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Some Electric Consumers Could See A Credit This Summer

By Stephen Smoot

What started as a federal bribery case in Ohio could give local energy customers a boost come this summer.

Early last month, Sam Randazzo, former chair of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and former Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, surrendered to federal authorities. Along with four other powerful Ohio political figures, he was indicted in a \$60 million bribery scheme that involved state support for nuclear power plants and cash payouts to preferred political candidates.

First Energy was involved in the bribery scheme. In the wake of First Energy's first rate request since 2014 from the State of West Virginia's Public Service Commission, the PSC "ordered a general investigation into the lobbying expenditures" of two First Energy subsidiaries in West Virginia, which were Monongahela Power and Potomac Edison.

These companies combined serve most of the Potomac Highlands region of West Virginia.

The audit was undertaken by Van Reen Accounting LLC. They gave Chair Charlotte Lane, PSC chair, two recommendations.

First, they recommended that the state look more closely into nearly \$19 million paid to BCG Resources in Columbus, Ohio, in lobbying expenses.

They also discovered nearly \$230,000 in "certain sponsorship costs . . . mischarged to Mon Power and PE" over a nine-year period of time. The companies determined that this misdeed came to more than \$2.5 million, which is owed to the customers of both companies.

Customers should expect to see their bills credited in July 2024.

The rate hike requested was described as an "ENEC" or expanded net energy costs. The hike, essentially, is said to cover the higher costs of producing energy. As West Virginia Metro News reported, Monongahela Power and Potomac Edison requested a \$167.5 million rate hike that would add an average of \$9.19 to each monthly bill.

This increase could potentially be added to another request that could push electric bills up as much as 15 percent. WBOY reported that Lane stated that the PSC would take First Energy related matters into consideration while the board examines and decides on the rate increase.

Costs are also expected to rise steeply next year, due to higher federal emissions regulations from the Biden Administration that impose higher cost burdens on energy producers.

First Energy agreed to pay a \$230 million fine to be split among multiple federal agencies for their role in the affair.



The Pendleton County Convention and Visitors Bureau wrapped up its 2023 business at Swilled Dog in Upper Tract.

Pendleton County CVB Concludes First Year of Work at Annual Dinner

By Stephen Smoot

Not long ago, the Pendleton County Convention and Visitors Bureau operating both independently and effectively was merely a vision and the beginnings of a plan.

Boy what a difference a year makes. During the past year, under the leadership of executive director Amber Nesselrodt and the board of directors, the CVB has succeeded in not only establishing itself, but sprinting out of the gate.

The group celebrated those accomplishments at a year end dinner held before Christmas at Swilled Dog Distillery in Upper Tract.

First the board and other officials enjoyed a small homemade buffet lunch that included dessert. Then Nesselrodt called the meeting to order.

The marketing committee opened official discussion with the budget and preliminary plans for 2024. Nesselrodt discussed how the CVB could take advantage of opportunities through cooperation with other nearby communities, both county and city. Annie Humes, board member, stated that "West Virginia Tourism encourages cohesive branding across county lines," and added that such efforts had more likelihood of earning grants.

Committee members then discussed the focus of promotional materials. Bryan Williams, a board member who also announced his resignation later in the meeting, suggested that "the big attraction to Pendleton County is outdoor recreation. I'd love to dive into goals for that."

Humes stated, "I agree that's the biggest activity," but asked "what are the other tourism products?" She said that they had tried to identify activities or sites that fit other categories. With limited resources, the group concluded that it had to pick points of emphasis wisely.

Williams said of the guide created by the CVB, "It's a great document. It's exactly what we are looking for."

Humes said of plans, programs, and opportunities for 2024, "some already exist. Some are being nurtured."

Lindsay Kazarick briefly discussed plans for Sweetwater Farms in Sugar Grove to expand its trail and related offerings in April. Williams added that he'd like to see specific mapping of hiking and biking trails. "I've seen these asset maps get created over and over," he stated, additionally stating that "focus on presentation" is a must.

With the resignation of Williams and other members, the board took up the question of filling out its membership. Williams stated that he had little time to fulfill his current CVB commitments, but offered to remain available as a resource to help the group when needed.

Katie VanMeter came to present the case for herself and her husband to both join the board. She shared that, although from Hampshire County originally, her husband Jared is from Franklin and she has lived in the county for 16 years. They have worked to open lodging near Brandywine this month and last year bought the historic McCoy House in Franklin to operate as a bed and breakfast and events venue.

"We've been doing open houses," she said about her and

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Community CALENDAR

Post 30 To Meet

American Legion Pendleton Post 30 will meet at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 10 at the Star Restaurant in Franklin.

Quilters To Meet

The Sew and Sews Quilt Guild will meet at 6 p.m. Monday at Faith Lutheran Church in Franklin. Jamey Wimer will be demonstrating the Shooting Star quilt block. Anyone interested in quilting is welcome to attend.

Senior Sponsored Meal Scheduled

An anonymous Army family will be sponsoring "Lunch on Us" for 60+ Seniors Friday at the Franklin Senior Center. The meal will be served from 11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. To reserve a free lunch, call 304-358-2421 today.

Ag Dinner Meeting Planned for Jan. 15

The West Virginia University Pendleton County Extension Service will be sponsoring its first educational dinner meeting at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 15 at the Pendleton Community Building in Franklin. Quill Ward will speak on "Making the Most Out of Your Pasture."

For reservations for the meeting call 304-358-2286 by Jan. 10.

County Commission Hears Updates on Broadband and Tourism

By Stephen Smoot

"We always pray for Your guidance," stated commissioner Roger Dahmer as he opened the final Pendleton County Commission meeting of 2023 with the invocation.

Laura Brown, executive director of the Seneca Rocks Regional Development Authority, began the discussion of business with a review on county broadband expansion and projects both in the past and near future. She was joined on the phone by Jeffrey Hartley of Thrasher to discuss the technical aspects of the projects.

She shared that during the past two years preliminary routes were laid out. "We are fortunate to have been able to put together projects," Brown stated, then briefly described progress on each. Lingo received \$2.2 million with a county match of nearly \$300,000. When completed the project will potentially link 220 addresses on 31.1 miles of fiber.

Brown said that the project should be farther along than it has gotten, explaining that "the power company has held up the process." This "statewide" problem, as she put it, involves power company ownership of poles and differences over the placement of lines which must be leased.

Hartley then discussed three projects under Seneca Rocks Spruce Knob Telephone. A project extending through Brandywine and Sugar Grove is funded by an \$888,000 grant with a county match of more than \$26,000. It will run 18.8 miles and potentially connect 151 addresses. A project near Franklin took a \$1.2 million grant with a \$22,000 county match and will connect 22.7 miles and 110 addresses. Between Franklin and Upper Tract, grant funding of \$1.2 million with a \$32,000 county match linking 29.9 miles and 152 addresses.

He added that the SKSRT projects are "just getting started." Brown said that Thrasher also provided valuable assistance on a connectivity

project involving the school system and library.

SKSRT will submit a grant application early next year for a future project. Hartley assured the commission that they "will be very competitive."

He then reported that the state had completed a broadband study to help guide decisions regarding a \$1.2 billion grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Hartley added that counties can no longer apply for funding and grants require a 25 percent match, but said "you guys are very well positioned to maximize your opportunities."

Next came a report on underserved areas of Pendleton County. More than 5,600 addresses are either currently "served," or will be by active projects. Of the 882 left, careful surveys showed that 294 "are considered unserviceable, leaving 600 addresses over 271 miles in some of the most remote sections of the area. Linking all of these would cost an estimated \$28 million.

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Board of Education Accepts Resignation of Volleyball Coach, Wraps Up Business For 2023

By Stephen Smoot

The Pendleton County Board of Education held its final meeting of 2023 at Franklin Elementary School. The inclement weather, however, forced the postponement of that school's update to the board.

Board president J. D. Wilkins opened the session saying, "We ask that You bless the decisions and the kids."

After hearing the treasurer's report from J. P. Mowery, the board accepted the resignation of Pendleton County High School volleyball head coach Rod Cooper. Cooper took the team to repeated state tournament appearances, this year's providing the program one of its biggest victories, an upset of number one seed Buffalo.

Board members and other officials briefly discussed the scandals facing Upshur County Schools during the past year. State officials have sanctioned the system for misappropriation of

funds handed to them because of the pandemic. Upshur County's school system must repay state and federal funds more than \$800,000.

Mowery pointed out that "finance is how they got in trouble, not having controls for people." He further explained that they employed "a sole proprietor as an auditor," who likely was "not as rigorous as ours." Upshur County lacked procedures to govern spending and did not use specific purchasing cards.

He then mentioned the advance of the Secure Rural Schools program in the U.S. Senate. The SRS reimburses counties for national forest lands from which counties cannot recoup timber taxes.

Travis Heavner followed with the facilities report, saying, "There's not a lot from me." Heavner shared that "we did get the new sign up and running." The electronic sign had flawed LED when it arrived and it had just been repaired. "They've been updating it and it looks nice," he noted.

He added that "we did order new letters for the

side of the high school. They should be installed on the Jan. 27."

Board member Betty Kimble inquired if the girls' bathroom at the middle/high school had been painted. Removal of an appliance revealed yellow paint that had not been covered when the school took on its current colors. Heavner replied that the painting was finished.

Carrie Nesselrodt then delivered the fourth month attendance report. Brandywine and Franklin Elementary schools have competed all year for best attendance numbers. This month, BES had the best grade in attendance, second grade with 96.48 percent. It also came in as the top school with 94.406 percent.

She added that "each school follows its own pattern" and that "I'm curious to see how attendance changes from one year to the next." Also, she stated that each county school has shown improvement in attendance and that "overall, we're higher

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OBITUARIES



Betty Gay Ketterman Mallow

Betty Gay Ketterman Mallow, 88, of Franklin, WV, passed away Dec. 19, 2023, at Pendleton Manor in Franklin.

She was born on Sept. 23, 1935, in Petersburg, the daughter of the late Kate Sites Ketterman.

Mrs. Mallow was a 1954 graduate of Petersburg High School and was also a graduate of the West Virginia Business College. She worked in various secretarial fields from 1956 to 1997.

She loved to attend church at a young age. She recalled walking to church in the Ridges of Petersburg and often said, "God has always been with me."

She learned to sew and was known to sew her own clothing as well as her family's. She was an avid gardener and loved to bless family, friends and businesses with her beautiful flowers. She took pride in cooking and enjoyed sharing her homemade pies with her family and was always searching for new recipes to share. Her passion in addition to her hobbies was living on her farm and taking long walks, seeking to find a new rock for her collection.

After the death of her husband, she became involved in the beef industry. One of her proudest achievements was receiving Potomac Valley District Farmer of the year award.

She was a proud member of the Republican committee, and she had served in various offices over the years.

On June 22, 1956, she married E. Paul Mallow, who preceded her in death on Oct. 5, 1983.

She was the last surviving member of her immediate family.

She leaves behind to cherish her memory two sons, Jeff Mallow (Yvonne) of Brandywine and Brad Mallow (Kathy) of Cameron, North Carolina; a daughter, Lori Raines (Rick) of Franklin; six grandchildren, Stephen Mallow, Alyssa Mallow, Abby Beecher (Justin), Katherine Matagi (Travis), Brett Raines (Danielle), and Logan Raines; three step-grandchildren; Brandon Baudin (Jennifer), Brett Baudin (Chelsea) and Breana Burgess; five great-grandchildren; two nieces, Joyce and Darlene Ketterman; and numerous great-nieces and nephews.

She was also preceded in death by a brother, Bert Ketterman; a sister-in-law, Alice Ketterman; a nephew, LeRoy Ketterman; and a great-niece, Peggy Ketterman.

A graveside service was held Dec. 22 at Mt. Hope Lutheran Church Cemetery in Upper Tract.

Memorial donations be made to any Pendleton County Emergency Rescue Squad or the Mt. Hope Lutheran Church.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at www.basagic.com or on Facebook at Basagic Funeral Home.



Mary Mick

Mary Mick, 82, of Cherry Grove passed away Dec. 20, 2023, at her home surrounded by her family.

She was born July 23, 1941, at Cherry Grove and was the daughter of the late Jimmie Hedrick and Zetta Marie Arbogast Bennett, and a granddaughter of the late Suttie Arbogast.

Mrs. Mick was a homemaker and a Christian by faith. She was a lifelong member of the Big Run Presbyterian Church, where she enjoyed singing in the choir and Christmas programs. More recently she had attended the North Fork Baptist Church at Cherry Grove.

She enjoyed putting puzzles together, going to Bible studies, gardening and spending time with her family. She will be remembered for her infectious smile and for always being a "hugger." She had a seemingly unbreakable bond with her late sister, Evon Simmons.

She was the last surviving member of her immediate family.

On Sept. 26, 1958, she married Eugene Logan "Loggie" Wheeler, who preceded her in death on Nov. 22, 1964.

On July 6, 1970, she married her best friend and the love of her life, William Hubert Mick, who preceded her in death on Dec. 27, 2008.

Surviving are two daughters, Ruthie Malcolm (Tim) of Riverton and April Davis (John) of Brandywine; a son, Eric Logan Wheeler (Penny) of Circleville; 13 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren, including Jason Buitendyke, whom she raised; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was also preceded in death by a sister, Evon Simmons; a brother, Jimmie Hedrick, Jr., two infant children, Joseph William Hedrick and Mary Grace Wheeler; and a grandson, Jerry Malcolm.

A funeral service was held Dec. 27 at Kimble Funeral Home in Franklin with Pastor Mike Lambert officiating. Interment was at the North Fork Memorial Cemetery in Riverton.

Memorials may be made toward funeral expenses, c/o Kimble Funeral Home, PO Box 159, Franklin, WV 26807.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.kimblefuneralhome.com.



Lacy Berry Bennett

Lacy Berry Bennett, 89, of Cherry Grove passed away peacefully at his home on Dec. 22, 2023, comforted and surrounded by his loving family.

He was born on April 3, 1934, in Cherry Grove, the son of the late Berry and Nellie (Bennett) Warner.

Mr. Bennett attended Hunting Ground one-room school and Cherry Grove Baptist Church.

He had worked in construction and logging and was a jack of all trades. He will be remembered for his gentle words of wisdom and his loving and encouraging spirit. He cherished time spent with his family and devoted time to making memories with each of them.

On May 29, 1958, he married his wife of 65 years, Motie Bennett, who survives.

In addition to his wife, he leaves behind to cherish his memory two daughters, Susan Harper (Stanley) of Riverton and Nancy Barkley (Rick) of Cherry Grove; a son, Bobby Bennett (Lena) of Cherry Grove; six grandchildren, Carrie Kisamore, Scott Harper, Justin Barkley, Ashley Hedrick, Berry Bennett, and Brittianna Davis; three step-grandchildren, Nicole Buckley, Debra Stumbo and JD Stumbo; 12 great-grandchildren; five step-great-grandchildren; five sisters, Mabel Mick and Barbara Hardy, both of Broadway, Virginia, Catherine Arbaugh and Floda Vandevander, both of Cherry Grove, and Mary Marshall (Mike) of Blue Grass, Virginia; a brother, John Warner (Robin) of Orange Park, Florida; and several nieces and nephews.

He was also preceded in death by a brother, Arnold Bennett; and three sisters, Peachie Bennett, Arlene Mick, and Pauline Arbaugh.

Funeral services were held Dec. 27 at the Basagic Funeral Home chapel in Franklin, with Pastor Angie Cosner and Pastor George Lambert, Jr. officiating. Interment was in the Mick-Bennett Cemetery in Blue Grass, Virginia.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at www.basagic.com or on Facebook at Basagic Funeral Home.



Olin Louis Hoover

Olin Louis Hoover, 82, of Brandywine passed away Dec. 29, 2023, at his home.

He was born Oct. 1, 1941, in Sugar Grove and was the son of the late Raymond Ralph Hoover and Beulah Elizabeth (Moyers) Hoover.

Mr. Hoover was a 1960 graduate of Franklin High School. He was a veteran, having served in the U.S. Navy as a radioman during the Vietnam War from 1960 - 1964.

He received his bachelor's of science from James Madison University in 1972, master of education from JMU in 1976 and masters + 30 in 1990 from West Virginia University.

He was an earth science teacher at Broadway High School from 1973 - 1980. In July of 1980, he became principal at Franklin High School, and later served as transportation director for Pendleton County Schools.

He was a member of St. John Lutheran Church and attended Brandywine Baptist Church and Brandywine Christian Church. He was a charter member of the JMU Leadership Society and had served as commander of American Legion Post #30.

On July 23, 1977, he married Donna (Bennett) Hoover, who survives.

Also surviving are two daughters, Dr. Michelle Renee Hoover-Wickline (husband, John) of Clarksburg and Dr. Annette Marie Hoover (fiancé, Zachary) of Martinsburg; a brother, Adalbert Eugene Hoover (wife, Lorena) of Brandywine; two grandchildren, Ty Hamilton Wickline (wife, Maryanna Marie Mason-Wickline) of Morgantown and Carrie Elizabeth Wickline of Fairmont; and several nieces and nephews.

He was also preceded in death by a brother, Dr. Raymond Medford Hoover.

All services and interment were private.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.kimblefuneralhome.com.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to the Kimble Funeral Home in Franklin.



Wayne F. Vandevander

Wayne F. Vandevander, 69, of the Ruddle community near Franklin passed away peacefully Dec. 22, 2023, at Grant Memorial Hospital in Petersburg.

He was born March 10, 1954, at Petersburg and was the son of the late Fred Vandevander, Jr. and Nola Ruddle Vandevander.

A 1972 graduate of Franklin High School, he had worked at Ruddle Saw and Equipment and then at Hanover Shoe Company for 23 years, both as a laborer and a supervisor.

Mr. Vandevander retired from Pendleton County Schools in 2022 after many years of dedicated service as a school bus driver and a maintenance and transportation worker. He was a licensed trainer for new school bus drivers, worked at the bus garage, was an inspector and delivered food and supplies to the schools. He tirelessly operated the farm that had been in his family for generations.

He was a member of the Ruddle Presbyterian Church where he served as elder and trustee. He was a member of the Pendleton County Farm Bureau and volunteered his time working with the Cub Scouts, 4-H clubs, and the local FFA. He was an honorary FFA member.

He and his cousin, Keith Kimble, grew up together like brothers, and he took great pride in serving in multiple capacities at Kimble Funeral Home.

He enjoyed spending quiet time on the mountain behind

his home riding his side by side, hunting and spending time with his dog. He had a special place in his heart for children and animals.

On June 28, 1980, he married the love of his life, Beverly Judy Vandevander, who survives.

Also surviving are a son, Fredrick Vandevander (Cassie) of Petersburg; a granddaughter, Laney Vandevander; his four-legged companion, Ebby; and his extended family — cousins, Keith Kimble (Barb) of Franklin, Virginia Flatgaard (Wally) of Bridgewater, Virginia, Brenda Phillips (husband the late Alan Phillips) of Elkins, Paula Siler (Joe) of Parsons, Mickey Cole and his sons, Ryan and Sean Cole, all of Richmond, Virginia, and Pam Cole of Harrisonburg, Virginia; sisters-in-law, Sherry Watts (Nick) and their son, Keaton, of Petersburg and Karen Chamberlain (Ross) of Franklin; brother-in-law, Dennis Judy (Donna) of Upper Tract and their daughter, Valerie Dasher (Richard) of Franklin; and niece, Briana Bruns of Franklin.

He was also preceded in death by an aunt, Wilda Kimble, and her husband, John; an uncle, Paul Vandevander, and his wife, Alice; a special cousin, Charlotte Cole, and her husband, Jim; in-laws, Denver and Bonnie Judy; and two brothers-in-law, Herbert Lee Sites and Steve Judy.

A funeral service was held Dec. 28 at Ruddle Presbyterian Church near Franklin with Pastor Deborah Beam officiating. Interment was at the Ruddle Church Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Ruddle Presbyterian Church, 17 Vandevander Lane, Franklin, WV 26807 or Upper Tract Rescue Squad, PO Box 42, Upper Tract, WV 26866.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.kimblefuneralhome.com.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to the Kimble Funeral Home in Franklin.

A BIG Thank You

As our 2023 Salvation Army bell ringing season comes to a close, we want to express our thanks to the many bell ringers — you are so appreciated for giving of your time to this worthy cause. Some of you have been ringing with us for decades, and we appreciate your continued dedication to your neighbors in need. We also want to thank the owners of T&K Markets for giving us a warm, dry place to ring the bell, and to the store employees for their pleasantness and courtesies shown to us while we were there. To all of you who dropped coins or cash into the kettle, our most sincere thanks.

The money that we collect helps the residents of Pendleton County who are in need, and we graciously thank each and every one of you for your kindness and generosity.

Barb Hamilton and Judy Grimm
Pendleton County Salvation Army Stewards

The Pendleton County Board of Education Is Once Again Selling Surplus Bus/Fleet Inventory

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Please visit the website below if you are interested in bidding on these buses. Deadline for Online Submission of Bids is January 11, 2024.

Interested parties may inspect any of the fleet by contacting Charles Miller for an appointment at 304-358-2588 between 8 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

<http://www.publicsurplus.com/>

Only public institutions sell their items on this site. Under REGION, select West Virginia Under AGENCY, select Pendleton County Schools Select VIEW ALL AUCTIONS for Pendleton County School District



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OBITUARIES



Naomi Wilfong Mitchell

Naomi Wilfong Mitchell, 97, of Sugar Grove died Dec. 27, 2023, at Pendleton Manor in Franklin.

She was born Dec. 1, 1926, and was the daughter of the late John Boyd Wilfong and Rosa Florence Varner Wilfong. Mrs. Mitchell was a graduate of the Franklin High School Class of 1947. She was a homemaker and loved animals, especially her cats.

She was a member of St. Michael's Lutheran Church, the Home Demonstration Club, V.F.W. Post 9666 Ladies Auxiliary and the Pendleton County Historical Society. She enjoyed decorating cakes, crocheting, gardening and researching genealogy.

She was also preceded in death by her first husband, Garland Edward Sheffer, and by her second husband, Other C. "Dick" Mitchell.

Surviving are a son, Gary Sheffer of Sugar Grove; a special friend, Linda Sheffer of Sugar Grove; a step-granddaughter, Renee Saylor of Lacey Springs; a step-great-granddaughter, Laura Reubush of Rockingham, Virginia; and a step-great-grandson, Timothy Eckard of Timberville, Virginia.

A graveside service was held Sunday at St. Michael Church Cemetery in Sugar Grove with Pastor Jerry Smith officiating.

Memorials may be made to the St. Michael Church Cemetery Fund, 627 Brushy Fork Road, Sugar Grove, WV 26815.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.kimblefh@shentel.net.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to the Kimble Funeral Home in Franklin.



Pamela Louise Bennett

Pamela Louise Bennett, 51, left her earthly home on Dec. 26, 2023, at Nella's Autumn Lake Health Care Center in Crystal Springs.

She was born on Aug. 28, 1972, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, the daughter of Eston Lee and Margie Marie (Hise) Bennett.

Ms. Bennett was a graduate of Franklin High School and loved volunteering for the Franklin Group Home and to help clean the Franklin firehouse and several churches in the area.

She was a Christian by faith and attended various churches. She had a sweet spirited personality and a smile that could light up your heart.

In addition to her parents, she leaves behind to cherish her memory a sister, Delores Ann Bennett of Circleville; and nephews, Kenneth Ryan Bennett and David Allen Arbaugh.

Funeral services were held Friday in the Basagic Funeral Home chapel in Franklin with Pastor Mike Lambert officiating. Interment was at the North Fork Memorial Cemetery in Riverton.

Memorials may be made to North Fork Rescue Squad or Mountain View Church in Circleville.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at www.basagic.com or on Facebook at Basagic Funeral Home.



Linda Lane Puffenbarger Malcom

Linda Lane Puffenbarger Malcom, 76, of Covington, Virginia, left this earthly life on Dec. 26, 2023, while a patient at Lewis Gale Hospital Montgomery in Blacksburg, Virginia.

She was born Dec. 8, 1947, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and was the only child of the late Harvey C. Puffenbarger and Glenna Todd Puffenbarger of Sugar Grove.

Mrs. Malcolm graduated from the Franklin High School in 1966.

In 1985, she completed a certified nursing assistant course at Dabney S. Lanchester Community College and was a nursing assistant. She was a member of Covington Grace Brethren Church, and having accepted Jesus as her personal savior, she is now enjoying her heavenly home.

She married Garet Malcom on Aug. 3, 1968, and moved to Covington, Virginia.

Surviving in addition to her husband of 55 years are a daughter, Tricia Malcom of North Chesterfield, Virginia; and a number of cousins.

She was also preceded in death by an infant daughter.

A graveside service was held on Saturday at Sugar Grove Cemetery with Rev. Dan Gillette officiating.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.kimblefuneralhome.com.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to the Kimble Funeral Home in Franklin.



Jeffery Hal Evick

Jeffery Hal Evick, 65, of Franklin passed away on Dec. 22, 2023, at the Pendleton Manor in Franklin.

He was born on Feb. 25, 1958, in Petersburg, the son of the late William "Bill" Morgan and Neva Katherine (Hammer) Evick.

Mr. Evick was a 1977 graduate of Franklin High School and a member of Faith Lutheran Church.

He had worked at the H. P. Store, Valley Clothing and in guest services at Massanutten Resort. He loved fishing at River Gap, South Branch of the Potomac, and Brandywine Lake. He enjoyed spending time with his family and watching West Virginia University sports.

He is survived by aunts, uncles, cousins, and a host of friends.

Funeral services were held Dec. 28 in the Basagic Funeral Home chapel in Franklin with Pastor Sherry officiating. Interment was at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Franklin.

Memorials may be made to: Pendleton Manor, PO Box 700, Franklin, WV 26807; Faith Lutheran Church, PO Box 262, Franklin, WV 26807; or to any Pendleton County Rescue Squad.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at www.basagic.com or on Facebook at Basagic Funeral Home.



Linda Louise Propst

Linda Louise Propst, June 28, 1949 – Dec. 9, 2023

Ms. Propst went peacefully to her heavenly home on Dec. 9, 2023, surrounded by her family.

She was unique and was known around town as the lady with the pink hair. Her favorite word of expression was "Indeed," which will long be remembered. She loved cooking and sharing food with families and co-workers. She enjoyed listening to music, reading, spending time at the Franklin Moose, and lovingly caring for her "fur babies." She was kind, hardworking and very outspoken. She will truly be missed.

She leaves behind to cherish her memory a daughter, Michelle; a granddaughter, Madison; two sisters, Kathy and Mary Beth; and several nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Samuel and Lucy Propst; her husband, Stan; a good companion, Bill; two brothers, Sammy and Tommy; a sister, Brenda; and a loving son, Tony.

Fly High Linda. Until we meet again. In honoring her wishes, her body has been cremated.



Sadie J. Pittman

Sadie J. Pittman, 81 of Goose Creek, South Carolina, passed away on Dec. 16, 2023.

Born on Feb. 15, 1942, in Franklin, she was a daughter of the late Cornelia Bowers Thompson.

Ms. Pittman was a huge Stingrays fan and attended many hockey games. She was even loved by the mascot Cool Ray. She loved to paint and many of her paintings hang in the family home. She loved puzzles, solitaire, mystery games and gardening.

Surviving are a son, James Pittman of Goose Creek, South Carolina; and a grandson, Jimmy Pittman of Goose Creek, South Carolina.

Funeral services were held Saturday in the Basagic Funeral Home chapel in Franklin. Interment was at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Franklin.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at www.basagic.com or on Facebook at Basagic Funeral Home.

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30 Years Ago
Week of January 1, 1994

DAHMER

**Local Records Indicate
Big Snow of 1890
Was Hip Deep**

The old folks who saw the big snow of 1890 have passed away. In an old McGuffey Speller, J. W. (Bud) Dahmer wrote big snow: December 16, 1890. The memories of the late Hugh Moyers: the snow started 11:00 a.m. December 16, 1890. How did Hugh remember this snow... because his father, Jasper Moyers, died of heart trouble and typhoid fever during the snowfall that lasted three days and laid on the ground until April. It was two weeks before a coffin could be brought in and he was not sure of the date buried. His grandfather, Harmon Moyers, died of fever January 6, 1891. A combined funeral service was conducted for Jasper and Harmon by Rev. William Milton Kibler on the front porch of the old log house on June 28, 1891. This old log house has been restored by a well-known citizen Mike Roberts. This snow was said to be hip deep to man by a number of older citizens. In the fall of 1890, there was a large mast for wildlife to live on. Joel Dahmer had some hogs out in the woods when the snow fell. He found several hogs in the spring near Ulrick Mountain under large oak trees surviving by eating acorns and some of his hogs he never found.

**Dixie Gas Growth
Over 38 Years
Impressive**

In an effort to make area residents more familiar with local business firms, the Franklin Business and Professional Association is designating a local business firm as Business of the Month and providing a brief account of the firm. This month the firm is Dixie Gas and Oil Corporation.

By Joan Ashley

The Franklin branch of Dixie Gas and Oil Corporation, serving customers in five counties in West Virginia and two in Virginia, opened its doors for business in 1956 with the acquisition of Moyers Gas Company customers.

Named the Dixie Bottled Gas Company, it was first located for several years on a side street in Franklin before moving to a rented building on Main Street. In October, 1970, a large two-story house on North Main Street was purchased from Mrs. Golda Wimer and renovated into office space. The upstairs was rented as an apartment until 1990 when it was turned into storage space.

Beginning as a small cylinder exchange operation, the cylinders were filled at the Verona plant and trucked to a dock located along the South Branch of the Potomac River south of Franklin.

Because of space shortage, an important part of the business, a small appliance department was located in a section of the old John Deere Equipment Building next to Franklin High School.

As the propane business grew, demand for larger tank installations increased as did the volume of propane to be delivered. The bulk truck driver hauled propane from the Verona plant almost daily until 1975 when a storage plant was built on U. S. Rt. 33 west on an acre of land purchased from the Annie Kee estate. An 18,000-gallon capacity storage tank was installed and cylinder storage was moved to the new location. The land on which the old dock was located was later sold and during the 1985 flood was washed away. In April, 1987, a second acre of land adjacent to the plant was purchased for any future expansion. In October, 1993, a second 18,000-gallon tank was installed.

Branch manager Nancy Scott assumed her duties upon the death of Robert Gonshor in 1983. Because of her years of experience serving as secretary since 1971, "top management felt I was qualified for the job," she said. She heads a work force of seven people

Dixie offers a complete line of Whirlpool and Roper appliances. Dixie also sells and services Toro lawn and garden equipment.

40 Years Ago
Week of January 5, 1984

**Marriage, Family
Counselor Opens Office
In Franklin**

David Fisher, a marriage and family counselor, has opened an office on Pine Street in Franklin. Both Fisher and his profession are somewhat new to the area.

The 34-year-old Harrisonburg native received his masters degree in counseling from James Madison University in 1982. Fisher, a former school teacher, became interested in the counseling profession through reading, taking courses in counseling and psychology, and through "my own experiences in therapy. I began to get real excited about what can happen in counseling—the growth, the healing, the discovery of what's inside us and how we can use that—and I realized one day that I would like to do this work professionally."

60 Years Ago
Week of January 9, 1964

100 YEARS AGO

By LON K. SAVAGE

Editor's Note—The following is one of a series of articles on the Civil War. Each weekly installment covers events which occurred exactly 100 years ago.

**Lincoln, Davis Hold
New Year Receptions;
Grant, Man of Honor,**

Boomed for President

A band of 78 horsemen from the Second Maryland Cavalry rode out from Harpers Ferry 100 years ago this week and went bounding across the snow covered fields of northern Virginia, hoping to find and destroy a group of Confederate federal troops in the area. They dashed to Hillsboro, to Waterford, to Purcellville and to Upperville, all in vain. Then, at Upperville—a shot rang out from nowhere, and a cavalryman went limp in his saddle, a bullet hole in his head.

So the year 1864 opened—the terrible year—the year that would bring thousands more to death, that would crush the Confederacy almost—but not quite—to its knees, that would pit Grant against Lee at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor and other points ever closer to Richmond. It would bring Sherman up against Joe Johnston in a horror filled fight for Atlanta, an ensuing "March to the Sea."

But it opened rather pleasantly on New Year's Day in Washington and Richmond, the capitols of the warring sides. In Washington, President and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln held a reception in the White House, while at Richmond, President and Mrs. Jefferson Davis held a reception in their home—"The White House of the Confederacy." Callers at both said their respective presidents were unusually friendly and warm.

The Lincolns' reception began at noon, when the doors to the White House swung open and a crowd of uniformed officers and smartly dressed men and women swarmed into the East Room. Lincoln greeted each cordially, often with a joke. Beside him stood Mrs. Lincoln who, one caller noted, was not in mourning for the first time since their son, Willie Lincoln, had died 20 months earlier.

At Richmond, much the same type of scene transpired that day. At the White House of the Confederacy, the same types of crowds came in, although the uniforms were grey and the civilian clothing, perhaps, was not quite in such good condition. President Davis shook hands warmly with his well-wishers, while beside him stood his wife, Varina Howell Davis, who was in mourning for her father who had died at Montgomery, Alabama, the preceding March.

But there were great differences in those two White Houses that day. Those who crowded into the executive mansion at Washington spoke confidently of the victory they were sure would come to the United States in the Civil War. In Richmond, although they would not say so aloud, some feared that the greatest moment of the Confederacy had passed—that the fate of the Confederate States of America had somehow been sealed during the year that had just ended.

Ulysses S. Grant, the man of

the hour in the United States of America, was riding through the mountains of northeast Tennessee and southeast Kentucky 100 years ago this week, and everywhere he went, crowds of mountaineers gathered to see him. As his party rode into the villages, the townsfolk would point and cheer at a distinguished, gray-haired man surrounded by a host of less prepossessing federal officers. As the people oohed and aahed, Grant—a short, bearded, rather scrubby man in his early 40's—rode on unobtrusively, not bothering to inform the people that they were cheering the general's surgeon rather than the general, himself.

Such was the position in which Grant found himself in early 1864. His name was on every lip; he was the hero of the United States Army; the man who had split the Confederacy in two and had driven the Confederates from Chattanooga, Tenn., to Georgia. Yet few persons knew anything else about him, few knew what he looked like and he, himself, made no attempt to correct the situation.

Even as Grant rode through the mountains (he was inspecting a supply line through Cumberland Gap), his name was being mentioned in New York City as the man to succeed Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States.

The "Boomlet" for Grant was being led by James Gordon Bennett, editor of the spicy scandal-filled "New York Herald," the largest circulating paper in the nation.

"The Herald" had little use for President Lincoln; he could not bring rebellion to a close quickly, according to Bennett and when the war was over, Lincoln was not the man to build the Union. The candidate Bennett asserted, must be a man who stood clear of partisan politics and whose popularity was of such magnitude that it would unite all behind him. Such man was Grant.

But Grant, himself, had no such views. At first, he only joked at the talk: "I aspire only to one political office. When this war is over, I mean to run for Mayor of Galena (his home town in Illinois), and if elected, I intend to have the sidewalks fixed up between my house and the depot."

Later, he became more serious about the matter. In a letter to his father in February he stated categorically: "I am not a candidate for any office. All I want is to be left alone to fight this war out."

Next week: Politicking Picks Up.

DAHMER

We had a 12-inch snow and the thermometer registered zero weather 20 and 22nd of December, and cold winds most of the time during the Yuletide Season, but most churches had their Christmas programs.

70 Years Ago
Week of January 7, 1954

EDITORIAL

IN RETROSPECT ---

The ending of an old year and the beginning of a new year always affords an opportunity for a bit of reminiscing. We who have the pleasure of living in small communities frequently indulge in the plaint that "nothing ever happens here," and indeed it is not always unjustified. But a moment's reflection will bring to mind quite a variety of events which have happened during the past year. Some were dramatic, some were tragic and some were humorous. A few of the stories that you have read in the Times during the past year are the following:

Wild Cat Kills 97 Chickens for Ralph Rexrode....County 4-H Poultry Judging Team Attains National Recognition....Body of Robert Hugh Gutshall Found in Smith Creek....Maxie Armentrout Sells Prize FFA Ham at World Record Price of \$51 Per Pound....Two Washington Boys Found in Trout Rock Cave....Hazel Simmons and Infant Child Perish in Buffalo Hills Fire....Bank Deposits for Year Hit New High of \$1,527,000 in Pendleton County....Fire Destroys Guy Keplinger's Home at Fort Seybert....Charles Lambert Fails to Return From B25 Combat Mission Over North Korea....Man Finds Wife As Result of Ad in The Pendleton Times....5000 Horsepower Compressor Station Begins Pumping at Mouth of Seneca.... Man Draws Penitentiary Term For Statutory Rape.... Harlan V. Kimble Wounded in Korea Just Twelve Days Before Signing of Truce.... Theodore Willis Released From Communist Prison Camp.... Bob Pope Signs to Play Ball With Senators....93 Year Old David Clark Mowery Dances Jig at Birthday Party....10,000 Fishermen Catch 15,000 Trout at Spruce Knob Lake Opening....Man Robs Franklin Farm Supply on July Fourth.... Randolph Minor is Killed in Auto Accident....200 Subscribe to Pendleton County Concert Association....Woodrow Vandevander Dies in Auto Wreck at Cherry Grove.... Franklin Wins Allegheny League Baseball Trophy.... Chester Arbogast Killed in Fort Bragg Maneuvers....648 Deer Killed in Pendleton County....

Although it is seldom sensational, the county news is always interesting. We laugh, we cry and we learn with our newspaper. We hope that the news during the new year will be good news—news of progress, accomplishments and prosperity. But whether it be good or bad we hope to have for our Times readers all the news that is fit to print every Thursday morning during the new year.

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**Smith Creek/
Friends Run**

by Dave Ellis

Hello 2024, good-bye 2023. As everyone has a memory of the year past, good or bad, put it away and start new. A New Year's resolution is a good start, but how many folks will keep it.

The burning law is now 24/7 until March 1. When burning make sure the area is clear and call the 911 Center to let them know.

Smith Creek and Friends Run Churches of the Brethren: shut-ins - Mary Mitchell, Bucky Moyers, Pam Riner, Anna Tesi, Alice Johnson, Arlin Dale and Freda Jamison, Hazel Simmons, Reva Hartman, Larry Moyers, Mary Alice Simmons, Sandy Washburn, Sandra Vandevander and Woodrow Hartman; prayer list - Richard Campbell, Tristan Hartman, Joshua Shirk, Ava George, Roberta Bennett, Kenny Williams, Dennis Mitchell, Debbie Horst, Myrtle Hammer, Pam Rexrode, Nancy George, Neal Eye, Margaret Wimer, Sherman Bennett, Donald Burns, David Bowers, Wendell and Darlene Nelson, Vada Bible, Ruby Gail Roberson, Gary Hess, Ruth Bauer, Anna Mauzy, Linda Maxwell Looney, Gloria Moats, Sterle Lambert, Martha R. Kimble, Bennie and Mary Alice Evick, Jimmie Bennett, Ruthalene Judy, Wayne Kimble, Stanley Propst, the family of Jeff Evick and the family of Olin Hoover.

Prayer thought: "The wisdom God provides is there to follow your path and direction. It just might save a life for eternity. What is your goal for 2024?"

High and low temperatures and precipitation for Dec. 25 through Dec. 31, followed by the same for last year, were as follows: Dec. 25 - 51°, 34°, .16" (28°, 8°); Dec. 26 - 53°, 40°, .12" (30°, 12°); Dec. 27 - 52°, 43°, .46" (41°, 19°); Dec. 28 - 51°, 33°, .01" (50°, 23°); Dec. 29 - 41°, 28° (61°, 25°); Dec. 30 - 40°, 29° (63°, 36°) and Dec. 31 - 41°, 30° (53°, 47°, .14").

Rainfall for December was 1.98", compared to 1.6" in December of 2022.

Rainfall for 2023 was 35", compared to 41.15" in 2022.

Snowfall for December was .5", compared to .25" in December of 2022.

Snowfall for 2023 was 2.75", compared to 32.5" in 2022.

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Christmas Lighting Creates Assorted Emotions

Sugar Grove

By Paula Mitchell

Why do people decorate with lights at Christmas? After asking a variety of people, who put lights up for the season, these were some of their responses:

- It's a neighborhood thing.
- It brightens up those short, gloomy days.
- It gets one in the holiday spirit.
- It's a family tradition.
- It brings joy to the eyes of the beholder.
- I just love Christmas lights.

Each community has its own traditions that make Christmas feel special.

Bringing about a spirit of peace and unity is where the Christmas tree is nicely decorated. It is where most families gather together to open gifts, or to merely chat.

For a lot of folks, Christmas is a magical time. It's a time of innocence; it's a time of joy. The lights on the inside, as well as the outside, boost happiness, and increase energy levels, according to science research.

Some families make a tradition of driving around to look at the lights and to judge which house has the best display. Christmas lights show that they inspire other people to go all out on their houses. Most of all, everyone can agree that Christmas lights truly showcase the true Christmas spirit.

The winners for this year's Parade of Lights in the Sugar Grove community were Jason and Martha Smith, first, Brandon and Cara Mitchell, second, Jeff and Maxine Rader, third, and Benny and Dinah Mitchell, the True Meaning of Christmas. As in the past, the winners will be receiving gift certificates to Fox's.

Take the family out to enjoy the lights in the community!

To my readers, "May the closeness of your loved ones, family, and friends fill your heart with joy, this coming year. Give a cup of kindness to all you meet...every day...all year through! Happy New Year!"

Life's little instructions include the following:

1. Occasionally let a person's children help one, even if it slows one down.
2. Wash one's hands before eating.
3. Learn how to take notice of the needs around one.
4. Put things back where a person found them.
5. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for one.

Joys of the week:

Everyone is thankful for the rains that fell this past week.

There were family get togethers, where laughter, enjoying foods and reminiscing memories were the order of the week.

Lots of gifts were exchanged, and peace abounded in this community.

Living in a safe community with helpful neighbors is a much-needed mix for a healthy life.

Quotes for the week are as follows:

"You can get excited about the future. The past won't mind." — Hillary Depiano

"Family is not an important thing. It's everything." — Michael J. Fox

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love." — Hamilton Wright Mabie

"Keep looking up...that's the secret of life." — Snoopy

"Let all the failures of your past year be your best guide in the New Year." — Mehmet Murat Ildan

"Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come. Whispering, 'It will be happier.'" — Alfred Lord Tennyson

"Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand." — Dr. Seuss

Sitting by the fireplace is the place to be, to hear the "Talk of the Grove."

Bob and Judy Grimm spent Christmas with Rodney Kiser and family who live in Preston County.

Robby, Linnea, Logan, and Michael Fisher joined Brenda Fisher for Christmas dinner. Everything was delicious and enjoyed by all.

Jim and Karla Moats enjoyed a wonderful visit with Tuesday, Brian and Cedar Simmons, and Troy and Montana Hise this past weekend.

Good to hear that Rosalee Grogg is back home. She enjoyed having the following visitors: Terri Grogg, Claude Castleberry, Steven, Dakota, Braxton, and Vance Grogg. Anthony and Asher Mauzy and Madison Grogg.

The community has lost two remarkable women, Naomi Mitchell and Mary Puffenbarger.

Naomi lived a life that was filled with so many adventures in her 97 years. She was the daughter of the late John Boyd Wilfong and Rosa Florence Varner Wilfong. Her first husband was Garland Sheffer, to whom she had a son, Gary (Linda).

To that she gained a step-granddaughter (Renee) and two step-great-grandchildren (Laura and Tim). She then married Otho "Dick" Mitchell. Naomi was preceded in death by both her husbands.

Her roots dated back to the Wilfong pioneer, of which she compiled a genealogy Wilfong book. She was an avid historian of the area, even securing a historical state road marker for the St. Michael Church (Wilfong). Her knowledge of history served her well as a former director on the Pendleton County Historical Society. She was also a member of the Home Demonstration Club, and the Post 9666 Ladies Auxiliary.



Naomi loved her many cats that lived a good life under her care. Her hobbies were crocheting, gardening, researching genealogy, and cake decorating. She was an avid communicator, writing many a letter to seek information for her causes. She was also a past Sugar Grove Tractor Parade Queen. Naomi was a busy lady.

Sunday afternoon, Naomi was laid to rest at the St. Michael Lutheran Church's cemetery. This was her faith home. She will be missed by all who knew her.

Mary Puffenbarger's fight with cancer ended Dec. 17. She was quite a determined lady. Mary was the daughter of the late Garland Rio and Myrtle Kathryn Carroll Terry. On Aug. 2, 1970, she married Eldon "Butch" Puffenbarger.

A definite homemaker, Mary enjoyed cooking, farming, gardening, sewing, babysitting, canning, and playing the piano. The writer recalls taking her "city cousins" to visit with Mary to see how cows were milked, and then the milk turned into butter, etc. The children were enthralled, and left learning a lot more about country living.

Mary was a former member of the Churchville Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, an assistant leader of the Churchville Girl Scouts. She also worked with the Kings Daughters Hospital ambulance service, prior to marrying Eldon. She was a member of Francis Asbury United Methodist Church in Sugar Grove.

Mary loved to sing, was in a church choir, and read her Bible faithfully. Gospel songs were always enjoyed by her, as a form of easy listening. "Will the Circle Be Unbroken..." was a favorite of hers, serving as a reminder of how important her family was to her. She enjoyed being close to her sons, Wesley (Becky) and David (Tabitha), and grandchildren, Ben, Emma, Nathan, Cole, Leah, Aria, and Ella.

Towards the last few months of Mary's life, she participated in the Sugar Grove Tractor Parade as the Queen of the Parade. This illuminated her life, bringing a proud smile to her very countenance. In the back seat of the car in which she was sitting, were her grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Saturday at the Obaugh Funeral Home in McDowell, Virginia. A large assembly of friends and family were in attendance to hear the messages given by Judy Vetter and Jerry Smith. Mary has gone home, and she will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

This week's clackety-clacks for the chin wagers are as follows:

- Each year, it is estimated that 80 percent of New Year's resolutions are abandoned by February.
- The island nation Kiribati in the Central Pacific is the first

location to ring in the New Year.

• Ancient Romans are credited with the kissing tradition on New Year.

• The most common resolution people make is to get healthier.

• Typically, a million people crowd into Times Square to watch the ball drop.

January birthdays include Janelle Mitchell and Linda Sheffer, first; Lowell Simmons, second; Wendell Marshall, fourth; Ivan Lam and Kathy McKenzie, fifth; Laney Bowers, seventh; Sue Kimble and Jeff Pitsenbarger, eighth; Richard Morrison, Ronnie Kimble and twin sister, Bonnie, ninth; Charles Nelson, Helen Nash and Julie Koontz, tenth; Joanne Moyers, 11th; Donna Bowers and Bob Hoops, 12th; Amy Gardiner, 13th; Tammy Mitts, Joyce Burgoyne and Richard Bennett, 14th; and Junior Crider, 15th.

Concerns for this week are many. They are as follows: Bob Adamson, Rick Adkins, Charles and "Pidge" Anderson, Roger and Joan Ashley, Mercedes Aumann, Judy Austin, Lynn Batty, Jimmie Bennett, "Bo" Boggs, Jane Conrad, Marie Col Norma Propst Cunningham, Christian Dasher, the Jeff Evick family, Bethany Eye, Isaac Eye, Marie Eye, Mary Eye, Neal Eye, the Monika Flippin family, Loreale Gordon, Lola Graham, Jordan Greathouse, Patsy Green, Rosalee Grogg, Marlene Harman, Marvin Hartman, Steve and Armanda Heavner, Grace Hedrick, George Hevener, the Miranda Henderson family, Jackie Hill, Edsel and May Ann Hogan, Virgil Homan, Jr., Adelbert Hoover, the Olin L. Hoover family, Myrtle Hoover, Tim Hoover, Debbie and Enos Horst, Mike Jamison, Jessica Janney, Alice Johnson, Richard Judy, Marsha Keller, the Boyd Kimble family, Danny Kimble, Dennis Kincaid, Kim Kline, Tracie Knight, Melissa Lambert, Robert Lambert, Rex Landis, the Linda Malcolm family, the Betty Mallow family, Roger and Skip Mallow, Yvonne Marsh, Anna Mauzy, Neil McLaughlin, Rose Miller, Bruce Minor, the Naomi Wilfong Sheffer Mitchell family, the French Moates family, Barbara Moats, Melvin Moats, Aaron Nelson, Ruth Nelson, Don Nilsen, Cheryl Paine, Barbara Parker, Shirley Pratt, Alda Propst, John O. Propst, Kathy Propst, Harley Propst, Sheldon Propst, the Mary Puffenbarger family, Charles Rexrode, Jason Rexrode, Pam Rexrode, Donna Ruddle, Annie Simmons, Phyllis Simmons, Erin Simmons, Eva Simmons, Kent Simmons, Robbie Sites, Donnie Smith, Connie Sulser, Rosa Tichenor, Sandra Vandevander, the Wayne Vandevander family, Raymond Varner, Amy Vaus, Sheldon Waggy, Judy Williams, Ann Wimer, Junior Wimer, and Margaret Wimer.

Board of Education

Continued From Page 1

than we were last year."

As she has stated in other meetings, Nesselrodt described chronic absence rates as a significant priority. She explained that chronic absence percentages for both the county and each school needed to be below 20 percent. As of now, only the middle/high school exceeds that threshold. "Franklin Elementary School is doing the best with chronic absence rates," Nesselrodt said.

Additionally, "chronic absences are lower this year than last for each month." The improvements helped Pendleton County to rank tenth in the state in attendance numbers.

Charles Hedrick, Pendleton County Schools superintendent, explained that pre pandemic "attendance was really good," and that he hoped to see the chronic absence numbers decline to 10 percent.

"We'd all like to see it go faster," he said, "but it's going in the right direction."

Board member Sonny O'Neil added that schools with small populations like North Fork can potentially see huge swings when even small numbers of children are absent.

Hedrick closed the meeting by sharing details from his meeting with State Senator Amy Grady. The legislator and teacher is leading the effort to craft a bill regarding the rise of discipline issues in many parts of the state.

He said, "They are trying to think about ideas of what to do differently. They've done a lot of conferences already."

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Pendleton County Closes Year With a Solid Win over a Solid Team

By Stephen Smoot

Tygarts Valley, a preseason top 10 selection in West Virginia single A, brought a two and one record to Franklin in the week running up to Christmas.

The Wildcats, however, made sure that the disciplined squad from Randolph County went home with stockings full of coal.

The home team pushed out to an early lead as Avery Townsend floated a three-point shot over the Bulldogs' zone defense 30 seconds into the game. Tygarts Valley responded with a 10-foot jumpshot, but with six minutes left in the first, Julia Mongold hit another three to give their team a 6-2 lead. Shortly thereafter, the Bulldogs hit two free throws and a long shot of their own to surge ahead 7-6.

Tygarts Valley took their biggest lead with less than a minute left, hitting a free throw to make the score 11-9. Jenna Smith erased the lead with 16 seconds left, hitting a three-point shot to set the score at 12-11. Gabby DePue put the exclamation mark on the end of the quarter in the final seconds, taking an offensive rebound and laying it up at the buzzer.

One minute into the second quarter, Townsend extended the lead by stealing a ball and driving the length of the floor for a layup. A minute later, DePue took another offensive rebound in for a score to push the lead to 18-11.

That was followed by a steal taken for a finger roll layup by Mongold and a strong post move and score by Susan Vincell, giving the team a 22-11 lead with 4:51 left in the half.

Neither team scored again in the stanza.

Tygarts Valley did not lack for talent, experience, or ability. They ran their offense efficiently, handled the ball well, and frustrated the Wildcats at times with good defense. They also blocked out well and grabbed their share of rebounds at both ends of the floor.

The Bulldogs came out and played better offensively in the third quarter. They put rebounds back for buckets and hit more jump shot opportunities. Every



Avery Townsend's defense stingy defense helped shut down Bulldog hopes in a big win before the holidays.

play the Bulldogs made to chew their way into the lead, a Wildcat made a big play to counter. When Tygarts Valley hit a layup and a three to cut the lead to seven, Smith buried a three to extend the lead at the 6:10 mark.

Another opponent layup a minute later came just before a Townsend pass found Mongold on a fast break for an easy two. At the 2:51 mark, Townsend hit a step back three to give her team a 30-19 lead.

Wildcat defenders continued to harass the visitors. Kiera Heavener's quick defense stopped Bulldog attempts to break through to the hoop. Townsend, Jessica Parker, and Mongold broke up plays by getting their hands on the ball. DePue and Vincell rebounded well. Smith broke up fast breaks by sheer hustle and determination.

Townsend led the Wildcats in stepping up the pressure to shut down any chance of a comeback. Repeatedly, she attacked the ballhandler and either stole the ball or forced a bad pass. She opened the fourth with a steal and a layup, something she did three times in

the first two minutes of the quarter. This gave the Wildcats a 16-point lead.

As time wound down, Pendleton County had an answer for every Bulldog play. With 3:25 left, Tygarts Valley hit a shot, but only 20 seconds later, Jameigh Miller hit Parker with a pass that led to a layup and a 40-26 advantage.

Parker later closed the scoring with two made free throws at the 31 second mark to seal a 44-28 win.

Head coach Donnie Kopp said, "We missed some easy shots, but Tygarts Valley was ranked seventh in the state. They had a couple of good players."

Additionally, Pendleton County has played nine games to only three by the Bulldogs. Kopp explained, "We're tired, but we sucked it up and did the best we could. I like what I've been seeing. We looked a lot better."

The Wildcats got to enjoy a lengthy rest before hosting Harman at 7 p.m. Friday and Keyser at noon Saturday. They travel to Union on Monday and host Pocahontas on Tuesday and East Hardy on Jan. 11.



Wyatt Franklin drives past a Petersburg defender during the Holiday Tournament championship game.

Vikings Surge Late to Defeat Wildcats in Petersburg Tournament Championship

By Stephen Smoot

One night after taking down Moorefield, Pendleton County faced another very familiar South Branch Valley foe in Petersburg.

A standing room only crowd greeted the teams as they took the floor. Petersburg brought an athletic and experienced squad to compete against the team that took out their least loved rival in Moorefield.

The Vikings took the tip and the opening score, drawing a foul on a layup. After making the free throw, they led 3-0. Quickly after, Cashton Kisamore fired a pass out to Wyatt Franklin who scored the first points for the Wildcats, a three-point shot. A Petersburg layup edged them ahead until two Chase Owens free throws tied it again.

With 3:20 left, Owens fired a pass to Kisamore, who executed a post move to score and put his team up 11-10. Pendleton County fouls led to three made free throws by their opponents by the end of the quarter, returning them to the lead, 13-11.

Just as he had the night before, Zykijah Wright showed himself a force underneath, gaining position and fighting for rebound after rebound.

Petersburg opened the second quarter with a three-point shot, providing a 16-11 lead. Josiah Kimble, only 30

seconds into the quarter, cut it to two with his own three-point shot.

At the 6:47 point, a Petersburg player experienced an apparent serious injury and had to be taken from the floor by paramedics. The teams returned to their locker rooms for the duration and play did not resume for nearly 25 minutes.

The Vikings returned to the floor with their emotions channeled, stealing the ball and scoring on the Wildcats, but Pendleton County matched their energy. Henry Warner buried a three to bring the Wildcats to within three points, but the Vikings matched with a three of their own at the 4:59 mark.

Pendleton County clawed into the lead with a little more than a minute in the half. Kimble scored a layup, followed by a three-pointer with 27 seconds left to push the lead to 27-23. Petersburg tried a play at the end, but Wright broke it up.

Just as against Moorefield, the Wildcats came out of the locker room with energy and focus. Owens immediately blocked a shot on the post and in the first 30 seconds, Franklin hit a three to give his team their largest lead of the night at 30-23.

The Vikings hit two free throws at the 6:25 mark, but Wright restored the seven-point lead with 4:45 left in the quarter. The Vikings

followed that with an eight to nothing run that gave them a 34-31 lead, which a subsequent Kisamore post move and layup sliced the lead to one.

The teams continued to battle to the end of the third. With seven seconds left, a Franklin layup off a Kimble pass knotted the game at 41, but a last second jump shot by Petersburg gave them back the lead.

Petersburg then did what experienced and talented teams do at home. They took the game in hand. The Vikings ended the game with a 14 to two run. Pendleton County expended no less effort, made no real mistakes save one player being out of position a single time on defense.

Viking shooters simply got hot, even, seemingly especially, with Wildcat hands in their faces.

Midway through the run, Pendleton County called timeout, but had to endure the blaring of an old rock song about victorious Viking warriors finding their way to heaven as they tried to meet the challenge.

The final score was 57-43, with the teams closer in ability than indicated. Franklin scored 13 points to lead the Wildcats, followed by Kimble with 11, and Owens with 10. Kisamore had four points, Warner three, and Wright two.

Pendleton County Outlasts Feisty Yellow Jackets in Rivalry Clash

By Stephen Smoot

There's no game quite like a rivalry game to bring forth the whole spectrum of emotions, especially when both teams expend every effort to earn the win. Such a game greeted fans in the opening act of the holiday tournament at Petersburg.

Prior to the game, the line to get into the gym extended out the door into the chilly evening. The play of the game kept the atmosphere inside hot.

Pendleton County took the tip off, but Moorefield took the first basket on a pick and roll play. Chase Owens answered with a spin move that took him to the hoop and a layup. Owens shortly thereafter stole the ball. Josiah Kimble then put his team on top, drawing a foul as he drove for a layup and hitting both free throws.

Just after the six minute mark in the first quarter, Moorefield drove the ball, hit a layup, and received a foul call, which they converted into a 5-4 lead. They clung to that lead for almost 30 seconds until Wyatt Franklin put the Wildcats back up, converting an offensive rebound into a layup.

The Yellow Jackets edged into the lead twice more in the quarter before giving it up for good. Kimble hit a 15-foot jump shot with 1:39 left in the quarter to set the score at 12-10. A Henry Warner steal led to Franklin finding Bradey Bowers for a score underneath. The quarter closed with a 14-11 score when Moorefield went one for two from the free throw line.

Pendleton County continued to squeeze points out of the Moorefield defense in the second quarter. The teams showed each other as mirror images. They both bring athleticism, toughness, and a measure of grit. The teams took pride in tightly defending each other. Wildcat shooters had to find more opportunities inside because the Yellow Jackets shifted on picks extremely efficiently.

A Cashton Kisamore steal led to Kimble completing a reverse finger roll layup to set the score at 18-11 one minute into the quarter. Pendleton County steadily built on the lead, but could not get too far ahead of Moorefield. Owens gave his team a seven-point lead at the half with a drive and score with only two seconds remaining.

Head coach Jeremy Bodkin reached deep into his bench during both games in Petersburg, Bowers, Justus Kuykendall, and Jaydon Hess gave strong minutes with ball handling and quick, relentless defense. Bodkin said of his bench play-

ers, "They've been practicing well. They step up for you."

Perhaps recognizing the rivalry atmosphere, the officials also called a tight, clean, but fair game.

With a 25-18 lead, the Wildcats took the ball first in the second half. Owens led his team in the first few minutes to ensure that Pendleton County did not lose momentum. He hit a shot 15 seconds in to increase the lead to nine. At the 6:16 mark, he and Franklin combined on a steal that led to an Owens layup and a 29-18 advantage. Dusty Smith, as he had the entire game, harassed ballhandlers and disrupted Moorefield's attempts to score. Smith grabbed a steal with 3:15 left in the quarter. Shortly after, Warner found him and he drilled a 17-foot shot to set the score at 35-20.

A 15-point advantage failed to extract the sting from the Yellow Jackets. They set to work eroding the big lead achieved in the third quarter. The Wildcats entered the final frame with the same lead they enjoyed at the half and pushed hard to extend it.

Shortly after the start of the quarter, Kisamore worked to pull down a rebound and lay it back in to provide a 40-29 lead. Kisamore and Zykijah Wright boxed out effectively and gave their team strength on the boards.

Down the stretch, both squads played with aggression and poise. At the two minute mark, however, Pendleton County seemed to have the win in hand with a 45-33 lead.

Then Moorefield mounted a desperate attempt to swarm the Wildcat team and steal a victory. They hit a layup at the 1:37 point, called a timeout, swiped a steal and hit a three, stole two more times and hit a layup at the 1:16 mark.

Suddenly, a 12-point lead earned by Bodkin's young squad had two thirds evaporated.

Once again, the sophomore Owens stepped up to make key plays, first scoring on a reverse layup and drawing a foul. His made free throw put the score at 48-40 with 58 seconds left. Not content to force the action on offense alone, he blocked the next Moorefield shot.

But with eight seconds left, Moorefield buried another clutch three-point shot to bring the game within five points again. They managed to foul Owens twice in the remaining time. He converted every opportunity and let the Wildcats ride his late game heroics to a very close 52-43 win.

Owens led the team with 19, followed by Kimble with 17. Franklin scored five, Kisamore four, Bowers three, and

Warner and Smith each with two.

The Wildcats are scheduled to travel to Petersburg on Saturday, host Tucker County on Monday and travel to Harman on Jan. 10.



Josiah Kimble hits free throws late as Pendleton County hangs on against Moorefield

CVB Annual Dinner

Continued From Page 1

her husband's work with the McCoy House, "we're getting ready to do more renovations." They also own Deep Clean Machines Laundromat in Franklin.

VanMeter described their love of interactive style events, saying, "We are medieval recreationists." Events that they have organized have attracted as many as 2-300 attendees.

"We just know that we want to help Pendleton County," she concluded.

Another interested individual, Cory Thomas from T&K Markets in Franklin, offered to put his experience in running a market, combined with academic degrees in agribusiness and rural development, to work for the CVB. Jeff Munn stated that the market has been "incredibly helpful" to tourism efforts and that Thomas also served on the board of the Pendleton County Economic Development Authority.

Munn also pointed out Thomas's ability to secure licenses for events that might include alcohol, such as wine or beer tastings.

The board approved membership for Katie VanMeter and Cory Thomas.

Less than two months away, the state will hold its first round of Maple Days events. Last year, Kent Leonhardt, West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture, came to Franklin to help celebrate.

CVB board members and officials first discussed how to best market the February event. Kazarick noted that Future Generations University received a United States Department of Agriculture federal grant to assist with marketing efforts. FGU is also compiling a list of maple producers, as well as lodging, including bed and breakfast establishments.

She added that "the biggest way to promote it is through social media" to generate word of mouth interest.

In the director's report, Nesselrodt touched on a number of highlights, including the Appalachian Forest Natural Heritage Area grant to promote awareness of county cultural assets. She also discussed talks with the Pendleton County Historical Society on how best to promote and plan the centennial of the disastrous Franklin fire.

County Commission

Continued From Page 1

Hartley then said, "You're sitting very successful compared to a lot of other counties in your region."

Carl Hevener, Pendleton County Commission president, added that "if it wasn't for Jeffrey and Rick Gillespie keeping up with the pole issue, we wouldn't be where we are."

Next, Diana Mitchell provided an update on essential training of Pendleton 911 personnel.

"Recently, we had an opportunity to do some training for mental health," she said. The training helped to prepare 911 telecommunicators to work with callers who may be communicating about, or experiencing, mental health problems. Pendleton County got to send Mitchell and Terry Ryan, despite the one trainee limit, because "other 911 centers didn't send one."

"We did scenario after scenario. I left the session just absolutely thrilled...it was some of the best training I've had in a long time," Mitchell said.

Hevener then added that he and other county officials, including Gillespie, Pendleton County Emergency Services coordinator, reached out to the school system to "brainstorm" about job shadowing or other programs that might get young people interested in telecommunicator work.

Amber Nesselrodt, executive director of the Pendleton County Convention and Visitors' Bureau, was invited to give her year-end progress report.

One of the big successes of the year for the CVB lay in working with stakeholders to create a Pendleton County Adventure Guide, the first in more than a decade. The CVB also took the lead in planning and executing the enormously successful visit of the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. Nesselrodt furthermore reported a significant increase in hotel-motel tax collections, the best indicator of tourism success.

The CVB also won an Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area grant to support cultural promotion and started work on obtaining more attractive "Welcome to Pendleton County" signs to greet visitors warmly.

Karen Pitsenbarger, Pendleton County administrator, shared that the fuel tank for the future courthouse annex was installed. "They did a great job," she said, adding that "it was a really great group of guys."

She said that metal detectors for courthouse security should arrive in mid-January for installation.

Finally, the county commission signed a letter of support for Workforce West Virginia. It argues for opioid crisis related grants from the United States Department of Labor.

Births



Chip Palmer Clements

Chip Palmer Clements was born Nov. 25, 2023, in Richmond, Virginia, to Drew and Meaghan Clements.

He is the paternal grandson of Dr. Cathy Slusher and Don Flegel and Dan Clements, all of Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Maternal grandparents are Chip and Ann Norford of New Kent, Virginia.

He is the great-grandson of the late Leo and Juanita Slusher of Franklin.

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MENU Pendleton Senior & Family Services

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5
BBQ Chicken
Cheesy Potatoes
Peas, Fruit Cup
Milk/Bread

MONDAY, JANUARY 8
Cook's Choice of Soup
P-Nut Butter/Jelly
Celery/Apple Slices
Milk

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9
Baked Potato/Chili
Cheese/Broccoli
Fruit Crisp/Milk

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10
Chicken Tenders
French Fries
Lima Beans
Orange/Milk

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11
Spaghetti/Meat Sauce
Salad, Spiced Pears
Garlic Bread
Milk

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NEW LISTING - CAMP RUN - 14+/- acres of mostly level, wooded land adjoining the George Washington National Forest. Property borders a state maintained road. Proximity to both the Camp Run Campground and Camp Run Lake. Perfect for camping, hunting, fishing, canoeing, and relaxing! **\$62,500. Call Angie Nelson.**

NEW LISTING - KISER GAP ROAD - 55.60 acres of mountain land located on Kiser Gap Rd., Pendleton County, culvert in place, leveled off for a house or camping trailer, 1/4 mile of good road frontage, electric available, excellent hunting, beautiful scenic views, only 15 minutes from the golf course. **\$325,000. Call Gene Boggs.**

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