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Several local officials visited Richmond, with many stopping by to see Del. Eric Phillips (far right), including Sandra Stone, Patrick County Treasurer, and Glenda Morse,

Legislators stand firm against solar bills, defend local control

By Taylor Boyd

As multiple bills make their way through the 2025 General Assembly, local officials are reaffirming their opposition to solar energy projects and efforts to shift decision-making authority away from local governments.

As of Feb. 3, 12 solar-related bills had been introduced, with only three failing. As of this writing, the remaining nine were in various stages of the legislative process, including the House, Senate, subcommittees, and incorporation into other measures, according to the Virginia General Assembly website. The proposed legislation primarily focuses on solar energy facilities, interconnection policies, local decision-making authority, photovoltaic equipment, and the Solar Interconnection Grant Fund and Program.

Local Authority vs. State Oversight

Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, said he opposes any legislation that removes localities' ability to determine where solar farms are located. "Those localities are elected by

their people, so if the people don't like the decisions that their elected officials are making, then they'll have to replace their elected officials," Williams said. "Otherwise, the localities are the ones that are going to get to decide where these solar farms go."

Williams acknowledged concerns among local officials and residents that the state could take over site selection for solar projects.

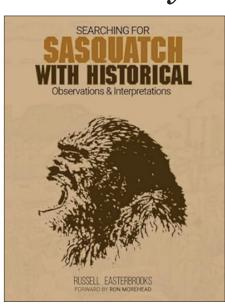
"I think that the only way that concern is going to be addressed is if we see some people break from the solar pack and vote against this so that their own localities can have those decisions instead of the State Corporation Commission (SCC)," he said.

Williams also suggested that some of the proposed legislation could pass both the House of Delegates and the Senate, even with opposition from many Republicans.

"But I think that ultimately it might come down to the governor having to veto the decision," he said.

Concerns Over Local Control

Exploring the Legend: Author Chronicles Sasquatch History in New Book



The 2023 book is available on Amazon and

By Taylor Boyd

Russell Easterbrooks' recently published book, "Searching for Sasquatch with Historical Observations and Interpretations," delves into the history and lore surrounding sasquatches in North America. Released in December 2023, the book serves as a reference guide for enthusiasts and skeptics alike.

Years of research inspired Easterbrooks to compile his findings into this comprehensive work.

"I started out doing a high school report on the sasquatch, and that kind of got me interested in the subject," he said. "I did a lot of research over the years and always wanted to try to put it together into a book, but just never did. Life kind of got in the way and so forth, so I just didn't get it done."

That changed last year when Easterbrooks finally completed the 125-

"I'm glad I did," he said. Easterbrooks emphasized that his



"Searching for Sasquatch with Historical Observations and Interpretations," Easterbrooks chronicles history of sasquatches in North America, incorporating historical accounts research findings

book isn't written to convince skeptics.

"It's not like that. It's just a book filled with information and information on a lot of different things," he

However, he firmly believes sasquatches are real.

They are very real, I can assure you of that," he said. "Uwharrie National Forest in North Carolina has a family unit, for sure. The Smokies also have some. I worked with the forest service and worked out in the Smokies quite a bit. I never did get to see a sasquatch, but I have some footprint impressions and plaster casts that I was able to collect. The Jefferson National Forest also has a family group living there."

Easterbrooks' fascination with sasquatch history stems from a gap he

observed in existing literature. "For me, I felt like a lot of the books that I have read on sasquatch-

(See Sasquatch Chronicles p. 2)

Fulk responds to recent remarks, urges focus on county business

By Taylor Boyd

Fulk is calling on current board county affairs rather than referencing her in discussions.

Following the Nov. 18 board meeting, Fulk no longer serves as interim and has returned to private life. However, her name surfaced in a recent interview with former board members regarding emails sent by Steve Marshall, who represents the Blue Ridge District.

During the discussion, Doug Perry, of the Smith River District, mentioned a past controversy he attributed to Fulk.

"The whole debaclery (sic)... and how she (Fulk) got ahold of or took some contract wordage, twisted things around, misrepresented them, and started the whole rumor control and misrepresented facts," Perry said.

After reading the remarks, Fulk questioned their relevance to the emails in question.

"I am tired of Doug Perry and Steve Marshall attacking my reputation and talking about a controversy," she said. "The only controversy that I'm aware of happened

Fulk said she repeatedly raised Former Patrick County Board of concerns about cuts to EMS salaries Supervisors interim member Jane before the board's October meeting.

On at least three occasions bemembers to shift their focus to fore that meeting, Fulk said she addressed her concerns with then-chairman Perry about reductions in pay for EMS personnel.

> "I was informed by Mr. Perry that it would be okay. They would work more hours for the same pay. This did not make any sense to me," she

Fulk said she specifically questioned the reduction of EMT wages from approximately \$18 to \$15 per

"The last time I spoke to Doug Perry about the EMTs' pay being cut... he advised me that it would be taken care of at the board of supervisors' retreat," she said.

That retreat, originally discussed in October, is now scheduled for late

"That did not compute in my brain as a help for the county itself since EMS personnel were quitting to go where they were being paid an amount in keeping with their training," she said. "I believe I informed Doug Perry that EMTs could go to Walmart and make \$15 an hour."

Fulk said she may have also while I was on the board is my be- voiced her concerns during an earlief that EMS (Emergency Medical lier board meeting but could not Service) providers should be paid a recall specific details. However, at fair wage according to their certifi- the October meeting, she formally

(See Fulk Responds p. 2)

Grant Writer Expands Passion into Small Business to Help Others

By Taylor Boyd

A local grant writer has transformed her passion for helping others into a small business aimed at helping organizations secure fund-

Kirsten Smith Beasley, founder of Granting Solutions, LLC, said she was inspired to start her business after receiving numerous requests for grant-writing assistance.

"Obviously, it's something I love to do, but I can't do it with my fulltime job. This was kind of a way where I could go out and dabble into some other sectors and help others out on the side," Smith-Beasley

In her full-time role, Smith-Beasley works as a grant writer for the Martin Tyrrell Washington (MTW) District Health Department in North Carolina. Over the past seven years, she has helped secure more than \$10 million in funding.

"I just love it. Once you start and you start getting awards, it's like you don't want to stop writing," she

Smith-Beasley specializes in public health and rural communities but also writes grants for nonprofit organizations, the public sector, the criminal justice sector, schools, and, more recently, small businesses.

She registered Granting Solutions last summer but took time to reflect before taking on her first client in November.

"Actually, I've gotten a few clients so far already in North Carolina and Virginia," she said.

Among her clients are a nonprofit assisting individuals and families affected by Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, and another nonprofit providing equine therapy for veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"Honestly, when I do get a grant, especially when you get the award notification, it's so much more than just getting money. That is money that is making a true difference in people's lives and in the communities, and that's why I do it," she



Kirsten Smith-Beasley founded Granting Solutions. LLC, in 2024

The Grant Writing Process

organizations with grant writing.

Smith-Beasley's process begins when individuals or organizations contact her with an idea of what type of funding they need.

"I go out into my data systems and start looking for grants that I think would be a good fit. Then I send them that list and say, 'I am here to help you—I can write it for you, I can do whatever you need me to do, or here's the resource if you want to do it on your own," she said.

For most projects, Smith-Beasley can compile a list of potential grants within a few days. If clients request her assistance in writing an application, the timeline varies based on deadlines, but she can typically complete a grant in one to two

Once she completes a draft, she reviews it with the client and makes any necessary revisions before sub-

"I'm basically the resource to help make their grants more competitive and stand out," Smith-Beasley said.

She also helps clients navigate match requirements and budget

"Most of the time, you can use inkind services and time as a match. That's always my go-to first instead of cash, leaving more money in organizations' pockets to use for other needs they may have," she said.

Affordable and Impact-Driven Pricing varies based on grant complexity. Local grants typical-

(See Grant Writer p. 3)

Legislators -

(cont. from page 1)

Del. Eric Phillips, R-Martinsville, said he is strongly opposed to any bill that would override local ordinances restricting the number or size of solar farms.

"Whether it be a certain amount of acreage or a certain amount of land in that certain district, or something like that. Pittsylvania County and Henry County both have ordinances on the books" that impose such limits, Phillips said.

He vowed to vote and speak against any effort to strip away local land-use control.

"I think that is a terrible law, and I think it sets a terrible precedent to take away local control over land use issues," he said. "That should be something that is debated between neighbors, constituents, and their member on the board of supervisors. The board of supervisors ultimately is the closest representation that our people have, and they have to account for their votes when they live in that community."

a three-judge panel in Richmond, which only reviews project plans rather than visiting proposed sites, is a flawed approach, Phillips said.

"They will never have to answer for their vote, and so I think it's a terrible idea to do that," he said.

Solar's Role in Virginia's Energy Future

Phillips also questioned the longterm viability of solar energy.

"A lot of them have 30-to-50-year leases, and I think by the time those leases are up we won't even be building solar because we'll have moved on to fusion energy and nuclear energy and other types of energy," he said. "The reward versus the usage, because it takes up so much land to produce a fairly insignificant amount of electricity, it's just a terribly inefficient way to generate electricity."

He added that officials in his district strongly oppose any attempt to limit local authority, "as they should. Because it may be solar Turning such decisions over to today, but let's say they don't like

something else tomorrow. Are they going to come in and say, 'You know what? We don't like the way you do that there, so we're going to come in and take over and we're going to decide it for you'? I think top-down government is the worst government, and it doesn't represent best the people in those areas," he said.

Phillips further argued that solar energy does not benefit the rural areas where most solar farms are being built.

"The power's sent back to power data centers in Northern Virginia and to really help them. It doesn't help our ratepayers one bit," he said. "Most of the ones I know send their power to a Microsoft data center or even to other states. It does nothing for our area, and it certainly is not really beautiful to look at."

If Virginia is to continue expanding solar, Phillips said he believes solar farms should be built in Northern Virginia counties such as Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William.

"All these places where they use



Del. Wren Williams giving a recent live update on his social media page.

our power from these solar farms, but they don't have any solar farms. That's what really irritates me because we get the crappy, ugly stuff while they get rich off of using it," he said.

State Sen. Bill Stanley, R-Moneta, did not respond to requests for com-

Fulk Responds

(cont. from page 1)

their previously approved levels.

"I have no regrets about putting the pay for the county EMS back to the amounts that were passed in the budget for 2024-2025," she

Fulk also questioned Perry's and Marshall's continued focus on the October meeting rather than county priorities in 2025.

Among the other issues discussed at that meeting was the creation of a fire chief position.

"As to the EMS Chief, I found out the night of the board meeting from the public, and other EMS

moved to reinstate EMS wages to volunteers, and the paid service, that the person had already been hired, had worked that day and was given a car to drive back and forth" to their home in the Smith Mountain Lake area, Fulk said.

> She said the lack of transparency surrounding the hiring process raised concerns both for her as a taxpayer and for others who spoke with her about the matter.

> Fulk also said she was not made aware of any applications or that the county was conducting interviews before the hiring decision was made.

"Mrs. Shough (Assistant Coun- don't understand it," she said.

Administrator/HR Director Donna), maybe at the direction of" someone else, "refused my request to look at the applications before any hiring was accomplished. I don't even know how many (applications) they had," she said.

Going forward, Fulk urged the board to move forward with county business.

"Do they still resent the fact that I wanted the EMS people to be paid what they needed to be paid? Do they have a grudge against EMS? I don't know.



Sasquatch Chronicles =

(cont. from page 1)

have a huge library—but those books don't talk about a lot of the history going back. It's more about sightings and things that are happening today, and I felt like there was a lot of good information that should be saved from the history," he said.

The book explores historical accounts from the Hudson Bay Company, the gold rushes in California and Alaska, and even the Native American perspective.

"Native Americans were very familiar with sasquatches, going as far back as you could go in your research," he said.

Written in chronological order, the book contains numerous short chapters ranging from two to four pages. Topics include encounters involving notable historical figures such as Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone, as well as the diverse names Native American tribes have for sasquatches.

"Almost every Native American tribe has a name for sasquatch, which is interesting," he said.

The book also delves into how diseases like smallpox may have impacted sasquatch populations, as well as historical accounts of sightings and interac-

One particularly notable chapter recounts Albert Osterman's story of being kidnapped by a sasquatch in his sleeping bag and held hostage for four days.

"He got to see a lot of things and describe a lot of actions—things that they were eating, how they reacted to him, and so forth before he escaped. So that's a really interesting observation, and it's an interesting chapter," Easterbrooks said.

The book also includes a chapter on a sasquatch sighting near Meadows of Dan about 25 years ago. Easterbrooks noted that the names of witnesses are omitted to protect their privacy.

"There were actually three people together at the time at a hunting camp, and they saw it briefly. Then they saw the footprints in the snow before the in a follow-up.

serve as a reference for enthusiasts and research-

"One person described it as a patchwork quilt, which I thought was a good analogy because it is like that. I have a lot of different things that I speak about that are all connected about these creatures," he said.

While he finds it difficult to pick a favorite chapter, Easterbrooks said the Osterman encounter stands out.

"I'm probably as familiar with that encounter as anybody in the country based on the amount of time I've spent researching that and so forth," he said.

Easterbrooks frequently discusses his research on podcasts and has spoken at events, including the Virginia Bigfoot Conference in 2016 and the Reynolds Homestead, where one of his talks drew over

Although he has no immediate plans for a sequel, Easterbrooks said readers have expressed interest

"Searching for Sasquatch with Historical Obser-Easterbrooks' goal was to create a book that could vations and Interpretations" is available on Amazon. Signed copies can also be purchased on eBay.

Pets of the Week



Shelter dog Nina is a sweet, gentle and loving girl, approximately 2 years old.

is a long haired, very friendly female, that rabies vaccination. would love to have a forever home.

mal Shelter at (276) information 694-6259 or visit the low-cost



and other available pets in need of a forever home. Adoption Beautiful kitty-cat fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and

The Blue Ridge Animal Welfare Call the Patrick League provides pet County Public Ani- food assistance and about spay/neushelter or its Face- ter services; contact book page to find in- blueridgeawl@gmail.

100 attendees.

snow melted the next day," he said.

ers.

Chamber Chat

By Rebecca Adcock

Greetings on day 283 of January 2025. Well, at least that is what it feels like. January felt like it was never ending with snow and cold temperatures, school delays and world events. We have decided that February will be the beginning of the new year, and it will be a good one!

The chamber kicked off its annual Membership drive and Spring Magazine advertisement sales in January. If you have been a member in the past, "thank you" and if you have not joined, we encourage you to talk with us about the benefits of joining. We are working every day to support and grow our business community. We are excited to start working on the Spring 2025 Patrick County magazine. It is always fun to sit with our team at Patrick County Tourism and SilverLining Design to discuss the articles and pictures.

We are also busy planning lunch and learn seminars. Our first one will be on April 2nd. The topic will be Succession Planning. With so many small, family-owned and operated businesses in Patrick County, we know this will be a great presentation to help ensure the continuation of those businesses with the next generation. We do have a survey out for more input

from you, our local businesses, on what topics you would be interested in learning. Please take a moment and fill out that survey so we can work to plan the rest of the year.

Other events we are working on for the first half of the year are a round table discussion with our "cottage" industry businesses in the county. These businesses

are home-based or use

local outlets and/or the



internet to sell their products. We will be partnering with the Reynolds Homestead to bring them together and work on supporting their needs. And, in March, we will be doing a Leprechaun decorating contest, similar to our annual Scarecrow contest.

With the cold temperatures, recovering from the holidays, and the snow, many of our local businesses have seen a decline in visits. We encourage everyone to come out and support our local community.

We hosted a ribbon cutting for KAM's Corner, LLC on January 22nd. This business is located at 797 Woodland Drive in Stuart. It offers substance abuse case management and mental health skills building programs. We are thankful that they are here helping our community.

Stay up to date with all the events the chamber and our local businesses are doing by following us on Facebook, sign up for our email newsletter or check out our website at www.patrickchamber.com.

Welcome to new businesses joining the chamber in January: Harvest House Emporium, LLC, Terre a'

Terre, and Snow's Land Maintenance. (Adcock is the executive director of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce)



Grant Writer =

(cont. from page 1)

Granting Solutions, LLC

Dr. Kirsten Smith Transforming Dreams into Funded

Empowering organizations and people to drive lasting community impact by providing comprehensive grant writing, strategic planning, and effective evaluation services.

state and federal grants, which re-

quire more work, range from \$750

bank; it's my passion, not my live-

to \$900.



Granting Solutions, LLC, helps individuals and organizations in Virginia and North Carolina secure funding.

ly range from \$150 to \$350, while you're supposed to do," Beasley said.

In her full-time role, she has successfully secured funding for "I just have to estimate my hours. programs such as the District Two I am not here to break anyone's Recovery Court, which serves five counties, an infant mortality reduclihood, so I'm extremely afford- tion program providing free educaable. It's more than the money to tion and supplies, a children's comme—it's about making a difference munity garden, re-entry programs, and kind of leaving that legacy be- and substance abuse prevention hind to show my kids, 'This is what initiatives.



As a grant writer for the MTW District Health Department, Smith-Beasley has secured more than \$10 million in funding.

rick County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Rebecca Adcock to discuss reviving the PCVA Business Builders program. She hopes bring the program back later this

There are some internal changthe community college (Patrick & Henry Community College), which

Beasley recently met with Pat- is a major partner in the program. After those changes take place and everyone is acclimated, then we are hopeful to bring that back to the forefront of opportunities for our to play a role in securing funding to small businesses in PC," she said.

For more information, visit www. granting-solutions.com or Facebook.com/GrantingSolutions.LLC. es coming up with retirements at Beasley can be reached at Kirsten. smith@granting-solutions.com or (276) 952-8311.

Farmers are encouraged to plan for upcoming planting season and cover crops

The Patrick County Soil and Water Con-District servation office has received state funding to assist Patrick County Farmers with cover crops on their farms. Cover crops can boost an agricultural producer's bottom line by increasing moisture retention and drought



soil erosion caused by benefits. State fund- and Sandra Heath wind and water and ing comes from the want to help you with improving soil struc- Virginia Agricultur- this great opportuture. Now is a great al Best Management nity. To sign up or to time to be thinking Practices Cost-Share set up a field visit, about and selecting Program. With over please contact Patrick the ideal cover crop to 45 years' combined SWCD office at (276)

resistance, reducing ic and environmental County, Tony Collins

Green Team cleans Poplar Drive

The Patrick County Green Team picked up over 260 pounds of roadside trash from Poplar Drive on Sunday Jan 26. Join the Green Team for the next cleanup on Feb 22.

reap the best econom- service to Patrick 694-2911. KAMS Corner now providing services



A ribbon cutting was held recently at Kicking Addictive Mentalities (KAMS) Corner, a new agency which helps with substance abuse disorders. The agency is located at 797 Woodland Dr., Stuart (in back of the building, below PC Eye Associates and Liberty Home Health). It provides case management, peer support, mental health skill building, outpatient services, and partial hospitalization. For more information, call (276) 734-3421.

Spelling Bee winners at HRMS



Hardin Reynolds Memorial School announced the winners of the annual Spelling Bee. They are:

1st place: Ronald Davis 2nd place: Kira Barker 3rd place: Carter Trent

Retired Teachers Busy with Christmas Projects

Members of the Patrick County Retired Workshop. December meeting held at Landmark Cen- cember birthday. ter. Betty Perry, Joyce Grooms, and Phyllis

Eastridge led the project. lis Eastridge provided a musical program the book club, members gather for a singing teachers provided Santa sacks of gifts py Connection. Everyone is invited to join. made by Norma Bozenmayer and a monly Parton Imagination Library, and PARC tails.

Retired teachers prepared Teachers made mesh Christmas wreaths birthday bags for residents at Blue Ridge with individual embellishments at their Therapy Connection who celebrate a De-

The PCRTA continues to hold its book club on the third Wednesday of each month Retired teachers have been busy spon- at the library. Members lead interesting soring several Christmas activities. Phyl- discussions on books of choice. Following at the Developmental Center and retired at Landmark Center or Blue Ridge Thera-

You are invited to join the Patrick Counetary donation to the Developmental Cen- ty Retired Teachers Association if you are ter. Donations were also made to several a retired teacher from anywhere. Contact programs, including Christmas Cheer, Dol- Betty Perry Bwperry7@yahoo.com for de-



WWW.THEENTERPRISE.NET

New Committee Assignments

The 119th Congress shapes up to be a busy Congress, particularly for me.

The increase in activity is both because of the bold initiatives Republicans hope to pass and additional committee assignments that I have been given.

In the last term, I was selected for the ly January, Speaker Committee! first time to serve on Johnson on Administration.

The Committee has Rules. jurisdiction over most larger than the Capi-

and world-famous Smithsonian Institute Muoversight of the Capmittee budgets.

the Committee has House. jurisdiction over federal election adminis- 435

and Commerce.

on and Commerce since The Committee holds ofhearings related to important avoid broadband.

sions and briefings

asked me to take on issues. the responsibility of Subcommittee.

Environmental Pro- Committee. tection Agency (EPA), government regula- pointment tions and overreach, Committee,



Morgan Griffith

Representative

vironmental policies. appointed

The Rules Committo the advancement dure. It includes the Li- of legislation, control

Jurisdiction stances where there and fair. includes is a suspension of the rules, every bill important bills come itol Police and com- usually goes through before the Committhe Rules Committee What many people before a floor vote is do not know is that taken by the entire

Given there are the House, many in will dedicate a great While an important the chamber histori- deal of my energy and committee, House Ad- cally offered numer- time to these bodies. ministration does not ous amendments to Committee on Energy ly, this practice consumed large amounts Energy debate on legislation.

The Rules first being elected. mittee is supposed to meet with my DC ofstreamline the legunnecessary issues, such as the delays. The Commit- able to meet with country's health care tee is empowered to folks when the schedsystem, domestic en- place limitations on ule permits. To do so, ergy production and the number of amend- I often must step off ments and establish- the dais and brief-Further, the Com- es the amount of time ly leave a committee mittee holds discus- of debate for each bill. hearing to see a con-

that require my at- assure the Commit- way. tee does not eliminate Chairman Guthrie debate on important obviously

Chairwoman chairing the commit-ginia Foxx (R-NC), during Environment who chairs the Rules Committee, will be The Subcommittee serving her first term tee meets in the U.S. will be focused on the as Chairwoman of the Capitol, while Energy

Following my ap-Chairand the country's en- woman Foxx select-

ed me to serve as Additionally, in ear- Vice Chairman of the

As Majority Leader the House Committee me to serve on the in Virginia's House House Committee on of Delegates, I was a staunch advocate for making sure the rules of the activities oc- tee exercises great of the chamber recurring at the U.S. influence over the flected the principles U.S. legislative process in of Jefferson's Manu-Capitol complex is Congress. Members of al of Parliamentary the panel contribute Practice and Proce-

This appointment brary of Congress, the length of debate to the Committee will the U.S. Botanical on a measure, and give me an opportunithe may even alter the ty to move the House content of legislation. towards a process Excluding circum- that is both efficient

I have already seen

Given the trust placed in me by Speaker Johnson and others for these comlawmakers in mittee assignments, I

But that does not take up as much of a single piece of leg- mean I will not take my time as the House islation. According- time to listen to your concerns.

Folks from Virgin-As you know, I have of time and prolonged ia's Ninth District are some of those who will come to DC and

Generally, I try to make myself avail-I hope to work to stituent in the hall-

and unfortunately be Vir- more commonplace, the 119th Congress.

The Rules Commitand Commerce meets in the Rayburn House the Office Building, and Administra-House tion meets in the Longworth House Office Building.

Accordingly, when coming to my office, you may have to be escorted to one of these three locations. Regrettably, the three locations are not easy to get to from each other, so it may take a few minutes.

Nonetheless, I will continue to listen to you and advocate for you in Washington, whether that involves me seeing you in the district, or in the hallways of Congress.

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

Patrick County Board of Supervisors (BOS)

the open. I applaud the efforts of work Steve; it is appreciated. Supervisor Steve Marshall and do not believe the attacks levelled at

I have been following the news him by other supervisors and critrecently regarding the BOS, and it ics at large are warranted. There is does seem clear that there is some- something his critics are hiding or thing going on behind the scenes attempting to hide from the citizens that needs to be brought out into of Patrick County. Keep up the good

Les Reynolds, Patrick Springs

Student Briefs

dean's list at JMU

Stuart resident Heather Ed-Edwards is majoring in Dietetics Commencement Program.

GPA of between 3.5 and 3.899.

the US who received the Doctor ed the commencement address.

Stuart resident named to of Chiropractic degree from Sherman College of Chiropractic in Spartanburg, SC, on December 14, wards has been named to the 2024. The Fall Quarter 2024 and dean's list at James Madison Uni- Winter Quarter 2025 graduates versity for the fall 2024 semester. participated in the college's 148th

The Doctor of Chiropractic pro-Students who earn dean's list gram at Sherman College requires honors must carry at least 12 students to complete approxigraded credit hours and earn a mately 4,600 hours (14 quarters) of classroom and laboratory study Amos Completes Doctor of and also includes an internship in Chiropractic Program at Sher- the college's on-campus Chiropractic Center. Assistant Professor of Matthew Amos, of Stuart, was Clinical Sciences Allie Hamstead, one of 64 students from across D.C., A.C.P., C.A.C.C.P., present-

Tourism Advisory Council Kicks Off 2025 with January Meeting

The Patrick County Tourism Advisory Council held its first meeting once a month, on the 3rd Thursday, of the year on Jan. 16 at 6 p.m. at at Patrick & Henry Community Patrick & Henry Community Col- College, Stuart. The public is wellege in Stuart.

TAC meetings are held at 6 p.m.



A group photo captured the following council members (left to right): Secretary Jeanie Clark, Chairman Bessie Weber, Assistant Director Grace Cooper, Photos and Videos Coordinator Kim Rakes, District Representatives Chris Prutting, Wayne Kirkpatrick, and Brian Alley, Patrick County Chamber of Commerce Director Rebecca Adcock, Administrative Assistant Sue Kajalack, Director James Houchins, Dan River District Supervisor Andrew Overby, Assistant Chairman Kurt Bozenmayer, Steve Marshall, the county's liaison, was not pictured. (Photos by Dan River District Representative Mary Dellenback Hill)



James Houchins (left to right), Andrew Overby, Rebecca Adcock and Kim Rakes chatted after the meeting.

Wise Honored with SAR Teacher of the Year Award and Bronze Good Citizenship Medal



Photo (left to right): Gene Fain (SAR), Matthew Wise, Mark Leviner (SAR), Principal Ricky

Matthew Wise, a dedicated Social Bronze Good Citizenship Medal is Studies teacher at North Stokes given by the SAR to individuals who High School, was presented with have made significant contributions the Colonel George Waller Chapter to their school, community, or state. of the Sons of the American Revo- This award, tied to Mr. Wise's role lution (SAR) Teacher of the Year as an exceptional teacher and men-Award on January 23. Wise, now tor, underscores the SAR's commitin his 11th year of teaching, also ment to honoring individuals whose serves as the school's wrestling work exemplifies patriotism, leadcoach and sponsor of the chess club. ership, and service.

In addition to the Teacher of the Year recognition, Mr. Wise was importance of education in fosterawarded the Bronze Good Citizen- ing civic responsibility and celeship Medal—specifically acknowl- brated Mr. Wise's profound impact

The ceremony emphasized the edging his contributions as an ed- on his students and the broader ucator. Commissioned in 1895, the school community.

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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.

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Patrick Pioneers

Spc. 4 Frederick C. Bullington Jr. By Beverly Belcher Woody

If you travel highway 58 back and forth to Martinsville, you cross the bridge over Spoon Creek which is named in memory of Spc.4 Frederick C. Bullington, Jr. I have always wanted to learn more about this young hero and his ties to Patrick County, so he is our focus this week.

Frederick was born on the 15th of December 1945 to Frederick Curtis Bullington, Sr. and Virginia Adeline Fulcher Bullington. According to the 1950 United States Census, Fred and Virginia were living in the Tunstall district of Pittsylvania County with their young children, Virginia Ann, age 6; Fred Jr., age 5; and one year old twin boys, Wayne and Warren. Fred and Virginia were both employed in the textile mills, Fred as a doffer and Virginia as a spinner.

In January of 1951, Fred and Virginia were blessed with the birth of another daughter, Patricia. On Christmas Day 1951, tragedy struck the family when forty-five-year Fred died suddenly, enroute to the hospital. Virginia Adeline brought her young family back home to Patrick County where she married Claude Irvin Scearce, and in 1953, they had a daughter named Janice.

Virginia Adeline Fulcher's par-

ents were John Buford Fulcher and Hallie Fulcher of the Horsepasture community. John Buford Fulcher's parents were William Harden Fulcher and Sally Florence Hundley of Sandy Ridge, North Carolina. Hallie Fulcher's parents were Thomas Jefferson Fulcher and Eliza Jennie Brim of the Spencer community.

Frederick and his siblings attended Hardin Reynolds Memorial School in Critz and according to a resolution by the Patrick County Board of Supervisors, dated May 14th, 2018, Frederick spent many happy hours as a child swimming and fishing in Spoon Creek.

Frederick enlisted in the United States Army in November 1964. After basic training, he was stationed in Hawaii until his deployment to Vietnam. He was a member of the United States Army 25th Infantry Tropic Lightning Company B, 1st Battalion (Mechanized) with a rank of Spc. 4.

On May 7th, 1966, Frederick was wounded in the head and neck by Viet Cong gunfire; he was transported to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines for treatment. The Patrick County and National Red Cross assisted Virginia with obtaining a flight to the Philippines so that she could comfort her son. Virginia was



SP4 Frederick Bullington (photo from Find A Grave Memorial)

by Frederick's side when he died on May 30th, 1966; he was twenty-one years old.

Spc. 4 Frederick C. Bullington's body was returned to the United States with an Honor Guard and taken to the home of his mother in Spencer, Virginia. Frederick's funeral was held at Stella Christian Church with burial in the church cemetery with full military rites.

In a 2018 Martinsville Bulletin story about the renaming of the bridge in memory of Frederick, the late

Wound Fatal To Soldier From Patrick

STUART - A Patrick Couny soldier who was wounded in Viet Nam May 7 died Sunday at a hospital in the Philippines, week after his mother flew from the United States to give him comfort.

The victim was Spec. 4 Frederick C. Bullington, 22, who was wounded in the head and neck by Viet Cong gunfire.

The Roanoke Times, 1966

Dr. Lock Boyce said that Bullington was the first Patrick County native to be mortally wounded in the Vietnam War. Dr. Boyce added, "Around here, he was known as Freddy, but after speaking to his platoon sergeant, I learned that his nickname was 'Bull,' not because of his name, but because of his strength. He was always one to jump up and do whatever needed to be done."

Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) 692-

Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty – About Social Security Benefits for Someone with Multiple Ex-spouses

Dear Rusty: If a financially well-off individual had multiple ex-spouses, could it happen that the multiple ex-spouses could each be collecting Social Security based on their own financial situation as compared to their rich ex-spouses? Thus, multiple payouts by SS? Just curious, because there are probably many people in this situation as a result of the ever-increasing number of people involved in multiple marriages that each lasted more than ten years. Signed: Curious Ex-Spouse

Dear Curious Ex-Spouse: A former spouse can only collect one SS benefit – either their own SS retirement amount, or an amount as an ex-spouse if the marriage lasted 10 years or more. And it is possible for multiple ex-spouses of a marriage to the same person to qualify for benefits from those any ex-spouse benefit they are entitled to from a

But each ex-spouse can only qualify for one benefit payment – either their own earned SS benefit, or their benefit as an ex-spouse. In other words, someone with two (or more) ex-spouses might have their ex's collecting full benefits on their record, provided that each marriage lasted at least 10 years. But an ex-spouse can only get one benefit –their own SS retirement amount or an ex-spouse amount - whichever is higher).

It's possible, also, that an ex-spouse can collect benefits from a former spouse at the same time as a current spouse is also collecting spouse benefits on the same record. And there is no detriment to either's amount because multiple spouses or ex-spouses are collecting on a one person's SS record (Social Security is, after all, a means for spouses, or ex-spouses, to avoid poverty). However, an ex-spouse's own SS retirement benefit (from their personal lifetime work record) must be less than

unions, if each marriage lasted at least 10 years. former spouse. Essentially, if the "10-years-married" rule is satisfied, ex-spouses are subject to the same benefit rules as a current spouse.

> You are correct that we see some cases like this these days, but each eligible ex-spouse can only get one benefit, and their ex-spouse benefit is always offset by any personal SS retirement benefit the exspouse may also be entitled to on their own lifetime work record.

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

Why We Advocate For Meatless Mondays (And Every Day)

Is there a relationship between our planet's often more expensive. health and our dietary choices? If so, the question begs—how, and what is our role? Can we make diferent in the long run, and save money as a planet? I ferent food choices, improve agricultural production, and reduce food waste? Unsurprisingly, the dietary choices we make largely influence climate change, land, water, and other planetary resources.

More and more people are adopting a plant-based diet, not only for health reasons but also to make a positive impact on the environment. However, how aware are Westerners regarding this relation to diet and its environmental impact? Well, most are not aware and did not show a willingness to know or accept that eating animal products contributes to climate change.

Studies done in several European and North American countries revealed that only a minority was aware of the environmental benefits of a plantbased diet. People in the Netherlands were the most aware with 18% of its population claiming to be vegetarians, compared to 3% in the U.S. It was found that women were mostly willing to eat less meat for environmental reasons, and men much less.

It's actually quite understandable. Meat is everywhere. Animal products show up as a part of our daily meals, menus, and grocery stores. Frozen meat in microwaveable packages is cheap, convenient, and easy. There seem to be more meaty options than vegetarian options and the vegetarian options are

believe so.

Meaty Facts

Did you know...

*19-29% of greenhouse gas emissions are due to food systems

*Meat production is responsible for 70% of all human water use, 80% of deforestation, and 30% of energy consumption

*In the U.S., 67% of plant calories produced are fed to animals

*Methane reduction is a quick way to help slow GHG emissions and global warming.

*In a 2006 report, the United Nations stated that raising animals for food generates more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks in the world combined. (Wow!)

The Adventist Health Study (AHS-2) and the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition-Oxford (EPIC-Oxford)

The two most significant studies regarding the effects of a plant-based diet considered both the health and environmental effects of a plant-based and pescatarian diet. The studies concluded the following regarding the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, comparing vegetarian diets to non-veg-

*Vegetarian diets in AHS-2 study = 29% less In the long run, could eating less meat save mongreenhouse gas emissions than non-vegetarian di-

> *Vegetarian/vegan diets in EPIC-Oxford study 47-60% less greenhouse gas emissions than non-vegetarian diets

> One important thing to note as well is that a balanced plant-based diet reaps many more benefits than a "junk-food, plant-based diet," i.e. a diet filled with processed, refined and sugary foods.

What Does Science Say?

Clear evidence has demonstrated that the foods we consume and produce are the main contributors of natural resource depletion and environmental degradation. Animal products, namely meat and dairy from cows, are the largest contributors to environmental degradation.

Logically, decreasing or eliminating meat in our diets could be the most significant way a single person could contribute to preventing environmental degradation. Progressive changes can lead to positive changes that lead to even more significant changes. The lifestyle choices we make are power-

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

3 Tips to Make You (And Your Heart) Happy

It's February and at this point, many of you are probably growing a little tired of talking about diet, exercise, and how you're not keeping your New Year's resolutions. Am I right?

No worries, this time we're going to discuss a different way to get healthy—by being happy. Specifically, how happiness affects the health of your heart. (It's February, after all.)

Be kind.

We're human. We all get angry. But did you know that when you become angry, you acutely increase your risk of heart attack by 200-300%? A large study looked at multiple cardiac risk factors; after taking anger into account, no other factor made an immediate difference. The effect of anger also persisted for about one hour after the initial blow up.

How many of you are on social media? Psychological Science magazine recently published a study done by the University of Pennsylvania. The study tracked negative emotions on Twitter, and overlaid

that pattern with a death rate map from the Cen-

ters for Disease Control (CDC). What they found

was that the more negative tweets that came from

a certain country, the higher the death rate. So be-

ing unkind—even via the Internet—can come back to hurt vou.

Be thankful.

heart function.

Dr. Paul Mills at the University of California, San Diego, recently showed that a spirit of thankfulness is good for your health. Grateful people were shown to have less depression, less anxiety, and better sleep. More surprisingly, however, is that they also

found out that thankful people also had lower levels of inflammatory markers and better overall heart To make this practical to you, instead of feeling burdened by the thought of "I have to do this," think "thank God that I can still do this!" Researchers have also recommended keeping a gratitude jour-

thankful for. Forgive. We're all sinners. We've all been hurt, but we've

nal, where you can write down the things that you're

also hurt others, so forgiveness applies to everyone. Researchers from Florida State University demonstrated that people who actively forgave others had lower heart rates, lower blood pressures, and better

Another study directly compared bitter women to those who were forgiving. They found opposite effects in their sympathetic tone, heart rate, blood pressure, and arterial stiffness. Those who forgave also had much better cardiovascular numbers than their angry counterparts.

So, we all just need to...let it go (cue Frozen soundtrack).

Why is this important?

While these ideas may seem easier than uprooting your diet or starting a vigorous new exercise regimen, they're actually more difficult. Kindness, thankfulness, and a spirit of forgiveness all represent a change in your habits, a change in your thought process, and essentially, a change of heart.

Luckily, we serve the ultimate heart surgeon. Claim His promise to you:

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and

give you a heart of flesh. - Ezekiel 36:26 (Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Harvey Hahn, MD. Used by permission from www.lifeandhealth.org Courtesy of LifeSpring - Resources for Hope and Healing Stuart, VA)

SPORTS

Strong team defense leads Lady Cougars over Floyd



The Lady Cougars celebrate their 56-51 win over Floyd County.

By Pat Delaney

the opening minutes of their game with Floyd County on January 30, the Patrick County High Lady Cougars came alive and never looked back in their 56-51 win.

Down 0-5 with 5:48 to go in the first quarter, the Lady Cougars, led by senior Kimora Wimbush off the bench, went on a 14-4 run to head into the second quarter up 14-9. In the first few minutes of the game, the Lady Cougars seemed rushed but settled down, led by great team defensive play that created points on the other

The Lady Cougars' defensive play did not let up in the second quarter. Playing in front of a very vocal home crowd, they held Floyd County to seven points in the quarter. The Lady Cougars led 30-16 at the half.

Patrick County extended their lead to 15 points following a Journey fully, we can keep it going forward."

Moore 3 point shot with 2:18 to go. After falling behind by 5 points in Floyd County played much better in the third, using full court pressure to try and slow down the Lady Cougars, closing the gap to 13 points after three quarters.

The Floyd County defensive pressure began to pay off for them in the latter part of the fourth, allowing them to close to 8 points with a minute to go. They would get as close as 6 points with :18 to go. With a chance to close the gap even further, Kimora Wimbush brought the Cougar faithful to their feet with a timely blocked shot that all but sealed the win for the Lady Cougars.

Lady Cougar head coach Tony Mosley was very happy with the way his team played, and hopes that it is a catalyst for the remainder of the season. "This was the first time we've beaten Floyd in a while. This is one of those games to get us over the hump. Hope-



Senior Kimora Wimbush (32) sparked her team off the bench.



Lilly Hazelwood shoots over the Floyd defenders.

past two games because she's been ful sight."

Mosley also praised senior Kimo- sick. She came off the bench and gave ra Wimbush's performance. "Kimora us so much energy. The crowd fed off came off the bench after missing the it. The team fed off it. It was a beauti-

PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of February 10-15:

7pm Boys Basketball at James River 7pm Girls Basketball at Alleghany



Easton Harris fires a shot over the Radford defender's reach.

Cougars fall to Radford

By Pat Delaney

against the Patrick County High Cougars on January 29.

The Cougars fell behind early in the first quarter, trailing by seven at the midway mark, and by eight with 2:15 to go. Showing great resilience, the Cougars battled back with a 10-2 run, capped off by a Noah Jessup layup at the buzzer to tie the game a 19-19.

quarter, hitting two early three point shots in the first minute our night."

and pulling out to a six point The visiting Radford Bobcats lead. The Cougars struggled in

> Radford continued their hot shooting in the second half, going up 35-58 after three, and taking the game, 44-75.

"We gave them too many buckets, and we didn't get enough Radford came out in the second stops," said Cougar head Coach Brian Chitwood. "Tonight wasn't

came away with a 44-75 win the second quarter, taking some good shots that just wouldn't fall. The Bobcats went into the half leading the Cougars by twelve points, 27-39.

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Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

*Brianna Morgan, 28, of Woolpossess Sch. I or II drugs. Senior Deputy C. Gilbert was the arresting officer.

*Roger Dale Simmons, 71, of ficer. Stuart, was charged Jan. 17 with drive while intoxicated. Master of Winston Salem, N.C., was Deputy M.T. Rorrer was the ar- charged Jan. 23 with one count resting officer.

*Austin Kenneth Bowman, 28, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 17 with fail to appear. Deputy C.L. Adkins was the arresting officer.

*Joshua Christopher Herring, 40, of Lawsonville, N.C., was charged Jan. 17 with possess Sch. I or II drugs. Lt. D.L. Foley was the arresting officer.

*Austin Kenneth Bowman, 28, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 17 with two counts each failure to appear on felony offense and violate condition of release/pretrial. Senior Deputy B. Fields made the arrest for Henry County.

*Matthew Ryan Scott, 39, of Patrick Springs, was charged Jan. 20 with one count each unauthorized use of vehicle and fail to appear. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Christopher Lynn Wimbush, 42, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 21 with trespass. Deputy J.L. Fain was the arresting officer.

*Christopher Lynn Wimbush, 42, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 22 with stalking. Inv. Tennille E. Jessup was the arresting officer.

*Brandon Lee Bowman, 38, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 22 with fail to appear. Deputy C.L. Adkins was the arresting officer.

*Franklin D. Rose, Jr., 39, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 22 with two counts violate protective or- Patrick Springs, was charged der and one count malicious bodi- Jan. 29 with obstruction of jusly harm. Inv. Tennille E. Jessup was the arresting officer.

*Kevin Shane Belcher, 32, of Norfolk, was charged Jan. 23 with two counts of probation vi-

arrest for Patrick County.

*Joshua Angel Valencia, 20, of Danville, was charged Jan. 23 with one count each disregard wine, was charged Jan. 17 with law enforcement command and continue to drive 20+ mph - endanger and reckless driving. Sgt. C.L. Elgin was the arresting of-

> *Javon Jamal Russell, 27, each probation violation and fail to appear. Senior Deputy B. Fields was the arresting officer.

> *Delilah Katherine Hardin, 49, of Martinsville, was charged Jan. 24 with fail to obey court order. Henry County made the arrest for Patrick County.

> *Jonathan Robert Forcier, 31, address not available, was charged Jan. 24 with three counts of probation violation. Botetourt County made the arrest for Patrick County.

*Zachary Robert Martin, 28, of Ararat, was charged Jan. 25 with drive while intoxicated. Senior Deputy A. Kinney was the arresting officer.

*Kenneth Roger Gwyn, Jr., address not available, was charged Jan. 27 with probation violation. Deputy H.D. Whitney was the arresting officer.

*Skylar Dwayne Dix, 30, of Stuart, was charged Jan. 28 with assault and batter. Inv. R. Haynes was the arresting officer.

*Keyona Tyshell Redd, 22, of Axton, was charged Jan. 28 with fail to obey court order. Sgt. J.D. Lewis was the arresting officer.

*Zachary Dalton Scales, 29, of Ararat, was charged Jan. 28 with assault and batter. Inv. R. Haynes was the arresting officer.

*Caleb Darion Shelter, 26, of tice. Senior Deputy M.R. Hodges was the arresting officer.

*William Gene Lineback, 65, of Ararat, was charged Jan. 30 with assault. Inv. Tennille E. Jessup olation. City of Norfolk made the was the arresting officer.

Crossing the Lines

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

Council terminates agreement with Martinsville Solar YMCA Requests \$500K from Henry County for New

The Martinsville City Council approved the termination of the Solar Development Power Purchase agreement at its Tuesday, January 28 meeting.

In July 2020, City Attorney Eric Payne said the city entered into an agreement with Martinsville Solar for power purchase. The company was authorized to develop a solar facility on the former Linwood Golf Course, situated on DuPont proper-

"Now the company has decided they do not want to move forward with the project. Our agreement that was executed almost five years ago gave us two rights in the event of termination," he said.

The first right is the city can purchase the property for \$1. The second right is in the event of termination by the company, the city would receive \$320,000 as liquidated damages.

"So, this is additional monies that are going to come back to the city as well as provide us with some substantial property that we can use for future development activity for the collective and beneficial use of the city of Martinsville," Payne

Rick Ward, director of the Blue Ridge Regional Library, discussed the Summer Reading Program.

Vice-mayor Kathy Lawson said the city amended their contract with the solar company once. "They still didn't do their part. We did our part, we ran our infrastructure down there four years ago, so the infrastructure is in place. We just need a reputable solar company," she said.

facility will feature childcare services, two swimming pools, a splash pad, and multiple sports courts. It will be located on a sevenacre site near the intersection of Memorial Boulevard and Fayette Street. The Henry County Board of

funding request from the Martinsville-Henry County Family YMCA for its proposed new facility, along with an update on the project, during its Jan. 28 meeting.

Supervisors received a \$500,000

YMCA Director and CEO Brad Kinkema

requested \$500,000 from the Henry County

Board of Supervisors to support the YMCA's

new building and splash park. The proposed

port the construction of a splash teams.

pad, designed as a recreational space for both YMCA members and the broader community.

Facility, Splash Pad

"We hope to make that not only an amenity for 'Y members, but for city and county residents," Kinkema said. "In most municipalities, if you do a study on what they want in the community as far as parks and rec, a splash park is the number one thing."

Kinkema also plans to request \$500,000 from the Martinsville City Council at its February meeting. He noted that the funding does not have to be provided in full upfront and could be distributed over several years. "Certainly, we need to frontload

things because we would like to start construction in a year and a half and need to have the funding, but we have spread some investments out over time," he said.

Board Chairman Jim Adams, of the Blackberry District, said the request will be considered during the upcoming budget season. The new YMCA facility, to be lo-

cated on a seven-acre property on Memorial Boulevard, will include: An early learning childcare cen-

ter licensed for up to 94 children, including infant and toddler care.

A full-service YMCA with two YMCA Director and CEO Brad swimming pools to accommodate Kinkema said the funds would sup- youth swim lessons and local swim

Blackberry native honored with 2024 Jack Dalton **Community Service Award**



Clifford Stone, flanked by members of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, received the 2024 Jack Dalton Community Service Award for his dedication to the community.

pervisors presented Clifford Stone with the 2024 Jack Dalton Community Service Award during its Jan. 28 meeting, recognizing his extensive volunteer work and lifelong commitment to the Bassett community.

"This prestigious award is a tribute to the legacy of Mr. Jack Dalton, whose exemplary public service set a standard of commitment and selflessness that continues to inspire our community," Board Chairman Jim Adams.

"Mr. Stone's tireless dedication to improving the lives of others, from his leadership with local organizations to his involvement in community projects, embodies the

The Henry County Board of Su-spirit of service that this award was created to recognize," Adams said. "We thank Mr. Stone for his invaluable contributions to Henry County and encourage all of our citizens to follow his example of giving back for the betterment of our community."

> Stone, a lifelong Blackberry District resident, has dedicated decades to serving his community. His extensive volunteer work includes involvement with the Sanville Ruritan Club, the Bassett Area Jaycees, Bassett Kiwanis, the Martinsville Moose Lodge #2003, the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce, the Adult Day Care Board, and the Clean Community Commission.

Ridgeway recognizes longtime volunteer for legacy of community service



The Ridgeway Town Council honored C.D. Prillaman for his volunteer service to the community on January 7. From left to right: Councilmember Tim Wood, Mayor Craig O'Der, C.D. Prillaman, Vice Mayor Mike Bass, and Councilmember Maeve McCulloch.

ored C.D. Prillaman, a longtime volunteer, business owner, and community advocate, with a resolution recognizing his years of dedicated service to the town. The resolution, passed on January 7, acknowledges Prillaman's contributions through his company, Prillaman Landscape Dimensions, Inc., and his involvement with local civic projects.

Prillaman serves on the Ridgeway Volunteer Rescue Squad Board of Directors as a citizen member and plays an active role in the town's Special Events Committee. His landscaping company also serves as the town's public works contractor, handling maintenance and beautification projects.

The Ridgeway Town Council hon- Prillaman as a visionary and dedicated leader.

"He lives right outside the township; I wish he actually lived in the town so he could serve on council because he'd be an excellent councilmember," O'Der said.

From the moment O'Der took office, Prillaman was eager to share ideas and propose solutions to enhance the town's quality of life.

"He's just really great to have around and always offers a great idea," O'Der said. "A lot of times when you're the elected person, everybody expects you to come up with the vision of how to make things better, but I've always tried to adopt the philosophy that there's never a bad idea, and C.D. has cer-Mayor Craig O'Der Jr. praised tainly given me a lot of great ideas."

Woody named Martinsville's Division-Wide Teacher of the Year

erly Woody was named the City of Martinsville's Teacher of the Year. Woody, who has been deeply involved in civic groups and has authored books, was praised for her commitment to students.

"You put your heart into your classroom every day. The kids are smiling, and you go above and be-

yond," said Principal Ama Waller. Woody, who writes letters to

Sixth-grade history teacher Bev- many of her former students, was visibly moved by the recognition. "This is such an amazing honor, it really is," she said.

Barry Nelson of Nelson Automotive presented Woody with a Honda Prologue, which she will be able to drive for several months.

Woody also writes the popular 'Patrick Pioneers,' a weekly column published in The Enterprise.



Beverly Woody (holding bouquet), a Martinsville Middle School teacher, was named the City of Martinsville's Teacher of the Year. Woody is pictured with Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley Jr., and other administrators.



OBITUARIES Robert Jackson Reynolds II

Southern Piedmont **Technology Council Innovation Stars Banquet**



Award winners honored at the Southern Piedmont Technology Council Innovation Stars Banquet are pictured.

The Southern Piedmont Technology Council held its annual Innovation Stars Banquet on January 21. Maj. Gen. Roosevelt "Ted" Mercer, CEO and Executive Director of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority was the Keynote Speaker for the evening and spoke on how the importance of space and technology within our daily lives and the role it plays in Virginia.

Throughout night, seven awards were presented to individuals and organizations in the region for going above and beyond through their daily work within the technology industry. Awards and winners include:

- 1. The Chairman's Award is the most prestigious award. It is awarded to an individual or organization that has shown nology Group. visionary leadership mont region. This their efforts to create mote and Hub.
- 2. Innovation in excellence, business (50 employees or less) The Innovation in Technology Small Business Award is awarded cellence in technolog- Education ical innovation. Pre- IT Academy. sented to Maxcess.



James Houchins, director of Patrick County Economic Development and Tourism, accepted the Maxcess award, presented for Innovation in Technology

- novation in Technol-50 employees that demonstrates excelinnovation. Present-
- to promote technology Education, Governin the Southern Pied- ment or Community the region utilizing or award is nominated awarded to an orga- Presented to Christie by the SPTC board. nization that devel- Hart. Presented to Mid-At- ops innovative uses lantic Broadband for of technology to proenhance the SOVA Innovation educational opportunities, governmental commu-Technology - Small nity outreach or displays innovative use of technology to deliver services, advance their mission, or impact the community. to a company with Presented to Adam 50 employees or less Reeves from Souththat demonstrates ex- ern Virginia Higher Center's
 - 5. Innovation in En- nology Students.

3. Innovation in trepreneurship Hon-Technology - Large or is awarded to an business (Above 50 entrepreneurial comemployees) The In- pany* that demonstrates excellence ogy Large Business in technological in-Award is awarded to novation. Presented a company with above to Kegerreis Digital Marketing.

- 6. The Rising Star lence in technological Award is awarded to an individual with ed to PenBay Tech- a new idea or initiative, or a new busi-4. Innovation in ness that has made a significant impact on Outreach award is enabling technology.
 - 7. Student Innovator Awards awarded to a high school or full-time college student that has shown leadership in technology. High school students must attend a school in the SPTC service region. College students must be from the SPTC service region. Presented to Pittsylvania County Career & Technical Center's Cyber Systems Tech-

Mr. Robert Jackson Reynolds II, age 62 of Stuart went to be with his Lord and Savior on Saturday, February 1, 2025, at his home. He was born in Patrick County on November 7, 1962. He was preceded in death by his father, Robert Jackson "Bobby" Reynolds. Robert's passions were growing flowers, canning, antiques, and cooking. He turned those passions into a career as the owner/ operator of Plantiques. He was a charter member of Grace Baptist Church, serving on the bereavement team and Wednesday night meals. He also served as a board member for Patrick County Christmas Cheer for many years. Robert always used his gifts to bless others.

Mr. Reynolds is survived by his wife of



Seth Reynolds and wife, Reagan, and Logan Reynolds, all of Stuart; his mother, Mary "Liz" Vernon Reynolds of Stuart; one brother, John Reynolds and wife, Joni, of Lewisville, North Carolina; one sister, Susan Reynolds of Stuart; one niece, Chelsea Torbush and husband, Matt of Winston-Salem, North Carolina; great-nephew, Carson Torbush; and a Torbush, both of Winston-Salem.

Funeral services will 30 years, Paula Ellen be held Friday, Feb-Pierson Reynolds of ruary 7, 2025, at 1:00 the home; two sons, p.m. at Grace Baptist care given to Robert.

Church with Pastor Mark Elkins and Pastor Jim Churchwell officiating. Burial will follow in Patrick Memorial Gardens. The family will receive friends on Thursday, February 6, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Grace Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1108, Stuart, Virginia 24171, to Christmas Cheer, P.O. 222, Stuart, Virginia 24171, or to Mountain Valley Hospice and Palliative Care, 1427 Edgewood Drive, Suite 101, Mt. Airy, NC 27030. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

The family of Robert great-niece, Chandler Reynolds would like to express their sincere appreciation to Mountain Valley Hospice, especially his caring nurse, Toni, for the

Walter Lee Penn III

Walter Lee Penn III, born in Henry County, Virginia, on June 24, 1940, died January 30, 2025, in Martinsville, Virginia, at King's Grant Retirement Community with his wife, Melinda, at his side. His family is very grateful for the love and support provided by the caring staff from King's Grant and Mountain Valley Hospice.

Walter, an pioneer sport para- his team. chuting in the early



the 82nd Airborne and FAA the 5th Special Forc-Wright Brothers Mas- es Group (Airborne). ter Pilot, took to the Along with a very leafy skies early, dusting Purple Heart, the Recrops and ducking pow-tired Major, U.S. Army and Damian and great er lines in his teens. Reserve, garnered a Soon after, he helped Silver Star for rescuing

60s, either flying a up and shipped to the Episcopal Church in Norseman or jumping states, Walter earned Martinsville, 2 pm out of one. After ob- his Juris Doctor from Saturday, February 8, taining a degree from $\,$ UVA Law and practiced $\,$ 2025. In lieu of flowers, Hampden-Sydney Col- in numerous capacities donations may be made lege, Walter served in over the years includ- to The Wounded Warthe U.S. Army, first as ing Virginia Assistant rior Project. a Lieutenant in the Do- Attorney General and minican Republic until Henry County Pros- al Home, Martinsville, he was wounded by a ecutor, all the while Va. is serving the famgrenade and then as pulling chandelles and ily. To express condoa Captain in the Viet- hammerheads in his lences online, please nam War for two tours aerobatic biplane, "Yel- visit www.collinsmckuntil he was shot in the low Streak." He retired eestonemartinsville. neck. He served with as a professor of avia- com.

tion at Averett College. Walter was prede-

ceased by his parents, Walter Lee Penn Jr. and Sallie Hubard Penn, and his brother and sister-in-law, Robert and Gale Penn. Surviving are his wife Melinda Carter Penn, his children, William Letcher Pannill Carter Jr. and his wife Lisa, Coates Randolph Carter and his wife Trish, John Christian Penn, and grandchildren Bracken, Caitlin, Allison, Aleya, Grace, Sebastian, Ada, Wren grandson, Sabian.

Friends and family are invited to his me-After getting patched morial service at Christ

McKee-Stone Funer-



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PATRICK PULPITS

Reconciliation

By Alan Dean.

retired

and Eve when they first sinned. He promised them that a Savior would come to reconcile them back to God. This brought needed hope into their lives.

When Jesus came to earth, He made reconciliation a major priority in His teaching. He wanted to give the downtrodden hope. Sin was not to be a permanent barrier between man and God.

In the well-known parable of the prodigal son, Jesus portrays the depth of God's desire to make reconciliation possible, even to son in the parable had wasted all His father's inheritance by going to a far country and spending it lavishly on selfish pursuits. Soon the son shamefully returned to his father's home, hoping to be accepted

God has when we choose to return to Him. He doesn't make any demands on our return, only that we Then, eternal life is guaranteed.

The parable also teaches us the

way to make reconciliation between Seventh-day Adventist individuals. When there is a desire to reconcile by one party, the other Reconciliation has always been an party is to remove all barriers that urgent need in our world from the may be blocking it. He needs to be beginning of history. God sought willing to forgive and reinstate the to bring reconciliation with Adam relationship with joy. This can only happen when both parties submit their differences to God and allow the Holy Spirit to work things out.

The desire to forgive and reconcile is enhanced as we recall God's forgiveness and reconciliation extended toward us. Understanding God's holiness, we quickly recognize our unworthiness. But regardless, God will welcome us with open arms, and all heaven rejoices. Such a joyous reception can only cause us to joyously receive a separated soul back into our open arms.

Nations can experience this joy of sin-hardened, worldly people. The reconciliation as well. At the end of World War II the United States and its allies spent much time and money to rebuild Germany and its economy. There seemed to be a joyful spirit on both sides as this was accomplished.

Heaven is going to be a joyful But his father, who had been place. The unfallen worlds, the anpraying for his son's return, gave gels, and the Godhead will all be him a royal reception and recon- overjoyed at our becoming a part of ciled him back into the family with- the Kingdom of God. And we huout any explanation or require- mans will be full of praise for all ments. He was just overjoyed that their support in our being there. the son had chosen to return. This Meeting Jesus will be the prized story manifests the love and joy moment when He personally gives us a warm welcome with a broad smile.

This time is approaching soon accept Jesus' sacrifice in our behalf when Jesus comes to take His and make Him the Lord of our life. faithful followers home. May we all choose to be in that number.

Learning Loss Remains Persistent Amid Signs of Progress

fifth grade while their schools cient high school students." remained closed.

we have a lot more work to do."

unnecessary disruptions, and emerging. the shift to remote learning had students, and students with dis- divisions and 212 schools. abilities.

students show signs of recovery, students in both Grades 4 and 8 but last year's eighth graders Reading and Math.

The National Assessment of are now high schoolers. We know Educational Progress (NAEP) they missed school at critical dewas released by the National velopment stages, and we need Center for Education Statistics to make sure they are getting at the U.S. Department of Ed- the supports they need to recovucation last week. Results are er," said Superintendent of Pubfrom the test administered last lic Instruction Lisa Coons. "Our year, late January through early ALL In recovery efforts continue March. The fourth graders tak- to help our children catch up. ing the test in winter 2024 were Our schools are working hard to kindergarteners and first grad- help their students recover, and ers when Virginia schools were we are encouraging our school closed for the pandemic; the divisions to see how they can eighth-grade test takers were provide these ALL In supports taught remotely in fourth and for their at-risk and non-profi-

Independent Research indi-"The learning loss suffered cates that Virginia students by extended classroom closures suffered the greatest degree of was deep and persistent and we learning loss overall in the enwent to work unleashing an ex- tire nation from their extended tensive recovery effort that went school closures. Over the past into full effect in calendar year two years, Governor Youngkin 2024," said Gov. Glenn Youn- has implemented a consistent gkin. "The early indications of focus on core strategies to fothose efforts were seen in our cus on learning recovery and May 2024 SOL scores. The ef- getting every student back on forts we're taking like ALL In track for success. This included high-intensity tutoring and Cell setting more rigorous academic Phone-Free classrooms through- standards, prioritizing literaout the Commonwealth show us cy, creating more transparency that we're making progress, but around outcomes, rolling out programs that provided high-in-Virginia—like the nation as a tensity tutoring and addressed whole—saw increases in grade 4 chronic absenteeism, and estabmath scores, no change in grade lishing Cell Phone-Free Educa-4 reading, and declines in grade tion. The January 2024 NAEP 8 reading and math results. scores released today continue These year-old data reflect the to show the staggering decline prolonged and pervasive nega- in student achievement and that tive impact that school closures, some signs of improvement are

NAEP is designed to report reon our children. They mirror the sults at the national and state results from the more recent level without requiring every May 2024 Virginia's Standards student in every school to take of Learning assessments that the assessment. An estimated showed that learning loss had 12,661 Virginia students parplateaued and there were signs ticipated in NAEP Reading and of improvement. There are also Math assessments in 2024. A promising signs of grade 4 gains representative sample across for English Language Learn- the Commonwealth was selected ers, economically disadvantaged which included students from 58

The national sample size for "We are seeing fourth grade NAEP is approximately 235,000

BIBLE TRIVIA

1. Is the book of 3 Timothy (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. Who said, "Lo, I dwell in a house of cedars but the ark of the covenant ... remaineth under curtains"? David, Nathan, Saul, Solomon

3. From Numbers 12, why was Miriam shut out of camp for seven days? Ungodly act, Leprous, Fasting, Lent

4. Who took David in as his own after the slaying of Go-Jonathan, Solomon, Saul, Eliakim

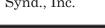
5. About how tall was Goliath in approximate cubits? 3, 4, 5, 6

6. Upon which mountain did Aaron die? Hor, Carmel, Pisgah, Sinai

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) David, 3) Leprous, 4) Saul, 5) Six, 6) Hor

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

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atrick Springs Pentecostal Holines! 60 Spring Rd., Patrick Springs, VA - 276-694-635

Worship Services 11 am

Sunday Worship 10:45 am day School for all ages 9:4 Wednesdays rmunity Meal & Service | Food Distribution Ministr Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Reconciliation

Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.



Super Crossword

DOWN

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33 American Ballet Theatre principal beginning

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43 "Juno and the Paycock" playwright Sean

44 He played Otto Octavius in "Spider-Man 2' 48 Truth bender 49 Shifts body

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Revolution

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56 "Yes, Yvette" Will Not Be

62 Jeff Bridges

65 Glockenspie 66 Frosty film

67 Planet's path Craig, e.g. 70 Stands up 71 Midday time

74 Impacts 77 Apt retail

81 Daddies

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exchange? 101 Mimicking a 13 Prefix with crow's cry 105 Sci-fi princess 106 Alias letters 14 - - lacto 107 Pal, to Yves

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to make a jiggly dessert? 119 Guevara

121 Assistant for 57-Across 122 Court period 123 Like the Zax

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and the Lorax

124 Gleeful cries

17 Reebok rival 18 Made over 19 Au courant 24 Tourist destination 29 Golf rarity

67 A while ago 69 Loch that's "green 70 Ketchup 34 Cruel Amin 72 Belittled. 35 Many an heir 36 Pan Am rival 73 Study of

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variety, briefly 86 Swiss mount 50 Slushy drink 87 Bowled over 88 Gas ratings

CELEBRITY

ANAGRAMS

75 Many a monk

unofficial

sci-fi stories

89 Floor cleaner 90 Styled after 91 Writer Anaïs 92 Partners

53 Real estate transaction 93 Capital of South Dakota 58 "It's too hard 94 Laotians and Thais 59 Brought on

95 Just dandy 96 Likenesses 99 Leslie of "Lili 100 "The Deep" director Peter 102 Delhi's land

there" ("That 103 Very poor 104 Whirls around 108 Short skirt

109 Old Peruvian

112 "Do - say!" 113 Skater Midori 115 Adam and -116 Actress Lucy 117 TV pitches 118 Signing tool

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20 22 23 25 34 35 53 58 75 76 78

49 55 83 98 105 106 111 112 113 114 | 115 | 116 | 117 119 120 121

Puzzle answers page 11

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The Housing Program Specialist II/III will be responsible for a variety of tasks required to maintain eligible households in its rental subsidy program, while observing regulatory and quality assurance requirements and offering an elevated level of customer service. As of the time of the recruitment

opening, there is one position available to fill. If the applicant's qualifications exceed the requirements of the Housing Program Specialist II position, the hiring team may choose to fill the Housing Program Specialist III position.

Early Childhood **Education Director**

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) Director is responsible for the management, supervision, planning, development, and growth strategies for the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The ECE Director will provide leadership and direction to program managers and staff in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Head Start services. including education, health, nutrition, disabilities, and family engagement; implement quality assurance measures, collect and analyze data, and ensure program performance and compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations, including Head Start Performance Standards, licensing requirements, programmatic guidelines, and agency policy & procedure; establish and maintain effective partnerships with community organizations, schools, government agencies, and other internal and external stakeholders to support the holistic development of children and families served by the

Head Start program. A minimum of a Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree preferred, in Early Childhood Education, Sociology, Social Work, Business Administration or related field is required. Ten (10) years of experience in supervision of staff, fiscal management, and program administration, preferably

in a Head Start or early childhood education setting or in the administration and supervision of a social service program related to young children from various socio-economic backgrounds is essential. Knowledge of Head Start Performance Standards, federal and state regulations, and best practices in early childhood education and family services is preferred. Qualified applicants

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JOB OPENING The County of Patrick

is accepting applications from qualified applicants for a part-time Solid Waste Transfer Station Attendant. Duties of the position will include, but are not limited to, customer assistance, operation of scales, loading

trailers, and facility maintenance. The preferred candidate must be capable of performing manual labor, possess good inter-

personal skills, and be able to communicate effectively with the public. Basic math and clerical skills to prepare customer tickets and perform record keeping are required. A high school diploma or GED is required. Applicants must be willing to submit to a background check and drug screen. This is a part-time position with no benefits. Hourly wage is \$15. Hours will be scheduled as required between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with rotating Saturdays. Hours are limited to 29 or less per workweek. The Patrick County employment application is available at https://www.

co.patrick.va.us/Jobs.aspx. Applicants must submit a Patrick County employment application to be considered for the position. The position will remain

open until filled. The County of Patrick is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age.

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EGAL

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

> Jam O. Wood Sason A. Wood Division Superintendent

LEGAL

Invitation For Bid (IFB) IFB # 2025-31200-01-31 **Night Vision Equipment and Accessories** Dated: January 31, 1025

The County of Patrick seeks the purchase of Night Vision Equipment and Accessories to fully outfit our SWAT for use at times of low or no light incidents. The intent and purpose of this invitation for Bid is to establish a contract with a qualified supplier to furnish and provide inside delivery of Night Vision Equipment and Accessories to Patrick County, Sheriff's Office, as needed and requested. To download the complete IFB package, please go to Virginia Marketplace (eVA.gov) or the Patrick County website at https://co.patrick.va.us/Bids.aspx.

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.

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

numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ♦ ♦ ♦ HOO BOY!

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Wednesday, February 5, 2025 - 11

Meetings

Monday, Feb. 10

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the third-floor courtroom of the Patrick County Administration Building. A representative from Brightspeed is scheduled to attend.

Thursday, Feb. 13

The Patrick County School Board will hold a public input session on the upcoming budget at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Office.

Wednesday, Feb. 19

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

Events

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.

Monday, Feb. 10 - Monday, Feb. 24

The Patrick County Recreation Department will hold sign-ups for tee-ball (coed) ages 4 to 6, girls coach pitch softball (grades 1-2), girls minor softball (grades 3-5), girls major softball (grades 6-7). Games will be played in April and May. Parents can complete a sign-up form at any of the elementary schools, on Facebook, or by calling the recreation office at (276) 694-3917.

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. Attendees are asked to bring their favorite meats, vegetables, and/or desserts to share. Beverages will be provided.

Saturday, Feb. 15

The Francisco FVD Ladies' Auxiliary will hold a Souper Game Night at the Francisco Community Building from 5:30-8:30 p.m. There will be soups and desserts.

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



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Friday, Feb. 21

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

Saturday, Feb. 22

Those interested in restarting the Friends of Fairy Stone State Park group will meet at 2 p.m. in Fayerdale Hall.

The Patrick Springs Ruritan Club will hold a BBQ Fundraiser to support Envision Critz. The event will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Reynolds Homestead. Eat-in or takeout plates are \$15 and include a pork or chicken sandwich, slaw, baked beans, chips, drink, and a dessert. Raffle for a portable generator. For more, visit the Patrick Springs Ruritan Facebook page.

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



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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.

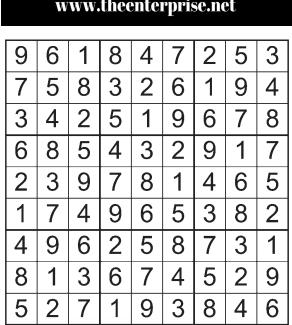
The Parks and Recreation Department is offering free Tai Chi Flow classes for seniors. The gentle, low impact exercise can help improve balance, coordination and mobility. Classes meet on Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart, through February 27. For additional information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

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New child labor laws on the books in VA this year

By Zamone Perez

Virginia News Connection

New child labor laws went into effect in Virginia at the start of the year, but some advocates say more can be done.

House Bill 100 took effect in January, raising the maximum financial penalty to \$25,000 -- up from \$10,000 -- if a child dies or is seriously injured while working in violation of labor law. Cases that do not involve injury or death will have stiffer penalties, too, with maximum fines set at \$2.500.

Nina Mast, a policy and economic analyst for the Economic Policy Institute, said it is just the start of combating illegal child labor in the Commonwealth.

"This was a really important first step in the overall goal of

the penalty amounts are really only as effective as the enforcement can be in the state."

Mast added that the legislation also created a group made up of youth-serving organizations and young people to explore the creation of workers' rights education for high school students.

Going forward, Mast said new laws must keep young people from working in dangerous or hazardous work environments, including staffing agencies that are often used to fill meatpacking and construction jobs. That keeps the main company from being held liable.

Mast said state labor agencies need more employees to hold companies accountable.



no one will ever enforce those vio- are found." lations," she said. "Adding capaci-"Employers know this. They ty is really important to signaling there was no minimum financial strengthening child labor stan- know that they will largely get to employers that the law will ac- penalty for business owners who dards in Virginia," she said, "but away with violating the law and tually be enforced when violations broke child labor laws.

Before the law went into effect,

Taxpayers have many options for help filing federal returns

2025 tax filing season on Jan. 27 and is accepting and processing federal individual tax year 2024 returns.

The IRS expects more than 140 million individual tax returns for tax year 2024 to be filed ahead of the Tuesday, April 15 federal deadline. More than half of all tax returns are expected to be filed this year with the help of a tax professional, and the IRS urges people to use a trusted tax pro to avoid potential scams and schemes.

Taxpayers residing in a federally declared disaster area may have additional time to file and pay federal taxes.

Get free help preparing and filing taxes electronically

Taxpayers can visit IRS.gov to get answers to tax questions. IRS.gov is the quickest way for taxpayers to get help. The Interactive Tax Assistant (ITA) is a tool that provides answers to several tax law questions specific to individual circumstances. Based on input, it can determine a taxpayer's filing status, if a person should file a tax return, if someone can be claimed as a dependent, if a type of income is taxable, if a filer is eligible to claim a credit or if an expense can be deducted.

The Internal Revenue Service opened the for more secure and faster refunds. According state tools to complete their state taxes. Get to the Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, paper refund checks are 16 times more likely to have an issue, like the check being lost, misdirected, stolen or uncashed. Filing electronically reduces tax return errors as the tax software does the calculations, flags common errors and prompts taxpayers for missing information.

Free tax filing options

The IRS offers free online and in-person tax preparation options for eligible taxpayers through IRS Free File, IRS Direct File and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs.

IRS Free File. Taxpayers with income of \$84,000 or less last year can use IRS Free File Guided Tax Software now through Oct. 15. IRS Free File Fillable forms, a part of this program, is available at no cost to any income level and provides electronic forms that people fill out and e-file themselves, also at no cost.

Direct File. Now open in 25 participating states, taxpayers can use Direct File to file online directly with the IRS for free. It is a free web-based service - available in English and Spanish - that works on mobile phones, laptops, tablets or desktop computers. It guides taxpayers through a series of questions to The IRS encourages people to file their tax prepare their federal tax return step-by-step. returns electronically and choose direct deposit Direct File automatically guides taxpayers to

help from IRS customer service representatives through a live chat feature in English and Spanish. Interested taxpayers can go to directfile.irs.gov, where they can determine if they are eligible.

Income Tax Assistance Volunteer (VITA). The VITA program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$67,000 or less, persons with disabilities and taxpayers whose preferred language is not English. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals.

In addition to VITA, the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 and older, specializing in questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors.

MilTax. This is a Department of Defense program available to members of the military and some veterans with no income limit. MilTax generally offers free return preparation and electronic filing software for federal income

tax returns and up to three state income tax returns.

Key Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking in the Commonwealth Unveiled

Virginia officials are ramping up efforts to combat human trafficking through Operation Silence Shattered, a statewide initiative focused on awareness, prevention, and law enforcement action. initiative, alongside key legislative efforts in the Virginia General Assembly, aims to protect vulnerable individuals and dismantle trafficking networks across the Commonwealth.

"Human trafficking is not a Republican or Democrat issue—it is a human rights issue," said Gov. Glenn Youngkin. "From day one, we have been committed to not just reducing but eradicating this evil, because the fight to end it has long weighed heavily on Suzanne's and my heart. Together, we will continue making a difference, empowering survivors, and building a future free from the darkness of human trafficking. Our work is far from over, but with unwavering determination, we will bring justice and hope to those who need it most." Launched on January 1,

Operation Silence Shattered is a collaborative effort between the Virginia State Police, the Human Trafficking Institute, law enforcement agencies, and campus police across the Commonwealth. The initiative prioritizes prevention and victim support through awareness paigns and strategic enforcement efforts.

Since its inception, Virginia State Police and the Human Trafficking Institute have engaged over 3,700 individuals in educational efforts, including outreach at rest areas, weigh stations, and law enforcement and prosecutorial training sessions. Through partnerships with

law enforcement agencies,



Gov. Glenn Youngkin meets with human trafficking advocates at an event to raise awareness on human trafficking in Richmond, Virginia on January 30. (Official photo)

the operation has resulted in monwealth." 21 arrests of traffickers and sex buyers, while 12 victims have been identified and offered services. The initiative also seeks to

prevent trafficking by educating communities, particularly on college and university campuses, and addressing demand for illicit sex. Its core objectives include: *To provide awareness and

outreach concerning anti-human trafficking efforts *To focus awareness of

trafficking within college and university campuses *To address the demand

for illicit sex throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia

"One of the most critical fights of our time is the battle against human trafficking," Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears said, emphasizing the urgency of the fight against human trafficking. "Human trafficking affects every community, and therefore, it affects all of us. Together, we must send a clear message: we will always stand with victims, and we will always fight for the

day when human trafficking

is eradicated from our Com-

Attorney General Jason Miyares reinforced the state's commitment to pursuing traffickers and supporting survivors. "In Virginia, we are relentlessly pursuing those who exploit the vulnerable. We have strengthened our efforts at every level—coordinating, enhancing, and centralizing our fight to dismantle trafficking networks and deliver justice. Our goal is clear: to provide a victim-centered, trauma-informed response that combats human trafficking across the Commonwealth. I am proud of our progress, but we will not rest until every trafficker is held accountable and every survivor has the support they need to rebuild their lives.'

First Lady Suzanne S. Youngkin highlighted the importance of survivor support. "Every survivor of human trafficking carries a story of unimaginable resilience, and it is our collective responsibil-

ity to ensure they find hope,

healing, and a future free

from exploitation. Together,

with organizations like Lati-

sha's House, Operation Light

Shine, and New Creation VA, we are building a safer and more compassionate Virginia-one where every life is valued."

Colleges and universities interested in participating can contact VSP's human trafficking unit at humantraffickingunit@vsp.virginia.

On January 17, 2024, Virginia State Police launched a Human Trafficking Hotline, allowing individuals to anonymously report suspected trafficking cases. Since its launch, the hotline has received over 333 submissions, leading to 136 active investigations and the identification of 47 victims who have been offered services as of November 2024.

To report concerns, text "VSP" followed by the tip to 847411 or submit an online

Virginia officials remain committed to strengthening their fight against human trafficking, ensuring traffick-

ers face justice and survivors

receive the support they need

to rebuild their lives.

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Don't Answer Calls from Unknown Numbers

Receiving a call from an unknown number may seem harmless, but it could be the start of a scam. Criminals are using increasingly sophisticated tactics to deceive you into revealing personal information or making payments. Here are three tips to protect yourself from unknown callers.

Let it ring. The easiest thing to do is not answer the call. If it is important, the caller will leave a message or call back again.

Let the caller speak first. Most

automated system that calls a bunch of random numbers at the same time and connects to a live person when someone answers the phone. That brief pause or delay before the caller speaks is a red flag that the call could

Block suspicious calls. Check with your service provider to learn about options to block spam and scam calls.

Report scams to local law enforcement. For help from AARP, call 877-908-3360 or visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/

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Yoga 10:00* Chair Exercise 1:30		Storytime 10:30 Hibernation		Walking Club 9:00		Sit & Stitch		Sit & Stitch 11:00		Castle Party 10:00	
LEGO Club 4:00		Yoga 5:15*		Yoga 1:15*							
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Yoga 10:00*		Storytime 10:30 with Emme Valentines		Walking Club 9:00							
Chair Exercise 1:30				Book Bingo 10:30		Not Your Mother's Book Club 5:00				Journaling Junkies 11:00	
LEGO Club 4:00		Yoga 5:15*		Yoga 1:15*							
	17		18		19		20		21		:
Yoga 10:00* Storytime 10:30 with			Walking Club 9:00								
Winter Snowflake Cake In a Jar 2:30*		the Master Gardener's Opossums		Library Board Meeting 12:00		Open Art Studio 1:00		Sit & Stitch 11:00			
LEGO Club 4:00		Yoga 5:15*									
	24		25		26		27		28		
Yoga 10:00*		Storytime 10:30 Dance		Walking Club 9:00							
Chair Exercise 1:30											
	.EGO Club 4:00 Yoga 5:15*		Yoga 1:15*								



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Snakes are celebrated at the library







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Building Site for Sale in Woolwine VA Auction Ends Wednesday, March 5th at 4 PM TBD Brammer Spur Rd., Woolwine, VA 24185 **Bid NOW at VAAuctionPro.com**

Check out this +/- 10.335 acre property for sale! This mostly wooded property has a small clearing making for a nice building site. It offers a peaceful setting with plenty of privacy. There are multiple old roadbeds and trails making for easy access. With access to utilities and a recent survey, this property is ready for your vision. Property is located at the end of a paved, state-maintained road. It is within a short commute of the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Towns of Stuart and Floyd, VA. Whether you're dreaming of a secluded retreat, a recreational haven, or a future homesite, this land offers endless possibilities. Don't miss your opportunity!



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Blue Ridge Land & Auction



and the misunderstood reptile, Master Gardeners Jess Hines and Norma Bozenmayer puppet. joined the children's librarian Sam Edmundson in celebrating own sock puppets. Did you know the snake at Storytime. Snake that snakes use their forked themed books, "The Greedy Py- tongues to smell their environthon," by Richard Buckley:

the Sheriff," by Sarah Burell visit or call the Patrick County and "Knot Cannot," by Tiffany Branch of the Blue Ridge Re-Stone were read to the children gional Library.

In honor of the start of the followed by a short information-Lunar New Year of the Snake al program on snake behavior, identification and the benefits of snakes taught by a snake sock

The children then made their ment? For more information on "Diamond Jim Dandy and snakes or other library programs





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