



THE ENTERPRISE

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

Solar, healthcare at forefront of a contentious meeting



About two dozen people attended the two-hour meeting on Feb. 6.

By Taylor Boyd
 Accusations and finger-pointing were common during the often heated discussion of a proposed solar project at a town hall meeting held last week for Smith River District residents. "That man's a cop-out," Ed Pool said of Doug Perry, vice-chairman of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors.

Perry hosted the event, along with Walter Scott, who serves as vice-chairman of the school board. "The state says by 2050, we're going to be completely fossil-fuel free. I don't get it," Perry said and then outlined the process that begins when a solar company identifies a landowner who wants a project on their



Doug Perry, vice-chairman of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors, held a community meeting at the Smith River Rescue Squad on Tuesday, February 6.



Walter Scott, vice-chairman of the Patrick County School Board, spoke about the school division and proposed cell tower.

land. The company then makes "a plan that hopefully goes along with our ordinance, and they bring that to the Planning

Commission. They say, 'Hey Planning Commission we want to do a solar farm at this location. This is what we want to

(See Solar p. 14)

School staff to lose positions as funding ends



The Patrick County School Board received certificates during School Board Appreciation Month. From left, Amy Walker, Walter Scott, Rob Martin, Shannon Harrell, and Lester Harrell.

By Taylor Boyd
 Eleven staff members of the county's school division are expected to lose their jobs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 due to the loss of grant funds. At the February 8 school board meeting, School Superintendent Jason Wood said the division would see a significant budget decrease due to a loss in funding. Regardless of state funds, "we will see a decrease in funds next year because our federal CARES (Coronavirus Aid Relief, and Economic Security), ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) I, ESSER II and ESSER II dollars end this fiscal year," he said. Since 2020, Wood said the divi-



Sara Leigh Collins (left) received a certificate from Superintendent Jason Wood (right) as part of School Board Clerk Appreciation Week.

Honor Guard issues a 'desperate call to arms'

By Debbie Hall
 The Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard needs immediate help! The Honor Guard was incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1992, according to Richard Cox, a longstanding member of the local guard. Cox recalled there were about 50 members at the time of incorporation. "Over the years since the Honor Guard was founded, its members have proudly conducted military rites for deceased veterans at approximately 1,000 funerals," Cox said. As can be expected over the years, the membership has decreased significantly due to the age of the members, illness, disability, or moving from the area, Cox said and added that currently, the membership is down to 28 active and inactive members. Additionally, "many members are reaching an age, or are facing health issues that result in them being unable to be as active or able to respond as they once did," Cox said. "Younger

members are still employed full time, and this prevents them from responding when they are at work." Recently, this has created an undesirable situation of not having enough members available for the Honor Guard to fully perform the military rites for a deceased veteran, he said. "This is a desperate call to arms to the citizens of Patrick County and all veterans," Cox said. "We need new members immediately if the honor guard is to continue to be available for the funeral(s) of our deceased comrades in arms." Cox said members are not expected to be available 100 percent of the time "should you choose to join us," and encouraged anyone interested in honoring the legacy and service of others to "please consider becoming a member of our organization. We meet on the first Tuesday of each month. This is an open invitation to attend one of our meetings." If you can help or are interested, call Cox at (276) 340-1618 or email him at PatCoVetMemHonGrd@gmail.com.



The Connect Health + Wellness mobile walk-in clinic will return to Stuart on Feb. 15, Feb. 21, and Feb. 29, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Walmart parking lot.

Mobile walk-in clinic provides healthcare option

By Taylor Boyd
 The Connect Health + Wellness mobile healthcare unit, a walk-in clinic on wheels, visited Stuart on Wednesday, February 7, offering residents another option for their healthcare needs. Lindsay Anthony, director of marketing, said the mobile unit visited the county because "it is an underserved area, so we're just looking to add additional access to healthcare services." Anthony said this was the first time the walk-in clinic was set up at Walmart. Fewer than 12 people were seen. The mobile unit will return to the same location weekly, on Feb.

15, Feb. 21, and Feb. 29. Hours are from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and patients aged 12 years old and up are accepted. A photo identification and a list of medications are required. Those with insurance cards should bring them; those without should bring proof of income (a month of pay stubs, W-2s, or Social Security Income letter). Anthony said the people she's talked to seem excited about Connect Health coming to the area. "We're working with a bunch of groups, community partners, they're helping us promote and they recognized that there's a need in

(See Mobile Clinic p.3)

Survey launched to help chart county's path forward

Patrick County launched a comprehensive community survey aimed at gathering valuable insights from residents to guide future decisions, an initiative that reflects the county's commitment to ensuring that the voices of its population are heard. The survey, accessible online at <https://virginiatech.questionpro.com/PatrickCountyCitizenSurvey> covers a wide range of local government topics. Residents are encouraged to participate and share their perspectives on current challenges, opportunities, and priorities for the county's development. "We believe that the success of our community hinges on the active participation and input of our residents," said Beth Simms, County Administrator. "This survey is an invaluable opportunity for every member of our community to contribute their ideas and

aspirations, ultimately shaping" the county's future. Simms estimates the survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. Insights gathered from the survey will inform the county's strategic planning process and help prioritize initiatives that align with the needs and aspirations of its residents. The results will be shared with the public and used to guide decision-making by county officials and community leaders. Simms said the Patrick County Library and the Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Stuart site will provide computer access if needed to participate in the survey. Residents are encouraged to complete the survey by February 25 to ensure their voices are heard and considered in the planning process.

Chamber Chat

By Rebecca Adcock



Already one month into 2024. The chamber kicked off the year with our annual membership drive and Spring 2024 magazine ads. The office has been busy cataloging all those replies. The chamber is appreciative of all businesses, organizations, museums and individuals who support us. Without your support, the chamber would not be able to continue to offer programming throughout the year, partner to provide events for networking, community growth and learning. We are also a voice at regional and state meetings to help keep Patrick County moving forward.

As we continue to move into 2024, we are excited to see how Patrick County continues to recommit moving our county forward. We already have a few programs in the works. The first big event is the Economic Summit that we are hosting in partnership with Reynolds Homestead, Patrick County Economic Development and Tourism departments, and the Town of Stuart. This is an information and feedback session that has not happened since 2016. And we know so much has changed since then. While all businesses are important to the health of Patrick County, this summit is targeting our county employers who employ more than twenty-five employees. Learning from this event, we expect to host an economic summit for our small businesses.

This is the year that the chamber will be leaning more into our partnerships to help bring programs. Reynolds Homestead will be leading the charge for the Work Based Learning initiatives that the state is promoting. We will be helping

to identify industry partners and learning workshops. We are also working with the economic development department to produce printed material and web content on business in Patrick County, checklists and resource guides for contact information. We anticipate hosting a Lunch and Learn to discuss all the resources available. Our office, along with economic development, has had multiple phone calls and visits from people interested in starting businesses in the county.

We are excited for 2024, with county administration in place, the announcement of the Downtown Revitalization grant for Stuart, pieces are starting to come together. If the chamber can assist you in any way, please reach out to us.

New Chamber Businesses: Stuart Family Restaurant, Insight, Reed Electric Solutions, LLC, Frontier Farm and Home Center, LLC.

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

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

*William Isaac Hylton 32, of Cana, was charged Feb. 2 with larceny. Senior Deputy M.R. Hodges was the arresting officer.

*Ashely Robertson, 37, of Ararat, was charged Feb. 2 with assault. Inv. T. Jessup was the arresting officer.

*Charles Nicholas Doss, 25, of Ararat, was charged Feb. 2 with fail to comply with terms of pretrial services. Master Deputy M.T. Rorer was the arresting officer.

*Vershonda Tamika Lewis, 39, of Bassett, was charged Feb. 2 with ID theft. Inv. F.M. Hubbard was the arresting officer.

*Mason Wyatt Wasoki, 22, of Stuart, was charged Feb. 2 with one count each drive while intoxicated, 1st offense; reckless driving and drive revoked/suspended. Trooper Luke J. D'Albero was the arresting officer.

*David Anthony Clark, 41, of Virginia Beach, was charged Feb. 3 with one count each drive while intoxicated, 1st offense and abuse/neglect child. Trooper J.A. Armes was the arresting officer.

*Mason Wyatt Wasoski, 22, of Stuart, was charged Feb. 3 with one count each carnal knowledge and indecent liberties.

*Sandra Michelle Hall, 29, of

Martinsville, was charged Feb. 3 with fail to appear. Senior Deputy J.S. Kendrick was the arresting officer.

*DaRehyon Monte Rucker, 22, of Martinsville, was charged Feb. 4 with obtain money by false pretense. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Eunice Ray Melton, 85, of Cana, was charged Feb. 5 with fail to appear. Lt. D.L. Foley was the arresting officer.

*Charle Thomas Cooper, 36, of Ridgeway, was charged Feb. 5 with unauthorized use of vehicle. Inv. J.W. Kruse was the arresting officer.

*DaRehyon Monte Rucker, 22, of Martinsville, was charged Feb. 5 with one count each forgery and uttering. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Richard Clay Fitzgerald, 35, of Patrick Springs, was charged Feb. 5 with four counts violation of protective order and one count stalking. Inv. T. Jessup was the arresting officer.

*Daniel Thomas Humphries, 29, of Burlington, N.C., was charged Feb. 8 with one count each disregard law enforcement command, reckless driving, and drive without license endorsement. CMV. Senior Trooper J.N. Mabe was the arresting officer.

Animal shelter to be closed Feb. 28

The Patrick County Public Animal Shelter will be closed on Wednesday, February 28.

It will reopen for normal business hours on Thursday, February 29.

Cupid's Connection to Crypto

The past two years have seen an explosion of crypto currency scams which has led many people to ask the same question - how? After all, crypto currency is something most people don't understand, and those who do follow it know that it is very volatile, completely unregulated, and has no protection for investors. So, given all of that, how are people losing billions a year to crypto scams? If we had to pick someone to blame (besides the criminals), it might be Cupid.

Romance scams have become one of the top drivers of crypto currency fraud, because once the criminal creates a deep connection with their victim, they are able to get that person to do things they wouldn't normally do.

If someone you only know online tells you they are making money in-

vesting in crypto and offers to teach you how, it's a scam - full stop. It doesn't matter how well you think you know this person or how strong of a bond you feel you've created, asking for money to invest in crypto currency is one of the surest signs of a modern-day romance scam.

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

With about 1 million members in Virginia, AARP is the largest organization working on behalf of people age 50-plus and their families in the Commonwealth. To learn more about how AARP Virginia is working in your community, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/aarpvirginia and follow @AARPVa on X at www.X.com/aarpva.

Charlottesville pharmacies to pay \$1.3 million

A Kroger Pharmacy and a Harris Teeter Pharmacy in Charlottesville have both agreed to pay the United States a combined total of \$1.3 million to settle civil claims that the stores violated the Controlled Substances Act (CSA).

The claims resolved by the settlement are allegations only and there has been no determination of liability.

"We have seen a record number of Americans lose their lives in recent years as a result of opioid poisoning," United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh said. "This epidemic remains ongoing, and we know that many individuals struggling with addiction are obtaining opioids and other addictive drugs from pharmacies who choose to look the other way. My Office continues to work with the DEA and others to hold accountable any pharmacy or doctor who illegally prescribes these highly addictive and dangerous drugs."

"Healthcare providers, including pharmacies, have a vital responsi-

bility when it comes to dispensing medications to meet the health needs of their patients. Our goal is to ensure that healthcare providers are equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to deliver high-quality care to their patients, while also preventing the diversion and misuse of prescription drugs for the safety and well-being of our citizens," said Jarod A. Forget, Special Agent in Charge, DEA Washington Division.

Specifically, the United States alleges the two pharmacies violated the CSA at least 160 times between February 2018 and April 2021 by filling invalid prescriptions for opioids and benzodiazepines that were written by a physician clearly acting outside the scope of his medical practice, and pharmacists at both locations should have known this information and refused to fill those illegal prescriptions.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Justin Lugar and the DEA Richmond District Office investigated the matter.

Former corrections employee pleads guilty to smuggling cell phone to inmate

A former Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) employee pled guilty to smuggling a cell phone to an inmate inside Haynesville Correctional Center.

Erica Shaie Morrow, 32, received a 3-year sentence with 3 years suspended, including credit for time spent in confinement while awaiting trial. Additionally, Morrow must show good behavior for a period of five years under the terms of her suspended sentence. Morrow's trial date was January 29 in Richmond County Circuit Court.

The date of the offense was June 1, 2022. Cell phones are considered contraband in VADOC facilities. Those found to be in violation of law which prohibits both inmates from

possessing cell phones and people without authorization from providing an inmate a cell phone are guilty of a Class 6 felony.

"The Virginia Department of Corrections is committed to preventing the flow of contraband and drugs into our facilities," said VADOC Director Chad Dotson. "The safety and security of our employees, inmates, and supervisees is our top priority. Those who attempt to smuggle items into our facilities will be held accountable for their actions."

The Virginia Department of Corrections continues to monitor the intake of contraband into its facilities. If you have any information, you can call anonymously to (540) 830-9280.

Pets of the Week



These two red dogs whose owner died are in need of a home. They are spayed and neutered, well-mannered and kennel trained. They are ready to be adopted today.

Meet Rodney, an adorable 7 month old with an eye patch. This doll is neutered and ready for a new

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

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School Staff

(cont. from page 1)

sion has received approximately \$8,925,000 in federal funds.

“We utilized about \$1.1 million a year” for the last three years on average “for salaries, tutoring, and employee bonuses” for those who worked through the pandemic, he said.

The rest of the \$5.4 million was used for capital improvement projects, like restroom renovations at each school, buying cleaning supplies and equipment, five new buses and safer cars at schools to transport students, learning loss supplies, school painting and furniture, metal storage buildings at every school, school playgrounds at each school, and other projects and supplies.

There will be a smaller staff

“because we will not have the grant funds to maintain those positions” next year, Wood said.

Because the division only receives the Required Local Effort (RLE) and Required Local Match (RLM) from the county, Wood said there are only a few positions the division would be able to move into the general operating budget.

It doesn't matter which calculation tool is used, “we're going to be unable to provide current level services to our students because we're losing these federal dollars,” he said.

Wood said most of those slated to lose their jobs are teacher assistants and some student success coaches.

“If the locality gives us additional dollars,” he said some could be retained. “We're looking at other grants now for a behavioral specialist to help with some of the issues. We're looking for other grant options to hire some back, but I do not see a grant out there to bring back \$1.2 million in our budget to keep the staff operating like it has been.”

Wood said the division is meeting with schools next week to consider enrollment and the number of teachers each school needs.

Those in the grant-funded positions “knew that June 30 was the last date for employment because that's when the funds run out,” he said, adding the division would love to be able to maintain

those levels of positions because they have been a benefit and a blessing to the students.

In other matters, the board:

*Recognized February as School Board Appreciation Month.

*Recognized the week of February 12-16 as School Board Clerk Appreciation Week.

*Heard the superintendent's report.

*Discussed the FY2023-2024 budget.

*Approved the consent agenda.

*Approved the second reading of the Face Mask Choice Policy.

*Approved the personnel list #1 as amended.

*Approved personnel lists 2-4.

*Approved religious exemptions 22.1-254.

Mobile Clinic

(cont. from page 1)

Patrick County,” she said. “We're just looking to help people that would like to be seen. We see everybody, insurance, no insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, self-pay.”

Anthony encourages anyone needing a medical provider or to be seen to come to the mobile healthcare unit.

The Virginia Harm Reduction

Coalition West Piedmont was also set up at the event.

Ariel Johnson, the director, said the group works with those who are actively using substances, or their friends and family, “to help educate them, how to reduce the harms of substance use such as overdose, death, and disease transmission.”

Johnson said Connect Health provides medical care and primary care to individuals in marginalized communities, just like the coalition does.

“So, as soon as I came up here, I connected with them and they were like ‘yep, please come on.’ Today, we're doing Narcan which is an opioid antagonist, it helps

survive overdoses,” she said.

Johnson said there are also resource connections and referral sheets available.

“Everything's completely free, we are a non-profit,” she said.

Johnson said the Coalition plans to set up at the future Connect Health mobile clinic days.

Lawmakers advance bill to teach high school students how to reverse opioid overdose

By Alyssa Hutton
Capital News Service

Bills to help educate juveniles and prevent fatal overdoses amid the opioid epidemic have advanced in the General Assembly.

The bipartisan measure Senate Bill 726 was introduced by Sen. Todd Pillion, R-Abingdon, and incorporates a similar measure from Sen. Stella Pekarsky, D-Fairfax.

The bill, which passed unanimously through the Senate, requires school boards to create a program of instruction for grades nine through 12 on opioid overdose prevention and reversal.

This type of education would include how to identify an overdose and how to administer medication such as naloxone to reverse an opioid overdose. Naloxone is the generic form of the brand name medicine Narcan.

A substitute for the bill advanced from committee and removed the requirement that such instruction be completed by graduation. Bill language now only recommends that it be completed before graduation.

Public schools would be required to have two doses of naloxone in the school and develop training protocols and policies for its use.

“While it is unfortunate that this bill is needed, I appreciate the bipartisan support for SB 726 which ensures our schools and state agencies are working together to confront the reality of dangerous and potentially life-threatening drugs in our schools,” Pillion stated in an email interview.

The bill states that the state

health and education departments will help develop policies and guidelines by January next year, with local school boards implementing the guidelines by the 2026-2027 school year.

Del. Briana Sewell, D-Woodbridge, introduced House Bill 732 that requires all public schools to have a two-dose supply of naloxone by the 2026-2027 school year. At least one school nurse or other employee must be trained in its administration.

Public schools are currently allowed to have a supply of naloxone and train staff how to use it, but it is not required.

Both bills include a “good faith” section to keep any employee who administers an opioid antidote, even without prior training, from any disciplinary action or civil or criminal liability.

HB 732 also has bipartisan support and has been approved unanimously by education and appropriation committees.

“This bill focuses on access and training for the use of Naloxone in schools because these programs have been proven to prevent deaths and be highly cost-effective,” Sewell stated in an email.

Sewell worked with several education associations, including the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, to vet the bill and best address the challenges schools are facing.

Emergency department visits for unintentional opioid overdoses for juveniles increased between 2018 and 2022, according to data from the Virginia Department of Health.

Visits increased by almost 16% for the age group of 14 and under. There was an over 13% increase for the 15-19 years old age group. Fatal overdoses from



Narcan, which is used to reverse an opioid overdose, is available over the counter. Bills to help educate juveniles and prevent fatal overdoses amid the opioid epidemic have advanced in the General Assembly. (Photo by Alyssa Hutton/VCU CNS.)

all opioids increased last year, according to preliminary VDH data. Opioids, specifically illicit fentanyl, have been the driving force behind the large increases in fatal overdoses since 2013.

At least 10 suspected overdoses occurred this school year in Loudoun County public schools, according to a November statement from the superintendent. That means 10 students received medical treatment and four received naloxone. Four students needed naloxone the entire school year before.

There were 22 nonfatal juvenile overdoses in Loudoun County last year and almost all were fentanyl-related, an increase from 15 nonfatal overdoses the previous year.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin issued an executive order in response to the school overdoses in Loudoun County, stating that parents should be alerted about school overdoses within 24 hours. Sen. Jennifer Carroll Foy, D-Woodbridge, introduced Senate Bill 498 to codify this. It

to the House next.

Tiana Vazquez is the education specialist for REVIVE!, the state's Opioid Overdose and Naloxone Education program. The program trains people to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose. Programs like REVIVE! could train school employees to administer naloxone if HB 732 or SB 726 are passed, something that Vazquez supports.

REVIVE! training helps break the stigma around opioids, Vazquez said.

“Honestly, it can be anyone and everyone and sometimes it's just accidental,” Vazquez said.

Training on opioid overdose prevention is free and available to anyone through REVIVE! Naloxone is available over the counter without a prescription.

“This is just another medical emergency,” Vazquez said about an opioid overdose and the use of naloxone. “We're just trying to prepare in that way.”

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

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FDA's Foreign Drug Inspection Program

I recently chaired a hearing in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, in which we examined the effectiveness, and shortcomings, of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA)



Morgan Griffith
Representative

foreign drug inspection program. Since 1955, the FDA has conducted international inspections on products regulated by the agency to ensure foreign facilities, laboratories, processing sites, etc. comply with U.S. law. As according to the FDA, Americans should have confidence that products manufactured outside the U.S. meet the same safety and quality standards as those manufactured domestically.

But, in the program's current state, this is far from the case. In fact, the FDA's lack of foreign inspections is alarming, and its consequences can be deadly.

The Subcommittee held a hearing on this subject in December 2019 in which we discussed a number of issues with the program. For example, all of the FDA's foreign inspections were pre-announced, giving foreign facilities 10-12 weeks advanced notification (U.S. facilities do not get advanced notification). And even with prior notification, the FDA found deficiencies during 66% of foreign inspections, including serious deficiencies in 16% of those inspections.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges with the program only increased.

From March 2020 through February 2022, the program essentially ceased functioning. For example, from March to October 1, 2020, the agency performed only three foreign inspections. In 2018 and 2019, the agency performed more than 600 inspections during that same time period.

Additionally, pre-announced in-person inspections were replaced by zoom calls.

Though zoom certainly has its benefits, what do inspectors miss when they aren't on site to see the interworking of how a facility is being operated?

Over zoom they cannot see if a rat skitters across the floor or if documents are being destroyed in a barrel out back.

Currently, I am most concerned by the FDA's lack of inspections in India and China, as these two countries comprise the majority of foreign manufacturing sites of generic drugs on the U.S. market.

In a recent analysis of data by ProPublica, it was shown that the FDA only inspected three percent of Indian manufacturers in 2022, while in 2019 they inspected 45 percent.

As I mentioned above, this can lead to deadly consequences, as was seen in 2023, not with drugs but with eyedrops. Eyedrops produced in a plant in Tamil, India infected 81 people in the U.S.

with a rare strain of extensively drug-resistant P. aeruginosa; three died and eight were blinded. The plant in which they were manufactured never received an inspection from the FDA.

With more and more of our drugs being made overseas, this lack of FDA oversight is unacceptable.

There have also been recurrent reports of data destruction and falsification by Indian and Chinese manufacturers, which is extremely alarming.

The FDA attributes its challenges, specifically its low inspections rates, to not having enough investigators within the agency.

One idea I mentioned during our hearing, to help alleviate this problem, is to have preliminary inspectors within the agency, someone who might not meet the educational or training standards of a full-fledged inspector, but who can at least go into facilities and do cleanliness inspections.

These preliminary inspectors can be people who have just graduated college or those who have a desire to see different parts of the world. They can be paid a low-cost stipend while helping Americans receive safe medicines. After a few weeks' training they can begin preliminary inspections of foreign drug manufacturing sites. They can then report on how clean a facility is and whether they saw anything that looked amiss. This will give the FDA information to prioritize full inspections, as a facility that doesn't have clean bathrooms and floors likely has other issues on the processing line.

Regular reviews by Congress on the current state and effectiveness of the foreign drug inspection program are essential to ensuring work is being done to improve the program, especially given the setbacks from COVID-19. I was very disappointed that the FDA did not send a witness to testify during our most recent hearing, as Congress, and Americans, should hear directly from the agency on what steps they are taking to improve the program.

I will continue to provide oversight over the program and plan to have more hearings on the subject. If the FDA proves unwilling to work with the Subcommittee, I will move to other means within the Subcommittee's power to ensure they cooperate.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bidens Iran de-escalation, green new deal and Ukraine

(Fox, Cato Institute, VOA, CNN, Newsweek, Washington Post, CBS News)

Iran: Top Iran experts in the U.S. and in Israel are warning President Biden that his administration's strategy of de-escalation and containment targeting the world's worst state-sponsor of terrorism – the Islamic Republic of Iran has failed.

Alarming reports about Iran moving at an astonishingly fast pace to possess a nuclear weapon have emerged since last month. The Trump administration listed the Houthis as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. However, after Biden entered the White House, he quickly delisted the Houthis as a terrorist entity in February 2021.

Biden's policy has been to bribe Iran not to advance its nuclear program through non-enforcement of sanctions. Iran advanced its nuclear program anyway and pocketed the extra revenue from oil sales to increase funding to its terror proxies. Remember the pallets of cash from Obama and the more than \$80 billion in oil exports under Biden's Iran sanctions rollback.

Green New Deal: If the U.S. had a robust fossil fuel industry like we had under Trump, Europe would not need Putin for energy. The U. S. could supply all the energy that Europe needed. Biden, a puppet of the progressives tried to destroy the U.S. fossil fuel industry because of the Green New Deal, which allowed Putin to sell millions of dollars to Europe when the U.S. could have done it. You do not destroy your energy infrastructure until you have another one to take its place.

Ukraine: Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union but declared itself an independent country in December 1991. But Putin still refers to Ukraine as Russian that rightfully belongs to

Russia. His ability to sell oil to Europe when he invaded Ukraine gave him the ability to cut off those in Europe who opposed him.

So far, Congress has approved about \$113 billion in aid to Ukraine, according to the U.S State Department and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

- But what is the money used for:
- weapons and ammunition
 - military support
 - money to combat human trafficking.
 - food, energy, and health services for the Ukrainian people
 - support for small and medium sized businesses
 - natural gas purchases by Ukraine
 - embassy security, diplomatic support
 - narcotics control/law enforcement programs
 - rebuilding of Ukraine's infrastructure
 - payment for government salaries, meet pension obligations.
 - maintain hospitals and schools.

The Biden administration and its allies in the news media conveniently ignored the ugly aspects of the "democratic" revolution that put Zelensky in power. Although there were genuine democrats in the demonstrations, there were also armed ultranationalist and even outright fascist elements, which played crucial roles.

Concerns over aid to Ukraine boil down to oversight. Ukraine is a young democracy with a history of corruption. According to Transparency International, it's ranked the second most corrupt country in Europe. Only Russia scores lower.

Ukraine is not a blossoming American-style democracy. In truth, it bears a much greater resemblance to the pseudo-democratic systems of Russia, Hungary, and Turkey.

Pray for our country.
William Salser,
Stuart

God or Man?

In the February 7 edition of the Enterprise, a reader responded to a previous letter of mine in which I had asked the question "If God is not our moral compass, then what is?" The reader answered the question by first defining morality using the Oxford Dictionary, which he indicated defines morality as a system of values, rules, or principles by which we judge actions as good or bad, right or wrong. He made note that "God" is not part of Oxford's definition of morality and later stated that "our civilization requires morality – one cannot murder because each person has equal rights which cannot be infringed upon."

In his response to my question, I believe the reader pointed toward the very heart of the issue my question was meant to raise. I think he is absolutely correct that civilization requires morality, and I don't think many would disagree with that. But I believe the Oxford definition cited by the reader and his answer miss the most important attribute of morality: its source. If morality is a set of values or rules by which society judges something as "good" or "bad," where do those rules and values in turn originate? They have to derive from somewhere. My contention is that they have to originate from one of two sources, either humanity or an authority apart from humanity. If mankind is the ultimate source of the values upon which the rules and principles that govern society are founded, then

morality becomes a matter of consensus; that is, the majority determines what is good or evil, right or wrong, lawful or unlawful in every case. If mankind, rather than God, is the source of morality, who is to say one person's concept of what is good or evil is more correct than another's? In a society in which what is right and wrong is simply what a majority of people agree upon rather than what an authority higher than us says is right and wrong, then there is no reason murder could not eventually be accepted as moral. That is an extreme example, to be sure, but the principle holds true if something greater than man is not the arbiter of right and wrong. Indeed, Nazi ideology held that Jews and other peoples were sub-human, and therefore, to the Nazis, it was not immoral to murder them. The reader mentioned that each person has equal rights that cannot be infringed, which is consistent with murder being wrong. But from where does an individual derive his or her rights? Are rights granted by or agreed upon by society, or are they from God? If rights come from men instead of God, then man can take them away if he can secure enough votes.

The question with which I ended my last letter in essence remains. Who ultimately determines what is right and wrong, good and evil? Is it God, or is it man? I believe life and death hinge on the answer.

David Robinette Jr.,
Patrick Springs

Letters to the Editor/Viewpoints Policy

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

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

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

Eliphaz and Nancy Anne Asher Shelton

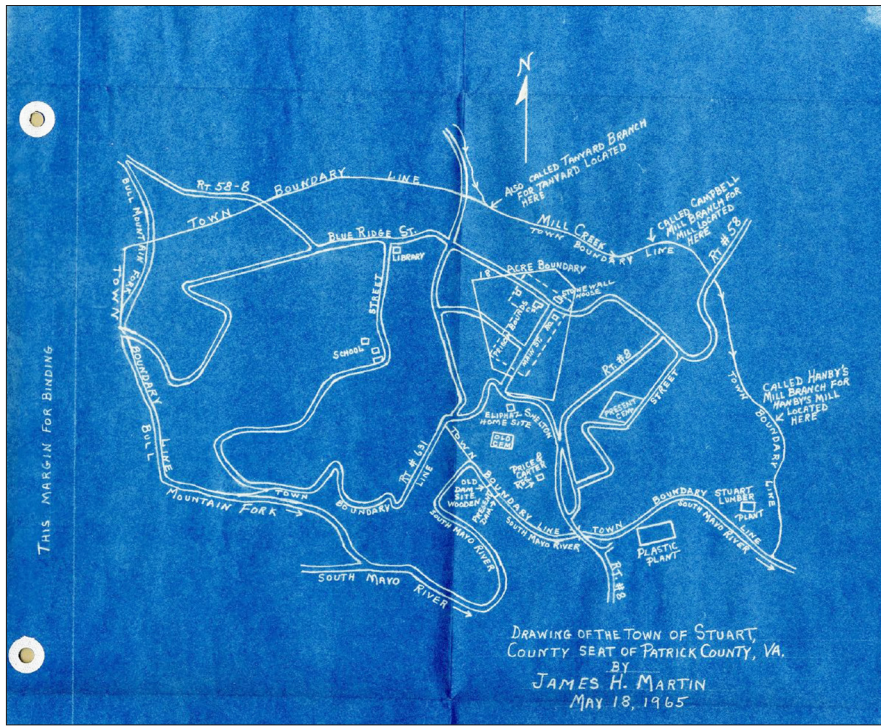
By Beverly Belcher Woody

For the past three weeks, we have been looking at the Welsh emigrant, George Taylor and some of his descendants. I have not been able to find out why the little community first known as Patrick Courthouse was officially named Taylorsville (later Stuart) after George Taylor. George Taylor served in the Revolutionary War, but so did many others, including Captain Eliphaz Shelton.

No offense to the Taylors, but I always thought it should have been named Sheltonville or something to that effect, because on July 11, 1791, Captain Eliphaz Shelton executed a performance bond in penalty of 200 pounds (British currency) binding him to convey 18 acres of land to the county for a county seat. On October 10, 1791, he deeded this land to the county. It was located near the center of his 590-acre land grant. The Patrick County courthouse has stood on this land for two hundred years at the head of Main Street. The Shelton home and family cemetery were located at the bottom of Main Street.

On July 21, 1763, Ralph Shelton, Sr. sold his land in Amelia County, and with his wife, Susannah Mary Daniel, and family, he moved west to Halifax County (that area now being Patrick County). There, he purchased 400 acres of land on the South Mayo River from Josiah Leake in 1771. Ralph Sr. had three sons: Eliphaz, Jeremiah, and James. Eliphaz Shelton took the oath of allegiance and was appointed Captain in 1779. Jeremiah furnished supplies to the county militia and James was appointed Captain in 1777.

Colonel Abram Penn was summoned to the aid of General Nathaniel Greene at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse during March 1781. With him marched Captain Eliphaz Shelton and his men. Because of this battle, the British supplies ran so low that it led to the surrender of the British at Yorktown. On February 28, 1784, Eliphaz Shelton received a land grant of 590 acres



Eliphaz Shelton Plat donated by James Martin.

from Governor Benjamin Harrison for payment of services during the Revolutionary War. This land bordered his father's land on the north and his brother James' land on the west.

The progenitor Ralph Shelton died March 1789 and was buried beside his wife, Susannah Mary in the Shelton cemetery at the foot of Main Street. Ralph had lived to see his land included in three counties - Halifax, Pittsylvania, and Henry. Two years later, this same land was in the newly formed county of Patrick.

Eliphaz and his wife, Nancy Ann raised ten children at the home at the foot of Main Street. Next week, we will look at each of the known Shelton children; four sons and six daughters. There are so many descendants of Eliphaz and Nancy Shelton still living in Patrick County, Gilberts; Newmans; Nowlins; Fitzgeralds; Fulchers; Shorts; Edwards; Coopers; Laymans; and the list goes on and on.

On March 13th, 1826, the following obituary appeared in "The Lynchburg Virginian" The original newspaper is held by Jones Memorial Library, Lynchburg, Virginia, which is located on the second floor of the Lynchburg Public Library.

"At his residence near Taylorsville, in the county of Patrick on the 16th ult. after a protracted and lingering illness, Captain Eliphaz Shelton, passed away in the 86th year of his age. The deceased defended bravely the liberties of his country during the revolutionary war and at the period the excitable Tories so much disturbed the country, he shouldered his musket, and marching in the van, made every possible effort and exertion, both in bravery and skill, to immolate them. Patriotism and an ardent devotion to the cause of his country were the first principles of his character. He who writes this last tribute of respect to Captain Shelton knew him well and he knows that in the various characters of husband, father, master, and neighbor, no one was more indulgent, kind and hospitable. A very large circle of relatives are remaining to grieve his dissolution."

In the 1970's, a plat of survey was given to the Col. Abram Penn Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution that showed the 18 acres of land given for the site of the courthouse and the town. The Eliphaz Shelton home and family cemetery are clearly marked on the survey too. These plats had been given

to the chapter by a descendant of Eliphaz, James H. Martin, of Bluefield, W. Va. The Colonel Abram Penn DAR chapter voted to donate the plats to the Patrick County Historical Society and Museum.

Here is the dilemma...I can't seem to locate the actual Eliphaz Shelton cemetery. On page 303 of Tombstone Inscriptions of Patrick County, Virginia, published in 1984, Mr. O.E. Pilson states the following:

"Eliphaz Shelton Cemetery, located at the foot of Main Street in Stuart. Except for a few crude field stones markers with no inscriptions, there is nothing now left of this cemetery. According to Mr. W.R. Shelton, Jr. of Columbus, Ohio, a descendant, the following are buried here: Ralph & Susannah Shelton, parents of Captain Eliphaz Shelton; Captain Eliphaz Shelton, and wife, Ann; Archibald Shelton and wife, Rhoda; Archibald was the son of Eliphaz; Hannah Shelton, oldest child of Eliphaz & Ann; Peany Shelton Sharp, daughter of Eliphaz and Ann; Sally Shelton Nowlin, daughter of Eliphaz & Ann; Frederick Shelton, son of Eliphaz & Ann. There may be others. The remaining undisturbed graves are probably those of the Shelton slaves."

If Mr. Pilson saw undisturbed graves and crude field stone markers in the 1980's, where did they go? Ann McConnell is Regent of the Colonel Abram Penn chapter of the DAR, and I'm the Regent of the Patrick Henry Chapter; our chapters would love to honor this heroic man who fought so bravely for the Revolution and gave the town of Stuart its' start. We would especially love to honor the enslaved Africans buried there.

If anyone can help us locate the cemetery, it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you to Joshua Martin, Ron Martin, and Shirlien Belcher for providing invaluable research assistance in helping try to find records for the cemetery. Next week, we will look at the known children of Eliphaz and Ann Shelton.

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

Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty - How is my Social Security Benefit Calculated?

Dear Rusty: I appreciate your recent article dispelling the myth that politicians have stolen Social Security money. As a CPA, I dispel this myth repeatedly to clients who falsely claim SS funds have been raided. But another thing I deal with often is how SS benefits are calculated. I know the formula for determining each person's benefit amount is complex, but I have had to explain numerous times that those who put the most into Social Security get the lowest rate of return and those who put the least in get the highest return based on the way the benefit formula is structured. I get tired of people complaining that monthly Social Security payments are higher for retired doctors and other highly paid individuals. Can you please explain how Social Security is weighted in favor of lower income workers? Signed: Tired of the Misunderstandings

Dear Tired: Please don't be frustrated. Because of the program's complexity, Social Security is prone to misunderstanding, and educating the misinformed is an important professional duty we share. Here's how each person's SS benefit is determined:

The first thing to know is that each person's SS retirement benefit is not based on their financial contributions to the pro-

gram. Social Security's purpose is to provide a benefit which replaces a portion of the person's pre-retirement income, so the SS benefit is based on actual lifetime earnings, not on the payroll taxes withheld from those earnings.

Social Security has your lifetime earnings record (obtained annually from the IRS) and that record determines your "primary insurance amount" or "PIA." Your "PIA" is initially determined in your eligibility year (usually age 62) and is the amount you will get if you claim for benefits to start exactly at your full retirement age (FRA).

To develop your PIA, Social Security first adjusts (indexes) each year of your lifetime earnings (up to the annual payroll tax cap) to account for inflation. They then select the 35 inflation-adjusted years in which you earned the most, from which they compute your average monthly earnings over your lifetime (this is called your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings, or "AIME"). They then break your AIME into three segments, the first of which includes a majority of - and possibly all of - your AIME. They then take a percentage of each segment and total those three amounts to determine your PIA. The first segment is the largest and 90% of that first segment contributes most of your PIA. Smaller percentages of the other two segments (32% and 15% respectively if your AIME is higher), are then added to the first computation to arrive at your full PIA - the amount you get if you start benefits in the month you reach

your FRA. Note that since most of the PIA comes from the first large segment of each person's AIME, lower income workers get a higher percentage of their lifetime average monthly amount.

Since benefits are based on earnings, those with lower lifetime earnings do, indeed, get a smaller benefit than those with higher average lifetime earnings, but the percentage of pre-retirement replacement income lower income workers receive is higher than for those with higher monthly average lifetime earnings. The Social Security benefit for lower income workers is typically about 40% of their pre-retirement average monthly income, while those with higher lifetime average earnings may get a benefit as little as 20% of their average monthly pre-retirement earnings. In that sense, the Social Security benefit formula is progressive and weighted in favor of lower income workers. Nevertheless, albeit a smaller replacement percentage, higher income workers receive a higher monthly SS benefit because of their higher lifetime earnings. Even so, those

higher earners did, indeed, contribute more payroll taxes from their higher earnings.

So, each person's SS retirement benefit amount is a percentage of their pre-retirement income. Coincidentally, those with higher pre-retirement income also contributed more to the Social Security program than did those with lower earnings. But their higher SS benefit amount is based on their higher pre-retirement earnings, not on payroll taxes paid from those higher earnings.

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

Marriage Licenses

Following are the marriage licenses issued in December, according to records in the Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk's office:

Dewayne Knotts - Kimberly Jefferson
Randy Bowman - Tammy Spencer
David King - Kimberly Dickens

Cougars win big on senior night



Senior Stuart Callahan goes up for the shot.



Tyler Marshall brings the crowd to their feet with a slam dunk.



Senior Nate Large put up a free throw.



Cougar seniors Stuart Callahan and Nate Large were honored in a pre-game ceremony.



Gavin Fain drives past the James River defenders.



Easton Harris fires up a three-point shot.

By Pat Delaney

The Patrick County High Boys varsity basketball team got off to a fast start against district opponent James River on February 5, and never trailed in a 69-40 win on senior night for the Cougars.

Back on January 20, at James River, the Cougars got off to a slow start and could not overcome the early deficit.

"I told the kids before we came out tonight that we had to get off to a much better start and play with energy and passion," said Cougar Head Coach Brian Chitwood, "and I thought our kids did."

The Cougars came out strong, hitting a three-point shot to open the scoring, taking a lead they would never relinquish. In the first quarter, the Cougars went on 6-0 and 7-0 runs, building a ten point, 15-5 lead heading into the second quarter.

Patrick County played tight team defense throughout, allowing few open shots for the visiting Knights. "We played physical, controlled the boards and we ran the floor, and that creates easy buckets," Chitwood said of the Cougars' defensive effort.

Starting the second half lead-

ing 30-13, the Cougars didn't let up. They went on 12-2 run to extend their lead, highlighted by a Tyler Marshall slam dunk off a James River turnover, bringing the Cougar fans to their feet. Patrick County took a 52-24 lead in the final quarter, where solid defense and hustle cemented the 69-40 win.

After being honored in a pre-game ceremony, Cougar seniors Stuart Callahan and Nate Large had impressive performances during the game. Callahan led the Cougars with 10 points and 5 rebounds, with Large adding 9

points.

Of his seniors, coach Chitwood said he was "very pleased and proud of those kids," adding they are, "top notch guys."

Chitwood was also proud of the way the team played for their senior teammates. "We talked about that in the locker room. Let's go out and give them the effort we would want our guys to give us. Real pleased with the effort that we gave tonight. Good win."

Noah Jessup finished the game with 8 points, 4 assists and 3 steals. Easton Harris and Ben Sutphin each chipped in 8 points.

Fishing Team members earn recognition

Several members of the Patrick County High School Fishing Team recently earned spots on the 2022-2023 John Crews All-Academic Team.

Eli Wood, Jonah Shockley, Hunter Heath, Evan Havens, and Tripp Thompson were among those to earn awards (pictured), as were Devin Walker, Jake Caine, Caleb Hostetter, Lacey Sutphin, Evan Wood and Jacob Spencer (not pictured).

To earn this award, anglers must earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of the school year.

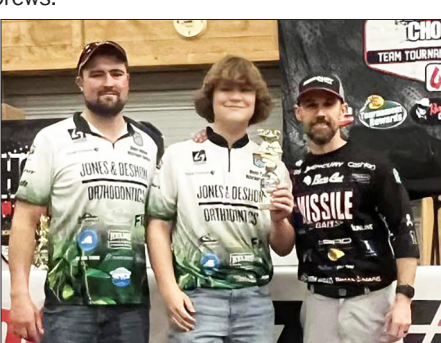
The awards were presented at the Angler's Choice Open House and John Crews was one of the guest speakers and presented the trophies to the students. John Crews is a Professional Bass Angler on the Bassmaster Elite and owner of Missile Baits.



Coach Hylton Scott, Eli Wood and John Crews. (Photos by Sandra Heath)



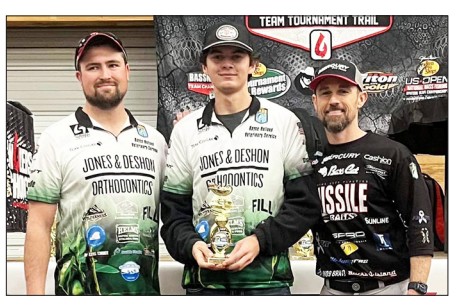
Coach Hylton Scott, Evan Havens and John Crews.



Coach Hylton Scott, Tripp Thompson and John Crews.



Coach Hylton Scott, Jonah Shockley and John Crews.



Coach Hylton Scott, Hunter Heath and John Crews.



Coach Hylton Scott, Will Heath, Chace Handy and John Crews. (Photo by Sandra Heath)

Heath, Handy earns awards for last season

Patrick County High School Fishing Team members Will Heath and Chace Handy were among those to receive the John Crews All Elite Team last season. To earn this award, anglers must place in the Top 10 of all Southern division teams at the end of the 2022-2023 season. Also receiving this award, but not pictured, are

Jake Caine and Devin Walker. The two were presented awards at the Angler's Choice Open House and John Crews was one of the guest speakers and presented the trophies to the students along with Coach Hylton Scott. John Crews is a Professional Bass Angler on the Bassmaster Elite and owner of Missile Baits.

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Broke vs Poor

By Bryan Golden

There is an enormous difference between someone who is broke and someone who considers themselves poor. Being broke refers to a current financial situation. Poor, however, is a state of mind.

The person who is broke can rectify their circumstances by improving their finances. As a solution, they seek to change their strategy in a way to improve their finances. There are countless examples of an individual losing all of their money and then making it all back. Even wealthy people have gone through this cycle.

Walt Disney didn't give up after he filed for bankruptcy in 1920. A few years later, in 1928, he founded a new company and created Mickey Mouse.

Henry Ford didn't give up after his first company failed and went bankrupt. He got right back up and started a second company. However, his second company also went broke. Undaunted, he launched FORD in 1903.

Rowland H. Macy failed at four attempts to open successful retail stores. His fifth venture was opening a store in Manhattan in 1858. This one did well, with sales of \$85,000 in the first year.

These are but three of numerous examples of people who have lost everything but never considered themselves poor. They were determined to continue until successful. They didn't waste one second making excuses. They devoted all of their time and energy to turning their situation around.

The poor person has a self-image of poverty. They believe their financial situation is a result of forces beyond their control. They use poverty as an excuse to justify their circumstances.

Anyone may experience tough financial times. What you do when there, and where you go next, are the determining factors that make all the difference. Should you view yourself as a victim who doesn't have control over their circumstances, you prevent yourself from taking corrective action.

Broke vs. poor illustrates the con-

trast between circumstances and attitude. Although circumstances do fluctuate, it's your response which determines the future. Action changes circumstances but attitude controls action. So, it's attitude which differentiates between someone who is broke and someone who is poor.

An attitude of "woe is me" leads to passivity. With this outlook, no action is taken because there is no point. This approach to life is characteristic of a victim mentality. Victims passively wait for things to get better. They passively wait for adversity to pass.

Victims blame other people or circumstances for their fate. They don't believe they have any control over what happens to them. Where they are is a result of what has been done to them. The targets they blame include family, friends, the economy, their job, their boss, bad luck, the government, or even strangers.

A person who thinks of them self as poor has a victim mentality. If they receive guidance from anyone successful, they have limitless excuses as to why they can't succeed. A poor person will also claim to have tried numerous strategies, none of which worked for them.

A broke person can't wait to do whatever is necessary to improve their finances. These people know their situation is temporary. They are constantly looking for ideas and inspiration. They study successful people to learn how they have done things. A broke person does whatever is necessary to turn their situation around.

If you ever find yourself in an adverse situation, remember that the outcome is based on your outlook. Taking the "poor" approach leaves you passively hoping and waiting for things to get better. Utilizing the "broke" strategy gets you in gear to take whatever action is needed to improve your circumstances.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2024 Bryan Golden.

Grant period for specialty crops now open

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) anticipates administering nearly \$550,000 in USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Specialty Crop Block Grant funding to increase the competitiveness of Virginia specialty crops. Agricultural associations, industry and producer groups, localities, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and non-profits are eligible for this grant opportunity. Eligible groups must submit proposals for grants of up to \$75,000 per project by 5 p.m. on March 11. Individual producers are not eligible for this grant.

Specialty crops are fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops, including floriculture, that are not typically covered by traditional crop insurance. Specialty crops do not include standard commodities such as corn, wheat, soybeans, peanuts, cotton or tobacco. Processed foods are eligible, provided their development enhances the competitiveness of one or more specialty crops.

Specialty crop competitive grant proposals must be specific and explain how an association, industry group or organization will use the funds to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Some examples include research, promotion and marketing plans, as well as food safety projects and projects that improve food access.

In awarding USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant funds, VDACS will give priority to projects that have the sole purpose of enhanc-

ing the competitiveness of specialty crops as they pertain to the following issues:

- Enhancing food safety.
- Improving the capacity of all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act and in cost-share arrangements for finding audits of such systems, including USDA GroupGAP, for small farmers, packers, and processors.
- Investing in specialty crop research, including research to focus on conservation and environmental outcomes.
- Developing new and improved seed varieties and specialty crops.
- Improving pest and disease control.
- Increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops.
- Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems.
- Enhancing sustainability.

Guidelines, instructions, and the application for the USDA Specialty Crop Competitive Grants are available at www.vdacs.virginia.gov/sales-specialty-crop-competitive-grant-program.shtml, via e-mail to Janelle Otieno at janelle.otieno@vdacs.virginia.gov, or by mailing VDACS, Specialty Crop Block Grant Application, 102 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

Applications received after 5 p.m. on Monday, March 11 will not be considered for funding. The duration of each grant is two years, and the grant period will begin Oct. 1.



Noah Jessup passes through Floyd's full court pressure.



Gavin Fain and Easton Harris playing tough defense.



Jackson Horton shoots from three-point range.



Stuart Callahan puts up a shot in the paint.

Varsity basketball team falls to Floyd

By Pat Delaney

The Cougar varsity basketball team fell to the Floyd County Buffaloes in a Three Rivers District game, 76-54 on February 9. It was a game that, for much of the time, felt closer than it was.

"The scoreboard was not indicative of the effort our kids gave," Cougar head coach Brian Chitwood said following the game.

Both teams played solid defensively to open the game, which was tied at six with 3:30 to go in the first quarter. A combination of the Buffaloes' full-court press defense and firing up three pointers helped them go on a 10-2 run to finish the quarter with a 16-8 lead.

The Cougars showed they could break Buffaloes pressing defense in the second quarter, but missed free throws held them back. While the teams each put up 14 points in the quarter, Patrick County could not chip away at the eight point deficit.

The Buffaloes started the second half with a 9-2 run to extend their lead to 13 points with 5:30 to go in the third quarter. Patrick County answered with a 7-0 run of their own, powered by stellar defensive play. The momentum the Cougars had picked up went away just as fast when the referee waved off a three-pointer for traveling.

"I can't help but think if the call goes a different way midway in the third period, if that three pointer counts, it's a five point game. It stayed eight and we never got

closer," said Coach Chitwood, adding, "we've got to live with the call that's made."

The Buffaloes took advantage, outscoring the Cougars 19-9 the rest of the quarter, including a last second three-pointer, to extend their lead to 16, at 58-42.

The Buffaloes continued the full court pressure in the final quarter, not allowing the Cougars to string together enough points to close the gap. Floyd County held on for the 76-54 win.

Leading the way for the Cougars was senior Stuart Callahan, who's play in the paint led to several put-back buckets off missed shots. He finished the game with 16 points on 8-of-9 shootings, and 9 rebounds. "He doesn't understand the talent, the athlete that he is," said Coach Chitwood of Callahan. "He's a very gifted athlete."

Easton Harris had 10 points, including three 3-pointers, Cameron Collins added 9 points and 3 assists, and Noah Jessup finished with 8 points and 4 assists.

Despite the final score, Coach Chitwood liked the effort his team gave while pointing out areas for improvement.

"We're still a work in progress. We're very young, but we've got to shoot the ball better from the free throw line. You can't give good teams advantages like that," he said. "That's (Floyd County) a really good basketball team. I'm proud of our effort. Our kids played hard."

Carrie Hill



On the morning of February 9th 2024, God peacefully and quietly called Sister Carrie Hill to her heavenly home. Sister Carrie was born on July 17, 1924 in Mount Airy, North Carolina to the late Joseph and Ida France. She attended school in Mount Airy and Patrick County, Virginia. She was united in holy matrimony to the late George W. Hill, Jr. To this union seven children were born (Gary, Larry, Carolyn, Roger, Janet, Shelby and Regenia). In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by two sisters and eight brothers.

their parents worked. Sister Carrie was also a lover of cats and dogs. In her lifetime, she cared for many pets including Sam, Tiger, Bruno and King. They all preceded her in death and was waiting for her on the rainbow bridge as she crossed over.

Sister Carrie joined Hylton Thessalonian Primitive Baptist Church in 1975 and was a mother of the church. She loved her church and church family, she was a faithful member and rarely missed a Sunday service until recent years due to failing health. She was a wonderful wife and mother. She never met a stranger and always welcomed anyone who happened to show up at dinner time. She also served as an unofficial "grandma" to a number of children in the community that she cared for while

Mom's favorite color was pink and favorite flower was tulips. She had an affinity for sweets and loved pancakes for breakfast. Spending time outside, she found joy in tending to her flowers and maintaining her yard. Even as she aged, she insisted on mowing her own lawn; she liked walking behind her self-propelled mower for exercise.

She leaves to cherish her memory and mourn her loss three sons, Gary Hill (Elaine), Stuart, VA; Larry Hill, Birmingham, AL; Roger Hill (Rita), Durham, NC;

four daughters, Carolyn Anderson (Dale), Wilmington, DE; Janet Ebron, Williamsburg, VA; Shelby Hill-McCray (Henry), Durham, NC; Regenia Hill, Richmond, VA; Daughter-in-law, Bettie Hill, Stuart, VA; Sons-in-law, Jerry Ebron, Bowie, MD and Stanley Jones, Fredericksburg, VA; Sisters-in-law, Shirley Redd, Martinsville, VA; Betty Gaither, Stuart, VA; Juanita Hairston, Stuart, VA; one uncle, Randall Straughter France, Westfield, NC; one aunt, Nannie Sanders, Cleveland, OH; eighteen grandchildren, numerous great grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services for Sister Carrie will be held Saturday, February 17, 2024, at 12:00 P.M. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Elder Manuel Jessup officiating. Burial will follow in the Hylton Thessalonian Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Dwight "Allen" Flippin

Dwight "Allen" Flippin, 59, of Claudeville, VA, passed away unexpectedly on February 4, 2024. Allen was born on March 28, 1964, the youngest of four children, to the late Robert Clyde and Beulah "Boots" Allen Flippin. Allen grew up in the close community of Asbury, NC, where he was blessed to be surrounded and loved by his aunts, uncles, and lots of cousins. He worked alongside his parents and siblings on their farm.

Allen enjoyed hunting, fishing, and helping cook ham and eggs for the 4th of July Breakfast Celebration, and roasting hotdogs by The Dan River. Sun Drop and ketchup were at every gathering because they were his favorites!

He was known for being generous with the bounty of his garden and would often share vegetables and canned goods with his neighbors, friends, and family.

Allen graduated from North Stokes High School and attended Surry Community College, where he was certified as a professional welder. He worked in this field for many years and he is currently employed by Stuart Concrete.

He was preceded in death by his parents and oldest brother, Robert Earl Flippin. He is survived by his brother, Gary (Phyllis) Flippin; and his "Sis," Sharon (Larry) Stone. Allen was "Papa" to Gavin, had many special nieces and nephews, and had a faithful friend, Sam. He was dear-

ly loved by all of us and his Savior, who was with him all the way. We will miss you "Little Bro." Allen recently sent this encouraging text message to a family member saying, "Life isn't easy, but God is always there."

A memorial service will be held at Asbury Pentecostal Holiness Church in Westfield, NC, on Sunday, February 11th, at 3:00 pm. The family will receive friends from 2:00 pm until 3:00 pm at the church.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Asbury PHC Cemetery Fund, c/o Fay Williams, 1386 Flippin Road, Mount Airy, NC 27030.

Online condolences may be made at www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Thomas Lusk, Jr.



Thomas Lusk, Jr., 86, of Martinsville, VA passed away February 8, 2024. He was born March 9, 1937, to the late James T. Lusk, Sr., and Irene Arnold Lusk. He was also preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, Trevis E. Lusk and a sister, Barbara L. Tuttle.

He is survived by his son, James T. Lusk, III; two brothers, Maynard E. Lusk, and Joseph E. Lusk. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews, who he loves very much.

Jim graduated from Martinsville High School in 1956. He was an honored veteran of the United States Army serving as a MP. He worked 29 years at E.I. DuPont and had a construction company

with his son J. He was a big sports enthusiast attending many high school and college games including the ACC tournament in spring of 2023. He and Trevis traveled extensively until her health intervened.

Visitation will be held from 12:30 noon to 2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16, 2024, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel. The funeral

service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16, 2024, with Rev. Eric Winn officiating at Norris Funeral Services. Burial will follow the service at Roselawn Burial Park.

Norris Funeral Services, Inc. and Crematory, Martinsville, VA is serving the Lusk family. Online condolences may be made at www.norrisfuneral.com.

Judith "Judy" Ann Sanborn



Judith "Judy" Ann Sanborn, 88, of Stuart, VA passed away on February 11, 2024 at her home. She was born on January 29, 1936 to the late Marvin Evans and Gertude Leidinger Evans. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her husband, Robert Sanborn, one son, Brad Sanborn and one sister, Jean Johns.

She was a member of Stuart Church of Living Waters, she was secretary for the

town of Bloomfield, CT. She worked at Patrick County Blood Banks, involved in Bull Mountain Arts and Weavers Exchange. Her past time was with Reynolds Homestead and she was one of the first Master Gardeners.

She is survived by her daughter, Tami Jackson of Stuart, VA, two sons, Scott Sanborn of Stuart, VA, Mark Sanborn of Florida, two brothers, Jack Johns of New Hampshire, Jerry Johns of Florida, five grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

All services will be private.

Norris Funeral Services in Stuart is serving the Sanborn family

Online condolences may be made at www.norrisfuneral.com.

Local VA250 Committee seeking information on local Revolutionary ancestors

With America's 250th birthday coming up in 2026, Patrick County is preparing for the celebration. The Pat-



rick County VA250 Commemoration Committee is planning events to celebrate both America and Patrick County's history to take place over the next two years, leading up to America's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026.

One project undertaken by the committee is looking at local residents who took part in the Revolutionary War. Part of that effort includes seeking current Patrick County residents who have ancestors who served, and would like to share the story of their service in the Continental Army or Militia.

Thanks to the Daughters of the American Revolution, the local VA250 Committee has posted a list of soldiers from Henry County (which included current day Patrick County) who served under Col. Abram Penn

during the Revolutionary War. The committee has posted the list on their Facebook page. It can be accessed at www.facebook.com/people/Patrick-County-VA250-Commemoration-Committee/61552995174610/. The committee welcomes those with ancestors on the list to comment with any information they may have on the soldiers

In addition, the State VA250 Commission is also seeking compelling modern photographs of significant sites relating to the Revolutionary War for use in interpretive exhibits, including a mobile museum that will travel across Virginia beginning this fall.

The Virginia 250 Commission encourages "submissions from individuals with diverse perspectives and artistic approaches." To submit, please send your images electronically to John Hennessy at jhennessy@va250.virginia.gov by Feb. 29.

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5	8	2	4	1	9	7	3	6
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OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON

Thank You for reading the enterprise

PATRICK PULPITS

Frustrations: a part of life

By Van Yandell

2 Timothy: 16-17 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

In a conversation with a man at a mission, he stated he did not believe the Bible was the word of any god. I asked him, "what about it do you reject?" His answer sent me into a state of skepticism, "Well I don't know exactly; I've never read it."

If I could name the frustration at the top of my list, it would definitely be the people that say they do not believe the Bible but don't have a clue what it contains.

Is it fair to judge someone or something without all the facts? Of course not! In the legal system of most countries, a trial for an alleged perpetrator of a crime is to uncover the evidence for guilt or non-guilt.

Why cannot this fairness (or the appearance thereof) be applied to God's word? All I've ever asked when speaking to a group, especially when I know that some (or many) in attendance are non-Christian, is to consider the evidence and be fair and reasonable in deciding what you believe.

Many believe the Bible is a supernatural document, written by men, inspired by God, the Creator of the universe and all things in it. There are volumes of evidence to indicate this is true if people would simply consider the information.

Many times when we think of the false prophets and false teachers, we think of other religions that have no (or very little) substance. Many are simply opinions of men and contain no supernatural quality. It is easy for someone not knowledgeable of the Holy Bible's authoritative structure to deny it as such.

Another type of false prophet/teacher is the one that believes nothing concerning the spiritual realm. In a sense, they are more dangerous than the one that claims to be a prophet from some god that does not exist.

These believers in their own super powers that are not verifiable, except by silver-tongued rhetoric, have led many to a life separated from their Creator.

Romans 6: 23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." While there is disagreement among Christians as to what "wages of sin is death" specifically means, one thing we can be assured of is that it means eternal separation from God.

If our existence is eternal, why do some ignore or refute the obvious. If I'm riding a motorcycle on a road at a speed of sixty miles per hour and I see a brick wall in the middle of the road, do you think I'm going to run into it headlong? Do I need to answer that question?

With the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, we have absolute conclusive evidence the Bible is an ancient writing. It was not written yesterday.

The Holy Bible contains many facts and threads of evidence leading us to the decision it has to be of a supernatural origin. For example, Job 26: 7 "He stretches out the north over the empty place, and hangs the earth upon nothing."

The Book of Job was written over 2600 years ago. Men thought the earth was flat and all the stars, sun, moon, and other planets revolved around a stationary earth until the 1500's A.D.

In 1543, Nicolaus Copernicus detailed his theory of the Universe in which the Earth, along with the other planets, rotated

around the Sun. He, at first, was considered a radical and even a lunatic. Then aided by the power of telescopes, his theory was verified.

Galileo Galilei and other astronomers first used telescopes to view the heavens around 1600 thus verifying the movement of the planets.

Aristotle, around 310 BCE came to believe the earth was round by observing the shadow of the earth on a quarter moon. The shadow was an arc (part of a perfect circle) thus indicating a spherical planet.

Isaiah 40: 22 "It is he that sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretches out the heavens as a curtain, and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in."

This is another example of the many scriptures of "beyond earth" examples in the Bible. "The circle of the earth" is a certain indication of a round earth. Isaiah observed humans as "grasshoppers" and the heavens as a curtain for us. We now know this is absolute truth. Doubters of the Bible are sometimes science aficionados although the two, verify each other.

Jeremiah 33: 22a "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured." Astronomers are now numbering the galaxies in the billions and the stars in the trillions. That's just too many to count. It seems as though Jeremiah and God were right after all.

Examples are too numerous to list. The evidence of the supernatural, divine nature of the Bible is overwhelming but people must consider it.

Skeptics and doubters will always be among us. Those that are too stubborn to consider the facts and turn their heads away from the obvious will continue to be blinded and mislead their victims. Yes, the followers of the false prophets are victims because this consideration has eternal consequences.

The examples of information in the Holy Bible that verify it as divine (from God) are many. Predictions/prophesies that have happened or are happening now are mind boggling when one considers the age of the source.

The last words that Jesus said before ascending were "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

Since these were the last words Jesus said to His disciples while on earth, they are of extreme importance. Those words are not a suggestion but a mandate of tremendous importance.

We are seeing our world literally fall apart morally because humanity has drifted away from the teachings of God. While we are consumed with entertainment, addictions and other self-destructive interests, the purveyors of such attitudes are becoming wealthy. Riches are finite, eternity is infinite.

Please pay attention, see the big picture and share this information with others. The Bible contains its own proof of validity if we will be fair and reasonable in accepting or rejecting it.

There is no point in being arrogant or overpowering in sharing (1 Peter 3: 15). Tell someone about the only eternal salvation, which is a faith based belief in Christ Jesus crucified for the redemption of sin and resurrected.

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary. His email: vmy2121@outlook.com.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Valentin (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From 1 John 3:18, "Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in ..."? Hope, Abundance, Touch, Truth
3. In Proverbs 10:12, "Hated stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all ..."? Sins, Beings, Creation, Enemies
4. Which Old Testament book reads like a love story? Ruth, Daniel, Habakkuk, Song of Solomon

5. Where does one find the phrase "God is love"? Genesis, Nehemiah, Hebrews, 1 John
 6. From Hebrews 13:4, what is honorable in all? Love, Trust, Marriage, Worship
- ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Truth, 3) Sins, 4) Song of Solomon, 5) 1 John (4:8, 16), 6) Marriage
- Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com.
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- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN | ACROSS | DOWN | ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Not quite first-rate | 1 Bird's crop | 52 Minecraft and StarCraft, e.g. | 2 Trellis strip | 9 Lure for insect extermination | 3 "Noelle" star Kendrick |
| 7 "Patience — virtue" | 3 "Noelle" star Kendrick | 55 Riddle, part 3 | 4 Glasgow natives | 10 The earth as a goddess | 5 Grandstander |
| 10 Car tankful | 4 Glasgow natives | 60 Brief promos | 5 Grandstander | 11 Cut — (dance) | 6 Chimpanzee variety |
| 13 Collie of TV | 5 Grandstander | 61 Triceps' place | 6 Chimpanzee variety | 12 Pago Pago people | 7 "— have to wait" |
| 19 Cattle farm of the West | 6 Chimpanzee variety | 62 Pop's Celine | 7 "— have to wait" | 13 "Meteor" actor Martin | 8 Got married |
| 20 Trumpet blast | 7 "— have to wait" | 63 See 58-Down | 8 Got married | 14 1972 Billy Wilder comedy film | |
| 22 Singer and actor Frankie | 8 Got married | 66 Bullfighter | | 15 Long, involved story | |
| 23 When it's 12:00 p.m. | | 67 Riddle, part 4 | | 16 Shut loudly | |
| 24 Element #3 | | 70 Put a new front on, as a building | | 17 Actress Skye of "Stranded" | |
| 25 Japanese city that hosted the 1998 Olympics | | 72 Unbroken | | 18 Grammy winner Brian | |
| 26 Start of a riddle | | 73 Recognized | | 21 "— the breaks!" | |
| 29 Japanese buckwheat noodle | | 75 With 59-Down, brand of frozen potatoes | | 27 Former Egypt-Syr. alliance | |
| 30 Dr. Seuss' Sam — | | 77 Riddle, part 5 | | 28 Texter's "Holy smokes!" | |
| 31 Amo, amas, — | | 81 Oval shape | | 32 "Let me!" | |
| 32 "Addams Family" cousin | | 84 Dejected | | 33 Bases-loaded situation | |
| 35 Riddle, part 2 | | 85 "Who am — judge?" | | 34 Lightweight kitchen utensils | |
| 43 Faint smell | | 86 Secret writing | | 36 Peak | |
| 45 Foldout bed | | 87 Postal pieces | | 37 Chicago daily, in brief | |
| 46 Co-workers of MDs | | 88 Detectives like TV's Magnum, for short | | 38 Global: Abbr. | |
| 47 Stalactite site | | 89 Karachi's nation: Abbr. | | 39 Mark for life | |
| 48 Florence's river | | 91 Very long time periods | | 40 Easter meat | |
| 49 Total amount | | 92 End of the riddle | | 41 Adam's mate | |
| 51 "Scram!" | | 99 Disloyal type | | 42 — Moines choreography | |
| | | | | 44 Bob of Tahitian skirts | |
| | | | | 49 Tahitian skirts | |
| | | | | 50 Package delivery co. | |
| | | | | 51 Carpentry material for some cabinets | |
| | | | | 52 Chi follower | |
| | | | | 53 Spicy Spanish pork sausage | |
| | | | | 54 Taxonomic subdivisions | |
| | | | | 56 Become lively | |
| | | | | 57 Cheer yell | |
| | | | | 58 With 63-Across, for the time being | |
| | | | | 59 See 75-Across | |
| | | | | 63 Oven used to bake naan | |
| | | | | 64 Spiny ant eater | |
| | | | | 65 Most unkind | |
| | | | | 67 Conservation org. with a panda logo | |
| | | | | 68 Pooch's yap | |
| | | | | 69 Big blue body | |
| | | | | 71 Genre of many sitcoms | |
| | | | | 74 Wide shoe spec | |
| | | | | 76 Mining shaft | |
| | | | | 77 Higher ground? | |
| | | | | 78 "You wish!" | |
| | | | | 79 Condé — | |
| | | | | 80 User-edited website | |
| | | | | 81 Rescue squad VIP | |
| | | | | 82 "— di-dah!" | |
| | | | | 83 False story | |
| | | | | 88 Projecting curves on saddles | |
| | | | | 89 By the day | |
| | | | | 90 Huffington of HuffPost | |
| | | | | 91 So to speak | |
| | | | | 93 Wise-acting | |
| | | | | 94 Thick-skinned critters | |
| | | | | 95 Day, in Chile | |
| | | | | 96 Studly guys | |
| | | | | 97 Abbr. on a bad check | |
| | | | | 98 End a vacation | |
| | | | | 103 Mother-of-pearl | |
| | | | | 104 Surfing need | |
| | | | | 105 Cake finisher | |
| | | | | 106 Holy Week's time | |
| | | | | 107 Eldest of the Brady boys | |
| | | | | 108 Helper: Abbr. | |
| | | | | 109 For fear that | |
| | | | | 110 Half a train track | |
| | | | | 111 — gin fizz | |
| | | | | 112 Camp shelter | |
| | | | | 113 Yank's rival | |

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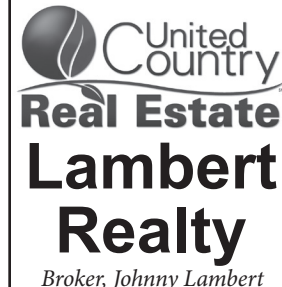
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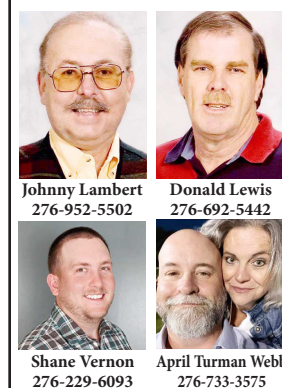
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Small Business Center Hosts Free Webinars in February



SCC's Small Business Center will be hosting a series of live and interactive webinars in February. The webinars take place from 6 to 8 p.m. You can register for them at surry.edu/sbc.

The How to Start a Small Business webinar will be hosted on Zoom on Feb. 20. The webinar will cover the basics of starting a business and will take you from idea to opportunity. You will learn key strategies for start-up, financing and marketing, as well as important information about legal issues, licensing, zoning, operations and more. The webinar will help you to realize the importance of a self-assessment and how to evaluate the feasibility of your business idea. You can also discover the resources available to help you start and successfully operate your business.

The next webinar covers Website Building 101 and will be hosted on Zoom on Feb. 26. If you are a small business owner or individual who wants to take your business to the next level by creating a web presence, then this beginning web design class is right for you. This seminar can help you quickly and efficiently design a website for your business with little technical knowledge. Don't continue to lose valuable clients because you lack a web presence. A website can be a valuable marketing tool that your business cannot continue to do without. This seminar will share various resources available to help you quickly build a web site in a short period of time.

On Feb. 27, there will be a Airbnb Hosting 101: A Beginner's Masterclass Part One webinar hosted on Zoom. This course is designed for beginners who want to start their Airbnb hosting journey on the right foot and create a listing with maximum earning potential in mind. Whether you are a homeowner with a spare room, an investor with multi-

ple listings, or have a desire to become a co-host or property manager, the skills you will learn in this course are applicable and practical. The part two of this webinar will be hosted on Zoom on February 29. By the end of the course, you will have a deeper understanding of the key principles that underpin successful Airbnb hosting, and you will have the confidence to apply these principles in your own listing. You will be able to create an attractive and welcoming space, provide excellent customer service, and build a reputation as a top-rated host on Airbnb.

There will be two other webinars hosted on February 29. The first webinar, hosted on Zoom, covers Desktop QuickBooks. You will learn how to get the most out of this feature-rich software installed directly on your computer and increase your productivity and reduce tax-related mistakes. The other

Sales and Use Tax for Nonprofit Entities; Online Seller for the Small Business Owner; Business Tax Essentials for the Small Business Owner; Individual Income Tax Basics; Federal and State W-4/NC-4; Sales and Use Tax Workshop for the Small Business Owner; and Withholding Tax Basics for the Small Business Owner.

SCC's Small Business Center also offers confidential business counseling, networking and referral sources, business resources and publications, workshops and computer classes, and much more to assist small business owners.

For additional information on the webinars or SCC's Small Business Center, contact Mark Harden by email hardennm@surry.edu or phone 336-386-3685.

LEGAL

VIRGINIA:
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PATRICK COUNTY
 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHWAYS,)
 Petitioner,)
 v.) **ORDER OF PUBLICATION**
 JAMES T. SEAGLE, PAMELA D.) Project 0058-070-E18, R201
 SEAGLE, SANDRA M. MAHONY,) UPC: 17536, Parcel 148
 SAMUEL DAVID MARTIN, JR., MARY) (Tax Map No. None Assigned)
 ELIZABETH MARTIN CLEMENT,) and Parcel 186 (Tax Map No.
 ELLAMARIE M. SMITH A/K/A ELLA) None Assigned)
 MARIE SMITH, UNKNOWN) Case No. CL24000047-00
 OWNERS, as Their Interests May)
 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:

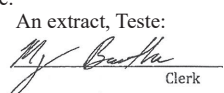
In this proceeding, the petitioner seeks to acquire by condemnation one parcel of land containing 7,384 square feet, more or less, land in fee, and one parcel of land containing 644 square feet, more or less, land in fee, and all improvements and appurtenances thereon, from two parcels of land (Parcel 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 not 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 
 JUDGE 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

webinar covers Finding the Perfect Product – How to Find Merchandise to Sell Online and will be hosted on Free-ConferenceCall.com. In this fast-paced class, you will learn secrets to sourcing merchandise to sell online in many different ways and learn secrets of supply and demand. You will also learn how to research products to find the best-selling items.

SCC will also work in conjunction with the N.C. Department of Revenue to host additional webinars in February. Topics for those webinars include Business Tax Essentials for the Small Business Owner; Sales and Use Tax Workshop for the Small Business Owner;

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

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.

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Meetings

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

Monday, March 11
 The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the third-floor court room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Thursday, March 14
 The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Administration Building.

Events

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., in Ararat starting at 8:30 a.m., and at Meadows of Dan starting at 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 15
 The Patrick County Republican Committee will meet at 6 p.m. in the Motorsports Hall of Fame Auditorium, at the end of Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Stuart site.

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.

The Patrick Springs Pentecostal Holiness Church will hold a Silent Auction to raise funds for its food ministry from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the church, located at 260 Spring Road. Ba-

nana boxes full of vintage and unusual items will be offered, each with a \$10 minimum bid. Homemade vegetable and vegetable beef soup, grilled cheese, crackers, drink and dessert for \$8.

Chicken Stew, 4 p.m. or until we run out. Donations welcome. Collinstown Stateline Community Center 2481 Collinstown Road, Westfield, N.C.

Saturday, Feb. 24
 The Patrick County Democratic Committee will meet at 10:45 a.m. at the Patrick County Library, followed by a group lunch.

A benefit for Lauren Worley and Micah Underwood will be held at the Woolwine Elementary School, from 2 to 8 p.m. It will include live music, BBQ or chicken for \$12 per plate, Cut-A-Thon by Cricket's Country Salon and Jessica Belcher, basket raffle, 50/50 drawing, a bake sale and more.

Wednesday, Feb. 28
 The Patrick County Public Animal Shelter will be closed. It will reopen for normal business hours on Thursday, Feb. 29.

Saturday, March 2
 A Turkey Shoot to benefit Lauren Worley will be held at the Smith River Wildlife Club, 2087 Charity Highway, Woolwine. Hosted by the Patrick County Patriots, the shoot begins at 1 p.m.; practice rounds start at 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 9
 A Hunters Education Class will be held at 10 Via Ave., Stuart, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for hunters 12 and up. Those completing the calls will be able to obtain a hunting license. Lunch will be provided. Hosted by the Patrick County Patriots. Register at dwr.Virginia.gov. Call Jonathan Scott at (276) 229-1700 with questions.

Ongoing

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

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

The Patrick County Alzheimer's Group LLC meets at 7 p.m. the first Monday of every

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

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

The Patrick County Quilters' Sit-N-Sew is held on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Quilted Colors. For more information, call 276-694-3020 or email patrickcountyquilters@gmail.com.

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

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

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

The Patrick County Recreation Department offers 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.

VISIT US ONLINE AT THEENTERPRISE.NET
 THANK YOU FOR READING THE ENTERPRISE

Student News

Erin Keith, of Stuart, was named a Fall 2023 Dean's List honoree at Eastern Mennonite University. The Dean's List, compiled at the end of each semester, includes degree-seeking students who achieve a semester GPA of at least 3.75 with no W, I, or F grades for 12 semester hours of standard grades. Levi Montgomery is among those students listed on the 6th grade A/B Honor Roll at Hardin Reynolds Memorial School.

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NOTICE

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

Weekly SUDOKU
 by Linda Thistle

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
 ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Solar

(cont. from page 1)

do, and this is basically how we want to do it,” he said.

The Planning Commission reviews the plan to see if it complies with the county’s ordinance.

“If it doesn’t, of course, they have the opportunity to go back to the drawing board, revamp, and come back,” Perry said. However, if the plan does comply, “it passes the Planning Commission then it moves on to a site agreement,” in which “a lot of lawyers” work with those in the county administration office to craft specifics and particulars.

“Right now, the county has control of that,” he said. “I think that’s the most important thing that we can do and that we have.”

A perfect example, Perry said is when it was brought up at the Planning Commission meeting that some of the property had been timbered, which resulted in excessive runoff flooding the nearby creek and leading to erosion and problems for another property owner.

Perry said the county is unable to do anything about what a property owner did.

However, if a solar farm locates there, “the county has the power, we have the ability, to say, ‘look, if you want to come in there and put panels on that hill, it’s going to have to be completely cleared and this problem that we’re already having is going to get worse so you will put a retaining pond down there.’ We have the ability to make that happen,” he said.

As the county has that power, it can control what does or does not happen, Perry said, and added “being able to control and regulate, that’s what this site agreement does.”

On the other hand, if the county told all solar companies to “pound the pavement and go away,” Perry said the state likely would not do anything at this point, because officials are waiting to see what bills get passed by legislators.

The proposals in Richmond were triggered by counties who “have stood up to them (solar companies), and where counties have made such strict regulations” on projects, Perry said. “If we tell them no, and these bills don’t pass, the state will say, ‘fine.’”

While that may result in a lawsuit, Perry said an easier method would be “if they just cut funding. What funding are they going to cut, what are we going to lose, how are we going to make up for that funding,” he asked. “You’re saying taxes are bad enough now, what’s going to have to happen to taxes to make up for that funding?”

Some public concerns with the proposed solar projects relate to the negative impact they would have on neighbors’ “viewshed,” Perry said, and added the ordinance requires a minimum of two rows of hedges.

“It’s not 100 percent, and trees don’t get but 25 to 30 feet tall. So, if you’re on this you’re hill and the panels are on this hill, you’re going to see some. Driving up and down the road, all you’re going to see is hedges,” he said.

Malcolm Roach asked why Perry and the board are giving into solar companies.

“Are we afraid to fight? Are you actually afraid to fight? I’m asking a question. I’m going to put you on the spot right now. Are you going to vote yes for this,” Roach asked.

“Are you going to raise hell when we

have to raise taxes an ungodly amount because of this? You’re looking at attorney fees. You’re looking at a minimum of \$150,000” to start, Perry countered. “I know the state. The state says this is going to happen.”

“No, no, no. Youngkin will veto that... So, fearing a lawsuit, fearing a lawyer is a cop-out as far as I’m concerned,” Pool said. “That man’s a cop-out.”

“I’m just laying it on the line, what it looks like,” Perry said.

County Administrator Beth Simms said one example is Franklin County, which is the only locality in the state that’s half-zoned, half-non-zoned.

“While I was there, we had solar projects come before Franklin County’s Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in zoned areas and non-zoned areas. The zoned areas had the authority to vote no, that this project could not move forward, does not meet this land’s use,” she said.

The only reason the supervisors consider solar projects is due to the revenue sharing, the solar siting agreement that comes along with utility-scale solar, Simms said, adding that “a group of rural localities in Southside Virginia lobbied the state for to say, ‘we need to have some control.’ Because when we first started there was no control whatsoever.”

Simms said supervisors in Franklin County voted down a solar-siting agreement for a project in U.S. 222 in Henry.

“Guess what? That project is being built. The only thing our board of supervisors is voting on is the revenue share. Because we are non-zoned,” she said and added that “having an ordinance in place” is important.

Additionally, and at various previous meetings, Pool has said the solar panels are made with cadmium telluride and as a result, are toxic.

Perry said the solar panels that are being used do not contain cadmium telluride.

“I got this information,” Perry said, and others can as well “if you go online and type in ‘how solar panels are made.’”

“If you type in something like toxicity or hazards or dangers or something, you’re going to get some kind of sponsored content. This topic is grossly political,” he said.

Perry said there are three types of solar panels: monocrystalline, polycrystalline, and thin-film.

“The thin-film panels are made with the cadmium. The thin-film panels, quick, cheap, easy to make, spit them out left and right,” he said and noted that he believes the panels proposed for Stuart are monocrystalline panels, which are made of silicone, gallium, boron, and phosphorus.

Pool contended that First Solar, an American solar technology company that may be the solar panel vendor, only makes cadmium telluride panels.

“Fairystone, I’m pretty sure when they briefed us, they said they were using” monocrystalline, Perry said.

“I’m not talking about the brief; I’m talking about the company. Go look up First Solar, they only make cadmium panels. The ones down in Wytheville are from Vietnam, 100 percent,” Pool said.

Kurt Bozenmayer, a member of the Patrick County Planning Commission, said he worked as a chemist for 35 years before retiring.

“My entire career, I’ve had to deal with material safety data sheets. They’re very important for people that handle the material while its being processed. After the material is processed, it’s a different story,” he said.

He encouraged those who are concerned about recycling and cadmium to take a step back and think about other products that contain cadmium.

“Besides the solar panels, the biggest application for cadmium is in nickel-cadmium batteries. Everyone’s had a rechargeable battery in one kind or another at one time. Before the carbon generation of rechargeable batteries, which are mostly nickel-metal hydride or lithium-ion batteries, there were nickel-cadmium batteries everywhere,” Bozenmayer said, adding those batteries are likely in many homes.

Additionally, the batteries also commonly go into the landfills and nobody pays any attention to them, Bozenmayer said.

“The other side to the fear-mongering on this, and I’m not a solar panel proponent, I don’t work for any of these companies, I’ve just been on the Planning Commission a few years listening to this. Everybody comes up with these concerns,” he said.

Bozenmayer said Roger Hayden, a former county supervisor, was at a recent board of supervisors meeting, and “he asked ‘what are they going to do with these solar panels? They’re going to spread herbicides around to keep the grass from growing up.’”

“Well, what do you think VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation) does along all these guardrails and around all these signs? They’ve been dumping thousands of gallons of herbicides in this county for 50 years. Does anybody complain about that? No,” Bozenmayer said.

Perry’s call for residents to conduct their research likely is the best approach, Bozenmayer said and would prevent anyone from relying on rumors or fearmongering tactics.

Perry said cadmium is also in food, including chocolate, in making fine jewelry in the welds.

“We come in contact with cadmium” daily. “Everything you smoke - that cigarette, the smoker retains two to three percent of the cadmium in that cigarette, and the secondhand smoke that somebody’s sitting in the room smelling retains up to one percent of the cadmium.

“Cadmium’s everywhere. Again, we’re not dealing with the pure, concentrated element,” Perry said.

Roach accused Perry of making an “absurd statement” about smoking.

“You said somebody inhales a cigarette and they retain cadmium, and they get cancer. It’s written right on the pack- do not smoke unless you want to get cancer,” Roach said and asked why Perry would want to introduce something into the county that causes cancer or is toxic.

Solar panels have been around for more than 30 years, Perry said. “I have yet to find a study that says that soil toxicity was this prior to panels going in,” and added that he’s also yet to find data that says solar panels can lead to an increase in area temperature.

Perry said he does not know what will happen if the solar company meets all the criteria in the county’s ordinance and the

(See Solar P. 15)

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Solar

(cont. from page 1)



About two dozen people attended the two-hour meeting on Feb. 6.



commission or the board says no.

"That's been a big part of our discussion.... That unknown is what I'm concerned about," he said.

If there are legal ramifications, Perry said the case would not be confined to the circuit court level, but on the state level or federal level, "because the federal has mandates and the state has mandates."

"And you can fight those too," Roach said.

Perry said the county can, but it takes money to do it.

"If the state pulls funding, so what? We have to learn to live on what we have," Roach said.

At the end of the day, Perry said property owners in Patrick County have decided they want to have solar panels and farms on their property.

The property owner "is going to be dead in 10 years and who's going to clean up his mess," Mary Smith asked.

Perry noted that is the reason the county is asking for a bond. As long as the project is legal and meets the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) guidelines, Perry wondered how could he tell someone else what they can do on their property.

Bozenmayer said the county's attorney was asked if the county could ban solar farms and facilities outright.

"He gave an explanation saying much in line with what Mrs. Simms has said. If you have zoning in your county, that you probably have better control over it. Since Patrick County does not have zoning, it was his opinion that for Patrick County to ban the facilities outright would probably lead to litigation, which would cost the county money," Bozenmayer said.

Perry said the board will consider the input it has received and determine what the county stands to gain, and, more importantly, what it stands to lose.

"We play this what if. What if can go either way. But we lose the ability to regulate these things and the state says, 'too bad so sad' they're coming in anyway," Perry said.

Pool said he doesn't think that will happen.

"It will become a 'Republican versus Democrat thing,' Perry said.

Bozenmayer said those who are enraged should remember back to the 1950s and 1960s when each state had its speed limits.

"The federal government came in and said, 'We wanted the speed limit to be 55 throughout the country.' A lot of states fought it, and the federal government responded by saying 'Okay, we're going to revoke the transportation funds,'" Bozenmayer said. "And guess what? All 50 states went to 55 miles an hour. It took another 20 years before (it) went through the courts, and now we have different speed limits again."

When he hears people say the government "can't do that," Bozenmayer said it can and it has done it before.

Pointing his finger at Bozenmayer and Perry in turn, Pool asked "So Kurt, why don't you work on the toxic chemical or a hazmat ordinance before you move this? Doug thought those were mono-silicone panels. You knew better. You knew they came from First Solar.

"Doug, you never looked it up," Pool said.

Perry said he thought the solar company said it was using monocrystalline panels while briefing the county.

"Get it in writing," Pool demanded. "That would be good, that would be cool."

At this point of the process, Perry said he believes the biggest thing the county stands to lose is the ability to negotiate.

"I don't know why you're negotiating, just say no," Roach said, adding that Perry didn't answer his question of if he would vote yes or no for solar farm projects.

Perry said he's still waiting to see what's

going to happen at the state level.

"You throw your hands up and you roll your eyes at me now, but there again, we go in and fight this and those bills pass," and "the state comes in and does its thing, and we lose the ability to control those things," Perry said.

Roach said his point is that Perry and the rest of the supervisors were not elected to do what they think is best for the county.

Rather, "you were placed on the board of supervisors to represent us," Roach said.

Perry said there are more than 3,000 in the Smith River District.

Roach said a majority have said they don't want solar projects.

"You keep trying to forge a path to have it," Roach said. "That's where the problem is. That's where it starts and ends. We want you to respect us. We want you to stop this, and we're willing to fight if we have to, but down the road. We don't need to fight now."

In addition to the solar issue, information on topics like broadband, education, a cell tower, and the hospital also was presented during the two-hour event.

Hospital and Healthcare

As of February 6, Foresight Hospital and Health Systems has not responded to the county's statement about the hospital not opening, Perry said.

"We stand firm with our statements. We keep finding more and more stuff out that they haven't done like they haven't applied for state or federal licenses," Perry said, adding that should have been accomplished on day one.

Perry said Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, is getting a lot of blame for the hospital not opening.

"Yeah, he made some promises that he might not have had 100 percent control over, but he did do everything that he could to ensure the success of that hospital. He cleared a lot of red tape, he paved the way," he said, adding the county had no control of the project either.

"We had no say so, one way or the other. They failed us, we didn't fail them. We're just taking that one day at a time," he said.

One course of action the county has taken is the launch of a Healthcare Access Committee to look at options to help the county. Those interested in serving on the committee may access a volunteer form that's available on the county's website.

Perry said Drug-Free PC is a substance abuse drug prevention coalition that Piedmont Community Services recently started, and "we should be starting to move into the assessment phase. So, with the coalition, they'll go through assessments, identify capacity, planning - which includes building these lodging models, implementations, evaluation while maintaining sustainability and cultural competency."

The coalition meets the second Tuesday of each month at noon in the Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC). Those wanting to join the group may email broberon@piedmontcsb.org.

Perry said Healthy PC, another group that seeks to improve the health of the county, is "working on three different aspects of our healthcare: access to healthcare, maternal, infant, toddler, preschool health, and pre-birth up to five years old. The third thing is behavioral health and substance use disorders," he said.

It will meet on the first Thursday at 1 p.m. at P&HCC. To join, email nancy.bell@vhd.virginia.gov.

Education

Scott said the county school division is ranked ninth out of 131 school divisions for test scores in the state.

"We're not number nine on funding, but we're number nine on test scores in the state of Virginia. That says a lot of about the parents, the students, the staff, the

whole nine yards. It's a network of people that make that happen," he said.

About four or five years ago, Scott said the division was ranked in the 80s out of the 131 school divisions for funding.

Scott said the new school administration building, the former Alexander's building, was purchased using no regular budget money.

"It was roughly \$300,000 of our one percent sales tax money that went to that project, the rest of it was grants. When you go by and see that building, it was basically a free building to the county," he said.

Scott said the parking lot is open to businesses in town on weekends.

"I think there was a car show over here a week or so ago. So, that gives a lot of extra parking to the town," he said.

Scott said the division donated the former school board back building to the county, "which is a completely, pretty much, remodeled building" that is ready to accommodate an office or two.

"That's going to save the county money as well," he said, and added the new school board office also houses the division's electronic equipment.

The Cougar Marketplace, a shop where people can buy student-made products, will be in the basement of the new facility, according to Scott, who added that items made in the welding shop, woodworking class, and culinary classes will be available for purchase.

"The money that generates goes right back into the program," he said.

Scott briefly discussed the Required Local Effort (RLE), the funds the state requires the county to give the school division, and the Required Local Match (RLM), the funds the division needs from the county to offer some programs.

"Everything we do is based on grants, pretty much. It's pretty much everything we do," Scott said. "The county puts 20 percent."

Broadband

Perry offered updates on broadband projects, including the Charter-Spectrum project, which doesn't cover the Smith River District, but instead the far end of Ararat.

"They have started moving forward with that project and bringing broadband to the Ararat section of the county," he said, and added that RiverStreet Network's, a broadband company out of North Carolina, project will come into the Smith River District.

"They are collaborating with AEP (Appalachian Power) where they're going to run the fiber cables through the power poles, and at some point, it comes down the pole and connects into your boxes at the house and brings broadband to your house," he said.

Perry said work is expected to start in March. It's rumored that work will start in Woolwine.

As the construction progresses, updates will be put on the county's website.

Cell Tower

Scott said a cell tower that will be placed at Patrick County High School (PCHS) will be situated further away from the main building.

"It was a little close as far as the things cell towers put out that hurt people. It was a little bit close, within, I think, 100-feet of the guidelines," he said.

Scott said the board heard concerns, went back to the drawing board, and came up with a new plan that's far away enough from the school buildings.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to approve that project on February 20 at the P&HCC Stuart site.

"As soon as that passes, we were told they're ready to go to work on it. As soon as it's approved, they're ready to start" installing the Verizon tower, he said.

Garcia on a mission to meet voters in Senate bid

By Taylor Boyd

One of Eddie Garcia's priorities in his November bid to unseat incumbent Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Richmond, is meeting as many people as he can "to hear them, hear their concerns, understand the cultural environment in which they live in.

"Virginia is so diverse in its culture between the Southwest, between Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, the Valley, and Richmond itself," he said while in Stuart last month at a GOP committee meeting.

Garcia said the southwest is a vital, important area. "I believe that too many federal politicians, or people running for federal office, disregard the Southwest, they disregard the rural areas of the Commonwealth."

Garcia, who grew up in rural America in a town of about 1,000 people, said he knows rural towns are full of good people with concerns that aren't shared by city dwellers.

"Their voice is just as important as anyone else's, and I think any leader would tell you that you've got to understand an organization or a people or a population" in as much detail as possible, he said.

Garcia also believes being present in the Southwest is important as rural areas are being left behind by the current government.

"If we don't have a voice to champion their concerns, it's going to continue to go in a way that is not positive for these communities," he said.

If elected, Garcia said he wants to focus on rebuilding small-town Virginia and "rebuilding some of these Down-towns that have been hollowed out because of businesses that have long been gone."

He also wants to improve the quality of the education system and public schools, especially in areas where there's only one school, incentivize people to show up and rebuild the commu-

nities over the long term.

Education

Garcia supports universal school choice.

"Having the power and the control of the money in the hands of the parents to make their decisions on where to send their kids to school, how to educate their children - whether it's home-school, charter school, private school, or public school - that's important," he said.

Retirement Account Taxes

Garcia believes taxes on retirement accounts should be eliminated "to help our seniors stay in their homes by keeping more money in their pockets, and not taxing Social Security. Helping our veterans by not taxing their retirement."

He also believes this will help encourage young people to start early in investing in a retirement plan because they will know the government won't tax them afterward if they're on a fixed income.

"We've got to start thinking about the future," he said.

Term-Limits

A supporter of term limits, Garcia said limiting the number of years someone can serve in public office will help eliminate lifelong career politicians.

"Lifelong career politicians that continue to get rich off of the system, continue to raise money perpetually, and making it almost impossible for an outsider like myself to compete," he said.

Energy

Garcia supports the construction of an all-American energy program.

"With nuclear energy as a prime solution for cheap energy across the nation, and most importantly, job growth across the nation," he said.

Garcia believes a new grid that's built with pipe fitters, construction workers, repairmen, and cyber security is needed.

"We can do these things as a coun-



Senate hopeful Eddie Garcia visited the Patrick County Republican Committee and spoke with several constituents during his visit. Garcia hopes to unseat U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine in November.

try if we have leaders that want to help us move forward and grow these jobs and opportunities," he said, adding the country needs all the options it can get.

"If wind works, if solar works, if oil and gas work, I mean we should be pushing every avenue that we can to reduce our energy costs and to make our energy grid more resilient in case of emergency outages," he said.

While he is not against the idea of solar, Garcia is skeptical of mass solar farm corporations buying farmland or forestry to install non-American-made solar panels which may have toxic chemicals.

Garcia added he hasn't seen any data that shows mass solar farms drive energy costs down in the long term.

Immigration

There's currently an immigration crisis in the US, Garcia said. "Our border has been dilapidated for 30 years. There's been no meaningful legislation on it since Ronald Reagan in 1986, and we're still looking at the problem, not solving it."

Garcia said he believes too many peo-

ple in Washington, D.C. are trying to punt the issue to the other side or to the executive branch.

"The truth of the matter is we need to secure our border," he said. "We need to increase asylum judges so that we can rapidly process anybody coming through ports of entry to determine who they are, what their intentions are, where they're from, and if we are going to accept them into the nation or if we are not."

Garcia said he wants to solve these problems to make it easier for legal immigrants, "and immigrants that we need in positions that we need in this country" to enter. He noted there are about 1,000 different counties, mostly rural, that do not have primary care physicians.

"These are problems that need to be solved. There are ways that we can use a smart immigration policy to incentivize those types of workers to come here legally. At the same time, we have to be able to keep the bad actors out," he said.

NC man charged after Thursday pursuit

A Burlington, North Carolina man was arrested on Thursday following a motorcycle pursuit, according to Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith.

At approximately 3:25 p.m., Virginia State Police Senior Trooper Jeremiah Mabe attempted to stop a motorcyclist for traveling 81 mph on JEB Stuart Highway. The motorcycle allegedly fled from Mabe and a pursuit ensued.

Patrick County Sheriff's Maj. Rob Coleman entered the pursuit to assist at the intersection of U.S. 58 and Animal Clinic Road. The motorcycle allegedly continued to flee westbound on Jeb Stuart Highway. The Patrick County Sheriff's Office 911 Communications Center notified Branch Civil to stop all traffic in the construction zone going up the mountain. Smith said that traffic was successfully stopped.

The pursuit continued up the mountain and into Carroll County, where Coleman lost sight of the motorcycle and termi-



Daniel Thomas Humphries

nated the pursuit.

The Carroll County Sheriff's Office, after being notified by Patrick for assistance, located the motorcycle at the end of a dead end road off of U.S. 58.

Daniel Thomas Humphries, 29, was taken into custody after he was found hiding in the woods a short distance away.

Humphries was charged by Mabe with felony eluding a law enforcement officer, reckless driving - with speeds 20 or more mph above the posted limit, and numerous other traffic violations in connection with the incident.

Humphries was released from the Patrick County Jail after posting a \$5,000 bond.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF PETITIONS BY VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY AND APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY, FOR DETERMINING THE TREATMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY CUSTOMERS' RENEWABLE ENERGY CERTIFICATES FOR PURPOSES OF EACH UTILITY'S RPS PROGRAM COMPLIANCE CASE NO. PUR-2024-00010

During its 2020 Session, the Virginia General Assembly enacted Chapters 1193 (HB 1526) and 1194 (SB 851) of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly. These duplicate Acts of Assembly, known as the Virginia Clean Economy Act ("VCEA"), became effective on July 1, 2020. The VCEA, *inter alia*, established a mandatory renewable energy portfolio standard ("RPS") program ("RPS Program") in § 56-585.5 of the Code of Virginia ("Code"), which requires Virginia Electric and Power Company ("Dominion") and Appalachian Power Company ("APCo") to procure and retire renewable energy certificates ("RECs") for an increasing percentage of the utility's total electric energy sold in the previous calendar year. The VCEA directed that all costs related to compliance with the mandatory RPS Program, including costs related to the retirement of RECs, shall be recovered from all retail customers as a non-bypassable charge, regardless of generation supplier, with certain limited exceptions.

Additionally, Code § 56-585.5 D requires Dominion and APCo to submit annually to the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") plans and petitions for approval of new solar and onshore wind generation capacity ("RPS Filing"). In APCo's 2023 RPS Filing, two proposals were presented relating to the proper calculation of total electric energy for the prior compliance year. The first proposal was to count the RECs from Rider WWS and Rider REC towards APCo's RPS Program compliance, and the second proposal was to remove the 100 percent renewable customers' load from the calculation of "total electric energy," thereby reducing the number of RECs required for RPS compliance. In its Final Order in that proceeding, the Commission found that the issue warranted additional consideration and directed APCo and Dominion to make a filing addressing these issues and presenting specific proposals for approval, including any proposed mechanism for netting the benefits of such RECs. Specifically, the Commission determined:

On or before January 16, 2024, APCo and Dominion shall make a filing, either jointly or separately, containing the proposed treatment of RECs associated with (i) customers taking service under each [utility's] voluntary renewable tariffs [{"Renewable Utility Customers"}] and (ii) shopping customers purchasing 100 percent renewable energy, for purposes of RPS Program compliance [{"Renewable Shopping Customers"}]. Such filing shall include any associated proposal for netting the benefits of such RECs, including applicable tariff language.

On January 16, 2024, in Case No. PUR-2024-00009, APCo submitted its petition ("APCo Petition"), which stated that the Commission should exclude the load associated with the Renewable Utility Customers and Renewable Shopping Customers from the calculation of APCo's annual RPS requirement, thereby allowing them to bypass VCEA compliance costs, if the Commission finds that approach to be permissible under current law. APCo asserts that using RECs to meet the utility's RPS requirement that have either been dedicated to one of its voluntary renewable energy riders or have been purchased by Renewable Shopping Customers is an impermissible double-counting of the RECs. Further, APCo claims that participants in voluntary renewable energy programs would effectively subsidize non-participants to meet the utility's RPS compliance requirement.

Also on January 16, 2024, in Case No. PUR-2024-00010, Dominion submitted its petition ("Dominion Petition") (collectively with the APCo Petition, "Petitions") requesting that the Commission reconsider its decision in Case No. PUR-2020-00164, in which the Commission held that RPS Program compliance requires recognition of RPS eligible renewable sales from competitive service providers ("CSPs"). Dominion requests that the Commission instead find that the RECs of Renewable Shopping Customers cannot be used by the utility for its RPS Program compliance. Dominion further asserts that, if the Commission determines that Renewable Shopping Customer RECs may be used for a utility's RPS Program compliance, their load should be deducted from the utility's calculation of "total electric energy" and they should be excluded from paying Rider RPS. Dominion further states that if the RECs of Renewable Shopping Customers can be used for compliance, the RECs of other similarly-situated customers, specifically Renewable Utility Customers, should also be used to reduce the utility's compliance obligations.

Interested persons are encouraged to review the Petitions and supporting documents in full for details about these and other proposals.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, consolidated the two Petitions into one case, Case No. PUR-2024-00010, and scheduled public hearings on the Petitions. A hearing for the receipt of testimony from public witnesses on the Petitions shall be convened telephonically at 10 a.m. on July 31, 2024. On or before July 24, 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 July 31, 2024, the Hearing Examiner will telephone sequentially each person who has signed up to testify as provided above.

On July 31, 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 Petitions from the Petitioners, any respondents, and the Commission Staff ("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.

An electronic copy of the Dominion Petition may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the utility: Elaine S. Ryan, Esquire, McGuireWoods LLP, Gateway Plaza, 800 East Canal Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or eryan@mcguirewoods.com. An electronic copy of the APCo Petition may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the utility: Noelle J. Coates, Esquire, American Electric Power Service Corporation, Three James Center, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or njcoates@aep.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies of the Petitions from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information.

On or before July 24, 2024, any interested person may submit comments on the Petitions 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 such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00010.

On or before March 28, 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 Petitioners. Pursuant to 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 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00010.

On or before June 5, 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 Petitioners, 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-2024-00010.

Any documents filed in paper form 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 Petitions, 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.

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Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count at a Virginia State Park

Identify the birds around you while contributing to science in the annual Great Backyard Bird Count.

Each year in February, millions of people count the variety of birds that can be seen and heard in their own backyards over a four-day period. You are invited to participate in the bird count that takes place Feb. 16-19.

The Great Backyard Bird Count brings people from all over the world together to connect and share their love of birds while learning about migration patterns. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before one of their annual migrations.

All you need to do is log the birds that you count in a 15-minute period on at least one of the four days of the event. You can download the Merlin Bird ID app to help identify the birds in your area or you can use the eBird Mobile app to enter your bird sightings.

“Virginia State Parks offer a unique and scenic location to view various birds this time of the year,” Powhatan State Park Manager Amelia Hulth said. “Our park is perfect for anyone to enjoy birdwatching alone or with friends and family. On Saturday, Feb. 17, we will offer a fun ranger-led activity where guests will discover more about our feathered friends that can be found in the park or in their backyard. For the second part of the program, we’ll use peanut butter or vegetable shortening, sweet gum balls, sticks and pinecones to make feeders that provide tasty treats



Chipping Sparrow at Chippokes State Park



Downy Woodpecker at Mason Neck State Park



Blue Heron at York River State Park

for our winged friends. You can hang the feeder in your backyard and see who comes to visit.”

Those interested in participating in this year’s bird count can find an event or related program at one of several participating parks. State parks that are having an event include:

- Bear Creek Lake, Cumberland
- Caledon, King George
- Claytor Lake, Dublin
- Hungry Mother, Marion
- Mason Neck, Lorton

- Natural Tunnel, Duffield
- New River Trail, Max Meadows
- Pocahontas, Chesterfield
- Powhatan, Powhatan

Your participation matters and your bird count contributes to a global study that helps protect bird populations all over the world. The Great Backyard Bird Count is a great way to connect with birds, nature and each other.

Visit www.virginiastateparks.gov for more information about upcoming events at a State Park.



Outside of the Department of Wildlife Resources. The agency is responsible for the management of inland fisheries, wildlife and recreational boating for Virginia. (Photo by Shelby Warren/VCU Capital News Service.)

Hunting dog permit may get through General Assembly this year

By Shelby Warren
Capital News Service

Lawmakers might successfully create a hunting dog permit this year through amendments to the state budget.

Budget amendments have been submitted in the House and Senate, which mandate the Department of Wildlife Resources to create a permit system by Oct. 31. Lawmakers have tried unsuccessfully through past legislation to help prevent hunting dogs on private property.

The permit would be required for any person who uses dogs to hunt or chase any game, including rabbit, deer and bear. The budget amendments state DWR shall have “minimally restricted” permit requirements and the permit be designed to “foster an atmosphere of voluntary compliance.”

The budget amendments state the permit will be free. Sen. David Marsden, D-Fairfax, who submitted the Senate request, said the cost could be on par with other hunting license fees at \$18.

“It will be used to acquire additional enforcement staff to ensure that this bill is respected, and that people are following the dictates of the law,” Marsden said.

DWR is involved with the effort to balance the state’s long history of dog hunting with the rights of property owners. In recent years, the conflict between hunters and landowners has increased. The state agency recruited the University of Virginia’s Institute for Engagement and Negotiation last year to gather data from citizens and create a report.

There was mutual agreement that more law enforcement staff was needed, better communication between the two groups and “hound identification mechanisms could be improved,” according to the report. Landowners also supported revisions to the state’s “right to retrieve” law and better protection of landowners’ rights. DWR has a final report expected this spring.

The Hound Hunters and Private Landowners Stakeholder Advisory Committee was created by DWR last fall.

Jim Medeiros, dairy farmer and member of the Property Rights Coalition of Virginia, served on the advisory committee. He has experienced hound dogs entering his property and disturbing cattle and poultry. This has financially impacted his farm, he said. Medeiros was part of a lawsuit filed in 2022 over the “right to retrieve” hunting law.

“One of the things that came to light was that DWR requires legislative authority in order to create ... reasonable regulations that could be brought into effect to curtail in the bad apples and integrate a system of accountability where these conflicts can be reduced,” Medeiros said.

He thinks the permit would create accountability, and works in other states.

“I’m not anti-dog hunting,” Medeiros said. “I just wish for those who want to participate in the sport to do so where they have permission to do so and not where they don’t have permission.”

Medeiros spoke on Tuesday in

support of Marsden’s Senate Bill 712, a measure to keep hunters from releasing dogs within 15 feet of the edge of a state or local roadway. The bill carries a misdemeanor charge, with an increasing penalty for subsequent violations.

Hunters release the dogs as a loophole called “through hunting,” according to Medeiros.

“What they’re doing is they’re allowing their hounds to run through a piece of property where they don’t have permission to hunt, knowing that the hounds will chase the game off of that property onto a place where they have permission or adjoining property,” Medeiros said.

The Senate bill narrowly passed the Senate Agriculture Conservation and Natural Resources Committee on an 8-7 vote.

Robbie Shackelford, a hunter with the Newtown Sportsmen Association, has hunted for over 45 years. He thinks the conflict between property owners and hunters who use dogs is low, with just a few exceptions.

There are approximately 180,000 hound hunters in Virginia, according to 2022 statistics that Shackelford got at a Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance lobby day. The statistics are attributed to DWR data. The agency confirmed it did not create the fact sheet being circulated, but was not able to confirm the cited stats before this article’s publication.

The stats were used to make the case that roughly 7% of over 5,200 hunting complaints in 2022 involved dog hunting.

“It’s being painted completely different than what the numbers say,” Shackelford said.

The lawmakers have used the budget to establish a permit, which means there will not be the same public hearing that a bill would have.

“The art of politics is proven here where somebody’s kind of shoving something into a place where it doesn’t need to be,” Shackelford said.

Shackelford is unhappy about getting an additional license. He worries about potential citations from his dog running onto someone’s property, and about those citations adding up — or possibly losing his license.

“In my opinion, there are a lot of extremists out here that are against hound hunting,” Shackelford said.

He also does not think a state representative from an urban area such as Fairfax should pose a bill that affects rural residents.

The permit cost will not be “prohibitive of the sport that they love,” Marsden said. It’s also a “changing world” without big tracts of undeveloped land, he said.

“Hopefully this is a message to people about how you treat your neighbors,” Marsden said.

Del. Paul Krizek, D-Fairfax, who submitted the House budget amendment, did not return email and telephone requests.

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

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SupHerb Workshop held



Master gardeners led a SupHerb workshop on 5 common herbs to a large crowd at the Patrick County Library on Saturday Feb 10. The culinary and medicinal uses of basil, oregano, dill, rosemary and thyme were addressed as well as how to easily propagate herbs in the home gar-

den or on your window sill. Participants were also invited to make a small herb garden to take home.

Master gardeners involved in planning and presenting the program were Chelsea Perez, Rita Browning, Jen Harrison Norma Bozenmay-

er, Sherri Mitchel, Jessica Hines and Hannah Vinova.

If interested in becoming a Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener or to learn about upcoming training, email mgpvcva@gmail.com. (Contributed)

Winter farmers markets offer fresh, local options year-round

While summer farmers markets boast peak-season produce, many Virginia markets offer local foods and artisan products year-round.

Of the 300-plus farmers markets in Virginia, more than 50 stay open throughout the winter, with some markets adjusting their schedules from summer, moving indoors or adding online sales, according to the Virginia Farmers Market Association.

"Of course you have a little less variety of produce, but we still have a great offering during these colder months," remarked Darrius Slaughter, VAFMA vice president and manager of the Lynchburg Community Market—one of the nation's oldest continuously running farmers markets.

Founded in 1783, the market serves as a gathering place for the community, with indoor shops, restaurants and a crafters' gallery open to shoppers throughout the week. During the winter, the Saturday farmers market attracts up to 1,900 visitors a day with over 60 indoor and outdoor vendor spots.

Many winter markets offer artisan meats,

cheese, eggs, honey and freshly baked breads, as well as hardy greens, winter squashes, apples, sweet potatoes and other root vegetables.

Shoppers also can find produce that's grown out of season, with many farmers using hydroponic and aquaponic systems, high tunnels, hoop houses and other season-extending techniques.

Visitors to the year-round Abingdon Farmers Market can find a wide variety of lettuce grown in aquaponic and hydroponic systems in the off-season. During the colder months, the covered market opens for two hours on Saturdays, features around 30 vendors and draws an average 800 visitors each weekend. The market also offers a preordering option and accepts Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

In 2021, over \$100 million in federal nutrition benefits were redeemed at farmers markets and direct market sales nationally, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"By being able to stay open throughout the year, there's never a time when farmers aren't able to provide for their community," Slaughter added. He noted an increase in farmers market

sales during the pandemic, when supply chain issues resulted in empty grocery store shelves—highlighting the "importance of being able to depend on your local producers and community."

Additionally, year-round farmers markets offer consumers the chance to "get to know your farmers, crafters and bakers and support your neighbors," said Abingdon Farmers Market manager David McLeish.

Locally owned retailers like farmers markets return more than three times as much of their sales to the local economy, and growers selling locally create 13 full-time jobs per \$1 million in revenue earned, according to data from USDA's Economic Research Service and Colorado State University.

The Abingdon Farmers Market, Lynchburg Community Market and others across Virginia host special events throughout the year in support of local businesses, including upcoming Valentine's Day specials.

To find a farmers market near you, visit virginiaforgrown.com or use the Virginia Farmers Market Trail map at vafma.org/find-market.

State Fair of Virginia calling all 'Ag Superheroes'

It's a bird, it's a plane, it's an ag superhero! The State Fair of Virginia is encouraging individuals to nominate Virginia's agricultural stars for its 2024 Ag Superhero Trading Cards.

Following the success of the program's launch last year, fair organizers are seeking a new round of nominations to celebrate those who contribute to and exemplify Virginia's agricultural sector. Nominations will be accepted through Feb. 26, and 12 Virginians working in various agriculture and natural resources professions will be featured on the cards.

"An individual working in agriculture and related fields is not your average person," noted Sarah Jane Thomsen, manager of agriculture education and strategic partnerships programming for the State Fair. "Agriculture today is sprinkled with technology, science, passion, dedication and advocacy. It encompasses hundreds of career opportunities and skillsets, all with a goal bigger than oneself to feed the world and protect the land for future generations."

The commonwealth is known for its rich array of agriculture and natural resources—and the trading cards aim to showcase that diversity. Nominees can include not only farmers, but also anyone in agriculture- and natural resources-related jobs like crop researchers, health care workers who serve farmers or agriculture advocates.

"I think the range is amazing," said Candace Monaghan, owner of Beaver Dam Sunflowers in Botetourt County and one of last year's ag superheroes. "You had drivers (on the cards) as well. Without those drivers, farm products are not going to get where they need to be. You had vegetable farmers and then you had people like me who are involved in agritourism."

Monaghan added that participating in the program was "a lot of fun." She and several other ag superheroes donned capes and passed out cards to fairgoers while sharing their own unique agriculture stories.

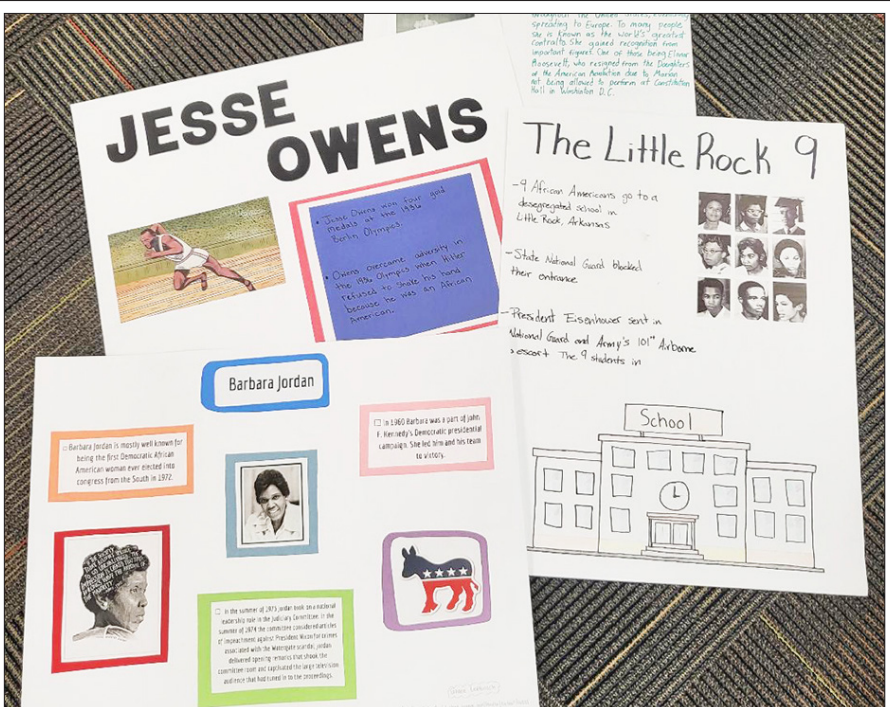
"It's not every day you get to have your face on a trading card," she quipped.

In addition to being handed out during the 2024 State Fair of Virginia and its Educational Expo, the trading cards will be distributed to teachers as educational resources, along with related lesson plans and activities.

To nominate an ag superhero, visit bit.ly/Ag-Superheroes. Nominations will be reviewed by a committee that will select 12 individuals to be featured on the 2024 trading cards. Other nominees may be featured on cards in future years.

Sponsorship opportunities to support production and distribution of the trading cards also are available.

To view last year's Ag Superheroes or for more information, visit bit.ly/3uhiKU0.



Students in Public Speaking class at Surry Community College created special poster projects related to Black History Month. These will be on display in the central area of SCC's Dobson campus for students, staff, and faculty, as well as the public, to view on Feb. 7-8, between 10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. each day.

SCC Observes Black History Month with Display of Special Projects

One of the ways in which Surry Community College is observing Black History Month is through the presentation of student poster projects designed to educate others about important events in Black History.

Students in SCC's Public Speaking class, taught

by SCC Communication Instructor Emily Workman, have created special poster projects related to Black History Month. These will be on display in the central area of SCC's Dobson campus for students, staff, and faculty, as well as the public, to view on Feb. 7-8, between

10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. each day. The posters highlight people, places, and events important to Black History.

If you'd like to learn more about this special display, contact Emily Workman at workman@surry.edu or (336) 386-3318.