

News Journal

Saturday, March 23, 2024 • USPS 387-780 • radfordnewsjournal.com • \$1.00

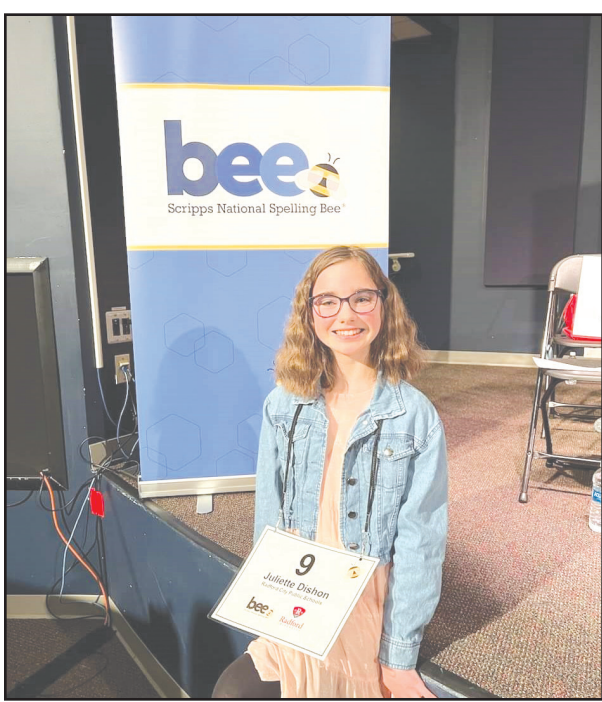


PHOTO COURTESY OF BELLE HETH SCHOOL

Belle Heth student Juliette Dishon won second place at the recent Scripps Regional Spelling Bee, held at Radford University.

Belle Heth student takes second at Scripps Regional Spelling Bee

RADFORD – One of Radford’s own took second place at the recent Scripps Regional Spelling Bee, held at Radford University.

“Congrats to Juliette Dishon who represented Belle Heth at the Regional Spelling Bee placing second overall,” Belle Heth Elementary School posted on social media. “Way to go Juliette!”

Dishon was narrowly edged out by Audrey Lee, a seventh grader at Andrew Lewis Middle School in Salem, who will go up against the nation’s top spellers in May’s Scripps National Spelling Bee.

This was the first time Radford University hosted a Scripps spelling bee, and university officials say they

were happy to host.

“We were thrilled to be part of this,” said Debora Bays Wilbon, associate dean of Radford’s College of Education and Human Development. “As an institution that has a foundation as a teacher preparation institution, we are committed to the success of Pre-K-12 students and schools.”

After accepting an offer from Scripps in November to become a regional partner, Wilbon and representatives from across the university, ranging from admissions to career and talent development to three different colleges, began to shape a memorable event for the participating students and their

families.

When bee day arrived, the university rolled out the proverbial Tartan carpet at the Bonnie Hurlburt Student Center.

The 24 participants, who represented public school districts and private schools across Southwest Virginia, arrived to find a special “green room” in the Bonnie Hurlburt Student Center fully stocked with snacks, board games, a cornhole set, putting green and a pair of four-legged companions. Ruby and Apollo, two Tartan Tails therapy dogs, were with the spellers before and after the competition to help

See **Heth**, page 6



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF CROOKED ROAD

The Crooked Road celebrates 20 years of heritage music in Southwest Virginia

The Virginia General Assembly designated the heritage music trail in 2004 to contribute to the creative economy through the region’s musical heritage

The Crooked Road is proud to celebrate two decades of contributing to the creative economy in Southwest Virginia. The Crooked Road was designated as Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail by the General Assembly in 2004.

The Crooked Road is a roughly 330-mile driving trail that follows U.S. Route 58 to connect 10 major venues and more than 50 affiliate venues throughout Southwest Virginia that feature and celebrate the region’s traditional musical heritage. The organization offers marketing, live music, and educational programs to 19 counties and four cities in the Southwest Virginia footprint.

The Crooked Road’s marketing and musician promotion supports Southwest Virginia communities as an economic driver, promoting domestic and international travel to the region. In

2022, visitor spending across the region topped \$1.3 billion.

“I am so proud of The Crooked Road’s work to foster community and economic development around Southwest Virginia’s cultural music scene. We’ve shown the world that we can build a new economy while not sacrificing our heritage and identity,” said Tyler Hughes, executive director of The Crooked Road. “As an old-time musician and Southwest Virginia native, I know firsthand the impact this organization’s support has on venues, artists, and communities.”

The tribute to the musical legacy has been acknowledged and promoted statewide and nationally after Governor Glenn Youngkin’s proclamation of the ‘Year of Country Music’ in the

See **Crooked**, page 6

McHarg principal wins state literacy award



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCHARG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dr. Michelle Greene, principal of McHarg Elementary School, recently received The Virginia State Literacy Association’s James D. Mullins Leadership award. The award was established in 1994 to recognize administrators

who show exceptional support of literacy. Winners of the award must be a strong advocate for literacy, teachers and children; have a vision for a school or school system; consistently make decisions based on a research-based

belief system, be creative in finding resources to support literacy programs, and be a strong supporter of literacy and/or VSLA or other literacy-oriented organizations or groups.

~ Staff report

Virginia State Parks invites visitors to witness solar eclipse, sells solar viewing glasses statewide

RICHMOND – On April 8, the skies will offer a rare spectacle as a total solar eclipse crosses North America, the last solar eclipse visible from the contiguous United States until 2044.

In celebration of this extraordinary event, Virginia State Parks invites visitors to witness this celestial wonder firsthand.

The solar eclipse, a natural phenomenon where the moon passes between the Earth and the sun, casting its shadow on Earth, promises a breathtaking experience for all who witness it. Virginia State Parks, renowned for their pristine natural settings and

See **Eclipse**, page 6



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Highlanders Vote President I’yonah Cartwright (left) and SGA President Lora Ellen (right) moderated a forum for local elections candidates in 2023.

Radford recognized for ALL IN approach on student voter registration

RADFORD - Radford University’s efforts to increase student voter participation and mobilization have received a seal of recognition. The ALL IN Campus

Democracy Challenge announced last week that it has awarded Radford its prestigious 2024 Highly Established Action Plan seal. ALL IN developed the seal of recognition

to honor colleges and universities that have built strong action plans designed to increase nonpartisan democratic

See **Radford**, page 6



PHOTO COURTESY OF VA STATE PARKS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Mar. 23:

Skipper cannon firing

In celebration of the Virginia Tech Ring Dance, the Corps of Cadets cannon, Skipper, is scheduled to fire twice between 10 and 11 p.m. on the Drillfield.

Monday, Mar. 25:

Radford City Council meeting

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

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

Public meetings are the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg. Closed sessions begin at 6 p.m. if needed. Open sessions begin at 7:15 p.m. Citizens are invited to attend and 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.

Tuesday, Mar. 26:

Blacksburg Town Council meeting

The council meets in regular session the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month 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 televised live on WTOB Channel 2.

Christiansburg Town Council meeting

Regular Town Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall (100 E. Main St.). The public is welcome and encouraged to attend, with a citizen hearing time reserved at each meeting for residents to bring any matter they desire before the entire council.

Wednesday, Mar. 27:

Hahn Horticulture Garden talk

What is a policy anyway and how do they shape the invasive species landscape? with Todd Schenk & David Haak. The talk is at the Hahn Horticulture Garden, 200 Garden Lane, Blacksburg, at noon. You do not need to register for these talks, just show up and attend. Parking passes for these educational events will be provided by the HHG thanks to supplementary funding provided by the School of Plant and Environmental Design.

Saturday, Mar. 30:

Easter Egg Hunt

Come join Pilot Community Center for its first annual Easter Egg Hunt; 2 – 3 p.m.! Kids 10 years old and under are invited to search for candy and prize-filled eggs. There will be refreshments for parents and kids of all ages. So come and join in the fun! This event will be held weather permitting. If there is rain or snow, the event will be cancelled and cannot be rescheduled. For more information: Call Brenda Eanes at 540-382-0857.

Red Cross blood drive

At St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 103 E. Main St., Christiansburg; 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Appointments: <https://www.redcrossblood.org>.

Blacksburg leaf compost giveaway

Loose and bagged leaves collected by the town are composted into leaf mulch, which can be used as a soil additive for composting. This is an important service as composted leaf mulch keeps leaves out of the landfill. Leaves can take up valuable landfill space and produce harmful greenhouse gases. This year, leaf mulch compost will be available for pickup at Glade Road Growing 8 a.m.-12 p.m. To arrange pickup, residents must register and follow these guidelines: Register for a 30-minute time slot starting at 8 a.m. Limit two cubic yards per truck or trailer, loaded by town staff. The process of loading leaves may cause scratches or dents to trucks or trailers as well as possible suspension damage due to the weight.

By participating in this program, those accepting loads of mulch assume the risk inherent with loading leaves into their vehicles.

On-going:

Radford Noon Rotary Club's Field of Honor

The Field of Honor will be installed on the grounds of Glencoe Mansion, Museum and Gallery prior to Memorial Day and will be displayed until the Fourth of July. The Radford Noon Rotary Club is looking for people to sponsor flags. Individual flags are \$50. Corporate Sponsorship is: Bronze - \$250; Silver - \$500; Gold - \$1000; and Platinum - \$2500. Money raised through the project will benefit scholarships to Radford High School students attending Radford University, and other Rotary initiatives. All flags are made in the USA. For further questions, and to register, contact rotary.club.of.radford.noon@gmail.com.

NRV Virginia Passenger Rail Survey

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority is conducting a survey seeking input on planning, designing, and constructing rail infrastructure improvements to extend passenger rail service to the New River Valley. To participate in the survey, please visit <https://form.jotform.com/240044027996054>. For more information on the New River Valley passenger rail expansion, please visit the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority's website at <https://vapassengerrailauthority.org/nrvproject/>.

Doctor at L5 Pain Clinic sentenced to 18 months in prison, ordered to pay over \$200,000

A doctor from North Carolina, who was assigned to several pain clinics in Virginia but was rarely physically on-site at any of them, was sentenced this week to 18 months in prison for conspiring with others to use a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration number issued to another person, and also ordered to pay \$205,000 in fines and forfeiture.

Wendell Lewis Randall, 71, of Millers Creek, N.C., pled guilty in Nov. 2023 to conspiring to use, in the course of dispensing and distributing controlled substances, a DEA registration number issued to another person. DEA registration numbers are unique identifiers issued to medical providers in order to track who issues drug prescriptions and to ensure only qualified providers prescribe controlled substances.

According to court documents, between 2017 and 2020, Randall—a medical doctor who operated his own practice in North Carolina—was affiliated with L5 Medical Holdings, an LLC which was doing business as Pain Care Center, a line of pain clinics operating in Woodlawn, Lynchburg, Madison Heights, Blacksburg, and Christiansburg.

Randall was nominally assigned to the Woodlawn clinic, but he was only

occasionally ever on-site. He was also absent from the Christiansburg and Madison Heights clinics, but Randall allowed other, unqualified medical providers to use his DEA registration number to prescribe Suboxone (buprenorphine) in his name, even though he had never actually seen the patients who received the drugs.

Court documents, including text messages, show L5 paid Randall in exchange for being able to use his DEA registration number. Randall acknowledged in these messages that he was not seeing patients at L5's clinics and that he was aware his arrangement with L5 was illegal.

Court documents also revealed Randall's colleagues repeatedly warned him that his prescribing practices for Schedule II opioids were improper. Randall received over \$300,000 in exchange for renting out his DEA credentials and for his supposed supervision of nurses who, in truth, Randall failed to supervise.

Randall is the third defendant sentenced in connection with L5's operation of pain clinics in western Virginia. Charles Wilson Adams, Jr., is currently serving a two-year prison sentence, and former nurse practitioner Debra Kay Shaffer was

sentenced to a term of imprisonment and a fine. Three other defendants—L5 owner Greg Barnes, former doctor Duane Dixon, and L5 itself—have pled guilty and are awaiting sentencing. A seventh defendant has pled not guilty to drug conspiracy, health care fraud, wire fraud, and false statement charges and is awaiting trial.

United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh, Special Agent in Charge Jared Forget of the DEA's Washington Division, Special Agent in Charge Maureen Dixon of HHS-OIG's Philadelphia Region, Colonel Gary Settle, Superintendent of the Virginia State Police, and Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares made the announcement.

The Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General, the Virginia State Police, and the Virginia Attorney General's Office - Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys S. Cagle Juhan, Jason M. Scheff, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Janine M. Myatt, Assistant Attorney General with the Virginia Attorney General's Office, prosecuted the case.

Office of the Virginia Attorney General

ONLINE AUCTION

Ends Thursday, April 11th at 3 PM

Income Producing Homes for Sale Near Radford University

Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141

Bid Now at VAAuctionPro.com

 <p>OFFERING #1</p>	 <p>OFFERING #2</p>
 <p>OFFERING #3</p>	 <p>OFFERING #4</p>
 <p>OFFERING #5</p>	

Offering #1 - 1201 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
 Offering #2 - 1205 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
 Offering #3 - 1207 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
 Offering #4 - 1211 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
 Offering #5: 1217 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141

Looking to expand your real estate portfolio with high-income properties? We have an unmissable opportunity for you! Presenting 5 homes that are currently used for student housing which are in the vibrant city of Radford, VA. They are just a short walk away from Radford University. These properties are perfectly situated for consistent rental demand and substantial returns on investment. Don't let this chance slip away!

Terms: 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$10,000 per offering is required on day of sale. Close on or before May 28th, 2024. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence before placing a bid. Auction starts ending at 3 PM on April 11th, 2024. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at VAAuctionPro.com.

CONTACT – Auctioneer Matt Gallimore at 540-239-2585 or email Gallimore.Matt@gmail.com or Realtor Dari Cupp at 540-250-1839. Auction is in cooperation with Realtor Stephanie Carfagna with Long & Foster; contact Stephanie at 540-230-9357 or email stephanie.carfagna@gmail.com

102 S. Locust Street, Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 745-2005 VAAuctionPro.com Lic# 2907004059

 **Blue Ridge Land & Auction Co., Inc.**

Send community news and photos to communitynews@ourvalley.org

'Shark Tank' meets Shakespeare: An ongoing business study casts theatre majors in dual roles

Delivering a successful sales pitch is both an art and a science – a winning salesperson has to know their business backward and forward, but they also have to be enough of a performer to present their ideas in a fashion that's persuasive to buyers and investors.

That delicate balance is the subject of a new Radford University research project. Spearheaded by Associate Professor of Management Richard Gruss, the study draws from such diverse resources as the reality television show "Shark Tank," plus several theatre majors with the College of Visual and Performing Arts.

"I was really interested in the idea of the entrepreneurial pitch, where there are certain factors that determine your success," said Gruss, of the Davis College of Business and Economics, who's conducting the study in collaboration with Assistant Professor of Management Zach Collier.

They looked first to "Shark Tank," the TV competition in which budding businesspeople present entrepreneurial concepts to venture capitalists, who then

decide if they want to invest in the projects.

The popular show is now in its 15th season, and Gruss obtained transcripts from about 600 episodes. He sifted through the winning pitches and found such common denominators as the use of shorter sentences, higher noun-to-verb ratios, metaphorical language and gender-based trends.

Another key factor, however, stood out most distinctly. Many of the successful pitches, Gruss realized, "really did tell a story, with the structure that you learn in ninth-grade English, in which you have a protagonist, and you have a conflict, then you have the resolution and the denouement."

Those narrative-based pitches, he found, were the ones that most often got funded: "It was like a 30% probability increase, which is, I mean, that size effect is unheard of in our research."

But he also had to address the fact that his "Shark Tank" statistics represented observational data or information drawn from an experiment he didn't conduct.

"With observational data, you can't

have random samples, and you can't have treatment and control. You're just looking at existing data, which is ... problematic," he said.

So Gruss harvested his own numbers, locally, by holding a business contest of his own.

He scripted sales pitches for four fictional products and planned to shoot two versions of each – one built around a story, the other without a narrative – then put those to a survey to gauge which was more appealing to viewers and why.

Tom Snediker, an instructional designer with Radford's Center for Teaching and Innovative Learning, helped coordinate a video shoot, and Gruss began casting the on-camera talent.

Because a sales pitch contains so many variables – speech patterns, tone, volume, gestures – he knew the two versions still had to be as similar as possible.

"Who knows how to keep control in presenting?" Gruss said. "Actors."

Senior theatre major Zoe Keith's fictional pitch product was "Marco the Monkey," a

toy designed to help children take medicine more easily.

That's how a business college study wound up involving theatre majors, including Megan Reed, a senior from Fairfax, Virginia, whose pitch involved a fictional appetite-suppressing lip gloss called "Kiss Away the Pounds."

"It was an opportunity to showcase what I can do, but also, it had another element," she said of the project. "I'm helping other people out so they can do research, and I thought that was pretty cool."

Reed became interested in acting in her junior year of high school when she got a part in "Fiddler on the Roof."

At Radford, she found that theatre students must work in a variety of fields – acting, but also set building, lighting, sound and costumes – before deciding on their chosen subject.

Another participant in the study was Zoe Keith, a Pulaski senior whom Gruss saw onstage last year as Ursula in Radford's

See Roles, page 7

Bull & Bones named winner of YMCA at Virginia Tech Try Y's Pi contest

The 4th annual YMCA at Virginia Tech Try Y's Pi contest was a huge success selling more tickets than ever and offering an amazingly delicious five pie sampler from four local restaurants and the Y Meals On Main Cooks.

The participating bakeries were Our Daily Bread, Blacksburg Bagels, Next Door Bake Shop, Bull & Bones, Christiansburg and Seth and Connor- the Y Mobile Kitchen Crew.

The pies were consumed and the votes were cast and we are pleased to announce the winning pie was created by Kayla from Bull and Bones, Christiansburg - a delightful Coconut and Strawberry Curd Pie. Congratulations Kayla!

"Kayla joined Bull & Bones in July of last year and has been a fantastic addition to our team," said

Bull and Bones manager Robbie Hockett. "Not only is she an excellent server and bartender, but it turns out she's a wonderful baker as well. She has a side business called Riddle's Cakes where she makes cakes for weddings, birthdays other special occasions, as well as many delicious holiday themed treats."

Kayla says she got the inspiration for her pie from one of her favorite bar drinks.

"The flavor combination came from being a bartender there at BnB," she said. "One of my favorite drinks I make is a coconut cocktail with strawberry syrup. Coconut Cream Pie has always been a childhood favorite and I played around with multiple recipes before I settled on one that I loved. The eight pies for the contest took about six hours to make. I made the crust

first and let it chill over night before I baked it. The coconut cream and strawberry curd are both cooked over the stove and once everything is cooled I put the pies together."

The Coconut & Strawberry Curd Pie from Bull & Bones joins the past winning pies Apple Crumb Pie from Bollo's in 2021, a Kenafa Pistachio Cream Pie from Halwa in 2022, and a Mango Coconut Key Lime Pie from Next Door Bake Shop in 2023 in the Y Pi "Hall of Fame."

Congratulations Kayla and Bull & Bones and thank you to all who purchased tickets and participated in this fundraising event for the YMCA at Virginia Tech Food Insecurity Programs.

YMCA at Virginia Tech



PHOTO COURTESY OF YMCA AT VIRGINIA TECH
Kayla from Bull & Bones Christiansburg baked the winning pie for this year's YMCA at Virginia Tech Try Y's Pi contest.



PHOTOS BY JACK MICALLEF FOR VIRGINIA TECH
Prototyping Studio Specialist Rob Jackson ensures all parts fit together before smoothing out any imperfections.

University Libraries Prototyping Studio resurrects dinosaur cousin skeletons bone by bone

BLACKSBURG - Skeletons thought lost to history are being recreated one fragile fossil at a time in University Libraries' Prototyping Studio.

3D scanners and printers are constructing strikingly realistic replicas of the extinct Teleocrater rhadinus using ancient fossils from more than 240 million years ago. Funded through an Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology grant, University Libraries is showing how technology can illuminate the past and bring long-extinct organisms face to face with the present.

The team, led by Sterling Nesbitt and Michelle Stocker of the Department

of Geosciences, had about 80 percent of the skeleton from the collections of five individuals from two fossil sites in Tanzania to use to replicate the bones in the studio.

The first incomplete specimen was found in the 1930s and housed in the Natural History Museum in London. Nesbitt, paleontologist and professor, was still missing pieces, so he was part of a team that trekked to Tanzania to the area where the first specimen was found and unearthed more bones from a rich fossil deposit.

See Dinosaur, page 4



Marketplace



THE FINCASTLE HERALD Vinton Messenger THE NEW CASTLE RECORD SALEM TIMES-REGISTER News Messenger RADFORD News Journal

Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 25, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Board of Supervisors' intention to act on the following Special Use Permit request:

A request by Sara Jones for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a dog grooming business as a Home Business. The property is located at the intersection of Shilo Way (State Route 1106) and Mount Tabor Road (State Route 624). The property is further identified as 1723 Mount Tabor Road, Tax Map 028-1 45,46,49 (Parcel ID: 007792), 2.292 acres,

Legals - Montgomery County

zoned Agricultural (A-1) in the Mount Tabor Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Residential Transition in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

Notice of Public Hearing Town of Blacksburg Planning Commission Tuesday, April 2, 2024

Notice is hereby given that the Planning Commission of the Town of Blacksburg will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 during its meeting beginning at 6:30 PM in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Council Chamber, 300 South Main St, Blacksburg, VA on the following item:

Legals - Montgomery County

PLAT-23-20-Glade Spring Crossing Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat Review for 176 lots on 45 acres at 1006 Glade Road (Tax Map Nos. 225-(A)-3,4 & 224-(A)-57) for Glade Spring Crossing, LLC (owner). This is the preliminary plat approval process for the Glade Spring Crossing major subdivision of 176 units on 45 acres at 1006 Glade Road. A rezoning request was approved for the property in May 2023 (RZN 22-0004/ORD 2007) that rezoned the property from RR-1 Rural Residential 1 to PR Planned Residential. As part of this process, the applicant has requested two variances to the Town of Blacksburg Subdivision Ordinance standards: Section 5-503 (e) Bikeways to permit landings of no greater than 5% grade, rather than 2% on the emergency access connection from Glade Spring Drive and Village Way South; and Section 5-901 Public Utility Easements to permit construction of a retaining wall on lots 169-175 within a public utility easements (PUE).

Persons affected by or interested in this major subdivision plat review may appear and present their views. After the hearing, the Planning Commission will take action. Copies of

Legals - Montgomery County

the request and all related items may be found online at www.blacksburg.gov/publichearings or reviewed in person at the Blacksburg Planning and Building Department, 400 South Main Street, Blacksburg, Virginia. You may also call the office at (540) 443-1300 for more information. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in the public hearing on the above should contact the Planning & Building Department at (540) 443-1300, or (540)-443-1000-TDD.

HAVE SOMETHING TO SELL?



To place your ad, call 389-9355

Legals - Montgomery County

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, April 1, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Conditional Use Permit request by Howard M. Thornton, Jr. and Gayle W. Thornton, Property Owners, and PCKK Partners, LLC, Applicant, to allow for a Contractors Equipment Storage Yard on property located at 520 and 540 Depot St. NE, identified as Tax Parcel 497-((A))-40; (Parcel ID 007903), and consisting of approximately of 2.409 acres. The property is designated as Downtown/Mixed Use on the Future Land Use Map of

Legals - Montgomery County

the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. B. Rezoning request by Johnny C. Martin, Jr. and Amelia F. Martin, Property Owners and Applicants, to rezone property identified as all of Tax Parcel 502-(9)-6, (Parcel ID 007453), and consisting of approximately of 1.595 acres located at 3345 Roanoke Street, and an approximate 5.955 acre portion of property located at 3301 Roanoke Street, identified as a portion of Tax Parcel 502-(9)-5C, (Parcel ID 090517) from Agricultural District (A) to General Business District (B-3). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. C. Conditional Use Permit request by Johnny C. Martin, Jr. and Amelia F. Martin, Property Owners and Applicants, to allow for an amendment of an existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the expansion of a Contractors Equipment Storage Yard on property located at 3345 Roanoke Street and a portion of property located at 3301 Roanoke Street, identified as all of Tax Parcel 502-(9)-6, (Parcel ID 007453), consisting of approximately of 1.595 acres, and a portion of Tax Parcel 502-(9)-5C, (Parcel ID 090517) consisting of approximately 5.955 acres. The property is

Legals - Montgomery County

designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the applications, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Retta Jackson, Planning Director, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1120 or by email at rjackson@christiansburg.org, with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.



BAG

A GREAT DEAL IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

To place your ad, call 389-9355

Obituaries

from page 4

cherish Lisa's memory are her very special friends, Norma Cox, Sandy Mills, Mollie Prillaman, and Regina Meredith whom the family cannot thank enough for their love and support.

In lieu of flowers Lisa requested that memorials be made to Flint Hill Community Church, 2831 Booker T. Washington Highway Rocky Mount,

VA 24151.

A celebration of Lisa's life was held Friday, Mar. 22, 2024 at Simpson Funeral Home with the Rev. Anthony Budzik officiating. Private interment will be in the family cemetery at a later date. The family received friends Thursday, Mar. 21, 2024 at Simpson Funeral Home.

Cox, Mike Willard

Mike Willard Cox, 66, passed away Wednesday, Mar. 20, 2024.

Born Sept. 25, 1957, he was preceded in death by his parents, Jack Willard and Iris Colleen Duncan Cox; and brother, Andrew Cox.

Survivors include his brothers, Arthur (Wanita) Cox, David (Dianne) Cox, Joe

(Teresa) Cox, and Sam (Dana) Cox; sister, Faye Holdren; many nieces, nephews, other family members and friends.

Graveside services will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday, Mar. 25, 2024, in Pleasant Valley Cemetery in Floyd.

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

Foley, Deidre Ione Hutchinson

Deidre Ione Hutchinson Foley, Hutchinson.

66, passed away Friday, Mar. 1, 2024, at her home in Pulaski.

Born Mar. 27, 1957, Deidre was a retired nurse. She was preceded in death by her parents, Ernest Charles and Muriel Anne Hutchinson; and brother, Chipper



Survivors include her husband, Robert C. Foley; son, Charles Foley (Desiree); grandson, Conner Foley; sister, Robin Turner (Dave); niece and nephews, Jessica, Jeb, and Will; 10 great nieces and nephews; special friends, Teresa

and Charles "Dink" Andrews; and many other relatives and friends. Services will be private.

Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory, Radford, is honored to be caring for the Foley family.

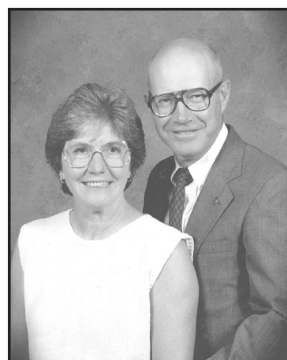
Foster, Bronté Charles

Bronté Charles Foster, 90, of "Missie" Radford, passed away Mar. 14, 2024.

Born Sept. 19, 1933, Bronté was born and raised in Grundy, Va., a graduate of Radford College and a lifelong member of Unity Christian Church (formerly First Christian Church). She was a devoted wife, mother, homemaker, and considered a mother by many.

She was preceded in death by her parents Roy and Amanda Rife Charles; husband, Robert Lee Foster, Jr.; daughter, Augusta "Gussie" Foster Kennedy; sister, Mona Charles Black; and her brother, Ransom Gale Charles.

She is survived by her daughters and son-in-law, Vanessa Abbott (Douglas), and Mona Melissa



Foster; son-in-law, George Kennedy; grandchildren, Matthew Kennedy (Holly), Sarah Kennedy, Laura Abbott and Allyn Abbott; great-grandchildren, Jack and Bishop Kennedy; and many other family members and special friends.

A celebration of life will be held at 11 a.m.

on Monday, June 3, 2024, at Unity Christian Church with Rev. Wendy Wilson officiating. A reception will follow in the church fellowship hall.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Unity Christian Church, 400 Tyler Avenue, Radford, VA 24141.

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

See Obituary, page 6

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 midweek 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, 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 Fourth Street Radford. Welcoming and accepting, we have been a part of the Radford community for more than 130 years. ALL ARE WELCOME. Grace offers an 8:00am Contemplative Eucharist and a 10:30am Eucharist with organ music and a choir, with refreshments served afterwards. The 10:30am service is also available on YouTube for those unable to leave their house. Find us on Facebook and www.graceradford.org.

LUTHERAN

Christ Lutheran Church, 201 Harvey St. Sunday worship with communion at 10am; fellowship &

Radford

WORSHIP DIRECTORY

CITIES OF REFUGE

Read Joshua 18:1 through 20:9

Once the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land, it had to be divided amongst the tribes. Joshua asked for a survey to be done, and with that information he carefully assigned each tribe their portion.

Chapter 20 addresses an interesting issue that reflects God's passion for justice. The "eye for an eye" principle was in vogue in those days, and God wanted justice for those who killed someone accidentally.

"Tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed you through Moses, so that anyone who kills a person accidentally and unintentionally may flee there and find protection from the avenger of blood." (Joshua 20:2-3).

What a great picture of Jesus and His compassion for us. Our sins can be accidental or unintentional, but sadly we sometimes disobey on purpose. Yet in either case, Jesus invites us to come to Him, confessing our sin. He promises to forgive us and cleanse us (1 John 1:9). He provides us the ultimate refuge from our mistakes.

Prayer for Today: Lord, when my thoughts, words, or actions are not pleasing to You, I will run to You because I know You are my "city of refuge."

Quicklook: Joshua 20:1-9

If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445 or email at advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com

snacks at 11am. All are welcome. Upcoming events and fellowship opportunities (Senior Brunch, Faith & Film, Rough Draught, etc.) detailed in weekly email and on website: clcradford.org. 540-639-2671.

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 we 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." You'll love our minister, The Rev. Dr. Wes Jamison, who engages us in God's word. St. Michael started and administers Micah's Caring Initiative which includes Micah's Backpack, Soup for Seniors, Garden, Closet, and Mini Pantry, with tremendous community impact. Partnering with Rainbow Riders and Total Action for Progress, we opened the first Early Childhood Head Start in our community (6 weeks to age 3). We sponsor an awesome Scouting program of Scouts Boy & Girl Troop, Venture Scouts for older youth, and a Cub Pack for girls & boys kindergarten - 5th grade, amongst many other programs. Directions: From Price's Fork Road, turn onto Merrimac Road. St. Michael is ~quarter mile on the left. For more information: Phone 540.951.8951; Email hope@stmlc.us; Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Central Church, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am; 9:45am Sunday School; and 11:00a.m. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com.

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, Rev. Larry Christopher (540) 552-7194. l.christopher695@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. Sunday School is at 10:00 a.m. and Sunday Service 11:00a.m. Morgan Whitfield Jr., Pastor will be leading worship. Phone 540-639-2585, Email pcofradford@gmail.com, Website www.pcradford.org. 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.

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 220 West Main Street, Christiansburg. Rev. Mike Derflinger (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship at 10a.m. with Children's Church at the same time, Sunday School at 9 a.m. Worship is in-person and Live-streamed on our YouTube Channel: StPaulUMC-ChristiansburgVA. All are welcome. Website: www.stpaulvaumc.org

Obituary from page 5

Stanley, Alecia Larew Apperson

Alecia Larew Apperson Stanley, 83, of Dublin, died Mar. 19, 2024, at her home. She was born at Stevens Clinic in Welch, W.Va., on July 2, 1940, and lived in Keystone, W.Va., and Newbern and Dublin. She was a proud 1958 graduate of Dublin High School. She studied piano under Benjamin Medford at Radford College. She was preceded in death by her husband, David C. Stanley, and her parents, C.T. and Aldah Apperson. In the summer of 1957, she met David Stanley at church. David and Alecia were married in the Dublin Methodist Church on Sunday, May 17, 1959, and for 59 years they built a life grounded in faith in God and unconditional love for each other. They had five children: Tal (Susan), Tim (Shally), Amy (Yoshiya), Meg (Doug) and Tom (Karen). For Alecia, there were no in-laws, only another child to love. She was Granny to David (Molly), Alecia Ann (Ryan), Sarah (fiancé, Patrick), Lainey, Calvin (Deanna), Blaine, Mark, Dan, Junko, Kiyo, Leiko, Roman, Luke and Finn. She was great-Granny to Lizzie,

Tucker, and Nora. "Miss Alecia," was an active part of the Dublin United Methodist Church for 74 years. She served as pianist and choir director for more than 40 years. She and her mother helped start the church's first choir, and Alecia went on to direct the adult, youth, and children's choirs. She led music at bible schools, Christmas programs, and Easter events. She served on committees, helped plan special observances and celebrations, helped to raise money to build a new church, and worked in the kitchen, always looking for ways to be creative and welcoming in all of the church's life. Alecia was the organizer and song leader for numerous county-wide Great Day of Methodist Singing events. She was active in the Women's Society of Christian Service and then the United Methodist Women, holding local, district, and annual conference offices.



The Dublin UMC was for Alecia but one way she lived her faith and calling to love. She was a founding board member for the Pulaski Adult Day Services and Fall Prevention Center. Alecia helped to establish and organize the Dublin United Methodist Learning Circle Preschool, serving on its board of directors for many years. She volunteered at Pulaski Daily Bread and served on its board of directors. Using skills perfected in decades of cooking, three meals a day for a "small army," Alecia delivered pound cakes, pies, cookies, and entire meals as a means of bringing comfort and care to hundreds of people. Teaching piano lessons in her home, through her love of music, and by personal encouragement, she taught hundreds of young people to "let their little light shine." Above all else, Alecia's happiest

moments were when all of her family was together at home in Dublin. Her vision and love made possible the annual Camp Stanley, a week-long, grandchildren-only event at Granny and Granddaddy's house. Through all of this, her family can sing with her, "blest be the tie that binds" and its echoes and ripples go out over the world. Our family is so very grateful to the congregation of the Dublin United Methodist Church, and to the members of the Mary Breese Circle and the Christians Under Construction Sunday School Class, for all of its love and support. We are also grateful to John Goodall, Mike Cox, Carl Wilburn, Eddie Brown, and Robin Martin for helping to sustain Granny at home. The family received friends at Dublin United Methodist Church Friday, Mar. 22 and will gather for a Service of Worship Celebrating her life on Saturday, Mar. 23, at 11 a.m. at the church. The Stanley family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

Family Fun Festival to be held at NRCC April 6

A "Family Fun Festival" will be held at New River Community College in Dublin Saturday, April 6 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Family Fun Festival will include a variety of activities for adults and children. Children's activities will include face painting, a bouncy house, a mechanical bull, a scavenger hunt, early childhood programming, fun science experiments, raffles, and children's book giveaways. Live animal and insect exhibits will provide hands-on learning experiences for kids of all ages. Community resources, health screenings and wellness information will also be available to attendees. Several classroom labs will be open for tours including criminal justice, welding,

and instrumentation. NRCC's Campus Cruise In car show will be going on during the Family Fun Festival from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in parking lot E. The Campus Cruise In will feature classic cars from regional car club members. The event is sponsored by the automotive technology department, is family-friendly, open to the public and free of charge. NRCC's Cyber Day event hosted by the Computer Club will also be part of the Family Fun Festival. Cyber Day is an event where anyone can bring their laptops, desktops, tablets and phones for a free tune up and virus scan. There will be several students and Dr. David Filer, NRCC information systems

technology professor and club advisor, working on the systems at the event. Any Windows or Android device is welcome. The Family Fun Festival event is sponsored by NRCC in partnership with the Southwest Virginia Governor's School. The event and all activities are free and open to the public. Food trucks will have meals available for purchase on campus during the event. For more information, contact Stephanie Addikis at saddikis@nr.edu or (540) 674-3600, ext. 4579. *New River Community College*

Eclipse from page 1

commitment to environmental education, provide an ideal backdrop for observing this awe-inspiring event. With 42 state parks across Virginia, visitors will have ample opportunities to find the perfect spot to witness the eclipse. To enhance the viewing experience, Virginia State Parks will host educational programs led by knowledgeable park rangers.

Some parks are offering eclipse events as early as March 23, giving visitors the chance to learn how to be a safe observer, explore the science behind the eclipse and in some cases, make pinhole viewers. To learn more about the solar eclipse events being offered through April 8, go to dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/solar-eclipse. What visitors will see during

the solar eclipse depends on the weather and the park's location. Many parks, especially those in Southwest Virginia, are expected to experience more than 85 percent sun obscurity, with Wilderness Road experiencing 90 percent. For a breakdown by park of eclipse start, peak and end times and the percent of obscurity, go to dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/solar-eclipse. At

Claytor Lake State Park: Eclipse begins: 1:55 p.m. Peak: 3:12 p.m. (86.5% obscurity) End: 4:27 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to plan ahead and arrive early, as parking and viewing areas may fill up quickly. To ensure guests can view the eclipse safely, parks will have a limited number of solar viewing glasses available for purchase. They cost \$1 plus

tax and will be located in parks' visitor centers and gift shops. For more information about viewing locations and educational programs, go to dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/solar-eclipse. *Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation*

Radford from page 1

engagement by promoting civic learning, political engagement and college student voter participation. The strength of the action plan was determined by ALL IN by reviewing campus action plans through the lens of its democratic engagement action public rubric, which includes numerous categories such as civic engagement and learning, curriculum, democratic engagement and participation and voter registration, education and mobilization. In November 2022, ALL IN recognized Radford for being one of the most engaged college campuses in the United States for student voting, saying that students, faculty and staff at the university made "intentional efforts to increase student voter participation," the organization noted. This year's action plan recognition is "a step up" from the previous honor, said Radford professor and chair of the Department of Political Science Chapman Rackaway, who leads the

campus initiative to increase student voter participation. "This is the highest level of recognition ALL IN offers," Rackaway noted. "Basically, this means that we have a well-thought-out and executed plan to get students registered and mobilized to vote." The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge is a national awards program. "By recognizing colleges and universities for their commitment to increasing student voting rates," the organization explained, "ALL IN encourages higher education institutions to help students form the habits of active and informed citizenship, make democratic participation a core value on their campus and cultivate generations of engaged citizens who are essential to a healthy democracy." Participating in the program and earning considerable success in a short time is a product of having "a really fantastic voter team," Rackaway said.

The team includes Radford senior Lyonah Cartwright, as well as many others on campus and in the Radford community. "We have been able to work together to create some great opportunities for students," Rackaway said. "I'm very proud of this recognition. I've been a part of voter efforts with All IN and campus vote projects at every institution where I've been a faculty member, but we never got this level of recognition this quickly at any of my previous schools." The 2024 ALL IN action plan recognition, the professor said, places Radford University "in a category with real leaders in civic engagement." Many students enroll in college unregistered to vote. Rackaway, soon after his arrival in Radford, began a process to educate and engage more students in the voting process with a citizen leader project in his spring 2022 state and local government class. In addition to the ALL IN Challenge, Rackaway and his

students have previously worked with the Campus Vote Project, which works with higher education institutions to reduce barriers to student voting. "We may not always be able to reach every student, but having the opportunity to reach one, 10 or 100 feels amazing," said Cartwright, a criminal justice and political science double major from Delmar, Delaware. "Working with Radford's voter team gave me the opportunity to not only register students but also help educate students on why they should vote." "Throughout our work, I realized you cannot just expect students to want to vote, but you can help them understand why they should vote," Cartwright continued. "I am very happy I had the opportunity to join Radford's voter team and help in the great progress we were all able to bring to campus." *Chad Osborne for Radford University*

Crooked from page 1

Commonwealth. In addition to the organization's major milestone celebrations, several major venues are celebrating anniversaries of their own. The Carter Family Fold, which pays tribute to 'the first family of country music' turns 50 in 2024. The Floyd Country Store is celebrating 40 years of their Friday Night Jamboree, which combines Appalachian traditions of dance and old-time music. The Ralph Stanley Museum, located in Dickenson County, will commemorate 20

years honoring the legendary bluegrass musician. Finally, the Birthplace of Country Music Museum in Bristol observes 10 years of operation in 2024. "The Crooked Road has been doing incredible work for the past 20 years to strengthen Southwest Virginia communities and deepen connections to the music and dance traditions. We are so grateful to have spent these years getting to know the people and traditions of our Southwest Virginia communities,"

said Dylan Locke, co-owner of the Floyd Country Store and the current chairman of The Crooked Road Board of Directors. The Crooked Road will partner with several accomplished music venues throughout the region to commemorate the anniversary year. Some of the dates include: April 27: Appalachia Rising, The Carter Family Fold May 25: Gathering in the Gap, Big Stone Gap June 15: The Crooked Road's

20th Anniversary Celebration, Country Cabin II July 12: Celebrating 20 Years of The Crooked Road, Moss Arts Center Aug. 2: The Crooked Road's 20th Anniversary Celebration, Rex Theatre Aug. 3: The Carter Family Fold Festival, The Carter Family Fold Sept. 13-15: Rhythm & Roots Reunion Festival, Bristol The Crooked Road staff and leadership, while in the middle of celebration, look forward

to continuing the vision of making Southwest Virginia a world-class tourism destination through musical experiences at iconic and legendary venues throughout the region beyond this anniversary year. For more information, details on The Crooked Road's 20th anniversary celebration can be located at <https://thecrookedroadva.com>. *The Crooked Road*

Heth from page 1



bring calm and a confidence boost. Post-competition, the spellers and their families were able to enjoy Radford University's open doors, including the Esports Center in Cook Hall, the planetarium in the Center for the Sciences, and social time and snacks in McConnell Library. "We are impressed by how hard you worked to get here," President Bret Danilowicz told the spellers prior to the competition. "You are an inspiration to all of us!" David Horton, the mayor of Radford and communications officer for the Artis

College of Science and Technology, was one of many university-based bee officials. Matthew Smith, Dean of the College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences, served as pronouncer. Judges were Tamara Wallace, Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, Brian Kitts, program coordinator for educational leadership and Lisa Aker, literacy education assistant professor. Instructional librarian Barbara Tait was the bee recorder. "This was a truly collaborative venture across the university," Wilbon said.

The day was designed for the visiting students and their families to take home positive memories in addition to their Radford University-branded goodie bags. "By opening our campus doors, it's our hope that you'll have a great experience and be able to see yourselves as part of a university community like ours someday," Danilowicz said. *Radford University and staff report*

RADFORD SPORTS

Clemson joins FSU in suit against ACC

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@mainstreetnewspapers.com

The life of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) continues to take twist and turns. This week, Clemson joined Florida State in a lawsuit against the conference on its exit fees.

In its lawsuit, Clemson seeks confirmation of the plain language found in the Grant of Rights agreements and the related media agreements between the ACC and ESPN – that these agreements, when read together, plainly state that Clemson controls its media rights for games played if it is no longer a member of the ACC. Clemson also seeks a ruling regarding the unenforceability of the severe penalty the ACC is seeking to impose upon exiting members and confirmation that it does not owe a fiduciary duty to the conference as alleged by the ACC.

In the filing, Clemson said the ACC's position regarding the Grant of Rights, the exit penalty, and obligations owed by members to the conference, as detailed in its public statements and other court filings, leaves Clemson with no choice but to move forward with this lawsuit.

Late last year, FSU also seemed to question the Grant of Rights and what could happen if it decided to leave the conference.

Earlier in the year, reports were leaked that as many as seven schools, including Virginia Tech, had held meetings to discuss an exit plan from the ACC. But no one admitted the discussions had taken place until FSU dropped the news of the first suit.

The schools say the current ACC-ESPN television deal puts the league at a disadvantage in comparison to others like the Southeastern and Big Ten conferences.

The Atlantic Coast Conference issued the following statement:

"The ACC remains confident that its agreements with all its members will be affirmed by the courts. Clemson, along with all ACC members, voluntarily signed and re-signed the 2013 and 2016 Grant of Rights, which is binding through 2036. In addition, Clemson agreed to the process and procedures for withdrawal. The Conference's legal counsel will vigorously enforce the agreement and bylaws in the best interest of the ACC's current and incoming members," said the statement signed by ACC Board of Directors chair Jim Ryan and conference commissioner Jim Phillips.

Clemson says the ACC does not, in fact, control its broadcasting rights if the university leaves the conference as it, apparently and cannot enforce a \$140 million exit fee if/when Clemson leaves the conference.

A new deal with the SEC shows each school will individual payouts of nearly \$23 million more than in the past years. ACC schools will receive about \$7 million to \$10 million less annually than those in the SEC and Big Ten.

The question is whether those two other conferences would be willing to accept FSU and/or Clemson as they would see their percentage of the bank roll decrease.

Questions to Virginia Tech have gone unanswered on whether they are considering anything close to the two other schools.

Despite the lawsuit, the ACC points out Clemson has not given notice that it is exiting the ACC and remains a member of the conference. Florida State has not also made any announcement on a plan to leave the conference. But it could be evident and looming on the horizon.

CHS, BHS seeking new athletic directors

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@mainstreetnewspapers.com

Two of the area high schools will need athletic directors this coming fall.

Peter Lyell at Blacksburg and Tim Cromer at Christiansburg are both leaving.

Cromer was named head football coach this past month at Floyd County High School. He will leave his Christiansburg post at the end of the school year. A search committee has been conducting interviews for his replacement over the past two weeks. An announcement of the new A.D. is pending.

He took over as athletic director in 2017.

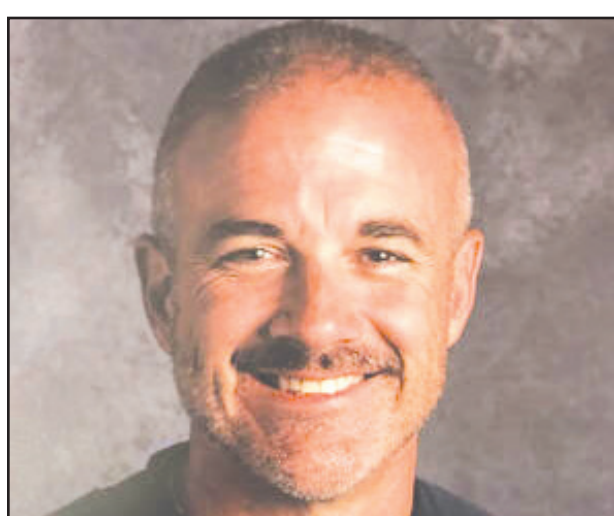
Meanwhile, Lyell, who has spent the past 10 years at Blacksburg, has stepped down effective at the end of this school year.

The Montgomery County school board has begun advertising the Blacksburg position with hopes of conducting interviews before the end of the school year.

Blacksburg is also seeking an assistant football coach, while both Christiansburg and Eastern Montgomery both need new volleyball coaches.



Tim Cromer



Peter Lyell

FILE PHOTOS

Lisa Dalton stepped away from the Christiansburg program at the end of this past season. Haley Duncan has done the same after three years at the helm at Eastern Montgomery. Christiansburg is also in need of a varsity competition and sideline cheer coach.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

Virginia Tech center Kitley has earned another first team recognition thanks to the Sporting News.

Kitley named first-team by Sporting News

Virginia Tech center Elizabeth Kitley was named a Sporting News first team All-American the publication announced Tuesday morning.

Kitley was named the ACC's Player of the Year for the third consecutive season earlier this month, becoming the third woman in ACC history to win the award in three consecutive seasons, joining Alana Beard (Duke) and Alyssa Thomas (Maryland).

The Summerfield, North Carolina native ranks second in the conference in scoring (22.79), second in field goal percentage (55.6%), first in rebounds (11.38), second in blocks (2.07), first in double-doubles (19) and first in 30-point games with eight.

She won ACC Player of the Week six times, the most of any athlete, including a stretch of four consecutive weeks in February. The six POW honors ties Beard for the most in any single season in conference history.

With her Player of the Year Award comes a fourth first team All-ACC nod, just the second player in conference history to accomplish the feat (Duke's Elizabeth Williams). Kitley was also recognized as an All-Defensive Team member for the third consecutive season.

Nationally, Kitley ranks third in field goals. She is sixth in points per game and eight in rebounds per game and double-doubles.

She has claimed the top spot in several categories in the Virginia Tech annals this season including: starts, minutes played, double figure games, 30-point games and rebounds, which is also an ACC watermark.

In terms of single-season achievements, the 2023-24 season has

seen Kitley produce the highest scoring average in program history, score the most field goals and come within six points of the record for single season scoring.

Additionally, she was named the Kay Yow Scholar Athlete of the Year for the third time this season.

Elizabeth Kitley was named a second team All-American the USBWA announced Tuesday afternoon. Point guard Georgia Amooore was placed on the third team.

Amooore was sixth in the conference in scoring (18.71), second in 3's per game (2.79), second in assist to turnover ratio (2.10) and led the ACC in assists (7.29) earning her first team All-ACC honors for the second consecutive season.

The Australia native owns two 30-point games, 14 20-point games and recorded nine double-doubles, a figure that was fifth in the conference. She was the only athlete to record more than five 10-assist games in the ACC.

Her 39-point performance on the final day of the regular season, was the highest scoring single-game output in conference play this season.

Amooore, who was named one of five finalists for the Nancy Lieberman Award, is third nationally in assists per game and also ranks in the top 20 of 3-point shooters.

The senior became the program's all-time leader in assists this season and has also climbed to second in 3's and fourth in scoring. This season, she has produced the third-highest single-season total of assists and the seventh-most 3's.

Virginia Tech Athletics

OUTDOOR REPORT

The Virginia Birding Classic is a statewide birding competition in which teams of birders search the public lands of Virginia every spring for as many species as they can find in 24 hours.

All registration proceeds will benefit the Virginia Wildlife Grant Program, which awards annual grants to non-profit programs focused on connecting youth to the outdoors.

Registration closes April 1, 2024. Don't delay—register now!

How does it work?

Pick a team name and register online: Your team of a least three or up to six people register online through GoOutdoorsVirginia.com by April 1, 2024. Registration includes a swag bag and free access to available Wildlife Management Areas, State Forests, and Natural Area Preserves on the day your team has chosen to go birding for the competition. Virginia DWR customers with an active license and/or permit will receive a discount on their registration. Youth under 16 years old can register for free but must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Pick when your team goes birding: Your team chooses a consecutive 24-hour period between April 15 and May 15 to go birding on federal, state, county, and municipal parks in the Commonwealth to identify as many species of birds as possible.

Share your team's results: Your team submits one official team eBird trip report for their tournament day to Virginia eBird. Final eBird trip reports must be submitted to the official Virginia Birding Classic eBird account by 11:59 p.m. on May 17, 2024.

The Virginia Birding Classic Grand Prize goes to the team that finishes their 24-hours of birding with the most species. This year, we are excited to announce that the Grand Prize will consist of the following:

Each member of the winning team will get to choose from a list of DWR Wildlife Experiences that only we can offer. The list may include opportunities such as:

• accompanying our biologists as they band and survey raptors, waterfowl, woodpeckers, or seabirds; visiting important habitat conservation areas that are not open to the public; viewing wildlife on a tour with knowledgeable members of our staff; and other exciting experiences only DWR can offer.

Each team will also get the opportunity to choose a library in the Commonwealth to be the recipient of three Birding Backpacks that will be available for checkout by members of the community! Each backpack will include: a pair of adult binoculars, a

See Outdoor, page 8

Roles from page 3

production of Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing."

Another fictional product in the survey, touted by junior Yaari Wilson, was "Fancy Bumps," a line of bespoke maternity wear meant to give new mothers a clothing option besides hospital gowns.

Keith has been into acting since she took part in a county drama program as a pre-teen: "I started doing shows in middle school, and I just never stopped."

Her transition from The Bard and "the boards" to being on camera was fairly smooth. Her shoot centered around a toy designed to help children take medicine, and she said they used a prompter that followed the script, but since she knew her lines, that was mostly for pacing.

"It was basically a long monologue, and

you had to do the same gestures each time to help keep track of it," Keith explained. "I definitely got to play with my 'customer service' voice."

A pool of viewers later watched various pitches and then took a survey that rated both the product and the on-camera sales reps. While his study remains ongoing, Gruss said the initial results gave them some general conclusions.

That challenged one of Gruss' initial assumptions – that the inclusion of a story demonstrates certain personality attributes of the person giving the speech – but it also confirmed that story pitches improve the impression of the product.

Neil Harvey for Radford University

RADFORD SPORTS

Virtuous cycle for women's March Madness

As March Madness tips off this week, the men's NCAA Tournament is not the only game in town drawing big interest, ratings, and betting.

Jadrian Wooten, a Virginia Tech collegiate associate professor in the Department of Economics, explains how investment and interest in women's basketball has created a "virtuous cycle" spurring growth in one another to help close the gender equity gap.

"If there's an increase in financial support, that can be reinvested in improving the sport's quality," says Wooten. "As quality increases, so does viewership, which attracts more advertising and sponsorship. It creates a self-reinforcing loop, where each element of success builds on and magnifies the others, leading to a brighter future for women's college basketball."

In recent years, the women's Tournament has made major strides to close the gap, with last year's national championship

game averaging 9.92 million viewers and topping out at 12.6 million (the men's final averaged 14.69 million). That led to a new television deal with ESPN this year, with a substantial increase in rights fees.

"This deal not only reflects the growing marketability of the sport, but also actively contributes to its future growth," says Wooten. "Schools can reinvest these funds into the sport, improving everything from facilities to recruitment and marketing efforts, directly benefiting the athletes and enhancing the competitive landscape. ... More visibility not only draws in more fans, but also elevates the profile of the sport, making it more attractive to potential sponsors and advertisers."

Stars like Angel Reese, with 2.7 million Instagram followers, and Caitlin Clark, with 1.1 million, have built their popularity by staying in school for several years, unlike many of the most prominent men's players, and are



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

For the second straight season, all-session tickets for the first and second round of the Women's NCAA Tournament in Blacksburg have sold out.

commanding seven-figure name, image, and likeness deals.

"Social media exposure can be an important force in driving attention toward college basketball," says Wooten. "Social media allows athletes to engage directly with fans, creating personal connections that traditional media can't replicate. This boosts visibility and creates a fan base willing to support players, teams, and associated brands."

The rise in interest in the women's game has also been reflected in huge booms in sports betting, up 14 times from last year's regular season on DraftKings.

"This is another strong indicator of rising interest and exposure. Betting activity often reflects engagement levels," says Wooten. "As more people bet on women's basketball, it naturally attracts even more attention. This isn't just from bettors themselves but also from

sports media outlets and platforms that cover betting trends and game analyses. This increased visibility draws new fans to the sport, which makes women's basketball a more attractive platform for advertisers. Advertisers are more inclined to invest when they know that the audience is more engaged."

Wooten is a collegiate associate professor with the Virginia Tech Department of Economics and is

the author of "Parks and Recreation and Economics." Read more about Wooten's takeaway on the economic impact of the Canadian wildfire crisis and climate change in his Monday Morning Economist newsletter. Wooten has been featured in USA Today, Inside Higher Ed, WJLA ABC 7 Washington, D.C., and NBC News, among scores of other media outlets.

Virginia Tech

Hokies wrestling takes on big KC this weekend

Virginia Tech wrestling takes to Kansas City, Missouri for the 2024 NCAA Wrestling Championships, Thursday, Mar. 21 – Saturday, Mar. 23 live on ESPN and ESPN.

The Hokies are one of seven teams to send a full lineup – one of three to send all starters in back-to-back championships – and field three top-ten seeds along with four All-Americans, a national champion, and a battle-tested squad ready to make a statement at the season finale.

Tech boasts four wrestlers with a total of eight All-American honors led by national champion Mekhi Lewis, two-time All-Americans Bryce Andonian and Sam Latona, and 2023 All-American Caleb Henson.

At 133-pounds, the veteran Sam Latona takes the mat for this fourth post-season appearance. A staple in the Hokies' lineup, the two-time All-American will once again look to do his best wrestling when it matters most and become Tech's sixth three-time All-American. Still with another year of eligibility, the Alabaster, AL native enters as the 12-seed with sights set on climbing the podium.

Caleb Henson took the country by storm as a freshman phenom last season en route to ACC Champion, a fifth-place All-American finish, and ACC Freshman of the Year honors and has continued to look the part in orange and maroon. The Cartersville, GA product has put together a strong year two campaign to the tune of 25-2 record and the number four seed when action begins in the T-Mobile Center. The sophomore sensation looks to

navigate 149-pound bracket and wrestle for a title come Saturday night.

At 157-pounds, the nation's most exciting wrestler, Bryce Andonian, competes in his final NCAA Championship after five years donning the orange and maroon. The two-time All-American hailing from Kirtland, OH looks to end his highlight-filled career on top of the podium after third-place (2022, 149-pounds) and seventh-place (2023, 157-pounds) in his previous championship trips. A five-time NCAA Qualifier, four-time ACC finalist, Andonian takes the mat in Kansas City as the 12-seed in a loaded weight class that features 10 All-Americans.

More history made by the most accomplished wrestler in program history as Mekhi Lewis became just the second-ever Hokie to claim the top seed as he enters his fifth and final NCAA Championship.

The first national champion and two-time finalist in program history will look to become the first four-time NCAA All-American in program history in his career curtain call. Lewis holds a 15-0 record with Entering as the No. 1 seed, Lewis will have to navigate his side of the bracket that features 2021 national champion Shane Griffith (Stanford, now at Michigan) and Lewis' rival, three-time national champion Carter Starocci (Penn State) as the Hokie looks to end his legendary career the way he started: on top.

Making their NCAA Championship debuts this weekend are Cooper Flynn and Thomas Stewart, Jr. at 125-pounds and 184-pounds, respectively.

Flynn takes the mat after entering the lineup in late January for the Hokies after an injury sidelined returning All-American Eddie Ventresca. Flynn made the most of his opportunity in a highly volatile weight class that saw multiple top-five rankings change throughout

the season. Flynn has inserted his name into podium contention with three wins over top-five opponents since entering the lineup and an ACC finals appearance. The redshirt sophomore from Seymour, TN begins his first NCAA competition as the 11 seed in Kansas City.

Stewart enters the season finale as the seven seed at 184-pounds after a stellar backend of the season after starting at 197-pounds. Stewart won the starting job for the Hokies in a crowded room that saw both Sam Fisher and Dakota Howard ranked at points during the season. The Triangle, VA native holds a 10-1 record including three-top ten wins on the season with adding an ACC title to his resume. The redshirt freshman looks to continue his blazing run in his debut season in the Tech lineup.

A quadruplet of Hokies return to the championships hoping to improve on their previous trips. Tom Crook will take to his second NCAA championship as the No. 20 seed at 141-pounds. The sophomore from Tampa compiled a 18-7 record in his second season for the Hokies including a top-five win and multiple top-20 wins to boost his resume.

Connor Brady makes his fourth championship appearance for the Hokies, claiming the 18-seed at 165-pounds. The two-time ACC finalist from Powell, OH looks to have a breakthrough performance in what could be his last season.

Tech will see the two upper weights as both the No. 26 seed in two-time qualifier Andy Smith and three-time NCAA qualifier Hunter Catka at 197-pounds and 285-pounds, respectively.

Virginia Tech Athletics

THE NRV MPO SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is developing its 2024-25 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP provides an annual schedule of activities, lists planning tasks and studies, and identifies funding sources. A draft plan is available for review at the offices of the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, the City of Radford, and the Montgomery and Pulaski County offices. It is also available on the MPO website:

www.nrvmpo.org

Deadline for written comments: 5:00 PM April 17, 2024

Oral comments will also be taken at the MPO Policy Board meeting at 2:00 PM on May 2, 2024 at the Montgomery County Government Center.

Comments can also address transit projects for which Federal operating and capital assistance will be sought under 49 USC Section 5303, as well as other transportation modes.

The NRV MPO ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Dan Brugh at: brughjd@montgomerycountyyva.gov or 540-394-2145, TTY/TTD 711.



'Throwing Shade VA' program offers incentives for planting native trees

Thanks to a new statewide initiative, Virginians can help improve the state's ecosystems, meet a variety of landscaping goals, and save money.

Virginia Department of Forestry has teamed up with retail nurseries across the state to launch the "Throwing Shade VA" program this spring. Now through May 1, or while supplies last, shoppers at participating nurseries can access customer discounts of \$25 on eligible native trees and shrubs valued at \$50 or more. Nurseries are reimbursed for discounts with allocated state water quality improvement funds.

"We wanted folks to get a discount for taking the initiative to plant native," explained Molly O'Liddy, DOF urban

and community forestry partnership coordinator, who is managing the program.

By lowering the cost for purchasing native species, DOF officials hope to spread awareness of their environmental benefits and expand biodiversity in the state.

"The overall goal is to get more trees and shrubs in the Virginia landscape, which, in turn, provides so many benefits for water and air quality, wildlife and pollinators," remarked Delaney Long, DOF urban and community forestry project coordinator, who is helping manage the program.

Trees improve water quality by filtering out pollutants, storing harmful greenhouse gases and reducing erosion. Native trees and shrubs

that evolved in Virginia's ecosystems also are more adapted to their natural environment than ornamental species, and more likely to thrive. They also provide essential food and habitat for wildlife.

"Whether it's meeting aesthetic goals, attracting more wildlife or providing shade, you're bound to find something that will fill your need just by learning more about Virginia's native species," Long said.

She added that expert staff at participating nurseries can help identify the right species and growing conditions for meeting specific landscaping goals.

"It's always good to ask a lot of questions to make sure you're planting the right tree in the right place," Long noted.

Customers can receive a \$25 discount on their

purchase at a participating nursery by selecting a native tree or shrub with a "Throwing Shade VA" tag, scanning the QR code on the tag to record where the tree will be planted, and showing the cashier that the information on the QR code was collected.

Information collected from the QR codes will help track water quality improvement goals and allocate funding for additional planting projects across Virginia.

Project officials hope to continue the program and open applications to interested nurseries this fall for next spring.

For a list of participating nurseries and more information, visit bit.ly/49TH7GW.

Virginia Department of Forestry

Outdoor from page 7

pair of children's binoculars, a field guide to birds of eastern North America, a kids field guide to backyard birds, bird coloring sheets and crayons, one field journal to

record sightings, maps and guides to area birding locations, and helpful tips and apps to make the most of their birding adventures.

This is an excellent way to give

back by giving the community the gift of birding.

Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources