



Staunton rallies to top Buffalo Gap

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The News Leader

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Psychic and entrepreneur Anita Dalton, owner of Sedona, Arizona's Center for the New Age, is among the Sedona hippies who are finding a new home on the American right. PHOTOS BY LAURA GERSONY/ARIZONA REPUBLIC

New Age believers find home on political right

Sedona's hippies part of larger shift in U.S. politics, conservatism

Laura Gersony
Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

SEDONA, AZ – Three years ago, Shelley Evans submitted garbled documents to the Coconino County Recorder's Office, demanding \$12 million for violations of her constitutionally guaranteed rights, in a tactic experts on right-wing radicalization have called "paper terrorism."

Two years ago, officials sued her under a statute that punishes wrongful liens, leaving her on the hook for roughly \$55,000, a sum she would later report was roughly equal to her net assets.

She tried, in the wake of the verdict, to navigate the Chapter 11 bankruptcy

"I think a lot of alignments, and categorization, are just like: Where do I belong? Who am I? What the hell is happening?"

Aila Arya Anam
Vaccine skeptic

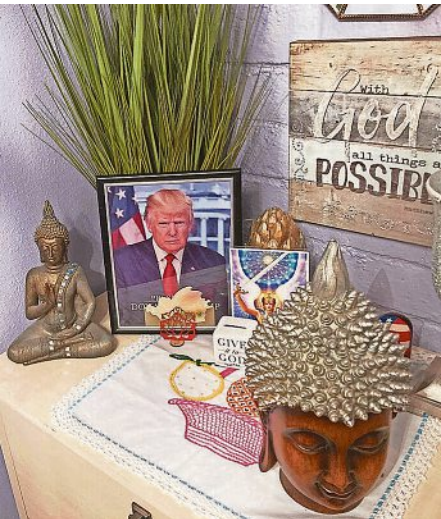
process without a lawyer. She failed.

At the end of a winding gravel road in Sedona, Arizona, Evans has repurposed a yoga studio into the headquarters of Ultimate Light Mission, a spiritual hub "where all paths converge in a unified vision."

The Sedona chapter of Children's Health Defense, the anti-vaccine group long chaired by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., meets there every few weeks.

A monthly informational session encourages people to put their money into decentralized cryptocurrency ledgers

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Many spiritualists' hostility toward policy and science experts, penchant for conspiracy, and appetite for personal "sovereignty" leave them with more in common with President Donald Trump than with other social movements.

THE AGENDA

Student success celebrated at meeting

Lyra Bordelon
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

A communications tower and the achievements of students are on the agenda for local school and government boards this week.

Two local education boards will meet, celebrating the achievements of their students.

The Staunton City School Board will be introduced to Lilah Dunn, the 2025-26 Student Representative to the School Board. The board will also recognize the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) National Competition winners from Staunton High School.

The Augusta County School Board will recognize the 2025 Virginia High School League (VHSL) Spring State Champions. The board will also recognize the State and National Career and Technical Education individual champions.

The Augusta County Board of Zoning Appeals will meet on Sept. 4 and to take up the following special use permit applications:

- Stuart Squier, agent for Celco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless, requested a permit to construct a 199' monopole telecommunications tower on property owned by Summit Dairy, Inc., located at the intersection of Wagon Shop Road and Pilson Road.
- Fredrick K. and Emily M. Helm, wish to construct a building for storage of commercial vehicles and equipment in conjunction with a landscape/lawn care business on property they own, located on the north side of Chestnut Ridge Road (Route 694), east of the intersection of Stingy Hollow Road (Route 693) and Chestnut Ridge Road (Route 694).
- Matthew J. Howell, is looking to have online auction sales and outdoor display of equipment and farm vehicles for sale on property he owns, located at 1919 Indian Ridge Road, Stuarts Draft, in the Riverheads District.
- Adam J. and Nicolette S. Powell requested a permit to have a short term vacation rental on property they own, located at 99 Naked Creek Hollow Road, Weyers Cave, in the North

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Augusta County School Board candidate forum set for Sept. 25

Patrick Hite
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

The News Leader and Victory Worship Center will co-host a candidate forum for The Augusta County School Board race on Sept. 25.

Three candidates, including both in the Beverley Manor District, have agreed to participate in the forum to be held at the Augusta County Government Center's Smith Board Room at 7 p.m.

Butch Wells and Daniel Whitmire are running for the Beverley Manor seat. Incumbent Donna Wells, Butch's wife, will

not be seeking reelection in November. Dan Ferraro had filed to run in the Beverley Manor District, but sent an email to The News Leader on Aug. 29 saying he was withdrawing.

"I recently submitted a withdrawal from the election," Ferraro wrote. "Unfortunately, I moved out of the Beverley Manor district."

Ferraro was charged with misdemeanor assault in July, but had agreed to take part in the forum before withdrawing his candidacy.

Wells is currently a member of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors, but is not seeking reelection to that

board. He is also a former Staunton police chief. Whitmire, a newcomer to the political arena, is a design principal with Moseley Architect.

The Beverley Manor District includes four precincts — Jolivue, Stuarts Draft Elementary, Verona and Wilson.

There is also a two-person race in the Pastures District. Incumbent Timothy Simmons will be challenged by John Ocheltree. Simmons unseated Ocheltree, who was running for a fifth term on the board, in 2021, winning by just 144 votes in a three-person race.

Ocheltree has agreed to participate in the News Leader/Victory Worship Cen-

ter forum Sept. 25. Simmons has declined the invitation.

The Pastures District includes five precincts — Buffalo Gap, Churchville Elementary, Craigsville, Deerfield and Cedar Green.

In the Middle River District, current school board chair David Shiflett will be running unopposed on the ballot. Shiflett is running for a seventh term. A farmer and former agriculture teacher at both Riverheads and Fort Defiance high school, Shiflett has served on the board since 2004.

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