



THE ENTERPRISE

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Process underway to fill vacant seat

By Taylor Boyd
Work is being done to refill the vacant Dan River District seat on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors.

Brandon Simmons, who was sworn into the position in 2022, resigned on April 25, effective immediately. The term is set to end December 31, 2025.

County Administrator Beth Simms said the board will accept applications from qualified voters of the district to fill the newly vacated seat.

"Applications will be available on Patrick County's website beginning May 3 and will close on May 17. The Board of Supervisors plans to review applications and make an appointment in late May/early June to fill the seat until the special election in November 2024," she said.

Doug Perry, acting chairman, said if an interim member is not chosen and sworn in 45 days after Simmons' resignation, the court will appoint an interim member.

Perry, of the Smith River District, was elected to serve as vice-chairman of the board in January. He will serve as the new chairman for the remainder of the year.

The board rotates the chairman and vice-chairman positions. Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, would be the new vice-chairman.

"Then come January, it would be the board's decision. Do I finish out Dan River's term and then, I do another year as Smith River's term, or do we just

consider this my term and then pass it on to Blue Ridge District which would be next," Perry pondered. "We will have that decision to make I guess come January."

Regarding Simmons' decision, Perry said he will miss him.

"I certainly think very highly of Brandon, he will be missed. I hate it, but I truly understand. I know he's got a lot going on and it's always so much, so I understand," he said.

Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, said he hates the fact that Simmons left the board.

"I talked to him, I guess last week or the week before, but he explained to me that he had the kids that he needed to spend time with, and they were active in sports and all that. I told him that family had to come first before anything else," Kendrick said.

Marshall said he supports Simmons' decision.

"I think it's right for him to do that if that's what he feels he needs to do," Marshall said. "He has young children, and he's taking time away from them to volunteer to help the community here."

Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, said it's been good working with Simmons over the last few months.

"I wish him only the best," he said.

Those who want to be considered for the seat may find the application online at <https://www.co.patrick.va.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=45>.



Derek Wagner and Joanne Spangler.

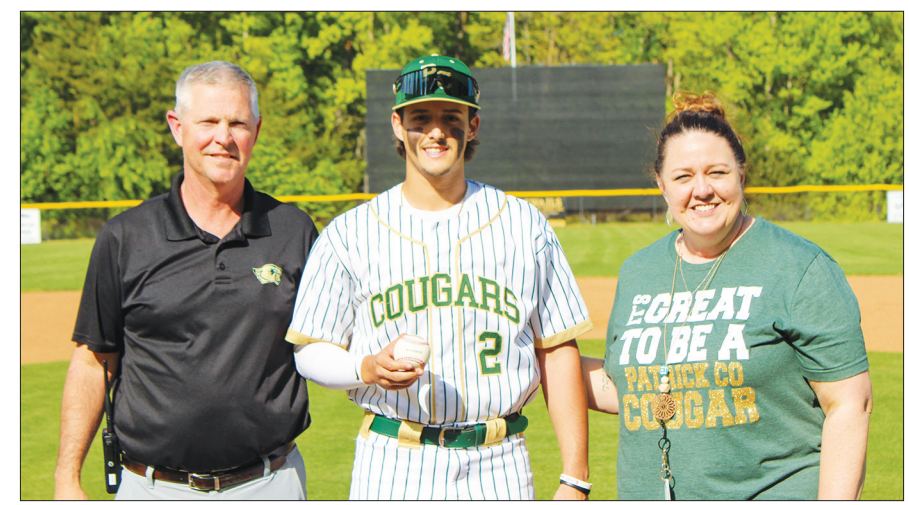
Squad weighs its next steps; expects a decision this month

By Taylor Boyd
After furloughing its paid staff in mid-April, Jeb Stuart Rescue Squad is considering the future and weighing all of its options.

"We're not trying to make a rush decision," President Derek Wagner said of the squad that is dealing with a \$40,000 to \$50,000 shortfall.

In January, the squad "requested \$100,000 per year from the county, or \$25,000 per quarter to help offset operational costs."

(See Stuart Rescue Squad p. 3)



Tucker Swails was presented with his 300th strikeout ball by Patrick County athletic director Terry Harris and principal, Hope Perry.



Tucker Swails pitches during the May 3 game against Alleghany.

Tucker Swails joins elite 300 strikeout club

By Pat Delaney
Cougar senior pitcher Tucker Swails hit a major milestone in his high school career, throwing his 300th strikeout against Glenvar on April 23. His 16 strikeout, two-hit performance placed him in elite company and within striking distance of the top 10 all-time in Virginia high school baseball.

Tucker entered his senior season with 238 strikeouts and as of May 3, has added 72 more this season, bringing his total up to 310. Patrick County High athletic director Terry Harris and

principal Hope Perry presented Tucker with the 300th strikeout ball in an April 25 pre-game ceremony.

"It's pretty awesome, it is. I'm very blessed," Tucker said of his achievements. Asked if he has thought of how few pitchers in state history have thrown more strikeouts, he said, "It pops into my mind every once in a while, but I'm really wanting to get into the top 10."

"He's not done. He's probably going to have, if things work out, five or six more starts. His goal is 350," said Cougar head coach and Tucker's fa-

ther, Tal Swails. "He strikes a lot of guys out. He's a strikeout pitcher, and he does it a lot."

Father and son, along with assistant coach and grandfather Sonny Swails, do not underestimate how special it is to be among the all-time best pitchers in Virginia high school history, but doing it together makes it even more memorable.

"It's pretty awesome to be able to come out here and work every day with my dad and my grandpa," said Tucker. "They definitely pushed

(See Tucker Swails p. 3)

Officials from P&HCC make case for funding

By Taylor Boyd
Officials with Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) attended the April 29 Patrick County Board of Supervisors work session to request the county not cut funds for the Stuart site during the ongoing fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 budget process.

P&HCC is set to receive \$15,000 of its requested \$17,000 for FY25. The organization received \$10,000 in the current budget year.

Dr. Greg Hodges, president of P&HCC, said the three-year revenue total for the P&HCC Stuart site's FY21-23 was \$2,273,760. Its expenses were \$2,269,789, and it had a net operating gain of \$3,971.

Hodges said equipment investments for the various training programs offered for the three years is \$933,724.

"All of these have been able to be procured because we've been able to show that Patrick County as a body, as a municipality, contributes dollars to Patrick & Henry Community College. We would not have been able to procure a single one of these without showing a degree of match coming, even small dollars, candidly, that there are contributions coming from Patrick County," he said.

Hodges said \$424,796 from the P&HCC Foundation Scholarships was also awarded over the three



Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) President Dr. Greg Hodges and P&HCC Vice-President of Workforce, Economic & Community Development Rhonda Hodges discussed the funding for the P&HCC Stuart site.

fiscal years.

According to a study through the Virginia Community College (VCCC) system by Lightcast, a company that specializes in labor market data and analytics, Hodges said that for every dollar that a student spends, they get back \$3.80 in lifetime earnings.

"For every dollar that a community invests in taxpayer dollars, that community receives back \$1.70 over the lifetime of that

(See P&HCC p.3)



Etta Owens and Lyndon Slate watered flowers they planted on the Trails of Rotary system.

Trail system opens at Rotary Field

By Taylor Boyd
The 1.4-mile Trails of Rotary system officially opened beside Rotary Field in Stuart on Friday, May 3.

The trail system begins beside the soccer area and is broken into three different trail loops, including a 0.5-mile loop, a 0.6-mile loop, and a 0.8-mile loop.

Rotary Club of Stuart President Sam Harrod said the system includes a trail for everyone.

"If you want a shorter trail, you can take it. If you want to do the whole thing you can do it. It's really nice down by the creek," he said.

When first entering the trail system, Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) member and Rotarian Wayne Kirkpatrick said visitors have the option of going straight for the 0.5-mile loop or the 0.6-mile loop, or a slight right for the 0.8-mile loop.

The 0.6-mile "trail goes by the cemetery on one side and then it

cuts down the hollow on the backside of the property." The other two trails "are interconnected on the other end together," he said.

Kirkpatrick said the large QR code on the kiosk provides visitors with a copy of the trail map on their cell phones.

"There are signposts at every intersection, and they'll show you left, right, or straight ahead. The backside of the signs denotes parking, so it leads you back here," he said.

Kirkpatrick said trail visitors can't get lost.

"You might think you are, but you're not," he said with a chuckle. "Once you walk through it one time, you'll know exactly what you're doing."

Harrod said the trail system was in the works for about two years.

"This last year we got a Rotary" matching "grant to fix it up, and we just finished it pretty much

(See Trail System p.11)

Benefit ride set to help local family

God's Revenge is hosting Drivin' For David, a benefit ride to support David Cassell, a Patrick County man who was recently injured in a car accident. The ride will start and end in the CVS/Food Country parking lot in Stuart on Saturday, May 25.

Registration and other activities begin at 11 a.m. All vehicles are welcome. Engines start and kickstands go up at 1 p.m. The cost is \$20 per vehicle and \$5 per additional rider. Children under 15 enter for free. All donations go towards David and his family's needs.

Items currently needed include size 7 Pampers diapers and baby wipes. For donation pick up, call or text Cody at (336) 552-7721, or Dena at (276) 692-6824. Donations collected will be picked up the week leading up to the event. All donations will be given to David's parents who are helping take care of him.

before the ride, with prize drawings held after. You must be present to win. Businesses, churches, and individuals are asked for any support possible. Options include cash and item donations, sponsorships, raffle prizes, and sharing our flyer to spread the word.

Raffle tickets will be on sale before the ride.



Summer Camp students enjoyed activities at Reynolds Homestead camps last year. (Photos by Kristin Hylton for Virginia Tech.)



Reynolds Homestead announces summer camp offerings

Virginia Tech's Reynolds Homestead summer camp offerings this year will include opportunities for children ranging from early elementary through high school. The day camps will be offered in late June and July, and registration is open now.

The camp season starts June 24-27 with NatureNauts' Discovery Camp. Local educator Adrienne Hiatt will offer hands-on learning experiences integrating science, technology, engineering, arts, and math through nature exploration. Students can expect to learn about scientific experimentation, environmental science, biodiversity, and sustainability, and exercise their skills in critical thinking, project planning, and creativity. Open to learners ages 9 to 13 (4th to 7th grades), the camp is from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and costs \$50 per camper.

From July 15-18, the Reynolds Homestead will host "Bugs Taking Over the

World" art camp. This creative exploration of nature will dive into a world of imagination, with students dreaming up scenarios in which bugs are overtaking the world. Led by Grace Helms, campers will explore the importance of insects in our ecosystem through art projects, guided nature walks, and interactive learning sessions. A public reception will be held on Thursday, July 18 at 12 p.m. for friends and family to view the diverse art portfolio created during the week. Art camp will run from 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and is open to ages 7-12. The cost is \$50 per camper.

From July 22-26, the Reynolds Homestead is offering Young Women Trailblazers, an opportunity for rising 10th graders and up to explore careers and leadership while developing new skills and relationships. The Young Women Trailblazers program is designed to explore a broad range of ca-

reers and the tools needed to explore individual interests and skills to build a successful path forward. Registration information and more details about all summer camps at the Reynolds Homestead can be found on the website at www.reynoldshomestead.vt.edu.

Chamber Chat

By Rebecca Adcock

April activities moved as fast as the tree bud-ded.

The Patrick County Magazines Spring 2024 are here! I hope that you have been able to pick up a copy, although many of our locations we are having to restock regularly. Once again, the group effort of the Chamber, Patrick County Tourism and SilverLining Design has created a great magazine that spotlights our community. Articles in this issue include a history of the Wood Brothers Racing team and how they are still a family run team, the 2023 Virginia State Patrick County Cougar Baseball team, the Star Theatre shining bright again, as well as other hidden gems and information from our county. This magazine would not be possible without the businesses and organizations that advertise in it. Please take time to thank them.

The chamber attended the Patrick County Tourism Summit organized by Patrick County Tourism. Again, this was a great event connecting our local partners with state and regional ones on how tourism is an economic driver for our county. I also attended the CTE advisory meeting at Patrick County High School. The county should be proud of this program, it has the ability to offer 42 classes and many students are able to graduate with an industry accredited certification. As our state educational system focuses more on work-based learning, our CTE program is ready to meet and exceed that demand. If you are a business, I hope that you will reach out to work with our



high school in order to help them and in return possibly find new employees.

The middle of the month was reserved for almost a week-long training session in Alabama. I had the privilege of being part of the group from Patrick County that was selected to attend the Appalachian Regional Commission's Gateway Communities Initiative. This training helped our group define steps we can take to leverage the availability and usage of public lands for economic development and community growth. We are excited to continue the work at home. Don't worry, we shared with everyone at the conference a copy of the Patrick County Magazine.

The chamber hosted the informal seminar "How to Start a Business in Patrick County." We had several interested parties come out and start the conversations of what types of businesses they would like to start. We hope that we can continue to encourage them along their journey, and we gain more businesses for our community.

The chamber assisted

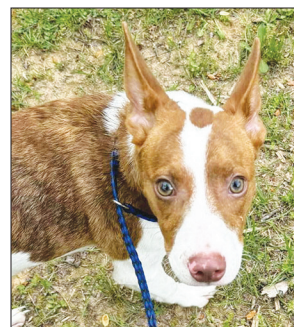
the Reynolds Homestead in starting the conversation related to Work-Based Learning. This event brought employers and service providers to the table to discuss how we can encourage more students to take advantage of opportunities that exist here and let them know what types of experiences are available in Patrick County. We are home to some amazing businesses that manufacture goods that are shipped across the country, from candy from Nancy's Candy Company to motor parts at Worley Machines and everything in between.

As we begin May, the chamber will be working on events and programming for the Fall. We will be working to duplicate our Economic Summit to focus our information for small businesses in the county. We will also be starting the process of advertisements and article selection for the Fall 2024 Patrick County Magazine. Winners from our April Pick-Up Patrick Campaign will be announced. Thank you to all the groups and individuals who got out and picked up litter in your area. If you need any assistance, feel free to reach out to the Chamber.

Welcome new Chamber Members: Jamie's Recycling Center, LLC, The Estate & Elder Law of Southwest Virginia, Ridge Crest Retirement Community, Blue Ridge Airport Authority.

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

Pets of the Week



This gorgeous lady was found on Witcher Dr. She is someone's spoiled girl, but is so stressed right now that she is not eating and not responding to us. She would be devoted to the person who adopted her. If anyone recognizes her, please let us know.

This young female was picked up on Community Church Lane. She is adorable with her big ears, and is waiting for someone to come adopt her.

Adoption fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and a rabies vaccination. Visit the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter (PCPAS) Facebook page to view available pets or call (276) 694-6259 for more information.

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Stuart Rescue Squad

(cont. from page 1)

“As closed session discussions have now been publicly disclosed by JEB Stuart Rescue Squad Captain and newly elected President Derek Wagner, Patrick County has been in discussions and offered multiple solutions to JEB Stuart Rescue Squad in response to their financial issues,” County Administrator Beth Simms said in a release.

Wagner “and other JEB Stuart board members advised Patrick County that they would not be operational after June 1,” Simms wrote, and added the county “remains open to conversations with JEB Stuart Rescue Squad’s leadership on funding solutions to keep emergency services personnel operating out of the JEB Stuart Rescue Squad facility,” she said.

Currently, the squad is looking at the cons and pros of options that include “coming under the county,” or meeting with an attorney that specializes in nonprofit agencies to figure out where it stands and potential actions/outcomes Wagner said.

“That’s just like going under the county, what all does that entail,” he asked. The potential loss of control of the building is a concern, and details have been slow to materialize.

At a meeting with county officials, Wagner said it is his understanding that if the squad came under the county, it would do away with its EMS agency number and its building would go under the county.

A paid truck (from Station 8) would be moved “to our building. They said they needed sleeping quarters, a day room, and stuff like that, and they would operate a paid crew out of our building.

“When we asked would the entire EMS Office (across from Subway) be moved to our building,” Wagner said squad representatives were told the logistics had not yet been worked out.

The county would take over billing and other financial operations of the squad, and the county also would collect payments from patients, Wagner said.

It is also his understanding that the squad would maintain its nonprofit status and co-exist with the county, but “we don’t know if we

would still keep our offices. Like where would we operate our 501©3? The basement of my house,” he asked. “It’s hard to figure out what you can do and what you can’t do. If they’re wanting us to keep our non-profit and our stuff from there, well, what’s the point in it.”

The squad has been told “you can still have your breakfasts,” and other fundraising events, Joanne Spangler, treasurer, said. “Okay, you collect that money from that, but what are you going to spend that money on because you no longer have a squad?”

If all of the squad’s assets are county-owned, why would the agency need to raise money, Wagner said is another concern.

Spangler said the squad’s paid service predated the county’s “because the county was sitting there twiddling their thumbs, and they didn’t know what to do. So, the hospital shut down, and we started paid service at our station trying to pick up everything that we can and help the county out when they needed it.

“But now that we need it, it seems like they’re not willing to help us,” she said, adding the squad doesn’t see the county’s options as being for the benefit of the squad.

The squad’s revenues last year totaled \$446,060.23, while its expenses were \$239,046.83, plus unpaid current bills.

Wagner said the squad got into financial straits because of general operating costs, such as maintaining ambulances, and the increasing costs of fuel and supplies.

“We spent \$33,000 on fuel alone last year,” Wagner said. The squad also responded to more calls than other squads, including the backup service, Station 8, funded by the county.

In comparison, the nonprofit squad that ran the second-highest number of calls spent around \$4,000 for fuel, Spangler said.

Another “thing that’s really got us now is the Medicare/Medicaid issue with their billing where they had the ransomware or breach in their system or whatever,” she said. “When I talked to our billing agency, they said they were having to do everything manually,” which

means it takes longer to get paid for services. “Everybody’s having that issue,” Spangler said.

Even when payment is received, Wagner said Medicaid pays anywhere from 20 to 30 percent of a bill. About 75-80 percent of the calls the squad responds to are from Medicaid clients.

Spangler estimates the squad, which soft bills, has been paid for three or four calls. While she didn’t have the total number of the outstanding calls it is owed for, it’s “a lot of calls.”

With its soft billing, Wagner said the squad sends the bill to collections but “that’s as far as we take it. We do send them to collections because we don’t want them to forget about their bill. Hopefully, we’re encouraging them to reach out and talk to us about the bill.”

However, “We do not do court orders, garnish wages, or any of that. We don’t do anything. After collections, it goes no further,” he said.

In the past, each squad has received an annual allocation of \$16,075 from the county. Squads must file an annual audit with the county.

Simms said the county’s proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year includes a 50 percent increase of funding for volunteer fire departments and a 31 percent increase for volunteer rescue squads.

Wagner said the squad has received a few donations since announcing it requested additional funds from the county, but is still facing a shortfall.

Wagner said patient care is the top priority. However, the business part of it also is important.

“It is a business,” Wagner said. “You can’t go over to” a doctor’s “office and get your blood pressure checked for free. You can’t go to an urgent care and be seen for free. You can’t go to the emergency room, doctors’ office, or anything like that” and be seen for free.

“I don’t understand why everybody thinks EMS has to be the only one that soft bills,” he said, and added that he expects the squad will reach a decision sometime in May.

Tucker Swails

(cont. from page 1)

me to do my best. It’s pretty cool.”

“I’ve watched him since he was seven years old when he started pitching, and he’s been special since the beginning,” said Tal Swails. “He has an ability to pitch that God blessed him with. I’ve had a great seat from the dugout for a long time and he never ceases to amaze me.”

“Proud is probably an understatement,” continued Tal Swails. “He’s fun to watch, and he’s just a good kid. He’s a great teammate, a pretty damn good shortstop, pretty good hitter and loves the game. When somebody loves it that much and has that type of success, it’s just fun. It’s special.”

Tal Swails has witnessed the years of hard work Tucker has put in, paying off. “He works. He works all the time. If he’s not in here (field house), he down there (on the field), if he’s not there, he’s in the gym, if he’s not in the gym, he’s in the training room taking care of his body, and in the middle of all that, he’s top 10 in his class.”

P&HCC

(cont. from page 1)

student for the economic impact that they bring to the community in upskilling and job obtainment,” Hodges said. “In society as a whole, that community gains \$4.10 on things like reduced dependency on state benefits, incarceration, drug addictions, all of which are enhanced by education and training.”

Rhonda Hodges, vice-president of Workforce, Economic & Community Development, said the college has tried to be strategic over the past 5 to 10 years in its local workforce development expansion.

“That really begins with education and industry working together, and that’s all about relationships. We have an amazing team here led by Angie Brown who has built a lot of relationships,” said Rhonda Hodges, who is no relation to Greg Hodges.

The college worked strategically to add the welding expansion to Patrick County High School (PCHS) juniors and senior students in addition to the dual enrollment program, Rhonda Hodges said.

“Students are able to earn some certifications - some of them American Welding Society (AWS) certifications - while they’re in high school, and then finish up through an associate degree at Patrick & Henry if that’s their desire,” she said. “When they get those AWS certifications, they’re immediately employable as a welder.”

Rhonda Hodges said manufacturing continues to be a critical employment sector in Southwest Virginia, although it is different than it was in the past. To provide the needed skillset for those jobs, she said P&HCC brought its mechatronics training program to the Baliles-Reynolds Learning Center.

“We put about \$600,000 worth of equipment in there dealing with PLCs, mechanical training systems, fluid power systems, and robot-

ics. Classes for academic credit have been offered in mechatronics to dual-enrolled students,” she said.

For workforce development, Rhonda Hodges said P&HCC offers sessions with Fast Forward programs, which are short-term, non-credit training programs that can lead to industry certifications or credentials.

Local businesses such as Insight Textiles and Ten Oaks, LLC have enrolled employees in that program to train and upskill them about the new automation in their facilities.

Rhonda Hodges said P&HCC partnered with Wytheville Community College in early 2023 to get a grant to develop the pole yard at PCHS to offer a powerline worker training program in Patrick County.

“We began the program in the fall, and we’ve had seven graduates that finished up in December. We currently have seven students enrolled in that program as well,” she said.

PCHS students currently cannot take classes that use the pole yard due to their age and safety concerns.

For the expended learning program, Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, asked how much P&HCC paid versus Patrick County.

Greg Hodges said when the idea was formed, he was approached by former school superintendent Dr. William Sroufe, who indicated he would provide the space and the college would cover everything else.

“We didn’t have the money for the equipment, and so we went to the Tobacco Commission to ask them to provide the equipment, and they said they don’t fund high schools. So, we came back to the superintendent at the time and said we’re going to have to get creative because we don’t have the dollars,” he said.

man year, we won three or four games. We won 23 last year and we’re at 14 (as of 4/29) right now, so we’ve improved. We’re starting to put the school on notice that baseball is a really good program.”

“I’m going to miss it,” said Tucker of his time at PCHS. “I’m going to miss all my buddies, and playing with them my whole life.” He’s looking forward to, “a new start. Got to meet new people. Got to compete at the next level.”

That next level will be playing for Virginia Tech next year. “It’s going to be a lot of work. I’m excited. I’m going to be surrounded by guys who are just as good or better than me and that’s going to make me better every day.”

For the rest of his senior year, he knows what he wants to achieve. Besides reaching the top 10 all-time in strikeouts, Tucker wants to “win player of the year again, and hopefully win another ring.”

Greg Hodges said subsequent superintendents have been generous in allowing P&HCC to do dual enrollment during the day and the adult welding lab in the evening.

“We took that back to the Tobacco Commission and they agreed. (It was the) first time in the Tobacco Commission’s history they have agreed to provide for that because it is a dual-function lab. So, long answer to your short question, we provide the equipment, we got it grant funded, and the only way we got it grant funded is because we showed your match your dollars that you put up,” he said.

Wood inquired about students’ tuition and the amount P&HCC gets in return.

Greg Hodges said it’s at capacity and there’s a waiting list, but he did not have the exact number.

Considering the locality’s workforce is a precursor to industry locating in the county, Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, said he appreciates what P&HCC does.

“I wish I could get this return investment on my own investments,” he said.

In other matters, the board:

*Discussed the proposed FY2024-2025 budget.

*Awarded the contract for FY2024-2025 health insurance renewal to Anthem with the premium increase share being 50-50 between the employer and the employees. Employees also have the option of two Preferred Provider Organizations (PPO) and two Point of Service (POS) plans as presented.

*Approved the signature of approval on the environmental review for the Business Development Center (BDC).

*Approved appropriating \$700,000 from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funds for the construction of the BDC.

Healthcare Hack

Our country is experiencing a massive shift in technology. Our daily activities often revolve around computers and smartphones.

Our Information Technology (IT) infrastructure grows daily. But so do the threats of cyberattacks.

This week, the Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations, which I chair, held a hearing focused on the fallout from the February 2024 cyberattack on Change Healthcare.

Change Healthcare (Change), a UnitedHealth subsidiary that was acquired by them in 2022, operates the largest Electronic Data Interchange clearinghouse in the nation, transmitting more than 15 billion transactions every year.

When the hack was discovered, UnitedHealth shut down its Change Healthcare networks. This action had profound consequences for providers and patients.

According to the American Hospital Association, 94 percent of hospitals reported being financially impacted by the cyberattack. Hospitals, clinics, medical practices and pharmacies across the country were prevented from getting paid and could not submit claims. Stopping all payments on claims made it difficult for providers and patients. An unknown number of patients had their care delayed.

These consequences were widely discussed on a bipartisan basis during the hearing, which featured UnitedHealth CEO, Sir Andrew Witty.

Patients reeled from this cut-off, prompting them to either walk away, pay large sums of money out of pocket for their medications or borrow money. I am sure some had to use credit cards with high interest rates.

NBC News reported patients not being able to afford their medication without copay assistance cards, such as patients at the Marion Family Pharmacy in Marion, Virginia.

One individual was forced to pay \$1,100 for medication because the Marion pharmacy was unable to process her copay assistance card.

When I raised this issue to Mr. Witty, I asked how this lady and other people WHO were similarly situated would be made whole for their loss. He seemed empathetic.

But it was clear to me that UnitedHealth did not have a plan on how to take care of patients who had been harmed.

He had no answer as to how much paperwork would be requested from a patient in order to be fully reimbursed. It is not just the \$1,100. It's the interest on that money that UnitedHealth got to keep and receive interest on while the patient was possibly paying interest to a lender.

There is also the possibility of increased medical attention needed for patients that were denied medicine or services because their insurance could not be processed.



Morgan Griffith

Representative

I hope in the coming weeks UnitedHealth will formulate a plan for making patients whole.

Another problem is how does UnitedHealth take care of healthcare providers.

Providers were kept in the dark when claims were not being processed and sparked fears of closures. Congresswoman Schrier (D-WA) told Witty a private practitioner in her district had to mortgage their home to make office rent and payroll.

UnitedHealth "helped" them out by giving them a \$70 first-round loan. Big help!

It is true the hackers were the bad guys, but as I said in my opening statement, UnitedHealth's Change did not have Multi Factor Authentication (MFA), which is a standard cyber protection tool. The criminals exploited this weakness allowing them access into the system.

Mr. Witty attributed the technology failure to Change's outdated system.

As the largest health care conglomerate in the United States, this response was concerning.

Over 50 percent of U.S. medical claims are processed through Change's EDI clearinghouse. UnitedHealth Group's vast network encompasses Optum, Optum Rx pharmacies, urgent care centers, United Healthcare Medicare and Retirement plans, including AARP Medicare plans, 10,000 doctors and other subsidiaries.

Given UnitedHealth's sweeping consolidation of medical companies, the company stands as a prime target for bad actors.

It begs the question whether one company should be able to control a market share of this magnitude in the healthcare arena.

I do not claim to know the answer, but the question must be asked.

UnitedHealth had an obligation to protect their customers. They failed! And they failed to have a secure backup plan.

Small medical practices and hospitals are hurting. But the most vulnerable to this incident were the people showing up at their healthcare provider needing care and at their pharmacy needing to get their medicine.

UnitedHealth has a big mess to clean up. Going forward, my Subcommittee will examine their actions and then we can determine if UnitedHealth is truly committed to rectifying their mistake.

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

Filling the empty place

I would like to comment on a letter in the May 1 issue titled "Practice tolerance, love." The writer mentioned that Easter is about "resurrection of the spirit, of love." To many Christians, Easter, or Resurrection Day, is perhaps the most significant day in all of human history. Indeed, human history is distinguished between the periods before and after Jesus' earthly life. On that first Easter, now more than 2,000 years ago, Jesus of Nazareth, who had been crucified on a Roman cross three days before, was physically raised from death by the power of God's Spirit and emerged from the tomb. For the next 40 days, before ascending into Heaven, the risen Jesus fellowshiped and ate with His closest disciples and was witnessed by hundreds of others in Jerusalem. Without this event—the physical resurrection of Jesus from death—Christianity is meaningless.

Jesus, who was both fully God and fully man, was sent into this world by God the Father to demonstrate His vast, unmeasurable love for us through forgiveness and redemption. Jesus came into this world to save from sin all who would believe in and trust in Him, for if not dealt with, sin would eternally separate us from God. We would not only suffer eventual physical death, we would also suffer eternal spiritual death by separation from our Creator. When Jesus died on the cross, He conquered sin and every work of evil, and when He arose from

the tomb on Sunday, He conquered death and the grave. Through faith in Him, we can have eternal life, in that we will ultimately be both physically and spiritually united with God forever. That is the glory of Easter.

In her letter, the writer emphasized the importance of love. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of love. We use the word "love" in so many ways today, but true love, that which God showed us through Jesus and which Christians are called to show others, is rooted in truth, the truth of who God is. We cannot really know the love of God apart from knowing God, and we can only know God through His Word and spiritual relationship with Him in Jesus, who teaches us to live and abide in God's perfect and good will for our lives. To change our gender, however, is attempting to change who God created us to be. All of us are born with the same empty place in the center of our soul, and we go through life looking to fill it. It cannot be filled with drugs, or sex, or family, or religion, or even good deeds, and it cannot be filled by attempting to change how we were born. That empty place can only be filled by Jesus, the One Easter is all about. He not only has the answers that will satisfy our deepest longings, questions, and uncertainties and heal our deepest hurts—He is the very answer itself. And He is only a prayer away.

David Robinette Jr.,
Patrick Springs

No One Can Know Everything

"Change is the only constant in life." You know this from the writing of revered, ancient philosophers to conversations with your friendly bartender or barista.

Patrick County is being assaulted with change, a lot of it from outside the county. Local politicians are being tempted by big corporate money. Solar farms are just the beginning. The Commonwealth and the federal government are mandating goals that drive these changes (remember that when it's time to vote.)

While our county supervisors wrestle with managing these changes, residents are growing increasingly frustrated with the obvious: Supervisors often don't have the knowledge or experience to make decisions that will affect future generations. During public meetings when residents often have more of a grasp of pertinent fact I that the supervisors, the frustration increase. In such an atmosphere, accusations of bribery can replace understanding.

No one can know everything. The residents don't expect the supervisors to know everything. It is, however, reasonable to expect supervisors to do their homework before voting on important issues, especially in a county without zoning. No, I'm not advocating for a zoning ordinance. I'm advocating for supervisors to take advantage

of the fact that there are residents who can be consulted to bring them up to speed on issues beyond their personal experiences. This implies delaying making a decision until more information is gathered. And yes, developers will be calling them often, reminding the supervisors that expiration dates are approaching, and daily fees are racking up on letters of credit and other sureties until a decision is made. The pressure to act quickly will be unrelenting.

I'm further advocating that, in lieu of a zoning ordinance, conditions be placed on the approval of projects. The conditions can be replicated from one project to another (caution will have to be applied here to avoid unequal treatment in time and possible lawsuits.) Again, taking the time to act smartly from the very beginning can't be overstressed.

Increasing the knowledge of supervisors may also entail listening to all residents. I urge supervisors to avoid any reluctance to include those not born in this county. If they moved here, they probably want to be here. Take advantage of relevant experience where you can find it and forget your egos.

After all, no one can know everything.

Joe Cadrin,
Stuart

May 5-11 is Correctional Officers Week

Many of the more than 8.6 million Virginians likely do not know a corrections officer at the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC), but I guarantee they have benefitted from their hard work and dedication.

This is because correctional officers at the Virginia Department of Corrections work around the clock with our law enforcement partners to provide long-term public safety for all who live, work in, and visit the Commonwealth of Virginia. Our highly trained officers serve on the front lines of our correctional facilities and often face the risk of personal harm. They protect the rest of our corrections team, the state-responsible inmate population, and the whole of Virginia.

Corrections officers do much more in the course of their duties. The VADOC's theme for Correctional Officers Week 2024 is "Public Safety in Action." VADOC corrections officers are constantly in action for the agency and beyond. These officers assist with treatment and rehabilitation programs, which is crucial to the statewide re-entry initiative.

Officers help inmates prepare for a smooth assimilation into their communities after release from VADOC facilities, which aids the department's re-entry success rate.

Additionally, VADOC corrections officers routinely assist their communities at large. I am so proud of our corrections team members who truly understand the importance of community spirit and public service.

I thank our corrections officers at the Virginia Department of Corrections for their service to the Commonwealth. Their work is not easy. In fact, it is often difficult. Despite these challenges, their commitment to ensuring public safety in Virginia never falters. Their professionalism and dedication is truly commendable.

I encourage you to thank any corrections officers in your life, both this week and beyond. Be sure to thank them for their service. Above all, however, remember to thank them for helping to keep you safe.

Chad Dotson, director,
Virginia Department of Corrections

Eviction Defense Center helps VA renters fight eviction

Edwin J. Viera
Virginia News Connection

As Virginia evictions rise, one group is helping low-income renters fight back.

Before the pandemic, evictions peaked at 16,000 in January 2020. An eviction moratorium kept renters housed during part of the pandemic but evictions are growing again.

Phil Storey, director of the Eviction Defense Center at the Virginia Poverty Law Center, said his office helps people navigate housing court.

"We wanted to provide not just information about things they can bring up to the judge to try and affect what happens but also some tools that'll help them do that without having to act as if they were experienced lawyers," Storey explained.

He added eviction laws are better

for tenants, although they still give landlords an advantage. Affordable housing significantly declined in the state leaving many people unable to afford housing. The Eviction Defense Center operates on two websites. English speakers can use FightMyEviction.org and Spanish speakers can use NoDesalojo.org.

While the Eviction Defense Center is still relatively new, Storey is looking for ways to improve and build on it. He added they want to learn from the users taking advantage of the tools being offered.

"Obviously, we'll be able to go sort of peek behind the curtain and see which paths people are following through the information," Storey noted. "If some of them end up as dead ends or if people end up backing out of the decision tree, or things like that. We'll learn things about how to make that all better."

Patrick Pioneers

CCC Company 363, NP-14-VA, Camp Rocky Knob, Part Two

By Beverly Belcher Woody

This week, we will continue looking at life at Company 363 through the CCC Camp newsletters, Rocky Hollow and The Knob, and clippings from the Floyd Press; these excerpts are taken verbatim from the publications.

Floyd Press, Volume 49, Number 31, 1 August 1940, "Five Floyd boys were taken to the CCC Camp at Woolwine July 29, this additional quota permitted 3 colored and 2 whites to go. The white boys were Fillmore Huff and Fred Adkins, the colored boys were Ivan Stuart, Randolph Stuart, and Robert Gibson.

Floyd Press, Volume 49, Number 41, 10 October 1940, "Edd Lee Moore, of the CCC Camp at Woolwine, Va., spent the weekend with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Moore."

Floyd Press, Volume 49, Number 49, 5 December 1940, "Glen Dickerson of the CCC camp Woolwine spent the weekend with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Dickerson."

Rocky Hollow, Volume 1, Number 1, 1 September 1939, "The big trouble with the CCC is that so many of the men get the idea that they get a dollar a day and that is all that matters and that they get that dollar the same, whether they work or just kill time. This is a deliberately erroneous idea and one that will bring woe to him who pursues it. To derive the fullest advantage from our enrollment in the Civilian Conservation Corps, we must realize that even though our prime consideration in enrolling was for the monetary compensation by which we would benefit, we have another important mission to fulfill. We are not here just to have something to do, we are here doing a job which is of great value to our country. A job that, despite its great present benefit, has its greatest justification in the effect that it will have on the future of our nation. Ours is a work that can never be forgotten. The very nature of it is such that it would of necessity to be written on the pages of history. Fellows, we are making history, now and

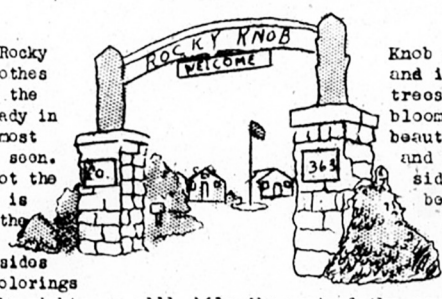
if our record is to be something to be proud of then, we must do our best. We must make for ourselves a vision of the future and picture in our minds what difference it makes, whether or not we do our job well. A little serious thought on the subject will show that we can, by diligently performing our duties, improve both ourselves and our nation, and in the right way and show America that the CCC is something to be proud of.

Knob, Volume 2, Number 2, 1 February 1940 "Foy Boyd, an enrollee of this company had a very severe attack of tonsilitis the other weekend while Dr. Russo was in Roanoke, Va on weekend leave. Since we do not have telephone facilities, Kiblinger, the camp Radio Operator put W3IFZ" on the air" and was promptly answered by W3BTM of that city. After explaining the situation briefly to W3BTM, a call was made to the Doctor's home and it was learned that he had gone to Simpsons, Va., The long-distance operator then put in a call to Simpsons, Va and it was learned that Dr. Russo had just left for Roanoke. Several homes along the way were contacted by long-distance and when the Doctor was seen driving along the highway in his car, he was halted by one of the many residents who were on the lookout for him. He went to the nearest telephone and contacted long-distance who then connected him with W3BTM, and first aid instructions were given directly through the radio-telephone hookup to Lt. Willoughby who was in the Radio Room at W3IFZ. Clyde Knowles, our CCC camp hospital orderly, carried out the instructions as ordered and in a short time the Doctor arrived to continue the treatment and bring relief to the patient who has having marked difficulty in breathing."

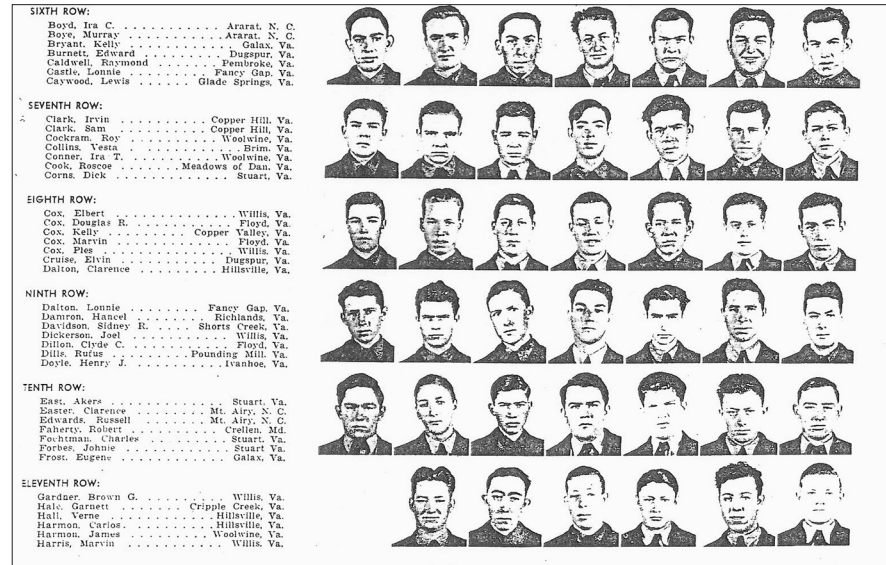
Foy Edward Boyd, the patient, and Clyde Knowles, the hospital orderly for the camp, were also first cousins. Foy was the son of Harry and Manilla Boyd of the Bent section of Patrick County, the paternal grandson of James Andrew and Sarah Susan Jones Boyd, and the maternal grand-

CAMP ROCKY KNOB DRESSES IN SUMMER REGALIA

The CCC Camp at Rocky Knob on its Sunday clothes with Summer. All the flowers are already in bloom and the eye has ever seen. White and Pink dot the The Rhododendron is bringing one of the known to Nature Kings of camp. Besides all of Nature's colorings pleased to find the nights so cool while the rest of the country swelters under a blanket of heat.



Knob 1 May 1940



CCC Camp 363 Enrollees Page 2

son of John Harley and Martha Ann Handy Boyd. Clyde Winfred Knowles was the son of Wilson Eldridge Knowles and Lillian Boyd, the paternal grandson of Charles Reed and Sarah West Knowles, and the maternal grandson of James Andrew and Sarah Susan Jones Boyd.

Knob, Volume 2, Number 3, 1 March 1940, "Elaborate plans are underway for one of the largest days ever to be held at this camp, during the first week of April. The camp will be open to visitors and all parents, friends, and sweethearts of the enrollees. Letters have been prepared by the Education Department in the form of invitations and will be mailed to all the parents. On the day of April 5th, there will be speeches by the leading citizens of Patrick County and in the afternoon they will be escorted to the Blue Ridge Park to view the work of their sons. Dinner will be

served for all comers, sweethearts included. So, let's everybody be on our toes to show people that the CCC is worthy of so many remarks as has been heard lately."

The young men of Company 363 took great pride in the work that was done in Rock Castle. I sincerely hope the Rocky Knob Housekeeping Cabins these young men built can be saved. Please write to your federal and state legislators to let them know these historical buildings must be preserved. Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) 692-9626.

In the photo of the CCC Camp enrollees, there are at least two errors. Marvin Harris, my great uncle by marriage, should be the second from the right in the bottom row. This leaves a mystery as to who else was incorrectly labeled, possibly Carlos or James Harmon?

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 - Widower's Retirement Stymied by Social Security's "WEP" and "GPO" Rules

Dear Rusty: My wife passed away 4 years ago. I want to retire so called SSA and was told I can collect my own SS at 62, reduced by WEP. My wife's SS was greater than mine, but they said I do not qualify for hers at age 60 because of the GPO. This seems odd that I get zero for her, however I can collect mine at the two thirds reduction at 62. Is this true? This zero dollar amount places my retirement on hold for now. I was counting on her SS. Signed: Discouraged Widower

Dear Discouraged: The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) are two of the most confusing (and unpopular) of Social Security's myriad rules. From the way you describe your conversation with the Social Security Administration, it doesn't appear to have concluded with you fully understanding how these provisions work, so allow me to elaborate.

WEP and GPO affect anyone who has a retirement pension from a fed-

eral, state, or local government agency which did not participate in Social Security, meaning neither the employee nor the employer paid into Social Security based on the employee's earnings. Obviously, you have such a pension, which means that WEP will reduce any Social Security retirement benefit you have earned from other employment where SS payroll taxes were withheld, and the GPO will affect any survivor benefit you are entitled to.

WEP affects only the SS retirement benefit you earned elsewhere; WEP does not affect any surviving spouse benefit you might be entitled to from your wife. Rather, it is the GPO which affects your survivor benefit, again because of your state retirement (called a "non-covered pension" - one earned without contributing to Social Security). The GPO will reduce any surviving spouse benefit you might be entitled to by 2/3rds of the amount of your "non-covered" state pension. Depending on the size of your state pension, that reduction may entirely eliminate your surviving spouse benefit from your wife.

Under normal SS rules, a surviving spouse does not become eligible for survivor benefits until they reach

age 60 (age 50 if disabled). Normally, a surviving spouse benefit claimed at age 60 is reduced by 28.5% and it is the GPO (not WEP) that will affect your survivor benefit whenever you claim it. However, even without GPO, your age 60 survivor benefit amount would be only 71.5% of the amount your wife was receiving (or entitled to receive) at her death. If you are already collecting your non-covered state pension when you claim your SS survivor benefit from your wife, then that reduced age 60 survivor benefit would be offset by 2/3rds of the amount of your state pension. And that (according to what Social Security told you) is what eliminated your age 60 eligibility for a surviving spouse benefit from your wife. If you don't claim it at 60 your survivor benefit will continue to grow until you reach your full retirement age (FRA) of 67, but if 2/3rds of your state pension is more than 100% of your SS survivor benefit, you still won't get any surviving spouse benefit from your wife's record.

A further consequence of your non-covered state pension is that the SS retirement benefit you earned elsewhere will be reduced by WEP. WEP will reduce, but cannot eliminate, your Social Security retirement bene-

fit. The WEP formula is complex but, generally, your WEP-based Social Security retirement benefit will likely be roughly half of what you would get if you did not have a state "non-covered pension." You could claim your WEP-reduced SS retirement benefit as early as age 62 or, if financially feasible, delay longer to get a somewhat higher (but still reduced) amount.

Just FYI, your state employer had an obligation to fully inform you of the consequences of not contributing to Social Security while earning your state pension. It appears as though they may not have fulfilled that obligation.

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 Researchers Are Implementing Food to Treat

Depression and Other Chronic Diseases

Ah, comfort food. Who doesn't have a love/hate relationship with it? For me on a bad day, I find myself craving the perfect storm of fries, pizza, and ice cream. What I don't realize as I'm dipping my fry into my ice cream is that I might experience an emotional low afterward that's even worse than how I felt at the beginning. Actually, I've noticed that when I have fresh fruits and vegetables, I'm much more vibrant and happy, and ready to accomplish the tasks throughout my day.

That brings up the question: Can the food we eat have a drastic impact on our emotional health? More specifically, can a plant-based, vegan diet reverse symptoms of depression and improve emotional health?

There have been many studies done

regarding the influence of diet on emotional health. For example, in January 2017, an issue of the medical journal BioMed Central (BMC) Medicine reported that a team of researchers led by Felice Jacka, an epidemiologist at Deakin University in Australia, studied the effect that diet had on the moods of individuals with major depression. The study had two groups: the initial group received counseling from a dietician and the second group received counseling from a positive social support caregiver.

The results indicated that those who ate a healthy diet were emotionally happier than those who received social support. Also shown was that an unhealthy diet high in processed and refined foods increased the risk for not only depression but other diseases as well. There have been many other stud-

ies revolving around this topic that support this research.

Nutritional psychiatry "Nutritional psychiatry" is a recent development in the medical world, but it's a rapidly growing research field. Understanding the effects that diet has on mental health is incredibly important - especially now - because there are so many chronic diseases that have become more prevalent because of the highly processed foods consumed by society.

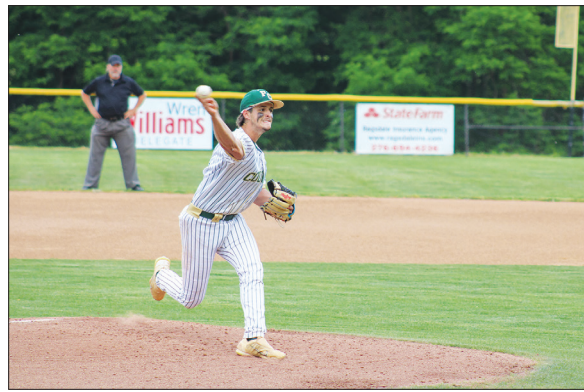
Dr. Jacka is the co-founder of the International Society for Nutritional Psychiatry Research that aims to expand the field by using a multi-disciplinary approach to research connecting emotional and physical health on a new level. The Food and Mood Center was created by Dr. Jacka as a center for studies on how diet influences mental health.

Because of the new studies that have been addressed, the American Psychiatric Association has begun to include presentations on nutritional psychiatry at their annual conferences.

Even though diet isn't the only factor influencing mental health, researchers have found another way to prevent and treat depression. What is it? You guessed it, eating a plant-based diet. A plant-based diet doesn't only promote good physical health, but it also shows promise in promoting emotional health and well-being. I think we can safely say that fruits and veggies should be the "happy food" to turn to when we're having a bad day.

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

10 run inning lifts Cougars over Alleghany



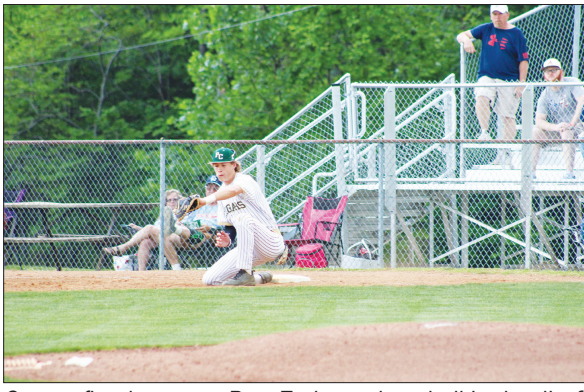
Tucker Swails pitched six strong innings and drove in five runs.



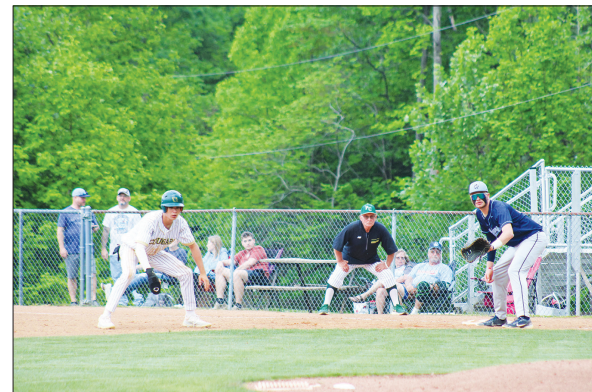
Calvin Lancaster makes a great catch in right field.



Tucker Swails crosses home after hitting a go-ahead, two-run homer.



Cougar first baseman Broc Taylor grabs a ball in the dirt for the out.



Jaiden Wilson takes a lead off first base.



Easton Harris sets for the throw to first

By Pat Delaney
The Patrick County Cougars welcomed Alleghany on May 3 for a game that had all the atmosphere of a playoff game, and for the first five innings, lived up to the hype. A 10-run 6th inning blew the game wide open and lifted the Cougars to an 11-2 victory, their 16th of the season.

In the Cougars half of the first inning, Gavin Fain led things off with a base hit single, taking second on a passed ball. A Noah Jessup sacrifice bunt moved Fain third and a Tucker Swails line drive to left brought him in for the game's first run.

Starting pitcher Tucker Swails got some help from his fielders in the second to keep Alleghany off the board. Calvin Lancaster raced in to make a great catch in right center, preventing an extra base hit. On first, Broc Taylor went down to grab a ball in the dirt, securing the third out on a solid piece of fielding.

Alleghany tied the game in the third and took a one run lead in the fourth. With runners on and one out, Tucker Swails prevented any further runs by striking out the next two Alleghany batters.

Rain began falling in the fourth, and the Patrick County bats went cold, going hitless in the third,

fourth and fifth innings. The only Cougar to reach base was hit by a pitch.

In the top of the sixth, Tucker Swails, with rain coming down, pitched a one-two-three inning, keeping the Alleghany lead at 2-1.

The bottom of the sixth began with a Noah Jessup single. Jessup took second on a bad pickoff throw to the first baseman and reached third on a wild pitch. Tucker Swails brought the Cougar faithful and his teammates to their feet with a two-run home run over the left field fence, giving the Cougars the lead once again at 3-2.

Next up for the Cougars, Stuart Callahan walked, following a long at bat. Callahan reached second on a passed ball. The Cougars loaded the bases for Jaiden Wilson, who hit a grounder through the infield for an RBI single. Easton Harris hit a liner that dropped just under the outstretched glove of the Alleghany right fielder, bringing in three more runs and increasing the lead to 7-2 with no outs.

Following a Gavin Fain walk, a Noah Jessup single scored Harris. Tucker Swails collected his fourth RBI of the inning on a liner down the left field line, bringing in Fain and Jessup. Swails would later score on a wild pitch for the Cougars

tenth run of the inning to take an 11-2 lead into the 7th.

Stuart Callahan pitched a perfect seventh inning, striking out two and securing the victory for Patrick County.

On the night, Tucker Swails pitched six innings, giving up two runs and striking out five, moving to 7-0 on the season. While not his best performance of the season, coach Tal Swails liked the way Tucker battled through for the win. "If you can't have your best stuff and you can give us six innings like that and keep us in the ball game, this team's going to find a way to win."

Swails led the Cougars at the plate, going 3-4 with a homer and five RBIs. Noah Jessup had two hits and scored twice. Easton Harris chipped in three RBIs and Jaiden Wilson added one RBI.

Patrick County coach Tal Swails thought that winning a big game like this would help his team in the future. "They're (Alleghany) a good baseball team. We need games like that. We need to be tested. We needed to be behind and find a way to win. You've got to get tested so that when you go into the playoffs, you're ready. We needed that. It was big."

Church School hosts Basketball Tournament



Kendra Vipperman, Lacey Harrison, Bailey Bray, Coach Rachel Bishop are pictured.



Coach Chad Harrison, Logan Harrison, Aubrey Tucker, Josiah Easter, Jason Shepherd.



Faith Bishop (far left) placed third place. She is pictured with Bailey Bray, Kendra Vipperman, Lacey Harrison, Coach Rachel Bishop. Overall, 3rd place Girls (4-6th grades) included Bishop (pictured above); Alana McPherson, Emi Combs and Christina Spencer, (not pictured).

Trinity Christian School hosted the Mountain Region 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament for the Old Dominion Association

of Church Schools (ODACS) on April 25. Eleven schools with multiple teams participated. Trinity Christian School placed first

in Girls (4-6th grades) and third in Boys (7-12th grades).

Kyle Larson beats Chris Buescher at Kansas in closest NASCAR finish ever

By Reid Spencer
NASCAR Wire Service

In the closest finish in NASCAR history, Kyle Larson beat Chris Buescher to the checkered flag by roughly one inch to win Sunday night's AdventHealth 400 at Kansas Speedway.

After Kyle Busch's spin on Lap 261 of a scheduled 267 sent the race to overtime, Buescher took the lead on the restart of the two-lap shootout, only to have Larson pull even on the backstretch on the final lap.

Larson's No. 5 Chevrolet and Buescher's No. 17 Ford banged doors twice coming to the finish line. Buescher held the edge a foot from the stripe, but Larson surged ahead to win in a photo finish, with timing and scoring showing a margin of 0.001 seconds.

The victory was Larson's second of the season, his second at Kansas and the 25th of his career. The win was the sixth this season for Hendrick Motorsports, most in the NASCAR Cup Series so far this year.

"That was wild," said Larson who had faded from second to fourth before Busch's spin. "I was obviously thankful for that caution. We were dying pretty bad. Was happy to come out third (off pit road), and figured my best shot was to choose the bottom and try and split three-wide to the inside.

"Worked out my car turned well and was able to get some runs. Got through (Turns) 1 and 2 really good down the backstretch and had a big tow on Chris, and got him to kind of enter shallow, and I just committed really hard up top.

"Wasn't quite sure if we were going to make it out the other side. I got super loose in the center, and then we're just trying to... I'm trying not to get too far ahead of him to where he can side draft, and then I was just trying to kill his run. It was crazy."

In the frenzied overtime, Chase Elliott was third, 0,059 seconds behind Larson, followed by Martin



With about an inch to spare, Kyle Larson won the race at Kansas Speedway with what was the closest finish in NASCAR history. (Courtesy of NASCAR)

Truex Jr., who trailed the leader by 0.075 seconds.

The caution for Busch's spin negated the fuel-saving measures that had dominated the final stage of the race. The lead-lap cars pitted en masse on Lap 263, with most taking right-side tires only, and Truex opting for fresh rubber on all four corners.

Fifth-place finisher Denny Hamlin was first off pit road and chose the bottom lane for the overtime restart with Larson behind him and Buescher to his outside. But Larson ducked to the inside entering Turn 1, abandoning Hamlin and allowing Buescher to surge into the lead.

Buescher, who scored his first career top five on an intermediate speedway, held the top spot until Larson surged ahead by a half-car-length on the backstretch to set up the wild drag race to the finish line.

"That sucks to be that close," said Buescher, who overcame a penalty for a pit crew member over the wall too soon during the Stage 2 break. "It was a great finish for us, a really strong day. A lot of speed in this Castrol Edge Ford Mustang, and we really needed that. Needed a win more, and I thought might have had that one.

"Had a lot of speed there firing off. We were really good really all day, and really proud of that. Had some

good strategy to get us back up there and tried to cover what I could and gave him half a lane too much, I suppose, but good hard race right there down to the line. But, yeah, it just hurts."

The race featured 27 lead changes among 10 drivers and seven cautions for 43 laps. Except for stage breaks, the race ran caution free until Lap 176, when contact from Corey LaJoie's Chevrolet sent seven-time Cup champion Jimmie Johnson spinning in a three-car accident that slowed the race for seven laps.

Three more cautions followed in rapid succession, creating varying strategic options as drivers either chose to pit for fuel or to stay out. Truex, who had ample fuel, was closing fast late in the race on then-leader Hamlin, who was saving gas, when the caution for Busch's spin forced the overtime.

Pole winner Christopher Bell ran sixth, followed by Alex Bowman, Busch, Noah Gragson (scoring his third straight top 10) and Michael McDowell.

"That race from start to finish was amazing," said Larson. "That first stage was incredible. The second stage at the end was fun, and then that whole last stage with the wrecks and cautions and then fuel strategy and tires running long and all that was wild.

"You guys got your money's worth today, and I'm just proud to be a part of the show."

Notes: Hamlin won the first stage and Buescher the second... The previous closest finishes in NASCAR history were Ricky Craven's 0.002-second win over Kurt Busch on March 16, 2003 at Darlington and Jimmie Johnson's victory over Clint Bowyer at Talladega on April 17, 2011 by the same margin... Corey Heim finished 22nd in relief of injured Erik Jones, who will return to action next weekend at Darlington... Larson extended his series lead to 29 points over Truex in second... Larson's victory by the closest of margins kept Ford drivers winless through 12 races this season.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Antisemitism in America

(Daily Caller, Fox, The Guardian, Forbes, The Jerusalem Post, Newsmax)

Since the deadly and demonic Hamas attack on October 7, we have seen a wave of anti-Semitism sweep across America. An anti-Israel rally does not shock us in Tehran, but it is happening in our country as well.

We see it in the protests and rallies being held, airports being closed, roads being blocked, Jewish schools and businesses being vandalized. We see it on college and university campuses where Jewish students are being targeted for attacks. The enabling of antisemitism on university campuses constitutes an egregious violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We see it in the support for Palestinian terrorism and the slaughter of innocent men, women and children being justified.

None of this happened by accident. Generations of young people have been bathed in a toxic bath of anti-Semitism that has infected our education system. The effectiveness of anti-Israel propaganda on young people in America was revealed in a current survey that showed 51% of people between the ages of 18-24 felt that the Hamas attack was justified. America's brightest minds are being manipulated by a force they do not even understand to adopt a narrow view of the world.

Mosab Hassan Yousef, a Palestinian ex-militant defected to Israel in 1997. Yousef, the son of Hamas co-founder Sheikh Hassan Yousef, worked as an undercover agent for the Jewish state's Shin Bet intelligence wing. Yousef was recently on

Hannity.

The Hamas defector said he sees no difference between Palestinians and Hamas. "I personally don't differentiate between Hamas and the so-called Palestinians because, actually, there is no Palestinians, there are tribes. There is a tribe of Hamas, and there is the tribe of the Islamic Jihad ... and each one has different interests, and all of them are conflicted," he said. "If they did not have Israel as the common enemy, they would kill each other. This is the reality. It is very disappointing to see Americans supporting Hamas while Hamas does not respect any of those followers. Those followers do not know that Hamas would torture them and massacre them with no mercy. Hamas calls them useful idiots. The thousands who were killed on Oct. 7, was a crime against humanity. It was genocide."

Yousef also accused the pro-Palestinian activists of being complicit in Hamas' crimes because they do not know what they are supporting. "They are supporting a monster that has hijacked an entire society and is endangering the safety of the entire Middle East. Those pro-Palestine people need to go to a mental asylum."

It is Satan who drives antisemitism. God created a covenant nation—Israel, the people of the promise—and gave them a covenant land. That is why Satan is so angry. He knows his time is short to stop God's covenant by destroying the Jewish people. Thankfully, as Christians we know how this ends.

Pray for our country.
William Salser,
Stuart

Lady Cougars shutout Alleghany



Jewel Iacovone reacts to scoring the game's final goal.



Jewel Iacovone (#3) celebrates her goal with Kendall Williams (#18).



Camille Gonzalez (#6) goes airborne for a Lady Cougar goal.



Raeli Moran reacts to her first of two goals on the night.

By Pat Delaney

The Lady Cougar varsity soccer team notched their third shutout in as many games with an 8-0 win over visiting Alleghany on May 2.

From the opening whistle, the Lady Cougars pressed the attack while playing solid defense and limiting Alleghany's scoring chances. The Cougar back line held firm in midfield, allowing the Lady Cougars to play much of the game in the Alleghany half of the field.

Seven minutes into the game, Kyra Titular opened the scoring for Patrick County, adding another just minutes later and completed the hat-trick with three minutes to go in the first half.

Kendall Williams scored seven minutes in on a penalty kick following an Alleghany handball in the penalty box. Rounding out the scoring in the first half was Raeli Moran, who found the back of the net in the last minutes of the half, giving the Lady Cougars a 5-0 lead.

Just minutes into the second half, Alleghany had their best scoring



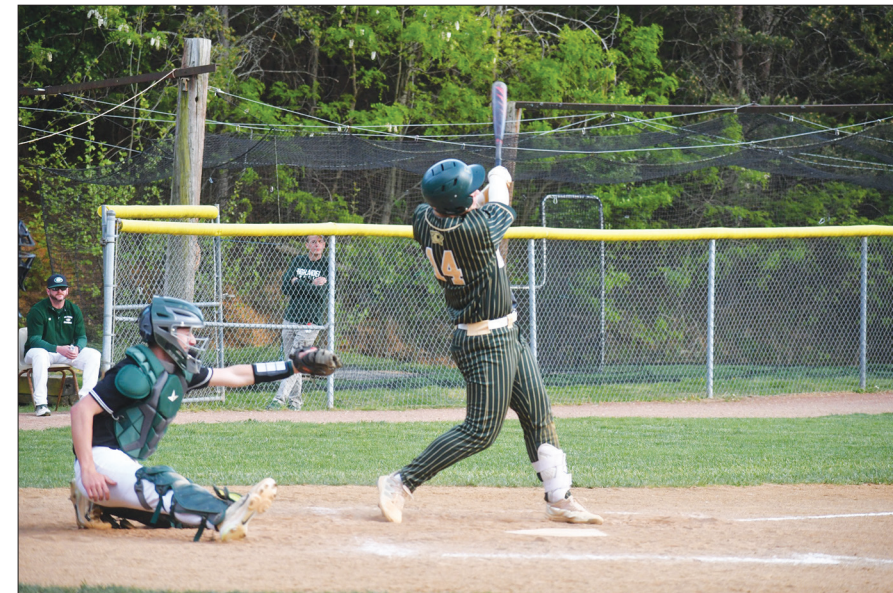
Kyra Titular fires a shot on goal.

chance of the night following a Lady Cougar foul in the penalty box. Keeper Skye Ayers made the big save, preserving the shutout.

Much of the second half the Lady Cougars used very effective passing to create scoring chances, paying off ten minutes in on Raeli Moran's second goal of the night. Camille Gonzalez and Jewel Iacovone added goals to give the Cougars the 8-0 win.

The victory moved the Lady Cougars to 8-6 on the season, riding a three game winning streak in which they outscored their opponents 18-0.

Varsity Baseball Defeats Bassett



Jackson Horton puts one out for the Cougars.

By Ashlee Mullis

The Varsity Baseball Team defeated Bassett, 11-1, Tuesday, April 29. Broc Taylor went the distance on the mound, throwing 5 innings, allowing 1 run, 3

hits, walking 1, and striking out 6. Noah Jessup, Tucker Swails, Jackson Horton, Easton Harris, and Taylor had 2 hits each. Horton picked up his 2nd home run of the season.

Sports Briefs

By Ashlee Mullis

Lady Cougar Tennis Loses to Glenvar

The Lady Cougar Tennis Team lost a close match to Glenvar on the road, 4-5, on April 22. The singles score was PC 2 Glenvar 4. Cecilia Leon Cisneros (PC) was defeated by Natalie McMahon 3-8. Katie Vernon (PC) defeated Rebecaa Magruder in a 10-8 tiebreaker.

Shyanne Holt (PC) was defeated by Karis Gillespie 1-8. Aaliyah Reynolds (PC) defeated Shawna Garwood 8-5, Brooke Collins (PC) was defeated by Riley Price 1-8, and Dylan Barker (PC) was defeated by Jamie Forster 6-8. In doubles Cecilia Leon Cisneros/Katie Vernon were defeated by Natalie McMahon/Rebecca Magruder 8-4.

Shyanne Holt/Aaliyah Reynolds were defeated by Chelsea Garwood/Julia Carroll 8-6

Brooke Collins/Dylan Barker defeated Ali Brown/Cay Jones 8-0.

Girls Tennis Defeats Magna Vista

The Lady Cougars Tennis Team defeated Magna Vista 5-4 on April 24. In singles, PC 2- Magna Vista 4. Cecilia Leon Cisneros (PC) defeated Lakyn Cochran 8-4, Shyanne Holt (PC) was defeated by Olivia Kendall 4-8, Aa-

liyah Reynolds (PC) was defeated by Kylie Minter 4-8, Brooke Collins (PC) was defeated by Elizabeth Caro Temieyo 3-8, Dylan Barker (PC) was defeated by Dakota Bender 2-8, Xena Wilcox (PC) defeated Gretchen Schuller 8-2. In doubles, Cecilia Leon Cisneros/Aaliyah Reynolds defeated Kylie Minter/Elizabeth Cairo Tamieyo 8-5, Shyanne Holt/Brooke Collins defeated Dakota Bender/Gretchen Schuller 8-5, Dylan Barker/Xena Wilcox defeated Emma Parker/Elizabeth Maxwell 8-0.

Cougar Softball Wins Two

The Lady Cougars defeated Floyd 11-2 on May 1. McKenzie Holt pitched a complete game giving up 1 earned run and striking out 7. The Cougars had 12 hits on the night. Holt had 3 hits and Journey Moore, Lauren Hazelwood, and Lilly Hazelwood had one home run each. On May 3, the Lady Cougars defeated Alleghany High School, 10-3 at home. Moore picked up the win on the mound, going 5 strong innings, striking out 7. Holt finished out the game in the circle striking out 4. Moore led the way at the plate with a home run, a double, and 4 RBIs. Lauren Hazelwood had 2 hits with a double. Lilly Hazelwood, Holt, Bryley Pike and Hayden Lawless each added hits.

JV Baseball Wins Two

By Ashlee Mullis

The JV Cougar Baseball Team won 8-2, April 29 on the road at Floyd. Zack Holt had 2 hits and a run. Carter Gregory, Will Heath, Eli Bogle, and Mark Register all had RBIs. Mark Register went 5 innings on the mound, striking out 9, allowing 2 hits, and 0 runs. Christian Hylton threw 2 innings, striking out 4 and allowing 1 earned run.

On Wednesday, May 1, the Cougars traveled to Bassett, getting a 17-0 win over the Bengals in a 5-inning run rule game. Carter Gregory had 2 hits and 2 RBIs. Will Heath had 2 hits and 2 RBIs. Noah Caine had 2 hits and 1 RBI. David Lawson, Anderson Brim, and Zack Holt all had a hit and 2 RBIs. David Lawson went 5 innings on the mound, striking out 8, allowing 2 hits allowed and no runs in a complete game.



Will Heath waits for his pitch.

The JV Cougars are 13-1 on the season heading into the final week of season play.

PC Girls Tennis Defeat Martinsville

By Ashlee Mullis

The Cougars defeated Martinsville, 9-0, on April 14.

In singles, PCHS defeated Martinsville 6-0. Cecilia Leon Cisneros defeated Nayti Patel 8-2, Katie Vernon defeated Cassidy Dodson 8-5, Shyanne Holt defeated Ahmyr Washington 8-2, Aaliyah Reynolds defeated Sontrell Daninos 8-1, Brooke Collins defeated Brooke Turner 8-0, and Dylan Barker won by Martinsville forfeit. In doubles, Cecilia Leon Cisneros/Katie Vernon defeated Nayti Patel/Cassidy Dodson 8-0.

Brooke Collins/Dylan Barker defeated Ahmyr Washington/Sontrell Daninos 8-3, and

Shyanne Holt/Aaliyah Reynolds won by Martinsville forfeit.



Katie Vernon serves in the win.

The Landmark Center to host a dinner to honor, recruit volunteers

The Landmark Center Assisted Living in Stuart will host a Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment Dinner on Thursday, May 16 at 6:30 p.m. in the facility's dining room.

Lisa Martin, director of Community Relations, noted that volunteers are important in "making every moment matter," the theme of National Volunteer Month. "We are looking for volunteers to offer their time and talents to our residents in many ways. It could be as simple as coming in for an hour once a month to read to a resident, help someone write and address cards or letters, or just sit and talk while working a puzzle together," she said.

The Landmark has a variety of volunteers who teach classes, help with gardening, and entertain residents with music. "We are so thankful for everyone who comes to share their gifts with our residents," said Martin. "I encourage everyone to think outside the box about ways you could benefit our residents."

Other ways in which volunteers can lend a hand include serving refreshments at events and activities, playing games or working puzzles with residents, providing clergy services, decorating for holidays and events, assisting with excursions, creating bulletin boards, and

so much more.

According to Martin, volunteer opportunities are only limited by your imagination.

There is no obligation to volunteer by attending the dinner. It is an opportunity to learn more about the facility and the requirements to be a volunteer. Residents have created gifts for each attendee and are very much looking forward to meeting and interacting with new people.

In addition, those who are currently volunteering at The Landmark Center are invited to come and be honored for their contributions as well as share their own stories of what it means to volunteer there.

Anyone age 16 and up is eligible to be a volunteer, though younger students as part of a scout, school or church group can volunteer as well. Group leaders are encouraged to attend to explore ideas for how their students can gain some valuable community service time at The Landmark.

For head count purposes, the Landmark would appreciate an RSVP if you plan to attend, though last minute decisions to attend are welcome. Please call (276) 694-3050 to register.

Joseph Alvin Hollandsworth

Joseph Alvin Hollandsworth, 93, passed away on April 30, 2024. He was born on January 28, 1931, in Henry County, Virginia, to the late James Hollandsworth and Lillie Spencer Hollandsworth. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by five brothers, William, Oscar, Ledford, Hernon, and Lewis Hollandsworth; four sisters, Doris Cannaday, Nora Wolfe, Vergie Amos, and Ruby Adkins; and two daughters, Crystal Hollandsworth and Sharon Hollandsworth Richardson. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Mary Cannaday Hollandsworth; a daughter, Brenda Wright (John) of Stokesdale, North Carolina; one



son, Dale Hollandsworth (Shelley) of Stuart, Virginia; one sister, Jean Cassell; one brother, Carl Hollandsworth; five grandchildren, David Richardson, Stacy Richardson, Meagan Baker, Tara Kendrick, and Zane Hollandsworth; and two great-grandchildren, Adelynn Richardson.

Joseph honorably served in the United States Air Force as an Airplane and Engine Mechanic, from 1949

to 1956. He worked as a supervisor in the tool industry for Virginia Machine Tool until his retirement in 1983. He was a member of Fork Mountain Wesleyan Church where he attended faithfully. In his leisure time, he enjoyed traveling, hunting, fishing, gardening, camping in the great outdoors, and spending quality time with his family.

All services will be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donating a tree to be planted, in his memory, from his online obituary. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bassettfuneralservice.com. Bassett Funeral Service is serving the Hollandsworth family.

2022 Census of Agriculture finds agricultural sales outpace loss of Virginia farms

The sales of Virginia agricultural products remain robust despite a general drop in farm numbers, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2022 Census of Agriculture.

A 10% decrease in the number of Virginia farms didn't seem to inhibit sales. Since the 2017 agricultural census, total sales of commonwealth farm-sourced products jumped from almost \$4 billion to \$5.5 billion in 2022.

Poultry and eggs still dominate Virginia agriculture, with Rockingham County listed as a top producer. While the number of poultry and egg operations dropped to 4,683 from 2017's 4,752, sales leapt from \$1.4 billion to \$2.2 billion.

"Demand for poultry, especially chicken and eggs, continues to grow year over year," said Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. "In 2022, higher feed costs coupled with the negative impacts on supplies associated with the highly pathogenic avian influenza contributed to the increase in overall poultry and egg revenue."

Grains, oilseeds, dry beans and dry peas sales soared from \$510 million in 2017 to \$843 million. The commodity category now ranks second in agricultural product sales, grown on 4,074 farms statewide.

Cattle and calves raised on 14,730 Virginia farms contribute \$695 million to overall sales, with the greatest number produced in Washington County. While this ranking dropped from No. 2 to No. 3 since 2017, sales rose by \$15 million.

Virginia's nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod operations brought in \$399 million in sales, which was higher than the \$328 million generated by the sector in 2017.

Cow's milk is now produced on 386 farms compared to 624 in 2017. Listed at No. 5 on the sales ranking, milk brings in \$354 million, with Rockingham County leading the way. Though the number of Virginia dairy farms dropped significantly, sales are up by \$19 million since 2017.

Other top agricultural items sold in Virginia include "other crops and hay" at No. 6, followed by hogs and pigs; fruit, tree nuts and berries; vegetables, melons, potatoes and sweet potatoes; aquaculture; cotton and cottonseed; tobacco; horses; Christmas trees; and sheep, goats and wool.

The census' state profile indicates that smaller operations generating less than \$2,500 in sales make up 36% of the \$5.5 billion overall state sales. Virginia's farm products contribute 1% to all U.S. agricultural sales.

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

*Matthew Criner, 24, of Stuart, was charged April 26 with fail to appear. Sgt. J.G. Pickrel was the arresting officer.

*Joseph Ray Walton, 35, of Ararat, was charged April 26 with one count each unauthorized use of vehicle, violation of protective order, obtain money/etc. by false pretense, larceny, and drive motor vehicle - license revoked suspended. Inv. O. Tejada was the arresting officer.

*Albert John Kellenbenz, III, 47, of Stuart, was charged April 26 with breaking and entering. Sgt. Deputy C.M. Gilbert was the arresting officer.

*Samantha Craddock, 33, of Stuart, was charged April 26 with breaking and entering. Sgt. L.K. Carroll, Jr., was the arresting officer.

*Kendal Marie Rock-Vainter, 32, of Stuart, was charged April 26 with breaking and entering. Sgt. L.K. Carroll, Jr., was the arresting officer.

*Jimmy Roosevelt Jones, 44, of Stuart, was charged April 26 with breaking and entering. Sgt. L.K. Carroll, Jr., was the arresting officer.

*Travon Devonte Beal, 24, of

Martinsville, was charged April 27 with one count each drive without license and continue to drive drive-20+mph-endanger. Sgt. L.K. Carroll, Jr., was the arresting officer.

*Samantha Upchurch, 32, of Ridgeway, was charged April 27 with shoplift. Deputy H. Hylton was the arresting officer.

*Seth Daniel Palmer, 40, of Martinsville, was charged April 29 with false identity to law enforcement officer. Senior Deputy A. Kinney was the arresting officer.

*Shannon Gray Pack, 32, of Claudville, was charged April 29 with one count each of violating protective order, obstruct communication sent through wireless, petty larceny, abduction, and unauthorized use of vehicle. Deputy C.A. Strother was the arresting officer.

*Jose Manuel Munoz Avelar, 31, of Floyd, was charged April 30 with grand larceny. Senior Deputy M.R. Hodges made the arrest for Floyd County.

*Jerry Lyndon Blakely, 37, of East Bend, N.C., was charged April 30 with fail to appear. Deputy C.A. Strother was the arresting officer.

Applications for Charitable Contributions Fund accepted

Farm Credit of the Virginias, a lending cooperative serving Virginia, West Virginia and western Maryland, announced that they are now accepting applications for the third cycle of grant opportunities through their Charitable Contributions Fund.

Through the Farm Credit of the Virginias Charitable Contributions Fund, the cooperative supports and builds stronger partnerships with organizations that preserve

and promote farmers and families in its rural communities. The program allows the Association to meet their mission to serve the agriculture industry by investing in the growth of agricultural programming.

Grants will be awarded for up to \$10,000 in funding. Funding will be considered for charitable projects that are either located in Farm Credit of the Virginias' 96-county territory or that serve communi-

ties where Farm Credit of the Virginias conducts business. Grants will only be awarded to non-profit groups and organizations, and will not be awarded to individuals or private farms. Additional terms and conditions are available on the print and online application forms.

Grant applications for the current funding cycle will be accepted May 1 through July 1. Grants will be awarded in August. Applications and additional program details can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.farmcredtofvirginias.com/ccf>

Regarding the Charitable Contributions Fund, Brad Cornelius,

CEO, said, "We are glad to continue our long-standing commitment to supporting agriculture and our rural communities through this third funding cycle of the Farm Credit of the Virginias Charitable Contributions Fund. This year, we look forward to providing grant funds to more organizations and projects in our footprint that allow us to meet this mission. It has been exciting to learn about the far-reaching and lasting impacts of previous grant recipients in our rural communities, and we're thrilled to see what more we can accomplish through the continuation of this grant program."

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| 3 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 5 |
| 5 | 7 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 6 |
| 6 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 9 |
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 |
| 7 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 7 |
| 9 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| 8 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 1 |
| 1 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 4 |

PATRICK PULPITS

Read a Bible for the grandchildren

By Van Yandell

2 Timothy 3: 16 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Several of the highlights of my life were mission assignments in other countries. What makes them so memorable and special are the people we meet. Usually, we think of the citizens of whichever country we are in.

Many times, however, we meet people that are a participant of the trip that really strike us as very special. One such person was Willa.

We were in Seoul, South Korea. Several of us had to spend an extra day in Seoul before we could leave to go to our assignment. Margie and I were to go to Taebaek for one week and then on to Donghae for a second week.

Our work was to teach ESL (English as a Second Language) to children and youth in churches. Being an industrial educator, teaching ESL was to be a new experience and I really had great anticipation for meeting the people and sharing with them.

While in Seoul, I noticed one of the ladies with us I had never met prior to the trip, continually reading her Bible. I remember thinking, "I'm addicted to my Bible but not to this extent."

Finally, she put the Bible down and I asked, "You apparently find the Bible as intriguing as I do." Her response was, "I read a Bible for my grandchildren." I was like, "What?"

She explained! "For every one of my grandchildren, I read a Bible all the way through. I write them letters and notes explaining things and tell them how I'm praying for them."

I was blown away! What a wonderful thing to do! I asked, "How many grandchildren do you have?" "Eight," she said. At the time Margie and I had one granddaughter. My thought was, "If Willa can read eight Bibles all the way through, surely I can read one."

Our granddaughter was born in 2006 and my mother had died in 2005. I had a brand new Bible I had bought for Mom about 1990. She had lived through the Great Depression, so she saved everything for another day, including the Bible I had given her. Instead, she continued to read her very worn Bible.

When we returned to the U.S., I immediately looked for and found that blue cover, King James, red letter Bible and began reading. I had for years written notes and underlined in my Bibles so that action was nothing new.

About six months later, the reading was completed. When we visited the children, I delivered the Bible. On that visit we discovered our daughter-in-law was pregnant with number two.

I immediately told Margie, "I've got to go to a bookstore and buy another Bible." We found a Christian bookstore in Altamont Springs and I purchased a new, leather backed Bible and soon began the second read.

When our grandson was one hour old, I sat in the hospital in Winter Park, Florida and wrote him a letter in the Bible. My prayer was that

the Bibles would be read and valued when both were older and that the Bibles will be kept.

I cannot think of a better way to convey to a young person, grandchild, niece or nephew or any other child, the value of God's teachings and the importance of including those teachings in one's life.

The leading scripture, 2 Timothy 3: 16, tells us "All scripture is inspired by God." To even begin to contemplate the Creator of the universe giving us a book (actually sixty-six books), to reveal Himself to us is mind boggling.

In reading and studying the Bible, one realizes the information was not written from the mind of a mere mortal. I cannot imagine anyone actually delving deeply into the scriptures and having any doubt of its origin and authenticity.

There are some things we do on this earth that will be here long after we are gone. I imagine those that built the pyramids had no idea people would be visiting them 5000 years later.

A question we may ask ourselves, "What can I do while on this earth that will make a difference in a million years." The only reasonable answer to a believer is, "tell someone about Jesus."

If you or I read and dedicate the reading to a specific person, for example a grandchild, that grandchild might share the Gospel with someone fifty years from now. My four grandparents died before I was born. It would be such a blessing to have something they had written.

In a past article titled "Resolve to Write it Down," my point was to show the importance of passing on the history of the family, the community and the nation. To pass on the book of faith and the faith itself is more important.

The range of possibilities for our actions is unbounded. Good or bad, right or wrong, some things last longer than we may at first think. We are accountable for our actions, but the comforting thing is, God forgives sins. 1 John 1: 9 "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Almost nine of ten households (87%) own a Bible according to the American Bible Society. The average household has three. Perhaps you have a Bible you can gift to someone. Perhaps the child of a close friend or relative would be appropriate for the project of reading the Bible completely. It would be a special gift with life-long effects.

I have come to believe over the years, there is no greater gift a parent or grandparent can give to a child than an appreciation for the Word of God. The Bible teaches us where we came from and where we are going.

It teaches us how to live and how to die. Life's most compelling questions and mysteries are answered in the Bible. There is no greater text known to mankind than the Holy Bible.

Pray for your children and grandchildren and teach them about Christ Jesus, crucified for the remission of sin and resurrected.

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

Genealogy club to host workshop

The Carroll County Genealogy Club and cosponsors Grayson Heritage Foundation and the Grayson County Historical Society will host a Genealogy Workshop on May 25. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Carroll County Search and Rescue Building, 100 Expansion Dr., Hillsville.

Tony Lowe, a local resident and a long time researcher of Quaker heritage, will discuss early Quakers in the area.

Gerald Goad, Circuit Court Clerk will attend to describe the materials his office has available for researchers and updates to his office as well.

"Childress Cousins," will present an overview and have books for sale.

Plan now to attend this free event, bring your lunch or snacks. Water and coffee will be available for purchase. At this time, credit cards cannot be accepted.

Bring your own research and family tree to share and maybe find new branches. Other books from our club and materials will be on hand for sale along with informational handouts.

Email carroll.va.genealogy@gmail.com with questions, or call (276) 231-8234. Also, follow Carroll County Genealogy Club on Facebook.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of 3 Kings (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Who said, "Indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost"? Matthew, Mark, John the Baptist, Luke
3. From Leviticus 14, how long was a "clean" person required to remain outside his tent? 1 night, 2 nights, 4 days, 7 days
4. What town or city was Saul of Tarsus near when he converted to Christianity? Da-

mascus, Assos, Corinth, Gaza
5. Which apostle's mother-in-law is referred to in the Bible but not by name? Peter, Judas, James, Andrew
6. Jesus says that you have to do what to see the kingdom of God? Love one another, Be born again, Do what's right, Tithe
ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) John the Baptist (Acts 11:16), 3) 7 days, 4) Damascus, 5) Peter, 6) Be born again
Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.Trivia-Guy.com.
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www.stuartbaptist.org office@stuartbaptist.org

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276.236.7814
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Mass Schedule
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Reconciliation
Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.

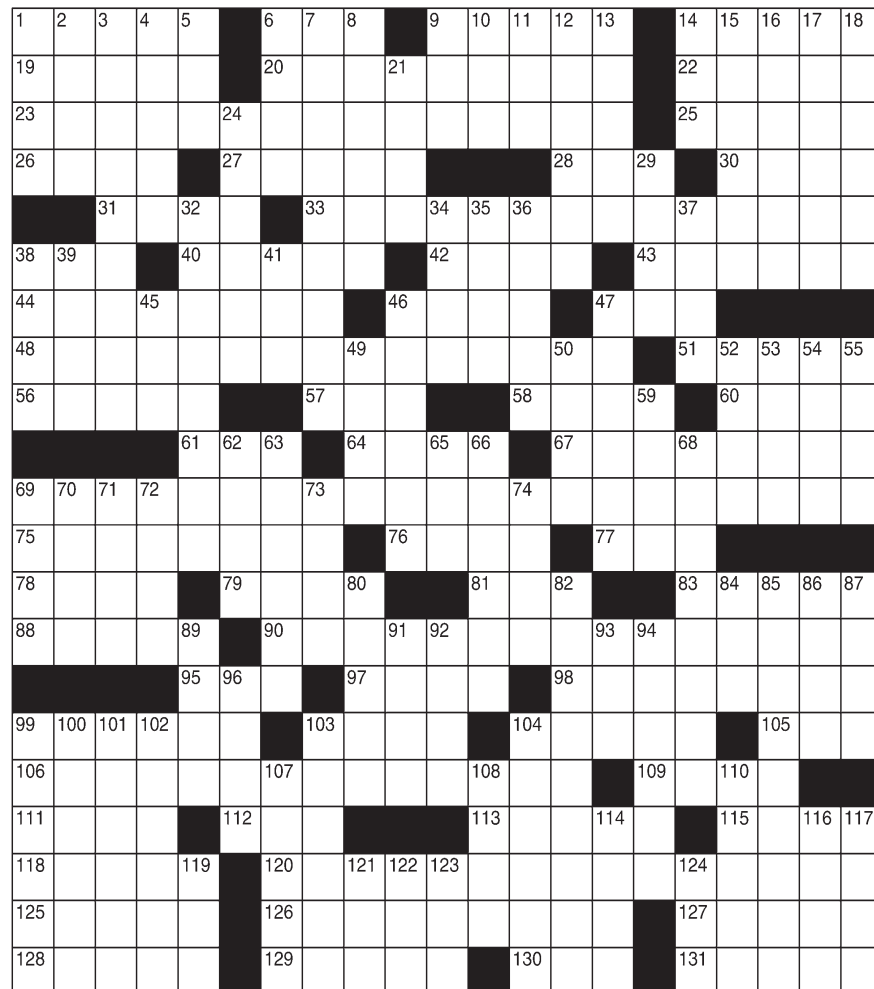
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| <p>ACROSS 1 Pour drippings on 6 J. Edgar Hoover's org. 9 Blocks up 14 Sailing 19 Earthy hue 20 Arsenal for weapons 22 Limericks, e.g. 23 Start of a riddle 25 Color qualities 26 Drain-clearing chemicals 27 Forster's "___ With a View" 28 Frequently, to a bard 30 Unadorned 31 Brandy fruit 33 Riddle, part 2 38 Halt 40 Everyday worker 42 Disembarked 43 Sings Alpine-style 44 "Listen up!" 46 Vaping device brand 47 Crafty 48 Riddle, part 3 51 Analyze, as an alloy</p> | <p>56 Belgian painter James 57 Pro photog's camera 58 Bamboozle 60 "Pride and Prejudice" actress Jennifer 61 Fleming who created Bond 64 Shaving balm brand 67 Handheld telescope 69 Riddle, part 4 75 Golden-coated horse 76 "Star Wars" princess 77 To this point 78 Uganda's Idi 79 Side in sports 81 Pewter metal 83 Kinds 88 Certain believer in God 90 Riddle, part 5 95 Marina del ___, California 97 Bucks' mates 98 Car fuel 99 Walk over 103 Trig ratio 104 Uses teeth 105 Australian state: Abbr.</p> | <p>106 End of the riddle 109 See 10-Down 111 Best Picture of 2012 112 Arbor Day mo. 113 Poker champion Stu 115 "Ticklish" doll 118 Top hats go-withs 120 Riddle's answer 125 Old TV parts 126 Captive's angry shout 127 ___ Carlo 128 "Full House" actor Bob 129 Walk over 130 Crimson, e.g. 131 Limerick penner Nash</p> <p>DOWN 1 Cereal holder 2 In need of a massage, maybe 3 Border collies, e.g. 4 In need of a massage, maybe 5 History unit 6 "M*A*S*H" actor Jamie 7 Small streams</p> | <p>8 "No more for me" 9 Federal health agcy. 10 With 109-Across, Beatles song or album 11 Brand of nail polish 12 Start to melt 13 Rod's partner 14 Liable 15 "It's a shame" 16 Upper House of Congress 17 Celebrity chef Lagasse 18 Size up 21 Rikishi's sport 24 Golfed acceptably 29 "Bye 4 now" 32 Pithy saying 34 Membrane enclosing a fetus 35 Supermodel Heidi 36 ___ Olay (face cream brand, formerly) 37 Boxer Oscar de la ___ 38 Additionally 39 12:00 p.m. 41 "Either you do it ___ will"</p> | <p>45 "Rock and Roll, Hoochie ___" (1974 hit) 46 Amount of jelly or olives 47 Visit casually 49 Smeltery stuff 50 Sammy with 609 homers 52 Part of SASE 53 ___ -Pei 54 Additionally 55 Polite rural assent to a lady 59 Singer Lovett 62 Doing the job 63 A ripe old age 65 Sports draw 66 The way things stand 68 Scrams 69 Tablet since 2010 70 Appoint 71 Livy's 552 72 Bits in physics 73 Ark crafter 74 Alexander of Reagan's Cabinet 80 Military doc 82 Match under the stars, maybe 84 Hooting bird 85 Bonni's region</p> | <p>86 Sunbathes 87 Gumbo, e.g. 89 Horse gait 91 The last Mrs. Chaplin 92 Rod's partner 93 Not, to Scots 94 Whirling 96 "Exile" New Age singer 99 Noisy kisses 100 Albanian capital 101 Yule drink 102 Singer Snow 103 One hanging ten 104 Ember 107 Eye-teasing paintings 108 San ___ Obispo, California 110 Envelop in haze 114 In the sack 116 Put in silent mode 117 Yaks, e.g. 119 Former Brit. Airways jet 121 Corrida shout 122 Stephen of "Roadkill" 123 Incensed 124 Angry rock genre</p> |
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www.co.patrick.va.us/Jobs.aspx. Applications are also available from the Patrick County Administration Office, Room 218, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, VA. Applicants must submit a Patrick County employment application to be considered for the position. Applications and resumes may be emailed to Donna Shough, HR Director, at dshough@co.patrick.va.us, with a copy to Melissa Taylor at mtaylor@co.patrick.va.us. Faxed applications will not be accepted. The position will remain open until filled. The County of Patrick is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age.

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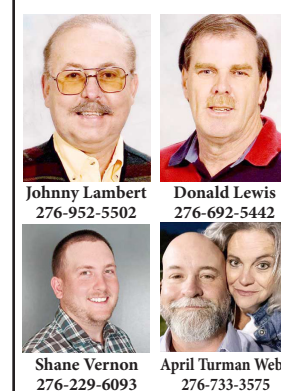
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Trail System

(cont. from page 1)



Stuart Rotary President Sam Harrod spoke about the 1.4-mile trail system.



More than a dozen people attended the trail's official opening on May 3.



Tourism Director James Houchins and DRBA member and Rotarian Wayne Kirkpatrick show off the kiosk and trail map.

this morning. It's finished and we hope that the neighborhood is going to enjoy it, and any tourists coming through we'd appreciate them using it as well," he said.

Harrod said Rotary partnered with DRBA and the Patrick County Master Gardeners to design the trail and the plants surrounding it. Plants for the trail were purchased from the Beautiful Earth Garden shop in Lawsonville, N.C.

Patrick County Tourism also helped Rotary with the grant application process by writing a letter of support for the project.

"It was helpful, and we appreciate it," Harrod said.

He added that Rotarian Liz Pierce applied for a grant that was used to place a bench on the trail system.

"It's a beautiful bench made of Trex material, so it will last a very long time. We put it sort of on an overlook where it looks down on the

stream below. It's in a nice location," he said.

Rotary member Anna Clark said a smaller sign with a QR code is stapled below the main sign on the kiosk at the trail entrance. To promote the trail and create awareness of it, Clark said visitors can enter hikes each time they complete one.

"You can do it daily if you want to. It's just a simple Google form. You upload a photo each time, and you'll be entered to win a quarterly drawing for some fun prizes," she said.

Tourism Director James Houchins said he's thankful for everyone involved in the trail project.

"While you're on this trail, that's my family's cemetery that you will go by. So, it's a very special place in my heart to have them do that," he said.

Harrod said Rotary hopes to expand the trail system in the future to connect with the nearby



Planting native plants on the newly opened Rotary Trail.

Mayo River Rail Trail.

"We're hoping to tie in all of that eventually," he added.

Communication and Swallowing Disorders Common in Adults

With speech, language, and swallowing disorders common in adults following stroke, head and neck cancer, and a variety of other illnesses and injuries, Stuart-based speech-language pathologist Bethney O'Connell encourages residents to learn the signs—and seek an evaluation—if they have concerns about themselves or a loved one. May is recognized as National Speech-Language-Hearing Month.

"If you have experienced a change in health from an injury or illness, your ability to communicate effectively may be different," said O'Connell. "Effective communication is critical to your recovery and to your quality of life."

O'Connell said, "Communication is something we often take for granted until we are faced with challenges. But it is central to everything that we do. Luckily, speech-language pathologists can help people who have had strokes, traumatic brain injuries, and other life-altering events make progress so they can share medical information, stay connected to friends and family,

and return to the activities that make up their daily lives."

The causes of speech and language problems that begin for the first time in adulthood can vary. Common causes—in addition to strokes, cancers in the head and/or neck region, and brain injuries—include Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson's disease. Communication difficulties can also stem from breathing problems and voice damage.

Speech and language disorders that may be acquired in adulthood include the following:

*Aphasia. This involves problems speaking or signing, understanding, reading, and writing. Often misunderstood, aphasia does not affect a person's intelligence. The most common cause of aphasia is stroke.

*Cognitive-communication disorders. This involves problems with thinking that can affect communication. Some examples are difficulty paying attention, remembering, organizing thoughts, and solving problems.

*Apraxia of speech. This involves the way the brain plans and co-

ordinates movements for speech.

*Dysarthria. This involves changes in the muscles and nerves used for speech and/or breathing.

Voice disorders. This involves changes in pitch, loudness, and vocal quality that negatively impact communication.

*Speech-language pathologists also help people with swallowing disorders—such as dysphagia. Dysphagia is caused by numerous diseases and injuries in adults. A person's ability to eat and drink is related to maintaining good health, recovering from illness, ensuring quality of life, and is a central part of many social experiences and family traditions.

Speech-language pathologists treat dysphagia in various ways:

1. Exercises to help strengthen muscles for chewing and swallowing
2. Techniques to help food and liquid move differently while chewing and swallowing
3. Guidance to help reduce the risk of illness related to swallowing

Learn more about speech, language, and swallowing problems in adults from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Stuart residents who would like to discuss their speech, language, and swallowing concerns may contact Bethney O'Connell at (276) 694-4488, info@resolutetherapy.net.

California Man Sentenced for Trafficking Fentanyl into Virginia

A Buena Park, California man, who supplied as many as 30,000 pressed fentanyl pills a week to individuals who then shipped the pills into Southwest Virginia, was sentenced last week to 18 years in federal prison.

Robert Contreras, 24, a.k.a. "Quill," previously pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to distribute and possession with the intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl, and one count of possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. In addition to his prison term, Contreras was ordered today to forfeit five firearms and \$31,294 in cash.

"Fentanyl, especially in the form of pressed pills, is taking its toll on America, and Virginia is no exception. This case, involving the collaboration of law enforcement agencies across the country, is a prime example of the proactive measures undertaken by this Department of Justice to combat the burgeoning pressed pill epidemic currently plaguing our nation," United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh said. "We will investigate, prosecute and hold accountable those who profit by poisoning our communities, and — as exhibited here — we will work up the chain of drug traffickers as far and wide as possible to bring them to account."

According to court documents, between 2020 and 2023, Contreras sold between 10,000 and 30,000 pressed fentanyl pills at a time to co-conspirator Marco Orozco at least once a week. At the height of the conspiracy in late 2021 and early 2022, Contreras sold Orozco 10,000 pressed fentanyl pills multiple times per week. The pills were then shipped from California to Southwest Virginia and other locations across the country for further distribution. Specifically, Orozco's sub-distributors used various social



U.S. Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh

media platforms to facilitate their drug trade.

On March 6, 2023, a search warrant was executed at Contreras' residence in California. At that time, officers recovered 1,639 pressed fentanyl pills, \$31,294 in cash, and five firearms without serial numbers, in addition to approximately 7,000 alprazolam pills, 3,000 Ad-derall pills, 242 grams of cocaine, and other hallucinogenic narcotics.

The Wise County Sheriff's Office, the Norton Police Department, the Southwest Virginia Drug Task Force (consisting of the Wise County Sheriff's Office, the Scott County Sheriff's Office, the Lee County Sheriff's Office, the Norton Police Department, the Big Stone Gap Police Department, and the Virginia State Police), the Orange County (CA) Sheriff's Department, the Santa Ana (CA) Police Department, the Anaheim (CA) Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, and the United States Postal Inspection Service investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Lena L. Busscher prosecuted the case.

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Meetings

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.

Thursday, May 15

The Stuart Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the town office.

Events

Thursday, May 9 through Saturday, May 11

The Patrick County Alzheimer's Group, LLC, will hold a yard sale from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The sale will be held at the basement of Hills Tax Service on Wood Brothers Drive in Stuart. BBQ sandwiches will be sold on May 10.

The Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold a morning of informative presentations led by industry professionals from 10-11:30 a.m. at Patrick Springs Park. Those interested should RSVP at patrickcountyswcd@gmail.com, or the district office at (276) 694-2911.

Saturday, May 11

Woolwine Methodist Church will hold a Spring Tea 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.

A yard sale and bake benefit to help Shanna Spence with her medical expenses will be held at Mayo Mountain Church from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be lots of girls' clothes, teens, women's and men's clothes, glassware, and more items.

Tuesday, May 14

The Stuart Cemetery Association will hold its annual meeting at 5 p.m. in the Conference Room of Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC), Stuart site. All landholders and family members are encouraged to attend.

Wednesday, May 15

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

Friday, May 17

The Woolwine community food truck will be at the Fairystone VFD from 3-4:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 18

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

The first annual cruise-in and art extravaganza featuring the WHOOTY Award will be held at the Francisco Community Building in Westfield, N.C., from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cars, trucks, and motorcycles are all welcome.

The Christian Bowhunters of the Blue Ridge will host a Youth Archery event for ages 6-17 at Sycamore Baptist Church, 179 Sycamore Church Road, Stuart, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Bows and arrows are provided, or you can bring your own. Walk ups are welcome, or preregister by calling (276) 288-4110.

An evening of singing and fellowship will be held at New Hope Community Church, 1863 Clark House Farm Road, Stuart, Virginia, at 7 p.m. Featured singer will be Eric Sheppard. Refreshments will be served. All are invited.

Saturday, May 25

God's Revenge will hold a ride to support David Cassell, a Patrick County man who was recently injured in a car accident. The ride will start and end in the CVS/Food Country parking lot in Stuart. It begins at 11 a.m. All vehicles are welcome. Engines start and kickstands will be up at 1 p.m. The cost is \$20 per vehicle and \$5 per additional rider. Children under 15 enter for free. All donations go towards David and his family's needs. Businesses, churches, and individuals for any support you can give. Support options include cash and item donations, sponsorships, raffle prizes, and sharing our flyer to spread the word. Needed items include size 7 Pampers diapers and baby wipes. For donation pick up, call or text Cody at 336-552-7721 or Dena at 276-692-6824. Donations collected will be picked up the week leading up to the event. All donations will be given to David's parents who are helping take care of him.

The Carroll County Genealogy Club and co-sponsors Grayson Heritage Foundation and the Grayson County historical society will hold a genealogy workshop from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Carroll County Search and Rescue building. Tony Lowe, a local resident and Quaker heritage researcher will speak. Gerald Coad, the Carroll County Clerk of Court, and Kathy Vestal, editor of the book "Childress Cousins," will also attend.

Monday, May 27

A Twilight Memorial Day Service will be held at Alice DeHart Park Pavilion in Stuart at 8:30 p.m. The event is presented by American Legion Post #105 and the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard. The ceremonies will have luminaries lit and placed along the roadway in honor of a deceased veteran, a living veteran, or a person currently in active duty. Luminaries may be purchased for a special veteran for \$10 each or 3 for \$20. Please indicate if the veteran is deceased, living, or on active duty. Money and information should be sent to Gary Griffith at 3929 Millhouse Road Woolwine, VA 24185. For additional information, call Clyde Thomas at (276) 930-2117, Griffith at (276) 930-2708, or any American Legion or Honor Guard member.

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 to join. 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 Carroll County Genealogy Club is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Through Monday, Sept. 2

The Fairy Stone State Park will hold a Monday Market every Monday from 5-7 p.m. at Fairy Stone picnic shelters 3 & 4.

Auto Dealer Pre-License, Dealer License Renewal courses set

Surry Community College is offering an Auto Dealer Pre-licensing Course and an Auto Dealer License Renewal Course at the Yadkin Center, 1001 College Drive, Yadkinville.

The pre-licensing course is required by the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles for professionals to obtain a license to be an automobile dealer in North Carolina. This class will be held on Monday and Tuesday, May 27-28, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with a tuition cost of \$146.

This pre-licensing course is designed to meet the 12-hour training requirement for individuals seeking an initial Used Motor Vehicle Dealers' license. Course content will include an in-depth review of North Carolina motor vehicle dealer rules, regulations, and application requirements.

The license renewal class is required by the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles for professionals to renew a license to be an automobile dealer in North Carolina. This class will be held on Thursday, May 30, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with a tuition cost of \$126.

The license renewal course is designed to meet the six-hour training requirement for individuals renewing their Used Motor Vehicle Dealers' license. Course content will include a refresher of North Carolina motor vehicle dealer rules and regulations along with in-depth discussion of any rule or regulation changes made in the past year. Completion of this six-hour course meets the requirements of the North Carolina Independent Auto Dealers Association for the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles for license renewal.

For information about either of these courses or to register, call the Yadkin Center at (336) 386-3580.

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
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101 Inducted into P&HCC's PTK Psi Phi Chapter

Patrick & Henry Community College celebrated the induction of 101 Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) members to the college's Psi Phi Chapter on Wednesday, April 24 at its fifty-second annual event.

Following opening remarks by P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges, advisors Bronte Miller and LaDonna Varner touted the accomplishments of the honorees

and encouraged them to explore the scholarship opportunities PTK will afford them when they transfer to four-year universities. Vice President Candice Lockard and member Alan Rodrigues Rosas were also recognized for their PTK All-Virginia Academic Team honor.

PTK is an international college honor society for students in two-

year colleges. The organization focuses on recognizing and encouraging the academic achievement of college students while providing opportunities for individual growth and development through participation in honors, leadership, service, and fellowship programming. For more than 100 years, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society has helped millions of

high-achieving college students reach their full potential. The organization makes it easy to research and apply for valuable scholarships that help reduce the cost of college.

P&HCC'S PTK officers are Maeve McCulloch, president; Candice Lockard, vice president; and Samantha Harris, recording & media officer.

Carter Bank and Trust Honored with 2024 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy

Carter Bank and Trust of Martinsville, Virginia, received the 18th Annual Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy. The organization was nominated for the award by Patrick & Henry Community

College. Hosted by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education (VFCCE), more than two dozen individuals, families, and organizations have earned the 2024 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy. The awards were presented at a luncheon ceremony in Richmond on Tuesday, April 16, 2024. VCCS Chancellor Dr. David Doré served as emcee, and The Honorable Maurice Jones was featured as the keynote speaker.

"Virginia's growth, prosperity, and well-being depend on the success of our community college system and the success of our students," said Jones. "From childcare and housing assistance to reducing food insecurity, we must care and invest in the whole student for students and the Commonwealth to be successful."

This year's class of distinguished philanthropy leaders has collectively contributed \$17 million dollars to Virginia's Community Colleges. With appreciation to event sponsors and the VFCCE, each college will receive \$3,000 in honor of their philanthropy leader to support the college's student suc-

cess fund.

Carter Bank & Trust has been a valued corporate partner to Patrick & Henry Community College for over 10 years. In addition to the financial and in-kind donations they have made over the years, they also take an active role in volunteering with the college. Employees from the bank serve on the P&HCC Foundation Board of Directors and on Business and Industry Leadership Councils helping to advise the college on local employer needs. In 2023, Carter reinvested a \$48,000 jobs retention grant award back into the community by donating it to the Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation to support workforce development efforts furthering their long-standing commitment to Patrick & Henry Community College and to the region.

"In the world of philanthropy, there are relationships and then there are partnerships. While both are important, it is the latter that creates transformational opportunities for change and improves the quality of life of a local citizenry. For well over a decade, Carter Bank & Trust has partnered with Patrick & Henry



Renee Hodges, Tiffani Underwood (P&HCC Foundation Director), Maurice Jones (Carter Bank & Trust Board Member), Dr. David Dore (VCCS chancellor), Loran Adams (Carter Bank & Trust Director of Regulatory Risk Management), Lisa France (Carter Bank & Trust VP-Sr. Consumer Real Estate Underwriter), Bill Kirby (Carter Bank & Trust VP-Commercial Market Manager), Beverly Lyle (Carter Bank & Trust SVP, CRA & Fair Lending Officer), Dr. Greg Hodges (P&HCC president)

Community College to help us fulfill our mission of economic mobility for our community. Their investments, their volunteerism, and their leadership have strengthened our college and the region that we serve in innumerable ways," said P&HCC president Dr. Greg Hodges.

Recipients of the 2024 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy are:

- Blue Ridge - Diane C. Davis and the late Richard D. "Rick" Davis
- Brightpoint - Dr. William W. Campbell
- Central Virginia - Dr. Muriel B. Mickles
- Danville - Stephen L. Worley

- Eastern Shore - Beth & Charlie Walker
- Germanna - Kevin Dillard
- Laurel Ridge - Rotary Club of Warrenton
- Mountain Empire - The Anne and Gene Worrell Foundation
- Mountain Gateway - Philip E. and Carole R. Ratcliffe Foundation
- New River - Gary Hancock
- Northern Virginia - Anne & Steve Altizer/Compu Dynamics
- Patrick & Henry - Carter Bank & Trust
- Paul D. Camp - The Blocker Foundation
- Piedmont Virginia - Bank of America Charlottesville Market
- Rappahannock - The
- Giving Circle of the Catherine Courtney Nursing Professorship Endowment
- Reynolds - Altria
- Southside Virginia - Lowe's Foundation
- Southwest Virginia - Catherine Corte Payne & Family
- Tidewater - Audrey D. Settle
- Virginia Highlands - Tony Miller
- Virginia Peninsula - The Blocker Foundation
- Virginia Western - The Ellett Family: Lucy R. & Frank T. Ellett; Heather & Frank R. "Russ" Ellett
- Wytheville - The Estate of Janie Hale Gentry
- VFCCE - VA529 College Savings Plan

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FIND US ON FACEBOOK

Enrollment opens for school peer leadership experience

Enrollment is open for the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority's (ABC) Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project (YADAPP).

YADAPP is a unique peer leadership opportunity fostering healthy communities and the prevention of substance use. The annual program begins with a kick-off conference July 22-26 at Christopher Newport University in Newport News. Participation requires the registration of a team including four high school student participants and one adult sponsor.

During the conference, students attend topical workshops facilitated by peer leaders, hear from well-known motivational speakers, learn peer leadership and prevention best practices and develop Strategies To Act Now (STAN) plans to address substance use among their peers. Teams compete for \$250 mini grants to use as seed money for their STAN plan and the \$500 Wheeler Award to sustain their continued prevention efforts.

Enrollment is open through June 1. A \$600 per-team fee includes conference materials, lodging and meals, as well as year-long coaching and support for adult sponsors as they aid their team in implementing its STAN plan throughout the school year.

Adult sponsors participate in their own track throughout the opening conference. They receive resources and training on topics that will help

them support their team. Adult sponsors are eligible for continuing education units and professional development hours. Law enforcement officers are eligible for partial in-service credits through the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

In addition to working on their prevention plans, students can expand their experience as peer leaders by applying for YADAPP youth staff positions and progressing through four levels of leadership with increasing responsibilities. These levels start with the youth leader role acting as a guide for conference participants and build to the top level of serving as conference interns. YADAPP interns are young adults who spend 10 months planning aspects of the program including curriculum development and youth staff training.

"Peer-led substance use prevention is a proven-effective path for young leaders to take a stand to create positive change and promote healthy behaviors among youth in the commonwealth," explained Katie Crumble, Virginia ABC director of Community Health and Engagement.

Since its inception in 1984, approximately 450 different high schools and community organizations and more than 12,000 students have participated in YADAPP. For more information and to enroll, visit the YADAPP website.

Get Ahead with Summer Classes at SCC

Surry Community College is currently enrolling for summer classes, which is a great way for students to get a head start on their education or complete some requirements during the summer break. Classes start May 20.

Students can take courses this summer in a wide variety of areas including Anatomy and Physiology; Art Appreciation; Autobody; Automotive; Biology; Carpentry; Chemistry; College Student Success; Computers; Co-op Work Experience; Cosmetology; Education; Electrical; English; History; Humanities; Machining; Math; Music; Nutrition; Physical Education; Psychology; Public Speaking; Reading; Religion; Sociology; Spanish; Theatre Appreciation; Viticulture & Enology; and Welding.

SCC is offering 22 Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC) courses this summer, which means all of these courses are guaranteed to transfer to any university in the University of North Carolina System as a general education course as long as the students maintain a C or higher. Some of the popular UGETC courses offered include General Biology I and II, General Chemistry I, American History I and II, Quantitative Literacy, Music Appreciation, and General Psychology.

Taking transfer courses at Surry during the summer has many benefits, most notably significant financial

savings. Tuition costs for an average three credit hour summer course at many of North Carolina's four-year universities range from \$550 to over \$900, while the cost of tuition at Surry is only \$76 per credit hour.

Many undergraduate students also choose to take summer classes at Surry as it opens up their schedule during the fall and spring semesters; when a college student takes care of a required course during the summer, they come back to campus in the fall ahead of the rest of their cohort.

In addition to the UGETC classes Surry is offering, students may also take non-UGETC classes that are required for their specific major such as Anatomy & Physiology I and II, Developmental Psychology, Educational Psychology, Elementary Spanish I and II, and Intermediate Spanish I. It is important to many students to maintain a certain grade point average in classes applicable to their major for graduate program purposes, so they often choose to take a course that may seem difficult during the summer in order to focus exclusively on that class's material.

The last day for new students to register for summer courses is Friday, May 17. Students who need help with summer class registration may contact Student Services at (336) 386-3264 or studentservices@surry.edu. A summer course list is on www.surry.edu.

Quality, safety guaranteed with Virginia Beef Quality Assurance certification

As demand for beef grows, cattle farmers want consumers to share in their expectation of quality, with confidence in product safety, humane practices and sustainability.

Through the Virginia Beef Quality Assurance program, those farmers have support in providing the best beef possible, expanding their production knowledge, increasing consumer confidence and strengthening farm profitability.

A state division of the nationally coordinated Beef Quality Assurance program, the Virginia BQA is funded by checkoffs. The state's BQA certification is earned at no cost to farmers, through a live or online training and test, followed by chute-side instruction.

"Getting certified better ensures that beef will always be one of the main protein sources on the table," said Lisa McCormick, Virginia Beef Center of Excellence coordinator at Virginia Tech, who works with Virginia Cooperative Extension agents statewide to administer the Virginia BQA program on the local level.

More than 85% of U.S. beef comes from BQA-certified farmers. In Virginia, it's estimated more than 50% of cattle is produced by certified farmers.

Level 1 Certification is earned in a classroom or online, with an overview of the BQA manual and guidelines. It focuses on the best management practices certified producers follow—from feedstuffs and preventive health programs to proper injection site locations and documentation.

Level 2 Certification requires a hands-on, chute-side training and

cattle-handling session. During these classes, participants learn proper vaccine administration, antibiotic use and drug safety.

Certification is renewed every three years.

Visit virginiabqa.org to learn more. Call your local Extension office to get started.

Trucking prices are a major disadvantage for smaller-scale producers. Another perk for farmers—certification allows participation in the Virginia Quality Assurance cattle transportation program. Feeder cattle are graded and grouped into tractor-trailer-size lots from several farms to maximize trailer space, which results in improved trucking rates and a lower carbon footprint, while minimizing cattle stress and injury.

"Those without enough cattle to market a load lot can sell groups at the same time in load lots of similar size," said Brandon Reeves of the Virginia Cattlemen's Association. "And that brings a premium."

To learn more about the VQA feeder cattle market program, visit vacattlemen.org.

McCormick invites those who want to learn more about the sector to Virginia Beef Cattle University July 14-16 at the Virginia Tech Inn.

The event, sponsored in part by the Virginia Cattle Industry Board, will feature trade show vendors, entertainment and education for youth and adults. Topics include herd health, marketing, nutrition and forages, business management, reproduction and meat science.

Visit vabeefcattleu.com/registration to learn more and register.

Social Health Connector tool launched

No Wrong Door Virginia has launched Social Health Connector, an innovative and award-winning online tool aimed at bolstering social connections and combating social isolation among Virginians. Developed in partnership with leading tech experts, Social Health Connector offers a unique and personalized approach to addressing the critical issue of social isolation.

No Wrong Door Virginia, a division of the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, held a virtual launch on March 20, which included recorded remarks from First Lady of Virginia Suzanne Youngkin, who said, "As our world continues to fight against the growing threat of social isolation, we must work together to foster support and encourage the well-being of others. That is exactly what the Social Health Connector tool is doing."

Social Health Connector offers a virtual survey through Virginia Easy Access, inviting people to answer a series of confidential, open-ended questions to assess their social connections and preferences. Driven by the 211 Virginia database, the tool generates a personalized Social Health Connection Plan with recommendations from local, vetted resources (for Virginia residents).

The tool leverages machine learning to enhance the relevancy of insights and resources offered to each user.

As part of its Commit to Connect campaign, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) selected Social Health Connector as winner of its 2021 MENTAL Health Innovation Challenge in partnership with United Way Worldwide and 211 Virginia. ACL awarded \$450,000 to fund the project.

"Virginia's Area Agencies on Aging have been charged with creating a culture of social connection, creating communities where older adults are recognized, valued and cherished. We believe the Social Health Connector tool will help support these efforts," said Amy Strite, executive director of Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging.

"Social connections improve our health, well-being and the human experience. No Wrong Door Virginia has embraced this journey with our network of partners, building a tool that supports Virginians in finding meaningful community resources," said No Wrong Door Virginia Director Sara Link.

For more information about Social Health Connector or to access the tool, visit https://easyaccess.virginia.gov/soheco_survey.

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VIRGINIA CAREER WORKS

Teachers offered environmental education training through Extension

Virginia Cooperative Extension in collaboration with the Southwest Virginia Chapter of the Society of American Foresters and other members of the forest industry – is offering an environmental education opportunity for teachers from July 8-11.

The Trees to Products program is designed to correlate with the Virginia Standards of Learning for grades K - 12. It awards 30 hours of professional development credits for participants, along with Project Learning Tree certification.

“We are pleased to offer this program for teachers again this year,” said Bill Worrell, Extension agent for forestry and natural resources in Southwest Virginia. “This is an excellent opportunity for teachers to get an in-the-field tour of sustainable forest-management techniques, as well as professional development credits, at a very low cost.”

Teachers will tour key forest-industry sites to learn about sus-

tainable forest management. They will also learn about how forests provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities, and the importance of forests in view-shed and water-quality efforts. Participants will see how trees are converted into a variety of everyday products.

In addition, teachers will receive Project Learning Tree® certification at the completion of the course. Project Learning Tree is a multidisciplinary environmental education program of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative for educators of students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12.

Participants pay a \$25 registration fee for the four-day conference. The costs of all meals, transportation, and lodging are provided by the sponsors, with the exception of transportation to the conference headquarters in Wise, Va.

Register at <https://forms.gle/NHsbmGdwuqqCSZf19>, or for more information, contact Bill Worrell at (276) 889-8056 or bworrell@vt.edu.

Virginia to offer nutrient management training in June

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation will offer a two-part agriculture nutrient management training in June. The training is for anyone interested in learning about the development of agricultural nutrient management plans or how to become a certified plan writer.

The first session, June 11-12, is a lecture series by Virginia Tech professors on soil science, soil fertility and crop production. This is a virtual course hosted through Microsoft Teams and will run from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. each day. Registration is \$150 with a deadline of June 3.

The second session, June 25-27, will cover nutrient management plan writing using a case-study farm. The training will be held in the Bioscience Building of Blue Ridge Community College in Weyers Cave. Each day will run from 9

a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Registration is \$150 with a deadline of June 17.

Nutrient management continues to be an important factor in a farmer’s decision-making process when considering application of materials to supply nutrients to crops and forages. Nutrient management plans determine rates for applying manure, fertilizers, biosolids and other soil amendments so that yields are maximized, and nutrient loss to ground and surface waters is minimized. Application rates are determined by a process using actual yield records or soil productivity when yield records aren’t available.

To register and for more information on nutrient management certification please visit www.dcr.virginia.gov/nmtrain.

Contact Stephanie Dawley at 804-382-3911 or Stephanie.Dawley@dcr.virginia.gov for additional details.

Warner honored for advocacy

Sen. Mark R. Warner, D-Alexandria, received the Legislative Advocate Award from Easterseals to celebrate his exemplary work fighting for people with disabilities, military families, and veterans. He was honored alongside Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) at the Easterseals 2024 Advocacy Awards.

“I’m deeply honored to receive the Legislative Advocate Award from Easterseals,” Warner said. “While we’ve made good progress expanding opportunities for people with disabilities, and taken important steps forward to improve benefits and protections for our military and veteran families, I know the work isn’t done, and I’m as committed as ever to getting more points on the board. Moving forward, I’ll keep standing up for these communities, getting protections and additional benefits enshrined in law, and advocating for their inclusion in all parts of our society.”

“Support from government leaders is essential to Easterseals achieving its mission,” said Jon Horowitch, president and CEO of Easterseals DC MD VA. “It is therefore so fitting that we honor Senator Mark Warner, along with his colleague, Senator Susan Collins, at our 20th anniversary Advocacy Awards. Over those two decades, Senator Warner has been a leader of bipartisan efforts to advance key Easterseals priorities.

“For instance, he has been a powerful voice for veterans and military families, and lent his support to legislation that ensures people with

disabilities aren’t denied insurance. For these and many other efforts, it is our honor to present him with the Legislative Advocate Award,” Horowitch said.

Warner is a longtime advocate for military families, veterans, and people with disabilities. Recently, he championed passage of the Honoring our PACT Act, landmark legislation to improve access to health care for veterans. He is also a longtime fighter to improve housing for servicemembers and their families. In 2022, he cosponsored the IDEA Full Funding Act, which would provide permanent funding for a federal grant program that funds special education and related services for children with disabilities. In recently passed government spending bills, Sen. Warner also secured funding for several projects designed for people with disabilities, including building an inclusive and accessible playground in Bristol and funding affordable housing developments in Arlington designed for those with disabilities.

Easterseals is a 501(c)(3) organization aimed at promoting equity and inclusion for all children and adults, with a special emphasis on people with disabilities and military backgrounds. Easterseals DC MD VA provides comprehensive services to thousands of individuals across the region, including personalized child development and early intervention services and employment support and mental health care for the military and veteran families population.

Digital Delivery Scams

If you’re like many Americans, the arrival of a package at your doorstep is a common occurrence. In the age of digital shopping, it has become harder than ever to keep track of what is coming, when and from whom. This new reality has led directly to the rise of the digital package delivery scam.

These scams start with a text message claiming that your package has been kept on hold because of an issue with your address, insufficient postage, or nobody was home to receive it. This type of impostor scam will claim to be from the U.S. Postal Service, UPS or FedEx delivery, to name a few, and will include

a link to a website that looks legitimate.

Once there you’ll be asked to verify personal information like your address or login credentials or pay a postage or delivery fee. According to the Federal Trade Commission, Americans reported \$330 million in theft from text scams in 2022, more than double the reported losses from the year before.

To avoid these

scams, never click on links or call phone numbers from random text messages. If you think there is an issue with a package you’ve ordered, go directly to the retailer or shipper’s website and check for yourself.

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/fraud-watchnetwork.

Marriage Licenses

According to records from the Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk’s Office, the following marriage licenses were issued in April:

Adrian Penn - Marquita Rucker
Timothy Fallon - Katie Ia-

covone
Jordan Roberson - Madison Johnson
Jozy Combs - Mohammad Rakan Aljarrah
Clyde Hill - Christine Jones

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Forest Service announces milestones in climate action

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service released new data today that shows how the agency has made progress in mitigating the impacts of climate change. The new data, published in the Forest Service Climate Action Tracker, represents a significant milestone in the agency's efforts to keep forests healthy. The agency is also updating its directives to clarify that Indigenous Knowledge can be considered as best-available science in land management decisions that guide forest management, restoration, and climate resilience actions.

"This is not just about tracking what we do, it's about the action we take to ensure our land management decisions incorporate the best available climate science to support the people, communities and landscapes we all depend on," said Forest Service Chief Randy Moore. "The Climate Action Tracker helps us make our forests more resilient and reduces our environmental footprint."

The Climate Action Tracker includes data

collected from sources nationwide and shows how the Forest Service has reached goals from its Climate Adaptation Plan for increasing the amount of climate vulnerability information in its environmental analyses. Through the environmental analysis process, the Forest Service is recognizing the impacts of land management decisions on climate change.

Forest Service efforts to mitigate climate change and clarify that Indigenous knowledge can be a source of best available scientific information is also responsive to President Biden's Executive Order to strengthen forests, communities, and local economies as well as Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's direction to improve climate resilience and carbon stewardship on national forests and grasslands.

Vilsack also directed the Forest Service to review policies for agency work that involves water, wildlife, wood product innovation, outdoor recreation, and more -- with a focus on climate. This review was guided by public responses and

is informing changes to new or revised climate policy, guidance, and training over the next several years.

The Forest Service's climate response also includes work to conserve mature and old-growth forests. A revised Mature and Old growth Definition and Inventory revised report recently released has new charts that include lands managed by both the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service. The report includes updated estimates from the Forest Inventory and Analysis database as well. Public comments on proposed climate actions are now available which, along with feedback received in mature and old growth engagements, will continue to inform agency actions.

The Forest Service will continue to share plans and progress in its efforts to advance climate adaptation, with the release of a full climate action report and sustainable operations strategy later this spring.

Initial claims for unemployment insurance are down

The number of initial unemployment insurance claims filed during the week ending April 27 was 2,266, which is 2.8 percent lower than last week's 2,331 claims and 17.1 percent lower than the comparable week of last year (2,734), according to Virginia Works.

Nearly 83 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (62 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (292); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (247); Health Care and Social Assistance (210); Retail Trade (196); and Manufacturing (194).

Continued weeks claims (15,518) were 1.7 percent higher than last week (15,254) and were 25.2 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (12,390). Nearly 93 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (59 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,373); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,149); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,375); Manufacturing (1,286); and Retail Trade (1,277).

A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemployment files a continued claim to claim

benefits for that week of unemployment. On a weekly basis, continued claims reflect a good approximation of the current number of insured unemployed workers filing for UI benefits, and are a good indicator of labor market conditions. While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

In the week ending April 27, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 208,000, unchanged from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 1,000 from 207,000 to 208,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 188,740 in the week ending April 27, a decrease of 13,884 (or 6.9 percent) from the previous week. The seasonal factors had expected a decrease of 13,133 (or 6.5 percent) from the previous week. There were 192,152 initial claims in the comparable week in 2023.

An initial claim is a claim filed by an unemployed individual after a separation from an employer. The count of U.S. initial claims for unemployment insurance is a leading economic indicator because it is an indication of emerging labor market conditions in the country.

Local man awaits extradition to N.C.



Jerry Christopher Howard

A Patrick Springs man was taken into custody on Monday, April 22, in connection with his alleged involvement in a robbery in Winston Salem, N.C., according to a release from the Patrick County Sheriff's Office.

Jerry Christopher Howard, 40, of 4028 Pleasant View Drive, is currently being held in the Patrick County Jail awaiting extradition to Winston Salem, according to Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith, who said that his office received information about the robbery warrant from the Winston Salem Police Department.

Patrick County Sheriff's Sgt. Lewis Carroll later saw Howard operating a Ford pickup truck on Pleasant View Drive, and attempted to stop the vehicle.

The vehicle allegedly evaded Carroll and it was spotted a short

time later by Senior Virginia State Trooper Joe Hylton, who initiated a traffic stop. Howard was taken into custody without incident.

A search warrant was subsequently obtained by Patrick County Sheriff's investigators for the Pleasant View Drive home. Approximately one pound of suspected Methamphetamine was seized as result of the search warrant.

"This is enough meth to infect more than 400 people when broken down into typically sold quantities," Smith said, and described the seizure as "significant" in slowing the distribution of meth in the county.

A narcotics detection K9 from the Martinsville Police Department alerted officers to the suspected drugs allegedly hidden inside of the house, Smith said.

In addition to the Virginia State Police and the Martinsville Police Department, other agencies assisting the Patrick County Sheriff's Office were US Department of Homeland Security, and North Carolina agencies of the Surry County Sheriff's Office, Stokes County Sheriff's Office and the Mount Airy Police Department.

Smith said the narcotics investigation is continuing. He urged anyone with information to call him confidentially at (276) 692-7012. Lt. Nick Pendleton and investigator Brian Hubbard are handling the investigation.

SBC to host free webinars in May

Surry Community College's Small Business Center will host a series of live and interactive webinars in May. You can register for them at surry.edu/sbc.

On May 14, there will be a Live Demo Workshop: Getting Started with Email Marketing hosted on Zoom from 6 to 8 p.m. Email marketing, you can't live with it, but you can't survive without it. We understand that kick starting your email marketing strategy can be a daunting task. It takes all of the things that small businesses and non-profits don't seem to have - time, effort and budget. That's why ConstantContact is offering a workshop that it designed to assist you with finally taking the email marketing leap that you've wanted to make. There will be a live demo on how to make and send powerful marketing emails in minutes. In this session, you'll learn directly from a ConstantContact expert. The instructor will walk you through, step-by-step, how to create highly effective email marketing in minutes. You will learn how to create mobile friendly and mobile responsive templates, to brand-match your email with colors and themes like a pro, to add features only ConstantContact has, and much more.

The next webinar will be a Farm to Fork Master Class on Financial Strategies. The webinar will be hosted on Zoom from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on May 14. You will learn the proven techniques of identifying your best products and services and their benefit and impact on your profitability. You will explore access to capital from the "eyes of



a lender" to help you understand and navigate how to prepare your business for short and long-term capital needs and what it takes to obtain the capital with confidence. Students will explore best practices for financial success to include learning how to navigate a cash flow projection and its impact on the business plan. Students will also learn how to identify the best three products/services that will propel their business forward toward profitability.

A webinar on How to Build an Email Marketing Database for Your Business will be hosted on Zoom from 6 to 8 p.m. on May 21. Your email list is the most critical and central piece of your digital marketing toolkit. Building that list is of incredible importance. In this class, we'll examine all the ways to build, maintain, and grow a healthy email list from day one. We'll review powerful techniques for segmenting and targeting your list. We'll review automation, the key to providing your subscribers with the positive and enjoyable ex-

perience they deserve. This topic is for new email marketers as well as established brands who have already been managing an email database in the past.

On May 21, there will be a webinar on Farm to Fork Master Class - Owning Your Culinary Niche. The webinar will be hosted on Zoom from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Explore the best ways to identify the customers that are the best fit for the business growth and stability and how to build a long-term relationship and buyer loyalty. You will focus on which marketing materials, social media channels, and branding elements will be important for your business goals, and you begin to launch your products and services.

The last webinar will cover Facebook Shops & Facebook Marketplace. The webinar will be hosted on FreeConferneceCall.com from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 22. If you want to be successful, you can't just post on your Facebook page anymore. You have to post where the customers are shopping, so where

are they? They are on Facebook Marketplace and Facebook Shops. Facebook is the largest social network in the world, with more than 1.1 billion people logging in daily to spend an average of 1 hour on the platform. If you sell products online and you don't have a Facebook shop, you're missing a huge opportunity. Let us show you just how easy it is to "Sell to the World" for free. What is Facebook Marketplace? Marketplace is an easy, convenient way to market your small business and sell in your local area. Customers can look through your listings or search for items near them to find great things to buy. Let us show you why you should use Facebook Shops & Marketplace.

SCC will also work in conjunction with the N.C. Department of Revenue to host additional webinars in May. Topics for those webinars include Business Tax Essentials for the Small Business Owner, Sales and Use Tax Workshop for the Small Business Owner, Doing Business in NC Series: Growing Your Business, Online Seller for the Small Business Owner, and Withholding Tax Basics for the Small Business Owner.

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

For additional information on the webinars or SCC's Small Business Center, contact Jennifer Cass Hamlin by email hamlinjc@surry.edu or phone (336) 386-3339.

Veteran and military farmers invest in Virginia agriculture

Former U.S. Navy SEAL officer and combat leader Sean Glass moved to Warren County and tasted his first locally sourced beef from a neighboring farm. The meat was quickly consumed by his family of seven, and they purchased more. It was just as good.

"Phenomenal," Glass recalled. "It really got my wheels turning. Most people ... don't have the access to put this on their plate every night. To me, that seemed almost un-American."

To increase that access, and support military families, Glass and partners launched the e-commerce operation Primal Beef Co. in the Shenandoah Valley. For every box sold, one cut of beef is donated directly to a special operations force member's household, in partnership with The C4 Foundation.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and the contributions of veteran and military farmers strengthen the state's agriculture community, said Wayne F. Pryor, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation president.

"While they share a call to service, farmers and soldiers also share a strong work ethic, problem-solving skills and determination to persevere through difficulties," Pryor said.

The recently released findings of the 2022 Census of Agriculture reported there are 7,679 farmers with military service operating on 1.2 million acres in Virginia. Over 4,000 of them average around age 68. Loudoun and Fauquier counties are home to the largest number of military farmers.

Virginia cattle typically is finished and processed in the Midwest, Glass noted. Now, the large-scale processing capacity offered by Primal Beef's partner Seven Hills Foods Co. boosts the brand identity of Virginia beef.

The Lynchburg facility has become the state's largest processor. President Dalton Mosser said his team designed their production model to accommodate every operation, "from farmers needing one head processed at a time, up to supporting major production for groups like Primal Beef

Co. We look forward to supporting their growth for many years to come."

Buying locally grown and processed beef not only supports American processing facilities and jobs, but also supports American farms, businesses and families with farm-raised beef. "And with ours, you're also supporting SEALS and their families," Glass added.

Farm Bureau and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services support the Farmer Veteran Coalition, offering training, resources and marketing initiatives like the Virginia Grown's Homegrown by Heroes label. Those interested in joining the Virginia chapter of the FVC should contact John Fant at jsfant64@gmail.com or visit facebook.com/FVCofVA to learn more.

The Virginia Cooperative Extension Small Farm Outreach Program also serves veteran farmers. Contact Virginia State University's SFOP office at 804-524-3292 or visit ext.vsu.edu/small-farm-outreach-program for information.

College to host Open House for Viticulture and Enology Program

Surry Community College invites prospective students to attend a Viticulture and Enology open house on Friday, May 31, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Shelton-Badgett N.C. Center for Viticulture and Enology on the college's Dobson campus, 630 South Main Street, Dobson, N.C.

Viticulture is the study of grape growing, and enology is the study of winemaking. Both areas of study are a part of the Viticulture and Enology program at SCC, which offers the option of a two-year degree or four certificate options in Viticulture, Enology, Wine Marketing, and Tasting Room Operations.

The open house will give interested persons a chance to speak with program instructors and learn more about the wine grape industry, as well as offer an opportunity for prospective students to submit college applications and obtain assistance with financial and class registrations for the Fall 2024 semester.

The event is free to attend, but pre-registration is required. Registrants will be entered for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship from the Surry Community College Foundation. To pre-register, visit surry.edu/wine.

The schedule for the open house events includes a program overview from 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., a vineyard tour from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., a tour of the Surry Cellars Winery with a wine tasting from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and an opportunity for college application and financial aid assistance from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Viticulture and Enology curriculum at SCC is designed to prepare individuals for various careers in the grape growing and wine making industry. Classroom instruction, laboratory and field applications of viticulture/enology principles and practices are included in the program of study.

Courses in viticulture include aspects of plant science, vineyard establishment and economics, soils and vine nutrition, canopy

management, harvest, and integrated pest management. Viticulture course work includes seasonal experience and training in the five-acre campus vineyard.

High school juniors and seniors can take Viticulture classes incorporating vineyard field work with grape science and earn classes toward completing a Viticulture certificate at Surry Community College as a part of the tuition-free, Career & College

Promise dual enrollment program.

Those interested in enology will receive training in the classroom, laboratory and on-campus winery in the tools and techniques of wine making. Course topics include fermentation science, sensory analysis, wine marketing and design.

For more information about the program, contact Jeff Jones at (336) 386-3391 or jonesjr@surry.edu or go to surry.edu/wine.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY FOR A 2024 BIENNIAL REVIEW OF ITS BASE RATES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO § 56-585.8 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA CASE NO. PUR-2024-00024

On March 29, 2024, Appalachian Power Company ("APCo" or "Company") filed an application ("Application") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to § 56-585.8 of the Code of Virginia ("Code") and the Commission's Rules Governing Utility Rate Applications and Annual Informational Filings, for a biennial review of the Company's rates and terms and conditions for the provision of generation and distribution services. Pursuant to Code § 56-585.8 D, the Commission must issue a final order regarding the Application by November 20, 2024, and any revisions in rates ordered by the Commission pursuant to the rate review shall take effect no later than January 1, 2025.

The Application states that this proceeding entails, among other things, determinations regarding: (i) APCo's cost of service and earnings during the twelve-month period ending December 31, 2023; (ii) whether prospective changes to APCo's rates for generation and distribution services are necessary; and (iii) the Company's prospective fair rate of return on common equity ("ROE").

APCo states that it files this Application under Virginia Code § 56-585.8, a new law enacted in 2023 that reinstated biennial reviews for APCo. The Company states that the statute requires APCo to file its first biennial review in 2024, and, in this initial review proceeding, the Commission must review APCo's earnings in 2023 only. The Company outlines the parameters for the Commission's review of APCo's earnings in a biennial review case, including the circumstances under which the Commission must order revisions to APCo's rates under Code § 56-585.8 F. APCo states that, if the Commission determines that APCo's existing rates will, on a going-forward basis, produce revenues above or below the Company's authorized rate of return, then the Commission "shall order any reductions or increases, as applicable and necessary, to such rates...that it deems appropriate to ensure the resulting rates for generation and distribution services (a) are just and reasonable and (b) provide the utility an opportunity to recover its costs of providing services" over the next biennial period and earn a fair rate of return as authorized by the Commission.

APCo states that, for the purposes of the earnings test in this case, APCo's authorized ROE is the 9.5% that the Commission approved in the Company's 2023 triennial review. APCo asserts that it earned a return of 2.26% on its common equity during 2023, which is the equivalent of more than \$149.2 million in pre-tax earnings below the authorized return of 9.5%.

In this case, APCo requests approval to implement retail base generation and distribution rates that are designed to increase the Company's revenues by approximately \$95.1 million, which represents a 5.1% increase to overall revenues. The requested increase includes a \$32.8 million increase to the generation function and a \$62.3 million increase to the distribution function. According to APCo, the requested revenue increase reflects, among other things, APCo's requested authorization of a prospective ROE of 10.8%.

APCo states that an increase to its rates is necessary to ensure the Company can continue providing safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates to its customers over the coming years. The requested rate increase is the result of numerous factors, including the following: fuel-related carrying costs; increased capital costs, including a 10.8% market cost of equity and higher interest expense; incremental capital investment; increased operating expenses, including but not limited to costs associated with major storms; and fully incorporating in rates the costs of APCo's vegetation management program.

Included in the Application are the Company's proposed changes to its terms and conditions of service, which include requests for approval of three additional rates schedules: Rider National REC, a voluntary rate schedule that provides customers with a lower-cost option to source renewable power than the Company's two existing options; Schedule LFEVC, a voluntary rate schedule for commercial and industrial customers with electric vehicle fleets; and Schedule PEVCFS, which is designed to accommodate public charging of electric vehicles. In addition, the Company requests approval of a new Customer Solutions EV Pilot Program, which is intended to provide a means to connect customers in need of EV charging infrastructure with qualified vendors to provide that infrastructure. Further, the Company proposes to increase the basic service charge for residential customers from \$7.96 to \$9.00 per month.

The overall impact of the Company's proposals would increase the monthly bill of a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month by approximately \$10.22, or 6.0%.

The foregoing is not an exhaustive list of all of the proposals contained in the Company's Application. Interested persons are encouraged to review APCo's Application and supporting documents in full for details about these and other proposals.

TAKE NOTICE that the Commission may apportion revenues among customer classes and/or design rates in a manner differing from that shown in the Application and supporting documents and thus may adopt rates that differ from those appearing in the Company's Application and supporting documents.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo's Application. On September 9, 2024, at 10 a.m., the Commission will hold a telephonic hearing, with no witness present in the Commission's courtroom, for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before September 4, 2024, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide to the Commission (a) your name, and (b) the telephone number that you wish the Commission to call during the hearing to receive your testimony. This information may be provided to the Commission in three ways: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting; (ii) by completing and emailing the PDF version of this form to SCCInfo@scc.virginia.gov; or (iii) by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting.

Beginning at 10 a.m. on September 9, 2024, the Commission will telephone sequentially each person who has signed up to testify as provided above.

On September 10, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Commission will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission's Staff.

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

An electronic copy of the public version of the Company's Application may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: James G. Ritter, Esquire, American Electric Power Service Corporation, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or jritter@aep.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies of the public version of the Application and other documents filed in this case from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/Case-Information.

On or before September 4, 2024, any interested person may submit comments on the Application by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/casecomments/Submit-Public-Comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00024.

On or before June 21, 2024, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel, if available. The respondent simultaneously shall serve a copy of the notice of participation on counsel to the Company. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Rules of Practice and Procedure ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00024. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing.

On or before July 19, 2024, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served on the Commission's Staff, the Company, and all other respondents simultaneous with its filing. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00024.

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

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

APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY



Surry Community is hosting a Viticulture and Enology program open house on Friday, May 31, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Shelton-Badgett N.C. Center for Viticulture and Enology on the college's Dobson Campus, 630 South Main Street, Dobson, N.C. Pre-registration is required. Visit surry.edu/wine to register. In this photo from the 2023 open house, SCC Viticulture Instructor Sarah Bowman talks with prospective students in the Surry Cellars vineyard.

Annual plant sale attracts crowd



Despite heavy rains Saturday morning, the line at the Stuart Rotary Building was long as people waited for the 8 a.m. opening of the Patrick County Master Gardeners annual plant sale.



More than 100 people shopped, saving their selections in a dedicated waiting area. Dozens of Master Gardeners gave gardening advice and assisted shoppers.



Ed Coleman is the chapter president, and Ginny Conaway is the plant sale coordinator.

Summer music series to be held at Virginia State Parks

Virginia State Parks will offer unique music series this summer through the fall that will include bluegrass, jazz, gospel, country, rock and roll, symphony and contemporary. Each location has a variety of music throughout the year so there is something that everyone can enjoy.

Treat yourself to the many music series available at the following Virginia State Park locations this year, including:

*Belle Isle State Park features Music by the River

*Caledon State Park features Songs in the Woods

*Hungry Mother State Park features Music in the Park

*New River Trail State Park features Foster Falls Music Series

*Pocahontas State Park features Pocahontas Premieres

*Westmoreland State Park features Music on the Cliffs

"Pocahontas Premieres will kick off the music season with The Embers, who have become known for their beach music that will surely make you move," said Pocahontas State Park Assistant Manager Mike Biby. "We have such a great lineup this year that you won't want to miss one single show so grab a chair or blanket and relax and enjoy wonderful music in our beautiful park."

Machicomoco State Park will debut Music in the Park on May 18 from 6 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. featur-



SWVA Museum Lunch on the Lawn

ing the Tidewinders.

Musical concerts include two Lunch on the Lawn events at the Southwest Virginia Museum, which will be held on June 2 and June 16 from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m. in the Victorian Garden.

"We are holding the annual Gathering of the Gap on May 25 in addition to the June lunch concerts," said Southwest Virginia Museum Park Manager Gretchen Cope. "We are excited to bring the local community and guests together by sharing the musical and cultural resources in Southwest Virginia."

Virginia State Parks also offer concerts, festivals and music camps taking place at several locations this year. These events are a great way to get outdoors and connect with nature, friends and family while enjoying rhythmic music.

Most series run from May until October and begin at 6 p.m. or later. Some concerts are free, and others require a ticket purchase, but parking fees are required at all park locations upon entry. You don't have to camp to enjoy the series, but camping is a great way to enjoy the music at night and explore the park during the day.

Each park location offers a unique view for the concerts so be sure to check out at least one of the many music series available this year. Find more Virginia State Park music events here.

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PATRICK COUNTY
chamber of commerce

CHAMBER HAPPENINGS

May is Business Appreciation Month!

Thank you to all the businesses who call Patrick County Home!

Ribbon Cutting~ Sweet Water Trading Company LLC

334 Patrick Avenue, Stuart VA
Friday May 10 at 11:30AM

Thank you to everyone who participated in Pick Up Patrick

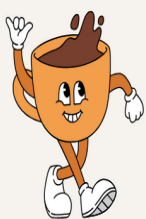
Meadows of Dan Ruritans, Woods Cold Storage, Ararat Ruritans, Stuart Ruritans, Caring Hearts Free Clinic, Dan River Park, Hall Hammerheads Baseball 9U team, Pickle & Ash, Blue Ridge Ozone Baseball, Woolwine Ruritans

Coffee Talk with the Chamber

Celebrating Business Appreciation Month

Join the Chamber at our local coffee shops for asking questions, resources & networking

Monday May 20 @ Primitive, Tuesday May 21 @ Uptown Stagecoach, Thursday May 23 @ Boyd's, Friday May 24 @ Crossroads



ROOSTER WALK 14
MAY 23-26, 2024
AT POP'S FARM IN MARTINSVILLE, VA

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CORY WONG
BROKE MOUNTAIN BLUEGRASS BAND
NORTH MISSISSIPPI ALLSTARS
BIG SOMETHING
DANIEL DONATO'S COSMIC COUNTRY X2
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|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|---|--|------|--|
| Monday | | Tuesday | | Wednesday | | Thursday | | Friday | | Saturday | | | |
| | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | | |
| Interested or have questions about our programs? Call us at 276-694-3352. *Registration required. | | | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Chair Exercise 10:15 | | Sit & Stitch 11:00 | | May the Fourth Be With You Celebration Family Movie 11:00 Star Wars: A New Hope | | | |
| | | | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Legal Aid 5:00 Custody | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | 7 | | 8 | | 9 | | 10 | | 11 | | | |
| Yoga 10:00* | | Storytime 10:30 Opposites | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | Board Game Day | | | |
| Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | Book Bingo 10:30 | | | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | | 14 | | 15 | | 16 | | 17 | | 18 | | | |
| Yoga 10:00* | | Storytime 10:30 Weather | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Chair Exercise 10:15 | | Sit & Stitch 11:00 | | Find us at the Strawberry Festival 10:00-4:00 | | | |
| Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | Retired Teacher's Book Club 11:00 | | Open Art Studio 1:00 | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | | | Intro to Zen 1:30 | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | | |
| 20 | | 21 | | 22 | | 23 | | 24 | | 25 | | | |
| Yoga 10:00* | | Storytime 10:30 With the Master Gardeners: Owls | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | | | | |
| Chair Exercise 1:30 | | | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club | | | | Books & Bakes 5:00 | | | | | | | | | |
| 27 | | 28 | | 29 | | 30 | | 31 | | | | | |
| CLOSED FOR MEMORIAL DAY | | NO STORYTIME | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Chair Exercise 10:15 | | | | | | | |
| | | Intro to Zen 1:30 | | Yoga 1:15* | | Mushroom Fairy Magical Woodland 2:30* | | | | | | | |

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