



Rec Department takes kids on a Hoppin' down the Bunny Trail Easter egg hunt



(Left) The Easter bunny was at the Christiansburg Recreation Department Saturday morning to welcome children as they hopped down the bunny trail on a drive-by egg hunt. (Above) Michelle Trussell hands Easter treats to the Gunion children: Tommy, Abigail, and Rebecca. Recreation department personnel said they had enough bags and treats for 2,000 children.

RU's Theatre, Cinema Department presents 'The Liar'



Junior theatre major Logan Burnley plays the lead role of Dorante in "The Liar."



Senior theatre major Madison Lawson plays twin characters Isabelle and Sabine in "The Liar."

Radford University's Department of Theatre and Cinema presents "The Liar," streaming online to audiences today, April 7, through Sunday, April 11.

Presented on the stage of Pride-more Playhouse in Porterfield Hall, the production will stream live to audiences on April 7, 8, 9 and 10 at 7:30 p.m. with a final showing on April 11 at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are available at <https://rutheatretickets.universitytickets.com/>.

Directed by Assistant Professor Molly Hood, "The Liar" is a comedy that takes place in 1643. The play does contain some mild sexual themes and adult language.

A young law school student named Dorante arrives in Paris for a visit. His biggest flaw is that he is prone to lying about, well, most everything, actually. When Dorante falls in love with a woman he meets shortly after arriving in the city, a case of mistaken identity becomes a central thread that entangles the

characters in a web of lies and comedic trouble.

Hood said her cast and crew have really made the production experience enjoyable. "The students are incredibly energetic and funny," she said. "Rehearsals have been a blast. We'll look at one moment of the play and they'll have five different suggestions for how to approach it. It's been absolutely wonderful to have such an energetic team who isn't afraid to play with ideas."

The production cast and crew continue to work in ways that differ from putting together traditional theatre presentations. Streaming to online audiences requires introducing technical elements much earlier than with standard production schedules. Cameras and microphones were added as rehearsal elements early in the production timeline, and students had to memorize their lines much earlier than usual to prepare for the additional technical challenges that accompa-

ny a live streamed production.

"The students have done a great job handling the extra requirements. They've really delivered," said Hood.

Junior theatre major Logan Burnley portrays the lead role of Dorante. He says that his first leading role has been a challenging yet rewarding experience.

"The role is very athletic," Burnley said. "Dorante loves to tell fantastic stories and he often acts them out to other characters in the scene at a frenetic pace. You have to be able to talk and jump around for minutes on end without becoming fatigued."

When the casting call went out for a classical comedy production at Radford University, he knew that he wanted to be involved as much as possible. In addition to playing the lead character, Burnley also worked in the scene shop helping

See *The Liar*, page 5

Christiansburg spring cleanup begins Saturday

The Town of Christiansburg's annual spring cleanup will begin Saturday, April 10, and continue through Friday, April 23.

For the convenience of the collection crews and to make the collection go faster, the town asks that residents place cleanup items within 10 feet of the street pavement and separate them from regular trash.

Town officials also ask residents not to block drainage ditches, gutters, sidewalks, water meters or sewer cleanouts. The town is not responsible for any items left at or near the street that residents did not intend to have collected. Piles that do not comply with cleanup rules will not be collected.

Residents are asked also to separate materials by type (i.e. pile bagged leaves, tree limbs and trimmings separately). Loose materials must be placed in bags or containers not exceeding 32 gallons. Leaves must be bagged.

There is no charge for items picked up during spring cleanup. Though special collection trucks follow regular garbage routes, cleanup may run behind the usual trash collection schedules. Crews will collect all items that are placed out prior to April 23, but there may be delays. If residents' items have not been collected by May 1, they are asked to reach out to Public Works directly by calling (540) 382-1151.

Town crews will pick

up the following items: furniture; appliances including sinks and tubs (limit two per household); passenger car and truck tires (limit four per household; no larger than 20-inches); tire rims (no limit); tree limbs, trimmings, and brush; leaves (bagged only); landscape timbers; paint cans and sealer cans (only if open and dry); barrels/drums (only if dry, ends are removed and do not contain hazardous material); and railroad ties/timbers (limit five per household).

Town crews will NOT pick up the following items: construction and demolition materials (including, but not limited to, wood, metal, concrete, stone, etc.); heavy machinery; automobile parts; kerosene heaters; fuel oil tanks of any size; commercial truck, tractor/trailer tires; hazardous household wastes (such as paint, pesticides and cleaning chemicals); tree/brush materials associated with land/lot clearing for construction; tree stumps; electronic components such as televisions and computers.

Public works can provide assistance in ensuring all items are acceptable for pickup. For help, call 540-382-1151.

The Town will not pick up household hazardous waste, which is waste that is considered to be toxic, poisonous, corrosive, reactive, flammable or combustible. Read the label on the products to determine if it is a hazardous prod-

See *Spring*, page 5

Town police plant pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention Month



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and members of the Christiansburg Police Department recently planted a pinwheel garden in front of Christiansburg's town hall as part of the 2021 Pinwheels for Prevention campaign. In 2008, Prevent Child Abuse America introduced the notion of Pinwheels for Prevention after the organization's research showed and what its experiences since then have reinforced is that people respond positively to pinwheels. They represent childlike whimsy and lightheartedness. The vision of Prevent Child Abuse America is of a world in which all children grow up happy and healthy and prepared to succeed amid supportive families and communities.

NASA engineer visits McHarg first graders virtually



First graders at McHarg Elementary School recently had a virtual visit by NASA Engineer Dr. Tracie Prater (on video screen in background) from the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center. The visit ended the first graders' two-week study of space with this virtual field trip. First-grader Abe Waff said he learned from the visit, "Animals have been sent to space. Even the moon. Tardigrades are the only animals that can live in space." The first-grade teachers and students look forward to more such virtual field trips in the future.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, April 8:

Virtual Author Talk with Ron Peterson, Jr. - Join in virtually with the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library as best-selling author Ron Peterson, Jr., discusses his new novel, "Chasing the Squirrel: The Pursuit of Notorious Drug Smuggler Wally Thrasher" at 7 p.m. Joining him will be his son, Montana Thrasher. "Chasing the Squirrel" is the true story of Wally Thrasher, whose investigation led in 1986 to the biggest drug bust in mid-Atlantic United States history.

Monday, April 12

Radford Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee meeting - The Google meet virtual meeting of this committee will be held at 5 p.m. The public is invited to attend. To be invited to the meeting with a virtual meeting link, contact Josh Brown, chairperson, at 267-3083 or Daniel Hill, director of special education at 267-3323.

Tuesday, April 13

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting - The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart-Horse-Artillery Camp 1784, will meet at 7 p.m. at Ally's Italian Family Restaurant at 3204 Riner Road. Jonathan McPeak will talk on the History of Virginia's 45th Infantry Regiment. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are invited to attend. For further information, call 320-4315 or 239-9864.

Wednesday, April 14

Radford Chamber of Commerce Business over Breakfast - The chamber presents 'Business over Breakfast' from 8:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. at Sweet & Savory Donuts and Bagels, 1026A Clement St., Radford. The guest speaker is Elijah Sharp with the NRV Regional Commission. He will present information about the new East Main Downtown Plan and how everyone can get involved.

Please wear a face mask to this event.

Wednesday, April 14, April 28, May 12, May 26:

Hahn Horticulture Garden Virtual Road Trip - The second stop of the five-stop Zoom tour of gardens and arboretums at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflowers Center with Tanya Zastrow will take place April 14 at 2 p.m. Register online for these talks and a zoom link will be provided: https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfc/form/SV_cumxRA-4Mec96guy.

The third stop will be on April 28 at 3:30 p.m. and will feature the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden with VT alumnus Brian Trader. Then comes a visit on May 12 at 2 p.m. to the Wisconsin Arboretum with VT alumnus David Stevens. The tour ends on May 26 at 2 p.m. at Lotusland with Paul Mills and Rebecca Anderson.

Through Thursday, April 15:

ARTGAWK Exhibition - "ARTGAWK: Selections from the Radford University Collection" is an exhibition of 111 works that range widely in media, artistic styles, and historical periods. The hours of the exhibition are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday from noon until 4 p.m. at the Art Museum at the Covington Center.

Through Friday, April 16:

Young Chef Ingredient Challenge - Through Friday, April 16, all day at the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library online. Young chefs have the chance to challenge their creativity by making a meal with carrots, lemon, honey, and potatoes. The chefs can add more ingredients to their recipe(s), but the meal must include all the ingredients listed.

Through Saturday, April 22, 23, 24:

Regional Library from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m.

Thursday through Saturday, April 22, 23, 24:

2021 Spring Plant Sale pickup days - The 2021 spring plant sale, a joint fundraising event between the Hahn Horticulture Garden and the VT Horticulture Club, is online this year due to COVID limitations on gatherings. The sale site link is <https://springplantsaleatvt.company.site>.

Quantities are limited, so early ordering is suggested.

Through Saturday, April 24:

"Unbearable Beauty" Exhibit at Moss Arts Center - The exhibit is open each Wednesday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. through Saturday, April 24. The exhibit is a demonstration of the devastation human activity has wreaked on the environment. The exhibit is free and is open to the public.

Tuesday, April 27:

Book discussion and Meet the Author at Radford Public Library - The RPL hosts Ron Peterson, Jr., for a Meet the Author/book discussion session via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. The author will be discussing another person of local interest in his new book "Chasing the Squirrel: The Pursuit of Notorious Drug Smuggler Wally Thrasher."

Throughout April:

Grab-and-Go Crafts - At the Meadowbrook Public Library. Call the library to request Take and Make craft kits. Available for grab-and-go with curbside pickup. The kits are free but supplies are limited.

StoryWalk - All the month of April at the Christiansburg Library. Exercise your brain as you read and walk the trail. The walk begins at the library at the College Street entrance of Downtown Park. This month's book is "Move!"

VT Mohawk student shares her love for lacrosse and her heritage

Once, during a high school lacrosse game, a group of fans from an opposing high school called Jacelyn Lazore and her teammates - many of whom were Native Americans - derogatory names associated with indigenous peoples.

That incident, which Lazore vividly recalls, happened more than five years ago, and stereotypes unfortunately still exist in today's world. But the young woman, who now plays attack on the Virginia Tech lacrosse team and is a member of the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation on the Canadian border, refuses to shun her heritage and culture. On the contrary, she embraces her background, choosing to educate and encourage when the situations allow for it.

"It's definitely defeating, but it makes room for the opportunity to

change the perception in the way that others see us," Lazore said.

Lazore knows about fighting for visibility, awareness, and engagement, both within her own tribe and outside of it. Tribal rules prevented girls from playing lacrosse, but several years ago, Lazore and her teammates won over the clan mother of the tribe, who got other tribal leaders to change their bylaws and later helped with fundraising efforts to keep the girls' program afloat when budget cuts originally forced her high school to eliminate the team.

In Blacksburg, Lazore, a sophomore, became involved with Native at VT where she found a group of people with like interests and backgrounds and with whom she could relate outside the sport of lacrosse.

"I started to feel more of a sense of home when I met the Native at VT



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE KNACHEL, VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

Though a starter on the Virginia Tech lacrosse team, as a member of the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation on the Canadian border, Jacelyn Lazore finds time to participate in Native at VT events on campus and enjoys learning about other indigenous cultures.

group," Lazore said. "They're a very small group, but they're very big in the sense of family. Even though I've had a limited amount of time to be with them - because the majority of time, I'm with my team lifting, I'm traveling, or I'm practicing - but the time I've had with them, it's been

very, very, comforting.

"I found that sense of community just through this small group of individuals. We come from different backgrounds, but we do share the same intentions to have indigenous excellence represented everywhere."

Currently, Native Americans comprise less

than 1 percent of the student population at Virginia Tech, but according to Melissa Faircloth, a graduate student pursuing a doctoral degree in sociology with a focus on the experiences of Native students on college campuses who is the full-time director of the AIICC, the number

of applications rose in the past year and efforts to let Native American high school students know that Virginia Tech welcomes diversity are taking effect.

"We've had in recent years a more concerted effort from admissions to reach out to this population," Faircloth said.

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VT's virtual black alumni reunion will be April 12-18

For the first time, Virginia Tech's Black Alumni Reunion will be hosted virtually.

The event is set for April 12-18. Registration is now open. The reunion will have opportunities to network, connect with students, and celebrate with fellow Hokies.

Virginia Tech's Black Alumni Reunion is held biennially for alumni to come together to celebrate milestones, connect with one another, and have fun. The event was sched-

uled for spring 2020 and was rescheduled to 2021 as a virtual event because of public health guidelines.

The week will feature online activities with collaborative events supported by campus partners, including the Office for Inclusion and Diversity and Career and Professional Development.

Registration is \$25, and a portion (\$5) is a gift to the Inclusive VT Excellence Scholarship Fund. Participants get access to online events,

plus a gift set that includes a T-shirt, glassware, and a tote bag. Students can register for free.

The theme of this year's event is "Reflecting, Reconnecting, Rising."

Even though Hokies cannot gather in person, the reunion's hallmark events will still happen online, including the Influential Black Alumni Awards ceremony, student and alumni networking, and a Friday night celebration.

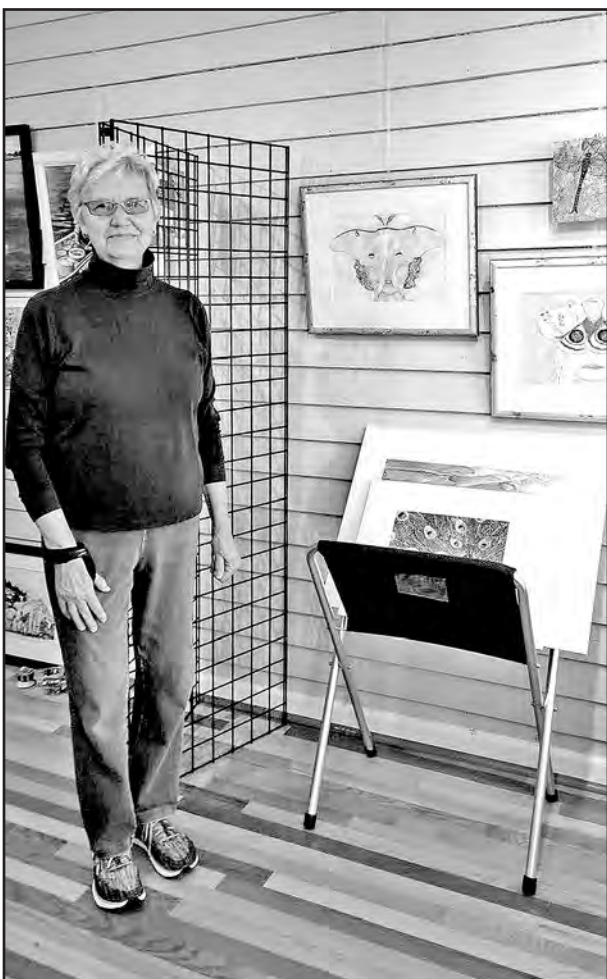
Here is this year's schedule: Monday, April 12: Welcome from the Office for Inclusion and Diversity; Tuesday, April 13: Gathering of women and men lunches; Wednesday, April 14: Online networking with Career and Professional Development; Thursday, April 15: Influential Black Alumni Awards ceremony; Friday, April 16: NOIR Decade[nce] Musical Battle of the Decades; Saturday, April 17: 3.2 Virtual Run in Remembrance.

Alumni are also asked to share their photos of past BAR celebrations and meaningful milestones for possible inclusion in the reunion.

To learn more and to register, visit: alumni.vt.edu/bar.



Blacksburg art association to open co-op shop



The Blacksburg Regional Art Association (BRAA) is opening a co-op art shop this Friday and Saturday, April 10 and 11, from noon to 4 p.m. Co-manager Mary Ratliff shows a few of the artworks that will be available for sale.



Sue Hossack (right) and Diamond Gabriel, both members of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association (BRAA), pause from loading The Art Place@The Artful Lawyer in preparation for the April 10 opening of the new weekends-only shop, the first of its kind for the organization. All artists to be featured in the shop are local and are members of the 71-year-old local art association.

On Friday, April 10, and Saturday, April 11, from noon to 4 p.m., the Blacksburg Regional Art Association (BRAA) will open The Art Space@The Artful Lawyer at 318 N. Main St. in downtown Blacksburg.

BRAA has been affiliated with The Artful Lawyer for a number of years and, like many businesses and associations, has experienced challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic. The art receptions formerly held in this space by the owner, James Creekmore, have been cancelled for months and the building has been closed to the public.

But now a portion of this stately old house will offer a new weekend attraction. Six spaces in the house will be rented by BRAA member artists on a quarterly basis beginning in April and continuing through June.

Sue Hossack and Mary Ratliff are co-managers of this new BRAA venture. Hossack describes the purpose of the shop as a way for BRAA artists to get their work seen by the public and for

residents of Montgomery County and beyond to have a chance to buy directly from artists.

"It will be a gallery of artists run by artists," said Hossack.

Located in the left wing of The Artful Place, the BRAA shop will offer patrons the chance not only to buy local art, but to meet and talk with the artists as well with several artists present each weekend. Artists will be in residence in the space for a period of three months at a time, weekends only. Each quarter, new artists will be featured.

For this first quarter, the artists will be Mary Ratliff, Sue Hossack, Diamond Gabriel, and Trenia Bell. They will offer a variety of works from original paintings in various media to notecards, photography and jewelry. Visitors may have the chance to watch art demonstrations.

The second quarter, July through September, will feature Ruth Lefko, Aileen Fletcher, Joy Rosenthal, Susan Lockwood, Lois Stephens, and Joe Scarpaci with paintings, photography and handmade oak coffee tables.

Customers will be able to purchase with credit card, cash, or check.

The organizing committee for this new venture includes artists Sue Hossack, Linda Correll, Ava Howard and Charlotte Chan.

Normal hours will be Saturdays and Sundays noon to 4 p.m.

"If things go well," said BRAA President Charlotte Chan, "we will consider opening more hours. Look for the sandwich board in front of the building as a reminder that we are open and are ready to welcome art lovers and, hopefully, buyers. We invite the residents of this area to put our shop on their list of places to bring their out-of-town visitors in to see more of what Blacksburg is all about."

All social distancing requirements will be met, so please wear masks, the "artsy-er the better." A maximum of 10 visitors at a time will be allowed in the space.

Go to www.blacksburgart.org for more information.

-Gerri Young

Christiansburg Rescue is first in Virginia to implement education program for cardiac arrests

Christiansburg Rescue has become the first agency in Virginia to implement the Resuscitation Quality Improvement (RQI) prehospital healthcare provider program, enrolling 75 providers.

RQI is an innovative resuscitation quality improvement program to advance the prehospital response to cardiac arrest events.

According to the American Heart Association, more than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the U.S. annually. About 90% of people who suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrest die.

Cardiac arrest victims must receive the highest quality CPR possible, which is known to be the cornerstone for survival. Christiansburg Rescue is taking a significant step to improve outcomes with its implementation of an innovative resuscitation quality improvement program to advance the prehospital response to cardiac arrest events.

RQI is a proven approach for achieving and sustaining verified competence in high-quality CPR. The program is co-developed by the American Heart Association, Laerdal Medical and the Resuscitation Academy Foundation and delivered by RQI Partners.

Christiansburg Rescue is a third-service municipal EMS agency serving the Town of Christiansburg and Montgomery County since 1947 that is comprised of volunteers and full- and part-time staff.

"Christiansburg Rescue prides itself on providing efficient, high-quality healthcare by following evidence-based science and on the progressive stance we take in early adoption of novel medical tech-

niques and resuscitation education and technology," said Deputy Chief Dustin Williams. "The path to RQI was simple. Our providers were not retaining their CPR skills and knowledge through the traditional every-two-years-model, and then COVID-19 struck. We needed a solution that would deliver ongoing instruction, maintain compliance and keep our staff members safe. RQI is a game changer, affording benefits to our providers, partner agencies and the greater community."

To deliver RQI Prehospital Healthcare Provider courses, Christiansburg Rescue is leveraging a new addition to the Association's digital resuscitation portfolio: the RQI-P GO solution. Launched last October, RQI-P GO is a compact, modular and mobile system designed for healthcare facilities and prehospital and public safety organizations that may not have access to a traditional RQI simulation station or operate locations distributed across a city or county, respectively. RQI-P GO affords the same course instruction and real-time feedback as a traditional RQI simulation station without sacrificing quality.

"We are excited about the far-reaching potential of the RQI-P GO solution," Deputy Chief Williams said. "The mobile attribute will be beneficial in expanding the RQI footprint and providing CPR instruction to our partner agencies, including our police department and the community at-large. Christiansburg Rescue is committed to investing in our staff and the community in which we live and serving to collectively help improve cardiac arrest survival."

VT campus COVID-19 cases trending down

Positive COVID-19 cases on Virginia Tech's Blacksburg campus are declining rapidly, a welcome sign for the university community as it aims for a strong spring semester finish in the midst of the pandemic.

Coronavirus case numbers have plateaued in recent days, reflecting a similar pattern at the same point during the fall 2020 semester when case counts dwindled, said Mike Mulhare, assistant vice president for emergency management at Virginia Tech.

Wide adherence to public health guidelines across the

university community has been key to the declining trends, he said.

Still, health officials encourage people to balance freedom with vigilance when it comes to protection against the coronavirus for themselves and others.

"Virginia Tech students on the whole have stayed the course with sacrifice, humility, patience, and hope," said Frank Shushok, vice president for student affairs. "The results show in case numbers, and more importantly, in our collective positive spirit. I

couldn't be more grateful."

With May commencement approaching, Virginia Tech is planning for some in-person ceremonies. The university announced this week that it will hold 15 in-person commencement ceremonies outdoors at Lane Stadium from May 10-16, while adhering to public health guidelines.

There is other good news among the Hokie nation. Increasingly, members of the university community are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. The New River Health District administered about

1,500 vaccine doses this past week to Virginia Tech employees, and more will be offered as supply allows.

Virginia Tech students are encouraged to register to receive a vaccine through the Virginia Department of Health.

Even so, despite positive strides, the campus community should continue to practice caution. People should continue to follow public health guidelines, such as wearing a mask in public, avoiding crowded spaces, and washing hands, said Noelle

Bissell, health director of the New River Health District, while speaking with the media this week. COVID-19 still is spreading in parts of the district.

"Our vaccines are the light at the end of the tunnel, but we're still in the tunnel," Bissell said. "We encourage people not to let their guard down until we get closer to herd immunity [when a majority of a population is vaccinated]."

-Written by
Jenny Kincaid Boone

Virginia high school students may apply for forestry department's natural resources academy

Virginia high school students currently in grades 9-12 who are interested in natural resources

may apply to attend the Virginia Academy of Natural Resources, a new virtual camp sponsored by Virginia Department of Forestry and the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

Students have until April 30 to apply for the academy, which will take place July 12-16, 2021. Each morning will feature live virtual presentations from natural resource professionals with daily themes of aquatics, forestry, soils, or wildlife. Each afternoon, participants will complete field explorations on their own

as well as further exploring topics through videos and reading material.

"Since both Camp Woods & Wildlife and Youth Conservation Camp were cancelled due to COVID-19, we wanted to offer an alternative way for teens to explore natural resource topics and careers," said Bonnie Mahl of the soil and water conservation districts.

"This camp has several unique twists you won't find in most virtual camps," said Ellen Powell of the Virginia Department of Forestry. The daily self-directed field studies complete with instructions and materials for campers to use and keep will connect campers

with nature in their own backyards, local parks, or woods. In addition, small groups of campers will work together to showcase the natural resources of their region of the state, culminating in group presentations on Friday.

The week will culminate with a natural resources competition modeled after the Virginia Dominion Energy Envirothon program.

Students may apply for the Virginia Academy of Natural Resources at <https://forms.gle/9mRUtyoaPRvFQY2N9>. Once students are notified of their acceptance, campers will receive a schedule, Zoom link, and materials for

completing their daily field studies.

The cost for the week-long academy is \$25 to

cover materials, and financial aid is available as academy coordinators want all students to experience the

academy. Students may contact Ellen Powell at ellen.powell@dof.virginia.gov to discuss options.



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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Radford, Christiansburg advance to state football playoffs

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The Radford High Bobcats and the Christiansburg Blue Demons used the last weekend of the regular season to claim wins that advanced them into fourth place in their respective districts, which also let them advance to the football state playoffs.

Radford blew out Richlands 42-0 in an add-on game after Carroll County opted out of the final regular season game while Christiansburg used a 57-0 win over Blacksburg to jump past Northside into the final 3D region spot. Bassett lost its final game of the year to finish .22 points behind the Blue Demons.

Radford gained the final 2C regional spot when Ft. Chiswell fell to Galax.

But both teams will have to go through the top team

in their respective regions to advance to the second round. Radford travels to 6-0 Appomattox, and Christiansburg will face Lord Botetourt (6-0) Saturday at 1 p.m.

The Region 3D title will go through Botetourt, which has dominated opponents with a 52-15 record since 2013. This year, Botetourt had wins of 70-6 over G.W. Danville, 49-6 over William Fleming, 55-13 over William Byrd, 49-6 over Staunton River and 57-7 over Franklin County.

Christiansburg scrimmaged Franklin County early in the season and won by three touchdowns, the only opponent the Blue Demons share with Botetourt.

The top-ranked regional team ranks third overall in the latest state poll of all classifications and has won 19 of its last 20 games with its lone loss coming in the state cham-

pionship game two years ago against Hopewell. They finished 14-1.

The team received a week off last week when Northside forfeited its contest.

Botetourt has 18 players over 200 pounds and 10 over 250 lbs. including highly recruited Gunner Givens (6-6, 275, #26 overall recruit in state of Virginia), Colston Powers (6-4, 285, first-team all-state Class 3 last year) and Troy Everett (6-3, 280, the #51 recruit nationally).

Running back Hunter is the workhorse for the team, having rushed 14 times for 173 yards and five touchdowns in the team's last contest against Franklin County.

Botetourt returned nine starters on both sides of the ball and has dominated the line of scrimmage.

Rice had 1,751 yards rushing with 18 touchdowns last

season.

In the Franklin County game, Botetourt quarterback Sam Peery was 6-for-7 passing for 221 yards. Receiver Kyle Arnholt had four catches for 117 yards.

Christiansburg is coming off a 57-0 win over Blacksburg in which Kenyon Johnson-Buchannon rushed 11 times for 97 yards with three touchdowns. Quarterback Casey Graham was 4-of-6 passing for 104 yards with a touchdown. MJ Hunter returned the second-half kickoff 97 yards for a touchdown.

The Blue Demon defense limited their cross-county rivals to 95 yards on the ground and six yards through the air.

Meanwhile Radford will face an opponent similar to Botetourt. Appomattox has dominated the Class 2 ranks for a long time. They finished the shortened spring season

with a 6-0 mark. Wins included 53-0 over William Campbell, 83-6 over Nelson and 42-6 over Altavista.

The only other time Radford and Appomattox have faced each other was in 2018 when Radford pulled off a 28-25 win.

Radford's season had been left in limbo after a COVID-19 contact tracing incident. The Bobcats had a no-contest with Floyd during that time and looked to have its final game against Carroll County also eliminated. But another game was added when Carroll said it would not play last week.

So, enter Richlands which also had an open spot after an opponent bowed out because of a COVID-19 issue. Radford rolled to the 42-0 win and with a Ft. Chiswell loss to Galax, moved into the final playoff spot in Region 2C.

Christiansburg takes Battle of the Burgs, claims final playoff spot



PHOTOS BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY

Christiansburg's Kenyon Johnson-Buchannon scores one of his three touchdowns Friday against Blacksburg in the Blue Demons' 52-0 romp.



Blacksburg running back Miles Ritenhour evades Christiansburg lineman Aidan LaComa in Friday's game on the turf at Bill Brown Stadium.



In a true Battle of the Burgs moment with Michael Bowen (bottom) hanging onto his shirt, Christiansburg quarterback Casey Graham faces off against the Bruins' Alex Lafon at midfield.



Keyon Johnson-Buchannon stretches for extra yardage in Friday's contest against Blacksburg. He finished with 97 yards rushing as Christiansburg moved to 3-3 on the season and grabbed the final playoff spot in Region 3D.

Football season draws to a close

It's hard to imagine it has been 497 days since high school football teams played a postseason game. But it begins this week with Radford and Christiansburg taking center stage in their respective regions and classifications.

I have to admit this season has seen its ups and downs thanks to COVID-19. We didn't even know if we would play this season after the Virginia High School League killed everything in the fall and moved football to this spring for six games.

Radford had to shut down its program for two weeks after a positive case, but that

was the only situation that affected area teams.

I congratulate players, coaches, schools, family and fans for enduring it all, making it to this weekend.

Yes, we were limited to a maximum of 250 fans, mainly the families of the players. Radford and Montgomery County schools stepped up to the plate and added the National Federation of High School sports' in-game cameras, thus allowing many fans to watch games from the comfort of their homes.

I know I enjoyed watching games from outside the area and even an occasional junior



From the Sidelines

Marty Gordon

varsity contest.

The same was true earlier for basketball, and almost no fans were allowed into the building.

Nothing has been normal, but at least the student-athletes were given an opportunity to get back on the court or field.

We never realized how im-

portant high school sports were until they were taken away from us.

Everyone should let that set in.

Sports are a backbone of the school experience for every youngster from kindergarten to high school.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken its toll on all of us, but in so many ways, I worry about our young people. They had their world turned upside down from no in-person school to no sports.

I guess the video world has gained a new large "cult" following. There were probably some strained thumbs and an occasional sore butt from

sitting so long. That's what youngsters turned to.

It's so nice to finally get outside and run, jump and play.

Kids need interaction with other kids. They need exercise, and sports provides both.

We should savor what we lost temporarily and get back on a whole different way.

I have been telling youngsters to hang in there, that changes are coming. For now, we have a temporary norm we must deal with.

The state championships for football will be held in three weeks, and we should remember this year for what it's worth.

State football playoff region semifinal games set

The pairings have been set for the first round of the state football playoffs.

Region C's first-round games will all be played Friday, April 9, at 7 p.m.

Region D's first-round games will be played on both Friday and Saturday nights,

April 9 and 10, at either 7 p.m. or 1 p.m.

Radford and Christiansburg both pulled out wins to end the season and jump into the final playoff spot in their respective regions.

As the #4 seed in Region 2C, Radford (4-1) will play at

#1 Appomattox (6-0) at 7 p.m. Friday. In the other 2C semifinal game, #2 Dan River (4-0) will host #3 Glenvar (4-2), also at 7 p.m. on Friday. As the #4 seed in Region 3D, Christiansburg (3-3) will play at #1 Lord Botetourt (6-0) at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 10. The other

Region 3D semifinal game will pit #2 Abingdon (5-0) against #3 Carroll Co. (4-1) at a time and date to be determined.

In other contests of local interest, in Region 1C, top-seed Galax (6-0) will host #4 George Wythe (3-2), and #2 Narrows (6-0) will host

#3 Parry McCluer (4-2) with both games played Friday, April 9, at 7 p.m. In Region 4D, #1 Salem (6-0) will host #4 Amherst Co. (3-3) at 7 p.m. Friday, and #2 George Washington (5-1) will host #3 Pulaski Co. (4-2), also at 7 p.m. Friday.

Outdoor Report: Spring turkey season officially gets underway this week

For the Old Dominion's spring gobbler hunters, the turkey season officially gets underway this weekend on Saturday, April 10. The season runs through Saturday, May 15.

Katie Martin, the deer, bear, and turkey biologist for the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), offers some insights for this year's season,

First, one of the most

important indicators of how good a spring season will be is the poults per hen (PPH) figure. Every July and August, DWR staff record their observations of young bird flocks. Since in any given season, 2-year-old toms are typically the ones that make up the majority of the harvest, the 2019 PPH is the one most relevant to this spring. The news here is not good.

Martin reports that

statewide the number of turkeys seen per 1,000 miles driven in 2019 (nine turkeys/1,000 miles) was below the 2018 ratio (12 turkeys/1,000 miles) and continued a decline that began in 2014. In 2019, statewide the PPH ratio was 2.5, which is close to the long-term survey average (2.6). Although the 2019 ratio was much better than the 2018 one of 1.6, this bit of good

news is tempered by the fact that the 2018 figure was the lowest ever recorded for the survey.

Martin says that the North Mountain region, where several counties have some of the lowest turkey densities in the state, offers encouraging news. That region had the highest PPH ratio (3.6) in Virginia in 2019. Martin says that good reproduction was also seen in the Tide-

water (2.9), South Piedmont (2.6), and Southwest Mountain (2.5) regions where P/H ratios met or exceeded the state average (2.5).

The North Piedmont, though, recorded a ratio of only 1.6 PPH. Although this was a slight uptick from 2018, this continues a declining trend of both turkeys seen and PPH in this region. This spring, North Piedmont hunters may find 2- and 3-year-old toms in short supply.

Martin says that although statewide the annual growth rate has been 1.6 percent over the past decade, turkey populations in the Old Dominion have basically stabilized. As would be expected given its rich soil and farm country habitat, the Tidewater Region boasts the highest turkey density in the state. Hunters with access to private land here have a good reason to be optimistic.

Public land turkey hunting is always a challenge, says Martin, but hunters utilizing the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests in the North Mountain region may have a particularly tough year due to

low population densities and long-term habitat decline in this area. Hunters should hone in on areas with recent management activities such as timber harvests or prescribed burns that provide better habitat diversity for turkeys and many other wildlife species.

Finally, all-day hunting is permitted only during the last two weeks of the spring season. The season bag limit is three birds; no more than two birds can be taken in the fall season. If two birds were taken in the fall, only one bearded bird can be taken in the spring. If one bird was harvested in the fall, two may be taken in the spring.

Do remember the following:

Bag Limit

One per day, bearded turkeys only. Hunters may take one, two, or three bearded turkeys depending on how many turkeys were taken in the fall season.

Season Dates

April 10 through May 2 statewide. One-half hour before sunrise until 12 noon each day.

May 3 through May 15, statewide. One-half hour before sunrise to sunset.



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