

# THE NEWS VIRGINIAN

Friday, January 16, 2026

WHERE YOUR STORY LIVES

NewsVirginian.com

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

# ‘SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO’



NELSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PHOTOS

School buses pull into Nelson County High School on Monday, Aug. 12, 2024.

## Nelson County braces for state funding formula change

**JUSTIN FAULCONER**  
Nelson County Times

Nelson County’s fiscal year 2026-27 budget will have a major challenge to contend with: a 10% increase from the last biennium state’s local composite index, a formula that determines state funding to the county’s public schools.



Reed

The local composite index determines school funding and a locality’s ability to pay for education. Ernie Reed, the Nelson County Board of Supervisors’ chair, said at the board’s Dec. 16 meeting, that the 10% local composite index for Nelson will be a real challenge for the school division’s upcoming budget and the county’s as well.

The two boards will have to figure out the fiscal effects, Reed said.

The local composite index is calculated using three indicators of a locality’s ability to pay: true value of real property (weighted 50%), adjusted gross income (weighted 40%) and taxable retail sales (weighted 10%), according to the Virginia Department of Education. Each locality’s index is adjusted to maintain an overall statewide local share of 45% and an overall state share of 55%, according to the state agency.

Nelson’s local composite index rate is now up to 0.7269, an increase from 0.6645 two years ago, according to the Department of Education.

“We’ve gone up to No. 10 in the state in terms of the composite index,” Reed said. “That is something to look forward to in the next budget season.”

### Board backs tourism region move

In other news during the Dec. 16 meeting, the board approved a resolution to recognize Growth & Opportunity, or GO, Virginia’s Region 9 as a distinct tourism region. The resolution states the creation of a distinct tourism region under the Virginia Tourism Corporation structure would allow more targeted investment, improved data collection and a unified brand message aligned with the economic and cultural identity of the region.

“A redefined tourism region would not only improve coordination among local destination marketing organizations but also strengthen VTC’s ability to market Virginia’s tourism diversity more effectively across the Commonwealth,” the resolution reads.

Please see **COUNTY**, Page A2

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

# ‘Everyone is going through something’

Neko Case takes break on ‘Thelma & Louise’ musical with tour stop in Charlottesville

**JANE DUNLAP SATHE**  
The Daily Progress

Neko Case’s latest songs about people finding a balance between strength and sentimentality continue to resonate with listeners who’ve been turning out for tour dates. That kind of balance is helping her remain patient with a project that’s requiring more of a long game.

Sunday’s stop at Charlottesville’s Paramount Theater is part of the Alexandria native’s tour in support of her

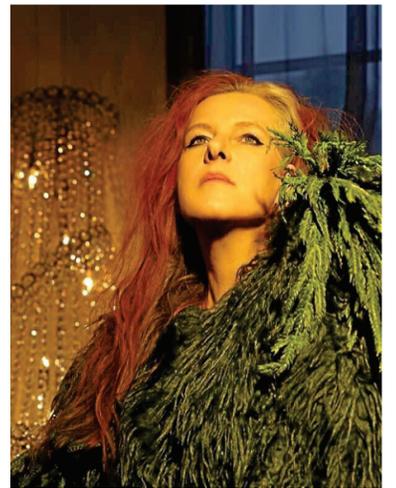
well-received “Neon Grey Midnight Green” album, which recently added a new string of dates in the West and Pacific Northwest. The album, which dropped Sept. 26, is her first release since “Hell-On” in 2018, and it includes “Winchester Mansion of Sound,” a song inspired by friend Dexter Romweber of the Flat Duo Jets, who died in 2024.

The songwriter’s 2025 memoir, “The Harder I Fight, the More I Love You,” also landed on numerous best-books-of-the-year lists and reached No. 5 on the New York Times’ nonfiction bestsellers list.

Touring actually requires striking a balance of its own between packing in new performances and knowing when she and her band need to take refreshing breathers. “We can’t be too long at sea. We don’t want to end up in a Moby Dick situation,”

Case told The Daily Progress. “We’re trying to avoid mutinies at all costs. We know each other well enough to know that we’re exhausted. We just genuinely like each other.”

Case also is excited these days about another creative storytelling project that is taking a bit longer to complete. She is part of a four-member team bringing the hit 1991 film “Thelma & Louise” to the stage as a Broadway production, joining forces with Callie Khori, the film’s screenwriter; playwright and actress Halley Feiffer, who’s writing the book; and director Trip Cullman. Case is writing the musical’s songs, and she looks forward to being able to share them with listeners at last.

Please see **CASE**, Page A2

EBRU YILDIZ

Alexandria-born singer-songwriter Neko Case is known for her solo work and as a member of the indie-rock group the New Pornographers.