



THE ENTERPRISE

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

Early morning fire claims the life of one



One person died following a house fire near the Virginia-North Carolina line on Sunday, Dec. 7.

By Taylor Boyd

A man died following an early morning residential structure fire at 154 Memory Lane near the North Carolina-Virginia border on Sunday, Dec. 7.

Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith said the 911 Communication Center received a call on Sunday, at 3:01 a.m., from a caller stating that the residence was on fire. Multiple fire departments were dispatched and responded to fight the blaze.

Smith said the man was unable to escape and died inside the structure.

"Out of respect for the family, we are not releasing the name of the victim until proper notification has been made," Smith said in a Sun-

day morning release.

Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief Clint Weidhaas said fire officials received the call around 3:04 a.m. to report a mobile home fire with an entrapment.

"A resident called in advising her loved one was in the trailer still," he said.

Moorefield Store Volunteer Fire Department, Patrick Springs, Stuart Volunteer Fire Department, and CCDF Volunteer Fire Department were initially toned out. As Patrick Springs had a crew at the station, Weidhaas said it had a truck on route within minutes.

Weidhaas was the first to arrive (See Fire p. 3)

Sammy Shelor's 'Banjorama' set for Saturday

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) will end the year strong with the annual Sammy Shelor's Banjorama on Saturday, December 13.

Sponsored by Hopkins Lumber, the event is free to the public. However, donations are appreciated and used to help the PCMA continue to support local musicians and provide free shows for the community.

The group is also partnering again with the Patrick County Food Bank, with non-perishable food items collected during the show to help those in need during the Christmas season.

The show will be held in the Patrick County High School (PCHS) Auditorium with doors opening at 5 p.m. and music starting at 6 p.m.

PCMA President Denny Alley said the annual event that features Shelor and the Lonesome River Band is the organization's show of the year. He described Shelor's band as a contemporary, bluegrass group.

"The Lonesome River Band is one of the top performing acts in the country, and you don't get

(See Sammy p. 3)



The spirit of Christmas — and this year's parade theme, "Magic of the Season" — was captured in Evelyn Wade's wonder-filled expression. She is the daughter of Erica and Robbie Wade. (More photos inside and online at theenterprise.net.) Photo by Pat Delaney.

Enterprise to close Stuart office, plans uninterrupted publication

For perhaps the first time since its founding in 1876, there will not be a physical newspaper office location for *The Enterprise*. The office, located at 129 N. Main Street in Stuart, will permanently close its doors to daily business operations as it transitions to a remote-first operating model on January 1.

Both *The Enterprise* and the *Henry County Enterprise* will continue to publish on their regular weekly schedules.

William Thompson, who once owned the building, estimated the newspaper moved its operations into the basement office in 1940.

With its December 31 closing, administrative responsibilities — including accounting, subscriptions, and classified ad placement — will be consolidated at the company's home office in Lewisburg, W.Va.

The shift reflects an industry-wide move toward centralized administrative operations and reduced overhead costs. This decision is not a step backward, but rather a strategic move designed to help our local newspapers adapt to the changing media landscape and continue to move forward in ever-changing times.

Reporters, the editor and display advertising director will remain based in the communities they cover, and news gathering will continue as usual. Obituaries will be handled locally.

Readers and advertisers will continue to receive their weekly editions of *The Enterprise* and the *Henry County Enterprise* as if nothing has changed. Subscriptions, advertising, and news coverage will continue without disruption.

Beginning in January, current subscribers with questions about billing or delivery, and new subscribers, will be able to contact the home office, Mountain Media, (304) 647-5724 for assistance. A partial list of email addresses and contacts for specific departments is below; additional contact information will be provided in upcoming issues.

New Contact and Submission Information:

- For News Tips and Submissions:** Please email our editorial team at dhall@theenterprise.net. We are always interested in local-interest stories and photos.
- For Advertising Inquiries and Obituaries:** Please contact Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445, or email advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com.
- For Subscription or Billing Questions:** Please call (304) 647-5724. Email addresses and contacts for specific departments will be provided in upcoming issues.
- Legal Notices:** email to Kathleen Stickley at legalads@mountainmedianews.com.
- Mailing Address for Payments:** P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901

We thank the community for its support over the years at our physical location and encourage you to continue supporting local journalism by subscribing, advertising, and engaging with our content.

The Enterprise will mark its 150th year of continuous publication in 2026, aligning with America's 250th anniversary. We remain deeply committed to being out in the community and reporting the news that matters to you.



One of the many scenes from last year's Festival of Lights at DeHart Park in Stuart.

Lighted tunnel added to growing Festival of Lights

By Taylor Boyd

A lighted tunnel for vehicles to navigate, new displays, and returning favorites are among the show-stopping offerings of the fifth annual Festival of Lights at DeHart Park in Stuart. The festival kicks off Saturday, Dec. 13, and runs through Tuesday, Dec. 23.

Open from 6-8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and until 9 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, the event aims to deliver holiday spirit for attendees of all ages.

Amy Corns, chairman of the Stuart Parks and Recreation Association Fundraising Committee, said this year's festival will feature 64 displays from local businesses, churches, organizations, families, and others — the most ever.

"We're really, really excited. We have lots of new businesses and community groups that are going to add to our festival this year, so that should be really exciting," she said.

To meet the goal of offering something bigger and better each year, Corns said the 2025 festival will include a lighted tunnel for drivers.

"We had tremendous community support in helping us get this new addition," she said. Numerous individuals and businesses "helped us plant the poles and run the wires for the lights to hang on, and we're just truly appreciative of all the help that has gone into setting up for the lights."

Admission is \$10 per car, and vehicles may drive through the loop as many times as they wish.

Corns said the festival typically draws 75-100 cars on weeknights and around 150 on weekends.

"Of course, each car, some of them have vanloads" of spectators, she said.

Last year, organizers tracked where visitors were coming from.

"I would say a good 75 percent of the festivalgoers are from Patrick County, but there is a good chunk, and I'd say it's about 25 percent, that come from surrounding counties," Corns said. "That just warms my heart, bringing people to see our beautiful county and all that we have to offer."

(See Lighted p. 4)

Reynolds Homestead hosts Victorian Christmas Open House on Dec. 14



Visitors gather in the Reynolds Homestead community engagement center for live music, crafts, and refreshments.



Reynolds Homestead docent John Reynolds leads visitors through the historic home.



Members of the Rock Spring Descendants Committee host visitors in the historic kitchen at the Reynolds Homestead. Photos by Kristin Hylton for Virginia Tech

Virginia Tech's Reynolds Homestead will hold its annual Victorian Christmas Open House on Sunday, Dec. 14 from 1 to 4 p.m. This free holiday tradition invites guests to step back in time and experience the season much as it was celebrated in the mid-19th century when the historic home was built.

Costumed docents will lead visitors through the historic home, which has been richly decorated by Reynolds Homestead volunteers and staff. On the lawn, a carefully tended firepit will be available for fellowship and holly burning, an Appalachian tra-

dition that likely has roots in European Yule celebrations. At the community engagement center, guests will enjoy crafts, refreshments, and live music by a Christmas quartet.

Several activities will be led by the Rock Spring Descendants Committee to share stories and traditions of the enslaved community, including crafting corn husk dolls and other historical interpretations.

If you are a person with a disability and wish to request accommodation, please contact Kristin Hylton at krhylton@vt.edu or 276-694-7181 ext. 26.

The Spirit of Christmas

(cont. from page 1)



Wesley Tatum's family served as the grand marshals of the 53rd annual Christmas Parade. Tatum was known and cherished for his annual Christmas display.



Interim County Administrator Michael McGuinness walks alongside the Hazel Y. Clark Patrick County Animal Shelter float.



Patrick County Schools message: "There is room for everyone on the nice list."

Pets of the Week



Max, a Boxer mix, is an extremely good boy. He has been at the shelter since the beginning of August. Please give this boy a home.



This sweet Shepherd mix female is shy at first but warms up quickly. She has been at the shelter way too long.

All dogs and cats deserve a permanent loving home. 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 vaccinations.

Check out the new

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.THEENTERPRISE.NET**



Santa Claus prepared for his Christmas flight while participating in Saturday's parade.

Chamber announces Inaugural Merry & Bright Market

The Patrick County Chamber of Commerce announced the inaugural Merry & Bright Market, a brand-new holiday shopping event designed to bring joy, community, and unique gift opportunities to the season. Bring your family and friends and enjoy an afternoon of festive fun while supporting local artisans and producers.

Shoppers can browse an array of one-of-a-kind, handmade, and locally crafted gifts from Stuart Farmers' Market vendors and Bull Mountain Arts members, offering the perfect

presents for everyone on your list.

Come hungry—there will be delicious food available for purchase from Tony's Pizza along with specialties from the Pickle & Ash food truck.

As a special treat, attendees can enter a drawing for a free pass to DeHart's Festival of Lights for this year's spectacular display.

Join us in celebrating the season while shopping local on Sunday, December 14, from 12 to 4 p.m. at the Calliope Building, 410 Patrick Avenue in Downtown Stuart.

Norris
Memorial Services

Visit our website for pricing:
www.norrismemorialservices.com



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276-638-2778

Grand jury returns 60-plus indictments

Grand jurors in Patrick County handed down more than 60 indictments on December 1, according to records in the Patrick County Court Clerk's Office.

An indictment is not an indication of guilt, but a grand jury's determination that enough evidence exists to warrant a trial.

Those named in the indictments are:

*Thomasena Elizabeth Collins, 57, of Stuart, possess firearm by non-violent felon, April 26.

*Michael Paul Hartfield, 55, of Stoneville, N.C., one count each possession of Sch. I or II drug and possess a firearm while possessing a Sch. I or II drug, May 5.

*William Carles Hall, Jr., 35, of Stuart, possess firearm by a non-violent felon, June 6.

*Adam Michael Polzella, 45, of Martinsville, possession of burglarious tools, May 2.

*Michael Logan Waldron, 28, of Spencer, one count each possession of Sch. I or II drugs, possessing a firearm while a violent felon, and possession of a firearm with Sch. I or II drugs, May 20.

*Joshua Angel Valencia, 21, of Danville, elude, Jan. 21.

*Sherman A. Dillinger, 78, of Stuart, unlawful wounding, June 8.

*River Lee Helms, 27, of Woolwine, one count each propose sex act by communication system and possess child pornography, between June 21 and June 23.

*Ricky Bradley Penn, 48, of Stuart, one count each possess firearm while possessing Sch. I or II drugs, possession of a firearm by non-violent

felon, and possession of Sch. I or II drugs, June 11.

*Jade Anthony Phillips, 24, of Lawsonville, N.C., malicious wounding, June 26.

*Joseph Michael Murphy, 39, of Stuart, possession of Sch. I or II drugs, Aug. 8.

*Michael Patrick Carter, 53, of Stuart, threat in writing, July 26.

*Mitchell Steve Slate, 50, of Stuart, possession of Sch. I or II drugs, June 11.

*Shannon Gray Pack, 34, of Claudville, one count each strangulation and abduction, Aug. 15.

*James Colton Wuchner, 38, of Stuart, unlawful shooting in occupied dwelling, July 14.

*Amber Mary Kendrick, 25, of Woolwine, one count each conspire to commit malicious wounding and malicious wounding, March 17.

*Freddie Lee Kendrick Jr., 22, of Woolwine, two counts solicitation of a juvenile to commit a felony and one count each malicious wounding and conspire to commit malicious wounding, on or between March 1 and March 17.

*Robert Evan Mabe, 42, of Claudville, one count each malicious wounding and abduction, June 13.

*Damien Drew Collins, 30, of Ararat, four counts distribute Sch. I or II drugs; two counts distribute Sch. I or II drugs while possessing a firearm, on or between July 18 - November 15, 2024.

*Skilar Engman, 24, of Flint, MI, one count each shoplift, conspiracy to shoplift, and obtain money by false pretense, Aug. 5.

*Christopher Kirk Gray, 55, of Ararat, one count each possession of Sch. I or II drugs and sale of Sch. I or II drugs, on or between June 20 - Nov. 21, 2024.

*Kenneth Dane Gray, 56, of Claudville, one count each possession of Sch. I or II drug with intent to distribute and possess firearm by a non-violent felon, Aug. 19.

*Deshawn Michael Hughes, 37, of Stuart, possession of Sch. I or II drug, Aug. 20, 2024.

*Erin Moore, Aug. 15, 26, of Flint, MI, one count each shoplift, conspiracy to shoplift, and obtain money by false pretense, Aug. 5.

*Brittany Marie Moss, 27, of Mt. Airy, N.C., two counts each distribute Sch. I or II drugs and distribute Sch. I or II drugs while possessing a firearm, on or between Aug. 6 - Nov. 15, 2024.

*Thatcher Linwood Robertson, 30, of Ararat, 21 counts take part in or film child porn, three counts encouraging a minor to be a subject of sexual material, two counts propose sex act by communication system, and one count each take part in or film child porn, and possess child porn (first offense), on or between June 29 and Nov. 1.

*Joseph Coy Setliff, 51, of Stuart, two counts possession of Sch. I or II drugs, March 9.

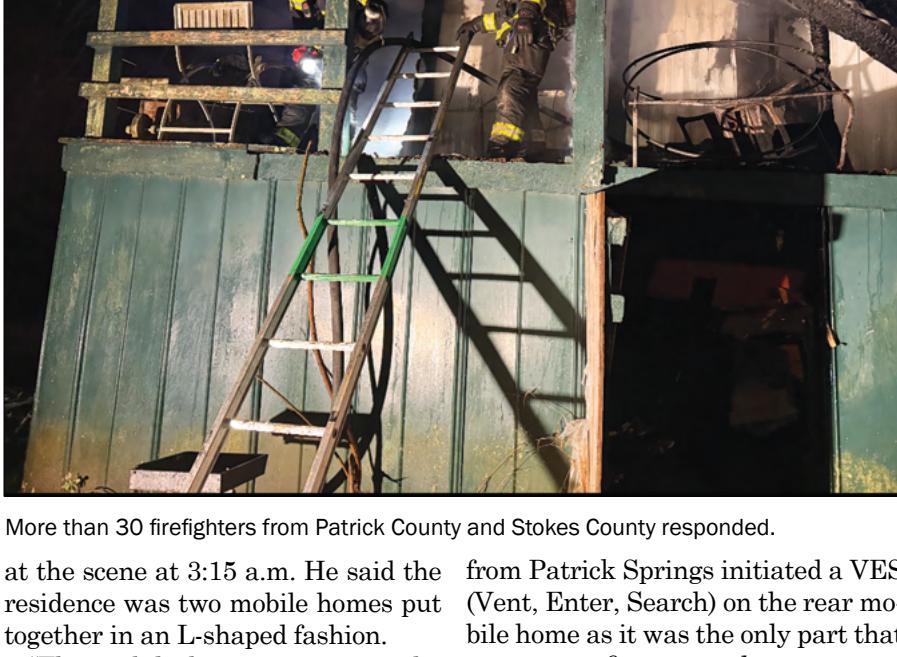
*Nikolaus Ryan Tabor, 39, of Stuart, one count each forgery, uttering, and obtain money by false pretenses, March 8, 2024.

*Mark Lukus Tatum, 48, of Stuart, perjury, July 16.

*Yamonie Williams, 26, of Flint, MI, one count each shoplift, conspiracy to shoplift, and obtain money by false pretense. Aug. 5.

Fire

(cont. from page 1)



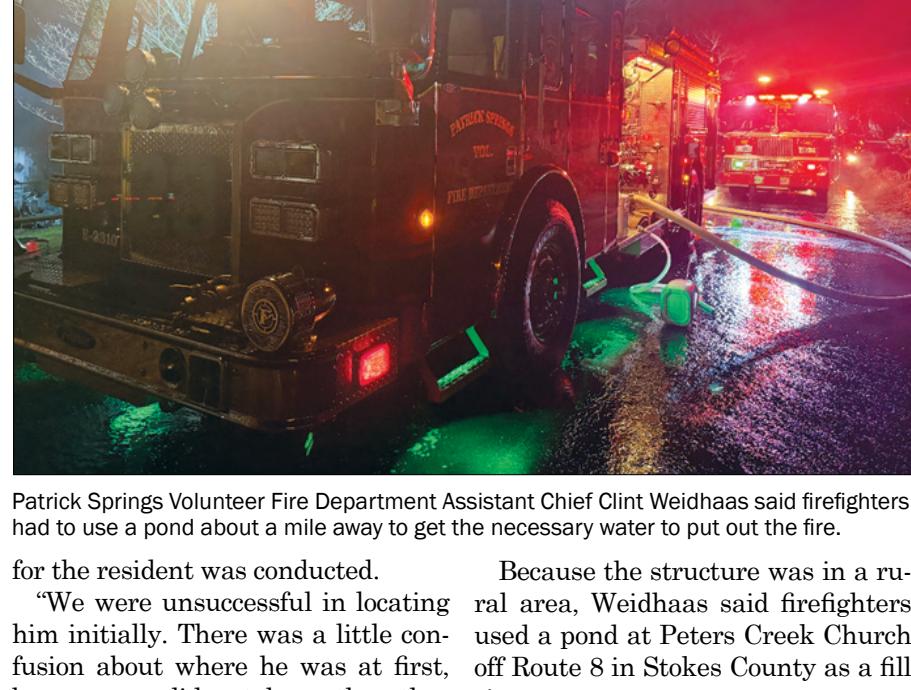
More than 30 firefighters from Patrick County and Stokes County responded.

at the scene at 3:15 a.m. He said the residence was two mobile homes put together in an L-shaped fashion.

"The mobile home nearest to the road was fully involved, and the mobile home in the rear was partially involved," he said. "First responders

from Patrick Springs initiated a VES (Vent, Enter, Search) on the rear mobile home as it was the only part that was not on fire yet, and we were unsure where he was."

Weidhaas said the firefighters were met with extreme heat as the search



Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief Clint Weidhaas said firefighters had to use a pond about a mile away to get the necessary water to put out the fire.

for the resident was conducted.

"We were unsuccessful in locating him initially. There was a little confusion about where he was at first, because we did not have the other homeowner there. She'd actually ran up the road, a quarter mile away, to the neighbor, so I didn't have that information when I first got on scene," Weidhaas said.

When fire crews received word that the man stayed inside the front structure, Weidhaas said it had basically completely collapsed, with the roof down on the floor.

"So, firefighters had to meticulously remove debris to locate the deceased resident. It took about an hour to locate him," he said.

Moorefield Store responded with units and three personnel, Patrick Springs had an engine and 10 personnel, Stuart had two engines and six personnel, and CCDF responded with tankers and two personnel.

Weidhaas said Patrick County also contacted Stokes County for the assistance of the Lawsonville and Sandy Ridge volunteer fire departments. Sandy Ridge responded with units and 11 personnel, and Lawsonville responded with units and five personnel.

Because the structure was in a rural area, Weidhaas said firefighters used a pond at Peters Creek Church off Route 8 in Stokes County as a fill site to get water.

It was "about a mile away from the scene. So, the turnaround time for the tankers was good. It wasn't a long travel time to go get water, so that was a plus. I'm not sure how many gallons we used, but we did have six tankers" working to extinguish the blaze, he said.

Weidhaas estimated firefighters were on scene until about 5:45 a.m.

Investigators from the Patrick County Sheriff's Office are being assisted by Virginia State Police fire investigators to determine the cause and origin of the fire, according to Weidhaas and Smith.

"At this point in the investigation, nothing stands out as being malicious or suspicious," the sheriff stated.

"Anytime there's a fatality like that, a lot of times your localities will call upon the state police for more assistance because you're bringing in more experience to the investigation. The state police have some other resources they can pull on, too," Weidhaas said, adding the agent was called out of Roanoke.



SCC is offering HVAC night courses from Jan. 9 through May 11. For more information, contact Timmy Overby, Lead Instructor of HVAC and Refrigeration, at (336) 386-3268 or overbyt@surry.edu, or Ray Hoots, Director of Engineering Technologies, at (336) 386-3268 or hootstr@surry.edu.

Surry Community College is offering HVAC night courses next spring.

Introduction to Refrigeration, AHR-110 or AHR-3131C, introduces the basic refrigeration process used in mechanical refrigeration and air conditioning systems. Topics include terminology, safety, and identification and function of components; refrigeration cycle; and tools and instrumentation used in mechanical refrigeration systems.

Upon completion, students should be able to identify refrigeration systems and components, explain the refrigeration process, and use the tools and instrumentation of the trade. Students can take this course to earn credit for

the HVAC certificate, diploma, or degree.

Classes are offered January 9 through May 11, Mondays and Wednesdays, from 6:30 to 10:20 p.m. This course is available to Virginia residents at in-state tuition rates.

For more information, contact Timmy Overby, Lead Instructor of HVAC and Refrigeration, at (336) 386-3268 or overbyt@surry.edu, or Ray Hoots, Director of Engineering Technologies, at (336) 386-3268 or hootstr@surry.edu. For help with college application, class registration, or financial aid, contact Student Services at (336) 386-3264 or studentservices@sury.edu. The deadline to register is January 5.

cheaper than free" to see them, he said.

Formed in Meadows of Dan in 1982, the group has released 15 recording projects. Shelor, the group's leader, is a Virginia Country Hall of Fame member and a five-time International Bluegrass Music Association Banjo Player of the Year recipient.

Last year's Banjorama garnered over 500 attendees.

"I think we got 640 seats in there. We just need people in each one of them," Alley said. But "it depends on the weather. Right now, the weather's the factor in everything. I'm not used to seeing snow and sleet this early in December," he said.

Nick Goad, Kyser George, & Friends will open the show.

"Right now, Kyser has one of the hottest touring bands in the country. He's a phenomenal musician," Alley said.

Jay Adams, Clyde Bailey, Danny Bowers, Barry Collins, Ronny Harrison, Nessie Hunt, Doug Joyce, Tim Lineberry, Larry Mabe, and Tommy Morse are also expected to take the stage.

Alley said musical acts are also lined up for the first three monthly shows of next year.

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.

Sammy

(cont. from page 1)

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Virginia Heroes: From Rowlett to the Hobacks



Morgan Griffith

Representative

As the Congressman representing Virginia's Ninth District, I am on the road often.

When traveling to visit various communities in the Ninth, I use some time in the car to listen to audiobooks.

One of my favorite genres is history.

In these historical pieces, I often look for relevant information suggesting ties to our region.

One of my recent books, Pearl Harbor: Final Judgement by Henry Clausen and Bruce Lee, highlights the actions of numerous American officials in the run-up to the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Clausen was appointed by U.S. Secretary of War Henry Stimson to be special investigator to look into the failures of Pearl Harbor.

As part of his investigation, Clausen interviews scores of witnesses. One witness is Lee County native Frank B. Rowlett.

Rowlett has long been of interest to me partly because of his graduation from my alma mater, Emory & Henry College (now University), but also due to his significant contributions as an intelligence officer for the U.S. Army before and during World War II.

The United States needed to be on alert as conflicts engulfed Europe and Asia.

As Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan were invading other countries, the U.S. was determined to monitor them.

We needed talented cryptologists and crypt-

analysts to help intercept and decipher codes of foreign communications systems.

Accordingly, the Army selected Rowlett, among others, to accomplish the critical task.

Rowlett helped play a major role in solving "Purple," the codename for Japan's very sophisticated cipher machine.

In Chapter 2 of Pearl Harbor: Final Judgement, Rowlett claims that he was "the guy who actually did the impossible trick" with breaking the "Purple" code machine.

Through Clausen's investigation, he confirms Rowlett's account (p. 44).

Accordingly, American intelligence captured essential security and diplomatic information from the Japanese. They codenamed the decrypted information "Magic."

"Magic" would be vital to the safety and security of American armed forces.

Unfortunately, before the "day that will live in infamy," military leaders at Pearl Harbor missed "Magic's" warning signs.

On December 7, 1941, more than 2,300 American personnel lost their lives from the Japanese bombing.

The stunning attack prompted the United States to enter World War II. For the war effort to be successful, American communities like Bedford, Virginia, had to send their boys into action.

That action ultimately led to the storming of Adolf Hitler's "Fortress Europe" in Normandy on June 6, 1944.

None of the Allied forces achieved all of their objectives on D-Day.

Would General Eisenhower be forced to order a withdrawal from the beaches?

Would the losses of our soldiers be in vain?

In Marching Orders, a separate book written by Bruce Lee, Chapter 9 illustrates the significance of the "Magic" summaries obtained by American intelligence.

"Magic" helped inform General Eisenhower of Nazi military plans ahead of the Normandy landings.

According to military intelligence expert Robert T. Crowley, "Magic" revealed that, fearing an attack elsewhere, "Hitler was not committing his reserves" to Normandy.

This gave Eisenhower a "sense of confidence" the Allies' Operation Overlord would succeed (p. 212).

Among the soldiers who died in the operation were 20 from Bedford, Virginia.

That day, no other American community suffered more losses per capita than Bedford, Virginia.

These "Bedford Boys," including Raymond and Bedford Hoback, made the ultimate sacrifice so American forces could overcome and succeed.

Thanks to Rowlett, American intelligence and "Magic," their sacrifice was not in vain.

Later, the Hobacks' younger sister, Lucille Hoback Boggess, committed to honor the sacrifice and legacy of her two brothers, the "Bedford Boys," and all who took part in the Allied D-Day landings.

Ms. Hoback Boggess helped in the founding of the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia.

Along with Delegate Lacey Putney of Bedford and Bob Slaughter of Roanoke, she lobbied me and the Virginia General Assembly to support state funding for the Memorial.

Ms. Hoback Boggess continued to be a beloved advocate for the Memorial for many years. Sadly, she just passed away on November 19.

As we observe Pearl Harbor Day, we should all reflect on the inspirational legacies of these heroes from our region.

In this column, we honor heroes from the World War II era. The Ninth District of Virginia has produced American heroes from the American Revolution to the present day.

Lighted

(cont. from page 1)



This year's festival begins on Saturday, Dec. 13, and runs through Tuesday, Dec. 23.

Like last year, the program will include coupons from local businesses to encourage attendees to visit other shops and restaurants.

"That was well-received last year, so we're going to do it again this year," Corns said. "We've

got a couple of new restaurants on board that weren't on the list last year, so that's really exciting."

Carolers will perform nightly at the picnic shelter. Groups include the Patrick County High School (PCHS) Praise & Worship Team, Middle Cross Church, Harvest Worship Center, Stuart Elementary School Junior Beta, the PCHS Marching Band, and others.

Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will also make nightly appearances, with Santa situated inside the Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) building on Monday, Dec. 15.

"Patrons can stop and go in the college, they can visit with the varsity and JV cheerleading program for the high school," Corns said. "They will be doing a fundraiser inside the college where they can buy baked goods and snacks and pay to take pictures and visit with Santa Claus."

Christmas tree ornaments will be given to the first 100 visitors.

The P&HCC Fabrication Lab will also be open that night for attendees to design and purchase their own ornaments, which typically cost \$1-\$2, "so very affordable keepsakes," Corns said.

Most nights along the light trail, local groups will set up fundraisers for their organizations. Corns said the Sugar Shack, PCHS Senior Beta Club, PCHS Band Boosters and the Stuart Ruritans are confirmed to participate.

"I know the money raised will go back into assisting their programs as well as our community," she said.

Funding Purpose

As in previous years, proceeds will support the construction of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant bathrooms at the park.

With funds raised from past festivals and a \$35,000 grant awarded from Appalachian Power (AEP) last month, Stuart Park Board of Directors Treasurer Frank Pettway estimates about \$20,000 is still needed to fully fund the project.

While the current 45-50-year-old restrooms are adequate, Pettway said they are open only seasonally.

"We have to close those in the winter months, just to winterize," he said. "If not, we're going to have them freezing, we're going to have typical water and weather problems. To do it in a public facility, it needs to be ADA-compliant. A lot of people will rent our shelters and so forth that need ADA restrooms."

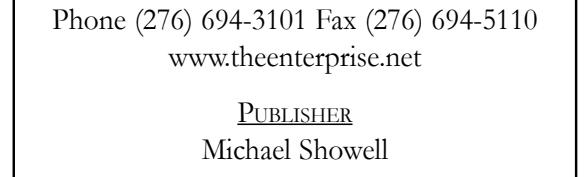
Pettway said the planned ADA restrooms will be a year-round facility similar to what's installed at the Stuart Farmers' Market.

"It will be available to any and everybody in the park. Not just the pool, not just for ballgames, it will be available 12 months for everybody in the park," he said.

The restrooms will be built on part of the parking lot adjacent to the tennis courts, placing the facility between the courts and baseball field 1.

"It'll be easily accessible, and it'll definitely be built to today's building codes, and it'll be ADA compliant. It puts checks in a whole lot of boxes to do it," Pettway said.

For more information, visit Facebook.com/DHartPark-StuartParks&RecreationAssociation.



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business in Patrick County

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

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

Congressional staff set December hours

Congressman Morgan Griffith's Ninth District STAFF will be available in Martinsville and Stuart on December 15.

• Martinsville - 10 - 11:30 a.m., City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 W. Church St., Martinsville.

• Patrick County - 12:30 - 2 p.m., Patrick County Administration Building, Conference Room, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart.

In the event of inclement weather

(heavy snow, sleet, icy rain, etc.), traveling office hours may be rescheduled to avoid putting constituents at risk. If schools are closed in the locality, then office hours will be cancelled.

Call the Christiansburg Office at 540-381-5671 or the Abingdon Office at 276-525-1405 with any questions or to schedule an appointment time in the event of cancellation.

email us

DHALL@THEENTERPRISE.NET

Thank you for reading The Enterprise

Patrick Pioneers

PAGE SIX

Stuart Book Club Donates \$300 To Recreation Center

STUART. — The Stuart Book Club met at the home of Mrs. Jack Hundley on Mayo Court Tuesday evening with Mrs. J. E. Clark as joint hostess.

The president, Mrs. W. L. Joyce, had charge of the business session, during which it was decided to donate the sum of \$300 to the Jaycees for the Community Recreation Center. The treasurer was instructed to send the check immediately. Books were exchanged and the

meeting turned over to Mrs. J. Myron Clark, program leader for the month. She introduced Miss Louise Fulton, who gave an interesting account of her recent trip through the West. She was assisted by Miss Barbara Anne Clark, who with color films, illustrated points of interest stressed in Miss Fulton's talk.

During the social hour, the hostess served delicious cantaloupe a-la-mode to members and several guests.

Martinsville Bulletin, 1948

Stuart Book Club-100th Anniversary: 1925-2025

By Beverly Belcher Woody

Last week we looked at the Stuart Book Club from its inception in 1925 through the social and altruistic activities of its first decade. This week, we explore additional ways the club continued to strengthen and serve the Patrick County community over the decades.

Club membership has always been limited to 12 members, united in their devotion to cultural, educational, patriotic, and philanthropic service.

The Stuart Book Club was instrumental in establishing the first library in Stuart and played a key role in securing the county's Home Demonstration Agents, as well as assisting with the organization of the first Home Demonstration Club. Members also sponsored the creation of the J.E.B. Stuart Woman's Club.

Their early work included providing hot lunches for school children, supplying schools with a First Aid kit, venetian blinds, cafeteria equipment, playground equipment, and books, and contributing toward the purchase of a playground fence.

During the war years, the club supported patriotic efforts including bond rallies and assembling packs for servicemen after induction. Members also donated clothing to needy children and purchased wheelchairs for children with disabilities.

Financial support extended to many major charities through generous contributions to organizations such as the American Red Cross, March of Dimes, Salvation Army, and other benevolent causes. The club sponsored annual fundraising drives for the Children's Home Society, contributed to children in need of medical and hospital care, and helped send a child to Camp Easter Seal.

One of the club's most visible traditions was sponsoring the town's first Community Christmas Tree on the courthouse lawn, complete with a visit from Santa Claus and treats for children. Members collaborated annually with the Rotary Club on this project and also contributed to Christmas Cheer efforts throughout the community.

When fundraising pledges were being accepted for the R. J. Reynolds Patrick County Memorial Hospital Building Fund, the Stuart Book Club donated most of its accumulated savings to help offset construction costs. In later years, members also funded the decorating of the hospital dining room.

In its earliest years, the Stuart Book Club established a corner lending library inside Clark's Hardware at Main Street and Blue Ridge Street. Because Patrick County had no florist for many years, the club also served as the local agent for Woodruff's Flowers. Mem-

		Disburse	Receipts
Dec.	Check #67		
12	T.B. Assoc. for T.B. Bond	\$10.00	
16	To Check 68 - Mrs. Nabel	\$10.00	
	Clark - gifts to indigent		
16	To Check 69. Wrennaff's	\$62.15	
	acct. to Dec 1		
17	By deposit	125.42	
Jan.	2 to Check Charlotte	54.25	
	gifts to members		
21	To Check 71. Thompson	13.84	
	telephone calls		
21	To Check 72. Enterprise	23.48	
	advertising		
	Telephone 23.50		
21	To Check 73. Woodruff's	322.46	
	account to Jan 1		
22	Clark Hardware	15.00	
	Paint for 1st. grade rooms		
27	March of Dimes	20.00	
Feb.	13 By deposit		
13	To Check 74. Mrs. AD Hopkins	1.15	
	total for Jan 1		
		221.49	

Dec 1947 Stuart Book Club Ledger

bers managed orders for funeral arrangements, potted plants, and corsages, using proceeds to fund the club's charitable and civic projects.

Newspaper Highlights

November 22, 1936 — Danville Register & Bee:

Twelve books of fiction were donated to the high school library. Mrs. Nash Thompson presented a program on "French Queens of the 16th Century."

September 10, 1937 — Martinsville Bulletin:

The Stuart Book Club announced plans to hold a children's clinic at the courthouse.

April 28, 1940 — Roanoke Times:

The club voted to withdraw from the Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs, directing that all funds be used solely for local community needs.

June 20, 1941 — Martinsville Bulletin:

Miss Ladye Clark, librarian of the Patrick County Library, thanked the club for a donation of 250 books. The club also purchased venetian blinds for the library's main reading room at a cost of \$40.00.

May 4, 1945 — Martinsville Bulletin:

As local sponsor of the Girl Scouts, the club hosted both Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops at the Stuart Baptist Church playroom.

May 25, 1945 — Martinsville Bulletin:

The club donated \$15.00 to the Cancer Fund, and two \$5.00 prizes for a War Bonds Auction scheduled for June 2. Prior to the business session, members attended the Star Theatre to view "Since You Went Away," an event arranged by program leader Mrs. A. D. Hopkins.

December 7, 1947 — Danville Register & Bee:

The club purchased a \$10.00 tuberculosis bond, donated \$15.00 toward painting two first-grade classrooms at Stuart Elementary, and increased its support of the Infantile Paralysis campaign from \$10.00 to \$20.00.

March 26, 1948 — Martinsville Bulletin:

The annual Easter flower sale was held at Mills' Store, with Mrs. John F. Clark and Mrs. J. Rucker Moore supervising sales. A \$25.00 contribution was made to the Cancer Fund campaign.

December 1, 1948 — Martinsville Bulletin:

Due to increased need for free lunches at Stuart Elementary, the club donated \$50.00 toward school meals.

February 24, 1957 — Martinsville Bulletin:

The club purchased playground equipment for Stuart Elementary School. They also fund-

Mrs. Divers Hostess To Stuart Book Club

STUART — The Stuart Book Club met Tuesday evening at the home of Mrs. Richard Divers. The president, Mrs. J. Rucker Moore, called the meeting to order and presided over the business session.

Following a report of officers and committee chairmen, Mrs. Paris Pugh read a list of articles sent a group of Italian children, in addition to the CARE package which was sent. She reported that all members had brought donations and the box contained games and toys as well as clothing. Letters were read from Miss Frances Burton at the Italian Embassy in Rome, Italy, expressing appreciation for the gifts sent the refugee children for whom she had requested aid. Pictures of the children and their camp were examined with much interest by those present.

At the conclusion of the business session the meeting was turned over to the program leader, Mrs. John R. Clark, who introduced Arthur E. Williams. He gave a most interesting talk on his recent trip to Canada and points of interest he visited en route. Mrs. Divers served a delicious frozen fruit salad, cookies and spiced grape juice.

Martinsville Bulletin, 1948

ed the basketball team banquet (\$25.00), donated \$50.00 to the American Red Cross, and \$25.00 to Easter Seal. I would like to interject here that the playground equipment was much appreciated by the students. I have fond memories of climbing that giant steel slide and riding the merry-go-round.

Betty Kirkpatrick, a former librarian and Stuart Book Club member, took on the monumental task of scanning each page of the decades of ledgers and treasury records which are housed at the Patrick County Historical Society & Museum.

Today Stuart Book Club continues to stay engaged with current events and community programs, fostering appreciation of literature within the group, in the schools and in the community, as they have done for a century. The club remains steadfast in its support of the Patrick County Library and its mission. Membership strongly believes that the love of books and the habit of reading developed early in life are vital to scholastic success.

Thank you to Suzanne Hutchens and Betty Kirkpatrick for assistance with this article. For questions, comments, or story ideas, please contact Woody at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or 276-692-9626.

Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty - About Tax Filing Status and Medicare

Dear Rusty: I'm trying to figure out if I should change my IRS filing status to "Married - Filing Jointly" prior to getting reviewed for my Medicare Part B and Part D. My current IRS status is "Married - Filing Single" and I noticed this filing status is more stringent. I will be turning 62 this year (2025) and I've read that Medicare will review my income 2 years prior to turning 65. Any input would be appreciated. Signed: Uncertain Senior

Dear Uncertain: Your IRS tax filing status has no bearing on your eligibility for Medicare Part B (coverage for outpatient healthcare services) or Medicare Part D (insurance coverage for prescription drugs). Medicare is an individual healthcare program, so enrolling in Medicare provides coverage for you (only), not your spouse (your spouse's Medicare eligibility will be individually evaluated).

What your IRS filing status may affect is the amount of your Medicare Part B and Part D premiums. There is a Medicare provision called "IRMAA" (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount), which sets the income thresholds on which your Medicare premiums are based, and those thresholds are different if you file your income tax as a single, or as "married/filing jointly." The IRMAA thresholds can change annually.

ally, and there's no way to yet determine what they will be when you are able to enroll in Medicare at age 65 (they are currently \$106,000 if you file as a single, and \$212,000 if you file your taxes as "married/jointly"). If your "provisional income" (your combined income from all sources) exceeds the threshold for your filing status, you will pay higher (than standard) Medicare Part B and Part D premiums. If your income is lower than the threshold, you will pay only whatever the standard Medicare Part B premium is for the year you start Medicare, and there will be no supplemental premium for your Part D coverage. For information, the IRMAA supplements are progressive — that is, the more you exceed the threshold by, the higher your IRMAA premium supplement will be. To see the current IRMAA thresholds and supplements (again, these will likely change when you are eligible for Medicare): www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/2025-medicare-parts-b-premiums-and-deductibles.

You are correct that your Medicare premium, when you enroll, will be determined by your total income from 2 years prior. So, if you plan to enroll in Medicare at age 65 (sometime in 2028), it is your 2026 income which will determine your Part B and Part D premiums, and that income will be defined by your 2026 income tax return. Note, too, that Medicare premiums are reevaluated each year, based upon your IRS income tax return from 2 years prior.

FYI, there are advantages to filing your income tax as "married/jointly" (vs. married/filing separately), and those are best evaluated by

your tax advisor (we are not tax advisors here at the AMAC Foundation). And while it's true that the IRMAA thresholds are higher when you file as "married/jointly," it's also true that your total income as a married couple will be used when determining your IRMAA premiums for Medicare. So, once again, it is probably best to consult with a qualified income tax advisor for guidance on whether it is best, financially, for you to change how you file your income tax in 2026, considering that you will be enrolling in Medicare in 2028.

One final thing: If you are still working and have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer ("creditable" is a group plan with at least 20 participants), then you can delay enrolling in Medicare until your employer coverage ends (thus temporarily avoiding the Medicare premiums). In other words, if you have creditable healthcare coverage from an employer, you don't have to enroll in Medicare immediately at age 65.

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Trinitie Penn dribbles the ball after a steal against Chatham.

JV Girls Beat Chatham

By Ashlee Mullis

The JV Lady Cougars beat Chatham 42-12 on the road, Wednesday, December 3.

Trinitie Penn led the Cougars with 15 points, 7 steals, and 5 rebounds. Hailey Lester had 10 points, 4 rebounds, and 1 steal. Sarah Lawson had 6 points, 1 assist, 1 steal, and 5 rebounds. Cassidy Brim had 4 points, 1 assist, 5 steals,

and 4 rebounds. Kyley Cain had 4 points. Bella Clark had 2 points, 2 steals and 1 rebound. Tiffany Eckrote had 1 point 2 steals and 6 rebounds. Bella Wright had 3 assists, 2 steals and 3 rebounds.

"We played in a tough environment tonight," said Coach Grace Helms. "The ladies kept positive attitudes and worked together!"

Sports Briefs

By Ashlee Mullis

JV Lady Cougars Defeat Bassett

The JV Lady Cougars hosted Bassett, Tuesday, December 2, defeating the Lady Bengals 42-9. Trinitie Penn led the Cougars with 19 points, 4 steals, 4 rebounds, and 1 assist. Hailey Lester had 7 points, 1 steal, 1 assist, and 7 rebounds. Sarah Lawson had 5 points, 5 assists, and 7 rebounds. Bella Wright had 4 points. Isabella Martin had 2 points, 1 assist, and 1 rebound. Cassidy Brim had 2 points, 2 steals and 3 rebounds.

Coach Grace Helms said, "The ladies played well tonight. I am grateful for their coachable attitudes and grit. I am blessed. They have lots of talent and have supportive families."

Varsity Girls Beat Bassett

The Lady Cougar Varsity Basketball Team opened their regular season with a 48-30 home win over the Lady Bengals, Tuesday, December 2. PC took a 31-17 lead into halftime, never falling behind on the scoreboard. Kendra Worley led the Cougars with 14 points, 3 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 steals, and 1 block. She was 2 for 3 behind the three-point line. Gracen Conner had 12 points with 6 rebounds, 3 assists, and 1 steal. Sheyan Lester had 7 points, 2 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal, and 3 blocks. Chloe Hubbard put up 6 points and 6 rebounds. Journey Moore had 5 points, 6 rebounds, 4 assists, and 3 steals in the win.

JV Girls Win Three in a Week

The PC Lady Cougars hosted North Stokes, Thursday, December 4, getting a 45-30 win over the Lady Vikings. Leading the Cougars was Sarah Lawson with 13 points, 1 assist, 3 steals, 1 block, and 7 rebounds. Trinitie Penn had 13

points, 1 assist, 4 steals, and 3 rebounds. Hailey Lester had 12 points, 3 steals, and 5 rebounds. Alaina McBride had 6 points and 2 assists. Allie Lewis had 1 point and 3 rebounds. Tiffany Eckrote had 2 assists, 2 steals, and 5 rebounds. Bella Wright had 3 steals and 4 rebounds while Isabella Martin had 2 assists and 3 rebounds.

Coach Grace Helms said, "We played 3 back-to-back games this week. I am so proud of these ladies! They work hard and are a joy to coach."

Varsity Girls Knock Off North Stokes

The Varsity Girls Basketball Team hosted the Lady Vikings, Thursday, December 4, knocking off the Lady Vikings 50-32. Patrick County out-scored Stokes every quarter going into the third with a 27-14 lead. Kendra Worley put up 12 points for the Cougars as well as 6 rebounds, 4 assists, and 6 steals. Abby Royall had 10 points, 6 rebounds, 1 assist, 7 steals, and 1 block. Chloe Hubbard had 10 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist, and 3 steals. Gracen Conner had 7 points, 4 rebounds, 3 assists, and 1 steal in the win. Journey Moore added 6 points, 4 rebounds, 3 assists, 7 steals, and 1 block.

Varsity Boys Get First Win

The Patrick County Varsity Team got their first win of the season, Thursday, December 4. The Cougars hosted North Stokes, getting a 70-58 win over a tough Viking team. Jayden Corns led the Cougars in scoring, putting up 20 points. Corns also had 10 rebounds and 4 steals. Vishal Somasundaram had 18 points and 1 rebound. Brayden Hylton had 12 points and 3 rebounds. Bronson Edwards had 11 points and 8 rebounds. Anderson Brim had 6 points and 2 rebounds in the win.

PCHS Sports Schedule

The Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of December 15-20:

12/17 7pm Boys Basketball at Staunton River
12/19 6:15pm Girls Basketball at North Stokes
7:45pm Boys Basketball at North Stokes
12/20 TBD Wrestling vs TBA at PCHS
9am Indoor Track Meet at Roanoke College



Kendra Worley protects the ball against a Chatham defender.

PC Varsity Girls Fall to Chatham

By Ashlee Mullis

The Patrick County Varsity Girls Basketball Team traveled to Chatham, Wednesday, December 3, to take on the Lady Cavaliers. The Lady Cougars fell 16-50 to a very tough Chatham team in the second game of a 3-game week. PC kept it close in the beginning, trailing 5-9 at the end of the 1st. But the Cavaliers turned up the heat in the 2nd quarter and never let up. Gracen Conner led the Cougars with 6 points, 3 of those behind the arc. Chloe Hubbard had 5 points on the night. Sheyan Lester had 3 points, and Kendra Worley added 2 points on the night.

Volunteer fire agencies to receive federal funds

Bassett Volunteer Fire Company, Incorporated, will receive \$58,083, and Woolwine Volunteer Fire Department Inc. \$408,000, according to a release from U.S. Sens. Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine.

The two announced over \$20 million in federal funding for Virginia fire departments, localities, and organizations last week.

This funding is awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and made possible by the Fire Grants and Safety Act, legislation supported by Warner and Kaine that re-authorized the Assistance for Firefighters (AFG) and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Resources (SAFER) grant programs.

The AFG and SAFER grant programs are used by fire departments and localities to address staffing needs, purchase equipment, develop fire training and education programs, and improve emergency medical services.

"Every day, Virginia's firefighters risk their lives to help and protect our communities," said Kaine, D-Richmond, and Warner, D-Alexandria. "We are pleased to announce more than \$20 million in federal funding that will go towards ensuring our fire departments have the support, training, and resources they need."

The Assistance for Firefighters (AFG) grant program helps firefighters and other first responders obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources necessary for protecting the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards. A total of \$3,832,551 was awarded to 17 Virginia localities and fire departments for the 2024 Fiscal Year.

**THANK YOU
FOR READING**

PCHS Sr. Beta students attend summit

Thirteen Patrick County High School Sr. Beta students went to Williamsburg for a leadership summit on October 27, and stayed at the Great Wolf Lodge. On the first day of the summit, October 28, the students competed in a couple of competitions including Being Better Betas: Ethical Decision Making and Collaboration Connection. On the second day, the rest of the students completed their competitions—Beta Blitz. All the

World is a Stage, and Project Proposal. In the last assembly, we learned that we qualified for nationals in all but one competition.

Students participating in the trip were Jaxon Ayers-Rosas, Alexis Cox, Carson Farrar, Willow Hylton, David Lawson, Kylee Leonard, Draysin Maselli, Callie Montgomery, Elizabeth Post, Madison Purdy, Rylee Soliday, Lacey Sutphin, and Callie Wood.

**THANK YOU
FOR READING**

Evona Lula Helms

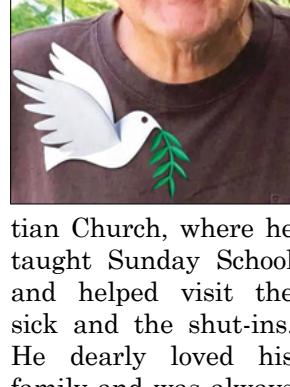


Mrs. Evona Lula Helms, age 85, of Meadows of Dan passed away suddenly and peacefully at her home on December 1, 2025. She was born on January 17, 1940, in Floyd County. Evona was known later in life to many as "Mountain Grandma", for she was a caring, loving, and hard-working mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She didn't move a mountain, but she kept her part of the mountain beautiful.

Evona was preceded in death by her parents Lula Belcher Harris and Morris J. Helms.

and Marvin J Harris; husband, Coy R Helms; brother, Dale Harris; grandson, Justin R Helms and great grandson, Dalton L Derrow. Left to cherish her memories are her loving companion of over

Mr. James Douglas
"Doug" Griffin, age
77, of Patrick Springs



Martinsville and Henry County on Wednesday, December 3, 2025. He was born in Stokes County, North Carolina, on June 25, 1948, to the late Clarence Griffin, Sr. and Mary Bennett Griffin. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a stepdaughter, Angela "Snookie" Rorrer; two sisters, Tina Griffin and Nancy Spencer; and a brother, Clarence Griffin, Jr. Doug faithfully and honorably served in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He was a retired truck driver with many years of service. He was a member of Mayo Chris-

peacefully on December 5, 2025 supported by the family that she spent her life loving, nurturing, and sharing her wisdom with.

friend to so many. She never met a stranger and was always quick to engage in a conversation or share a warm hug. She had a kind, giving heart and was always doing something thoughtful for someone.

She was born in Woolwine, Virginia on May 16, 1948, and was the oldest of 7 children. She was in charge from the very beginning and carried that with her

carried that with her throughout her life. She went on to raise 3 children of her own and 2 bonus children and at last count she had 7 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren. She encouraged her children very early on to be thinkers and pursue knowledge through technology. She was

also a very hands on grandma; attending ball games, kid-centric events, birthday parties, and always made time to spend with her grandkids teaching them to sew, cross stitch, cook and quilt.

had many strengths. Whether she was selling Princess House crystal and earning trips, building houses, coaching a basketball team, dressing up for a re-enactment to run the tea party, or volunteering her time in her community, she did it all with so much heart and her big, wonderful personality.

personality. Joan was very active in her church, faithful to her beliefs, and was appreciative of her church family. She lived in several places throughout her life, but Patrick County remained in her heart and she was happy to be able to live and retire

She always had a positive attitude and a solution to every problem and always led by example. She was generous, kind, strong, smart, and simply a very good human and she will be dearly missed. The world has

and friends that will cherish her memory.

Funeral services will be held at Conners View Primitive Baptist Church, 3408 Mountain View Road, Meadows of Dan, on Friday December 5, at 1:00 p.m. with Elder Tim McGrady officiating. Burial will immediately follow in the church cemetery. Family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the church. The family requests in lieu of flowers that donations be made to Conners View Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Barry Fain, 459 Woodland Drive, Stuart, VA 24171 or to the Glaucoma Research Foundation, 131 Steuart Street, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94105. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Griffin

of Fresno, California; sister, Judy Stanley of Madison, North Carolina; brother, Tony Griffin of Greensboro, North Carolina; and many nieces and nephews.

Following Doug's request, the family will have a private service officiated by Pastor Curt Ashley. Military rites will be provided by the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart has been entrusted with the services, and online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

Doug's family wants to express their gratitude to Mountain Valley Hospice and Moody Funeral Home for their care and kindness.

Joan was preceded in death by her parents; Thomas Conner and Nannie Ruth Conner and 3 siblings; Michael Conner, Marcus Conner and Diane Gilespie. She is survived by her siblings; Donna Jewel (Ray), Jeannette Belcher (Ellis), Ronnie Conner, her spouse; Terry Williams; ex-husband Richard Caudill, children; Cory Bryant (AnnMarie), Logan Bryant (Catherine), Melissa Caudill (Phil), Paul Williams, and Matthew Williams; 7 grandchildren, David, Tyler, Daniel, Hannah, Corie Marie, Ashley and Callie, several nieces and nephews and dear friend Elizabeth Armendi.

Joan's memorial service will be held at True Gospel Baptist Church, 7403 Salem Hwy, Stuart, VA on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. with Pastor J.R. Shelton officiating. Burial will immediately follow in the church cemetery. Family will

Mrs. Schmehl Lee malangeni Hill, age 63 of Stuart, passed away Sunday, November 30, 2025 at the Woltz Hospice Home in Dobson, North Carolina. She was born on November 23, 1962 in Piggs Peak, Eswatini to the late Winie Lomhlume. She was a member of the Greater Tabernacle of Praise where she sang in the choir. Mrs. Hill came to Patrick County, Virginia in 1986 with the Swaziland Weavers, who were well known for their beautiful tapes-

No.

Nellie Jean Joyce Terry, 93, of Henry County formerly of Patrick County, Va passed away on Monday, December 1, 2025 at Stanleytown Health Care. She was born in Patrick County on August 26, 1932 to the late Nannie Sue Tuggle and Louie Washington Joyce. She is preceded in death by one daughter, Joyce Kaye Cobbler, son, Carl Louie Terry, five sisters Edith Wray, Ilda Mitchell, Racine Craig, Geneva Dillon, Annie Bea Adams and four brothers, James Curtis Joyce, Dolphus Joyce, Bobby Joyce and Ronnie Joyce. She was a member of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church, celebrated a milestone of seventy five years of marriage on November 7, 2025, was a wonderful cook, devoted wife, enjoyed canning, loved her family, and babysitting children. Cared for approximately up to 40 children over

Violent

Mrs. Violet Irene Williams Hubbard, age 87 of Stuart, Virginia, passed away Wednesday, December 3, 2025. She was born on March 28, 1938, in Patrick County, Virginia to the late August Riley Williams and Thelma Jane Slate Williams. She was preceded in death by her husband, Harold Thompson Hubbard; a sister, Rachel "Gail" Flippin. Violet enjoyed watching the birds and all flowers. The joy of her life was her family. She loved spending time with her family, and she held a special place in her heart for her grandsons and great-grandsons. She will be remembered as

Mr. Roger Allen Echols, age 85, of Woolwine, Virginia, passed away at Lewis Gale Medical Center on Friday, Decem-

Sellinah Lomalangenı Hill



Funeral services will be held Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. at the Greater Tabernacle of Praise with Pastor Melton Rober- son officiating. Burial will follow in Patrick Memorial Gardens. A wake will be held one hour prior to the service at the church. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is handling the arrangements, and online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

erry

Bassett, VA, Tommy Joyce (Emma- Dean) of Bassett, VA, eight grandchildren, Susan Davis, Victoria Ow- ens, Tommy Bell, Ter- ry Cobbler, Amanda Olivera, Wilson Cob- bler, Lanca Foster, Leah Johnson, seventeen great-grandchil- dren, four great-great grandchil- dren, several nieces and neph- ews.

A funeral will be held at 2:00 pm on Saturday, December 6, 2025 at Norris Fu- neral Services Chapel in Stuart with Elder Mark Terry and Elder Junior Conner of- ficiating. Burial will follow at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery in Vesta, Va.

The family will re- ceive friends one hour prior to the service from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

Norris Funeral Services in Stuart is serving the Terry family

Online condolences may be made at www.norrisfuneral.com.

ubbard

two great-grandsons, Dawson and Riley; three sisters, Vera W. Wood of South Boston, Joan Smith of Stuart, Essie Holt (Guy) of Stuart, one brother Riley Williams (Geraldine) of Bassett; brother in law, Lar- ry Flippin of Stuart; and several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service will be held Monday, December 8, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Jacks Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery with Elder Tim McGrady officiating. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is handling the arrangements, and online condolences may be sent by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

s

Force.

Left to cherish the memories of Roger are his loving and devoted wife of 41 years, Joanne Martin

There was
a on



All services for Mr. Echols will be private. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com.

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HELP WANTED

The County of Patrick is accepting applications from qualified applicants for a part-time Solid Waste Transfer Station Attendant. Duties of the position will include, but are not limited to, operating grounds maintenance mowing equipment, including tractors, mowers, and weed eaters; preparing ballfields; trash and debris collection and disposal; assisting with landscaping; miscellaneous general grounds maintenance tasks; assisting with recreational sporting events; and other duties as assigned by the Parks & Recreation Director.

The preferred candidate must be capable of performing manual labor, possess good interpersonal skills, and be able to communicate effectively with the public. Basic math, clerical, and computer skills to prepare customer tickets and perform record keeping are required. A high school diploma or GED is required. Applicants must be willing to submit to a background check and drug screen.

This is a part-time position with no benefits. Hourly wage is \$15.45. Hours will be scheduled as required between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with rotating Saturdays. Hours are limited to 29 or less per workweek.

The Patrick County

employment application is available at <https://www.co.patrick.va.us/Jobs.aspx>. Applicants must submit a Patrick County employment application to be considered for the position. The position will remain open until filled. The County of Patrick is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age.

The County of Patrick is accepting applications from qualified applicants for a part-time Parks & Recreation Assistant.

Duties of the position will include, but are not limited to, operating grounds maintenance mowing equipment, including tractors, mowers, and weed eaters; preparing ballfields; trash and debris collection and disposal; assisting with landscaping; miscellaneous general grounds maintenance tasks; assisting with recreational sporting events; and other duties as assigned by the Parks & Recreation Director.

The preferred candidate will have experience with grounds maintenance equipment operation and be able to perform manual labor. A valid Virginia driver's license with an acceptable driving record to Patrick County and its insurance carrier(s) is required.

This is a part-time position with no benefits. Hourly wage is \$15.45. Hours will be scheduled as required between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Evening, weekend, and flexible/irregular work schedules may be required. Hours are limited to 29 or less per workweek.

The Patrick County employment application is available at <https://www.co.patrick.va.us/Jobs.aspx>. Applicants must submit a Patrick County employment application to be

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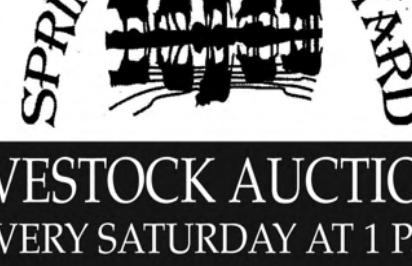
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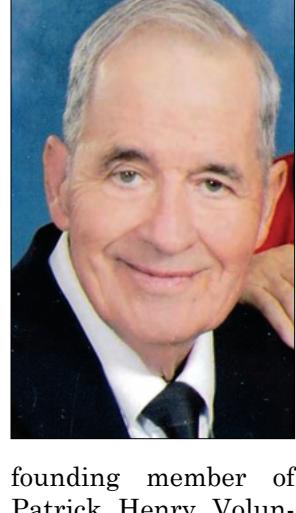
OBITUARIES

cont. from p. 8

James Richard Reynolds

James Richard Reynolds, 83, of Patrick Springs, Virginia, passed away Thursday, December 4, 2025. He was a loving and devoted husband to his wife Hannah Philpott Reynolds for over 62 years. Born July 10, 1942, he was the eldest son of the late Lemley and Louise Spencer Reynolds of Patrick Springs. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother, Robert Lee Reynolds.

Mr. Reynolds worked in sales and consulting in the forest products industry. He devoted his life to his faith, his family, and his community. Although he traveled all over the world for his career, in Patrick County, with his family, was where he always felt most at home. He never hesitated to help a neighbor, friend, or stranger in need. Mr. Reynolds was a member of Pleasant View Baptist Church and a



and Juliet Turner; one brother, Edgar Reynolds (Bea); two sisters, Marie Waller and Carol Faye Reynolds; and several nieces and nephews as well as great nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held at Pleasant View Baptist Church in Patrick Springs with Pastor Joey McNeill officiating. The family will receive friends on Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at Pleasant View Baptist Church. The funeral service will begin at 1:00 p.m. at Pleasant View following the visitation. Interment will follow at Foley Family Cemetery in Patrick Springs. Any donations may be made in his name to the Bookmobile at the Patrick County branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library, P.O. Box 787, Stuart, VA 24171, or Pleasant View Baptist Church, 4432 Pleasant View Drive, Patrick Springs, VA 24133.

founding member of Patrick Henry Volunteer Fire Department.

He was also a proud veteran, faithfully serving his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He was an avid reader and was often found enjoying a good book. His granddaughters were his absolute pride and joy.

Left to cherish his memory in addition to his wife, are two children, James Richard Reynolds II (Kimberly) and Jennifer Turner (Matthew); three grandchildren, Jillian Turner, Ella Reynolds,

William Letcher's Story Lives On

By Tom Perry

With the recent renewed interest in the American Revolution, I thought it would be good to remember the most crucial event that actually occurred at Laurel Hill in Patrick County, Virginia, involving J. E. B. Stuart's great-grandfather, William Letcher. The following is from the multiple interpretive signs placed at Laurel Hill by the J. E. B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust, Inc., the 501 (c) (3) non-profit that owns and operates the site, which is on the Virginia and National Registers of Historic Places.

William Letcher, the maternal great-grandfather of James Ewell Brown Stuart, was born about 1750 near Petersburg, Virginia. He was the second son of Giles Letcher of Goochland County, who was born in Ireland, and his wife, Hannah Hughes, who was of Welsh descent. Giles established himself as a successful merchant in Petersburg, but unfortunately lost his property in a fire. He eventually prospered and, at the time of his death, was a well-to-do landowner. By the late 1770s, William Letcher was described as 'a man of fine appearance and greatly beloved and esteemed.' Ventured out of his own. On November 20, 1778, he married Elizabeth Perkins of Perkins Ferry near Danville, Virginia. After their marriage, William and Elizabeth decided to head west towards Kentucky, as other settlers were doing at the time, but they stopped in the far southwestern part of what was then Henry County, Virginia. Patrick County was not formed from Henry until 1791.

He chose a place known as 'The Hollow' due to the circular bend the mountains made around it. The Blue Ridge Mountains sweep around the west side, while Slate and Little Mountain are on the east and south sides. The Ararat River runs through the length of the valley and empties into the Yadkin River to the South. On a slight elevation along the banks of the Ararat, William Letcher built his home, which was probably of log construction, as were any other supporting structures. No documentation is known to exist that William Letcher ever held title to this land. The deed could have been lost or destroyed, or, given the short time Letcher was here, he may never have had the opportunity to record it. There is some evidence suggesting that Letcher's connection to this property may have come through his wife's family, the Perkinses.

William Letcher had as many as nine enslaved people while living here. He grew corn and tobacco in the bottomland and had many livestock, including cattle, hogs, and horses. An inventory in the Henry County Courthouse includes many household and farm items such as saddlebags, rifles, featherbeds, and a looking glass. William and Elizabeth were blessed on March 21, 1780, with a daughter, Bethenia, who was named after her grandmother.

William Letcher was said to be a born leader and an ardent supporter of the Patriot cause during the American Revolutionary War, and was active and very prominent in the local militia. In 1779, Letcher ap-

pears on the payroll list of Captain David Carlin's Henry County Militia. In a letter written by Letcher's granddaughter, she states, 'He was a volunteer at the Battle of Shallow Ford on the Yadkin River near the village of Huntersville, North Carolina.' He likely participated in other skirmishes and raids against Tories and other British sympathizers in the area, but he appears to have never been in any major battle, nor was he a member of the Continental Army. Letcher was appointed Justice of the Peace for Henry County by the Governor of Virginia in 1779. The area around The Hollow and along the Virginia and North Carolina border, spreading into Western North Carolina, was a hotbed for Tories and others loyal to the British Crown. The people who settled this western backwoods region were far removed from the more populated eastern sections of the colonies and had no quarrel with the British government.

A large number of these individuals aligned themselves with the British Army and harassed and threatened the colonists in the area who were supportive of the Revolution. William Letcher was a loyal supporter of the latter, which put his life in jeopardy. The letter from Letcher's granddaughter goes on to state that 'He had the promise of long years of happiness and domestic felicity, but a serpent lurked in this path, for whom he felt too great a contempt to take any precautions.

He had been warned that his life was in danger, but being naturally fearless and thinking the Tories too few, he underrated the danger. He had helped defeat them once and thought them too cowardly to attack again. He would frequently go alone, armed only with a shotgun, into the most inaccessible recesses of the mountains and hunt the Tories from their hiding places.' Threats to his life and property became more and more common and culminated in his death on August 2, 1780. There are several versions as to how Letcher was murdered, but the most accepted is that the perpetrator of this foul deed was a local Tory by the name of Nichols, who came to the home and demanded him in His Majesty's name, and shot Letcher in the presence of his wife and daughter. Nichols was later apprehended, and after evidence was found on him that linked him to the murder, he was promptly executed. One other man who was involved tried to escape to Kentucky with his family, but Native Americans killed them along the Holston River. Prompted by Letcher's death and seeking vengeance, the Patriots and Whigs in the area rounded up numerous Tories around The Hollow, and several were hanged without mercy or delay. After William Letcher's death, his wife and daughter returned to Pittsylvania County, where Elizabeth later married George Hairston, a large landowner and one of the wealthiest men in the region. They made their home at Beavercreek Plantation in Henry County, which still exists. This estate contains the grave of George and Elizabeth Perkins Letcher Hairston and numerous family members. William Letcher

(See William p. 13)

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Love Lights Registration Form

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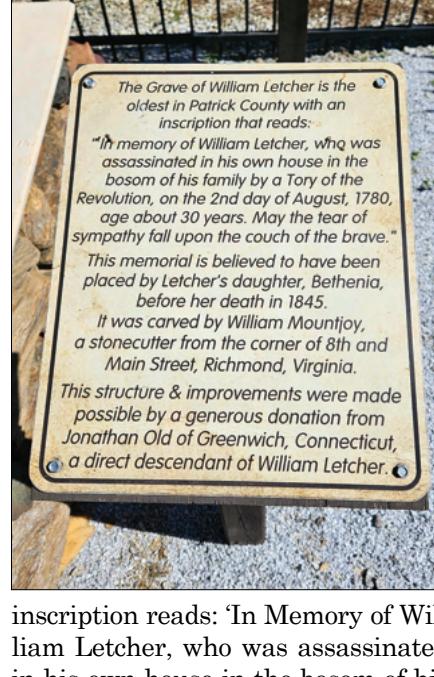
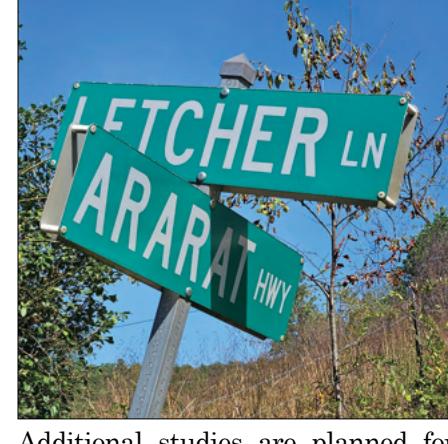
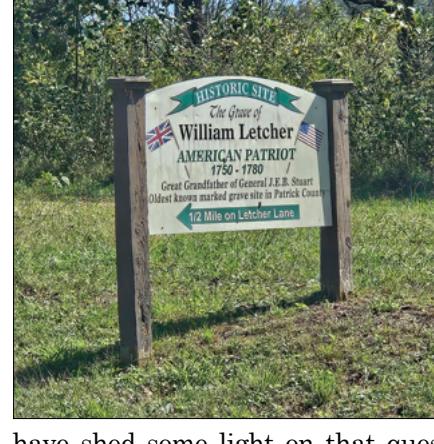
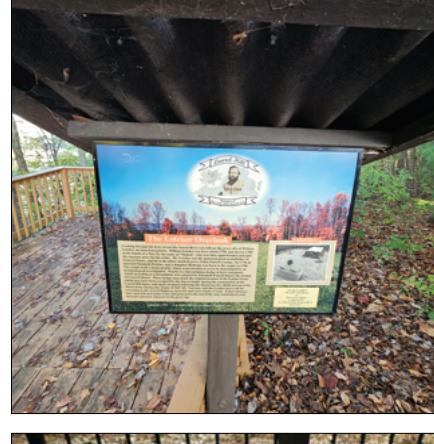
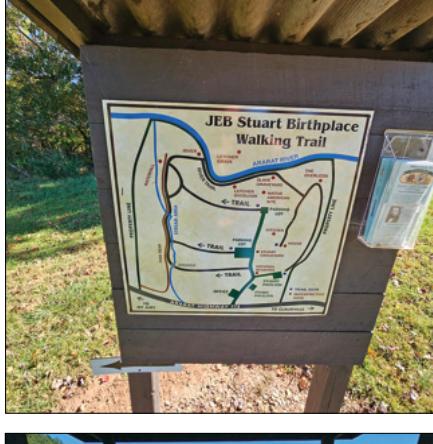
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William

(cont. from page 12)



er lies in a grave not much more than a stone's throw away from the site of his home along the Ararat River, and sadly, the place of his murder.

His daughter Bethenia had a white marble slab placed over the grave from a Richmond, Virginia, stonemason before she died in 1845. On the stone was carved a fitting tribute to her father. The grave, the oldest known in Patrick County, with an

inscription reads: 'In Memory of William Letcher, who was assassinated in his own house in the bosom of his family by a Tory of the Revolution, on the 2nd day of August, 1780, age about 30 years. May the tear of sympathy fall upon the couch of the brave.'

"One of the enduring mysteries in the preservation of Laurel Hill has been finding the location of William Letcher's home. Recent discoveries

have shed some light on that question. In June of 2009, several students from Radford University, led by Dr. Cliff Boyd, Dr. Rhett Herman, and Dr. Susan Christopher, attempted to answer that question. Using modern methods, including ground penetrating radar, the group set out to locate foundations and other evidence dating back to William Letcher's time. After an initial evaluation, a grid was laid out over the area and then scanned with radar. The area before you showed clear evidence of a previous structure. After surface excavation, numerous foundation stones and other small items were uncovered. This location was where what appeared to be foundation stones lay on the surface, and where local and oral tradition states was the location of the Letcher's home.

Additional studies are planned for the future.

It must be noted that the Stuart Family also occupied this area at a later date, as was evidenced by a Scottish Thistle button found near the old well by Tony Marks. The button was dated about 1840. A second mystery was finding the graves listed as 'others' that Elizabeth Stuart designated when she sold the Laurel Hill Farm in 1859. These graves were for an infant son, who died in 1834, and a daughter who died at the age of six in 1842. These burial plots, children of Archibald and Elizabeth Stuart, were thought to be near William Letcher's grave. After initial scans, at least one spot looked promising, but further study determined it was not a grave. At this time, the location of 'others' remains a mystery."

Low-cost spay/neuter shuttle set for Dec. 29



To participate in the Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League's Angels of Assisi spay/neuter shuttle later this month, complete the form at blueridgeawl.org/spay-neuter-shuttle-form.

By Taylor Boyd

The Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League (BRAWL) is hosting a low-cost spay/neuter shuttle for Patrick County residents on Monday, Dec. 29. BRAWL Vice President Lynn Chipkin said the \$50 fee includes a rabies vaccine.

"If it's the primary, if it's their first one, then it's a one-year" vaccine, she said. "If they have proof of subsequent vaccines that are still in date or not too far out of date, then they could get a three-year" vaccine.

The shuttle is by appointment only. Those interested should fill out the form on the group's website to reserve a spot for this shuttle, which will include 14 dogs and 20 cats.

Dogs must be younger than 6 years old and under 50 pounds, and cats must be friendly and in carriers. There is a limit of two pets per owner.

Chipkin said Angels of Assisi, a Roanoke-based animal shelter, will pick up the animals that morning and return them the same afternoon.

Because of the expense, Chipkin is unsure when the next spay/neuter

shuttle will be held.

"Each one is very expensive for us. We're only charging the public \$50, but that's not what Angels is charging us. It's very expensive," she said.

To help cover the cost, Chipkin said BRAWL is seeking sponsors and/or donors.

"If people want to sponsor shuttles, we would certainly advertise their name. That would be great because each one costs us over \$1,000. Like this one with all the cats and dogs, it is going to be tremendously expensive for us, and we're a new organization," she said.

Chipkin said BRAWL's November rabies vaccination day was a success, with 57 cats and dogs vaccinated. She expects the next event to be held in the spring.

For more information, visit Facebook.com/BlueRidgeAnimalWelfareLeague or blueridgeawl.org.

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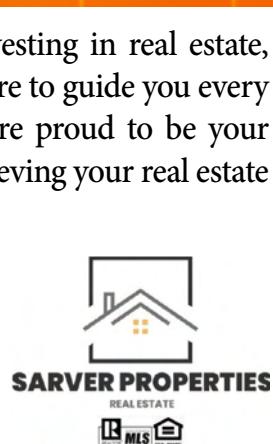
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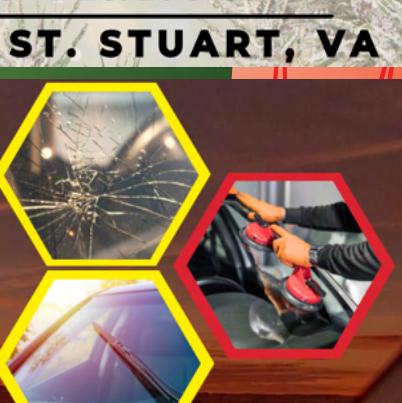
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