

# The Charlotte Gazette

DEVOTED TO THE BEST INTERESTS OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY - FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS

50 cents

Vol. 148 - Number 19

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Drakes Branch, Virginia

## Surge in cases continues

By Alexa Massey  
The Charlotte Gazette

COVID-19 data was nothing short of jaw-dropping this week, with humongous jumps in virus numbers reported both locally and statewide, but Piedmont Health District Director Dr. H. Robert Nash warns these latest numbers may be a bit misleading.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) this week was reporting an eye-widening 214 new coronavirus cases out of Prince Edward County between last Monday, Jan. 11, and this Monday, Jan. 18.

The other counties in the health district saw similar leaps. On Monday, Charlotte County was up 97 cases.

Lunenburg rose 54 cases, and Buckingham was listed as having seen 127 new cases in the week. Cumberland was up 36 cases.

And although the state has been reporting record highs in COVID-19 cases each week for over a month now, numbers skyrocketed Sunday, Jan. 17, to reflect a staggering reported case

record for the day at 9,914 reported cases for Virginia.

The numbers shocked many across the commonwealth. Nash offered an explanation on Monday that may clarify the sudden surges.

According to Nash, all COVID-19 testing sites across the state send their available test results elec-

tronically to the health department's central office in Richmond, at which point health district officials must investigate each positive case assigned to the district to verify that those cases are indeed from the localities they are assigned to.

Nash said the health

(See SURGE, Page 10)

## Missing senior citizen found by pharmacist

The location of one of the community's beloved senior citizens brought relief to many Tuesday, Jan. 19 as Richard L. Bankston was found after being missing overnight.

The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office reported Tuesday morning that Richard L. Bankston, the 74-year-old white male who was reported missing Monday evening, had been found.

Bankston was found in a Walgreens store in Charlotte, North Carolina. According to the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, Bankston had driven to



Richard L. Bankston

North Carolina by himself. Bankston was talking to a pharmacist in the Walgreens who alerted local authorities. He was located at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan.

19 Bankston was born and grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina. He was the subject of a statewide Senior Alert from the Virginia State Police Monday evening after he went missing Monday afternoon. Authorities said he may have been driving a gold Toyota Camry.

Bankston is well known in Charlotte County as former coach and athletic director at Randolph-Henry High School.

The Facebook post from the Sheriff's Office thanked the citizens for their help.

## Schools reopen despite COVID rise

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

Despite a surge of 97 COVID-19 cases in one week, Charlotte County Public Schools (CCPS) reopened its doors to students Tuesday, Jan. 19 for a restart of hybrid in-person learning.

CCPS Superintendent Robbie Mason said staffing remains a critical issue for the school system. He said while school administration recognizes that community COVID numbers are increasing, data has shown that schools have been effective in mitigating COVID risk through continued mask-wearing, social distancing, and proper disinfecting in the schools.

"Our hybrid instructional model was very effective in keeping students and staff healthy in the fall and we believe that continuing those practices will allow us to do the same right now," Mason said, "We must have enough

(See SCHOOLS, Page 2)

## Updated status of R-H sports

By Titus Mohler  
The Charlotte Gazette

The landscape of area high school sports, which has been in a constant state of flux since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, has shifted once again with the announcement last week that Buckingham County High School would not be participating in re-scheduled fall sports for the 2020-21 school year.

However, hope remains for Randolph-Henry High School (R-H).

According to the Virginia High School League's condensed 2020-21 fall sports schedule, football

(See STATUS, Page 2)

## Live video coming to the board room

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

Starting in February, the Charlotte County Administration office is making it even easier for citizens to keep abreast of county business.

According to County Administrator Dan Witt, the plan is to have all the details worked out by the February 8 board of supervisors meeting to allow

citizens to see the entire board room and hear the live meetings via a video feed.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens have been able to access the live BOS meetings via Zoom from their phone or audio on their computer.

"Now, they will also have a live video stream," Witt said.

Board Chairman Gary Walker said he hopes the

new technology will enable more citizens to feel like they are a part of the decision-making process.

"Some folks can come to day meetings, and some can come to night meetings, but this should allow more to see and hear the way decisions are made," Walker said. "Maybe there will be a bit more decorum if people know that others can see and hear the way they act."

## Solar farm still destined for Randolph

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

A Reston Virginia solar company still has its eyes on Randolph as a location for one of its solar facilities.

SolUnesco CEO Francis Hodson confirmed Monday the company continues to advance Randolph Solar's development, but said there was no significant update on the project at this time.

County administration officials said plans seem to

be in the works as well.

"The county has not yet received an application for the Randolph Solar project," Assistant County Administrator Monica Elder said. "However, we understand that SolUnesco still plans to submit an application for the project."

Last summer, the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors (BOS) voted 6 to 1 to approve a zoning amendment change that will allow for more density

in the construction of utility-scale solar farms in a five-mile radius.

Before that change, the county's zoning ordinance limited utility-scale solar density to 3% in any given five-mile radius.

SolUnesco's expressed interest in constructing a utility-scale solar facility exceeded that previous density in the Randolph area.

With the new zoning

(See SOLAR, Page 10)

## Donation will help save community building

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

The Bacon District Volunteer Fire Department received a recent gift that will help them retain the old firehouse to be used for community events.

The Charlotte County Christmas Parents most recently used the building during its toy distribution day in December.

Morgan Lumber Company, Inc. in Red Oak, made a donation to the Bacon District Volunteer Fire Department to fund the renovation of the original firehouse located on Route 15 North in Wylliesburg.

The fire department outgrew the old building several years ago, and with the added expenses of maintaining a vol-

unteer-based fire department, they have been unable to make the necessary upgrades to this building.

"My father, Billy Morgan, was one of the founding members of the fire department and helped fund the original firehouse," said the owner of Morgan Lumber Company, Ken Morgan. "I made a donation in memory of him. I see a strong need in the community for a building which is used for community events and has all the amenities needed to provide the citizens a building of which they can be proud of."

According to Morgan, the contribution will cover remodeling all the building's bathrooms with upgrades to make them handicap accessible. A shower will be added to allow

(See DONATION, Page 2)

Lancers climb Big South standings  
Page 6

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# SURGE: Phase 1b includes adults 65+

FROM PAGE ONE

department often has to transfer many of these positive cases to the appropriate district or county, as they sometimes come in mislabeled.

“A lot of folks don’t know the difference between Prince Edward, Prince William and Prince George,” he provided as an example.

Nash said that as of Friday morning, Jan. 15, Richmond began to auto-populate case data with its electronic positive test results to be immediately posted online before being screened at the county or district level, by-passing much of the identifying data that goes along with those numbers.

Nash said numbers reported over the weekend may be “erroneously elevated” due to not yet being screened by the local epidemiology team and then vetted and appropriately accepted in their respective district/counties or transferred over the

county in which they do belong.

“A good number of those cases could belong to other districts and other counties,” he explained.

Nash said it’s not uncommon to see dips in data graphs where it is apparent some case numbers after review have been removed from a county and transferred to the appropriate locality.

He said he suspects a number of positive cases will be removed in the coming week after numbers have been vetted.

Nash added as the same phenomenon may be going on with case records, it’s important that residents take the latest figures with a grain of salt.

“It appears as though we’re in an increase. It appears as though we’re in a surge. The actual validity of the magnitude of the numbers, we really have to take it with a grain of salt right now, because we need to verify those numbers. They’ve

not been reviewed on a case-by-case basis right now. The trends? We can believe in the trends. I mean, there are increasing numbers of cases.”

With the start of Phase 1b of vaccinations only a day away, Nash said Monday the health department was eager to get going, providing some further insight as to how the process is evolving.

Nash said that on Tuesday the health district will begin implementing its POD (point of distribution) vaccine clinics.

The health district, he said, will be running closed PODs in which appointments are made for specific individuals who have already filled out their paperwork and had their medical history reviewed to come in and receive their first dose of the vaccine.

Nash said right now the health district is completely restricted to performing the vaccinations at the health department locations, which is mostly the

result of strict vaccine handling requirements.

He said vaccinators have only six hours after thawing the vials of vaccine to use all 10 doses held within each vial. Therefore, the health department is scheduling its clinics in blocks of 10 individuals. The department does two clinics at a time for a total of 20 people, as only two nurses on hand can dispense the vaccine. Twenty vaccines are distributed in the morning and 20 in the afternoon.

Nash highlighted the health department unfortunately is currently very limited by the number of providers who can administer the vaccine.

However, he said the department is developing plans to dramatically quicken the pace. According to Nash, the health department can contract with up to 25 outside doctor’s offices and independent pharmacies authorized to administer the vaccine, which the department can distribute to them

directly.

He said the health department currently has four completed contract agreements and 15 pending for distribution partners, a good number of which will be coming on board within the next week or two.

Additionally, Nash said Longwood student health and nursing faculty have also completed their training to serve as community partners authorized for the administration of the vaccine, and officials are diligently working with Longwood to get their 70 student nurses trained and certified to administer doses.

He added this will also help alleviate a backup currently being experienced in vaccine scheduling.

Nash said that on Wednesday United States Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar instructed Phase 1b of vaccine distribution had to be expanded to include those 65-and-over rather than the previously-indicated 75-and-over rule.

Nash said many members of that large 65-and-over group call the health

department asking to arrange for a vaccination only to be told clinics are fully booked through March.

He said with the addition of help from Longwood and those 19-25 credentialed distribution sites, appointments should begin to open up quickly.

He added nursing students will be very helpful in the future when a drive-thru POD is able to be implemented.

“At that point we’ll probably be vaccinating over 1,000 (people) a day,” he said.

Nash said it’s important to remember the health department’s understanding of the virus is still growing, and directives should be expected to change.

He said while he understands everyone’s eager to receive their vaccine doses, it may take a few more weeks to get the community saturated with providers.

He added while officials don’t know how long immunity will last following inoculation, it will take seven to eight weeks before someone who has received both doses reaches clinical immunity.

# SOLAR: Company CEO confirms plans to continue

FROM PAGE ONE

change, the BOS may approve a denser area and establish a maximum density permitted for utility-scale solar energy farms. This change does not approve the Randolph area solar farm itself.

SolUnesco must apply for various permits and public hear-

ings before the BOS can vote on the project’s approval.

According to details listed for the Randolph Solar project, there would be 10,763 total acres under site control, with 4,900 acres buildable.

SolUnesco currently has a conditional use permit for the Moody Creek Solar project located in the county.

The Moody Creek Solar project calls for the construction of a 150-megawatt utility-scale solar facility (equivalent to 25,000 homes worth of energy). The proposed site, owned by Devin Logging Company/John A. Devin, Jr. and Armistead Tune Devin, is located on Route 47, Crafton’s Gate Highway, approximately 1.4 miles east of the traffic light at the intersection of Highway 360/15 and Route 47.

The Moody Creek project is set to be constructed on property that is approximately 1,655 acres in size.

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50 cents

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Drakes Branch, Virginia



Photo by Crystal Vandegrift

## Spring arrives

The signs of spring were a welcome sight in Charlotte County this past weekend after last month's ice storm that left many without power for close to two weeks. The Virginia Department of Transportation is continuing to work throughout the county on tree and debris removal from the February storm.

## Halifax gets grant as Charlotte waits

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

Neighboring Halifax County was recently awarded \$65,000 in grant funding to construct broadband in its county.

Halifax County and EMPOWER Broadband will connect 25 serviceable units to a regional fiber network using portions of \$20.1 million

in Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) grants to improve broadband infrastructure in 17 localities.

The VATI extends broadband service to currently unserved areas.

EMPOWER Broadband, Mecklenburg Electric and Charlotte were recently part of a joint effort to

(See **BROADBAND**, Page 2)



## Homecoming Queen and King

Chastity Dunaway and Justen Staten were chosen as Randolph-Henry High School's Homecoming Queen and King during the school's homecoming game Saturday, March 20. The Statesmen defeated the Cumberland Dukes 42-0.

## R-H to hold graduation

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

The Randolph-Henry High School (R-H) Class of 2021 will get to take part in a graduation ceremony this spring thanks to Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam's announcement Wednesday, March 17, that schools may safely hold in-person graduation.

The announcement also extends to commencement ceremonies at colleges and universities.

The state now recommends graduation ceremonies held outdoors can be capped at 5,000 people or 30% of

the venue capacity, whichever figure is less.

Graduation and commencement ceremonies held indoors may have up to 500 people in attendance or 30% of venue capacity, whichever is less.

Officials advise attendees at such events must wear face masks and follow other safety guidelines to ensure proper social distancing.

"Although our ceremony will be different than in years past, we are committed to making it a special time for the Class of 2021," R-H

(See **R-H**, Page 2)



The Town of Keysville is looking to expand the county's enterprise zone to include the downtown area.

## Downtown incentives could fill shops

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

In an effort to bring more businesses to fill vacant buildings in downtown Keysville, the town council is looking to expand the county's enterprise zone to include the downtown area.

According to Keysville Vice Mayor George Sandridge, members voted to ask county officials to expand its enterprise zone at the March Town Council meeting.

"By offering this economic development incentive in the downtown portion of Keysville, Town

Council believes that it can help attract businesses to fill vacancies," Sandridge said. "From the Keysville Post Office to Railroad Avenue, there are currently five vacant storefronts along Main Street, and unfortunately, the start-up costs associated with operating a business are oftentimes prohibited for certain businesses and or investors."

Sandridge said the local incentives and state grants that come with being an enterprise zone would help make the district more appealing.

(See **INCENTIVES**, Page 2)

## Voting precinct to be moved again

By Crystal Vandegrift  
The Charlotte Gazette

Once again, the Charlotte County Electoral Board is on the hunt for a new location for the Bacon/Saxe District voting precinct after learning the current location is no longer an option.

According to Interim General Registrar Eric Goode, Shiloh Baptist Church informed the board the church would no longer be available

for use as a polling place.

Goode did not elaborate as to why the church had rescinded its offer.

Shiloh Baptist Church was first used as the Bacon/Saxe voting precinct in November 2020 after the electoral board spent months searching for a new location.

The relocation of the precinct to Shiloh Baptist Church took months

(See **PRECINCT**, Page 2)

Statesmen shut out the Dukes 42-0

Page 5

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## R-H: 'There are some significant restrictions in place'

FROM PAGE ONE

Principal Erin Davis said. "There are some significant restrictions in place that will force us to think creatively about our ceremony."

Davis said the school

would make every effort to hold the graduation ceremony outdoors in order to maximize the number of guests who may attend.

"If the weather forces our ceremony indoors, we will need

to operate at an even smaller capacity," Davis said. "Regardless of the venue, it is our intention to live stream and record the event for those unable to attend. Once we receive a confirmation on the total

number of guests we can accommodate safely in our facilities, our senior families will receive a letter with more detailed information related to our ceremony this year."

R-H Senior Mor-

gan Lawson said she is grateful that she will be able to have an actual graduation and walk across the stage at the end of the school year.

"This year has been very tough, but to be able to have a gradua-

tion has made things so much better," Lawson said. "I was really worried that it would have to be virtual, but thankfully it was not. I am so excited to finally walk across the stage and get my diploma."

## BROADBAND: Engineering plan expected next month

FROM PAGE ONE

bring fiber and a hotspot to the Bacon District Volunteer Fire Station using a \$72,000 grant.

County Administrator Dan Witt said some citizens who are close to the fire department had been offered EMPOWER Broadband, and others whose homes in which the fiber line may pass by can ask to be connected. "Empower has also installed and offered connectivity to citizens along their route south of Wylliesburg," Witt said.

Charlotte County officials are currently working with RiverStreet Network on a county-wide broadband

engineering plan, that is expected to be presented at the April Board of Supervisors meeting.

The broadband fiber to the home network engineering plan comes with a \$40,000 price tag to the county.

Administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), VATI provides targeted financial assistance to extend broadband service to unserved areas.

This is the second round of funding for the VATI 2021 program year, and in total, more than \$49.8 million has been awarded for 28 localities, connecting more than 25,000 households and businesses.

## INCENTIVES: Can help attract businesses to fill vacancies

FROM PAGE ONE

The Virginia Enterprise Zone (VEZ) program is a partnership between state and local government that encourages job creation and private investment. VEZ accomplishes this by designating enterprise zones throughout the state and providing two grant-based incentives, the Job Creation Grant (JCG) and the Real Property Investment Grant (RPIG), to

qualified investors and job creators within those zones, while the locality provides local incentives.

Currently, the county has an enterprise zone in partnership with Lunenburg and Prince Edward counties.

Charlotte County's portion of the enterprise zone is contained in the Heartland Park located along Highway 360 in Keysville.

According to County Administrator Dan

Witt, the county can have two additional non-contiguous portions of an enterprise zone, and the town could add its own incentives within that zone.

According to Sandbridge, council is expected to view the expansion map, discuss local incentives and take a vote at its April meeting.

The enterprise zone expansion will then need to be voted on by the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors.

## PRECINCT: Church no longer an option

FROM PAGE ONE

to finalize after several meetings between both the electoral board and board of supervisors in 2020.

The relocation of the precinct gained attention during a July 2019 meeting of the Charlotte County Electoral Board when members were made aware of issues at the Southhall Community Building, the original Bacon/Saxe voting precinct.

According to former General Registrar Nan Lambert, park-

ing space was one issue that was brought up about the community building, as well as entrance ramps and wood heat that is needed to heat the building.

During a March 2020 Board of Supervisors, meeting, members voted 6 to 1 to approve the relocation of the Bacon/ Saxe District polling place from Southhall Community Building to New Hope Methodist Church.

Just a week after that vote, New Hope Methodist Church rescinded its offer to use the building.



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Drakes Branch, Virginia



The Heartland Business Park in Keysville is hopeful a grant will help fund wells to bring new businesses to Charlotte County.

## Business park needs H2O to grow

By Crystal Vandegriff  
The Charlotte Gazette

The Heartland Business Park is losing out on economic development opportunities due to the lack of adequate water availability.

Virginia's Heartland Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (VHRIFA) has recently submitted a grant application for funding for a preliminary engineer report for onsite wells at the Heartland Park in Keysville to add water to the park's capacity.

The grant would be for \$40,000 through the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission.

According to the VHRI-

FA, with a current capacity of 590,000 gallons per day, the Town of Keysville, which supplies water to the Heartland Park, cannot meet the water needs of potential businesses with substantial water requirements. However, installing onsite wells at the property has been identified as an economically feasible means of addressing additional water capacity needs.

VHRIFA is hopeful additional grants will help fund the construction of the wells.

"We feel that water system enhancements at the Heartland Park are needed to help improve the marketability of the Heartland Park

and bring new businesses to Charlotte County and the region," Charlotte County Board of Supervisors (BOS) Chairman Gary Walker said.

During the Monday, July 12, meeting of the BOS, County Administrator, Dan Witt told the supervisors the Heartland Park Board had been approached numerous times about projects and companies looking to locate in the industrial park.

The lack of infrastructure was a deterrent.

"Because of the amount of water that Keysville can treat and also sewer treatment, we've missed out on those opportunities," Witt said.

## BOS to keep TCCAA

By Crystal Vandegriff  
The Charlotte Gazette

Three months ago, the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors (BOS) elected to move away from one community services agency to another, but now that may not be possible.

In April, County Administrator Dan Witt said the BOS wanted to move away from Tri-County Community Action Agency (TCCAA) and rejoin with STEPS to have needed services provided to its citizens.

TCCAA serves low-income families in Halifax, Mecklenburg, and Charlotte counties and has requested just over \$18,000 in funding for its services.

STEPS serves South Central Virginia providing community services such as housing, education, workforce, and economic development.

Currently, STEPS operates the Head Start Program in Charlotte County.

Charlotte County was a part of STEPS at one time but left in the early 2000s to join TCCAA.

Witt said the county is required to provide certain services to its citizens, and the \$18,000 is in the budget and will remain in the budget. It is just a matter of who will receive the funds.

During the April 27 meeting of the BOS, President and CEO Petrina Carter of TCCAA addressed the board,

(See TCCAA, Page 2)

## Cases on the rise again

By Alexa Massey  
The Charlotte Gazette

There are still no confirmed cases of the Delta variant in the Piedmont Health District, but COVID-19 cases are on the rise locally and across the state.

After weeks on the downtrend, coronavirus cases began to trend upwards at the beginning of the month, nationally and locally.

From Monday, July 12, to Monday, July 19, Charlotte County saw eight new cases of COVID-19. Lunenburg County saw two new cases of the virus, Prince Edward County saw three new cases, Buckingham County saw no new cases and Cumberland County saw one new case.

The state has seen large jumps in its number of cases in the last week. On July 19, the commonwealth's COVID-19 cases, per the Virginia Department of Health, was 275, up from last week's figure of 183.

The seven-day moving average of COVID-19 cases in Virginia is also on the rise from 237 last week to 376 this week.

Acting Piedmont Health District Director Dr. Sulo Adekoya said Monday, July 19, this increase in case numbers could likely be attributed to the Fourth of July holiday, adding officials typically see a temporary uptick in cases after holidays and other travel-heavy events.

Adekoya said the relaxing of social distancing and masking requirements may also play a role in the increase in cases.

(See CASES, Page 2)

## Message to commission: Keep towns, counties together

By Roger Watson  
The Charlotte Gazette

Longwood University in Farmville was the first stop of a listening tour for Virginia's newly formed Redistricting Commission as the group began a series of public hearings to hear from voters before beginning to redraw the commonwealth's legislative boundaries.

The meeting, held at Longwood's Jarmin Hall,

gave the panel of state delegates, state senators and citizens appointed to the committee an opportunity to hear from citizens throughout the commonwealth about how they feel the state's legislative boundaries should be changed.

While the majority of the eight citizens who spoke during the meeting that lasted just over a half hour came from Lynchburg to urge the unification of legislative

districts in the city, Lunenburg County Supervisor Mike Hankins also asked the board to consider keeping counties and cities whole.

Hankins said the county is divided between two legislative districts, the 61st and the 75th. He said every polling place is a split polling place with voters from both districts voting at the same polling location.

(See KEEP, Page 3)

## Town's efforts recognized

On Wednesday, July 14, Delegate James Edmunds presented a resolution to the Town of Drakes

Branch commending the town for its efforts for building a new building after the damage to the town's current building, due to Tropical Storm Michael.

In addition, Edmunds pre-

sented a Virginia State Flag to the Drakes Branch Fire Department which had been flown over the State Capital at Richmond.

This flag and resolution will be displayed at the new building.

Those present during the presentation were Chief Kenny Tharpe, Town Council

Member and Treasurer of the Fire Department Noah Davis, Town Clerk Mary Sands, Chairman of the Charlotte County Industrial Development Authority Ralph Moore, Board of Supervisors member Garland Hamlett Jr., Edmunds, Fire Department President Charlie Hancock, and Vice Mayor Phillip Jackson.



Delegate James Edmunds presents a state flag to Drakes Branch officials.

Poll results - Would you sell your land to a solar farm? - Page 4

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## CASES: Could be attributed to July 4 holiday

### FROM PAGE ONE

While most of the area's COVID-19 cases occur in individuals who are unvaccinated, Adekoya said Monday the health district does see instances in which vaccinated residents contract COVID-19. She added cases among vaccinated citizens are typically seen most often in instances in which individuals travel to an area with low vaccination rates, and even then, vaccinated residents tend to show very mild symptoms. So far, no vaccinated residents have needed to be hospitalized as a result of contracting the virus.

Although the highly transmissible Delta variant of the virus has not yet been spotted in the Piedmont Health District, 59 cases have

been identified in the Central region of the commonwealth.

Adekoya emphasized residents, especially unvaccinated individuals, have a much higher chance of contracting the Delta variant. Currently, all COVID-19 vaccines offer protection against this new variant.

Adekoya warned individuals who venture to a place with a low vaccination rate are at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19, adding individuals should make efforts to protect their health by still masking up in such areas and knowing the infection rate of places they plan to travel to.

And while Virginia's COVID-19 infection rate is still low compared to other states, officials hope to keep those

figures from trending any further upward by continuing to encourage vaccination.

Vaccination rates in the Piedmont Health District were up in most cases by more than a percentage point this week compared to the week prior, a statistic Adekoya said officials find encouraging.

The percentage of fully vaccinated residents as of July 19 for each county are as follows:

Charlotte - 38.6%  
Lunenburg - 39.6%  
Prince Edward - 34.5%

Buckingham - 39.3%  
Cumberland - 37.5%

Adekoya noted pharmacies and vaccination clinics in the health district continue to offer opportunities to get vaccinated mornings, evenings and weekend hours.

## TCCAA: Discussed was the need for better communication

### FROM PAGE ONE

telling them her agency was not made aware of possible cuts.

"We were left out of the budget, and a vote was taken for redesignation of the county," Carter said. "That was made without anyone contacting us prior to there being a vote."

Carter further said her agency is always made aware of any issues that may arise in a county, but none have been presented to her concerning Charlotte County.

"We did not hear anything from our board representative, and Board of Supervisors member or the county administrator," Carter said. "We are seeking transparency on the budget and would like to have had a negotiation if we were going to be cut."

According to Witt, he met with Carter in June to discuss concerns over services provided to the county.

"Discussed was the need for better communication, availability for services, and more of an accessible presence in Charlotte County," Witt said.

Witt said after receiving a letter from TCCAA stating they were not willing to sever ties with the county, he contacted the Department of Social Services and the State Department and learned that without a mutual separation, it would be challenging for the county to make the separation.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was suggested for a year outlining the county's expectations and the services that need to be provided within the county.

In addition, Witt also requested Carter provide written monthly reports showing who was served and what work was done within the county.

During the Monday, July 12, meeting of the BOS, Carter addressed the board.

"In coming up with the MOA, we are here, so we are clear on what you all want, and you are clear on what we can provide." Carter said. "Often in doing what we do, the rate of

success is not always fast and easy. Often times families have many different issues going on."

Carter further told the board TCCAA was committed to the county and was aware of the needs in the community.

"We know one thing is that when people have a place to live, it helps cure some of the other issues they may be facing," Carter said. "If you're working with humans and you think you can lay out one plan and it will work for everyone, you are wrong."

Supervisor Kay Pierantoni inquired why the TCCAA office building was still closed to clients sighting concerns for underserved citizens.

"I do have a problem with that," Pierantoni said.

Carter told Pierantoni the building would be open this week for clients. She said no person went unserved during the COVID-19 closure as they could call the office or access needed services online.

"Poor and underserved people often don't have a computer, so not being open to the public is very concerning," Pierantoni said. "They need the door open."



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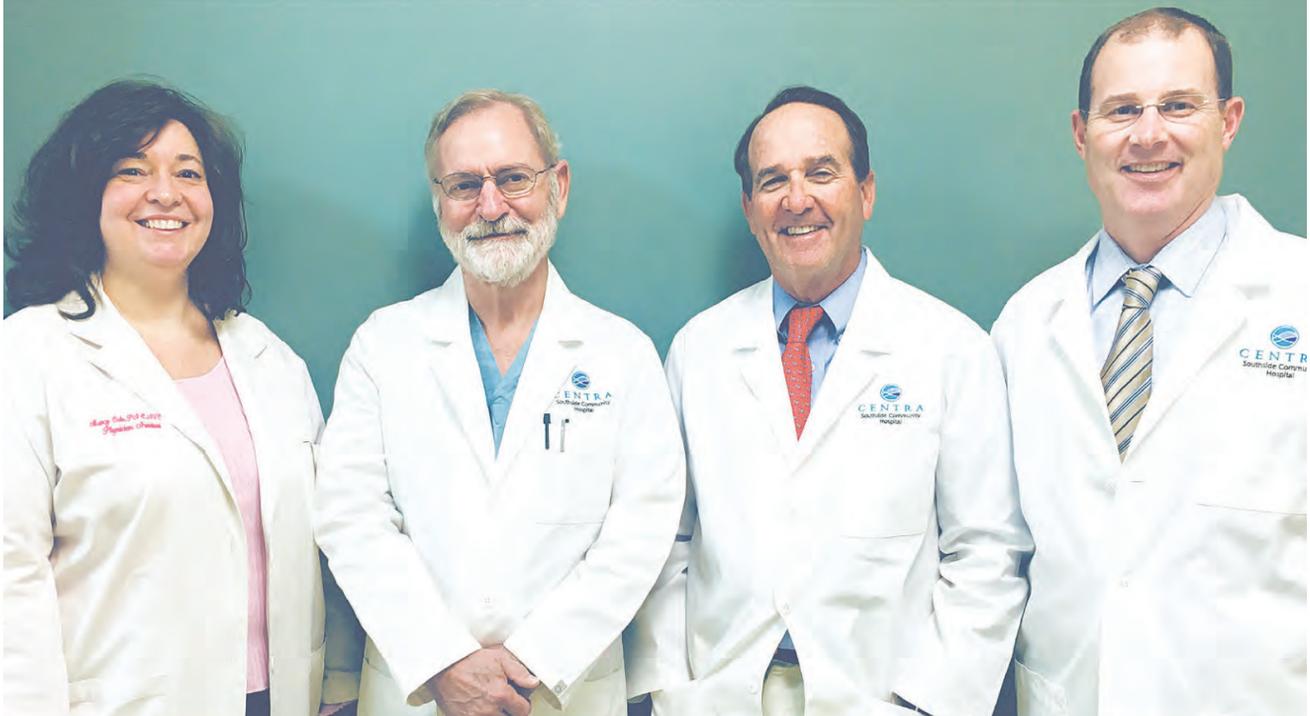
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