

A Look Back at 2024:Part 1

Here is a look at some highlights from The Hinton News in 2024. These are a few stories chosen by the editor to from throughout the year. Enjoy this look back at 2024!

January

Spyro's Quest for a New Tank: Dive into the Adventure of Library Lizard Fundraising

HINTON NEWS W.Va. (Hinton News) - Join the Friends of the Library to raise \$900 for a new tank for Spyro, the community's favorite library mascot.

The Friends of the Summers County Public Library would like to outfit him in something brand new, a little larger than what he has now, and with storage for his supplies. The estimated cost for this new tank is \$900.

Recently, the group released the following tips to help raise the money:

“Teachers—here’s your chance to encourage the kiddos to support the library. Every cent counts, so try a Silver for Spyro jar in your classroom.

“Friends—Try your own family fundraisers. For one day, give up that Dunkin Donuts coffee, and donate that \$5 to the library. Or empty out that change jar on your desk for a family Silver for Spyro donation!

“Drop your jars or coin rolls off at the library.

“Let’s see if we can reach \$900 by March 31 and celebrate spring with a new home for Spyro.”

One man is in custody after short pursuit

SUMMERS COUNTY W.Va. (Hinton News) - Summers County police were dispatched to a situation involving alleged theft on Wednesday, Jan. 10. The incident ended with one individual, Albert Lee Ward, 25, of Ravenswood, in Southern Regional Jail after a brief pursuit.

According to the criminal complaint, the victim notified police that three individuals were stealing from their home. While on the way to the area, one of the officers passed a vehicle matching the description of the suspect’s vehicle. Reportedly, the officer turned around and noted the car accelerated. When another officer passed them, the driver allegedly “drastically” increased their speed.

A third officer reportedly decided to wait at an intersection where the suspect and officers would be approaching. The criminal complaint states that the driver once again sped up, after seeing the third officer’s car. This reportedly caused that officer to believe the driver was attempting to ram him, creating fear for his life.

The criminal complaint further states that the third officer, in fear for his life, fired a weapon at the vehicle. At this point, the vehicle reportedly came to a stop, ending the pursuit. The driver was identified as Ward, one of the individuals the victim accused of stealing from their property.

Reportedly, the items stolen include, trail cameras, jewelry, knives and around \$300 in cash, totaling less than \$1,000.

Ward is facing charges of petit larceny and fleeing with reckless indifference. He is currently residing in Southern Regional Jail. At the time of writing, his bail has not been set.

February

Kroger Workers in Hinton, WV and Beyond Rally for Fair Contract Before Expiration

HINTON W.Va. (Hinton News) - Before their contract expired at midnight on Feb. 24, Kroger employees in Hinton, West Virginia joined their colleagues across the East Coast in a powerful display of solidarity, urging the company to improve their contract renewal offer. The atmosphere crackled with determination as workers rallied for fair wages, better working conditions, and recognition of their role as front-line workers in the community.

A flyer distributed by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local 400, which represents Kroger employees, outlines several key areas where the proposed contract from Kroger falls short of the union’s goals:

Wages: The union argues that Kroger’s proposed wage increase fails to keep pace with inflation, effectively resulting in a pay cut for many employees. Additionally, the proposal could reportedly reduce pay for workers who don’t consistently work full-time hours.

Health and Welfare Benefits: The flyer claims Kroger’s proposal would eliminate health care benefits for future retirees, increase costs for current retirees, and potentially put the future funding of the entire healthcare plan at risk, leading to higher out-of-pocket expenses for employees.

Paid Time Off: The union states that Kroger’s offer does not provide any additional paid time off or paid sick days. It also removes language guaranteeing a premium rate for night crew members who take vacation time.

Hours and Scheduling: The union highlights concerns that Kroger’s proposal would:

Make Sundays a regular part of the work week, impacting work-life balance for many employees.

Eliminate time-and-a-half pay for working more than 8 hours in a day, reducing overtime compensation.

Reduce the minimum guaranteed hours from 15 to 12 per week, potentially impacting part-time employees’ income stability.

Reduce the minimum call-in shift from 5 hours to 4 hours, potentially increasing scheduling unpredictability for workers.

Workplace Safety: The union emphasizes that Kroger’s proposed contract lacks any new provisions to address workplace safety concerns, despite the increasing threat of gun violence in stores.

The flyer concludes by urging Kroger to improve its offer and stating the union’s unwavering commitment to fighting for a fair contract.

At the time of writing, Hinton News has not yet

reached a Kroger representative for comment from the company’s prospective.

On Feb. 26, the union released a statement that members would be voting on a potential strike. As of the time of writing, a decision has not been announced. Keep a check on hintonnews.com for the latest updates. To see a video of the rally, go to the Hinton News page on Facebook.

March

Hope Cooper Steering SCHD into the Future

HINTON W.Va. (Hinton News) - Summers County has many things to be proud of. Among those are the Summers County Health Department and its Administrator, Hope Cooper.

Recently, Cooper spoke about the strides the health department is making and said that she loved learning new things and teaching others. She feels that her background in business administration helped her transition into her position but feels that not a day goes by that she doesn’t learn something new.

A longtime Summers County resident, Cooper was previously an employee of the Summers County school system for almost 11 years. She went on to say that she enjoys having a challenging yet rewarding career.

Cooper has a vision of making public health awareness a priority. She stated that she feels like women in our area are grossly overlooked in the area of obstetrical care and she has a multi-year plan to fix that. Cooper noted that finding partners to take on these healthcare needs is a challenge all over southern West Virginia.

Cooper stated that the Health Department still offers all vaccines to people of all ages. Additionally, she said she has hired a nurse practitioner to see patients three days a week. The nurse practitioner can provide primary care, acute and chronic care, minor wound care, sports physicals, and DOT physicals. Cooper explained that the nurse practitioner is very compassionate about providing patient care. Cooper is very excited to be able to provide more options for the people of the community.

In the coming years, Cooper wants to make the health department known for its excellent patient care and educate people on the importance of taking care of themselves.

For more information about services offered at the Summers County Health Department, call 304-466-3388.

Former Beckley Resident Launches New Book in Hinton

HINTON W.Va. (Hinton News) - A new historical novel, “The Saga of Virginia Ham” by former Beckley resident, Phyllis Campbell Whitley will be launched at the Summers County Public Library on Saturday, April 20, between 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. with book signings. Light refreshments will be served.

Whitley says Virginia Ham was an enigmatic

woman. Even so, every person has a story. Jenny was born in 1860 in southern West Virginia and finished her journey on this earth on New Year’s Day, 1946. Her life seemed a mystery to all in the community.

A few years ago, it was suggested that Whitley research the history of Jenny’s life and perhaps write a book. She started with the two facts she knew; She was old and lived alone in a little house near her grandparents’ home on the Greenbrier River, and a cousin said she was a witch.

She began interviewing people living in that area, researching the lives of people there, throughout the state, and around the world for information that might have impacted Jenny’s life. Ideas for a story began to form, an outline was developed. Over the next two years, a historical novel unfolded.

In her saga, Jenny chronicles her life story beginning in 1860. Items from her old, cherished candy box greatly enhanced her memories.

Finally, it is now 2024, and Jenny’s story has been written, published, and ready for readers. Whitley says, “As a historical novel it is the truth as I believe it to be. I hope you enjoy the book and perhaps you will concur with my conclusion.”

Whitley will sign her book at the launch. Payment for the \$35 book can be made by cash, check or credit card.

If you cannot attend the launch, you can order books at [her website, https://www.thesagaofvirginiaham.com](https://www.thesagaofvirginiaham.com) or contact the author at acpcw1@gmail.com to arrange for a form to be sent directly to you. The price is \$40 which includes shipping and handling.

Whitley worked for a national corporation in the “big cities,” including several years at Bell Laboratories in New York City and New Jersey before taking early retirement to Virginia to pursue her passions as an artist, a photographer and an author.

A native of West Virginia, she spent her childhood summers at her grandparents’ farms in the county. Her passion for chronicling the history of country life that bespeaks the heritage, the culture, and more importantly, the people, has produced treasures for generations to come. Today, she lives in Spotsylvania, Virginia with summers spent at her cottage on the Greenbrier River near Hinton.

Other publications by this author are *Barns of Summers County - West Virginia Heritage*, *Photographer on Horseback - John C. Wikel, 1999 - A Normal Year*, (Coauthored with Philippe Louis Jules Jouan) and *Fun at Pipestem State Park* with Kevin and Katherine (A coloring storybook for children).

April

A Peek into Summers County’s Past: Hinton Hospital and Doctor Stokes

HINTON W.Va. (Hinton News) - My family has made several interesting connections to the old Hin-

ton Hospital over the years. One of which is where my Mother’s parents first met. My Grandfather, Bearnard Thompson’s, Aunt, Nora Wallace, of Talcott, was a patient sometime towards the end of 1953.

He would go to Hinton to visit his aunt, and while he was visiting her, he got to talking to this young lady who was her roommate named Beatrice “Bea” Thomas. Bernard and Bea became quite smitten with each other. Granddad would “forget” his aunt had been released and would go back to see her. Once Bea reminded him Nora had been discharged, he would sit down and visit with her, you know, since he was already there, “cough cough.” Grandma was engaged to another gentleman at that time, but that didn’t stop Granddad from pursuing Bea.

Once Bea was released, the two started dating and eventually married in 1954. Then along came my Uncle Bob in 1956, who was born in the Hinton Hospital. The same goes for my Mother in 1958. The Old Hinton Hospital had a reputation for being one of the best hospitals in the surrounding counties. For instance, my mother was rushed to the hospital in 1962 when a steel swing set fell on her, striking her on the temple.

On the way to the hospital, she was pronounced dead. After arriving there and having quite a long stay, she made a miraculous recovery. Some of the names you hear most about the doctors of this hospital are Doctor Stokes, Doctor Ritter, Doctor Mcneer, and Doctor Camara.

I will focus on Dr Stokes, as my family has a long history of being some of his patients over decades. My grandparents had moved to Charleston from Talcott for grandad’s job with Chemical Leaman Tank Lines. They kept their house in Talcott and used it for a camp to come “home” and visit on weekends and holidays. While here, if they needed medical attention, Grandma would take the children to Doctor Stokes.

You see, the odd and funny part of this story is that my grandmother had dated Doctor Stokes’ son years before. My Mother can vividly remember going to him when they would be up here from Charleston, and she would get sick. Doctor Stokes would tell her, “Cheryl come over here and sit on my knee.” She would, and then he would say, “You do know you could have easily been my granddaughter, don’t you Cheryl?” And then just die laughing.

Another Doctor Stokes story about him and my mother involved mom wanting her ears pierced. Mom was about eight years old and wanted to get hers pierced because all her friends in the “city” were getting theirs pierced. Grandma didn’t want her to and hadn’t let her.

Mom had gotten strep throat or something and was taken to Doctor Stokes about it. Grandma either told him or his nurse before getting there about Mom

wanting to get her ears pierced. After examining her for the reason she had gone to see him, he said to her, “Come sit by me Cheryl, what is this I hear about you wanting to get your ears pierced?” Mom said, “All of my friends are getting theirs done.”

Doctor Stokes told her that girls shouldn’t get their ears pierced at such a young age. Mom asked why not. He told her an off-color story about what could happen if she did. And finished it off by telling her if she got her ears pierced now she wouldn’t be able to have children when she gets older. He had mom so terrified that the subject never came up with grandma again for years. She didn’t get her ears pierced until she was 15. HaHa

I met Doctor Stokes’ grandson at the airport in Pence Springs in 2019. He said that Doctor Stokes was called to the home of a couple on the mountain above Hinton to deliver their baby. When he got there, the midwife was already with the mother-to-be. So the doctor and the midwife went into the bedroom with the lady, and the husband stayed out in the dining room sitting at the table.

After an extended time, there was a “smack,” and a baby started crying. Doctor Stokes came out and congratulated the dad on his new baby. A few seconds later, the midwife stuck her head out around the closed door and said, “Quick Doctor, get back in here!”

The father stood up, thinking something was wrong. Doctor Stokes told him to sit back down, and he would go find out what is the matter. The door shut. A few minutes passed, and suddenly, you heard another “smack” and a second baby crying.

Doctor Stokes came out with a towel, drying his hands, and said, “Congratulations, it was twins!” The dad sat back in his chair, started wringing his hands, and rubbed his head. He was saying things like, “Ohhh ohhh what am I going to do now? I can’t do this, I don’t have it.” Dr Stokes asked him what was worrying him, and the guy said, “Doc I only saved enough money for the one!” Haha

Doctor Stokes laughed and said, “Do not worry about that, we will figure something out. Now go meet your babies.” See, in those days when the wife was expecting, the family would start putting a little money to aside to pay the doctor when he delivered the baby. This dad expected Doctor Stokes would double charge him since it turned out to be twins and not just the one baby like they had all been expecting.

This is only a small sample of the great and hilarious stories of the doctors of Summers County. I have said for years that someone should write a book with a collection of stories about these great doctors. The book would write itself in essence. Hopefully, someone will record these memories before they are lost with time.



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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES



Retha Ann Pack Freeland
Retha Ann Pack Free-

land, 79, of Roanoke, VA, formerly of Hinton, passed away Monday, January 6, 2024, at Lewis-Gale Medical Center in Salem, VA, following a long illness.

Born April 4, 1945, in Hinton, she was the daughter of the late Charles M. and Ora Lilly Pack and was also preceded in death by her only sister, Peggy.

Retha is survived by her loving husband of 60 years, Herbert Free-

land; daughter, Lineki McDaniel and husband, Steve, of Sunset Beach, NC; son, Brian Freeland and wife, Chrissy, and their sons, Brayden and Riley, all of Warrenton, VA; her only brother, James C. Pack and wife, Ramona, of Beverly, WV; along with several nieces and nephews also survive.

Retha was a graduate of Hinton High School, Class of 1963. She and her husband resided in

Covington, VA, for 43 years, before relocating to Roanoke in 2008. While raising her children, she was very active in volunteering at their schools; especially with the band at Allegheny High School, where she ran the stadium concession stand. She was a past member of Mallow Presbyterian Church in Covington and active in various church activities. After moving to Roanoke, they have at-

tended Melrose Baptist Church.

Retha had a warm smile for everyone she met and was loved by all who knew her well. She will be sorely missed by those left behind, but a welcome addition to the place God has provided for her.

Funeral services were held at 1 p.m. Friday, January 10, 2025, at Pivont Funeral Home Chapel in Hinton with Pastor Gary Trout offici-

ating. Burial followed in Lilly-Crews Cemetery at Nimitz, WV. The family received friends from 12 p.m. until time of services on Friday at the funeral home.

Family and friends served as pallbearers.

You can send online condolences at www.pivontfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements by Pivont Funeral Home, Hinton, WV.

Speaker Hanshaw Announces Plans for Upcoming 87th Legislature

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (Hinton News) – House Speaker Roger Hanshaw, R-Clay, today announced several leadership roles within the West Virginia House of Delegates and a change to the committee format for the upcoming 87th Legislature.

Hanshaw, first elected to the House in 2014, was elected House Speaker for the fifth time when the House convened for the 87th Legislature on Wednesday, Jan. 8.

"Each of the ladies and gentlemen who will come to this building to take the oath of office will do so with the confidence of the 1.8 million West Virginians who are counting on us to chart a course of leadership and progress that will improve their daily lives," Hanshaw said. "A new Legislature is an opportunity to adjust the foundation we have here to facilitate the work of the House, and we believe the lineup we've assembled will bring about new discussions, new approaches and new solutions."

Returning to the position of **Majority Whip** will be Delegate Marty Gearheart, R-Mercer. Delegate Matt Rohrbach, R-Cabell, will serve as **Speaker Pro Tempore** as well as continue to serve as **Deputy Speaker**, a role Delegate David Kelly, R-Tyler, will take on as well.

Delegate Pat McGeehan, R-Hancock, will serve as House **Majority Leader**. Several members will serve as **Assistant Majority Leaders**: Delegates Tom Clark, R-Webster; David Green, R-McDowell; Keith Marple, R-Harrison; Delegate-elect Dave McCormick, R-Monongalia; Erica Moore, R-Roane; Mickey Petitto, R-Harrison; and Elliott Pritt, R-Fayette.

Gearheart will be aided in his role with several **Assistant Majority Whips**: Delegates Jim Butler, R-Mason; Jordan Bridges, R-Logan; Eric Brooks, R-Raleigh; Dave Foggin, R-Wood; Delegate-elect Sarah Drennan, R-Putnam; and Bill Ride-nour, R-Jefferson.

The **Conference Chairman** role will be filled by Delegate Mike Hornby, R-Berkeley, who will help facilitate majority caucus meetings and policy discussions among Republican members. Delegates John Paul Hott, R-Grant, and Doug Smith, R-Mercer, will return to their roles as **Conference Vice Chairmen**.

"In addition to a strong blend of new and established leadership, I'm excited to implement a new format for our committee

work here in the House," Hanshaw said. "For far too long, the success rate of a legislative session has been measured by the number of bills passed, and that's just not the appropriate assessment for what should be a focus on problem-solving."

"We've seen that the low-hanging fruits, such as the elimination of the food tax and creation of an Intermediate Court of Appeals, have already been picked after 10 years of a Republican majority. What's left are the complex, complicated issues that will require a different approach to lawmaking."

The House will have six standing committees: Health and Human Resources, Energy and Public Works, Finance, Government Organization, Education and Judiciary. The Standing Committee on Finance will have four subcommittees and all other standing committees each will have three subcommittees. The committee process also will see changes.

The Speaker will refer each introduced bill to a standing committee or a subcommittee, and similar to the floor session's three-day process, a bill going through the committee process may cover three days: Introduction, with agency reviews and comments from the public on day one, markups to the bill on day two and committee votes on day three. Both the subcommittees and standing committees will follow this process.

"Not only did we want to build in specific and predictable steps with appropriate timing for the committee process, but we also wanted to better execute our oversight role," Hanshaw said. "Not every problem is solved by enacting a new law, and we think regular discussions with Executive Branch agencies will give all of us a better understanding of the challenges, successes and resources out there in every corner of our state."

The **Standing Committee on Finance** will be led by Chairman Vernon Criss, R-Wood, with Delegate Clay Riley, R-Harrison, serving as Vice Chair. Its **Subcommittee on Revenue** will be led by Gearheart as its Chairman and Delegate Chuck Horst, R-Berkeley, as Vice Chair. Delegate Trenton Barnhart, R-Pleasants, will be Chairman of the **Banking and Insurance Subcommittee** and Delegate Walter Hall, R-Kanawha, will be the Vice Chair. The **Investments Subcommittee** will have

Delegate Jarred Cannon, R-Putnam, as Chairman and Delegate-elect Ray Canterbury, R-Greenbrier, as Vice Chair. The **Appropriations Subcommittee** Chairman will be Hott and Roy Cooper, R-Summers, will serve as its Vice Chair.

Delegate Brandon Steele, R-Raleigh, will serve as Chairman of the **Standing Committee on the Judiciary** and Delegate JB Akers, R-Kanawha, will be its Vice Chair. The **Courts Subcommittee** will be led by Delegate Phil Mallow, R-Marion, as its Chairman and Delegate Andy Shamblin, R-Kanawha, as Vice Chair. Delegate Buck Jennings, R-Preston, will serve as Chairman of the **Homeland Security Subcommittee** and Delegate Bryan Ward, R-Hardy, as its Vice Chairman. Delegate Laura Kimble, R-Harrison, will lead the **Legal Services Subcommittee** as its Chairman and Delegate Josh Holstein, R-Boone, will serve as its Vice Chair.

Delegate Evan Worrell, R-Cabell, will serve as Chairman of the **Standing Committee on Health and Human Resources**. Delegate Michael Hite, R-Berkeley, will be its Vice Chair. The **Public Health Subcommittee** will be led

by Delegate Scot Heckert, R-Wood, and Vice Chairman Geno Chiarelli, R-Monongalia. Delegate Adam Burkhammer, R-Lewis, will be Chairman of the **Human Services Subcommittee** with Delegate Margitta Mazzocchi, R-Logan, serving as its Vice Chair. The **Health Care Regulation Subcommittee** will have Delegate Dean Jeffries, R-Kanawha, serving as Chairman and Delegate Adam Vance, R-Wyoming, as its Vice Chair.

The **Standing Committee on Government Organization** will be led by Delegate Chris Phillips, R-Barbour, as its Chairman and Doug Smith, R-Mercer, as Vice Chair. Its **Subcommittee on Government Administration** will have Delegate Jonathan Pinson, R-Mason, as its Chairman and Delegate Mark Dean, R-Mingo, as its Vice Chair. The **Subcommittee on Local Governments** will be led by Chairman Dana Ferrell, R-Kanawha, and Vice Chairman Mike DeVault, R-Marion. The **Agriculture, Commerce and Tourism Subcommittee** will be led by Delegate Wayne Clark, R-Jefferson, as its Chairman and Delegate Patrick Lucas, R-Cabell, as its Vice Chair.

The **Standing Com-**

mittee on Education will be led by Chairman Joe Ellington, R-Mercer, and Delegate Joe Statler, R-Monongalia, will serve as its Vice Chair. The Delegate Chris Toney, R-Raleigh, will serve as Chairman of the **Subcommittee on Public Education** and Delegate Jeff Campbell, R-Greenbrier, as its Vice Chair. Delegate Lori Dittman, R-Braxton, will be Chairman of the **Higher Education Subcommittee** with Delegate Jimmy Willis, R-Brooke, serving as its Vice Chair. Delegate Kathie Hess-Crouse will serve as Chairman of the **Educational Choice Subcommittee** and Delegate Mike Hornby, R-Berkeley, as its Vice Chair.

Delegate Bill Anderson, R-Wood, will be Chairman of the **Standing Committee on Energy and Public Works** with Delegate Mark Zatezalo, R-Hancock, serving as its

Vice Chair. Delegate Bob Fehrenbacher, R-Wood, will serve as Chairman of the **Energy and Manufacturing Subcommittee** with Delegate George Street, R-Preston, as its Vice Chair. The **Economic Development Subcommittee** will be led by Chairman Gary Howell, R-Mineral, and Vice Chairman Jordan Maynor, R-Raleigh. Chairman Daniel Linville, R-Cabell, will lead the **Environment and Infrastructure Subcommittee** with Delegate Rick Hillenbrand, R-Hampshire, serving as its Vice Chair.

"We know this will be a big adjustment for a lot of us, especially our staff and the public, but we are optimistic about this approach, which we think will be easier to follow and will lead to a more solution-oriented approach to lawmaking," Hanshaw said.

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A Peek into Summers County's Past: Maddy Grocery

William Jones
PENCE SPRINGS W.Va. (Hinton News) - This is the only photograph I have ever uncovered of Maddy Grocery in Pence Springs. It was located in what later became the Pence Springs Post Office building. This photo was taken in 1957 and shows where gasoline was also sold there.
 At that time and before it was very common for small convenience stores to have a gas pump in front of their establishment. I can think of 6 small stores in Pence Springs during the 1920s up till the 1970s and they all

had a gas pump. Maddy Grocery was owned by the late Robert "Shirley" Maddy and Adena R. Garten Maddy. I have referenced members of the Garten family in several of my past articles, especially in ones in relation to Pence Springs.
 In gathering information I spoke with their son, Ashby Maddy, a retired state policeman. He said that his father Shirley built the building in the early 1950s for both Maddy Grocery and the Pence Springs Post Office.
 It wasn't a grocery

store in terms of Kroger or Walmart today, but it sold the staples/necessities that would tide you over till you went to Alderson or Hinton once a month for groceries. He remembered being in the service in Korea and writing back home to his mother at the post office. He said he simply put his name "Ashby Maddy mother Pence Springs, W.Va." And it made it to Adena from Korea just like that!
 This was before the days of having to have a zip code on every piece of mail to get it to a specific location. It is

hard enough to imagine mail arriving like that locally addressed like that today. But especially all the way from Korea!
 His mother retired after 28 years of being the postmaster of Pence Springs. He remembered gasoline being 15 cents in the early days of Maddy Grocery. That is a far cry from the average of \$3.06 a gallon today. The store closed in the mid to late 1960s. The post office remained in the same building until closing in 2011 which made Talcott the closest post office for Pence Springs.



1957 photo of Maddy Grocery. Photo provided by William Jones

Winter Storm Jan. 5/6, 2025



Branches covered in ice. Photo by Lisa Abshire



A back road in Summers County. Photo by Lisa Abshire



Part of Lowell Road. Photo by Lisa Abshire

Scholarships awarded at Alderson Women's Club December meeting

ALDERSON W.Va. (Hinton News) - During the December meeting of the Alderson Women's Club, the annual Emma B. Alderson Scholarships were awarded to three students who currently are seniors at Greenbrier East High School. These ladies all attended Alderson Elementary School. This year's very deserving recipients are as pictured l-r: Ashlyn Blevins, Sophie Wiley and Grace Boettner along with President Betty Thom-



Learning Contentment

By Jeremy Paschall

When the apostle Paul received financial relief from his beloved Philippian brethren, he "rejoiced in the Lord greatly" (Philippians 4.10) and commended them for having "done well" (v. 14). Because of their generosity, he had "an abundance" and was "amply supplied" (v. 18). But there had been a time when Paul's needs were not met (v. 10), not because the Philippians lacked concern for his welfare, but because they had lacked opportunity to serve him in that way. While acknowledging these past circumstances, Paul wrote these words:

"Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." (Philippians 4.11)

Even while suffering adversity and need, the apostle Paul had learned a quieted and settled disposition. Despite false accusations, unjust treatment, and the wrongful imprisonment from which he wrote these words, he had adopted a paradigm uncommon among mankind. What had Paul learned about contentment?

Flawed Foundations

Paul had learned that contentment does not depend upon **External Circumstances**, but instead it transcends "any and every circumstance" (v. 12; cf. v. 11). When "brought low" (v. 12 ESV; cf. 2 Corinthians 11.23-28), he did not speak with doubt, fear, bitterness, or anger. When he was blessed to "abound" (v. 12 ESV; cf. Acts 16.14-40; 17.11,22; 19.1-10), there was no hint of arrogance, self-righteousness, or boasting. Paul wavered not with his personal lows and highs, but maintained a steady composure through them all.

Paul had learned that contentment does not depend upon **Material Resources** (v. 12). At this writing, he had been "filled" by the Philippians' gift, but there were times when it was not so. He had also experienced "going hungry" (v. 12; cf. 1 Corinthians 4.11-12a). However, even in the midst of such dire need, having become "the dregs of all things" (1 Corinthians 4.13b), his words ring of peace within — "when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; when we are slandered, we try to conciliate" (v. 12-13a).

Paul had learned that contentment does not depend upon **Other People**. While he rejoiced to have the help of others in his work (v. 10a), this had not always been so. Even the Philippians had "lacked opportunity" to help in the past (v. 10b), and others willfully forsook their brother (Acts 13.13; 2 Timothy 4.10,16a). Only a heart that had learned real contentment could say, "May it not be counted against them" (2 Timothy 4.16b).

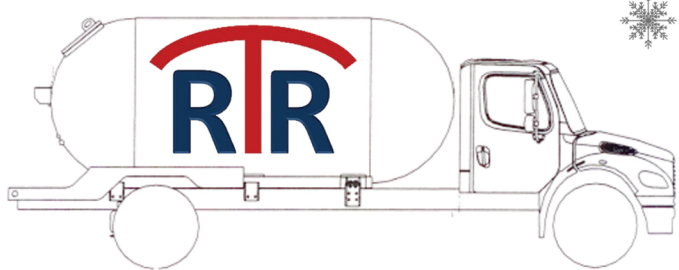
If these are flawed, then upon what foundation did Paul's contentment rest?

(We will continue these thoughts next week.)

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CIVIL SERVICE APPLICATION DEPUTY SHERIFF

Applications for the Civil Service Examination for the position of Summers County Deputy Sheriff will be available beginning **Wednesday, January 15, 2025.**

Application packages shall be received from and returned to Lynn Reed, Summers County Clerk, 120 Ballengee Street, Suite 106, Hinton, WV 25951. All persons interested in this position must make application by **Friday, February 14, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.**

Persons successfully completing the Physical Agility test will be notified of the time, date and location of the Civil Service Examination. All applicants certified or non-certified must take the physical agility test.

We urge all veterans and minorities to apply. Applicants must live within 5 miles of Summers County.

The Summers County Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Discrimination is prohibited due to race, creed, color, religion, sex, orientation or national origin. Applicants must be 18 years old and not more than 45 years old on the date of application. (15,22ja)

A.A. meetings in Hinton

HINTON W.Va. (Hinton News) - The Hinton Alcoholics Anonymous group holds two weekly meetings on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. and Wednesdays at noon, in the lower level of Ascension Episcopal Church. Both are open meetings.

The entrance to the meeting area is through the rear of the church, which is located at the corner of Temple Street and 5th Avenue

For more information, please call 304-660-7073 or 1-800-333-5051.

Carnegie Classics Series with Barbara Nissman Continues with More Beethoven, The Great!



L-R: Samuel Magill, Barbara Nissman, Russell Fallstad

LEWISBURG W.Va. (Hinton News) - Pianist Barbara Nissman returns to Carnegie Hall on Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m., for More Beethoven, the Great!, another exciting program in the Carnegie Classics series. Nissman will welcome two musician friends as her special guests: violinist Russell Fallstad, and cellist Samuel Magill who will join her in a performance of Beethoven's "Archduke" Trio for piano, violin and cello. Combining great music with informal chat, Barbara will also introduce us to some more popular piano works by the great master.

Who doesn't like Beethoven!! "Beethoven is the composer who always keeps me sane and focused," says Nissman. "Beethoven gives so much joy and strength to all who listen. A man

of courage, his music always inspires us to go forward."

Barbara, a member of the inaugural class of Steinway "Legends" chosen from over a century of Steinway Artists, and a recent inductee into the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame, has performed with major conductors and orchestras on nearly every continent. She recently returned to Amsterdam and appeared before a live audience of 10-12,000 and a television audience of 1.2 million to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Prinsengracht concerts that she helped initiate in 1982. These concerts have remained a popular summer tradition with audiences arriving on foot or in their boats to listen. Barbara was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Music degree from West Virginia

University in May 2024, and in 2020 received the Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020

Cellist Samuel Magill is the former Associate Principal Cello with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and a former member of both the Houston and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras. He has appeared as a soloist in concerts throughout France, Belgium, Japan and the U.S. and has recorded over 20 CDs. He now resides in Greensboro, NC.

Russell Fallstad has played his violin all over the world, in 20 countries and has given concerts in 40 states here in America. He is known locally as the owner of HeartStrings Academy where he teaches violin in a studio above Carnegie Hall and to students online. He has come out

of retirement to perform Beethoven with Barbara and Sam.

Carnegie Classics now in its third season is a three - part concert series hosted by Barbara Nissman designed to introduce classical music to new audiences, as well as inspiring and entertaining all music enthusiasts.

"What a joy it has been for me to return for another season of great music performed on the beautiful Steinway at our wonderful Carnegie Hall! With this series we are expanding the audience for classical music, and it is so gratifying for me to share with my community the music that I love so much. We all need more joy in our lives these days, and music has the power to transport us into a magical world."

Tickets are \$25/ adults. Thanks to the

Carnegie Cardinal Fund, Greenbrier County Students attend for free, but still must reserve a seat.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.carnegiehallwv.org, call 304.645-7917, or stop by 611 Church Street, Lewisburg, WV.

The Carnegie Classics Series is made possible with support from the James F.B. Peyton Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, with approval from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts. Additional funding is also provided by Eugene and Annie Jeffus.

Carnegie Hall WV is a nonprofit organization supported by individual contributions, grants, and fundraising efforts such as TOOT and The Carnegie Hall Gala.

Treasurer Pack Announces More Than \$1.6 Million in Unclaimed Property Funds Returned During December

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (Hinton News) - State Treasurer Larry Pack announced his Office's Unclaimed Property Division returned more than \$1.6 million worth of funds to individuals, businesses and other organizations during the month of December.

"As your new State

Treasurer, I am proud to return these lost funds to rightful owners," Treasurer Pack said. "This is the people's money, and we're committed to returning it to them."

The Unclaimed Property Division returned a total of \$1,652,465 paid out across 1,202 claims representing 3,715 indi-

vidual properties during the month of December.

A monthly record \$8.5 million in unclaimed property was returned in November. Since the fiscal year began on July 1, the Office's Unclaimed Property Division has returned more than \$22.2 million to rightful owners.

The Office currently has \$472.5 million worth of listings in its unclaimed property database.

Treasurer Pack is encouraging West Virginia Cash Now recipients to deposit their unclaimed property checks before the checks stale-date in March.

"While we're returning funds at the fastest pace in state history, we're also receiving new listings all the time," Treasurer Pack said. "I encourage everyone to keep checking our unclaimed property data base because you never know if there may be unclaimed property funds in your name."



Dear Recycle Lady

Dear Recycle Lady,
What is the difference between plastic wrap and cellophane? They look very much alike. **Puzzled**

Dear Puzzled,
Both plastic wrap and cellophane are transparent. However, they are two different types of film. According to www.luening-verpackt.de/en/verpackungen-fuer, cellophane is a natural product that is breathable, biodegradable and compostable (in a city composting facility only); while plastic wrap, also called plastic film, is a non-breathable, non-ecological product. Plastic wrap is made from polyethylene, which is made from crude oil and cellophane is made from renewable raw materials such as wood, cotton, hemp, or other plant sources. However, www.Sierraclub.org cautions that these natural products do not necessarily make cellophane the safest product to use as cellophane is also referred to as a bioplastic material that contains toxic chemicals. Plastic wrap and cellophane are both used to seal food in containers to keep them fresh. However, plastic is more often used as it is cheaper.

Dear Recycle Lady,
Kitty litter come in boxes that have plastic handles. Can these boxes be sent to the Recycling Center without removing the plastic handles? **Love My Cats**

Dear Love My Cats,
The plastic handles do not need to be removed before recycling the boxes with cardboard. Just be sure the boxes are clean and empty. Did you know kitty litter can be used when your car is stuck in snow? Just throw several handfuls under the tires to improve traction. Kitty litter can also be used on icy sidewalks and steps. One word of caution. Kitty litter will cling to shoes, so place a mat at the entryway to wipe them off.

Dear Recycle Lady,
I keep getting letters requesting donations for planting trees. Why are trees considered so important? **Nature Lover**

Dear Nature Lover,
Trees are one of our serious protectors against climate change. According to greatergood.com, trees absorb and store about 30% of our carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and they produce more than 20% of our oxygen. During a down pour of rainwater, trees act as a water filter. They slow

down the pouring water before it hits the ground, thus helping to reduce the amount of runoff that could include pesticides and fertilizers. Trees also help to limit soil erosion as soil is stabilized by the trees' roots, thus trees help prevent the soil from being washed away. The leaves of trees help protect our lungs by removing dangerous pollutants from the air and they provide habitat and shade for birds and wildlife. Trees are like natural air conditioning as their shade lowers the temperature outside our homes and can help cut the costs of air conditioning inside our homes. Old trees form a dynamic system called old-growth forests. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM.gov) defines old-growth forests according to tree size, the accumulations of large dead woody material, the number of canopy layers, the species composition and the ecosystem function. According to fs.usda.gov, "our mature and old-growth forests store massive amounts of carbon, offer biodiversity and wildlife habitat, and provide clean air and water, recreation opportunities and aesthetic beauty."

The BLM and the U.S. Forest Service are charged with inventorying mature and old-growth forests, analyzing reforestation opportunities and ensuring the resilience of America's forests.

Good News: Crustaceans act as nature's clean-up crew for our oceans. They eat not only all the algae that is along the ocean floor, but also dead plants and animals, keeping marine ecosystems balanced. The crabs have a taste for variety, but algae are a go-to snack!

Bad News: Over 200 million plastic toilet cleaner bottles end up in U.S. landfills each year. These bottles are typically non-recyclable due to their material and content residue. Thus, they contribute to plastic pollution that can take centuries to break down. Fortunately, several alternative choices are now available.

Have questions about recycling, or interesting information about recycling? Send questions or requests to Recyclelady7@gmail.com. Dear Recycle Lady is sponsored jointly by the Greenbrier Recycling Center and Greenworks Recycling.

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Gingerbread Day at War Ridge Free Will Baptist Church



The entire group of kids with their completed gingerbread houses back row (left to right) Jaydon Little, Austin Fox, Hailey Matney, Sydney Fox, Brooke Fox, Lavana Shamblen, Jayson Little, Brystal Little, Maggie Bennett, front row (left to right) Hunter Little, Jacob Brogan, Karsyn Fox, Dylan Little, and Kaiyden Little.

WAR RIDGE W.Va. (Hinton News) - On Friday, Dec. 20, 2024, the War Ridge Free Will Baptist Church held a "Gingerbread Day" for the kids in the Kids Club. The fun-filled day started at 10 a.m. While waiting for everyone to arrive, the kids played a game of "This or That." "This or That" is played with a ball of yarn and a bunch of sticks with two pictures on each stick. The first child draws a stick and decides which item they like best and asks who agrees with them. They then wrap the yarn around their back at the waist level and roll the yarn ball across the circle to someone who agrees with them and wrap the yarn around their back. The yarn continues to be rolled to the next person until everyone who agrees has wrapped the yarn around themselves. Another stick is drawn and the play continues. The kids basically tie themselves in knots over whether they like one item better than another.

Once everyone arrived the kids got untangled and pro-

ceeded on to the rest of the day's activities.

They started with a craft and decorated a small jar with tissue paper, a silhouetted Nativity and a tea light turning it into a lighted lantern. They then played "Rudolph's Nose Dive" while waiting for lunch to be served.

They enjoyed a lunch of walking tacos, chips and cookies and then played "Elf Sneeze" while waiting to start building and decorating their gingerbread houses.

Although some of the kids had no issues building their gingerbread houses that was not the case for everyone, several kids had structural problems with roofs sliding off and houses and chimney's falling down. One of the kids had a wall collapse and during salvage operations, the wall broke

into pieces. Not to be outwitted by a minor construction challenge she stated that it was an accident scene and all was well.

Once everyone had their gingerbread houses decorated they retired to the game room to play "Who Wrapped This," where they unwrapped a cling wrap ball filled with candy and small toys while wearing oven mitts. They had 30 seconds to try to unwrap some of the goodies before they had to pass it to the next person. The ball continued around the table until the final prize in the middle was claimed.

The rest of the afternoon was occupied with more games, including the Left/Right game where the story of the first Christmas was read while kids passed unopened gifts either to the

right or to the left depending on what the story said. The kids completed a snowman ornament craft and each child iced and decorated a half dozen sugar cookies. The kids were picked up at 4:30 by parents glad that someone else entertained them on their first day of Christmas break.

A special thank you goes out to volunteers Bonnie Galford, Crystal Matney, Penny Matney, and the "referee" Charles Osborne who all helped keep the person with this crazy idea somewhat sane.



Lavana Shamblen with her "accident scene" gingerbread house.

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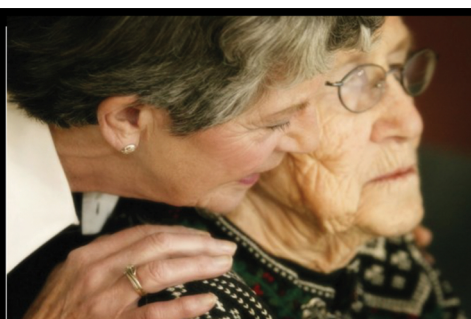
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