BUSINESS & PROGRESS EDITION: OUR COMMUNITY MOVING FORWARD

THE ENTERPRISE

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

Connect Health to expand services with $785,000 federal award

By Taylor Boyd

Connect Health + Wellness will expand its medical and dental services in Patrick County after receiving $785,000 in congressionally directed federal funding.

The funding will allow the federally qualified health center to renovate its Patrick Springs clinic, purchase additional medical equipment, and recruit more healthcare providers to meet growing demand.

U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, D-Alexandria, presented the ceremonial check during a June 30 event attended by representatives from the offices of U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Richmond, U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, and local officials.



Connect Health CEO Marcus Stone addresses those gathered at to Connect Health + Wellness last week for the funding announcement.

Since opening the Patrick Springs clinic in August 2024, Connect Health has treated about 3,000 patients, according to CEO Marcus Stone.

"This is about a 3,000-square-foot building, and we're currently using about 1,500 square feet," Stone said. "We're going to renovate the building so we can use the entirety, and we may actually add a little bit of space, if available."



U.S. Sen. Mark Warner addressed the crowd during his June 30 visit to Connect Health + Wellness in Patrick Springs.

The clinic also plans to purchase equipment to increase capacity and recruit additional providers to expand available services.

"When we started this, it was mainly to improve access to care," Stone said. "We were able to accomplish that in a small space and on a small scale, but now that we've seen the need here, we're ready to improve on that and increase the capacity of the building."

Stone said access to healthcare remains one of the biggest challenges facing rural communities.

"Transportation is one of the biggest challenges residents in rural Southwest Virginia continue to face," he said, adding that provider shortages, long travel distances and financial barriers also make it difficult for people to receive care.

"For about seven years, people in this very community had to travel in multiple di-

(See Connect p. 3)

Arcadian Cafe brings ice cream, community space to Main Street



Owners Justine and Daniel Elliott opened Arcadian Cafe & Ice Cream Parlour in early May in Stuart.

By Taylor Boyd

To keep a space they loved from closing, Daniel and Justine Elliott purchased the former Harvest House Emporium and reopened it as Arcadian Cafe & Ice Cream Parlour.

Justine Elliott said the couple bought the space after Harvest House owner Angel Garner announced she was closing, not because they had originally planned to buy a business.

They took over ownership in early May.

"When she told us that she was closing, I was heartbroken because we really loved what she did with the place," she said. "The milkshakes were so good, and this was kind of our favorite date-night place. I felt like the space was really promising as a community spot for people to hang out with board games, puzzles, and things."

At first, she said, she thought it was a "hair-brained" idea. But she asked her husband, Daniel Elliott, what he thought.

"He was supposed to say 'no, that's crazy,' but instead he said, 'Well, let's ask her some questions and see if she's open to that.' Angel was willing to share her recipes with us, sell us her equipment and give us some tips on starting out," she said. "We just ended up looking at the numbers and were like, 'OK. You know what,

(See Arcadian p. 8)



Brian Jessup said he "just started with nothing and have been blessed by the people of Patrick County" during a June 18 celebration marking the opening of Jessup & Associates' new Main Street office in Stuart. Joining Jessup and his wife, Traci, were family members and friends, including (from left) father-in-law Jerry Love; mother-in-law Rachel Love, in the pink-and-white blouse; Shannon Young; the couple's oldest son, Luke Jessup, and his wife, Emily; contractor Ron Caviness, in the green shirt behind Traci Jessup and Luke Jessup, who completed the building's renovations, and Jessup's father Dwight Jessup, who is standing behind Luke and Emily, wearing a "Sthil" hat.

Jessup reflects on 30 years in business, growth in Patrick County

By Taylor Boyd

Jessup & Associates, PLC marked its 30th anniversary with a ribbon cutting and the opening of a new office on Main Street in Stuart, a milestone owner Brian Jessup said feels both hard-earned and hard to believe.

"I blink and it's gone," he said.

Jessup launched his accounting career with a certified public accounting firm in Danville before returning to Patrick County, where a conversation with his father-in-law, then-Commissioner of Revenue Jerry Love, helped set the stage for his business.

"He called me and said, 'If you plan on coming back to Patrick County, now might be a good time.' So, I came back and started talking to people, and June 17,1996 is when I officially opened," Jessup said.

What began as a one-person operation in the former Hooker Building at the top of Main Street has grown into a firm with 12 employees across its Stuart and Martinsville locations.

"I just started with nothing and have been blessed by the people of Patrick County. The faithful clients that I've had over the years to be able to keep going and grow," Jessup said.

Over the decades, the business expanded beyond its original Stuart office. Jessup later opened an office on Preston Road in Henry County after purchasing a business there, and eventually acquired Accounting & Tax Services in Martinsville, relocating operations to Church Street.

"We had an office on Preston Road in Henry County, I bought a business there. Then, about six years after that, I purchased Accounting & Tax Services in Martinsville, and we moved

(See Jessup p. 13)

Man wanted in multiple counties arrested after pursuit



Robert Allen Trent Jr.

A man wanted on outstanding warrants from five Virginia counties was arrested on Friday, July 3, after authorities said he fled from a traffic stop in Patrick County.

According to the Patrick County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Cameron Adkins attempted to overtake and stop a black Honda Accord shortly after observing it traveling 72 mph in a 55 mph zone.

Authorities said the driver turned onto Connect Road, then Mountain View Loop before stopping on Vipperman Lane. The driver allegedly fled on foot, prompting a search by multiple law enforcement officers.

A short time later, the suspect was located near Rich Creek Drive and Progress Drive. Authorities alleged he again attempted to flee on foot before being taken into custody.

The suspect was identified as Robert Allen Trent Jr., 36, of Cumberland, Va.

According to the sheriff's office, Trent was wanted on outstanding warrants from Carroll, Pulaski, Appomattox, Buckingham and Wythe counties. The warrants include felony probation violation and failure to appear, with underlying charges that include abduction, malicious wounding, assault on a law enforcement officer, DUI, shoplifting and distribution of marijuana.

Trent is being held without bond at the Patrick County Jail.

The Virginia State Police assisted the Patrick County Sheriff's Office with the arrest.

June Branch Report, Patrick County Library







Author, Sarah Addison Allen, said "June is a time when new possibilities unfold, paving the way for personal growth and achievement", and I completely agree. June was such a busy and fun month here at the Patrick Branch. From summer reading to art classes for the young and old, there was something here for everyone.

Cindy Howe's Fantasy Flower painting class was a hit and students learned some important techniques on creating two toned flowers. The one-hour class was just not enough, so plans have been made for a follow up class for August, diving deeper into that aspect of painting. We are so thankful for Cindy and all she does for our library. Her talent and compassion are deeply appreciated.

Leandio's Ice Cream Workshop was delicious! The meeting room smelled like sugar and vanilla for hours after all was said and done. We had ten attendees for this event and luckily, Leandio prepared too much and Kaye and I were able to enjoy a homemade ice cream waffle creation ourselves. Thank you for all your efforts, Leandio. You are amazing and we appreciate you.

Due to summer reading, I have suspended the Homeschool Bookworms programs and everyone understands because they are participating in our Summer Reading Programs, which has been so much fun, not only for the kids but for the staff here as well. Stay tuned for Miss Lisa's part of the report.

Not Your Mother's Book Club met this month and chose Wolf Worm by T. Kingfisher for our next read. I have yet to read a bad T. Kingfisher book, so I am looking forward to the next meeting for sure. Also on June 11th, the Quilting Crew came back for a second time and there were several people in attendance. Sewing machines were set up and the meeting room was filled with conversation and activity. I think the Patrick County Library is a fitting place for this group.

The Retired Teachers Book Club met and had chosen a theme this month. They were queens for the day, each having their own crowns to wear. Their book discussion was on the book titled, The Queen of Sugar Hill by Reshonda Tate, which is the story about actress Hattie McDaniel. One of our beloved and regular patrons, Joanne Hill, led the meeting and showed a YouTube short with Hattie playing the character Mammy in "Gone with the Wind." At the end of the program, Joanne donated all the crowns to the library, which will come in handy for our next castle party. I am so thankful for such thoughtful and creative patrons.

Trivia Night was a huge success. Twenty people made up five teams for the Nature and Animals themed game. Questions like, name ALL the states that have the Appalachian Trail in them, and what is the only marsupial to inhabit the United States and Canada? Team names are always part of the fun and this month was no different. Team names included Roadkill, the Critters, the Rhodos, short for rhododendrons, classic "Team #4", and the Khaotic Kritters. Team Roadkill ended up winning drawstring bags filled with hiking appropriate gear and of course an animal book. They were super excited about their first win.

On Friday, June 26th, Terri Alt from the Virginia Cooperative Extension office, came by and taught several seniors about healthy snacking options that were both easy to create and affordable. There were peanut butter and oatmeal balls, mini mozzarella, tomato and basil "kabobs", and yogurt parfaits for everyone in attendance. She also brought a reusable lunch bag filled with valuable health information to give to those in attendance. Thank you, Terri, for your continued support to our library. Due to scheduling conflicts, I have rescheduled Mahjong 101 for July 10th, so that will be something exciting and new here at the Patrick County Library. I apologize to those who were inconvenienced by having to reschedule.

June was a blast and I can only anticipate that July will be just as cool, even though the July summer temps could be in the three digits. Thank you to my staff who come to work each day, ready to plow through our to-do list and are so kind and compassionate to our patrons. You are all rock stars.

Patrick County Children Summer Reading with Miss Lisa

June was the start of summer reading and it's been filled with lots of fun. In the beginning of June Preschool Storytime, we explored ocean creatures and got the jellyfish vibes. They created their own jellyfish to hang in their rooms and drew ocean creatures with sidewalk chalk outside on the sidewalks. The next week we discovered dinosaurs and created 3D pictures of dinosaurs to frame. The preschoolers then enjoyed a dinosaur carnival with lots of dinosaur games and prizes to choose from. A surprise guest showed up at the carnival that day as well. Pinkie, the Reading Dinosaur, made an appearance and was welcomed by most. Storytime for June ended at the Farmers' Market with a camping experience. A flameless fire was created, along with a teepee and quilts were thrown around the fire for story time all about camping. The children then made their own lanterns to use at night and smores kits were handed out to each child. It was a fun story time with many gathered around the campfire.

The school age summer reading has been very exciting as well. The first week of summer reading the school aged kids were introduced to Unearth a Story and they did a scavenger hunt to learn about the library. When they completed their scavenger hunt, they were given a dinosaur themed gift bag filled with goodies. Then they ventured to the patio area to do sidewalk chalk drawings for all to enjoy. The next week, they did a dinosaur dig and they enjoyed chipping away at the dinosaur egg until they found a small dinosaur inside. After they found their dinosaur, they were able to get a trading card that told facts about their dinosaur. They then played outside with dinosaur games, blew bubbles with Pinkie and got dinosaur tattoos. We finished off June with the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Ms. Annabelle Sechrist did a great program on erosion and how the weather effects the geology of our communities. Each child was given a dinosaur pencil and paper pad to document their findings. They enjoyed doing the experiments and documenting their results.

The teens have enjoyed summer reading as well. They had a tie dye class the first week, taught by one of our patrons, Alyssa Knowles. They created some awesome t-shirts and Alyssa explained the chemistry of the baking soda soak and the dye to create wonderful colors and designs. Each teen was given a dinosaur goodie bag to enjoy. The next week the teens and Pinkie created beautiful suncatchers in a class led by Shavonda Teague. The last week of June, teen participants had a drawing and shading art class with Karen Sigmon. They all did an excellent job and Karen provided each teen with a bag of supplies to practice with at home. After the drawing class, the teens then had a tie dye t-shirt reveal party with ice cream and dinosaur tattoos. All of their tie dye t-shirts turned out awesome! They all are looking forward to a fun filled July with summer reading.

The Lego club met twice in the month of June with a great turnout. They created some really cool Lego creations such as a snow cone cart, a Lady of the Sea, a shark's home, a fish tank and many more sea related items. The Youth Art Program was on June 3rd with Karen Sigmon. The youth created some 3D geometric Henry Moore sculptures. On the second and fourth Mondays in June the Patrick Library Cinema showed Lego: Jurassic World and Alpha and Omega: Dino Digs. Popcorn and water were provided and the kids brought their blankets from home and they really had a fun, chill time. We are so looking forward to our July programs and making lots of library memories.

As always, thank you for your continue support and happy reading!

Somer Ojodeagua,

Patrick County Library Branch Manager

email us

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Pets of the Week





This black German Shepherd type girl was found on Woolwine Highway near Orchard View. Anyone recognize her?

The Patrick County shelter has so many adorable kittens of every color ready for their purr-ever homes.

Please save a life! Adopt! All dogs and cats at the shelter 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. Visit the Blue Ridge Animal Welfare League Facebook page to see our videos of these amazing pets.

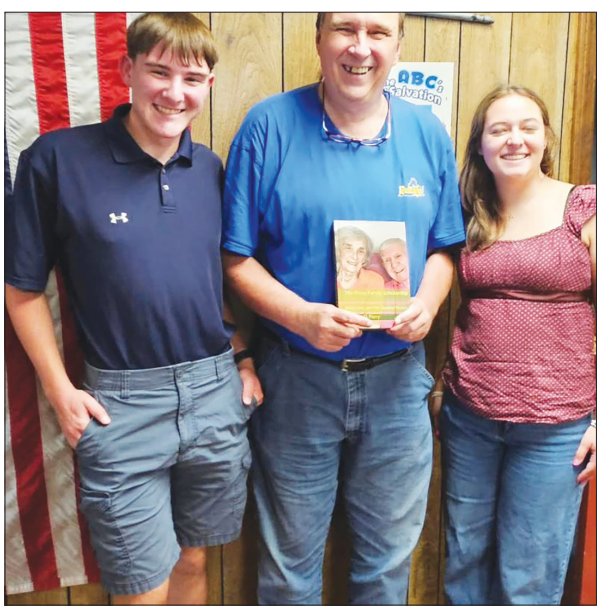
VISIT US ONLINE WWW.THEENTERPRISE.NET

Perry Family Scholarship awarded









On Saturday, June 27, Boyd's Restaurant hosted the Perry Family Scholarship. This year's recipients of $500 are David Lawson III and Lilieann Butler. The students are required to write a 1,000-word essay on a historical topic of their choosing. David wrote on the Salem Witch Trials, and Lilieann wrote about Alexander Hamilton. Along with the money to further their education, the students' essays are published in a hardcover book, along with almost all the other essays by students who have received the scholarship, which has awarded $7,000 since its inception.

Tom Perry said the scholarship to honor his parents after their deaths within two months of each other in 2021. Erie Meredith Perry was a teacher and principal in Patrick County, Virginia, for almost thirty years. Betty Jane Hobbs Perry worked for Dr. Tutelege in Ararat and Claudville, and then for over 40 years at Quality Mills/Cross Creek Apparel in Mount Airy. A voracious reader, Tom Perry credits his mother for encouraging his interest in history.

David Lawson III was accompanied by members of his family, the Lawsons and the Belchers. David plans on studying mechanical engineering at Tom Perry's alma mater, Virginia Tech. David was a tennis and baseball athlete at Patrick County High School.

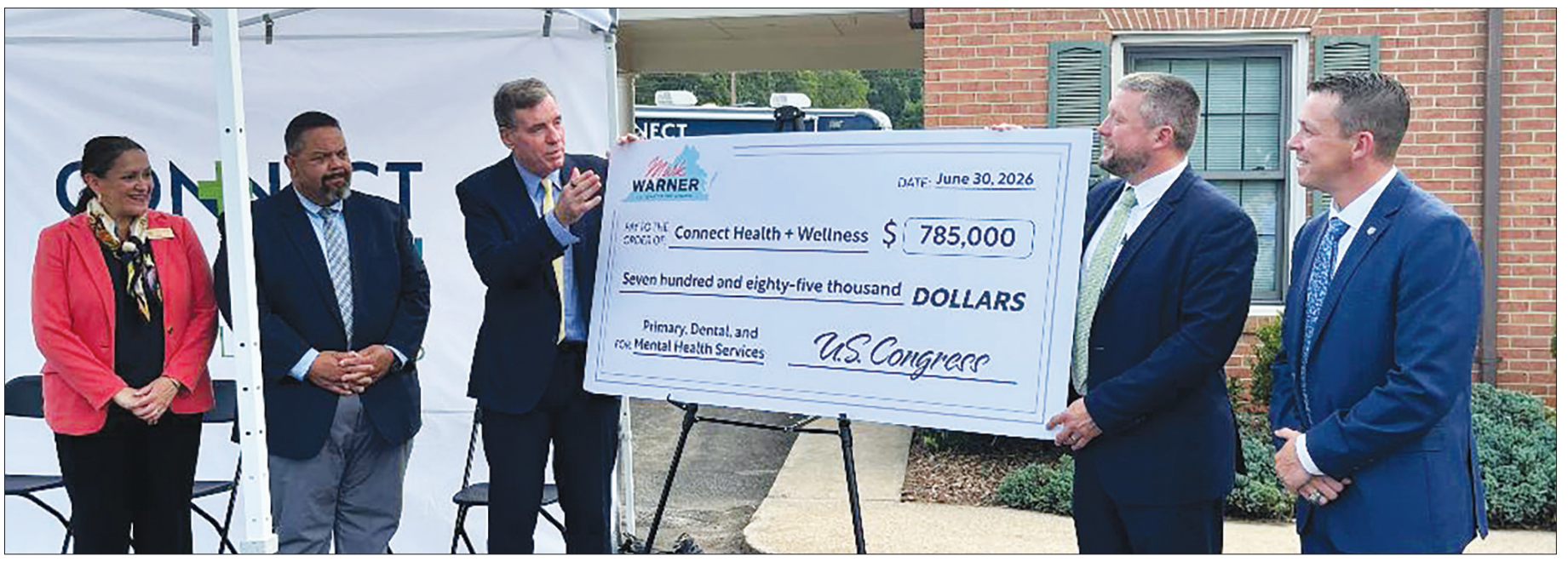
Lilieann Butler was accompanied by her mother, Cissy, and stepfather, Sammie Cassell. She plans to study pre-veterinary medicine at Lee McRae College, Erie Perry's alma mater, in Banner Elk, North Carolina.



Special thanks to Rodney Boyd and the staff of Boyd's Restaurant for hosting this event.

Connect

(cont. from page 1)



U.S. Sen. Mark Warner presented $785,000 in federal funding to Connect Health + Wellness, with the funds earmarked to expand medical and dental services at the Patrick Springs clinic.

rections to get healthcare, but not today. At Connect Health + Wellness, we believe everybody deserves equal access to quality healthcare, regardless of where they live or their ability to pay. Our vision is that this investment will strengthen our Patrick Springs clinic and move us closer to creating a trusted healthcare home for the community."

Connect Health currently offers dental services on Mondays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. A dentist and dental hygienist provide routine cleanings as well as procedures such as fillings.

"They can do most everything here, but if we can't get it done here or time's going to be a constraint, we also have a dental clinic in Martinsville and one in Bassett," Stone said. "Sometimes we may refer people there to get more advanced work if needed, but most everything we can handle here."

The clinic also has a nurse practitioner who provides primary care and accepts walk-in patients.

"One of the benefits of being a federally qualified health center is we provide walk-in visits because we realize that people, if you walk in and you're sick, may not have a primary care doctor," Stone said. "Those are the people we want to see because we know we can make a huge impact on their health."

Stone said the clinic provides sick visits, annual physicals, immunizations, and vaccines while treating chronic conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

"Those are two of the biggest concerns for health across the country, and those are things that we can certainly treat and help with here," he said.

Although Connect Health offers behavioral health services, Stone said the Patrick Springs clinic collaborates closely with Piedmont Community Services rather than duplicating existing services.

"Sometimes they'll send patients to us for medical care, and sometimes we refer patients to them for behavioral health," he said. "Sometimes it's easier to work through that referral network than it is to try and create another wheel."

Warner said the funding reflects cooperation among Virginia's congressional delegation.

"The three offices have to work together and prioritize this. We are very happy to provide these resources," he said.

Warner noted he visited Patrick County about three years ago to help support efforts to restore local hospital services. While that group did not reopen the hospital, Warner said the county did not give up.

"My understanding is the hospital has now reopened," he said. "You've got to have all parts of healthcare, and what we're doing with Connect Health is part of the emergency immediate care."

Patrick County Economic Development & Tourism Director James Houchins said the investment extends beyond healthcare.

"A strong local economy depends on a healthy workforce," Houchins said. "When our residents have access to quality healthcare close to home, they're better equipped to succeed in school, remain productive in the workplace and contribute to the continued growth and prosperity of their community."

Houchins said expanded healthcare services also help attract new businesses, employees, and families to Patrick County.

"This investment will have a lasting positive impact on our citizens for years to come," he said.

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The Republican Congress continues to use the reconciliation process to produce conservative wins for the American people



Morgan Griffith

Representative

Not only were the Working Families Tax Cuts (WFTC) done in a reconciliation bill, but earlier this June, Congress passed another reconciliation bill to fully fund federal immigration enforcement agencies through the rest of President Trump's term.

This had to happen after "open borders" Democrats refused to fund the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Because of their obstruction, the DHS shutdown was the longest agency shutdown in U.S. history.

With Republicans' passage of this immigration enforcement reconciliation package, we blocked Democrats from defunding the federal agencies responsible for removing criminal illegal aliens.

I will continue to support policies that protect American communities from Biden-Harris "open borders" policies.

A potential reconciliation package is also being discussed to help with things ranging from defense funding to voter ID policies. As of right now, a final draft of a potential reconciliation bill has yet to be produced.

Delivering conservative wins through the reconciliation process is evident from the Working Families Tax Cuts that President Trump signed into law on July 4, 2025.

I was proud to back this transformative package, which prevented tax hikes on working families and delivered other meaningful tax relief reforms.

Data is now available on how these reforms are helping Americans.

According to the U.S. Department of Treasury, 97% of tax filers accessed these tax cut benefits. The Ways and Means Committee in Congress notes that IRS data shows Americans received an average refund of nearly $3,300, marking a greater than 11% increase in average individual refunds year over year.

By passing this legislation, the Ways and Means committee notes that we stopped a tax increase of 22% for the average taxpayer.

Additionally, tax filers took advantage of new opportunities.

More than 7 million Americans claimed a deduction for tips. This follows on President Trump's "No Tax on Tips" promise.

But Republican lawmakers did not stop there.

We also created a deduction for those who work hourly overtime. This tax season, nearly 30 million filers claimed this deduction.

Further, an enhanced senior bonus deduction allowed seniors on social security to keep more of their money. The $6,000 bonus is in place for single filers and $12,000 for joint filers.

While we strengthen economic prospects for working families through this tax relief, Republicans also advance businesses with a focus on 'Made in America.'

Johnson & Johnson, a pharmaceutical manufacturer, is one company expanding domestic operations in the United States.

The company's CEO, Mr. Joaquin Duato, credited Republicans' legislation for his company moving forward with the $55 billion expansion.

The reconciliation bill also delivers vital health care funding to rural communities through the Rural Health Transformation Program.

Virginia is the recipient of more than $189 million thanks to the Rural Health Transformation Program.

This pot of money helps rural hospital providers in Virginia's Ninth District. That includes Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon, to which Virginia awarded its first Program grant.

This award will help the College expand health care workforce training opportunities. As medical deserts threaten health care access, grants like these can help close the provider gap, develop a pipeline of rural health care workers and better serve rural patients.

As more Rural Health Transformation Program awards flow to our region, I will continue to advocate for tax policies that help our region.

Such policies include the New Markets Tax Credit, which we permanently extended in the Working Families Tax Cuts.

This tax credit has been credited for the construction of a new medical office building in Tazewell County!

This facility is creating new options for health care, which in turn is helping Carilion Tazewell Community Hospital.

Further, I believe that the reconciliation package's boosted tax incentives for Opportunity Zones in rural areas can unlock more potential health care opportunity. A tax structure that promotes investments in rural communities can produce dividends!

These ideas show that the tax policies we advanced in the Working Families Tax Cuts support our economic prospects.

Further, I will continue to consider reconciliation ideas that produce prosperity, opportunity and freedom for the American people.

If you have ideas, please feel free to contact our office.

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Letters to the Editor

More than 200 attend launch of county's 250 Celebration

We had 200 people show up for the kickoff of the Patrick County 250 Celebration at William Letcher's grave at Laurel Hill, the birthplace of J. E. B. Stuart, in Ararat, Virginia. We had Revolutionary War reenactors and a cannon, along with food and fireworks to kick off the 250th birthday of our democratic republic.

William Letcher was killed on August 2, 1780, at Laurel Hill. His grave is the oldest marked grave in Patrick County. He was Jeb Stuart's great-grandfather. Thanks to the Mitchell and especially the Dellenback families for preserving William Letcher's grave or we would not have it.

Thanks to the Ararat Ruritan Club for supplying the BBQ and Eric Bolt for cooking it.

Thanks to the ladies of the Daughters of the American Revolution for the lemonade.

Thanks to the Jeb Stuart Birthplace for serving the food, especially Chip Bondurant and Amy Brown Sawyers. The cake was delicious. Special thanks to President of the Jeb Stuart Birthplace, Ronnie Haynes, for everything he does.

Thanks to Andrew Doss, Mark Leviner, Gene Reamey, B. J. Nolan, Arlen Doss, the members of the Colonel George Waller Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, the other Revolutionary War reenactors, and the big brass cannon.

Thanks to Chris Corbett and the Ararat Fire Department for the fireworks.

Thanks to Sue Kolljeski of Patrick County Tourism for promoting this event.

Thanks to Mike Ward of the Surry County Genealogical Society for the sound system and Esther Johnson for the support of our local history.

Thanks to Debbie Hall and Taylor Boyd of The Enterprise, WHEO, WSYD/WPAQ, The Mount Airy News, Cardinal News, Bill Wyatt of the Martinsville Bulletin, and everyone on social media who helped promote this event. As Andy Griffith would say, "I appreciate it."

I was particularly thrilled to see multiple of my teachers from Patrick County High School. We sit on the shoulders of those who came before us. I was grateful to see Bobby Clement, who helped me enormously with photos when I first started trying to preserve local history. I dedicated my remarks to my mentor, Ophus Eugene "O. E." Pilson.

Prayers for Vice-President of the Jeb Stuart Birthplace, David Lusk.

My speech is available on YouTube and as a book on Amazon: "A Tale of Two Great-Grandfathers," about William Letcher and Alexander Stuart, who fought in the American Revolution, in paperback, Kindle, and Audible formats.

https://www.amazon.com/TALE-TWO-GREAT-GRANDFATHERS-REVOLUTIONARY-ANCESTORS/dp/1693563991

You can watch my talk on William Letcher on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIqvhbAzIAu4

See photos (photo credits to Andrew Doss, Mark Leviner, Mike Ward, Pamela Smith, and Amy Snyder), and videos from this event at https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=tom.perry.12532&set=a.27570519959211458

A related story is inside this newspaper.

Letter to the Editor

I understand and appreciate that our school board's primary concern is the safety of our students. Every parent, teacher, and community member wants to ensure that children are protected. However, I believe permanently closing the road between the school and the gym is not the best solution.

Rather than eliminating an important roadway that serves our community, why not improve the safety measures already in place?

Many railroad crossings use gates that automatically lower to stop traffic while a train passes. A similar system could be installed at the school. When a class is ready to cross, a teacher or staff member could simply press a button to activate crossing gates and flashing lights, temporarily stopping traffic until all students have crossed safely. Once everyone is across, the gates would raise, and traffic could continue. This approach would significantly increase student safety while allowing the road to remain open for the many residents, parents, emergency vehicles, and others who rely on it.

Communities should not have to choose between safety and accessibility when thoughtful solutions can provide both. Closing the road may solve one concern, but it also creates inconvenience and potential challenges for those who depend on that route every day.

I encourage the school board and board of supervisors to explore alternatives before making a permanent decision. By working together, we can find a solution that protects our students while preserving the roadway that has served our community for many years.

Our children deserve the safest possible environment, and our community deserves solutions that balance safety with common sense. I hope this decision will be reconsidered in light of practical options that can accomplish both goals.

Lori Morse,
Stuart

County's weeklong America 250 celebration launched

Period flags from 1776 waved in the slight breeze at the Letcher home-site at Laurel Hill on June 29, 2026, as the JEB Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust joined Patrick County Tourism in hosting the first of a week-long series of events around the county commemorating the 250th anniversary of American independence. More than 150 visitors braved the summer heat of southwest Virginia on an otherwise beautiful evening to enjoy barbecue, kindly provided by the Ararat Ruritan Club, along with cake by the Trust and much-appreciated cold lemonade provided by Ann McConnell and the ladies of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The Fisher Peak Timber Rattlers provided a backdrop of lively period music.

Patrick County's own local historian, Mr. Tom Perry, delivered the evening's main event, a program highlighting two of the area's most prominent figures from the Revolutionary period, JEB Stuart's great grandfathers William Letcher and Alexander Stuart. William Letcher's resting place on the Laurel Hill property is the oldest known marked grave in the county, and his story serves as a reminder of the high cost of liberty and that the War of Independence touched even this far corner of Virginia. Mr. Perry spoke of what life was like for families such as the Letchers and Stuarts in this part of Virginia during the War, which was then still considered frontier. He told of the tensions between Patriots and local Tory loyalists and how those tensions culminated in William Letcher's murder at the hands of a Tory in his own house in August of 1780.

Revolutionary War re-enactors from the Sons of the American Revolution gave visitors a glimpse of what life was like for American soldiers and militiamen 250 years ago, with demonstrations of formations and uniforms and a 21-gun salute with flintlock muskets, punctuated by a few cannon volleys courtesy of Mr. Bob Tabor and his artillery crew.

As dusk approached, Trust Board member Chris Corbett and the Ararat Volunteer Fire Department delighted spectators with a thundering and colorful fireworks display from the high ground at neighboring Laurel Hill, a most fitting commencement to Patrick County's week of celebrating a quarter-millennium of American independence.

David Robinette – Director,
JEB Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust

Patrick Pioneers



Chair Factory Resumes Operation

The Stuart Chair Factory which has remained idle since the sale, several months ago, resumed operation again last week.

It is understood that the split-bottom chair, or famous Blackard Split-Bottom chair is to be manufactured, and as the demand increases, rockers will also be made.

Mr. Goodwin Blackard, who has had years of experience in this line of work, is in charge of the plant, so the work is expected to grow rapidly.

Enterprise, Volume 48, Number 15, 12 April 1928



Goodwin Blackard and his in-laws. Thank you to Danny Compton

Ruth Ellen Turner Blackard

By Beverly Belcher Woody

Sometimes the greatest treasures of family history are not found in courthouse records, faded census pages, or weathered cemetery stones. Instead, they are discovered in the handwritten memories of someone who lived through another era and took the time to record the experiences that shaped a lifetime.

Recently, Charlie Bowman shared with me a remarkable family treasure—a memoir written by Ruth Ellen Turner Blackard and recorded by her daughter, Ella Nora Blackard Reynolds, on April 7, 1939. Reading Ruth Ellen's words is like opening a window into nineteenth-century America. Through her own recollections, she takes us from the final years of antebellum Virginia into the turmoil of the Civil War, through her childhood conversion to Christ, her marriage, the challenges of building a home, and eventually her move from what is now West Virginia to Patrick County, Virginia. More than anything else, her memoir is a testimony of gratitude—a life measured not by hardships, but by blessings.

Before allowing Ruth Ellen to tell her own remarkable story, it is helpful to become acquainted with the family from which she came and the family she would help establish.

Ruth Ellen Turner was born on April 7, 1858, at Mt. Ovis, Virginia (now West Virginia), to Jeffrey Goodwin Turner and Nancy Jane Mason, both originally of Franklin County, Virginia.

The 1850 United States Census records Jeffrey and Nancy living in Franklin County with their young family:

Robert Turner, age 9
Sarah A. Turner, age 7
Mary Turner, age 4
Samuel Turner, age 2

During the following decade, the Turner family moved west into Kanawha County, Virginia, an area that would become part of the new state of West Virginia in 1863. The 1860 United States Census shows the family continuing to grow with the births of:

Ona F. Turner, age 8
Martha Turner, age 6
Ruth Ellen Turner, age 2

By the time of the 1870 United States Census, the Turner household had welcomed three more children:

Eliza C. Turner, age 9
Elizabeth Turner, age 4
William J. Turner, age 3

Growing up in such a large family meant that Ruth Ellen learned responsibility early in life. As her older brothers and sisters married and established homes of their own, she willingly assumed greater responsibilities at home, helping her parents with daily chores and caring for her younger siblings. Those lessons of hard work and service would remain with her throughout her life.

As Ruth Ellen entered young womanhood, she met Jesse D. Blackard, the son of William Blackard and Susannah Melinda DeHart of Meadows of Dan.

The 1860 United States Census records Jesse living with his parents and siblings:

Willoughby Blackard, age 8
James Blackard, age 6
Gabriel S. Blackard, age 4
Lucinda Blackard, age 2
Lillian Blackard, two months old

Like so many Patrick County families, the Blackards experienced heartbreaking loss during the Civil War years.

On January 18, 1861, little Gabriel Blackard died from diphtheria.

Only a little more than a year later, Jesse's father, William Blackard, enlisted in Company I, 24th Virginia Infantry on March 10, 1862, in Patrick County. His military service was tragically brief. William died in Banner Hospital in Richmond on April 27, 1862, at only thirty-five years of age. He was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Richmond. Military records show that his widow, Susannah Melinda Blackard, filed for his military benefits on July 14, 1862, later receiving $37.83. Left behind were five young children whose lives would forever be shaped by his sacrifice.

One of those children, Lucinda Blackard, would later marry John Floyd Shelor of Meadows of Dan.

Years later, Jesse Blackard became one of the respected citizens of Patrick County. In 1891, he was appointed Postmaster of Meadows of Dan, serving his community through one of its most important institutions. By the 1910 United States Census, he was employed as the foreman of a stave mill, where skilled craftsmen transformed oak timber into precisely cut wooden staves used in the manufacture of barrels.

Together, Jesse and Ruth Ellen built a home filled with love, faith, and hard work. They became the parents of four children:

William "Goodwin" Blackard (1875–1940), who managed the Stuart Chair Company and was an excellent craftsman. Goodwin married Callie Martha DeHart, the daughter of Green Washington DeHart and Louisa Ellen Ayers.

Ella Nora Blackard Reynolds (1877–1965), who married James Fay Reynolds, superintendent of Patrick County schools, for twenty-eight years. James Fay Reynolds was the son of Pleasant Calloway Reynolds and Temperance Louise Massey.

Elroy Avery Blackard (1885–1953), a traveling salesman. Elroy married Crystal Riddick from Suffolk, Virginia.

Hoy Orten Blackard (1889–1953), a skilled cobbler. Hoy married Callie Weaver, the daughter of Walter Greene Weaver and Delia Simpkins of Woolwine.

Now that we have a good foundation of Jesse and Ruth Ellen Turner Blackard's family, we will hear from Ruth Ellen in her own words.....

I was born at Mt. Ovis, Virginia, (now WV) April 7, 1858. The first I remember was the Civil War, when I was three years old. I remember many things about the war distinctly, and things that occurred during the four years of the terrible tragedy. I remember very well when my brother left our home to go to war, and I remember so well when the news came that he had been shot. I remember when the war was over, all the excitement left memories on my mind I shall never forget.

And I remember so well when I was quite small my sister taught me how to milk, she bragged on me so much, how well I did, I was delighted to help her. I thought everything had to be done up to date, and that is what I tried to do. Sometimes I would slip into the kitchen after the dishes were washed and put away by my older sister, to see if the chairs were all sitting straight and looking nice. It was a pleasure to be doing something to help along, especially for my father and mother.

When I went to school, I loved my classmates and teacher and always tried to hurry home to help my mother.

When I was about ten years old, there were serious thoughts that come to me—that if I should die—would I be saved? My dear father had given me a New Testament and I prom-

(See Patrick Pioneers p. 6)

Social Security Matters

By Russell Gloor, AMAC Foundation Social Security Advisor
Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty – Why Doesn't My Social Security Record Show All My Military Earnings?

Dear Rusty: When I look at my earnings on my Social Security account, I see that in 1955 and 1956 have no earnings. I was in the U.S. Navy as a first officer and have my DD-214 paperwork which shows my military service from Oct. 1954-Oct. 1958. My Social Security earnings record shows that I had earnings in 1954, 1957, and 1958 but doesn't show that I was paid in 1955 or 1956. Shouldn't I have received Social Security credit for all my service years?
Signed: An Older Veteran

Dear Older Veteran: First, I want to thank you for your military service. Whether your earnings while in the military would provide you with any additional Social Security benefit depends on your career earnings after leaving military service. Here's why:

Your monthly Social Security (SS) benefit is based upon the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime (with earlier years adjusted for inflation). From those highest earning 35 years, SS develops your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings (your lifetime "AIME") which is the basis of the SS benefit you get if you claim for benefits to start at your full retirement age (FRA). So, if - after you completed your military service - you had at least 35 years of other employment where you earned more money than you did while serving, then your military pay won't affect your Social Security benefit.

FYI, Social Security payroll tax has been withheld from military pay since 1957, which is why your SS earnings record shows your military pay only for 1957 and 1958. Your SS record wouldn't show military pay prior to 1957 because you didn't contribute to SS from your military pay during those years. The earnings you see in your SS earnings record for 1954 are likely from non-military employment prior to starting active duty in October 1954.

SS does provide older veterans with "special extra credits for military service," but those credits are only a supplemental earnings amount added to your military pay record during the years you served. It is not a bonus amount added to your monthly Social Security payment; rather it is only an amount added to your military pay record used when calculating your Social Security benefit. For those who served prior to 1957, Social Security would have no record of your military earnings during those early service years. But when you claimed Social Security later in life, they would have asked if you served in the military and given you "special extra credit" in the form of presumed earnings for your service years. They likely asked for a copy of your DD-214 and would have added $160 to your military earnings record for each active-duty month from October 1954 through December 1956, and additional earnings credits for 1957 and 1958.

But that doesn't mean you get a special Social Security bonus for your military service. If you have at least 35 years of civilian employment after serving in the Navy, your service years would only affect your SS benefit if those military service years were among the highest paying 35 years over your entire lifetime. Click here to read more on this topic. And, again, please accept our appreciation for your service to our country.

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

Race Report: Chicagoland Speedway

By Wood Brothers Racing

A sellout crowd welcomed the NASCAR Cup Series back to Chicagoland Speedway for the first time since 2019 for the eero 400, where Josh Berry and the No. 21 Wood Brothers Racing team showed solid pace early in Sunday's eero 400 before late-race front-end damage relegated the eero Ford Mustang Dark Horse to a 33rd-place finish.

After starting 34th, Berry wasted little time working his way through the field, climbing into the top 20 during the opening stage and continuing to run competitively through the first half of the race.

During a cycle of green-flag pit stops in Stage 2, an untimely caution left the No. 21 a lap down, but the team recovered by taking the wave-around under a later caution to return Berry to the lead lap.

The race for Berry took its biggest turn in the final stage when the No. 21 sustained damage to the nose of the car, significantly affecting its handling performance. Despite remaining on the lead lap following the earlier recovery, the loss of speed from the damage proved too much to overcome, and Berry eventually finished 33rd in eero Ford Mustang.

The Wood Brothers Racing team now shifts its focus to EchoPark Speedway for next Sunday's Quaker State 400.



Patrick Pioneers

(cont. from page 5)

ised to read it. So, I would go to the kitchen alone on Sunday afternoon and read my Testament, and I soon found out there was something for me to do—what I could do for others. This thought worried me so much.

Sometimes at night I could not sleep, but one night I came downstairs to my mother's room but did not want her to know what was troubling me. She asked if I was sick, I told her no, and she told me to go back to bed and go to sleep. I went back to bed, but did not sleep. I went on like this for some time. I would try to pray. I did not want anyone to know how I was feeling.

So, on Sunday we were all at church, and our Pastor was preaching he repeated the beautiful verse. "I can but perish, if I go, I am resolved to try, for if I stay away, I know I must forever die." I will always love this verse.

I thought about this for a long time. I was then about eleven years old. I did not want to talk to anyone about it. So then at last Henry Hughart came to our church he preached there for some time. I was carried away with his sermon, after a while he was holding a revival, he talked to me, and it seemed I felt better.

So, one night at the meeting it just seemed I could do nothing more, so I tried to turn everything over to the Lord and just then I felt like another child. Don't tell me God does not work on little children.

So, I am going to finish all of it while I am telling you. I could hardly wait for the church door to open, so I offered myself to the Lord and church. They ask to tell them how I felt so these are the very words I said—

"I feel that the Lord has pardoned my sins, and I hope to meet you all in heaven."

One deacon said that is enough. So, they received me into the church. I was one more happy soul.

I have always wanted to live right. Ever since, I know I have done many things through all these years I should not have done and left undone many, many things I should have done, but as soon as I have time to think it over, I take it to the Lord in prayer and I know he is a forgiving Saviour.

When I was in West Virginia time before last, my dear sister was telling me different places she was going to take me. I said, take me to the church where I was converted. There was no church there, but the ground and the beautiful trees were there, and that was enough—it seemed that the Lord was there.

My younger sister joined the church a few days before I did, and we were baptized together in Mill Creek near our home. It was in January and ice was cut off the pond. I was about twelve and my sister was about ten. Just before this time my two older sisters had married, both on the same day. My brother had married also. I had to help my mother and father, all I could do to help was a pleasure. My father kept me with him when my mother could spare me. When I was going to school, I always tried to hurry home to help all I could—I loved my parents dearly and made every effort to help of a morning before I went to school.

My father kept a girl to help all the time he could, but could not get one all of the time. So we worked along the best we could. Sister Eliza had grown fast and was almost as large as I was. Lizzie and Jeffrey were big children—so we got along as best we could.

About this time I had a few beaus, but I cared nothing for them until the right one came along. Then I decided I wanted a home of my own as much as I loved my parents, I wanted to keep house myself. I had never disobeyed my parents before—it almost broke my heart. But I could not feel I was doing wrong—I loved my parents, brothers and sisters, but some way I loved your Pa better than anyone else, and I wanted a house of my own.

So, we were married on April 5, 1874. Your Pa at this time was working for Dr. Stanton, five miles from here. I had a sister living close to where he was working, so we decided to stay with them until we could get a house built. We were building on my father's farm. We decided to stay there for ten years. They started to work on our house the first of Sept. Your Pa worked on for Dr. Stanton and stayed at my sister's, but I went home, as I was crazy each day to know how they were getting along. Your Pa finally got off from Dr. Stanton and finished up the house himself. Had it ready to move into at Christmas time. I was the happiest I ever was in my life. So we stayed there and your Pa worked away most of the time, coming back on Saturday nights and leaving on Monday mornings.

Pretty soon after we moved to our new house, brother Sam built the house on the hill above us and lived there some time then moved to Mill Creek. Jim and Lizzie were married and lived at Evans Fork—They then moved to the house on the hill that Sam had built, and stayed there as long as we stayed in WV. We had a good time together—I helped Lizzie do her work, she would help me, and then we would both help mother. We were together so much, and I don't think we ever had a hard thought of each other. I had two children and she had one. Your Pa was still working away from home—I worked all week looking forward to Saturday and Sunday. I did not do much on Saturday except clean and get ready for Sunday. On Saturday evenings I would prepare supper early and get all my work done, and then I would say to you and Goodwin,

"Now you can go to Grandmas, I am going to meet your Pa."

So, you would soon be out of sight—then I would hitch up my little mule and start off at a pace to meet your Pa. I was as happy as Mrs. Roosevelt, then we would both get on the mule and would soon be home. Happy days them were. Sometime your Pa would catch up with his work and be home for a few days. Then we would hitch up our little mule to our one-horse wagon and load up our potatoes, butter, chickens, eggs, tomatoes, and brans—drive to Campbells Creek Coal Co., sell our produce, buy lots of things then drive back home again. Those were happy days.

And on our meeting day we would take you and Goodwin and strike out for the church. We worked hard and got along fine—I looked after things at home while your Pa was away.

Just about this time our ten years was up. Tom Blackard and Milt Dehart came to our house from Kentucky. Milt stayed a few days and left for Virginia. Before we moved here, your Pa came here on a visit, while Tom was there with us. He stayed about two months and while he was here, he made plans for us to move. When he came home, he began to sell our things, I did not like the idea very much for he had been interested in a beautiful place at the mouth of Blue Creek, which if he had bought, would have been a fortune to us - a few years later oil was discovered there and the place was sold for thousands of dollars. But it might have been for the best, for some time I think it is better to be poor than rich.

Anyway, your Pa came home about the first of Feb. and by the last of May we were ready to move here - we sold out cows, hogs, sheep, furniture and everything we had except our bed clothes, dishes, and few little things, so we were ready to go.

Den Robertson came with his wagon and took us to brother Sams on Mill Creek, where we spent the night with them and until the next afternoon. Then we went to Charleston and spent the night with Mrs. Woodrum, a very dear friend - who at one time lived on Blue Creek near us, and her daughter had stayed with us when you were born. After spending the night with this friend, we took the train for Virginia and got to Christiansburg about sunset. Uncle Tom Dehart met us with his wagon, he loaded us on, struck a trot, and I don't think he stopped until we got to Union Mills, where we spent the night. We fixed a little supper as we had a lot of provisions box, and a lot of good coffee, before they called us.

So, we loaded up, struck another trot, we traveled all day, with the exception of about an hour at noon. We got to Uncle Toms in Meadows of Dan about dark. We had a lovely reception waiting for us, and a good supper. We rested the next day then went to Willoughby's and had a nice day with them, also spent the night. The next day being Sunday and Concord Church day, we all went to preaching. After preaching we went home with John Floyd Shelor, spent the night with them, coming back to Uncle Toms, we began to make plans for some place to stay until we could build. We decided to fix up this little house at the mill. So, we repaired the house and stayed there about a year.

Then we went to Mrs. Spanglers place and kept the post office until we got the house built down by the mill. Avery was born there on October 28, 1885.

When I left WV, I got my church letter from Evans Fork Church. I had been a member of this church ever since I professed a hope in Christ, the church was first called Mount Evans, but after changing it to another place they called it Ryans Fork. I enjoyed the church so much; my father, mother, brothers, and sisters belong here, and I did not like giving it up.

But pretty soon after my arrival I put my letter in the Meadows of Dan church and from Meadows of Dan I came to the Stuart Baptist Church, and enjoyed it very much.

However, I have had my sorrows since I came to VA. My father died in about two years, and pretty soon my mother died. And since then, I have lost five brothers and sisters, only one brother is living, out of eleven children—one little sister died in infancy and another 1872. So, this makes up the family.

Up until I lost my dear companion, I had pleasures, a good home, a kind affectionate husband, four children that have been near and dear to me, many friends, a good church to go to, so when we count our blessings, they over balance our sorrows.

Nearly a century after those words were written, Ruth Ellen Turner Blackard still reminds us that a life well lived is measured not by the hardships we endure, but by the blessings we choose to remember. Her memoir is more than the story of one remarkable woman—it is a gift to her family and to all who cherish the history of Patrick County.

Thank you to Charlie Bowman for sharing this special memoir and Danny Compton for the photograph. Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com, or 276-692-9626.

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My Patriot Ancestor

By Mary Baughan Martin

The first meeting of The Colonel Abram Penn DAR Chapter was in the home of my grandmother, Annie Sue Fulton Clark, in February 1950. At the time of organization, thirteen of the eighteen original members were descendants of Colonel Abram Penn.

My grandmother became the Organizing Regent. My mother, Barbara Clark Baughan, was one of the organizing members as well and served this chapter for over 67 years. The three of us are descendants of Colonel Abram Penn, for whom this chapter was named. We were able to join the DAR due to his military service during the Revolutionary War.

Abram was the son of George and Ann Penn. He spent his childhood in Caroline County, Virginia, and grew up in Albermarle (now Amherst). On March 3, 1767, he married Ruth Stovall, daughter of James and Mary Cooper Stovall.

As a militia captain under General Andrew Lewis, Penn fought at Point Pleasant in Dunmore's War, 1774. After moving to Pittsylvania (later Henry) County, Abram served on the Committee of Safety in both counties as Delegate to the General Assembly from Henry.

In the county militia, Penn advanced to colonel, and during the winter of 1780-1781 organized the only body of Revolutionary troops from Henry and adjoining counties. He led this regiment to join General Nathaniel Greene in North Carolina and to oppose Lord Cornwallis at Guilford Courthouse (March 1781). In May 1781, Penn's regiment joined General Greene again in defense of the Carolinas, fought in Battle of Eutaw Springs and continued in service through the surrender of Yorktown.

Abram Penn settled in his "Poplar Grove" home before Patrick County was organized in 1791. Penn, commissioned by the Governor, administered State and Federal oaths to the officers of Patrick County at its first court in June 1791. During the early years of the county, Abram Penn and seven of his nine sons served as "Gentlemen Justices".

The Colonel Abram Penn Chapter is a member of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, which was founded October 11, 1890, and has headquarters in Washington, DC.

Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution is eligible for membership. NSDAR is a non-profit, non-political volunteer women's service organization. Help researching and proving your lineage can be provided by the chapter. The objectives of the DAR are historical preservation, promotion of education, and encouragement of patriotic endeavor.

If you are interested in learning more about DAR and/or becoming a member, please contact our Regent, Mrs. Ann McConnell by email at nammcconnell@yahoo.com.

Editor's Note: *The Enterprise* is pleased to partner with the Colonel Abram Penn Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to present *My Patriot Ancestor*, an ongoing series highlighting Revolutionary War patriots through the stories of local DAR members and their families.

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6	7	8	9	10	11
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13	14	15	16	17	18
Barre Yoga 10:00* Family Movie 3:30	Walking Club at the Rail Trail 9:00 School Age Summer Reading Program 11:00 Chair Yoga 2:15* Gentle Yoga 5:15*	Walking Club at the Rail Trail 9:00 Retired Teacher's Book Club 11:00 Gentle Yoga 12:30*	Open Art Studio 1:00 Teen Summer Reading Program 2:00 Sports Trivia 6:00	Storytime 10:30 Zoo Sit & Stitch 11:00	Crochet and Chill 2.0* Beginners 10:30-12pm Pt. 2 12:30pm-1:30pm Book Bedazzling 11am
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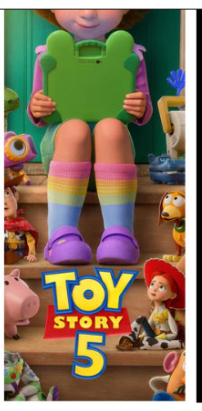

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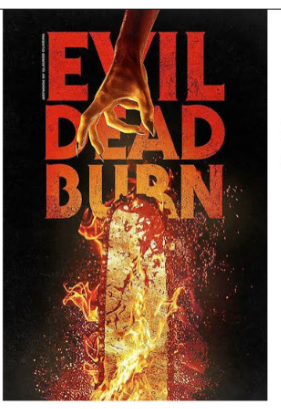

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Arcadian

(cont. from page 1)

this might actually work.' I guess so far it is, and hopefully it continues."

In addition to milkshakes, ice cream, truffles, and fudge previously sold at Harvest House, Arcadian Cafe also offers Homestead Creamery products, including milk and fresh eggs.

"We also use some consignment stuff like she did," Elliott said. "We're trying to focus a little bit more on that because we really want more small businesses to be noticed, and so we're trying to get as many different people in here with their products as possible."

The cafe currently features Gingerly Snapped lotions, soaps and lip balm products, crocheted bookmarks, pottery, 3D resin animals, magnets, bracelets and more.

"Just kind of an array of things," she said.

Daniel Elliott said the couple is also considering expanding the menu in the future.

"We jumped into this on short notice trying to get open before the Strawberry Festival. We're just trying to get our feet under us for what we're doing and then figure out how we can expand to get more stuff in," he said.

The Elliots also plan to host weekly community events on Friday nights. The first Friday in June featured trivia night.

"We're thinking maybe some swing dancing or karaoke, or we might even have some local talent," Justine Elliott said. "We have some people that we know that are young magicians who are still starting out, and we'd love to let them come in and practice their shows."



Justine and Daniel Elliott serve ice cream, milkshakes, and other treats at Arcadian Cafe.



Arcadian Cafe & Ice Cream Parlour is located on Main Street in Stuart.

Daniel Elliott said he chose the name "Arcadian" after looking up synonyms for simple and rustic.

"Arcadian is a noun for something that's simple, quaint and old-fashioned, and if something is described as Arcadian it's something that's idealistic, picturesque and pastoral," he said. "We wanted to be someplace that's kind of like things used to be when we would go someplace to hang out with friends, because nowadays a lot of people are just on their phones all the time."

Noting there is not a lot to do in the evening in Patrick County, Daniel Elliott said he hopes the Arcadian Cafe becomes a place where people can gather and enjoy good drinks and company.

Arcadian Cafe & Ice Cream Parlour is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-9 p.m.

For more information, visit Facebook.com/TheArcadianCafe&IceCreamParlour.



Photo courtesy of Michael Downey, Virginia Department of Forestry

Extinguish your risk of sparking a wildfire while tidying up the lawn

When safety falls by the wayside, summertime yardwork can trigger catastrophic consequences.

Lawn mowers, tractors, brush cutters and other popular yard equipment can potentially spark wildfires during the dry, hot summer months.

"Rising temperatures, low relative humidity and gusty winds can all play a factor in what the fire service calls 'red flag warnings,'" explained Michael Downey, Virginia Department of Forestry assistant director of fire and emergency response.

The Virginia DOF responded to 356 wildfires that burned 4,920 acres from Feb. 15 through April 30, and 57 wildfires spanning over 200 acres in May alone.

Wildfires are especially dangerous to people who use forests and outdoor areas or live in nearby homes and communities. They also wreak havoc on the environment—harming wildlife and their habitats.

Lawn mowers can spark a fiery chain reaction in myriad ways—like when dry debris ignites on hot engine surfaces, leaking fuel reaches the exhaust, or mechanical sparks ignite fuel vapor or faulty wiring.

Mower fires most commonly ignite when blades hit a rock and generate sparks, and from equipment without spark arrestors.

"These are safety devices designed to trap or cool hot exhaust particles expelled by internal combustion engines," Downey explained.

He emphasized the importance of proper maintenance and equipment care in helping mitigate fire risk.

Before starting up the mower, the Virginia DOF advises keeping the following safety tips in mind:

Mow before 10 a.m. while humidity is still high and temperatures are cooler.

Avoid mowing dry grass or when it's windy.

Keep your mower well-maintained to prevent overheating, and inspect before each use.

Remove rocks, debris and other potential strike hazards from the mowing area.

"Up to 90% of wildfires in Virginia are human-caused and primarily from debris burning," Downey noted. "If precautions are not taken, life and property are at risk."

He encourages Virginians to skip mowing and transform manicured lawns into bustling pollinator habitats.

Virginia Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co.'s homeowner and farmowner policies provide coverage for fires caused by lawn mowers that damage covered property.

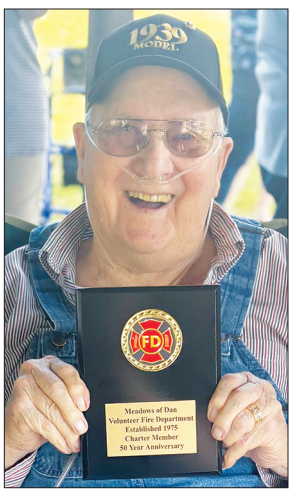
For more wildfire prevention tips, visit dof.virginia.gov.

THANK YOU FOR READING
THE ENTERPRISE

OBITUARIES

Ralph Lee Barnard

Ralph Lee Barnard, 87, of Meadows of Dan, Virginia, entered into the presence of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on the evening of June 29, 2026. Fittingly, Ralph's life came full circle—he was born on January 4, 1939, on the Barnard family land in Meadows of Dan, and it was there, surrounded by the place and people he loved most, that he peacefully passed away.



For more than eight decades, Ralph built a life defined by unwavering faith, quiet strength, and humble service to others. While additional details of his education and early career will be remembered by his family, those who knew Ralph knew him as a man who could seemingly do anything. He was a master plumber, carpenter, electrician, brick mason, mechanic, and craftsman whose knowledge and work ethic earned the respect of everyone around him. There was rarely a problem he couldn't solve or something broken that he couldn't repair.

Ralph devoted many years of service to the Patrick County School System before later working in maintenance for Tri-Area Community Health. Following the tragic fire that destroyed the original Meadows of Dan Elementary School, Ralph was entrusted with supervising the construction of the new school—a responsibility that reflected both his skill and the confidence others placed in his character. Through his work, he quietly helped shape the community that he loved.

His legacy, however, extends far beyond the buildings he helped construct. Alongside his beloved wife, Hope, Ralph helped establish the Backpack Program in Meadows of Dan, providing food and essential supplies to local schoolchildren in need. He never sought recognition for his kindness. Instead, he demonstrated his love through countless acts of service, always ready to lend a hand wherever one was needed. His generosity touched countless lives, and the impact of those quiet acts of compassion will continue for generations.

Ralph was a man of deep Christian faith. His relationship with Jesus Christ was the foundation upon which every other part of his life was built. He faithfully loved his Savior, cherished his wife Hope, and devoted himself wholeheartedly to his family, church, friends, and neighbors. Though often a man of few words, his steady presence, gentle humor, and unmistakable laugh brought comfort and joy to everyone fortunate enough to know him.

He found great happiness outdoors, especially while fishing and enjoying God's creation. Ralph also proudly served as the first Fire Chief of the Meadows of Dan Fire Department when it was established, voluntarily serving his community in that role, and as a member of the Meadows of Dan Ruritan Club for many years. Additionally, he was a member of the Patrick County School Board for several years.

Ralph is survived by his loving and devoted wife Hope Belcher Barnard, his daughter Debbie Lee Barnard, two grandchildren Robin Lee Hancock and John Lucian Belcher, as well as his great-grandchildren Avery Lee Hancock and Mason William Hancock. He's also survived by his step-children Damon (Sussanna) Moore, Regina Moore Scott and Sheldon (Kay) Moore, as well as his step-grandchildren T.W. Moore and Stephanie Moore.

He was preceded in death by his parents Lucian Elbert and Hazel Barnard, his sister Betty Jean Goad, his infant brother, his great-grandson Colton David Hancock, and his step son-in-law James Scott.

Those who knew Ralph will remember not only what he accomplished, but who he was—a faithful servant, a dependable friend, a devoted husband and family man, and a man whose hands were always busy helping someone else. His life was a testimony that love is most clearly seen through humble service, steadfast faith, and quiet sacrifice.

While his absence leaves a tremendous void in the hearts of those who loved him, they rejoice knowing that his faith has become sight and that he now rests in the presence of the Savior whom he faithfully served throughout his life.

Funeral services for Mr. Barnard will be held on Thursday, July 2, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at Harris Chapel Church with Pastor Marcus Wood officiating. Family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will follow in the Barnard-Terry Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Meadows of Dan Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 830, Meadows of Dan, VA 24120. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.moodyfuneralservices.com

"Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your Master." — Matthew 25:23.

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The Bible and the Declaration of Independence

By Van Yandell

2 Corinthians 3: 17 "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

The word "Creator" in the Declaration of Independence indicates a God/Bible believing people. The parallels to Bible teachings, concepts and people connect the Bible to the Declaration.

King George III ruled Britain in from 1760 until 1820. Many of the early settlers in America from Britain thought of George as the Antichrist. The tyranny and excessive taxation levied against them led those first Americans to rebel against the King and Britain.

When unalienable (sometimes spelled inalienable) rights are held for ransom, people can be expected to rebel. Those rights are those explicitly given by God to every human He has created.

Those rights are considered by many to be "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The statement in the Declaration of Independence written by Thomas Jefferson clearly defines the American perspective.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. Among those are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

God created man "In His own Image" (Genesis 1: 27) to be free; to have freedom of choice and freedom to pursue the lifestyle he desires. He did of course, in the Holy Bible give mankind guidelines to live by but within those limitations/commandments, He made man free.

God gave Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden freedom. One of those freedoms was the freedom to sin just as He has given mankind the freedom to sin and He knew we would. He then planted the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God had a plan.

Isaiah 5: 20 "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

God destroyed all life on earth (Genesis 7) and Sodom (Genesis 19) for the same actions/sins that America is not only approving but promoting in today's society.

The Declaration of Independence; adopted July 4th, 1776 and signed August 2, 1776, set a course for America for these last 250 years. That course has been perverted but we do have a future.

While the Declaration does not specifically mention the Holy Bible, it does refer to "The Creator," This appears to be a monotheistic attitude and a reference to the ensuing freedom of religion and basic other human rights.

People leaving Ireland, England and other European countries has been compared with the exodus from Egypt in the Book of Exodus. To escape the oppressive Egyptian Pharaoh, God sent Moses and his brother Aaron to lead the Hebrews from Egypt.

Certain American revolutionaries led the occupants of this new land to freedom from King George just as Joshua led the Israelites to victory over the Canaanites.

The oppression by the King could not be tolerated. At times, war is the only and final solution. Freedom is precious and sacred. It must be protected and at times that means it must be fought for.

King Saul in 1 Samuel was an evil king. 1 Samuel 15: 11 God said "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments."

King George did not regard those that had left Europe for the new world as worthy of anything but his scorn. That included oppression, intimidation and taxation. Comparing him to Saul seems to be a fair comparison.

A statement from Leviticus 25: 11 is "proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Those words are emblazoned on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Those words and the bell are symbols of our free land and our determination to keep America free.

Galatians 3: 28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Freedom and opportunity are rights of any American. Discrimination must not exist because of wealth (or lack of), race or gender. Our differences can be our strength or our demise. If we allow ourselves to be separated over our differences, perhaps we deserve to perish.

Proverbs 22: 2 "The rich and the poor meet together' the Lord is the maker of them all." Our Declaration of Independence does not provide for any differences in the governing of the people.

Acts 10: 34 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The founding fathers honored God in the document; the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration and the Bible share concepts, philosophies, human rights and divine justice. All in all, we can trace our way of life, our freedoms and liberties to the Holy Bible.

If we consider the teachings of God and the history of the world, specifically America, we can clearly see America exists for a divine purpose. The only way to accomplish that purpose is to return to our Creator in confession and repentance.

John 3: 16 is also a declaration and a statement of freedom from sin. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The Bible teaches there is only one eternal salvation. That is by a faith based belief (Ephesians 2: 8) that Christ Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27: 35) for the remission of sin (Romans 4: 25), resurrected (Matthew 28: 6) and ascended alive into Heaven (Acts 1: 9).

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and missionary. His email is vmy3451@gmail.com.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

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

2. From Nehemiah 10, what was the most common starting letter of the 87 names listing priests, Levites, chiefs and fathers? *C, B, T, H*

3. In Matthew 10:34, who said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword"? *Herod's guard, Judas, Roman centurion, Jesus*

4. Which prophet foretold about the ministry of John the Baptist? *Levi, Isaiah, Aaron, Mordecai*

5. What was unique about Balaam's donkey? *Fast galloper, Could speak, Turned to stone, 6-legged*

6. From 1 Chronicles 20, Elhanan slew Goliath's ...? *Father, Brother, Mule, Oxen*

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) H, 3) Jesus, 4) Isaiah, 5) Could speak, 6) Brother

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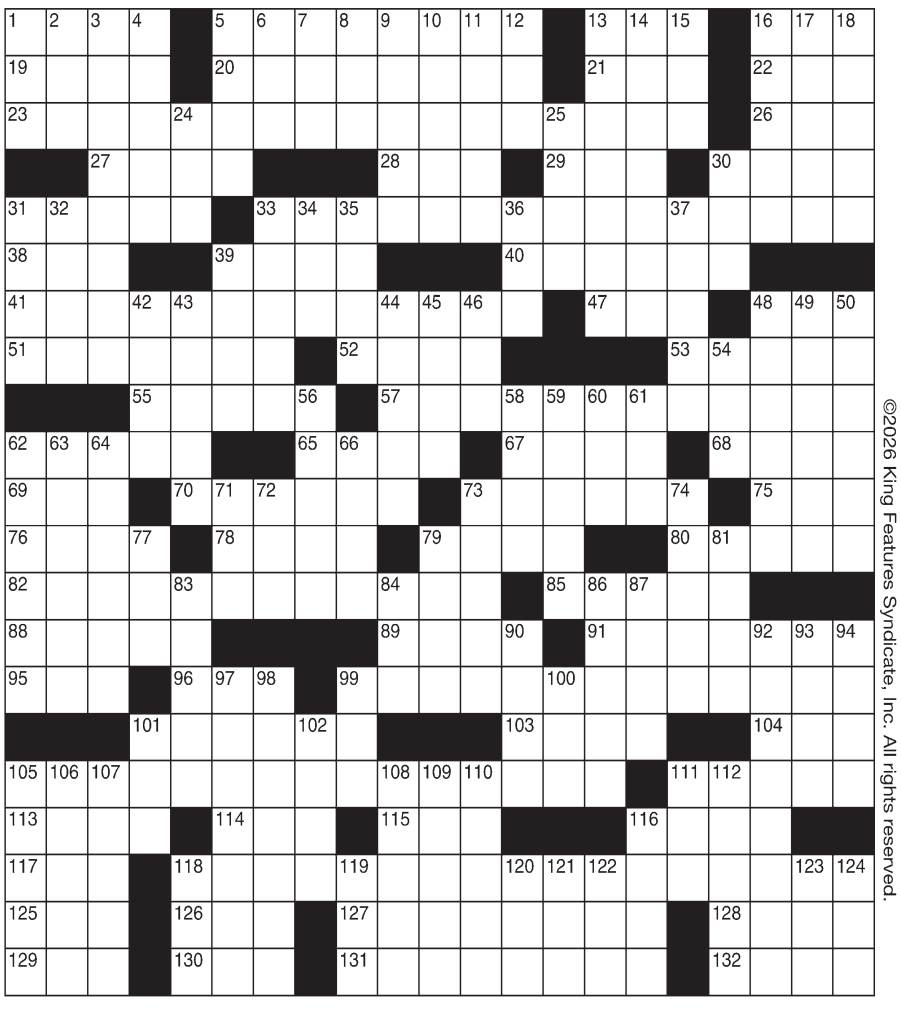
Q2 REPORT

ACROSS
1 Pet plaguers
5 Keg party dispensers
13 Iranian city with a 1,200,000+ population
16 Brainpower stats
19 Cries of awe
20 Having hay fever, say
21 Italian "a"
22 Bring to court
23 More proficient than anybody else
26 Tchr.'s union
27 Figure skating leap
28 Sauna setting
29 Photo lab blowup: Abbr.
30 Barbie or Ken
31 "He wouldn't hurt —"
33 Fairly often
38 Kung — chicken
39 Extremist sect
40 Female graduates
41 Ball hitter in a certain court
47 Center or glottis lead-in
48 Old JFK jet
51 Tallinn locale
52 — Christian Andersen
53 She sang "Skyfall"
55 Grandma, in Italy
57 Sri Lankan monkey with a hatlike whorl of hair
62 Nosy sort
65 Yuletide poem opener
67 Skip out (on)
68 Business attire
69 French "the"
70 Dental buildup
73 Joked around
75 Cooler cubes
76 Competent
78 Gallivant
79 Doubt-free
80 Deep-seated
82 Cartoon short featuring a bird who was a precursor to Tweety
85 Lamp cover
88 Sheer
89 Gooey cheese
91 Designer with the fragrance Lucky Wish
95 Quaint suffix with poet
96 Reply to "Are you?"
99 Dropping extra work and "acting your wage"
101 Wicca's realm
103 Jethro — (rock band)
104 Excavate
105 NHL team that became the Colorado Avalanche
111 Saintliness
113 Draws upon
114 Nutrition fig.
115 Debt memo
116 Tear apart
117 — Lady of Fatima
118 Algebraic statement graphed as a parabola
125 Bi- plus one
126 Poet's dusk
127 Counterpart of digital (Var.)
128 Norway port
129 Kong, for one
130 1950s prez
131 Actor Clint
132 "Sheesh, close call!"

DOWN
1 Hitter Gehrig
2 Tiny particle
3 "Calm down!"
4 Suffix similar to "-ish"
5 Joan of folk
6 Letter after kay
7 English cathedral city
8 Necessary: Abbr.
9 Have faith in
10 Visibly awed
11 Relative of risotto
12 — -fi
13 Latin for "five"
14 A single block of sugar, say
15 Irate
16 Playground comeback
17 Subdue
18 Serta rival
24 Stage actress Hagen
25 Have a hunch
30 Genetic stuff
31 Vaulted church area
32 E-help pages
33 Sacred book of Islam
34 Suffix with form
35 Hanker (for)
36 Disloyal type
37 Seminal '40s computer
39 Goatee spot
42 Top-shelf
43 Pig's noise
44 Doha locale
45 Pizza chain, informally
46 Atty.'s title
48 Costume spangle
49 Channel for excess water
50 Move like a seesaw
54 Govt. lawyers
56 "Shaq —!" (O'Neal memoir)
58 Lyft rival
59 Makes lighter
60 Sch. close to Harvard
61 Heady drink
62 Dental buildup
63 Disproves
64 Land specks in the sea
66 Bank bought by Chase in 2008, in brief
71 Financier Onassis
72 "Apollo 13" director Howard
73 Andrews of "Mary Poppins"
74 Failed to
77 Dallas-to-Nashville dir.
79 Assistant on iDevices
81 Uncluttered
83 In a — (very quickly)
84 — Dhabi (emirate)
86 Schleps
87 Deep blue dye
90 Dying rebuke from Caesar
92 Course part, in an eatery
93 Course part, in school
94 — Azalea ("Fancy" rapper)
97 Like built-up interest
98 Ordinary
99 Div. of an NBA game
100 "— Sera, Sera"
101 Drs. who deliver babies
102 Washerful
105 Sales target number
106 Seize illegally
107 Hair-raising
108 Pop diva Ross
109 Teensy bits
110 Thick cover
111 Item in a pod
112 Being pulled
116 Regretted greatly
118 End-of-proof abbr.
119 TV actress Charlotte
120 Dairy beast
121 Psyche part
122 Status —
123 Corrida cry
124 This minute



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Puzzle answers page 11

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

Meetings

Monday, July 13
The Patrick County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the third-floor court room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

Tuesday, July 14
The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the School Board Office.

Wednesday, July 15
The Stuart Town Council will meet at 6 p.m. at the Town Office.

The Blue Ridge Regional Library Board will meet at 3 p.m. at the Martinsville Library.

Friday, July 17
Free Community meal, 4-6 p.m. at Ross Harbour Methodist Church, 6260 Elamsville Road, Stuart.

Tuesday, July 21
The Patrick County Planning Commission will meet at 6 p.m. in the community room of Patrick & Henry Community College.

Events

Thursday, July 9
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will meet at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Jimmy Handy will provide the entertainment and hot dogs, buns, Cole slaw, condiments, and beverages will be provided. Attendees are asked to bring side dishes and/or desserts to share.

Friday, July 10
Stuart Farmers Market is open 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., with the same great selection of locally grown produce and handmade items. The Master Gardeners will be on site with some plants to sell and great information.

Saturday, July 11
The United Daughters of the Confederacy will hold a special program form the 130th anniversary celebration of Mildred Lee Chapter 74, Virginia Division at the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Museum, 1 East Main St., Martinsville, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, July 12
The descendants of John Preston Williams will hold their annual reunion at the Hughes Shelter in Trot Valley, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Bring a covered dish for lunch, which begins at 1 p.m.

Rockingham/Stokes Genealogical Society will host a program on finding records of lost children, 2:30 p.m., in the Walnut Cove Public Library, 106 W 5th St., Walnut Cove, N.C.

Tuesday, July 14
The Stuart Evening Farmers' Market will be open from 5-7 p.m., with a wide variety of fresh produce, fresh eggs, baked goods, peanuts, homemade peanut butter, and hand-crafted items.

Wednesday, July 15
The Patrick County Food Bank will distribute food from 8:30 - 11 a.m., and 5 - 6:30 p.m., at 108 Commerce Street, Stuart; 8 - 10 a.m. at Fellowship Church in Ararat; and 5:30 until out of boxes at the Community Building in Meadows of Dan.

Friday, July 17
The community food truck will be at Fairystone VFD from 3-4 p.m.

Saturday, July 18
Patrick Springs Christian Church, 23716 Jeb Stuart Hwy, Patrick Springs, will hold a movie night with finger foods at 6 p.m.

Thursday, July 25
Fresh Harvest Christian Church, other churches and organizations, will hold a Community Back-to-School Experience at Rotary Field from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Descendants of the Rock Castle community, as well as anyone with an interest in the history of Rock Castle, are invited to attend the annual Rock Castle Reunion beginning at noon in the Meadows of Dan Community Center, 2858 J.E.B. Stuart Highway, Meadows of Dan. Attendees are encouraged to bring family photographs, stories, historical artifacts, and a covered dish to share. For additional information, contact Beverly Belcher Woody at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or 276-692-9626.

Ongoing

The Patrick County High School Hall of Fame Committee is accepting nominations for induction into the Hall of Fame Class of 2026 until July 31. Nominations can be made at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/147g76X_3A_FezM1OXKGz-0BqHem1wiWnL_lV2iIxhah0/edit.

American Legion Post 105 meets every third Friday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Post building at 553 American Legion Road, Stuart. All are welcome.

VFW Post 7800 meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month. Premeeting meal starts at 6 p.m.; meeting starts at 7 p.m., 939 VFW Road, Patrick Springs. Qualified new members welcome.

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.

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.

The Patrick Springs Ruritan Club meets at 6:30 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the community room at Patrick Springs Park, 2 Ballpark Road, Patrick Springs.

Vesta Alzheimer's Group LLC meets at the Vesta Community Center on the third Tuesday of 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.

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.

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.

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Wilderness - Stuart, Inc.
Buying Logs
Standing Timber or Timberland
Stuart, VA
Contact Ronnie Bolt at
(276) 694-4432

Super Crossword

Answers

L	I	C	E	■	B	E	E	R	T	A	P	S	■	Q	O	M	■	I	Q	S
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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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3	6	1	8	7	2	9	5	4
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LEGAL

TOWN OF STUART, VIRGINIA

Employment Opportunity

Community Coordinator

The Town of Stuart is accepting applications for a full-time, salaried Community Coordinator. The Community Coordinator plans and leads Town community events and special programs; serves as a liaison among Town administration, local businesses, and community organizations; and provides administrative and project support to the Town Manager and Clerk/Treasurer. This is a public-facing position with seasonal peaks in workload, including some evenings and weekends.

Reports to: Town Manager

Starting salary: $49,000 per year, negotiable based on qualifications and experience

Application deadline: 4:00 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2026 (firm)

Duties include:

- Plan and coordinate Town sponsored events, including Strawberry Festival and Apple Dumpling Festival. Must communicate logistics with various vendors, partnering organization, and volunteers.
- Maintain the Town website and social media and post public notices and announcements.
- Provide administrative and project support to the Town Manager and Clerk/Treasurer.
- Provide front-line customer service to the public.

Minimum qualifications:

- Associate's degree in business, public administration, communications, marketing, or a related field preferred; an equivalent combination of education and experience will be considered.
- Experience in event planning or coordination and in public-facing customer service.
- Strong organizational and communication skills; proficiency with standard office software; valid Virginia driver's license.

Benefits:

The Town pays 100% of the premium for employee-only health insurance, plus a retirement plan, twelve (12) paid holidays, and paid vacation and sick leave.

To apply:

Submit a completed Town of Stuart employment application, a cover letter, a current resume, and three (3) professional references to information@stuartva.org, or by mail or in person to Town of Stuart, Attn: Town Manager, 100 Patrick Avenue, PO Box 422, Stuart, VA 24171. The full position description and application are available at www.stuartva.org. Questions: (276) 694-3811. Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2026.

The Town of Stuart is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

STUART FARMERS' MARKET

JULY MARKET EVENTS

Every Friday 8 am to 12 pm

July 10th: Friday Morning Market is open 8 am - 12 pm. Great selection of vegetables, baked goods, Fresh eggs, local honey & hand crafted items. The Master Gardeners will be on site with lots of valuable information & plants for sale.

July 14th: The Tuesday evening market will be open from 5pm - 7pm. Swing by after work and pick up some great local produce, soaps, hand crafted items, peanut butter, fresh eggs, coffee, & baked goods.

July 17th: Friday Morning Market is open 8 am - 12 pm. Come check out a great selection of local grown crops and hand made items. The Rise & Shine Youth Market plans to be on site with a great selection of items made by our local youth.

July 21st: The Tuesday evening market will be open from 5 pm- 7pm. Come out on your way home and pick up some baked goods, fresh eggs, local peanut butter, local vegetables, hand crafted items, soaps.

July 24th: Friday Morning Market is open 8 am - 12 pm. Same great selection of local grown produce and hand made items. The Landmark Center will be on hand to offer free Blood Pressure checks. The Blue Ridge Regional Library will be on site for a story time reading at 10 am.

July 28th: Tuesday Evening Market will be open 5pm-7pm. Swing by after work and pick up some great local produce, soaps, hand crafted items, peanut butter, fresh eggs, coffee, & baked goods.

July 31st: Friday Morning Market is open 8 am - 12 pm. Featuring a great selection and variety from fresh produce, fresh eggs, hand crafted items, coffee, peanut butter, birdhouses, baked goods, & handmade soaps.







LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY FOR A 2026 BIENNIAL REVIEW OF ITS BASE RATES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO § 56-585.8 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA

CASE NO. PUR-2026-00044

On May 29, 2026, Appalachian Power Company ("APCo" or "Company") filed an application ("Application") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to § 56-585.8 of the Code of Virginia ("Code") and the Commission's Rules Governing Utility Rate Applications and Annual Informational Filings of Investor-Owned Electric Utilities, for a biennial review of the Company's rates and terms and conditions for the provision of generation and distribution services. Pursuant to Code § 56-585.8 D, the Commission must issue a final order regarding the Application by January 15, 2027, and any revisions in rates ordered by the Commission pursuant to the rate review shall take effect no earlier than March 1, 2027.

In the Application, APCo represents that this proceeding entails, among other things, determinations regarding: (i) APCo's cost of service and earnings during the two-year period ending December 31, 2025; (ii) whether prospective changes to APCo's rates for generation and distribution services are necessary; and (iii) the Company's prospective fair rate of return on common equity ("ROE").

APCo states that it files this Application under Code § 56-585.8, which requires APCo to file a biennial review, utilizing "the two successive 12-month test periods ending December 31 immediately preceding the year in which such proceeding is conducted" to determine any excess or deficiency in the Company's earnings, which in this case are 2024 and 2025. The Company outlines the statutory parameters for the Commission's review of APCo's earnings in a biennial review case, including the circumstances under which the Commission must order revisions to APCo's rates.

Additionally, APCo represents that under Code § 56-585.8 F, if the Commission determines that APCo's existing rates will, on a going-forward basis, produce revenues above or below the Company's authorized rate of return, then the Commission "shall order any reductions or increases, as applicable and necessary, to such rates . . . that it deems appropriate to ensure the resulting rates for generation and distribution services (a) are just and reasonable and (b) provide the utility an opportunity to recover its costs of providing services" over the next biennial period, and earn a fair rate of return as authorized by the Commission.

APCo avers that, for the purposes of the earnings test in this case, APCo's authorized ROE is the 9.75% that the Commission approved in the Company's 2024 biennial review, Case No. PUR-2024-00024. APCo asserts that it earned a combined return of 4.655% on its common equity in 2024 and 2025.

In this case, APCo requests approval to implement retail base generation and distribution rates that are designed to increase the Company's revenues by approximately $61.4 million, which represents a 3.3% increase to overall revenues. The requested increase includes a $14.3 million decrease to the generation function and a $75.7 million increase to the distribution function. The requested revenue increase reflects, among other things, APCo's requested authorization of a prospective ROE of 10.5%.

APCo asserts that an increase to its rates is necessary to ensure the Company can continue providing safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates to its customers over the coming years. According to APCo, the requested rate increase is primarily the result of general inflation, increased investment in distribution and generation, increased capital costs, and the costs of required programs to support electric vehicles and low-income solar.

Included in the Application, the Company is proposing two Electric Vehicle ("EV") pilot programs: (1) the EV Charger Rebate Pilot, a charger rebate program for Level 2 and DC Fast chargers, and (2) the Residential Managed EV Charging Pilot, a managed charging program offering both active and passive managed charging options to customers. Additionally, the Company proposes changes to its economic development rider, Rider EDR, by: (1) limiting participation to new customers; (2) increasing the economic development required to participate; (3) requiring the service to be in an Environmental Justice Community; and (4) limiting the 40% adjustment factor to all customer generation charges. The Company is also proposing changes to its line extension policy for non-residential customers. Further, the Company also proposes to cancel Rider VWS because no customers are currently enrolled. The Company also proposes to increase the basic service charge for residential customers from $7.96 to $9.00 per month.

According to APCo, the overall impact of the Company's proposals would increase the monthly bill of a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month by approximately $9.10.

Interested persons are encouraged to review APCo's Application and supporting documents in full for additional details.

TAKE NOTICE that the Commission may apportion revenues among customer classes and/or design rates in a manner differing from that shown in the Application and supporting documents and thus may adopt rates that differ from those appearing in the Company's Application and supporting documents.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo's Application. On October 19, 2026, at 10 a.m., the Commission will hold a telephonic portion of the hearing, with no witness present in the Commission's courtroom, for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before October 15, 2026, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide required contact information to the Commission. This information may be provided to the Commission: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting; or (ii) by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting.

On October 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Commission will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission's Staff.

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

An electronic copy of the public version of the Company's Application may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: Elisabeth M. Bruce, Esquire, American Electric Power Service Corporation, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or ebruce@aep.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies of the public version of the Application and other documents filed in this case from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

On or before October 15, 2026, any interested person may submit comments on the Application by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/submit-public-comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044.

On or before August 26, 2026, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding must do so by filing a notice of participation at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties and their counsel. A copy of the notice of participation as a respondent also must be served electronically on counsel to the Company, any other respondents, and Commission Staff. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Rules of Practice and Procedure, 5 VAC 5-20-10 *et seq.* ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any notice of participation filed by a person not represented by counsel shall also set forth why the filer's positions in this matter are not adequately represented by another party to this proceeding and cannot be expressed through written or oral public comments as provided for in this proceeding. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing.

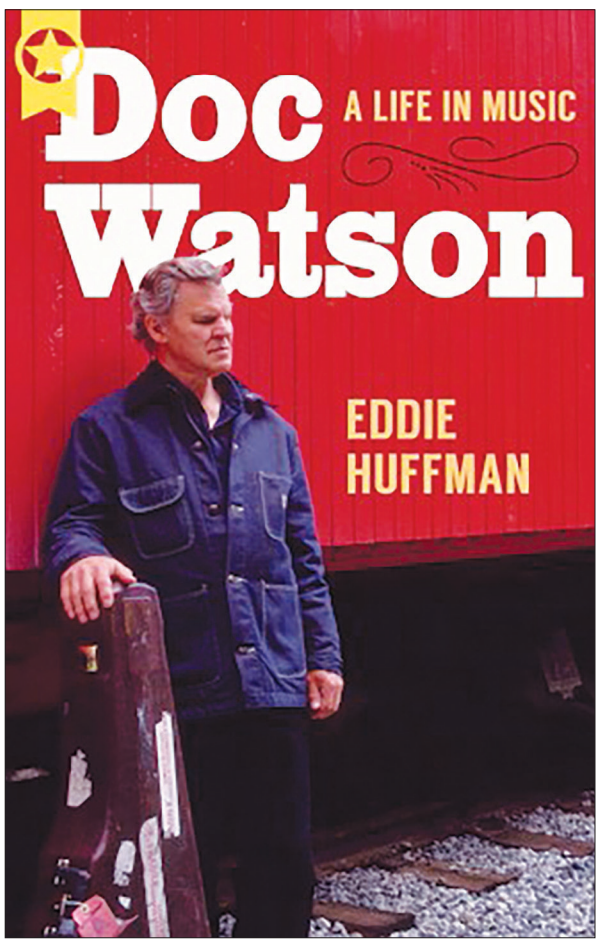
On or before August 26, 2026, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served electronically on the Company, any other respondents, and the Commission's Staff. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service,* and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044.

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

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

APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY

Backstories program to focus on Doc Watson on July 11



Doc Watson: A Life In Music

The Blue Ridge Music Center is launching its Backstories series with author Eddie Huffman accompanied by Riley Baugus on banjo celebrating the life of Doc Watson from noon to 3 p.m., Sat., July 11, on the breezeway. This event is free of charge.

Huffman will read excerpts from his book Doc Watson: A Life in Music, a biography that explores how the musician from Deep Gap, N.C, became synonymous with roots music in America and his influence on music today. The book is



Riley Baugus

full of fascinating stories ranging from Watson's first banjo made from his grandmother's cat to the founding of MerleFest.

Interspersed with the readings, Baugus will play songs and talk about his experiences with Watson. Baugus is an American musician, singer, and instrument maker celebrated for his mastery of old-time American banjo and song, particularly the Round Peak style that originated in Surry County, N.C. Based in Walkertown, he learned music from family members and community elders, building his first banjo with his father. Baugus gained recognition as a ballad singer and period banjo maker for the film Cold Mountain. He has collaborated with Rob-



Eddie Huffman

ert Plant, Alison Krauss and others on Grammy-winning albums.

Huffman will be available to sign copies of his book. You can bring a copy to have autographed and a limited number of books will be available for purchase.

This event is part of the Music Center's Backstories series, supported by Mid Atlantic Arts' Central Appalachian Living Traditions (CALT) program made possible by Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies. CALT Experiences grants support projects and events that encourage broad public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of living traditions and grow and disseminate artistic skill and cultural knowledge within the community.

The Backstories series focuses on the stories behind the music, and includes presentations by authors, musicians, artists, and interpreters focusing on the people, instruments, and culture of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Jessup

(cont. from page 1)



Brian and Traci Jessup at the June 18 open house for Jessup & Associates, PLC, in Stuart.



Brian Jessup, standing in a doorway, discusses the new office with a guest attending the open house.



Community members and clients attended the celebration marking the opening of Jessup & Associates' new Main Street office in Stuart.

from Henry County into the City of Martinsville. Now our office is on Church Street across from Martinsville City Hall and the Police Department in the Reed Young Law Office building," he said.

The early years were defined by long hours and limited resources, Jessup said, recalling 16- to 18-hour days and nights spent in the office.

"My wife, Traci, if it wasn't for her, I couldn't have done it, but she would bring me changes of clothes and I would, after two or three hours of sleep, get back up and do it again," he said.

Even now, he said remnants of those early days remain in the office design.

"So, through those early years when I didn't have the clients there, it was definitely tough when you're trying to make ends meet and to grow the business the way that I wanted to. I've been very, very blessed in many, many different ways," he said.

At the ribbon cutting, Jessup credited his wife not only for her early support but also for keeping the family afloat during the business's startup phase.

"She kept food on our table, paid our rent, and kept my truck from being repo-ed," Jessup said to a laughing crowd at the ribbon cutting. "I really appreciate her loyalty. She even became an employee of ours back in 1999. She is one of my most-tenured employees."

Employee longevity, he said, has also been a defining strength of the firm, with several staff members remaining for more than a decade, and some for more than 20 years.

"Those longtime employees have been really just crucial because they are the face of my business and I could do nothing without them," he said.

While the firm has grown steadily, Jessup said the nature of tax work remains one of its biggest challenges due to constant changes in regulations.

"Anything in tax is constantly changing and evolving, so making sure that you stay up on tax law and, not only that, but what specifically relates to our clients or making sure that we're there for them when they need us and we're providing good, reliable information," he said.

Jessup said Patrick County's size has also helped insulate the business from some of the sharper economic swings seen elsewhere.

The move into the new Main Street building came after a chance conversation with then-property owner Marilyn Lewis, he said.

"She said, 'Brian, I'm selling this building, and someone has bought my business. This would be a good building for you.' I was like 'oh yeah, it would' because my old office was on the upper floor, it was the old Dr. Thompson office," he said.

For nearly three decades, clients climbed stairs to meet with staff or conducted business in cars or nearby coffee shops when mobility was an issue. The new ground-level office, Jessup said, provides a more accessible and modern space.

"It just worked out great that I was able to get a property right across the street and on the ground level. This building had a wide-open floor plan, so I was able to come in and just build it out the way that we wanted to. It worked out really, really good for that, lots of room, they were able to modernize it and do the things that we needed from a technological standpoint," he said.

Even as he moves forward in a new space, Jessup said he remains grateful for the community support that helped sustain and grow the firm from its earliest days.

PCHS students honored at annual workforce development event

A career and technical education student in Virginia was recognized with a certificate of accomplishment at the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC) held June 1-5 in Atlanta. An all-time high of 7,000 students competed in the 2026 SkillsUSA Championships at NLSC, which is the largest gathering of the future skilled workforce.

Team G — which included Patrick County High School students Eli Wood, Parker Roop, Carter Gregory, Reggie Brown — was awarded a Skill Point Certificate in TeamWorks.

As an indicator of proficiency, Skill Point Certificates were awarded to SkillsUSA Championships competitors who met a predetermined threshold score for their respective competition. Students can add this certificate, an indicator of career readiness, to their employment portfolio.

To be invited to the SkillsUSA Championships, students first had to win their state-level competition, demonstrating their technical skills, workplace skills and personal skills. The national competition featured state champions from middle school, high school and college/postsecondary divisions across the country in 115 hands-on career and leadership competitions including robotics, automotive technology, drafting, criminal justice, aviation maintenance, public speaking and more.

"This showcase of career and technical education demonstrates SkillsUSA at its finest," said SkillsUSA Executive Director Chelle Travis. "Our students, instructors and industry partners work together to ensure that every student excels."

The SkillsUSA Championships is the largest skill competition in the world and covers 1.79 million square feet, equivalent to 31 football fields or 41 acres. It's supported by leaders from 850 businesses, corporations, trade associations and unions who planned and evaluated the competitors against their industry standards. More than 2,000 industry judges and technical committee members also volunteered their time to ensure a successful event.

The next NLSC will be held June 21-25, 2027, in Atlanta. Learn more about SkillsUSA, the No. 1 workforce development organization for students, at www.skillsusa.org.

William Letcher, Patriot







By Tom Perry

In the summer of 2000, movie history buffs were entertained by Mel Gibson, who fought his way through the American Revolutionary War in "The Patriot". The British Army under Lord Cornwallis made its way from Charleston in early 1780 with a loss at Cowpens, South Carolina, and a victory at Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina, in 1781, before crossing the Dan River into Virginia and making its way to Yorktown and surrendering to George Washington's Continental Army and the French under the command of Jean-Baptiste de Rochambeau.

There is a local connection to this fight for independence in Patrick County, Virginia, on the property owned by the J. E. B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust, Inc. Across the Ararat River from the site of Stuart's birthplace stands a lone grave.

On June 29, I presented a program kicking off the American 250 celebration with a program at the oldest marked grave in our county: 'A Tale of Two Great-Grandfathers: J E. B. Stuart's Great-Grandfathers in the American Revolution.'

William Letcher was the great-grandfather of James Ewell Brown "Jeb" Stuart. Little information has been passed down to us about Letcher, aside from the fact that he died around the age of 30, just like his famous Civil War great-grandson. We do know he was fervent in his love of the patriot cause. Papers in Henry County listed him on July 25, 1779, on the payroll list of Captain David Carlin's Henry County Militia as a corporal. Patrick County was Henry County in 1780, and it descended from Pittsylvania and Halifax counties.

William Letcher was born to Giles and Hannah Letcher around 1750, in Goochland County, north of Richmond along the James River. William, the second son, was described as a man of fine appearance and greatly beloved and esteemed. On November 20, 1778, William Letcher married Elizabeth Perkins and moved to present day Patrick County. Elizabeth, born on May 13, 1759, to Nicholas and Bethenia Hardin Perkins, grew up at Perkins Ferry in present day Pittsylvania County.

On August 2, 1856, John Letcher, future Governor of Virginia, wrote of William Letcher, "He chose for his residence a spot in the southwest corner of Patrick County, Virginia, called The Hollow. It derives its name from the circular bend, which the mountains make around it. The Blue Ridge makes a semi-circular sweep halfway around it on the west and the Slate Mountain and Little Mountain on the east and south. The Ararat, with its waters as clear as crystal, and as swift as the arrow shot from the bow, traverses this whole valley from north to south and then empties into the Yadkin. On one of the gentle swelling hills that lifts its head on the banks of this stream, Mr. Letcher established his home."

In August 1779, Henry County recommended William Letcher to the Governor of Virginia as a Commissioner of the Peace. Elizabeth and William Letcher left little documentation, except for a list of possessions and a summary of the major events in their lives. They grew corn and tobacco in the bottomland along the river. They held livestock, including 20 head of cattle, 10 hogs, and 5 horses. William Letcher's estate inventory, located in the Henry County courthouse, includes many of the household and farm items that you would expect. Among these items were saddlebags, rifles, three feather beds, and a looking glass.

William Letcher's granddaughter, the mother of J. E. B. Stuart, wrote of Letcher. "He had the promise of long years of happiness and usefulness and domestic felicity, but a serpent lurked in his path, for whom he felt too great a contempt to take any precautions." The clouds of war reached the home of William and Elizabeth Letcher that summer with tragic results in the form of Tories, those loyal to the British. John Adams said of the Tories, "A Tory here is the most despicable animal in the creation. Spiders, toads, snakes are their only proper emblems." The same day Bethenia was born, Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson wrote to Colonel William Preston in Montgomery County stating, "I am sorry to hear that there are persons in your quarters so far discontented with the present government as to combine with its enemies to destroy it." It was 4 years since this famous Virginian had penned the words of The Declaration of Independence, and we celebrated the 250th anniversary on June 29.

William Letcher was killed, as the British troops depicted in "The Patriot" were moving through the Carolinas for their appointed destiny at Yorktown in 1781. The presence of the British Army emboldened locals who sympathized with George III. The records of the Moravians nearby in North Carolina show much activity relating to the Tories. Tories were pro-British, and Patriots favored independence from Great Britain. The Tories, partly due to this isolation, targeted him.

The most romantic and accepted story tells that Letcher was in his fields on August 2, 1780, when a stranger came to the house and asked Elizabeth Letcher about her husband's whereabouts. She replied that he would be back shortly and invited the visitor to stay. When Letcher entered, the man identified himself as Nichols, a local Tory leader, and said, "I demand you in the name of His Majesty." Letcher replied, "What do you mean?" Nichols shot Letcher. The Tory fled the home, leaving the dying Patriot in the arms of his wife.

Elizabeth Perkins Letcher would marry George Hairston of Beaver Creek Plantation in Henry County, and Bethenia, the daughter of William Letcher, would marry David Pannill and, one day, have her own daughter, Elizabeth Letcher Pannill Stuart, the mother of the Civil War General. Elizabeth's brother William Letcher Pannill would become the ancestor of the famous textile company Pannill Knitting.

The Laurel Hill property would pass down through the family to Elizabeth L. P. Stuart and her husband Archibald. The Stuarts lived on the land from the mid-1820s until 1859, when Mrs. Stuart sold it. "Jeb" Stuart was born at Laurel Hill on February 6, 1833, the seventh of eleven children and the youngest son.

Whether or not "Jeb" Stuart identified with his great-grandfather while fighting for Southern Independence is unknown, but the only item remaining from the time of Stuart at Laurel Hill is the lone grave across the river, enhanced by the Sons of the American Revolution with an appropriate marker that states simply William Letcher, Patriot. The gravestone from a Richmond stonecutter named Montjoy, placed by Letcher's daughter, Bethenia Pannill, before she died in 1845, states, "In memory of William Letcher who was assassinated in his own house in the bosom of his family by a Tory of the Revolution, on August 2, 1780, age about 30 years. May the tear of sympathy fall upon the couch of the brave." An overlook was built near the Stuart house site so visitors can see down to the grave. You can also drive to the grave by taking Letcher Lane off the Ararat Highway.

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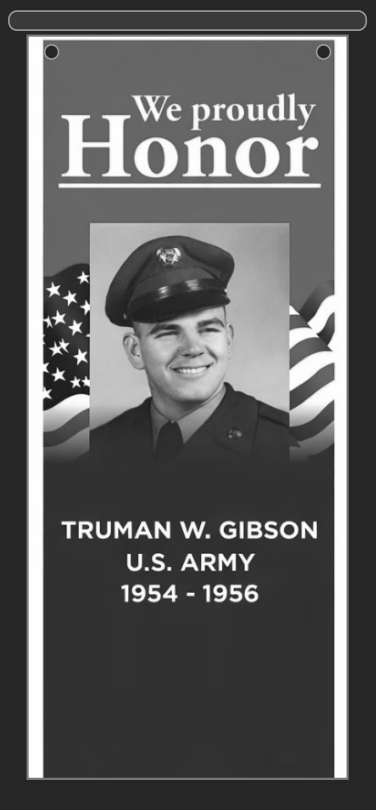

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