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 **BREEZY WITH CLOUDS AND SUN 45 • 27** FORECAST, A2 | **MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021** | martinsvillebulletin.com

Virginia virus cases explode

Nearly 10,000 new infections recorded Sunday; no new deaths locally.

THE ROANOKE TIMES
Virginia reported nearly 10,000 new COVID-19 cases Sunday, far surpassing the previous record set just one day earlier.

The 9,914 new cases bring the cumulative total during the pandemic to 439,305, according to the Virginia Department of Health. On Saturday, the state reported 6,757, a record at the time. The state first reported more than 5,000 new cases on Dec. 31; since then, it has logged 10 days with more than 5,000 new cases. As of Sunday morning, there had been 5,729 COVID-19 deaths in Virginia, an increase of 23 from Saturday. Statewide, the total number of people hospitalized was 19,913, an increase of 67 from Saturday, though the VDH website notes that hospitalizations are under-represented. The West Piedmont Health District contributed 117 new cases to the record total. That's actually lower than Saturday's 132 and well short of the single-day mark of 151 set two weeks ago.

There were no new deaths reported, but the district added four more people to be hospitalized. Henry County reported 45 new cases and one of the hospitalizations, and Franklin County had 40 cases and the other three hospitalizations. Martinsville had 19 new cases, and Patrick County had 13. There were no new cases added to the 89 reported in the outbreak at Mulberry Creek Nursing & Rehabilitation in Martinsville. That facility was added to the state's tracking database earlier this week, but management from Kissito Health Care, its owners, had sent out emails to staff, residents and their families alerting them to the growing problem. Since the pandemic began, the district has record 8,438 cases, with 148 deaths and 519

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The 'Gift' of discovery

Helen Hensley turns a recently found 71-year-old story into a book.



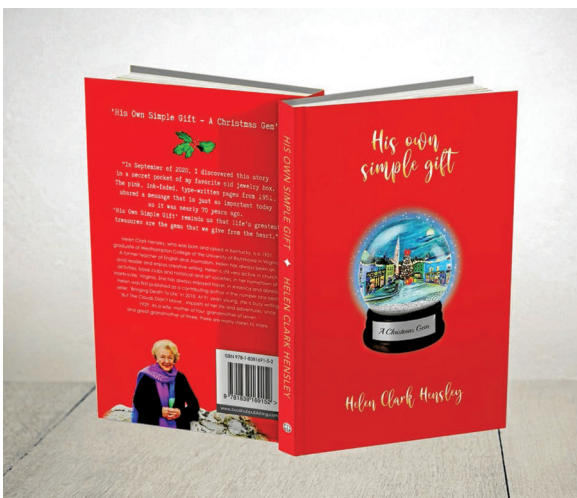
Helen Hensley of Martinsville poses with a portrait of herself from years past.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

HOLLY KOZELSKY
hkozelsky@martinsvillebulletin.com

Helen Hensley of Martinsville became a published author 71 years after she wrote her story. "It happened unexpectedly," she said, of the whole experience. It all started in 1951, when she was a recent graduate of the University of Richmond. Her mother asked her a favor: Write "a quick Christmas program for her" to use at her music club meeting. "I didn't have long to do it," Hensley said. "I sat down and started writing. It was just like the writing kept going."

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"His Own Simple Gift" is the newly published book from a story Helen Hensley of Martinsville wrote 71 years ago.



SCREEN CAPTURE
Stacey Abrams speaks during a Zoom event to launch Averett University's annual America's Sunday Supper in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. week.

Abrams says community builds with trust, action

Stacey Abrams delivers keynote during Averett's MLK event Sunday.

JOHN R. CRANE
Lee Newspapers

Build community out of chaos. That was the message from former Georgia House of Representatives minority leader and 2018 gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams and Averett University on Sunday. There are three ways to build community out of chaos: trust, imagination and action, Abrams said during a Zoom event to launch Averett's annual America's Sunday Supper in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. week. "It will require trust, it will necessitate imagination and it will only be if we take action," she said. Abrams gave the keynote address on the week's theme, "From Chaos to Community." The title refers to King's last book, "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?" Community requires everyone respecting, listening to and learning from one another, but it not easy, Abrams said. "Community is complicated, community is hard and it is rough, it scrapes against your nerves," she said. During her speech, Abrams also touched upon the political division in the country, including the storming of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 by armed Trump supporters. "It has reached a fever pitch in the last four years," she said. The attack came the day after Georgia's runoff election for its two Senate seats in which Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock prevailed over incumbent GOP senators. With those victories, Democrats took the Senate majority. Abrams' efforts to get out the vote and convince the party to pay more attention to Georgia have been credited with delivering wins for Ossoff and Warnock. "The entirety of our state, the diversity of our state ... saw themselves as part and parcel of building the next phase of our country," Abrams said. But the next day, domestic terrorists had stormed the Capitol, she lamented. "The aftermath of that chaos continues to reverberate," she said.

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