# THE ENTERPRISE

Calendar Church Classified Family Album **Obituaries Sports Viewpoints** 

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

# MERRY / SISMOS

# Stuart Council Weighs Sign Permit, Honors Outgoing Mayor Weiland's Service



Stuart Town Council at the final meeting of 2024.

By Taylor Boyd

proved a 30-day temporary permit or approval and raised complaints for a sign constructed by New Life from nearby property owners Allen Community Church at its Dec. 18 meeting, deferring a final decision to its Jan. 15 session.

said the LED scrolling message

sign, located at 515 Landmark The Stuart Town Council ap- Drive, was constructed without priand Kathryn Ziegler.

"Basically, it's a scrolling message sign, LED I think it is, that is Town Manager Bryce Simmons programmable, can show different

(See Stuart Council p.3)

# Fulk reflects on tenure as interim supervisor

By Taylor Boyd

Jane Fulk concluded her sixmonth tenure as the interim supervisor for the Dan River District at the Nov. 18 Patrick County Board of Supervisors meeting. She was appointed to the role in May following Brandon Simmons' resignation.

Fulk, who chose not to seek reelection after her previous term ended in 2021, described the experience as "interesting," particularly because of the dynamics of the current board.

"This board was the most unusual of the three Boards of Supervisors with which I worked," she said. "The boards I worked with before they might have words between each other in executive session, but when we come out in the public it was not like that. I don't recall any board member ever saying anything derogatory about another board member in the four years I was on the board."

Noting that while the members of a previous board didn't agree all



Jane Fulk served as the interim Dan River District seat on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors for about six months.

the time, and some members had some harsh words for other mem-

(See Jane Fulk p.3)

# Roark Reflects on a Life of Blessings and Christmas Memories

By Joanne Hill

For 97-year-old Grover Roark, the holiday season is a time to count his blessings. Though he doesn't recall much about Christmas trees or church programs from his childhood, he holds on to cherished memories of simpler times.

Speaking recently at a Patrick County Seniors meeting, Roark took a few minutes to reflect on Christmases past and share a favorite Christmas memory from 1937, when he was just nine years old. That year, he received an autoharp and an apple and orange.

"That was the biggest and grandest thing ever," Roark said, recalling the joy of receiving an apple and an orange alongside his new instru-

When asked if he learned to play the autoharp, Roark admitted with a chuckle that he never quite mastered it. He said he had lessons, but just didn't catch on. Despite this, music played a significant role in his life. He and his late wife enjoyed



Grover Roark

singing together, and Roark has written several songs and poems over the years.

"Songs should have a message, (See Grover Roark p.3)

# Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe Offers Vintage Treasures and Future Café in Stuart

By Taylor Boyd

Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe, a new addition to downtown Stuart, officially opened its doors Dec. 4. The store offers a variety of vintage furniture, books, décor, glassware, jewelry, and other unique items.

Owner Tara Tramonte said the shop reflects her passion for entrepreneurship and her long history in business.

"It reflects who I am, and to have a store reflects what my drive is. I'm very entrepreneurial. I've been all my life in businesses of every imaginable type since 1970," Tramonte said.

This is Tramonte's third retail venture, and she said she enjoys creating a space where customers can browse, feel inspired, and find treasures at affordable prices.



Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe opened its doors Wednesday, December 4 in Downtown Stuart. Its owner is Tara Tramonte.

"If they see something they like, they can buy it – I keep my prices very (See Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe p.2)

# inning creative writing entries announced

ative Writing Contest that is open to school-aged never had once in any single second of my life youngsters throughout the county. All of the entries are featured in the B-section. The winning entries are featured below, along with our appreciation to the schools and staff for their help, and to our students for sharing their talents.

Winners may claim prizes by calling the office, (276) 694-3101, by January 31.

We hope you enjoy reading the entries as much as we did.

### Grades 6-7

### First Place: A Haunted Christmas

By Nathan Shuff

It was a cold Christmas morning. The windows were fogging up, and I could hear the sound of logs crackling in the fire. It was so peaceful until my rowdy brother woke up my family and me. I decided to stay in bed until I was forced to get up and open presents. I laid there shivering half to death wondering what I was going to get. After a long time going through the options for gifts I wanted, it was time to unravel all my presents.

As usual, I started with the stocking. I got so much candy I already knew my stomach wasn't going to like me. I sat by the fire eating candy waiting for the others to get everything out of their stockings. It was finally my turn to open the first present. It was very small. I was confused because I never wished for something the size of a newborn ant. My parents said they never bought this present. I opened it up very cautiously to find a crumpled up note inside it. of gigantic boxes. They pulled open the door and The note said, "I will be here to haunt you every found a man in there. His name was Erik the breath you breathe. You will never find me or Destroyer. He was a high profile criminal that

experienced something like this. My mom and dad drove to the police station to report the note. My siblings and I stayed at the house.

I decided to go down into the basement thinking what is happening is just one big dream. I pinched myself and I am not in a dream. I sat down thinking about what could happen to me in the near future. While I was sitting on the icy cold floor two hands encased my neck. They wouldn't let go. I tried with all my might to find a way to break free. I continued to struggle and I finally broke free. I ran upstairs so fast that not even a pronghorn could catch me. I never was able to get a good look at this mysterious person. As soon as I got out of the basement my parents walked through the door. I ran towards them gasping for air and told them everything that had just happened.

My dad went into the basement and found nothing down there. They must have thought I was going crazy until they spotted scratch marks on my neck. This went from the average Christmas to the scariest one of my life. My dad informed the police over the phone and they said they would send a couple of deputies. The scratch marks on my neck started to burn like fire. As I was beginning to treat my injuries the police knocked on the door. They instantly went

into the basement searching every corner. They couldn't find any leads until one of the deputies noticed a hidden door behind a couple

Each year, The Enterprise sponsors a Cre-know my identity." I was scared for my life! I the police had been searching for. The deputies thanked me for breaking down the clues as they put cuffs on Erik.

> I could finally enjoy the rest of my Christmas. This was by far the scariest Christmas I ever had experienced and I hope I will never experience this again.

### **Second Place:**

The Truth About Christmas By Natalie Worley

What is Christmas, so many will say

They don't understand why we celebrate this

Many think it's all about Santa and lights so

bright But there is so much more about that special

night. In a little manger, long, long ago

A baby was born that made our hearts glow.

He came as our Savior to this earth

Bringing love and hope with his birth.

The stars above shone bright and clear

To help guide the wise men near.

They brought him gifts and angels sang praise And shouted peace for all our days.

This Christmas, remember it's God's son It's the gift of Jesus and the miracles he has

### **Third Place**

### Christmas in Space

By Kaitlyn Gunter

The year is 2102. Our parents have scheduled a Christmas trip for us around the eight planets. The spaceship is covered with all kinds of Christmas decorations. Rumor has it that Santa

(See Winners p. 2)

# Winners

(cont. from page 1)

has a rocket of his own, so maybe, just maybe, Santa and his reindeer will visit us on this trip!

It's a few days until Christmas and we are boarding the spaceship. They call it "Supernova 17" because it can travel a lightyear in one minute! I board the ship with my parents and we are amazed. The ship is very spacious and our spacesuits are in front of us waiting to be worn. We put them on and buckle up preparing for take off in the snowy landscape outside of the ship. As the astronauts work their magic we hear a countdown. "5...4...3...2...1...preparing for space travel." And WOOSH! The Supernova takes off and my parents and I are suddenly miles high up in the sky! The stars look wonderful, and Earth is arguably more beautiful from

It's Christmas Day! We've flown past Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus. Neptune is the last. We hope Santa will be able to travel all the way here, because if not, my parents say I won't get any presents. As we get closer to Neptune we look out the window and see Santa! But he seems to be aimlessly floating through space. Is he in trouble? We hopelessly stare until we have an idea. We tell the astronauts to go back and they do so. As we approach at a slower than usual speed, I gear up in my spacesuit and prepare to save Santa.

I hop out of the ship and a tether is the only thing keeping me from drifting out to space. I approach Santa and his sleigh of reindeer and ask what happened. Santa explains that his rocket ran out of fuel and all of his reindeer were tired, rendering them unable to pull the sleigh. I pull Santa's sleigh towards our ship. As I latch onto the ship using the tether that was pulling me I tie it to the sleigh. I head back inside and relay the information to my parents and we fly back home to Earth.

Once we get to Earth and land, we've officially

ered. Keep in mind, this is A LOT. As we head Christmas. My parents are planning on doing this next year, albeit without saving Santa!

### Grades pre-K-3 First Place

### Santa and the Forgotten House

By Tanner Whitt

While the Elf and Santa were flying away from the last kid's house. They realized that they missed a house. When they got back to the North Pole, they were shocked. Santa said, "Oh, no! We missed a house! What are we going to do!?" elf replied, "It's fine. We will just go back."

Santa and the Elf agreed and decided they had to go back to the kid's house for sure. The kids had to have presents. The Elf realized it sunrise. The Elf shouted, "Oh, no! What are we going to do now that it's almost day light?" Santa said, "Don't worry! I carry the disguises and the parachute at the back of the sleigh." So, they hurriedly changed clothes and jumped out of the

Santa was dressed as a mailman and the Elf was dressed as a kid. Since it is sunrise, if they don't get to the kid's house by 8:00 AM they will be in trouble. Oh, and also, I don't know why but Santa has a motorcycle in his sleigh as well. The Elf and Santa drove the motorcycle to the kids house with a bag full of presents. When they got to the kid's house, the time was 7:48 AM. They needed to work fast. Santa guarded the house while in mailman clothes and the Elf changed into his Elf clothes. The Elf snuck into the house and climbed onto the shelf so that he could watch out for the boy while Santa brought in the presents.

Santa got all the presents into the house and placed them under the beautiful Christmas tree. Santa used his magic to teleport the Elf and himself back to sleigh where they drove off to the

ta gives us all of the cookies and milk he's gath- North Pole. They arrived at the North Pole. The Elf was so relieved, but Santa wasn't because home in our flying car we are satisfied with our he remembered something. Santa yelled, "THE BOY HAD A SISTER!!!!!!!

### **Second Place**

### **Christmas Cookies**

By Meredith Pilson

Down the hallway I go

To make cookies with dough. Sugar, eggs, flour, and butter

I can't wait to pick my favorite cutter.

So sugary and sweet These cookies can't be beat.

Add some sprinkles on top

I can't wait for Santa to stop.

### Third Place

The Christmas the Grinch was Good! By Jackson Boyd

Once upon a time on Christmas Eve, there was snow on the ground! The Grinch was waking up on this cold morning and rolled over to say morning to Max. Max was the Grinch's dog. Max had an idea and started wagging his tail. The Grinch said "tell me Max." Max was thinking that not everyone gets Christmas presents because their parents could not afford them.

Max the dog thinks that the Grinch should buy the kids presents. The Grinch says "no way Max." Then Max reminds the Grinch how it use to feel not to get anything. The Grinch started

As the day went on, he couldn't help but think about those kids. Then he says "Max you were right, we should buy the kids some presents." Max told the Grinch "let's get going, we only have a little time." They went and got alot of presents! They knocked on everyone's door in town to make sure that everyone had a present under the tree!

But remember, it's not about what's under the tree, it's about the birth of Jesus and spending time with family! Merry Christmas!

# Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe

(cont. from page 1)

low because I can," she said.

Tramonte credits her business partner, Tim Lucas, for helping launch the store. Lucas, who also operates God's Torches Inc. in the shop's basement, assisted with moving and setting up furniture.

# Gov. Adds \$290 Million to School Construction **Budget, Totaling \$700** Million for Biennium

Gov. Glenn Youngkin has announced an additional \$290 million in funding to support school construction and modernization efforts across Virginia, bringing the biennial budget total to \$700 million. State investments in school infrastructure since he took office have reached nearly \$2 billion, leveraging local and federal funds to generate an estimated \$3.4 billion in total funding.

"Over the last three years, we have invested historic amounts in our education system, including our public school facilities," Youngkin said. "Our record economic growth and the resulting surplus allows us to make this critical investment to ensure every Virginia student has access to high-quality school facilities that support academic success."

The \$290 million in additional non-general funds will expand competitive grant opportunities for school divisions in high-need areas, addressing critical infrastructure issues and ensuring safer, more conducive learning environments for K-12 students across the Commonwealth.

"One of our guiding principles since day one of the Youngkin Administration has been to provide safe, vibrant, and healthy learning environments for all of our students," said Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera. "This investment in supporting new and refurbished school buildings makes it possible for every community in the Commonwealth to have the means to provide a best-in-class education that prepares every student for success in our increasingly demanding knowledge- and skills-based economy."

The additional funds build on a series of education-related investments during Youngkin's term, reflecting his administration's focus on modernizing school infrastructure while fostering academic excellence statewide.

he has contributed a fair amount in the furniture area," she said. The furniture on display, much of it for sale, largely came from Tramonte's personal collection.

"He's a contractor, so we came together on this,

and he has been like an angel for me. He's moved all

this furniture in, he did it all single-handedly, and

"For the time being, it's a type of downsizing. I have been a collector since 1970 when I opened my first store," she said, recalling her experience importing antiques from France.

Tramonte shared a story about a shipment of antiques that sank in Baltimore Harbor due to a lack of insurance. She speculated about the possibility of piracy being involved, which she said was not uncommon at the time. The shop will soon expand to include the Book

Nook Café, which Tramonte aims to open in the first quarter of 2025.

"It's going to be in the back of the building, and we've got a little area for stools where people can come and sit and gather and have some espresso,"

The café will serve a variety of espressos and

lattes, including a signature Cuban espresso, café Cubano. Desserts will also be on the menu.

In addition, Tramonte is working with the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board to offer a limited Happy Hour on Fridays and Saturdays, aligning with events at the nearby Star Theatre.

Community Classes and Events

A ceramic sculpture artist, Tramonte plans to offer monthly sculpture workshops starting in 2025. As a nonprofit, the classes will be free, though attendees will need to cover the cost of materials such as glaze, clay, and kiln use.

Once Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe joins the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce, Tramonte hopes to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and is closed on Sundays and Mondays.

For more information, visit the store's Facebook page at Facebook.com/YeOldeWhat-NotShoppe or call (276) 288-4469. Those interested in sculpture workshops can email Tramonte at ttramonte@ya-





Ye Olde What-Not Shoppe is open Tuesday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and is closed on Sundays and Mondays.



The shop features a variety of vintage treasures, and a new addition — the Book Nook



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Jason Pendleton

# Stuart Council

(cont. from page 1)



Outgoing Mayor Ray Weiland ceremoniously passed the torch to Mayorelect Terry Dalton.

messages, different colors," Simmons said.

The sign violates several of the town's zoning codes, including a provision against flashing or intermittent lights.

"Any flashing sign or device displaying flashing or intermittent lights or lights of changing degrees of intensity, except a sign indicating the time and/or temperature alternating on not less than on a five second cycle."

Simmons noted the sign's scrolling messages were difficult to read while driving, further complicating the matter. "Because as you're passing, you couldn't read the full message," he said.

Simmons said issues with the sign were brought to the town's attention by Allen and Kathryn Ziegler, who are property owners adjacent to the sign. The Ziegler's sent a letter to the town on December 10 and included three zoning codes they believed the sign was in violation of.

"From the letter he (Allen Ziegler) basically states that, 'the bottom line of the discussion was that we were directly asked by the Planning Commission what compromise we would be willing to offer. While we reluctantly offer resolution, it is our position that we should not bear any responsibility in determining what we would be willing to accept regarding the sign violations. It is the responsibility of the town's governing bodies to ensure fair enforcement of zoning codes and not to place an



Stuart Town Manager Bryce Simmons presented Mayor Ray Weiland with an award in recognition of his years of service to the

in front of an audience of nonsuppurative parishioners," Simmons said.

From the discussion and cooperation of the Planning Commission, Simmons said it came up with three conditions of approval for the sign to receive a special use permit.

The conditions are the automatic shutoff of the sign daily at 8 p.m., each message displayed on the sign remains stationary for a minimum of five seconds before transitioning to the next message, and the sign's brightness being set to its lowest setting to mitigate any light pollution or visual disruption to the surrounding area.

"Based off of my understanding of the sign's zoning the biggest thing was obviously the five second transition because we do have in our ordinance that any message should be displayed for a minimum of five seconds. So that to me, that made it more in compliance with the zoning as written," Simmons said.

Since the recommendations were made, Simmons said they are being met by the Church.

"The sign cuts of at 8 p.m., and honestly you can't even see the sign after the lights cut off. I believe that the message displaying for five seconds does allow people that are passing by to get that quick information that they're infringed property owner in the looking for, and the brightness position to negotiate compliance level is definitely much more



Several members of the New Life Community Church attended the Wednesday, December 18 Stuart Town Council meeting.



Stuart Town Council and staff at the final meeting in 2024.

maintained based off of the original observation of it." he said.

Mayor Ray Weiland said he wanted to hear directly from the Zieglers how they feel about the compromise the Planning Commission came up with.

"Looking at the letter. I'm not sure if they would say that would be ultimately reasonable," he said.

While he doesn't want to speak on the Zieglers behalf, Simmons said it was apparent at the Planning Commission meeting that removal of the sign was the only thing they felt was appropriate.

"I do feel based off of the recommendations that we can approve the sign under a special use permit. If any of those conditions fail to be followed, then we would have reason to have additional enforcement," he said.

Councilmember Jeff Houchins also suggested the Church should look at having the sign set to automatically turn on and off with the sunrise and sunset.

"Kind of appease a little bit on some of the anxiety from the light that they're complaining about," Houchins said.

As they are unsure if a public

hearing is required to approve the sign's special use permit, the council decided to revisit the matter at the January 15 meeting.

However, for a special use permit, Weiland said ideally the council should hold a public hearing.

"And have the Zieglers come in and give their side of the story certainly and go from there. The compromise that the Planning Commission came up with I think is a good one. I certainly agree with what they've established here," Weiland.

The meeting marked the final session for Weiland as mayor. He was recognized for 23 years of service on the council, including 12 years as mayor. Town Manager Bryce Simmons presented Weiland with an award in his honor.

Mayor-elect Terry Dalton will assume the role in January.

The council also:

\*Approved a resolution for the Downtown Revitalization Project.

\*Discussed One Family Production's year-end review.

\*Approved meeting minutes. \*Heard updates on public works

projects and town policies. \*Approved bill payments.

# Grover Roark

(cont. from page 1)

not just be words put together," he ting on a stump and praying ear-

He also recounted that his uncle wanted him to go to Nashville his word, and the family went to with him and sing to perform with famed country music figure Ralph Emery. "My uncle liked to drink too much; I couldn't handle that," Roark said, explaining why he declined the invitation.

particularly One Christmas in the 1930s came with an unusual twist. Roark's father made a promise to the family: if their cow "came fresh" — a term N.C., leads an active life. He tends for giving birth and producing to a garden, keeps honeybee hives, milk — they would take a trip to and sells his produce and hon-Virginia Beach. Hoping for the ey from his booth at the Patrick

nestly for the cow to come fresh.

And so, it did. His father kept the beach for three days, crossing on the ferry and spending the night in a Richmond hotel on the return trip.

"The Good Lord has blessed me," Roark reflected. "I don't ever feel memorable bad, don't get sick, live alone, still work, and drive wherever I want to go.'

Roark, who lives in Sandy Ridge, trip, young Roark remembers sit- County Farmers Market. A man live another 20 years. Roark's re-

of simple pleasures, he finds joy in church, gardening, and reading.

"I don't like TV," he admitted. Roark worked for General Mills

for 32 years and six months without missing a single day. He and his wife, who passed away along with one of their two sons, built a life defined by hard work and faith.

Despite his age, Roark said it is unbelievable that he is doing as well as he is at his age, "My bones are wore out, so I can't walk too good and I can't hear too good."

he was told at a recent doctor's visat his vitality, predicting he could consider it.

sponse?

"I told the doctor he was wrong.

I'm going to live 40 more years." Roark credits his longevity to a daily spoonful of honey, a ritual he believes has been key to his health.

As Christmas approaches, Roark feels both festive and content. For him, the holiday season serves as a reminder of the blessings life offers — if we take the time to appreciate them.

What a treasure and what assur-Otherwise, he is doing well, as ance it is that Christmas is coming. Blessings are near to all of us it. There, his physician marveled if we just take a few minutes to

### Jane Fulk

(cont. from page 1)

bers while in executive session, "but when they came out of executive session and worked on what needed to be worked on for Patrick County, they worked for Patrick County's good, not for their own agenda or the agenda of their buddies.

"I don't remember a time that Lock Boyce put on his podcast anything derogatory about one of the board members," she said, adding that the current board has sometimes handled situations unprofessionally, while other times they've been on target.

While there have been low points throughout her entire time on the board, Fulk said the lowest was perhaps in the last two months. "I didn't feel like we were working together for a goal for Patrick County," she said, adding that she believes "each one of them has the potential to do good for Patrick

to do that. I really would.

"My biggest hope is that all the board will work together towards a common goal, and will be able to work with county administration towards the same goal," Fulk said.

In retrospect, Fulk said she wishes she'd had more time to work with the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and help plot a path forward to attract economic growth in the county. "Without it, we're in bad shape. Everything can't rely on taxpayer money, personal and property tax money. You have to have businesses, and you have to have some growth," she said.

Fulk added she hopes the hospital reopens under the new owners, even if it's not exactly the model

the county had before.

"If we can have something, it

would help with our paid EMS

(Emergency Medical Service) ser-

County, and I would like for them vice and our volunteer EMS service," she said.

While she came onto the board wanting to work with the other supervisors and help out, Fulk said she didn't know if the board accomplished anything. "I hope I've been able to direct a little bit, I don't think I done as much as I would have liked to have done," she said.

When she looks back on her time as the interim supervisor in the Dan River District, Fulk said she will think about the fact the county was in fairly good financial shape.

"Right now, as far as monetary goes, it has been in the best. When I came on the board in 2018, our carryover funds were \$2 million. The carryover funds for this year were \$11 million," she said. "I cannot say how it will be in June 2025, but when I came on the board this time, the financial shape was good."

Following the November meeting, Andrew Overby assumed the position of Dan River District supervisor. Fulk said she believes Overby will serve the district and the county well.

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# Christmas Traditions

I respect people of all faiths, but as a Christian, I celebrate Christmas and the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas Every season, there are traand images ditions prevalent in our leisurely activities.

One tradition Christmas films, such as Die Hard, It's a Wonderful Life, Na-Lampoon's tional Christmas Vacation, Elf or Miracle on 34th Street.

famous actor George C. Scott, a native of Wise County, "Scrooge" in the 1984 film adaptation of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Car-

Another famous actor, John Payne, who grew up in the Fort Lewis section of Roanoke County, stars as Kris Kringle's lawyer in the 1947 film Miracle on 34th Street.

Community parades commonplace. departwhere fire ments blare their siwhile children anticipate the jolly old man and chant: "Here comes Santa Claus!" Similar chants inspired Gene Autry to write his song of the same name. It is one of my favorites.

Another Lighting Ceremony.

The ceremony takes by the White House. The ceremony tradition first started under President Calvin Coolidge in 1923. His chief advisor was C. Bascom Slemp of Big cifically, Germany. Stone Gap.

year's This ceremony featured a 30foot red spruce from Grayson County!

Recreation Area felled and trans-White House, according to the Galax Gazette.

country, the selection Revolutionary the Christmas season. America.



# Morgan Griffith

Representative

Christmas tree farms are a staple of Grayson County and the Ninth District's agricultural sector.

WVTF radio ports that 1.2 million Christmas trees are marketed out of Grayson County in a given year. Virginia ranks eighth nationally in Christmas tree production, and leading counties in production acreage include Grayson, Floyd and Scott Counties.

Trees from the region have been displayed at the Virginia Governor's Mansion as well as the State Capitol. In 2023, Governor welcomed Youngkin a 10-foot Fraser Fir from Floyd County as the Mansion's Christmas tree.

December, This Governor Youngkin proclaimed December Christmas "Virginia Tree Month."

staffer former tradition of mine, Emily Miis the National Tree chael, sends me a picture each year of the Christmas tree she place at the Ellipse buys in DC. The seller gets their trees from... Grayson County.

> The origins of this Christmas tradition can be traced back to Europe, and more spe-

Martin Luther, the catalyst for the Protestant Reformation, is credited by some for The Mount Rogers lighted candles on a Christmas tree

ported the tree to the tradition then came to America. Some speculate Hessian soldiers, who were Germans Of all the trees to fighting for the Britchoose from in the ish in the American War, of a Grayson County and ultimately settled tree is a significant in Pennsylvania, were recognition of our re- responsible for the gion's contributions to tradition starting in

However, Christmas tree tradition did not catch on right away. For a long time, the tradition was rejected and dismissed for promoting pagan symbols.

Others point to a Amer-German-born ican professor and clergyman, Charles Minnigerode, for playing an influential role in the Christmas tree tradition.

Minnigerode immigrated to the U.S. in 1839. Most notably, he was the rector of Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, which attracted the likes of Confederate Jefferson President Davis and Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

In May 1862, Minnigerode baptized Davis and administered his first communion.

It is alleged that Minnigerode, who also taught classes at William & Mary, introduced to Williamsburg the custom of decorating a Christmas tree. According to the university's website, Minnigerode gifted a fellow professor a decorated tree.

Just after Minnigerode's arrival in Amer-America's 14th Franklin president, Pierce, brought Christmas tree to the White House. Pierce being the first to place is often credited for being the president to introduce a Christmas The Christmas tree tree into the White House.

Depending on your America's source, 26th president, Teddy Roosevelt, supposedly banned Christmas trees at the White House. The renowned environmentalist was not willing to cede any ground on his cause, even if it meant ditchthe Christmas ing spirit!

Many localities in the Ninth have neatly decorated their towns and homes with trees, wreaths and lights this Christmas.

Wherever you got your tree from this holiday season, do not forget the Ninth District's role in making the Christmas tree tradition a reality for many in America.

And in this year's case, it has even made the National Tree Lighting Ceremony a reality. No

matter what faith you practice or what traditions you keep, I hope you have peaceful holiday and...Merry season Christmas!

Call the Abingdon office at (276) 525-1405, the Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671, or email by visiting www.morgangriffith. house.gov with ques-

tions or comments.

# The Greatest Story Ever Told

Dr. Glenn Mollette

No story can match the Christmas story.

Mary was just an ordinary girl but she was special in the eves of God. She was someone God knew he could choose to enter the world as the baby Jesus. Mary and husband to be Joseph followed the leadership of God and were willing vessels to be used of

Jesus was born in Bethlehem and placed in a cow's trough. This young couple had to sleep in a barn because the town was crowded and there was no room for them in the inn.

They were poor people and hey had a new baby. The conditions were less than ideal for the care of a mom and a newly delivered baby.

God took care of them. Even when

an evil king was paranoid by the birth of Jesus, God directed them to relocate to Egypt for period of time. Jesus grew up and at the young age

of 12 was confounding the religious leaders with his knowledge and wisdom.

This young man would grow up to be the greatest man who has ever lived. He was different. He was a man but He was God in the flesh. Yes, he hurt just like we hurt, bled like we bleed. and was tempted as we are tempted, but He was God.

John the Baptist recognized Him as the lamb of God. The disciples recognized they were living in the presence

No one else has ever lived the way Jesus lived. He healed the sick. He gave the blind sight. He enabled the lame to walk. He raised the dead. He fed masses of people with a few loaves of bread and fish. He was the greatest teacher who ever lived.

More books have been written about Jesus than any other person. The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. Every week billions of people worship him publicly and privately.

Jesus loved like no other person but he had great opposition. Sadly, most of the opposition was from the religious crowd of his day. They weren't satisfied until they convinced the political leadership of that day to execute Jesus publicly on a cross. His execution was brutal, humiliating, shameful,

and repulsive. The way Jesus was treated fully exposed the wickedness of mankind and the literal cruelty of religion.

The story of Jesus does not end at the cross or his burial. The story of Jesus doesn't end at all. Three days later the stone was rolled away from his burial tomb and he emerged alive as the victorious Son of God who conquered death, hell, and the grave. He spent time with his followers teaching and equipping them before his departure into heaven right before their

As he ascended into heaven the angels told the disciples, "Why do you stand here gazing up into heaven. This same Jesus shall come again in like manner." From that day forward the disciples became the greatest group of missionaries of all time. Everywhere they went they told the story of Jesus. Everyone who heard the story and believed the story were forever changed.

Do you believe the story? Have you heard this story? Maybe you've heard it many, many times. Possibly, you never grow tired of hearing the story. It's an old, old story but it's the story that gives us hope. This story of Jesus keeps us going, looking forward to better things and better times.

The story of Jesus is the story of life, peace, hope, and forgiveness of all of our sins. It's the story about heaven and seeing our loved ones again. It's the story that often turns houses into homes, lifts drug addicts out of ditches, gives people a sense of direction and purpose in life.

Do you love the Christmas story? Do you love who this story is about? The story is about Jesus. If you don't know him, ask him right now to come into your heart and life and he will.

A heavenly host of angels proclaimed to shepherds watching their flocks, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

May the greatest story ever told become the greatest story you know personally.

Find books by Glenn Mollette at Amazon.com Learn more about his books, columns and music at GlennMollette. Com. Email is gmollette@aol.com

# Chamber Chat for December

By Rebecca Adcock

"December is the time for remembering the past and reaching toward the future." Ralph Waldo Emerson

As we close out 2024, we want to take a moment to recap some of the projects and events in which the Chamber of Commerce was involved. Many of these events would not have been possible without assistance from our community partners. The chamber was able to host and assist with the following events: an Economic Summit, Stuart Spooktacular, Hometown Christmas, Festival of Lights, and Lunch with Community Leaders. We hosted five ribbon cuttings for new businesses, won "Best Magazine Guide" again for our Patrick County magazine – a partnership with Tourism. We hosted community coffee talks across the county, continued promotion of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program, the Pick Up Patrick Campaign, presented at the Mid-Atlantic Farmers Market Conference, and was part of a county contingent that participated in the Appalachian Gateway Communities Initiative. The chamber also attended several meetings, luncheons and workshops as a representative of Patrick County.

The office is already preparing for 2025. We are securing several Lunch and Learn programs that will benefit both our newly established businesses as well as our long-standing ones. We are working on the advertising and content selection for the Spring 2025 Patrick County Magazine, as well as our 2025 Membership drive. If you have not joined the chamber, I hope that you will consider it for the coming year. Our members are what drive our organization. We are also looking forward to multiple ribbon cuttings that will be happening in the

first part of the year. And of course,

promoting all the wonderful events

that happen in Patrick County during



the year and beyond. From January to May, the Chamber will be part of a learning cohort with the Richmond Federal Reserve's Community Investment Training. This training will help us gain knowledge for designing and presenting more attractive grant pro-I do want to take a moment to say

"Thank you" to all the organizations and individuals who partner with the Chamber of Commerce. Again, without your partnership and support, the events that the Chamber spearheads or assists with would not be possible. A "Thank you" to all of our members, who without the chamber would not be an organization that is here to assist residents, visitors and businesses. The community is our business, and we have worked all year to bolster that community through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, attending the Healthy Patrick County meetings, contacting our local, regional, state and federal representatives regarding the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Secret Santa program, and many more. I hope everyone can enjoy the hol-

idays and have some much-needed rest time.

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

# THE ENTERPRISE

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Wednesday, December 25, 2024 - f 5

(While we take time to celebrate the season with our loved ones, we hope you enjoy this story, originally published in December 2023)

### **Patrick Pioneers**

Stuart Cotton Mill

By Beverly Belcher Woody

This week's column leads me to more questions, rather than finding answers. I have been unable to find much information about the Stuart Cotton Mill and was wondering if any readers had heard stories from families that worked there in the early 20th century? The cotton mill was located below Stuart Elementary School on what is now Oakhurst Drive.

The Danville Register & Bee, November 19, 1921, edition stated, "It is currently reported here that the Stuart Cotton Mill has been sold to the Patrick Land and Development Company and that it will be leased to a concern in High Point, North Carolina which plans its' operation as a knitting mill. The deed of sale is expected to be

executed this week. The mill has never been operated, although at one time, machinery was placed in it for the manufacture of cotton goods.

Cindy Griffith wrote that the Stuart mill was part of the Schoolfield division of Dan River Mills but closed when the Great Depression hit the community. Lawrence Burton stated that county fairs were held across from the cotton mill in the 1940s.

An article in the 12th of September 1931 edition of the Roanoke Times stated, "Meetings are being held here this week by business and professional men of Stuart in an attempt to raise \$12,000.00 to purchase and repair the old cotton mill building. The Jobbers Pants Company, a firm that has been operating in Martinsville for sev-



Stuart Cotton Mill, from Curtis Carter Collection

eral years, desires to open a unit in Stuart and the new plant will require a building, for the use of which, the pants company will pay 7% interest for rent. The only building available in Stuart is the cotton mill, which can be bought and repaired for \$12,000.00." Did this deal ever pan out? I can't find where Jobbers ever operated in

Sandy Rodgers recalls going to the mill with his mother and grandmother while they were shopping for piece goods; this would have been around 1950.

If anyone has more information about the Stuart Cotton Mill, I would love to hear about it. Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or

# **Social Security Matters**

By Russell Gloor, National Social Security ken even had you claimed at age 65. Advisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty - Have I Saved Social Security Money by Claiming at 62?

Dear Rusty: I had to start collecting Social Security at 62, and I am 75 now. I believe that in the last 13 years I have saved Social Security money, so I do not know why I cannot draw my full benefits now.

If I had started drawing at 65 at \$1,200 per month, then I would have drawn \$16,400 per year. Instead, I got \$680 per month from 62 to 75, or \$8,160 per year, or about \$106,000 over 13 years. Compare that to the age 65 amount of \$14,400 per year for 10 years, which is \$144,000. So, by claiming at 62, at age 75 I have saved the government over \$38,000. It would make seniors lives so much easier if they could draw full Social Security at 75 years old, after getting only part of their SS. Signed: Second-guessing

Dear Second-guessing: The difference between benefits claimed at various ages causes many to reflect, as you have done, about what might have been had you waited longer to claim. But there is an error in your calculations. If your age 62 monthly benefit is \$680, your age 65 monthly benefit would have been about \$845, not \$1,200. Thus, at 75 you would have collected about \$101,400 by claiming at 65, vs. the \$106,000 you have received by claiming at age

Social Security says that it doesn't matter when you claim - they say that if you claim early your payments will be less, but you'll get more of them. Where SSA's argument falls apart is when life expectancy is longer. Our experience is that if you wait until your full retirement age (FRA) to claim (which is age 66 in your case), vs. claiming at age 62, you will collect the same amount of total money at about age 78. In other words, the "breakeven age" for waiting until FRA to claim is about 78. So, you will reach your personal "breakeven age" in about 2 ½ years (at age 78). And this is precisely why we encourage everyone to understand their life expectancy when deciding when to claim Social Security those who expect to live longer will, indeed, get more SS money if they delay claiming.

Your benefit is determined by your age when you claim, and if you claim before your FRA your monthly amount is permanently reduced. If you claimed at age 62 and your monthly amount was \$680, then in the four years until you reached age 66 (your FRA) you would have received about \$32,640. If you had, instead, waited until your FRA to claim, your benefit at age 66 would have been about \$906/month. Collecting \$906/month (at 66) vs. \$680/month (at 62) would make your breakeven age about 78. If you claimed at age 65 instead of 62, your breakeven age would have been about a year earlier (77).

So, have you saved Social Security money? Up 62. In other words, you still would not have bro- to this point, you have not. Since you claimed at

age 62, you have collected about \$680/month for 13 years until you were 75 (or about \$106,000). If you had waited until age 65 to claim you would have, instead, collected about \$101,400 in other words you have received more, so far, by claiming at age 62. But that will change when you reach 77 (your breakeven age, had you claimed at 65). Starting at age 77, you will have received less in cumulative lifetime benefits because you claimed at age 62. Which, again, is why – at the AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory Service - we encourage everyone to consider life expectancy when deciding when to take Social Security. Of course there are other factors too, not the least of which is financial need, but life expectancy is key. And since the benefit you get when you claim is permanent (except for annual Cost of Living Adjustments), deciding when to claim Social Security is a decision which affects a lifetime.

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

# Growth Through Adversity: How to Be Happy

meant you weren't happy during all times of the day? Perhaps it sounds outlandish to be happy under adversity, conflict, and pain, but there may be a different meaning to true happiness altogether. We may have been conditioned all our lives to believe that happiness is a destination and one that is achieved once "all our ducks are in one row".

I would like to share how happiness is a journey, and how it goes beyond gratifying our own selves, but how it involves growing as a person and finding contentment in life.

True happiness is not about avoiding hard times but knowing how to respond to adversity. It involves the kind of hope that knows that the outcome may not be perfect but accepts and is okay with results, regardless.

Firstly, understand that a direct result of pain is a clouded mind. I don't know about you, but when my mind is clouded, it is even more painful to think. At this moment, it is important to rest and trust God.

the views of The Enterprise.

the time? What if true happiness has granted you in your life, and we can change our attitude and approve your health and prevent disultimately His love, does wonders to the mind. Since 9 out of 10 diseases starts from the mind, there is clearly an intimate relation between the body and mind. The mind is a powerful thing.

Stay Active

I know it all too well; if you are in emotional pain or depression, the last thing you desire to do is go out for fresh air and engage in activity. Exercising, engaging in useful employment, going out in nature, and serving others will help you rise above pain. Staying active physically also reduces stress on the body, increases energy levels, and releases endorphins. Endorphins trigger a positive feeling in the body. Exercising reduces anxiety, depression, and negative moods.

### Be Steadfast

You may be asking yourself, "What if the same problems continue to arise? I'm too burnt out to keep standing strong." There are certain things in our lives beyond our control, and how we meet the conflict determines our personal Allowing your mind to dwell on development. We may not be able

proach. I am reminded of a time when I was falsely accused of my motive. That was beyond my control. As hard as it was, I chose to respond calmly and continue my responsibilities. It is so tempting to look for an immediate exit during conflict, but being steadfastness produces fortitude. The uncertainty and unpredictability of the situation caused me pain and stress, but I pressed on faithfully. Prayer and connection to God was my greatest source of strength that carried me through. In the end, the false accusations cleared, and I was able to bridge a connection and make a positive difference in the other person's life.

### **Cultivate Cheerfulness**

It is a fact that we won't always feel lighthearted, but the best antidote is to look on the bright side of life, smile, and talk about positive things. Brooding over our sorrows comes easily, but it will not change the circumstances. Instead, brooding decreases our health and happiness. There are certain emotions that we can't help but feel, but we can certainly train our minds to look upwards.

### Eat Clean & Balanced

Eat clean, nutritionally balanced, and whole foods as much as possible. Ensuring proper nutrition helps your body's energy levels, and supports overall improved emotional and mental health. Diets with high amounts of fat and sugar are linked to mood disorders. You can learn a bit on how to switch

Do you wish you were happy all positive things; the blessings God to change our circumstances, but to a plant-based diet to highly imease, and even more in detail here.

> Surround Yourself with Supportive People

> We were not meant to bear life's burdens alone. I can recall several periods in my life where I was experiencing pain, and I knew that God had sent a loving friend my way at that very moment. It was not a coincidence. Hearing another person's perspective can help you view things in a better light and remind you that you're not alone.

### **Have Happiness Now**

In an earlier statement, you can have happiness along the way of life. Ask yourself, where do you look to for happiness when things go awry? Maybe you are experiencing financial hardships, family and home troubles, betrayal, supposed failure, or other painful circumstances. Life will not always run smoothly, but we can choose hopefulness and joy now, at this very moment. It is a fact that many are sad during the holidays.

True happiness is joy and hope under painful circumstances.

In what ways can you choose happiness in your current situation? How can you help others who are experiencing difficult times?

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih. gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658/ (2) LS 292

(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Grace Jauwena, Health Coach. Used by permission from www.lifeandhealth.org Courtesy of LifeSpring – Resources for Hope and Healing Stuart, VA)

# 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

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# **SPORTS**

# **Boys Varsity tops Chatham**



Senior Noah Jessup drives to the basket for two of his 16 Senior Tyler Marshall led the Cougars with 18 points.

### By Pat Delaney

The Cougar Varsity basketball got back into the win column with a 58-48 win over the Chatham Cavaliers on December 17.

The Cougars got off to a strong start. In the first minute, the teams traded three pointers before Patrick County, behind solid team defense, pulled out to a 13-5 lead with 2:56 to go in the quarter. With smart ball movement and offense and converting turnovers into layups, the Cougars took a 17-10 lead into the second quarter.

The Cavaliers came out in the second with stifling full-court pressure that seemed to steal the Cougars' momentum. Chatham, who only dressed seven players for the game, also increased the tempo of the game, racing down court off turnovers and rebounds, leading to a 10-3 run that closed the gap to just three points at halftime, 33-30.

Cougar head coach Brian Chitwood was impressed by the effort the shorthanded Cavaliers displayed. "I told their coach at the end of the game that I was very impressed by the energy that those guys played with."

In the second half, Chatham continued with



their fast pace and full court pressure. The Cougars struggled offensively in the early part of the quarter. With 5:37 to go in the half, Chatham tied the game at 35, forcing a Patrick County Coming out of the timeout, the Cougars retook

the momentum, finishing the half on a 9-5 run that included two offensive rebounds and put backs by Seth Geiger that brought loud cheers from the Cougar faithful and helped swing the momentum to the Cougars who would have a four point lead after three quarters at 44-40.

Chatham got to within two points early in the fourth quarter at 46-44, but the Cougars stepped up their defense and held the Cavaliers to just four more points, and would close out the game with a 10 point win.

Following the game, Coach Chitwood was happy with the win, but knows his team has some things to work on. "We struggled in several ways tonight. We did enough to close the deal. Our kids work very hard and we did what we had to do to get back to winning ways."

Seniors led the way for the Cougars on the night. Tyler Marshall had 18 points and 7 rebounds while Noah Jessup had 16 points and 3



Cameron Collins shoots over the defenders.



Jayden Corns had 8 points in the win.

Jayden Corns chipped in 8 points, and 8 rebounds and Easton Harris added 8 points and 7 rebounds.

# Lady Cougars win home opener



Bassett faced a very tough Lady Cougar defense all night.

### By Pat Delaney

The Patrick County High Lady Cougars avenged a season opening loss at Bassett on December 4 with a defensive gem, in a 51-26 win. Playing at home for the first time this season on December 16, the Lady Cougars took the lead in the game's opening minute and never looked

The Lady Cougar defense was great all night, creating turnovers, clogging passing lanes and never allowing Basset to get into any rhythm ed Bassett to five points in each of the first two played defense on the night, adding, "we stress



Lilly Hazelwood shoots past three Bassett defenders.

quarters, resulting in a 17-point deficit at halftime (27-10).

With their defensive pressure never letting up, the Lady Cougars maintained their lead in the third quarter, then extended it, out-scoring Bassett 14-6 in the fourth quarter for the 25 point victory.

After the game, Lady Cougar head coach offensively. The Lady Cougars' defense limit- Tony Mosley was happy with the way his team



Journey Moore with a fast break layup.

defense."

Another bright spot for the Lady Cougars was their ability to come down with rebounds against the bigger Bassett players. "We've been working on that," said coach Mosley. "Lilly Hazelwood did a great job on their bigs tonight," and Kimora Wimbush, "she was amazing."

Leading the way for the Lady Cougars was Lilly Hazelwood with 14 points and Kimora Wimbush with 13.

# Dawson wins Best In Show in photography exhibit

Rick Dawson of Bassett, won best is located on the former Rock Spring in show for his black-and-white piece, "Timeless Beauty," on Nov. 17 at the Virginia Tech Reynolds Homestead's Nancy Susan Reynolds photography exhibit. Laine Errichetti was named best in show in the youth division for his entry, "God's Beauty."

About 40 people attended the awards ceremony and exhibit opening, including 15 of the artists, their guests, and the public.

Photography has not been exhibited at the Reynolds Homestead since 2019, and the show marked the return of this exhibit with nearly three dozen submissions across seven categories. The show is open to participants in Patrick County and the surrounding counties in both Virginia and North Carolina.

Sarah Wray, community engagement, partnerships, and programs manager at the Reynolds Homestead, opened the ceremony with remarks about the history of the Nancy Susan Reynolds photography exhibit. Exhibit judge Lisa Carter of Danville, Virginia spoke to attendees about the judging criteria, her affiliation with

various photography organizations, and the high quality of work submitted for exhibition.

The Reynolds Homestead, a univer-

sity outreach center in Critz, Virginia,

Plantation where R.J. Reynolds was born. It now acts as part museum, part community gathering place, and part educational and cultural center.

### Youth

1st: Laine Errichetti, God's Beauty 2nd: Laine Errichetti, Farm Friends **Portrait** 

1st: Katie Joanne Hill, Storyteller

2nd: Joan Norman, LOVE 3rd: Jessica Moricle, The Ancient

### **Macro Photography**

1st: Joan Lawson, Just Bee

2nd: Nancy Long, Spotted Cucumber Beetle 3rd: Richard Joyce, Lines & Circles

Honorable Mention: Rick Dawson, Forest Secrets

### Landscape 1st: Bruce Arnold, Reflections of

2nd: Patty Young, Pilot Mountain

Poppies

3rd: Nancy Long, Northern Lights 2024-10-11

Honorable Mention: Richard Joyce, Warm Springs Creek

### **Event**

1st: Y'dell Lynch, Grenadine Dream 2nd: Katie Joanne Hill, Deserted 3rd: Jan Atkins, The Lapping of

### Luxury Digital Enhancement



The exhibit is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Dec. 18. The Reynolds Homestead Community Engagement Center will close for the holidays on Dec. 19. (Photos by Kristin Hylton for Virginia Tech)

1st: Joan Lawson, Nature's Lady 2nd: Michael Williamson, Excellence Noir

3rd: Ben Dawson, The Supervisor



Black & White

1st: Rick Dawson, Timeless Beauty 2nd: Patty Young, Monochrome Swallowtail

# PCHS Sports Schedule

1/4

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of December 30-January 4: 1/3

7pm Girls Basketball vs North Stokes

8:30pm Boys Basketball vs North

Stokes

9am Wrestling at South Stokes 10am Boys Basketball vs Fort Chiswell (at Floyd County) TBA Indoor Track Meet at Virginia Military Institute

Wednesday, December 25, 2024 - 7

# Crossing the Lines=

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

Board hears audit report, approves electronic participation policy



Henry County's Chief Financial Officer Darrell Jones reviews a draft of Henry County's fiscal year 2024 audit, conducted by Creedle, Jones & Associates, P.C.

The Henry County Board of Su-be vacation, that could be anything," pervisors at its December 17 meet- he said. ing approved a document allowing board members to participate in manent disability or other medical board meetings by remote electronic condition that prevents a member's or telephone access.

This policy will be part of the bylaws the board adopts at its organizational meeting.

Before the meeting, the board had no policy regarding electronic participation in meetings, County Attorney George Lyle said.

"So, by default members of this body can dial in, and monitor the a board member that participates meeting, and speak remotely from other locations, but they cannot make motions or vote," he said.

provides two categories in which board members can tell the chairman they cannot attend the meeting in person: due to a personal reason or a temporary/permanent disability, Lyle said.

Those members referring to the personal reason can attend electronically "up to three meetings, or 25 ity of four of the six board members, percent, because this board has 12 must physically attend the meeting regular meetings a year. You can do to consider another member's re-

However, in the temporary/perphysical attendance category, Lyle said from his reading of the Code of Virginia members are not limited by the three meeting limit.

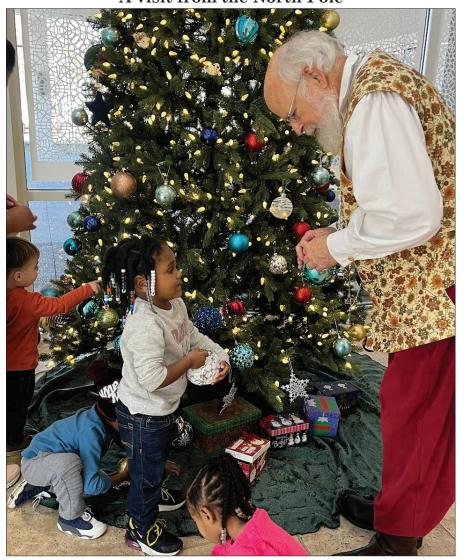
"Those could be more if a person's disability or reason for not being able to be here goes longer," Lyle

At the start of a meeting, Lyle said electronically will give the reason they are not physically attending the meeting, and their location. The The policy adopted by the board board would then have the option of voting to allow that board member to participate remotely.

The only reason the board would vote not to allow to remotely participate is because they can't be heard or clearly or seen to participate," he

Lyle noted a quorum, or the majorthat three times a year - that could quest to participate electronically.

### A visit from the North Pole



Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Gale Buck and his wife Christy) stopped by Piedmont Arts in Martinsville to help local students decorate the Christmas tree. (Contributed)

### Pearson calls on council to prioritize residents over drama in farewell speech

At the end of her last meeting as a member of Martinsville City Council Tammy Pearson offered further insight into her decision not to seek reelection, and offered an impassioned plea to other council members.

"I thought a lot about what I should say. Should I go out blazing, right all the wrongs and spill the beans and all that kind of stuff," she said, adding that she decided "that's probably not quite the right thing."

Rather, "I thought I should kind of rise above that and maindecorum and decency and I think I've tried to It's not something that thank my children. comes easy to me ... I four years."

and crying and throw- me so I could focus on thank you."



Tammy Pearson is pictured at her final meeting as a member of Martinsville City Council.

tain a certain level of ing things and all the city." that." She added that go with that my whole dragged into" certain bers" as well, Pearson time on council. I first issues, and "risked his said. want to share my businesses when I had thanks. I know a lot of to take a stand. He Council members, I people do this but first took great care of not want us to stop foof all, I'm really bad only me, but also our cusing on personal at saying 'thank you.' children. I also want to gains and remember

apologize that I hav- fice, Will and I sat is right for our city," en't done it more in my down with the kids to Pearson said. "It's up Pearson also thanked okay with it. They gave and every one of the God, her husband, me love and encour- people on this council Will Pearson, her chil- agement and support accountable with what dren, and others. She I can't repay. We defi- they do with their said her husband has nitely lost some time words and actions." "stood by me no matter together, but we knew what," even "when I that would happen, with "I love all of you came home screaming and they gave that to and I just want to

our employees but "he was unnecessarily by some council mem-

"To my fellow City you took an oath to do "Before I ran for of- what is best and what make sure they were to all of us to hold each

She ended simply,

### Sewer project, traffic changes get nod from council

Martinsville City Council adopted a resolution and approved a bond package for sewer improvements, approved new traffic calming plans, heard comments from several residents and concerns from outgoing member Tammy Pearson (related story), and Vice Mayor Aaron Raw-

The council also approved a resolution after holding a public hearing on revenue bonds for the Doe Run Sewer Project.

In 2021, an inspection of the Doe Run, Smith Lake Road, and Industrial Park sewer interceptors was completed, and a preliminary engineering report was prepared based on the condition assessment that identified the project needs. An application was submitted in 2022 to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requesting project funding.

The DEQ identified Martinsville's project as a priority project for funding through the Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund (VCWRLF). Construction plans have since been completed, the project is ready to go out to bid, and the City recently received drafts of the funding and financing agreements.

In September the council approved entering into VCWRLF loan cording to Greg Maggard, director and appropriated \$559,610 from the Water/Sewer Fund Balance for

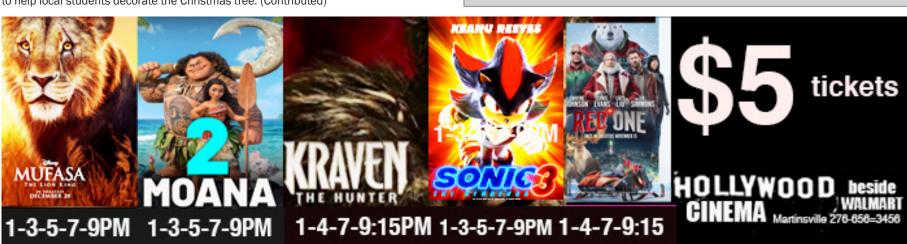


Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls discussed some issues at the Dec. 17 meeting of Martinsville City Council.

the Doe Run, Smith Lake Road, and Industrial Park Sewer Improvements. Bids were opened November 4, with the low bid coming in about \$2 million more than the engineer's estimate, and with other "soft costs" such as survey, acquisition, etc., added, the budget shortfall increased to \$2,732,000.

The city contacted the Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund and has secured additional loan proceeds to resolve the shortfall, acof Public Works.

FOR MORE, VISIT THE HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE AT WWW. HENRYCOUNTYENTERPRISE.COM.



# **OBITUARIES**

### Hazel Catherine Mabe Martin

Hazel Catherine Mabe Martin, 93, of Stuart passed away on December 16, 2024 at her home. Mrs. Martin was born in Campbell (Stokes County), North Carolina on October 5, 1931. She was preceded in death by her parents Ollie Berry Mabe and Rilla Iowa Merritt Mabe, her brother Clarence Mabe, and her husband of 70 years Robert (Bobby) Daniel Martin.

Mrs. Martin is survived by her daughter Karen Martin Wood and husband Danny. In addition, she is survived by her grandson Jonathan Wood and wife Holly, and four great-grandchildren: Benelli Wood, Brooklynn Bocock, Levi Vipperman and Bridgette Whitney (Hunter) all of Stuart



where she raised a vegetable garden as well her well known Red Presidential Lilies that she raised 1301, for over 50 years.

December 18th Stuart, and then a art Chapel. Reverend com.

sonal information –

their date of birth,

age, address, Social

Security number or

mation – the taxpay-

er should be cautious.

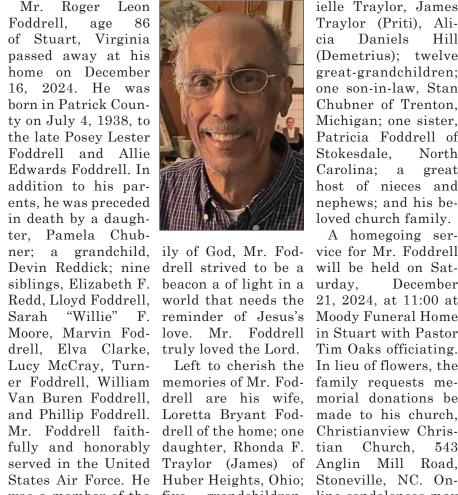
Ask why the infor-

It's also a good prac-



homemaker where she Ronnie Brown will be helped her husband officiating. The famiraise dairy cattle, ly will receive friends beef cattle, and hogs and family one hour before later retiring prior to the service. from American Furni- The burial will follow ture in Martinsville. at Patrick Memorial Mrs. Martin also had a Gardens with Reverpassion for gardening end Ronnie Brown officiating.

Memorials can be as flowers including made to the Patrick County Alzheimer As-Canna sociation, P.O. Box Stuart, 24171. Norris Funer-The funeral will be al Services in Stuart held on Wednesday, is serving the Martin at family. Online condo-Mrs. Martin worked 3:00 pm at Norris Fu-lences may be made at United Elastic in neral Services - Stu- to www.norrisfuneral. Roger Leon Foddrell





F. reminder of Jesus's Moody Funeral Home

was a member of the five grandchildren, line condolences may Christianview Chris- Victoria tian Church. As a spoon, Deaun Red- www.moodyfuneralsmember of the fam- dick (Randeep), Dan- ervices.com.

ielle Traylor, James Traylor (Priti), Ali-Daniels Hill (Demetrius); twelve great-grandchildren; one son-in-law, Stan Chubner of Trenton, Michigan; one sister, Patricia Foddrell of Stokesdale, North Carolina; a host of nieces and nephews; and his beloved church family.

A homegoing service for Mr. Foddrell December Left to cherish the In lieu of flowers, the Weather- be made by visiting

# Keep personal information safe under digital lock and key

During the ninth annual National Tax Secu- emailed, texted or other requests but instead rity Awareness Week, the IRS and its Security Summit partners want to assist taxpayers in recognizing tax scams and fraud to keep their information safe and out of the hands of identity thieves and scammers. By following these tips, taxpayers can reduce the risk of losing their identity, money or accounts to criminals.

Always protect personal data

If someone is requesting a taxpayer's per-

# LEGAL

Tin Pen Alley Inc. trading as TIN PEN ALLEY, 511 W Blue Ridge St, Stuart, Patrick County, VA 24171. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA AL-COHOLIC BEVERAGE CON-TROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Restaurant, Beer and Wine, On and Off Premises license, to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Kathy Anderson,

co-owner/secretary/treasurer NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc virginia.gov or (800) 552-3200.

to seek out the requestor's website or to contact them directly.

### Shop at reputable retailers

When shopping online, taxpayers should confirm they're on a reputable and secure retailer's website and avoid sites with invalid digital certificates. Don't assume that a web address is legitimate just because it includes "https." Criminals can purchase valid security certificates and attach them to fraudulent websites.

### Use security software

The IRS encourages taxpayers to take the bank account infor- time to ensure all family members have comprehensive anti-virus protection for their digital devices, particularly on shared devices. When a taxpayer stores sensitive files – only provide what's should backup and encrypt those files for adabsolutely necessary. ditional protection.

tice not to respond to two-factor authentication

Use strong, unique passwords for each account and enable two-factor authentication where possible. Remember to never re-use passwords for online accounts and never share passwords with anyone.

### Know the risk of public Wi-Fi

Connection to public Wi-Fi is convenient and often free, but it may not be safe. Criminals can easily steal personal information from these networks. People should always be cautious and use a virtual private network when connecting to public Wi-Fi.

### Be aware of compromised accounts

Once a criminal hacks an email or social media account, they may try to scam the victim's contacts by posing as the victim. Everyone should be suspicious of unusual, out-of-character requests or messages, even when the acmation is needed and such as tax records - on a digital device, they count belongs to a friend, colleague or family member.

> Act fast if identity theft happens, and learn Choose strong passwords and enable more at www.irs.gov/identity-theft-fraudscams/identity-theft-for-individuals.

# Initial unemployment claims increase

ia Works, 2,764 unem-

ORDER OF PUBLICATION COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104 Patrick Circuit Court, 101 West Blue Ridge Street/PO Box 148, Stuart, VA 24171

SAMRUAY KHOONIN HOWELL v. MICHAEL CALVIN HOWELL The object of this suit is to: PROVIDE PROPER SERVICE TO DEFENDANT WITH UNKNOWN

It is ORDERED that MICHAEL CALVIN HOWELL appear at the

above-named court and protect his interests on or before January 1, 2025. NOVEMBER 19, 2024

were filed during the week ending December 07, 2024, which is 115.3 percent higher than last week's 1,284 claims and 65.6 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (1,669).Nearly 73 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (57 percent) were Administrative and Support and Waste Manage-

weekly initial claims turing (226); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (225); Health Care Technical tion (183).

> Continued percent higher than last (15,070)27.6 percent higher than the compara-(12,007). Nearly 92 has percent of claimants self-reported an as-

top five industries (59 of unemployment. On percent) were Professional, Scientific, and and Social Assistance (2,474); Administra- of the current num-(198); and Constructive and Support and ber of insured unemweeks (1,963); Health Care for UI benefits, and claims (15,318) were and Social Assistance are a good indicator (1,393); Manufactur- of labor market conweek ing (1,360); and Re- ditions. While contail Trade (1,206).

ble week of last year tial claim and who ing evidence of the week of unemployment files a continsociated industry; of ued claim to claim

According to Virgin- ployment insurance ment (313); Manufac- those reported, the benefits for that week a weekly basis, continued claims reflect Services a good approximation Waste Management ployed workers filing tinued claims are not A person who has a leading indicator, already filed an ini- they provide confirmexperienced a direction of the econ-

Request for Proposals

**Professional Services** 

The Town of Stuart, Virginia is in need of professional engineering and/or architecture services for design, construction administration and resident inspection of the Stuart Downtown Revitalization Project. The project is being financed with Virginia Community Development Block Grant funds, Appalachian Regional Commission funds, and local funds.

Firms interested in receiving a copy of the Request for Proposals (RFP) may contact: Bryce M. Simmons, Town of Stuart, 100 Patrick Avenue, PO Box 422, Stuart, VA 24171, (276) 694-3811, information@stuartva.org. Deadline for submittal of proposals is Thursday, January 23, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. at the Stuart Town Office (100 Patrick Ave., Stuart, VA).

Minority and/or female owned businesses or firms and Section 3 businesses or firms are encouraged to apply. The Town of Stuart, VA is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN THE FAMILY COURT OF THE COUNTY OF RICHLAND FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

LEE T. CONNELLY,

PLAINTIFF,

MARK E. HANCOCK DEFENDANT.

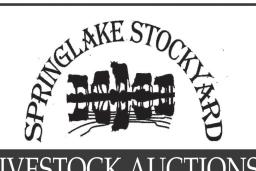
SUMMONS AND NOTICE DOCKET NO.:

No. 2024-DR-40-1768 TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT MARK E. HANCOCK: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED AND REQUIRED to an-

swer the Complaint in this action, and to serve a copy of your Answer on the Plaintiff's Attorney at his office, 1720 Main Street, Suite 301, Columbia, SC 29201, within thirty (30) days after service of this Summons upon you, exclusive of the day of such service; and if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, the Plaintiff in this action will apply to the Court for the relief sought in said Complaint. YOU WILL PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the original Com-

plaint was filed in the Office of the Clerk of Court for Richland County, South Carolina, on June 13, 2024.

ATTORNEY: Larry C. Marchant Jr., Attorney for Plaintiff Columbia, South Carolina



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Terri S. Wood, Manager

# PATRICK PULPITS

# What happened to **Sundays and Christmas?**

By Van Yandell

which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

If there is any single thing that is brutally tormenting, it is the gradual disregard for Sundays and Christmas Day.

Growing up in the fifties and sixties, remembering stores being closed on Sunday and Christmas Day, very strongly lingers in my

Granted, many stores close on Christmas day in order for their employees to be with family. This is indeed admirable and to those we give a big thumbs-up!

Apparently, the presence of greed (1 Timothy 6: 10) in our world has preempted the word and will of God. It is also evident that for employers to sustain a monetary gain in their businesses, they feel the need to open on the days that have been deemed by our Creator as sacred.

We fully well understand the influence of capitalism on our engage in those non-essential lives. We have microwaves, smart TVs and the internet which people have come to depend upon open a door for disobedience to as if survival could not continue without them.

We also have a large segment of the population for which Christmas Day and Sunday mean no more than a Monday or Wednes-

What has happened in our world that has caused us to relegate God and His commandments into a position of lesser importance? While there are numerous answers to the question, the final answer may be greed or a satanic

Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six a doubt it is our precious Jesus days shalt thou labor, and do all and His sacrificial death on the thy work." Is this so difficult? It is Cross of Calvary. We are given not a suggestion; it is a command- eternity by our faith based belief ment by our Creator God!

Exodus 20 10-11 "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the this day in the city of David a Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not Savior, which is Christ the Lord." do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

If verses eight and nine did not make a point, surely ten and eleven do. "The Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." This is a statement of certainty! We know sin is sin and all sin is sin into "severe" and "not so bad." This is an action that discredits the Word of God; how dare we?

in the wilderness after leaving Egypt, God provided them with manna. Manna is believed to be

a bread-like substance but since Genesis 2: 2-3 "And on the sev- they had no chemical preservaenth day God ended his work tives, it would ruin if they gathered more than a one-day supply.

Exodus 16: 23 "And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, tomorrow is the rest of the Holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to day, and see that ye will see; and that which remains over has happened in my lifetime that lay up for you to be kept until the morning.'

> The power of God to preserve on the sixth day for the seventh is a demonstration of His abilities to enforce the priorities of the day of rest. It also signifies the position of importance to commandment number four. "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy."

> The priorities of God are unmistakably clear. When we determine His priorities should be our priorities, we may be on a direct and certain path to being that person that pleases Him.

> Galatians 1: 10 "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men, for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." To be pleasing to God is a characteristic every Christian must strive for.

> When we open our stores or actions that our earthly wisdom tells us "That's not so bad," we govern our lives. We humans are vulnerable to our own notions and opinions. We are vulnerable to the retailers that tell us to shop and buy on Sunday.

> We are vulnerable to the restaurants that cater to the after church crowd. How many of us have attended church on Sunday morning then ate lunch at a restaurant after the church service? Does that not encourage the restauranteurs to open their doors on the Sabbath?

So, what do we regard as our Exodus 20: 8-9 "Remember the most precious blessing? Without in Him.

Luke 2: 11 "For unto you is born

Of course, this would be an opinionated statement but the most significant days in world history should be the day of Jesus' birth, His crucifixion and His resurrection. How can humanity ignore those days with a blink and a shrug?

Our indifferent attitudes toward the Sabbath and Christmas Day scream volumes about our disregard for our Creator. Just as our parents gave us life, Christ Jesus gave us eternity. How can anyone ignore that?

Writers note: This article was against God. But we categorize inspired by my good friend and amazing neighbor, Luis Marin. Thank you sir!

Van Yandell is a retired Indus-When the Israelite people were trial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary. His email vmy2121@outlook.com.

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### BIBLE TRIVIA

1. The main Christmas story is paraphrased from which two New Testament books (KJV)? Mark/John, Acts/ Romans, Matthew/Luke, Jude/Revelation

2. Who visited Jesus on the night of His birth and found Mary, Joseph and the babe lying in a manger? Innkeeper, Shepherds, Herod, Magi

3. Where was the young child when the Magi came to visit Him to present gifts? Manger, Under the stars, House, Temple

4. How many times does the word"Christmas" appear in the Bible (KJV)? Zero, 1, 2, 7

5. Who was King of Judaea at the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem? Solomon, Herod, Balak,

Belshazzar 6. What animals were present at Jesus' birth? Lions and bears, Sheep and goats, Cows and donkeys, No mention of an-

ANSWERS: 1) Matthew/ Luke, 2) Shepherds, 3) House, 4) Zero, 5) Herod, 6) No mention of animals (in Bible)

Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

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### Skyline Pentecostal Holiness Church 1515 Rock Church Rd. Meadows of Dan, Virginia Rev. Tommy Gosnell **CHURCH SERVICES** Sunday School 10 am

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Worship Services 11 am



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Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m



# **Super** Crossword

6 Of Swiss

mountains

Asian land

10 Get by logic

11 Joins closely

7 Playa del -

8 Climb up

9 Divided

88 Genetic

stuff

89 Spider's

hatching

pouch

92 NFL goals

in old slang

Gershwin

spongy balls

95 Battle with

96 "So funny!"

97 Light beams

99 Actress Alley

100 Even a

single

105 Regal seat

106 Playground

fixture

110 "Bad, Bad

112 Delight in

114 Big name in

115 In a fitting

117 Small kid

119 Chip topper

manner

113 Nimble

Brown'

thesauruses

109 Wipe clean

93 With it,

94 Lyricist

48 Sierra, Yukon

and Acadia

49 Trendy

berry

50 Shells out

56 Very thin,

57 "It matters

to me"

58 Escorted

from outside

as clouds

52 Boggy areas 53 Motorists' gp.

**ACROSS** 1 Drag race vehicle 8 Schuss, e.g. 11 Stinging flier 15 Contributed 19 Halloween mask feature 20 Hoodwink

21 Falco of TV 22 Leave off 23 Tendency toward chaos

> 24 Fido's noise 25 \* Star of the 1950s TV series "China 27 BLT seller

28 Naval forces 30 - Field (Mr. Met's home) 31 \* Getting tired 34 Baby bird 38 Evergreen

with red arils 39 Actress Polo 40 Stephen of "V for Vendetta' 42 Young

moray, e.g. 43 Cowl wearer 45 \* Hope when the situation

is desperate 51 Mosque official

Alastair

131

132

54 Scrooge for short portrayer 103 RV refuge

104 Six-legged 55 Minerals in thin sheets marchers 56 \* "Vanity Fair" 107 Suffix with novelist Carol 61 "One World" 108 How Alaska is populated **111** \* Town

musician John 65 Holders of crier's cry frozen cubes 116 Cab cost 117 "It takes two' 66 Girl in the fam dances

67 "Insecure" 118 Agents. in brief actress 119 \* "The Price 69 - Hawkins Is Right" host dance 70 Astonishment 123 Happy dance

**73** E'en if **75** Actor B 76 Fathers 79 Auditing gp. **81** Was

disgusting to 84 Deep desires 85 \* Period superseded by automobiles

89 Ragtime pianist Blake 90 Aficionado 91 Large cut 92 \* Three-part

trude Stein 98 Green-light 102 Removal of restrictions.

org.

129 Bullfight yell 130 Dissimilar 131 Legal equal 132 Brontë's Jane 133 Despite this 134 What the last four letters of eight key answers in

124 Net. as

128 Saturate

novel by Ger-

**DOWN** 3 Lay in place 4 Tossed

5 "Relax!"

20

**12** Org. for cavity fixers 13 Thereafter 14 Counterparts of manis 15 Cousin of a chimpanzee 16 Poehler of "Baby Mama" Figh 127 Ames' state 18 Zeta follower 26 Pronounces 28 "Just my opinion. in a text 29 Supermodel Banks 31 Fitness locale 32 Early auto 33 Award for U2 34 All-time low

this puzzle 35 Creeping might be vine

36 Once called considered, cryptically 1 Honorarium 2 Writer Rand

37 Fido's threat 41 Intertwine 44 Tartan skirt wearers 46 Suffix with owl or wolf

47 Vardalos of

Hollywood

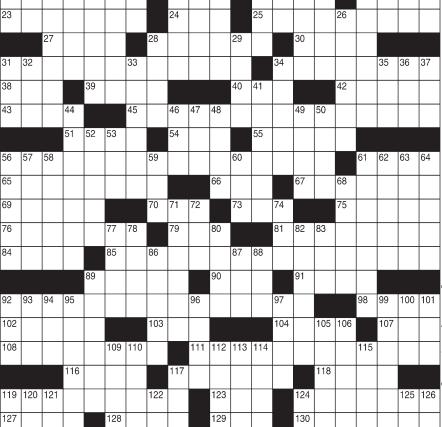
59 Org. with bag screeners 60 The whole and caboodle Fox-sighting cry 62 Jagged, as a leaf's edge 63 "When I Need You' singer Leo **64** Hopper of old gossip 68 Fake coins 71 Not fooled by

72 Previous to 74 Globe 77 Ergo **80** In no

78 Japanese noodle type danger 82 Playwright O'Neill

120 Fish spawn 121 She-sheep 122 Mug handle 124 Bit of word wit 83 Links letters 125 Rap sheet 86 Dangerous abbr.

126 Boomer's kid 87 Vetoing vote 16 117 26



Puzzle answers page 11

# **CLASSIFIED**

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

All real estate advertised in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitations or discrimination based on race, color, sex or national origin," or an intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. Our readers are informed that all dwellings advertised in this paper are available on an equal opportunity basis. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate or employment which is in violation of the law.

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number 531775 for additional information and to apply. For further information contact Terri Alt, Unit Coordinator, at 276-694-3341 or email talt@vt.edu. Review date 1/3/25. EO/AA **Employer** 

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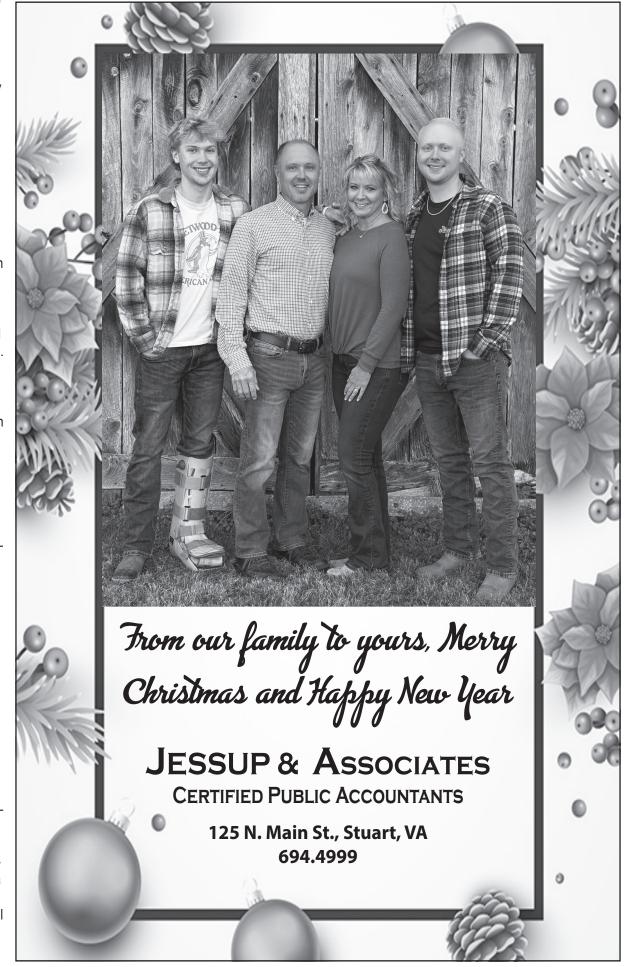
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Wednesday, December 25, 2024 -  $oldsymbol{11}$ 

Meeting and event information is due no later than 5 p.m. Friday of the week before publication is requested. Items are included as space allows.  $Email\ to\ dhall@the enterprise.net.$ 

### Meetings

### Monday, Jan. 6

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will hold its reorganizational meeting at 6 p.m. in the third-floor courtroom of the Patrick County Administration Building.

### Thursday, Jan. 9

The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Office.

### Wednesday, Jan.15

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

### **Events**

### Thursday, Jan. 2

The Parks and Recreation Department is beginning to offer free Tai Chi Flow classes for seniors, a gentle, low impact exercise to help improve balance, coordination and mobility. Classes meet on Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart, and will continue through February 27. For additional information, call (276) 694-3917.

### Saturday, Jan. 4

Jeb Stuart Volunteer Rescue Squad will have a community breakfast from 7:30-10 a.m. at its building. Plates are \$8 and dine in, carry out, and curb service options are available. Orders can be placed by calling (276) 694-6171.

**Ongoing** 

The Patrick County Patriots Turkey Shoot will be held Saturdays in January, and Saturday, February 1 and 8 at the Smith River Wildlife Club. Practice rounds start at 12:30 p.m. Shoot starts at 1 p.m. Rules are factory chokes only, no sleeves or re-chokes, and no modified gun barrels. Food will be available for purchase.

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

The Patrick County Alzheimer's Group LLC meets at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of every month at the Alzheimer's office at 109 Buena Vista Ave in Stuart. New members or volunteers are welcome. For more information, call (276) 693-6018.

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

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

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

Free Community Meal, every 4th Wednesday, 5 p.m., Raven Rock Wesleyan Church, 1912 Raven Rock Road, Ararat. Take out or dine in. Call Scott or Nann Phillips at (276) 773-6004 or email pastor@ravenrockchurch.org.

Messianic Bible Study, Fridays from 6-7:30

p.m. at The Honey Pot, 106 N. Main St., Stuart (across from The Coffee Break). Call (276) 694-2356 for more information.

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

The Willis Gap Community Center: Members Meeting, the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m.; Appalachian Acoustic Open Jam, every Friday. Doors open at 6 p.m. for food. The music and dancing are 6:30-9 p.m.; Golden Oldies Open Jam is on the last Tuesday of the month. Doors open at 6 p.m. for food, music and dancing from 6:30-9 p.m.

Connect Health+ Wellness offers free confidential Medicaid/FAMIS application and renewal assistance for Virginia residents from birth to 64. No sign-up fees, no premiums, no deductibles. Medicaid renewals have resumed. Medicaid members need to keep their mailing address and contact information up to date. Connect Health + Wellness' specially trained Medicaid/ FAMIS Outreach Advocate can provide more information. Call or text Ann Walker, (276) 732-0509, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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# Youngkin "deeply concerned" about drone activity, lack of information

al Vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones, were reported in and around Virginia, Gov. Glenn Youngkin wrote in an update, "I remain deeply concerned that Virginia has consistently sought information from federal partners, and to date, the information shared with the Commonwealth has been insufficient."

Youngkin emphasized the importance of Virginia's role in national security, noting the presence of critical infrastructure across the state. "The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to a significant number of national security and critical infrastructure sites upon which our nation depends each and every day," Youngkin said. "The Virginia State Po-

After multiple sightings of Unmanned Aeri- lice Homeland Security Division and Virginia Department of Emergency Management continue to closely coordinate through our Fusion Center with the greater law enforcement and first responder community regarding drone activity in the Commonwealth. We will continue to engage with numerous federal partners and release further information as it becomes known and available."

Authorities are urging the public to report drone sightings to the Virginia Fusion Center at VFC@ vfc.vsp.virginia.gov or by calling (877) 4VA-TIPS. Officials also warned against attempting to interfere with or capture UAVs using personal drones or other means.









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

### **DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆**

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ♦ ♦ ♦ HOO BOY!

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# 'Teal Night' honors Worley's recovery after crash



The Lady Cougars hosted "Teal Night" at their home game against Bassett on Dec. 16. During a break in play, Lauren Worley received a standing ovation, marking one year since her recovery began after being critically injured in a car crash caused by a drunk driver. Lauren is standing near the top of the stands.

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# Hike Gravely Nature Preserve

Join the Dan River Basin Association for an approximately 2.5 mile at the Gravely Nature Preserve in Ridgeway. DRBA's First Saturday Outing (FSO) on January 4 at 10 a.m. This hike consists of easy trails along the ridge and a more strenuous loop trail leading down to and along the Smith River then back up.

Outings and meetings of the Dan River Basin Association are open to the public without charge.

Situated a few miles south of Martinsville, the 75-acre Gravely Nature Preserve presents outdoor lovers with a rich history, bountiful wildlife, and outstanding views of the Smith River. Old tobacco barns and the Burgess family cemetery along the ridge on the Jones Cliff Trail bear witness to its 19th century history as a tobacco plantation. Now nature has reclaimed the plantation and a more recent owner, Richard P. Gravely, an industrialist and amateur archaeologist, provided for its preservation as a "wildlife habitat and nature conservancy".

managed by Henry



County Parks and Recreation and DRBA volunteers, features an outdoor education center, approximately 2.5 miles of trails with The preserve, owned interpretive signage, by Henry County and and a port-a-toilet. Mature hardwoods and

pines cover the higher box turtle. areas, but as the Rho-River you begin to enriver you pass through a glorious tunnel of or North Carolina. rhododendrons. This

Hiking clubs meet dodendron Trail grad- on the property to ually descends nearly walk the trails, and 200 feet to the Smith boaters can enjoy the lush views by putting counter thick stands in nearby at the Marmountain laurel rowbone Creek Access rhododendrons. and then floating down As the trail follows the the Smith River Blueway to Mitchell Bridge

"I have hiked this area is known for its trail in the spring to abundant collection admire the profusion of ferns, mushrooms, of wildflowers, in earand spring wildflow- ly summer for rhodoers. During your trek dendrons in bloom, in along the river keep fall for colorful leaves, your eyes open for ot- and in winter for river ter, belted kingfishers views. And I love walkand other birds. Far- ing through a living ther up slope watch for tunnel of rhododen-

any time of year," said FSO coordinator, Ellen Jessee.

Participants should dress in layers, wear hiking shoes or boots, bring hiking and stick(s), lunch, and All particiwater. pants will be required to sign a waiver.

For more information, contact the outings coordinator Ellen Jessee, 276-734-1317, ejessee105@gmail.com

**NOTE:** If for any reason the event needs to be canceled, visit www.danriver.org by Friday, the day before the outing to determine whether the outing will be held.



276-952-2800





# A festive guide to caroling

Christmas caroling is a joyful tradition that has endured for centuries. Christmas caroling can be traced to the fourth century in Rome. Latin hymns were written to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Historians believe that even before the emergence of Christianity midwinter songs existed to lift people's spirits through the bleak weather and extended hours of darkness.

Christmas caroling continues to unite communities and spread holiday cheer through song. It is time to inspire a caroling resurgence by planning to gather friends, family, or neighbors for a caroling session. This guide can help anyone plan a memorable caroling event.

### Gather your group

Begin by assembling a group of singers. No one needs to be an expert singer, as enthusiasm goes a long way. Reach out to friends, family, coworkers, and/or local community members. Try to get a diverse group of people together whose main goal is to have fun.

### Find the right time and date

Typically evening hours after work or during weekends are when you can reach the greatest number of people. The goal is to enable participants to relax and enjoy the experience.

### Map out a caroling route

Carefully identify neighborhoods or locations that are known for being festive. While the organizer may choose to carol around his or her own neighborhood, it may be possible to engage more of the community in other settings. Look at local nursing homes or even community centers as caroling locations. Contact businesses along Main Street to see if caroling in the center of town to coincide with holiday shopping may be a good idea.



Christmas music often sets the holiday scene, and carolers can bring familiar songs into neighborhoods this time of year.

### Compile a list of classics

Most people will want to hear the carols and other songs they know and love. Make a list of classic Christmas songs that aren't overly complicated and singers will already know how to sing, such as 'Jingle Bells,' 'Deck the Halls,' 'Frosty the Snowman,' and 'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.' If a particularly accomplished singer is in the group, he or she might do a featured solo. Be sure to have printed copies of the lyrics and sheet music for all participants.

### **Enlist some musicians**

Although caroling is traditionally performed a cappella, having someone who plays an instrument, like a guitar or violin, can ensure everyone is on the right note and can keep the pace of each song.

### Plan to rest

Singing can be joyful, but also tiring. Bring along refreshments so the carolers can rest their voices and stop to grab a drink or snack. Tea, coffee and cocoa can warm up participants on chilly days. Perhaps make one of the caroling stops in front of a local coffee shop and pop in after a set.

### Coordinate attire

Although everyone does not have to dress alike, a similar element, such as a red scarf or green mittens, can unite the group.

### Add a charitable element

Consider incorporating a charitable aspect to the caroling. Collect financial or food donations for a local food pantry, or do a toy drive while caroling, encouraging people to offer a wrapped gift in exchange for some beautiful music.

# Notable Christmas celebrations around the world

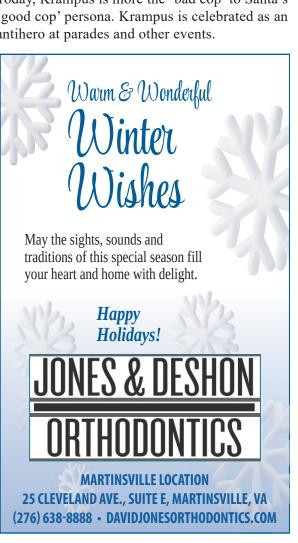
It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas all over the world. Christmas celebrations include various time-honored traditions that celebrants hold near and dear to their hearts.

Depending on where someone lives, their Christmas traditions may look quite different from those in other parts of the globe. It can enjoyable to learn how Christmas is celebrated elsewhere and perhaps even incorporate a few new traditions into your celebrations.

### Take a peek at these customs near and far.

Seafood and beachside celebrations: Australia is located in the southern hemisphere, which means Aussies are enjoying the peak of their summer come December 25. A white Christmas is unlikely, unless the 'white' refers to white, sandy beaches. Santa is probably swapping his thick coat for a pair of board shorts, and heavy, roast-laden meals are unlikely to make it on to the menu. Instead, Australians dine on seafood feasts and spend Christmas outdoors camping or at the beach.

Krampus parade: Some Christmas elves are not so jolly. Just ask residents of the Austrian, German and Hungarian Alps. Each year in this region, a true 'Bad Santa' is the talk of town. Villagers believed that Krampus, a half-man, half-goat creature with a legion of ill-tempered elves, roamed the mountains wreaking havoc. Krampus was said to abduct miscreants and set unruly youth or even intoxicated adults straight. Today, Krampus is more the 'bad cop' to Santa's 'good cop' persona. Krampus is celebrated as an antihero at parades and other events.





Holiday traditions differ considerably in various regions of the world. Celebrants may want to consider incorporating foreign traditions into their own Christmas celebrations this year.

Las Posadas: According to scripture, Joseph and Mary had to make an arduous journey from their hometown to Bethlehem for census purposes while Mary was pregnant. When the couple arrived, they found lodgings were nonexistent, and Mary ended up giving birth to Jesus in a manger surrounded by animals. In celebration of that journey, people in Mexico and Guatemala celebrate Las Posadas, a procession representing Mary and Joseph's journey and their struggle to find lodging.

La Befana: In Italian folklore, La Befana is a witch-like old woman who, like Santa, delivers gifts to children throughout Italy. Instead of this gift-giving taking place on Christmas, La Befana hands out gifts on the Epiphany Eve in a simi-

lar way to how the Three Magi brought presents to Baby Jesus. Le Befana also is believed to fly through the night sky to sweep away all the troubles of the old year and clear the way for a fresh

Move over reindeer: Although reindeer often garner fanfare this time of year, the Yule goat is a Christmas symbol and tradition in Scandinavia and northern Europe. Each year in towns throughout Sweden and other areas, large statues of Yule goats are built on the first day of Advent and stand throughout the holiday season. This tradition dates back to ancient Pagan festivals, and some believe the goat is connected to the Norse god Thor, who rode in the sky in a chariot pulled by two goats.



# **Creative Writing Contest**

Each year, youngsters participate in our annual Creative Writing Contest. The hardest part for us is selecting the winners, three in each of the categories represented. All of the entries we received this year, as every year, are well written and creative. Our Honorable Mention entries are below and on the pages that follow. We hope you enjoy them as much as we did!

# Pre-K - 3rd Grade

By Brantley Setliff

If the Grinch came to my door, I would get my mom to make him go away nicely because I think he is scary!

By Olivia Gregory

If I could ask Santa Claus one question, I'd want to ask what he does. He said he has magic and his reindeer can fly.

By Luna Hatfield

roof stable. The candy cane would be on the side of the door. The gum drops would be on the roof. After that, I would eat it!

By Maddy Cassell

If a gingerbread man jumped out of my oven, I would jump out of the window!

By Micah Harris

My favorite Christmas cookies are chocolate cookies, gingerbread cookies and sugar cookies. I like them because they are sweet.

By Jonathan Padgett

My Christmas wish list is a truck, a cup and an elf. I'd like these toys because the truck reminds me of my dad named Shane. The cup reminds me of my mom. The elf reminds me of Santa Claus.

By Chloe Howell

If I got to help in Santa's workshop, I would like to make presents. I think it would be fun to wrap presents. I am good at wrapping.

By Maddox Trent

One time I made a feast for my classroom. I served gingerbread man's alligator chicken. Then, I served pig and all of it tasted good.

### Frankie the Snowman

There was a girl snowman named Frankie. She could not talk. This made her very sad. One day, a little girl found Frankie the snowman on a cold windy day. When she found Frankie, she put a new nose on the snowman. Next, the little girl's Granny came. Granny used sticks to give Frankie new arms and legs.

The little girl gave Frankie a hug. Suddenly, the snowman found her voice. Frankie was so happy she could talk and sing. She said, "I love all the people! Merry Christmas!"

By Arianna Whitt,

Kindergarten

### Santa and the Forgotten House

While the Elf and Santa were flying away from the last kid's house. They realized that they missed a house. When they got back to the North Pole, they were shocked. Santa said, "Oh, no! We missed a house! What are we going to do!?" The elf replied, "It's fine. We will just go back."

Santa and the Elf agreed and decided they had to go back to the kid's house for sure. The kids had to have presents. The Elf realized it was sunrise. The Elf shouted, "Oh, no! What are we going to do now that it's almost day light?" Santa said, "Don't worry! I carry the disguises and the parachute at the back of the sleigh." So, they hurriedly changed clothes and jumped out of the sleigh.

Santa was dressed as a mailman and the Elf was dressed as a kid. Since it is sunrise, if they don't get to the kid's house by 8:00 AM they will be in trouble. Oh, and also, I don't know why but Santa has a motorcycle in his sleigh as well. The

### Patrick Springs Primary School

By Emmy Brumbaugh

My ugly Christmas sweater will have glitter and some red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, red, violet, pink and rose. It will have fire powers and some water powers. It will have Earth powers and light powers. It is my superpowers, Christmas sweater!

By Ruthann Hudson

My favorite Christmas song is "Last Christ-If I built a gingerbread house, I would add a mas." I like the sounds and I like how the peocandy cane, icing, gumdrops and a sucker. The ple sound. I feel happy when it's Christmas. icing would hold the walls up and make the My mom will turn on the music when we put up the tree and decorate the tree, it is fun.

> By Kalliope Hall My favorite Christmas ornament is an orna-

ment from my grandma. It has a snowman face with black eyes, a white body, an orange nose and a black dotted mouth. It is on my Christmas tree. I put it there every year.

By Easton Burris

watching and Santa is watching too, so be good".

By Cadence White

When I look at a Christmas tree, I feel good. They look pretty. I love decorating the Christmas tree. After I'm done, it looks good and I like it. My details of the tree are nice. I love

By Mason Putnam

Wow! A magic sack! It says "To Josh". It has a toy plane, a toy knife and an American flag inside. I gave the sack to Josh, who is my brother. My brother was happy.

By McKinley Lowe

My favorite Christmas movie is "Home

Alone". I like it because one kid is home alone and is happy. He gets to do whatever he wants, like eat sweets, watch TV all night and stay up late.

By Camden Burks

My favorite Christmas ornament is a Grinch ornament because I like the movie. It is great and funny. The Grinch is green and mean and at the end, he is nice.

By Lydia Mathis

When I look at a Christmas tree, I think pretty. The tree is white. The lights are red. The ornaments are pretty.

By Riley Maxey

I have two surprise gifts to give. I'm going to give one to Olivia and the other one to Chloe. I put a new water bottle in the first one. The second one has a new pair of shoes.

By Korben Spangler

I'm in charge of decorating the Christmas If Rudolph could talk, he would say "I am tree this year. It has a star on top and fake snowflakes. The lights are red and blue. It has orange balls with fake snow in them. It also has a circle rug to make the tree look like it's on carpet.

By Phoenix Ratliff

My favorite things about Christmas are:

- 1. getting presents
- 2. putting up the decorations
- 3. God's birthday

If I was hired to watch Santa's reindeer, I would first grab a wrench. Then put super boosters on the back of Santa's sled. Then, I would train the reindeer. Then, I would give the reindeer a carrot.

By Scotty Helbert Second Grade

### Meadows of Dan Elementary School

Elf and Santa drove the motorcycle to the kids house with a bag full of presents. When they got to the kid's house, the time was 7:48 AM. They needed to work fast. Santa guarded the house while in mailman clothes and the Elf changed into his Elf clothes. The Elf snuck into the house and climbed onto the shelf so that he could watch out for the boy while Santa brought in the pres-

Santa got all the presents into the house and placed them under the beautiful Christmas tree. Santa used his magic to teleport the Elf and himself back to sleigh where they drove off to the North Pole. They arrived at the North Pole. The Elf was so relieved, but Santa wasn't because he remembered something. Santa yelled, "THE BOY HAD A SISTER!!!!!!!"

By Tanner Whitt

3rd Grade

### The Christmas the Grinch was Good!

Once upon a time on Christmas Eve, there was snow on the ground! The Grinch was waking up on this cold morning and rolled over to say morning to Max. Max was the Grinch's dog. Max had an idea and started wagging his tail. The Grinch said "tell me Max." Max was thinking that not everyone gets Christmas presents because their parents could not afford them.

Max the dog thinks that the Grinch should buy the kids presents. The Grinch says "no way Max." Then Max reminds the Grinch how it use to feel not to get anything. The Grinch started to

As the day went on, he couldn't help but think

about those kids. Then he says "Max you were right, we should buy the kids some presents." Max told the Grinch "let's get going, we only have a little time." They went and got alot of presents! They knocked on everyone's door in town to make sure that everyone had a present under the tree!

But remember, it's not about what's under the tree, it's about the birth of Jesus and spending time with family! Merry Christmas!

By Jackson Boyd

Third grade

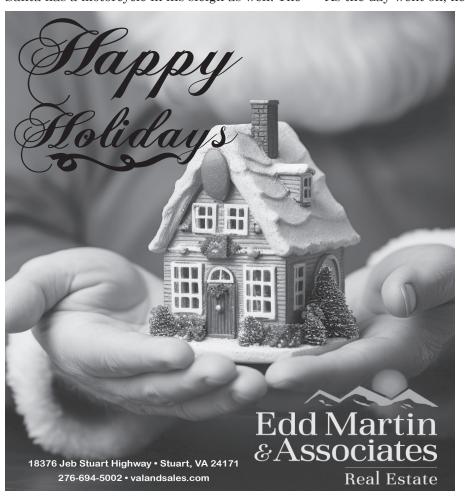
### **Christmas Cookies**

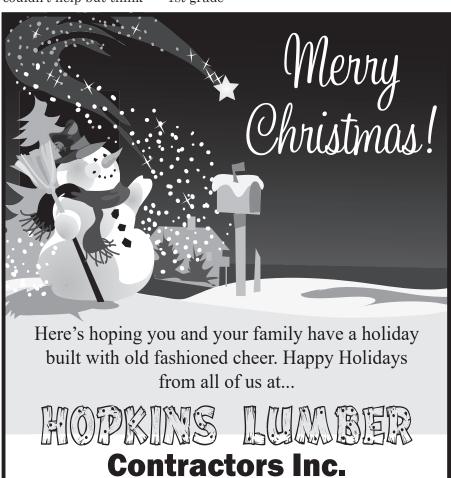
Down the hallway I go To make cookies with dough. Sugar, eggs, flour, and butter I can't wait to pick my favorite cutter. So sugary and sweet These cookies can't be beat. Add some sprinkles on top I can't wait for Santa to stop. By Meredith Pilson Grade 1

### **Rudolph Goes to School**

Rudolph was so excited about his first day of school. He did math, technology, and wrote sentences. He made one hundred friends. His best friend is Comet. Rudolph ate lots of apples for lunch because he loves apples so much. At the end of the day, Santa came to school with the sleigh to take Rudolph back to the North Pole.

By Liam Whitt 1st grade





### Woolwine Elementary School

### Christmas Eve

Twas the night before Christmas and Abby was so excited that she couldn't sleep. She knew morning would come a lot faster if she slept, but she couldn't Day stop thinking about how much his reindeer!

hear it again. She fell asleep.

Santa and his reindeer.

By Bailey Vance Grade 6

### The Kid Who Had A Dream

the house. I raided the candy jar they needed anything to call her. and got a handful of candy and nitely was a Santa who had visit- was all about having each other. ed my house!

By Ethan Lee Worley

### Grade 6

The Truth About Christmas What is Christmas, so many

They don't understand why we

celebrate this day.

Many think it's all about Santa

and lights so bright

But there is so much more about mood. that special night.

In a little manger, long, long games

A baby was born that made our to shame.

hearts glow. He came as our Savior to this

Bringing love and hope with his

and clear

They brought him gifts and an-

gels sang praise And shouted peace for all our

This Christmas, remember it's

God's son

miracles he has done.

By Natalie Worley Grade 6

# A Poor Mom on Christmas

There once was a mom who fun tomorrow would be. She was loved her daughter with all her also pretty sure that if she stayed heart. They were always there awake, she would hear Santa and for each other even though they didn't have much. It was getting Abby lay very still in her bed. close to Christmas and all the litwas a light tapping sound that presents she hoped she would get. seemed to be coming from the roof. Mom couldn't stop thinking about There it was again! Abby listened what her daughter's face would carefully. It sounded like some- look like if she didn't have a presthing was walking on the roof. ent. The little girl told everyone Abby knew that it must be the that her mom was going to get her reindeer and Santa! She didn't something very special this year.

One day the little girl and her She woke up the next morning mom went to the grocery store. and went downstairs. She saw They were in the checkout line the gifts from Santa, but before and the cashier told them your she opened them, she checked the cost is \$15.85. Mom searched cookies that she had left for San- through her purse and realized ta. They were all gone! She knew that she did not have enough to what she heard last night was pay for the groceries. She looked through the same thing. She paid for their groceries and they talk-It was Christmas Eve and I was ed for a few minutes. It turns out determined to catch Santa, so I that the lady lived in the same put cameras and traps all over apartment and told them that if

It was finally Christmas morngot some surgery drinks to help ing and the mother was franticalme stay up all night to catch San- ly thinking of how she was going ta. I waited and waited, but he to tell her excited daughter that never came. I was about to give she could not afford to give her up, but then I heard something a Christmas present this year. so I turned around really quick- The little girl woke up and startly. I looked at the fireplace and ed looking for her presents. Her all around the house, but I could mother got out of bed to tell her not find Santa. I walked to the daughter who was still looking. Christmas tree and I found tons She got to the room as her daughof presents under the tree. When I ter opened the front door to see looked on the cameras, Santa was if her present was outside of the there! I went to bed and Christ-door. There was a present placed mas morning I found out that it right outside. She knew that a was all a dream. There were no miracle had happened! However, cameras or traps, but there defi- they both knew that Christmas

> By Paisley Wood Grade 6

### On Christmas Day

Hooray! It is Christmas Day I can not wait to be on the way. Nana and Popie's house is close Filled with family that I love

Nana will serve dishes of food Then we will all be in a good

Where Popie normally puts us

By Alycia Wilson

6th grade

### The Christmas Miracle

Today is Christmas Eve, but it The stars above shone bright does not feel like Christmas Eve. It feels lonely. I am the only one To help guide the wise men home, no tree is set up, and most importantly, there is no snow. When my dad comes home we go out to buy a Christmas tree, but when we get there the man at the counter says they are all sold out. So we go back home and I go dolph, "You need to go to the dento my room where I hear a little tist." Rudolph took off running It's the gift of Jesus and the voice. I don't think much about as fast as he could, but Vixen

it until I hear it again. So I went and Prancer tackled him and the downstairs to check it out. When three of them landed face first in I get to the bottom of the stairs, I the snow. Vixen had a snow beard see a decorated tree with lots of and Prancer laughed, "Vixen, now presents under it, and most im- you're Santa!" Prancer turned ally is a Christmas miracle.

By Christian Rakes Grade 6

### The Two Elf Friends

On December 22, 2023 at 2:00 and 15 inches of snow had alall 25 elves looked out the window of Santa's Little Helpers Toy Factory, they were surprised.

There were two elf friends named Beans and Candy Cane. factory, and they made lots of toys together. However, Beans was jealous of Candy Cane in some ways. Candy Cane made much better toys than Beans and Candy Cane seemed much around for a miracle to happen. A smarter also. Everybody paid nice lady behind them knew what much more attention to Candy it was like because she had been Cane, Toy making didn't come easy to Beans like it did to Candy Cane. That made Beans sad. Beans didn't know what to say about it to Candy Cane, because Beans was afraid it would come out in a mean way. Beans knew he had to talk to Candy Cane, and Christmas was right around the corner. So at 3:00 P.M. December 23, 2023, Beans finally talked to Candy Cane, and it did not come out in a mean way! Beans said, "Since I'm not as good as you, can you please teach me how to be a better toy maker?" Candy Cane was honored that Beans was asking for help, and he looked forward to teaching his friend.

> They worked everyday together from then on. By the next Christmas, Beans and Candy Cane were the best toy makers in all of Alaska. The lesson of this story is that one conversation made all the difference.

By Scarlett Greer Grade 6

# Didn't Light

ness. After the first 2,000 houses, it. they saw light. They flew to the lot of dust appeared. Rudolph was gone. Santa saw him behind a tree. His nose was red! So they delivered all the presents before Christmas Day.

By Wyatt Rodgers Grade 6

### Rudolph Goes to the Dentist

One winter day Santa told Ru-

portantly, it is snowing! This re- around and added, "Rudolph, you are going to that dentist whether you like it or not." Rudolph sighed and then nodded.

When Rudolph walked into the dentist's office all he could smell was mint. He walked up to the Suddenly, she heard a noise. It tle girl would talk about was the PM, it was a cold winter's day in receptionist and asked her when Alaska. It was snowing very hard the dentist could see him. She told him that he needed to wait a ready fallen that evening. When few minutes. The dentist walked through the door and told Rudolph to come on back. Rudolph sat down in the chair and the dentist began to work.

> After the dentist filled two cav-They were a great team in the ities, Rudolph went home. When the numbness was gone, he decided that the dentist wasn't so bad after all.

By Dixie Scott Grade 6

### The Nice Ape One winter day

It was cold and I saw a sleigh. It was going to be fun, fun, fun! But then I saw it would not run.

So I went to my house to get some tape But on the way I saw an ape.

He was nice and wanted to be my friend. He gave me a sleigh and I was happy again.

So I played and played until the

By Brayden Bowman Grade 6

### Not So Bad After All

It was December 24, 1986, a day before Christmas, but for some reason everyone was sad. The reason was that there was no snow! There was no sledding, no snowball fights, no making snow angels, and no making snowmen! "What will we do?" asked Matthew and Brandon, the two brothers who lived on Main Street.

After a while of thinking Matthew broke the silence. "Brandon! I know what to do." he said. Bran-The Night Rudolph's Nose don replied, "What?" "We have to write a letter to Santa," Matthew It was Christmas Eve. Santa said. So they got paper and a pengot ready and the elves packed cil and began writing. "Dear Sanhis sleigh and bag. It was time for ta, it is a day before Christmas take off. They were on their way and there is still no snow! Could to drop off the presents at the chil- you please make it snow before dren's houses, but all a sudden, a tomorrow, so everyone can have boom and Rudolph's nose would fun?" After Matthew finished not light. It was hard to see, but writing, he put the note in an enthey made it through the dark-velope and asked his mom to mail

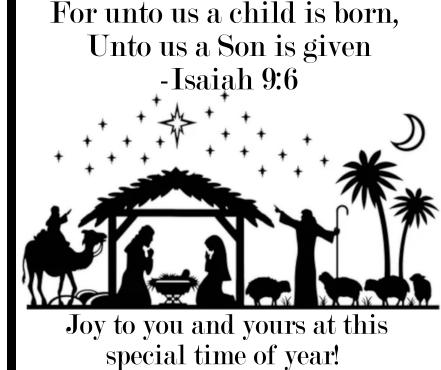
After all of that, the family light that was red. They got very had to go shopping for their big close, and all a sudden, Boom! A Christmas feast that they always had. By the time they were back it was already time for the brothers to go to sleep.

> When they woke up they looked out the window. There was snow everywhere! Santa had gotten their letter and their plan had worked! Maybe Christmas wouldn't be so bad afterall.

By Blake Miles

Grade 6





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# 6th - 7th Grade

### Christmas

Christmas is a time

When jingle bells chime.

Christmas is a wonderful sea-

To be cheerful for every reason. All these things are really nice Jesus Christ.

By Kaeleigh Woodham Grade 7

### The Ready Reindeer

Dasher said, "Look how fast I can fly.'

Dancer said, "Look at my dance

Prancer said, "I'm ready to fly." Vixen said, "I hear Santa Claus."

said, "I can hear the Comet bells."

Cupid said, "I see the elves." Doner said, "I feel the joy."

Blitzen said, "I'm ready to deliver toys."

Rudolph said, "I'm excited to see the good girls and boys."

Santa gave a simple command and they flew out of sight.

By Aubree Bowman 6th grade

### The Sneaky Elf

breakfast. I thought it was gomessed up. I started to panic because I had family coming over. bookshelf where he was supwaiting for my family to come searching every corner. knock on the door when I heard Then, finally, I had peace.

By Blake Belcher

Grade 6

### A Haunted Christmas

It was a cold Christmas morning. The windows were fogging up, and I could hear the sound of logs crackling in the fire. It was so peaceful until my rowdy brother woke up my family and me. I decided to stay in bed until I was forced to get up and open presents. I laid there shivering half ing away with time as it and life to death wondering what I was going to get. After a long time gomy presents.

eating candy waiting for the others to get everything out of their stockings. It was finally my turn We decorate the Christmas tree to open the first present. It was With all our friends and family. very small. I was confused because I never wished for something the size of a newborn ant. My parents said they never bought this present. I opened it up very cautiously But Christmas is the birth of to find a crumpled up note inside it. The note said, "I will be here to haunt you every breath you breathe. You will never find me or know my identity." I was scared for my life! I never had once in any single second of my life experienced something like this. My mom and dad drove to the police station to report the note. My siblings and I stayed at the house.

I decided to go down into the basement thinking what is happening is just one big dream. I pinched myself and I am not in a dream. I sat down thinking about what could happen to me in the near future. While I was sitting on the icy cold floor two hands encased my neck. They wouldn't let go. I tried with all my might to find a way to break free. I continued to struggle and I finally broke free. I ran upstairs so fast that not even a pronghorn could catch me. I never was able to get a good look at this mysterious person. As One snowy day I woke up to eat soon as I got out of the basement my parents walked through the ing to be a normal day, but when door. I ran towards them gasping I saw that the entire house was for air and told them everything that had just happened.

My dad went into the basement When I calmed down, I realized and found nothing down there. that I had an elf, so I ran to the They must have thought I was going crazy until they spotted posed to be, but he wasn't there. I scratch marks on my neck. This looked for a little while and final- went from the average Christmas ly found him in my room on my to the scariest one of my life. My bed. I didn't know how he could dad informed the police over the have gotten there because I had phone and they said they would just been there. I had no time to send a couple of deputies. The think about it so I started clean- scratch marks on my neck starting. It took me hours to clean up, ed to burn like fire. As I was bebut finally I finished. After that I ginning to treat my injuries the was really tired but I didn't want police knocked on the door. They to go to sleep so I stayed up. I was instantly went into the basement

They couldn't find any leads a loud BANG!!! I jumped and ran until one of the deputies noticed to see what it was and, of course, a hidden door behind a couple of it was the elf. He knocked over a gigantic boxes. They pulled open vase so I had to clean up fast. I the door and found a man in there. swept it up, took it to the trash, His name was Erik the Destroyand threw it all away. I put him er. He was a high profile criminal in the basement with all of the that the police had been searchother old Christmas decorations. ing for. The deputies thanked me for breaking down the clues as they put cuffs on Erik.

> I could finally enjoy the rest of experienced and I hope I will never experience this again.

By Nathan Shuff

Grade 7

### The Month Of December

Winter is cold, but the month is warm like an open fireplace burnitself passes on.

As Jesus himself was born on ing through the options for gifts I the day given the name Christwanted, it was time to unravel all mas while angels above cry tears of joy but as they fall their tears As usual, I started with the turn into little flakes of snow covstocking. I got so much candy I ering everything in its path in a already knew my stomach wasn't white blanket making everything

to gather around the Christmas tree for singing and praying.

Children especially love it becial things in life that only they can see or feel.

Christmas is special to everyone just in different ways.

By Lily Johnson Grade 7

### **Christmas With Fudge**

Christmas time with Fudge the

She's my friend and she's not She sits with me when I play

my games

She's always quiet and never complains. Christmas is her favorite time

Catnip in her stocking brings her lots of cheer.

Lots of sleep is in our plan Waking up so we can Eat lots of food and treats.

Christmas with Fudge can't be

By Holden Perez Grade 7

### Reindeer Are Missing!

It was three days before Christmas and everyone at the North Pole was trying to get

everything ready for the holiday. Elves were scurrying about making sure

the toys were ready. One elf named Holly went to check

on the reindeer and give them candy canes, their favorite treat. hope Santa will be able to trav-Holly handed them their treats.

was time for Holly to clean their any presents. As we get closer to stalls. Holly led them out of their Neptune we look out the window stalls to the big pen next door. and see Santa! But he seems to be She started to latch the stall, but aimlessly floating through space. suddenly another elf told her that Is he in trouble? We hopelessly Santa was having an emergency stare until we have an idea. We meeting. Holly hurried to lock the tell the astronauts to go back and stall but was not careful about it. they do so. As we approach at a She then hurried to the meeting. slower than usual speed, I gear What she didn't know was that up in my spacesuit and prepare to chaos was about to strike.

Donnor was the first one to noother reindeer close behind.

see the stables anymore. They were lost!

my Christmas. This was by far had realized that the reindeer to the sleigh. I head back inside the scariest Christmas I ever had were missing because they had and relay the information to my another problem. The sleigh was parents and we fly back home to broken! The elves worked on the sleigh until Christmas Eve.

> An elf named Snowy went to the stables to check on the reindeer. They were missing! Snowy looked everywhere but could not find them. He finally went to Santa and told him what had happened. Santa asked Snowy to bring in the elves. Snowy knew Santa had

After Santa told the elves his plan they got to work. About three hours later they had made 7,000 candy canes! A few elves moved a big fan in front of the candy

canes so the scent would trav-

Christmas is a time for families el farther. The reindeer had been walking for a while. Suddenly they smelled candy canes! They followed the scent all the way cause it opens their eyes to spe-back to the stables. The elves saw them coming and they all cheered. Christmas was saved!

> By Lacie Bullins Grade 7

### Christmas in Space

The year is 2102. Our parents have scheduled a Christmas trip for us around the eight planets. The spaceship is covered with all kinds of Christmas decorations. Rumor has it that Santa has a rocket of his own, so maybe, just maybe, Santa and his reindeer will visit us on this trip!

It's a few days until Christmas and we are boarding the spaceship. They call it "Supernova 17" because it can travel a lightyear in one minute! I board the ship with my parents and we are amazed. The ship is very spacious and our spacesuits are in front of us waiting to be worn. We put them on and buckle up preparing for take off in the snowy landscape outside of the ship. As the astronauts work their magic we hear a countdown. "5...4...3...2...1...preparing for space travel." And WOOSH! The Supernova takes off and my parents and I are suddenly miles high up in the sky! The stars look wonderful, and Earth is arguably more beautiful from space.

It's Christmas Day! We've flown past Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus. Neptune is the last. We el all the way here, because if After they ate their treats it not, my parents say I won't get save Santa.

I hop out of the ship and a tethtice that the gate was open so he er is the only thing keeping me gently nudged it open the rest of from drifting out to space. I apthe way and stepped out of the proach Santa and his sleigh of pen. He smelled candy canes so reindeer and ask what happened. he followed the scent with the Santa explains that his rocket ran out of fuel and all of his rein-By the time they reached the deer were tired, rendering them candy canes they couldn't even unable to pull the sleigh. I pull Santa's sleigh towards our ship. As I latch onto the ship using the Back at the workshop no one tether that was pulling me I tie it Earth.

Once we get to Earth and land, we've officially saved Santa and his reindeer! As a reward Santa gives us all of the cookies and milk he's gathered. Keep in mind, this is A LOT. As we head home in our flying car we are satisfied with our Christmas. My parents are planning on doing this next year, albeit without saving Santa!

By Kaitlyn Gunter Grade 7

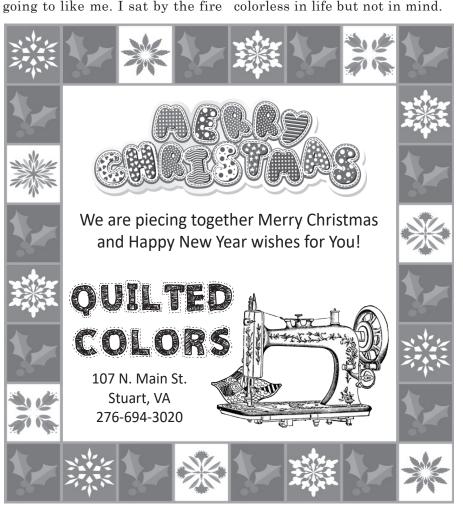


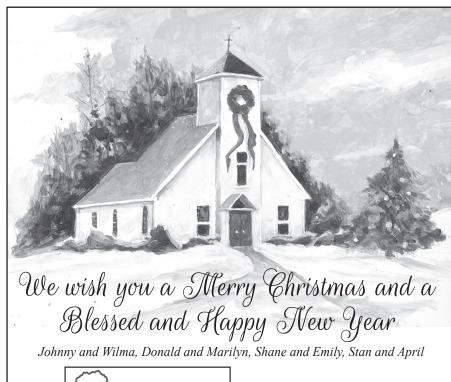
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No One Knows The Country Like We Do

# Classic holiday films the whole family can enjoy

Celebrants owe the joy of the holiday season to various components. Decor and gift-giving go a long way toward making December a joyous time of year. Holiday films also do their part to make the season so special.

Many people have their own favorite holiday films, and the following are some that can engage viewers who are young or simply young at heart.

### 'A Christmas Story'

Released in 1983, this warmly nostalgic, humorous film is a perennial favorite among families. It follows the story of Ralphie, who has his heart set on a very specific Christmas present: a Red Ryder BB gun. Amidst wintry exploits and family drama, the true spirit of Christmas manages to shine through in this beloved film. Some of the subject matter can be off-color, and there are some bullying scenes. So this is a movie best watched with children who are mature enough to make it through without being scared.

### 'Little Women'

Based on the Louisa May Alcott novel of the same name, the 1994 telling of this classic follows the March sisters, who confront finan-



Films are a popular component that help to make the holiday season so special.

cial difficulties, romance and family tragedies in mid-nineteenth century Massachusetts. While it's not a traditional Christmas movie, the importance of spending time with family around Christmastime is a core theme in this coming-of-age tale.

### 'Klaus'

Perhaps not as well-known as other animated holiday flicks, 'Klaus,' released in 2019, has a personality all its own. Postman Jesper, who is not making the grade at the postal academy, is sent to work in a frozen

town in the North, where he discovers a reclusive toy maker named Klaus. The unlikely duo ultimately team up to make and deliver toys and bring smiles to children's faces.

### 'Meet Me In St. Louis'

Starring the irreplaceable Judy Garland, this movie musical focuses on four sisters who are awaiting the 1904 World's Fair in their hometown, but learn that their father has accepted a new job and the family must move to New York beforehand. A Christmas miracle occurs and all

is right in the end. Garland sings a memorable version of 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas' in the film, solidifying this as a holiday classic.

### 'The Santa Clause'

This Disney film came out in 1994 and remains a family favorite. When divorced dad Scott (Tim Allen) accidentally kills a man in a Santa suit, he magically becomes the next Santa. He must learn to cope with the ways the transformation to the man in red interrupts his normal life, eventually giving over to the magic of Christmas.

### 'Emmet Otter's Jug-Band Christmas'

Though this 1977 Jim Henson production is a television special and not a full-length feature film, Generation X likely remembers the heartfelt tale of a poor otter family who sacrifice prized possessions to have what's needed to enter a talent contest. The goal is to win the prize money to buy special Christmas presents. Audiences get to enjoy narration by Kermit the Frog.

Films are a popular component that help to make the holiday season so special.

# How to keep guests entertained this holiday season

Gatherings with loved ones are a big part of what makes the holiday season such a special time of year.

As families grow and spread out across the map, they may not get too many chances to spend quality time with one another. But the holiday season is a time each year when families make a concerted effort to get together. As families get together under the same roof during the holiday season, individuals tasked with hosting gatherings tend to have a lot on their plates. Memories tend to be made around the holiday dinner table, but the season also presents ample opportunities to create nights to remember outside the house as well. Hosts can keep the following ideas in mind as they look for ways to entertain guests this holiday season.

Take a turn as a tour guide. Locals may not make the rounds of nearby tourist destinations too fre-



Hosts can lead a tour of their towns to entertain overnight guests during the holiday season.

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quently, but the holiday season is a great opportunity for hosts to show guests what makes their towns so unique. Serve as a tour guide for guests on a sightseeing day with visits to local monuments or museums. Wrap the day up at a holiday bazaar where local small business owners have set up shop. This affords guests a chance to tour a new community or a hometown they haven't visited in awhile, and also makes for a great chance for all to squeeze in a little last-minute holiday shopping.

Plan an ugly sweater bar crawl. If hosts and their guests are all of age, an ugly sweater bar crawl can make for a fun night out on the town. Encourage guests to wear an ugly holiday sweater and map out a route and schedule of visits to local bars and restaurants. Hosts must prioritize safety on these types of excursions, so arrange for a bus to take guests from one spot to the next if establishments are far away from one another. If Main Street has a local bar district, arrange for transportation downtown at the start of the crawl and home when the

night ends.

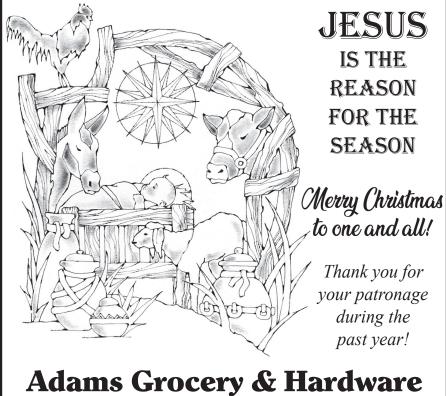
Take in some local entertainment. Whether it's a holiday lighting display show or a local theater performance of a classic holiday tale like Charles Dickens's 'A Christmas Carol,' a night of local live entertainment is a great way for hosts and their guests to get out of the house. Hosts can even book a reservation for a pre-show meal at a local restaurant so they can be free of cooking and give guests

their undivided attention.

Host a holiday movie night. Weary travelers who want to stay in may appreciate a holiday movie double feature. Hosts can let guests pick a pair of holiday films and then host a double feature, complete with traditional movie fare like popcorn and candy. Hosts can even offer adult guests a glass of homemade eggnog during the films to up the holiday ante even further.

Holiday hosts can embrace various ways to entertain guests during a time of year when there's no shortage of fun ways to spend a night.





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Christmas fanfare does not cease when the calendar turns from December 25 to 26. The Epiphany on January 6 also is an important day of celebration.

# Celebrating the Epiphany

ple may believe this important time begins at the start of December, for millions of the Christians, the Twelve Days of Christmas begin with the birth of Baby Jesus on December 25 and continue through the Epiphany on January 6.

The Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day, is a Christian feast day that "celebrates the revelation of God in His Son as human in Jesus Christ," says The National Shrine of Saint Jude. The Epiphany is celebrated on January 6 each year and gets its name from the Greek word meaning "to reveal, or manifestation," a nod to the idea that this was the day Jesus was revealed to the world.

On the Epiphany, three Magi visited the Christ child to pay homage. These wise men were the first to greet Jesus after his parents. The Magi followed a star to Bethlehem, having faith that the Child's location would be accurate. The unlikely royal visitors bestowed gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These herbs are typically used in burial ceremonies, and their offering may have potentially foreshadowed Jesus' destiny.

According to Father Hezekias Carnazzo, a Melkite Catholic priest

The holiday season is full of faith and founding executive director and celebration. Even though peo- of the Virginia-based Institute of Catholic Culture, the Feast of the Epiphany is one of the earliest feasts and actually predates the celebration of Christmas.

Although the Epiphany is an important date for Christians and many celebrate it, celebrants in Spain and Latin America consider it as important as Christmas Day. Within these nations Día de los Reyes (Three Kings Day) is a time for serving Rosca de Reyes, an ovalshaped treat that has a small doll inside to represent Baby Jesus. The figurine symbolizes the hiding of the infant Jesus from King Herod's troops. Children also receive the majority of their gifts on Three Kings Day. It is customary for kids to place their old shoes with a wish list on them for the Three Kings. On the morning of January 6, the shoes are filled with toys and gifts.

The Epiphany is celebrated in various ways around the world. In the Czech Republic, people swim in the freezing cold Vltava River and men dress up as the Magi before riding camels through Prague's city center. Three Kings Bread, similar to the Rosca de Reyes and called Dreikönigskuchen, is prepared and consumed in Germany and Switzerland.

# Take the time to honor veterans this holiday season

when family and friends gather America Day, which takes place to reconnect and celebrate. For on a moving day each December many families there are people at thousands of locations, volmissing from these celebra- unteers place wreaths on headtions, whether they sacrificed stones and read out the name their lives defending the coun- of the service members. try or died honorably years after serving in the military.

through decorations and other touches, they also can consider adding a bit of the holidays to rest. This is the main prem-America organization.

primary

The holiday season is a time ies. On National Wreaths Across

The organization was founded by Morrill Worcester and his As individuals plan to add wife, Karen, as a way to teach spirit to homes and businesses all generations about the value of their freedoms and the importance of honoring those who sacrificed so much to prothe places where their beloved tect those freedoms. Worcester, service members lie in eternal owner of the Worcester Wreath Company in Maine, rememise behind the Wreaths Across bered a trip to Washington D.C. as a child that included a visit activity of to Arlington National Ceme-Wreaths Across America is to tery. In 1992, when Worcesdistribute wreaths to be placed ter's business had a surplus of on graves in military cemeter- wreaths nearing the end of the

# Games add another layer of levity to holiday celebrations



These are just a few festive ways to have fun with friends or family members during holiday gatherings.

The holidays bring together friends, neighbors and family members to celebrate some of the most festive days of the year. Although celebrants often incorporate traditions they hold dear this time of year, downtime provides an opportunity to embrace new games and entertainment ideas as well.

The following are some fun games to play this holiday season that can help to break the ice and keep everyone laughing.

### Reindeer Games

Everyone knows that Rudolph wanted to have fun and participate in "reindeer games," but he was left on the sidelines. Inspired by the tune, everyone can participate in reindeer games at your home. These types of games can include tests of endurance and dexterity, like fruitcake-eating contests, running races or doing hurdle competitions in the yard.

### **Candy Cane Home Runs**

Participants can see how well they can launch a marshmallow into the outfield by hitting it with a candy cane taking the place of the baseball bat. Each participant gets three swings. The person with the most home runs wins.

### Guess the Gift

In this game, party hosts wrap up five oddly shaped gifts specifically for the game (the gifts may be oddly shaped or just the wrapping as a decoy). Players take turns trying to guess what is inside and mark

holiday season, he remembered an indelible image of wreaths on graves at Arlington and devised a way to put those wreaths to use honoring the country's vet-

Arlington National Cemetery was the first place to re- an important way to set aside movement has grown to include to show appreciation for vetercemeteries across the nation. ans who are no longer with us. In 2022, Wreaths Across Amer-2.7 million sponsored veterans' volunteer nation's service members at munities.

down their answers on sheets. One by one the gifts are revealed. If anyone guesses the gift, it is given as a prize. If more than one person guesses a gift, come up with a fun way to break the tie, such as rock, paper, scissors or thumb wrestling.

### Christmas Karaoke

Singing traditional carols and popular holiday tunes is not uncommon come December. In this competitive version of karaoke, singers have to keep on singing, even when the lyrics get turned off or covered to test their true knowledge of these

### **Present Stackers**

This requires keeping a collection of oddly shaped gifts at the ready. Game participants try to stack the presents as tall as they can without them toppling over.

### Fishing for Fun

Hang strings on the straight ends of candy canes to fashion fishing poles, with the curved ends serving as the "hooks." Participants try to "fish" smaller candy canes out of a bowl and see how many they can

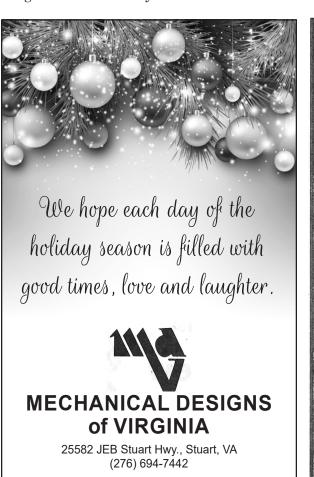
### The "No L" Game

The game referee has a list of a few categories (i.e., food, sports, colors, cars, etc.) and players are split into a few teams. When the category is called, the teams have to jot down as many words as they can pertaining to the category that do not have a letter "L" in them before a timer runs out.

3,702 participating locations.

Although veterans are remembered each Memorial Day and Veterans Day, they can be honored 365 days a year for their service and sacrifices. Wreaths Across America offers ceive wreaths. Since then, the time during the holiday season

Those looking to get involved ica and its national network of can visit www.wreathsacrossavolunteers placed more than merica.org to learn more about opportunities wreaths on headstones of our bringing WAA into their com-







business this year.

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# Simplify holiday cooking with these easy suggestions

Food is an important component of the holiday season for millions of people across the globe. Many a holiday host has wrestled with what to serve for their gathering and how to prepare meals while still finding time to spend with loved ones. Sometimes simplicity is the way to go when hosting for the holidays. Just because certain dishes are less labor-intensive to prepare does not mean they lack flavor. Hosts can consider these tips to simplify holiday cooking this year.

Utilize shop-from-home services. Supermarkets can be particularly busy this time of year. By shopping from the comfort of home, holiday hosts can sort through their lists and let someone else navigate crowded store aisles. The small fee involved for this service can be well worth the time saved.

Scale back the sides. Some hosts feel an impressive dinner spread is one with plenty of options. Several side dishes require a lot of time and money, and such foods may take away from the star of the table. Guests might fill up on rolls, potatoes and salads, leaving little room for the main course. Scaling back on sides creates more time for hosts to mingle with family and ensures everyone gets their fill of the main course.

· Delegate some of the work. Asking guests to bring a little something to the meal doesn't immediately turn it into a potluck. However, it can reduce some of the work the host has to do. Figure out who is bound to be an early arrival, and ask that person to bring an appetizer. Individuals who like to be fashionably late can bring side dishes or desserts. Delegating beverage detail also can be a time-saver.

· Familiar is often fabulous. A major holiday is seldom the right time to experiment with a new, labor-intensive dish. Rather than risk an epic fail, hosts should stick to meals they have prepared before. Also, familiar flavors may appeal to a greater number of guests.

· Include some prepared foods. While it is perfectly alright to cater the entire dinner, that can prove costly. If budget doesn't allow for a fully catered meal, supplement with some prepared dishes to help save time, particularly those recipes that can be complicat-

· Make it a buffet. Sit-down dinners require careful timing to ensure all foods are set out hot and ready-to-eat. A buffet-style meal involves preparing trays of food in advance, and then setting them to heat in chafing dishes until meal time. This involves far less strategizing with meal preparation and frees up time for hosts to spend with guests.



Holiday meals require a lot of effort, but some handy suggestions can ensure hosts have ample time to spend with loved

# The celebration of Las Posadas

The story of the birth of Jesus Christ is one that has been told for more than 2,000 years and serves as one of the foundations of Christianity. The Nativity is an important component of Christmas celebrations, and Nativity scenes frequently included in town-wide and personal celebrations. Perhaps nowhere is the Nativity story told with more faith-based gusto than through the annual celebration of Las Posadas, which originated in Mexico and Guatemala.

Las Posadas is a vibrant and meaningful tradition that unites communities and celebrates the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and how they tried to find safe refuge before the birth of their child. Joseph and Mary were unable to find lodging in Bethlehem, and had to shelter in a stable, where Jesus was born.

According to Britannica, the



Las Posadas is a communal celebration that kicks off the Christmas season with a procession reminiscent of the trip Joseph and Mary took just before Baby Jesus was born.

elsewhere with high numbers of volves a procession of carolers

religious festival is celebrated Mexican and Guatemalan immiprimarily in Mexico between De- grants. "Posada" is the Spanish cember 16 and 24, but also in en- word for "inn" or "lodging." The claves in the United States and celebration of Las Posadas in-

led by a small child dressed as an angel. The tradition can be traced back to the sixteenth century, when Spanish missionaries sought to teach indigenous people

about the Christian faith. Over nine nights (representing he nine months of pregnancy) participants reenact Mary and Joseph's search for lodging, going from house to house in the community. The procession also includes singing, carrying candles and often dressing as the holy couple. Traditionally, the procession is refused lodging at each stop, though the hosts of homes visited will often provide refreshments. Scripture is read during these visits, and Mass is held each day after the procession. Additional components associated with Las Posadas include:

- ·Piñatas
- · Traditional foods
- · Nativity scenes
- · Community involvement



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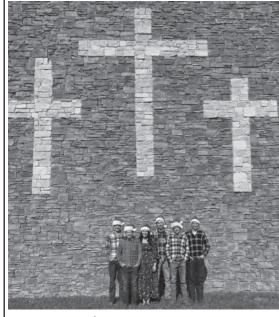
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Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:14

# Tips to make holiday dinners more affordable



Holiday hosts can embrace various strategies to save money on family meals this season.

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"Eat, drink and be a holiday dinner is a merry" is a familiar great way to welcome refrain come the hol- family and friends iday season. Hosting and encourage them to embrace the festive nature of the season. However, the high cost of foods and other essentials may have certain holiday hosts rethinking their menus and their guest lists this year.

A 2024 Pew Research Poll showed Americans worried about the state of the economy cite the price of food and the cost of housing as their foremost concerns. More than 90 percent of Americans say they are "very" or "somewhat" concerned about the cost of food and consumer goods.

Average annual foodat-home prices were 5 percent higher in 2023 than in 2022, according to the USDA Economic Research Service. In-

the U.S. Bureau of La-main dish. bor Statistics indicates than a luxury like beef tice if you use generic inflation continues to tenderloin or prime rib or store brand ingrecool off from all-time roast, consider a less dients, which can be highs, consumers are expensive dish, such considerably cheaper still anxious about how as a pork tenderloin, than their brand-name food prices are affect- roasted ing their bottom lines even seafood. and their holiday entertaining plans. Ac- dishes. Incorporate an cording to Farmdoc inexpensive item like Daily, which offers ag-rice, beans or an exriculture-based analysis, 68 percent of into the meal so that U.S. consumers expect- plates can be filled ed rising food prices to with the less expensive impact their holiday foods and fewer highmeals in 2023. Similar cost items. concerns may prevail in 2024.

Stretching entertaining mind, hosts can conholiday season.

flation has been a key meal calls for pulling and freeze them until to a minimum; othertopic of discussion for out all of the stops, and they're needed. much of the last three that may mean spend-

chicken

· Add extra side data tra vegetable side dish

· Shop the sales. holiday supermarket circular. can keep alcohol costs dollars While you may have in check. comes down to being had one holiday dinner savvy. With that in idea in mind, once you Instead of a charsider these meal mod- putting on sale you can ification strategies this stock up on those items and meats, opt for dips · Replace a high-cost around them. If you or a low-cost cheese protein with a more find a good deal several ball made with cream affordable alternative. weeks away from the cheese and herbs with Sometimes a holiday holidays, buy the items crackers. Keep snacks

years. While data from ing more on a special store brands. Chanc- room for dinner.

Rather es are no one will noor counterparts. are even manufactured in the same facilities that produce the name brand stuff.

· Make an affordable drink. Alcohol costs can add up when you try to cater to everyone's tastes and preferences. Make one or two bulk drinks, like a holiday punch or sig-Plan meals around a nature cocktail, so you

· Stretch the snacks. see what the stores are cuterie board filled with expensive cheeses and build the dinner and raw vegetables wise, guests may fill · Buy generic or up and then not have







From your friends at Patrick County Tourism and the Tourism Advisory Council.







December is the time for remembering the past & reaching toward the future. Ralph Waldo Emerson

As we remember the great events & programming we hosted in 2024, we are excited to continue to grow & expand those offerings in 2025.

FROM THE STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS OF THE PATRICK COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, WE WISH EVERYONE A HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND MAY OUR COMMUNITY CONTINUE TO GROW IN THE COMING YEAR!

