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Secretary of State Warner announces that Ballot Positions for Primary Election Candidates will take place on February 24th in all 55 counties

Charleston, W.Va. – WV Secretary of State Kris Warner has announced that the drawing to see in what order the names of candidates will appear on the May 12th Primary Election ballot is scheduled to take place in all 55 counties on Tuesday, February 24th, at 9:00am.

According to WV State Code, the County Clerk in each county is responsible for managing the process for determining the order that candidates' names appear on the ballot. By law, this determination is made by random drawing for each office in which more than one candidate has filed,

which is open to candidates or candidates' representatives.

"This event is the next phase of preparing for the Primary Election," said Secretary Warner. "Yet another procedure built into law for transparency and fairness, each County Clerk manages the random drawing to order candi-

dates' names in their presence."

Secretary Warner said that a final list of state and federal candidates was certified by his office on February 20th and sent to the county clerks. Nearly 2,700 candidates will participate in West Virginia's Primary Election set for May 12th.



Hardy and Pendleton County Based Partners Take Up South Branch Stockyards Operation

By Stephen Smoot

Potomac Highlands livestock producers received a shock in recent weeks. One of the most respected livestock exchanges in the Eastern United States, South Branch Livestock Exchange, would go up for auction after about nine decades. With processes prioritizing health and care of animals and guardianship of more-than-three-century-old lines of cattle genetics, the stockyards earned a national reputation for both quality and quantity of cattle sold there.

All can breathe easier. The "largest and oldest sale barn in the state of West Virginia" will remain in familiar hands dedicated to continuing a legacy of excellence.

Gary Vance steered the ship for about a quarter century and also served as an auctioneer for over a half century. Now a consortium of three, Brandon Neely, Dave McGee, and Travis Hinkle, will take over operations with the goal of maintaining the services and processes that producers and buyers have come to rely on. As the industry evolves, the stockyards will continue to work to make processes as efficient and as beneficial as possible.

"It's a big step," shared Neely. The three new owners will still

rely on many who have been key to the exchange's success over the decades. Said Neely, "Roger Pratt has been here since he was 13 years old and he was one of the owners with Gary." He went on to add that "Roger will continue to be here working with us. When you think of the South Branch Stockyards, Roger is one of the first things to come to people's minds."

Also a veteran of the stockyards since childhood and still a key part of the operation, Brandon's wife Jackie Neely will continue her diligent and wide-ranging work, especially in preparation of cattle for sale. "My wife will be a big part of this," he said.

Neely shared that his passion for the field of auctioneering started early. Neely explained that "ever since I was a little boy, auctioneering was a passion." McGee stated that he had worked with Neely's family as he grew up. "He was always trying to sell me little plastic cows" and other farm toys, McGee smiled.

He then added that Neely "always wanted to be a world class auctioneer." Neely had a way of relentlessly pursuing his dreams to fruition, winning a world championship in auctioneering in 2015. At the age of 12, he told McGee "I'd like to own a stockyard and be an auctioneer." Mc-

Gee's response to the young man was that if he ever had an opportunity, McGee would be there to help.

Now with the help of McGee and Hinkle, Neely stands poised to realize both of his life's major dream, running the South Branch Stockyards and auctioneering there.

This consortium ensuring continuity of operations was not a foregone conclusion. Hardy County Commissioner David Workman, with decades of experience and work in Potomac Highlands agriculture, voiced concerns prior to the auction that "someone with deep pockets will come in" and buy the land for residential housing or some other business. Workman explained that neither of those would match the sheer economic impact that South Branch Livestock Exchange brings to the region every single year of its existence.

McGee came to the group after working 30 years for the State of West Virginia throughout the Eastern Panhandle.

Travis Hinkle of Riverton in Pendleton County was the third to join and complete the partnership. As part of the family-owned Hinkle Trucking that has been led by three generations of the family, he adds transportation ca-

pability and logistics experience. He shared that the 1985 flood nearly wiped out the company's physical assets and it has been painstakingly rebuilt in the years and decades since.

That rebound demonstrated the resilience of both the company and the family that owns it. It also creates a long-haul type of mentality that prioritizes persistent growth over decades through the ups and downs. Additionally, Hinkle raises his own cattle. Over time, his and Neely's paths crossed and they combined efforts.

"I always thought Brandon was in line for it (ownership of the stockyards) anyway," said Hinkle. He added that he told Neely "if you need help, I'm behind you. I don't want you to lose it. I'm here for what you need."

Then Hinkle said "I called Brandon one night. We talked business. We talked cows, and now we're partners."

One theme among all partners lay in their dedication to maintaining the legacy crafted over 90 and some years, especially in the last 25 by Vance. Neely said "Gary was one of the top auctioneers. I idolized Gary and wanted to follow in his footsteps." Vance returned the respect by employing Neely as an auctioneer at

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Hardy County FFA Chapters Celebrate 2026 National FFA Week, Feb. 21 - 28

HARDY COUNTY - February 20, 2026 - National FFA Organization - The FFA chapters in Hardy County, WV will celebrate National FFA Week, Feb. 21 - 28, 2026. This National FFA Week embraces more than 95 years of FFA traditions while looking forward to the organization's future. More than one million members will participate in National FFA Week activities at local, state and national levels. These members have a passion for agriculture.

The week of George Washington's birthday was designated National FFA Week in 1947 and runs from Saturday to Saturday. FFA Week gives FFA members an opportunity to educate the public about agriculture. During the week, chapters conduct a variety of activities to help others in their schools and communities learn about FFA and agricultural education. East Hardy, Moorefield and Moorefield Middle will celebrate National FFA Week by participating in the following activities: dress up days, WV FFA State Officer visit and workshops, program highlights and more.

Today, FFA provides the next generation of leaders who will change the world. As the top school-based youth leadership development organization in the nation, FFA helps young people meet new agricultural challenges by developing their unique talents and exploring their interests in a broad range of career pathways. FFA members are our future leaders, our future food suppliers, our future innovators and more!

Whether it is through service projects or community gatherings, National FFA Week is a time for FFA members to raise awareness about the role the National FFA Organization plays in the development of agriculture's future leaders and the importance of agricultural education.

The National FFA Organization is a school-based national youth leadership development organization of more than 1,027,200 student members as part of 9,235 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Happy National FFA Week!

Moorefield JackBots Robotics Team Competes at US Governors' Conference in DC

By Stephen Smoot

If any governors of any states in these United States want to glimpse into the future of education, skills development, personal growth of young people, and technology all in one, they could see all of that by observing the JackBots robotics team in action this weekend.

The squad hit the road on Thursday to compete in Washington DC in conjunction with the National Governors' Association winter meeting.

"All Governors will be in attendance (at the meeting) in DC," shared Alicen Adkins, one of the coaches along with Bonnie Crites. She added that "All have been invited to this event along with U.S. Representatives and

Senators, too. The President has been invited as well."

One team from each state received an invitation to come and compete. From each team, one student ambassador represents both the team and the state.

Robotics team participants include much more than simply designing, building, and operating a device in competition. Just as important in competition, "connect teams" conduct communications, fundraising, and other aspects of supporting the effort. This would be equivalent to students running the high school athletic boosters with a bit of guidance from adult mentors from time to time.

Student ambassadorships are part of the outreach aspect of the competition. From Moorefield,

Summer Evans earned the honor. Furthermore, Evans and four others were selected by event organizers to conduct an interview of an American astronaut, Dr. Chris Williams, aboard the International Space Station. He is the flight engineer for Expedition 74.

"She will be talking to someone in space," expressed Adkins excitedly. Adkins then explained that "she will be the last person to go. She will wrap it up and give our thanks."

One of the advantages enjoyed by Moorefield lies in its dedication to use in-house crafted pieces and only purchase "stock" equipment when absolutely necessary. Students fashion pieces with 3D printers and assemble them according to designs engineered by them.

Adkins explained "this is the capstone event for the year. We did not advance to worlds like we did last year, though." The team still earned a first place connect award in earlier competition for "outreach, primarily with STEM professionals, local businesses, universities, and others." That was one of 12 first place awards granted for the Chesapeake District of FIRST Tech, in which Moorefield competes.

Chesapeake District includes Virginia, Maryland, and Washington DC and is recognized as having the highest level of competition in the nation. Moorefield regularly competes against, and often bests, schools or non scholastic teams from much more populated and much more affluent areas.

A highlight of the season came when Moorefield again received the honor of hosting a major FIRST competition at Moorefield High School. Over 70 teams from across the Mid-Atlantic converged on Moorefield. Adkins said "the Facebook page for these events was overwhelmingly positive." Visitors to the area for the competition raved about the scenery, the people, and the excellent organization of the event. "We really enjoy hosting events like this," shared Adkins. She added that the event is an important booster for tourism and likely encourages people to return in more congenial weather to enjoy the area.

Success in competition and connections has bred success in expanding participation. "There

are over 40 teams between first and 12th grades in Moorefield," said Adkins. While the high school team represents the area in interstate competition, it also takes the lead in teaching and encouraging the middle and elementary school teams.

"It's kids teaching kids," said Adkins.

Along with Bonnie Crites, Adkins helped to form an organization to spread the impact and the opportunity through an organization called STEMpact. It can help to build either school-based or grass roots non scholastic squads. "A lot of counties don't have robotics or only have a school and not a community-based team."

Financial support has come from grants and also gener-

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EDITORIAL

Education Reconciliation

By Stephen Smoot

Since education reforms championed by State Senator and former Senate Education Chair Patricia Rucker, West Virginia has had two school systems. The traditional continued to serve the overwhelming majority of students while alternative systems used the virtual fertilizer, water, and sunlight of support from the HOPE Scholarship to educate and develop children along different lines. Within this system, parents, guardians, and, most importantly, children find individualized paths that lead to the same destination as public schools.

It is important and imperative to know that both school systems in West Virginia have labored diligently to address the expanding, and sometimes unpredictable, challenges created by fractured families and a similarly fractured society. Both have generally shown improvement since the COVID disruptions, even as bad apples have appeared here and there.

The state badly needs its traditional system to serve as it has while continuing to improve. The state also badly needs education pioneers creating various opportunities where children with very specific needs can find their own path.

What has not helped has been a specifically selected and rashly shared "example" of poor home school documentation distributed by Jackson County Schools Superintendent Will Hossaflook along with information and ideas to State Legislators and stakeholders. Some of that information actually did contribute to the discussion and debate over how to address current problems, but the "example" was a shot fired that formed a barrier to productive talks.

That "example" was a badly compiled and edited account of student grades and its placement implied that poor practice was com-

mon. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is as wrong to assume that all home schoolers and alternative educators document in this fashion as it would be to assume that all West Virginia middle schools are like the formerly dangerously out of control Martinsburg North.

West Virginia needs both systems to properly educate because different children have different needs. There is no way that the public school system can address all of those needs and it would not be fair to expect it to. Some children, for example, come from trauma or family dysfunction that renders it difficult for them to handle the stimulation of a normal classroom environment. Many of these kids tend to shut down, shut off, and do what they can to endure a difficult environment. Alternative education can shape itself to both educate and encourage children with these and other powerful problems better in many cases than a public school.

How do we bring two systems together that both have a fervent passion to educate and help kids face adulthood? Give each a stake in the other without one "lording it" over the other system.

Minds more grounded in the education system can come up with myriad ways this can happen, but here is a suggestion. Create a regime where the public schools can provide supportive services, such as nutrition, to alternative educators without any voice in the direction of curriculum or other facets of schooling, but public schools get something too.

Here is an actually potentially productive example. Create lists of supportive services from the public school system at certain tiers. The lowest tier would entitle the public school to, say one-fourth of each student thus served. Another tier would have more support, but the county schools would get the equivalent of half a student in state

aid and that could, of course go higher.

Delegate Elias Coop-Gonzales (R-Randolph) proposed a bill that could help transition schools such as Pickens in his county, Hannan in Mason, or other very small public schools into HOPE Scholarship supported microschoools. Pathfinder Institute in Evans, Jackson County educates over three dozen children. The small student population and class sizes also increase teacher-pupil interactions and allow for curriculums that emphasize students mastering student outcomes.

Additionally, microschoools could pioneer a return to the best model of public education conceived, the one-room schoolhouse. In these environments, older children assisted in the teaching of the younger. This provided two outstanding outcomes. First, one learns much more thoroughly when teaching. Second, this inadvertently created a mass teacher education program where every teacher from rural West Virginia had multiple years of practical, but guided, instructional experience under their belt on day one of their professional careers.

It would be exciting to see this return in the 21st century. If they once again, in the form of microschoools, dotted the remote hills and hollows, mountains and valleys, the costs of sparsely populated counties with large land areas could shrink.

Many ways exist to create "win-wins" between the public and alternative systems. With a commitment to finding the "win-win," and the public schools respecting and honoring those working on other paths, both the traditional public school system and the alternative can come together to be greater than the sum of the original parts.

When a "win-win" happens here, the victory and laurels go to the children and parents who will benefit.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

South Branch Special Sales

Over the years, South Branch Stockyards has had the reputation of being one of the few cattle sales that have kept the State Graded Feeder Sales truly special. The quantity of quality feeder cattle that South Branch has to offer in their spring and

fall sales is well known and respected by cattle buyers and sellers. Not only the quality of the cattle, but the way South Branch has gone the extra mile in the grading and penning of cattle, whether it be trucking, the handling of the cattle, or care at the sale barn, it all adds up.

But maybe most important is how the cattle are cared for after weighing. At South Branch, the cattle are mostly in bigger feed pens with hay and automatic waters. This certainly adds value that buyers recognize. By producers working together to market their cattle through the

graded sales, they are helping each other. I have noted first hand that South Branch prices have been very competitive with other markets and mostly a good bit higher.

I see no reason why this will change.

Brandon and Jackie Neely have put everything on the line to keep this market up and running. It is truly for the benefit of area producers to support their endeavor. When I first started, cattle producers gave me a chance and they deserve one too as all of us needed one. With an ending, there is also a begin-

ning. Brandon and Jackie have been in the cattle business all their lives, literally from childhood, and have much experience with stockyards, sales, and processing cattle.

Gary L. Vance

Letter to the Editor,

What do Black History Month, Carter Godwin Woodson, one hundred years, and West Virginia have to do with each other? Why I am writing about this? Our view of history depends on the lens through which we view, if at all, the events that we narrate.

First, let me back up to what Sunnyvale, California and Hardy County have to do with each other... I have written previously that I am a "Come Here" to Hardy County. Where did I come from?

I grew up in Sunnyvale, Californian, at the southern tip of the San Francisco Bay. I grew up

on a quarter acre track-home in a white suburb. In the 1960's, that end of the Bay Area transitioned from apricot, plum and cherry orchards to track-home developments. Decades later Yahoo settled in northern Sunnyvale; Google built lots of campuses just west in Mountain View; Apple built just south in Cupertino; several other tech companies sprouted throughout Santa Clara and San Jose to the east. I left Sunnyvale 45 years ago, as these companies' founders were tinkering in their garages.

I attended De Anza Elementary School (named for Juan Bautista de Anza, 1736-1788,

explorer, military officer, and politician in the Spanish Empire lands that would later become California). History, as I learned it, was the Spanish Missions, Coastal Indians (as we understood them in the 1960's, before the local Native Americans living in Oakland and San Francisco occupied Alcatraz Island in 1969, reasoning that the Sioux Treaty of 1868 applied to the de-commissioned rock in the Bay), and the Gold Rush. The Revolutionary and Civil wars were something that happened in distant parts of the country. The lens through which I learned history did not reveal images of Black people.

De Anza school had one black student, Sammy. Willie Mays played for the San Francisco Giant at Candlestick Park. I was not exposed to the the black communities in Oakland to Fremont. After college, I lived in some more diverse neighborhoods in Seattle, east San Jose, and Jackson Heights, Queen, NYC. After I moved to the East Coast, I began exploring Revolutionary and Civil War battlefields. I came upon sites from Peacedale, Rhode Island (where enslaved people made uniforms for the Union) to Charleston, South Carolina (where the hub-bub began).

Throughout my "discoveries"

of our nation's historical sties, I was not attentive to Black History Month. I remember reading about the controversy that Colonial Williamsburg generated when they conducted a historically accurate slave auction. Only a couple of years ago did a couple of local neighbors mention where slave owning families lived near Baker, and which plots of land they granted to their emancipated slaves after 1865.

I lived a couple of decades in West Virginia before I read about Carter Godwin Woodson, who grew up and taught in West Virginia. He initiated Black History Week in February

1926, one hundred years ago, while teaching history at West Virginia College (now University in Charleston) an HBCU. He wanted to promote honored President Abraham Lincoln (whose statue stands in front of our Capital), and Frederick Douglas, both who were born in February. Godwin Woodson wanted to add a lens through which we could view history.

Over the years, Black History Week grew to a nationwide observance of Black History Month. Why do folks think that California is more progressive than West Virginia?

Oscar Larson
Baker, WV

Capito Commends Trump EPA's Repeal of Biden Era Attacks on Coal

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, applauded the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA)

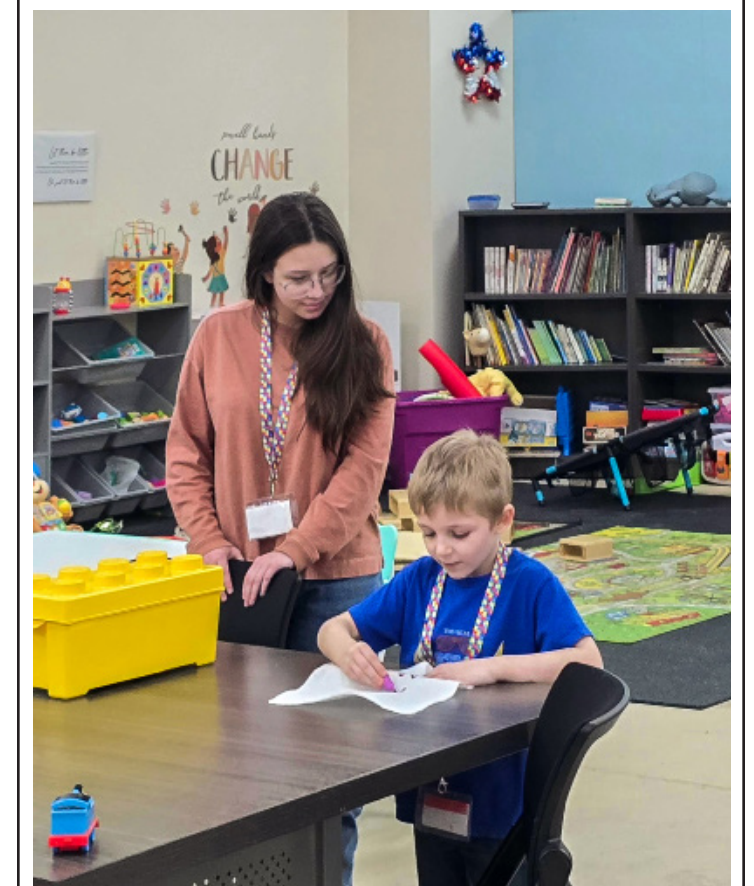
repeal of the Biden-era Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) rule, which placed unreasonable standards on America's coal- and oil-fired power plants.

"I applaud the Trump EPA's

continued efforts to overturn burdensome Democrat regulations that have placed lasting hardship on American families and workers. The Obama Administration's 2012 MATS rule was one of the biggest blows against West Virginia in the war on coal, putting an indescribable strain on our dedicated coal miners, their families and communities and our entire state. The Biden Administration only made matters worse when it

included an even more stringent MATS rule in its package of regulations aimed at eliminating coal from our nation's energy mix. Building on last week's announcements, this latest action from the Trump EPA further demonstrates President Trump's and EPA Administrator Zeldin's support of the affordable and reliable electricity that coal provides," Chairman Capito said.

Fun, Food, Fellowship, and Family



To accommodate different family schedules, the Hardy County Family Support Center held two Saint Valentines Day get togethers for parents and children alike. Here Maya Shingleton, who volunteered along with Emily Haggerty, Tricia Poe, and Rosie Wilhelm, helps one of the younger attendees. The FSC served up hot dogs with sauce from Hawse Shop N Save, chicken nuggets, cookies, cupcakes, and hours of relaxed good times.

MOOREFIELD EXAMINER

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NEWS

Moorefield High School DECA recognized for outstanding School-based Enterprise (SBE)

Moorefield, WV – Yellow Jacket Enterprise the school-based enterprise at Moorefield High School was among 989 school-based enterprises achieving Gold for the 2025-2026 school year and will be recognized during DECA's International Career Development Conference this April 25-28, 2026, in Atlanta, Georgia.

A school-based enterprise (SBE) is an entrepreneurial operation in a school setting that provides goods and services to meet the needs of the market. SBEs are managed and operated by students as hands-on learning laboratories that integrate National Curriculum Standards in marketing, finance, hospitality and management.

DECA advisors have utilized this effective educational tool for over four decades to provide their students with realistic and

practical learning experiences that reinforce classroom instruction, enhance 21st Century skill development, and prepare students for college and careers.

The Moorefield High School DECA members who contributed to the certification were Kate Combs, Elizabeth Williams, Emmy Crites, Leah Hose, and Mady Ketterman with the assistance of their DECA chapter advisor, Amy Crites. The SBE at Moorefield High School has operated for 9 year(s) and is to be commended for this achievement.

“DECA's School-based Enterprise Certification Program is a rigorous process designed to help DECA members demonstrate their classroom learning in a practical, learning laboratory, and then translate that into meaningful outcomes,” said Christopher Young, CAE,

Chief Program Officer at DECA Inc. “These DECA members are practicing important workplace readiness skills while preparing for college and careers.”

DECA's School-based Enterprise Certification Program provides recognition for outstanding achievement by school-based enterprises and motivates SBEs to strive for excellence and growth. SBEs can be certified at three levels: bronze, silver or gold. In order to apply for the certification, SBEs must submit extensive documentation that explains how the SBE demonstrates the practice of various marketing and retail standards. A review committee evaluates the documentation to determine which level of certification has been achieved.

DECA's School-based Enterprise program is sponsored by Otis Spunkmeyer Inc.



Moorefield DECA attendees at a DC conference last November

JackBots

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ous donors. The Eastern Panhandle Community Foundation through its Hardy County entity has granted support. “American Woodmark is another huge partner,” said Adkins. Executives at a corporate meeting were highly impressed by the team as they watched a video of their performance.

While every team competes with a championship in mind, robotics competition leaves many more opportunities to shine. Moorefield High School in every way has brought rural West Virginia values, work-ethic, and ingenuity to both national and global platforms as they have constructed a community of participation and support right here in Hardy County.

And as they venture from high school into the world, they carry with them vital money-making and job earning skills that can set them up for success in life as well.

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South Branch Stockyards Operation

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the age of 15 and from there the young man's career rocketed all the way to a world championship in the field in 2015.

For a decade, as Neely describes, Vance mentored him closely, teaching him the details of operating the business the South Branch way. This prepared him to take over a livestock exchange business during a time of uncertainty in the field of beef, especially. According to USDA NASS, the federal agricultural statistics reporting service, commercial red meat production dropped 17 percent between Dec 2024 and Dec 2025. Commercial cattle slaughter declined by 22 percent in the same period of time. Nationally, the number of cattle and calves dropped by about 320,000 head in the same December-to-December time frame.

The inability of the U.S. cattle industry to increase production to meet demand and cool price increases has pushed the value of quality cattle higher. Hinkle said the price of a good bull could range between \$10,000 and \$100,000. Average cost is approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000.

With “a cattle shortage,” Neely says that the business can bank on “the best reputation on the East Coast” to not only maintain, but also expand volume of business. “We will have the buyers,” he shared.

Having a sterling reputation for not only sales, but treatment of cattle in house makes South Branch one of the most desired facilities with which to conduct business. Expert staff prioritize tending to their health as part of a regimen of care followed with each animal. With each animal carrying higher-than-ever prices, that reputation becomes more

vital than ever for producers and buyers alike.

The group will continue Vance and Pratt's decision to hold sales on Saturdays instead of Wednesdays, as had been done previously. Neely noted that with many farmers carrying part or even full time employment outside the farm, convenience dictated keeping those sales on that schedule. Wednesdays will have, however, miscellaneous sales. Special sales in April and October will continue as they have.

Neely also shared that the future might bring occasional consignment farm equipment auctions and that the second floor restaurant could return to operation in some fashion. McGee will put his expertise of previously operating the Mineral County Farmers Market to work on this property.

As Hinkle stated, one of the major goals of the new owners in

terms of the Exchange is “we're hoping to make things better without change” whether better means more efficient processes or expanded services to join the traditional. Those who have done business with the Stockyards for years or decades will find their needs met in the same ways as traditionally. Others will come to do business in different ways. Both will expand the business and continue to serve both the industry and community well.

With the business purchased, however, the hard work for the three men and their team truly begins. “We made a large investment for the people and for the producers here,” explained Neely. He added that “now we need the producers to support us so that we can continue the legacy of superior cattle and excellent service while also remaining a huge force in the local economy.”

In Loving Memory **Obituaries**
Honoring the Lives of Those We Have Lost
To place an obituary in The Moorefield Examiner, contact us at:
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OBITUARIES

George Robert Sherman



George Robert Sherman, age 85 of Old Fields, WV, passed away Friday evening, February 13, 2026, at his residence with his loving family at his side. Born on May 9, 1940, in Fisher, WV, he was a son of the late William Highberger Sherman and Ada May Cook Sherman. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister and three brothers.

George was a kind and generous man who loved his Lord, his family, and helping others. He was an avid hunter and fisherman who enjoyed taking pictures of his trips and wildlife. He also

enjoyed walking on the beach and finding shark's teeth. He had a passion for everything concerning nature. His favorite pastime was going to the camp, sitting on the porch swing and listening to the river. He was a U.S. Army Veteran, retired from Hester Industries after 40 years but could not stand being idle and decided to go to work at American Woodmark for several years.

Surviving is his loving wife, Joan McArthur; daughters, Robin Miller, granddaughter, Michelle (Randall) Wolfe and great-grandchildren, Danica & Delanie; Kelly (Kevin) Cronin, grandson

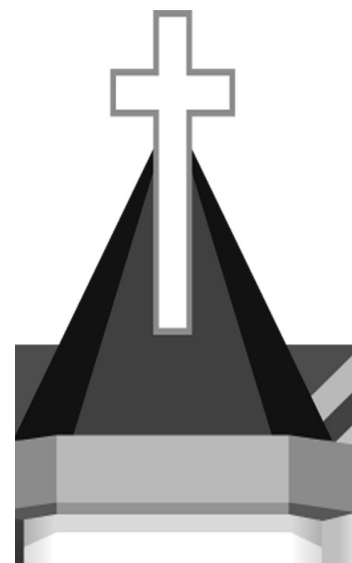
Bryan (Christine) Loggins and great-grandson, Christian; son, George “Bud” (Leana) Sherman, grandchildren, Briana & Madison and great-grandchildren, Waylon, Johnathan and two on the way; sisters, Linda (Ray) Bergdoll and Doris Sherman; brothers, Eugene (Hilda) Sherman and Lawrence (Bessie) Sherman; special friends, Gerald (Judy) Sherman and Donnie (Arletta) Miller, along with numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Private Graveside Inurnment with Military Honors was held in the Newhouse Cemetery.

A quote from his favorite poem

was ... “Let me live by the side of the road and be a friend to man.” This is how George lived his life and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him. To offer condolences, share memories, or upload photos in honor of George's extraordinary life, visit his Tribute Wall at www.fraleyfuneral-home.com and celebrate the impact he made on all those around him.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Fraley Funeral Home.



Church Services

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church
2029 St. Road 55, Moorefield, WV
(304)434-2547
Fr. Arul Anthony
Fr. Jose Manuel Escalante
Mass Times: Saturday @ 5:00 p.m.
Sunday @ 8:00 a.m.
Sunday (Spanish Mass) @ 12:00 p.m.



CLASSIFIEDS

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Administrative Position Available

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The Region 8 Planning and Development Council is accepting applications for the position of Upper Potomac Area Agency on Aging (UPAAA) Monitor/Fiscal Administrator. The Area Agency Monitor performs mid-level professional external auditing/monitoring and compliance reviews of agency grants and contracts in the following areas: general accounting, external auditing, budget/administration, grants management, financial analysis, statutory accounting, and compliance with accounting/auditing guidelines and procedures. The work may require considerable travel.

This position requires a Bachelor's degree from an accredited

college or university with at least 6 semester hours in accounting. The position also requires at least one year of full-time or equivalent part-time paid professional experience in statutory accounting. A Master's degree in accounting may substitute for the required experience. Relevant experience in accounting/auditing may substitute for attained degree if deemed applicable. Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest to Melissa Earle, Executive Director of the Region 8 - PDC, 131 Providence Lane, Petersburg, WV 26847. Deadline for applications is Friday, March 13, 2026. The Region 8 PDC is an equal opportunity employer.

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Interested applicants may apply through Indeed or submit their resume and application to the attention of Tom Nelson at: PO Box 97 Baker, WV 26801 or email: tnelson@hawsehealth.com

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Local appraisers from the Hardy County Assessor's Office will visit real properties in Hardy County.

Legislative Law 11-1c-7 of this article states that each assessor shall maintain current values on the real and personal property within the county. In repeating three-year cycles, every parcel or real property shall be visited by a member of the Assessor's staff. That member, trained pursuant to Section Six 11-1c-6 of this article, will determine if any changes have occurred which should affect the valuation of the property.

If you have any questions, call the Hardy County Assessor's Office at (304) 530-0202.

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Community Recreation and Education Center Comes One Step Closer in Baker

By Stephen Smoot

As a long, cold, and bitter winter comes apparently, or hopefully, to its completion, community health care and economic development leaders gathered in Baker. They came to celebrate the breaking of ground on a new E. A. Hawse community center for both physical recreation and also education.

Last Friday, 60 degree temperatures with a still wintery breeze greeted those assembled. Mike Funkhouser, a Board member for E. A. Hawse, offered an invocation. The approximately two dozen who came formed a prayer circle and linked hands as he asked “a blessing for many years to come.”

Then, Melissa Thompson, Chief Executive Officer of E. A. Hawse Health Center, greeted those who had gathered for the event. She stated that “I’m excited to get this going and then start the project across the street” and called the center “community level change that’s occurring”

Thompson then added thanks for “our board members moving forward and doing good things for the community.”

Chief Financial Officer Chris Hahn also shared his thoughts, saying “I was born and raised here” then added it was a “dream to me to have a place where everyone can go.”

The coming facility plays a role not before seen in the E. A. Hawse Health system. It houses multiple classrooms designed for art, but that could serve other capacities. A full sized basketball gymnasium can accommodate one game on the main floor or two simultaneously and side by side. Outdoor sports facilities will also provide places where teams can practice and compete or children can play on their own. While the school system has outstanding facilities, time with them is a limited resource.

Hahn added that children are the secret to the facility’s success. “If we can get kids here, we can get adults here.” Fred Brooks, Executive Vice President

and Chief Lending Officer for Capon Valley Bank, shared that he had grandchildren attending East Hardy and that “this is very much needed” to expand youth recreation opportunities.

One of the important aspects of the center and its role in area health care lies in preventative medicine. Children who go will develop the habits of active adults. Adults can also find workout facilities, a walking track around the inside wall, and other ways to get more active and gain more health.

Also behind the project and standing side by side with locals who transformed the dream into a coming reality is a generous donor who bankrolled the cost of the facility. MacKenzie Scott “is an American novelist, philanthropist, and an early contributor to Amazon,” according to her online biography. At one time, she was also married to corporate owner Jeff Bezos.

As Rohrbaugh explained, “we saw an article on her philanthropy for non-profits. We went

online to her foundation and requested \$1 million.” Scott examined the project, carefully vetted E. A. Hawse executives, then responded that \$1 million would not cover the cost. She sent \$4.2 million instead.

“You should have heard the bank when the wire came in!”, Rohrbaugh said.

Thompson then spoke to explain that former E. A. Hawse CEO Gary Johnson, whom she replaced eight years ago, “told me to keep the Health Center going and to keep the status quo.” Within those guidelines, Thompson has maintained the high quality service that built the center’s reputation while expanding into new fields. Her strategy? “Put it on paper and make it happen.”

Hardy County Commission President Steven Schetrom stated “it’s a great thing. It’s a great thing for E. A. Hawse. It’s a great thing for Baker. Congratulations to you guys for what you have been able to do here.”



This is a generated rendering of what the Hawse Recreation Center will look like.



Members of the Hardy County Chamber of Commerce, Rural Development Authority, and E. A. Hawse Health Center officials celebrated the Baker groundbreaking.

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HARDY COUNTY SPORTS



East Hardy High School Boys Seniors

All bark, no bite: East Hardy annihilates Huskies

By Carl Holcomb
Moorefield Examiner

The Cougars stifled Northern Garrett with 18 perimeter shots pushing a 50-point lead entering the final stanza and cruised to an 89-41 victory on senior night in Baker.

East Hardy honored the seniors for boys basketball and cheerleading with a special ceremony: Evan Hamilton, Mason Hamilton, Joseph Price, Levi

Price, Shayne Sisler, Adriana Gonzalez, Kayla Grandison and Danica Smith.

This East Hardy Boys Basketball senior quintet has been the most accomplished in program history with the most all-time wins with a record of 74-22 (and counting) and three straight state tournaments as regional champions.

Evan Hamilton scored a game-high 26 points for the Cougars, followed by Gideon Good with 19 points, Mason Hamilton 15 points and Aubrey McCullough

14. The Hamilton twins corralled 12 out of the 18 trifectas, Evan nailed 7 and Mason hammered 5.

The remaining 3-pointers came from Nehemiah Graham (2), McCullough (2), Good (1) and Sisler (1).

Northern Garrett was paced by Jayden McNally with 24 points and Angelo Lacy with 10.

East Hardy (15-4) stomped over the Huskies in the first frame 28-9 en route to a 10th consecutive win.

The Cougars started the game

with a carom collecting jumper by Gideon Good, then the Huskies responded with a 3-pointer by McNally for their only lead of the game at 7:29.

That lead was erased on a 3-pointer by Mason Hamilton within 22 seconds.

Northern Garrett tied the game on the ensuing series as Lacy hit a jumper at 6:53.

Good put the Cougars back on top at 6:28.

After a few misses, the net was found on the perimeter by Evan

continued on page 7



State Bound: Hardy County Wrestling is sending 11 girls and 6 boys to Huntington

By Carl Holcomb
Moorefield Examiner

Hardy County Wrestling received their final regional report card and passed with flying colors.

Moorefield Yellow Jackets will be sending seven girls and three boys to the state wrestling tournament.

East Hardy will embark to the state tournament in Huntington with three boys and four girls.

East Hardy Boys Wrestling junior Aaron Barb led the charge for the Hardy County contingent in Flatwoods, pouncing for the Class AA-A Region II 106-lb Championship.

The pride of Cougars have two boys state alternates with Brinn Childers and Ryan Harman who both finished the regionals in fifth place.

Moorefield Boys Wrestling had a pair of Class AA-A bronze medalists, Jhon Paul and Alex Rodriguez earning state bids and the state alternate is Javi Acosta rounding out the field in fifth

place.

On Sunday, the inaugural North Region Girls Wrestling Tournament was held in Buckhannon.

Moorefield Girls Wrestling proved they meant business finishing in fourth place as a team among a field of 35 squads.

The Yellow Jackets buzzed to the podium snatching up seven state tournament tickets led by bronze medalists LeeAnne Coon in the 100-lb division and Kailynn Penkov in the 185-lb division.

Moorefield Girls Wrestling's Annie Barr (126) and Grace Simmons (132) collected fourth place regional medals for state berths.

The Yellow Jackets Girls kept the momentum going with state qualifiers at the North Region Girls Tournament: Jaelee Lendchiders (5th - 152), Kourtney Smith (5th - 235) and Morgan Malone (8th - 138).

East Hardy Girls Wrestling senior Morganne Miller finished as the North Region Tournament 145-lb class runner-up for the biggest state ticket for the Hardy County Girls.



Moorefield Middle claims PVL 7th grade girls basketball crown

The Moorefield Middle School Girls Basketball team emerged victorious 31-20 to collect the Potomac Valley League Championship over the Bobcats in Capon Bridge.

It was a tight title contest with the Yellow Jackets maintaining an 8-6 edge entering the second period and held a 16-12 halftime lead.

Moorefield Middle got a little bit of a cushion entering the final stanza with a 22-14 advantage and was able to fend off Capon Bridge Middle for the crown.

Moorefield Middle's Kylan Markwood and Naomi Markwood were selected to the All-Potomac Valley League Conference Team.

The PVL 7th grade champions coached by Morgan See, Juwana Bridger and Josh See, had a talented and determined team

comprised of these members: Allison Ours, Aubrey Hose, Darah See, Tatum Crites, Laila Redman, Adalyn Toney, Isabella Barb, Naomi Markwood, Kate Cumberland and Kylan Markwood.

"This team battled injuries. We pushed them to get into shape and they gave us all they had. This group was hands down the most unselfish bunch of players I had ever coached. Their team chemistry is amazing. They worked to earn that championship, putting in the work to get better," Moorefield Middle 7th grade Girls Basketball Coach Morgan See noted.

Capon Bridge Middle School 8th grade Girls Basketball team prevented a Hardy County sweep by defeated the East Hardy Middle School Cougars for the title.

photos on page 8

Moorefield triumphs as Falcons bow gracefully

By Carl Holcomb
Moorefield Examiner

The Yellow Jackets buzzed with joy in the Hive celebrating the seniors with compassion from Frankfort during a 38-27 win.

The Falcons agreed to let the two injured Moorefield seniors a chance to start the game and touch the ball before an immedi-

ate timeout to have them gracefully hop to the bench.

A Frankfort parent noted that her team would want the same thing afforded them if they were in the same boat.

Moorefield recognized seniors in a special pregame ceremony: Veronica Carr, CiCi Kump, Raleigh Kuykendall, Elizabeth Williams and statistician Faith Snyder.

The Yellow Jackets quartet of senior players got the nod to start which included the injured duo of Kump and Kuykendall.

The act of kindness and sportsmanship by the Falcons coaching staff and team will be remembered well after the final whistle.

Moorefield sophomore Kerigan Bergdall led the team with 11 points, followed by senior Elizabeth Williams with 10 points and

junior Brenna See with 9 markers.

Frankfort's Kasi Ouellette netted a game-high 12 points.

The Yellow Jackets opened the game with a 7-0 run, but Frankfort responded with its own run to take a 9-7 lead before Moorefield equalized the game entering the second stanza.

The first minute and change

continued on page 7



Moorefield High School Girls Seniors

MHS Girls and Frankfort

continued from page 6

had turnovers and errant shots.

Williams netted the game's initial basket in the paint for the Yellow Jackets, then recorded a defensive block.

See snatched a defensive carom, then the next attempt went awry and Parvatee Snyder hauled in the board to keep play alive.

Moorefield took a 5-0 lead as See knocked down a 3-pointer at 5:12.

See deflected a dribble and Bergdall scooped up the ball on the ricochet for the steal leading to a layup, 7-0.

Frankfort scored the next 9 points in a balanced attack stretching over three minutes by Angel Arnold, Allegra Northcraft, Raygan Grogg and Ouellette.

Williams notched a tying layup with 20 seconds left in the first period.

See commenced the second stanza with a steal and assist to Bergdall as the Yellow Jackets regained the lead, 11-9.

The Falcons drew iron twice prior to a steal by Bergdall, but the ensuing shot was blocked by Ouellette.

Williams grabbed a rebound, then Bergdall was fouled and added one point on the line at 5:52.

A steal by Bergdall, who returned the favor with an assist to See for a 14-9 lead at 5:28.

See swiped the ball, then got trapped into a jump ball.

Moorefield's Lily Eye stole the ball, but the Falcons' Northcraft blocked the next attempt.

See made another steal, but Moorefield failed to connect three times.

Ouellette found an opening in the lane for a basket as Frankfort cut the deficit to 14-11.

Eye snatched an offensive board and dished to Williams for the hoop.

See created two turnovers and the Yellow Jackets capitalized these times with an own layup and a dish to Brylee Reel, who drew a foul and added both shots on the charity stripe.

Reel garnered a steal, but Moorefield came up short.

Moorefield took a 20-12 lead into halftime.

Bergdall and the Yellow Jackets began the third period with a four-point play, 24-12.

Eye swiped the ball and located Bergdall for a layup extending the lead to 26-12 at 7:32.

The Falcons purchased several free throws over the next two minutes by Ouellette and Maci Smith.

A steal by Frankfort's Ava Lupette setup a bucket by Ouel-

lette to make it 26-17 at 5:11.

The game got sloppy in both directions, but Northcraft managed to add a field goal for the Falcons.

Williams added a jumper for the Yellow Jackets with a minute and change remaining in the third frame for a 28-20 edge.

Both teams combined for 25 errant shots and 14 turnovers in the final frame.

Despite the miscues, Moorefield kept a 10-7 edge to give the seniors a 38-27 win gift.

Eye paced the Yellow Jackets with four points in that final frame, while Carr, See and Williams created two points apiece.

Frankfort returns to the Hive for a rematch in the playoffs.

"It is always nice to get a win on senior night. It was a special moment. I want to personally thank the Frankfort coaches and team for allowing us to have that moment with our two injured girls. It is something they will remember for the rest of their lives. It wasn't the prettiest game, but we buckled down and got the job done. We wanted to speed things up and they wanted to slow things down, but it just didn't work out. We did enough in the end to win. These girls have meant a lot to the program. They were great leaders for us," Moorefield coach Jared Wratchford remarked.

Moorefield Girls Basketball seniors provided some information about their careers:

Veronica Carr is a three-sport athlete competing in golf, basketball and track and field.

Carr has been to the WVSSAC state golf tournament in Wheeling and a four-year representative at the WVSSAC girls golf invitational state tournament in Mineral Wells.

Carr is the MHS Class of 2026 president, student council vice president, a member of the Social Studies Club, Academic Showdown and Envirothon teams, MHS National Honor Society treasurer and on the Superior Honor Roll.

Carr plans to attend West Virginia University to study Biology Pre-Medicine with an emphasis on Human Health and further her education with a graduate's degree in pursuit of becoming a physician assistant.

CiCi Kump is a three-sport athlete for the Yellow Jackets in volleyball, basketball and softball.

Kump is the president of the MHS National Honor Society, MHS Senior Class vice president and student council member.

Kump made all-conference and all-state selections.

Kump will attend the University of Kentucky, joining her sister

Sterling.

Kump will pursue a degree in a sports medicine related field.

Raleigh Kuykendall is a three-sport athlete in volleyball, basketball and softball.

Kuykendall has been to the state volleyball tournament and named to the all-PVC volleyball team and member of the North-South Volleyball All-Stars, plus selected to the Bub Riggelman Softball All-Tournament Team.

Kuykendall is a member of the National Honor Society and Student Council.

Kuykendall's advice to the underclassmen is: "Play every game like it could be your last, because you truly never know when an injury could change everything. Don't take a single practice, rep, or game for granted. Don't complain about early mornings/Saturday practices, because one day you might be wishing you could do it all again."

Kuykendall added her favorite quote: "If you think the price of winning is too high, wait til you get the bill for regret. You don't get hurt sitting on the couch eating butterfingers," Adam Kuykendall said.

Kuykendall plans to attend WVU to obtain a degree in nursing and later become a nurse practitioner specializing in aesthetics.

Elizabeth Williams was a



member and captain of the first girls soccer team in school history this season, in addition to playing basketball and track.

Williams is the MHS Student Council president, NHS vice president, Future Farmers of America treasurer, MHS Class of 2026 treasurer, a member of Envirothon and Academic Showdown teams, Social Studies Club member, NHTS member and West Virginia DECA state vice president.

Williams is a member of the Old Fields Mountaineers 4-H Club, Moorefield Presbyterian Youth Group and the Lions Club International Exchange Club in Germany.

Williams plans to study International Relations at WVU and go to law school.

Faith Snyder is the MHS girls basketball statistician and competed in track.

Snyder is a member of the NHS and Student Council.

Snyder is an active member of Believers Victory Center and enjoys volunteer work in the community.

Snyder has maintained a 3.5 GPA for her entire high school career.

Snyder plans to attend West Liberty University and obtain a degree in marine sciences.

These Yellow Jackets have a bright future ahead.

These Yellow Jackets have a bright future ahead.

These Yellow Jackets have a bright future ahead.

These Yellow Jackets have a bright future ahead.

These Yellow Jackets have a bright future ahead.

These Yellow Jackets have a bright future ahead.

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HIGH SERIES WOMEN (SCRATCH): Dee Anna McDonald 523, Denise McGreevy 492,

Emily Stark 487, Helen Bell 450; (HANDICAP): Jordan Ketterman 701, Helen Bell 678, Emily Stark 673, Denise McGreevy 669, Paula Bergdall 669;

HIGH AVERAGE (WOMEN): Carissa Michael 183.02, Dee Anna McDonald 175.64, Sarah Earle 167.86, Ashley Wratchford 160.85;

**THURSDAY NIGHT
MENS LEAGUE
02/12/2026**

TEAM STANDINGS: Vetter's Mini Mart 59 - 29, Golden Lanes 53.5 - 34.5, Strikeforce 46 - 42,

Balls Deep 45.5 - 42.5, Petersburg Oil Company 44.5 - 43.5, E-Bowl-A 44 - 44, Country Cars & Trucks 40.5 - 47.5;

HIGH GAME (SCRATCH): Don Himelright 259, Phil Crews 259, Larry Walp 257, Jon Hedrick 246, Bradley Vetter 245;

(HANDICAP): Phil Crews 285, Larry Walp 279, Ed Turner 277, Don Himelright 276, Bradley Vetter 269;

HIGH SERIES (SCRATCH): Jon Hedrick 683, Phil Crews 681, Cohan Kesner 659, Don Himelright 657, Derek Thorne 657,

Larry Walp 656; (HANDICAP): Phil Crews 759, Pete Luttrell 747, Derek Thorne 738, Ed Turner 732, Larry Walp 722;

HIGH AVERAGE: Cohan Kesner 226.41, Jon Hedrick 211.30, Zachary Arbaugh 208.80, Evan Kesner 208.02, Andrew Kesner 204.08, Don Himelright 202.65;



East Hardy and Huskies

continued from page 6

Hamilton, 10-5.

Good blocked a shot, then the Huskies hit iron twice before Ansen Miller scored on a putback.

Covering a span of 30 seconds, East Hardy made three steals with perimeter shots from the Hamilton twins and layup by Trevor Roof for a 20-7 lead.

A minute elapsed before a slam dunk by Good putting the Cougars up 22-7 with 1:37 left in the opening period.

The Huskies would add two free throws, but the Cougars created a block by Good with Evan Hamilton feeding Roof, then two steals for McCullough and Joseph Price resulted in their own baskets for a 28-9 advantage.

East Hardy's defense was like a pesky pollen causing the Huskies to lose control of the ball and the Cougars kept scorching the nets for a 49-12 halftime lead.

The Huskies fumbled the ball twice to start the second period with Good making a layup and Evan Hamilton adding a trey.

The crowd went wild with each 3-pointer and berserk on a second dunk from Good grabbing a 36-9 lead.

During the final two minutes of the first half, Good netted a jumper, then the Huskies lost the ball out of play and McCullough scored off a rebound.

Shayne Sisler corralled a defensive carom and found McCullough for a 3-pointer and the 49-12 lead.

Good intercepted a pass, but the Cougars didn't capitalize.

Two minutes into the second half, East Hardy was off to a 10-nil run commencing with a beyond-the-arc shot from Mason

Hamilton.

Sisler swiped the ball and dished to Mason Hamilton, who found Good for a bucket inside.

Both teams hit the rim, then Sisler scorched a perimeter basket.

Mason Hamilton stole the ball and made the layup completing that run prior to two free throws by the Huskies.

East Hardy's Mason Hamilton drilled a 3-pointer off an assist from his brother, but Northern Garrett answered with the same by Aiden Pickerel.

The Cougars recorded four trifectas over a three minute stretch by Good, McCullough and Evan Hamilton (2), while the Huskies countered from long distance by McNally and Lacy for aa 74-25 score.

McNally added a jumper with two minutes to go in the third frame, then both teams hit the rim thrice prior to a perimeter dagger by McCullough for a 77-27 50-point margin entering the final stanza.

Northern Garrett outscored the Cougars 14-12 in the last period.

The dozen markers by East Hardy all came from beyond the arc netted by Graham (2) and the Hamilton twins (one apiece).

McNally scored on an old-fashioned three-point play in a 9 point scoring effort in the fourth period.

East Hardy glided to the 89-41 win.

"[Seniors] I have all sorts of stories about these guys, but normally it is them making fun of me because of things I say. I think Evan and Mason come in every day wondering what kind of crazy thing I am going to say.

This group is probably the winningest group of kids to ever come through East Hardy in a four year stretch. I know it has been the most successful stretch of my career having them here. They aren't just good athletes, they are wonderful kids. That is probably why they are good athletes, because they do all the other things correctly. They work their tails off and all have great grades. They are super respectful, too. The things they do on the court is tremendous, but the things they do off the court impresses me and helps me to be a better coach. Their character and integrity speaks volumes," East Hardy Boys Basketball coach Chris Hahn stated.

The Cougars kept the good vibes going with a Top-10 tilt against Clay-Battelle on the road and held a 10-point lead a couple times before staving pff a furious rally for a 49-47 victory.

East Hardy Boys Basketball: Evan and Mason Hamilton, twin brothers, both plan to attend Potomac State College of WVU in Keyser and play baseball for Catamounts veteran skipper Doug Little.

The Hamiltons helped the Cougars win the Class A state baseball championship last season and have been key members of the Prime USA organization in Virginia, in addition to playing for the Bridgewater Reds of the Rockingham County Baseball League along with teammate Garrett Van Meter, EHHS alum Brett Sharp and Moorefield alum Isaac Van Meter.

The Hamiltons have made three consecutive Class A state basketball tournament appear-

ances including a state semifinal finish last year, plus won multiple Class A state track and field medals in Charleston.

Both of these seniors have been named to all-conference and all-state basketball and baseball teams.

The Hamilton twins are members of the National Honor Society and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Joseph Price has been a member of three straight state basketball tournament Cougars teams.

Joseph is a member of the NHS, FCA, Spanish Club and Future Farmers of America.

Joseph plans to become a roofer and a great farmer.

Levi Price has shared his brother's passion for basketball, in addition to becoming an elite football player and state champion baseball star.

Levi set the Cougars Football program record for receiving touchdowns in a single game and was the centerfielder for the 2025 Class A state baseball championship Cougars squad.

Price has been a part of the storied basketball team in Charleston.

Levi Price was named an all-state and all-conference representative during his career.

Levi plans to become a roofer, just like his brother and perhaps help with his brother's barn roof.

Shayne Sisler has been a member of the state basketball team, golf team and last year's pitcher in the Class A state baseball championship.

Sisler has been recognized for all-conference and all-state competition.

Sisler is a member of the FFA, FCA, Spanish Club and National



Technical Honor Society.

Sisler is undecided about his future endeavors after high school, but remains focused on his current state basketball and baseball journeys.

East Hardy Cheer: Adriana Gonzalez is a member of the cheerleading and softball teams.

Gonzalez is a member of the FFA and Spanish Club.

Gonzalez plans to study medicine to become a nurse.

Kayla Grandison is the Cougars Cheer captain and has eight seasons of cheerleading experience, in addition to being named most improved and collecting the

leadership award during her high school career.

Grandison is a member of the FCA, Future Business Leaders of America and Skills USA.

Grandison plans to attend community college, work as a Certified Nursing Assistant and continue in the medical field along with traveling.

Danica Smith is a member of the NHS NHTS, Spanish Club, FCA, Gaming Club and Student Council.

Smith plans to become an art teacher.

East Hardy visits Pendleton County and Petersburg to close out the regular season this week.

WVSSAC Establishes Girls' Wrestling as a Sanctioned Sport for 2026-27

The West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Board of Directors voted on Tuesday night to approve girls wrestling as a preliminary sanctioned sport beginning with the 2026-27 school year.

The decision establishes an official WVSSAC girls wrestling state championship supported by a regional qualifying format. The girls-only championship

will be conducted separately from the boys state wrestling tournament.

Participation in girls wrestling has grown significantly in recent years, increasing from 142 student-athletes in 2023 to more than 300 statewide and representing 86 schools this year (27 full teams). The Board's action formalizes a championship structure while maintaining the

flexibility that has supported the sport's rapid expansion.

As a preliminary sanctioned sport, girls wrestling will compete in dedicated regional and state championship events as more schools build toward full team sponsorship.

"The WVSSAC is excited to add girls wrestling to our championship offerings," said Wayne Ryan, WVSSAC Executive Di-

rector. "We're proud of the growth and progress that this sport has made in recent years, and this move gives these athletes a clear pathway to compete for a state championship while allowing schools to continue strengthening and expanding their programs."

Ryan noted that full team sanctioning requires a minimum number of complete programs

statewide, as well as adherence to national federation regulations that govern roster limits, team structure and competition formats. The preliminary designation allows girls wrestling to continue expanding without placing additional infrastructure demands on emerging programs.

"The vote for preliminary sanctioning of girls wrestling is

an important step in legitimizing the sport while supporting its continued growth," said Meredith Dailer, WVSSAC Board of Directors Chair and Principal at Wheeling Park. "This reasonable and flexible approach ensures our female student-athletes have the opportunity to compete and allows the sport to develop in a thoughtful, sustainable way."

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- EE Spring Water, 24 pk., 16.9 oz. Bottles **\$2.99** (SAVE 50¢)
- EE Pasta, 12-16 oz., Family Size Can **88¢** (SAVE \$1)
- EE Ketchup, 24 oz. **2/\$3** (SAVE 81¢)

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2026 EAST HARDY SOFTBALL SCHEDULE

MAR 16	LURAY, VA - 5:00PM	🚌
MAR 20	PETERSBURG - 6:00PM	🏠
MAR 23	LURAY, VA - 5:00PM	🏠
MAR 25	TUCKER CO. - 6:00PM	🏠
MAR 27	BERKELEY SPRINGS - 5:00PM	🚌
MAR 30	FORT HILL, MD - 5:00PM	🚌
APR 1	PENDLETON CO. - 6:00PM	🏠
APR 3	HAMPSHIRE - 4:30PM	🚌
APR 6	HAMPSHIRE - 6:00PM	🏠
APR 8	SOUTHERN GAR., MD - 4:30PM	🚌
APR 13	BERKELEY SPRINGS - 5:00PM	🏠
APR 15	SOUTHERN GAR., MD - 5:00PM	🏠
APR 17	TUCKER CO. - 6:00PM	🚌
APR 20	FORT HILL, MD - 5:00PM	🏠
APR 22	PENDLETON CO. - 6:00PM	🚌
APR 27	PETERSBURG - 6:00PM	🚌
MAY 2	ELKINS - 1:00 & 3:00 - DH	🏠
MAY 6	SPRING MILLS - 5:00PM	🏠

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***GAMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

PUBLIC NOTICES

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF VALUABLE REAL ESTATE

The undersigned Substitute Trustee, by virtue of the authority vested in him by that certain Deed of Trust, dated November 19, 1999, and duly recorded in the Office of the Clerk of the County Commission of Hardy County, West Virginia, in Book No. 152, at Page 454, Gary J Hall and Nancy M Hall did convey unto Household Finance Company III, Trustee(s), certain real property described in said Deed of Trust; and the beneficiary has elected to appoint Seneca Trustees, Inc., as Substitute Trustee; and default having been made under the aforementioned Deed of Trust, and the undersigned Substitute Trustee having been instructed by Bravo Residential Funding Trust 2024-RPL1 to foreclose thereunder, will offer for sale at public auction at the front door of the Hardy County Courthouse in Moorefield, West Virginia, on

March 19, 2026 at 12:45 PM

the following described real estate, together with its improvements, easements and appurtenances thereunto belonging, situate in 02 - Lost River District, Hardy County, West Virginia, and more particularly described as follows:

All that certain piece or parcel of land situated in Hardy County, West Virginia, known and designated as containing 2.0 acres, more or less, improved with a dwelling house, situated along Rush Lick Hollow Road, in Lost River District, Hardy County, West Virginia.

At the time of the execution of the Deed of Trust, this property was reported to have an address of: Rt 1 Box 82K2, Mathias, WV 26812.

The referenced real estate will be conveyed with no covenants of warranty, and subject to all covenants, restrictions, easements, rights of way and reservations which may be a matter of record in the aforesaid Clerk's Office or visible upon the ground, all prior liens and encumbrances, including, without limitation, liens for real estate taxes, incinerator, sanitary and sewer charges. The purchasers at the sale shall be responsible for paying the recording costs and also the tax on the privilege of transferring real property (the cost of the tax stamp to be affixed to the deed). The purchasers shall be responsible for payment of all real estate taxes.

The subject property will be sold in "AS IS" condition. The Substitute Trustee shall be under no duty to cause any existing tenant or person occupying the subject property to vacate said property.

TERMS: \$3500.00 in cash and/or certified funds as deposit at the time of sale with the balance due and payable within 30 days of the day of sale.

FEDERAL TAX LIEN: In the event that there are Federal Tax Liens against the property, the United States would have the right to redeem the property within a period of 120 days from the date of such sale or the period allowable for redemption under local law, whichever is longer.

Pursuant to the Deed of Trust, the Trustee may postpone the sale by public announcement at the time and place designated or by posting a notice of the same, and act by agent in the execution of the sale. The parties secured by the Deed of Trust reserve the right to purchase the property at such sale.

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Reference File No. 28527

cc: The Moorefield Examiner
February 18, 2026, February 25, 2026

√ _____

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF VALUABLE REAL ESTATE

The undersigned Substitute Trustee, by virtue of the authority vested in it by that certain Deed of Trust dated September 25, 2023, and duly recorded in the Office of the Clerk of the County Commission of Hardy County, West Virginia, in Deed of Trust Book 348, at Page 481, Story Orlando Borrero and Aliona Stefaniuc did convey unto David G. Plamer, Trustee, certain real property described in said Deed of Trust; and the beneficiary has elected to appoint Pill & Pill, PLLC as Substitute Trustee by a Substitution of Trustee recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office; and default having been made under the aforementioned Deed of Trust, and the undersigned Substitute Trustee having been instructed by the secured party to foreclose thereunder, will offer for sale at public auction at the front door of the Hardy County Courthouse, in Moorefield, West Virginia, on
March 18, 2026, at 11:00 AM

The following described real estate, with its improvements, easements and appurtenances thereunto belonging, situate in the Lost River District, Hardy County, West Virginia, and more particularly described as follows:

All that certain lot or parcel of real estate, containing 26.3510 acres, more or less, together with any buildings and improvements thereon, including all rights, rights-of-ways, improvements, minerals, and appurtenances thereunto belonging, located in the Lost River District, Hardy County, West Virginia, and designated as Tract 3 in the Barb Mountain Estates, on that Plat of record in the Office of the Clerk of The Hardy County Commission in Map Book 6 Page 100, to which reference is made for any and all pertinent purposes.

At the time of the execution of the Deed of Trust, this property was reported to have a mailing address of 1285 Boggs Lane, Mathias, WV 26812.

AND BEING the same real estate which was conveyed to Story Orlando Borrero and Aliona Stefaniuc, by Deed dated September 21, 2023, from Homestogo, LLC, and recorded in the Office of the Clerk of the County Commission of Hardy County, West Virginia, in Deed Book 370, at Page 342.

The above-described property will be sold subject to any covenants, restrictions, easements, leases and conditions of record, and subject to any unpaid real estate taxes.

The subject property will be sold in "AS IS" condition. The Substitute Trustee shall be under no duty to cause any existing tenant or person occupying the subject property to vacate said property.

TERMS: Ten percent (10%) of the purchase price as a deposit with the balance due and payable within 30 days of the day of sale.

Pill & Pill, PLLC, Substitute Trustee

Richard A. Pill, Member

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Wardensville Town Council
Amendment to Town Code

A public hearing at which you may be present and speak will be held before Wardensville Town Council at which time the following ordinance will be considered:

Ordinance 26-01, an ordinance updating the Town building code by adopting current state building codes.

The proposed ordinance is posted and available for public inspection at Wardensville Town Hall, 25 Warrior Way, Wardensville, W.Va.

All persons interested are invited to attend the Town Council hearing and be heard on the matter. The hearing will be held beginning at 6:30 p.m. on **Monday, March 9, 2026**, in the Conference Room of the Wardensville Visitor and Conference Center, 301 East Main Street, Wardensville, W.Va. Written comments may be mailed (and must be received three days in advance of the hearing date) to Wardensville Town Council, Town of Wardensville, PO Box 7, Wardensville WV 26851, info@wardensville.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Moorefield Board of Zoning Appeals will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 5:00pm, at the Moorefield Town office to hear the following:

Hardy County Board of Education – requests a conditional use to the Moorefield Zoning Ordinance **20-4.05-Conditional Uses**. Solar Array is not a permitted use by right in the residential (R1) zone, it is permitted as a conditional use, subject to approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals. The Hardy County Board of Education is requesting to construct solar canopies at Moorefield Elementary and Moorefield Middle School.

David Judy – requests a conditional use to the Moorefield Zoning Ordinance **20-7.05- Conditional Uses**. Self-storage is not a permitted use by right in the commercial (C2) zone; it is permitted as a conditional use, subject to approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Judy would like to construct self-storage units at 306 Jackson Ave. (Lots 9&10 of Henkel Addition). The applicant is seeking approval contingent upon the final enactment of the pending zoning ordinance amendment.

Anyone desiring to make comments pertaining to any of the above requests to the Zoning Ordinance is invited to attend the hearing or may submit a written statement at or prior to the hearing. All written comments should be delivered or mailed to 206 Winchester Avenue, Moorefield, WV 26836, and addressed to the Town of Moorefield Board of Zoning Appeals.

By Order Of:

Amy Greenwalt
Director of Community Development & Outreach
Town of Moorefield



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