Church Classified Family Album **Obituaries Sports Viewpoints**

Calendar

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

Board votes to cut ties with consulting firm

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to terminate its contract with the Berkley Group, LLC, at its Monday, March 24, meeting.

The Berkley Group is a local government consulting firm specializing in providing direct services such as community development and planning, capital project management, administration, and other local government concerns.

The county began contracting with the group last year to assist its Planning Commission in creating ordinances focused on solar power and tall structures.

According to Vice-Chairman Andrew Overby, of the Dan River District, Berkley received \$3,600 a month for its services.

County Administrator Beth Simms said the county can issue a 30-day notice as it is currently in a month-to-month contract with the organization.

"We probably have to pay through April," Simms said, "and then we can cancel it for May."

District, said he wanted to hear cated that their next steps would be from the Planning Commission to ensure it had received all it needed I'm not so sure we need a solar sitfrom Berkley and was not current- ing ordinance if we've made the ly using the firm for any essential



County Administrator Beth Simms discusses issues with the board. Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith is seated behind.

tasks.

"Do you want to try and use them to get through the current solar resolution stuff we have?" Simms asked Planning Commission Chairman Kurt Bozenmayer.

At the March 18 meeting, Bozenmayer said the commission approved a resolution to amend the comprehensive plan, which determined that commercial solar is not a conforming use within the county. That amendment will now go to the supervisors for approval.

"I think that pretty much wraps Doug Perry, of the Smith River it up because Berkley Group indito revise the solar siting ordinance.

(See Board p. 2)



Local, state, and federal authorities are investigating the cause of a blaze at Gregory Pallet and Lumber Company. (Contributed)

ATF, state police help investigate Gregory Pallet blaze

By Staff Reports

Federal, state, and local authorities are investigating a commercial structure fire that occurred at Gregory Pallet and Lumber Company in Stuart, the most recent in a series around the region responded to batof significant fires across Patrick tle the blaze. County and surrounding areas.

According to Patrick County

Sheriff Dan Smith, the fire at Gregory Pallet was reported to the 911 Communication Center at approximately 1 a.m. on Friday, March 28. Multiple fire departments from

The fire destroyed numerous

(See AFT p. 3)



The 10th annual Wine & Beer Festival will be held on Saturday, April 5, at the Star Theatre. (Contributed photo)

Stuart's 10th annual Wine & Beer Fest moves to Star Theatre

By Taylor Boyd

The Town of Stuart will hold its

said there will be a \$10 wine tasting, which includes a free wine

eries that we know will be there— Wines, Childress Vineyard, and Daring Wine and Cider Company,"

be onsite selling beer and other concessions for those who aren't wine

(Contributed)

While the event has typically 10th annual Wine & Beer Festival been held at the Stuart Farmers' on Saturday, April 5, at the Star Market, Simmons said it has often Theatre from 12-4 p.m. Admission been plagued by bad weather, such as rain and heavy winds. As a re-Town Manager Bryce Simmons sult, the town decided to hold it at the Star Theatre.

"That's also due to some ABC (Alcoholic Beverage Control) permit-"Right now, there are four win-ting issues. An ABC permit has to be tied to a particular address, so in Villa Appalachia, Wood Acres Fruit pulling the ABC permit, it just sort of made sense to do it at the Star," Simmons said. "That way, it'll be climate-controlled, we'll have plen-One Family Productions will also ty of space where people can just enjoy themselves. Plus, I think it (See Stuart's p. 3)

Wood Brothers Racing celebrated for NASCAR legacy



Members of Wood Brothers Racing are pictured with Clay Campbell (far right), president of



Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, (center) presents a commendation from the Virginia House of Delegates, House Resolution No. 653, to members of the Wood Brothers Racing family and team at Martinsville Speedway on Sunday. The honor recognizes the team's illustrious career in NASCAR, highlighted by its 100th Cup Series victory achieved by driver Harrison Burton at the Coke Zero Sugar 400 in Daytona on August 24.

NASCAR's most storied teams, was from the Virginia House of Delegates recognizing its decades-long success in the sport. House Reso-

Wood Brothers Racing, one of lution No. 653, presented by Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, celehonored Sunday at Martinsville brates the team's rich legacy, punc-Speedway with a commendation tuated by its 100th NASCAR Cup Series victory achieved by driver Harrison Burton at the Coke Zero Sugar 400 in Daytona on August 24.

Judge Ruth Williams and the Little White Cottage



Judge Ruth Williams' former home on E. Blue Ridge Street stands in disrepair, but perhaps one day it will be restored, with roses once again welcoming travelers to Stuart.

By Joanne Hill

Special to The Enterprise

but it has deteriorated into a tum- the bench was far from ordinary. bledown shack, with a caved-in grown with weeds and debris. The usual route. lovely roses, suitable for cutting, no longer exist to adorn the front porch south of Stuart in the Five Forks railing but have been replaced with community, attending small local old boards and clutter.

Known locally as the "Judge Ruth"

curve, the bend in the road near the cottage was one that teens and oth-Once upon a time, a quaint white ers navigated carefully—they had cottage on E. Blue Ridge Street was no desire to appear in court before a welcoming sight for those entering the Honorable Judge Ruth Olive Stuart. Times have changed—the Williams, who lived there. Judge street has changed, and the people Williams is a legend in these parts, have changed. The cottage remains, a remarkable woman whose path to

When she was first appointed as roof and a dismantled porch. The a trial justice, she was one of only once meticulously groomed lawn, two female judges in Virginia. Her bordered with flowers, is now over- journey to being a judge was an un-

> Williams grew up about five miles schools until her family moved to

(See Judge p. 3)

Chamber Chat



By Rebecca Adcock

I am partial to this quote about

"March is a tomboy with tousled hair, a mischievous smile, mud on her shoes, and a laugh in her voice." Hal Borland.

I have always been a tomboy, and March is when we can really start to be outside and play in the dirt. I hope you spend a little time playing outside.

For the Chamber of Commerce, it was a month of blink, and you miss it. March came in like a lion

and ran out like a cheetah. I was fortunate enough to be able to read to the preschoolers at Step, Inc. during Read Across America week. It was fun and a great way to share my love for reading and the importance of reading, which is why the Chamber continues to support the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for Patrick County. Along with our partners, Step, Inc., One Family Productions and Stuart Rotary, we are able to provide this program to residents of Patrick County.

The first of the month saw the chamber and Reynolds Homestead partner to present the Cottage Industry Roundtable. This first of its kind event sought to bring together our many makers, bakers, doers, and others who run a business from their home and what resources the chamber, Reynolds Homestead and others can assist them with. It was a great day of engagement, and we look forward to helping and watching these entities

We were also excited to attend the ribbon cutting for the new Heavy Equipment Operator simulators that have been installed at the P&HCC site in Stuart. These simulators teach students the ins and outs of operating all types of heavy equipment. With the current Highway 58 project and the newly announced Vesta section, students will have no trouble finding quality paying jobs after completion of the program.

The chamber, in partnership with the Stuart Farmers' Market and Bull Mountain Arts, successfully hosted another indoor pop-up market in March. These events help carry our market through the winter and create excitement for when the farmers' market does open for the season which will be April 18 and 25 and the official opening May

The Patrick County magazine is at the printers and will be here in time for county April events. No matter how much we meet and plan, it always feels that it comes down to the wire with pulling the advertisements and content together. Long hours go into the editing process. But like each issue, we are happy with the finished product and hope everyone will be too. Thank you to everyone who advertised in the magazine. It makes the magazine possible and provides the extra local taste of our county and surrounding area.

The upcoming events the chamber has planned are a Succession Planning on April 2 for businesses and organizations. The chamber has a strong sign-up listing and looks forward to helping these entities transition their leadership while still serving our community. May 6 is the presentation Pre-Venture Planning for Entrepreneurs. This session will help individuals take their ideas for a business and map out the basics for getting it up and going. Growing and supporting new businesses in Patrick County is a vital part of our local economy.

If you have any questions about our upcoming programs or county events, feel free to reach out to the chamber at www.patrickchamber. com or call (276) 694-6012.

Adcock is the executive director of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce.

Board

(cont. from page 1)



The Patrick County Board of Supervisors approved terminating the month-to-month contract with Berkley Group, LLC, a consulting firm, at its March 24 meeting.

to consider commercial solar a nonconforming use," Bozenmayer said.

He added that it could be somewhat contradictory to have Berkley develop a revision to the solar siting ordinance, noting that prudence dictates the county's attorney should review the matter as well.

"So, we could be looking at another four-to-sixmonth process here by the time we get through public hearings and all of these reviews. If the Board of Supervisors votes to accept that resolution and amend the comprehensive plan, then I think that the commercial solar issue is pretty much wrapped up at this time," he said.

Perry asked for clarification whether the Planning Commission no longer needed Berkley's assistance.

Bozenmayer said he is not certain the county honestly think our students drink a lot more couldn't have received adequate help from the water just because they like to fill their water West Piedmont Planning District Commission bottle up in that particular type of water foun-(WPPDC).

"We've been relying on those folks for a decade or more, and to my knowledge, this whole solar issue was never brought to the attention of West Piedmont," he said.

In other matters the board:

*Discussed the Proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Budget. At the start of the discussion, Simms summarized budget decisions made at the March 10 meeting. The board reversed its decision to cut financial advising services from Davenport & Company, LLC.

Simms said the county received a letter from the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) Financing Authority regarding debt it helped Patrick County renew a few years ago.

"It's going to end up being \$500,000 in savings. Keeping the financial advisor kind of in the know of what's going on and having them consistently helping you, especially with the age of our infrastructure—our buildings are 40-50 plus years old except for the jail, and if and when there comes a time when Patrick County has to look at borrowing again, or when we get a new reassessment and you need to do a new tax rate, it may be good to have those financial advisors that that's all they look at all day every day is local government financial advising. It'd be good to have them in the know of what's going on in Patrick County," she said.

After the last reassessment, Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, said the county needs competent advice to anticipate proper revenue levels to cover bills and expenses.

"I'd much rather cut the Berkley Group before we cut our financial advisor," Chairman Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, said.

Perry agreed with Marshall and Wood, stating that one significant issue the county has faced is public concern about its high tax rate.

"Well, that's because our property value es. I think we need to

decision that our comprehensive plan is going is so much lower. Then with the assessment, all that's going to change. To be able to make that adjustment, that fair adjustment, so that things are balanced. I think that's where they earn their money—things like that, maintaining that balance," Perry said.

An official proposal from Davenport was requested, and Simms said it should be provided at the board's next meeting.

"So we can see exactly what they do and can do for us," Wood said.

*Reversed its decision to remove water coolers. Instead, the board decided to use funds for water fountains equipped with filters and water bottle fillers.

"I know it will be a higher one-time investment, but long-term it might save. Like the ones at the high school, they literally tell you While he believes Berkley has been helpful, how many bottles you saved by using that. I tain," Wood said.

> *Discussed courthouse security improvements. The board reviewed the request to replace the carpet in the county's circuit court, use the unassigned fund balance for one-time capital improvement projects, and implement an access control system for court proceedings held on the third floor.

> Simms said a representative from the Department of Homeland Security was scheduled to evaluate the building to provide a more definitive analysis of security needs.

> Perry asked if the analysis is something that could potentially be expanded and done in multiple phases.

> "You start out with the keycards and one entrance," he said.

> Simms said that was all that was requested the first time. "That one point of entry and keycards, and then do the other buildings in future years," she said.

> Wood asked if that could limit access to some of the rooms in the Administration Building.

> 'What we're really trying to do is create one point to and from, and be able to keep track of people coming in and out. That's kind of the first step in all these things," Simms said.

> When he was picking up his child's birth certificate in Rockingham County, North Carolina, Wood said he had to walk in with his keys in one hand and his belt in the other.

"I don't want us ever to go that far. I think

we live in a fairly safe place. I don't want TSA (Transportation Security Administration) inspection to walk in here, but I agree we need to tighten it up in a few placlook at that and I'm looking forward to what they have to say on that," Wood said.

Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, believes the county doesn't need to be extreme. When he was at a security office in a larger city, Kendrick said he had to take off his shoes, his belt out, and hold his pants up.

"This is not a Homeland Security building,"

"It's a service that they offer local governments that have soft target offices, which we do." Simms said.

Kendrick asked Simms if she expected Homeland Security to hold the county to its own stan-

"This isn't a federal building. We don't house a Department of Homeland Security here, but we do house court, and a Department of Health, and a DMV, and some things that are considered soft targets. Once we get the report back, the survey back, it would be up to you all to decide how or if to implement it," Simms said, adding she's just trying to get an outside per-

*Awarded Anthem the Health Insurance Contract for FY 2025-2026. The board approved fully insured coverage, with the county assuming the full cost of the premium increase. The \$200,000 increase was added to the county's

*Heard from Schools Superintendent Jason Wood About the School Division's Budget.

Pets of the Week



Nina is a mixed breed and has been at the shelter for a long time. Nina is sweet and friendly, but it is stressful for her to watch as other dogs find their families.

Grogu is new to the shelter and only 10 months old. He loves people and kids, but best to a home without livestock. They are both so deserving of a loving home.

Free spay/neuter and rabies vaccinations. Call the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter at (276) 694-6259, visit the shelter or their Face-



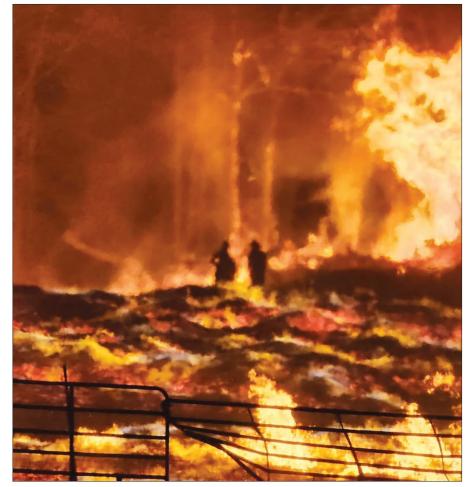
book page, to find information about these and other available pets in need of a forever home. Adoption fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and rabies vaccination.

The Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League provides pet food assistance and information about low-cost spay/ neuter services; contact blueridgeawl@gmail. com. We are also asking for live trap donations (have-a-heart type), even if they need some minor repairs.



DHALL@THEENTERPRISE.NET

(cont. from page 1)





Gregory Pallet and Lumber Company incurred substantial damage during a fire. The cause of the blaze is under investigation.

equipment, burning an estimated 10 acres.

Due to the scale of physical damage and financial loss, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and Virginia State Police are assisting the Patrick County Sheriff's Office in investigating the cause and origin of the fire.

"We are forever grateful for our volunteers, both in our county and throughout the region, for their dedication and selflessness, and our thoughts and prayers are with the Gregory family and their employees," Smith stated in a Friday afternoon release.

Local departments battle major fires amid heightened fire activity

The Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department responded to two significant fires within its district in March and assisted in containing

structures, vehicles, and other a massive 250+ acre blaze in North 3.5 hours to bring the fire under Carolina.

South Mayo Drive Fire - March

According to Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief Clint Weidhaas, the department responded to a structure fire on South Mayo Drive on Wednesday, March 19, with 13 personnel and three apparatus.

The fire broke out in an abandoned home deep in the woods with limited access and spread to approximately five acres. The structure was a total loss.

Supporting agencies included Moorefield Store, CCDF, Patrick Henry, and Stuart volunteer fire departments, as well as the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDF), which deployed a fire plow.

"We had to quickly pull those hoses back and reengage those spots to knock it out because of the wind," Weidhaas said, noting it took about

control.

No Business Mountain Fire -March 21

On Friday, March 21, Patrick Springs responded to a brush fire about 1.5 miles off Abram Penn Highway near the base of No Business Mountain.

Weidhaas said the fire began when a homeowner using a bush hog struck a rock, causing a spark that ignited dry brush. The fire quickly spread to the woods and driven by high winds, began advancing toward No Business Mountain.

Despite limited access and rough terrain, Patrick Springs crews, supported by Moorefield Store, Patrick Henry, and the VDF bulldozer, managed to cut off the head of the fire using an access road.

"There was an access road literally splitting the fire scene right down the middle, and we literally drove the brush truck with fire on both put out," Weidhaas said.

sides through the burned area," Weidhaas said.

The roughly three-acre fire was contained within 40 minutes.

"These weren't big fires in the grand scheme of what has been going on around us, but due to the undergrowth, terrain, and limited access, they were exhausting situations," Weidhaas said.

North Carolina Wildfire Assistance-March~22-23

Patrick Springs, along with Ararat, CCDF, and Stuart volunteer fire departments, assisted with a sprawling 250+ acre fire in Rockingham and Stokes counties in North Carolina.

"We had departments from Rockingham, Guilford, Stokes, Surry, Henry, Patrick, and Forsyth counties responding with personnel and apparatus to help with the fire. Full containment was reached Sunday afternoon. It took over 24 hours to

Stuart's =

(cont. from page 1)

makes it more of an intimate event." live bands, as in past years.

"The reason that we're doing that they start playing, people inevitably start complaining about it being too loud. Because people ultimately

want to be able to have conversa-Simmons said the festival will tions and talk and see their friends, feature house music rather than so we're just going to do house music for this event," he said.

Tony's Pizza will provide concesis, especially when you get a lot of sions and pizza, the Patrick County people in for a wine tasting, it al- Alzheimer's Association, LLC, will ways seems to happen that you get be selling cheese and chocolate-covthe band, do sound check, get every- ered strawberries, and Henry's Cofthing leveled, and then as soon as fee will also be selling concessions onsite.

For additional information, call (276) 694-3811 or (276) 692-7188.

Gubernatorial candidate visits Martinsville

Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears, who is campaigning to serve as the next governor of Virginia, visited Martinsville over the weekend. Before participating in NASCAR activities on Saturday, she discussed her campaign and met supporters at Piedmont Arts Center.



Clayton Kendrick (second from left) representative of the Mayo River District of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors; his wife, Editha Kendrick (far left), was among those to meet Earle-Sears, who is pictured alongside Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart. (Contributed photos)

Judge

(cont. from page 1)

later attended Stuart High School, graduating in 1930 as valedictorian.

Initially, she planned to follow in her mother's footsteps and become a teacher, but she changed her mind and enrolled at National Business College in Roanoke, where she excelled in stenographic skills.

Returning to Stuart in November 1932, during the Great Depression, no jobs were available and she struggled to find employment. She briefly worked for R.E. Woolwine, and attorney Will Joyce recognized her exceptional shorthand skills and hired her to record proceedings and evidence for an upcoming trial in Patrick County Circuit Court. The case, involving the murder of local law officer Bunyon Sheppard in a stolen car incident, was of significant local importance.

Since her reputation had become known as a responsible court reporter with superior Gregg shorthand skills, many courts in the area sought her

services.

In 1942, Judge John D. Hooker resigned as trial justice to join the U.S. Naval Reserve. Judge J. Turner Clement appointed Williams to fill the vacancy. When Hooker returned from military service, he resumed his role. During this time, Williams served as Clerk of the Court. She was later

Stuart in 1924, when she was 11. She hired as a legal secretary at Hooker and Hooker, a prominent local law

> In 1948, when Judge Hooker left his trial justice appointment to become Commonwealth's Attorney for Patrick County, Judge Kennon Whittle reappointed Williams to the bench. She continued in that role as Judge of the Combined Courts until 1956, when she transitioned to Judge of Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court.

In 1969, she was appointed as the Judge of General District Court and continued in that position until her retirement at age 65 in 1978. She was one of the few judges in the state who served without the benefit of receiving a law degree; however, her experience as a court reporter, Clerk of Court, and legal secretary had well prepared her for her duties. She served with firmness, fairness, and compassion. She was regarded as being well informed on the law and kept up with

When she first began as a trial justice, court was held on Saturdays, allowing her time for her other duties during the week. In later years, she civil matters on Wednesdays. Judge Williams' life was not com-

held traffic and criminal courts on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and heard

pletely dominated by her career in

the courts. Her influence extended beyond the courtroom. Williams was deeply involved in community activities, serving as:

- President of the J.E.B. Stuart Women's Club
- Treasurer of the American Red
- Cross Chapter · Member of the Patrick County
- Historical Society Active member of her church

However, she considered her most significant civic contribution to be fundraising for the R.J. Reynolds-Patrick Memorial Hospital, which opened in December 1962.

"It was one of the greatest accomplishments in Patrick County," she once said.

The hospital has since undergone many changes and is currently closed, though Braden Health is working to restore it to serve the county once

again. Williams also served at the state

level, participating in Governor Mills

E. Godwin Jr.'s Traffic Safety Study

Committee and holding a position on the Executive Committee of the Association of Trial Justices of Virginia.

Williams was the daughter of James F. Williams, who was employed in road construction, and Marcella Barnard Williams. She had two sisters: Marjorie, who married local orchardist J. Carl Ayers, and Rachel, who lived with her in the white cottage on Blue Ridge Street, with the porch railing once surrounded by blooming

Judge Ruth Olive Williams passed away on March 2, 1988.

Today, the cottage she once called home stands in disrepair, a shadow of its former self. But perhaps, one day, it will be restored—and the roses will bloom once more, welcoming travelers to Stuart on E. Blue Ridge Street.

(Sources: Patrick County Historical Society, Bassett Historical Society, The Enterprise, The Martinsville Bulletin, personal history written by Judge Ruth O. Williams, Patrick County Heritage Book.)

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Greenland: "A Security Black Hole"

As promised before the election, President Donald Trump committed to prioritizing the best interests of the United States by securing our homeland and combatting outside threats to our national security.

We have already seen important progress just months into Trump's second term.

After a visit to Pan-State Marco Rubio over rious consideration." concerns that Communist China exercised influence over the Panama Canal, Panama has initially accepted American overtures.

I discussed in a previous column that lawmakers from both parties expressed concern Chinese-linked Panama Canal and the threats that posed to the United States.

Ports owned by the Hong Kong-based but Chinese-linked CKHutchison Holdings is supposed to be sold to the American company BlackRock.

Additionally, Panama's president announced his country's withdrawal from China's Belt and Road Inito connect China to the rest of the world through the development of physical infrastructure such as ports and railways.

We will need to be vigilant on this issue. Time will tell whether Panama's assurances and early actions are real or merely window dressing.

ing south of our border bases outnumber North Denmark is changing security interests.

The Danish territory of Greenland is viewed as another national security concern.

more than five times the North Pole. bigger than California

State William Seward, attacks

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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 let-

ter and edit letters for length, content and style.



Morgan Griffith

Representative

who helped facilitate the 1867 U.S. purchase of Alaska, remarked that acquiring Greenama by Secretary of land was "worthy of se-

> Greenland was later an American protectorate in World War II. As a result of an agreement, America stationed forces in Greenland to deter the aggressionist aims of Nazi Germany (who invaded and occupied Denmark).

In 1946, U.S. officials ports operating in the made a \$100 million play to woo the Danes. Greenland, these officials believed, was a military necessity because of its location on the shortest polar route Washington between and Soviet Moscow.

While no deal materialized, American troop presence on the island

The only U.S. military base there today is the Pituffik Space Base. tiative, a project meant Pituffik is the Department of Defense's northernmost installation.

However, more U.S. Arctic bases may be needed to prevent an emerging threat.

Russian activity in the Arctic is concerning. Russia tests its nuclear deterrent and hypersonic missiles in the Arctic.

According to the International Institute The Trump Adminis- for Strategic Studies, tration is not just look- Russia's Arctic Circle to protect U.S. national Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) installations by roughly 33 percent.

The shortest path by air to North America American interest in for Russian missiles or Greenland, an island bombers would be over

An American Iron and more than three Dome defense system, times bigger than Tex- a concept promoted as, dates back centuries. by Trump, to defend Former Secretary of us from such missile means

Greenland will play a critical role in our air defense capabilities.

Additionally, the waters between Greenland and the United Kingdom are the only way Russia's northern-based naval fleet can access the Atlantic Ocean.

If a global conflict involving Russia were to arise, unfettered access to the Atlantic and movement around the Arctic will be critical to Russia's war strategy.

Given Greenland's location, additional U.S. military installations will strengthen surveillance of Russian military activity and deter aggression in the Arctic.

Russian encroachment in the Arctic must be treated seriously. If not, we invite a national security disaster to our doorstep.

For years, Greenland's "security black hole" has frustrated observers and some security officials. Denmark consistently failed, as acknowledged by their defense minister, make adequate improvements to its de-

According to a 2021 High North News article, Denmark's security of Greenland consisted of one aircraft, four helicopters and four ships!

Due Trump's Greenland concerns,

This year, Denmark announced \$2.5 billion to boost military presence in the region and will raise their defense spending to more than 3% of gross domestic product.

While this is a welcome first step, future actions are needed.

For this reason, Vice President JD Vance's travel to Pituffik is the latest development to illustrate our concerns about Greenland's curity black hole."

Given America's status as the greatest defender of western civilization's liberty and freedom, we strongly urge our allies in Denmark and Europe to heed American concerns.

Rubio's visit to Panama yielded initial dividends. Vance's visit might bear even greater

In an era where the Arctic is of increasing strategic interest to our adversaries, I will continue to monitor the Greenland situation and support the Administration in warding off threats to American national security.

Call the Abingdon of-

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

Letters to the Editor

Social Security is not a handout, it's a promise

I am 72, and have been working since I was 17 years old. In my seventh decade, I still work two parttime jobs, because Social Security does not cover my expenses which include assisting family, in addi-"Ponzi Scheme" is ignorant and insulting. Social Security isn't a handout-it's a promise that millions of

us Older Americans have paid into with every paycheck. This administration is dismantling an essential program, closing offices, cutting hotlines, and spreading misinformation to justify these attacks. As tion to keeping a roof over my head. elder citizens who have worked long Elon Musk's assertion that S.S. is a and hard, we deserve dignity, not broken promises. Christel Reges.

Stuart

Prices surge as public services and protections erode

Well, the price of eggs might be ten dollars a dozen one day, and gasoline prices are rising again too, but I'm not worried because President Trump is on the job. He told us he'd "deflate inflation" and even "kick the hell" out of it. If bird flu has forced poultry farms to destroy millions of chickens and could even be spreading to us humans, he and his crew will find a cure even if they have to fire every researcher at the National Institutes of Health and the USDA to

While most economists think Trump's tariffs on goods from just about every country in the world will increase prices for many other things we buy too, what do they know?

Secure borders? He's working on that, even though some of those same economists say that deporting all those immigrants will likely raise prices on fruits, vegetables, meats, and the cost of constructing a home. I'm sure we can find good, true-blue Americans to do all those jobs at even lower wages.

Although Mr. Trump and DOGE are gutting federal agencies and firing employees - some say in defiance of laws requiring notice and giving reasons for termination, who really cares about those silly laws or all those families losing their breadwinners? Hey, military veterans make up only about 30 percent of those danged "gov'ment" workers, so what's the big

Worried about 80,000 workers at the Veterans Administration, its hospitals, and its clinics being terminated? I'm sure my fellow veterans and I will tough it out - even though the suicide rate among us might go up a

Concerned about your local Social Security office closing? Well, why have offices if you don't have workers there to handle claims or problems you might have with your monthly check or with Medicare? Think of all the money government will save when people die before their cases ever get processed -

and the same goes for veterans' claims. USAID closing causing deaths of innocent children? It'll "decrease the surplus population," according to Ebenezer Scrooge.

No need to worry about anyone investigating our hero or his friends because a bunch of 'inspectors general" who investigated fraud and waste and protected those pesky "whistleblowers" have been fired too. Banks are thrilled with the disbanding of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau too.

You say that CFPB returned some \$20 billion to consumers by doing its job? Well, who needs all that extra money we paid in credit card fees and bank service charges anyway? We sure don't want our banks going hankrupt.

Now, I've just heard that some dude that runs several big companies got \$15.1 billion in contracts with the federal government over the past de-

I think his name is Pylon or Elon or something like that. The companies are "Space Y" and "Teslala" maybe, and he is the richest person in the world. Now, that might be something really worth investigating for fraud, waste, and abuse!

John Reynolds,

$ullet{Editorial}$

A welcome moment of unity on the Board of Supervisors

Kudos to the Patrick County Board of Supervisors for their seeming willingness to put aside personal disagreements and work in tandem for the good of the county as a whole, as was illustrated at the most recent meeting.

We know that local government is often messy and contentious, built on diverse perspectives, competing interests, and passionate advocacy. But in Patrick County, interactions among some board members have in the recent past gone beyond healthy debate, devolving into public and private attacks that hinder progress and damage credibility.

The acrimony between some members has become a recurring spectacle at board meetings; some disagreements are indicative of ongoing, deep-seated personal animosities that may affect the board's ability to govern effectively. The bitterness has spilled over into public forums and social media.

Yet, despite this dysfunction, the ty. We appreciate it.

board's most recent meeting offered a glimmer of something vastly different: a willingness to collaborate. They came to agreements on several key issues and showed us that cooperation remains possible when it matters most.

No one expects that the board will agree on every issue - nor should they. Healthy debate is essential to good governance. But the pattern of personal attacks and combative exchanges that carry over beyond meetings undermines not only the board's credibility but also the county's confidence.

The board's most recent meeting showed a flicker of its potential to recognize its responsibility to engage in good faith, put personal grudges aside, and strive toward common goals. The board functioned as a cohesive unit, all intent on serving the interests of Patrick County's resi-

It was a refreshing moment of uni-

Chamber to host Lunch and Learn on pre-venture planning

The Patrick County Chamber of their business idea, and navigate ple Inc., will present Pre-Venture ness. The session will also provide Planning for Entrepreneurs.

People Incorporated Financial Services, is the scheduled speaker.

This training is designed for asearly stages of developing a business idea. Participants will learn

Commerce in partnership with Peo- the initial steps of starting a busiinsights into local resources and Justin Lewis, the Trainer and funding opportunities available Technical Assistance Specialist at in Southwest Virginia. Through practical guidance and strategic planning, attendees will gain the knowledge and confidence to move piring entrepreneurs who are in the forward with their entrepreneurial

Bring your lunch and learn the key financial concepts, understand best practices for creating a busicredit basics, assess the viability of ness from your idea.

Postmaster: send address changes to The Enterprise, P.O. Box 348, Stuart, VA 24171-0348. Subscription Rates: \$32 FIND US ON FACEBOOK per year in Patrick County; \$45 per year in state; \$45 per year out of state. Single copies \$1.00. comments.

Wednesday,April 2, 2025 - **5**

Patrick Pioneers

Dorothy "Dot" Pruitt Spence Gammons

By Beverly Belcher Woody

This week, we are remembering Dot Gammons, who was loved by many in Patrick County, but especially by family, friends, and neighbors in the Big A and Wayside communities. Dot was born on the 5th of June 1923 to William Tyson Pruitt and Pencie Jane Dunkley of Patrick County. Dot's paternal grandparents were John Milton Pruitt and Mary Stephens Pruitt of Stewart's Creek in Surry County, NC and her maternal grandparents were James Booker Dunkley and Rebecca Jane Beasley Dunkley who lived near Aaron's Corner.

Dot was the fourth of eleven children born to William and Pencie Jane Pruitt on their farm near Collinstown, in Stokes County, NC. The oldest child was Lois Emma, born in 1917; followed by James Milton, 1919; Walter Booker, 1921; Dorothy Jane "Dot", 1923; Paul Lester, 1926; George Hassell, 1928; Annie Arlene, 1930; Mary Magdalene, 1933; Ruby Inez, 1936; Harvey Lee, 1938; and Kenzie Marie, 1941.

Dot married Charlie Frederick Spence on the 4th of October 1947 in Stuart, VA. The Honorable John S. Taylor, Circuit Court Clerk performed the ceremony. Charlie was the son of Simon Edgar Spence, a coal miner who was originally from Floyd County, VA and Gladys Williams, the daughter of Samuel Dickerson Williams and Emma Layman Williams of Stuart. Just a couple of months before Dot and Charlie's marriage, he had been honorably discharged after serving with the 171st Evacuation Hospital Detachment V Corps Medical Department.

Dot and Charlie set up housekeeping in the Big Creek community of Stokes County, NC and the following year, their son Charlie Ray Spence was born on 17th of July 1948. In the 1950 United States Census, Charlie listed his occupation as furniture factory worker and Dot was a homemaker. On the 7th of August 1951, their daughter, Addie Mae was born and less than a year later, tragedy struck.

Charlie was swimming in the Dan River near the Union Roller Mill in Collinstown when he dived into the water and broke his neck. He was taken to the hospital in Winston-Salem where he died shortly after, he was 23 years old. Charlie was survived by his wife, Dot, his two little children, his parents, and eleven brothers and sisters. He was laid to rest at the State Line Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. On a side note, the Union Roller Mill is now more commonly known as Jessup's Mill.

Dot would face another unimaginable tragedy in 1954, when her little daughter, Addie Mae would die from encephalitis on the 30th of April. Little Addie had only been sick for three days when she passed away at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro; she was 2 years, 8 months, and 23 days old. Little Addie was laid to rest near her father at the State Line cemetery in Westfield, NC.

Dot married William Lee Gammons on the 1st of October 1954. John S. Taylor, Circuit Court Clerk performed this ceremony too. William, a farmer and logger, was the son of Grady and Sadie Hodge Gammons of the Big A community. On June 21st of 1955, Dot and William's first son, Grady William "G. W." was born, followed by son Ronald James "Ronnie" on June 22, 1959.

We lived near Dot and William on Big A School Road and some of my earliest memories are of Dot, including another tragedy for her and her family. In the summers, during the day, I stayed with another fine Big A community family, Odell and Vera Hamm. I vividly remember the day when Vera got



Dot Gammons and grandchild (Courtesy of Angela Owens)

Bassett-Walker Knitting and as a nurse's aide at R.J. Reynolds Patrick Memorial Hospital. Dot had a servant's heart and would do anything to help anyone. Dot's granddaughter, Michele Spence Belcher, shared that Peggy Hamm Davis, the daughter of Vera and Odell, is trying to replicate Dot's cake recipe. Peggy said that Dot would always bring preacher cookies or a cake when she came to help work in tobacco. My Mama, Shirlien Boyd Belcher, recalled Dot's delicious sheet cakes.

Dot endured so many unimaginable tragedies, but she never became bitter and treated everyone with love, acceptance, and kindness. On January 1, 1994, Dot endured another unbearable loss when her former daughter in law, Lynn Dalton and her three grandchildren, Grady William Gammons II, age 16; Crystal Dawn Gammons, age 15; and Stephanie Cecile, age 12 all died in a house fire. I worked with Lynn at Pluma and remember her as a very kind and hard-working mother, working two jobs, who adored her children. On May 7th, 2004, Dot's son, Grady William Gammons, died from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident; he was 48 years

I asked Dot's granddaughters, Michele Spence Belcher and Angela Spence Owens to share some memories of their grandmother. Angela, "I have many fond memories of Granny Dot. The first thing that came to mind was her living in the little house with no water for years before she went to Cotton Mill. Then walking with her to Idell's (Mrs. Foster Hall) house almost every day. Her walking us to the bus stop at the intersection of Big A and Poplar Drive where Daddy and Berkley had built a little shed for us to wait in. There are way too many more to mention, but they all bring a smile to my face. Even the hard times because they shaped the kind, loving soul she was."

Michele shared these memories, "I'm trying to remember how old she was when she got her first doll. She was older and it burned in a house fire. There are so many great memories, it's hard to know where to start. Homemade cookies and cakes. Almost always other kids around. She left me her wedding ring that my daddy's daddy (my grandpa Spence) gave her. The handwritten note is precious. My last memory of her is sitting by her bedside holding her hand as she slowly took her last breath. Yes, it hurts my heart, but I know she is in a much better place. She was always a giving person."

Michele also has Dot's diary from 1945. Dot often wrote about walking to the store with her siblings, not buying anything, but always saying they had a phone call from Dot that William had been killed fun. I asked Dot's sister, Kenzie to what store was ing memories about precious Dot. Woody may be in a logging accident; it was the 24th of June 1974. Dot referring. She said it was Andrew Padgett's reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) Dot worked for many years as a seamstress at store, which was next to the community building 692-9626.



Dot Gammons (Courtesy of Randy Pruitt)



William and Pencie Dunkley Pruitt (Courtesy of Michele

As a testimony of Dot's unending love for everyone, a young man's obituary (who passed away this year) listed Dot as "like a grandmother," of family who predeceased him.

Dot's baby sister, Kenzie Penland, shared the following memories, "Dot was just like a second Mother to Harvey and I and we looked up to her! We loved to go to yard sales and just get out and ride around! She was always there for me no matter what. I would go spend the weekend with her and we just loved being around each other."

I asked Harvey Pruitt, (Dot's brother) about the house fire. He said that he was fourteen years old when their home burned to the ground, and they lost everything. I also asked Harvey about the 1930 census where his father listed the value of their home as a ½ crop. He said that his dad raised tobacco on his land and another neighbor's land as a

In later years, Dot lived at the Cotton Mill Apartments in Stuart. After Dot became unable to stav alone, she moved to Blue Ridge Nursing Home. Harvey visited her every day of the week except for Sundays. Dot looked forward to visits from her little brother who used to cry after her when he was a toddler. Dot passed away on the 28th of February 2006 and was laid to rest between her two husbands, Charlie and William at State Line Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Thank you so much to Harvey Pruitt, Kenzie Pruitt Penland, Randy Pruitt, Michele Spence Belcher, and Angela Spence Owens for shar-

Social Security Matters

By Russell Gloor, National Social Security Adare used regardless of when you actually claim benvisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty - Can My Wife and I get Spouse

Benefits from each other? Dear Rusty: My wife and I are currently collecting Social Security. We both started receiving SS at

62 years old. That said, we get by on a tight budget. A retired friend told us about an option which allows a spouse to collect half (1/2) of the other spouse's SS monthly income. My question has two parts: 1. Can we both collect on each other's SS? And 2. Are there any pitfalls? Signed: Seeking an

Dear Seeking: Well, I'm afraid spousal benefits aren't quite that simple. One spouse may be eligible for additional benefits from the other, but only if that spouse's personal Social Security retirement benefit at their full retirement age (FRA) is less than half (50%) of the other spouse's FRA entitlement. Note that for spouse benefits, FRA amounts

efits. Full retirement age for both you and your wife is 66, so that means that if you both claimed at 62 your FRA entitlements were higher - about 25% more - than you are both currently receiving.

Since you applied for benefits some time ago at about the same age, one way to estimate if one of you may be entitled to an additional amount as a spouse is to evaluate your current monthly amounts. If either of you are getting a benefit which is less than half of the other's amount, it's possible that the one with the lower benefit may be entitled to more as a spouse. And note, only one spouse is eligible for benefits – you cannot both get spouse benefits from each other.

Another way to explore this is for the spouse with the lowest monthly Social Security benefit to contact Social Security at 1.800.772.1213 to ask if spouse benefits are available. Noting that contacting SS these days can be a time-consuming process, yet another way is for you to provide us (the

AMAC Foundation's SS Advisory Service) with both of your current monthly SS benefit amounts (before any deductions) and the exact ages when each of you claimed. Using that information, we can do the math to see if either of you might be entitled to more as a spouse. But, in the end, only the spouse with the lower benefit may be eligible, and then, only if their FRA entitlement (not their actual current amount) is less than 50% of the other spouse's FRA entitlement.

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.

Enrollment open for year-long high school peer leadership experience

(ABC) Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project (YADAPP).

YADAPP is a unique peer leadership opportunity fostering healthy communities and the prevention of substance use. The annual program begins with a kick-off conference which will be held July 14-18 at Christopher Newport University in Newport News. Participation requires the registration of a team of four high school students (including

rising ninth graders) and one adult sponsor. During the conference, students attend topical workshops facilitated by peer leaders, hear from well-known motivational speakers and learn leadership and prevention best practices to develop a Strategies To Act Now (STAN) Plan addressing

Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority's returning teams compete for the \$500 Wheeler Award to sustain their continued prevention ef-

"Peer-led substance use prevention is a proven effective path for empowering young leaders to take a stand to create positive change and promote the culture of healthy behaviors among youth in the commonwealth," said Virginia ABC Youth Education and Prevention Coordinator Wyatt Anderson. "Given some of the troubling influences and

substance use among their peers. Teams compete April 30. The price will increase to \$600 per team

viral pressures on youth in recent years, YADAPP offers timely tools specifically created to help students make smart choices and use their natural strengths to make a difference." Early enrollment opens April 1 and offers a dis-

Enrollment opened on Tuesday, April 1, for the for \$250 mini grants to use as seed money and until the June 1 enrollment deadline. The fee includes conference materials, lodging and meals, as well as year-long coaching and support for adult sponsors as they aid their team in implementing

its STAN Plan throughout the school year. Adult sponsors participate in a separate track throughout the conference and receive resources and training on topics that will help them support their team. Adult sponsors are eligible for continuing education units and professional development hours. Law enforcement officers are eligible for

partial in-service credits through the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Since its inception in 1984, YADAPP has impacted approximately 450 different high schools and community organizations and more than 12,000 counted enrollment rate of \$500 per team through students. For more information and to enroll, visit

the YADAPP website, https://www.yadapp.com/.

THE ENTERPRISE



Mark Register gets the win for the Cougars.

JVB aseballGets Road Win

By Ashlee Mullis

the mound, going 4 1/3 innings, striking out 10

and allowing 0 earned The Cougar JV Base- runs. Jaxon Handy ball team traveled to went 1 inning, striking Dan River on Wednes- out 2 and allowing 0 day, March 26, getting runs. Noah Caine was a 12-1 win in a 6-in- on fire at the plate, ning run rule game putting up 3 hits, 6 against the Wildcats. RBIs (single, double, Patrick County put a triple), and walking run on the board every once. Ethan Errichetti inning. Mark Register had 2 hits and 2 RBIs. was overpowering on Jayden Corns and Anderson Brim had 2 hits

Lady Cougar Softball Opens Season with Wins



Journey Moore pitches for PCHS.

By Ashlee Mullis

24, getting a 20-2 win over the Lady Benfor 5 on the night.

Taylor Lawless had hits.

3 hits and Hayden The Lady Cougar Lawless and Lilly Ha-Varsity Softball Team zelwood each had 2 traveled to Bassett doubles. Wednesday, on Monday, March March 26, the Cougars had a big win at home defeating Dan gals. Journey Moore River 3 to 0. Woods had a big night, pitch- pitched a great game, ing 6 innings and going all 7 innings striking out 9. Moore with 5 strikeouts. had 4 hits, 6 RBIs, a Hazelwood had 2 hits triple, and a homer- with a triple, Hayden un. Jenna Woods had Lawless had 2 RBIs, a homerun and went 4 and Taylor Lawless had one. Woods had 2

Gavin Fain pitches in the win against Bassett.

Baseball Opens with Close Win

By Ashlee Mullis The Varsity Baseball Team opened the season with a 6-5 win over Bassett on the road, Monday, March 24. Gavin Fain earned the win on the mound going 4 innings, giving up 2 runs on 5 strikeouts,

Lancaster threw 2 innings, and Christian Hylton picked up the save, throwing the 7th inning. Jackson Horton had the big hit for the Cougars in the 3rd, driving in 2 runs. The Cougars had 7 stolen bases on the day, 3 by and walking 2. Calvin Jackson Callahan.

Cougar Baseball Gets Two Home Wins



The Varsity Cougar ed Martinsville 14-0. Baseball Team got Zach Holt earned his a 7-5 win over Dan 1st win on the mound River on Wednesday, going 3 perfect in-March 26. Christian nings with 7 strike-Hylton had an excel- outs, no walks, and lent 1st start on the no hits. Calvin Lanmound, going 4 in- caster threw a clean nings, allowing 3 runs 4th and 5th inning to on 4 hits, striking out 7 combine with Holt on and walking 4. Jaiden a no-hitter. The Cou-Wilson picked up the gars were led at the win in relief and Noah plate by Easton Har-Jessup had a perfect, ris who was 2-3 with 2-inning save. Jack- 2 RBIs, and 2 runs. son Horton led the of- Gavin Fain went 2-2 fense with 3 runs, and with 2 RBIs. Jackson Zach Holt crossed the Horton had 2 RBIs, plate 3 times in the and Will Heath scored

the Cougars defeat-

Noah Jessup catches the fly ball to end the inning.

By Ashlee Mullis

win. Friday, March 28, three runs.

JV Baseball Defeats Martinsville

By Ashlee Mullis

The Cougars defeated Martinsville, 16-1, in a 3-inning run rule game on Friday, March 28.

PC scored 5 runs in 1st, 5 runs in the 2nd, and 6 runs in 3rd. Caleb Vaughn had 2 hits, 1 RBI, and scored 3 runs. Mason Cassell had 1 hit and 3RBIs. Anderson Brim had 1 hit and 3 RBIs. Brim went 2 innings on the mound, striking out 4 and allowing 1 run. Cassell threw 1 inning allowing no runs and striking out 2.



Anderson Brim pitched for the win

Fishing team members earn top honors

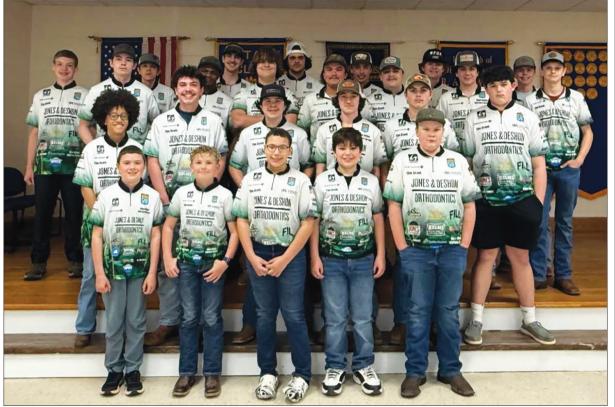
The Patrick County High School Fishing Team got a break in the weather with no wind and rain and competed in their fourth qualifying tournament on Sunday, March 23, at Philpott Lake against area high

Congratulations to Evan Eastridge and Wesley Kruse in the Junior Division for their First Place Win. Competing in the Junior State Championship on May 17 and 18 for Patrick County High School will be: Evan Eastridge and Wesley Kruse; Cameron Redd and Parker Jones; Kipton Vipperman and Trenton Miller.



Evan Eastridge and Wesley Kruse

PCHS Fishing Team



Members of the Patrick County High School (PCHS) Fishing Team are shown. (Left to right, front row) Trenton Miller, Kipton Vipperman, Cameron Redd, Parker Jones, Caleb Howell. (Second row) Jazmyne Reynolds, Chace Handy, Carter Gregory, Jonah Shockley, Asher Perry, Wesley Kruse. (Third row) Kade Williams, Antwain Mitchell, Tripp Thompson, Evan Havens, Ben Wood, Eli Wood, Jake Bryant. (Fourth row) Josiah Easter, Colton Wood, Will Heath, Caleb Geiger, Jacob Spencer, Evan

Wood and Parker Roop. Not pictured: Hunter Heath, Chance Corns, Evan Eastridge, Jameson Lawson.

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JV Baseball Wins at Home

By Ashlee Mullis

Bengals.

Errichetti had 1 hit The JV Baseball and 2 RBIs. Brae-Team opened the sea- don Hylton added 1 son on Monday March hit and 2 runs. Noah 24. The Cougars de- Caine went 2 and 2/3 feated Bassett at innings on the mound home 11-1 in a 6-in- allowing 1 hit, no ning run rule game. runs and struck out PC had a big 2nd in- 6. Handy went 2 inning, scoring 6 on the nings, allowing 1 hit, no earned runs, and Caleb Vaughn had 2 striking out 3. Reid hits and 2 RBIs. Jax- Corns threw 1 and 1/3 on Handy had one hit innings striking out 1. and 3 RBIs. Ethan (Sports cont. on p. 14)

THE ENTERPRISE

—Crossing the Lines= News snippets from outside the town/county lines...

Supervisors to help volunteer squad with ambulance purchase

The Henry County Board of Supervisors appropriated \$236,320 for the purchase of a 2021 Wheeled Coach/Ford F450 ambulance for the Ridgeway District Volunteer Rescue Squad during its March 25 meeting. The funding includes a lien on the vehicle.

Garrett Dillard, of the Iriswood District, cast the only dissenting vote.

Travis Pruitt, of the Ridgeway District, abstained, as he previously served as the squad's president.

The rescue squad, which has served the community for nearly 50 years, is facing a decline in volunteerism, a trend seen across Virginia, according to Squad President Sidney McClure.

"We have a small but mighty force in our squad. We service two of the biggest events that Martinsville-Henry County has to offer our community and to tourists, and that is Martinsville Speedway and Rooster Walk," McClure said.

He emphasized that multiple ambulances are needed to cover such large-scale events in case of emergenestimates the truck is used about five times per month.



Squad President Sidney McClure speaks at the March 25 Henry County Board of Supervisors meeting.

"That is our best truck, so most times cies. Outside of those events, McClure our volunteers, if they come and run, they're going to get on that truck," he

Auto repair shop rezoning sparks debate, receives board approval

The Henry County Board of Supervisors approved a contentious rezoning request in the Reed Creek District during its March 25 meeting, allowing a 0.19-acre property to be rezoned from Agricultural District (A-1) to Commercial District (B-1) for use as a commercial automobile repair garage.

The request was approved in a 5-1 vote, with Pam Cobler, of the Reed Creek District, casting the only dissent-

During the public hearing, multiple residents spoke against the rezoning, citing noise disturbances, traffic concerns, and zoning violations.

Holly Kozelsky argued that the property should not qualify for commercial zoning under existing rules.

"The business that has been there since July has been an absolute nightmare for the neighborhood. It's the kind of thing that causes communities to disintegrate. It's the starting point of a downfall," she said.

Kozelsky noted that the property had not operated as a business since 2008, exceeding the two-year grandfathering period required for zoning protection.

"This is 17 years—a lot more than

two years," she added.

She also claimed the property has cars parked in the street right-of-way, in neighbors' yards and driveways, and



Holly Kozelsky speaks against a rezoning request.

does not meet required zoning setbacks. Additionally, Kozelsky believes the business failed to meet zoning guidelines, which prohibit uses inconsistent with the existing character of the dis-

"This is a peaceful, nice neighborhood," she said.

School board finalizes budget, introduces candidates for vacant seat

The Henry County School Board approved a \$121 million budget during a special meeting on March 20, securing staff pay raises, new positions, and facility upgrades. The budget will now be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

The spending plan focuses on raising staff salaries, addressing necessary repairs, and adding positions while maintaining level funding from the county.

The school system will hire five new EL teachers as part of its response to Henry County's growing Hispanic population, according to Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis.

Additional staffing and compensation priorities include three gifted education teachers, five teacher intern positions, two middle school deans of students (one per school), three special education specialists, additional special education teachers and paraprofessionals based on student needs, three additional middle school teachers based on enrollment numbers, and full-time substitutes for each building, a work-based learning specialist, two school security officers (one per high school), increased stipends for ed/autism paraprofessionals to \$2,500 per semester, increased substitute pay and driver compensation for field trips and activities, and salary increases for school employees.

Teachers (steps 1-29) will receive a ing a \$2,500 stipend.



Schools Superintendent County Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis explains the budget process to the board.

2.5% raise, while step 30 will receive a 3% raise—resulting in an average 3.5 percent increase. New teacher salaries will start at \$51,356.

Administrators will receive 2 to 2.5 percent per step.

Contracted and full-time bus drivers will get a 3.5 percent increase.

Professional salary scale employees will receive an average 3.5 percent increase, with step 30 employees receivRawls escorted from Martinsville council meeting after tense exchange



A police officer prepared to escort Martinsville City Council member Aaron Rawls from the dais at Tuesday's meeting. (Courtesy of STAR NEWS)

Council member and former Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls was escorted from the March 25 Martinsville City Council meeting and the municipal building after a tense exchange with Mayor LC

During his comments near the end of the meeting, Rawls referred to an unsigned document shared with him during the meeting, and added it was written by "a coward. I have seen quite a bit of cowardly behavior. People posting on social media in the dead of night, lying on people, no hesitation, where somebody else can't respond," yet they "can't put down the bottle long enough to form a sentence coherently. I've had enough of it. I don't know if I'm sitting a good example," Rawls said, as some in the crowd responded, "you're not."

"Good. With you all saying that, I know I'm doing the right thing," Rawls said. "People who voted for people who strangle women - get outta here with trying to judge me morally."

A "lack of leadership has been a root problem in this community for a very long time. It's not a backhanded sleight to this council. It's been a problem in this community way before this council. We feel everything harder than most communities because of our lack of leadership. So, when the cost of living rises, it rises harder and more harshly here," Rawls said.

'That's a function of us not having the leadership to mitigate that. We have end-of-life infrastructure with health and hazard issues in this (municipal) building, where we have to move people out, get leases, pay attorneys to help us.

"I only cite this as examples of what lack of leadership costs us because it's coming out of your pockets within these next few months, and it'll be coming out of your pockets for years to come," Rawls said.

"I really want to get to one of our ugliest issues head-on. A bunch of you guys got called in advance, and I can guess what they told you. 'Hey, we have some big old race issue and you're all being threatened by it. We need you here to support us," he said.

Residents were likely not told their taxes would increase, "your utilities are going up and now we're talking about raising executive pay with your money. Raise the pay for somebody who's making almost \$200,000 a year in the City of Martinsville," Rawls

The council recently decided to allow Jones to negotiate the pay of City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides, up to a pre-approved amount.

According to information on the city's website, Ferrell-Benavides is paid a salary of \$183,855. She is ineligible for overtime pay.

Jones tried to gavel the meeting back to order and said, "Fall in order, sir. ... I ain't going to tell you again. Fall in order."

"What was that?" Rawls asked.

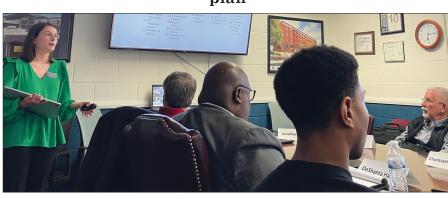
"Fall in order," Jones replied. "I don't even know what you're say-

ing," Rawls said.

"You're making personal attacks," no money or no plan to replace it," he Jones said. "Fall. In. Order. You." He said. "We have utterly preventable added, "Your time is up. We're going to move on.

> A police officer then proceeded to escort Rawls from the meeting and the building.

City gathers feedback to shape future development plan



Caroline Vanterve discusses the comprehensive plan process.

The City Council's work session phase. on March 25 focused on reviewing the comprehensive plan, which serves as a roadmap for the city's

Virginia requires all localities to have a comprehensive plan, which must be reviewed every five years. The plan updates reflect recent changes and help adjust land use roadmaps for the city's develop-

The plan is currently in the data-gathering and community input munity forums.

"It's just as much about the process as the final product," said Caroline Vanterve, senior planner for Berkley Group LLC.

The project webpage is available for citizens to review, and the entire process is expected to take 18 to 20 months.

Community feedback will be gathered through pop-up events, an interactive map, a community-wide survey, eight focus groups and com-



OBITUARIES Theresa Moran Smith

Walter Lee "Wally" Augustine

Mr. Walter Lee "Wally" Augustine, age 66 of Meadows of Dan, Virginia passed away at home on Wednesday, March 26, 2025. He was born in Pender County, North Carolina on February 28, 1959, to Walter Don Augustine and Mary Lee Rivenbark Augustine. He was preceded in death by on something all the his father. Wally owned and operated Wally's Automotive for over 20 years. He loved fishing, hunting, and watching racing. Wally loved to watch his boys and grandchildren play ball and always had a project he was working on. lin,



time.

Left to cherish the memories of Wally are his mother, Mary Lee Rivenbark Augustine of Elizabethtown, North Carolina; his three children, Allison Augustine Vincell (Joe) of Frank-West Virginia, He had to be tinkering Landon Augustine (Ky-neralservices.com.

lie) of Stuart, Virginia, Braedon Augustine of Patrick Springs, Virginia; three grandchildren, James Vincell, Susan Vincell, and Nathanael Vincell.

A memorial visitation will be held on Sunday. March 30, 2025, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart. Burial will be private. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to Meadows of Dan Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 830, Meadows of Dan, VA 24120. Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfu-

Theresa Moran Smith, 71, of Floyd, went to be with the Lord on Sunday March 23, 2025. She was born in Fort Rucker, Alabama on February 4, 1954. She was a proud graduate of Floyd County High School, where she was active in the band as a saxophonist and majorette. Theresa loved spending time with her family, dancing, visiting the beach, and playing bingo. She was a member of Flovd Baptist Church. She was preceded in death

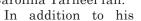
Survived by husband: Gary Smith; Children:-Justin Hopper (Angie), Holly Verne Davis (Justin), Stephen Cort Smith (Caroline); grandchildren: Miley by her father: Archie Marie Hopper, Allie Moran; daughter: Jen- Nicole Martin, Taylor nifer Hopper; Brother: Davis, Ashlyn Davis; being served by Gard-Archie Darrell Moran. mother: Lucille Harris; ner Funeral Home.

Sister: Cathy Renee Banks (Mark); Charlie Martin; two aunts: Shirley Meade (Steve) and Jane Clifton. A memorial service will be held Saturday March 29, 2025, at 12 noon at Gardner Funeral Home with Pastor Roy Turpin officiating. The family will receive friends Saturday from 11 until 12. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Plasters Cemetery c/o Judy Farmer 46 Old Place Ln., Hillsville, VA 24343. Online condolences may be made at Gardnerfuneralhomefloyd.com. The family is

Louis McCray Martin

Louis McCray Martin, 86, went home to be with his Lord Thursday morning, March 27, 2025, at Forsyth Medical Center.

McCray was born on May 8, 1938, in Patrick County. VA to the late Richard M. and Ocie DeHart Martin. He was a long-time member of First Baptist Church of Walnut Cove and was retired from RJ Reynolds Tobacco with over 40 years of service. Mc-NASCAR Racing and was a collector of old cars. He loved basketball and was a huge Carolina Tarheel fan.





parents, McCray was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years. Lettie Sue Nelson Cray enjoyed watching Martin; and a brother,

Richard A. Martin. He is survived by his daughter, Debra Martin, and a special aunt, Mary Lee Martin.

There will be a 2:00 this time.

pm graveside service held on Sunday, March 30, 2025, at First Baptist Church of Walnut Cove Cemetery with Pastor AJ Reynolds officiating.

There will be no formal visitation.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First Baptist Church Cemetery Fund: Po Box 552, Walnut Cove, NC 27052 or to the donor's choice.

The family welcomes online condolences at www.burroughsfuneralhome.com.

Burroughs Funeral Home of Walnut Cove is proud to serve the Martin family during

Mrs. Linda Floyd Dunkley, age 84 of Stuart, Virginia passed away at The Joan and Howard Woltz Hospice Home in Dobson, North Carolina on Thursday, March 27, 2025. She was born in Patrick County to the late William Abe Floyd and Sue Moore Clark Floyd. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by eleven siblings, Sallie E. Floyd, Edmund Waller Floyd, Naomi F. Wooten, George C. Floyd, Henrietta F. Scott, Betty S. Floyd, Charlie "Bill" Floyd, Ann F. Eller, Patsy M. Floyd, James "Jim" Floyd, and Samu-

Linda Floyd Dunkley

da loved animals, farming, and being in the outdoors. She cherished her time travelling with her husband.

Left to cherish the memories of Linda is P.O. Box 325, Dobson, her loving husband of NC 27017. Online con-Bobby Lee 63years, Stuart, Dunkley of

law, Gay Nell Floyd of Patrick County; and Numerous Nieces and Nephews.

Funeral service for Mrs. Dunkley will be held, Monday, March 31, 2025 at 2:00 P.M. at Moody Funeral Chapel with Rev. Ricky Rogers officiating. Burial will follow in Stateline Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. Family will receive friends one hour prior to the service. Flowers will be accepted, or memorial donations may be made to Woltz Hospice Home, dolences may be made by visiting www.moody-

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Terri S. Wood, Manager

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Explore Bigfoot Mysteries at Patrick County Library Program

gram about Bigfoot on Saturday, April 12 starting at 11a.m. The program is free and open to the public. Seating is limited, so plan to arrive early.

The program is titled, "In The Shadow Of Big Red Eye: Bigfoot Experience.'

Join Producer and Lead Investigator, Mike Familant as he shares his experiences researching and tracking down the truth behind North America's most iconic cryptid, Bigfoot.

Bigfoot, Sasquatch, Grassman, Skunk Ape or Big Red Eye, whatever name you choose to call this large, bipedal hominid, Familant has probably tried to track it down.

Familant has been researching this amazing creabrary or call (276) 694-3352

The Patrick County Library will host a unique pro-ture for over 13 years, and has captured some impressive evidence along the way. From the Florida Swamps to the North Country of Maine and everywhere in between, he is the full-time, lead investigator and producer of the show, "In the Shadow of Big Red Eve.

He will exhibit some extraordinary evidence backed by facts which he and his team have collected throughout his journey, along with some of the unfortunate experiences which come along with Bigfooting. A Q&A will be held after the presentation and Familant will be available after for photographs and

For more information, visit the Patrick County Li-

PATRICK PULPITS

The Divine Design of Our Earth

By Alan Dean, retired Sev- late the earth's temperature. enth-day Adventist pastor

ligent Creator God could place charge.

For example, our earth is the cals. perfect size that it should be and the right composition it needs to moon. The size of the moon and be for our gravity to be just right. its distance from the earth is just Our planet has an iron and nickel core that gives it gravitational Each day (of 25 hours) has two pull. If the earth were larger, high tides and two low tides. If the gravity would crush us and the moon were smaller or farif smaller, we would float off into

and 21% oxygen. If nitrogen were higher, there would be too little oxygen to sustain respirating creatures. If oxygen were and sun appear to be the same higher, the air would be dangerously combustible.

A third example is our earth's temperature. Our 60-mile-high closer to the earth. atmosphere allows air to be circulated to avoid extremes of tem- cisely designing and creating the perature. The atmosphere also provides just the right shield from the sun's blistering radiation. The water cycle on earth of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation also help to regu-

Another example concerns It is surprising that more peolightning. There are about 6000 ple don't believe that there is lightning strikes every minute a God that created the entire on our earth. These thunderuniverse (millions of galaxies) storms and electrified clouds and wonderfully sustains His are live batteries that cause the creation. Our earth is a perfect earth to have a negative charge example that only a super-intel- and the atmosphere a positive Thunderstorms our earth in the exact location transfer the negative charges and with a precise environment back to earth. Without them this so that life can exist. Any mod- electrical balance in the earth's est change in location or environ- atmosphere would disappear in ment would cause life to cease to minutes. Lightning also makes helpful, ozone-producing chemi-

A fifth example concerns our right to control oceanic tides. ther away, the tides would be too weak to sufficiently circulate and Another example: our earth's oxygenate the oceans and coastatmosphere has just the right all areas resulting in the oceans combination of gases for life to becoming stagnant. If the moon exist. The air is 78% nitrogen were larger or closer, the tides would be too powerful and cause massive destruction.

> It is interesting that the moon size in the sky. This is because the moon is 400 times smaller than the sun but also 400 times

> Conclusion: By our God preearth's atmosphere, water cycle, and position in space relative to the sun and moon, our earth is able to sustain life. Chapter one of Genesis gives a perfect account of this.

BIBLE TRIVIA

1. Is the book of 2 Peter (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. How did God identify Himself when speaking from the burning bush? I am who I am, King of all, Jesus Christ, Lord of Jehovah

3. Which of these was not one of the 10 plagues in Egypt? Locusts, Wicked skins to stone, Water turned to blood. Livestock diseased

4. 2 Kings 19 and which other book and chapter are almost alike word for word? Jeremiah 50, Job 16, Isaiah 37, Deuteronomy 7

Which judge of Israel had 30 sons? Samson, Jair, Ephraim, Gideon

6. What king dug wells in the desert? Abner, Isaac, Uzziah, Abimelech

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) I am who I am, 3) Wicked skins to stone, 4) Isaiah 37, 5) Jair, 6) Uzziah

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

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sandwich 20 Kind of daisy 21 Bullring shout 22 Perfume bottle

23 Baseball's "Iron Man" fully stated? 26 Western U.S. gas brand 27 Hit sketch

show since

'75 **28** Atop 29 Move, as a seedling 31 Stitch

32 Statistic of a chemical element, fully stated? 39 Protein in

egg white and milk 41 Panther 42 2010s dance move often

43 Tropical

vines

clothes

tourism 63 "Aladdin" monkey 65 Auto-cleaning 106 Annual site, fully stated? 69 "I knew it all —!" 71 Once surnamed 72 "Thank you, Yvette!

73 Lode of unrefined stated? 79.001 inch 82 Singer Cherry 127 French ice

Super Crossword 84 UConn women's ple" principle) coach

Smart" group **57** Tyro, in gaming lingo 58 Actor Cage,

noise 62 Prefix with

44 -- 's razor

47 Fallon's

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metal, fully **78** — -di-dah

83 Hoppy drink

basketball Auriemma 86 Radiohead

49 Singer Ora 50 Irritability, title track of fully stated? 2000 53 — Lingus 55 Some racing

56 Evil "Get

informally) Sneeze

130 Enzyme suffix 131 Useful thing 132 Believers in God, of sorts

128 Focal point

129 Punta del -

DOWN

1 Circle bits

2 Coffee bit

6 — - Caps

7 Not for

8 Truism

9 Country

11 Luau gift

Window

4 Kabuki sash

5 Sports official

(candy brand)

singer Carter

10 Scottish port

12 Certain cola

container

13 Hebrew "A"

15 Egg cells

14 Rail against

16 Initial perfor-

mance on

3 Uproar

87 Prone (to) 88 British islet 90 Biblical boat fully stated? 95 Architect

Ludwig Mies van der -97 Fun, in brief 99 "The -Professo

100 Tribe of the Southwest 101 Grads 103 Ear-busting 105 Mistaken

done with the Whin

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beauty

of -119 "Mystic River" actor, fully stated? 125 Christ, in Italy 126 CPR expert

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Broadway, say 24 Destroy

17 Inked cheek image, e.g. 18 Period when sales slump 25 Baby buggy,

in Britain

30 Airport agcy.

33 North African 80 Boise locale 81 Cutting capital 34 Muscat's land

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37 Kind of

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Habana

48 Part of B.A.

51 Overwhelm

52 Stranded

59 Dogma

suffix

69 Birthday

topic

75 Devotee

79 Criminals

beam 85 Anti's vote 35 Soup with 86 Tree knots 89 Body of 36 Junk email

FULLY STATED

water west of Liverpool 91 "Movin' —' ("The

39 Comparable Jeffersons" 40 Pale purple song) 44 Bear, in Baja 45 Alternative

92 German auto 93 "Citizen -94 Impressionist 96 "Mom" has two

98 Weather conditions 102 Tiny criticism 104 Uncork, e.g.

cellular stuff 105 Judith with 54 Cattle locale two Tonys 107 Looks as if 108 Arm bones 109 For the

61 Some film FX 63 Hilo "Hello!" (temporarily) 110 Map blowup **64** "— voyage!" 66 Abode: Abbr. 115 Cut calories **67** Ounce, e.g. 116 Boaters 68 Writer Levin tools

118 Mon. follower 120 Links gp. 121 Letters before 70 Hair stiffener 73 Running riot 96-Down 122 PC readout 74 Buffs again

of a sort **76** Put in writing 123 Winning sign 77 Trial balloon 124 Singer DiFranco

16 19 20 22 23 25 26 27 28 29 32 33 34 35 38 39 43 45 48 51 58 83 90 91

50 56 62 82 87 88 95 98 101 103 104 102 106 107 111 112 117 118 125 126

HUGE 2-DAY ESTATE & PERSONAL PROPERTY AUCTION

Friday, April 4, 2025 @ 6:00 pm & (Doors Open at 4:00 pm) Saturday, April 5, 2025 @ 10:00 am

(Doors Open at 8:00 am) GUNS, GOLD & SILVER JEWELRY, CASE KNIVES (NIB), COPPER FRENCH MILK CAN, BOYD BEAR VILLAGES & ACCESSORIES, HANDMADE BATTLE AXES, NEW RED RYDER BB GUN, QUILTS, 1950'S MONTGOMERY WARD BICYCLE, 6ft. ROOSTER, OVER 14ctw OF DIAMOND RINGS, DIE CAST CARS, OLD METAL TOYS, FURNITURE, STATE QUARTER WATCHES, PRIMITIVES

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CLASSIFIED

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

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Patrick County Senior Services Driver STEP, Inc, a multifac-

eted community action agency, is seeking a part-time, 20-25 hours per week, Senior Services Driver in Patrick County. The Senior
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responsible for transporting senior citizens to
and from various locations. This position will
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delivering meals to the
homes of the program
participants.

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(https://apply. stepincva.com/?positions=Patrick+County+Senior+Services+Driver) STEP, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

LAND FOR SALE

Small parcel of land for sale @ 586 Mount Calvary Church Rd, Stuart, VA 24171. If interested, please call (276) 694-2842 between 10AM and 4PM

YARD SALE

Gigantic Estate/Yard sale on Saturday April 5th. Outside sales begin at 7AM and inside sales begin at 8 AM Sharp until 2 PM. 2 huge estates have been donated, many items new or like new. Nice dining room and bedroom furniture, washer, dorm fridge, household, kitchen & craft items, upholstery,

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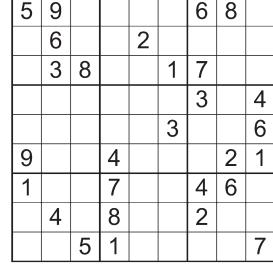
3609 South Mayo Dr., Stuart

God Bless You

fabric, wonderful decor items, tools, ladders, wheelbarrows, so much more, too much to list here. box lots etc. Hotdogs, biscuits, coffee, chips, and drinks will be available by the women's group. Yard sale proceeds go to scholarship fund for kids in need. 6260 Elamsville Rd, at Ross Harbour Church.

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Weekly SUDOKU



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: ◆◆◆

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Wilderness - Stuart, Inc.

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LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Patrick County Planning Commission will have a regular business meeting on Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 6 p.m.

The meeting will be at the Patrick & Henry Community College (Stuart site) in the Community Room.

LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Stuart will convene a Budget Meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 6:00 PM. This meeting will take place at the Stuart Town Office, located at 100 Patrick Avenue. The Stuart Town Council will review the Budget for the Fiscal Year ending in 2026. Individuals wishing to provide comments to the Town Council who are

Individuals wishing to provide comments to the Town Council who are unable to attend may reach out to Bryce Simmons, Town Manager, by telephone at (276) 694-3811 or via email at information@stuartva.org.

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1;8.01-316,-317,20-104
PATRICK CIRCUIT COURT
101 WEST BLUE RIDGE STREET/PO 1

PATRICK CIRCUIT COURT

101 WEST BLUE RIDGE STREET/PO BOX 148, STUART, VA 24171

ESTATE OF JOHN WILLIAM ADKINS v. JOHN DOE

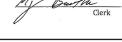
BONNIE LOU LAWSON; UNKNOWN HEIRS OF

ADMINISTRATOR JOHN WILLIAM ADKINS The object of this suit is to:
TO LOCATE ANY LAWFUL HEIRS OF JOHN WILLIAM ADKINS

THE PLAINTIFF appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before APRIL 16, 2025

MARCH 21, 2025

WARCH 21, 2025



Case No. CWF24-257

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING PUBLIC HEARING: The Patrick County Board of Supervisors

will hold a Public Hearing, Monday, April 14, 2025 on the proposed relocation of the Russell Creek voting precinct currently located at 1808 Ayers Orchard Road to New Hope Community Church at 1863 Clark House Farm Road.

The hearing will be held in the 3rd floor Courtroom on the Patrick County Veterans Memorial building, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, Virginia.

Anyone wishing to view the proposed revisions to the current vota-

Anyone wishing to view the proposed revisions to the current voting precinct locations may do so at the County Administration office, Suite 218 located in the Patrick County Veterans Memorial building.

If you plan to attend and have any special needs requirements, please contact the County Administration Office at 276-694-6094.

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 - 11

Meetings

Thursday, April 10

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

Monday, April 14

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the third-floor court room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Wednesday, April 16

The Stuart Town Council will meet at 6 p.m. in the Town Office.

Events

Wednesday, April 2

The DMV Connect Mobile Unit will be at the Patrick Henry Community College Site, 212 Wood Brothers Dr., Stuart, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Closed for lunch 12:30 -1:30 p.m. This event is open to the public for Driver transactions, with no appointment needed.

The Patrick County Chamber of Commerce will hold a Lunch & Learn at 12 p.m. in Room 103 at the Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Stuart site. The workshop will focus on Succession Planning and it's free. Registration is available at www.patrickchamber.com.

Friday, April 4

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

Saturday, April 5

Creasey's Chapel will hold a BINGO! Games, Food, Prizes. Doors open at 4 p.m., bingo starts at 5 p.m. \$25 for 20 cards, 10 door prize tickets and 1 coverall.

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

Ross Harbour Church will have its annual estate/yard sale fundraiser with 100 percent of proceeds going to fund scholarships or other assistance for children in need. The outside sale will start at 7 a.m. and the inside sales will be from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free coffee. Hotdogs available for sale.

Monday, April 7

The annual Patrick County Tourism Summit will be held at the Star Theatre. Registration is at 8: 30 a.m., and people should RSVP by March 31. Lunch will be provided.

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conduct a workshop at the Carroll County High School in Hillsville from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no charge to attend, but donations are greatly appreciated. There will also be several speakers presenting during the workshop.

Sunday, April 13

The Rockingham and Stokes County Genealogical Society meets at 2:30 p.m. in the Mc-Michael Meeting Room of the Madison-Mayodan Library, 611 Burton St., Madison, NC. Jeff Bullins, speaker, will share information about the H. Lee Waters film of Western Rockingham County. Books available to purchase, some at sale prices. The Board of Directors will meet at 1:30 p.m., before the regular meeting.

Friday, April 18

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

Saturday, April 19

The Patrick County High School (PCHS) Senior Beta students will hold a charity car wash at Advance Auto in Stuart to raise money for PCHS students traveling to the National Senior Beta convention and competition in Florida this summer. Rain date is Saturday, April 26.

Country breakfast, 6:30-10 a.m., at Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department, 6687 Fairystone Park Highway, Stuart. Dine in adult plates are \$10 and child plates are \$5. Take out plates are \$10 each. To order, call (276) 930-2113.

Saturday, April 26

The Rockingham and Stokes County Genealogical Society's Spring Swap Meet, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Francisco Community Building/ Volunteer Fire Department located on Highto the public. Bring your family history information, family photographs, etc. to share. Printer available for a nominal fee. Please bring a covered dish. Authors or other historical or genealogical societies are invited to bring books to sell or set up an information table.

Ongoing

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

Patrick County Alzheimer's Group LLC is open Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. During opening hours an inside yard sale is open to the public. Proceeds are of Hills Tax Service on Wood Brothers Drive. New members are welcome. For more information, call (276) 693-6018.



The Patrick County Quilters' Sit-N-Sew is The Carroll County Genealogy Club will 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 ev-

ery month at the American Legion Post 105 at 7 p.m. Interested veterans are welcome to attend. Free Community Meal, every 4th Wednesday, 5 p.m., Raven Rock Wesleyan Church,

1912 Raven Rock Road, Ararat. Take out or dine in. Call Scott or Nann Phillips at (276) 773-6004 or email pastor@ravenrockchurch.

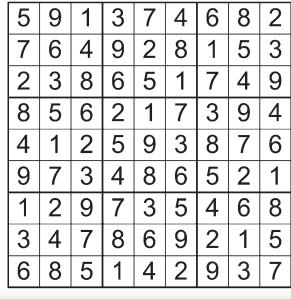
The Carroll County Genealogy Club is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

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 Walkway 89 in Francisco, Stokes County, NC. Free er, (276) 732-0509, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to

> Salem Church on Salem Road in Critz holds a community meal on the first Sunday of every month at 12:10 p.m. Call (276) 222-1069 with questions.

Patrick County Parks and Recreation Department will sponsor an aluminum bat co-ed adult softball league this summer providing there is sufficient interest. A minimum of 4 teams must be registered and fees paid by the May 1 registration deadline. The league is open to men and women who will be 18 years of age or older as of June 1. Coaches are required to recruit their own team members. Each co-ed team must have a minimum of 10 players with a maximum of 15 players includused to purchase supplies. Members meet on ing at least 3 females per team. Team registhe first Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in tration fee is \$300, and the completed team the Alzheimer's office, located in the basement roster must be submitted to the recreation by the May 1 deadline. A copy of the 2025 adult softball rules and team roster forms can be requested by calling (276) 694-3917 or visiting the department's Facebook page.







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Arena Talent co-founders to speak at P&HCC Athletics Banquet

ers of Arena, a leading development and networking platform for sports, media & entertainment professionals and athletes, will serve as guest speakers for the 2025 Patrick & Henry Community College (P&H-CC) Annual Athletics

sented by ValleyStar Credit Union.

With a mission to create equitable career opportunities for the next generation of leaders in the sports, media, and entertainment industries, Bueno and Khosla will share their

their professional jour-

Exclusive Career Development Workshop

Before the banquet, Bueno and Khosla will lead a workshop from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM titled "Breaking into the Industry: Careers in

Adriene Bueno and Banquet on April 17 expertise and inspire Sports, Media, and En-Parul Khosla, co-found- at 6 p.m. at the P&H- P&HCC student-ath- tertainment." This ses- mium access to Arena CC MET Complex, pre- letes to take charge of sion aims to equip stu- Pro, providing excludent-athletes with the tools and knowledge needed to transition into successful careers beyond athletics.

Workshop Goals:

- Introduce student-athletes to career opportunities in sports, media, and entertain-
- * Provide practical advice on networking, building a personal brand, and navigating the industry.
- Encourage student-athletes to take the next step by signing up for Arena to explore career opportunities and make industry connections.

As part of Arena's commitment to empowering the next generation, the company will present "The Future Leader Award" to a deserving P&HCC student-athlete during the banquet. This prestigious honor will include:

*One year of free precareer-building resources and industry connections.

"We are thrilled to welcome Adriene Bueno and Parul Khosla to Patrick & Henry Community College," said Brian Henderson, Assistant Vice-President of Student Engagement and Athletic Director. "Their leadership in the sports, media, and entertainment industries will provide student-athletes with invaluable insight as they prepare for life beyond the game."

The 2025 Patrick & Henry Community College Athletics Banquet promises to be an unforgettable evening celebrating the achievements ofP&HCC student-athletes while providing them with the tools to succeed in their professional fu-

For more information about the banquet *A certificate/plaque and workshop, contact recognizing leadership Henderson at bhender-

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| Monday | | Tuesday | | Wednesday | | Thursday | | Friday | | Saturday | | |
| | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 |
| | | Walking Club 9:00 Storytime 10:30 April Fool's Day | | Walking Club 9:00 | | | | Sit & Stitch 11:00 | | | | |
| | | | Yoga 1:15* | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | | |
| | | 7 | | 8 | | 9 | | 10 | | 11 | | 12 |
| Yoga 10:00* | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Not Your Mother's Book Club 5:00 | | | | Rigfoot | Program | |
| Bunny In Bloom 1:00* | | | Storytime 10:30 Libraries with Emme | | Book Bingo 10:30 | | | | | Bigfoot Program 11:00 | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | Yoga 5:15* | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | Board Game Day | | |
| | | 14 | | 15 | | 16 | | 17 | | 18 | | 19 |
| | Yoga 10:00* | | Storytime 10:30 Easter | | Walking Club 9:00 | | | | | | | |
| Chair Exercise 1:30 LEGO Club 4:00 | | Medicare 101 12:00 Yoga 5:15* | | Retired Teacher's 11:00 Yoga 1:15* | | Open Art Studio 1:00 | | Sit & Stitch 11:00 | | Journaling Junkies 11:00 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yoga 10:00* Teacup Fairy Garden 1:00* | | Walking Club 9:00 Storytime 10:30 Fossils with the MG's | | Walking Club 9:00 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | LEGO Club 4:00 | | Yoga 5:15* | | Yoga 1:15* | | | | | | | |
| | | 28 | | 29 | | 30 | | | | | | |
| Yoga 10:00* | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Walking Club 9:00 | | Interested or have questions about our programs? Call us at 276-694-3352. *Registration is required. Walking Club meets at the Food Bank Parking Lot at the Rail | | | | | | |
| Chair Exercise 1:30 | | Storytime 10:30 Rain | | | | | | | | | | |
| LEGO Club 4:00 | | ub 4:00 | Yoga 5:15* | | Yoga 1:15* | | Trail on Tuesday mornings. | | | | | |

Lewis, Clark, and Stuart







By Tom Perry

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson engineered the purchase of Louisiana from the French (800,000 square miles for 15 million dollars). Congress received a confidential message from Jefferson to outfit an expedition to explore the newly purchased territory for \$2,500, \$38,000 today. Jefferson placed his secretary Meriwether Lewis (1774-1809) and William Clark (1770-1838), both born near Monticello, in command of the expedition. The Corps of Discovery started up the Missouri River to its source in the Rocky Mountains and over the mountains to the Pacific Ocean. They returned 864 days later after making over 600 more camps, mapping 4,000 miles, collecting 122 new animals and 178 new plant specimens, and writing journals of over 1 million words. They crossed eleven states that today contain over 39 million people.

Thomas Jefferson's Secretary and handpicked expedition leader, Meriwether Lewis, and his Newfoundland dog, Seaman, left Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with a 55 foot keelboat and two 40 foot canoes or pirogues. Traveling down the Ohio River to Louisville, Kentucky, Lewis picked up his friend from their army days, William Clark, and his slave, York. They proceeded on to Saint Louis camping, where the Missouri River merges with the Mississippi River.

The only man lost was Sergeant Charles Floyd, who died of appendicitis in August 1804. The first winter was spent with the Mandan peoples in present day North Dakota, where new members joined the Corps of Discovery, including a Shoshoni woman named Sacagawea, her trapper husband Toussaint Charbonneau, and their baby Jean Baptiste.

The expedition encountered many Native peoples and had only two bad encounters. An encounter with the Sioux set a precedent that continued until Custer's Last Stand and the Massacre at Wounded Knee less than a hundred years later. The Blackfeet tribe suffered the only fatality at the hands of the Corps. Twice, women would save the Corps from destruction at the hands of Indians when Sacagawea intervened with her own Shoshoni people, and a woman named Watkuweis saved them from the Nez Perce.

The expedition reached the Pacific Ocean on November 7, 1805. For the first time in American history, a woman, Sacagawea, and Clark's



slave, York, voted over the placement of the winter campsite, Fort Clatsop National Park in Oregon. The Corps of Discovery left for the return journey on March 23, 1806.

On September 23, 1806, nearly thirty men in boats came ashore in Saint Louis, Missouri, from the Mississippi River near the present day site of the arch that dominates the city's skyline. Lewis and Clark were back, and they changed the history of the United States of America. Meriwether Lewis wrote President Thomas Jefferson the following letter on the day the Corps of Discovery returned to St. Louis.

"It is with pleasure that I anounce to you the safe arrival of myself and party at 12 OClk. Today at this place with our papers and baggage. In obedience to your orders, we have penitrated the Continent of North America to the Pacific Ocean, and sufficiently explored the interior of the country to affirm with confidence that we have discovered the most practicable rout which dose exist across the continent by means of the navigable branches of the Missouri and Columbia rivers."

Over the years, I followed part of the expedition from Saint Louis to Fort Leavenworth in Kansas along the Missouri River. I visited the Daniel Boone home, where the explorers may or may not have met the famous explorer of an earlier generation. While in Oregon twice in the 1990s, I followed the expedition from the Pacific several hundred miles up the Columbia River across some of the most beautiful landscapes in this nation. From Fort Clatsop near Astoria, Oregon, where the mighty Columbia River empties into the ocean. Mount Hood to the south and what is left of Mount St. Helens to the north of the river make a startling difference in the landscape.

Stephen Ambrose wrote a book about Lewis and the expedition ti-

tled Undaunted Courage. You can say many things about two men, but you cannot doubt their courage. They left on a journey described by historians today as going to the moon with little knowledge of what they would face and if they would return. In 2022, I took Ambrose's book and followed the expedition from Louisville to the Pacific Ocean.

On August 19, 1809, Lewis appointed his "three most intimate friends, William Clark, Alexander Stuart, and William Carr, his lawful attorneys with full authority to dispose of all or any part of his property." In a letter to his brother, Clark said, "He has given all his landed property into the hands of Judge Stuart, Mr. Carr and me to pay his debts." Lewis served as Governor of the Louisiana Territory after the trip and befriended Judge Alexan-

der Stuart. On August 25, 1809, Meriwether Lewis, Governor of the Louisiana Territory, stood on the dock near the Mississippi River at Saint Louis, preparing to board a ship for a trip to Washington D.C., hoping to restore his reputation and answer questions about his use of government monies. Deeply depressed, Lewis stood with three friends, among them was the man he crossed the continent to the Pacific Ocean with the Corps of Discovery from 1804 until 1806. William Clark

wrote his brother the next day: "I have not spent such a day as yesterday for many years...I took my leave of Governor Lewis, who set out to Philadelphia to write our book, but more particularly to explain some matter between him and the government...I do not believe there was ever an honester man in Louisiana not or who had purer motive than Governor Lewis. If his mind had been at ease I should have parted cheerfully."

Natchez Trace in Tennessee, Meri-

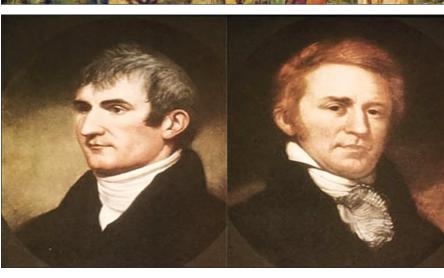
wether Lewis took his own life, although many murder conspiracy theories about his death remain. William Clark served the government as Governor and Indian Agent before his death at the home of his son, Meriwether Lewis Clark. He rests today high above the Mississippi River in Saint Louis.

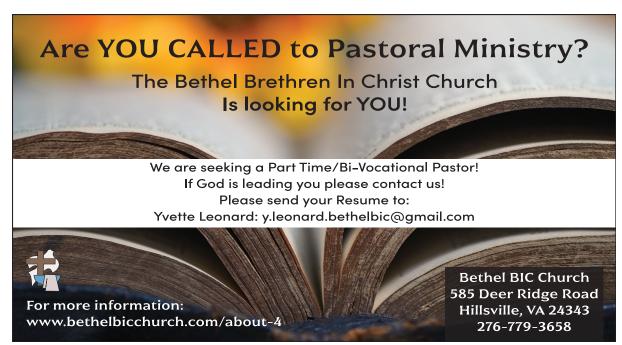
The death of Lewis was a waste of someone with so much to offer at the age of 35 after enduring so much is the tragedy of this story. He could have been President of the United States but rests today sadly along the Natchez Trace in a grave at one of the saddest places I have ever seen. It would be better for a man who had done so much for his country.

At his death, Lewis owed Judge Alexander Stuart \$750, \$15,000 today. Stuart, born in Augusta County, served as a judge in the United States Courts in Illinois and Missouri before serving in the legislature of the latter, rising to Speaker of the House. Judge Stuart returned to Augusta County, Virginia, in 1832 for a visit. He died in December, two months before the birth of his grandson James Ewell Brown Stuart, on February 6, 1833, in Ararat, Patrick County, Virginia. William Clark died in 1838 after serving as an Indian agent and Governor at his son's Meriwether Lewis Clark's home

Ken Burns ends his documentary with Thomas Jefferson saying the following. "The work we are now doing is I trust done for posterity --- in such a way that they need not repeat it. We shall delineate with correctness the great arteries of this country. Those who come afterwards will fill up the canvas—we begin."

On April 28, Perry will teach a class on the expedition at the Reynolds Homestead for the College of Older Adults, which kicks off at the On October 11, 1809, along the Reynolds Homestead on April 3 at 10 am.





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Sports = (cont. from page 6)

New approach gives Denny Hamlin dominating NASCAR Cup victory at Martinsville

By Reid Spencer NASCAR Wire Ser-

It didn't take Denny Hamlin long to find the recipe for success in Sunday's Cook Out 400 at Martinsville Speedway.

Hamlin grabbed the lead on Lap126 of 400 in the seventh NA-SCAR Cup Series race of the season and never looked back.

With flawless work from his pit crew, the driver of the No. 11 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota led 274 of the last 275 laps—with the only exception a lap credited to pole winner Christopher Bell, who raced side-by-side with Hamlin after the final restart on Lap 326.

Hamlin pulled away toward the end of the final 75-lap green-flag teammate, to the finish line by 4.617 seconds.

The victory Hamlin's sixth at the 0.526-mile short track, most among full-time active drivers, but his first at Martinsville since 2015. It was his first win of the season and the 55th of his career, tying him with Rusty Wallace for 11th on the career victory list.

The win was also Hamlin's first with crew chief Chris Gayle, who took over the pit box on the No. 11 Toyota this season. Hamlin has now won Cup races with seven different crew chiefs.

"You know, Chris Gayle, all the engineers, the pit crew, everybody really on that

his Joe Gibbs Racing ing to come here with a different approach than what we've been over the last few years," said Hamlin, who won at Martinsville for the first time with the Gen 7 race

> "It was just amazing. The car was great. It did everything I needed it to do. Just so happy to win with Chris, get 55... Obviously, back here in Martinsville where I spent so many years racing late models and whatnot-gosh, I love winning here."

Bell's No. 20 Toyota was too loose over the final run to keep up with Hamlin's No. 11 Camry.

"We were back and forth on balance a little bit," Bell said. "I asked to be freer wall right there, just throughout the whole



Denny Hamlin, driver of the #11 Progressive Toyota, celebrates after winning the NASCAR Cup Series Cook Out 400 at Martinsville Speedway on March 30, 2025 in Martinsville, Virginia. (Photo by Logan Riely/Getty Images)

just went a little bit The last two weeks too loose and lost my drive off (the corners).

"It was a great weekend for Joe Gibbs Racing. Showed a lot of pace. All four of the cars were really good. Really happy to kind run and beat Bell, deciding they were go- race. That last run, I of get back up front.

finals. William Over-

by finished 19th in

the 1600. In the 3200

Meter, Noah Hiatt

finished 10th, Over-

by finished 13th, and

Brett Foley finished

17th. Glenn Stovall

took 18th in the 110

Meter Hurdles and

14th in the 300 Me-

ter Hurdles. Landon

Moles, Eli Hairston,

Peyton Pascale, and

4x200 Meter Relay.

lay. In Discus, Tyrese

Penn finished 13th

and Reggie

4/8

Gosnell

15th in the

Jacob

ished

Dylan

have been rough for this 20 team... Really happy for Denny. He's the Martinsville master. Second is not that bad."

Bubba Wallace finished third for the second straight race, as Toyotas claimed the top three finishing positions at the paperclip-shaped track.

"That final restart, I let that second (place) get away," said Wallace, who drives for the 23XI Racing team co-owned by Hamlin and NBA legend Michael Jordan.

"I don't know if I had anything for Denny. It would have been fun

"But all in all, hell of a day for Toyota. Top three. That's nice. Keep the momentum going, having fun."

Chase Elliott came Quesinberry, home fourth, followed Hunter Martin, Fishby Hendrick Motorer Martin, and Xavier sports teammate Kyle Torres finished 9th in the 4x400 Meter Re-Larson.

> Ross Chastain, Ryan Preece, Joey Logano, Chase Briscoe and Todd Gilliland completed the top 10.

Before Hamlin took control, a debris caution on Lap 31 resulted in a dramatic change to the running order. Josh Berry led a group of six driv-

ers who stayed on the track under caution, and maintained the top spot for 40 laps, the first circuits led by the No. 21 Wood Brothers car at Martinsville since 2005.

A caution for Chris Buescher's spin on the frontstretch ended Berry's stint at the front. A collision with Wallace's No. 23 Toyota on pit road and subsequent alternator issues cost Berry two laps and took him out of the mix.

Logano stayed on the track under the Lap 71 yellow and won the first 80-lap stage over Alex Bowman in a two-lap sprint, but it was an up-and-down day for the reigning Cup champion.

On Briscoe's Toyota bounced off the inside curbing in Turn 3 and sent Logano's Ford spinning toward the outside wall. Logano pitted for fresh tires, restarted 25th and drove back to eighth place by lap 400, scoring his first top 10 of the season.

William Byron, who finished 22nd after a lengthy pit stop under the first caution, retained the series lead by 17 points over Lar-

Track Competes at North Stokes fied him for the state

By Ashlee Mullis

The Cougar Track and Field Team competed in the Mighty Viking Invitational at North Stokes, Saturday, March 28. Gracen Conner finished 10th in the 100 Meter Dash. Conner finished 9th in the 200 Meter Dash. Cameron Rakes placed 18th in the 800 Meter Run. Callie Wood came in 12th in the 1600 Meter Run. Sadie Martin placed 3rd in the 3200 Meter with a time of 12:35.69, qualifying her for the state finals. Kaylene Cameron in the 4x100 Relay. Fisher Martin fin-time of 4:35.92 quali-finished 19th.



Gracen Conner runs the 200 Meter Dash.

Sierra Helms placed ished 3rd in the 800 Rakes, Gracen Con- 14th in Discus, and Meter Run. Hunter Isabella Maddy Martin was Martin placed 3rd in Nashburn placed 8th 12th in Shot Put. the 1600 Meter with a

129 Howell Lane

Stuart, VA

O SU UK



PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports

Schedule for the week of April 7 - 12: 4/7 7pm Boys Soccer at Radford

> Track at Radford Boys Tennis vs Radford 4:30pm 4:30pm Girls Tennis at Radford Baseball at Radford 5pm

7pm 4/10 4:30pm 4:30pm 5pm 5pm 7pm

TBA

4/12

5pm

Girls Soccer vs Martinsville Girls Tennis vs Floyd Co. Boys Tennis at Floyd Co. Baseball vs Floyd Co. Softball vs Floyd Co. Boys Soccer vs Floyd Co. Track at William Byrd

Softball at Radford



3 Building Lots for Sale in Meadows of Dan VA Online Auction Ends April 25th at 3 PM TBD Grandview Dr., & Belcher Mountain Rd., Meadows of Dan, VA 24120 **Bid NOW at VAAuctionPro.com**

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OFFERING #1

This +/- 2.015 ac tract is mostly open and level and has been perked. Underground utilities are already in place. Deed restrictions do apply.

OFFERING #2

This +/- 2.033 ac tract is gradually sloping and mostly wooded. Property has already been perked. Deed restrictions do

OFFERING #3

This +/- 11 ac tract has rolling hills and is both a mix of wooded and open land. Property has not been perked. Underground utilities are already in place.



TERMS & CONDITIONS: 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$5,000 per offering is required on the day of sale. Close on or before June 9th, 2025. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence before placing a bid. Auction starts ending at 3 PM on April 25th, 2025. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at VAAuctionPro.com.

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