



THE ENTERPRISE

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

Hospital official blasts board comments, vows to continue efforts "to make something happen"

By Debbie Hall
 Reiterating that Foresight Health System is considering all options – including donating the hospital to the county and operating it for them – company officials responded Monday to a statement by Brandon Simmons, chairman of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors.
 Last week, Simmons said the company would not reopen the hospital in

Stuart as planned.
 "After reading the statement, I was enraged," Foresight's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and General Counsel Joseph Hylak-Reinholtz wrote in a Monday release. "Rarely in my career have I ever been blindsided so callously by a local government official."
 The company, Hylak-Reinholtz said, "wants the public to know that, never, not even once, did Mr. Simmons try,

either personally, through electronic mail, or through an intermediary, to reach me or anyone else who works for Foresight to ask for a status report on the project before releasing this surprise attack against the company. His attempts to demonize Foresight Health are unprofessional and frankly, just plain wrong."
 Late Monday, Simmons said his statement "was based on the informa-

tion given to me months ago that they were going to rethink the project. I, as well as others in Patrick County, have been watching the work being done at the hospital – the temporary fences and the signs.
 "Based on the information given to the county at the beginning of the process," and limited progress at the hospital, Simmons said it was clear the
(See Hospital p. 18)

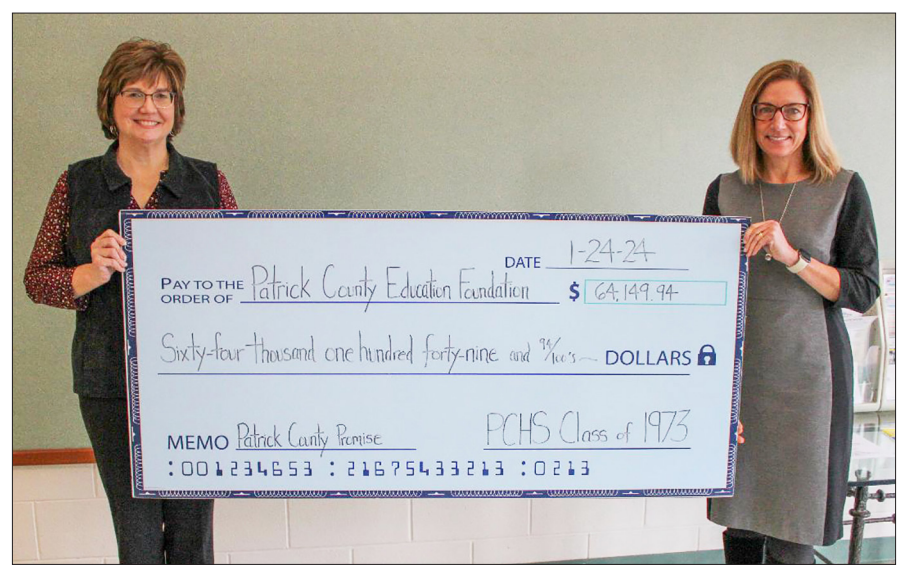
Board hears broadband update

By Taylor Boyd
 The Patrick County Board of Supervisors heard a broadband update at its January 22 meeting from County Administrator Beth Simms. Noting that there are two state-funded broadband projects occurring in the county, Simms said the first is the Patrick County Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2022 with Charter-Spectrum. This project is primarily located in the furthest south-west corner of the county.
 "They did finally get their VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation) permits. That was the hold-up on that," Simms said, adding she expects construction of that project to begin "really any day."
 Simms said she will have a more concrete update on the timeline during the first week of February, "but they were delayed with some permitting processes," she said. "I



John Fitzgerald, of Gynn, Waddell, Carroll & Lockaby, P.C., presented FOIA and COIA training to the Board of Supervisors.

think that's one thing to note. Even
(See Broadband p. 3)



P&HCC Foundation executive director Tiffani Underwood (right) presents the PCHS Class of 1973 donation to Angie Brown, Patrick County site facilitator.

Patrick Promise receives donation from PCHS Class of '73

The Patrick County High School (PCHS) class of 1973 held its 50th class reunion in September 2023. A presentation was made by class member and Patrick County Education Foundation (PCEF) Board Chairman Dr. Stewart Roberson to

consider supporting Patrick & Henry Community College's (P&HCC) Patrick Promise as a gift from the class to future PCHS graduates. Roberson was one of the first to graduate from the consolidated
(See Patrick Promise p. 3)

Griffith discusses hospital during stop in county



U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith discussed the hospital and other issues while in Patrick County last week.



County Administrator Beth Simms, (right) is pictured with 9th District Rep. Morgan Griffith.

Master Gardeners host cotton workshop



Youngsters attending a recent Storytime at the library in Stuart were treated to a workshop on cotton by the Patrick County Master Gardeners. Attendees made items and planted cotton seeds. For more about the Master Gardeners, their activities and photos of others in the workshop, see 'Cotton featured during recent programs' inside.

By Taylor Boyd
 During a recent stop in Patrick County, 9th District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, shared his thoughts about the hospital reopening, and discussed some of his proposals working their way through Congress.
 Regarding the recent announcement that Foresight Hospital and Health Systems in Stuart would not open, Griffith said that he as well as U.S. Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine had early concerns.

"I think I can speak for both senators on this. We've worked on this as a team all the way along," Griffith said, adding that "Senator Warner (D-Alexandria) and I shared some concerns with some people - probably close to two years ago - about this project that was just nixed."
 One reason he and the senators were concerned about the Stuart project was due to the familiarity of the process they gained while working closely on the Lee County hospital.
(See Griffith p. 3)

Benefit set for teens injured in crash

A benefit for two teens who were injured in a December crash will be held on Saturday, February 24 at the Woolwine Elementary School, from 2 to 8 p.m.
 Funds raised at the event will benefit Lauren Worley, of Patrick County, and Micah Underwood, of Floyd County. The two were injured on December 16.
 One person was charged with felony counts of permanent maiming another while driving while intoxicated and driving while intoxicated maiming serious injury and several misdemeanor charges in connection with the incident.
 Underwood was treated for his injuries and has since been released.
 Worley was recently transported from a hospital in Roanoke to a facility in Charlotte, N.C., for rehabilitation.
 The event will include live music- bluegrass, gospel and country, as well as a plated meal of BBQ or chicken. The cost is \$12 per plate, and a drive-thru option is available.
 A Cut-A-Thon by Cricket's Country Salon and Jessica Belcher, a basket raffle, 50/50 drawing and a bake sale.

The benefit begins at 2 p.m. with welcome and prayer. Michael Ray Fain will perform at 2:30p.m. followed by Mike Hall, Allison Harris & Jackie Belcher at 3 p.m.
 The Revelators are scheduled to perform at 3:15 p.m., with the first round of raffles set for 3:45 p.m., followed by Voices of Praise at 4 p.m., Fresh Harvest Praise Team at 4:30 p.m., and a second round of raffles at 4:45 p.m.
 The Alum Ridge Boys and Ashlee with Chris Prillaman are scheduled to perform at 5 p.m., with a third round of raffles at 6 p.m., followed by PCHS Praise and Worship at 6:15, and the fourth round of raffles at 6:45 p.m.
 The final performers – Jordan T. Morrison and The Foothill Boys – will perform at 7 p.m., with a 50/50 drawing and auction items scheduled for 8 p.m.
 The benefit is not sponsored or endorsed by the Patrick County School Board. It is being sponsored by the communities of Woolwine, Stuart and Floyd communities. Organizers express a special thanks to the Ruritan clubs, Woolwine Fire and Rescue and Woolwine Elementary School. Email questions to gentry.turner@patrick.k12.va.us.

Creative, temporary food service ideas sought for Mabry Mill

The National Park Service's Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) process is now open to submit ideas for temporary food service during the 2024 season at Mabry Mill, located at milepost 176.2 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The purpose of the RFEI is to identify interested individuals, organizations, or businesses that offer creative ideas for outdoor food and beverage service, such as self-contained outdoor vending concepts, like food trucks or vending carts. This opportunity is intended to be temporary in nature, to both complement retail operations at the site and provide food service while the National Park Service seeks a new long-term concessioner for the Mabry Mill site.

"This is an opportunity to test new services for park visitors at Mabry Mill," said Blue Ridge Parkway Superintendent Tracy Swartout. "We know that the local community and businesses care about the future of this site and have ideas about what might serve today's visitors and meet the historic intent behind this developed area. A temporary food service gives us the opportunity to consider alternatives that could help us determine future, flexible uses at Mabry Mill and other beloved

sites along the Parkway." The National Park Service will evaluate responses to the RFEI to inform the next stage in planning for this business opportunity which will likely be authorized by a Commercial Use Authorization (CUA). Interested commercial entities can email blri_concessions@nps.gov to request a full copy of the RFEI, including submission criteria. The RFEI is also available on the "Doing Business With Us" page of the Parkway's website. Responses to the RFEI are due by February 23.

Mabry Mill Restaurant and Gift Shop has historically operated as a park concession, whereby a private business provides park visitors a service that parks do not provide directly. As announced in December of 2023, the concession contract at the site expired at the end of 2023, and the previous food service and retail operator has chosen not to accept an extension while the NPS seeks a new, long-term contractor to provide those services. America's National Parks (TM), a part of Eastern National and longtime Parkway bookstore partner, will manage retail operations during the 2024 visitor season at Mabry Mill.



Seed Library Restocked

In celebration of National Seed Swap Day and the start of garden planning time Master Gardener Hannah Vinova and her son Lucca restocked the seed library at the Patrick County Library. A variety of vegetables and flower seeds are available

free of charge. Please return unused seeds to the return box now located at the seed display for other gardeners to plant. For information on the Seed Library or any Master Gardener program, email mgpcva@gmail.com.

Lincoln play to be performed at historic Star Theatre

Virginia Tech's Reynolds Homestead will bring the one man show, "Mr. Lincoln's Office: A Meeting with the President," to the historic Star Theatre on Monday, Feb. 19 at 6 p.m. The theater is located at 318 Patrick Ave., in downtown Stuart.

The performance, offered as a collaboration between the Reynolds Homestead and One Family Productions, caps off a day of student showings at the theater in honor of Presidents' Day.

The show is adapted and performed by Peter

Holland and runs just under an hour. Tickets are available now on the One Family Productions website, onefamilyproductions.org. Tickets for the show are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

For more information about the student shows available to both public school and homeschool students, please email Kristin Hylton, communication and program support assistant at krhylton@vt.edu or call (276) 694-7181.



Trust plans Stuart's birthday celebration

The JEB Stuart Preservation Trust on Saturday, February 3 will hold a birthday celebration honoring Patrick County native Major General J. E. B. Stuart, CSA. His birthday is on February 6.

The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Ararat, Va. Ruritan Club Building, located at 4711 Ararat Highway (the Blue Ridge Elementary School). This is an excellent location with plenty of room for exhibits and merchandise tables.

Attendees are encouraged to dress in period clothing.

The JEB Stuart Preservation Trust will have lots of merchandise for sale, such as hats, T-shirts, framed prints, books, coffee mugs, etc., all of which were being sold to raise funds for the upkeep and maintenance of Laurel Hill, the Homeplace of General Stuart.

A local band will be on hand to provide musical entertainment.

Food includes birthday cake, lemonade, hot dogs, chips, soda and coffee.

The trust's Board of Directors will use this event as an opportunity to sell memory bricks for our Laurel Hill pavilion, and offer annual memberships to guests.



Pets of the Week



This black dog is a little camera shy, and doesn't show up well in the photo. However, the goal is to find his owner. He looks to be a black lab and pit bull mix. He was found at 152 Via Mountain Lane in Patrick Springs.

The scared little black and white female is hiding in her bed. She was found



on Free Union Road in Meadows of Dan. Adoption fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and a rabies vaccination. Call the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter (PCPAS) at (276) 694-6259 for more information, or to view available pets, visit the shelter or its Facebook page.

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Board

(cont. from page 1)

though this is a state initiative, and this is grant funded and all this stuff, they still have to go through the construction process just like anybody else.”

Because projects are going on throughout the state, the permitting process is slower rather than faster, Simms said.

The second project is the West Piedmont VATI 2022 project, which is a regional project that includes Patrick, Franklin, and Henry counties.

“RiverStreet (Networks) is the internet service provider, but Appalachian Power is also part of that. As you all know, Appalachian Power is a pretty big company,” Simms said, and added

there are a “lot of things to get through with them.”

Construction is scheduled to start on that project February 16 in Franklin County, with construction in Henry and Patrick County scheduled to begin 30 days later, or around mid-March.

Simms said she, other county staff members, and the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) - which is over the broadband initiative - meet monthly with the companies working on the projects.

“Construction should be picking up, and be continuous here in the next couple of months, so

I’ll plan to give one of these updates every meeting,” she said.

In other matters, the board:

*Received Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) training and Conflict of Interest Act (COIA) training.

*Heard an update on the Parks and Recreation Department from Director Travis Murphy.

*Heard the administrator’s report.

*Heard the supervisors’ reports.

*Heard from Kurt Bozenmayer about potential FOIA training for those appointed to boards.

*Reappointed David Haymore to the ANCHOR Commission Board for an at-large term.

Patrick Promise

(cont. from page 1)

high school. The class has donated a total of \$64,149.94 thus far.

“Patrick County has a history of very meaningful investment in its students and their futures,” said Roberson, adding, “our class is fortunate to have benefitted from that community support and we’re honored to give back by investing in the future of Patrick County in this substantial way.”

Patrick Promise embraces a goal for support of Patrick’s students which is similar to The Harvest Foundation’s goal for students in Martinsville and Henry County - to provide free tuition to PCHS graduates attending Patrick & Henry Community College. PCEF invites the community to participate so that all PCHS graduates can benefit from the same level of investment as their peers in Martinsville and Henry County.

The early work of PCEF focused on improv-

ing the on-time high school graduation and GED attainment rates for Patrick County. As of 2022, the state on-time graduation rate was 89%. Patrick County’s was 92%. To decrease or eliminate population decline, increase economic mobility for the citizens of Patrick County, and increase the economic attractiveness and workforce development of Patrick County, PCEF is committed to ensuring the percentage of Patrick County adults - aged 25-64 - with a post high school credential will equal or surpass surrounding counties/locales.

In preparation for enhancing the post high school credentialing of Patrick County citizens, P&HCC has significantly expanded its presence in Patrick County. General Education/Transfer courses as well as Electrical Groundsman and Mechatronics training are available at the Stuart site, Welding is available at Patrick County High School, and P&H-

CC has partnered with Wytheville Community College to expand Powerline Training to Stuart on the campus of Patrick County High School. Fifty-four percent of currently enrolled Patrick County students attend P&HCC free to the family.

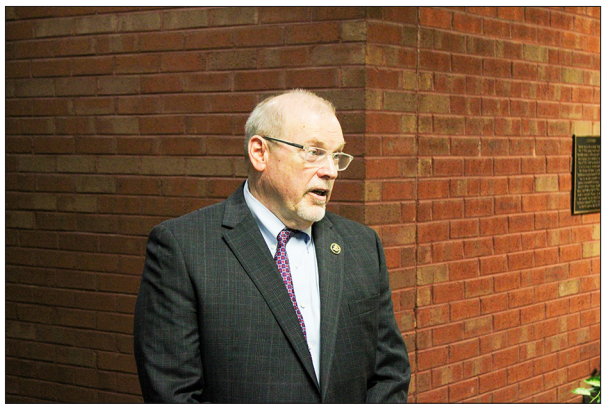
In support of PCEF’s goal, Patrick Promise will provide last dollar funds for Patrick County graduates to attend P&HCC FREE to the family for up to 2.5 years. As of November 2023, Patrick Promise has raised more than \$139,000.

“PCEF will enlist the support and involvement of other classes to have graduated from PCHS to continue the example set by the Class of 1973,” said Roberson.

Community members interested in donating to Patrick Promise are encouraged to visit <https://bit.ly/phccgivenow> (designate Patrick Promise when donating).

Griffith

(cont. from page 1)



Securing funds for a generator needed at the water treatment plant is one of the local projects that U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith is working on. Others, he said, “are not ready yet for prime time.”

Officials involved in the effort to reopen the Patrick hospital did not reach out to any of them, Griffith said on a January 24 swing through the area.

Griffith recalled that he, Warner and Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Richmond,

“We said, ‘wait a minute. We were ready to go with Lee County. We were aware of everything that happened with the one that finally took, and we’re not seeing that here,’ and that raised concern,” Griffith said.

He also said that hospital experienced failure before it eventually reopened.

“I think they had two different people that tried to leave,” he said. “It’s not like one failure means you’re out. The third time was the charm in Lee County.”

Griffith hopes someone will step forward to help with the hospital in Patrick, or that the county will come up with a project that would fit the rural area.

When that happens, “I will tell you we all stand ready to help,” Griffith said. In the interim, “as long as they (Foresight) have ownership of the hospital, there’s nothing the county could do.”

Griffith said he’s proposed a wide array of bills related to several issues, including broadband, privacy, healthcare, and others

– most are policy related “because my committee has jurisdiction on the policy - not the money.”

One of his proposals is related to humorous highway signs.

“The federal highway said, ‘you can’t use humor signs.’ Today’s message, as I was driving down to Henry County, was ‘seatbelts save lives,” he said, adding that Virginia and other states got creative and found memorable ways to convey the same message.

But, “for some reason, the federal government doesn’t have a sense of humor and they came out and said, ‘you can’t use humorous messages,’” he said. “So, I’m getting ready to put in a little bill that says, ‘yeah, disregard that.’ I mean, it’s a paragraph, just ‘this subsection shall not be enforced.’”

In terms of economic development, Griffith said he is working on obtaining funds for different projects - including one in Stuart to buy a generator for the water treatment plant.

“That may or may not get through,” he said. “It’s gotten through the appropriations committee, but we’ve been involved in a battle over a lot of other spending. We’ll see if it gets through the final cut.”

Griffith said he should know whether that



U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, is pictured with County Administrator Beth Simms.

bill is successful by the end of March.

He also met with County Administrator Beth Simms, and discussed potential projects that would help the county in the long term.

“They’re not ready yet for prime time, but we’re working on some thought patterns,” he said.

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff’s Office reported the following:

*Jay Thomas Goins, 33, of Spencer, was charged Jan. 18 with probation violation. Deputy W. Higgs was the arresting officer.

*Gwynn Marie Keith, 51, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 18 with one count each credit card larceny and petit larceny. Lt. D.L. Foley was the arresting officer.

*Timothy Dale Plasters, 53, of Patrick Springs, was charged Jan. 19 with probation violation. Deputy M.T. Rorrer was the arresting officer.

*Elvis Xavier Santiago-Rivera, 27, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 22 with fail to comply with terms of pretrial services. Deputy C.A. Frick was the arresting officer.

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Sweden Set to Join NATO

The Kingdom of Sweden was a great power in Europe, controlling much of the Baltic region during the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Its decline was marked by Sweden's loss at the Battle of Poltava. In July 1709, King Charles XII and the Swedish army lost to a superior Russian force.

The Battle of Poltava was Sweden's greatest military disaster and began the rise of Russia as a European power.

The Russian Empire continued to expand over the next 200 years and during World War I, communists took over the country and formed the Soviet Union.

After World War II it was clear the Soviet Union was going to attempt to continue to expand their empire and control over puppet governments. To counter that, many countries in Europe and the United States formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Once the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, many countries in Eastern Europe (Estonia to Bulgaria) joined NATO in an effort to prevent future Soviet (now Russian) control.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, both Finland and Sweden formally submitted applications for membership to NATO.

In order for a new country to join NATO each of the existing members must vote in favor of the new members. While almost all of the NATO member countries voted in favor of both Finland and Sweden in 2022, Hungary and Turkey did not.

Turkey initially opposed both countries joining NATO as they had provided support to Kurdish groups seeking a Kurdish homeland (deemed as terrorist organizations by Turkey).

While Finland did eventually receive approval by all member countries, and formally joined NATO in April 2023, it is taking a bit more negotiation for Turkey to approve Sweden's membership.

This included Sweden tightening their anti-terror legislation and agreeing to work closely with Turkey on concerns of national security. Separately, the United States must also approve the sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey.

Now that Turkey's Parliament has voted in favor of Sweden's membership, the last step is for Turkey's President Erdogan to sign the protocols.

Though Hungary technically has not yet ratified Sweden, Hungary's Prime Minister released a statement saying the government supports Sweden's membership.

Russia's rhetoric towards Ukraine prior to invasion is very similar to Russia's rhetoric regarding NATO members Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This rhetoric creates a concern they want to



Morgan Griffith

Representative

reconquer these NATO countries and a Russian versus NATO war in the region would destabilize Scandinavia and the Baltic.

Further the border between Poland and Lithuania, known as the Suwalki Gap, is another flashpoint between Russia and NATO countries. While Belarus is to the east, there is a Russian enclave to the west of the Gap, the Kaliningrad Oblast, created after World War II when Russia took the territory from Germany, which formally was East Prussia. Today, it is heavily militarized by the Russians, including warships, warplanes, and nuclear weapons.

Sweden's membership in NATO could prove to greatly benefit the alliance as Sweden's military strength significantly increases NATO's capabilities in Scandinavia and the Baltic.

Sweden's defense industry is one of Europe's largest, producing some of the best defense equipment on the market. One example of this is the Saab JAS 39 Gripen, a supersonic fighter aircraft, produced by Swedish aerospace and defense company Saab AB. The Gripen is designed to take off and land on short runways and can be refueled and re-armed in a matter of minutes.

As a result, Sweden's Air Force is one of the largest in Europe, which possesses at least 100 fighter jets. These fighter jets provide critical support to Army and Navy forces as they conduct operations in the Baltic and Arctic regions.

Sweden's strategic position in Northern Europe and powerful submarine force are also key to keeping waters navigable in the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea is a shared waterway with Russia, and it bottlenecks, limiting access to ports in eight countries. Sweden's knowledge of navigating the Baltic Sea and their submarines which work well in the Sea's shallow water, could all prove to be important for NATO's future success.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine brought into sharp focus Russia's desire to expand far into Europe once again. The importance of the NATO alliance, and bolstering its capabilities, has become clear and with Sweden in the alliance, it looks to become stronger than ever.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It takes a village

PAWS is appealing to the public for support. PAWS was founded as a 501c3. in 2006 and has done so many great things. Recently, we have had many calls from citizens in need of dog food during the current economy crunch and we have made arrangements with the new Food Country USA (the former Lowes) to be a collection location you can drop food off at the desk. PAWS had a very large donation bequeathed to PAWS in 2020. This money paid 100% of cost of spays and neuters for over 500 Patrick County, and bordering county's, pets. This money lasted 3 years but is now gone, so we are calling on the citizens of Patrick County to keep PAWS spay

neuter program going. If the folks that benefited from these services would give a donation, PAWS can continue to spay and neuter pets in need. Otherwise, the program is in danger of closing. PAWS needs anyone who is able to write grants, even students that are just interested in learning how to write grants. If we can get the support, we are in desperate need of donations. Contributions of any amount can be mailed to Post Office Box 743, Stuart, Va. 24171. If you have any questions, email paws_pres@yahoo.com.

Like the saying goes, It takes a village.

Murphy Brown,
Stuart

Reaching a consensus

The January 24 edition of the Enterprise included a response to a letter I had written regarding abortion. The writer indicated that I was opposed to abortion "rights" based on my religious beliefs, which is essentially true, and then reminded me there is a separation of church and state in this country, the point being that those who oppose abortion cannot impose that viewpoint on those who do not. Without getting into details regarding what I believe is a serious misreading by the writer of the entire church/state separation issue, it is not possible to have civil society without a foundation of law based on some higher moral order. In the case of Western civilization, including the United States, that higher moral order has been Christianity (i.e., what God says is right versus wrong). We have laws against murder, for example, for a reason; there is a standard of right and wrong that is higher than humanity's. I would ask the writer upon what higher moral order does he base his conclusion that abortion is acceptable? If he believes abortion is a "right," as he appears to believe, then where does that right come from? Does the writer believe there are any limits to when an abortion can occur? If so, when, and why? Does he believe, as do some abortion advocates, that it is acceptable to abort a baby essentially right up to the point of birth? If so, on what moral grounds?

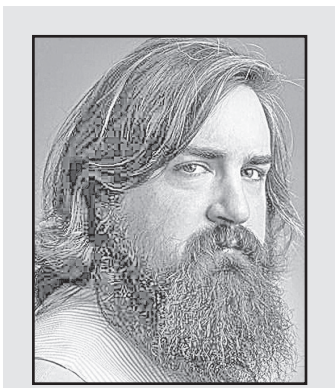
The writer also indicated that abortion is "healthcare" and therefore a woman should not be pre-

vented from controlling healthcare for her own body. Bodily autonomy when it comes to healthcare is indeed a basic component of what it means to be a free human being. A person has a fundamental, God-given right to control their own body. We cannot be free and human otherwise. However, and it's a big however, abortion is not just about one person's life; there is another life involved, a human life that cannot speak for itself. Like it or not, believe in God or not, abortion represents the termination of a life. No amount of sanitation of the language by using terms such as "healthcare" can change that basic fact. My question for the letter writer is: upon what morality do you base the belief that deliberately aborting a child is a fundamental human right?

Finally, the writer stated that he felt that "all who oppose abortion" (presumably to include me, I suppose) should be "required to adopt, support, and educate any baby resulting from a forced birth." Although untold numbers of abortion opponents around this world have gladly adopted children to prevent their abortion, my first impulse was to counter and suggest that perhaps all who favor abortion as a fundamental human right be the ones required to do so. Instead, maybe we should attempt to come to a consensus about what life is and where it gets its value. If God is not our moral compass, then what is?

David Robinette Jr.,
Patrick Springs

Regarding the Patrick County hospital



By Ben R. Williams

Back in February 2018 when I was a full-time journalist, I found myself inside the former Pioneer Community Hospital in Stuart, Virginia.

It was a red-letter day for Patrick County. Governor Ralph Northam was in town along with numerous state and local politicians and an audience of about 200 people. After filing for bankruptcy in 2016, the hospital had closed its doors the previous September. Northam had arrived at the hospital to sign Senate Bill 866 into law, the first bill of his governorship. Authored by Sen. Bill Stanley, the bill was

designed to keep Pioneer's certifications and licenses current so that when a new owner purchased the hospital, they would have significantly fewer hoops to jump through to get it up and running again.

It was a hopeful day. I talked to a whole lot of folks that afternoon — only a fraction of the quotes made it into the story I wrote — and I remember the overwhelming sense that surely, sometime very soon, the hospital would reopen. It HAD to reopen. How could the entire county go even a few months without a hospital?

What I remember most vividly from that day, however, is that somewhere within the hospital, there was a humidity sensor alarm that kept ringing. No one could figure out how to completely turn it off, only silence it temporarily. It lent a distinctly "Tell-Tale Heart" sort of vibe to the proceedings.

It's been six years since that day, and the hospital is no closer to opening its doors. If anything, the goalposts have moved even further.

I read with great interest Debbie Hall's article in the last edition of The Enterprise, "Board chairman says hospital will not reopen." On Jan. 22, Patrick County Board of Supervisors Chairman Brandon Simmons announced that despite being

purchased by Foresight Health Group in 2022, the hospital would not be reopening. There was no reason given and no additional information provided. In a related story, Foresight apparently hasn't paid taxes on the property in two years and the county is in the early stages of the collection process for a total of \$33,101.12.

The story added that the town is trying to get Foresight to take down the "Opening in 2023" banner in front of the hospital.

I drive past that banner a couple of times per week, and every time I see, it serves as a grim confirmation of my long-held belief that Foresight's big promises were never going to materialize.

I don't want to come across as Mr. I Told You So, but every time I heard a new update on Foresight's ambitious plans for the county hospital, I felt like I was watching a depressing reboot of "The Music Man" without the musical numbers or romance. Maybe I'm just cynical. Maybe it's the fact that a cursory Google search revealed that Dr. Sameer Suhail, President and CEO of Foresight, has been embroiled in multiple well-documented legal probes involving millions of dollars of insider contracts received from Chicago's Loretto Hospital. Who can say?

I would never, ever suggest that an enterprising individual with less than stellar intentions might come into a community and provide an easy answer to a need so desperate that local officials would be willing to overlook more red flags than you'd see at a Chinese military parade. I'm sure that Dr. Suhail is well-intentioned and that his various Chicago legal problems can easily be explained away. I say this both because it is my deeply-held belief and also for legal purposes.

However, the root of the problem that Patrick County faces has nothing to do with Foresight. It has to do with the reason Pioneer closed in the first place.

According to the article in The Enterprise, Joseph Hyak-Reinholt, COO of Foresight, issued a statement regarding Foresight's failure to reopen the hospital.

"As 2023 turns into 2024, we have yet to develop a plan that makes sense both clinically and financially," he wrote. "That is, we have to develop a plan that we believe can provide an adequate scope of services while also being profitable."

And there's the problem.

If your house catches fire, you don't have to pay the firefighters to come put it out. If your car gets stolen, you don't have to institute a payment plan with the police so that they'll go out and look for it. And yet I've never heard anyone complain about "socialized firefighting" or "socialized law enforcement."

When I was inside Pioneer back in 2018, I heard several people say that if no one was willing to reopen the hospital, the government needed to step in and do it. I had a feeling that if I said to those same folks that that would be socialized medicine, they would not have been pleased.

The situation with the Patrick County hospital is a prime example of why we need universal healthcare in this country. If an underserved community desperately needs a hospital, it shouldn't have to wait until someone can figure out how to do it while still turning a profit. I would much rather have my healthcare paid for by my taxes rather than the current system of paying a bloated hive of insurance company leeches even MORE money so that they can occasionally tell me that after consulting some soulless corporate ghoul, they have decided that I don't actually need the medical procedure that my doctor recommended.

The old joke is that universal healthcare is such a complex problem that only 32 out of the world's 33 developed nations have managed to make it work. Until this country figures out that healthcare is a human right, I don't know that the Patrick County hospital will ever reopen.

I realize that "socialized medicine" is a scary concept, but I imagine that it becomes a lot less scary when you're in the back of an ambulance on the long road to Carilion Franklin in Rocky Mount.

(From the Henry County Enterprise.)

Letters to the Editor/Viewpoints Policy

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

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

Patrick Pioneers

Dr. William Frederick Brown Taylor and Dr. Joseph Bishop

By Beverly Belcher Woody

Last week, we looked at early Welsh emigrant George Taylor and his family, who settled along the Mayo River in what would eventually become Patrick County. The first county seat of Patrick was named Taylorsville in honor of George Taylor. Several of George Taylor's children went out west, while a couple became successful businessmen in Stokes and Surry counties in North Carolina. The youngest two children of George and Elizabeth Anyon Taylor, William and Reuben, settled in Patrick County and raised successful and productive citizens of the community.

Today, we will take a look at the sixth child of William Anderson Taylor and his wife, Catherine Ann "Kitty" Hill; Dr. William Frederick Brown Taylor. Dr. Taylor was born on the 17th of February 1828 in the Horsepasture community. Family history states that Dr. Taylor attended medical school in Philadelphia and then returned to Elamsville in Patrick County to set up his practice.

Dr. William F. B. Taylor married Miss Frances Morton "Fannie" Bishop on the 27th of April 1858 in Patrick County. Fannie was a recent graduate of Greensboro Female College, now Greensboro College. Fannie was the daughter of Dr. Joseph Monroe Bishop and Elizabeth Terrill Bishop, who were originally from Charlottesville, Virginia, but had moved to Patrick County in 1844. Dr. Bishop hung out his shingle in Stuart in 1845 and was highly respected in the community. In the census records for the last half of the 19th century, there are quite a few men named in honor of Dr. Bishop, including Joseph Bishop Blackard (1859-1949) and Joseph Bishop Dalton (1860-1920).

Dr. William F. B. Taylor and Fannie's first child, Lucy Elizabeth was born on the 17th of December 1859, but sadly, died of scarlet fever on the 9th of December 1861, eight days short of her second birthday. The couple's second child, Mildred "Minnie" Ann, was born on the 23rd of January 1861. Minnie would grow up to marry Staunton Richard West and they would raise a large family in Patrick Springs.

In what used to be quite a common practice, Dr. Taylor, and wife Fannie, named their third child in memory of their first child. Lucy Elizabeth, the second, was born on the second of December 1864 in Elamsville. Lucy married Asa Howard Aldredge from Floyd County. Around the turn of the 20th century, Lucy and Asa moved their twelve children to a farm in Dayton, Ohio where they remained the rest of their lives.

Dr. William and Fannie Taylor's fourth child, Mary Catherine, was born on Christmas Eve 1865. Mary Catherine would grow up and marry Robert Martin Wood of Patrick Springs in 1893; they would have five children. The couple's fifth child, another daughter, Emma Morton, was born on the 18th of January 1868. Emma would also marry

NOTES FROM STUART.
Death of a Well-Known Physician—Minerals.
(Correspondence of the Richmond Dispatch.)
STUART, VA., February 24, 1890.
Yesterday morning Dr. Joseph Bishop, a well-known and highly-respected physician, died suddenly at his residence at Stuart, Va., in the eighty-seventh year of his age. He was apparently in good health and was out on the street a few days ago. Dr. Bishop was born near Charlottesville, in Albemarle county, and moved to Patrick about fifty years ago. He was a fine physician, a man of sterling worth, of the strictest integrity, and of large heart. His numerous deeds of charity will long be remembered by the citizens of this and other counties. For more than sixty years he was a consistent member of the the Baptist church. He leaves a wife who is but two months younger than himself and four children—Dr. John Bishop, Messrs. A. J., H. C., and Miss Sue—all of Stuart, Va.

Dr. Joseph Bishop Obituary

a young man from Patrick Springs, John Robert Martin and they would raise eight children near where the Springs of Life camp (old hotel) is located. After John passed away in 1938, Emma married again to John Wesley Atkins, of Buffalo Ridge. Emma lived to the age of ninety-one.

The sixth child of Dr. William and Fannie Taylor was a son, William Joseph "Joe" Taylor, born on the 15th of February 1870. Tragically, Joe suffered a stroke many years before his passing. The stroke left him without the ability to speak and the use of one arm. Joe worked as a painter before his illness and never married. Fannie Jane "Beadie" Taylor was born only 14 months after her brother Joe, on the 10th of April 1871. Beadie married William H. Martin of the Hollow section of Patrick County, which we usually now call Ararat. Beadie and William must have moved out to Kansas City, Missouri immediately after their January 3, 1899, wedding in Stuart because their first child, William Bernard, was born on the 7th of December 1899 in Kansas City. William H. Martin was the son of John Henry Martin and Martha Patsy King of the Hollow section of Patrick County. Martin served in the Missouri state legislature for two terms, was the city license inspector, and the commissioner of parks for many years. When William and Beadie's son, Raymond was born on the 5th of March 1906, the following announcement appeared in the daily newspaper..."Born, this morning, to Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Martin, 721 Coy Street, a full-fledged Jeffersonian Democrat."

The youngest child of Dr. William F. B. and Fannie Taylor, John Samuel Taylor, was born in Elamsville on the 24th of September 1872. After John's birth, his mother, Fannie never quite seemed to recover and died less than two years later. After Fannie's passing, young John Samuel was raised by his maternal grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Bishop. Fannie was laid to rest at the Bishop fam-



Dr. William F. B. Taylor

ily burying ground at the Bishop home in Stuart. Many years later, her remains and those of other members of the Bishop family were moved to the Stuart Cemetery.

John Samuel Taylor held his first public office in 1896, when he became a member of the Stuart Town Council; he represented Patrick County in the House of Delegates for 1897-1898, following in his father, Dr. William F. B. Taylor's footsteps. Dr. Taylor had served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1865-1871, participating in the drafting of the Underwood Constitution in 1869 that would govern Virginia until 1902. The first post-Civil War legislature, it was dominated by old-line Whigs, the forerunner to the Republican party. Both Dr. William F. B. Taylor and his son, John Samuel were Republicans.

John Samuel Taylor was elected clerk of court, serving from 1906 until 1920, when he resigned to become cashier of the First National Bank of Stuart. In 1927, he was again elected Clerk of Patrick Circuit Court and served until ill health forced him to retire in September 1945. John Samuel married Miss Elizabeth Ruth Davis in 1906 and they had three sons, John Davis, William Clay, and James Spotswood and two daughters, Frances Pannill and Catherine Langhorne.

Next week, we will look at what happens to Dr. William F. B. Taylor after his wife, Fannie's passing in 1874. I could not have written this article without all the detailed facts and information provided by Dr. Taylor's 2x great granddaughter, Terry Trefry.

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

Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty - Will Withdrawing from 401(k) Affect My Social Security?

Dear Rusty: My full retirement age (FRA) is 66 and 8 months, which I'll reach in September 2024. I'm still working 3 days a week. I want to cash in my 401K and want to know if I have to wait until my FRA for IRS purposes or can cash it in anytime in 2024. I don't want to affect my Social Security or end up paying taxes on my benefits. *Signed: Seeking to Avoid Taxes*

Dear Seeking: We're not experts on IRS matters here at the AMAC Foundation so I can't address 401(k) questions, but we can provide information on your Social Security circumstances and how 401(k) withdrawals may affect your SS. I assume from your question that you are now receiving early Social Security and wish to avoid any tax consequences thereto by cashing in your 401(k), as well as from working. Here's what you need to know:

• Since you will reach your full retirement age (FRA) in 2024, your 2024 work earnings limit will be \$59,520 up to the month you reach FRA. If you were born in January 1958, you'll attain FRA in September 2024. After you have reached your FRA there is no longer a Social Security limit to how much you can earn from working, so your work earnings thereafter will not affect your monthly Social Security benefit regardless of how much you earn. If your part time work between January and August 2024 won't put you over the \$59,520 limit,

your work earnings will not negatively affect your gross monthly Social Security benefit.

• Assuming you are on Medicare, the premium for which is deducted from your Social Security payment, withdrawals from your 401(k) might affect your net monthly Social Security payment in two years hence. Medicare premiums are based upon your combined income from all sources, including 50% of the SS benefits you received during the tax year. If your 401(k) withdrawal(s) put you over an income threshold for your tax filing status, you may be required to pay an "IRMAA" (Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount) on top of the standard Medicare premium. That IRMAA supplement would be deducted from your Social Security payment. Your Medicare premium for each coming year is determined by your combined income from two years prior, so if you "cash in" your 401(K) in 2024, it would affect your net Social Security payments in 2026.

• Whether you will pay income tax on your Social Security benefits is determined by your combined income from everywhere, which the IRS calls your "Modified Adjusted Gross Income" or "MAGI." MAGI is your income from all sources (except ROTH IRA withdrawals) and includes half of the SS benefits you received during the tax year. If you file your taxes as a single, and your MAGI is over \$25,000 - or if you file your taxes as "married-jointly" and your MAGI is over \$32,000 - then 50% of the Social Security benefits received during the tax year becomes part of your overall income taxed by

the IRS (at your normal IRS tax rate). But if your MAGI as a single filer is more than \$34,000 - or as a married/jointly filer over \$44,000 - then up to 85% of the SS benefits received during the tax year becomes part of your overall income taxed by the IRS.

So, to recap:

1. Your part time work earnings in 2024 won't affect your monthly Social Security benefit, unless your 2024 work earnings prior to September 2024 exceed \$59,520.

2. Depending on the amount of your 401(k) withdrawals, your 2026 net Social Security payments may be impacted by Medicare's IRMAA provision. But your 401(k) withdrawals will not affect your gross Social Security payments.

3. Depending on the amount of your 401(k) withdrawals, some of the Social Security benefits received during the 2024 tax year will likely be subject to income tax. That is, if your annual total income, including your 401(k) withdrawals, exceeds the MAGI thresholds described above.

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.

You'll Feel Better Without Clutter - Part 2

Once the process of reducing the excess gets started, you might be surprised at how it overflows into other areas of life. For example, a study by the Association for Psychological Science found that simply working at an orderly desk could promote generosity and healthy eating.

Decluttering looks different for everyone. Some are content in just purging duplicates and inessentials, while others cut to the bare minimum. Whatever your goals, keep these simplifying principles in mind:

1. Approach it as a lifestyle, not a choice

You didn't accumulate all that stuff overnight, so you won't be able to get rid of it overnight either. It's a process, a way of housekeeping, not just a weekend event. So be patient with yourself as you learn new habits of shopping, donating, and organizing.

2. Think of it as making room for more important things

You are making room for what you need and love by getting rid of what you don't. "Having less stuff to think, worry, or even obsess about frees people up to focus on more important things in life, such as family, friends, religion, and hobbies," says professional organizer Karen Reyes.

3. Put every item through the three-question test. Before buying something new, or while deciding what to keep of your current possessions, ask yourself:

Do I need it?

Do I love it?

Do I have a place for it?

If not, bid it "a fond but firm farewell," and don't look back, says Marie Kondo, author of *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*.

4. Remember, more isn't better; better is better

It's the long-standing debate: quality versus quan-

tity. When it comes to simplifying, the answer is to go with quality. Rather than buying multiples of lesser quality, invest in one or two high-quality items that are reasonable for your budget and time of life. More isn't better; better is better.

5. Make list of what you want out of life

Do you want to travel more? Have more family time? Spend less time on housework? What possessions will (and won't) help you toward that end? Keep those goals in mind as you organize and clean. When deciding what to keep and what to get rid of, make three piles: keep, donate (or sell), and trash. Follow through with each pile quickly. Otherwise, you may end up pulling things out of the give-away pile and bringing them back into your closet or kitchen.

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

JV Girls Get Road Win

By Ashlee Mullis
The JV Lady Cougars beat Radford 36 to 24 on the road, January 25. Chloe Hubbard led the Lady Cougars with 8 rebounds, 9 points, and 3 steals. Lauren Hazelwood had 3 rebounds, 4 steals, and 6 points. Gracen Conner had 2 rebounds, 2 steals, 1 assist, and 6 points. Martina Hubbard had 1 rebound, 2

steals, 1 assist, and 6 points. Sheyan Lester had 6 rebounds, 3 steals and 2 blocks. Aubreigh Large had 6 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals, and 1 block.
Coach Grace Helms said, "I am proud of the ladies for playing consistent defense and their intensity. I love their character and teamwork! I am proud of them!"



Sheyan Lester drives in for the score at Radford.

Ararat resident named to James Madison University dean's list

Freedom Collins, of Ararat, has been named to the dean's list at James Madison University for the fall 2023 semester. Collins is majoring in Health Sciences - BS.

honor must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of between 3.5 and 3.899. Collins is majoring in Health Sciences - BS.

First semester student achievements at P&HCC

Dean's List
Students named to the Dean's List have earned a grade-point average of 3.2 or higher for the semester and who are enrolled for 12 or more college credits.
Ararat: Riley Brim, Eliza Clifton.
Claudville: Logan Cassady, Benjamin Sutphin.
Critz: Jalen Hagwood, Richard Hagwood.
Meadows of Dan: Karen Joaquin, Somer Luna, Maria Ojodeagua.
Patrick Springs: Ethan Curry, Jonathan Hodges, Sadie Martin, Charles McClain, Gavin McGhee, David Smith, Leanna Tatum.
Spencer: LeAndra Carson, Kansas Cutchins, Hayley DeShazo, Karlyn Hall, Raegan Lane, Kaci Meade, Sadie Perry, Qualeak Pride, Lestat Sink, Mary Williams.
Stuart: Hannah Anderson, Lillian Byers, Bryan Clark, Mallory Dehart, Bryson Fulcher, Emilea Harbour, Tristan Hardy, Rachel Helms, Allison Hughes, Moneus Hyde, Lillian McKenzie, Caleb Morris, Nubia Penn, George Stovall, Devin Walker, Kendall Williams.

Woolwine: Moises Cisneros, Autumn King.
Honors List
Those students who have attained a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher, and who have completed 30 or more credits and who are enrolled for 12 or more college credits are recognized with placement on the Honors List.
Ararat: Nathan Large.
Claudville: Seth Beasley.
Laurel Fork: James Brintle.
Meadows of Dan: Diego Ojodeagua, Sabrina Rorrer, Isaac Wood.
Patrick Springs: Braedon Augustine, Odette Chavez, Codie Marion, Aniya Penn, Courtney Sharpe, Andrew Taylor, Haley Underwood.
Spencer: Luke Cutchins, Alexander Doyle, Joshua Graham, William Marshall, Hunter Meade.
Stuart: Marissa Bentley, Marissa Brown, David Bryant, Lillian Cobbler, Madison Collins, Kali Craig, Haley Day, Heather Edwards, Dreama Foley, Zachary Heath, Elizabeth Rose, Mia Stowe, Maria Turner, Bridgette Whitney.
Woolwine: Samantha Harris.

PCHS sophomore earns award



The 26th annual RMA Awards Banquet was held on December 16. Hunter Hubbard received an award recognizing him for 10 years of service and dedication to Rutter's Martial Arts. Hunter won student of the year in his Shotokan class located in Bassett, and was promoted to 1st Kyu Adv. Brown. Hunter had to go through a process of tests including an essay and exam to earn his title. His next step will be to test for his black belt. Hunter's instructor is Grandmaster Scott Rutter. Rutter's Martial Arts has locations in Stuart, Bassett and Floyd. Hunter (aka "The Weatherman") is the son of Billy and Candice Hubbard, of Stuart. He is a sophomore at Patrick County High School.

Sports Briefs

By Ashlee Mullis
JV Lady Cougars defeat Glenvar

The JV Lady Cougars got a 26-19 road win at Glenvar, on Tuesday, January 23. Lauren Hazelwood led the Cougars with 7 points, 5 steals, 1 assist, and 1 rebound. Gracen Conner played had 6 steals, 6 points, and 4 rebounds. Martina Hubbard had 4 points, 3 blocks, 2 steals and 1 rebound. Sheyan Lester had 4 points, 3 rebounds, 1 steal, and 1 block. Novella Nester hit a 3 pointer and had 1 assist. Chloe Hubbard had 7 steals and 4 rebounds. Aubreigh Large had 3 rebounds and a block. Meredith Wood had 5 rebounds and 1 steal.
"I am proud of my ladies for over-

coming some obstacles tonight. The games are faster paced and we are growing each practice. I am most proud of their team work," said Coach Grace Helms.

Varsity Girls Beat Glenvar
The Varsity Lady Cougar Basketball Team defeated Glenvar, 53-12 on the road, Monday, January 22. Aniya Penn led the Cougars with 11 points, 2 rebounds, 4 deflections, 1 assist, and 1 steal. Kendra Worley had 10 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 deflection, and 3 steals. Allannah Mitchell had 9 points, 4 rebounds, 3 assists, and 6 deflections. Shauntel Hill had 6 points, 5 rebounds, 4 deflections, and 3 steals, and Kimora Wimbush had 6 points, 4 rebounds, 1 deflection, 1 assist, and 1 steal.

PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of Feb. 2-8 is below:

2/2	5:30p	Girls Basketball at Carroll County
	7pm	Boys Basketball at Carroll County
2/3	9am	Wrestling Meet at Roanoke College
2/5	7pm	Boys Basketball vs James River
2/6	7pm	Girls Basketball at James River
2/7	6pm	Girls Basketball vs Carroll County
2/8	7pm	Boys Basketball vs Carroll County

Community center is site of photography session

The Willis Gap Community Center Open Jam on Friday, Jan. 26, at 144 The Hollow Road, Ararat, hosted visitors from Patrick County Tourism, and Silver Lining De-

sign taking photos for the new Fall Patrick County Magazine, in which Willis Gap Community Center has requested a full-page ad.



Kim Rakes (left to right), Crystal Perkins, and Aston Young. (By Mary Dellenback Hill)



Mary Dellenback Hill (left to right), Kim Rakes, and Aston Young. (By Crystal Perkins)

Warner, others push to preserve telehealth for seniors

U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner, D-Alexandria, joined several bipartisan, bicameral lawmakers to urge the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to work with Congress to ensure Medicare beneficiaries maintain access to telehealth. Current pandemic-era flexibilities will expire on Dec. 31, without further action, forcing seniors to adapt to new care routines.
In a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra, the lawmakers underscored the urgent need to make pandemic-era telehealth flexibilities permanent.
"We urge you to work with Congress to ensure that all Medicare beneficiaries have permanent access to telehealth services before the temporary waivers expire on December 31, 2024," the lawmakers wrote. "Enacting permanent telehealth legislation will require collaboration between HHS and Congress in the year ahead. We urge you to communicate to Congress and the public the authorities, appropriations, resources, and other supports needed to achieve this goal."

"Telehealth is a cost-effective way to improve access to care, especially for rural and underserved communities," the lawmakers added. "Telehealth also allows patients to choose a medical provider that best suits their personal medical needs. Medicare beneficiaries have come to rely on expanded access to telehealth and are satisfied with the care they have received."
Warner has consistently led efforts to expand telehealth accessibility. He is an original cosponsor and a tireless advocate for the Creating Opportunities Now for Necessary and Effective Care Technologies (CONNECT) for Health Act, legislation that would expand coverage of telehealth services through Medicare and make permanent COVID-19 telehealth flexibilities. He has also introduced bipartisan legislation to increase access to telehealth services for individuals with substance use disorder and repeatedly pushed on the DEA to institute long-term flexibilities for the prescription of controlled substances via telehealth.

Honor Roll list of PCHS students

Patrick County High School recently released the list of academic achievements. Students recognized are:

8th grade: (88 or higher average)

Hailey Anderson, Kloe Armentrout, Rylee Barker, Benjamin Bowman, Lily Bowman, Casey Boyer, Cody Boyer, Logan Brown, Jake Bryant, Mysteri Campbell, Ivy Carter, Isabella Clarke, Caleb Clement, Olivia Clifton, Cole Coffey, Presley Combs, Gracen Conner, Hayden Conner, Oliver Cruise, Rain Davis, Eli Dillon, Carson Farrar, Kaylene Garcia, Karson Gillispie, Cheyenne Gregory, Scarlett Gregory, Ashton Gurley, Zoey Haas, Evan Hancock, Mason Hancock, Morgan Handy, Abigail Hanks, Jordan Hardee, Arabella Haynes, Nakoma Hicks, Nathan Hodges, Lowell Hopkins, Martina Hubbard, Soledad Huerta-Dominguez, Brayden Hylton, Owen Jenkins, Ivan Joaquin-Ortega, Analeigh Jones, Riley Jones, Mason Keith, Leah Kendrick, Olivia Kendrick, Evan Kruse, Owen Kruse, Savannah Lawrence, Halo Martin, Madelyn Martin, Isabella Mashburn, Peyton McBride, Jayme Moose, Kinley Morrison, Kyara Nieves, Christian Pendleton, Alex Periban-Crispin, Camryn Perkins, Asher Perry, Ernesto Ponce, Cameron Rakes, Mark Register, Kamia Reynolds, Alexa Rivero, Marion Rowe, Maggie Rutledge, McKenzie Sanchez, Brisan Scott, Eva Sechrist, Josiah Shelor, Aiden Slate, Kalix Smith, William Smith, Nevaeh Teague, Jared Thompson, Layla Thompson, Julianna Turner, Stephanie Vasquez, Caleb Vaughn, William Viperman, Jonathan Walton, Haileigh Wingfield, Carly Wood, Colton Wood, Conner Wood, Kayleen Wood, Meredith Wood, Jenna Woods.

9th-12th grade (3.2 GPA or higher)

9th grade:

Caleb Ashworth, Myhia Ballenger-Mijes, Melissa Barker, Joseph Beasley, Nathaniel Bright, Mason Cassell, Isobel Clay, Riley Clifton, Madison Corns, Jason Day, Adam Edwards, Jacob Edwards, Laine Errichetti, Mason Fain, Jaylee Foley, Aedan Frazier, Bristol Goad, Caleb Goins, Jahdoir Hairston, Addisyn Hall, Natalie Hancock, Kaydence Harman, Wheeler Helms, Ava Hiatt, Chloe Hubbard, Willow Hylton, Kyra Ingalls, Elyjah Jenkins, Lily Kelly, Aubrey Large, LeMia Lemons, Joseph Linster, Fisher Martin, Hunter Martin, Kimatai Martin, Nexander Martinez De Jesus, Michael Mitchell, Landon Moles, Brady Moore, Oren Osborne, Alyssa Overby, Emily Pearson, Kendra Penn, Anderson Philpot, Riley Pruitt, Logan Rakes, Ryder Richardson, Hayden Rowe, Alexia Shuff, Abigail Slate, Jacob Spencer, Mason Spencer, Lacey Sutphin, Maddox Taylor, Tripp Thompson, Zachary Thompson, Joseph Turner, Karleigh Vasquez, Isabella Walker, Emily

Whitaker, Lilliana White, Paige Whitt.

10th grade:

Telmuun Angarag, Skye Ayers, Jaxon Ayers-Rosas, Amber Barnett, Eli Bogle, Devon Booth, Autumn Bowman, Isaac Boyer, Rachel Branch, Abigail Bryant, Lillieann Butler, Jayden Callahan, Ethan Casstevens, Brooke Collins, Tonya Collins, Haley Conner, Alexandra Cotoc Santos, Alexis Cox, Tristan Cox, Dylan Cruise, Lacey Easter, Bronson Edwards, Carrington Fain, Daniel Finnegan, Avery Foley, Adin Geiger, Camille Gonzalez, Carter Gregory, Avril Gutierrez, Jaeden Hairston, Jykevis Hairston, Aiden Handy, Logan Handy, Johnathan Harbour, Peyton Hazlewood, Will Heath, Cynthia Hernandez, Joselin Hernandez, Noah Hiatt, Robert Holt, Chloe Hostetter, Hunter Hubbard, Kristopher Huerta, Christian Hylton, Hannah Ingalls, Jacob Jones, Mitchell Keith, Avone Kidd, Raegen Kingsley, Benjamin Knight, Kona Knight, Sadie Knight, William Lancaster, Hayden Lawless, David Lawson, Kylee Leonard, Jacob Lester, Brycen Lewis, Alyssa Light, Evan Martin, Kiley Martin, Erik Martinez Tejada, Draysin Maselli, Elijah McBride, Callie Montgomery, Ellianna Montgomery, Journey Moore, Virginia Nations, Rocky Nelson, Novella Nester, Samantha Nester, Eden Nickelston, Angela Overby, Benny Pack, Abigail Pendleton, Michael Perez, Angel Plaster, Brandy Ponce, Braydon Priest, Haley Rakes, Nathan Register, Aailyah Reynolds, Jazmyne Reynolds, Hunter Roberts, Parker Roop, Abigail Royall, Cassandra Sanchez, Madison Scott, Cayden Smith-Adame, Rylee Soliday, Vishal Somasundaram, Katelynn Spillman, Brady Stewart, Mitchell Stovall, Sydney Tatum, Adara Taylor, Greely Terry, Alyssa Titular, Kyra Titular, Wyatt Westmoreland, Dana Wilcox, Xena Wilcox, Kade Williams, Saidie Wingfield, Callie Wood, Eli Wood, Kathryn Wood, Zoe Wooden, Kendra Worley, Savanna Wright, Jed Young, Denali Zimmerman.

11th grade:

Anna Arellano, Dante Belcher, Jordan Belcher, Burke Black, Jeremiah Bowman, Kali Bowman, Heather Brim, Donovan Buchanan, Emma Buchanan, Alyssa Callahan, Sasha Campos, Carrie Cassell, Haley Cassell, Bryan Clark, Amelia Clement, Eliza Clifton, Jonah Clifton, Tara Collins, Taylor Collins, Zachary Collins, Daryl Combs, Alysha Copening, Williams Corns, Lexi Cutchins, Kayleigh Davenport, Mason Dellenback, Emma Dellinger, Blake Dillon, Emily Eastridge, Kendall Epperly, Rachel Fitzjarrald, Joshua Freeman, Santa Garcia, Adrianna Gause, Haley Gillispie, Jacob Gosnell, Nicolas Haden, Breanna Hall, Easton Harris, Evan Havens, Lilly Hazelwood, Hunter Heath, James Hensley, James Hodges, Sydney Hopkins, Jack-

son Horton, Caleb Hostetter, Riley Hubbard, Allison Hughes, Jackson Iacovone, Abigail Jackson, Noah Jessup, Tessa Johnson, Autumn King, Alivia Kirk, Whitley Kruse, Trinity Lackey, Ryanne Lary, Chelsea Lawson, Haley Lawson, Cindy Leon-Cisneros, Zachary Letchworth, Jymasia Manns, Jude Martin, Sadie Martin, Raeli Moran, Matthew Nester, David Neziric, Owen Nutter, Rocio Olivares, Dayton Pack, Sydney Peer, Hunter Pendleton, Quentyn Penn, Rhythm Poynter, Carley Quesinberry, Dylan Quesinberry, Samantha Register, Kieran Rodriguez, Lane Ross, Mason Scott, Sophie Scruggs, Sadie Shelton, Jonah Shockley, Hunter Smith, Emily Stiltner, Benjamin Sutphin, Dhritik Tanna, Xavier Torres-Seda, Isabelle Turner, Sydni Turner, Katie Vernon, Josilene Williams, Kendall Williams, Mary Beth Williams, Noah Wingfield, Cheyenne Wood.

12th grade:

Matthew Allen, Draiden Archambo, Andi Arnold, Dakota Ashworth, Seth Atkins, Jackson Barbour, Alexandria Barker, Seth Beasley, Carlos Becerril, Riley Bell, Marissa Bentley, Daniel Betancourt, Jack Blaylock, Bailey Bolt, James Brintle, Marissa Brown, Paul Bryant, Tyler Buchanan, Curtis Busick, Jonah Byers, Stuart Callahan, Morgan Cambron, Moises Cisneros, Cheyenne Clifton, Lillian Cobbler, Bryan Cole, Kali Craig, Luke Cutchins, David Darnell, Alura Day, Dustin DeHart, Coby Dillon, Colt Easter, Heather Edwards, Austin Errichetti, Alexander Frazier, Lauren Fulcher, Hannah Gay, Brayden Gilley, Haley Gilley, Bethany Goode, Miranda Hall, Kyle Handy, Madeline Heath, Myranda Helms, David Hernandez, Shyanne Hicks, Shauntel Hill, Jonathan Hodges, Trinity Holt, Austin Hylton, Chase Hylton, Jewel Iacovone, Hannah Janney, Anaiah Jenkins, Katelyn Johnson, Aaron Jones, Lindsey Jones, Kylee Joyce, Danyel Koger, Nathan Large, Colby Layman, Cecilia Leon Cisneros, Gabriel Lomibao, Cheryl Lopez-Gonzalez, Zackary McHone, Hunter Meade, Remi Miller, Madison Mills, Allanah Mitchell, Dakota Moore, Caleb Morris, James Nunez, Lance Overby, Montana Oxendine, Arya Patel, Nicholas Pell, Aniya Penn, Quentin Perkins, Dalyce Pike, Kaitlyn Puckett, Brandy Quesinberry, Destiny Rakes, Abigail Ramsey, Rebekah Ramsey, Brayton Reynolds, Pablo Rios, Isabella Rivero, Bobbijo Roberts, Sabrina Rorrer, Elizabeth Rose, Gina Rubio, Anna Bella Russo, Rayshawn Sawyers, Heather Spencer, Stephen Spencer, Joseph Stiltner, Bradley Swails, Andrew Taylor, Emily Trent, Maria Turner, William Vernon, Levi Viperman, Stephen Wagner, Gage Welch, Lauryn Williams, Lauren Worley, Mason Wright, Audrey Young, Jaylan Younger.

Senior meeting set for Feb. 8

The entertainment for the Patrick Co. Senior Citizens meetings is always enjoyable. In the past few months, entertainers have provided a variety of music for the second Thursday monthly meetings at the Hooker Building at Rotary Field.

Included in the performers was Philip Addams who creates a familiar vibe with his gospel music as he plays the keyboard and sings. Ramona and Junior Cassidy are always a hit with their nice harmony as he strums the guitar. Johnny Joyce and friends kept the toes tapping as they created some smooth blue grass sounds.

Last month, Mary Jo and Charlie Leek were a hit with their strumming and singing plus a little harmonica thrown in. For the February meeting, guests can look forward to hearing Roger Wells who will perform at 11:00 on Thursday the 8th (second Thurs.).

Lunch which is served after the entertainment always seems to leave everyone satisfied. Many different foods are offered and a pot luck lunch is sure to please at the February meeting. Beverages will be provided by the planning committee. The Landmark and Blue Ridge Therapy Connection will be there as usual to read blood pressures. Door prizes and birthday gifts are always shared and received with pleasure. There is no charge for this event which is sponsored by the Patrick Co. Department of Parks and Recreation, but donations are accepted. All se-



nior citizens are invited to come and participate. The planning committee invites you to come and bring a friend on February 8, at 11 a.m. in the Hooker building. Food, fun and fellowship awaits you.



Wet weather saturates fields, lifts drought advisories

A torrent of wet weather has lifted drought advisories in several Virginia localities—and saturated some farmers' fields.

After a dry summer and fall, several areas in Virginia received above-average rainfall over the past few weeks, prompting the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to remove drought advisories in 49 counties.

One of those counties was New Kent, where Paul Davis grows wheat, grains and other crops. He said his community received 9 inches of rain in December, followed by another 4 in January.

"We're plenty wet," said Davis, a Virginia Farm Bureau member. "We've had ponding of water in the fields that probably drowned out some cover crops, but we won't know until spring how that's going to go."

According to the most recent U.S. Department of Agriculture Crop Progress Report, 77% of topsoil moisture and 58% of subsoil moisture

was adequate as of Jan. 2, with some fields seeing standing water. The report also noted 58% of the state's barley and 78% of winter wheat are in good condition.

Despite the frequent rains making it difficult to work outside, Davis was able to apply nitrogen and weed killer to his wheat on time. And while things "don't look too bad" from all the rain, he's concerned about the recent cold snap.

"It was 15 degrees in the mornings, so it's tough on the cover crops and the hard red winter wheat, or any wheat that you're growing," he said. "Any winter annual doesn't like wet feet and sub-15 degree weather."

While rains lifted several counties out of drought, a DEQ advisory stated that 15 counties in the Big Sandy and Upper James areas remain under a drought watch. Seven counties in the Shenandoah region, which includes Augusta, Clarke, Frederick, Page, Rockingham, Shenan-

doah and Warren counties, are under a drought warning—where significant drought is imminent.

"The recent rains have helped a lot with soil moisture, especially since they were pretty slow, all-day type rains," explained Matt Booher, a Virginia Cooperative Extension agent in Rockingham County. "From a cropping standpoint, we are back to normal."

But, he added, "our groundwater reserves that wells depend on are still below average for this time of year. This can impact irrigation water, water for poultry houses and rural homes."

The DEQ noted long-term precipitation deficits persist, and more rain is needed to increase stream flows and groundwater reserves. It urges residents to conserve water resources by minimizing water use, monitoring drought conditions and detecting and repairing any leaks.

For more information on the current drought status, visit bit.ly/4bm70An.

Donna Murphy Scott

Mrs. Donna Murphy Scott, age 56 of Stuart, passed away Monday, January 22, 2024, at her home. She was born in Martinsville on October 1, 1967. She was preceded in death by her parents, Bill Lewis and Virginia "Jinks" Murphy. Donna attended Temple Baptist Church. She enjoyed trips to the mountains and the beach and loved spoiling her grandbabies.



Surviving is her husband, Mike Scott of the home; two daughters and sons-in-law, Amber and

Chad Pilson of Bassett, Whitney and Cody Spence of Ridgeway; two grandchildren, Meredith Pilson, Brantley Spence; two sisters, Debra Tatum of Critz, Sharon Kodenski of Pilot

Mountain, NC; special friend, Kathy Kismore of Stuart; and several nieces and nephews. A visitation will be held Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. All other services will be private. Flowers will be accepted, or memorials may be sent to Mountain Valley Hospice, 240 Commonwealth Blvd, Unit 602B, Martinsville, VA 24112. Online condolences may be sent to www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Frances Rakes Lyon

Mrs. Frances Rakes Lyon, age 90 of Woolwine, Virginia passed away Sunday, January 21, 2024. She was born on May 20, 1933, to the late Thomas Homer Rakes and Cassie Brammer Rakes. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Alvin F. Lyon; three sisters, Gladys Rakes, Elsie Pendleton, and Ada R. Rakes; and six brothers, Clyde, Alvin, Davis, George "Jink", Falis "Fay", and Glen Rakes. Frances had retired from Liberty Fabrics and enjoyed working in her garden. She was a member of Sycamore Baptist Church. She loved her



church family and was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and sister.

Mrs. Lyon is survived by two sons, Jerry Lyon of Woolwine, Rodney Lyon and wife, Linda of Stuart; one grandson, Justin Lyon; two sisters, Lorene Guilliams

of Rocky Mount and Elaine Atkins of North Royalton, OH; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A funeral service for Mrs. Lyon will be on Saturday, January 27, 2024, at 11:00 AM at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Pastor Shaun Draughn officiating. Burial will follow in Sycamore Baptist Church Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Memorials may be made to Smith River Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 122, Woolwine, VA 24185. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Charles Reid Gunter

Charles Reid Gunter, age 92, passed away peacefully on January 5, 2024, in his residence in Virginia Beach having relocated several years ago from Ridgeway, Virginia. Born on February 7, 1931, in Stuart, Virginia to Reid Lafayette and May Martin Gunter, he spent his youth on the family tobacco farm alongside his sister Mildred and brothers, Bernard and Ralph. From his upbringing on his family farm Charles cultivated qualities that shaped his character: resilience, hard work, and an unwavering sense of responsibility. Living close to the land, he learned the beauty of simplicity, the value of patience and the importance of community. These lessons, sown in the soil of his upbringing, are part of the legacy he leaves behind.



Charles graduated from Stuart High School in 1949. He furthered his education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Class of 1953), where he was a proud member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry. He remained a lifelong Hokie and always took great pride in donning his VT cap.

Charles served as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army, initially stationed in Kentucky. In the summer of 1956, he was deployed to Fairbanks, Alaska. While home on leave, he met the love of his life, Doris Hale Gunter. Their whirlwind romance led to Doris joining him in Fairbanks. They were married on November 25, 1956, just three days after her arrival and only a few months after first meeting. Together they travelled domestically and abroad as they raised their three beloved children of whom they were both so proud.

Dedicating 25 years to the United States Army, Charles served in various locations overseas, including Germany, Thailand and Vietnam. He concluded his military career as a Lieutenant Colonel at the Pentagon in Washington,

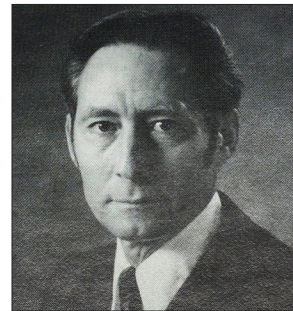
D.C. Upon retiring in 1978, he moved his family closer to the family farm, settling in Ridgeway, Virginia. Charles divided his time between working at Lester Forest Products and tending to his farm in Stuart.

Charles is predeceased by his loving wife and best friend of 65 years, Doris Hale Gunter, who surely greeted him at the pearly gates with arms wide upon, a huge kiss, a crossword puzzle and some homemade biscuits. He is also predeceased by his siblings, Ralph Gunter, Bernard Gunter and Mildred Gunter Smith. He is survived by his sons, Chief Warrant Officer William E. Gunter (Lori) of Pinehurst, North Carolina and Charles R. Gunter, Jr. (AnnMarie) of Norfolk, Virginia and his daughter, Rose Anne Voigt (Matt) of Idaho Falls, Idaho. Additionally, he leaves behind his grandchildren; Eli Gunter, Bryan Goede, William Goede, Adam Goede, Andrew Gunter, and Sophia Gunter, along with two great grandchildren.

A service at the Gunter Family Farm in Stuart, Virginia will be held at a later date.

Donald Lee Stanley

Mr. Donald Lee Stanley, age 87 of Meadows of Dan, went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston Salem, North Carolina. He was born in Carroll County on May 10, 1936, to the late Lionel O. Stanley and Geneva Helen Hall Stanley. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Mary Lee Boyd Stanley; one brother, Jimmy Stanley; and one sister, Patsy Ann Copenhagen. Don loved his Lord and served Him as a deacon and by singing in the choir at Meadows of Dan Baptist Church. He dearly loved his family and had a passion for tinkering with cars and computers, he was an engineer through and through. Don will be remembered as an honest, hardworking



man with great faith.

Left to cherish his memory are one daughter, Joanne Stanley McGrady (William Michael McGrady); six grandchildren, Anjulia Finley (Kyle Finley), Javan Pohl, Sara Armstrong (Steven Armstrong), JonDavid Meraz (Megan Meraz), Jeremy Meraz (Rachel Frazier-Meraz), Josiah Meraz (Sarah Lavway); eight great-grandchildren, Kierralee S. Riddell, Tallasen R. Finley, Rayne Stowe, Nolan Hunter, Prudence L. Meraz, Lily Armstrong, Riley Armstrong, and Atlas Armstrong; four

step-grandchildren, Alisia Goad (Adam Goad), Kacy Brooke Ruley (Dustin C. Ruley), Haley McGrady, Harley McGrady; five step-great-grandchildren, Maycie L. Goad, Cooper Lee Goad, Loukas Goad, Brantley Kole Ruley, Kodah Ray Ruley; one brother, Melvin Stanley and one sister, Susie M. Burkhart.

A Celebration of Life Memorial Service will be held Saturday, January 27, 2024, at 1:00 P.M. at Meadows of Dan Baptist Church with Pastor Shawn Carter officiating. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service on Saturday afternoon at the church. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is serving the Stanley family and online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Manufacturing sector leads overall increase

The number of initial unemployment insurance claims rose in the latest filing week to 2,576 but remained slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA) announced last week.

The department noted that the manufacturing sector was the leading industry for claims.

For the filing week ending January 20, seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia were 2,576, which was a decrease of 307 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 13,999, which was an increase of 584 claimants from the previous week and an increase of 23 percent from the 11,371 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (57 percent) of continued claims were from administrative and support and waste management (1,944), professional, scientific, and technical services (1,771), construction (1,359), manufacturing (1,220), and health care and social assistance (1,184) 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 January 20, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 214,000, an increase of 25,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 2,000 from 187,000 to 189,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 248,955 in the week ending January 20, a decrease of 42,375 (or -14.5 percent) from the previous week. There were 225,228 initial claims in the comparable week in 2023.

Looking at preliminary data, most U.S. states reported decreases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. Texas's preliminary weekly change (-5,988) was the largest decrease. California's preliminary weekly change (-4,182) was the second largest decrease. New York's preliminary weekly change (-4,120) was the third largest decrease. Georgia's preliminary weekly change (-3,679) was the fourth largest decrease. Virginia had the 32nd largest decrease (-342).

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OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON

Thank You for reading the enterprise

PATRICK PULPITS

Faithfulness in Small Matters

Alan Dean,
retired Seventh-day Adventist pastor
Luke 16: 10 reads "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much". In other words, he that is honest in small matters will be honest in larger responsibilities.

In Treasure Valley, Idaho the main county roads (similar to other rural areas in the U.S.) are laid out in a square, grid-like pattern, about a mile apart. I say "about" a mile because at some intersections where one expects to go straight, he must jog. Someone inquired about this and was told that some of the early surveyors made small, careless mistakes in their work. Today the roads reflect their mistakes. Some of these jogs are as much as 70 or 80 feet. Apparently a very small error can become quite significant when a line is projected a considerable distance. Fortunately, not all surveyors are careless.

As a young man, George Washington, later the first president of the United States, did quite a bit of surveying in the Virginia wilderness for Lord Fairfax. Centuries later in 1913, in preparation for the purchase of some of this same land by a forest timber company, surveyors re-surveyed the area. They found that the marks made by Washington were as perfect as it was possible for human beings to make them in his day.

This same integrity in Washington's work carried over into his leadership of the Colonies during the Revolutionary War and into his later work as president of our young nation. His life won the respect of people all around the world.

The reward for faithful service most always leads to greater responsibilities. Today employers are diligently looking for honest, dedicated employees that they can promote in their business. Such employees are getting harder to find.

It's true for God as well. He is searching for faithful disciples that He can advance in His work. Satan works hard against God's plans. He draws people into higher financial lines of secular work and tries to discourage or lead astray those who do enter His work.

But the Lord promises that the Christian who is faithful in his responsibilities today will be rewarded not only tomorrow but for eternity. The Apostle Paul shared a glimpse of eternity's reward when he said "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Rom 8: 18).

So, let's do our work well so that God can plan greater work for us in the future. And also, like Washington, future generations will know that we did our best. And may our faithful conduct also live on to influence future generations.

Alzheimer's Commission releases Dementia State Plan

The Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) Commission released the Virginia Dementia State Plan 2024-2027: Building a Dementia-Capable Virginia.

The updated plan has six goals addressing:

- state coordination of services
- data collection
- workforce and caregiver training
- care coordination
- research
- brain health and dementia risk reduction

"The plan lays out how the Commonwealth can help individuals navigate care resources while supporting preventive efforts to reduce the future impact of this terrible condition," said Lana Sargent, chair of the ADRD. "It is the culmination of nearly two years of work by the commission, including consulting with a wide range of stakeholders such as families living with dementia, care providers and other advocates."

The ADRD Commission made changes in 2023 that addressed the state coordination of services. This effort brought to the table the five state agencies essential to supporting individuals and families living with dementia, including the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Behavioral Health and Disability Services, Department of Medical Assistance Services, Department of Social Services and Virginia Department of Health.

"With a focus on compassion, inno-

vation and community collaboration, Virginia leads the way in fostering dementia-friendly communities that prioritize awareness, caregiver support and a better quality of life for those impacted by dementia," said DARS Commissioner Kathy Hayfield.

Based on feedback from the 2023 Virginia Dementia Capable Summit and other stakeholders, the commission elevated brain health and dementia risk reduction as a new goal. The plan directly ties in some of its objectives with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy Brain Initiative Roadmap.

Since 2021, the CDC has granted VDH funding under the BOLD Infrastructure Act to ensure that Virginia's public health system is increasing awareness of brain health and dementia risk reduction.

"A key element of VDH's Healthy Brain Virginia initiative is educating and partnering with the public," said State Health Commissioner Karen Shelton, MD. "As with other organs, brain health is affected by many factors and there are things we can do as individuals and communities to reduce risk factors for dementia. Our work with state, federal, and community partners is focused on sharing these important messages."

For more information on the Dementia State Plan or other dementia-related initiatives, contact dementia@dars.virginia.gov or the Dementia Services Coordinator at (804) 662-9154.

Grow your own citrus



Donnaah Sparkle presented a program on citrus at the Patrick County Library.

The community enjoyed an informative program on Growing Citrus led by Master Gardener Donnaah Sparkle at the Patrick County Library on Jan. 27. Donnaah shared her knowledge and experiences growing a variety of citrus plants. Participants left the program excited with the challenge of growing their own lemons, limes and blood oranges in Patrick County.

Coming soon:

The library will host SupHerb Herbs on Feb. 10 at 11 a.m. This Master Gardener led program will

address culinary and medicinal uses and propagation of 5 herbs. This program is free and open to the public.

Master Gardeners will also host their annual Garden Symposium on March 9 at the Stuart site of P&HCC. The symposium begins at 9 a.m. The cost to attend is \$10 at the door.

Email mgpcva@gmail.com for more information on any program or if you are interested in joining the 2024 Master Gardener training class.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Haggai (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What does Paul urge Christians to be of God, as found in Ephesians 5:1? Lovers, Believers, Followers, Worshipers
3. From Proverbs 3, we are not to lean on our own ...? Riches, Understanding, Friends, Pity
4. In 2 Chronicles, what godly priest had a wife named Jehosheba? Jehoiada, Felix, Demetrius, Jeremiah
5. What is the middle chapter of the Old Testament (KJV)? 2 Chronicles 3, Job 29, Psalms 34, Isaiah 41
6. On which day did God make Adam and Eve? Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Followers, 3) Understanding, 4) Jehoiada, 5) Job 29, 6) Sixth
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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www.stuartbaptist.org office@stuartbaptist.org

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Stuart
(actually in Patrick Springs)
276.236.7814
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Mass Schedule
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Reconciliation
Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.



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Super Crossword

THE SILVER SCREEN

- | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| ACROSS | 46 Beginner, in gaming lingo | 84 Potent compound in marijuana: Abbr. | 123 More impertinent | 34 Piercing first | 81 Tennis unit |
| 1 Guy in the Beatles' "I Am the Walrus" | 47 Use sandpaper on, informally | 85 Sequence of episodes on the tube | 124 Actor Dick Van — | 35 Come in | 85 1982 film and arcade game |
| 7 Brand of bottled water | 48 Ed. supporter | 89 Test of speed | 125 Evaluate | 36 Vintage auto | 86 Steam hole |
| 13 Holy places | 50 Brain wave tests, in brief | 92 1986 Molly Ringwald Cinderella story | DOWN | 38 Someone — problem | 87 Ninny |
| 20 Yacht basin | 54 —Ball (carnival game) | 96 6x9-inch book | 1 Tokens | 39 Sleep stage | 88 Bump — log |
| 21 Old Missouri natives | 57 Lubbock-to-Laredo dir. | 99 Attach with cord, e.g. | 2 Telescope pioneer | 43 "I fail — the humor" | 90 Road map abbr. |
| 22 Arranged, as a page for printing | 58 1986 Isabella Rossellini neo-noir film | 101 Actor Patrick | 3 Newton topic | 44 Some sporty autos | 91 Write music |
| 23 2001 Josh Hartnett war film | 61 WWW page | 102 1992 Wesley Snipes sports film | 4 Rats' relatives | 45 Orating skill | 92 Pod veggie |
| 25 Not macho | 64 Musical inaptitude | 107 ABA mem. | 5 Crooner Paul | 46 No, in Skel Kirk | 93 Like Charlie Brown's kite, inevitably |
| 26 "— little!" ("Have some fun!") | 67 Having arrived tardily | 108 Sol-do linkup | 6 "Probly not" | 48 Least ornate | 94 Seine users, e.g. |
| 27 Vegas action | 68 Choose (to) | 109 Meat spread | 7 Carpentry rod | 49 Zig or zag | 95 Result of a very-low-carb diet |
| 28 Darkens in the sun | 69 1984 Gene Wilder romantic comedy | 110 "Starpeace" singer Yoko | 8 Invite out for | 51 Major Taiwanese carrier | 96 Hooting baby birds |
| 30 Hammer, e.g. | 72 "— said before ..." | 111 — voce (quietly) | 9 Hardly happy | 52 Implies | 97 Latin dance |
| 31 Yalie | 73 "The Lion in Winter" actor | 113 Smart speaker from Amazon | 10 Of yore | 53 Pub mugs | 98 Gives 10% |
| 32 1971 Malcolm McDowell crime film | 75 Dawned | 115 Photos not in shades of gray ... or what eight answers in this puzzle are? | 11 Unfamiliar | 54 Nosy sorts | 99 Blast creator |
| 37 They're fed after parking | 76 Certain English student | 120 Precisely, with "on" | 12 Fails to be satisfactory | 55 Sustained | 100 Polar topper |
| 40 "Energy healing" technique | 78 1984 Prince musical film | 121 Retaliate | 13 Skulked | 56 Automaker Bugatti | 103 Diner patron |
| 41 Artist Neiman and Jim Croce's Brown | 80 Psychic "gift" | 122 Czar called "the Great" | 14 Sci-fi role for Harrison Ford | 58 Part of N.B. | 104 1995-2011 Yankee Posada |
| 42 1973 Charlton Heston thriller | 82 Table scraps | | 15 Cup edge | 59 Lead-in to Cong or Minh | 105 Release, as from a corral |

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The County of Patrick is accepting applications from qualified applicants for the position of Billing Clerk. This is a full-time position with benefits that include vacation and sick leave, life and health insurance, and retirement. Hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The successful candidate must have excellent computer skills, be detail-oriented, and be willing to work with the public in a courteous and tactful manner in an often fast-paced environment. The ability to maintain strict confidentiality is a must. Minimum requirements are graduation from high school or GED certification with coursework in accounting and bookkeeping, or a combination of education and experience. Patrick County employment applications and a detailed job description may be obtained at <https://www.co.patrick.va.us/Jobs.aspx>. Applications are also available in the Patrick County Administration Office, Room 218, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, VA. Applicants must submit a Patrick County employment application to be considered for the position. Applications and resumes may be emailed to Donna Shough, HR Director, at dshough@co.patrick.va.us, with a copy to Melissa Taylor at mtaylor@co.patrick.va.us. Faxed applications will not be accepted. The position will remain open until filled. The County of Patrick is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age.



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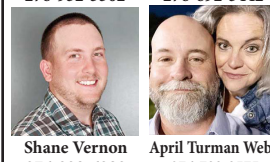
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One acre farmer named Minority Farmer of 2023

Pedro Lopez Morel of Lawrenceville, whose one-acre home lot may be the most intensively farmed property in Virginia, has been honored by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as the state's Minority Farmer of the Year for 2023.

Lopez, who was born in the Dominican Republic and has since become a naturalized American citizen, received his award from Dr. Edwin Martinez Martinez, NRCS' state conservationist for Virginia, on Jan. 20 at the Virginia Association for Biological Farming's Small Farm Outreach Summit in Roanoke.

Lopez came to the U.S. at age 21 in 1985 without farming skills or experience. He first landed a job as kitchen help in an Italian restaurant in New Jersey, eventually learning the chef's duties by watching the cook at work. After relocating in Brunswick County to cook at another restaurant, he realized he could generate more income by growing and selling food items than by preparing them for diners.

By 2017, he was ready to farm full-time and looking for help in making the transition. He affiliated with Virginia State University's Small Farm Outreach program, which led him to his regional NRCS field office. He remains active in the VSU program, although now it's as a mentor as he conducts clinics on how to grow some of his tropical



Pedro Lopez Morel (right) receives his Farmer of the Year award from NRCS State Conservationist Dr. Edwin Martinez Martinez (Photo: Tatiana Gil, NRCS).

plants in a non-tropical environment. Lopez's business plan is to sell to both restaurants and at farmers markets. His goal is to not only sell food items popular with average Virginians, but also to provide "taste of home" produce for Hispanic buyers seeking authentic fruits and vegetables normally grown in Central America and the Caribbean islands.

The tropical plants require extensive use of high tunnels, enclosures that allow Lopez to extend his growing seasons and to shelter plants during Virginia's cold winters. Lopez now has nine of these structures in his crowded back yard with four of them

partially funded by NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which is geared to assist beginning farmers.

He's currently producing between 35 and 40 different fruit and vegetable varieties. He and a partner share the expense of renting some nearby acreage to expand their growing capacities in the summer months, but the heart of Lopez's operation remains his residence, which sits on .97 acres and includes not only his house and driveway, but outdoor quarters for goats, chickens and other species of poultry.

"I want to do more expansion," he said. "At first, I concentrated on the tropical plants, but my American customers wanted more traditional American food items. I find room for them somewhere."

Tropical plants he raises include bananas, plantains, limes, tomatillos, habanero peppers and other species seldom grown in or even associated with Virginia. His current project involves permanently enclosing one of his home-made high tunnels to allow it to house freezers and serve as a cold storage room.

"At NRCS, we're committed to working effectively with agricultural producers in every county of the state, regardless of the size of their operations. We do so in collaboration with all our valuable partners," Martinez said. "VSU's Small Farm Outreach is a program we support and one that can make a difference by allowing new growers like Pedro to see all the opportunities they have."

"If I have a message for other people like me," Lopez said, "it's that there's no such thing as a space too small for farming. Don't wait until you can have a full-size farm. The best time to start is always now."

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 6 p.m. at the (Stuart Site) Patrick & Henry Community College in the Community Room.

The purpose of this hearing is to adopt the Comprehensive Plan Conformance Review Application with Moscato Solar, LLC.

Anyone wishing to view the Comprehensive Plan Conformance Review Application may do so at the Tax Mapping office, Suite 215 located in the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Building.

Authorized by: Patrick County Planning Commission

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 6 p.m. at the (Stuart Site) Patrick & Henry Community College in the Community Room.

The purpose of this hearing is to approve Milestone Towers' request to install a cell tower to be located at the Patrick County High School.

Anyone wishing to view the proposed Milestone Towers cell tower application may do so at the Tax Mapping office, Suite 215 located in the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Building.

Authorized by: Patrick County Planning Commission

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

ON A PROPOSED NOISE ORDINANCE FOR THE TOWN OF STUART

The Council of the Town of Stuart will hold a public hearing at its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in Council chambers in the Stuart Town Office at 100 Patrick Avenue, Stuart, Virginia.

The purpose of the public hearing will be to receive comment from members of the public regarding a proposal to enact an Ordinance to restrict, regulate, and/or prohibit certain noise within the Town limits. In summary, the purposes of the proposed Ordinance are to reduce, and to eliminate where possible, excessive noise and related adverse conditions in the community, and to prohibit unnecessary, excessive, harmful and/or annoying noises from all sources subject to the Town's police powers.

The full text of the proposed Town of Stuart Noise Ordinance is available for inspection in the Town Office during regular business hours.

The Mayor or Council may limit the time allotted to each speaker at the meeting.

Christopher A. Corbett, Town Attorney
108 North Main Street
P.O. Box 1270
Stuart, Virginia 24171
Telephone: (276) 694-7145
Facsimile: (276) 694-2320
cacorbett@cacorbettlaw.com

LEGAL

Public Notice of Intent

Henry County Parks and recreation, Senior Transportation Services proposes to provide flex-fixed route and demand response transportation throughout Henry County. Funds are being requested from the Commonwealth of Virginia to purchase one (1) 9 Passenger raised roof van with wheelchair lift through the FTA Section 5310 Program to replace one (1) older, high mileage vehicle currently being used in Henry County.

We invite any interested public or private transit or Para-transit operators in Henry County to comment on the proposed services by sending a written notice by February 1, 2024 to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation - Public Transportation Division, 600 E. Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219 and to Henry County Parks and Recreation, Senior Services, Post Office Box 7, Collinsville, Virginia 24078.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION SPECIAL COMMISSIONER'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE COUNTY OF PATRICK, VIRGINIA

Pursuant to the terms of those certain Decrees of Sale entered in the Circuit Court of County of Patrick, the undersigned Special Commissioner will offer for sale at an online only public auction the following described real estate beginning on **February 7, 2024** and ending **February 14, 2024**.

The sale of such property is subject to the terms and conditions below, and any term or conditions which may be subsequently posted or announced by Rogers Realty ("Auctioneer") and Taxing Authority Consulting Services, PC ("TACS"). Subsequent announcements made on the day of the auction take precedence over any prior written or verbal terms of sale.

Property Owner(s)	Tax Map No.	TACS No.	Property Description
1 Tommy Pauley, et. al.	4911-08(-)12-	725783	Providence Drive
2 James F. Nolen, et. al.	4910(-)138-	445851	Big A. School Rd.
3 Charles E. Stegall, et. al.	5210(-)12-K	747776	Log Cabin Lot #14
4 Edgar Ray Young, Jr.	4010(-)69-	342748	Spring Branch Rd.
5 Shannon Williams, et. al.	4110(-)117-A	445867	Ararat Hwy
6 Karson William Foley	5217(-)44- and 5217(-)45-	806426	Yeaman Sub Lt 38 and Lt 37 Fayerdale Dr.
7 Karson William Foley	5217(-)46- and 5217(-)47-	806426	Yeaman Sub Lt 36 and Lt 35 Fayerdale Dr.
8 Karson William Foley	5217(-)72- and 5217(-)75-	806426	Yeaman Sub Lots 7-10 Fayerdale Dr.

GENERAL TERMS OF SALE: All sales are subject to confirmation by the Circuit court. The Special Commissioner has the right to reject any bids determined to be unreasonable in relation to the estimated value of the Property. Any unsold property will be offered for sale again at the next auction, whenever that may be.

All interested parties must register and be approved by the Auctioneer. Registration and bidding are free of charge and are done through the Auctioneer's website <https://www.rogersauctiongroup.com/>. If any interested bidders are unable to attend for in-person bidding and wish to bid on property, but do not have access to the internet, please contact Rogers Realty, at (336) 789-2926 for assistance.

Properties are conveyed by Special Warranty Deed, subject to any easements, covenants, agreements, restrictions, reservations, and any and all rights of record which may affect the property. Properties are offered for sale as-is, where-is, and if-is, with all faults and without any warranty, either expressed or implied. Persons are encouraged to make a visual inspection of the property within the limits of the law and to obtain an independent title search, at their own expense, prior to bidding on any of the properties to determine the suitability of the property for their purposes. It is not guaranteed that the property has a right-of-way or that it is not landlocked. Property is sold in gross and not by the acre. There is no warranty as to the accuracy of any information contained in the GIS system, nor is the information contained therein a legal representation of any of the features of the property which it depicts.

The sale of property to the highest bidder is not contingent upon obtaining financing. Financing, if needed, is the sole responsibility of the high bidder. By bidding, parties are entering into a legally binding contracts waive all rescission rights, and understand that their bid is immediately binding, irrevocable, and enforceable. Additionally, by bidding, parties are representing that they have read, and agree to be bound by, all terms and conditions for this sale. Failure to complete the property purchase will result in forfeiture of any funds paid and may subject the highest bidder to additional damages, which may include expenses and any deficit upon resale.

PAYMENT TERMS: On the day of the auction, the highest bidder shall make a deposit in the amount of twenty-five percent (25%) or One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever is higher, **along with a 10% buyer's premium, subject to a minimum of \$150, added to the final bid.** Bids which are less than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) shall be paid in full at the time of the auction. Deposits shall not exceed Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) per parcel. Such sum shall be held by the Special Commissioner and credited towards the purchase price following confirmation of the sale. Subsequent taxes will be prorated from the auction date, and the highest bidder will be responsible for taxes from that date forward.

The balance of the purchase price and recording costs for deed recordation shall be deposited by the highest bidder with the Special Commissioner within fifteen (15) days of confirmation of the sale by the Court. The highest bidder will receive their purchase contract and balance due via email following the close of the auction. The contract shall immediately be executed and returned to TACS. **The deposit and buyer's premium must be received in full within seven (7) days following the auction closing (no later than February 21, 2024).** All payments must be made in the form of certified funds, cashier's check, money order or wire transfer. Cash and personal checks **will not** be accepted. Checks and money orders shall be made payable to County of Patrick and forwarded to TACS, at the address shown below. Wire transfer instructions will be provided to the highest bidder upon request.

GENERAL TERMS: To qualify as a purchaser at this auction, you may not owe delinquent taxes to County of Patrick and you may not be a Defendant in any pending delinquent tax matter. Questions concerning the registration and bidding process should be directed to the Auctioneer online at <https://www.rogersauctiongroup.com/>, by email to keithgunter@rogersrealty.com or by phone to Keith Gunter, at (336) 789-2926. Questions concerning the property subject to sale should be directed to TACS online at www.taxva.com, by email to taxsales@taxva.com, by phone to 804-548-4429, or by writing to the address below.

Taxing Authority Consulting Services, PC
Attn: Tax Sales
P.O. Box 31800
Henrico, Virginia 23294-1800

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

ON A PROPOSED SALE OF LAND IN THE TOWN OF STUART

The Council of the Town of Stuart will hold a public hearing at its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in Council chambers in the Stuart Town Office at 100 Patrick Avenue, Stuart, Virginia.

The purpose of the public hearing will be to receive comment from members of the public regarding a proposal to sell a tract of land owned by the Town of Stuart. The tract consists of 5.794 acres by survey, situated on Commerce Street, and bears Patrick County PIN 4811-14-4A. The proposed sale price is \$10,000 per acre.

The Mayor or Council may limit the time allotted to each speaker at the meeting.

Christopher A. Corbett, Town Attorney
108 North Main Street
P.O. Box 1270
Stuart, Virginia 24171
Telephone: (276) 694-7145
Facsimile: (276) 694-2320
cacorbett@cacorbettlaw.com

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL24000022-00

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104

PATRICK COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT
101 WEST BLUE RIDGE STREET/PO BOX 148, STUART, VA 24171
DALTON BRADLEY BUTLER v. DALTON BRADLEY VANNOY

The object of this suit is to:

CHANGE THE NAME OF MINOR CHILD
It is ORDERED that WILLIAM BUTLER (FATHER)

appear at the above-named court and protect her interests on or before
FEBRUARY 20, 2024

JANUARY 17, 2024

Myr B. Butler
JUDGE IN CLERK

LEGAL

Public Notice

The Public Hearing on the Patrick County Public Schools 2024-25 Budget will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Office Conference Room - 132 North Main Street, Stuart, VA 24171.

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Meetings

Tuesday, Feb. 6
The Board of Social Services will hold its first meeting of the year at 6 p.m. in the third floor DSS conference room.

Thursday, Feb. 8
The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Office.

Monday, Feb. 12
The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the third-floor court room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Tuesday, Feb. 13
The Economic Development Authority of Patrick County will have a Special Meeting at 7 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Events

Friday, Feb. 2
The Woolwine community food pantry will be at the Smith River Rescue Squad from 3-4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 6
The Church of the Living Water will hold a community coffee starting at 10 a.m. The guest speaker will be Brooke Hall, of the Alzheimer's Association, discussing healthy living for the body and brain.

Thursday, Feb. 8
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will hold its monthly meeting at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Entertainment will be provided by Roger Wells. Attendees are requested to bring their favorite foods and desserts to share with the group. Beverages will be provided.

The Office of Tourism and the Meadows of Dan Community invite all merchants and interested citizens to a meeting at 5:30 pm in the Meadows of Dan Community Building. The conference aims to discuss the Mabry Mill Restaurant, concerns surrounding the mill, and signage along Highway 58. A representative from the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Virginia Department

of Transportation (VDOT) will also be in attendance. Please come out and explore ways to work together to enrich MOD and the Parkway.

Saturday, Feb. 10
The Patrick Springs Ruritan Club will hold a Poor Man's Supper at the Patrick Springs Park building from 4-7 p.m. The cost of the meal is \$8, and it includes pinto beans, potatoes, corn bread, dessert, and drink. Funds raised will be used for community service projects.

Saturday, Feb. 10-Sunday, Feb. 11
Providence Super Sub Weekend. The Providence United Methodist Women will sponsor the Super Sub Weekend with subs or salads offered for \$10 each. They will have 3 meats, 3 cheeses, tomatoes, pickles and chips (crackers with salad). Call Doris (276) 694-6203, (276) 692-6046, or Cathy at (276) 692-7194 by Tuesday, Feb. 6 to place an order. Drive thru pickup available on Saturday, 4-6 p.m., or Sunday, 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 14
The Patrick County Food Bank will hold distribution at the Stuart site from 8:30-11 a.m. and from 5-6:30 p.m., at Ararat starting at 8:30 a.m., and at Meadows of Dan starting at 5:30 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 16
The Woolwine community food pantry will be at the Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department from 3-4:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 24
A benefit for Lauren Worley and Micah Underwood will be held on Saturday, February 24 at the Woolwine Elementary School, from 2 to 8 p.m. The two were injured in a December crash.

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 Alzheimer's Group LLC

meets at 7 p.m. the first Monday of every month at the Alzheimer's office at 109 Buena Vista Ave in Stuart. New members or volunteers are welcome to join in assisting the needs of the clients. For more information, call (276) 693-6018.

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.

The Patrick County Recreation Department will offer a Tai Chi Flow class for seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. No experience needed, just wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. There is no registration for the program. Call the Park Office at (276) 694-3917 for more information.

Willis Gap Community Center will hold an Open Jam Acoustic every Friday night with doors opening at 6 p.m. for hotdogs, chips, candies, popcorn, coffee, and assorted sodas. From 7-10 p.m. there will be old time country, bluegrass, and gospel music. A 50/50 drawing will be held at about 8:15 p.m.

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.

Charlottesville man charged in connection with prostitution ring

A Charlottesville, Virginia man, who allegedly posted hundreds of commercial sex ads for adult women in various cities in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, was arrested last week for violating the Mann Act, a federal law that criminalizes the transportation of any woman or girl for the purpose of prostitution.

Brian Lamont Turner, 42, was arrested at a home in Charlottesville following an alleged hours-long standoff with police on a federal criminal complaint charging him with one count of violating the Mann Act.

United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh of the Western District of Virginia and Stanley M. Meador, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Richmond Division, announced the arrest.

According to court documents, in February 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation received multiple reports from local law enforcement agencies identifying a man and adult females suspected of engaging in commercial sex acts.

The FBI's investigation revealed an account on the commercial sex website SkiptheGames.com registered to an email address allegedly known to be used by Turner. The account allegedly posted hundreds of commercial sex advertisements in various east coast states, including Virginia, North Carolina, South

Carolina, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

According to court documents, one of the most recent listings was posted on January 17, allegedly advertising commercial sex in Charlottesville.

Turner is alleged to have controlled all or almost all aspects of arranging commercial sex dates, including creating the advertisements, communicating with customers, and scheduling the dates. Text messages allegedly show him providing instructions and information to victims about dates, such as how long the date was scheduled to last and how much money to charge. The also allegedly transported the adult victims to and from the hotels and often stayed in the hotel parking lot or another hotel room while the victims saw commercial sex customers.

Female victims who had drug addictions were specifically targeted, recruited, and their drug addictions used to control them, the complaint alleges. Allegedly, Turner became the women's main source of drug supply and threatened to withhold drugs from his victims if they did not complete their commercial sex dates or follow his directions.

In addition, Turner allegedly was known to possess a firearm. It was allegedly used to compel victims to follow his instructions.

The FBI is investigating the case. The Charlottesville City Police Department and the Albemarle County Police Department assisted with Turner's arrest.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Melanie Smith is prosecuting the case.

A criminal complaint is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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NOTICE

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

Weekly SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Elementary school students named to academic, principals' lists

Blue Ridge Elementary School Academic Awards

3rd Grade Academic Awards: Lydia Clement, Marlee Dailey, Grayson Guynn, Hope Hedgepeth, Talan Hernandez, Kara Hiatt, Arabella Noonkester, Kasen Rupert, Brooklyn Stanley.

Principal's Award: Jase Bowman, Ian Roman, Landree Simmons

4th Grade Academic Awards: Jase Brim, Mackenzie Cain, Taylor Carson, Jack Dupstadt, Early Hill, Dallas Lawson, Daniel McGrath, Chloe Quesinberry, Brody Scales.

Principal's Award: Olivia Chaney, Raven Hernandez, Staci Martin, Renesmee Moody, Karleigh Saunders, Evan Seal.

5th Grade Academic Awards: Emily Adams, Cailey Arnett, Montana Cain, Arianna Crews, Brent Crocker, Lucas Hall, Jay Hill, Tanner Horton, Austin Marshall, Matthew Morales, Payton Odell, Bentley Stanley, Wyatt Thompson, Olive Waycaster

Principal's Awards: Kaylee Bowles, Sadie Bowman, Lincoln Puckett, Tobin Simmons, Colton Smith

6th Grade Academic Awards: Haylee Bowman, Gavin Burris, Ryan Chaney, Carly Dellenback, Camdon Fain, Maddox Frye, Jayden Gonzalez, Kimberly Gutierrez, Keira Helms, Grayson Holland, Christian Humble, Brody Hunger, Chloe Lawson, Tommy Lawson, Josue Rios.

Principal's Awards: Bronx Beasley, Elijah Brown, Mason Epperson, Reese Horton, Brigham Meredith, Beckham Terry.

7th Grade Academic Awards: Cassidy Brim, Fisher Colna, Sydney Easter, Aiden Moody, Ashland Noonkester, Reed Puckett, Midori Waycaster, Isaiah Willard, Bella Wright.

Principal's Award: Ean Martin, Kayleigh Smith, Gage Whitaker.

Hardin Reynolds Memorial School Academic Awards

4th Grade Academic Awards: Bentley Brooks, Matthew Clifton, Ella Dolarhite, Natalie Ferguson, Paisley Holt, Holly Lawrence, Amya Steph-

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

any, William Trent.

Principal's Award: Brayden Conner, Timothy Hough.

5th Grade Academic Awards: Aleigha Biggs, Wesley Burge, Atticus Colson, Simon Frazier, Nataley Graham, Jensen Harbour, Mackenzie Harman, Avalynn Huffman, Andrew Keen, Miles Lange, Mason Mills, Andrew Nelson, Ethan Nelson, Jada Stump, Linnea Tankersley, Elena Turner.

Principal's Award: Taelyn Blankenship, Braidan Brooks, Savannah Carroll, Dylan Clark, Colston Collins, Aiden Hagwood, Amilya Lawson, Lucas O'marra, James Pombo, Leila Stephany, Alice Terry, Mason Whitlow.

6th Grade Academic Awards: Kody Agee, Caitlyn Collins, Eli Collins, Mason Collins, Colton Errichetti, Ariana Hagwood, Caden Harris, Kendra Howell, Benjamin Hudson, Jayden Johanknecht, Gabriella Johnson, Mahala Martin, Alaina McBride, Savannah Sanchez-Austin, Jennifer Stowe, Elyssia Turner.

Principal's Award: Kira Barker, Cali Biggs, Aleah Bowman, Madilyn Callahan, Kenneth Craig, Ronald Davis, Conor Dollarhite, Addyson Foley, Evelyn Hayes-Linton, Noah Jenkins, Sarah Lawson, Arianna Lemons, Brinlee Mills, Dane Orton, Novie Rutledge, Mia Spangler, Asher Vaughn, Maci Whitlock

7th Grade Academic Awards: Lily Boyce, Steven Brooks, Braylon Clapp, Adrian Dehne, Anna Dixon, Evan Eastridge, Tiffany Eckrote, Isaiah Gilley, Robert Goff, Laila Hairston-Slater, Wesley Kruse, Ian Lackey, Rosalinda Medina, Natalie Moore, Lily Purdy, Bethany Rakes, Collin Rakes, Diesel Sanchez, Zoey Slate, Aishwraya Tatum, Jayson Turney

Principal's Award: Kylee Childress, Bentlee Davis, Sky Evans, Graham Foley, Sarah Hagwood, Levi Hankins, Maddyson Kendrick, Anna Long, Mauricio Mendoza-Gonzalez, Lily Pritt, Gabrielle Reynolds, Ava Rigney, Jenna Robertson, Gavin Smith, Samuel Tatum, Kody Townsend, Reagan Underwood, Cooper Wikstrom, Damian Wolfe

Meadows of Dan Academic Awards
3rd Grade Academic Awards: Deklynn Goins, Jennings Hatcher, Emersyn Wood.

Principal's Award: Banner Davis, Carter Puckett.

4th Grade Academic Awards: Easton Hall, BHayleigh Phillips.

5th Grade Academic Awards: Daylin Blevins, B Allysa Jordan.

7th Grade Principal's Award: Caleb Howell, Hannah Phillips, William Wood.

Academic Awards: Isabel Wilson.

Patrick Springs Primary School

Principal's Award: Will Keffer, Destiny Plaster, Trinity Plaster, Sarah Wyatt.

Academic Award: Landon Correll, Ryan Graham, Mia Hagwood, Rebecca Handy, Sophia Hylton, Nathaniel Jones, Porter Keffer, Jeremiah Lester, Emma Nelson, Carter Quesenberry, Harlem Smith, Caroline Whitlow, Tae-

lyn Wilson.

Stuart Elementary School Academic Awards

3rd Grade Academic Award: Adley Black, Addison Bowman, Carley Rae Fain, Raelynn George, Landon Hall, Hayden Hall, Whitney Hanks, Faith Hedgepeth, Milagros Juarez-Luna, Scarlett Kendrick, Maewyn McCraw, Skilynn McDonnell, Olivia Morrison, Colton Overby, Bristol Pack, Nora Post, Jacob Pruitt, Bentley Queen, Isabella Queen, Conner Scott, Jocelyn Stevens, Bella Terry, Reina Tucker, Bradley Wheeler, Jace York.

Principal's Award: Avery Brown, Annie Crowell, Wyatt Fain, Brooklyn Fulcher, Preslie Hall, Ethan Parsons, Korbin Puckett, Canon Rakes, Zion Turner, Wesley Whitener.

4th Grade Academic Award: Peyton Adkins, Nella Bembry, Braeden Campbell, Easton Conner, Tomias Devers, Kaythan Gray, Cooper Hall, Emily Hawks, Adrian Hodges, Lyric Houchins, Emma Hutchens, Parker Jones.

Principal's Award: Caleb Allison, Lucas Black, Aiden Brown, Carter Foley, Kay'Cee Glenn, Courage Jackson, Hadley Jones, Matias Jose, Paige Ragsdale, Harper Russo, Lucas Wheeler.

5th Grade Academic Award: Easton Childress, Sofia Gonzalez-Hylton, Charlee Handy, Zania Hines, Ava Lawson, Alex Leon Cisneros, Ethan Lester, Hana Martinez-Tejeda, Addyson Minter, Chandler Moles, Keller Muse, Maddox Scott, Hope Walton, Ivy Witt.

Principal's Award: Elise Cagle, Eli Fain, Avery Hubbard, Adalee Hughes, Sophia Martin, Hannah Post, Milli Scott, Juliet Turner.

6th Grade Academic Award: Ian Baker, Carles Campos, Tessa Curry, Milli Foley, Brantley Fortner, Carrie Gregory, Madison Handy, Jada Hylton, Kiah Jackson, Ian Martinez-Tejeda, Jesse Minter, Nathan Spencer, Mya Taylor, Bryson Turman.

Principal's Award: Savannah Fain, Vanessa Gregory, Ashton Hall, Adilynn Jones, Pagan Smith

7th Grade Academic Award: Cameron Campbell, David Clark, Tucker Collins, Emmalynn Corns, Gabe Delgado, Layla Hege, Riley Hostetter, Ethan Hutchens, Ben Joyce, Nexaniel Martinez De Jesus, Audrey McGhee, Ellie Post, Abigail Quesinberry, Mariah Scott, Charlie Tabor, Jillian Turner.

Principal's Award: Noah Bembrey, Kobe Bogle, Elena Cagle, Molly Cassell, Kinsleigh Harris

Woolwine Elementary School
3rd Grade Academic Award: Zoey Mabe.

Principal's Award: Maelynn Jones, Talin Maselli, Asher Perez.

4th Grade Academic Award: Emmalyn Hubbard, Cameron Kendrick, Raina Newsome, Sophia Otero-Garcia, Joel Shaffer.

Principal's Award: Moncerat Joaquin-Ortega, Charlee Shuff.

5th Grade Academic Award: Aubree Bowman, Blake Miles, Dixie Scott, Natalie Worley.

6th Grade Academic Award: Kaitlyn Gunter, Grant Iacovone, Jasper Lockhart, Nathan Shuff

7th Grade Academic Awards: Mason Conner, Addison Friedrichs, Conner King, Isabella Martin, Corrynn McAlexander, Levi Ojodeagua.

Principal's Award: Paisley Shuff.

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Health district receives 'Project Public Health Ready' recognition

The West Piedmont Health District (WPHD) is being recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for its ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies.

WPHD demonstrated these capabilities by meeting the comprehensive preparedness benchmarks required by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), a unique partnership between NACCHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. WPHD joins a cohort of more than 550 local health departments across the country that have been distinguished for excellence in preparedness through PPHR, either individually or as part of a region, according to NACCHO.

"We are pleased that WPHD has received this recognition," said Dr. Kerry Gateley, WPHD Director.

"A team representing all aspects of public health worked very hard over the course of nearly a year to document the health district's strengths in all required areas."

Gateley added that the WPHD's response to the COVID-19 pandemic provided opportunities to test existing emergency response efforts. Some processes were strengthened and streamlined as a result, he said.

"Public health preparedness planning, response, and recovery begins at the local level. Local health departments play an essential role in creating healthy, resilient communities that can respond to and recover from disasters," said Lori T. Freeman, NACCHO Chief Executive Officer. "NACCHO commends the West Piedmont Health District for being a model of public health emergency preparedness."

PPHR recognition confirms that the WPHD has a thorough and coordinated emergency response plan in place and that staff have the training to protect the health of the community during an emergency. Local health departments recognized by PPHR undergo a rigorous evaluation by peer review to assess their ability to meet a set of national standards for public health preparedness. These standards align with federal government requirements and other national best practices, according to NACCHO.

PPHR recognition also requires health departments to collaborate with state, local and community partners to develop plans that account for all the constituents in their jurisdictions.

NACCHO, the voice of the nearly 3,000 local health departments

across the country, provides resources to help local health department leaders develop public health policies and programs to ensure that communities have access to vital programs and services that people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Its mission is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments in order to ensure the conditions that promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives.

The West Piedmont Health District covers the counties of Franklin, Henry and Patrick and the City of Martinsville, Virginia.

For more information on Project Public Health Ready, including recognized sites, project tools, and resources, visit <http://www.naccho.org/PPHR>.

Legal advocates look to defend VA Fairness in Lending Act

Edwin J. Viera
Virginia News Connection

Virginia legal advocates are on the lookout for attempts to subvert the state's Fairness in Lending Act.

The 2020 law establishes a fair regulatory framework for lending in the state - but it seems some lenders are finding ways around it, such as referring to different types of loans as an "advance."

A Consumer Reports investigation has found some "advances" have been offered at an interest rate of 490%.

Jay Speer - executive director of the Virginia Poverty Law Center - said despite the name change, it's still a loan.

"They're giving you money now and you've got to pay it back later for a fee," said Speer. "But again, they don't want to come under the Fairness in Lending Act. They don't want to give people loan disclosures - like the Truth in Lending Act disclosures - to see how much you're being charged, so they try to pretend they're not a loan."

Legislation has been introduced to protect Virginians from these loans. House Bill 648 doesn't ban probate advances, but it clarifies that they are loans under Virginia law.

While Speer said the goal isn't to ban these loan products, his group wants to see better consumer protections for them.

He said he thinks House Bill 648 can make it through the session with little opposition.

But probate advances are only



one concern. House Bill 330 regulates so-called "puppy loans," by requiring pet shops to comply with the federal Truth in Lending Act.

Like probate advances, they include high interest rates and non-specific terms. Yet, Speer noted that what they're doing isn't unfamiliar.

"They're doing the same thing the payday lenders did over 20 years ago, which is claim they're not actually loaning you money," said Speer. "That it's a bank somewhere out of state - and in this case, probably Utah - making the loan to you and therefore, they're not subject to our usury laws."

Transportation Alliance Bank or "TAB Bank" has backed these loans.

A National Consumer Law Center report finds TAB Bank helped noted predatory lender EasyPay Finance make pet loans at 130% to 188% interest, which is illegal in most states.

Speer said since TAB is chartered in Utah and supervised by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, EasyPay Finance can "launder" its loan through the bank.

Youngkin says bold policy measures must continue after December jobs data

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Local Area Unemployment Statistics ("LAUS" or "the household survey"), the labor force participation rate, which measures the proportion of the civilian population age 16 and older that is employed or actively looking for work, remained unchanged at 66.9 percent in December.

"Coming into office, Virginia was bottom third in the nation in job growth, and for our first 22 months we outpaced national job growth trends, rising to third in the nation in job growth, and it wasn't by accident," said Gov. Glenn Youngkin. "I hope that my general assembly colleagues understand the tone that is set, and the policies being pursued directly impact job growth and opportunity for Virginians."

"Therefore, we must continue to advance bold policy measures as I outlined in our Unleashing Opportunity budget to continue moving the Commonwealth forward. Reducing taxes, lowering the cost of living and cost of doing business for Virginians, strengthening our business-friendly environment and improving pathways from the classroom to the workforce must be our focus," he said. "To be clear, if we're not moving forward, we're falling behind."

According to BLS LAUS, Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in December increased by 0.1 percentage points to 3.0 percent,

which is 0.7 percentage points below the national rate. The labor force decreased by 1,763 to 4,623,066; and the number of employed Virginians decreased by 8,395 to 4,484,295 as the number of unemployed residents increased by 6,632 to 138,771.

BLS publishes an additional employment figure from its Current Employment Statistics Survey ("CES" or "establishment survey"). The CES survey uses payroll records of establishment employers and is designed to provide a count of jobs under which the employer pays unemployment insurance. The LAUS survey is based on household interviews conducted each month for the Bureau of Labor Statistics and provides comprehensive data on the labor force, including those who are employed and unemployed. Establishment survey data reflects changes for updated seasonal adjustment factors, and industry classification conversions (NAICS), as part of the annual benchmarking process.

The household survey only distinguishes between whether a person is employed or unemployed, whereas CES counts each employee that is on an employer's payroll. CES excludes business owners, self-employed persons, unpaid volunteers and private household workers, and those on unpaid leave or not working because of a labor dispute.

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Study shows P&HCC adds \$75.1 million to economy

A review of the economic value of Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC), Lightcast EIS determined that for every \$1 received by the college, society gains \$4.10 in added income and social savings.

The results of the analysis (reflecting fiscal year 2021-2022) demonstrate that P&HCC is a strong investment for all three of its major stakeholder groups—students, taxpayers, and society. Students receive a substantial return for their investments in education from P&HCC, gaining \$3.80 in lifetime earnings for every \$1 invested. At the same time, taxpayers' investment in P&HCC returns more to government budgets than it costs (\$1.70 in added tax revenue and public sector savings for every dollar) and creates a wide range of social benefits throughout Virginia.

The results of this study indicate that P&HCC creates value from multiple perspectives. The college benefits regional businesses by increasing consumer spending in the region and supplying a steady flow of qualified, trained workers to the workforce - one of every 37 jobs in the service region is supported by the activities of P&HCC and its students. P&HCC enriches the lives of students by raising their lifetime earnings and helping them achieve their individual potential. The college benefits state and local taxpayers through increased tax receipts and a reduced demand for government-supported social services. Ultimately, P&HCC benefits society as a whole by creating a more prosperous economy and generating a variety of savings through the improved lifestyles of students.

P&HCC president Dr. Greg Hodges briefed the P&HCC Board on the study at its regular monthly meeting on Monday, highlighting the following:

* P&HCC plays a key role in helping students increase their employability and achieve their individual potential. The college draws students to the region, generating new dollars and opportunities for the P&HCC Service Region. P&HCC provides stu-



Dr. Greg Hodges, president of P&HCC, briefed the P&HCC Board on the study at its recent regular monthly meeting.

dents with the education, training, and skills they need to have fulfilling and prosperous careers. Furthermore, P&HCC is a place for students to meet new people, increase their self-confidence, and promote their overall health and well-being.

*Approximately 14% of students attending P&HCC originated from outside the region. Some of these students relocated to the P&HCC Service Region. In addition, some in-region students, referred to as retained students, would have left the P&HCC Service Region for other educational opportunities if not for P&HCC. These relocated and retained students spent money on groceries, mortgage and rent payments, and other living expenses at regional businesses. The expenditures of relocated and retained students in FY 2021-22 added \$1.4 million in income to the P&HCC Service Region economy.

*In FY 2021-22, P&HCC added \$75.1 million in income to the P&HCC Service Region economy, a value approximately equal to 1.7% of the region's total gross regional product (GRP). The net impact of the college's operations spending added \$17.6 million in income to the regional economy in FY 2021-22.

Over the years, students have studied at P&HCC and entered or re-entered the workforce with newly acquired knowledge and skills. Today, thousands of these former students are employed in the P&HCC Service Region. The net impact of P&HCC's former students currently employed in the regional workforce amounted to \$56.1 million in added income in FY 2021-22.

*Taxpayers provided P&HCC with \$8.9 million of funding in FY 2021-22. In return, they will benefit from added tax revenue, stemming from students' higher lifetime earnings and

increased business output, amounting to \$13.4 million. A reduced demand for government-funded services in Virginia will add another \$1.9 million in benefits to taxpayers.

*Total taxpayer benefits amount to \$15.2 million, the present value sum of the added tax revenue and public sector savings. For every dollar of public money invested in P&HCC, taxpayers will receive \$1.70 in return, over the course of students' working lives. The average annual rate of return for taxpayers is 3.7%.

In FY 2021-22, Virginia invested \$37 million to support P&HCC. In turn, the Virginia economy will grow by \$145.7 million, over the course of students' working lives. Society will also benefit from \$5 million of public and private sector savings. For every dollar invested in P&HCC in FY 2021-22, people in Virginia will receive \$4.10 in return, for as long as P&HCC's FY 2021-22 students remain active in the Virginia workforce.

"This report reinforces the critical role P&HCC plays in our regional economy, and the ripple effect our programs have in making our community an excellent place to live, work and learn," Hodges said.

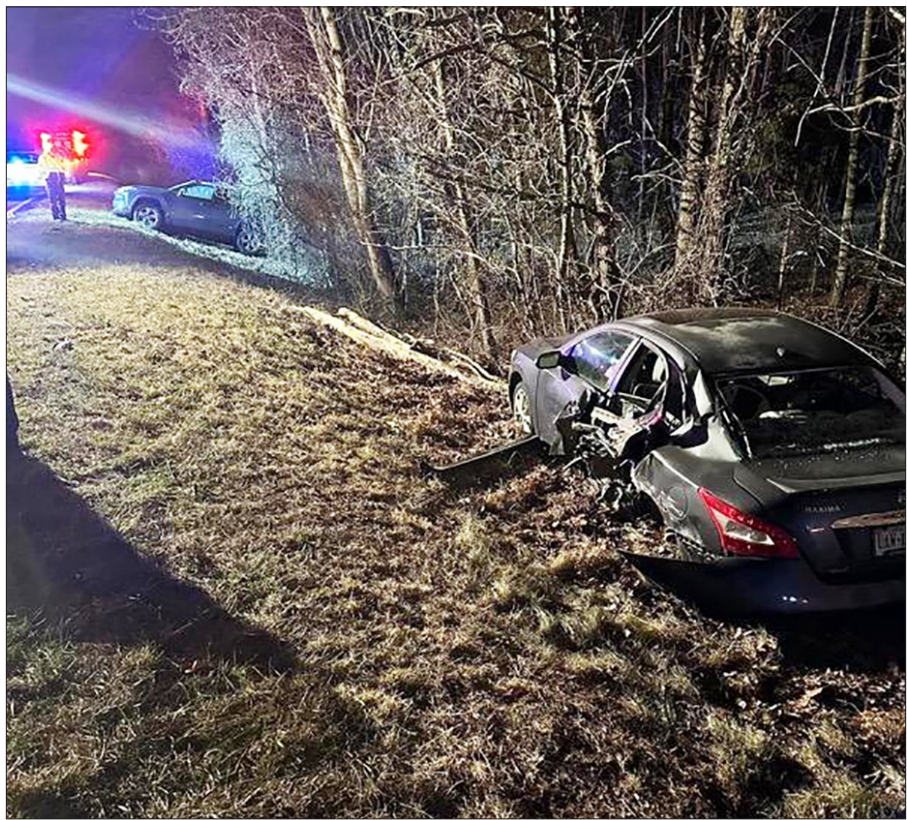
By the numbers FY 2021-2022:

- * 3,360: Number of students at the institution
- * 483: Number of full-time and part-time employees
- * 1,530: Jobs directly and indirectly supported
- * \$17.6 million: Operations spending
- * \$1.4 million: Amount spent by students who relocated or stayed in the region and who wouldn't be here if not for the institution
- * \$56.1 million: Spending by alumni currently working in the region
- * \$75.1 million: Total economic impact

Data and assumptions used in the Lightcast study are based on several sources, including the FY 2021-22 academic and financial reports from P&HCC, VCCS, industry and employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau, outputs of Lightcast's Multi-Regional Social Accounting Matrix model, and a variety of studies and surveys relating education to social behavior. The study applies a conservative methodology and follows standard practice using only the most recognized indicators of economic impact and investment effectiveness.



Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department and Moorefield Store Volunteer Fire Department responded to a two-vehicle crash on January 22.



A man, aged 87, was transported to Martinsville before being flown to Roanoke for treatment of a serious injury.

One injured in vehicle crash

By Taylor Boyd

Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department and Moorefield Store Volunteer Fire Department responded to a motor vehicle crash on Monday, January 22.

Assistant Chief Clint Weidhaas said the call came in around 6 p.m. for a two-vehicle crash on U.S. 58 at Nettle Ridge Loop.

"Once we arrived on scene, we found a four-door sedan over the embankment in the woods, and we found a four-door SUV over the embankment with one person still inside," he said.

Weidhaas said a male driver, 87-years-old, who left the roadway and struck a broke down vehicle on the shoulder. He believes the broken down vehicle had been abandoned on the shoulder.

"After striking the broke down vehicle, his vehicle rolled one time and went down the embankment into the woods," he said.

Fire and rescue departments on scene assisting the man in getting

out of his vehicle. He did not have to be cut from his vehicle.

Weidhaas said the man was transported to Sovah Health Emergency in Martinsville with an active brain bleed and then flown to a hospital in Roanoke.

"He was refusing care. The rescue squad talked him in to going to Martinsville, thank God. When they got to Martinsville 15-20 minutes later and did a CT scan," Weidhaas said medical personnel realized the extent of the man's injury and summoned a helicopter.

The Patrick Springs crew responded with one apparatus, one engine, and 10 personnel. Moorefield Store responded with one apparatus and four personnel, he added.

The Virginia State Police, Patrick County Sheriff's Office, Station 8, and Jeb Stuart Volunteer Rescue Squad also responded.

Weidhaas believes both vehicles involved in the crash were a total loss.

When That Hot Ticket is a Fake

Getting tickets to must-see concerts is becoming harder than ever. From presale signup to waiting hours online and still missing out on the tickets you want, criminals have a solution - and it's costing consumers a lot of money in fraudulent ticket purchases. With most concert venues switching to digital tickets only, it is easier than ever to produce counterfeit tickets. And with many of the top shows selling out instantly the market for resale tickets is larger than ever. Here are three tips to avoid buying a worthless ticket.

First, stick to known ticket sales sites or visit the National Association of Ticket Brokers (natb.org) to ensure that you are dealing with a verified reseller. Always type the web address of the site you want

to visit into your browser vs. clicking a link that could take you to a copycat site.

Second, beware of offers on social media and online marketplaces where this scam flourishes.

Third, never pay with a peer-to-peer payment app unless you are getting tickets from someone you know. You don't have the same consumer protections with these methods that you have with a credit card.

Report scams to local law enforcement. For help from AARP, call 1-877-908-3360 or visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

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Two houses destroyed by fires



Two homes were destroyed in house fires.



The Ararat area fire was on January 23.



The county line area fire occurred on January 24.



By Taylor Boyd

Two houses were destroyed in house fires last week – one in the Ararat area and another in the county line area.

The first fire occurred on January 23 at 2018 Homeplace Road with the call coming in at 2:18 p.m.

Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief Clint Weidhaas said Ararat Volunteer Fire Department, Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department, Stuart Volunteer Fire Department, and CCDF Volunteer Department were alerted of the working house fire.

“The home was fully involved upon Ararat’s arrival. Fire crews were on scene for about three and a half hours due to clutter conditions in the

residence,” he said.

Weidhaas said the house trailer was a total loss. An elderly man, who had no phone, lived at the residence.

“He had no phone, so he drove from his home on Homeplace to Ararat Grocery. He went there to report that his house was on fire. I think that’s what allowed the fire to get so big in the amount of time,” he said.

The cause of the fire is unknown.

Ararat responded with two apparatus and four personnel, Patrick Springs responded with one apparatus and three personnel, and Stuart responded with four personnel and one apparatus.

Fire crews were also requested from Four Way Volunteer Fire Department and Bannertown

Volunteer Fire Department in North Carolina.

Another house fire occurred at 83 Candyland Road on January 24.

The call came in at 12:43 p.m. with Patrick Henry Volunteer Fire Department, Patrick Springs, Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department, Bassett Volunteer Fire Department, and Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department being dispatched.

“When Patrick Henry arrived on scene, they were met with heavy fire conditions in a one-story, wood-frame home,” he said.

Weidhaas said the home was completely gutted and the occupants were completely displaced.

Patrick Henry had four personnel on scene and Patrick Springs responded with five personnel.

P&HCC to host second annual NJCAA/JUCO Jamboree

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) softball invites the community to attend the second annual National Junior College Athletic Association (JUCO) Softball Jamboree February 22-25, 2024 at Southside Park in Martinsville. The pre-season national tournament will feature 2023 nationally ranked Division II and Division III softball teams from around the country, including the eighth ranked Lady Pats of P&HCC.

“It is so important to us to be able to host in our area so the community can be involved and see the talent both here locally and nationally. Our team is excited to partic-

ipate in an event of this scale to get the P&H name out there and to play outside of our conference and region. We moved up in the ranks last year following the jamboree - we started about 500 and moved up to 8,” said P&H softball coach Robbi Campbell.

The public is encouraged to support P&HCC’s team, which includes local student athletes from Bassett, Danville, Henry, and South Boston, as well as from Virginia Beach, North Carolina and Texas, during their Saturday (2:15) and Sunday (2:15) games. “Our student athletes are definitely students first - for the last four years

our team has won the GPA award for the college – but they’re also outstanding athletes. We’re excited to see where we go this year,” said Campbell.

Admission for the Jamboree is \$7 for a single day pass, \$10 for a 2-day pass, \$15 for a 3-day pass, and \$20 for an all-access pass, which includes admission to all 26 games played over the four-day event.

For more information, contact P&HCC softball Campbell at rcampbell@patrickhenry.edu.

The 2024 Jamboree will include the following teams:
 NJCAA Division II (D2)
 NR #18 - Potomac State College

- (WV)
- Lackawanna College (PA)
- Community College of Baltimore County (MD)
- Richard Bland College (VA)
- NJCAA Division III (D3)
- NR #1 - Caldwell Community College (NC)
- NR #4 - Corning Community College (NY)
- NR #5 - Brookdale Community College (NJ)
- NR #7 - Surry Community College (NC)
- NR #8 - Patrick & Henry (VA)
- NR #9 - Herkimer Community College (NY)
- Camp Community College (VA)



JUCO JAMBOREE

DATE / TIME	FIELD 1	FIELD 2	FIELD 3
THURSDAY FEB. 22ND 10PM	COMMODORE VS PATRICK SPRINGS VS HENRY	BASSETT VS SURRY CC BANNERTOWN VS CCDF	CCDF VS BROOKDALE
FRIDAY FEB. 23RD 2:00PM	CALDWELL VS BASSETT CANNONVILLE VS HENRY	COMMODORE VS BROOKDALE CORNING VS BANNERTOWN	CAMP CC VS CCDF LACKAWANNA VS CCDF LACONIA VS PATRICK SPRINGS
SATURDAY FEB. 24TH 2:00PM	HENRY VS BROOKDALE HENRY VS LACKAWANNA LACONIA VS PATRICK SPRINGS	BANNERTOWN VS CCDF COMMODORE VS PATRICK SPRINGS	CAMP CC VS COMMODORE BANNERTOWN VS PATRICK SPRINGS PATRICK SPRINGS VS BANNERTOWN
SUNDAY FEB. 25TH 2:00PM	POTOMAC STATE VS BROOKDALE POTOMAC STATE VS BANNERTOWN	BANNERTOWN VS LACKAWANNA CCDF VS PATRICK SPRINGS	COMMODORE VS CCDF LACKAWANNA VS COMMODORE

Barons

Generals

Camp

Knights

FEB. 22ND, 2024 - FEB. 25TH, 2024



Cotton featured during recent programs

Recently, Landmark residents and youngsters attending the Blue Ridge Library in Stuart's Storytime learned all about cotton, including how it grows and how it's made into clothing. They each found fuzzy cot-

ton seeds from a locally grown cotton boll, and hand spun some cotton string from a cotton ball. The children at Storytime also decorated a flowerpot and then planted seeds to grow their own cot-

ton plant.

The programs were led by Master Gardeners Jessica Hines, Norma Bozenmayer and children's librarian Samantha Edmundson.

Registration is now open for the

2024 Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Training Class. For more information about the training or Master Gardener programs, email mgpeva@gmail.com.



REAL ESTATE AUCTION

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION
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Ending Wednesday, Feb 14 Starting at Noon**



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- Property #2 - Big A. School Rd.
- Property #3 - Log Cabin Lt #14
- Property #4 - Spring Branch Rd.
- Property #5 - Yeaman Sub Lt 38 & Lt 37 Fayerdale Dr.
- Property #6 - Yeaman Sub Lt 36 & Lt 35 Fayerdale Dr.
- Property #7 - John W Yeaman Sub Lots 7-10 Fayerdale Dr.
- Property #8 - Ararat Hwy

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THANK YOU FOR READING
THE ENTERPRISE

Hospital

(cont. from page 14)

“hospital was not opening as planned.”

Since obtaining ownership of the property formerly known as Pioneer Hospital, Hylak-Reinholtz said, “we have developed and considered several plans to achieve the goal of reopening the hospital. However, as 2023 turns into 2024, we have yet to develop a plan that makes sense both clinically and financially. That is, we have yet to develop a plan that we believe can provide an adequate scope of services while also being profitable. That is precisely why we did not open the hospital in 2023.”

The statement from Hylak-Reinholtz “completely contradicts conversations recently had between Dr. Sameer Suhail, Foresight Health’s CEO, and Patrick County administration,” according to a release from the county.

“As reported by The Enterprise on January 24, 2024, Foresight Health currently owes \$33,101.12 in real estate taxes to Patrick County and \$526.12 in past-due utilities and \$7,980.54 in unpaid property taxes to the Town of Stuart. ... Even though Hylak-Reinholtz claims that ‘several plans’ have been developed, none of them have been presented” to the county, a release stated.

However, “we are considering all options now that we are in the first quarter of 2024. Nothing is off the table. We will continue to work with local officials to make something happen,” he said.

Hylak-Reinholtz confirmed the company has been in ongoing discussions “about a possible transfer of ownership of the hospital property to the county” with Del. Wren Williams, R – Stuart, and several county officials, including County Administrator Beth Simms and Pat Cooper, director of the county’s Economic Development Authority (EDA).

“These discussions were supposed to remain confidential,” Hylak-Reinholtz said, but Simms “broke that trust, and Foresight now feels compelled to tell its side of the story. If the residents of Patrick County want the truth, I am happy to give it to them. I hope they can handle it.”

During the discussions with Williams and local officials, Hylak-Reinholtz said “neither I nor any other Foresight executive suggested that we would completely abandon the community. If the county accepted the donation of the hospital, we offered to manage it for them.”

In the latter half of 2023, “before considering the idea of donating the hospital to the county, I personally suggested to Del. Williams that if the county or a state agency provided financial assistance with the rising cost of renovations, that Foresight Health could get this project open much sooner,” Hylak-Reinholtz, said. “Perhaps this information was never conveyed to Mr. Simms.”

Williams said he conveyed the company’s proposals to EDA officials, but he did not discuss the proposal with Simms or the Board of Supervisors.

Williams, Hylak-Reinholtz said, “ultimately rejected the idea of a management agreement with Foresight because he believes, and perhaps it is true, that the community likely doesn’t want us around anymore.”

Williams said he did not feel the proposed ar-

rangement was in the county’s best interests.

“The company has never taken any option off the table, nor will it,” Hylak-Reinholtz said. “But the residents of Patrick County need to be reminded that Foresight Health is a for-profit business, and that a for-profit business, or any business for that matter, needs to turn a profit. It makes no sense to start a business that has a significant likelihood of failing.”

“If Foresight had requested assistance to facilitate their reopening of the hospital in Patrick County, as suggested by Mr. Hylak-Reinholtz’s statement, we would have promptly responded. However, no such requests were ever made,” Patrick County Administrator Beth Simms said in the release.

Patrick County elected officials and staff “have been inundated with questions about the status of the hospital project for months, and we stand behind the statement made and released last week, providing answers to our citizens and assurance that we are working diligently to increase health-care access in Patrick County,” the release stated.

Hylak-Reinholtz said residents “want and deserve answers. We understand that they are restless and want to see progress, especially the removal of the ‘Opening in 2023’ sign.

“I and everyone else at Foresight Health shares your desire to see an operational hospital in Stuart, but as the company’s chief operating officer, I need to present my CEO with a plan that will not bankrupt the business,” he wrote.

As of Monday, and at Suhail’s direction, Hylak-Reinholtz said more than \$4 million has been spent on the project.

“While that is a significant amount of money, Foresight Health needs to secure more funds to successfully open this site as a critical access hospital, with an emergency room, and a psych program, and to recruit and employ doctors and other necessary health care professionals,” he said, and noted that hospitals are expensive to operate. “Old hospital buildings like the one in Stuart, need a lot of attention, which can cost millions of dollars to do it right.”

Additionally, “it has been more difficult than anticipated to find qualified healthcare professionals who are willing to work in rural America,” Hylak-Reinholtz said. “Electronic medical record systems are quite costly. One of the more ‘affordable’ versions that could do everything we needed would have cost us about \$250,000 to develop and then we’d have to pay an additional subscription fee that’s over \$52,000 per month. That cost center alone, before factoring in salaries, would consume almost a quarter to a third of our monthly expenses based on the revenue model considered. We can seek grants, but those take a lot of time and are not guaranteed.”

Hylak-Reinholtz said another consideration is “the service line that Patrick County residents ask for most, emergency room care, and just how costly it is to provide this to the community. Report after report, consultant after consultant, tells us the same story— that, on average, emergency depart-

ments generate insufficient revenue from their billings to cover the costs. In a small, rural hospital with significant overhead costs, it becomes almost impossible to make it profitable.”

Most states, including Virginia, do not provide additional financial support to rural hospitals to help them keep the emergency room from being a loss leader, he said, and added that the company also asks the community to consider another relevant point.

“When Foresight Health first came to Patrick County, our intention was to reopen the hospital as a stand-alone psychiatric and drug treatment hospital,” Hylak-Reinholtz said. “Our vision for the property did not include an emergency department. If this was our only mission, I believe that a specialty hospital would have already been operational. But our initial mission changed as our CEO and others at Foresight started to hear from the community and the original plan was eventually abandoned to address additional concerns.”

Then, after meeting with local elected officials, first responders, and many others who live in or near the county, Hylak-Reinholtz said “our CEO, Sameer Suhail, instructed me to find a plan that would provide not only psychiatric services but also general hospital services and emergency care for the community.”

The change in the mission for the project was significant, and went much further than the original vision both in scope and in cost, he said. “It was a tough assignment for sure. Having heard the same comments and concerns as our CEO, I and everyone else who worked on the project at the time accepted the challenge.”

“Sometimes a company needs to speak frankly,” Suhail said. “This is one of those times. If Foresight Health had unlimited funds and an endless supply of blank checks, we would have opened the hospital many months ago. But our company’s pockets are not as deep as we’d like. We are not HCA Healthcare or UHS. Our funds are not unlimited. Consequently, our company must make tough decisions, like delaying the project, considering purchase offers, or coming up with an entirely different approach.”

In conclusion, Hylak-Reinholtz underscored that “Foresight Health will leave nothing on the table for consideration in 2024. We will review any purchase offer, joint venture proposal, change of scope, etc.”

Noting that the company “is a private business,” Williams said he worked to help keep the ball rolling between the company and the county’s EDA, but he does not have the authority to speak for either.

“Patrick County remains open to conversations with Foresight Health about future plans for their property located in Stuart, and/or remedying their outstanding financial obligations,” Simms said.

Williams said he also is committed to moving forward.

Currently, “I think we just keep pushing forward. If Foresight goes forward, we’ll push forward with them. If not, we’ll keep looking at other options,” Williams said. “We can’t just stop.”



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