



News Journal

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Commencement held for Radford High Class of 2024

RADFORD - Inclement weather led the Radford High School Class of 2024 commencement ceremony to move from Bobcat Stadium to the Ken Bondurant Auditorium on the campus of Radford University Friday evening, May 25.

The graduating class arrived by bus to the auditorium, where their family members and friends awaited their arrival. Student speeches were made by Class President Isabella Calfee, Valedictorian Adalynn Ruth Turner and co-Salutatorians Elijah Goff and Maxwell Kanipe.

The Commencement speaker, who is chosen each year by the students, was Social Studies teacher John Furgeson. Welcome remarks were also given by Superintendent Dr. Adam Joyce and RHS Principal Ken Keister.

Turner, who has a GPA of 4.4667, plans on attending William and Mary. Her major is



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CALFEE FAMILY
RHS Principal Ken Keister introduces Class President Isabella Calfee prior to her speech at RHS's commencement ceremony.



Valedictorian Adalynn Turner



Salutatorian Elijah Goff



Salutatorian Maxwell Kanipe

undecided. Goff has a GPA of 4.3103. He plans on attending UVA with a major in business. Kanipe has a GPA of 4.3103. H plans on attending NC

State with a major in Mechanical Engineering.

Staff report



This home on Downey Street caught fire as a result of a downed power line. Firefighters were able to put out the fire quickly.



A tree was struck by lightning and fell on a power line during Sunday's storm, leading to a home catching on fire.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RADFORD FIRE AND EMS

Downed power line leads to fire

RADFORD - Downed power lines from Sunday evenings storm led to a fire on Downey St.

According to the Radford Fire and EMS department, Radford Fire/EMS was dispatched for a power line down in the 1600 block of Downey St. at 6 p.m. Sunday. "After speaking to the residents of one home who had concerns about a downed power line next to their residence, crews investigated and confirmed there was no fire at that residence," the department stated. "Crews continued down the street to further investigate the downed

power line, finding a large tree that had fallen across the lines. A Radford City Police Department officer was also in the area and reported seeing smoke coming from a separate residence in the 1500 block of Downey St."

"Firefighters observed fire in the house," the statement continued. Firefighters forced entry into the unoccupied home and quickly brought the fire under control in five minutes, limiting damage to only one room. During a search of the residence, one dog was found and rescued from the structure.

One cat is unaccounted for. Units performed overhaul and cleared from scene after about two hours.

Firefighters faced several challenges, such as accessing the structure, downed power lines in the area and minimum staffing. Despite these challenges, firefighters worked together diligently and were able to efficiently suppress the fire, preventing further property damage.

No civilian or firefighter injuries were reported.

Staff report

Radio field day near Audie Murphy site set for Saturday

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The New River Valley Radio Club and other ham radio operators are a link to the world we sometimes seem to forget.

Current estimates are that there are three million amateur radio operator active worldwide.

The whole idea of ham radio is the use of the radio frequency spectrum for purposes of non-commercial exchange of messages, wireless experimentation, self-training, private recreation, radio sport, contesting, and yes, emergency communications.

This Saturday, June 1, the local group, which boasts close to 40 members, will hold a special event in honor of Audie Murphy, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Audie Murphy was the most decorated US soldier in World War II and died in a plane crash on Brush Mountain, near New Castle, Va. on May 28, 1971. This field day marks the 53rd year of his passing, and brings awareness to his life as a soldier, actor, and American hero.

According to online records, he received every military combat award for valor available from the United States Army, as well as French and Belgian awards for heroism. Murphy received the Medal of Honor for valor that he demonstrated at the age of 19 for single-handedly

holding off a company of German soldiers for an hour at the Colmar Pocket in France in January 1945, before leading a successful counterattack while wounded and out of ammunition.

He died along with four others in heavy fog as his plane cut through the mountainous area of southwest Virginia. His plane crashed 14 nautical miles northwest of Roanoke at a spot now marked by a memorial along Brush Mountain near New Castle.

Organizers of the radio field day thought it fitting the two events could be linked together.

The hillside of Brush Mountain also presents itself as a great location for transmitting the radio frequencies where temporary antennas will be set up along with several broadcast stations.

The idea of Ham radio is booming, spurred by COVID lockdowns. In the past three years, thousands of new ham operators were licensed to take to the airwaves.

The National Association of Amateur Radio (NAAR) says Amateur Radio is a popular hobby and service that brings people, electronics and communication together. People use ham radio to talk across town and even around the globe.

Typically, any ham operator must have a federal license to operate on public airwaves. Field

See Murphy, page 8

Amazonia welcomes Highlanders to the jungle



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Students taking part in the RARE: Amazonia expedition in 2019.

Nine Highlanders are currently in the Peruvian jungle as part of the Radford Away Research Expedition (RARE): Amazonia.

Students participating in RARE: Amazonia, such as this group from 2019, travel to the Las Piedras Biodiversity Station, a laboratory located in the midst of more than 30,000 acres of rainforest.

The trek gives undergraduate students the opportunity to explore an Amazonian rainforest ecosystem and a forum in which to conduct scholarly projects. RARE: Amazonia was previously held each spring from 2015 to 2019 and is now resuming after being paused during the pandemic.

This year's journey, which began May 15, will be overseen by Assistant Professors of Biology Joy Caughron and Tara Pelletier.

Some of the projects and experiments that will take place include creating an ethnobotanical field guide; documenting the presence of chytrid fungus,

an amphibian pathogen; and examining the effects of immersion in nature on a person's well-being and mindfulness.

Students in the RARE: Amazonia program will spend part of their time in Puerto Maldonado, near Peru's eastern border, where they will connect with guides from the conservation and ecotourism group Tamandua, LLC, whose mission is to protect and conserve Peru's jungles.

During the trip, Radford's group will also travel to the Las Piedras Biodiversity Station, a laboratory located in the midst of more than 30,000 acres of rainforest.

This remote locale - reached following an eight-hour journey by both car and boat - will provide the students a foreign environment in which to conduct experiments that compare and contrast with the results they've recorded domestically in such fields as animal behavior, parasites of mammals and birds, carcass

decomposition and the immune responses of insects in both logged and unlogged areas of the jungle.

From mid-May to early June, students in the RARE: Amazonia program spend part of their visit in Puerto Maldonado, near Peru's eastern border, and will also travel to the Las Piedras Biodiversity Station. (Google)

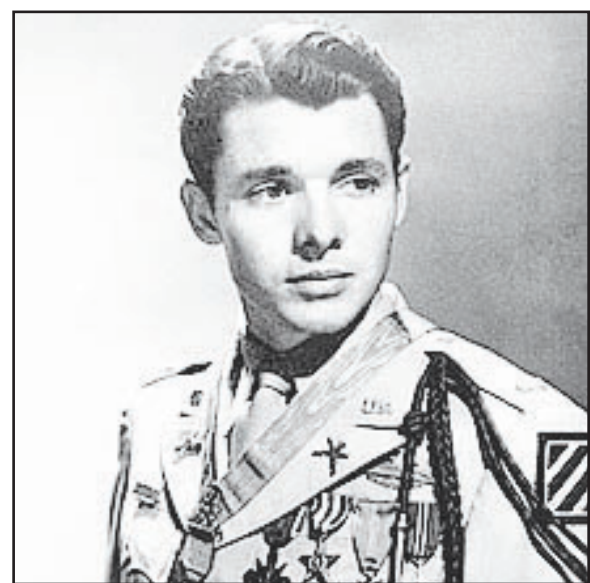
During their stay, students will also visit different parts of the Madre de Dios region.

Biology Professor Jason Davis has worked with RARE since its inception and said the students and their projects cover an array of interests.

"It's not exclusively a science trip," Davis explained. "Each year, we really want to take a range of students - artists, anthropologists, sociologists, someone studying business or nursing.

"These students are our researchers; they are engaged in

See RARE, page 8



Audie Murphy



FILE PHOTOS

Monument at the site of the Virginia plane crash, which killed Audie Murphy.

OBITUARIES

Albert, Clara Gertrude Slusser

Clara Gertrude (Trudy) Slusser Albert was born in Coal Bank Hollow, Blacksburg Oct. 7, 1930. She is preceded in death by her husband, Juel Albert, Sr., of 54 married years; parents Pat and Annie Slusser; brothers Paul, Joe, Erno, Johnny, and Dennis Slusser; and many family members. She is survived by her beloved son, Juel Albert Jr. (Angie); granddaughters Tiffany Albert and Crystal Boyle (Jason); great-grandchildren Justyna, Wyatt, Luke, Tanner, Riley, Dawson, and Layla; and great-great-granddaughter Selene, all of Blacksburg; little sister Maggie, family Terry and Carl Davis, and lifelong friend Lenore. Trudy spent 45 years working downtown as a banker. She never met a stranger and was always known for her friendly wave from the downtown picture bank window. Her ability to make people feel



comfortable and conduct business in all manners was amazing. She was confident in giving student loans as well as start-up business loans, some even honored by a handshake and a promise. Being a coal miner's daughter, she was also heavily involved in the local chapter of The Coal Miners Association. She was also a member of the Heritage Foundation and the American Heart Association. She too, was a familiar face in her retirement years working at Custom Catering

during the Virginia Tech Sportsclub luncheons and many other events. Trudy's greatest accomplishment was by far her family. Growing up in a strong family, her love of life was home and making sure everyone was fed and cared for. Gardening, making Sunday meals, working in her flower beds, crocheting, canning tomatoes, snapping beans, picking wild strawberries up on the hill, and listening to bluegrass were her favorite pastimes. She was also one of the all-time best flat footers in town. The family will honor her with a celebration of life at her favorite place on the New River in late summer. All donations can be considered for the Albert Family Cemetery at her home place. C/O Juel Albert Jr. 4829 Whitethorne Rd. Blacksburg Va, 24060.

Dowdy, Genevia Fisher

Genevia Fisher Dowdy, 58, of Radford, died Friday, May 24, 2024, at her home. She was born in Montgomery County Dec. 3, 1965 to the late Oren Wayne and Ellen Collins Fisher. She worked at Virginia Tech for over 34 years. She is survived by her husband of 41 years, Frankie D. Dowdy; sons Dusty Fisher (Brittany) and Eric Paul Fisher (Paulina);



daughter, Jessica Fisher; adopted son, Bobo; seven grandchildren;

one great-grandson; sister, Geraldine Sawyers (Eddie); and special sister-in-law, Della King. A funeral service will be held Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at 11 a.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Neal Turner officiating. Interment will follow at Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Christiansburg. The family will receive friends 10- 11 a.m. prior to the service.

Reed, Joseph

Joseph "Joe" Reed, 80, of Christiansburg, died May 23, 2024, at his home. Joe was a lifelong auto mechanic, who owned Cambria Auto Repair. He is preceded in death by his mother and stepfather, Idabell and Roy Richards, father, Claron O. Reed, sister, Lilly Ellen Hinkley, and stepson, Ronnie Farmer. Left to cherish his memory are his wife of 49 years, Carol Reed; daughters and sons-in-law, Sarah and Jason



Egan, and Shelia and Ralph Collins; son and daughter-in-law, Jeff and Tabatha Dulaney; grandchildren, Cody

Egan, Bryanna Egan, Casi Dulaney, Jeffrey Dulaney, and Jarrid (Caitlyn) Dulaney; brother, Kenny Richards and wife Ramona; sister, Bobbie Ogle; numerous nieces and nephews. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, May 28, 2024 in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel, with Pastor Doug Reed officiating. Interment followed in Sunset cemetery. The family received friends before the service.

Quackenbush, Connie Marie

Connie Marie Quackenbush, 77, of Elliston, passed Friday, May 24, 2024, at Lewis Gale Medical Center. She was born in New York Nov. 18, 1946, to the late Robert Stanton and Veronica Dunkley Batease. Connie loved

traveling all over the country with her husband Fred on their motorcycle. She was a talented artist and loved spending her time with family and friends. She is survived by her husband Frederick B. Quackenbush;

daughter, Michelle Higgins; son, Richard Quackenbush; and grandchildren, Amber, Owen, Makayla, and Layla. Graveside services will be conducted Friday, May 31, 2024, at 11 a.m. in the Sunset Cemetery, Christiansburg.

McConnell, Jr., Harry Willis

Harry Willis "Chopper" McConnell, Jr., 77, of Fairlawn, was surrounded by family members as he departed this earth and entered Heaven's gates the evening of May 21, 2024. Chopper was born in Saltville, Va. Aug. 17, 1946 to Ruby McConnell and the late Harry Willis McConnell. He graduated from Damascus High School and went on to serve as a Radioman in the United States Navy. While stationed in Norfolk, Virginia Chopper met his beautiful bride, Linda. In 1976, they settled in Fairlawn, where they raised their two children and enjoyed life together in the New River Valley. In southwest Virginia, he loved sharing meals, desserts and movies with his beloved Linda, fishing with Jeff and his grandchildren, gardening with Terri, and golfing or hunting with friends. Chopper worked 31 years for RDAISA at The Radford Army Ammunition Plant and retired from the workforce



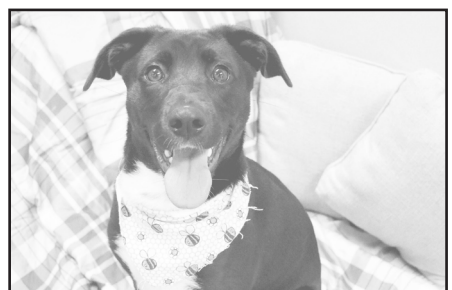
in 2001. Multiple people have referred to Chopper as the most intelligent man they have ever met. His family members know him as the nicest, most considerate man they have ever known. The old saying of "he'll give you the shirt right off of his back" was coined for Chopper. For the next 23 years he basked in retirement, spoiled his grandbabies, enjoyed traveling the world, relished trips to visit his mother and family in both Richmond and Damascus, evenings on the carport with his hummingbirds, sneaking snacks to his granddogs and neighborhood pets, talks with his neighbors,

listening to music, and most of all just spending time with family. He is survived by his wife of 57 years Linda, of Oceana, W.Va.; mother "Granny Ruby," 104 years old, of Damascus, Va., daughter and son-in-law: Terri and Shannon Wohlford of Radford, Va., son and daughter-in-law Jeff and Susan McConnell of Richmond; sister and brother-in-law Brenda and Curt Smith of Damascus; brother and sister-in-law Tommy and Audrey McConnell of Damascus; grandchildren Grace Wohlford of Richmond, Michael, William and Hampton Wohlford of Radford, and Reilly and Tyler McConnell of Richmond. Funeral services will be conducted at noon Friday, May 31, 2024 at the Virginia Southwest Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia. Donations can be made to the American Liver Foundation to help find a cure for NASH.

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.

Twiddlebug is a young, energetic pup who's ready to find her forever home. She enjoys romping around and happily playing with squeaky toys. She can be a little nervous at times, but some human love and guidance would help her gain confidence.



Whisper seems to live up to her name. She's a generally quiet calm dog who needs a future home without other pets. Whisper tends to prefer human interaction. She also does well on leash walks. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to meet her.

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antiques. For more information, visit blacksburgfarmersmarket.com/vintage-market/.

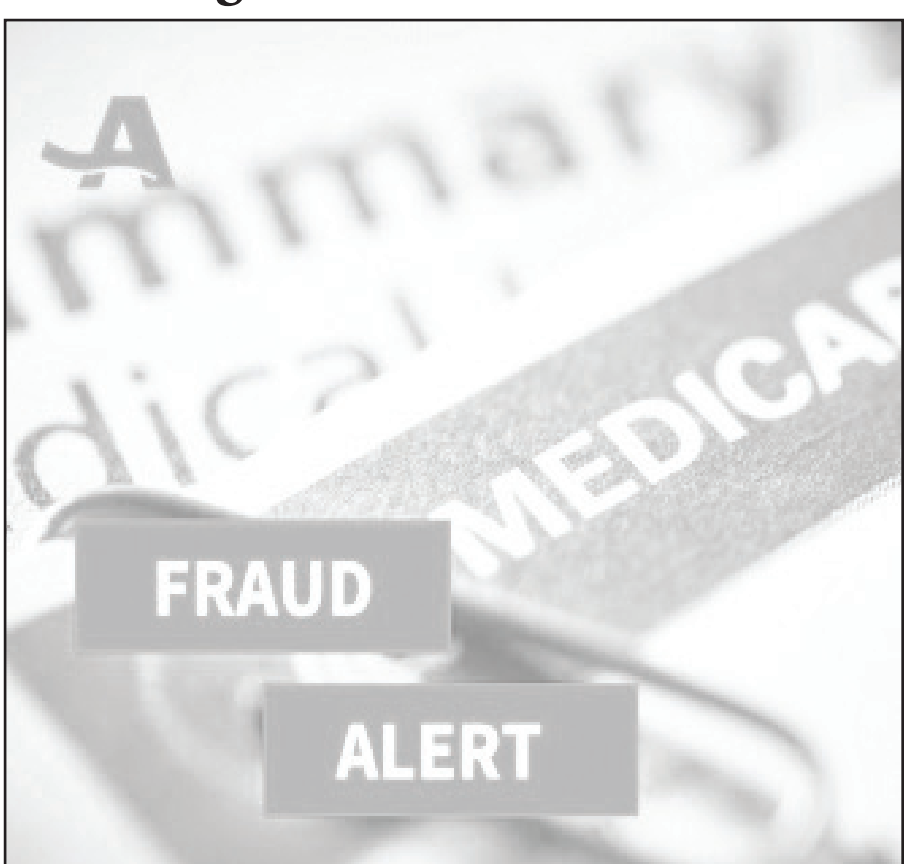
Monday, June 10:

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 normally held 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, June 11:

AARP Virginia Fraud Alert: Medicare Scams



Government programs are often the target of criminal scammers and Medicare is one of the biggest ones. Thankfully, a nationwide network of Senior Medicare Patrol volunteers often sees these scams first and warn others. Here are three scams they are seeing in 2024: Falsebilling for diabetes treatment has been seen on Medicare summary notices of people who don't have diabetes and didn't receive a related device. This is one example of how crooks charge Medicare for services not provided. To guard against this, check monthly Medicare statements carefully and report any false charges. Free products are another common Medicare scam, however

the product you receive – if you get anything at all – is usually cheap and inferior. Only share your Medicare number with your healthcare providers, and not with someone offering "free" products or services.

Lastly, free genetic testing is once again a trending Medicare scam. This often happens at health fairs where a scammer will offer a free genetic test that only requires a cheek swab and your Medicare number. Medicare rarely covers genetic testing, and this is just a ploy to get your Medicare number. Be a fraud fighter! If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam.

AARP Virginia



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OPINION

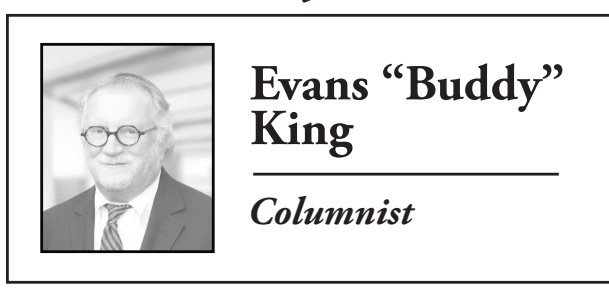
Lessons from summer jobs stick for a lifetime

It's that time of year when high school and college kids begin summer jobs - or at least they did when I was that age. Like everything else, this has probably changed quite a bit since then. My daughters, for instance, had infinitely more glamorous and interesting jobs while they were in college a few years ago - such as working summer camps for the National Cheerleader Association and trolling the Gulf Coast for hammerhead sharks for a marine lab. Summers in Sarasota or on various college campuses somehow sound better than my summers on the banks of Crab Creek.

I worked six summers during my high school and college years - the first two as a school janitor, washing windows and scrubbing floors, and the last four for C.W. Poff and Son, doing maintenance and unskilled (extremely unskilled - I took the term to a new level) construction. I am sure there are floors in townhouses in Blacksburg that still squeak because I had trouble finding the studs when I was putting down sub-flooring. Thankfully, Mr. Poff and my great (seriously) boss Elmer Underwood were patient and found ways to use me in a manner that maximized my skills - I did a lot of toting of stuff in other words. Blocks, lumber, carpet, appliances, tools, etc. I wasn't much help with these things when I got them where they were supposed to go, but I was darn good at getting them there.

During my college years I think my father would have preferred that I find jobs that might have meshed better with my future career plans - becoming a lawyer or a writer. In fact, I am sure he would have helped me find jobs around Christiansburg where I would have had that type of experience - plus air-conditioning! But there were a couple of problems - first, it being the 70s, I didn't cut my hair, so I looked more the part of stage crew for the Grateful Dead than an office clerk or mail room kid. Secondly, I more or less craved physical activity then and did not see myself as wearing a tie or nice clothes to work. I look back at my pictures from that time and I am grateful (and lucky not to be dead) that my folks let me stay in their house. It was a true sign of how wonderful they were as parents.

To say my summer jobs were not educational or beneficial to my future would be a grave misstatement, however. I learned the benefit of hard work and dependability. Despite my heavy summertime "social"



Evans "Buddy" King

Columnist

and softball schedules I showed up every day and on time (right Elmer?). I also learned that the value of each person's life is the same. Whether you are the president of the bank or the guy who cleans the toilets, your hopes and feelings are essentially the same. Some may do more with what they are given and some may do less, and some may not be given enough, but the value of each life is the same. Except for the grace of God (or some other cosmic force if you prefer), I could just as easily have been born into the body of a Haitian child with a nine-month life expectancy as where I was born - into a great family and in a wonderful community in almost certainly the greatest country in the history of civilization and arguably in its greatest era. Damn lucky. One of my favorite quotes (Barry Switzer) sums this thought up - "lots of folks are born on third base and go through life thinking they have hit a triple." I know I was born on third base.

So, my summer jobs were extremely beneficial in molding my character - I learned a strong work ethic (reinforced by my father) and I learned to respect people, regardless of status. Plus, and to get back to my bent, which is to tell funny stories, I learned many great "lines" from my co-workers (term my girls and other young folks use - we said "people we work with").

To give a little more context, during my college summers, I got to work with two of my best friends ever - Greg, who worked on the same job sites with me every day and also resembled stage crew for the Dead, and Bob, who worked at a higher level since his dad and brother owned the company, learning the family business (someday I'll tell the story of when Bob and I managed to "clip" the overhanging roof of the Dari-Delite with a cement mixer).

One of the first things I learned from our crew - most

of whom were 20-30 years older than Greg and me - was the importance of finding a "good hiding place". This was a spot where Junior or Elmer or whomever you were working for that day couldn't find you for a few minutes - this allowed us to "give Charlie (Mr. Poff) a little time." This would give you time to "collect yourself," i.e., doze for five minutes. As I recall the backstairs of Building 6 were good for this.

I also remember that Greg and I learned things about domestic life and marriage that have carried us far. We often heard our co-workers utter sayings like, "being married makes a man work many a day when he don't feel like it." This helped lay the foundation for our futures.

I also remember falling for the same line every Saturday morning - we got overtime on Saturdays if we came in and helped the carpet layers unload and carry the big rolls of carpet into the townhouses we were building. Often, we came in at 7 a.m. with two or three hours of sleep, tops, looking for the extra dollars. Our crew would be sitting around, recovering from the night before, waiting for the carpet guys. Then Glen would say, "I feel so much better since I quit drinking." Every time I would ask, being one of the few conversational guys there and recognizing that Glen needed a straight man, "when did you quit drinking Glen?" and every time Glen would look at his watch and say "oh, about two hours ago." This proved our co-worker Dewey's point that "people are stranger than anybody."

The stories about Elmer are legion. He was a Christian man and exceedingly kind. In fact, too kind at times. Our primary worksite was at Golden Gate Apartments and Carriage Hill Townhouses, and Elmer managed the units that had been completed and were being rented. His kindness was often on display when a couple of co-eds from Tech (one of the few job perks we had, perhaps the only), who lived in Unit 321, say, had avocado appliances and would want copper tone which were always 10 units away. To this day I can hear Elmer say, "no problem, I'll have Greg and Buddy make that switch." This involved refrigerator, dishwasher, stove and occasionally washer and dryer. It would have been easier for Greg and me to move the girls' entire apartment contents than to make

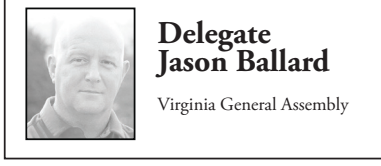
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Delegate makes his case for his party's platform, candidates

Every year brings a new election season in Virginia, and 2024 is no different. Soon, Virginia Democrats and Republicans will be holding primary elections to determine party nominees for the House of Representatives, with Republicans also holding a primary election for the United States Senate seat currently held by Senator Tim Kaine. This is in addition to November's general election, in which we will choose not only our members of Congress, but also the President of the United States. It seems like with each election, we're told that "it's the most important one in recent memory." While each election is certainly important in its own right, the 2024 election will no doubt have a large impact on domestic policies - especially as it relates to the economy - in the years to come.

Despite the rhetoric from the White House and congressional Democrats, inflation really hasn't gone anywhere. Recent reports show prices for commodities have risen - on average -

20% since February of 2020, according to the bureau of labor statistics. What it amounts to is a decade-worth of inflation in just three years. The March inflation



Delegate Jason Ballard

Virginia General Assembly

report showed overall inflation at 3.5%, up from 3.2% in February of this year. Grocery prices climbed 1% month over month, and gasoline increased 1.3% month over month. Even as inflation slows, it is not the same thing as deflation. Prices remain high - they are simply rising at a slower rate. Anyone who buys groceries, gas, or pays their electric bill knows what a large problem this has become. And unfortunately, national Democrats have no plan or sense of urgency to solve it.

The Presidential primaries appear to be heading toward a straightforward general election rematch between President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump. In Virginia, we must also decide whether to continue with President Biden's economic policies in the U.S. Senate through Senator Tim Kaine. Considering that - according to FiveThirtyEight politics - Senator Kaine votes with President Biden 97% of the time, we can assume that a vote for Tim

Kaine is a vote for the continuation of economic policies that are putting the average American family in debt. As such, I would encourage you to learn more about the five Republicans who are vying to defeat Senator Kaine and return a Republican to the U.S. Senate for the first time since 2009. These candidates are: Hung Cao, Jonathan Emord, Eddie Garcia, Scott Parkinson, and Chuck Smith.

I believe any of these candidates would fight for common sense policies that would bring inflation under control, and I hope you'll take the time to learn more about each in advance of the U.S. Senate primary election on June 18. We can't afford more of the same Biden-omics, and the road back to sound fiscal policy starts in Virginia.

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 DelJBallard@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.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Orator's podium

5. UK-Netherlands gas pipeline

8. Partner to "oohs"

12. African antelope

14. Indigenous Thai person

15. Monetary unit of Angola

16. Becomes less intense

18. Insurance mascot

19. Tech hub ___Alto

20. Actress Tomei

21. Airborne (abbr.)

22. Type of smart watch

23. Natives

26. Incompetent person

30. Rare Hawaiian geese

31. Unspoken relationships

32. Passports and licenses are two

33. Claw

34. Status quo

39. Mimic

42. Fur-lined cloak

44. Ancient foreigner

46. In an angry way

47. Ill-intentioned

49. Monetary unit of Serbia

50. S. American plant

51. One or the other

56. An alias for Thor

57. Gratuity

58. In a painful way

59. French commune

60. Promotional materials

61. Greek city

62. Assistant

63. Confederate general

64. Former NJ governor

CLUES DOWN

1. Used by gymnasts

2. "Luther" actor Idris

3. Broad volcanic crater

4. Not for

5. Blur

6. Tots

7. Acted leisurely

8. About the Alps

9. Gets out of bed

10. Town in "The Iliad"

11. Welsh given name

13. Remove salt

17. Calvary sword

24. Mental disorder concerning body odor (abbr.)

25. Keeps a house cozy

26. Ballplayer's accessory

27. Southwestern Russian city

28. Pro sports league

29. Congress investigative body (abbr.)

35. Stop standing

36. Utilize

37. Sign language

38. Famed ESPN broadcaster Bob

40. Being of central importance

41. Ruin environment

42. Dessert dish

43. Sea eagles

44. Fertilized

45. Jerry's friend Benes

47. Indian river

48. Pass into a specified state or condition

49. Nocturnal rodent

52. A way to travel

53. Iron-containing compound

54. Ancient Greek City

55. NFL signal caller Matt

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RADFORD SPORTS

RU begins search for new softball coach

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Radford University will need a new softball coach this coming season after the school announced on Saturday they would not renew the contract of head softball coach Alisa Tasler.

"I'd like to thank Coach Tasler for all the time and effort she put into the Radford softball program," said Director of Athletics Robert Lineburg. "We wish her the best in her future endeavors."

Tasler has been RU's head coach the past three seasons tallying a 59-86 overall record.

She was initially hired in 2021 and became the 10th coach in RU's history and came to the New River Valley with a lot of clout.

Previously, she had coached at Concord University

for 10 seasons, where she had an overall record of 247-228. Her accomplishments at Concord include: 18 players earning all-conference honors, 5 all-region selections, An All-American in 2015, and Second place in the MEC South in 2019.

In 2019, she led the team to its most successful season in program history. The Mountain Lions made their first NCAA tournament appearance and finished second in the MEC South with a program-record 38 wins. The program also made the NCAA Tournament in 2015 where they would record their first-ever win in the national tournament with a 3-0 victory over West Chester.

Tasler also previously spent time as the head coach at Neosho Community College in Chanute, Kansas for six seasons before joining Concord. The Panthers won 54 percent of their games in the

demanding Jayhawk Conference in her final two seasons, including a 2011 squad loaded with 14 freshmen. Tasler's program also experienced excellence in the classroom, earning several Academic All-American honors.

Tasler also spent time as an assistant at Pittsburgh State for three seasons, increasing the team's win total every year from 18, to 28, then 44. Pittsburgh State ranked second in the nation in team GPA over that span as well.

A native of Newcastle, Oklahoma, Tasler played softball and basketball at Northern Oklahoma College. She set several school pitching records while helping the Northern Oklahoma College basketball team win back-to-back conference championships.

A national search for Radford's next softball coach will begin immediately.

Radford boys down Dan River in regional playoffs



Radford's Robert Fuksz scores the first goal of the match just over four minutes into the game.



Dawson Martin battles for position against Dan River on Thursday in the Regional playoffs.



Brody Shull launches a bullet for a score to put the Bobcats up 2-0 just before halftime.



Andrew Hope passes the ball to a teammate in Radford 7-0 win against the visiting Wildcats.

PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

SMU transfer brings talent to RU



COURTESY IMAGE

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Radford University has added another player via the transfer portal.

Basketball coach Darris Nichols has announced the addition of forward Xavier Foster. He will join the Highlanders for the 2024-25 season after attending Southern Methodist University.

"Xavier is a player with a lot of talent and we are excited to give him an opportunity to showcase it," said Nichols.

The Oskaloosa, Iowa native appeared

in four games with the Mustangs during the 2023-24 season. During his sophomore season at SMU, he played in 10 games, totaling four points and four rebounds.

Foster was named First Team All-State and was the 67th ranked player in the country by ESPN. Additionally, he was ranked 70th by 247sports and 64th by Rivals, making him a 4-star recruit.

Foster will be joined by fellow newcomers Jonas Sirtautas, Jarvis Moss, David Early, Zion Walker, Tony Felder, Brandon Maclin, Chace Davis and Isaiah Gaines.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Lydia Pratt (left) and Claire Fender are Region 2C Champions. The Radford pair beat Floyd 6-0 6-1.

Weekly reports: Radford duo region doubles champs

The Radford High School domination in state girls' tennis play continued this past week.

In individual play, Lydia Pratt won the regional individual title and then teamed with Claire Fender to take the doubles championship.

Meanwhile both the girls and boys took team titles to advance to the state semi-finals.

Christiansburg softball advances in region

Top-seeded Christiansburg defeated Pulaski 3-0 on Friday as they continue to play in the Class 3 softball post-season.

To start things off Kady Camper went yard and then did it again later to finish with two homeruns.

Tyleigh Dillard would follow suit and knock one over the fence. Freshman Aubrey Davis had a triple and the other hit came from Addison Reasor. On the mound, Camper had 14 strikeouts with no walks and just two hits.

Blacksburg soccer splits
One Blacksburg High School fell in the region playoffs this past week, while one moves on. The Blacksburg boys' is out, while the girls' advanced.

The Lady Bruins defeated Jefferson Forest in the first sudden death overtime period 1-0 on Friday night. With the win, Blacksburg advances to the regional final on Tuesday, where they will host James Wood High

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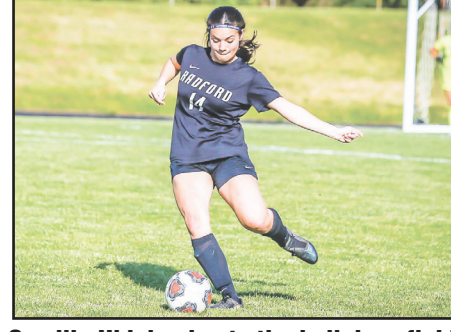
Radford girls advance in regional play



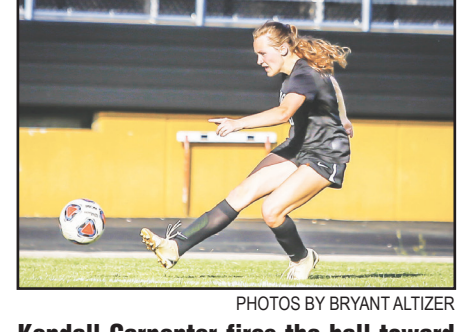
Reagan Bryant takes a shot on goal in Thursday's win over Liberty.



Lauren Owens passes to a teammate in Radford's 4-1 victory.



Camille Hidalgo boots the ball downfield to get the Bobcats' offense going.



Kendall Carpenter fires the ball toward the goal in the Bobcats' regional playoff win.

PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

Radford

from page 7

School.
Claire Langlinais headed home a cross from Bella Garza for the win. Paige Miller recorded five saves to gather her 17th shutout of the season.
Blacksburg improves to 17-0-2 on the season and Jefferson Forest ends their season 17-2.
Meanwhile Jefferson Forest (18-0) took a 1-0 win over the Blacksburg boys.
The lone goal came on a scramble in the penalty area in the 49th minute by Maxwell Reed.
Tyler Beck had four saves for Jefferson Forest, and Blacksburg's Simon Pratt

had five saves. Blacksburg finishes 16-2-1 on the season.
Auburn rolls in baseball
Auburn (20-1) defeated Craig Co. 19-0 in the opening round of the Region C baseball tournament. Four pitchers combined to throw a five-inning no-hitter with Josh Givens picking up the win throwing two innings with four strikeouts. The Eagles scored 11 runs in the first and six in the second to put the game away.
Jared Lavergne had three hits and scored three runs, Zac McGlothlin had two hits and four RBIs and Matthew

Lessons

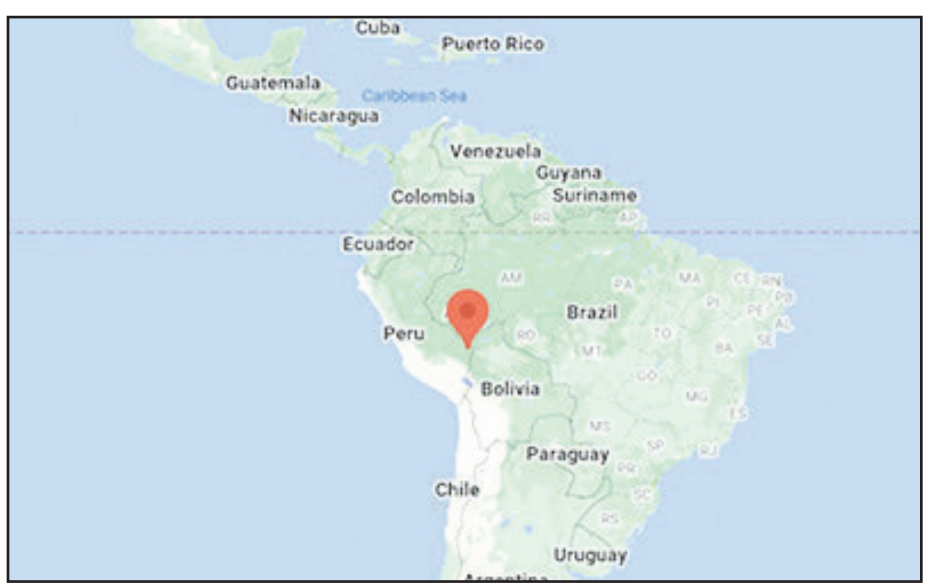
from page 4

these switches. Often Greg and I would say "Elmer, can't you make them learn to love avocado." But kind Elmer would always say he wanted "happy renters."
My all-time favorite story from these summers involved one of my first weeks at work. I was working in the "yard" at the main office site in Christiansburg (Bob was probably watching this activity from the AIR-CONDITIONED office - not that I was envious, Bob). It was unseasonably warm for mid-June then - 150 degrees (actually, probably only 90). I was asked to go to Blacksburg with a regular yard laborer - a pine knot of a man as they used to say. He was probably 60 and weighed 130 pounds, strong but wearied by many years of hard physical work. We were tasked with driving to Blacksburg and picking up a flatbed truck with about 30 large picture window frames on the back. Somehow my co-worker decided that I should be the one to drive the flatbed (tractor trailer size) back from Blacksburg. This truck had something called a split-shift axle (surely the work of the devil himself). I never got the

truck out of first gear, not knowing that you should start out in second gear. A trip that should have taken about 20 minutes became a day and a half. It was the Lewis and Clark Expedition of its time. Women with babies in strollers passed us. I think the foreman in the yard sent out a search party.
But the real fun began when we got back to the yard. My friend to this point had said only two words to me all day - "you drive" - despite my constant chatter. We then spent the next four or five hours climbing on the back of the truck, edging the frames to the edge of the bed and then jumping down and coaxing the things off the truck. We would then carry them about 30 yards into a warehouse for storage. I continued to try to engage my friend in conversation about the topics of the day - but nary a word from him until we got down to one last frame on the back of the truck.
Excited by this prospect, I cleverly said "well, there's the last one." My friend looked at me and said, "wish we'd found that son of a [gun] earlier."
Great life lessons.

RARE

from page 1



From mid-May to early June, students in the RARE: Amazonia program spend part of their visit in Puerto Maldonado, near Peru's eastern border, and will also travel to the Las Piedras Biodiversity Station.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Students participating in RARE: Amazonia, such as this group of Radford, travel to the Las Piedras Biodiversity Station, a laboratory located in the midst of more than 30,000 acres of rainforest.

a process of discovery, whether that is studying, for example, the language traditions of the local people or exploring microbial fauna," he said.
"They're doing their own thing, which gives them real ownership of it, and helping each other with different projects at the same time."
The RARE group is scheduled to return to the United States on June 5.
You can learn more about the project and see video footage of the 2019 expedition on Radford's RARE website.

Also this month, a separate branch of RARE - the Radford Away Research Expedition: Appalachia - will undertake a similar mission, albeit somewhat closer to home. RARE Appalachia will spend the second half of May visiting such local areas as Troutdale, Damascus, Abingdon and Burke's Garden. Along the way, they'll camp out, visit a coal mine and stop in at Abingdon's Barter Theatre.
Neil Harvey for Radford University

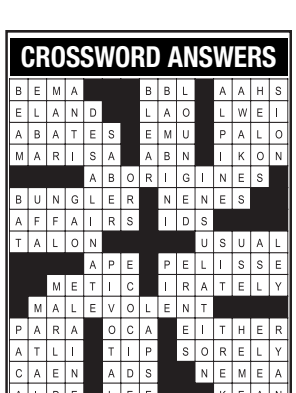
Murphy

from page 1

days are held throughout the United States and Canada each year for a 24-hour period, where operators try to make contact with as many others as possible usually in remote locations.
In this case, the remote area of Brush Mountain.

The local group hopes people can learn both about ham radio but also Audre Murphy.
Murphy would embark on a 21-year acting career following his return from War. This included many business ventures including the trip that brought his plane to our area.
Reports were simple on that day in 1971, his private plane was dealing with rain, clouds, fog and zero visibility.
The twin engine Aero Commander 680 struck the side of the mountain. No one survived.
Three years after the crash, the Veterans of

Foreign Wars placed a stone monument near the site of the crash, which can be approached by a short walk.
Directions: From Blacksburg: Take Main Street to Mount Tabor road (Rt. 624). Go 12 miles just past Rt. 650 turn left onto a gravel road (FS p188.1). Turn right at the top of Brush Mountain and continue for three miles.
The public can also observe the ham radio field day just down from the monument. For more information on the NRV Amateur Radio Club go to: <https://www.n4nr.org/>



Altizer had two hits and two RBIs. Graham Alley, Landen Marrs, Talan Mower and Brady Hale also added two runs batted in each.
Auburn boys setup EM matchup
The Auburn boys soccer team was slated to play county-rival Eastern Montgomery Monday night with a trip to the state semis on the line. Auburn advanced after a 8-0 win over Narrows.
Jared Bradley scored three goals and had an assist in the match. The third and final goal set the AHS boys soccer single season goals record with 25 goals scored.

Goalkeeper Coahan Gordon picked up another shutout as Auburn is now 12-4-1 on the season.
EM alive in softball
Late last week, Eastern Montgomery defeated George Wythe Softball in a close game 3-2. The Mustangs took the lead for good when Alexis Artrip hit a three-run homer in the bottom of the fifth inning. Mary Miller was the winning pitcher.
With the win, Eastern Montgomery advances in region play.
Staff report

Radford University, Junior Achievement give local students a sampling of the college experience



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Students participate in the Radford University Junior Achievement initiative.

RADFORD - A new initiative, launched in 2023 through Radford's business school, has hosted more than 100 local high school students so far this year, giving five separate groups of young people the chance to see what campus life is like and to offer them workshops on practical and constructive topics
Based out of the Venture Lab, it's a partnership between the Davis College of Business and Economics and Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia, which between January and April welcomed the young visitors from Botetourt, Carroll, Salem and Wythe County high schools as well as Roanoke's Burton Center for Arts & Technology.
The students arrived early in the day, often on mornings that were chilly, and filed quietly into the lab where they got breakfast refreshments, then broke into smaller groups to spend about an hour attending three or four short classes from a topic pool that included time management, conflict resolution, career success, goal setting, starting a business and personal branding in an age of social media.

thinking about the future," explained Keri Garnett, president of the group's Southwest Virginia branch.
"It's an outreach strategy," said Radford business management instructor Andy Travers, who's also a longtime Junior Achievement board member. He acted as coordinator and general host during the visits.
"The goals for Junior Achievement are financial literacy, workplace readiness and financial acumen, and we've got similar goals here in the business school," Travers said. "I thought, well, gee, we could use that common set of goals as a bridge to engage high school students."
Steve Mason, a GED instructor with Carroll County Public Schools, chaperoned the second group that visited campus.
"Some of the workshops cover subjects that are key for our kids, and it was good to give them exposure to that," Mason explained.
"A lot of them don't have a chance to get out and do things like this," he added.
The exposure is also meant to show the high schoolers just one option of what is available to them locally in terms of higher education. While on campus, they also took a tour of some of the facilities - including Hemphill Hall's Social Media Analytics and Research Technology (SMART) Lab and the Esports Center in Cook Hall - and got a sampling of what a modern local college is like.
"It's good for them to know what's out there," said Mara Pufko, an instructor at Burton and the school's Jobs for Virginia Graduates (JVG) coordinator. "In every group we've had, there have been at least two people who said, 'I wasn't thinking about college, but now I am.'"

During those discussions, the teens talked about their future ambitions. One Burton student said that after high school, he would like to start his own marketing company.
Junior accounting major Jackson Hughes, a Venture Lab ambassador, was one of several Highlander volunteers - along with three MBA candidates and members of the business fraternity Delta Sigma Pi - who walked the students through basic points of business and adulthood and urged them to consider key questions.
"What are you bringing to the field? How does your service solve a customer's problem?" Hughes asked them: "That is called a value proposition."
Another workshop focused on resolving conflicts. The volunteers undertook role-playing exercises and discussed a set of optical illusions to underscore the ways different people can have differing perspectives. Tips included staying calm, active listening, accepting that conflict is normal, picking the right moment for a debate and understanding that once a dispute is concluded, it should be left alone.

These workshops first began in the spring of 2023 but expanded to their current size this year.
"The whole goal with Junior Achievement is to get students

The Junior Achievement workshops aren't the only recent forum Radford has offered for high school students.
In February, five regional schools visited Kyle Hall to face off in the Jobs for Virginia Graduates' Ignite Competition, a "Shark Tank"-style contest in which students present potential business concepts.
Later the following month, nearly 300 high school students and teachers attended the JVG State Conference, which was also held at Kyle and saw the presentation of numerous scholarships.
Neil Harvey for Radford University