

Board members respond to allegations of collusion, question Marshall’s claims



Jonathan Wood Andrew Overby

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors expressed shock and confusion over a series of emails sent by fellow board member Steve Marshall, representing the Blue Ridge District. In the emails, dated January 13 and January 16, Marshall alleged potential legal violations and issues involving personnel matters.

“It is my belief that supervisors have actively engaged the assistance of members of the public and colluded with them to this end,” Marshall wrote in one email. “I believe that these actions represent intentional and willful misconduct at minimum,” he concluded in

another.

Board Chairman Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, said he was shocked when he read the emails.

“I’m unaware of any such collusion between supervisors and members of the public in order to attempt the termination or resignation of any employees. He (Marshall) stated that there had been some chatter about how we as supervisors can do and say what we please with impunity under the claim of sovereign immunity – I’ve not heard that. Obviously, that’s not the case for anybody on the board,” Wood said.

(See Board Members p.3)

Delegate proposes two-year freeze on AEP rate hikes amid rising utility costs



Del. Eric Phillips, R-Martinsville Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart

By Taylor Boyd

A proposed bill in the Virginia House of Delegates seeks to freeze Appalachian Power Company (AEP) rate increases for two years while introducing greater citizen input into the State Corporation Commission’s (SCC) decision-making process.

House Bill (HB) 2665, sponsored by Del. Will Morefield, R-Tazewell, and co-sponsored by Del. Eric Phillips, R-Martinsville, among others, was referred to the House Committee on Labor and Commerce last week.

Morefield emphasized the need for ratepayers to have a stronger voice in the SCC’s approval process. “They are the ones who make the tough decision to either pay their electric bill or buy

food,” he said.

Phillips noted the sharp increases in power bills as a pressing concern voiced by his constituents.

“We’re hearing from people with \$700 to \$1,000 power bills, and it’s just not sustainable for power rates to keep increasing at the rate that they are,” Phillips said.

The Role of the Virginia Clean Economy Act

Phillips attributed much of the rising costs to the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA), passed in 2020, which mandates a transition to 100% renewable electricity by 2045 for Dominion

(See Utility Costs p.3)



Canadian Tourists Enjoy Winter at Fairy Stone State Park Beach

These Canadian visitors had a fun afternoon on the beach at Fairy Stone State Park on a recent weekend. With summer crowds absent, these tourists had the park to themselves and had fun ‘ice skating’ and strolling on the beach. (By Pat Delaney)

State DSS Ends Corrective Action Plan with County, Highlights Staffing and Compliance Issues



Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Deputy Commissioner of Human Services Carl Ayers confirmed that the corrective action plan with Patrick County DSS has been successfully closed.

By Taylor Boyd

The Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS) has closed the corrective action plan it initiated with Patrick County DSS in May 2023. The update was shared during the Patrick County Board of Supervisors meeting on January 13.

Carl Ayers, Virginia DSS Deputy Commissioner of Human Services, explained that the plan was implemented to address critical concerns, including delays in responding to child abuse and neglect complaints, insufficient in-home services, and issues surrounding permanency planning.

“We did that back in May, and during that time specifically, there were concerns about Child Protective Services (CPS) around the timely response to abuse and neglect complaints that were coming in, around the in-home services that were being offered, around permanency, and a number of different items, and certainly around resource,” Ayers said.

Throughout the corrective action process, DSS regional staff engaged with the county on a near-weekly basis, providing technical assistance and conducting strategic planning.

“They have primarily come down here to discuss work we’ve been doing, including a ton of in-person technical assistance, doing team meetings that we do with leadership on a monthly basis, (and) doing data support,” Ayers said.

By the end of December, the state determined the local DSS had made enough progress to close the corrective action plan. However, Ayers noted lingering concerns that require attention.

Ayers highlighted Patrick County DSS’s reliance on outstation workers — emergency personnel sourced from outside the area — which he said undermines stability and increases costs.

“Whenever you’re using emergency workers, it doesn’t bring stability at all; it also costs you additional money. So, it’s much higher to use outstation workers than to invest in those inside the county,” Ayers said.

Staffing ratios also remain problematic. Ayers noted that a foster care worker in Patrick County currently manages an average caseload of 45 children, far exceeding the recommended ratio of 15:1 in the public sector.

“There’s been times over the year that DSS has had no staff in its foster care unit,” he added.

The strained staffing levels have led to other compliance issues, particularly with resource homes. Ayers explained that the county has been funding resource homes using local-only money, missing opportunities to match those funds with state and federal dollars.

“What I will tell you is the amount of money that you have spent in local-only payments is (significant). If you funded the staff to do the work, you would actually come out financially better off,” Ayers said.

Jonathan Wood, chairman of the board and representative of the Peters Creek District, sought clarity on the financial implications.

“So, we’re spending lots

(See State DSS p. 3)

Patrick Supervisors Developing Performance-Based Evaluation for Post

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors is collaborating with the county attorney to develop a comprehensive, performance-based evaluation process for the county administrator position.

Jonathan Wood, chairman and representative for the Peters Creek District, emphasized the importance of creating a fair and structured evaluation system.

“We need it to be not based on the person but based on their performance,” Wood said. “We need help writing that to make sure that whether it’s an evaluation used for a current administrator or a future administrator, then that way it’s fair for everyone involved—the taxpayers,

the citizens of the county, as well as the employee

the

Wood explained that the board is currently working to establish the evaluation framework, as it appears the county lacks a formal process.

“So, we want to make sure there’s one in there,” he said.

Historically, Wood believes the evaluations have been informal. “In the past, I think it’s been more of a ‘you’re doing good’ or ‘you’re not doing good’ type of evaluation. I want something pen to paper to make sure that it’s for the best interest of everyone involved,” he said.

The board anticipates that current County Administrator Beth Simms’ evaluation will take place midyear.

“An exact date has not been set, but that will give us enough time to get the evaluation element back, look over it, and make sure we’re good with it. We’ll make any changes that we as the county and the board of supervisors want to make. That way, it’s evaluating exactly what we want as well,” Wood said.

Simms, who returned to work in January following maternity leave, had been scheduled for an evaluation after her return, according to former chairman Doug Perry, of the Smith River District, in October.

The new evaluation process aims to enhance accountability and provide clear expectations for the county administrator role while aligning with the board’s goals and priorities.

P&HCC Receives TRRC Grant for Building Trades Expansion

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) is one of five community colleges awarded a Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (TRRC) grant for workforce training programs. P&HCC will use the \$129,527 grant for expanded electrician training via a mobile training lab.

P&HCC has experienced great growth in both employer demand and enrollment in building trades programming in the last two years, and is working on planned expansions of multiple building trades training programs. P&HCC will bring training to students with barriers that prevent or make it difficult to travel to the college's main campus. TRRC funding will support equipment needed to offer expanded electrician training and Greenlee/NC3 certifications. This equipment will be housed in an existing mobile trailer and will be used at P&HCC's Patrick County site, The Franklin Center, and to serve the Henry County Adult Detention Center, in conjunction with classroom space at each location. Students participating in training in the mobile lab can earn



Greenlee certified instructor Lionel Nolen shares equipment from the P&HCC industrial electronics course that will be included in mobile lab instruction.

up to 11 industry recognized certifications. "P&HCC began offering training with embedded Greenlee certification programming in April 2023 and has had great success with the program," said P&HCC Vice President for Workforce, Economic, and Community Development Rhonda Hodges, adding, "We anticipate being able to serve 40 students each year through the mobile lab." In addition to preparing electricians to work in the P&HCC service region, localities will benefit from the mobile lab's opportunity for more accessible training. This is particularly beneficial for residents

of Patrick and Franklin County, many of whom may be prevented from receiving training due to transportation barriers. For incarcerated individuals in the Henry County Adult Detention Center, it represents an opportunity to earn training that is otherwise entirely inaccessible to them. For all participants, this training will provide training and industry recognized certifications for an in-demand career path. Individuals with electrical training will positively impact a variety of building trades employers, who report the need for trained employees, in all localities.

Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

- *Daniel Lee Kindrick, 65, of Richmond, was charged Jan. 3 with probation violation. Chesterfield PD made the arrest for Patrick County.
- *Mary Kay Cox, 49, address unavailable, was charged Jan. 3 with two counts of probation violation. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.
- *Chessie Ann Rakes, 44, of Martinsville, was charged Jan. 4 with one count each possession of Sch. I or II drugs and possession of firearm on/about person w/Sch. I/II drugs. Sgt. J.G. Pickerel made the arrest for Martinsville.
- *Meghan Nicole Elias, 37, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 4 with possession of Sch. I or II drugs. Master Deputy E. Sain was the arresting officer.
- *Zachary Ty Johnson, 27, Stuart, was charged Jan. 9 with a warrant of extradition. Sgt. J.D. Lewis was the arresting officer.
- *Zachary James Denny, 28, address unavailable, was charged Jan. 10 with two counts of probation violation. Martinsville PD made the arrest for Patrick County.
- *Joshaua William Pfuntner, 40, of Chesapeake, was charged Jan. 12 with two counts of probation violation. Norfolk PD made the arrest for Patrick County.
- *Gregory Wayne Moore, 27, of Bassett, was charged Jan. 12 with first offender violation. Senior Depu-

- ty M.R. Hodges made the arrest for Franklin County.
- *Raekwon Keyon Manns, 28, address unavailable, was charged Jan. 13 with three counts of probation violation. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.
- *Martha Sue Silva, 46, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 13 with assault and batter. Sgt. J.G. Pickerel was the arresting officer.
- *Lawrene Eugene Mishoe, 61, of Fieldale, was charged Jan. 14 with two counts of probation violation. Master Deputy E. Sain was the arresting officer.
- *Gerardo Nolasco, 63, of Bassett, was charged Jan. 15 with petty larceny. Lt. D.L. Foley was the arresting officer.
- *Christopher Lee Rhodes, 42, of Bassett, was charged Jan. 15 with two counts of probation violation. Deputy Robert Dillon was the arresting officer.
- *French Andrew Bailey, 35, of Martinsville, was charged Jan. 15 with two counts each probation violation. Senior Deputy M.R. Hodges was the arresting officer.
- *Franklin D. Rose, Jr., 39, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 16 with six counts of violation of protective order and one count unlawful dissemination of image. Inv. Tennille E. Jessup was the arresting officer.
- *Jesse Lee Frye, 21, of Rural Hall, N.C., was charged Jan. 16 with a warrant of extradition. Lt. D.L. Foley was the arresting officer.



Members of P&HCC's advising team are prepared to support students from their first campus visit through graduation and beyond.

Patrick & Henry Community College Wins National Award for Holistic Advising

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) is one of nine institutions selected by a panel of students as a recipient of the Advising Success Network (ASN) Student Choice Award for Holistic Advising. This award recognizes postsecondary institutions whose holistic advising redesign efforts reflect a commitment to the inclusion of the student voices and perspectives. Along with the ASN recognition, P&HCC receives \$5,000 made by NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education to support student voice and engagement efforts.

"Funds from the award would be allocated to expanding student engagement initiatives and addressing food insecurity on campus. Enhancing student engagement and fostering a sense of connection to the campus community are crucial for improving retention," said Meghan Eggleston, P&HCC's dean of student success, adding, "To meet these needs, the college aims to focus on organizing events specifically designed for special populations, helping them build stronger connections with both the campus and their peers."

In January 2023, P&HCC established the Student Success Division and adopted a tiered holistic advising model aimed at fostering trust and collaboration between students and advisors to enhance student success. The division integrates Admissions, Advising, Financial Aid, The Student Success Center, TRIO programs, and Dual Enrollment, streamlining their efforts to improve the student experience. P&HCC students can meet with advisors and coaches by phone, in-person, via zoom, or via email.

P&HCC has Tier 1 advisors stationed across campus to ensure students can easily access help. These advisors generally support students through their first 15 credits and may specialize in specific areas such as Health Sciences, Technical Studies, International Students, and Athletes. Tier 1 advisors often meet students early in their academic journey and provide continuous support throughout their time at the college. While Tier 2 advisors focus on academic and career guidance

within specific disciplines, Tier 1 advisors continue to support students throughout their academic journey. They assist with course substitutions, enrollment, financial aid, and connect students with comprehensive support services such as tutoring, the food pantry, laptop loaner programs, and emergency funds.

P&HCC's College Success Coach program offers specialized assistance, particularly for first-generation college students. The Student Success Center features a variety of resources, including a food pantry, meal voucher coupons for campus dining, a clothing closet with interview attire, a textbook lending library, a laptop loaner program, an internet hotspot loaner program, and an emergency fund for unforeseen expenses.

Advising and student support services are essential to students' progress in college. Advising is often one of the only regular, structured, and focused touchpoints that institutions have with their students. When done well, advising has been proven to be one of the most significant determinants of students' success. Strong advising environments can provide a safe space within higher education where students' voices and motivations can be heard, personal stories can be shared, and campus climate issues can be unearthed, particularly for racially minoritized and poverty-affected students. Recently, the term holistic advising – looking at students through not only a purely academic lens, but rather as a whole person – has become a central design element in student support services.

The Student Choice Awards for Holistic Advising recognize postsecondary institutions that have undergone holistic advising redesign efforts supported by cross-functional teams and centering student experiences to increase completion and success indicators for Black, Latino/a/x, Indigenous, Asian, and Pacific Islander students and poverty-affected students. Student reviewers will present these awards to institutions that demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion of student voices and perspectives.

Norris

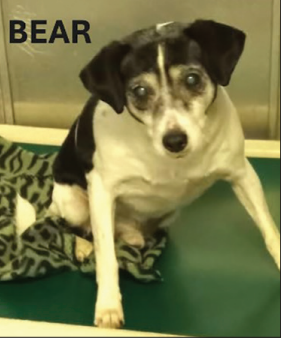
Memorial Services

Visit our website for pricing:

www.norrismemorialservices.com

1500 Kings Mtn Rd.
Martinsville, VA,
276-638-2778

Pets of the Week



Bear is a senior neutered male, mix Jack Russell terrier who would love to find a forever home.

Betty is a 3-year-old female; she is so sweet and was an owner surrender through no fault



of hers. Phoenix is a sad little pup. He is 3 to 4 months old and needs a loving home. Call the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter (PCPAS) at (276) 694-6259, visit the shelter or their Facebook page, to find other available pets in need of



a forever home. Adoption fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and rabies vaccination. The Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League provides pet food assistance and information about low-cost spay/neuter services; contact blueridgeawl@gmail.com.

APPLICATIONS FOR THE REAL ESTATE TAX RELIEF PROGRAM ARE DUE MARCH 1, 2025

The Commissioner of the Revenue office has mailed real estate tax relief applications for the Elderly and Handicapped to those who qualified last year and to those who requested applications for this year.

If you are a Patrick County resident age 65 or older, and/or were 100% disabled on December 31, 2024, and you meet the requirements you could receive a reduction in your real estate taxes up to \$300. The combined gross income of the household for 2024 year cannot exceed \$24,000. The taxpayer's total combined financial net worth as of December 31, 2024 cannot exceed \$100,000. The net worth limit excludes up to \$100,000 for the assessed value of the residence including up to one acre surrounding the residence, others requirements must be met.

The Commissioner of the Revenue office is located in room 220 in the Patrick County Veterans' Memorial Building at 106 Rucker Street, telephone number is (276) 694-7131.

Glennnda C. Morse
Commissioner of the Revenue

Board Members

(cont. from page 1)

Wood expressed concern about the lack of evidence to support Marshall’s claims.

“They’re unfounded allegations as far as I’m concerned because, as he said, they’re based on ‘beliefs’ and not on the facts,” Wood said, adding that such accusations could erode trust among board members, county staff, and residents.

He noted he would never condone trying to conduct county government in that way and believes the rest of the board feels the same way.

“To reiterate, I was shocked to hear such allegations about board members based on beliefs and not facts,” he said.

Wood also believes this could hinder the board’s ability to work together in the future.

“It’s going to create distrust between the supervisors. Making allegations, like I said, that are not founded that I know of. If they are, then we need to work those issues out,” he said.

Wood hopes Marshall will have more details at the next board meeting to share with the rest of the board.

He said he did not respond to Marshall’s email.

Board Vice Chairman Andrew Overby, of the Dan River District, accused Marshall of using the emails to intimidate and silence other board members.

“I didn’t take it well. A lot of things with Steve, you just have to ignore because he acts like he thinks he knows everything,” Overby said.

He suggested Marshall should defer legal interpretations to the county attorney.

“If he feels we have a legal issue, then he needs to discuss it with the attorney and let the attorneys handle it. and stop trying to be a Facebook attorney or an email attorney. Last time I checked, he doesn’t have a law degree, so he probably just needs to stay out of it,” Overby said.

Utility Costs

(cont. from page 1)

Energy Virginia and by 2050 for Appalachian Power.

The VCEA “requires that AEP start decommissioning coal-fired plants and moving more and more to ‘green energy,’ which is less efficient. There’s a cost to shuttering plants. There is also a cost to paying to build solar farms and wind farms and all these alternative ways of generating energy,” he said, adding solar and wind farms are less efficient and costly to build.

“At the end of the day, that cost gets passed on to the ratepayer,” Phillips said, estimating that 25% of a customer’s bill can be linked to the VCEA. For example, if someone is paying \$200 for electricity, then \$50 can be directly attributed to the VCEA.

Additionally, Virginia’s largest utilities companies can’t meet the requirements set by the VCEA, Phillips said.

“One of the largest power suppliers in the Commonwealth is so desperate to get credit for solar energy that they sell their solar power into the grid, sometimes at a negative price. In other words, they pay people to take their solar power because they have to meet these requirements. Because ultimately, it’s saying that all power companies have to be carbon-neutral by a drop-dead date within sometime in the next decade-and-a-half or so, which is just not going to happen,” he said.

Phillips said while Republicans would prefer to re-

“I just think it was inappropriate for him to be sending those types of emails,” he added.

Overby didn’t respond to the emails.

Supervisor Doug Perry, of the Smith River District, initially said he was unable to recall the specific emails but referenced a previous controversy involving former interim supervisor Jane Fulk. “The whole deba- clery (sic) ... and how she got ahold of, or took some, contract wordage, twisted things around, misrepresented them, and started the whole rumor control and misrepresented facts.”

Perry said Fulk did the same thing with the Emergency Management Services (EMS) issue involving the hiring of a new Fire Chief, which led to several residents getting “fired up.”

“She even watched who was coming in and out of the interviews, created a very toxic environment, which was why the first guy never even took the position. She had the guy from Franklin County hired before the first guy even turned the position down, so just her little stunts is the only thing that I know of,” he said.

After recalling Marshall’s emails, Perry said he tried to make sense of Marshall’s emails, and assumed he was referring to Overby’s questioning of the contracts.

“Was it unfair, did it cross lines – that could be argu- able,” Perry said. “Plus, he’s new and trying to figure things out. But like I said, Jane’s little stunt is the only thing that I know of that’s happened,” he said.

Perry said Overby may have crossed some lines back in December when he was trying to talk about the county administrator’s contract while she was not present.

“I mean, that’s not on” County Administrator Beth Simms. “That’s on the board that did the contract, and by playing 50 questions with Mrs. Simms, then that would certainly be pressure and stress on her,” Perry

said.

Perry believes the board also needs to stop point- ing fingers, and if something’s not right take action to make it right.

“There seems to be a movement to trash the county. Too many people with agendas and making things up and twisting facts around, misleading people, and it’s going to be the end of this county. People think that Mrs. Simms is doing a horrible job – she’s doing an amazing job. She’s cleaning up stuff that should have been cleaned up years and years ago,” he said.

Perry believes if the county loses Simms as its ad- ministrator, it would cost at least \$160,000 to find a re- placement. He noted some counties around the same size as Patrick still can’t replace their administrators for that amount.

“Mrs. Simms is highly qualified and she’s doing an amazing job, and I don’t know why these people are just so bound and determined to tear this coun- ty down. Something’s going to have to be done or the state’s gonna end up taking the county over,” Perry said.

Supervisor Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, was also surprised by the emails.

“I just don’t understand what his (Marshall’s) angle is. If he’s got a problem with what some of the rest of us do, then just say it to us, and don’t go write up some kind of legal stuff you can’t understand,” Kend- rick said.

Kendrick dismissed Marshall’s actions as an at- tempt to exert control over the board.

“He’s just trying to bully us and get it to where he can do whatever he wants to do. I’m too hardheaded for that,” Kendrick said.

He also did not respond to the emails.

Marshall did not respond to requests for comment.

peal the VCEA or at least amend it to extend dead- lines, the current Democratic control of the General Assembly makes such changes unlikely.

“We can’t afford to pay for this green energy agen- da overnight,” Phillips said, warning that rates will continue to climb as utilities face increasing pres- sure to meet the law’s requirements.

“There’s no end in sight as it gets closer to these dates. I mean, they’re going to have to get more ag- gressive, these power companies, to do these things, so I think you’ll continue to see rates climb,” he said.

HB 2665 proposes freezing AEP’s rate increases for two years to provide lawmakers time to seek bi- partisan solutions “and maybe come up with some kind of compromise, some new ideas on ways to keep it from being completely passed onto the consumer.”

However, Phillips acknowledged the bill faces an uphill battle.

“It’s going to be difficult to get this passed, but we’ve got to try and do what we can,” he said.

The SCC ultimately decides whether to approve rate increases or not. Phillips said the General As- sembly has no authority in rate increase approval.

“We can’t ultimately approve or deny a rate change, but we can direct the SCC to do certain things in that regard,” he said.

Noting it will be a hard fought battle to gain ap- proval for the proposal, Phillips said it does have some bipartisan support with a Democrat among

the chief co-patrons.

“You never know with a bill till it gets there what’s going to happen. I would say it’s going to have an uphill battle, but we’ve got to do something,” Phil- lips said. “We’ve got to try and do what we can do and hope that we can get some support for this bill to figure out some of these issues.”

Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, expressed skepti- cism about HB 2665, cautioning that a rate freeze could lead to larger increases after the two-year pe- riod ends.

Williams also noted that a freeze would prevent rates from decreasing during the period, potentially locking in higher costs.

“I believe the proposed legislation is trying to fix the problem, but it’s going about it in a nuanced way that’s just going to cause more problems down the road,” he said. “What’s going to happen two years from now is bills are going to be quadrupled. I don’t agree with the legislation, I don’t think that’s the right fix.”

Williams has introduced his own bill, HB 1588, to address the issue by prohibiting electricity rate increases during the winter months of November through February. The proposal has bipartisan sup- port, including co-sponsorship by Phillips.

In a January 16 Facebook post, Williams de- scribed his bill as a practical measure to provide re- lief to ratepayers during colder months.

State DSS

(cont. from page 1)

of extra money that we shouldn’t be because we’re basically doing some paperwork wrong and we’re not getting money from the state or feds. Is that cor- rect?” Wood asked.

Ayers confirmed and emphasized the need for lo- cal investment in staffing to resolve the issue.

“We have helped you solve that problem, but we cannot staff your agency going forward. That’s where we are turning to you,” Ayers said.

Wood asked if the department had unfilled po- sitions or simply lacked adequate roles. Ayers re- sponded that while positions had gone unfilled, the current staffing configuration is insufficient to meet

compliance requirements.

“You need two additional positions within that to bring that caseload down to the maximum, which is 15:1,” Ayers said.

Steve Marshall, Blue Ridge District supervisor, suggested hiring three employees to further reduce the caseload and take on additional administrative responsibilities, which would help address record- keeping issues under the Child Services Act (CSA).

“We should really strive for three employees and bring that down to low 15. If I’m not mistaken an extra employee could also take on other administra- tive duties which would take care of some of the re-

cordkeeping that has to go over the CSA (Child Ser- vices Act) for things to be paid there on time. Just a thought,” Marshall said.

Marshall also pointed out that the state would cover more than 80 percent of the costs for these ad- ditional positions.

“The problem is when we don’t have the paper- work done, we end up paying 100 percent,” Marshall said.

Ayers encouraged the board to plan for these changes in the upcoming fiscal year to ensure con- tinued progress and financial stability for the de- partment.

Stuart man airlifted after shooting incident

A Stuart man was airlifted after being shot on Thursday, January 23, according to Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith.

The incident occurred when Griffith Coy Goodyear, 34, of Salem Highway, allegedly went to the home of James Hazelwood, 78, of 3382 Big A School Road in Stuart.

The Patrick County E911 Communication Center received a call from Hazelwood around 8:30 a.m., Smith said. Once Goodyear arrived, Hazelwood looked out his window and allegedly saw Goodyear beating Hazelwood’s vehicle with an iron pipe. Hazelwood al- leged that Goodyear then approached his residence,

still armed with the pipe, and began to beat the home, breaking out several windows.

Goodyear then allegedly began to beat the front door of Hazelwood’s home with the pipe, eventually break- ing the door open. At that point, Hazelwood allegedly fired one round from a .38 caliber handgun, striking Goodyear, who then retreated from the front door, got into his vehicle, and began to back down the driveway.

Patrick County Sheriff’s Sgt. Lewis Carroll, In- vestigator Faith Hubbard, and Investigator Brian Hubbard encountered Goodyear as he entered Big A School Road. The deputies rendered aid to Goodyear, who was eventually airlifted to Baptist Hospital in

Winston-Salem. Goodyear’s condition is not known at this time.

According to Smith, Goodyear and Hazelwood were past acquaintances. A permanent protective order is on file against Goodyear to have no contact with Ha- zelwood. The permanent protective order was initiat- ed by Hazelwood and served by law enforcement on Goodyear on April 26, 2024. It remains active until April 2026.

Hubbard and Investigator Robbie Haynes are lead- ing the ongoing investigation, with assistance from the Patrick County Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office.

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS & COUNCIL MEETING REGARDING VACANCY ON STUART TOWN COUNCIL

The Town of Stuart will hold two meetings to address the vacancy on the Stuart Town Council:

1. Public Hearing

- Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025
- Time: 7:00 PM
- Location: Council Chambers, Stuart Town Office, 100 Patrick Avenue
- Purpose: The Town Council will announce the names of all individuals being considered for interim appointment to fill the vacant Town Council seat.

2. Regular Council Meeting

- Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025
- Time: 7:00 PM
- Location: Council Chambers, Stuart Town Office, 100 Patrick Avenue
- Purpose: The Town Council will appoint a qualified voter to fill the vacancy.

Important Information:

- These meetings are being held in accordance with Section 24.2-228 of the Code of Virginia.
- Public Comment: You can submit comments in writing to the Town of Stuart at PO Box 422, Stuart, VA 24171 until 4:00 PM on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, or by emailing information@stuartva.org.
- Accessibility: If you plan to attend and have any special needs requirements, please call 276-694-3811.

For additional information, please contact:
Bryce Simmons, Town Manager
Phone: 276-694-3811

LEGAL

**TRUSTEE’S SALE OF
328 BOAZ POND LANE, STUART, VA 24171**

In execution of a Deed of Trust in the original principal amount of \$176,500.00, with an annual interest rate of 3.875000% dated April 29, 2005, recorded among the land records of the Circuit Court for the Patrick County as Deed Instrument Number 050001317, the undersigned appointed Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction all that property located in the Patrick County, at the front of the Circuit Court building for the County of Patrick located on the corner of Blue Ridge and Main Streets, 101 West Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, Virginia on March 12, 2025 at 11:00 AM, the property with improvements to wit: S MAYO R TRACT 8 PL:279-G I#040001841 Tax Map No. 5010-8 THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder’s deposit of 10% of the sale price, will be required in cash, certified or cashier’s check. Settlement within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Trustees may forfeit deposit. Additional terms to be announced at sale. Loan type: Conventional. Reference Number 24-296314. PROFESSIONAL FORECLOSURE CORPORATION OF VIRGINIA, Substitute Trustees, C/O LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP, Mailing Address: 10130 Perimeter Parkway, Suite 400, Charlotte, North Carolina 28216 (703) 449-5800.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK

LEGAL

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION
The Patrick County School Board will hold a public input session on the 2025-2026 School budget on Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Patrick County School Board Office, 132 North Main Street, Stuart, VA 24171.

Authorized by

Jason A. Wood
Jason A. Wood
Division Superintendent

Panama Canal

U.S. foreign policy is bound for a transformation under President Trump.

After his election in November, many world leaders have established lines of communication with Trump.

Some even visited Mar-a-Lago with the then President-elect.

One issue gaining interest concerns the Panama Canal, which has operated since its opening in 1914.

France was an original sponsor in constructing a canal. A canal could pay immense dividends for trade and commerce in the region by drastically cutting distance and travel time from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean.

Otherwise, countries were subject to traveling around the continental mass of South America via the Strait of Magellan.

After a French effort went bankrupt and high mortality rates consumed the canal project, U.S. President Teddy Roosevelt advocated for United States involvement in constructing a canal in the region.

This was not the first time the United States had sought influence over infrastructure projects in the region.

In 1850, the United States helped develop the Panama Railroad.

A deal to give the canal project to the U.S. was put in place, but the Colombian government rejected the measure.

To circumvent the Colombian government, Roosevelt supported the separation of Panama from Colombia.

Although the Colombians sent troops in an attempt to thwart Panamanian rebels, U.S. troops were present in the area to support the rebels.

After recognizing the new Panamanian government, a treaty was signed with this new nation of Panama. The treaty granted rights to the United States to



Morgan Griffith

Representative

build and control the Panama Canal Zone and its defenses.

In May of 1904, the U.S. took formal control over the canal property. Through American engineering prowess and determination, the Panama project was completed in 1914.

The project was the single most expensive construction project in U.S. history at the time.

America later facilitated formal relations between Panama and Colombia as the U.S. continued its control over the territory encompassing the Panama Canal Zone.

American control over the territory lasted for decades.

Later, President Jimmy Carter negotiated a deal with the Panamanian government to cede control of the territory to Panama. While I disagreed with that policy decision, the one positive aspect of the Carter giveaway was that the country of Panama guaranteed that usage of the waterway would be permanently neutral.

Despite the shift in control over the waterway, traffic through the Panama Canal continues to grow. According to Panama Canal Authority sources, traffic through the canal in some years has exceeded 14,000 ships.

BBC reports that between October 2023 and September 2024, China accounted for 21.4% of the cargo volume transiting the Panama Canal, making it the second-largest user after the US.

We see private and state-owned Chinese investments in infrastructure projects like ports and termi-

nals, including those in the Panama Canal, springing up all over the world. Landbridge Group and CK Hutchison, a Hong-Kong based company, operate some of these ports.

Chinese companies now control ports at both ends of the canal.

Chinese national security laws require private companies within their jurisdiction to assist in intelligence gathering or military operations.

These ports see high volumes of Chinese and American ships passing through. Could China compel these ports to be converted for military use?

In 2023, then-Southern Command chief Gen. Laura Richardson said:

“There’s five state-owned – Chinese state-owned enterprises along the Panama Canal. And so what I worry about is the – is the being able to use it for dual use. Not just civilian use, but flip it around and use it for military application.”

During a 2024 Congressional hearing, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) raised concerns about the Chinese government potential to exert control over Panamanian ports: the CCP could use its control of the canal’s entry points and “could decide to delay American civilian and military shipping” particularly in an event of conflict.

The charges of transit through the Panama Canal have also increased, disproportionately hurting American ships as we use the Panama Canal more than any other country in the world.

Article III Section (c) of the permanent neutrality agreement says that tolls and other charges must be “just, reasonable, equitable and consistent with the principles of international law.”

Given these national security concerns and threats to the terms as agreed upon in the Jimmy Carter giveaway deal, it makes sense why recently confirmed Secretary of State Marco Rubio will visit Panama soon.

As China makes inroads in the Western Hemisphere and around the world, we need to maintain a strong defensive position and I know President Trump will project a strong image in foreign policy.

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

Letters to the Editor

Turnaround and Service Improvements at the Transfer Station

In a recent newspaper, one of our County Supervisors, Mr. Perry, mentioned the success of the county Transfer Station in the story. He is correct, as it has made a tremendous turn around. This was due to many factors. The prior Transfer Station Manager submitted a procedural recommendation to the County Administrator, which she in turn changed into a policy that was advantageous to the citizens of Patrick County.

Then hiring of the new Transfer Station Manager and his staff is another win for Patrick County. They have made many internal changes which have not only

made an impact financially to the county, but have enhanced the services provided to our citizens and streamlined procedures and processes that save time and money. They are very cognizant of the value of saving a dollar for the county.

As the Director of Facilities, I want to be sure to recognize the people that make things happen as I am just a small portion of this success. The credit goes to the operators, they are the ones that make things happen.

Michael McGuinness,
Director of Facilities
Patrick County

Sports Briefs

By Ashlee Mullis

Varsity Girls Win at Carroll

The Varsity Girls Basketball Team traveled to Carroll County, Thursday, January 16, getting a 51-33 win over the Lady Cavaliers. Lilly Hazelwood led the Cougars with 15 points, 8 rebounds, 1 assist, and 2 blocks. Gracen Conner had 9 points, 9 rebounds, 4 assists, 2 deflections, 3 steals, and 1 block. Kimora Wimbush had 7 points, 10 rebounds, 1 assist, 4 deflections, 1 steal, and 6 blocks. Kendra Worley had 7 points, 5 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 deflection, and 5 steals. Abigail Royall had 7 points, 2 rebounds, and 1 assist.

Lady Cougars Beat Glenvar

The Lady Cougars won 46-13 on the Road at Glenvar, Monday, January 13. Lilly Hazelwood had 11 points, 7 rebounds, 1 assist, 4 deflections, 5 steals, and 1 block. Kimora Wimbush had 11 points, 6 rebounds, 1 assist, 4 deflections, 4 steals, and 1 block. Gracen Conner had 7 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, and 2 steals. Journey Moore had 6 points, 2 rebounds, 3 assists, 6 deflections, and 3 steals.

JV Girls Beat James River

The JV Lady Cougars got a 26-20 win over James River, Tuesday, January 21. Martina Hubbard led the Cougars with 13 points, 8 steals, and 1 rebound. Meredith Wood scored 4 points, 7 rebounds, and 4 steals. Kenzie Sanchez had 4 points, 6 steals, and 4 rebounds. Bella Martin had 3 points, 6 rebounds, and 2 steals. Bella Wright had 2 points, 4 steals and 3 rebounds. Bella Mashburn had 3 rebounds and 2 steals. Tiffany Eckrote had 4 rebounds. Jenna Woods had 2 rebounds and 2 steals. Shianne Townsend had a beautiful assist. Alexa Rivero had 1 steal.

Coach Grace Helms said, “They had a 6-foot post player that scored 15 of their points. I am proud of the ladies for tuning into my voice at the end of the game. The gym got loud. James River led the first quarter 5-2. We took the lead in the 2nd quarter

and played good defense the rest of the night.”

JV Girls Get Road Win

The JV Lady Cougars won 32 to 20 on the road when they travelled to Carroll County, Thursday, January 16. Martina Hubbard led the Cougars with 9 points, 6 rebounds, 3 steals, and 1 assist. Kenzie Sanchez added 7 points, 9 rebounds, 4 steals, and 2 assists. Meredith Wood had 6 points, 9 rebounds, and 2 steals. Bella Wright had 4 points, 6 rebounds and a steal, and Tiffany Eckrote added 6 points. Bella Martin had 1 rebound, 1 steal and 1 assist. Bella Mashburn had 4 rebounds, Shianne Townsend had 1 steal, Jenna woods had 1 rebound, and Alexis Rivero had a steal.

Coach Grace Helms said, “These ladies played a fantastic game. We came out in the first quarter slow, losing 5 to 6. They started playing their game the 2nd quarter, going up 18-10. We only had 5 turnovers total tonight. I am so proud of how far these ladies have come. The first game we had a total of 35 turnovers. We rebounded so well tonight and moved the ball to get open shots!”

JV Ladies Win at Home

The Lady Cougars hosted Allegheny, Tuesday, January 14, getting a 27-9 win. Martina Hubbard led Patrick County with 12 points, 7 steals, 6 rebounds, and 1 assist. Kenzie Sanchez had 6 points, 4 steals, 3 rebounds, and a block. Bella Wright had 5 points, 5 rebounds, and 2 steals. Tiffany Eckrote had 3 points, 3 rebounds, and a block. Meredith Wood had 6 rebounds, 1 steal, and 2 assists. Shianne Townsend had 2 rebounds and 1 steal. Bella Mashburn had 2 rebounds and a steal. Bella Martin had 2 rebounds, Jenna woods had 3 rebounds, and Alexis Rivero had a steal.

“I am proud of their growth,” said Coach Grace Helms. “They played team ball and are putting it all together. We played hard. I love the ladies’ determination.”

Big second half lifts James River over Lady Cougars

By Pat Delaney

The Patrick County High Lady Cougars got off to a good start against the visiting James River Lady Knights on January 21. The Lady Cougars played the 12-1 Lady Knights tough, but the shots wouldn’t fall in the second half, allowing the visitors to leave with the 28-42 win.

The Lady Cougars started strong, taking an early 4-0 lead off two Journey Moore steals and layups. Both teams played tough defense throughout the first quarter, with neither team able to get any real momentum.

Going into the second quarter tied at 12, the tough defense continued, denying either offense quality looks at the basket. After falling behind by four points at the midpoint of the quarter, 14-18, the Lady Cougars held the Lady Knights to just 1 point in the last four minutes. A Kendra Worley three-point shot with :15 to go in the half gave the Lady Cougars a 21-19 lead at the break.

“Great first half,” said Lady Cougar head coach, of his team’s performance in the first half, holding the Lady Knights to under 20 points with solid team defense.

An early James River three-point shot gave them a one point lead in the

first minute, only to have the Lady Cougars battled back for a 26-22 lead two minutes in. James River would finish the quarter on an 11-0 run, finishing the third with a 26-33 lead.

In the second half, the Lady Cougars were able to get some good shots off in spite of the James River defense, but couldn’t catch a break with many of the shots rattling around the rim before falling out. The Lady Cougars held the Lady Knights to points in the fourth, but it was enough for James River to take the 28-42 win.

“It was one of those nights where the basket was really tiny, and they didn’t fall for us,” said Mosely. Defensively, he liked what he saw from the Lady Cougars, particularly, how they played against the Lady Knights senior Caitlin Canada. “We did a great job on Canada. She’s a good player and she makes that team go. I thought we played her well.

It’s that defensive effort that Mosely sees as the foundation for the remainder of the season. “That’s how we’re going to build on our future. We’re just a tick away from being in that top level of teams in this district.”

Kendra Worley led the Lady Cougars with 10 points. Lilly Hazelwood added 8 points and 4 rebounds.



THE ENTERPRISE
Established in 1876
USPS 523-500
P.O. Box 348 - Stuart, Va. 24171-0348
Phone (276) 694-3101 Fax (276) 694-5110
www.theenterprise.net

PUBLISHER
Michael Showell

EDITOR
Debbie Hall

ADVERTISING
Wendi Craig
advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com

The oldest continuously operated business in Patrick County
*Published each Wednesday by Virginia Media, Inc.,
P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901.*

The Enterprise encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Enterprise reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

Postmaster: send address changes to The Enterprise, P.O. Box 348, Stuart, VA 24171-0348. Subscription Rates: \$32 per year in Patrick County; \$42 per year in state, \$43 per year out of state. Single copies \$1.00.

Seasons of Lover's Leap (Part II)
By Beverly Belcher Woody

Three of my grandfather's brothers were traveling up the mountain in a pickup when an argument broke out between two of them. The boys decided to pull over at the Lover's Leap wayside to fight it out. While the two "warriors" were duking it out, the other brother went up in the woods for a minute. Unbeknownst to the fighting pair, a county deputy pulled up to observe the battle. When the third brother emerged from the woods to see his brothers being placed into the back of the police car, he yelled, "Hey fellows, wait for me!"

One of the saddest occurrences was reported in the Danville Bee on July 5th, 1956. Jerry Ray Barber, the four-year-old son of Thomas Harding Barber of Avalon Drive in Danville was having his picture taken at Lover's Leap when he suddenly turned and ran into the side of a moving car driven by a Patrick Springs man. The little boy died in the Stuart Hospital about thirty minutes after the accident happened. According to Trooper W. D. Jordan, the Barber family was having a Fourth of July picnic at Lover's Leap and the mother had just released the little boy's hand so she could take his picture.

The Danville Register reported on July 13th, 1966, about the mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of a 32-year-old Stuart man when his body was discovered about fifty feet from the wreckage of a 1962 Ford Thunderbird which had plunged over 500 feet down the mountainside at Lover's Leap. Authorities said there was no indication of speed at the time of the accident and the car had missed the retain-



Siblings James and Nancy Turner in foreground at Lover's Leap. (Photos courtesy of Sheila Turner.)

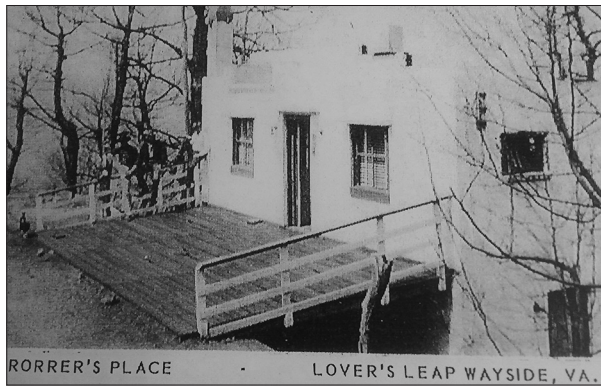
In December of 1966, two Martinsville men were found guilty of an insurance fraud scheme that claimed the life of the 32-year-old man mentioned above. The two men were charged with pushing or arranging to have pushed the car down Lover's Leap last July to collect insurance. According to the Danville Register, the 32-year-old Stuart man accidentally went over the cliff with the car as he helped push it over the edge.

The remaining numerous newspaper reports were found in various Virginia Chronicle links on the Library of Virginia website. On Sunday, August 6, 1972, a 1963 Chevrolet was found over the mountainside at Lover's Leap. Investigation revealed that the vehicle, which was 450 feet down the mountain, had all of the doors closed, and no one was found inside. A thorough search of the area failed to yield any evidence of a driver or passenger. The car was reportedly stolen on August 5th, 1972, from a Blacksburg parking lot.

A year later, on the 12th of September 1973, a 1968 Plymouth was found burning fifty feet below the Lover's Leap overlook. The vehicle was later reported stolen from Ridgeway. On September 24th, 1976, a young woman from Meadows of Dan was killed when the car in which she was a passenger crashed into the Lover's Leap Tavern (later known as the Henriedda's Bird House).



Leonard and son George Turner at Lovers Leap.



Rorrer's Place

On the 18th of January 1989, four people were traveling through the area on their way to West Virginia, when they decided to stop at the Lover's Leap overlook. A member of the group spotted a human body about twelve feet down the embankment at the overlook with his hands tied behind his back, and his head and shoulders covered with a plastic bag. Hung Van Vuong was identified at the scene by information found in the wallet in his pocket. Vuong was last seen on Tuesday, January the 10th, when he drove away from his part-time job at the Wilderness Road Truck Stop on Pepper's Ferry Road in Wytheville; he was also a full-time employee of Morton Thiokol. Vuong had escaped from Vietnam and relocated with his wife and four children to Wytheville and became a naturalized citizen.

After all this sadness, we will close on a happy note. In 1987, Fred Clifton Park at Lover's Leap wayside was opened. The 72 acres of land was purchased and donated by Carolyn and "Bill" Franck, who was chairman and chief executive officer of Tultex Corporation in Martinsville. "It's hard to put into words what Mr. Clifton means to Patrick County and this whole area," Franck said. "A list of his accomplishments and contributions wouldn't do him justice. His spirit and his manner have meant as much as his deeds." Fortunately, 90-year-old Clifton was able to attend the dedication and shared some thoughts, "My grandfather and grandmother Clifton lived in a log-bodied cabin not too far from Lover's Leap.... I'm a product of the air, soil, and water of Patrick County."

Thank you to Shirlien Belcher, Eileen Boyd, Glen Sutphin, Cheryl Sutphin, George Turner, and Sheila Turner for their contributions to this story. Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) 692-9626.

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

Dear Confused: The article you refer to was misleading for stating that the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) used to determine your Medicare premiums includes your normal Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) from your income tax return, plus any non-taxable interest you may have had, plus 50% of the SS benefits you received during the tax year. What the article should have said was

For additional clarity, the Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) is a supplemental amount added to the standard Medicare premium for those with higher incomes. The thresholds at which the IRMAA supplements apply depend on your IRS filing status, and your MAGI determines the amount of supplement which will be added to the standard Medicare premium. Single filers with MAGI over \$103,000, or married filers with MAGI over \$206,000 will see an IRMAA supplement added to their Medicare premium. Those whose MAGI is under the first IRMAA threshold pay the standard Medicare premium, but those whose MAGI exceeds the first IRMAA threshold above will pay more. How much more depends on how much their MAGI exceeds the first IRMAA threshold by. The IRMAA supplement (the additional premium amount) could be anywhere from \$69.90 to \$419.30 per month for Medicare Part B (coverage

IRMAA and MAGI can be confusing. If you have questions about your Medicare premiums, help is available at SSadvisor@amacfoundation.org, or at 1.888.750.2622.

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

By Pat Delaney

In the second half, the Lady Cougars held Glenvar to twelve points while extending their lead with smart ball movement on offense and continued stellar defensive play. In



Kimora Wimb
to the basket.

Gracen Conner led the Lady Cougars with 11 points. Journey Moore chipped in 8 points and Kendra Worley added 7 points. Kimora Wimbush had 5 points and 6 rebounds.

- **Jaci Parham (Utility)**
Batting average: .311 (42-135), 5 HRs, 25 RBIs
2024 Awards:

- For schedule updates and team news, visit the www.phccsports.com or follow the Lady Pats on social media.



By Pat Delaney

It has been a challenging month for the Cougar wrestling team. After being

For more photos, visit www.theenterprise.net.

Jayden Corns (15) led all players with 15 rebounds.

By Pat Delaney

"I thought our guys came out with good energy early," said Cougar head

Tyler Marshall led the Cougars with 11 points, 6 rebounds and 3 assists. Noah Jessup had 10 points, and sophomore Jayden Corns led all players with 15 rebounds on the night.

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports		2/4	7pm Boys Basketball vs Alleghany
Schedule for the week of February 3-8:		2/5	7pm Girls Basketball vs Carroll County
2/3	7pm Girls Basketball vs Chatham	2/6	7pm Boys Basketball at Carroll County
	7pm Boys Basketball at Chatham	2/7	7pm Girls Basketball at James River

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports		2/4	7pm Boys Basketball vs Alleghany
Schedule for the week of February 3-8:		2/5	7pm Girls Basketball vs Carroll County
2/3	7pm Girls Basketball vs Chatham	2/6	7pm Boys Basketball at Carroll County
	7pm Boys Basketball at Chatham	2/7	7pm Girls Basketball at James River

The Patrick County High School Fishing Team competed against regional high school teams in the second State Qualifier at Smith Mountain Lake. It was a tough day on the water for the team, but the anglers faced the cold temperatures and experienced competitors with their heads held high.

Evan Eastridge and Wesley Kruse placed 3rd in the Junior Division with two fish weighing in at 3.28 pounds.



Evan Eastridge and Wesley Kruse placed 3rd in the Junior Division with two fish weighing in at 3.28 pounds.

Placing in the Senior Division: Tripp Thompson and Jacob Spencer placed 10th with 7.10 pounds. Eli Wood and Parker Roop placed 16th with 3.49 pounds. Jonah Shockley and Hunter Heath placed 17th 2.72 pounds. The PCHS Fishing Team is hoping to have better luck (and warmer weather) in the Spring!

Jonah Shockley and Hunter Heath placed 17th 2.72 pounds. The PCHS Fishing Team is hoping to have better luck (and warmer weather) in the Spring!

Crossing the Lines

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

Former City of Martinsville employee files \$10 million lawsuit



Rozina Baig

Rozina Baig, a former City of Martinsville employee, filed a civil lawsuit in Henry County Circuit Court on Jan. 21 seeking \$10 million and other considerations, according to a copy of the document.

‘Complaint Of Whistleblower Retaliation Lawsuit’ is the subject of the filing, which names City Attorney (Commonwealth Attorney) Andrew G. Hall, Martinsville City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides and Edena Reese Atmore, Chief Operating Officer as defendants.

Baig, a former Chief Technology Officer in Martinsville, alleges wrongful termination, violation of the whistleblower protections, and retaliation, due to “due to adverse employment action taken against me.” She writes, “following is my good faith report of illegal and unethical conduct within the company.”

According to the document, Baig — who is representing herself in the civil suit — noted among a dozen allegations that her employment with the city began in September 2024.

She alleged the “chain of retaliation

starts on November 20th, 2024, when” Baig alleged she was directed “to create an unlawful and illegal organization chart for Information technology department.”

Baig wrote that she “completely refused” the directive, “because there are n (sic) number of several position which is not required for the organization and get funding for the position is not a best practice procedure. She honestly explains to them that she follows rules and regulations to create those types of positions.”

Baig alleged discussions of her termination began in December, and that she was “terminated without following any rules and regulations.”

The suit seeks a total of \$10 million, attorney’s fees and costs; and other relief the court “deems just and fair.”

“We are aware of the allegations listed in Mrs. Baig’s lawsuit and have started our own process of investigating the claims” Ferrell-Benavides, who received notification of the suit Thursday, said.

Spanberger Campaigns in Martinsville, Outlines Vision for Virginia



Abigail Spanberger gives her views about the challenges of running for governor.

Abigail Spanberger, the Democratic hopeful for governor of Virginia, brought her campaign to southern Virginia last week, making a stop in Martinsville on January 19. Spanberger addressed a crowd at the Virginia Museum of Natural History during an event organized by the Martinsville Henry County Democratic Committee.

Spanberger, a former CIA officer who worked undercover for several years, shared how her family inspired her move to Virginia. After living on the West Coast, it was her then five-year-old daughter who suggested relocating to be closer to family in the Commonwealth.

Spanberger emphasized her commitment to improving education in Virginia. “I want to put us on a path

to having the best public schools in the country,” she said, addressing challenges in teacher recruitment and retention. Spanberger stressed the need for proactive measures, saying the state must tackle the issue “head-on” to ensure the stability and quality of the public education system.

Housing was another key issue Spanberger highlighted, calling it a crisis that demands immediate attention. “We can’t wait another fifteen years to fix it,” she said.

She also spoke about the high cost of prescription drugs, particularly for veterans. Referencing her role in helping pass the PACT Act, Spanberger emphasized her dedication to reducing healthcare costs for those who have served the country.

County Man Reflects on Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience at Trump Inauguration

Braving freezing temperatures and navigating security barriers, Ray Reynolds fulfilled a lifelong dream by attending the inauguration of President Donald J. Trump on January 20 in the nation’s capital.

“It’s what most people, what every American, lives for,” Reynolds said. “This is once in a lifetime. I mean, Trump will not be president again. This is it—there won’t be another inauguration for Trump. It’s a chance of a lifetime.”

Reynolds, of Bassett, and a fellow GOP supporter from Hillsville, arrived in Washington, D.C., on Friday, January 17, and began the return trip on Tuesday, January 21.

Reynolds secured accommodations just two blocks from the Capitol, anticipating proximity to key events. However, security measures, including fences and road closures, turned simple trips into long walks through a maze-like setup.

“It was like a maze. We had to walk anywhere from 10 to 16 blocks every time we wanted to go to the Convention Center or anywhere downtown,” Reynolds said. “It was for security concerns, and I understand that. I just wasn’t prepared for the cold, the freezing rain, the snow.”

Despite the weather, Reynolds described the atmosphere as electric, with Trump supporters lining up in droves for events. “Anytime we went to




Henry County resident Ray Reynolds (right) poses with Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin during an event in Washington, D.C. (Contributed)

an event, the lines were three to four blocks long, and three blocks wide,” he said. “You’d have never known it was 10 or 15 degrees. Nobody was complaining — people were laughing, having a good time.”


VISIT US ONLINE

WWW.THEENTERPRISE.NET


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




1-3-5-7-9PM




1-3-5-7-9PM




1-3-5-7-9PM



1-3-5PM



7-9PM



1-3-5-7-9PM

HOLLYWOOD CINEMA

beside WALMART

Martinsville 278-858-3458

PATRICK PULPITS

What Do We Fear?

By Van Yandell

John 14: 1-3 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

Not long ago I was jogging on an abandoned logging trail in the woods behind my house. In my peripheral vision, I sensed something unusual beside the trail. My mind was a million miles away, probably preaching a sermon, writing an article or hiking a trail in the Rockies.

About fifteen feet further along, I stopped and turned around to see a diamondback rattler six feet long sunning his fourteen rattlers. A cold chill ran down my spine because I had stepped within two feet of his head.

When he realized my presence, he coiled in about one millionth of a second and was on full alert prepared to strike my leg. His head was bigger than my fist and his eyes were as looking into the eyes of Satan.

When I got back home, wife Margie took one look at my face and immediately asked, “What’s wrong?”, I’d seen (or experienced) something terrible and she could see it.

I’ve been told the strike of a diamondback is like being hit with a sledge hammer. And the subsequent days of suffering are as horrible a sickness as anyone could ever experience.

To fear something is based on previous experiences or information we have received. The information may or may not have been true. In the case of the rattle snake, I do not want to find out!

Most of our fears are unfounded but certainly not all of them. If the way we vote or our political ideologies differ from another, should that be a reason to live in fear? Can we not disagree without fear of retribution? The signers of The Declaration of Independence knew they might be signing their own death sentences by openly calling for freedom from Great Britain.

Many live in fear of scammers and identity thieves. Can a government not stop scammers or telemarketers from intimidating and cheating citizens?

The government can’t even stop the TV advertisers from broadcasting their messages at a higher volume than regular programing; even though increased volume is illegal. The mute button may be the greatest invention of mankind.

And speaking of advertisers, have you insulted your doctor by asking for a pill you saw advertised? Fear of illness is also at the top of the list of our fears. The state of American’s health has become epidemic.

Being apprehensive has become a way of life. Merchants and sales people only tell us what they want us to know. The goal is to make the

sale and “what you don’t know can’t hurt you” is a lie.

When a lung or heart patient has to step outside to grab a smoke can we question the intellect of this population? Several doctor’s office waiting rooms are furnished with over-sized chairs. Can the logical, reasonable person not see what we are doing to our bodies (1 Corinthians 6: 19)?

Perhaps our greatest fear should be of ourselves and specifically our levels of ignorance. Sun Tzu said (a Chinese military general, strategist, philosopher), “If you know the enemy and know yourself you need not fear the results of a hundred battles.”

While many of our fears exist in the “what if” category, some are legitimate and have credibility. My encounter with the rattler could have been very bad had it been coiled as I passed by.

Religion has reached a state of extreme polarization and the hatred that exists for Christians, Jews, Muslims and most any other religion has become dangerous and unreasonable (Matthew 24: 9). Violent disagreements have been known to happen even among varying Christian faiths.

We remember a time when we often heard the phrase “God fearing people.” Should we fear the one that created us (Genesis 1: 27)? Should we fear the one that loved us so much (John 15: 13) He came to us in the form of the man, Jesus (John 1: 14) and suffered and died for our sins in that we might spend eternity with Him?

The “fear of God” is a feeling of respect, being in awe of Him and knowing what the consequences are when we are not obedient. God is King. We are dependent on His mercy.

What we must fear is His wrath for our disobedience! Just as His chosen people suffered His wrath for their disobedience throughout the Old Testament, the world appears to be suffering His wrath today for the same reason.

What are we to expect in our near future? The Biblical prophesies are loud and clear. The world will continue to deteriorate into a quagmire of crime, hatred, war, pestilences and famine just as Jesus said it would (Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21).

Mankind has the ability to change but will we? At this point it doesn’t seem likely. With over eight-billion people in the world and many believing they create their own religion and write their own rules, the future appears bleak at best.

Can we return to God? Individually we can write our own futures. The Bible teaches eternal life for the believer (John 3: 16). Can we agree on one thing: eternity is much longer than our lives here on earth!

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary. His email: vmy2121@outlook.com.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Ezra (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From Proverbs 29, “But whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be ...”? Made whole, Blessed, Safe, Wise
3. What does God want us to keep as the apple of our eye? His law, Brotherly love, Faithfulness, Righteousness
4. Upon which mountain did Balaam build seven altars? Olives, Sinai, Pisgah, Carmel
5. What did David do to Go-

liath once he slew him? Stole his armor, Robbed him, Cut off his head, Buried him


6. Which is known as the “First Book of the Kings”? Judges, 1 Kings, 1 Samuel, 1 Chronicles

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Safe, 3) His law, 4) Pisgah, 5) Cut off his head, 6) 1 Samuel

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson Casey’s latest book, “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” available in bookstores and online.

(c) 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

Skyline Pentecostal Holiness Church
1515 Rock Church Rd.
Meadows of Dan, Virginia
Rev. Tommy Gosnell
CHURCH SERVICES
Sunday School 10 am
Worship Services 11 am

Risen Lord Catholic Church

59 Mountain View Loop
Stuart
(actually in Patrick Springs)
276.236.7814
Office Hours (Tue-Thu 8 am-3 pm)
Mass Schedule
Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Reconciliation
Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.

Patrick Springs Pentecostal Holiness
260 Spring Rd., Patrick Springs, VA - 276-694-6357

Sunday Worship 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:45 am
Wednesdays
Community Meal & Service 6:00 pm
Food Distribution Ministry:
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
"To Ignite a Passion to Follow Jesus Christ"

Stuart Baptist Church
Bringing the World to Christ

108 W. Blue Ridge St.
276-694-3440
www.stuartbaptist.org
9:45 Sunday School
11:00 Worship Service
office@stuartbaptist.org

Stuart Seventh-Day Adventist Church
220 Patrick Avenue, PO Box 1078, Stuart, VA 24171
276-694-7677 • www.stuartva.adventistchurch.org

SATURDAY SERVICES:
Sabbath School - 9:20; Worship 11:00 a.m.
Come visit our Bible-believing church
Join the Church Page!
Call (276) 694-3101 Today

Super Crossword

BENEFICIAL FAT

ACROSS

- 1 Diving equipment
6 Theater actor's place
11 Ray of light
15 Agts. like Eliot Ness
19 Babies, in Barcelona
20 Like meat that's OK to eat per Muslim law
21 Hamburg's river
22 Humorist Bombeck
23 — citato (in the work already mentioned)
24 Colonel North, in brief
25 "So right!"
26 Notice
27 Start of a riddle
31 Suffix with cash
32 Dollar divs.
33 Mil. roadside hazards
34 Busy Chicago airport
36 Small seed
39 Web, for a fly
41 ROY G. —
43 Moral wrong

- 44 Riddle, part 2
49 Source of a scratch from a tabby
50 Russian empress
51 Ark builder in Genesis
54 Oklahoma city
56 Saturated
57 Splits
61 Appraise
64 Cash, slangily
67 Motorists' org.
69 Meadowland
70 Riddle, part 3
74 Just get (by)
75 Be a suitor of
76 Nissan model
77 Seville's land, to its natives
78 Hip-hop bro
80 Himalayas, e.g.: Abbr.
82 Garbo of the silver screen
84 Garden in Genesis
85 Raised, flat land
89 Ohio college that was the first in the U.S. to admit women

- 92 End of the riddle
98 Luau paste
99 That lady
100 Full of curves
101 Calf catcher
103 "It's just one of — things"
105 Saturate
106 — Aviv
108 First year of the 10th century
109 Riddle's answer
116 Hair removal brand
117 Falafel bread
118 Defrosts
119 Dazzling success
120 Pakistani's language
121 Ever and —
122 Loosen, as laces
123 Dishonor
124 Apple discard
125 Camera eye
126 Verse writers
127 "— With Love" (1967 #1 hit song)

DOWN

- 1 Trap by a winter storm
2 Constellation between Cassiopeia and Draco
3 Dredge up
4 Ernie's buddy
5 "Wait just —"
6 "Dang it!"
7 Converses
8 "For — know ..."
9 Increase
10 Like a song of lament
11 Lairs for grizzlies, e.g.
12 "St. — Fire"
13 Lying on a king or queen
14 Eatery list
15 Comb parts
16 Brand of food seasoning
17 Large markets
18 Vetoer's vote
28 Piece for eight
29 Reform Party founder Ross
30 Assembly of witches
35 Rhinoplasty doc
37 Red-shelled Chinese fruit
38 Green gp.
39 Skiing races

- 40 Football Hall of Famer Ozzie
41 Part of FBI
42 Mimic
45 Mo. in fall
46 Big feather
47 Logging tool
48 Pothole filler
51 Christened
52 Japanese metropolis
53 Crooked
55 Together (with)
58 Homeric epic
59 Pasta tubes
60 "Cosmos" host Carl
62 Akron-to-Atlanta dir.
63 Belly
65 Genre for Yes and Genesis
66 "Come, Fido"
68 DOJ heads
71 Babe or fox
72 Like Cheerios
73 Key or corkscrew
79 Family MDs
81 Deep blue
83 Fido's sound
86 One of the 87-Down

- 87 Competitors who didn't win
88 Pinkie-side arm bones
90 "But Not for Me" actress Palmer
91 Home to Boise: Abbr.
92 Fitting
93 A total lack of compassion
94 Carbon — (exhaled gas)
95 Have a gabfest
96 Actor Cage
97 — Trail (Everglades highway)
102 Jousting knight
104 Play a guitar
105 Determined to achieve
106 Specifically
107 "That's someone — problem"
110 White gem
111 Climbing plant
112 "Don't say it!"
113 Statistician Silver
114 Waistcoat
115 Reverberate
116 Letters before xis

email us

DHALL@THEENTERPRISE.NET

Your relationships are why Ashbrook Audiology has corrected hearing issues for 20 years. Your relationships are more important than anything else in your life. Correcting your hearing issues positively improves every relationship you have. People just like you regain and strengthen their relationships with their family and friends everyday because they discovered Ashbrook Audiology. Come in today and experience first-hand the incredible and affordable increase in your quality of life these communication systems can bring you, and from professionals who wear hearing instruments themselves.

WE TAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS SERIOUSLY! DO YOU!



ASHBROOK AUDIOLOGY

WHERE RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

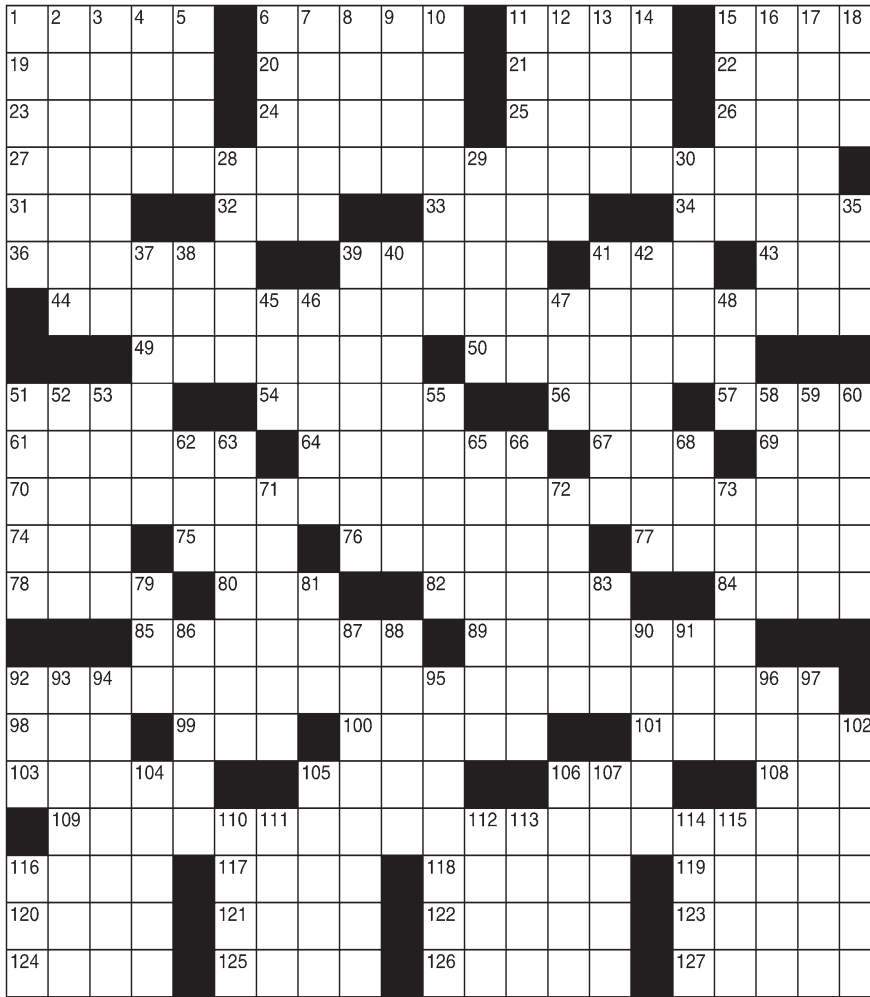


Cynthia M. Jones, AA, AS

1111 Spruce Street
MARTINSVILLE, VA
(276) 666-0401

4500 Riverside Drive
DANVILLE, VA
(434) 792-2182

1-877-610-HEAR (4327)



CLASSIFIED

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

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

CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE: MONDAY AT NOON
Call (276) 694-3101

SERVICES

KENDRICK PAVING & TRUCKING, PAVING, Sealing, Line Striping, Gravel Hauling and Mulch. Rodney Kendrick 276-629- 3913 or 276-340-7786. Email at kendrickpaving@gmail.com Carrying on the tradition of quality.

CLAYTON KENDRICK PAVING (Original Kendrick Paving) Gravel hauling and spreading, grading, mulch, dirt, pavement maintenance and striping. 42 years experience. Reasonable prices. Call (276) 694- 7786 (office) or (276)- 340-8786 (cell) Email: ckendrick@embarqmail.com or claytonk81@gmail.com

WOODWRX, INC. Est. since 1988 Carpentry/Cabinetry - fine woodworking, design, tile, closet & garage organizers, repairs, etc. Originally based in Palm Beach County- References Bob Morehouse Phone: 276-930-1703 Cell: 561-881-8292 E-Mail: Bob@Woodwrx.net Website: Woodwrx.net

THOMAS LAND SOLUTIONS LLC Forestry mulching, overgrown property cleanup, bush-hogging, pasture & field reclamation, ATV & walking trails, hunting lanes, skid-steer, tractor and mini-excavator work. Free estimates. Call 276-229-9410 or Facebook Thomas Land Solutions LLC

Morris Construction LLC Home remodeling & repairs, carpentry, roofing, siding, painting, fencing, tree work & more! Contact Nick @ 276-224-4623 or 757-621-5219.

HYDRO AIR SYTEMS Heating, Cooling & Electrical Contractors, SALES & SERVICES, Licensed in VA & NC, 276-694-7308

FOR RENT

For Rent: 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom apartments available. Located near Walmart in Stuart. Call 540-493-9835 for information.



VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.ENTERPRISE.NET



Online Real Estate Land Auction in Albemarle, VA. 187 Acres in 4 Tracts with 20 Division Rights with Timber. www.dudleyresources.com for more info.

ATTN. AUCTIONEERS: Advertise your upcoming auctions statewide and in other states. Affordable Print and Digital Solutions reaching your target audiences. Call this paper or Landon Clark at Virginia Press Services 804-521-7576, landonc@vpa.net

HOME IMPROVEMENT Vinyl Replacement Windows Installed! Starting at \$350 Call 804-739-8207 for More Details! Ronnie Jenkins II Windows, Siding, Roofing and Gutters! FREE Estimates! Call 804-739-8207 for More Details! American Made Products!

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 7-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-844-947-1479 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

Replace your roof with the best looking and longest lasting material steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer – up to 50% off installation + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-844-902-4611.

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. Plus 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-877-614-6667

Safe Step. North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-877-591-9950

The bathroom of your dreams in as little as 1 day. Limited Time Offer - \$1000 off or No Payments and No Interest for 18 months for customers who qualify. BCI Bath & Shower. Many options available. Quality materials & professional in-



stallation. Senior & Military Discounts Available. Call Today! 1-844-945-1631

PETS, DOGS, CATS If veterinary care is unavailable or unaffordable, ask for Happy Jack@ products to treat yeast infections, hook & round worms. At Southern States@.

SERVICES DIVORCE-Uncontested, \$475+\$86 court cost. WILLS-\$295.00. No court appearance. Estimated completion time twenty-one days. Hilton Oliver,



Attorney (Facebook). 757-490-0126. Se Habla Espanol. BBB Member. https://hiltonoliverattorney-va.com.

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 350 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-888-550-3083 www.dental50plus.com/virginia #6258

Portable Oxygen Con-

“We Feed What We Sell”

Economically priced and more feed value for your money.

AVAILABLE IN BAG OR BULK

- Horse Feed
- Chicken Feed
- Beef Grower Feeds
- Corn Gluten Pellets
- Sheep & Goat Feed
- Hay Stretcher
- Calf Feed
- Soyhull Pellets

Whole Beef Hamburger \$5.75/lb.
HAMBURGER PATTIES \$6.00 LB.

We buy Corn, Oats, Wheat & Barley. Call for price.




Mark Pendleton

Call for prices today!

888-777-5912

Jason Pendleton



LIVESTOCK AUCTIONS
EVERY SATURDAY AT 1 P.M.

- We sell cattle, goats, sheep & pigs.
- State Graded Feeder Sale every Saturday

For directions to our facility, weekly updates of upcoming events and current sale prices, please visit our website:
www.springlakeauctions.com.

Please feel free to call us at
(540) 297-1707.

We appreciate your business!

1069 SICKLE COURT, MONETA, VA 24121

HUGE SELECTION OF LIFT CHAIRS



Small, Medium and Large size chairs available

Starting at Only \$795

Riverside Furniture
1580 Greensboro Road
Martinsville VA
276-632-1286
Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm • Saturday 9am - 2pm



centrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 888-608-4974

We Buy Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-844-216-5028.

Switch and save up to \$250/year on your talk,

Guaranteed Paying the Most - Buying CARS & TRUCKS. Running or not, ATV's, tractors, stamps, old coins, jewelry & fire arms. **647-5563 or 806-4433**

I will clean out basements, garages, etc. and haul away anything, brush also, Free Estimates! Call Scott 647-5563 or 276-806-4433

Cedar Square Apartments

is now accepting applications for 1 BR and 2 BR apartments. Income limits do apply. Water and sewer are included in rent.

Cedar Square Apartments
210 Patrick Avenue, Stuart, VA 24171
Office number: 276-694-4922
Fax: 276-694-3786
TTY: 711
cedarsquare@chpc2.org

JAMIE'S RECYCLING CENTER

BUYING: Cans, #1 Copper, #2 Copper, Brass, Metal, Different types of Aluminum, Vehicles, Stainless Steel, etc.

Call for prices.



Roll off container & pick up service available. Call for details.

(276) 694-5692
or 276-694-5697
Hours: Mon-Fri 8 am-5 pm, closed 12-1 pm for lunch
3609 South Mayo Dr., Stuart
God Bless You



text and data. No contract and no hidden fees. Unlimited talk and text with flexible data plans. Premium nationwide coverage. 100% U.S. based customer service. For more information, call 1-855-262-5564.

We buy 8,000 cars a week. Sell your old, busted or junk car with no hoops, haggles or headaches. Sell your car to Peddle. Easy three step process. Instant offer. Free pickup. Fast payment. Call 1-844-268-4773

Max Kendall Lumber & Tin
Price Reduced
Metal Roofing

Now Made In Axton, Va.
276-650-2825
Free call 1-888-434-2825

Lynchburg, Va.
434-821-3251
Free Call 1-833-593-3251

Reidsville, NC
336-348-1600
Free call 1-833-205-1600

20 COLORS
Classic Rib – PBR Panel
Standing Seam – 5V

Buy Direct and Save!

American Made
Top Quality
Low Prices
Made Same Day
40 Year Warranty

WE FINANCE
METAL
ROOFS ON
YOUR HOME

Snow Guards
Lumber
Rough - Dressed - Treated
PACKAGE BUILDINGS
Contractors Welcome
maxkendalllumber.com
8261 Mountain Valley Rd

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Events

Saturday, Feb. 1
A JEB Stuart Birthday Party will be held at the Ararat Ruritan Club, 4711 Ararat Highway, Ararat, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free admission. The party includes music, cake, refreshments, door prizes, and items for sale.

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

Meadows of Dan Women's Club Bingo, Meadows of Dan Community Center, 2858 JEB Stuart Hwy; Doors open at 5 p.m., games start at 6. Food is available for purchase. For more information, call (276) 952-2674.

Friday, Feb. 7
A Pop-Up Farmers' & Artisan Market will be held at Calliope Circus for the Arts in Downtown Stuart from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event is held in partnership between Bull Mountain Arts, the Stuart Farmers' Market and the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce.

The community food truck will be at the Woolwine SRRS from 3-4 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 13
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will meet at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Entertainment will be provided by Roger Wells and beverages will be provided. The menu is potluck. Attendees are requested to bring their favorite meats, vegetables, and/or desserts to share.

Saturday, Feb. 15
Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department will hold a country breakfast from 6:30-10 a.m. Dine-in prices are \$10 for adult plates and \$5 for child plates. All take out plates are \$10 each. Call in orders can be made by calling (276) 930-2113.

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.

The Parks and Recreation Department is offering free Tai Chi Flow classes for seniors. The gentle, low impact exercise can help improve balance, coordination and mobility.

Classes meet on Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart, through February 27. For additional information call (276) 694-3917.

Local Forestry Award Presented



The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) and the Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District (Patrick SWCD) recently awarded Erica Hession & David Wegener with the 2024 Patrick SWCD Forestry Award. During the past year, Erica & David have been intensively managing their farm for both timber production and wildlife habitat.

In 2023, DOF Area Forester, Kevin Keith, wrote a Forest Stewardship Plan for Erica & David that made recommendations on how to properly manage their timberland and open fields. During the past year, multiple forest management projects have been completed that will help improve the overall health of the forest and improve the water quality in Patrick County.

Some of the projects that they have completed include participation in the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practice (BMP) Cost-Share Program with emphasis on the Afforestation of Crop, Hay and Pasture Land practice. This program partially funded the planting of nine acres of old fields in loblolly pine. They also completed six acres of hardwood timber stand improvement that was funded by the DOF Hardwood Initiative Cost Share Program. Lastly, DOF burned six acres of old fields to improve wildlife habitat.

For more information or to schedule a field visit, please contact Patrick SWCD District office at 276-694-2911 or the Virginia Department of Forestry at 276-634-8046.

Pictured (l to r) are David Wegener And Erica Hession recipients of the 2024 Patrick County Forestry Award along with Kevin Keith, VDOF. (By Sandra W. Heath)

Tired of driving to the landfill?



We'll pick it up at your curb!

Household pickup once a week - \$30 month

Dumpsters for residential and business use available.



WE ARE NOW OFFERING ROLL-OFF CONTAINERS.

Please call for pricing. 276-251-1303

RURAL SERVICES

Residential & Commercial Garbage Collection in P.C.

ruralservicesinc. @swva.net

THINKING ABOUT SELLING YOUR HOME?

LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

Four Rivers Realty

(276) 694-5044

21521 JEB STUART HWY
STUART, VA 24171

LINDSEY PUCKETT

✉ LPUCKETT@FOURRIVERSVA.COM

☎ 276-732-6544

💻 LINDSEYPUCKETT.COM



S	C	U	B	A		S	T	A	G	E		B	E	A	M		T	M	E	N			
N	E	N	E	S		H	A	L	A	L		E	L	B	E		E	R	M	A			
O	P	E	R	E		O	L	L	I	E		A	M	E	N		E	S	P	Y			
W	H	A	T	C	O	O	K	I	N	G		P	R	O	D	U	C	T	D	O			
I	E	R		C	T	S						I	E	D	S		O	H	A	R	E		
N	U	T	L	E	T		S	N	A	R	E		B	I	V		S	I	N				
	S	H	Y	P	E	O	P	L	E		C	O	N	S	U	M	E	T	H	A	T		
			C	A	T		C	L	A	W		T	S	A	R	I	N	A					
N	O	A	H				T	U	L	S	A		W	E	T		R	I	P	S			
A	S	S	E	S		M	O	O	L	A	H		A	A	A		L	E	A				
M	A	K	E	S	T	H	E	M	M	O	R	E	O	U	T		G	O	I	N	G		
E	K	E		W	O		S	E	N	T	R	A					E	S	P	A	N	A	
D	A	W	G		M	T	S			G	R	E	T	A			E	D	E	N			
			P	L	A	T	E	A	U		O	B	E	R	L	I	N						
A	N	D	S	O	C	I	A	L	L	Y	C	O	N	F	I	D	E	N	T				
P	O	I		S	H	E		S	N	A	K	Y					L	A	R	I	A	T	
T	H	O	S	E			S	O	A	K						T	E	L			C	M	I
	E	X	T	R	O	V	E	R	S		I	O	N	O	L	I	V	E	O	I	L		
N	A	I	R		P	I	T	A			T	H	A	W	S		E	C	L	A	T		
U	R	D		A	N	O					U	N	T	I	E		S	H	A	M	E		
S	T	E	M		L	E	N	S			P	O	E	T	S		T	O	S	I	R		

Wilderness - Stuart, Inc.

Buying Logs

Standing Timber or Timberland

Stuart, VA

Contact Ronnie Bolt at

(276) 694-4432

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

Firewater

SERVICE CENTER

1329 Scenic Drive, Stuart, VA 24171

(276) 694-7417 or (276) 358-1580

Hours: Mon - Fri 8:00 to 5:30, Sat 8:00 to 2:00

VALVOLINE AND SCHAEFFER OIL PRODUCTS

Now Offering

TIRES & FRONT END ALIGNMENT

• State Inspections

• Oil Changes using Amsoil, Valvoline & Schaeffer Oil Products

• Full Brake Service for Disc and Drum Brakes

• Replacement of Belts and Hoses

• Tune Ups

• Tire Rotations

• Starter and Alternator Replacement

• Battery Replacement



10% DISCOUNT FOR VETERANS

WHEO



92.7 FM

Classic Hits

wheoradio.com

"Small Town Station with a BIG Town Sound"

Community Foundation Awards Funds for Improvements to I.C. DeHart Memorial Park



LOVE Sign I.C. DeHart Memorial Park.

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) has been awarded grant funding to improve I.C. DeHart Memorial Park in Patrick County, thanks to the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia. Rebekah Morgan, Community Development Director for WPPDC, collaborated with the Woolwine Park Association to secure this funding.

The Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia granted \$20,000 from its Community Catalyst Funds for essential upgrades including cell service boosting equipment, weatherproof benches, ADA-compliant safety surfacing and inclusive play components for the playground, an ADA-compliant path and landing space leading to restrooms, and restroom upgrades. Additionally, the Community Impact Funds of the Community Foundation provided \$880 for the purchase and installation of a high/low shower station and bike wash station.

“We are incredibly grateful to the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia for recognizing the critical need for funding to improve the amenities at I.C. DeHart

Memorial Park and for their generous support of these much-needed upgrades,” said Morgan. “For years, the Woolwine Park Association has worked tirelessly to maintain the park as a community destination through volunteer efforts and donations alone. Parks like I.C. DeHart Memorial Park are often overlooked when funding community services, despite their vital role in fostering healthy, vibrant communities and providing spaces where people of all ages and abilities can gather, connect, and thrive.”

“The Woolwine Park Association has worked diligently to implement improvements based on community survey feedback,” Sandra Belcher, chairman of the Woolwine Park Association, said. “While previous fundraisers and donations have supported minor upgrades and operational costs, Rebekah Morgan from WPPDC has elevated the fundraising efforts significantly. Her dedicated work securing grant funding has made larger necessary park upgrades possible.”

Belcher expressed gratitude for Morgan’s invaluable support in enhancing I.C. DeHart Memorial Park



I.C. DeHart Memorial Park Entrance.

and supported future collaborations aimed at further improving the park as a community resource and tourist destination.

Morgan said the upgrades will enhance accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring the park welcomes everyone while addressing community safety and broader redevelopment goals. Investments like these improve local residents’ quality of life and support initiatives like the Mountain Spirit Trail, helping position Patrick County as a destination for tourism and outdoor recreation. This funding is a powerful reminder of how critical it is to support community spaces that enrich lives and bring people together.

I.C. DeHart Memorial Park, named after local resident Isaac “Ike” DeHart, was historically used for a grist mill and legal distillery before evolving into a favorite spot for hikers and mountain biking enthusiasts. The park, located at 2631 Charity Highway, Woolwine, VA, features amenities including a picnic shelter, playground, two tennis courts, a walking trail, a baseball field, a horseshoe pitching area, a natural wetland wildlife area, the Trail H.A.N.D.S sculpture, and mountain bike trails. It also hosts the USA Cycling Mountain Bike Virginia State Championships, Bootlegger’s Blitz, annually, with this year’s event scheduled for Saturday, March 29.

The West Piedmont Planning District is a regional planning organization serving the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the Town of Rocky Mount. The WPPDC seeks to carry out its mission by facilitating regional thinking and dialogue among the district’s local government, K-12 and higher educational institutions, economic development organizations, workforce development, and other key stakeholders. Learn more at westpiedmontpdc.org.

Nominations Now Open for P&HCC Distinguished Alumni

The Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation (P&HCC) is seeking nominations for P&HCC graduates to be named “Distinguished Alumni” during its annual awards dinner to be held on Friday, June 13. The deadline to make a nomination is February 25.

To be considered, nominees must have graduated with a degree or certificate or completed a minimum of 24 credit hours from P&HCC. They must have demonstrated success within their chosen career or field of expertise, given significant community-based services, and be able to attend the awards ceremony.

“The Distinguished Alumni honor is one of the most significant awards for P&HCC alums,” said Tiffani Underwood, Executive Director of the



Mrs. Reneé Hodges pins a boutonniere on 2024 honoree Sandy Hines.

and honors those who found Patrick & Henry Community College to be one of the foundations of their success.”

Last year’s recipients were Jim Adams (1973), Sharon Clark (1994), Andrew Doss (2003), Van Drewery (1975), Shani Gaylord (2016), Shaun Hagwood (2005), Tiffany Hairston (2014), Sandy Hines (2012), Steve Martin (1985), Diana Martin (1984), Dave Santoemma (2013), Houston Stutz (2010), Susan Warren (1980).

Alumni nomination forms can be accessed online at www.patrick-henryfoundation.com, under the “Helpful Links” section. Forms are also available from the foundation office at Patrick & Henry Community College, 645 Patriot Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112. Contact Letitia Pulliam at (276) 656-0250 or at lpulliam@patrickhenry.edu.

Norris
FUNERAL SERVICES, INC. AND CREMATORY

Affordable Funerals And Cremations With Updated Facilities

www.norrisfuneral.com

129 Howell Lane
Stuart, VA
276-694-2012

Business REVIEW

Time to Brag
About **YOUR** Business!

YOUR story - YOUR employees - YOUR message
in our Business Review Edition on February 26th.
Write your own story & advertisement with pictures
of your staff and/or business - Deadline February 19th

TO ADVERTISE,
Call Wendi Craig at (276) 340-2445
advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com

Thank You for reading the enterprise

From bathroom bleak to
bathroom chic.
\$750 off a tub to shower conversion

RE-BATH 540.301.1017 | REBATH.COM

PROUDLY SERVING: SALEM, VINTON | NEW CASTLE,
RADFORD | ALL OF SW VIRGINIA

SENIOR LIVING 2025

Reading as Brain Medicine: How It Can Help Combat Cognitive Decline

Aging and change go hand in hand. Although some may bemoan the gray hairs that start to arrive or stiffness in the knees that seems to sneak up on a person in middle age, such concerns are not necessarily enough to lose sleep over. However, many people 50 or older are nervous about the potential for cognitive issues like dementia as they grow older.

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that 6.7 million people have Alzheimer's disease in the United States. The Alzheimer Society of Canada estimates that there were 733,040 people living with dementia in the country as of January 1, 2024. Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can rob people of their memories, personalities and abilities to live satisfying, independent lives. While it may not be impossible to prevent all cognitive issues completely, there is reason to believe that reading could be an ally in cognitive care.

The American Academy of Neurology says that reading stimulates the brain and has been shown to slow down cognitive decline in old age. Reading also may help slow down memory loss.

The powers of reading were noticed more than 10 years ago when a 2013 study from researchers at Emory University measured readers' MRI scans as they read books. They found the deeper readers went into a story, the more areas of their brains were activated. This activity



Reading can keep brains functioning optimally and potentially delay age-related cognitive decline.

remained elevated for several days after participants finished their books. The more a person reads, the stronger complex networks in the brain become.

Additional evidence that reading can help the brain was noted by researchers at the Texas A&M School of Public Health. A 2024 study suggests that older people with mild cognitive impairment who engage in high levels of activities like

reading, hobbies and word games have better memory, working memory, attention, and processing speed than those who do not take part in such endeavors. Furthermore, a 2021 study published in Neurology found that high levels of cognitive activity, like reading and writing letters, can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease by five years among those age 80 and over.

Assisted Living | Memory Care

Continue life's
beautiful adventure.



THE LANDMARK
CENTER



Call **276-694-3050** today
to schedule your private tour.

227 Landmark Dr | Stuart, VA | LandmarkCTR.com



REYNOLDS HOMESTEAD
VIRGINIA TECH.



COLLEGE FOR
OLDER ADULTS

A FOUR WEEK SERIES
OF DIVERSE, RELEVANT
OFFERINGS FOR LIFE
LONG LEARNING.

conveniently located at
Reynolds Homestead in Critz, VA



The
LANDMARK
CENTER



reynoldshomestead.vt.edu

THE ESTATE & ELDER LAW CENTER
of Southside Virginia, PLLC

3 tips to get a more restful night's sleep

There is no magic formula to ensure long-term health. However, if there were such an equation, sleep would be a critical component. Though adults may be able to function with less sleep than doctors recommend, the National Institutes of Health note that consistent lack of sufficient sleep can interfere with work, social functioning and driving ability.

The National Institute on Aging notes that adults of all ages generally need the same amount of sleep, typically between seven and nine hours of rest per night. That's an important distinction, as busy adults in mid-life might feel as though they can operate on less sleep without adversely affecting their overall health. However, in addition to the problems noted by the NIH, the NIA reports that ongoing lack of sleep, or even consistently poor sleep quality, can increase risk for cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and obesity.

Adults who feel their sleep quality is poor or those who aspire to sleep more each night can consider these three strategies to ensure a more restful night's sleep.

1. Keep devices out of the bedroom.

Screens are everywhere in modern life, and that includes the bedroom. In fact, the National Sleep Foundation's 2022 Sleep in America® Poll found that 58 percent of survey participants acknowledged look-



Sleep is an important component of a healthy lifestyle. Some simple strategies may help adults get a more restful night's sleep.

ing at screens within an hour before bedtime. The NSF reports that device usage so close to bedtime can adversely affect sleep quality because the blue light emitted from screens has shorter wavelengths than other colors in the visible light spectrum, which results in more alertness than warmer tones.

The blue light actually confuses the brain into thinking it's earlier in the day, thus making it harder to fall asleep.

2. Skip late afternoon naps.

Short naps can help people reenergize, but the timing of naps could adversely affect how well people sleep at night. The

Mayo Clinic notes that napping after 3 p.m. can make it harder to sleep soundly at night. And while short naps can provide a necessary jolt, it's important that naps be no longer than 30 minutes. Naps that exceed half an hour can contribute to feelings of grogginess and even compromise your ability to get restful sleep overnight.

3. Avoid alcohol.

Some may consider alcohol a sleep aide, and there's good reason for that perception, even if it's misguided. Hackensack Meridian Health notes that alcohol acts as a depressant for the central nervous system that can cause brain activity to slow down. As a result, alcohol can increase feelings of relaxation and tiredness. However, that effect is not long-lasting, and as alcohol levels in the blood drop, individuals are likely to wake up and may even find it hard to fall back asleep. Waking up in the middle of the night cuts down on the time individuals spend in the most restorative stage of sleep, which is why individuals often feel as if they got little rest after a night of drinking.



KNOW THE SIGNS!

SAVE A LIFE



SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK



Pressure or squeezing in the center of the chest



Shortness of breath



Shooting pain through shoulders, arms, neck or jaw



Heartburn, nausea or indigestion-like pain



Dizziness, fainting or sudden abnormal sweating



Extreme fatigue or exhaustion

* Women may experience signs that may not be as easy to recognize, such as fatigue or feeling flu-like symptoms.



Always call 911 when you feel any combination of these symptoms. Do not wait or try to drive yourself to the hospital.

Cardiovascular Institute

CARILIONCLINIC

800-422-8482 | CarilionClinic.org/KnowTheSigns

Steps Seniors Can Take to Safeguard Their Mental Health

Mental health challenges can affect anyone, including older adults nearing or already enjoying retirement. While the “golden years” often evoke images of carefree days, many individuals aged 60 and older grapple with mental health issues.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that about 15% of adults aged 60 and older worldwide experience a mental disorder. However, the true scope of the problem may be even larger. The WHO acknowledges that depression among seniors is frequently undiagnosed and untreated, often because it co-occurs with other health issues.

In the past, late-life anxiety and other mental health concerns were less understood. But growing awareness has led to more resources and tools available to help seniors safeguard their mental well-being.

Recognizing Warning Signs

Recognizing the symptoms of mental health issues is the first step toward treatment. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) highlights several warning signs that seniors and their loved ones should monitor:

- Noticeable changes in mood, energy, or appetite
- Difficulty feeling positive emotions or experiencing a “flat” mood
- Trouble sleeping or oversleeping
- Persistent worry, stress, or

difficulty concentrating

- Irritability, anger, or aggressive behavior
- Chronic headaches, digestive problems, or other physical pain
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or suicidal thoughts
- Risky or compulsive behaviors

• Thoughts or behaviors that disrupt daily life or concern others

• Hallucinations or sensory experiences not shared by others

These symptoms can vary by individual and condition, underscoring the importance of seeking professional guidance when concerns arise.

Seeking Support

Fortunately, seniors today have access to a wide range of mental health resources. In the United States, the NIMH provides a “Help for Mental Illnesses” webpage (<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help>) with information about crisis support services. In Canada, the Canadian Mental Health Association (<https://cmha.ca/find-help/find-cmha-in-your-area/>) offers similar tools to connect individuals with local support networks.

Mental health crises require prompt attention, so seniors experiencing severe symptoms or distress should not hesitate to seek help.

Healthy Habits for Mental Well-Being

While some cases of depres-



Depression is often undiagnosed among older men and women and untreated because it co-occurs with other issues affecting seniors.

sion and anxiety may not be preventable, adopting healthy habits can significantly benefit mental well-being. The National Institute on Aging (NIA) recommends the following:

- Stay active. Regular physical activity boosts both mental and physical health.
- Eat well. A nutritious diet can reduce the risk of illnesses associated with depression and disability.
- Get enough sleep. Aim for seven to nine hours of restful sleep each night.
- Stay social. Regular interactions with friends, family, or community groups combat isolation.
- Pursue hobbies. Engaging in enjoyable activities provides purpose and joy.

• Communicate openly. Discuss mental health concerns with trusted friends, family members, or healthcare providers.

A Growing Need for Action

Mental health issues among seniors are increasingly recognized as an important public health concern. Early detection, professional support, and a commitment to healthy living can make a significant difference.

Seniors and their families can learn more about safeguarding mental health by visiting trusted resources like nimh.nih.gov or consulting with local mental health organizations. The golden years can be a time of fulfillment and happiness, especially when mental health is prioritized.

Considerations for your second act



A number of retirees ultimately explore second careers. Finding a match may be easier than one could have imagined.

Many people see their careers as one of their defining characteristics. Children are often asked what they want to be when they grow up, and as adults they will likely be asked “What do you do for a living?” more times than they can remember. Work is undoubtedly a major component of life for most people from the time they leave school to the day when they retire. And a growing number of adults value work so much that they pivot to second careers.

A phenomenon known as “unretirement” occurs when people who have previously retired return to the workforce. A 2010 paper published in the Journal of Human Resources found nearly 50 percent of retirees followed a nontraditional retirement path that involved partial retirement or unretirement. According to a recent Retirement Saving & Spending Study from T. Rowe Price, around 20 percent of retirees are working either full- or part-time, while 7 percent of study respondents are looking for employment. Some people return to work for financial reasons while others seek the social and emotional benefits employment can bring. But individuals mulling a return to work or those currently working but trying to determine a second act should not feel beholden to previous career paths. A second trip around the employment block can involve an entirely different line of work. The following are some things to look for in a second act.

• Flexibility: Choose a career path that enables you to set your own schedule or possibly work part-time if that is your preference. This way you can still reap some of the benefits of retirement, including the flexibility to travel.

• Social interaction: Adults may lose daily opportunities to be social when they retire, which can compound feelings of isolation common among retirees. Consider a second career that lets you interact with a number of people and continue to build relationships and a good network.

• Personal passions: Reflect on what you might do for work if money is no object. This may help you narrow down new opportunities that are in line with your interests and passions. Find a job that utilizes your skills and experience and meshes with your interests. A former graphic artist, for example, may decide to teach design to young people.

• Nonprofit opportunities: Many retirees spent years in high-stress corporate environments where bottom lines may be more important than the bigger picture. Shifting to a career in the nonprofit sector can be a personally fulfilling job that utilizes skills learned in the corporate world.

• Consulting or contract work: If you’re a retiree who loved your job, you might want to have a second career as a consultant or contractor in the same field.



Stress is a part of life, but finding ways to manage chronic stress is vital to long-term health.

Strategies to manage and tame stress

Stress is a part of life. In small doses, stress can have a positive effect. But when stress is chronic, it can take its toll on the body and mind.

Stress can make people irritable and cause them to lash out at others. Stress also can contribute to high blood pressure and adversely affects sleep. When confronting chronic stress, individuals may have to take action to find relief. These stress-busting strategies can help.

- Engage in physical activity. The Mayo Clinic says any form of exercise can help relieve stress. Physical activity boosts chemicals in the brain and endorphins that help a person feel good. Exercise also can refocus attention, so a person is not preoccupied with stressful thoughts or situation.
- Listen to music. Music can be calming and serve as a distraction from stressful feelings. Simply listening to music can be a quick fix for a stressful situation and a bad mood.
- Review your lifestyle. It’s easy to take on too much, but doing so can lead to feelings of being overwhelmed, says the Mental Health Foundation. Prioritizing some things over others and delegating when

possible, can tame stress.

- Practice mindfulness. Breathing and mindfulness exercises can be practiced anywhere. Research has shown that mindfulness can reduce the effects of stress and anxiety. Deep breathing and being in a quiet moment when stress peaks may help to reduce stress.
- Step away for a few minutes. If possible, step away from a stressful situation, whether it is a difficult project at work or a loud room with a lot of activity going on. Many people find commuting stressful. Changing the route to one that avoids busy roads, even if it takes a bit longer to get from point A to point B, might help.
- Talk it out. Sometimes connecting with others and sharing experiences can help to relieve stress. Keeping feelings in and fixating on a situation may exacerbate feelings of stress. Social situations that encourage talking and laughing can lighten a person’s mental load, says the Mayo Clinic.
- Don’t turn to substances. Alcohol and drugs may temporarily relieve stress, but this approach can lead to addiction and even worsen the physical and mental toll stress takes on the body.

Staying Healthy After 50: Why Annual Wellness Exams Are Essential

Seniors are a growing and increasingly prosperous demographic. As the senior population increases, a greater emphasis must be placed on keeping aging individuals healthy. Wellness checks are important at any age, but they bear even more significance as individuals grow older.

Age brings with it many things, including experience and wisdom. But age also brings an increased risk for health problems. Aging men and women are vulnerable to chronic conditions like heart disease, COPD, cancer, and arthritis. It's noteworthy that many chronic health conditions fail to produce any symptoms until they have progressed to a point where treatment is difficult.

Annual wellness exams can help older adults take charge of their health and stay as healthy as possible. It's possible for a person to preserve his or her health (and possibly life) through check-ups and easy tests. Here are some common screenings and health recommendations that come up in the prime of one's life.

• **Colorectal cancer screening:** A colon cancer screening is recommended for everyone at age 45. Colon cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, and risk increases at age 45. Although people seldom look forward to a colonoscopy and the required prep, putting off this test due to a little discomfort may result in missing colon cancer at its earliest stage when it is most treatable.

• **Cholesterol screening:** This simple blood test can help evaluate the risk for heart disease. High chole-

sterol can contribute to the buildup of plaque in the arteries, making them narrower and less flexible, according to Sharecare, Inc.

• **Mammogram:** Most health organizations recommend annual mammogram screenings from age 40 until menopause. Then it may be possible to have a mammogram every other year for those who are at average risk. It is important for women to discuss mammogram frequency with their doctors, particularly if there is a family history of breast cancer.

• **Diabetes:** ChenMed says diabetes may be more common in older adults, so regular screenings for this illness can enable early diagnosis and management.

• **Testicular cancer screening:** This test generally is not recommended without symptoms. Some organizations suggest men with a family history or other risk factors consider performing self-examinations.

• **Vaccination needs:** Doctors can alert patients to recommended vaccinations during wellness exams. Seniors should receive an annual flu shot and updated COVID-19 vaccination as available. Pneumococcal vaccine can protect against pneumococcal disease that can lead to pneumonia, meningitis and bloodstream infections. Adults over 50 also should receive a vaccination for shingles, which can occur in older age in those who have previously experienced chickenpox.

There are additional advantages to routine health checkups. Doctors can inquire about fitness routines, stress, sleep, and diet to see if patients are within the guidelines for healthy living.

Perfect Part-Time Jobs for Retirees Seeking Income and Engagement

For many adults nearing retirement, the thought of leaving behind long commutes and daily work obligations is a welcome prospect. Retirement offers the freedom to pursue recreation, travel, and long-postponed hobbies. However, as countless retirees discover, the appeal of unending free time isn't always as idyllic as imagined.

Factors like rising inflation can increase the cost of living, leaving some seniors stretched thin financially. Others may miss the social connections and mental stimulation that work provides. For retirees who aren't ready to commit to full-time employment but still want to stay active and engaged, part-time work offers an ideal solution.

Here are some part-time roles well-suited to retirees looking to reenter the workforce:

Retail Sales Associate

Working in retail can provide retirees with a variety of responsibilities and social interactions. Tasks might include greeting customers, making sales, restocking inventory, and assisting shoppers with their selections. Strong customer service skills and a personable demeanor are essential in this role. Many retailers offer flexible schedules for part-time employees, allowing seniors to adjust their hours to fit their lifestyles.

Consultant

Retirees who enjoyed their careers but prefer a less time-intensive commitment may



Seniors have many different options if they decide they want to return to the workforce in a part-time capacity.

find consulting to be an attractive option. According to The Balance: Money, consultants often earn more per hour than they did as full-time employees. Consulting provides a way to share expertise and contribute to industries retirees know and love, all while maintaining a flexible schedule.

Customer Service Representative

Customer service representatives assist clients with questions, concerns, and troubleshooting. These roles can often be performed from home, making them a convenient option for retirees. For those who enjoy problem-solving and interacting with others, customer service roles provide both purpose and flexibility.

School Positions

Jobs in schools offer retirees a chance to work in a lively and community-focused environment. Options include driving a school bus (with proper training and licensing), serving as lunchroom aides, substitute teaching, or working as crossing guards. Many of these roles have part-time hours during the school day, with the added bonus of holidays

and summers off.

Receptionist

Receptionists are the friendly faces that greet visitors in office settings, whether in medical clinics, corporate offices, or skilled nursing facilities. Tasks typically include answering phones, scheduling appointments, and light clerical work. For retirees seeking off-peak schedules, evening and weekend shifts in healthcare facilities may be a good fit.

Why Part-Time Work Makes Sense for Retirees

Beyond the financial benefits, part-time work can help retirees maintain an active social life, engage their problem-solving skills, and add structure to their days. It's also a chance to explore new industries or rediscover passions from earlier in life.

Retirement doesn't have to mean stepping away from work entirely. By choosing part-time roles, retirees can strike the perfect balance between leisure and productivity, ensuring their golden years are both fulfilling and financially secure.



Adults over 50 who want to be more physically active can look at any number of fitness classes to break a sweat, build strength and have fun all at once.

Fitness classes for the over 50 crowd

Exercise is a pillar of a healthy lifestyle. When individuals exercise regularly and pair physical activity with a healthy diet and smart lifestyle choices, they can extend their life expectancies and sleep well knowing they're doing everything they can to increase their chances of enjoying a limitless retirement.

Adults over 50 know it's not always so easy to exercise. Hectic schedules can make it seem like there's little time for exercise. And even when adults make time to break a sweat, they might find that traditional workouts combining strength training with cardiovascular exercise are too time-consuming and possibly even a little dull. In such instances, fitness classes can take the place of more traditional exercise regimens. Various classes provide a challenging workout, and many can do so in an hour or less.

• **Pilates:** Improving balance, core strength and flexibility are three goals of Pilates. Pilates has an interesting history, as it was created by Joseph Pilates, a German prisoner of war who was imprisoned off the coast of England during World War I. Pilates and the exercising phenomenon he created ultimately made their way to the United States, where the routine was embraced by dancers looking for a way to aid their injury recovery. Pilates is now part of millions of individuals' exercise regimens. This low-impact exercise is designed to strengthen muscles and improve alignment and flexibility. Achieving greater balance after 50 pays untold dividends for older adults, who can decrease their risk for falls and fall-related injuries by increasing their steadiness.

• **Spin:** Spin classes are a wildly

popular exercise program that utilizes cycling to help people break a sweat. Cardiovascular exercise is beneficial for a number of reasons, including its connection to heart health and even cognitive health. But many people lament daily sessions on a treadmill or elliptical that they find boring. Spin classes involve the use of stationary bikes, but instructors typically guide class members through conditions that mimic outdoor cycling sessions. Resistance and pedaling speed changes throughout a spin class, which serves to keep individuals engaged and burn lots of calories.

• **Kickboxing:** Sometimes referred to as Krav Maga, kickboxing is another unique and challenging class offered at many fitness facilities. Martial arts like kickboxing assist with weight loss and can help people improve their muscle tone, flexibility and stamina. Adults over 50 who are not accustomed to physical activity may find their energy levels are low, but a few kickboxing sessions may produce noticeable differences in stamina. The balance benefits of kickboxing are similar to those provided by Pilates, so this activity may be particularly beneficial for adults over 50 looking to reduce their vulnerability to falls as they grow older.

• **Dance:** Dancing is widely seen as a fun activity, and rightfully so, as few things can be as enjoyable as cutting a rug. But dancing also provides a great cardiovascular workout. Local community centers and even some fitness facilities offer age-specific dancing classes, which the AARP notes are great for individuals who want to build core strength, improve bone health and protect their heart.

The Key to a Comfortable Retirement: Saving Early and Strategically

The importance of saving for retirement is a message ingrained in professionals from the moment they enter the workforce. Whether it's parents urging their children to plan ahead, financial institutions promoting retirement services, or employers offering investment plans, reminders to save for the future are everywhere.

Despite this widespread emphasis, a significant number of individuals fall behind on their retirement savings. A 2023 survey by the Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan revealed that 44 percent of the 2,000 Canadian employees surveyed had not saved any money for retirement in the past year. In the United States, the numbers are just as sobering: a CNBC Your Money survey from 2023 found that 56 percent of Americans believe they are not on track to retire comfortably.

These statistics highlight the urgent need for financial planning, particularly among young adults just starting their professional journeys. Retirement goals vary by individual, as some may wish to retire early, while others plan to work into their 70s. Regardless of the timeline, establishing a savings strategy early can make a significant difference.

To help individuals stay on track, financial experts at Fidelity® have developed an age-based savings guideline for professionals aiming to retire at age 67. This system is designed to help individuals maintain their pre-retirement lifestyles and serves as a benchmark for retirement planning. Fidelity's recommendations are as follows:

- **Age 30:** Save at least 1x your annual salary.
- **Age 35:** Aim for 2x your salary.
- **Age 40:** Have 3x your salary saved.
- **Age 45:** Work toward 4x your salary.
- **Age 50:** Save 6x your salary.
- **Age 55:** Increase savings to 7x your salary.
- **Age 60:** Reach 8x your salary.
- **Age 67:** Ensure you have 10x your salary saved by retirement.

These benchmarks are based on the assumption of retiring at 67, but they can be adjusted for those planning to retire earlier or later. Fidelity encourages individuals to consult with financial advisors to tailor these goals to their unique circumstances.

Reaching these benchmarks can seem daunting, but starting early and saving consistently can make a significant difference over time. Automating savings, contributing to employer-sponsored retirement plans, and taking advantage of employer matching can accelerate progress.

It's also important to recognize that these benchmarks are guidelines rather than strict requirements. Some individuals may need to save more depending on their post-retirement plans, health needs, or lifestyle goals.

Ultimately, the key to a secure and comfortable retirement is a proactive approach to saving. Whether you're just entering the workforce or approaching the later stages of your career, taking the time to assess your financial goals and implement a savings strategy can ensure your golden years are truly golden.

Keep Your Brain Sharp and Protect Long-Term Cognitive Health

Cognitive health plays a critical role in overall well-being, enabling individuals to think clearly, learn effectively, and remember important information. While some memory lapses are a normal part of aging, significant cognitive changes that interfere with daily life should raise concerns.

According to the National Institute on Aging (NIA), brain health is a multifaceted concept that extends beyond cognitive function. It includes:

- *Cognitive health: The ability to think, learn, and remember.
- *Motor function: How well an individual controls movement.
- *Tactile function: Sensation and the ability to feel touch.
- *Emotional function: The interpretation and response to emotions.

Protecting cognitive health begins with understanding the factors that influence brain function. Experts emphasize proactive steps that can help maintain cognitive abilities and promote overall brain health as individuals age.

Prioritize Overall Health

Maintaining general health through regular medical care is a cornerstone of cognitive well-being. Routine screenings, managing chronic conditions, avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption, and getting sufficient sleep are all vital. Sleep is especially important, as it allows the brain to rest and repair, supporting memory consolidation and cognitive performance.

Manage High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure in midlife is linked to an increased risk of cognitive decline and dementia later in life, according to the NIA. Lowering blood pressure can reduce the likelihood of developing mild cognitive impairment. Routine monitoring and treatment of hypertension should be a priority for individuals aiming to protect their cognitive health.

Stimulate Your Brain

Keeping the mind active can help maintain cognitive abilities. Harvard Medical School recommends activities such as:

- Maintaining social connections.
- Engaging in puzzles, reading, or playing strategy-based games.
- Traveling to new places and learning



Cognitive health should be a priority. Adults can employ various strategies to reduce their risk of cognitive decline as they age.

about different cultures.

- Taking up new hobbies or skills, such as learning a musical instrument or a new language.

These activities challenge the brain and may foster the development of new neural connections.

Reduce Stress

Chronic stress can take a toll on the body, including the brain. Prolonged exposure to stress hormones may contribute to memory problems and cognitive decline. Reducing stress through relaxation techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, or mindfulness practices can be beneficial. Spending time with friends and loved ones, laughing, or taking a break with a vacation can also alleviate stress.

Boost Vitamin D Levels

Vitamin D is known for its role in bone health, but it also plays a part in brain function. Spending time outdoors in natural sunlight and consuming vitamin D-rich foods like fatty fish, fortified dairy products, and egg yolks can support brain health. For those

with low vitamin D levels, doctors may recommend supplements.

Address Hearing Loss

Hearing loss is another factor that may contribute to cognitive decline. Research published by Healthline suggests a link between central hearing loss and an increased risk of mild cognitive impairment. Seniors experiencing hearing issues should consult with healthcare professionals to explore interventions like hearing aids or other treatments that may help reduce cognitive risks.

A Holistic Approach to Brain Health

Cognitive health is influenced by a combination of physical, mental, and emotional factors. By taking a proactive approach—managing chronic conditions, staying socially and mentally engaged, reducing stress, and addressing sensory health concerns—individuals can protect their cognitive abilities and enjoy a higher quality of life as they age.

For more information and resources on maintaining cognitive health, visit the National Institute on Aging at nia.nih.gov.



An award-winning Life Plan Community for those 55 and better, King's Grant residents enjoy active and independent lifestyles knowing that access to other levels of living is available should the need arise. This means never having to leave the community they've grown to love.

Schedule your personal tour of our pet-friendly community today!

Independent Living • Assisted Living • Skilled Nursing • Memory Support



350 King's Way Road | Martinsville, VA 24112
276.634.1000 | 800.462.4649 | LiveatKG.com

Sarah Bidwell, Esq.

Owner | Estate Planning Attorney



Will and Testament
Last will and Testament

Estate Planning in the Comfort of Your Home

**Wills | Advance Medical Directives | Deeds
Trusts | Power of Attorney | Funeral Directives**

“

Sarah Bidwell has handled numerous legal cases for me and I can't say enough positive things about her and her tireless work-ethic. Her knowledge and command of the legal system is second-to-none.

However, her greatest attributes are her honesty and integrity. Her dedication to the well-being of her clients is indisputable and she can be trusted with the most sensitive matters.

– R.Wray

Wills on Wheels, PLLC provides mobile estate planning in the comfort of your home giving you and your family peace of mind.



Please email or call
434.435.1390 to schedule
your consultation today.

Sarah Bidwell, Esq.
willsonwheelsofva@gmail.com