



THE ENTERPRISE

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

Company official hopes to extend olive branch, foster spirit of cooperation with county



Foresight Hospital and Health Systems signs installed at the former hospital in Stuart were recently removed. The Town of Stuart asked the company to remove the 'Opening 2023' signage from the property.

By Taylor Boyd
The Foresight Hospital and Health Systems project is officially on hold, its Chief Operating Officer (COO) Joe Hylak-Reinholtz said in a Friday interview.

"At the moment I have the project on hold, and that was my call," Hylak-Reinholtz said, adding that

the company is opening facilities in Chicago and Dubai and has a project going in Saudi Arabia.

"My goal is to get all these going in this first month or two of this year. Then, if something doesn't materialize with Patrick County, which at this point I don't think it's going to, I will then turn my eyes

back to Virginia and try to figure out what we can do."

The company has looked at a number of options, including going back to just a psychiatric facility, which he knows doesn't solve the county's emergency room access issues, he said. Another option is a residential treatment facility.

"We're looking at options that might have a lower cost when it comes to renovations and staff than a hospital with an emergency department that needs to be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Hylak-Reinholtz said. "I'm not saying we're closing the door to that,

(See Olive Branch p. 3)

County asked to pay for 'donation' of hospital

By Debbie Hall
An email obtained by The Enterprise indicates the hospital owners asked for more than \$800,000 for the donation of the hospital property, plus a letter confirming the donation and a fair market value of \$3.9 million.

The email, between Foresight Hospital and Health System executives, top county officials and others, was obtained from an anonymous source and later confirmed by sources familiar with the proposal.

In a Nov. 2, 2023 email to Dr. Sameer Suhail M.D., as well as local county and economic development officials, Joseph Hylak-Reinholtz, general counsel and COO of Foresight, expanded on the proposed donation that appears to have initially been made to the Southwest Virginia Health Authority, and later proposed to Patrick County.

"I originally thought that there was two parts to this deal, but now I think it is three based on your questions," Hylak-Reinholtz wrote in the email that appears to be his response to questions posed by Beth Simms, county administrator.

"First, Foresight Health will donate the hospital property located at 18688 Jeb Stuart Highway, Stuart, Virginia (Patrick County) as-is to the Southwest Virginia Health Authority (the "Authority") or some

other designated agency or entity, giving no warranties, transferring said property via quit claim deed," Hylak-Reinholtz wrote.

The authority is a special state organization created in 2007 by the Virginia General Assembly to bring area leaders together and find ways to improve health and health related prosperity in the far Southwest Virginia region. The authority currently serves the Lenowisco and Cumberland Plateau Planning Districts, according to its website.

"In exchange for this donation of real property, the Authority will provide a donation letter confirming that the real property was donated and has a fair market value of \$3.9 million (as noted in an April 2023 valuation)," Hylak-Reinholtz wrote. "This valuation pertained only to the real estate," and did not include the value of any fixtures, furniture, and equipment remaining in the hospital.

"Second, and this is the part that I did not consider until you asked about assets, Foresight Health will donate all of the personal property assets within the hospital building that are presently within the premises," the email stated.

"This includes several pieces of medical equipment, fixtures, furniture, and the like," he wrote.

(See Donation p. 3)



Several county officials attended a recent Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) conference in Richmond and met with Del. Wren Williams. Pictured are County Administrator Beth Simms; Brandon Simmons, chairman of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors; Williams and Clayton Kendrick, past board chairman. (Contributed photo)

County officials react to company statement

By Taylor Boyd
Members of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors had a strong reaction to a statement issued last week by a Foresight Hospital and Health Systems official.

Doug Perry, vice chairman, said he couldn't bring himself to read all nine paragraphs of what he referred to as a "never-ending rant. What I did read of it, I just shook my head and questioned where he's coming from."

Perry's comments were regarding a statement issued last week by Joseph Hylak-Reinholtz, Chief Operating Officer (COO) and general counsel for Foresight, in which he stated that he was "enraged" by comments made by Brandon Simmons that the hospital was not reopening as planned.

"Rarely in my career have I ever been blindsided so callously by a lo-

cal government official," Hylak-Reinholtz wrote.

Perry said the company "never kept us in the loop and never did those things to say, 'we may be behind schedule, but we are moving forward.'"

"I hate that Mr. Hylak-Reinholtz thinks this is so unprofessional. He seems to think I'd want this board to not keep the public informed," said Simmons, who is the chairman of the board.

Perry said the letter came out of left field.

"Again, it was just a never-ending rant, pointing fingers, blaming everybody. (I) just shook my head like, 'Where's this coming from,'" Perry said and added that after the letter, he doesn't foresee the company doing anything in the county besides wasting its time and other

(See County p. 3)

Mobile Health Unit to visit Stuart



Connect Health + Wellness will hold a mobile healthcare clinic at the Walmart in Stuart on February 7 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., with Joanna Carter, FNP.

Sick and well patients are accepted for mobile clinic visits. Pre-registration is not required.

Services offered include everything medical/ primary care related - sickness, high blood pressure, (if you don't have a doctor), etc.

The clinic is available for those aged 12 years old and older.

Everyone must bring a photo identification and a list of medications.

Those with insurance cards should bring them, those without should bring proof of income (a month of pay stubs, W-2, or Social Security Income letter).

A sliding fee discount program is available.

New patients are welcome.

Football among sports targeted for growth

By Taylor Boyd
Travis Murphy, director of the county's Parks and Recreation Department, said his goal is to increase sports participation and events for seniors.

Murphy presented the information as an update to the Patrick County Board of Supervisors at its January 22 meeting.

As a former athletic director and football and basketball coach, Murphy said he wants to work on teaching the children the knowledge of the games they are playing.

"We're going to be doing some things in this next year, it's not going to cost any money to help our coaches to come on board and volunteer their time to coach with knowledge of the game," he said.

Murphy said football and basketball are going to be his focus because he believes the coaches are doing a pretty good job in baseball



Patrick County Parks and Recreation Director Travis Murphy gave an update on annual sports participation at the January 22 Board of Supervisors meeting.

and softball.

"I'm going to focus on the ones that I see need a little help," he said.

(See Football p.11)

Application period open for DMV grants

If your organization is dedicated to keeping Virginia's roads safe, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) Highway Safety Office wants to help you save lives with essential grant funding. Applications may be submitted by local governments, state agencies, institutions of higher learning and nonprofits serving Virginia with transportation programs. Grant applications are due February 28.

Grant funding is available in many areas of highway safety such as pedestrian safety, motorcycle safety, speed prevention, and drunk and distracted driving prevention. Below is more information on these areas of safety. Does your organization have a program that can help?

Pedestrian safety – Vulnerable road users like pedestrians and cyclists need your support. In 2023, 132 pedestrians were killed in crashes. DMV is looking to fund programs that share pedestrian safety education in their communities or help in enforcement surrounding areas that are problematic for pedestrians.

Motorcycle safety – In 2023, there were 2,125 crashes on Virginia's roadways involving motorcycles. Motorcyclists need drivers to share the road and up-to-date training for motorcyclists is vital for safe travel. DMV is looking to fund programs that raise awareness around motorcyclist training,

promoting the importance of helmets or promoting safe operation of motorcycles through public information campaigns.

Speed prevention – Speeding is a primary factor in crashes year after year. In 2023, speed was a factor in 25,229 crashes resulting in 446 deaths. Programs focused on prevention, enforcement and raising public awareness surrounding the dangers of speeding could receive vital funding from DMV.

Drunk driving prevention – Last year, 252 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes. DMV wants to partner with organizations that seek to share information and raise enforcement to help prevent drunk drivers from getting behind the wheel.

Distracted driving prevention – In 2023, distracted driving resulted in 21,486 crashes. If your organization is dedicated to raising public awareness surrounding the dangers of distracted driving, DMV wants to help.

If your organization is helping raise awareness in one of these areas, please consider applying for a highway safety grant. Examples of program evaluation measures and more information on additional funding areas can be found on our website. For more information on grant applications or required training workshops, please reach out to the DMV program manager in your area.

Partners sought for Summer Meals Program

The Virginia Department of Education-Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs is seeking partners to participate in the Commonwealth's Summer Food Service Program this year to ensure that children have access to nutritious meals during months when school is not in session.

The SFSP Program — funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the VDOE Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs provides the opportunity for organizations to combine a meal program with another activity in communities where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Approved organizations are reimbursed for meals served and associated administrative costs. In addition, all participating organizations receive training and technical assistance from the VDOE-SNP.

The Program can operate at schools, public housing centers, community centers, playgrounds, camps, parks, and churches. Organizations that qualify to participate in the program include public and private schools, local governments, public and nonprofit private residential summer camps, and faith-based and community-based non-profit organizations.

Organizations in areas designated as rural by the U.S. Department of Agriculture may be eligible to serve multiple days' worth of take-home meals at once.

Approximately 125 summer meals partner organizations served almost 3 million meals to Virginia's children between June-August last year.

Information for organizations interested in applying to participate in the Program — including details on application deadlines — is available on the VDOE website.

Your Info Is Out There

If we really want to keep ourselves - and our money - safe from fraud, we must all come to terms with one thing: our personal information is likely already out there. Many entities have our per-

sonal information - credit card and bank account numbers, Social Security numbers, and health-related information - and data breaches have most likely exposed it. So, what can we do to

protect ourselves after the fact?

Here are three steps towards protecting yourself against identity fraud:

- 1) Place a security freeze on your credit accounts with the three big agencies so no one can open a new credit line in your name;

- 2) Establish online access to your financial accounts and monitor regularly (you can set up text alerts for activity on these accounts);

- 3) Use strong and unique passwords for every online account; consider using a password manager that creates complex passwords and stores them securely.

Visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork or call the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline at 1-877-908-3360 to report a scam or get help if you've fallen victim.



Tourism Talks

Hello Patrick,

I hope all is well! Can you believe it is already February? I am not sure which groundhog to trust, but I can guarantee that we will have six more weeks of some weather. I am hoping for one good snowfall in Stuart this winter. Several areas in the county have seen it, but we seem to miss out. I am a little envious of Meadows of Dan! They have seen some accumulation, and other parts of the county have already. Speaking of Meadows of Dan, I have a reminder: don't forget about our Community Meeting on February 8th at 5:30 p.m. in the community center. This is to discuss Route 58 signage and Mabry Mill updates.

Also, as we transition into spring and ramp up for another fantastic season, I want to remind you that we are working on our 2024 Spring Edition of our County Magazine. Rebecca Adcock, David Stanley, and the entire tourism team are excited as we prepare to get it to the printers. This will be another significant

issue as we discuss various things that make our County extraordinary. I hope you feel the same way and show some love this month; February 14th is just around the corner, Valentine's Day!

Check out our website and our (in-house) community board; visit the visitor center. By the way, have you stopped by? Just checking on you. There are a lot of events for singles, wine lovers, chocolate lovers, music lovers, and charitable events where we can give back to the community. We support Team Lauren and all our citizens. Patrick, we are family! Well, that will do it, for now, just a little tourism talk.

Patrick, you are an incredible community. Stay strong, warm, and inviting. And remember, tell all of your business partners, family, and friends, "Come get lost and find yourself here!"

All my best,
James Houchins
Director of Tourism

New peer-to-peer mental health resource available for farm families

While difficult circumstances in agriculture often are temporary, certain decisions can be permanent.

Farming is tough on the best of days, said American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall at the recent AFBF annual convention in Salt Lake City.

"And it can really be lonely out there sometimes, especially with the pressures that we face," he continued.

Florida farmer Marshal Sewel, founder of the Mind Your Melon mental health education program, knows this firsthand.

"My senior year of high school, my dad made the decision that the world no longer needed him," he said in a video presentation. "I don't know if he was overwhelmed by the bills, and checks that weren't coming in because his strawberries were dying off. But it breaks my heart that my dad made a permanent decision out of a temporary issue."

It takes courage to speak up, or reach out when others are hurting, Duvall continued.

"That's why Farm Bureau entered in a new frontier years ago when we took on mental health and wellness," he said. "I'm proud to say the Farm State of Mind platform has become a go-to resource for our rural communities."

Now, AFBF has established a new relationship with the Farm Family Wellness Alliance to launch access to a peer-to-peer support community Togetherall, free to all American farm families 24/7. Addi-

tional counseling services also can be made available at no cost.

"This groundbreaking resource gives farm families access to an online community that understands the challenges that come with agricultural life," said Matt Nuckols, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation safety coordinator.

Togetherall is a safe, anonymous online community continuously moderated by licensed physicians, said Jessica Cabrera, AFBF managing director of member engagement. She explained that farmers and their family members aged 16 or older can set up a profile with an anonymous username. They can then access a global network of peers who will listen and support them.

"Farming is very challenging and often farmers are living in isolation or facing stigma about reaching out for help," she noted. "Taking that first step to reach out is often the hardest step to take."

Togetherall offers a range of tools, including self-assessments and access to additional support services through a partnership with Personal Assistance Services. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, financial health, improving sleep and more. In addition to the global community, Togetherall offers access to agricultural sector subgroups in which farmers can share their experiences with like-minded people.

Visit Togetherall.com or farm-stateofmind.org for rural mental health resources.

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.

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

*Fernando Sanchez, 22, of Mt. Airy, N.C., was charged Jan. 24 with fail to comply with conditions of bond. Deputy Robert E. Dillon was the arresting officer.

*Rodney Aaron Turner, 30, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 25 with assault. Senior Deputy C.L. Elgin was the arresting officer.

*Vernon Leon Henry Charles, III, 39, of Stuart, was charged with one count each disregard law enforcement command and obstruct justice. Deputy C.L. Adkins was the arresting officer.

*Darren Boyd Epperly, 36, of Martinsville, was charged Jan. 27 with drive while intoxicated, 2nd offense within five years. Senior Deputy C.M. Gilbert was the arresting officer.

*Taylor Rorrer, 23, of Patrick

Springs, was charged Jan. 28 with fail to appear. Senior Deputy A. Kinney made the arrest for Henry County.

*David Wayne Trent, 47, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 30 with violate a protective order. Senior Deputy J.S. Kendrick was the arresting officer.

*Brandon Cory Thomas, 34, no address available, was charged Jan. 31 with fail to comply with terms of pretrial services. Carroll County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Dionte Morris Nowlin, 21, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 31 with disregard law enforcement command. Master Deputy M.T. Rorrer was the arresting officer.

*Sydney Jason Roberts, 35, of Siloam, NC, was charged Jan. 31 with trespass. Senior Deputy A. Kinney was the arresting officer.

Olive Branch

(cont. from page 1)

but I just need to see what opportunities are out there, and if an opportunity arises, I need to consider that.”

Hylak-Reinholtz said “the million-dollar question” is where Foresight is going from here, and what its next step is.

“I need to be fully honest; I don’t know. I wish I could have an answer for you,” Hylak-Reinholtz said.

Foresight, he added, has had a number of challenges that haven’t been solved, including finding an electronic medical records software provider.

“That in itself is a major problem when what we’re looking for, we’re talking \$250,000 development fee for the software, then \$51,000 a month in licensing fees to this particular company. And that is one of the more affordable options,” he said.

He was unable to identify the company because a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) has been signed as part of the negotiation process.

Hylak-Reinholtz said he also doesn’t know how long, if ever, it would take for the hospital to turn a profit, “and that’s a problem when it comes to that, when it comes to renovation costs, when it comes to the amount of time and energy

spent trying to recruit physicians. There are a number of things where prices are higher than we originally anticipated.”

The company was working with Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, to see if it could transfer ownership of the hospital to the county, Hylak-Reinholtz said. The company also considered regional health-care development agencies outside of the county.

“Wren was working... to see if there was an opportunity to do that,” Hylak-Reinholtz said, adding the company is looking for different options and nothing is off the table.

“If there was an opportunity like other states and counties have done in the past,” with the county owning the building “and then we could operate the facility, that was something I thought was worth exploring,” he said.

While Foresight was pursuing that option, there was never a guarantee it was going to take place, Hylak-Reinholtz said, but he believes considering every option is what a business needs to do.

“If someone says, ‘Hey, maybe you guys donate this hospital to the county since you aren’t doing anything with it. Maybe we could do something to get it off the ground

quicker than you guys are doing.’ I’m going to listen to that opportunity,” he said.

He added Foresight has also entertained the idea of other people purchasing the facility from them, “but at the end of the day, I can’t guarantee” anything until a deal is struck. “I still need to start considering what other options we might do for the property. At the end of the day, it’s still on our books, it’s still an asset we have, and it would make no sense to leave it there doing nothing.”

Because he is not in charge of Foresight’s financials, Hylak-Reinholtz said he was unaware that there were unpaid county taxes or utilities owed to the Town of Stuart.

“I’m working with our CEO on a timeline to figure out when that needs to be paid,” he said, adding that he was surprised Patrick County Board of Supervisors chairman Brandon Simmons didn’t know about the possibility of Foresight transferring ownership of the hospital to the county.

“It was kind of surprising to me that he said he didn’t know about it since we’ve been having conversations with individuals who work for the county,” he said.

Williams has said he discussed the company’s proposals with the county’s economic development team.

Hylak-Reinholtz last spoke with county officials in late November or December, he said of County Administrator Beth Simms and Economic Development Director Patrick Copper.

He added that the company has not moved any new equipment into the hospital. The only property or equipment inside the building was left by the former owner who closed the hospital in 2017.

“When you update a facility, the last thing you do is bring in new equipment. So, we have not done any acquisitions or put anything new in the building since we acquired it,” he said.

Hylak-Reinholtz plans on reaching out to Simmons and the rest of the board to potentially talk about the future, the direction of the company, and where they want to see it go.

“I don’t think it’s productive for us to move beyond my initial reaction in the present,” he said. “I think now I’m looking to extend an olive branch, and again try a spirit of cooperation with Patrick County.”

Donation

(cont. from page 1)

“Unfortunately, I do not have a fair market value for these assets, so we could either (1) take a lot of time to inventory everything in the building and spend more time trying to figure out the used, as-is value of the assets, or (2) just agree that the value of the assets is \$100,000 and add that to the donation value, giving us additional

tax deduction credit,” the email stated.

“For example, there is presently an x-ray machine that is old but upgradable per our medical equipment consultant. This has an overhead camera but also includes GE OEC 9800 Plus C-Arm that has an online used value of \$30,000 to \$35,000,” he

wrote and asked for feedback on the proposal.

“Third, we’ve told Del. Williams about all of the costs that we have incurred to maintain the property and the expenses which arose to assess the condition, develop plans for reopening the hospital, etc., and proposed that Foresight Health recover

half of the incurred costs to minimize our losses with this project.

“An excel spreadsheet that shows all of our incurred costs, along with supporting evidence,” was sent to Williams, and “totals about \$1.63 million,” Hylak-Reinholtz wrote. “We have requested payment via wire transfer of approximately \$815,000.”

County

(cont. from page 1)

resources.

Because a hospital is so needed, “I hope they come through as we can patch the relationship, and they do all these things they said they were going to do, but I don’t have a lot of hope for it,” Perry said.

As a new board member, Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, said he cannot speak as to what may have been said or done in previous months or years between the county and Foresight.

“All I can say is that the citizens of Patrick County need access to medical care 24 hours a day,” he said.

Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, said he believed Hylak-Reinholtz was out of line with his letter.

“I don’t want to stir up anything. They got so hard on Brandon, but Brandon just told the people what they really need to hear ‘cause we weren’t seeing progress anywhere,” he said.

Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, said Hylak-Reinholtz’s statement made zero sense to him.

“My understanding was they promised an up-and-running medical center, not a psychiatric cen-

ter. And to me right from the get-go the timeframe just didn’t seem great with the amount of work that needed to be done on the building. It just wasn’t feasible,” he said.

Marshall, who also is a new board member, said Foresight would have had to use an extraordinary amount of money and a huge number of work crews, “which we’ve never seen,” to get the building working on the 2023 timeframe it set.

“And on that note, the fact that they’ve never paid taxes to me makes it seem to ring false that they ever intended to do any sort of work,” he said.

As of January 31, Patrick County Treasurer Sandra Stone said Foresight still had not paid any of the taxes owed to the county, which currently is \$33,101.12 in delinquent taxes for 2022 and 2023, plus penalties and interest.

Marshall believes a project needs to be done, but that Foresight’s idea and angle will never work.

“I think we absolutely need to get state help on this. I honestly think what needs to happen is the state needs to take eminent domain on that property, mitigate all the problems, take that building down, and then make some kind of deal

between the county, state, and one of these large medical providers.”

Marshall noted there are several large medical providers within an hour to an hour-and-a-half of Patrick County.

“I’m sure we could work with one of them to bring their system down here,” Marshall said, adding that would take a few years and a lot of work but could be done if there was state cooperation.

County, state, and others met with several providers when the hospital shuttered, but they were unable at that time to strike a deal. Additionally, hospitals are for-profit businesses, and as such are under the auspices of economic development.

The county does “absolutely not” need to be in the hospital business, Simmons said. “We can’t afford it.”

Perry said he’s also unsure if the county itself should be in the hospital-owning business because he can think of pros and cons of that happening.

“We see what happens when we’re not in charge, or we don’t have some control over something, but at the same time in this day and age with the way our health-care system is set up, if you’re not part of a bigger, bigger, bigger en-

terity, it’s hard to stay afloat and stay open,” he said.

Perry added he would need to sit down with someone who has more experience in this subject and get those assessments and the numbers crunched before firmly making a decision.

Wood also doesn’t believe Patrick County should be in the hospital business.

Kendrick agrees with Simmons that the county cannot afford to operate a hospital.

“Where are we going to get the money for that,” Kendrick asked rhetorically, and noted that he had “seen it mentioned somewhere that almost \$10 million” is needed “to bring it up to code.”

Years ago, Kendrick recalled that the Economic Development Authority (EDA) worked on this issue and tried multiple avenues to reopen the hospital.

“The only thing close we got was” one other health system potentially interested, he said and added that the provider wanted the county to buy the property, “bring it up to code, and then they still wanted \$2.5 million a year to subsidize it and run it for us.

“The money just ain’t there,” Kendrick said.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Haters

(Fox, Daily Signal, The Federalist, MRCTV, Washington Post, AEI, Newsweek, Jewish Journal)

Jew Haters hate all of western civilization, not just Israel. This hatred for the West and those identified with it explains why leftists are not bothered by the inconsistencies of their support for radical Islamists. But the left's ideological imperatives push them to side against whomever they perceive as more white, Western, and Christian, which in this case are the Jews and Israel.

This is, why many on the left have been indifferent or gleeful regarding the atrocities committed by Hamas. For the left, only oppressed identities are deserving of sympathy. And in this view, Jews no longer count as oppressed but are instead viewed as oppressors — and therefore legitimate targets.

This is morally deranged and historically illiterate, which is to be expected when academia's intellectual garbage is processed through the media. Jews are intertwined with the history of the West and are natural enemies of hateful fanatics who want to destroy Western Civilization. It is not that Jews have punched far above their demographic weight in contributions to culture, science, and art. It is that Jewishness is a rebuke to leftism itself.

At heart, leftism is a perversion of religion. Faced with the evil and brokenness of the world, leftism

responds not by turning toward God, nor by first seeking to tame the evil of one's own heart, but by seeking power. Call it critical theory, anticolonialism, or just call it what it really is ---Marxism. The promise of leftism is that power, properly redistributed from the oppressors and to the oppressed, can be used to remake the world.

Of course, this seizure of power is tied to the destruction of the old (unjust) order. The past is seen as little more than a catalog of injustice and the status quo as the perpetration of injustice. Hence the constant calls to smash the system, burn it all down, stage a revolution, and so on. If people get hurt, well, they had it coming.

Today's left still want to destroy, but without any apparent faith in a glorious future, they take power to hollow out institutions and secure patronage, not to build anything just, worthy, or beautiful. Those chanting "from the river to the sea" know that the fulfillment of their slogan would not be a prosperous, multiethnic secular democracy, but genocide and an Islamist hellhole.

Yet they carry on — hopeless, but full of resentment and a desire to hurt others. Hatred gives them meaning, so they have eagerly embraced Jew-hatred as the latest iteration of their rage against all of Western Civilization.

Pray for our country.
William Salser,
Stuart

Enraged, But Gullible No Longer

Here's a big vote of thanks to Brandon Simmons for speaking plainly about the future of Foresight Health's plans for a hospital on the site of the old Pioneer Hospital. It not only restored my faith in my own sanity but has quite possibly moved things forward towards a realistic healthcare solution for the area.

Foresight General's COO and General Counsel, Joseph Hylak-Reinholtz, said he was enraged by Simmon's public assessment of the situation. I know how he feels. When the sign said "Opening in October 2023," I was cynical but conceded that an unveiling in time for the November election would a theatrical climax, but welcome, to Delegate Wren William's re-election campaign.

He won re-election. The sign changed to "Opening in 2023." Trees were cut down. The lawn was mowed. The lights glowed at night. Hey! Ninety days to go. It might still happen. I was willing to concede that Delegate Williams might just pull a rabbit out of a hat. Sadly, it was not even rabbit ears, just a pair of white flags, waved by Hylak-Reinholtz as he raised new possible solutions:

- *financial assistance from the county or a state agency.
- *a possible transfer of ownership to the county - with a Foresight team managing the operation.
- *Foggy references to purchase offers, joint ventures and a change of scope

Considering Hylak-Reinholtz's recitation of all the problems in establishing or reviving any rural hospital, it's difficult to believe in the management prowess of anyone directly involved with this project's genesis. Add the problems that were well-known to ordinary citizens in the county – black mold, leaky roof, etc. – it's doubly hard to believe there was any due diligence involved in their investment decision.

It is not difficult to believe, however, that Foresight is aware of possible new sources of funding for medical services, such as the \$300 million announced by Gov. Glenn Youngkin on December 13, and the budget amendment proposed last week for free rural clinics like Patrick County's Caring Hearts. Some might see these developments as worth the gamble of sticking around.

But Simmons stepped in, saw that the emperor had no clothes and told the truth. Thankfully.

Judy Ferring,
Claudville

Sources: *Enterprise articles concerning Simmon's revelation and Hylak-Reinholtz' response.
*Release from Governor's office on Dec. 13, headlined "Governor Glenn Youngkin Announces Additional Funding and Waiver Slots for Virginians with Developmental Disabilities, Enhancing Support"
*WVIR report on Feb. 3 "Proposed budget amendment would add \$5M in funding for Virginia free clinics

Abortion and morality

A recent letter writer obviously disagrees with my beliefs (which is certainly his right) and asks some questions which I will endeavor to answer. He obviously uses religion as his basis of morality and opposition to abortion. His closing comment was "If God is not our moral compass, then what is?"

First one must define morality. There are many good definitions, and all are very similar, so I will use that contained in the Oxford Dictionary – "A system of values, normative rules, or principles according to which intentions or behaviors are judged to be good or bad, right or wrong." Note that "God" is not part of the definition. Certainly, some use religious beliefs to define morality, but that is just a subset of the definition but not part of the actual definition. Our civilization requires morality – one cannot murder because each person has equal rights which cannot be infringed upon.

And he feels abortion is "termination of a life." When does life begin? There are many opinions on that. Being a person of science and reality, I believe that life can only begin when an unborn can live outside the womb. However, one has to also consider the phi-

losophy and cultures involved as well as the medical knowledge available at the time. Currently, it is generally accepted that a fetus cannot survive until at least 24 weeks from conception – i.e. about 6 months of pregnancy. Any time before that is where opinions really get involved, since the question has already been answered from a medical standpoint.

I do believe that the healthcare of a woman is primary. If having an abortion protects her, then that should be the prime consideration. The news recently reported on a woman in Texas who was having a problem with a pregnancy (Texas prohibits abortions to a very strict timeline) and she had to go to another state for the abortion. By having the abortion, she would then be able to have another child later, as carrying the non-viable fetus to delivery would not only lose the child, but would prevent her from later becoming pregnant.

And I am aware that separation of church and state is a misnomer. If the writer would like to debate further, I can be reached at sandy.rodgers@earthlink.net.

William S. Rodgers,
Brentwood, TN

Push Me, Pull You

I am often asked by friends and constituents how things are going in Washington. I have to say I am doing my best, but sometimes I get frustrated. We know that there can be partisan gridlock that slows things down in Washington, but right now frustrating and nonsensical decisions are coming from the Biden Administration.



Morgan Griffith
Representative

The way they decide policy reminds me of the Doctor Dolittle character, the Pushmi-Pullyu, an animal with two heads at opposite ends of its body.

Currently, the Administration is trying to push billions and billions of taxpayer money out the door to fund new-fangled energy technologies that are not fully developed, while at the same time closing a door on the natural gas industry that brings down costs for families and helps our national security interests.

Recently I chaired a hearing in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, in which I questioned a Senior Advisor at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about the agency's new Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. The fund was authorized by the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, which has \$27 billion for Green New Deal projects. (A recent report in the Daily Caller even says they are going to deem the playground for the wealthy, Martha's Vineyard, as "low income" to push EV charger subsidies.)

According to the law, the agency must award all the funds by September 30th. That is a staggering amount in the next eight months.

While I did not vote for the Inflation Reduction Act and don't agree with many of the policies, the fund is set to hand out \$27 billion in taxpayer funds in a short amount of time and we must ensure there are proper protocols put in place to limit waste, fraud, and abuse of this money.

During the hearing, I asked our witness about the specific audit and debarment measures the EPA will use to ensure compliance by grantees, but also sub-grantees.

I also asked him to ensure that both grantees and sub-grantees will be responsive to this Oversight Subcommittee.

I asked this because unfortunately the federal government has run into issues in the past when funding and overseeing new types of energy and environment projects. A prime example was when the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) gave loans to Solyndra from 2009 to 2011. Abuse by DOE and their failure to properly administer the program cost the American taxpayers an additional \$170 million.

And pulling in the other direction, Biden recently announced that he would be instituting a ban on permits for new projects that export U.S. Liquefied Nat-

ural Gas (LNG) to countries that do not have free trade agreements with the U.S., including all of Europe.

Unfortunately, limiting LNG exports will not only have negative effects here at home, but also internationally.

Blocking new LNG projects will damage future natural gas infrastructure and kill thousands of good paying American jobs. Before Biden's ban, a 2017 report by ICF International indicated that by 2040, the U.S. LNG industry was projected to support between 220,000 and 452,000 additional U.S. jobs. Additionally, the report projected the industry would add between \$50 billion and \$73 billion to the U.S. economy.

U.S. exports of LNG also help protect ours and other countries' national security interests.

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, U.S. companies increased their LNG exports so that European countries would not have to rely solely on Russia.

This was in an effort to not only restrict the revenue Russia would receive from their LNG exports, but also decrease the likelihood that Russia could destabilize the region should they want to retaliate against Europe for supporting Ukraine.

Recently, I met with a few members of Bulgaria's Parliament who talked about Bulgaria switching from Russian to U.S. LNG and how they were glad to have U.S. energy sources to rely on.

So, on the one hand, the Administration is pushing billions of dollars to implement new and untested technology, and on the other hand they are pulling the benefits of technology that helps here and abroad.

Not only that, but the Administration has also now adopted this push/pull stance on foreign affairs. They have claimed to support Ukraine and previously advocated for exporting LNG in order to support Ukraine and the rest of Europe. Now they are stopping new permits, which will help Russia and hurt Ukraine.

How does any of this make sense?

It's time for the Biden Administration to stop these senseless decisions that push in one direction and pull in the other.

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/>.

If you enjoyed the recent columns by Ben Williams and Holly Kozelsky, they are available weekly in the Henry County Enterprise

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Patrick Pioneers

Dr. William F. B. Taylor and wife, Penceaniah "Fox" Purdy Taylor

By Beverly Belcher Woody

Last week, we looked at Dr. William F. B. Taylor, his first wife, Frances Morton "Fannie" Bishop, and her parents, Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Monroe Bishop. Fannie passed away in 1874 at the age of forty-two, leaving seven children under the age of thirteen.

Dr. Taylor remarried again on the 30th of July 1881 in Danbury, North Carolina. The young bride was Miss Penceaniah "Fox" Purdy, the daughter of John Anderson Purdy and Martha Custer Purdy of Mayo Forge. Dr. Taylor was fifty-three and Fox Purdy was nineteen years old.

The newly married couple returned to the doctor's home in Elamsville, Virginia. Fire had recently destroyed the first Taylor home, and it was then that Dr. Taylor considered moving his family to Danbury. Fearful of losing their community doctor, local residents persuaded Dr. Taylor to stay in Elamsville by building him a new home.

Dr. Taylor and Fox's first child, Wiley F. B. Taylor, was born on May 7th, 1882. The couple's second child, Henry "Huey" Franklin Taylor, was born on April 9th, 1884. Tragically, the following year, little Wiley died at the age of three on the 21st of July 1885.

In what used to be a common practice, Dr. Taylor and wife, Fox named their third child in memory of their first child. Wiley F. B. Taylor, the second, was born on the second of May 1886. The couple's only daughter, Martha Lillian, was born on the 27th of December 1887.

The Taylor family attended Ross-Harbour United Methodist Church, which was established in 1866. Dr. Taylor continued to practice medicine until shortly before his death on the fifth of September 1891; he had succumbed to tuberculosis.

Fox remained at the Taylor home where she raised her stepchildren and children. Mary Taylor Wood, Fox's stepdaughter who was born in 1865, remarked that Fox was more like a sister than a stepmother, since they were only three years apart in age.

Dr. Taylor and Fox's second son Huey Taylor grew up and moved to Norristown, Pennsylvania where he worked as a police officer. Huey and his wife moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in 1923 and Huey joined the local police department the same year. Huey was an excellent marksman, winning the police pistol state championship from 1932-1934. I suspect he acquired this shooting skill as a child while squirrel hunting back in Patrick County. Huey passed away at



Nolen Taylor Family

the age of seventy-seven in 1961; he is buried in St. Petersburg.

Dr. Taylor and Fox's third son, Wiley F. B. Taylor, moved to Cape May, New Jersey where he lived until his passing in 1974. Wiley's body was brought back to Patrick County and was buried in the Taylor plot in Stuart Cemetery.

The Taylor's only daughter, Martha Lillian married Charles William Nolen on the 24th of June 1908. Charles, a recent graduate of William and Mary, was the son of George Sparrel Nolen and Ruth Josephine Hooker of Elamsville. Charles and Lillian Taylor Nolen raised eight children including five sons: William Taylor; George Franklin; Russell Tazewell; Curtis Brown; and Chester Winfred; and three daughters: Josephine; Mary; and Frances.

Martha Lillian Taylor Nolen passed away on November 30, 1966, at the age of seventy-eight, and her husband, Charles followed her to the grave only ten months later.

Thank you so much to Terry Trefry for the photos and information about Dr. Taylor and his family.

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



Charles and Lillian Taylor Nolen (Photos courtesy of Terry Trefry)

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 my WEP Reduction Go Away if I Continue Working?

Dear Rusty: I'm 63 years old and have not yet started my Social Security. I now work for the State of Illinois and will draw a pension from that state's university system. I don't pay into Social Security from this position and, as a result, my Social Security payment will be reduced. But I have also worked elsewhere and contributed to Social Security for 26 years.

If I retire from the state university and begin drawing my reduced Social Security payment, and then work in a different job which does contribute to SS, will the reduction to my Social Security payment ever be eliminated? Or will I be permanently stuck with the smaller Social Security payment? Signed: Curious Educator

Dear Curious: A rule called the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) will apply to your Social Security benefit because your IL state pension was earned without paying into the Social Security program. The basic rule is that anyone with a pension earned without contributing to Social Security, and who is also entitled to Social Security benefits, is subject to WEP, which reduces that person's Social Security retirement benefit. It's a law enacted many years ago to equalize how SS benefits are paid to all Social Security beneficiaries. However, the WEP rules also provide relief for those who have only a small non-covered pension, and for those who have sep-

arately contributed to Social Security for a lot of years. For example:

- The WEP reduction to your SS benefit cannot be more than 50% of your non-covered (IL) pension
- The WEP reduction is smaller for each year over 20 years contributing to Social Security from substantial earnings
- WEP does not apply to those who have at least 30 years contributing to SS from substantial earnings

Although you could retire at 63 and collect your pension from the university and also collect your WEP-reduced Social Security, you have something else to consider if you take another job which pays into Social Security.

Social Security has an annual "earnings test" for those who collect benefits before their full retirement age (FRA). The earnings test limits how much you can earn while collecting early SS before they take away some of your benefits. The earnings limit for 2024 is \$22,320 and, if that is exceeded, you will lose \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. If your work earnings substantially exceed the earnings limit, you would likely be temporarily ineligible to receive Social Security benefits. FYI, the earnings test no longer applies once you reach your full retirement age, which for you is 67.

Without knowing your expected income from a new job, I can't say how much of your SS you would be able to receive, but you can use this as a guide: Social Security will take away benefits equal to half of what you exceed the annual earnings limit by, and they typically recover by withholding future benefits. If 12 months or more of

benefits are withheld, you will be temporarily ineligible to receive benefits until your earnings are less, or you reach your full retirement age (the earnings test no longer applies once you reach your FRA). So, depending on your expected annual work earnings, you may wish to defer claiming your Social Security until you either earn less or reach 67 years of age.

If you already have 26 years contributing to Social Security from "substantial earnings," your WEP reduction will already be mitigated, and any additional years of substantial earnings from which SS payroll taxes are deducted will result in an even smaller WEP reduction. If you can achieve 30 years of SS contributions from substantial work earnings, WEP will no longer apply. So, you may not be "stuck with" the WEP reduction permanently, but you will need to contact Social Security to request that your WEP reduction amount be reviewed in light of any additional years of SS-covered earnings (this should be done after you submit your income taxes each year you have additional SS-covered earnings).

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The Power of Preventative Medicine

We all know the quote by Hippocrates well: "Let food be your medicine, medicine be your food." But do we take it seriously? Do we just think of it as another ancient proverb that we recite as poetry? Or perhaps, should we understand it as Hippocrates did, as a deep-rooted meaning that would still be true today?

The rise in obesity and chronic diseases has gained our attention in recent years. Today's environment and lifestyle affect our children; they're the ones who will have to face the consequences of our choices. Educators are looking for solutions and it all seems to point to a plant-based diet. We've known that eating healthy prevents diseases, but not until recently have we paid attention to the success of lifestyle medicine.

Preventative measures are becoming more and more popular. Seeing how a poor diet caused a rise in chronic diseases among children is finally causing people to pay attention to the seriousness of diet.

The University of Central Florida (UCF) College of Medicine saw the need for lifestyle medicine classes for their medical students, so they developed an innovative culinary medicine course. The course was created to sustainably heal patients by teaching medical students how to talk about nutrition and healthy eating.

Dr. Robert Karch, a pediatrician at Nemours Children's Hospital and associate professor of pediatrics at UCF College of Medicine assisted in implementing this amazing program. He realized the need for better communication

between patients. Doctors can hand a patient a paper with information, but being able to offer advice on healthy cooking and healthy eating at home was "groundbreaking." The practical application of preventative care is seen through this program. This program was first launched six years ago and since then, it's been implemented in 40 medical schools nationwide. With the obesity epidemic and rise in chronic diseases among children, this elective course will give medical students the tools to share practical lifestyle advice with their patients.

Diet can be deadly when abused but used correctly, it can also be a strong force for good health and long life. Food is imperative to health and wellbeing, but there have been difficulties in proper patient education. The UCF program is a truly groundbreaking one, in that it is finally providing useful techniques to develop healthy eating habits within families. Giving medical students the opportunity to provide lifestyle management advice in their practice is the missing puzzle piece that will heal our children's future. The program is one way to highlight the connection between food and health. In the modern age, we are becoming aware of how diet is crucial to our health. Instead of just providing an informational sheet or increasing medications for patients and expecting results, they have found a tangible solution.

There needs to be more medical schools like this. Food is the preventative measure of lifestyle that can be addressed. It's amazing how our healthcare providers are

investing their time and research to find solutions to address the rise in obesity and chronic diseases in pediatrics.

The change can begin with our children

We need to build a better future and lifestyle for this next generation. Children are suffering because of their diets. If we get actively involved in educating parents and caretakers about the advantages that plant-based diets promote, we can create a movement towards better health and longevity. Let's become educators of health just like these UCF medical students that want to give a practical tool that patients can take home with them. In the end, these students are not only helping patients but improving their health and reducing their mortality risk. As people who are aware of the power of a healthy lifestyle, this should also be our goal.

How can we start the process of rejuvenating the lifestyle and environment of our children? It can be as simple as promoting fresh veggies and fruits as exciting and healthy treats. Begin by teaching children to prepare their own food. They'll feel a sense of ownership when they finish the recipe. And be consistent because, let's be honest, sometimes kids don't want to eat their veggies especially if we don't have them regularly in our diet. Make this transition a positive one.

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

JV Lady Cougars fall in overtime



Gracen Conner fights for a loose ball. (By Pat Delaney)



Sheylan Lester battles two Lady Buffaloes for a rebound.



Aubreigh Large puts up a shot.

By Pat Delaney

The JV Lady Cougars dropped a hard fought, overtime game to Floyd County, 35-26. The game on January 29 featured tough defense from both teams and remained close throughout.

For most of the first three quarters, the Lady Cougars trailed, while keeping Lady Buffaloes within striking distance. Late in the third quarter, Sheylan Lester hit a big jump shot to take a two-point lead into the fourth.

The fourth quarter was as tough as the first three, with solid defense on both sides, making it tough to score. Floyd regained the lead, which it held for much of the quarter, leading by three with just 35 seconds to go in the game. A Meredith Wood free-throw got the Cougars to within two.

The Cougar home crowd erupted when Gracen Connor stole the Lady Buffalo inbound pass and drove to the basket for the game-tying layup with 29 seconds to go. Neither team could score in the time remaining, sending the game to a four-minute overtime period.

Floyd County grabbed the momentum back with a huge three-pointer in the first minute of overtime. Another three-pointer with just over two-minutes to go increased their lead to



The Cougar faithful were out in force, and wearing teal for Lauren Worley.

seven, and tight defensive play held the Lady Cougars to one point in overtime, giving the Lady Buffaloes the 35-26 victory.

Sheylan Lester led the Lady Cougars with 9 points, 2 blocked shots and 6 rebounds. Gracen Conner, Martinia Hubbard and Lauren Hazelwood all chipped in four points each.

They "battled hard tonight. I am so proud of their effort and hustle," said Lady Cougar Head Coach, Grace Helms, who also appreciated the Cougar faithful who cheered them on throughout the game. "It felt great to have a full gym."



Aubreigh Large looks for a teammate. (By Ashlee Mullis)

Lady Cougars drop hard fought game to Floyd

By Pat Delaney

"That was a heavyweight fight," Cougar Head Coach Tony Mosley said after his team fell to Floyd County, 44-38 on January 29. "They just lasted a little longer than we did."

The Three Rivers District game was a defensive battle, with both teams playing full-court press defense for much of the game, causing turnovers and making points hard to get.

The game started with a show of sportsmanship from the visiting Lady Buffaloes. Patrick County senior Lilli Cobbler, who injured her knee in the previous game with Glenvar, could not play against Floyd. She was, however, in the starting lineup, and after an uncontested opening jump ball, Floyd allowed her to score on her senior night.

"I appreciate their coach for allowing us to do that," said Coach Mosley of Buffaloes' coach, Karen Radford. "She's a class act."

A pregame ceremony honored Lady Cougar seniors Shauntel Hill, Allanah Mitchell, Aniya Penn, and Lilli Cobbler, along with their families. It was also, "teal night" with most of the fans, along with both coaching staffs, wearing teal to support Patrick County's Lauren Worley and Floyd County's Micah Underwood, who were both severely injured in a car accident in December.

After allowing Floyd to tie the game at two, both teams played smothering, end to end defense, making it difficult for either team to get into any sort of offensive rhythm. Following an Aniya Penn three-pointer, the Lady Cougars grabbed an 11-9 lead with three minutes to go in the quarter. After several minutes of back-and-forth play, Floyd took a one-point lead to end the quarter at 13-12.

The second quarter was a tale of two runs. The Lady Cougars went on a 6-0 run to start the quarter only to have the Lady Buffaloes respond with an 8-0 run of their own, taking a 24-20 lead into halftime.

Patrick County played well in the third quarter, but went cold shooting the ball. Many shots rattled around the rim, only to fall out. Floyd County took advantage and, despite tough defense from the Lady Cougars, extended their lead to seven by the end of the quarter at 38-31.

In the final quarter, the Lady Cougars closed the gap to three points with 5:24 to go, but could not string together any sort of run. Both teams struggled against the opposing defense, with only 13 points scored by both teams in the quarter. Floyd County held onto their lead, winning the game by six points, 44-38.

One factor in the game was Floyd County's rebounding. The Lady Buffaloes had a rebounding edge of 46-30, limiting second chance opportunities for the Lady Cougars. Another factor was the play of Floyd County's Kiley Hylton, who had 21 points and 16 rebounds.

"That #34 (Hylton), she's a baller," said Cougar Coach Mosley. "She hurt us, she really did. In the first half, she had over half their points."

Lilly Hazelwood led the way for the Lady Cougars with 9 points and 5 rebounds. Allanah Mitchell, Kendra Worley and Aniya Penn each added six points. Penn also had 6 offensive rebounds and 4 assists.

After the game, Coach Mosley said that playing that kind of hard fought, end-to-end game takes, "a lot of energy. I want to thank our fans for coming out and bringing all that energy, and I appreciate our girls for playing so hard. They played great. I'm proud of them."



Seniors (L to R) Lilli Cobbler, Shauntel Hill, Allanah Mitchell and Aniya Penn were honored in a pre-game ceremony. (Photos by Pat Delaney)



Senior Shauntel Hill goes up for a shot.



Kendra Worley dribbles around a Floyd defender.



Shauntel Hill drives the ball down the court. (By Ashlee Mullis)



The Floyd coaches and team wore teal for Lauren Worley and Micah Underwood.



Senior Lilli Cobbler heads to the bench after scoring the game's first points on senior night.



The Cougar coaches wore T-shirts for Lauren Worley and Micah Underwood.



The student section reacts to a Cougar three pointer.



The Lady Cougars defense was solid all game.



Senior Aniya Penn shoots over two Floyd defenders.



Senior Allanah Mitchell drives to the basket.

EDITORIAL: We will rise or fall together

As I watch the birds flit around and a handsome red headed woodpecker light between tree branches on this gorgeous Saturday, I can't help but think about the prospect of an early spring, closely followed by a guilty nudging: I need to get to work. Much remains to be done for the upcoming editions, and I don't have time to lollygag what with the hospital situation changing daily.

Still, I take a few minutes to mindlessly scroll through my social media, stopping occasionally to read or 'like' a post. Then, I read that Wren Williams has been singled out in many posts as the poster boy for the failed hospital deal.

I understand the need to blame when facing disappointment, but is that fair or just?

No, this is not pro any political party. Truth is, I detest labels, most of which serve to dehumanize and divide. I believe we have more in common than the sum total of our differences. I also dislike social media when it is used as a platform to say things that likely (hopefully) would not be said to another human being during a face to face conversation.

And in my view, recent news about the hospital project is not Wren Williams' fault.

True enough, it was mentioned more than once during his campaign, and to that extent, he is to blame for creating that expectation among voters.

However, to borrow a line from a friend who dislikes Mr. Williams, "Anyone who thinks that Wren has the power to reopen the hospital doesn't understand how government works."

Also, to be fair, the talk about reopening the hospital predated Mr. Williams' campaign. It

was mentioned multiple times before he ever became a candidate. Perhaps it is in his blood.

His grandfather was among a group of investors to step forward years ago when it looked as though the hospital would close. While under the group's oversight, the hospital was called Patrick Community Hospital. The group of investors managed to keep the hospital open until a buyer (Pioneer) was found.

In this latest deal, and as I understand it, the state was involved only to the extent needed to ensure certain licenses to reopen the hospital could be extended or obtained. It would not be involved in the day to day, on the ground activities (such as installing signs), because hospitals are for profit businesses.

Additionally, neither Mr. Williams nor anyone else in state government had any input into whether the hospital was sold, when, or to whom.

A private company, then called Virginia Community Capital (VCC), and now known as Locus, bought the hospital at an auction. The same company held the lien on the property for funds it loaned to the former owners (Pioneer).

After purchasing the property at auction, filings indicate that VCC then created a limited liability company called Patrick County Real Estate, LLC. Perhaps to market and sell the hospital property, but that is entirely speculation and conjecture.

In 2022, another entity was created - Foresight HS Property Holdings Blue Ridge LLC. The principal office address and contact was listed as Joseph Hylak-Reinholtz, who

is Foresight Hospital's general counsel and COO. The entity's address was listed as 303 E Wacker Dr Ste 2110, Chicago, IL, 60601. Sameer K Suhail, CEO of Foresight, is listed as the organizer.

The paperwork to create the entity was filed by Virginia Registered Agent Services, LLC, a firm in Virginia Beach. The firm, according to Google, is Professional Registered Agent Service for a Reasonable Price - in this case, \$49.

Recently in Stuart, Congressman Morgan Griffith said that he and Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine had concerns about the hospital project nearly two years ago after they were not contacted to the secure federal licenses needed.

One person, whether or not it is Mr. Williams, will never be the county's savior and solve its every problem. That will take a team, and is not easily accomplished even then. If we need a savior, I suggest we look to Jesus if we're Christian, or some other deity if we're not.

In my experience and memory, Mr. Williams and his family have worked to keep the hospital open and/or reopen it. More often than not, they end up with a blackeye for their efforts.

This time around, Mr. Williams worked to gain the approval needed to extend the license. Since then, he has worked to help facilitate the project. He stands ready to help in the future, as evidenced by his recent comment: "We can't just stop."

Seems to me, he has done his part. What have the rest of us done?

General Assembly session is now at full steam



Sen. Bill Stanley

The General Assembly session is now at full steam. Committees are considering long dockets of legislation submitted by the Senators and bills are beginning to come to the floor for consideration by the full Senate. This also was the last week to file any remaining bills for consideration by the General Assembly

As part of our effort to keep Virginians safer, we considered bills proposed by my fellow Republican colleagues in the Senate in the Senate Courts of Justice Committee. Simply put, Republicans want to take firm action and stop the illegal sale of fentanyl and other dangerous drugs that often lead to deaths from overdoses. These deaths are tragic and result in the heartbreaking grief of families and loved ones who go through this indescribable pain. It is so important that we do everything we can to prevent these deaths and hold accountable those who played a role in these tragedies accountable. Republicans supported legislation to crack down on those who play a role in deaths due to dangerous illegal drugs. Under the Republican bill, an individual illegally providing drugs that are responsible for the death of the user could be charged with sec-

ond degree murder—even if no money was involved. My Republican colleagues and I think it is just common sense that with the number of deaths due to substances like fentanyl increasing, it is time to hold the people who provide these drugs that result in death accountable for their actions. Most Democrats on the Courts of Justice committee refused to support this common-sense measure and the bill died on a party-line 8-7 vote.

On other matters, a few years ago, Democrats passed a law requires that Virginia's rules related to auto emissions and electric vehicle mandates mirror those set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). This means that California bureaucrats—who work and live 2,500 miles from here, and are not even elected by Californians, never mind Virginians—are setting rules Virginians are forced to live by whether they are right for us or not.

Because of this, Virginians are on course to phase out sales of gasoline-powered vehicles by 2035--the same schedule California has set for itself. Whatever CARB decides for California automatically becomes wrong. It doesn't matter that companies like Ford are cutting electric vehicle production because sales are below expectations. It doesn't matter that battery life is lousy in cold weather here. It doesn't matter that it will cost billions to upgrade the electric grid to give us the capacity to charge all these cars. Because of the bill passed by the Democrats a few years back, Californians make our rules, not Virginians. My Republican colleagues and I want to change that. A bill was put forward to return control over these rules to Virginia, co-sponsored by every Republican in the State Senate. Even with all that support, Democrats used their majority on the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee to

kill the bill. Sadly, that leaves Californians in charge of telling Virginia what our auto emission standards should be.

I'm proud to share that Senate Bill 212, the Virginia Small Business Economic Development Act, which I strongly advocated for, successfully reported out of committee this week. This comprehensive bill will provide much-needed support and resources to our state's small businesses and will allow them to participate in the gaming industry that has been created by the law passed a few years back regarding gaming in Virginia. This bill establishes a tax and regulatory framework for skill game regulation, creates a dedicated funding source for small business development, our local governments, and school modernization. Also, my bills regarding the banning of cell phone use by students in our public schools during school hours, creating a return to offering vocational technical education training in our public schools, and expanding the ability of the New College Institute to engage in needed workforce training in our region that will create a tech-talent workforce pipeline that will attract new businesses to our area all advanced to the Senate floor for final consideration by the Senate. I anticipate that each of these bills will cross over to the House of Delegates for consideration soon.

With the deadline to file new legislation proposals occurring this past Friday, I submitted the following proposals:

Senate Bill 684, the Online Children's Safety Protection Act. This vital legislation aims to protect our children online by requiring specific safeguards from tech companies and empowering the Attorney General to hold them accountable. In today's digital age, children deserve robust protections against harmful content

and predatory practices.

Senate Joint Resolution 48, designating March 31st as FIRST Robotics Day in Virginia. This resolution honors the incredible work of FIRST Robotics, an organization that inspires young minds to pursue STEM careers through robotics competitions. Recognizing their contributions will showcase the importance of these programs and encourage further support for them.

As always, I want to encourage you to watch the General Assembly session. You are welcome to visit us in person in Richmond and view the proceedings from the gallery. But you can also stream each day's session. Session begins typically at noon each weekday except Friday when it generally starts at 10 a.m. Always check these times as they can change when needed. You may also be interested to know that committee meetings are also streamed.

As always, I want to hear your views, opinions, suggestions, and questions as it relates to legislation or state government. You can email my office at district7@senate.virginia.gov. And if you are in Richmond, please come by my office at the General Assembly building. I am in Room 514. While my schedule is often hectic and subject to change, I would love to say hello to you if I can.

The coming weeks promise to be even more action-packed, with committee hearings on key bills and potential floor votes on critical legislation. I am committed to representing your interests on every issue, from education and healthcare to economic development and infrastructure. As always, your feedback is invaluable. Please don't hesitate to stay in touch and let me know your concerns. Thank you for the privilege of serving the 7th Senate District. It is an honor to represent you in Richmond.

Sports Briefs

By Ashlee Mullis

Varsity Lady Cougars Take Loss on the Road

The Varsity Lady Cougars lost 54-30 on the road at Allegany, Wednesday, January 31. Aniya Penn had 8 points, 10 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 deflection, 2 steals, and 1 block. Kimora Wimbush had 6 points, 3 rebounds, 2 deflections, and 1 steal. Kendra Worley had 5 points, 1 rebound, 2 deflections, and 2 steals. Shauntel Hill had 3 points, 4 rebounds, 2 deflections, and 2 steals while Lilly Hazelwood had 3 points and 3 rebounds.

JV Lady Cougars Fall to Carroll

The JV Lady Cougars lost 29-40 to Carroll County on Thursday, February 1. The Lady Cougars had a 7-2 lead at the end of the 1st. They fell behind in the 2nd and 3rd quarters, missing several free throws. The Lady Cougars came back in the 4th and scored 18 points.

"I am proud of them for never giving up and working the whole game," said Coach Grace Helms. Gracen Conner led the Lady Cougars with 11

points, 6 rebounds, and 2 steals. Chloe Hubbard had 9 rebounds, 8 points, and 3 steals. Martina Hubbard had 4 points, 2 steals, and 1 assist. Meredith Wood had 8 rebounds, 2 steals and 1 assist. Sheyan Lester had 3 points, 3 rebounds and 1 steal. Lauren Hazelwood had 3 rebounds and 1 steal.

JV Girls Beat Alleghany

The JV Lady Cougars got a 26-17 win over Alleghany, Wednesday, January 31st. Martina Hubbard led the Lady Cougars with 7 points, 5 rebounds, 1 assist, and 4 steals. Chloe Hubbard had 10 rebounds, 4 steals, and 5 points. Sheyan Lester had 6 points and 5 rebounds. Gracen Conner had 5 points, 2 rebounds, 4 steals, and 1 assist. Skye Ayers had 1 point and 6 rebounds. Aubreigh Large had 1 point and 2 rebounds. Meredith Wood had 1 point, 7 rebounds, and 1 steal. Novella Neater had 2 steals. Jazmyne Reynolds had a steal.

"I am proud of the ladies!" said Coach Grace Helms.

PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of Feb. 9-15:

2/9 7pm Boys Basketball vs Floyd County

2/12 7pm Boys Basketball vs Glenvar

Alfred Chester Turner

Mr. Alfred Chester Turner, age 77, of Woolwine passed away Monday, January 29, 2024, unexpectedly at his home. He was born on January 22, 1947, in Stuart to the late Chester Turner and Mildred Thomas Turner. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brothers Oscar Turner and Albert Lane Turner, as well as infant brother, Stephen.



He was well known for riding the roads, wheeling and dealing while hunting parts for his Power Wagons, a passion he shared with his sons and grandsons. Mr. Turner always had a two-dollar bill and gold coins to offer up for payment or for any children he might meet.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, February 2, 2024, at 11:00 at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart with President Dan Wait officiating. Burial will follow at the Boyd-Hylton-Turner Family Cemetery. The family will receive friends Thursday evening from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Funeral Home in Stuart. In lieu of flowers please make donations to the Woolwine Ruritans Club, P.O. Box 203, Woolwine, VA 24185 or the Smith River Squad, P.O. Box 122, Woolwine, VA 24185. Online condolences may be sent to www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Surviving are his wife of 55 years, Ayles Belcher Turner (“Love”) of the home; four children, Timothy Turner; Nancy Turner Belcher (David); Stephen Turner (Charity); and Matthew Turner (Jennifer); six grandchildren, Cole, Layton, Logan, Lucas, Jillian and Juliet; and one brother, Mitchael; sisters-in-law Shelley, Joan, Carol, and several nieces and nephews in addition to a few great nieces and nephews.

mechanic, who spent 34 years working in Nome, Alaska. Further, Mr. Turner was a long-time member of the Smith River Rescue Squad. He was a devout member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Stuart branch. He served a wide variety of leadership roles within the church and enjoyed sharing the gospel with as many people as he could. He had a passion for service and spent countless hours giving back to his community. Indeed, Alfred never met a stranger.

Alfred was a diesel heavy equipment

Leigh Ann Boyd Meadows

Leigh Ann Boyd Meadows, age 53 of Martinsville, gained her angel's wings Saturday, February 3, 2024, at her home. She was born in Giles County on February 5, 1970. She was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Walter and Minnie Boyd, and her maternal grandparents, Russell and Mary Frazier. For twenty-two years, Leigh Ann was a massage therapist whose healing touch changed many lives. She attended Rich Acres Christian Church, was strong in her Christian faith, and was a generous person. She loved her boys; they were the center of her life. She will be remembered as a wonderful mother, loving daughter, best big sister, caring aunt,



beloved dog, Mitch; many nieces; nephews; great-nieces; and great-nephews; and countless other dear friends.

A memorial visitation will be held Wednesday, February 7, 2024, from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart. If desired memorial donations may be made to the SPCA of Martinsville and Henry County, 132 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville, VA 24112. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Leigh Ann's family would like to express their gratitude to the nurses and staff of Mountain Valley Hospice for all their tender care and support given.

and devoted friend. Her wings were ready, but our hearts were not!

Leigh Ann is survived by her sons, Reiden Hylton and Paxton Tucker; her father, Wayne David Boyd; her mother, Susan Frazier Reed (Jesse); two sisters, Shannon Boyd (Al) and Kelly Haynes (Chad); a brother, David Walter Boyd (Sam); her soul sister, NitaJ Bowman; a step-sister, Leigh Ann Hall (Jeff); her

Ruth Polly Holt Martin

Mrs. Ruth Polly Holt Martin, age 82 of Stuart, Virginia went to be with her Heavenly Father on Sunday, February 4, 2024, at Blue Ridge Nursing Center in Stuart. She was born in Patrick County, Virginia on May 6, 1941, to the late Will and Pearl Lankford Holt. In addition to her parents, Mrs. Martin was preceded in death by her husband, William “Bill” Martin, a daughter, Faye Tucker Howell; two sisters, Oma H. Willard and Mary Alice H. Inman; and a brother, James Holt. She was a member of True Gospel Baptist Church and truly loved her church family. She loved calling everyone “Doll” and enjoyed listening to WHEO Radio. She loved her friends and family, especially her children and grand-



vate for Mrs. Martin and will be officiated by Pastor Jeff Pendleton. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Patrick County Caring Hearts Free Clinic, 835 Woodland Drive, Stuart, Virginia 24171, Patrick County Food Bank, P.O. Box 1304, Stuart, Virginia 24171 or to Meals On Wheels, c/o Southern Area Agency on Aging, 204 Cleveland Ave., Martinsville, Virginia 24112. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart has been entrusted with the arrangements, and online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

children, who are all comforted in knowing that she was strong in her faith and is now walking on the Heavenly streets of gold.

Mrs. Martin is survived by a daughter, Kaye Martin Wagoner (Richard); a son, Billy Joe Martin; three grandsons; three granddaughters; two great-grandsons; one great-granddaughter; two sisters, Inez Miller and Sue Fain; and several nieces and nephews.

All services are pri-

mo.

Mrs. Martin's family wants to express their gratitude to the staff at Blue Ridge Therapy Connection for all of their tender care and support given to their mom.

Clariss Adams Wright

Mrs. Clariss Adams Wright, age 95 of Stuart, passed away peacefully Monday, January 29, 2024, at her home. She was born in Patrick County on November 21, 1928 to the late Walter William Adams and Callie Ruth Hylton Adams. In addition to her parents, Mrs. Wright was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Arlis Curtis “Mickey” Wright; six sisters, Ruby A. Moorefield, Doris A. Tucker, Ruth A. Gunter, Cleatus Elizabeth Adams, June Dare Adams, and Nina Ann Adams; and two brothers, Ralph Warren Adams and William Lee Adams. Mrs. Wright was a longtime member of Stuart Church of



p.m. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Mike Shoaf and Aaron Blackard officiating. Interment will follow in Patrick Memorial Gardens. The family will receive friends on Thursday one hour prior to the services at the funeral home. Memorial donations may be made to Mountain Valley Hospice, P.O. Box 325, Dobson, NC 27017. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Christ. She will be remembered as a loving wife, devoted mother, caring grandmother, sister, and friend.

Mrs. Wright is survived by two daughters, Rhonda Wright, Donita (Richard) Thompson; one granddaughter, Alice (Lily) Thompson; and one great-grandson, Gabriel.

Funeral services for Mrs. Wright will be held Thursday, February 1, 2024, at 2:00

The family of Mrs. Wright would like to express their gratitude to her caregivers, Faye Handy and Betty Whisnant, and to Mountain Valley Hospice for all their love, care, and support given to Clariss.

Orben Ray Rakes

Mr. Orben Ray Rakes, age 94 of Ferrum, passed away February 1, 2024, at his home. He was born in Patrick County on January 26, 1930, to the late Walter “Goode” Rakes and Laura Lee Hall Rakes. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by four brothers, Hubert, Oscar, Randolph, and Richard Rakes; and six sisters, Edna Duncan, Marilyn Rakes, Altrude Shively, Mildred DeHart, Gaye Worley, and Judy Hale. Orben



Lane Rakes; one sister, Rena Lou Stone; sister-in-law, Carol Rakes; and several nieces and nephews.

had retired from Bassett Mirror. He loved fishing and coffee laces.

Surviving are two brothers, Cleo Rakes,

A graveside service will be held Monday, February 5, 2024, at 11:00 AM at the Rakes Family Cemetery with Chaplain Daniel Collins officiating. The family will receive friends on Sunday, February 4, 2024, at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Online condolences may be sent to www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

email us
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OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON
 Thank You for reading the enterprise

PATRICK PULPITS

Use everything but the squeal

By Van Yandell

1 Corinthians 9:22 "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

Having been a part of a generation that had an opportunity to listen to those that actually lived through the Great Depression of the 1930's has given me enlightenment to some facts and concepts that today's generation would never even consider reasonable.

An "old saying" that once was common was, "We used everything of the hog but the squeal." "Hog killin' time" was a common occurrence in rural America in the 30's (and long before) until the 1970's and is still done in families in some areas.

People, especially during those hard times, made use of everything available. Nothing was wasted and nothing was taken for granted. People were thankful for what God had provided and believed that to be wasteful was being sinful.

Recently I talked to a lady that had bought a turkey on sale for forty-nine cents per pound. She roasted it, deboned the meat; then cooked the left over product to make broth. The broth later ended up as a soup base with vegetables and chopped up turkey.

My mother raised chickens when I was a little boy in the 1950's. She bought chicks at the local farm store and fed them to a size she called pullets. Mom would kill one on Saturday and we had fried chicken for Sunday dinner.

Mother could have gone to the local grocery store (there were no supermarkets back then) and bought a chicken for ten cents per pound but that would have been a luxury she could not have afforded.

I remember the old iron kettle being filled with boiling water over an open fire. She "scalded" the dead chickens to remove the feathers. Mom also used the kettle when making lye soap. The homemade soap plus a scrubbing by her kept me clean. I often thought her attitude was, "If you don't bleed, you're not clean."

I used that kettle for a flower pot and still have it. One winter it froze, and the side broke out of it. I welded it back together and still use it for flowers.

This past summer I had the privilege of preaching in several churches in Kentucky. In the congregation of one was a couple that had made sorghum molasses the week before. I found it interesting to talk to them and hear of their procedure. They had planted and grew their own sorghum. They gave me a sample and it was fantastic with hot buttered biscuits.

To today's generation that seems to think products grow on the shelves in the stores, this must sound like the stone-age, but it is reality for many of us. To exist in a world of electrical dependence may some time in the future become a world of horror for many.

We are only one electromagnetic pulse (EMP) or geomagnetic disturbance (GMD) away from electricity becoming non-existent. These may be caused by solar flares/storms or the detonation of a nuclear device.

Terrorist attacks or an overloaded grid could also result in electrical outage for millions of people. Since this condition has only been experienced for short periods of time, we cannot even imagine what the results of a long term electrical interruption would mean.

The alarmists and conspiracy

theorists would have us in a state of panic, but most do not listen to their rhetoric. But if you think it cannot happen, think again. A permanent (or long term) electrical outage would immediately take us back to the 1930's.

It might be advisable for parents (or grandparents) to teach the young ones a few survival techniques. Those actions and procedures people practiced as normal fifty plus years ago may come in handy at some point in their future.

To plant and raise a garden, kill and eat wild game, find and purify water or food sources may seem archaic but those skills may become necessary for survival.

Apparently, I'm not the only one thinking this way. I see numerous articles and videos on preparing for disasters and lists of food products to purchase and store for such eventualities. To be prepared might sound old fashioned but if it becomes necessary, it may have been an expedient action.

Sad to say, electricity and technology has had an adverse effect on our connection with our Creator. I recently saw a poster with three pictures. One was at a ball game, another at a rock concert and the third, a church service.

As you might imagine the first two events were full of people and in the church were plenty of empty seats. Because of declining church participation and worship, the working of the Great Commission has suffered greatly (Acts 1: 8). If Christians do not tell the world about Jesus, no one will.

The Bible teaches the only eternal salvation is by a faith based belief that Christ Jesus was crucified for the remission of sin and resurrected (John 3: 16).

People in previous times used all their resources; we must use all the resources available to us to promote the Gospel of our Jesus. Nothing was wasted and that included time.

As many people in the 21st century seem to adhere to the belief that life is all about the here and now, eternity is not at the forefront of their minds.

Just a short seventy years ago, people were killing their own chickens. Also, they were making their own soap and heating their houses with firewood they had cut in fireplaces they had built.

For anyone to think the world cannot go back to that is a state of blind foolishness comparable to thinking that eternity is for fools. As many as eighty million Americans alive today are too young or were not yet born on September 11, 2001.

Yet, we well know the terrorist attack on that date happened. I recently had to explain what WTC was in reference to 9-11.

Simply because something is not at one's fingertips and clearly visible, doesn't mean it is not reality.

Christians are doing a great disservice to the world by not telling others about the saving power of our Creator (Colossians 1: 16). The fundamental of the gospel is: Eternal salvation is by a faith based belief that Christ Jesus was crucified for the remission of sin and resurrected.

John 20: 29 "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

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

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Shimeah (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. In Joshua 10, which people were killed by great stones cast down from heaven? Amorites, Samaritans, Canaanites, Nazarenes
3. From Genesis 2:24, what phrase describes the marriage of a man and a woman? Holy matrimony, God's reward, One flesh, Today forever
4. Which insect is mentioned in the book of James as an eater of garments? Gnat.

Hornet, Ant, Moth

5. What king of Bashan had an iron bed thirteen and a half feet long? Edrei, Og, Argob, Senior

6. On which day of creation was the sun made? First, Second, Third, Fourth

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Amorites, 3) One flesh, 4) Moth, 5) Og, 6) Fourth

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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Super Crossword

STORYBOOK SENTIMENT

- ACROSS**
- 1 Auxiliary professor
 - 8 Nickname for baseball great Ruth
 - 15 Cultural value system
 - 20 High-fashion clothing
 - 21 Knows someone at the company, say
 - 22 Reluctant (to)
 - 23 "Wait, my rant isn't finished ..."
 - 25 Private, as desires
 - 26 Agnus — (lamb figure)
 - 27 "Cool beans!"
 - 28 Down dinner
 - 30 Look lewdly
 - 31 2018 war documentary directed by Peter Jackson
 - 38 Composer — Sebastian Bach
 - 40 Hamilton/Burr confrontation
 - 41 Era upon era
 - 42 Turndowns
 - 43 Stati — (America, in Italian)
 - 44 Stage design
 - 47 La — Tar Pits
 - 49 Gp. opposed to leather
 - 51 Made a habit of taking risks
 - 54 Actress Cuthbert
 - 57 French for "summers"
 - 58 Bible book after Micah
 - 59 Dwell at
 - 61 —Ops (CIA mind games)
 - 62 Coffee holder
 - 63 In love
 - 67 Big name in candy wafers
 - 68 2011-13 Fran Drescher sitcom
 - 71 Give it — (try)
 - 74 Paris' Champs- —
 - 75 Certain scanning device: Abbr.
 - 76 St. crossers
 - 79 First book section
 - 81 Former U.N. chief Boutros Boutros- —
 - 83 Stool or pew
 - 84 Milk container
 - 85 Just a tiny bit
 - 90 Op-ed writer Maureen
 - 91 Art of Erté
 - 92 Once existed
 - 93 Eldritch
 - 94 Links gp.
 - 96 Canon camera brand
 - 98 — part (role-play)
 - 100 1996-2002 sports sitcom
 - 101 Song phrase following "See you later, alligator"
 - 107 Amazes
 - 108 Daddy's boy
 - 109 Prague citizen
 - 110 Victor's hand gesture
 - 113 Prefix with type or plasm
 - 115 What's spelled out by the starts of six answers in this puzzle
 - 121 Lot units
 - 122 Countering an attack by missile, e.g.
 - 123 Pundit Huffington
 - 124 Hockey feints
 - 125 Fill with more inventory
 - 126 Like soon-to-be-unveiled tech
 - DOWN**
 - 1 Mil. school
 - 2 Finished
 - 3 She won a Tony for "Hurlyburly"
 - 4 Stage actress Hagen
 - 5 Pious sister
 - 6 Actor Hume of "Cocoon"
 - 7 Heads, to Henriette
 - 8 Iota preceder
 - 9 Novelist Robbins
 - 10 N.Y. hours
 - 11 Cranky cry
 - 12 Singer DiFranco
 - 13 Stanford- — test
 - 14 Occupy
 - 15 — Lilly & Co.
 - 16 Until this time
 - 17 "Just one moment"
 - 18 Verdi opera
 - 19 Tears to bits
 - 24 "Told ya so!"
 - 29 Recurring themes
 - 32 Detests
 - 33 Author Blyton
 - 34 Oil, informally
 - 35 Dweeb's kin
 - 36 Cassini of 20-Across
 - 37 Quick quip
 - 38 Minty Kentucky Derby drink
 - 39 — last legs (about to collapse)
 - 44 Biting turtle
 - 45 Ordinal suffix
 - 46 Like so, informally
 - 48 Correo — (Spanish airmail)
 - 50 — over (satisfied for the moment)
 - 52 "Movin' —"
 - (sitcom theme song)
 - 53 Tube prizes
 - 55 Brand of fruit drinks
 - 56 Year, in Brazil
 - 60 Signs up
 - 62 Multilevel structure for Fluffy
 - 64 Suffix with chlor- or fluor-
 - 65 Model Cheryl
 - 66 "ER" or "CSI"
 - 68 Get a move on
 - 69 Lead-in to "So sue me!"
 - 70 Caesar's 202
 - 71 N.C. State's NCAA div.
 - 72 "— Na Na"
 - 73 Tolling away
 - 76 Fetching
 - 77 Certain surrealist paintings
 - 78 Eye maladies
 - 80 Funds
 - 82 Sly — fox
 - 83 Tortoise's top
 - 86 Calf product
 - 87 Caesar's "Behold!"
 - 88 Campus mil. program
 - 89 Singer Halliwell
 - 94 Underside of a dog's foot
 - 95 Liftoff stress
 - 97 Hebrew row
 - 99 With 106-Down, North Pole surround
 - 100 Cling (to)
 - 102 Perfumer Lauder
 - 103 Absurd
 - 104 Missouri's — Mountains
 - 105 Toon pic
 - 106 See 99-Down
 - 111 Kin of -ette
 - 112 Novelist Jennifer
 - 114 Pre-CIA gp.
 - 116 "— a girl!"
 - 117 Fabric dye brand
 - 118 Retired NBAer Ming
 - 119 Vote down
 - 120 "True —" ("Indeedy")

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CLASSIFIED

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

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

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are required. Degree in a human services field or comparable experience is preferred. Criminal background check is required. Send resume to Southern Area Agency on Aging, 204 Cleveland Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112 by 2/26/24. Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.

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Football

(cont. from page 7)

There were 10 teams for T-ball, ages three-six for boys and girls, Murphy said, adding there were not enough participants to fill the major league.

“Right now, we’re kind of projecting that we may not have any participants for the major leagues,” he said. “I’m worried about it, but I’m not too worried about it because that is a grade level where you kind of advance into middle school, so I’m kind of fighting that age group for middle school sports.”

For soccer, Murphy said there were 287 participants across four divisions and age groups.

“What we did this year is we rotated the soccer games on Saturdays to all parks that would like to host them, including I.C. DeHart. That gives the parks an opportunity to sell concessions, make a little money,” he said, adding that also will happen this year.

Murphy said activity fees were tapped to buy new jerseys for youngsters participating in football. The jersey colors are representative of the player’s respective school.

Murphy said the Patrick County High

School (PCHS) currently plays eight-man football.

“That’s not going to cut it for a high school. I think Parks and Rec Department in sports should be a feeder system into high school sports,” he said.

He believes the department needs to push the older tackle football groups to eight-man football. While this will probably result in fewer teams, Murphy said the teams will go to different places, play 11-man football, and grow that sport for the long term.

In watching coaches this year in football and basketball, Murphy said while he appreciates the volunteer coaches, some may lack knowledge of the game. Murphy said if he sees a need and the coaches don’t have the background, it’s his responsibility to teach them and give them the tools to coach the children better.

“Typically, when we do a coach meeting for each season, the coaches come in, we have the information on how many signups we had, we divide them up, so they take the kids,” he said.

Participation in basketball increased

with a total of 411 children playing this season.

“All the schools, they were able to make a little money for their booster clubs,” he said.

When he took the position in March 2023, Murphy said there was a lot of talk about adult softball.

“So, we started adult softball, it was co-ed softball. I was trying to get as many people to participate as possible. It was great. The adults adulated. There were no arguments, they had a lot of fun, and they were just thankful to be on the field to play,” he said.

Murphy also wants to increase adult sports in the county by starting a corn-hole league and a flag football league.

“We’re going to try cornhole at the parks this year during the summer. Maybe on a Wednesday night,” he said.

He also wants to increase what Parks and Recreation offers for the county’s senior residents. The “super seniors” have their year planned out with meals at the Hooker Building in Stuart each month.

“They always have a good time, they

have musical performers, and different types of meals each month. They get to come about in fellowship with one another, it’s a good time,” he said.

Murphy said Parks and Recreation works to serve and maintain each of the county’s parks, including Fred Clifton Park, and the Rotary Field in Stuart.

The staff or “our trustees go up once a week” to Fred Clifton “regardless of what we’re doing and checks on the park, picks up any trash, and makes sure the railings and everything are sturdy,” he said.

With an increase in highway traffic due to the U.S. 58 expansion project, Murphy noted there’s also some traffic for people stopping to take photos of the Lovers Leap area.

“The other thing is we want to check on the new picnic tables we’ve installed, make sure those haven’t gone over the side. We’ve bolted those down, so we don’t have to worry about that,” he said.

Murphy said the department also mows at Rotary Field and will work on the DeHart Park pool in March or April.

Bills to make cocktails to-go permanent pass muster

The Virginia House and Senate respectively passed HB 688 (Vote: 81-18) and SB 635 (Vote: 40-0), companion bills that would permanently allow cocktails to-go to be sold from bars, restaurants and distilleries in support of businesses and consumers, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS) and The Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association (VRLTA).

Currently, cocktails to-go for takeout and delivery in Virginia are set to expire July 1.

“Local bars, restaurants and distilleries continue to face headwinds with inflation, supply chain disruptions and staffing shortages,” said Andy Deloney, senior vice president and head of state public policy at DISCUS. “Cocktails to-go offer a stable and important source of revenue for Virginia businesses while providing increased convenience for consumers. Making cocktails to-go permanent provides long-term stability for those in the hospitality sector and continues a convenience many adult consum-

ers have come to enjoy over the last four years. We applaud the Virginia House and Senate for moving these measures forward.”

Since the beginning of the pandemic, 23 states and the District of Columbia have enacted laws to permanently allow cocktails to-go, and 9 others have enacted laws that allow cocktails to-go on a temporary basis. Numerous states are still considering cocktails to-go legislation.

“During the pandemic, cocktails to-go was a vital lifeline to help keep Virginia’s restaurateurs in business, and it has continued to be a highlight for both restaurant operators and our customers into

the present,” said Eric Terry, president and CEO of VRLTA. “As the restaurant industry is confronted with rising costs on a number of fronts, tools like this will help ABC-licensed establishments maintain their businesses and teams. We are grateful to have worked with our legislative patrons and partners across the alcohol and food service industries to make this permanent.”

The distilled spirits industry is committed to responsibility and encourages moderation for adults who choose to drink alcohol. Cocktails to-go are intended for home consumption. Laws governing alcohol consumption must always be observed.

LEGAL

VIRGINIA:
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PATRICK COUNTY
COMMISSIONER OF HIGHWAYS,)
Petitioner,)

v.)
JAMES T. SEAGLE, PAMELA D.) **ORDER OF PUBLICATION**
SEAGLE, SANDRA M. MAHONY,) Project 0058-070-E18, R201
SAMUEL DAVID MARTIN, JR., MARY) UPC: 17536, Parcel 148
ELIZABETH MARTIN CLEMENT,) (Tax Map No. None Assigned)
ELLAMARIE M. SMITH A/K/A ELLA) **and Parcel 186** (Tax Map No.
MARIE SMITH, UNKNOWN) None Assigned)
OWNERS, as Their Interests May) Case No. CL24000047-00
Appear, One parcel of land containing)
7,384 square feet, more or less, land)
in fee, and all improvements and)
appurtenances thereon, designated)
Parcel 148, being acquired in its)
entirety, and One parcel of land)
containing 644 square feet, more or)
less, land in fee, and all)
improvements and appurtenances)
thereon, designated Parcel 186,)
being acquired in its entirety,)
Respondents.)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:
Pursuant to an order entered on the 31st day of January, 2024, this notice is hereby given:

In this proceeding, the petitioner seeks to acquire by condemnation one parcel of land containing 7,384 square feet, more or less, land in fee, and one parcel of land containing 644 square feet, more or less, land in fee, and all improvements and appurtenances thereon, from two parcels of land (Parcel 148 and 186) situated in Stuart, Virginia, for the uses and purposes of the petitioner for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, improvement, maintenance, and repair of Route 58, for a project known as State Highway Project No. 0058-070-E18, R-201, in Patrick County, Virginia, all of which uses and purposes are described more particularly in the petition and exhibits attached thereto on file in the office of the Clerk of this Court, to which petition and exhibits reference is hereby made for a full and accurate description thereof; and the petitioner further asks the Court to ascertain, or to appoint commissioners or to empanel a jury to ascertain, just compensation to the owners of any estate or interest in the property to be taken or affected as a result of the taking and use thereof by the petitioner.

For such purposes, the petitioner will apply to the Court, sitting at the Patrick County Courthouse, 101 W. Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, VA 24171, on the 25th day of April, 2024, at 1:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the petitioner may be heard, for the Court to ascertain, or to appoint commissioners or to empanel a jury to ascertain, and report just compensation as aforesaid.

And it appearing by affidavits filed according to law that all owners of Parcels 148 and 186 at the time the petitioner acquired the aforesaid property interests cannot be found, that all living heirs at law of any deceased owner cannot be found, and that due diligence has been used by and on behalf of the petitioner to locate all owners or all living heirs at law of any deceased owner of Parcels 148 and 186 without effect, the Court does hereby ORDER that:

1. Any owner of Parcels 148 and 186 shall appear within ten days after due publication of this order in the Clerk’s Office of the Circuit Court of Patrick County, Virginia, and do what is necessary to protect their interests; and

2. If any owner or heir at law of any deceased owner desires to assert any objection or defense to the taking or damaging of Parcels 148 and 186 or to the jurisdiction of the Court to hear the case and to proceed with a jury, commission, or bench trial, such person shall file an answer designating the property in which that person claims to be interested, stating the grounds of any objection or defense to the taking of the property or to the jurisdiction of the Court to hear the case, and asking the Court to proceed with a jury, commission, or bench trial for the determination of just compensation. Should any such person fail to file an answer as hereinabove provided, such failure shall preclude the person from appearing on the date set for the jury, commission, or bench trial or from presenting evidence as to valuation and damage or from sharing in the award of just compensation according to that person’s interest therein or otherwise protecting that person’s rights, but such failure shall preclude such person from any other defense by way of pleas in bar, abatement, or otherwise.

An extract, Teste:

 Clerk

Lori J. Bentley (VSB No. 40063)
Brian J. Brydges (VSB No. 43883)
Johnson, Ayers & Matthews, P.L.C.
310 First Street, S.W., Suite 700
Roanoke, VA 24011
P.O. Box 2200
Roanoke, VA 24009
Ph: (540) 767-2000
Fx: (540) 982-1552
lbentley@jamlaw.net
bbrydges@jamlaw.net
Counsel for Petitioner

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING: The Patrick County Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 20 at 6:00 p.m. at the Patrick & Henry Community College building located at 212 Wood Brothers Drive in Stuart, Virginia, to discuss the Moscato Solar Comprehensive Plan Conformance. The hearing will begin directly following the cell tower public hearing at the Patrick & Henry Community College building located at 212 Wood Brothers Drive in Stuart, Virginia. Action will be taken at the meeting. If you would like to review the Moscato Solar Comprehensive Plan Conformance, you may do so at the Tax Mapping office located on the 2nd floor of the Patrick County Administration Building located at 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, VA.

If you plan to attend and have any special needs requirements, please contact the Tax Mapping office at 276-694-4624.

LEGAL

FOR PUBLIC NOTICE:

The Town of Stuart will hold a Budget Committee meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 5:00 PM in the Stuart Town Office, located at 100 Patrick Avenue. The Stuart Budget Committee will discuss the Town’s Budget for Fiscal Year 2025. Those that are interested in providing comment to the Budget Committee, but are unable to attend, please contact Bryce Simmons, Town Manager by phone at (276) 694-3811 or by email at bryce.simmons@stuartva.org.

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

 Clerk

LEGAL

NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE SALE

60 Yahweh Lane, Patrick Springs, VA 24133
By virtue of the power and authority contained in a Deed of Trust dated February 6, 2009 and recorded at Instrument Number 090000364 in the Clerk’s Office for the Patrick County Virginia Circuit Court, Virginia, securing a loan which was originally \$78,876.00. The appointed SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE, Commonwealth Trustees, LLC will offer for sale at public auction at the front steps of the Circuit Court for Patrick County located at 101 W Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, VA 24171.

February 27, 2024 at 11 AM
improved real property, with an abbreviated legal description of the following described property, to wit:

LAND REFERRED TO IN THIS COMMITMENT IS DESCRIBED AS ALL THAT CERTAIN PROPERTY SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF PATRICK, AND STATE OF VIRGINIA AND BEING DESCRIBED IN A DEED DATED 05/30/1996 AND RECORDED 05/30/1996 IN BOOK 314 PAGE 110 AMONG THE LAND RECORDS OF THE COUNTY AND STATE SET FORTH ABOVE, AND REFERENCED AS FOLLOWS:
ALL THOSE TWO (2) CERTAIN LOTS OR PARCELS OF LAND SITUATED ON THE SOUTH-EAST MARGIN OF ACCESS ROADWAY OFF STATE ROAD 721, MAYO RIVER DISTRICT, PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, BEING KNOWN AND DESIGNATED AS PARCEL “B”, CONTAINING 1.0805 ACRES, AND PARCEL “B-1”, CONTAINING 0.6918 ACRE, AS SHOWN ON PLAT OF SURVEY FOR PAUL J. DONLEY AND RUTH M. DONLEY. BY LARRY RAKES, LLS, DATED FEBRUARY 18, 1991, REVISED MAY 24, 1996, SAID PLAT TO BE RECORDED HERewith AND PARCEL “B” BEING THE SAME LAND CONVEYED GRANTORS, BY JAMES RICHARD REYNOLDS, ET ALS, BY DEED BEARING EVEN DATE AND TO BE RECORDED CONTEMPORANEOUSLY HERewith AND PARCEL “B-1”, BEING THE SAME LAND CONVEYED GRANTORS, BY JANICE MARIE R. WALLER, BY DEED BEARING EVEN DATE AND TO BE RECORDED CONTEMPORANEOUSLY HERewith REFERENCE TO SAID MAP AND DEEDS IS HERE MADE FOR A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THE LAND HEREBY CONVEYED.

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

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING: The Patrick County Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 20 at 6:00 p.m. at the Patrick & Henry Community College building located at 212 Wood Brothers Drive in Stuart, Virginia, to discuss the Milestone Towers Cell Tower at Patrick County High School. The hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Patrick & Henry Community College building located at 212 Wood Brothers Drive in Stuart, Virginia. Action will be taken at the meeting. If you would like to review the Milestone Towers Cell Tower plan, you may do so at the Tax Mapping office located on the 2nd floor of the Patrick County Administration Building located at 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, VA.

If you plan to attend and have any special needs requirements, please contact the Tax Mapping office at 276-694-4624.

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

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

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.

LEGAL

ABC NOTICE

Food Country USA of Stuart Inc. trading as FOOD COUNTRY USA STUART, 301D South Main Street, Stuart, VA 24171. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Virginia ABC license, convenience grocery store, to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Don Henderson, President Food Country USA
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.



Meetings

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.

Wednesday, Feb. 21
 The Stuart Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the Town Office.

Events

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.

Friday, Feb. 9
 Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Moonshine Hollow Hike, 10 a.m. at the Visitor's Center.

Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Fayerdale Missing Town Hike at 2:30 p.m. at Shelter 4.

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.

Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Little Mountain Falls hike starting at 9 a.m. at the Amphitheater Trailhead Parking Lot.

Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Lakeshore Trail hike starting at 1:30 p.m. at the Amphitheater Trailhead Parking Lot.

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.

Sunday, Feb. 11
 Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Mountain View/Horse Camp Trail at 9 a.m. at the Amphitheater Trailhead Parking Lot.

Fairy Stone State Park will hold an Iron Mine hike at 1:30 p.m. at the Iron Mine Parking Lot.

Tuesday, Feb. 13
 The newly formed breast cancer support group will meet at 6 p.m. in the basement of the Farm Bureau Office in Hillsville. Call (276) 733-6877 with questions.

Wednesday, Feb. 14
 Ash Wednesday Service, 7 p.m. at Stuart Church of Living Water, 101 East Blue Ridge Street, Stuart. Everyone welcome!

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.

Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Moonshine Hollow Hike starting at 10 a.m. at the Visitor's Center.

Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Fayerdale Missing Town Hike at 2:30 p.m. at Shelter 4.

Saturday, Feb. 17
 Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department will hold a Country Breakfast from 6:30-10 a.m. Dine-in prices are \$10 for an adult plate and \$5 for a child plate. All take out plates are \$10 each. To call in an order, call (276) 930-2113.

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 holds Rook games every Monday night from 6:30-8 p.m.

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

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

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.

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NOTICE

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

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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
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Don't Let Delivery and Takeout Foods Fumble Your Super Bowl

Safely serving friends and family during the big game is a win for everyone; don't fumble it this Super Bowl Sunday. February 11 kicks off Super Bowl LVIII, and football fans will be huddling up to watch the big game while enjoying their favorite foods. Whether you're ordering delivery, or preparing and serving food to guests, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has some gameday plans to keep your Super Bowl from being intercepted by foodborne illness.

"Super Bowl parties are a fun time for people to unwind and enjoy the big game, but food safety must remain a top priority," said USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Emilio Esteban. "Simple steps like not leaving food out at room temperature for more than two hours or keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold can help keep your friends and family safe."

Follow these USDA tips to avoid

getting caught offside with food safety this Super Bowl Sunday.

Deliveries and Takeout Foods
If you're ordering takeout earlier in the day before the big game, make sure someone is there to get the food in a timely manner. Place any food that is not being eaten immediately in the refrigerator. When storing leftovers, divide them into smaller portions and place them into small, shallow containers. Perishable foods that have been sitting out at room temperature must be eaten within two hours after being cooked.

Stay in the In Zone, not the Danger Zone

If you're serving food to groups, follow the two-hour rule. When perishable foods sit in the Danger Zone (temperatures between 40 F and 140 F) for more than two hours, bacteria can multiply rapidly. Meat and poultry must be refrigerated or frozen within two hours of sitting out on a counter in the Danger

Zone. If you want to enjoy the big game and serve food longer than two hours, keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Hot foods must be kept at 140 F or above by using warming trays, chafing dishes, or a slow cooker. Cold foods must be kept at 40 F or below. To keep them cold, serve them in smaller portions and refill them, or place the food in containers and nestle them in ice.

Don't Let Leftovers Sit on the Sidelines

Your Super Bowl leftovers will be safe for three to four days in the refrigerator. Reheat leftovers to the safe internal temperature of 165 F as measured with a food thermometer. Reheat liquid foods like soups and sauces to a boil. Tasting food to determine its safety is dangerous. When in doubt, throw it out!

Always Remember the Four Steps to Food Safety

*Clean—Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds before, during, and after meal preparation. Clean and

sanitize surfaces often with soap, water and a sanitizer. In a recent USDA study, 96% of handwashing attempts failed due to missing all the necessary steps.

*Separate—Use separate cutting boards: one for raw meat and poultry and another for fruits and vegetables. Keep raw foods separate from ready-to-eat foods and utensils.

*Cook—Cook meat and poultry products to a safe internal temperature by using a food thermometer.

*Chill—Place foods that are no longer being eaten back into the refrigerator or freezer within two hours of sitting out at room temperature.

If you have food safety questions, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854), email MPHHotline@usda.gov or chat live at www.ask.usda.gov 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

Farm Loan Payments Can Now Be Made Online

Most farm loan borrowers will soon be able to make payments to their direct loans online through the Pay My Loan feature on farmers.gov in early February. Pay My Loan is part of a broader effort by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) to streamline its processes, especially for producers who may have limited time during the planting or harvest seasons to visit a local FSA office; modernize and improve customer service; provide additional customer self-service tools; and expand credit access to assist more producers.

On average, local USDA Service Centers process more than 225,000 farm loan payments each year. Pay

My Loan gives most borrowers an online repayment option and relieves them from needing to call, mail, or visit a Service Center to pay their loan installment. Farm loan payments can now be made at the borrower's convenience, on their schedule and outside of FSA office hours.

Pay My Loan also provides time savings for FSA's farm loan employees by minimizing manual payment processing activities. This new service for producers means that farm loan employees will have more time to focus on reviewing and processing new loans or servicing requests.

The Pay My Loan feature can be accessed at farmers.gov/loans. To

use the payment feature, producers must establish a USDA customer account and a USDA Level 2 eAuthentication ("eAuth") account or a Login.gov account. This initial release only allows individuals with loans to make online payments. For now, borrowers with jointly payable checks will need to continue to make loan payments through their local office.

FSA has a significant initiative underway to streamline and automate the Farm Loan Program customer-facing business process. For the over 26,000 producers who submit a direct loan application annually, FSA has made various improvements including:

*The Online Loan Application, an interactive, guided application that is paperless and provides helpful features including an electronic signature option, the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns, complete a balance sheet, and build a farm operating plan.

*The Loan Assistance Tool that provides customers with an interactive online, step-by-step guide to identifying the direct loan products that may be a fit for their business needs and to understanding the application process.

*A simplified direct loan paper application, which reduced loan applications by more than half, from 29 pages to 13 pages.

N.C. man pleads guilty to Va. charge

A North Carolina man, who sent a nude photograph to an employee of the Federal Bureau of Investigation whom he believed to be a 9-year-old girl, pled guilty recently to federal child pornography charges.

William "Willy" Alexander Korthals, 30, of Beaufort, NC, waived his right to be indicted and pled guilty to a one-count Information charging him with attempted transfer of obscene matter to a minor.

"One of the cornerstones of the Department of Justice's mission is protecting the most vulnerable among us: our children." United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh said. "This case should serve as a warning to all predators lurking online seeking to exploit children: You are not invisible, and agents from the FBI and other federal agencies are actively hunting you in every corner of the internet in order to bring you to justice."

"Protecting children from all

forms of exploitation is one of our highest priorities," said FBI Special Agent in Charge of the Richmond Field Office, Stanley M. Meador. "We will continue to fully investigate these crimes and work with our law enforcement partners to protect children from predators, hold them accountable and protect our communities. I want to thank the I-81 Human Trafficking and Crimes Against Child Task Force and our partners for their work on this case."

According to court documents, in May 2022, Korthals was in a Kik chat room for "Active Parents," in a group titled "Loving Family," when he responded to a public group thread that read, "anyone want to come to Virginia to have sex with my daughter?"

Korthals reached out to the individual who posted the thread and inquired about the age of the "daughter" and was told she was nine years old. Unbeknownst to Korthals, the thread was posted

by an undercover FBI employee posing as the girl's father. In an effort to coax the "daughter" to send him pictures, Korthals sent a photograph of his erect penis.

For over a year, Korthals chatted with the undercover FBI employee and requested "live" photographs of the 9-year-old as well as other sexually explicit photographs and videos, and also attempted to Facetime with the undercover "father and daughter." Additionally, Korthals described specific acts of sexual abuse he wanted the "father" to perform on his "daughter," including oral, vaginal, and anal sex.

In preparation for an in-person meeting with the undercover father and his "daughter" in August 2022, Korthals sent his laboratory test results of his sexually transmitted disease status to the undercover "father" so that Korthals could have unprotected sex with the 9-year-old "daughter." Two days before the

planned meeting, Korthals cancelled it.

At sentencing, Korthals faces a maximum statutory penalty of up to 10 years in prison and/or a fine of up to \$250,000.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Melanie Smith is prosecuting the case.

The case is brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as identity and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov/.

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Dairy issues recall of cheese products

Country Corner Dairy, LLC, of Cullen, Va., has issued a recall of all cheese and skyr (similar to yogurt) products sold between August 2, 2023 and January 24, 2024 with a batch/date stamp of 080223 through 012424, due to a lack of proper pasteurization. A lack of proper pasteurization could have allowed dangerous pathogens to survive in the product.

Recalled products include Cuajada Cheese; Blueberry Flavored Skyr;

Grape Flavored Skyr; Pineapple Flavored Skyr; Cherry Flavored Skyr; Raspberry Flavored Skyr; Strawberry Flavored Skyr; Vanilla Flavored Skyr; White Cheddar Cheese; Yellow Cheddar Cheese; White Colby Cheese; Yellow Colby Cheese; Sizzling Colby Cheese; Monterey Jack Cheese; Marble Jack Cheese; Pepper Jack Cheese; Garlic and Chives Cheddar Cheese; Garlic and Dill Cheddar Cheese; and Smoked Cheddar Cheese.

These products were packed in approximately 8 oz., 2.5 lb., 5 lb., and 40 lb. units and were distributed at Peacock Hill Dairy in Richmond County; Miller's in Farmville; Pine View Grocery in Farmville; Spring Hollow Grocery in Buckingham County; Country Corner Dairy in Charlotte County; Cedar Grove Auction in Charlotte County; Hollering Hill Auction in Halifax County; and Central Virginia Produce Auction in Buckingham County.

Consumers who have purchased Country Corner Dairy cheeses or skyr with the above batch/date stamp may return the products to the place of purchase for a product exchange or refund.

No illnesses have been reported to date in connection with this recall. Consumers should not consume these products, even if the product does not look or smell spoiled.

Initial claims steady in latest filing week

Little change was reported in the number of initial unemployment insurance claims, according to the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWD). In the latest filing week, initial claims were at 2,541 and remained slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019.

For the filing week ending January 27, seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia were 2,541, which was a decrease of 35 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 14,586, which was

an increase of 587 claimants from the previous week and an increase of 26 percent from the 11,624 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (58 percent) of continued claims were from administrative and support and waste management (2,015), professional, scientific, and technical services (1,863), construction (1,450), manufacturing (1,393), and health care and social assistance (1,185). 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 27, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 224,000, an increase of 9,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 1,000 from 214,000 to 215,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 261,029 in the week ending January 27, an increase of 11,082 (or 4.4 percent) from the pre-

vious week. There were 225,026 initial claims in the comparable week in 2023.

Looking at preliminary data, most U.S. states reported increases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. California's preliminary weekly change (+5,599) was the largest increase. New York's preliminary weekly change (+4,316) was the second largest increase. Oregon's preliminary weekly change (+4,036) was the third largest increase. Georgia's preliminary weekly change (+811) was the fourth largest increase. Virginia had the 25th largest decrease (-8).

Individual Income Tax Filing Season is Underway

The tax filing season in Virginia is now underway. Taxpayers are now able to file their individual income tax returns.

"We strongly encourage you to file electronically," said Tax Commissioner Craig M. Burns. "It's the faster, safer option. We also recommend that you request your refund, if you have one coming, via direct deposit."

Virginia Tax takes refund fraud seriously and encourages you to do the same. Our automated system reviews returns for suspicious activity or possible

fraud, then employees manually evaluate the returns selected for review. Filing early helps ensure the fastest possible refund if your return is selected for review.

Here are some steps you can take to help make sure your return and refund aren't delayed:

Gather all W-2s, 1099s and other withholding information before filing your return;

Include your Virginia driver's license or Virginia identification card number on your return. Returns that don't have that information won't be rejected,

but providing it helps us process the return more quickly;

Be sure the spelling of your name(s), Social Security number(s) and all calculations are correct; and

If you moved since you filed your last return, use your current address.

For secure, online self-service you can create and log onto an online individual account. This allows you to track your return or refund. You can also check the status of your refund by using the Where's My Refund application on the Virginia Tax website, or by calling 804.367.2486.

Legal Notice

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF A PETITION BY
APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY
FOR A PRUDENCY REVIEW,
PURSUANT TO § 56-585.1:4 H OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA,
WITH RESPECT TO THE PURCHASE OF ENERGY
CAPACITY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES
FROM SOLAR FACILITIES THROUGH
POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENTS
CASE NO. PUR-2023-00212

On January 11, 2024, Appalachian Power Company ("APCo" or "Company"), pursuant to § 56-585.1:4 H of the Code of Virginia ("Code"), filed a petition ("Petition") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") for a prudency determination with respect to three power purchase agreements ("PPAs") that the Company seeks to add to its portfolio of renewable energy used to comply with the Renewable Portfolio Standards ("RPS") established by the Virginia Clean Economy Act. Pursuant to Code § 56-585.1:4 H, the Commission must issue a final order regarding the Petition within three months of the date of filing.

The Company states that the PPAs and the solar projects ("Projects") that are the subject of this Petition are:

- Elliot Solar, which is a 5 megawatt ("MW") solar facility located in Tazewell County, Virginia, with an expected commercial operations date in late 2025. APCo and the developer, Inovateus, entered into a 20-year PPA for the facility's output.

- County Line Solar, which is a 150 MW solar facility located in Charlotte County, Virginia, with an expected commercial operations date in late 2026. APCo and the developer, Competitive Power Ventures, entered into a 20-year PPA for the facility's output.

- 7 Bridges Solar, which is an 80 MW solar facility located in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, with an expected commercial operations date in late 2026. APCo and the developer, Longroad, entered into a 30-year PPA for the facility's output.

The Company asks that the Commission determine that the execution of the PPAs will be prudent additions to the Company's RPS compliance portfolio. The Company asserts the PPAs were selected after a competitive and robust bidding process, due diligence and contract negotiations. According to the Petition, the Projects will help the Company comply at a reasonable cost with the RPS requirements (by producing approximately 1.0 million renewable energy certificates annually on a Virginia retail basis). The Company asserts that the PPAs will also allow APCo to reduce the amount of power purchased from the PJM energy markets. APCo further asserts that the PPAs will produce carbon-free energy thereby advancing the Commonwealth Clean Energy Policy.

According to the Petition, as the Projects are not expected to go online until after the rate year in the Company's next RPS compliance filing, expected to be filed in April 2024, the Company will not seek cost recovery related to the PPAs from Virginia customers until 2025.

The details of these and other proposals are set forth in the Company's Petition. Interested persons are encouraged to review the Company's Petition and supporting exhibits for the details of the proposals.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo's Petition. A hearing for the receipt of testimony from public witnesses on the Company's Petition shall be convened telephonically at 10 a.m. on March 6, 2024. On or before February 26, 2024, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide to the Commission (a) your name, and (b) the telephone number that you wish the Commission to call during the hearing to receive your testimony. This information may be provided to the Commission in three ways: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting; (ii) by completing and emailing the PDF version of this form to SCCInfo@scc.virginia.gov; or (iii) by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at: scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting.

Beginning at 10 a.m. on March 6, 2024, the Hearing Examiner will telephone sequentially each person who has signed up to testify as provided above.

On March 6, 2024, at 10 a.m., or at the conclusion of the public witness portion of the hearing, whichever is later, in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Hearing Examiner will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Petition from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission Staff.

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission has directed the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and required electronic service on parties to this proceeding.

Electronic copies of the public version of the Petition may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company, Noelle J. Coates, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, njcoates@aep.com.

On or before February 26, 2024, any interested person may submit written comments on the Petition by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/casecomments/Submit-Public-Comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2023-00212.

On or before February 16, 2024, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel, if available. The respondent simultaneously shall serve a copy of the notice of participation on counsel to the Company. Pursuant to Rule 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by Rule 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2023-00212.

On or before February 16, 2024, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served on the Staff, the Company, and all other respondents simultaneously with its filing. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2023-00212.

All documents filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Rules of Practice.

The Commission's Rules of Practice, the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, and other documents filed in the case may be viewed at: scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information.

APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY

Pilot program leads to launch of new website

A new website was designed to bring increased transparency and efficiency to the Commonwealth's permitting processes.

When announcing the release of the Virginia Permit Transparency (VPT) website, Gov. Glenn Youngkin said, "Our administration is committed to increasing transparency in the permitting process. The Virginia Permit Transparency website allows Virginia to continue to lead the country by bringing greater visibility to the regulatory and permitting processes. Virginia is demonstrating how a transparent permitting process can continue to attract top-quality business and job opportunities."

VPT provides the public a centralized platform to track the daily status and timeline of critical steps for Commonwealth of Virginia's permits. Users can search permit applications or filter results by fields such as agency, application number, locality, and more. VPT can be accessed at Permits.Virginia.Gov.

When it went live, the permits of three agencies were available on the website: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Virginia Energy (ENERGY), and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC). Additional agencies are to be added in the coming months. The program was first launched as a pilot program last year at DEQ and has won several awards including the "2023 State Program Innovation Award" from the Environmental Council of the States.

"The Commonwealth of Virginia continues to drive innovation in transparency and accountability for government. VPT is another example of Virginia setting the standard for the rest of the country," said Director of the Office of Regulatory Management Andrew Wheeler, whose office is leading the VPT development and expansion.

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Report shows Virginia families, employers continue to face rising health insurance costs

When it comes to health care spending, Virginia is in the enviable position of having expenditure rates that remain well below national levels. The same cannot be said for health insurance costs, unfortunately.

On the contrary, the amount that individuals and families across the Commonwealth spend on annual health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket deductibles continues to rise sharply year-over-year. Meanwhile, the gap between what individuals and families pay for insurance, and what insurance companies pay for health care services, continues to widen. Those findings are part of a new report from the non-partisan research firm Altarum that examines 2022 health spending in Virginia based on data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Virginia's All-Payer Claims Database, and other public sources.

The Altarum analysis shows that the average single health insurance premium in 2022 was \$7,400 and the average family health insurance premium was \$21,400 for people with private sector employer-sponsored health care coverage. When the average cost of deductibles is included, the averages increase to "\$9,400 for single coverage and \$25,200 for family coverage."

The report further notes that "premiums for single coverage of a private-sector employee are up 76.6 percent and family premiums are 79.3 percent higher" since 2008. When increases in cost-sharing co-pays and deductibles for single and family plans are factored in, total plans costs in 2022 were 89.1 percent higher over that span in both categories. (see image below) Those increases have been a con-

sistent trend, as a previous Altarum report on 2021 health care spending in Virginia similarly found significant growth in the total average cost of single and family health insurance premiums as well as growth in out-of-pocket costs.

While insurance costs impacting Virginia families and employers are rising, growth in total health spending has been restrained: personal health care spending in the Commonwealth remains below national averages across several measures including total spending as a percent of state gross domestic product (GDP) and per capita health care spending. The Altarum report found that "Virginia's total health spending" as a percent of GDP "mainly stayed constant between 2015 and 2020 but has been declining in 2021 and 2022." In fact, the share of state GDP spent on health care declined from 15.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 to 14.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 2022, reflecting an amount of spending in Virginia that "is the lowest since 2011 and well below the national average."

In evaluating health care spending, the report notes that "Virginia's estimated health spending per capita in 2022 was over \$1,800 less than the national average." That includes Virginians spending less than the national average on "professional, physician, and clinical services (\$260 less per capita); hospital care (\$570 less per capita); nursing home, residential, and home health (\$130 less per capita); prescription drugs (\$340 less per capita) and other care (\$510 less per capita)."

The latest analysis from Altarum, which also produced reports on Virginia health care

spending and employment trends in 2019, 2020, and 2021, further notes that:

*The largest payer for personal health care (PHC) products and services in Virginia is private health insurance, which spent an estimated \$27.3 billion PHC in 2022. Next is Medicare at \$18.5 billion and Medicaid at \$15.3 billion.

*Total health spending as a percentage of the state Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Virginia fell from 15.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 to 14.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 2022, an amount that is the lowest since 2011 and well below the national average (17.2 percent) of the economy that is spent on health care.

*If Virginia had spent the same share of its GDP on health care as the U.S. average (17.2%), spending would have been \$14.9 billion dollars more than the actual 2022 spending level (\$113.7 billion versus the actual amount of \$98.8 billion).

*Even though aggregate health care spending in Virginia has been less than the national average, what privately-insured individuals and families in Virginia paid in premiums and out-of-pocket insurance costs in 2022 were similar to those paid by the average American.

*The health care sector continues to be a significant employer in Virginia, accounting for 389,000 individuals employed in the fourth quarter of 2022, which is equivalent to about 11.5% of the total private sector employed population.

As of 2022, the unemployment rate in Virginia among those in health care industries was just 2.7% and even lower (2.1 percent) among those with health care-specific occupations.

Master plan public meeting to be held for Southwest Virginia Museum Historical State Park

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will hold its second public meeting to discuss the Southwest Virginia Museum Historical State Park master plan. This plan is updated every 10 years and guides development for the park.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 20, from 3-4:30 p.m., in the Victorian Parlor at the Southwest Virginia Museum, 10 West 1st Street North, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, 24219. Attendees can also participate via Zoom and find the Zoom link at dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/sw-masterplan.

DCR planners and staff will summarize and report on previous input received at the April 2023 meeting and present key elements of the proposed master plan, including existing and proposed site amenities, experiences and phase development. They will also take questions from the audience.

Located in the town of Big Stone Gap, the park is unique among Virginia's state parks. The main feature of the park is the Southwest Virginia Museum, which is housed in a mansion originally built by Rufus Ayers between 1888 and 1895. The park serves to collect, preserve, share and interpret the history and culture of the commonwealth's far southwestern coal-producing counties, sustain connections with surrounding local communities and promote a sense of regional identity.

Supporting the recreational needs of the community requires the community's input. Attendees will have the opportunity to give feedback during a portion of the meeting.

Written feedback will also be accepted through



Southwest Virginia Museum Historical State Park

March 22. Written comments may be emailed to planningresources@dcr.virginia.gov; faxed to 804-786-9240; or mailed to Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Attn: Samantha

Wangsgard, 600 E. Main St., 24th Floor, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

For more information, visit dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/sw-masterplan.

Farmers voice opinions on legislation impacting agriculture at annual Legislative Day

Keeping the farm going sometimes requires the operator to leave it behind.

And 100 of them did that for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's annual Legislative Day at the General Assembly in Richmond. While there, they met with lawmakers and advocated for legislation that affects agriculture.

Many urban and suburban legislative offices welcomed farmers to hear firsthand how wage issues and solar collection facilities on prime lands threaten operations.

There's anxiety among farmers that urban representatives have a closed door to conversations about agriculture, said Martha Moore, senior vice president of VFBF governmental relations. However, positive relationships have been established with those state leaders through VFBF's statewide series of roundtable discussions with farmers.

"And Legislative Day is just the next step in continuing to build that relationship," Moore said. "These legislators have an open door to these conversations, even if we don't agree on every issue."

Complimentary snack bags packed with Virginia-grown, value-added agricultural products were distributed to each lawmaker.

Farmers from Northern Virginia met with the constituent services director for Sen. Russet Perry, D-Leesburg, a member of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee.

"I'm hoping Sen. Perry will vote no on taking away the local control of zoning for solar facilities," said Loudoun County produce grower Avis Renshaw. "It's crucial. Most of those facilities will go on open, easy land or forested land. Farms are the low-hanging fruit."

While developing emission-free energy sources is encouraged, "All politics is local" is doubly true in this situation," Renshaw added.

Farmers advocated for SB 234, which promotes the installation of solar arrays only on parking lots.

Jakob Seely, a cattle and poultry grower and forestland owner, said Fauquier County farmers have proposed a local cap on solar

projects. "It's a plan to be pro-solar, with the least negative effects on farmland," he said. But a loss of local control could upend that.

Farm Bureau is opposed to two House of Delegates bills aimed at increasing the minimum wage to \$15 by 2026 and eliminating wage exceptions for farmworkers. VFBF state board member Barry Bates of Essex County said mentoring youth in farmwork allows them to grow into higher wages with experience.

"You're their teacher while paying them too," he explained. "If we set wages at \$15 off the bat, they may not have that opportunity."

Senate agriculture committee chair Sen. Dave Marsden, D-Burke, believes there may need to be a deeper discussion of labor issues.

"There's talk about an amendment that allows the minimum wage requirements to take place in the second year of employment," he said. "It can be a training wedge, because a lot of times these people are not going to come back."

Tax-time donations benefit biodiversity conservation, outdoor recreation

As one-third of animal and plant species face extinction nationwide, Virginia taxpayers have a chance to help the commonwealth make a difference.

This tax season, those who are passionate about biodiversity conservation and outdoor recreation may contribute to the Open Space Recreation and Conservation Fund by donating all, or a portion of, their 2023 state tax refunds.

A whopping 34% of plants and 40% of animals in the United States are at risk of disappearing, according to a 2023 report by NatureServe. Forty-one percent of ecosystems are at risk of range-wide collapse.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation, the state's lead natural resource conservation agency, manages the fund to support biodiversity conservation and expand and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities. The agency works to protect Virginia's native plant and animal life and their



Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve, Roanoke County

ecosystems.

Half of the fund generated by the

state individual income tax check-off program is used to buy land for con-

servation and recreation, including the Virginia Natural Area Preserve System. More than 20 natural area preserves across the state offer public access for hiking, water access, bird-watching, nature photography and other low-impact recreation opportunities.

The other half is used for outdoor recreation grants to localities for projects that increase access to safe open space in Virginia's communities, including the Trail Access Grants program, which funds projects that increase access to trail opportunities for people with disabilities.

To choose the Open Space Recreation and Conservation Fund, enter Code Number 68 on Schedule VAC (Virginia Contributions Schedule), Section II (Other Voluntary Contributions). This form accompanies the state individual tax return Form 760.

For more information, go to <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/checkoff>.

Surry Knights Baseball Team Volunteers to Help with Local Youth League Teams

The Surry Knights Baseball team is giving back to the community by mentoring local Cal Ripken Youth League teams. The Knights visit the practices and sometimes games of the community's youth league baseball teams.

Hunter Sherrill is the Student Government Association Vice President at SCC. He is also a Surry Knights baseball player, and the originator of the volunteer program. He stated, "Our goal is to have fun with the kids and give them tips on baseball."

Sherrill will be graduating from Surry Community College this semester with an associate in arts degree, but the Mooresville native will not be leaving for long. He plans to return next year to gain a teaching certificate. He also plans to transfer to a university to eventually gain a



Surry Knights players visit the practices of local youth league teams and help to provide one-on-one coaching and tips.

Masters in Sports Management. Sherrill hopes to someday work at Surry Community College.

"The Surry baseball team is a tremendous help for many local youth teams. They have not just worked with my teams, but

gone around the county to assist many teams in Elkin and Mount Airy as well. Having their help is wonderful, but their ability to serve as role models to these youth players is the best part," said Alan Unsworth, Dean of Instructional Support at SCC and the fall coach of Dobson Yankees baseball team and a Dobson youth basketball team coach.

Unsworth continued, "The Surry players act like true positive role models for the younger players, and they are helping these kids feel like they belong, like they matter, and that can lead to the kids continuing to play the game. These efforts also stick with a young player and the parents of that player, leading them to think positively about Surry Community College in general and know that we are there to serve the entire local community."

Sherrill attended about four practices per week in the fall semester and has said that "My personal favorite part of the program is how the kids look up to us and the impact we can have on them with just teaching them some baseball tips."

"The coaches really appreciated the help, and our kids looked



The Surry Knights players sign hats and baseballs for the youth league players after practice.

forward to these sessions so much. It was great for them to have some sports-related role models that they could really talk to and listen to. The players were fun and patient with the kids," said Mecca Lowe, Instructor at SCC and parent of a youth league baseball player.

Surry Community College's sports department and Surry Knights have also been asked by Dobson Elementary to come and visit their basketball practices.

"Surry baseball players almost always have an extensive sports history, and the ones that come out to practice also played basketball growing up. Some of them played at a high level in high school and with travel teams. Having their help makes practice so much better for everyone because there are so many more people directly talking and working with players," said Unsworth.

The Surry Knights baseball team also had time to host a Slugfest, before the Spooktacular, in October. The team took to the field to play an informal game in costume. Sherrill said, "We had a pitching machine set

(See Surry Knights p. 18)

REAL ESTATE AUCTION

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION
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REAL ESTATE
PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA
ONLINE ONLY BIDDING**

**Bidding Begins Wednesday, Feb 7 at 11am,
Ending Wednesday, Feb 14 Starting at Noon**



- Property #1 - Providence Dr.
- 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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Surry Knights

(cont. from page 17)

up so the people in the stands could have fun watching all the silly stuff we were doing.”

The impact of the Surry Knights baseball team is felt throughout the community with coaches, parents, and players.

“Our community is so fortunate to have such a giving and talented group of young men that are willing to give their time and efforts to help young boys, just like my own. It is so very heartwarming to see such an incredibly kind and giving group of young men that had only hoped to help the youth

become better athletes; it ended up becoming something that goes so far beyond just a lesson in sports. It is refreshing to see kids looking up to every day, ordinary people that are successfully doing what they love and helping others along the way,” stated Brittany King, Student Services Coordinator and parent of a youth league team player.

King would especially like to acknowledge the efforts of Hunter Sherrill. “He set a personal goal early on in the year to increase engagement with Surry’s Athletics and the

community, and I am so very proud to say he has surpassed this goal. The connections and involvement Hunter has made will have long lasting impacts on these kids. Not only is SCC proud of Hunter for his athletic abilities, but more importantly, for his heart and willingness to help others.”

This outreach program is one of many steps taken by Surry Community College to give back to the community that it calls home. To learn more about Surry Athletics, visit www.surryknights.com.

| FEBRUARY | | | | | | PATRICK COUNTY BRANCH LIBRARY | | | | | | 2024 | |
|---|--|--|--|------------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------|--|---|--|------|--|
| Monday | | Tuesday | | Wednesday | | Thursday | | Friday | | Saturday | | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | | |
| Interested or have questions about our programs? Call us at 276-694-3352. | | | | | | Senior Chair Exercise 10:15 | | Sit & Stitch 11:00 | | Family Movie 11:00 Jetsons The Movie | | | |
| 5 | | 6 | | 7 | | 8 | | 9 | | 10 | | | |
| Yoga 10:00 Registration required | | Storytime 10:30 Dragons | | Yoga 1:15 Registration required | | Senior Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | Board Game Day | | | |
| Senior Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | | | Not Your Mother's Book Club 5:00 | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | 13 | | 14 | | 15 | | 16 | | 17 | | | |
| Yoga 10:00 Registration required | | Storytime 10:30 Love | | Book Bingo 10:30 | | Senior Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | Castle Party 10:30-12:00 | | | |
| Senior Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | Yoga 1:15 Registration required | | Open Art Studio 1:00 | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | | | | | Intro to Zen 1:30 | | | | | | | |
| 19 | | 20 | | 21 | | 22 | | 23 | | 24 | | | |
| Yoga 10:00 Registration required | | Storytime 10:30 Rocks | | Retired Teacher's Book Club 11:00 | | Senior Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | | | | |
| Senior Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | Yoga 1:15 Registration required | | Cookbook Showdown 2:30 Registration required | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | | | | | Books & Bakes 5:00 | | | | | | | |
| 26 | | 27 | | 28 | | 29 | | | | | | | |
| Yoga 10:00 Registration required | | Storytime 10:30 With the Master Gardeners: Herbs & Spices | | Yoga 1:15 Registration required | | Senior Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | | | | |
| Senior Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | | | Medicare 101 12:00 Registration required | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | | | | | Intro to Zen 1:30 | | | | | | | |



SPECTRUM MEDICAL

Meet Our Providers

Patti P. Snead, PT, DPT
PELVIC HEALTH PHYSICAL THERAPIST



FORMAL EDUCATION : Old Dominion University, Doctor of Physical Therapy, 2007 • Chowan University Bachelor of Science Biology, 2003. **CONTINUING EDUCATION/CERTIFICATIONS:** Herman and Wallace, Pelvic Floor Level 1: Introduction to Pelvic Floor Function, Dysfunction, and Treatment • American Physical Therapy Association Level 1: Pelvic Health Physical Therapy • Herman and Wallace, Pelvic Floor Level 2A: Function, Dysfunction and Treatment: Colorectal and Coccyx Conditions, Male Pelvic Floor, Pudendal Nerve Dysfunction • American Physical Therapy Association, Fundamental Topics of Pregnancy and Post-partum Physical Therapy • Herman and Wallace, Pelvic Floor Level 2B: Function, Dysfunction and Treatment: Urogynecologic Examination and Treatment Interventions • Herman and Wallace, Dry Needling and Pelvic Health • Herman and Wallace, Biofeedback for Pelvic Floor Dysfunction.



PELVIC HEALTH PHYSICAL THERAPY

The pelvic floor is a group of muscle, tendons, and ligaments in your pelvis which provide support for your pelvic organs, aide in bowel and bladder control, and contribute to sexual function. These structures coordinate with the bony structure of your hips and spine and the muscles of your back, abdomen, and diaphragm to provide your trunk with stability. Your pelvic floor must be able to contract and relax fully as well as respond to forces transmitted through your extremities. Injury to the pelvic floor may occur but is not always the cause of dysfunction.

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