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Sit down to a Virginia-grown Thanksgiving feast

RICHMOND—Fit the whole state on your plate this Thanksgiving with a holiday spread made from Virginia-grown agricultural products. Taste Virginia flavors in every forkful: turkey raised in the Shenandoah Valley, sweet potatoes grown in the sandy soils of the southern Piedmont, apples cultivated in Blue Ridge orchards, aquaculture-raised oysters for dressing, and pie sourced from southwest Virginia's pumpkin patches. Toast to the state's agricultural abundance and its hardworking growers with locally brewed craft beverages, fresh apple cider, and virtually unlimited varieties of Virginia wines.

"Choosing Virginia foods and beverages this holiday is a boost to the state's economy and a fantastic way to thank Virginia farmers for their hard work," said Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring.

A pre-dinner charcuterie can be styled with a variety of Virginia-made processed products including sauces, peanuts, meats, cheeses, jams, baked goods, snacks, and more. Consumers can look for the Virginia's Finest label to ensure they are getting the best of local products.

"The Virginia Grown program helps consumers easily recognize farm products that are grown in the commonwealth," Ring said. "The blue and red Virginia's Finest checkmark logo

identifies top-quality Virginia specialty food and beverage products.

"When you buy local, your dollars stay in the state and the community, which helps to keep Virginia's agricultural industry healthy."

To locate growers and retailers of favorite Thanksgiving items, visit viriniagrown.com. Consumers also can find delicious local products at farmers markets, farm stands, and supermarkets. This time of year, Virginia-grown produce could include late-season vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, hydroponic lettuce, winter squash, white potatoes, and other

See **Thanksgiving**, page 2



NRCC students support community art mural project

Art students at New River Community College have recently been involved in a special community outdoor mural painting project. Under the guidance of NRCC art professor Tammy Parks, students spent eight days working on the bright, imaginative forest mural that covers a large portion of an outdoor brick wall in downtown Pulaski.

Parks incorporated the mural project into her students' curriculum for the fall semester.

Through their work, students have learned the process of mural painting from preparation to design to installation. Parks's two-dimensional design, three-dimensional design, and painting classes are all working on the project.

"It allows us to really concentrate on contrast and composition," said Parks.

Through the art project, students have had the opportunity



Under the direction of professor Tammy Parks, art students from New River Community College recently spent eight days creating a mural that covers part of a brick wall in downtown Pulaski.

to not only visit the downtown Pulaski area but also to get to know and work with some community volunteers.

"Students thrive when they are placed out in the community," said Parks.

Community members will also have the chance to get involved in painting.

The two edges of the mural will be part of a community paint-by-number project where anyone can come help, regardless of their artistic skill level.

The mural can be viewed off Main Street in Pulaski at the Count's Crossing pocket

See **Mural**, page 2

NASCAR driver Jesse Iwuji to speak at Virginia Tech on Nov. 18



Jesse Iwuji is a naval officer turned NASCAR driver, a child of immigrants who went on to play football at the U.S. Naval Academy.

NASCAR driver Jesse Iwuji will bring a positive message about access, resilience, and perseverance when he speaks Thursday, Nov. 18, as part of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets' Cutchins Leadership Lecture Series.

Iwuji's talk to the Corps of Cadets begins at 3:30 p.m. in Burruss Auditorium and is open to the public. Seating is available behind the cadets, who have assigned seats in the front half of the auditorium.

"We selected Jesse Iwuji because of his exciting story," said Capt. Jamie McGrath, director of the Rice Center for Leader Development, the academic arm of the Corps of Cadets. "He's a champion for underrepresented groups in NASCAR."

One of two Black drivers regularly competing in NASCAR's national series, Iwuji earned a full scholarship to the U.S. Naval Academy where he played football and ran track and field.

He commissioned as a surface warfare officer in the U.S. Navy and deployed twice to the Arabian Gulf. He now serves in the Navy Reserves and champions companies and charities that give back to the men and women in uniform.

This summer, Iwuji announced a partnership with NFL Hall of Famer Emmitt Smith to form a new full-time Xfinity team in 2022 known as Jesse Iwuji Motorsports. He has said his goal is to bring more diversity to NASCAR and being an owner is the most direct way to do that.

Radford University announces new Dean of the Libraries

RADFORD - Radford University has chosen Paul Orkiszewski as the Dean of the Libraries, effective in January.

Reporting to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, the dean serves in the critical role of supporting student and faculty research, scholarship, and the open exploration of ideas. The university hosts two libraries, the McConnell Library on the main campus in Radford and a Roanoke-based Radford University Carilion Library.

"Mr. Orkiszewski brings a wealth of experience to Radford along with his scholarly interests in acquisitions and collections, technology services, digital initiatives, and intellectual property issues in the digital environment," said J. Orion Rogers, RU's Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

"I am thrilled and deeply honored to have been named Dean of Radford University Libraries and to become part of the Highlander community," said Orkiszewski, who will join Radford effective Jan. 10, 2022. "I very much look forward to building on the great work that library staff has done at McConnell and at Radford University Carilion as we develop and build vital, engaged, and inclusive library spaces and services



Paul Orkiszewski

that will be an active and central part of the intellectual, scholarly, and creative life of the students, faculty, and staff at Radford."

With more than 25 years of experience, Mr. Orkiszewski is currently serving as the Interim Dean of the Libraries at Appalachian State University and has served in that role since 2019. He leads 39 faculty and 55 staff members in fulfilling the teaching and learning mission of the university libraries with a budget of more than \$10 million. He earned a bachelor of music and a master of music degree from Rice University and a master of library and information science degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

McConnell Library

plays a critical role in providing transformative educational experiences and ensuring student success," said Radford University Interim President Carolyn "Lynn" Ringer Lepre. "Mr. Orkiszewski brings extensive experience and innovative thought leadership as the next dean of the libraries at Radford University. I am confident that his ability to collaboratively engage campus partners and the community, cultivate donor relationships, integrate technology, and create inclusive learning environments will significantly contribute to our mission and have a positive impact on our university. I look forward to welcoming him to campus as a Highlander."

New study: Where COVID is concerned, men are more likely to get sicker and die but women demonstrate more extreme fear

Steven Mackay
Contributing writer

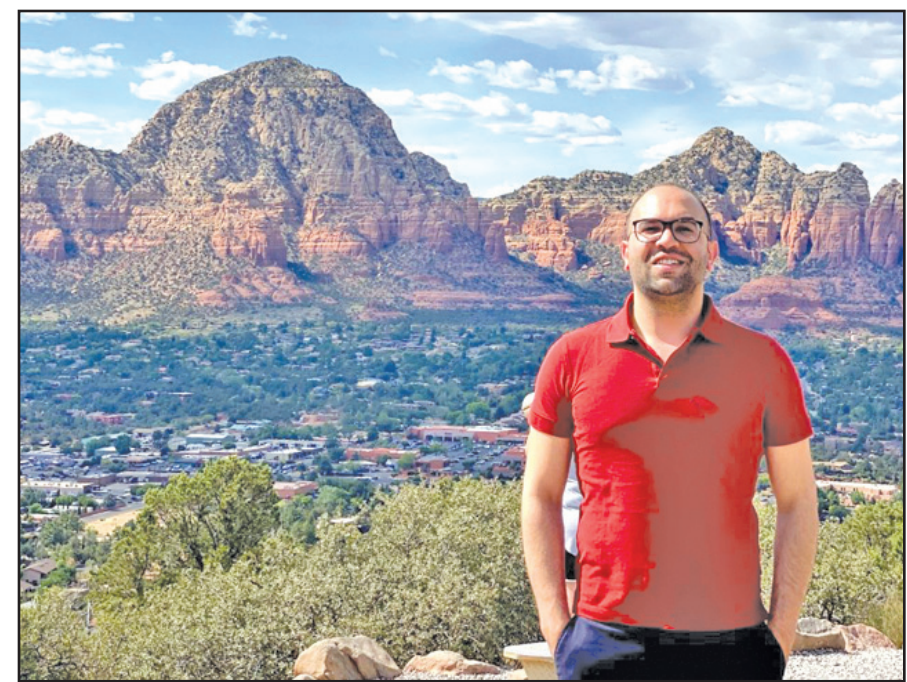
A study by a group of Virginia Tech economic researchers published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* revealed that women were more likely than men to report extreme levels of fear of COVID-19.

In fact, when survey responders were asked to rate their fear of the pandemic on a sliding scale, nearly 20 percent of women chose the highest possible option compared with 9.3 percent of men. However, previous studies have shown that men are more likely to experience severe illness or die of COVID-19.

"That's the big surprise in the paper. It's a mismatch," said Sheryl Ball, a professor in the Department of Economics, part of the Virginia Tech College of Science. "You would think that if the health risks are bigger for one group than another group, you expect the group that is facing the greater risks to be working harder to not get COVID, and we just don't see that."

In March 2020, just days into the COVID-19 pandemic, the researchers started brainstorming ideas for a study that would gauge how people were emotionally responding to the pan-

See **COVID**, page 4



Lead author Abdelaziz Alsharawy's research revealed that women were more likely than men to report extreme levels of fear of COVID-19.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, Nov. 17:

Hahn Horticulture Garden In-Person Learn at Lunch

“Ramps” with Pabitra Aryal; noon to 1 p.m. Pabitra Aryal is a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences’ School of Plant and Environmental Sciences who is researching the onion’s cousin by growing ramps from seeds and bulbs to study the germination time of the plant. Come learn more about ramps and her research. This is a free event, no registration needed. VT requires face masks in public spaces, so everyone will need to wear a mask at this event. Parking passes will be provided to attendees.

Computer Basics: Library Databases

At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 10:30 a.m. This course will cover accessing and utilizing library databases from computers, smartphones, and tablets. Databases include the library digital collections, genealogy and research, career resources, and resources for kids.

Sustainable Blacksburg Lunch & Learn: Food Waste

“The Surprising Cost of Food Waste and What We Can Do about It” is the theme of this lunch-and-learn at the Blacksburg Library at noon. We waste about 40% of food produced in the United States every year. Join Kas Church, the Assistant Director of the Food Access Initiatives at Virginia Tech, as she discusses the Campus Kitchen at Virginia Tech (CKVT). Since its founding in 2015, CKVT has diverted over 240,000 pounds of food from campus dining centers to local food access partners. <https://sustainableblacksburgva.org/>.

Loops Group with New River Art and Fiber

At the Blacksburg Library at 2 p.m. Participants can bring their latest project every Wednesday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. to knit and chat.

Art Club

At the Christiansburg Library at 2 p.m. The club will explore the art of Lubaina Himid and recreate one of her famous paintings, “The Carpet.” Registration is required. For ages 6 and up.

Teen Book Club: “The Song of Achilles”

Virtual/Online at 4 p.m. Each month the club reads a

different book and meets on the last Wednesday of every month to chat about it. This month the club is reading “The Song of Achilles” by Madeline Miller. The club is meeting both in person and online. Email mroach@mfrl.org for the link to participate virtually or for more information.

Talking About Books Non-fiction; “Gulp” by Mary Roach

At the Christiansburg Library at 11 a.m. Discussed this month is “Gulp” by Mary Roach meeting both inperson and virtually.

Thursday, Nov. 18:

Talking about Books

To be discussed is “Crying in H Mart” by Michelle Zauner at the Meadowbrook Public Library at 11 a.m. Call (540) 268-1964 for more information or to reserve a copy.

Kids’ Candle Making

At the Christiansburg Library at 4:30 p.m. Kids of all ages are invited to make candles at the library.

Pokemon Snap Event

At the Blacksburg Library at 5 p.m. Participants can take a tour and snap some Pokémon pics. They will journey to the newly discovered Lental Region and snap some photos of Pokémon on 30 courses, including six that were just added. When the tour is finished, participants can choose a picture to print and decorate as a memento of the journey. All ages are welcome. Contact [sstaufer@mfrl.org](mailto:sstauffer@mfrl.org) with questions.

Saturday, Nov. 20:

Creative Writing Group

At the Meadowbrook Public Library at 11 a.m. Participants will receive support, feedback, and writing tips both in person or on Go-to-Meeting. Email mupthegrove@mfrl.org or call 540-268-1964 for more information. Participants do not need a Go-To-Meeting account to join.

Caturday

At the Christiansburg Library at noon. Sign up at the front desk for a 15-minute slot to read to a cat from the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center to practice reading and to socialize shelter cats. All ages are welcome. Email shodges@mfrl.org for more information.

Edible Pumpkin Patch Craft

At the Blacksburg Library at 2 p.m. Create an edible pumpkin patch with the likes of graham crackers and Oreos. All ages are welcome, registration is required, and all supplies are provided.

Teen DND

At the Blacksburg Library at 2 p.m. Teens. Dungeons. Dragons.

Help Project Linus

At the Radford Public Library from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Happiness is a warm blanket. Join in the fun and make a blanket with RPL and Project Linus. Then contribute the finished blanket to Project Linus, which distributes blankets to children in need in Radford, Montgomery, Floyd, Giles, and Pulaski counties. Lamplighters will provide materials, and Project Linus volunteers will provide tools and instruction for participants to begin and complete a blanket to donate to a child in need during this event. Supplies are limited, so participants are invited to bring their own supplies if they’re able (1&1/3 yards Blizzard Fleece in a child-friendly print). Blankets will be completed with loop-through edging rather than knotting. Email elizabeth.sensabaugh@radfordva.gov today to reserve a space. For ages 14+.

Sunday, Nov. 21:

Chess Club

At the Blacksburg Library at 3 p.m. Kids and teens ages 8 years and up are welcome to come sharpen their chess skills. Supplies will be provided. All skill levels are welcome.

Tuesday, Nov. 23:

Secret Agent Camp

At the Blacksburg Library at 4:30 p.m. Children of all ages are invited to attend the library spy camp. Crack codes, lift fingerprints, and learn how to sleuth.

Wellness Book Club: “The Anti-Diet”

At the Christiansburg Library at 6:30 p.m. This is a limited book-club series. Discussed this month will be “The Anti-Diet” by Christy Harrison. Pre-register with the Town of Christiansburg Recreation Department at 540-382-2349.

Wednesday, Nov. 24:

MFRL closed

All branches of the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library will close at noon on Wednesday, Nov. 24, and will remain closed on Thursday, Nov. 25, and Friday, Nov. 26 for Thanksgiving.

Throughout November:

Donate your old sneakers

The RADical Change Commission and GotSneakers have partnered up to promote healthy communities with creative recycling. This sneaker drive fundraiser helps keep sneakers out of landfills and reduces the amount of toxic chemicals released into the air and the soil. All sneakers from the drive are recirculated to people who want quality, reusable footwear at affordable prices or repurposed into new surfaces such as playgrounds and tracks. Donors are asked to wash their old sneakers before dropping them off at either of the following two locations: 1) Unity Christian Church, 400 Tyler Ave. (corner of Tyler and Clement), Radford, Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. The bin is located at the office door facing Moe’s Southwest Grill. 2) The Shelter, 1205 Downey St., Radford. The bin is located on the front porch. Drop-off hours are anytime day or night. Sneakers will be collected through Nov. 30. They can be in any size or condition.

Help the Veterans with Your Donations

All the month of November at the Meadowbrook Public Library, a collection point for items needed at the VA Medical Center in Salem. Donors may bring the following items to the library during November: deodorant, denture adhesive, 3 in 1 body wash/shampoo/conditioner, body lotion, toothpaste, nail clippers, sweatpants, sweat-shirts, t-shirts (size M, L, XL), and new baseball caps.

No brush collections in November

Christiansburg public works crews are not collecting brush this month due to equipment failure. Brush collection will resume in December once repairs are completed.

Wednesday, Dec. 1:

Radford Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony

The Radford Coffee Company (RCC) will offer hot cocoa and cookies from the library parking lot prior to the lighting of the tree. Libby and Olivia, members of the Grove United Methodist Handbell Choir, will perform music and will also lead interactive handbell playing for little ones. Mayor David Horton will provide the countdown for the magical tree lighting, and Santa will be there to flip the switch. This event takes place outside, rain or shine. Please dress accordingly.

Thursday, Dec. 2:

Radford Holiday Parade

Radford’s Holiday Parade, themed “Winter Nights and Magical Lights,” will take place at 7 p.m. The line-up begins at 6 p.m. The parade route will line up on East Main Street between Tyler Avenue and University Drive Bridge and proceed westward along Main Street to the Central Square Shopping Center.

Sunday, Dec. 5:

Luminaries Display

The annual Stroubles Mill Neighborhood Association Luminaries Display in Blacksburg will begin at 5:30 p.m. The rain date is Dec. 6.

Ongoing:

Second annual Radford holiday display contest

The Radford Chamber of Commerce’s second annual holiday display contest is underway as Radford businesses and residents are urged to come up with their best window or home displays. The entry fee is \$25, and the entry deadline is Nov. 30 with decorations required to be up by Dec. 10. Public voting will then take place from Dec. 10 through Dec. 22.

“Paper Alchemy” exhibit

Currently on display in the gallery in the Covington Center at Radford University. This is an exhibition of jewelry and other objects made from Thurmanite®, a material invented by James Thurman, an artist who teaches at the University of North Texas. Thurmanite is a unique composite material made of layers of recycled paper bonded together with an environmentally friendly plant-based resin. “Paper Alchemy” is a dynamic demonstration of the artists’ range of inventive problem-solving and creativity.

Warm Hearth Village employees walk to fight Alzheimer’s

BLACKSBURG -- On Nov. 6, Warm Hearth Village and its employees participated in the New River Valley Walk to End Alzheimer’s for the 21st time.

The Alzheimer’s Association’s Walk to End Alzheimer’s is the world’s largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer’s care, support, and research. Amy Slone, Warm Hearth’s

associate director of development, coordinated the WHV team and said the 12 team members contributed \$1495 of the total \$44,924 raised by the New River Valley Walk.

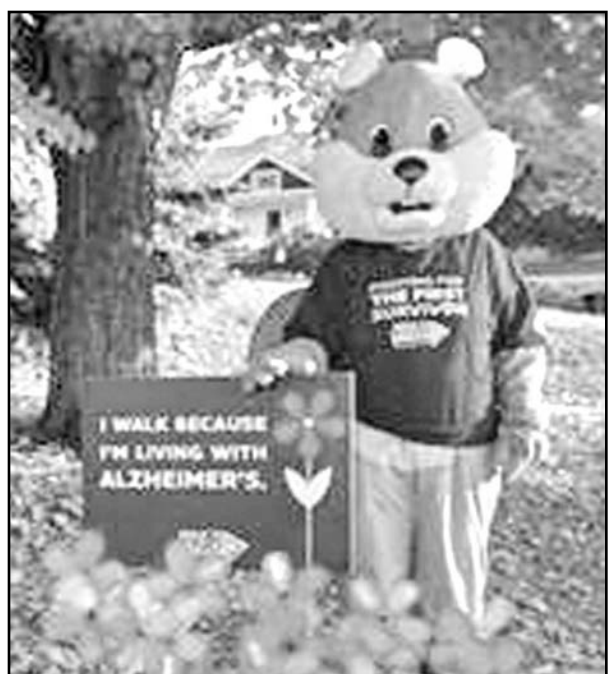
“It is really important to us not only to raise funds but to raise awareness, so we participate in the walk each year,” Slone said. “Fighting Alzheimer’s disease takes a consistent

commitment and that’s what we try to bring to the walk, an unwavering determination to support seniors and their families who struggle with this disease. We see firsthand how the village serves those with Alzheimer’s and dementia, so it feels good to be able to do our part and make a meaningful difference. All the dollars we raise benefit those in our com-

munity who are affected by Alzheimer’s.”

Warm Hearth Village serves many seniors who are impacted by dementia. Part of the facility’s advocacy is helping residents and staff better understand and care for those with the disease. The WHV Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Group meets every other Friday from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. via Zoom and is open to the public. This provides a safe and welcoming environment for people with early Alzheimer’s and a place for them and their family and friends to socialize and support each other.

The village also hosts a Parkinson’s Support Group the first Thursday of every month at 2:30 p.m.



Warm Hearth Village’s mascot, Nutmeg, was present at the facility’s Alzheimer’s Walk 2021.

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Thanksgiving

from page 1

cool-season crops.

Virginia Farm Bureau Federation’s agricultural commodity experts also encourage Virginians to seek out regionally grown Thanksgiving dinner items.

“Those thoughtful purchases help contribute to Virginia’s largest industry, which generates \$70 billion annually and pro-

vides more than 334,000 jobs,” said Elijah Griles, commodity specialist for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation agriculture, development, and innovation. “And when there are fewer miles for your food to travel from farm to plate, Virginians can enjoy their favorite Thanksgiving items at peak freshness and nutritional value.”

Mural

from page 1

park.

Funding for the project was provided through a state grant obtained by the Pulaski on Main organization, for which Parks is a volunteer.

Parks is a graduate of Emory & Henry College who holds master’s degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi and Goddard College, and is currently working on a doctoral degree in art. Parks special-

izes in 2-D and 3-D art and art history and works with paint, clay, and glass primarily in her personal work. She teaches art history, art design, painting, drawing, and design art courses at NRCC.

Jazz rockers Squirrel Nut Zippers tour includes stop at Blacksburg's Lyric Theatre Dec. 1

The Squirrel Nut Zippers, a platinum-selling bunch of jazz rockers, have set off on a 17-date Holiday Caravan Tour that will include a stop at Blacksburg's Lyric Theatre on Dec. 1.

On the tour, the longest the group has ever undertaken, the band will perform classic holiday songs and some of their hits.

The first stop on the tour is Nov. 30 in Asheville, N.C., at The Grey Eagle. The second stop is the Lyric Theatre date. The tour will conclude in Nashville on Dec. 19. Other stops include New York City, Detroit, Cincinnati, Alexandria, Va., and Beverly, Mass. SNZ's most recent

album, "Lost Songs of Doc Souchon," debuted in late 2020. It features 10 brand-new tracks – a combination of newly-penned Zippers songs, along with a few tunes from past times – and has received acclaim from fans and critics alike.

"This new album was inspired by all of the mysterious characters from the history of New Orleans jazz music," said band leader Jimbo Mathus. "It speaks to the hidden roots of where our aesthetic, interests, and philosophy comes from. It pulls on the hidden thread."

Prior to "Lost Songs of Doc Souchon," their most recent studio album,

"Beasts of Burgundy," was released in 2018 and debuted at #4 on the Billboard Jazz Albums Chart upon its release. Back in 1998, SNZ released its only holiday album, "Christmas Caravan," which went on to sell a quarter of a million copies and reached #12 on the Billboard holiday albums chart.

SNZ began its musical journey in Chapel Hill, N.C., in the mid-1990s, as a musician's escape from the cookie-cutter world of modern rock radio at the time. Mathus and drummer/percussionist Chris Phillips formed the band as a casual musical foray among friends and family

in the area. It wasn't long before the band's quirky mix of jazz chords, folk music, and punk rock leanings spread out of the region

and attracted a national audience.

Since reactivating in mid-2016, SNZ has been performing to packed

houses across the country and around the world. As Mathus has said since the band's re-launch, "It's not a reunion, it's a revival."



Jazz rockers Squirrel Nut Zippers are embarking on a 17-date tour that will bring them to Blacksburg's Lyric Theatre on Dec. 1.

Virginia Tech awarded Virginia Values Veterans award

At the recent 2021 Virginia Veterans and Military Affairs Conference, Virginia Tech was awarded the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Award.

As a public entity, Virginia Tech received the award for demonstrating innovative support for Virginia veterans and promoting veteran employment.

Virginia Tech's Talent Acquisition team has dedicated resources and outreach efforts to V3 and other veteran organizations to attract, hire, and retain more active and former servicemen and servicewomen to the university.

"It is a source of great pride for Virginia Tech to be recognized for our efforts to support veterans," said Bryan Garey, vice president for human resources. "It is important to honor our veterans for their service to our nation and to support them and their families in any way we can, including enhancing opportunities for them to have a dynamic career with a great public institution."

Virginia Tech has been previously recognized by the V3 Program, including becoming the first public university in the commonwealth to be certified by

V3 in 2015 for its commitment to hire veterans.

In addition, 14 other employers in the commonwealth were recognized for their exceptional commitment to the V3 Program and their hiring of Virginia military veterans, transitioning service members, and their spouses.

The V3 Program is a Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Veterans Services Program. V3 helps employers understand, design, and implement nationally recognized best practices in recruiting, hiring, and retaining veterans.



Virginia Tech has been awarded the Virginia Values Veterans award in recognition of its demonstration of innovative support for Virginia veterans and for promoting veteran employment.



Shoppers can get a head start on finding just the right Christmas gifts for everyone on their list at the Holiday Pop-up Market on Dec. 11 at Glencoe Mansion, Museum, and Gallery.

Handcrafted Holiday Pop-Up Market returns to Glencoe Mansion

The annual handcrafted Holiday Pop-Up Market hosted by MountainTrotter Arts returns to Glencoe Mansion, Museum, and Gallery on Dec. 11 from noon until 4 p.m.

The handcrafted market features one-of-a-kind and high quality handcrafted works by local artists, providing a perfect time for holiday shopping. While at

the market, shoppers may enjoy hot beverages, sweet treats, live holiday music, and the holiday display inside Glencoe Mansion.

This year visitors will be transported through Virginia's past into the present with the museum's "Christmas in Virginia" display.

Glencoe Mansion is also home to Radford's favorite gift shop, fea-

ture a wide variety of items perfect for giving this holiday season. The museum will also feature works by local artists in its gallery space for even more great holiday gift-giving ideas.

The event and the museum are both open to the public with no admission charge.

In case of weather issues, the rain date will be Dec. 18.

National, state agriculture issues to be discussed at Virginia Farm Bureau's convention

Dr. Jewel Bronaugh, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, will be the keynote speaker at Virginia Farm Bureau's 95th Annual Convention in Williamsburg Nov. 30 through Dec. 2.

The event is among the largest gatherings of Virginia's farmers. During the Nov. 30 opening luncheon, Bronaugh will talk about current national policies affecting farmers. She also will discuss international trade issues and the upcoming farm bill.

Bronaugh served as commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services from 2018 until appointed to her current position in May 2021. A Petersburg native, she previously served as the executive director of the U.S.

Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency in Virginia and as dean of the College of Agriculture at Virginia State University.

A featured speaker during the Dec. 1 meeting of county Farm Bureau delegates is Sam Keiffer, American Farm Bureau Federation vice president of public affairs. Keiffer leads AFBF's public policy, advocacy, and economics teams in advocating to the U.S. government on behalf of farmers and ranchers.

He will discuss a few of the many issues with which AFBF is actively involved with in Washington. These include addressing concerns in the agricultural supply chain, protecting important tax provisions used by farmers and defending the Navigable Waters Protection Rules,

which AFBF supported during the previous administration. He also will talk about working with the new administration and trying to find bipartisan consensus on Capitol Hill.

Keiffer grew up on a grain and beef farm in Pennsylvania, and previously served as the chief administration officer of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau after beginning his career with the organization in 2005.

Virginia Farm Bureau Federation policies for the coming year will be set during the meeting of voting delegates. This is part of Farm Bureau's grassroots process that starts at the county level and culminates

at the annual convention. Policies related to national issues will be submitted to AFBF for consideration at that organization's annual convention in January.

The Virginia Farm Bureau Federation convention agenda also includes recognition of top membership programs among county farm bureaus and the accomplishments of young farmers. The VFBF Young Farmers Achievement Award will be presented on Dec. 1, and the winner of the Young Farmers Discussion Meet competition will be recognized that day as well.

Convention participants will have the opportunity to attend workshops

on farmer mental health, property easements, business succession planning, and smartphone photography.

With 132,000 members in 88 county Farm Bureaus, Virginia Farm

Bureau Federation is Virginia's largest farmers' advocacy group. Farm Bureau is a non-governmental, nonpartisan, voluntary organization committed to supporting Virginia's agriculture industry.

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OPINION

Buddy King: The cat speaks of Banana Slugs, Anteaters, and Polar Bears

I'm back. It's a Cat of a Certain Age. I finally got my own iPad so I hope to be writing more columns.

I used my boarder's credit card and got the newest version of the iPad pro. I hope he doesn't notice the charge.

I overheard him talking to himself the other morning about an idea he had for a column, and I've decided to beat him to the punch, to "preempt him" as we writers like to say. He was talking about doing a piece on college mascots and nicknames. The more I heard him talking to himself, the more I got interested in the topic. So I did a little research and I feel like I have some interesting thoughts to share.

I'll start off by saying that I'm not going to waste time on Wahos and Hokies. I mean, who even knows what either one is or what the words mean? I understand what is now referred to as a Hokie was once known as a Gobbler and a Wahoo once was a Cavalier. At least those are words that mean something.

I have given thought to some of the more absurd team mascots - like the Stanford tree. There's one that will strike fear into the hearts of your opponents. "Their team was moving down the field like a tree." And the Cal Irvine Anteaters and the Cal Santa Cruz Banana Slugs? What do all these schools have in common? California. Enough said.

I have to throw the Ohio State Buckeye into the mix too, though. Who names their school

after an acorn? Or was it a piece of candy? Maybe OSU should move to Cali.

Now being a cat, I have a partiality for animal mascots, or at least certain ones, like the California Golden Bears and the UCLA Bruins and the Baylor Bears and the Maine Black Bears. Ferocious imagery, something to fear. You know the old expression: "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger, except for bears, bears will kill you." Compare to the Syracuse Orange (a fruit? with pulp?) and the Dartmouth Green (the green what? What is the mascot? a pickle?) and the Minnesota Golden Gophers and Wisconsin Badgers (sound like cartoon characters).

I am not enamored with schools that have picked nicknames like yellow jackets (like Georgia Tech and Randolph Macon) or the Spiders of Richmond (We called them the Fighting Arachnids when I was in college.) or the Wasps of Emory & Henry or the Boll Weevils of Arkansas Monticello (I kid you not.) Little, irritating creatures you can squash with your paw. They might hurt you a little, but they are hardly to be feared. Not mascot material in my opinion.

I have to admit confusion over the schools that apparently used Al Roker to pick their nicknames like the Iowa State Cyclones and the Miami Hurricane although their names make some sense, but the St. John's Red Storm (What exactly is that?) and the Tulsa Golden Hurricane (You

get a lot of hurricanes in Oklahoma?). Come on now.

Another group of mascots I don't get are the devil worshippers like the Duke Blue Devils and the Wake Forest Demon Deacons and the Arizona State Sun Devils. They are a little scary, but the optics are bad. Hard to align with the devil. Sadly, my boarder has clothing that says Blue Demons, so he must have fallen under some spell himself. I think it has something to do with where he went to high school.

Living in West Virginia, we have some interesting high school team nicknames ourselves. For instance, we have a town called Poca. The high school nickname? The Dots of course. The Poca Dots - get it? Some clever thinking there. A former high school near where I live with my boarder had a nickname that was hard to figure out. The school is now gone, Harrisville High, but its sports teams in the day were known as the Gators. Given that the school was in the hills of West Virginia, near Ohio, I couldn't make the connection.

But through some research and talking with the boarder, I figured out that the name had something to do with a four-wheel drive vehicle the kids in that area liked to ride on through the hills. You got me. And we have the Fairmont Senior Polar Bears. I sure have seen a lot of them around.

There are a couple of groups of mascots that I simply detest and can't understand why any

self-respecting group would choose to identify with. First are the birds, like the Boston College Eagles and the Southern Miss Golden Eagles and the Auburn War Eagles and the Miami of Ohio Red Hawks and the South Carolina Gamecocks (a chicken?) and the Rice Owls (creepy) and the Oregon Ducks (another cartoon character?).

A more worthless species to pick a mascot from I cannot imagine. These creatures serve no earthly purpose other than to irritate my kind.

And now the worst. The dogs! Particularly the bulldog! They are ubiquitous: Georgia (too much attention these days), Gonzaga (ditto), Mississippi State, Yale, the Citadel. Bad enough to pick a dog as your mascot, but why the ugliest one around? Although I have to admit that the sad sack hound that the University of Tennessee uses comes close on the "All Ugly Mascot Team."

Then there are the Huskies at Washington (I always pull for the Cougars of Washington State, for obvious reasons.) and UConn and the Wolfpack at N.C. State and Nevada Reno. While I understand some types of this species once served useful purposes, that day is long gone. When I think of the modern-day dog, I think of a creature who couldn't forage for food if her life depended on it and who has to ask for help to go to the bathroom. They make pathetic mascots.

I do have teams that I'm par-

tial to, like the Arizona Wildcats and the Villanova Wildcats and the LSU Bayou Bengals (delicious nickname - I love Cajun food) and the Auburn Tigers (the school's schizophrenic - War Eagles and Tigers and Plainsmen - pick one, darn it!) and the Cincinnati Bearcats (don't know what one is, but love the imagery) and the Ohio U. Bobcats and the BYU Cougars.

There are some really weird ones out there too - like the TCU Horned Frogs (What must that thing look like?) and the Texas Longhorns (dumbest creature on the planet) and the UNC Tar Heels (where'd that come from?).

The funniest story I came across is at Purdue, that great engineering school in Indiana. The name that won out, Boilermakers, had stiff competition from such early candidates as the pumpkin-shuckers, the cornfield sailors, the grangers, and the rail-splitters. Boiler-makers doesn't seem so bad, does it?

From what I can tell from hanging out with the boarder, I don't think he picks his teams based on the same factors I do. I hope my prejudices haven't shown through too much.

Evans "Buddy" King is a proud native of Christiansburg, CHS Class of 1971. He resides in Clarksburg, W.Va., where he has practiced law with the firm of Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC, since 1980. He can be reached at evans.king@steptoe-johnson.com.

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(540) 389-9355

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USPS 016-490 Online: www.ourvalley.org

Michael Showell, *Publisher*

Ed McMinn, *Editor*

editor@ourvalley.org

Heather Bell, *Community News Editor*

communitynews@ourvalley.org

Lynn Hurst, *General Manager*

lhurst@ourvalley.org

Randy Thompson, *Advertising Consultant*

advertise@ourvalley.org

Give us your view:

editor@ourvalley.org

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.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Veterans Day parade made me proud of our hometown

As a veteran of the United States Army, I appreciated the parade and ceremony that was held in Christiansburg on Veterans Day.

On a beautiful November day, bands from the four county high schools performed, seven platoons of high school ROTC students marched, old cars honked their horns, old veterans shuffled along, and sign-bearing students paraded through downtown Christiansburg.

Main Street was crowded with what seemed like thousands of elementary and primary school students, parents, and local citizens (probably 2500) all with American flags, cheering the marchers.

At the end of the parade, I stood near the center of the town thinking this was what small-town America is all about. All that was left was Norman Rockwell (famous painter).

It made me feel proud of what this

country and community are all about and the type of people who live here.

As a veteran, I say thank you.

Steve Huppert

Christiansburg Town Council

These comments are mine and do not represent the opinions of the staff of Christiansburg or members of the Christiansburg Town Council.

Gas Buddy: Virginia's gas prices fell last week

Virginia's gas prices fell 0.8 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$3.29/g Sunday evening, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Gas prices in Virginia are nevertheless 9.9 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand \$1.25/g

higher than a year ago. According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.92/g Sunday while the most expensive was \$3.89/g, a difference of 97.0 cents per gallon. The national average price of gasoline fell 2.6 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.40/g Sunday. The national average is up 9.5 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands \$1.28/g higher than a year ago.

"As of Sunday evening, the national average price of gasoline posted its first weekly decline in

months," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy. "As the price of oil continues to struggle, COVID cases flare up, and anxiety over demand starts rising, motorists are likely to see the declines continuing into this week," according to DeHaan. "While it's not known how long market conditions will continue to push gas prices down, it appears that the fall should last through Thanksgiving, just in time for millions of Americans to prepare to hit the road for the holiday. However, the damage may already be done. According to

GasBuddy's Thanksgiving Travel Survey, a significant portion of Americans say the high gas prices already led them to re-think their plans."

GasBuddy is the authoritative voice for gas prices and the only source for station-level data spanning nearly two decades. GasBuddy's survey updates 288 times every day from the most diverse list of sources covering nearly 150,000 stations nationwide, the most comprehensive and up-to-date in the country. GasBuddy data are accessible at <http://FuelInsights.GasBuddy.com>.

COVID from page 1

demic. "As a team of behavioral economists, we are interested in how people make decisions and in factors that contribute to changes in behavior," said Abdelaziz Alsharawy, lead author on the study and a recent Ph.D. graduate in economics. He is now a post-doctorate researcher at Princeton University. "The onset of the pandemic seemed like a worldwide natural experiment, and we were immediately drawn to investigating its implications on individuals and the process of decision-making," said Dr. Alsharawy. "The team was especially interested in how the fear of COVID-19 affected people's behavior and economic choices, specifically if those reactions differed between men and women."

Starting in early April 2020, the team issued a survey to 1,500 people randomly selected from across the United States and asked them to answer questions about their demographics, attitudes, social preferences, and how they were following preventative health measures.

Survey respondents also rated how likely they were to adopt Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-recommended practices such as handwashing, physical distancing, and wearing a face

mask. The data revealed that women were more likely to follow these practices than men, and that behavior is motivated by a fear of COVID-19.

"It isn't being female that makes you adhere to the preventative measures, it's the level of fear," said Alec Smith, an assistant professor of economics. "And it just happens to be true that women have more fear of COVID than men."

The gender differences don't stop there — the survey also gauged how people perceived both the health and financial consequences of the pandemic. Women were more likely to be concerned about the health risks than men, but men showed greater worry for the financial consequences. This surprised the team, as they hypothesized that women would show greater fear for both.

"We hope that this research contributes to our understanding of how to convince large groups of people to make behavioral changes in response to an urgent situation like a global pandemic," said co-author Ross Spoon, a graduate student in economics. "Understanding how different groups of people respond to information and emotional appeals will help governments and other institutions craft communication strategies to deal with these situations."

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
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49	50		51				52			53			
54			55			56					57	58	59
60					61						62		
63					64					65			
66						67				68			

- CLUES ACROSS**
- German philosopher
 - A type of stock trading (abbr.)
 - Cincinnati ballplayers
 - Deerlike water buffaloes
 - Island
 - Jewish calendar month
 - Round Dutch cheese
 - Unstressed syllable of a metrical foot
 - A restaurant needs one
 - Decent behaviors
 - Groans
 - Works hard
 - Upset
 - A sound made in speech
 - One point east of due south
 - Boxing's GOAT
 - Whittles
 - Tailless amphibian
 - Surrounded
 - Doesn't stay still

- Copycat
- Four-door car
- Morally correct behavior
- Something that is owed
- Pasta needs it
- Ant-Man's last name
- Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- Small period of time (abbr.)
- Woman (French)
- On or around
- Fencing swords
- Fonts
- A command in the name of the court
- Sprays with an irritant
- Georgetown athlete
- Dry or withered
- Sign of injury
- Tracts of land (abbr.)
- 365 days
- Physique
- Icelandic poems

- CLUES DOWN**
- Bodily substance
 - Internal
 - Provoked or annoy
 - Type of lounge chair
 - Losses
 - Makes less severe
 - Identifies a thing close at hand
 - Group of blood disorders (abbr.)
 - Rebuilt
 - Ancient Greek City
 - American investigative journalist
 - Partially melted snow
 - Take shape
 - Mexican beverage
 - Patti Hearst's captors
 - Jacobs and Summers are two
 - Disfigure
 - Scientists' tool (abbr.)
 - Ill-mannered person

- Overhang
- Famed rat catcher
- Passover feast and ceremony
- Equal to 10 meters
- Central processing unit
- Chinese native religion
- Unfermented juices
- "To the ___ degree"
- Frozen water
- Medieval circuit courts
- 1,000 cubic feet (abbr.)
- Gossipy
- Shopping is one type
- Palmlike plant
- Partner to "ooled"
- Welsh name meaning "snow"
- Popular Mexican dish
- It helps power devices
- Reddish-brown wildcat
- Impertinence
- Legal financial term (abbr.)
- Atomic #52

Financial Focus: Maximize your charitable giving

The Tuesday after Thanksgiving has become known as Giving Tuesday, when people are encouraged to donate to charitable organizations. If you'd like to take part in this special day, you'll want to maximize the effectiveness and benefits of your charitable gifts.

So, consider these questions: Is the charity reputable? Does it use its resources wisely? Most charitable organizations are honest and dedicated to helping their specific causes. But sometimes there are a few "bad apples" in the bunch. These groups aren't necessarily fraudulent (though some are), but they may spend an inordinate amount of their donations on administrative expenses rather than directing this money to where it's most needed. Fortunately, you don't

have to guess about the trustworthiness or the efficiency of a particular group because you can check on it.

To make sure that a charity is an actual charity – one that is tax-exempt and listed as a 501(c)(3) organization – you can go to www.irs.gov, the website of the Internal Revenue Service, and hit the "Charities & Nonprofits" link. An organization called Charity Navigator (www.charitynavigator.org) tracks charitable groups' financial health and accountability, including how much is spent on administrative and fundraising costs.

Generally speaking, a charitable group that dedicates more than about 30% to 35% of its total costs to administration and fundraising expenses might be considered somewhat ineffi-

cient, though you'd want to evaluate each charity individually, since extenuating circumstances can occur. Keep in mind, though, that smaller charities may not have the same resources as a national organization to provide the reporting necessary for Charity Navigator.

Will my employer match my contribution? You can make your charitable gift go a lot further if your employer matches it. Typically, companies match donations at a 1:1 ratio, but some will match at 2:1 or even higher. Check with your human resources department about your company's policy on charitable matches.

Are my charitable gifts tax deductible? A few years ago, Congress significantly raised the standard deduction, which, for the

2021 tax year, is now \$12,550 for single taxpayers, \$25,100 for joint filers, and \$18,800 for heads of household. As a result of this increase, many people no longer itemize and thus have less financial incentive to make charitable contributions.

If you still do itemize and you're thinking of making charitable gifts, you generally have a choice between giving cash and another asset such as stocks. Each type of gift could earn you a tax deduction, but a gift of appreciated stocks could be more beneficial because you may also be avoiding the capital gains tax you might incur if you eventually sold the stocks. You should consult with your tax advisor and the charity (not all accept investments) before making the cash-versus-stock decision.

Even if you don't itemize, you could still get a tax benefit from making a charitable contribution. That's because Congress has extended part of the COVID-19-related legislation that allows taxpayers to claim charitable deductions of \$300 (for single filers) or \$600 (for married couples) if they claim the standard deduction. The charitable donations must be made in cash, not stocks.

Giving Tuesday comes just once a year, but your gifts can have lasting benefits. So, be as generous as you can afford and enjoy the good feelings that follow.

Submitted by Meghan Kuczmarzski, Edward Jones Financial Advisor, 540-552-1241.

CAC December Schedule

Aqua Yoga (Monday/Wednesday)

8-9 a.m.; Dec. 1-20 (no class 12/13); \$32, residents; \$42, non-residents.

Aqua Yoga utilizes the principles and movements of hatha yoga and adapts them to the water. The yoga poses practiced in this class will help participants develop strength and static balance and increase their range of motion. Beginners are welcome. The instructor is Thea Vincenti with a maximum enrollment of 10.

Morning Fit (Monday/Wednesday)

9:15-10:15 a.m.; Dec. 1-16; \$27 residents; \$37 non-residents.

This shallow water workout combines calisthenics style movements with variations of upper and lower body resistance exercises. Participants will jog, kick, march and jump through the water to improve their cardiovascular fitness, muscular endurance, and flexibility. Danielle Bland is the instructor at the slide side of the leisure pool, the deep beach area. Maximum enrollment is 16.

Warm Water Workout (Monday/Wednesday)

10:30-11:30 a.m.; Dec. 1-16; \$32 residents;

\$42 non-residents.

This warm water exercise program is designed for individuals with arthritic and mobility limitations. This class is for those whose goals include increasing strength, flexibility, and range of motion in a relaxing and low-impact atmosphere. Danielle Bland is the instructor in the therapy pool with a maximum enrollment of 10.

Due to limited spacing and class popularity, the center is limiting participation to one session of Warm Water Workout per person per month.

Rolling in the Deep (Tuesday/Thursday)

9:30-10:30 a.m.; Dec. 2 and 7; \$10 or drop-in (\$7 per class).

Strap on an aqua belt and take part in this deep water class in the competition pool. Participants can expect to perform aerobic exercises such as jogging, skiing, and more to develop core strength. The instructor is Jillian Kowalcik.

Hydro Power (Tuesday/Thursday)

9:30-10:30 a.m.; Dec. 14 and 16; \$10 or drop-in (7 per class).

This aqua class combines cardiovascular training and muscle conditioning through meth-

ods of interval training, abdominal work, and muscle enduring activities. These combinations provide a great workout with the use of equipment such as pool noodles and water weights in the leisure pool. The instructor is Jillian Kowalcik.

Warm Water Workout (Tuesday/Thursday)

9:15-10:15 a.m.; Dec. 2-16 (no class 12/09); \$26 residents; \$36 non-residents.

Danielle Bland is the instructor in the therapy pool with a maximum enrollment of 10.

Due to limited spacing and class popularity, the center is limiting participation to one session of Warm Water Workout per person per month.

Warm Water Workout (Tuesday/Thursday)

10:30-11:30 a.m.; Dec. 2-16 (no class 12/09); \$26 residents; \$36 non-residents.

Location: Therapy Pool. Instructor: Danielle Bland is the instructor in the therapy pool with a maximum enrollment of 10.

Due to limited spacing and class popularity, the center is limiting participation to one session of Warm Water Workout per person per month.

Hydro Power (Tuesday/Thursday)

5:45-6:30 p.m.; Dec. 2-16 (no class 12/09); \$20 residents; \$30 non-residents.

Jillann Kowalcik is the instructor in the leisure pool with a maximum enrollment of 25. Drop-ins are allowed.

Swim and Trim (Wednesday)

7-7:45 a.m. Dec. 1, 8, 15; \$17 residents; \$27 non-residents

This new routine consists of half dryland workout and half water workout and is guaranteed to hit all the right muscles and have participants ready to conquer the rest of their day. Participants should bring their own mats or extra towels for the deck exercise portion

Location: Leisure Pool. Jillann Kowalcik is the instructor in the leisure pool with a maximum enrollment of eight and two participants per lane.

Drop-ins are allowed.

Rise N' Shine Water Aerobics (Wednesday)

7-7:45 a.m. Dec. 1, 8, 15; \$17 residents; \$27 non-residents.

Gear up for this morning class that will get participants ready for the day. This is an aerobics class for the early risers so they can kick off their day energized.

Edward Tickle is the instructor at the slide side of the leisure pool with a maximum enrollment of eight.

Drops-in are allowed.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY WORKOUTS

12 Days of Christmas Workout; 8-9 a.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 8; \$7.

The pyramid format of this class is based upon the song "The 12 Days of Christmas" in that it builds and encourages some festivity, but also provides the structure for a pretty powerful workout. Exercises such as lap swimming, core workouts, and squats will be completed both in and out of the water at the competition pool with a maximum enrollment of eight.

Drop-ins are allowed.

Warm Water Merry and Moving; 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Monday, Dec. 20; \$7. This class provides

exercises that assist with balance, stability, and range of motion with a movement-filled workout in warm water. This is great for those with arthritic or mobility limitations. Maximum enrollment is 10 in the therapy pool.

Drop-ins are allowed.

Holly Jolly Workout; 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 21; \$7.

This is an aqua class guaranteed to get the fitness party started and have participants energized for the holidays.

This class combines cardiovascular training and muscle conditioning through methods of interval training, abdominal work, and muscle enduring activities. These combinations provide a great workout with the use of equipment such as pool noodles and water weights in the leisure pool.

Maximum enrollment is 16.

Drop-ins are allowed.

Holly Jolly Workout; 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 21; \$7.

Maximum enrollment is 25.

Drop-ins are allowed.

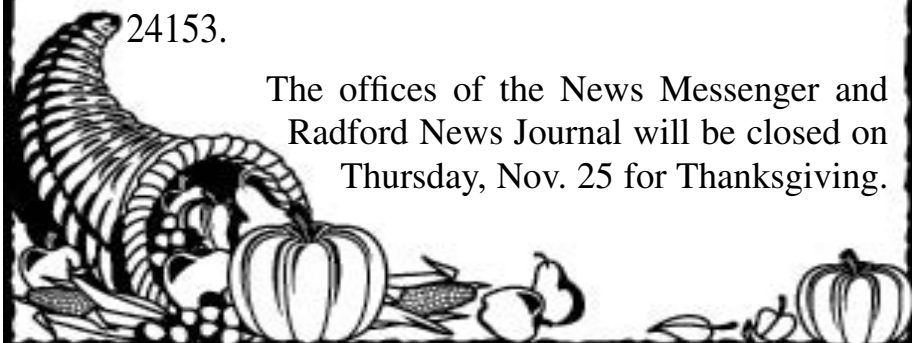
EARLY DEADLINES FOR THANKSGIVING PAPER


There will be early deadlines for the Nov. 24 issue because of Thanksgiving.

Please send your news items, photos and church news by **Thursday, November 18 at noon** to communitynews@ourvalley.org. Send ads by **Thursday, November 18 at noon** to advertise@ourvalley.org. You may also drop off news items and ads at our offices at 1633 W. Main Street, Salem, VA 24153.

The offices of the News Messenger and Radford News Journal will be closed on

Thursday, Nov. 25 for Thanksgiving.





Valley to Valley Trail Study
Roanoke, Montgomery and Pulaski Counties;
Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg and Pulaski
and the City of Radford

Citizen Comment Opportunity
 November 10 – December 1, 2021
<https://www.virginiadot.org/valleytovalleytrail>

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is studying a new multi-use path called the Valley to Valley Trail that would connect the Roanoke Valley to the New River Valley. This new trail would create a single cohesive trail network by connecting the Roanoke River Greenway in Roanoke, the Huckleberry Trail in Blacksburg and Christiansburg, the Radford Riverway Trail and the New River Trail State Park. The study will help to determine a recommended alignment with sections that could be developed in individual phases.

VDOT has posted a recorded presentation about the study along with an online survey on the project website at <https://www.virginiadot.org/valleytovalleytrail>. Comments will be received through **December 1, 2021**. Citizens can provide comments through the online survey or by mailing them to Michael Gray, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem VA 24153. For additional information, contact Michael Gray at 540-494-8288, 1-800-367-7623, TTY/TDD 711.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Anyone requiring special assistance to attend and participate in this comment opportunity may contact Michael Gray at the phone numbers listed above.

Send community news and photos
to communitynews@ourvalley.org

OBITUARIES

Akers, Bonnie D.

Bonnie D. Akers, 74, died at Chippenham Hospital in Richmond on Monday, Nov. 8, 2021. Bonnie was born on May 2, 1947, at Mountain Lake Hotel in Giles County to the late Robert and Josephine Dolinger.



ter-in-law, Robert Auvil, Bill and Debbie Akers, and Johnny and Lily; daughters and sons-in-law, Amber and Lee and Cindy and Floyd.

Bonnie was also blessed with 11 grandchildren: Amanda, Jessie, Kali, Beth, Ashley, April, Harley, Kennedy, Liam, Margaret and Jordan; 18 great-grandchildren; a sister, Lena Meredith-Hites; and

a brother, Clate Dolinger. A memorial service was held on Monday Nov. 15, 2021, at McCoy Funeral Home in Blacksburg at 5 p.m.

Gravley, Elizabeth "Ann"

Elizabeth "Ann" Gravley, 56, passed away peacefully on Nov. 7, 2021, at Roanoke Memorial Hospital with her daughter, Tracie Smith, and her significant other, William "Bill" Brown, by her side. She was born in Wytheville to the late Mary Elizabeth Gravley and David Edward Gravley, Sr.



in her family and friends and always kept them close to her heart. Ann was a person who wore her heart on her sleeve; she loved hard and forgave easily.

Ann was preceded in death by her parents, Mary and David Gravley, and her brother, David Edward "Eddie" Gravley, Jr.

She is survived by her daughters, Heather Amanda Gravley and Tracie Leigh Smith; three grandchildren, Aiden Lee Altizer, Korree Ann Mozelle Alley, and Ella Faye Smith; a brother, Donnie Raye Gravley; and nephews Justin Raye Gravley and Rusty Shayne Gravley.

A celebration of life gathering will be held in the spring of 2022.

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

Ann was disabled due to health complications for a large portion of her life. The trials and tribulations that came along with that never stopped her from fulfilling her duties as a full-time mother. She single-handedly raised her daughters and was so proud of the women they became. Ann also held her three grandchildren very near and dear to her heart. She found joy in the little things and the time she spent with them. Ann was especially proud of their successes in school and their extracurricular activities. She took such pride

McCartney, Elina A.

Elina A. McCartney, 88, of Blacksburg, passed away peacefully on Friday, Nov. 12, 2021, at her home surrounded by her beloved family.



Elina and her husband moved to Blacksburg when her son, Bruno, and his wife, Christine, had their third child. As grandparents living in the house, they were actively involved in the raising of their five grandsons, taking them to soccer games and imparting their love of the outdoors and passion for cooking. Elina's talent for creating her unique art provided many pieces to cover the walls of her home and will be an enduring and treasured legacy.

Elina is survived by her sisters, Maria, Angela, and Leonilda; her sons, Bruno and Walter; her daughter-in-law Christine; and her grandchildren, Antonio, Angelo, Vittorio, Martino, and Marcello.

A service was held Monday, Nov. 15, 2021, at 11 a.m. at St. Mary's Church in Blacksburg with Deacon Rick Furman officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Micah's Backpack, St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Blacksburg.

Elina was born in Italy on July 27, 1933, to the late Giuseppe Paccasassi and Chiara Paccasassi. She was preceded in death by her husband, William B. McCartney, her brothers Minervino, Ennio, Luigi, Gino, and Antonio and her sisters Eligia and Gina.

Elina was born in Pietralta, a small village in the Abruzzi region of Italy. She learned her cooking skills from a very young age in the rustic kitchen of her family's stone house high in the mountains. Elina began her artistic passion learning intricate embroidery from the nuns in the village. She and her husband Bill, whom she met in Naples, embraced the simple life, valuing family and being outdoors every day. A 20-mile bike ride or a trek around local trails looking for mushrooms was part of her everyday life.

Brammer, Elizabeth

Rose Creed

Elizabeth Rose Creed Brammer, 93, of Elliston, went to be with her Lord and Savior on Nov. 11, 2021.

She was born in Montgomery County to the late Melvin Lewis and Ada Moore Creed. She was preceded in death by her husband, Elmer H. Brammer; her son Corlis E. Brammer; brothers Lewis, John, and Gary Creed; and sisters Lorene Brammer, Geraldine Carden, and Mary Huff.

She is survived by her daughter, Linda, and her husband Paul Robinson, and her son, Dennis Brammer, her brothers, Clyde Creed and Wilford Creed; 12 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandchild, and numer-



ous nieces and nephews.

Elizabeth was a retiree of Radford Army Ammunition Plant and after retirement, she worked at K&W for a number of years.

Funeral services were conducted at McCoy Funeral Home chapel with the Rev. Mike Vest presiding on Monday, Nov. 15, 2021. Interment was held at Roselawn Memorial Gardens in Christiansburg.

The family would like to thank the Radford Health and Rehab Center and their staff for their loving care of Elizabeth. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Faith Missionary Baptist Church for the Operation Christmas Child Outreach.

Wirt, Allen Insley

Allen Insley Wirt, 75, of Christiansburg, died peacefully Thursday morning, Nov. 11, 2021, at Commonwealth Assisted Living in Christiansburg and entered into his eternal home in Heaven with his family by his side. He was preceded in death by his parents, William Eugene and Minnie Era (Eanes) Wirt; and his brothers, Bobby Eugene, James Lloyd, and Edward Henry Wirt.



and Wolverine. He loved hunting, fishing, gardening, watching the Dallas Cowboys, woodworking, and spending time with his family and friends. His friendly, giving, loving, kind, and generous personality will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

The family received friends on Monday, Nov. 15, 2021, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed with Pastor Kelly Howlett officiating. Interment with full military honors followed in the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin.

The family would like to thank the staff at Kindred Hospice and Commonwealth Assisted Living for the care, kindness, and compassion shown to Allen.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made to the Humane Society of Montgomery County, 1183 Flanagan Dr, Christiansburg, VA 24073.

Condolences and memories may be shared with the family at www.mullinsfuneralhome.com.

Survivors include his son and daughter-in-law, Michael Eric Wirt (Susan); daughter and son-in-law, Kristin Wirt Gunter (Jon); grandchildren Megan and Ben Wirt and Josh and Jakob Gunter; sister Barbara Jean Barnes; brother and sister-in-law Donald Lee Wirt (Wanda); beloved dog Hershey; and many other relatives and special friends.

Allen graduated from Christiansburg High School in 1966. Upon graduation he enlisted in the Air Force and served during the Vietnam War. He was stationed at Pope AFB in Fayetteville, N.C. as a sergeant, and worked as a jet engine mechanic. Allen later worked for UPS

Whitehurst, Henry Armistead

Henry Armistead Whitehurst, 76, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021, at his home in Christiansburg.

He was a U. S. Army veteran and a lawyer. He was preceded in death by his parents, Jerry and Mary Whitehurst.

Survivors include his wife, Joetta Akers Whitehurst of Christiansburg;



sons Koehler, Thrasher, Alexander, Jeremy, and B. J.; a daughter, Moriah; one grandchild; a brother and a sister; and many other relatives and friends.

Per Henry's request, services will be private.

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

VDOT road watch Nov. 17

The following is a list of forecasted highway projects that may impact traffic during the week from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. Transportation District this week. Work schedules and construction project timelines are always subject to change and weather dependent. The Salem District covers Bedford, Botetourt, Carroll, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, and Roanoke counties.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

I-81 NORTHBOUND AT EXIT 105 NEW RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY - Lane and shoulder closures may be in place near exit 105.

Lane closure may be in effect during the week from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. Shoulder closures may be in effect at any time during the week. Slow rolls may be performed on I-81 in the north and southbound lanes from mile marker 104 to 106 from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. Speed limit is reduced to 60 miles per hour in the work zone. Shoulder closures will remain in place though the duration of the project. Project completion is estimated by June 2022.

Right lane closures may be in place on I-81 northbound between mile markers 104-105 during nighttime hours, 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. the following morning.

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

I-81 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT EXIT 114 IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY - The bridge replacement of the two Interstate 81 bridges over Route 8, northbound

and southbound, is underway. Drivers can expect alternating lane and shoulder closures, northbound and southbound, from mile marker 114 to 115. Exit 114 ramp shoulder closures will be ongoing from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Speed limit is reduced to 60 mph in the work zone. Route 8 will have alternating northbound and southbound shoulder and lane closures, day or night, as needed between the I-81 on and off ramps. A temporary traffic signal will direct traffic on Route 8 throughout the duration of the project. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction. Estimated completion is late 2021.

ROUTE 643 PAVING PROJECT - Beginning soon, exact date to be determined, a project is being scheduled to resurface an unpaved portion of Route 643 (Yellow Sulfur Road). The work area begins .7 mile south of the intersection with Route 642 (Jennelle Road) and ends 1.7 miles north of the bridge over Route 460.

See VDOT, page 10

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Christiansburg advances in playoffs



Just as Staunton River was approaching the goal line, Jaxson Clarke snagged an interception as the Blue Demons advanced to the regional semifinals Friday with a 48-0 win that upped Christiansburg's season record to 10-1.



Tyrique Taylor (left) and Kenyon Johnson-Buchannon (right) pressured the Staunton River quarterback all game long and recorded four sacks. The defense limited the Golden Eagles to 37 yards on the ground and 68 through the air Friday.



Christiansburg's Stephan Myrthil scores one of his two touchdowns early in the third quarter Friday. He also rushed 15 times for 117 yards as the Blue Demons advanced in the playoffs.

PHOTOS BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY

Undefeated Auburn Eagles advance to state volleyball semis



Avery Zuckerwar had four kills and two aces in Auburn's 25-20, 25-19, 25-18 win over Patrick Henry-Glade Spring this past weekend. The Eagles advanced to the state Class 1 state semifinals to play Chilhowie.



Auburn's Anna McGuire collected 26 assists, three aces, and eight digs in her team's win as they remained unbeaten for the season.



Stacy Lewis finished the three-set sweep of Patrick Henry-Glade Spring with 17 digs. Allyson Martin added 17 kills, two aces, and 14 digs.

PHOTOS BY ASHLEY AKERS

Radford, Christiansburg advance in postseason

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Then there were two. Eastern Montgomery was eliminated from the first round of the state high school playoffs this past week, while Radford

and Christiansburg advanced with wins.

Christiansburg now hosts Lord Botetourt, which downed Hidden Valley this past week. This is the 10th straight year Botetourt has moved on to the second round of the regional play-

offs. In the spring's shortened season, Botetourt routed Christiansburg 55-0.

In Friday's game, Christiansburg rolled over Staunton River 48-0 as quarterback Casey Graham was 11 for 13 passing for 157 yards with three touch-

downs. The Blue Demons improved to 10-1 on the season.

Radford will now travel to Appomattox in the regional semifinals after a 47-27 win over Floyd County. Landen Clark threw five touchdown passes, going 17 of 26 for 259 yards. He also had an

interception for the 8-3 Bobcats.

Eastern Montgomery ran into a buzz saw in Giles in a 47-17 loss to finish the season at 5-6.

Predictions for the weekend: Christiansburg 34, Lord Botetourt 30; Radford 34, Appomattox.

Blacksburg volleyball falls in quarterfinals



Sophia Johnston is all air as she spikes the ball to Millbrook, which defeated Blacksburg 26-24, 24-26, 28-26, 13-25, 15-13 in a tight match in the state quarterfinals.



Blacksburg's Rylee Sloss (right) spikes the ball to Millbrook in this past weekend's Class 4 state quarterfinals.

PHOTOS BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY

Christiansburg, Auburn, East Mont race in state cross-country championships



Auburn's Katelyn Lafon placed fourth in the girls' Class 1 championship race with a time of 20:54.0 Saturday at Green Hill Park.



Eastern Montgomery's Camren Sampson placed 34th in the Class 1 State Championships Saturday at Green Hill Park.



Lawson Mecom placed fourth for Christiansburg in the Class 3 boys' championship race (16:18.8).

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Questions surround coaching job in Blacksburg



From the Sidelines
Marty Gordon

reer here in Blacksburg with the defeat of Duke. He has avoided questions about his future, even saying he has no control of that and will keep doing what he is doing: coaching the Hokies on a week-to-week basis.

Sometimes, it is hard to say goodbye. On a day when Virginia Tech honored a long list of seniors at Lane Stadium, there were many questions about whether it would be the last appearance for head coach Justin Fuente on the Hokie sidelines.

Fans, including many in the stands on Saturday, have expressed their displeasure in the football team's success or should we say lack thereof. Fuente has been on the hot seat since last year but so far has weathered the storm. Now, the question: Is he out or is he still the coach of the Burgundy and orange. For this week, he is still in.

The online chat forums have called for his head after losses to Boston College and Syracuse. He was even booed by the crowd at Lane. Not something any head coach is hoping to experience.

In play is a decrease in the amount a buyout could cost the university to let him go before his contract runs out. That date is around December 15 when the amount would drop by \$2.5 million. But onlookers wonder if the university can wait as recruiting hangs in a balance. Recent commits have stood the ground, and so far, none have "decommitted" in the midst of Fuente's hot-seat discussion.

Getting rid of Fuente could cost the university anywhere from \$7.5 to \$10 million.

The Hokies can still be bowl eligible if they can get by Miami and Virginia in the final two games of the year, which are both on the road.

Saturday, Fuente was all smiles as the team managed to produce one of its best games of the season and maybe of his ca-

But that has not squelched the discussion as to who might be his replacement. As a matter of fact, the next coach talk has taken center stage not just locally and regionally, but nationally.

After the game, Fuente praised those outgoing seniors who were honored on Senior Day.

"Thanks to everyone for coming out and supporting us," the head coach said. "It was a special day for those seniors, and I'm happy to send them out in their last home game on a positive note. I'm proud of our kids and their perseverance through tough, adverse times. They continue to amaze all of us in this building who see them every day with their resilient nature and their care for each other. It's a lot of fun to watch. Inspiring, quite honestly, to all the coaches and everybody around them. They're a great group of kids."

Fuente was named Virginia Tech's head coach on November 29, 2015, after orchestrating a dramatic resurrection of the football fortunes at the University of Memphis.

The Hokies enter their sixth season under Fuente in 2021. Through Saturday's game, he has compiled a 43-31 record in Blacksburg. While the coach's overall mark is not terribly bad, expectations for the Tech program have pushed the demands even higher.

Media members skated around the subject during the post-game press conference.

The non-asked question might have been: "Coach, what would you say if this was your last appearance in Lane Stadium?" A simple wave might not be enough for the Hokie fans who seem to have already written off Fuente and a return to the sideline in 2022.

RU to retire jersey of former Highlander basketball star

On Sunday, Nov. 28, at the Radford-Eastern Kentucky basketball game at the Dedmon Center, Radford University will retire the jersey of former Highlander basketball star Javonte Green.

Green will make the trip to the New River Valley and be in attendance for the 4:30 p.m. game.

A member of the Radford program from 2011-15, Green ranks first in program history for career games played (133) and ca-

reer steals (243) and ranks second for career points scored (1,911), career field goals made (701), and career rebounds (1,064).

The Petersburg, Va., native was an All-Big South Conference selection in each of his four years as a Highlander and was named Big South Defensive Player of the Year in 2014-15.

After earning a bachelor's degree from Radford University, Green went on to play professionally over-

seas with stops in Spain, Italy, and Germany before becoming the first player in RU program history to sign a contract with an NBA organization. In 2019, he signed a two-year deal with the Boston Celtics. During the 2020-21 season, he was traded to the Chicago Bulls, re-signed with them in the summer of 2021, and became a fan favorite in the Windy City with his energy, his defense, and his electrifying slam dunks.

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VDOT from page 6

Traffic impacts will include intermittent flagging operations between these intersections. This project has an estimated completion date of May 2022.

LANE CLOSURES: Intermittent single lane closures utilizing flagging operations will be in place between the intersection of Teaberry Road and Jennelle Road. ROUTE 636

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT SENECA HOLLOW - Work has begun replacing the bridge on Route 636 over the Roanoke River at Seneca Hollow. A road closure with a detour is in place from Echo Hills Road to .36 mile south of Route 460. The detour will restrict access to Route 460 at Seneca Hollow and will require

travelers to enter/exit Route 460 at Friendship Road near Wheeling Hollow. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2021.

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

VARIOUS ROADS FOR UTILITY WORK - Utility crews will be working on overhead lines along a general corridor alignment following Route 114 (Peppers Ferry), Route 460 Business (Franklin Street) and Route 11/460 (Roanoke Road). The work zone

will span from the Pulaski/Montgomery county line to the Montgomery/Roanoke county line. In addition, various side roads will be impacted by intermittent closures for crossings. Motorists should expect shoulder closures and lane closures for travel in both directions. Intermittent full closures of the roads will be required for periods lasting no longer than 15 minutes. Work hours are scheduled for 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily. Advance warning for weekend work involving closures of primary highways on weekend mornings from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. will be provided via message boards once scheduled. Work is scheduled to last through the fall of 2021.



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