



# Lacks recognized for service with inaugural award



The Patrick County Board of Supervisors presented Judy Lacks with a proclamation and recognized her as the first Patrick County Partner recipient for her work in the community. From left, Chairman Jonathan Wood, Lacks, Vice Chairman Anderw Overby, and board members Doug Perry, Steve Marshall, and Clayton Kendrick.

**By Taylor Boyd**  
The Patrick County Board of Supervisors approved a proclamation and presented its first-ever Patrick County Partner Award to Judy Lacks at its final meeting of the year.  
Lacks, a former school superintendent who later assists the county's Parks and Recreation Department, now serves as chairman, treasurer, and planning committee member of the Patrick County Senior Citizens group.

County Administrator Michael McGuinness created the new award program to honor unsung heroes—those who work without formal recognition to make the county a better place to live, work, and play.  
Also at the December board meeting, McGuinness, who had been named the interim county administrator, was unanimously confirmed to the position.  
Following the meeting, McGuinness said he

was honored and energized by the board's decision.  
"It's an honor. I am fired up. I feel like I could go back to the office at 2 a.m. and start working," McGuinness said.  
"When the employees say, 'Hey, I haven't been this motivated,' or 'I feel validated,' that's why you work 70 hours a week — because you care," he said. "I've said it before, and I'm assuming it's going to get old, but it's an honor" to serve in the post.  
McGuinness said the decision was unexpected. "Did I think it could come true? Sure," he said. "Do I think — and you'd have to ask the supervisors — that they may have seen some positive changes already in 30 days? I hope. I hate to keep saying it, but we're winning. Patrick County is winning."  
In other business, the board:  
• Heard from Ed Anthony on the need for the board to consider the Planning Commission's recommendations regarding limits on solar energy in the county.  
• Approved releasing the remaining funds allocated to the Patrick County Food Bank for fiscal year 2026.  
• Approved a \$30,000 donation to the Patrick County Food Bank using American Rescue Plan Act funds.  
• Approved reallocating \$16,000 originally earmarked for the Business Development Center to the Food Bank.  
• Appointed a budget committee for the up-  
(See Lacks p. 12)

# Meadows of Dan Elementary School recognized as Region VI Leader in Reading Growth

Reading growth data recently published confirms that Meadows of Dan Elementary School ranks #1 in Region VI for growth in reading, a significant achievement that reflects the collective commitment of students, families, faculty, and support staff.  
This outstanding accomplishment is a testament to the dedication, collaboration, and shared belief in student success that define the Meadows of Dan Elementary School community. Every role—students, families, teachers, assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, custodians, and support personnel—contributes to the culture of growth and excellence evident in these results.  
In addition to leading Region VI in reading growth, Meadows of Dan Elementary School has earned multiple distinctions:  
\* One of the Top 5 Schools in Region VI  
\* #1 in Region VI for Reading Growth

\* #2 in Region VI for Math Growth  
\* #2 in Region VI for Readiness – Chronic Absenteeism  
\* Recognized as Distinguished in Performance Level (VDOE Performance & Support Framework Ranking: 97.1)  
These recognitions underscore the school's continued focus on academic growth, student readiness, and strong attendance practices.  
"This achievement truly highlights the strength of our entire school community and the unwavering support of the Meadows of Dan community," Mrs. Rozina Turner, Principal, shared. "Together, we are making a meaningful difference for our students every single day."  
Meadows of Dan Elementary School proudly celebrates this success and remains committed to fostering growth, engagement, and excellence for all learners.



Ed Anthony (at podium) discusses the Dogwood Road closure, as Patrick County Administrator Michael McGuinness (seated) listens intently.

# Anthony questions legality of Dogwood Road closure

**By Taylor Boyd**  
Mayo River District resident Ed Anthony believes the September 8 vote by the Patrick County Board of Supervisors to close a portion of Dogwood Road between Hardin Reynolds Memorial School (HRMS) and its gymnasium is null and void.  
At the December 15 Board of Supervisors meeting, Anthony said the law requires that all items to be voted on must be published in at least two local newspapers for a period of two weeks  
(See Anthony p. 8)

# Winners of Creative Writing Contest announced

Congratulations to the winners of the annual Creative Writing Contest sponsored by The Enterprise.  
The overall winner is Paisley Shuff, a ninth-grade student at Patrick County High School.  
The first-place winner in the fourth through seventh grade division is Irie Snow, school not listed.  
Meredith Pilson is the first-place winner in the kindergarten through third-grade division. Meredith attends Woolwine Elementary School.  
Parents: to claim your child's prize, email Kathy Hunter, kathyhunter@mountainmedianews.com, or call (304) 647-5724.  
We appreciate all of the submissions and the time contributed by local school staff. The participating local schools and corresponding ab-  
(See Winners p. 3)



# Santa's reindeer cleared for Christmas Eve travel in Virginia

Santa Claus shakes hands with Dr. Charlie Broadus, Virginia state veterinarian, after Santa's nine reindeer received a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection allowing them to enter Virginia on Christmas Eve.  
Each year, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) state veterinarian has the responsibility of regulating

the movement of animals into the state, while the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) is charged with the management of the state's wildlife. The importation and possession of any member of the deer family is prohibited in Virginia without a DWR permit to ensure animal health and protect the Commonwealth's wildlife and agriculture.



# DMV Select to close for holidays

The DMV Select office in Stuart will be closed Wednesday, December 24, through Friday, December 26 in observance of the Christmas Holiday.

The office will also be closed on Thursday, January 1.



## Keep the holidays festive, fun and safe

With holiday gatherings and festivities in full swing, experts are urging caution to keep celebrations safe for everyone.

Garlands, Christmas trees and twinkling lights are hallmarks of the season. But for all the cheer they bring, it’s important to decorate responsibly. The National Fire Protection Association reports that U.S. fire departments respond to around 835 home fires per year that begin with holiday decorations.

Safety experts advise using nonflammable decorations when decking the halls, and keeping lit candles well away from anything that can burn.

Before stringing lights, ensure they’re in good working order. Replace strands with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections and follow manufacturer guidelines for indoor or outdoor use. Use clips instead of nails to hang lights to avoid damaging wires.

“Be careful with lighting,” cautioned Kim Price, Virginia Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. farm field underwriting manager. “Don’t overload circuits, check light strands for frayed areas, and always turn them off when you’re away and at night when you’re asleep.”

The centerpiece of holiday décor also deserves special attention. Between 2018 and 2022, fire departments responded to an annual average of 155 home fires caused by Christmas trees. While uncommon, these fires can

## Chamber Chat



By Rebecca Adcock

The holiday and end of year events are upon us. So much has been happening that I forgot to write a “Chamber Chat” for November. So, here is a combined article.

We blinked and November passed us by, but not before we were able to do some events for the Chamber. During the first half of the month, we held our annual Community Leaders Forum. This year’s featured speakers included the Virginia Department of Transportation, Patrick County EDA & Tourism, Town of Stuart and Triton Inc., the contractor for the Highway 58 Vista section. Thank you to everyone who attended and to our speakers. Lots of exciting projects will be happening in Patrick County in 2026. We also assisted Reynolds Homestead with our Leadership Patrick County cohort as they visited businesses in the Woolwine area. Meetings throughout the month helped us catch up with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Patrick County magazine, Downtown Revitalization Project, dam removals along the Mayo River and projects along the Mayo River Rail Trail.

December is always a whirlwind, and this year was even more so with the winter weather that helped to usher in our Hometown Christmas weekend. Having a beautiful blanket of white snow draping the tree as we participated in the Grand Illumination made the event even more magical. The snow held on as all of our Satur-

day events were successfully attended leading up to the annual Patrick County Christmas Parade. The holiday happenings have not stopped and will continue through the New Year, with special dinners, parties and first day hikes. We were also busy in December delivering some extra special gifts through our Secret Santa program. One of the best perks of being with the Chamber is helping to distribute funds to some of our hard working, much deserved citizens of Patrick County. We are thankful and appreciative to our sponsor of this program.

Another year has come to a close. It has been a whirlwind for sure. We have hosted some great programs from our Community Leaders Forum, educational classes with P&HCC, to promote all the great events that are happening in our county. We were fortunate to host the Federal Reserve for a first ever county visit back in August. And, we are continuing to work on enhancements for our beloved Mayo River Rail Trail. While we have had some setbacks, the Chamber of Commerce continues to be committed to working with our local town and county in cultivating a diverse and healthy economy for our residents and visitors.

As we look forward into 2026, The Chamber is continuing to work on educational offerings for our community, the Patrick County magazine, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, as well as working on some new and exciting initiatives for our county. We could not do it without your support. Our 2026 Chamber Membership will be rolling out the first of the year. To those businesses, individuals, and organizations that are current members, Thank you! To those who have been members in the past or have never joined, I hope you will consider joining. Our Chamber plays a vital role in helping to assist the town and county, as well as assisting our local non-profits with information and resources. We are always happy to talk to anyone who is interested in learning more.

On behalf of the Chamber board and staff, we hope everyone is able to enjoy the holiday season with friends and family. And, here’s to a prosperous and healthful 2026!

*(Adcock is the director of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce)*

grow fast and become serious.

“Keep those live Christmas trees watered and away from vents,” Price advised.

According to NFPA, 35% of tree fires occur in January when Christmas trees become more flammable as they dry out. Trees should be kept well hydrated by adding water daily. They should be placed at least 3 feet from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and don’t block any exits or doorways. Properly dispose of the tree after Christmas or when it’s dry.

Safety also extends to preparing a holiday feast. NFPA reports that Christmas Day and Christmas Eve rank second and third for home cooking fires, with nearly double the

daily average.

Unattended cooking is the leading cause of kitchen fires and fire deaths, so always remain in the kitchen while using the stovetop, and check on food frequently.

Items that can catch fire, like oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging and towels, should be kept well away from the stovetop. And always keep children a safe distance from hot surfaces, liquids, electrical cords, matches and lighters.

Read more on entertaining safely this season, and what to do in the event of a fire.

And if you’re venturing out to run errands or visit family this season, follow travel safety tips.

# Armfield Scholarship application opens earlier



The Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation is opening scholarship applications on Monday, December 15.

The Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation annually awards scholarships to deserving students graduating from each of the five traditional Surry County high schools, Surry Early College High School, and Millennium Charter Academy who will be attending four-year colleges and universities or Surry Community College.

Scholarships are also available for Surry Community College students who are graduating with an associate degree and continuing toward their bachelor’s degree. Scholarship awards vary, and are renewable, provided the student maintains a 3.0 GPA.

Applicants must be May 2026 graduates who plan to enter an accredited four-year educational institution or Surry Community College in the fall of 2026 as a full-time student.

Surry Community College May 2026 graduates must have previously graduated from a public high school in Surry County and plan to enter an accredited four-year college/university in the fall of 2026 to complete their bachelor’s degree as a full-time student.

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must complete the following:

- Complete all sections of the online application.
- Submit a FAFSA form, print or

save an electronic copy of the student’s SAI (Student Aid Index), and upload it.

- Upload a 300-word short answer responding to the following prompt: “Why should you be selected for an Armfield Foundation Scholarship?”
- Submit the email address of the student’s school counselor, in order for the counselor to upload the student’s academic credentials for the transcript portion of the application.
- Complete electronic signatures for both the student and their parent/guardian.

The Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation has awarded \$2.3 million in scholarships to deserving students graduating from the public high schools in Surry County since 2005. Scholarships range in value from \$1,000 per year for Surry Community College attendees up to \$12,500 per year for students attending higher-cost private colleges and universities. Scholarships are renewable for one additional year for Surry Community College students or students transferring from Surry Community College to a four-year institution, and for three additional years for students attending four-year schools immediately out of high school.

To be considered for The Armfield Foundation scholarship, students must complete an online application by Friday, February 27, 2026, at noon. To apply, visit [armfieldscholars.communityforce.com](http://armfieldscholars.communityforce.com).

Photo Caption:

The Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation is opening scholarship applications on Monday, Dec. 15. Students can apply at [armfieldscholars.communityforce.com](http://armfieldscholars.communityforce.com). The deadline is February 27, 2026, at noon.

## Pets of the Week



Our featured pet this week is shelter pup Toby, a sweet little mix of pure joy in search of a Christmas miracle.

Toby is about 8 months old, and super playful. He was well behaved with all the other dogs, and excited for his chance to be in the Christmas parade.

This little boy has been in the shelter way too long and his life depends on finding a loving home.

Toby weighs about 40 pounds. He is neutered and vaccinated. Toby needs a Christmas miracle. (276) 694-6259

**THE SHELTER IS FULL -PLEASE SAVE A LIFE! ADOPT!!** These are fantastic pets! 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.

The Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League provides pet food and spay/neuter assistance. Contact [blueridgeawl@gmail.com](mailto:blueridgeawl@gmail.com) for details. Visit the Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League website at [www.blueridgeawl.org](http://www.blueridgeawl.org). and our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/blueridgeawl/>

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# Winners

(cont. from page 1)

breviations are:

- Blue Ridge Elementary School (BRES)
- Meadows of Dan Elementary School (MODE)
- Woolwine Elementary School (WES)
- Patrick County High School (PCHS)

Entries receiving honorable mention are published inside and in the B-section of this week’s newspaper.

## ***Eighth - Twelfth*** **Savior in a Stable**

*By Paisley Shuff*  
*Patrick County High School*

In theory, time travel sounds like fun.

Just imagine: you go to the future, see new inventions, and brag all about it when you get back to the present.

However, it’s not quite as fun when you time travel to a rusty stable with a scratchy outfit instead of your go-to sweatpants, the fetid stench of barn animals at your back.

“No offense,” I tell the horse standing behind me.

“Esther!” A woman calls. “What are you doing? We have more guests to attend to!”

I stick my head out the barn to find a woman, maybe in her forties, marching to a dimly lit building not far in the distance. Curiously, I follow her to-

“An inn?” I mumble.

The woman enters the inn, and, with slight hesitation, I do as well. There’s a set of stairs off to one side, as well as a gazillion doors for a gazillion different rooms. Honestly, it doesn’t look too different from a modern-day hotel.

“Take the guests to their rooms, Esther,” the brunette woman instructs me. I’m going to call her Mrs. Innkeeper. “Make sure they are all settled in comfortably.”

“Alright,” I smile.

I’m still not sure why I’m in this specific day at this specific time, but I guess I’ll find out soon enough.

A myriad of guests arrive at the inn, and, after carefully doing my best at a job I’ve never done before, I march back down the stairs to report to Mrs. Innkeeper that all the rooms are full.

“That is going to be a problem,” Mrs. Innkeeper mutters. She motions somewhere behind her, and I look at where she’s pointing.

An older man, presumably Mr. Innkeeper, is talking with a young couple.

“It’s okay, Joseph,” the young woman says.

“No, it’s not, Mary,” Joseph argues. “You can’t go any further! You’ve been in pain for the last hour- and don’t even try to say otherwise!” He mumbles something about a senseless census.

Mary, who can’t be but a young teenager, nods her head. “I’m afraid he’s right,” she tells Mr. Innkeeper. “I’ve been having contractions for a while now.”

Suddenly, I realize that Mary is with child.

“Oh,” I whisper, “that’s why I time traveled here.”

Everybody looks at me.

“Sorry,” I say sheepishly. “I was just thinking about how there is one last option...”

“What is it?” Mary and Joseph plead.

“There’s the stable,” I offer, “it’s kind of smelly, but it’s warm.”

“It’s a shelter,” Joseph decides. He looks to the innkeeper. “Can we stay in your stable?”

Mr. Innkeeper nods and looks at me. “Esther, go set up two beds...” He pauses, looking at the couple. “...and maybe a third.”

Setting up the beds takes all of two seconds. I try to stuff as much hay as I can underneath the measly mats, and they end up looking frumpy. Hezekiah, a stable hand, is sent into the barn to help me set up the third bed: a baby bed.

After taking it outside to wash it out, Hezekiah returns with a manger, traditionally used to feed animals from.

“It’s not perfect,” Hezekiah admits. He runs a worried hand through his dark hair.

“It’s better than nothing,” I promise him. “And something tells me it’ll work out just fine.”

Mary and Joseph enter the stable soon after, and I wander around the fields outside the inn, uncertain how much longer I’ll be here before I time travel back to the present.

A pained scream from the stable answers my question.

Mr. Innkeeper’s wife rushes into the stable mere seconds after I do, and we find a tear-streaked Mary and a nervous yet reassuring Joseph. He doesn’t complain as Mary squeezes his hand, barn animals braying in the background.

“Esther, go grab a cold towel,” Mrs. Innkeeper tells me, her voice steady. I do as she says and return, placing the towel carefully on Mary’s forehead.

My heart beats faster every second when I realize something incredible:

*I am witnessing the birth of the Savior.*

Despite the tiredness in Mary’s eyes, Mary insists that she holds the baby.

“What’s his name?” I ask as she cradles Him gently, even though I know the answer.

“His name is Jesus,” Mary responds. She and Joseph share a knowing glance.

Just then, a few shepherds burst into the stable and fall to their knees.

“It’s the Messiah!” one of them cries. “He’s here! Emmanuel!”

The young couple smiles at the shepherds when, suddenly, Mrs. Innkeeper recoils.

“Out with you!” she shouts. “Take your insane mouths with you!”

“There’s nothing insane about what they’re saying,” Joseph informs her.

Mrs. Innkeeper stiffens. “Esther, do you believe any of this?”

“All of it,” I tell her, “all of it.”

All of a sudden, the room darkens, and I’m lying down on a comfortable mattress, definitely invented in the later A.D. years. Oh- and I finally have my go-to sweatpants on.

I look beyond the ceiling.

“Humble beginnings.” Then I shake my head, smiling. “You could’ve been born anywhere. You could’ve even made sure there was an empty room at the inn.”

Sunlight slowly begins to stream into my room. I know it won’t be long until my younger siblings start turning on all the lights and yelling, “Merry Christmas!”

I grin as I throw back my covers.

“The Savior of the world- humbly born in a stable.”

## ***Fourth – Seventh***

*First Place*

### **The Girl Like Me**

*By Irie Snow*

*Seventh Grade*

Our story starts at a cabin in a forest named Rivka. The forest is named after the mother of three stunning daughters named: Lavinia, (the oldest at 17) Georgina, (the middle at 15) and Wilhelmina, (the youngest at 14).

When the sister’s where about 15, 14, and 13, they lost their mother over night to hypothermia the same thing that their father died from when they weren’t even 8 years old, as you might think it was a terrible tragedy but the girls tried to make it through.

It was hard for Lavinia especially, she was never quite the same, after their first winter after his death, she has always bin strange or, maybe off from the rest of her sister’s, that’s what her mothers mother said before she died that awful summer night.

On this important day Lavinia was turning 18 but she did not tell, or remind her two other sisters because since father passed, she never really had a good birthday, she was always wishing on shooting stars that something might change and of that might be sooner that later, and today she felt as if God had herd her request.

She awoke early, at sun rise, did her chores quietly trying hard to not wake the rest, she packed a bag full of things she believed God told her to bring, like, extra lunch food, white cloth, oil, and her comb, she put it in the only thing that she was ever given on her birthday it was her velvet backpack that was the color of a roes pink and sunflower yellow her favorite colors, then simply wrote a note that said, I will be gone for as long as the day, the till the super bell rings. < Lavinia

As she left she walked through her forest named Rivka. She approached the field witch was about a mile from her cabin and in the field to her astonishment was a horse specked like the picture her grandmother made and told her that royals own, her grandmothers best friend owns those horses Lavinia’s mother always hushed her grandmother saying, If that that was true, might as well have Lavinia marry royalty! That will never happen muma! < Mother

As she walked closer to the speckled horse, and saw a man about 19 or 20 years of age sitting their, he seemed to be waiting for something, or if she was lucky waiting for her. She was arm length away from him, he turned around in and looked her right in her eyes she examined him slowly Livia described him in her mind like this: he is taller than me, he has blue eyes like the ocean in the books I read his smile seemed to fit his smooth handsome face, he had blonde hair that looked golden in the sun light, she thought in her head

“Lavinia?” He asked wakening her back to reality.

Feeling as if she had just woke up confusingly said, “Yes sir,or, no, Wait what is your name?”

“my name is Pr....Maximus,” Maximus answered hesitantly.

“Hello Pr.....Maximus,” Mocked Lavinia playfully.

“No its just Maximus” He corrected quickly.

“So Maximus, what is your will here?”

“You. It’s complicated.”

“I’m surprised,” She said with a giggle.

“Well your family, you and your girls....”

“Sisters.” She corrected.

“Your sisters, are trusted with money and a good amount of it too,”

“you did a poor job of disguising yourself Prince” she snickered

“Well that’s not, it’s not what you, never mind” he said sound a little bit defeated.

“I’ll lead you to my home, I’m going that way now,”

“Yes, thank you,”

As they walked through the woods, the walk seemed longer, and on the walk they talk about random things like animals, clothes, books, Lavinia absolutely love’s books she had what seemed like millions of them in her tiny room. One year when she just learned to read, her mother got her a book about flowers, Livia read that book from cover to cover about 10 times.

When they arrived at Livia’s house she was nervous for the girls, but to her advantage, you could say, (they where still a good ways out, but close enough that you could see the smoke from

the chimney of the fire place.)Maximus fell or stumbled and cut his hand on a stick that was pointing out of the ground. He had a terrible slash on his right hand and Livia said

“Oh Prince I can fix that or at least tend to it, if you are okay with that?” she pleaded.

“Yes please do!” He insisted.

She wrapped his hand gently with cloth, after applying some oil on the wound, then let him rest as she gently combed his hair because it had gotten a little messy when he fell.

He was so grateful for her he that wanted her to know, but he thought as if he would never know how to.

When Maximus was done resting they continued on their journey to her cabin when they reached the cabin the girls Georgina, and Wilhelmina, where over the moon and so mad when Livia told them to give them space because the Prince had important business to talk about.

Now alone in Livia’s room Maximus informed her that she and the girls where given the money, including a house, close to the castle it was so close it was in the gated part of the castle too, she said that she would need to think about it, which made the prince tell her about his library, she was sold at that right, there and as she was saying yes to him her sisters trampled in and yelled “YES! she will take it she, deserves every thing that you will give her!” So surprised she said yes. And he said that he can bring them there right now that day.

As they left, Livia looked back watched until it hurt she was sad but glad that God answered her call.

*Second Place*

### **Christmas Time**

*By Sophia Garcia*

*Sixth Grade*

*Woolwine Elementary School*

One cold winter day, I woke up to the sound of snow falling outside my window. The sky was a soft shade of gray, and everything looked quiet and peaceful. I felt excited because it was Christmas time, the best holiday of the year. My family was getting ready for Christmas morning, and I couldn’t wait to see what Santa would bring me.

That morning, we all wore cozy sweaters and drank hot chocolate while we decorated the Christmas tree. The tree sparkled with colorful lights and shiny ornaments, and at the top was a big star. We listened to Christmas music, and I danced around the room. My little brother was excited too, and he kept asking if Santa was coming soon.

Later, we went outside to play in the snow. I made a big snowman. I gave him a carrot nose, button eyes, and a crooked smile. My dog loved to jump and catch snowflakes in the air. We had a snowball fight and built a tiny igloo. It was fun to run around in the cold, crisp air and feel the snow crunch under our feet.

That night, we all sat by the fireplace and told Christmas stories. I loved hearing about Santa and his reindeer flying through the sky. As I looked out the window one last time, I saw the moon shining brightly on the snow covered ground. I felt happy because I knew tomorrow would be Christmas, and I had so many things to be thankful for. It was a perfect Christmas time.

*Third Place*

### **The Ride**

*By Brystol Helms*

*Sixth Grade*

*Woolwine Elementary School*

Slowly snow is falling, cold and light

Covering the world in a blanket so white.

The stockings are hung by the chimney right here

Waiting for Santa to spread Christmas cheer.

The Christmas tree stands merry and bright

Filled with ornaments shining all night.

With joy in the air, and smiles so wide

Christmas is here, so enjoy the ride.

## ***Kindergarten through Third***

*First Place*

### **Christmas Eve**

*By Meredith Pilson*

*Second Grade*

*Woolwine Elementary School*

On Christmas Eve day

we make our way,

to Gamma’s house

to eat and play.

Biscuits, gravy, and eggs

for these my tummy begs.

Presents in the other room

We can open them soon.

Aunts, uncles, and boy cousins

Run to the tree with a zoom.

Stockings packed with care

toys are scattered everywhere!

Back home we go

to make cookies with dough.

Listening closely

to hear Santa go HO, HO, HO!

*Second Place*

### **Christmas**

*By Finley Wilson*

*Third Grade*

*Blue Ridge Elementary School*

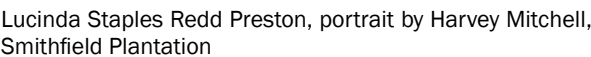
Christmas is a holiday when people get together with family and friends. Some people have family traditions that pass years to come. Some people listen to Christmas music. Some just like

(See Winners p. 6)





“On the 17th day of October, 1891, at Smithfield (her residence) in the County of Montgomery, Mrs. Lucy S. Preston (widow of the Hon. William Ballard Preston, deceased) departed this life after an illness of ten days. The disease that terminated her life was pneumonia, and during its early stages her case was



Smithfield, the residence of Mr. Preston, was the resort of many of the first families of Virginia and South Carolina, such as the Hamptons, Prestons, McDowells, Floyds, Watts, and others of high repute.

Hillsboro, Ohio News-Herald June 13, 1889

Next week, we will try to discover more about the families who lived in the home that would become Stuart Hospital, namely the Moir family. If you have any questions, comments, or story ideas, you may contact Woody at [rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com](mailto:rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com) or 276-692-9626.

**Dear Wanting my Benefits:** If you have not yet reached your SS full retirement age (FRA) and you are working full time, you are likely being affected by Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much you can earn while collecting Social Security prior to your FRA. Your FRA is somewhere between 66 and 67, depending on when you were born. The annual earnings limit for those collecting SS benefits prior to FRA in 2025 is \$23,400 (changes yearly) and, if that is exceeded, Social Security

So, my suggestion is this: as long as you are working full time and exceeding Social Security's

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## LEGAL

BWW# VA-5/8545-5

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 742 SPRING ROAD, PATRICK SPRINGS, VA 24133. In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated October 25, 2021, in the original principal amount of \$133,536.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Patrick County, Virginia as Instrument No. 210002354. 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 February 26, 2026, at 4:45 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THOSE THREE (3) CERTAIN TRACTS OF LAND, TOGETHER WITH THE IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, LYING AND BEING IN MAYO RIVER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, DESIGNATED AS PARCEL "A" CONTAINING 0.480 ACRE, PARCEL "B" CONTAINING 0.024 ACRE, AND PARCEL "C" CONTAINING 0.031 ACRE AS SHOWN ON THAT SURVEY ENTITLED "EDNA M. KEITH" PREPARED BY LAWRENCE W. COCKRAM, LLS, DATED AUGUST 24, 1987 RECORDED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, IN DEED BOOK 259, PAGE 739. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit often 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. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.bwwsales.com. VA-378545-3.

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Christmas is Good News

Dr. Glenn Mollette

Christmas is good news. Christ the Savior is born. This declaration is embraced daily by billions around the planet and especially on Christmas day.

There is more to Christmas day than the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We utilize the day for family gatherings, gift exchanges, and to eat more than most other times of the year. We get fatter so that on New Year's day we can make another resolution that we are going to eat less and exercise more. We play the Santa Claus game and always hope we can catch a glimpse of him racing through the sky.

A lot goes on at Christmas. Many people spend money they don't have to give gifts that others may not really want or need. We cram our schedules full of dinners, parties and other appointments that could just as easily be done the first week or two in January. For some reason it seems so much has to be done by Christmas day.

Christmas is a great time for the little children who don't have many Christmases to compare to the present. They are mostly looking at today without much regard for the past. This is a perspective that we lose as we become adults and especially older adults. It became impossible for us. If we have any memory left at all we start comparing our Christmases. We remember

a special Christmas in the past. We remember a special meal. We remember special people and the time when everybody was together. We remember when children were younger or when grandparents were still alive. At some point and time on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day these old times seem to haunt us.

Loneliness is common to all of us at some point and time in our lives. We are lonely for those who made us laugh. We are lonely for those who cared for us or those for whom we cared. We get lonely for the simple things that brough us such internal joy.

Today we often try harder to create a magical moment. We spend more, bake more, try to do more when in fact, we are trying to fill a vacuum that often isn't filled. We can't bring back a child, parent or friend who is no longer with us. We will always miss them. That hole in our hearts can't be filled.

We know by now, the good news that Jesus was born, lived, died and arose from the grave as written in scripture. He came to give us peace, comfort, hope and to fill that cavern in each of our lives. He gives us hope that we will see our loved ones again in a festive way that will far surpass our earthly Christmas celebrations.

Tonight, and this week, may our focus be on Jesus. His joy and love are the reasons we celebrate.

Investors, don't let scammers steal your holiday spirit

Don't let fraudsters take the "ho, ho, ho" out of your holiday season.

The State Corporation Commission's Division of Securities and Retail Franchising and the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA), of which the division is a member, are warning investors that bad actors are preparing to unwrap a new generation of sophisticated schemes. In some cases, they simply put a new twist on existing scams.

According to NASAA's 2025 Enforcement Report, state securities regulators conducted over 8,800 active investigations in 2024, leading to more than \$259 million in monetary fines and restitution. At the Virginia SCC, in 2024 the division received 238 complaints and conducted 149 investigations leading to 14 civil enforcement actions and \$381,000 in penalties and monetary relief for the benefit of investors. Nationwide, data reveals that while scammers are using new technologies like artificial intelligence to dress up their schemes, the goal remains the same: separating victims from their hard-earned money.

"Rapid technological advancements and the rise of artificial intelligence give scam artists new tools to steal your money," said Division Director Doug Joyce. "Not every investment offer is what it seems, and many bogus offers prey on investors' fear of missing out."

Joyce encourages Virginia inves-

tors to check every investment opportunity twice, as well as the person offering it, so you don't wind up with a stocking full of coal.

Based on data from NASAA's 2025 Enforcement Report and its annual survey of top investor threats, the division cautions Virginians regarding the schemes below:

• Affinity or "pig butchering" schemes: A major focus of 2025 enforcement, this scheme combines romance and finance. Scammers befriend victims online, build trust over time, and convince them to invest heavily in fake platforms before disappearing with the funds.

• Scams targeting older investors: In 2024, regulators nationwide investigated over 1,600 cases involving senior victims. Older investors are specifically targeted with traditional scams involving promissory notes and equities, as well as newer digital frauds.

• Unregistered solicitors: Despite professional-looking websites and pitches, many sellers are not licensed. In 2024, regulators nationwide opened 944 investigations involving unregistered individuals.

In Virginia, you can find more information about protecting your investments and how to report suspected investment fraud at InvestWiselyVA.com or by calling 804-371-9051 or 1-800-552-7945 (toll-free). Learn about other top investor threats in this NASAA advisory.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. The main Christmas story is paraphrased from which two New Testament books (KJV)? *Mark/John, Acts/Romans, Matthew/Luke, Jude/Revelation*

2. Who visited Jesus on the night of His birth and found Mary, Joseph and the babe lying in a manger? *Innkeeper, Shepherds, Herod, Magi*

3. Where was the young child when the Magi came to visit Him to present gifts? *Manger, Under the stars, House, Temple*


4. How many times does the word "Christmas" appear in the Bible (KJV)? *Zero, 1, 2, 7*

5. Who was King of Judaea at the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem? *Solomon, Herod, Balak, Belshazzar*

6. What animals were present at Jesus' birth? *Lions and bears, Sheep and goats, Cows and donkeys, No mention in Bible*

ANSWERS: 1) Matthew/Luke, 2) Shepherds, 3) House, 4) Zero, 5) Herod, 6) No mention in Bible

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SIX-E-SOMETHINGS

ACROSS

- 1 Audibly  
6 Mission —, California  
11 Spill the beans  
15 Golf coups  
19 Perceive  
20 — Good Feelings  
21 Many a "Hee Haw" character  
22 Boxing event  
23 Involuntary leg reactions  
26 Stimulate  
27 — yung (Chinese dish)  
28 Rocket downer, for short  
29 Relative of a tank top  
31 "O Fortuna" composer Carl  
33 Some arm muscles, informally  
35 No. on a road sign  
36 "And that's that"  
37 Note that recommends a job applicant, e.g.  
43 Wood-dressing tools  
44 Pigsty stuff

- 45 In the thick of  
46 Dark, gloomy rock genre  
48 Fast, sporty auto  
51 "My treat"  
52 Greek "S"  
54 Face cover  
58 WWW address  
59 Longer-than-normal prison term  
62 Cat breed  
65 Region  
66 Long-unshaven  
67 What "have solved" is in, in terms of grammar  
73 Ad awards  
74 Utilize a Juul device, e.g.  
75 Aided in evil  
77 In bed  
83 Yoko of the avant-garde  
84 Utters  
85 Stimulate  
86 "Dame" Everage  
87 Cleric's home  
89 Oregono, e.g.  
90 Telly watcher  
91 "Help us!"  
92 Cat food brand  
96 Innermost parts

- 103 Cuba's largest city  
105 "Norma —"  
106 Get it wrong  
107 Cel figure  
108 Fir or spruce  
113 — Lingus  
115 Cato's 1,101  
116 Monopoly expense  
117 2020 drama thriller film  
120 El —, Texas  
121 "Why should — you?"  
122 Concur  
123 Carried, as a load  
124 Loads  
125 Stitches up  
126 Lunchtimes, often  
127 Pack-toting equines

DOWN

- 1 Solicit  
2 "The Raven" maiden  
3 Done just a single time  
4 Purpose  
5 "It's — vu all over again!"  
6 Pests like rats and roaches  
7 Rile  
8 Lobed body parts  
9 "Piano Man" singer Billy

- 10 Proposed for consideration  
11 Nominal military promotion  
12 Poshness  
13 Cain's victim  
14 Plagued (by)  
15 Treated badly  
16 Congress' Alexandria Ocasio-  
17 University of Oregon's city ruler  
18 Spirited horses  
24 Abated  
25 Riga native, old-style  
30 Old Iranian ruler  
32 Disaster relief gp.  
34 Insufficient  
38 Futuristic sci-fi play of 1921  
39 Single-named supermodel  
40 Mortgage claim  
41 Case for ova  
42 Italy's capital  
47 Beige  
48 Gloomy —  
49 Level just below major league  
50 Lucidness  
51 Plow beasts

- 52 Feudal peon  
53 Concept, in Calais  
54 Signified  
55 Jennifer of "The Switch"  
56 Lint catchers  
57 Lock partner  
59 Memphis-to-Atlanta dir.  
60 Has the gumption  
61 Fare- — well  
63 Feline cries in odes  
64 Cato's "to be"  
68 Cathode-ray picture producer  
69 Oom- — (tuba sounds)  
70 Sword type  
71 "Ciao!"  
72 Samantha Bee's station  
73 "NCIS" network  
76 Stag's mate  
78 Prior to, in odes  
80 That girl's  
81 Fix text  
82 — nous (in confidence)  
87 "The Simpsons" bartender  
88 Admin. aide

- 89 With 118- Down, do a surfing stunt  
90 Brewski container  
91 Fastener fitting into a nut  
92 Helper in the Himalayas  
93 Lace into  
94 "OK, but still ..."  
95 Red Cross founder  
97 Film director Lubitsch and physicist Mach  
98 Liver spread  
99 Wipes clean  
100 Actress Suzanne  
101 Epoch of the first whales  
102 "Blade" star Wesley  
104 "— a jealous mistress"  
109 Jennifer of "Zero Dark Thirty"  
110 "So nasty!"  
111 Hence  
112 Architect Saarinen  
114 Singer McEntire  
118 See 89-Down  
119 Boxing wallops

OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE  
MONDAY AT NOON

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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THANK YOU FOR READING THE ENTERPRISE



(Meeting/event information must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Friday before the desired publication date. Email to [dhall@theenterprise.net](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net).)

Events

**Wednesday, Dec. 24**  
Unity Baptist Church, 452 Nettle Ridge Loop, Stuart, will have a Christmas Eve Candlelight service on at 11:30 p.m.

**Friday, Jan. 2**  
The Community Food Pantry will be at the SRRS in Woolwine from 2-4 p.m.

**Wednesday, Jan. 7**  
The Patrick County Parks and Recreation Department will offer Free Tai Chi Flow classes for seniors. Join us to improve your balance, flexibility and coordination. The 1-hour classes will meet every Wednesday and Thursday in January and February at 3 p.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. For information, email Keith at [kskallapos@gmail.com](mailto:kskallapos@gmail.com).

**Thursday, Jan. 8**  
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will hold its monthly meeting at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Entertainment will be provided by

Junior Cassady and Friends. Beverages will be provided. The menu is potluck, so bring your favorite meats, vegetables, and/or desserts to share.

**Friday, Jan. 16**  
The Community Food Pantry will be at the Fairy Stone VFD from 3-4 p.m.

**Ongoing**  
The Patrick County Parks and Recreation Office are holding sign-ups for grades K–3 basketball season. The deadline is Monday, January 12. Students in grades K – 1 and students in grades 2-3 will play on co-ed teams according to the two described grade-level groupings on Saturdays during February and March. Forms are available at any elementary school or the recreation department. Contact the recreation department at 276-694-3917 or [redept@co.patrick.va.us](mailto:redept@co.patrick.va.us) with questions.

The Patrick County Patriots will hold a Turkey Shoot each Saturday in January and the first Saturday February in 2026. Events will be held at the Smith River Wildlife Building. Practice starts at 12:30 p.m. and the shoot starts at 1 p.m. Factory chokes only, no sleeves are allowed.

# Blood donors needed as Virginians prepare for the holidays



Only 3% of Virginians donate blood, despite more than 60% being eligible to donate, according to the American Red Cross. (Adobe Stock)

**By Zamone Perez**  
*Virginia News Connection*

As Virginians get swamped with holiday preparations and travel, some may find it difficult to find the time to donate blood but the need for blood donors, especially in the winter months, remains high.

Blood cannot be artificially manufactured, so people need to donate blood at their local blood bank to keep up the supply. Each day, the Red Cross alone must receive nearly 400 donations in the Washington, D.C., metro area just to keep up with the demand from hospitals.

Scott Marder, regional communications manager for the American Red Cross, said it is important to find time to donate blood during the holidays.

“Oftentimes, people travel, and

they focus on the holidays, events and gifts, and they don’t come out to donate,” Marder observed. “They don’t go to the blood drive and yet the need for blood is constant. So we are urging people to come out to donate.”

Despite the need for blood, few donate. Even though more than 60% of Virginians are eligible to donate blood, only 3% do. According to America’s Blood Centers, just a 1% increase in donors would alleviate blood shortages.

Marder added a person needs a blood transfusion in the U.S. every two seconds. He emphasized blood donation is completely safe and the process is easy. After going through health history and testing your blood, clinics move forward with the donation process.

“It really only takes about eight to 10 minutes in the donation bed,” Marder explained. “You may feel a little bit of a pin prick for a second as they put the needle in, but that’s it. I see people read books, or I saw someone doing work on his laptop while he was donating. And then when you’re done, you can go over and you get juice and cookies.”

To find a local blood drive, you can go to [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter your ZIP code for a list of blood drives near you.

## Super Crossword

# Answers

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

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

Inside yard sale to benefit Patrick County Alzheimer’s Group LLC. 109 Buena Vista, Stuart, Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Members meet on the first Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Alzheimer’s office. New members are welcome. For more information, call (276) 693-6018.

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

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

Vesta Alzheimer’s Group LLC meets at the Vesta Community Center on the third Tuesday each month at noon. Both groups welcome new members and invite caregivers to attend. Literature is also available.

Ararat Ruritan Club holds Rook games every Monday night from

6:30-8 p.m.

Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard meets on 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 the 4th Wednesday, 5 p.m., Raven Rock Wesleyan Church, 1912 Raven Rock Road, Ararat. Take out or dine in. Call Scott or Nann Phillips at (276) 773-6004 or email [pastor@ravenrockchurch.org](mailto:pastor@ravenrockchurch.org).

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

Willis Gap Community Center: Members Meeting, the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.; Appalachian Acoustic Open Jam, every Friday. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for food, with music and dancing, 6:30-9 p.m.; Golden Oldies Open Jam is on the last Tuesday of the month. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for food, music, and dancing from 6:30-9 p.m.

ABSOLUTE REAL ESTATE AUCTION

SAT., JANUARY 10, 2026 - 10:00 AM

BEAUTIFUL FULLY FURNISHED BRICK RANCH HOME ON NICE, LEVEL LOT WITH 2 DET. STORAGE BUILDINGS & VIEW 967 Jeb Stuart Highway. – Meadows of Dan, VA 24120

This brick ranch home features a living room, kitchen/dining combo, 2 bedrooms, full bath and laundry room. Hardwood-carpet & tile throughout, 2 fireplaces, radiant ceiling and baseboard heat, private well and private septic system.

Residence is being sold fully furnished and move in ready! Home sits on a gorgeous, level .65(+/-) ac. lot with a paved drive, fruit trees, 2 outbuildings and country view.

**Great location only minutes from scenic Blue Ridge Parkway!!**

*Terms:* \$4,000 deposit day of auction, balance within 30 days at closing.  
*Inspection:* Call our office anytime to see this beautiful property.

**Auctioneer’s Note:** Great opportunity to purchase a full-time residence or weekend getaway in the mountains, fully furnished and at Absolute Auction!!

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# Honorable Mentions

(cont. from page 6)

I - Icicles  
O - On the Shelf  
N- Nice  
S - Stockings

**Christmas Day**  
*By Charli Engle*  
**BRES**

On Christmas day we pray to Jesus and Mother Mary. I pray for everyone each year. After we pray we open presents around the tree. There are a lot of presents for everyone each year. Then we go to my Nana’s to eat and open more presents. After that we go to my Grandma’s to eat and open even more presents. My Aunt Brandy comes every year and then we open presents from her. We have the best Christmas Day!

**Santa**  
*By Landon Charles Frye*  
**BRES**

Hey Santa, I know why we celebrate Christmas, it’s because it’s Jesus’ birthday! Thank you for all the presents but I just want one thing for Christmas this year. I want my dad to stop going to work. I just want to spend time with him! I only see him for two days on the weekends. And one more thing I want for Christmas this year is for my mom. She is the worker of the house and I wish she had a break so we can spend time with her and my day this Christmas! Thank you Santa!

**Christmas**  
*By Raegan Hunger*  
**BRES**

Christmas is really fun! I got a Pac Man Machine. I made a Ginger Bread Man for Santa. Putting up decorations are fun, because they are so colorful. The fire is fun for making smores. One time I heard Santa’s footsteps! Christmas is the best!

**What I Wrote to Santa Last Christmas**  
*By Ashlyn Jones*  
**BRES**

Last Christmas I wrote a letter to Santa and it said, “Thank you Santa for delivering gifts to kids

that behave. Thank you.” I left Santa chocolate and a toy. Santa wrote me a note on a piece of paper, “Thank you Ashlyn for the gifts. I left you extra presents.” I loved the gifts that Santa left for me. I love Christmas, it is so much fun!

**2024 Christmas**  
*By Caleb Lawson*  
**BRES**

On Christmas 2024 we all got bean bags. My brother Dallas got the biggest beanbag but I don’t know how that thing fit in his room, it was just crazy! My brother Robert got a pogo stick and I got an easel that took forever for my mom to build. The house was a mess with the wrapping paper. It was like a pool of wrapping paper everywhere. Christmas 2024 was crazy!

**Christmas Tree**  
*By Mollie Martin*  
**BRES**

A Christmas tree,  
Oh what it means to me.  
It shines with light,  
How beautiful and bright.  
Ornaments are everywhere,  
Presents under there.  
Up there on the top is the star,  
Which can be seen from far.

**Christmas**  
*By Mallory McMillian*  
**BRES**

Christmas time is the best because the Elf on the Shelf is waiting for us to find him. The snow starts falling and covering everything. I like to go sledding in the snow. My favorite thing is opening presents! Christmas is the best!

**Santa Claus**  
*By Logan Niten*  
**BRES**

Santa Claus was spotted on a roof top. He got stuck in the chimney. One child saw him and helped him out. Then the child went back to bed and Santa Claus gave him an extra toy for helping him out of the chimney.

*Montgomery Barker*  
**BRES**

There once was a girl named Jenny. Jenny had a friend named Alfred. Alfred liked Jenny and Jenny liked Alfred. They fell in love and got married on Christmas day. They’d celebrate their anniversary alongside Christmas. They’d bake cookies and eat Oreos with milk and watch Christmas movies. Sadly they had to move but years later new people moved there. They could feel memories in the air. What they called home, others called it memories. Jenny and Alfred died of cancer but people say the house still stands and holds all of the memories once made in that small house.

**The One Snowman**  
*By Elias Goins*  
**BRES**

‘Twas the night before Christmas all through the house. Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. Santa was here and in the chimney he went. But he noticed something. It was a small snowball. He picked it up and left sixteen presents! He got back to the North Pole. He looked at the snowball got startled! It turned into a snowman! It gave him a small present. It was a rein-dog.

**My Favorite Christmas**  
*By Brantley Adkins*  
**BRES**

There was this Christmas that was my favorite. The reason I love this Christmas is because my whole family came. And my dream came true. I finally got an iPhone 15. I was so happy that I almost cried. A few days later my papa gave me twenty-five dollars. Since he missed Christmas because that day he had got back from the hospital from surgery. I was very happy. He took me to the trampoline park! I even got an Icee and I played arcade games, well just a few. When we left I got bubble gum! I even went to get some Mexican and I got ACP and chips, and I even got some Mt. Dew and cheese dip! The end!

(See Entries for Grades 4-7 p. B1)

# Lacks

(cont. from page 1)



Doug Perry, of the Smith River District, was honored for his tenure on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors.



County Administrator Michael McGuinness hugged all of the board members after the unanimous vote. He is pictured with Overby and Marshall.



coming fiscal year 2027 budget season in a 4-1 vote. The committee will include the chair and vice chair selected at the January meeting. Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, cast the dissenting vote.

- Heard an update from Parks and Recreation Director Luke Williams.
- Allocated \$4,000 per park to cover operating expenses for the remainder of fiscal year 2026 using ARPA funds.
- Allocated up to \$21,000 to Mountain Top Park for work on its well.
- Allocated \$1,500 in ARPA funds to I.C. DeHart Park for an electrical project.
- Allocated \$2,500 in ARPA funds to Dan River Park for awning and window repairs.
- Denied the Appalachian Power easement as presented by majority vote and asked that alternative easements be brought forward for

consideration.

- Discussed bids for proposed facility card readers. Vice Chair Andrew Overby, of the Dan River District, and Marshall will participate in further discussions.
- Approved codification as presented at the Nov. 17 meeting.
- Appointed an at-large member to the Economic Development Authority.
- Heard an update on the Patrick County Library and Bookmobile from Blue Ridge Regional Library Director Melissa Chapman.
- Approved a letter of commitment for a regional stormwater-sewer vulnerability assessment grant application.
- Heard from Kurt Bozenmayer regarding Doug Perry’s tenure on the board. The meeting marked Perry’s final meeting as the Smith River District representative. Rick Swink will take

the seat Jan. 1.

- Recognized Perry for his four years of service on the board.
- Approved a proclamation recognizing Lacks as December’s Patrick County Partner, in part for her work with Parks and Recreation.
- Approved an amendment to the fiscal year 2026 budget.
- Heard a broadband update from River-Street Networks Director of Business Development and Government Affairs Rob Taylor.
- Heard a broadband update from Appalachian Power External Affairs Manager Rob Mann.
- Approved the Nov. 17 meeting minutes.
- Approved bills, claims, and appropriations as amended.
- Heard the county administrator’s report.
- Heard supervisors’ reports.

# Earn N.C. Child Care Credential at Surry



Surry Community College is offering an Introduction to Early Childhood Education course from January 9, 2026 to May 11, 2026. Students can earn the N.C. Child Care Credential through this course. For more information, or to register, contact Kayla Norman, Lead Instructor – Education, at (336) 386-3351 or normanks@surry.edu.

Surry Community College is offering an Introduction to Early Childhood Education, EDU-119, course beginning January 9, 2026, and running through May 11, 2026.

Those who complete EDU-119 with a “C” or better are awarded the N.C. Child Care Credential. Upon completion, students should be able to design a career/professional development plan and appropriate environments, schedules, and activity plans.

This course introduces the foundations of early childhood education, the diverse educational settings for young children, professionalism, and planning intentional developmentally appropriate experiences for each child.

Topics discussed in class include

theoretical foundations, national early learning standards, N.C. Foundations for Early Learning and Development, state regulations, program types, career options, professionalism, ethical conduct, quality inclusive environments, and curriculum responsive to the needs of each child/family.

Tuition is \$76 per credit hour. Spring registration is currently underway. For more information, or to register, contact Kayla Norman, Lead Instructor of Education. For help with college application, class registration, or financial aid, contact Student Services at (336) 386-3264, or studentservices@surry.edu. The deadline to register is January 5, 2026.



# Winners of Christmas Bonus announced



Angela Belcher



Christiana Crace



Sandra Perry



Terry Hundley



Melissa Boyer

The winners of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce's Secret Santa Christmas Bonus were announced recently.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous patron, the Chamber of Commerce was once again able to host a random drawing, benefiting five lucky Patrick County residents and workers.

This year's winners are Angela Belcher from Panel Processing, Christiana Crace with Blue Ridge Elementary School, Sandra Perry at Patrick County High School, Terry Hundley at Food Country, and Melissa Boyer at Patrick County Sheriff's Office.

"On behalf of the chamber and our lucky winners we would like to say, 'Thank you,' to our sponsor of this program. It brings such cheer and joy not only to the winners, but to the community at large," the chamber stated in a release.

Winners are pictured with Rebecca Adcock, director of the chamber.

## Laurel Hill's Many Histories: The Mitchell Family



**By Tom Perry**

In the early days of the twentieth century, young George Elbert "Shug" Brown made his way to school along the old farm road that still exists today, running from the Ararat Highway across the Ararat River and up Rabbit Ridge to the J. E. B. Stuart School. Brown saw two aging veterans of the War Between the States sitting on the porch of a large white frame home in the bottomlands once owned by the Stuarts. They were trading tales of their experiences of The War Between the States within sight of William Letcher's grave.

Albert Harvey Jarrell (1835-1923) was born in Rockingham County, North Carolina, and enlisted in Company A, 2nd North Carolina State Troops in Wake County on September 5, 1862. After being captured on May 3, 1863, he was exchanged ten days later, only to be captured again on November 7, 1863, near Kelly's Ford, Virginia. He spent several months in prison at Point Lookout, Maryland, before

being exchanged in February 1865. He married Jane Tickle and lived along the Ararat River on land previously owned by Archibald Stuart. Many of his descendants still live in the area, including world-famous Bluegrass musician Tommy Jarrell and his great-grandson, Dr. Eric Jarrell, who was educated at the University of Virginia.

The owner of the house was his neighbor, William Alvis Mitchell (1838-1915), who hailed from Mississippi, lost two fingers in the War, but found himself in Company A, 2nd North Carolina State Troops at Appomattox in April 1865 when Robert E. Lee surrendered to U.S. Grant. His copy of Lee's General Order #9 was a treasured possession of his grandson, William Taylor Mitchell (1920-2011), and his wife, Maydee Ellen Watson Mitchell (1926-1998). Their two children, Melissa, who married Wesley Collins and then Mike Straka, and Alan Taylor Mitchell, who married Linda Gammons, gave William and Maydee four grandchildren: Chris

Collins, Amy Manuel, Kevin, and Randall Mitchell.

After the Stuarts sold the Laurel Hill Farm in 1859 to Robert R. Galloway and Dr. Joseph Hollingsworth, except for the possibility of a few tenant farmers, the land mainly sat idle for the next twenty years. In 1879, Samuel Hill Taylor (1820-1892) purchased about half of what was the Stuart homeplace. Samuel, a prominent businessman from the area, was involved in road construction and hotel development in Danbury and Mount Airy, North Carolina. He also served as a clerk of the superior court and, at one time, was sheriff of Surry County. Samuel was married to Eliza Jane Davis (1821-1900). Down through the years, the Stuart land was broken up and sold, and eventually owned by several well-known families in the area, including Pedigo, Hatcher, Jarrell, Brown, Dellenback, and Mitchell.

In 1905, Thomas Brown purchased a portion of the farm, and it was through his son, George E.

"Shug" Brown, that the J. E. B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust was able to acquire seventy-one acres in 1990, which included the site of the Laurel Hill home where James Ewell Brown Stuart was born.

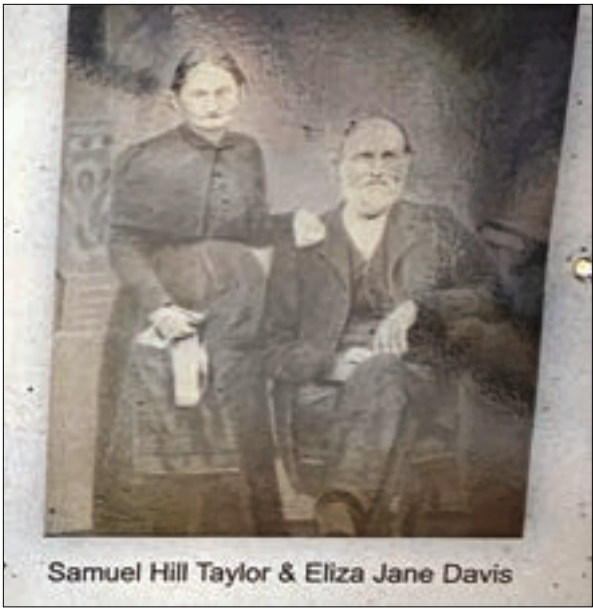
William Aaron Mitchell (1838-1915) purchased 169 acres of the Stuart farm about 1891, which included the site of the old William Letcher home. Much of this property, with its fertile bottomlands, was along the Ararat River. Mitchell, who was from Mississippi, was born in 1838 and served in the War Between the States. He surrendered with Robert E. Lee at Appomattox as a soldier with the 2nd North Carolina State Troops. When the War ended, William and a comrade walked back to Mississippi. Later, he would travel by train back to Mount Airy, purchase plug tobacco, wagons, and mules, and return to his home state to sell the items. While in Mount Airy, they stayed at the old Blue Ridge Hotel, which

(See Laurel p. 14)



Laurel

(cont. from page 13)



Samuel Hill Taylor owned. It was said that young J. E. B. Stuart also stayed at the hotel. While staying at the hotel during his trip, Williams would continue to court and eventually marry the young lady he met after the War. The young lady was Lucy C. Taylor (1848-1933), the daughter of Samuel Taylor.

About 1896, William Mitchell built a large two story farmhouse on the site. Local lore held that the Mitchell Family tore down adjacent structures that may have dated to the Stuart or Letcher era and used the lumber to construct their home, but later evidence showed that was not the case. The Mitchell Family farmed some of the same land that William Letcher and the Stuarts had years earlier. William A. Mitchell died in 1915, and the land passed to his son, John Taylor Mitchell (1878-1950). He worked at a hardware store in Mount Airy and also ran the commissary store for the Kibler and Kay lumber operation in Kibler Valley, which served the Mount Airy and Eastern Railroad, known as "The Dinky." John married Lillie Smith (1893-1946) about 1918, and continued to farm his part of Laurel Hill for the next thirty-five years, where he raised livestock, tobacco, and wheat



using a three horse team, while Lillie sold milk, butter, and eggs. John and Lillie Mitchell had two children, the above mentioned William and Evelyn, born in 1926, who married Ed Richardson and had two children, John and Kitty. The Mitchells' time at Laurel Hill ended when John sold the 169-acre house to Charlie Dellenback in 1949. The Dellenback Family will be the subject of the next article in this series.

The William Letcher site is part of five acres on the Laurel Hill Farm owned by the J. E. B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust, Inc. It includes the site of the Mitchell-Dellenback House, which is located on the south side of the Ararat River. Tom Perry can be reached at freestateofpatrik@yahoo.com and the J. E. B. Stuart Birthplace's website is www.jebstuart.org.


Matching grants now available to Virginia dam owners

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation today announced the opening of a new grant round for the Virginia Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund, which supports projects that help dam owners and Virginia localities enhance public safety and reduce the risk of dam failures and property damage from

flooding. A total of \$5 million in matching grants is available for dam safety projects. The fund is managed by the Virginia Resources Authority on behalf of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The fund provides financial assistance to dam owners for a wide

range of eligible activities, including dam repair and upgrades, hazard mitigation efforts and engineering studies. "Protecting Virginians from dam failures and flooding is one of our most important responsibilities," said Acting DCR Director Andrew Smith. "These grants help communities strengthen critical infrastructure, address known risks and build a safer future." Dam owners in Virginia are responsible for the safe operation and maintenance of their dams. In the event of a failure, dam owners are responsible for any downstream damage. "Many dams across Virginia were built decades ago and require modernization to meet current safety standards," said DCR Chief Dam Safety Engineer Andrea Henry. "Through this grant program, we're ensuring that owners and localities have access to the resources needed

to safeguard lives and property." All grants are reimbursements and require between a 10-30% match. The maximum amount per grant will be determined based on amounts requested for eligible projects, application scores and available funds. Requests must be submitted by 4 p.m., March 31, 2026. Grants are offered to local government or privately owned dams across two project type categories: Type 1 projects Up to \$1 million is available for initial engineering studies for dams. Type 2 projects: Up to \$4 million is available for final plans and construction. Go to www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/dam-safety-funding to download the grant manual. For more information, contact your regional dam safety engineer or email dam@dcr.virginia.gov.



*In Loving  
Memory of  
Robin Lee  
Hiatt*

*as you celebrate  
Christmas with Jesus*

Death's power is limited----  
It cannot eradicate memories  
Or slay love  
It cannot destroy even a threadbare faith  
Or permanently hobble the smallest hope in God  
It cannot permeate the soul  
And it cannot cripple the spirit  
It merely separates us for awhile  
That is the only power death can claim  
-----No more  
Donna VanLiere  
The Christmas Shoes

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# Young voices shine in annual creative writing contest

Local students put their imaginations to work for the annual Creative Writing Contest sponsored by The Enterprise. From short stories to poems, entries from area schools showcased humor, creativity, and insight, giving judges a glimpse into the vibrant ideas flourishing in classrooms across the commu-

nity. We appreciate every entry. Each one made us smile, and we hope you enjoy them as much as we do. Below, you'll find the honorable mentions from this year's contest, highlighting the imagination and talent of local students.

The participating local schools and corresponding abbreviations are:  
Blue Ridge Elementary School (BRES)  
Meadows of Dan Elementary School (MODE)  
Woolwine Elementary School (WES)  
Patrick County High School (PCHS)

## Fourth through Seventh Grade Entries

### Fourth Grade

**Living Christmas Presents!**  
**By Harper Shelton**  
*WES*

Hi! I am Holly. It is finally Christmas Eve night in Ireland. I am an only child; my parents are Thomas and Grace. I sneak to the tree, just to see if Santa had visited, and I see my presents. I see a new trampoline, hippo stuffie, Unplugged book, and lastly an iPad. But, something was weird, the presents were...moving! I started feeling a little scared, so I yelled "Mom and Dad come here." So, they came downstairs and asked "What's wrong?" "Do you see that?" I replied. My parents tucked me back into bed, with a kiss on the forehead and "Good Night." I lay there wondering if my parents were blind or if I was dreaming. But you know, after this, I can't sleep.

One could say, I am feeling mischievous, or maybe just curious. So, I went back downstairs and I saw my presents; they were drinking hot chocolate. I was feeling brave, so I crawled under the tree and imagined I was one of those spy kids. I got to see the presents eating candy canes, and putting together some brand new gingerbread houses that we purchased earlier that day from a local store. I also watched them making our new ornament kits.

Feeling brave, I rolled into the kitchen, behind the counter while whispering Christmas song lyrics. But, I rolled right into two elves, who were just having a good time. I tried to scurry, but, THEY SAW

ME! I tried to act normal, but what came out of my mouth was, "What's up, party people?" I was soooooooo embarrassed. But why, my presents seem to be LIVING. My hippo stuffie even asked if I was the pizza guy. I told them "I am the child that lives here." We laughed and giggled and played for a bit. I was no longer scared, but still thought it was weird.

We must have played most of the night, because I could hear footsteps. I knew my parents would be coming down soon to make their morning coffee. I tiptoed up the stairs and crawled into bed, pretending to be asleep. I realized my parents were just checking on me as they went to the restroom. So, I quietly returned downstairs. I didn't see my gifts at all, it was almost like they had disappeared!

I started to get stressed while searching, evidently they were outside and returned through the kitchen door. We continued having fun together until I could hear my parents moving upstairs. This time they would be coming down for their coffee. I said, "Shhhhhh" they're coming. The gifts looked at each other and then at me and the trampoline said "Who are they?" Evidently, parents are people they have never heard of. But, they all went back under the tree. I quietly, but quickly ran upstairs and pretended to be asleep again, so our family could come downstairs together for Christmas morning!

Christmas morning, everything seemed normal, except, I was super tired! My presents were wrapped, but they were the same living presents I

had played with the night before. It was the most magical Christmas ever!

**Santa and the Missing Girl**  
**By Tanner Whitt**  
*MODE*

Santa and the Elf realized it was morning so they couldn't fly back to town to give the missing girl her present. When they arrived at the house, they looked in the bed and she wasn't there. The Elf said, "I guess we'll have to wait until night to come back but then it won't be Christmas." Santa realized his sleigh could help give out presents quicker because it was a time machine. He and the Elf hopped back into the sleigh. They traveled back in time to when they were giving presents to the other kids. They then realized that traveling way too far back in time wasn't such a good idea. So, they had to do presents over again. Santa said, "Aw shucks! I don't want to start Christmas all over again." He and the Elf jumped into the sleigh and traveled forward in time until they got it right. He wasn't about to not give the missing girl her present. Afterwards, they went back to the North pole. Santa said, "I can finally relax!" The unknown girl said, "Santa?" as she was climbing out of the sleigh. Santa was shocked because the missing girl had been in the sleigh the whole time sleeping and they didn't even know it. All Santa could say was "Uh-oh!!" and gave her the biggest huge ever.

### Fifth Grade

**PRESENTS**  
**By Brody Meredith**  
*BRES*  
P - Pretty  
R - Red  
E- Elves  
S - Shiny  
E - Exchange  
N - Nice  
T- Under THE Tree  
S- Sparkling

**TOYS**  
T-Toys  
O-Obos  
Y- Yoyos  
S- Sleds

**Trees**  
**By Brody Meridith**  
*BRES*  
T- Twinkles  
R - Rotates  
E Enormous  
E Electric  
S - Sparkles

**Lights**  
**By Kasen Rupert**  
*BRES*

### Sixth Grade

**Snowmen**  
**By Jack Dupstadt**  
*BRES*  
S - Snow  
N - Nice  
O - Oval  
W - White  
M - Motionless  
E - Exciting  
N - Neat

**Sleigh**  
**By MacKenzie Cain**  
*BRES*  
S - Snow  
L - Lovely  
E - Exciting  
I - Icy  
G - Guided  
H - Happiness!

**Reindeer**  
**By Brody Scales**  
*BRES*  
R- Runs  
E - Energy  
I - Interesting  
N - Night Time  
D - Deer  
E - Ears  
E- Eve  
R - Rudolph

**Bobby The Snowman**  
**By Lettie Moricle**  
*WES*

Once upon a time, there was a really big blizzard and people could not get out of their homes. It was like.... maybe an avalanche? All the people were in their houses except Bobby. Bobby had gotten stuck in the snow. At first, he screamed for help, but then he knew that no one could hear him. I mean the people were in their houses. After he screamed for help his

L - Lovely  
I - Inside  
G - Glowing  
H - High Up  
T - Tonight  
S - Sparkles

**Holidays**  
**By Jase Bowman**  
*BRES*  
H- Home  
O - Others  
L- Love Them  
I - Interesting  
D- Dangerous for Bank Accounts  
A - Always special  
Y- You Enjoy!  
S - Stress

**The Christmas Miracle**  
**By Zoey Mabe**  
*WES*

It was three days before Christmas at the Maxwell family. So far, every kid there was behaving and writing their Christmas list, except for one kid, a boy named Adam Maxwell. He was noisy and disruptive and could never sit still. All the kids laughed and taunted, one kid even said "You'll never get anything for Christmas!" He always wondered why he was like this, but his mom still believed he could do some-

throat started itching and hurting. Then he thought to himself, "Maybe I can eat some snow, I mean it is edible." So he ate snow until he couldn't eat anymore. So that became Bobby's daily diet, well, at least before the snow melted.

He kept eating and eating it every day wondering when the snow would melt. Then he started feeling weird because he was eating so much snow, but he didn't think it would make him feel funny. He went to sleep and had this weird dream about turning into a snowman. He didn't think it meant anything, but when he woke up he didn't feel weird anymore. He thought it was just normal to feel fine after not feeling well, but then he noticed that for some reason he couldn't move. He didn't know why, but he thought it was because he had on 6 layers of jackets, a long sleeve shirt, two pairs of sweatpants, and a beanie. He barely could remember anything that happened before the blizzard.

Then he looked down at his feet and saw snow. He tried to wipe it off but more snow just piled on. He was super confused! Then he rubbed his face because it was very cold. He looked down at his hands and they had become sticks! Then he touched his nose and it was a carrot! "Oh, no! Oh, no, I'm a snowman!" But then he thought it was really cool because he didn't get cold.

Suddenly all the snow just disappeared. He tried to move again and he still couldn't. Then he noticed a snowgirl and everything just went silent, and she winked and said, "It's really not that bad to be a snowman or girl! All you have to do is get used to it!" "But... but what about my family?" Bobby asked. "Well, I'm really sorry to say that ever since you became a snowman, they just forgot about you," replied the snowgirl. "Oh!" Bobby said. "So they don't know who I am now?" "No, they don't remember you, but you have a snow family and we are the most loyal family!" said the snowgirl. "Really? I already have a loyal family and I miss them very much. I want to be with my own family for Christmas."

Suddenly the sun came out very brightly and melted him. He had said the magic words of family being

thing. "You can do it sweetheart," she assured him, but it never worked. He tried and tried to be normal. He tried to sit still in class, but he couldn't. He even tried to color in the lines during free time, but he still couldn't.

It was Christmas Eve, and the kids were getting ready to go to bed. They were putting on their pajamas and brushing their teeth. Adam did too, hoping he could sleep so Santa could come. He stayed up until 11:30 PM. He rolled over, shifted to his left side, then to his right side, and even repositioned his pillow, but still couldn't sleep. He thought about what his mom said. The words "You can do it sweetheart," echoed in his mind. Finally, he rolled over towards the window, wished upon a star, and went to sleep. He woke up just as everyone else, on Christmas morning. As everyone else rushed down the stairs, excited to open their gifts, Adam only walked sluggishly.

As everyone passed around presents, Adam was last. He opened the only present that was left for him, and unwrapped it carefully. Inside there was a bell. Just a "normal" bell. He rang it but no one could hear it. "Awe, it must be broken," his mom said. Adam was confused. "What do you mean?" he asked. "I can hear it, can't you?" but no one could. Adam didn't care; he loved his bell. He later learned that every time he rang the bell, he could focus and sit still. He used the bell every day. Unknowingly, his mother said "I always knew you could do it." Little did both of them know they couldn't do it without Santa.

the most important thing at Christmas. Even though he had been offered another family, he knew that he already had the best family in the world!

**A Mouse's First Christmas**  
**By Skylar LeBlond**  
*WES*

One Christmas Eve night there was a little mouse that was sleeping by the Christmas tree to the sound of Christmas carols. Around midnight there was a sound that woke the mouse. The sound was loud, but cheerful.

"Ho,Ho,Ho!"  
The mouse was confused; he had never heard a sound like that, but he had just been born that year. The mouse got up and looked around. Then he saw it! A man in red had come down the chimney! The mouse was scared. He thought someone had broken into the house! Then the man in red came into full view, he was in the living room and the mouse could see him clearly. The man had a big fluffy white beard, dark brown eyes, and a bag full of gifts.  
"Santa!"  
"Hello there, little mouse, I heard this is your first Christmas," Santa said with joy.

The mouse nodded. "Yes! This is my very first Christmas!" The mouse was very excited.  
Santa began going through his bag of gifts as if looking for something. "Ah, yes, here we go." Santa took out a small wrapped gift and said, "Your present." Santa put the small gift next to the mouse. "Make sure you don't open this until morning."

The mouse nodded, "Okay, Santa!"  
Santa waved to the mouse. "Goodbye, little mouse, see you next year." Santa went up the chimney, and the mouse went back to where he was sleeping. Just as the mouse was going back to sleep he heard something off in the distance.  
"Merry Christmas and a happy new year!" and then the mouse happily went back to sleep.  
The next morning the mouse woke up to the sound of children running downstairs. The mouse got up  
(See Mouse p. 2)



# Mouse

(cont. from page 1)

and went over to where his present was and immediately ripped open the gift and saw what it was. The mouse gasped! “A toy train!!! It’s just what I wanted!” The mouse played with the toy train all day.

Later that night the mouse looked out the window. He spoke to himself. “I wonder what Christmas will be like next year?” The mouse fell asleep and dreamed of the Christmases to come.

***The Case of the Missing Cookies***  
**By Charlee Shuff**  
*WES*

It’s not a federal law, but stealing cookies should be a felony- especially if it’s Santa’s cookies.

One Christmas Eve, Noel was setting up the traditional cookies and milk. She was stacking the cookies very strategically on a plate and pouring the milk into a glass at a certain angle so it didn’t spill.

Being very curious, Noel’s dog, Rudolph, shuffled through the kitchen to find out what she was doing. Knowing that Rudolph loved cookies, Noel pushed him away before he could get into any mischief.

She finished setting up the surprise for Santa right before her mom said, “Time for bed!” Noel sprinted to her bed and crawled under the covers. Just like every other kid on Christmas Eve, she was too ecstatic to even try to fall asleep. Surprisingly, once she closed her eyes she dozed off within a matter of minutes with Rudolph snuggled peacefully at her feet.

Bang! Suddenly Noel and Rudolph awoke from their peaceful sleep. Rudolph hopped out of the bed swiftly, and Noel followed behind. Once they got to the kitchen Noel realized all of the cookies were gone, but the presents still had not arrived from Santa’s sleigh!

“Someone ate Santa’s cookies!” Noel exclaimed. “There’s a thief walking around munching on Santa’s cookies and Rudolph and I are going to catch the culprit!”

First, they scrambled around the house searching for clues. They looked up and down, left to right, but still found absolutely nothing. They were getting very frustrated until Rudolph found a clue!

He found a jingle bell on the kitchen floor. Rudolph brought the jingle bell over to Noel. “Finally, a clue!” Noel shouted. She thought to herself about how a jingle bell would randomly get there. “An elf! Only an elf would accidentally leave a jingle bell! Where would we find an elf? The North Pole!” Noel shouted. Rudolph barked in agreement.

She put on her winter coat and Rudolph’s leash on his collar. It was bitterly cold outside, but they were determined to catch the culprit.

They had no idea where to go. Suddenly Rudolph started glowing! “Rudolph, what’s happening?” Noel exclaimed. All of a sudden, Rudolph turned into Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer! “Wow!” Noel shrieked. She hopped on Rudolph’s back expecting him to just trot all the way to the North Pole, but to her surprise, Rudolph’s hooves lifted off the ground and they took off on a journey to the North Pole. It took a very long time, but they managed to make it to the North Pole without any complications- well, that is, other than a little frostbite.

Noel hopped off Rudolph’s back and started looking around to see where they could find the guilty elf. No one was even around. Then Noel realized that it was almost time for Santa to be leaving with his reindeer to deliver presents all around the world.

“We need to sneak into Santa’s workshop.” Noel explained. “The only question is: How?”

So Noel and Rudolph softly walked their way to the workshop while trying not to get caught. They made it to one side of the workshop where they found a reindeer door. Through the door, they saw an elf dressed in all black. This looked very suspicious since elves usually wore vibrant Christmas colors. Noel noticed something interesting. When the elf turned around, he was eating something. She realized what had just happened right before her eyes! They had just found the culprit!

“Aha!” Noel screeched. Abruptly, the elf darted off! Without hesitating, Noel scurried off to catch the elf with Rudolph behind her. Candy canes were flying everywhere! Red and green ribbons that were hanging up were now on the ground! They made a complete circle around the workshop and landed in the same room from where they started the chase. They were all so out of breath, but Noel took this situation as an opportunity.

“Why did you steal the cookies we had out for Santa?” Noel asked.

“Well, I have always been jealous of the attention Santa gets, so I wanted to live a little bit of the

dream.” explained the elf.

“Oh, I didn’t know someone would feel that way, but I understand,” Noel said. “Let’s make a deal. If you stop stealing people’s cookies, I will lay out a separate plate of cookies for you every year. Does that sound like a deal?” Noel asked.

“Sure!” agreed the elf. Then, Noel hopped on Rudolph’s back and they went home.

“Good morning,” Noel’s mom whispered. Noel woke up and realized it was all a dream. Regardless, Noel decided to put out an extra plate of cookies every year- just in case.

***Christmas for the Animals***  
**By Emmalyn Hubbard**  
*WES*

Once upon a time, there were people throwing a Christmas party. They had a little girl named Madison. Through her window she watched her puppies play in the snow. She started to think about why animals don’t have Christmas too? She ran to the kitchen where her mom was making Christmas cookies for the Christmas party planned for later that same day. Madison asked her mom why the animals didn’t have Christmas like we do. Her mom didn’t know how to answer her, so she sent Madison to her dad. She asked her dad the same question. He had no idea either, so he said, “I don’t know darling.” She was disappointed in her parents which made her sad.

Madison ran back to her mom and asked if she would ask the people who had animals to bring their animals with them to the party. Her mom said, “Yes, but just let me finish the cookies first.” Madison said thank you to her mom. She ran to her room without telling her mother why she wanted the pets to be invited.

Madison started to plan her pet Christmas party. She needed to ask her mom to take her to the store to get some things for the party. She planned everything out perfectly. She would bring the pets to her room and give them treats. Suddenly she realized she didn’t have a Christmas tree in her room. She asked her dad to take her to the Christmas tree farm to chop down a small tree for her room. Her dad agreed and they headed to the Christmas tree farm. When they got there Madison spotted the perfect tree. It was the perfect size and color, and it had the perfect branches. She ran to the tree and said “I want this one, please!” Her dad cut the tree down and put it on the truck. She was so happy about the tree and the plan.

When they got home her mom said she told the people to bring their pets to the party. Madison had almost forgotten to ask her mom to take her to the store to get the pet party things. She asked her mom if they could go and her mom said that they could. When they got there Madison went straight to the pet aisle and found what she needed. They returned home and her mom said that the guests would be there soon, so Madison began setting up everything. She had to hurry, so she could meet her pet guests and take them to her room for the pet Christmas party.

The guests arrived with their pets and Madison took the animals to her room and gave them the food she had planned for the party. The animals had their meal and then it was time to play. She gave them toys for their presents. They played for about an hour and then went to their owners with their toys in their mouths. It was time for them to leave.

Madison thanked her mom and dad. She asked them if she could have a pet Christmas party again next year, and they said that she could. Afterall, don’t you think that pets should enjoy Christmas, to o?

***A Christmas Mystery***  
**By Monce Ortega**  
*WES*

We were getting ready to go outside. It’s Christmas Eve and it looked like a winter wonderland outside. This was the first time it had snowed like this in years. My sister and I were really excited. When we stepped into the snow the snow was almost up to our waist! It was really hard to walk, but we were able to climb up on a big hill that was perfect for sledding down. We knew we were going to have the time of our lives!

First we had a competition on who could build the better snowman. We went all out. I found different types of hats to put on my snowman while she found some funny sunglasses to put on hers. We had to judge ourselves and we decided that her snowman was better. Then it was time for igloos. It was kind of hard to make them stand, but I had a strategy. My

strategy was to build blocks instead of just piling up snow. Thanks to my strategy, I won.

Next was a snowball fight. Surprisingly we both threw pretty hard and it wasn’t that difficult to form the snow into balls. The rule was that the first one to hit the other one ten times won. We were in the middle of the fight when my sister hit what we thought was a rock. The “rock” stood up! It was not that tall, but not that short either. It seemed kind of furry and it didn’t move. It just stood there. We both froze, looked at each other, and started running for our lives.

Once we got home we locked all the doors. Our mom asked us what was going on and we explained to her what we had seen. We all looked out the window, but there was nothing there, so she thought we were imagining things. Although we were both scared, we knew we had to catch it or at least figure out what it was.

The next day we went out again, but instead of playing we were setting up a trap to catch this monster. When we got back inside we took turns sitting by the window and watching the trap. We waited all day and nothing happened, but on the second day, it was different. I was on duty and was about to fall asleep when I heard the bell we had installed in case one of us fell asleep. So I ran outside to the trap. At first I was scared, but I worked up my courage and slowly opened the trap. I saw it! My sister joined me and she was as surprised as I was!

It was a dog, not old, but not young either. It was the cutest thing I had ever seen. It was black and white and its eyes were blue. Surprisingly, it wasn’t scared of me. It even came up to me, so I picked it up and carried it back to our house. We groomed it, fed it, and gave it a shower. After a lot of begging and pleading, we convinced our parents to let us keep it. Safe to say, this was the best Christmas present ever!

***Working At The North Pole***  
**By Molly Frable**  
*WES*


It was early on a winter morning and the snow was falling from the sky. I live in the snow and so did my family. During a tense snowball fight they got knocked over! If you couldn’t already guess I’m a snowman! My name is Casper. I don’t know why I’m named that, but I suppose a little kid named Caleb named me, and technically made me. Anyways, it’s almost Christmas, so all snowmen will be called to the North Pole. Now you may be asking why snowmen are going to the North Pole. Well, we snowmen have to help make the toys. Yes, it’s not just the elves. Honestly, we snowmen do not get enough credit.

Tonight is the night! I can already feel the Christmas spirit as I gaze up at the sky. Then suddenly it happens! I’m teleported to the North Pole. Almost immediately elves, snowmen, and reindeer are getting rushed around in all different directions. Soon after I register everything, Santa appears on top of a tree which is very exciting for me since I’m a big fan. Cheers roar and then a hush falls upon the crowd as we all look up at Santa as he speaks. “Let’s all make this a merry Christmas!” he shouts, and the crowd erupts in agreement and cheers.

After his brief speech I hurried inside the toy factory to begin making toys. An elf starts shouting orders, so bossy those elves, but nonetheless, I begin making dolls, dinosaurs, trains, and whatever else is highest in demand this Christmas. I make toys until I run out of supplies. Then I have to ask those bossy elves for help. I hop on the stage to ask the elf in charge for more supplies. The elf clicks his tongue in annoyance, even though the other elves have run out before me! “You snowmen are so wasteful with supplies,” the elf complains. I can’t control the amount of supplies I was given!

After I finish all the gifts I needed to make, I begin helping with the reindeer. If you ask me, they are gross, but I’m stuck washing them! I have to admit though, some of them are indeed cute. I look around and it’s just me! No one else has finished making gifts yet, and there are SO many reindeer to wash! Santa really needs to start paying me for this. After what feels like hours I finally finish washing them with zero help.


Finally, it’s Christmas Eve. Santa is gone delivering gifts, snowmen are packing up, and elves are drinking hot chocolate. In a shockingly short time, Santa arrives back. Now, usually the snowmen go back to wherever they were made, and they all did, but not me. I look around confused. Suddenly Santa lands in front of me. “You have real spirit, Casper! (See Working p.4)




December is the time for remembering the past & reaching toward the future.  
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

As we remember the great events & programming we hosted in 2025, we are excited to continue to grow & expand those offerings in 2026.

FROM THE STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS OF THE PATRICK COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, WE WISH EVERYONE A HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND MAY OUR COMMUNITY CONTINUE TO GROW IN THE COMING YEAR!





**JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON**

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love, joy and peace this  
Christmas and throughout  
the New Year.



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Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,  
good will toward men. Luke 2:14

*Happy  
Holidays*

From Our Family to Yours

Wishing you infinite moments of  
joy and connection throughout  
this special season.

*Thanks for bringing so much joy and  
meaning to our year with your trust and your visits.  
We look forward to seeing you again soon in the new year!*



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holiday season is filled with  
good times, love and laughter.*



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**Season's  
Greetings**

*"For the Lord Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth."  
Psalms 47:2*



To our dear friends and  
customers at Christmastime,  
warm wishes for a merry  
and meaningful season,  
and tremendous thanks for  
being a part of our year!

*Mattie B's*

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*We wish you a Merry Christmas and a  
Blessed and Happy New Year*

*Johnny and Wilma, Donald and Marilyn, Shane and Emily, Stan and April, Adrian*



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a Season Filled With

*Health, Happiness  
and Love*

Merry Christmas and very best wishes to our family of  
friends. We appreciate every moment you've chosen to  
spend with us, and we thank you for your support  
throughout the year.



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# Working

(cont. from page 2)

I want you to stay. Do you accept this invitation?" I nod vigorously. So I drink cold chocolate everyday..... until next Christmas.

*The Best Christmas Ever*  
By Raina Newsome  
WES

Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Lilly and she loved Christmas. Lilly loved decorating her house with Christmas lights and other Christmas decorations. She had always celebrated Christmas with her dad, but four months ago he passed away with cancer. So she was not feeling the Christmas spirit this year. While Lilly is going through this hard time, her mom has to go on a business trip and Lilly is going to miss Christmas with her.

## Seventh Grade

By James Pombo  
HRMS

As the snow-white minivan pulled up the drive-way, Aunt Ellie ran out of the house. She was excited to see her nephew and her niece. Henry and Lily ran out of the car to hug Aunt Ellie, while Thomas was getting their bags. He was grateful for his sister’s invitation, but Christmas had become just a checklist to him: Gifts Bought, Money Spent, Energy Gone. He couldn’t quite express joy for Christmas the way his kids could anymore. All he wanted to do was go to sleep and make Christmas pass quickly. Aunt Ellie’s house was a farmhouse. It was bigger than most because it had three floors. The living room, kitchen, and dining room were on the first floor, the bedrooms were on the second floor, and the writing room was on the third floor. Aunt Ellie was a good writer, with more than five books released. She invited the family over every Christmas, but this was the first Christmas that they could celebrate together. They went inside and found the tree all lit up.

“The same tree that mom and dad used to have.” Aunt Ellie said, handing Thomas a cup of spiced cider.

Later that evening, everyone was asleep except Thomas. As he roamed the halls, he stopped, staring at the same old Christmas tree, the one that he always found presents waiting for him. He never received presents anymore. He gave presents to his kids but never got any back.

The next morning on Christmas Day, Thomas woke up to the sound of kids running, coffee brewing, and bacon sizzling. As he got up from his bed, his kids swung open the door and jumped on his bed.

“WAKE UP!” the kids yelled, “IT’S CHRISTMAS!” “Fine, fine. Go down to your aunt, I’ll be there soon,” Thomas said to them.

The children ran down, ready to open their presents. Thomas slowly got up, got dressed, and came downstairs as he promised. Ellie was there, coffee in hand, offering a cup to him.

“How many times have they asked to open the presents?” Thomas asked while grabbing the cup, “400?” Ellie chuckled. They all sat down on the couch, Ellie and Thomas watched Henry and Lily.

“Ok, time to open presents,” Thomas said, watching the smiles on their faces and smiling himself.

After everyone opened their presents, there was one left. The tag wasn’t Ellie, not Henry, and not Lily, but Thomas. Thomas slowly opened the gift and inside was a cute little snow globe. The snow globe contained statues of everyone: Lily, Henry, Aunt Ellie, and even Thomas. Thomas was so happy that he leaped up and jumped around, but it wasn’t the snow globe that made him so happy, it was the warm feeling that people cared. Some people would call it Christmas Spirit, but I would call it Family and Love, because no one can be happy without family, friends, or love.

*Time for Christmas*  
By Natalie Worley  
WES

It’s time for Christmas, laughter in the air,  
Time for love and kindness everywhere.  
It’s time for sledding and time for snow,  
Time for Santa to say, “Ho, Ho, Ho!”  
It’s time for twinkling lights shining high,  
Time for snowflakes falling from the sky.  
It’s time for baking cookies that are so sweet,  
Time for all our favorite things to eat.  
It’s time for gifts and Christmas cheer,  
Time for the best time of the year!

*The Mission*  
By Scarlett Greer  
WES

One snowy evening, Rudolph decided to leave the North Pole on a mission. He made sure Santa knew he left, so he had written a note. “Santa, I am leaving the North Pole on a mission.”

Rudolph was not sure where to go first. He came across a little drummer boy. Rudolph said, “Hi! What is your name, little guy?” The drummer boy, in a daze, was silent for a moment. Then again, Rudolph asked, “Hello? What is your name?” The little boy responded now, saying, “Oh! sorry, my name is Liam but most call me Li for short. What’s your name?” “My name is Rudolph and my nose glows, so be warned in case I accidentally scare you.” “Ok,” Liam replied. Rudolph suggested, “Hey, want to come with me on my mission for Santa?” “Sure,” Liam said. So Liam and Rudolph decided to head South. They showed up in a town with people, streets, and shops. Nearby, they saw a snowman. Wanting a closer look, they went up to it, and touched its arm. Suddenly, the snowman came to life! “Merry Christmas!” the snowman said. “Who are you!?” Rudolph and Liam spoke at the same time. “Me?” the snowman asked. “Yes, you,” Liam replied. “I am Frosty The Snowman! And if I may ask, who are you?” “I am Rudolph and this is my friend Liam. We are on a mission for Santa! Want to tag along?” “Of, course!” the snowman answered.

They finally arrived at their mission destination, The Ice Castle. They knocked on the door and a little penguin showed up. The penguin asked them, “What brought you here?” “We are here to see the Ice King,”

So Lilly has to spend Christmas with her grandparents that live in Maine. Lilly lives in California so she has to fly there. She does not see them much and she does not know how much they love Christmas. There are Christmas lights all around the house and tinsel around the porch railing. There are Christmas pillows on the rocking chair and lots more decorations. Lilly gets out of the car with her mom and walks up to the porch. Her grandparents greet them with four cups of hot chocolate. They all talk for a while but the only thing that Lilly can think about is not spending Christmas with her dad. Eventually, her mom say, “I have to go and get on the flight for my trip.” Then she turns to Lilly and says, “I will be back in two weeks. Try to have fun.” Then she gives Lilly a big hug, gets back in her car and drives away.

Rudolph replied. The penguin let them in and took them to the Ice King who was sitting on his throne. “Who sent you?” the Ice King asked. “Santa sent us to ask for your help!” replied Liam. “What exactly does he need help with?” inquired the King. “There is a big ice storm coming! He needs your help in building a wall around the North Pole,” Rudolph explained. “Yes! I’ll do it,” the King agreed.

He summoned his millions of henchmen penguins and they all headed to Santa’s home. Once they arrived at the North Pole, they drank hot cocoa and spent two hours figuring out how to build the wall. They finished the construction of the wall right before midnight. The storm started 30 minutes later. They all spent the night at Santa’s home because they were scared of the big storm. All of them went to bed in their cozy pajamas and slept tight with no bed bugs to bite. This just goes to show you that people who work together can really make a difference!

*Christmas Night*  
By Aubree Bowman  
WES

Look at the Christmas lights  
while getting the cookies ready for the night.  
Don’t forget the carrots  
for the baby reindeer and their parents.  
Watch the snow fall off the roof  
before Santa Clause gets to you.  
Go fast to sleep without a peep  
while the reindeer come right down your street.  
While you are sleeping in bed  
Santa Clause and his reindeer deer are flying  
above your head.

*My Christmas*  
By Cassidy Urbach  
WES

On Christmas Eve my family and I have a lot to do. The whole day we are all wrapping presents and making food. My mom always cooks dinner for us while my dad and I wrap presents. It’s really hard to wrap presents when there are two dogs in the way! Having to hide presents is also very difficult. One time last year I was wrapping my mom’s present and she walked in with a big box and told me to wrap it for my dad. I had to shove all of her presents under my bed as fast as I could so she wouldn’t see, because her presents were not completely wrapped.

This day normally goes by very slowly because I just want it to be Christmas so badly, and all I do is think about Christmas and what I’m going to do. My mom’s food is really good. On Christmas Eve she makes oven roasted chicken with green beans, potatoes, and sweet Hawaiian rolls. After dinner we gather in the living room and watch a Christmas movie and eat popcorn. Afterwards, my family and I go into our own rooms and go to bed. It takes me a while to go to sleep because I just want it to be the day of the best holiday ever, Christmas!

IT’S FINALLY CHRISTMAS!! Every year on Christmas morning my parents and I wake up really early to open our presents. It’s more like I wake up early and barge into their room yelling, “IT’S CHRISTMAS!” I always have to wait for them to get their coffee because every year they say, “Our coffee is important!” So every year it takes forever to open presents. Every year my mom and I wake up first and I beg her to let me open my stocking so I can at least see a little of what I got. My parents always get little presents for my pets so they don’t feel left out. Mostly we get them treats, lots and lots of treats.

Once we are finished opening our presents, we clean up all the wrapping paper and watch a Christmas movie and eat candy. Christmas is the one time of the year that I can eat candy all day. We normally watch the Grinch but sometimes we watch the Elf. Halfway through the movie Mom gets up and starts making dinner. For dinner she makes ham, mashed potatoes or twice baked potatoes, green beans or corn, and Hawaiian rolls or she will make her own bread. When it is dinner time we eat. Later we make popcorn and watch another Christmas movie. We finally have to go to bed which is sad, because being a kid, I never want Christmas to end!

*The Time I Caught The Elf*  
By Christian Rakes  
WES

There are so many good things about Christmas. For example, I love the joy of opening presents, the tear of the wrapping paper, the anticipation, and the smile on my family’s faces. But, here’s the downside of Christmas. Think about all the money that is spent on Christmas every year. But that doesn’t even come close to the worst part of Christmas, the Elf. He always makes a huge mess, and this year, I am determined to catch him!

So here’s the plan. I will need a camera, a trap, and perseverance, because this might take some time. Lucky for me, my grandma gave me a Go-Pro camera for Christmas last year. Now all I need is a trap, and courage, which I have yet to find. I will use a wooden board for the base, some PVC pipe for support, and some metal wire for the walls and roof.

Now it’s time to set the trap. I put the trap on the kitchen table and the camera on the bar. I also fill

Lilly’s grandma says, “It’s cold out here, so let’s go inside.” Lilly thought there were a lot of Christmas decorations outside, but, oh, when she went inside she was so surprised. There was a massive Christmas tree, tons of other Christmas decorations, and gifts everywhere. Lilly happens to notice that the Christmas tree does not have any lights or ornaments on it. Her grandpa says, “We waited for you to decorate it.” Lilly was so happy to decorate the Christmas tree!

Before she knew it a week had gone by and Lilly was having so much fun drinking hot chocolate, making Christmas cookies, and telling stories by the fire. Lilly wakes up the next morning and realizes that it is Christmas Day. She runs out into the living room and sees lots of presents under the tree. Lilly’s grandparents had given her the best Christmas ever!

the trap with snacks to lure the Elf in. Now, I wait. After about an hour, I get up to go to the bathroom, and as soon as I turn my back, I hear a loud snap. I caught him! I am so happy. Then, I wake up from a very weird dream. I get up and go downstairs for breakfast and I look at the bar and there is the Elf. I have actually caught him after all.

By Maciahh Marshall  
WES

It was late at night, and I heard a noise outside, so I got up off my bed and went to my window. I looked outside and didn’t see any dogs, cats, burglars, bears, or wolves. I saw nothing, so I wobbled back to my bed and sat down, laid back, pulled the blanket over my head, and slowly started drifting asleep.

But as soon as I was about to fall asleep, I heard a very loud bang coming from my living room. When I heard that, I jolted up and grabbed the nearest thing to me, which was a bat, and started going downstairs very slowly and cautiously. On the last step, I dropped the bat and saw a very big man wearing an outfit with the colors of red, black, white, and a dash of yellow on his belt. He was putting presents under the tree and eating chocolate chip cookies with a cold glass of white milk.

When he turned around, he looked at me with a gleaming face and slowly started to fade away. At the last second the man told me, “Merry Christmas, and I’ll see you next year,” and he waved goodbye to me as he faded away. I instantly started to sprint back to my room and jumped in my bed, closed my eyes, and finally went to sleep.

As the next morning hit, I got up, still a little tired. I walked downstairs and saw so many presents under my tree. One of the presents had a card on it saying, “Don’t be a bad boy next year, or you’ll get coal.”

*Snowy Day*  
By Brayden Bowman  
WES

I wake up in the morning, ready to play  
I look outside and it’s snowing today!  
I rush to my closet and put on my boots,  
Then run downstairs to eat some Fruit Loops.  
I walk outside and get my sled,  
I slid down the hill and hit my head.  
I pick up some snow to have a snowball fight,  
Then I throw the snowball with all of my might!  
This is what I do on a snowy day,  
I run around with my friends and play.  
Later I go inside and rest,  
I sleep like a little bird in its nest!

*Christmas Trees*  
By Camden Bullins  
WES

Trees are short and trees are tall,  
Some lose their leaves in the fall.  
Trees are fat and trees are skinny,  
Some are scarce and some are plenty.  
Trees are big and trees are small,  
But Christmas trees are the best of all.

By Blake Miles  
WES

The wind outside made Daisy fearful,  
But the snow afterward made everyone cheerful.  
Daisy sat in her room the next day,  
Hoping to catch a glimpse of Santa’s sleigh.  
Then came Christmas Eve night,  
When Daisy awoke with a terrible fright.  
She looked out the window and saw nothing but snow,  
But later heard an enthusiastic, “Ho, Ho, Ho!”  
Daisy knew that Santa was here,  
But all she could do was cheer.  
She thought of going downstairs to say hey,  
But thought it better to see him leave in his sleigh.  
Daisy told her parents Christmas Eve was the best night,  
Even though the sound on the roof gave her quite a fright.  
Now in the middle of the night, every Christmas Eve,  
You know who Daisy is hoping to see.

*December Dreams*  
By Daylin Blevins  
MODE

Snow drifts down with quiet grace,  
Softly settling on each place,  
Streetlights hum in winter’s air,  
Spreading warmth through nights so bare.  
Whispers float through silver light,  
Candles glowing throughout the night,  
Under winter’s gentle shade,  
Hold the dreams December made.  
Footprints on a moonlit street,  
Where distant stars and silence meet.  
And for a moment all feels new,  
Held in frost and pale blue hue.  
A sip of cocoa, a soft embrace,  
Time slows down in gentle space,  
And in the still of winter’s art,  
Christmas rests within the heart.

(See Seventh Grade Entries p.5)



(cont. from page 4)

***A Christmas Snow***  
**By Blake Wood**  
**MODE**  
Snow oh snow  
With a white glow.  
The wind is a breeze  
The water did freeze  
Christmas near  
It's full of cheer

***Christmas night***  
**By Happy Martin**  
*MODE*  
 Christmas cheer  
 All around to hear  
 Lights up the night  
 Colorful and bright  
 Putting cookies on a plate  
 Hoping Santa won't be late  
 Don't forget the reindeer too  
 Giving them a snack to chew  
 Stockings hanging nice and neat,  
 Fireplace warming up our feet.  
 Everything is calm and still,  
 Waiting for that Christmas thrill.  
 Soon the morning light will

glow,  
Making smiles start to show.  
Presents underneath the tree  
Christmas joy for you and me

**CHRISTMAS**  
By Kaya Reeder  
**BRES**  
C - Christ  
H - Holiday  
R - Reindeer  
I - Icing  
S - Stockings  
T- Trees  
M-Manger  
A - Angels  
S - Santa

***SNOWMEN***  
**By Amelia Bowman**  
*BRES*  
 S - Scarves  
 N - Noses  
 O - Olaf!  
 W White  
 M - Melting  
 E - Exciting  
 N - Nice







Thank you for supporting my small business this year and many to come!

*Merry Christmas!*  
from Cricket & Lisa



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**Merry Christmas & Many thanks for your business this year.**

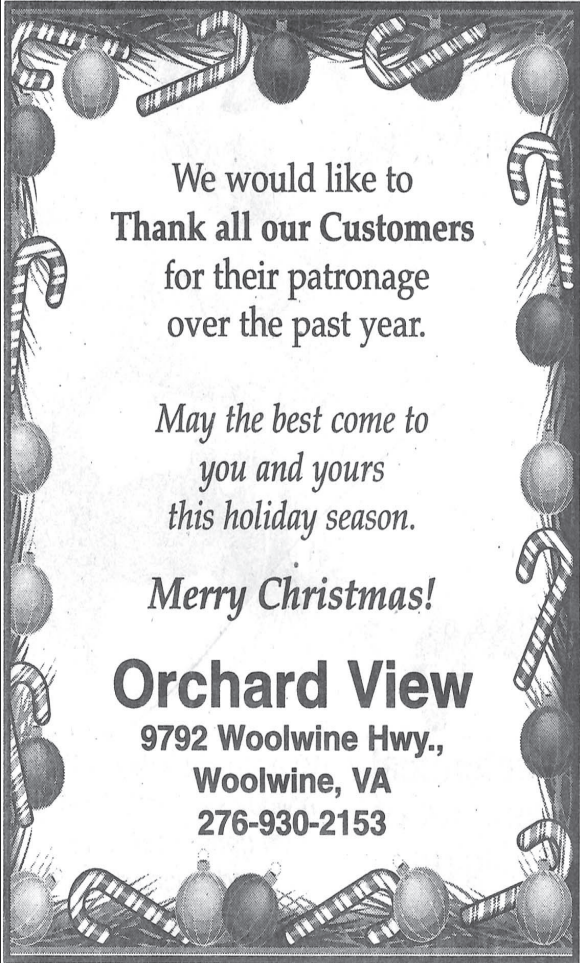
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We would like to Thank all our Customers for their patronage over the past year.

*May the best come to you and yours this holiday season.*

*Merry Christmas!*

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**May Happiness Reside in Your Heart & Home This Christmas**

There's no place like home for the holidays, and we're very grateful to be here with so many good neighbors like you. Thanks for making us feel so welcome in this community with your kindness and friendship.

We hope your holiday season is filled with peace, joy and contentment. Merry Christmas and best wishes to you and yours!




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*Merry Christmas!*



Here's hoping you and your family have a holiday built with old fashioned cheer. Happy Holidays from all of us at...

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For unto us a child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given  
-Isaiah 9:6



Joy to you and yours at this special time of year!

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