

Wednesday, April 10, 2024 • USPS 387-780 • radfordnewsjournal.com • \$1.00

Taxes, electric and wastewater rates proposed to increase in Radford

Public hearings set regarding the proposed increases

RADFORD – The Radford City Council has scheduled public hearings for April 16 and April 22 regarding proposed increases to property taxes, electric rates and wastewater (sewer) rates for the upcoming year.

A public hearing is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 16, 2024 on the proposed tax rates for calendar year 2024.

“Interested parties are invited to attend the public hearing and present their views,” according to the announcement on www.radfordva.gov. The hearing will be held in the council chambers, located at 10 Robertson St., Radford.

“Notice is given that the Council’s intention to increase in the following tax levies for calendar year 2024: Real Property tax levy at \$0.69 per one \$100.00 of assessed value.”

Machinery and tools tax levy will remain at \$1.76 per \$100.00 of assessed value.

Tangible personal property will remain at \$2.44 per \$100.00 of assessed value.

A second public hearing will be held following the close of the first hearing at 5:30 p.m. on the advertised fiscal year 2024-2025 budget in the amount of \$79,043,310.

The following is a synopsis of the 2024-2025 budget:



IMAGE COURTESY OF CITY OF RADFORD

General fund: \$35,411,361

See Proposal, page 8

Radford alum living his best life in nation’s capital



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PHOTO BY TOM WITHAM

Hunter Henderson, Deputy, White House Liaison, Office of the Secretary swears in Geoffrey Preudhomme, Press Assistant, Office of Communications (OC), Office of the Secretary (OSEC) on Monday, March 25, 2024, at the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.

Heather Bell
Editor

WASHINGTON D.C. – When Geoffrey Preudhomme started his college career at Radford University he planned to pursue a career in animation.

A talented caricature artist at Busch Gardens, Williamsburg, Preudhomme was initially an art major at Radford. In 2016, however, he says he felt called to a life in politics – and he has never looked back.

“I was shocked into movement,” he said. “It was the aftermath of 2016 and then Charlottesville [Unite the Right rally of 2017] that inspired the revamping of the Radford University Young Democrats in 2017, spurring a revival of progressive politics. After being inspired by #MLK50 in 2018, I led the effort to elect the current Radford City Mayor, David R. Horton, in what was the highest municipal turnout in the state.”

Horton said Preudhomme has a bright future and brings his passion to everything he does.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOFFREY PREUDHOMME

Preudhomme at the 2022 White House Spring Garden Tour, April 10, 2022.

“Since I first met Geoffrey in 2018 I have consistently been impressed with his passion to make a difference in this world,” said Horton. “When he lived in Radford, he was very active in local and regional government and his energy was electric. I believe his future is bright and that his work will benefit his community, the commonwealth and the country as he continues to strive for good government and leadership.”

In 2019, Preudhomme became President of the Radford University Young Democrats and won the Virginia Young Democrats Chapter of the Year.

“Later that year, I worked as an organizer in the 2019 Virginia General Election that elected Virginia’s first Democratic trifecta in 30 years, and I just wrapped

See Alum, page 2

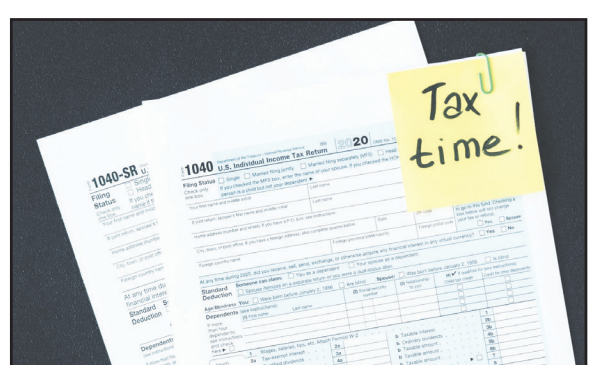


PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS VIA VIRGINIA TECH

Experts offer advice for protecting privacy and security when filing taxes

April is here which means tax filing is upon us. While taxes can be stressful, there is also a concern about the information you share and the impact on your privacy.

Virginia Tech information privacy and cybersecurity experts and co-founders of Voices of Privacy, France Bélanger and Donna Wertalik, explain more about privacy when it comes to filing your taxes.

Privacy and security challenges

“A major privacy concern is tax scams,” says Bélanger. “The goal is to steal your sensitive information, like your Social Security number, name, address, and employer details.” Using this information, cyber criminals can file a false return in your name with the goal of receiving refunds to their own accounts.

Sign of scams can include:

Receiving requests from the IRS via text, phone, email, and even sometimes physical letters. The IRS will not text you or call you for information.

Receiving W-2 forms from unknown employers. Receiving unexpected notices by text and email.

“A key point to remember and understand is that electronic filing is more secure than mailing a tax return,” says Wertalik. “That’s because they are encrypted, meaning it is not possible to read the information as it is being transmitted from your personal device to the tax authorities.”

Tips for managing privacy and security when filing taxes

Request a Personal Identification Number (PIN) from the IRS. No one can file a return with your SSN without it.

Never share your PIN or password to anyone, except the person or tool that helps you with filing your taxes.

File your taxes early to avoid any scams or invasion of privacy. If you are filing before scammers, they won’t get through.

Remember that revenue agencies will never reach out asking for private information via call, text, or email.

If asked extra information by the tool you use to file taxes, do not

share more information than necessary with that software.

Watch for signs of fraud like being unable to e-file tax returns because of a duplicate Social Security number, receiving an IRS notice that an online account has been created by your name, or, receiving an IRS notice that your existing online account has been accessed or disabled when you took no action.

Save your tax files in secure locations. Do not store those files in the cloud. Shred any documents no longer needed.

When in doubt, call the IRS at 800-829-1040 or go to www.irs.gov.

“It is easy to look past your data privacy and security, especially when it comes to dealing with an already irritating task, taxes,” says Wertalik. “By following these tips and remembering the importance of data privacy, you will be able to keep your private information safe and protected.”

Bélanger holds the titles of University Distinguished Professor, R. B. Pamplin Professor, and Tom & Daisy Byrd Senior Faculty Fellow in the Accounting and Information Systems Department within the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech. An author, researcher, educator, consultant, and advocate for information privacy, she has studied issues surrounding the topic for two decades and written about the subject for the majority of her 200 published articles.

Wertalik currently serves as director of marketing strategy and analytics and is a professor of practice in marketing in the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech. Her role encompasses branding, marketing and metrics for the business school, as well as leading the strategic efforts of Pamplin’s Virtual Identity through Virginia Tech’s Social Media Organization, Prism. She has diverse corporate and academic experience in the identification of marketing opportunities, brand management, social media engagement and measurement, and overall product development.

Margaret Ashburn for Virginia Tech



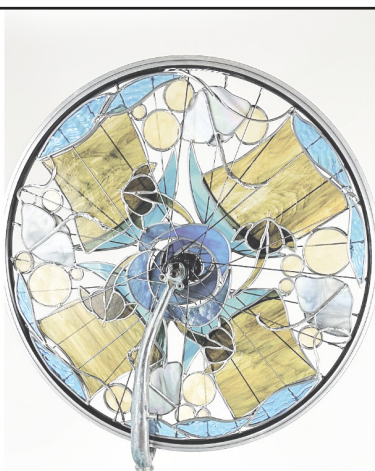
TENDING THE LIVING AND THE DEAD
A History of Physicians, Funeral Homes and Rescue Squads



(D.D. Lester Collection, Montgomery Museum)



CREATIVITY ENCLOSED:
REUSING HISTORIC
SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES



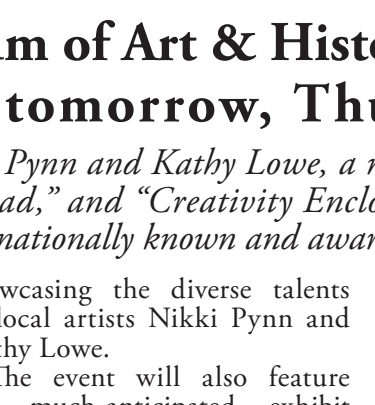
Nikki Pynn's
Movement
Brought to Mind



Kathy Lowe's
Solitude,
Serenity, Stillness



AMANDA KELLY



BLAKE GORE



Montgomery Museum
OF ART & HISTORY
UPCOMING RECEPTION:
Thursday, April 11, 2024
4:00 PM - 7:00 PM
4:30 PM - Nikki Pynn and Kathy Lowe
5:30 PM - Creativity Enclosed/Miniature Artists
6:30 PM - Serving the Living & the Dead
4 EAST MAIN STREET,
CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073
www.montgomerymuseum.org/exhibits

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

Montgomery Museum of Art & History to host multi-exhibit reception tomorrow, Thursday April 11

Event features local artists Nikki Pynn and Kathy Lowe, a new history exhibit entitled “Tending the Living and the Dead,” and “Creativity Enclosed: Reusing Historic Safe Deposit Boxes,” exhibit featuring nationally known and award-winning miniatures artists

CHRISTIANSBURG – Tomorrow, Thursday, April 11, 4- 7 p.m., the Montgomery Museum of Art & History will play host to a grand reception

showcasing the diverse talents of local artists Nikki Pynn and Kathy Lowe.

The event will also feature the much-anticipated exhibit

“Tending the Living and the Dead: a history of physicians, funeral homes, and rescue

See Reception, page 2

Thursday, APRIL 25
Eastern Divide
Brewing Company
3175 Commerce Street,
Blacksburg

Benefiting
Blacksburg
BATTLES CANCER

COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER
OF THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

FREE
ADMISSION

Food available for purchase at venue

\$1
per beverage will be donated to CHCNRV and BBC

Silent Auction

4:30-5:30 P.M.
THE VIRGINIA TECH JAZZ COMBO

5:30-6:30 P.M.
STEVE KESSLER TRIO WITH AL BROHOLM & LOGAN VALLEROY

6:30-7:30 P.M.
ROOT DOWN QUINTET

7:30-9:00 P.M.
LENNY MARCUS TRIO

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 13:

Mount Tabor Ruritan Biscuit Breakfast

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club serving up hot biscuits topped with sausage gravy, or with "world-famous" apple butter, with scrambled eggs, orange juice and coffee; 8 to 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Slusser's Chapel, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. Club fundraiser to help serve community, and donations will be accepted for the breakfast. There will be sign-up information available for club's newest community initiative - Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This is the last breakfast until October.

Skipper cannon firing

Skipper, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets cannon, will be fired twice on the Upper Quad of Virginia Tech's campus between 2 - 4 p.m. as Virginia Tech cadets return from the spring Caldwell March. The actual timing of the cannon's firing will depend on the length of the march, subject to weather and road conditions.

Sunday, April 14:

Skipper cannon firing

Skipper, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets cannon, will be fired once between 11:55 a.m. and 12:05 p.m. new the Tech Softball Park as part of the opening celebration for Virginia Tech Softball's Military Appreciation game.

Thursday, April 18:

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 Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Alum from page 1



Preudhomme's Radford University May 2019 graduation photo.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GEOFFREY PREUDHOMME

Preudhomme speaks at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial for its 10th anniversary, Oct. 16, 2021.

up my time as a Legislative Aide in the Virginia House of Delegates."

In March, Preudhomme was appointed by the Biden-Harris administration as Press Assistant for the United States Department of Agriculture. He was previously Press Assistant for the House Financial Services Committee from 2022-2023.

"As Press Assistant to the Director of Communications and Press Secretary, I participate with them on a variety of responsibilities that include press releases and media advisories," he said.

Paige Tan, a Radford University political science professor, says Preudhomme has picked a career path perfect for him.

"Geoffrey was destined to work in politics," said Tan. "At RU, he interned on a long-shot Democratic Congressional campaign in deep red southwest Virginia and turned the campus Young Democrats into the most outstanding chapter in the state."

"He brings together a fire for the game of politics with a deep belief that he's on the side of what's right," she added.

When former President Donald Trump visited Radford in 2016, Preudhomme was launched into the national political process and has been recognized for those efforts.

"I was added to the National Civil Rights Museum, Smithsonian-affiliate and the assassination site of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., permanent collection for pioneering one of the first large protests against Donald Trump at Radford University's campus on February 29, 2016, after Trump refused to denounce former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke the day before," he said.

Preudhomme said he feels proud to be involved in public service.

"I enjoy the fact that like myself, I am surrounded by diligent and hard-working public servants who are well intentioned, pure of heart, and love their country who only want the very best for all Americans, farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and rural communities like Radford, which is desperately needed in public service today," he said. "Public servants who are dedicated to the public good who share USDA's core values of equity, inclusion, and social justice. The executive department is full of staff with important purposes."

"From programs dealing with nonprofits, housing, farmers, small businesses, and seniors, along with nutrition support programs like SNAP and WIC, I am proud to join one of the most important agencies in the entire executive branch."

Friday, April 19:

Skipper cannon firing

Skipper, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets cannon, will be fired once between 5 - 5:30 p.m. on the Drillfield during the opening ceremony for Relay for Life; Skipper will fire at the end of the national anthem. Relay For Life at Virginia Tech is a student-run yearlong fundraising initiative for the American Cancer Society focused on raising funds for critical research as well as lifesaving patient support programs.

Saturday, April 20:

NAACP Young Adults Meet and Greet

At the Christiansburg Library; 6 - 7 p.m. Geared toward 25- 50 years olds. Learn about the NAACP, meet people and learn about professional development and social opportunities. Giveaways and appetizers. For more information crashatowndsend@gmail.com.

Monday, April 22:

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. Citizens are invited to attend and allowed to speak at each meeting. 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, April 23:

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.

Saturday, April 27:

Children's Consignment Sale

The spring children's consignment sale will be held 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church, 701 Church St SE. (note different location). Families can get great deals on seasonal kids' clothes and shoes, toys, books, baby gear, sports equipment, maternity clothing and more. Many items are like-new (some even brand-new). Some items will be half-price between 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. but you will want to shop early for the best selection! Cash or checks only. No card or electronic payments. There is space for new consignors. For more information, email bumckidsale@aol.com.

On-going:

Radford Noon Rotary Club's Field of Honor

Field of Honor will be installed on the grounds of Glencoe Mansion prior to Memorial Day until the Fourth of July. 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. To register, contact rotary.club.of.radford.noon@gmail.com.

Reception from page 1

squads," offering a poignant exploration of life and death in our area. Additionally, visitors will be enchanted by "Creativity Enclosed: Reusing Historic Safe Deposit Boxes," a unique miniature presentation taking place in the vault of the Museum's historic bank building. This multifaceted affair promises to be a celebration of creativity, heritage, and community.

Artist Nikki Pynn has worked in stained glass since graduating from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1980 with a Bachelor in Fine Arts, Painting and Printmaking. Her exhibit at the Montgomery Museum is titled, "Movement Brought to Mind." She was influenced by the negative space of various objects, particularly broken bike wheels, and began filling in the spaces between the spokes on wheels, and holes of sprockets discarded by local bike shops. Pynn was recently accepted into the Southern Highland Craft Guild and has spent many years perfecting her stained-glass technique and experimenting with the layout and complications that come from integrating her choices of materials and moving parts.

Additionally, for works in this exhibit, she has reached back to previous work to create drawings that are, in her words, "representative of accepting my chaotic mind and being comfortable with it." Other drawings in the show offer the artist's experiments in expression through body language and facial expressions.

In her exhibit, "Solitude, Serenity, and Stillness," oil painter Kathy Lowe's use of contrast between light and dark and color are worth studying. Some of the landscape paintings exhibit almost photographic realism except that the colors are beyond what nature can do. Another of Lowe's favorite subjects is lighthouses. The rounded contours of these buildings make them seem three dimensional.

"Creativity and the art of painting according to the artist, serve as a singular act of existence in making statements about the emotional connection to life and the many subjects that influence us all." Lowe, a Petersburg native, has a background in science that culminated in a career at the Virginia Tech Veterinary College electron microscope lab. The art of electron microscopy contributed to her artistic talent.

The history exhibit "Tending the Living and the Dead: a history of physicians, funeral

homes and rescue squads" will also be on display. Those who assist in times of sickness, emergency, and death form a critical part of any community. What is surprising, is how the histories of physicians, funeral homes, and rescue squads are closely intertwined. Ambulance service was a lesser-known part of early funeral businesses. Initially, there was little in the way of first aid provided by the ambulance attendants, but the idea of trained

attendants traveling with the patient was championed by local funeral home staff who knew the need firsthand. Medical, funeral, and rescue artifacts from Kenneth McCoy and others will illustrate the evolution of these institutions in Montgomery County, Virginia. Exploring how our community tended its living and dead is an important way to understand its people and values. As part of the exhibit, visitors will be invited to share personal stories and recollections of these traditions at 6:30 p.m.

Also opening on April 11 is "Creativity Enclosed: Reusing Historic Safe Deposit Boxes." The Montgomery

Museum of Art and History is located in the former Bank of Christiansburg building, which was completed in 1964. The building retains many original features including the steel safe deposit boxes in the main vault. Reusing these tiny historic spaces is the focus of this exhibit. The museum invited fine artists, hobby miniaturists, and all creative souls to contribute small works for this show. The call sparked interest from artists across the mid-Atlantic and as far away as California.

This art exhibit also features work from nationally-known miniature artists, Amanda Kelly "Panda Miniatures" and Blake Gore. Amanda Kelly is pursuing her Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture at Radford University where she also teaches. Kelly's award-winning artwork has been exhibited in various art galleries and museums including The Museum of Museums in Seattle, Wash., the Var Gallery in Milwaukee, Wisc., and the Olin Galleries in Salem, Va. Her commercial work includes miniature sets and content for clients such as Coca-Cola, Disney, XBOX, and General Mills. In 2020, she was a finalist on the HGTV miniature competition show Biggest Little Christmas Showdown. Originally from New York, Amanda lives in Virginia with her wife and three cats.

Blake Gore, a New River Valley resident, creates miniature art using a .15mm pen nib and minimalist canvases. Often drawing in a space of only an inch or two, he is inspired by the challenge of creating more with less. Gore's miniature works have shown from Middle America to Manhattan and have found their way into private collections around the globe. He has partnered with brands such as Jo-Ann Stores, Monopoly/Hasbro, BLICK Art Materials, Sakura of America, Canson, Strathmore, and General Pencil.

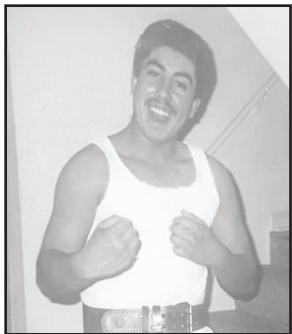
This is a free community reception. Enjoy refreshments and food while listening to these artists, storytellers, and historians and enjoy this large exhibit opening featuring the smallest art mediums on display.

Montgomery Museum of Art & History

OBITUARIES

Madrigal-Ramos, Juan Manuel

Juan Manuel Madrigal-Ramos, 47, of Dublin, passed away Thursday, April 4, 2024. Born April 29, 1976, he attended St. Mary's Catholic Church in Blacksburg and owned and operated Happy Cinco de Mayo Restaurant in Ft. Chiswell. He was a dedicated husband and father.



Survivors include his wife, Minerva Mendoza; parents, Isidro Madrigal-Garcia and Gudelia Ramos Malgoza; sons, Juan and Francisco Madrigal-Mendoza; daughters, Diana and

Ramos; and many other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 12 - 2 p.m. at Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will follow. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at St. Mary's Church in Blacksburg. Interment will follow in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

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

Mattox, Judith Amy

Judith Amy Mattox, of Blacksburg, passed away Wednesday, April 03, 2024.

Judy was born October 25, 1943, to the late William H. Quarterman, Jr. and Naomi A. Shaver. Judy retired in 2004 from the law offices of Frith and Pierce and David T. Mullins after 42 years as a legal secretary. Judy loved her family, friends, the Virginia Tech Hokies, NASCAR racing, and last but not least her beloved cats.

Survivors include her son, William Shane



Mattox; sister and brother-in-law Patricia and Jeff Raines; brothers and sisters-in-law William "Butch" Quarterman, Richard "Buddy" and

Peggy Quarterman, David and Cheryl Shaver, Lester and Lourie Shaver; and many nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 2 p.m. at McCoy Funeral Home Chapel, 150 Country Club Drive SW, Blacksburg. A visitation will be held from 1 - 2 p.m. prior to the service at McCoy Funeral Home. The family would like to thank the staff at Heritage Hall and Good Samaritan Hospice for their love and care.



PHOTO BY CLARK DEHART FOR VIRGINIA TECH

The ceremonial candle burns in front of the April 16 Memorial during the 2023 Day of Remembrance.

Virginia Tech to observe 2024 Day of Remembrance

BLACKSBURG - Virginia Tech will observe the 2024 Day of Remembrance to honor the students and faculty members who lost their lives on April 16, 2007.

At 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 13, the 3.2-Mile Run in Remembrance, an annual event that attracts thousands of walkers and runners to the Blacksburg campus, will begin — rain or shine — at 9 a.m. with a moment of silence.

The run's 3.2-mile course will begin in front of Patton Hall, near Burruss Hall, and pass by landmarks such as the Grove, Lane Stadium, and the Virginia Tech Pylons, ending at the April 16 Memorial. Advance registration for this event is encouraged.

Virtual participation opportunities are available in addition to the in-person event. Virtual participants are encouraged to move in a way that is meaningful to them and to share photos using the hashtag #VT32Run on social media.

On Tuesday, April 16, the lighting of the ceremonial candle will be held at 12:01 a.m. at the April 16 Memorial, located in front of Burruss Hall on Drillfield Drive. The candle will be lit by representatives of the student body, and the names of the 32 Hokies lost on April 16, 2007, will

be read. Members of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets will stand in watch for the 24 hours that the candle is lit.

At 9:43 a.m., a brief wreath-laying ceremony and moment of silence will be held at the April 16 Memorial. Student members of the Virginia Tech Rescue Squad will carry wreaths to the memorial, which will then be placed by Virginia Tech President Tim Sands and Laura Sands and Executive Vice President and Provost Cyril Clarke.

At 11:59 p.m., the ceremonial candle will be extinguished and the light will be carried back into Burruss Hall, representing the university's commitment to never forget.

There are also more than 20 alumni chapter events planned. Details are available on the We Remember website.

Several other university events, including Spring Family Weekend, and the football Spring Game will be held over the April 13-14 weekend. Parking and transportation information is posted online to help those attending events that weekend.

Mark Owczarski for Virginia Tech

"Creating Connections" campaign launches to promote freight rail in Virginia



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), is launching a marketing campaign, "Creating Connections: For the Long Haul", aimed at showcasing the vital role of freight rail in Virginia's transportation infrastructure.

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), is launching a marketing campaign, "Creating Connections: For the Long Haul", aimed at showcasing the vital role of freight rail in Virginia's transportation infrastructure. This campaign focuses on raising awareness about the efficiencies, sustainability, and economic advantages offered by freight rail transportation as well as the DRPT programs that support freight rail throughout the Commonwealth.

Through a series of multimedia components that include video, digital ads, and engaging social media content, "Creating Connections" will share the benefits of businesses with rail connectivity, innovations driving efficiency, and the environmental benefits of choosing rail over traditional modes of transport.

DRPT Director Jennifer DeBruhl expresses enthusiasm for the initiative,

stating, "Virginia's freight rail system plays a critical role in our economy, supporting businesses, creating jobs, and reducing road congestion. By highlighting the benefits of our freight rail programs and the businesses utilizing rail, we hope to inspire companies to explore the opportunities and advantages that rail transportation can offer."

"Creating Connections" will launch with a dedicated webpage providing a wealth of information, resources, and testimonials. The public is invited to explore the site to learn more about the benefits of freight rail and its impact on Virginia's economy and sustainability efforts.

For more information on "Creating Connections" and to stay updated on the latest resources and information, visit connectingva.org.

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Carilion Clinic again earns Fortune Magazine's "America's Most Innovative Companies" honor

FORTUNE

AMERICA'S MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

2024

statista

Carilion Clinic was again named to Fortune magazine's "America's Most Innovative Companies" list.

Compiled with market research and data company Statista, the 2024 list identifies 200 companies chosen for "transforming industries from the inside out."

Carilion ranks #122 on the list, 18 spots higher than 2023. This year's list was trimmed from 2023's 300 companies, and 21 hospitals and healthcare systems among 44 healthcare honorees. It's the second consecutive year Carilion has been honored, and Carilion is the only Virginia

hospital or healthcare system in the 2024 rankings.

Fortune evaluated companies from mid-September through late November 2023. Thousands of employees, management consultants, patent attorneys, recruiters and human resources experts were surveyed about how companies spark innovation through research and development, product invention, process streamlining and collaborative and thoughtful leadership.

The ranking is based on a methodology resulting in scores in three categories:

Product innovation — A company's products and services, covering attractiveness, design, usability, uniqueness and other criteria

Process innovation — Analyzing all company processes, from sourcing and production to marketing, sales and support.

Innovation culture — Measuring to what extent a company fosters a spirit of entrepreneurship and creativity internally and allows ideas to be implemented.

Carilion Clinic

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PREMIER PROPERTY AUCTION
FRI, APR. 26

CLARKE CO., VA
86AC COUNTRY ESTATE
1074 Berrys Ferry Rd, White Post, VA

PREVIEW DATES ONLINE

TRFAuctions.com
434-847-7741

Torrence, Read, & Forehand

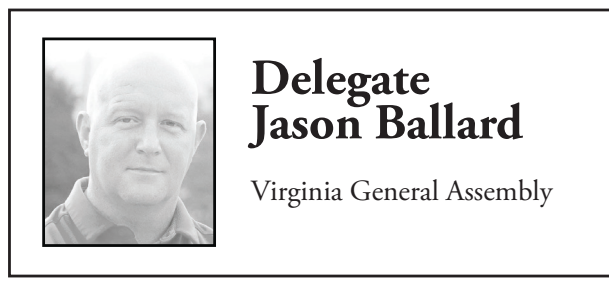
101 Anajo Court, Forest, VA | VAAF001

OPINION

Delegate lauds Youngkin's propensity for vetoes

Since last week's column, Governor Glenn Youngkin has continued vetoing legislation passed by the Democratic majority in the Virginia General Assembly. At this point, Governor Youngkin has surpassed all former Virginia governors in vetoes during his term – issuing 128 of them as of the writing of this article. Perhaps that should be of no surprise, considering the raft of far-left legislation that has been sent to him. This past week, many of Governor Youngkin's vetoes were focused on legislation seeking to restrict lawful firearm ownership.

Rather than focusing on pragmatic and fact-based solutions to Virginia's most prevalent form of firearm violence, Democrats preferred to advance legislation that attacked the rights of law-abiding gun owners. A ban on modern sporting rifles, an end-run around the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, unconstitutional waiting periods, and age limits all made their way to the Governor's desk, where they were vetoed. Group violence intervention programs like Project Ceasefire and "Safe, Alive, and Free" produce positive results, time and time again. But Democrats actually cut funds for those programs in their budget. It proves that they are only interested in advancing emotion-based policies that fly in the face of common



Delegate Jason Ballard
Virginia General Assembly

sense. It's disappointing to see the Democratic Senate Majority Leader vocally stand against tax cuts and economic development in favor of items on the far-left's wish list. When the General Assembly returns to Richmond on April 17 to consider pending action from the 2024 session, I look forward to sustaining Governor Youngkin's legislative vetoes and, hopefully, passing a responsible budget that works for all Virginians.

On a separate note, I think it's worth mentioning that while General Assembly Democrats focused on restricting your Second Amendment rights and making energy more expensive, among other things, they continued their inaction on the scourge of fentanyl in Virginia. On average, five Virginians die each day

from a fentanyl overdose. Yet, Democrats have refused to enact common-sense measures that would help save lives. HB 674 would have charged anyone who gives someone more than two milligrams (a lethal dose) of fentanyl with attempted murder. This bill didn't even get a hearing! In fact, Republicans had to fight tooth and nail to get a hearing on a bill that will protect our kids from fake prescription pills laced with this poison. House Democrats even passed a bill that would have made possession of 500 lethal doses of fentanyl a misdemeanor – a bill so extreme that not even Senate Democrats would go along with it. This shouldn't be political. Fentanyl kills, and we need to do much more to protect our communities from this drug. Unfortunately, that doesn't appear to be a priority for Virginia Democrats.

As the Delegate representing the 42nd House District in the Virginia General Assembly, your concerns are my greatest priority. If ever I may be of assistance to you and your family, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at DelJasonBallard@House.Virginia.Gov. You can also follow me on Twitter @JasonBallardVA or like my Facebook page, Jason Ballard for Delegate, to keep up to date with what I am doing in Richmond and in our community on your behalf.

Virginia gas prices still on the rise

Average gasoline prices in Virginia have risen 2.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.46/g today, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 21.5 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 1.6 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 3.1 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.02 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.99/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$4.49/g, a difference of \$1.50/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.99/g while the highest was \$4.49/g, a difference of \$1.50/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 6.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.57/g today. The national average is up 17.1 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 0.8 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Virginia and the national average going back ten years:
 April 8, 2023: \$3.44/g (U.S. Average: \$3.58/g)
 April 8, 2022: \$4.01/g (U.S. Average: \$4.12/g)
 April 8, 2021: \$2.73/g (U.S. Average: \$2.86/g)
 April 8, 2020: \$1.79/g (U.S. Average: \$1.88/g)
 April 8, 2019: \$2.53/g (U.S. Average: \$2.75/g)
 April 8, 2018: \$2.48/g (U.S. Average: \$2.65/g)
 April 8, 2017: \$2.19/g (U.S. Average: \$2.39/g)
 April 8, 2016: \$1.89/g (U.S. Average: \$2.04/g)
 April 8, 2015: \$2.19/g (U.S. Average: \$2.39/g)
 April 8, 2014: \$3.44/g (U.S. Average: \$3.58/g)
 Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:
 Roanoke- \$3.38/g, up 0.4 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.38/g.
 Richmond- \$3.47/g, unchanged from last

week's \$3.47/g.
 West Virginia- \$3.41/g, up 1.9 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.39/g.
 "After a brief break, gas prices have leapt back up, driven by extensive refinery maintenance on the West Coast, where prices have increased notably; only a handful of states have seen prices decline over the last week," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "With oil prices rising to nearly \$87 per barrel last week, their highest since October, we are not only facing the seasonal factors that push prices up—refinery maintenance, the switch to summer gasoline, and rising demand—but also escalating crude oil prices as OPEC's production cuts continue to cause declining global oil inventories, with escalations between Iran and Israel adding to concerns of further destabilization. The West Coast is likely to see gas prices continue to jump, and in a week or so, will be joined by the mid-Atlantic and Northeast states as they wrap up the transition to summer gasoline."
GasBuddy

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AARP Virginia Fraud Alert: IRS Scams

Tax season isn't just about filing returns; it's also prime time for IRS impostor scams. According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumers reported theft of \$5.8 million via these scams in 2023 alone. Here is what you need to know about IRS impostors so you can stay one step ahead of these crooks. IRS impostor scams often begin with a robocall, instructing you to press a number on your keypad to talk with a live agent or call back using the number provided. Victims often trust these contacts because the phone numbers seem legitimate.

However, scammers can manipulate caller ID to appear as though the call is coming from the IRS. Once they have you on the phone, they may demand payment for back taxes under the threat of arrest. The payment of choice in these scams tends to be via wire transfer, gift cards, or cryptocurrency. If you get this type of request, it is 100% certainly a scam. Sometimes these impostors will claim the IRS owes you an unexpected refund in an attempt to steal sensitive information like your Social Security number or bank account details.

Even if a caller has personally identifiable information of yours to "prove" who they are, don't believe it. Disengage, and if you're concerned, contact the entity via a trusted number (a paper statement or by finding a number on that entity's website). Be a fraud fighter! If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam. Report scams to local law enforcement. For help from AARP, call 1-877-908-3360 or visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

AARP Virginia

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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CLUES ACROSS
 1. Atomic mass unit
 4. Criticize mightily
 7. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
 10. Stand in for
 11. Everyone has one
 12. Brew
 13. Rectify
 15. Popular Dodge truck model
 16. Beef or chicken intestine
 19. Satisfy
 21. Of a particular people or localized region
 23. Movements in quick tempos
 24. Able to pay one's debts
 25. Fleshy bird beak covering
 26. Dueling sword
 27. Helps
 30. Court is in it
 34. Touch lightly

CLUES DOWN
 1. Sharp mountain ridge
 2. Thin, fibrous cartilages
 3. Provides new details
 4. Muscular weaknesses
 5. Ottoman military title
 6. Banes
 7. Horse-riding seats
 8. Arms of a shirt
 9. Narrow path along a road edge
 13. Viper
 14. Disfigure
 17. Variety of Chinese language
 18. Portray in a show
 20. Wrongful act
 22. No (slang)
 27. State of agitation
 28. Diego
 29. One point east of due south
 31. 007's creator
 32. The NBA's Toppin
 33. Midway between north and northeast

37. Examples
 38. Gould, actor
 39. The habitat of wild animals
 40. Artful subtlety
 41. Infielders
 42. Keep under control
 43. Herb
 44. Distressed
 47. A way to go down
 48. Type of acid
 49. Take by force
 51. Collected fallen leaves
 52. Shout of welcome or farewell
 53. Monetary unit
 58. Swiss river

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RADFORD SPORTS



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The Hokies welcome back multiple starters on the defensive side of the ball, especially in the secondary while retooling along the interior.

Hokie football preview: What might the defense hold?

Editor's note: It is less than a week until this year's Virginia Tech Spring football game. So today, we continue a look at what the team could look like.

Having already previewed what Virginia Tech looks like on the offensive side of the ball, the reason for momentum doesn't stop there.

The Hokies bring back some key contributors on the defensive end, with plenty of newcomers coming in as well. Let's take a quick glance at what Tech could look like on that side of the ball.

Defensive Line

Defensive line coach J.C. Price is set to possess a collection of talent up front this upcoming year. The Hokies return the likes of Antwaun Powell-Ryland, Cole Nelson, C.J. McCray and Keyshawn Burgos at the defensive end spot, while also welcoming back the veteran duo of Josh Fuga and Wilfried Pene at the defensive tackle position.

Powell-Ryland is coming off an impressive first season suiting up in maroon and orange. The Florida transfer registered 14.5 tackles for loss in 2023, sacking the quarterback a team-best 9.5 times over the course of the year.

Nelson, on the other hand, had a strong campaign as well. The Johns Creek, Georgia, product racked up 27 total tackles a season ago, securing 4.5 sacks of his own and serving as a key piece on the defensive front.

That's not without mentioning the impact of McCray, Burgos, Fuga and Pene, too. McCray posted 21 total tackles a year ago, while Burgos (17), Fuga (13) and Pene (10) all played an important role in Tech's success in 2023.

You can't forget about the transfer additions either. Tech brought in the trio of Aeneas Peebles (Duke), Kelvin Gilliam Jr. (Oklahoma) and Kemari Copeland (Iowa Western Community College) this past offseason to help retool.

Peebles was a member of the 2023 All-ACC Third Team this past season suiting up for the Blue Devils, while Gilliam, a Richmond, Virginia, native, and Copeland, a Virginia Beach, Virginia, product, all eye a big year returning to the Commonwealth in the next step of their college careers.

Linebackers/Stars

Gone is sixth-year man Alan Tisdale, who helped steer the ship at the linebacker spot, but nearly everyone else returns, including Keli Lawson, Keonta Jenkins, Jayden McDonald, Jaden Keller, Caleb Woodson and Will Johnson, who all made an impact in 2023.

Lawson's forced to miss the entirety of spring ball after offseason surgery, but

is poised to make a big impact following his return. The 6-foot-4, 220-pounder finished the year with a team-high 80 total tackles (39 solo), showcasing his skills and athleticism at the highest of levels in his time on the field.

Jenkins and McDonald both were crucial throughout the year as well. Jenkins recorded 50 total tackles, with 30 solo stops, over the course of the campaign, while McDonald had 30 total wrap-ups and 11 solo in his redshirt sophomore season.

Keller (23 total tackles), Woodson (22) and Johnson (9) each contributed, too, while redshirt freshman Aycen Stevens and freshman Gabe Williams all seek to slide in and make their college debuts.

That's also all without mentioning the addition of Middle Tennessee transfer Sam Brumfield. The redshirt senior linebacker was named to the All-Conference USA Second Team a season ago, completing the year with a team-high 81 tackles and 6.5 tackles for loss. With Brumfield's abilities, he's set to play a pivotal role in 2024, and could be a big add if all goes well this upcoming year.

Defensive Backs

Filled with promise and prize heading into phase two, there's much to like about what Tech's set to trot out onto the field in the defensive backs room in 2024.

The Hokies welcome back a laundry list of accolades at the cornerback position with both Dorian Strong and Mansoor Delane returning to the fold, while Jalen Stroman, Jaylen Jones and Mose Phillips III are set to suit up at safety after seeing time last year.

Strong was awarded Third Team All-ACC after putting up 25 total tackles (18 solo) and three interceptions a season ago, while also being named one of Pro Football Focus' top-10 returning cornerbacks in 2024.

On the flip side, Delane tallied 54 total wrap-ups and 31 solo stops in 2023 and is poised for another big season this upcoming year.

Stroman also had himself a solid campaign. The Bristow, Virginia, native finished third on the team with 55 total tackles, while Jones (34) and Phillips (27) each adjusted nicely to both their first seasons manning the position at the collegiate ranks.

Let's not forget about Dante Lovett and Braylon Johnson also returning to the mix, while redshirt freshmen Krystian Williams, Jonathan Pennix, Thomas Williams, Antonio Cotman Jr. and Cameren Fleming all aim to earn a shot.

Virginia Tech Athletics

Women's basketball gaining in popularity this year



From the Sidelines

Marty Gordon

The increase in popularity for women's college basketball can be seen in our own backyard.

Cassell Coliseum was sold out not just for one game but as many as six this season. The "queens of the Cassell" did not disappoint. Their winning ways led to a lot of attention on a sport that has been waiting for its due.

Women's basketball received the increase in attention thanks to players like Caitlyn Clark (University of Iowa) and Angel Reese (LSU). At Tech, Liz Kitley and Georgia Amooore should also be congratulated for helping the sport. The Hokies brought the sport up to elite status, and we have to hope this is not a passing trend.

Clark turned not only the women's game upside down but the college one in general.

Those accolades included:

Named preseason Big Ten Player of the Year

Unanimous AP preseason All-America selection

Became Iowa's all-time leading scorer

Achieved most 30-point games by any man or woman in Division I in the past 25 seasons

Shared The Sporting News Athlete of the Year honors with Angel Reese of LSU

Became Big Ten's all-time leader in assists

Became Iowa's all-time leader in assists

Broke Big Ten Player of the Week conference record

Broke Big Ten all-time scoring record

Became Division I women's career scoring leader

Broke Iowa's single-game scoring record

Became all-time leader in points among major women's college basketball players

Set Big Ten career record for 3-pointers

Set NCAA single-season record for 3-pointers

Became all-time NCAA Division I men's and women's scoring leader

Unanimous Big Ten Player of the Year

Named first-team All-Big Ten

Achieved most three-pointers in a single season by any male or female Division I player

Became the first Division I women's player

to score at least 1,000 points in two different seasons

Became career leading scorer in the Big Ten tournament

Named Most Outstanding Player in Big Ten tournament

Achieved most points in single season in Division I women's history

Passed Temeka Johnson for the most career assists in NCAA tournament history

Passed Diana Taurasi for the most career 3-pt FG in NCAA tournament history

Tied Courtney Moses for the most threes in a game in NCAA tournament history

Became first player in NCAA tournament history with 3 career 40-point games

Passed Taylor Robertson for most career 3-pt FG in Division I history

Named Albany 2 Regional Most Outstanding Player

Won Naismith Player of the Year for the second year in a row

Won AP Player of the Year for the second year in a row

Achieved the most points in a single quarter of an NCAA championship game

Passed Chamique Holdsclaw for the most career NCAA tournament points

Clark will be remembered as one of the best to ever play the game. Hopefully, her popularity will encourage young girls everywhere to take up the sport.

It was the attention to her game that brought not basketball fans to the table or should we say to the coffee table to watch games this season and it showed in Iowa's last two this past week.

The women's championship game last year between Iowa and LSU reached 9.9 million viewers - the best rating ever for a women's game at the time, and an increase of 103% from 2022 (4.85 million viewers). Iowa's 94-87 victory over LSU this past week averaged 12.3 million viewers on ESPN, according to Nielsen.

The Iowa-LSU game's record unseated the 1983 National Championship game that previously held the record with 11.86 million viewers.

The game had more viewers than any of the five World Series games from last year.

Women's college basketball has come a long way baby and should only continue this climb. Who will be the next Caitlyn Clark or in our neck of the woods, Liz Kitley or Georgia Amooore? We see you.

Sports notes: Former Highlander coach takes over in Miami

Marty Gordon

NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The University of Miami has hired Tricia Cullop as head women's basketball coach, Vice President/Director of Athletics Dan Radakovich announced Friday.

Cullop comes to Coral Gables after spending the past 16 seasons as the head coach at the University of Toledo, where she compiled a record of 353-169. The six-time Mid-American Conference Coach of the Year led the Rockets to five MAC regular season championships and 11 postseason berths, including two trips to the NCAA Tournament. Prior to Toledo, Cullop spent eight seasons as the head coach at the University of Evansville.

Cullop is the eighth head women's basketball coach in Miami history. Her introductory press conference will take place this week at a date and time to be announced.

Miami's new coach is familiar to many people in the New River Valley as a former assistant t Radford University during a time when the Highlanders were a regular in the Big South championship game.

Cullop was an assistant women's basketball coach at Radford, Long Beach State, and Xavier, before taking over as head coach of Evansville in 2000.

Dominy running at Milligan

It was a successful trip to the Tennessee Invite as the Milligan University men's and women's track & field teams collected three top times in the NAIA, nine top-10 finishes, and 12 personal bests. One of the top runners on the women's side of things was Auburn High School alum Caitlyn Dominy.

She scored the ninth-fastest time in the 1500 with a time of 4:35.20 as she finished ninth in the event. She followed that with the 14th-fastest time in the NAIA in the 800, logging a personal best time of 2:17.69.

This comes on the heels of Dominy being named the Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC) Women's Outdoor Track Athlete of the Week.

Worley, UK advance

Seven-seed Kentucky gymnastics has advanced to the NCAA Regional Final at Bud Walton Arena in Fayetteville, Ark. following a 197.100 semifinal meet on Thursday.

Fifth-year senior Raena Worley from Christiansburg earned her 30th career all-around title and 27th floor individual win.

UK Coach Heather McAtree has been named WCGA Central Region Administrator of the Year while Worley was named WCGA Central Regional Athlete of the Year, the Women's Collegiate Gymnastics Association (WCGA) announced this week.

Tech football takes part in Saturday's Big Event



Several Hokie football players took part in Virginia Tech's The Big Event this past Saturday.

The Virginia Tech Football team took a great opportunity this past Saturday to give back to the local community by participating in The Big Event across the New River Valley.

The Big Event at Virginia Tech is a student-run day of service that has grown into the second-largest event of its kind in the nation. Every spring, thousands of students, faculty, and staff come together to complete nearly 1,200 community service projects throughout Blacksburg, Christiansburg and the New River Valley, with the purpose of saying 'Thank You'.

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nearly 1,200 community service projects throughout Blacksburg, Christiansburg and the New River Valley with the purpose of saying Thank You.

Head coach Brent Pry spoke during the opening ceremony at the Drillfield, highlighting the importance of giving back to the community.

"The fact that you're giving back to the community that fills the stadium, that supports you," Pry stated during a team meeting Saturday morning. "It's really a great event for us."

The day of service officially began with the firing of Tech's iconic Skipper.

Following the opening ceremony, players and staff gathered their tools to aid the Blacksburg community. Organized into 10 different groups based on positions,



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

Football coach Brent Pry motivates the crowd during opening ceremonies of the Big Event.

players engaged in diverse acts of service, including mulching and weeding, planting fruit trees, painting and repairing sheds, cleaning at a local church and refurbishing furniture for residents.

"That's what it's called being a Hokie," defensive lineman Elijah Klock reflected while conducting yard work. "Blue collar."

The Hokies' hard-working blue-collar mentality will continue with the upcoming spring game, presented by PMSI, set for Saturday, April 13, at 3 p.m. ET. In collaboration with Triumph NIL and The Hokie Way, fans are encouraged to participate in the NIL initiative of their choosing.

Virginia Tech Athletics

Outdoor report: Spring turkey hunting on public land



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VDWR

Old logging roads are among the primary areas that a gobbler will be found strutting this spring.

Virginia's spring turkey season runs April 13-28, statewide one half hour before sunrise until 12 noon each day. A second time period runs April 29 through May 18, One half-hour before sunrise to sunset.

Wild turkeys are undoubtedly one of the most challenging game species.

They're wary and heedful, making it difficult for a hunter to remain veiled. Hunting a spring gobbler doesn't wholly depend on the equipment used to pursue them.

"Knowing where the turkeys are located is more important than having the best turkey call in your pocket," said Gary Norman, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) wildlife biologist and forest game bird project leader.

It's important to scout an area right before the season starts. Scouting can set you up to being successful, especially during the early part of the season.

"Second is being patient with turkey hunting. Hunters are often anxious and move to another location if a gobbler isn't responding," says Norman, who encourages hunters to arrive to their hunting destination early (before other hunters), to have a higher chance of being successful on public land.

It's important to scout an area before the season starts.

Norman says one of the best times to hunt the Virginia spring turkey season is the last week in April, which is the peak of hen incubation. When hens aren't available to the gobblers, the gobblers respond to calls.

Is it truly possible to bag a bird on public land?

Despite the negative reputation that public hunting land often receives, success on public land does exist if you are committed.

"We have so much land and opportunity with

great turkey in the state. With public lands, you just need to do your homework – it's a gold mine for us! That's the part people overlook," says Hank Tassitano, an avid public land user.

Tassitano has been hunting public land in Virginia for nearly 20 years, tagging out on spring turkeys. He says that national forest opportunities are a treasure, but only with persistence.

"As soon as deer season ends, I'm in the woods. Looking for what I missed, turkey sign, or change in patterns of the game. You must do all these things when the woods are an open book. Get out and do it!"

Tassitano emphasizes that scouting and becoming familiar with the area that the birds are traveling prior to the season is vital for success. But, he says, trail cameras are valuable if time doesn't permit.

"As a hunter, step back, look at what other hunters are doing and avoid them, because there's plenty of room. Go way back up in there," says Tassitano, who encourages hunters to go off-the-beaten-path in pursuit of gobblers. "There's access points on public lands that are untouched. You'd be surprised."

Old logging roads are among the primary areas that a gobbler will be found strutting.

On national forest, hunting hillsides, old logging roads, ridge points, or benches off a mountain side are the primary areas that a gobbler will be found strutting. The open range allows them to be seen by the hen while also protecting them from predators.

Tassitano says that his success rate for bagging a bird increased by nearly 75% when he began hunting from a pop-up blind on a hillside. Though tactics

differ for every hunter, the blind is an advantage when it's tough to flip around locations in steep terrain of public forest, or in light foliage (during the early part of the season).

Safety on Public Land

Safety is the most important component when hunting on public land. Hunting is relatively safe when looking at it statistically, but the consequences are severe when someone is injured. David Dodson, Hunter Education Program Manager at DWR, explains how to minimize hunting-related accidents this season.

"One of the most important things is to sit and call the turkey to you instead of stalking the turkey," says Dodson.

Hunting tactics are constantly dynamic, and new hunting techniques in pursuit of a bird should be performed with caution.

"Using turkey decoys of any kind, especially gobbler decoys, a hunter needs to be extremely careful and ensure you're not in the line-of-fire to anyone shooting at the decoy," says Dodson.

Dodson says if you see another hunter while hunting, remain still and call out, so the hunter doesn't mistake you for a turkey.

"Make sure of your target and what's behind it before shooting – that's the number one rule for turkey season," says Dodson.

Remember, if you are hunting spring turkey season in Virginia, a hunter must use #2 fine shot or smaller.

Emily George, Virginia DWR

Expert shares advice for dealing with seasonal allergies this spring

Many who suffer from seasonal allergies might be experiencing more severe symptoms this year due to the early start of spring. Rebecca Schapira, D.O., an assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and an allergist with Carilion Clinic, provides insight on how to detect early allergy symptoms and prepare for their impact on your overall health.

"Our shifting climate has brought us an earlier start to spring. This means earlier tree pollination and therefore earlier development of allergy symptoms," said Schapira. "Sneezing, runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, and itchy or watery eyes are common symptoms."

Over-the-counter allergy medicines are popular among those who suffer from allergy symptoms. Steroid nasal sprays are the first-line treatment for seasonal allergies in patients over age 4 but will take 2-4 weeks to achieve the best effect, so starting these medications about a month before your symptoms usually occur is advised," said Schapira. Your local pharmacist can help you find the over-the-counter steroid nasal sprays in the medication aisle, as not all nasal sprays should be used long-term. "Antihistamines taken by mouth will work the same day, but in general are less effective at reducing nasal symptoms than steroid nasal sprays."

For those whose allergies are more severe, Schapira suggests seeing a local allergist. "It is important to know what seasonal allergens you are allergic to. Testing can help identify your allergens, and then your allergist can work with you to individually tailor medications and develop a plan to help you stay outside."

Symptoms of seasonal allergies can often be similar to those of a cold. Schapira offers insight on how to differentiate between the two.

"Environmental allergies are symptoms triggered by your immune system's response to pollen or other



COURTESY OF PIXABAY VIA VIRGINIA TECH

Many who suffer from seasonal allergies might be experiencing more severe symptoms this year due to the early start of spring.

allergens. These reactions are typically reproducible, and therefore predictable. Symptoms often last for several weeks," she said. "On the other hand, a cold is due to a viral illness encountered by the immune system and is often accompanied by similar symptoms as environmental allergies, but may also be accompanied by a fever. Symptoms often last 1-2 weeks and then resolve."

Schapira also says that allergens can change with age. "Seasonal allergies occur when the immune

system identifies an environmental airborne allergen, such as pollen, as a foreign invader. It develops an allergic antibody against that pollen as a self-protective response," she said. "With more advanced age, the immune system becomes generally less reactive, and therefore more tolerant of foreign invaders such as pollen. Alternatively, your immune system may not grow into this tolerance and begin reacting to pollen."

Sarah Hern for Virginia Tech

Proposal

from page 1

Streets maintenance fund: \$2,829,359
Transit: \$2,860,488
Water/wastewater fund: \$6,320,498
Electric fund: \$28,854,443
Solid waste fund: \$1,688,841
The City Council will also hear comments on the Radford City School Board budget in the amount of \$46,803,799. The summary is as follows:
Operating fund: \$38,098,270

School nutrition fund: \$1,033,057
Grants fund: \$2,694,745
Textbooks fund: \$852,102
Capital projects fund: \$220,000
Health insurance fund: \$2,858,251
Region 7 virtual academy fund: \$862,896
A copy of the document is available for review in the city manager's office, the Radford Public Library, and on the City's website at www.radfordva.gov.
Another public hearing will be held Monday, April 22 at 7 p.m. regarding utility rates. The hearing will be held in the council chambers located at 10 Robertson St. It is the council's intention to propose an increase in the following water,

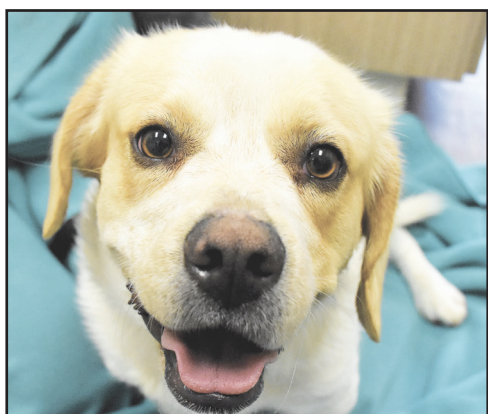
wastewater and electric rates and fees for fiscal year 2025:
Wastewater rates are proposed to increase from \$14.24 to \$16.24 for 2,000 gallons.
The water connection fee is proposed to increase from \$1,300 to \$2,000.
Electric base rates (energy + customer charge) are proposed to increase from \$104.65 to \$107.97 for 1,000 kwh customer.
Residential:
Basic customer charge: (per month): \$7.02
Energy charge all metered kWH): \$0.10095
Rate Tariffs for all customer classes are available for review on the City's website at www.radfordva.gov.

Staff report

PETS OF THE WEEK

These pets and many others are available for adoption at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center, 480 Cinnabar Rd., Christiansburg. Phone: (540) 382-5795.

Adelaide is ready to head to a home with humans who can give her time to adjust and grow her confidence. She tends to be a little unsure of new sights and sounds, but when she starts feeling comfortable, her tail gets wagging and she shows off her sweet personality.



Culchie would like to be a lap dog. Depending on the size of the lap, his dreams could come true! He's a friendly boy who could use some basic doggie training. Culchie appears to enjoy affection over treats. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to meet him.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS
AMUPANSSB
REPAGEALE
AMENDRAMDERMA
SATIATEENDEMIC
PRESTOSOLVENT
CERESEPEE
ASSISTISSESSION
DAB
DNESELF BROWNIE
ALAJAERO
DRUMLINSIERRAS
INSPIREENGRAVE
PAULOSAMAIKEN
RETSAE NEE
PSTERNODD