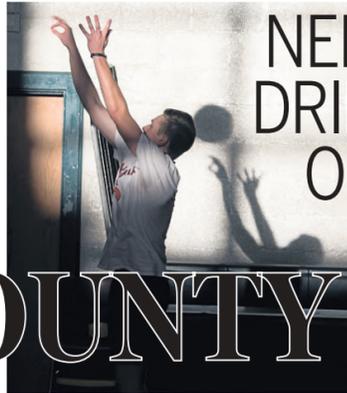


REVERSE CHRISTMAS PARADE SET FOR DEC. 12

» INSIDE, A8



NELSON HOOPS DRILLS IN HOPES OF A SEASON

» SPORTS, A7

NELSON COUNTY TIMES

Serving the community since 1874

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020

www.nelsoncountytimes.com

Vol. 143 - No. 49 \$1

PLANNING COMMISSION

Officials discuss zoning updates

Among proposals are changes to special use permit applications

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522

The Nelson County Planning Commission recently held an initial discussion on several recommended changes to the county's zoning ordinances.

One change that came before the planning commission during the Nov. 18 meeting would be to include in the special use section of each zoning district language stating, "Any other use which the planning director determines as consistent with the statement of intent for this district and is of the same general character of special uses in this district."

Director of Planning and Zoning Dylan Bishop said the update would provide officials with a "Band-Aid" fix, allowing applications to come before commissioners as a special use permit that are not specifically outlined in the ordinance. She also noted this was similar to an ordinance that was added during her previous employment in Amherst County's planning and zoning office.

"We have these scenarios, people will call and say, 'Here's what I want to do, here's my use,' and we try to fit it into something else and we just can't. We can't find a use that would fit what they're asking

SEE ZONING | A2

'Focus the energy'

Trinity Episcopal Church in Arrington welcomes its first full-time pastor



PHOTOS BY KENDALL WARNER/NELSON COUNTY TIMES

Rev. Donna Steckline poses for a portrait in Trinity Episcopal Church (pictured below) in Arrington on Nov. 25.

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522



"Blessed are the flexible for they won't be bent out of shape."

That's the motto of the Rev. Donna Steckline, the newest pastor to grace Trinity Episcopal Church — built in 1830 — and the first full-time pastor the Arrington church has seen, an official with the church said. It's a prospect the new pastor was excited about.

In her own experience, Steckline said years ago "the churches had to be connected to another church to be able to afford to have a pastor of their own and there was always a tension of some sort ... so I think it's wonderful that they can afford to do that number one, and I

SEE CHURCH | A2

Riggleman talks Bigfoot, QAnon, and conspiracies

Discusses writing new book on his fascination with how curiosity, sincerity of belief develops

BY AMY FRIEDENBERGER
The Roanoke Times

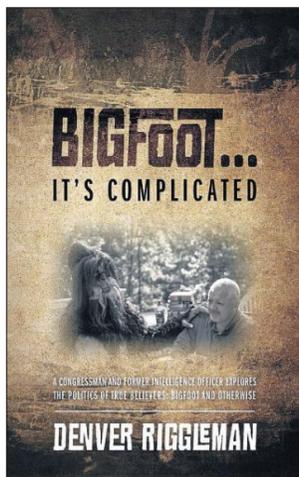
ROANOKE — Rep. Denver Riggleman wants to be absolutely clear: He does not believe Bigfoot exists.

And despite what you'll find on the internet if you search "Denver Riggleman Bigfoot," the 5th District Republican from Nelson County definitely is not into Bigfoot erotica.

But Riggleman is really into Bigfoot. He's gone on hunts for the creature. He recently watched a musical performance from a man dressed up in a big hairy suit play-

ing the saxophone — Saxsquatch. Riggleman, who considers himself somewhat of a "Bigfoot scholar," just released a book, "Bigfoot ... It's Complicated." The self-published book delves into his lifelong fascination with Bigfoot and the creature's believers and how their intense sincerity and curiosity can transform into conspiracies.

"I wrote this fun book, but then by the end it's not so funny," said Riggleman, an Air Force veteran with a background in counterterrorism as a contractor with the



SEE BIGFOOT | A3
Cover of Rep. Denver Riggleman's book, "Bigfoot...It's Complicated."

Afton-based equine rescue given accreditation status

Nonprofit becomes one of four groups in Va. with credentials

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522

A Nelson County-based equine rescue has achieved accreditation status for its thoroughbred aftercare, the organization recently announced in a news release.

Hope's Legacy Equine Rescue Inc., a nonprofit on Castle Rock Road in Afton, announced it's been accredited by the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance for a two-year term, becoming one of four TAA-accredited organizations in Virginia, according to a news release.

According to its website, TAA is the only accrediting body in thoroughbred aftercare.

"We are incredibly honored to be part of the TAA network," said Maya Proulx, executive director of Hope's Legacy Equine Rescue, in the release. "This is a culmination of a year's work, making sure we had all of the requirements in place. The entire process has made us a better organization overall."

There are about 80 accredited organizations in North America, according to the release.

Organizations must undergo a thorough application and inspection process prior to TAA accreditation with reviews of the organization's operations, education, horse

SEE RESCUE | A5

Online

Looking for more Nelson County news, sports, wedding engagements and more? Check us out online at:



Index

Calendar..... A9
Classifieds..... A10
Community A9
Crossword..... A9
Obituaries A5
Opinion..... A4
Sports A7

Contact us

Contact us at:
» Nelson County Times
101 Wyndale Drive
Lynchburg, VA 24501
» Phone: (434) 385-5440
» Email:
editor@nelsoncountytimes.com

Classifieds

» Get the latest on places to rent, employment, auto sales and other announcements.
Page A10



SOFTBALL PLAYER ENJOYS LAST GAME OF SEASON

» SPORTS, A7

IS THE 5TH DISTRICT RIPE FOR AN UPSET?

» INSIDE, A6

NELSON COUNTY TIMES

Serving the community since 1874

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2020

www.nelsoncountytimes.com

Vol. 143 - No. 44 \$1

WINTERGREEN

Wedding at resort results in quarantine

Multiple employees possibly exposed to COVID-19; some have tested positive for virus

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522

A recent wedding held at Wintergreen Resort has resulted in multiple employees being quarantined because of possible exposure to COVID-19 and some staff have tested positive, an official with the resort said Oct. 23.

Director of Marketing Lori Zaloga said Wintergreen hosted a wedding the weekend of Oct. 10 and 11. A few days afterward, she said, resort staff was notified by a member of the wedding party an attendee had tested positive for COVID-19.

SEE RESORT | A2

Nelson board OKs requests for CARES Act funding

Include community resource phone line for area residents

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522

The Nelson County Board of Supervisors has allocated \$16,255 of its remaining Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money for two requests brought before the board.

One request was made by the Nelson Community Wellness Alliance in the amount of \$11,255 that would establish a community resource phone line for residents and the other was for \$5,000 by the Nelson County Department of Social Services, according to county documents. Supervisors unanimously approved both funding requests during the Oct. 13 meeting.

SEE FUNDING | A2

A RIPE DAY FOR PICKING PUMPKINS



PHOTOS BY LEE LUTHER JR./FOR THE NELSON COUNTY TIMES



Carson Lucado (above) balances a large pumpkin after getting proper weight for pricing at Fitzgerald Farms' Pumpkin Patch in Nelson County at the intersection of U.S. 29 and Virginia 56. LEFT: The sun sets behind a scarecrow. FAR LEFT: Candace Fitzgerald weighs a pumpkin. BELOW: Pumpkins are spread out at Fitzgerald Farms.



Online

Looking for more Nelson County news, sports, wedding engagements and more? Check us out online at:



Index

- Calendar..... A8
- Classifieds..... A9
- Community A8
- Crossword..... A8
- Obituaries A5
- Opinion..... A4
- Sports A7

Contact us

Contact us at:
» Nelson County Times
101 Wyndale Drive
Lynchburg, VA 24501
» Phone: (434) 385-5440
» Email:
editor@nelsoncountytimes.com

Classifieds

» Get the latest on places to rent, employment, auto sales and other announcements. **Page A9**



THIS HOLIDAY
SEASON
SHOP LOCAL



By shopping local, you support local jobs, encourage community, and you're helping support your local economy.

This Holiday Season Please Shop Local.

NELSON COUNTY TIMES

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

NELSON COUNTY TIMES

Serving the community since 1874

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2020

www.nelsoncountytimes.com

Vol. 143 - No. 53 \$1

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Looking back on the top stories of 2020 in Nelson



1

KENDALL WARNER/NELSON COUNTY TIMES

Eleanor Amidon signs a banner celebrating the cancellation of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in Nelson County on July 24. Members of the Nelson County community had been fighting for six years for the cancellation of the pipeline and on July 5 they won the fight.

Local reporter reflects on the episodes that shaped life across the rural region

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522

1. 'We won the impossible fight': Nelsonians react to news of Atlantic Coast Pipeline's demise

Upon hearing news of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's cancellation in early July, Nelson County resident Richard Averitt, who was staunchly opposed to the project, said and his family went out to their porch and screamed in jubilation before popping bottles of champagne. It made total sense. Real people were at the center of a drawn-out fight over the multi-billion-dollar interstate natural-gas project.

There's no doubt this story represents one of the biggest in Nelson County in years because so many people, both against and for the project, were deeply affected.

2. Nelson County begins school year online; staffing levels affected

The decision from the Nelson County School Board to begin the fall 2020 semester in an entirely online format in response to the COVID-19 pandemic — and subsequent votes to extend that through the spring 2021 semester — was one of the more polarizing decisions to be made by local government this year. It was a decision that left some families in shock, scratching their heads as to how they would support their children's education while leaving others with a sense of comfort knowing loved ones may be far safer at home.

Later reports from school officials showed the online format resulted in far more failing grades across primary and secondary grade levels and



2

NELSON COUNTY TIMES FILE

Kindergarten teacher Carrie Bryant and third grade teacher Tracey Campaigne work together to troubleshoot technology issues before the start of remote learning at Rockfish River Elementary School in Nelson County on Aug. 24.

Editor's note

» The coronavirus pandemic had sweeping effects across Nelson County in 2020. Check out next week's Nelson County Times for an article on how COVID-19 disrupted life in the county this year.

students unable to meet academic benchmarks compared to previous years. Problems only were exacerbated by spotty access to internet throughout the county as surveys showed about 30% of families did not have access to reliable internet at home.

3. Nelson County's Confederate statue draws local pastor's cry for removal

In the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd while in police custody in May, calls for the removal of Confederate monuments in Virginia quickly followed. And in Nelson

County, a statue depicting a Confederate soldier located on the county's courthouse grounds soon would find itself in the spotlight as well when Rev. James Rose requested the Nelson Board of Supervisors remove and relocate the monument.

Rose's request to the board would spark passionate discussion and subsequent comments to the board of supervisors during other meetings from both sides of the issue. As a reporter for a local newspaper, my primary goal is to generate discussion among the community on issues that matter, giving readers the necessary, factual and unbiased information they need to reach their own conclusions. While I hope I achieve that goal to some degree with every story I write, no other story in my opinion this year has generated this level of community discussion.

SEE REVIEW | A2

Report: County's jail costs increase

Expenditures rose 67% for Charlottesville facility since turn of the decade

BY NICK CROPPER
ncropper@newsadvance.com
(434) 385-5522

A recent report shows Nelson County is picking up more of the tab when it comes to the region's shared jail costs resulting from decade-long increases in incarcerations of local offenders and falling numbers in surrounding localities.

The report compiled by Neal Goodloe, Criminal Justice Planner with the Jefferson Area Community Criminal Justice Board, analyzes from 2010 to 2019 crime trends and statistics in Nelson County contributing to the county's portion of bed day expenditures at the Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail.

Nelson's share of total bed day expenditures at ACRJ rose 67% since the turn of the decade, but only represents about 14% of the jail's bed days, or more than double what it was in 2010. As the county's expenditures rose, by comparison, Charlottesville's dropped by 19% since 2010.

"These inadvertently have cost implications for a jurisdiction because ... your cost for participation in the regional jail authority is in many ways predicated on the number of beds your inmates expend," Goodloe said.

SEE REPORT | A3

Law targets driving while holding phone

State rule enters into force Jan. 1; first fine set at \$125

BY AMY FRIEDENBERGER
The Roanoke Times

ROANOKE — Put your phone down and focus on driving. Starting Jan. 1, that will be the law in Virginia.

The law will prohibit people from holding a handheld communications device while driving. It's a primary offense, which means police can pull a driver over for that alone.

First-time offenders face a fine of \$125, and additional offenses are a fine of \$250.

"There is a lot of agreement that this is something that will significantly improve traffic safety across the state," Roanoke County Police Chief Howard Hall said. "Distracted driving is a significant factor to crashes."

Virginia law already prohibits texting and emailing while driving, but

SEE DRIVING | A3

Online

Looking for more Nelson County news, sports, wedding engagements and more? Check us out online at:



Index

Calendar..... A9
Classifieds..... A10
Community..... A9
Crossword..... A9
Obituaries..... A5
Opinion..... A4

Contact us

Contact us at:
» Nelson County Times
101 Wyndale Drive
Lynchburg, VA 24501
» Phone: (434) 385-5440
» Email: editor@nelsoncountytimes.com

Classifieds

» Get the latest on places to rent, employment, auto sales and other announcements. Page A10

