



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

Members of the Virginia Tech football team helped children with their reading skills during a "Book Buffet" at Margaret Beeks Elementary School Monday.

Hokies help kids at Beeks Elementary's reading skills day

Coming off their win over Richmond and entering the bye week, Virginia Tech football players stayed busy Monday morning when they volunteered at Margaret Beeks Elementary School to help children with their reading skills.

"Any time I get the opportunity to come and give back to the kids, I always

want to do it," said offensive lineman and team captain Tyrell Smith. "I love giving back to the kids and putting a smile on their faces because, the way I look at it, they're the future. Showing them that they can look up to us and go through different things in college and in life, I think it's a good thing to do."

Smith and his teammates volunteered at Margaret Beeks Elementary School's Book Buffet where students could select a book to read and take it to breakfast. Virginia Tech players assisted the students in choosing a book, sharing which books they liked to

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\$2 million winning Powerball ticket sold in Christiansburg

A \$2 million winning Powerball ticket was sold Monday, Sept. 27, at the Stop In Food Store at 2374 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg.

The ticket, which matched the first five winning numbers, is as yet unclaimed.

Normally, matching the first five numbers wins \$1 million, but whoever bought this ticket spent an extra dollar for Power Play. That extra dollar doubled the prize to \$2 million.

The winning numbers for Monday's Powerball drawing were 21-22-39-44-60, and the Powerball number was 12. The only number this ticket did not match was the Powerball number.

Whoever has the ticket has 180 days from the drawing date to claim the prize. The Virginia Lottery advises that before doing anything else, the winner should immediately sign the back of the ticket to establish ownership. When the person is ready to claim the two-million-dollar prize, he or she should contact the Virginia Lottery.

The store receives a \$10,000 bonus from the Virginia Lottery for selling the winning ticket.

The ticket was the only one nationwide to match the

first five numbers. No ticket matched all six numbers to win the estimated \$545 million jackpot. That means the jackpot for the next Powerball drawing grows to an estimated \$570 million.

Powerball drawings are held at 10:59 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. The odds of matching the first five numbers to win Powerball's second prize are 1 in 11,688,054. The odds of matching all six numbers to win the jackpot are 1 in 292,201,338.

Authorized by Virginia voters in a successful 1987 referendum, the Virginia Lottery generates more than \$2 million per day for Virginia's K-12 public schools. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, lottery customers helped generate more than \$765 million dollars in funding for public education.



Rocket launches into space experiments developed by team of undergraduates, including Virginia Tech

Jama Green
Contributing writer

On the Eastern Shore of Virginia, a sounding rocket was recently launched into space at the NASA Wallops Flight Facility. Among the Terrier-Improved Malemute's cargo were projects developed by undergraduate students from eight community college and university teams, including Virginia Tech, as part of the national RockSat-X program.

VT undergraduate student teams, faculty advisors,

and family were on hand for the countdown and the launch.

The projects aboard the rocket this year were a mix of technology and science experiments, including the development of a 360-degree camera for use on sounding rockets, space debris removal concept, and collection of particles in space for research on the origins of life.

Among these experiments was a solar array deployment system for CubeSats, developed by the RockSat-X team at Virginia Tech.

Three years in the making, the RockSat-X team has been developing a CubeSat form factor, deployable solar array to enhance power generation capabilities on university CubeSat projects.

These small satellites, 10 by 10 by 10 centimeters in size, are typically equipped with solar panels on several faces of the cube, but have power limitations due to the size of the panels and intended short-term length of mission. Using a series

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The payload section containing the eight RockSat-X undergraduate projects, prior to being incorporated into the Terrier-Improved Malemute sounding rocket. Photo courtesy of Abby Schefer, student manager of the national RockSat-X program.

Why are masks still required indoors at Virginia Tech?



PHOTO BY RAY MEESE.

Virginia Tech students Hannah Lyons (left) and Emma Putnam work in a campus biochemistry lab while following the university's indoor face mask guidelines.

The majority of students, faculty, and staff at Virginia Tech are fully vaccinated for COVID-19. So, why are masks still required in indoor spaces at the university?

University leaders will continue to monitor the data and introduce changes when it is safe to do so. But until COVID-19 transmission

rates remain consistently low, Virginia Tech will continue to require individuals to wear masks in public, indoor spaces, regardless of vaccination status.

"We're trending in the right direction, but we want to see those trends continue before we change any mitigation strategies," said Mike

Mulhare, assistant vice president for emergency management at Virginia Tech. "We don't want to take a step backwards."

As the contagious delta variant spreads locally and across the country and some breakthrough infections are possible, wearing a mask, along with other mitigation strategies, is an important step to help reduce the rate of infection.

Virginia Tech is monitoring transmission rates for COVID-19 on the Blacksburg campus, and this week, these rates declined to a moderate level from a substantial level previously, Mulhare said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines a moderate transmission rate as 10 to 49 positive cases per 100,000 people. The transmission rate, based on last week's testing data (the past seven days), declined from approximately 73 to 27 cases per 100,000 people.

For Southwest Virginia, the COVID-19 transmission rate was in the high level, with 424

cases per 100,000 people, for the week ending Sept. 25, according to the Virginia Department of Health.

Masks act as a barrier to germs that spread through the respiratory route, according to Noelle Bissell, health director for the New River Health District. Wearing a mask indoors, along with avoiding crowded and poorly ventilated places, are multi-layered approaches to controlling the spread of COVID-19, she said.

"Let's do the things that work," Bissell said during a meeting with the news media on Monday.

As for total COVID-19 cases in the New River Valley, "universities are not contributing significantly to our case numbers," she said.

Virginia Tech continues to monitor and report positive COVID-19 cases, as well as its vaccinated population, via two online dashboards.

Overall, the university's high coronavirus vaccination rates and the campus community's willingness to adhere to pub-

lic health guidelines are the reasons that Virginia Tech can operate as it has this semester, Mulhare said.

"We're seeing the benefit of what we've done," he said. "We're just not to a point where we can change the course we are currently on. Virginia Tech is constantly reevaluating the data and will adjust mitigation strategies when possible."

The university continues to test unvaccinated students and employees regularly for COVID-19.

Aside from the coronavirus, health officials expect cases of the flu to be higher this year than last year. That's based on the flu season in the southern hemisphere, which tracks similarly to the United States, Bissell said. The health department is offering flu shots and COVID-19 vaccines, and individuals can receive both at the same time.

Virginia Tech is hosting several flu shot clinics for students and employees. The first will be held on Oct. 6 at Rec Sports fieldhouse.

News Brief: Tractor-trailer driver killed in Rt. 8 crash

The driver of a tractor-trailer was pronounced dead at the scene of a Tuesday afternoon crash at the intersection of Ri-

ner Road and Childress Road on Route 8.

First responders arrived on the scene shortly after 3 p.m. and located

a passenger car that had been struck by the tractor-trailer. The impact sent the 18-wheeler off the roadway and into a

house.

The occupant of the passenger car and an occupant of the house were transported to a local

hospital for treatment.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Wednesday identified the driver of the tractor-trail-

er rig as Ronald Stewart Bolt, 55, of Willis.

Route 8 was reopened Tuesday evening at approximately 8:20.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Oct. 2:

Shredding Event and Holiday Food Collection

From 9 a.m. until noon today, American National Bank in Christiansburg will be hosting a shredding event to collect food for the United Way's holiday meal boxes and give people the chance to shred documents. This is a great time to get rid of any unwanted paperwork while supporting local families in need. Participants should bring five items from the United Way's holiday needs list for each box of papers they want shredded with a limit of three boxes of papers. Boxed macaroni and cheese, canned vegetables and fruit, and boxed mashed potatoes are the current items most needed. Those preferring to donate money may do so at <https://e.givesmart.com/events/nWW/>.

Caldwell March

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets will use a portion of the Huckleberry Trail for a 13-mile march between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. today, Saturday, Oct. 2. Cadets will be using the trail between the library and Heritage Park. At the conclusion of the march, Skipper, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets cannon, will be fired twice from Upper Quad between 12:15 and 1:30 p.m. The actual times depend on how long the march takes subject to weather and road conditions.

Tony L. Huddleston Trout Rodeo

This event will test your child's fishing ability. More than 300 fish will be stocked in the local Izaak Walton pond for this rodeo. Each kid will be allowed to catch up to four fish in the allotted two-hour time frame. Goodie bags and T-shirts will be given to the first 100 pre-registered participants. A hot dog lunch will be provided as well. The event will also feature giveaways and potential raffles. Check-in begins at noon; fishing starts at 2 p.m. All information is subject to change based on COVID-19 restrictions. Call 540-382-2349 to pre-register. The event is free for ages 4-15.

Sunday, Oct. 3- Thursday, Oct. 14

Nighttime rock removal operations at Hahn Hall
Nighttime rock removal op-

erations are scheduled to begin Sunday, Oct. 3, and continue through approximately Thursday, Oct. 14, for ongoing construction of the campus chilled water line project.

To avoid noise impacts to academic programs during normal operating hours, the drilling and jackhammering activities will be limited to 9 p.m. through 7 a.m. Sundays through Thursdays. During this time, the building connector between Hahn Hall north and south will remain open, but all exterior doors in the connector will be closed. Alternate sidewalk routing near Derring and Robeson Halls will be available. Alternate ADA parking locations near Derring Hall will be available. Central chilled water and steam distribution systems will not be affected, so all cooling and heating systems will operate normally. Questions or concerns may be directed to Gerard Folio at gfolio@vt.edu or (540) 231-2269.

Chess Club

Will meet every Sunday in October (3, 10, 17, 24, and 31) at the Blacksburg Library at 3 p.m. Kids and teens ages 8 and up are welcome to come in and sharpen their chess skills and enjoy playing with others. Supplies will be provided. All skill levels welcome.

Tuesday, Oct. 5:

Harry Potter Trivia and Treats

Dine on delicious chocolate frogs at the Radford Public Library's Harry Potter Trivia and Treats night at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 6:

Draper Road Streetscape Meeting

The Town of Blacksburg will hold an in-person meeting and open house at the Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Dr. from 6 to 7:30 p.m. On the agenda is a review of previous feedback and the exploration of concepts for the Draper Road Streetscape project. RSVP to save a seat at Reimagine Draper Road | Public Meeting #2 Tickets, Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 6 p.m. | Eventbrite. A summary of the first public workshop is available at www.draperstreetscape.com/draper-road-vision.

Thursday, Oct. 7:

American Legion meeting

American Legion Harvey-Howe-Carper Post 30 will meet at 7 p.m. at the VFW Post Home in Radford. For further information, call 250-2283 or 239-9864.

Author Talk: Writers by the River

At the Christiansburg Library; 6:30 p.m. Donia Eley and Grace Toney Edwards will present their new book, "Writers by the River: Reflections on over forty years of the Highland Summer Conference." The book will be available for purchase at the event, and the authors will be available to sign copies after their talk.

Saturday, Oct. 9:

Radford Highlanders Festival 2021

The festival will feature the famed heavyweight games, sheepherding, live entertainment, food, vendors, and festivities for all ages. The festival is a partnership between Radford University and the City of Radford and will be held on the campus of Radford University. The festival is open to the general public with free admission.

Tuesday, Oct. 12:

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 at 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are invited to this meeting. For further information, call 320-4315 or 239-9864.

Friday, Oct. 15:

Cannon Firing for Homecoming Parade

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets cannon will be fired twice the afternoon of Friday, Oct. 15, as cadets pass in review on the Drill Field as part of Virginia Tech's homecoming. The event begins at 3:30 p.m. Two shots total will be fired at the first note of the National Anthem and the first note of "Tech Triumph."

Wednesday, Oct. 20:

Radford Army Ammunition Plant (RFAAP) Community Meeting

The (RFAAP) Community Meeting will be held Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2021, at 6 p.m. at the Christiansburg Library. The rescheduling of this meeting will allow RFAAP to provide the most current updates on environmental and modernization projects. Broadcast on Facebook Live from the Radford Army Ammunition Plant Facebook page. These meetings are open to the public and are an opportunity to learn about RFAAP Modernization and Environmental Projects. The public can reach out with questions or conduct research on their own through several resources, including:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RadfordArmyAmmunitionPlant/>.

Homepage: <http://www.jmc.army.mil/Radford/Radford-Default.aspx>.

Email: usarmy.radford.peo.eis.list.rfaap-public-affairs@mail.mil.

Friday, Oct. 22:

VT Corp of Cadets Formal Retreat

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets will hold a formal retreat ceremony at 4:15 p.m. on Upper Quad. The Color Guard will lower the flag, and the regimental band, the Highty-Tighties, will play. Skipper, the corps cannon, will fire once.

Through Oct. 19:

Crafts-to-Go

At the Meadowbrook Library. Drop by the Meadowbrook Library for Halloween and autumn take and make craft kits. They are available at the library with curbside pickup. They are free but supplies are limited.

Diaper Drive benefiting Montgomery County Christmas Store

At the Blacksburg Library. The Blacksburg Junior's Club and the Blacksburg Library are hosting a diaper drive benefiting the Montgomery County Christmas Store. All sizes of diapers are needed and welcomed.

Through Oct. 20:

Halloween Costume Drive

At the Meadowbrook Library. The library is looking for gently used costumes in all sizes. Drop off Halloween costumes during library hours through Oct. 20. Come to the

Halloween Costume Mania and select a costume for children or adults while costumes last.

All month of October

Halloween-Sidewalk Obstacle Course

At the Meadowbrook Library in the library's courtyard. Participants are challenged to make it through the library's Halloween-themed obstacle course. Participants must also not forget to count the candy corn throughout the course to win a prize. For all ages and abilities. Those who complete the course can enter for a special prize drawing to be held on Oct. 25.

Passionate Painters

At the Blacksburg Library. Check out the beautiful works by the students and friends of VT Lifelong Learning Institute.

Through October:

Grab-and-Go Meals

All the month of October at the Meadowbrook Public Library, free grab-and-go meals and snacks. Children 18 years and younger can come and get a week's worth of meals and snacks. Each box will contain a five-day supply. This is free to all children and teens during library hours. The meals are sponsored by Feeding Southwest Virginia, an equal opportunity provider.

Radford Farmers Market

The Radford Farmers Market will be held each Saturday through Oct. 30, from 9 a.m. to 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 continues every Thursday through October from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Christiansburg Recreation Center parking lot.

Ongoing:

Passports available at the Radford Public Library

The Radford Public Library is a Passport Acceptance Office. Call (540) 731-3621 to set up an appointment time. Those planning overseas travel should get their passports as early as possible as the current waiting period is 18 weeks.

Rocket

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of scissor joints on a deployable extending arm, Virginia Tech's 1U CubeSat is testing the viability of a design that exposes

additional solar cells, enabling future CubeSat experiments to take on more power-demanding missions.

This particular experiment dates back to the 2018-19 academic year, and the team has experienced numerous hurdles

throughout the way. During that first year, the project was deemed not mature enough at the time of the design review process, leading them to miss out on a coveted spot on the rocket that summer. The team continued to refine their payload and passed the design review the following year, only to see countless delays of the launch caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

"At this point in time, I have put an absurd amount of time into this project," said Eric Williams, a senior majoring in mechanical engineering. "The team continued to forge ahead each time the launch was delayed, and tried to stay on track working off-campus during the pandemic. There are both feelings of elation and relief that it finally made it into space, given all the craziness of the project

from start to finish."

After flying to around 91 miles altitude, the payload with the experiments descended by parachute and landed in the Atlantic Ocean, about 64 miles off the Virginia coast approximately 15 minutes after launch. As a fail-safe, the RockSat-X team deployed two methods for data collection. The team installed a laser range finder on the deck plate to measure how far the solar panels moved from their base position and voltage/current sensors to measure power generation, saving the data to the payload's internal storage. They also sent the voltage and current sensor data through a telemetry system on the rocket that downlinked to the NASA Wallops ground station.

Virginia Tech has participated in the national RockSat-X program since 2008 and has seen nine previous projects launched into space or near space, according to faculty advisor Kevin Shinpaugh, professor in the Kevin T. Crofton Department of Aerospace and Ocean Engineering. Approximately 30 undergraduates from across the College of Engineering have been involved with the RockSat-X deployable solar panel array experiment since the project's inception in 2018.

ONLINE ONLY AUCTION

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The yard features stone fire pit, mature flower gardens with numerous perennials, blueberry and raspberry bushes, fruit trees, outbuildings, and woodshed. There is a large 42x20 "Party Deck" with Pergola, as well as a covered front porch.

Preview Dates - Saturday Sept. 25th @ 10 AM & Saturday Oct. 2nd @ 10 AM

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Brian Holcombe named Moss Arts Center curator

With visual arts experience spanning nearly two decades, curator, artist, and educator Brian Holcombe joins the Moss Arts Center as its curator, leading the center's year-round program of art exhibitions and related educational and engagement activities in its galleries and public spaces.

In 2002 Holcombe founded Saltworks, a groundbreaking contemporary art gallery in Atlanta, Georgia, and served as the gallery's director and curator for 12 years. Saltworks quickly established itself as a preeminent gallery for emerging to mid-career interdisciplinary artists in the Southeast and served as an inclusive platform that introduced global perspectives to the Atlanta community through curatorial collaborations and initiatives.

"We are thrilled to have Brian joining the Moss Arts Center at this time," said Ruth Waalkes, Virginia Tech's associate provost for the arts and executive director of the Moss Arts Center. "With his experience and networks in

the field, we will build on the exceptional record of visual arts programming already established here, and forge new relationships with and among Virginia Tech faculty, students, artists, and our wider community."

The center's visual arts programming combines national and international visiting artists and exhibitions, state and regional artists and community arts programs, and projects involving Virginia Tech faculty and students with diverse voices and perspectives at its core. Its galleries—the Ruth C. Horton Gallery, Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery, and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor—are capable of exhibiting a wide range of traditional and trans-media works and installations.

"I am delighted to join the Moss Arts Center, an institution that embraces high-caliber arts and innovative programming while remaining accessible to the local community and beyond," said Holcombe. "It's especially

thrilling to curate the visual arts galleries and the four-story experimental Cube in an environment that fosters creativity and embraces cutting-edge technologies. I look forward to building upon the artistic excellence that the Moss Arts Center has already achieved and to further the institution's visionary goals in partnership with Ruth Waalkes; the center's leadership, staff, and volunteers; and the Virginia Tech community."

Holcombe served as a board member of the Atlanta-based international art magazine Art Papers from 2014–2020 and was a founding member of the Atlanta Westside Arts District from 2009–2012. He holds a master of fine arts from Florida State University, a master of industrial design from Georgia Tech, and a bachelor of fine arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Holcombe's debut exhibitions at the Moss Arts Center open Jan. 27, 2022, and will feature solo exhibitions by artists Shin-il Kim and Namwon Choi.



Brian Holcombe joins the Moss Arts Center as its curator and will lead the center's year-round programs of exhibitions and educational activities. Photo by Ribhav Murria for Virginia Tech.

An innovative approach to fighting hunger



Kas Church, the assistant director for food access initiatives for VT Engage, and a team of student workers set up The Market of Virginia Tech before student participants make their weekly visit.

To hear Isabelle Largen tell it, the benefits of a visit to The Market of Virginia Tech extend well beyond the food that students leave with.

"The thing I enjoy most about [my job at the market], and what makes me excited to come to work, is just getting to talk to our participants," Largen said. "They're pretty amazing. They don't come and sit and talk only about food — they come and talk about their goals, the classes they are stressed about, or an

upcoming thesis defense. Some people bring their kids with them. It's more the people aspect that makes me excited about doing this."

Now operating out of a new space in the University Mall and offering increased flexibility to participants, the staff and volunteers who make the market possible hope the program can continue to expand its impact on students experiencing food insecurity.

Largen, a student worker at

the market who expects to graduate this December with a degree in water resources, policy, and management, has been contributing to efforts to combat food insecurity since before the market existed. In addition to working on VT Engage's Campus Kitchen program, urban gardens in Roanoke, and conducting research on food systems in Charlotte, she served as a student representative on the university's Food Security Task Force.

The Food Security Task Force was formed in response to research into the problem of hunger on campus, including a Virginia Tech study released in October 2019 that showed 29 percent of undergraduates and 35 percent of graduate students having low or very low food security. In March, the group released a report outlining a number of barriers to improving food security for students, as well as a variety of recommended strategies for overcoming those barriers at Virginia Tech.

The Market of Virginia Tech, which was made possible by a generous \$1.5 million donation from alumni Hema and Mehul Sanghani, is one of several approaches the university is taking to

improve food access for students. It's a campus-wide initiative run by VT Engage: The Center for Leadership and Service Learning and the Dean of Students Office, both units within the division of Student Affairs.

Based on an innovative concept that distinguishes it from traditional models of emergency food assistance, the market's staff and volunteers aim to build lasting relationships with, and provide ongoing nutritional support for, the students that visit each week.

Kas Church, who serves as the assistant director for food access initiatives for VT Engage, oversees the market's operations. "We don't see ourselves as an emergency food pantry," said Church, describing the market's unique approach to improving food access for participating students. "Our goal is to provide students with a solid base of fresh, nutritious ingredients, while also working to build relationships with our participants."

The market first began providing food for students experiencing food insecurity in the fall of 2020. Throughout its first two semesters of operation, up to 75 students visited the market at

one of its several previous locations each week to collect pre-filled bags, each of which contained about 10 meals worth of fresh meat and produce, dairy items, pantry staples, and more. In the 2020-21 academic year, the market provided more than 125 Hokies with over 14,000 meals total.

"[The Market] has allowed me the peace of mind to focus on school work and simply to stay in the moment," reads the anonymous feedback provided by an early student participant in the market, "to be the most effective I can be each day without having constant thoughts or worries distracting me, knowing I will be okay and fed that week and the week after. It has made such a difference in my life."

This semester, thanks to the flexibility afforded by having its own dedicated location in a newly renovated space in the University Mall located near campus, the market is able to offer greater freedom for participants to select the foods that best fit their dietary needs and preferences. They have also added additional pick-up times each week to help accommodate participants' busy schedules.

Hokies Read from page 1

read as a kid with the hope of inspiring the younger generation to continue to read.

"It's not what I expected from the big, bad football players to come up here and be so amazing with the kids," said Beeks Elementary's principal Dr. Beth Poff. "They're really invested in taking time to talk to the kids, I've seen them read books to the kids before. For the kids to actually be able to interact with them and see that they're real people and they love books too is amazing."

The players greeted the students as they arrived at school, handing out high-fives and taking them to select a book. After each student had a book, the Hokies escorted them to breakfast and their classrooms.

"It just brings back so many memories for me from when I was a kid, walking these halls," said offensive lineman Lecitus Smith. "I just wish I had older college players show up to my school. That would have been very inspiring to me as a young

kid, and I know we inspired some young kids here today."

On the team's off-day during its bye week, Tech had over 10 players volunteer to participate at 8:30 a.m. and serve as role models for the elementary students, embodying Virginia Tech's motto of "Ut Prosim" (That I may serve).

"To really show these kids how important it is to stay in school, you can't get anything better than that," said defensive lineman Josh Fuga.

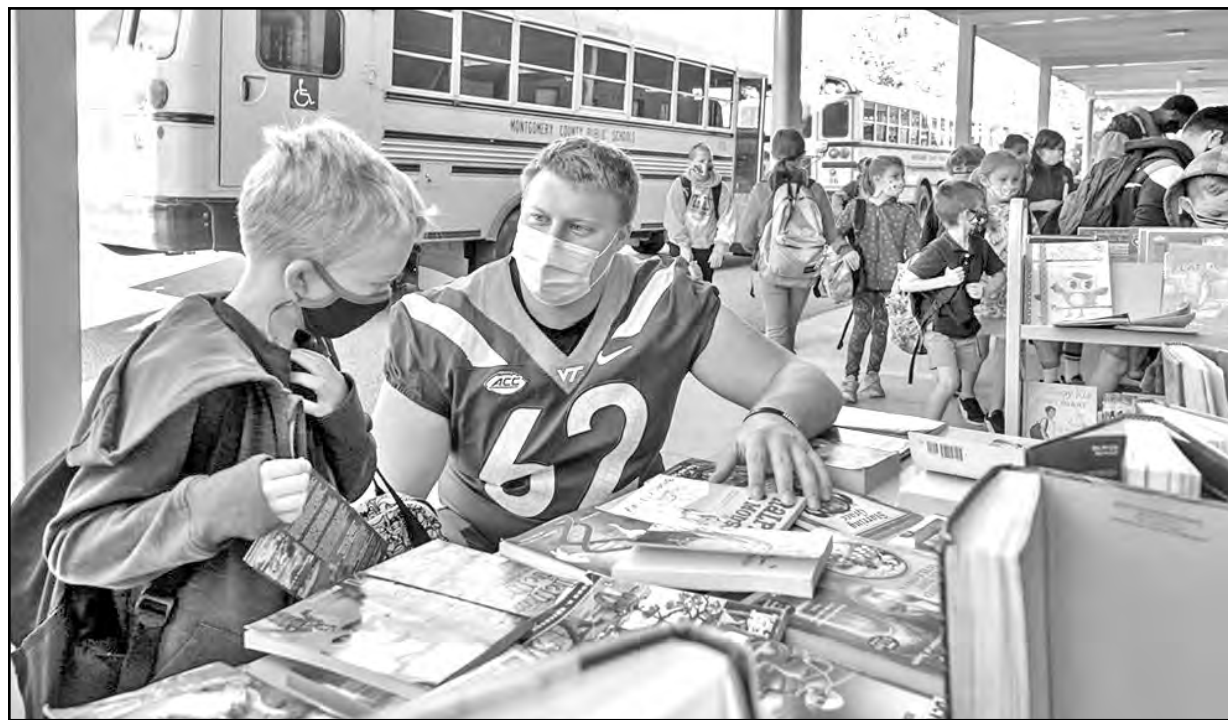


PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

VT offensive Lineman Jonathan Kuhler helps an elementary student pick out a book during a special event held at a Blacksburg elementary school earlier this week.

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NRV Regional Water Authority Notice of Public Hearing to Increase Wholesale Water Rates

Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 15.2-5136(G), the NRV Regional Water Authority will conduct a public hearing to be held on October 27th at 3:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in the Conference Room at the NRV Regional Water Authority Administration Building, 155 Walton Road, Radford, Virginia 24141 to receive citizen comments on the proposed wholesale water rates (per 1,000 gallons) for fiscal years ("FY") 2023 to 2025 as follows: FY 2023 - increase of 2.0% from \$3.96 to \$4.05; FY 2024 - increase of 2.0% from \$4.05 to \$4.13; and FY 2025 - increase of 2.0% from \$4.13 to \$4.21. The Authority may or may not act on the proposed 2023-2025 wholesale water rate changes following the public hearing at the October 27, 2021 meeting. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in this meeting should contact Sharon Huff, Executive Assistant, at (540) 639-2575. Caleb M. Taylor, Executive Director.

OPINION

Home Country

Slim Randles
Contributing writer

Mickey Baker has owned The Strand — our local movie theater — since the new releases starred Virginia Mayo. The Strand, naturally, is an icon here. More than a few of our long-lasting marriages in the area began with a first date there. Most of us

have consumed more than our share of Raisinettes and Jujubes while watching Duke Wayne whip the bad guys.

We know every inch of The Strand. We know where the rips are in the used-to-be blood-red carpet, which of the seats don't fold all the way down, which seats are most secluded in case it's a

smooching date.

It was ol' Dud, back when he was about four feet tall, who discovered how to combine chewing gum and the lock on the back door to provide five-finger discounts for friends wanting to watch Victor Mature run around in a loincloth. The Strand, in other words, is a vital part of our past, if not of our lives today.

We seem to just go rent those tapes and disks now and stay home and watch

the newer films when we feel like it, and that might be because we now appreciate being able to stop the action for an occasional bathroom break now and then.

Attendance dropped dramatically when home entertainment really hit a lick. But Mickey fought back. He tried the free popcorn route for a while. All he charged for was the butter. Attendance didn't really pick up, and the popcorn bill was ... well,

appreciable if not staggering.

Mickey now thinks he has the answer. He bought a disk player thingie that works on a big screen. Then he bought some old movies and lowered the price.

The first night he did this was a triple header, and we all turned out to see our old heroes vanquish Nazis, solve the bank robbery in Cactus Gulch, and find out who really killed the big-city mayor. We

paid too much for popcorn, but who cares?

The Strand lives on, even if there is more gray hair there than at a Percheron horse show. Besides, when was the last time you saw The Duke standing 15-feet tall?

Pick up "Home Country: Drama, dreams and laughter from the American heartland" www.lpdpress.com.

COVID update: New cases declining, no effects from college football games

Dr. Noelle Bissell, Director of the New River Public Health District, told the assembled media Monday at her regular press conference that the number of new COVID cases in the district is declining, following a trend both statewide and across the country, and that Montgomery County isn't seeing any effects from the college football games, also a trend that is holding true across the country.

"There will still be local pockets of higher transmission, and some states have not yet peaked (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, West Virginia)," she said. "We aren't seeing a sharp decline because our vaccination levels are

high enough to have prevented the exponential rise and fall, but are not high enough to have prevented the surge."

The health district director told the press that Montgomery County hasn't seen any effects from the college football games, and said, "Across the country, college football communities are finding this to be true. Outdoor transmission of COVID-19 is rare. We also have to remember that correlation is not causation," Dr. Bissell said. "Just because someone attended an event and was diagnosed with COVID does not necessarily mean they contracted it at the specific event."

Dr. Bissell also told the media, "Cases among school-aged children have peaked and are declining in that population as well. This makes sense, as 70% of transmission is in households."

"As you know," she said, "Our hospitalizations lag behind new cases by a number of weeks. This morning our hospitals reported 70 COVID cases and two persons under investigation awaiting test results. Our hospitals are at capacity with some at 100% or more holding patients in the emergency departments."

"They are operating at normal function, but there is no wiggle room. We need everyone's help to relieve the stress on our hospitals. Don't go to the emergency room for a test or for routine health care. Get vaccinated. Avoid risky behavior that might cause injuries. And if you get COVID and are at risk of hospitalization, please seek the monoclonal

antibody treatment."

Dr. Bissell went on to warn, however, "Even though our new case numbers are starting to decline, we are not out of the woods. We continue to ask everyone in the community to practice mitigation strategies, including wearing masks inside when not at home, washing hands, and avoiding crowded unventilated spaces."

"The best tool we have is vaccination," she said. "Please continue to encourage family and friends to get vaccinated. The vaccines are safe and they work. They are very effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death."

Dr. Bissell also reported what she called "the big news this week": Booster shots are available for some people who completed their second Pfizer shot at least 6 months ago. People 65 years and older, residents of long-term care settings, and people aged 50-64 with underlying medical

conditions should receive a booster shot. People 18-49 with underlying medical conditions and people 18-64 who are at increased risk for exposure because of their occupation may receive a booster shot.

"These booster shots are for Pfizer recipients only. We expect Moderna booster shots to be authorized in the next few weeks after the FDA reviews their data. To my knowledge, Johnson & Johnson has not yet submitted the paperwork for boosters, so that would be later. We do also expect Pfizer authorization for 5-11 year olds in the coming weeks and will work with our schools, pediatricians, and pharmacy partners to make the vaccine available and convenient."

Dr. Bissell said that in the New River Health District, no large vaccination events for booster shots are being planned. We have adequate vaccine supply and many locations to get the vaccine. We have increased

access through the Health Department, and our pharmacy partners continue to vaccinate robustly as do our pediatricians' offices.

"To get a vaccine, people can visit one of our health department clinics, visit a local pharmacy, or find a vaccine through vaccinefinder.org. You may also call 1-877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682). Our health department clinics are from 8:30-3:30 daily. We are at Montgomery County Health Department Monday, Thursday, and Friday. We are at Floyd on Tuesday, Pulaski and Giles on Wednesday, and Radford on Friday. Please call for an appointment. Phone numbers and locations are posted on our NRVroad-towellness.com website."

"Lastly, please plan on getting a flu vaccine this year. People getting COVID boosters can get their flu vaccine at the same time. We do expect flu this year and have already seen some cases."

News Messenger

Established 1869
(540) 389-9355
P.O. Box 1125 • Salem, VA 24153

USPS 016-490 Online: www.ourvalley.org

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The News Messenger is a newspaper of, by and for the people of Montgomery County. We encourage letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached for verification. All letters will be verified before publication. We reserve the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

The News Messenger (USPS 016-490) is published twice a week for \$44 a year in Montgomery County, \$53 elsewhere in Virginia, and \$54 out of state by Virginia Media Inc., P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901. Periodical postage paid at Christiansburg, VA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NEWS MESSENGER 1633 W. Main St., Salem, VA 24153.

State Superintendent: 93% of Virginia's Class of 2021 graduated on time

Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane announced Thursday that more than nine out of 10 students who entered the ninth grade during the 2017-2018 school year earned a diploma and graduated from high school within four years.

Of the 97,155 students in the class of 2021, 93% earned a board of education-approved diploma, compared with 92.3% of the 2020 cohort. The dropout rate for the class of 2021 was 4.3%, compared with 5.1% for the previous

graduating class.

"In addition to congratulating our 2021 graduates for their perseverance under extraordinary and challenging circumstances, I want to thank the state board of education for the emergency guidance it approved last fall that allowed for greater flexibility in the awarding of verified credits toward graduation," Lane said.

"The board's action — and the emergency waivers I issued last year — ensured that students were not prevented from graduating by pandemic-related factors beyond their control."

Of the students who entered high school as first-time ninth graders in 2017 52.8% earned an advanced studies diploma (including international baccalaureate), 38% earned a standard diploma, 2.1% earned

an applied studies or modified standard diploma, 0.7% earned a GED, and 4.3% dropped out.

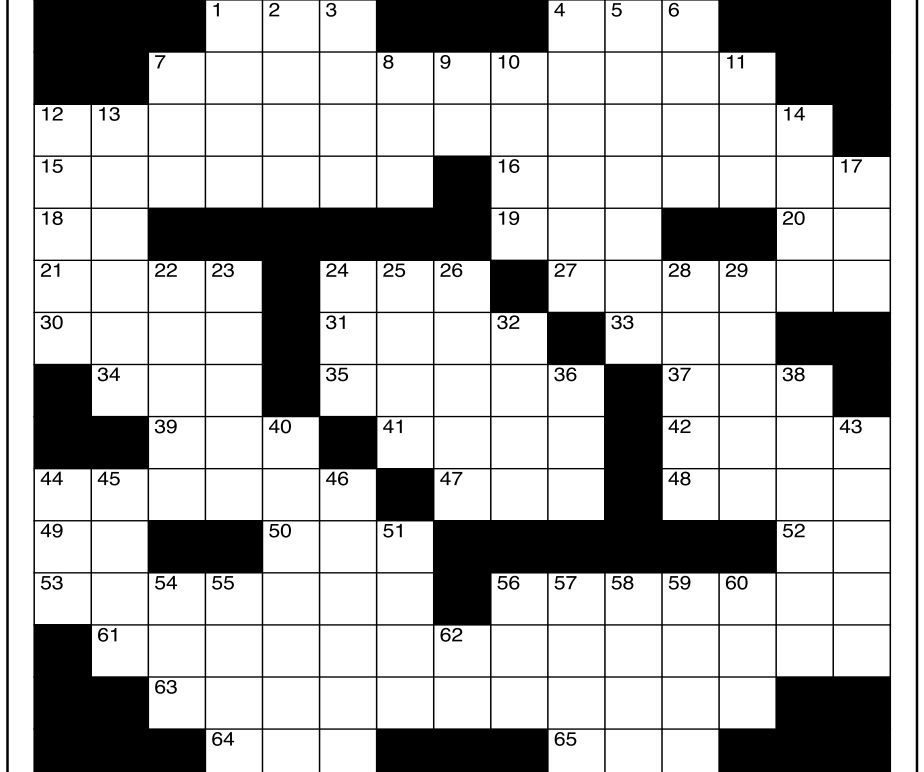
Applied Studies and Modified Standard Diplomas are available only to students with disabilities. Students who earn high school equivalency certificates — such as a GED — or complete high school without earning a diploma are not included as graduates in calculating graduation rates.

The graduation rates and dropout rates for the various demographic groups are as follows: 98.5% of Asian students graduated, 0.9% dropped out; 90.8% of Black students graduated, 4.8% dropped out; 89.2% of economically disadvantaged students graduated, 6% dropped out; 77.2% of English learners gradu-

ated, 21.2% dropped out; 85.1% of Hispanic students graduated, 12.2% dropped out; 90.7% of students with disabilities graduated, 7.3% dropped out; 95.1% of students of multiple races graduated, 2.3% dropped out; 95.3% of white students graduated, 2.3% dropped out.

Since 2011, high schools have had to meet an annual benchmark for graduation and completion to earn state accreditation. Schools receive full credit for students who earn diplomas and partial credit for students who remain enrolled, earn GEDs, or otherwise complete high school. In addition, revisions to the accreditation standards adopted by the state Board of Education in 2017 include benchmarks for reducing dropout rates and chronic absenteeism.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>CLUES ACROSS</p> <p>1. Superhigh frequency</p> <p>4. Sinatra's ex-wife</p> <p>7. Unity</p> <p>12. Not useful</p> <p>15. One who mocks</p> <p>16. Teachers</p> <p>18. "Pollock" actor Harris</p> <p>19. Fifth note of a major scale</p> <p>20. A type of coalition</p> <p>21. Aircraft transmitters</p> <p>24. Where golfers begin</p> <p>27. We all have them</p> <p>30. Monetary unit</p> <p>31. Calendar month</p> <p>33. Pouch-like structure</p> <p>34. Winter sport tool</p> <p>35. Minneapolis suburb</p> <p>37. ___ student, learns healing</p> <p>39. Keyboard key</p> <p>41. Brief proposal</p> <p>42. Gasteyer and Ivanovic are two</p> <p>44. Lunatic</p> <p>47. Cool!</p> <p>48. Japanese musician</p> <p>49. Successor to League of Nations</p> <p>50. Actor Diesel</p> <p>52. The Constitution State</p> <p>53. Go back over</p> <p>56. One long or stressed syllable followed by unstressed syllable</p> <p>61. All of it</p> <p>63. Seriousness</p> <p>64. Adds color</p> <p>65. ___kosh, near Lake Winnebago</p> | <p>CLUES DOWN</p> <p>1. Turfs</p> <p>2. Handle</p> <p>3. Floating ice</p> <p>4. Railways</p> <p>5. Breathe in</p> <p>6. Neutralizes alkalis</p> <p>7. Coenzyme A</p> <p>8. Make a mistake</p> <p>9. Tin</p> <p>10. Parts of a machine</p> <p>11. Midway between northeast and east</p> <p>12. Prizes for victory</p> <p>13. Great amount</p> <p>14. Goodwill (archaic)</p> <p>17. Suspicion of having committed a crime</p> <p>22. Signed one's name</p> <p>23. Quake</p> <p>24. Exercise system ___bo</p> <p>25. Round Dutch cheese</p> <p>26. Ready to go</p> <p>28. Khoikhoi peoples</p> <p>29. Opera scene</p> <p>32. Husband of Sita (Hindu)</p> <p>36. A sign of assent</p> <p>38. Cut a rug</p> <p>40. An army unit mounted on horseback</p> <p>43. Satisfies</p> <p>44. Austrian river</p> <p>45. In a more positive way</p> <p>46. Religious creed</p> <p>51. Brazilian NBA star</p> <p>54. One and only</p> <p>55. Street</p> <p>56. Explosive</p> <p>57. Gambling town</p> <p>58. Public crier calls</p> <p>59. Hard money</p> <p>60. Time units (abbr.)</p> <p>62. Exists</p> |
|---|--|

Senators reintroduce bill to modernize Virginia's aging schools

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Wednesday, U.S. Senator Tim Kaine, a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the Senate Budget Committee, and Senator Mark R. Warner, a member of the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, reintroduced the School Infrastructure Modernization Act, legislation to help modernize schools in Virginia and across the nation.

According to a June report from the Virginia Department of Education, over half of all schools in Virginia—more than 1,000 schools—are at least 50 years old.

This bill would adjust the current federal historic rehabilitation tax credit to make school buildings that continue to operate as schools eligible for the credit. Under current law, the credit applies only to buildings renovated to serve a different function than before. This bill would waive this 'prior use' clause for school renovation projects, allowing school districts with aging infrastructure and tight budgets to partner with private entities to finance renovations that the districts

otherwise would not be able to afford.

Older schools can often be renovated for less money than the cost of new construction. Representative Dwight Evans (D-PA-3) introduced companion legislation on the House side.

While Mayor of Richmond, Kaine led a coalition to utilize the historic tax credit to finance the renovation of a closed public school and reopen it as the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has further underscored the need to ensure our schools are modern and safe learning environments," said the senators. "By modernizing schools, we can help more students learn, support local economies with construction jobs, and maintain the character of these historic institutions."

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program has played a role in rehabilitating historic structures and revitalizing communities for more than 35 years. In the commonwealth alone, the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit has helped restore more than 1,200 structures since 1997.

OBITUARIES

Crigler, Ilene R.

Ilene R. Crigler, 95, of Radford, passed away peacefully on Sept. 25, 2021.

She was born on April 10, 1926, in Radford to the late Walter F. and Lillie Cox Quesenberry Roop. She was a member of Christ Lutheran Church for 69 years where she sang in the choir, served on the church council, and took part in many other church committees and groups.

Ilene also sang in the New River Community Chorus for many years. She was also a member of the Radford PEO, Chapter H.

Originally a homemaker, Ilene eventually transitioned to the workforce to help her husband, Bill, run Crigler's Shoe Store. They both worked tirelessly to provide proper fitting, quality footwear for families for three to four generations of customers until it closed in 1995.

Ilene was a loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother with a great sense of humor. She was predeceased by her husband William F. Crigler, Sr., (Bill) to whom she was married for 62 years before he passed in 2014.



She is survived by three sons: William F. (Bridgette) Crigler, Jr., of Salem, Va., Thomas H. Crigler of Greensboro, N.C., and Walter J. (Margaritta) Crigler of Midland, N.C.; six grandchildren: Will, Hunter (Brittany), Jacob (Kara), Macy (Jordan), Spencer (Jenna), and Brandon; and two great-grandchildren, Hudson and Laney. Also

surviving are her sister, Evelyn R. Lasher; a sister-in-law Millie A. Roop; and numerous nieces and nephews, including a very special niece, Dianne Morris.

The family offers a special thanks to Commonwealth Senior Living and for the many friends and family who came to see her over the years.

Due to COVID, the family has requested the services be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made to Christ Lutheran Church, 201 Harvey St., Radford, VA 24141 or to The Radford Clothing Bank, 2000 West St., Radford, VA 24141.

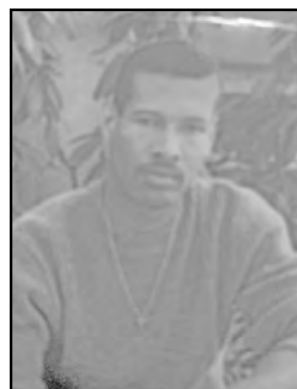
The Crigler family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford. www.mullinsfuneralhome.com.

Dobson, Jr., Robert Luther

Robert Luther Dobson, Jr., 61, passed away Friday, Sept. 24, 2021, at his home in Vinton.

He was preceded in death by his father, Robert Luther Dobson, Sr.; and a son, Brandon Andrews.

Survivors include his mother, Charleen Loretta Dobson; daughters Tasha Andrews-Rigney and husband Enrique Rigney, and Katrina Dobson and husband Joshua Santiago; sons Robert D. Dobson and Rodney Andrews; seven grandchildren; brothers and sisters Ardelia D. Reeves and her husband Nelson, Demetry M. Dobson, Isaac W. Dobson



and his wife Ranglette, and C. Katrice Davis and her husband Berkeley; and many other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends from 10 until 11 a.m. today, Saturday, Oct. 2, 2021, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 11 a.m. with Dr. Rev. Lee E. Suggs, Sr., officiating. Interment will follow in Schaeffer Community Cemetery in Christiansburg.

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

Draughn, C.L. (Buddy)

C.L. (Buddy) Draughn, 77, of Blacksburg, passed away on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2021.

He was born in Pennington Gap, Va., on Oct. 15, 1943, to the late Curtis W. and Ruby Bruner Draughn.

Buddy and his wife, Phyllis, owned and operated CL Draughn Ditching, Inc., for over 49 years. He is survived by his wife of 55-and-a-half years, Phyllis Ayers Draughn; a sister, Mary Alice Thompson; brothers and sister-in-law Jimmy and Denise Draughn and Ricky Draughn; sisters-in-law and brother-in-law, Janice Ayers,



and Gayle and Charles Jackson; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Dane and Anna Ayers and Doyle and Linda Ayers; a special friend, Mike Payne; multiple friends and employees; and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, Oct. 22, 2021, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Jerry Hylton officiating. The family will receive friends from 1 to 2 p.m. prior to the service at McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Matthews, Linda

With profound sadness we announce the passing of our mother, Linda Matthews. 78 years old, Linda died peacefully surrounded by her family on Sept. 29, 2021, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Linda was a fierce matriarch who dedicated her life to her children, grandchildren, and friends. Born June 22, 1943, in the Bronx, N.Y., she came to Radford in 1962 to attend Radford College. After raising her children, Linda finished her education, graduating from Radford with a bachelor of science in psychology.

Her determination to make a better life for her family was unmatched. She went on to have a very successful career as a Senior Vice President of Workforce Development for Goodwill Industries of the Valleys. In 2014, she received the "Expanding Opportunities" Award from The Virginia Community College System, a testament to her unwavering commitment to those she served. Linda retired from Goodwill in 2015.

The only titles Linda ever cared about were "Mom" and "Nana." Her greatest joy in life was spending time with her children: Kim (Bruce) of Jacksonville, Fla., and Kev-



in (Amy) of Roanoke, and her grandchildren, Hannah and Gabby of Jacksonville, Fla., and Emma and Gray of Roanoke.

While she had four biological grandchildren, Linda was "Nana" to so many others. She embraced that role like no other. While her small and mighty family is lost without their fearless leader, the memories of her time on earth will sustain us.

In retirement, Linda reconnected with so many dear friends. She enjoyed playing cards and was happiest with a porch full of people and red wine. Linda was strong-willed and proud. Her indomitable spirit kept her pushing through her health issues with so much dignity. The last few years of her life were rich and happy. To her most special friends (you know who you are), thank you for taking such good care of her.

It was Linda's wish that her family and friends gather in celebration upon her passing. Plans for the celebration will be announced in the near future.

The Matthews/Allerton family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

Robertson, Viki

Viki Robertson passed away Friday, Aug. 27, 2021.

Viki was born on June 4, 1947, in Christiansburg, to Marie and Johnny Harman.

She is survived by her sister, Gina Fletcher and her brother, John (Darlene) Harman; nieces and nephews Scott Fletcher (Katie), Lori Graves (Travis), Kristi Rhodes (Sydney) and Harry Harman; and their children, Jackson Graves and Maddie Fletcher.

Viki was preceded in death by her son, Roby; her parents; her partner, Charlotte Fitzgerald and brother-in-law, Mark Fletcher. She attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and majored in art. She lived in Richmond with her former husband, Whit Robert-



son, and her son, Roby. She and Rob later moved to Washington DC.

After leaving Washington, Viki moved to Bayse, Va., with Charlotte and they enjoyed life in the country. They later moved to Christiansburg. Viki moved to Frederick in 2014. She volunteered for events held at Creekside and was an avid poker player. She started

working at Dublin Roasters in 2016. She loved working at Dublin Roasters and had many fun times there.

A celebration of life will be held at Dublin Roasters on Oct. 16, 2021, from 4 to 7 p.m. Memorial donations can be made to The Frederick Center at www.thefrederickcenter.org. A full obituary and online condolences may be found on www.goinghomecares.com.

Sutphin, Violet Ellen

Violet Ellen Sutphin, 80, of Christiansburg, died Monday, Sept. 20, 2021, at Radford Health and Rehab Center. She was born in Montgomery County on May 16, 1941, to the late James Allen and Viola Pickett Godbey Hall.

She was also preceded in death by her husband, Carl Sutphin, and two sons, Chester Sutphin and David Stuphin.

She is survived by a son, Henry Glenn Sutphin; her daughters and sons-in-law,

Carolyn and Don Harris, and Judy and Robert McNeil; numerous grandchildren and great-children; a sister, Lois Howard; brothers Larry Hall, and Steson Hall; a sister-in-law, Ethel Frazier; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on Friday, Sept. 24, 2021, in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel. Interment followed at Sutphin Spaulding Family Cemetery, Christiansburg.

grandchildren Mackenzie Mathis and John Kokkinakos.

In lieu of any acts of kindness, the family would prefer that donations be made to the NRV Good Samaritan Hospice, 1160 Moose Dr., Christiansburg, Va. 24073. The family sends the deepest heartfelt gratitude to the angels at Good Samaritans who lovingly cared for Patricia.

Services were held privately. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Simpkins, Wilbur Reupard

Wilbur Reupard Simpkins, 84, passed away Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

He was a member of the Childress Church of God and was a dairy farmer. He proudly served his country in the U. S. Marines.

Wilbur was preceded in death by his parents, Reupard Willie and Stella Wilson Simpkins; a son-in-law, Buddy Joe Smith, Sr.; and his brothers, Troy and Willie Simpkins

Survivors include his wife, Emma Dudley Simpkins; daughters and son-in-law Whitney Simpkins Smith, Chrisanna Lynette and Brian Showalter, and Anetta Leigh Simpkins; grandchildren Daniel



Gordon Simpkins (Victoria), Hannah Nicole Showalter, and Charles Joseph Showalter; a brother, Paul Dean Simpkins; and many other relatives and friends.

The family received friends from noon until 2 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 1, 2021, at the Rockford United Methodist Church in Fairlawn. Funeral services began at 2 p.m. with Pastor Ron Smith officiating. Interment followed in the Church cemetery.

The Simpkins family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory in Radford. www.mullinsfuneralhome.com.

Williamson, Patricia Louise

Patricia Louise Williamson, 81, of Christiansburg, passed away Friday, September 24, 2021.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Rudolph Taylor Lorton and Myrtle Louise Nunley Lorton; her husband, Ersel Williamson; and her sisters, Mary Lorton Jones and Lila Mae Lorton.

Survivors include her niece, Lori Jones Tucker, and her husband David; a nephew, Brian T. Jones and his wife Kim; a brother-in-law, Stanley Jones and

his wife, Dana; great-nieces and nephews Jennifer Jones, Michael T. Jones, Taylor Jones, Jordan Jones, Gracie Lorton Tucker, and Riley Tucker; a great-great nephew, George S. Smith; and many other relatives and friends.

Memorial services will be held at a later date.

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

Sweeney, Patricia Hodge

Patricia Hodge Sweeney went to be with her Lord and Savior on Sept. 25, 2021.

She was at home surrounded by her family. She was the daughter of the late William Henry Hodge and Birdie Sartan Hodge, and the last of 13 children.

She is survived by her husband of 69 years, John Calvin Sweeney; daughters Sandra Clontz and Sherry (David) Parsons, all of Christiansburg; granddaughters Angela Alderman (Jay Mathis) and Amy Kokkinakos (Steven); and great-

Send community news and photos
to communitynews@ourvalley.org

Giant vegetables, baby calves draw crowds at State Fair of Virginia

DOSWELL—They may not have broken a State Fair of Virginia record, but the giant pumpkin and watermelon entries were a huge showstopper at the fair this week.

Ricky Atkins of South-

ampton County won first place for his 773-pound giant pumpkin. Barry Shrum of Shenandoah County placed second with a 750-pound pumpkin, and Robin Shrum, also of Shenandoah County, won third with a

701-pound entry.

A first-time grower from Newport News, Cody Lahocki, had a 1,241-pound pumpkin that was disqualified under Great Pumpkin Commonwealth rules due to a crack larger than

3 inches.

In the giant watermelon competition, Luke Williams of Middlesex County took first place with a 197-pound variety; second place went to Hank Houston of Spotsylvania County, who

grew a 160-pound specimen; and Jr. Brent Of Lancaster County placed third with a 148-pound melon.

Williams also won a blue ribbon in the gourd classes for his 121-pound bushel gourd, and Davis Wells of Hanover County took first place for an 81¼-inch long gourd.

But it wasn't just giant vegetables that fairgoers were treated to in the opening days of the event, which runs through Oct. 3 at The Meadow Event Park in Caroline County. A calf was born each of the first three days of the fair. A bull calf named Henry was born in the wee hours of opening day, Sept. 24, followed by another bull calf, Otis, on Sept. 25, and a heifer named Annie early in the morning on Sept. 26.

Fairgoers witnessed Otis's birth, and "they were fascinated," said Larry Cohron, a farmer in Augusta County who

supervises the births and hand-milking demonstrations during the fair's 10-day run. "I'm 80 and have been witnessing calving almost all my life, but it's still a miracle every time."

Fair organizers want to share that miracle with the public, which is why the calving, milking and educational program in the SouthLand Dairy Farmer Center is a fixture in the fair's Harvest Landing.

The owners of Riverside Farm in King William County breed 10 of their dairy cows so they will be due to calve during the state fair. They transport the animals to the fair, and once the calves are born, the cows and calves are taken back to the farm.

It doesn't always work out as planned, however. This year all 10 cows were due Sept. 23, but four of them calved before the fair even started, Cohron said.



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. Follow us on Facebook

St. Philip's Anglican Church, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, 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 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, 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

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, Dean Meadows, Campus Minister.

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. 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 for program listings, www.

Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Blind Allegiance

Read John 18:1 through 20:31

By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover (John18:28).

The old saying, "can't see the forest for the trees," takes on a whole new meaning in this verse. The Jewish priests were extremely concerned about entering the palace. Some scholars believe the Jewish people feared entering the home of a Gentile because it was rumored that Gentiles buried their dead under their homes. As per Jewish custom, a Jewish person would remain unclean for seven days after being near a dead body.

These Jewish leaders were preparing for Passover and had no time for such a wait. In their piety, they refused to enter the home of a Gentile, yet had no problem sentencing an innocent man to die.

These leaders allowed rules and tradition to regulate their lives. They lost sight of the purpose behind many of their traditions. In doing so, they were unable to recognize their Savior.

Prayer Suggestion: God, help me to keep my eyes on You and not get caught up in doing things the way they've always been done at the expense of Your plan.

Quicklook: John 18:28–32

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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 for more information about how the teachings of Eckankar lead you to spiritual freedom.

EPISCOPAL

Grace Episcopal Church, 210 4th Street, Radford, 639-3494. A friendly, mission-oriented spiritual community sharing the Word of God. ALL ARE WELCOME. In person and live-streamed services 10:30AM Sundays. Holy Eucharist twice a month. Morning Prayer twice a month. Fellowship and refreshments follow services. Find us on Facebook: Grace Episcopal Church and www.graceradford.org.

LUTHERAN

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church ELCA, 600 Prices Fork Rd, Blacksburg. Weekly Online Worship at 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, 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. Sunday School at 10 a.m. and morning worship is 11 a.m. Evening service at 6 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

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

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

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

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

Eric Paterson appointed inaugural executive director of the Virginia Tech National Security Institute

Lindsey Haugh and Jama Green
Contributing writer

Eric Paterson, world-renowned expert in computational fluid dynamics and naval hydrodynamics, has been appointed executive director of the Virginia Tech National Security Institute.

“Dr. Eric Paterson has devoted his entire academic career to security-related research and is a world-renowned expert in computational fluid dynamics,” said Dan Sui, vice president for research and innovation at Virginia Tech. “He is a proven academic leader who works tirelessly to advance the university core mission in research, education, and outreach. His broad interdisciplinary outlook and passion to train the next generation of national security leaders have made him the ideal inaugural executive director to lead the Virginia Tech National Security Institute.”

Paterson has served as interim executive director for the Ted and Karyn

Hume Center for National Security and Technology for over two years and has led the Kevin T. Crofton Department of Aerospace and Ocean Engineering as department head for almost 10 years.

During his tenure at the Hume Center, research expenditures increased from \$13 million to \$18 million, while seeing rapid growth in the demand for the Hume Center education programs. Paterson was also engaged with the Office of Research and Innovation on the development of a dedicated space for security-related research in Virginia Tech’s Corporate Research Center, which is now home to the newly launched Virginia Tech National Security Institute.

With Paterson’s promotion as the director for Virginia Tech’s National Security Institute, Julia M. Ross, the Paul and Dorothea Torgersen Dean of Engineering, has ap-

pointed Robert Canfield interim department head of the Kevin T. Crofton Department of Aerospace and Ocean Engineering.

During his tenure, alumnus Kevin T. Crofton gifted the department \$14 million — establishing the first named aerospace and ocean department in the country.

In addition to his leadership role and running an active research program, Paterson takes pride in maintaining a close connection with the student population. As department head, he served as a faculty advisor to 15 graduate students and continued to teach both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

Paterson has over 30 years of combined industry and higher education experience that includes the Harris Corporation, the University of Iowa, Penn State University, and Virginia Tech with many years as a research faculty member.

Paterson’s classified and restricted research portfolio spans the defense and



A proponent for hands-on experiential learning, Eric Paterson (left) and professor of practice H. Pat Artis often spend weekends out at the launch pad at the Kentland Experimental Aerial Systems Laboratory alongside aerospace engineering students.

intelligence communities and focuses on fluid dynamics, heat transfer, computational physics, and high-performance computing with an emphasis on applied research where efforts have direct impact on the design, analysis, and

operation of real-world systems.

Honored with awards and distinctions throughout his career, Paterson is a Fellow of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers and an Associate Fellow of the American In-

stitute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Paterson is a three-time mechanical engineering graduate of the University of Iowa, earning a bachelor’s in 1987, a master’s in 1990, and a doctorate in 1994.

Virginia farmers should benefit from expansion of COVID food assistance program

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced up to \$1 billion is being made available to farmers who previously were ineligible for Coronavirus Food Assistance

Program 2 payments.

Contract livestock and poultry producers and specialty crop growers can apply for payments under new CFAP 2 guidelines. The CFAP 2 sign-up period also has been extended,

and USDA’s Farm Service Agency will continue to accept new and modified applications until Oct. 12.

CFAP-eligible commodities now include broilers, ducks, geese, hogs and pigs, laying

hens, pheasants, pullets, turkeys, and quail. Breeding stock and eggs of all eligible poultry types produced under contract also are covered. Grass seed also was added to the list of eligible specialty crops.

Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, noted the expansion should benefit Virginia farmers. He explained that most Virginia-raised hogs and poultry aren’t owned by local farmers, but rather by the processing companies with which the producers contract.

Due to COVID-19, many contract livestock and poultry producers incurred losses that were caused by fewer animals placed on their farms or by processing delays. Now that they’re eligible to apply for payments, those farmers can recoup some

of their lost income.

Additionally, USDA has amended the payment calculation for specialty crops, allowing producers to substitute 2019 sales figures with 2018 numbers. Previous program guidelines dictated payments for specialty crops were based only on 2019 sales, which were used to estimate what producers could expect to market in 2020.

Giving farmers the option to choose between marketing years when applying for CFAP 2 payments also could help their bottom lines, Banks added.

“No two marketing years are ever the same for any farmer,” he said. “By allowing farmers to select between 2018 and 2019 sales data, USDA has given farmers the opportunity to choose between a year that may be typical versus one that was abnor-

mal.” American Farm Bureau Federation also lauded the changes to CFAP 2, which the organization had advocated for since first raising concerns about farmers being left out by the program in May 2020.

“We appreciate USDA recognizing the incredible losses farmers endured during the height of the pandemic,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “While previous CFAP funding addressed many losses, AFBF recognized that contract growers were left out and worked with lawmakers and the administration to ensure all farmers’ voices were being heard.”

“COVID relief will help farmers across the country recover from the damage caused by the pandemic and ensure they can continue putting food on the table for America’s families.”



Commodities now eligible for the COVID food assistance program include broilers, ducks, geese, hogs and pigs, laying hens, pheasant, pullets, turkeys, and quail. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has added grass seed to the list of eligible specialty crops.

Active Atlantic storm season brings record number of lawn chewing fall armyworms to Virginia



Female fall armyworm moths can lay up to 1,500 eggs in their 31-day lifetime, creating a vast number of larvae that feed on grass and severely damage a lawn. Photo by Natalie Hummel, Louisiana State University AgCenter, Bugwood.org.

In his more than 20 years at Virginia Tech, this is the worst season for fall armyworms that Tom Kuhar, a professor of entomology, has ever seen.

Fall armyworms are the larvae of tropical moths native to warm climates of the western hemisphere. Female fall armyworm moths can lay up to 1,500 eggs in their 31-day lifetime, creating a vast number of larvae that feed on grass. A large population of armyworms can severely damage a lawn, consuming all the grass in their path.

Across the commonwealth, gardeners and community members are encountering more fall armyworms than ever, as the high number of early named

storms in the Atlantic has pushed currents of warm air — and moths — north into Virginia.

“This year, the moths arrived as early as we might see them,” said Kuhar, who began to get reports of fall armyworm outbreaks in Richmond during the last week of August. These worms were likely brought to Virginia on storm fronts in mid-August.

Once here, moths brought by these warm air currents can lay eggs and reproduce quickly, creating many worms in a short period.

“This year we may even see a third generation of fall armyworms in Virginia,” said Mike Goatley, Virginia

Cooperative Extension turfgrass specialist and professor of turfgrass science. “Fall armyworms can keep completing their short 31-day lifecycle and laying eggs until we get the first killing frost.

“If we get another tropical system that pushes the moths north again, who knows how many more we could see,” Goatley said.

Fall armyworms feed on turfgrass, consuming leaves with their chewing mouthparts as they move across the lawn. Their presence is often indicated by increased bird-feeding activity. When present in large numbers, these destructive pests can defoliate lawns, eating all the leaves off of turfgrasses.

In cases where minimal leaf thinning has occurred,

fall armyworm damage on cool-season grasses can be remediated with a standard recommended fall fertility program. Gardeners who encounter high populations of fall armyworms in their landscapes can also consider chemical treatment. To ap-

propriately fertilize your fall lawn by getting a soil test to measure nutrient levels and pH or for specific pesticide recommendations, contact a local Extension Office.

If fall armyworms have severely damaged the grass, it may be necessary to re-

place grass with fall seeding or sodding. For more information about fall lawn care and effectively seeding a lawn, see Extension’s publication on fall lawn care.

-- Written by Devon Johnson

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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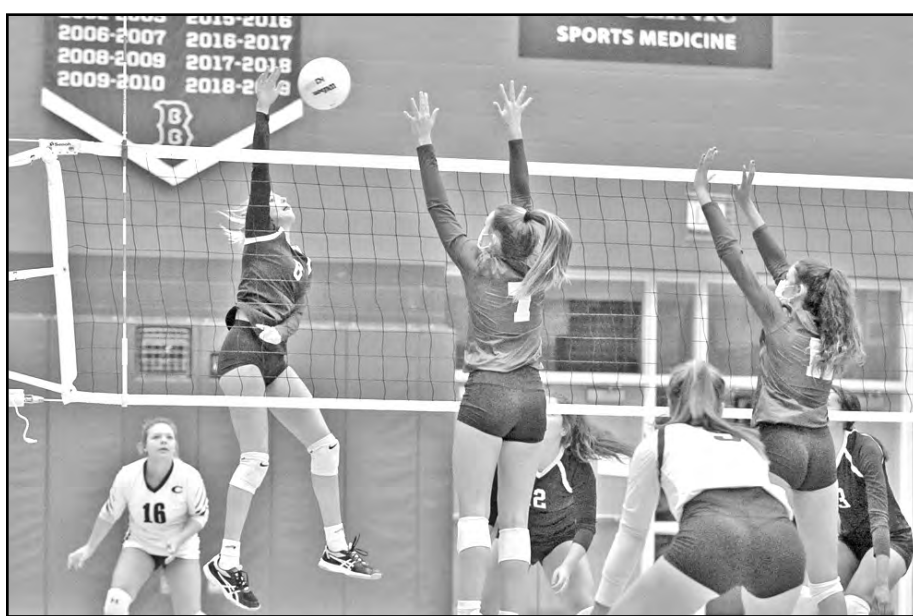
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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Blacksburg downs Christiansburg in volleyball



Christiansburg's Katie Hoover spikes the ball for the Blue Demons against Blacksburg during Tuesday night's volleyball match between the Montgomery County rivals. Blacksburg swept the match 25-18, 25-15, 25-14.



Blacksburg's Rowan English wins a point against Christiansburg's Addison Reasor during a 3-game sweep for the Bruins over the Blue Demons Tuesday. Blacksburg is now 4-1 in district play and 8-6 overall.



Christiansburg's Rachel Bruce makes a pass during Tuesday's match at Blacksburg. With the loss, Christiansburg fell to 7-6 on the season.



Blacksburg's Avery VanGilder (left) and Rowan English block a shot by Christiansburg's Cristen Semones.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Blacksburg wins region golf championship

Marty Gordon

NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Blacksburg High School's golf team took a step toward the state Class 4 finals by winning the Region 4D championship Monday at Hidden Valley Country Club.

The region title came on the heels of the River Ridge district

title last week, won by the Bruins at the Thorn Spring Golf Course in Pulaski with a team score of 285.

Blacksburg's David Zhang took medalist honors in the region competition, but he needed a 23-hole playoff with teammate Samantha Skinner and Salem's Kathryn Ha. The trio all finished with 69s to force

the playoff.

Jake Albert shot a 72 and Sean Ruan fired a 74 for the Bruins at the region competition. With a team score of 311, Salem finished second to qualify for the state tournament, which will be held at Glenloch Country Club in Abingdon. Hidden Valley was third and Patrick Henry fourth.

In 2C golf action, Floyd claimed the top spot with a 339. Patrick County was second at 349. Radford finished a distant third at 361 with Jack Davis leading the Bobcats with an 85. Patrick's Jalen Hagwood took medalist honors with a 79.

Abingdon claimed the 3D tournament championship, also held on Monday. Northside's

Nick Crawford was the region's medalist after a three-way playoff. Abingdon defended its regional team title with an overall score of 302. Hidden Valley was second at 306, and Magna Vista finished third at 309.

Christiansburg finished ninth with a 397 as Josh Cummins shot a 97 and Garrett Matthis a 98.

Hokie wrestler scores bronze medal at Junior World Championships

Virginia Tech wrestler Bryce Andonian recently returned from the Junior World Championships in Russia with a bronze medal, becoming only the second Hokie wrestler to win a medal at the international event.

A rising junior on the Hokies' team, Andonian won his medal in the 70-kilogram weight class competing for the U.S. wrestling team at the championships held Aug. 16-22 in Ufa, Russia.

Andonian secured his spot in the U.S. team when he won the 70-kilogram class at the United World Wrestling Junior Nationals in Coralville, Iowa, in early May. He lost his first match in Russia before making his way through the consolation bracket. He won three consecutive matches to claim the bronze medal.

"I was training for gold, but when I got back, that's when basically everything hit me because it was such a great change with seeing everybody again and knowing that I was able to bring something back," Andonian said. "It just made me grateful to bring [the bronze medal] back to my coaches, who gave time to me, to at least bring something back in the fashion that I did it by coming back after losing my first match and wrestling back. I think that's what made my coaches prouder. I was able to come back and not be empty-handed, which was great because my coaches

definitely sacrificed a lot for me this summer."

Attempting to become Virginia Tech's second Junior World Champion — Mekhi Lewis won a gold medal in 2018 — Andonian suffered a tough defeat in his opening match against Efan Mohammad Elahi of Iran. He led 7-5 with 1:30 remaining, but Elahi scored the final three points to hand Andonian an 8-7 defeat.

Perhaps some of the late-match letdown came about from a disjointed flight schedule from the U.S. to Russia. Various delays forced Andonian and Virginia Tech assistant coach Jared Frayer to leave a day later than planned.

Once they took off, they endured a rather lengthy journey. They flew from Roanoke to Washington, D.C., and then took an eight-hour flight to Frankfurt, Germany. A three-and-a-half-hour flight landed them in Moscow, and from there, a two-hour flight took them to Ufa.

"The first match, I did have a lot of nerves," he said. "I've never really faced too many nerves before a wrestling match. I always feel excited, but this match, I definitely got a little too amped up."

"The next morning [after his loss], I woke up and I didn't overthink it. I just said, 'Let's wrestle, and let's do what I do.' I went out there with less of an intense attitude. I said, 'Let's do what I do, and

that's wrestle.' I was more nonchalant, but it definitely worked out for me."

He pinned his first opponent in less than a minute. In his next match, Andonian beat Kazakhstan's Asset Bauyrzhanov 9-6 to advance to the bronze medal match. His 38 points at the Junior World Championships were the most of any U.S. wrestler. Like Lewis before him, the Kirtland, Ohio, native became a household name on the American wrestling scene.

"I'm not really big on attention," Andonian said. "But going back home, it was pretty cool because I didn't realize how much support I had. I knew I had support with my coaches and my teammates, but Hokie Nation, I didn't understand how amazing they were. I was grateful for the fans, but it was just amazing to see the support from people online and people texting me and people reaching out saying, 'Congratulations.' I was pretty grateful for that."

"I expected people from Russia to be all angry and stuff, but the people there were really kind, and being my first international tournament, it was my first time seeing so many different countries in one place," Andonian said. "I realized how kind people are. Just because there was a language barrier, people were still able to communicate and talk to each other, and I thought that was cool."

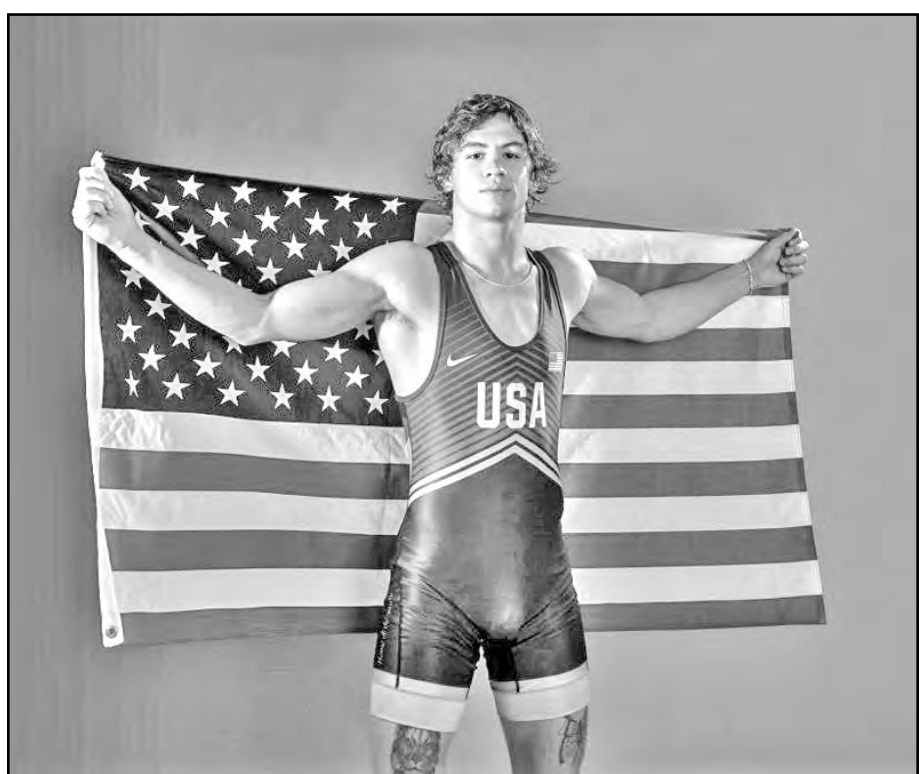


PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE KNACHEL, VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

Bryce Andonian became just the second Virginia Tech wrestler ever to win a medal at the Junior World Championships when he brought home a bronze from the event held in Ufa, Russia.

He also found the food to his liking, such as pizza.

"It was like a fire-cooked pizza in one of those stoves, and I hate to say it, but I think that was the best piece of pizza I've ever had," Andonian said.

"In Russia, if you walked down the street, people would ask why we were there or would start a conversation with short English, and we'd say, 'For wrestling,'" Andonian said. "You could just see their faces glow like, 'Wow, you're a wrestler.' They just thought it was pretty cool. I just thought that was really cool to be appreciated to be in that

sport."

Once he returned home, Andonian — a human development major who some day aspires to work in a career helping others — took a few days off before resuming his training for the upcoming season. The Hokies, who won the ACC's dual meet title last year, enter this campaign with a talented lineup and high expectations, and he wants to do his part to help the team reach those.

He is a two-time ACC runner-up in his weight class — losing both times to a wrestler who went on to win the national title.

Andonian feels that now is the time to be on top.

"It [the bronze medal] gave me a huge confidence boost coming back," Andonian said. "I'm not sleeping on American wrestlers. Of course, I'm going to train my heart out, but it gave me confidence knowing that I went through something that extreme, wrestling a whole different side of the world, and here I am."

Andonian and the Hokies open the wrestling season in early November.

—Jimmy Robertson,
VT Athletics

RU assistant AD Jennifer Norton battles her way to being cancer-free

Jennifer Norton, Radford University's assistant athletics director for sports performance, has been battling cancer since shortly after her arrival in Radford. She has fought so long and so hard that she recently received the news she was cancer free.

As a result, the university presents the Jennifer Norton Courage Award in her honor.

Norton is not one to take curtain calls. Instead, for her, the rewards for come in the milestones reached and the victories earned by the athletes she works with.

"[The athletes] faces when they win, that means everything to me," Norton says. "I don't care if they ever say 'Coach Norton you helped us get here,' I know deep down that I played a big part in helping them get to that point."

Norton insists on demonstrating two qualities to her athletes to help make that connection with them: fearlessness and vulnerability.

"There are two types of people in the world," Norton said. "You're either giving energy or you're

taking energy. There's no in-between. I feel like my role is giving it all the time."

Norton sets the tone of the room when she walks in, and even in a short conversation it is not hard to understand how that energy rubs off on the athletes.

Women's basketball head coach Mike McGuire said of Norton, "It is so easy to be motivated when you are around Coach Norton. It is a privilege to work alongside her, and I know our ladies feel the same way."

Norton says her day-to-day life hasn't changed despite the news that she is cancer-free. She still takes her treatment every day and will still receive treatment for the foreseeable future. But there she is, every day, in the Dedmon Center weight room, putting all of herself into her work. To say she's fearless seems like an understatement.

It's important, too, for Norton not to lose sight of the vulnerability of being human. That vulnerability is the other side of the coin which allows her to connect with and gain

the trust of the athletes she works with.

"I think I show the athletes that I'm a real person and that I don't care how I look out there [during workouts]," said Norton. "I make sure that they understand that I'm not over them, I'm more commanding the room and trying to get them to find the energy in themselves."

"I don't need [coaches and athletes] to pat me on the back," Norton said, "but I want them to know that I'm here to help them be the best version of themselves. My one true wish is for them to see that it's okay to have faults. Nobody is perfect, and I relate a lot of that to the stuff I've been going through the last couple of years."

Before being promoted to her director's role earlier this year, Norton came to Radford from her alma mater, Florida Atlantic University, in August 2018 to be an assistant strength and conditioning coach. She was diagnosed with cancer five months later, and in April 2019, Norton got a surprise: The Jennifer Norton Courage Award.

The university hands

out the award to an individual who has possessed strength in the face of adversity, courage in the face of trial, and the willingness to display positivity following a hardship. Norton didn't know ahead of time that the award would be first given in 2019. She wasn't even going to go to the RUBY Awards that year. The ceremony is an annual event that honors Radford's student-athletes for their achievements in the classroom, in competition, and in the community. Norton's mom was in town to help her go to doctor appointments, and she was so sick that she didn't think she could go. But she was convinced to go.

"Coach Bennett kept asking me, [saying] 'you need to go,'" said Norton. "So it was like a last minute thing and we went. I remember just breaking down crying. It was like I knew and understood that Radford had my back."

That trust continues to motivate Norton, who keeps her courage award on a shelf behind her desk as a reminder in the times she gets down of what this is all about.



Radford University has established the Jennifer Norton Courage Award in recognition of the assistant athletic director's "strength in the face of adversity, courage in the face of trial, and the willingness to display positivity following a hardship."

"If I ever have one ounce of 'I'm not feeling it today,' it's almost like I tell myself [the athletes] are counting on me to be my best," Norton says. "It's not a negative stress like they are counting on me, or that I have to fake it,

it's more of—hopefully I have taught them to allow yourself to make a mistake and look stupid doing it. I teach them to laugh at everything. If you can't laugh at yourself you're going to have a miserable life."

Outdoor report: Fall is the best season for freshwater fishing in Virginia, especially for smallmouth bass

There might not be a finer season to explore our freshwater fisheries across Virginia than in fall. Maples, tulip poplars, oaks, and sycamores turn red, orange, yellow, and brown as air temperatures cool to a comfortable range in the 60s and 70s. The cool crisp air during this time of the year is a welcome change to anglers who have fished throughout the hot humid Virginia summer. The changing of the seasons creates excellent conditions for anglers targeting smallmouth bass across the state.

Smallmouth bass, frequently referred to as smallies or bronzebacks, are a freshwater member of the sunfish family: Centrarchidae. Their green and brown sides are often marked with vertical black bars. Some of these fish have war paint like markings extending horizontally and diagonally behind their eyes and across their gill plates.

Smallmouth bass are native to the Great Lakes system and the Mississippi River Basin including the Tennessee and Big Sandy River Drainages of Southwest Virginia. However, these game fish have been introduced all across the Piedmont of Virginia and are truly a worthy opponent on rod and reel. Because of the smallmouth's widespread range in Virginia, they are readily available to anglers fishing west of the coastal plains above the fall lines of our major river systems. This allows anglers who reside in cities and large metropolitan areas to fish local smallmouth opportunities are plentiful. The James River in Lynchburg and Richmond, Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg, Rivanna River in Charlottesville, Maury River near Lexington, and the New River in Blacksburg are fine examples of local opportunities.

Anglers in Northern Virginia can focus efforts on the Upper Potomac River as well as the Shenandoah mainstem, North Fork, and South Fork. The North Fork of the Holston River and the Clinch River provide excellent smallmouth opportunities in Southwest Virginia. Floating these larger rivers in a canoe or raft can be a great way to cover water, just remember to wear your life jacket. You can also wade-fish these rivers and their tributaries in lower water conditions.

As water temperatures cool from the upper 80s down to the mid-70s and eventually upper 60s, smallmouth will become very active. While the smallmouth's metabolism might be highest in warmer water temperatures, these conditions can sometimes make the fish a bit sluggish, especially on bright sunny days in the heat of the sum-

mer.

Therefore, the cooling trends that occur in early to mid-fall can often put smallmouth on the feed. Also, as water temperatures drop, dissolved oxygen will increase. During the hottest summer months, smallmouth often congregate at the heads of riffles in broken water where dissolved oxygen levels are highest. It's the fall cooling of water temperatures that in turn can spread more smallmouth out evenly throughout various habitats from riffles and pocket water to long runs, pools, and flats. Smallmouth can also disperse when large rain events occur throughout fall and river levels rise from typical low late summer and early fall flows.

As mid-fall progresses into late fall, water temperatures will drop even further. As water temperatures drop into the mid to low 50s, smallmouth will stage in transitional water between their summer habitat and deep overwintering holes. In Virginia, this often happens from late October through the middle of November. Look for smallmouth to be on the edges of drop-offs as well as congregating around river points and bends. During this transitional time smallmouth can also be found in the middle sections and tail-outs of deep riffles holding around structures like log jams and big boulders.

Topwater lures and flies will continue to produce good numbers of smallmouth bass well into the month of October. Anglers should take advantage of this last opportunity to fish on the surface before winter kicks in.

For fly fishing, make sure to keep your flybox stocked with your favorite poppers. I always carry Boogie Bugs, Double Barrel poppers, and Walt's Bass Popper in a variety of sizes and colors in early fall. It's best to experiment with your retrieve to figure out if the fish are looking for fast or slow action. Your retrieve and approach can also depend on the type of water you are fishing and the action of your fly or lure.

As water temperatures continue to drop in late October through November, a subsurface approach is best. It's still possible to catch bass on topwater lures and flies but you will find more fish feeding subsurface with water temperatures in the 50s. Smallmouth will actively ambush smaller forage fish during this time of the year as they attempt to put on weight for the upcoming winter season. This makes mid to late fall one of the best times of the year to target large smallmouth in our rivers and streams across Virginia. A variety of subsurface crankbaits,

soft plastic swimbaits and flukes, spinnerbaits, and jerkbaits will prove productive. The Rebel Crawfish, a crayfish crankbait, should also be in your selection of subsurface lures as smallmouth will prow pools and flats for crayfish in the fall.

When fishing some of these subsurface lures, especially soft plastic swimbaits and flukes, it's important to apply action to the lure on occasion by quickly jerking your rod to the side and then pausing briefly during your retrieve. This will give your lure an erratic motion and imitate a stressed and injured baitfish which is exactly what the smallmouth are looking for.

Late October through November is an excellent time to fish large streamers for big smallmouth bass. When fly fishing in mid to late fall, consider fishing with a sinktip or a 250-grain full sinking line in the deeper riffles and pools on our larger rivers. I have had great success in the fall fishing Bob Clouser's Clouser Minnow, Lefty Kreh's Deceiver, as well as the combination of the two patterns: the Half & Half.

Large articulated streamers that were originally developed for trout fishing in western states likes Montana, Colorado, and Wyoming will also be productive on fall smallmouth. Kelly Galloup's articulated streamer patterns from Montana work well and most of these flies have large profiles as some of them are tied with wool or spun deer hair heads. Charlie Craven's patterns from Colorado are also quite productive on our Virginia smallmouth. The profile of these large articulated streamers attracts fall smallmouth, and these patterns swim really well through the water as they are articulated.

The multi-sectioned Gamechanger tied by Blane Chocklett also works quite well this time of the year. You should also carry large beadhead or conehead Woolly Buggers. I like fishing this classic pattern in sizes 2-4 in black, dark brown, and olive. Chuck Kraft's Clawdad and Harry Murray's Hellgrammite are also productive patterns to fish lower in the water column this time of year.

As the season progresses from October into November, it's important to bring a dry bag with a towel and an extra change of clothes for safety precautions due to cooler water and air temperatures. Make time to get out this fall and take advantage of the prime fishing conditions for smallmouth across the state.

-- Alex McCrickard,
DWR Aquatic
Education Coordinator

Dave Close lands hole in one at Auburn Hills no. 11



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUBURN HILLS

Dave Close, pictured above, aced hole #11 at Auburn Hills Golf Club this past week.

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