

City Editor: Jeremy Hunt, 574-6273, jhunt@dnronline.com; Night City Editor: Jerry Blair, 574-6281, jblair@dnronline.com

Way To Go Nonprofit Seeks County Tax Exemption

Group Provides Vehicles To Area's Working Poor

By NOLAN STOUT
Daily News-Record

HARRISONBURG — It's not easy to keep a job if you can't get to work.

And Way To Go Inc. helps people living below the poverty line get around town by providing them with vehicles at little to no cost.

The company is seeking tax-exempt status from Rockingham County, and the Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on the request Wednesday.

The nonprofit, which is part of James Madison University's Madison Center For Community Development, has federal and state tax-exempt status but is

seeking an exemption from the county's personal property tax.

Way To Go typically has no taxable property, but it receives donated vehicles that could remain in the nonprofit's name during tax time, according to a public notice.

"We rely on members of the community to donate their used vehicles," said Ben Craig, the organization's program coordinator.

Craig said Way To Go typically goes to the Department of Motor Vehicles to have the car's title transferred to the organization and then immediately to a client.

He said an issue arose when Way To Go received a car at the end of 2016 and it was still in the organization's name on Jan. 1.

Way To Go was founded in 2005 and helps around 200 families a year get transportation,

Craig said. Clients must live in Harrisonburg or Rockingham County, be employed for at least 30 hours a week and be referred to the organization by Social Services.

Some of the vehicles the company uses come from residents who donate cars, Craig said. Residents can use the donations as a tax write-off.

"It's a plus for them and it's a plus for our clients as well who have transportation to get to and from work," he said, "but also are able to access other community services as well."

Craig said the group partnered with Farmers & Merchant's Bank in 2015 to provide fixed, low-interest loans to clients so they can buy a car.

Way To Go helps with the

See EXEMPTION, Page A4



Holly Marcus / Special to the DN-R

Broadway resident Deanna Dove gets ready to test drive a 2006 Honda Odyssey at Steven Toyota in Harrisonburg on Friday as Rhonda Taylor, a family services specialist with Harrisonburg Rockingham Social Services rides along. Dove is receiving assistance through Way To Go Inc., a nonprofit that helps low-income families in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County with transportation needs.

Police Seek Suspects Passing Counterfeit Checks In Harrisonburg

By NOLAN STOUT
Daily News-Record

HARRISONBURG — Police are trying to find a group of people they say passed counterfeit checks in the city last week.

Four or five people stole checks from local businesses and created counterfeit checks resembling them on Thursday and Friday, according to a Saturday press release from the Harrisonburg Police Department.

Police say the checks were then cashed by other people at several banks and the money was given to the suspects, who are described as three or four black men and a black woman and are all around 25 years old.

HPD Sgt. Chris Monahan didn't know what businesses the checks came from or how much money was gained in the crime. Monahan said more banks may have received the checks.

"There's probably additional banks that cashed them and just haven't realized it yet," he said.

Monahan said it's unclear if the people who cashed the checks knew they were counterfeit, but there doesn't appear to be a relationship between them and the suspects.

The suspects are possibly linked to three vehicles, the release says: a newer model black Chevrolet Impala with North Carolina registration EED-9406, a gray or blue Ford sedan and a silver SUV. The cars may be rentals from North Carolina and Texas.

The group was seen around East Market Street and Burgess Road during the day on both Thursday and Friday, the release says.

The release said they most likely stayed in "local lodgings" on Thursday and Monahan said they are probably no longer in the area. He wouldn't say where police believe they stayed.

Copyright © 2017 Daily News-Record, 02/06/2017
February 6, 2017 10:31 am GMT +5:00

Anyone with information is asked to contact HPD's Major Crimes Unit at 437-2640. Callers can remain anonymous by calling Crime Solvers at 574-5050 or by

Feline Football



LEFT: James Madison University senior Cailin Lindsay of Mechanicsville holds Buster as her boyfriend, Ryan Black, also of Mechanicsville, watches during the Cat's Cradle kitten bowl at Pale Fire Brewing Co. on Saturday.

BELOW: Cheerleaders fire up the crowd at the start of the Rockingham/Harrisonburg SPCA Kitten Bowl at JMU.

Photos by Daniel Lin / DN-R

SuPurr Stars Stage Kitten Bowl

Shelters Show Off Cats For Super Bowl Weekend

By KELLY CLARK
Daily News-Record

HARRISONBURG — Two city animal shelters held variations of one big game on Saturday in a push to get their cats into loving homes.

The Rockingham/Harrisonburg SPCA and Cat's Cradle Adoption Center hosted local versions of the Kitten Bowl in separate events that spoofed the NFL's Super Bowl.

The SPCA held a tailgate party with the James Madison



Laura Mock of WHSV and money for the adoption center.

Schools. Schools Superintendent Mark Johnston will present the school division's funding request during the School Board's meeting this Thursday.

Supervisors are scheduled to approve the final fiscal 2018 budget and tax rate on April 18.

The current spending plan of \$60.4 million, adopted in April, includes \$26 million for county schools, \$14.6 million for public safety and \$1.1 million for public works.

The board also set the real estate tax rate at 60 cents per \$100 of assessed value, an increase of 3 cents from the year before.

The personal property tax rate was set at \$3.60 per \$100 of assessed value, an increase from \$3.50.

Contact Kelly Clark at 574-6290 or kclark@dnronline.com

Contact Kelly Clark at 574-6290 or kclark@dnronline.com

Can Help Build Credit

Exemption

FROM PAGE A3

down payment and the loans allows the client to "improve their credit scores, which then in turn can be a building block for long-term financial stability," Craig said.

The organization also helps out with "really anything that is vehicle-related," Craig said, such as vehicle repairs.

The hearing begins at 6 p.m. in the Rockingham County Administration Center, 20 E. Gay St.

Contact Nolan Stout at 574-6278 or nstout@dnronline.com

Helped Point Out Areas In Need Of Improvement

held in Harrisonburg, Rockingham County and Augusta County last year.

Commander said the trainings meant to perfect procedures for large-scale hazmat situations, the Valley has escaped in recent years.

"If the good Lord willing, we'll have to deal with something like this for real," he said.

Contact Kelly Clark at 574-6290 or kclark@dnronline.com



Bridgewater firefighter Ryan Eagle goes through hazmat paperwork during a training exercise at Hose Co. 4 Saturday morning.

Daniel Lin / DN-R