

# Hampshire Review

and The South Branch Intelligencer



**Diving into the season**  
Swimmers make a splash  
Sports, Page 1B

Wednesday, December 1, 2021

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Hello, Hampshire! From The Elf on the Shelf



Patricia Moore, Shanks  
Thanks for subscribing

**Dealer property headed for new owners** Details, Page 5A

Augusta Fire Co.  
Crews work a series of brush fires along Little Cacapon Road before dawn Tuesday morning.



## Pre-dawn fires 'obviously' set

Review Staff  
AUGUSTA — Fire crews from 4 volunteer companies and the Division of Forestry battled a series of brushfires set within a mile-and-a-half of each other early Tuesday morning.

"It is obvious these fires were set by someone," the Augusta Fire Company posted on its Facebook page Tuesday. The 3:12 a.m. 911 call drew crews from Augusta, Romney, Slanesville and North River

Valley — along with Forestry, sheriff's deputies and the Augusta Rescue Squad — to Little Cacapon Road and a couple of intersecting streets about 5 miles south of U.S. 50. Augusta Fire Chief Michael

Hott said 5 separate fires were discovered. The largest burned between a half and full acre. Firefighters were on the scene until 5:30 a.m. The Division of Forestry is investigating. □

## 'Abrasive ... and nothing more'



Williams lays out 10 defenses against misconduct charges

JIM KING Review Staff

Judge Carter Williams has conceded many of the facts caught on body camera during his July 11 traffic stop, but argues that they do not rise to the level of judicial misconduct. Williams' statement on the event was filed with the State Supreme Court last week as his official response to the 11 charges of official misconduct filed by the Judicial Investigation Commission against the 22nd Circuit judge in late October. Williams was stopped on July 11 by Moorefield Police Officer Deavonta Johnson, who said he observed Williams with a cellphone in his hand while behind the wheel.

Their interaction was captured on the officer's body camera. During and after the call, Williams called or talked face to face with the Moorefield officer in charge that night, Moorefield's police chief and former police chief, Moorefield's mayor and Chief Judge Charles Carl. "Judge Williams has admitted at all times since the encounter that he was agitated, frustrated, upset, impatient, and worried about his daughters who were then at his residence awaiting his arrival at the time of the traffic stop, and he was rude, impatient, and abrasive during the encounter — and nothing more," the response acknowledged mid-See **ABRASIVE** page 7A ■

## COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

LAST WEEK



NICK CARROLL Review Staff

The 230-display Christmas Festival of Lights comes alive Saturday at Central Hampshire Park **MORE PHOTOS** Page 4B

## Jobless numbers hit historic lows

JIM KING Review Staff

Unemployment in Hampshire County hit a pair of historic lows in October. Estimates from Workforce West Virginia showed the county with a staggeringly low 1.9% unemployment, the 1st time below 2% since the agency began tracking the statistic 45 years ago. A dive into the statistic showed only 220 people

who were looking for work couldn't find it, another all-time low since 1976. Surprisingly, 2 counties fared even better than Hampshire in unemployment during October, for which numbers were released only last week. Pendleton led the state with 1.7% unemployment and Jefferson was 2nd with 1.8%. More amazing, Hampshire See **LOWS** page 7A ■

THIS WEEK

Holly jolly  
**DECEMBER**  
Your guide to what's happening this month

Living, Page 1C

Christmas Tidings

Details, Page 8C



JIM KING, On the Loose, 6A

We need a lot of Christmas now ...



ED MAURER Review Correspondent

Students from Capon Bridge Elementary help decorate pines in the town's Christmas Tree Village. Details, Page 4B

Facebook

A tree by the Court-house in Romney, placed in honor of the twins, is decorated in their favorite colors of blue and green.



## Inclusive playground honors late Rinker twins

EMMA JUNE GROSSKOPF Review Staff

ROBINSON, III. — The legacy of Landon and Nolan Rinker lives on through a memorial at "Friendship Playground," an Illinois park dedicated to inclusivity. Romney native Justin Rinker and his wife Melody were blessed with twin boys Landon and Nolan in 2013. For their entire lives, the twins battled lissencephaly, a brain condition where the surface of their brains were smooth instead of being crisscrossed with folds and grooves. Their life expectancies were less than 2 years. Nolan passed away in 2017, and his brother passed just this past April. Melody and Justin, after the twins' 3rd birthday in 2016, donated \$2,500 raised by Melody and her coworkers from the accounting group at Marathon Petroleum Corp. to



Robinson's Kiwanis Club's Harmony Park, which focuses on music and outdoor musical instruments. This connects the Ohio family (which also has Hampshire County roots) with the Robinson community, and last week, the town of

Robinson honored the late twins at "Friendship Playground," an addition to the Robinson City Park that is inclusive and accessible for all children. The Robinson City Parks Department See **TWINS** page 7A ■

MELODY RINKER Facebook

"Friendship Playground" in Robinson, Ill., was built in honor of the late Rinker twins, who passed away from their battles with lissencephaly.

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