



# NEWS JOURNAL

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## Epperly case heads to parole board again



Stephen Epperly prison photo

FILE PHOTO

**Marty Gordon**  
Contributing writer

The Virginia Parole Board took up the case this past week of Stephen Epperly, the man convicted in the 1980 death of Radford University student Gina Hall.

A final decision is not expected for months, but Hall family members were adamant in letters to the board to keep him in prison.

Epperly was convicted during a time when inmates were still eligible for parole and has now had nine hearings in front of the parole board. This hearing was based on

what state officials are calling his "geriatric age status." Three years ago, then former Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam told the parole board to examine thousands of cases involving inmates over the age of 60. Epperly is now 71 and serving a life sentence at the Buckingham Correctional Center.

Hall's sister Dlanan Bodmer said in a letter to the board that "Epperly has no remorse for his actions, and Epperly never revealed where he disposed of Gina's remains." Thus, his parole should be denied. Hall disappeared June

28, 1980 from a Blacksburg nightspot, and evidence pointed to Epperly being the last person that saw her alive. He was convicted without a body.

Bodmer said every parole hearing always comes with much anxiety and concern at the prospects that a violent man could be paroled and the safety of her family, and others, jeopardized.

"Stephen Epperly should never be released," she said.

Pulaski County Commonwealth's Attorney Justin L. Griffith also sent a letter to the parole board in which he said, "When

the Virginia Parole Board announced the denial of his parole in July of 2021, I gave our community my word I would be ready to fight his next attempt at parole and that time has arrived. We will never forget Gina Hall and we are always conscious of what her family continues to endure."

Family members have continued to search for her remains and recently say they found what they think are dismembered parts of Hall and possible DNA samples from a site at Gatewood Reservoir.

See Epperly, page 6

## Keynote speakers announced for Radford University spring commencement ceremonies

RADFORD - Radford University has announced the keynote speakers for its upcoming Spring Commencement ceremonies, scheduled for May 3 and 4, 2024.

This year's commencement speakers represent excellence as alumni, embodying leadership, service, philanthropy and accomplishment. Mark Pace '92 will deliver the keynote address at the university's undergraduate ceremony. Amanda Cox, MBA '21, will deliver the keynote address during the graduate hooding ceremony.

Mark Pace represents the essence of entrepreneurial spirit and community stewardship in Virginia. As the president and owner of E.C. Pace Co. Inc., a renowned heavy highway utility construction company based in Roanoke, Pace upholds



Amanda Cox

a legacy spanning four generations. His leadership has been instrumental in the company's continued success and its positive impact on the region's infrastructure.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Pace is deeply involved in community service, serving on the boards of the Virginia Business Higher Education Council and Carilion Clinic. His dedication to Radford University is evident



Mark Pace

through his past leadership roles, including serving as a member and vice rector on the Radford University Board of Visitors.

Since earning his undergraduate degree in business, Pace has remained committed to his alma mater's growth and prosperity. Alongside his wife, Amy, Pace has two children, Nicholas and Megan.

Amanda Cox stands as

See Speakers, page 6



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARY HARRIS

## New flag flying high over Veterans Field

Radford VFW Post 776 Commander Gary Harris said he recently received a phone call from a citizen "asking why there is not a flagpole and flag at Veterans Field. Not knowing, I said I would check on it," said Harris. "People like to help. In three days, I had a pole and the electric department and street department put it up. We got together Sunday for a picture." Pictured (left to right) Lee Simpkins, Howard Weddle, Melvin Brammer, Greg Holbrook, Andy VanHoy, Gary Harris and Brian Francis.

- VFW Post 776



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

RDL Graphics celebrates its recent ribbon-cutting.

## Radford Chamber celebrates new business ribbon-cutting

RADFORD - The City of Radford and the Radford Chamber of Commerce, joined by the Pulaski Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated a ribbon cutting ceremony for RDL Solutions newest location.

Quality work and fast turnaround are RDL's motto. They're committed to doing right by their customers, going above and beyond, and tackling any challenge that comes their way. At RDL, teamwork isn't just a buzzword, it's how they roll. Together, they're making sure everything runs smoothly.

With speeches all around, Dwayne Linkous, owner of RDL, gave thanks to everyone for their support. Dan McKinney from the Radford Chamber welcomed guests and gave a shoutout

to some VIPs in attendance, including Jonathan Sweet from Pulaski County, Kim Repass from Radford's Economic Development, and Angie Hall from Senator Hackworth's office. Special thanks to Mayor David Horton, Sean Pressman, Pulaski Chamber President, Abram Williams, Radford Chamber President for saying a few words. We love when companies can grow their businesses!

Congratulations again RDL, we know more good things are to come!

For more information about RDL and its services, visit <https://rdlmods.com/>.

Radford Chamber of Commerce

## Music Therapy Spring Showcase celebrates achievements



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Professor Rachel Rotert helms this year's Music Therapy Spring Showcase.

RADFORD - On Tuesday, April 23, Radford University's music therapy program held their annual Music Therapy Spring Showcase. The showcase is a special event for both students and clients and it can represent a meaningful accomplishment for those involved.

The showcase is part of the program's commitment to provide students with useful, hands-on practicum experiences to prepare them for their careers. They partner with community organizations

and families to offer therapeutic services to improve function in speech, motor, cognitive, interpersonal, and emotional areas.

Practicum students may work in schools, hospitals, and elder care facilities as part of that education. They offer music therapy services under faculty supervision, and clients benefit from the program, often significantly.

"We acknowledge that it is a huge act of trust to accept therapeutic services from students who are still in training,"

said Professor Rachel Rotert, who organized this year's showcase.

"We do not take their trust or their dedication of time for granted."

Because their clients have placed trust in their student therapists and the program, Rotert said it is important to celebrate therapeutic progress made throughout the semester. Therefore, the Music Therapy Student Showcase brings together music therapy practicum clients and student facilitators to

See Rotert, page 6

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 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.

## Thursday, May 2:

### American Legion meeting

The American Legion, Harvey Howe Carper Post 30 will meet at 6 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in Radford. For further information, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

## Sunday, May 5:

### Blacksburg Community Strings concert

Blacksburg Community Strings presents their Spring 2024 Concert, 2 p.m. at the Warm Hearth Village Center, Blacksburg. The program includes Antonin Dvorak's Symphony No. 9 "From The New World" as well as Appalachian Morning by Robert Sheldon and Prairiesong by Carl Strommen. Come and hear music that reflects the land and cultures of America. Admission is free, donations are accepted and appreciated.

## Monday, May 13:

### 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](http://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, May 14:

### 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.

## Thursday, May 16:

### Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Family Italian Restaurant, 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are also invited to attend. Tiffany Lloyd will do a presentation on the Sam Davis Youth Camp. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

## On-going:

### Route 460 Business Corridor Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Study

The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization is seeking input for the Route 460 Business Corridor Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Study. The study will look at the segment of the corridor, from Industrial Park Road in Blacksburg to the Uptown Christiansburg Mall, for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements. Materials are posted online at [www.newrivervalleympo.org](http://www.newrivervalleympo.org) and will be available for comment until May 9 at 5 p.m.

### 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: Bronze - \$250; Silver - \$500; Gold - \$1000; and Platinum - \$2500. To register, contact [rotary.club.of.radford.noon@gmail.com](mailto:rotary.club.of.radford.noon@gmail.com).

# Radford University hosts record numbers at admitted-student days

RADFORD - Highlander Days are held every spring for admitted freshmen and transfer students at Radford University.

This year, the number of students and guests registered for the three events brought nearly 3,000 people to the Radford and Roanoke locations - the largest group in university history.

"We are starting to see a surge in interest in programs across the university that include nursing, business, cybersecurity, education and criminal justice," said Vice President of Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications Dannette Gomez Beane. "These are in-demand fields that guarantee job placement, which is important for these students."

Most of the participants were Virginia residents. With the recently announced Radford Tuition Promise program, qualified families are hoping to benefit from the institutional commitment to cover 100% of tuition costs. Due to FAFSA delays, these families are still waiting for final confirmation of their eligibility.

Even without the assurance of aid packages, admitted students are confident that Radford will provide substantial financial support for a higher education college option. Fewer students are choosing virtual degrees and instead are choosing the more traditional campus experience that Radford offers at an affordable tuition rate, among the lowest in the state.

Students who attended a Highlander Day said they felt reassured with their decision to choose Radford.

"Great enthusiastic energy on campus, and I could tell it was genuine," said prospective student Stella Fredrick.

This year, the university plans to change its



Radford University students greet potential students, who enjoyed a day of exploring campus life and academics during Highlander Days at Radford University.

enrollment trajectory from declining to growing, with an incoming class that is larger than last year. The admissions process and financial aid awarding

continues through June 1.

Radford University



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH

As Lyme disease cases rise in the U.S., humans are not the only ones at risk. Dogs are too.

## Lyme disease in dogs: What dog owners should know

RADFORD- As Lyme disease cases rise in the U.S., humans are not the only ones at risk.

Veterinarians with the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine say dogs are increasingly vulnerable to this tick-borne illness.

"Black-legged ticks, also called deer ticks, are most common carriers of Borrelia burgdorferi and can be found in the northeastern and north-central parts of the U.S. The western black-legged tick is found on the Pacific Coast," says Jenny Marin, a clinical assistant professor at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital. "They are

small - about the size of a poppy seed and thrive in tall grasses and wooded areas."

While Lyme disease was traditionally thought to be limited primarily to the northeastern U.S., Marin says positive cases of canine Lyme disease have now been reported across 39 states reporting high and moderate prevalence. Veterinarians say dogs tend to be bitten by infected ticks in the early spring and late fall when adult ticks are most active, but animals and humans can contract Lyme disease any time of year.

See Lyme, page 6

# The YMCA at Virginia Tech's annual Y-TOSS is coming

## Call for volunteers

The YMCA at Virginia Tech Y-TOSS program is a leading sustainability initiative on the Virginia Tech campus.

Annually, Y-TOSS gathers gently used dorm items during move-out week to repurpose them. These items are later sold at the YMCA Lancaster House sale during move-in week at the beginning of the next fall semester, conveniently located across from the Virginia Tech campus. To facilitate donations, Y-TOSS strategically places storage PODS near residence halls as collection points. Volunteers play a crucial role in organizing and promoting Y-TOSS to students and families during the move-out period, essential for the success of our initiative. The goal is to make it easier and more appealing to drop those items in the Y-TOSS POD instead of the dumpster.

From the last event,

in 2023, YMCA helped divert 12 tons of waste out of the waste stream, including, for example, 1000 pounds of clothes, 100 pounds of food, and 40-plus pounds of linens. With about 50 volunteers who collected 150-plus community service hours, the event was successful in taking steps towards Virginia Tech's Climate Action Commitment of becoming a zero-waste campus by 2030.

Y-TOSS's operational period spans from May 3- 8, coinciding with finals week, which poses challenges in securing student volunteers due to their busy schedules. However, the success of the event relies heavily on a substantial amount of work and support. To address this, YMCA is actively engaging with local organizations and businesses to promote the event and recruit volunteers. YMCA needs help recruiting more volunteers and spreading the word of

the event.

Y-TOSS is a YMCA program led by Y Student Program Leaders Vivian Peregrino, Abby Touchstone, Sydney Kehl and Ellie Hepp. Volunteer shifts last for two hours. During the shift volunteers will be assigned to a specific POD and responsible for grouping donated items within the POD and keeping the area organized while also encouraging students and families to donate the items instead of trashing them. It's a great volunteer opportunity for individuals or groups to help with this huge sustainability initiative.

If you or a group you know of are interested in volunteering you can sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/>.

YMCA at Virginia Tech



PHOTO COURTESY OF NRCC

(Left to Right) Katie Thompson, Executive Director, Pulaski Community Youth Center; Margaret Hurst, First Steps Program Coordinator, Community Foundation of the New River Valley; Bonnie Graham, NRCC Professor of Human Services And Early Childhood Education; Kim Thomason, VT Early Childhood Education Initiatives Program Manager and VA AEYC Conference Committee; Emily Perkins, Head Start Giles County Site Administrator and New River Valley VA AEYC Leadership Team.

# Graham honored with 2024 VAAEYC award

New River Community College Program Head and Professor of Human Services and Early Childhood Bonnie Graham was recently recognized by the Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children (VAAEYC) as the 2024 recipient of the VAAEYC Outstanding Service to Young Children Award. The award was presented to Graham at the VAAEYC annual conference held in

March in Roanoke, Va. The board unanimously agreed to honor Graham with the award for her “tireless efforts to mentor and educate young men and women in quality care and educator practices and ensure that children in the region have access to quality care,” according to her award letter. “Bonnie is so deserving of this honor.

She has dedicated herself to ensuring quality early childhood experiences by preparing hundreds of her students to implement best practices with young children in their care,” said Dr. Sarah Tolbert-Hurysz, NRCC dean of arts and sciences. “The New River Valley is fortunate to have such a strong advocate working on early childhood initiatives.” Graham is a college student advisor

for the New River Valley chapter of the VAAEYC. The organization’s (VAAEYC) goal is to serve Virginia early childhood educators with community, professional development support, connections, and advocacy. For more information about NRCC’s early childhood development programs, visit <https://www.nr.edu/ecd/>.  
*New River Community College*

# Professor seeks answers in veterinary forensics cases

As a board-certified veterinary anatomic pathologist, Teresa Southard is no stranger to piecing together clues. Pathology is the study of injuries and diseases, and anatomic pathologists perform necropsies and biopsies to uncover the disease processes at play and determine a cause of death or cause of illness.

Southard, associate professor of anatomic pathology at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, has a particular interest in forensic pathology, performing necropsies to uncover the truth behind animal deaths that may relate to illegal activity, such as neglect and abuse. Forensic pathologists are often called in to testify in court, working with the justice system to uncover the truth.

Working on cases of horrifying violence and neglect can take a huge emotional toll, but Southard finds strength in the fact that her work can prevent future suffering.

“There’s a sense of satisfaction that you’ve contributed to the justice process,” Southard said. “Whether you find out that this animal died of natural causes and the person being blamed for it is innocent, or if you find out that someone intentionally hurt or neglected an animal and you can be part of the process that keeps them from doing that again, it’s rewarding.”

Since joining the college in 2021, she’s worked on over 70 forensic pathology cases in addition to her usual load of necropsies and biopsies.

**Finding the answers**

After a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences and an Air Force career, Southard entered veterinary school intending to become a veterinarian for lab animals, but after a pathology rotation, she was hooked. As Southard puts it, “Pathology is where you really find out the answers.”

During her anatomic pathology residency at Johns Hopkins University, Southard volunteered her necropsy skills at a Baltimore animal shelter.

“That’s where I started to see some of the evidence of neglect and abuse,” she said.

After taking a job at Cornell University, Southard built upon her forensic pathology experience as she worked alongside Sean McDonough, a trailblazer in the field. At Cornell, Southard performed over 500 forensic necropsies and appeared as an expert witness in nine criminal trials.

She joined the veterinary college at Virginia Tech in 2021 and quickly built a relationship with Baltimore City Animal Control, who now sends its forensic cases to her.

Because they are often asked to testify in court, forensic pathologists must go beyond the normal necropsy procedure.

“One of those extra duties is trying to figure out how long the animal has been dead in some cases, because that could help identify suspects,” Southard said. “We also have to document everything carefully, because if we have to go to court, it’s much easier to show a picture than describe what you saw, and it’s much more convincing to the jury. And lastly, we’re asked to comment on the degree of suffering or pain an animal encountered, which is not a part of our normal necropsy procedure.”

**Bridging the knowledge gap**  
“There’s this thing called the CSI effect, where we expect to know everything within a nice, 45-minute segment, but it doesn’t always work out that way,” Southard said. That goes double for veterinary forensic pathology, where in many cases, the information just isn’t out there.

With less research and less data, veterinary forensic

pathology struggles behind human forensic science, but Southard and others are working to bridge that gap.

For example, Southard once tried to determine whether the pattern of fractured ribs in a dog was consistent with the history of a caretaker tripping and falling while carrying the dog. She pored over the published data, but there wasn’t enough information on the mechanisms behind different canine rib fractures to form a conclusion.

Instead, she took matters into her own hands. Using cadavers, she studied how different mechanisms of injury to the thorax form different fractures. With this new information, she determined that the dog’s injuries were consistent with the history.

Southard is currently finishing her master’s degree in veterinary forensic sciences at the University of Florida, one of only two institutions in the United States that offer degrees in forensic science.

As part of her master’s thesis, Southard is collaborating with the Virginia Tech College of Engineering’s Busting lab to study the strength of bones using samples from canine cadavers. The lab offers mechanical tests that measure tensile strength, compression, hardness, and more.

“This kind of research is something that is lacking in the veterinary field,” Southard said. “We get asked these kinds of questions in trials — how much force does it take to break a dog’s femur? We know a little bit from experience because we have seen fractures where we know the causes, but we need to be able to quantify these things.”

**A small but mighty field**

Although the number of trained veterinary pathologists has increased over the years, the number of pathologists with training and experience in forensic cases remains small. In the late 1990s, only one veterinary college in the country accepted forensic

cases, and though that number has grown, there are few institutions where veterinarians can get forensic pathology experience. In the United States, the first textbook on the subject was published in 2006.

However, as the number of trained veterinary forensic pathologists has increased, so has the demand for their expertise. Over the past few decades, more and more research points toward a connection between violence against animals and violence against humans, and this has spurred law enforcement to take a deeper look at cases that involve animals.

At the veterinary college, Southard delivers lectures on forensic examination and on testifying as an expert witness. Veterinarians rarely have training in that area. There is currently no requirement for accredited veterinary colleges in the United States to address the topic, and a recent study showed that more than half of U.S. veterinary school do not address animal abuse in their core curriculum.

Southard described testifying in a case in which the animal’s primary veterinarian was also called in to testify, and the other veterinarian felt blindsided by the process and expectations. Southard wants the next generation of veterinarians to be better prepared and to be more aware of animal abuse and the responsibilities of veterinarians in abuse and neglect cases.

“My goal is that every student who graduates from this school — or any vet school — should be thinking about animal abuse, they should be aware of what some of the common signs are, and they should know what to do when they suspect abuse or neglect, at the very minimum.”

Through education, research, necropsies, and testimony, Southard works to expand the pool of knowledge so that justice can be served.

*Andrew Mann for Virginia Tech*



Marketplace



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Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia

that the Board hereby schedules a public hearing on Monday, May 13, 2024 at 7:15 p.m., or as soon thereafter, at the Montgomery County Government Center, 2nd Floor, Board Room, 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia in order to receive comments on the following:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE D-2 AND D-4 PRECINCT BOUNDARIES BY MOVING 2065, 2097 AND 2265

Legals - Montgomery County

BLOCK OF LAUREL RIDGE MILL ROAD IN THE RINER AREA OF THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA FROM THE D-2 PRECINCT TO THE D-4 PRECINCT IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE SENATE DISTRICT SPLIT IN THE D-2 PRECINCT

A copy of the full text of the Ordinance is on file in the Office of the County Administrator and is available 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for public inspection or copying.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Angela M. Hill  
County Administrator



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# OBITUARIES

## Cooper, Carlie Lee

Cooper, Carlie Lee, 81, of Josh Price (Laura), Matt Cooper (Tyler), Michael Cooper (Jessica) and Amie Crowder (Lee); great-grandchildren, Austin, Chase, Callie, Quinn, Layton, Rylee and Braxton; brothers, Paul Cook, Curtis Cook and Ricky Cook, and several nieces and nephews.



Christiansburg, died Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at her home surrounded by her loved ones. She was born in Montgomery Co., on Oct. 23, 1942, to the late Guy S. and Lessie Reed Cook. She was also preceded in death by her brother, Roger Bruce Cook, and her maternal grandmother, Susan Reed.

She is survived by her special long-time companion, Charles Roop; sons, Gary Cooper (Kim), Donnie Cooper (Kim) and Michael Cooper; daughters, Debbie Cole (Jeff) and Missy Miller (Kevin); grandchildren,

28, 2024, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. John Hopkins officiating. Interment will follow in the Hale Cemetery. The family will receive friends at McCoy Funeral Home from 1-2 p.m., before the service.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. John Hopkins officiating. Interment will follow in the Hale Cemetery. The family will receive friends at McCoy Funeral Home from 1-2 p.m., before the service.

## Cooper, Carlie Lee

Elbert Arvil Keith, 76, of Pilot, died Wednesday, April 24, 2024, at his home.

He was born in Floyd County March 12, 1948, to the late Lemon Arvil and Bertha Sowers

Keith. He was also preceded in death by his brothers, J.C., Franklin, Ray, Johnny, and Joe Keith. He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Billy and Tammie Keith; daughter, Shelia

Keith; grandchildren, Ashley Odell, and Sarah Keith; great-grandchildren, Bryson, Mackynzi, Bella, Hudson, and Kolty; and sisters and brother-in-law, Vera Mae Hodge, and Jewel and Randolph Vaden.

Funeral services will be

conducted Saturday, April 27, 2024, at 1 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Steve and Mary Lou Akers officiating. Interment will follow in Sunset Cemetery. The family will receive friends from 12 - 1 p.m. before the service.

## Price, Frank Eugene

Frank Eugene "Gene" Price, of Blacksburg, passed away peacefully Thursday, April 18, 2024.

Gene was born Oct. 21, 1935 to Guy Lewis Price and Anna Mae Slusser Price. He was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years, Carolyn Grubb Price; father Guy Lewis Price; mother Anna Mae Slusser Price; and brothers Jack Price and Glen Price.

He is survived by his daughters, Marie Greene and husband Joe and Sharon Davis and husband Steven; son Guy Price; sisters-in-law Janice Price (Jack) and Barbara Price (Glen); six grandchildren, Crystal Bond (Jerry), Quentin Davis (Samantha),



Price and Ean Greene (Summer); three great grandchildren, Levi Davis, Rylan Bond and Aubrey Davis; as well as numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

We would like to thank Chippenham Hospital for the care they provided during his final days.

The viewing for Gene and Memorial for Carolyn was held at McCoy Funeral Home in Blacksburg Thursday April 25, 2024. A graveside service was held at the Veterans Cemetery in Dublin on April 26, 2024, officiated by Rev. Neal Turner.

# RADFORD NEWS JOURNAL

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[radfordnewsjournal.com](http://radfordnewsjournal.com)

## Kennedy, Lois Virginia Hall

Lois Virginia Hall Kennedy was taken home by her Lord and Savior April 22, 2024.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 70 years Lester W. Kennedy Jr., parents George and Mary Hall, brothers Richard, Donald, Tommie, and Larry, and one sister Doris.

She leaves behind five children Judy, Lester (Susie), Richard (Jeni), Danny (Valarie), Joyce (Ron); 16 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren; and 4 great great grandchildren.

Lois was born June 30, 1927 to George and Mary Hall in Roanoke. They were not a rich family, but they had enough to get by. When the Depression hit Roanoke, the family lost their new home and lost their money in a bank closure. In order to find work, Lois and the family moved to Pennsylvania and New Jersey. By 1940 they would finally move back to the Clearbrook area in Roanoke County. Her father would take up a leadership role in the Clearbrook Grace Brethren Church, where Lois would play the piano. After graduating from Andrew Lewis High School Lois, worked to help support the family and continued to help her father grow the church in Clearbrook and began setting up the formation of a church in Willis, Va. In the summer of 1949 the church needed a temporary pastor and on one Sunday morning Lois and Lester met walking through the same set of doors in the church. By August both left to go to Winona Lake, Ind. to attend Grace College. They were engaged on Christmas Eve 1949 and were married at the Clearbrook Brethren Church on June 16, 1950. They would both go on to graduate



from Grace in 1952 and would begin their lives as missionaries to the Central African Republic.

They were first sent to France for language study, and it is there that they welcomed their first child, Judy. Lois had a keen knack for languages and learned how to fluently speak both French and the native language Sango. By the summer of 1953 they began their service to the salvation of others in Africa. Lois helped lead bible studies and organized prayer groups with local women of Mbaiki. Two of her children, Lester III and Richard, would also be born in Africa. By 1960, their first mission trip ended and they returned to the U.S. where Lester would be the preacher of the Grace Brethren Church in Limestone, Tenn. During their three-year stay in Tennessee they would welcome two more children, Danny and Joyce.

In 1966, Lois and the family would return to the mission field in Africa for three more years. When they returned, the family ministered at the First Brethren Church in Buena Vista, Va. Lois played the piano and was an important member of the church and supported her husband throughout their 16 years of service to the church there. In 1987, Lois and Lester would change churches for the final time when they moved to Fairlawn to minister at the Grace Brethren Church. Lois would go on to play the piano at the church for almost 30 years and Lester would serve as the preacher of the church until his death Nov. 17, 2020. On April 22, 2024, Lois was greeted by her

See **Obits**, page 5

**CROSSWORD**

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| 64 |    |    |    |    |    | 65 |    |       |    | 66 |

- CLUES ACROSS**
- Easy as 1-2-3
  - Goat and camel hair fabric
  - A women undergarment
  - British bathrooms
  - Assemblages of parts into one entity
  - Semitic fertility god
  - Dull & uninteresting
  - Yemen capital
  - Stare impertinently
  - Banished persons
  - Heart failure & energy supplement
  - Reduction in force
  - Women's \_\_\_ movement
  - Polynesian wrapped skirt
  - Double-reed instruments
  - Own (Scottish)
  - Summer window dressings
  - Many not ands
- CLUES DOWN**
- Vestment worn by priests
  - The trunk of a tree
  - Transmission line cable
  - Freshwater duck genus
  - Bulk storage container
  - Oil obtained from flowers
  - Shopping containers
  - Abnormal breathing
  - Brew
  - Bake eggs in their shells
  - Serviceable
  - A person in the navy
  - A child's slight injury
  - Fain
  - Supports trestletree
  - Parian Chronicle discovery site
  - Greek famous for fables
  - Farical afterpiece
  - Dispatches by mail
  - Hall of Fame (abbr.)
  - Aah
  - Unnaturally pale
  - Before
  - Fixed in one's purpose
  - Madames
  - Frosts
  - City drains
  - Baseball playoff
  - Cruise
  - Steeple
  - Precipitation
  - Ancient Greek rhetorician
  - A unit of two
  - Viewed
  - Taxis
  - 4840 square yards
  - London radio station
  - Perform work regularly
  - Longest geological time



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# Obits

from page 4

savior for whom she loved and was reunited with her husband in eternal glory.

Lois lived an incredible and almost unbelievable life and she used it to help others find salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. She loved all of her family and prayed for them every night. If there is one thing Lois would want everyone to know it is that there is nothing the Lord cannot help you with and if you pray and accept Him then anything is possible.

The family received friends Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services

followed with Pastor Lester Kennedy III officiating. Interment followed in Sunrise Burial Park in Radford.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributions to Fairlawn Grace Brethren Church Memorial Fund (in Lois's name), 6893 State Rd 1204, Fairlawn, VA 24141.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

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

Katy Mitchell, of Blacksburg; uncle, Rodney Kirby, Georgia; numerous cousins, and his dogs, Joey and Julie.

Mike's first priority in life was his children. He took great joy in being with Eli and Caroline and succeeded in being the best dad anyone could ever have had. They were his reason for living. He was very protective of his mother and was a good son.

Mike was known as much for his kindness and ready smile as for his music. He was able to brighten even the gloomiest of situations and make everything that he did fun.

Mike got his first guitar at age 10, stood in front of a mirror playing it for hours and dreaming of becoming a rock star. He played throughout his life with bands such as Yams from Outer Space, Axis, Lather, Train Wreck, and Awesomesauce. He was a founding member of each of these bands. The "Yams" toured the east coast in a rickety old school bus that broke down more than it ran. Mike played with such notable musicians as Dave Matthews, Slash from Guns N' Roses, and Artimus Pyle of Lynyrd Skynyrd. He and his band released three CD albums containing original songs that they wrote.

Mike was a fan of KISS and delighted in taking his kids to see them in 2020.

He fulfilled a lifelong dream by seeing Paul McCarthy perform. He aspired to play guitar as well as Eddie Van Halen, and who is to say that he didn't?

He was baptized at the age of 17 at Haven's Chapel Methodist Church, Floyd. He played in a praise band in Atlanta, Ga., and led two praise bands in churches in the New River Valley. He had a lifelong and very private relationship with God.

Mike taught music in the New River Valley for 30 years. He loved to share his gift and love of music with others.

A Celebration of Life was held at Gardner Funeral Home on Thursday April 25, 2024, led by Scott Dickens of Richmond. The Celebration was followed by a graveside service in Jacksonville Cemetery, Floyd. The family received friends one hour prior to the Celebration of Life.

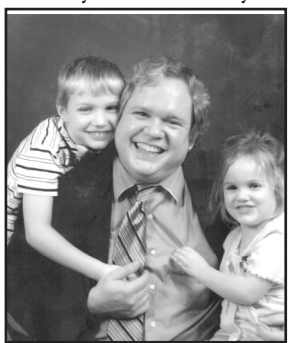
All former band mates of Mike's were invited to serve as honorary pallbearers. The family wishes to thank the Floyd County Rescue Squad, Skyline Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Good Samaritan Hospice, and Gardner Funeral Home. Online condolences may be made at [gardnerfuneralhomefloyd.com](http://gardnerfuneralhomefloyd.com). The family is being served by Gardner Funeral Home.

See **Obit**, page 6

## Kirby, Michael Steven

Michael Steven Kirby, 59, of Floyd, passed into the arms of Jesus on April 20, 2024, at his home. His children were by his side.

He was a graduate of Floyd County High School and Radford University, where he majored in classical guitar performance. He was preceded in death by his father, Raymond Kirby; his grandparents Earnest and Juanita Cregger Kirby of Roanoke and Emmitt



and Mary Shupe Craghead of Roanoke; step grandmothers, Dorothy Farmer Kirby of Radford and Louise Wertz Craghead of Roanoke; aunt, Mary Anne Collins and a cousin, Mary McNeely.

He is survived by his children, Elijah Kirby, of Blacksburg and Caroline Kirby, of Blacksburg and Savannah, Ga; mother, Adelene Kirby, of Floyd; the mother of his children,

### ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

**St. Philip's Anglican Church**, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, [www.stphilipsblacksburg.org](http://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](http://www.sttofc.org) for mid-week masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).

### BAPTIST

**First Baptist Church**, 555 West Rock Road, Radford, 639-3873. Rev. Corwin C. Casey, Pastor. Worship with us: 9:45 a.m.; Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.; Praise and Worship: 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship Service; Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, 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: [fbradford.org](http://fbradford.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](http://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](http://www.SnowvilleChristianChurch.com) (and Facebook), Office: 540-633-3761, Email: [office@SnowvilleChristianChurch.com](mailto: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](http://www.graceradford.org).

### LUTHERAN

**Christ Lutheran Church**, 201 Harvey St. Sunday worship with communion at 10am; fellowship & snacks at 11am. All are welcome. Upcoming events and fellowship opportunities (Senior Brunch, Faith

# Radford

## WORSHIP DIRECTORY

### GOD'S COVENANT

Read Genesis 9:1 through 11:32

A covenant is a promise or contract between two parties. However, a biblical covenant involved much more. It was a permanent arrangement designed to promote friendship and understanding between God and man. After the flood, God made a covenant with Noah and every living thing.

I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth (Genesis 9:13).

This covenant had three parts. Never again would a flood devastate the earth. Season would follow season as long as the earth remained. Then God gave the rainbow to show that He could be trusted to keep His part of the covenant.

The rainbow speaks of God's grace and mercy. But His grace didn't stop with the rainbow. God wanted to have a relationship with us in spite of our unworthiness, so He sent us a Mediator—Jesus—who, by His death, opened up a new and better covenant, one that removed our sin and cleansed our conscience (Luke 22:20).

Prayer for Today: Lord, with Your help I will keep my part of the covenant—to love and honor You. Amen

Quicklook: Genesis 9:8-17

**If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445 or email at [advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com](mailto:advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com)**

& Film, Rough Draught, etc.) detailed in weekly email and on website: [clcradford.org](http://clcradford.org). 540-639-2671.

**Our Saviour Lutheran Church ELCA**, 1845 Cambria St NE, Christiansburg. Celebrate Word and Sacrament as we worship with varied liturgy, hymns and music. Join our inclusive community in person or online Sundays at 10:00 am ([youtube.com/@OSLCcburg](http://youtube.com/@OSLCcburg)), followed by refreshments and fellowship. Ministries include Bible study, choir, food ministry, and crafters. Little Free Pantry and Library available 24-7 by the parking lot. Parent's Morning Out offers faith-based activities and play for children 16 month - 5 years select weekdays. Wheelchair accessible. Learn how you may contribute to our ministries at [www.oslc-cburg.org](http://www.oslc-cburg.org). 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@stmcl.us](mailto:hope@stmcl.us); Website [www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org](http://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. [\[tralmethodistchurch.com\]\(http://tralmethodistchurch.com\).](http://www.cen-</a></p>
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### PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

**Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church**, Rev. Larry Christopher (540) 552-7194. [lchristopher695@comcast.net](mailto:lchristopher695@comcast.net). Sunday school at 10 a.m. and morning worship is 11 a.m. Evening service at 6 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

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

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

### PRESBYTERIAN

Join us at **The Presbyterian Church of Radford**, 201 4th Street, at the corner of 4th & Randolph. 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](mailto:pcofradford@gmail.com), Website [www.pcradford.org](http://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: [StPaulUMCChristiansburgVA](http://StPaulUMCChristiansburgVA). All are welcome. Website: [www.stpaulvaumc.org](http://www.stpaulvaumc.org)

# DAR honors members for their community service

The Alleghany Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) has honored two individuals for their outstanding work with community service in our local area.

A luncheon was held on Saturday, April 20 at the Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Blacksburg to present 2024 DAR Community Service Awards to Alicia Glynn and Margot Thompson.

Glynn volunteers with the Kiwanis Club of Christiansburg. Since moving to the New River Valley about seven years ago, Alicia chose to become involved with the Kiwanis because she loves children and all the Kiwanis Club does for them, along with caring about their members and families. Glynn does a lot with the yearly Wilderness Trail Festival, sponsored by the Kiwanis. She also does outreach to the ill and injured members with phone calls and cards.

Thompson has given many hours of work with “Room at the Table,” a community outreach project sponsored by the Christiansburg Presbyterian Church to supply free weekly meals to those in need. Thompson serves as a team leader and this year she will be a co-organizer of Room at the Table’s weekly meals and distribution. Margot also volunteers once a month at “For Your Table,” a community food pantry. Additionally, Thompson volunteers with the Montgomery County Christmas Store and is a past board member of the Montgomery Museum of Art & History and a docent. She is vital in helping with the Heritage Day event sponsored by the museum.

*Alleghany Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution*



PHOTO COURTESY OF DOT CUPP

(From left) Award recipient Alicia Glynn, Alleghany Chapter Regent Debbie Haught and Award recipient Margot Thompson.

## Lyme from page 2

Symptoms of Lyme disease in dogs can vary and may not appear for months after infection. Those may symptoms include:

- Fever
- Joint pain or swelling
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Lethargy
- Appetite loss
- Increased thirst and urination
- If left untreated, veterinarians say the

disease can damage the kidneys, nervous system, and heart and cause chronic joint pain. Kidney damage from Lyme disease is typically fatal, and damage to the nervous system can lead to seizure disorders. Heart damage due to Lyme disease is rare.

To diagnose Lyme disease, your dog’s veterinarian will examine its clinical signs, exposure to black-legged ticks, and test results. Dogs produce antibodies

4-6 weeks after infection, which can be detected through testing. Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics for typically a month.

“While antibiotics are effective in most cases, it’s critical to complete the entire course of treatment, even if symptoms improve, to prevent the recurrence of the disease and reduce the risk of complications,” says Marin. “Most symptoms clear up quickly with

antibiotic treatment.”

Like so many diseases, the best treatment is prevention. Your veterinarian might suggest vaccinating your dog against Lyme disease or prescribing preventive products, depending on its needs and exposure to ticks.

*Virginia Tech*

## Rotert from page 1

acknowledge the strides both have made.

And the strides can be more profound than one might think.

In general, music therapy can be a powerful tool for improving quality of life and enhancing recovery. Both the music and the personal interaction can open avenues for cognitive, emotional and physical improvement for people facing a wide variety of challenges.

“Music is a uniquely powerful catalyst for healing because it can effectively support many areas of functioning at once,” Rotert explained.

“The structured and rhythmic components of music can support measurable shifts in physiological rhythms like heart and breathing rates, motor rehabilitation, and speech

rehabilitation.”

The benefits of collaborative musicmaking are also significant. It can help support effective interpersonal interactions for people with behavioral and communication challenges.

Additionally, music can provide a pathway for emotional expression, insight, and problem solving.

“For example,” Rotert said, “a lyric discussion of a relatable song could help a person feel less alone in their experience and identify strategies for positive change.”

Graduate student Grace Pflieger specializes in using music therapy across generations to create connections between people who might be separated by many years. This is her third year presenting at the Music

Therapy Showcase.

Pflieger says the event gives the students a valuable opportunity to reflect on their growth during the academic year and get experience in a real-world scenario.

“Presentations are an integral part of the profession,” Pflieger said, “and the showcase offers a formal opportunity to practice this skill.”

It also offers the clients the opportunity to see how much progress they have made.

“This year, the Music Through Generations group I led worked together to write their own song and record it for the presentation. They were very proud of their work.”

Marshall Colón is a senior music therapy major. Colón explained how the work they

do can be very important to recognize at the showcase.

“One of my clients last semester had low self-esteem and low confidence,” Colón recounted. “We encouraged him to perform live music during the showcase with the hopes that the positive reaction would help.”

When the client decided to perform with Colón, a major step forward.

“I felt a lot of pride and accomplishment when we presented our song.”

Senior music therapy major Sapphire Halstead cites a similar experience.

“It cultivates a deeper connection with my own clients as we collaborate to present something we’ve been working on together to an audience.”

And working with other students in the process has been valuable as well.

“The showcase has played a pivotal role in enhancing my understanding of working with different clients by observing the progress and performances of others,” Halstead noted.

Ultimately, the showcase is the culmination of much work and interaction, and Professor Rotert says the strengths and personal qualities of the clients brings more to the students than they can imagine going into their education.

“We deeply respect our clients and acknowledge that we often learn more from them than they learn from us,” Rotert said.

*Sean Kotz for Radford University*

## Speakers from page 1

a beacon of leadership in the corporate and community spheres. Currently serving as the external affairs manager at Appalachian Power Co., Cox’s responsibilities include overseeing local and county governmental affairs, fostering regional economic development and nurturing community relations. As a registered lobbyist in Virginia, she actively engages in General Assembly sessions in Richmond, advocating for policies that benefit her community and beyond.

Prior to her role at Appalachian Power, Cox served as the president and CEO of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and its Partnership for Economic Growth. Under her leadership, the chamber achieved significant milestones, including securing a five-star rating with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for the first time in its history. In addition to her Master of Business Administration from Radford, Cox’s academic journey includes a Bachelor of Science in Business

Administration from Ferrum College.

Cox’s commitment to service extends beyond her professional endeavors as she actively participates on multiple state, regional, and local boards. She resides in Franklin County with her husband, Jonathan, and their two children, embodying the values of leadership, dedication and community engagement.

Radford University is honored to welcome Pace and Cox as the keynote speakers for our Spring Commencement ceremonies. Their inspiring stories and

steadfast commitment to excellence serve as guiding lights for the graduating Class of 2024, inspiring its members to pursue their dreams and make meaningful contributions to society.

For more information about Radford University’s Spring Commencement ceremonies, please visit [www.radford.edu/commencement](http://www.radford.edu/commencement).

*Radford University*

## Epperly from page 1

The details of this most recent development were in Bodmer’s letter to the board. According to Bodmer, the DNA analysis report can be obtained from the Virginia State Police Investigator who was present for the Gatewood excavation, who also processed and secured the Rapid DNA test from that which was excavated and submitted the swab sample through ANDE RAPID DNA to be tested.

The sample will now be sent to the state’s laboratory for further testing, in hopes of profiling the DNA further.

The recent finding comes a year after apparent bones were discovered at another site in Pulaski County. Bodmer is convinced they belong to her sister.

“We will still continue this process until one of

the items unearthed proves to have enough non-deteriorated DNA to match Gina’s profile,” she said.

Epperly’s age has started to take a toll on him, and he recently had hip surgery. It is because of that age he is eligible to receive a hearing every year from now on. Bodmer has requested a three-year deferral from the next parole hearing, despite Epperly’s age.

## Obit from page 5

### Rollins, Larry Darnelle

On Thursday, Dec. 21, 2023, Larry Darnelle Rollins (aka “Buzz”), age 67 of Radford, Va., transitioned to his final resting place.

Larry was born May 9, 1956 in Radford to Bobby “Pannie” Nelson Rollins and Archie Rollins, Jr.

Larry attended Radford High School, where he played football, and assisted the Bobcats in winning the State AAA Championships. During this time, he lovingly earned the nickname “Buzz.”

Larry enjoyed fishing, hunting, spending time with his dog Sasha, but most of all, Larry loved his family. He always had a joke or comment to make us laugh.

He was last employed at Radford University.

Larry was preceded in death by his loving mother, Bobby (Pannie) Nelson Rollins Flynn of (Radford); stepfather, Roy Edward Flynn (Pulaski); maternal grandparents, William McKinley

Nelson, and Annie Virginia Nelson (Radford); paternal grandparents, Archie Rollins Sr. and Esther Lena (Casey) Rollins; and step grandmother, Isabelle Day Rollins (all of New River); his grandson, Devin Hairston; and multiple aunts, uncles, and other relatives.

Larry leaves to cherish his memory and love, his wife, Brenda Porterfield Rollins, of Radford; his father, Archie Rollins, Jr. and stepmother, Cara Miata Rollins, both of Radford; his children, son, Lowell Jermaine (Jay) Walson of Radford and daughter, Tasha Akers, of Christiansburg; his sisters, Paula Rollins Moore (James) of Accokeek, Md., Tena Rollins Fisher, Anita Dawn Woodson (James), Rosalind Gale Nelson, all of Radford, Natalie Rollins



Carter (Vincent) of Alexandria, Va., and Dana Austin of Charlotte, N.C.; his brothers, Bobby Nelson, Greg Rollins and Steve Rollins, all of Radford; and his special niece, Stacie Nelson of Radford; his grandchildren, Shauna Walson of Georgia, Shametrius (Anthony) Raymond of Missouri, Hanna Walson of Radford, Jeremiah Walson of Nevada, Danika Akers of Blacksburg and Corey Hairston of Montgomery, Va.; his nieces, Barbara Ruiz, Portsmouth, Va., Brittany Joyce Cleveland Smith, Staunton, Va., Jessica Astoy (Yusif) Alexandria, Va., Kayla Distefano (Rick) Springfield, Va., and Veronica Nelson, Radford; his nephews, Christopher C. Adams, Arenas, N.Y., Shawn A. Woodson, Florence, Ala., Justin Carter, Raleigh, N.C.; his aunts, Audrey Lee (Sherman), New

River, Virginia Clark (Calvin) Upper Marlboro, Md., Connie Kincannon (John), Columbus, Ohio; and his beloved dog, Sasha.

He also leaves a host of great grandchildren, stepchildren, and other relatives; and his special friends, Georgina Walson, Cindy Akers Rollins, Charles (Chuckie) Day, David Stewart, David Morton, and Odell Palmer.

A graveside memorial service will be at the Sunrise Burial Park in Fairlawn on May 9, 2024, at 1 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the graveside memorial service will be held in Highland Memory Gardens Mausoleum, 5555 Lee Highway, Dublin, VA 24084.

Following the memorial service a “Celebration of Life” will be at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge, 100 Pulaski St., Radford.

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

# RADFORD SPORTS

## Hoover coming home to state as Hokie assistant

**Marty Gordon**  
*NRVsports@mainstreetnews.com*

Roanoke native Jen Hoover is coming home after serving as assistant coach for the past two years at Kentucky, the very school where former Virginia Tech Coach Kenny Brooks has landed.

New Virginia Tech women's basketball head coach Megan Duffy named Hoover as an assistant coach of the program Monday. Hoover is the all-time winningest coach at her alma mater, Wake Forest, where she led the program for 10 years.

"Coach Hoover brings a wealth of knowledge to our program, including deep experience as a head coach and player in the ACC," Duffy said. "From our first conversation, I knew Jen would be a great fit, she has the energy needed to continue the winning tradition of Hokie basketball and can develop top talent at an elite level. She knows what it takes to lead and connect with female athletes in this evolving era of women's college basketball. She's an excellent addition to an already strong staff."

led the Demon Deacons to four postseason appearances, including an NCAA Tournament berth in 2020-21.

Before her time in Winston-Salem, Hoover spent one year as the head coach at High Point in 2011-12. During that season, the Panthers earned a 20-13 record, including a 13-5 mark in the Big South. The 20 wins tied for the most in a single season since High Point moved to Division I in 1999. Hoover was named the 2012 Spalding Maggie Dixon Division I Rookie Coach of the Year after the season.

"I am both thrilled and grateful to join Coach Duffy and the entire Virginia Tech family," Hoover said. "Not only is she a proven winner with a knack for player development, but her character and integrity shine through in everything she does. Returning to the ACC and coming home to coach at Virginia Tech is an incredible honor! I'm eager to get to work building strong relationships with our student-athletes, collaborating with our staff, and immersing myself in the unwavering



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

passion of Hokie Nation."

Hoover's assistant coaching career began in 1994 and included stints at California, Virginia, Memphis, James Madison, East Carolina, VCU and Missouri-Kansas City.

In three seasons as an assistant coach at California, from 2008-11, she helped the Golden Bears to a combined 69-36 record, their first-ever NCAA Tournament Sweet 16 in 2009 and a WNIT Championship in 2010. She also helped bring in back-to-back, top-10 recruiting classes at California, including the No. 1 class in 2009. While at Cal, Hoover helped coach Kentucky alumna and current coaching video coordinator DeNesha Stallworth, among All-

Americans such as Ashley Walker and Devanei Hampton.

Before her time at California, Hoover was an associate head coach at Memphis in 2007-08 and an assistant coach with the Tigers in 2002-03. Between those two stops at Memphis, she spent four years as an assistant coach, including two years as a recruiting coordinator, under Hall of Farmer Debbie Ryan at Virginia from 2003-07. There, she helped produce a pair of top-15 recruiting classes in 2005 and 2006 and guided the program to a couple of 20-win seasons, an NCAA Tournament appearance and two WNIT berths. She also helped Virginia ink junior college All-American Aisha Mohammed

and McDonald's All-American and 2006-07 ACC Rookie of the Year Monica Wright.

Hoover started her coaching career at the University of Missouri-Kansas City from 1994-96, before becoming an assistant coach at Virginia Commonwealth for two seasons in 1996-98. She then spent two seasons at East Carolina from 1998-00, before moving on to James Madison in 2000-2002, where she helped the Dukes to the WNIT Final Four.

Hoover has an impressive reputation for developing forwards at the highest level, in part because of her own playing career. A post player herself, she starred for Wake Forest from 1987-91. She was a three-time All-ACC selection and is

still second on the school's career charts for points (1,728) and rebounds (1,006). Hoover led the Demon Deacons to their first NCAA Tournament appearance in 1988, and the next year, she helped the South Team win a bronze medal at the Olympic Festival in Oklahoma City, Okla., in 1989. Hoover was later inducted into the Wake Forest Sports Hall of Fame in 2007.

Following her collegiate career in Winston-Salem, she played professionally overseas for the Solna IF Basketball Team in Stockholm, Sweden, from 1991-92. She then played with Athletes in Action on the USA Fall Exhibition Tour in 1993, followed by the Australian Spring Tour the following year, before beginning her career in coaching.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECHNIQUES

**Blacksburg High School freshman Jenna Kidd is excelling on the gymnastics mat.**

## Local gymnast qualifies for Eastern Nationals

Virginia Techniques Gymnastics gymnast Jenna Kidd has qualified to the USAG Level 9 Eastern National Championships.

Kidd, 15, is a freshman at Blacksburg High School and trains five days a week at Virginia Techniques. She is coached by owner and team director Cheryl Johnson, head coach Amanda James, and optionals coach Tad Piscatelli.

Kidd earned her spot in this prestigious championship meet after a strong all-around performance at the recent USAG Region 7 Regional Championship meet, held at the Nittany Valley Sports Center in State College, Pa. April 11-14.

At regionals, Kidd claimed the uneven bar event title with an impressive 9.5. She placed third on the floor exercise with a score of 9.625. Her all-around score was a 37.325, placing her fifth in the Junior 8 age division and securing her a spot in USAG Eastern National Championships.

Kidd is also the Virginia USAG Level 9 silver medalist on the uneven bars, floor exercise and all-around.

The USAG Gymnastics Women's Program is comprised of eight regions throughout the nation, representing all 50 states. Region 7 Gymnastics is the governing body of USAG Gymnastics representing Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. The top seven all-around finishers and one alternate from each age group at Regionals qualify to represent Region 7 at the Eastern National Championships.

"We are proud of Jenna for qualifying to compete at this prestigious event," said Cheryl Johnson, owner, and head coach of Virginia Techniques Gymnastics. "Jenna has had a wonderful season. Her hard work, dedication, and perseverance

See Kidd, page 8

## Sports notes: Radford to rededicate Hodge Field

Hodge Field in Radford was built in the late 70s, and over the years has been home to both boys and girls baseball and softball games.

This coming Monday, the public is invited to the rededication of the field at 5:30 p.m., 1014 Pendleton Street in Radford.

Joe Hodge was a long-time member of the Radford Parks and Recreation Department where he served as athletic director and the parks and fields supervisor. He, along with several summer park aides, the Public Works Department and many volunteers helped to construct the field.

When he wasn't working on the fields, Hodge also found time to help coach many teams.

The new upgrades by the recreation department include new dugouts, fencing, water lines, scoreboard, seating, painting and a new Joe Hodge Field sign.

RU's Rupert Big South POW

The Big South Conference announced Tuesday morning that River Rupert has earned Defensive Player of the Week honors for the first time this season.

The Falls Church native headed Radford's defense to back-to-back 16-6 victories. During the game against Gardner-Webb, Rupert tallied a single-game career high of four caused turnovers in addition to three groundballs and an assist on a goal. Facing Presbyterian, she caused three turnovers and scooped up two groundballs. Rupert was also a major contributor to Radford's 91-percent success rate across the two



FILE PHOTO

**Hodge Field is located at Sisson Park.**

games.

**Kinneberg to lead River Turtles**

The Pulaski River Turtles will enter their fourth year of competition in the Appalachian League with new leadership in the clubhouse, as respected baseball veteran Bill Kinneberg joins the organization as manager for the 2024 season.

The appointment marks Kinneberg's second season in the Appalachian League; Kinneberg managed the Bristol State Liners in 2023. A decorated baseball veteran with 39 years of coaching experience, Kinneberg has enjoyed considerable success in college baseball.

Regarded as one of the most accomplished head coaches in the history of the University of Utah's baseball program, Kinneberg amassed 381 wins, two NCAA tournament appearances, one Mountain West tournament championship

and one Pac-12 conference title during his 18-year career (1996, 2005-21). Kinneberg received the Pac-12 Baseball Coach of the Year award in 2016. He retired from full-time coaching following Utah's 2021 season.

Head coaching stints at UTEP (1985) and Wyoming (1986-92) preceded his tenure at Utah. His teams established school records for victories in a season at UTEP in 1985 and Wyoming in 1990, an achievement that earned him WAC Coach of the Year honors.

### CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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## RADFORD SPORTS

## RU Athletics hold annual RUBY awards

The Radford University athletics department came together to celebrate the accomplishments of its student-athletes at the annual RUBY's awards banquet on Monday night.

In the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee's 12th year organizing the event, the evening inside Preston Hall was all about honoring programs and individuals who have made contributions to the Highlanders' great success during the 2023-24 campaign in the classroom, in competition and in the community.

Strength & Conditioning Award - Olivia Hunter, Lacrosse and William Flanagan, Baseball

"This year's female strength & conditioning award goes to someone that is a strong leader for her team on the field and in the weight room. With a tremendous amount of success at her position since she's been here, a squat max of 335, a bench press max of 175, and a power clean max of 160, this year's female strength & conditioning award goes to Olivia Hunter." -Sam Pyles

"This year's male strength & conditioning award goes to someone who possesses a tremendous amount of strength, confidence, and leadership in the weight room. He has led his team since the day he began his career at Radford, and has been an extension of our staff during the most vigorous strength, speed, and conditioning sessions. With a back squat max of 465lb and a deadlift max of 500lbs, this year's Male strength & Conditioning award goes to Will Flanagan." -Jen Norton

Transfer of the Year - Olivia Flanagan, Volleyball and Chandler Turner, Men's Basketball

Flanagan made her presence known on the court this year by leading the Highlanders in kills and points with 140 kills and 170.0 points across 66 sets in 19 matches. Finished the season with a .160 hitting percentage on 387 total attacks and contributed 35.0 blocks, 31 digs, 11 service aces and three assists. She would record two career highs during a monster performance to secure the win over Presbyterian and would lead her to receiving the Big South Player of the Week honor the first time the program has received the award since Samantha Reitz garnered the award on Oct. 18, 2021.

Turner used his final year of eligibility with the Highlanders as he signed in May to join the team for his graduate season. The powerful forward played in 31 of 33 games this season, averaging 9.8 points, 5.6 rebounds, 1.1 assists and .6 steals per game. He shined in Radford's triple overtime game against Winthrop, earning a single game-career high of 33 points and 12 rebounds for his first double-double of the 2023-24 season. Turner also earned academic accolades being named to Big South's

Men's Basketball All-Academic team.

Scholar Athlete of the Year - Emily Brandow, Women's Tennis and Nick McCumsey, Men's Cross Country

Battling on the top flights every season, Brandow began her career in 2021 clinching a 4-3 semifinals victory in the Big South Tournament to push Radford to the Championship for the second time ever. Since then, she has accumulated 32 singles wins and 32 doubles wins which both rank within the top-15 in program history while earning a 3.97 GPA in Biology. Brandow also most recently won the Big South's all-academic award in back-to-back seasons.

A scholar off the course and a fantastic runner on it, this year's male scholar-athlete of the year Nick McCumsey carries a 3.94 GPA as a Sociology major. McCumsey earned his 6k personal best right out of the gate during the first meet of the 2023 season. Additionally, he came in 34 place at the 2023 Big South Cross Country Championships.

Coach of the Year - Ben Sohrabi, Women's Soccer

Women's Soccer Head Coach Ben Sohrabi earned this year's inaugural Coach of the Year award after another historic season in his 28th year at the helm of the program. At the conclusion of the 2023 Fall season, Sohrabi was named Big South Coach of the Year, the sixth overall in women's soccer's history. Sohrabi led the Highlanders to their sixth regular season championship in program history last Fall posting a 10-5-2 overall and 6-1-1 Big South record.

Last season marked the 16th time Sohrabi has led a Highlander team to 10 or more wins. Radford as a team ranked top-two in shots, shots on goal, points, goals and assists in the Big South. Sohrabi's five conference coach of the year awards are now two more than the next closest coach in Big South history.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP AWARD - Tori Boyd, Softball and Noah Haddad, Men's Soccer

This award recognizes a senior student-athlete who has excelled in academics and athletics, has made significant contributions to the community by demonstrating leadership and a commitment to service. This award recognizes an individual who promotes the university and athletics departments' missions, goals, and values through their actions; demonstrates exceptional leadership ability; and fosters a positive and motivating environment for their team. Boyd, from the softball program, and Haddad, from the men's soccer program, met every requirement and then some to earn this year's award.

Alliance of Athletes Award - Baseball  
The Alliance of Athletes Award was first awarded last year under the title "Highlanders for Highlanders". Team support is vital to the success of any

athletics program. Radford Student-Athletes consistently support each other's programs by displaying spirit during competition and this award recognizes a team who has exhibited what being a Highlander is all about, by showing up and cheering on each of our programs. This year's recipient of the award is the baseball program.

The Ruby Cup - Women's Soccer

The RUBY CUP recognizes a team that achieved over a 3.0 GPA, displays team spirit at competitions, and is active in the community throughout the year. Not only is this team high achieving on the field of play, but also consistently shows support to other programs by displaying spirit during competition and are very giving of their time and service to the community.

The women's soccer program not only pushed themselves to a successful season on the pitch last Fall, but pushed off the field to an incredible team GPA while also supporting their local community at multiple charity events. The women's soccer program was also a common sight at Radford home and away events throughout the academic season.

Academic Excellence Team Award - Softball

The Academic Excellence Award is another new award to the Ruby's this year. This award is to recognize the team who embodies what it means to be a student-athlete. This year's recipient of the award is the Highlanders' softball program.

Support Staff of the Year - Abby Federici, Jennifer Norton, and Allison McCoy

The Support Staff of the Year Award is new to the RUBY's this year. This award is to acknowledge the staff who work behind the scenes to support our student athletes' successes on and off the field. It was voted on by our student-athletes to recognize three individuals who have had a positive impact on their time here at Radford. This year's award winners were athletics trainer Abby Federici, associate athletics director for sports performance Jennifer Norton and associate athletics director for student-athlete support services Allison McCoy.

Comeback Athlete of the Year - Jillian Silverstone, Women's Soccer and Scott Rouse, Baseball

In October of 2022, Silverstone fell during a tackle and tore her shoulder labrum. She was taped up, won her first Big South Championship, and was eventually named to the all-tournament team. During the spring of 2023, Silverstone worked harder than anyone to get her shoulder stronger and get back on the soccer field. Then, in preseason 2023, she took another fall on that same shoulder right after getting cleared to return to full soccer participation. As the 2023 season continued, Silverstone

continued to work on her shoulder and helped guide the team to back-to-back Big South women's soccer championships.

Last season, Rouse was struck with a line drive and suffered a subdural hematoma which is when blood pools between the brain and its outermost covering and can be life threatening. Despite the injury, Rouse earned the academic achievement of being on the Dean's list for each of the last two semesters. His return to the field is only possible by encouraging CT scans, protective equipment and by playing specific sports like baseball.

Freshman of the Year - Eileen Albers, Women's Soccer and Tom Saporta, Men's Tennis

Albers was named Freshman of the year after an incredible debut campaign with women's soccer last Fall. At the season's end of year postseason awards, Albers became the sixth Highlander to ever earn Freshman of the Year in program history and the second in the last three seasons to do so. The Melsungen, Germany native was electric leading the team in goals (6) and points (15). Her six goals ranked third-most overall in the conference and most among Big South freshman.

Saporta was named Freshman of the Year after bursting onto the scene with the men's tennis program this Spring. The newcomer played on court two singles and split time on court two and three doubles facing tough competition all season. Despite that, Saporta was able to claim victories over opponents from schools such as ETSU, BYU, and Campbell. His total singles victories also led the men's tennis program overall.

Athlete of the Year - Chloe Wellings, Women's Cross Country/Track and Field and Cameron Pittman, Baseball

Riding her high from last season's Big South podium finishes, Wellings wasn't done yet as she has broken nearly all her own personal bests during the 2024 season. At the 2023 Big South Cross Country Championships, she earned fifth place in the 5k to run her personal best and placing second in Radford's record book. Wellings took over the top spot in the record book to earn a school record of the 3k. At the Big South Indoor Track and Field Championships, she proved her speed taking not gold in not one, but two events.

A true lead off hitter and the definition of consistency are just a few ways to describe Pittman. He averages a .348 batting average, the highest of all Highlanders and 6th highest in the Big South. Pittman so far has 25 runs, 21 RBI, a career high slugging percentage of .485 and stolen bases. He also leads the Highlanders in hits and has two home runs on the season as well.

*Radford University Athletics*

## Columbia head coach now assistant at Va. Tech

Virginia Tech wrestling's head coach Tony Robie announced the addition of Zach Tanelli as Associate Head Coach of the program on Monday, April 22, 2024.

Tanelli comes to Blacksburg after eight seasons in New York City as the head wrestling coach at Columbia University. No stranger to the mats, Tanelli brings 15 years of coaching experience on top of an All-American finish, three trips to the NCAA Wrestling Championships, a finalist at the Big Ten Wrestling Championships, and a Ken Kraft Midlands Championships title as a student-athlete for the University of Wisconsin.

"We could not be more excited to have Zach and his family join the Virginia Tech Wrestling Family," Robie mentioned. "You

can't overstate how great of a job Zach did building a winning culture at Columbia. Getting another coach on staff that has the experience and skill set to excel in every aspect of this job is what we were looking for. Zach undoubtedly checks all those boxes. He also brings incredible wrestling knowledge that will help our entire roster, especially our lower weights, accomplish their goals. Zach was the first and person we pursued and are grateful that he and his family want to call Blacksburg home. We can't wait to get to work and continue our pursuit of greatness."

At the helm for the Lions from 2016-2024, Tanelli made a monumental impact on the program, setting school records in Division I and EIWA conference dual meet wins in a season, highest team placement at the EIWA Championships, team points at the EIWA Championships, and individual NCAA Championships qualifiers

in a season.

"My family and I want to thank Coach Robie, Coach Frayer, Coach Haught, and all at Virginia Tech Athletics for giving us the opportunity to join their program. This is a very special place and I'm humbled to be viewed as someone who can add value to their established culture. I'm excited to get to work and see the impact I can make," said Tanelli.

The 2023-24 campaign was a banner year for Tanelli at Columbia. They crowned their first All-American since 2013, and only their sixth in program history, in Lennox Wolak (174-pounds). Additionally, Tanelli coached both Wolak and Aaron Ayzerov (184-pounds) to EIWA Championship titles, the first time the program has seen multiple tournament champions since 1935. During his tenure, Tanelli was responsible for five of Columbia's nine total EIWA Champions in over a 75-year period. With just eight top-5

team finishes at the EIWA Championships all-time, Columbia Wrestling ended the season in the top-5 at the EIWA Championships in each of Tanelli's final three years in NYC. The team also recorded their highest dual meet victory ever over No. 15 Northern Iowa. Academically, the Lions were recognized as a Top-30 NCAA Scholar All-American Team six times during his time leading the program, highlighting 18 individual Academic All-Americans.

"My eight seasons as Head Coach at Columbia were incredibly fulfilling. My student-athletes and coaching staff are the things I am most proud of - we created something unique that I believe embodied the grit and tenacity of New York City. I have tremendous gratitude for Columbia Wrestling, the men I coached and the families that gave me the privilege of training their sons and daughters. They are built on solid foundation, and I am confident they

will finish the work we started."

Before his time at Columbia, Tanelli spent two years as an assistant coach at Purdue University from 2014-2016 where he would help send a total of 11 student-athletes to the NCAA Championships. He guided Purdue to its first Midlands tournament champion since 1963 in Chad Welch (165) and helped see the team to a 10-win season in 2014-15. Tanelli was instrumental on the recruiting trail for the Boilermakers with a FloWrestling-ranked sixth best recruiting class of 2016.

Prior to his time at Purdue, Tanelli climbed his way through the coaching ranks, serving as interim head coach and head assistant coach at Hofstra University to begin his coaching career. Tanelli's impact was immediate across the board for Hofstra, particularly with the lightweights. The former Badger coached four All-Americans and helped guide 12 individual

conference champions for the Pride during his five-year stint in Hempstead.

A three-time NCAA qualifier, Tanelli earned a fourth-place podium finish to earn All-America honors in 2009. He completed his senior year with a 31-6 record, including an undefeated 7-0 record against Big Ten opponents during the dual season. Tanelli was ranked No. 1 in the country for the second half of the 2008-2009 season after winning the 141-pound Midlands Championship, before a runner-up finish at the 2009 Big Ten Championships.

A native of Millburn, New Jersey, Tanelli earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Wisconsin in 2009 and his master's degree in Higher Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Hofstra in 2012. Tanelli and his wife, Emily, along with their three children, Leo, Scottie, and Madison will now call Blacksburg home.

*Virginia Tech Athletics*

## Kidd from page 7

have paid off, and we could not be more excited for her to have this opportunity to compete and showcase her skills amongst the best of the best at this level."

Kidd will compete at the USAG Development

Program 2024 Eastern National Championship May 4 at the Myrtle Beach Sports Center in Myrtle Beach, SC. VA Techniques has had five other gymnasts qualify to Eastern Nationals over the last eight years.

*Virginia Techniques*