



Wednesday, June 29, 2022 • USPS 387-780 • ourvalley.org • \$1.00

Radford VFW Post 776 elects new officers



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Radford VFW 776 recently elected its new officers for 2022-23. Pictured (left to right) are Charlie Burton, Senior Vice Commander; Brian Francis, Junior Vice Commander; Dana Jackson, Adjutant; Gary Harris, Commander; Howard Weddle, post advocate; Larry Hawkins, surgeon; and Mike Ross, quartermaster. Not pictured are Melvin Brammer, Chaplain; and Mike Conklin, officer of the day.



RTW Management will assume the management of Radford Transit effective July 1.

New contractor to take over Radford Transit operations

Heather Bell
hbell@ourvalley.org

RADFORD – A new service provider will be managing the operations of the city's bus system as of July 1.

The City of Radford announced Thursday that RTW Management, a transit operator that has been in business for 20 years with operations in six states, will be the city's new contractor for Radford Transit.

In operation since 2011, Radford Transit's areas of service include the City of Radford, the Radford University campus, Fairlawn, downtown Christiansburg, the Aquatic Center, NRV Mall, First/Main, and the Squires Student Center in Blacksburg. It is funded by a combination of federal, state, local, and Radford University funds.

New River Valley Community Services (NRVCS) has operated Radford Transit for the City of Radford since service began on Aug. 12, 2011.

In a statement, the City of Radford said it "is happy to announce that starting July 1, 2022, RTW Management will be Radford Transit's new contractor.

"RTW is committed to safe, efficient transportation by serving the community with quality and value," the city's

statement said. "RTW will continue to provide the same ridership experience that our community currently is accustomed to. Riders should expect a smooth transition in service with no noticeable changes from the riders' perspective. We welcome RTW to Radford and look forward to working with them as they take on the role of Radford Transit's new service provider."

"During the past 10+ years we are proud of what our team has accomplished with this system in partnership with the City of Radford and Radford University," said NRVCS in a statement. "We are thankful to all of our staff who have contributed to our success. Because of the commitment and diligence of our staff, we have never canceled or missed service beyond normal vehicle issues or weather-related shutdowns."

"On July 1, RTW Management will be starting a new contract for Radford Transit," the statement says. "We have worked together to make this a smooth transition for our riders by keeping the phone number, the website address, and the app the same. We want to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve our community in this role over the last 10+ years and wish Radford Transit all the success moving forward."

VT political science expert warns of pushback on Biden's gas tax holiday

President Biden's call on Congress to suspend the collection of the federal gas tax for three months will provide drivers short-term relief amidst soaring prices, but Virginia Tech political science expert Karen Hult says there could be some pushback from some legislators.

"Many see such a temporary suspension of the gas tax as a way of curbing inflation, reducing the risk of recession, and providing drivers short-term relief amidst soaring gasoline prices," Hult said. "However, the brief suspension does little to address the problems underlying the price hikes: growing demand, insufficient U.S. refinery capacity, and the war in Ukraine."

Hult notes that some Senate Democrats in contested states have been calling for such a holiday for several months, as such has been reported since at least February.

"Many House Democrats seem likely to join them, particularly those running for newly redistricted seats and facing the headwinds of a poor economy and an unpopular president," said Hult. "At the same time, other Democrats may be concerned both that the holiday is inconsistent with moving toward cleaner energy and that money from the Highway Trust Fund also supports mass transit projects."

"Meanwhile, at least some Republicans may be reluctant to support a President whom Republican voters oppose," said Hult. "Many others may be concerned about possible effects on inflation after the holiday ends."

"Some Republicans have joined others who view such steps as empty symbolism with few concrete benefits," said Hult. "Congressional Republicans also might be ex-



PHOTO CREDIT: PIXABAY

pected to argue the call is driven by Democratic fears of losing the House and Senate in the November midterm elections."

Hult says another challenge will be responding to Biden's call that Congress offset the loss of funds to the Highway Trust Fund (approximately \$10 billion). To be deficit neutral that would mean cutting or postponing funding

elsewhere; otherwise, it would involve additional short-term spending.

About Karen Hult
Virginia Tech political science professor Karen Hult teaches political science at Virginia Tech and its Center for Public Administration & Policy with expertise in the U.S. Presidency, U.S. state politics, policy, and governance, and organizational and institutional theory.

Elementary schools invite public to share popsicles with the principals

McHarg and Belle Heth
Popsicles with the Principals

Thursday, June 30th!

COME JOIN US!

11:00	Highland Village
11:15	Farfax Village
11:30	Rodgewood/Estes
11:45	Heather Glen
12:00	Willow Woods
12:15	Rustic Village
12:30	Sunset Park
12:45	Hodge Field
1:00	Jeffres Drive
1:15	Riverbend
1:30	Bisset Park Main Playground
1:45	Belle Heth Playground

The public is invited to come out and meet the principals of McHarg and Belle Heth elementary schools on Thursday, June 30, and have a free popsicle during the meet and greet. The principals will travel to 12 locations throughout the day.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

(Left to right) John Giesen, owner of Eleven West, a custom apparel and promotional products company, presents a check to Radford High School head soccer coach Nikki Greco and RHS Principal Tara Grant for proceeds from a T-shirt fundraiser for the Marilyn Alley Memorial Scholarship fund.

Eleven West supports Marilyn Alley Memorial Scholarship fund

The Radford High School girls soccer team recently partnered with Eleven West, a custom apparel and promotional products company, to raise money for the Marilyn Alley Memorial Scholarship through the sale of T-shirts featuring Alley's name and soccer number with wings attached.

In February, Alley, a senior captain on the Lady

Bobcats soccer team, was killed in a car accident. Head Coach Nikki Greco said John Geisen and Eleven West were a big part of the successful fundraiser.

"When we approached Mr. Giesen about getting T-shirts for the team to warm up in and potentially to sell to the public, he immediately said, 'Let's make it a fundraiser,' and Eleven West set

up everything with an online campaign," said Greco. "We are so grateful to John and the Eleven West staff for all of their hard work in getting this off the ground."

On Wednesday, Giesen presented Radford High School with a \$1,000 check to be used for the Marilyn Alley Memorial Scholarship.

Heather Bell

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, June 29:

Beach Party
At the Blacksburg Library at 3 p.m. Come check out the beach, right at the library. Dig through the sand and make some ocean slime. Some supplies are limited.

Monday, July 4:

Radford's Spirit of America Celebration
The City of Radford's Independence Day celebration will be held at Bisset Park from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. Live music, food and craft vendors, children's games and fireworks will all be a part of the fun.

Tuesday, July 5:

Summer backpack program
At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 3:30 p.m. The summer backpack program is intended to help families with children and teens stretch their grocery budget. The bags are filled with nutritious food with one bag per child per week. This is a drop-in program with crafts for the kids each week in addition to the bags of food. The program is drive-thru only at the curb side of the library. Open to residents of Eastern Montgomery County only. For more information, call the Meadowbrook Library at 540-268-1964.

Thursday, July 7:

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, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

Saturday, July 9:

Mt. Tabor Ruritan fish fry
The Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its July fish fry from 5 to 7 p.m. at Slusser's Chapel Picnic Shelter, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. The club will be serving up fish; fries and slaw; homemade deserts; and beverages. The cost is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children under 12; free for children un-

der three. Carry-outs are \$12. This month, the Blacksburg Community Band will be playing. The fish fry will be held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan.

Tuesday, July 12:

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 (UDC) are invited to attend. For further information, call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Thursday, July 14:

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

Ongoing:

United Way Emergency Food Pantry in need
The United Way NRV Emergency Food Pantry supply is critically low. Anyone able to donate any pantry items can drop them off at the Christiansburg office at 111 West Main St.

Food Lion grant to benefit Warm Hearth Village

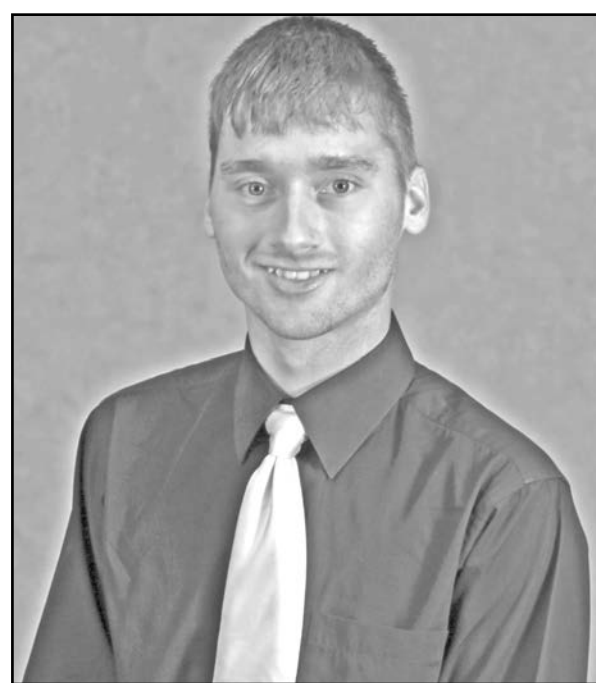
BLACKSBURG – The Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation recently awarded a \$500 grant to the Warm Hearth Foundation to support Micah's Pantry. Located on the Warm Hearth Village campus, Micah's Pantry opened this May and operates as a storefront to help fight food insecurity by providing food and meals to village seniors

who meet federal low-income guidelines. The Micah's Pantry program at Warm Hearth Village includes a variety of opportunities like fresh produce, prepared meals, gardens on campus to grow and tend, shelf-stable groceries, pet food, and personal care items. "We are so grateful for this gift and for being able to work alongside

others in our local community who share our passion for making a difference," said Karen Nelson, Associate Director of Development for Warm Hearth Village. Warm Hearth Village is a nonprofit senior living community in Blacksburg that provides a full continuum of living options on its campus and in the home.



Taking part in Food Lion's recent grant to Warm Hearth Village were (left to right) Food Lion Customer Service Manager Paige Dripps, Warm Hearth Village Associate Director of Development Karen Nelson, and Food Lion Store Manager Chris Simpkins.



New River Community College student Nathan Shupe is the college's first electronics technology student to receive his Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification as a remote pilot.

NRCC student Nathan Shupe receives FAA certification as remote pilot

New River Community College student, Nathan Shupe, recently received his Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification as a remote pilot after completing a course as part of the electronics technology program at the college. He is the first electronics technology student at NRCC to complete this certification in conjunction with the course.

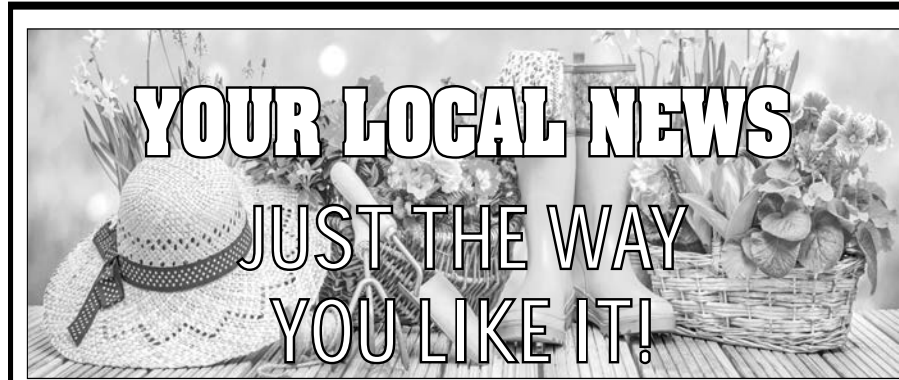
The program at NRCC is a two-year associate degree that includes courses about drones, which Shupe took this spring.

The course, UMS 107-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) Remote Pilot Ground School, taught by Adjunct Instructor Steve Taylor, covers regulations applicable to sUAS operations, loading and performance, emergency procedures, crew resource management, determining the performance of the sUAS, and maintenance/inspection procedures. It helps students prepare for the FAA written test required to receive the remote pilot certificate.

While attending NRCC,

Shupe also works at the New River Valley Airport in Dublin. He believes his work at the airport assisted him when taking the test. Shupe says that with his certification he hopes to do some photography freelance work with a drone. He says he is happy to have the certification "under his belt" for whatever job he pursues in the future. He is also working on an associate degree in instrumentation and control automation technology at the college and is interested in transferring to Old Dominion University.

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Fourth-generation grad adds to Ecuadorian family's Hokie legacy

If you're a firstborn son in the Andrade family, you likely go by two titles: Carlos and Virginia Tech graduate.

Carlos Andrade Coello proved the latter true by accepting his degree in industrial systems engineering this May in front of his father, Carlos Andrade Moscoso '94, and grandfather, Carlos Andrade González '72.

"It's kind of like in the Olympics, when runners pass the torch," said Carlos Andrade Coello, who spent most of his life in Guayaquil, Ecuador. "This tradition's big in my family, and now it's my time to go out and make a name for myself."

At commencement, he became the fourth generation of the Ecuadorian family to graduate from Virginia Tech, a streak that dates back to his great-grandfather Carlos Andrade Ribas's earning a chemistry degree in 1944.

"It feels amazing," his father, Carlos Andrade Mos-

coso, said. "Dude, when he got into the engineering program, we were jumping up and down back at the house. It was great. So this is a very proud moment."

According to the family, Carlos Andrade Ribas, who died in 2002, was drawn to Virginia Tech, then named Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute, by the strength of the university's chemistry program.

"My grandfather's father always wanted his kids to study in the states," said Carlos Andrade Moscoso, who traveled from Ecuador for graduation. "He was the vice president of the Rotary Club worldwide [Rotary International] and was living in New York. So when it came time for my grandfather to go to school, he said he wanted to study chemistry because that's what the family business was. They did some research and found out Virginia Tech had a really good chemistry department."



(From left) Glenn Spring '94, Carlos Andrade Moscoso '94, Carlos Andrade '22, Carlos Andrade González '72, and James Archer '72 celebrate Carlos Andrade Coello's graduation. Photo courtesy of the Andrade family.

With a degree in hand, Carlos Andrade Ribas returned to Ecuador to work in the family's pharmaceutical business. When it came time for his son, Carlos Andrade González, to attend a uni-

versity, the father's good experience with Virginia Tech was influential.

"He mentioned it and I saw the albums [yearbooks] he had," Carlos Andrade González said. "I had good references [for the university], not

only from family, but I also inquired a little bit about it, I read about it, so it was a good choice."

Though not a U.S. citizen, Carlos Andrade González joined the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets when he came to

campus, which he very much enjoyed.

"I made good friends, and I really liked it. Even though the pace was hectic, I didn't mind it," he said.

By Travis Williams

PETS OF THE WEEK



This is Mischief. He's a sweet young pup who can't wait to go home. He can be a little shy but once he's found his person, he becomes a cuddly lap dog who loves affection, including being hugged and carried.



If you're looking for a smaller pet, Marble may be the furry friend for you. She is a guinea pig who has been a short-time resident at the Animal Care and Adoption Center. Marble is a nice girl who comes with her own portable home.

OBITUARY

Alls, Thomas Kevin

Thomas Kevin Alls, 52, of Blacksburg, died Sunday, June 26, 2022, at Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

He was born in Radford on Oct. 31, 1969, to the late Thomas Leroy and Judy Hunter Alls.

He is survived by his brother and sister-in-law, Jason and Angie Alls; niece and nephews, Hayden, Evann, Justin Buckner and wife Brook, Isaac Buckner and wife Hannah; his fiancé, Vera Caldwell and

daughter Kasey Caldwell; special friends John Sewell and Jeff Caldwell; and numerous other friends.

Memorial services will be conducted today, Wednesday, June 29, 2022, at 7 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel. The family will receive friends from 5 to 7 p.m., Wednesday evening at the McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Dr. S.W., Blacksburg, and at other times, 1755 Mt. Tabor Road, Blacksburg.

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ONLINE AUCTION

Ends Thursday July 14th @ 4 PM
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426 Mt Elbert Rd, Riner VA 24149

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You have the opportunity to purchase a lucrative business in Floyd County VA! This property features a turn key dog boarding business on 2 acres for sale in Riner VA. The building was constructed in 2017 and has over 1,300 sq. ft. of space with an office, dog bathing space, handicap accessible bathroom and 10 8x8 boarding rooms. Each room has air vents and ceiling fans for comfort. The building is metal sided with metal interior walls, roof and is well insulated. It has a private well and septic. There is a large, fenced lot out back for dogs to run and play for exercise during their stay. This is a great opportunity to pick up and continue a highly successful dog boarding business in a great location. Business stays steady and has the potential to remain booked throughout the year. It could serve as a great source of income. Don't miss out on the opportunity to scoop up this great business for sale in Riner VA! Contact agent for P&L statement and other financial documents.

Preview- Thursday June 30th at 5 PM
and Saturday July 9th at 11 AM

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OPINION

GasBuddy: Virginia gas prices dropped by 10.3 cents per gallon last week

Average gasoline prices in Virginia fell 10.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$4.73/g Monday, June 27, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 28.4 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand \$1.79/g higher than a year ago. The price of diesel has risen 2.6 cents nationally in the past week and stands at \$5.80 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$4.09/g Monday while the most expensive was \$5.99/g, a difference of \$1.90/g. The national average price of gasoline fell 8.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$4.88/g Monday. The national average was up 28.3 cents per gallon from a month ago and Monday stood \$1.79/g higher than a year ago, according to

GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country. "With Independence Day a week away, gas prices have continued to fall for the second straight week as the price of oil has faltered, ushering in the drop we're seeing," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "The good news is we could

also see a third straight week of decline. While prices will be at their highest July 4th level ever, they'll have fallen close to 20 cents since our peak in early June," according to De Haan. "Motorists should be wary that while the decline could continue for the week ahead, any sudden jolts to supply could quickly cause a turnaround, and risk remains that when the peak of hurricane season arrives, we could see a super

spike at the pump." *GasBuddy is the authoritative voice for gas prices and the only source for station-level data spanning nearly two decades. GasBuddy's survey updates 288 times every day from the most diverse list of sources covering nearly 150,000 stations nationwide, the most comprehensive and up-to-date in the country. GasBuddy data are accessible at <http://prices.GasBuddy.com>.*

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.

New information is noted by "NEW" and updates are noted when a current project has had an update added to the listing. The Salem District covers Bedford, Botetourt, Carroll, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski and

Roanoke counties. **FOURTH OF JULY HOLIDAY:** To ease travel for the Fourth of July holiday weekend, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will suspend many highway work zones and lift most lane closures on interstates and other major roads in Virginia from noon Friday, July 1, until noon Tuesday, July 5. While lane closures will be lifted in most locations, motorists may encounter semi-permanent work zones that remain in place during this time.

SHAWSVILLE 5K RACE - The 41st Annual Shawsville 5K will be held at 8 a.m. on July 4. The course will start near the Shawsville Middle School and proceed west along Oldtown Road. At the intersection with Route 460, the runners will swing left and run along the shoulder of Route 460 until they reach the Dollar General where they will again turn left onto Stewart Lane. At the top of the hill, the runners will return to Oldtown Road and finish the race just past the school. Drivers should expect closures and delays.

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. Starting in February and 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 shoulders will be built up before barrier walls can be installed for road crews to work behind. Barrier walls 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:

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.

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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 during 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: Nighttime 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.

SHAWSVILLE JULY 4th PARADE - The 4th of July Parade will be held at 4 p.m. on July 4 through the Village of Shawsville beginning at the Sisson & Ryan office, proceeding a short distance on Route 460 and then remain on Route 753 to athletic field at Shawsville Middle School.

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 will be in place through August 2022. Flagger operations may be in place. Route 615 will be limited to one 10 foot lane. Expected completion is October 2022.

BARRIER WALLS: Barrier wall installation is in process. Nighttime lane closures will be in place and lane widths will be reduced to 11 feet. Nightly lane closures may be in place along the right lane with possible nightly ramp narrows as needed for guardrail and shoulder strengthening.

ROUTE 641 CULVERT REPLACEMENT - Route 641 (Wayside Drive) is closed for a culvert replacement over Spring Branch. Drivers should watch for signage. The road will reopen on July 22 at 5 p.m., weather permitting.

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 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.

I-81 PAVING OPERATIONS - Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

1. Basics
4. In a new way
10. ___ Paulo, city
11. Jailhouse
12. Expresses surprise
14. Trigraph
15. A small stream
16. Dissimilar
18. Promote
22. Gives a boost
23. Lawmaker
24. Orthodox Jews
26. Actor Harris
27. Wild cherry
28. Participate in democracy
30. Opposite of begins
31. A Brit's mother
34. Set of moral principles

CLUES DOWN

1. St. Francis of ___
2. Supported
3. United in working
4. It cools your home
5. Predicting
6. Irritated
7. Popular talk show host
8. Fabric edge
9. A resource for employees
12. Broadway's Jackman
13. Small water buffalo
17. City of Angels: ___ Angeles
19. Asteroids
20. Tailless amphibians
21. German expressionist painter

CLUES ACROSS

36. Very fast airplane
37. Czech river
39. Private school in New York
40. Israeli dance
41. Electron volt
42. Adjusting
48. Duct by the bladder
50. Small burger
51. Begin again
52. Unstuck
53. Jai ___, sport
54. Get free of
55. For instance
56. Hotel chain
58. A team's best pitcher
59. Extracts from various sources
60. Indefinite period of time

CLUES DOWN

25. What drives you
29. N. Vietnamese ethnic group
31. Gold coin used in British India
32. Have deep affection for
33. Ponds
35. Breaks between words
38. Hairstyle
41. Print errors
43. Family of iron alloys
44. Sidelined in bed
45. Many couples say it
46. Brazilian hoopster
47. Allman Brothers late frontman
49. German city
56. One hundred grams (abbr.)
57. One billionth of a second (abbr.)

ROUTE 114 TURN LANE CONSTRUCTION - 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.

TROUTVILLE REST AREA CLOSURE - The Troutville Rest Area located on southbound Interstate 81 near mile marker 158 in Botetourt County is closed until September 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 OPERATIONS: While the Troutville Rest Area is closed, southbound I-81 drivers

I-81 BRIDGE DECK REPAIRS - Weather permitting, crews will repair bridge decks on Interstate 81. Between mile markers 138 to 152, right and left lane closures will be in place northbound and southbound during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

POTHOLE PATCHING OPERATIONS - Weather permitting, crews will patch potholes along southbound and northbound Interstate 81. Mobile right and left lane closures will be in place and moving along northbound and southbound lanes during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for moving vehicles and equipment. Expect possible delays.

INTERSTATE 581 ROUTE 581 BRIDGE WORK OVER WILLIAMSON ROAD - On Route 11 (Williamson Road) drivers can expect intermittent and alternating lane closures between the intersections with Rutherford Avenue and Wells Avenue. Intermittent daytime and nighttime lane closures between the intersections above might be required, and will be in place utilizing flagging operations. Any impacts to I-581 will be minimal. The project is expected to be complete in the fall of 2022.

LANE CLOSURES: o A left lane closure will be in place on north-

VDOT

from page 4

bound and southbound I-581 from mile marker 0-1, Monday at 7 a.m. through Wednesday at 7 p.m.

o A right lane closure will be in place on northbound and southbound I-581 from mile marker 0-1, Thursday at 7 a.m. through Saturday at 7 p.m.

o A left and center lane closure will be in place on northbound and southbound I-581 from mile marker 0-1, Saturday at 5 p.m. through Sunday at 2 p.m.

o A right lane closure may be in place on Route 11 northbound between the intersections of Rutherford Avenue and Wells Avenue periodically.

o Nighttime left lane closures for both the northbound and southbound directions of Route 11 are possible between the intersections referenced above.

I-581/220 EXPRESSWAY PAVING OPERATIONS – Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

I-581/220 LANE & RAMP CLOSURES FOR PAVING AND MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS IN ROANOKE COUNTY – Weather permitting, crews will be milling and paving along Interstate 81. Right and left lane closures will be in place along northbound and southbound lanes during nighttime hours. Drivers should expect possible delays.

I-581 BRIDGE REPAIRS – Weather permitting, crews will repair bridge decks on Interstate 581. Right, center and left lane closures will be in place northbound and southbound during nighttime hours, 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays. Scheduled traffic impacts include:

o Left or right lane closures may be in place on I-581 northbound from Orange Avenue to Valley View Boulevard from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

o Left or right lane closures may be in place on I-581 from Valley View Boulevard to Orange Avenue from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

o Flagging operations may be in place on Liberty Road NW from Lukens Street NE to Hunt Avenue NW from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

INTERSTATE 77 (CARROLL COUNTY)

I-77 PAVING OPERATIONS – Weather permitting, crews will be performing paving operations along Interstate 77 between mile marker 24 and 0. Right and left lane closures may be in place along northbound and southbound lanes during nighttime hours, 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. Drivers should watch for moving vehicles and equipment. Expect possible delays.

Milling and paving operations on I-77 southbound lanes are underway. Right lane closure will be in place from mile marker 9 to 7. Ramp restrictions possible.

Latex application on I-77 northbound 2 lanes near mile marker 11 are underway. Ramp closures are possible. Message boards will alert drivers.

I-77 BRIDGE DECK REPAIRS – Weather permitting, crews will repair bridge decks on Interstate 77. Right and left lane closures may be in place northbound or southbound during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

I-77 LANE & RAMP

CLOSURES FOR MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS IN CARROLL COUNTY – Weather permitting, crews will be milling, paving and performing maintenance along Interstate 77. Right and left lane closures will be in place along northbound and southbound lanes during nighttime hours. Drivers should expect possible delays.

I-77 MOWING, BRUSH REMOVAL & SHOULDER WORK – Weather permitting, crews will remove and clear brush and work on shoulders and slopes along I-77 northbound and southbound from mile marker 17 to 14 during nighttime hours, 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. the following morning. A left lane closure will be in place.

ROANOKE CITY

13th STREET SE IMPROVEMENTS WITH DETOUR – A project to improve a portion of 13th Street SE in Roanoke is underway. Located in a residential neighborhood just east of downtown Roanoke, this project will improve traffic flow and connectivity along 13th Street SE from Tazewell Avenue to Norfolk Avenue. The project entails reconstructing about 0.2-mile of 13th Street as an improved, two-lane roadway with 10.5-foot-wide travel lane and a raised median. A new roadway will extend 13th Street to Norfolk Avenue and the intersection at 13th Street and Wise Avenue will be reconfigured to include a roundabout. Bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks and curb and gutter will also be added. Southbound 13th Street traffic has a detour in place using Norfolk Avenue onto 12th Street to Tazewell Avenue. This detour will be in place throughout the duration of this project. Signs will be posted to designate the detour route. Northbound 13th Street will remain open to traffic. Flaggers may be possible and the speed limit through the work zone is 25 mph. The project is expected to be completed in summer 2023.

SURFACE TREATMENT OPERATIONS – Weather permitting, crews will begin surface treatment operations 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. The road surface may be rough for several weeks after surface treatment is applied. Once it packs down, the road surface will be brushed and return to a more smooth surface.

ROANOKE COUNTY

ROUTE 311 AND ROUTE 419 ROUNDABOUT AT HANGING ROCK – A road project to replace the signalized intersection of Route 311 and Route 419 in Roanoke County at Hanging Rock with a roundabout is set to begin. During construction, lane closures and a road closure with a detour will be in place through August. Drivers should expect the following:

o Closure & Detour: A portion of the Route 419 and Route 311 intersection is closed and a detour is in place for approximately four to six weeks. It is scheduled to reopen in August or September. Motorists should be aware of the following impacts:

o Traffic will not be able to turn left from Thompson Memorial Drive (Route 311) onto Catawba Valley Drive (Route 311)

o Thompson Memorial Drive traffic will not be able to drive straight through the intersection

onto Route 419.

o Route 419 traffic will not be able to continue straight at the intersection onto Thompson Memorial Drive.

During the partial intersection closure, drivers will need to use alternate routes and can detour using Interstate 81 exit 140 onto Thompson Memorial Drive and exit 141 onto Route 419. Using Main Street in Salem to reroute onto Route 419 or Thompson Memorial Drive around the partial intersection closure is another option.

The new roundabout is expected to be open to traffic in August or September. Drivers should still expect nighttime lane closures with flaggers between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., Sunday through Thursday around the roundabout for final paving, pavement marking and sign installation.

ROUTE 628 CULVERT REPLACEMENT – Route 628 (Greenridge Road) is undergoing a culvert replacement located .25 miles east of the road's entrance from Route 780 (Cove Road). Lane closures on Route 628 utilizing temporary traffic signals will be in place through August 2022. Expected completion is October 2022.

ROUTE 760 (DIUGUIDS LANE) BRIDGE REPLACEMENT & DETOUR – A project to replace the Route 760 (Diuguigs Lane) bridge over the Roanoke River is underway with preliminary work. The bridge is located at the Salem city limits near Route 760's intersection with Route 639 (West Riverside Drive). The 45-day detour is now expected to go in place July 5. Signs will be posted two weeks in advance of the road closure. Drivers will use Mill Lane or West Riverside Drive to detour and return to Diuguigs Lane. Typical work hours are expected to be Monday through Saturday during daytime hours with occasional work on Sunday. Flagging operations may be in place periodically and occasional night work is possible. Drivers can expect short-term lane closures with flaggers controlling traffic on West Riverside Drive periodically. Access to Green Hill Park, private entrances and businesses will be maintained at all times. Completion is expected in the winter of 2022.

o Flagging operations are in place, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., on southbound Diuguigs lane as well as the intersection of Harborwood Road/W Riverside Drive. A right lane closure northbound may also be in place, Monday through Friday.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY CLOSURE – The Blue Ridge Parkway is repairing slope failures. Detour signs to detour traffic around the Bent Mountain section of the Parkway will be in place. Traffic will be rerouted to Route 220 south to Route 419 north to Route 221 south. Traffic traveling north on the Parkway will be reversed.

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.

o Crack seal operations will be performed on Route 419 South near Route 1699 and Salem City Limits.

o Milling and paving operations, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. with single lane flagging, in Roanoke County include:

o Route 605 (Shadwell

Drive / Old Mountain Road) from Roanoke City Limit to Route 627.

o Route 601 Hollins Road from Route 115 to Route 627

SURFACE TREATMENT OPERATIONS – Weather permitting, crews will begin surface treatment operations 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. The road surface may be rough for several weeks after surface treatment is applied. Once it packs down, the road surface will be brushed and return to a more smooth surface.

BEDFORD COUNTY

ROUTE 460 SCURVE REALIGNMENT – Work is coming to a close to realign 1.4 miles of the eastbound lanes of Route 460 in Bedford County near Montvale, about eight miles west of Bedford and approximately 2.3 miles east of Montvale. All lanes are now open. Speed limit has returned to 55mph. Drivers may see residual work continue and traffic impacts such as lane closures may be possible. Message boards will be posted to alert drivers. Completion is expected in Summer 2022.

ROUTE 757 PIPE REPLACEMENT CLOSURE - Effective July 11, 2022 at 8 a.m., a section of Route 757 (Joppa Mill Road) and Route 691 (Shepherds Store Road) will be closed for a pipe replacement. This closure will be located 0.10 of a mile from Route 691 (Shepherds Store Road) and 0.75 mile from Route 807 (Scenic View Road) and 1.36 miles from Route 745 (Mount Olivet Road). There will be signage for a detour that follows Route 24 (Stewartsville Road) and Route 122 (Moneta Road). The road is scheduled to be completed on Aug.8 at 5 p.m.

ROUTE 807 CLOSURE - Effective July 5 at 8 a.m., a section of Route 807 (Scenic View Road) will be closed to install a concrete slab span on a structure over a branch of Goose Creek. This closure will be located 0.70 mile from Route 747 (Joppa Mill Road) and 1.30 miles from Route 24 (Stewartsville Road). The road is scheduled to be completed on July 14 at 4 p.m.

ROUTE 221 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS – A project to improve safety and operations at three signalized intersections is underway. Two intersections are on Route 221 in Bedford County in the Salem District and one is at Route 460 Business (Timberlake Road) and Route 622 (Waterlick Road) in Campbell County in the Lynchburg District. In Bedford County, this project will improve two adjacent signalized intersections in the Forest area on Route 221 at Route 1425 (Graves Mill Road) and at Route 1426 (Gristmill Drive). Most work will be performed during nighttime hours, Monday through Friday, 6 p.m. – 7 a.m. the next morning. Drivers may see shoulder and lane closures during daytime hours on the weekends. The project is expected to be completed in spring 2023.

ROUTE 655 INTERSECTION AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS – Construction to improve the intersection and shoulders began on Route 655 and various locations from 0.91 mile north of the Route 653 and 655 (Goodview Road and Route 616 (Horseshoe Bend Road) to 0.038 mile north of the Route 655 (Good View Road) and

Route 616 (Horseshoe Bend Road) is in progress. Flagging operations at the intersection of Goodview Road and Horseshoe Bend will be in place during the week and work hours of 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The expected completion date is the end of September 2022.

ROUTE 691 PIPELINE REPLACEMENT - A section of Route 691 (Quarles Road) will be closed due to a pipe failure. The closure is located .40 mile from Route 726 (Quarterwood Road) and 1.30 mile from Route 619 (Pendleton Road). The road will be closed until further notice.

ROUTE 623 CULVERT REPLACEMENT - A section of Route 623 (Turkey Foot Road) in Campbell County on the Bedford County line is closed to replace a culvert which carries Buffalo Creek. This structure is located .18 mile north of US 460 and 0.68 mile south of the Bedford/Campbell County line. There will be signage for a detour. The road is scheduled to be completed on July 29 at 5 p.m.

ROUTE 619 CULVERT REPLACEMENT – A project to replace a culvert on Route 619 is underway. Route 619 will be reduced to one lane with a temporary signal controlling traffic from Route 1460 to Route 839 and will continue to stay closed until late June 2022. The expected completion of the project is the end of September 2022.

ROUTE 715 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT – A bridge replacement project over Norfolk Southern Railroad has closed Route 715 (Lowry Road). The bridge is located 0.085 mile south of Norfolk Southern Railroad to 0.048 mile north of Norfolk Southern Railroad on Route 715. Message boards will alert drivers. This replacement will change the current single lane steel and wooden bridge to a two-lane concrete bridge. A detour will be in place. Travelers will use Route 671 (Timber Ridge Road) to Route 221 (Forrest Road). The detour will remain in place until project completion which is scheduled for Fall 2022.

SURFACE TREATMENT OPERATIONS – Weather permitting, crews will begin surface treatment operations 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. The road surface may be rough for several weeks after surface treatment is applied. Once it packs down, the road surface will be brushed and return to a more smooth surface.

Surface treatment is scheduled for Routes 839, 700, 616, 791, 749, 608, 731 and 735, weather permitting. Drivers may expect flagging operations on any of the routes listed above.

ROUTE 619 CULVERT REPLACEMENT – Crews are replacing a culvert on Route 619 with a road closure in place. The closure is being operated by temporary signals through August 26, not to exceed 90 days. A flagging operation will be used as needed on Route 619 from Route 1460 to Route 839 during the hours of 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Expected completion is the end of September 2022.

B O T E T O U R T

COUNTY
ROUTE 674 CULVERT REPLACEMENT – A culvert replacement on Route 674 (Tinker Mill Road) is underway Temporary signals are in place to control traffic through

a single lane at the culvert during construction. Expected completion is early July 2022.

ROUTE 817 (OLD RAIL ROAD) BRIDGE WORK – Old Rail Road in Oriskany is closed for repairs to the bridge over Craig's Creek, the historic McCallister Truss Bridge. The bridge is located 0.60 miles from Route 704 (Branchwater Road) and 0.20 miles from Route 770 (Edlo Lane). The bridge will be closed during daytime hours, 8 a.m. through 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday, when the water level is low. Work on this bridge is restricted when water in the creek is high. All traffic between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. will use the Edlo Ford. Signs have been posted to alert drivers. Estimated time for completion Fall 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.

CARROLL COUNTY

ROUTE 645 CULVERT REPLACEMENT – Partial removal and demolition of the existing culvert on Route 645 (Stone Mountain Road) is underway. The road will be closed for removal of existing culvert and installation of a new box culvert. A detour will be in place at the intersections of Route 645 and Route 618 and Route 645 and Route 638. Estimated completion is April 2023.

ROUTE 608 CLOSURE FOR CULVERT REPLACEMENT – Route 608 (Coal Creek Road) is closed for a culvert replacement located in the vicinity of Route 815. Message boards will alert drivers. Drivers will need to seek alternate routes. The road will reopen on Friday, July 8.

ROUTE 58 WESTBOUND BRIDGE REPLACEMENT - Work is underway to replace the bridge on Route 58 westbound over Crooked Creek near the Woodlawn area. The bridge is located between the intersections with Route 822 (Fieldview Road) and Route 887 (Glendale Road). Initially, the project will focus on constructing crossovers between the above-mentioned intersections with intermittent and temporary single lane closures in place. These crossovers are temporary during the bridge replacement with single lanes in each direction until the end of the project. Once the crossovers are complete, Route 58 westbound will be temporarily detoured through the left lane of Route 58 eastbound, limiting travel in each direction to a single lane. A right lane closure will be in place traveling westbound and a left lane closure traveling eastbound. The project is scheduled to be completed in December 2022.

TRAFFIC SHIFT – A traffic shift is in place re-

See VDOT, page 10

ducing both directions to one lane near Glendale Drive. It will be in place for approximately 12 months or until fall 2022. All eastbound traffic will use the existing right eastbound lane. All westbound traffic will be shifted to the existing left eastbound lane.

Right lane closures may be in place on Route 58 eastbound between Route 822 (Fieldview Road) and Route 887 (Glendale Road).

CRAIG COUNTY

See VDOT, page 10

Virginia Tech hosts national steel bridge competition

Virginia Tech recently welcomed hundreds of engineering students from across North America to its Blacksburg campus for the National Student Steel Bridge Competition.

Virginia Tech's hosting duties were announced at the 2019 Student Steel Bridge Competition at Southern Illinois University. Because of COVID-19, the event was canceled in 2020 and 2021.

The main competition and awards banquet took place in the Beamer-Lawson Indoor Practice Facility. Turf that normally is covered with footballs and cleats was transformed to hold steel beams and hard hats, and the aesthetics judging area of the competition was located in the concourse of Lane Stadium. During the two-day event, participants had the opportunity to socialize, explore campus, and take in the famous Hokie Stone architecture.

The Student Steel Bridge Competition is sponsored by the American Institute of

Steel Construction, which works with host schools to plan the regional events and national finals. Top teams made up of undergraduate and graduate students from over 20 regional events qualified to compete at the national finals in Blacksburg.

The competition challenges student teams to develop a scale-model steel bridge. This build starts ahead of the competition in the design and fabrication of a team's bridge and includes a thorough plan for efficient assembly under timed construction at the competition. Once it is built during the competition, the bridges are load tested and weighed. The competing teams are judged in seven categories: construction speed, lightness, aesthetics, stiffness, cost estimate, economy, and efficiency.

"The steel bridge competition is a unique growing experience for students because it presents them with an uncomfortable problem to solve, one which their



Virginia Tech's Steel Bridge team members before the national competition. Photo by Peter Means for Virginia Tech.

professor does not have the answer to," said Zachary Coleman, a graduate student in the Charles E. Via, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) who helped organize the event.

Coleman competed in the steel bridge competition as an undergraduate student a few years ago and said the experience was an opportunity for significant personal growth. "For many students, this competition

is the first time they must leverage their engineering judgment, research skills, and ingenuity to work toward a solution as a team," he said.

For this year's event, Coleman was one of three

graduate students from CEE who led the planning and organization. Ten other graduate students and multiple staff members also pitched in.

By Courtney Sakry



At the VCU Massey Cancer Center, Robert Winn is the director of one of only 71 cancer centers designated by the National Cancer Institute to lead its research and training. Photo courtesy of VCU Massey Cancer Center.

Nationally renowned cancer center director to speak on importance of health for black men

As a pulmonologist with a focus on lung cancer, Robert Winn has reached the pinnacle of his profession, becoming the director of one of only 71 cancer centers designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to lead its research and training. At the VCU Massey Cancer Center, he is focused on eliminating health disparities and building a model for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the oncology workforce.

Winn, however, believes that the health and well-being of a community begins at home.

"One in two men will be diagnosed with cancer, and the fact of the matter is that it could be prevented in many of them," said

Winn. "Proper screening is the first step toward reversing these numbers and increasing overall health. Men matter! Having a dialogue about cancer prevention is not a suggestion; it is critical to the well-being of every man and to the foundation of every community."

Winn, the first Black director at an NCI-designated cancer center, is visiting the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine for a talk called "Generational Health: An Intimate Conversation on Black Men and Health Disparities." Hosted by the Black Father Family Initiative, a partnership with the United Way of Roanoke Valley, the event will be held at 7:30 p.m. July 14.

William Lee, the founding chairman of New Horizons Healthcare and the former pastor of Roanoke's Loudon Avenue Christian Church, will join Winn for the discussion. It is open to the public and free of charge with a suggested donation to Black Father Family, but registration is required.

In addition to the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, sponsors of the talk include Black Father Family, United Way of Roanoke Valley, New Horizons Healthcare, and Alpha Kappa Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

By Josh Meyer

New app helps farmers manage row crop pests

Using modern technology ensures farmers can produce more efficient, maximum crop yields, and now there's a new tool of the trade: a smartphone app that helps growers keep damaging pests at bay.

The new MyIPM Row Crop app helps farmers identify crop pests and diseases and provides pest management information like labeled pesticides and application rates. It includes photos and descriptions of insects and diseases, as well as life cycle information and non-chemical control methods.

"The goal is to reach as many producers as possible

to help them minimize costs and crop losses from insects, diseases and weeds," explained Sally Taylor, an associate professor of row crop entomology at Virginia Tech, who contributed to the app's development.

The app was created by Clemson University with the support of the Southern Region Integrated Pest Management Center and other university researchers in mid-Atlantic and Southeastern states. Free in Apple and Google app stores, the easy-to-use, interactive app allows farmers to select pest management information for corn, cotton, peanuts, sorghum and soybeans.

After the initial download, the app can be used regardless of a phone's data connection, a helpful feature for growers in rural areas where connectivity is limited. When a data connection is available, users will receive updates with new or revised information.

"Pesticides and pest complexes are continually changing, and this app will allow us to communicate those changes in real time as opposed to relying on annual print publications," Taylor noted.

Robert Mills, a farmer in Pittsylvania County, said row crop farmers like himself have needed an

app like this for a while.

"It is really good for identifying certain pests," said Mills, a Virginia Farm Bureau Federation board member. "It takes out one of those steps where we have to call somebody or take a picture of it and send it to an extension agent or crop specialist."

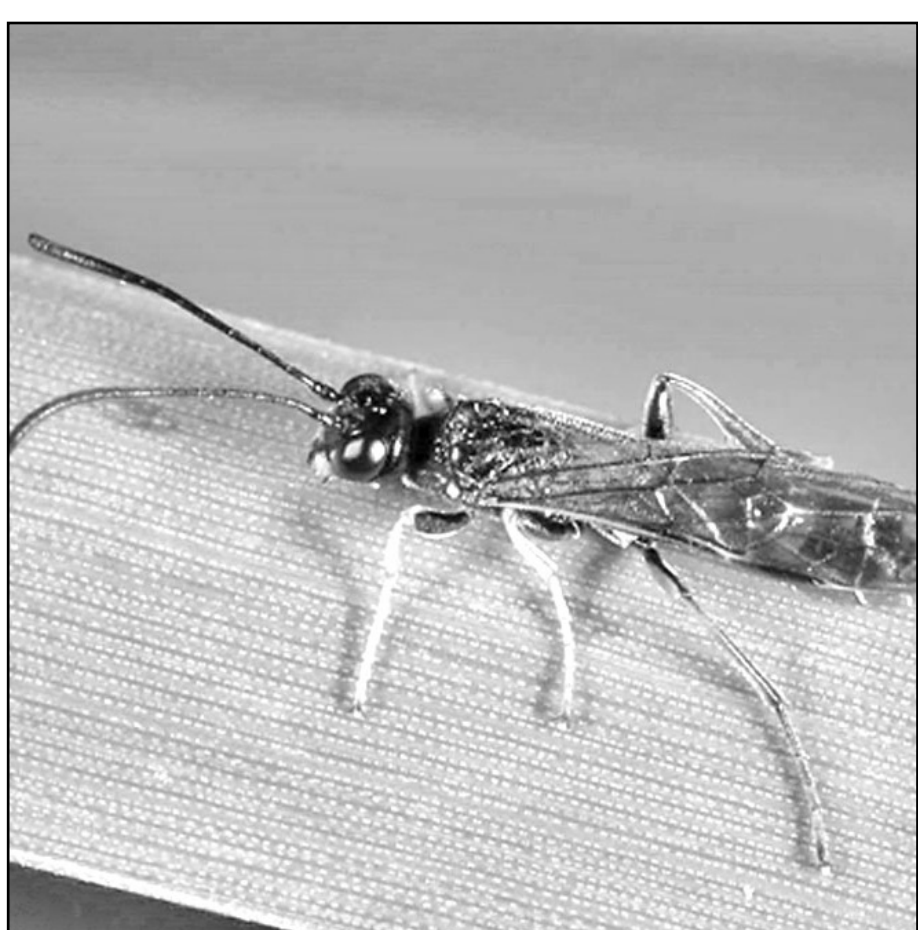
The app also benefits farmers because "every-

thing is about speed and getting things done in a timely manner.

"I think it speeds the process up. Whether it's a disease or an insect, it matters how quickly you find them and how quickly you deal with them," Mills explained. "This is the direction we're going. We're going to be doing self-diagnostics on pests we're combating at the

time, and we're going to want to find out what we need and then take care of it."

Taylor said they're continuing to add new data and enhance the smartphone app's features, creating a comprehensive platform with more disease, pest and weed management information for crops and other small grains.



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RADFORD SPORTS

Southwest Virginia Swim League competition at Shawnee Swim Club



Pine Valley's Nora Webster swims in the 9-10-year-old 50-yard breaststroke event at Shawnee Swim Club during week three of the Southwest Virginia Swim Club meet.



Pine Valley's Willow Leary swims in the 11-12-year-old 50-yard breaststroke event.



Pine Valley Swim Club's Ellie Speed competes in the 13-14-year-old 50-meter breaststroke at the Shawnee Swim Club. Speed placed sixth with a time of 51.93.



Pine Valley's Andrew Hope swims in the 13-14-year-old 50-meter breaststroke. Hope placed sixth with a time of 44.32.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING



PHOTO COURTESY OF REBECCA MINNICK

Local woman flying high in sport of disc golf

Marty Gordon
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After she finished in the top 20 of the World Amateurs disc golf competition this past weekend, Virginia Tech PhD student Rebecca Minnick now ranks among the best players on the circuit.

Disc golf is a flying disc sport in which players throw a disc at a target. It is played using rules similar to golf. The latest estimates say more than a million people regularly compete in disc golf.

Jim Conrad, last year's world professional champion, is a Blacksburg native and is encouraging others to follow in his footsteps.

"It's an amazing sport that is very cheap, is extremely accessible and is becoming more and more so with the addition of new courses. You can easily play it by yourself or in a group," Minnick said during a recent interview.

She started playing disc golf only a year and half ago but now runs a large Ultimate Frisbee group in Blacksburg.

The two sports are similar in that they both use a plastic disc commonly known as a frisbee. Ultimate Frisbee is a non-contact, self-refereed team sport. Two teams of seven players compete on a playing field about the same length as a football field, but narrower, with an end zone on each end of the playing field. Each team defends an end zone.

Disc golf is a game that is very similar to golf. Instead of using golf balls and golf clubs, players throw a disc into a basket or at a target. The score is kept in the same manner as golf with the lowest score winning.

Minnick is looking to turn her love of disc golf into a professional career and recently launched a GoFundMe effort to help with this endeavor.

"It's simple. I fell in love with this sport a little over a year ago," she said. "This year, I decided I wanted to make a career out of disc golf. I have never felt so sure about a direction in my entire life. This journey has been an amazing dream."

Her GoFundMe is to help cover tournament fees, traveling costs, and lodging expenses.

Her competitive schedule for the year includes more than 30 tournaments.

"I spent a lot of time researching which tournaments I wanted to compete in," she said. "I was interested in several things: 1) I wanted the tournaments to have a large playing field in my division (for more competition); 2) I wanted as many A-Tier tournaments as possible and B-Tier if they were good tournaments; 3) Most of the tournaments needed to be less than eight hours away; 4) I wanted tournaments that I believed would give me the opportunity to prepare for playing open and going on tour.

"I have used all of my tournaments to work on my mental game a lot," she said. "I have focused on working on my mental game/preparation more so than my disc golf game because I believe it to be more important."

Minnick is originally from West Virginia and has lived in Blacksburg since 2012. Her tournament travels have led her to 14 states and Canada. So far, she has been successful on the tour including representing Virginia Tech as a member of the Disc Golf Club.

"I am competing at a very high level for only having been in disc golf for just one and half years," she said. "I will likely be a PDGA 900 rated player by the end of the year, which is definitely pro level. For most of the year I was ranked #1 in the nation for collegiate disc golf women and my team, which consisted only of me, was ranked #2 in the nation," she said.

Earlier this year, she tied for first place at the Collegiate Disc Golf National Championships against 31 other women, going into a sudden death playoff and eventually placing second.

So far this year, she has finished in first place in 18 tournaments.

She has also won three A-Tiers this year in FA1 (Advanced), which is the highest division before going to FPO (Open/Pro).

She is also becoming pretty popular on social media, specifically Insta-

gram with her handle: Ace-Babeee. Minnick gained that name after hitting two aces in two consecutive tournaments.

Her ultimate goal is to become a touring pro.

"I plan on making disc golf the main part of my life and see where that takes me," she said. "It's very exciting. I am loving life and what I have been given the opportunity to do, and I have never felt more sure about anything in my life."

"I have not followed James Conrad's career in detail, but I have seen him play on coverage a significant amount," Minnick said. "I am still very new to disc golf, so I don't know a lot about many of the pro's careers in detail, but I am learning more and more as I have time. I'm honestly too busy playing disc golf myself, working on my PhD, playing ultimate frisbee, and just living life to have time to keep up with any one pro."

For those wanting to get into the sport, Minnick encourages them to buy a putter and maybe a midrange disc and go play a short nine-hole course, google it, and/or connect with the local disc golf community, and ask them what discs are good beginner-friendly discs.

"There are also usually people that are happy to give form advice and help people to have something to aim towards or work on, if that's what they're wanting," Minnick said. "The main thing is to have fun and enjoy it and there are so many ways to do that."

The Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Department has a 37-hole Disc Golf course at 390 Cinnabar Road. This unique course consists of wooded fairways with a variety of elevation gains. Out of 4,300 national public courses listed in the disc golf course database, Golden Hills is one of only 19 in the United States with 37 holes.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS									
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Radford High girls' head basketball coach steps down

Marty Gordon
Contributing writer

Radford High School is advertising for a new girls' head basketball coach after Timothy Worles stepped down late last week.

A full-time minister at Calvary Baptist Church, Worles had served as an assistant before taking the head coach's role this past year. He said he made the decision to step down for his family and ministry.

"When you say yes to one thing, you always say no to another. It was getting to where I was saying no too much to my family and ministry," Worles said in an email.

"It was the hardest decision I've had to make," he said. "I love the girls in our program and the direction we were heading. I envy the next coach and hope he can stay long-term. The girls deserve it."

Worles's wife, Hannah-Kait, served as an assistant coach but recently had the couple's first child.

Worles played for Rick Cormany's 2011 state championship team while his wife won the championship the same year as a member of the Lady Bobcats.

This past season, the Lady Cats were 15-7 losing in the second round of the state playoffs to Gate City.

Pulaski quarterback to suit up for CHS Blue Demons this fall

Pulaski County quarterback Cam Cooper will wear the blue and gold this fall as a Christiansburg High School Blue Demon.

This past week Cooper participated in 7-on-7 summer drills with CHS.

After showing promise early on last season for Pulaski, Cooper suffered a broken collar bone and was unable to finish the season.

Cooper's addition could allow rising CHS junior Tanner Evans to remain in the defensive lineup

where he was almost as important last season as he was on the offensive side of the ball. Cooper was recently named the top signal caller at two at-large football camps.

The Virginia High School League has released its "master fall schedule" for the upcoming fall with few surprises.

Blacksburg will face Giles and Lord Botetourt to open the season before an open week to prepare for River Ridge District play.

Christiansburg will open with Floyd, Abingdon, and William Byrd before a breather going into River Ridge action.

Radford will tangle with George Wythe, Gate City, Ft. Chiswell, and Christiansburg.

Auburn faces Narrows, Craig, Floyd, and Eastern Montgomery in its out-of-district schedule.

Eastern Montgomery will see familiar foes in Holston, Rural Retreat, North Cross, and Auburn.

Marcus Moore cards hole in one at Auburn Hills



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUBURN HILLS GOLF CLUB

Marcus Moore recently carded his first-ever hole in one on hole number 7 on the Auburn Hills Golf Club's Riner course.

VDOT from page 5

ROUTE 311 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT OVER MEADOW CREEK - Temporary signals to control traffic across the bridge will be in place throughout the project. Construction has begun on the northbound side of the bridge, and once completed, work will switch to the southbound side. In addition, a section of Route 646 (Allen Street) between Route 650 and Route 311 will be closed during construction and a signed detour will be in place. All traffic will be detoured to Marshall Street and Kanawha Street to access either 311 or the homes located off Allen Street. Speed limit will be reduced to 35 mph in the work zone with a width restriction of 9 feet. Drivers should expect delays and allow extra travel time through the work zone. Weather permitting, the bridge is expected to be open to traffic by the end of 2022.

effective July 5 at 8 a.m., a section of Route 726 (Wads Gap Road) will be closed for a low water structure replacement. This structure is located one mile South of Route 613 (Naff Road) and .2 mile north of Route 664 (Hicks Hollow Road). The road is scheduled to be completed on Aug. 3 at 5 p.m.

ROUTE 619 CLOSURE - Effective August 3 at 8:30 a.m., a section of Route 619 (Pleasant Hill Road) will be closed for one day for a pipe replacement. This closure will be located 0.3 mile south of Route 40 (Franklin Street) and 0.4 mile north of Route 939 (Menefee Road). The road is scheduled to be completed on August 3 at 7 p.m.

ROUTE 834 AND 670 ROUNDABOUT PROJECT - The roundabout project at Route 834 (Brooks Mill Road) and Route 670 (Burnt Chimney Road) is underway. Flaggers will be controlling traffic around the intersection of Route 670 (Burnt Chimney Road) and Route 834 (Brooks Mill Road) on weekdays during the spring and summer months. The speed limit will be reduced to 35 mph in the work zone. Drivers should expect traffic shifts and new traffic patterns throughout the duration of the project as turn lanes and portions of the new roundabout are being constructed. The new roundabout with lighting is anticipated to open to traffic in fall 2022. Overall project is expected to be completed in early 2023.

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 220: Crack sealing operations are in place on northbound Route 220 near Route 618 and Route 718 during nighttime hours. Drivers can expect alternating lane closures with flagging operations.

SURFACE TREATMENT OPERATIONS - Weather permitting, crews will begin surface treatment operations 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. The road surface may be rough for several weeks after surface treatment is applied. Once it packs down, the road surface will be brushed and return to a more smooth surface.

GILES COUNTY
ROUTE 673 ROAD WIDENING AND RESURFACING - The widening, stabilizing, and resurfacing of Route 673 (Penvir Road) is underway. Work begins at the intersection with Route 61 (Wolf Creek Highway) through 1.2 miles south of the intersection. Drivers can expect intermittent single lane closures controlled by flagging operations. Expected completion is September 2022.

VILLAGE OF NEWPORT 4th OF JULY PARADE - A parade will be held in the Village of Newport on July 4 beginning at 11 a.m. The parade will begin at the Newport Christian Church at 115 Rose Circle and will travel on Route 42 East for approximately 1.25 miles to the Newport Ball Park. Parade expected to last 45-60 minutes. Drivers should expect closures and delays.

FLOYD COUNTY
FLOYD 4th OF JULY CELEBRATION - Route T1009 between Floyd Elementary School and Floyd County High School will be closed on July 4, 2022 from 4 p.m. to midnight for the 4th of July celebration of 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 221 northbound, milling and filling operations from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m.

FRANKLIN COUNTY
ROUTE 726 CLOSURE - Ef-

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