



Assistance available for past due city utility bills

RADFORD - The City of Radford is assisting some residential electric customer who have been economically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with funds for past due bills, and there is still time to apply for the assistance. Radford's COVID-19 Municipal Utility Relief Program is accepting applications until January 6. "The Governor has authorized Coronavirus Relief Funds for the purpose of assisting our customers with arrearages in excess of 30 days, with

priority given to those that are greater than 60 days in arrears," reads a letter sent out by the city's treasurer's office. "In order to qualify for relief under this program, the customer must attest that he/ she has experienced financial hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic." The program requires an application be filled out and returned to the treasurer's office no later than Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021 to be considered for the funding. Applicable causes of

economic hardship on the application include having been laid off, place of employment has closed, experienced a reduction in hours, must stay home to care for children due to schools/daycare closed, loss of child or spousal support, can't work due to contracting COVID-19, unable to find work, or unable/unwilling to participate in previous employment due to high risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

- Heather Bell

News brief: Carilion Clinic implements new hospital visitation guidelines

Carilion Clinic implemented new hospital visitation guidelines effective Tuesday, Dec. 22. The new guidelines have three risk levels: green level (limited visitation), yellow level (restricted visitation) and red level (highly restricted visitation). The public may visit CarilionClinic.org/visitor-guidelines to learn more about each level and look up the current level for their local facility. The visitation level for each hospital will be updated weekly every Monday morning based on the level of COVID-19 spread in the immediate community surrounding each hospital. According to the clinic this was a difficult decision, especially during the holiday season. Given the increased community spread throughout the region, however, this is the best way to keep patients, staff and visitors safe. Carilion Clinic operates the following facilities in Montgomery County: Carilion Clinic Family Medicine, 205 Roanoke St. Christiansburg. Carilion Clinic Urology, 120 Akers Farm Road NE, Christiansburg. Carilion Clinic Outpatient Therapy, 120 Ponderosa Dr. NE, Christiansburg. Carilion Clinic Family Medicine, 901 Plantation Rd, Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic Family Medicine, Warm Hearth

Village, 981 Litton Ln, Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic Pulmonary Medicine New River Valley, 2900 Lamb Cir. Suite 7-700b, Christiansburg. Carilion Clinic Cosmetic Center, 817 Davis St. Suite 2, Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic Family Medicine, 6920 Roanoke Rd, Shawsville. Carilion Clinic Cardiology, 1201 Elm St. NE, Christiansburg. Carilion Clinic Family Medicine North Main, 1420 N. Main St, Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic Village Square, 434 Peppers Ferry Rd. NW, Christiansburg. Carilion Clinic Orthopaedic Surgery, 215 Gilbert St., Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic, 901 Plantation Rd., Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic Employee Asst., Carilion Clinic, St. Albans, Radford. Carilion Clinic Pulmonary Medicine, 901 Plantation Rd., Blacksburg. Carilion Clinic Sleep Center, 2900 Lamb Cir. #370, Christiansburg.



VFW donates bicycles for Christmas



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Radford's Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 776 is making Christmas a little brighter, recently donating four bicycles to the Radford City Sheriff's Department to distribute to children in need. Pictured (left to right) is RCSO Deputy Jeff Raven, and VFW members Mike Ross, Commander Gary Harris, Mike Conklin and RCSO Deputy Charlie Burton, who is also a VFW member.

Radford Sheriff's Office distributes Christmas gift boxes

With the annual Radford Sheriff's Office Christmas party for senior citizens cancelled by COVID-19, Sheriff Mark Armentrout came up with a new way to give back to the seniors: the distribution by the sheriff's office of Christmas gift boxes. The Christmas party is a function of TRIAD, a cooperative effort of law enforcement agencies (police/fire/sheriffs), senior citizens and senior organizations focused on reducing crimes against the community's most vulnerable citizens: its seniors. During Thanksgiving, the Radford Sheriff's Office pulled winners out of a hat and delivered five Thanksgiving holiday baskets to the lucky winners. The baskets were filled to the brim with everything needed for a Thanksgiving dinner, including a gift card for a turkey.



With the annual senior citizen Christmas party cancelled, Radford Sheriff Mark Armentrout and his office came up with a new way to give back to the seniors: They distributed Christmas gift boxes.

See Sheriff's Office, page 2

ThickSat satellite built by Virginia Tech students is headed to space

Few students have the opportunity to design, test and build a satellite and see it successfully launched into space. A group of Virginia Tech engineering students is one step closer as their satellite, the "ThickSat," has been delivered for space

launch qualification testing before being integrated onto the rocket for launch. What began as a conceptual senior capstone design project for a group of aerospace engineering seniors two years ago has since been

expanded and developed into a complex piece of hardware bound for low-Earth orbit. Once cleared for flight, the completed satellite will fulfill its mission when it launches into space aboard the Cygnus NG-15 spacecraft, scheduled for launch in February 2021. "This project is providing students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels the unique opportunity to design, develop, test and monitor their own experimental payload and see it successfully launched into space," said Jonathan Black, professor in aerospace and ocean engineering, co-director for the Center for Space Science and Engineering Research (Space@VT), and director of the Aerospace and Ocean Systems Lab at the Hume Center at Virginia Tech. "Throughout the process, they are gaining critical skills in spacecraft systems engineering and space science that will complement what they are



PHOTO BY GUSTAVO GARGIONI

Students at Space@VT finalize assembly of their ThickSat, which will test a carbon fiber mast boom in low Earth orbit.

See ThickSat, page 3

Virginia revs up statewide checkpoint strikeforce campaign to halt impaired driving this holiday season

Governor Ralph Northam Monday announced that the commonwealth's 19th annual Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign and enforcement effort is ramping up on Virginia's roads this holiday travel season to help curb alcohol-related traffic fatalities. According to figures from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), 253 individuals have died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes on Virginia's roadways through Dec. 8, 2020, compared to 249 alcohol-related traffic fatalities recorded during the same period in 2019. During last year's Thanksgiving to New Year's holiday period, 32 percent of all traffic deaths in Virginia involved drunk drivers. "At every stage of this pandemic, Virginians have worked together to keep each other safe, and this holiday season is no different," said the governor. "While your travel plans may look different this year, it is important to keep your guard up, even if you are just making short trips near home. If you plan to drink, make sure you have a sober ride. Virginia has zero tolerance for impaired driving." In partnership with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" national enforcement mobilization period from Dec. 18, 2020, to Jan. 1, 2021, state and local law

enforcement agencies will be conducting more than 700 saturation patrols and nearly 100 sobriety checkpoints throughout Virginia. "We all have a shared responsibility to prevent alcohol-related fatalities on our roads," said Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine. "As we celebrate this holiday season, I urge Virginians to take care of each other by designating sober drivers and never allowing friends or family to drive after drinking." "Although fewer vehicles have been on the road during the pandemic, our data shows no decrease in the devastation caused by selfish drivers who choose to get behind the wheel when impaired," said DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb, the governor's highway safety representative. "Many of us will be spending the holidays at home this year, but if you are going out and your celebration involves alcohol, please make a plan for a safe ride home before you start drinking." Complementing the high-visibility enforcement efforts, Virginia's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign will be running a surround-sound ad campaign called "Act Like It." The advertising campaign is geared toward Virginia males ages 21-35, the demographic that, according to research, is

See Strikeforce, page 3

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, Dec. 23:

Radford Public Library holiday closings

The library will be closed from Wednesday, Dec. 23, through Sunday, Dec. 27, for the Christmas holiday. Open for Grab & Go and Library by Appointment services again on Monday, Dec. 28. For the New Year, RPL will be closed from Thursday, Dec. 31, through Sunday, Jan. 3, and will resume routine hours on Monday, Jan. 4, 2021.

Thursday, Dec. 24:

Christiansburg closings for Christmas, New Year's

The town's facilities will be closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Solid waste normally scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 24, will be collected on Tuesday, Dec. 22, along with Tuesday's regular collection. Solid waste normally scheduled for Friday, Dec. 25, will be collected on Wednesday, Dec. 23, along with Wednesday's regular collection.

Also, the town's facilities will be closed for New Year's Day on Friday, Jan. 1, 2021. Solid waste normally collected on Fridays will be collected on Thursday, Dec. 31, along with Thursday's regular collection.

Radford Closings for Christmas:

Radford City offices will be closed Wednesday, Dec. 23, through Friday, Dec. 25.

The solid waste collection for Friday, Dec. 25, will be collected on Monday, Dec. 28. Please have garbage available for collection by 7:30 a.m. The drop center will be closed Dec. 23 through Christmas.

Saturday, Dec. 26:

Escape of the North Pole

MFRL Library online at 4 p.m. on Discord, a live play of a North Pole Escape Room or participants may play at their own pace. Email shodges@mfrl.org for more information.

Monday, Dec. 28:

Hibernation Station

MFRL Library Online at 1 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 1-Monday, Jan. 25

MFRL Cookie Decorating Contest

MFRL Library online. Decorate a cookie with supplies in your home. Cookies can be homemade or store bought. Participant entries will be featured on social media. The contest is open to all ages. A prize will be awarded to the winner. The contest ends Monday, Jan. 25. Send pictures of your decorated cookies to shodges@mfrl.org.

Wednesday, Jan. 6:

Talking About Books: Virtual Meeting

Christiansburg Library, 11 .m. - noon. Discussing American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins, virtually.

Thursday, Jan. 7:

Chamber of Commerce Eggs & Issues

Panel discussion with local law enforcement via Zoom, 8 - 9 a.m.

American Legion meeting

Harvey-Howe-Carper Post 30 will meet at 7 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in Radford. In the event of heavy snowfall or ice, the meeting will be canceled. For further information, please contact 250-2283 or 239-9864.

Tuesday, Jan. 12:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Family Italian Restaurant on 3204 Riner Road. Jonathan McPeak will present the "History of the 24th Virginia Infantry Regiment." Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are also invited to attend. For further information, call 320-4315 or 239-9864.

Ongoing: Through Dec. 24:

Wrapping for a Reason

A holiday wrapping booth to raise money for local emergency assistance is located in Uptown Christiansburg (formerly NRV Mall), near Bath & Body Works. It is open today and Christmas Eve, Dec. 23 and 24.

Volunteers are needed. All proceeds benefit the Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program, commonly known as MCEAP, which provides emergency food, clothing, utility, rent and mortgage assistance to Montgomery County

residents year-round. The sign-up link is <https://tinyurl.com/w4r2020>. Monetary, tax-deductible, year-end donations to MCEAP are also welcome. Details are at mceap.com or 540-260-3173. For more information, email w4reason@gmail.com or text/call 540-239-1093.

Through Dec. 30:

The YMCA at Virginia Tech Meals on Main program

Today, Dec. 23, the Y Crew will be passing out holiday treats from Next Door Bake Shop, Blacksburg Bagels and the Thrift Shop along with the shelf stable meals and snacks. Treats are available while stocks last. Santa has decided to take a few hours away from the elves and reindeer to come and help with the meal distribution today, Dec 23, at the Thrift Shop parking lot. Santa will remain behind the tables to keep safe social distancing but he'll be delighted to say hello. Please remember to wear your mask and keep your distance. As always Meals on Main will operate rain or shine.

The holiday schedule for meal distribution will be as follows: Wed., Dec. 23 (to replace Fri Dec 25): 4-6 p.m. in the Thrift Shop parking lot; Mon., Dec. 28: 4-6 p.m. at Prices Fork Elementary School parking lot; Wed., Dec. 30 (to replace Fri., Jan. 1): 4-6 p.m. in the Thrift Shop parking lot.

Through the Meals on Main initiative, the YMCA at Virginia Tech hopes to help relieve some of the pressure faced by families due to the current pandemic.

Through Dec. 31:

Christiansburg Leaf Collection

The town of Christiansburg's annual free leaf collection is underway and runs through Dec. 31, weather permitting. Public Works crews use a special truck that vacuums the leaves and will collect only piles of loose leaves; leaves placed in bags will not be accepted. Do not place leaves in a way that blocks sidewalks, sanitary sewers, solid waste carts, drainage ditches or utility meter boxes. If you are concerned your leaves may blow away, please place a tarp on top of your pile. Crews will remove the tarp, collect leaves and leave tarp behind.

Throughout December:

Grab-and-Go Crafts

At the Meadowbrook Public Library during regular library

hours. These are free crafts that may be taken home to make. Each week there will be new crafts.

StoryWalk

All month at the Christiansburg Library. Brains and bodies get exercise by reading and walking the trail. The walk begins at the library at the College Street entrance of Downtown Park. This month's book is The Emperor's Egg.

Virtual Cookie Recipe Exchange

At the Christiansburg Library. Share your favorite cookie recipe on Facebook. Take-and-Make Snowman Hot Cocoa in a Jar craft will be available while supplies last.

Aquatic, Rec Center hours for appointments

The Christiansburg Aquatic Center is open by appointment only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturdays from noon to 5 pm. To make a reservation, visit www.cacpool.com

The Christiansburg Recreation Center is open by appointment only Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m., on Saturdays from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Sundays from 1 p.m. until 7 p.m. To make a reservation, visit www.christiansburg.org/recreation.

Montgomery-Floyd Library Curbside only

All branches of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library are offering only curbside pickup service (including remote printing). In-branch services are not currently available. Curbside hours are: Monday - Thursday 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Please return all library items in the outside Book Drop. Visit <https://www.mfrl.org> for more information.

Radford Public Library Resumes In-Library Appointments

Same-day in-house browsing and computer use appointments can be made Monday through Saturday on the hour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Staff will continue to ask screening health questions, take temperatures and require masks be worn as part of the ongoing process of in-library browsing. Children/youth under 18 are welcome to browse when accompanied by an adult. Please call (540) 731-3621 to schedule an appointment to

browse or use the computers on Thursday through Saturday.

Radford Public Library Grab & Go Services

Monday through Saturday. Please remember that you can use the MyLibro app to search RPL's catalog and place holds as well as schedule pick-up times. For Grab and Go Prints, email the documents you would like printed to rad.lib@radfordva.gov, then call 731-3621 to make sure the document are received and schedule a time to pick them up at the building entrance. Prices are the same as usual (\$0.10 for black and white, \$0.25 for color), and exact change is appreciated when possible.

Through Monday, Jan. 4, 2021:

United Way Festival of Trees

The United Way and partner agencies are decorating Christmas trees in their offices to help spread some holiday cheer in these troublesome times. Pictures of each tree are posted on unitedwaynrv.org/tree. Residents of the NRV have the job of picking their favorite tree by visiting the United Way website anytime through Monday, Jan. 4, checking out the trees and casting a vote. A special trophy will be awarded to the winner. Voting will be cast by donations of any amount.

Through Thursday, Jan. 21:

Girl Scout Cookie Sales

The Girl Scouts of Virginia Skyline Council are taking orders for cookies that will be delivered in mid-January. Gift certificates can be purchased through Jan. 14, 2021, by emailing info@gsvsc.org or calling 540-777-5100. Girl Scout cookies are \$5 a box. To locate a Girl Scout to take an order, contact the girl scouts at info@gsvsc.org or 540-777-5100. When the cookies arrive in the region in mid-January, Girl Scouts will be delivering them in different ways: masked drop-offs to the customer's door; cookie booth drive-thrus; online ordering with shipping via Digital Cookie; cookie delivery service (The details are being worked out work with a national food delivery service. They will be announced on Jan. 12.); and voice-activated sales via Echo home systems.

Sheriff's Office

from page 1

This gesture was noticed by several citizens in the community who expressed a desire to pitch in and do

even more for Christmas. Tom Hannifan of the Snowville Masonic Lodge #159 donated \$500 to the

Radford City TRIAD to be used to pay for, pack and distribute Christmas gift boxes for TRIAD mem-

bers. A plan was set in place to give each member of TRIAD a Christmas gift. Soon after, another willing citizen donated \$300 towards this effort.

Radford business owner Abie Williams of Stifel Nicolaus and Co. also donated \$500. Jeff Caldwell of Ship on Site of Radford donated all the gift boxes, and Scott Armentrout of Radford Drug donated gifts as well.

The donations were enough to expand and in-

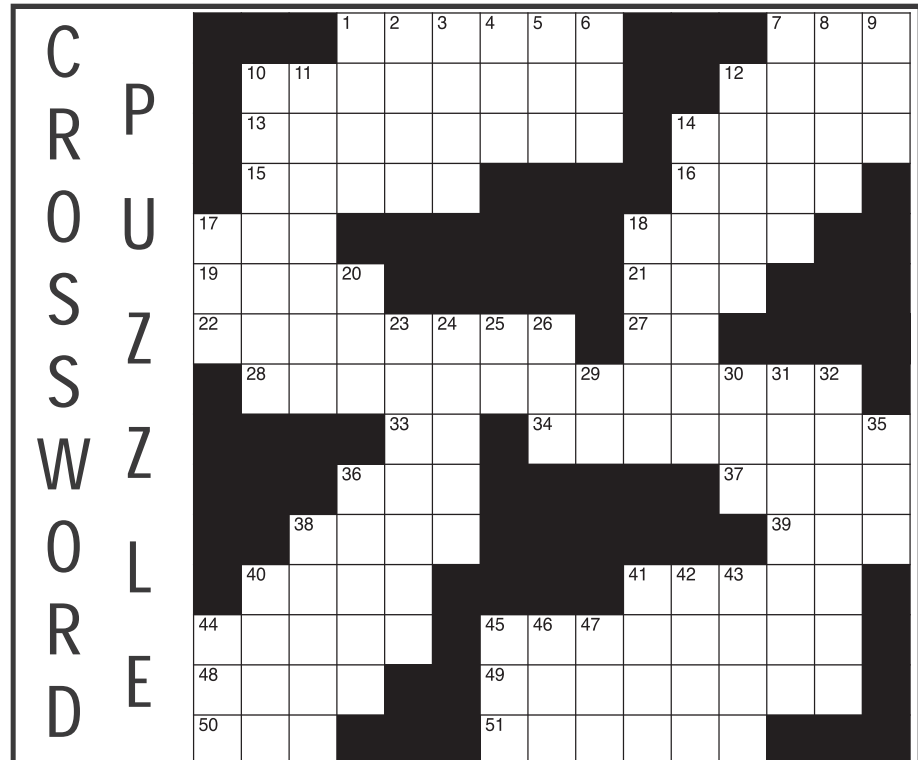
clude every participant in the Radford Sheriff's Office Good Morning Radford Program a gift as well. The Good Morning Radford program calls participants every morning for a well-being check. This daily call program started in 2005 and has continued every day for the past 15 years.

With such large support, the deputies of the Sheriff's Office, Accreditation manager/ Secretary Shannon Linkous and volunteer Kat Daily chipped in and pre-

pared the gift boxes. When Jae De La Mora heard of the gifts, she encouraged her children to create hand-made cards to be included in each gift box.

The boxes were stuffed with a variety of items ranging from Christmas goodies and personal protective equipment to household items and much more.

The gift box distribution was such a success that Sheriff Armentrout has declared his hopes of making the effort an annual event.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Twos under par
 - 7. Expresses surprise
 - 10. Shows exceedingly great size
 - 12. At this place
 - 13. One who prints from a plate
 - 14. '95 U.S. Open golf champ Corey
 - 15. Stupefy with alcohol
 - 16. Breezed through
 - 17. A major division of geological time
 - 18. Humble request for help
 - 19. Part of a deck
 - 21. Albanian monetary unit
 - 22. Atomic #22
 - 27. Atomic #18
 - 28. Catholic holiday service
 - 33. Canadian province
 - 34. Capital of Alberta
 - 36. Large African antelope
 - 37. Mexican tortilla sandwich
 - 38. Pigmented eye membrane
 - 39. Baby's food protector
 - 40. Winglike structures
 - 41. Sun-dried brick
 - 44. Those dull in appearance
 - 45. Basketlike baby's bed
 - 48. Purpose or intent
 - 49. Difficult to carry
 - 50. Cry made by sheep
 - 51. More than one spouse
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Incredible edibles
 - 2. About aviation
 - 3. Small biting flies
 - 4. Bulgarian monetary unit
 - 5. Point midway between E and SE
 - 6. Old CCCP or U___
 - 7. Rubber tree genus
 - 8. Waterless
 - 9. Female chicken
 - 10. Relating to the Hebrews
 - 11. Dig up
 - 12. Diacritic caron
 - 14. Capital of Sicily
 - 17. Shock therapy
 - 18. Cyto___: surrounds the nucleus
 - 20. Daughters of the Am. Revolution
 - 23. Nincompoops
 - 24. Great battle of 333 BC
 - 25. Salt Lake state
 - 26. Woman (French)
 - 29. A public promotion
 - 30. Social insect
 - 31. Knifed
 - 32. Formal association of people
 - 35. Toff
 - 36. Snaps up
 - 38. Annona diversifolia
 - 40. Opera vocal solo
 - 41. Largest continent
 - 42. Day (Latin)
 - 43. Sole
 - 44. Hit lightly
 - 45. Guy (slang)
 - 46. Black tropical Am. cuckoo
 - 47. Screen Writers Guild

DO IT. SO WE CAN GET THROUGH IT.

Practice safe socializing.

CARILIONCLINIC

Santa joins Y Crew to distribute meals at YMCA at VT

Santa Claus himself surprised the Y Crew at the YMCA at VT Thursday, Dec. 17, by taking time away from his busy schedule at the North Pole to help distribute meals as part of the Y's Meals on Main program. First, Santa stopped in Salem to help load the food truck there and then flew down in his sleigh to Blacksburg to help the crew unload the meals into the storage space in the Y Center.

Santa was so happy to help that he planned to make a return trip today, Dec. 23, to help distribute the meals to the children outside the YMCA Thrift Shop at 1000 N. Main St. from 4 to 6 p.m.

The Y Crew also passed out holiday treats today, Dec. 23, from the Next Door Bake Shop, Blacksburg Bagels and the Thrift Shop along with the shelf stable meals and snacks from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Thrift Shop parking lot.

Treats are available while they last.

The holiday schedule for meal distribution is as follows:

Wednesday, Dec. 23 (to replace Friday, Dec. 25): 4 to 6 p.m. in the Thrift Shop parking lot.

Monday, Dec. 28: 4-6pm at Prices Fork Elementary School parking lot.

Wednesday, Dec. 30 (to replace Friday, Jan. 1): 4 to 6 p.m. in the Thrift Shop parking lot.

On Wednesday, Dec. 30, the YMCA at VT is partnering with Avellino's Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria to provide fresh cooked family meals to be distributed during Meals on Main (4 to 6 p.m.). A donation from Green Valley Builders helped make this special food distribution possible.

Through its Meals on Main initiative, the YMCA at Virginia Tech hopes to help relieve some of the pressure faced by

families due to the current pandemic.

The Y's holiday tree and gingerbread house at Kent Square placed first in the contest organized by Downtown Blacksburg, Inc., Kent Jewelers and Nest Realty. The contest raised funds for the Women's Resource Center of the NRV.

All of the contest's holiday trees and gingerbread houses are on display in Kent Square until Jan. 4. They can also be seen on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/events/206224557675535/?active_tab=discussion.

The YMCA at Virginia Tech has also opened the Y's Best Boutique in the Y Center building adjacent to the Thrift Shop. Y's Best Boutique contains higher value, brand-name labels; new, vintage and collectible merchandise donated to the Y; and some consignment items. All items are researched and competitively priced



Santa Claus took a break Thursday from the cold weather of the North Pole to fly down to Virginia and help the YMCA's Y Crew distribute meals in the Meals on Main program.

with proceeds going to support the YMCA's programs in the New River Valley.

Y's Best Boutique is usually open on weekends Friday through Sunday, but because of the holidays, the boutique has added a special shopping day -- today, Wednesday,

Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. -- and will be closed on Christmas Eve; Friday, Christmas Day; New Year's Eve; and Friday, New Year's Day.

As always, more details about shopping hours are available at www.vtymca.org.

The YMCA at VT is

a nonprofit dedicated to serving this community. Donations can be made to support the Y's community programs such as Meals on Main from the Y's website at: <http://vtymca.org/> or by sending a check to YMCA at VT, 403 Washington St. SW, Blacksburg, VA 24060.

PETS-OF-THE-WEEK

At this time, visits to the Animal Care and Adoption Center are limited to one party at a time in the lobby area. Animal areas are not open to the public. To schedule an appointment to meet a prospective pet call (540) 382-5795 or email animalcenter@montgomerycountyva.gov.



Brooklyn is ready for a home for the holidays and beyond. She would need to be the only pet in the home as she does not react well to other animals. Brooklyn is house-trained and aims to please. She has some early "holiday weight" due to her love of yummy treats.



Kalvin has an independent spirit. He's a nice guy who prefers to relax without too many distractions. Hanging out in front of a window may be a favorite pastime. Calvin is house-trained and is good with other cats.

Truliant supports Radford's Elf Shelf and Helping Overcome Poverty's Existence

Truliant Federal Credit Union, which has a branch in the Village Oaks Shopping Center in Radford, is partnering with community organizations, including Radford's Elf Shelf and Helping Overcome Poverty's Existence, to spread a message of hope through its 'Brighter Days' initiative this holiday season.

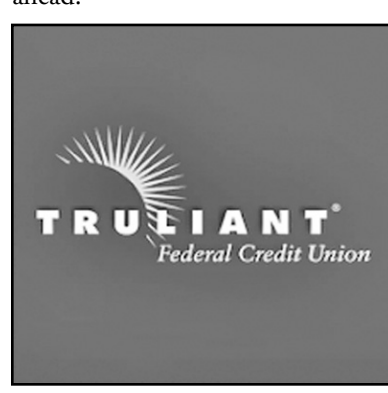
"We can all agree that 2020 has been challenging," said Tricia Beeker, Truliant's director of marketing. "From a global pandemic to financial hardships, from vacations canceled to family gatherings being impacted, this holiday season is going to look different. Truliant is different too. We're here to shine a light on these dark days and help our community see Brighter Days during the holidays."

Through the initiative, Truliant

is working with more than 35 community organizations in the Carolinas and Virginia. The initiative will impact more than 2,300 individuals across the credit union's branch footprint. Truliant is offering funding for utility and rent assistance, food and meal delivery, gift cards to purchase toys for foster children and children at domestic abuse centers, local food pantries, headphones for virtual learning students, kid's shoes and coats, emergency needs items for students, and more.

"We celebrate the work of community partners who did an outstanding job of filling the gaps in communities during this challenging year," said Atticus Simpson, Truliant's director of community engagement. "At Truliant, we're carrying out our mission to improve

lives by helping them close 2020 strong and with the support to continue providing comfort and a crucial safety net to those who are most vulnerable. There are hopeful signs for health and economic recovery on the horizon. We are building on the message that Brighter Days are ahead."



ThickSat

from page 1

learning in the classroom."

Humble beginnings At Space@VT, Virginia Tech's ThickSat was developed by a large team of undergraduate and graduate students from across the College of Engineering and the College of Science over the past two years.

Professor Kevin Shingpaugh encouraged student participation in the ThinSat program as part of his space vehicle design course, a year-long senior capstone design experience in the Department of Aerospace and Ocean Engineering.

According to Shingpaugh, the plan was to design a satellite during the first semester, complete a quick build and test with a low-altitude balloon flight prior to delivering the final space flight payload in the spring. The undergraduates designed and built a prototype, but delays in the test phase occurred, and as the seniors graduated and departed Virginia Tech, a group of Space@VT students picked up the project where they left off.

Virginia Tech's completed flight unit was recently delivered to the Near Space Launch in Upland, Ind., where it will undergo space launch qualification testing to ensure the hardware can withstand launch and deployment in the space

environment. The ThickSat, along with dozens of ThinSat projects from other university and high school teams, will then be integrated into a satellite dispenser and prepared for launch. The payloads will be transported back to the NASA Wallops Flight Facility and attached onto the upper stage booster on the Cygnus NG-15 and launched into space.

After the Cygnus spacecraft separates from the rocket, the satellite dispenser will open up and disperse the satellites at the edge of the Earth's atmosphere, in the region known as extreme low Earth orbit. The satellites will collect data or perform their intended missions for about five to seven days before burning upon re-entry into Earth's atmosphere.

Since the ThickSat project's inception, approximately 25 Virginia Tech undergraduate and graduate students have had a hand in this mission as part of a much larger cross-institutional team. Students from aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, computer science and physics have worked together to make the mission a reality.

-Written by Jama Green

Strikeforce

from page 1

most likely to drive after drinking.

Ads will reach them where they spend their time—on social media platforms, gaming sites, streaming music and TV, and more—to remind viewers that drinking and driving is irresponsible. If you are old enough to

drink, act like it. Get a safe ride home.

The 30-second spot is updated from the original version developed in 2018 to address the current COVID-19 pandemic. This year's campaign also includes Spanish-language ads online and on streaming radio.

Historic Montgomery



Christiansburg's West Main Street is ready for Christmas, c. 1950. (This image from the D. D. Lester Collection and many more are available from the Montgomery Museum of Art & History.)

HOLIDAY ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Our offices will be closed on Friday, December 25 for Christmas. The deadline for ALL ADVERTISING running in the Saturday 12/26 issue of the News Messenger/Radford News Journal will be Wed., December 23 at noon. We will also be closed on Friday, January 1 for New Years. The deadline for ALL ADVERTISING running in the Saturday 1/2 issue of the News Messenger/Radford News Journal will be Wed., December 30 at noon.

OPINION

Evans King: The Christmas orange

I was in the grocery store the other day doing a little Christmas stocking up. I spied an item that must be seasonal – a bag of spectacularly colored apples – reds and greens – and brilliant oranges. I wasn't used to seeing them packaged that way and I had to buy them.

If nothing else it helps provide cover for the little white lies I tell my doctor and my health insurance carrier that "oh, yeah, sure, I always have fruits and vegetables around." Never know when they might ask for receipts.

It brought back a poignant Christmas memory. I don't remember how old I was, maybe 8, but I can still hear my father when I asked what he got for Christmas when he was a kid. He said, "an orange." I said, not intending to be funny, "an orange what?" An orange bicycle? An orange baseball glove? An orange wagon? He said, "No, we just got oranges". Remembering that moment always fills me even more with love and warmth for my Dad eager to tell the King family story.

In case I am losing readers at this point, there is one urgent takeaway here: learn about your families while you have the chance. It's easier to chronicle and preserve now. In my youth it was mainly an oral history, and I did not do my part by being a good listener as well as I would have liked. Take the time.

Back to the Kings of Christiansburg. My dad was the oldest of eight (There had been one more – another boy John – who died in early childhood in 1918 from the Spanish flu.)

The kids consisted of my Dad (Evans), the twins Clyde and Cline, Elbert, Violet, Ruth, Pearl and Barbara. No argument from me if you say they sure don't name them like they used to. Aunt Barbara, the youngest, got off easy (must have run out of cool names by then). My grandfather was Charlie, and my grandmother was Virgie Mae (no comment please), Virgie Mae Sutphin.

The first several years of my Dad's life were spent in a hollow near the Montgomery-Floyd County line. Huffville, a suburb of Pilot. I don't think they knew which county they were in. They were the classic Southern family of that era – post-reconstruction, pre-depression – subsistence farmers. I was away at college before I learned that "damn" and "yankee" were separate words. My father said that they didn't even notice the depression when it came along. They had lived it their whole lives.

When things got really rough, grandfather Charlie would go to southern West Virginia and work in the mines. He was a mechanic and worked on the rail cars that hauled the coal out of the ground. He lived in coal camps and sent money back to his family. He worked underground some.

Here is where the story gets a little more interesting. The Kings are known as a loquacious lot; we talk. A lot. But apparently this trait wasn't from the King side. My Dad said one time that he heard his father say "maybe 10 words in his whole life." Charlie King was just a simple, hard-work-

ing, God-fearing man who did the best he could to provide for a family that got away from him numbers-wise.

The penchant for talk and a thirst for learning came from my grandmother. In the early part of the 20th century, she obtained a "normal school degree," which, from what I understand, entitled her to teach school, and she was determined that her kids would get educations, like it or not. I think they did like it, judging from the results.

My grandmother's desire that her children be "properly schooled" led her to move the family into Christiansburg after my Dad had finished the eighth grade – for the third time. His mother had been waiting for some of the younger members of the brood to catch up with him to justify the move. There had been no high school where they lived – just a bunch of Kings and Epperlys and Huffs and Turners, and an old one-room school house. Altoona School I think it was called.

Christiansburg had about 1,000 residents when the Kings moved into town in the late 1920's, making a substantial bump in the population. I like to say that they were the poorest family in town, but small southern hamlets of that era were not exactly swimming with Carnegies and Rockefellers, so they were probably typical, just a few more mouths to feed than most.

They settled on Craig Street, not far from the stockyard, the "economic engine" of its day. My vague memories (Charlie and Virgie Mae died close to-

gether around the time I was in first grade.) are of a chicken coop in the yard and a small pasture next door. Smack in the middle of town.

They knocked the back wall out and built rooms on to extend the house as more Kings arrived. (Charlie and Virgie Mae apparently spurning overtures from Planned Parenthood as farm families did.) They never owned a car. My mother taught my Dad to drive when he returned from World War II when he was already principal of the high school. Grandfather Charlie worked at the mill and was a handyman in town, still going to the mines when circumstances required.

Virgie Mae's passion for education and for a better life for her kids was fulfilled many times over. All four sons graduated from college, my Dad and the twins from Emory & Henry, Uncle Elbert from VPI. The girls, who my father said were all brighter than any of the boys, all finished high school, and family legend (my Dad) has it that each was valedictorian of her class. (The times being what they were, college was not in the cards for the girls.) The Kings of Craig Street had the largest number of graduates of Christiansburg High of any nuclear family ever, again per my father. Since families don't get that large any more, I think this record will endure.

The kids all worked hard in school and at home. They all had after-school jobs. The boys played sports, Clyde and Cline being among the better football players in the area. Cline eventually coached the football team at CHS for a couple of

years while my Dad was principal.

My Dad worked in a grocery in high school in addition to playing football and baseball. In college, he worked in the campus cafeteria and sold class rings to get by at the height of the Great Depression.

Later, three of the brothers were in three separate graduate schools in New York City at the same time: my Dad at Columbia and Clyde and Cline at NYU and City College. Around that time, the fourth son, the youngest, Uncle Elbert, began a long and successful career as an engineer with Foster Wheeler, also in the City. Pretty remarkable for a family from hillbilly country. Most of the kids served in World War II. All were solid members of their communities.

Inevitably, each generation takes the past more for granted than the previous one. For goodness sake, it's the past. We assume that things are the way they are because of our own efforts and our own brilliance. How we got to where we are is irrelevant. We are born on third base and go through life thinking we hit triples.

But every year at Christmas, when I see an orange, I count my blessings for the family that gave me the opportunities and the life I have been given.

Evans "Buddy" King is a proud native of Christiansburg, CHS Class of 1971. He resides in Clarksburg, W.Va., where he has practiced law with the firm of Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC, since 1980. He can be reached at evans.king@steptoe-johnson.com.

Cong. Morgan Griffith: Christmas traditions

Christmas is a time of tradition, for families, communities, and throughout our society. For those of us who celebrate, like me, we each have our favorite customs about this season, whether attending a family gathering or town parade or just hearing a favorite Christmas carol.

How those traditions become things we return to year after year make for interesting stories on their own.

One story caught my eye recently on the Merriam-Webster Dictionary website about the phrase "tis the season," a phrase often said around this time of year originating in the Christmas carol "Deck the Halls."

As someone with Welsh ancestry and as chairman of the Congressional Friends of Wales Caucus, I was glad to learn that this beloved carol had notable Welsh roots. According to Merriam-Webster, the carol's tune was apparently first recorded in a 1784 book titled Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards. The book was written by Edward Jones, a harpist for the then-Prince of Wales, the future King George

IV, and Jones dedicated his work to the prince.

A century later, the Welsh tune became linked to a Welsh lyricist. In 1884, a book called The Song Book: Words and Tunes from the Best Poets and Musicians reported that the lyrics to "Deck the Halls" were a translation by Thomas Oliphant of lyrics written by John Jones, a poet who also went by the Welsh name Talhaiarn.

Those lyrics included "tis the season," but they also included the syllables "fa la la la," and the carol's Welsh origins are important in understanding their inclusion.

Merriam-Webster quotes composer John Rutter as saying the song was originally intended for performance by a group of singers and a harpist, the harp being Wales' national instrument. The singers would sing a verse, the harpist would improvise, the singers would move to the next verse, and so on.

But harpists are not always available, nor do harps occupy such a prominent place in our culture as they do in that of Wales. As Rutter said, "That only worked in Wales where they had harpists on every

street corner." So "fa la la la" would be sung to take the harp's place.

Before reading this article, I had not been aware of the link between Wales and this Christmas carol so widely known and sung in our culture. One of the remarkable aspects of the Christmas season is how traditions from so many parts of the world have been blended into the celebrations in our country. You may participate in several without thinking much about it. For example, if you put up a Christmas tree in your house, you're engaging in a custom brought to our country by settlers from Germany.

The variety of these traditions for one holiday speaks to the universal message of the Christmas season and also to the melting pot of American culture. We should be thankful that we live in a country where we can celebrate, or not celebrate, according to our beliefs.

This year, the coronavirus pandemic impedes our enjoyment of some of these customs.

Community celebrations have

See Griffith, page 5

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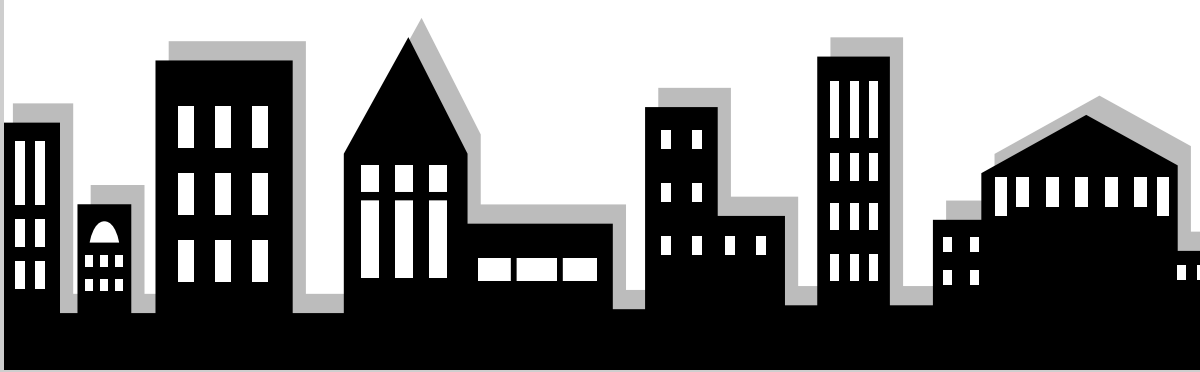
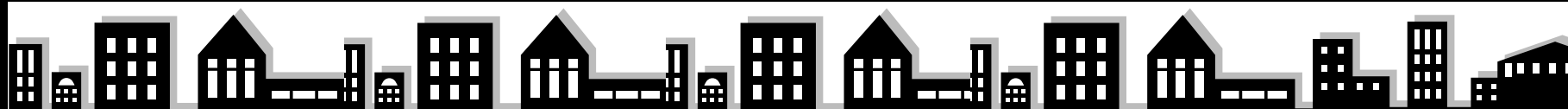
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Home Country with Slim Randles

There's something about a winter moonlight walk, Doc thought, as he smiled his way through his neighborhood.

He looked at the light coming from the windows of each house. Each housewarming its family. It would be about supper time now. Maybe I can

sniff just right and see if I can guess what is cooking. But that could be construed as detective work, and this is definitely not the time for work.

Oh, no. Not when you can look through the lacy, filigree patterns of dormant twigs high in the trees and see

them play sacred music with that moon in the background. No technology can touch the lighting of the world when it's dark. Not the geniuses in Hollywood or anywhere else.

Doc stopped and looked up.

This, he thought, is the real thing. The genuine article.

Oh, we can make lights so bright they blind people, but this is something completely different. This is a light that enchants people.

Yes, Doc thought, as he turned back toward his house. It's true. There's something about a winter moonlight

walk. It's COLD!

Brought to you by "River Runs through Me" by a great salmon fisherman, minister, and author of clean, fun mysteries, Mark Henry Miller. Check it out at www.markh-miller.wordpress.com.

Cooperative Extension Service: Holiday greenery can spread boxwood blight to your landscape

Holiday greenery can spread boxwood blight to your landscape, according to Virginia Cooperative Extension experts.

Boxwood blight, a fungal disease affecting plants in the boxwood family, can be spread by discarded holiday greenery.

"Having a wreath hanging on your door is not necessarily a problem because those fungal spores are not going to jump off the wreath into the landscape, and this fungus doesn't get around very easily," said Mary Ann Hansen, Virginia Cooperative Extension plant pathologist. "It is mainly going to spread if you have discarded infected plant material lying right next to susceptible

boxwood."

Boxwood cuttings are popular in holiday greenery such as wreaths. In recent years, there have been documented cases of holiday greenery infected with boxwood blight, which if placed in the compost pile or left in the landscape, can spread the disease to nearby boxwoods. According to Hansen, decorations using the broad-leaf evergreen often come from western North Carolina and southwest Virginia, where the first cases of boxwood blight were seen in 2011.

Symptoms of boxwood blight include severe and sudden leaf drop; circular brown or tan leaf spots with a dark border; linear black streaks on stems;

and star-shaped, white spore clusters.

To dispose of any holiday greenery, Hansen recommends double-bagging the decoration and sending it to the landfill. Beyond that, there are several ways to prevent the spread of the disease from holiday greenery including familiarizing yourself with the symptoms of boxwood blight, found on Virginia Cooperative Extension Boxwood Blight Task Force website; Inspecting holiday greenery and plants before purchase; purchasing from a reputable source, such as nurseries participating in the Boxwood Blight Cleanliness Program; and properly disposing of discarded boxwood greenery

and infected plants.

Hansen warns not to leave unbagged infected plants and leaf debris on the side of the road to be picked up by waste collectors. In Virginia, the disease is often found on English and American boxwood, both of which are highly susceptible.

Mary Ann Hansen is an Extension specialist and instructor of plant pathology at Virginia Tech who co-manages the Virginia Tech Plant Disease Clinic, which serves as the central diagnostics service lab for Extension county agents throughout the state. Hansen has nearly four decades of experience working with the Virginia Tech Plant Disease clinic provid-

ing diagnostic services for plant problems caused by pathogens and abiotic factors. Hansen also holds a

master of science in plant pathology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Boxwood cuttings are popular in holiday greenery but can also infect it with boxwood blight, which shows itself in leaf drop, dark leaf spots and black streaks on stems.

Goodwill of the Valleys receives largest investment in its 118-year history

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys announced last Wednesday the donation of \$10 million from MacKenzie Scott as part of a historic gift presented to Goodwill Industries International. The donation is the largest in the organization's 118-year history.

Scott is an American novelist, billionaire and venture philanthropist. She has served as the executive director of Bystander Revolution, an anti-bullying organization she founded, since 2014.

The investment will be used by Goodwill Industries of the Valleys

to expand its efforts to help Americans find jobs at a time when more than 10 million Americans are unemployed and urgently need help finding their next jobs. Goodwill will invest the donation in efforts to train and equip individuals with the skills they need to get back to work and onto sustainable career paths.

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys will deploy these resources over a three-year period to support mission, business and human service needs with a focus on serving individuals with obstacles to em-

ployment and providing individuals with opportunities for greater independence.

"We are uniquely positioned to lead the way in ensuring that every individual, regardless of challenges and backgrounds, has access to the skills and services they need to face today's economic situation," said Bruce Phipps, President & CEO, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys. "We are humbled, grateful and overwhelmed by MacKenzie Scott's transformative contribution, which will address the growing need for skills training for job

seekers and help them move onto career paths. The donation will also build access to opportunity and equitable hiring nationwide as millions of community members continue to face historic hardships during this pandemic."

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys provides a breadth of services that range from job readiness, skills training — including digital skills, certifications and credentials — and employment placement, as well as access to holistic wrap-around services such as housing, child care, financial education and

transportation. This financial gift builds upon Goodwill's partnerships with like-minded organizations for more than a decade, including corporate leaders who work in collaboration and strategically with Goodwill, whether through hiring events, assessments or other technology.

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys serves 35 counties and 14 cities throughout Central, Southwest and Southside Virginia. Its mission is to help people and families achieve a better life through work and independence.

Local college students graduate, earn recognition

Blacksburg's Hanchen Zhou graduates

Hanchen Zhou of Blacksburg graduated spring semester from the New York Institute of Technology with an MS in Mechanical Engineering.

New York Institute of Technology offers 90 undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs in more than 50 fields of study. A nonprofit, independent, private, and nonsectarian institute of higher education, New York Institute of Technology has campuses in New York City (Manhattan) and Long Island (Old Westbury), New York; Jonesboro,

Ark.; and Vancouver, British Columbia, as well as programs around the world.

Three make Dean's List at Berea College

Kennet Manley and Victoria Reichert, both of Blacksburg, and Ezra Lanoue of Radford have been named to the Fall 2020 Dean's List at Berea (Kent.) College.

A student is named to the Dean's List who achieves a GPA of 3.4 or higher while passing at least four total credits, a course load equivalent to 16 semester hours.

The first interracial and coeducational college in the South, Berea focuses

on learning, labor, and service. Supported by the school's no-tuition promise, Berea College admits only academically promising students with limited economic resources, primarily from Appalachia.

All students must work 10 hours or more weekly, earning money for books, room and board. The College's motto "God has made of one blood all peoples of the earth," speaks to Berea's inclusive character, and the quality of its programs ensures that graduates from Berea go on to distinguish themselves and the college in many fields.

Founded on Christian principles in 1855, Berea

College is distinctive in higher education. Offering bachelor's degrees in 34 majors, including arts and sciences and select professional programs,

as well as independent majors designed by students to mirror approved majors at other colleges, Berea College awards four-year tuition scholar-

ships to all its students, who because of financial circumstances cannot otherwise afford a high-quality, residential, liberal arts education.

Griffith from page 4

been curtailed or cancelled, families are reconsidering whether to have as big a gathering as they might normally have, and the festivities that do take place have as a backdrop the pandemic that has inflicted so much suffering.

Most of us have some aspect of the season we treasure that will not take place as usual this year.

I enjoy participating in Christmas parades in the different towns of the Ninth District. After riding through a town saying "Merry Christmas" and seeing the bright eyes of children and hearing the warm wishes of the adults, I find it impossible to finish a parade without simply feeling good about

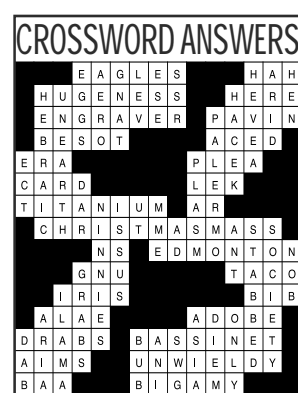
the world.

Christmas remains a time of hope, and the traditions we come back to each year are also the traditions we can look forward to. I invite you to share some of your own on my official Facebook page where this column is posted.

If you celebrate Christmas, however you do so this year, I hope that it will bring you comfort and joy, and I wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, feel free to contact my office. You can call my Abingdon office at 276-525-1405 or my Christiansburg office at 540-

381-5671. To reach my office via email, please visit my website at www.morgangriffith.house.gov. Also on my website is the latest material from my office, including information on votes recently taken on the floor of the House of Representatives.



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OBITUARIES

Ashworth, Dorothy Spradlin

Dorothy Spradlin Ashworth, 96, of Christiansburg, died Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020.

She was born in West Virginia on June 20, 1924, to the late George and Mamie Matilda Spradlin. She was preceded in death by her husband, James M. Ashworth; brothers Earl, Henry and Edward Spradlin; and sisters Nellie S. Sumner and Irene Spradlin.

She is survived by her children, Harold Ashworth (Ruth), Larry Ashworth (Pat) and Freddy Ashworth (Cheryl); five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren;



and several nieces and nephews.

The family would like to express gratitude to Dr. Sowinski and the staff of Heritage Hall for their loving care. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to New River Agency on Aging toward home delivered meals, nrva.org/contributions, New River Valley Agency on Aging 6226 University

Park Dr. Suite 3100, Fairlawn, Va. 24141 or a charity of your choice.

Services will be held privately. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Hypes, Thelma McMahan

Thelma McMahan Hypes "Yang," 89, of Christiansburg, passed away Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020. She will be in Heaven with her beloved husband, "Ed" throughout eternity.

She is survived by her son, Barry and Carole Hypes, and a daughter, Sharon Hypes. Her children were the pride and joy of her life. She is also survived by a sister, Dianne Dove; a brother-in-law, Billy Hypes; a special nephew, David and

husband Drew.

She had lots of very special friends while at English Meadows. They were so special to her. The family would like to give special thanks to Kindred Hospice and the wonderful staff at Montgomery Regional ICU.

Funeral services will be held privately. Interment will be at Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Christiansburg. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Kingrea, Bishop Kenneth Ray

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only, but also to all who have loved His appearing." — II Timothy 4:7-8

Bishop Kenneth Ray Kingrea of Christiansburg was welcomed into Heaven by his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ during the early morning hours of Monday, Dec. 14, 2020, while surrounded by his family.

Born Dec. 1, 1941, in Floyd, he was the son of the late Hosea Hungate and Nina H. Franklin. Skilled in many areas, he succeeded in business; however, at the age of 36, he acknowledged a call into the ministry, a decision that would create a spiritual legacy of ministry within his own family and would impact the eternity of countless individuals.

In 1977, Bishop Kingrea was licensed and ordained as a minister in the International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC) and was an active minister in the Appalachian Conference of the IPHC for over 40 years. Beginning his ministerial service at Blacksburg Pentecostal Holiness Church, he was led to plant the Pilot Pentecostal Holiness Church (now Abundant Life Fellowship) along with his brother, the evangelist Rev. Richard Kingrea. He pastored there before moving to Salem to lead the congregation of Salem Pentecostal Holiness Church (now Christian Life International). He then served the IPHC as Appalachian Conference Evangelism Director and Assistant Superintendent before being appointed to the Office of Superintendent. After completing 10 years of service to the denomination, Bishop Kingrea still could not refuse his desire to minister and continued pastoring at Oak Grove Church in Christiansburg until 2019.

An avid student of the Word, Bishop Kingrea loved to learn and earned multiple degrees including a bachelor's degree from Trinity College of the Bible, a master's degree from Southwestern Christian University, and an honorary doctorate from Maranatha College of the Bible. Bishop Kingrea shared this knowledge with people all over the world, traveling to numerous countries to teach and preach the Gospel



of Christ. He also served as a member of the IPHC General Evangelism USA (EVUSA) Division Council and sat on the Emmanuel College Board of Trustees.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 56 years, Juanita Marcella Kingrea, and his twin brother, Samuel Jay Kingrea.

Left to cherish his memory are his three children, Towana Kingrea-Kitts of Christiansburg, the Rev. Ray Kingrea and wife Sandy of Lynchburg and the Rev. Brian Kingrea and wife Kay of Gaithersburg, Md.; one sister, Shirley Cox and her husband, Richard, of Catawba; and one brother, the Rev. Richard Kingrea and wife Renee of Christiansburg.

He was the beloved grandfather to eight grandchildren: Bethany Creger, Hannah Venable (husband Michael), Andrew Kingrea (wife Sydnah), Jessica Barbir (husband Timothy), Dakota Kingrea, Zachary Kingrea (wife Candice), Cheyenne Kingre, and Tacoma Kingrea (wife Chrissy) and great-grandfather to 10 great-grandchildren: Gabriel, Ezra, Willow, Anderson, Kennedy, Ruth, Cash, Carter, Laurel and Aaron.

He is also survived by his loving wife of three years, Nita Martin Kingrea, numerous nieces and nephews who he loved as his own, as well as many other relatives and close friends.

For those of you who knew or were impacted directly by Bishop Kingrea's ministry, his family would ask that you honor his memory by reflecting on the time shared on this earth, most importantly, the messages he preached about salvation and the importance of being prepared to meet God. His heartfelt desire was that all would come to know Christ as Savior and could share in the joy of hearing Jesus say, as he certainly did, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and current state-mandated restrictions, there will be no public viewing. A private funeral service will be held at Harbor of Hope Pentecostal Holiness Church in Christiansburg with interment to follow at the Appalachian Conference Cemetery in Dublin.

The Kingrea family is in the care of McCoy Funeral Home of Blacksburg. Online condolences may be shared at www.mccoyfuneralhome.com under "tributes."

Oliver, Iona Johnson

Iona Johnson Oliver, 98, of Christiansburg, moved back to Heaven on Dec. 16, 2020, to begin her joyful reunion with her Heavenly Father, and those who preceded her there, including her husband, Garland 'Bentley' Oliver; an infant son, Stephen; a son, Michael; her parents, Frank Johnson and Florence 'Ethel' Atkinson Johnson; siblings Alice Jones, Reba Oberndorfer, Wilma Bonds Comer and Frank 'Buck' Johnson; and other beloved family members and friends.

Those she leaves behind are a sister, Maurine Nester of Salem; daughters and sons, Joyce Belshan, Garland 'Jerry' Oliver and Sharon Akers of Round Hill, Va., Rhonda Smith, Phillip Oliver and Marc Oliver of Shawsville; 10 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; and other extended family and friends, especially J.D. and Paulette Lambert. Iona's family and friends will



greatly miss her, but we rejoice in her newly restored and joy-filled life.

Iona's family wants to thank the diligent members of Faith Christian Church and the Alleghany Church of Christ who tirelessly brought communion to Iona and ministered to her. She appreciated and enjoyed their fellowship so much. Iona is remembered for her dedication to God,

family, and country, and her loves of gardening, homemaking, NFL and VT football, and her lovely smile.

A mother holds her children's hands for a moment, but holds their hearts eternally (author unknown).

Please make life celebration memorial gifts in Iona's name to the Faith Christian Church of Christ or the Alleghany Church of Christ building funds.

Services were held at the Alleghany Church of Christ with interment at Sunset Cemetery.

Overstreet, Chandra

Chandra Overstreet, a wonderful and talented artist of Christiansburg, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 13, 2020, at age 41 at LewisGale Hospital Montgomery.

Chandra was born to the late Carla Sleight.

She is survived by her father, Marshall Overstreet; her best friend, John DeRosset; her fiancé,



Bill Hackler; and her beloved cat, Jillian, among many others who loved her. Chandra will forever be engraved in the memories of those who loved her.

Services will be held at a later date due to the impact of COVID-19. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Poff, Gary David

Gary David Poff, 62, of Blacksburg, passed away Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020.

Gary was born on Dec. 2, 1958. He was an avid hunter and was employed by Virginia Building Services.

Gary was preceded in death by his father, David Poff; his stepfather, Earl Mowry; and his sister, Karen.

He is survived by his



loving partner, Teresa; children Travis, Savannah, Daniel and Donald (Jennifer); a granddaughter, Jennifer; his loving mother, Joyce (Epperly) Mowry; his stepmother, Fredene; brothers Dennis (Beth) and Rick (Juliann); and nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Price, Allen Manges

Allen Manges Price, 85, of Blacksburg, passed away peacefully on Friday, Dec. 18, 2020.

Allen was born in Blacksburg in 1935. He was preceded in death by his parents, Melvin and Mabel Price; his brother, Richard Price; and a grandchild, Christopher Thomas.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Louise Eakin Price; a son, Dale Price (Donna) of Clayton, N.C.; a daughter, Diane Thomas (Gary) of Blacksburg; a brother, Kenneth Price (Joe) of Stanton; a sister, Francis King (Victor) of Gordonsville; granddaughters Heather, Gretchen, Kelsey and Jacqueline; and four great-grandchildren.

Allen graduated from Blacksburg High School in 1953. He served in the Army Reserves and worked 41 years in the Agronomy Department



at Virginia Tech doing research in small grains. He was a lifelong member of the Blacksburg Fire Department and served as Fire Chief from 1971 to 1974 and as a Virginia Department of Fire Programs Instructor.

He loved the outdoors and hunting grouse and deer. After retirement, he was an avid woodworker and craftsman. He loved Blacksburg and Virginia Tech and was rarely seen not wearing the orange and maroon colors.

Funeral services were held at 10 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 21, 2020, at McCoy Funeral Home in Blacksburg. Burial followed at Westview Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Blacksburg Fire Department. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Walters, Dorothy

Dorothy Walters, of Blacksburg, formerly a long-time resident of Falls Church, Va., peacefully passed away Dec. 13, 2020, on a warm, sunny springlike day at the age of 100.

She was the wife of the late Barney and loving mother to her late son, Keith, her daughter, Laurie, and her two younger sons, Brian and Stephen.

Dorothy was born on May 1, 1920, in Washington, D.C., to the late Willard and Florrie Smith. She completed two years at Longwood University before marrying just prior to the beginning of the Second World War.

Besides being a homemaker and raising four children, she enjoyed gardening, reading, celebrating family

get-togethers and baking her famous banana bread.

She is survived by her remaining children, her son-in-law Richard Shepherd, a daughter-in-law Sussi Walters, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Enough cannot be said about the wonderful care Dorothy received over the past year from the caregivers of Warm Hearth at Home and Carilion Hospice who made it possible for her to remain in her home.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, a service commemorating Dorothy's life will be arranged at a more appropriate date. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Wilson, Carol Sue

Carol Sue Wilson, 67, of Blacksburg went to be with the Lord on Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020, surrounded by her family.

She was born in Blacksburg on Oct. 27, 1953, and lived well the 67 years God gifted her. She leaves behind an incredible legacy of love.

Carol married the love of her life, Al Wilson, on Oct. 26, 1974. Al preceded her in death when she was 38. Together, they shared some wonderful years serving in ministry in Bozeman, Mont.; Martinsville, Va.; North Apollo, Penn.; Quitman, La.; Poplar Bluff, Mo., and Christiansburg. She loved serving the Lord and others and was blessed to help wherever she could in the church. Her love for others was unrivaled as she helped so many others grow in their own faith as a pastor's wife, in Sunday school, youth and at Camp Christi.

She was preceded in death by her father Alvie Akers, step-dad (and special grandpa) Gene Kegley and a brother, Steve Akers.

Her greatest ministry, however, was carried out in her home. She was the proud mother and is survived by Kristy (Paul Post, Bloomington, Ind.), Kelly (Chris McMurray, Winter Garden, Fla.), and Matthew (Blacksburg). She was an incredible example of God's love and her children's greatest cheerleader, and she always found a reason to choose joy. Her fingerprints will forever be inscribed all over their faith, and her convictions and virtues will be passed on as a generational blessing.

Carol is survived by her five grand-



children: Wyatt and Alli Post, Jimmy Wilson and Lillyanne, and Caroline McMurray as well as her two bonus grandbabies, Miah Mitchell, and Naomi Noren, whom she cared for since they were babies. One of the greatest treasures on earth was to watch how happy she was when she was loving on and playing with her grandbabies.

She is also survived by her mother, Mary Akers (Blacksburg), brother Mike Akers (Dawn of Palatka, Fla.), sister Ann Mann (Charlie of Blacksburg) as well as numerous nieces and nephews whom she loved as her own. Carol found a way to love and serve each one in her own special way.

Carol was a beautiful example of God's love. She cared for anyone she ever crossed paths with and was generous with her love. She loved others more than she loved herself, and we can only imagine how happy she was to meet her Savior and finally be home with the love of her life again. The desire of Carol's heart would be for you to 'put a smile on your face and a song in your heart.'

A memorial service was held on Friday, Dec. 18, 2020, at Christiansburg First Church of God with the Rev. Chris McMurray and the Rev. Lance Jenkins officiating. The family received friends one hour prior to the service. Memorial contributions can be made to Christiansburg First Church of God.

McCoy Funeral Home is assisting the family.

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RADFORD SPORTS

Virginia Tech adds 25 during football early signing period

Head coach Justin Fuente welcomed 25 student-athletes to Virginia Tech last Wednesday, Dec. 16, the first day of the early signing period.

The group is composed of players who competed at the prep level from 11 different states in addition to one player from Germany. Tech's early signing list also included six players who completed their prep careers in Virginia.

Wednesday's list of signees includes six defensive backs, four running backs, four wide receivers, three linebackers, three defensive linemen, two tight ends, two offensive linemen and one quarterback.

In addition to Virginia, Tech's early signing contingent featured players from Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and South Carolina. For the second straight year the Hokies landed a European player, offensive lineman Danijel Miletic from Germany.

Tech's tradition of siblings following older brothers also continued on Wednesday. Tight end Jack Hollifield is the younger brother of current linebacker Dax Hollifield, and defensive back Jalen Stroman is the younger sibling of current Washington NFL team member, cornerback Greg Stroman.

The traditional National Signing Day will be on Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021.

Signing early were the following commits:

Chance Black
Running Back (6-1, 190 lbs.)
Roebuck, S.C. (Dorman High School)

Dorman registered a 4-2 record during a six-game 2020 campaign. Black rushed for 736 yards and 10 touchdowns in that six-game season as a senior and caught seven passes for 121 yards and three touchdowns. As a junior in 2019, he had 166 carries for 1,067 yards with 11 touchdowns and caught 20 passes for 375 yards and five touchdowns. Black also ran track at Dorman and finished fourth in the 2019 state meet in the triple jump.

Tahj Bullock
Quarterback (6-4, 223 lbs.)
Jersey City, N.J. (St. Peter's Prep School)

The Marauders finished 4-2 during the 2020 campaign as Bullock threw for 814 yards and 12 touchdowns and ran for 306 yards and six touchdowns. Bullock was a state player of the year finalist, a first-team all-state pick and a first-team all-conference selection. As a junior, he led St. Peter's Prep to four fourth-quarter comeback victories and threw five touchdown passes in a win over St. Augustine Prep. Bullock led St. Peter's to a state championship as a junior in 2019, earning first-team offensive all-state honors. He was also named the all-county MVP and the offensive player of the year. Bullock was considered by analysts to be one of the nation's top 20 dual-threat quarterback recruits, and NJ.com considers him the top quarterback in New Jersey. As a junior, he threw for 2,274 yards and 26 touchdowns and had 480 rushing yards and six touchdowns.

Mattheus Carroll
Defensive Lineman (6-3, 220 lbs.)
Baltimore, Md. (Gilman School)

Carroll played defensive end and served as a team captain. The Greyhounds posted a 2-0 record during an abbreviated 2020 season. As a junior in 2019, Carroll was named an All-MIAA selection and was named to the Baltimore Touchdown Club's Super 22 team after posting 11 sacks. He also competed on the wrestling squad at 220 pounds. His nickname is "Stretch."

Kenji Christian
Running Back (6-2, 197 lbs.)
Pinson, Ala. (Pinson Valley High School)

Christian is ranked the No. 36 running back overall and the No. 22 prospect in Alabama by 247Sports. Pinson Valley won the Alabama 6A state championship with a 23-13 win over top seeded Spanish Fort. The squad finished the season with an 11-2 record that included an eight-game winning streak. As a junior, Christian rushed for 451 yards on 63 carries. He opened the 2020 season with a 100-yard rushing performance vs. Hewitt-Trussville. He also ran track at Pinson Valley.

Da'Shawn Elder
Defensive Back (6-2, 200 lbs.)
Watkinsville, Ga. (Oconee County High School/Fork Union Military Academy)

Elder and was part of a squad that posted a 5-1 record in 2020, continuing the long pipeline of FUMA alums to Blacksburg. He had 62 tackles (40 solo), eight tackles for loss, six interceptions and a fumble recovery in 22 games for the Warriors, in addition to five catches for 74 yards and 63 kickoff return yards. He also competed in basketball at Oconee County.

Isi Etute
Linebacker (6-3, 205 lbs.)
Virginia Beach, Va. (Frank W. Cox High School)

Etute was a first-team All-Beach district linebacker and tight end in 2020 and a second-team all-region pick at linebacker. He also worked at wide receiver and played safety as a freshman. Etute is the No. 36 prospect in Virginia and the No. 45 inside linebacker in the country according to 247Sports. He earned the team's Iron Helmet Award in 2019, registering a team-high 74 tackles. He had four interceptions and two touchdowns on defense during his junior season.

Jared Gibble
Tight End (6-4, 225 lbs.)
Winston-Salem, N.C. (Oak Grove High School)

Gibble was a key contributor during the Grizzlies' 2019 season in which they claimed a Central Carolina 2-A title in the program's second year. He earned All-Davidson County honors and all-conference accolades. He was primarily a blocking tight end for an offense that amassed more than 2,500 rushing yards. Gibble caught 10 passes for 151 yards in 11 games as a junior. He had four touchdowns and averaged 15.1 yards per catch and 13.7 receiving yards per game. According to 247Sports.com, he is the No. 65 overall player from North Carolina and the No. 71

tight end in the Class of 2021.

Bryce Goodner
Offensive Lineman (6-3, 300 lbs.)
Athens, Tenn. (McMinn County High School)

McMinn County finished the 2020 campaign with a 10-2 record and qualified for the state playoffs.

DJ Harvey
Defensive Back (5-11, 166 lbs.)
Chatsworth, Calif. (Sierra Canyon High School)

The Trailblazers are set to begin their season in January 2021. Harvey was named the Cali Sports All-Purpose Player of the Year in 2019 and 2020. He earned Max Prep second-team All-America honors in 2019 and was named to the Max Prep 2020 All-Defense Team. In his first three varsity seasons, Harvey accumulated 94 tackles (66 solo), 12 interceptions (195 yards) and 45 passes defended to go along with a blocked field goal and a tackle for loss. He racked up 3,341 all-purpose yards in those three seasons, 2,166 receiving yards, 668 kickoff return yards, 195 interception return yards and 43 rushing yards.

Jack Hollifield
Tight End (6-3, 225 lbs.)
Shelby, N.C. (Shelby High School)

Hollifield posted 369 career tackles, 18 sacks and three fumble recoveries in high school. He also had a pick six in the 2018 2A-AA North Carolina state championship game. He recorded at least 100 tackles in each of his three high school seasons, including a team-best 164 tackles in the 2019 season. In 2019, he had 24 tackles for loss, including nine sacks. He also played on a state champion basketball squad. He is the younger brother of current Tech linebacker Dax Hollifield.

Elijah Howard
Running Back (5-11, 182 lbs.)
Chattanooga, Tenn. (Baylor School)

Howard ran for 800 yards in a shortened senior season while recording 110 receiving yards and seven touchdowns. He compiled 1,422 rushing yards and 22 touchdowns as a junior in 2019 and was ranked by Rivals as the No. 25 prospect in Tennessee.

Jalen Hoyle
Defensive Back (6-0, 175 lbs.)
Englewood, N.J. (Dwight Morrow High School)

The Raiders compiled a 5-1 record during an abbreviated 2020 season with Hoyle earning first-team All-North Jersey honors. He had 46 total tackles, including six sacks to go along with one interception. Hoyle threw for 632 yards and nine touchdowns while also rushing for 640 yards with three touchdowns. He earned first-team all-conference honors his final three seasons and was a second-team all-county pick as a junior and a senior. Hoyle had 77 tackles as a junior, to go with two interceptions and a fumble recovery. As a junior, he passed for 598 yards and five touchdowns and rushed for 493 yards and three touchdowns.

Nyke Johnson
Defensive Back (6-1, 185 lbs.)
Florence, S.C. (West Florence High School)

As a junior in 2019, Johnson had 40 tackles, including three for loss, three interceptions, a sack and a fumble recovery. He also played running back, rushing for 136 yards and four touchdowns and catching two passes for 42 yards and a touchdown. He had 33 tackles as a senior.

Will Johnson
Linebacker (6-2, 195 lbs.)
Leonardtown, Md. (Leonardtown High School)

Johnson transferred to Leonardtown High School from St. Mary's Ryken, where he played his first three prep seasons as a wide receiver and safety. He was an honorable mention All-Metro selection of the Washington Post in 2019. Johnson had 34 catches for 629 yards and 11 touchdowns his sophomore season and had 17 catches for 279 yards with two touchdowns as a junior.

Jaylen Jones
Wide Receiver (6-1, 185 lbs.)
Richmond, Va. (Thomas Jefferson High School)

Jones earned first-team all-state and all-region honors after accumulating 76 receptions for 1,369 receiving yards and 18 touchdowns as a junior in 2019. He was a first-team all-metro selection of the Richmond Times-Dispatch. His totals as a junior were the top marks in the Central Region in 2019. He is Thomas Jefferson's first player to sign with a Power Five school since 1974.

Jaden Keller
Defensive Back (6-3, 195 lbs.)
Bristol, Tenn. (Tennessee High School)

Keller was ranked No. 21 in his class in Tennessee and was a second-team all-state defensive squad pick in 2020.

Keli Lawson
Linebacker (6-4, 200 lbs.)
Stephens City, Va. (Sherando High School)

Lawson was ranked by Rivals as the No. 32 player in Virginia. He was a three-year starter, a three-time district champion and a one-time regional champion.

Da'Wain Lofton
Wide Receiver (5-10, 175 lbs.)
Fort Worth, Texas (North Side High School)

North Side finished the season with a 7-3 record and qualified for the Texas state playoffs. Lofton had 16 receptions for 294 yards with two touchdowns and added nine rushes for 63 yards. He had 2,022 yards of total offense and 32 touchdowns as a junior in 2019, helping North Side reach the playoffs for the first time in 40 years. He also played basketball for the Steers and was clocked with a 11.48-second time in the 100-meter dash, the second-fastest mark in school history. His accolades included 2018 District 4-5A Special Teams Player of the Year, the No. 81 ranked player on Dallas-Ft. Worth's 2019 Top 100 Players, 2019 District 4-5A Most Valuable Player of the Year, 2019 DFW 1st first-team all-area wide receiver, 2019 AP first-team all-state wide receiver, 2020 District 4-5A Offensive Player of the Year and no. 11 on DFW's 2020 Top 100 Players. Lofton owns North Side High School career records with 5,135 all-purpose yards and 62 total touchdowns (26

receiving, 21 rushing, 11 return, four passing).

Desmond Mamudi
Defensive Lineman (6-3, 290 lbs.)
Tampa, Fla. (Carrollwood Day School)

Mamudi had 146 tackles (79 solo) in two seasons to go with nine sacks and two fumble recoveries. He had 85 tackles (49 solo) as a junior, including 23 tackles for loss.

Danijel Miletic
Offensive Lineman (6-3, 290 lbs.)
Frankfurt, Germany (Darmstadt Diamonds)

Miletic was a member of the PPI Recruits program that has placed more than 60 players in major Division I programs. He is originally from Serbia.

Christian Moss
Wide Receiver (6-3, 180 lbs.)
Kennesaw, Ga. (North Cobb High School)

Moss was part of a squad that compiled a 10-2 record in 2020. He also competed in the long jump.

Cole Nelson
Defensive Lineman (6-3, 230 lbs.)
Alpharetta, Ga. (John's Creek High School)

Nelson recorded 179 tackles in his prep career that included 38 tackles for loss and 16.5 sacks. He also had 21 quarterback hurries. He had 85 tackles (49 solo) as a senior to go along with 18 tackles for loss and five sacks. He scored one rushing touchdown his junior year and also caught three passes.

DJ Sims
Wide Receiver (6-3, 190 lbs.)
Christchurch, Va. (Christchurch High School)

Christchurch registered a 6-3 record during the 2019 campaign as Sims had 21 catches for 598 receiving yards with seven touchdowns, including a 76-yarder. He also rushed seven times for 156 yards (22.3 avg.) and had eight kickoff returns for 218 yards (27.3 avg.) with one touchdown. Sims had 16 tackles (eight solo) on defense with a 22-yard pick six and nine passes defended. He also returned a pair of fumble recoveries for scores. Sims is rRated as the No. 27 prospect in Virginia by 247Sports.

Jalen Stroman
Defensive Back (6-1, 190 lbs.)
Nokesville, Va. (Patriot High School)

Stroman was a three-year starter at safety and wide receiver. As a junior in 2019, he made 58 tackles with three interceptions and caught 18 passes for 470 yards and five touchdowns as the Pioneers went 10-2. Stroman was a first-team All-Region 6B and first-team all-Cedar Run District defensive back and a second-team All-District wide receiver. He is the younger brother of former Hokies' standout, Greg Stroman, who is currently a member of the Washington NFL team.

Malachi Thomas
Running Back (6-0, 180 lbs.)
Hartwell, Ga. (Hart County High School)

Thomas was the Georgia AAA Player of the Year in 2019 and was a two-time all-region selection. He ran for 1,942 yards in 2019 and posted 2,862 all-purpose yards and 36 touchdowns.

Kroger's Touchdown for Turkeys donates 400 birds to local families

Through Kroger's Touchdown for Turkeys program and Feeding Southwest Virginia, every Virginia Tech touchdown

during the 2020 season scored ten turkeys for local families that rely on food banks and food pantries to feed their households.

Since Virginia Tech finished the season with 40 touchdowns, Kroger donated 400 turkeys to Feeding Southwest Virginia for

distribution.

"This year brought an increased demand to food banks as many individuals are hurting as a result of the pandemic," said Allison McGee, corporate affairs manager for Kroger Mid-Atlantic. "We hope that this turkey donation brings food to those in need during this holiday season."

"Many circumstances contribute to our neighbors facing food insecurity. It may be unemployment, reduced hours, fixed income or illness," said Pamela Irvine, President and CEO of Feeding Southwest Virginia. "We are grateful for this donation that will allow us to bring joy to the many households who will receive a turkey this holiday season in addition to their shelf stable items. What a

blessing."

"It's always our pleasure to help uphold Virginia Tech's spirit of Ut Prosim (That I May Serve)," said Hokies' head football coach Justin Fuente. "We know how challenging 2020 has been for so many of our neighbors across Southwest Virginia. On behalf of our entire football team, we extend our sincere thanks to our partners at Kroger and everyone who helped make this distribution possible. We are all hoping for a better year ahead. Go Hokies!"

Feeding Southwest Virginia was founded in 1981 and serves 26 counties, including nine city regions, providing food or meals to those in need.

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West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio. Based in Roanoke, the Mid-Atlantic Division employs about 18,000 associates. Kroger is dedicated to eliminating hunger in the communities it serves through partnerships with nine Feeding America food banks and numerous local organizations. The grocer's Zero Hunger | Zero Waste efforts are aimed at ending hunger in Kroger communities and eliminating waste in stores by 2025. Kroger also supports breast cancer research, the military and their families and more than 4,000 nonprofit organizations. Last year, Kroger Mid-Atlantic donated 16.5 million meals to charity and 3,606,296 pounds of food-to-food bank partners.

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Volleyball travel team honors essential workers at local hospitals



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The River Valley Juniors Volleyball Club has given several local hospitals special gifts this holiday season. Pictured (L to R) are LewisGale Hospital Montgomery Emergency Department Director Julie McElwee, Ellie Eddleton and volleyball players Jasmyn Charlton, Ann Sisson, Riley Hilgart and Abbey Neal.



The River Valley Juniors Volleyball Club honored essential workers at several local hospitals recently. Pictured are (left group, left to right) Carilion New River Emergency Department's Briana Keen and registered nurses Carrie Duck and Darlene Wells; right group, top, left to right, volleyball players Ava Weseloh, Claire Jenkins and Amanda Lowe; bottom, left to right, Sara Albert, Avery Zuckerwar and Katie Widner.

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

A group of athletes recently honored essential workers at several local hospitals.

The River Valley Juniors Volleyball club has 10 teams with 120 athletes and 17 coaches from Jefferson, Forrest, Giles, Radford, Christiansburg, Blacksburg, Shawsville, Auburn and some Roanoke schools.

For the past three weeks, the group has collected pediatric supplies for local hospitals and also donated meals to the nurses and doctors.

For the past two years, River Valley Juniors have picked a community service project that the entire club participates in.

Nicole Taylor, who is the director of River Valley Juniors Volleyball Club and the head volleyball coach at Blacksburg High School, formerly worked as an Emergency Department registered nurse for Carilion New River Valley.

Friends who still work at the hospitals told her they were low on pediatric supplies.

"They like to give stickers, stuffed animals, character band-aids whenever they can so the kids can leave with a token from their visit," said Taylor. "Once I heard that I said, we should help out Giles, Montgomery and NRV. We split the teams up so that we could even out the supplies. Then I started reaching out on Instagram for monetary donations to purchase the ED staff lunch and breakfast the day of drop-off, and our River Valley Juniors alumni and other donors raised over \$400."

"The kids were super excited doing this, and as always, they went above and beyond," Taylor said. "We have such a great base of RVJ staff members, families and alumni who make our projects go over seamlessly."

Information about the River Valley Juniors is available at the club's Facebook page or its website, www.rivervalleyjuniors.com.

Under the tree for the Hokies



From the Sidelines
Marty Gordon

Virginia Tech football fans might have wished for some presents under the tree, but when they wake up on Christmas morning, those packages might not be what they asked Santa for.

Yes, Virginia and Hokie fans, there is a Santa Claus, but sometimes he doesn't bring what you expected.

Justin Fuente's remaining the head coach of the Hokies really is no great surprise. This past year, everything

was against him. The roster and depth chart were never the same for any ball game. Even the coaching ladder was different, too, all thanks to COVID-19.

I salute the players and coaches for laying it all on the line. I know personally that taking the COVID-19 test is not easy, and most of the Hokies took as many as 30 this past season. There is so much uncertainty waiting for the test results. On top of that, being around or near someone who tested positive meant being quarantined.

It's amazing that the Hokies were able to get in 10 games this season. That in itself proves that players

and coaches sacrificed a lot. This included staying away from their immediate families. This included coaches like Justin Hamilton not seeing his newborn baby for weeks.

Yes, Santa needs to bring Hokie fans a little patience. They also need to remember college students between the ages of 18 and 21 have had to give up some of the most important times in their young life. I guess many of the players learned what a video game was all about to find some solace in the chaos.

On the field, there will and need to be some changes, but we will never know how good the Hokies could

have been this season. There was no spring training, no spring game and no summer practices. Instead, the players just stepped out on the field and played football.

Off the field, the coaching staff will probably undergo some changes, but again Hokie fans need to be patient.

Who will be on the field next season for the Hokies? No matter what, the roster will not resemble anything from this past year. Where and who will the Hokies turn to? The answer could lie with someone looking for a new home.

The transfer portal has a whole different aspect this year as everyone has im-

mediate eligibility wherever they transfer to thanks to the COVID-19 waiver.

Last year, Virginia Tech benefited with the move of running back Kahli Herbert to Blacksburg, and this year could be another defining moment.

The biggest need for the Hokies is probably at quarterback. Baylor's Charlie Brewer is looking to transfer to a new school after starting for three years at Texas. Hokie fans will remember the last name as Charlie is the younger brother of former Tech quarterback Michael Brewer.

Another name to listen for is former University of Tennessee signal caller Jar-

rett Guarantano. The 6-4, 230-lb. Guarantano passed for 6,174 yards and 38 touchdowns before losing his starting job in Knoxville. He could bring transfer-bound wide receiver Isaiah Montgomery with him. The 6-1, 212-lb. Georgia native did not play this past season but offers the Hokies a quality player with great hands.

Don't count out 6-3, 170-lb. Darnell Pratt, Jr., who entered the portal after standing on the sidelines for most of the year at UVA.

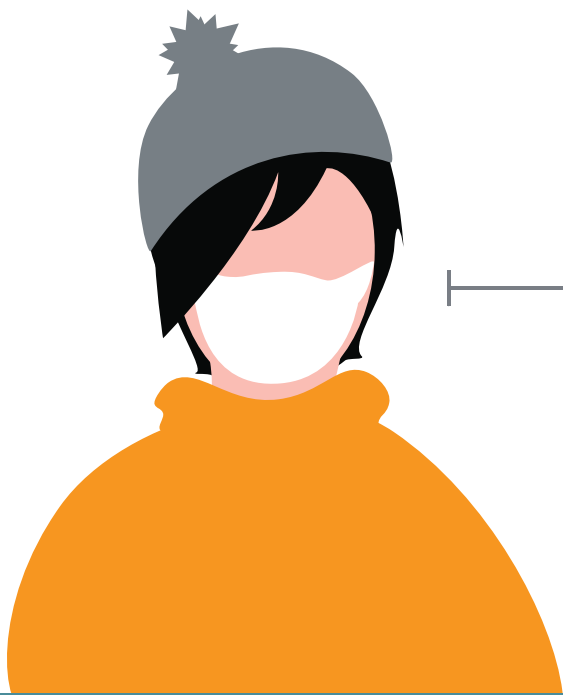
Another receiver in the portal is 6-3, 180-lb. Tyquan Johnson who spent a year at Fork Union Military Academy. He is an original South Carolina signee.

Blacksburg would be a great place for any number of players on the lookout for a new zip code.



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