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Fluvanna Review



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OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES

Cover: A common sight around Fluvanna County. Cover design by Amelia McConnell.



GENERAL

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Fluvanna School Board changes

BY RUTHANN CARR CORRESPONDENT

At its first meeting of 2022 (Jan. 12) the Fluvanna School Board:

- •Welcomed new member Gequetta Murray-Key (Rivanna)
- Voted James Kelley (Palmyra) as Chair • Voted Perrie Johnson (Fork Union) as Vice Chair
- ·Changed meetings to the second Thursday of each month

Meetings will still be held in the auditorium of the Administration building with the closed session beginning at 5:30 p.m. and public session at 6:30 p.m.

Former Chair Johnson began the meeting introducing the many "housekeeping" chores the board faced at the first meeting of the year after an election.

"I'm removing myself for nomination as Chair," Johnson said. "During the past year I felt returning members held a diminishing respect for my efforts to accomplish the role."

Johnson nominated Kelley for Chair. The board approved Kelley 3-0.

Andrew Pullen (Columbia) was absent. Charles Rittenhouse (Cunningham) attended remotely but his vote wasn't heard.

Kelley changed seats with Johnson.

"This isn't a position I necessarily sought," Kelley said. "I appreciate Ms. Johnson's service to us. I feel bad for

the part I played in making her not feel valued. It's a difficult position. I know I have some learning to do. I know I'll reap what I sow. I expect karma to remedy all things for you."

Kelley nominated Johnson as Vice Chair, adding, "if she's willing because I could use her help."

Kelley checked to see if Rittenhouse had anything to say.

After unmuting his microphone, Rittenhouse joined the others to vote Johnson as Vice Chair.

Kelley asked Rittenhouse if he wanted to record his vote for Chair.

Rittenhouse said he would have voted "no" for Kelley for Chair.

"But you got it, so let's move on," Rittenhouse said.

The final vote for chair was 3-1.

In other news, Capt. Von Hill presented the board with an overview of the School Resource Office (SRO) program.

Hill said the program began in Fluvanna in 2003 and officers involved have specific roles:

- Act as a positive role model;
- Educate;

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- · Work as a law enforcement officer to

School board continues page 5.

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spotlight

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School board from page 3.

address violations.

Hill said SROs are specifically trained to work in schools in those capacities.

Murray-Key said she'd like the program to be shared with and explained to the community and staff.

She thanked Hill for meeting with her after the November election.

"Ultimately our students and teachers need to feel safe," Murray-Key said. "I am in support of what we're doing. Making sure discipline is applied fairly is important. What we have is what I've been looking for in a program. Great job, on where you started and where you've

brought the program." Kellev agreed.

He said studies show SROs lead to school incidents moving to courts and disproportionally affecting students of color.

"But that doesn't seem to be the case in Fluvanna," Kelley said. "What's the secret sauce?"

Hill said it's a three-fold approach: Being open-minded and open in communication and being willing to listen. In other business:

Superintendent Peter Gretz said 82 Fluvanna students enrolled in Virtual Virginia for a second semester.

He said the schools received \$17,615

from the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund for Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) to help homeless students and families with emergency wrap-around services.

They also were awarded \$160,000 funding for security upgrades. It requires a \$40,000 match.

Gretz said CDC revised its guidelines shortening isolation/quarantine guidance with a lot of nuances about time of vaccination and age.

He didn't feel the schools needed to change their policy immediately.

"I'm asking if changes regarding isolation and quarantine need to be made

that you would defer to me to work with my team to make those decisions in the next few weeks rather than waiting for the next board meeting or calling a special meeting," Gretz said.

The board agreed.

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Small Business: Coping with Shortages and Delays

"Use a healthy

dose of common

sense to navigate

through this crisis.

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advisors can provide

assistance."

As we enter the New Year, businesses • Rethink lead times. If you can afford continue to be hampered by a near-unprecedented lack of supplies and ma-ahead of time. Stock up on essentials for terials. Besides items that have received your business when you can. widespread national attention like toilet

paper and computer chips for cars, the slowdown in the supply chain is affecting everything from electronic devices to couches to sneakers—and plenty in between.

To complicate matters for businesses operating in a competitive environment, the supply chain disruption is being compounded by a tight labor market, espe-

cially for drivers and other delivery people. It all adds up to long delays, reduced profits, and frustration for everyone involved. What can your small business do? Consider these practical suggestions.

• Communicate with empathy. The worst thing you can do is clam up when customers start questioning orders or complaining about backlogs. Be upfront about the problems you're facing.

• Underpromise and overdeliver. It's better to lower expectations than it is to set a high bar that can't be reached. Don't make promises you can't keep. Customers will be pleasantly surprised if you exceed vour initial estimates.

• Be creative about pricing. If your production costs are shooting through the roof, it should be reflected in your pricing structure. Of course, you can't pass on the entire extra cost to customers, but factor increases into the equation.

• Find new partners. Your business may be forced to turn to different suppliers or vendors. If you can fund quality materials, expand your business contacts and regular resources.

• Think outside the box. Try a different approach that may mitigate the shortages. For example, you might find a suitable and available re-

placement for a product component. Don't just accept the status quo. Finally, use a healthy dose of common

sense to navigate through this crisis. Your business advisors can provide assistance.

This year, as in years past, returning clients and other groups such as Veterans, Teachers, and First Responders will continue to receive a discount on our services. We are a part of this community and as such, we want to make sure that those who provide us services are recognized.

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Chamber of Commerce FLUVANNA COUNTY, VA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Fluvanna Business Corner Let's All Welcome Fluvanna's New **Economic Development Director!**

Bv: Ruthann Carr

ennifer Schmack started working as Fluvanna's Economic Development Director in October.

Schmack's career started in Suffolk where, as a 16-year-old she enrolled in a coop office program and worked for Suffolk Fire and Rescue. She used that experience to pen a Job Description Manual, which won first place in Virginia's Future Business Leaders competition. She went on to place fourth nationally.

In 2003, she began working for Suffolk's Economic Development Office as an Executive Secretary and was later promoted to manage their Economic Development Authority.

Schmack moved to Fluvanna in 2019 to work with Albemarle County where she created its Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program.

When the job opened in Fluvanna, Schmack jumped at it.

"I think Fluvanna has a tremendous amount of opportunity," she said. "I live here, and I believe in supporting the community where vou live."

Schmack brings her experience and knowledge of Business Retention and Expansion to Fluvanna.

Iuvanna

"BRE measures the heartbeat of your business community, connects companies and organizations and allows us to identify problems and opportunities. BRE builds a more competitive community. We'll find those like businesses and connect them to create synergy. Then when we get to recruiting businesses to Fluvanna, those are our ambassadors."

Another key to BRE is making sure Fluvanna's existing businesses get the specific help they need when issues arise.

Schmack sees her position as being the go-to for established businesses and ones that are just in the idea stage.

She has built years of experience and a network of connections to help assist businesses

"And if I don't know the answer, I'll find out," Schmack said. "I love learning new things and passing that knowledge on to others."

Contact Jennifer Schmack at 591-1921 jschmack@fluvannacounty.org

CONTACTS		
Rudy Garcia, Chair Economic Development Authority rleegarcia@rpava.com	Ruthann Carr, Office Manager Chamber of Commerce ruthann.carr@fluvannachamber.org 434-589-3262 PAID ADVERTISEMENT	
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So, who has our new governor nominated

as secretary of Natural and Historic Resources for

Virginia? The answer is Andrew Wheeler, a former

coal lobbyist who rolled back crucial clean air

and water protections when appointed head of

the Environmental Protection Agency by Trump.

Wheeler's record is egregious at best. One of his

proposed rules under Trump was denounced by 69

Lung Association). Obviously, Youngkin has started

off on the wrong track even before taking office on

Saturday. Is this an indication of how regressive and

be over the next four years?

now before it's too late.

against this evil.

blatantly dismissive of our environment Youngkin will

If you are concerned about the stewardship of

Virginia's natural resources, please speak out and tell

Governor Youngkin that Wheeler is unacceptable.

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the `Big Lie', the misrepresentation of what Jan. 6,

2021 meant (ie: 'tourist visit', the act of 'patriots')

destroys faith in government and the American way

of life. All people need to speak out - continuously -

One way to do this is through the Sierra Club's

-Julius Neelley, Lake Monticello

-Charles Van Der Heide, Palmyra

scientific and medical groups (including the American

The planet is getting hotter protect our natural areas."

I'm sure most of us have seen the recent headlines about rising global temperatures. According to the 2020 Global Climate Report from NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, every month of 2020 except December was in the top four warmest on record for that month. July 2021 was the earth's hottest month on record. Around the globe, the combined land and ocean-surface temperature was 1.67 degrees F (0.93 of a degree C). Does anyone in our area does not know that, in fact, the past seven years have been the hottest in recorded history? Just think back to last month's record-breaking warmth on Christmas day. It broke a record that stretches back 140 years.

At Gov. Ralph Northam's final State of the Commonwealth address on Jan. 12 he stated, "We're also putting nearly \$12 million into water quality, air quality, and land conservation initiatives at natural resources agencies...These are important investments to ensure that we don't fall behind in protecting these critical assets, and ensuring that DEQ can continue to

Remember Jan. 6

Jan. 6 must be remembered not only on that annual date but at all times as an insurrection. an attack on democracy, an attempt to prevent a duly elected president from taking office. The right to vote, to have votes counted fairly and represented as such is the bedrock of our democracy. Continued conspiracy falsehoods,

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Freedom to Vote act needed

My name is Betty Tabony and I am a retired Nelson County teacher/gifted program coordinator now living in Charlottesville. The Freedom to Vote Act sets national standards for us to safely and freely cast our ballots, ensure every vote is counted, and elect people who will deliver for us. Our Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine need to deliver the Freedom to Vote Act to the American people, and to do that, they need to fix the Jim Crow filibuster which is blocking the progress of this overwhelmingly popular and urgently needed legislation.

Our freedom to vote is under attack by extremist state lawmakers across the country who want to put up barriers to make it harder to vote - especially for people of color. The filibuster is preventing debate on the Freedom to Vote Act. The filibuster is a loophole historically used to block civil rights legislation. If we reform the senate rules and fix the filibuster we have a big chance of protecting the freedom to vote, getting big dark money out of politics, and taking action on climate change, immigration reform, gun control, and other crucial issues.

Our senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine must do everything necessary including fixing the filibuster to deliver the Freedom to Vote Act to realize the promise of democracy for all! -Betty Tabony, Charlottesville

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Supervisors organize for the year ahead

BY HEATHER MICHON CORRESPONDENT

The Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors held its first meeting of 2022 on Wednesday (Jan. 12), delayed by a week due to the previous week's snowstorm.

This was the first meeting for Chris Fairchild, who was elected in November as supervisor for Cunningham District. He replaces Donald Weaver, who retired in December after 32 years of service on the board.

The first order of business was administrative: election of a chair and vice-chair, changes to committee assignments, and setting the time, dates, and location for the remainder of the year.

Supervisor Mozell Booker (Fork Union) nominated Tony O'Brien (Rivanna) to serve as chair, but the nomination failed to find a second despite Booker's forceful argument in his favor.

"This is not against an individual. I'm not talking about Mike [Sheridan]," she said. "I'm talking about the position of chair. Everybody brings their own strengths to the chair, and we need the opportunity to bring more voices to the chair so that they can bring their strengths."

After some discussion, Mike Sheridan (Columbia) and O'Brien were re-elected to their current positions as chair and vice-chair, respectively.

Committee assignments remained

mostly unchanged. Fairchild will take over Weaver's position on the Central Virginia Regional Jail board and will replace O'Brien on the Parks and Rec committee.

Meeting start times will change slightly, with the once-monthly 4 p.m. meeting moving to 5 p.m.

The location for meetings remains in flux. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, supervisors met in the county courthouse, and it remains their official meeting place. But with access to the courthouse still tightly restricted, and a new county office building still at least two to three years away, the board has struggled to find a long-term temporary home.

For the time being, it appears they will be staying at the Carysbrook Performing Arts Center, but this could change due to the center's busy performance calendar.

Storm recap

County Administrator Eric Dahl praised county personnel, VDOT, and the power companies for their actions during the Jan. 3 storm.

"It was a huge undertaking," he said. "We were expecting maybe three to five inches and we got almost a foot of really wet snow, and it caused a lot of havoc."

All county departments stepped up to help where they could, and Dahl said even local businesses had stepped in

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with assistance.

Dahl said there would be an after-action meeting in the coming weeks to discuss what had worked and what hadn't and perhaps make some changes for the future.

In other matters:

• The county is now one step closer to allowing residents to pay bills by credit card. Tyler Technologies will be installing credit card terminals at the treasurer's office, planning and zoning, and the buildings office. Online payment will also be streamlined. The board approved a \$1,368 budget transfer for the initial setup of the terminals.

• Supervisors also approved the advertisement of a public hearing for the next tranche of money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The county will receive the second and final portion of the \$5,297,000 allocation in early June. The county will have until late 2024 to use the funding for expenses and improvements relating to the pandemic.

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Fluvanna Faces: Cyndi Hoffman

BY HARVEY SORUM CORRESPONDENT



Tell us about your past before becoming the Fluvanna County Public Library director.

I grew up on a dairy farm in up-state New York in the Finger Lakes – most of my family still lives up there. I have a very large extended family there. I went to undergraduate school for Russian and International Comparative Politics with a minor in French and then went on to graduate school for library science. I have moved all over the United States working in a variety of libraries. I have lived in Conroe, TX; Bergen, NY; New City, NY; Kinston, NC and finally here in Fluvanna.

Why did you become a librarian?

I have always loved libraries and reading. We grew up going to story time at the library. Libraries and reading were a big part of our childhood.

When did you join the library?

I became the library director at the Fluvanna County Public Library in 2008 – just a couple of months before we moved to the new location (current location).

What attracted you to the Fluvanna County Public Library and what was your first assignment?

I was looking for a library in an area similar to where I grew up – rural but near lots to do and family. A small town feel to the community and an active library. There is so much history, nature and more in the area and I have extended family fairly close. My parents also asked me to stay within one day driving distance from them.

Since you first started, have you found the interest at the library growing and why?

I was lucky in that when I came here

Fluvanna Faces continues page 10.



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Fluvanna Faces from page 8.

we were moving to a new building. That gave me and the library staff an opportunity to change things up and try new things. Fluvanna library is a very active and community oriented library so interest seems to be growing. We like to try new things and have lots of programs to keep everyone active.

After visiting your web site, I had no idea you have so much to offer. What are some of the activities you'd highlight?

With COVID we have had an opportunity to provide a different variety of programs. The new Grab n Go activities and the Spice of the Month Club are two of my favorites. Anyone that knows me – I love cooking and baking and trying new things and Spice of the Month Club combines books and cooking. On the fourth Saturday of every month we give out samples of a spice, information about a spice and recipes.

We also have added several new online databases. I like exploring the new databases. Just For Kids is a new streaming video database that offers great video content for kids – including all of the original Berenstain Bears videos, Franklin and more. Each video also usually has an activity to go with it. The new BrainFuse databases are also a great resource – Homework Help, VetNow (help for veterans) and JobNow (employment help). We miss Friday Movies and No School Day programs and hope to start them again this spring. We are already planning Summer Reading and Winter Reading is happening now – just check out our webpage. We do programs for all ages – infants to adults.

With so many varied things to do at the library, you must have a very talented staff. What are some of the things they do?

Fluvanna library is very lucky to have a great staff and wonderful volunteers. Everyone is very friendly and helpful with a wide variety of interests to help guide patrons to new materials at the library. Our new Children's Program Specialist Erinn Henning has started offering drop in children's activities and crafts around the library, as well as story time twice a week most times during the year. She is also decorating the library and creating monthly displays. Staff usually spends a lot of time helping at the desk and we are currently preparing all of the Grab n Go bags, crafts and activities, decorations and more as time permits.

We have great volunteers, including several groups of high school students, who come to the library weekly and some daily to help with shelving the books and putting DVDs away. The volunteers make most of the phone calls for holds, help get new books ready to put on the shelf, shelve books, shelf read and so much more. We couldn't offer everything we do without the great volunteers. We are still limited in how many volunteers we can have in the building at one time – but look forward to welcoming everyone back soon.

Are the library facilities available for public use such as meetings, guest speakers, children's group activities, and more?

Fluvanna library has a large meeting room (that can be divided into two smaller rooms) and a conference room space that are open for use by organizations (not for personal use or for profit) – you just have to book the rooms – which you can do by calling the library at (434) 589-1400 or emailing fluvannalibrary@gmail.com. They are very popular and used quite a bit by a wide variety of groups in the county, as well as the library for our programs and the county.

Looking into your plans and goals for 2022, what are some of the things that will grow public interest visiting the library?

We are constantly looking for new ideas and programs. With COVID we are hoping that we can just get back to our regular offerings in 2022. We are planning to continue Grab n Go and limited in-person programs through the spring and then by summer we are hoping for more regular programs.



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SPECIAL NOTICES

VIRGINIA DEPT. OF VETERANS SERVICES: Need Help? Visit us at the Fluvanna Community Center, 5725 James Madison Highway > by appointment only. Appointments are only available on the first Wednesday of each month from 9 to 11:30a.m. Call Pamela Zirkle & Jeannette Flint at (434) 529-6431 to schedule your appointment. www.dvs.virginia.gov

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The Sudoku Puzzle will return next week.

Fluco girls top Orange, boys fall to Orange in OT

BY DUNCAN NIXON CORRESPONDENT

This is what high school sports is all about. Two varsity basketball games played back-to-back with maximum intensity and close results. Usually, when the varsity boys are at home, the girls are away and vice versa. On Jan. 14 the Fluco girls' varsity hosted the Orange County varsity at 6 p.m. and the Fluco boys hosted the Orange County varsity at 7:30 p.m. The Fluco girls under Coach Nick Ward jumped to an early lead and stubbornly fought off every push by the Hornets to close the gap. The girls won 61-50 to up their record to 7-3. In the second game, Orange County came in with a 9-1 record. If they expected the Flucos to roll over and bow to their outstanding record, they were wildly off base.

In the first quarter, the Fluco boys opened with a 14-2 run to put the Hornets on notice that they were in for a fight. Back-to-back three-point baskets by Fluco stand-out guards Bobby Gardner, a junior, and Kobe Edmonds, a senior, provided the heart of the 14-2 run. Edmonds had two threes in the quarter and senior Grant Brown contribute three points. However, as Fluco Coach Heath Bralley noted, "neither team was about to give in." Orange County responded with a twelve-point run and the first quarter ended 14-14. In the second quarter, it looked like there was a lid on the baskets at both ends of the court. The defense was intense and neither team put many points on the board. Lance Bruce had a three-point basket for the Flucos, but Orange won the quarter 9-8, and took a 23-22 lead at the half.

In the third quarter, Edmonds started to get into high gear for the Flucos, scoring nine in the quarter and leading the Flucos to a three point advantage of 42-39 going into the final quarter. Forward Blaise Silverman sank one of the Flucos' seven three point baskets in the game.

The fourth guarter started with a nice steal by Gardner and a feed to Edmonds for an easy lay-in. However, Orange would not go away and the Flucos could not boost their lead above five points. With three minutes left in regulation, the Hornets managed to tie the score at 51-51. From that point on it was mostly free throws, with both teams doing pretty well at the line. Orange led by 61-59 with 43 seconds remaining, but Edmonds took a rebound and dribbled the length of the court scoring on a difficult twisting lay-in to tie the score. Both teams had one more chance in regulation but when the buzzer sounded the score was 61-61.

The four minute overtime started

Public Notices



PUBLIC HEARING Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Notice is hereby given that, the Board of Supervisors of Fluvanna County, Virginia (the "County"), will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Carysbrook Performing Arts Center, 8880 James Madison Highway, Fork Union, VA 23055, to receive public comment and input regarding the proposed incurrence of debt, without a referendum, in the form of a lease-purchase agreement, in the maximum principal amount of \$5,231,500 (the "Lease Purchase Debt"), which is expected to be issued to JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. Proceeds of the Lease Purchase Debt will be used for the purpose of financing the leasing and acquisition of certain assets, including athletic field lighting, fire trucks and ambulances, public works equipment and a storage facility for such equipment, and vehicles for use by County staff and the Sheriff's Office, and to pay costs of issuance of the Lease Purchase Debt.

The public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, will be conducted at 7:00 p.m. at the Carysbrook Performing Arts Center, 8880 James Madison Highway, Fork Union, Virginia, 23055. For additional information please contact Caitlin Solis, Clerk to the Board, at 434-591-1910 or csolis@fluvannacounty.org.

Interested persons may appear at such time and place and present their views.

Clerk, Board of Supervisors of Fluvanna County, Virginia well for the Flucos. Gardner scored on a driving lay-up and Edmonds converted three of four from the foul line for a five point lead. Unfortunately, the Hornets outscored the Flucos 10-2 the rest of the way to win 71-68.

Before the season started Coach Bralley noted that although the Flucos don't have a lot of height they are very quick. He was not exaggerating. Orange, however, was also very quick and a little bigger and stronger. There were a lot of turnovers in the game as the Flucos went with a tight man to man defense and the Hornets utilized a three-quarter court zone press for most of the game that gave the Flucos some problems. The Flucos were supported by a large and noisy crowd.



The Fluvanna County School Board will hold a budget work session at 5:30 p.m. and a budget public hearing at 6:30 p.m. for the FY2023 operating budget on Wednesday, February 2, 2022. The meeting will occur in the auditorium at the Fluvanna School Board Office located at 14455 James Madison Highway, Palmyra, VA.



The Fluvanna County School Board will adopt the FY2023 operating budget during the regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 10, 2022, starting at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will occur in the auditorium at the Fluvanna County School Board Office, located at 14455 James Madison Highway, VA 22963.



The Fluvanna County School Board voted unanimously on January 12, 2022, to hold their Regular School Board Meetings on the second Thursday of each month unless otherwise noted. The meetings will begin with a Closed Session at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Regular Meeting starting at 6:30 p.m. All meeting information is available for review at www.fluco.org. The meetings will take place in the auditorium at the Fluvanna County School Board Office located at 14455 James Madison Highway, Palmyra VA.

Edmonds had a very impressive game for the Flucos, scoring 33 points, almost half his team's points, with 25 coming in the second half and overtime. Gardner contributed 14 and Bruce had seven.

In the girl's game, the Flucos had a very balanced attack. Four juniors scored in double figures, as the Flucos won the first second and fourth quarters. Alana Carter-Johnson led the way for the girls with 19 points including two three-point baskets. Forward Tatyana Turner was very consistent scoring five in the first quarter, four in the second, two in the third and four in the fourth for a total of 15. Guard Abby Seal contributed 12, and she also made two three-pointers. Aniah Webb scored 11 with three from long range. The Flucos had a twelve point lead at the half and maintained about that margin the rest of the way, winning by eleven.

After the game, Coach Ward noted that he was pleased with Harley Kirby's rebounding and hard-nosed play, and with Carter-Johnson's rebounding, as well as her scoring. The Orange squad fought hard, but the Flucos were a more talented squad.

Fluco wrestlers excel at Billy Wensel Tournament

BY DUNCAN NIXON CORRESPONDENT

The Fluco wrestling squad, under the tutelage of Coach Michael Gore, hosted the 5th annual Billy Wensel wrestling tournament on Saturday Jan. 15.

This year's event brought in 15 visiting wrestling squads from around the region. The Fluco team finished in a respectable 8th place. Two Fluco wrestlers, Aiden Valentine and Sam Stoltz, finished the day with perfect 5-0 records. Valentine is a junior and wrestled at 138 pounds. He had four wins on the mat and one forfeit victory. Stoltz is a sophomore and he had five wins on the mat. He competed at 160 pounds.

Sean Oliva and Austin Moore also were outstanding, as both posted 4-1 records. Oliva and Moore are both seniors. Oliva was 3—1 in matches and won one by forfeit. Moore was on the mat for five matches. Oliva competed at 152 pounds, while Moore wrestled at 182 pounds. Wrestling four or five matches in a day is quite a test. Winning four or five matches is an impressive show of endurance.



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