

Weiland reflects on more than two decades of service

By Taylor Boyd

Ray Weiland, a dedicated public servant, marked the end of his 23-year tenure with the Town of Stuart on December 18, receiving accolades during his final town council meeting. Weiland, who served as mayor for 12 of those years, chose not to seek reelection following his promotion to Engineering Field Director for the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Drinking Water.

In his new role, Weiland oversees the Danville Field Office, which regulates nearly 400 waterworks across 17 counties and four cities, including Patrick County. He explained his decision to step down, in part citing potential conflicts of interest.

“Some of this grant money comes from the Office of Drinking Water, and I just didn’t want...anyone thinking there’s any kind of conflict of interest there,” Weiland said.

A Reluctant Start in Public Service

Weiland’s journey in local government began in 2001 when his coworker, Rick Prutting, urged him to fill a vacant council seat.

“After much convincing...it took me a while to say okay, but I finally, reluctantly said, ‘alright.’ I figured that’s all I would do. Well, needless to say, now it’s 23 years later,” Weiland recalled.

What began as a temporary commitment soon became a passion. “It was interesting in what was going



Ray Weiland reflected on 23 years of service to Stuart, including 12 years as mayor.

on behind the scenes that I had no idea about,” he said, admitting that he had never attended a council meeting prior to taking the role.

Weiland ran for reelection multiple times, often unopposed, and found himself at the forefront of transformative projects.

Early Achievements

When Weiland joined the council, Stuart’s water treatment plant was undergoing upgrades and the first Downtown Revitalization project had recently concluded. As he became more familiar with council operations, Weiland was part of initiatives that reshaped the town.

(See Weiland p. 3)

Lifelong Servant, Leader, and Advocate Remembered for Dedication to Community

By Taylor Boyd

D. Victor Williams Jr., a prominent figure in the Patrick County and Martinsville communities, passed away on Sunday, December 29, 2024, at SOVAH Health in Martinsville. He was 70 years old.

Williams was known for his unwavering commitment to service, spanning decades in healthcare, local government, and community volunteerism. His legacy includes significant contributions to the Jeb Stuart Volunteer Rescue Squad, local healthcare facilities, and the Town of Stuart, where he served as mayor from 1986 to 1988.

A 30-year lifetime member of the Jeb Stuart Volunteer Rescue Squad, Williams was certified in Advanced Life Support/EMT-Shock Trauma and Cardiac Tech. Derek Wagner, president of the rescue squad, highlighted Williams’ dedication and leadership.

“I think what I will remember most about Victor is he was a caring person, easy to talk to. He sure helped Jeb out through some tough times with his business knowledge and wisdom,” Wagner said.

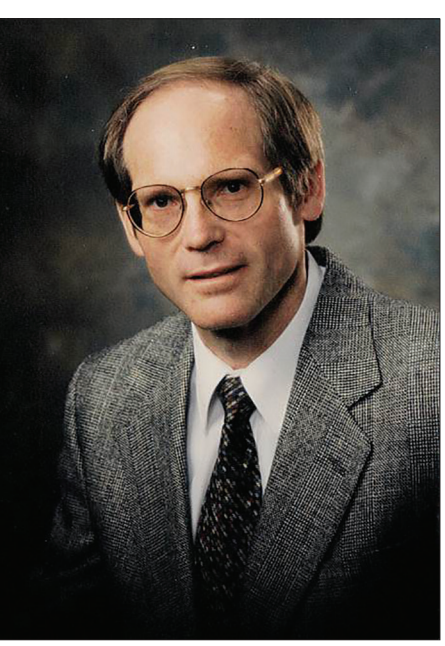
Though his call activity decreased in recent years due to health challenges, Williams continued to support the squad as vice president and, in 2024, began serving as president. Wagner emphasized Williams’ passion for doing things right and his desire to see others succeed.

“If he was going to do something, he wanted to do it right. He’s definitely going to be missed, and he was a friend to most of us down there,” Wagner said.

Fellow squad member Galen Gilbert praised Williams’ thoughtful approach and problem-solving abilities.

“He knew his stuff, he was a good provider, and very reasonable about everything. You could bounce all the questions off of him, and he would go through all of them and figure it out,” Gilbert said.

Williams was instrumental in advancing healthcare in the region. As president and CEO of The Land-



Victor Williams’ life was defined by his tireless service, compassion, and leadership. Whether through his contributions to healthcare, local government, or the rescue squad, he leaves behind a legacy of dedication and care that will be fondly remembered by all who knew him.

mark Group until his retirement in 2019, he played a key role in constructing and operating facilities like the Blue Ridge Nursing Center, Blue Ridge Therapy Connection, and Highland Ridge Health and Rehab Center.

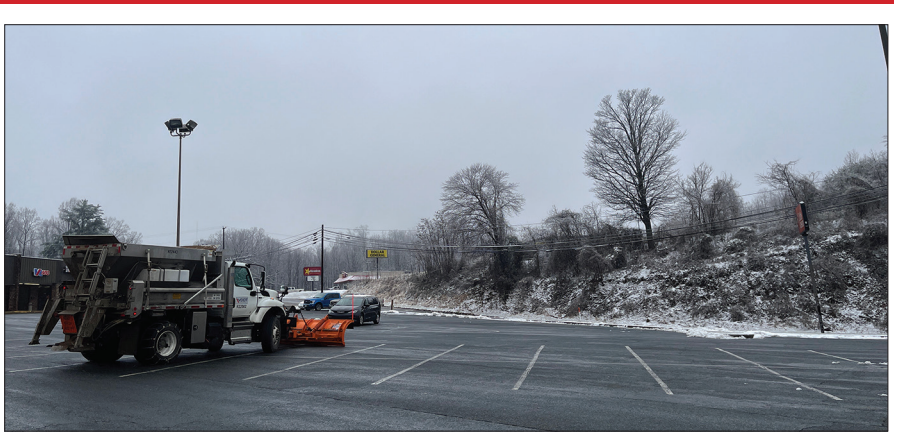
He held licenses as a Nursing Home Administrator, Assisted Living Administrator, and Preceptor, and he served on numerous boards and committees with the Virginia Health Care Association.

A devoted supporter of education, Williams served on the Patrick & Henry College Board of Directors and volunteered as an athletic trainer for Patrick County High School (PCHS) sports programs. He regularly attended sports medicine conferences at the University of Virginia to enhance his knowledge.

Lester Harrell, a fellow Jeb Stuart member, recalled Williams’ unwavering support for others.

“If he thought that you had value or considered you a friend, Victor would give you the shirt off of his back,” Harrell said.

(See Lifelong Servant p.3)



A snowplow took a break in a parking lot in downtown Stuart after clearing roads as a winter storm blanketed the area Sunday and Monday.

Winter Storm Brings Snow, Ice, and Cleanup Crews Across the County

By Debbie Hall

As a snow and ice storm swept through the region Sunday and Monday, plows became familiar sights on roads across the county. Snow accumulations varied widely, with some areas seeing several inches, while others experienced lighter coverage.

The situation shifted Monday as freezing rain moved in, creating icy conditions before temperatures climbed slightly, melting much of the snow in some areas.

State officials urged residents to use caution on untreated roads and sidewalks, as patches of ice lingered despite efforts to clear major thoroughfares. Crews remained active through Monday evening, working to address icy spots, ensure safe travel and the aftermath of expected gusty winds.

Meteorologists predict temperatures will remain near freezing for the next few days, with the potential for additional winter weather later in the week.

(See Winter Storm p.2)

Board resets organizational meeting

A winter storm that dropped several inches of snow and ice throughout the county Sunday through Monday prompted the Patrick County Supervisors to reschedule their organizational meeting. The board is now slated to elect new officers on January 13 at 6 p.m. in the third-floor meeting room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

The board will elect a new chairman and vice-chairman, and consider adopting its Rules of Procedure and a proposed meeting schedule for the upcoming year.

In other business, the board will appoint members to various committees. The county attorney is scheduled to discuss items with board members, and the board will consider meeting in closed session.

The Ridge Gun Range Fosters Safety and Confidence, Particularly for Women

By Taylor Boyd

Jamie Kerley, owner of The Ridge Gun Range, is on a mission to empower women with the skills and confidence to handle firearms for self-defense.

Kerley’s focus stems from a belief that women often don’t realize they can be targets.

“I’ve actually sat in the Walmart parking lot in my car for about 15-20 minutes and watched women just hop out of their cars on the phone, not paying attention to their surroundings. They don’t realize that at any moment they could be a target,” she said.

Kerley emphasized that in today’s world, everyone faces some level of risk. However, she believes many women avoid carrying firearms because they lack familiarity and comfort with them.

“They’ve never had anybody show them. I hate to say it like this, but other than their uncles or their dads,” Kerley said most women haven’t interacted with firearms.

Kerley herself has no law enforcement or military background. Instead, she describes herself as “just a chick who took a concealed carry course” and felt

The Ridge Gun Range

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For more details, visit Facebook.com/TheRidgeGunRange.

compelled to share her knowledge.

Now certified through the Department of Justice and the National Rifle Association (NRA), Kerley teaches North Carolina and Virginia concealed carry classes, with a special emphasis on welcoming women.

“We do a lot of that stuff here, especially with women. I’ve actually taught a young lady who has cerebral palsy—she has one hand, one eye, and a bad leg. I worked with her for about six months,” she said.

Kerley regularly offers women-only classes, believing they foster a more comfortable environment.

“I’ve had a lot of people come, and that’s what they say,” she said. “I had a lady and a guy who were staying at Meadows of Dan. They stopped by here, and they’re from Edenton, North Carolina. She said, ‘I’ve been looking for like three years for a firearm, and I went to every gun shop.’ She told me, ‘You’ve made me feel so comfortable.’”

Kerley noted that the woman plans to return for her concealed carry class.

As a woman in a male-dominated field, Kerley understands the challenges.

“At every gun range I’ve been to, I didn’t feel comfortable. I didn’t feel welcome. That’s what I wanted

(See The Ridge p.2)

The Ridge

(cont. from page 1)

to change here,” she said.

Kerley also teaches women techniques tailored to their unique needs, such as how to draw a firearm from the various places they might carry it.

“For men, it’s easy. They’re either carrying” in one of two common ways, she said. “Women, we carry in all different places. So that’s one thing I do that a lot of other places don’t do.”

Since taking over the business in early 2024, Kerley has sought to create a welcoming, family-oriented atmosphere at the range, which was previously known as Rabbit Ridge Gun Range.

Instead of celebrating an annual anniversary in January, Kerley decided to hold a family reunion each October.

“The family is anybody who’s ever been here and anybody who’s welcome to be here because

we’re open to the public,” she said.

The most recent reunion featured tables filled with food brought by regulars and a lively atmosphere on the shooting range.

“My whole goal here when I opened was to be like Cheers, but without the alcohol,” she said. “I didn’t want it to feel like just a gun range.”

Kerley also prioritizes gun safety education for children.

“There’s a lot of people who want their children to learn the correct way. You can’t teach them the correct way all the time in the backyard. Bring them here, and they learn about gun safety,” she said.

Her six-year-old daughter shoots a .22 rifle from a tripod, while her nine-year-old son practices with a pistol.

Kerley hopes to dispel misconceptions about

firearms.

“My whole goal is to get everybody to know that guns aren’t the problem; it’s the people behind them. If they’re not safe and don’t know the correct way, that’s a lot of the problem,” she said.

The Ridge Gun Range charges by the day and allows visitors to bring their own firearms and ammunition, which is also available for purchase onsite.

“The only thing I don’t allow in here are armor-piercing or tracer rounds, but everything else I allow,” Kerley said.

The facility includes a regular gun range, a long-distance rifle range, and a clay range.

For more information, contact Kerley at (276) 251-2013 or theridgerange@yahoo.com. Details are also available at Facebook.com/TheRidge-GunRange.



Jamie Kerley operates The Ridge Gun Range in Ararat, Virginia.



The Ridge Gun Range offers a variety of facilities, including a rifle range and a clay range.



Winter Storm

(cont. from page 1)



Snowfall amounts varied across the area, and slightly raised temperatures Monday began melting much of the snow, as seen in the photos from the Stuart area.

New administration could help farmers by addressing meat industry monopolies

Trimmel Gomes
Virginia News Connection

As inflation and falling crop prices continue to affect Virginia farmers, their advocates said the incoming Trump administration could take steps to reform the nation’s industrial agriculture system.

Ideas include ending foreign farmland ownership, blocking a U.S. Department of Agriculture rule mandating farmers use electronic ID tags on livestock and ending lobbying by global food corporations. The latest federal

data show net farm income dropped by more than 4% this year, after declining by nearly 20% in 2023.

Joe Maxwell, chief strategy officer for Farm Action, said voters overwhelmingly support reforms to break up major corporations’ hold on the nation’s food system.

“Eighty-eight percent of rural voters in battleground states during this last election cycle say they would be more favorable toward a candidate who supports cracking down on meat-processing monopolies and ensuring local busi-



nesses can compete,” Maxwell reported.

Maxwell predicted food producers will likely be hit harder by President Donald Trump’s tariff plan. This month, Congress passed a one-year extension of the 2018 Farm Bill, with \$10 billion in economic aid to farmers and temporary funding for federal farm programs.

Chris Newman, cofounder of Blackbird Farms near Colonial Beach, views monopolies in meat processing as a critical issue. As a poultry integrator, he supports bringing back the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program, which provided millions in grants to independent businesses before ending

last year.

“That pumped a lot of money, I believe tens of millions of dollars, into the expansion and the creation of new, smaller and more regionally oriented meat processors,” Newman recounted.

“There’d be more competition in these areas and so, more businesses like mine would be able to spin up and offer some competition to the big integrators like JBS, Smithfield, etc.”

Maxwell added a new Farm Bill would offer a chance to make major changes to benefit small farmers and consumers, and boost local supply chains.

“We believe with the current environment, it is reasonable to have the perfect opportunity to get both parties pushing for antitrust reform and action within the next two years,” Maxwell projected.

According to a Farm Action report, between 2017 and 2022, more than 140,000 farmers nationwide went out of business.

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Weiland

(cont. from page 1)

The Uptown Revitalization project was particularly notable, transforming Main Street by moving powerlines underground, improving sidewalks, and installing streetlamps and planters.

“It really turned out fantastic on Main Street,” Weiland said.

The town also acquired property to build the Stuart Farmers’ Market and Amphitheater, a project that remains a focal point of community activity.

Taking the Helm as Mayor

Weiland became mayor in 2012 after then-Mayor Jimmy McHone stepped down.

“I don’t think anybody else was interested in running for mayor at the time,” he said. Encouraged by colleagues, Weiland decided to take on the leadership role, setting ambitious goals.

One of his primary objectives was addressing the town’s aging infrastructure, particularly the wastewater treatment plant. Weiland also championed the construction of a new fire department building, a project initially slated for Commerce Street but ultimately realized through the renovation of the old Food Lion building on Wood Brothers Drive.

“Its location was absolutely perfect,” he said, adding that the renovated building saved the

town over \$1 million.

Challenges and Triumphs

The wastewater treatment plant upgrade was a longer journey, plagued by permitting delays and the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these hurdles, the project was completed successfully.

“The discharge water...is as clean or cleaner than the water when we took it out of the Mayo River,” Weiland said proudly.

Another highlight of Weiland’s tenure was the purchase and revival of the Star Theatre. Operated by One Family Productions, the theater now serves as a cultural hub for music, movies, and plays.

“We felt the theater would be a great addition for entertainment in the town,” he said.

Financial Growth

Under Weiland’s leadership, the town’s financial standing improved dramatically. Stuart’s bank balance grew from \$400,000 to approximately \$5 million, including \$1.7 million earmarked for the next Downtown Revitalization project.

Planned upgrades include enhancements to the Stuart Farmers’ Market, the construction of a megadeck connecting downtown buildings, and the installation of generators at the water and wastewater plants to ensure uninterrupted

operations during power outages.

A Legacy of Service

As he steps away from public office, Weiland expressed confidence in the town’s future.

“We have a great town council and an excellent Town Manager in Bryce Simmons...I know that they’re going to continue the good work that we’ve been doing all along,” he said.

Weiland also praised former Town Manager Terry Tilley, who served for 42 years, and the town’s employees for their dedication.

“It’s just been a really good run, and I’m really proud of everything that we accomplished over the years,” he said.

Looking Ahead

While his focus now shifts to his role with the VDH, Weiland remains open to serving the town in other capacities.

“If they ask me to be on a committee or something...I would be more than happy to do that and help them out in any way that I can,” he said.

A Grateful Goodbye

Weiland extended his gratitude to Stuart’s residents for their support over the years.

“They allowed me to serve the town for so long...it’s been an honor,” he said.

Lifelong Servant

(cont. from page 1)

Harrell also fondly remembered Williams’ stories about growing up with his family and their adventures with various animals, including a chimpanzee.

“They had a chimpanzee for years. He used to talk about their interactions with it and how it would wrestle them down. It was just unbelievable, but I believe every (story) was true,” Harrell said.

In addition to serving as Stuart’s mayor, Williams received numerous accolades for his service, including the 2009 Patrick County High

School Community Service Award and the 2013 DAR Community Service Award.

Former Stuart Town Manager Terry Tilley described Williams as a thoughtful and intelligent leader.

“I really enjoyed working with him. I worked with him a couple of years, three years, and been knowing the family for about 40-something years. All of them were good young men, and all friends,” Tilley said.

Dean Goad, a former Stuart council member, said Williams did a very good job in the role.

“They didn’t have as much to work with budget wise when Victor was there. But he served well, and he was a nice fella. He did a good job while he was on there,” Goad said.

Born on November 3, 1954, at Martinsville Hospital, Williams was a graduate of Patrick County High School and Carson-Newman College, where he played football as a defensive lineman. He was a member of Stuart Presbyterian Church and a lifelong learner who enjoyed reading on diverse topics.

(Full Obituary on page 8)

Stuart Rotary Club Productions Receives Virginia Tourism Corporation Grant for Tourism Marketing

The Stuart Rotary Club (SRC) Productions received a \$5,000 reimbursable grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)’s Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program (SEF) for the Stuart Beach Music Festival.

SRC Productions will supply a minimum of \$5,000 in matching funds to be reimbursed by the grant to host the event at Wayside Park on June 12 – 14. The 43rd Stuart Beach Music Festival will feature seven bands, food, beverages and merchandise vendors. The event promotes Patrick County tourism and attracts music lovers from several states.

Virginia Tourism Corporation will award more than \$812,139 in matching grant funds to 81 special events and festivals as part of this program, ultimately impacting 324 combined partners. The VTC Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program is designed to leverage local marketing and event production dollars with matching state funds to increase overnight visitation, improve the visitor experience, and increase traveler spending at Virginia special events and festivals. The program also extends the Virginia is for Lovers brand to drive special event and festival visitation. Each Go Virginia region is limited to 20% of available funds creating a matrix of sponsored special events and festivals statewide.

Using the hub and spoke tourism model to create multi-day itineraries, four Virginia entities partner financially to apply for funding. Partners may consist of Virginia cities, towns, counties, destination marketing organizations, restaurants, museums, attractions, and other

tourism-related businesses. With the special event or festival as the main lure, the program is designed to encourage visitors to extend their stay to experience Virginia Main Streets, boutique shopping, unique restaurants, and historic sites creating significant economic impact driven by the special event or festival.

This funding cycle, local partners will commit more than \$4.8 million in private-public sector funds to match the VTC funding, providing more than \$5.62 million in new marketing and event production activity focused on increasing overnight visitation to Virginia in 2025.

“The Stuart Rotary Club is a strong community partner, and the Beach Music Festival is one of the main attractions that helps support our county tourism efforts. I am thankful for their work and glad to see them receive this support from the Virginia Tourism Corporation, our partner at the state level,” said James Houchins, Director of Economic Development & Tourism.

“Special events and festivals are at the heart of what makes Virginia such a unique and vibrant destination,” said Rita McClenny, President and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation. “We are excited to support these events through the Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program, helping to create unforgettable experiences while increasing overnight visitation and traveler spending in Virginia.”

VTC will have additional grant and sponsorship rounds opening throughout 2025. Organizations and businesses that are interested in applying may visit vatc.org/grants for more information.

A full list of funding recipients for all grant programs can be found [here](#).

Out-of-state visitors and Virginians alike are encouraged to visit www.virginia.org to start travel planning for these special events and festivals in the New Year.

SRC Productions is a non-profit within the Rotary Club of Stuart that hosts the Beach Music Festival. Club members work year-round planning and promoting the event as well as participating in service projects in Patrick County. Proceeds from the Beach Music Festival, from the Annual Steak Dinner and from the annual Agricultural Fair support donations to our local Fire and Rescue squads, the Stuart Rotary Student Loan and Scholarship Foundation, BSA Troop 65, Caring Hearts Free Clinic, the PC Food Bank, Christmas Cheer, local pet rescue efforts, a weekend back-pack food program for the Blue Ridge Elementary School, the PC Cougars baseball team, and other service projects. The Stuart Rotary Club is proud to support Patrick County!

Virginia is for Lovers is one of the most iconic and recognizable travel brands in the world. Using that powerful brand equity, Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) is charged with promoting the Commonwealth as a premier travel destination by showcasing all there is to love in a Virginia vacation. The dollars spent by travelers fuel the economy, provide jobs for Virginians, and improve communities across the state. Simply put, tourism helps make Virginia a great place to live, work, and vacation. Learn more at virginia.org.

Sibling of local resident helps those in need

Sylvia Poll, a resident of Germantown, TN met the head of the nonprofit Urban Bicycle Food Ministry when she decided to donate two Cannondale bikes and related items to someone who could benefit from their use. The bikes are used to deliver food and necessities to the homeless in downtown Memphis.

As a result, Poll became involved in making knit hats for the homeless in downtown Memphis, TN; her donation to this group was 42 hats. She also made hats to accompany the four coats donated to a nonprofit through Germantown Athletic Club’s annual coat drive, 10 knit hats for dolls donated to a nonprofit through Germantown Athletic Club and Toys for Tots annual toy drive at Christmas. She said she was amazed at how people responded to the warm, knit hats, and has donated more than 75 hats total this fall to deserving individuals.

Poll is on several commissions

appointed by the Mayor of Germantown, TN and active in the tennis and pickleball leagues in the Memphis, TN area and teaches tennis to youth under age 10.

Currently, Poll is active in several programs to promote canine cancer awareness and “WoofTrax” to track miles walked to earn funds for Germantown Animal Shelter. As of early December 2024, total miles walked since June 2024 is just over 300 miles. Her loyal companion is Mitzi, a 19 month old black/silver Miniature Schnauzer who charms the neighbors she meets on their daily walks.

Poll is the sister of Stuart, VA resident David Sheley and an avid volunteer for various nonprofits in the Germantown/Memphis Tennessee area. She has been a resident of Germantown, TN since September 1975, a graduate of University of Memphis, and Marketing Director at Kraft Foods, Upjohn Pharmaceuticals and WebMD before her retirement.

Clearing the myths: Simplifying SNAP benefits to fight senior hunger

Trimmel Gomes

Virginia News Connection

Hunger doesn’t retire, yet millions of older Americans struggling to afford food may not realize help is within reach.

Misconceptions and stigma often prevent eligible seniors from accessing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the nation’s largest anti-hunger initiative.

However, with simplified application processes and renewed outreach efforts, advocates are working to break down these barriers and connect seniors with the support they need.

Norm Gold - a consultant with Feeding America and an AARP community ambassador - highlighted these challenges and the importance of outreach.

“If it’s too much of a pain for them to do it, they don’t,” said Gold. “Most seniors don’t want to have to deal with it, honestly, I’m one of them, I’ll be 70, and that’s just the way older people are. To make it easy, that’s why they’ve got the simplified application. That’s what’s made it much easier for them.”

A free webinar tomorrow aims to clear up myths and misconceptions about SNAP benefits, and highlight how the program supports older adults struggling with food insecurity.

The event, titled “SNAP Food Benefit Myths, Rumors and Misconceptions,” begins at 1:30 p.m. and is open to everyone who registers at events.aarp.org.

Brian Jacks is associate state director for community outreach at AARP Virginia. He emphasized the benefits of clearing out misconceptions to help encourage more seniors to apply.

“Number one, SNAP is not just for families with children,” said Jacks. “Any adult of any age who meets the income requirements is eligible. Secondly, your participation in SNAP will not take the benefit from anyone else who needs it.”

To encourage participation, AARP Virginia has worked with food banks and community ambassadors to conduct outreach through health fairs and festivals, distributing materials highlighting SNAP benefits.

People can call 211 to connect with local resources for direct assistance with accessing SNAP benefits.

Patrick Pioneers

Memories of Edna Roena Reynolds Yeatts (Part Two)

By Beverly Belcher Woody
Last week, we started looking at the childhood memories of Edna Roena Reynolds Yeatts; the daughter of Ruth Eliza Barnard and Elam Owen Reynolds and the wife of John Henry Yeatts. We are so fortunate that Mrs. Yeatts took the time to record her experiences for all posterity because they provide a wonderful snapshot of life in 1890's Patrick County.

After Mrs. Yeatts lost her mother Ruth Eliza at the tender age of ten, she longed for the comfort of a mother's love. Two ladies in the community, Mrs. Harrell and Mrs. Webb, helped fill the void left from losing her mother. Looking at the 1900 census, Elam Owen Reynolds and his family lived near Malcolm Leonard Webb and his wife, Mary Jane Weeks Webb and David Kent Harrell and his wife, Martha Adeline Hopkins Harrell. I suspect these are the Mrs. Webb and Mrs. Harrell, to whom Mrs. Yeatts refers to so fondly.

Mrs. Yeatts, "Mrs. Harrell's home was always so tidy and neat. I admired her greatly for that. She was kind, and she would sit and smoke her clay pipe and talk with us. She would give us apples and chestnuts. We considered a visit there to be a treat indeed."

Mrs. Yeatts recalled her grandmother, "We also had a kind and sweet old grandmother who would come and clean up our home and patch our clothes when she was able. She always wanted to take us to church. One time she wanted to take us to Concord and our shoes were quite a problem. They were rough and unshined. She blacked them with the black from the dinner pot and we made the distance to and from, a distance of about four miles each way. I have always enjoyed going to church and worshipping my Heavenly Father. I wasn't in style, with my calico bonnet and homemade shoes, but I know that God was aware of my presence and to Him, clothing is all the same. We would hurry to get to Mrs. Webb's so that we could ride in their oxen-drawn wagon. I can still remember the oxen's names: Sam and Short and though it was hardly like a fine automobile, they took us there and got us back safely."

I was able to determine which grandmother came to visit and take Mrs. Yeatts to church because her maternal grandmother, Lucinda Eliza Scott Barnard passed away in July 1888, two years before Mrs. Yeatts' mother, Ruth Eliza Barnard Reynolds died. The grandmother that Mrs. Yeatts spoke so fondly of was her paternal grandmother, Roxanne Shelor Reynolds, the daughter of John Shelor and Nancy Howell. Roxanne Shelor was born in 1822, so she would have been around 75 years old at the time she was helping her grandchildren. Concord is referring to the Concord

Primitive Baptist Church that was organized around 1835 in Meadows of Dan.

Mrs. Yeatts reflects on her education, "Our schooling was cut short after our Mother died. We would get to go only for a few days now and then. Lots of times, I was bitter because I couldn't go when I enjoyed going so well. My books consisted of one McGuffey's speller and one McGuffey's third reader. I studied the boys' arithmetic books until I got to the multiplication tables. I had a few lessons in a borrowed Maury's geography book. I had a craving for knowledge and reading. I borrowed all the books I could find. I read Uncle Tom's Cabin several times and also Pilgrim's Progress. I borrowed them from a good old uncle of ours whom we loved dearly."

I am only taking a guess here, but suspect that the uncle she loved dearly was one of her mother's brothers, John Jehu Barnard, a civil engineer and farmer or James William Barnard, a Primitive Baptist preacher.

Mrs. Yeatts recalls a favorite aunt, "One bright spot in our lives was to get to go visit our Aunt Sally. That was to us like a visit to Yellowstone Park would be today. She was a kind and sweet old lady and always had lots of apples in the wintertime. Her house was surrounded by lilacs and roses in the spring and summer, making it a beautiful place to us. The distance to her house was a right long way and we would walk fast in fear of meeting mad dogs."

Aunt Sally was Sally Barnard Ingram, Mrs. Yeatts' mother's sister. Aunt Sally was born in 1839 and married John G. Ingram in 1859. Sally and John never had any children of their own. Remember last week when we learned that Mrs. Yeatts mother, Ruth Eliza Barnard was first married to German Wood and had two children, Flora and John T. Everett? Well, these two children were very close to Aunt Sally and her husband, John Ingram as witnessed in his will, probated in 1882. I am sharing the will as it provides wonderful evidence of where the Ingram home was located and also the close relationship between John Ingram and his wife's family. Patrick County, VA Will book 8, page 100: Know all men by these presents that I, John G. Ingram of Patrick County & State of Virginia, Being in common good health of sound and disposing mind and memory, do make and publish this my last will and testament hereby revoking all former wills by me at any time heretofore made and as to my worldly estate and all the property real and personal or mixed of which I shall die seized and possessed or to which I shall be entitled at the time of my decease. I devise and bequeath and dispose thereof in the manner following to wit: My will is that all my just debts and funeral expenses shall by my executor herein-after



Edna Roena Reynolds Yeatts and John Henry Yeatts.



Edna Roena Reynolds Yeatts and some of her grandchildren.

named, be paid out of any estate as soon after my decease as shall by them be found convenient. I give devise and bequeath to my beloved wife Sally Ingram, all of my property both personal and real except my lawful heirs and also my wife's lawful heirs one permanent dollar apiece, for my wife to have and to hold and dispose of during her widowhood and if it should be necessary for her to sell lands she shall consult my executor and he shall make deeds to all of her sales and his assignments shall be a good title. I give and bequeath to Jerman Wood's heirs Flora C. Wood, John T. E. Wood, the following described land bonded as follows, Beginning in the back line known as the Gates line thence a straight line passing 60 yards above a house known as the Dalton house to a corner on the Glade Branch thence a straight line to the fork of Mayberry Creek below wagon road thence up said creek to a corner gum near or in their own line to five maples on said creek thence & 76' West with the old line to the beginning, to have at mine and my wife's deaths. My will is that James A. Ingram shall not have but the one dollar above mentioned. I will at mine and my wife's death the one half of my estate to be equally divided among the remainder of my brothers and sisters and also making Flora C. Wood and John T. E. Wood (the two) one equal heir with my brothers and sisters. My will is that my wife Sally Ingram's brothers and sisters have the other half of my estate equally divided except Ruth Eliza Reynolds and Polly A. Smith; their part to go through the hands of my executor to be given them as their necessity require it and if not needed in their lifetime Polly A. Smiths part to return to her brothers & sisters

and Ruth E. Reynolds' part to go to her heirs by her second husband. And lastly, I do nominate and appoint Wm Barnard my executor as an aid and friend to my wife doing her widowhood and at her death or marriage, I appoint the said Wm T. Barnard any sole executor and his assignments be a good title to all the lands sold by him or my wife during her widowhood, and if the said Wm T. Barnard should die before he winds up my estate I appoint John T. E. Wood as executor in said Wm T. Barnard's place. In testimony whereof I the said John G. Ingram have to this last will and testament contained on the one sheet of paper thereof I have subscribed my name and affixed my seal this the 11th of September 1882. Signed sealed published John G. Ingram , declared by the said John G. Ingram as and for his last will and testament in the presence of us who at his request and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as witnesses thereto. Joel E. Marshall and D. L. Barnard.

I could write about Mrs. Yeatts and her connections to the community for months, but it is time to move on; there are more stories to tell. John Ingram's will is a good segue to lead into next week's story when we will look at his parents and siblings. Thank you to Gerry Scardo for sharing information about her remarkable grandmother, Edna Roena Reynolds Yeatts. Thank you to Shelby Inscore Puckett for having previously transcribed John Ingram's will and thank you to Judy Ferring for the very nice letter to the editor this past week. Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) 692-9626.

Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty – I Use only VA healthcare; Can I get back Medicare taxes paid?

Dear Rusty: I'm 72 years old with 20 years of military service. I am retired collecting Social Security, my military pension, and State retirement benefits. According to my SSA statement, over my working lifetime I paid \$14,302 into Medicare, but I never used that medical plan. I only bring in \$33,000 in annual income. Can I get those Medicare taxes back somehow? I've run into dead ends at SSA, Medicare and IRS websites. Signed: Veteran Seeking Answers

Dear Veteran Seeking Answers: First, I want to thank you for your military service to our country. You may find the "For Veterans" section of our www.amacfoundation.org website of interest.

Regarding the contributions you have made over the years to federal Medicare, I'm afraid you cannot get any of those taxes back even though you have never used Medicare healthcare services. That's because Medicare, like Social Security, is a "pay as you go" program where all contributions received from workers are used to pay for benefits for current beneficiaries (contributions aren't put into a separate account to pay for your coverage). It's also important to

know that your Medicare taxes were used only to fund Medicare Part A, which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization services. Those contributions (via payroll taxes) did not entitle you to outpatient healthcare services, as provided by Medicare Part B (for which there is a monthly premium).

FYI, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A to collect Social Security benefits after age 65. Medicare Part B isn't mandatory to collect Social Security, but assuming that, as a retired military veteran, you now receive healthcare benefits under the military's TriCare-for-Life program for retired veterans, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B to maintain your TriCare-for-Life coverage. Your military TriCare coverage coordinates with Medicare to pay for your healthcare costs. Thus, even though it may not be transparent to you, you may be benefiting from your current enrollment in Medicare.

Note that some non-career veterans can use VA healthcare services based on their service years, instead of TriCare-for-Life for retired military veterans. Non-career recipients of standard VA healthcare services are not required to be enrolled in Medicare but, in any case, cannot receive their past Medicare Part A contributions back if they choose to decline Medicare. You may have interest in this article I previously published on the topic of VA benefits versus Medicare: www.socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-i

have-va-coverage-should-i-get-medicare-part-b/.

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Crossing the Lines

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

Community prayer event aims to inspire unity, healing in Martinsville

In a heartfelt gathering on Dec. 23, St. Paul High Street Baptist Church hosted a community prayer event designed to amplify voices from across Martinsville and Henry County. The Rev. Charles Whitfield presided over the event, which brought together local clergy, civic leaders, and residents to pray for peace and unity amid growing divisions within the community.

Other speakers included Mayor LC Jones, Elder Arnold Bullock, Dr. Zebedee “Zeb” Talley, Jr., Pastor Avery Preston, Mallori Lowe, Dr. Greg Hodges, Bishop Alan Preston, Rev. Faith Weedling, Elder Tremayne King, Spencer Koger and others.

AN estimated more than 200 people attended the hour-long service, available for viewing on the church’s Facebook page. The event featured impassioned speeches and prayers from community leaders. Jones set the tone for the evening with a call for togetherness.

“I want you to understand that tonight is about us as a community,” Jones said, emphasizing the importance of fostering connections despite



Spencer Koger, executive director of Uptown Partnership, was among the speakers.

differences. “It’s a thought of, we are all citizens of Martinsville Henry County.” He stressed that the focus of the night was not on political or council issues but on the broader goal of healing and unity.

The event comes during a time of heightened tension in the city, following contentious election cycles, disputes among council members, and recent remarks by Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls. Against this backdrop, clergy and community

leaders took to the pulpit to address the need for cooperation and understanding.

Spencer Koger, executive director of Uptown Partnership, encouraged attendees to embrace their ability to enact change. “No matter what people want to change, they have the opportunity to do that,” Koger said. He added that Martinsville, known as the “City Without Limits,” provides space for individuals to make a difference regardless of their background.

County board to focus on jobs, services, and growth in 2025

Members of the Henry County’s Board of Supervisors shared their priorities for the coming year, outlining a vision focused on job creation, infrastructure expansion, and enhanced support for essential services such as fire and EMS. With the 2025 budget process on the horizon, supervisors are optimistic about the county’s future but acknowledge challenges ahead.

Jim Adams, chairman and of the Blackberry District, highlighted the county’s ongoing projects, including the grading at Commonwealth Crossing. The development is expected to attract new businesses and generate jobs. “The county has multiple projects going on, and we hope the grading will bring more business to the area,” said Adams.

Vice Chairman Joe Bryant, of the Collinsville District, described the upcoming year as “a wait-and-see game” as the board evaluates budgetary constraints and opportunities. “After the budget is looked at, we can see what new things the county can allocate funds toward,” said Bryant.

Among Bryant’s top priorities is increasing funding for fire and rescue services. “Even though we give to the fire and rescue squad, funding is not where I want to see it at,” he said. He also noted potential increases for libraries and other public amenities.

Bryant expressed satisfaction with recent wage increases in the county but emphasized the need for

continued focus on job retention and quality. “How do we keep the people we got here working and not going to other places? What can we do to improve the work environment?” he asked.

Debra Buchanan, of the Horsepasture District, underscored the importance of public service expansion, particularly water and sewer services through the PSA (Public Service Authority). “I hope the board will keep working together to create new job opportunities for the citizens of Henry County,” said Buchanan, who also emphasized the need for PSA expansions along U.S. 58 West.

Garrett Dillard, of the Iriswood District, noted that updating the county’s comprehensive plan — a roadmap for future growth and development — is a key priority. “The biggest thing we have right now is getting ready to start our joint comprehensive plan meetings,” said Dillard.

The plan will integrate community input. “Where do the citizens see growth? What do they want to see in a comprehensive plan?” added Adams. The current plan has not been updated in years.

Dillard also addressed the housing shortage, advocating for innovative solutions. “We are looking at creative ways to reduce the housing shortage. We have to incite people to remodel, rebuild, or build new housing,” he said.



The Teacher’s Closet offers a variety of essential classroom items for educators.

FAHI Museum, Alumni Collaborate to Support City Teachers with Supply Closet

The FAHI Museum has launched a new initiative in collaboration with alumni from several Martinsville High School graduating classes to support local teachers. The project, dubbed the “Teacher’s Closet,” aims to ease the financial burden teachers face when buying classroom supplies.

“Several graduating classes have chosen to come back home and give to the community,” said James Dallas, one of the organizers. The idea originated at a reunion when Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley encouraged alumni to find ways to give back.

“Teachers continue to come out of their pockets for money for school supplies,” Dallas said, noting that schools often struggle to provide adequate resources. Teachers, he added, frequently step up to ensure students have what they need for a

quality education.

While some progress has been made in recent years, the alumni saw an opportunity to offer additional support. The Teacher’s Closet will officially open in January, just in time for the start of the second semester. Teachers will be able to access supplies to keep their classrooms running smoothly.

“We threw a lot of things on the wall,” said Dallas about brainstorming ideas for the project. Establishing a supply closet, he explained, was a simple yet impactful way to begin.

Faye Holland, vice-chairman of the FAHI board, helped get the ball rolling, and Bridgett Carter hopes local businesses will contribute donations to sustain the project.

“We are going to try to get some community partners,” she added.

Young Pianist Finds Harmony in Rare Talent and Faith



Dylan Chappell poses with the grand piano at First Assembly of God in Martinsville, Va.

At just 18, Dylan Chappell demonstrates an extraordinary gift for the piano, capturing the attention of the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum. In a recently shared video, Chappell plays the historic 1886 Steinway piano with a level of skill that belies his three years of experience. Remarkably, he cannot read treble clef but learns songs by observing others perform.

Chappell, a lifelong attendee of First Assembly of God, credits church pianist Chris Nunley as his inspiration. “I’ve been watching Chris, the piano player here, my entire life,” Chappell said. While always interested in music, he never imagined he would play the piano.

Currently enrolled in the electrical program at Patrick & Community College, Chappell applies his technical skills to improve his church’s equipment, which started with a fascination with the church’s unique ceiling fans. “I have a lot of weird hobbies,” he said, though mu-


sic remains his passion.

Chappell’s piano journey began unexpectedly during the COVID-19 pandemic while staying with his grandmother. “She has this really old piano in the basement, and I started tinkering with it,” he said. His mother, Amanda Bennett, is another source of inspiration, pushing him to explore his talents.


Nunley’s performances became Chappell’s classroom. “I won’t say that I’m a good piano player, I’d say I’m a good mimicker,” Chappell said, emphasizing his belief that his talent is a divine gift. “I know that I’ve got to keep serving Him and doing my part, so He will keep blessing me with this great talent to play for people.”

Chappell has been going to First Assembly of God his whole life, but he also attends Faith Fellowship in Bassett where he plays the piano.


“If you want to do it, just try and don’t give up,” he advises. “It’s very much worth the wait when you learn to do it.”




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Janice Marie Harbour Rorrer

Ralph was a Jack of all trades and loved to play music, especially the guitar. He worked in construction and enjoyed hunting, fishing, and reading. Ralph had a soft spot for cornbread and milk. It was said that he could make anything grow, and Ralph particularly loved working with Judy in her flower garden.

Left to cherish the
memories of Mr. Handy

William “Penn” Zentmeyer

William "Penn" Zentmeyer passed away peacefully surrounded by family on the morning of January 1, 2025 at Lake Prince Woods Skilled Nursing in Suffolk VA at the age of 89 1/2.

Penn was born on June 26, 1935 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and lived a full and remarkable life. Until he went to college, he lived at the Zentmeyer family homeplace called Sunnyside in rural Patrick County, Virginia. Sunnyside was purchased by his great-grandfather John N. Zentmeyer in 1852. He lived there with his mother "Mamie" Jane Autrey Zentmeyer, of whom he said in early 2024 that he owed, "everything he ever was or ever achieved" to her. Also living at Sunnyside was his adoring father Peter "Leath" Zentmeyer, Jr. and brother, Robert "Bob" Leath Zentmeyer and grandmother, "Hattie" Moore Penn Zentmeyer.

Penn grew up in a time that most cannot imagine these days. Times after the Depression were hard and his father suffered from an undefined illness that baffled doctors of the day and kept him bedridden for 18 years. Living in such a rural area, the family had no electricity until Penn was a sophomore in high school. The house was heated by fireplaces in each room and there was no phone service or TV until he was in college. Chores as a boy included milking the cow, gathering eggs from the chicken house, working in the garden, and on Saturdays, it was Penn's job to trim the wicks and refill all the oil lamps for lighting the house. By the time he was ten, he was preparing breakfast, often eggs and toast, for his mother and brother before they all went to school where his mother was an elementary school teacher. His boyhood was filled with joys and adventures a country boy should have including pet dogs and cats and goats and squirrels, as well as hunting, fishing, trapping, beekeeping, horseback riding, and skinny dipping in the North Fork of the Mayo River where his brother Bob taught him to swim.



are his sisters, Emma Jean Mize (James) and Donna Wyatt (Jerry) all of Martinsville; nieces, Elisa Hudson (Chris) of Martinsville, Tonya Jesse (Charles) of Ridgeway, and Tiffany Moore of Martinsville; great-niece, Autumn Telles; great-nephews, Evan Hudson and Colin Jesse; and his very special



rial School in 1953 in a class of 13, he attended Ferrum College before attending Virginia Tech. He was always Hokie football fan but Hokies know, that's not always easy!

In the summers, he worked as a lifeguard at Fairystone State Park which he recalled fondly as fun, carefree times. In 1956, his brother introduced him to a pretty young classmate at Richmond Polytechnic Institute (now VCU), Ann Hunton Mitchell from Leesburg VA. Both were immediately smitten. Penn hitchhiked from Blacksburg to Richmond most weekends before they married on August 31, 1957. He graduated from VPI in 1958 and taught vocational education for several years. He and Ann lived in Leesburg, Orange, and Westmoreland County on the Rappahanock River, Virginia before moving to Richmond in 1962 so that Ann could finish her degree at RPI as he promised her father Claude Mitchell that she would. They lived happily in Chesterfield County until Ann's untimely and shocking death in 1988 at age 52.

Penn worked at the Virginia Department of Agriculture for more than 30 years in a number of roles before retiring in 1991. If you knew Penn, you know he could and did fix just about anything. He was a talented landscaper and took great pride in his yards and maintaining the family homeplace Sunnyside. Sunnyside was built in the mid-1800s and stands in remarkable condition thanks in large part to Penn's efforts and devotion to his family and homeplace. He also took up flying small private airplanes in the 1960s and enjoyed it well into the 1990s.

Penn was very lucky to have found love again with Anita “Nita” Page McLemore with whom they shared many friends and good times. They married on Octo-

friend, Judy Williams of
Stuart.

Funeral services for Mr. Handy will be held Saturday, January 4, 2025, at 1:00 P.M. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Pastor Douglas Shuff officiating. Burial will immediately follow in the Martin-Rakes Family Cemetery. The family will receive friends Friday evening from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart and at other times at the home of his sister, Emma Jean Mize (325 Woodview Lane, Martinsville, VA 24112). Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

ber 19, 1997 and shared nearly 30 years together. He and Nita left their beloved Surreywood home in September 2023 and moved to Suffolk VA to downsize and be nearer to her family. Nita was devoted to Penn to the very end.

Penn was a devoted father and family man and loved to share his family history. He and Ann had 2 daughters, Jan Penn Zentmeyer and husband, Glen A. "Skip" Skinner, and Suzanne Wynn Zentmeyer Stewart survive their dad. He is also survived by 4 grandchildren, Anna Penn Skinner and husband, Charles "Chip" Wilson Jackson V, Sydney Autrey Skinner Stockmoe and husband, Sean J. Stockmoe, Peter Mitchell Stewart, and LucyAnn Zentmeyer Stewart, and one precious great-grandson, Carter Joseph Stockmoe and 3 nieces. Penn is also survived by loving step-children, Ann Burton Barnes Heikens and husband Timmy, and Troy McLemore Barnes and wife Wendy, and grandchildren, Dillon Heikens and wife Emily, Camryn Heikens, Brianna Barnes, and Charles Barnes, and great granddaughter, Penelope Mehegan Heikens.

Penn was preceded in death by his parents and beloved brother Bob in 1995 and sister-in-law Betsy Lawrence Zentmeyer Wengert in 2023, but is also survived by loving and devoted nephews Leath and Larry Zentmeyer and their wives and children and grandchildren.

Penn's ashes will be buried beside his wife, Ann in Oakwood Cemetery in Martinsville VA in the Spring of 2025. No flowers are requested. If individuals are interested, contributions can be made to historic Oakwood Cemetery for the care and upkeep of the grounds, www.oakwoodcemeterymartinsville.com. R.W.Baker & Co. Funeral Home, Downtown Suffolk Chapel is serving the family.

Perhaps not consciously stated but we believe Penn lived by this philosophy. "Your children will follow the footsteps that you leave for them. Walk in the direction of love, integrity, compassion and self-worth."

Mrs. Janice Marie Harbour Rorrer, age 78 of Stuart, passed away Thursday, January 2, 2025 at Franklin Memorial Hospital in Rocky Mount. She was born on June 18, 1946 to the late John Estel Harbour and Nova Pendleton Harbour. In addition to her parents, Mrs. Rorrer was preceded in death by two brothers, Kenneth Harbour and Camden Harbour; and a nephew, Lynn Pendleton. She was a member of Jacks Creek Primitive Baptist Church. She was "Nannie" to multiple children throughout the years and loved quilting with her sister.

Mrs. Rorrer is survived by her husband of 58 years, John Ce-

D. Victor Williams Jr.

D. Victor Williams Jr., age 70, passed away Sunday, December 29, 2024, at SOVA Health in Martinsville, VA. Victor was born in Martinsville Hospital on November 3, 1954. He was preceded in death by his father, Dorn V. Williams, Sr. and mother Dae Reynolds Williams. Victor was also preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Virgil and Lowell Williams of Stuart and maternal grandparents, Hassie T. and Mildred Reynolds of Critz. Victor is survived by his wife Shirley and daughter Courtney Dean Williams of Smith Mountain Lake, VA. Also left to cherish the memories of Victor are his brothers, Gerald (Adriana) of Dobson, and Bart (Donna) of Dublin, Va.; in addition to his brothers, a sister-in-law, Lynn Reeves of Health Springs, SC and several special nieces, nephews, cousins, uncles and aunts.

Victor was of the Presbyterian faith and was a member of the Stuart Presbyterian Church. He was a 1973 graduate of Patrick County High School, being voted "Friendliest Male" and a 1977 graduate of Carson-Newman College where he played football as a defensive lineman. Victor was a lifelong learner and student who loved to read on many different topics.

Victor was known for his love of the family businesses over



phus Rorrer of the home; a son, Greg Rorrer of Stuart; three grandchildren, Kelli Belcher (Trevor) of Stuart, Laken Rorrer (fiancé, Gavin Worley) of Meadows of Dan, and Charlie Rorrer of Stuart; one great-grandchild, Riggs Belcher of Woolwine; a sister, Regina Pendleton of Stuart; a brother, Lloyd Harbour (Mary) of Stuart; a sister-in-law, Mar-



the years. He enjoyed sports and athletic training, and attended many Sports Medicine conferences at University of Virginia. For several years he volunteered as the Athletic Trainer for the Patrick County High School sports programs, attending both home and many away games. Victor served on the Patrick and Henry College Board of Directors and was a 30-year lifetime member of Jeb Stuart Rescue Squad, being certified in Advanced Life Support/EMT- Shock Trauma, Cardiac Tech.

He was very involved in the Virginia Health Care Association, serving on several boards and committees. Victor retired in 2019 as President and CEO of The Landmark Group. Prior to retirement he was instrumental with his family in the construction and selling of the Blue Ridge Nursing Center of Martinsville, VA (currently Mulberry Creek), and day to day operations of Blue Ridge Therapy Connection, Highland Ridge Health and Rehab Center, and The Landmark Assisted

gie Wood of Stuart; several nieces and nephews; and special friends, Joan Griffin and family.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 2:00 P.M. at Jacks Creek Primitive Baptist Church with Elder David Kamada officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery. The family will receive friends two hours prior to the service at the church. Flowers will be accepted, or memorial donations may be made to Jacks Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Lloyd Harbour, 130 Winding Stair Road, Stuart, VA 24171. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Living Center. He was a licensed Nursing Home Administrator and Assisted Living Administrator, as well as Licensed Preceptor for both.

He served as Mayor of the Town of Stuart from 1986-1988. In addition, Victor has received many service recognitions including the Patrick County High School 2009 Community Service Award and the 2013 DAR Community Service Award.

The family will receive friends at Moody Funeral Service in Stuart on Wednesday, January 1 from 1:00 PM- 4:00 PM. Condolences may also be expressed by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Victor's family would like to express appreciation to Terry Grimes, Les Bowers, Stanleytown Health and Rehab Center and King's Grant Retirement Community for their continuing care and support.

The funeral service for Mr. Williams will be officiated by Pastor Jim Churchwell and King's Grant Pastor Bonnylee Whitt on Thursday, January 2 at 11:00 AM at Moody's. A private family interment will follow at Patrick Memorial Gardens in Stuart.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Patrick and Henry Community College Foundation, 645 Patriot Avenue, Martinsville, Virginia 24112.

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PATRICK PULPITS

Positive Thinking

By Alan Dean, retired Seventh-day Adventist pastor

Proverbs 23: 7 says “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” This is saying our character depends a lot on how we view others and life in general. Some people are positive thinkers, while others are negative thinkers. In the stressful world we live in we need to train our mind to think more positive thoughts. Let’s try it more in 2025.

A husband once asked his wife, after they had been married a number of years, how she was always able to remain positive. Her answer amazed him. She said, “I don’t always feel happy and positive, but I choose to be that way anyway, and I try to use words that are positive.”

Our words have powerful influence on both ourselves and our listeners. In the book “Desire of Ages” it says that “words are more than an indication of our character. They also have power to influence our character.” In other words, we are influenced by the words we speak, and our words influence still more powerfully upon the character of others.

Norman Vincent Peale made a simple yet profound statement: “There are only two ways of looking at anything – positive or negative.” And this is largely determined by the way we think. The Apostle Paul states in Philippians 4: 8 that we need to think on things pure, honest, loving,

and wholesome. By thinking thus, our words become positive and they will have a positive influence upon our character and upon other’s as well.

As humans, we do tend to complain about our trials and problems as if life should be easy, but nowhere have we been promised this. M. Scott Peck begins his book “The Road Less Traveled” with the words “Life is difficult” and then points out that when once we are willing to face up to this fact, life becomes easier.

Another fact we should remember is that life is at times a mystery and not always understandable. Paul tells us that “we can be full of joy here and now even in our trials and troubles. These very things will give us patient endurance; this in turn will develop a mature character” (Romans 5: 3, 4).

A dentist who specializes in treating children entered an orphanage at the early age of 7 when his parents died. Evidently it didn’t occur to him to be bitter and to feel sorry for himself. Instead, he was grateful for the love and care given him there. He determined to help other children when he grew to adulthood, largely because of appreciating the help given him when he needed it.

May God grant us the ability to think positively in the coming year despite the trials that plague us from day to day. Thank God now for the positive people in your life and tell Him how they have helped you.

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff’s Office reported the following:

*Dylan Shane Vernon, 32, of Collinsville, was charged Dec. 14 with one count each drive while intoxicated and refusal- breath, 2nd + offense. Sgt. C.L. Elgin was the arresting officer.

*Joseph Robert Kennedy, 60, of Hillsville, was charged Dec. 15 with one count each petty larceny and interfere with property rights of another. Carroll County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Susan Michelle Smith, 46, of Winchester, was charged Dec. 17 with fail to appear. Winchester PD made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Brenda Leigh Williams Floyd, 56, of Ararat, was charged Dec. 19 with destruction of property. Senior Deputy M.R. Hodges was the arresting officer.

*Richard Lee Byrd, 44, of Patrick Springs, was charged Dec. 20 with one count each break and enter, and destruction of property. Master Deputy M.R. Rorrer was the arresting officer.

*Jason Garrett Chilton, 39, of Ararat, was charged Dec. 20 with assault and batter on law enforcement officer. Senior Deputy J.S. Kendrick was the arresting officer.

*Andrew Roy Hill, 39, of Stuart, was charged Dec. 20 with assault. Sgt. L.K. Carroll Jr. was the arresting officer.

*Russel Dale Wimbish, 76, of Patrick Springs, was charged Dec. 21

with fail to appear. Master Deputy E. Sain was the arresting officer.

*Andrew Roy Hill, 39, of Stuart, was charged Dec. 2 with one count each malicious bodily injury and assault. Inv. Tennille E. Jessup was the arresting officer.

*Kelsey Patrice Wade, 36, of Martinsville, was charged Dec. 26 with shoplift. Martinsville PD made the arrest for Patrick County.

*David Allen Michaud, 38, of Meadows of Dan, was charged Dec. 26 with two counts of assault and batter. Sgt. J.G. Pickerel was the arresting officer.

*Connie Curry, 58, of Bassett, was charged Dec. 27 with interfere with property rights of another. Sgt. C.L. Elgin was the arresting officer.

*Rodney Clifford Hoke, 62, of Mt. Airy, NC, was charged Dec. 27 with warrant of extradition. Senior Deputy M.R. Hodges was the arresting officer.

*Kenneth Wayne Gusler, 41, of Patrick Springs, was charged Dec. 30 with pointing/brandishing firearm. Lt. D.L. Foley was the arresting officer.

*Cody Joseph Wyatt, 31, of Stuart, was charged Dec. 31 with fail to appear. Master Deputy M.T. Rorrer was the arresting officer.

*Clifford Kenner Harris Nieto, 37, of Roxboro, NC, was charged Jan. 1 with probation violation. Senior Deputy H.R. Hylton was the arresting officer.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Miriam (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which book may be summarized as “Bad times do not change the nature of God”? Judges, Job, Jeremiah, Jonah
3. From 2 Chronicles 9:11, what are psalteries for singers? Robes, Stringed instruments, Lyrics, Abodes
4. In Revelation 6, what’s the name of the fourth horseman? Death, Power, Brimstone, Terror
5. From Ecclesiastes 3, there is a time to break down and a time to? Plow, Climb, Rejoice, Build up
6. Which of these was Abraham’s wife? Rebekah, Martha, Sarah, Michal

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Job, 3) Stringed instruments, 4) Death, 5) Build up, 6) Sarah

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

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Super Crossword

UNTHEMED

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| ACROSS | 61 The Emerald Isle | 121 Stylish filmmaker | 17 Mo. in spring | 51 Military mission, in brief | 83 Singer Carly — Jepsen |
| 1 Upside-down-sleeping mammal | 62 Play — in (contribute to) | 122 Made giggle | 18 Final letter | | 84 A cow milker tugs on it |
| 8 Economizes to a fault | 63 Heap | 123 Active, as a law | 19 Hosp. triage sites | 52 Spinner of "Star Trek" films | 85 H.S. juniors' exams |
| 14 Untrustworthy sort | 64 Graduate student's position that might include conducting experiments | 124 Out of sight | 24 Riddle-me- — 25 KO counter | 57 Neckline shape | 90 Campaigning pro |
| 20 One way to serve apple pie | 74 "Give — ring" | 125 San Fran football team | 30 Some sorority letters | 58 Dinosaur in Nintendo games | 91 Net address |
| 21 Very solitary sort | 75 Plantain lily, familiarly | 126 Music scorer | 31 Grab — (eat quickly) | 59 Actress Kaitlin | 92 Wash clothes |
| 22 Monkey (with) | 76 Actress Ward of "Sisters" | DOWN | 32 AI who won four Indy 500s | 60 Singer with the 2007 hit "1234" | 93 Untrustworthy sort |
| 23 Frigid-weather readings | 77 Polite cut-in words | 1 Explorer John or Sebastian | 33 French buddy | 65 Whac- — (reflex-testing game) | 98 Have a spat |
| 26 Military missions, in brief | 86 Drains of color | 2 Letter before beth | 34 Driveway-topping goo | 66 Of kidneys | 99 Pine (for) |
| 27 Old Ford div. | 87 Heaps | 3 Triple-time dance, in France | 35 Stinging hits | 67 Slyly spiteful | 100 "— Can Cook" (old culinary show) |
| 28 Tennis great Chris | 88 Tulsa-to-Topeka dir. | 4 Broody rock subgenre | 36 Lays into | 68 Engraved stone pillar | 101 Net, for one |
| 29 Classic Coca-Cola slogan | 89 Metropolises, e.g. | 5 Bend at a curtain call | 37 Something to RSVP to online | 69 Divining card | 102 Food taste associated with MSG |
| 39 "Son of," in Arabic names | 94 Climb | 6 Woodworking tool | 42 Longtime Twins catcher Joe | 70 Old JFK jet | 103 Must have |
| 40 Thurman of "Kill Bill" films | 95 — pro nobis | 7 Swarms (with) | 43 Navel type | 71 "Die Lorelei" poet Heinrich | 104 Actress Joanne |
| 41 Volcanic flow | 96 Flight guess, in brief | 8 Not at all tall | 44 Swizzles | 72 Actress Massey | 105 Red lab dye |
| 42 Watershed draining dozens of U.S. states | 97 "In time the reason shall be made clear" | 9 Mustard alternative | 45 Airline to Oslo | 73 Window segments | 106 Divided |
| 53 Busy crawler | 109 Furnish with new weapons | 10 Choler | 46 Basketball — Thomas | 77 Baseballer Martinez | 107 Drug dealer |
| 54 Make sport of | 110 Mean Roman emperor | 11 "Delicious!" | 47 2014 Wimbledon winner | 78 Stayed home for a meal | 108 Overly fond sort |
| 55 Cocktail party spread | 111 Kung — chicken | 12 One of 11 in a Christmas song | 48 Sickly | 79 Washer cycle | 112 Baby's cry |
| 56 School in England's East Midlands | 112 "The Magic Flute" composer | 13 Carell of "The Office" | 49 Compete (for) | 80 Gave two pills to, say | 113 Yes, to Gigi |
| | | 14 Knighted Ringo | 50 "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" musical | 81 Cool, in jive talk | 114 British "Inc." |
| | | 15 Cappuccino alternative | | 82 That, in Peru | 115 Govt. agent |
| | | 16 Ostrich relative | | | 116 Of city govt. |

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LEGAL

Meeting Notice
Patrick County Public Service Authority
Quarterly Business Meeting

The Patrick County Public Service Authority Board of Directors will hold a Quarterly Business Meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Court Room of the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Building. Petitions and requests from the public to address the Board shall be submitted in writing to the PSA located in the Patrick County Administration Building at 106 Rucker Street, Suite 218, Stuart, VA. Petitions and requests to address the Board shall be submitted no less than fire (5) business days prior to the scheduled meeting and placed on the official meeting agenda in order to be considered. Persons wanting to address the Authority's Board not having submitted a pre-request to do so may only be heard after a majority of Directors agree. The Directors encourage public attendance at all meetings.



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LEGAL

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA) IN THE FAMILY COURT OF THE
COUNTY OF RICHLAND) FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
)
LEE T. CONNELLY,)
PLAINTIFF,) SUMMONS AND NOTICE
vs.)
MARK E. HANCOCK) DOCKET NO.:
DEFENDANT.) No. 2024-DR-40-1768

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT MARK E. HANCOCK: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED AND REQUIRED to answer 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 Complaint 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

LEGAL

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S SALE OF
485 HARDIN REYNOLDS ROAD
CRITZ, VA 24082

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust to Tanya Jones, Mitch Smith and Charles M. Aaron, P.L.C., Attorney at Law, Trustees, dated July 20, 2017, recorded July 20, 2017, in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court, Patrick County, Virginia, as Instrument Number 170001316, (Lafayette, Ayers & Whitlock, PLC, a Virginia professional limited liability company, having been appointed as Substitute Trustee by instrument duly recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office), default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured thereby, and being required so to do by the Noteholder, the undersigned, in accordance with the provisions of the aforesaid Deed of Trust, and after having given at least sixty (60) days prior written notice to the owner of the real estate of the date, time, place and terms of the sale, will offer for sale to the highest bidder at public auction the property described in and conveyed by said Deed of Trust being known and designated as: "ALL that certain tract or parcel of land, together with the improvements thereon, lying and being in the Mayo River Magisterial District of Patrick County, Virginia, being on the northerly side of Hardin Reynolds Road, Virginia Secondary Route 694, being shown as Lot 1, containing 15.838 acres, as shown on survey entitled "Subdivision of the Property of Darian R. Tatum at Hardin Reynolds Road in the Mayo River Magisterial District of Patrick County, VA", prepared by Donald B. Abele, dated October 2, 2016, and recorded as Instrument Number 160001632, of the Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk's Office" Tax Map #5211(-)-100E; Account #83083 (herein "the Property"). The sale shall take place on **January 17, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.** at the front steps of the building housing the Circuit Court of Patrick County, Virginia, 101 Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, VA 24171.

TERMS OF SALE: All cash at settlement. A bidder's deposit of 10% of the sale price, in cash or certified check, shall be required at time of sale from all bidders except the holder of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust. The balance shall be paid at settlement, to be held within twenty (20) days from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post sale confirmation that the borrower(s) did not file for protection under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code prior to the sale. In such event, the sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. The Substitute Trustee reserves the right to: (i) waive the deposit requirement; (ii) approve the creditworthiness of any bidder and final purchaser; (iii) withdraw the Property from sale at any time prior to the termination of the bidding; (iv) keep the bidding open for any length of time; and (v) reject any and all bids. In the event that the purchaser fails to go to settlement as required, the aforementioned deposit shall be forfeited and the Property shall be resold at the purchaser's risk and expense. All closing costs, including preparation of the deed and the grantor's tax, shall be borne by the successful bidder. Real estate taxes shall be prorated to the date of sale. Rents and other expenses of the Property, if any, shall not be prorated. The Real Property shall be conveyed by special warranty deed. The Property shall be sold "AS IS" without representation or warranty of any kind, and **SUBJECT TO** conditions, restrictions, rights-of-way, easements, and reservations, if any, contained in the deeds forming chain of title thereto, and all other matters of record taking priority over the Deed of Trust, if any. Delivery of possession of the Property will not be performed by the Substitute Trustee but will be the responsibility of the Purchaser. The Purchaser will be required to execute a Memorandum of Sale and Contract concerning the purchase of the Property, a copy of which will be available immediately before announcing the sale. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. LAFAYETTE, AYERS & WHITLOCK, PLC, SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE, 10160 staples Mill Road, suite 105, Glen Allen, Virginia 23060. Telephone: (804) 545-6256. FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: EDWARD S. WHITLOCK, III, ESQ., Lafayette, Ayers & Whitlock, PLC. Telephone: (804) 545-6256 or (804) 545-6258.

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@theenterprise.net.

Meetings

Thursday, Jan. 9
The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Office.

Monday, Jan. 13
The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will hold its reorganizational meeting at 5 p.m. in the third-floor courtroom of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Wednesday, Jan.15
The Stuart Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the town office.

Events

Thursday, Jan. 9
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will hold its January monthly meeting at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Entertainment will be provided by The Senior Melodies. A variety of soups, crackers, and beverages will be provided for lunch. Attendees are requested to bring sandwiches and desserts to share with the group.

Thursday, Jan. 16
The Patrick County Republican Committee meeting,6 p.m., 212 Wood Brothers Dr., Motorsports Hall of Fame Auditorium. Members and Guests are welcome.

Friday, Jan. 17

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

Saturday, Jan. 18
Free Community Breakfast, 7:15-9:30 a.m., New Hope Church of the Brethren, 2007 New Hope Road, Stuart (Elamsville area). Eggs, bacon, sausage patties, apples, pancakes, biscuits & gravy.

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.

Initial unemployment filings fall

According to Virginia Works, 1,468 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims were filed during the week ending December 28, 2024, which is 34.2 percent lower than last week’s 2,230 claims and 29.1 percent lower than the comparable week of last year (2,070). Nearly 74 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (64 percent) were Manufacturing (174); Construction (168); Accommodation and Food Services (140); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (115); and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (82). Continued weeks claims (15,712) were 2.4 percent lower than last week (16,104) and were 27.2 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (12,357). Nearly 92 percent of claimants

self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (57 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,350); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (1,996); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,396); Manufacturing (1,353); and Retail Trade (1,166). A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemployment files a continued claim to claim benefits for that week of unemployment. On a weekly basis, continued claims reflect a good approximation of the current number of insured unemployed workers filing for UI benefits, and are a good indicator of labor market conditions. While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Lawson receives the county's Clean Water Farm Award

The Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District (Patrick SWCD) Board of Directors along with District Staff Tony Collins and Sandra Heath nominated and presented Mr. Garland Lawson with the Patrick County Virginia Clean Water Farm Award. Mr. Lawson's farm is located in Dobyns Section of Patrick County and part of the Mayo River Watershed. Mr. Lawson received a Certificate signed by the Governor of Virginia and a sign to display proudly at his farm.

The Clean Water Farm award was established to provide special recognition to farmers who demonstrated a strong commitment to natural resource conservation through the implementation of best management practices and management of their lands. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation was given lead responsibility for program development and administration and the Department relies upon Soil and Water Conservation Districts to select worthy recipients within their communities.

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Best Management Practices (BMP) Program and USDA Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) was used to assist Mr. Lawson with the stewardship of his land that he desired. As part of his stewardship of the land, Mr. Lawson has protected over four thousand feet of streams that run through his property by fencing out livestock access. Mr. Lawson established 3 acres of new riparian buffers to help filter run-off from his farm. A limited access stream crossing was installed to allow cattle and farm machinery to cross the stream without damaging the stream banks and channel. To provide his livestock with clean water, he installed three frost free watering facilities.

Mr. Lawson is the recipient of the 24th consecutive Clean Water Farm Award presented in Patrick County. Past Patrick County Clean Water Farm Award winners include:



Lester Wood; Pansy, Jeff and Eddie McAlexander; Wyoming East Farm, Tim Service, Helen Clark Wood and Kate Dunnivant; David Collins; Greenview Farm; Benton and Michael Culler; Pam Hall; Mulberry Farm; Joey Epperson; Joe and Denise Clark; Dannie and Kathy Anderson; Larry Hutchens; Leon and Jane Stevens; John and Rose Wood; Marion and Glenda Cobbler; Ted and Brenda Kirby; B H Cooper Farm; Dewey Moss and Roger Wilson; Clarence and Darrell Mitchell; Chester Turner; and John F. Clark.

The Patrick Soil and Water Conservation District office, along with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, are proud sponsors of the Clean Water Farm Award. These individuals are role models who encourage others' stewardship. Agricultural Producers spend time, energy and hard-earned money carrying out conservation practices that benefit many people. There are 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout Virginia. If you would like to nominate someone for the Clean Water Farm Award or schedule a field visit to sign up for Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share, please feel free to contact the Patrick SWCD office at 276-694-2911. (Photo credits Sandra Heath)

Eagles club donates to Shop With A Cop program



The Stuart Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4007 donated \$1,500 to the Shop With A Cop program in Patrick County! All the members want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas!

Café awarded plaque for 50 year milestone



Representatives from the Town of Stuart, Town Council and the Tourism Department were on hand recently to present a plaque to Denny Alley, owner of the Coffee Break Café, for the eatery's 50 years in business. Alley (third from left, holding plaque) is pictured with Stuart officials, and those from the Tourism Department.

Worley Machine celebrates 50 years



Worley Machine Enterprises in Woolwine, Va celebrates their 50th year in business. The company also recognized two employees for 40 years of dedicated service. Ronnie Harbour and Clinton Connor both received 40 year plaques for their service, which is an unbelievable achievement. Ronnie Harbour (left), Don Worley, president center) and Clinton Connor (right) are pictured.

Feedback sought by VDOE on draft overdose response guidelines

To help ensure that parents are notified by their child's school division in the occurrence of a school-related overdose, the Virginia Department of Education is offering a series of feedback sessions for parents, educators, and community members to share their thoughts on the Virginia Board of Education's newly proposed School-Connected Overdose Response and Notification Guidelines to help local school divisions develop effective action plans for school-connected overdoses and timely parental notification.

The proposed guidelines build upon Gov. Glenn Youngkin's Executive Order 28, issued in October 2023, which mandated that schools notify parents within 24 hours of any school-connected overdose. The executive order followed nine opioid-related overdoses in Loudoun County schools. Final parental notification guidance for school divisions was released by the VDOE in February 2024. Senate Bill 498, passed by the General Assembly in 2024, further required the Virginia Board of Education to create comprehensive guidelines addressing overdose response and notification.

Virtual Feedback Sessions Announced

To ensure public involvement in shaping these policies, the VDOE is hosting three virtual feedback sessions:

Thursday, January 9, 2025 — 5:30-7 p.m.

Monday, January 13, 2025 — 5:30-7 p.m.

Tuesday, January 14, 2025 — 5:30-7 p.m.

Participants must register to attend or speak at these sessions via Zoom. Feedback can also be submitted through an online public comment form.

These sessions provide an opportunity for community members to express their expectations and concerns regarding the guidelines and to contribute to the policies that will shape how schools respond to and communicate about overdoses.

Those interested in participating in the virtual sessions or sharing feedback on the guidelines can visit the VDOE's Substance Use and Overdose webpage at <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/parents-students/parent-resources/substance-use-and-overdose> for registration and additional resources.

Matching grants now available to Virginia dam owners

Owners of the commonwealth's more than 2,500 regulated dams may now apply for matching grants from the Virginia Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund.

A total of \$5 million is available for dam safety projects.

The fund is managed by the Virginia Resources Authority on behalf of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. "These grants will assist dam owners to take necessary steps to safeguard lives, property, and increase local communities' flood resilience. Dam safety is key to protecting public safety and we encourage all eligible dam owners to apply," said DCR Director Matthew Wells.

Dam owners in Virginia are responsible for the safe operation and maintenance of their dams. In the event of a failure, dam owners are responsible for any downstream damage.

All grants are reimbursements and require a 50% match. The maximum amount per grant will be determined based on

amounts requested for eligible projects, application scores and available funds.

Requests must be submitted by 4 p.m., Feb. 28, 2025.

Grants are offered to local government or privately owned dams across three project type categories:

Type 1 projects Unknown hazard dams: up to \$1 million is available for initial engineering studies for dams with Unknown Hazard classifications.

For the following two categories, a total of \$4 million in matching funds are available:

Type 2 projects: plans, specifications, engineering studies and instrumentation

Type 3 projects: dam repairs, safety modifications or removal

Go to www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/

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Start 2025 Right
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Next Meeting is January 16th
Email: PatrickCountyGOP@GMail.com

dam-safety-funding to download the grant manual.

For more information, contact your regional dam safety engineer or email dam@dcv.virginia.gov.

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Chadbourne exhibit to open



The Stokes County Arts Council announced the opening of an exhibit of original paintings by artist Kathryn Chadbourne in the Apple Gallery. A meet and greet is scheduled for Sunday, January 12 from 3-4:30 p.m. in the Apple Gallery of the Stokes County Arts Council, 500 Main Street Danbury, N.C.

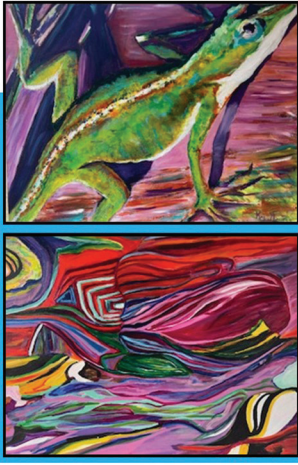
Chadbourne predominantly works in oil and acrylic painting. She began painting after she retired as a Stokes County Schools teacher. She was mentored by the late Sarah Reynolds Dixon, who was her painting instructor at Forsyth Technical Community College.

Chadbourne graduated from James Madison University. She has studied painting and participated in workshops in Richmond, VA, Little Switzerland, NC, and Pawley's Island, SC with instruc-

tors such as Jennifer Young, Ringling School of Arts Instructors, John Reedy, Karen Galahar, Connie Winters, and Curney Huffer.

Chadbourne's work has received awards and recognition. She was one of ten artists chosen by Associated Artists of Winston-Salem to paint a 5"x5" for Hanes and Companies. She won first prize at a benefit show for the Humane Society of Catawba County at the Full Circle Gallery in Hickory, NC.

The paintings in the exhibit are oils and acrylics, full of color and texture. Her paintings are inspired by photos she has taken. The images of zebras, elephants, and painted dogs are inspirations from Chadbourne's trips to South Africa, and the roosters by the ocean are inspired from images she saw in Hawaii. Other subjects, such as the fox, were seen



SCCIC Presents: An Exhibit of Original Paintings by Artist Kathryn Chadbourne
In The Apple Gallery-502 Main Street, Danbury, NC -An Opening is scheduled for Sunday, January 12 - 3:00-4:30pm.
Exhibit Dates: January 1-February 15, 2025

locally at a friend's house.

This exhibit will be on display from January 1-February 15 in the Apple Gallery. The Stokes County Arts Council is open to the public Monday through Friday, 9

a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-5

p.m. and Sunday 12-5 p.m. For additional information about the exhibit, please contact the Stokes County Arts Council at (336) 593-8159 or visit www.stokesarts.org.

Student Kiosks Implemented at SCC Learning Centers

Surry Community College has recently implemented student kiosks at its four learning centers – The Pilot Center, 612 E. Main St., Pilot Mountain; the Center for Public Safety, 1220 State Street, Mount Airy; The Elkin Center, 1461 N. Bridge St., Elkin; and The Yadkin Center, 1001 College Drive, Yadkinville.

The student kiosks are self-service digital stations that offer access to a variety of SCC services. Connected to the campus network, students can quickly find information or complete tasks without the need to interact with staff if desired. Student kiosks provide an easy and efficient way for students to access important campus student services, which include campus announcements, accessing campus resources, and

all student services needs.

Furthermore, these newly implemented student kiosks allow students to quickly complete tasks, saving time and reducing the need to drive to SCC's Dobson campus for answers to simple inquiries. Students will be able to stay organized, stay informed, and manage their day-to-day activities in a more efficient manner by using the resources at the kiosks. Immediate access to necessary services and information is especially important for nontraditional or part-time students who may not find themselves on campus regularly.

Not only do these kiosks improve student efficiency, but they also improve operational efficiency among staff by answering standard

inquiries. College personnel can then handle more complex matters, improving overall campus workflow. In addition, kiosks help reduce administrative workload and improve student experience by offering a self-service alternative, leading to student satisfaction.

"Student kiosks are a game-changer for both students and colleges," mentions Forrest Lineberry, Vice President of Student Services. "They empower students by giving them more control over their academic experience, while also streamlining administrative operations. In an age where technology plays such a central role in our lives, it makes sense to integrate these tools to improve both efficiency and student satisfaction."



Dr. Ruberte Thiele initially pursued a career as a biomedical engineer in the medical device industry and academia. Interested in directly impacting patients' quality of life, he applied to medical school with the singular goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon. After completing additional training in robotics and navigation for partial and total joint replacement as well as revision arthroplasty, returns to the area eager to help patients get back to doing what makes them happy. When not attending one of his kid's swim meets or soccer games, he enjoys outdoor activities like biking and hiking as well as recreational basketball.

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