



## VDOT names Christiansburg its Locality of the Year

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has named the Town of Christiansburg its Locality of the Year.

This award recognizes the town's engineering department for hard work, excellence in project management, and commitment to delivering transportation projects for Christiansburg residents. This marks the second year the town has received this award.

In 2018, the Salem District's Locally Administered Projects Team created the award to

encourage local governments who administer transportation projects to improve delivery of VDOT-funded projects. Successful delivery of locality-administered projects is critical because these projects comprise more than 50 percent of the statewide Six-Year Improvement Program, which is determined by SMART (System for the Management and Allocation of Resources for Transportation) Scale results.

SMART Scale is a method of scoring planned projects submitted by localities to the state that

is based on an objective-outcome process. It scores localities' proposed projects based on need in that specific area so that taxpayer money can be more fairly distributed across the state. If a SMART Scale project has been awarded to a locality, the chosen project is funded by VDOT and given to the locality to administer.

The Locality of the Year Award is scored on three factors: participation in quarterly conference calls, training opportunities, and local and statewide work-

shops; proficiency with project applications, agreements, plan submittals, and documentation; and performance related to the number of projects completed and project stages completed on schedule, a metric which is tracked in VDOT's Dashboard 4.0 system, which monitors localities' project progress.

Additional focus in these three areas not only improves a locality's chance of winning but also improves its performance in managing the development and delivery of transportation proj-

ects. Delivering locally-administered projects successfully gives localities' credibility with taxpayers, legislators, and contractors. These performance metrics help ensure that projects will be completed efficiently.

During the award presentation, VDOT leadership thanked Christiansburg's engineering department for continued efforts to serve the community with timely, efficient, and consistent planning and project implementation.



Laura Jones-Wilson worked three internships during her time at Virginia Tech, including two for NASA that helped prepare her for her current career working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California. Photo courtesy of Laura Jones-Wilson.

## VT alumna is key player in NASA mission to determine if life can exist on Jupiter moon Europa

In 2024 or 2025, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration – better known to many Americans by the acronym NASA – plans to launch the Europa Clipper, an unmanned spacecraft, toward Europa, one of Jupiter's moons. NASA's scientists hope to determine if the moon possesses the conditions needed for supporting life.

Laura Jones-Wilson '07 is a key player on that mission. She has been working on the project in various capacities at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., for the better part of six years. So, to her, three more revolutions around the sun basically equates to roughly a 20-minute wait at the dentist's office.

"People had been working

to get a funded Europa mission together for decades," she said. "I've been on the project for six years. I started on this mission when they announced the instrument selection six years ago. So, after all this time, I'm getting excited to finally see hardware being built. Things are really heating up."

Jones-Wilson, who received her undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech's Kevin T. Crofton Department of Aerospace and Ocean Engineering, currently serves as the payload verification and validation lead for the mission. Her role is of utmost importance. In simple terms, she oversees the analysis and testing of the spacecraft's instruments, which hopefully will provide scientists with the

information needed to determine the habitability of the moon.

Scientists believe Europa holds the three ingredients needed for life: water, the right chemical elements, and energy. Icy satellites of the outer solar system intrinsically have a lot of water, and they believe that Europa has a salty ocean underneath its cold, icy crust. Europa's ocean may contain more water than all of the Earth's oceans combined.

But scientists need more data to prove their hypotheses, and the Clipper's instruments are designed to provide just that. The Clipper possesses a suite of 10 instruments – everything from ice-penetrating radar to cameras and

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## Great Little Park groundbreaking set for Aug. 31



Downtown Christiansburg, Inc., invites the public to attend the groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the start of construction of the Great Little Park on Main on Monday, Aug. 31, at 5:30 p.m. at 100 W. Main St. in Christiansburg. This ceremony marks the first step in making the park a reality after months of fundraising by the park's leadership team, which is composed of citizens from across Christiansburg.

## Montgomery Museum to present 'Bench Views' exhibition

The Montgomery Museum of Arts and History, 300 Pepper St. in Christiansburg, will present "Bench Views," an exhibit featuring Blacksburg resident Martha Olson, from Sept. 2 through October 29.

The museum will host a reception on Sept. 9 from 5 to 7 p.m. to give the public the chance to meet Olson in person.

Olson described herself as a "paper person," a term she uses to describe her work, for which the medium is recycled, repurposed magazines. She employs acrylic paints and washes and implements to create her free-flowing style by drawing, cutting, and tearing.

Olson's biography says she has been involved with art in some form all her life. Her first memory goes back to a third-grade experience with Mrs. Kemper, who instilled in her the love of art. She said, "As a child I was always doing something." Though receiving no formal training, this early experience led her to spend time exploring and testing materials,

attending workshops, and evoking every educational experience possible.

"I have become braver with materials, working larger and using disruption to learn," Olson said.

She receives inspiration from taking nature walks, cruising magazines, reading, and scouting the Internet. Her motivation is "everything everywhere."

She describes herself as an observer of all that surrounds her and thus the title of the show, "Bench Views." She expresses pride that her work is all original and most unusual, feeling that art should be accessible to all and abstract interpretation should be left to the viewer.

Among many honors and awards, Olson has received the 2021 "Best in Show" at the Perspectives Gallery in Blacksburg. Her work can be found across the United States and in Europe. Currently, her work can be seen at the Moss Arts Center, Miller off

See Bench Views, page 5



## YMCA at VT to host Welcoming Week Sept. 10-19

The YMCA at Virginia Tech, along with the Town of Blacksburg, the Blacksburg Library, the Blacksburg Museum & Cultural Foundation, the Blacksburg Newcomers Club, and Literacy Volunteers of the NRV, will host a week of activities for Welcoming Week, Sept. 10 through Sept. 19, 2021.

Welcoming Week is a national celebration that brings together immigrants and U.S.-born residents at community-based events to promote cross-cultural understanding and raise awareness of the benefits of welcoming everyone.

Y-USA has adopted the benefit-driven headline, Belonging Begins with Us, as the theme for 2021 Welcoming Week. The

theme aligns with the national Belonging Begins with Us campaign, which is supported by a broad coalition of public and private partners working to help create a more welcoming nation where everyone can feel like they belong.

A team has scheduled activities that include welcoming hour, resources, story time, gallery exhibits, local history tours, art shows, and a Welcoming Week festival. All activities will offer multilingual interpreters when possible and translated written materials.

The schedule of events is as follows: Friday, Sept. 10

See YMCA page 2



Paris Mountain Rt. 723 Luster's Gate by Martha Olson

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Saturday, Aug. 28:

**Dialogue on Race 2021 Summer Summit**

From 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the Montgomery County Moose Lodge No. 1470, 115 Fairview Rd. NE, Christiansburg. The theme is Student Voices: Reflections on Race and Racism in our Schools. Register at <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eib8sm17c5bacc8a&oseq=&c=&ch=>.

**Triwizard Tri-Mile Trail Race**

At Bisset Park at 9:30 a.m. This is a fundraiser for Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley. Register for the race at [www.lvnrv.org/potterinthepark](http://www.lvnrv.org/potterinthepark). For more information, call (540) 382-7262 or send an "owl" to [info@lvnr.org](mailto:info@lvnr.org). Follow <https://www.facebook.com/LVNRV/> for race updates.

## Sunday, Aug. 29:

**Glencoe Mansion closing reception for "Mountain Rail Tales"**

Glencoe Mansion, Museum, and Gallery concludes its art gallery exhibit, "Mountain Rail Tales," featuring photography by Dale R. Carlson of Bluemoon-istic Images with a reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Everyone is welcome and there is no admission charge. Glencoe is located at 600 Unruh Dr. in Radford.

## Monday, Aug. 30:

**McDonald Hollow Trails Temporarily Closed**

The McDonald Hollow Trails property will be closed to the public starting Monday, Aug. 30, so the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy can remediate issues with past, small-scale mining on the property. The expected time to fix the issues will be about three weeks, but the trail system should need to be closed for only three to five days. Follow the New River Land Trust on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/NewRiverLandTrust>, call (540) 951-1704, or email [nrlt@newriverlandtrust.org](mailto:nrlt@newriverlandtrust.org) to check the status of the trail openings before visiting.

## Thursday, Sept. 2:

**American Legion meeting**

American Legion, Harvey-Howe-Carper Post 30 will meet at 7 p.m. at the VFW Post Home at 102 Watts St. in Radford. Representatives from Boys State

and Girls State will be recognized at this meeting. For further information, call 250-2283 or 239-9864.

## Monday, Sept. 6:

**Montgomery-Floyd Regional Libraries closed**

All MFRL Libraries will be closed in observance of Labor Day. Also, the libraries will be open on Sundays beginning Sunday, Sept. 12.

## Wednesday, Sept. 8:

**Blacksburg Rent Relief Workshop**

Virginia's Rent Relief Program can provide funds to assist in paying rent, late fees, and other lease-related costs back to April 2020 for those impacted by COVID-19. Learn about the requirements and get help completing online applications at Blacksburg's Rent Relief Workshop at 7:30 p.m. at the Blacksburg Montgomery Floyd Regional Library. For more information, call the library at 540-552-8246.

**Brown Bag Book Club**

At the Radford Public Library at noon. In September, the Brown Bag Book Club will be discussing Kate Moore's "Radium Girls." Bring a lunch and make some new friends at this casual book discussion. In October, the club will be discussing the classic Halloween read "Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley.

## Saturday, Sept. 11:

**NRV Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection & Document Shredding**

Residents served by the New River Resource Authority are invited to participate in the region's household hazardous waste and document shredding event. Interested residents should call the New River Resource Authority at (540) 674-1677 to schedule an appointment.

The event will be held at 7100 Cloyd's Mountain Road, Dublin, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. No commercial waste or commercial vehicles will be accepted.

## Tuesday, Sept. 14:

**The Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting**

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Family Italian Restaurant on 3204 Riner Road. Members

of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are invited to attend this meeting. For further information, call 320-4315 or 239-9864.

**Radford City Police Department Civilian Response and Casualty Care course**

The Radford City Police Department is offering a free course to the public designed to give life-saving skills. This in-person course of Civilian Response and Casualty Care (CRCC) provides a coordinated effort through a "whole community approach" to establish stakeholders within the community and empower citizens to become "immediate responders" who do what they can, where they are, with what they have to work with until first responders arrive. Interested people can sign up for the course at [www.radford.va.us](http://www.radford.va.us) and choose either a morning session (8 a.m. until noon) or an afternoon session (1 p.m. until 5 p.m.) session.

## Wednesday, Sept. 15:

**Virginia Tech Women's Club Annual Welcome Reception**

The Virginia Tech Women's Club (VTWC) will host its annual welcome reception at The Holtzman Alumni Center from 4 to 5:30 p.m. The event will include refreshments and is free and open to the public. All women who are interested in supporting female students at VT by awarding scholarships or serving the community, enjoying a multitude of interest groups, traveling to local sights, and listening to engaging community speakers are invited to attend. For more information or to join the VTWC, contact [VTWC65@gmail.com](mailto:VTWC65@gmail.com).

## Thursday, Sept. 23:

**What Isn't Remembered**

At the Radford Public Library from 7 to 8 p.m. Kristina Gorcheva-Newberry, winner of the 2021 Raz/Shumaker Prairie Schooner Book Prize in Fiction, is a Russian-Armenian emigre who moved to the U.S. in 1995 after witnessing perestroika and the collapse of the Soviet Empire. She graduated from both Radford and Hollins universities and has published over 50 stories and received eight Pushcart nominations.

## Through September:

**Blacksburg's Market Square Jam 2021**  
Blacksburg's Market Square Jam 2021 continues each Wednesday through September from 7 to 9 p.m. at Market Square Park.

**Simply Elemental Art Exhibit**

The Simply Elemental art exhibit in the Hahn Horticultural Garden (on the Virginia Tech campus) will be on display through Sept. 30.

**Take & Make Crafts**

At the Blacksburg Library, craft kits

## YMCA

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Welcome Hour at the Lancaster House, 403 Washington St, SW, Blacksburg. 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 11  
Resource table with multilingual interpreters and multilingual story time at the Blacksburg Library, 200 Miller St. SW, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 14  
Local history 16 Frogs guided tour with multilingual interpretation at 9:30 a.m. starting at the Five Chimneys, 203 Washington St SW, Blacksburg.

Blacksburg Newcomers Club meeting at 9 a.m. in the community room of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church at 600 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg.

Wednesday, Sept. 15  
Free COVID vacci-

nation clinic from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Lancaster House, 403 Washington St. SW, Blacksburg. First come, first served with no ID required.

Friday, Sept. 17  
Meet the Artists: Riley Chan at the Alexander Black House from 3 to 5 p.m.

Young International Artists at the Lyric Theatre from 4 to 6 p.m.  
Free performance by BANDALOO at the Moss Arts Center at 5 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 18  
Free performance by BANDALOO at the Moss Arts Center at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 19  
Welcome Festival at Market Square Park from 1 to 4 p.m., free and open to the public

will be available all month long. Each week the library will offer a new craft for kids to take home.

**Interactive Movie Kits**

All month at the Christiansburg Library and the Meadowbrook Public Library. Make movie night interactive with a movie kit that contains popcorn and props for four individuals to participate.

The movie is not included and supplies are limited.

**Crafts to Go**

All Month at the Meadowbrook Public Library.

Drop by the Meadowbrook Public Library for a Take & Make Craft Kit. Available at the library or with curbside pickup. They are free but supplies are limited.

## Through October:

**Radford Farmers Market**

The Radford Farmers Market continues each Saturday through October 30, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the New River Valley Community Service parking lot (the old Wade's parking lot) on West Main Street.

**Christiansburg Farmers Market**

The Christiansburg Farmers Market is being held every Thursday through October at the Christiansburg Recreation Center parking lot from 3 to 7 p.m.

## Ongoing:

**Free GED preparation classes from NRCC**

Free GED preparation classes are being offered through New River Community College's Office of Transitional Programs in Montgomery, Floyd, Giles and Pulaski counties and the City of Radford. The classes run until Dec. 17. They help adults increase their skills to pass the GED exam and prepare for college or a career.

Class schedules are Floyd County: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to noon, at New River Community Action, 120 Epperly Mill Road SW, Floyd; Giles County: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Pearisburg Community Center, 1410 Wenonah Ave., Pearisburg; Montgomery County: Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9 a.m. to noon, at New River Community College's Christiansburg site, 782 New River Road, Suite 400, Christiansburg and Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the same Christiansburg site; Pulaski County: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to noon and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at New River Community College, 234 Edwards Hall, 5251 College Dr., Dublin; Radford City: Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Radford Public Library, 30 West Main St., Radford.

Those interested in registering or with questions may contact the NRCC Office of Transitional Programs at 540-674-3682 or [adultbased@nr.edu](mailto:adultbased@nr.edu).

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Ongoing activities

New Virginians Exhibit at the Blacksburg Library during regular open hours.

Gallery Showings at the Lyric Theatre and the Moss Arts Center during regular open hours.

Immigration Exhibit: The International Culture of Blacksburg at the Alexander Black House Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Gallery Show by Riley Chan at the Alexander Black House Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Resource table at the Blacksburg Library during regular open hours.

Take a walk or ride a bike on The Huckleberry Trail.

Visit the Blacksburg Farmers Market, Saturdays from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. and Wednesdays from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Sign up for the 16 Squares Historical Downtown Tour at the Blacksburg Museum.

Market Square Jam from 7 to 9 pm. At Market Square Park, every Wednesday through Sept. 29.

Watch a movie at the historic Lyric Theatre.

Visit the YMCA at VT's Thrift Shop and local businesses.

# NRCC offering free GED preparation classes throughout the NRV

New River Community College's Office of Transitional Programs is now offering free GED preparation classes in Montgomery, Floyd, Giles, and Pulaski counties, and the City of Radford.

The classes run until Dec. 17.

The classes help adults increase their skills to pass the

GED exam and prepare for college or a career. Students will prepare to take the GED/high school equivalency exam, prepare for the Virginia Placement Test, and learn employability skills.

The class schedules are as follows:

Floyd County: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to

noon, at New River Community Action, 120 Epperly Mill Road SW, Floyd.

Giles County: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Pearisburg Community Center, 1410 Weno-nah Ave., Pearisburg.

Montgomery County: Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9 a.m. to noon, at New River

Community College's Christiansburg site, 782 New River Road, Suite 400, and Tuesday and Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the same site.

Pulaski County: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to noon and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at New River Community College, 234 Edwards Hall, 5251 College Dr., Dublin.

Radford City: Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9 a.m. to noon, at the Radford Public Library, 30 West Main St., Radford.

Those interested in registering or with questions may contact the NRCC Office of Transitional Programs at 540-674-3682 or [adultbased@nr.edu](mailto:adultbased@nr.edu).

## State Fair of Virginia will celebrate the commonwealth's largest private industry: agriculture

Virginia's agricultural heritage has always been at the heart of the State Fair of Virginia, and agricultural activities continue in 2021 with a long list of farm-related attractions.

As Virginia's first and third largest private industries, agriculture and forestry will be celebrated throughout the 10 days of the state fair. Live animal exhibits and competitions, culinary and creative arts contests, and interactive agricultural displays will offer an immersive and educational experience for fairgoers of all ages. The fair will be held Sept. 24 through Oct 3 at The Meadow Event Park in Caroline County.

Youth are preparing for livestock competitions by getting their goats, sheep, cattle and swine show-ready for the annual state fair scholarship event. Fairgoers are encouraged

to visit the Sale of Champions on the second Saturday. AgriScience, forestry, crops, and farm equipment competitions are among other 4-H and FFA events.

Families can enhance their knowledge of Virginia agriculture in the Meadow Pavilion, which showcases multiple organizations representing the state's farm products, from the soybeans used to produce crayons to the bees that make honey.

Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, which owns the state fair, will host an educational display in the pavilion. Fairgoers can sit in the farm tour tractor cab to virtually explore a chicken house or chop feed corn. They also can visit the interactive farm product kiosk to learn about popular farm commodities.

Agricultural programming will be featured in the family-focused

Harvest Landing area, including Young MacDonald's Farm "with the always-popular sliding ducks, hatching chicks, plus pigs, roosters, and the new, bigger, better Goat Mountain," said Marlene Jolliffe, the fair's executive director.

The SouthLand Dairy Farmer Center will house hand-milking demonstrations and the Dairy Cow Birthing Center. A pigeon and dove tent will showcase more than 300 breeds of pigeons, and guests can learn about the birds' homing abilities and history. The Natural Resources Area will include special programs exploring Virginia's aquatic species, reptiles, and raptors. Fairgoers can use their phones to join an agriculture audio tour.

Heritage Village exhibits can transport fairgoers to a century gone-by with antique tractors,



**Agriculture -- Virginia's largest private industry -- will be celebrated at the State Fair with live animal exhibits and competitions and interactive agricultural displays. The 10-day fair begins Sept. 24.**

steam engines, tools, and children's toys. Live demonstrations will feature trades of past centuries with a blacksmith, a glass blower, a violin maker, a banjo maker and a wool spinner.

The creative and culinary arts competitions will exhibit basketry, needlework, and homemade cakes and pies created by youth and adult competitors. Culinary

entries are due Sept. 3. Contest rules and sign-up details can be found at [StateFairVa.org](http://StateFairVa.org).

Online ticket sales begin Sept. 1. Visit [StateFairVa.org](http://StateFairVa.org) to purchase tickets and to view details of the fair schedule, concert series and free entertainment.

The State Fair of Virginia is held each fall at its permanent home at The Meadow Event Park

in Caroline County. The event celebrates the best of Virginia's past, present, and future through scholarship initiatives, creative programming, and a focus on the commonwealth's agriculture and natural resources industries. Virginia Farm Bureau Holding Corp. operates the fair and is a subsidiary of the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation.

## VT doctoral student crowned first-ever Miss Virginia Volunteer

**John Pastor**  
Contributing writer

Breana Turner, a first-year student in the Translational Biology, Medicine, and Health (TBMH) graduate program at Virginia Tech, has made history as the first-ever Miss Virginia Volunteer.

The 24-year-old was recently awarded the title in Lynchburg, earning a \$10,000 scholarship. She will dedicate her reign to advocate for women's health and will compete next spring at the national pageant, Miss Volunteer America, in Jackson, Tenn.

With a master's degree in public health from

Virginia Tech, Turner has spent five years building a community outreach mentor and empowerment program, Sisters with Ambition. The program helps girls in middle and high school gain confidence, foster healthy relationships, set goals, and learn valuable professional development skills.

"Even though I'm a mentor to these middle and high school young women, I aspire to be a role model that is real," Turner said. "They inspire me more than I inspire them."

Virginia Tech's TBMH program offers interdisciplinary master's and doctoral degrees in biomedical and health sciences

research for students interested in advanced educational and career opportunities at the intersection of the life, physical, engineering, social, and computational sciences.

"We think Breana is a great representative of the TBMH program's values to engage in the community and to be leaders in thought and practice," said Steven Poelzing, associate professor at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC and co-director of the TBMH program. "As a group, we are always striving to do better and be better to make positive, sustainable changes for our students, science, and the world at large."



PHOTO PROVIDED TO VIRGINIA TECH BY TURNER

**Breana Turner was recently named Miss Virginia Volunteer at the Lynchburg Academy Center of the Arts.**

## NASA

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spectrometers capable of creating high-resolution images and composition maps of the moon's surface to a dust analyzer and mass spectrometer to study dust particles in space near the moon. A radiation vault protects most of the electronics from Jupiter's radiation.

"We're sending the spacecraft out there, and all of those instruments are going to return data that we'll use to assess Europa's habitability," Jones-Wilson said. "My job is to make sure those instruments work properly. So, we have a rigorous analysis and testing program to make sure that we know before we launch that they can all actually answer the science questions that we're sending them there to investigate."

The 13,000-pound Clipper will travel 484 million miles and can take up to six years to get to Europa. Once in Jupiter's orbit, the Clipper will spend a year altering its trajectory for its Europa flyby and then spend the next three years orbiting Europa more than 40 times. The data collected during each flyby gets sent back to Earth.

So, this is arguably one of NASA's most ambitious missions, and Jones-Wilson plays a critical role.

"As soon as I came to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, I knew that Clipper was the project I wanted to work on for a while because it's a new front in understanding our solar system that is my generation's version of the early Mars program," Jones-Wilson said.

Jones-Wilson finds herself in a role that she has wanted since attending an Earth Day celebration as a 5-year-old and learning about space. A few years later, she learned the word "engineer" from watching "Star Trek" episodes, and that only motivated her more to pursue a career related to space.

Virginia Tech certainly played an important role in preparing her for this career. The school's highly acclaimed aero-

space engineering program had a usually large offering of dedicated coursework on spacecraft engineering (rather than general aerospace engineering) that appealed to her coming out of high school in Alexandria, Va., and she liked the research being done at Virginia Tech. The department's professors — particularly Chris Hall, a former Virginia Tech department head who now works at the University of New Mexico — allow undergraduates to work with graduate students in research labs, which also appealed to her.

An honors student, Jones-Wilson earned a degree in aerospace engineering with a minor in mathematics. Hall, who was Jones-Wilson's advisor at the time, changed her life when he insisted that she apply for fellowships to go to graduate school.

Jones-Wilson won two fellowships that paid for her to earn her master's and doctoral degrees at Cornell University.

"I like to say that I owe him \$500,000," Jones-Wilson said. "I don't think I would have had the self-confidence to apply for those fellowships if Chris hadn't told me, 'No, you have to do this.'"

After she defended her dissertation, she joined NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory weeks later as a guidance control expert and gradually worked her way into her current role as the payload verification and validation lead for Europa Clipper.

The launching of the Europa Clipper in a little more than three years will result in her moving to a different project after spending so many years and so much energy on this one. "There will be no dearth of really cool missions to transition on to," she said. "Generally speaking, NASA doesn't rest on its laurels. It's trying more ambitious things, and there are always new challenges to try out.

"I'm going to be happy no matter where I end up."

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# OPINION

## COVID update: Health district expects COVID-19 cases to peak this month, decline in September

COVID-19 cases continue to rise in the region.

Hospitalizations have doubled since last week.

Cases in children ages 5 to 11 are up.

But come September, the picture may look different.

Noelle Bissell, health director for the New River Health District, said Monday in her weekly meeting with the media that she expects the latest surge in coronavirus cases, sparked by the contagious delta variant, to peak soon in the district and then decrease next month. She cited the variant's trend in other countries and even in other parts of the state where COVID-19 cases are slowing down after a rise.

"We expect we will hit a peak at the end of the month," Bissell told the press. "The delta variant is so contagious that you see that exponential rise in cases. It runs through the bulk of our susceptible, unvaccinated population,

and then, cases do start to drop off. It could be that this is our last big surge."

The NRV Health District's director reported that positive coronavirus cases are approximately 300 across the district as of Aug. 23 with cases up in children younger than 12 years old for whom a vaccine is not yet available. This peak still is lower than the surge last fall and winter, when there were about 1,000 new COVID-19 cases a week in the district, she said.

Also, as of Aug. 23, 48 people were hospitalized with COVID-19 in the New River Valley, which is double the number a week ago, Bissell said. Though there are reports of some breakthrough cases, which occur in people who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19, Bissell said the bulk of the positive cases are in people who are not vaccinated.

She went on to say that the surge in COVID-19 hospital pa-

tients is wearing down the health care community from hospital workers to public health employees. As the number of people who are sick with the coronavirus rises, fewer health care professionals are available to take care of them in some areas. A rising number are leaving the profession due to burnout, Bissell said.

"Everyone's tired, everyone wants this to be over," she said. "No one wants it to be over more than our hospital and public health workers."

Still, the surge in variant infections has prompted more people to get vaccinated for COVID-19, Bissell said. Local pharmacies, for example, are seeing twice the number of people requesting vaccines this week than did so last week.

"This is exactly the situation that vaccines were developed to prevent," she said. "Hundreds of millions of doses being given and a dramatic impact on decreasing

the risk for severe illness, hospitalization, and death."

The demand for COVID-19 testing in the region has also been stronger, Bissell told the media.

On Aug. 23, the Food and Drug Administration announced its full approval of the Pfizer vaccine, replacing its emergency use authorization for the vaccine. Bissell said this approval likely will lead to more people feeling comfortable about receiving a vaccine. Many were waiting for the FDA approval. It also may lead to more vaccine mandates by employers and businesses.

"If it becomes more inconvenient to not be vaccinated, I do think we will see more people going ahead and getting vaccinated," she said.

The health district already is offering third vaccine doses to people who are immunocompromised, which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended recently. Bissell

said she expects the FDA to authorize an additional COVID-19 vaccine dose for everyone though the timeline is unknown.

The district also is preparing to host multiple flu shot clinics where it also will offer COVID-19 vaccines. There are tests to create a vaccine in the future that would protect against both the flu and COVID-19, Bissell said.

While the delta variant is circulating, Dr. Bissell encouraged everyone to be cautious and to wear a mask indoors, to socialize outside, and to stay away from large crowds and confined indoor spaces. She also cautioned parents not to send their children to school if they are sick.

"You want to become part of the solution and not the problem," she said. "I do think we'll be in a totally different place by the end of the month, once cases start declining."

—Written by Jenny Kincaid Boone

Submit letters to the editor to editor@ourvalley.org

## WalletHub ranks Virginia as 30th among states with highest student debt

As the personal finance website WalletHub points out, student debt is a huge problem in America. According to the website, with the exception of mortgages, student loans make up the largest component of household debt for Americans.

With student-loan debtors in mind, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia based on 11 key measures of indebtedness and earning opportunities. Virginia came in reasonably well, ranking as the state with the 30th highest student loan debt.

At the end of the second quarter of 2021, total outstanding college-loan balances stood at \$1.59 trillion, according to the Department of Education. That comes out to an average of \$37,000 for each of the 42.9 million

borrowers.

To determine the best and worst states for student debt, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across two key dimensions: "student-loan indebtedness" and "grant and student work opportunities." The website then evaluated those dimensions using 11 relevant metrics.

The metrics used in the "student-loan indebtedness" dimension were the average student debt, the proportion of students with debt, student debt as a share of income, the share of student loans in past-due or default status, and the share of federal student loan borrowers enrolled in an income-driven repayment plan.

Across the "grant and student work opportunities" dimension, the metrics

used to determine the rankings of the states and the District of Columbia were the unemployment rate among the population aged 25 to 34, the underemployment rate, the availability of student jobs, the availability of paid internships, the grant growth, and the presence of a "student loan ombudsman" law.

The ten states with the highest student loan debt were 1) West Virginia 2) New Hampshire 3) Pennsylvania 4) South Dakota 5) Mississippi 6) North Dakota 7) Delaware 8) Michigan 9) Wisconsin and 10) Ohio.

The ten places with the lowest student loan debt were 42) Hawaii 43) Colorado 44) Alaska 45) Washington 46) Florida 47) New Mexico 48) Wyoming 49) California 50) District of Columbia and 51) Utah.

## Virginia soldier accounted for from Korean War

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced Wednesday that Army Cpl. Roy H. Thomas, 22, of St. Charles, Va., killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Dec. 22, 2020.

Cpl. Thomas's family only recently received their full briefing on his identification, which is why this release is going out now when he was accounted for last December.

In late 1950, Thomas was

a member of Company M, Third Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, Seventh Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 12, 1950, after his unit was attacked by enemy forces as they attempted to withdraw near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered.

On July 27, 2018, following the summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un in June 2018, North Korea turned over 55 boxes, purported

to contain the remains of American service members killed during the Korean War. The remains arrived at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii on Aug. 1, 2018, and were subsequently accessioned into the DPAA laboratory for identification.

To identify Thomas's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA (mtD-

NA) and Y chromosome (Y-STR) analysis.

Thomas's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are still missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Thomas will be buried in Woodway, Va. The date has yet to be determined.

For family and funeral information, contact the Army Casualty Office at (800) 892-2490

## WalletHub: Virginia unemployment claims are 11.03% higher than last year

The personal finance website WalletHub declared Thursday that "Virginia is struggling with its unemployment recovery with last week's claims higher than key dates in 2020."

According to WalletHub's updated rankings for the states whose unemployment claims are recovering the quickest, released Thursday, Virginia ranks 49th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia in terms of its rate of recovery from unemployment claims. Virginia was one of only four states (New Mexico, Maryland, and Oregon were the other three) that had unemployment claims last week that

were worse than the same week last year.

Three of the statistics the website cited to account for Virginia's poor showing were that weekly unemployment claims in the commonwealth increased by 518.16% compared to the same week in 2019, the second biggest increase in the country; weekly unemployment claims in Virginia increased by 298.27% compared to the start of 2020, the third biggest increase in the U.S.; and weekly unemployment claims in Virginia increased by 11.03% compared to the same week last year, the fifth biggest increase in the U.S.

According to WalletHub's rankings, the ten states that are enjoying the quickest recovery from unemployment claims are (1) North Dakota (2) Kentucky (3) South Carolina (4) Arkansas (5) New York (6) Arizona (7) Iowa (8) Pennsylvania (9) South Dakota and (10) Vermont).

The ten places in the country experiencing the slowest recovery from unemployment claims, according to WalletHub's rankings are (42) Tennessee (43) Alaska (44) Colorado (45) Oregon (46) Indiana (47) Illinois (48) Maryland (49) Virginia (50) District of Columbia and (51) New Mexico.

### News Messenger

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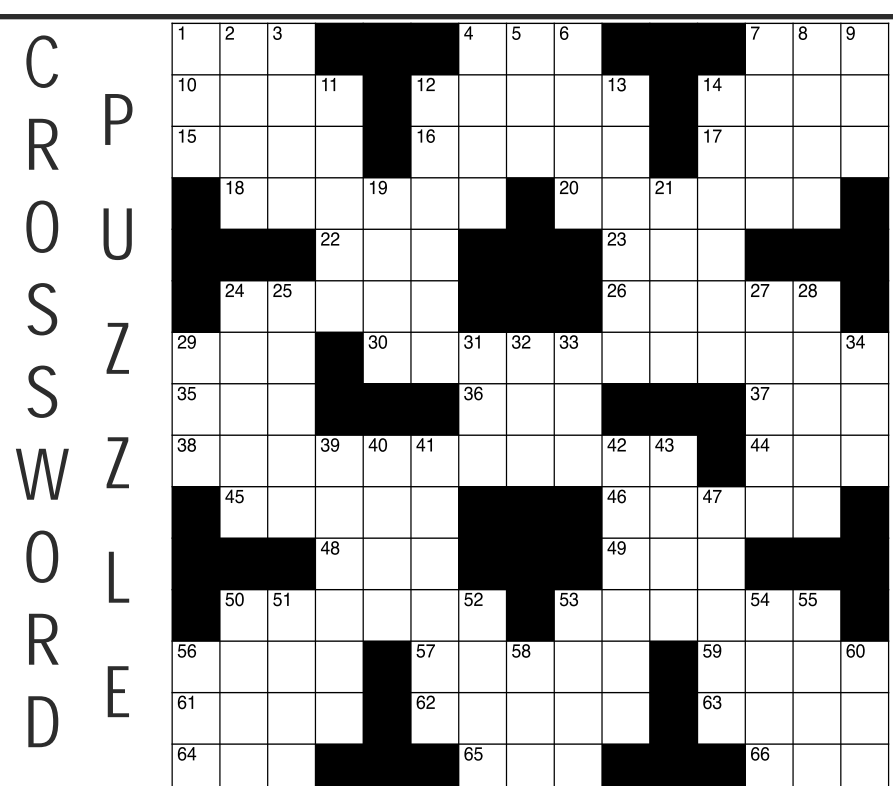
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|---|--|--|--|
| <p><b>CLUES ACROSS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Easy as 1-2-3</li> <li>4. Goat and camel hair fabric</li> <li>7. A women undergarment</li> <li>10. British bathrooms</li> <li>12. Assemblages of parts into one entity</li> <li>14. Semitic fertility god</li> <li>15. Dull &amp; uninteresting</li> <li>16. Yemen capital</li> <li>17. Stare impertinently</li> <li>18. Banished persons</li> <li>20. Heart failure &amp; energy supplement</li> <li>22. Reduction in force</li> <li>23. Women's ___ movement</li> <li>24. Polynesian wrapped skirt</li> <li>26. Double-reed instruments</li> <li>29. Own (Scottish)</li> <li>30. Summer window dressings</li> <li>35. Many not ands</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>36. Paddle</li> <li>37. Being a single unit</li> <li>38. Silly behavior</li> <li>44. Insecticide</li> <li>45. A blank area</li> <li>46. Reduces stress</li> <li>48. Morning moisture</li> <li>49. Tear away roughly</li> <li>50. Elevated</li> <li>53. Cristobalite</li> <li>56. Baseball's Ruth</li> <li>57. Indian monetary unit</li> <li>59. Contest of speed</li> <li>61. Having a slanted direction</li> <li>62. Gross receipts</li> <li>63. A river in NE Spain</li> <li>64. The brain and spinal cord (abbr.)</li> <li>65. Dynegey Inc. on NYSE</li> <li>66. Japanese monetary unit</li> </ol> | <p><b>CLUES DOWN</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vestment worn by priests</li> <li>2. The trunk of a tree</li> <li>3. Transmission line cable</li> <li>4. Freshwater duck genus</li> <li>5. Bulk storage container</li> <li>6. Oil obtained from flowers</li> <li>7. Shopping containers</li> <li>8. Abnormal breathing</li> <li>9. Brew</li> <li>11. Bake eggs in their shells</li> <li>12. Serviceable</li> <li>13. A person in the navy</li> <li>14. A child's slight injury</li> <li>19. Fain</li> <li>21. Supports trestletree</li> <li>24. Parian Chronicle discovery site</li> <li>25. Greek famous for fables</li> <li>27. Farical afterpiece</li> <li>28. Dispatches by mail</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29. Hall of Fame (abbr.)</li> <li>31. Aah</li> <li>32. Unnaturally pale</li> <li>33. Before</li> <li>34. Fixed in one's purpose</li> <li>39. Madames</li> <li>40. Frosts</li> <li>41. City drains</li> <li>42. Baseball playoff</li> <li>43. Cruise</li> <li>47. Steeple</li> <li>50. Precipitation</li> <li>51. Ancient Greek rhetorician</li> <li>52. A unit of two</li> <li>53. Viewed</li> <li>54. Taxis</li> <li>55. 4840 square yards</li> <li>56. London radio station</li> <li>58. Perform work regularly</li> <li>60. Longest geological time</li> </ol> |
|---|--|--|--|

# From pasture to patient: VT scientists distill cow's milk into nano-capsules for drug delivery

Exosomes are nano-sized biological capsules that cells produce to protect and courier delicate molecules throughout the body. The capsules are hardy enough to withstand enzymatic breakdown, as well as acidic and temperature fluctuations in the gut and bloodstream, making them a promising candidate for drug delivery.

Harvesting them to achieve clinical-grade levels of purity, however, is a complex process.

"Exosomes are abundant in cow's milk, yet they're difficult to isolate from other milk proteins and lipids," said Rob Gourdie, professor and director of the Center for Vascular and Heart Research at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC.

Gourdie's laboratory developed a scalable method to harvest exosomes from unpasteurized cow's milk. Using this purification method, which was published this month in *Nanotheranostics*, the research team can extract roughly a cup of purified exosomes for every gallon of unpasteurized milk.

"For the first time, we've charted a path toward the industrial scalability of exosome purification for oral drug delivery," said Gourdie, who is also the Commonwealth Research Commercialization Fund Eminent Scholar in Heart Reporative Medicine Research and a professor of biomedical engineering and mechanics in Virginia Tech's

College of Engineering.

The research team developed their multistep, cost-effective purification process, which optimizes filtration methods, and timing of temperature and chemical treatments affecting calcium levels, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Spencer Marsh and Kevin Pridham, both postdoctoral fellows in Gourdie's lab at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute, and Jane Jourdan, Gourdie's lab manager, did the practical work to develop the proprietary procedure.

"Our team worked together effectively and safely on this project throughout the pandemic," Gourdie said. "It was a sight to see: Their selfless teamwork, enthusiasm, and dedication to overcoming challenges is something that does not happen as often as you might think in science. There were many failures, but eventually we figured out stepwise processes that worked."

Exosomes are secreted naturally by nearly all cell types in humans and other mammals and can be found abundantly in blood, lymph, urine, and milk. Lined with protective membranes, exosomes shuttle biomolecules, snippets of genetic material, and chemical signals between cells over long ranges.

"Imagine instead of getting a vaccine shot, your nurse hands you a milkshake," Gourdie said. "Another milkshake may con-



Virginia Tech scientists at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute have developed a novel way to isolate exosomes from cow's milk. The research team, Jane Jourdan (left), Spencer Marsh, Kevin Pridham, and Rob Gourdie, visited Donnie Montgomery (right) of Homestead Creamery, which has provided the scientists with unpasteurized milk samples for experimentation. The researchers' purification protocol was published this month in *Nanotheranostics*. Photo by Whitney Slighthead for Virginia Tech.

tain exosomes loaded with a therapeutic peptide designed to protect internal organs such as the heart from myocardial infarction."

Exosomes can also penetrate the blood-brain-barrier, a collection of coupled cellular processes

that protects the brain from unwanted pathogens and chemicals, introducing a new way to deliver therapeutics to treat neurological diseases and brain cancer.

Gourdie partnered with Homestead Creamery, a local dairy processing plant, to obtain

unpasteurized milk samples for the study.

"We have always built our business on relationships, and this is an exciting collaboration for us," said Donnie Montgomery, co-founder and co-owner of Homestead Creamery.

## Hokie researchers are working to feed lemurs far from home

August 23, 2021 -- In the jungles of Madagascar, the threatened sifaka lemur spends most of its days leaping from tree to tree, searching for leaves and fruit in a forest territory that is increasingly in peril.

Halfway across the world on the VT campus, under the watchful care of experts from the Duke Lemur Center, a group of sifakas is part of a broad effort to ensure that all lemurs — small primates that are native only to Africa's largest island — will not go extinct.

But what do you feed an animal that is so far from home?

"My daughter is obsessed with lemurs," said Collegiate Assistant Professor Kevin Hamed of Virginia Tech's College of Natural Resources and Environment. "Several years ago, we found out that the Duke Lemur Center had a summer educational camp, and we had to go."

While the aspiring lemur scientist was enjoying camp, Hamed, a faculty member in the Department of Fish and

Wildlife Conservation, noticed that the center had put out a call for winged sumac trees in the Durham, N.C., area.

"Winged sumac is a successional tree that tends to grow in scrubby areas, in places that are cleared for development but not utilized," said Hamed, who started cultivating winged sumac when he taught at Virginia Highlands Community College. "With the resurgence of development in Durham, I realized that it might be harder to find, so I reached out and said, 'I think we can grow some of this.'"

The need is significant, as sifaka lemurs, with a unique multi-colored fur pattern that makes them a frequent subject in documentaries and children's television programs, are particularly difficult to care for in captivity.

"They are folivores, or leaf eaters," said Charles Welch, the lemur center's conservation overseer. "They're difficult to care for because they're susceptible to gut ailments, but we've found

that winged sumac is one of their favorite foods. More critically, sumac freezes readily, providing us a useful store of fresh leaves through the winter."

"This all started with a hallway conversation," said Seiler, Alumni Distinguished Professor and the Hon. and Mrs. Shelton H. Short Jr. Professor of Forestry. "Dr. Hamed mentioned that the Duke Lemur Center needed to propagate winged sumac. I started fiddling around with it and quickly realized that it wasn't easy to find wild winged sumac seed in the New River Valley."

Seiler worked to propagate the sumac using cuttings taken from sumac roots and branches and by a pond near the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine building attempting to grow them as new plants. To aid in this effort, Seiler recruited undergraduate student Lesley Merkel to collect samples of winged sumac around campus and grow them in the greenhouse.

So far Merkel has found that the twig cut-



Sifaka lemurs, who spend most of their days in the trees of the jungle of Madagascar, are possibly being saved from extinction halfway around the world as twig cuttings of the lemurs' favorite leaves, winged sumac, are being cultivated next to Cheatham Hall, home of VT's College of Natural Resources and Environment, and by a pond near the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine building.

tings collected in the winter root much better in perlite, and she is currently testing the same treatments on summer cuttings. Merkel hasn't had to go far to collect samples. Some winged sumac is growing alongside Cheatham Hall, home of the College of Natural Resources and Environment, and a larger patch is taking root.

With 15 lemur species calling the Duke Lemur Center home, a nearby crop of tasty leaves is a valuable resource for the many researchers and technicians working to help conserve animals that are significantly threatened by habitat loss.

"Our center started as a primate research center in the 1960s," noted Welch, "but we've

evolved to cover other objectives, including education and conservation. In a normal year, we have 35,000 visitors come through our facility. In addition to that outreach, we're involved in conservation efforts in eastern Madagascar."

For the Duke lemurs, the chance to enjoy their favorite leaves makes the collaboration well worth the effort.

## Bench Views from page 1

Main, and Earth, Fire and Spirit in Lexington, Va.

After a year of searching for a direct focus, Olson is taking time to examine her artistic direction, determine the kind of artist she wants

to develop into, and how to enhance that journey.

Olson said she believes in the importance of supporting the arts "in any way possible: by journeying, becoming involved, participat-

ing, volunteering, just showing up." When she is not in her studio, she can be found gardening, hiking, biking, and enjoying the great outdoors with its changing seasons.



Mid-summer by Martha Olson

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# Leader in eliminating disparities in cancer survival to deliver season's first Maury Strauss lecture



**Otis Brawley, Bloomberg Distinguished Professor of Oncology at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University, will discuss disparities in how cancer is prevented, diagnosed, and treated in the first installment of the 2021-2022 Maury Strauss Distinguished Public Lecture Series Sept. 9.**

## Matt Chittum Contributing writer

Otis Brawley, Bloomberg Distinguished Pro-

fessor of Oncology at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University, will discuss dispari-

ties in how cancer is prevented, diagnosed, and treated in a talk titled, "Cancer Control in the 21st Century with Special Attention to Disparities in Health."

The talk, at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 9, is the first in the 2021-22 season of the Maury Strauss Distinguished Public Lecture Series, hosted by the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC.

The series is named for Maury Strauss, a Roanoke businessman and longtime community benefactor who recognized the importance of bringing leading-edge scientists to Roanoke.

Attendees must register online in advance to attend the lecture in person in the auditorium at 2 Riverside Circle on the research institute's

Roanoke campus. Attendees will follow strict public health guidelines. The lecture will also be streamed virtually via Zoom and on the research institute's website.

An estimated 600,000 Americans will die of cancer this year, according to the American Cancer Society. But why some will survive and others won't is not always determined by the disease alone.

A college education, for instance, with all of the economic and health care benefits that typically come with it can make an enormous difference, according to Brawley, an international expert in cancer prevention and control.

"More than one-in-five cancers would go away if everybody had what college educated Americans have," Braw-

ley said in a lecture last year at Emory University. "This is just giving people what we already know exists: the whole spectrum of prevention, diagnosis and screening, and treatment."

In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, cancer was the second leading cause of death in the United States behind heart disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But while death rates for both cancer and heart disease are declining, cancer is projected to become the most common cause of death in the U.S. in the next five to 10 years.

Brawley notes that while Black Americans have seen the greatest decline in cancer deaths over recent decades, they started from the highest

point. Racial and other disparities have remained stubborn despite more people surviving cancer overall.

A lack of high-quality health care, good screening, and prevention are to blame, Brawley said.

"We have underemphasized prevention in the United States," Brawley said in the 2020 Emory University talk.

The top causes of cancer are smoking and being overweight, both of which are preventable, yet are more prevalent among minority and low-income populations, he said.

Increasingly, disparities in cancer survival are geographic, he noted, with many states in the southeastern U.S. lagging behind much of the country in improvements to cancer survival rates.

## ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

**St. Peter the Apostle Anglican Church**, 230 W. First St., Christiansburg, VA. Fr Peter Geromel OHI Th.M., Vicar, Fr. Alex Darby, "Associate", 540-382-0432/540-270-9166. Sundays: 8:00 am & 10:00 am Holy Eucharist followed by Christian Education and refreshments. Holy Communion most Thursdays at 12Noon, other Holy Days as announced. Traditional services use the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and 1940 Hymnal. Handicapped accessible. All are welcome. Come worship with us! Website: [www.stpetersacc.org](http://www.stpetersacc.org). Follow us on Facebook

**St. Philip's Anglican Church**, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, [www.stphilipsblacksburg.org](http://www.stphilipsblacksburg.org). Reverend Fr. Wade Miller, Priest. Eucharist Sundays at 11am and Wednesday's at 12pm.

**St. Thomas Anglican Church** - located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit [www.sttofc.org](http://www.sttofc.org) for midweek masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).

## BAPTIST

**First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave.**, 215 Third Ave. at the corner with Downey St. We are committed to personal spiritual growth and to providing leadership in community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: [www.fbcradford.org](http://www.fbcradford.org), 540-639-4419. Worship is broadcast live on JOY radio, 93.1 FM and 890 AM.

**Trinity Community Church**, 1505 N. Franklin Street, C'burg. John Altizer, Lead Pastor, Brian Cockram, Associate Pastor, 382-8121. Worship at 10:45 a.m., Outreach Ministries - 6:00p.m. Wednesday, Growth Groups - 5:00p.m. Sunday, Youth and Children's Ministry - 5:00p.m. Sunday, [www.trinitycburg.org](http://www.trinitycburg.org)

## CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Blacksburg Church of Christ**, 315 Eakin St., 552-1331. Sun. Bible Classes 9:30 a.m., Sun. Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m., Wed. Bible classes, 7 p.m., Outreach Minister Curt Seright, Community Minister Tom Gilliam.

**Faith Christian Church of Christ**, 305 3rd Street, Christiansburg, David Rhudy, Minister, 382-4628, Sunday School 10 am; Worship 11 am; Evening Worship 6:30 pm; Wednesday night Bible Study for Women and Men 6:30 pm. We welcome you to any and all of our services.

## CHURCH OF GOD

**New Hope Church of God**, 1404 Mud Pike Rd., C'Burg. Rev. T. Michael Bond, pastor, 731-3178. Sun. School 10 a.m., Worship 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m. Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

**West Radford Church of God**, 1824 West Main Street, Radford, VA 24141, Sunday School— 10:00A.M. Morning Worship— 11:00A.M., Children's Church 11:00A.M. Sunday Evening — 6:00P.M., Wednesday Night — 7:00P.M., Pastor Danny Newman, Church Office — 540-639-6562 or 804- 921-0828.

## CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

**Christiansburg Church of the Brethren**, 310 South Franklin Street. Pastor: Paul J. Stover Jr. 540-797-5015. Sunday School 10 a.m.; Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays. Website: [www.christiansburgcob.org](http://www.christiansburgcob.org). A loving family, fueled by the Holy Spirit, grounded in God's Word, and delivering Jesus forgiveness and love to all people. Come as you are... you are welcomed!

## ECKANKAR

**Eckankar, the Path of Spiritual Freedom**, is located at 1420 3rd St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. However, due to COVID-19, the Light & Sound Services and other ECK programs are currently available online through Zoom. Visit [www.eck-va.org](http://www.eck-va.org) for program listings, [www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences-Group), or call 540-353-5365 and leave a message. We will return your call. Also visit [www.eckankar.org](http://www.eckankar.org) for more information about how the teachings of Eckankar lead you to spiritual freedom.

## LUTHERAN

**Luther Memorial Lutheran Church ELCA**, 600 Prices Fork Rd, Blacksburg. Weekly Online Worship at [www.lmlc.org](http://www.lmlc.org). We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes and affirms all people just as they are. For information on Bible studies and Wednesday Vespers, email [luthermemorial-blacksburg@gmail.com](mailto:luthermemorial-blacksburg@gmail.com), or contact the church office, (540) 951-1000. Rev. Monica Weber, pastor.

## MULTI-CULTURAL

**NON-DENOMINATIONAL Christian Growth Center**, 1850 Electic Way, Christiansburg, VA 24073 (beside Hubbell Lighting). Sunday Worship: 9:30am Prayer,

10:00am Service \*Nursery Available. Lead Pastor: Todd Hallinan. Founding Pastor: Rob Sowell. Mission: Sow, Grow, & Go Sow Faith! Grow in Righteousness! Go into all the world in the authority of the believer! 540-382-2908.

**PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church**, Rev. Richard Hall (540) 552-7194. [pastorhall29@gmail.com](mailto:pastorhall29@gmail.com). Sunday School at 10 a.m. and morning worship is 11 a.m. Evening service at 6 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

**Radford Worship Center**, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Hal Adams brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:00 AM & 10:45 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services, join us as Love, Grow, Serve, find us on facebook and Instagram

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

**UNITED METHODIST Asbury United Methodist**

**Church**, 500 Stuart Street, Christiansburg. 540-382-0743. Rev. Dr. Patricia Jones. Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship, 11:00 a.m. All are welcome.

**Central United Methodist Church**, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am (interpreter provided); 9:45am Sunday School (interpreter provided); and 11:00a.m. Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30p.m. Child care is provided. [www.centralmethodist-church.com](http://www.centralmethodist-church.com).

**St. Paul United Methodist Church**, 220 W. Main St., C'Burg. Rev. Mike Derflinger (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship 10 a.m., Sunday School 9 a.m. Live streaming Sunday Service - [www.twitch.tv/stpaulumc](http://www.twitch.tv/stpaulumc) **Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church**, 350 Stafford Drive, Christiansburg, VA 24073, Sunday School 10am, Sunday Worship Service 11am.

## WESLEYAN

**Christ Wesleyan Church**, 525 Harkrader Street, Christiansburg. Public Worship service at 11:00 AM. Sunday School for adults - 10:00 AM. Pastor: Gale Janofski 574-306-7682. Website: [christwesleyanchurch.org](http://christwesleyanchurch.org)

# Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

## God Meant It

Read Ezekiel 5:1 through 7:27

"Emma! Liam! Have you even started your homework?" Sheryl had given strict instructions to her children to complete their homework or they wouldn't be going skating later. "Looks like we won't be going skating tonight. You'll be doing homework instead."

The children exclaimed, "Please, Mom, let us go. That's not fair!"

"And they will know that I am the Lord; I did not threaten in vain to bring this calamity on them" (Ezekiel 6:10).

Like Sheryl, God had a purpose in His instructions to Judah.

He gave them wonderful promises. Peace and safety would be theirs if they followed Him. He also gave stern warnings. If they ignored Him, destruction would come.

The people acted in disobedience and did what was evil. As a result, God sent them into exile. Even today God does not speak in vain. If we listen to Him, we will receive blessings. If we run to rebellion, we will fall into judgment. Live in such a way as to receive His blessings.

Prayer Suggestion: Dear Lord, I will believe what You have said.

Quicklook: Ezekiel 6:9-11

**If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Randy Thompson at 540-389-9355 or email at [advertise@ourvalley.org](mailto:advertise@ourvalley.org)**

# Virginia Department of Transportation road watch

The following is a list of forecasted highway projects that may impact traffic traveling in the 12-county Salem Transportation District this week. Work schedules and construction project timelines are always subject to change and weather dependent. The Salem District covers Bedford, Botetourt, Carroll, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, and Roanoke counties.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

**I-81 NORTHBOUND AT EXIT 105 NEW RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY** – Lane and shoulder closures may be in place near exit 105. Lane closure may be in effect during the week from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. Shoulder closures may be in effect at any time during the week. Slow rolls may be performed on I-81 in the north and southbound lanes from mile marker 104 to 106 from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. Speed limit is reduced to 60 miles per hour in the work zone. Shoulder closures will remain in place through the duration of the project. Project completion is estimated by June 2022.

**SLOW ROLLS:** Slow rolls may be utilized periodically on both the northbound and southbound lanes from mile marker 98-109 for structural steel deliveries and setting beams.

**I-81 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT EXIT 114 IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY** – The bridge replacement of the two Interstate 81 bridges over Route 8, northbound and southbound, is underway. Drivers can expect alternating lane and shoulder closures, northbound and southbound, from mile marker 114 to 115. Exit 114 ramp shoulder closures will be ongoing from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Speed limit is reduced

to 60 mph in the work zone. Route 8 will have alternating northbound and southbound shoulder and lane closures, day or night, as needed between the I-81 on and off ramps. A temporary traffic signal will direct traffic on Route 8 throughout the duration of the project. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction. Estimated completion is summer 2021.

**RAMP CLOSURES:** Weather permitting, the I-81 northbound exit 114 on and off ramps may be closed during nighttime hours from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. Message boards will update drivers.

Nighttime lane closures may be in place periodically on I-81 southbound from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning.

**DMV Notice:** The bridge on I-81 northbound at mile marker 114 currently has a restricted width for wide loads of 26 feet or larger.

**ROUTE 643 PAVING PROJECT** – Beginning soon, exact date to be determined, a project is being scheduled to resurface an unpaved portion of Route 643 (Yellow Sulfur Road). The work area begins .7 mile south of the intersection with Route 642 (Jennelle Road) and ends 1.7 miles north of the bridge over Route 460. Traffic impacts will include intermittent flagging operations between these intersections. This project has an estimated completion date of May 2022.

**LANE CLOSURES:** Intermittent single lane closures utilizing flagging operations will be in place between the intersection of Teaberry Road and Jennelle Road.

**ROUTE 11 BRIDGE DECK REPLACEMENT** – Work is underway on Route 11 southbound to replace the bridge deck over the Norfolk Southern Railroad. The bridge is located .4 miles north of the intersection with Route 748 (Big Spring Drive) and .4 mile south of the intersection with Route 603 (North Fork Road). The left lane of both Route 11 north and south is closed with a detour in place until the completion of the project. Once in place, the detour will re-route Route 11 south traffic through the left

lane of Route 11 north, limiting each direction to a single lane. The expected completion date is November 2021.

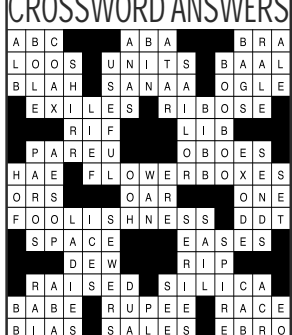
**TRAFFIC SWITCH:** A new traffic pattern is in place detouring Route 11 southbound traffic through the left lane of Route 11 northbound between the intersections above, limiting each direction to a single lane.

**ROUTE 636 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT SENECA HOLLOW** – Work has begun replacing the bridge on Route 636 over the Roanoke River at Seneca Hollow. A road closure is in place from Echo Hills Road to .36 mile south of Route 460. A detour is also in place. The detour will restrict access to Route 460 at Seneca Hollow and will require travelers to enter/exit Route 460 at Friendship Road near Wheeling Hollow. The project is expected to be completed in fall 2021.

**UTILITY WORK ON ROUTE 460** – MMI will be installing fiber optic along Route 460 from the Giles County line to the Floyd County line. This work will be ongoing. Motorists should expect shoulders and/or lane closures for travel in both directions.

**VARIOUS ROADS FOR UTILITY WORK** – Utility crews will be working on overhead lines along a general corridor alignment following Route 114 (Peppers Ferry), Route 460 Business (Franklin Street) and Route 11/460 (Roanoke Road). The work zone will span from the Pulaski/Montgomery county line to the Montgomery/Roanoke county line. In addition, various side roads will be impacted by intermittent closures for crossings. Motorists should expect shoulder closures and lane closures for travel in both directions. Intermittent full closures of the roads will be required for periods lasting no longer than 15 minutes. Work hours are scheduled for 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily. Advance warning for weekend work involving closures of primary highways on weekend mornings from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. will be provided via message boards once scheduled. Work is scheduled to last until fall 2021.

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS



## ONLINE ONLY AUCTION

**Commercial Development Opportunity in Blacksburg VA  
26.7 Acres on Harding Rd, Blacksburg VA 24060**



**Bidding Ends Sept. 9th at 4 PM  
Go to VaAuctionPro.com**

26.7 acres of open development land in the Town of Blacksburg VA. Within walking distance to downtown Blacksburg & VA Tech. Property has ideal topography for development with 1,365 +/- ft of road frontage on Harding Road. Town water & sewer at site and readily available along with Natural Gas & Gigabit Internet Connectivity. Property is gently sloping and allows for potentially unblocked mountain views from every lot. Property is equally suited for Single or Multi-Family Development, Student Housing, 55+ Active Adult or Retirement Community and/or Private Estate.

There is extensive local & regional public transportation network (Blacksburg Transit) & Smart Way Commuter Bus with direct links to Airport, & Northern VA. Newly approved rail service and Amtrak Station scheduled for 2024. Existing Bus Stop within 100 ft of property. Walkable Community to all convenient amenities.

Download Bidder Pack for Maps, Terms, Zoning, Sample Purchase Contract, sample development plan. Sample Development is not approved & is shown only for illustration purposes of what might possibly be accomplished. Bidders are expected to do their own research and due diligence for their own ideas for intended use approval and feasibility.

**Terms** – Bidding opens on August 26th. 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Buyers are expected to complete due diligence prior to bidding. Earnest Money Deposit of \$150,000 required on day of sale. Close in 60 Days. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is where is any and all faults. Auction starts ending at 4 PM on September 9th 2021. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes.

Contact – Broker & Auctioneer Matt Gallimore at  
540-239-2585 or email gallimore.matt@gmail.com

102 S. Locust Street,  
Floyd, VA 24091  
(540) 745-2005  
VaAuctionPro.com  
Lic# 2907004059



Blue Ridge Land  
& Auction Co., Inc

## OBITUARIES

### Mans, Sr., Arthur Allen "Butch"

Arthur Allen "Butch" Mans, Sr., 79, of Christiansburg, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2021.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles Herbert Mans and Lucille T. Murdock Mans, and his wife, Betty Jo Bishop Mans.

Survivors include his daughter, Jennifer Mans; his sons, Arthur Allen Mans, Jr., and David Roger Mans; grandchildren Jonathan Whitehead, Terry Dale Mans, Kelsey Cecil, and Hunter Mans; a sister, Jean Reed; sisters-



in-law Patricia Tinley, Patsy Young, Ethel Bugg, and Diane Bishop; brothers-in-law Frank Bishop and Bobby Bishop; and many other relatives and friends.

The family received friends from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 27, 2021, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Graveside services followed in West View Cemetery in Radford.

The Mans family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory. www.mullinsfuneralhome.com.

### Smeal, Paul Lester

Paul Lester Smeal, 89, of Blacksburg, died Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2021, at Lewis-Gale Hospital Montgomery. He was born in Clearfield, Penn. on June 11, 1932.

He is survived by his wife, Gladys Smeal; daughters Gwen Woods, and Tra-

cy McLean; and a son, Lester Alan Smeal. A graveside service was conducted Friday, Aug. 27, 2021, at 11 a.m. in the Westview Cemetery.

Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

### Lopez, Anthony (Tony)

Anthony (Tony) Lopez was born on May 13, 1919, in Quillota, Chile.

He died peacefully at home at age 102 on Aug. 22, 2021, in Blacksburg. Tony's parents were Flora Matas de Lopez and Antonio Lopez Benito. Both his mother's parents (French and Spanish) and his father (Spanish) immigrated to Chile from Spain.

Tony was proud of his Spanish, French, and Chilean roots. He was the oldest of four siblings, who were his sister Flora and his brothers Carlos and Michael. He often spoke of happy memories of childhood with his sister and his brothers, especially family games of tennis with their father. He was an accomplished tennis player and won a national high school boys singles title in Chile. Tony's passion for tennis was lifelong, and he played often and regularly through his late 80s.

Tony attended a Jesuit boarding school in Santiago, Chile, for much of his early education and received an excellent classical education. This was followed by studies at the Catholic University of Chile and graduation with a degree in chemistry.

Soon after, he won a scholarship competition to study in the United States. He subsequently enrolled at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, to study food science. While there, during Thanksgiving dinner at his major professor's house, he met the professor's daughter, Mary Fellers. In 1947 Tony was awarded the Ph.D. in food science and technology, and shortly thereafter, he and Mary were married.

They moved to Santiago where Tony worked for Sanitas Pharmaceuticals, and they started a family, having a daughter and a son. After a few years in Chile, the family moved back to the United States so that Tony could return to academia, and they had their third child, a son.

Tony was on the faculty at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and the University of Georgia before being recruited to Virginia Tech as a full professor in 1954. There he was instrumental in developing the Food Science and Technology



Department. He remained at Virginia Tech for the rest of his distinguished career, deeply involved in research, teaching, and service to the university and to the field of food science.

He retired in 1990 at age 70. One of his proudest achievements was the mentoring of numerous graduate students, many of whom have gone on to distinguished careers themselves all over the world.

Tony's beloved wife, Mary, died in 1992, after 45 years of marriage. He was fortunate to find love again and to marry his second wife, Barbara (Baska) Smith, in 2007. Baska and Tony shared an active, loving, and fulfilled life.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife Baska, his children and stepchildren Martita Lopez (Steve Sigman), Anthony Lopez (Susan), Michael Lopez (Bobbie), Caroline Montet, Frederic Krebs (Catherine), and Catherine Mowrey (Clint Collins); his grandchildren Anthony Lopez (Kelly), Matthew Sigman, Lauren Sigman, Thomas Lopez (Nickole), John Lopez, Andrew Lopez, and Ryan Mowrey; and his great-grandchildren Riley Lopez, Ava Lopez, Lucas Lopez, Anthony Lopez, and Adelyn Lopez.

He also leaves beloved family in Chile though his siblings predeceased him. He was especially close to his nieces, Monica Wienecke and Maria Luisa Bisquertt, and to his nephew, Federico Wienecke Lopez.

Tony will be fondly remembered for his soft-spoken intelligence, dry wit, generosity, and kindness. He was devoted to his family, he loved to travel, and he prized a good game of tennis. His was a long, healthy, and well-lived life. He was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

The family will gather privately to celebrate his life. If desired, contributions to honor his life and legacy may be made to the Food Science and Technology Department at Virginia Tech (fst.vt.edu/giving). A memorial website for condolences and memories may be found at mccoymfuneralhome.com.

### Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 500-year Floodplain

**To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals**

This is to give notice that the Town of Christiansburg has determined that the following proposed action under the Appalachian Regional Commission and VA-20106 is located in the 500-year floodplain, and the Town will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the floodplain and the potential impacts on the floodplain from the proposed action, as required by Executive Order 11988, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands. The proposed project, located on a portion of Hickok Street between College Street and W Main Street in downtown Christiansburg, will construct a permanent farmers market structure and gathering place. The steel and timber arcade will be approximately 154 feet in length. The proposed project is located on Hickok Street, adjacent to 53 W Main Street in the Town of Christiansburg, Montgomery County.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplain, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by the Town of Christiansburg at the following address on or before September 13, 2021: Town of Christiansburg, 100 E Main Street and 540-382-6128, Attention: Randy Wingfield, Town Manager. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8:00am to 5:00pm at the address above and online at www.christiansburg.org. Comments may also be submitted via email at rwingfield@christiansburg.org

# MONTGOMERY SPORTS

## Hokies set to host UNC, optimistic about season with fans in Lane



**From the Sidelines**

Marty Gordon

College football is around the corner with Virginia Tech's first game on Friday, Sept. 3, against North Carolina coming up fast.

Can you feel the excitement and anticipation of having a full house in Lane Stadium for the first time in over a year?

"Enter Sandman" is awaiting the roar of the crowd, and a national television audience

is about to learn how good this year's team really is.

If the Hokies play to their potential, we could see at least an 11-1 season. The North Carolina game is critical to the season, and a win would set the stage for what there is to come.

A quick look at the Hokies' schedule shows wins over West Virginia, Pittsburgh, Georgia Tech, Duke and Virginia. The two key matchups will be Oct. 9 against Notre Dame in a packed Lane Stadium and Nov. 20 at Miami.

The new college season also brings some new rules to bring to your attention. The NCAA Football Rules Committee has

made changes, tweaks, and adjustments to several things as we know it.

The biggest is the idea of speeding up overtime by limiting the length of the game and reducing the number of plays from scrimmages. Teams will now be required to run a two-point conversion after a touchdown in the second overtime. Previously, they were required only in the third overtime.

How many times as fans have we yelled at the television when an opposing player falls to the ground in what is an apparent injury to stop the clock? Well, that is about to change.

Under the new rules this

year, if a coach believes an opposing player is faking an injury, he can ask for a video review. Then a national coordinator of officials can determine if there was a "fake job." The problem with this is that there is no penalty for such an offense, but it is a new rule subject to review.

The team area on the sidelines has also been changed. Two years ago, teams were restricted to the space between the two 25-yard lines. During COVID, it was extended to the 15-yard lines. Now, it will be changed to the two 20's.

Also, coaches leaving the coach's box on the sidelines will now be flagged with a 15-yard

penalty.

Now, video board and audio and lighting operators may not create any distraction that obstructs play this year. If they are found guilty, the team will receive an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

Taunting will also be a point of emphasis. Taunting the opponent in any fashion now carries an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty of 15 yards.

On a side note, congrats to the entire offensive line of the Virginia Tech Hokies who have signed a sponsor (NIL) agreement with Mission BBQ. I guess they will be well fed for the entire season.

## ACC announces COVID-19 game rescheduling policy

The Atlantic Coast Conference Wednesday announced its 2021-22 COVID-19 game rescheduling policy and several key updates to protocols within the league's COVID-19 Medical Advisory Group (MAG) report.

The policy, which was approved by the league's athletics directors, applies to football, field hockey, men's and women's soccer, and volleyball.

If a 2021 ACC game cannot be played on its originally scheduled date due to a team unable to play due to an insufficient number of available players related to COVID-19, that team shall be deemed to have forfeited with a loss assigned to the team unable to play and a win assigned to its scheduled opponent with both the

loss and the win applied to the conference standings.

If a 2021 ACC game cannot be played on its originally scheduled date due to any factor(s) directly associated with a Game Discontinuation Consideration as listed in the current ACC Medical Advisory Group (MAG) report, the conference's sport rescheduling policy shall apply.

If a 2021 ACC game cannot be played on its originally scheduled date due to both teams being unable to play due to an insufficient number of available players related to COVID-19, both teams shall be deemed to have forfeited with a loss assigned to both teams and applied to the conference standings.

The updated ACC

Medical Advisory Group report includes accommodations for vaccinated individuals and institutional discretion to relax mitigation strategies based on team vaccination rate.

The report is the latest from the ACC Medical Advisory Group and follows a 2020-21 academic year in which the conference completed regular-season and postseason championship competition (where applicable) in each of its 27 sanctioned sports. The ACC has adhered to the guidelines put forward by the MAG, which has met frequently since May 14, 2020, to share information related to the impact of COVID-19 on college campuses and the return of college sports.

The MAG is composed of an individual from

each member institution and includes a cross-section of infectious disease experts, public health experts, campus student health experts, team physicians, athletic health care administrators, and a mental health expert.

"The Medical Advisory Group has adjusted protocols based on the lessons learned last year, the availability of vaccines, and the current state of the pandemic," said Dr. Cameron Wolfe, Chair of the ACC Medical Advisory Group and member of the infectious disease division at Duke University Medical Center. "We will continue to work closely with local public health to ensure our protocols and efforts are synchronized. Just like last year, there may be a need to adjust as the pandemic evolves,

and we will be prepared to do so in the best health interests of our student-athletes."

While fully vaccinated individuals will no longer be required to participate in a surveillance testing regime under the latest revisions, testing must still be administered to unvaccinated student-athletes, coaches and sport support staff who have significant interaction with student-athletes, individuals designated in a team's travel party, and anyone else who is in regular close contact with student-athletes as determined by the institution.

Unvaccinated individuals on a team with a vaccination rate less than 85 percent, must be tested a minimum of three times per week with a molecular (PCR) test. Unvaccinated

individuals on a team with a vaccination rate at or greater than 85 percent, must be tested once per week. Additional testing of unvaccinated individuals is at the discretion of the institution.

Teams that have a vaccination rate of 85 percent or higher among their student-athletes and have no active cases may relax mitigation strategies around team activities (e.g., spacing/masking in meetings, at meals, while traveling). In all sports, the masking of any individual, vaccinated or unvaccinated, (student-athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, non-coaching personnel, officials) permitted in the team bench area or within the playing enclosure will be at the discretion of the home institution.

## Nichols era begins at RU

The 2021-22 Radford University Men's Basketball non-conference schedule was announced on Monday morning, revealing a challenging gauntlet of regional opponents in Head Coach Darris Nichols' first season at the helm. The Nichols era gets a warm-up on Monday, Nov. 1 with a preseason exhibi-

tion against Eastern Mennonite and then officially begins when Emory & Henry visits the Dedmon Center on Tuesday, Nov. 9. Radford then hits the road to Charlottesville for a contest with the 2019 National Champion Virginia Cavaliers on Friday, Nov. 12 before facing off against Virginia Tech in Blacks-

burg on Monday, Nov. 15. The Highlanders will play in Furman's multiple-team event in Greenville, S.C. immediately after, facing the Paladins on Friday, Nov. 19 and then Navy the very next day on Saturday, Nov. 20. The Dedmon Center springs back to life on

Wednesday, Nov. 24 when William & Mary comes to town for a big in-state matchup. Then two teams from the Bluegrass State – Eastern Kentucky on Sunday, Nov. 28 and Kentucky Christian on Tuesday, Nov. 30 – make their way to the New River Valley as well.

December is just one big road trip with six games against formidable opponents in their home arenas. Radford first heads to Morgantown, W.Va. to play Coach Nichols' alma mater, West Virginia, on Saturday, Dec. 4. The Highlanders then make visits to James Madison

(Saturday, Dec. 11), George Washington (Monday, Dec. 13), Davidson (Saturday, Dec. 18), Akron (Monday, Dec. 20), and UMBC (Wednesday, Dec. 29). Non-conference play concludes back home in the Dedmon Center on Saturday, Jan. 1 against Averett.

Date	Opponent	Location
Nov. 1	Eastern Mennonite	Radford, Va.
Nov. 9	Emory & Henry	Radford, Va.
Nov. 12	at Virginia	Charlottesville, Va.
Nov. 15	at VirginiaTech	Blacksburg, Va.
Nov. 19	at Furman	Greenville, S.C.
Nov. 20	Navy	Greenville, S.C.
Nov. 24	William & Mary	Radford, Va.
Nov. 28	Eastern Kentucky	Radford, Va.
Nov. 30	Kentucky Christian	Radford, Va.
Dec. 4	at West Virginia	Morgantown, W.Va.
Dec. 11	at James Madison	Harrisonburg, Va.
Dec. 13	at George Washington	Washington, D.C.
Dec. 18	at Davidson	Davidson, N.C.
Dec. 20	at Akron	Akron, Ohio
Dec. 29	at UMBC	Baltimore, Md.
Jan. 1	Averett	Radford, Va.

2021-22 NON-CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### RADFORD MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOV. 1	vs. EMU	NOV. 30	vs. WVA
NOV. 9	vs. E&H	DEC. 4	at W
NOV. 12	at V	DEC. 11	at JMU
NOV. 15	at VT	DEC. 13	at GW
NOV. 19	at F	DEC. 18	at
NOV. 20	vs. N	DEC. 20	at Z
NOV. 24	vs. W&M	DEC. 29	at
NOV. 28	vs.	JAN. 1	vs.

HOME | AWAY | NEUTRAL

PHOTO COURTESY OF RU ATHLETICS

# Marketplace

**For Rent - Apartments**

**2, 3, 4 BR**  
**Townhouse Style**  
accepting applications. Short waiting list, HUD subsidized, W/D hookups, private patio, water & trash incl. Fairfax Village Apts. 332 Fairfax St., Radford Cambridge Square 1805 Whipple Dr. NW Blacksburg 540-731-1786 EHO TDD #800-828-1120

**For Sale - Misc**

**FOR SALE**  
Unprinted end rolls of newsprint. Great for packing & shipping, moving & storage and for art projects. Various sizes available. Stop by the Salem Times-Register 1633 West Main St. or call (540)389-9355 for details.

**Help Wanted - General**

**Part Time Newspaper Production Help**  
The Salem TimesRegister has openings for afternoon/evening shift work inserting, labeling and bundling newspapers for delivery. No experience necessary. Hours may vary. Will train. \$7.50 per hour. Contact Lynn Hurst, General Manager, Salem-Times Register (540)389-9355 or email lhurst@ourvalley.org

**Legals - Montgomery County**

**ABC NOTICE**  
Lost in Taste LLC, trading as Lost in Taste, 2675 Roanoke St, Christiansburg, Montgomery County, Virginia 24073-2607.  
  
The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine and Beer On Premises, Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

**ADVERTISE!**

To place your ad, call 389-9355

**BAG**

**A GREAT DEAL IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!**

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# Pitt, FSU top ACC men's, women's preseason soccer polls

Pitt has been selected by a vote of the ACC head coaches as the preseason favorite to win the 2021 men's soccer championship. The coaches also picked FSU as the favorite to win the women's soccer championship.

The Panthers were voted the ACC favorite by seven of the 12 head coaches while Clemson earned three votes and North Carolina two.

After making its first trip to the NCAA College Cup last season, Pitt returns 10 starters and 20 players from its 2020-21 squad that finished 16-4 overall and 9-1 in ACC matches. Among the returnees is junior midfielder Valentin Noel, who was named the 2020 ACC Offensive Player of the Year and was one of three finalists for the MAC Hermann Trophy, which is presented to the top player in college soccer.

Pitt also was voted the preseason favorite in the Coastal Division, finishing with nine first-place votes and 64 total points. After joining Pitt in the NCAA College Cup last season, North Carolina finished second in the preseason Coastal Division voting after claiming three first-place votes and 58 points. Virginia Tech (40), Virginia (32), Duke (28) and Notre Dame (24) were picked third through sixth, respectively.

Reigning ACC champion Clemson was named the preseason favorite in the Atlantic Division after garnering nine first-place votes and totaling 64 points. After earning two first-place votes and 57 points, Wake Forest was second while Louisville was third with 38 points, and Boston College was fourth after securing one first-place vote and 36 points. NC State (27) and Syracuse (24) rounded out the division.

ACC men's soccer returns to its traditional league format this season, with each team

playing eight conference matches. Each squad will play its five division foes as well as three sides from the other division.

The Florida State Seminoles advanced to their 11th NCAA Women's Soccer College Cup last season and played for the national championship. They received 11 first-place votes and tallied 167 points.

North Carolina collected two first-place votes and 155 points to finish second in the voting, while Virginia earned 148 points and one first-place vote to occupy third. Duke and Clemson rounded out the top five with 129 and 124 points, respectively.

Notre Dame was picked sixth with 104 points while Virginia Tech was tabbed seventh (85). Louisville, Wake Forest, and NC State were separated by just six points with the Cardinals claiming eighth (77), followed by the Demon Deacons (72) and the Wolfpack (71). Pitt (57), Boston College (45), Syracuse (24), and Miami (16) rounded out the poll.

Ten members of the preseason All-ACC Team were named to one of the league's 2020 all-conference teams, headlined by Florida State's Jaelin Howell, the 2020-21 MAC Hermann Trophy Award winner (given to the top player in college soccer) and ACC's Midfielder of the Year, and Virginia's Lia Godfrey, the conference's Freshman of the Year.

The fall season began Thursday, Aug. 19, with 13 of the league's teams in action. Conference play kicks off Thursday, Sept. 16, with Clemson hosting Pitt.

The top six teams in the final league standings will advance to the ACC Championship, which begins with quarterfinal matches at campus sites on Sunday, Oct. 31. The semifinals and final are scheduled for Nov. 5 and Nov. 7 at WakeMed Soccer Park in Cary, North Carolina.



VT's wide receiver trio of Tayvion Robinson, Tre Turner, and Kaleb Smith accounted for 96.6% of the Hokies' receiving yards in 2020.

## Opportunities exist for wide-receiver newcomers to step up

### PLAYERS TO WATCH

Tayvion Robinson and Tré Turner posted almost identical numbers a year ago. Robinson led the squad with 38 catches for 592 yards with three touchdowns while Turner was right behind him with 34 receptions for 529 yards and three scores.

Robinson averaged 15.6 yards per catch in 2020 and boasted an even higher 17.7-yard average when Braxton Burmeister was at quarterback. Robinson had a big day in the season finale vs. Virginia, coming up with five catches for 98 yards, including a 60-yard touchdown.

Turner owns a pair of 100-yard receiving games in his career and also has four rushing scores. His 94 career receptions leave him a scant six catches shy of joining Tech's 100-catch club.

### OTHERS IN THE MIX

Kaleb Smith could be poised to be a big contributor for Tech in 2021 after an injury-shortened 2020 cam-

paign. He has managed 17 catches for 209 yards with two touchdowns in his first two campaigns with the Hokies.

Also, keep an eye on redshirt freshman Jaden Payoute who missed all of 2020 after fracturing his ankle in the preseason. The Chesterfield, Va., native is a former four-star recruit and was the state 100-meter champion at L.C. Bird High School.

### POSITION NOTES

The trio of Robinson, Smith, and Turner made up 96.6% of the receiving yards from the wide receivers during the 2020 season.

Robinson hauled in the longest reception in 2020, his 60-yard touchdown catch from Burmeister vs. Virginia.

Turner was the only wide receiver to have a multi-touchdown game in 2020, with his two scoring grabs at Pitt.

While Robinson and Turner tied for receiving touchdowns in 2020

with three, Turner led all wideouts in total touchdowns adding in his two rushing scores.

### POSITION OUTLOOK

The trio of Turner, Robinson, and Smith gives the Hokies a solid complement of pass catchers with starting experience. The wild card for the Hokies could be Payoute. After missing the 2020 campaign, the athletic and speedy Payoute could be a difference maker.

There should be plenty of opportunities for freshmen Da'Wain Lofton and Dallan Wright to get lots of work during preseason camp after getting fully indoctrinated into the offense this spring. Villanova transfer Changa Hodge was coming on strong at the end of the 2020 campaign but unfortunately will miss the 2021 season after suffering a knee injury in the spring. Hodge's absence opens the door for a number of other players to step up this fall.

## ACC, Pac-12, Big-10 announce alliance

The Atlantic Coast Conference, the Big Ten, and the Pac-12 have announced a historic alliance that will bring 41 institutions together on a collaborative approach surrounding the future evolution of college athletics and scheduling.

The alliance – which was unanimously supported by the presidents, chancellors and athletics directors at all 41 institutions – will be guided in all cases by a commitment to, and prioritization of, supporting student-athlete well-being, academic and athletic opportunities, experiences and diverse educational programming.

The alliance includes a scheduling component for football and women's and men's basketball designed to create new interconference games, enhance opportunities for student-athletes, and optimize the college athletics experience for both student-athletes and fans across the country. The scheduling alliance will begin as soon as practical while honoring current contractual obligations. A working group composed of athletic directors representing

the three conferences will oversee the scheduling component of the alliance, including determining the criteria upon which scheduling decisions will be made.

The football scheduling alliance will feature additional attractive matchups across the three conferences while continuing to honor historic rivalries and the best traditions of college football.

In women's and men's basketball, the three conferences will add early and mid-season games as well as annual events that feature premier matchups among the three leagues.

The future scheduling component will extend coast-to-coast, across all time zones. The competition will bring a new level of excitement to the fans of the 41 schools while also allowing teams and conferences to have flexibility to continue to play opponents from other conferences, independents, and various teams from other subdivisions.

"The ACC, Big Ten, and Pac-12 recognize the unique environment and challenges currently facing intercollegiate athletics, and we are proud

and confident in this timely and necessary alliance that brings together like-minded institutions and conferences focused on the overall educational missions of our preeminent institutions," said ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips.

"Student-athletes have been and will remain the focal point of the Big Ten, ACC, and Pac-12 Conferences," said Big Ten Commissioner Kevin Warren. "Today, through this alliance, we furthered our commitment to our student-athletes by prioritizing our academics and athletics value systems. We are creating opportunities for student-athletes to have elite competition and are taking the necessary steps to shape and stabilize the future of college athletics."

"The historic alliance announced today between the Pac-12, ACC, and Big Ten is grounded in a commitment to our student-athletes," said Pac-12 Commissioner George Kliavkoff. "We believe that collaborating together we are stronger in our commitment to addressing the broad issues and opportunities facing college athletics."

## Tech alumnus leading Southern Cal esports to greater gender equity

Joe Jacko started out playing Pokémon in his childhood and transitioned to playing Call of Duty with friends before reaching a competitive level as one of the top players in the world in League of Legends, a multiplayer online battle arena game.

Today, the Virginia Tech alumnus is the League of Legends head coach at the University of Southern California.

Along the way, Jacko, a 2019 communication studies alumnus, noticed there was something absent from the esports industry. He used his education in Virginia Tech's School of Communication to explore this missing piece.

"There was a lack of diversity and equity in the space, and there wasn't a whole lot being done to combat this absence," Jacko said. "I ended up taking an academic dive into the issues surrounding the space and tried to tailor my education as I was going through Virginia Tech to pursue a better and more inclusive environment within gaming. During my communication studies program I heavily focused on gender and communication in esports. I felt like there was a way into this

field if I could help understand and solve those issues at the time."

Jacko credits the communication and gender class he took with Beth Waggenpack, a now retired professor who was recently conferred the title of associate professor emerita, as a key stepping stone into his research on these issues. He examined the work of Deborah Tannen, a professor of linguistics at Georgetown University, specifically applying her research on gender communication and language into the esports realm.

"Joe's online gaming expertise focused him on the types of and impact of gendered communication in online environments, particularly gendered role expectations," Waggenpack said. "His final paper focused on a literature review of research on the competitive nature of online gaming tournaments and its influence on gendered communication patterns among participants. Joe was able to use that research as he pursued job interviews. When a student can see a direct application between theory and research and desired career goals, it's the best of all worlds."

Jacko enjoyed his time as a competitive player at

Virginia Tech where he and others won more than \$20,000 in esports scholarships. Through targeted recruiting efforts, Jacko also helped the university's League of Legends team improve from being composed of players in the top 10 percent of the game when he arrived to players in the top 0.1 percent of the game when he graduated.

Still, he knew the best way to implement the changes he sought would be as an esports coach instead of as a player. Upon graduation from Virginia Tech, Jacko began searching for these jobs. His research on gender and equity and overall skill as a player made him an attractive candidate that led him to Southern California.

"Virginia Tech helped me during all of those interview processes," Jacko said. "I was able to combine everything I'd learned about résumé building, interviewing, elevator pitches, and public speaking into my own personal brand."

Since Jacko has been the head coach at USC, much of his instruction has been largely focused around in-game strategy and breakdowns of the games after the fact, but a significant

amount of attention is devoted to communication between the players.

Chatter between the players can often deviate away from the game. This is where Jacko reins them in to make sure the players are instead focusing on communicating their actions so their teammates can best follow suit.

"I try to look especially at how our communication jells together," Jacko said. "How can we get better at communicating? That's a major focus for me and an area in which I think I can excel or help these players."

"Joe's coaching has made me not only a better player, but a better person as well, through his dedication and commitment to our players," said Daimyan Angulo, USC League of Legends team captain.

When Jacko examined Tannen's research, he was captivated by the typical one-upping, competitive language of males compared to the more cooperative language of females. In his coaching, he sees the amalgamation of these two communication styles as a pivotal piece for success in his team.

"If we're able to meld those two styles — cooperative and competitive — then



all of a sudden these students are not just teaching each other how to be better at the game because they want to be better, but they're also helping bring up the players who might be a little further behind," Jacko said.

It's all been working so far. This year, Jacko had his first starting female-identifying player on the varsity team. It marks notable progress for the short time he's been the head coach.

In other words, Jacko is getting the chance to fulfill his passion of creating a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere in esports.

He was helped by the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic helped fuel esports. The long months in quarantine sparked an ex-

ponential growth in gaming and Twitch. With these new players across all different backgrounds, Jacko's greatest hope is that they can innovate, much like he did, to lead esports to an even brighter future.

"Seeing all the new people brought into this space is exciting and warming," Jacko said. "My greatest hope would be to see the students take their interest in games and tie it with academics. Seeing more people involved in this space with greater, overarching ideas for how they can solve problems or invent solutions is the most important thing."

—Cory Van Dyke,  
Virginia Tech



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