

# The Farmville Herald

Honor for the past, help for the present, hope for the future

Farmville, Virginia

Friday, March 3, 2023

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Benjamin Beiler, left, looks on as other members of the Toga Volunteer Fire Department make stew for an upcoming fundraiser.

## Amish firefighters help community

BY JENNIFER HOLTON  
*The Farmville Herald*

**BUCKINGHAM**

It's a crisp and clear day in Toga, and Benjamin Beiler just got word about a fire in Buckingham County. Beiler lives only about a half a mile from the fire house, but time is of the essence. He's got to get there quickly, so he hops on his scooter, outfitted with a light and a siren, and kick-starts the ground to be on his way.

It's not battery-operated or gas-fueled. Beiler is Amish, and good ol' fashioned foot power is his mode of transportation.

"Obviously having an emergency flasher makes it like a fire truck which is just fun," Beiler says with a laugh.

Beiler is one of several men in Buckingham's Amish community who volunteer their way.

The scooter has no motor.

See **HELP**, Page **A4**

## Rezoning request rejected

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
*The Farmville Herald*

**NEW CANTON**

Olympia Moore wants to put a business on property she owns in New Canton, to help the community grow. It might be a restaurant, a grocery store or something similar. She just doesn't know yet, because there's no buyer or proposed tenant in place. She wants the property rezoned, however, to help with that. That may take a bit longer to

happen. After five months and four trips before the planning commission, the group rejected her request in their Monday, Feb. 27 meeting.

The vote was actually deadlocked at 4-4, despite the fact nobody actually said they were against the idea. The argument, instead, was the same one as in previous times when

See **REJECTED**, Page **A5**

## Partnership examines how to use empty buildings

BY RACHEL AUSTIN  
*The Farmville Herald*

**FARMVILLE**

Something new is coming to Main Street, but first, the Farmville Downtown Partnership is taking time to figure out what that is.

Currently, two buildings on Main Street are sitting empty but full of potential. Located at 109 and 111 North Main Street, one is currently on the market

with the other unusable. The Farmville Downtown Partnership is hosting a study to see how viable these buildings are and how they can be best utilized on Main Street.

### WHAT IS THE STUDY?

The study will see what

See **BUILDINGS**, Page **A3**

# Planning board suggests alternate mining plan

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
*The Farmville Herald*

**BUCKINGHAM**

Instead of focusing on metallic mining, why not just ban the chemicals involved in the process? That was the question raised during Monday's meeting of the Buckingham County Planning Commission.

In February, Buckingham supervisors put together a proposal to eliminate metallic mining as an allowed land use across the county. But that's not something supervisors can just approve. First, it has to go before the planning commission. Last week, the commission asked for help in defining things like mining and getting more detail about what's actually involved in the process.

The reason is they don't want to accidentally ban or harm the other types of mining currently happening in the area. The biggest of those companies is the Kyanite Mining Corporation, whose president urged the commission Monday to proceed with caution.

My company, as many of you know, has been based and has had 100% of its operations and employees in Buckingham for

the better part of the last century," Kyanite President Guy Dixon said. "And given that (Kyanite), I think, has played a somewhat significant and positive role in the economic development of our little corner of the world over the course of those many decades and that we have been a reasonable corporate citizen over that vast timespan, I feel that it would not only be sensible but prudent for the people considering these changes to study the issue with the diligence and care that such a significant shift in policy deserves."

The Dillwyn resident added that he found it hard to imagine such diligence would not at least include an examination of the long-term effects. If you eliminate metallic mining or mining in general, what would that mean for the county's employment situation? How would it affect economic development overall?

### FOCUS ON THE CHEMICALS

Commission member Danny Allen said for

See **MINING**, Page **A3**



HAMPDEN-SYDNEY ATHLETICS

Adam Brazil drives to score during a game earlier this year. The Mooresville, North Carolina native is one of several juniors looking to make their mark in this year's tournament.

## Tigers take aim at NCAA tournament

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
*The Farmville Herald*

**HAMPDEN-SYDNEY**

Harrison Taylor remembers what it was like the first time he came to campus. The 6'5 ft. senior forward from Nashville, Tennessee saw what was on the stat sheet, as five years ago, Hampden-Sydney only had four wins. But he saw more than that. He saw the potential in what Coach Caleb Kimbrough was building. Flash forward to 2023 and Taylor is part of a team headed to the Division III NCAA Tournament.

"To see it come to fruition now, a few years later, it's an emotional moment," Taylor said. "It really makes you step back. College basketball is such a busy and emotional roller coaster and sometimes you forget. You don't

get to step back and look at all the work you put in. It means a lot. And the fact that we're just getting started, it's exciting."

Exciting pretty much describes how the school, Taylor's classmates and even the community feel right now. The Tigers finished the regular season this year with an overall record of 20-5, including 14-2 in the ODAC (Old Dominion Athletic Conference). It marks the program's highest win total since the 2012-13 season, when they went 23-5 and only the fourth time in 20 years that the team has won 20 or more. Interestingly enough, that 2012-13 squad was also

See **TIGERS**, Page **A2**



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OBITUARIES  
OPINION

A3  
A4

CLASSIFIEDS  
PUZZLES

A6-8  
A6-7

LIFE  
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B1  
B6

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HAMPDEN-SYDNEY ATHLETICS

A look at this year's Hampden-Sydney Tigers. The team finished the regular season this year with an overall record of 20-5, including 14-2 in the ODAC. Now they're focused on an NCAA run.

# TIGERS: Players reflect on what it means to reinvent a program

FROM PAGE ONE

the last group that made the NCAA tournament. Hampden-Sydney also earned its highest national ranking in school history this year, climbing as high as #16 in the Top 25. They currently stand at #20.

### REBUILDING A PROGRAM

"When you come into a school like Hampden-Sydney, you're at this storied program," Taylor said. "You walk into the gym and there are all these banners about national championship appearances, tournament appearances and ODAC championships. I won't say it's pressure, but you feel at least a certain obligation to give everything you have in order to continue that legacy."

Taylor's teammate, 5'10 ft. junior guard Adam Brazil, agrees. Also from one of Coach Kimbrough's first recruiting classes, Brazil said this year's wins mean a lot, because of how the team got better in each of his three years.

"It's easier to build a house from scratch than it is to tear down a house and rebuild it," the Mooresville, North Carolina native said. "I think it was just really hard to establish a new culture here and we've done that, by putting in a lot of blood, sweat and tears. It's a very rewarding feeling."

"It's bigger than us," 6'6 forward Josiah Hardy said. "We're not just playing for us, we're playing for the school."

Hardy, who comes from Ashburn, points to the school's history. The Tigers have been to the NCAA tournament 14 times, with a pair of Sweet Sixteen visits in 1992 and 1994, a trip to the Elite Eight in 1995 and a spot in the championship game in 1999. Add in another Final

Four appearance in 2003 and you have a program that's used to displaying banners.

"We're trying to get that back," Hardy said. "Coming from a history where we're (in) every year, we want that back. It's tough, but I'm very grateful to be a part of something so special."

### DEFINING TIGER BASKETBALL

But this year's Tigers team, while honoring the past, is its own thing. The team talks about having "Tiger DNA" and, as Brazil pointed out, focus on Tiger basketball. That's not just a style of play. It's a culture, something you can point to and immediately recognize.

"You have an obligation to your teammates to give your all every day," said 6'4 ft. junior guard Alex Elliott. "It's almost selfish of you not to. We talk about being the excellence of Division 3 basketball and that's what it is, hustling on and off the court."

Brazil agreed, saying he would define it as being high energy.

"It's this really high energy confidence," Brazil said. "Locking up on the defensive end, moving the ball on the offensive end, shooting three pointers and dunking. It means waking up with a clean slate every morning, wondering how I can give my all today. It's the way we operate."

Now Tiger basketball will face off against Emory University in the first round of the NCAA Tournament. Hampden-Sydney plays Friday at 7:20 p.m. at home, as the school was one

of 16 sites chosen to host first and second round games. The two winners of the Friday games will play in the second round on Saturday, March 4, at 7:20 p.m.

And the players are ready. "It's definitely a surreal feeling," Taylor said. "All of us talked after the

selection show about how we used to sit in our high schools and watch March Madness on our laptops. And now it's our time."

Hardy nodded and said now it's time to put the work in.

"No excuses. We use that 24-7," Hardy said. "It's time to get it done."



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Tigers coach Craig Kimbrough, center, draws up a play during last Friday's NCAA Tournament win over Emory University.



Sophomore guard Ayman McGowan drives past an Emory defender to score in the Tigers' first round game.

## After Cinderella season, Tigers look ahead

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
*The Farmville Herald*

### HAMPDEN-SYDNEY

An impressive season came to an end Saturday night for the Hampden-Sydney Tigers, but not without a fight. In the second round of the NCAA Division III Tournament, the Tigers lost 72-59

to No. 2 ranked Christopher Newport.

"To get to the semi-final of the conference tournament, to play a game we were really proud of, and then be able to go to the NCAA tournament and win a game, it's amazing," said Hampden-Sydney

men's basketball coach Caleb Kimbrough. "I'm very proud of this accomplishment."

Now as the team looks ahead, Kimbrough said the goal is to learn from this season and come back ready to play in the fall.

"Right now, we want to give our guys a break, but we'll talk to them individually and get their thoughts," Kimbrough said. "Then as coaches, we'll take a look at how we can be better. We'll just try to figure out how we can improve and see where it takes us."

That mindset took the Tigers this year to a 22-7 record, the team's best season in a decade and only its fourth 20-win season in the last 20 years. The Tigers were ranked as high as #15 in the nation at one point,

finishing the regular season ranked #20 in Division III.

And there's more good news for the team. Out of this year's squad, 19 of 20 team members expect to return, including all five starters. Only senior Harrison Taylor will graduate in May.

### THE NEXT STEP

Now the team has made it to the NCAA Tournament, been ranked in the Top 20 and Top 15 in the nation and won an NCAA Tournament game by beating Emory University 63-59 last Friday. So what's the next step for this team to take?

Kimbrough said it's building and developing players, while constantly increasing the level of competition. Hampden-Sydney is built around "Tiger Basketball," what Kimbrough and the players

refer to as "the Excellence of Division III".

That's not just a style of play. It's a culture, something you can point to and immediately recognize.

"You have an obligation to your teammates to give your all every day," 6'4 ft. junior guard Alex Elliott described it during an earlier interview with *The Herald*. "It's almost selfish of you not to. We talk about being the excellence of Division 3 basketball and that's what it is, hustling on and off the court."

In that same interview, his teammate, 5'10 ft. junior guard Adam Brazil agreed, saying he would define it as being high energy.

"It's this really high energy confidence," Brazil said. "Locking up on the defensive end, moving the ball on the

offensive end, shooting three pointers and dunking. It means waking up with a clean slate every morning, wondering how I can give my all today. It's the way we operate."

Taking the next step means looking at what worked this season, what didn't and how everyone on the team can improve, Kimbrough said.

"We talk all the time about getting the most out of everyone," Kimbrough said. "That's going to be the same approach (now). We're thinking to ourselves that we've got to get better."

### GROWING THE TEAM

And they'll work to get better with a larger team. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all NCAA players have an extra year of eligibility. That means Hampden-Sydney heads into next year not just adding recruits, but bringing back 19 players from this year's squad who now have playoff experience.

"It's never a bad thing to have a lot of players," Kimbrough said. "Our vision is not just to play minutes or score points. We want to get the most out of every player. We tell players "you need to be ready" because they never know when their time will come."

This year's recruiting class wrapped up in December, so they didn't join the team based on an NCAA Tournament run or a national ranking. Instead, the pitch was slightly different.

"The pitch wasn't about the NCAA Tournament, it's telling them 'here's how we do things,'" Kimbrough said. "That's what they really latched on to. We're looking for high character guys. They want to get better, to try and maximize what they can do."

That's what Kimbrough wants not just for the freshmen, but the returning players as well, to maximize their potential.

"Just because another year's gone by and we're returning a lot of guys (next fall), that doesn't mean (the NCAA run) just happens again," Kimbrough said. "We have to make sure individually that we're getting better, getting bigger, faster and stronger."



Josiah Hardy shoots over an Emory defender during the first round matchup.



Junior guard Adam Brazil calls a play during the Tigers' 63-59 win over Emory, the team's first NCAA victory in a decade.



Current Hampden-Sydney students, alumni and members of the community made their voices heard during the first round game.

Photos by Connor Thompson



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# The Farmville Herald

Honor for the past, help for the present, hope for the future

Farmville, Virginia

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

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## Questions raised about schools

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
The Farmville Herald

Why were schools allowed to get in their current physical condition? Why is the county being constantly asked to pay for additional teachers, when the district can't fill the open positions they have now? And where are the tangible results from extra funding provided to schools? Prince Edward

County's board of supervisors have plenty of questions for Superintendent Dr. Barbara Johnson and the Prince Edward County School Board. Those questions were all laid out during the first budget planning meeting of the year, on Wednesday, Feb. 22.

"There's a lot of things they asked for and they never used the money for. They asked for additional teachers, quite

### PRINCE EDWARD

a few of them (and) another counselor," said District 8 Supervisor Pattie Cooper-Jones. "Nobody hired any of those people. And it's not that they didn't have the funding. So what really happens and why do you come to us with all these gigantic proposals about what you need and then you don't even use the funds?"

Schools in Prince Edward County do still have vacant positions, both when it comes to teachers and staff. Based on the posted openings, updated as of Monday, Feb. 27, there are more than 12 current needs, with 11 more anticipated for the fall semester.

Current needs include a math teacher, science teacher, baseball coach and softball coach at Prince Edward High.

At the elementary and middle school levels, the district needs a music teacher, a pre-k teacher, one special education teacher, one early education teacher, three paraprofessionals, a school psychologist and a middle school computer technology teacher.

If the school district isn't spending the money on what

See **QUESTIONS**, Page **A3**

## Assembly leaves without fixing shortfall

We still don't have an answer for the \$201 million school budget shortfall. Now it looks like a solution could take more time to arrive. On Thursday, Feb. 23, the Virginia House of Delegates adjourned for this session without taking a vote on the state budget, leaving school districts still waiting. The Senate followed two days later, adjourning "sine die" on Saturday, Feb. 25. Sine die means "with no appointed date to return."

So what does that mean for local districts? School officials say they'll have to go forward and figure out how to absorb the cuts. According to Virginia Department of Education Director of Communications Charles Pyle, as of Monday, Feb. 27, Prince Edward County will lose \$131,000 in fiscal year 2023 and \$325,000 in fiscal year 2024.

We are in fiscal year 2023, so that refers to the current school year. The news isn't great for Buckingham County either. Originally, the school district expected to lose \$200,000 overall. Now Pyle says they'll lose \$116,000 this year and \$287,000 in fiscal year 2024. Cumberland County, meanwhile, will lose \$76,000 this year and \$187,000 for next year in state funding. Cumberland County Superintendent Dr. Chip Jones said the district, like all the others, has to make one plan now and then will likely have to adjust it

See **SHORTFALL**, Page **A2**

## Charges filed after Monday bomb threat

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
The Farmville Herald

A Farmville resident faces multiple charges after an incident Monday morning at the Prince Edward County Courthouse. Forty-six-year-old Donta M. Gross was arrested and charged with two counts of making a bomb threat, as police believe he's connected to a similar incident that happened in December.



Donta M. Gross

### PRINCE EDWARD

Courthouse was evacuated immediately and searched by the Virginia State Police K-9s and Prince Edward County sheriff's deputies. No bomb or any other explosive device was found and the case went under investigation."

During the search,

See **BOMB**, Page **A5**



Players celebrate as the Hampden-Sydney Tigers earn an at-large bid to the D3 NCAA tournament.

## Tigers head to the big dance

BY BRIAN CARLTON  
The Farmville Herald

### HAMPDEN-SYDNEY

In the moments beforehand, everything was silent. Some players nervously looked at their phones, others closed their eyes or just looked at the floor. And then the announcement came on the television. "After 10 years, one of the most storied programs on the East Coast has made the NCAA tournament, so it's a great moment for Hampden-Sydney."

And that's when the silence ended. In fact, you could argue the room started to shake a little as players celebrated. The tv announcer wasn't wrong. Hampden-Sydney College had not been to the D3 NCAA Tournament in a decade. But now, not only will they be competing in the NCAA tournament, they'll be hosting a first-round game. Hampden-Sydney will play Friday at 7:20 p.m. at home, against Emory

University.

"Wow, that's a very exciting moment right there," said Hampden-Sydney head coach Caleb Kimbrough, right after the first round announcement was made. "We worked really hard (to get here). We talk a lot about preparing ourselves to be playing the best basketball at this time of the year. To be able to put ourselves in a position to get an at-large bid is amazing."

### HOW THEY GOT HERE

It's been a whirlwind of a season for Coach Kimbrough and the team. They finished the regular season with an overall record of 20-5, including 14-2 in the ODAC. It marks the

See **TIGERS**, Page **A2**

## High school student juggles classes and a crown

BY RACHEL AUSTIN  
The Farmville Herald

### BUCKINGHAM

Jenna Oliver has a bit more on her plate than the normal teenager. The Buckingham High School junior finds herself juggling classes and a crown, as the first Miss Virginia Agritourism.

Oliver won her crown in the 17-21 year-old category late last year. Now she travels the state, educating people about how important agriculture is to Virginia.

Oliver tells *The Herald* she has been connected to agriculture her whole life. She grew up on a farm, has served in the Future Farmers of America for several years and works at Sprouse's Corner Ranch in Buckingham where she cares for horses and cattle and teaches Pony Summer Camp Lessons. She has been to the state fair

See **STUDENT**, Page **A2**



Jenna Oliver, Miss Virginia Agritourism, is pictured with Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Matt Lohr.



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OBITUARIES	A3	A TO Z KIDS NEWS	A6
OPINION	A4	CLASSIFIEDS	A7-9

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# SHORTFALL: Local districts say they will just expect to absorb the cut

FROM PAGE ONE

later. "We are basing our budget off of the Governor's 2022-2024 Amended Budget that was released in December," Jones said. "Like everyone, we are waiting for the final budget to be released. When it is released, we will have to revisit our budget."

## EXPLAINING THE SHORTFALL

What are we talking about? From the end of Gov. Ralph Northam's term to the beginning of Gov. Youngkin's, there has been a push to get rid of the state's grocery tax. That finally happened last year, removed as part of budget negotiations. Here's where the problem comes in. Multiple members of the Assembly had said the schools would be "held harmless", that is the state would find another source to give them the \$201 million over two years it was taking away. That promise never ended up on paper, however. In the final budget signed in June 2022, there was no alternative source for that funding to come from.

And so, the state had \$201 million less than before to give schools. But the Department of Education

also made an accounting error. Each year, they give districts a budget tool, a mathematical formula that helps the district's staff determine how much each district would receive from the state over the next two years. The department didn't account for the loss of the \$201 million, so their tool gave incorrect numbers.

The districts then used that incorrect information to set up their budgets, plan, pay for salaries and make repairs.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Now the money is included in both the Virginia House and Senate versions of the budget, but it's in different amounts. The House version, for example, would give \$90 million for this current year, to cover the \$58.1 million shortfall. Next year, however, it would only allocate \$77 million for the remaining \$111 million budget hole.

The Senate version, however, fully covers the \$201 million total budget shortfall over the two year period. And plus, there's an extra \$441 million Gov. Glenn Youngkin wants to add for schools, but both the House and Senate still have to debate how that would be spent, if they agree to add it.

## CAN THE ASSEMBLY RETURN?

So what happens now? The House and Senate assigned budget negotiators earlier this month. That group will continue to try and reach a compromise. Once that happens, the House and Senate can come back into session and take a vote. But this isn't a quick solution.

First, the governor will need to call the Assembly back for a special session. Then each lawmaker must receive a copy of the full budget. Under state law, the budget has to be given to lawmakers 48 hours before a vote takes place. And because the school funding has been attached to the overall budget, we won't see a vote on the first piece until the entire package is agreed to.

In a statement released after the full Assembly adjourned, Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin said he was happy with what had already been accomplished in this year's session, but there was more to be done.

"I'm pleased with the efforts we've made to protect Virginia farmland from our foreign adversaries, reform occupational licensing to expand worker freedom, realign our workforce development pipeline, bolster school resource officers, make a strong stand against antisemitism, and take care of our veterans," Youngkin said. "I stand ready to work with the general assembly as we finalize a budget."

Both sides have said they want to avoid a similar situation to last year. In 2022, the budget wasn't agreed on and signed by the governor until June.

# STUDENT: Oliver plans to compete for the national title

FROM PAGE ONE

numerous times as she has competed and placed in Plant Science and Horse Hippology at the local and state levels.

## HOW SHE GOT INVOLVED

When she was at the state fair this past fall, she saw that the title for Miss Virginia Agritourism was accepting applications. With her background in agriculture and beauty pageants, she joked with her mom that she would be perfect for the role. The joke didn't last long as her mom encouraged her to apply and Oliver was chosen as the first Miss Virginia Agritourism.

"Honestly, it feels very fulfilling but I get a little anxious because when I go to events and I'm the center of attention it's out of my comfort zone," she said.

Agritourism is the combination of business and agriculture. Most of the time it is brought together through experiences, as Oliver plans to work with local farms to create more pick-your-own strawberries,

apples, blueberries and other occasions to connect the two.

Since there is no Miss Agriculture at this time, Oliver is also filling that role as well as she travels to various events across the state to educate people about the importance of agriculture.

"What I want to accomplish the most is for people to understand that literally, everything comes from agriculture," said Oliver. "Our food, clothes, even medicine is made from byproducts."

With Virginia losing farmland each year, Oliver wants to educate people that if this trend continues there won't be anything left.

To become Miss Virginia Agritourism, this part wasn't a pageant. Oliver sent in her application, resume and pictures and then got a call from the Miss Agriculture director that she had won. Now, she's getting ready to compete for the National Miss Agritourism pageant located at Enterprise, Alabama in November. This competition will be more like a pageant with formal wear, interviews and a press conference.

# TIGERS: Team will compete for NCAA Division III title

FROM PAGE ONE

program's highest win totals since the 2012-13 season, when they went 23-5 and only the fourth time in 20 years that the team has won 20 or more. Interestingly enough, that 2012-13 squad was also the last group that made the NCAA tournament. Hampden-Sydney also earned its highest national ranking in school history this year, climbing as high as #16 in the Top 25. They currently stand at #20.

They made a run in the ODAC conference tournament, but fell just short Saturday night. A last-second three-point shot, banked in by Jordan Davis of the 13th-ranked Guilford (NC) College Quakers cost Hampden-Sydney the win in a 70-69 game. But the loss didn't end things for this squad. Being ranked in the Top

25, the Tigers earned an at-large bid and now, Coach Kimbrough says,

it's time to get back to work. "We are very very ex-

cited," Kimbrough said. "But we've got a lot of work to do."



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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

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**Major Lanay Walker at 434-392-1601 ext. 240**

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