



Saturday, February 13, 2021 • USPS 387-780 • ourvalley.org • 75 cents

Radford City Schools to offer increased face-to-face learning option

RADFORD - Radford City Public Schools will open all school buildings to all students who choose to participate in face-to-face learning four days a week beginning March 1.

Families must choose the learning platform they want their children to participate in for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year by Friday, Feb. 19. Parents can register their choice through a survey. RCPS has created three

surveys - preschool, elementary, and secondary - and all families need to complete the appropriate survey for each of their school-aged children - one survey for each child in the family.

There are two learning options for families to choose from for the remainder of the school year, which is set to end May 28.

• Option one - Face-to-Face Learning in the school building four days a week (Monday, Tues-

day, Thursday and Friday), accessing instruction in person at the school building during regular school hours.

• Option two - Remote Learning at home four days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday), accessing instruction/learning through asynchronous/synchronous lessons and assignments.

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Businessman Larry Linkous is challenging Democrat Christ Hurst for the House seat in Virginia's 12th district.

Blacksburg businessman Larry Linkous enters race for Virginia House District 12 seat

Larry Linkous, a Blacksburg native and longtime businessman, is throwing his hat into the ring for the 12th District Virginia General Assembly House seat currently held by Democrat Chris Hurst. Linkous is running as a Republican.

Hurst has held the seat the past three years after defeating Republican Joseph Yost in the 2018 election cycle. His current term ends on January 12, 2022.

The 12th district represents the city of Radford, Giles County, and portions of Montgomery County and Pulaski County.

Linkous decided to run after being approached by a number of people over the past few months. "I am displeased with the current political climate here and want to change it," he said.

Linkous made his announcement Thursday in the parking lot of the Hilton Garden in Blacksburg. Supporters gathered with masks and sat in the cars, tooting their horns after the candidate made a few remarks.

Linkous is no stranger to the region, having served as the past chairman of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, the New River Community College Board and the Montgomery County Economic Development Authority. He ran unsuccessfully for the House seat in the early 90's.

He is an auctioneer by trade and has served as the past chairman of the Virginia Auctioneers Regulatory Board and president of the Virginia Auctioneers Association. He was named the 2000 Virginia Auctioneer of the Year and remains active in the state group.

Linkous was also one of the first auctioneers certified in the commonwealth with license number three. In 1989, he was named the businessperson of the year by the Greater Blacksburg Chamber of Commerce.

In 2001, he was named the chamber's Distinguished Citizen of the Year. He has been active in the

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Honoring Black History Month in Radford



John Dobbins

RADFORD - Radford Mayor David Horton is continuing his daily spotlights honoring Radford Black History Month on his personal Facebook page, focusing on an historic church among his latest installments.

He writes: Monday, Feb. 8: "To celebrate #radfordblackhistory



Nannie Mae Berger Hairston

today, I thought we would remember a time before Radford was Radford when one of the oldest congregations in our community was established.

"In the fall of 1869, just a few short years after the end of the Civil War, our community was still known as Lovely Mount.

"Rev. Capt. Charles S. Schaeffer of



Robert "Mr. Bob" Jones Sr.

the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands met with the people of Lovely Mount and organized the Lovely Mount Baptist Church.

"Sarah Carter, who we profiled last week, researched the history of Lovely Mount Baptist Church from

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Civil War-era love letter remains a mystery



In 1863, Virginia Cross penned a letter to her sweetheart and enclosed an intricate piece of folk art. The letter and art are now housed in the Virginia Tech University Libraries' Special Collections and University Archives.

On July 12, 1863, a young Virginia Cross picked up a pen and ink, several sheets of precious paper, and wrote to her sweetheart, a discharged Civil War soldier. She used a small blade to cut an intricate and delicate white heart to enclose with her words.

"Dear Sir, I received your letter and was glad to hear that you were well and it found me enjoying the same feeling also and was very glad to hear that you had got your discharge from service," wrote Cross. "I would be very glad to see you as soon as you can make it convenient to come down."

The letter continued with coyness and humor as Cross described a sweetheart she picked out for him. "I

See Love Letter, page 2

Survey: Americans to spend less this Valentine's Day; candy remains the favorite purchase

According to a Valentine's Day spending survey conducted by the personal finance website WalletHub, Americans have lowered their expectations for Valentine's Day 2021. With many Americans facing budget constraints because of COVID-19, the survey revealed that 98 million Americans expect their significant other to spend less on Valentine's Day this year than they did last year.

The survey uncovered just how dire those financial restraints might be, showing that 59 percent of those surveyed expect their valentine to spend \$50 or less this Valentine's Day. Twenty-eight percent of the survey respondents don't expect their valentine to spend anything at all on them. Another 31 percent expect their significant other to spend only

between \$1 and \$49. Thirty-four percent of those answering the survey questions said they expect to have between \$50 and \$100 spent on them for Valentine's Day. Only seven percent said they expected their loved one to spend more than \$100 on them.

Candy remains the Valentine's Day gift of choice for 54 percent of the population surveyed. Other gifts are greeting cards 44%, flowers 36%, an evening out 24%, a

gift card 21%, clothing 20% and jewelry 18%.

But COVID-19 has indeed forced some changes in Americans' love life. Seventy-two percent of the people surveyed said they've spent less money on dating since COVID-19 started.

It turns out men may be more romantic than the distaff side. Twenty-one percent of the men

See Survey, page 3



COVID-19 vaccinations available now at CVS Pharmacy

On Friday, Feb. 12, CVS Pharmacy began administering COVID-19 vaccinations.

That came after CVS began on Tuesday, Feb. 9, to register Virginians age 65 and older who are within the Phase 1b eligibility guidelines for vaccinations as part of the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination.

Eligible individuals can register at <https://www.cvs.com/immunizations/covid-19-vaccine>.

The Virginia Department of Health has worked closely with CVS to ensure that the CVS system follows Virginia's priority guidelines and to provide an advance opportunity for eligible individuals already registered on VDH waiting lists. Because of technological limitations with their national appointment system, however, CVS is un-

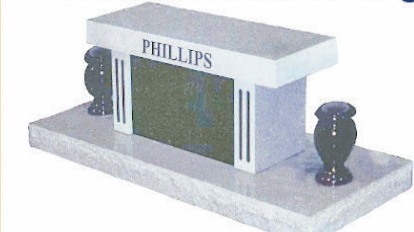
able to reserve appointments for pre-registered individuals. Virginia will continue to work towards a solution in partnership with other participating states and the federal government.

The federal program will supplement existing vaccination programs by providing 26,000 more vaccines to Virginians. CVS is the first of Virginia's pharmacy partners in the federal pharmacy partnership to move forward with vaccinations. More pharmacies and more locations are expected to start vaccinating patients in the future.

The Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination is a public-private partnership between pharmacy companies and the federal govern-

See Vaccine, page 3

Cremation Memorialization helps the family move forward from grief to remembrance



Granite Bench for Cremation Urns



Permanent Home for Cremation Urns

Memorial Gardens of the New River Valley
2551 North Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060
(540) 552-7800

www.memorialgardensnrvalley.com
cturner@memorialgardensnrvalley.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Feb. 13:

Backyard Bird Count
Through Monday, Feb. 15, 10 a.m. at the Meadowbrook Public Library
Pick up supplies to make a bird feeder. Then count and identify the birds that visit your backyard. Supplies are limited.

Dialogue on Race 2021 Winter Summit

This is a Zoom event from 10:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. All Dialogue on Race events will be held online or virtually until further notice. The keynote speakers are Dr. Abraham B. Hardee III, DO/PhD and Dr. Pete Guerra, MDA. Subjects include: The Year in Masks; The COVID Pandemic; Race and Racism; Vaccination and Vaccines: What to Know and What to Do. Register at https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_Jbi-908JMSgq1264cQKX8Eg.

Craft Supply Swap - Outdoors

3 p.m. at the Blacksburg Library weather permitting. Bring unwanted craft supplies and trade them for new stuff. All unclaimed items will be donated to the library or to the New River Creative Re-use Center. Please bring donations to the library at least four days before the event so items can be quarantined. Call the library ahead to make sure it's happening.

Monday, Feb. 15:

RPL closed for President's Day

The Radford Public Library will be closed in observance of President's Day. The library will open again for browsing, computer, and Grab & Go appointments on Tuesday, Feb. 16 at 9 a.m. Many options for digital ebooks, audiobooks, movies, television shows and more are available through a variety of free platforms from the Radford Public Library website with your library card.

Town of Christiansburg Closings

Christiansburg Town Hall will be closed in observance of George Washington Day. The Christiansburg Aquatic Center will be open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., but the administrative offices will be closed. The Christiansburg Recreation Center will be open regular hours from 6 a.m.-7 p.m., but the administrative offices will be closed.

Tuesday, Feb. 16:

Town Council Work Session Agenda

The agenda for the Blacksburg Town Council work session scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 16, at 11 a.m. at the Blacksburg Transit Facility located at 2800 Commerce St. can be found at https://blacksburg.granicus.com/GeneratedAgendaViewer.php?view_id=22&event_id=2573.

Wednesday, Feb. 17:

City of Radford Planning Commission Meeting

At 5:30 p.m. at 10 Robertson St. The agenda includes 1. A Special Use Permit (SUP) for 1129 East Main St. Ellet Valley. An investor has submitted an application for an SUP to allow residential use on the second floor of the existing building within the B-3 Business District. 2. A Zoning Ordinance Update: Urban Agriculture Ordinance, Mixed Use Zoning, Wireless Communications Requirements within the Business District

Thursday, Feb. 18:

Discord Comic Book Club

This is an all-ages voice chat discussion of Comic Books via Discord. To be read and discussed this month is Jason Latour's "Spider-Gwen Vol. 1: Greater Power." Check it out on Hoopla at Spider-Gwen <https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/12020853>. Send the library a Facebook message or email duncan.hall@radfordva.gov to sign up. The staff will then send an invitation to the RPL Discord server.

Saturday, Feb. 20:

American Red Cross Babysitter's Training

This is for ages 11-15 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Dr. The fee is \$65 for residents and \$75 for non-residents. Participants will learn to take care of children and infants. Included is how to be a good leader and role model, making good decisions, solving problems, and keeping

children safe. Participants should bring a snack and lunch. The training includes American Red Cross certifications for babysitting and for pediatric care.

Sunday, Feb. 28:

Blacksburg Disc Golf Fundraiser

This is a two-division trophy-only event. The course has been modified into a temporary 16-hole tournament layout. Registration is \$30 and will include a two-disc player pack. The money raised will be used to reimburse the cost of the installation of the new tee pads at Blacksburg Municipal Park.

This is a tee-time event. Final tee times will be posted on the event page after registration closes on the evening of Friday, Feb. 26. Arrive at least 15 minutes before your designated tee time to check in. To register, visit https://www.discgolfszene.com/tournaments/Blacksburg_Municipal_Disc_Golf_Fundraiser_2021.

Tuesday, Mar. 16:

Radford Reads with Monica Rodden

Join the Radford Public Library for a Zoom conversation with Monica Rodden, author of "Monsters Among Us." Email Elizabeth at elizabeth.sensabaugh@radfordva.gov for details. The library has a limited number of free copies of this book, so let them know if you would like a copy (while supplies

last); 6:30 p.m.

Ongoing:

StoryWalk

All the Month of February, at the Christiansburg Library Exercise your brain and body as you read and walk the trail. Begin at the library at the College Street entrance of Downtown Park. This month's book is "The Big Red Barn."

Through Friday, Mar. 5:

Glencoe Mansion "2020 in Review" Art Show

The show features the works of artists Cheryl Mackian, the Radford Photo Club, and Teresa Regil, whose works all appeared in the Gallery during 2020. The exhibit is open to the public and is free.

Through Saturday, April 24:

'Unbearable Beauty' Exhibit at Moss Arts Center

The exhibit is open each Wednesday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. through Saturday, April 24. The exhibit is a demonstration of the devastation human activity has wreaked on the environment. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

Honoring

from page 1

its founding on Nov. 13, 1869, in a storehouse on Rock Road, to its relocation in 1898, when the congregation purchased the Lutheran church that stood on Fairfax Street between Washington Street and Adams Street and changed its name to the First Baptist Church.

"The pictures of campus from the 1940s and the 1950s show the area of the church marked in yellow.

"The first church of the Baptist denomination in Radford, Lovely Mount/First Baptist Church served the African American community for more than 60 years until Radford College purchased it in 1961 and demolished it to expand Peters Hall.

"The congregation still continues to this day at First Baptist Church on Rock Road and the marker that denotes the history was dedicated during the Radford University Centennial Celebration in 2010-2011.

"At the time of the dedication of the plaque in March, 2011 a senior member of the congregation, Walter Price Jr., who was accepted as a member of Lovely Mount

Baptist Church through baptism in the New River at the age of 12—90 years ago, was among the group present.

"He noted that Lovely Mount Baptist Church was the heart of the community with Sunday services, picnics, school graduations and other major events held on the grounds.

"More on Reverend Schaeffer - <https://schaefferbaptistchurch.org/history/>."

Tuesday, Feb. 9:
"Today in #radfordblackhistory we feature one of the greatest athletes in Radford High School and later Virginia Tech History - John Dobbins.

"He was among the first African American athletes to participate on the RHS teams of the 1960s. He was so strong and so fast that no one could keep up with him. In one game against Fort Chiswell, he had already scored five touchdowns when a player of the FC bench couldn't take it anymore and jumped up to tackle him.

"His legend lives large at Norman G. Lineburg field at Bobcat Stadium as he scored

the very first touchdown in that facility when it opened. He was a leader on and off the field.

"These talents and a move toward integration helped propel him to become the first African American football player at nearby VPI (Virginia Tech) in the fall of 1969 on the freshman team and in 1970 on the varsity squad. His success helped propel the team to great seasons during his time there.

"Radford remained his home and he spent his working career at what is today Volvo in Dublin. Thousands of local kids knew him as a legendary leader coaching youth sports in the years following in Radford. He was a genuine foundation of the late 20th century for this community and following his passing in 2003, his life was commemorated with John Dobbins Park located right behind the Fred Wygal School building, now home to Radford City Public School administration.

"It is not easy to be the first to break a major barrier like he did, but Mr. Dobbins did so with grace, talent, and pride.

"Please continue to celebrate and share the stories in your life for #radfordblackhistory."

Wednesday Feb. 10:

"As we continue to celebrate #radfordblackhistory we have received many messages from Radford citizens nominating people who folks would like to recognize.

"Today we are highlighting the work of a regional champion for people of color right here in the NRV - Nannie Mae Berger Hairston.

"Ms. Hairston was a fierce advocate for civil rights and channeled her energy and spirit through many significant roles with the Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County branch of the NAACP.

"Originally hailing from West Virginia, the oldest of 10 children and the daughter of a coal miner, she settled in the NRV in Christiansburg with her family but she has many connections to the city of Radford.

"Ms. Hairston worked to expand local employment opportunities for African American women, was a founding member of the local chapter of the League of Women Voters, and a supporter of the history of African American education through her advocacy for the Hill School and the Christiansburg Institute which served as the high school available to the region's Af-

frican American students, including those from Radford until the mid 1960s when the area began integrating more fully.

"According to the library of Virginia, in 1997 the state chapter of the NAACP recognized Ms. Hairston's civic and humanitarian work with the Maggie L. Walker Community Service Award.

"A bronze bust of Ms. Hairston, created to commemorate her community work, was dedicated at the Montgomery County Government Center in 2006 and the local branch of the Virginia NAACP annually presents the Nannie B. Hairston Award to a member for outstanding and long-standing service to the branch and community.

"To honor her and her husband of 70 years, the John T. & Nannie B. Hairston Endowed Scholarship was established at New River Community College.

"Ms. Hairston's legacy continues to this day through the recognition of her work and the efforts of her family, including extended family in and around Radford."

Thursday, February 11, 2021

"The outpouring of support and positive thoughts for this salute to #BlackHistoryMonth by highlighting #radfordblackhistory has been overwhelming. With that in mind, I felt like

someone who embodied support for community and a positive spirit was perfect to recognize today - Robert "Mr. Bob" Jones, Sr.

"Mr. Bob took care of people in this city.

"He took care of our Bobcats as he took them by the bus load to athletic and academic events and competitions. He took care of them by looking out for all and encouraging them to be their best with a smile and a joke.

"Mr. Bob took care of the congregation at Central United Methodist Church for 42 years as custodian both of the facilities and of all the friends he had there. He had a wonderful sense of humor and spirit that endeared him to all.

"He took care of the congregation at Zion Hill Baptist Church where he was a Deacon.

"He took care of his fellow employees at Hercules (Radford Army Ammunition Plant) and the Lynchburg Foundry where he served as a supervisor.

"Numerous people reached out asking that he be included in our #radfordblackhistory posts because he meant so much to them and this community. He passed in January of this year and is missed by all who knew him.

"The Bobcats love Mr. Bob!"

Love Letter

from page 1

want you to come and see her and see if she will soothe you," wrote Cross. "I have picked one out as near like myself as I could find her so you will come and look at her and see if you like her."

She then ended the letter with words of love: "Remember well and bear in mind that a faithful friend is hard to find and when you find one that is write just and true never slight the old for the new. My pen is bad my ink is pale my love for you will never fail."

More than 150 years after Cross put pen to paper, Kira Dietz, Virginia Tech University Libraries assistant director of Special Collections and University Archives, said the flowing cursive handwriting, lack of punctuation and irregular spelling are common for letters of that time. The enclosed romance-inspired artwork, called Scherenschnitte or "scissor cuts," is not.

"We purchased the letter from a Pennsylvania bookseller and gallery owner,"

said Dietz. "This is a classic letter for scholars interested in the homefront, relationships and history of language during the Civil War. What makes this letter unique is the enclosed folk art. She folded the heart in half and used the blade to carve out the pattern so the design can be consistent."

Special Collections and University Archives has one other letter carved in this way, but the carving was done inside the letter with the Civil War soldier author writing around the cuts. The Virginia Cross heart was an enclosure. Researchers can infer special meaning for using a separate piece of paper to make this gift.

"In 1863, during wartime, people were conservative about paper use," said Deitz. "She used this extra piece of paper to create the art and it survived, still in one piece. It's a heart detached at the bottom; it's intricate work."

Was her family well-to-do and able to afford the ex-

tra expense or was her love that strong for her sweetheart? We may never know.

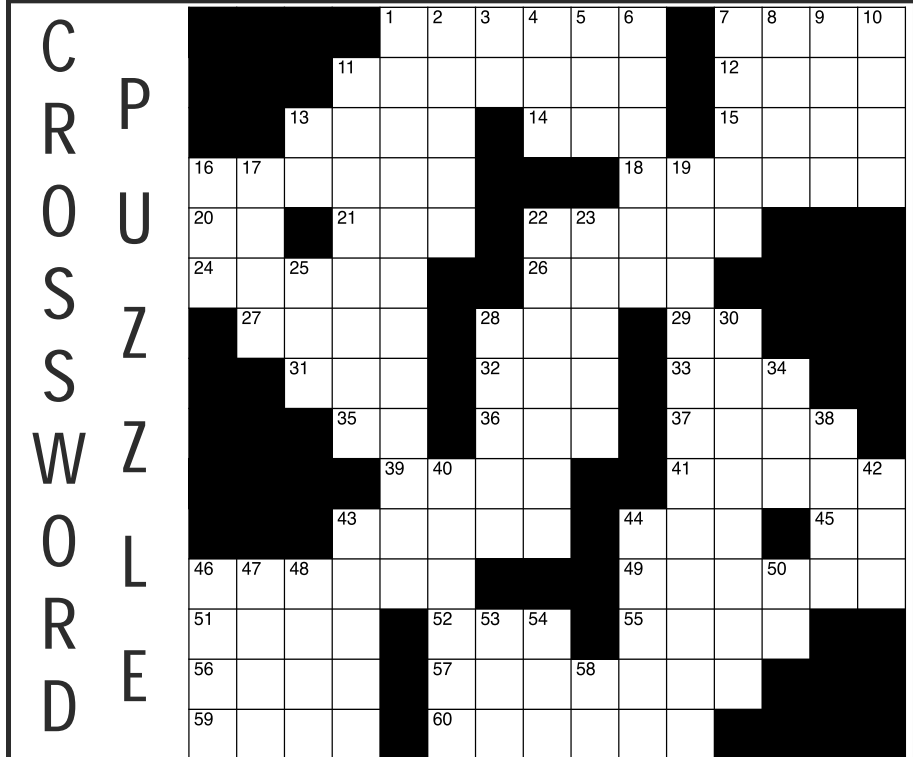
"We don't know if she wrote to a Union or Confederate soldier," said Dietz. "The header says Manchester, but there are Manchesters in the North and South."

Dietz has looked for Virginia Cross in the 1860 census and in marriage records around that time. She said finding anything about unmarried women can be tricky.

"It would be interesting to find out if she married the soldier," added Dietz. "There aren't a lot of details about Virginia or her beau."

But who doesn't love a 150-year-old romantic mystery?

"Our job is to create access to precious primary sources, like this love letter, for research," said Dietz. "If we uncover a mystery along the way, that makes our job even more fun."



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| <p>CLUES ACROSS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our 10 numerals 7. Horseshoe cleat 11. Ear shell 12. Soprano solo 13. Vestments 14. Heart's singer Wilson 15. Set of type in one style 16. Withdraw from work 18. Ancient Hebrew coin 20. Megacycle 21. 26th British letter 22. Colonnaded Greek walks 24. Russian sourgrass soupsomething 26. OK Corral's Wyatt 27. Cheremiss 28. Schenectady County Airport 29. Laptop 31. Actress Farrow 32. NYSE for Murphy Oil | <p>CLUES DOWN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Word shortening 2. Tore down (var. sp.) 3. 22nd state (abbr.) 4. Tropical constrictor 5. Hostelery 6. Examine and expurgate ceremonies 7. Small restaurants 8. E. Asian anis liquor 9. Infestation of head louse 10. New Yorker film critic Pauline 11. An orange-red crystalline dye 13. Indicates position 16. Root mean square (abbr.) 17. Electronic counter-countermeasures 19. 12-31 greeting 22. Fastens 23. Himalayan wild goats 25. One who overacts 28. Facial gesture 30. Absence of aggression 34. China 38. Older Bridges brother 40. Plays 42. Term denoting psychic abilities 43. Oral polio vaccine developer 44. Any habitation at a high altitude 46. Hyperbolic cosecant 47. Russian mountain range 48. An aromatic salve 50. Venezuelan fashion designer initials 53. Highest card 54. 5th son of Jacob 58. Music storage device |
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This Valentine's Day protect your heart by learning about Virginia Tech's AED program

As Valentine's Day quickly approaches, heart-shaped decorations pop up, and loved ones are top of mind, it is important to think about the hearts we cannot see.

Heart disease is among the leading causes of death in the United States. In fact, February is American Heart Health Month. The Virginia Tech Rescue Squad strives to raise awareness of the disease and prevent cardiac-related deaths by administering the university's Public Access automated external defibrillators (AED) program.

An AED is a device that delivers an electric shock to the heart and allows it to re-establish an effective rhythm in the case of sudden cardiac arrest. The goal of the on-campus AED program is to increase the survival rate of individuals who have suffered sudden cardiac arrest.

A person who receives defibrillation, an electric shock aimed at restarting the heart, within minutes has a dramatically greater chance of surviving than someone who does not receive a shock. The only device that can provide this shock is an AED.

There are more than 180 AEDs in place throughout the Blacksburg campus and Virginia Tech greater Washington, D.C., area facilities, most often located in highly visible, high-pedestrian traffic areas. The all-student-run rescue squad leads the operation, maintenance, and inspections of these devices.

The squad appoints an AED coordinator each year to oversee the program. Joe Clift currently serves as AED coordinator. Clift recently graduated from Virginia Tech in December 2020 with his bachelor's in bio-

logical sciences and a minor in chemistry.

As AED coordinator, Clift is responsible for the maintenance of all campus AEDs, budget allocation, raising awareness for the AED program, delivering ongoing educational programming for the campus community, and coordinating new requests for AEDs.

To use an AED, individuals should be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in order for the AED to be used effectively. CPR training can be scheduled through Virginia Tech



AED station located on the first floor of the Public Safety Building.

Environmental Health and Safety and the Virginia Tech Rescue Squad.

Many of the AED stations also have Stop the Bleed Kits

within them. Virginia Tech Emergency Management offers Stop the Bleed training to the university community throughout the year.

History, patron saint of Valentine's Day are shrouded in mystery

The history of Valentine's Day—and the story of its patron saint—is shrouded in mystery. What is known is that February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and that St. Valentine's Day, as Americans know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. But who was Saint Valentine, and how did he become associated with this ancient rite?

The Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Still others insist that it was Saint Valentine of Terni, a bishop, who was the true namesake of the holiday. He, too, was beheaded by Claudius II outside Rome.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, an

imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl, possibly his jailor's daughter, who visited him during his confinement.

Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter signed "From your Valentine," an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic and—most importantly—romantic figure. By the Middle Ages, perhaps thanks to this reputation, Valentine became one of the most popular saints in England and France.

While some believe that Valentine's Day is celebrated in the middle of February to commemorate the anniversary of Valentine's death or burial, which probably occurred around A.D. 270, others claim that the Christian church may have decided to place St. Valentine's feast day in the middle of February in an effort to "Christianize" the pagan celebration of Lupercalia. Celebrated at the Ides of February, or February 15, Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus.

To begin the festival, members of the Luperci, an order of Roman priests, would gather at a sacred cave where the infants Romulus and Remus were believed to have been cared for by a she-wolf or lupa.

The priests would sacrifice a goat for fertility and a dog for purification. They would then tear the goat's hide into strips, dip them into the sacrificial blood and take to the streets, gently slapping both women and crop fields with the goat hide.

Far from being fearful, Roman women welcomed the touch of the hides because it was believed to make them more fertile in the coming year. Later in the day, according to legend, all the young women in the city would place their names in a big urn. The city's bachelors would each choose a name and become paired for the year with his chosen woman. These matches often ended in marriage.

Lupercalia survived the initial rise of Christianity but was outlawed, as it was deemed "un-Christian," at the end of the fifth century when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day. It was not until much later, however, that the day became definitively associated with love.

During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that the middle of Valentine's Day should be a day for romance. The English poet Geoffrey Chaucer was the first to record St. Valentine's Day as a day of romantic celebration in his 1375 poem "Parliament of Fowles," writing, "For this was

sent on Seynt Valentynes day / Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate."

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, though written Valentines didn't begin to appear until after 1400. The oldest known valentine still in existence today was a poem written in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London following his capture at the Battle of Agincourt. (The greeting is now part of the manuscript collection of the British Library in London.) Several years later, it is believed that King Henry V hired a writer named John Lydgate to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois.

Americans probably began exchanging hand-made Valentines in the early 1700s. In the 1840s, Esther A. Howland began selling the first mass-produced Valentines in America. Howland, known as the "Mother of the Valentine," made elaborate creations with real lace, ribbons and colorful pictures known as "scrap." Today, according to the Greeting Card Association, an estimated 145 million Valentine's Day cards are sent each year, making Valentine's Day the second largest card-sending holiday of the year (More cards are sent at Christmas).

Seven surprising facts about St. Valentine

The St. Valentine who inspired the holiday may have been two different men.

In all, there are about a dozen St. Valentines, plus a pope.

Valentine is the patron saint of beekeepers and epilepsy, among many other things. You can find Valentine's skull in Rome (in the Basilica of Santa Maria).

English poet Geoffrey Chaucer may have invented Valentine's Day (in his poem "Parliament of Fowles").

You can celebrate Valentine's Day several times a year (because of the abundance of St. Valentines on the Catholic roster).

There is even a female St. Valentine who is celebrated, St. Valentina, a virgin martyred in Palestine on July 25, A.D. 308.

Seven momentous kisses through history

The first recorded kiss: Circa 1500 B.C. in Vedic Sanskrit scriptures, according to research by Vaughn Bryant, an anthropology professor at Texas A&M University.

The Judas kiss: In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss so that armed men can take him away and eventually kill him.

The first kiss on film (1896): The first people to smooch on film were May Irwin and John C. Rice, who appeared in a short film

known variously as May Irwin kiss, Kiss or The Kiss.

The first black kiss on film: In 1898, black performers Saint Suttle and Gertie Brown starred in a short film titled Something Good-Negro Kiss, the first film to show black Americans kissing. In 2017, film historians rediscovered the footage, which was filmed by a white man named William Selig in Chicago.

The V-J Day kiss (1945): Captured in the iconic photo of an American sailor clutching a white-uniformed woman in a back-bending, passionate kiss in Times Square to celebrate the long-awaited victory over Japan. The Navy sailor and the dental assistant parted ways after the kiss.

Star Trek's interracial kiss (1968): Nichelle Nichols as Uhura and William Shatner as Captain James T. Kirk kissed in the Star Trek episode "Plato's Stepchildren," which aired on Nov. 22, 1968. Technically, it was not the first interracial kiss on television, but it was the kiss that seemed to have the most cultural impact.

The Socialist fraternal kiss (1979): Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and East German President Erich Honecker kissed each other on the mouth on the occasion of East Germany's 30th anniversary.

Linkous

from page 1

local business community for 48 years including founding Custom Meats, Custom Catering and Linkous Auctioneers.

In 2019, Hurst narrowly beat Republican Forest Hite with 53 percent of the vote. He has been outspoken about the storming of the capitol shortly after then-President Donald Trump spoke to supporters.

"If you run as a Republican in 2021

and beyond, you must answer for the actions of Trump and the violent insurrection on 1/6. Do you support Trump? Do you support the rioters? Why are you still a Republican?" Hurst said recently on Twitter.

Linkous said there is a big difference between him and the current Democrat. "I've got so much more time invested in this district that I should know it better than him," he said.

He would not speak directly to Hurst's recent criticism of a local businessperson who attended the events at the capitol last month.

The Democrat also received attention last year from a traffic stop when he was pulled over but was not charged with driving under the influence.

The local Republican Party has not announced as of yet how it will choose a candidate for the seat.

Learning

from page 1

The Friday, Feb. 19 deadline is important because RCPS needs this information to revise bus routes, plan for school meals and ensure that mitigation strategies can remain in place regardless of the number of students and staff in the buildings beginning March 1. This is the last time RCPS will offer a change in learning platforms for the remainder of the school year. Once students choose their learning platform on the survey no changes will be made unless extenuat-

ing circumstances require a change. If you should have any question about the learning platforms, bus transportation, or the school meals program or need help accessing the survey, please contact your child's school:

- Grove Preschool – 835-4004
- McHarg Elementary – 731-3652
- Belle Heth Elementary – 731-3653
- Dalton Intermediate – 731-3651
- Radford High School – 731-3649

Vaccine

from page 1

ment. Pharmacy companies receive vaccines directly from the federal government through the partnership program. Initially, the federal government asked states to limit distribution to one

pharmacy chain partner. CVS Health is the initial pharmacy partner for the program in Virginia.

The appointment for the second vaccination will be made when the first vaccina-

tion appointment is scheduled. Those without online access can contact CVS Customer Service at (800) 746-7287. Walk-in vaccinations without an appointment will not be provided.

Survey

from page 1

questioned said they think a Valentine's Day gift is worth going into credit card debt for. Only 11 percent of the women questioned agreed.

But romance is still alive at least somewhat in that 50 percent of the survey respondents said they'd rather get shot by Cupid's arrow than the

COVID vaccine. But that means an equal number would just as soon get vaccinated.

Apparently social distancing and isolation haven't been as hard on romance as many have said. Forty-eight percent of those surveyed said they have gotten richer in love since Valentine's

Day 2020.

Certainly the pandemic has affected the way Americans show their love for each other. It hasn't, however, seemed to wreak too much havoc on that love we feel for each other. In other words, in America, despite the coronavirus, love is alive and well.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

COVID-19 shots at Blue Ridge Church

Since December, I have been watching individuals on television stand in line to be tested or to receive their COVID shots. On one station a reporter stated that people had been standing in lines for hours to get tested or to receive a shot.

After I received information concerning when I should go to Blue Ridge Church in Christiansburg, when I got to the church, there was a small line that was moving quickly. I was in and out in 45 minutes. I was so pleased that it went so quickly and easily.

Last Wednesday, I went for the second shot. I could not believe it. No line. Walked in, filled out some papers, got the shot, waited for any reaction and left. I could have done the whole procedure during half-time of the super bowl.

What a great job, so well organized. Maybe it was done so quickly and so much faster than the big cities because there were fewer people. (I have heard they are giving 1400 shots a day at Blue Ridge Church.)

But I think it was because the people were better organized and were ready to help end

this terrible situation that the country has been facing for the last year. It is hard to beat the citizens in our town.

As I was leaving the church, I told a lady who had just received her shot that the workers deserved an "A." She said, forget it, they should receive a triple "A."

Another thing I noticed as people were leaving: They were walking a little taller and had smiles on their faces like a burden had been taken from them.

I felt the same way.

As a member of the Christiansburg Town Council, I have not had much to be happy about during the last several months. Getting the two shots certainly made my life better.

With the way everyone is working together, we are going to win this battle and become a stronger, better community.

*Steve Huppert
Christiansburg
Town Council*

Note: These are my comments and do not represent the opinions of the Christiansburg staff or members of the Christiansburg Town Council.

OPINION

Water, water everywhere, including on my brain

I mentioned in an earlier column that as I've gotten older, I seem to have fallen victim to a propensity for lapses into what I have labeled time loops: memories from long ago that just show up of their own accord as momentary flashbacks. They're there and then they're gone: snippets of my past I haven't thought of in decades.

Some of those recently have had to do with water and me.

John Denver, whom critics dubbed "a song's best friend," once sang of "the serenity of a clear blue mountain lake." Even for me with my balance-challenged self so that the only time I tried water skiing I dang near did myself some grievous bodily harm, water has always been like a magnet. It wasn't a mountain lake that day I climbed aboard the skis, and I sure didn't find any serenity as I struggled to shore with my body battered by those selfsame unruly skis. But I just couldn't resist the siren call of the water.

Growing up, the highlight of the year was my family's summertime vacations to the beaches of Panama City, Fla. My wife and I have been beach folks, too, taking off for long weekends whenever we can, usually to Mexico Beach, Fla., which tragically was pretty much obliterated in 2018 by Hurricane Michael.

Sadly, beach trips came to an end when we left Georgia and moved to Virginia. The nature of our jobs makes trips to the Virginia coastline impossible. Too far away.

We aren't the only ones, of course, for whom the nearest body of water holds an attraction too compelling to ignore. There's just something primal and primeval about the whole relationship and the need we as humans have to immerse ourselves in and seek solace from the water.

We dive right in even knowing that the deep -- briny or other-

wise -- is the repository of some of the most dangerous and nightmarish creatures on the planet. A special little joy is the Irukandji or box jellyfish that inhabits the northern waters of Australia. I ran across this delightful little monster on a recent TV show about Australia's deadliest critters. And there's a whole bunch of them.

The box jellyfish is apparently an innocuous little creature. It's a tiny thing, about a cubic centimeter. It is thus the smallest jellyfish in the world, but its size doesn't seem to make it self-conscious at all. It is also one of the world's deadliest jellyfish. Its stings can cause fatal brain hemorrhages and have been characterized as "100 times as potent as that of a cobra and 1,000 times stronger than a tarantula's."

And there they are in that water right off the coast. Thank goodness, I'm about as close to Australia as I ever plan to get.

And don't forget giant squids like that in Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea and Bruce, fictitious but emblematic of a real monster, the great white shark.

A league, by the way, in case you're interested, is a very inexact unit of nautical measurement. Apparently it varies in different countries and at different time periods. In English-speaking countries, a league has usually been about three miles. Since Jules Verne was French, it seems unlikely he was talking about 60,000 miles.

But nasty creatures -- with or without gills -- don't seem to keep us from diving right in and invading their territory. The truth is that when we're in the water, since we don't have gills, we're somewhere we really don't belong no matter how much we might like it.

To this day, the most achingly beautiful scene I have ever been privileged to see was the Bay of

Naples at sunset, the water so blue and clear it didn't look real, Mt. Vesuvius in the background across the bay. One of those flashbacks I hope comes again.

When I think of bodies of water, particularly those that lend themselves to fishing, I can't help but think of my father and grandfather, dedicated anglers both. I have often thought I let my dad down in the sense that I didn't inherit his love of fishing. Maybe I compensated for it by marrying a fisherwoman. She can bait a hook and work a can pole with the best of them.

Part of my failure to fish may well come from one of the ironies of my life. Despite my affinity for the water, I don't eat anything that comes from it. I don't like seafood and it's not just fish. If it had to be hauled from the water, I don't want it on my plate or my palate. Picky, picky, picky. But I do like olives, if that's any consolation.

Still caught in my time loop and thinking of fishing, I pause a minute or two to recall Grumpier Old Men in which Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau reel in Catfish Hunter, a beautifully named monster catfish they have been trying to catch for 20 years or so. They admire him for a moment, savor their accomplishment and the challenge he gave them, and then they toss him back into the lake to swim away.

I like that scene. A sort of tribute from two old men who have loved the water and what it has offered them all their lives. Kind of like me.

The author is a man of a certain age who -- in a time loop flashback -- recalls the time a few decades back when the wife and he took a train ride from New Orleans to Atlanta. As they crossed Lake Pontchartrain, in what must surely be a recurring ritual, the fishermen close to the tracks as a group -- in separate boats, of course -- mooned the passing train.

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WalletHub: Three Virginia sites rank among 20 best places in which to get married; average wedding costs \$38,000+

With Valentine's Day on Sunday and COVID-19 vaccinations paving the way for safer weddings in the coming months, the personal finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2021's Best Places to Get Married and included three commonwealth locations -- Newport News (12), Virginia Beach (15) and Rich-

mond (18) -- among its top 20.

According to the survey, the top five best places to get married in are 1) Orlando, Fla. 2) Fayetteville, N.C. 3) Austin, Texas 4) Portland, Ore. and 5) Charleston W.Va. Couples will want to avoid what WalletHub determined to be the five worst places in which to marry: 182) Providence, R.I. 181) Jersey City, N.J. 180) Newark, N.J. 179) Yonkers, N.Y. and 178) Bridgeport, Conn.

The website noted that the restrictions on large gatherings will eventually be loosened once a significant portion of the U.S. is able to get vaccinated this year. Therefore, engaged couples may want to begin their wedding planning now so that they will have less of a rush when things return to

normal. In the aftermath of COVID-19, the website points out, cost is likely to be an even bigger concern than it usually is for many couples as millions of Americans have been financially impacted by the pandemic and may need to cut back their spending.

WalletHub reports that weddings in the U.S. traditionally have an enormous price tag with the average couple shelling out over \$38,000 for their big day. There are so many things to purchase and organize that many couples hire professional event planners to do the heavy lifting.

Between sending invitations, securing reservations, planning a menu and obsessing over final touches on the cake, it's no wonder weddings are arranged

months, even years, in advance. Tying the knot is a huge commitment, and the wedding industry is worth around \$73.3 billion in revenue per year.

To assist with the planning process, WalletHub compared more than 180 U.S. cities to find the cheapest and most convenient wedding destinations that also promise a memorable day. They examined each city across 20 key indicators of wedding-friendliness. Included among those indicators were the average wedding cost, the number of chapels and churches per capita, the number of wedding planners per capita, the number of bridal shops per capita, the number of flower shops per capita and the number of venues and event spaces per capita.

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OBITUARY

Trail, Thomas Emmett "Tom"

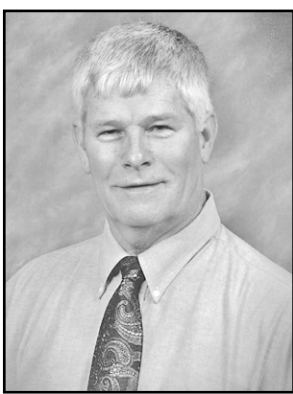
Thomas "Tom" Emmett Trail, 78, passed away Monday, Feb. 8, 2021, at his home in Radford.

Born and raised in Radford, he was a Bobcat football star and always attended home games.

He was retired from Lynchburg Foundry where he worked most of his life with stints as an independent contractor and a pattern maker.

After retirement, Tom enjoyed camping with friends and family, going to bluegrass festivals, exploring Radford history, and weekly coffee and conversation with the McDonald's crew. Most of all, he enjoyed the simple things in life: sitting outside feeding the birds; listening to live bluegrass music; sharing stories and jokes with old friends; helping others with construction projects; Bobcat football games; going on drives all around the New River Valley; reading the Bible; serving his church, Carter Street Methodist; and spending time with loved ones.

He was devoted to his grandchildren, Jordan and Madison, whom he helped



raise and who loved playing with and talking to their Pawpaw. His beloved wife, Mary, was his partner in all he did and was always by his side.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents, James and Jeannie Trail; brothers James, Jr., and Dan Trail; and sisters Eleanor Myers, Nancy Viers, Isabel Simpkins, Jeanette Dickerson,

Frances Harris and Judy Sarver. Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Mary Jane Trail; a son and daughter-in-law, Thomas Jr. and Amy Trail; a daughter, Melissa Naff; grandchildren Jordan and Madison; a brother and sister-in-law, Bob and Lorraine Trail; a sister-in-law, Hattie Ethel Altizer Trail; special friends Kathy and Lauren Young; and many other relatives and friends.

Services will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

The Trail family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford. www.mullinsfuneralhome.com.

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- At the completion of the service, the family will receive visitors via drive-through visitation as the attendees leave the service.
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ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

St. Philip's Anglican Church, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, www.stphilips-blacksburg.org. Reverend Fr. Wade Miller, Priest. Eucharist Sunday's at 11am and Wednesday's at 12pm.

St. Thomas Anglican Church- located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit www.sttofc.org for mid-week masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).

BAPTIST

First Baptist Church, 555 West Rock Road, Radford, 639-3873. Rev. Corwin C. Casey, Pastor. Worship with us: 9:45 a.m.; Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.; Praise and Worship: 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship Service; Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:58.

First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave., 215 Third Ave. at the corner with Downey St. We are committed to personal spiritual growth and to providing leadership in community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: www.fbcradford.org, 540-639-4419. Worship is broadcast live on 105.9 FM, 101.3 F, 1430AM.

Trinity Community Church, 1505 N. Franklin Street, C'burg. John Altizer, Lead Pastor, Brian Cockram, Associate Pastor, 382-8121. Worship at 10:45 a.m., Outreach Ministries - 6:00p.m. Wednesday, Growth Groups - 5:00p.m. Sunday, Youth and Children's Ministry - 5:00p.m. Sunday, www.trinitycburg.org.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Blacksburg Church of Christ, 315 Eakin St., 552-1331. Sun. Bible Classes 9:30 a.m., Sun. Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m., Wed. Bible classes, 7 p.m., Outreach Minister Curt Seright, Community Minister Tom Gilliam.

CHURCH OF GOD

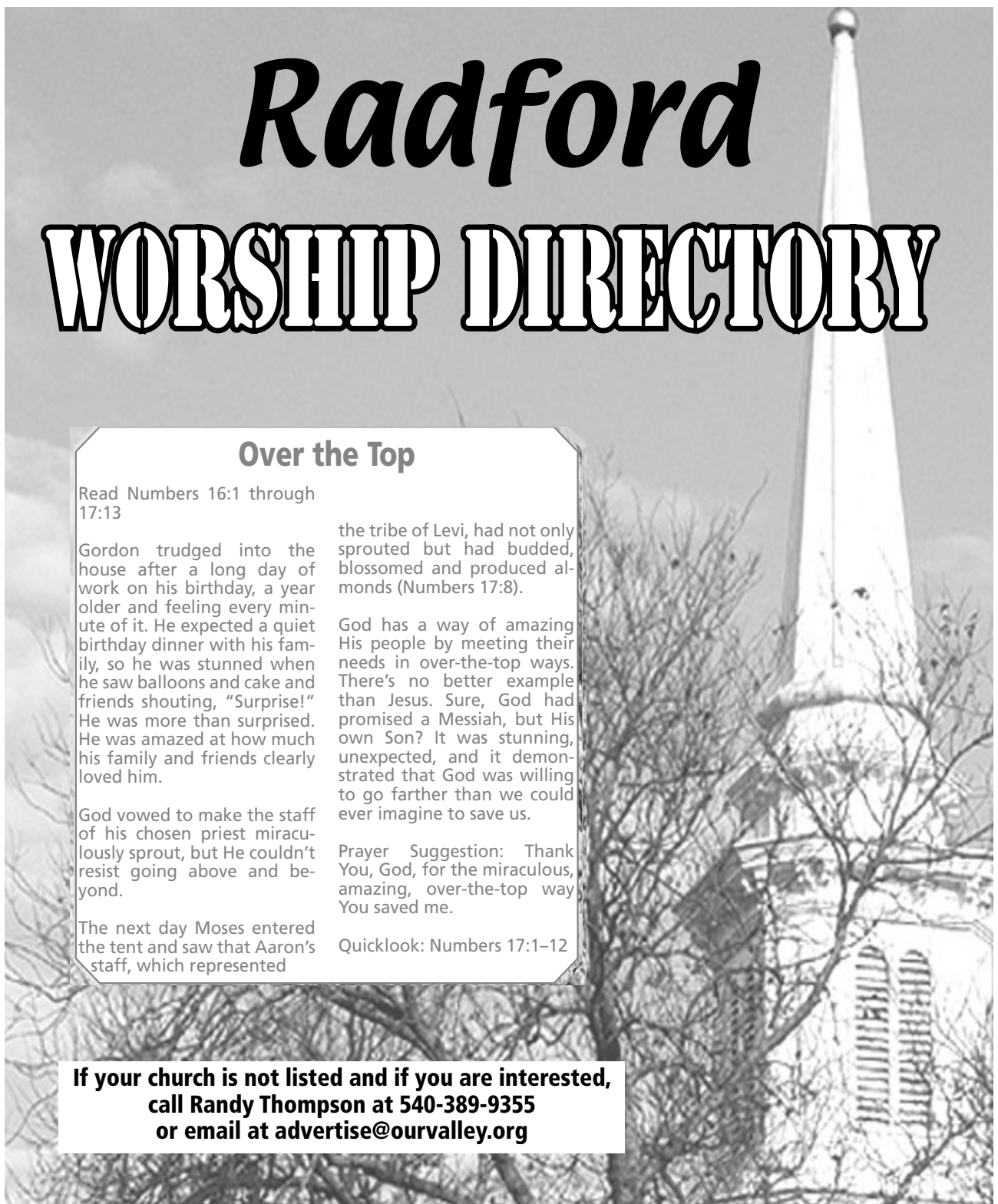
Childress Church of God, 4187 Piney Woods Rd., C'Burg. 381-3693. Sun. School 10 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m. & Wed. 7 p.m.

New Hope Church of God, 1404 Mud Pike Rd., C'Burg. Rev. T. Michael Bond, pastor, 731-3178. Sun. School 10 a.m., Worship 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m. Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

West Radford Church of God, 1824 West Main Street, Radford, VA 24141, Sunday School - 10:00A.M. Morning Worship - 11:00A.M., Children's Church 11:00A.M. Sunday Evening - 6:00P.M., Wednesday Night - 7:00P.M., Pastor Danny Newman, Church Office - 540-639-6562 or 804-921-0828

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

Radford Church of God in Christ, 206 Russell Ave., Radford. Supt. Ronald A.



Radford

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Over the Top

Read Numbers 16:1 through 17:13

Gordon trudged into the house after a long day of work on his birthday, a year older and feeling every minute of it. He expected a quiet birthday dinner with his family, so he was stunned when he saw balloons and cake and friends shouting, "Surprise!" He was more than surprised. He was amazed at how much his family and friends clearly loved him.

God vowed to make the staff of his chosen priest miraculously sprout, but He couldn't resist going above and beyond.

The next day Moses entered the tent and saw that Aaron's staff, which represented

the tribe of Levi, had not only sprouted but had budded, blossomed and produced almonds (Numbers 17:8).

God has a way of amazing His people by meeting their needs in over-the-top ways. There's no better example than Jesus. Sure, God had promised a Messiah, but His own Son? It was stunning, unexpected, and it demonstrated that God was willing to go farther than we could ever imagine to save us.

Prayer Suggestion: Thank You, God, for the miraculous, amazing, over-the-top way You saved me.

Quicklook: Numbers 17:1-12

If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Randy Thompson at 540-389-9355 or email at advertise@ourvalley.org

Watson, Sr.; Elder, 639- 5948. Sun. School 9 a.m.; Prayer 11:30 a.m.; Worship 6 p.m.

LUTHERAN

Christ Lutheran Church, 201 Harvey St. Sunday worship with communion at 10am; fellowship & snacks at 11am. All are welcome. Upcoming events and fellowship opportunities (Senior Brunch, Faith & Film, Rough Draught, etc.) detailed in weekly email and on website: clcradford.org. 540-639-2671.

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, Rev. Larry Christopher (540) 552-7194. lchristopher695@comcast.net. Sunday school at 10 a.m. and morning worship is 11 a.m. Evening service at 6 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Radford Worship Center, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Hal Adams brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:00 AM & 10:45 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services, join us as Love, Grow, Serve, find us on facebook and Instagram

Walton Pentecostal Holiness Church, 4003 Morning Glory Rd., off Walton Rd. on Rt. 114. 731-1755. Lee Sarver, pastor. Sun. School 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6: p.m., Wed., 7 p.m.

PRESBYTERIAN

Join us at **The Presbyterian Church of Radford**, 201 Fourth Street, at the corner of 4th and

Randolph Streets. Phone 639-2585. Worship at 11 am in the parking lot. In case of rain, the service will be streamed on Facebook. Bible study on Tuesday at noon, also on Facebook. Find us on Facebook (The Presbyterian Church of Radford) and on our Website (www.pcradford.org) The mission of our church is to exhibit our belief in God's love for us by sharing and extending that love to all of our brothers and sisters. Kelsey and Peter Hawisher-Faul, Pastors.

UNITED METHODIST

Asbury United Methodist Church, 500 Stuart Street, Christiansburg. 540-382- 0743. Rev. Ryan Schaeffer. Sunday School, 10:15 a.m., Sunday Worship, 11:30 a.m., Wednesday Bible Study 7pm, alternating month's with Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church, Senior Bible Study Thursday, 10:30 a.m. All are welcome.

Central United Methodist Church, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am (interpreter provided); 9:45am Sunday School (interpreter provided); and 11:00am. Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30pm. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com.

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 220 W. Main St., C'Burg. Rev. Moonsup "Paul" Song (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship 10am, Sunday School 9am. Live streaming Sunday Service - www.twitch.tv/stpaulumc.

OBITUARIES

Ulfers, Helga Sylvia

Helga Sylvia Ulfers, 89, of Blacksburg, passed into eternity peacefully on Feb. 1, 2021, a few days after seeing all seven of her grandchildren and her three sons.

She was born in 1931 in Santiago, Chile, to Erwin and Hermine Sievers. She married Horst Emil Ulfers in April 1960. He preceded her in death in 1997.

She was raised in Chile, the second of three siblings. She received her Christian baptism on Oct. 15, 1932. She grew up as part of the German community in Chile.

After moving to the USA with her beloved Horst, she returned regularly to Chile to visit her parents; her two brothers, Ronald and Gerold, and her dear friends and extended family. She had a very special place in her heart for the wonderful Chilean people, the landscape and the rugged, stunning coastline.

She was known as Helga, Ma, Mom, Oma and Helgita. She lived a healthy and vibrant life to the end, enjoying frequent outdoor walks.

She was fluent in three languages (Spanish, German and English). She always appreciated beauty whether in art, music, or life itself; It wasn't unusual to hear her say "That is a beautiful thing."

As a young woman, she studied ceramics abroad in Germany where she first met Horst. She was very creative as evidenced by the artwork hanging in so many of the homes of her extended family and friends, beautiful expressions of who she was.

Her faith in Christ expressed itself in her simple love towards family and strangers. She often volunteered in her community and at her church. People from at least four continents, including Africa, who visited her had very fond memories of her. Her kindness was an expression of God's gift to us all.

When grandchildren visited her in Reston, they enjoyed playing games like Canasta and Mexican train dominoes with her. She enjoyed the guitar and the piano until the end of her days. And she will always be known by those who visited her in Reston for her hospitality. In 2018 she moved to Showalter Center in



Blacksburg where she made new friends and continued to enjoy her amazing life.

After their marriage ceremony in Chile, Horst and Helga settled down in the United States to begin their new life together raising a family of three sons: Bernard, Robert and Detlef. In 1970, they moved the family from New Jersey to Reston, Va. where she and Horst continued to enjoy a happy marriage.

They were founding and active members of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and members of The Reston Chorale. In 1989 they moved to the Netherlands for several years before returning to Virginia. After Horst's passing in 1997, Helga continued to live in Reston with remarkable independence, always ready to welcome family and friends into her condo, where she was very much appreciated as a "great neighbor." In 2014 her older brother Ronald Sievers preceded her in death.

She is survived by her younger brother, Gerold Sievers, her three sons, and all her grandchildren: Caleb, Nathanael, Carolyn and Jesse, who were born to Bernard and Margaret; and Josiah, Hannah and Bina, who were born to Robert and Yezmin. She also has three great-grandchildren: Peter, Anna and Joshua, who were born to Carolyn and Lance as well as many more of her brothers' children and grandchildren in Chile and Europe.

Burial services shall be limited to immediate family with additional memorial services to be eventually held in Reston and in Blacksburg to celebrate her life with those who knew and loved her.

Memorial services will be open to all friends. Please leave your contact information with Robert "Bob" Ulfers if you are interested in receiving dates, locations and times for Helga's memorial life celebrations which are yet to be scheduled for a safer time. He will contact you when those details are known. You may call him at 540-998-4800.

Please refrain from sending flowers until memorial dates for Helga are announced. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home,

McGinty, Michael John

Michael John McGinty, 69, beloved son and brother, passed away on Feb. 6, 2021, at his home in Blacksburg.

Michael was born on Feb. 16, 1951, in New Orleans, La., to Catherine Chidester McGinty and John Theisman McGinty. He graduated from Mandeville High School in Louisiana and attended Southeastern Louisiana University.

Growing up, Michael developed a love for the outdoors early on. He had great respect for nature and enjoyed sailing, hiking, and other outdoor activities. Golf was, far and away, his passion. As an accomplished golfer, he earned numerous awards and championships throughout his life. Michael ran his own golfing business at one point in his working career, combining his passion for sports with his work life. Michael was very gregarious and

developed countless friendships along the way.

He had a great love for animals, owning dogs for most of his adult life. He had a keen sense in training them, and they were loyal companions.

Most of all, Michael cherished his family and was a loving brother and son. He had a kind and cheerful heart and will be greatly missed.

He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, Brian J. McGinty and John C. McGinty. He is survived by sisters Patricia A. Jewett (William) and Kathleen A. Stith (Reg); a brother, Ronald J. McGinty (Diane), and nephews and nieces.

A funeral mass is in the care of the Lak Lawn Funeral Home, New Orleans, La., followed by entombment in the family tomb at the Metairie Cemetery, New Orleans, La.

Smith, Easley Stone

Easley Stone Smith, 96, of Blacksburg, died on February 2, 2021.

He was a resident of the Showalter Center of Warm Hearth.

Easley was born May 16, 1924, in Nottoway County, Va., to Clack Stone and Pearl Easley Smith. He was raised on the family farm and graduated from Crewe High School. He enrolled at Virginia Tech in 1941 and attended for four quarters prior to enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. He commanded a ten-man crew in the 723rd bomber squadron, 450th bomb group of the 15th Air Force on a combat tour based in southern Italy flying daylight bombing missions in support of the Allied war effort. Daylight bombing was exceedingly dangerous work. During the war over 30,000 airmen were killed in combat, over 14,000 were wounded and another 33,000 were shot down and captured. He was always thankful that despite witnessing much death and destruction, none of his crew members were ever injured.

He completed a tour of 25 missions as a 1st Lieutenant and flight commander and volunteered to return to the United States for retraining in B-29s and eventual reassignment to the Pacific theater. He landed back in the United States on his 21st birthday in May of 1945. By that time the war in the Pacific was winding down, and he did not fly in combat again. He completed his enlistment duty stateside in time to be back at Virginia Tech for the winter quarter in 1946.

Easley graduated from Virginia Tech in 1948 and began his career as a sales representative for a farm machinery manufacturer. He met Helen Mitchell on a blind date in Richmond and married her in Lynchburg in June of 1951. His career eventually brought him back to Blacksburg and the extension service of Virginia Tech.

He joined the faculty of the department of Agricultural Engineering (now Biological Systems Engineering) in 1956 and earned an MS in Agricultural Engineering

in 1960. His specialty was farm machinery, and he was instrumental in the development of no-till farming. He always enjoyed working with farmers and students and for years was involved with state and regional 4-H programs. He served as an Associate Professor until his retirement in 1984.

After retirement, Easley read the newspaper thoroughly every day, maintained a prodigious garden and continued to volunteer in the community. At various times he served as a PTA president, a community volunteer on local planning boards, on professional societies, the Lions Club and on the Session and numerous committees of the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church.

He enjoyed travel when he could persuade Helen to go, including trips to Europe and Australia. He particularly enjoyed a 1996 trip back to Manduria, Italy, to visit the country where he spent one winter 51 years before serving his country.

Easley loved his wife and family, his home and church, his country and, of course, his Hokies. He always aimed to set a good example, and he exemplified being a patriot and an active citizen. In addition to his parents, Easley was predeceased by his wife, Helen; his brothers Randolph W. Smith and R. Lawson Smith; his sister Anne Smith Palazzo; and one grandson, Zachery Smith. He is survived by his three sons: Blair Smith (Debbie) of Jacksonville, Fla., Steve Smith (Jane) of Raleigh, N.C., and Doug Smith of Charlotte, N.C., along with eight grandchildren, 10 nieces and nephews, and a whole town of admirers.

His family would like to give special thanks to the staff of the Showalter Center of Warm Hearth for enriching his life, especially over the last year during the pandemic. He appreciated the efforts of all of them: housekeeping, dietary and especially the nursing staff who gave him care and comfort over his last years.

Anyone considering a memorial contribution to memorialize Easley should consider either the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church or the Warm Hearth Foundation.

Morris, Jr., John Shular

John Shular Morris, Jr., 90, of Dublin, passed away Saturday, Feb. 6, 2021, in the LewisGale Medical Center in Salem.

He was a longtime member of Dublin United Methodist Church and retired from Hercules in 1985.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John S., Sr. and Elva G. Morris; a daughter, Connie Lynn Mauck; and two sisters and two brothers.

Survivors include his loving wife of 73 years, Mary Erta Morris of Dublin; sons Johnny Morris and Dinah of Roanoke and Ricky and Regina Morris of Shiloh; son-in-law David Mauck; grandchildren Amanda,



Cary, Erika, John, Tara and Tyler; great-grandchildren Monica, George, Muna, Stella, Ella, Wyatt, Lynnen, Naomi, Oakley, Bexley and Ava; brother Benny Morris and Carol of Pembroke; sisters Norma Jean McPeak and Tom of Dublin, Loretta Pifer of Dublin and Barbara Hall of Snowville; and many other relatives and friends.

Graveside services were held on Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021, in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin with the Rev. Don Shelor and the Rev. Don Hanshaw officiating.

The Morris family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory in Radford.

Marketplace

ourvalley.org

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THE NEW CASTLE RECORD
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News Messenger
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Auctions

PUBLIC NOTICE
The contents of the listed unit will be sold at Public Auction February 18, 2021 at 11am at 1st Security Self Storage 5 Midway Plaza Dr. Christiansburg, VA. D12
1st Security reserves the right to refuse any bid. Terms: CASH OR CREDIT CARD AT SALE.

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The Salem TimesRegister has openings for afternoon/evening shift work inserting, labeling and bundling newspapers for delivery. No experience necessary. Hours may vary. Will train. \$7.50 per hour. Contact Lynn Hurst, General Manager, Salem-Times Register (540)389-9355 or email lhurst@ourvalley.org

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Legals - City of Radford

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED PLAN OF FINANCE AND REVENUE BOND FINANCING BY THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF RADFORD, VIRGINIA FOR THE BENEFIT OF PROVIDENT GROUP - RADFORD PROPERTIES LLC
Notice is hereby given that the Economic Development Authority of the City of Radford, Virginia (the "Authority"), whose address is 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141, will conduct a public hearing on the application of Provident Group - Radford Properties LLC, a Virginia limited liability company, including any subsidiaries, affiliates, successors or assigns thereof (the "Borrower"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Provident Resources Group Inc., a Georgia nonprofit corporation ("PRG"), whose address is 5565 Bankers Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, for the issuance by the Authority of up to \$40,000,000 of its revenue bonds (the "Bonds") at one time or from time to time in one or more series as part of a plan of finance to assist the Borrower in financing or refinancing certain of the costs of (a) the acquisition, construction and equipping of an approximately 124-key

Legals - City of Radford

hotel consisting of approximately 88,000 gross square feet, including approximately 4,000 gross square feet of conference space; and (b) the funding of any debt service reserve fund, capitalized interest fund, operations reserve fund, working capital fund and costs of issuance fund (collectively, the "Project"). The Project will be located within the 600 block of Tyler Avenue in the City of Radford, Virginia 24141. The Project will be owned, operated and principally used by the Borrower for the benefit of Radford University (the "University") and the Radford University Foundation, Incorporated, a Virginia nonstock corporation, or a wholly owned subsidiary thereof (collectively, the "Foundation") and for the purpose of lessening the burdens of the City of Radford, Virginia (the "City"), by fostering economic development and promoting the public good and general welfare of the City. All or a portion of the Bonds are expected to be issued as "qualified 501(c)(3) bonds" as defined in Section 145 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"). The Borrower is a disregarded entity for federal tax purposes, and each of PRG and the Foundation is exempt from the payment of federal income tax under Section 501(a) of the Code, as an entity organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. When all of the Bonds have been repaid, ownership of the Project will be transferred to the Foundation for the benefit of the University.

Legals - City of Radford

The issuance of the Bonds as requested by the Borrower will not constitute a debt or pledge of the faith and credit of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the City of Radford, Virginia, or any other political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, including the Authority, and neither the faith and credit nor the taxing power of the Commonwealth of Virginia or any political subdivision thereof will be pledged to the payment of the Bonds. This notice is intended to comply with the public notice requirements of Section 147(f) of the Code. The public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, will be held at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Time, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on March 4, 2021 before the Authority, in the Council Chambers of the City Administrative Building located at 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and in compliance with IRS Rev. Proc. 2020-21, interested persons are also invited to attend the public hearing by publicly available conference call and present comments regarding the plan of finance, the issuance of the Bonds and the financing of the Project. To attend via conference call on March 4, 2021 at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Time, dial 855.588.2540 (toll-free) and when prompted enter conference code 3032927817, passcode 3658. Any person interested in the plan of finance, the issuance of the Bonds or the location or nature of the proposed Project may dial into the

Legals - City of Radford

conference call or appear at the hearing and present his or her views, or submit written comments prior to the hearing to the attention of the Authority in care of Kim Repass, Economic Development Director, City of Radford, 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141. The hearing shall provide the fullest opportunity for the expression of opinion, for argument on the merits, and for the introduction of documentary evidence pertinent to the plan of finance, the issuance of the proposed Bonds and the financing of the Project.

Legals - Montgomery County

Public Notice
The Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Room, Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street.

Pursuant to Va. Code §§ 15.2-1800, 15.2-1813, 15.2-2100(A), and § 15.2-2006, the purpose of the public hearing is to receive comments on a request from the Montgomery County School Board to vacate the right of way known as the Christiansburg High School "bus loop" at 100 Independence Boulevard N.W. (Tax Parcel No. 466-2-11A) (.954 acres), and convey the property from the Town of Christiansburg to the School Board to facilitate future development of the high school.

Legals - Montgomery County

Information on the preceding item, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073-3029 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, contact Andrew Warren by phone at (540) 382-6120 ext. 1130 or by email at awarren@christiansburg.org.

Run: Saturday, February 6th and Saturday, February 13th

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RADFORD SPORTS



Big South changes 2021 basketball tourneys format

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to play havoc with sports schedules, the latest of which is an announcement from the Big South Conference that its 2021 Hercules Tires Basketball Championships will not be played at a neutral location but rather at the higher seed locations. That change affects Radford University.

The men's and women's tournaments had been scheduled to be played at Bojangles Coliseum in Charlotte.

The decision to adjust the format was made by the Big South's Council of Athletics Directors and is due to the current COVID-19 pandemic environment. Conference Commissioner Kyle Kallander said Wednesday he felt that for the health and safety of the student-athletes and participants, minimizing the number of teams and possible exposures in one location is smart.

"It also provides a reward to those teams with higher seeds for regular season success," he said.

This is the second time the conference has moved the neutral-site plan back another year. Initially, the 2019-2020 tournament would have been the first in Charlotte. Now, it could be no earlier than 2021-2022.

The men's and women's No. 1 seeds were originally scheduled to host the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds with higher seeds hosting first-round games. The highest remaining seed will still host the championship final.

The dates for the tournaments will be determined later and announced when they are finalized and will follow Big South Conference health and safety protocols and guidelines.

The new 2021 Hercules Tires Men's Basketball Championship Format:

First Round (at No. 6, 7, 8 seeds) – date TBD

Quarterfinal Round (at No. 1, 2, 3, 4 seeds) – date TBD

Semifinal Round (at higher seed) – date TBD

Championship Final (at highest remaining seed) – Sunday, March 7 (noon – ESPN)

2021 Hercules Tires Women's Basketball Championship Format:

First Round (at No. 6, 7, 8 seeds) – date TBD

Quarterfinal Round (at No. 1, 2, 3, 4 seeds) – date TBD

Semifinal Round (at higher seed) – date TBD

Championship Final (at highest remaining seed) – Sunday, March 14

Positive test results forcing teams to "pause" their seasons has affected the Big South just like every other conference. Kallander said, however, that proactive scheduling policies put in place prior to the season allowed the Big South Conference to

be flexible in ensuring the maximum number of games would be played.

"The Big South has led the country in the average number of games played by institution. That says a lot about the effort and cooperation by the Big South membership," he said.

COVID protocols have limited the contact of teams with possible positive COVID-19 cases as schedules have been adjusted several times. But Kallander admitted the threat of teams not being able to participate in post-season play due to COVID is still very real.

"We are currently exploring appropriate procedures in the event the Big South is faced with that challenge," he said.

The Big South is one of only three conferences nationwide that approved special scheduling in the midst of the restrictions. The league schedule was adjusted to limit travel and help ensure the health and safety of student-athletes, coaches and staff. In most cases, teams played doubleheaders on back-to-back days.

The conference also approved a plan that would allow teams to play with seven players in the first game of the doubleheader and only six players on the second day. So far, that has not come into play.

During the season, both Radford University's men's and women's basketball teams have had to shut down day-to-day operations because of the COVID-19 protocol.

Other college programs are also being affected by COVID-19. Emory & Henry College has announced that its wrestling program would shut down effective immediately due to health and safety concerns stemming from COVID-19.

"The student-athletes on the team have made the difficult decision to conclude their current season due to safety concerns," said Pete Hansen, head coach of the men's and women's wrestling teams. "I support their decision as we continue to focus on the safety of our student-athletes during this unprecedented time."

The Wasps competed in two meets during their inaugural season, before pausing wrestling-related activities in the middle of January due to COVID-19 positive cases and precautionary contact tracing measures among individuals.

Emory & Henry officials have said the school will maintain the current schedule of competition in other sports and will continue to observe thorough health and safety protocols based on guidance from local, state and national medical experts, which includes testing for all student-athletes prior to competitions.

Shutdown brings New York basketball player to NRV



PHOTO BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY

Matt Simmons (left) became a starter for the Christiansburg High School basketball team after moving here in September.

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected high school student-athletes in many different ways. Seasons have been shut down or changed. Teams have faced tighter restrictions, and some players have opted out of this past year's athletic programs.

One high school basketball player wanted to play so badly he took a rather radical action. Matt Sim-

mons, from New Paltz, N.Y., packed up his gym bag and traveled 538 miles to the New River Valley and Christiansburg High School.

Simmons said he felt the change in address might be the only way he could receive attention from recruiters and have a chance at playing basketball in college.

"My sister goes to Virginia Tech and has a home here in Christiansburg, so it was a no-brainer. My

mom and I moved here," he said.

The 6-0 guard had played at his school in New York, but when it looked like this year's winter season wouldn't happen, he felt the move would be his only chance. He enrolled at Christiansburg High School and almost immediately was hit by the school system's going virtual. Fall sports were shut down, and winter sports were left hanging on the edge.

Simmons spoke at a Montgomery County School Board meeting in November and asked the group to consider allowing athletes to play. "Let them play" became the rallying cry, and it brought a special meaning for him.

"That was the reason I moved here, and then there was a chance we would not play. I was concerned and felt I needed to speak out," he said.

The school board agreed to let athletes play other county teams while

eliminating junior varsity and middle school winter sports altogether, and the aspiring basketball player had hope.

COVID has affected few students as much as it has Simmons. "But in my case, it's because I left my friends, left my school and left my family to move here."

But the move has certainly worked out well for him. He had a 4.0 GPA his first semester and moved into the Blue Demons' starting lineup. He spends most of his day at the Christiansburg Recreation Center shooting basketball, then practicing or playing and doing his schoolwork.

"I have had the best school year I have ever had. My new teammates have accepted me, and I love the area," Simmons said.

He hopes the move and the change in environment will lead to a path to playing college basketball and majoring in exercise science.

RU limits attendance for spring sports

Radford University Athletics announced Tuesday afternoon that because of the COVID-19 pandemic attendance for the events of the 2021 spring season will be restricted to a limited number of family members of the student-athletes and the coaches.

Affected by the restrictions are baseball, softball, women's lacrosse, men's and women's soccer, men's and women's tennis and volleyball.

According to the athletics department, the restrictions were put in place in accordance with the guidelines regarding in-person gatherings

of the Commonwealth of Virginia, local health officials and Radford University itself.

Radford Athletics has been working closely with the university, the Big South Conference and the Virginia Department of Health to provide a safe environment for all competitions this season. The health and safety of the student-athletes, coaching staff, community and fans is the top priority. The university will continue to monitor the situation as the spring sports season moves forward with hopes of allowing current RU students to attend the events later in

the semester.

Fans can watch select Highlander games from home on the ESPN+ platform. Information about whether or not events are streamed are available on the respective schedule pages. Fans can always keep up with events via live stats, which can also be found on the schedule pages.

Radford Athletics is currently offering a fan cutouts program for the spring seasons. To purchase a fan cutout or to get more information, visit radfordathletics.com/fancutouts.

--RU Athletics

Blacksburg High boys, girls win Region 4D indoor track titles

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Blacksburg High School won the championship of both the boys and the girls Region 4D indoor track competitions this week in Amherst.

The BHS girls dominated their region opponents, rolling up 214 points. Finishing a distant second was Amherst with 105 points. Pulaski was third with 82 points.

The boys' competition was closer

with the Bruins easing past Pulaski 182-173. Amherst was third with 67 points.

For the girls, Blacksburg's Sophia Krouscas won the 300-meter dash while teammate Mari Garza was tops in the 500-meters. Other first-place winners for BHS were Audrey Link in the 1,000 meters, Annika Griggs in the 1,600-meters, Mia Jones in the 3,200-meter, and Katja Kehlenbeck in the high jump.

The Bruins dominated the relays,

winning the 4X400, the 4X200 and the 4X800.

On the boys' side of the track, Ben Hager won in the 55 meters, Vance Ruiz claimed the 500 meters, Ben Schmitt won the 1,000 meters, Connor Rutherford finished first in the 1,600-meters and Lance Dinkel led the pack in the 3,200-meter run.

The Blacksburg boys also took gold in the 4X400 and 4X800 relay events.

Hokies announce baseball schedule

Virginia Tech baseball has released its 2021 schedule of 51 games, which will begin on Friday, Feb. 19, with a three-game series at home against Kent State at English Field at Atlantic Union Bank Park.

The Hokies then host Radford on Feb. 23 before traveling to Miami (Fla.) for their first ACC weekend on Feb. 26. Tech will host an eight-game stint in Blacksburg against ACC opponents North Carolina (March 5-7) and Florida State (March 12-14), and non-conference opponent Virginia Commonwealth (March 9-10).

The Hokies will be at home for these ACC weekends: Boston College (April 1-3), Georgia Tech (April 16-18), UVA (April 30-May 2) and Notre Dame (May 20-22).

The Hokies will be at home for these ACC weekends: Boston Col-

lege (April 1-3), Georgia Tech (April 16-18), UVA (April 30-May 2) and Notre Dame (May 20-22).

The Hokies will play a home-and-home series against East Tennessee State (A: April 6; H: April 27) and Liberty (A: April 13; H: May 12).

Other non-conference opponents are VMI (April 20), Georgetown (May 4) and Toledo (May 8-9).

Tech goes on the road against ACC opponents Clemson (March 19-21), Pitt (March 26-28), Wake Forest (April 9-11), NC State (April 23-25) and Duke (May 14-16).

Tech is set to return 26 letter winners from last year's squad and will

welcome 20 newcomers under head coach John Szefc, who enters his fourth season.

Virginia Tech's 2021 baseball schedule:

Feb. 19-21, Kent State, Home

Feb. 23, Radford, Home

Feb. 26-28, Miami at Coral Gables, Fla.

March 5-7, North Carolina, Home

March 9-10, Virginia Commonwealth, Home

March 12-14, FSU, Home

March 19-21, Clemson at Clemson, S.C.

Pitt (March 26-28) at Pittsburgh

April 1-3, Boston College, Home

April 6, East Tennessee State, at Johnson City, Tenn.

April 9-11, Wake Forest at Winston-Salem, N.C.

April 13, Liberty at Lynchburg, Va.

April 16-18, Georgia Tech, Home

April 20, VMI, Home

April 23-25, N.C. State at Raleigh, N.C.

April 27, East Tennessee State, Home

April 30-May 2, Virginia, Home

May 4, Georgetown, Home

May 8-9, Toledo, Home

May 12, Liberty, Home

May 14-16, Duke at Durham, N.C.

May 20-22, Notre Dame, Home

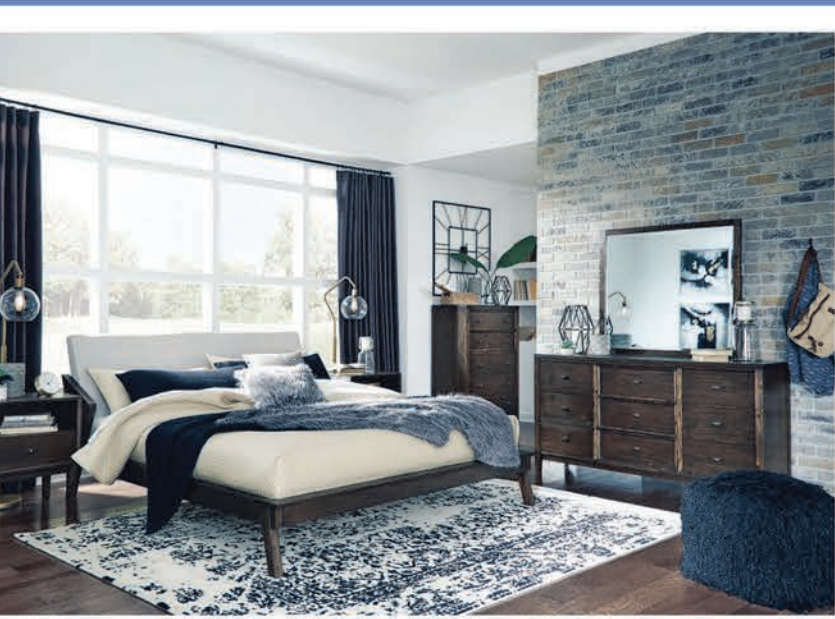
May 25-30, ACC Championships, Charlotte, N.C.

Send community news and photos to communitynews@ourvalley.org



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