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



Scott Wickham, CPA, CFE, of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates (RFC), presented the county's audit for the year ended June 30, 2023.

## Audit shows county's finances 'much improved'

By Taylor Boyd

Patrick County received a good, clean report on its year ended June 30, 2023, audit at the February 12 Board of Supervisor meeting. Scott Wickham, CPA, CFE, of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates (RFC), said three reports are issued for the audit every year. The first is the Independent Auditors' Report which speaks to the number and financial statements of the county and the Patrick County School Board.

"The county and the school board received an unmodified opinion, which is the best opinion that you can get. That means the numbers are fairly accurate," he said. Wickham said the second report was the Gas Report on State Compliance and Gas Requirements. Aside from a state noncompliance finding that regarded school painting procurement, "it was a clean report, and no items were noted there."

(See Audit p.3)

## Community invited to Robotics annual open house

The PC Rocket Robotics team is inviting the community to attend its annual end of season celebration, set for Thursday February 29, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the PC Rocket Robotics lab, located in uptown Stuart, 137 North Main Street. The front lab entrance is located beside Tom's Barber Shop on Main Street and will be marked. A handicap accessible entrance is also available at the backside of the building. Eight members were on the team this season – Evan Farmer, John David McCann, Hunter Meade, Mackenzie Harris, Abigail Lavender, Jake

Bryant, Peter McCann and Elizabeth McCann. There is limited availability for new team members in the upcoming season. Interested students in the 8th – 12th grade should attend the open lab and complete an application. This year's team competed in the FIRST Tech Challenge game, Centerstage. Each season, the game is released the first week of September and the team then begins designing and programming the robot to compete in competitions that take place in December/January. This year's

(See Robotics p.3)



PC Robotics Team members this season are pictured left to right: Elizabeth McCann, Abigail Lavender, Jake Bryant, Hunter Meade, Peter McCann, John David McCann, Mackenzie Harris, Evan Farmer. (Contributed photos)

## Citing NDA, officials decline to provide spreadsheet, EDA works to obtain grant for environmental study

By Staff Reports

Officials with Foresight Hospital and Health Systems declined to provide a copy of a spreadsheet detailing the company's expenses for the hospital project. Joe Hylak-Reinholtz, CFO and general counsel for Foresight, said the spreadsheet is among the documents included in a nondisclosure agreement (NDA). Dr. Sameer Suhail M.D., the owner of Foresight, referred ques-

tions to Hylak-Reinholtz. The spreadsheet was referenced in emails last year between the company, county officials and others. Meanwhile, the county's Economic Development Authority (EDA) is working towards conducting an environmental study at the former hospital site, according to a release from the county. The county is in the process of applying for a Brownfield plan-

ning grant and Brownfield grant extension to pay for the study. A brownfield is a property, "such as the former hospital site," which would pose "unique challenges due to hazardous materials, pollution, or contaminants. It is standard practice when a locality is approached about purchasing one of these properties that due diligence, including environmental studies, are conducted to inform any potential redevelopment or

reuse efforts," the release stated. "Localities can also perform these studies with the permission of the property owner if they don't intend to purchase the property, and provide these studies to a prospective buyer as a recruitment tool," it added. The need for an environmental study also was "to better understand Patrick County's financial risk," County Administrator Beth

(See Hospital p. 11)

## Poor Farmer's Market to celebrate 40 years

By Taylor Boyd and Debbie Hall Poor Farmer's Market Old Fashion Country Store, and a staple of the Meadows of Dan community, is putting the finishing touches on an event that has been years in the making – a celebration of its 40th year in business. "As of March 1st, 2024, Poor Farmers Market has been open 365 consecutive days a year for forty years. That is 14,600 consecutive days having never closed in 40 years except when the power was out," Feleica Shelor, owner, wrote in a series of excerpts on social media detailing the journey to the upcoming milestone celebration. The event is set for Sunday, March 3, from 2-4 p.m. at the store, with live music, a Trivia Game and prizes at 3 p.m., a pinata for youngsters, drawings for gift cards, and other goodies, leading up to the grand prize - a weekend get-away at Poor Farmer's Cabins. Shelor started her business selling produce on the side of the road at Lovers Leap with her grandmother. "All my life, I've sold produce to tourists, so it was an easy transition from doing that to coming here," she said of the brick and mortar space



Feleica Shelor, the owner of Poor Farmer's Market Old Fashion Country Store, is pictured at the market. she began renting in 1984 from Larry Hutchens, of L.E Hutchens Inc. "I rented this building from him, and he rented it to me in order for me to sell gas for him," she said. Now, 40 years after striking her agreement (See Poor Farmer's Market p. 14)



Clark Gas & Oil President Blair Clark gave checks to non-profit organizations in Patrick County that are dedicated to helping others.

## Business spreads love with donations

By Taylor Boyd

Clark Gas & Oil donated \$59,000 to local non-profit organizations during its traditional giving back to the community event held on February 14. Blair Clark, president, said the business began the practice of reinvesting in the communities it serves more than 20 years ago. "We're part of the community, and we want to give back to the

community. Our parents, B and Coates Clark, raised us that way," he said. Clark said he and his sister Anna Lester, make up the third generation of the Clark family. "So, we've just continued on with our parents' legacy. We feel we're blessed with business; we want to give it back to the community." While the family has donated a

(See Clark Gas & Oil p.11)

## A Miraculous Homecoming



Lauren Worley and her family wave to those standing along their route. (Photos by Pat Delaney)

Lauren Worley returned to her home in Patrick County Friday, nearly two months to the day after she suffered severe, life-threatening injuries in a Dec. 16 car crash. Her boyfriend, Micah Underwood, of Floyd, also was injured in the crash that allegedly was caused by a drunk driver. First responder escorts from the Patrick County Sheriff's Office and the Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department led the

entourage that included Lauren, a Patrick County High School senior, and her parents, Chris and Mandy Worley, to their Woolwine home. Spectators gathered in several areas along the route in celebration, including PCHS students who held banners and signs of welcome. Elementary school students also participated in a range of activities to welcome the family.

(See Homecoming p.15)



# A New Take on an Old Scam

One of the oldest scams around involves a criminal getting hold of one of your checks and forging the payee and the amount. Usually this is done by “washing” the check with chemicals to remove the real information you have written on it. Today, with access to new technologies, criminals are “cooking” checks by creating fake versions of real checks using computer programs. These “cooked” checks can be manipulated digitally and either printed or deposited electronically, saving the crook a lot of mess and hassle.

The best way to protect against these scams is to be careful how

you send checks. If you use your checkbook to pay bills via mail, how you send those bills is the key to staying safe. Rather than dropping the bills in your mailbox and flipping up the flag, take them to the post office and drop them off inside. A criminal can’t wash or cook a check they don’t physically have, so taking this extra step to safeguard your mail can protect your bank account in the long run.

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](http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork).

# Broadband projects to receive additional funds

U.S. Congressman Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, announced that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has awarded \$700,000 to Patrick County, Virginia, for the West Piedmont Planning District Commission Universal Broadband Project.

This project plans to install 101 miles of fiber, which will ensure service is available at 3,424 locations around Patrick County.

“The \$700,000 awarded by the ARC will assist in the expansion of broadband services to unserved and

underserved areas of Patrick County,” said Griffith. “Once completed, this project will provide access to 3,424 homes and businesses in Patrick County, greatly improving the quality of life of residents in this increasingly digital age.”

According to ARC, this project will result in 3,312 new residential connections, 102 new business connections, and 10 new community anchor connections. Total project funding is \$7,544,000 when combining ARC, state, local and private sources.

# Dr. Seuss Birthday Celebration to be held at Reynolds Homestead



Julie Walters Steele (at right), director of the Reynolds Homestead, reads a story to volunteer Cat in the Hat Mia Waddell (from left) and kids Etta Owens, Louisa Straith, and Rhiannon Martin during last year’s birthday celebration for Dr. Seuss at the homestead’s Community Engagement Center. Photo by Diane Deffenbaugh for Virginia Tech.

You could not, would not, should not miss a birthday such as this! We’re having a party, it’s truer than true. We want to celebrate and party with you!

Come spend the afternoon at Virginia Tech’s Reynolds Homestead celebrating the birthday of beloved children’s author Dr. Seuss from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday, March 3. Admission is \$5 per person; find details and register online at [reynoldshomestead.vt.edu](http://reynoldshomestead.vt.edu).

The afternoon will be filled with various fun activities for families to enjoy. Sit back and listen to a story, read aloud, walk around and make crafts, or try your hand at a Seuss science experiment.

After eating some Seuss-inspired snacks and refreshments, maybe you’ll find yourself getting your camera out and spending some time taking silly photos in the photo booth using a variety of Seuss character props. The options are endless.

Enjoy a leisurely afternoon with your family celebrating Dr. Seuss’s birthday. This will be a floating event, and everyone is welcome to come and stay for as little or as long as they would like.

In addition, this event will continue with the support of the Patrick County Dolly Parton Imag-

ination Library. This monthly book-gifting program is available to any child under 5 living in Patrick County. The program is sponsored by the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce, STEP, INC, One Family Productions, and Stuart Rotary with support from a local steering committee of educators, civic leaders, and business owners. Participation in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library is free, though a registration form must be completed to sign up. Additional information about the program and registration forms will be available at the Dr. Seuss birthday celebration.

Special guests at the event will include a variety of Dr. Seuss’s imaginative characters as well as a lead cast member from Patrick & Henry Community College’s upcoming presentation of Dolly Parton’s smash-hit musical 9 –to 5. The show is at Walker Fine Arts theatre on the P&HCC main campus in Martinsville in April and tickets go on sale Friday, March 1. We are excited to have “Dolly” with us in person to celebrate the contributions of both Dolly Parton and Dr. Seuss to children’s literacy.

If you have questions or need additional information, call Melanie Gilbert at (276) 694-7181 ex. 22.

# Organizational meeting set for farmers market

The Stuart Farmers Market vendor organizational meeting is set for 11 a.m. on Friday, February 23, in the Town Office, 100 Patrick Avenue, Stuart.

The upcoming market season will be discussed.

A representative from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences will attend to discuss the role growers play in the Senior Nutrition Voucher program.

Call the town office at (276) 694-3811 with additional questions.



2023-2024 P&HCC Patrick & Henry Scholars.

# Applications for P&HCC Scholars and Commonwealth Legacy Scholars Now Open

The Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Foundation is now accepting applications for the Patrick & Henry Scholars and Commonwealth Legacy scholarships. Each year, up to ten local high school graduates are chosen to become Patrick & Henry Scholars. These scholars receive a scholarship to cover tuition, textbooks, and fees for up to two academic years.

“Becoming a Patrick & Henry Scholar is a distinguished honor that is both an experience and an opportunity,” said Tiffani Underwood, Director of the P&HCC Foundation, adding, “The application process is rigorous, but the reward of being P&H Scholars is invaluable both while on campus here at P&HCC and beyond.”

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must have a high school grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. They must be graduates from an area high school or have completed a homeschool program of study. Scholars are chosen for their superior academic achievement, civic involvement, and leadership potential. Graduates of homeschool programs must be seventeen years of age or older at the time of the application and must reside in the P&HCC service region.

Once accepted, Patrick & Henry Scholars must maintain a 3.0 grade

point average and be full-time students (enrolled in at least 12 credit hours) at P&HCC. They also will be expected to participate in two extracurricular activities per semester and accrue ten volunteer service hours each semester.

Students who apply for the Patrick & Henry Scholars award will automatically be considered for the Commonwealth Legacy scholarship. One outstanding student from each community college in Virginia is selected to receive this award, which was created by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and is sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education. The funds from this scholarship can be used for tuition, textbooks, and fees. Eligible students are full time, associate degree-seeking students attending college for the first time. As a merit-based scholarship, it will be awarded to a student who has demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to develop leadership skills.

To apply, students should visit [www.patrickhenry.edu/scholarships](http://www.patrickhenry.edu/scholarships).

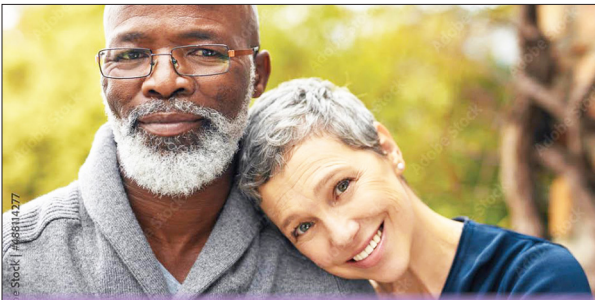
For additional information, contact Letitia Pulliam in the Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation Office at (276) 656-0250 or [lpulliam@patrickhenry.edu](mailto:lpulliam@patrickhenry.edu).

# Understanding Dementia Related Behaviors Topic of February 27 Program

Caring for an individual with Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia can be challenging and, at times, overwhelming. Frustration is a normal and valid emotional response to many of the difficulties of being a caregiver.

In an effort to bring a better understanding of dementia to the community, The Landmark Center, in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Association of Central and Western Virginia, will host its monthly Alzheimer’s educational program on February 27 at noon. This program is free and open to anyone who is interested in learning more about how to recognize, manage, and provide care to someone living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

This month’s program can help you gain valuable insights into understanding behaviors linked with dementia. Explore typical triggers for these behaviors and discover effective strategies to assess the



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individual’s requirements. Learn how to intervene in a manner that promotes their well-being and quality of life. Equip yourself with practical knowledge that empowers you to provide better care and support for those affected by dementia.

The presentation by Brooke Gill will begin at noon and lunch is provided for attendees. February will feature homemade chicken noodle soup and mini sub sandwiches. Those interested in attending can call (276) 694-3050 or email Community Relations Director Lisa

Martin at [lmartin@thelandmarkctr.com](mailto:lmartin@thelandmarkctr.com) to reserve a lunch. Reservations are not required to just attend the program.

“We encourage any caregiver – personal or professional – who works with dementia patients to attend the event,” said Martin. “What Brooke will present can help you make a positive difference in the lives of others.”

In the event of inclement weather on the day of the program, it will be moved to the fourth Tuesday in March. The Landmark Center is located at 227 Landmark Drive in Stuart.



# Audit

(cont. from page 1)

The last report issued is the Uniformed Guidance, or Federal Compliance Testing, which also was clean, with no findings noted.

“That concludes all our federal testing of the county, the school board, services as well. All that came back really correct and in compliance,” he said.

In 2023, Wickham said the county had a little more than \$10 million in net investment in capital assets, including the county’s buildings, infrastructure, vehicles, and the like, and \$3,012,044 in restricted funds.

“Those are things such as opioid settlements, donated funds, some asset forfeiture/seizure funds. Things that are restricted by the Code of Virginia or an external party for a certain use,” Wickham said.

Patrick County has \$11,257,180 in unrestricted funds for 2023, Wickham said, adding that amount is available for use.

“You can see it’s a bit in growth there from 2019, which is really encouraging to see,” he said. “I know several years ago we sat here and discussed the concerning condition of the county, but it’s much improved, so that’s good to see.”

Wickham said the total revenues for the county are growing about nine percent per year over the five-year trend.

“That’s heavily inflated with the use of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds. So, you’ll see the intergovernmental revenues increased quite a bit from ’21 to ’22, to ’23. That is the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) money you received over that time-frame,” he said.

Overall, he said the revenues have increased by about nine percent, with property taxes being about 4.5 percent.

Wickham said there is a significant increase in the other local taxes category, which accounts for the “1 percent additional, for the most part, related to sales tax which goes to the school board. You’ll see an increase in contribution to the school board, which kind of offsets that increase in revenue,” he said.

A small increase in general administration expenses was noted, from \$1,661,445 in 2021 to \$2,000,302 in 2023, Wickham said, “but \$140,000 of that was ARPA funds this year.”

In addition to an increase in education, there also was an increase in health and welfare, with “a significant increase in CSA (Children’s Ser-

vices Act) cost in revenues as well to offset this year,” he said.

The total debt service for 2023 was \$2,740,109. “It did decline by 20 percent per year, but that’s a little bit deceiving, 2019 did include that refunding, so there’s additional costs in that year. Excluding that 2019 year, debt services has increased by about 4 percent over the last four years. So, a little bit more of a relative number for you there,” he said.

The total expenses for 2023 were \$32,135,628, and increased by less than four percent per year, Wickham said, and added that it is good to see revenues outpacing expenses, “particularly where you were, in a situation where your fund balance was really low. That’s a good way to get back to where you need to be.

For fiscal year 2023, Wickham said 7 percent of the county’s revenues were property taxes and 15 percent were other local taxes, such as local sales taxes, lottery taxes, and meals tax.

The general fund expenses for 2023 include 31 percent for public safety, 23 percent for education, 14 percent for health and welfare, and nine percent for total debt service.

Wickham said Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), a national organization, recommends “a minimum unassigned fund balance of two months, or 16.67 percent. That’s a minimum and that is a true unassigned fund balance.”

Patrick County’s unassigned fund balance as of June 2023 was \$14.2 million, he said and noted that some localities may need more than that versus others.

“Also, you do twice a year (real estate tax) collections, so half of your real estate, personal property, comes in, in June essentially,” Wickham said. “At the end of June, you would expect to have a little higher fund balance than you may have at other points during the year.”

The county’s general long-term obligation debt decreases by about 4 percent per year, Wickham said, “so, it’s good that you’re paying down those bonds.”

Wickham said the state debt average is 3,766 in 2022 and 2023, while the county’s is 3,257.

“You are below that, so that’s good because that state does include Northern Virginia, which should probably have a higher debt per capita,” he said.

In other matters, the board:

\*Heard an update on the county’s broadband projects. County Administrator Beth Simms said Charter-Spectrum, which is doing the project in the Claudville area, has started construction.

“They have installed one mile of cable underground. They did hit rock, so they’re having a little bit of a delay. They have multiple crews working, and they’re waiting on some arial permits from Appalachian Power,” she said.

Simms the county is working on scheduling a Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) site visit.

“You know, DHCD has put out all this money so they kind of want to come and see progress. So, when we do that, we’ll let you all know and hopefully get some pictures and show the progress that’s happening there,” she said.

With the RiverStreet Networks project, Simms said construction in Franklin County was scheduled to begin on Friday, February 16. “We have been promised that Patrick and Henry Counties will start 30 days after that,” she said.

\*Approved minutes from the Jan. 8 and Jan. 22 meetings.

\*Approved the bills, claims, and appropriations.

\*Set a public hearing for March 11 to approve the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) secondary six-year plan.

\*Scheduled a public hearing for March 11 to approve the Fairy Stone Solar siting agreement.

\*Approved a performance agreement with Apex Mills Insights Textiles.

\*Approved the opening of checking accounts for the Public Service Authority (PSA) and Building Inspections.

\*Approved a funding request for Meadows of Dan Volunteer Fire Department.

\*Heard the administrator’s report.

\*Heard the supervisors’ reports.

\*Heard from Norma Bozenmayer, about Doug Perry’s community meeting and a crime watch meeting held by Sheriff Dan Smith and Deputy Dustin Foley.

\*Heard from Steve Ferring, of the Dan River District, about the county’s spending and the need for a purchasing agent.

\*Heard from Jamie Clark, of the Peters Creek District, about Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and solar.

# Robotics

(cont. from page 1)

game required the team to figure out a way to capture hexagonal shaped Pixels on the playing field and be able to score them on a slanted backboard as high as 32 inches off the ground. To that end, the team designed a 4 stage linear drawer slide system that was capable of reaching over 36 inches off the ground to score in the highest location.

The programming team uses Java as the programming language to program the robot to operate in both Autonomous and Driver Controlled mode, and incorporated a webcam into the robot to read the location of a custom Team Scoring Element, also designed by the team. The ability to implement Autonomous odometry into the robot this season allowed the programing team to accurately program the robot to make movements around the playing field quickly and repeatably. This year, the team’s autonomous programming and scoring was as good as any team it competed against.

The Patrick team competed in three qualifier events this season. At the December 2 event in Christiansburg, it finished the day with 4 wins and 1 loss, and ranked 3rd. On January 20,

the team competed in Harrisonburg, VA, and finished the day with 3 wins and 2 losses, and ranked 7th. Unfortunately, the team was eliminated in the semifinals of these tournaments.

The team’s final competition also was at Harrisonburg, on January 21, and PC Rocket Robotics finished the day with 5 wins/0 losses and ranked #1 for the day. It is always difficult, but an honor to finish the day ranked #1, and the top seed in the tournament, John Pendleton, who is among the organizers, said. Unfortunately, the team fell 1 win to 2 losses in the tournament because its alliance partner had mechanical issues with a robot.

The local team built an amazing robot for the 2023–24 season, Pendleton said. “The team should be extremely proud as they consistently compete with teams from all over Virginia, Maryland and DC. During the Harrisonburg event on January 20, the highlight of the day was the team being awarded the Motivate Award.

“The team that receives the Motivate Award celebrates the culture of FIRST and clearly shows what it means to be a team. This award celebrates the team that represents the essence of the FIRST Tech Challenge competition through team building, team spirit, and displayed enthusiasm. This



is a team who makes a collective effort. The robot created by the team is pictured.

fort to make FIRST known throughout their community and sparks others to embrace the culture of FIRST,” he said.

The team is losing three seniors this season: Elizabeth McCann has been on the team for two years and is part of the programming team. Evan Farmer and Hunter Meade joined PC Rocket Robotics as 7th graders in its first season in 2018. Both have been a part of the team for all six seasons. Evan has been on the Build team and Hunter on the CAD/Design Team for all six seasons.

The loss “will leave a huge void in our team and (they) will be sorely missed,” Pendleton said. “We wish them all the best and can’t wait to see the amazing accomplishments they will have in their life.”

Team mentors “are



The team will lose three seniors this season - Evan Farmer, Elizabeth McCann and Hunter Meade.

said. “The season is long, requires hard work, commitment but most importantly, TEAMWORK! We are extremely proud of this year’s awesome robot design, the impressive way it competed on the field, and most of all for the dedication by the team to keep working and make the robot better and better.”

PC Rocket Robotics is a 501c3 that relies on donations for businesses and individuals to provide STEM based Robotics opportunities for the youth of Patrick County. The team appreciates all of its sponsors this season, and is “extremely grateful for our Platinum sponsors,” Pendleton said of Rodney and Donna Overby, C&F Bank, DRP Performance, Walmart, Qualcomm, MiNet and SolidWorks. To make a donation to the team, send a check made out to PC Rocket t e a m , ” Robotics, INC to PC Rocket Robotics, PO Box 165, Stuart, VA 24171.

# Firewater

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# *Glenvar tops Cougars*



Nathan Large puts up a shot.



Cameron Collins shoots against two Glenvar defenders.



Head Coach Brian Chitwood talks with this team during a timeout.

**By Pat Delaney**

The Patrick County varsity boys' basketball team closed out their season against the Glenvar Highlanders on February 12, falling 73-51.

The Highlanders came out from the opening tip playing a full-court press, which caused the Cougars trouble in stretches throughout the game. Early on, the Cougars kept the game within reach, despite Glenvar hitting multiple three-point shots in the first quarter. Turnovers cost Patrick County, allowing Glenvar to increase their lead late in the quarter to eight, 17-9.

The Highlander defensive pressure continued to cause turnovers, leading to a 7-0 run midway through the second quarter. In the last three minutes of the quarter, the Cougars found success against the full-court

pressure, pushing the ball down court and holding the Highlander lead to 12 going into halftime at 33-21.

The Cougars showed flashes in the second half, including an 8-0 run in the middle of the third, causing several turnovers and converting them into points while closing the Glenvar lead to nine. Glenvar's defensive pressure and ability to hit three-pointers kept Patrick County from closing the gap and further. The Cougars fought back to a ten point deficit with 3:00 to go in the game, but a 6-0 Glenvar run shut the door on the Cougars comeback.

“Our margin of error is so thin,” said Cougar Head Coach Brian Chitwood. “We’re playing stretches and then in moments we have far too many turnovers.”

Despite the Highlander's game



Noah Jessup drives over Glenvar defenders for the shot.



Easton Harris flies toward the basket.



Stuart Callahan shoots over two Highlander defenders.

long, full court pressure causing turnovers, Coach Chitwood liked the effort he saw from his team.

"That's the learning curve. Our guys played their hearts out. We're working. It's just situational basketball and sometimes we don't understand, and that's my fault. That's not theirs," he said. "But it's something that takes time, and I promise you, we're working on it. They're going to get there. That's a great group of kids. They do their best to

do what I'm asking them to do."

Looking ahead to next season, the Cougars will have nine juniors returning to the roster.

“That’s a huge nucleus of guys that have a whole year’s playing experience, and we’ll be better as a result of that. We’ve got a very rigorous offseason planned that’s about to go into place and our guys are going to continue to work,” said Chitwood, “and we’re going to get better.”



Pictured are Coach Hylton Scott, Will Heath and John Crews. (Contributed)

# Heath earns spot on academic team

Will Heath, a member of the Patrick County High School Fishing Team, earned a spot on the 2022-2023 John Crews All-Academic Team. To earn this award, anglers must earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of the school year.

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.

**General fund revenues  
in January were  
consistent with forecast**

General fund revenues for January 2024 remain in line with the consensus revenue forecast, Gov. Glenn Youngkin said last week. For the month of January, Virginia experienced a 2.5 percent decline in comparison to the same period last year, despite an extra collection day relative to the prior year. Year-to-date general fund revenues are up a moderate 5.3 percent through the first seven months of Fiscal Year 2024. The slight decline was driven largely by a dip in non-withholding collections and lower-than-expected individual income tax refunds related to the elective Pass-Through Entity Tax (PTET), while other major revenue sources were generally in line with expectations.

“The Commonwealth’s January revenues show that our conservative forecast remains prudent as conflicting economic signals continue to cloud definitive conclusions in the fiscal year,” said Youngkin. “Virginia’s labor market remains tight and we continue to monitor withholding and non-withholding patterns as we start a new calendar year. This

month's report confirms we budgeted appropriately when releasing our Unleashing Opportunity budget in December and as the budget process moves forward in the General Assembly this weekend we can all be confident the topline forecast remains prudent."

“While PTET-related collections and refunds continue to distort overall revenue collections, underlying revenue growth in our major revenue sources remains on or slightly ahead of forecasts,” said Secretary of Finance Stephen Cummings. “We are confident in our conservative revenue forecasts and we are continuing to monitor revenue collections and economic data. Given these downside risks, we will maintain a cautious outlook going forward.”

Among the major revenue sources, net individual income tax collections, corporate income tax, and interest income are all slightly elevated relative to last year, while sales and use tax collections, insurance premiums, and wills, suits and deeds are all lower year-to-date.



## Dean Morris Hanby



Dean Morris Hanby, 96, passed away on February 14, 2024. She was born July 18, 1927, in Henry County to the late William Quince Morris and Lelia Joyce Morris. She was preceded in death by her husband of 62 years, David G. Hanby on April 5th, 2016. Dean was born in Henry County, graduated from Spencer Penn High School and attended Madison College, now James Madison University. She began her working career in the office of Dupont, then at the State Corporation Commission in Richmond. She returned to Martinsville, where she and D.G. met and married. They worked in the Circuit Court Clerk's office in Stuart together for many years.

Dean and D.G. were longtime residents of Stuart and were an integral part of life in Patrick County. They were active members of Stuart United Methodist Church where Dean was a member of United Methodist Women, taught Sunday School, and served as financial secretary for some years. Dean was a member of the hospital auxiliary as a pink lady with the lights of love and the gift shop.

Other family mem-

bers who preceded her in death were her siblings, three brothers, Clyde, Tom, and Glenn Morris. Also, three sisters, Mattie Reed Lester, Ruth Myers, and Patsy Hite.

Dean is survived by her daughter and son in law Barbara Reed Hanby (Bobbie) and Rod Acuff of Roanoke, Va. and step-granddaughter Lindsey and her family of Christiansburg, Va. She has also been blessed by remaining nieces and nephews including Myke Myers, Joyce May, Billie Abrams, Patty Hite, Jack Lester, Marty Czubek, Susan Painter, and Larry Hawks, who have remained a constant in her life.

After their move to Kings Grant in 1997, Dean and D.G. found a new life full of wonderful support and loving friends, who continued to care for her after D.G.'s death. They had become members of

First United Methodist Church, where her membership and support remained.

The family would like to offer deepest gratitude for the love and care shown my parents, while at Kings Grant. I never worried about them and slept well at night while under your care. Also, I extend my sincere thanks to Mom's faithful friend Jean Browe, who remained steadfast with Mom till the end.

Mom would be pleased to have memorial donations made to the Fellowship Fund at Kings Grant, The First United Methodist Church of Martinsville, or Cave Spring United Methodist Church of Roanoke.

On Monday February 19th the family will be present for a service of committal at the mausoleum at Patrick Memorial Gardens in Patrick Springs at 11am. This followed at 1pm at Kings Grant in Martinsville for words of remembrance of Dean by Kings Grant Chaplain and longtime friend Paul Johnson, followed by a small reception of refreshments for friends to gather. Online condolences may be sent to [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

## Derrick Bryan Roop



Mr. Derrick Bryan Roop, age 71, of Critz, Virginia went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at Northern Regional Hospital in Mount Airy, North Carolina. He was born in Honolulu, Hawaii on October 14, 1952, to the late George Johnson Roop and the late Dana Evelyn Gilley Roop. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one brother, Lynn Roop. Derrick was a graduate of Patrick County High School, Class of 1971, which was the first graduating class from Patrick County High School. After high school, he attended Averett University. Derrick retired from Smurf-it-Stone Containers. In his younger years, he enjoyed horseback riding and trail rides with his family. He was a hard worker, and a great provider for his family. Derrick was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend. Above all, he

loved his family, especially his grandchildren. Derrick will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Left to cherish the fond memories of Derrick Roop are his loving wife of 51 years, Joan Williams Roop of the home; one son, Kenneth Roop of Stuart, Virginia; one daughter and son-in-law, Dana Roop Harris (Michael) of Critz, Virginia; four grandchildren, Faith Roop Ruscelloni (Christian) of Stuart, Virginia, Joshuwa Roop of Stuart, Virginia, Kristen Harris of Critz, Virginia, Makayleigh Harris of Critz, Virginia; one great-grandchild, Joana Rose Rusc-

loni; one sister and brother-in-law, Linda Roop Handy (Hassel) of Critz, Virginia; several nieces and nephews; and many dear friends.

A funeral service for Mr. Derrick Roop will be held on Monday, February 19, 2024, at 2:00 P.M. at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart with Pastor Jimmy Wood and Pastor Roger Moore officiating. The burial will immediately follow the funeral service in Patrick Memorial Gardens. The family will receive friends two hours prior to the funeral service on Monday afternoon at the funeral home. Flowers will be accepted, or memorial donations in memory of Mr. Roop may be made to Mountain Valley Hospice and Palliative Care, 1427 Edgewood Drive, Suite 101, Mt. Airy, NC 27030. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is serving the Roop family, and online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

## Angela Diane Pendleton



Angela Diane Pendleton, born November 20, 1961, in Galax, VA at Waddell Hospital, moved to North Carolina and graduated from Ragsdale High School in Jamestown, NC. Angela received both her BS and MS in Laboratory Animal Science from North Carolina A&T State University.

Angela's life work was in the social sciences and mental health-care fields, helping so many people. She is survived by 1 son,

Andrew B. Duncan of Charlotte, NC; 1 daughter, Christine E. Duncan of Greensboro, NC; 2 grandsons, Cameron and Beckham Duncan;

1 brother and sister in-law Ernest L. and Cindy Pendleton of Stokesdale, NC; 2 nephews, Nathaniel and Jeremiah Pendleton; 1 niece, Ariel Pendleton; several cousins; many great friends; and her mother, Frances S. Pendleton of Laurel Fork, VA.

Burial will be at the Eliza Boyd cemetery in Meadows of Dan, VA. Services will be held at a later date. Online condolences may be sent to [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

# Bills advance to protect state employees who access medical cannabis



**By Michael Chun**

*Capital News Service*

State lawmakers have advanced bills that would allow public sector employees to use medical cannabis without losing their job.

House Bill 149, introduced by Del. Dan Helmer, D-Fairfax, extends to state public employees rights that already exist in the private sector. The bill passed with bipartisan support on a 78-20 vote.

Helmer sponsored HB 1862 three years ago, to protect patients approved for medical cannabis use. That bill "unintentionally did not protect public sector employees," Helmer said.

"The key was we left our brave first responders out of this," Helmer said. "That was never our intent and so this bill is meant to fix that."

A cannabis product is anything from CBD up to 10 milligrams of THC per dose, the current state cap, as long as the product is produced, sold and tested through the medical cannabis program.

Public sector employees such as firefighters, police officers and teachers are among the groups that would be protected under Helmer's bill if they are approved to use cannabis products to treat conditions or diseases.

Senate Bill 391, introduced by Sen. Stella Pekarsky, D-Fairfax, also offers protection to public sector employees, with the exception of law enforcement officers. The bill passed the Senate with a 30-10 vote.

Pekarsky's bill uses language that extends protection for use of cannabis oil.

Helmer's bill was amended from "cannabis oil" to "cannabis products," which he said is meant to "refer to a slew of medically recommended products that have cannabis as the basis."

Any increase in inquiries or modifications to existing policies would be absorbed within existing resources by the Department of Labor and Industry or Department of Human Resource Management, respectively, according to the bill's impact statement.

Joe Mirabile, a representative of Virginia's Professional Firefighters, testified in support of Helmer's bill during its committee hearing.

"My members have reported that they're relying on alcohol far less, they're sleeping more at home and they're seeing other positive effects, such as reduction of joint and muscle pain without having to use opioid prescriptions," Mirabile said.

The only legal way that a person can purchase cannabis in the state is through the medical cannabis program. Approved state practitioners can issue a certification after an ini-

tial consultation.

Dawn Adams, a nurse practitioner and former state delegate who represented the Richmond area, operates a medical cannabis practitioner clinic. Cannabis products are often used to help with PTSD, anxiety and sleep problems that are associated with the employee's role, according to Adams.

Over-the-counter and prescription drugs, along with alcohol, can sometimes have lingering effects compared to an appropriate dose of short-acting cannabis medication, Adams said. But that has been the only option for many workers.

"Many of these people have had to jump through a thousand hoops to even be considered to use medical cannabis," Adams said. "When in fact, it would be a pretty decent alternative to many of the health determinants that are associated with their life."

Employers would still be able to prohibit use of cannabis on the job and take action against any employee whose work is impaired because of cannabis use. The proposed bill does not make any changes to the current law in regards to federal workers.

There is no widely available rapid test to nail down the window of cannabis use to determine if an employee was impaired at work. Researchers at Virginia Commonwealth University are working on a THC breathalyzer to help law enforcement detect cannabis impairment, and distinguish between THC and CBD use.

Chelsea Higgs Wise is the executive director of the advocacy group Marijuana Justice, which is focused on helping the state create an equitable recreational cannabis marketplace.

"State employees should be allowed to access cannabis in their off-work time," Higgs Wise said.

The group supports Helmer's bill.

"We understand the nuances that public employees are navigating and are excited to offer our support for this extension of wellness to our employees of the Commonwealth," Higgs Wise stated in the organization's letter of support to Helmer.

There are approximately 1,000 approved medical cannabis practitioners in Virginia. A total of 98,396 patients used their written certification in 2023 to receive medical cannabis through the state program, according to the managing agency Cannabis Control Authority.

Both bills now advance to the other chamber.

*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.*

# Floyd man dies in Montgomery Co. crash

A Floyd man died in a two-vehicle crash last week in Montgomery County, according to a release from the Virginia State Police.

The crash occurred Monday, Feb. 12, at 2:20 p.m. on Virginia 11, one mile south of Plum Creek Road in Montgomery County, according to a release from the VSP.

The release stated that the 2010 Chevrolet Impala was traveling south on Virginia 11, when the vehicle crossed the centerline and struck a 2016 Ford F-150 head-on.

The driver of the Ford was identi-

fied as Jesse Allen Jones, 29, of Floyd. Mr. Jones was not wearing his seatbelt and died at the scene, authorities said.

The Chevrolet was driven by Richard S. Helm, 41, of Shawsville, Va. Mr. Helm was not wearing his seatbelt and was transported to the hospital for injuries received in the crash.

Charges are pending.

The Virginia State Police Crash Reconstruction Team assisted with the crash.

The crash remains under investigation.



**OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON**



# PATRICK PULPITS

## We are living in a plastic world

Van Yandell

Genesis 1: 1-3 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

Being from the “Boomer Generation,” my reality is somewhat different from the world of Generation Z. The Z generation preceded Generation Alpha and both of those people groups are ones totally immersed in an age of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality.

To live in a world in which nothing is real, in which everything is artificial, is living in a simulated reality and results in a distorted view and attitude concerning concepts once considered sacred.

In the 1950’s and 60’s we knew cartoons were not reality. Mice could not talk and coyotes could not fly or be blown up and come back to life. Reality was one thing and fantasy was another.

In today’s world, animated videos are so realistic it is difficult for even the most discerning to realize the deception. Will the Hollywood actors soon be out of work because of high-tech animation and Artificial Intelligence?

People of my generation well remember a time when anything made of plastic was cheap and in many cases, considered junk. In today’s world of computer generated algorithms, parameters and polymers, we exist in a plastic reality.

Many parts of automobiles, appliances and other products that were once made of metal are now plastic.

Anything plastic is produced by extracting the elements from a natural product such as petroleum, soybeans, natural gas or coal and recombining the chemical elements into a polymer (plastic).

When we combine the effects of a world of AI, VR and synthetic (unnatural) materials, we produce not only different products but also different attitudes and mindsets.

When the older generations think of the younger ones, we sometimes ask the question, “Why would anyone think the way they do?” The answer (whether simple or complex) is, they exist in a different reality than the one in which we grew up and then grew old.

There are over eight billion of us on planet earth. In the area of technological advancement and infrastructure, we may as well live on three different planets. With the U.S being in the middle of this scheme, sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Indochina or Central American jungles, are like going back to the Stone Age.

On the other end of the scale, several cities in China, South Korea and other Asian cities, America appears to exist in the 1930’s. The technology seen, especially in the infrastructure, is amazing and exceeds anything I’ve seen in the U.S. at this point in time.

What makes the differences in the three geographic areas? Technology of course! And it has run away with our common sense and sense of values. I was sitting in a waiting room recently and nine of ten people there were deeply buried into their phones.

Plastics (products of technology) have invaded the food products we consume, the water we drink and even the air we breathe. We are living in an artificial environment and a simulated world.

A recent news broadcast revealed the plastic waste products in the oceans of the world. In an article a few years ago, I discussed the problem of the waste products (garbage) in America and much of that is in the form of plastics. A few plastic products are considered to be biodegradable. The problem is,

it takes some plastics 10,000 years to biodegrade.

If the environmentalists feel a need to protest, they should consider the damage plastics are doing to this planet. Toilet paper has been biodegradable for many years. Why can’t containers be?

Where does this leave the Christian perspective? To the sincere Christian the Bible is reality and fiction is fiction. Some people in our society (young and old) have been raised to be discerning. We have determined to be analytical but practical in decision making.

To believe or not to believe in something is a decision we all have to make in our lives. Could our perspectives regarding technology, plastics, artificial intelligence or virtual reality influence our abilities to make a logical decision?

Could living in a world in which so many of the products and concepts are artificial influence our abilities to think and reason? Simulated actions distort our vision of real versus fiction.

The Christian dedicated to reaching the unchurched for the Lord Jesus can be hindered by the limitations set forth by the new mindsets. Variances in perspectives concerning the faith, along with the permissiveness, and an “anything goes” way of thinking hinder the Christian objective. We must reach the unchurched but do it in accordance with Biblical values.

To reach the lost, logic and reason must be applied to some non-believers. Knowing of course, the Bible is the reality of our Creator, we must deal with both the intellect and the emotion of the target group we are attempting to reach.

To reach those in this artificial world we may find it advantageous to address the science in the Bible. Simply because so many still believe science and God are at odds, while in reality they are not only compatible but in complete agreement.

With the recent pestilence (Matthew 24: 6) of Covid, the Bible teaches us to wash our hands under running water (Leviticus 15: 13). The Bible also teaches to quarantine the sick (Leviticus 15: 36).

Man did not know what a bacteria or virus was when Leviticus was written. Only our Creator could have issued such a statement.

With so many blood borne diseases, Leviticus 17: 11 which tells us “the life of an organism is in the blood,” is a dramatic statement of fact to the most discerning mind.

The rivers in the seas (Psalm 8: 8) became known to mariners in the 1600’s. King David had written of them 2600 years previously.

The science of physics and creation are verified in the first and second laws of thermodynamics. The first law of thermodynamics states that matter is constant. When God said “it is finished” (Genesis 2: 2) referring to creation He verified the first law of thermodynamics. The second law is the Law of Entropy which completely discredits evolution from lower forms of life. Chaos cannot evolve into order.

In the words of Isaiah 40: 22, the earth is round. Job 26: 7 verifies the earth floats free in space. Job 9: 8 tells us the universe is constantly expanding and Jeremiah 33: 22, states there are too many stars in the universe to even begin to count.

To exist in a world of artificial concepts and products, our reality has changed. But the Word of God will never change. Eternal salvation is only by a faith based belief that Christ Jesus was crucified for the remission of sin and resurrected. Now that IS reality!

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary.

## BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of 1 Peter (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What was a god of the Philistines that had a man’s face and hands, but the body and tail of a fish? Bullock, Elohim, Dagon, Baal-gad
3. Who slew a giant that had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot when he defied Israel? Sibbechai, Cyrus, Silas, Jonathan
4. From Proverbs 22, what is a good name better than? Great riches, Scorn, Its own

reward, Lust

5. What town was home to Jesse’s boys? Gilgal, Jericho, Hebron, Bethlehem

6. On which day of creation did dry ground appear? Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Dagon, 3) Jonathan, 4) Great riches, 5) Bethlehem, 6) Third “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.


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**Rev. Tommy Gosnell**  
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## Super Crossword

RULING PARTY

### ACROSS

- 1 Gilda Radner character on "Saturday Night Live"  
9 Certain martial arts surface  
16 Just OK  
20 Enthusiastic reply to a request  
21 Raised, as a building  
22 Central point  
23 British ruler applying veneer?  
25 Violent anger  
26 Nutrition Facts category  
27 Brewed beverage  
28 Great Plains tribe  
29 The Devil  
30 Nile goddess  
33 Turkish ruler's pungent condiment?  
38 Quaint office transcribers  
41 Sleep study diagnosis  
42 Regarding  
43 Something a French-kissing Arab ruler has?

### DOWN

- 46 Small sailboats  
51 Nuptial vow  
52 Really smell  
53 Kind of tide  
56 China's Zhou —  
57 Actress Perez  
59 Hindu ruler's radio sign-off?  
65 Secretive U.S. org.  
67 Tehran's land  
68 Jug handle  
69 Skye of film  
70 Save the Russian ruler from tumbling to the ground?  
75 Actors Mineo and Landi  
77 Car club initials.  
78 Coin-op hole  
79 Thesaurus entry: Abbr.  
80 Afghan ruler caught up in a tornado?  
85 Stared in amazement  
89 Agate playing marble, informally  
90 Lingo suffix  
91 Greek money  
93 Brewed beverage  
94 Exam taker  
96 Very easy task for a Muslim ruler?  
102 Many a war vet's affliction  
105 Behave badly  
106 Yellowstone gusher  
107 English ruler making mouse sounds?  
111 Bomb part  
112 Liquid- (Drano rival)  
113 Electees  
114 Iowa college  
116 Louver strip  
120 Hula —  
121 What's revealed by taking an X-ray of a Persian ruler?  
127 Shower affection (on)  
128 Butt forcefully  
129 Waters north of Australia  
130 Went swiftly  
131 Visits during a trip  
132 Car mileage recorder

- 2 Tibet locale  
3 Bat very gently  
4 Emerging  
5 Actor Studi  
6 Herr's "Alas!"  
7 Sits tight  
8 Writer Rice  
9 Pa Clampett  
10 Arg. neighbor  
11 Last mo.  
12 Gopher Lorena  
13 Volcano in E. Sicily  
14 — Fables  
15 Six-pt. plays  
16 Shredded bit  
17 Pontificate  
18 Fructose, e.g.  
19 Yoked yaks  
24 Utters breathlessly  
29 Oral  
31 Most vinegary  
32 "Understood"  
34 Sch. in the Granite State  
35 Director Ang  
36 Mai — (drink)  
37 UFO pilots  
38 Commotion  
39 Commotion  
40 Actress Mireille —  
41 Singer Paul

- 44 Ending for cash  
45 Comedian Hart, casually  
47 Hoosier State  
48 Building story  
49 Part-goat god  
50 Where it's at  
54 "It's — real!"  
55 Boast  
58 Irritated  
60 Big name in peanut butter  
61 Break out in —  
62 Actress Berry  
63 Set to a slow speed  
64 Bow shapes  
66 Berry of Brazil  
70 Some mollusks  
71 Loathe  
72 Oohs and —  
73 "Lord, is —?"  
74 Precursors of embryos  
75 Brief parody  
76 Cry of woe  
81 Person crying  
82 Golf gizmo  
83 Kind of tide  
84 Used a spade  
86 Cronies  
87 Model Macpherson  
88 Doe or stag  
92 Spaghetti sauce brand  
95 GPS calculation  
97 Egyptian — (cat breed)  
98 Cold cubes  
99 GPS calculation  
100 Grape cluster  
101 Visual insult  
103 Slope-hitter's headwear  
104 Energetic sort  
107 Small sailboat  
108 Citation  
109 Officiated on the diamond  
110 Vessel used to lure U-boats  
111 Foul-smelling  
112 Profs' degs.  
115 Maestro Klemperer  
117 Strong desire  
118 1940s film critic James  
119 "— she blows!"  
121 This yr.'s grads  
122 Hosp. VIPs  
123 "Give — try"  
124 Obtained  
125 Med. group  
126 DVD- —

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# CLASSIFIED

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**Health Education Coordinator** – will plan, administer and coordinate evidence-based health education programs, at community sites, for older adults in a four county/two city service area. Training will be provided. Requires excellent organization, time management and communication skills. Ability to plan, develop

and coordinate services. Experience in volunteer recruitment and retention is preferred. Ability to keep track of and follow through on a variety of details. Bachelor's degree in human services social work or related field is preferred. At least two years' experience in a health or human service setting, that required extensive contact with the public, is preferred. Must be proficient in Microsoft Office Products. Criminal background check is required. Position is 40 hours per week, with health insurance benefits. Submit resume to Southern Area Agency on Aging, 204 Cleveland Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112 by 2/26/24. SAAA is an Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action Employer.

**Care Coordination Assistant** – Full time with benefits. Non-profit organization is seeking individual who will serve as the initial and primary contact for callers and visitors who are seeking information about resources in the community and/or application for services for older adults. Will provide front-line communication, referral, information and assistance services for older individuals and others seeking help. Strong skills in human relations; and excellent oral and written communication skills are essential. Proficient computer skills are required. Degree in a human services field or comparable experience is preferred. Criminal background check is required. Send resume to Southern Area Agency on Aging, 204 Cleveland Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112 by 2/26/24. Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.



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# Hospital

(cont. from page 1)

Simms wrote in a Nov. 17 email to Suhail, who also is CEO/Clinical Dean of American International Clinical Group & CEO Psychiatric Group Metropolitan Behavior Associates, both based in Chicago.

“Please confirm that we and our vendor are granted access to this privately owned property and provide a key so we can proceed,” Simms wrote to Suhail. Other recipients included in the thread of correspondence were Hylak-Reinholtz; Del. Wren Williams; Stuart Town Manager Bryce Simmons, Pat Cooper, economic development director and Ron Haley, who serves on the EDA Board.

In a Dec. 21 email to Simms, Suhail asked, “Any traction on EDA taking over the property before the end of the year? Let me know if it’s a possibility and we can negotiate some sort

# Clark Gas & Oil

(cont. from page 1)

lot of money over the years, Clark said it’s not as enjoyable as it once was due to inflation and other factors.

However, he said he considers the agencies supported with funding to be ministries.

“They’re really helping a broad spectrum of folks who are struggling,” he said.

Eighteen organizations and six schools received the donations.

Organizations include Safety Rope; the Reynolds Homestead; Caring Hearts Free Clinic of Patrick County; Patrick County Food Bank; Patrick County Alzheimer’s Association, LLC; Patrick County Developmental Center; PARC Workshop; Dan River Basin Association (DRBA); Ararat Volunteer Fire Department; Meadows of Dan Volunteer Fire Department; Moorefield Store Volunteer Fire Department; Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department; Patrick Henry Volunteer Fire Department; Smith River Rescue Squad; Stuart Volunteer Fire Department; Vesta Rescue Squad; Woolwine Volunteer Fire Department, and JEB Stuart Rescue Squad.

The six schools are Meadows of Dan Elementary School; Patrick Springs Primary School; Stuart Elementary School; Hardin Reynolds Memorial School; Blue Ridge Elementary School, and Woolwine Elementary School.

Since the company started the annual donations, Clark said “over \$1 million for sure” has been donated.

In total, Clark said \$102,500 was donated this year in the three counties in Clark Gas & Oil’s service area, which in addition to Patrick, includes Floyd and Carroll counties.

of payment plan if possible – I wanted to get some tax reductions this year, that’s the reason I wanted to do the deal in 2023.”

“No, as explained on the phone, the EDA is in the process of applying for a Brownfield planning grant and Brownfield grant extension,” Simms replied,

Foresight officials were negotiating with the county on a proposed donation of the hospital property. In exchange, the county was asked to pay \$815,000, which is a fraction of the amount spent by Foresight, according to previous reports.

Once it was announced that the hospital would not reopen as planned, county officials said they were working to develop a Healthcare Access Committee and a Mobile Healthcare Unit, and identified healthcare access as

a top priority, according to a release.

“The lack of a hospital is negatively impacting our EMS services and leading to a decline in volunteerism due to the required length of rescue calls. We are committed to working with local, regional, state, and federal programs to mitigate these issues to the best of our ability,” the release stated.

“We are extremely grateful to Connect Health + Wellness for bringing their Mobile Clinic to the Walmart in Stuart on a weekly basis this month and strongly encourage citizens to take advantage of this opportunity,” a release from the county stated. “We also want to thank the other healthcare providers who have reached out and we have had the opportunity to talk to since the announcement of the hospital not reopening.”



School principals attended the event to receive a donation for their respective school.



Local volunteer fire and rescue squads received donations at the February 14 event.



Eighteen organizations and six schools received \$59,000 in donations from Clark Gas & Oil.

# Ohio-based company to pay millions in misbranding veterinary prescription case

Covetrus North America LLC, a company based in Dublin, Ohio, which sells veterinary products to customers across the United States, pled guilty to causing the introduction and delivery of misbranded veterinary prescription drugs into interstate commerce. As part of the agreement, Covetrus will pay over \$23 million in criminal fines and forfeitures.

“The United States Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Virginia takes the distribution of misbranded prescription drugs seriously,” United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh said. “Covetrus shipped over \$20 million in prescription drugs to unauthorized end-users in violation of federal laws that are designed to en-

sure prescription drugs are kept within a controlled chain of distribution and to prevent diversion and inappropriate use. Today’s result demonstrates my Office’s commitment to holding those companies and corporations accountable when they seek to profit by breaking the law.”

According to court documents, from March 2019 to December 2021, Covetrus shipped over \$20 million in prescription drugs from their non-pharmacy locations throughout the United States to end-users that were not authorized to receive prescription drugs. Shipments from non-pharmacy locations to non-authorized end-users or locations are deemed “misbranded.”

Covetrus will forfeit \$21,534,091, pay

\$1,000,000 to the Virginia Department of Health Professions, as well as a fine of \$1,000,000. In addition, Covetrus is obligated to keep in place appropriate compliance measures to prevent future violations.

Sentencing is scheduled for May 8, at 10:30 a.m.at the United States Federal Courthouse in Abingdon.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration – Office of Criminal Investigations and the Virginia State Police investigated the case, with the assistance of the Virginia Department of Health Professions.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Ramseyer is prosecuting the case.

## LEGAL

TRUSTEE’S SALE OF 1052 UNION BRIDGE ROAD, FERRUM, VA 24088. In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated June 30, 2010, in the original principal amount of \$104,295.00 recorded in the Clerk’s Office, Circuit Court for Patrick County, Virginia as Instrument No. 100001137. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Patrick County, 101 West Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, Virginia, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on May 6, 2024, at 1:15 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL OF THAT CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND, TOGETHER WITH THE IMPROVEMENTS THEREON AND APPURTENANCES THEREUNTO BELONGING, LYING AND BEING IN SMITH RIVER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, BEING DESIGNATED AS TRACT 6A CONTAINING 5.412 ACRES AS SHOWN ON THAT PLAT OF SURVEY ENTITLED “KATIE V. LANE” PREPARED BY TERRY A. WALLER, L.L.S., DATED SEPTEMBER 28, 2008, OF RECORD IN THE CLERK’S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, AS INSTRUMENT NUMBER 0802379. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder’s deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser’s deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee’s Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee’s attorney. A form copy of the Trustee’s memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at [www.bwvsales.com](http://www.bwvsales.com). Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWV Law Group, LLC, attorneys for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: [www.bwvsales.com](http://www.bwvsales.com). VA-368816-1.

## LEGAL

TRUSTEE SALE OF  
1422 Fayerdale Drive, Stuart, VA 24171  
In execution of the Deed of Trust dated December 7, 2009, in the original principal amount of \$72,070.00, recorded as Inst. 090002580, in the Clerk’s Office of the Circuit Court for the County of Patrick, Virginia, default having occurred in the payment of the indebtedness thereby secured and at the request of the holder of the note, the undersigned, as Substitute Trustees, any of whom may act, will sell at public auction at the front entrance of the Circuit Court for the County of Patrick on March 14, 2024, at 12:00 noon, the property located at the above address and described as Lot 39 containing 0.689 acre as shown on plat recorded as Inst. 0902579, County of Patrick. TERMS: CASH. PROPERTY SOLD AS IS WITH SPECIAL WARRANTY OF TITLE. A deposit of \$5,000.00 or 10% of the successful bid amount (whichever is lower) will be required immediately of the successful bidder, in cashier’s check or certified funds only payable to or signed over to “DOLANREID PLLC, TRUSTEE,” balance due within 15 days from date of sale. No personal checks accepted. Sale is subject to post sale confirmation and audit of the status of the loan including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower filed for and obtained bankruptcy protection, entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, or if trustee is unable to complete the sale, or if it is set aside or not fully completed for any reason except purchaser’s default, the sale shall be null and void, and the purchaser’s sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. Upon purchaser’s default, the deposit shall be forfeited and the property resold at the risk and costs of the defaulting purchaser. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, reservations and conditions, if any, of record, as well as inchoate liens and any other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the premises. Real estate taxes will be adjusted to the date of sale. All costs of conveyance, deed, examination of title, recording charges, grantor’s tax and possession will be at the expense of the purchaser. All risks of casualty immediately pass to the successful bidder. Time is of the essence. Winning bidder must sign a memorandum of sale immediately upon completion of sale. Additional terms may be announced at the time of sale. Trustee’s affidavit and a copy of the notice of sale available at the foreclosure sale. The opening bid is not announced until the sale. Current sale status available at [dolanreid.com/foreclosure-sales](http://dolanreid.com/foreclosure-sales). THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.  
For Information Contact:  
DolanReid PLLC and G. Benny Moore, Substitute Trustee(s)  
12610 Patrick Henry Dr., Ste. D, Newport News, VA 23602; (757) 320-0255

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ABC NOTICE  
DKP Properties Inc trading as Dry Pond Convenience, 2236 Dry Pond HWY, Stuart, Patrick County, VA 24171-3882. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Off-Premises of Beer and Wine license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Harjot Paul, President  
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](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or (800) 552-3200.

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in Iron Mine Parking Lot.

**Tuesday, Feb. 27**  
VFW Post 7800 will hold its next meeting at the post building. A meal will be held at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7 p.m. Anyone meeting the requirements for the VFW is welcome to join.

Patrick County Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meets at 4 p.m. in the Patrick County School Board Office in the Conference Room.

**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 community breakfast will be held at JEB Stuart Rescue Squad from 7-10 a.m. Plates are \$8. Dine in, carry out, and curb service options are available. Orders can be placed by calling 276-694-6171.

Springs of Life Camp hosts a Scentsy Bingo Fundraiser. Doors open at 6pm, games start at 7 p.m. Concessions are available.

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. 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](mailto: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 at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday each month at the American Legion Post 105. Interested veterans are welcome.

Introduction to Zen Meditation and Zen Buddhism at the Blue Ridge Regional Library Stuart site, second and fourth Tuesday, 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; wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. Registration is not required. Call the Park Office at (276) 694-3917 for more information.

Willis Gap Community Center will hold an Open Jam Acoustic on Fridays, doors open at 6 p.m. Food is available. Old time country, bluegrass, and gospel music from 7-10 p.m., with a 50/50 drawing around 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.

**Saturday, Feb. 24**  
The Patrick County Democratic Committee meets at 10:45 a.m. at the Patrick County Library, with a group lunch after.

Walk the trails at Fairy Stone State Park, 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Meet in the Amphitheater Trailhead Parking Lot.

**Sunday, February 25**  
Mountain View/Horse Camp Trail, 9 a.m.  
at the Amphitheater Trailhead Parking Lot,  
Fairy Stone State Park; Iron Mine, 1:30 p.m.

**Saturday, March 9**  
A Hunters Education Class will be held at 10 Via Ave in Stuart from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is for hunters 12 and up to be able to obtain a hunting license. Lunch will be provided. Register at [dwr.Virginia.gov](http://dwr.Virginia.gov). For questions call Jonathan Scott at 276-229-1700.

The Patrick County Master Gardeners Association will host its 15th annual Gardening Symposium at Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$10, payable at the door. Horticulturists Eli Roberson and Eric Jackson are featured. Vendors on site. Light refreshments provided. Visit [mgpcva@gmail.com](mailto:mgpcva@gmail.com) more information.

## Ongoing

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

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

# NOTICE

The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) and fire departments across Virginia issued a reminder about spring fire season and raise awareness of the statewide burning law, in effect from Feb. 15 through April 30. The law prohibits outdoor burning before 4 p.m. when the fire is within 300 feet of the woods or dry grass.

Violation of the burning law is a Class-3 misdemeanor and punishable with a fine up to \$500. Those who allow a fire to escape may be liable for suppression costs and any resulting property damage.

The burning law applies to all open-air fires such as debris burning, campfires and charcoal grills like those found in park settings. This law does not apply to charcoal or gas-fired barbecue grills. Some exceptions to the law are made for campfires at Virginia State Parks. To learn more about Virginia's 4 p.m. burning law and fire prevention, visit DOF's website: <https://dof.virginia.gov/wildland-prescribed-fire/fire-laws/4-pm-burning-law/>.

“Last fall, Virginia experienced extreme fire activity that provided a stark reminder of the importance of safe burning practices,” said DOF Chief of Fire and Emergency Response John Miller. “Simple safety measures are easy to follow and significantly reduce the likelihood of an escaped fire, the number one cause of wildfires.”

Although Virginia also has a wildfire season in the fall, more than 60 percent of the Commonwealth's annual average of 700 wildfires occur in the spring. Rising temperatures, dry and windy weather, and abundant fuels such as frost-killed vegetation and dead leaves, increase the potential for wildfires and make them harder to extinguish.

In addition to the statewide 4 p.m. burning law, individual cities and counties may have specific burn laws, bans or restrictions. Check with local officials in your area before burning.

Keep these things in mind this spring fire season:

- \* Burning is allowed between 4 p.m. and midnight as long as proper precautions are taken
- \* Never leave a fire unattended
- \* Avoid burning during dry and windy conditions
- \* No fire may be started, and no fuels can be added to a fire after midnight
- \* Have a shovel, rake and a charged hose on hand to control the fire
- \* Call 911 if a fire escapes your control



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# 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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The logo for WHEO 92.7 FM Classic Hits is presented in a clean, black-and-white style. On the left, a detailed illustration of a vintage microphone is shown. A series of musical notes flows from the microphone's grille, curving upwards and to the right across the top of the image. The call letters "WHEO" are prominently displayed in a large, bold, sans-serif font at the top left. Below them, the frequency "92.7 FM" is written in a large, bold font, with "Classic Hits" in a smaller font directly underneath. The website address "wheoradio.com" is centered in the lower half, and the slogan "Small Town Station with a BIG Town Sound" is at the bottom, enclosed in quotation marks.

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# VA General Assembly OKs bills to develop small modular nuclear reactors

**Edwin J. Viera**  
*Virginia News Connection*

Virginia's General Assembly has approved legislation to develop small modular nuclear reactors.

The bills passed both chambers despite concerns about how this affects ratepayers. Senate Bill 454 allows utility companies to begin billing customers during a research and development phase, which means ratepayers can be billed for engineering, site development and other costs before utility companies get a power plant permit.

Peter Anderson, state energy policy director for Appalachian Voices, said Virginia should learn from other states with similar legislation.

"Georgia was developing a new conventional nuclear reactor," Anderson pointed out. "They passed some legislation kind of like this one, and what they ended up with was a project that ultimately came online about \$20 billion over budget



and about 15 years after the initial in-service date."

The reactors have not seen a major success rate in Virginia. Last year, the state's General Assembly considered a bill creating a small modular reactor pilot program. The bill passed in the Senate but failed in the House. Even if the bills are signed into law, the State Corporation Commission has the final say in granting utility companies a permit to build one.

Along with concerns about how

the measure affects ratepayers, there are environmental concerns. A 2022 Stanford University study found the reactors produce more volumes and highly reactive waste than traditional light-water reactor plants. Anderson noted electric grids need to meet certain specifications as part of the clean-energy future.

"The electric grid needs to be carbon-free, and it needs to be reliable and it needs to be affordable for people in their everyday lives," Anderson asserted. "If you're not doing all three at the same time, something's broken. It's not an easy thing to do."

While some are uncertain about nuclear energy's place in a climate-smart future, Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin has made it part of his "all of the above" energy plan. The plan calls for using several other energy sources such as natural gas, biomass, and renewable sources.

## Christiansburg DMV to Temporarily Close for Renovation

The Christiansburg DMV Customer Service Center, located at 385 Arbor Drive, is temporarily closed for renovation, and is set to reopen Monday, March 25.

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Editor Debbie Hall

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

For vehicle-related transactions, such as registration renewals, titles, license plates, and decals, customers can visit the DMV Select partner in the Radford Treasurer's Office, located at 619 2nd Street, Rm. 164. Improvements to the office include a new, efficient countertop design, interior paint, and new interior and exterior lighting. In addition, the restrooms will be updated and parking lot will be resealed and striped.

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## Alzheimer's group to hold talent show on March 16

Patrick County's "Got Talent" is the underlying theme for the talent show that Patrick County Alzheimer's Group, LLC is planning for March 16 at 7 p.m. at Patrick County High School auditorium. Registration must be completed by March 8.

The Group, which is celebrating its twentieth year of serving Alzheimer clients and their caretakers in Patrick and the surrounding area, held their first talent show last year, and it was a great success with 26 performers.

Tina and Herbert Conner were the featured performers last year, and this year Michael Fain, Patrick County's own country music singer and song writer, has volunteered to open the show.

All ages are invited to perform in the show and prizes will be presented by age groups. Each performance time will be limited to 3 to 5 minutes per act. This is a great opportunity for young and old to join in the fun and perform before a live audience. Admission is by donation and concession selections will be available, with BBQ sandwiches topping the list.

All talent acts are welcome, in-



cluding musicians, singers, dancers, gymnasts, actors, comedians, magicians, etc. are invited to participate. Judges and the emcee will be local volunteers. Co-sponsors of the event are Blue Ridge Therapy Connection, the Landmark Center and Tony Dixon.

Flyers for registration will be available in the communities and in The Enterprise. Calls will be accepted to (276) 693-6018 or (276) 694-7358.

The Alzheimer's group appreciates everyone who helps make this fundraiser possible, and invites new volunteers to join the group whose motto is "Together...we can make a difference."

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B	A	B	A	W	A	W	A	J	U	D	O	M	A	T	S	O	S	O
I	S	U	R	E	C	A	N	E	R	E	C	T	E	D	C	R	U	X
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S	P	E	D	S	T	O	P	S	A	T	O	D	O	M	E	T	E	R







# Homecoming

(cont. from page 1)



Several people lined Main Street as Lauren and her family rode by. Many are Lauren's classmates at PCHS.



Classmates blew kisses, waved and cheered as Lauren and her parents drove past.



Confetti was part of the celebration Friday as Laren Worley and her family traveled to their home.



Led by first responders Lauren's motorcade came up Main Street on Friday.



A crowd of onlookers gathered in uptown Stuart Friday to welcome Lauren Worley home.

# Water—the cheapest medicine!

**Part 1**

A few years ago, you could read this slogan on large posters in the streets of Vienna. Indeed, a lack of water can cause pain. If we drink a few glasses of water over our thirst, we feel noticeably better. Simply drinking water can resolve confusion. Anyone who has ever suffered from thirst in the desert knows what we're talking about. Why is water so important?

**Structure of Water**

Water is a special liquid. Even its unusual chemical and physical properties make this small molecule to a great helper in the human ecosystem. We all know the chemical structure H2O. Two hydrogen atoms are connected to an oxygen atom at a very special angle so that two oppositely charged poles are formed. This dipole characteristic is the prerequisite for the special property of water. It can form hydrogen bonds with many other substances. In this way it can dissolve substances, bind, transport, excrete, yes life processes are made only possible by water. By the high specific heat capacity and latent heat released with the evaporation of the water, our body is protected from temperature fluctuations.

**Water Balance**

When nutrients are broken down, water is formed. Together with hydration via drinks and food, it forms one side of the balance in relation to water absorption. The water loss occurs via the lungs, skin, kidneys and intestines. Consumption needs to be adequate to maintain a healthy balance. Drinking additional water beyond our thirst helps us to stimulate our body metabolism. Children naturally crave more drinks. Unfortunately, adults are less aware of thirst signals. Therefore, the water content in the cells decreases more and more with age. Chronic dehydration of the cells is the result, which can lead to symptoms like an illness. If the various signals of dehydration are not recognized, they are treated with medication. Hence the above saying makes sense: water – the cheapest medicine.

A good way to check that you are getting enough water is to check your urine. During the day it should be clear. That doesn't apply to morning urine, it is more concentrated. The composition of the food also has an influence on the amount of water released. Increased salt and protein intake dramatically increases the

amount of water excreted. Therefore, the cells also dry out when drinking seawater.

**How Much Shall We Drink?**

The body needs 6 to 8 glasses of water, a quarter of a liter. Alcohol, coffee, black tea, diuretic teas and caffeine-containing beverages should not be included in the fluid balance. They stimulate the body to excrete more water. In coffee houses you get therefore a glass of water with a cup of coffee.

The first glasses of water should be drunk immediately after getting up. This stimulates the elimination of kidneys and intestines. The first glasses after getting up can be compared to washing the gastrointestinal tract. Ideally, water should be consumed between meals. Start drinking about two hours after meals, and stop drinking half an hour before the main meals. If more water is drunk, thirst is better recognized.

Let us thank our Creator that we are allowed to live in countries where good drinking water is part of the quality of life and let us use it responsibly. Unfortunately, even in our part of the world, there are communities here and there where proper water supply is not always guaranteed.

*(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Esther Neumann. Used by permission from www.timetogotready.org Courtesy of LifeSpring – Resources for Hope and Healing Stuart, VA)*

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# New funding for parks, outdoor recreation projects available

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation will open grant rounds today for two programs under the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

At least \$12 million will be available through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Assistance Program, or LWCF.

The National Park Service Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program, or ORLP, is a national competition with about \$224 million available.

Under both programs, recipients must be able to fund 100% of their project while seeking periodic reimbursements.

Eligible applicants include state agencies, cities, counties, park authorities and federally or state-recognized Indian tribes.

A virtual informational session and application workshop for both programs will be held Feb. 21 at 1 p.m. Register at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the webinar. The webinar will be recorded and the recording will be made available online.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

LWCF is a 50-50% matching reimbursement program established to acquire, develop and re-

habilitate park areas. Additional funds beyond the \$12 million may be made available.

The minimum grant award will be \$250,000 with a minimum total project cost of \$500,000. There is no maximum grant award amount.

An updated program manual, application materials, and applicant resources will be posted to <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>. Please read all posted documents to ensure your application is complete.

Applications for LWCF will be due via email no later than April 18 at 4 p.m. Applications must be emailed to [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov).

Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program

DCR will begin accepting pre-application proposals today for submission for ORLP. The 50-50% matching reimbursement program supports outdoor recreation projects in underserved urban areas. The minimum grant award is \$300,000 with a minimum total project cost of \$600,000. The maximum grant award is \$15 million.

For ORLP, the park project must be located within an incorporated city or town with a population of at least 30,000 people. Based on the 2020 census, qualifying cities and towns

in Virginia are the cities of Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Chesapeake, Danville, Hampton, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Manassas, Newport News, Norfolk, Petersburg, Portsmouth, Richmond, Roanoke, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach; and Blacksburg and Leesburg towns.

Within those cities and towns, the project must also serve disadvantaged communities lacking access to walkable outdoor recreation, in specific census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the federal Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool.

Eligible projects can include acquisition, development, a combination of acquisition and development, or rehabilitation of parks and other outdoor recreation areas.

DCR must submit projects selected through this call for proposals to NPS, which will be selecting the projects to move forward.

Instructions on how to compete for funding, the pre-application and reference materials will be made available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf#orlp>.

Pre-applications for ORLP are due to DCR via email to [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) no later than April 4 at 4 p.m.

Questions about LWCF or ORLP can be emailed to [Kristal.Mckelvey@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:Kristal.Mckelvey@dcr.virginia.gov).



Colonel Abram Penn Chapter Registrar Sheree Russo administers the Oath of Membership to Beth Wood Witt.



Colonel Abram Penn Chapter NSDAR member Betty Banks was awarded a certificate in recognition of twenty-five years of membership and service to DAR. Chapter Regent, Ann McConnell, presented the certificate on behalf of the Chapter and NSDAR.

# Black History topic of DAR program

The Colonel Abram Penn Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution met February 12, 2024 in the fellowship hall of Stuart Presbyterian Church. Ann McConnell, Chapter Regent, presided with four members present.

In honor of Black History Month, “Black Heroes of the American Revolution” was the topic for the program presented by Regent McConnell. Historians estimate that between 5,000 to 8,000 African-descended people participated in the Revolution on the Patriot side, and that upward of 20,000 served the crown. Monday’s program focused on seven exceptional African American figures: among the seven are a

martyr, a poet, and a double agent.

A business meeting followed the DAR Ritual. Chapter member, Betty Banks was recognized for her twenty-five year membership in the DAR and the Colonel Abram Penn Chapter, where she has held many offices including Chapter Regent.

The Oath of Membership was administered to Beth Wood Witt as the Chapter’s newest member.

Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, who can prove a lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution is eligible to join the DAR. For more information contact [nammcconnell@yahoo.com](mailto:nammcconnell@yahoo.com) or visit [www.dar.org](http://www.dar.org).

# P&HCC Leads the Nation in Festo NC3 Certifications

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) led the nation in 2023 in Festo National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) Industry 4.0 certifications, with 580 certifications earned by students during the calendar year, contributing to the college’s total of 2,750 certifications issued since the beginning of their NC3 partnership.

NC3 certification curriculum provides students the opportunity to demonstrate the expertise they acquire for today’s in-demand industry skills. NC3 certification supplements course curriculum with theory and hands-on practice using world-class equipment and tools. These stackable credentials increase employment potential in a variety of industries.

“We’re currently at 2,750 credentials and should achieve 3,000 by the end of the semester,” said P&HCC instructor of Industrial Electronics Technology Daniel Edwards.

P&HCC students earned 580 credentials in fundamentals of electricity – AC (60), fundamentals of PLCs – Allen-Bradley (49), fundamentals of fluid power – hydraulics (49), fundamentals of fluid power – pneumatics (47), fundamentals of electricity – DC (46), fundamentals of robotics (43),

fundamentals of sensor technology (40), fundamentals of PLCs – Siemens (37), applied fluid power (37), applied PLCs – Allen-Bradley (36), fundamentals of mechanical systems (35), applied robotics (34), applied PLCs – Siemens (31), applied mechanical systems (25), Industry 4.0 certified associate – fundamentals (9), applied principles of smart sensors (1), and Industry 4.0 certified technician – applied (1).

“I want to congratulate P&HCC on an outstanding year of certifications. Their efforts are clearly evident by leading the entire nation in the issuing of the Festo NC3 certifications in 2023. We value P&HCC’s commitment to their students and our relationship,” said Steve Lehr, Festo director of business development.

About Festo: Festo is a global manufacturer of process control and factory automation solutions. To learn more, visit <https://www.festo.com/us/en/>.

About NC3: The National Coalition of Certification Centers is a value-driven organization and the future model for Career and Technical Education, creating highly skilled, job-ready professionals through a growing network of educational partners and global industry leaders. To learn more, visit <https://www.nc3.net>.

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# Astronomers invited to Spring Star Party

A Spring Star Party, sponsored by the Chapel Hill Astronomical and Observational Society (CHAOS), will be held next month in Staunton River State Park. This week-long astronomy festival gives stargazing enthusiasts of all ages the chance to experience the night sky at an International Dark Sky Park like they’ve never done before.

From March 4 through March 10, astronomers are invited to bring their telescopes and camp on the park’s Dark Sky Observation Field, which is renowned for its

dark sky and excellent stargazing conditions. On Friday and Saturday afternoons, attendees can hear from different speakers, including the president of DarkSky International and a NASA ambassador.

“We’re excited to welcome visitors to Staunton River State Park for our annual Spring Star Party,” said Park Manager James Wright. “With our pristine dark skies and knowledgeable astronomers, this event promises to be a highlight for anyone interested in astronomy and the wonders of the universe.”

Admission to the Spring Star Party is \$110 for the full week or \$60 for the weekend (Thursday-Sunday). These prices include camping privileges on the field. Registration closes on Feb. 26. To learn more about the Spring Star Party or to register, click here (<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/event?id=2023-11-07-18-16-08-920226-kon>) or email [stauntonriverstarparty@gmail.com](mailto:stauntonriverstarparty@gmail.com).

The Spring Star Party is open to the public on Friday, March 8. From 8 to 10 p.m., visitors will

have the opportunity to meet the astronomers on the observation field and explore the cosmos themselves. The Star Party is free to attend for the public on Friday; however, standard parking fees apply. To learn more about the public night, click here ([www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/event?id=2023-11-07-18-17-47-896882-y7x](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/event?id=2023-11-07-18-17-47-896882-y7x)).

Astronomers unable to attend the Spring Star Party can mark their calendars for the Fall Star Party. It’s scheduled for Sept. 30 through Oct. 6, with a public night on Friday, Oct. 4.



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Piques



Star Party

# Mandolin Fest set for Feb. 24

**By Taylor Boyd**

A Mandolin Festival will be held by the Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) on Saturday, February 24.

The event will be held at the Rotary Building in Stuart. Doors open at 5 p.m., and the music will start at 6 p.m.

PCMA President Denny Alley said Ralph McGee and the Goodfellers will headline the show.

Rex Smith, Ronald Inscore, Charlie Chaney, David H. Helms, Vince Bullins, Nick

Schmick, and others will also take the stage.

Like in the January show, Chaney’s music students will perform during “Charlie’s Corner” at the start of the show.

Alley said Ralph McGee and the Goodfellers have had two or three number one songs on the Bluegrass Charts over the last two years.

“They’re a really good group, multi-award winning musicians,” Alley said, and added that McGee won the Galax

Fiddlers Convention numerous times.

The March show will have Lynn Foddrell with the Piedmont Blues as the headlining act.

Even though it was raining, Alley said the January show was well attended with about 100 people in attendance.

“You just can’t beat eight inches of rain,” he said.

Based on information gathered at the show, Alley said more attendees were from out-

side Patrick County than county residents.

Admission is a \$5 donation at the door. Prizes will be awarded throughout the night.

Concessions will be available for purchase from the Patrick County Shooting Education Team, with proceeds going to teach children in the area fire-arm safety.

For more information or to watch past music performances, visit [Facebook.com/PatrickCountyMusicAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/PatrickCountyMusicAssociation).



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



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



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MONDAY - FRIDAY 08:00 AM - 4:30 PM



# Primary students celebrate day of love



Students attending Patrick Springs Primary School were treated to a Valentine's Day celebration last week, complete with decorations, balloons and sweets. (Photos by Taylor Boyd)

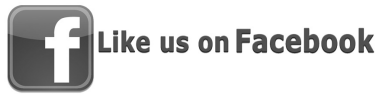
## Congressional staff to hold local hours

Congressman Griffith's Ninth District staff will hold local office hours on Feb. 28. Staff will be in Martinsville from 10 – 11:30 a.m. in City Hall, Council Chambers, Second Floor 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville. They will then travel to Patrick County and hold office hours from 12:30 – 2 p.m. in the Patrick County Administration

Building, Conference Room, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart. Call the Christiansburg Office at (540) 381-5671, or the Abingdon Office at (276) 525-1405 with any questions. In the event of inclement weather (heavy snow, sleet, icy rain, etc.), traveling office hours may be rescheduled to avoid putting constituents at risk. If schools are closed, office hours are cancelled.

## Hazard Named to Dean's List

Melissa Hazard, of Stuart, earned Dean's List honors during the fall 2023 semester at Hollins University. To attain this distinction, students must earn at least a 3.5 average on a 4.0 grading scale.



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