

RADFORD

NEWS JOURNAL

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Radford Transit regional service increasing due to Commonwealth Transportation Board approval

CTB TRIP projects to expand transit in Virginia, including between Radford, Blacksburg, and Christiansburg

RICHMOND — Radford Transit service will increase service between Radford, Blacksburg, and Christiansburg, due to approval by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) of three projects that will expand transit services around the Commonwealth.

The projects are funded through the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) and were approved by the CTB on Dec. 6.

According to the CTB, "the 2020 General Assembly session established TRIP with two goals: to improve the regional connectivity of urban areas and to reduce barriers to transit use for low-income riders. TRIP already supports zero or reduced fare at eight agencies as well as four regional connectivity projects around the commonwealth."

Radford Transit will expand the operations of its route that connects the town of Radford to the towns of Blacksburg.

"The route already operates while universities are in session; however, to better meet the needs of university employees and residents of the community, Radford Transit will operate the route all day and throughout the entire year," the CTB announced. The three-year project will cost \$653,963 with state and local funds.

"The Transit Ridership Incentive Program encourages transit agencies to be innovative and flexible in developing solutions to best meet the transportation needs of Virginians," said Jennifer DeBruhl, Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. "These projects will improve the mobility of Virginians by closing gaps in transit service as well as enhancing economic opportunity."

Since TRIP's creation, DRPT has allocated \$24.5 million to multi-year zero-fare/low-income projects and \$11.6 million to multi-year regional connectivity projects. This newest round of projects is supported by an



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

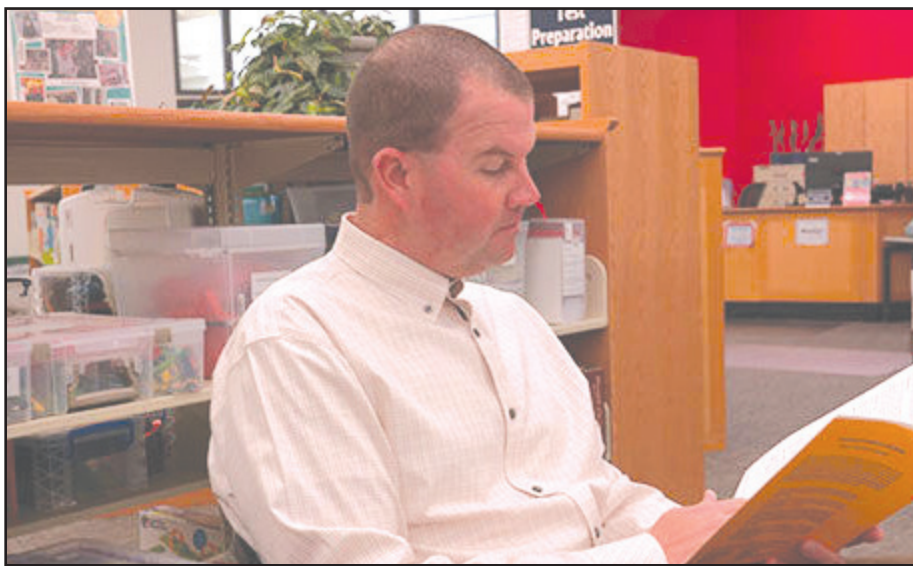
Radford Transit will soon be increasing its service from Radford to Christiansburg and Blacksburg, thanks to a project funded through the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP).

additional \$5 million the 2022 General Assembly approved for the state budget to put into TRIP. To receive TRIP funds, transit agencies must provide a local match.

Two other approved TRIP projects are in Richmond and Loudon counties.

- Radford News Journal Staff report

Winter Commencement 2022: Educator takes place among pioneering Ed.D graduates



RADFORD UNIVERSITY PHOTO

Brian Kitts

RADFORD - Brian Kitts is a lifelong believer in public education.

For more than 20 years, he was a teacher and served as a principal at elementary and secondary public schools in Montgomery County. Now, Kitts teaches master's-level courses in educational leadership at Radford University and supervises field experiences for aspiring school administrators.

"I've devoted much of my life to education," Kitts said. "I believe in the structure and systems we put in place to help young people grow up and do whatever they want to do to be successful in life."

Three years ago, Kitts took another step in his journey to "do more," he said, "for the young people in the next generation." He enrolled in Radford University's

then-new Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree program, which is designed to prepare practicing professional educators, like Kitts, to fill positions as educational leaders at the district level in Virginia.

Administered by the College of Education and Human Development, the 63-credit hour program includes courses in educational foundations, educational leadership, applied research, field experiences, and elective choices. The fully online program is designed to be completed in three years part-time, and it qualifies individuals for licensure as a superintendent.

On Dec. 9, 2022, Kitts was among the first cohort of 20 students to graduate from Radford with a Doctor of Education degree.

"It's great to be part of

history," Kitts said.

"I love this place, this university, the professors, this community. I grew up here," he said. "It's just always been a special place."

He's excited, too, he said, for those Ed.D. program cohorts who will follow and the "excitement and energy that's growing in the program, and what it will do for public schools, not only in this region but all around the state of Virginia."

Radford University held its graduate degree commencement ceremony on Friday, Dec. 9. The winter commencement ceremony for undergraduates is being held today, Saturday, Dec. 10 at the Dedmon Center.

Chad Osborne
Radford University

Blacksburg Art Association presents Radford holiday open house

Three area artists will be showcasing their works at the seventh annual holiday open house presented by the Blacksburg Regional Art Association from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. today, Dec. 10, and Saturday, Dec. 11 at 408 Eighth St., Radford.

The event is free and is open to the public. A percentage of all sales will be donated to local charities.

Collage artist Martha Olsen uses recycled and found papers as her preferred

medium to create her free-flowing style. Painter Ruth Lefko lets each of her works speak for themselves, choosing to create a feeling rather than a realistic depiction.

Fine art photographer Susan Lockwood, known primarily for European subject matter, frames her pieces with archival acid-free materials.

- Radford News Journal staff report

Caroling, bells and sweet treats highlight tree lighting ceremony

RADFORD - A big crowd turned out Tuesday for the annual Radford Christmas tree lighting ceremony, hosted by the Radford Public Library.

The event, emceed by Radford Mayor David Horton, included musical performances by the Grove United Methodist Handbell Choirs and the Radford

See **Caroling**, page 4



PHOTO BY ETHAN BELL

The Grove United Methodist Handbell Choir performs one of several Christmas carols at Tuesday's tree lighting ceremony.

NRCC Concert Series presents free concert today in Dublin

The music of Bluegrass Kinsmen and Gap Civil will be featured during New River Community College's Concert Series event today, Saturday, Dec. 10, 2022. Music will begin at 6 p.m. in 117 Edwards Hall at NRCC in Dublin.

Bluegrass Kinsmen is a bluegrass band from Southwest Virginia that was formed in 1971. They perform a variety of bluegrass music that includes traditional, folk, and gospel. Band leader Ebby sings harmony and plays banjo and is accomplished on guitar, mandolin, and fiddle as well. Band members also include his wife, Teresa, who sings lead and harmony, and other guest musicians.

Gap Civil is an Appalachian mountain music band built on its motto of honor and innovation. They honor the mountain traditions that have shaped and rooted their music, and they take great pride in innovative and exciting original songs, tunes,



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Gap Civil was formed in 2017, is based in Sparta, NC, and features Chris Johnson on banjo and bass, Lucas Pasley on fiddle and vocals, and Kyle Dean Smith on bass and lead guitar.

and arrangements. The band fluidly blends old time, country, bluegrass, and Americana.

Gap Civil was formed in 2017, is based in Sparta, NC and features Chris Johnson on banjo and bass, Lucas Pasley on fiddle and vocals, and Kyle Dean Smith on bass and lead guitar.

The doors open at 5 p.m. for the show. Admission is free; however, donations will be accepted to help offset the musicians' travel expenses..

For more information about the NRCC Concert Series, contact Tim Jones at (540) 674-3625 or visit www.nr.edu/concerts.

- News Messenger staff report

UPCOMING EVENTS

Now through Dec. 17:

Blacksburg leaf collection extended

Leaf collection in the Town of Blacksburg has been extended approximately two weeks from the scheduled Dec. 3 conclusion date to ensure all neighborhoods have been served. Public Works has been operating with a significantly reduced staff dedicated to leaf collection, so patience is greatly appreciated.

Saturday, Dec. 10:

Handcrafted Holiday Pop-up Market

At Glencoe Mansion, Museum and Gallery, hosted by MountainTrotter Arts. The market will feature local artisans, crafters, and more from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The food truck Empanada Nirvana will be on site as well. Santa will be available to take pictures on Glencoe Mansion's porch. Visitors can also enjoy Glencoe Mansion's Holiday Open House from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The rain date is Sunday, Dec. 11.

Volunteer tax preparer interest meeting

At the Christiansburg Library; 11 a.m. Learn to prepare taxes and make a difference in the community at the same time simply by volunteering to help prepare taxes free of charge with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) or Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs.

Holiday movie

At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 12:30 p.m. Kick off the holiday season with a Christmas movie and some hot chocolate. The film follows the misadventures of Jack Skellington, Halloweentown's beloved pumpkin king, who has become bored with the same annual routine of frightening people in the "real world." When Jack accidentally stumbles onto Christmastown, all bright colors and warm spirits, he gets a new lease on life. He plots to bring Christmas under his control by kidnapping Santa Claus and taking over the role. But Jack soon discovers even the best-laid plans of mice and skeleton men can go seriously awry. Rated PG. Call (540) 268-1964 with any questions.

DIY terrariums

At the Christiansburg Library; 2 p.m. Too cold to grow plants outside? Grow some in a terrarium. All supplies will be included. Registration is required. Intended for adults. Presented by Master Gardeners.

Saturday, Dec. 10 and Sunday, Dec. 11:

Seventh annual Radford Holiday Open House

Three area artists will be showcasing their works in the seventh annual holiday open house from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days at 408 Eighth St., Radford. The event is free and is open to the public. A percentage of all sales will be donated to local charities. Martha Olsen, a collage artist, uses recycled and found papers as her preferred medium to create her free-flowing style while painter Ruth Lefko lets each of her works speak for themselves, choosing to create a feeling rather than a realistic depiction. Fine art photographer Susan Lockwood, known primarily for European subject matter, frames her pieces with archival acid-free materials.

Monday, Dec. 12:

Radford City Council meeting

The Radford City Council will hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Radford Municipal Building, 10 Robertson St., Radford.

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in a closed session at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg. Open sessions begin at 7:15 p.m. Citizens are invited to attend and will be allowed to speak at each meeting. All regular meetings of the Board of Supervisors are rebroadcast on Montgomery County Comcast and Shentel Channels 190 daily.

RCPS Special Education Advisory Committee meeting

A Radford City Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee meeting will be held at 4 p.m. at Belle Heth Elementary School, 151 George St., Radford. The public is invited to attend. The meeting will also be available virtually using Google Meet. To be invited using Google Meet, contact Anne Goodman, Chair, at 540-267-7144, or Kate Leeper, Vice Chair/Secretary, at 540-267-7223, to obtain a virtual meeting link.

STEM Club

At the Christiansburg Library; 1 p.m. This homeschool STEM club explores science, technology, engineering, and/or math. Ages 8 and up.

Holiday crafts for all ages

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 4:30 p.m. Drop in to make variety of holidays crafts. All supplies will be provided. For all ages.

Tuesday, Dec. 13:

Talking about books

At the Blacksburg Library; 11 a.m. To be discussed is "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Call (540)-552-8246 to reserve a copy.

Homeschool creative writing

At the Blacksburg Library; 1 p.m. Teens and tweens are invited to this Homeschool Creative Writing club. Participants will practice their writing skills with fun and creative prompts, learning about constructive criticism by working with peers and talking about stories. Recommended for ages 10 and up.

Art for Tots

At the Blacksburg Library; 3 p.m. Participants will make some fun art projects appropriate for little hands. Supplies will be provided.

Science Fiction Book Club

At the Blacksburg Library; 6:30 p.m. To be discussed is "Permafrost" by Alastair Reynolds. Call (540) 552-8246 to reserve a copy.

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, 3204 Riner Road. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are invited to the meeting. If Montgomery County Public

Schools are closed on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week due to weather, the meeting is canceled. For further information, call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Blacksburg Town Council meeting

The Blacksburg Town Council will meet in regular session at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 S. Main St. These meetings are open to the public and are televised live on WTOB Channel 2.

Christiansburg Town Council meeting

The Christiansburg Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of Town Hall (100 E. Main St.). The public is welcome and is encouraged to attend with a citizen hearing time reserved at each meeting for residents to bring any matter they desire before the entire council.

Radford City School Board meeting

The Radford City School Board will meet at 6 p.m. at the School Board Office at 1612 Wadsworth St., Radford.

Wednesday, Dec. 14:

Page to screen movies:

"Rebecca"

At the Radford Public Library; 5:45 p.m. This is a screening of the 1940 Hitchcock classic "Rebecca" on the library's big screen. The movie starts at 5:45 p.m. and has a 130-minute run time. The film is rated PG. Popcorn from Lil'Bit Corny LLC will be provided while supplies last.

Library Board of Trustees meeting

At the Christiansburg Library; 7 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 15:

Radford Photo Club meeting

The Radford Photo Club will meet at 6 p.m. at the Radford Public Library. Attendees are invited to share their three best photos of the year and talk about each one. Goodies to share will be welcome. The photo challenge this month is Vacation Photography. Bring a print. There is also an Open Theme challenge. Meetings, events, and outings are open to the public. The Radford Photo Club is made up of professional and amateur photographers from throughout the New River Valley.

Gingerbread houses

At the Blacksburg Library; 4:30 p.m. All ages are invited to build a personalized gingerbread house with the supplies provided. Registration is required.

Saturday Dec. 17:

Saturday

At the Christiansburg Library; noon. Sign up at the front desk 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. Email spahl@mfrl.org for more information.

Holiday movie

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 12:30 p.m. Get into the holiday spirit with a showing of this fan-favorite holiday animated film (rated G) about a young boy who embarks on a train ride to the North Pole. Call (540) 268-1964 with any questions.

Teen DND

At the Blacksburg Library; 2 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons for ages 11 to 17.

Gingerbread Houses

At the Christiansburg Library; 2 p.m. All ages are invited to build a personalized gingerbread house with the supplies provided. Registration is required.

"The Grinch" Movie, Photos, and S'mores

At Glencoe Mansion, Museum, and Gallery. S'mores and pictures with the Grinch at 6 p.m. The movie at 7 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 19:

STEM Club

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 2 p.m. Participants will explore science, technology, engineering, and/or math. Ages 8 and up.

Pokémon Club

At the Christiansburg Library; 4:30 p.m. Pokémon fans can bring their DS or Pokémon cards and get ready to battle, trade, and make new friends. All ages.

Ongoing:

Help the veterans with donations

The Meadowbrook Public Library is a collection point for items needed at the VA Medical Center in Salem. Donors can bring the following items to the library during December: deodorant, denture adhesive, 3-in-1 body wash/shampoo/conditioner, body lotion, toothpaste, nail clippers, sweatpants, sweatshirts, T-shirts (size M, L, XL), and new baseball caps. Co-Sponsored by VFW Post 5311 and Montgomery-Floyd Regional libraries.



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Vinton Messenger
The New Castle Record
Salem Times-Register
News Messenger
RADFORD News Journal

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Legals - City of Radford

NOTICE FOR REQUEST FOR QUOTES
The City of Radford is seeking to procure two (2) 14 passenger (12-passenger plus 1-wheelchair and driver) body on chassis paratransit bus. The complete Request for Proposals (RFP) package is available on the City's website at <https://www.radfordva.gov/1276/Current-Bids-and-RFPs> or upon request. Written proposals must be received no later than 12:00 PM local prevailing time on January 9, 2023 IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER at 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141, for consideration. PROPOSALS MUST BE SEALED IN AN ENVELOPE CLEARLY MARKED "RADFORD TRANSIT 14 PASSENGER ADA BUS", RFP # 23-01-Transit, ALONG WITH THE NAME OF FIRM, ADDRESS AND PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON. Proposers are required to submit all items listed in the Request for Proposals, including acknowledgement of all addendums.



To place your ad, call 389-9355

CEMETERY MAINTENANCE

Highland Memory Gardens is looking for 2 Full Time cemetery ground maintenance people.

Great Benefit package, Health, Dental, Vision, uniforms, and 401-K Retirement program pay commensurate with experience. Must be able to pass a background check and drug test.

For confidential interview, call Paul at 540-674-5231.

Classified Advertising DELIVERS

RSVP celebrates the season with holiday party

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Montgomery County and Radford held its holiday party on Tuesday, Dec. 6, at the Christiansburg Recreation Center.

Thirty-four people attended, and wonderful goodies, holiday music, and Santa filled the room with Christmas cheer. Outgoing Advisory Council Members Melissa Adams-Felts, Sharon Brown, Nola Elliott, Shannon Hammons, Rosemary Jones, Amanda Terry, Carol Trutt, and Remon Yassa were recognized for their hard work and dedication to the program.

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors Chair Sherri Blevins, Deputy County Administrator Angie Hill, Montgomery County

Human Services Director Tonia Winn, Montgomery County Communications Specialist Becky Hertling, Town of Christiansburg Mayor Michael Barber, and Christiansburg Recreation Center Director Brad Epperley thanked the volunteers for their support. Chair Blevins congratulated volunteers for their 25,463 hours of service as of Oct. 31, 2022.

RSVP sent out special thanks to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for their support, the Christiansburg Recreation Center, and Brian Compton, who assumed the role of Santa Claus.

- News Messenger staff report



RSVP volunteers and community partners gather to fill their plates with holiday goodies.



Santa Claus (Brian Compton) with Advisory Council Members Carol Trutt (left), Rosemary Jones, Nola Elliott, and Sharon Brown



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANDY HAYES

Santa Claus (Compton) with Irene Dowdy (left), Brenda Arnold, Shirley Mullins, and Rosemary Jones

Community chorus Blue Ridge Vocal Connection to sing at Hotel Roanoke Sunday

On Sunday, Dec. 11, Blue Ridge Vocal Connection, the New River Valley's fastest-growing and farthest-traveling community chorus, continues a festive parade of holiday concerts with a stroll through Hotel Roanoke's "Fashions for Evergreens" Christmas tree display.

The group will sing in the North Entry Foyer near Roanoke Ballroom (D) between 5 and 7 p.m.

The program, called "Christmas in the Air... Waves," features familiar, toe-tapping hits such as a Pentatonic-styled "Up on the Housetop," "My Grown Up Christmas List," and "All I Want for Christmas is You."

The chorus will meander among the merry boughs, serenading with

holiday favorites such as "Silent Night," "The First Noel," "Silver Bells," and "The Holly and the Ivy" along with a fresh, original version of upbeat gospel great, "Children, Go Where I Send Thee."

Director Thomas L. DeBusk founded Blue Ridge Vocal Connection in the summer of 2021 as a way to bring people together. The chorus has grown significantly in just a few months, now numbering more than 30 singers. DeBusk routinely combines people who "just like to sing" with original musical arrangements to create truly entertaining musical programs.

Blue Ridge Vocal Connection is a community-based organization purpose-driven to build community

through engagement.

While this is only the chorus's second Christmas season, they've already performed concerts at the Lyric Theatre in Blacksburg and Primland Resort in Meadows of Dan.

Upcoming concerts, in addition to the Dec. 11 concert at the Hotel Roanoke, include Saturday, Dec. 17, at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Christiansburg; Sunday, Dec. 18, at New Dublin Presbyterian Church in Dublin; and Tuesday, Dec. 20, at the Karr Center at Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg.

- Submitted by Mark D. Freeman

NRV Cares Director Andi Golusky named Non-Profit Director of Year



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNITED WAY OF THE NEW RIVER

Andi Golusky, Director of NRV Cares, was named the Non-Profit Director of the Year at the recent Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce annual dinner. NRV Cares is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to protecting children and strengthening families.

Blacksburg Young Pros Holiday Mixer



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLACKSBURG YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The Blacksburg Young Professionals will hold their annual holiday mixer at The Inn at Virginia Tech on Tuesday, Dec. 13, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

VDOT 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.

underway on road improvements on Route 114 (Peppers Ferry Road) for a new entrance to Belview Elementary School. Motorists should expect daily lane closures controlled by flagging.

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. 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:

RAMP CLOSURES: Ramp closures are possible during nighttime hours, 12 a.m., to 5 a.m. Drivers should

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. The old bridge is being demolished. 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.

ROUTE 114 TURN LANE CONSTRUCTION - Construction is

See VDOT, page 4

VDOT from page 3

watch for message boards dates and times the ramp will be closed.

LANE CLOSURES: Alternating left and right lane and shoulder closures during nighttime hours between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., Sunday through Thursday, are possible. Lane widths will be reduced to 11 feet.

- o Northbound lane closures from I-81 mile marker 136 to 141.
- o Southbound Lane closures from I-81 mile marker

141 to 136.

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.

- Virginia Dept. of Transportation

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Radford News Journal is a newspaper of, by and for the people of Radford. We encourage letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached for verification. All letters will be verified before publication. We reserve the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

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Events

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Free GED Classes

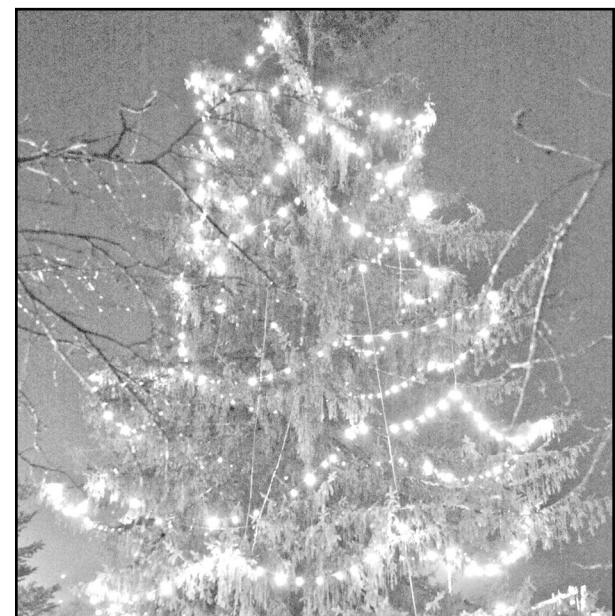
At the Meadowbrook Public Library, 5 to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. New River Community College is offering free GED classes at the Meadowbrook Library every Tuesday and Thursday until Thursday, Dec. 15. For more information or to sign up, call the library at 540-268-1964.

Caroling

 from page 1


The Radford University Chorus sings for the crowd at the tree lighting ceremony, held at the Radford Public Library.

University Chorus. Children got to try their hands at several handbell carols, led by Grove United Methodist Handbell Choir director Libby Watts. Homemade chocolate chip cookies and hot cocoa were provided by the Radford Coffee Co., and Santa made a special visit from the North Pole to light the tree at 6:30 p.m. The 80-plus foot Norway Spruce outside the library was planted in the 1940's and is considered Radford's official



PHOTOS BY ETHAN BELL

The 80-plus foot Norway Spruce outside Radford Public Library was decorated with more than 1,000 brightly colored bulbs after being lit by Santa with a countdown from the crowd led by Radford Mayor David Horton.

Christmas tree.

Rain canceled Radford's "Jungle All the Way" holiday parade, which was scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 9 and, according to the City of Radford, will not be rescheduled.

- Radford News Journal staff report

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59
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- CLUES ACROSS**
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>1. Abu __, U.A.E. capital
6. Herring-like fishes
11. 55120 MN
12. Indigo bush
13. Pollyanna-ish
15. Pleasing to the ear
18. Parcels of land
19. Microns (alt. sp.)
20. Cooking containers
21. Express pleasure
24. Meat from a calf (alt.)
25. 7th Greek letter
26. Operated the sales register
30. Blueprint for the day
32. Congressperson (abbr.)
33. Angle (abbr.)
35. Fragrant health promotion
43. Trespasses</p> | <p>44. __ Lanka
45. Wife of Hercules
47. A large body of water
48. Chicken house
49. Sicilian volcano
51. Coarse edible red seaweed
52. __ May, actress
54. Opposites of credits
55. Unable to move
57. Someone who is highly skilled
58. 100 = 1 kwacha
59. "Rocky" star Talia</p> | <p>4. Used for hitting the ball in various games
5. Not out
6. South Dakota
7. Possessed
8. Grad
9. UPS driver
10. Fired
13. In a way, augmented
14. River in SE S. Am.
16. Division of geological time
17. Follows sigma
21. Sign language
22. Expression of surprise
23. Hull Identification Number
26. Salmwood
27. Associated Press
28. Half of an em
29. Networks in Spanish</p> |
|--|---|---|
- CLUES DOWN**
- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Having a sophisticated charm
2. Minute amounts (Scott.)
3. Turkish leader's title</p> | <p>31. Dough fermenting agent
34. Auto fuel
36. An alternative
37. Manuscripts (abbr.)
38. Digested
39. Darjeeling or green
40. Horsepower
41. 1985 Formula 1 champion
42. Expression of alarm
43. Gain possession
45. Own (Scottish)
46. Snake-like fish
48. Dicer
50. A fresh
51. Hindu mother goddess
53. Before
54. Code for dash
56. Atomic #52
57. Millisecond</p> |
|---|--|

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OBITUARIES

Alls, Phyllis Keister

Phyllis Keister Alls, 68, passed Rodney and Paige Keister and away Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022.

She was a member of Riner Grace Brethren Church and was a domestic housekeeper.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jimmy and Elizabeth Keister.

Survivors include her husband, Robert B. Alls of Riner; a son, Ethan Alls of Riner; a brother, Rodney Keister of Radford; a sister, Gail Quesenberry (Danny) of Pulaski; a sister-in-law, Lois Lancaster; a nephew-in-law, Michael Lancaster; a nephew, Keith Ferrell; nieces Kelly Holzer and Paige Keister; special pets Karl and Fuzzy; and all of her cats that she loved so much.

The family would like to thank



Good Samaritan Hospice for taking such good care of Phyllis in her last days.

The family will receive friends from 10 until 11 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 12, 2022, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 11 a.m. with the Rev. Kenny Farley officiating. Graveside services will follow in Rockford Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributions to Good Samaritan Hospice.

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

Caldwell, Reginald Wayne

Reginald Wayne Caldwell, 61, Miller, and Teresa Guth.

of Blacksburg, died Thursday, Dec. 2, 2022, at his home. He was born in Radford on Sept. 18, 1961. He is survived by his parents, Lois and Clinton Lowe; sister, Regina Wright; brothers, Randall Caldwell and Ashley Lowe; special nephew, Brian Caldwell (Jennifer) and their children, Bryce and Brody; God son, Mark McIntyre; God daughters, Summer Brown and Cassie Brown; special friends, Wanda Brillhart, Alex



Funeral services will be conducted Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Gary McCoy and Rev. Randy Jarrells officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Reginald W. Caldwell Memorial Fund, C/O The National Bank of Blacksburg, P.O. Box 90002, Blacksburg, VA 24062, or in person at any NBB location.

See Obituaries, page 6

Send community news and photos to communitynews@ourvalley.org

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

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

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

BAPTIST

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

First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave., 215 Third Ave at the corner with Downey St. We nurture meaningful connections to God and others through worship, spiritual growth, and community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: fbcradford.org 540-639-4419. Worship is in-person and live-streamed on Facebook and on our YouTube channel: First Baptist Church Radford.

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

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

CHURCH OF GOD

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

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

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

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

Radford Church of God in Christ, 206 Russell Ave., Radford. Supt. Ronald A. Watson, Sr.; Elder, 639- 5948. Sun. School 9 a.m.; Prayer 11:30 a.m.; Worship 6 p.m.

(DOC - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Snowville Christian Church, 5436 Lead Mine Rd., Hiwassee, VA 24347, Pastor: Jerry King, Website: www.SnowvilleChristianChurch.com (and Facebook), Office: 540-633-3761, Email: office@SnowvilleChristianChurch.com, Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 a.m., Sunday School: 10:00 a.m., Thursday Bible Study: 6:00 p.m., We are: "Inspiring hope, helping people grow their faith, and sharing God's love with others!"

EPISCOPAL

Grace Episcopal Church, 210 4th Street, Radford, 639-3494. A friendly, mission-oriented spiritual community sharing the Word of God. ALL ARE WELCOME. In person and live-streamed services 10:30AM Sundays. Holy Eucharist twice a month. Morning Prayer twice a month. Fellowship and refreshments follow services. Find us on Facebook: Grace Episcopal Church and www.graceradford.org.

LUTHERAN

Christ Lutheran Church, 201 Harvey St. Sunday worship with communion at 10am; fellowship & snacks at 11am. All are welcome. Upcoming events and fellowship opportunities (Senior Brunch, Faith & Film, Rough Draught, etc.) detailed in weekly

Radford WORSHIP DIRECTORY

TRUST THE TRUTH

Read 2 Timothy 1:1 through 4:22

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

The Greek word orthotomeo, translated here as "correctly handles," is rendered "rightly dividing" in other versions.

It carries the idea of cutting straight like a surgeon and getting to the heart of the matter. Paul's letters to Timothy emphasize sound doctrine, which must be taught in the churches so believers will be established in the truth. Is false teaching being advocated? Stand firm on God's truth. Do unbelievers mock our Christian life? Stand firm on God's truth.

We are all to be students of God's Word—diligently studying it, faithfully putting it into practice in our daily lives, and effectively sharing it. We should never be ashamed to be identified with Christ, nor do we want to be embarrassed by our lack of preparation for witnessing.

We need to be ready with knowledge of the truth and guided by God's Spirit in sharing it with others.

Thought for Today: Train in the truth and trust its teaching.

Quicklook: 2 Timothy 2:7-15

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

email and on website: clcradford.org. 540-639-2671.

Our Saviour Lutheran Church ELCA, 1845 Cambria St NE, Christiansburg. Worship each Sunday at 10 am, in person and online at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMsB-gbyjmV5ce9mr43dbCw>. Please visit our website at www.oslc-cburg.org and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/oslcchristiansburg> to learn more about us. Little Free Pantry and Little Free Library located in our parking lot. Pastor Joshua L. Copeland; church office 540-382-2223.

St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Worship service each Sunday at 10 AM, Sunday School 9 AM. We are a community of God's people where people gather for worship, learning and service. Visitors and new members are always WELCOME! Google comments: "Wonderful, welcoming congregation...A place where all are truly welcome... Nice, friendly, competent staff." You will like our minister, The Rev. Michelle L. Stramiello. Her previous service was as Family Faith Formation Director at Cross and Crown Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, IN, Pastor of St Matthew Lutheran Church, Paducah, KY, and Hospice Chaplain in Largo, Fl. St. Michael started and administers Micah's Backpack which has great community impact, Micah's Soup for Seniors, Micah's Garden, Closet, and Mini Pantry. Also, partnering with Rainbow Riders and Total Action for Progress, we opened open the first Early Childhood Head Start in our community (6 weeks to age 3), and have numerous other programs including a Justice & Mercy Fund providing assistance for those needing emergency assistance with critical bills. Further St. Michael sponsors an awesome Scouting program of Boy & Girl Scout Troops, Venture Scouts for older youth, and a new Cub Pack for girls & boys kindergarten - 5th grade. Directions: From Price's Fork Road, turn onto Merrimac Road and St. Michael is 3/10ths of a mile down on the left. For more information about any of our activities: Phone 540 951-8951. Email hope@stmcl.us or visit our Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, Rev. Larry

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

Compassion Church, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Chandler Jones brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services. Our vision is to see all Saved. Freed. Restored. Fulfilled. Find us on facebook and Instagram

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

PRESBYTERIAN

Join us at **The Presbyterian Church of Radford**, 201 4th Street, at the corner of 4th & Randolph, for Sunday School at 10 am and Worship and Children's Church at 11 am. Our Interim Minister is Steve Willis. Phone 639-2585. Watch the worship services on Facebook, which can be accessed through the church website at www.pcradford.org or through the Presbyterian church of Radford Facebook page. We are called to share the love of Christ in this community and beyond.

UNITED METHODIST

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

Central United Methodist Church, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am (interpreter provided); 9:45am Sunday School (interpreter provided); and 11:00am. Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30pm. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com. **St. Paul United Methodist Church**, 220 W. Main St., C'Burg. Rev. Moonsup "Paul" Song (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship 10am, Sunday School 9am. Live streaming Sunday Service - www.twitch.tv/stpaulumc.

Obituaries

from page 5

Bailey, Linda Garlic

Linda Garlic Bailey died Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022, at her home in Shawsville.

She was born on April 15, 1949, to the late George Lee Garlic and Mary Rose Garlic.

She is survived by her sons and daughters-in-law, Charles Duncan, Mike Duncan (Loretta), and Ronald

Duncan (Jodi); grandchildren Josiah Duncan, Jailee Duncan, Jesse Duncan, and Madelyn Duncan; and a brother, Jerry Garlic.

A visitation will be conducted on Thursday, Dec. 29, 2022, from 4 to 6 p.m. at the McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Dr. SW Blacksburg.

Jenkins, Jimmie Vaughn

On Sunday, Dec. 4, in the early morning hours, Jimmie Vaughn Jenkins went home to be with her Lord and Savior. Her final years were spent at her daughter and son-in-law's residence and her final moments were spent with her daughter and son-in-law by her side.

Jimmie was born in Norton, Va., on Feb. 24, 1935. She graduated from Norton High School in 1953. She and her husband were King and Queen of their senior prom. They were married shortly after graduation and began their 58-year journey together as husband and wife.

The couple decided to put down their roots in Radford and never looked back. Jimmie believed in building the community in which she wished to live and raise her family. She devoted her time to her church and to other community organizations that promoted her values. She loved everything about building a home. Hers was welcoming and inviting and full of unconditional love. She was known for her impeccable taste.

Jimmie was predeceased by her parents, Jim and Margaret Vaughn; her husband, Max Jenkins; her daughter, Meg Jenkins Goepel; a grandson, John Patrick Jenkins; three brothers, Bobby Vaughn, Johnny Vaughn, and Jack Vaughn.

She is survived by her son, Robert



Max Jenkins; a daughter and son in law, Jill Jenkins Alderman and Tony Alderman of Radford; grandchildren William Alex Alderman of Lake Tahoe, Calif., Robert Max Jenkins II of Richmond, Emily Walters Jenkins of Kent Island, Md., Andrew Chambers Goepel of Greenville, Va., and Abigail Vaughn Jenkins

of Kent Island, Md.; a sister, Mary Sue Daniels of Norton, Va., and her daughters Denise Hickman of Durham, N.C. and Jeannine Vires of Norton; a brother in law and his wife, Bobby and Stathia Jenkins of Reidsville, Va.; special friend Barbara Van Dyke of Radford, and other dear friends too numerous to mention; a very special granddog, Rhett Butler Jenkins Alderman of the home; and special nephews and cousins.

The family would like to thank Intrepid Hospice for the care and comfort they provided to Jimmie and her family during her illness.

A memorial service was held on Friday Dec. 9, 2022, at The Presbyterian Church of Radford with the Rev. Steve Willis officiating. The family received friends at a reception immediately following the service at the church.

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

Jones, Edna Elizabeth Hall

Edna Elizabeth Hall Jones, 80, of Radford, formerly of Old Town, Fla., passed away on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022. She resided in Old Town with her husband, Victor, for 28 years. Edna came into this world in 1942 in Comer's Rock, Va. She loved quilting, knitting, sitting on the porch with family and friends, and her fur baby cuddles. She was preceded in death by her parents, Walter Ernest and Nellie Elizabeth Hall; her brother, Bobby Hall; and her grandson, Chase Landon Jones.

Survivors include her husband, Victor Jones of Old Town; a daughter, Becky Jones of Radford; sons and daughters-in-law Tim Jones of Lenoir, N.C., Kenny and Kim Jones of Thaxton, and Shon and Melissa Jones



of Lenoir, N.C.; a stepson, Woody Jones of Florida; grandchildren and their spouses Chad and Amanda Jones, Sarah and Todd Ray, "Lil" Victor Jones, "Lil" Kenneth and Karolina Twigg, Brittany and Tom Deely, and Jacob Jones and Lacy Baker; great-grandchildren, Micah Ray, Destiny Ray, Charity Ray, Madalynn Twigg, Mallory Twigg, Orion Twigg, Natalie Twigg, Isabella Deely, Kenny "Boo" Collins, Darian Jones, Kris Smith, and Ariel and Dewey Perkins; and many other relatives and friends.

Services will be held at a later date. The Jones family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

Lockee, Nova Christine Godwin

Nova Christine Godwin Lockee, her retirement, she enjoyed travel 95, of Blacksburg, passed away on Dec. 3, 2022.

She was born on June 11, 1927, in Pembroke, N.C., to the late William Purcell Godwin and Jessie Florence Chavers.

Christine is survived by her son, Robert Merritt Lockee (Barbara) of Blacksburg; a grandson, Chase McPherson Lockee of Savannah, Ga.; a brother Angus Chavers Godwin (Joan) of Ithaca, N.Y., a sister-in-law Ruth Godwin of Denver, Colo., and many beloved nieces, nephews, and cousins throughout the country. She was preceded in death by her parents and siblings Junior, Marie, Claire, and Tom.

Christine served her full career as a teacher of history, English, and social studies at McClintock Junior High School in Charlotte, N.C. After



and time with family, especially the annual gatherings of treasured siblings, nieces, and nephews.

She was a proud member of the Lumbee Tribe of Eastern North Carolina and valued the legacy of her family's heritage and engagement in the Pembroke community.

A private graveside service and interment were held at Sharon Memorial Gardens at 5716 Monroe St. in Charlotte on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Catching the Dream, a scholarship fund for Native American students pursuing higher education. More information about the organization is available at <https://catchingthedream.org>.

Quesenberry, Clarence William

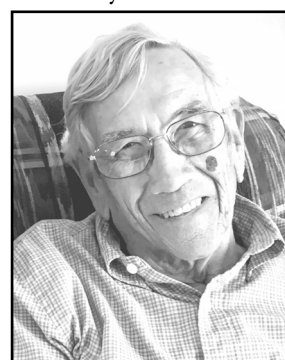
Clarence William Quesenberry until moving to Penn Laird in 2017. passed away at his home in Penn Laird, Va. on Dec. 5, 2022.

A native of Radford, he was born on March 2, 1931 to the Rev. Roy Pierce and Eula Elizabeth Rupe Quesenberry. Preceding him in death were two brothers and three sisters; Lawrence Everette Quesenberry, the Rev. Roy Glennard Quesenberry, Barbara Ann Quesenberry, Dorothy Quesenberry Thompson, and Lelia Quesenberry Thompson, and a great-granddaughter, Josephine Mae Crawford.

He is survived by his wife of almost 70 years, Alice Annabelle Sutphin Quesenberry; a daughter, Teresa Ann Quesenberry Crawford and her husband, James Fillmore Crawford, Jr.; granddaughter Jessica Lea Crawford DiPuma and her husband Charles James DiPuma; a grandson, James McChesney Crawford and his wife, Stephanie Noble Crawford; a great-grandson, Jaden McChesney Crawford; a sister, Ruth Marie Quesenberry Kirtner, and many beloved cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Clarence graduated from Radford High School on June 1, 1948, and attended Emmanuel College in Georgia.

On December 24, 1952, he married Alice Annabelle Sutphin. They lived in Fairlawn until their move to Dublin in 1959. In 2002 they moved to Bridgewater, Va. where they resided



Employee Relations, making his total service to RAAP 41 years.

Clarence was an avid bowler, fisherman, and golfer. He was a founding member of the Dublin Volunteer Fire Department and a past Worshipful Master of the Henry Clay Masonic Lodge in Dublin. He is now rejoicing in Heaven with those who have gone before him.

The family will receive friends on Friday, Dec. 16, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. A Masonic service will be held following visitation at 7:30 p.m. in the chapel.

A graveside service will be held at Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin on Saturday, Dec. 17 at 11 a.m. All who knew and loved him are invited to attend either or both services.

In lieu of flowers, honorary donations can be made to the Dublin Volunteer Fire Department, P. O. Box 699, Dublin, VA 24084.

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

Richardson, Billy Gene

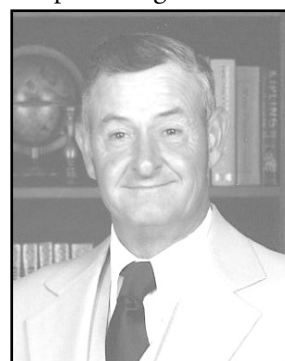
Billy Gene Richardson, 92, passed away Friday, Dec. 2, 2022, at his home in Riner.

He retired from Kroger where he drove a tractor-trailer for 27 years and was a proud member of Teamsters Local #171.

Billy was a lifelong resident of Riner and a graduate of Auburn High School. He was an avid outdoorsman, loving to fish and hunt, was a lifelong member of the NRA, and was a veteran of the United States Air Force.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Oakley John, Sr., and Mildred Ethel Simmons Richardson; and brothers O.J., Jr. and Larry Richardson.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Mary Jane Farley Richardson; a daughter and son-in-law, Pamela Richardson-Finley (Terry) of Radford; grandsons Jermaine Richardson of Riner, Terrell Richardson of Radford, and Braedon Richardson (Amber) of Radford; great-



grandchildren, Isaiah and Autumn Jane Richardson; sisters and brother-in-law, Janet Shelburne (Richard) of Riner, and Judy Clingenpeel of Boones Mill; sisters-in-law, Florence Bishop of Christiansburg, Cora Thompson (Gratton) of Christiansburg, Lou Ellen Belcher (Freddie) of Princeton, W. Va., and Margaret Richardson of

Connersville, Ind.; and a host of nieces, nephews and friends.

The family received friends on Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Graveside services were private.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Riner Volunteer Fire and Rescue or to New Freedom Farm, 6118 Lithia Road, Buchanan, Va.

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

Submit letters
to the editor to
editor@ourvalley.org

radfordnewsjournal.com

Put The Classifieds To Work!
Call 389-9355

RADFORD SPORTS

FROM THE SIDELINES

By Marty Gordon

Committee got it right, transfer portal opens up

The College Football Committee has received a lot of criticism for the past few years in deciding the final four for the college playoffs, but this year, they might have gotten it right. Georgia definitely deserves to be the top seed, and Michigan is another good choice.

TCU and Ohio State are also good choices, but think about the future of twelve playoff teams. Would it be better or worse?

There are plenty of positives and negatives on both sides of the debate. More will only make it more interesting to watch and maybe more competitive.

If the procedure was in place in 2022, Georgia would face Utah in the first round, along with TCU and Tennessee. Michigan would face Clemson, and Ohio State would battle Alabama.

The larger bracket would draw a larger crowd and of course a larger payout for everyone involved.

But back to 2022, Georgia should have a great opener and for all purposes, should face Michigan in the championship game. A Michigan-Ohio State rematch could add to the conversation, and a TCU-Michigan contest is intriguing. We just hope the fans will show up for the gate and watch on television.

The expansion of the playoffs is just around the corner, and we have to hope it will get better.

Meanwhile, the transfer portal is about to take its toll in Blacksburg. First-year coach Brent Pry is watching the open door with as many as a dozen players simply out of the program.

Earlier this week, he admitted his staff is working with those players and their families to make the right decision for them as an individual. Behind the scenes, he might be sweating the rising temperatures while monitoring the portal for incoming players of his own.

The Hokies need a few good receivers, several defensive linemen, a quarterback to make the competition stiffer in the spring, and a good running back and some offensive linemen to open holes this fall.

Pry is discovering this is the new way of recruiting, and he will have to do everything possible to convince players that this is the place for them.

Sometimes the grass is not greener on the other side as many former Hokie football players have discovered.

Thanks for the memories, but Hokie fans will forget you as quickly as you forget them.

Helmet ratings expand to include equestrians



PHOTO BY ELEANOR NELSEN FOR VIRGINIA TECH

Equestrian sports account for more than 50,000 visits to hospital emergency rooms annually for concussions and other brain injuries, more than any other sports in the country. To develop a set of ratings for equestrian helmet ratings, researchers from the Virginia Tech Helmet Lab conducted extensive testing under real-world conditions at the Alphin Stuart Livestock area on Virginia Tech's Blacksburg campus.

Over the past two years, the Virginia Tech Helmet Lab researchers analyzed more than 100 videos of riders falling off horses. The researchers measured the hardness of the sand, dirt, grass, and synthetic surfaces under foot at equestrian events.

The researchers dragged dummy heads and necks and pendulums and other equipment including boxes and boxes of helmets out to Virginia Tech's equestrian facilities to simulate falls.

Then the team of researchers from the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics took all that data back to the lab to recreate those events in a series of controlled, quantitative tests. They used those tests to assess 40 equestrian helmets from different manufacturers.

The result is the first set of equestrian helmet ratings from the Virginia Tech Helmet Lab.

Equestrian sports account for 30 million rides in the U.S. every year and 50,000 trips to the emergency room for concussions and other brain injuries. That's more than any other sport in America.

"Most people are surprised to learn that," said Stefan Duma, the Harry Wyatt Professor of Engineering and the Helmet Lab's founder. "But when you think about the height of a horse and the distance a rider would fall, that translates into a high impact energy."

If a rider's head hits the ground in a fall, the helmet can determine whether the rider makes it through without an injury.

That's why the helmet lab wanted to determine which helmets perform better than others. Of the 40 models included in this initial set of ratings, two earned the top score of five stars. Eleven earned four, and the rest earned three or below.

Price isn't necessarily a predictor of quality: One of the two five-star helmets retails for \$460, and the other for \$58.

The ratings apply to falls that occur during walking, trotting, galloping, jumping, and the wide variety of other

horse movements that can occur in equestrian disciplines including hunter-jumper, eventing, and dressage.

The lab's extensive testing also shed more light on what happens during real impacts in the equestrian arena and illuminated some gaps between the required safety standards these helmets have to pass before going on the market and the actual impacts they're subjected to when a rider is wearing them.

"Standards for equestrian helmets are typically based on severe impacts," Duma said. "What we found is that a lot of riders come off at lower velocities, and many helmets are too stiff to effectively cushion those softer impacts. The helmets that perform better are able to deal with different energy levels."

Virginia Tech's ratings also go beyond the existing standards by using a formula that considers the rotational acceleration that occurs when a rider's head hits the ground, in addition to linear acceleration.

This is the lab's ninth major ratings release since researchers began rating helmets in 2011. They have tested and rated helmets for varsity, youth, and flag football; soccer; cycling; hockey; snow sports; and whitewater sports, transforming the science of sports safety by giving athletes, parents, and coaches unbiased, quantitative data they can use to choose the safest equipment.

The ratings for each sport come together through a meticulous process of translating metrics from real-world head impacts into evidence-based test methods that assess helmet performance under realistic conditions.

The equestrian ratings, and those for the other sports the lab has studied, are available on the Virginia Tech Helmet Ratings website, along with the corresponding test methods. That allows companies to use the protocols to evaluate designs and prototypes, optimizing a new helmet's safety profile before it ever hits the market.

- Virginia Tech Athletics

Hokie wrestlers place 11th at Keen Open

The No. 10 Virginia Tech wrestling team returned to Blacksburg from the 40th Annual Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational this weekend with five place-winners in tow. The Hokies sent seven wrestlers to Vegas, and five found the podium to help lead Tech to an 11th-place team finish on Saturday evening.

Leading the way was No.-2 Mekhi Lewis with a runner-up finish. In his second CKLV finals appearance in as many entries, Lewis became the first two-time finalist in program history. In a highly entertaining finals match, Lewis dropped a tight loss to No. 3 Mikey Labriola of Nebraska 3-1. Lewis was tactical all weekend, picking up two

bonus point victories and dispatching three ranked opponents.

The second highest-placing Hokie was graduate senior Hunter Bolen with a third-place finish. The Christiansburg Cowboy went 6-1 over the two-day tournament to claim third in his last Cliff Keen Invitational. Bolen dropped his quarterfinal bout to No.-4 Kaleb Romero of Ohio State before winning two straight on the backside to set up a third meeting with Romero this season. He avenged his earlier loss with a 3-1 sudden victory. Bolen secured three bonus point victories in six wins to help match his third-place CKLV finish of three years ago.

Making their Cliff

Keen Invitational debuts and finding the podium were No. 9 Sam Latona, No. 13 Tom Crook, and No. 32 Andy Smith. Latona highlighted his weekend with an upset victory over returning All-American No. 7 Chris Cannon of Northwestern to push him into the semifinals. Crook picked up three ranked wins on the night in his first trip out west. Smith put the nation on notice with his victory over No. 11 Tanner Sloan of South Dakota State to propel him into the semifinals match.

The Hokies return to action next Sunday for the first home dual of the season as they host No. 6 Mizzou at 4:30 p.m.

- Virginia Tech Athletics

Four Hokies qualify for Olympic trials

Caroline Bentz, Emma Atkinson, AJ Pouch and Forest Webb qualified for the 2024 U.S. Olympic Trials during their time in Greensboro at the Toyota U.S. Open Championships. In case you missed the Hokies swim, NBC Network will stream a taped version of the U.S. Open Championships on Dec 10 for viewing at 4:30 pm.

U.S. OLYMPIC TRIALS QUALIFIERS & EVENTS

Caroline Bentz: 100 backstroke and 200 backstroke

Emma Atkinson: 100 backstroke and 200 backstroke

Forest Webb: 100 backstroke

AJ Pouch: 200 breaststroke

Junior Caroline Bentz took her A game to Greensboro. She started day three with her first Olympic Trials qualifying time during prelims in the 100 backstroke at 1:01.18. Bentz finished the finals in fifth place with a time of 1:01.21.

Taking that momentum into the next day, she qualified in the 200 backstroke during finals on day four with a time of 2:12.25, finishing fifth.

Also swimming backstroke, Emma Atkinson showed out alongside Bentz. With a time just behind Bentz in the 100 backstroke during day-three

prelims, Atkinson finished with a time of 1:01.40 and qualified for the Olympic Trials. She finished the finals in sixth place with a time of 1:01.64. During day-four prelims, Atkinson swam 2:12.64 in the 200 backstroke, making the Olympic Trials cut. She later beat that time in the finals, placing fourth with a time of 2:11.00.

Men:

Continuing his strong back stroke performances, Nico Garcia Saiz made the A final during the day-four prelims in the 200 backstroke with a time of 2:01.28. He finished second overall in the 200 backstroke with a time of 1:59.49.

Forest Webb started day three prelims with his first Olympic trials qualifying time in the 100 backstroke, finishing at 55.54. He placed sixth overall during finals with a time of 55.71.

AJ Pouch finished off the U.S. Open strong by making the A final in the 200 breaststroke during day-four prelims with a qualifying time of 2:14.78. Pouch later went on to beat that time in the finals, finishing fifth with a time of 2:13.06.

- Virginia Tech Athletics

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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E	A	G	A	N	O	A	L	E	A		
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Lord Botetourt takes down Blacksburg girls 58-36



Blackburg's Brynn Ferguson scores against Lord Botetourt during the third quarter Tuesday night, Ferguson had 15 points in the 58-36 loss to the Cavaliers.



Blackburg's Gabby Brooks scores over Lord Botetourt's Gracie Huffard Tuesday night.



Blackburg's Riley Price drives into the lane and draws a foul from the Lord Botetourt defense.



Blackburg's Mila Santsaver-Jones grabs a defensive rebound against Lord Botetourt.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Five reasons to attend Sunday's VT-Missouri wrestling match

Need a reason to attend this Sunday's dual featuring Virginia Tech hosting Missouri? How about five?

1) This Sunday's match marks the first home dual of the season for the No. 9-ranked Hokies. Tech returns a national champion, a two-time finalist, four NCAA All-Americans, four conference champions, and nine NCAA qualifiers to their lineup. Tech is coming off a first-place team finish at the Keystone Classic and an 11th-place finish at the 40th Cliff

Keen Las Vegas Invitational, which saw five out of seven Hokies find the podium 2) A top-10 battle. In the latest National Wrestling Coaches Association poll, Tech ranks at No. 9 while Mizzou enters the bout at No. 7. This will be the second year in a row that the two programs meet while ranked in the top-10. Both squads boast a full lineup of ranked wrestlers with a full list of credentials up and down the lineup. Both programs have a national champion

in their lineup with a total of seven All-Americans, Hokies with four, the Tigers with three. Additionally, the dual is laden with international accolades with a total of four junior world championship medals from both sides.

3) In the spirit of the season, a toy and stuffed animal drive will be held prior to the dual. Fans are encouraged to bring either a new stuffed animal to be donated to the Carilion Clinic and/or a new toy that will be donated to the Montgomery

County Christmas Store.

4) Hokie holidays in full effect. With the holidays right around the corner, fans are invited to wear their best festive sweater to the dual Sunday afternoon. Aan ugly sweater contest will also be held.

5) As with all wrestling matches in Cassell, admission is free. The dual will start at 4:30 p.m. with doors opening at 3:30 p.m.

- Virginia Tech Athletics

Land Auction Fri, Dec. 16 at 12:30PM
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PREVIEWS: Thu Dec. 1 3-5; Sun Dec. 11 1-3; Wed Dec. 14 12-2; self-guided tours ok
DIR: From Christiansburg, 81S 22mi to exit 94 for Pulaski. L at end of ramp. 1/4mi to L on Old Rte 100. 1/4mi to R on Lowmans Ferry. 3/4mi to R on Lake Ridge. 1mi to on left.
TERMS: 10% deposit. Close on or about 30 days. 5% buyer's premium.

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