



# THE ENTERPRISE

Calendar	11
Church	9
Classified	10
Family Album	5
Obituaries	8
Sports	6
Viewpoints	4

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## Board tables motion for second time

**By Taylor Boyd**  
 The Patrick County Board of Supervisors tabled potentially increasing the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) by one percent at its Monday, September 9 meeting. The suggestion to increase the TOT from five percent to six percent originally came up in July after it was discovered the county needed an additional \$83,868 for required line items and an estimated \$68,719 for maintenance repairs.

To pay for the estimated \$152,587 in unexpected items, the board approved using some of its unrestricted reserves.

Doug Perry, chairman, and of the Smith River District, said the county's unrestricted reserves was enough to cover all the costs.

"We still have enough to be comfortable in our unrestricted reserve funds, so technically we don't have to act on anything right now. We did have some concerns" that were brought to us by residents, "and other concerns were we didn't

want to increase what a tourist or someone coming into the county would have to pay because we'd like them to come back, and bring friends, and give us a good thumbs up and encourage other people to come here," he said.

On the other hand, Perry said the average bed and breakfast in the area is about \$150 a night. He estimates one percent on the \$150 is an extra \$1.50 a night to the bill.

"We've got a lot of things coming up, a lot of things that have been pushed aside for a very long time to include the courthouse, to include investment in our rescue, especially talking about we have to get Station 8 into a home, having those ambulances sitting outside and running of the whole shift, that's not the best for ambulance or fuel," he said.

Perry also believes the board needs to work to bring more business and industry to Patrick County.

"I think we might have butted a few heads as to which business



Michael McGuinness will serve as the county's new Facilities Director.



Scottie Hylton is the new Patrick County Transfer Station Manager.

or industry to bring in the county, but there's certain things that make a county attractive for business and industry to come in and that takes money as well," he said. "So, knowing that there's things in

the future that we're going to have to invest in, where does the money come from? Do we keep leaning on property owners, or how does that work? This is just a suggestion on (See Board of Supervisors p.3)



Members of the Stuart Town Council and Patrick County Board of Supervisors show off a check presented by U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith and U.S. Sen. Mark Warner.

## Town receives \$1.1 million for infrastructure upgrades

**By Taylor Boyd**  
 A congressional delegation visited on September 14, to present the Town of Stuart with a \$1.1 million check from the Congressionally Directed Spending Program for local water resiliency and reliability upgrades.

"You've got the only municipal system here in the county and Stuart," U.S. Sen. Mark Warner said at the check presentation ceremony held Saturday, at the Stuart Volunteer Fire Department. "My understanding, at least, is if you have a power outage, not only does that system shut down for Stuart, but it also shuts down across the whole county."

Warner added that he also thinks no one really focuses on the intricacies of water systems unless they are directly involved with it, or they turn on the faucet and water doesn't come out.

"What we are doing with this \$1.1 million of federal funds is making sure that Stuart, and by extension all of Patrick County, has that re-

siliency and backup so people in the event of shutdowns are still going to have that access to water," he said.

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith explained that funds from Congressionally Directed Spending are earmarked funds that federal representatives decide how to spend. "It's just directing that money out of what is already going to be spent. The money that we're announcing is something that we all worked on together, it's something that will affect this community in a positive way," he said.

Stuart Town Manager Bryce Simmons said the funds are allocated by congress to specific projects that are important to the security and well-being of local communities.

"This spending should be seen as an investment in the long-term function of the services and the infrastructure that our local government is tasked with providing. The efforts to secure these funds deserve to be celebrated as clear, bipartisan support for the citizens of the Town

(See Town Infrastructure p. 2)

## Above and below

A pictorial look at the 70th annual Patrick County Agricultural Fair.



Courtesy of Hubbard 1 Productions.

(See Above and Below p.2)

## Wood named vice-chairman

**By Taylor Boyd**  
 The Patrick County Board of Supervisors selected Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, as vice chairman at its meeting Monday. The decision was made after a majority of the board approved a motion to not approve the August 12 and August 19 meeting minutes because the board's chairman and vice-chairman were listed in the meeting minutes.

Beginning in July, Doug Perry was listed as chairman and Steve Marshall was listed as vice chairman, according to Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District. But "I don't remember voting or picking the chairman and vice-chairman."

Perry, who was vice-chairman, began serving as the board's interim chairman when then-chairman Brandon Simmons' resigned in April, said he thought the board discussed the issue. But its order of succession is confusing.

The way Perry said he remembered it, "it would be Peters Creek (District) that would be next in line in our order of succession for chair, but after Mr. Simmons stepped down, I would move into the chair and Mr. Marshall would take vice-chair."

"I thought that was our agreement, and come January," when the officers change, the board could

vote then to return to its traditional order of succession, Perry said.

"Whoever is next in line to be chairman serves as the vice-chairman," Kendrick said, adding that while the order is confusing, the vice-chairman post should have been filled by the Peters Creek representative - in this case, Wood.

"I guess everything got thrown out of kilter" when Simmons left, possibly before, Kendrick said.

"It's our discretion who we vote in," Perry said, noting that the board doesn't necessarily have to follow its standard order of succession. "I was remembering my first year that was Blue Ridge (as chairman), my second year was Mayo (River), then the third year was Dan River, and then it kicked over into me - which is Smith River. So that would naturally leave Peters Creek as next in line of succession," he added.

Perry noted that only three meetings are scheduled for the remainder of the year. He added that the board could leave the officers listed in place through the end of the year, and return to the regular order of succession in January.

"Then in January, the chairs change. Then we can get back in that line of succession if we care to," Perry said.

(See Vice-Chairman p. 5)

## Marketplace breakfasts offered daily



Breakfast will be served from 8:30-9:30 a.m. every school day at the Marketplace, prepared by students in Culinary Arts classes.

**By Taylor Boyd**  
 Daily breakfast at the Marketplace in the Career & Technical Education (CTE) classroom behind the Patrick County School Board Office began on Monday, September 9.

Patrick County High School (PCHS) Assistant Principal/CTE Director Trey Cox said breakfasts are offered every school day from 8:30-9:30 a.m. and will include coffee and pastries. A soft opening of the program's lunches was also held on Wednesday,

September 4, with school board office staff receiving pre-ordered salads and cupcakes.

"So, pretty much she has the class divided up into groups, a salad group, a chicken group, a group making the croutons. It was a pretty impressive showing, I'll give her credit for that," Cox said of the CTE teacher. Employees in the Patrick County Administration Building will most likely be the next group the culinary arts classes cater to, he

(See Marketplace p.2)

# Town Infrastructure

(cont. from page 1)



Members of congress talked with residents in Stuart about issues facing the community.

of Stuart and our larger service area of Patrick County,” he said.

Noting that when Stuart has a water leak, he’s often said, “it doesn’t matter if you vote red, blue, green, or purple, the expectation is that the problem will be fixed and paid for,” and as a result, Simmons said it was only fitting to acknowledge that both Warner, D-Alexandria, and Griffith, R-Salem, supported the water resilience and reliability initiative for passage in the appropriations bill.

“This initiative looks to provide increased water and waste-water security for the residents of the community by developing backed up power systems for our existing water and waste-water infrastructure, and to complete the engineering needed to serve additional customers in town and along the highway 58 corridor,” he said.

Simmons emphasized that it cannot be understated that the funds will help to keep the most critical infrastructure in the combined localities of Patrick County and the Town of Stuart operational during any real or perceived emergency situations.

“The Town of Stuart owns and maintains the only municipal water and waste-water treatment systems within the county, which serves the high school (Patrick County High School), two elementary schools, all



Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, (left) and Sen. Mark Warner, D-Alexandria, (right), discuss chat during a ceremony Saturday.

community healthcare facilities, the designated emergency shelter, three separate industrial areas, and the area’s largest volunteer fire department,” he said.

Knowing that these facilities will be well-served even beyond his tenure as Town Manager is a blessing that’s hard to describe, Simmons said.

Mayor Ray Weiland said the town is pleased to accept the \$1.1 million check that will help cover its ongoing infrastructure improvements.

“We know that this \$1.1 million investment of federal funding will continue to support water and waste-water infrastructure in Patrick County, and especially here in the Town of Stuart. Our town could not accomplish the many projects that we have completed over the years without this kind of funding help,” he said.

The check, Weiland said, represents more than half of Stuart’s yearly budget, and without it, the town would not be able to afford the



U.S. Sen. Mark Warner addressed those gathered at a ceremony Saturday.

needed upgrades to its systems.

“Using state and federal funding opportunities for improvements, we have accomplished over the years giving our town a drinking water plant that continues to provide our community with an ample supply of clean and reliable drinking water, a waste-water plant that is now operating beautifully with modern equipment that guarantees our discharge in the Mayo River is cleaner than the actual river water,” he said, adding the funding has also made possible the Stuart Fire Department building, Patrick & Henry Community College’s (P&HCC) Gerald L. Baliles and Richard S. Reynolds, Sr. Learning Center, and other projects.

Weiland said many projects over the years have helped Stuart become better than it ever was.

“Senator Warner and Congressman Griffith - thank you both for working together to help rural communities across Virginia. This is how the government is supposed to work for the benefit of all the people,



Former Attorney General Mary Sue Terry with U.S. Sen. Mark Warner.

and not just the more densely populated parts of the county. We need your continued support in developing creative policies and funding for the public health and safety needs of rural Virginia,” the mayor said.

James Houchins, the county’s director of Economic Development and Tourism, said “It is wonderful to work with the town of Stuart, and we also know that all of the successes that you see happening in Stuart actually reflects on the County of Patrick.”

Houchins said one of his goals is for increased collaboration between the county and town, and he believes the project and check are steps in the right direction.

“We’re very fortunate for it. There’s a lot of other things that we’re trying to get worked out. But again, having Washington (D.C.) on our side when it comes to infrastructure, when it comes to water and sewer, is very important because we know the infrastructure is what’s important again for us to be able to grow,” he said.

# Above and Below

(cont. from page 1)



Midway barkers, food trucks, rides and other activities were part and parcel of the annual fair.

# Affordable Health Screenings Coming to Stuart, Virginia

Stuart, Virginia – Residents living in and around the Stuart, Virginia can learn about their risk for cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, and other chronic, serious

conditions with affordable screenings by Life Line Screening. John D Hooker Memorial Building will host this community event on 10/1/2024. The site is located at 420 Woodland Drive in Stuart.

Screenings can check for:  
 The level of plaque buildup in your arteries, related to risk for cardiovascular disease, stroke and overall vascular health.  
 HDL and LDL Cholesterol levels  
 Diabetes risk  
 Kidney and thyroid function, and more  
 Screenings are affordable and convenient. Free parking is also available.

Special package pricing starts at \$159, but consultants will work with you to create a package that is right for you based on your age and risk factors. Call 1-877-237-1287 or visit our website at [www.lifelinescreening.com](http://www.lifelinescreening.com). Pre-registration is required.

## Pets of the Week



This is Lady (left). She was found on JEB Stuart Hwy in Patrick Springs and is available for adoption.

This black cat will be hard to see. He is neutered and has an unregistered microchip. He was found on Goblintown Road. Someone must be missing him.

Adoption fees are only \$10 and include spay/neuter and a rabies vaccination. Visit the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter (PCPAS) in person or view available pets on Facebook. Call the shelter at (276) 694-6259 for additional information.

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# Board of Supervisors

(cont. from page 1)

moving forward into the future.”

Before the board tabled the matter, Kurt Bozenmayer spoke about the potential increase, as he did at the August 12 meeting. Then, Bozenmayer said the board was asked to approve a one percent increase in the TOT to fund “recent exigencies.”

The board tabled the proposal at the meeting following negative input from citizens, Bozenmayer said.

“On August 19, we were treated to a joint meeting between the board of supervisors and the Economic Development Authority (EDA). Among the presentations made by the county’s consultants were proposals to develop the Patrick County incentive philosophy and to design and solicit a Hotel Market Study,” he said.

Bozenmayer said he fails to see how increasing the TOT to fund recent needs could put an attractive spin on hotel market studies and incentive philosophies.

“To me, this proposal says, ‘come to Patrick County, we want to pick your pocket to fund our inability to budget properly.’ Please show your support for our tourism industry, and the local entrepreneurs who operate lodging, campgrounds, bed-and-breakfasts, etc. by leaving the Transient Occupancy Tax alone,” he said.

In other matters, the board:

\*Met the new Facilities Director Michael McGuinness, who said “I’m here because I want to be in Patrick County, and I want to make a difference. Honestly, there’s no place in the world I’d rather be and no position I’d rather have than here.”

Originally from Pittsburg, McGuinness said he joined the U.S. Marine Corps the day he turned 17. He is married to his high school sweetheart and the couple have two children together.

“I’m driven to be the best, and I don’t mean this to be rude, I’m not real concerned with what other counties want to do, I want to set

the standard in Patrick County, and I want them to look at us and say, ‘look at what they’re doing down there.’ We could be that gold standard,” he said.

McGuinness’ philosophy is to do what he can for residents, the county as an entity, and to help save the county money, so taxpayers aren’t stressed. In the two weeks he’s been on the job, McGuinness said changes have been made that have benefited the county.

County Administrator Beth Simms “gave me a priority list that we’re making progress ..., simple things like uniforms on employees. You know, they need to take pride in being part of Patrick County. That identifies them and gives them a purpose, and that behavior will build a culture that drives them to success as a team, meaning the county as a team,” he said.

McGuinness said he told the team not to allow complacency to sneak in because one of their missions as public servants is to continuously seek self-improvement in ways to better serve residents.

“Changes are imminent, they always are. There will be no changes made just to make a change. A change will be made when it benefits our citizens and our great county with services or financially. I totally expect my department heads to complain and go behind closed doors to tell me it’s not going to work, but at the end of the day I’ll make that decision, and they’ll execute,” he said.

The purpose of upper-level management, McGuinness said, is to provide service to employees below him so they can provide the best service possible for the county. One of his goals for the next month is to talk with every board member to gain knowledge of the county, tour the county’s facilities, note changes that are being made, and ask for their input on what he needs to be doing.

“That way I can better serve Beth and our team. I closed my department head meeting

with two ideas: I told them, you take your directions, and you execute it. That’s what I do for Ms. Beth, she’s my boss, I’m loyal to her. She tells me what to do and I do it, and she gets that direction from you,” he said to the board.

\*Was introduced to the new Patrick County Transfer Station Manager Scottie Hylton. A Patrick County native, Hylton said for the past 17 years he’s worked for Stuart Flooring and Ten Oaks, with the last three as a team lead.

“My first two goals for the Transfer Station are improved communication between us and the citizens. For them to know when our closures, what household items are, what items are that need to be weighed, and general communication with a smile. Because there’s times they will have to wait, and maybe an explanation why they’re waiting,” he said.

Hylton also wants to work on direction, particularly the signage and verbiage, to improve communication and continue in the safest way to get residents in and out. “Because I know going to that Transfer Station is not the highlight of anyone’s day,” he said.

\*Heard an update from Chris Hughes, of Springs of Life Camp and Retreat, regarding the camp.

\*Approved the non-discrimination policy for grant applications with noted changes.

\*Discussed the proposed fiscal year 2026 budget calendar.

\*Approved the bills, claims, and appropriations.

\*Heard the administrator’s report.

\*Heard the supervisors’ reports.

\*Appointed Robbie Overby to the EDA for the Peters Creek District.

\*Reappointed Scott Eustler to the Public Service Authority (PSA) for the Peters Creek District.

\*Appointed Kendrick and Larry Cowley to the Stormwater Board of Appeals as At-Large members.

# Marketplace

(cont. from page 1)



Wooden items made at Patrick County High School (PCHS) like bird houses, cell phone holders, and tables are available for purchase at the marketplace.



Trey Cox brought Schools Superintendent Jason Wood the ordered salad lunches and cupcakes to distribute to staff in the School Board Office.

added.

While the class is still working out the kinks in the marketplace, Cox said the current plan is to have lunches sold twice a week. A start date has yet to be announced, but the idea is for the early week meal to be held on Tuesdays -- something on the lighter side like salads and quesadillas. The end of the week meal on Thursday will be something heavier, like pasta or a meat dish.

“Start the week light and give them more time to make a bigger meal” at the end of the week, he said of the class members.

Cox noted the culinary arts classes also plan to distribute a survey to get feedback from customers on the food and suggestions for future meals. Students will then use the suggestions to decide what meals to create for the following week.

“We don’t want any overages. We run on a tight budget, and we just want to make sure we’re not losing any money. I don’t want them to make 74 dinners and only sell 16, so we have to send out the requests and get them to fill it back in in order for us to start making it for next week,” Cox said.

Surveys will be sent out on Fridays and the necessary items will be purchased on Mondays. Cox added he has no doubt the culinary arts classes will be able to mass produce the food needed to operate.

The Marketplace is entirely student-run, and Cox noted his only role is to collect the money and take it back to the students, who will then reconcile it.

“They’ll do all the parts of it. They had an ingredients per cost

sheet up, and go by it to figure out how much money they were making on each salad, how much money they were making using the chicken, how much money they were making with the cupcakes and ingredients in this batch and that batch. They’re doing it all,” Cox said, adding students taking the lead was the purpose of the project.

“They did the marketing. They’ve come up with flyers, they’re doing that part as well. That’s all part of the standards that go along with culinary,” Cox said, and getting the Marketplace up and running has been a long process.

“We wanted to make sure it was done right. Because they’re not going to order it just because we’re the school if it’s not good,” he said with a chuckle. “I wouldn’t, I mean that’s your money.”

He believes the prices are also reasonable, with lunches mostly between \$10-\$15.

“You pay that for a bad meal” from fast food restaurants, “which is not very good for you either,” Cox said, adding that students in Culinary Arts II will be running the breakfasts. Those students are also already SERV Safe Manager certified.

“They can go and get a job anywhere as SERV Safe Manager, so it’s being prepared by kids who are well-versed on every safety rule,” Cox said, adding the students have a lot of plans for the Marketplace, and he hopes it goes well.

“I hope we keep doing it because it is so great for the kids. They’re getting on the job experience, and we can’t teach that. You can’t teach interactions with



Patrick County High School (PCHS) Assistant Principal/CTE Director Trey Cox said the American flags made by PCHS students cost \$50 and are available in the Marketplace at the Patrick County School Board Office.

the public. You can’t teach the things that they’re having to do with the market and stuff, and dealing with the money,” he said.

Students are also gaining experience just by being enrolled in the classes and being in the kitchen, Cox said, especially if they plan to enter the culinary field after high school.

“That’s our job – to get them ready to leave and for them to find something to do when they leave. Mrs. Perry (PCHS Principal) says three things all the time, and I truly believe it with all my heart, you’re either enrolled, enlisted, or employed when you leave here, and that’s what we want,” he said.

Wooden items like crates, tables, bird houses, American flags, and cellphone holders made in CTE classes also will be available for purchase. “We’re going to get some shelving in to



Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Sara Leigh Collins enjoys the salad and cupcake prepared by PCHS culinary students.

house our plants and stuff from the greenhouse” so people “don’t have to go to the school all the time, they can actually get them here,” he said.

Cox said the wood for the tables were donated and the school “didn’t spend a dime” for them. “They cut them out. The small ones are like \$40, and the bigger ones are \$80. They’re heavy duty too. They’re not light,” he said.

Bird houses cost \$15, big phone holders are \$10, small phone holders are \$5, crates are \$15, and the American flags are \$50. Cox said the flags are a popular item, and it’s challenging to keep them in stock.

“We had a back order of like 16 last time I looked. People love them. It takes them (students) a little time to do them, but they’re just so nice and they’re gonna last,” he said.

# The SAVE Act

Early voting starts on September 20th in Virginia, and because there is some discussion in the press about the SAVE Act, I want to detail my involvement with the bill.

The SAVE Act prohibits non-citizens from voting by requiring states to obtain proof-of-citizenship when registering individuals to vote in federal elections.

Earlier this year I was one of six Members of the House who voted to send the SAVE Act to the full House for consideration.

During the summer, I supported the SAVE Act when it came to the House floor. The legislation passed with bipartisan support, though most Democrats voted against it.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Senate has yet to consider the legislation.

Non-citizen voting is complicated by federal government efforts to have federal agencies register voters and become political get-out-the-vote organizations, done on the order of someone who, at the time, was a candidate for president.

The Biden-Harris Administration directed executive agencies via Executive Order 14019 to work with local partners to register voters and turn out votes.

While the administration will tell you they are just protecting the vote, the involvement of numerous federal agencies is unprecedented.

Further, if their efforts are innocent, why haven't they responded to House Republicans' requests for the details of their strategic get-out-the-vote plans?

West Virginia Secretary of State Mac Warner testified before a House Administration Committee hearing to discuss his efforts to protect West Virginia elections. His state has removed 400,000 names from their voter rolls and implemented voter ID requirements.

Because of the federal Motor Voter law, every person applying for a driver's license with their state's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) receives a voter registration application. The various states' DMVs don't check citizenship status before giving out the voter registration application.

Because they receive a registration form from a government agency, many non-citizens don't know they are not supposed to vote and apparently some of them register to vote.

The same thing is likely to happen with federal agencies registering people with whom they come in contact.

I believe that is why the federal government has never done this before.

As far as I know, the agencies are not checking to see if a person they are dealing with is a citizen who is eligible to vote in federal elections before giving them voter registration forms.

From the non-citizen's view, the government encouraged them to register. Therefore, it must be legal to vote!

That is why we need the SAVE



**Morgan Griffith**

Representative

Act.

The SAVE Act makes clear that non-citizens have no business voting in American elections.

Shouldn't U.S. states be required to use their authority to obtain proof-of-citizenship when registering people to vote in federal elections?

When non-citizens have the opportunity to register to vote, some will vote, diluting the voting power of actual American citizens.

Last year, in order to address non-citizen voting, I introduced the NO VOTE for Non-Citizens Act. If a locality wants non-citizens to vote in their local election, the bill would require separate voter rolls for local and federal elections.

This push to address non-citizen voting comes as a result of looking at weaknesses in American election administration and recent state actions cleaning voter rolls.

In August, Governor Youngkin made a critical step by issuing Executive Order 35. The order codified security procedures put into place during the Youngkin Administration, which included stringent ballot security, complete and thorough counting machine testing, and best-in-the-nation voter list maintenance.

Following the Executive Order, the Youngkin Administration removed over 6,300 non-citizens from Virginia's voter rolls.

The integrity of our elections is also threatened by potential cheating via political entities.

The House Administration Committee, on which I serve, is investigating ActBlue, a website that raises campaign funds for Democratic candidates.

ActBlue collects campaign contributions from donors and then sends funds to various Democratic candidates and causes.

According to whistleblower allegations, ActBlue is potentially skirting campaign donation laws.

ActBlue allows donations through Paypal, Venmo, Google Pay, prepaid credit cards and gift cards. These contribution methods do not check or use card verification value, or CVV.

This failure makes manipulation and fraud by malicious actors easier.

In August, Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares sent a letter to ActBlue requesting more information on the platform's verification processes and procedures when assessing the legitimacy and accuracy of donor and contribution information.

As of the date of this writing, the AG's investigation into ActBlue is ongoing.

Our elections must be secure in order to ensure fair outcomes and restore confidence in U.S. elections. That is why I continue to support the SAVE Act.

# Letters to the Editor

## Fast forward to June 2025

The new President had delivered her inaugural speech and in subsequent months what had been unthinkable for many Americans happened. We should not have been surprised. The Democratic leadership had announced their goals years ago. In 2008 Obama promised to "fundamentally change" America. No reporters had asked what he meant exactly. On July 14, 2023, in Maryland and Ohio, Kamala had called for the US to "reduce population" in order to fight climate change.

In March of 2025, a central bank digital currency was introduced. Digital New Dollars replaced the dollar as legal tender, paying down some of the national debt by substituting New Dollars at 60% exchange rate for politically-favored races and 45% for disfavored races. Congressional approval (and thus the will of the people) for a Reparations Program was bypassed. Race riots ensued.

By the end of March, the BRICS nations fulfilled their promise. They dumped the Digital New Dollar as the world reserve currency. They, along with China, dumped US Treasury bonds, notes, and bills. The Dow Jones Industrial Average plunged to 3000, virtually wiping out 401K and pension plans.

The price controls that Kamala had touted during her election campaign had instant effects by the end of April. The cartels that had crossed the southern border illegally now controlled thousands of black markets. They created false supply chain shortages sporadically, supplementing the naturally-occurring supply

chain shortages that always follow price controls. The political elite never lacked for anything, however.

The Administration's continued policy of identity politics spiked the crime rate again. The Administration's "solution" to the spike they had created was a mandatory firearms buy-back program. Ammunition sales were limited to the "re-imagined" new police and the new military, led by DEI-based promotions. The black markets increased their prices for firearms. Crimes involving knives and "blunt objects" soared.

By June, supply chain shortages, the Administration's refusal to rehire medical personnel who had lost their jobs by refusing to take COVID shots, the retirements of Baby Boomer-aged doctors, and the increasing demands for the "human right" of health care by illegal aliens, resulted in people dying for lack of medical care. Kamala's solution to fight climate change was fulfilled.

Enough of dystopia! Fast back to the present.

By June 2025, there will be no time for a do over. If the unthinkable happens, will you regret that you did not register to vote? Will you regret your having fallen for the obvious attempt at re-imagining the Democratic candidate from her documented Marxist past? Will you regret that you did not vote for the Republican candidate, whose past term in office proved that his policies represented order, prosperity, and freedom, not a dystopian future? Act now. Vote and volunteer.

Joe Cadrin,  
Stuart

## Kamala Harris

(Fox, Daily Signal, The Federalist, MRCTV, American Action Forum, George Mason University, Tax Cuts and Job Act, Daily Signal, Washington Post, Bill O'Reilly)

In a recent Gallup poll, Americans are concerned about four issues: inflation, crime, immigration, and the economy. Biden/Harris has unequivocally failed on all four. If elected, nothing will change except Harris will be Biden on steroids.

During her 24 years as a Prosecutor in California she is on record for supporting the following:

- Open borders.
- Defunding police.
- Removed ICE as an enforcement tool.

- No cash bail.
- Affirmative Action.

She had numerous ethical and constitutional violations that caused the dismissal of over 1,000 criminal drug cases.

- Refused to file a death penalty case against a gang member who gunned down police officer.

- Refused to help Catholic clergy with sexual abuse cases.

- Raised money to bail violent rioters out of jail during 2020 riots.

- Sent thousands of state prisoners back to communities.

As Vice President she is on the record supporting the following:

- Fracking ban.
- Gun restrictions.
- Defunding police.

- Medicare for all -- socialized medicine.

- National ban on food prices -- socialism.

- Green New Deal.
- Transgenderers.

- Men to access female locker rooms and bathrooms.

- Men competing in women's sports.
- Against deporting illegal aliens.

- Increase the national minimum wage to \$15.

- Decriminalizing marijuana at the national level.

- Health coverage for illegal aliens.
- No cash bail system.

- Electric vehicle mandate.
- Opposed the Border wall.

As running for President, she is on the record for the following:

- Increase small business taxes to 39.6%.

- Increase corporate taxes to 28%.

- Increase capital gains taxes to 44.6%.

- Increase the death tax to 25%.

- An unrealized gains tax of 25%.

- Expanding subsidies for the Affordable Care Act.

- Increase Social Security benefits by across the board tax.

- A tax on stock trades of 2% and bond trades of 1%.

- \$25,000 downpayment for first time homebuyers.

- Tax credit for builders of starter homes.

- Tax credits for rental and housing solutions.

- Support of reparations by tax credit.
- Government guaranteed jobs.

- A \$6,000 tax credit for first year of baby's life.

- Increase Child Tax Credit from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

- Tax credit of \$3,000 for single filers and \$6,000 for joint filers.

- No tax on tips but tips would still be subject to payroll taxes.

- A tax credit for those who earn less than \$100,000 a year and spend more than 30% on rent and utilities.

- Increase tax on stock buybacks from 1% to 4%.

Kamala's flip flops: That's where a dishonest paid politician wants power and is highly ambitious will say and do anything to get elected.

- She no longer supports.

- gun restrictions
- Medicare for all

- Electric vehicle mandate
- ban on fracking.

- defunding police
- bail fund for rioters.

- Opposition to Border wall

- Her flip flops keep changing. She is trying to buy votes.

- "Kamala has not abandoned her progressive ideals. She is being pragmatic and doing what she thinks is right in order to win the election" -- Bernie Sanders.

- Who will pay for the Harris tax and free stuff plans? You will --increased taxes.

- Pray for our country.

- William Salser,  
Stuart

## Letters to the Editor/Viewpoints Policy

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

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

## PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of Sept. 20-26:		9/24	1pm Golf vs Blacksburg H.S. and Floyd County
9/20	7pm Football at Chatham	9/26	7pm Volleyball vs Carroll County
			7pm Volleyball at James River

## Patrick Pioneers

*Fayerdale Residents-Horace and Minnie Hooker Brown*

**By Beverly Belcher Woody**

For the past two weeks, we have been visiting the Goblintown community. This week, we will venture a couple of miles over into the little mining town known as Fayerdale. Jack Williamson has done a wonderful job writing about the history of the Goblintown Grist Mill and the Fayerdale Iron Works and his information is easily accessible on the Internet. I recently came across a much lesser-known source of information on the town of Fayerdale in the form of a man named Horace Brown.

Horace Garland Brown was born in Pulaski, Tennessee on the 27th of July 1879. Horace was one of eleven children born to Salem, Virginia natives, dry goods merchant Joshua Callaway Brown and his wife, Mary Jane Williams Brown. In the 1900 census, Horace Brown is listed as a bookkeeper for a coal company in Roanoke. I will let Brown pick up the story from here, "I first went to Fayerdale in 1906. I was sent there by the Virginia Ore and Lumber Company as the company's storekeeper and payroll clerk. I had some experience in the coal mines of Welch, West Virginia and they picked me out for the job because the company was mining ore in Fayerdale."

In a Martinsville Bulletin interview with Brown in October 1948, Brown stated that Fayerdale was named by Mrs. Frank A. Hill, the wife of geological expert, president of the Red Jacket Coal Company, and the Virginia Ore and Lumber Company. Mrs. Hill had taken the "F" of her husband's first name, combined it with his middle name "Ayer" and added "Dale" in honor of Hill's business partner, Dale Lafferty.

Brown wrote that when he was first sent to Fayerdale, the mining company was set up with a \$300,000 investment of capital stock and the land known as the Sam Hairston tract was purchased for \$54,000. The adjoining acreage was known as the Watt Hairston tract and was managed by Ben Townes, who also managed Watt Hairston's 25,000 acres of cotton land in Mississippi.

When Brown first came to Fayerdale, the company told him that, on account of the low wages paid to the ore mine employees, they expected him to sell to them at only a small profit. Brown stated that, "On one occasion, I was invited to a home that did not even have a wood cookstove. The skillets were put directly into the fireplace. I did not wonder long at this lack of modernity as the people were hospitable and friendly and though education was limited, they possessed a native wit."

Brown wrote that in 1907, Mr. and

Mrs. C. V. Ferguson took over the operation of the Fayerdale Hotel, which was "well-run and well patronized." Charles Hagood was the hotel waiter and stable boss, and his wife Maggie was the hotel cook. I looked in the 1910 census, and Charles Hagood and Maggie Turner were listed as working and living at the Fayerdale Hotel along with Charles and Daisy Ferguson and their two sons, George and Robert Ferguson. A marriage record from December 29th, 1912, is recorded in the Henry County Circuit Court Clerk's office for Maggie Turner, daughter of Henry and Nancy Turner and Charles Hagood (Hagwood), the son of Ben and Eliza Hagood.

On the fifth of June 1907, Horace G. Brown married a local Elamsville girl, Miss Minnie Maude Hooker, the daughter of William Crawford Hooker and Mary Alice Ross Hooker. The couple would go on to have two children born in Fayerdale, William Calloway Brown, born in 1908 and Catherine Langhorne Brown, born in 1910.

Fayerdale was a booming little community, Brown recalls, "the first project of the mining company was to build a 12 mile stretch of standard gauge railroad from Philpott to Fayerdale." The cost of the grading alone was \$120,000, not to mention the two iron bridges and numerous wooden bridges, the rails, the passenger and freight cars, the locomotive purchased from Norfolk & Western, and the turntable to make the trip back to Philpott.

Brown recalls, "the company cut lumber to make cross-ties for the railroad. Later, the sale of tan bark and pulpwood became a profitable business." Brown and his family lived next door to Dr. Albert Lancaster, the mining company doctor. Within a short time of Brown coming to Fayerdale, there were over 400 men on the company payroll and "the lumber division and railroad construction had been let out to private contract and their joint payrolls ran to around 1,200 men."

The Fayerdale Schoolhouse was made of rock and the teacher was Miss Della Wood, later known as Mrs. Della Wood Harger, the daughter of Daniel Hillsman Wood and Malinda Ruth Corn Wood. Sunday School and church services were conducted at the school every week by Reverend Alexander Bryant. Reverend Bryant's son, H.O. Bryant was the station agent at Fayerdale and P. T. Setliff was mine foreman.

When the mining operation ceased in 1910-1911, Brown went to work managing his father in law's store in Elamsville; Brown was also working out of the store as the local postmaster. Brown recalled, "at Elamsville, we did a thriving business, so did I. M. Akers at Buffalo Ridge and W. G. Atkins at Woolwine. We handled



Horace and Minnie Brown's Fayerdale Home



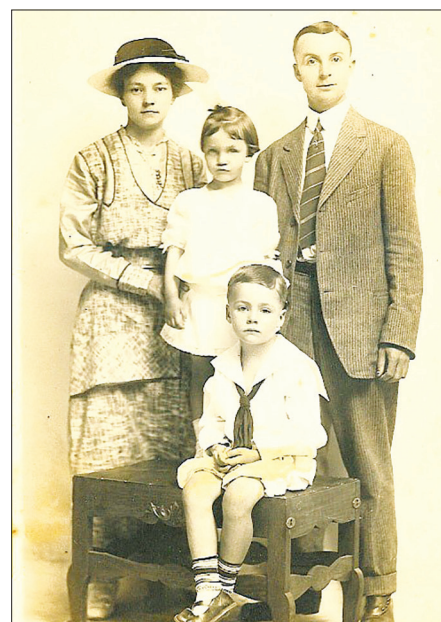
Horace Brown and Fayerdale Hotel staff

poultry, butter, eggs, chestnuts, dried fruits, and walnut kernels. At times, the inventories were so heavy, it was necessary for all three of our stores to put props under the second story floor to keep the floor from caving in."

Brown recalled what happened next, "the roads at times were so bad that we couldn't get out of our areas to trade off the merchandise that we had accumulated from our suppliers. This often caused us to suffer losses, particularly in perishable goods. The merchants met to work for better county roads to get our produce out for shipment to Roanoke and Martinsville. Model-T Fords were just coming into favor, and it took seven gallons of gasoline just to travel up and over Bull Mountain."

"We soon learned the county did not have money to build such a road, so the local merchants lent the county money (without interest) to build a road from Elamsville at Marsh Stone's place to the Henry County line. Credit for obtaining the right of way is due to W. C. Hooker; Jeff Ross; Elkanah Lackey; Daniel Hillsman; John T. Wood; Ben Mays; and Tump Spangler. If someone didn't have money, they lent their teams; later J. D. Bassett and E. J. Davis, a Martinsville tobacconist helped as they were anxious to trade with us."

According to Brown, the building of the new road did not benefit the Patrick County merchants as planned, "the intentions of us poor Patrick Countians were good. We had figured that the road would enable us to truck our freight to and from Martinsville,



Horace and Minnie Hooker Brown and William and Catherine. (Photos from Katherine H. Boaz)

but we had overlooked one thing. The people from whom we had been buying and to whom we had been selling took advantage of the road and delivered their produce in person to the larger trading centers. They said they could get higher prices in Bassett and Martinsville and had a wider assortment of things to choose from to bring home. This reduced our big businesses to slim pickings."

Brown eventually moved his young family to Martinsville and would work in a variety of service professions. After he left his father in law's country store in Elamsville, he worked as a caterer on Pullman and private cars on the Norfolk & Western Railway, then served as the store manager of Martinsville's Montgomery Ward Catalog Store for twelve years. When WWII broke out, he served the War Department as the PX Manager at Fort Pickett in Blackstone, Virginia. After the war, he returned to Martinsville and worked as the concessions manager at Forest Park Country Club.

Horace G. Brown passed away in 1957 at the age of 77 and his wife, Minnie Hooker Brown, passed away in 1970 at the age of 86; they are buried at Roselawn in Martinsville. Next week, we will look at Minnie's parents, William Crawford Hooker and Mary Ellen Ross and their families. Thank you so much to Katherine Hooker Boaz for sharing these wonderful photographs. Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) 692-9626.

## Social Security Matters

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

**Ask Rusty - About Widow's Benefits vs. Benefits from my Ex-spouse**

**Dear Rusty:** In November I will be 60 and eligible for widow's benefits. My late husband's Social Security was approximately \$2,300 when he passed around 7 years ago. FYI, my ex-husband is still working and will probably receive the highest SS when he retires in about 5 years (we were married for more than 10 years). Either of these is more than my own Social Security will be, so how does this work? Will this turn into my Social Security? Can I start on one and switch to the other later? Signed: *Wondering Widow*

**Dear Wondering Widow:** Provided you have not remarried before age 60, you have a choice which benefit to receive - either your deceased hus-

band's benefit as his surviving spouse, or your ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband while he is still living. Taking your survivor benefit from your deceased husband will likely be best because it is based on 100% of his SS amount when he died, whereas your ex-spouse benefit from your living ex-husband is based on 50% of his FRA entitlement. To get an ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband (which you can't get until you are 62), your own SS retirement benefit would need to be less than 50% of your ex's FRA entitlement.

As you know, you will be eligible for survivor (widow's) benefits from your deceased husband when you are 60 but be aware that by taking your survivor benefit at 60, it will be reduced for early claiming. Rather than 100% of your husband's SS benefit, at age 60 you will get about 71.5%. Your surviving spouse benefit reaches maximum at your full retirement age (FRA) of 67 and will grow to that point but will

be reduced if taken prior to that.

Also, if you are working, Social Security's "earnings test" will apply until you reach your full retirement age, so your plans for working may influence your decision on when to claim your widow's benefit. If you exceed the earnings limit (\$22,320 for 2024; it changes annually), Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. They "take away" by withholding future benefits until the penalty is satisfied, which means you would go some number of months without benefits. And, if you substantially exceed the earnings limit you may even be temporarily ineligible for any SS benefits (until you earn less or reach your FRA - the earnings test goes away at your FRA).

If you claim your surviving spouse benefits from your deceased husband first, and your ex-husband later dies, you do have the option to switch to the higher survivor benefit from your ex-husband. In effect, if both hus-

bands are deceased, you have a choice which benefit to take (and, obviously, you'd chose the higher of the two).

None of this, however, happens automatically. To claim your surviving spouse benefit you will need to contact Social Security directly at 1.800.772.1213 (or call your local SS office) to make an appointment to apply for widow's benefits.

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

## Vice-Chairman

(cont. from page 1)

Kendrick maintained the board only discussed and did not vote on the officers. As a result, he said he would not vote to approve the minutes for the rest of the year.

Perry then called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Marshall made the motion, but it died for lack of a second.

Perry then called for a motion to not approve

the meeting minutes, which was made by Wood and seconded by Kendrick, and approved in a 3-1-1 vote, with Jane Fulk, of the Dan River District, also voting in favor of the motion.

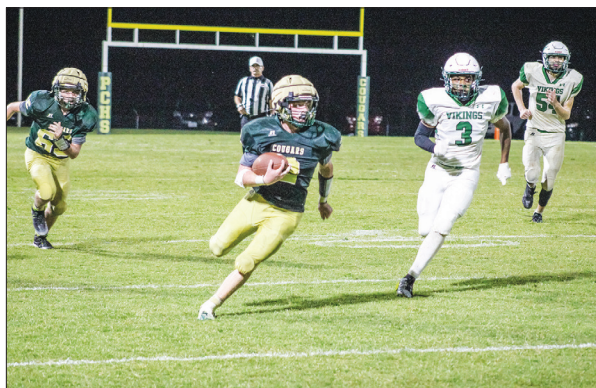
Perry voted no, and Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, abstained.

Since the meeting minutes were not approved, County Administrator Beth Simms said they would be considered draft minutes.

"If that's the pleasure of the board for the remaining meetings, then they'll just live as draft minutes unless some action wants to be taken to remedy the situation," she said.

Following its closed session meeting, the board decided to follow the succession order, with Wood to serve as vice-chairman for the rest of 2024, and become chairman in 2025.

# Cougars rush past North Stokes



Calvin Lancaster on his way to the end zone for a 52-yard touchdown run.



Jackson Callahan (#5) goes airborne while forcing a Viking fumble.



Josiah Spangler and the Cougar defense kept the pressure on the Viking quarterback.

**By Pat Delaney**

Behind a rushing attack that gained 347 yards and solid defensive play, the Patrick County High Cougars defeated the visiting North Stokes Vikings 42-13 on September 13.

The Cougar defense forced a punt on the Vikings first possession and took advantage of a bad snap, recovering the ball on the North Stokes 26. An 18-yard Easton Harris rushing touchdown gave the Cougars the early 6-0 lead.

A couple of turnovers helped keep the Cougars out of the end zone for the rest of the first half, despite playing well on both sides of the ball. A late Viking touchdown gave them the halftime lead at 7-6.

After taking the second half kickoff, the Cougars drove down the field behind an offensive line that controlled the line of scrimmage. The Cougar runners took advantage of the holes the offensive line created, rushing for the go-ahead touchdown. A two-point conversion gave the Cougars a 14-7 lead.

Following an Easton Harris interception, the Cougars got back to work on offense and continued to gain yards on the ground. Quarterback Avonne Kidd scored on a two-yard run, then converted a two-point conversion to extend the lead to 22-7.

A Jayden Corns touchdown run increased the lead to 28-7. The Cougars recovered a short kick-off and scored again for a 35-7 lead.

The Vikings scored on a short touchdown throw with 2:14 to go in the game. Tyler Cobbler blocked the extra point attempt, keeping the score 35-13.

The Cougars finished the game strong with a 52-yard Calvin Lancaster touchdown run with :33 to go. The offensive line once again opened up running room and Lancaster rushed through for the game's final score, giving the Cougars the 42-13 win.

One key to the win was the play of the offensive and defensive lines and their ability to control the line of scrimmage. On the offensive side, Cougar head coach David Morrison said the offensive linemen have been working hard to improve.

"They've come a long way in the last little bit," said Morrison. "They had a little chip on their shoulders. They've been hearing from a lot of people outside the program that they're not good enough to get the job done. We've been trying to tell them that's just not the case." They "just gotta keep putting in the effort and it's going to click. And when it does, it's going to look good, and it's starting to click for these guys."



The Cougars celebrate a short touchdown run.

Behind the stellar play of the offensive line, the Cougars rushed for 347 yards in the game. Jayden Corns led the way with 144 yards and two touchdowns. Calvin Lancaster finished with 81 yards and a touchdown.

Avonne Kidd had 47 yards on the ground with a touchdown and a couple of two-point conversions.

Defensively, Jackson Callahan's nine tackles and forced fumble led the Cougars. Paul Pascale had eight tackles and Conner Goad added five tackles.

The Cougars will go on the road for their next game, September 20 at Chatham.

# Glenvar edges out Lady Cougars



Lilly Hazelwood hits one past the Glenvar blocker.



The Lady Cougars and their fans react to their third set win.



Chloe Hubbard with a big kill past the Glenvar blocking.

**By Pat Delaney**

Visiting Glenvar edged out the Patrick County High Lady Cougars in a match that never seemed to lack excitement and featured outstanding play on both sides of the net. The Lady Cougars dropped their first match of the season, three sets to one, 24-26, 23-25, 28-26, 15-25 in the September 10 matchup.

The Lady Cougars took an early lead in the first set, forcing a Glenvar timeout with the score at 9-5. Glenvar chipped away at the lead, tying the set at 24-24 before taking the next two points for the set win.

It was Glenvar who jumped out to the lead in the second set. The Lady Cougars took a timeout trailing 2-9, eventually falling behind 10-19. Fighting back, the Lady Cougars went on a 11-2 run catching Glenvar at 21-21. The teams traded points, staying tied at 23-23. Glenvar once again took the final two points and the set, 23-25.

"That was awesome," said Lady Cougar head

coach Heidi Moore. "The fact that they didn't give up, that we were down 19-10 and we tied it up, that shows you the heart they've got."

The third set was a nailbiter throughout. The set started with the teams trading points, and Glenvar eventually pulling out to a 10-15 lead. Once again, the Lady Cougars fought back with a 7-2 run, tying the set at 17 apiece. Patrick County took the lead at 20-19, with Glenvar coming back to take their own lead at 21-24. Facing match point, the Lady Cougars took the next four points, taking a 25-24 lead. After being tied again at 26, they finished out the set with a 28-26 win.

The Lady Cougars took a lead in the fourth set at 11-8. Glenvar went on a 12-2 run, pulling out to a 13-20 lead. While there was no quit in the Lady Cougars, this time Glenvar was able to hold on for the 15-25 set win, taking the match in four sets.

"It was a good match on both sides," said Coach



The Lady Cougars react to coming back from nine back to tie the set.

Moore, noting how close the match was throughout. "We hit a little bit better, we win tonight."

Camille Gonzalez had 30 assists and 10 digs on the night. Journey Moore finished with 23 digs. Lily Hazelwood had 11 kills, 4 blocks and 5 aces with Jayden Callahan adding 9 kills and 15 digs.

# Lady Cougars down North Stokes



Jayden Callahan goes up for the spike.



Camille Gonzalez sets for a teammate.



Sydney Tatum puts the ball away for a Cougar point.

**By Pat Delaney**

The Lady Cougars continued their unbeaten streak to open the season with a 3-set win over North Stokes on September 9. The 25-16, 25-19, 25-17 win improves their record to 5-0, without losing a set.

The Lady Cougars got off to a quick start in the first set with solid hitting and defense. North Stokes closed the gap to a single point, but the Lady Cougars never trailed and pulled away for the 9 point set win.

North Stokes took a 7-1 lead in the second set, forcing Lady Cougar coach Heidi Moore to take a timeout. Following the timeout, Patrick County went on a 13-3 run to take the lead at 14-10.

North Stokes went on a run of their own, getting to within one at 19-18, but the Lady Cougars finished the set with a 6-1 run for the 25-19 win.

In the third set, the Lady Cougars trailed 9-10, only to battle back, taking a 13-12 lead which they would not give up. They finished the set with a 12-5 run, taking the set 25-17 for the 3-0 match win.

"We hit a lot better tonight. We hit a lot more down," said Lady Cougar coach Heidi Moore. "We had to work on getting around their block. They have a really good blocker, so we had to do a little more strategic things than we have."

In the win, Camille Gonzalez had 30 assists. Eliza Clifton had 13 kills, Sydney Tatum had 5



The Lady Cougars celebrate the win.

kills and 2 blocks, and Journey Moore had 17 digs, 5 aces and 3 assists.

# Crossing the Lines

News snippets from outside the town/county lines...

## City officials urged to work towards unity

Residents addressing the Martinsville City Council on Tuesday pleaded for members to return to unity, and keep campaign promises.

"I hate to see the city officials bickering with each other," said Leory Hairston Jr. He added that he was sick when he read about the turmoil between council members and a perceived rift among some members.

Before reading and hearing about the issues, Hairston said he thought "the city was going in the right direction. Now, all of a sudden, I feel like it's turned backward. We need to do some serious talk about who's going to come in" after the election, "and we really need to pray for them."

Hairston said he is concerned about the impact it has on the city. "Maybe y'all don't really care," he said. "I care about the city. I think as a citizen, all this bickering back and forth, needs to hush."

He urged voters to think about



Stephanie Mills also encouraged members of council to work together.

the future of the city when making choices in the November election. "We have to give serious thought to who will come in and who we will get (vote) out," he said, adding that issues between council members are confusing.

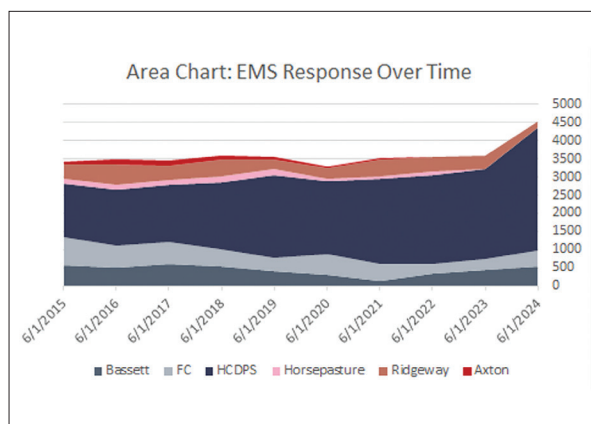
"God is not the author of confusion. He is a just God," Hairston said. "Every last one of us in this room, we live in Martinsville (and) one God is the maker of all. If we sit here and play like we all this and that, that ain't nice. I'm very upset. I just cannot take this. God is not in no confusion. Look at ourselves more closely again in the mirror, and ask is God pleased with us? I think He's not."

## Campaign launched to increase emergency responders

Henry County, in conjunction with its volunteer Fire & EMS agencies, is launching a three-month campaign to bring awareness to the importance of emergency response volunteers and to boost recruitment and retention efforts.

For many years, volunteer agencies have served as the backbone to the county's emergency response network, but the number of volunteers has steadily declined over the last several years.

A reduction in the county's volunteer force has strained resources for the agencies and led to an uptick in the number of calls that are handled by the Henry County Department of Public Safety (HCDPS).



In 2015, the Henry County Department of Public Safety responded to approximately 1,500 EMS calls year to date in June, which was 43 percent of all calls for the county (see Figure 1). By 2024, the department had responded to approximately 3,300 calls year to date, which was 74 percent of all calls in the county.

"We have tremendous volunteers in our community but lately we have been asking them to do too much with too little," said Matt Tatum, director of Public Safety. "It is unsustainable to have the same few individuals running all of these

calls for these stations. They simply get burnt out. Our department was originally created to assist the agencies on these calls but due to a lack of volunteers, we're quickly becoming the primary response for certain parts of the county."

## County schools prepare to implement order

The county school board convened on September 3 to review plans for complying with Gov. Glenn Youngkin's Executive Order 33, which bans cell phone use during instructional hours—a move that has sparked considerable debate among educators.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis outlined the order's focus on curbing cell phone use to address concerns over mental health and social media addiction among students. "The executive order aims to eliminate cell phone use during instructional time and address the mental health issues arising from children's social media and cell phone addiction," Blake-Lewis explained.

Blake-Lewis presented detailed guidelines to ensure clarity for board members, teachers, parents, and students. "I have broken down the guidelines as defined by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for elementary, middle, and high school levels," she said.

Under the new guidelines, cell phone restrictions will vary slight-



Henry County Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis, pictured at a groundbreaking ceremony last week, presented a draft of the new cell phone policy at a recent board meeting.

ly by school level but will remain in effect during instructional hours. "Cell phones or communication devices will not be used by elementary students within the school building or on school grounds," Blake-Lewis said. Parents are advised to keep phones off and stored during educational hours and use school-based communication channels for emergencies.



Groundbreaking ceremonies on two field houses were held last week. Proceeds from the one percent sales tax are instrumental in funding the projects.

## Dual groundbreakings mark start of field house projects

A pair of groundbreaking ceremonies were held on September 4 at Magna Vista and Bassett high schools to mark the start of new athletic field house projects.

Henry County Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis announced that the projects are slated for completion by the end of the 2024-2025 school year. "These field houses are funded by a one percent sales tax approved by Henry County voters in 2020," she said. "This tax is designated for new construction and major renovations within our school division."

Blake-Lewis expressed excitement about the projects, which have long been a goal for many on the Henry County School Board, as well as for community members, coaches, students, and staff. "We are thrilled to see these projects come to fruition and appreciate everyone who has supported this initiative," she added.

The new field houses will serve as venues for athletic events and provide shelter for players during severe weather conditions.

"We're eager to get started," School Board Chairman Teddy Martin III, of the Reed Creek District, said at the Bassett High School groundbreaking.

Quality Construction of Danville was awarded the contract for the Bassett field house with the lowest

bid of \$1.94 million. Andy Grant, Senior Associate and Architect at RRMM Architects, outlined the facility's features. "The field house will cover 4,633 square feet and include a home and visitor locker room accommodating 70-80 people each. The home side will feature 70 oversized lockers, direct access to toilet rooms and football storage, a coach's office, track storage, a training room, a referee changing room, and a laundry facility," Grant explained. The building will also be handicap accessible, with a standing seam metal roof and brick walls.

At the Magna Vista High School groundbreaking, School Board Member Ben Gravely, of the Iriswood District, reflected on the long-term vision behind the project. "Field houses have been part of our capital improvement plans for nearly a decade," he said. Gravely credited past and current board members for their commitment to modernizing school facilities.

Concrete Foundations Inc., of Gretna, was awarded the Magna Vista field house contract with the lowest bid of \$2.79 million. Tammy Kost of Concrete Foundations expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work on the project. "We are committed to delivering a high-quality facility and ensuring that it meets the needs of the school," she said.

## Griffith toured P&HCC MET Complex, Explores Welding and Robotics Programs



Congressman Morgan Griffith and P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges toured welding booths.

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith toured the MET Complex at Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) on September 3, guided by college President Greg Hodges. The visit focused on the college's welding programs and industrial courses.

During the tour, Rhonda Hodges, vice president of Workforce, Community, and Economic Development, provided Griffith with historical context about the complex. "These two buildings previously housed Arrington Engines, where Dodge Hemi engines for NASCAR were produced," Rhonda Hodges explained.

Greg Hodges detailed the funding and development of the complex, noting that federal and Harvest Foundation grants, along with \$22 million in raised funds, were used to revitalize the facility. "We initially had 16 welding booths,

which were in high demand with a 60 to 70 person waiting list," Greg Hodges said. "Now, we have 45 welding booths and have significantly expanded our capacity and dual enrollment options."

Griffith, R-Salem, inquired about local job opportunities for welders, acknowledging that welding is an underserved field. "Welding is an area with high demand, but jobs can require relocation," he said.

Greg Hodges clarified that while students often receive job offers before completing their programs, the challenge is ensuring they finish their degrees. "Students receive AWS American Society of Welding certifications during their training, which can lead to numerous job offers," he said. The college has addressed this by incorporating frontloaded courses to encourage program completion.

**1-3-5-7-9PM**

**1-3-5-7-9PM**

**1-3-5-7-9PM**

**1-4-7-9:15PM**

**1-3-5PM**

**1-3-5PM**

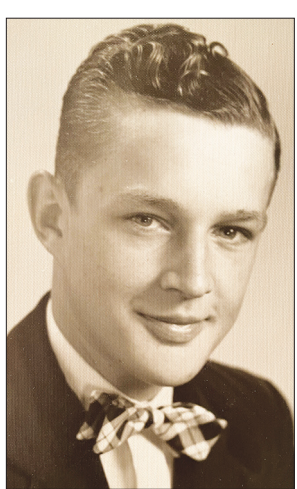
**HOLLYWOOD CINEMA** beside WALMART  
 Martinsville 278-858-3458

**Ruth Jean Bolt**



On September 12, 2024, Ruth Jean Bolt died at Laurel Meadows, Heritage Hall, in Laurel Fork, Virginia. She was ninety-three years old. Ruth Jean was born in Stone, Kentucky, on October 11, 1930, to the late Myrtle Shelor Bolt and Sylvester Lawrence ("Lawrence") Bolt. Ruth Jean had two sisters: the late Eileen Bolt Dalton and Alice B. ("Tinky") Shelor.

**Arvil Coolidge Bowman**



As a young woman, Ruth Jean attended Mars Hill College and later graduated from Radford University. She majored in elementary education and dedicated her life and career to teaching. For over thirty years, she was a teacher and mentor to several generations of students in Patrick County, among whom she is beloved and will be dearly missed. She was well-known in the community as a local historian, and her paintings were

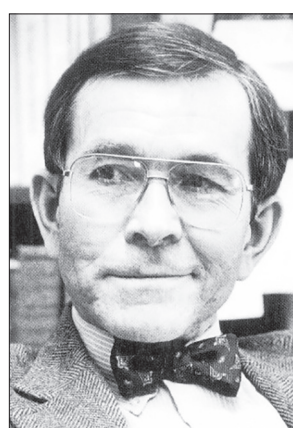
**Patty S. Dillard**



greatly admired. She leaves behind her nephew, Booker Hughes ("B.H.") Dalton and his family, including his wife, Gail Pavlock Dalton, and his daughters, Ashley and Virginia Dalton; Tom George, the husband of her late niece, Betsy George; her great-niece, Jane George, and several cousins.

A memorial service for Ruth Jean will be held at a later date. Moody Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements. Online condolences may be made by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Paul David Nelson**



He loved hunting, fishing and gardening. He especially enjoyed spending time on his farm with his horses and riding four wheelers. He will be remembered for his humor and being a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend.

The funeral for Mr. Bowman will be held at Moody Funeral Home in Mount Airy on Friday, September 13, 2024 at 11:00 a.m., with the Reverend Daniel Miller officiating. A private burial will follow at the Bowman Family Cemetery on Squirrel Creek Road in Ararat, VA. The family will receive friends at 10:00 a.m. before the service at Moody Funeral Home. The family requests in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Joan & Howard Woltz Hospice Home, 945 Zephyr Road, Dobson, NC 27017.

Mrs. Patty S. Dillard, age 73 of Stuart, passed away Saturday September 14, 2024 at SOVAH Hospital in Martinsville. She was born on August 18, 1951, in Wytheville, Virginia to the late James Sprinkle Six and Margaret Elizabeth Waddell. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, T. Jefferson Dillard; a son, Anthony "Tony" Dillard; one sister, Glenda C. Tibbs; and two half-siblings, Paige Hash and Donald M. Waddell.

Mrs. Dillard leaves behind her beloved daughter, Erin Dillard of Stuart; two grandsons, Julian and Grayson Dillard; and one half-sister, Edith Sole.

Mrs. Dillard was a faithful follower of God and devoted wife and mother to her two children. She loved with all her heart. Heaven gained a true loving mother.

Funeral services for Mrs. Dillard will be held Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. at Friendly Christian Church in Martinsville with Pastor Roy Moulden officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Online condolences may be sent to [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

Paul David Nelson, historian, died on September 8, 2024. He is survived by his beloved wife Rebecca P. Nelson. His two sons, Matthew David and Paul Christopher, preceded him in death, as did his parents George T. and Frances Pridy. He is survived by two brothers, Wade and Tommy, and one sister Peggy Dudley. He was born May 15, 1941, in Patrick County, Virginia, and grew up on a small family farm. He majored in history at Berea College. Graduating in 1965, he entered graduate school at Duke University and five years later

est faculty accolade, the Seabury Award for Excellence in Teaching. From 1992 to 2003 he served as chairman of the History Department. David was a Woodrow Wilson scholar in 1965, A Danforth Teaching-Intern in 1968-1989. He published eight books on the American War of Independence.

Memorials may be made to the Salvation Army, 736 West Main Street, Lexington, KY 40508; or Catholic Relief Services, 228 West Lexington Street, Baltimore, MD 20201.

Services for David will be announced at a later date.

**Susan Boyd Netherland**



Susan Boyd Netherland, 76, of Stuart, VA, passed away unexpectedly on September 9, 2024. Having worked in healthcare for more than 50 years, Susan's last morning was spent volunteering as a triage nurse at Caring Hearts Free Clinic in Stuart. She was gearing up for her next volunteer stint later in the week at UNC Health Rockingham in Eden, NC, where she'd chalked up 264 hours of volunteer service.

Born December 14, 1947, in Philadelphia, PA, Susan was the daughter of Joan McGrath Boyd, a nurse and an independent, strong single mother who fostered the same traits in her young daughter.

From an early age, Susan was the girl with a library card who checked out her book limit every week. She read voraciously and excelled in her studies, abilities that were equally matched by a decisive demeanor and a willingness to take charge in most any situation. Those attributes earned her an invitation to attend the Philadelphia School for Girls, where she completed high school.

Following in her mother's footsteps, Susan chose a career in nursing, completing her RN studies at Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing. She pursued a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from Medical College of Virginia, while simultaneously working as a

staff nurse in the hospital's recovery room. She completed her formal education at Temple University, earning a Master's of Business Administration with a major in Health Administration. During her career she held multiple positions, starting as a staff nurse and quickly advancing to leadership roles. Her penchant for details, accountability, and procedures led her into the field of risk management at Lancaster General Hospital in Lancaster, PA, where she was cracking ceilings as one of only two women in directorship roles.

**George Marion Cobbler**



In the late 1970s, Susan left Lancaster, then a city of 150,000, and moved to Stuart, a town of around 1,100 at that time. The lure was the opportunity to hold the position of Director of Nursing, the number two spot at RJ Reynolds Patrick County Memorial Hospital. When Susan met Frank Netherland, a hospital board member, the hills and hollers of Stuart that she thought would be only a stopover in her career, became the place she would put down roots. In 1985, Susan married Frank, a talented and promi-

nent organist, gentleman farmer, engineer, civic leader and someone who appreciated an ambitious woman who valued challenges over frills. Together they reared their daughter, Susannah, not always adhering to traditional parental roles, but making certain she was exposed to music, art, travel and science, and valued education and independence.

In 1991, Susan accepted a position at Morehead Memorial Hospital, now UNC Health Rockingham, where she eventually became the Director of Quality, Accreditation, and Risk. A stickler for adherence to policy, she was a hound dog when ferreting out any noncompliance. She lived by holding herself accountable, and expected no less of others.

Susan was preceded in death by her husband, Frank. She is survived by her daughter Susannah Netherland, son-in-law, Brian Brindle, and her brother, Gary McGrath.

A memorial celebration will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 21, 2024 at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart, VA. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the UNC Health Rockingham Foundation at 117 East Kings Highway, Eden, NC 27288 or to the Caring Hearts Free Clinic at 835 Woodland Drive, Suite 101, Stuart, VA 24171. Online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

George Marion Cobbler (78), went peacefully to be with his Lord and Savior on Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born on December 3, 1945, in Patrick County, VA to the late Mildred Coleman Cobbler and Joseph Richard Cobbler. In addition to his parents, he was preceded by one son, Christopher Newton Cobbler, three sisters, Nannie Ruth Cobbler Merritt, Rachel Mae Cobbler, Rena Carolyn Cobbler, two brothers, Joseph Elmer (JE) Cobbler, Larry Cobbler. Marion was a loving and caring husband, father, uncle, and friend to many.

Marion graduated from Hardin Reynolds High School in 1964 and went to work for DuPont. During his time at DuPont, he was called up to serve his country and entered into the Air Force for 3 1/2 years during the Vietnam War. He then returned home to Patrick County and worked for DuPont until his retirement in 1998. Marion also farmed raising tobacco for many years and then cattle which he loved until his health would no longer allow. Marion was a member of Peter's Creek Baptist Church.

Marion leaves behind to cherish his memory his loving wife of 57 years Glenda Smith Cobbler, daughter, Tonya Johnson (Gary) of Clayton, NC and his

Friday evening, September 13, 2024, starting at 6:00 p.m. with the service starting at 7:00 p.m. at Norris Funeral Services Stuart Chapel. The burial will be Saturday, September 14, 2024, at Peters Creek Baptist Church, Lawsonville, NC, starting at 11:00 a.m. with military rites by Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard.

The family is so thankful for the loving care he received from his caretakers and friends Tami Jackson and Rebecca Lilly. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the Patrick County Alzheimer's, PO Box 1301, Stuart, VA 24171.

Norris Funeral Services in Stuart is serving the Cobbler family. Online condolences can be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com)

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## Breast cancer screenings expanded

In 2021, only 38 percent of women in the Tri-Area Community Health (TACH) service region, which covers Patrick, Carroll, Floyd, Franklin, and Grayson counties along with Galax, received breast cancer screenings — a rate substantially lower than both the state and national averages. Limited access to breast cancer screening locations complicated by the extensive travel needed to reach healthcare providers presents challenging barriers to women in the region.

As a result, TACH partnered with UVA Health to enhance breast cancer screening and follow-up services across Southwest Virginia, bringing essential resources to underserved communities.

The partnership aims to improve access to regular screening and follow-up care by exploring innovative strategies to bring mammography services closer to the community. A grant application was made for a mobile mammography unit to serve TACH's locations in Laurel Fork, Cana, Ferrum, Floyd, Troutdale, Fries, and Stuart. If funded, services will include diagnostic imaging, biopsies, patient education, navigation services, and referrals for treatment at National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers like UVA Cancer Center.

“This partnership with UVA Health is a significant step in addressing the barriers that prevent women from accessing breast cancer screenings,” said James Werth, Jr., TACH Chief Executive Officer. “By bringing these services to our communities, we can overcome challenges such as travel and limited access, enabling earlier detection and timely care.”

To enhance the initiative's impact, UVA Cancer Center navigators will

work with TACH patient navigators to develop a navigation protocol to identify patients, remove barriers, schedule mammograms, and provide follow-up referrals. This collaboration seeks to engage regional healthcare providers, such as free clinics and private practices, to broaden the reach of the services. Existing programs such as Every Women's Life (EWL), from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and available through UVA Health, will play a crucial role in expanding the number of uninsured and low-income women who access lifesaving cancer screenings.

Community engagement and education are key components of the initiative. UVA Cancer Center outreach specialists will train TACH navigators to offer UVA cancer education programs such as Understanding Cancer at local faith-based organizations and other key community locations.

This collaborative showcases a shared commitment to improving breast cancer screening rates and outcomes. Together, TACH and UVA Health aim to provide comprehensive breast cancer screening navigation services that include community engagement, education, outreach, and clinic-based support for women in the region.

Tri-Area Community Health is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and a 501(c)3 organization with full-service locations in Cana, Ferrum, Floyd, Fries, Grayson Highlands, and Laurel Fork; Behavioral Health in Stuart; and School-Based Clinics in collaboration with Galax City Public Schools and Carroll County Public School District. For more information call (866) 942-0401 or visit [www.triareahealth.org](http://www.triareahealth.org).

## Marriage Licenses

According to records in the Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk's Office, the following marriage licenses were issued in August:

Brian Hall - Tammy Cardwell  
Alexander Geohagan- Cayla

Shelton

Vicky Harmon - Danny Joyce  
Shane Nelson- Macy Wickline  
Varshith Reddy- Aleta- Pratyusha Madduri  
Jack Whorley- Jayme Conner

## Programs about Alzheimer's, dementia set

The Landmark Center and Blue Ridge Therapy Connection announced a new line-up of programs on Alzheimer's and dementia are slated to begin on Tuesday, September 24 at noon.

Presented in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association of Central and Western Virginia, these discussions will feature the results of new research and new topics requested by caregivers and families. Brooke Gill, region 14 research and program manager, will be presenting these programs at The Landmark Center each month. Lunch is provided by the facilities and everyone — caregivers, family members, those diagnosed with dementias — are invited to attend.

The first presentation on Tuesday, September 24 is Dementia Conversations, which addresses the difficult conversations that caregivers must have with those who have received a dementia diagnosis, or for those they suspect may be showing signs of the disease.

When someone is showing signs of dementia, it's time to talk. Often, conversations with family about

changing behaviors can be challenging and uncomfortable. This program provides tips for breaking the ice with your family so you can address some of the most common issues that are difficult to discuss: going to the doctor for a diagnosis or medical treatment, deciding when to stop driving, and making legal and financial plans for future care.

Anyone interested in attending is welcome to join. Chicken Brunswick stew will be served for lunch. If you would like to register to ensure a spot, please call 276-694-3050 and let the receptionist know you are registering for the Alzheimer's program.

Additional programs through May include:

October 29 — Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors; November 19 — Exploring Care and Support Services; January 28 — Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia; February 25 — Building Foundations of Caregiving; March 25 — Supporting Independence; April 22 — Communicating Effectively; May 20 — Managing Money: A Caregiver's Guide to Finances.

## Sports Briefs

By Ashlee Mullis

### JV Volleyball Gets Two More Wins

The JV Volleyball Team beat North Stokes, Monday, September 9, 2-0 with scores of 25-11 and 25-9. Brooke Barner had 5 kills. Mariah Scott had 5 assists and 4 aces.

Maddy Martin had 7 aces, and Jenna Woods had 5 aces. Thursday,

### Varsity Golf Finishes 2nd

The Varsity Cougar Golf Team traveled to Westlake Golf Club, Thursday, September 12. The Cougars finished with a score of 334, beating Magna Vista's score of 341, but coming in behind Franklin County's 320.

Parker Roop shot an 81 for the Cougars. Chance Corns shot an 82. Josh Freeman shot an 86, and Car-

September 12, the Lady Cougars beat Radford in 2 sets, 25-17 and 25-15. Kendra Penn had 5 kills and Barner had 5 kills. Scott had 8 assists and 6 aces. Woods had 8 digs, 3 aces, and 2 kills, and Kaylene Garcia had 7 assists.

ter Gregory finished with an 86.

“We shot a good score today as a team,” said Coach Philip Stegall. “We made better shot selection today on approach shots and around the green. We just need to keep working hard in the upcoming weeks as we prepare for the sub-regional tournament.”

## Student Briefs

### Edwards enrolls at JMU

Stuart resident Heather Edwards has enrolled at James Madison University for the fall 2024 semester. Edwards is majoring in Dietetics - BS.

## Students from PCHS among those attending Camp Med

This year, Northern Regional Hospital held two Camp Med sessions — one in June and one in July — and hosted approximately 40 local high school students, including several Patrick County High School (PCHS) students. Camp Med is a program designed to identify, recruit, educate, and prepare local high school students for careers in health professions.

During the week, students participated in tours, interactive stations, animal dissection, hands-on labs, and obtained a certification in CPR. The

program provided a range of unique educational experiences in the healthcare field, from meeting practitioners to seeing ultramodern technology, touring healthcare facilities, and learning about the services provided to patients, as well as presentations by the Surry County EMS, Surry County Sheriff's Office, medical staff from Northern Regional Hospital, and others. Participants explored different medical career pathways, including surgical services, obstetrics, emergency medicine, and more and each obtained a CPR certification.

## Months long road closure planned

The section of Virginia 640 (Central Academy Road) in Patrick County between U.S. 58 and Virginia 621 (Community Church Lane/Bouldin Church Lane) will be closed to through traffic starting September 23.

The closure is expected to remain in place for approximately three months

and be removed before the end of the year. Drivers can detour around the closure using Virginia 8.

The existing road elevation along this section of Virginia 640 will be raised approximately 10 feet as part of the ongoing road construction project to widen U.S. 58 over Lovers Leap Mountain.

## Initial unemployment claims increase

The 2,129 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims filed during the week ending September 07, 2024, are 16.6 percent higher than last week's 1,826 claims and 0.5 percent higher than the comparable week of last year - 2,118, according to Virginia Works.

Nearly 77 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (58 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (235); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (191); Health Care and Social Assistance (186); Manufacturing (160); and Retail Trade (152).

Continued weeks claims of 15,006 were 3.7 percent lower than last week's 15,589, and were 15.2 percent higher than the comparable week of last year - 13,027. 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 (2,367); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,101); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,430); Retail Trade (1,245); and Manufacturing (1,131).

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 benefits, and of labor market conditions. While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

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# Nine PCHS grads named P&HCC Scholars

The Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Foundation welcomed nine P&HCC freshmen as Foundation Scholars at an orientation on August 15 and at their board meeting last week.

In addition to the 125 scholarships the foundation awards to students annually, P&HCC Foundation recognizes local scholars who have brought distinction to themselves through academic achievement, community involvement and leadership potential with full tuition scholarships each year. Patrick & Henry Scholars also receive free books and fees for up to two years.

"We are thrilled to support the education of these nine scholars as they pursue their academic and career goals," said Foundation Executive Director Tiffani Underwood, adding, "their ongoing dedication to accomplishing great things is inspiring and we are proud to be part of their future successes."

This year's award recipients are graduates of Patrick County High School (PCHS).

Jackson Barbour will pursue an Associates in



Pictured, left to right - front row, are: Miranda Hall, Lauryn Williams, Avery Brintle; second row: Stephen Spencer, Moises Cisneros, Jonah Byers, Lindsey Jones, Luke Cutchins and Jackson Barbour.

Information Systems Technology.

Avery Brintle will pursue an Associates in General Studies.

Jonah Byers will pursue an Associates in General Studies.

Moises Cisneros will pursue an Associates in General Studies.

Luke Cutchins will pursue an Associates in Science.

Miranda Hall will pursue an Associates in General Studies.

Lindsey Jones will pursue an Associates in Science.

Stephen Spencer will pursue an Associates in General Studies.

Lauryn Williams will pursue an Associates in General Studies.

For more information about the Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation Scholars program, call the P&HCC Foundation at (276) 656-0250.

## Bringing in the harvest



The first two photos are of harvesting hay at JEB Stuart Birthplace (Laurel Hill Park). The hay is always mowed and rolled before the annual October encampment, a local history reenactment. The hillside of the original house site, with JEB Stuart's mother's garden at the top. Also, the photo of the brick memorial pavilion showing the stature of young Stuart in the background to the left, and the Blue Ridge mountains in the background to the right. (By Mary Dellenback Hill)

## 24 Million Acres of Lawn: Can we mow it all?

By Robin Reichelt  
Patrick County Master Gardener

When I was a kid, we mowed our yard every Saturday with a push mower. At first my brothers and I argued over who was going to get to do it. Over time the argument became about whose turn it was to do it! It wasn't as much fun as our Dad made it out to be. Of course it was probably more fun for Dad. He watched from the porch in the shade with an ice cold, iced tea. Well now that I'm an adult with my own lawn and no kids left at home to help with the mowing, I have rethought the whole green grass trend.

### Why Replace Your Lawn

We have over 24 million acres of lawn here in the US and that number is growing with every new housing development that goes up. That means as we spread into forests and fields we are displacing wildlife and native vegetation habitats. We are losing the beauty and diversity of those habitats that appeal to wildlife.

Don't get me wrong, lawns have their own beauty. The bright green of a freshly clipped lawn is inviting to most of us. Not to mention the smell of fresh cut grass. However, there are negative impacts to lawns.

The harmful effect of lawns is that it reduces the native plant populations. Lawns have very few varieties of vegetation and are a sterile environment to wildlife. They lack the diversity of vegetation that provides food and shelter for wildlife.

Another issue with lawns is the maintenance process of those lush green

yards. We tend to fertilize and use pesticides to keep those lawns looking green. This pollutes the water sources. We mow using lawn mowers that burn gas. We use a vast quantity of water that is wasted by sprinklers. These all take their toll. This is both expensive, time consuming, and not good for the environment.

### Considerations

Before you start ripping out your lawn and replacing it with that bag of wildflower seed you bought at one of the big box stores, there are a few things to consider. How much yard do you want to replace? Do you need some green grass for children or pets? How much sun and for how long does the area get sun? Is there water nearby to help establish seeding? Have you tested your soil? For most people, starting with a small area is the way to go. You can always add more later.

### Alternatives to Lawn

Generally speaking, there are two types of lawn replacement alternatives: annual or perennial meadows or prairies. Annual plants or seeds require replanting each year. Whereas perennial plants or seeds come back year after year.

Most of the bags of seed you get at the big box stores are annual. In addition, they often have non-native species in them. These can potentially spread and become invasive. If you decide to use one of these seed bags, please review the seed mixture carefully to determine that they do not have aggressive species in their mixes such as:

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*)  
Dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)

In addition you can look up non-native species on the DCR's invasive plant list at <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/invspdflist>

Perennial meadows or prairies take hold more slowly. These alternatives to lawn usually require two or three years to establish properly. The first year the roots establish. In the second year you begin to see upward growth. Finally in the third year you are rewarded with the blooms. You can add annual wildflowers to give you some interest in the first two years, but after that there is very little to do with a perennial meadow. It will need to be mowed once a year at the beginning of spring, after the birds and wildlife have used your natives over the winter and occasionally weeded of unwanted plants. Some native plants to consider are:

Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)  
Butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)

In addition, the Virginia Native Plant Society has a book on their website on gardening with southwest Virginia native plants. It is free as a PDF at <http://vnps.org>.

So, whether you are tired of mowing your yard or want to help out our wildlife as their habitats are declining, there are alternatives to a grass lawn. Add a few native



plants to an existing bed and expand as you can, reducing your lawn area. Remove any invasive plants you have and substitute native plants instead. Learning about the native plants of our area is a journey and takes time, so start small and replace your grass a few blades at a time.

Brittingham, Margret C., Sullivan, Kristi L. (2024) Meadows and Prairies: Wildlife-Friendly Alternatives to Lawn. Penn State Extension <https://extension.psu.edu/meadows-and-prairies-wildlife-friendly-alternatives-to-lawn>

White, Annalisa (2021) Why You Should Grow Wildflowers Instead of A Green Lawn. Furman Greenbelt Sustainable Living Community

<https://blogs.furman.edu/greenbelt/2021/04/28/why-you-should-grow-wild-flowers-instead-of-a-green-lawn/>

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## Preparations underway for annual encampment

Flags at Laurel Hill Park - Gen. JEB Stuart's Birthplace - are flying in autumn breezes as preparations continue for the annual encampment. The front side coming into the park shows recently installed three-rail fences, and the back side of the flags from inside the park show the recently planted miniature Crepe Myrtle bushes. The local history reenactment will be held next month. (By Mary Dellenback Hill)

## Early voting begins Sept. 20

Early voting begins at all general registrar's offices on Sept. 20. Some cities and counties offer early voting satellite locations. Dates and times vary by jurisdiction.

The Virginia Department of Elections is emphasizing the importance of eligible voters registering for the Nov. 5 election and reminding those who are already registered to update any personal information that may have changed since the last election cycle.

All information on registering to vote in Virginia can be found online at [vote.virginia.gov](http://vote.virginia.gov).

For the November 5 general election, the deadline to register and cast a regular ballot is October 15. After that, eligible voters can register and vote through same day registration and cast a provisional ballot.

On the ballot this year in Virginia are candidates for president and vice president, all 11 congressional seats, a Senate seat, an amendment to the Constitution of Virginia and

a variety of local offices. A full list of candidates in all 2024 races can be found online.

As of Sept. 1, there were 6,280,912 registered voters in Virginia.

Other important dates for the Nov. 5 election cycle are:

Oct. 15 - Deadline to register to vote and cast a regular ballot

Oct. 16 - Same-day registration begins. Anyone registering and voting at the same time will have to cast a provisional ballot.

Oct. 25 - Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail or online

Nov. 2 - Last day of early voting

Nov. 5 - Election Day

Nov. 8 - All mailed ballots must be received by the general registrar's office by noon.

Nov. 15 - Deadline for local electoral board to certify provisional ballots

Dec. 2 - State Board of Elections certifies results.

Dec. 17 - Electoral College meets to cast votes for president and vice president.

## Council considers transferring pump station to PSA

By Taylor Boyd

The Stuart Town Council will hold a public hearing at its Wednesday, September 18 meeting to give the public notice of the town's intention to convey two pieces of land to Patrick County.

First, the town proposes to convey free of charge a tract of approximately 0.342 acres to the Patrick County Public Service Authority (PSA). The tract is commonly known as the Campbell Farm Loop Pump Station and bears the County PIN 4911-9-72.

The town also proposes to convey without charge a tract of approximately 0.06 acres known as the Rich Creek Pump Station to the Patrick County PSA. A portion of that tract of land has the County PIN 4911-57.

Stuart Town Manager Bryce Simmons said he got a call from Patrick County Planning Commission Clerk Teresa McCormick about three weeks ago, and was told it was determined that the town held a couple of pump station lots that are actually PSA facilities.

"So, we are just trying to trans-

fer over the pump station lots out of the town's name into the PSA's. It's an administrative function," he said.

Patrick County PSA Executive Director Mark Vernon said when the town did its last annexation it had new boundaries drawn.

"There was an annexation agreement between the town and the county. In that agreement, the water and sewer lines that the town was operating at the time, if they fell outside of the new town boundaries, they were being transferred over to the PSA," he said.

However, Vernon said the deeds to the individual properties that were sewer pump stations were never transferred.

"It's something that should have been done a long time ago, but it was not done," he said.

Vernon noted the situation is just a bookkeeping issue, and that business will continue as usual.

"The PSA has been operating those pump stations for several years," he said, adding the only thing that will change is the name on the deeds.

## How Hobbies Make You Happier and Healthier - Part 1

"Do you know what I really like to do?" my friend Erin asked.

"What?"

"I love to watch kids play."

Huh?

I didn't totally understand, but, yeah, that's Erin's favorite pastime. Watching kids play. She loves it.

Listening to her explain (unintentionally, I had uttered the "huh?" aloud), I realized that her offbeat diversion is a really good fit for her. Erin is a highly regarded children's speech therapist. Observing play helps her relate to her small patients more naturally. It helps her know how to put them at ease and what things they yearn to express if only they could. Plus, Erin's hobby is helping prepare her for a future aspiration. She wants to write plays for kids to act out—maybe at camp, church, or in school drama clubs. As she spoke, I imagined what her adventurous, exciting children's plays would be like. Kids would love them.

So much goodness and potential for enrichment comes from Erin's seemingly unusual pastime. Hobbies have a way of enriching your life, work, and relationships. They give you something new to talk about, and they make life (or dare I say, you) more interesting. And they can be as unique as you are.

Is Watching TV Your Hobby?

Many of us tend to log screen time instead of indulging in some sort of engaging pastime. After a stressful day, nothing may seem more appealing than binge-watching television. But for most people, that's not exactly a cozy, family activity. Studies have found that splurging on television (watching about three episodes or more) is usually a solo activity. And it's probably not as relaxing as you'd think. Research published in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine reported poor sleep quality in binge watchers.

Additionally, too much screen time may cause us to feel jaded about life in general. Norman Doidge, psychiatrist and author of *The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science*, describes how our heart rate and brain try to keep up with the frantic images, the visual stimulation, and the loud, sudden noises on-screen.

"Because typical music videos, action sequences, and commercials

trigger orienting responses at a rate of one per second, watching them puts us into continuous orienting response with no recovery," writes Doidge. "No wonder people report feeling drained from watching TV. Yet we acquire a taste for it and find slower changes boring." Maybe you can relate: Do you feel like life is overstimulating, yet boring?

How Hobbies Make You Happier and Healthier

There's evidence that fun diversions contribute to good health. One study showed that people who engage in hobbies enjoy better moods, feel more interested, and have less stress and lower heart rates—even hours after the recreation time. Embracing a hobby can also sharpen your ability to solve problems in other areas of life and can spin-off into unexpected skills, maybe even inspiring a new career.

Pastimes improve your social well-being too. In his book *Bowling Alone*, author Robert Putnam describes—alongside substantial research—how Americans have retreated into isolation. He writes that while people may still do things, like bowling, for example, they tend to do them alone. Instinctively, we know we need to connect through common interests, but we are doing it less frequently.

Psychology professor and columnist Jaime Kurtz, Ph.D., writes, "Over a couple of generations, Americans have somehow misplaced their free time." Many of us may retort, "What free time?" But the lesson here is that tasks tend to absorb as much time as you're willing to give them. According to Kurtz, not many of us are legitimately super-busy; instead, we habitually waste time, creating the illusion of busyness.

Busyness can be difficult to put aside. Culturally, it seems to be a measure of status and significance. If you're one of the people stuck in the habit of wasting time, hobbies can help break the dead-end routine. Active leisure can promote that feeling of losing yourself in doing, and that "flow" is one of the things worthy of putting on the schedule.

(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Michele Deppe. Used by permission from [www.lifeandhealth.org](http://www.lifeandhealth.org) Reposted with permission from *Vibrant Life* magazine. Courtesy of LifeSpring - Resources for Hope and Healing Stuart, VA)

## Sausage company recalls wiener products

Dearborn Sausage Company, Inc., a Dearborn, Mich. establishment, is recalling approximately 1,944 pounds of ready-to-eat (RTE) wiener products due to misbranding and undeclared allergens, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

The labels of the two products implicated in the recall were inadvertently swapped resulting in soy, a known allergen, and pork not being declared on the product labels.

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