

Wednesday, June 1, 2022 • USPS 387-780 • ourvalley.org • \$1.00



Members of the New River Valley Marine Corps League bow their heads during the invocation at Monday's Memorial Day ceremony in Bisset Park.

# Radford honors fallen veterans at Memorial Day ceremony

**Heather Bell**  
 hbell@ourvalley.org

RADFORD - Under sunny skies and warm temperatures Monday, hundreds of people gathered in Bisset Park to honor veterans who lost their lives in war.

Radford's annual Memorial Day ceremony, held at the park's Duncan Gazebo, was emceed by American Legion Post 30 Commander Dana Jackson and included speeches by Mayor

See **Ceremony**, page 6



An Army veteran stands and salutes during the Radford High School band's performance of U.S. military songs.

PHOTOS BY HEATHER BELL

## App Power issues warnings about water levels downstream of Claytor and Leesville dams

Appalachian Power wants boaters, kayakers, tubers, and other recreational users downstream of Claytor and Leesville dams to know water levels on the New and Roanoke rivers are rising rapidly as of Tuesday, May 31, and could continue to fluctuate throughout the week.

The National Weather Service is calling for temperatures this week in the mid-80's to 90s, and PJM, the independent regional transmission organization that manages the electric grid in 13 states, has notified Appalachian Power it may need to increase power generation at its hydroelectric plants to maintain the reliability of the regional electric grid.

"If the company is notified to increase power generation, we have little time to alert the public," said George Porter, who oversees communications for Appalachian Power's

hydro-operations. "Because of the short notice, we want to make the public aware now of the possibility water levels could increase suddenly and continue to fluctuate throughout the week."

Below Claytor Dam, water levels could increase up to two feet in a matter of minutes. Water levels below Leesville Dam could increase as much as eight feet over a seven-hour period. Those considering recreating on the rivers should monitor American Electric Power's (AEP) website for additional information.

Located on the New River in Pulaski County, the Claytor Dam is operated by Appalachian Power. The total installed electric generating capacity of the plant is 76 megawatts. Leesville Dam, with a generating capacity of 50 megawatts, is part

See **Water Levels**, page 3

## Radford City Schools announce free summer meals for children

RADFORD - Radford City Public Schools will be serving meals at no charge to children 18 and under at Belle Heth Elementary School for the majority of summer break.

Meals are available to all children from June 6 through June 30 and from July 18 through Aug. 4.

Meals will be provided, on a first-come, first-served basis at the following times and location:

Belle Heth Elementary School  
 Breakfast: 8 a.m.- 8:45 a.m.; Lunch: 11:00 a.m.- 11:45 a.m.

Breakfast and lunch will be available from June 6 through June 30,

Monday through Thursday.

Belle Heth Elementary School

Breakfast 9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Breakfast and lunch will be available beginning July 18 and continuing through Aug. 4, Monday through Thursday.

Students must consume meals on the Belle Heth Elementary School campus. Pick-up is not available. Contact the Radford City Public Schools Department of the School Nutrition Program at (540)267-3229 or email rcwood@rcps.org for all questions, or visit www.rcps.org.

## Sheriff's Life Skills Camp returns this summer

RADFORD - The Radford City Sheriff's Office is gearing up for another session of its popular summer camp designed to teach kids important skills while having fun doing it.

The Second Annual Life Skills Camp will be held August 19-21 at Bisset Park. Camp activities will include life skills training, archery, fishing, police interactions, construction, mechanics, and firefighting activities. The camp is free, and lunch is provided to all campers on Saturday.

More than 100 children attended last summer's first camp. Campers must register by July 22 to attend. To sign up, contact the RCSO at 540-731-5501 or email to summercamp@radfordva.gov.



Radford City Sheriff Mark Armentrout poses for a photograph with one of the campers from last year's Life Skills Camp at Bisset Park.

FILE PHOTO

## Wounded Warrior Golf Tournament at VT Pete Dye Course Monday, June 6

The sixth annual Wayne Zellers Virginia Wounded Warrior Project Region III Golf Tournament will be held at the Pete Dye River Course of Virginia Tech on Monday, June 6, 2022.

This event offers support to veterans and their families in

need as a result of their service to the country. This annual event has raised more than \$50,000 since its inception. Its founder, Wayne Zellers, was an avid golfer with a true passion for helping fellow veterans and their families in the New River Valley.

Local businesses and individuals are being contacted to support this special event. Red, white and blue sponsorships are available. Sponsors at these levels will receive recognition on sponsor signs, invitations to the silent auction, the dinner, and the awards function, and a golf certificate for four players on the course at a discount.

Festivities will begin at 6 p.m. on the third round. Gifts-in-kind are accepted and will be entered in a raffle to be conducted while the players are on the course.

One-hundred percent of sponsors' gifts will go to support veterans and their families in the New River Valley. Through these efforts, the Virginia Wounded Warrior Project has been able to deliver more than 5,600 services to local veterans and their families.

## NRCC students named to Phi Theta Kappa All-Virginia Academic Team

New River Community College (NRCC) student Addison Levy has been named to the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Top Ten 2022 All-Virginia Academic Team.

Three other NRCC students were nominated for the PTK 2022 All-Virginia Academic Team and New Century Workforce Scholars: Dylon Leonard, Abigail Ridpath, and Daniel Irwin.

Levy completed her coursework at NRCC in December 2021 and graduated from NRCC in May 2022 with an associate degree in business administration. While at NRCC, she was a member of PTK. She plans to transfer to Liberty University to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration with a focus in music business online. A gifted musician, throughout high school and college, Levy has used her passion for traditional Appalachian music to perform, entertain, and teach

music. She will continue to work as a full-time musician through school and pursue all avenues of the music world once she graduates.

Leonard studied instrumentation and control automation at NRCC and plans to work at R.J. Reynolds immediately after graduation. He was named the 2022 Outstanding Student in Instrumentation and Control Automation Technology. Ridpath earned an associate degree in general studies at NRCC and plans to transfer to Radford University to pursue a degree in writing. She was an ACCE scholar and earned the 2022 Outstanding Student in English award. Irwin studied medical office administrative support and medical coding at NRCC and plans to continue his education at NRCC.

Students from across the state were recognized by Virginia's Community Colleges at an awards



From left: VCCS Chancellor Dr. Glenn DuBois, NRCC President Dr. Pat Huber, Dylon Leonard, Daniel Irwin, Abigail Ridpath, and Addison Levy.

luncheon in Richmond.

The Top Ten All-Virginia Academic Team consists of those members of the All-Virginia Academic Team achieving the highest rating in the international program sponsored by PTK, USA Today, and the American Association of Community Colleges.

Phi Theta Kappa is an interna-

tional honor society of two-year colleges and academic programs, particularly state colleges and community colleges, and the organization's mission is to recognize academic achievement of college students and to provide opportunities for them to grow as scholars and leaders.

To become a member of the

Omega Eta chapter of PTK at NRCC, students must currently be enrolled at NRCC, have a minimum 3.2 cumulative grade point average, completed at least 12 non-developmental credits at NRCC. For more information on PTK at NRCC, contact faculty sponsor Brian Clark at bclark@nr.edu.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Wednesday, June 1:

**Talking About Books: "Harlem Shuffle"**  
 At the Christiansburg Library; 11 a.m. To be discussed this month is "Harlem Shuffle" by Colson Whitehead, in-person and virtually.

**Talking about Books: "The Righteous Mind"**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 6 p.m. To be discussed is "The Righteous Mind" by Jonathan Haidt. Call (540) 268-1964 for more information or to reserve a copy.

## Thursday, June 2:

**American Legion meeting**  
 American Legion Harvey-Howe-Carper Post 30 will meet at 7 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in Radford. For further information, call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

**Chamber Foundation annual bocce ball tournament & Business after Hours**  
 At the Montgomery County Moose Lodge 1470 115 Farmview Road NW, Christiansburg from 2 to 7 p.m. The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Foundation presents its annual Bocce Ball Tournament for great food, fun, and networking. <https://bit.ly/mc-bocce2022>.

Also, join the Chamber for Business After Hours from 5 to 7 p.m. Featured will be chances to win prizes at the raffle, including an Old Town brand kayak. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20. Email [programs@montgomerycc.org](mailto:programs@montgomerycc.org) for more details.

**Crafternoon**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 2 p.m. Participants will make a variety of ocean-inspired crafts. All ages are welcome but supplies are limited.

**Cupcake Wars: Under the Sea**  
 At the Blacksburg Library at 3 p.m. Help the library kick off its summer reading program by decorating cupcakes with an ocean theme.

## Thursday, June 2- Thursday, June 23:

**Set sail to healthy eating and cooking for the family**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library; Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. Participants will learn how to make affordable, healthy snacks and meals for the family. They will receive free cooking utensils at each class and a slow cooker on completion of the four-week series. Activities will be provided for children ages 3 and older. The program is co-sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. For more information, call the Meadowbrook Library at 540-268-1964.

## Friday, June 3:

**Nailed It! Summer edition**  
 At the Christiansburg Library at 2 p.m. Inspired by the hit Netflix TV show, participants will use their wacky, artistic side to create a work of art using the provided supplies. Ages 8 and up. Registra-

tion is required.

## Saturday, June 4:

**BMCF Annual Gospel Sing**  
 The Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation's annual gospel sing will be held from noon to 6 p.m. on the Alexander Black House lawn, 204 Draper Road SW. Admission is free, donations are encouraged. Area choirs, soloists, and praise dancers will sing current and old-time gospel favorites. Everyone is welcome to bring an instrument and join in the group sing.

The schedule for the music is as follows: Noon to 1 p.m.: Bob and Claudia Goldstein; 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.: the Gloylanders; 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.: Joann's This and That Singers; 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.: Simple Gifts; 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.: the Indian Run Gospel Trio; 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.: Alexis Johnson. Sponsored by the Virginia Tech Foundation.

**American Red Cross blood drive**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 9 a.m. Schedule an appointment at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org). The blood drive will be held at the Waldron Wellness Center-Carilion Community Room. A patron of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library who has fines and donates blood will be forgiven up to \$10, redeemable only at Meadowbrook Public Library.

**Caturday**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library at noon. Sign up at the library for a 15-minute slot to read to a cat from the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center to practice reading and to socialize shelter cats. For all ages.

**Father's Day gift program**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 1 p.m. Participants will make a special Father's Day gift. Fill a mug with treats and then gift-wrap it. Supplies are limited.

**Teen DND**  
 At the Blacksburg Library at 2 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons for ages 11 to 17.

**PanJammers Steel Drum Orchestra**  
 At the Blacksburg Library at 5 p.m. PanJammers is an award-winning steel drum orchestra based in Blacksburg.

**Woman's Club of Radford yard sale**  
 The Woman's Club of Radford will hold a yard sale from 8 a.m. until noon at 207 10th St. in Radford. Proceeds will benefit children's literacy projects in the New River Valley. The Woman's Club's Babies into Books program gives a book to every baby born at the Carilion New River Valley Medical Center. The group's Reading Is Fundamental program serves three elementary schools: Riverlawn and Snowville in Pulaski County and McHarg in Radford. Each child gets the chance twice a year to select a book of his or her own.

## Monday, June 6:

**Blacksburg real estate taxes due**  
 The Town of Blacksburg real estate tax invoices have been mailed and are due by Monday, June 6. Anyone who has not

yet received a tax statement should call the Department of Financial Services at 540-961-1105. Payment may be mailed, made in person, placed in the drop box at 300 South Main St., Blacksburg, paid by phone with a credit card, or paid online at [www.blacksburg.gov/payments](http://www.blacksburg.gov/payments). A 10% penalty will be charged if not paid by June 6, 2022. Interest will be charged at the rate of 10% per year beginning July 1, 2022.

**Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center of Roanoke program**  
 At the Christiansburg Library at 10 a.m. and at the Meadowbrook Public Library at 2 p.m. This one-hour program will feature non-releasable animal education ambassadors, fun stories, and history. Learn how to help local wild animals.

## June 6, 13, 20, 27:

**Nature Walk/Library Talk**  
 Each Monday in June at 10 a.m. at the Meadowbrook Public Library Courtyard. Walk with babies or children in strollers, slings, or carriers. Participants will get together and walk, make new friends, talk about nutrition and feeding babies and toddlers, and learn more information about the library. Sponsored by the Family Nutrition Program of the Virginia Cooperative Extension of Montgomery County.

## Tuesday, June 7:

**Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center of Roanoke program**  
 At the Blacksburg Library at 10 a.m. This one-hour program will feature non-releasable animal education ambassadors, fun stories, and history. Learn how to help local wild animals.

## Wednesday, June 8:

**Brown Bag Book Club**  
 At the Radford Public Library on the second Wednesday of each month at noon. To be discussed this month is "84 Charing Cross Road" by Helene Hanff. Participants may bring a lunch or enjoy Aaron's latest delicious culinary creation (tea & scones!). To be discussed next month is "Malibu Rising" by Taylor Jenkins Reid.

## Thursday, June 9:

**River City Quilt Guild**  
 The River City Quilt Guild meets the second Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Grove United Methodist Church, 1020 Tyler Avenue, Radford. All skill levels of quilters are welcome. For more information call Anna Handy, 540 320 7791.

## June 2022 Eggs & Issues: COVID After-Action Report

At Warm Hearth Village 2387 Warm Hearth Drive, Blacksburg from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce presents its Eggs & Issues breakfast and a COVID after-action report on how the community has adapted. Invited speakers are Dr. Noelle Bissell, Director of the New River Health District; Bill Flattery, Vice President of Carilion Clinic, Western Region; Devin Tobin, COO of LewisGale Hospital Montgomery and Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the New River Valley Regional Commission. Admission is \$25 for chamber members and \$35 for non-members. Space is limited. Reservations are required by Tuesday, June 7 at noon. Register and pay online or contact [programs@montgomerycc.org](mailto:programs@montgomerycc.org).

**Meet the author event**  
 At the Radford Public Library at 7 p.m. Award-winning garden writer Barbara Pleasant, author of "Homegrown Pantry," will share dozens of tips for enjoying a garden's bounty in every season. A copy of Barbara's book will be given out during the event.

## Saturday, June 11:

**Fish Fry**  
 The Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its June Fish Fry from 5 to 7 p.m. at Slusser's Chapel Picnic Shelter, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. The club will serve up helpings of fish, fries, and slaw with homemade desserts and beverages. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children under 12. Children under 3 will eat free. Carry-outs are also \$12. The fish fry will be held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan

**Second Annual Radford PRIDE March**  
 Organized by the RADical Change Commission. March begins with brief remarks at the Radford Public Library, fol-

lowed by a march starting at 7 p.m. from the library to the City of Radford administration/ police building. Any questions can be asked to the RADical Change Commission on Facebook.

## Tuesday, June 14:

**Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting**  
 The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Italian Family Restaurant at 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are invited to attend. For further information, call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

## Tuesday, June 4 and Wednesday, June 5:

**Dynamic Plein Air Painting with Arlene Daniel**  
 Sponsored by the Blacksburg Regional Art Association. Oil painter Arlene Daniel will be in Christiansburg, June 4-5, at the Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, 107 W Main St. to demonstrate in oil but will take artists using any medium into the class. Class hours will divide between indoors and outdoors. To register go to [Blacksburgart.org](http://Blacksburgart.org). To learn more about Arlene Daniel, go to [arleneedaniel.com](http://arleneedaniel.com). Cost is \$125/\$155 (member/non-member).

## Saturday, June 18:

**NAACP Juneteenth Commemoration**  
 The local NAACP will celebrate Juneteenth, the traditional African American commemoration of freedom from slavery from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Rosa Peters Playground, 300 Depot St. NE, Christiansburg. Music will be played and food will be available to purchase. The NAACP Youth Council will sell hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks, and other snacks. An ice cream truck courtesy of Freedom First Credit Union will provide free ice cream. Proceeds from the event will benefit local youth educational activities and programs. The program will begin at noon and will be followed by swimming, children's games, a silent auction, and raffle with door prizes. Various talents will be shared by youth and community members. Information booths from the NAACP and other community organizations will be on site. If an organization wants to have a booth, contact the NAACP at [info@mrfnacp.org](mailto:info@mrfnacp.org) or call the branch at 540-382-6751. Entry is free.

## Wednesday, June 22:

**Red Cross blood drive**  
 The New River Health District in partnership with Blue Ridge Church, 1655 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg, is hosting a blood drive with the American Red Cross on June 22 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Friday, June 24:

**BMCF Sunset Rhythms 2022**  
 The Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Center kicks off its summer concert series on the lawn of the Alexander Black House from 7 to 8:30 p.m. with singer/songwriter Grace Campbell. Spoons' shaved ice truck will have treats for sale. Guests are welcome to bring a picnic or other snacks as well. Tickets are \$5 for adults. Children ages 13 and under are free. All proceeds support the work of the Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Center. Visit [www.blacksburgmuseum.org](http://www.blacksburgmuseum.org) for more information.


## Throughout June and July:

**"Turtle-y Awesome"- sidewalk obstacle course**  
 Visit the Meadowbrook Library during the months of June and July and go through the tropical theme sidewalk obstacle course located in the courtyard. Those who complete the course can enter for a special prize drawing.

## Ongoing:

**Free GED classes with NRCC**  
 At the Radford Public Library; 9 a.m. to noon. Free GED prep classes offered by New River Community College in the library's community room. Call (540) 674-3682 for additional information.

**Grab-and-go meals**  
 At the Meadowbrook Public Library. The library offers free grab-and-go lunch and snack meals. Children and youth 18 and younger can come and get a weeks' worth of lunches and snacks every week. The event is sponsored by Feeding Southwest Virginia,



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# Tropical storm expert encourages people to be ‘weather aware’ as hurricane season starts

A Virginia Tech meteorologist with expertise in hurricanes and tropical storms encourages people to prepare for the Atlantic hurricane season that began today June 1, in part by finding a trusted area weather source and paying attention to local weather alerts.

“During hurricane season, context is important,” said Stephanie Zick, an assistant professor in the College of Natural Resources and Environment’s Department of Geography. “For example, a weather app can tell you there is a 100 percent chance of rain, but it won’t tell you about the flooding threat or what to do when there is a simultaneous threat of tornadoes and flooding.”

“Trusted sources can provide valuable information that you will need to keep your family and property safe,” Zick said. “No matter where you live, I recommend that you have a trusted local

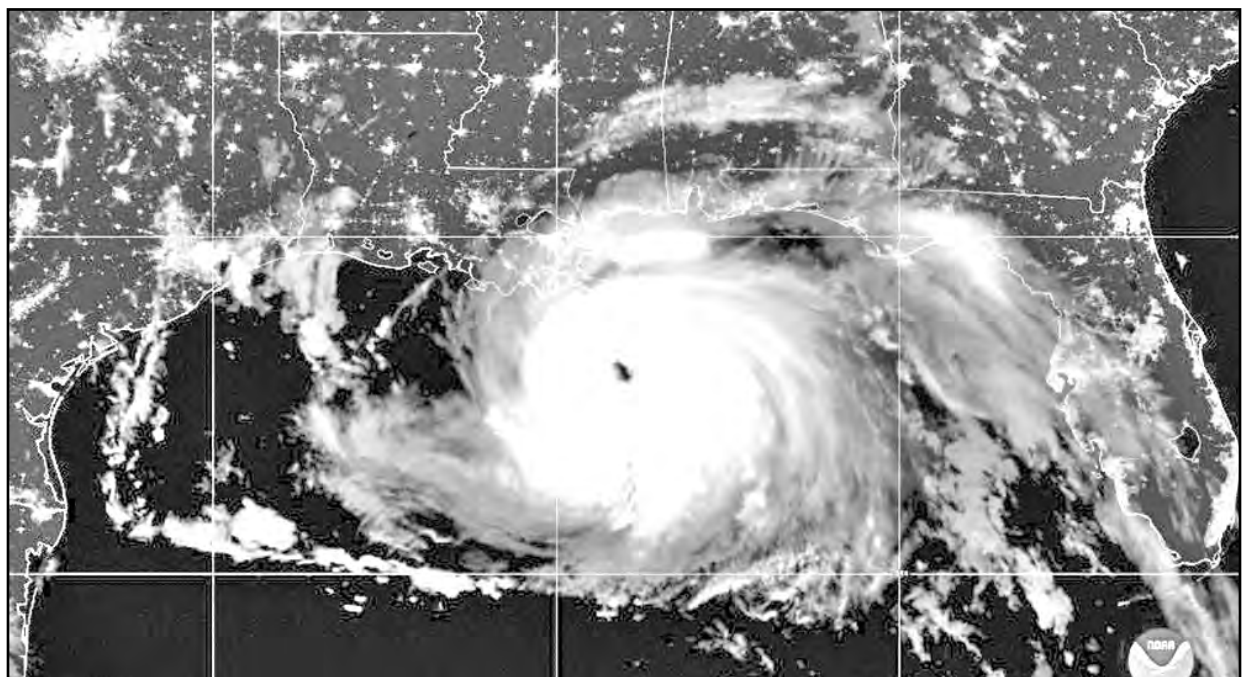
weather source, such as a local broadcast meteorologist who you watch on TV or follow on Twitter.”

Forecasters at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on Tuesday released their prediction for an above-normal 2022 Atlantic hurricane season.

Zick said it’s important to remember that hurricanes have the potential to threaten both coastal and inland areas, as seen with Hurricane Ida in 2021.

“Many people think of wind when they hear the word ‘hurricane,’ but rainfall induced flooding is another significant hazard,” she said, citing National Hurricane Center statistics that show rainfall was responsible for 65 percent of hurricane-related deaths in the United States over the last five years, many of which occurred during Hurricane Ida and Hurricane Harvey in 2017.

The U.S. has recently seen multiple hurricanes



A visible satellite image of Hurricane Ida approaching land in the Gulf of Mexico taken by NOAA’s GOES-16 (GOES East) satellite on August 29, 2021.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NOAA

undergo rapid intensification close to land, Zick noted.

“Hurricane forecasting models can predict these rapid intensification periods and give forecasters greater confidence when

predicting these events that can be so impactful to coastal residents,” she said.

“As with every hurricane season, it only takes one storm, and we should always be prepared and stay weather aware.”

### About Zick

Stephanie Zick is an assistant professor of geography and meteorologist in the College of Natural Resources and Environment. Her research areas include

tropical meteorology, tropical cyclones, precipitation, numerical weather prediction, and model forecast verification.

By Jordan Fifer

## PETS OF THE WEEK



Meet Clawdia. She’s a sweet gal who came to the Animal Care and Adoption Center with her three kittens. They all found homes and now it’s her turn. Clawdia is friendly and outgoing. She is also curious and likes to explore. Stop by to get to know her. She may be your purrfect match.



Hill is a happy hound who is ready to sniff out a new home. He’s a friendly boy and enjoys affection from his favorite humans. He also gets along with other dogs. As a lot of hounds like to do, Hill occasionally belts out a few tunes, so it would be best he live in a place that does not share walls with others.

## Mt. Tabor Ruritans to sponsor Blacksburg Fourth of July parade

The Mount Tabor Ruritan Club is sponsoring the thirty-fourth annual Blacksburg Fourth of July Parade. Entries are sought for floats, bicycles, wagons, marchers, walkers, antique/classic cars, race cars, horses, fire engines, scouts, bands, and sports teams.

The parade will begin at 2:00 p.m. in midtown Blacksburg at Eheart St. NE. It will end at Alumni Mall near Virginia Tech’s Drillfield.

Check-in and lineup will begin

at 1:30 p.m. Lineup positions will be emailed to parade participants a few days before the parade. Ruritan Club members will be on hand to assist with organizing the lineup.

The theme of the parade is “Thanking medical personnel and first responders.”

The floats may not be more than 13 feet high. Candy may be passed out but must not be thrown from vehicles so children don’t run into the street near vehicle wheels to

pick candy up.

Blue Ribbon Awards will be handed out at the judges’ discretion. For further information, text or call Gavin Faulkner, 540-449-6178, gavin@rowanmountain.com. Facebook: MtTaborRuritan.

Beginning at 6 p.m., the Blacksburg Parks & Recreation Department will have music, food, and entertainment near the Blacksburg Recreation Center. The day’s celebration will end at 9:30 p.m. with fireworks.

## Water Levels from page 1

of the Smith Mountain Project, a 636-megawatt pumped storage hydroelectric facility on the Roanoke River.

Appalachian Power has 1 million customers in Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee.

It is part of American Electric Power, which is focused on building a smarter energy infrastructure and delivering new technologies and custom energy solutions. AEP’s approximately 16,700 employ-

ees operate and maintain the nation’s largest electricity transmission system and more than 224,000 miles of distribution lines to efficiently deliver safe, reliable power to nearly 5.5 million customers

in 11 states. AEP is also one of the nation’s largest electricity producers with approximately 31,000 megawatts of diverse generating capacity, including 7,100 megawatts of renewable energy.

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# OPINION

## Buddy King: Reading the “comics” in the local newspaper

It’s early Sunday morning and I have retrieved the newspaper from my front yard. The begonias are now on my porch for the summer, so the newspaper guy is avoiding my ire by tossing the paper haphazardly in the general direction of my house as he rounds the corner on two wheels at high speed. He and I have had spirited discussions in prior summers regarding how little I like having my beautiful scarlet blooms scattered by his control problems. I guess I have truly become a “get off my lawn guy,” or at least the “don’t hit my \$300 flowers with the Clarksburg Exponent or I’ll call Circulation guy.”

As I have mentioned in the past, I still faithfully subscribe to the local daily paper. This act is motivated as much by community commitment and nostalgia as by curiosity as to what is going on around me in my little town. It has been at least a generation since most of us got our major news from newspapers, having it thrust upon us in recent years, like it or not, by the Internet, television, radio, etc. I can’t even check my watch for the time without a “push” from Apple News popping up. But nonetheless I remain a faithful subscriber to my local paper. Which brings

me to the subject of this column. The comics, what we used to call the “comic strips” or the “funny papers.”

As a child, I read the newspaper at the breakfast table, getting sections only after my father was finished. He was a “front to back guy.” My mother waited till he had gone to work and I had had my turn before she caught up on the world events as reported by the Roanoke Times.

I had no interest in the front section. It was about “world, state and local news,” which held no interest for a 9-year-old. I wanted the back section: sports and the comics. I might have struggled with graphs and diagramming sentences in school, but I darn sure knew how to read a baseball box score.

In the spring and summer, I started my days by reading the baseball scores and checking the standings. In the fall and winter, it was reading about “VPI” football and basketball, either accounts of the games or the work of a couple of columnists who alternated serving as cheerleader or critic for the Gobblers.

After my fill of sports, influenced by my Dad of course, I moved to the back pages of the Times. To the

“funny pages.” My mom was the main “influencer” here. She read several serial strips, the newspaper versions of television soap operas. I remember a couple in particular which I read for years, originally just because my mom did.

First, there was “Mary Worth,” a strip featuring a white-haired lady (now in her eighth decade of remaining the same age). Mary was and continues to be a cross between Martha Stewart and Oprah and Ellen. A “sage” advisor and friend to many, she was known for her common sense (look it up, it used to exist).

Mary was never the main character in her stories, rather lurking in the background to come out and dispense pearls of wisdom and direction when all seemed lost. I was rarely enthralled with the storylines, but my mom, who did not watch television soaps, liked to discuss them with me, and I guess I was accommodating. Today I might be called an “enabler.”

Another serial comic in the back pages of my childhood newspaper was “Steve Roper.” An investigative journalist. In those pre-Watergate days, before every news reporter in the world thought he or she had unearthed the next Pulitzer-Prize-

winning story, Steve would have been known as a “beat writer” I think. I know his forte was “racket-busting” and his venue was New York City, a good place for it. My research indicates that this strip, which ran under several names over the years, including “Steve Roper and Mike Nomad” during the time of my readership, ended a 68-year run in 2004. Presumably, Steve foresaw the coming of the fake news era and wanted no part of it.

And I can’t do this column without discussing what put the “funny” in the funny papers. The funnies of course. I religiously read “Dennis the Menace” (I didn’t get it, just seemed like everyday life to a 9-year-old kid then. What was so funny?), “Beetle Bailey” (an inept Army private surrounded by equally inept officers and a sergeant too fat for the service - made me glad the country wasn’t under attack in those days), “Peanuts” (over my head at the time but I was told by my dad that it was clever), “Blondie” (but it was really about Dagwood, who never seemed to be good enough for Blondie, an early crush of mine), “Archie and Veronica” (the adventures at Riverdale High, tales of soda fountains

and letter sweaters and jalopies. I GOT this one).

To end this stroll down memory lane, I have to give a shout out to “Gil Thorp”. This is where the twain of sports and comics met: a comic strip published in the sports section. It was read by all my gang in high school, sometimes becoming a satire (it was the 60’s; Gil and his guys and girls were too good to be true). Gil was the athletic director and head coach of football, basketball, and baseball at Milford High School and was a sports world version of Mary Worth. At the same time that I was reading Gil Thorp in the paper, I was also reading the Chip Hilton book series, which featured Chip’s accomplishments at Valley Falls High under the tutelage of his iconic coach, Hank Rockwell.

To this day, my law partner Walter and I discuss who we would have rooted for if Milford High had ever played Valley Falls.

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](mailto:evans.king@steptoe-johnson.com).

**RADFORD NEWS JOURNAL**

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## Home Country: The right way for squash bug stomping time

Dud was heading home in his pickup truck when he saw the strange goings-on at the Bahdziewicz place. Abraham Lincoln Bahdziewicz was out in the family’s large garden with a full complement of kids who were happily hopping around. Some of the kids came from the neighborhood, but most of them were homegrown Bahdziewicz kids.

The Bahdziewicz family had a great garden, and went at the whole thing scientifically and in great fun because this is one family that runs short on cash but long on kids.

Dud pulled over and watched for a minute as Abe laughingly directed the family dancers doing the vegetable boogie through the various rows

of the huge garden.

“What’s going on, Abe?” yelled Dud.

“Squash bug stomping time,” Abe said, turning over another board lying next to the vegetables. As soon as the board was flipped over, a plethora of Bahdziewicz kids stomped the bugs flat. “It’s the kids’ favorite time in the garden.”

The third-grader, John Kennedy Bahdziewicz, said, “Flip another board, Dad.”

“Hold it!” Dud yelled. “Not another move until I get back, okay? I’ll be back here in five minutes. Five minutes!”

Abraham Lincoln Bahdziewicz looked at his oldest son, Woodrow

Wilson Bahdziewicz and they both shrugged. The rest of the family stopped, too. Dud peeled out in the pickup and was back in less than two minutes.

“Okay,” Dud yelled. “Let’s do the squash bug stomp the right way!”

And he strapped on his accordion and fired up a grand polka as boards were flipped over and the exposed squash bugs were dispatched in record polka time.

Sometimes just living here can be an awful lot of fun

By Slim Randles

Pick up “Home Country: Drama, dreams and laughter from the American heartland” [www.lpdpress.com](http://www.lpdpress.com).

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Applauding the people of Ukraine

I am happy to announce that this letter is now being circulated throughout the entire country of Ukraine and Russia. Every government, church, bank, university, and many other institutions have been emailed. The feedback is overwhelming. The Ukrainians are ready to defend themselves and the Russians want no part of this war.

This letter is in response

to the articles covering the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

As a citizen of and believer in democracy, I applaud the efforts of the Ukrainian people. Their efforts are similar to what is happening in many other parts of the world. Believe it or not, one thing that overrides capitalism and political correctness in the United States is the right to have one’s voice heard. This is the foundation on which our democracy is built.

The Ukrainian people should continue to defy Vladimir Putin’s powerful armed forces so that Ukrainian democracy can continue to thrive. It is unfortunate that the United States compromised on one of its most fundamental values in order to protect its economic interests in Eastern Europe, something that happens all too often domestically as well.

It is not the Ukrainian people that are attempting

to expand NATO power, but rather it is Vladimir Putin who has engaged in intimidation to prevent the will of the people (both Ukrainian and Russian) from being heard. Why else would he stoop to such underhanded tactics to block various means of communication among the citizens of Ukraine and Russia? Why is Putin forcing Russia to return to the Cold War utilizing political strong-arm tactics such as violence? Vladimir Putin, you have had over twenty years to acknowledge Ukraine and have failed them by your own choosing. The days of your despotic regime are finally coming to an end as it appears the desire for freedom will continue to sweep among the Eastern European nations as well as Russia.

Accordingly, let the call go forth among all citizens of Ukraine that your brothers and sisters of democracy from all over the

world are with you during every trial and tribulation you may encounter during this crisis. To the people of Ukraine, the trumpet of freedom beckons you to rise in protest and loudly your voice to preserve your sacred heritage, promote your children’s future, and obtain the blessings of liberty we all cherish. Ukraine, the hour of your redemption is at hand. As you the rightful citizens move forward to reclaim your own country, rise and strike! In the name of those who were murdered fighting for everyone’s rights, rise and strike! To push back this evil regime, rise and strike! Let no one continue to fear this man. Every Ukrainian must be strong and fight on for their freedom. Rise and strike!

Vladimir Putin, you little weasel...let Ukraine go!

JOE BIALEK  
Cleveland, Ohio

## Financial Focus: New opportunities for 529 plan owners

If you want to provide educational opportunities for your children or grandchildren, you may want to consider investing in a 529 plan.

In recent years, this plan has gotten more flexible, and potentially more powerful, than ever. A key benefit of a 529 plan is that earnings are generally tax free, provided the money is used for qualified educational expenses. As the owner of the plan, you can essentially name any beneficiary you want, and you’re free to change the beneficiary as needed. Contribution limits are quite high, so you can put away considerable sums in a 529 plan – and you may want to, because college costs have risen steadily over the years. In fact, for the 2021-22 academic year, the College Board reports that the average cost (tuition, fees, room and board) of a

public, four-year college or university is more than \$27,000 for in-state students and nearly \$56,000 for students at private schools.

But 529 plans are no longer just for higher education. Over the past few years, the rules governing 529 plans have changed, so they can now be used for K-12 tuition expenses (up to \$10,000 per student, per year), apprenticeship programs registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, and student loans (\$10,000 lifetime limit for student loan repayments per each 529 plan beneficiary and another \$10,000 for each of the beneficiary’s siblings).

And soon, a major change will affect the relationship between grandparent-owned

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12			13		14				15			
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62				63					64			

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>CLUES ACROSS</b>                              | <b>CLUES DOWN</b>       |
| 1. Orator’s podium                               | 1. Used by gymnasts     |
| 5. UK-Netherlands gas pipeline                   | 2. “Luther” actor Idris |
| 8. Partner to “oohs”                             |                         |
| 12. African antelope                             |                         |
| 14. Indigenous Thai person                       |                         |
| 15. Monetary unit of Angola                      |                         |
| 16. Becomes less intense                         |                         |
| 18. Insurance mascot                             |                         |
| 19. Tech hub __Alto                              |                         |
| 20. Actress Tomei                                |                         |
| 21. Airborne (abbr.)                             |                         |
| 22. Type of smart watch                          |                         |
| 23. Natives                                      |                         |
| 26. Incompetent person                           |                         |
| 30. Rare Hawaiian geese                          |                         |
| 31. Unspoken relationships                       |                         |
| 32. Passports and licenses are two               |                         |
| 33. Claw   |                         |
| 34. Status quo                                   |                         |
| 39. Mimic  |                         |
| 42. Fur-lined cloak                              |                         |
| 44. Ancient foreigner                            |                         |
| 46. In an angry way                              |                         |
| 47. Ill-intentioned                              |                         |
| 49. Monetary unit of Serbia                      |                         |
| 50. S. American plant                            |                         |
| 51. One or the other                             |                         |
| 56. An alias for Thor                            |                         |
| 57. Gratuity                                     |                         |
| 58. In a painful way                             |                         |
| 59. French commune                               |                         |
| 60. Promotional materials                        |                         |
| 61. Greek city                                   |                         |
| 62. Assistant                                    |                         |
| 63. Confederate general                          |                         |
| 64. Former NJ governor                           |                         |
| 3. Broad volcanic crater                         |                         |
| 4. Not for                                       |                         |
| 5. Blur  |                         |
| 6. Tots  |                         |
| 7. Acted leisurely                               |                         |
| 8. About the Alps                                |                         |
| 9. Gets out of bed                               |                         |
| 10. Town in “The Iliad”                          |                         |
| 11. Welsh given name                             |                         |
| 13. Remove salt                                  |                         |
| 17. Calvary sword                                |                         |
| 24. Mental disorder concerning body odor (abbr.) |                         |
| 25. Keeps a house cozy                           |                         |
| 26. Ballplayer’s accessory                       |                         |
| 27. Southwestern Russian city                    |                         |
| 28. Pro sports league                            |                         |
| 29. Congress investigative body (abbr.)          |                         |
| 35. Stop standing                                |                         |
| 36. Utilize                                      |                         |
| 37. Sign language                                |                         |
| 38. Famed ESPN broadcaster Bob                   |                         |
| 40. Being of central importance                  |                         |
| 41. Ruin environment                             |                         |
| 42. Dessert dish                                 |                         |
| 43. Sea eagles                                   |                         |
| 44. Fertilized                                   |                         |
| 45. Jerry’s friend Benes                         |                         |
| 47. Indian river                                 |                         |
| 48. Pass into a specified state or condition     |                         |
| 49. Nocturnal rodent                             |                         |
| 52. A way to travel                              |                         |
| 53. Iron-containing compound                     |                         |
| 54. Ancient Greek City                           |                         |
| 55. NFL signal caller Matt                       |                         |

# Virginia Department of Transportation road watch

The following is a list of forecasted highway projects that may impact traffic traveling in the 12-county Salem Transportation District this week. Work schedules and construction project timelines are always subject to change and weather dependent. The Salem District covers Bedford, Botetourt, Carroll, Craig,

Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski and Roanoke counties

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

I-81 NORTHBOUND AT EXIT 105 NEW RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Traffic on northbound I-81 has been switched onto the newly constructed bridge over the New River at the Montgomery/Pulaski County line. Lane and shoulder closures may be in place near exit 105. Lane closure may be in effect during the week from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. Shoulder closures may be in effect at any time dur-

ing the week. Slow rolls may be performed on I-81 in the north and southbound lanes from mile marker 98 to 109. Speed limit is reduced to 60 miles per hour in the work zone. Shoulder closures will remain in place though the duration of the project. Project completion is estimated by summer 2023.

**LANE CLOSURES:** Night-time alternating lane closures will be in place on I-81 northbound between mile markers 104-106 from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning.

**SLOW ROLLS:** Slow rolls may be utilized periodically on both the northbound and south-

See VDOT, page 10

## OBITUARIES

### Anderson, Roger Lee

Roger Lee Anderson, 81, of Pulaski, passed away on Thursday, May 26, 2022.

He worked for H.T. Bowling Construction Company as a maintenance man for 43 years. Roger loved the outdoors, spending time with his family, and eating out for meals.

He was preceded in death by his father, Harry Lee Anderson; his mother, Lucy Mae Walls Anderson; his stepmother, Vergie Anderson; his brothers, Bobby and Draper Anderson; a daughter, Sherri Anderson; and a grandson, Shane Arnold. Survivors include his loving wife of 53



years, Janice "Jan" Anderson; a daughter, Renee Anderson; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; a sister, Alene Gray; a brother, Arnold Anderson; several stepsisters; and many other family members and special friends.

The family received friends on Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford, followed by memorial services with Pastor Billy Akers and Charlie Henderson officiating.

The Anderson family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

### Bane, Ronald

Ronald Bane, 56, departed this life on Thursday, May 26, 2022.

Those left to cherish Ronald's memory include his parents, Lewis and Elizabeth Bane of Parrott; his brothers Doug (Lisa) of Pulaski, and Dennis (Cissy) of Dublin; a daughter Anna; and a multitude of nieces, nephews, special friends and loved ones.

Ronald also had special children in his life that he adored, including Nathan and Cierra.

He grew up as a native son of Parrott and enjoyed fishing the river and hunting the mountains.



Ronald was a skilled carpenter by trade and worked in the concrete industry for many years. He had an eye for genuine quality in his work, and many homes bear his workmanship detail in their build.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at the Parrott Church of God. The family received friends prior to the service. Interment followed in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

The Bane family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

### Faulconer, Leigh Anne

Leigh Anne Faulconer, 52, of Radford, passed away Monday, Oct. 25, 2021, at Carilion New River Valley Medical Center.

Leigh was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, James William and Hazel W. Faulconer; her maternal grandparents, Jesse F. and Cloetta M. Robinson; an uncle, David John Robinson with whom she shared a birthday; and also her beloved Corgi, Gracie.

Leigh was a 1987 graduate of Spotsylvania High School. Following her graduation from Virginia Tech in 1991 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology, Leigh went on to earn a Master of Science, Family and Child Development at Virginia Tech in 1994 and in 1998 a Master's in Social Work from Radford University. She dedicated over 25 years of service to her adopted home in the New River Valley Region as a medical social worker at Carilion



Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

She served as an assessment specialist, CONNECT, at Carilion St. Albans Behavioral Health, and over 10 years as a hospice social worker with Carilion Clinic Hospice, New Century Hospice in Wytheville, and lastly at Blue Ridge Cancer Care in Blacksburg. Leigh was a member of Lifeline Church, Christians-

burg. She was born on June 9, 1969, in Fredericksburg, Va., to James A. and Mary R. Faulconer. Including her parents, Leigh is survived by a brother, James V. Faulconer (Kelly), a niece, Alexandria L. Faulconer (Tate) and a sister Jamie L. Faulconer. Her Spotsylvania County family includes many aunts, uncles, and cousins. A memorial service for Leigh will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, June 5, 2022, at Lifeline Christiansburg, 100 W. Main Street, Christiansburg.

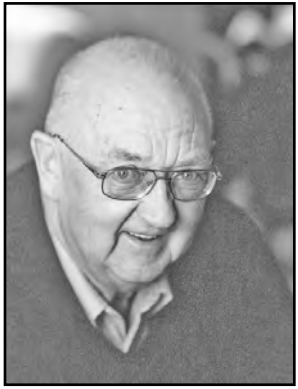
### Weaver, Howard W.

Howard W. Weaver unexpectedly left this earth to join his Lord and Savior on May 25, 2022.

Born in Dublin on Aug. 23, 1934, Howard was a lifelong resident of the town. He met his beloved wife, Margaret, in 1954. The two were married for 62 years, prior to her preceding him in death in December 2018.

Howard was the proud father to two daughters, Beth Weaver Weber (Charlie) and Molly Weaver Nevitt and an "adopted" daughter, Stephanie Bird Henthorn. He additionally welcomed the many friends of his girls into his home offering a boat ride to all and grilling hamburgers for them. He attended many band and other school functions. He was a devoted family man and was in attendance at Dublin United Methodist Church in the same spot every week, surrounded by those who loved him.

Professionally, Howard worked as a CPA for all his adult life after graduating from National Business College. He had his own practice for over 50 years and worked side by side with his wife for most of those. He was a lifelong member of the Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants and was honored at a ceremony in Richmond for this lifetime achievement in 2012. He was also a life member of the American Institute of



Certified Public Accountants.

In the community, Howard was a lifelong member of the Lions Club in Dublin, Va.

Howard was semi-retired and continued to work with a few special clients. He enjoyed spending time with his family and living at Claytor Lake. He enjoyed time at Myrtle Beach and always

wanted a good seafood dinner.

He was preceded in death by his parents, J. Emmet and Ruth Weaver; his wife of 62 years, Margaret Weaver; and an infant Weaver.

Survivors include his daughter, Beth Weaver (Charlie), and Molly Jo Nevitt; a cousin, Jeanette Poole; and many other relatives and friends.

The family received friends on Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at the Dublin United Methodist Church. Funeral services will be held today, June 1, 2022, at 1 p.m. at the Dublin United Methodist Church with Pastor Don Shelor officiating. Interment will follow in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Dublin United Methodist Church, 424 E Main St, Dublin, VA 24084.

The Weaver family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

### Whitley, Nancy Saraske

It is with heavy hearts that the family announces the passing of Nancy Saraske Whitley on May 24, 2022, at the age of 66 at her home in Pilot.

Nancy was born in Anderson, S.C., to John Oscar Saraske and Kathleen Rogers Saraske on Nov. 26, 1955. She was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, James Saraske of Anderson, S.C.

Nancy's faith was a bedrock upon which she built and lived her life including time spent as a member and pianist/organist at Riverside Baptist Church in Anderson, Red Cross Baptist Church in Red Cross, N.C.; and most recently at Floyd Baptist Church. She was often found at her piano bench practicing or playing her favorite hymns.

Her light and impact will live on through



the lives of her family and friends including her husband of 41 years, Rodney Whitley of Pilot, and her children and their families: Michael (Madison) Whitley, Melinda (Cameron) Lephew, and Daniel Whitley. Her love also endures in each of her cherished grandchildren: Lily, Nolan, and Isabelle.

A visitation was held at Gardner Funeral Home in Floyd on Saturday, May 28, from 6 to 8 p.m. A funeral service was held at Floyd Baptist Church on Sunday, May 29 at 2 p.m. A burial service will be held in Red Cross, N.C. at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society. Online Condolences may be made at Gardnerfuneralhomefloyd.com. Arrangements by Gardner Funeral Home.

## Financial Focus from page 4

529 plans and the financial aid packages awarded to their grandchildren. Families applying for aid have not been required to report grandparent-owned 529 account assets on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). However, under previous rules, you had to report withdrawals from the grandparent-owned plans as untaxed student income, which could reduce aid eligibility by up to 50% of the amount of cash received.

But that's changing for the 2024-25 FAFSA, which won't require students to report cash support, including money taken from a grandparent-owned 529 plan. Instead, a student's total income amount will be reported directly from federal in-

come tax returns. This means that a grandparent-owned 529 plan won't have any effect on need-based financial aid eligibility. This benefit to families is already here because 2022 will be used as the base year for the 2024-25 FAFSA, so any withdrawals taken in 2022, and also going forward, won't need to be reported as student income.

With this change, families will now have more options on using 529 plans without jeopardizing financial aid. You can generally withdraw any amount from the aggregate of all 529 plans for higher education costs, but only the qualified withdrawals – the ones used for typical education-related expenses – will be tax-free. The earnings portion of

non-qualified withdrawals are taxable and could also incur a 10% penalty.

Given the new rules affecting a grandparent-owned 529 plan, you should consult with a financial professional to determine how this plan can work with other strategies to help meet educational expenses while, at the same time, not detracting from the progress you'd like to make on other important goals, such as a comfortable retirement.

In any case, consider looking into a 529 plan. It was already a great tool for education funding, and it can now offer your family even more options.

*Submitted by Marquise Francis, Edward Jones Financial Advisor*

### ONLINE AUCTION

Ends Wednesday June 15th at 4 PM  
Home for Sale in The City of Roanoke VA  
1527 20th St. NE, Roanoke VA 24012

Bid Now at VaAuctionPro.com



You have the opportunity to purchase a sweet one level home in Roanoke VA. This home features 3 bedrooms, 2 baths and 1,400 sq. ft. of space. The property consists of two tax map parcels combining for a total of .3007 +/- acres. There is a new addition on the back of the home for the master bedroom and bath which is nearly complete. The addition needs flooring and trim work. The bathroom has a toilet and shower but still needs a sink installed. Kitchen also needs flooring installed. Home is being sold "As-Is". The master bedroom has vaulted ceiling with exposed beams. The home has a heat pump, shingle roof, wood and stucco exterior, public water and sewer, concrete crawl space foundation, gravel driveway, a new security system, two storage buildings, covered front porch, and two uncovered porches. Interior floors are hardwood, vinyl, tile, and subfloor in master bedroom, bath and kitchen. Great investment property or home for someone looking to live in Roanoke VA!

Preview - Friday June 3rd @ 4 PM

**Terms** - 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$5,000 due day of sale. Close in 45 days. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence. Download Bidder Pack at VAAuctionPro.com

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# Scientists detect deadly arrhythmia trifecta: Salt, swelling, and leaky sodium channels

Less than 1 percent of the population has been diagnosed with Long QT syndrome – a rare heart condition that can cause chaotic, sometimes fatal, heart rhythms.

Now, Virginia Tech researchers at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC have identified two core factors that may put patients with Long QT syndrome Type 3 at significantly higher risk of sudden cardiac death. Their findings were recently published in the American Journal of Physiology – Heart and Circulatory Physiology.

The researchers found that heart inflammation and elevated blood sodium levels together elevate the risk of dangerous arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death in guinea pigs with faulty intercellular sodium channels, a condition modeling a form of the Long QT syndrome.

“Monitoring salt intake is a simple, inexpensive intervention, but our new findings demonstrate that controlling blood sodium could help Long QT patients prevent dangerous arrhythmias,” said Steven Poelzing, the study’s lead author and associate professor at the Fralin Biomedical Research

Institute.

Some Long QT syndrome patients are born with the disease while others develop it as a result of natural aging, certain medications, tissue swelling, or heart disease.

The syndrome remodels the heart’s sodium channels to become hyperactive and leaky, which disrupts the heart’s normal electrical pathways. Long QT is diagnosed when the length of time it takes for a heartbeat to drop from its peak to baseline, the QT interval, is extended on an electrocardiogram reading.

Some patients with Long QT live long, healthy, and event-free lives, while others suddenly die. We’ve examined cellular activity to better understand which factors exacerbate the disease,” Poelzing said.

Poelzing’s laboratory was the first to examine the impacts of heart tissue swelling and blood chemistry in relation to the syndrome. The research team injected wild type guinea pigs with a toxin derived from sea anemones that makes the heart’s sodium channels leaky.

“Combined, leaky sodium channels and elevated blood sodium levels slightly altered the heart rhythms,



PHOTO BY CLAYTON METZ FOR VIRGINIA TECH

**Virginia Tech scientists recently found evidence that high salt intake, heart inflammation, and overactive sodium channels together elevate the risk of sudden cardiac death. Xiaobo Wu, the study’s first author and a graduate student in Virginia Tech’s Translational Biology, Medicine, and Health Program, was mentored by Steven Poelzing, the study’s principal investigator and an associate professor at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute.**

but it didn’t cause sudden cardiac death,” said Poelzing.

Finally, Poelzing’s research team added mannitol, a drug that causes swelling by drawing water into the spaces called the perinexus between heart cells. This ‘trifecta’ was

enough to prompt sudden cardiac death.

“Our data suggest that the combination of tissue edema, elevated blood sodium, and faulty sodium channels trigger deadly heart arrhythmias,” Poelzing said.

Poelzing believes these

findings could help Long QT patients, as well as the general population. As humans naturally age, heart muscle cells grow and require more calcium to contract. To sustain elevated calcium levels, heart muscle cells also need more sodium. As a result, the ag-

ing human heart naturally adapts ‘leaky’ sodium channels, allowing more sodium to enter the cell.

“While Long QT is a rare disorder, anyone could acquire similar sodium channel dysfunction with age, ischemia, or other heart disease,” Poelzing said.

# RADIO IQ wins six Edward R. Murrow Awards for outstanding news

WVTF’s Radio IQ news team has won six 2022 regional Edward R. Murrow Awards for outstanding achievement in broadcast journalism, more than any other station in its three-state region.

In addition to accolades for feature and news reporting, Radio IQ was recognized for “Overall Excellence” as the top small market radio news

team in the region for the second year in a row.

The Region 12 awards, given by the Radio Television Digital News Association, includes broadcasters in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. All WVTF/Radio IQ regional award winners will now advance to the national competition in the fall.

“Every Radio IQ news team member had a hand in these awards—producers, reporters, hosts,” said news director David Seidel. “The awards really demonstrate the versatility and skill of our staff in telling important and engaging stories.”

Radio IQ and WVTF Music provide public radio programming to 200,000 listen-

ers weekly through 25 signals reaching over half of the commonwealth. A community service of Virginia Tech, the station is licensed to the Virginia Tech Foundation and helps fulfill the university’s motto *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

The awards include: Overall Excellence. Breaking News Coverage

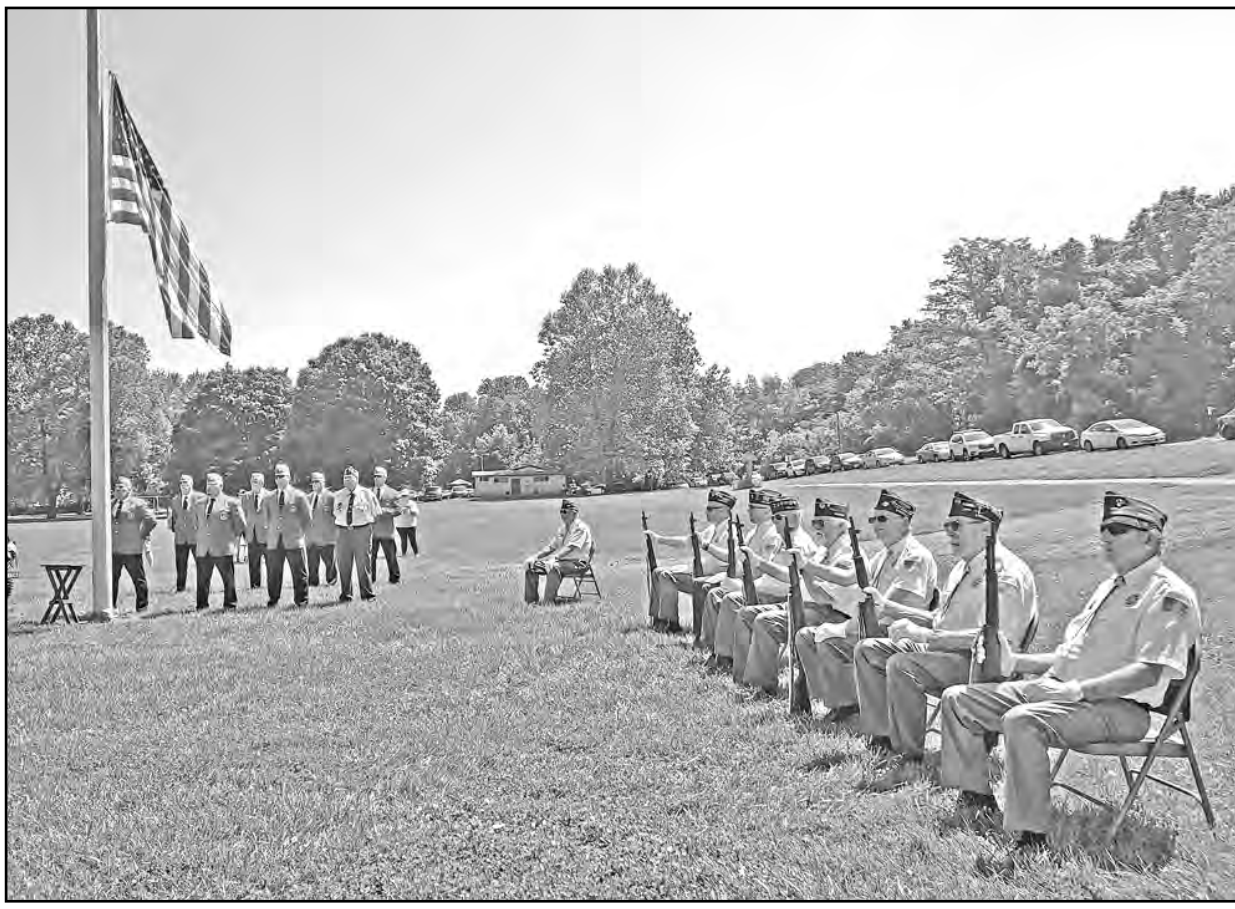
for “Charlottesville Monuments Removed” by Sandy Hausman, reporter.

Continuing Coverage for “Virginia’s Redistricting Journey” by Jahd Khalil, reporter.

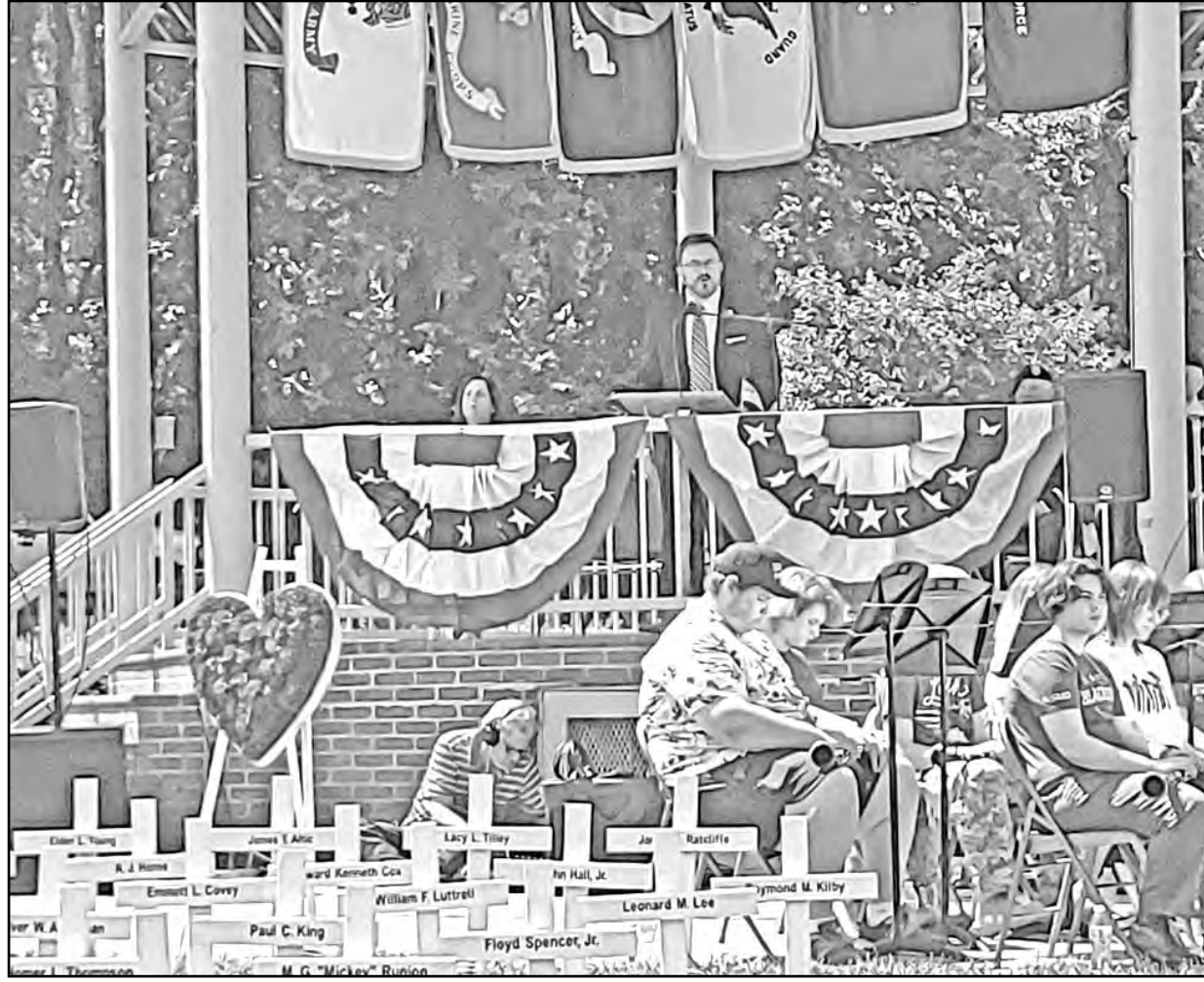
Feature Reporting for “Joe Thompson’s Legacy” by Luke Church, reporter.

News Series “COVID 19 in Virginia Prisons” by Sandy Hausman, reporter.

## Ceremony from page 1



**Members of the VFW Post 776 Honor Guard and the NRV Marine Corps League participate in Monday’s Memorial Day ceremony.**



PHOTOS BY HEATHER BELL

**Radford Mayor David Horton delivers remarks at Monday’s remembrance, which included a display of crosses depicting the names of Radford citizens who died in war.**

David Horton, Radford Army Ammunition Plant Commander Lt. Col. Russell Jones, Lt. Col. and Delegate Jason Ballard. Rev. Diana White of First Baptist Church (Third Avenue) gave the invocation, and Jackson recited the names of Radford’s war dead.

Horton honored the sacrifice by fallen soldiers “to ensure our freedoms and chart the course for our future.”

Ballard, who received a Bronze Star and several other military awards for his combat tour in Baghdad, urged the crowd not to think of Memorial Day as a holiday, but rather as “a day of somber reflection.”

“We honor those who did not make it home from battle,” said Ballard.

Jones, who is also a Bronze Star recipient, among other military awards, for his combat service in Iraq, looked out at the rows of crosses depicting the names of Radford residents who died in war, and said behind each name there is not only heroism, but a family who had to bear the pain of losing a loved one.

“Our nation must always remember what they did and what they gave,” said Jones. “Let us not remember them just

on Memorial Day, but every day.”

The ceremony also included performances by the Radford High School Choir, who sang the National Anthem, and the RHS Band, who performed a medley of the songs of each branch of the U.S. military. The NRV Marine Corps League led a Posting of the Colors and the VFW Post 776 conducted a 21-gun salute. Piper Andrew Meeks performed “Amazing Grace,” and VFW Post 776 presented “Taps.”

The ceremony has been held for the past 20-plus years, and is presented by Radford VFW Post 776, American Legion Post 30, the NRV Marine Corps League, Bondurant Realty, the Dublin-Radford Ruritan Club, the Radford News Journal, WRAD AM1460, and WPSK 107.1.

Ceremony presenters thanked the following for support of the program: the City of Radford, Director of Radford Parks and Recreation Ken Goodyear, the Radford Army Ammunition Plant, Sign Systems, BAE Systems, Sound engineer Russell Brewster, Mullins Funeral Home, and Virginia Chapter 14 of WoodmenLife.

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# RADFORD SPORTS

## Region track summary Christiansburg girls win region 3D; Blacksburg girls finish second in 4D track; Auburn girls win 1C; Radford boys take second in 2C



Blacksburg teammates Reese Bradbury and Mia Jones placed fifth and sixth in the 1600m race at the Region 4D championship meet on Wednesday at Louisa County High School.



Blacksburg's Conner Rutherford takes the lead over Jefferson Forest's Brannon Adams and went on to win the Region 4D 1600m race with a time of 4:21.52.



PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Blacksburg's Sophia Krouscas won the 100m, 200m, and 400m races at the Region 4D championship meet Wednesday.

**Marty Gordon**  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Action was heavy this past week on the track for all the area high schools. The Blacksburg girls finished second in Region 4D as Jefferson Forest took the team title with 137.5 points to the Bruins' 120 points. The Blacksburg boys finished fourth, behind first-place Pulaski (128.5 points) with 83 points.

The Radford boys' team finished second in Region 2C with 102 points to Glenvar's 124 points. Floyd was third with 95 points.

Christiansburg claimed the girls' title in Region 3D with 112.33 points to second-place William Byrd's 105.33. The boys' team finished fifth.

Blacksburg's Sophia Krouscas won the girls' 200-meter dash, the 100-meter dash, and the 400-meter run. Teammate Mia Littlejohn won

the regional title in the 100-meter hurdles. Katja Kehlenbeck cleared 5-02 in the high jump to win that event.

Conner Rutherford gave the Bruins a win in the 1,600-meter run.

Auburn's Haley Hollins continued her dominance in Region 1C, winning the discus with a throw of 109' 3" and the shot put with a toss of 39' 6.25". Katelyn Lafon and Kasey Rosenbaum were 1-2 in the girls' 1,600-meter run with Eastern Montgomery's Valeria Castillo third. The trio also finished in the same places in the 800-meter run.

Eastern Montgomery's Aija McHone brought home the 400-meter title.

The Auburn girls' 4X800 relay team outran cross-county rival Eastern Montgomery for the regional title. Auburn also took the 4X400 relay title.

The Auburn boys' 4X800 relay slipped by second-place Eastern Montgomery for first place. The

two schools flipped places in the 4X400 relay.

Daniel Graham gave Auburn gold in the 110 hurdles, and Bryce Dehart finished first in the 100-meter dash.

Eastern Montgomery's Cody Roop cleared 5' 8" for the win on Thursday in Pearisburg.

In 3D, Tyrique Taylor brought the discus and shotput championships to Christiansburg.

Summer Hamlin finished second for the Blue Demons in the 400-meter dash and the 800-meter run. Teammate Kayla Waters was third in the 800 meters.

Christiansburg's Madelyn Moles was the Region 3D medalist in the 300-meter hurdles and finished third in the 100-meter hurdles. Moles took the pole vault event at 11' even and finished second in the girls' long jump. Teammate Amara Okoronkwo claimed the girl's triple jump crown.



FILE PHOTO

CHS alumnus Kevin Cox has been appointed the school's head boys' basketball coach. He replaces Mike Hunter.

## Christiansburg alum returns to coach boys' basketball team

**Marty Gordon**  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Christiansburg High School alumnus Kevin Cox has been appointed the school's head coach after the departure this past month of Mike Hunter.

Cox, who had been serving as an assistant at Floyd County High School, is also a former assistant at Christiansburg.

"Being a Christiansburg alumnus, a former player on the state qualifying team in 2011, and a previous coach here for seven years, I am overjoyed to come back home and be back in the navy and gold. This is home," Cox said last week.

Cox's first stint with the Blue Demons was in 2013 when Shawn Good brought him in. He served as a varsity assistant for seven years and was the junior varsity head coach for five seasons.

This past season, he was the head middle-school coach for a team that finished 15-1.

"My expectations for the Christiansburg boys' program as a whole are to get better each and every day, brick by brick from the local travel programs to the middle school and all the way up through junior varsity and varsity," Cox said.

"My short-term goal would be to improve from one season to the next and emphasize progress and growth in the off-seasons to keep improving. Long-term, the goal is to get this program back to where it was in 2009-2012 (when Shawn Good was at the helm) competing for district and region hardware and of course competing for the ultimate goal: a state championship. With that being said, it's going to take time, and I am ready to do whatever it takes to get the Christiansburg boys' basketball program back to that point."

Cox has also helped Good in coaching U17 at Spectrum and coaching with Xtereme and the New River Nets in numerous off-seasons.

## Bobcat swimmer commits to VMI



FILE PHOTO

Radford High School's Hampton Wohlford swam to this year's state title in the 100-yard butterfly.

**Marty Gordon**  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

One of the area's top high school swimmers will continue his career at Virginia Military Institute (VMI) as this past week Radford's Hampton Wohlford signed a letter-of-intent in Radford's gymnasium in front of family, friends, and teammates.

Wohlford is the 2022 champ in the 100-yard Butterfly and is a member of the 200-yard medley and 200-yard freestyle relay teams.

At VMI, Wohlford will be a part of the historical military program, one of the reasons he chose the Lexington, Va., school.

"I wanted to do Navy ROTC in college so that I could prepare myself for the military," he said. "I was deciding between Virginia Tech and VMI.

After I visited VMI, I felt like it had a lot more structure than another school would have. I also get the opportunity to swim there and not at Virginia Tech."

Virginia Military Institute is a public senior military college. It was founded in 1839 as America's first state military college and is the oldest public senior military college in the United States. The school currently has an enrollment of 1,685 students.

All of the school's sports teams compete in NCAA Division I, and all but four compete in the Southern Conference (the exceptions being men's and women's swimming and diving in the America East Conference).

Wohlford was part of three-straight state Class 2 team champions at RHS. "I hope to drop

time in all my events," he said. "I also want to try and get pool records at their new pool and maybe even team records. I also hope to contribute for the team in scoring at the meets and help out in relays."

Wohlford hopes to major in mechanical engineering.

The former state Virginia champ thinks the military aspect will keep his life on track and keep him away from distractions. After being commissioned in the Navy, he hopes to serve on board submarines.

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# Blacksburg boys, girls advance in region soccer



Blacksburg's Milla Santsaver-Jones scored two quick first-half goals to get the Bruins off to a fast start against Amherst County in first-round region action Thursday.



Blacksburg's Andrew Neely gets behind the Halifax County defense and scores a first-half goal in the Region 4D opening round match Thursday night. Blacksburg's boys won 8-0.



Blacksburg's Ayden Stosser pushes the ball past Halifax County's Evan Hite during first-half action in a Region 4D tournament match Thursday.



PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Blacksburg's Norin Bortz takes the ball away from Amherst County's Electra McPherson during the first half of the Bruins' 8-0 win that advanced them in the region 4D tournament.

## VDOT from page 5

bound lanes from mile marker 98-109 for structural steel deliveries and setting beams.

**WILDERNESS RIDE INCREASES CYCLISTS ON ROADWAYS** - The 31st Annual Wilderness Road Ride will be held on Saturday, May 28. This bike ride takes place across various routes in both Pulaski and Montgomery Counties. Cyclists will follow all "rules of the road", but motorists should be aware that there may be several groups of cyclists throughout the day.

**ROUTE 615 CULVERT REPLACEMENT** - Route 615 (Pilot Road) is undergoing a culvert replacement located at the intersection of Pilot Road and Old Pike Road, across from the Pilot Post Office. Lane closures on Route 615 maintained by utilizing temporary traffic signals are in effect and will be in place through August 2022. Flagging operations may be in place. Route 615 will be limited to one 10 foot lane. Expected completion is October 2022.

**ROUTE 114 TURN LANE CONSTRUCTION** - Starting June 6, road improvements on Route 114 (Peppers Ferry Road) will begin for the construction of a new entrance to Belview

Elementary School. Motorists should expect daily lane closures controlled by flagging forces. Work is expected to last until August 2022.

**PAVING OPERATIONS** - Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place and flaggers may control traffic at times during daylight hours. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

Route 765, both east and west lanes, will have a flagging operation in place for paving from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

**INTERSTATE 81 INTERSTATE 81 LANE WIDENING CONSTRUCTION PROJECT EXIT 137 TO EXIT 141** - A \$179 million design-build project to widen both directions of I-81 between mile markers 136.6 and 141.8 from two to three lanes is set to begin. Continuing into the early summer, work will be performed on the inside and outside shoulders along a five mile section of both northbound and southbound Interstate 81 in Roanoke County and the city of Salem. The should-

ers will be built up before a barrier wall can be installed for road crews to work behind. The barrier wall will be installed along the shoulders in the spring and summer. Two lanes of I-81 traffic in each direction will remain open during the project with periodic lane closures scheduled during nighttime hours or outside of peak travel times as needed. Drivers can expect the following lane closures and upcoming impacts on northbound and southbound I-81:

**TRAFFIC SHIFT:** A traffic shift towards the shoulder of the roadway for southbound traffic is underway.

Until mid-June, nighttime right lane and shoulder closures will be in effect between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., Sunday through Thursday.

To mid-June, alternating left and right lane and shoulder closures will be in effect during nighttime hours between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., Sunday through Thursday.

Nightly lane closures may be in place along the right lane with possible nightly ramp narrows as needed for guardrail and shoulder strengthening.

· Northbound I-81 lane closures from mile marker 138 to 142.

· Northbound I-81 exit and entrance ramp narrows possible at Route 311.

The project also includes replacing six bridges, widening two bridges, installing approximately 2.6 miles of sound barrier walls along northbound I-81, improving the southbound exit 137 off-ramp intersection at Wildwood Road and adding interchange lighting at exits 137, 140 and 141 are also included in the project. Expected completion in early 2026.

**I-81 TROUTVILLE REST AREA CLOSURE** - The Troutville Rest Area located on southbound Interstate 81 near mile marker 158 in Botetourt County is closed until Sept. 2, 2022. Signage indicating the closure has been posted in the rest area. During the closure, a temporary concrete barrier wall will be installed in front of the facility. The rest area facility, ramps and parking lot will be closed to the public. This project will extend the ramp into the rest area by 500 feet and the ramp out of the rest area by 2,100 feet. It will also include expanding the truck

parking area at the facility by about 10-13 spaces. Work is expected to be completed in early fall 2022.

**REST AREA OPTIONS:** While the Troutville Rest Area is closed, southbound I-81 drivers can use the Fairfield Rest Area at mile marker 195 in Rockbridge County or the Radford Rest Area at mile marker 108 in Montgomery County. In addition, the Troutville Weigh Station, located on southbound I-81 at mile marker 149, will have portable toilets and parking will be temporarily available for commercial vehicles.

**INTERSTATE 81 LANE WIDENING CONSTRUCTION EXIT 141 TO EXIT 143** - A project to widen the lanes on I-81 in Roanoke in both northbound and southbound directions between Exit 141 to Exit 143 is underway. All lanes are now open and will remain open through the winter with periodic lane closures at night as needed. The final surface paving and markings for northbound traffic will resume this summer. Drivers can expect rough pavement. Estimated completion date of the project is summer 2022.

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