



The Fincastle Herald

& Botetourt County News

www.fincastleherald.com



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The 72nd Buchanan Carnival entertained the county last week.

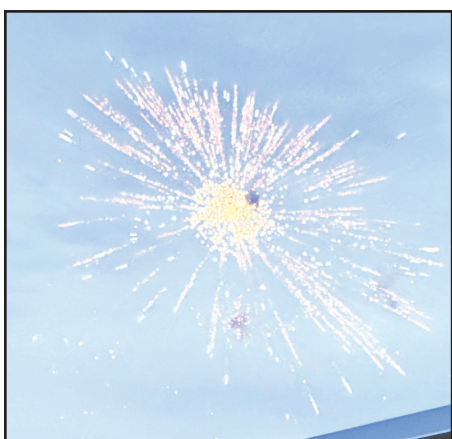


Fireworks begin at the carnival PHOTO BY MELAINA CHURCH

Crowds celebrate Independence Day with carnival, fireworks across Botetourt County



Food trucks serve attendees before the fireworks over Breckinridge Elementary.



Families and friends get settled before the Fincastle fireworks show Sunday night. PHOTOS BY MATT DE SIMONE

Matt de Simone
Managing Editor

Thousands of Botetourt County residents celebrated Independence Day over the holiday weekend, with friends

and families filling the midway in Buchanan for the annual carnival before gathering for fireworks displays July 4 and July 5 at Buchanan Town Park and Breckinridge Elementary School in Fincastle, respectively.

Both events offered residents an opportunity to celebrate the Fourth of July close to home, continuing traditions that have become annual highlights throughout the county.

The 72nd Buchanan Carnival once again transformed the town into a summertime destination, with colorful rides, midway games and classic carnival food welcoming visitors throughout the holiday weekend.

Families lined up for attractions ranging from the Ferris wheel to children's rides, while the aroma of funnel cakes, fried treats and other

See July 4, page 10

Solar proposal sparks broader debate over Botetourt's future

Matt de Simone
Managing Editor

A proposal to build Botetourt County's first utility-scale solar facility became about far more than renewable energy during the June 23 joint public hearing of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission. By the end of the lengthy discussion that evening, supervisors unanimously denied



PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXABAY

OneEnergy Renewables' application to construct a 2-megawatt shared solar facility along Catawba Road near Daleville. But the debate leading to that vote revealed competing visions

for the county's future, as officials, residents, and experts weighed renewable energy against farmland preservation, environmental

See Solar, page 5



FILE GRAPHIC

Matt de Simone
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Botetourt County officials have issued a public response to recent calls from Planning Commissioner Mark Tyson for an investigative hearing on water resources, saying the Planning Commission does not have the legal authority to independently convene such a hearing and emphasizing that long-term water planning is already

County disputes planning commissioner's authority over proposed water hearing

handled through established state and regional processes.

The county's July 3 media release follows Tyson's recently published open letter to Botetourt County residents, in which he urged further examination of the potential effects of continued growth and Google's planned data center campus on the county's water supply.

See Disputes, page 7

Planning Department shifts legal notices to an online publication

Residents who routinely look to The Fincastle Herald for Botetourt County Planning Commission public hearing notices should no longer expect to find those advertisements in the newspaper for the foreseeable future.

County officials recently informed The Herald that the Planning Department is no longer placing its legal advertisements with the newspaper, either in print or online, instead publishing them through a local digital news organization.

According to county officials, the decision was driven by staffing limitations and budget constraints.

The change means residents who rely on The Herald to stay informed about upcoming zoning requests, special exception permits, text amendments and other

land-use matters will need to seek those legal notices elsewhere or monitor the county's website.

The first Planning Commission notice not published in The Herald is for the commission's Monday, July 13, meeting.

Items scheduled for public hearing include:

- A request by Fralin & Waldron Inc. for a special exception permit to establish a vision care medical facility in the Daleville Town Center area.
- A proposed amendment to the county's zoning ordinance creating and defining an Industrial Park Directory sign.
- A request from the Western Virginia Water Authority for a commission permit related to the construction of approximately 3,800 feet of waterline

along Etzler Drive and Victoria Road.

Virginia law was amended in 2024 to allow qualified online news organizations to publish legal notices that were previously required to appear in newspapers, provided those organizations meet state certification requirements.

Prior to publication, The Herald requested comment from Board of Supervisors Chairman Dr. Mac Scothorn through the county's communications office regarding the decision to discontinue publishing Planning Commission legal notices in the newspaper.

Among the questions submitted were whether the chairman is concerned that removing Planning

See Legal notices, page 10

2026 SEASON

daleville
town center

Scan here for complete event schedule, and details.

JULY 11

BOTETOURT FARMERS MARKET

8:30 to NOON

JULY 18

BOTETOURT FARMERS MARKET

8:30-NOON

SUPAFLY FIVE 5-9PM

JULY 24

JORDAN RAINER

5-9PM

Botetourt County History

This decorative poster is being displayed in the foyer of the Botetourt Museum of History & Culture in Fincastle with other items to help celebrate the nation's semiquincentennial this summer.

It is on loan from Ed and Betty Holt.

The Second Continental Congress approved “The Unanimous Declaration of the 13 United States of America” on July 4, 1776. On July 19, Congress ordered an official copy to be made in ornamental handwritten script on parchment paper. Therefore, the official signing did not occur until August 2, 1776.

As President of the Continental Congress, John Hancock boldly signed the official document first under the center of the text. The remaining delegates signed their names in columns starting with the northernmost colonies on the right and moving south to the left. The delegates who were absent on August 2 later added their signatures making a total of 56. Some delegates never signed their names.

It was a risky choice of heroism to sign this document.

~ Botetourt County Museum of History & Culture

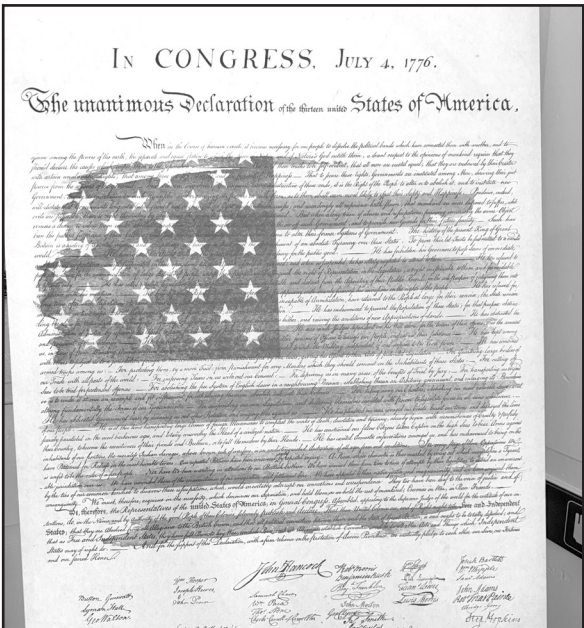


PHOTO COURTESY OF BCMHC

Delegate Austin leads VA250 Fourth of July celebration in Colonial Williamsburg

Delegate Terry Austin (37th House District) participated in the historic Fourth of July celebration at Colonial Williamsburg in his capacity as chairman of the Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission (VA250). As Virginia commemorated the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding, Delegate Austin helped oversee the official festivities, which drew an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 visitors from across the Commonwealth and the nation.

The statewide celebration, “America Made in Virginia: 250 Years Together,” was broadcast live nationwide on PBS, showcasing the American Revolution and Virginia's pivotal role in the birth of the United States. A recording of the broadcast

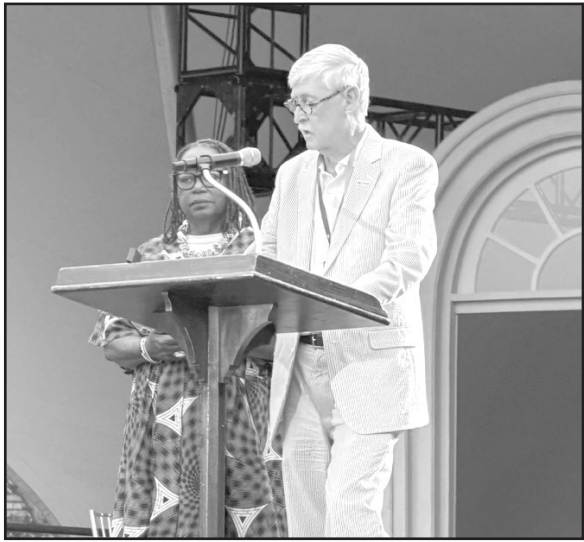


PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE ALLEN

is available at <https://www.va250.org/250-years-together>.

The celebration featured patriotic ceremonies, historical re-enactments, musical performances, and family activities,

highlighting Virginia's central role in the story of American independence. As chairman of VA250, Delegate Austin collaborated with

See Austin, page 7

Edwards is eager to serve Botetourt's agricultural community

Matt de Simone

mattdesimone@mainstreetnewspapers.com

Growing up on a small farm in neighboring Craig County, Lara Edwards learned early where food comes from and the work it takes to produce it.

Now, as Botetourt County's new Agriculture and Natural Resources agent with Virginia Cooperative Extension, she's looking forward to helping local farmers, landowners, and residents while building relationships throughout the community.

“I just love what agriculture is about and supporting producers,” Edwards shared. “Helping people know where their food comes from and what they're eating and how it gets to their plate is what I'm passionate about.”

Edwards officially joined the Botetourt County Extension office after most recently serving as an agriculture science teacher in Montgomery County Public Schools. She previously worked as a 4-H Extension agent in the City of Suffolk, giving her firsthand experience with Virginia Cooperative Extension before returning closer to home.

A graduate of Virginia Tech with a degree in agricultural science and a master's degree in teaching, Edwards said agriculture has been part of her life for as long as she can remember.

Her parents met while on Virginia Tech's horse judging team, and her father works as a farrier. The family has long been involved in raising livestock and producing hay, experiences that helped shape her career path.

“I've always been in it,” she recalled. “Craig County is just so rural. Half my friends had farms, and spending time outside working with our parents was just normal.”

Although she enjoyed teaching agriculture in the classroom, Edwards noted that becoming an Agriculture and Natural Resources agent had long been one of her professional goals.

“When this position came open, it just felt right,” she explained. “It feels like home.”

As the county's Agriculture and Natural Resources agent, Edwards will provide educational programs and technical assistance on a wide range of topics, including soil testing, well water testing, pesticide certification, livestock management, and connecting producers with available state and federal assistance programs.

She described the position as one centered on serving the community.

“Really, I am here to serve the



PHOTO BY MATT DE SIMONE

New Virginia Cooperative Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources agent Lara Edwards

community and figure out what the needs are,” Edwards emphasized. “That could look different every day or a year from now. Just being of service is really what it is.”

One of the immediate challenges facing local agriculture, she observed, is the ongoing drought, which has forced many livestock producers to haul hay from greater distances while coping with reduced forage production.

Edwards also hopes to expand educational opportunities for both established producers and newer landowners entering agriculture through small or hobby farms.

“I think support is needed there,” she added. “Supporting who's already here and finding ways for them to earn a better profit and produce higher quality products is one of the big components.”

While she's only been on the job a short time, Edwards has already begun visiting farms and meeting producers with the help of fellow Extension staff.

She also plans to become more involved in the community as she prepares to move to Botetourt with her daughter.

“I think being visible in the community, whether that's in person, online, or in the newspaper, is really important,” she continued. “People don't always know what Virginia Cooperative Extension is or what we do.”

Edwards encourages anyone unfamiliar with Extension to stop by the office or call to learn more about available programs and services.

“I want people to know that I'm excited to be here,” she stressed. “Their needs are my focus. I want to hear from them.”

For her first year on the job, Edwards believes success won't necessarily be measured by the number of programs offered, but by the relationships she builds.

“I think establishing those relationships, so people know who I am and know they can come ask me for what they need, is what I really want to accomplish,” she concluded.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY FOR A 2026 BIENNIAL REVIEW OF ITS BASE RATES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO § 56-585.8 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA CASE NO. PUR-2026-00044

On May 29, 2026, Appalachian Power Company (“APCo” or “Company”) filed an application (“Application”) with the State Corporation Commission (“Commission”), pursuant to § 56-585.8 of the Code of Virginia (“Code”) and the Commission’s Rules Governing Utility Rate Applications and Annual Informational Filings of Investor-Owned Electric Utilities, for a biennial review of the Company’s rates and terms and conditions for the provision of generation and distribution services. Pursuant to Code § 56-585.8 D, the Commission must issue a final order regarding the Application by January 15, 2027, and any revisions in rates ordered by the Commission pursuant to the rate review shall take effect no earlier than March 1, 2027.

In the Application, APCo represents that this proceeding entails, among other things, determinations regarding: (i) APCo’s cost of service and earnings during the two-year period ending December 31, 2025; (ii) whether prospective changes to APCo’s rates for generation and distribution services are necessary; and (iii) the Company’s prospective fair rate of return on common equity (“ROE”).

APCo states that it files this Application under Code § 56-585.8, which requires APCo to file a biennial review, utilizing “the two successive 12-month test periods ending December 31 immediately preceding the year in which such proceeding is conducted” to determine any excess or deficiency in the Company’s earnings, which in this case are 2024 and 2025. The Company outlines the statutory parameters for the Commission’s review of APCo’s earnings in a biennial review case, including the circumstances under which the Commission must order revisions to APCo’s rates.

Additionally, APCo represents that under Code § 56-585.8 F, if the Commission determines that APCo’s existing rates will, on a going-forward basis, produce revenues above or below the Company’s authorized rate of return, then the Commission “shall order any reductions or increases, as applicable and necessary, to such rates . . . that it deems appropriate to ensure the resulting rates for generation and distribution services (a) are just and reasonable and (b) provide the utility an opportunity to recover its costs of providing services” over the next biennial period, and earn a fair rate of return as authorized by the Commission.

APCo avers that, for the purposes of the earnings test in this case, APCo’s authorized ROE is the 9.75% that the Commission approved in the Company’s 2024 biennial review, Case No. PUR-2024-00024. APCo asserts that it earned a combined return of 4.655% on its common equity in 2024 and 2025.

In this case, APCo requests approval to implement retail base generation and distribution rates that are designed to increase the Company’s revenues by approximately \$61.4 million, which represents a 3.3% increase to overall revenues. The requested increase includes a \$14.3 million decrease to the generation function and a \$75.7 million increase to the distribution function. The requested revenue increase reflects, among other things, APCo’s requested authorization of a prospective ROE of 10.5%.

APCo asserts that an increase to its rates is necessary to ensure the Company can continue providing safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates to its customers over the coming years. According to APCo, the requested rate increase is primarily the result of general inflation, increased investment in distribution and generation, increased capital costs, and the costs of required programs to support electric vehicles and low-income solar.

Included in the Application, the Company is proposing two Electric Vehicle (“EV”) pilot programs: (1) the EV Charger Rebate Pilot, a charger rebate program for Level 2 and DC Fast chargers, and (2) the Residential Managed EV Charging Pilot, a managed charging program offering both active and passive managed charging options to customers. Additionally, the Company proposes changes to its economic development rider, Rider EDR, by: (1) limiting participation to new customers; (2) increasing the economic development required to participate; (3) requiring the service to be in an Environmental Justice Community; and (4) limiting the 40% adjustment factor to all customer generation charges. The Company is also proposing changes to its line extension policy for non-residential customers. Further, the Company also proposes to cancel Rider VWS because no customers are currently enrolled. The Company also proposes to increase the basic service charge for residential customers from \$7.96 to \$9.00 per month.

According to APCo, the overall impact of the Company’s proposals would increase the monthly bill of a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month by approximately \$9.10.

Interested persons are encouraged to review APCo’s Application and supporting documents in full for additional details.

TAKE NOTICE that the Commission may apportion revenues among customer classes and/or design rates in a manner differing from that shown in the Application and supporting documents and thus may adopt rates that differ from those appearing in the Company’s Application and supporting documents.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo’s Application. On October 19, 2026, at 10 a.m., the Commission will hold a telephonic portion of the hearing, with no witness present in the Commission’s courtroom, for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before October 15, 2026, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide required contact information to the Commission. This information may be provided to the Commission: (i) by filing out a form on the Commission’s website at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting; or (ii) by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting.

On October 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in the Commission’s second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Commission will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission’s Staff.

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission has directed the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and required electronic service on parties to this proceeding.

An electronic copy of the public version of the Company’s Application may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: Elisabeth M. Bruce, Esquire, American Electric Power Service Corporation, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or ebBruce@aep.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies of the public version of the Application and other documents filed in this case from the Commission’s website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

On or before October 15, 2026, any interested person may submit comments on the Application by following the instructions found on the Commission’s website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/submit-public-comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044.

On or before August 26, 2026, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding must do so by filing a notice of participation at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties and their counsel. A copy of the notice of participation as a respondent also must be served electronically on counsel to the Company, any other respondents, and Commission Staff. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Rules of Practice and Procedure, 5 VAC 5-20-10 *et seq.* (“Rules of Practice”), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any notice of participation filed by a person not represented by counsel shall also set forth why the filer’s positions in this matter are not adequately represented by another party to this proceeding and cannot be expressed through written or oral public comments as provided for in this proceeding. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing.

On or before August 26, 2026, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness’s testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served electronically on the Company, any other respondents, and the Commission’s Staff. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044.

Any documents filed in paper form with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Rules of Practice.

The public version of the Company’s Application, the Commission’s Rules of Practice, the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing, and other documents filed in the case may be viewed at: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

Sirens and Salutes treats first responders to free Independence Day meals

While many families gathered for cookouts and holiday celebrations on Independence Day, Sirens and Salutes made sure the first responders working to keep their communities safe also had a chance to enjoy a meal.

The local nonprofit sponsored three food trucks Friday to provide free lunches to first responders across the region, serving those on duty at the Botetourt County Sheriff's Office, the Roanoke City Jail, and the Salem Western Regional Jail.

Late morning and into the early afternoon, law enforcement officers, correctional officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and dispatchers were invited to stop by and

order meals at no cost.

The effort was designed to accommodate those whose duties prevented them from taking a break. Employees who could not leave their posts were able to place to-go orders for co-workers, ensuring entire shifts had an opportunity to eat. Organizers also prepared additional meals and set them aside for night shift personnel reporting for duty later in the day.

"We're honored to help take care of those protecting our communities while we celebrate the holiday with our families," said Bill Price of Sirens and Salutes.

- Fincastle Herald staff report



PHOTO COURTESY OF SIRENS AND SALUTES

MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR ROLLS

Botetourt County middle schools released the following honor rolls for the fourth quarter of the 2025-26 school year:

CENTRAL ACADEMY

A HONOR ROLL

EIGHTH GRADE: Lillian Dooley, Hannah Ferguson, Brett Henry, Noah Horne, Wyatt Manbeck, Jasmine Montgomery, Evan Mundy, Gavin Price, Samuel Reynolds, Chase Schoch, Kinley Scott, Macy Weddle

SEVENTH GRADE: Lily Alls, Harper Beckner, Cole Belcher, Ruby Boblett, Lindsey Branch, Liam Camper, Lucy Dubbe', Rilee Erickson, Bryson Garner, Anna Henry, Jaden Herrig, Kaylen Hull, Sedley Jeter, Grace Kang, Noah Koon, Wren Manbeck, Sadie May, Maci Silva, Ronan Snyder, Rosalie Stull, Jocelyn Theimer, Mia Thurston, Kinsley Tolley, Abigail Topkin, Roy Trivellin, Natalee Vassar, Adalyn Whitney, Ellymae Windsor, Bodhi Woodson

SIXTH GRADE: Elowen Anderson, Josee Armentrout, Blake Belcher, Cayden Carpenter, Berkley Carroll, Imelda Graham, Easton Hayes, Makayla Howson, Madeleine Huddleston, Rosalee Lash, Jace Newman, Emerson Race, Elias Reynolds, Camryn Sartorius, Aida Simmons, Eli Walker, Avery Wertz, Sydney West

A-B HONOR ROLL

EIGHTH GRADE: Landon Anderson, Haley Bailey, Brandon Baka-Collins, Cole Bandy, Athena Bergman, Anthony Bona, Lillian Cress, Emma Dalton, Marinette Devinney, Sophie Dewhirst, Mazi Elmore, Ridley Engstrom, Camdyn Flint, Aubrey Ginapp, Raegan Hickey, Addison Kelly, Garland Miller, Hudson Saunders, Braelyn Scott, Alora Seitz, Bayleigh Sieger, Brayden Turman, Reagan Walker, Angela Williams

SEVENTH GRADE: Harley Armentrout, Jamie Arthus, Kyle Asbury, Nikolai Baker, Jameson Brady, Charles Burnette, Ava Burton, Layah Combs, Carson Cook, Grayson Curtis, Rylee Dancausse, Bear Delseni, Cammie Dunbar, Myles Falls, Easton Galanes, Tyler Gilmer, Autumn Ginapp, Tanner Goyer, Samuel Hall, Ryder Hall, Jayden Howson, Baylee Hylton, Austin Justice, Samuel Kern, Bentley Keyser, Kirra Kitt, Jackson Lowe, Madison Mathews, Mason Mays, Autumn Meador, Logan Moyers, Haden Murphy, Harper Patterson, Brooklyn Persinger, Adalyn Persinger, Barry Short, Johanna Sink, Brantley Smith, Luke Sprinkle, Matthew Tate, Maddox Taylor, Micah Tingler, Adelyn Tribble, Sariah Turner, Nora Wilburn, Jaden Willis

SIXTH GRADE: Charles Ayers, Kasey Ayers, Colton Baker, Burton Bigoney, Kenslie Blevins, Eli Boggs, Brynnan Bryant, Bailey Carroll, Elise Cason, Jonathan Clemons, John Cruise, Jackson Daniels, Sadie Davidson, Dennon Dudding, Amelia Duff, Lennox Duty, Elizabeth Earnest,

Meirco Elmore, Easton Firebaugh, Lily Fix, Jaxson Flannagan, Olivia Graves, Lillian Halsey, Colton Haynes, Peyton Hightower, Esther Hipes, Grayson Houseman, Alayna Johnson, Jenna Jones, Avery Kelly, Teagan Kern, Charlotte Lee, Owen Leftwich, Tucker Lisle, Rieleys Lisle, Novah Long, Sullivan Louque-Parrish, Cora Lowman, Logan McVey, Katelyn Moore, Charlotte Moulton, Elijah Neal, Amelia Neighbors, Kylee Payne, Olivia Poff, Cullen Prill, Caden Rucker, Reece Saunders, Ethan Schermer, Colton West, Tanner Wright

READ MOUNTAIN

A HONOR ROLL

EIGHTH GRADE: Paige Abney, Clayton Akers, Annaleigha Aldridge, Michael Aliveto, Elijah Anderson, Matthew Barker, Lillian Bishop, Claire Conn, Layla Cook, Jackson Cummings, Gabriella DeHaven, Noah Dillow, Josiah Dunker, Gabrielle Elmore, Selin Etciglu, Thomas Frederickson, Nathan Gergely, Berkley Gray, Millie Haniewich, William Hedrick, Yan Hernandez Mancia, Grace Hoover, Ian Huddleston, Ariyanah Johnson, Christopher LeMond, Jerrica Lee, Ava Lee, Brock Lough, Everly Lucas, Emma Lugar, Dawson Lyle, Jack Madden, John McNamara, Adam McNamara, Hadley Milko, Silas Milton, Caitlyn Moser, Julia Mosley, Berkley Murray, John Pastrikos, Aarya Patel, Micah Perdue, Dylan Pham, Alisha Poudel, Meredith Purser, Cayden Ray, Jackson Rock, Isaac Spencer, Rebecca Stakor, Ella Stewart, Lukas Stowers, Emily Taylor, Addison Thompson, Malachi Tribble, Cameron Vess, Allison Vess, Laurel Wiley, Isaac Williams, Olivia Wolfe, Toby Zhu

SEVENTH GRADE: Yalda Atayi, Chloe Barnes, Channing Belcher, Molly Bogen, David Bowling, Reese Burns, Makenna Carswell, Cody Carwile, Noah Church, Jackson Cockfield, Savannah Colleluori, Andrew Collins, Levi Crockett, Charlotte Curulla, Aleah Dalton, Braeden Daniels, Landyn Foster, Kalin Guilliams, Bryson Harless, Gwenna Hartvigsen, Benjamin Henderson, Samuel Jackson, Grace Jensen, Grayson Johnson, Kaylee Kammerer, Jackson Kish, Jalen Lin, Vivian Lipscomb, Alex Mattarocchia, Brantley McMillion, Leah Meadows, Nicholas Meyer, Claire Nagle, Kiyan Patel, Ember Persing, Trevor Rock, Scharlotte Rock, Aubree Rogers, Vayoeth Romero Pineda, Presley Russell, Nora Salsgiver, Layla Samuel-Bolt, Eleanor Shively, Dawson Simmons, Caleb Slaughter, Griffin Spalding, Liam Ward, Mason Weeks, Leona Wilhoit, Aubrey Witt, Kaylee Wittensoldner, April Wood, Addisyn Yetter

SIXTH GRADE: Harrison Akers, Averi Alderman, Cameron Allison, Henry Badgley, Nova Bailey, Adam Barbour, Layla Beard, Everlie Beckner, Rylan Borba, Braeden Brown, Evelyn Brummer, Natalie Buehring, Parker Bunn, Yitong Chen, Jacob Clark, Cory Classey-Rhea, Amelia

Cook, Ashlyn Corey, Mason Dalglish, Riley Dallos, Mia Davidson, Jake Delp, Kannon Dively, Cooper Dooley, Joshua Dunker, Everley Duns-Spiteri, Emmet Hamre, Scarlett Hickman, Wesley Hilgers, Lilia Hoover, Reese Huffman, Scarlett Hunt, Olivia Karabin, Olivia Kirby, Nikolas Klaus, Franklyn Klaus, Liam Lavinder, Parker Lough, Matthew Lupiya, Logan Maddox, Emma Markham, London Merchant, Evelyn Milko, Claire Miller, Brooklyn Morgan, Carter Morris, Luke Mullins, Jordan Murray, Mason Nichols, Charlotte Noble, Alyona Parrish, Afton Patrick, Augusta Payne, Maelie Pritt, Sophia Reiner, Hunter Ristine, Madelynn Roberts, Jack Roginski, Benjamin Saville, Bria Scharf, Hayden Smith, Roman Spencer, Grayson Starks, Philip Thomas, Denver Thompson, Swayze Thompson, Isaiah Tribble, Robert Triplett, Brady Tyler, Maci Walls, Josi Whitaker, Wren Wiley, Roman Wilhoit, Isabelle Williams, Abigail Williamson, Emma Willmott, Dannica Wise, Charlotte Woody, Caleb Wright, Elijah Wright, Autumn Wright

A-B HONOR ROLL

EIGHTH GRADE: Mackenzie Akers, Grayson Amos, Karson Anderson, Grayson Beckner, Aiden Beheler, Sydney Bergsten, Cameron Booth, Cailyn Booth, Austyn Borba, Aylah Brown, Trenton Brubaker, Otto Brummer, Colleen Burton, Haley Clark, David Cloninger, William Conn, Ella Cook, Tristen Craddock, Brayden Deacon, Kinsley Dent, Jaxon Dively, Hannah Eberly, Katelyn Engels, Mia Fields, Elijah Foskey, Morgan Gartland, Dorian Granados Armas, Peyton Greathouse, Eli Hall, Trevor Harrison, Braxton Harvey, Tayler Hatter, Cainen Hatter, Brooke Heizer, Carly Hilgers, Rylynn Hill, Everleigh Hudson, Kinley Huffman, Isaiah Irons, Kara Kaufman, Erika Kitts, Cayden Kroll, Bryson Long, Brooklynn Long, Kinleigh Manley, Emmalin May, Evan May, Hannah Meador, Willow Meyers, Ethan Montes Martinez, Melody Moore, Mason Morgan, Kennedy Mulford, Lily Mullins, Wyatt Naff, Aubrey Nicely, Brady O'Quinn, Miles Patrick, Lucas Perdue, Pedro Petrin, Aisha Poudyel, Ella Purves, Joseph Reiner, Alasia Reynolds, Camden Rosenberger, Chloe Sanders, Oliver Saville, Holden Shaw, Laney Shepherd, Kiryn Sollars, Kendall Spencer, Asia Stephens, Walker Stevens, Alanah Thompson, Levi Thompson, Joseph

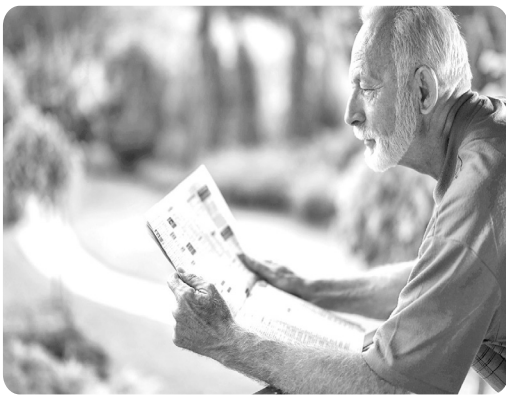
Thompson, Caleb Thorne, Keaton Tice, Charlee Truax, Olivia Waff, Ryan Waggoner, Archer Wilkinson, Grace Witt, Charlotte Wright, Levi Young

SEVENTH GRADE: Emma Allison, Ella Arbogast, Makenzi Asbridge, Antounios Barakat, Eileigh Beckner, Cayden Benge, Emma Bond, Zyiah Brown, Emmalin Butler, Ansley Carkuff, Aoife Case, Alexander Clark, Ryan Cunningham, Reagan Dameron, Jericho Daniel, John Davis, Alyssa Dickerson, Aubrey Dogan, Ethan Dooley, Mariah Downs, Micah Eggleston, Brooks Ferguson, Mehmet Fidangul, Nicole Fields, Christopher Fields, Ryan Fuller, Emma Garcia, Kyrie Gardner, Mason Gilliam, Allison Graham, Elsie Grant, Robin Haburn, Garrett Helms, Bailey Higgins, Tristan Hinds, Reese Holloman, Taryn Kincer, Corinne King, Kyra Lake, Kennedy Lavinder, Curtis Law, Shea Legon, Grayson Markham, Ella Marshall, Olive Megow, Hannah Myers, John Nancarrow, Brynn Nunley, Kinley Oliver, Gabriel Papenfuse, Kylie Pippert, Caroline Powell, Cooper Pritt, Paisley Purdham, Madison Reynolds, Genesis Rosa Cruz, Jordan Sample, Lucy Shawn, Caleb Sherman, John Shuler, Abigail Silva-Garcia, Katie Sorrell, Aubrey Spence, Liam Stallard, Lily Surratt, Alexa Thomas, Shannon Trout, Julian True, Nate Wilson, Cora Wimmer, Olivia Woodruff

SIXTH GRADE: Nevah Adams, Skylar Amos, Cooper Anderson, William Booth, Riley Boyd, Emilia Braden, Stephanie Brown, Lucas Bryant, Isaac Busie, Daniella Carillo, Reese Cecil, Gavynn Champion, Anna Cobler, Aurora Cook, Chadwick Dales, Jackson Duncan, Colton Flannagan, Levi Frederickson, Prescott Gallacher, Kolby Gillespie, Maddi Grant, Evelyn Hatfield, Gavin Hawkins, Jaxon Hodges, Charles Jones, Alhan Khan, Christopher Klein, Landon Knick, Kennedy Kourim, David Lawrence, Madeline Linthicum, Hailey Mack, Violet May, Aliyah Mitchell, Sawyer Mulford, Brentley Niedermeier, Maishvi Patel, Ethan Peck, Katelyn Pierce, Josiah Powers, Bryson Prusak, Astrid Rutes, Lily Rubenstein, Jordan Ruppel, Tate Ryledge, Angey Safera, Isaac Sampson, Aaron Shelton, Serena Smith, Raelyn Steinruck, Myra Strickler, Link Thacker, Danny Ulloa Mancia, Kade Underwood, Carley Vaughn, Brooklyn Wagner, Katelynn Wagner, Alexis Woodson, Paul Yopp

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Solar

from page 1

stewardship, long-term planning, and the county's rural character.

According to the meeting's agenda packet, the proposal called for a utility-scale solar facility on approximately 20.7 acres located about 2.6 miles from the intersection of Catawba Road and U.S. 220. Roughly 9.5 acres would have housed about 3,800 solar panels participating in Appalachian Power's Shared Solar Program, allowing subscribers to receive credits on their electric bills without installing solar panels on their own properties.

One Energy representatives described the project as an example of "agrivoltaics," an approach intended to combine solar energy production with continued agricultural use. Plans included sheep grazing beneath the panels, pollinator-friendly vegetation, and an onsite apiary.

"This site works because it preserves the rural and agricultural character of the county," OneEnergy representative Alyssa Miller told supervisors and planning commissioners on June 23. "Solar is a good, quiet neighbor."

Company officials emphasized that less than half of the property would actually be occupied by the solar array. Existing vegetative buffers would remain in place, no permanent lighting was proposed, and the site would require little traffic after construction.

Planning staff reported that the application met the county's current utility-scale solar ordinance, including requirements related to environmental studies, wildlife assessments, stormwater management, glint and glare analysis, and a professionally engineered decommissioning plan backed by financial assurances.

Technically, the proposal complied with the county's existing regulations.

Whether those regulations were enough became the central question of the evening.

Throughout the hearing, Planning Commission members repeatedly stressed that they were not necessarily opposed to solar energy but questioned whether the county should approve its first utility-scale project before completing updates to its Comprehensive Plan and ongoing revisions to its solar ordinance.

Planning Commission member Mark Tyson questioned why some Virginia localities that previously embraced utility-scale solar have since adopted more restrictive policies.

"If it's such a good and quiet neighbor," Tyson asked, "why are other communities... actually retreating, going the other way?"

Tyson also raised concerns about erosion, runoff, long-term maintenance, decommissioning, and whether commitments made by today's developer would necessarily be honored decades from now if ownership changed.

Planning Commission Chair Beth Leffel acknowledged that OneEnergy had addressed many concerns commonly associated with utility-scale solar proposals and praised the company's effort to keep the property in agricultural use.

"I appreciate that you did present us with a well-thought plan," Leffel remarked.

Still, she concluded that the county first needs clearer guidance identifying where utility-scale solar belongs.

"I think we need better guidelines as to where solar should go," she added.

Planning Commissioner Steve Hartman echoed

those concerns, saying he remained uncomfortable approving projects before revisions to the county's long-range planning documents were complete. He also expressed concern after learning portions of the facility would be visible from at least one location along the Appalachian Trail.

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended denying both the commission permit and special exception permit. Minutes later, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted that recommendation, effectively ending the proposal.

The OneEnergy application was originally one of two utility-scale solar proposals scheduled for consideration that evening. A separate proposal submitted by Barkett Solar LLC for property near Fincastle was removed from the agenda before the hearing at the applicant's request. County officials said the application could be resubmitted at a later date, meaning the Board of Supervisors' vote applied only to the OneEnergy proposal.

Although the vote was unanimous, interviews conducted after the meeting suggest the broader debate is far from settled.

Mark Hanson, a Daleville resident whose home has been powered by solar panels since 2008, viewed the decision as a missed opportunity but agreed the county should establish clearer policies before considering future projects.

"I think you probably should get guidelines," Hanson explained. "To me, it seems obvious that we need solar, but to people who aren't familiar with it, maybe they need some guidance."

Hanson said his nearly two decades of experience with residential solar has given him confidence in the technology's reliability and environmental benefits.

"I haven't had any problems with them," he recalled. "Our volunteer club has been putting them in for about 20 years, and they've been pretty reliable."

For Hanson, one of the proposal's greatest advantages involved Appalachian Power's Shared Solar Program, which would allow apartment residents and homeowners whose properties are unsuitable for rooftop systems to subscribe to locally generated solar power.

"Community solar is good for people who live in apartments," he noted. "They can offset their electric bills and benefit from clean energy."

Hanson also challenged several concerns raised during the hearing. He dismissed claims that modern solar panels contaminate surrounding soil, noting the panels are sealed products, and argued that agrivoltaics demonstrates renewable energy and agriculture can coexist.

"That's been done across the country," he remarked. "They mix it with other uses."

Questions about what happens decades into a project's lifespan generated some of the evening's longest discussion.

County officials questioned whether financial guarantees required today would remain adequate if ownership changed hands years later.

Hanson acknowledged relatively few utility-scale facilities have reached the end of their operational lives, making long-term data somewhat limited. However, he said many existing projects are upgraded with newer equipment rather than abandoned altogether.

"I've never heard of a solar farm just being

abandoned," Hanson said. "Usually they repower them."

When asked about concerns that farmland could become unusable after decommissioning, Hanson questioned that assumption.

"I don't see how the land would not be usable again," he said. "If they're removed, then you could use it again."

Tom Williamson, a local farmer and environmental scientist who spoke against the proposal during the public hearing, agreed with Hanson on one point: the county needs clearer policies before approving utility-scale solar.

Where the two sharply diverged was over what those future policies should permit.

Williamson emphasized that his opposition is not rooted in opposition to renewable energy itself.

"It's not that I'm against solar," he explained. "It just needs to be done responsibly and in the right places."

Like several planning commissioners, Williamson believes the county should complete revisions to its Comprehensive Plan and solar ordinance before considering utility-scale facilities. He argued that the proposal highlighted the need for clearer policies governing where such projects should be located and how agricultural land should be protected.

"I don't think we have proper policies laid out yet for Botetourt County," he said. "We haven't really put enough thought into it or planning, and I think going into anything without proper planning is a horrible idea."

Beyond planning, Williamson believes the proposed site itself presented environmental concerns. He described the property as highly erodible farmland and argued that installing a utility-scale facility there could increase runoff and accelerate soil loss.

"We've spent billions of dollars as a nation and hundreds of millions in Virginia trying to clean up our waterways," Williamson observed. "Doing this would completely be going the other way."

Drawing on his background in soil science, Williamson pointed to soil classifications developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, arguing portions of the site are already considered highly susceptible to erosion. He also disputed the applicant's position that state-required stormwater controls would sufficiently address those concerns.

"I'm a soil scientist from Virginia Tech," Williamson maintained. "They were wrong."

One Energy representatives, however, told county officials the project had been engineered to comply with state stormwater regulations and maintained that permanent vegetative cover beneath the panels would reduce erosion while improving soil stability compared with some traditional agricultural practices. Planning staff likewise reported the proposal met the county's existing stormwater requirements.

That disagreement reflected one of the hearing's

recurring themes.

Supporters and opponents frequently relied on different interpretations of the available information. In some cases, those differences centered on engineering or environmental studies. In others, they reflected fundamentally different views about acceptable long-term risk and how agricultural land should be managed.

The debate over decommissioning illustrated those differences as well.

Williamson questioned whether farmland could realistically be restored to its previous condition decades after construction, particularly if topsoil is disturbed during installation.

"If it takes 100 years for every inch of topsoil to regenerate," he said, "the odds of this getting back to prime farmland again aren't going to happen in our lifetimes—probably not our kids' lifetimes."

He also questioned what might happen if ownership of a facility changed

See [Proposal](#), page 10

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JULY 18th 6:35 PM

Lilo and Stitch Night

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Botetourt Worship Directory

ANGLICAN
Orchard Hills Church - 6032 Cloverdale Rd. next to Read Mountain Fire Station. Worship at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sundays. Home group Bible studies available throughout the week. Pastor Scott McLucas, 977-6800. To find out more about Orchard Hills Church go to the website at www.orchardhillschurch.org.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
New Beginnings Assembly of God, 1317 Narrow Passage Rd., 43 North. Sunday School, 10:00a.m.; Worship, 11a.m.; Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study, 6:00p.m., Pastor Steve Tremblay, email: pastorstevetremblay@gmail.com. Everyone welcome.

Troutville Assembly of God, 118 Conner Lane, P.O. Box 728, Troutville, VA 24175, Pastor Dennis Carroll, 540-960-1224, Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m., Children's Church 11:00 a.m., Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Everyone welcome.

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST
Crossroads Baptist Church - 1128 Wheatland Rd., Buchanan, Pastor Elmer Clemons, (540) 510-0927 Home, Sunday School 10:00 A.M., Morning Worship, 11:00 A.M., Sunday Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study 5:30 P.M.

Faith Baptist Church—4258 Botetourt Rd., Fincastle, VA. 24090, Pastor, Dr. John W. Reynolds, Phone; 540-473-2325, Email: jwr56fbc@yahoo.com, Church website: fincastlefaith.com, Services: 10 A.M. Bible Expositions, 11 A.M. Worship & Children's Church, 7 P.M. Wednesday Bible Study & Prayer, Messages at www.youtube.com/@faithfbaptistchurch9219. We look forward to meeting you.

Lapsleys Run Baptist Church- 608 Zion Hill Road, Fincastle. 540-556-3504. Worship: 2nd & 4th Sundays at 11:00a.m.

New Hope Baptist Church—2315 Blue Ridge Blvd. (US 460), 977-6610, Pastor David McNeill; Sunday School, 9:45AM; Worship, 10:45AM, 7PM; Wed., Bible Study 7PM; Kings Kids, 7PM; Daycare and Preschool, Mon-Fri. 6:30AM-6PM.

Valley View Baptist Church—17471 Main St., Buchanan; Rev. Daniel Boone, 254-2760 (church), 254-2570 (H). Sunday School, 10 AM; worship, 11 AM, Sunday Evening, 6:30 PM; Wednesday: Prayer and Youth Ministries, 7 PM, Word Of Life youth ministry for 4 year olds-12th grade Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST
Bonsack Baptist Church - 4845 Cloverdale Rd. (Alt. 220) Dr. Chris Cadenhead, 977-5701, Sunday School, 8:30a.m. and 11a.m.; Worship 9:45a.m.; Wed. Bible study, 6 p.m.

Buchanan Baptist Church - 19730 Main Street, Buchanan, Sunday Bible Study for all ages 9:45 a.m.; Worship at 11 a.m. Wednesday Fellowship Meal at 6 p.m. followed by Bible Study and activities for all ages. Facebook - Buchanan Baptist Church; Web Site - buchananbaptist.com; Phone - 254-2253, Minister of Music - Stephen Harris

Daleville Baptist Church—Corner of Valley Rd. and Orchard Dr., 992-1570;

Senior Pastor Wes Belcher; Sunday School 9:15 AM, Worship 10:30 AM; Wednesday: Prayer & Bible Study - 6:30 PM, Youth - 6:30 PM

Fincastle Baptist Church—Located at 7330 Roanoke Rd., Fincastle, Rt. 220, 1 mile south of Fincastle, 540-473-2861; www.fincastlebaptist.org; Sr. Pastor Kevin B. Cummings. Sunday Mornings, we offer a dual Bible Study/Worship Service at both 9:00 am and 10:45 am. On Wednesday evenings, we offer events for the entire family: Kids Club (3 years-5th grade) 6:15-7:30 pm; Middle School Ignite (Grades 6-8) 6:15-7:15 pm; Adult Bible Study 6:30-7:30 pm; Ignite High School Group (Grades 9-12) 7:45-8:45 pm; and childcare (birth-36 months).

Forest Grove Baptist Church—693 Mt. Moriah Rd. (Rt. 681), Eagle Rock, Rev. Jerry Marsh, Pastor. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:35 a.m., Wed., Bible Study 7 p.m.

Glade Creek Baptist Church - 3148 Webster Road, Blue Ridge, Virginia 24064. Pastor Steve McChesney. Phone 540-977-1686 or 540-798-7462. Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m., to include Chidren's Church. Wednesday evening Worship and Bible study begins with a meal at 6:30 p.m.

Mill Creek Baptist Church—11475 Lee Hwy., Fincastle, 992-3474. Danny Quirin, Pastor. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Worship 8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday night activities begin at 6pm: Bible study, children and youth activities, choir and handbell rehearsals follow. office@millcreekbc.com

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church—4930 Country Club Road (corner of Country Club & Haymakertown Roads), 540-992-5556. Pastor Danny Barham. Sunday School, 10 a.m.; Worship Service, 11 a.m. Worship can also be viewed online at the PHBC Facebook page or on Youtube (PHBCtube). Other activities and schedules can be found at www.phbcweb.com.

Springwood Baptist Church - 88 Copps Hill Rd., Buchanan; Rev. Mike Anderson, 540-819-4616, Email pmike09@outlook.com. Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.: worship 11 a.m.: Wednesday night bible study will be held every first and third Wednesday of the month from 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Troutville Baptist Church—P.O. Box 309, Troutville, VA 24175; 992-1026, Rev. Carol Johnston. Sunday School 10:00AM; Worship 11AM. Wednesday: Adult Prayer & Bible Study, 6:15PM; Youth & Children Activities 6:30PM.

Zion Hill Baptist Church—Intersection of Zion Hill Road and Old Fincastle Road. Pastor Donald Goforth (540) 884-2285. Sunday School -10 AM Worship 11AM. Youth Activities (grades 6-12) and Kingdom Kids (preschool-grade 5) Wednesdays at 5:30 PM.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Cloverdale Church of the Brethren—4708 Read Mtn. Rd., 992-1060; Sunday School, 9:15 a.m., worship, 10:30 a.m.; Wed. (Sept.-

Honor in Work

Read Proverbs 5:1 through 8:36

In past generations, parents taught their children the value of hard work and faithfulness to their families. People had at least one job. When a person lost a job, he worked very hard to get a new one as soon as possible. He knew hard work honored his family and God.

Maybe times and values have changed, but today it seems like more and more young adults would rather not work at all. An entire generation of young people have been lured away by different types of leisure activities. Scripture warns against neglecting one's work:

A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man (Proverbs6:10–11).

God created people to work hard with the giftedness and talents He gave us. Like no other generation in the world, we have access to education and job training to prepare us for our work. It is good for parents to provide for the needs of their family through the work God has provided.

Prayer Suggestion: Thank God for your talents and abilities and for the work He has placed before you.

Quicklook: Proverbs 6:6–11

May), Family Dinner, 6 p.m., Bible study, 6:45 p.m. Preschool, after-school care & summer day camp for preschool and elementary age children. Patrick Starkey, Pastor; Shawna Burkhart, preschool director.

Mt. Bethel Church of the Brethren—10603 Narrow Passage Rd., Eagle Rock. PO Box. 183 Eagle Rock, VA 24085. Interim Pastor Dreama Osborne. 884-2292 (church), 540-597-8272 (cell). Sunday School, 10 AM; worship, 11 AM; Ladies' Aid meets 2nd Thurs. monthly.

Mt. Joy Church of the Brethren—2565 Buffalo Rd., 10 miles N of Buchanan, 254-2298. Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m. Pastor Michael Tabor, (540) 309-7595.

Pleasant Dale Church of the Brethren, 3732 Breckinridge Mill Rd, Fincastle, Rev. Dr. David A. Tozar - pastor, Sunday worship at 11am, preceded by coffee fellowship at 10:30, Bible Study Sunday at 4pm, 5th Sunday Potluck luncheon, Handicap Accessible, Contact Pastor Davd at dtozar9@yahoo.com. Follow on Facebook, Sunday worship and Bible study stream live.

Troutville Church of the Brethren - 5133 Lee Hwy., 992-1571; Terry R. Johnson, Pastor; Don Obenshain, Choir Director. Sunday Morning Services: Sunday School, 10 am; Worship Service, 11 am. Sunday Night Meetings: Rainbows, 5:30 pm; Christ Seekers, 6:00 pm. Wednesday Night Meetings: Bible Study, 6:30 pm, Choir practice, 7:00 pm. Family Fellowship Time will be held each 3rd Sunday of the month. Handicap Accessible. Our email address is: Troutvillecob@hotmail.com.

ECKANKAR
Eckankar, The Path of Spiritual Freedom, is a simple teaching that focuses

on the Light and Sound of God to help people find more love in their life. We offer a Spiritual Event on the 2nd. Sunday of each month. The program may be a Light and Sound Service, a Spiritual video and discussion, or other topics and techniques to help Raise Your Spiritual IQ. The Roanoke ECK Center is located at 1420 3rd. St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. For more information visit www.eck-va.org or call 540- 353-5365. People of all faiths are welcome.

EPISCOPAL
St. Mark's Episcopal Church - 111 S. Roanoke St., Fincastle. P.O. Box 277 Fincastle, VA 24090. The Rev. G. Willis Logan, Rector. 473-2370. Worship in the sanctuary and by Zoom on Sunday mornings at 10:00am, with Adult Education on Sunday mornings from 9:00 to 9:50am. Evening Prayer is Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm by Zoom. Brown Bag Bible Study on Thursdays at 12 noon in the Ministry Center and by Zoom. Links for Zoom can be found on our website, www.stmarksfincastle.org.

LUTHERAN
Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church (WELS) - 9068 Cloverdale Road, Troutville, VA; Paul Workentine, Pastor; Worship Sunday at 10:00 AM. Sunday School at 11:30 AM. Info and calendar at osroanoke.com. Phone: 540-977- 4888.

Wheatland Evangelical Lutheran Church—1560 Wheatland Road, Buchanan, 24066; 540-254-1605. Sunday worship service, 10:30 a.m. (in person or parking lot, tune car radio to 88.9 FM). Interim Pastor: Phyllis Diamond. Facebook, <http://www.wheatlandlutheran.org>; teemwheatland@gmail.com

NON-DENOMINATIONAL
Grace Bible Church of Botetourt – 148 Amsterdam Rd. (beside the south lane of 220 in Amsterdam, 1.5 miles north of LBHS). Sunday Worship, 10 a.m. Pastor Jay Robinette - 855-4620.

Mt. Carmel Church, 6 miles south of Eagle Rock at intersection of Rt. 43 and 688; pastor, Richard Ronk; phone # (540) 884-3653; Sunday School at 10:00 A.M., Worship at 11:00 A.M., Wed. Prayer Meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Woodland Church - We Present Christ - 45 Woodland Rd. Troutville, VA. Corner of Blacksburg/ Country Club Rds., 3.5 miles W. of Fincastle. 540-632-1515. Pastor: Caleb Lythgoe. Sunday School, 10AM; Worship, 11AM, Wed. Prayer Meeting 6:30PM. Website: woodlandchurchbc.com. E-mail address: woodlandchurchbc@gmail.com.

PRESBYTERIAN
Buchanan Presbyterian Church - 19559 Main St. Buchanan. 540-254-1390. Donna Hopkins Britt, Pastor. Choir rehearsal at 9:00 am. Sunday School at 10:00 am. Worship at 11:00 am. Videotaped services can be viewed on YouTube. The Food Pantry is open from 9-11 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Handicap accessible. Facebook page or website: www.buchananpresbyterian.org. Contact www.admin@buc

buchananpresbyterian.org
Fincastle Presbyterian Church – 108 E. Back Street, Fincastle, VA 24090. The Rev. Dr. David Dickerson, Supply Minister, Lori Turner, Music Director. Worship service in the Sanctuary and via Live Streaming (<https://www.facebook.com/fincastlepresbyterianchurch>) at 10:30 AM. Adult Sunday School offered at 9:30 AM. Fellowship time in the Fellowship Hall immediately following morning service. Bell choir practices after Sunday Fellowship, often providing special music in our services. For more information please email fincastlepresbyterianchurch@gmail.com or call 540.473.2042.

Galatia Evangelical Presbyterian Church - 78 Gala Loop Road, Eagle Rock, VA 24085. Rev. Emily B. Hook, pastor, 804-516-6552. Sunday School at 10 a.m. each Sunday. Morning Worship & Praise at 11a.m. each Sunday. Communion once each quarter.

Virginia Presbyterian Church – 918 Pico Road, Buchanan, 24066. Worship 9:30 a.m. (nursery provided), Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

ROMAN CATHOLIC Church of the Transfiguration—7624 Roanoke Rd., Fincastle, VA 24090; Fr. Zaverio “Xavier” Banasula. 473-2656. Saturday Mass at 4:30pm & Sunday at 8:30am; Christian formation after Mass on Sunday.

UNITED METHODIST
Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church – 3936 Beaver Dam Road, just off Springfield Road, Springfield. Rev. Morris A. Bennett. Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. followed by Worship, 10 a.m.

Eagle Rock United Methodist Church – 14565 Church St., Eagle Rock, 10:15 AM; Glen Wilton UMC, Main St., Glen Wilton, 9:00 AM; Shiloh UMC, Shiloh Rd, Eagle Rock, 11:15 AM. Pastor Ray Sandifer (540) 525-0258. Mail donations for the building fund to P.O. Box 85, Eagle Rock.

Fincastle United Methodist Church – Sunday School at 9 a.m. in the Family Life Center. In person services Sunday, 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, 136 S. Church St., Fincastle. Service is also live streamed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@FincastleUMCMedia> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068517955699>. Reverend Jim Bollinger, office, 473-3001. E-mail: office@fincastleumc.org.

St. Mark's United Methodist Church – 19 Cedar Ridge Drive, Daleville. Pastor Samuel Plymale, 992-3030. We have one service on Sundays at 10:00am, with Sunday School for children, youth, and adults following at 11:00am. Shipyard Youth meets every Sunday from 4:00 to 6:00pm, unless there is a special monthly mission event. Frogs and Tadpoles Children's Ministry meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, September through April, from 4:00 to 6:00pm.

Trinity United Methodist Church – 19637 Main St., Buchanan; Rev. Greg Knopff, 254-2475 (O). Worship, 9:45AM, Sunday School 10:30 AM.

MAIN STREET CLASSIFIEDS

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ourvalley.org

The Fincastle Herald

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The New Castle Record

Salem Times-Register

News Messenger

Radford News Journal

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Legals - City of Salem

Notice is hereby given
to all interested persons that the City of Salem Planning Commission, at its regular meeting on July 15, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, will hold a public hearing, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, to consider approval of the following requests relative to the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA:

1. Consider the request of Community Church Inc, property owner and Cornerstone Classical Academy, lessee, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow for an Educational Facility, Primary/Secondary, on the property located at 1923 East Main Street (Tax Map #78-1-14).

2. Consider the request of Robertson Family Revocable Trust, property owner and Amer Alsayadi, lessee, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow a retail sales, smoke shop, on the property located at 501 West 4th Street (Tax Map #143-3-14).

3. Consider the request of The Preston Place Preservation Foundation Inc., property owner, for a Special Exception Permit to allow an assembly hall, nonresidential uses in an accessory structure, and nonresidential uses out of doors, and a Use Not Provided for Permit for outdoor gatherings of less than 500 people on the property located at 1936 West Main Street (Tax Map #138-2-7).

Copies of the proposed plans, ordinances or amendments may be examined in the Office of Community Development, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia.
At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard relative to the said requests.
THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA BY:
Christopher J. Dorsey
Executive Secretary

Legals - City of Salem

Order of Publication
Commonwealth of Virginia
VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316;-317.20-104
Case No.CL26-1177
VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF ROANOKE, VIRGINIA, Complainant, v.
RUBY C. BONHAM, *et al*, Respondents.
The object of this suit is to: enforce the lien for taxes assessed by the County of Roanoke, Virginia against certain real property designated as Tax Map Parcel No.064.01-03-17.00-0000.
An affidavit having been made and filed that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain the location of Ruby C. Bonham and that there are or may be persons with an interest in the subject property, including heirs, devisees, and successors in title of Ruby C. Bonham, who may be deceased, whose names and addresses are unknown, it is hereby ORDERED that each of the parties appear on or before the August 14, 2026, and do whatever is necessary to protect their interests in said land. It is further ORDERED, pursuant to Va. Code Ann.§8.01-321, that this order of Publication be published once a week for FOUR successive weeks in the *Salem Times Register*, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Roanoke, and that a copy be posted at the front door of the Courthouse in County of Roanoke, Virginia.
Entered this 18th day of June, 2026.
Honorable James R. Swanson, Judge
I ask for this:
Amy H. Geddes, Esquire
VSB#38650
OPN Law
3140 Chaparral Drive, Suite 200-C
Roanoke Virginia 24018
Phone: (540)725-8181
Fax: (540)772-0126
Email: ageddes@opnlaw.com
Counsel for Complainant

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia
VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316;-317.20-104
Case No.CL26-1091
VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF ROANOKE COUNTY OF ROANOKE, VIRGINIA, Complainant, vs.
CHARLIE L. PHELPS, a/k/a CHARLES L. PHELPS, *et al* Respondents.
TO: THE RESPONDENTS; The object of this suit is to: enforce the lien for taxes assessed by the County of Roanoke, Virginia against certain real property designated as Tax Map Parcel No. 087.11-03-25.00-0000.
An affidavit having been made and filed that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain the location of Charlie L. Phelps, a/k/a Charles L. Phelps and that there are or may be persons with an interest in the subject property, including heirs, devisees, and successors in title of Charlie L. Phelps, a/k/a Charles L. Phelps, whose names and addresses are unknown, it is hereby ORDERED that each of the parties appear on or before the August 1, 2026, and do whatever is necessary to protect their interests in said land. IT is further ORDERED, pursuant to Va. Code Ann.§8.01-321, that this Order of Publication be published once a week for four successive weeks in the *Salem Times Register*, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Roanoke, and that a copy be posted at the front door of the Courthouse in county of Roanoke, Virginia.
Entered this 9th day of June, 2026.
Honorable James R. Swanson, Judge
I ask for this:
Amy H. Geddes, Esquire (VSB #38650)
OPN Law
3140 Chaparral Drive, Suite 200-C
Roanoke Va 24018
Phone: (540)725-8181
Fax: (540) 772-0126
E-mail: ageddes@opnlaw.com
Counsel for Complainant

Additional terms may be announced at the time of the sale. The Trustee will convey the above-described property to the purchaser(s) by Special Warranty deed at settlement and makes no additional representations or warranties of any kind regarding the title to said property.

John K. Prillaman, Esq. Trustee
For Information Contact: John K. Prillaman, Esq. OPN Law, PLC 3140 Chaparral Drive, #200-C Roanoke, Virginia 24018 (540) 725-8194

Public Notification:
Norfolk Southern Railway Company proposes to construct two 60-foot positive train control towers with 10-foot antennas (max height 70'). The towers are proposed on the railroad right-of-way. Tower #71095 will be located at railroad mile post 261.1, in Roanoke, Virginia, Latitude 37.27033344/Longitude - 79.99903731. Tower #71099 will be located at railroad mile post 261.7 in Roanoke, Virginia, Latitude 37.27257934/Longitude -80.01055476. This notice is being published in accordance with Federal Communications Commission regulations (47 CFR Pt. 1, Appx. C, § V.C. and 47 CFR § 1.1307) implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. CHA on behalf of our client invites comments from any interested party regarding the potential effects of the project on historic properties. Comments may be sent to Nicole Frazer, CHA, nfrazer@chasolutions.com, 3 Winners Circle, Suite 100, Albany, NY, 12205. Comments must be received within 30 days of the published date.

Legals - City of Salem

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 1514 Golfside Avenue NW, Roanoke, VA 24017 Tax Map: 2461312

In execution of a Deed of Trust dated December 15, 2023, recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court for the City of Roanoke, Virginia, as Instrument No. 230010160, the Trustee will offer the above-described property for sale to the highest bidder at public auction on July 23, 2026 at 9:00am, at the Roanoke City Circuit Court, 315 W. Church Ave, Roanoke, VA 24010.

All that certain lot or parcel of land, lying and being in the City of Roanoke, Commonwealth of Virginia, and being more particularly described as follows, to-wit:

Lot Twelve (12), Block Five (5), according to the map of Carol Heights dated February 21, 1955, prepared by David Dick, State Engineer & Surveyor, a copy of which is recorded in the Clerks' Office of Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, in Map Book 1, Page 55.

Date of Sale: July 23, 2026 at 9:00am, at the Roanoke City Circuit Court, 315 W. Church Ave, Roanoke, VA 24010.

Terms: CASH; a deposit in the form of certified funds in the amount of \$10,000 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower. Settlement within thirty (30) days of date of sale. Time is of the essence.

OPTIONS:
1. All costs of conveyance, examination of title, recording charges, etc. will be at cost of purchaser with the exception of the grantor's tax. Neither the Trustee nor any other party guarantees or covenants to deliver or in any way to obtain possession of the premises for any third-party purchaser.

2. The Trustee reserves the right to reject all bids, extend the time to receive bids or withdraw the property from sale at any time. In addition, should the Trustee be unable, for any reason, in its sole discretion, to convey title, the successful bidder's sole remedy in law or equity shall be the return of his deposit. Upon refund of the deposit, the sale shall be void and of no effect.

Additional terms may be announced at the time of the sale. The Trustee will convey the above-described property to the purchaser(s) by Special Warranty deed at settlement and makes no additional representations or warranties of any kind regarding the title to said property.

John K. Prillaman, Esq. Trustee
For Information Contact: John K. Prillaman, Esq. OPN Law, PLC 3140 Chaparral Drive, #200-C Roanoke, Virginia 24018 (540) 725-8194

Public Notification:
Norfolk Southern Railway Company proposes to construct two 60-foot positive train control towers with 10-foot antennas (max height 70'). The towers are proposed on the railroad right-of-way. Tower #71095 will be located at railroad mile post 261.1, in Roanoke, Virginia, Latitude 37.27033344/Longitude - 79.99903731. Tower #71099 will be located at railroad mile post 261.7 in Roanoke, Virginia, Latitude 37.27257934/Longitude -80.01055476. This notice is being published in accordance with Federal Communications Commission regulations (47 CFR Pt. 1, Appx. C, § V.C. and 47 CFR § 1.1307) implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. CHA on behalf of our client invites comments from any interested party regarding the potential effects of the project on historic properties. Comments may be sent to Nicole Frazer, CHA, nfrazer@chasolutions.com, 3 Winners Circle, Suite 100, Albany, NY, 12205. Comments must be received within 30 days of the published date.

Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,
By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia that the Board of Supervisors hereby schedules a public hearing for Monday, July 27, 2026 at 7:15 p.m. or as soon thereafter in the Board Room in the Montgomery County Government Center located at 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, in order to hear citizens comments on a proposed ordinance establishing a tax at the rate of \$1.00 per One Hundred Dollars of assessed value for a separate classification for tangible personal property taxation for motor vehicles owned or leased by certain members of a volunteer rescue squad or volunteer fire department in the County of Montgomery, Virginia.
BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Angela M. Hill
County Administrator

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, July 20, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Conditional Use Permit request by Jeffrey T. and Jamie M. Zoellner, Applicants, and Ray D. Craggett Trust, c/o Anna C. Rogers, Trustee, Property Owner, to allow a Planned Housing Development consisting of one Two-Family Dwelling in the General Business (B-3) zoning district on property located at 185 New Street NW, identified as Tax Parcel 526 - ((A))- 238; (Parcel ID 004144), and consisting of approximately of 0.465 acres. The property is designated as Business/Commercial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

B. Conditional Use Permit request by Samuel Bishop, Property Owner and Applicant, to allow residential use in the General Business (B-3) zoning district on property located at 465 Stuart Street NE, identified as Tax Parcel 527-((3))-50A and 527-((3))-49B; (Parcel ID 001756 and 001755), and consisting of approximately 0.18 acres. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Town Hall will be open and available to receive public comments in-person at the time of this Public Hearing. A copy of the application, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the Planning Department, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1902 or by email at planning@christiansburg.org or g, with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 3426 MOUNT ZION ROAD, BLACKSBURG, VA 24060.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated March 11, 2005, in the original principal amount of \$177,800.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No.2005002842. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for the City of Radford, 619 Second St., W., Radford, VA, or any such temporary

Legals - Montgomery County

alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on September 3, 2026, at 12:45 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: BEGINNING AT A POINT, A ROD SET ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MT. ZION ROAD (VA. RTE. 655), CORNER TO PROPERTY OF RALPH L. AND THERESA P. RUPERT; THENCE LEAVING MT. ZION ROAD AND WITH THE RUPERT LINE, N. 00° 24' 13" E. 284.49 FEET TO A POINT, AN EXISTING ROD FOUND AND CORNER TO THE PROPERTY OF GLEN E. AND DENISE G. PRICE; THENCE LEAVING RUPERT AND WITH THE PRICE LINE, S. 88° 21' 17" E. 76.84 FEET TO A ROD FOUND AT AN ANGLE POINT; THENCE CONTINUING WITH PRICE, S. 01° 31' 00" E. 191.00 FEET TO A ROD SET AT AN ANGLE POINT; THENCE STILL CONTINUING WITH PRICE, S. 64° 26' 19" E. 33.48 FEET TO A POINT, A ROD SET CORNER TO THE PROPERTY OF ROY B. MILLER, JR. AND DONNA C. MILLER; THENCE LEAVING PRICE AND WITH THE MILLER LINE, S. 15° 23' 00" W. 108.00 FEET TO A POINT, A ROD SET ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MT. ZION ROAD (VA. RTE. 655); THENCE LEAVING MILLER AND WITH MT. ZION ROAD, N. 72° 15' 48" W. 79.15 FEET TO A ROD FOUND ON SAME; THENCE CONTINUING WITH SAID ROAD, N. 72° 45' 29" W. 10.50 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND BEING ALL OF THAT PROPERTY NOW OR FORMERLY BELONGING TO JAMES PATRICK ELLIOTT, AS MORE PARTICULARLY SHOWN ON A PLAT OF SURVEY AND BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT DATED FEBRUARY 23, 2005, PREPARED BY JOHN R. CHRISTMAN, LAND SURVEYOR, A COPY OF WHICH IS RECORDED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA, IN PLAT BOOK PAGE 25, PAGE 81. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.aldridgepите.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.aldridgepите.com. VA-353027-3.

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Proposal

from page 5

multiple times or if a future company became financially unable to meet its restoration obligations.

“Money’s got to come from somewhere,” Williamson said.

Hanson acknowledged that some long-term questions remain simply because utility-scale solar is still a relatively young industry.

“I guess it’s hard to say that far out because it hasn’t happened yet,” he said of large-scale decommissioning.

Despite reaching very different conclusions, both men recognized that some of the issues debated during the hearing have yet to be fully answered by decades of real-world experience.

That uncertainty also surfaced repeatedly during the public hearing.

Planning commissioners praised portions of OneEnergy’s proposal while simultaneously concluding that the county should first establish clearer policies before approving utility-scale solar facilities. Leffel commended the company’s effort to preserve agricultural activity through agrivoltaics. Tyson acknowledged that Botetourt’s ordinance already contains

safeguards— including setbacks, stormwater requirements, and decommissioning provisions— that exceed standards adopted by some Virginia localities years ago.

Even so, commissioners ultimately concluded that approving the county’s first utility-scale solar project before completing updates to the Comprehensive Plan would be premature.

Public comments reflected many of the same themes.

Some residents expressed support for renewable energy but urged officials to determine appropriate locations before approving projects. Others questioned potential impacts to farmland and the environment, while supporters emphasized the need to diversify Virginia’s energy portfolio and expand access to locally generated renewable power.

In the end, the discussion was less about whether solar energy has a place in Botetourt County than where— and under what conditions— it should be developed.

That distinction may ultimately prove to be the hearing’s lasting takeaway.

Although Hanson believes the county should encourage

additional renewable energy development and Williamson hopes future regulations place tighter limits on where utility-scale facilities may be built, both agreed clearer guidance would benefit applicants, elected officials, and residents alike.

County officials are already working toward that goal through updates to the Comprehensive Plan and proposed revisions to the county’s solar ordinance. Those efforts are expected to provide more specific guidance on where utility-scale solar facilities may be appropriate, how agricultural land should be protected, and what standards future applicants will be expected to meet.

Whether those revisions ultimately make future projects easier or more difficult to approve remains to be seen.

What appears certain is that the unanimous denial of OneEnergy’s proposal did not end Botetourt County’s conversation about utility-scale solar. Instead, it marked the beginning of a broader discussion over how the county balances renewable energy, private property rights, environmental stewardship, farmland preservation, and long-term planning as it charts its future.

July 4

from page 1



The dragon-coaster rolls.



Many carnival-goers took a ride aboard the Scrambler.



First frisbee, then fireworks



VFW Post 1851 brought hot dogs for Fincastle’s fireworks extravaganza.



Breckinridge Elementary’s playground equipment was put to good use Sunday.



The Carousel at the Carnival



Music rocked the night last Friday at the Buchanan Carnival. PHOTOS BY MATT DE SIMONE

fair favorites filled the air. As temperatures cooled in the evening, the carnival grounds remained busy with children, parents and visitors enjoying the festive atmosphere.

The carnival has long served as one of Buchanan’s signature summer events, drawing residents from throughout Botetourt County and neighboring communities. The annual

celebration also provides an economic boost for local organizations and businesses while giving families an affordable way to celebrate the Independence Day holiday close to home.

The festivities also included Buchanan’s annual Fourth of July Parade through downtown. Among this year’s winners were James River Drip in the commercial category; Mark Cline, whose Uncle Sam portrayal earned first

place in the creative and funniest categories before also being named Best Overall; Night Crawlers Jeep Club for decorated non-vintage vehicles; Glasgow Life Saving & First Aid Crew Inc. for emergency medical services, with Fincastle EMS receiving second place; Effinger Volunteer Fire Department for fire department; Botetourt Artillery for the red, white and blue category; and the owner of a Model T for the vintage vehicle division.

Later in the weekend, residents gathered at

Breckinridge Elementary School in Fincastle for the town’s annual Independence Day celebration and fireworks display.

Long before dusk, families spread blankets and lawn chairs across the school grounds while children played on the playground and swings or visited community vendors set up around the campus. The relaxed atmosphere gave neighbors an opportunity to visit while waiting for darkness to fall.

As evening arrived, fireworks illuminated the sky above Breckinridge Elementary, drawing

cheers from the crowd and bringing the celebration to a patriotic conclusion. The event once again served as one of Fincastle’s largest community gatherings of the year, attracting residents of all ages.

“We started early to beat the storms, and the show went off beautifully without a hitch,” Fincastle Mayor Mary Bess Smith said. “We are grateful to Master Displays LTD and the Fincastle Volunteer Fire Department for their professionalism and care. Events like this honor our deep traditions as we come together as a community to celebrate, and this

year was particularly special as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of our nation.”

While each event offered a different experience, together they reflected Botetourt County’s tradition of celebrating Independence Day through community gatherings that bring neighbors together.

Whether riding the midway in Buchanan or watching fireworks from a lawn chair in Fincastle, residents found opportunities throughout the holiday weekend to celebrate the nation’s birthday with family, friends and fellow community members.

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Cow/Calf Pair	\$3,200.00
Graded Steers	
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700-799	\$338.00-\$341.00
Graded Bulls	
400-499	\$375.00-\$411.00
500-599	\$356.00-\$411.00
600-699	\$332.00-\$351.00
Graded Heifers	
300-399	\$400.00-\$405.00
400-499	\$362.00-\$425.00
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Legal notices

from page 1

Commission legal notices from the county’s local newspaper could reduce public awareness or participation in zoning and land-use matters, particularly among older residents who continue to rely on the printed newspaper rather than online sources. The Herald also asked how the board balances staffing and budget considerations with ensuring public notices reach as broad an audience as possible, why the Planning Department is experiencing staffing and budget constraints despite the number of projects currently underway, and whether

the decision to stop publishing legal notices in The Herald is intended to be temporary or a long-term policy.

The county did not respond to those questions or acknowledge the request for comment by the newspaper’s press deadline.

The Fincastle Herald will continue to report on Planning Commission meetings, zoning requests and development proposals affecting Botetourt County.

- Fincastle Herald staff report

Hoffman

from page 12

crash three years later. Catfish Hunter passed from Lou Gehrig’s disease a few years after he was our guest speaker for the Salem-Roanoke Baseball Hall of Fame banquet. Seaver and Morgan left us in 2020 and Rose died in 2024 without making the Hall of Fame due to his gambling activities.

As for the Bird, he was only 54 years old when he was found dead beneath his 10-wheel dump truck at his Northborough, Mass., home in April of 2009. Authorities concluded that Fidrych had suffocated after his

clothes had become entangled with a spinning power takeoff shaft on the truck.

I feel lucky I got to see those 1976 all-stars play, some in person and all on TV. My gosh, it doesn’t seem like 50 years ago. I remember getting excited about getting Johnny Bench’s rookie card in a pack of bubble gum cards.

For many years I took team pictures of kids as a side job for some extra money, as weekly sports editor is a far cry from being Elon Musk. I had a

Johnny Bench catcher’s mitt I carried with me in case a kid was a catcher and didn’t have his mitt for the picture. One time, 15 or so years ago, I was talking baseball with some boys on a 12-year-olds team and asked them if anyone knew who Johnny Bench was. Dead silence followed until one the youngsters piped up, “Isn’t he that guy on the paint commercial?”

Yes he was, and 50 years from now maybe Mike Trout’s name will get that same reaction. That sounds like I’m setting you up for a fish joke, but I

won’t go there.

It’s now 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the All-Star game is back in Philly next Tuesday at beautiful Citizen’s Bank Park. I most likely won’t be here 50 years from now to reflect on it, so break out the cheesesteaks, Tasty Cakes and birch beer and kick back and enjoy the game. You’ll see a lot of future Hall of Famers on the field in Philadelphia, and if some of them don’t make it I hope they can at least fix cars.

Roberts named new Greenfield Elementary assistant principal

Botetourt County Public Schools has announced the appointment Jenny Roberts as assistant principal of Greenfield Elementary School, effective July 1.

Roberts brings more than 25 years of experience serving children, families, and schools through education, social work, counseling, and community engagement. She currently serves as a special education teacher with Roanoke City Public Schools, where she works closely with students, families, and staff to support academic, behavioral, and social-emotional growth.

“Jenny’s career reflects a deep commitment to helping children overcome challenges and reach their full potential,” said Jennifer Hawks, principal of Greenfield Elementary School. “She brings a unique blend of educational expertise, compassion, and leadership experience that will strengthen the support we provide to students, families, and staff at Greenfield Elementary. We are excited to welcome her to our school community.”

Roberts holds a master of education from Mary Baldwin University and a bachelor’s degree in social work from Radford University,

and has completed administrative certification through James Madison University.

“I am honored to join Greenfield Elementary and become part of the Botetourt County community,” said Roberts. “Elementary schools play such an important role in shaping students’ confidence, curiosity, and love of learning. I look forward to working alongside our dedicated teachers, staff, and families to ensure every child feels supported, valued, and empowered to succeed.”

- Fincastle Herald staff report



PHOTO COURTESY OF BCPS
Jenny Roberts

DAR: Our Patriot Ancestor

In recognition of the 250th celebration of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the DAR America 250! Committee of the Botetourt County Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution is placing a spotlight on members’ Patriot ancestors who helped the country achieve American Independence. These Patriot ancestors are men and women whose service to the American Revolution has been documented through careful research. Whether they served as soldiers, provided supplies, or performed essential public service, their contributions have been proven by previous members of DAR. This new Patriot, **Richard Roberts**, however, was established through the meticulous research of member Pat Honts and her husband, George Honts. The chapter sincerely appreciates Pat and George’s dedication to researching historical records and documenting the service of her Patriot ancestor.

Richard Roberts was born in Hanover County, Va., north of Richmond. As with any white male, he was put on Hanover County’s militia role at age 16 and could be called up again until the age of 50. The Rev. Mr. Dunlap married Richard and Alice Hughes in 1779. Son Wiliam was born June 17, 1780, and five sons followed over the next 12 years.

According to Mrs. Roberts’ application W4573 for a widow’s benefit dated June 17, 1841, Private Roberts’ first tour was “out against the Indians on the frontiers – on the Holston River – where he was stationed the greater part of the time at the lead mines near Fort Chiswell in Wythe County, Va.” The Loyalists coveted lead for British armament purposes.

“The second tour he served was at the Battle of Guildford Court House, under Capt. Jacob Moon in March 1781,” (North Carolina, March 15, 1781) where Capt. Moon was killed at said battle.” The British held the field but with devastating losses and soon abandoned their Carolina campaign.

“Her husband was also at the taking of Cornwallis (October 19, 1781). At the taking of Cornwallis her husband saw the British General hand the sword to



FILE GRAPHIC

Washington (sic) and when the British soldiers laid down their Arms the Band of Music commenced playing.”

Before the turn of the 19th century, Richard, Alice and their six boys moved to Bedford County where Richard died September 7, 1831. The Roberts family made the decision to move to Bedford County because much of Hanover County’s desirable land had already been claimed and divided among established families. Bedford still had abundant land, cheaper frontier land and attracted many immigrants from eastern Virginia. Also, Hanover County was largely Church of England (Anglican), and the Roberts family may well have been Presbyterian.

The Daughters of the American Revolution is a non-profit, non-political organization open to any woman who can document her lineage to a Patriot who contributed to the success of the American Revolution. Founded over 135 years ago, it is focused on service to the community through its mission of Historic Preservation, Education, and Patriotism. Anyone interested in joining the chapter or have questions about membership may contact Membership Chair Emily Talbot-Guillote by email at eptg1019@gmail.com, or Registrar JoElla John at jjohnregistrar@gmail.com. Members welcome your interest and would be happy to help you explore your Revolutionary War ancestry and the membership process.

- Botetourt County DAR

AARP Scam Alert: Watch for Credit Card Skimming

With fuel pumps and ATMs as frequent targets, a surge of skimming devices is threatening consumers. Criminals attach sophisticated skimmers directly over legitimate card slots or splice them into internal wiring to secretly record your financial data.

Many modern skimming devices closely resemble real hardware, making them difficult to detect at first glance. Vulnerable targets

include standalone ATMs, unattended retail checkout lines, and card terminals located in busy tourist areas.

The next time you fill your tank or use a card terminal, inspect the machine closely for loose, bent, crooked, or scratched components. Pull firmly on the card slot or wiggle the keypad before inserting your card. If anything feels loose or altered, do not use it and notify an employee

immediately. To help stay safe, choose tap-to-pay options or digital wallets over physical insertion. Use credit cards for stronger fraud protections.

Learn how to spot and avoid scams with AARP Fraud Watch Network. Suspect a scam? Call the free helpline at 877-908-3360 and talk to a fraud specialist about what to do next.

- AARP

BTEC student wins award at SkillsUSA National Conference



FILE GRAPHIC

A Career and Technical Education student from Botetourt County was awarded a certificate of accomplishment at the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC) held June 1-5 in Atlanta, Ga. An all-time high of 7,000 students competed in the 2026 SkillsUSA Championships at NLSC, which is the largest gathering of the future skilled workforce.

As an indicator of proficiency, Skill Point Certificates were awarded to SkillsUSA Champions who met a predetermined threshold score for their respective competition. Students can add this certificate, an indicator of career

readiness, to their employment portfolio.

Noel Caballero, from Fincastle and a student at Botetourt Technical Educational Center (BTEC) in Fincastle, was awarded a Skill Point Certificate in Welding.

To be invited to the SkillsUSA Championships, students first had to win their state-level competition, demonstrating their technical skills, workplace skills and personal skills. The national competition featured state champions from middle school, high school and college/postsecondary divisions across the country in 115 hands-on career and leadership competitions including robotics, automotive technology,

drafting, criminal justice, aviation maintenance, public speaking, welding, and more.

The SkillsUSA Championships is the largest skill competition in the world and covers 1.79 million square feet, equivalent to 31 football fields or 41 acres. It’s supported by leaders from 850 businesses, corporations, trade associations and unions who planned and evaluated the competitors against their industry standards. More than 2,000 industry judges and technical committee members also volunteered their time to ensure a successful event.

- Fincastle Herald staff report

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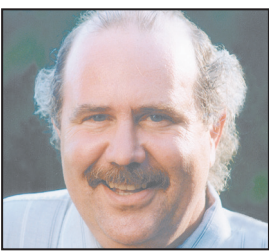
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BOTETOVRT

Sports

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Brian Hoffman

Sports Editor

One week of RVAA Monday night meets to go



PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

The Roanoke Valley Aquatic Association summer season of Monday night meets is quickly coming to an end. The final Monday night meets will be July 13 when and all three Botetourt County pools will be on the road. Read Mountain will be at Castle Rock, the Ashley Plantation

team is at the Elks Club and Limestone Park will swim at the Roanoke Country Club. The season ends with the annual City-County Meet on July 24 and 25, and this year it will be held at the Liberty University Natatorium. Pictured above are swimmers from a June 29 meet at the Ashley

Plantation. Addison Stewart and Jaden Herrig compete in the breaststroke and it's a close race among the older boys as they come down the home stretch. In the picture with three girls, left to right, Jrelyn Warr, Emery Frye and Hallie Hanre wait their turn to swim.

All-Star game was in Philly for Bicentennial

Brian Hoffman
Sports Editor

The year was 1976, the Bicentennial celebration of the United States of America. It was 50 years ago but, to me, it seems like yesterday.

You probably have to be at least 60 years old if you remember anything about it. There was lots of patriotic stuff going on, and it was a healing time in America after Richard Nixon resigned from office in August of 1974. If you listen to Vice President J.D. Vance, that wasn't a big deal, but I lived through it and, believe me, it was a big deal.

Gerald Ford was president in 1976, having taken over after Nixon resigned. To this day he's the only president who was not elected to either the presidency or vice president position, having taken over as Nixon's VP after the resignation of Spiro Agnew. And God Bless You if you remember him.

Americans celebrated the Bicentennial with parades, historical re-enactments and the famous Operation Sail with tall ships gathering in New York, much like last Saturday. On TV we enjoyed "Bicentennial Minutes," with celebrities describing big events in our country's history during breaks in popular television shows of the day like "All in the Family," "Happy Days,"

"Charlie's Angels" and "M*A*S*H."

Of course, there was a lot of action in cities like Boston, New York and Philadelphia that were front and center during the American Revolution. Philadelphia hosted many Bicentennial events, not the least of which was the 1976 Major League Baseball All-Star game.

I had already been working for the paper for two years in the summer of '76, having transplanted from southeast Pennsylvania by way of Roanoke College. It was a big deal for Philadelphia to host the All-Star game, much like it will be next Tuesday, and it was special to me having been a Phillies fan since I was 7 years old.

This was the third time the All-Star game was played in Philadelphia, and the first at Veterans Stadium. "The Vet" was a subject of ridicule in its later years with a hard artificial playing field, much like a patio with what amounted to a large green doormat covering the surface. It was one of those round "cookie cutter" ballparks, just like ones in Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Kansas City and most ballparks not named Wrigley Field, Yankee Stadium or Fenway Park. It wasn't until Baltimore's Camden Yards opened did our modern day palaces start

to replace the concrete monstrosities.

However, in 1976 I thought the Vet was the most luxurious ballpark I'd ever seen. Having grown up going to games in Connie Mack Stadium with hard wooden seats, benches in the bleachers and a constant stench of stale beer, Veterans Stadium was a comfortable, enjoyable place to watch a game.

It was all decked out in '76. Bunting, I love bunting, hung from the concourse and upper deck and the green outfield fence was painted with "Happy Birthday America" in big red, white and blue letters. It was a fitting place for the game in our Bicentennial year and some of the greatest in the game participated. The National League had stars like Pete Rose, Joe Morgan, Johnny Bench, Tom Seaver and hometown hero Mike Schmidt. The American League roster included Rod Carew, George Brett, Carl Yastrzemski, Catfish Hunter and the late Thurman Munson.

Both rosters were chocked with future Hall of Famers, but ironically the two starting pitchers would only walk the streets of Cooperstown as visitors. Randy Jones would start for the National League and Mark "The Bird" Fidrych was the American League starter. Jones was off to a



FILE PHOTO

All-Star starting pitchers Mark Fidrych (left) of the Tigers and Randy Jones of the Padres show off their hairstyles that were popular in 1976.

great start for the Padres that season, his fourth in the big leagues. He ended up winning 22 games in 1976 with a 2.75 ERA but in the next six years he never had a winning record, ending his career with a 100-123 overall mark. Jones died in 2025 at age 75.

Fidrych was the big story in 1976. He was a rookie for the Tigers that year and was nicknamed "The Bird" because his lanky frame and curly hair reminded fans of "Big Bird" from Sesame Street. Through June he was the best pitcher in baseball and his bizarre antics only added to his popularity. He would "talk to the ball" on the mound, and that summer I did a tongue-in-cheek column like I was interviewing

the ball. A writer in Detroit did an eerily similar column weeks later that was brought to my attention. I couldn't prove it but I suspect somehow they got ahold of my column and ripped off my idea. Actually, I was somewhat flattered.

Like Jones, Fidrych turned out to be a "one-year wonder." He finished that season with a 19-9 record and a 2.34 ERA but struggled with injuries after '76. He only pitched four more years and his career record was 29-19. I remember him being interviewed once the spotlight left him and he wasn't at all concerned about a promising career gone awry, noting, "I don't need baseball because I can fix cars."

As for the game, the National League won 7-1 with Jones pitching three innings of scoreless ball to pick up the win. Fidrych went two innings and took the loss, allowing four hits and two runs. George Foster homered off Catfish Hunter and Cesar Cedeno took Frank Tanana deep for the NL team. Rose was the only National League player with two hits and Rusty "La Grande Orange" Staub was two-for-two for the American League. The only run for the American League came on a solo homer by Freddie Lynn off Tom Seaver.

A lot of those players are no longer with us, I hate to say. Thurman Munson died in a plane

See **Hoffman**, page 11