

Input sought on proposed hikes to personal property taxes

By Taylor Boyd

One of the public hearings scheduled for the Monday, April 28 meeting of the Patrick County Board of Supervisors is to gather public input on a proposal to increase personal property taxes by up to 16 cents each year for a three-year period. This would bring the personal property tax rate to \$2.20 in three years.

The motion was made by Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, and seconded by Doug Perry, of the Smith River District. It passed in a 3-2 vote. Marshall, Perry, and Jonathan Wood, chairman and of the Peters Creek District, voted in favor. Andrew Overby, vice chairman and of the Dan River District, and Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, voted against.

With a \$197,336 deficit still remaining in the budget, the board plans to use reserve funds to balance it.

“That’s what it’s there for,” Marshall said. “Also, our personal property tax is—we got to increase that. There’s no way around it, it’s been at that price for many, many years.”

(See **Property Taxes** p. 3)



Transfer Station Manager Scottie Hylton spoke about the four recommendations proposed at the April 14 meeting.



Trena Anderson requested the Patrick County Board of Supervisors censure Steve Marshall, of Blue Ridge District.

Board takes steps to terminate solar agreement, approves adjustments at Transfer Station

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors approved adjustments to the Transfer Station and took steps to terminate a proposed solar project at its Monday, April 14 meeting.

The board directed the county attorney to proceed with a formal letter to terminate the Fairy Stone Solar project, an estimated 170-acres solar project on Commerce Street in Stuart.

The project was canceled last year when it was considered no longer viable due to interconnection issues.

Fairy Stone LLC, a subsidiary of Energix Renewables, was deemed to have a fatal flaw in its connection.

(See **Transfer Station** p. 2)



The school board recognized Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) Regional Art contest winner Midori Waycaster.

School board approves \$2.3 million in projects despite budget hit

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County School Board approved updates totaling \$2.3 million using one-percent sales tax funds, even as it learned the division is expected to lose \$667,228 in funding.

At its Thursday, April 10 meeting, the board voted 4-1 to approve several projects for Fiscal Year 2025. Walter Scott, of the Smith River District, cast the only dissenting vote.

Schools Superintendent Jason Wood said the projects are made possible by the one-percent sales tax approved by county residents.

“We’re so thankful that our county approved that so we could make some much-needed upgrades to things that have been neglected over the past,” he said.

Among the approved projects:

- \$526,557.50 will cover the remaining cost of renovations at Blue Ridge Elementary School, which received a School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP) grant last year. The project includes upgrading the stage and concession stand, expanding restroom facilities, adding a covered walkway to connect the gym to the main building, and addressing subflooring and flooring repairs.
- \$680,000 will go toward paving and resurfacing the Patrick County High School (PCHS) track with a rubberized surface.

“The athletic trainer has been compiling data over the last two years, and 50 to 53 percent—one year’s 50, the next year’s 53 percent—of the track athletes have been referred to her and then to further medical treatment for their participation,” which is being attributed to the track surface, Wood said.

“Students have had stress fractures and things. She has kept a documentation log of those injuries and presented that as a safety concern.”

(See **School Board** p.13)



Darrell Bowling (third from left) was honored with the Chancellor’s Philanthropy Award.

Bowling honored with Chancellor’s Award for Leadership in Philanthropy

Darrell Bowling, of Stuart, received the 19th Annual Chancellor’s Award for Leadership in Philanthropy. He was nominated for the award by Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC).

Hosted by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education (VFCCE), more than two dozen individuals, families, and organizations were honored with the Chancellor’s Award for Leadership in Philanthropy. The awards were presented at a luncheon ceremony in Richmond on Tuesday, April 15. VCCS Chancellor Dr. David Doré served as the emcee, and Mr. Mark Hourigan, founder and CEO of Hourigan, delivered the keynote address.

“Every time our donors support a scholarship, fund a new program, or an emergency grant, they are not just giving back, they are lifting up,” said Hourigan. “They are invaluable partners whose generosity can and does make the difference between a student dropping out or staying the course and realizing their true potential.”

Doré echoed those sentiments, adding that a culture of care can have a profound impact on student performance. “When our students realize that someone cares enough to help remove the formidable obstacles standing in their way, it’s life-changing,” he said. “The things they thought impossible suddenly become doable, and their confidence soars as a result.”

This year’s class of distinguished philanthropy leaders has collectively contributed \$24 million dollars to Virginia’s Community Colleges.

Thanks to Bowling, motorcyclists from across the country have gathered in Patrick County for the annual Cpl. Jonathan W. Bowling Memorial Bike Ride for 20 years. The annual memorial motorcycle ride is both a way for fellow veterans and servicemen to remember fallen Marine Jonathan Williams Bowling and a chance for these men and women to continue his legacy of giving back to the community. The Corporal Jonathan W. Bowling Memorial fund has provided money for two Patrick County students to attend P&HCC each year since 2004.

“P&HCC has been honored to partner with the Bowling family to preserve Corporal Bowling’s memory in this way,” said Tiffani Underwood, Director of P&HCC’s Foundation, adding, “We are so grateful for Darrell’s work to make the annual ride such a success and for his dedication to ensuring Patrick County students have the opportunity to work toward their goals at P&HCC.”

High Strung to Headline Saturday’s PCMA Show



High Strung will headline the Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) show on Saturday, April 26.

By Taylor Boyd

High Strung will headline the Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) show on Saturday, April 26, at the Rotary Building in Stuart.

Doors open at 5 p.m., with music starting at 6 p.m.

PCMA President Denny Alley said High Strung has never performed at a PCMA event before.

“Not here. They travel a lot and tour a lot, they’re down in North Carolina a lot,” he said.

Alley noted that the band’s bass player is a regular performer during the Coffee Break’s Tuesday morning jam sessions. The restaurant’s Jam Band will also take the stage during Saturday’s show.

Following this performance, PCMA will host three more shows before taking a summer break. Monthly shows will resume in October.

(See **High Strung** p. 9)

Transfer Station

(cont. from page 1)

tion to the grid, Energix Vice-President of Development Seth Christman said at the time.

“Unfortunately, the project would have triggered an unacceptable voltage change where it interconnected to the Stuart substation,” he said.

The board had approved a siting agreement for the project in a hotly debated 3-2 vote at its March 11, 2024, meeting.

Transfer Station

The adjustments at the Transfer Station were based on recommendations by Transfer Station Manager Scottie Hylton, and center around adjusting the tipping fee and tire disposal fee, eliminating the line item in general cleanup, and interest charged on non-payments.

Beginning July 1, Hylton said Republic Services, the current solid waste contract, will implement its annual five percent raise.

As the current cost is \$64.19 per ton, the new rate is expected to be \$67.39 per ton. Hylton said the county currently charges \$65 per ton.

“If we leave it the way it is now, it’ll be a loss of \$2.39 per ton. To offset this deficit and provide a more sustainable margin we propose increasing the tipping fee to \$69.29 cents per ton. This change results in a positive margin of \$1.86 per ton,” he said.

With the average customer disposing of 200 pounds of waste, the cost will be approximately \$6.93.

“Right now 200 pounds is \$6.50, so it’s not too big of an increase,” he said.

Hylton said the county currently pays around \$9,500 annually for tire recycling and operates at an annual deficit of \$500.

He proposed increasing the tire disposal fee from \$130 per ton to \$135 per ton.

Hylton said the county historically charged a flat rate of \$2 per tire, which was not sustainable especially for large tires like those from tractors. He believes moving to a per ton rate will also

“By moving to a per ton rate” costs will be estimated more accurately. “The average cost to dispose of a standard tire is now roughly \$1.80. Increasing the per ton rate allows the county to recover costs while minimal impact on residents disposing of standard tires,” he said.

Hylton’s third recommendation was to eliminate the general clean up line item, as it’s created confusion and frustration among county residents.

“For example, if a resident cleans out a closet, they’re currently required to weigh that material separately even though it’s clearly household trash. Many residents circumvent this by placing such items in the large, black trash bags to avoid this extra step,” he said.

This policy has led to inconsistent enforcement, Hylton said, and places transfer station attendants in the difficult position of making judgment calls.

“Removing this line item simplifies the process, reduces resident complaints, and treats all household generated trash uniformly — if it comes out of your house such as clothes, books, things like that — it’s just trash that you’re throwing away. If you’re cleaning out your basement and you have items such as this, it’s no longer something that needs to be weighed. It’s just now trash,” he said.

All other separate line

items like furniture, appliances, mattresses, construction debris, and home improvement waste will still be weighed at the Transfer Station.

Hylton’s last recommendation was to charge an annual interest rate of 10 percent on past due credit balances. The interest charge will apply to charges made on or after July 1, which are unpaid after 30 days of the statement date.

Doug Perry, of the Smith River District, asked who would be most affected by the interest rate.

Hylton said it would be account holders.

Jonathan Wood, chairman and of the Peters Creek District, asked if the Transfer Station could weigh the lighter tires with its scale.

Hylton said the scale could weigh down to 20 pounds.

“Usually it’s more than one tire, but that’s one of those things that’s more of a judgement call. If it’s four tires, yes, the scales will pick it up, but if one person had one tire it goes back to \$2 and no one has complained about that because they understand it costs us to dispose of the tires,” he said.

Wood asked for clarification about whether there would be a charge to get rid of general household trash.

Hylton said no.

“So, if you’re not paying now, you’re not going to be paying in the future. At least not in the foreseeable future,” Wood said.

In other matters, the board:

*Heard from Trena Anderson, who requested the board censure supervisor Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District.

“For 15 months Patrick County citizens have been trying to get this board to listen to us and to work for our benefit. Taxpayers desire and expect a return on our forced investment of tax money. We are forced by law to fund the needs of Patrick County. We will not be silenced and ignored while our money is spent or wasted on the desires of a few,” she said.

Anderson said county residents have the Constitutional right to speak their minds at the meetings even if some board members or county employees find their speech offensive.

While as the board’s chairman, Wood can ask people speak civilly, Anderson said he can’t require speakers to comply with a set of rules written by the county administrator.

“I am well aware that I caused those ‘rules’ to be written because I exposed available public information about a supervisor. Fifteen months later, I would do it again and I may do so in the near future. This board insists on ‘civility’ from citizens but not from individual supervisors themselves,” she said.

Anderson said Marshall has subjected county residents who pay him to constant verbal abuse, called private citizens liars and worse, and disparaged the media whose job it is to hold the board accountable.

She believes board members and county employees have retaliated against people who’ve spoken out, and noted some Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have been denied for inappropriate cause or charged fees for work product that was unnecessary or wasn’t done.

“Such retaliation is improper, unprofessional and in some cases illegal. These employees should

be thoroughly investigated by this board and held accountable,” she said, adding the board has the legal ability and authority to investigate improper actions.

Months ago, Anderson asked the board to censure Marshall.

She believes progress has been limited and impaired at every juncture, and that the situation must be dealt with by holding those accountable for behavior.

While some supervisors use social media to communicate, Anderson said Marshall uses it as a weapon.

“At least three supervisors on this board have been individually victimized by another supervisor. This supervisor disparages other supervisors, volunteer appointed board members, taxpayers, and citizens of this county. He threatens bogus legal actions against the same people,” she said.

Anderson also provided the board with packets of printed examples of emails, posts, publications, and articles, and alleged Marshall has a habit of denying citizen comment on his official postings, deletes comments he disagrees with, and blocks individuals who confront his behavior.

“These actions and behaviors are unprofessional, unethical, unconstitutional, and in some cases quite possibly criminal. He has chosen to open this board and county government to civil liability lawsuits due to his chosen actions and behavior. It is unfathomable that this behavior has been allowed to continue for 15 months,” she said.

*Heard from Steve Ferring about the county’s budget and the expense figures various departments provided. While he would like to assume that no favoritism is given during this budget process, Ferring said it wasn’t a valid assumption in the past.

“There are questions outstanding regarding some of the budget numbers put forth by the Sheriff’s Department that need to be justified before you pass the current proposed budget,” he said.

E-911 expenses for communications seems extensive, Ferring believes, and noted there’s no mention of applying for the state grant program to modernize all 911 operations in Virginia.

“This is a grant of up to \$150,000 we should qualify for and has been available since 2023. Why haven’t we applied? We spend our funds to maintain the current radio system rather than use state funds to migrate to a digital system that is much cheaper to operate, has better coverage, and is easier to maintain,” he said.

Ferring said the cost to feed inmates at the jail is also much higher compared to other jails in Virginia, with costs between \$3-\$6 per day per inmate, while Patrick County spends more than that.

“The contract for food has not been rebid in years. Why? The current budget is \$235,000. If we allow \$5 per inmate per day the amount of the budget should be \$146,000, which is \$89,000 in savings,” Ferring said.

He also believes the jail, county and school division should combine to purchase janitorial products, which would allow each entity to take advantage of bulk discounts. He suggested the same strategy should also apply to paper and station-



Galen Gilbert



Steve Ferring

ary requirements, and the county should implement a fleet management program that serves the county, school division, and sheriff’s office to save money on maintenance, fuel, and insurance.

“You have objected to the county employees having bottled water but have not been willing to query the second largest budget the county supports. Why? Is the board of supervisors not up to the task? Biased? The actions we are requesting you take in no way ‘defund’ our police. They only make the department fiscally and managerially effective,” he said.

*Heard from Kurt Bozenmayer about a proposal for an updated county budget financial policy. Over the past few months, Bozenmayer said people have called on the county to prepare a comprehensive budget to replace the “hit or miss” budget process that’s occurred over the past few decades.

“While there are a number of areas where such a policy can benefit the county and its citizens, I would like to address just one issue that has been raised several times in the past few months. Specifically, the budget proposals for ‘capital improvements’ recently included a line item for \$400,000 for a new ambulance,” he said.

Bozenmayer believes the budget process needs to face a reality, that with eight rescue squads and multiple fire departments, it’s reasonable to expect that the county will need to replace at least one ambulance and fire truck per year.

With the assumption that each rescue squad has at least two ambulances, this suggests that the oldest ambulance in the county would be 16 years old.

“Given this annual replacement need, I maintain that ambulance and fire truck purchases should not be capital improvement issues, but rather annual maintenance costs, well planned in each budget cycle,” Bozenmayer said.

Before moving to Patrick County over two decades ago, Bozenmayer served as a volunteer firefighter and line captain for 20 years in New Jersey. He believes his experience highlights the perils of poorly planned financial policy.

“Our town realized that they needed to buy a new fire truck each year, on a rotational basis, for the six companies. That started out at around \$85,000 forty years ago, and it had reached \$875,000 for a ladder truck at last report. The insurance writers declared that once a fire truck reached seven

years old, it was no longer considered adequate for service,” he said.

The town government, Bozenmayer said, chose to finance the purchases by issuing 25-year bonds, which meant they were still paying for trucks 17 years after they had been taken out of service with interest.

“I hope that Patrick County adopts a better financial plan than that. Our volunteers need adequate equipment; let’s develop a practical means of providing it without straining the taxpayers,” he said.

*Heard from Galen Gilbert about the intersection of U.S. 58, South Mayo Drive, and Spring Road.

“I know they’ve done a study saying that a stoplight is not feasible. They’ve also done a study down there that said that the intersection needs to be daylight with lights, the curbs need to be fixed, and this was done many years ago and it has not taken place yet,” he said.

Gilbert requested the board put some pressure on Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to follow the study recommendations, or at least provide additional safety measures to the area considering another wreck at the intersection.

“I don’t know when it’s going to stop. Until another person is killed or what? I don’t know, but something needs to be done,” he said, adding he believes getting rid of a few of the turning spots around the intersection would be a good idea because there are so many of them.

Gilbert also spoke about the recently conducted fire and rescue report, Public Safety Authority (PSA) rules about public comment, and handicap sidewalk access to the Administration Building.

*Heard from Brenda Payne and Brett Boothe who supported a leash

law for dogs in the county.

*Heard from Crystal Harris who invited the board to the Patrick County Fire and Rescue banquet, and spoke about her issues with Bright-Speed.

*Heard from Virginia Department of Agriculture (VDACS) STS Project Supervisor Ben Templeton about aerial spray treatments.

*Approved giving the annual fire and rescue capital improvement funds of \$154,000 to Patrick Henry Volunteer Fire Department for the purchase of a brush truck. The department will pay for the remaining cost of the truck themselves.

*Approved giving the annual fire and rescue capital improvement funds of \$76,000 to CCDF Volunteer Rescue Squad to replace their LifePack 15 with LifePacks 35. The remaining funds will be used to make the department Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, and upgrade its Unit 10.

*Approved the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)/Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2023 Universal Broadband Project.

*Approved the moving of the Russell Creek Voting Precinct from 180 Ayers Orchard Road to New Hope Community Church at 1863 Clark House Farm Road.

*Approved a proclamation naming April 2025 as child abuse prevention month.

*Approved the March 10 and March 24 meeting minutes.

*Approved the bills, claims, and appropriations.

*Heard the supervisors’ reports.

*Approved to enter Marshall’s report into the meeting minutes without hearing it.

Pets of the Week



The little light brown and white fellow was brought into the shelter from Gammons Road in Stuart. The dark brown pooch was brought in from Wayside Road in Stuart.

They are both looking for 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 Facebook 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.

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Property Taxes

(cont. from page 1)

Inflation has not stopped, and if the amount you're collecting stays at one price and your inflation continues at the rate it's been going over the last 15 years or so since that's changed, that's revenue erosion. You think you're getting that amount of revenue, but you're really not cause of the inflation," he said.

Marshall said he believes the county has either the lowest or second lowest personal property tax rate in the region. He believes the county should instead fall somewhere in the middle, based on a regional median tax rate.

"If we could average what that median is, and that median would be a fair price for taxes, and then phase that in over a three-year period and then after that index that into the" Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), "which is a tool that measures inflation. And you index it to that and it gives you your automatic increases with inflation," he said.

Kendrick said he wouldn't agree to increasing the personal property tax without an argument.

"You may not increase the rate in 10 years, but everything you go to buy has went up," he said, adding the machine and tools tax is placed on businesses.

Marshall said he understands that the machine and tools and personal property taxes are historically tied and set at the same rate, but he wonders if one could be raised without adjusting the other.

County Administrator Beth Simms said she believes most localities keep the two rates the same.

In a document provided to the board, Kendrick noted that an increase of \$51,790 is expected from the machine and tools tax without a rate change.

Perry asked whether the increase was due to the U.S. 58 expansion project.

"So that's an increase we'll see this coming year, and we'll see some extra personal property tax probably through 2031. But once the 58 project is done, that will go away, so just keep that in mind," Simms said.

Marshall said the county's budget issue is a revenue problem, not a spending problem.

"It's a revenue problem because our taxes are just dysfunctional at this point. They're dated and they need to be brought up to speed. I know it's an unpopular idea, but it's also practical," he said.

Perry believes the lack of revenue is affecting the ability of county departments to function effectively.

"If the money's not there, the money's not there. I kind of think we should look at an increase on personal property tax. I know that covers citizens that don't have real estate, and I know that those on a limited income, they're not driving around on \$80,000 vehicles either, so it kind of balances out. We haven't increased the personal property tax in quite some time," he said.

Perry added he'd also like to consider increasing the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) to help fix the deficit and provide more funding to departments.

"I feel like it's kind of pushing a can down the road. The next generation boards are going to have to come up with money to bring departments back up to standards that we haven't budgeted for," he said.

Marshall said the county's real estate tax assessment is regressive.

"Which means the lower income folks pay more of the load for the greater income folks. If you get revenue from a different source, it will help offset any real estate tax increases. It's also a more fair tax because, you know, you have an \$80,000 truck you pay your fair share. If your grandma and grandpa are living off of \$600 a month on Social Security, naturally they're going to have a less expensive vehicle and probably pay about \$40 a year. It makes things a great deal fairer across the board and it kind of offsets the need for a real estate tax increase," Marshall said.

Kendrick said the board has already reduced the budget deficit from \$2.4 million to \$197,336.

"I don't think anybody's going to be



The Patrick County Board of Supervisors at a recent meeting.

suffering with that. I think we need a little bit more time, cut a little more, and make it work," he said.

Simms countered that some of the budget cuts are unrealistic.

"Not really," Kendrick said.

"Yes, they are," Simms replied. "We have one department that completely cut office supplies to zero. So, I don't think that's realistic to think that department is actually going to be able to go through an entire year with zero office supplies."

Kendrick suggested Simms look at the building appropriations from this month and how some departments move money between line items.

"Some of them \$3,000 come to my head real quick. If they can move it from one fund to another one they're over budget it to start with," he said.

Simms said she didn't disagree with Kendrick but reiterated that expecting a department to go an entire year with no money for office supplies was unrealistic.

"Cutting an additional \$197,000 out is going to be disingenuous, I guess is what I'm saying. We're going to have to come back to you all and say, 'hey, we've ran out of money.' Or there are some board members that don't like the moving around of line items, I'll be honest I don't either. But I've been told numerous times that's how we do it here and that's how we've always done it here," she said.

When she's tried to push for change, Simms said she's often told, "well, this is just how we're going to do it."

"To be quite honest, when our department heads are given an impossible task of cutting costs that can't be cut,

they have to present, 'well, this is our six-and-a-half percent cut. You tasked us with presenting this cut, here we are, this is what I've cut.' I mean, the cost of some things we just can't cut. I'm sure all of us have had our personal budgets hit with the rise of insurances and different things, utilities. Unfortunately, we can only cut so far," Simms said.

One of the other two public hearings is related to a proposed two-percent increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), with the additional revenue earmarked for fire departments and rescue squads.

The public hearing to raise the TOT from five percent to seven percent was approved in a 4-1 vote. Marshall cast the dissenting vote.

According to the Virginia Legislative Information System (LIS) website, any county, by duly adopted ordinance, "may levy a transient occupancy tax on hotels, motels, boarding houses, travel campgrounds, and other facilities offering guest rooms rented out for continuous occupancy for fewer than 30 days."

"The tax shall be imposed on the total price paid by the customer for the use or possession of the room or space occupied in a retail space," the LIS website states.

The final hearing—to consider approval of the FY 2025–2026 budget—was approved unanimously in a 5-0 vote.

The board indicated that no vote would be held at the April 28 meeting and the hearings were to gather community input. However, the board can vote on the public hearings at a future meeting.

Registration begins April 30 for summer vegetable program

Registration opens April 30 for Virginia's Farm Market Fresh For Seniors (also known as the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program) is available through the Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA).

Eligible seniors may receive a \$50 Benefit Shopping Card or a \$50 Digital Benefit that can be used to purchase locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables and cut herbs at participating Farmer's Markets.

The number of people who can participate is limited. Beginning on Wednesday, April 30, the SAAA will take applications over the phone and in person. The agency will also continue to take applications throughout the following week(s) while the supply of the \$50 benefit lasts.

You may qualify to participate if:

- * you are (or will become) 60 years of age or older on or before June 1, 2025;

- *and you are a resident of Danville City, Martinsville City, Franklin County, Patrick County, Henry County or Pittsylvania County,

- *and you do not live with, and are not an immediate family member of the farmer who grows the produce,

- *and you have a gross monthly household income that does not exceed the income requirements of the program.

Those who wish to apply for the \$50 Benefit must contact the SAAA at (276) 632-6442 or toll-free at 1-800-468-4571.

Beginning April 30, and continuing as long as the supply of the \$50 benefit lasts, applicants must be prepared to certify total gross monthly household income information when applying over the phone or in person. Southern Area Agency on Aging is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Stuart Farmers' Market kicks off 2025 season with "Sneak Peek Fridays"

The Stuart Farmers' Market is excited to get growing for the 2025 season. Market hours of operation for 2025 will be on Friday's, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., May through November. The season will officially kick off on Friday, May 3, however vendors will be on site Friday, April 18 and April 25 with what we call the "sneak peek Fridays." Cool season crops of lettuce, kale, spinach, onions and broccoli, along with baked items, coffee and crafts will be available.

From May to November, every Friday will feature a variety of vendors with locally grown fruits and vegetables, homemade baked items, locally grown meats, eggs, plants and crafts. We will have vendors that can accept the Senior Nutrition vouchers.

We invite everyone to come to the market on our opening day, May 2 at 9 a.m. for a special dedication. Tom Bishop who many of our market patrons know as "the Birdhouse man" passed away this winter. We are honoring him by installing a birdhouse of his in the garden beds at the market.

The Patrick County Master Gardeners will be on site the last Friday of each month with information and to

answer gardening questions. Our tool sharpening vendor will be on site the first Friday of every month to sharpen tools. So bring those dull blades and have them sharpened while you shop.

The Rise and Shine Youth entrepreneurial vendors will join our vendors on Friday, June 20 and July 18. Come shop from our local youth who set up during those special market days.

Our annual Red, White and Blueberries celebration will happen on Friday July 4. Just the right day to celebrate and shop for your picnic essentials.

The First Friday Summer Jam Series returns offering a great concert, food truck and wine for the first Friday of each month May through August. Our holiday tradition of Mistletoe Market will be back for its 17th year. This annual holiday market will be on Saturday, December 6, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Mistletoe Market is a great spot to shop for holiday decor, gifts and more.

Stay up to date with market events by visiting our Facebook page. For more information about the Stuart Farmers' Market contact the Town of Stuart at (276) 694-3811.



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Full-time. Manage Head Start education staff. Requires bachelor's in early childhood ed. or equivalent, 3 yrs supervisory experience, budget skills. Salary: \$46,730.25–\$54,054.05 + benefits.

Head Start Admin Assistant – Franklin Co.
Full-time. Reception, data entry, file mgmt, recruitment support. Requires HS diploma/GED, admin experience, computer skills. Salary: \$15.12–\$17.62/hr + benefits.

Head Start Teacher
Full-time (10 mos). Plan and lead classroom activities. Associate's in ECE (Bachelor's preferred), 3 yrs experience. Salary: \$17.60–\$21.28/hr + benefits.

Head Start Teacher Assistant
Full-time (10 mos). Assist in classroom. HS diploma + CDA or ECE certificate, 1 yr experience. Salary: \$14.02–\$18.15/hr + benefits.

Substitute Teachers
Flexible schedule. \$110/day (HS diploma), \$130/day (Bachelor's).

Visit www.stepincva.com/employment/ for full details and to apply.
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Small text: Patrick County, Virginia
West Piedmont Regional Adult and Career Education

Letters to the Editor

Sermon Without A Word

As the preacher reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sun-

William Salser,
Stuart

Applications now being accepted for food assistance program

Interested charitable food assistance organizations must submit VAFAP applications by 5 p.m. on May 9, 2025. Applications should detail the plan to engage local farmers to purchase locally grown

For more information and to apply, please visit www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/rsfi-vafap-guidelines-Instructions.pdf.

**To advertise
in the
Mountain
Messenger
call 304-647-5724**

Patrick County needs someone who represents us

While he seems in no danger of public humiliation, native son Wren Williams is also dealing with a lot of distractions as he pursues re-election as the 47th District's delegate. "I remain committed to being a conservative champion and advocate for President Don-

Judy Ferring,
Claudville



DAR chapter recognizes agencies with special deliveries

Any woman 18 years or older who can prove lineal, bloodline descent from an ancestor who aided in achieving American independence is eligible to join the DAR.

Soil and Water Conservation District to host informational outreach event

- Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resources Conserva-

If you are unable to attend, you can still contact Sandra Heath or Tony Collins at the Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District to learn more about available programs or schedule a visit. The office is located at 104 Via Avenue, Stuart.

Crossing the Lines

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

Jones discusses politics, future after recent resignation

LC Jones is fully invested in his community and takes pride in adhering to his campaign promise of putting Martinsville first — even with the toll it has taken and the sacrifices it has required him to make.

But would he do it again?
In a word, no.
Jones, who serves as the mayor and is a member of Martinsville City Council, recently stepped away from his career in law enforcement for the second time in the span of a few years.

A Martinsville Police officer for about seven years, Jones served as a School Resource Officer (SRO) at Martinsville Middle School. He resigned from that post during his campaign after learning an employee could not serve as a council member.

The Henry County Sheriff's Office later contacted him about potential employment, and Jones served as an SRO there for a little more than two years before his recent abrupt departure.

"I did resign, but it wasn't like I just woke up that morning and said, 'I'm going to resign,'" Jones said, adding that he was asked to resign during a meeting with Sheriff Wayne Davis and Capt. Sandy Hines. The reasons cited were concerns about the amount of time he was taking off and the strain on department resources.

"I think what played a huge part in it was the negativity, slanderous comments, comments from council members and from certain parts of the media," Jones said.

He believes the controversy and negativity began to reflect poorly on the sheriff's department. "I gave them the resignation letter. It wasn't necessarily amicable, but I know they were ready



Martinsville Mayor LC Jones

to move in a new direction. With everything going on, I really think it had to do with the negativity on council and the time commitment I was able to provide at this time."

Jones said he understood the department's position, and acknowledged that the demands of balancing his mayoral duties with his job created time constraints that affected both his professional and personal life.

"I was expecting to have to make a decision on my time dedication one way or another by the end of this" school year, Jones said, adding that he is grateful to the sheriff and his office for the support during his time there.

"They called me with the offer and worked really well with me," he said. "They were 100 percent good to me when I was there. I have no hard feelings... When one door closes, another one opens."

In a release, Davis said that Jones was eligible to be rehired in the future.

Doss works to preserve town and company history

Andrew Doss is working to preserve the history of Bassett—both the town and the company that shares its name—and to share it with others.

Doss manages Bassett – Looking Back. Moving Forward, a Facebook group where members can find historic photos and information about the town. He also helps preserve the company's legacy as part of Bassett Furniture.

"I am unofficially the company historian," said Doss, who was inspired to start after discovering the location of archived Bassett Pioneer newsletters. The newsletters, which celebrated employees and were produced in high print quality, held personal significance for Doss, a fourth-generation Bassett Furniture employee. He wanted to find photos of his family.

Community members soon began contributing their own copies.

"Ever since I've been doing it, people started donating, and I have tons of these things,"



Andrew Doss holds pieces of Bassett Furniture history in his hands.

Doss said.

A coworker later suggested creating a digital archive, and Doss began compiling the material.

"I ended up scanning 20 years' worth of these newsletters off and on, for four years."

The Facebook group started as a side project.

"I honestly only figured maybe 100, 200 people would be interested. I had no idea of the kind of interest. At the time, it didn't make any sense to me."

Today, the group has nearly 12,000 members.

Doss co-manages a historical YouTube channel with friend and fellow group administrator Jarred Marlowe. The channel, "Doss-Marlowe: History in Sight," features in-depth content about the history of Bassett and the surrounding area. Subscribers to the channel have access to more in-depth information about the history of Bassett and the surrounding area.

City school board seeks grant to bolster CTE program



The Martinsville School Board voted to submit an application for the Perkins Grant.

The Martinsville City School Board voted to approve the submission of an application for the federal Perkins Grant during its regular meeting on April 14. The board also approved several policy amendments aimed at improving operations in schools and board meetings.

The Perkins Grant is a federal funding program that supports career and technical education (CTE) at the sec-

ondary and post-secondary levels. Director of Technology Shauna Hines presented details about the grant application to the board.

A total of \$83,255 is being requested, with \$42,420 allocated for professional development.

"One of our new classes we will be providing is cybersecurity operations and cybersecurity foundations," Hines said.

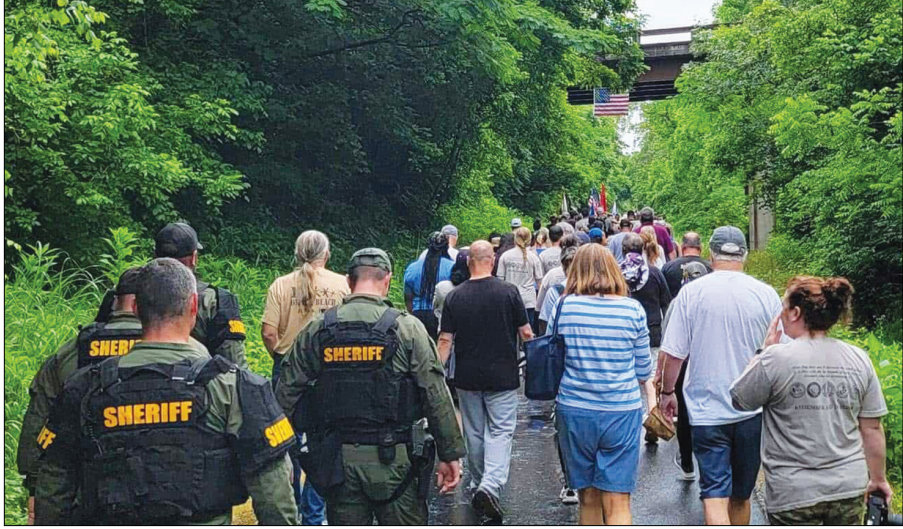
updates, volunteer opportunities, and event details through the All Vets Facebook page: All Vets Virginia on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AllVetsVirginia/.

Flags can be purchased in memory of a loved one, friend, or unknown service member for inclusion in this year's ruck. Visit the All Vets Memorial Ruck Store 2025 to learn more.

updates, volunteer opportunities, and event details through the All Vets Facebook page: All Vets Virginia on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AllVetsVirginia/.

Flags can be purchased in memory of a loved one, friend, or unknown service member for inclusion in this year's ruck. Visit the All Vets Memorial Ruck Store 2025 to learn more.

All Vets to host 22-mile Memorial Ruck honoring fallen service members



More than 100 community members helped the team finish the county-wide ruck, escorted by the Henry County Sheriff's Office. (Courtesy Tobie Panos Photography, 2024)

All Vets, a Henry County-based nonprofit organization, has announced the second annual county-wide Memorial Ruck, set for Saturday, May 24. The 22-mile ruck will honor fallen military members and raise awareness about veteran support needs during Memorial Day weekend.

Escorted by the Henry County Sheriff's Office, more than 25 participants will carry rucksacks filled with hundreds of American, service, and POW/MIA flags—each one rep-

resenting a fallen service member.

The ruck begins at 6 a.m. at Jack Dalton Park, located at 130 Jack Dalton Road in Collinsville. The team will traverse a 22-mile route across Henry County, returning to the park by approximately 2 p.m. The public is invited to join participants for the final lap around the park's Trail of Remembrance.

Jack Dalton Park will be adorned with flags and patriotic decorations. Following the final lap, All Vets will host a short storytelling pre-

Lawless to invest \$1 million, drive revitalization in community

Chris Lawless, who is running for the Collinsville District seat on the Henry County Board of Supervisors, announced a \$1 million investment in a property that will become home to Lawless Welding and Fabrications Inc.

He announced the investment, ongoing work and plans at a press conference that was held at his newly acquired property at 1687 Stultz Road, a site formerly used by the Henry County Public Service Authority and Virginia Department of Transportation.

The site is the first piece of property the company has owned, Lawless said, adding that significant improvements to the property are already underway, with tree removal marking the beginning of a larger revitalization effort.

When completed, he said the site will be known as 'Lawless Campus,' a space he hopes will bring

"positivity" and help drive revitalization in the Collinsville/Fieldale areas and surrounding community.

A neighborhood cookout is planned once clean-up efforts are completed, and he has plans to incorporate murals on some or all of the buildings to brighten the community.

"Put your money where your mouth is — we are going to help revitalize this neighborhood," Lawless said, and reflected on his personal journey. He described himself as a troubled college student and credited welding with turning his life around.

"Welding saved my life," he said, adding that hard work and dedication fueled his success. "I would work a 40-hour job, and I would work my job on the side. If you would have asked me about this in 2011, I was just trying to make part-time, side money."



STAR NEWS
Chris Lawless announced a \$1 million investment in property located on Stultz Road.



1-3-5-7-9



1-3-5-7-9



1-3-5-7-9



1-4-7-9:15



1-4-7-9:15

\$5 tickets

Hollywood Cinema
beside Walmart
Martinsville 276-656-3456

PATRICK PULPITS

Now What?

By Luke Moore
High Point Baptist Church

Another Easter has come and gone. The food was great, the sunrise service was stirring, and it was (hopefully) nice to get together with family and friends to celebrate. We solemnly remembered our Lord’s death on the cross and we rejoiced in His resurrection. But now what? Do we just go back to work and wait for Memorial Day to roll around to give another occasion for cookouts and get-togethers?

After Jesus’ death and resurrection, I believe the disciples had the same question. Somehow, the magnitude of the crucifixion and the joy of seeing their friend and Savior alive again seemed to fade very quickly. Peter, apparently not knowing what to do next, told the other disciples, “I am going fishing” (John 21:3). I cannot blame Peter for this mundane decision after so great an occasion. When we’re not sure what to do next, we often revert to the last thing we knew to do. Peter was a fisherman, so he went fishing. When we finish celebrating and reflecting on Jesus’ death and resurrection, we go back to the monotony of our everyday lives. Now what?

Fortunately for His disciples and for us, Jesus did not let that question linger for too long. None of the gospel accounts of the events of Jesus’ life on earth end with the resurrection. In Matthew and Mark, we get the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20, Mark 16:14-20). In Luke, we see instructions to the disciples that are continued in Acts with a similar Commission (Luke 24:45-49, Acts 1:7-8). In John, after Peter returns from fishing, we see a very specific encouragement and mission for Peter

(John 21:15- 19). Despite Jesus’ declaration on the cross, “It is finished” (John 19:30) and despite the finality of the resurrection and the defeat of death itself, there is still more to come.

Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, His followers now have work to do. The first task at hand is the Great Commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. 28:19-20). In Jesus’ final instructions recorded in Acts, He tells His disciples, “you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (1:8). Now that Easter has passed, we need to “Go.” We need to be teaching His Word in our homes, in our community, in our nation, and in our world.

How do we do this work, knowing that it will bring persecution and suffering in this world? For one, we look back to the cross. Hebrews 12:2 tells us to “fix our eyes on Jesus... who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross...”. We also look forward to the second coming of Jesus. Paul in Titus 2:13 calls this our “blessed hope - the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Because of His willingness to suffer on our behalf and the promise of His return, we can endure in the mission He has given us.

So, now that Easter has passed, we need to work: to make disciples of all nations. And we can do so, enduring all suffering, because of the example and the hope we have in Jesus.

High Strung

(cont. from page 1)

For the May show, Lonesome Heart and Barry Collins & the Mudflappers are set to perform. June’s show will feature Shelton & Williams and Jordan Morrison & the Foothill Boys.

Alley said the third upcoming event will be part of the Songwriter’s Circle Series, to be held at the Star Theatre on May 17.

“We have Jerry Salley, a three-time Grammy winner from Nashville, coming. He wrote songs for Chris Stapleton and won a Grammy about a month ago on Chris” song “It Takes a Woman,” he said.

Salley, a 2018 and 2019 International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) winner, has recorded approximately 300 songs during his career.

Roger Handy, Miller Hopkins, Barry Hutchins, and Will Hutchens are also scheduled to perform

during the show.

As seating is limited, advance ticket purchase is required.

“They’re cheaper to buy here at the Coffee Break than anywhere else. They’re \$10 here, and the day of the show—if we have any left—they’re \$20,” Alley said.

He added that some people have already called to purchase 10 to 12 tickets at a time.

“Because this guy [Salley], he’s the real deal. Him and Will and Barry will do the last set together,” Alley said.

Concessions will be available for purchase from the Patrick County Shooting Education Team, with proceeds supporting firearm safety education for local youth.

For more information or to watch past performances, visit Facebook.com/PatrickCountyMusicAssociation.

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BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Bezalel (KJV) in the *Old or New Testament or neither?*
2. At the Last Supper, which disciple protested against having his feet washed by Jesus? *Peter, Andrew, Bartholomew, Judas*
3. What golden graven image did the Israelites dance in front of? *Calf, Ox, Horse, Camel*

4. Who primarily made the golden graven image in the above question? *Joseph, Michal, Lot, Aaron*
5. From Revelations 13:18, what’s the number of the beast? *7, 13, 666, 777*
6. In John 18:38, who asked, “What is truth”? *Pilate, Martha, Joel, Eve*

ANSWERS: 1) *Neither*, 2) *Peter*, 3) *Calf*, 4) *Aaron*, 5) *666*, 6) *Pilate*

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Rev. Tommy Gosnell
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Worship Services 11 am

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(actually in Patrick Springs)
276.236.7814
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Reconciliation
Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.

Patrick Springs Pentecostal Holiness
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Sunday School for all ages 9:45 am
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www.stuartbaptist.org
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11:00 Worship Service
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Super Crossword

RE-SOUNDING DUOS

ACROSS

- 1 Gourd-shaped rattle
7 Cognizant
12 — -mo replay
15 Alaskan island
19 Greeting in Apple ads
20 Gourmet mushroom
21 Paddle-propelled surfboards
23 BOX + BISCUITS
25 Family of writer Ralph Waldo
26 Main character on “Saved by the Bell”
27 MARRY + WIDER
29 Yearned (for)
32 — Jima
34 Basil-based sauces
35 SHANTY + OWNERS
40 Suds maker
44 Golf bag peg
45 That, in Peru
46 Grain staple
47 Winnie-the-Pooh creator
50 Fix the spine of, as a book
53 CLONK + BUNGLE
57 “Rashomon” director Kurosawa
58 Rate — (be judged as perfect)
59 Vamooses
60 Annoy
61 CLEANSER + SCOW
64 Norway’s biggest city
65 Positive votes
66 Je ne sais —
67 Finish
69 Prime draft status
71 Prefix with sphere
74 Radiance
77 PIGGY + CONCH
83 Siouan tribe
84 Successor of mono
86 — Reader (magazine)
87 Fool in the opera “Pagliacci”
88 SWAT + SCOURGE
91 Gives a lift to
92 Ancestry
93 Punk/folk singer
94 Hamm of soccer
96 Bar “rocks”
97 Flimflam

DOWN

- 1 1997 sci-fi spoof, briefly
2 Pal, in Paris
3 Sprinted
4 Bowled over
5 Quebec’s home
6 “Ride On” rock band
7 “Better Call Saul” channel
8 “Yippee!”
9 Duncan of Obama’s Cabinet
10 Wetland plant
11 Snow queen in “Frozen”
12 Stockholm citizens
13 Ovine babies
14 Plain to see
15 Booth or Oswald, notably
16 Defeated by decision in boxing, for short
17 Fork point
18 World power until ‘91
22 Slangy ending for switch
24 Slips on sleet, say
28 “Weekend Edition” airer
29 Of the stars
30 Insolently bold
31 — jeebies
33 “— Man” (1994 hit for Salt-N-Pepa with En Vogue)
36 Flanders on “The Simpsons”
37 Recline lazily
38 Pops
39 LAX guesses
41 Song from the ‘50s, e.g.

- 42 “It’s the end of —”
43 Big wheel’s benefits
47 Rock-clinging mollusk
48 Praline nut
49 Followers of lambdas
51 Baghdad citizen
52 Half of Mork’s “Bye!”
54 That woman
55 Sgt., e.g.
56 “ER” figures
58 Texas or Kansas city
62 Pooch’s ID
63 Suffix with depend
65 “Yippee!”
68 Hip-hop dance of the 2010s
70 This, in Peru
71 Copies
72 Moral tenet
73 2016 Disney film
75 No. like “first” or “third”
76 Spider snare
78 Suffix of 75-Down numbers
79 2015 Marvel film
80 Naval officer
81 Chinese nut

- 82 Be beaten by
84 Jamaican pop music
85 Snowman in “Frozen”
89 Gravesite site
90 Having one flat, musically
91 Nasty
95 Grant — (financial subsidy)
98 Yankees’ rival
99 Fumble
100 Cause injury
101 Actress Hedy
102 Stain or soak
104 Jumble
105 Writer Joyce Carol —
106 Govt. bond
109 Sheep cries
110 Abbr. on an invitation
111 Rival of Lyft
112 Take — at (criticize sarcastically)
113 Actress Campbell
114 News site for techies
116 “Dancing Queen” group
119 “Science Guy” Bill
120 — Tin Tin
121 Stuck — rut
122 Suffix with lion

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Standing Timber or Timberland
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LEGAL

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF
568 Laurel Ridge Estate Road, Meadows of Dan, VA 24120
In execution of a Deed of Trust in the original principal amount of \$193,325.00 dated October 17, 2022 recorded among the land records of the Circuit Court for Patrick County on October 21, 2022 as Instrument Number: 220001897, the undersigned appointed Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction, at the Main entrance of the courthouse for the Circuit Court of Patrick County, 101 W Blue Ridge St, Stuart, VA 24171 on June 17, 2025 at 10:00 AM the property described in said deed of trust, located at the above address and briefly described as: All that certain tract or parcel of land with all improvements thereon and appurtenances and rights of way thereunto belonging, and being in the Blue Ridge Magisterial District of Floyd County, Virginia, being Lot 13, containing 4.9142 acres, as shown on that certain plat of survey prepared by Larry G. Rakes, CLS, dated October 29, 1984, and recorded in Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Patrick County, Virginia, in Plat Cabinet I, Slide 15-C; and Together with that right to use the roadways shown the aforesaid plat of survey, for ingress and egress to State Route #601, as set forth in Deed dated November 19, 1984, recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office in Deed Book 240, Page 592. Parcel ID: 4414-111
TERMS OF SALE: A bidder's deposit of \$10,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required in the form of a certified or cashier's check. Cash will not be accepted as a deposit. Settlement within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Trustee may forfeit deposit. Additional terms to be announced at sale. This is a communication from a debt collector. This notice is an attempt to collect on a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. (Trustee # 25-004567)
Substitute Trustee: ALG Trustee, LLC C/O Orland Law Group PLLC PO Box 2548, Leesburg, VA 20177 (703) 777-7101 website: www.Orland.com The Vendor Covius Holding Services will be used in conjunction with this sale.

LEGAL

BWW# VA-359977-2
TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 767 OLD FARM ROAD, ARARAT, VA 24053. In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated February 22, 2018, in the original principal amount of \$143,200.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Patrick County, Virginia as Instrument No. 180000396. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Patrick County, 101 West Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, Virginia, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on May 19, 2025, at 3:30 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY SITUATED IN PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA: LYING AND BEING IN DAN RIVER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, CONTAINING 1.013 ACRES AS SHOWN ON A PLAT OF SURVEY TITLED "PLAT OF SURVEY FOR DON COOPER AND MAXINE COOPER," DATED NOVEMBER 4, 1998, PREPARED BY D. B. DUDLEY, CLS #1125. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH.
A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the Subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwwsales.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWW Law Group, LLC, attorneys for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: www.bwwsales.com. VA-359977-2.

Meetings

Monday, April 28

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

Tuesday, April 29

The Patrick County Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) will meet at 4 p.m. in the Patrick County School Board Office's conference room.

Tuesday, May 20

The Patrick County Department of Social Services (DSS) Advisory Board will meet at 4 p.m., second floor conference room, Patrick County Administration Building.

Events

Thursday, April 24

Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District hosts informative presentations led by industry professionals from 9-10 a.m. in the Community Room of Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC).

Friday, April 25

Spaghetti Supper at Doby's Community Building, 4-7 p.m.

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 Highway 89 in Francisco, Stokes County, NC. Free to 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.

Sunday, April 27

The Bassett Ruritan Club hosts a Bluegrass music jam from 1:30-4 p.m. Musicians are welcome to come and bring their instruments. There is no admission charge.

Thursday, May 1

National Day of Prayer Gathering at the steps of the old courthouse in Stuart, 12-12:30 p.m.

In case of rain, the venue will be the Stuart Church of Living Water (Formerly Stuart UMC).

Friday, May 2

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

Saturday, May 2

Brothers In Arms: J. E. B. Stuart and his brothers in the Civil War by Tom Perry, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Ararat Ruritan Club, 4711 Ararat Highway, Ararat. Perry will discuss the lives of Major General James Ewell Brown "Jeb" Stuart and his brothers, William Alexander Stuart, who ran the saltworks in Saltville, Virginia, and Dr. John Dabney Stuart, who served as a physician in the 54th Virginia Infantry during the War Between The States. Programs are free.

Tuesday, May 6

The Patrick County Chamber of Commerce will hold a Lunch & Learn at 12 p.m. at the Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Stuart site. The workshop will focus on pre-venture planning for entrepreneurs and it's free.

Saturday, May 10

The Patrick County Master Gardener's annual plant sale will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Rotary Building in Stuart. Plants start at \$2 and will include flowers, vegetables, shrubs, trees, groundcovers, and bulbs.

Wednesday, May 14

The Patrick County Food Bank will distribute food at the Stuart site from 8:30-11 a.m. and from 5-6:30 p.m., at the Fellowship Church in Ararat from 8-10 a.m., and starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Building in Meadows of Dan.

Friday, May 16

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

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 used to purchase supplies. Members meet on the first Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Alzheimer's office, located in the basement of Hills Tax Service on Wood Brothers Drive. New members are welcome. For more information, call (276) 693-6018.

Two branches of the Alzheimer's Group LLC have been established — in the Vesta and Ararat communities. The Ararat group meets at the Fellowship Church in Ararat on the second Thursday each month at 12 p.m. The Vesta group meets at the Vesta Community Center on the third Tuesday each month at 12 p.m. Both groups welcome new members and invite caregivers to attend these meetings and learn how to deal with the effects of Alzheimer's Disease. Literature is also available.

The Patrick County Quilters' Sit-N-Sew is

held on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Quilted Colors. For more information, call 276-694-3020 or email patrickcountyquilters@gmail.com.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Salem Church on Salem Road in Critz holds a community meal on the first Sunday of every month at 12:10 p.m. All are also invited to church service at 11 a.m. Call (843) 222-1069 with questions.

Patrick County Parks and Recreation Department sponsors 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 including at least 3 females per team. Team registration fee is \$300, and the completed team 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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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF THE PETITION OF APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY PROPOSING A MINIMUM BILL, TARIFFS, AND AGREEMENTS TO IMPLEMENT A SHARED SOLAR PROGRAM PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE § 56-594.4 CASE NO. PUR-2025-00028

During its 2024 Session, the Virginia General Assembly enacted Chapters 715, 716, 763 and 765 of the 2024 Virginia Acts of Assembly. Among other things, these Acts of Assembly amend the Code of Virginia ("Code") by adding a section numbered 56-594.4, effective July 1, 2024. Code § 56 594.4, which is applicable to Appalachian Power Company ("APCo" or the "Company"), requires the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") to "establish by regulation a shared solar program that complies with the provisions of subsections B, C, D, and E by January 1, 2025, and shall require each utility to file any tariffs, agreements, or forms necessary for implementation of the program by July 1, 2025."

On November 25, 2024, in Case No. PUR-2024-00122, the Commission entered an Order Adopting Regulations to implement the directives in Chapters 715, 716, 763 and 765. On December 12, 2024, the Coalition for Community Solar Access filed a Petition for Reconsideration and Clarification. On December 13, 2024, the Commission issued an Order Granting Reconsideration that: (1) continued jurisdiction over this matter to consider the Petition; and (2) suspended the Order Adopting Regulations pending the Commission's reconsideration. On February 10, 2025, the Commission issued an Order on Reconsideration in Case No. PUR-2024-00122 that unsuspends the Order Adopting Regulations, thus finalizing the new shared solar rules, effective February 14, 2025.

Pursuant to Code § 56-594.4 D, the Commission must establish a minimum bill for APCo, which shall:

include the costs of all utility infrastructure and services used to provide electric service and administrative costs of the shared solar program. The Commission may modify the minimum bill over time. In establishing the minimum bill, the Commission shall (i) consider further costs the Commission deems relevant to ensure subscribing customers pay a fair share of the costs of providing electric services, (ii) minimize the costs shifted to customers not in a shared solar program, and (iii) calculate the benefits of shared solar to the electric grid and to the Commonwealth and deduct such benefits from other costs.

On February 10, 2025, the Commission entered an order in this proceeding that, among other things, directed APCo to file a minimum bill proposal on or before April 1, 2025. On April 1, 2025, APCo filed its petition proposing a minimum bill ("Petition") as directed by the Commission. In addition to a proposed minimum bill rate of \$48.66 per 1,000 kWh, the Petition includes several tariff schedules that the Company requests the Commission approve, including the Company's proposed (i) Subscriber Tariff (Schedule SSP-S); (ii) Subscriber Organization Tariff (Schedule SSP-SO); (iii) Subscriber Organization Coordination Agreement; and (iv) Subscriber Organization Registration Agreement.

According to the Petition, the Company largely followed the methodology approved by the Commission for Virginia Electric and Power Company in Case No. PUR-2020-00125. The Company states that in that proceeding, the Commission found that the minimum bill should include certain fixed and volumetric costs. APCo states that the Company includes as fixed costs the Customer Charge and the Administrative Charge. APCo proposes that the existing Customer Charge apply from the applicable tariff under which a customer takes service. The Company explains that it set the Administrative Charge to \$1.00, as it is currently in the process of determining the necessary work to reprogram its customer information and billing systems to accommodate the shared solar program.

APCo states that the Company includes as proposed volumetric costs: (1) Statutorily Non-Bypassable Generation Charges; (2) Base Distribution Charges; (3) Distribution RAC Charges; (4) Base Transmission Charges; and (5) Transmission RAC charges. APCo explains that the Company did not propose Base Transmission Charges, as those charges are not included in the Company's tariffs.

APCo asserts that its proposed minimum bill also includes five Non-Bypassable charges, which are statutorily mandated: Rider Percentage of Income Payment Program (PIPP); Rider Broadband Capacity (BC) Rate Adjustment Clause (RAC); Rider RPS Compliance A.5; Rider PCAP Capacity A.5; and Rider Renewables Capacity A.6. Additionally, APCo explains that its proposed minimum bill includes base distribution charges from the applicable tariff under which a customer takes service, including the Rider Energy Efficiency RAC and the Company's Transmission RAC for transmission charges.

The Company states that prior to the consideration of benefits, the Company's proposed gross minimum bill equals \$89.25 for a customer who uses 1,000 kWh of grid electricity per month and subscribes for the same amount.

The Company asserts that it calculated benefits consistent with how the benefits of utility-scale, distribution-interconnected solar facilities have been presented to and approved by the Commission in the past. The Company proposes to include credits for shifted PJM Interconnection, LLC ("PJM") zonal transmission costs, avoided load-based ancillary service costs, and Renewable Energy Certificates ("REC") generated by the shared solar facilities, which would be used to comply with the Company's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard obligations under the Virginia Clean Economy Act. APCo proposes that the REC credit on the minimum bill be the renewable energy premium charge in Optional Rider W.W.S. for each applicable subscriber's schedule.

For the proposed shifted transmission and ancillary services credit on the minimum bill, the Company proposes to use the avoided cost rates for transmission and ancillary services that it calculated and proposed in the Company's ongoing net metering case, Case No. PUR-2024-00161. To calculate the proposed transmission benefit, the Company states that it compared the average hourly monthly load profile of a typical residential customer with the average hourly generation profile of a representative solar array. The Company explains that it divided the average avoided transmission credit component, which is based on the Annual Network Integration Transmission Rates for the AEP Transmission Zone, by the total net excess generation to produce the proposed credit rate. The Company states that it based its proposed ancillary service cost component rate on its actual 2023 PJM Ancillary Services charges.

In sum, the Company states that it determined the total proposed shared solar benefits to be \$40.59 per 1,000 kWh. The resultant minimum bill (net of benefits) the Company proposes in the Petition is thus \$48.66 per 1,000 kWh. According to the Petition, the proposed \$48.66 minimum bill minimizes cost shifts to non-participating customers by appropriately compensating shared solar subscribers for the benefits provided by shared solar facilities while ensuring those subscribers contribute their fair share towards the Company's cost of providing retail electric service.

Interested persons are encouraged to review the Petition and supporting documents in full for additional details.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo's Petition. A hearing for the receipt of testimony from public witnesses on the Company's Petition shall be convened telephonically by the Commission at 10 a.m. on June 9, 2025. On or before May 27, 2025, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide to the Commission: (a) your name, and (b) the telephone number that you wish the Commission to call during the hearing to receive your testimony. This information may be provided to the Commission: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting/; or (ii) by calling (804) 371-9141 to register. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting/.

Beginning at 10 a.m. on June 9, 2025, the Commission will telephone sequentially each person who has signed up to testify as provided above.

On June 9, 2025, at 10 a.m., or at the conclusion of the public witness portion of the hearing, whichever is later, in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Commission will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Petition from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission Staff ("Staff").

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission has directed the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and required electronic service on parties to this proceeding.

An electronic copy of the Company's Petition may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: Andrew J. Flavin, Troutman Pepper Locke LLP, 1001 Haxall Point, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or andy.flavin@troutman.com. Interested persons may also download unofficial copies of the Petition and the public versions of other documents filed in this case from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/.

On or before May 27, 2025, any interested person may submit comments on the Petition by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/submit-public-comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2025-00028.

On or before May 1, 2025, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation with the Clerk of the Commission at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel, if available. The respondent simultaneously shall serve a copy of the notice of participation on counsel to the Company, any other respondents and Staff electronically as described above. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, 5 VAC 5-20-10 *et seq.* ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2025-00028. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing.

On or before May 12, 2025, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served electronically on the Staff, the Company, and all other respondents simultaneously with their filing. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2025-00028.

Any documents filed in paper form with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Rules of Practice.

The Company's Petition, the Commission's Rules of Practice, the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, and the public versions of other documents filed in the case may be viewed at: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/.

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River Ranger Buckets available for use on the Mayo River Trail



River Rangers buckets were showcased at the Kids Trout fishing day on the Mayo River Trail. The buckets are now available for budding ecologists to explore life in the river. They contain everything needed to catch and identify macroinvertebrates from the river bottom. The buckets can be found near the little free library on the Mayo River Trail.

Borrow them, explore the river and return for other ecologists to use. Many interested children stopped by the table to learn about how macroin-

vertebrates are indicators of the health of the Mayo River. The excitement of catching trout and learning about macros overshadowed the windy, chilly day.

The River Ranger program was developed by Rebecca Adcock, director of Patrick County Chamber of Commerce, and funded by an Eco Ambassador grant through the Dan River Basin Association. The kits were assembled by Southwest Piedmont Virginia Master Naturalists Julie Currier and Norma Bozenmayer, and the kiosk rack for

the buckets was built by Kurt Bozenmayer. Plans are being made to expand this program to other parks. For more information on River Rangers, email director@patrickchamber.com.

School Board

(cont. from page 1)

cern that we really need to address,” he added.

He said improving the track could also help student-athletes who receive college scholarships.

- \$280,000 is allocated for replacing light poles at the PCHS baseball field.

“We had the inspection of the light poles at the baseball field, and it has been suggested and recommended we replace those because there are holes in those light poles as well. As you recall, I shared when they took the light poles down at the stadium, several of them broke because they were that weak,” Wood said.

- Fixing drainage issues at the PCHS softball field.

“This is where it was built on a retention pond, and so the soil compaction—and actually the water—sometimes will swell from underneath and make little humps and mounds out in the outfield and things,” Wood said. “It’s an issue just where they placed it. It needs some drainage and maybe some new topsoil and things like that.”

- \$230,000 in end-of-year funds will be used to apply epoxy coating over tile flooring at Patrick Springs Primary School, instead of replacing the tile.

“In the construction assistant grant, we got 30 percent of that from grant funds. While the company’s here, we’re going to look and see the cost of what it would be,” Wood said, adding that the estimate is based on square footage.

Scott raised concerns about long-term use of one-percent funds.

“If we’re not careful, we’re going to be begging for money to replace a roof. And \$680,000—is it a big enough safety concern that we would ask the board of supervisors to give us \$80,000 to do this? Is it that bad,” he asked.

Rob Martin, of the Dan River District, said, “We’re the only track around that’s an asphalt track.”

Scott asked what was wrong with asphalt. Wood said there are cracks, which is why it would be repaved.

Martin said he has heard concerns from multiple parents.

“If we didn’t have the one percent, yeah, I’d definitely be wanting to ask. I’ve had numerous parents concerned about it from different districts. Some of the things I’ve heard is the other programs get attention besides the track program,” he said.

Martin also noted that PCHS students run the mile twice a semester in P.E. on the track. “It would also be for the students too,” he added.

Shannon Harrell, of the Blue Ridge District, said she’s also heard from concerned parents and a student about the track’s safety risks.

“I think it’s important for morale and just for students to get to host events. You know with tennis, they weren’t getting to host and now they get to host, and I think that’s important,” she said.

Scott said he supports projects that address safety concerns, like the light poles, but questioned the



Hardin Reynolds Memorial School (HRMS) Jr. BETA winners.

cost of the track.

“If we’re just wanting to do a rubber track to run on, they run on pavement everywhere. Everywhere you go. I mean, go out here and look—they run down this sidewalk, it’s concrete,” he said. “I just have an issue spending that kind of money on something we could probably fix for a lot less money.”

He added that most other projects funded by the one-percent had some grant support.

“So, this here is 100 percent one-percent money. There’s no grant involved. Then you look over at Blue Ridge School—just about 30 percent of that was a grant,” Scott said.

Budget Update and Insurance Payment

During the meeting, Wood said the school division is expected to lose \$667,228 in funding for FY 2025-26. He attributed the loss to the General Assembly’s revised calculation tool.

“I talked to the county administrator (Beth Simms) today and let her know that the ADM (Average Daily Membership) has come in and the amount of local funding that they would have to provide us has decreased by \$280,136,” he said.

The division will also lose \$387,092 in state funding due to the changes.

Wood said he also discussed insurance payments with Simms.

“When the county and school division used to be combined with insurance and split, there was some deficit from a lack of premium payments,” he said.

In the first year of the split, Wood said the division contributed \$150,000 to the county on March 31 as a payment toward its share of the deficit.

“Last year, again March 31 came around, we told the county this is how much less you owe us, and not that I expected or can dictate what they do, however they did not apply any of those statements to the deficit. So, the deficit is still there, and it’s negatively affecting our school’s renewal rates,” he said.

The county still owes \$282,269.94 to Jefferson Health Plan, the division’s insurance provider, for run-out claims and premiums.

Wood said he spoke with Simms, “and she was in agreement that instead of us sending them the money back — or in essence them not providing us the money — we’re going to keep the funds and make that payment for the county. Truly it’s funds back to them, but we’re making a payment to Jefferson Health to” fix the “2023 bill that they owe our insurance carrier,” he said.

Since the amount is \$2,133.94 above the difference in the Required Local Match (RLM), Wood said he informed Simms that it will be deducted from the division’s next School Resource Officer (SRO)/Grant Writer reimbursement.

“So, we would be at a zero balance of what they should give to meet Required Local Effort and what we’re going to offset their outstanding bill for our health insurance,” he said.

Martin asked whose decision it was for the county to leave the health insurance agency. Wood said the county chose to separate for insurance purposes.

“We have been very diligent in the school system to pay down that deficit, and definitely by making this contribution through their outstanding bill, we as a school system will no longer have an insurance deficit, which will help our future renewal rates,” Wood said.

By eliminating the insurance deficit, he added, the division will be in a better position to negotiate renewal rates.

Also at the meeting, the board:

- *Heard the superintendent’s report.
- *Approved the consent agenda.
- *Approved the 2025 Federal IDEA Annual Plan/Part B Flow Through Application.
- *Adopted the secondary math textbooks as presented.
- *Recognized Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) Regional Art contest winner Midori Waycaster.
- *Recognized Jr. BETA winners from Hardin Reynolds Memorial School (HRMS).
- *Approved the personnel report as amended.

Fiddle legend Don Rierson shines at acoustic jam ahead of 87th birthday celebration



Left to right: Don Rierson, Dan Shikenjanski, Dot Shikenjanski, Alan Cray, Sue Nester. (Photos by Mary Dellenback Hill, Representative, Dan River District, Patrick County Tourism Council)

The Friday Night Acoustic Open Jam on April 18 attracted performers that included Don Rierson on the fiddle. He is seated on the left, playing solo. Les Edgell introduced Ri-

erson and presented a short biography. Rierson has played nine years on the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, TN, and some on the TV Series Hee Haw. Rierson has been one of the



Left to right: Jake Brewer, Sue Nester, Daryl Atkins, seated Ed Dalton, Dot Shikenjanski, and Jack Holt.

regular volunteers for several years.

Also in the circle of the usual musicians was Sue Nester, of Wildwood Farms in Floyd. Nester is a well-known singer/musician in Virginia and North Carolina.

The Friday Night Acoustic Open Jam on April 25 at 144 The Hollow Road, Ararat, will include a birthday celebration to mark Rierson's 87th birthday. Cake and coffee will be served.

ONLINE AUCTION

LARGE LAND TRACT AND POND FOR SALE IN STUART VA
ONLINE AUCTION ENDS THURSDAY, MAY 15TH, AT 4 PM
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Have you been searching for a large land tract in Stuart, VA? Look no further than this +/- 145.27 acre property that is being sold through an online auction. This property features mostly wooded land, a large 11.6 acre pond, a picnic shelter and several building sites. Trails wind throughout, making this tract of land perfect for outdoor adventure and a prime hunting retreat. This parcel presents an excellent opportunity for recreational development or the establishment of a new country home.



At the center of the expansive property lies a stunning 11.6 acre pond. This large, serene body of water is perfect for fishing, boating, or simply enjoying peaceful waterfront views. Adjacent to the pond, a well-constructed picnic shelter provides a fantastic space for hosting outdoor events. Equipped with a full bathroom and a full kitchen, it offers a unique business opportunity for event hosting or simply a beautiful space for personal gatherings.

Property has road frontage on Scenic Dr and access from Mountain View Loop by a 50 ft right of way. The wooded land makes for great seclusion and privacy, while the property is conveniently located just off of Route 58. Route 58 provides easy access to Patrick Springs, Stuart, Martinsville, Hillsville, the VA/NC state line, and other surrounding cities. Do not miss your chance on this large land tract in Patrick County VA!

TERMS & CONDITIONS: 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$20,000 is required on the day of sale. Close on or before June 30th, 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 4 PM on May 15th, 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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Blue Ridge Land & Auction

Prune (cont. from page 8)

more successful.

* Hand held or bypass pruners (my favorite) have a curved upper and lower blade. They cut like scissors and can prune up to a 3/4" diameter stem. A good pair can vary in price from \$15 - \$20.

* Lopping shears are basically long handled bypass pruners, but they can cut up to a 2" diameter branch.

* Manual hedge shears have one long straight blade and one toothed blade with short handles that require both handles to open and close for cutting. The toothed blade makes it easier to trim woody plants. The electric models are easier to use but can leave ragged and poorly placed cuts on the plants. Keeping manual shears sharpened can greatly improve the growth of your plant and also make it easier to cut.

* There are bow saws, folding saws, chainsaws, and pole pruners for more specific jobs. If you use these tools, please wear proper safety gear and use equipment safely. When in doubt, call a professional.

* Another tool I find very useful is a good sturdy pair of garden scissors. They run about the same price as the bypass pruners and are terrific for cutting flowers, vegeta-

bles and herbs. They're also great for cleaning up and cutting back dead flowers.

The other reasons to prune Spring or Fall are to remove sucker shoots coming up from the roots next to the plant, branches that are crossing or rubbing against each other, and water sprouts that develop on an old cut. All of these issues can weaken or misshape your plant, so helping to keep them pruned will improve their health.

Pruning is not something that is learned overnight- I am still learning- but as we continue planting and growing, we find that working with our plants and maintaining them really does help bring out the best in them. Pruning should not be a chore, but a tool to give our plants the best opportunity to grow.

Don't forget to tune into WHEO Radio, 92.7 FM or 1270 AM on April 22nd to hear the Master Gardeners' discussion on Pruning.

The Master Gardeners' Annual Spring Plant Sale will be held at The Rotary Club at 264 Woodland Dr. on Saturday, May 10, from 8 am - 12 pm. See you there!

If you have any gardening questions or would like to see what we are up to, please email us at pcm-gassn@gmail.com.

Happy Planting!

email us

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Starts at 8am

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\$20 (ages 5-17) – through May 9th
****Price increases by \$5 May 10th through race day****

Location: Race starts at Patrick & Henry Community College and runs through the Town of Stuart.

All proceeds from this race will directly benefit the patients of Caring Hearts Free Clinic with medical, dental, and other health services!

Registered runners will receive a t-shirt, medal and other prizes. All others will be on a first come, first serve basis.

Register TODAY online at runsignup.com or email christie.fain@caringheartscclinic.org for a registration form. Call 276-694-3410 with any questions!

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