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

Rescue squad to discontinue paid staff due to lack of funding

By Debbie Hall

One of the busiest rescue squads in Patrick County may revert to an all-volunteer squad - or even shutter completely - on June 1 unless it receives additional revenue.

Reverting to an all-volunteer squad "would mean extremely limited coverage. That is not good," said Derek Wagner, captain of the Jeb Stuart Rescue Squad.

He added that the district spans 160 square-miles and includes several population centers, from the Patrick/Henry county line on U.S. 58 to the Patrick Henry Volunteer Fire Department, the communities of Moorefield Store, Dobyns, the Town of Stuart as well as the area beyond Howell's Grocery (to the first truck escape ramp), the Cen-

tral Academy area and others.

Patrick County High School, Hardin Reynolds Memorial, and two elementary schools - Stuart and Patrick Springs - are included in the district, as is the sheriff's office and jail, two nursing homes, and several businesses. Additionally, the squad responds to calls in other districts as needed and when it can, he said.

"We do a very good job managing it for the staff and volunteers we have," Wagner said and added there are six or seven volunteers who regularly respond to calls.

Last year, Wagner said the squad responded to 1,208 calls - more than any other in the county.

Even the backup service that the county provided to help other res-

(See Rescue Squad p.7)



Rita and Darrell Bowling (from left to right), present P&HCC Foundation executive assistant Letitia Pulliam with a donation from the ride in 2023.

Final Memorial Bike Ride set

Motorcyclists from across the country will gather in Patrick County on Saturday, April 27 for the 20th annual Cpl. Jonathan W. Bowling Memorial Bike Ride. The annual memorial motorcycle ride is both a way for fellow veterans and servicemen to remember fallen Marine Corp. Jonathan Williams

(See Memorial Ride p. 7)

Cell tower vote tabled until May 13 meeting



Numerous residents attended the April 8 Board of Supervisors meeting.



Milestone Towers Director of Development Matthew Penning addressed the board regarding the proposed cellular tower.



Milestone Towers License Professional Engineer Andrew Peterson spoke about the tower's safety.

By Taylor Boyd

In a 3-1 vote last week, the Patrick County Board of Supervisors tabled a vote on the proposed Patrick County High School (PCHS) Cellular Phone Tower until its May

13 meeting.

Before that, the board heard from representatives of Milestone Towers, the applicant and developer of the project, including Director of Development Matthew Penning

and License Professional Engineer Andrew Peterson.

Penning said Milestone, a Virginia-based business, has been in business for over 20 years with over 150 towers constructed.

"It always starts for us on the need for a site. Our company policy is never to build a speculative site, we already have a signed lease with Verizon for a tower at Patrick

(See Cell Tower p.3)

Budget updates presented Thursday

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County School Board heard budget updates at its meeting on Thursday, April 11.

Schools Superintendent Jason Wood said the governor has amended the fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 budget and sent it to the General Assembly for approval.

"As we anticipated, it's going to be some back and forth, but the good news is the governor left in that 3 percent raise," he said.

The General Assembly will reconvene later this month to consider the proposal.

"We're hoping they're getting closer to a finalized budget so that we are able to start with a budget sooner than we did last year," he said.

Regarding the FY 2023-2024 budget, Wood said an expected report will help calculate the final average daily membership (ADM).



The Patrick County School Board recognized Deputy Cameron Adkins for his assistance in getting digital radios and GPS for school buses.

"So, next week we'll actually be able to finalize our March 31 ADM, and be able to let the Board of Supervisors know the exact amount that will be owed to the school system and finish up this year's budget," he said.

Wood said the division was able to reappropriate some of its grant funds to save with some of its projects to give employees bonuses.

For the bonus, \$194,846.50 was used from grant funds while \$47,904.25 was used from local funds.

"The performance bonus will be mostly grant-funded. That's how much of local funds were used to ensure that every employee is able to get that performance bonus," he said.

In other matters, the board:

- *Recognized Patrick County's Sheriff's Office Deputy Cameron Adkins for his assistance in getting digital radios and GPS for school buses.
- *Heard from John Pendleton, of the PC Rocket Robotics, about LEGO League.
- *Approved the consent agenda.
- *Heard updates on division projects.
- *Approved the Carol Perkins application as presented.
- *Approved the policy updates as presented.
- *Approved the 2024-2025 Patrick County High School (PCHS) handbook.
- *Approved adding LEGO League as a sponsored stipend position for schools. The stipend will include \$500 per school allocation.
- *Approved personnel report 1 as amended.
- *Approved personnel report 2.



Lonesome Heart will headline the April 27 Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) show at Rotary Field in Stuart.

Lonesome Heart to headline PCMA show

By Taylor Boyd

Lonesome Heart will headline the Saturday, April 27 show held by the Patrick County Music Association (PCMA).

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.

Charlie Chaney and some of his music students will start the show during the Charlie's Corner segment. The Lower Dam Band will then take the stage.

PCMA President Denny Alley

(See Lonesome Heart p.7)

Series of firearm safety classes set

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office is preparing to hold a series of citizen firearm safety classes.

Sheriff Dan Smith said the office is a proponent and supporter of the Second Amendment in being able to assist in training its citizens to be responsible gun owners.

The courses, he said, are focused on firearm safety and how to safely load and unload a firearm, "and we teach the basics of marksmanship. The class is focused on safe handling of a handgun."

The class is about four hours long, including a two-hour discussion about concealed carry laws, justifiable use of deadly force, firearm safety rules, and the fundamentals of marksmanship.

Smith said the class costs \$55 per

person.

Class dates are May 11, July 13, October 12, and a women's only class on September 14.

"That's something I added probably 10 years ago. I particularly want the women in our community to embrace self-protection, and sometimes ladies are not comfortable in a class with men, so I think it's important because I really want to focus on helping our ladies be able to protect themselves better," Smith said.

Those wishing to attend must register no later than one week before the class date. A criminal history check will be performed on those registering for the class.

The class exceeds the training requirement to obtain a Virginia

(See Firearm Safety p. 7)

Drug store in Stuart closes



Signage at the Walgreens store in Stuart was removed last week, signaling the store's closure. The corporate office did not respond to a request for additional information. (Photos by Pat Delaney)

Most firearm regulation measures meet veto pen roadblock



An estimated 22,000 gun rights advocates crowded the Capitol to protest proposed gun legislation on Jan. 20, 2020. All streets surrounding the Capitol were close to traffic and filled with law enforcement. No firearms were allowed on the grounds. (Photo by Jeffrey Knight.)



Gun show attendees browse the selection at the Sunday, March 25, 2018 gun show. A majority of vendors own retail stores around Virginia and traveled to the Richmond show with a smaller selection to sell. (Photo by Erin Edgerton)

By Vali Jamal
Capital News Service

Democrats delivered on their campaign promises to introduce gun safety measures if they won control in the state General Assembly, although most bills did not pass the desk of Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

Youngkin vetoed over 30 bills related to the regulation of firearms, some duplicates from both chambers. The bills included measures to institute a waiting period, raise the purchase age, regulate concealed carry and a total ban on assault weapons.

Democrats promised and delivered in the sense that they advanced the bills to Youngkin's desk, according to Alex Keena, an associate professor of political science at Virginia Commonwealth University.

"Even if the governor vetoed the legislation, it still is a 'win' for the Democrats because the governor is vetoing legislation that a majority of the public supports," Keena stated. "Which makes the Republicans look bad and the Democrats look good."

Youngkin amended six firearm-related bills that he said "will make it harder for criminals to use guns in the commission of a violent act."

He signed four that he said were bipartisan, "commonsense reforms."

Two identical bills punish parents who let their children possess a firearm if they had been previously warned by school officials that their child poses a threat to themselves or others.

The other two identical bills ban auto sears, a device that allows a semi-automatic firearm to shoot automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading. This brings the state into alignment with federal law.

"So in that regard, they were able to move the needle (so to speak) by getting the governor to approve rea-

sonable gun safety measures with broad popular appeal," Keena stated.

Virginians want more gun policy, Democrats say

Sen. Saddam Azlan Salim, D-Fairfax, sponsored multiple pieces of gun legislation throughout the session, many of which were vetoed by the governor.

Democrats pushed firearm legislation because their constituents often brought up "gun violence prevention" as a top issue, according to Salim.

"Right now kids have to go through active shooter drills, where no one in this General Assembly has had to do that when they were in school," Salim said. "So how do we tell a parent, 'hey it's just a drill,' and we're doing the drill knowing that there could be an incident that could happen in the future?"

Youngkin's veto sends a message to Virginians that he doesn't care about what the majority wants, Salim said.

Virginians have the most consensus around creating criminal penalties for gun owners if their firearms are used by minors in a crime, and requiring gun owners to lock up firearms if children are in the home, according to a January survey by The Wason Center.

A slight majority support banning assault-style weapons, and oppose allowing teachers to carry guns in K-12 schools.

Salim introduced Senate Bill 327 to raise the minimum age to purchase a gun to 21. The bill passed in a party-line vote in the Senate. One House Republican legislator, Del. Carrie Coyner from Chesterfield, supported the bill.

Youngkin also vetoed SB 491, introduced by Sen. Jennifer Carroll Foy, D-Woodbridge.

Her bill held the firearm industry liable if guns were sold to someone who the sellers could have "reasonable cause" to assume

might use a firearm in a crime, or who is prohibited by law from owning a firearm.

Carroll Foy cited gun violence as a major issue for her constituents.

"We knock on doors and we hear from constituents that their top concerns are mass shootings, and their top concerns are the increase of the use of guns by minors, by people who are mentally ill, by people who are a danger to themselves and others," Carroll Foy said. "We listen to those concerns."

Democrats put forth "commonsense" safety measures, according to Carroll Foy.

"While I understand the Republican response is 'the answer to guns is more guns,' we know that's faulty thinking," Carroll Foy said. "It is a fallacy to believe that more guns is the answer to gun violence in this country."

Philosophical differences between parties

Democrats passed a number of gun control measures while in control of both chambers for two years under former Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam, according to Carroll Foy.

This included background checks, purchase limits, locality regulation of firearms on government property and a red flag law that prevents purchase or possession of a firearm by those deemed to be a danger to themselves or others.

"We philosophically disagree with Republicans, whose platform on gun safety reform is to do nothing," Carroll Foy said.

Youngkin cited the constitution and protection of the rights of law-abiding citizens as reasons for his vetoes.

Senate Minority Leader Ryan McDougle, R-Hanover, said the fundamental difference between the parties is whether to focus on guns or criminal activity.

"Republicans, for the most part, believe that the Second Amendment is a constitutional amendment and there should not be the effort to just take guns from law-abiding citi-

zens," McDougle said. "The focus should be on making sure that the community is protected from people that have proven they are not willing to follow the law."

Gun rights advocates back Youngkin

National Rifle Association executive director Randy Kozuch praised Youngkin's vetoes of "ill-conceived" gun control bills.

"His refusal to bow to unconstitutional overreach — stopping widespread bans on semi-automatic firearms, blocking ill-conceived laws like arbitrary waiting periods, and unjust age restrictions — underscores his fierce commitment to safeguarding our fundamental rights," Kozuch stated.

Philip Van Cleave is president of the Virginia Citizens Defense League, an organization that lobbies on behalf of gun owners. Van Cleave opposed most of the measures Democrats supported and said they were not aimed at criminals, but at people like him.

"The vast majority of the Republicans understood the issues, that these bills were bad, that they wouldn't lower crime, that they would only make it harder on good people," Van Cleave said. "They did everything they could do."

The governor "did an excellent job" with the vetoes, Van Cleave said.

Van Cleave's organization originally opposed two bills that the governor signed, because they "overreached."

"But they were narrowed down by the time they got to the governor," Van Cleave said. "We were neutral on them."

The General Assembly will reconvene on April 17 to review and vote on the governor's changes and vetoes.

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.

Pets of the Week



Yes, Clover Cat Rescue has dogs too. Meet Roscoe, a sweet boy who is house trained and good with cats, dogs, and kids.

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Cell Tower

(cont. from page 1)

County High School, so Verizon would be the first tenant to come on the tower," he said.

The tower would be built for up to four wireless carriers, according to Penning, who said with the tower, Verizon is trying to address the coverage deficiency it has in the area and its capacity.

"They add another site into their cellular network which opens up and creates more capacity. So, obviously for a high user area like Patrick County High School, which has 1,000 staff and students approximately, the surrounding area has over 100 households and then 4,300 average daily travelers along Route 8," he said.

Penning said the proposed tower would add to the area's coverage and offload capacity on the existing sites to improve and enhance connectivity in the area. Milestone has worked with the school board to site the tower on the northwestern side of the 67-acre property.

"This gives it over 1,200 feet from the closest residence as well as 1,700 feet from Route 8 and Salem Highway. The large school parcel allows us to site it in a way that screens it from surrounding residences and from the roadways," he said.

Penning said the total footprint for the tower compound site will be less than 2,500 square feet, "which is less than a 50 by 50 square compound. It will be enclosed by an eight-foot-tall fence with privacy slates, and we're going to be utilizing the existing access road."

The tower structure will be near the existing pole yard that is used by Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC).

Peterson said the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has the sole jurisdiction over the regulations regarding electromagnetic field safety.

"Basically, the FCC's guidance is codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, and that is the law of the land when it comes to electromagnetic safety," he said.

As tower developers and wireless providers, Peterson said Milestone is required to demonstrate compliance with the FCC guidelines.

When a new facility is being built, he noted the company cannot measure it because it's not yet on the air.

"So, what we do, and what has been deemed appropriate as the method of demonstrating compliance is, we perform calculations to determine what the anticipated exposure levels would be from a facility once it's on the air," he said.

Peterson said companies accomplish this by using the formulas prescribed by the FCC.

"Because we use multiple factors, upper limit factors, we're really looking at a worst-case scenario for the maximum exposure on ground level, and that's what we've done here," he said.

In this case, Peterson said he wrote a report demonstrating that the proposed facility would be less than 1.4 percent of the applicable FCC standards at all locations of public access.

"Often, I get the question, 'Well what if there are more carriers that jump on board- AT&T, T-Mobile, Dish Network.' There's really only four in the marketplace at the moment," he said. "So, we go a step further and evaluate the anticipated exposure with all of the carriers in the marketplace onboard."

Peterson said the calculations show that even with worst-case assumptions of all four carriers, it would still be below 8 percent of the applicable FCC standards, which is "still compliant by a wide margin."

The FCC exposure limits are based on recommendations made by organizations including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP), Peterson said.

After construction, Peterson added Milestone always has a third party verify that the anticipated exposure levels that were calculated are what's out in the field.

A common radiofrequency exposure source is mobile phones, he said.

"There's much greater emissions that individual is exposed to by the device" than the proposed cellular phone tower. "That's purely because it's much more proximate to us, it's in our pocket, it's next to our ear, and that's truly the more meaningful source of electromagnetic exposure," he said.

Peterson said electromagnetic exposure actually decreases when a cell phone tower is situated near a person.

"The faculty and students that would be using this tower at the school because they're now closer to a tower their mobile phone has to transmit with less power. It doesn't have to yell as loud for that tower to hear it, so their exposure is actually decreasing," he said.

Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, asked if there was any danger of exposure for students using the pole yard or participating in extracurricular activities, and whether first responders would have access to the tower.

Noting that the report contemplates all areas of public access surrounding the facility, Peterson said, "Even (for) an individual at the base of the tower, the energy from these types of facility is mainly directed towards the horizon."

Peterson said Milestone will make space available for first responders, "and that's very common to have a" go location "by first respond-

ers," he said.

Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, asked if the particular site choice gives the county the "biggest bang for the buck."

Peterson said this location is where Verizon expressed it has a need.

"High schools in particular generate a lot of wireless demand. I think we all know high schoolers, use their devices an awful lot, and all that usage requires strong service. This is not surprising to me that Verizon has indicated that it has a strong demand in this area, and needs a site in this area," he said.

Doug Perry, vice-chairman of the Smith River District, asked if the antennas would be directional or omnidirectional, and the wattage of the antennas.

Peterson said the antennas would be directional and use a 320-watt radio with four other radios at 160 watts each.

"They're panel-style antennas that are about the size of a shoebox, except elongated to about six or eight feet depending on the exact model that's used. They're generally arranged, which is going to be the case here, on a triangular platform," he said.

Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, said he believes Verizon has a tower at Rotary Field in Stuart and another at the former Results building. "I was wondering why you need three around Stuart and folks over around Fairystone can't even talk with a tin can and string."

Penning said part of the application was to look at existing power sites within a two-mile radius.

"There's two that were looked at. One was an AM radio station tower, and we contacted the owner of it, and they don't have structural capacity on that tower to accommodate a wireless user," he said, adding another site is used solely for 911 operations.

Two other towers that were considered were short in height and about a mile to a mile-and-a-half north of the PCHS site.

Several county residents also voiced their opposition to the proposed tower.

Gail Spencer addressed the board regarding comments chairman Brandon Simmons, of the Dan River District, made at the March 11 meeting.

Paraphrasing Simmons' statement, she said, "That because we were so upset over solar farms that he was surprised that we weren't upset over cell towers because they were worse in putting off exposure and causing cancer."

Spencer said she would like to know where Simmons got his information and if the county is "being panhandled something else in the county. I understand that the school, the high school, needs internet for the computers, for their cellphones, no. They don't need cell phones in their classrooms, it shouldn't be allowed. If it is, then there's a problem in this county."

Spencer asked the board if anyone could tell her that the towers were not dangerous or why Simmons made the statement.

"Are these towers safe? What's the exposure to our kids at the high school," she asked.

Perry said he could not speak for Simmons. Spencer and Perry also talked about solar panels.

Dean Spencer said it's up to the board to do its part in the conservation and beautification of Patrick County.

"Do the right thing, do good for Patrick County. Solar panels, cell towers, and wind turbines are not good. Necessary, but not good. So, do good," he said.

Dean Spencer said he was at Foresight Hospital recently and counted 14 cell towers within sight, "and like you say, they were closer than two miles apart. Maybe that's a necessity in Winston-Salem, I don't see it here."

Dean Spencer said studies have shown that mobile phones cause cancer.

"People wear them in their shirt, they get lung cancer, they get heart cancer. It happens, so don't say that it's not going to happen, it happens, it can happen, and they've proven it," he said.

After spending a few weeks looking at studies on cell phone tower proximity to people, Melanie Beasley said she became horrified that the tower was even being considered.

"Across the board, you cannot find a study anywhere that suggests that anything less than 400 meters is considered acceptable. In regard to the school, you should always err on the side of caution with children, 1,500 meters, which is 1,640 feet. This is less than a third of that," she said.

Beasley said while representatives repeat that FCC guidelines are followed, she is concerned about the impact of lobbyists.

"They have repeatedly ignored the American Academy of Pediatrics asking them to please reevaluate their stance on these towers at schools. What Verizon cannot do is tell you that these towers are safe, they will just say we are following the FCC guidelines, that's where they start and finish every time," she said.

If the tower is approved, Beasley said she would take her son from the school system and encouraged other parents to do likewise.

Heather Morrison Spence said, "Numerous valid concerns have been brought to the attention of the board of supervisors regarding the solar power plants as well as the cellular tower

placement at the high school. It is my opinion that some of the concerns have been ignored, downplayed, or remained willingly ignorant of the concerns of the people they were elected to represent."

Spence said she is passionately against introducing carcinogens or toxic radiation that could have negative effects on county residents. In May 1999 her son was born with a rash. After several tests, Spence said it was determined that he had Langerhans cell histiocytosis (LCH).

"At that time, LCH had no known cause, no known cure, and a newborn with the disease had a 20 percent chance of survival. It is now considered a type of cancer and is caused by a somatic genetic mutation meaning something that he was exposed to in utero altered his DNA and his immune system," she said.

Spence asked the board to strongly consider its decisions, actions, and words "as they will have far-reaching effects in the near and distant future."

Spence and Perry also discussed cadmium and cadmium telluride.

In other matters, the board:

*Heard from Steve Ferring about the county's finances, including a recent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to find out why the budget for ammunition and targets was high.

"It turns out our Sheriff's Department qualifies practically every month. It's qualified by law to qualify your officers every year. Most of the law enforcement agencies recommend twice a year for proficiency," he said.

Ferring said 25 deputies are trained monthly and spend approximately 100 rounds each a month.

"In addition, they expand thousands of rounds for their rifle team, called SWAT in this case. I don't think the county needs a SWAT team, but thousands of rounds. Five hundred rounds is about \$260, 1,000 rounds is close to \$600, and they're talking about thousands of rounds," he said.

*Heard from Trena Anderson. "What I wanted to talk about has to deal with the LCI (Local Ability-to-Pay) for school funding. I'm going to save that till next time."

*Heard from Leo White, who spoke about the county's finances via FOIA requests. "If you guys haven't looked at it, I encourage each and every one of you to take a look at what we're seeing," he said.

White said the county's average household earning is \$38,972 with a poverty rate of 14.4 percent, which is higher than the state's at around 12 percent.

"With that being said, there's a lot of individuals in this county that are suffering and are going to the food bank and churches in order to put food on their tables for themselves and for their kids," he said, adding this doesn't include the county's elderly who rely on Social Security.

He also discussed the board's three-minute restriction for public comment but allowed those invited to give presentations unlimited time to speak. "Unlimited time for them, but we the people get three minutes. That's BS," he said.

*Heard from Bebe Purcell who spoke about the decision in February to charge Rural Services, Inc., for dumping waste from individuals. In her rural neighborhood, Purcell said the dumpster fee went from \$300 a month to \$700.

"Our neighborhood just cannot afford to, with absolutely no notice, take this type of increase. Mrs. Simms told me any other county would do that, but when I reached out to ... Carroll County they first said, 'we can't even drive our trucks through your county to get to parts of Carroll County.' Then they said we're not allowed in, so I went back and said that supposedly they are allowed in, but no one has let them know they can service the county," she said.

*Approved the March 11 and March 19 meeting minutes.

*Approved the bills, claims, and appropriations.

*Approved a proclamation naming April 7-13 as National Library Week.

*Approved the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board - Consortium (CLEO) agreement.

*Approved a contract award for RFP \$2024-11000-01 opioid misuse needs assessment.

*Approved a resolution appointing County Administrator Beth Sims as the local Board of Social Services.

*Approved the solid waste license effective April 9.

*Approved a letter of support for the rehiring of an agriculture and natural resource extension agent.

*Approved the additional fiscal year 2024 Child Service Act (CSA) appropriation as presented.

*Approved the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) designation of Long Branch Road as a Rural Rustic Road.

*Approved the VDOT proposed six-year highway plan.

*Approved a letter of support for Route 58/Spring Road intersection

*Heard superintendents' reports.

*Heard an update on broadband projects in the county. See inside for full story.

Chairman Brandon Simmons, of the Dan River District, did not attend the meeting.

Courage



Morgan Griffith
Representative

One of my favorite movies has always been The Wizard of Oz.

When my children were younger, I would often, in trying to teach them, recite the famous lines of the Cowardly Lion.

“What makes the flag on the mast to wave?”
“Courage!”

“What makes a King out of a slave?”

“Courage!”

One day as I was driving, a little voice piped up from the car seat in the back.

“Daddy, has that ever happened? Has the flag on the mast ever waved because of courage?”

I thought for a minute, and several examples came to mind, including the United States War of Independence against Great Britain, which makes our beloved stars and stripes on the mast to wave.

But on that occasion, I responded with the 1948 Israeli War of Independence, and the movie Cast a Giant Shadow.

The movie follows U.S. Army Colonel David Marcus, who is played by actor Kirk Douglas. Colonel Marcus, who is of Jewish faith, feels the call to return to duty in order to help the nascent Israel form an army.

The Jewish people had never completely left the Holy Land. And after (a) promises by the British government in 1917, (b) the Holocaust during WWII and (c) a United Nations resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in 1947, many Jewish refugees returned to the Holy Land. They came to form a Jewish State in British-held territory as they were promised.

Many of the Arab nations were opposed. The British left! And the Jewish people fought for independence.

They had so much determination and courage, that as the film depicts, in one of their battles, some of the Jewish charged forward without knowing how to click off the rifle's safety. Even though they couldn't fire their weapons, courage spurred them into charging against daunting odds.

Courage made the flag of Israel on the mast to wave.

And that is what I told my son.

I recalled that incident recently as I traveled to Israel.

On the trip, I talked to one of the former residents of the Nir-Oz Kibbutz. Nir-Oz is one of many villages that were ambushed by Hamas during their October 7 attack. We were shown where civilians died and where houses were burned and bombed.

After that we went to the outdoor music festival site where more than 250 attendees were murdered. Hamas videos of the attacks were circulated online and on social media.

Visiting the site, we spoke to a twenty-year-old survivor, who is alive today only because she is a tiny girl. In a frightened state, she hid in the back of a small bomb shelter. She was shielded from gunfire by the bodies of the dead on top of her.

She told us she could hear Hamas soldiers laughing as they fired into the shelter.

Her boyfriend was killed in the attack.

Nonetheless, she affirmed that life has to go on, and that Israel must continue.

I am asked about stopping Israeli efforts to eliminate Hamas. Hamas supporters often cite the loss of innocent Palestinian life.

War is always a horrible thing!

Even in war, minimizing death is important.

But since Hamas took control of Gaza in 2007, they have consistently shelled Israel, particularly in Israel's Gaza envelope.

Hamas adheres to their “from the river to the sea” concept, threatening the very existence of Israel and the Jewish people.

Further, Hamas has no problem using Palestinian civilians as shields from gunfire and it takes refuge in hospitals and homes.

Hamas started the current war when 3,000 Hamas soldiers crossed the border into Israel and targeted civilians, men, women, and children, and brutally murdered the defenseless.

In the attack, it is estimated that Hamas killed approximately 1,200 people. Over two hundred were kidnapped, and some are still hostages as of this writing, including the son of the man who gave us the tour of Nir-Oz.

As the young lady at the festival testified, they must have the courage to go on.

Israel has come to recognize they have no choice but to eliminate the terrorist organization Hamas, because Hamas is determined to spend all of their time, efforts and money to eliminate the State of Israel.

While I continue to pray for peace, without the courage of the Israelis to live on and defend themselves, Israel would not have a flag on the mast to wave.

What makes the flag on the mast to wave? Courage.

Call my offices with questions, concerns, or comments: Abingdon, (276) 525-1405; Christiansburg, (540) 381-5671, or via email at <https://morgangriffith.house.gov/>.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Blood Drive was success

Thank you, Patrick County. Our goal of twenty units was achieved and then some! Thirty equivalent units of blood were collected which translates to helping 90 patients with medical issues.

Thank you, Volunteers! They are the ones who make your donation experience as pleasant as possible. The Volunteers take time out of their schedule to help donors through the general process of donation. Volunteers this month were William Hines, Debra Boswell, Harriette Moore, Ann Sheppard, and Betty Holt.

We are always interested in adding to our roster of Volunteers. If

you are interested in giving back to your community, please consider volunteering your time with the Patrick County Blood Drive, the oldest continuing blood drive in the county. Please stop by the next blood drive or contact one of the volunteers for further information.

Please remember that the American Red Cross encourages donors to make an appointment for your time to donate via internet at redcross.org or by calling 1-800-733-2767.

Next month's blood drive is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Gene Stirewalt,
Stuart

Work Zone Awareness

Each spring, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and other state DOTs recognize Work Zone Awareness Week to remind drivers of the importance of avoiding distractions and driving safely through work zones. Join us at VDOT as we promote National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 15-19, with our theme this year, “Work zones are temporary. Actions behind the wheel can last forever.” Whether you work on our roads or drive them every day, work zone safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our employees and contractors put their lives on the line in work zones every day while working to improve travel for motorists in Virginia. This is true in mobile operations like mowing, paving and plowing snow, short-term work zones set up to replace bridges and culverts, as well as in our established work zones for long-term construction projects. Although signs, cones and safety vests can be effective in warning motorists of a work zone, these tools are no protection against a fast-moving vehicle or an inattentive driver. In fact, most work zone deaths are motorists, not workers, so slowing down, eliminating distractions and paying close attention in work zones can help all of us.

All motorists — whether a seasoned driver or someone new behind the wheel — should follow these instructions when driving

through a work zone:

- Work zones are a sign to slow down.
- If you see the orange work zone warning signs, be alert for changing conditions ahead.
- Eliminate distractions and stay aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Follow Virginia's phone down and move over laws.

In addition, to show support for National Work Zone Awareness Week, VDOT encourages you to participate in these activities during the week:

- Show us your Orange! Wednesday, April 17 is national “Go Orange Day.” Everyone is encouraged to wear orange in support of work zone safety across the country. Share your pictures with us on Twitter and Facebook! #GoOrangeVa
- Attend the vigil at the VDOT Worker's Memorial on Afton Mountain on Wednesday, April 17 at 4 p.m.
- Follow us all week long and share our Facebook VDOT Salem District group page at www.facebook.com/groups/VDOTSalem and ReTweet with us @VaDOT-Salem.

Join our team to keep our roads and work zones safe for everyone. Let's work together so we can all arrive home safely each and every day.

Ken King, P.E.
District Engineer,
VDOT Salem District

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion – DEI

(Fox, NY Post, Newsweek, Prager U, Daily Signal, MRCTV)

Diversity used to mean that people of different backgrounds were free to join a group or association. Equity used to mean enforcing equal standards for all individuals and groups. Inclusion used to mean allowing people of every background and identity to participate in a group or association.

Now, in Bidens DEI context, these words all mean one thing: applying unequal standards to ensure preferential outcomes for individuals and groups based on race, sex, and gender identity. DEI is ultimately about only one thing: advancing those who are not white, heterosexual, and male at the expense of white, heterosexual men, regardless of their respective qualifications.

Corporations now pay millions upon millions of dollars to so-called DEI experts to spread division and distrust among their own employees. If they do not set up a DEI office, that proves their company is racist, sexist, and homophobic. But if they do set up a DEI office, that proves their company is racist, sexist, and homophobic. Heads DEI wins, tails you lose, but the DEI fraud is condescending. It is the single most non-productive, self-destructive thing a business can do to itself. It both manufactures and perpetuates victimhood.

DEI assumes black people, women, or anyone who falls under the LGBTQI+ umbrella cannot make it on their own. They all need what only DEI can give them because no one can compete with the white, heterosexual man.

DEI is a national security threat. It fosters tribalism in the federal

workforce, undermines our shared American identity, distracts from the missions of our federal agencies, legitimizes anti-Americanism in our leading institutions and hurt recruitment efforts.

DEI has also infected our medical schools. George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences has mandated that incoming students take courses such as “disrupting racism” and “advancing health through an intersectional health equity lens.” One course explicitly calls on “disrupters” to challenge our “racist” cultures, policies, and practices.

The encroachment of DEI into medical education raises serious concerns about the future of American health care. It diverts doctors' focus from essential medical skills to ideological agendas, potentially leading to catastrophic consequences for individuals seeking medical assistance. When medical students like these are indoctrinated with DEI—instead of focusing on unarguable biology, essential surgical practice, and clinical care—lives can be devastated or lost. Reminder: This is a medical school, not the Black Lives Matter homepage.

The truth is that Americans of all races get along fine. The vast majority of Americans do not even think about race. They want to work hard and get ahead; and they know America is the best place to do that. The big lie is the DEI made-up version of American life. And thanks to woke colleges and corporations, they are shoving it down our throats.

Pray for our country.
William Salser,
Stuart

Sustainable Beekeeping class to begin April 20

A Sustainable Beekeeping class will be offered by Surry Community College. The class runs from April 20 through Aug. 17. The class will be held partly at the Center for Public Safety in Mount Airy, and partly at H & S Bee Supply in Mount Airy.

Topics covered by the class include how and why to feed your bees, honey production and extracting, queen rearing, mite testing and treatment, routine hive inspection, and reading the comb.

Prior bee experience is not necessary. Students must dress accordingly for classes working with bee hives. All participants must wear a bee veil at minimum, but a bee suit is not required. Students are asked to provide their own protective equipment.

The first class will be on Saturday, April 20, at H & S Bee Supply, 231 Airview Drive, Mount Airy, from 2 to



Surry Community College is offering a Sustainable Beekeeping class that runs from April 20 through August 17. The class will be held partly at the Center for Public Safety in Mount Airy, and partly at H & S Bee Supply in Mount Airy. To register, contact SCC's Pilot Center at (336) 386-3618.

6 p.m. where all other Saturday meetings will be held. Tuesday class meetings will be held at the Center for Public Safety, 1220 State Street, Mount Airy, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Tuition for the class is \$127. For more information and to register, contact SCC's Pilot Center at (336) 386-3618.

Patrick Pioneers

Samuel and Ruth Lawson Dobyns
By Beverly Belcher Woody

Samuel Green Dobyns was born to Thomas Mitchell Dobyns and Lurinda Conner on the 4th of March 1851 in Patrick County, Virginia. Thomas Mitchell Dobyns was the son of Abner Dobyns and Elizabeth Wilks of Bedford County. Abner and Elizabeth had moved to Floyd County, where Thomas grew up. Lurinda was the daughter of William Conner and Exoney Ross of Woolwine, Virginia. Shortly after the birth of Samuel Dobyns, Lurinda passed away.

Thomas Dobyns remarried soon after to Permelia Lemon of Franklin County, Virginia (near the Five Mile Mountain area). Thomas and Permelia had a daughter, Henrietta, who was born in 1858. Sadly, Permelia passed away after the birth of their daughter, Henrietta.

Thomas Dobyns married for the third time in 1861 to Catherine Ganaway of Wythe County. Samuel Green Dobyns was ten years old by the time his father remarried, and Samuel had already lost his mother and first stepmother.

In 1870, Samuel was attending Trinity College, which would later become Duke University. Samuel was boarding with Trinity professor William Ganaway and his family. I have a strong feeling that William was related to Samuel's second stepmother, Catherine Ganaway Dobyns, but at time of this writing, I have not made the connection.

Samuel married Miss Ruth Elizabeth Lawson on the 5th of February 1872. Ruth was the daughter of Rev. William Madison Lawson and Anne Thompson, of Meadows of Dan.

Samuel and Ruth's first child, Nancy Ada Dobyns was born on the 3rd of November 1872. Nancy would grow up and marry Robert Henry Dunkley of Claudville and they had at least seven children. Nancy would tragically die at the age of 85, when she tripped over her vacuum cleaner and broke her leg. Nancy suffered a blood clot and died three days later.

Charles William Dobyns was born to

Samuel and Ruth on the 5th of March 1874. Charles married Miss Ella Ward of Wythe County and Charles was a merchant in Crockett in Wythe County.

Samuel and Ruth's third child, Annie, born on the 24th of May 1875, married Hardin Harbour Reynolds of Critz, Virginia. Hardin was the brother of the well-known R.J. and Abram David Reynolds. Hardin and Annie had four children, two sons and two daughters. On Christmas Day 1912, their seven-year-old daughter Nancy was placing her gifts from Santa Claus on the mantle above the fireplace, when her gown caught fire. Little Nancy died from the burns and shock nine hours later. Tragically would strike again when their fourteen-year-old daughter Lucy would die from a ruptured appendix. After Hardin Harbour passed away, Annie married Samuel Ward Thompkins from Floyd County.

The fourth child of Samuel and Ruth was Thomas Green Dobyns, born on the 10th of November 1877. Thomas married Miss Virginia Landreth and they had two sons, Robert Edward and Samuel Thomas Dobyns.

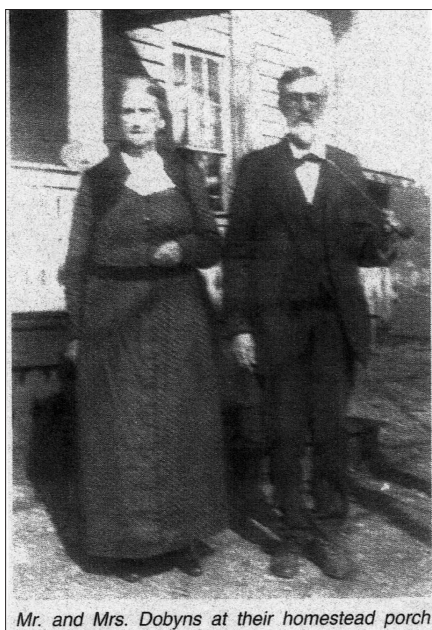
Samuel and Ruth's fifth child was Katherine, born the 7th of March 1882. Katherine married Professor James Luther Taff, who was from Meigs County, Tennessee.

Samuel and Ruth's youngest child was Gladys Ruth, born on the 30th of July 1889. Gladys married William Angel on the 22nd of February 1911 and the couple moved to Harrisonburg, Virginia where William worked for the Southern Railway Company. Gladys came home to Claudville to visit her parents for Christmas and died suddenly on the 12th of December 1911; she was only twenty-two years old.

Samuel Green Dobyns died on the 20th of January 1941 and his beloved wife Ruth passed away twenty days later on February 9th, 1941.

Samuel's obituary was printed in the Martinsville Daily Bulletin on Tuesday, January 21st, 1941, on page 7, column 4...

Samuel G. Dobyns, 90, oldest alumnus of Trinity College, now Duke Uni-



Mr. and Mrs. Dobyns at their homestead porch

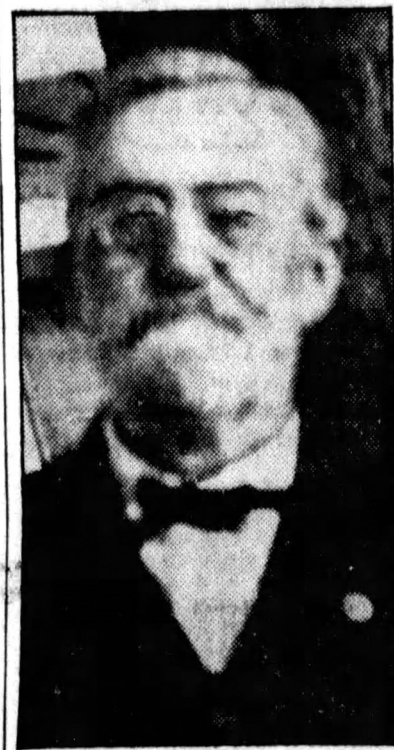
Ruth Lawson Dobyns and Samuel Dobyns from Wilma Padgett collection.

versity, died Monday night at his home, Dobyns Homestead, five miles west of Stuart. He had been in ill health for several months. Mr. Dobyns was born at Floyd Courthouse, March 4, 1851, a son of Thomas M. and Lurinda Conner Dobyns. He went to Mount Airy Academy before entering Trinity. He graduated in law but never practiced, deciding instead to return to Patrick county and devote his life to the management of his farm. He served as deputy collector internal revenue under General Fitzhugh Lee during Grover Cleveland's second presidential administration. Funeral services will be held Wednesday morning at 11 o'clock with Elders Joel E. Marshall and J. M. Dickerson at the Claudville Baptist Church.

Three weeks later, Ruth's obituary was also printed in the Martinsville Daily Bulletin on page 9, column 6...

Mrs. Ruth Lawson Dobyns, 92, passed away at her home, "Dobyns Homestead" following a gradual decline in health. She was born at Meadows of Dan on March 23, 1849, the daughter of William and Annie Thompson Lawson; she was the last of twelve children. Ruth joined Concord Baptist Church in 1863, at the age of 14, and in 1872, she married Samuel Green Dobyns. Soon thereafter, they moved to Dobyns Homestead in Claudville where they

Passes in Patrick



Samuel G. Dobyns (above), 80-year-old Patrick county farmer and the oldest graduate of Trinity college, now Duke university, died late Monday night at his home five miles from Stuart.

The Roanoke Times, 1/22/1941, page 2.

spent the remainder of their lives. Mr. and Mrs. Dobyns were chiefly instrumental in securing the establishment of the present Dobyns Church and were faithful members, bringing their membership to Concord as its' first members. Funeral services were held Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock at Dobyns Church with Elders J. M. Dickerson of Floyd, and Joel E. Marshall, of Stuart in charge of services. Pallbearers and flower bearers were neighbors and close friends of the family.

Samuel and Ruth were laid to rest at the Samuel Green Dobyns Cemetery, located on a knoll, between roads #631 and #644, in the Dobyns Church area, about a half mile south of Vipperman's old mill.

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

Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty - Can I Claim Social Security and Still Work?

Dear Rusty: I will be turning 63 soon. Can I apply for Social Security and continue to work? Would I be limited to how many hours or how much I could make? I know my monthly SS amount would be cut by 30%, or somewhere around there, but how would working affect me? I was trying to read up on this, but the \$1 and \$2 thing confused me. I have an offer to take a work-at-home position and need to decide soon, but it is a cut in income. The cut would be okay if I could draw my Social Security too. Signed: Wanting Work at Home

Dear Wanting: If you claim your Social Security to start in the month you turn 63, you'll be claiming 4 years before your full retirement age (FRA) of 67, which means your monthly benefit at 63 will be about 25% less than it would be if you claimed SS at age 67. And if you are working before your FRA, you'll be subject to Social Security's "earnings test."

The 2024 earnings limit for those collecting early Social Security benefits is \$22,320 (this limit changes annually). If your annual earnings exceed the limit,

Social Security will assess a penalty of \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. They will recover that penalty amount by withholding future benefits until they recover what you owe. If your work earnings are under the annual limit, you will get all your monthly SS benefits. But if you exceed the limit, they will find that out after you submit your income tax return (the following year) and issue you an overpayment notice, telling you how much you owe for exceeding the limit last year. They will then withhold your benefits until they get back what you owe, or you can repay them in a lump sum. To avoid the overpayment notice, it is best to inform Social Security in advance that you will exceed the annual earnings limit, and they will simply withhold your monthly SS benefits during the year for enough months to avoid overpaying you.

So, what you should do depends largely on how much your earnings from your new work-at-home position will be. If your earnings are below the annual limit, no penalty will be assessed. If you only exceed the annual limit by a little bit, then you can still work and earn and simply repay them what is owed for exceeding the limit (or have your SS benefit temporarily withheld). If you only exceed the earnings limit by a little, you'll still get benefits for most months of the year. But if you significantly exceed the annual

earnings limit, you could even be ineligible to receive SS benefits until you either earn less or reach your full retirement age (the earnings limit goes away at your FRA).

So, what you should do depends on what "a cut in income" means in terms of your expected annual earnings amount. If your total annual earnings will be under the annual limit, your SS benefit won't be affected. If you only exceed the limit by a little bit, then you will get SS benefits for most months of the year. But if your annual earnings are significantly over each year's annual earnings limit, then you won't get SS benefits for most months of the year and may even be temporarily ineligible to receive benefits.

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

How Your Friends Influence Your Food Choices

Imagine this: You're lying on a weight bench, arms sore and back feeling a bit tight. You glance over at the wall clock. You've been at the gym for twelve minutes. You glance at your wristwatch. Yep. Just. Twelve. Minutes.

Now picture the above scene in two ways: one where you're alone, and the other where your friend is spotting you. Maybe they're a bit stronger than you are. Maybe you're competing to see who loses the first two pounds. In which scenario would you push yourself a little harder and a little longer?

What are you trying to improve in your own life? Are you trying to quit smoking? Is a plant-based lifestyle something you've been considering? Are you struggling to make positive changes in your life?

18-year old Caide Prewitt does it all: tennis, running, Bikram yoga, P90X, weight training, dog-walking... she's even headed off to college this summer on a full volleyball scholarship. When it comes to food, she tries her best to find balanced nutrition in plant-based ingredients. When asked about the influence of friends and family on exercise and diet, she agrees that there is a clear relationship between the two.

"When I'm alone, it's hard to keep motivating myself on what I need to be doing. But if I have other people with me like my [volleyball] coaches and teammates, they can motivate me to do so much more. Food-wise, my mom helped me realize that what you consume is what you put out...because your internal body is so important on the energy you give and how strong you can be."

Caide isn't the only one who notices the relationship between health and social structure. The presence of others having a distinct influence on behavior has been studied extensively and termed "social facilitation." It

suggests the mere (or imagined) presence of people in social situations creates an atmosphere of evaluation and increased or decreased performance, depending on the confidence you have in your abilities.

Psychologist Norman Triplett pioneered research on social facilitation in 1898 when he found that cyclists had faster race times when in the presence of other cyclists as opposed to when riding alone. He demonstrated this effect in a controlled laboratory experiment where he found that children performed a simple task faster in pairs than when performing tasks by themselves.[1]

Thomas W. Valente, PhD, professor of preventive medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC says that when evaluating your health goals, it is "important to understand the social structure of the group and the dynamics of influence at play".[2]

This means that when embarking on a quest to make healthy changes in your own life, it's helpful to take note of your group's social structure: the hobbies of your friends and family, diet patterns, sleeping habits, etc.

But healthy social structures certainly don't fall out of the sky and into your lap—they're developed, cultivated, and, ideally, passed on from generation to generation. What do you do when you're the first of your friends and family to actively seek out a healthier lifestyle? You can't be expected to drop your group of friends and reinvent an entirely different social structure. Caide may have been raised by a health-conscious family, but she's ultimately responsible for maintaining her wholesome philosophy. How did she do it?

"I think that if you were to do it on your own, it would take a long time to adapt because of all the temptations that can distract you from what you want to do. You

have to switch your entire mindset."

And if she wanted to bring a junk food-loving friend into her lifestyle, how would she go about changing their mindset?

"I would just...be a little pushy at the grocery store and say something like, 'Hey, you need to buy this!' And maybe, by introducing the mere idea of substituting veggies for potato chips, it could, little by little, turn their minds towards healthier options. I think a lot of unhealthy people don't even realize that there's a better and delicious way to eat, so even introducing different options at the grocery store could eventually change their lifestyle."

Maybe you're lucky enough to be surrounded by people who prefer chickpeas to chicken and soy milk to soda. But if you're not, you are still absolutely capable of initiating change in your life and in the lives of your loved ones.

It's your life so do something about it. If you're craving that group of like-minded and health-conscious friends, do something about that too. If your friends are less partial to healthful living, make yourself the social facilitator of the group and nudge them in the right direction by offering them a taste of your black bean burger, or by visiting the local farmers' market rather than the supermarket. Introduce them to the fresh-feeling, mouth-watering, invigorating, and stabilizing community of wellness. Just, well, be a friend.

[1] Triplett, N. "The dynamogenic factors in pace-making and competition." Indiana University.

[2] Health 24. "Facebook and friends influence health behavior."

(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Sarah Yoo. Used with permission from www.Lifeandhealth.org.)

Bryant takes third place in tournament



Patrick County High School Fishing Team member Jake Bryant captured a third place finish in the Junior Division at the B.A.S.S. Nation of Virginia High School Fishing Tournament at Philpott Lake. (By Sandra Heath)

Claudville youngster bags first turkey



Levi Chaney, 7 years-old, of Claudville, got his first turkey on Youth Day in Patrick County. Levi's parents are Leigh & Dakotah Chaney of Claudville.

PC Varsity Softball Splits Week

By Ashlee Mullis
The PC Varsity Softball Team defeated Alleghany High School 6-5 in Covington, on Tuesday, April 9. McKenzie Holt struck out 18 in the win, allowing 0 earned runs. Journey Moore led the way for the Cougars with 2 hits and a grand slam.

The Lady Cougars lost to Carroll County 9-0, on Friday, April 12. The Lady Cougars only had 3 hits. Maria Turner had a double, and Lauren Fulcher and Lauren Hazelwood had one hit each. Journey Moore pitched 4 innings, striking out 5. McKenzie Holt pitched 3 innings, striking out 6.

SCC Offers Self-Defense Class for EMS, Hospital, Fire/Rescue and Education Workers

Surry Community College is offering a self-defense class especially designed for emergency medical services, rescue, fire, education, and hospital personnel at the Center for Public Safety, 1220 State Street, Mount Airy, on Wednesday, May 8, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost for the class is \$70.

The class, entitled "Safer in a Day," teaches people who work with the public in stressful situations to improve their ability to defend themselves against a sudden assault during the course of their duties.

The instructor for the course is Robert Hamilton, a former Guilford County deputy sheriff, and lead instructor and owner of Hamilton Protective Training Solutions.

Topics to be covered in the class include learning how your primitive survival system acts instinctively to protect you from danger, how to use basic skills to defend yourself, how to manage fear, actions, and decisions, using effective, simple, and gross motor skill-based tactics, and scalable self-defense and control tactics for patients, clients, and students.



According to Hamilton, "Over 65 percent of EMS and fire personnel have stated they have been assaulted in the line of duty. Forty-seven percent of emergency room personnel have been assaulted, and of those attacks, 51 percent harmed patients. Seventy-seven percent of attacks are from

patients, with another 5 percent of attacks coming from family members." Hamilton continues, "Almost one in three, or 33 percent, of teachers have indicated they have faced violent encounters. Not only do these first responders, healthcare workers,

and teachers need to protect themselves, they also need to protect those for whom they're responsible. Injuries lead to lost workdays and lost income. Most people can't afford to be injured."

This course integrates principles and tactics from the SPEAR (Spontaneous Protection Enabling Accelerated Response) System, which has been used by law enforcement and military personnel to protect themselves against sudden assaults. SPEAR Defense utilizes the speed and reliability of the startle-flinch mechanism to convert the human body's natural response to a sudden attack into a tactical response.

To register for the class, visit bit.ly/SCCself-defense. If you have further questions about this opportunity, contact Dr. Douglas Underwood, Director of Yadkin Center/Director of Emergency Medical Programs at (336) 386-3584 or underwoodd@surry.edu, or contact Robert Hamilton, Lead Instructor and owner of Hamilton Protective Services, at robert@hamiltonprotective.com or (336) 392-1695.

PCHS Track and Field Competes

By Ashlee Mullis
The PCHS Track and Field Team competed at the Blacksburg Invitational held Saturday, April 13. In the girls track category, Shauntel Hill finished 19th in the 200 Meter Dash. In the 800 Meter Run, Mackenzie Williams finished 14th, and Hannah Harmon finished 18th. Sadie Martin and Callie Wood finished 2nd and 8th, respectively, in the 1600 Meter Run. Martin's time of 5:37.29 automatically qualifies her for the state 1600 Meter Run. The 4x400 Meter Relay team, consisting of Sadie Martin, Mackenzie Williams, Eliza Clifton, and Shauntel Hill, placed 4th. In the track category, Brandy Quesinberry finished 13th in Discus, and Tara Collins finished 22nd. In Boys Track, Ethan Cobbler finished

25th in the 200 Meter Dash. In the 400 Meter Dash, Nathan Callahan finished 25th. In the 800 Meter Run, Moises Cisneros finished 17th. In the 1600 Meter Run, Hunter Martin finished 15th, Fisher Martin finished 19th, and Noah Hiatt finished 21st. The 4x400 Meter Team, Hunter Martin, Fisher Martin, Moises Cisneros, and Xavier Torres, finished 5th. The 4x800 Relay Team, consisting of Xavier Torres, Greeley Terry, Moises Cisneros, and Brett Foley, finished 1st overall. Ethan Cobbler placed 23rd in the Long Jump. In Discus, Tyrese Penn placed 15th, Reggie Brown placed 17th, and Kyle Handy placed 24th. Trevor Joyce placed 14th in Shot Put.

PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of April 22-27:				
		4/24	4pm	Boys Tennis vs Magna Vista
			4:30p	Girls Tennis at Magna Vista
			5pm	Track Meet at Carroll County
4/22	4pm	Boys Tennis vs Glenvar	4/25	4:30p
	4pm	Girls Soccer vs Glenvar		4:30p
	7pm	Boys Soccer vs Glenvar		5pm
4/23	5pm	Baseball at Glenvar		5pm
	5pm	Softball at Glenvar		7pm
	6pm	Girls Soccer at Glenvar		7pm
				Boys Soccer at Radford

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Rescue Squad

(cont. from page 1)

cue crews, known as Station 8, responded to 889 calls in the same time frame, Wagner said county records show.

"We covered 1,180 calls in our coverage area and 28 mutual aid calls," he said county records indicate.

In 2015-16, the squad undertook a renovation/remodel project that was needed because of the weight of its vehicles, Wagner said. November will mark 7 years it has relied on paid staff, which means it bills patient insurance companies for services it provides - as do many others in the area.

The squad files an audit annually with the county to receive the same amount (\$16,075) of local funding that other, less active squads receive, Wagner said. For comparison, he said the CCDF volunteer squad responded to 90 calls last year "but received the same amount of money."

The squad's revenues last year totaled \$446,060.23; its expenses were \$439,046.83, plus any unpaid



current bills, he said.

Currently, Wagner said the squad is operating with a \$40,000 to \$50,000 deficit.

Several of its employees were furloughed April 1, with plans to furlough additional personnel between now and June 1.

Members have held monthly community breakfasts to try and raise funds, which helps but isn't enough.

Additionally, "we get calls that we have to respond to in the middle of breakfasts," Wagner said, adding the squad also planned to use direct mailing to solicit funds in 2021.

To do that, he said a flyer from an event held the year before was required, but "because of COVID, we hadn't had any events" and therefore, didn't qualify to solicit donations by mail.

Seemingly out of options, Wagner said the squad "requested \$100,000 per year from the county, or \$25,000 per quarter to help offset operational costs."

Essentially, "we asked them in January to fund us so we can keep doing what we do," Wagner said. "Now, we're going into May with no answers" and nothing settled, which is surprising because last year, several squad members were recognized by the county for helping to save a woman's life.

The squad was founded as a non-profit agency and began operating in June 1980, he said.

"This is our 44th year, and we want to continue to serve," said Wagner, who hopes the county and the community will help. All options are on the table, and the squad is pursuing additional remedies.

Donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 340, Patrick Springs, Va., 24133, or 1258 American Legion Road, Stuart, Va. 24171.

For more information, Wagner can be reached at (276) 692-6640.

Memorial Ride

(cont. from page 1)

Bowling and a chance for these men and women to continue his legacy of giving back to the community.

"This will be our final ride and we want to thank everyone who has supported us and helped us realize our goal of Jonathan's scholarship becoming perpetual," said ride organizer Darrell Bowling, a retired Master Trooper with the Virginia State Police and Bowling's father.

The event begins at 10 a.m. at Patrick County High School, located at 215 Cougar Lane, in Stuart, and features live music, food, and door prizes. The ride begins at noon.

Registration is \$15 per vehicle, and each entrant has a chance to win prizes. Trophies are given for the bike traveling the farthest to participate in the ride.

participate in the ride.

All proceeds from the ride will go toward the Corporal Jonathan W. Bowling Memorial Scholarship, which was established to honor his legacy and provide a Patrick County student with funding to attend Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC).

To date, the ride has collected a total of \$89,000.

Bowling, a Martinsville police officer, volunteer firefighter, and elder at his church died in 2005 during deployment in Iraq. Because Bowling also was an avid biker, the Chapter 11 Red Knights Motorcycle Club instituted an annual bike ride to honor his memory.

"P&HCC is honored to partner with the Bowling family to preserve Corporal Bowling's memo-

ry in this way," said Tiffani Underwood, director of P&HCC's Foundation, adding, "The engagement of the motorcyclists who have participated in this event over the last twenty years is a testament to Corporal Bowling's life and memory and has ensured that Patrick County students will have the opportunity to carry his legacy into the future."

The Corp. Jonathan W. Bowling Memorial fund has provided money for two Patrick County students to attend P&HCC each year since 2004. Students with a desire to enter a public service career are given priority.

To learn more about the ride, the scholarship, or Bowling's life, visit www.cpljonathanbowling.us.

Lonesome Heart

(cont. from page 1)

said Lonesome Heart, a Christiansburg-based group, plays a variety of music.

"Three of them are from the same family, it's three siblings. They're teenagers, he said.

Alley said Scott Patrick, the group's leader, will participate in the PMCA's Songwriter Circle Series coming up on May 4.

The Lower Dam Band is from Meadows of Dan.

"They live on Lower Dam Road," Alley said, adding the group often comes to the Coffee Break on Tuesday mornings to play music.

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 firearm safety.

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

Clement reels in keepers at Trout Fishing Day



With her Virginia Trout Slam, Lydia Clement reeled in at the Patrick County Kids Trout Fishing Day, April 13. Rocky Mabe informed her of the great catching and explained the Virginia Trout Slam challenge.

The Virginia Trout Slam is a challenge to anglers to catch all three species of trout (Brook Trout, Rainbow Trout, and Brown Trout) all in the same day <https://dwr.virginia.gov/fishing/virginia-trout-slam-challenge/>. (Photo by Sandra Heath)

Firearm Safety

(cont. from page 1)

concealed handgun permit. U.S. citizens 18 and older may register for the class. Children 12 and up may participate in a class if they are registered by and accompanied by a legal guardian.

Those successfully completing the class will receive a certificate of firearms safety training.

Registered participants must bring their own 25 rounds of ammunition. Participants may use a handgun provided by the sheriff's office or their own handguns. If participants choose to use their own handgun, it should be unloaded when brought to the class.

Those choosing to use a handgun from the sheriff's office are requested to bring .22 long rifle ammunition, but .38 Special or 9mm ammunition can be accommodated.

The classes will take place at the sheriff's office/4H Club shooting range, 223 Transfer Station Lane, Stuart.

Participants are advised to dress for the weather - all of the classes are conducted outdoors - and encouraged to bring lawn chairs and snacks.

To register for the class or for more information, call the sheriff's office at (276) 694-3161.

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THANK YOU FOR READING THE ENTERPRISE

Native American History to be offered online



SCC's Native American History course will be offered online this summer from May 20 through July 17. It will cover Native American History from pre-European contact through the modern period with a particular focus of the 20th and early 21st Century. As seen in this photo of the Marine Corps War Memorial in Washington, D.C., Pfc. Ira Hayes, a Native American, was instrumental in raising the American flag.

Surry Community College will be offering an online summer history course entitled Native American History. The course will run May 20 through July 17. The course will cover Native American History from pre-European contact through the modern period and will have a particular focus on the 20th and early 21st centuries. Social Sciences Division Chair Dr. Cory Stewart notes, "This class will do a lot with the 20th century, especially with the 1960s and 1970s, and then bringing it in to the modern period. Many people don't think about modern aspects impacting Native Americans, and this class will cover that. We will

also discuss the impact Native Americans had during World War II." Stewart also notes that one of the American soldiers in the famous image of the U.S. flag being raised at Iwo Jima was Ira Hayes, a Native American from Arizona. "This is such an iconic image, and many people don't realize that a Native American was there." Native American History, or HIS 227, will be offered online with three credit hours given as a curricular course, and it will also count for elective credit for students. No textbook is required. If you'd like to learn more, contact Stewart at stewartc@surry.edu or (336) 386-3517.

P&HCC announces banquet partnership

Patrick & Henry Community College is partnering with ValleyStar Credit Union, a leading financial institution dedicated to community support and engagement, as the presenting sponsor of the upcoming 11th annual P&HCC Athletics Banquet to be held on April 18 at Patrick & Henry Community College's Stone Hall Gymnasium in Martinsville. The P&HCC banquet is an annual event that celebrates the outstanding achievements of the student-athletes. It serves as a platform to recognize their hard work, dedication, and

commitment to excellence in the classroom, courts, and fields. "As the presenting sponsor, ValleyStar Credit Union is honored to align with this important event that highlights the values of teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship," said Susan Chapman, Chief Marketing Officer. "This sponsorship underscores our ongoing commitment to supporting local initiatives that promote health, wellness, and community development." "We are delighted to partner with ValleyStar Credit Union as the presenting sponsor of the

11th annual P&HCC Athletics Banquet," said Brian Henderson, P&HCC Assistant Vice-President for Student Engagement and Athletic Director. "At P&HCC, we believe in the power of sports to inspire and unite communities. This sponsorship allows us to continue to empower student-athletes and foster a culture of achievement." The banquet will feature the guest speaker Lucas Jones, former P&HCC Baseball head coach, who led Lynchburg University to the 2023 NCAA DIII National Champions, and 2023 NCAA DIII National Coach of the Year. The evening will conclude with the awarding of the ValleyStar Credit Union Patriot and Lady Patriot of the Year awards. The community is invited to join in celebrating the talent and dedication of our athletes. For more information about the event and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Brian Henderson at bhenderson@patrick-henry.edu.



Josie Boyd Epperson

As we remember Miss Josie on her first birthday in Heaven we wish to acknowledge those who showed great kindness in caring for her:

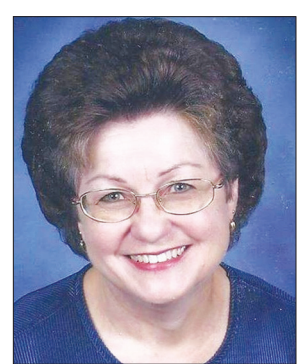
Aero Care, Ararat Rescue Squad, Atrium Health Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, Liberty Home Care And Hospice Services, Mountain Valley Hospice And Palliative Care, North Main Pharmacy, Northern Cardiogy And Pumonology, Northern Regional Hospital, Northern Urology, Novant Heath, Sumner Family Denistry, Surry Medical Associates, The Skin Surgery Center, Unity Church and Woltz Hospice Home.

We also want to thank those who came to the visitation and attended the services.

And we appreciate everyone for their generous show of support with cards, flowers, food, online condolences, telephone calls and visits.

With gratitude and affection,
The Josie Epperson Family

Judy Anderson Davis



Mrs. Judy Anderson Davis, age 76 of Ridgeway, Virginia passed away at her home on Monday, April 8, 2024. She was born in Patrick County on November 24, 1947, to the late Herbert Handy Anderson and Lucy Jane Thomas Anderson. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Paul S. Davis, Jr.; one nephew, Matthew Anderson; and one niece, Regina Anderson. Mrs. Davis was a faithful member of Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church until it's closing and then attended Good Home Primitive Baptist Church in Axton. She enjoyed tending to her flowers, gardening, playing cards with friends, going to singings, listening to music, and making homemade cards

to send to friends and family. Judy enjoyed babysitting her "grandpets" and will be remembered for her great love of her children and family. Mrs. Davis is survived by two children, Paul S. Davis, III and wife, Katrinka of Thomasville, NC and Teresa D. Queen and husband, Wesley of Ridgeway, VA; two brothers, James "Jimmy" Anderson and wife, Suzanne of Imlay City, MI and Gary Anderson of Stuart, VA; and one

great-niece, Katrina and husband, Jordan Morrow of Imlay City, MI; one great-great, niece; one great-great nephew. A funeral service for Mrs. Davis will be held on Friday, April 12, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Elder Kenneth Bowles officiating. The family will receive friends Thursday evening at the funeral home from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. The committal service will be held on Monday, April 15, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in Roselawn Burial Park. Memorial donations may be made to Good Home Primitive Baptist Church, c/o Fred Webb, 131 Hemlock Drive, Danville, VA 24540. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Carolyn Thompson Williams



Carolyn Thompson Williams, age 91, of Stuart, passed away Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at The Landmark Center. She was born in Stuart on April 13, 1932, to the late Dr. William N. Thompson and Opal Ingram Thompson. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 67 years, Christian V. Williams. Mrs. Williams attended Westhampton College at the University of Richmond before returning to Stuart to raise her family and assist her father with his medical practice. She also served as the food service coordinator for Patrick County Schools for many years. Later, she and her husband were proprietors of the Green Hill Western apparel and equestrian store in Stuart. Mrs. Williams

was a lifelong member of Stuart Baptist Church. She will be remembered for her sharp wit and as a devoted wife. Surviving are two daughters and a son, Becky Nowlin of Stuart, Beverly Joachim of Roanoke, and Rodger Williams (Teresa) of Stuart; eight grandchildren, Terrence Nowlin, Meredith Nowlin, Andrew Joachim, Bradley Joachim (Lindsey Umstead), Christopher Joachim (Rebekah), Eli Williams (Emily), Luke Williams, and

Levi Williams; two great-grandchildren, Amelie Griffith and Róisín Joachim; a sister and two brothers, Joan Conway of Sarasota, Florida, William Thompson of Stuart, and Murray Thompson (Dianne) of Elkton, Maryland; and many nieces and nephews. Funeral services will be held Saturday, April 20, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. at Stuart Baptist Church with Pastors Mark Hackler and Stephen Dixon officiating. Burial will follow in Stuart Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Flowers are welcome, or memorial donations may be made to Stuart Baptist Church, P.O. Box 472, Stuart, Va. 24171. Online condolences may be sent to www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Billy (Bill) Lee Deatherage



Mr. Billy (Bill) Lee Deatherage, 88, of Lawsonville, passed away Wednesday morning April 10, 2024, at Northern Regional Hospital in Mount Airy after a brief illness. Bill was born on September 9, 1935 in Stokes County, the son of the late Albert Deatherage and Annie Martin Deatherage. Bill was a truck driver for Macfield Industries which later became Unifi. He

retired in 2000. After his retirement, Bill enjoyed mowing his grass, and most of all he enjoyed riding his ATV on the family property. Bill is survived by his daughter, Ann Deatherage Ferrelli, husband Joe and son Lee Deatherage, wife

Debbie. His grandson Joseph Ferrelli, wife Carlen, and his granddaughter Amber Deatherage, husband Josh. He is also survived by special grand dogs, Charlie, Phoenix, and Walter. In addition to his parents Mr. Deatherage was preceded in death by his wife Rebecca Tatum Deatherage, sister Betty Lou Deatherage and brother John William (JW) Deatherage. Respecting Bill's wishes, his service will be private. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is in charge of the arrangements, and online condolences may be sent to www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

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Pete Campbell, Manager
Terri S. Wood, Assistant Manager

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Weekly Sudoku Answers									
5	2	9	7	8	6	3	1	4	
3	7	6	5	1	4	2	9	8	
4	1	8	3	2	9	5	7	6	
6	4	7	1	5	3	8	2	9	
1	5	3	8	9	2	6	4	7	
9	8	2	4	6	7	1	3	5	
8	3	1	9	7	5	4	6	2	
7	6	4	2	3	8	9	5	1	
2	9	5	6	4	1	7	8	3	

PATRICK PULPITS

1 John 3:1-3 "What Great Love"

By Thomas Shepherd, Pastor
Stuart Church of Living Water

Do you love someone? Are you loved? We all have the desire to love and to be loved. It is built into our very nature. We want to love and be loved. However, there are many who do not believe they are loved. They don't feel welcomed or wanted. They could be the drug addict in your neighborhood, the alcoholic across the street, and many others. It is the child or children of parents who are trapped in the consequences of bad decisions and are often left alone or abused emotionally and mentally. People are hurting and longing for relationship and when they don't get that in their realm of the world they turn to other things, like drugs or alcohol or sex or other things to fill their emptiness. Yet, the truth is none of the things we seek in the world will satisfy the void we all have.

John the Apostle and the other Apostles have revealed to us throughout the New Testament that there is indeed a God who loves us. This Loving God wants to have a relationship with us. Think about it like this, a good parent wants what is best for their children and wants a relationship with their children. God is our good parent. Even if our human parents aren't or weren't the best of parents there is a God who is our loving parent. John speaks about that same type of love and hope calling us the "children of God."

But who is a child of God? While everyone is a part of God's Creation, that is not what makes one a child of God. When God created all things, he created mankind as His greatest creation and made us in His image. God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and was in a personal relationship with them and would walk and talk with them in the evenings. That relationship was lost because of sin. There is nothing we can do in and of ourselves to restore that relationship, but God in His love for humanity provided a means of restoration through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. Now we have an option. We can believe and accept God's offer of restoration through Jesus and become the children of God or we can reject it and be forever separated from the presence of a God who loves us. All humanity needs a savior!

If you truly love someone you long to be in a relationship with them and see them face to face. John writes here in verse 2, "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is." Paul says something similar in Romans 8:22-23 saying, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies." We are the Children of God now, but we haven't received our glorified bodies. That will come later at the resurrection and the children of God will be in full relationship with God. We shall see God face to face.

Here is the strange thing about the Christian faith; God wants a relationship with us. The question is Why? Why would an all-powerful, perfect God want to be in a relationship with a sinful, imperfect people who reject God and treat Him with contempt? It boggles the mind. But God does want a relationship with us because God loves us. God is love and His love makes a way for redemption where we can stand before God perfect through Jesus the Messiah.

However, even though God is love, it in no way overrides God's righteousness, holiness, justice, or any other attribute of God. The fact is, God uses His attributes to reveal His love. For example, in Exodus after God set Israel free from Egypt, God gave the Ten Commandments and the Law. While Moses is on the mountain Israel rebels against God and convince Aaron to make a golden calf. They declared that this idol was the god who delivered them from Egypt, and they worshiped and sacrificed to it. God was so angry that He told Moses He was going to destroy them all and start over with just Moses. Yet, Moses prayed for Israel and God change His mind about destroying them, but God said that He would not go with them into the Promised Land. So, Moses prayed again, and the Lord relented from that as well. See, God does love us, even in our sinful state. Moses was so excited at the mercy of the Lord that he said, "Show me your glory." Moses wanted to see God face to face. God told him that no one could see His glory and live, but God allowed him a glimpse of his glory as He passed by. King David wrote about longing to see the face of God in Psalm 27 saying, "Come, my heart says, 'seek his face!' Your face, Lord, do I seek." David wanted to see the Lord face to face.

God wants us to seek His face. God wants a relationship with us because God loves us with an unfailing love, but in his holiness will not let our sin and wickedness go undeal with. So, the most powerful expression of the love of God is through offering Jesus the Christ to take our penalty for our sin so we could enter a relationship with God through Christ. This is the work of reconciliation God offers to everyone and Jesus said, "It is finished." He took our punishment of death that we deserve, and His freewill offering is available to all who call on Him in repentance. If you trust and believe you have a hope that is sure and certain, and according to John all who have this hope "purify themselves, just as Christ is pure" (3). Christ makes us pure so we can follow the greatest commandment to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" and to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12 30, 31).

"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are" (1 John 3:1). God wants to have a relationship with you and because of Jesus and what he accomplished on the cross you can come to God in faith. What Great Love is this!

Farmers' Market schedule released

In a preview of the upcoming season, organizers of the Stuart Farmers' Market announced the market hours of operation for 2024 will be on Fridays, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., May through November. The season will officially kick off on Friday, May 3. Vendors will be on site Friday, April 19 and April 26 for "sneak peek Fridays." Cool season crops of lettuce, kale, spinach, onions and broccoli, along with baked items, coffee and crafts will be available.

From May to November, every Friday will feature the market's usual group of vendors with locally grown fruits and vegetables, homemade baked items, locally grown meats, eggs, plants and crafts. With more than ten vendors during the season, there are plenty of options for everyone. Some vendors can accept the Senior Nutrition vouchers.

The Patrick County Master Gardeners will be on site the last Friday of each

month with information and to answer gardening questions. The Landmark Center and Blue Ridge Therapy Connection will be available on May 17, June 14, July 12 and August 16 for free blood pressure checks.

The Rise and Shine youth entrepreneurial vendors will join our vendors on Friday, June 21 and July 12, and a special homeschool youth market on Friday, August 9.

The First Friday Summer Jam Series returns offering a great concert, food truck and wine for the first Friday of each month May through August. The holiday tradition of Mistletoe Market will be back for its 16th year. This annual holiday market will be on Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Mistletoe Market is a great spot to shop for holiday decor, gifts and more.

Stay up to date with market events by visiting our Facebook page.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Jeremiah (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. The villains Sanballat and Geshem are only mentioned in which book? 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
3. From Ephesians 5, what did Paul recommend as a substitute for wine? Water, Laughter, Love, Holy Spirit
4. Who condemns drinkers who start early in the morning? Job, Isaiah, Ezra, Esther
5. Which king had 1,400

chariots and 12,000 horsemen? David, Jehoshaphat, Solomon, Neco

6. Who wrote the book of Revelation? John, Jude, Matthew, Peter

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Nehemiah, 3) Holy Spirit, 4) Isaiah, 5) Solomon, 6) John (the Revelator)

"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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Super Crossword

APPLICATION PROCESS

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN | ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Big trucks | 62 Primer for a wall, e.g. | 115 Writer Calvino | 3 Pertaining to an opening of the larynx |
| 5 "Serial" podcast host Koenig | 67 Names anew | 117 Ethiopia's — Selassie | 52 Slippery road condition |
| 10 Brothers Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan | 70 Outdoor enclosure for a tabby | 118 Ovid's lang. | 54 "The Hunger Games" |
| 15 Like GI garb, often | 72 Abundant | 119 Tubers often candied | 4 Former jet to JFK |
| 19 Woeful things | 73 Cow sound | 120 Engine speed meas. | 5 Mix, as batter |
| 20 Bingham of "Baywatch" | 74 Despot Amin | 121 By way of | 6 Desi of Desilu Studios |
| 21 Slobber | 75 It's often played during a massage | 123 Tattooist's supply | 7 Sleazy paper |
| 22 Nivea rival | 78 "Let us spray," e.g. | 124 Otherwise | 8 King topper |
| 23 Outfit | 79 Recognize | 126 What eight answers in this puzzle might say if they could talk? | 9 Furry feet in back |
| 26 Lasses | 80 Central Asia's — Sea | 131 Increase, with "up" | 10 Biblical utopia |
| 27 All upset, with "up" | 81 Honking birds | 132 Internet sales | 11 Shirt part |
| 28 "...flaw — feature?" | 82 Old Jewish ascetic | 133 Increase, with "up" | 12 Clemente of baseball |
| 29 Actor Knotts | 84 Snootiness | 134 Villain in "The Avengers" | 13 Compah band genre |
| 30 Wrung (out) | 87 Cur's warning | 135 609-homer Sammy | 14 Shirt part |
| 32 Deli classic | 89 Snake's warning | 136 AC — (big name in auto parts) | 15 Tooth on a gearwheel |
| 33 Bother a lot | 90 Not bogus | 137 Promotes heavily | 16 A Gulf state |
| 35 Frank of rock | 91 Small plateau | 138 Leg joint | 17 Patroller around a food court |
| 38 Outward display of courage | 93 Give relief to | DOWN | 18 Bivalve mollusks |
| 40 Attachable with a click | 96 Choir female | 1 Most wealthy | 24 Sweltering summer day |
| 42 Hits, as a fly | 99 Responses to massages | 2 Actress Douglas who starred in "Grace of My Heart" | 25 Ivory, e.g. |
| 44 Fill with love | 101 Something revealed by a scale | | 31 Lion's hideout |
| 45 "The X Factor," e.g. | 107 Fly without a co-pilot, e.g. | | 34 Fast glance |
| 47 Congeal | 110 Like a famed Vatican chapel | | 36 Burnt residue |
| 49 Short sleeps | 112 Roll around in mud or dust | | 37 Gp. once led by Arafat |
| 50 Diane once of NPR | 113 Mascara, e.g. | | 38 Raft wood |
| 51 Gentlemen | | | 39 Soda brand |
| 53 Breather | | | 41 Utmost |
| 56 Apple option | | | 43 Dickens' miser |
| 59 Cow sound | | | 46 Opposite of lge. |
| | | | 48 Three, to Fifi |
| | | | 57 Jason's wife, in myth |
| | | | 58 "Ta-ta," in Tours |
| | | | 60 Central Florida city |
| | | | 61 Crayon stuff |
| | | | 63 Less of a lie |
| | | | 64 Louvre Pyramid architect |
| | | | 65 Adjectives modify them |
| | | | 66 Message-leavers' cues |
| | | | 68 Astronomer Tycho — Harrison's moniker) |
| | | | 71 Fierce female feline |
| | | | 76 1972 Eric Clapton hit |
| | | | 77 Chinese menu letters |
| | | | 83 Aussie girl |
| | | | 85 Newlywed man |
| | | | 86 "Got it, man" |
| | | | 88 San Luis — |
| | | | 92 Slightly excessive |
| | | | 94 "How cute!" |
| | | | 95 Ugly foe of Popeye |
| | | | 96 Neverending |
| | | | 97 Not deserting escort |
| | | | 98 Frightful flies |
| | | | 100 Like always |
| | | | 102 "Ode — Grecian Urn" |
| | | | 103 Costa — Sol |
| | | | 104 Use as a skating surface |
| | | | 105 Mount — College (Elaine Chao's alma mater) |
| | | | 106 12-year-old kid, say |
| | | | 108 Set in place |
| | | | 109 Gave the nod |
| | | | 111 — City (Ohio town named for William Henry Harrison's moniker) |
| | | | 114 Theatricalize |
| | | | 116 Like sheep |
| | | | 120 Move, to a Realtor |
| | | | 122 Tattooist's supplies |
| | | | 125 Green org. |
| | | | 127 Ocakose of The Cars |
| | | | 128 Endeavor |
| | | | 129 Spying setup |
| | | | 130 Big name in civ. rights |

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More than 20 units collected at drive

Many thanks to all who helped April 13 at the Ararat Ruritan Club and donated to the Blood Drive held in Ararat, with 20 units collected.



Pictured, left to right, are Les Edgell, Carol Edgell, Tom Perriello, Michelle Dom, Samantha Mitchell, Victoria Peery, on table Rodney Boyd, and Vicki Minter.



Victoria Peery and Brian Burks.



Samantha Mitchell and Janice are pictured.



The Ararat Ruritan Club, pictured with the American Red Cross vehicles, is located at 4711 Ararat Highway, Ararat.

Healthy Families West Piedmont Accredited for Quality Service

Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) recently announced that Healthy Families West Piedmont, a program of Piedmont Community Services and affiliate of Healthy Families America, has received accreditation as a provider of high quality home visiting services to pregnant families and families with infants and young children.

Expectant and new parents often face new stressors and have questions about their child's development. Healthy Families America connects with families through community partners like hospitals and pediatricians to support parents, meeting within the familiarity and convenience of the family's own home. Healthy Families America is an accessible, voluntary and well-received service.

"HFA sites utilize evidence-based best practices to provide individualized support to families when needed most, and linkages to community services," said Melissa Merrick, President and CEO of PCA America. "We congratulate Healthy Families West Piedmont, and we commend the staff for their leadership and commitment that has contributed to this most notable and highly regarded achievement."

The accreditation process is based upon a stringent set of 12 critical elements grounded in more than 30 years of research. The process involves an in-depth examination of

the site's operation, as well as the quality of the visits made by HFA home visitors.

"We commend Healthy Families West Piedmont for opening itself up to such an intensive review process," said Kathleen Strader, National Director of HFA. "We believe that all families and all communities deserve access to quality home visiting services."

The HFA site in Martinsville is located at 3 Dudley Street.

"It makes me proud to be working in a program that is accredited," stated Rhonda Fulp, Family Support Specialist for Healthy Families West Piedmont. "This shows that our team takes seriously the role in making sure families thrive. I see families progressing as they meet goals, using resources in the community."

One of the mothers served by Healthy Families West Piedmont said, "I am so thankful for the home visiting program. It has helped me to feel more confident in being a mom. I want to be the best mom to my kids and Healthy Families has been a good thing for my family. We love Ms. Ginger."

One of the primary goals of HFA home visiting is to promote nurturing, responsive parent-child relationships. Home visitors in each community receive extensive training on a wide range of topics important to just about every new parent. These topics can include caring for a new baby, ensuring the baby is receiving the nutrition needed, promoting healthy child development, and coping with a myriad of other potential stresses that may become heightened with an addition to the family.

PCA America implemented the Healthy Families America (HFA) initiative in 1992. HFA serves families of all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, meeting the needs of close to 600 communities including Martinsville and the Counties of Henry,

Patrick and Franklin.

Healthy Families America is an effective and proven evidence-based home visiting program according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

Representatives of Piedmont Community Services said the agency is proud of the accreditation received by Healthy Families West Piedmont, and proud to be part of a national movement dedicated to improving the lives of families and children.

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

*Cassandra Hope Cole, 34, of Critz, was charged April 5 with obtain money by false pretense. Senior Deputy I. R. Wood was the arresting officer.

*Zachary James Denny, 28, of Bassett, was charged April 5 with two counts of fail to appear. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Taylor Renee Rorrer-Haynes, 24, of Stuart, was charged April 9 with one count each grand larceny, possess controlled paraphernalia, and fail to appear. Sgt. L.K. Carroll, Jr., was the arresting officer and made the arrest for Henry County.

*Joshua Wayne Justice, 35, of Stuart, was charged April 9 with aggravated sexual battery. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Christopher Dwayne Hylton, 33, of Bassett, was charged April 10 with probation violation. Senior Deputy I.R. Wood was the arresting officer.

*Lindsey Faith Harris, 23, of Stuart, was charged April 12 with one count each drive while intoxicated, 1st offense, and abuse/neglect child. Senior Trooper R.S. Lawson was the arresting officer.

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL24000203-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
Patrick Circuit Court, 101 West Blue Ridge Street/PO Box 148, Stuart, VA 24171
PATRICIA ANN CASSELL v. IN RE: TREVOR KYLE DAVENPORT
RONALD LEE CASSELL
The object of this suit is to:
CHANGE THE NAME OF TREVOR KYLE DAVENPORT, A MINOR
It is ORDERED that THE NATURAL FATHER OF TREVOR KYLE DAVENPORT appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before MAY 8, 2024.
APRIL 9, 2024
[Signature]
Clerk

LEGAL

REQUEST FOR QUOTE
TOWN OF STUART, VIRGINIA
The Town of Stuart, Virginia is soliciting a Request for Quote from qualified Contractors or Individuals to provide Inspection and Inventory Services for a Lead Service Line Inventory Project. These services include excavation or potholing, identifying water service lines, and recording the existing material of the water service lines entering the water meter box from the Town's service tap and the type of material leaving the meter box, supplying the customer. An electronic recording file, or inventory form, will be provided to enter all data required. For reference, the Town of Stuart has 617 metered water accounts, which must be inventoried before October 1, 2024. The proposed inventory project is being funded by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). All state and federal requirements by this agency must be met. All guidelines for the Request for Quote will be available for review on the Town of Stuart website (www.stuartva.org). Any additional questions can be emailed to information@stuartva.org or can be submitted to the Stuart Town Office at 100 Patrick Avenue, Stuart, VA, 21417.

The Town of Stuart will accept Quotes until 2:00 p.m. Eastern Local Time, on Thursday, April 25, 2024. Two (2) hard copies of the Quote shall be mailed or hand-delivered to Bryce Simmons, Town Manager at PO Box 422, 100 Patrick Avenue, Stuart, VA 24171. Questions regarding this solicitation should be made prior to Thursday, April 18, 2024.

This request is extended without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, age or physical or mental handicap. The selected Firm or Individual will be required to comply with all the State and Federal guidelines or requirements, including, but not limited to:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- Age Discrimination Act
- MBE/WBE Solicitation Guidelines

The Town of Stuart will reserve the rights to accept or reject any or all proposals; to waive any formalities or technicalities as it deems appropriate; and to retain multiple qualified Individuals or firms as it deems appropriate. For projects that may be successfully funded, the Town of Stuart reserves the right, if it so deems, to enter into negotiations with the selected firm for any resulting services related to the project implementation.

Minority and/or female-owned businesses or firms are encouraged to apply. The Town of Stuart is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

LEGAL

Meeting Notice
Patrick County Public Service Authority
Quarterly Business Meeting
The Patrick County Public Service Authority will hold a Quarterly Business Meeting on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 6:00 P.M. in the 3rd Floor Court Room of the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Building. Petitions and requests from the public shall be submitted in writing to the PSA located in the Patrick County Administration Building at 106 Rucker Street, Suite 218, Stuart, VA, not less than five (5) business days prior to the scheduled meeting and placed on the official meeting agenda in order to be considered.

LEGAL

Trustee Sale
149 Woodland Drive, Stuart, Virginia 24171
Default having been made in the terms of a certain Deed of Trust dated December 7, 2021, in the original principal amount of \$161,475.00 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Patrick, Virginia in Instrument No. 210002753, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will sell at public auction on **May 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.** in front of the building housing the **Patrick County Circuit Court**, 101 West Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, VA 24171, the property containing 1.2494 acres, as shown on plat of survey entitled "Patrick County Youth Builders, Inc. and Stuart Flooring Corp." prepared by Larry G. Rakes, IIS, dated February 10, 1998, and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Patrick County, Virginia, in plat cabinet 1, slide 147-A. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, and conditions, if any, of record, or other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the premises. **TERMS: CASH.** A deposit of \$ 16,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Prior to the sale, interested bidders will be required to register with and must present a bid deposit which may be held during the sale by the trustee. The bid deposit must be certified funds and/or cash, but no more than \$9,900.00 of cash will be accepted. The successful bidder's deposit will be retained at the sale and applied to the sale price. If held by the trustee, all other bid deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders. Settlement is to be made within 15 calendar days. The successful bidder will be responsible for obtaining possession of the property, and for all costs and fees related to recording the Trustee's Deed, including the grantors tax. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Memorandum of Trustee's Sale, available for review on the Foreclosure Sales page of www.glasserlaw.com, outlining additional terms of sale and settlement. A Trustee's Deed will be prepared by Trustee's attorney at high bidder's expense. This is a communication from a debt collector, Glasser and Glasser, P.L.C. on behalf of Atlantic Trustee Services, L.L.C., and/or Auction.com-VA, LLC, Substitute Trustees, Crown Center Building, Suite 600, 580 East Main Street, Norfolk, VA 23510, File No. 234272-01, Tel: (757) 321-6465, between 10:00 a.m. & 12:00 noon only.

McManus honored by Pitt-Bradford

Jackson McManus, a senior accounting and business management student from Woolwine, was one of 50 students honored by the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford at its annual Honors Convocation held on Friday, April 12.

McManus received the Senior Academic Excellence Award and the Outstanding Student Achievement Award for Management and Education.



Meetings

Wednesday, April 17
The Stuart Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the town office.

Thursday, May 9
The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the school board office.

Monday, May 13
The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the third-floor court room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Events

Wednesday, April 17
Chef Mark Anthony's free dinner and a message, 6 p.m., Stuart Adventist Church, 220 Patrick Ave., Stuart.

Thursday, April 18
The Carroll County Genealogy Club will hold a business meeting at 6 p.m.

Roving Ranger: Turtle Time 10 a.m., Fairy Stone State Park.

The Patrick County Republican Committee meeting will be held at 6 p.m. in the Motorsports Hall of Fame Auditorium.

Friday, April 19
The community food pantry will be at the Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department from 3-4:30 p.m.

Moonshine Hollow Hike, 10 a.m., Visitor's Center; Fairy Stone Hunt, 11 a.m., Visitor's Center; Fairy Stone Workshop, 1 p.m., Shelter 4; ADA Trail Hike, 1:15 p.m., sign up through the park office, and Fayerdale Missing Town, 2:30 p.m., Shelter 4, Fairy Stone State Park.

Saturday, April 20

The Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department will hold a country breakfast from 6:30-10 a.m. adult plates are \$10 each and child plates are \$5 each. All take out plates are \$10 each.

Fairy Stone Hunt, 11 a.m., Visitor Center; Roving Ranger: Conservation Successes, 12 p.m.; Fairy Stone Workshop, 1 p.m., and Oak Hickory Trail, 1:30 p.m., Shelter 4, Fairy Stone State Park.

The Patrick County Democratic Committee will meet at 11 a.m. at the Patrick County Library to select delegates to the District and State conventions. Regular business meeting to follow.

Community breakfast, 7:30-10 a.m. by the Providence United Methodist Church men's group in Patrick Springs. The menu includes ba-

con, sausage, eggs, apples, gravy, and biscuits. Donations will help fund local mission projects.

Sunday, April 21
Moonshine Hollow Hike, 10 a.m., Visitor Center, Fairy Stone State Park.

Fairy Stone Hunt, 1:30 p.m., Visitor Center, Fairy Stone State Park.

Monday, April 22
DWR Fairy Stone Farms Tour, 1 p.m., Visitor Center, Fairy Stone State Park.

Wednesday, April 24
Magic Trees, 1 p.m., Shelter 4, Fairy Stone State Park.

Oak Hickory Trail, 2 p.m., Shelter 4, Fairy Stone State Park.

Thursday, April 25
Roving Ranger: Turtle Time 10 a.m., Fairy Stone State Park.

Friday, April 26
A spaghetti supper will be held at Doby's Community Center from 4-7 p.m.

Saturday, April 27
Cruise-In, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Hunter's Chapel Assembly, Ararat Highway, Ararat. Hot dogs and BBQ will be served.

Saturday, May 4
The Patrick County Master Gardeners will hold its annual Spring Plant sale from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Stuart Rotary Building. All proceeds return to benefit the community through local service organizations, community projects, and scholarship awards.

Monday, May 6 - Monday, Sept. 2
Fairy Stone State Park Monday Market, 5-7 p.m. Mondays at picnic shelters 3 & 4.

Thursday, May 9
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will hold its May meeting at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Entertainment will be provided by Alan and Margaret Koegler. Beverages will be provided. The menu is potluck. Attendees are asked to bring their favorite meats, vegetables, and/or desserts to share with the group.

Saturday, May 11
Spring Tea hosted by the Woolwine Methodist Church from 2-4 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for children, and those 10 and under enter for free. Tickets may be purchased by calling Margie Cockram at (276) 930-2850 or Betty Perry at (276) 930-2578. The proceeds will benefit the community mobile food pantry.

Ongoing

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

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

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

The Patrick County 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. For more information, call (276) 693-6018.

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

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

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

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.

Open Jam Acoustic, Fridays at Willis Gap Community Center. Doors open at 6 p.m. for concessions, with music 7-10 p.m. A 50/50 drawing will be held at about 8:15 p.m.

The Patrick County Senior Citizens is sponsoring a three day and two nights trip to Elkins, West Virginia, departing Wednesday, September 18 and returning Friday, September 20. Trip includes chartered bus transportation, two nights' accommodations at the Holiday Inn Express in Elkins, tour of the WV Railroad Museum, 4-hour train ride, admission to the Crandell Creek Band bluegrass music show, admission to the Gandy Dancer Dinner Theatre, admission and guided tour of the Green Bank Observatory, five meals (two breakfasts, one lunch, and two dinners), baggage handling, all taxes, and all gratuities. Any adult, regardless of age, is eligible to participate. Trip flyers and more specific information, including cost, can be obtained by calling the Recreation Department at (276) 694-3917 or Judy Lacks, trip coordinator, at (276) 694-4767.

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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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Decline in farmland worrying farmers, agricultural organizations

The steep decline in U.S. farmland is raising an alarm among farmers and agricultural organizations.

According to the recent 2022 U.S. Census of Agriculture, the country has lost 20.1 million acres of farmland since the 2017 census. That's three times all the farmland acreage in Virginia, and an area about the size of Maine.

Virginia has lost nearly 500,000 acres of farmland in the last five years.

"Just stop and think about that for a minute," said Wayne Pryor, president of Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. "That's a lot of land to take out of production in a short period of time."

Farmland is vital for global food security, local food systems, wildlife habitats and environmental efforts like sequestering carbon in soil and protecting water quality. According to the American Farmland Trust's Farms Under Threat report, farmland loss is attributed to increasing commercial, industrial and residential development, particularly from urban and suburban creep surrounding established urban centers, as well as rural sprawl.

Increasing non-residential development like utility-scale solar facilities—a fast-growing industry in Virginia—also

contributes, as these facilities favor high-quality farmland since it's typically flat, dry, cleared and close to existing infrastructure. An AFT report on solar development modeling stated over 2 million agricultural acres are projected for conversion to solar development between 2020 and 2040. Of that, nearly half is expected to occur on nationally significant land, the nation's best land for long-term agricultural production.

Among states with agricultural land predicted to be converted to utility-scale solar facilities, Virginia ranks 12th in the nation, with 45,900 farmland acres projected for conversion.

The Farms Under Threat report also found more than 40% of U.S. farmland is owned by people over 65. Up to 370 million acres of farmland will change ownership over the next 20 years, "increasing the possibility that the land will be sold for development."

Additionally, the lack of farmland and increasing fragmentation of remaining farmland has led to escalating land prices—increasing barriers to entry for new and young farmers.

Farmland is a finite resource, Pryor noted. Once lost to development, it's very dif-

icult, if not impossible, to transition the land back into agricultural production.

While efficiency and technological advancements have allowed farmers to increase their productivity with less acreage and resources, demand for food and fiber is ever-increasing. According to a report from American Farm Bureau Federation, the U.S. population more than doubled since 1950, rising from 159 million in 1950 to 340 million in 2023. The global population more than tripled, increasing from 2.5 billion to 8 billion during the same period.

"Populations are going to continue growing, and the need for more agricultural production is going to grow with it," Pryor said.

Farmers are resilient, but the loss of farmland, combined with lower profit margins and high production expenses like equipment, feed, crop inputs, supply costs and labor, has caused farmers to question their economic viability—particularly among small and midsize farms. The census reported that Virginia lost over 4,200 farms. Nationally, the number of farms decreased more than 141,000 since 2017.

"This loss is just in five years," Pryor said. "What's it going to be in another 50 years?"

New report finds food and ag-related industries contribute over \$9 trillion to U.S. economy

A newly released report found that the total economic output for food and agriculture-related industries in the U.S. grew 11.8% over the last year, reaching \$9.63 trillion.

The eighth annual Feeding the Economy report said food and agriculture's contributions represent 20% of total U.S. economic output.

"The agricultural supply chain is everywhere," noted Roger Cryan, chief economist for the American Farm Bureau Federation, one of the 32 organizations that sponsored the report. "It's critically important to the economy, let alone how important it is just to feed and clothe people. Numbers like this can help drive home to everybody in every state the importance to them of the agricultural economy."

Feeding the Economy analyzes the direct and indirect impact of food and agriculture on jobs, wages, economic output and business taxes.

The report found that nationally, the two sectors created 48.67 million jobs—up 19.53% since the 2020 report. Total wages from food and agriculture were \$2.77 trillion, up 33.82% from 2020. Business taxes were up \$1.25 trillion, a 36.91% increase since the 2020 report. And exports were \$181.36 billion, down 2.7% since 2020.

In Virginia, the report found food and agriculture created 1.06 million jobs, \$53.6 billion in wages, \$26.1 billion in business taxes and \$3.2 billion in exports.

Results also revealed that nationally, the number of direct jobs in food and agriculture was up almost 800,000 since the 2020 report.

Additionally, from the previous report to now, food and agriculture manufacturing jobs grew at a faster rate than any other job category. As a result, agricultural production now accounts for almost 20% of America's manufacturing jobs, over twice as many as automobile manufacturing.

The direct impact is measured by the output of nearly 2 million farms and ranches across the U.S. Indirect benefits come from food scientists, production workers, logistics experts, truck drivers and engineers that work in more than 200,000 food manufacturing, processing and storage facilities, the report said. These jobs keep food supply chains strong and ensure that fresh, safe food is available worldwide.

When including the nation's more than 1 million restaurant and foodservice locations and the 200,000 retail food stores, the impact is multiplied even more. And economic benefits continue as workers in the food and agriculture industries spend their income, supporting both rural and urban localities.

In addition to national and state data, the Feeding the Economy report breaks down county-level results for each state. For more information, visit feedingtheeconomy.com.

Shred instead for ultimate protection

There are many things that we can do to protect ourselves from identity thieves. We can use strong and unique passwords, keep our device operating systems current, and monitor our credit reports. If you want to keep thieves out of your recycling bin, you'll also want to make sure to shred your sensitive documents. Despite all of the online crimes out there, criminals won't hesitate to dumpster dive for valuable sensitive personal information. Shredding continues to be an important step in preventing identity fraud.

If you shred papers yourself,

a micro-cut shredder offers enhanced security. Otherwise look for businesses that offer shredding (for a fee) or keep an eye open for free shredding events, often offered by nonprofits of local government agencies. Another important protection against identity theft is placing a fraud alert or credit freeze on your credit reports. Learn how to take these free steps at annualcreditreport.com.

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.

Volunteer opportunities await at the Blue Ridge Music Center

The Blue Ridge Music Center is looking for friendly music enthusiasts to join its team of volunteers for the 2024 Deep Roots, Many Voices: Summer Outdoor Concert Series.

This fun and rewarding opportunity is a great way to give back and allows volunteers to attend concerts by the biggest names in bluegrass, old-time, and American roots music. Help concerts run smoothly by selling tickets and merchandise, tracking attendance, and assisting with parking. Volunteers can choose which concerts

they work and are invited to stick around and watch the rest of the show after their shift.

Summer concerts are held Saturday evenings, Memorial Day through Labor Day, in the Music Center's outdoor amphitheater.

A pre-season meeting for summer concert volunteers will be held at the Music Center on Saturday, May 11. Those who plan to attend should contact Marianne Kovatch at 866-308-2773 ext. 212 or mkovatch@brpfoundation.org for more information.



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Update on broadband projects presented at meeting



Appalachian Power (AEP) External Affairs Manager Amanda Cox.



Riverstreet Networks Director of Business Development & Government Affairs Rob Taylor.



Charter Communications Director of State Government Affairs Joe Prater.

By Taylor Boyd
Representatives from Charter Communications, Riverstreet Networks, and Appalachian Power (AEP) gave broadband updates to the Patrick County Board of Supervisors at its April 8 meeting.

Charter Director of State Government Affairs Joe Prater said the company's two broadband projects are primarily in the southwestern corner of the county.

Charter will build 690 locations through the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) state grant program, and 873 locations through the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF).

"So, we're kind of building them all at the same time. These numbers will change as we actually get out and build, when we see there are actually rooftops that are not serviceable locations or vice versa, but it's looking to be a little bit over 1,500 locations as part of both of these initiatives," he said.

In Charter's build process, Prater said the company begins with a walk out.

"We literally will walk out, technically ride it, but we go every foot of the network we're building to determine which best route - whether we want to go aerial or whether we want to go underground," he said.

Every serviceable home and access pole space along those routes to further get an idea of what the build will entail will be surveyed. After that is complete, data will be forwarded to the design team, which will design the network on Google Earth.

Then, Prater said permits will be obtained and the design will go to the construction team.

"Build time is determined by our receipt of those permits. We work closely with all the permitting agencies, but this is the part where we have to wait to get those back," he said.

As soon as the permits are received, Prater said Charter will move into the 'make ready' phase where it gets all the poles and everything else ready for the build.

"Then after that of course is the actual construction. This is by far the fastest part of the build. It's these preliminary

steps that take the most time. Of course, when construction's complete, that's when we activate the network," he said.

Prater said the walkout for both VATI and RDOF have been 100 percent completed, and the company is currently in the permitting process.

On April 8, Prater said representatives from Charter, West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC), Patrick County and others did a site visit throughout the county.

Before the network is activated, Prater said Charter's marketing team will send flyers to every street address that's encompassed in the build, letting residents know the hookup options available.

"That and mailers, we'll obviously do news ads, radio, television. We do the best we can to get the word out, but a lot of the times working with the county and a lot of those local community anchor institutions is the best way to get the word out," he said.

Riverstreet Director of Business Development & Government Affairs Rob Taylor said the company has VATI 2022 and 2023 funds and RDOF funds.

"In total, we'll be passing 8,376 locations in the county. Total route miles you're looking at about 621 miles of fiber we'll be installing. The project cost is just under \$50 million at \$49.5 million," he said.

Taylor said Riverstreet will bring in \$10.3 million, AEP will bring in about \$14.1 million, and \$1.5 million is in RDOF funds from the FCC. Patrick County has also committed approximately \$2.1 million.

"We're able to take the funding from Riverstreet, from AEP, and from the county and position that to secure about \$21.2 million from VATI to get this project going. Our estimated cost is around just under \$6,000 per location pass," he said.

Taylor said AEP will run the middle mile, or the fiber that runs along the main routes and down the streets, while Riverstreet runs the last miles.

"So, those are going to be the drops basically coming from the poles to the homes, or it might be from the poles to the junction location where it might be feeding into a neighborhood that maybe the neighborhood has got all

buried infrastructure so there's no poles there," he said.

Taylor said AEP and Riverstreet engineers are working on getting the construction timeline put together.

"As soon as I have a hard and committed to timeline from them, I'll release that to the county as well as the board of supervisors and come back and do an update," he said.

Taylor said this project is part of a three-county project for Franklin County, Henry County, and Patrick County.

"I know AEP has already started construction in Franklin County on that portion," he said.

Citizens addressed to be served can go to www.MyRiverstreet.net and go to 'The Future is Fiber' and select their county to explore options. Those without internet can call Riverstreet's toll-free number at (844) 238-0131.

Taylor said the service isn't extended to the house or the business until an order is placed.

"Once someone places an order, then Riverstreet covers the first 2,000 feet of the cost to install fiber. So, if your house is within 2,000 feet of that pole line where the middle mile fiber is at, there's no cost to you to sign up and get the service," he said.

If there is more than 2,000 feet drop from the pole line to the house, then Riverstreet will extend a cost of \$5 per additional foot.

"So, we still cover the first

2,000 feet, but it's up to \$5 per additional foot after that," he said.

Taylor said Riverstreet participates in the Virginia Line Extension Customer Assistance Program (LECAP) program, where households that have a median income of less than \$180,000 will have the additional cost of hookup covered by LECAP.

"There's no cost to the homeowner at that time," he said.

AEP External Affairs Manager Amanda Cox said crew are out in the field doing work like distribution analysis, fiber engineering, and environmental activities.

"We are nailing down last mile design with Riverstreet. We should have that, and I believe in the next couple of weeks you should see some start-stop construction along the way, but after that you should see some really solid progress when the designs come in," she said.

Cox said AEP will work on making ready projects like pole replacement, ensuring that everything is in line for Riverstreet.

"We will be starting on the edge of Henry County, and we'll also start Henry County's right there on the edge of Patrick. So, we will build from the border of both of those segments and that will allow our resources to bounce back and forth between the counties to get work done more effectively and more efficiently," she said.

Proposal seeks to expand access to diabetes prevention programming

Last week, Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) and Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) along with U.S. Reps Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) introduced the PREVENT DIABETES Act, bipartisan, bicameral legislation that would make diabetes prevention care for those on Medicare permanent and more accessible online in order to help address widespread disparities in access to diabetes care in medically underserved communities, including Black and Latino communities and rural areas.

"As the father of a Type 1 diabetic, I know how important consistent and reliable care is for patients' health, but too many Virginians still struggle to get the care they deserve. This legislation will save lives by expanding access to diabetes prevention programs virtually," said Warner.

"Too many South Carolinians in vulnerable communities are struggling to manage diabetes," said Sen. Scott. "Our bill aims to expand access to life-saving healthcare options by opening the door to virtual suppliers. We can and must ensure everyone in the Palmetto State—regardless of race, background, or zip code—has the support they deserve to manage their healthcare needs."

"Tens of millions of Americans live with either diabetes or prediabetes," said Rep. DeGette, Co-Chair of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus. "Taking on diabetes requires a comprehensive approach to stopping type 2 diabetes before its onset. Our bill makes CDC-recognized diabetes prevention programs more accessible to Medicare beneficiaries at risk of diabetes, particularly those in rural areas and others who may not be able to attend an in-person diabetes prevention program. With a growing number of patients opting for virtu-

al care, our PREVENT DIABETES Act will help more Americans learn about how they can avoid this disease."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is a higher prevalence of diabetes within minority populations. Diabetes affects 16.4% of Black adults, 14.9% percent of Asian adults, and 14.7% of Latino adults, compared to 11.9% of white adults. To expand access to diabetes prevention programs, the PREVENT DIABETES Act would make permanent the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP), which is currently a demonstration program. The MDPP leverages evidence-based interventions to prevent the full onset of Type 2 diabetes in at-risk Medicare beneficiaries. The legislation would also make the program more accessible by allowing virtual suppliers to participate.

In October 2019, Warner and Scott wrote to then-U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar urging him to expand the program by administrative action. The senators wrote another letter in April of 2020, requesting that beneficiaries be allowed to access the program via a virtual platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. HHS temporarily allowed individuals to access the program via a virtual platform, but this administrative change still excludes a number of providers and does not ensure long-term access to a virtual benefit.

As part of their efforts to craft a framework of solutions, Warner and Scott introduced the PREVENT DIABETES Act in 2020 and again in 2021. Companion legislation in the House of Representatives is led by Reps. Bilirakis and DeGette.

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Williams offers review of General Assembly session

By Taylor Boyd
Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, spoke about his experiences in the 2024 General Assembly session at a recent meeting of the Patrick County Republican Committee.

With more than 30 new members of the House of Delegates, Williams said he was promoted in rank.

"We only had six or seven, but we lost a lot of people that were above. So, I went from 85 to 54. Then divide that basically in two, and now I'm sitting in the high 20s," he said.

With this, Williams said he was able to get a better position on the Transportation Committee, which will help with roads and air travel.

"There's a lot of stuff happening in" the aviation "field with Boeing coming to Virginia and also Dulles and Reagan (airports). There's a lot going on in transportation," he said.

Williams was also put on the Commerce and Labor Committee, specifically the Energy Committee, where Williams said he poked holes in bills sponsored by legislators on the other side.

"One of the things was \$15 an hour for farm labor, and so you can't imagine what \$15 an hour would do to our food prices. I explained that, and they still don't care. Truly, they don't care," he said.

Williams said there was once a conversation about Jiff Peanut Butter and the price increase.

"The Democrats came in and said, 'well, you can buy Food Lion peanut butter and it's cheaper.' As if they were going to say the generic is cheaper. So, I told them, 'we used to have a Food Lion, and now

we don't. We have a food dessert,'" he said.

Williams said he worked on public safety issues as a member of the Criminal sub-committee, and added that he's the only lawyer to ever practice criminal law that sits on the criminal sub-committee, "which is insane, but it is what it is. So, I was very regularly showing them the error in their ways," he said.

Williams said one bill he remembers is when some sub-committee members wanted to make trace evidence of drug use anything under an ounce.

"That's not trace, that's felony distribution. I pointed that out, I said, 'look you're telling me under an ounce you can do cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl.' And they were just like, 'well, yeah,'" he said.

Williams said the Northern Virginia (NOVA) Democrats also had a lot of control this year, and believed they were vengeful in intentionally trying to kill every single Republican's bills.

"They said no wins for Republicans," he said.

One bill he brought up and was happy with involved Appalachian Power. In this bill, instead of an increase on December 1, it would change the date to March 1, which meant it would avoid Christmas, winter, "and a number of things," he said.

That bill did not pass, Williams said, and added that one Democrat from Herndon, "which is about as far north as you can get from here, has not a single Appalachian Power rate payer in the district. She killed it along with like four or five



Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, discussed the recent 2024 General Assembly Session.



other Democrats." Williams said he approached them to ask what he should tell his constituents when he returned home after session, and "she said, 'well, you know, maybe next year,'" he said.

One bill that did pass was brought to him by Clint Weidhaas, the chief of Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department. Williams said Weidhaas notified him that volunteer fire departments could not bill insurance companies for the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) they provided.

"Which is striking. I didn't even realize that," he said, and added that he believes the bill will be signed by the governor soon.

In total, seven of Williams' 22 proposed bills passed the Senate and the House of Delegates. He also proposed eight commending resolutions including those commending

the Patrick County High School Baseball Team, Howell's Grocery Store and Restaurant, commending the Galax High School football team, and others.

Solar farms and solar energy have been a battle at the state level, Williams said.

"Some of the bills they brought this year, for instance, take all the local authority over approval of these and send it back to Richmond, which is crazy. There's been some controversy about how much solar could be brought into a county, there were some bills about that," he said.

However, Williams said many so-called solar bills died.

"There were just too far, a lot of them very expensive, just sort of ramming it down your throat legislation. That's where it ended up, still at the local level," he said.

Registration Open for 28th Annual Surry Community College Golf Tournament

Registration is now open for the 28th annual Surry Community College Foundation Woltz-Harold Golf Tournament, scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 19, at Cross Creek Country Club in Mount Airy. Tee times are at 8 a.m. and 1:15 p.m.

The SCC Foundation Golf Committee is actively seeking golfers and sponsorships at a variety of price points.

Each year, approximately \$225,000 to \$260,000 in scholarships is awarded by the SCC Foundation to students including endowed and pass-through scholarships. Money is also set aside to help students through the Student Emergency Fund. The SCC Foundation has held a golf tournament for 28 years to raise money for student scholarships, netting more than \$1.44 million.

The tournament honors past SCC Foundation

board of directors Pat Woltz and Bobby Harold who personally endowed scholarships for students and volunteered annually for the golf tournament.

Tournament winners do not receive prizes. Instead, scholarships will be awarded to students in the name of winning teams for the 2024-2025 school year.

Players may participate individually or in teams. Breakfast, lunch, and an evening meal will be provided for all players, with various levels of recognition available within the sponsorship



Golfers travel between holes on the beautiful Cross Creek Country Club course at the 2023 tournament. Registration is now open for this year's 28th annual Surry Community College Foundation Woltz-Harold Golf Tournament, scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 19, at Cross Creek Country Club in Mount Airy. To register to play or become a sponsor, visit surry.edu/golf.

Nutrition Workshop

Friday, April 26th 6:30 pm

Unity Fellowship Building
4337 Unity Church Rd. Ararat, VA.

Join certified nutritionist, Kathleen Loveland and learn how to nourish your skin from the inside out.

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Preregister by April 25th at paypal.me/KathleenJimLoveland or in person. For questions, call 276-692-6325.



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packages. Committee members include Susan Harold Thomas, Gary Harold, Peggy Rees, Alice Connolly, Marion Venable, Jerry Venable, Ann Vaughn and Jim York, along with SCC Foundation Executive Director Sheila Franklin and SCC President Dr. David Shockley.

To register to play or become a sponsor, visit surry.edu/golf. Registration forms can also be completed and mailed to the SCC Foundation at 630 South Main Street, Dobson, NC 27017. Please contact Sheila Franklin, SCC Foundation Executive Director, at (336) 386-3205 or franklins@surry.edu for additional information.



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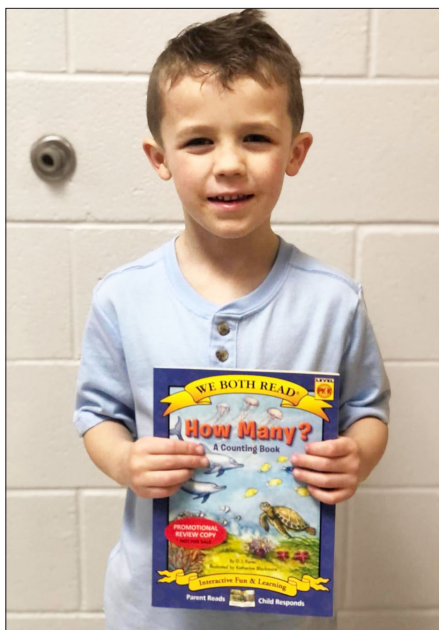
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Third quarter winners in WES reading program announced

Woolwine Elementary School recently announced the names of its top readers who participated in the Warrior Reading program during the third quarter. Each student who reached their grade level goal received a free snack and a free personal pan pizza from Pizza Hut. In addition, students who read the most books in each grade level also received a free book. The school congratulates all, and hopes youngsters will keep reading.

The top readers are:



Pre-K—Miles Foley.



Kindergarten—Lexi Hubbard.



First Grade—Joanna Shelton.



Second Grade—Sterling Martin.



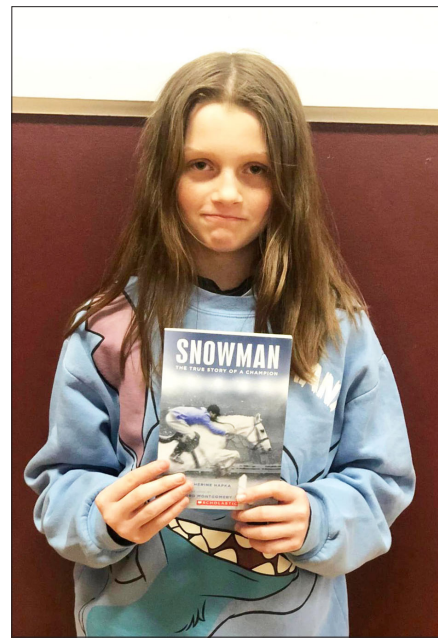
Third Grade—Melissa Hughes.



Fourth Grade—Sophia Otero-Garcia.



Fifth Grade—Blake Belcher.



Sixth Grade—Lacie Bullins.



Seventh Grade—Paisley Shuff.

Spend Earth Day at one of Virginia's 42 state parks



Volunteers at Caledon State Park.

In recognition of Earth Day, Virginia State Parks are hosting more than 50 events to celebrate and preserve the natural wonders of the commonwealth. From educational programs to hands-on conservation efforts, the parks invite visitors of all ages to join in honoring our planet and taking action for a sustainable future.

“We believe that Earth Day is not just a day to celebrate, but it’s also a day to act,” said Virginia State Parks Director Dr. Melissa Baker. “Our goal is to empower individuals to make a positive impact on the environment, both within our parks and beyond. By coming together as a community, we can create lasting change for the betterment of our planet.”

With a mission to conserve and protect Virginia’s natu-

ral resources, Virginia State Parks have long been at the forefront of environmental stewardship. On Earth Day, they reaffirm their commitment to conservation through a range of engaging activities and initiatives.

From April 20 through April 28, visitors can participate in a variety of Earth Day service projects, including trail cleanups, invasive plant removal, seed and tree planting, and bird box building. Additionally, educational programs will be offered to raise awareness about environmental issues and inspire visitors to take action in their communities.

There will be something for everyone this Earth Day at Virginia State Parks. To learn more, go to virginiastateparks.gov/earthday.

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Uptown Gardens Ready for Spring

The Winter Gardens Uptown have been cleaned and prepared for spring. More than 140 snapdragons, dianthus and pansies have been planted. The Patrick County Master Gardeners Association members Sherry Easterbrooks, Denise Smith, Ginnie Conaway and Dee Nolan participated. Associates not pictured are Judy Ferring and Denny Jenkins.

Community meeting held in Ararat



Pictured, left to right, are Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith, Virginia State Trooper Robert Lawson, and Patrick County deputy Eric Sain. (Photo by Mary Dellenback Hill.)

Willis Gap Community Center held its Community Crime Watch meeting on Thursday, April 11. Patrick County Sheriff's deputy Eric Sain opened the meeting with general comments, and Sheriff Dan Smith spoke. Virginia State Trooper Robert Lawson was the guest speaker. He talked about the ins and outs of his job and presented a brief history on his background as a graduate of Patrick County High School before joining the state po-

lice and serving six years in Chesapeake. He then was transferred closer to home.

Refreshments, including a homemade lemon cake by Waymond Dawson and brownies by Dispatcher Campbell were served. Others donated vegetables, dip, and corn chips, with assorted drink offerings.

The next meeting is planned for Thursday, July 11 at the center, which is located at 144 The Hollow Road, Ararat.

Vintage Plants Added to PCMGA Plant Sale



Peggy Goad invited several members of the Patrick County Master Gardeners Association to her home this week to collect plants from her well-known decades-old personal gardens. These plants, including several amaryllis, were donated as part of the PCMGA Annual Plant Sale on May 4.

Members said they enjoyed working with Goad, appreciated her hospitality and interest in the association.

Patrick County Master Gardeners Association members Sherry Easterbrooks, Ginnie Conaway, Judy Ferring, Dee Nolan and Tom DeBusk (not pictured) assisted Peggy Goad.

Congressional staff to hold local hours

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith's staff will hold office hours in the City of Martinsville and Patrick County on April 24.

Hours in Martinsville are 10 - 11:30 a.m., City Hall, Council Chambers, Second Floor, 55 W. Church Street.

Staff will be in Patrick County 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.

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