



FILE PHOTO
Longtime Christiansburg Town Council member Henry Showalter has been appointed to serve as Christiansburg's vice mayor.

Henry Showalter announced as the newly-appointed Christiansburg vice mayor

The Christiansburg Town Council Tuesday night unanimously appointed longtime member Henry Showalter to serve as vice mayor. He will serve the next year in the capacity.

The Christiansburg native had

previously served as vice mayor from 2014-2015.

The council also used the first meeting of 2022 to reorganize, keeping the second and fourth Tuesdays as its meeting dates.

Mayor Michael Barber also an-

nounced appointments of council members to town and regional commissions and town committees.

Three new council members were welcomed on board. Casey Jenkins, Tim Wilson, and Tanya Hockett were elected to four-year terms.

VT Athletics institutes vaccination policy for indoor events

Effective today, Saturday, Jan. 15, 2022, Virginia Tech Athletics will institute a policy requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination or proof of vaccine medical exemption or negative test for indoor events.

This vaccination policy has been developed in conjunction with Virginia Tech campus officials and Virginia Tech's COVID-19 task force with guidance from health professionals and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This policy has been implemented with the health and well-being of Virginia Tech's student-athletes, staff, community, and guests being the top priority.

All guests and working personnel ages 12 and older will be required to show proof of a COVID-19 vaccination, proof of a vaccine medical exemption or a negative COVID-19 PCR or rapid test taken within 72 hours of the event. Face masks continue to be required and must be worn during all home indoor athletic events.

Upon entry to an indoor venue, one of the following will be required:

An official, government-issued vaccination card listing the guest's name and dates the last dose was administered.

A photo or digital version of an official government issued vaccination card listing the guest's name and dates the last dose was administered.

A printed or digital negative COVID-19 PCR or antigen test taken within 72 hours of the event that includes the guest's name and date the last test was taken.

For guests with vaccine medical exemptions, proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR or rapid test taken within 72 hours of the event that includes the guest's name and date the last test was taken.

For Virginia Tech students, a valid Hokie passport.

Individuals who cannot provide proof of vaccination, proof of medical exemption or a valid negative COVID-19 test according to the conditions outlined above will not be allowed to enter a Tech Athletics indoor event. These changes will remain in effect until further notice.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Proof of vaccination, medical exemption, or a negative COVID test is now required for entrance to indoor events, including Cassell Coliseum.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Ginny Ayers is the new executive director of Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley.

Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley names new executive director

Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley welcomed Ginny Ritenour Ayers as its new executive director on Monday, Jan. 10.

"Ginny brings a remarkable blend of impactful fund development and volunteer engagement experience together with a strong history of leadership," said Board Chair Karim Khan. "We are so excited about the skills, passion, and en-

thusiasm she will bring to our mission to change lives through literacy."

In her previous position as Director of Alumni Chapter Programs at Virginia Tech, Ayers led alumni volunteer management and fundraising programs for 14 years. She has extensive experience leading a team to meet strategic goals through engagement programs.

Prior to her employ-

ment at Virginia Tech, Ayers was employed for 14 years with New River Foundry in various roles. She earned a Masters in Education from Virginia Tech in 2014.

"I'm ready to leverage my leadership strengths, organizational skills, and love for the New River Valley to better benefit our diverse community members right here at

See Literacy, page 4

100+ Women Who Care NRV donates \$10,000+ to Montgomery Museum

The local chapter of the 100+ Women Who Care of the New River Valley recently donated \$10,625 to the member-selected organization Montgomery Museum of Art and History in Christiansburg.

Montgomery Museum was chartered in 1983 to collect, preserve, and interpret the history of Montgomery County and the region. The museum also promotes an understanding of the role of art and artists in the region primarily through the exhibition of the work of regional artists.

The museum plans to use the funds donated by the 100+ Women Who Care to expand its educational programming outreach by making materials more accessible to individuals and schools; to help fund the Town Square Storyboard Project's signs and subsequent installation; and to bolster new art and history programs and exhibits that highlight untold and neglected voices and stories.

The museum's Executive Director, Casey Jenkins, said, "We are so grateful to the 100+ Women Who Care for making this funding

available to the museum. It will help ensure that cultural programming is accessible to everyone within Montgomery County and beyond."

The 100+ Women Who Care chapter meets quarterly on the third Tuesday of January, April, July, and October. The organization continues to meet virtually and will meet via ZOOM on Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. Committed members donate \$100 each quarter, and each meeting lasts one hour.

At each 100+ Women Who Care quarterly meeting, the names of three local not-for-profits are drawn from a bucket. Each organization must have a 100+ Women Who Care sponsor willing to present on its behalf. The group's membership area includes the counties of Montgomery, Giles, Pulaski, and Floyd, and the City of Radford. All interested women are invited to join to support local not-for-profits that make the New River Valley a better place to live. For more information, visit www.100womenwhocarenrv.com or email nrv100wwc@gmail.com.

Glo Fiber brings blazing fast Internet to Blacksburg area

Glo Fiber, powered by Shenandoah Telecommunications Company, announced Tuesday the 2022 arrival of its fiber optic network to Blacksburg.

The company will launch services in the first half of 2022, delivering blazing fast Internet to more than 7,000 serviceable homes and businesses.

Glo Fiber provides next-generation fiber-to-the-home Internet access, streaming TV, and phone service in the Mid-Atlantic region with optional wall-to-wall Wi-Fi service that allows customers to connect anywhere in their home or business. Using WiFi 6 technology, customers can enjoy faster speeds, higher performance, and better support for multiple devices throughout the home with the assurance of advanced protection and automatic updates.

"We are continuously investing in our fiber network infrastructure to keep it best in class, both for residential and business customers," said Chris Kyle, Vice President of Industry and Regulatory Affairs at Shentel. "The expansion to Blacksburg aligns with our strategic growth goals and commitment to our customers to provide the fastest, most reliable, and most affordable Internet to homes and businesses throughout the Mid-Atlantic region."

Glo Fiber will offer three

tiers of symmetrical, high-speed Internet access, streaming TV, and unlimited local and long-distance phone service to the area. Glo TV service is delivered via an app and is compatible with Apple TV, Amazon's Fire Stick, and many smart TVs with embedded streaming software. Internet pricing is all-inclusive with no additional fees or surcharges, excluding taxes, making it an affordable option for one or more individuals relying on the Internet for work, school, and play.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

UPCOMING EVENTS

Now through Jan. 21:

Apply now for NRV Master Gardener Program

The New River Valley Master Gardener Program is seeking applicants for the 2022 Master Gardener Training class. The classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from Feb. 15 through May 5 on the Virginia Tech Campus and at the Montgomery County Government Center. Topics covered include basic botany, plant propagation, herbaceous plants, houseplants, vegetables, fruits, pruning, landscape design, floral design, lawn care, woody plants, entomology, plant pathology, abiotic stresses, soils, and pesticide use and safety. The cost for the course is \$185.00 and participants do 50 hours of volunteer service. Contact Wendy Silverman at the Montgomery County Extension Office at 540-382-5790 for more information. Applications are due Jan. 21, 2022.

Now through Feb.1:

Town of Blacksburg Leaf Collection

The Town of Blacksburg is finalizing leaf collection in the two remaining areas of town: Wyatt Farms and Woodbine. Residents are reminded that leaves may also be bagged and placed curbside until Feb. 1.

Now through Feb. 28:

MFRL adult winter reading program

Join the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library's adult winter reading program, challenging patrons to read during January and February and keep track of their reading on the library's Beanstack site. Earn badges with each book read and activity completed. <https://mfrl.beanstack.org/>.

Saturday Jan. 15:

Caturday
At the Christiansburg Library; noon to 1 p.m. 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. Email shodges@mfrl.org for more information.

Dyslexia: The Basics
At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 1 p.m. Pediatric speech-language pathologist Vicki W. Brackett will give a brief overview of the symptoms and cause of dyslexia. Her presentation will include the myths, the symptoms to look for in both young children and adults, and what can be done to help overcome some of the issues associated with dyslexia. Handouts will be provided.

Author Talk: Mary Ellen Campagna
At the Christiansburg Library; 2 p.m. Join local author Mary Ellen Campagna as she discusses her new book, "UNA: Queen of Trouble." Books will be available for preorder at the event.

Teen DND
At the Blacksburg Library at 2 p.m.

Chess Club
At the Blacksburg Library; 3 p.m. Ages 8 and up are welcome to sharpen their chess skills. Supplies provided. All skill levels welcome.

Sunday, Jan. 16:

Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County NAACP MLK Celebration
The NAACP celebrates and honors the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Guest speaker for the 2022 celebration is Dr. Tommy McDearis, Senior Pastor of Blacksburg Baptist Church. The virtual celebration will include presenting the MRF NAACP/Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Awards and presentations by the NAACP Youth Council. Join in honoring Dr. King with music, poetry and an inspiring message. To register for the virtual celebration, log onto <https://mrfnacp.com/MLK2022>. A special offering will be taken for the MRF NAACP/Samuel H. Clark Memorial Scholarship. Each year up to five youth are

awarded \$1,000 scholarships. Donations may be sent to Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County Branch NAACP, PO Box 6044, Christiansburg, Virginia 24068.

Monday, Jan. 17:

Crafternoon
At the Radford Public Library; 1 to 2 p.m. Participants may bring their supplies to this Crafternoon Delight crafting club for adults.

Radford closures and Solid Waste Collection For MLK Jr. Day

City offices will be closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The solid waste collection schedule is as follows: Monday, Jan. 1, 7 will be collected on Tuesday, Jan. 18. Please have garbage ready for collection by 7:30 a.m. The drop center is closed on Monday, Jan. 17, and Tuesday, Jan. 18.

Tuesday, Jan. 18:

Stuffed animal taxidermy
At the Blacksburg Library; 4:30 p.m. The library will supply all the materials. Recommended for teens. Email mroach@mfrl.org with any questions.

Laid Back Gaming Night for Teens

At the Radford Public Library; 6 p.m. Registration required. Enjoy a relaxing time playing a variety of video games both current and retro. To register, call (540) 731-3621 or email elizabeth.sensabaugh@radfordva.gov. This event is for grades 7-12.

Wednesday, Jan. 19:

American Business Women's Association luncheon meeting
At the Holiday Inn Christiansburg-Blacksburg, 99 Bradley Dr., Christiansburg, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$14.25. Guest speaker is Ann Custer, Professional Organizer with WOW Organizing Services. RSVP by noon on Jan. 17, 2022. Contact Terri Welch at christiansburg@wineanddesign.com

Computer Basics, Part 3
At the Meadowbrook

Public Library; 10:30 p.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..

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Schedule an appointment at www.redcrossblood.org. The blood drive will be held at the Waldron Wellness Center-Carilion Community Room and is co-sponsored by the Craighill Masonic Lodge. Patrons of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library with fines who donate blood will be forgiven up to \$10, redeemable only at Meadowbrook Public Library at 1 p.m.

Art Club: Chila Kumari Burman

At the Christiansburg Library; 2 p.m. Explore the art of Chila Kumari Burman and recreate one of her famous sculptures, Eat Me Now. For ages 6 and up.

Free GED Classes with NRCC

Free GED prep classes are being offered by New River Community College in the Radford Public Library's community room from 9 a.m. until noon. Call (540) 674-3682 for additional information.

Thursday, Jan. 20:

Talking About Books Nonfiction: "The Good Neighbor - The Life and Work of Fred Rogers"
At the Christiansburg Library; 11 a.m. Discussed this month is "The Good Neighbor: The Life and Work of Fred Rogers" by Maxwell King. Meeting in-person and virtually.

Snowstorm Slime

At the Blacksburg Library; 3:30 p.m. Make some fun snowstorm slim.! Supplies are limited. Email mroach@mfrl.org with any questions.

Dungeons & Dragons - Level 3

Adventure into the world of Dungeons & Dragons with the Radford Public Library from 4:30 to 7 p.m.

Email duncan.hall@radfordva.gov to get set up with everything needed to build a level 3 hero. Hybrid virtual attendance options are available for those interested.

Saturday Jan. 22:

Friends of the Library Book Sale

An all-day event at the Blacksburg Library; \$5 per bag of books, \$1 for hardbacks, \$.50 for paperbacks. Support the Friends of the Library and score some deals on terrific books.

Tuesday, Jan. 25:

Rock Painting

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 4:30 p.m. Paint rocks to look like a fish (or other aquatic creature) and put them in a fishbowl for a personal aquarium. All supplies are provided, and this is a free event. Recommended for ages 10 and up. Spaces are limited so pre-registration is required.

Science-Fiction/Fantasy Book Club: "Trail of Lightning"

Blacksburg Library; 6:30 p.m. To be discussed is "Trail of Lightning" by Rebecca Roanhorse. Call 540-552-8246 to reserve a copy.

Wednesday, Jan. 26:

Lunch and Learn: Listening Session

At the Blacksburg Library; noon. Sustainable Blacksburg is making a January listening session an annual tradition to keep building on the progress and incorporate new ideas for the new year. This is a fun, interactive community listening and brainstorming session. Meeting in person or via Zoom by registering at <https://go.mfrl.org/BB012622>.

Saturday, Jan. 29:

Click Smarter photography Q and A

Radford Public Library from 11 a.m. to noon. Talk to professional photographer Charlie Whitescarver about photography. He can look at your photographs and provide some tips on how to improve them. Masks are required for in-person

attendance of library programs. Whitescarver has been taking pictures and teaching the art of photography since the mid-1970s.

Quilting Marathon

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Meadowbrook Quilters are hosting a quilting marathon. The public is invited to see these skilled individuals working on quilts. The event is open to everyone at any skill level to come and join in the quilting or to just ask questions.

Bookmark Making

Blacksburg Library; 2 p.m. Use basic hand sewing skills to create a colorful elastic bookmark that fits many sizes of books. A quick and fun craft for anyone who can sew a few stitches. Best for ages 8 and up. All supplies provided; registration recommended. Call the library at 540-552-8246.

Sunday, Jan. 30:

Teen Game Day

Blacksburg Library; 1 p.m. Spend an afternoon playing games like Among Us and Jackbox in person with other teens. Bring a device and download Among Us prior to the program. Pizza and beverages will be provided. Registration is required.

Wednesday, Feb. 2:

Radford Chamber Business Over Breakfast

The Radford Chamber of Commerce is hosting Business Over Breakfast at BT'S on Tyler Avenue at 8 a.m. The seaker is to be determined. Registration is required by clicking the "register here" link on the Chamber's website (www.radfordchamber.com).

Thursday, Feb. 10:

River City Quilt Guild

The River City Quilt Guild meets the second Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Grove United Methodist Church, 1020 Tyler Avenue, Radford. All skill levels of quilters are welcome. For more information call Anna Handy, 540 320 7791.

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Inorganic Ventures expands with new enterprise development team

CHRISTIANSBURG — Inorganic Ventures, a manufacturer of high-quality analytical inorganic standards for testing in a wide range of industries, Monday announced the addition of a new enterprise development division. Led by Justin Yalung, Chief Operating Officer, the company's enterprise development arm will have overall authority for developing new products and expanding the organization's portfolio.

"The enterprise development division will play an integral role in defining the future expansion efforts of Inorganic Ventures," said Yalung. "The newly appointed team will be instrumental in exploring the intersection of the company's core business capabilities and decades of experience with its existing customer base and the limitless market opportunities that the company can expand into."

As part of the announcement, the company has appointed Tyler Farnsworth to the newly created role of Head of Product

Development. In this role, he will have oversight and responsibility for identifying and developing new products and expanding existing product applications to penetrate markets outside the company's core business lines.

Prior to joining Inorganic Ventures, Dr. Farnsworth served as a research scientist with Luna Innovations where he conducted applied materials research and product development bridging the military and commercial sectors. Farnsworth earned his doctorate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina Upstate.

The company also promoted Tom Borak to the newly created role of Head of Commercial Development. His responsibility will include overseeing the company's expansion into new product lines, additional services, and growing business. Borak previously served as customer experience manager for the organization.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Christiansburg's Inorganic Ventures has announced a major expansion with the creation of a new enterprise development team that will develop new products.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society celebrates its 50th anniversary

With an office in Christiansburg, Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc., its celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2022.

The society was established in 1972 as a one-attorney, two county-program supporting Smyth and Bland Counties. Major legal efforts first began with a focus on opening hospital doors to low-income pregnant women in need of obstetrical care. The first director, Joseph S. Tate, focused on helping low-income individuals and families with civil law cases, providing outreach education, and working with Emory and Henry College to prepare educational materials for the low-income people.

Today, the legal aid society operates as a 501(c)(3) law firm with three offices located in Castlewood, Marion, and Christiansburg, staffing over 40 employees throughout a service area consisting of 17 counties and four small cities.

As part of the 50th Anniversary events, the legal aid society is focusing on an increased social media presence and has launched a new website, www.svlas.org, which features a user-friendly menu and easier navigation tools for clients, donors and partners. Additionally, the society is planning several educational webinar sessions and other notable events to include two annual conferences: the Elder Abuse Conference (June 10, 2022) and the

Domestic Violence Conference (Oct. 7, 2022).

"For fifty years, the Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society has provided assistance to over 300,000 low-income Southwest Virginians," said the society's executive director, Joseph R. Carico. "Our attorneys and staff stand ready to continue to serve the people here with their personal struggles and during these challenging times."

Anyone needing legal assistance may call legal aid at 1-888-201-2772 to apply for services. The call is free, and intake staff are available to take calls Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Those seeking assistance can also apply online 24 hours a day at www.svlas.org.

Soaring fertilizer prices have farmers bracing for spring planting

As fertilizer costs continue to rise, farmers are working hard to plan and budget for the 2022 growing season.

Fertilizer is a necessity for farmers, allowing them to achieve the high yields needed to meet demand and keep their operations afloat. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, fertilizer costs have risen as much as 300% in some areas, adding significant pressure to farmers' pocketbooks.

"It's just so outrageously high. It's pretty unreal," said Richard Kitchen, a Southampton County farmer and member of Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's Cotton Advisory Committee.

Kitchen grows cotton, peanuts, corn, soybeans, and wheat at Plank Road Farms in Courtland. He said while he isn't using much fertilizer during the winter, he'll have to be strategic in the spring.

"It'll be a lot of sharpening the pencil and deciding what is going to be the best crop mix for the 2022 growing season," Kitchen

said. "Maybe that means not growing as many acres of crops that require a lot of fertilizer."

American Farm Bureau Federation says that increased global demand; energy costs; increased prices of raw nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium; supply chain disruptions; and trade duties are all contributing to sky-high prices.

Kitchen said that many farmers had stellar growing seasons with larger yields in 2021. Combined with higher commodity prices, farmers were in a good position to make extra income, money that could be saved or reinvested back into the farm.

"Unfortunately, a lot of those profits are going to be diminished because you're already going to be spending this money just to buy fertilizer so we're able to farm next year," Kitchen said. "So where normally we'd be excited, it's knocking us back a notch."

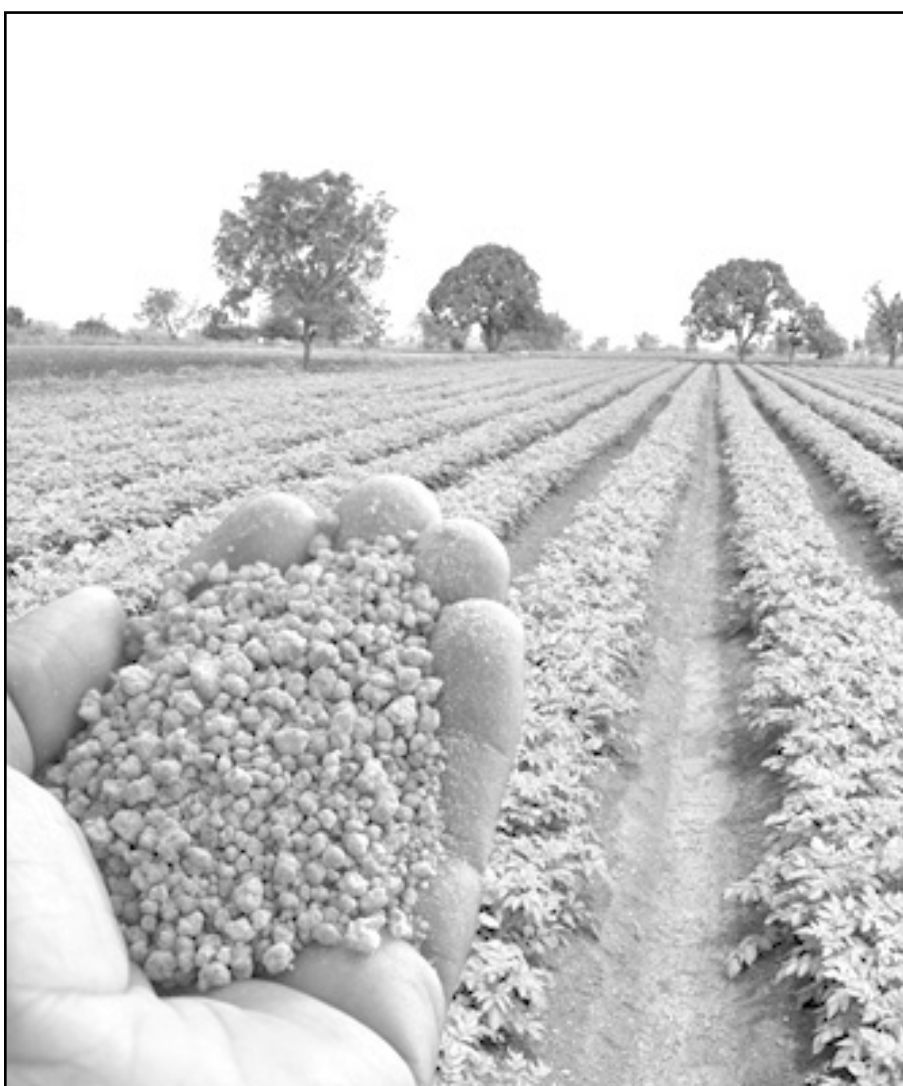
In Westmoreland County, Sparky Crossman said high fertilizer prices

are just another thing for farmers to contend with, alongside unpredictable weather, pests, and other factors that come into play when growing crops.

"When commodity prices go up, fertilizer, seed, and everything tend to follow," he said. "It goes up quickly and stays there for a while, and it's a long time coming back until commodity prices start dropping again."

Crossman owns Laurel Springs Grain Corporation in Mount Holly where he grows corn and grain on about 500 acres. He noted that corn requires the most nitrogen, and according to the American Farm Bureau Federation, nitrogen costs have risen over 159% compared to September 2020.

Crossman said farmers will have to "tighten their belts." He added that he may reduce the amount of fertilizer he uses in 2022. "It probably wouldn't hurt me for a year or so, but if prices stay up there a long time, it would really hurt everyone. I don't like it, but what can we do?"



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Virginia Forestry Department urges caution for burning storm debris



SUBMITTED PHOTO

In the wake of recent storms that hit Virginia, officials with the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) is encouraging people to practice safe burning if and when they begin burning yard debris and blown down limbs and trees.

The VDOF regulates open burning and there

are several rules, regulations, and tips that residents need to follow to stay safe, stay legal, and avoid undesirable impacts from smoke.

From Feb. 15 through the end of April, it is illegal to burn BEFORE 4 p.m. if you're within 300 feet of woods or dry grass leading to the woods. Visit <https://dof.virginia.gov/wildland-prescribed-fire/wildfire-prevention/before-you-burn/> for complete regulations.

The department offers these tips to ensure responsible burning:

Start any burn as early as possible (after 4 p.m. during fire season), so the fire will have time to die down before evening sets

in.

Citizens should follow any local burning ordinances that are in effect in their area.

Have enough people on-site to keep the fire attended to and controlled at all times.

Keep handy a water hose, shovel, or other means to put out the fire.

Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving it. This means no

smoke and no heat.

Call 911 for help immediately if your fire escapes. Several minutes may pass before a fire department or the Forestry Department can arrive on the scene.

Be aware that you might be held liable for the cost of suppression and damages to the property of others.

Burn piles should be located in an area that

has been cleared down to bare soil, less than 10 feet in diameter, at least 25 feet from any forested area (grasslands, brush or wildlands), at least 25 feet from your home or other combustible structure, and at least 50 feet from any public roadway.

The department offers the following burn don't's.

Don't burn household garbage (including paper

products), treated lumber, plastics, rubber materials, tires, pesticides, paint and aerosol containers. Burning these items is illegal.

Don't burn wet materials, as this creates excessive smoke.

Don't burn on windy days.

Don't leave a fire unattended, even for a moment. Escaped debris fires can spread quickly.

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Literacy

from page 1

home,” Ayers said.

“Having worked both in the manufacturing sector and higher education in the NRV, I’ve had front-row exposure to the needs of our neighbors and the lack of resources available for adult literacy skills development. I have a personal affinity for the work of LVNRV, and I look forward to supporting and expanding our variety of educational opportunities to help our students achieve their goals.”

The organization’s previous executive director, Linda Jilk, will continue to be employed with LVNRV in a part-time role focused on promot-

ing student literacy learning.

Literacy Volunteers of the NRV, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and United Way partner agency, offers free educational services for adults who want to improve reading, writing, English, math, and basic computer skills, or prepare for the GED or the US Citizenship exam to achieve goals for self-sufficiency.

Instruction is provided one-on-one as well as through small groups and classes offered at community-based locations throughout the New River Valley and online. A family literacy program, offered in partnership with local pub-

lic libraries, teaches parents skills to help their children succeed in school. Skill UP NRV is an initiative to help adults learn skills to get and succeed at a job.

The Bridge to Digital Literacy initiative helps adults access technology and skills for virtual tutoring and independence.

Each year, 200 to 300 adults receive literacy services through LVNRV thanks to the in-kind contributions of more than 150 volunteers and the generous financial support of the NRV community. Estimates are that 24,000 adults in the New River Valley struggle with basic reading.

Growing the edge of plant-forward campus dining

Making effective choices for personal health, like choices for the health of our climate, can be complex and sometimes overwhelming. Because those choices meet in the foods we eat, Dining Services is increasing ways for students to improve both personal and planetary health with every meal.

By increasing plant-based options in dining center menus, chefs empower eating choices with greater diversity of flavor, less adverse environmental impact, and a healthier balance of ingredients, choices collectively known as plant-forward cuisine. Dining Services

promoted those options in each dining center with its recent Plant-Forward Fridays series.

The Culinary Institute of America defines plant-forward as “a style of cooking and eating that emphasizes and celebrates, but is not limited to: foods from plant sources — fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, plant oils, and herbs and spices — and reflects evidence-based principles of health and sustainability.”

Ben Marks, associate director of Dining Services, says plant-forward dining focuses on “plant-based foods that add new

and exciting flavors, textures, experiences, sustainably sourced proteins, and foods that benefit your health within sustainable food systems.”

Plant-forward dining emphasizes balance, so it takes an inclusive approach to ingredients and menus. “Plant forward is not vegetarian, nor is it animal protein heavy. It encourages chefs to use fresh ingredients and showcase their natural flavors to create a unique dining experience,” said James Zeisler, executive chef at Owens Food Court.

While the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends about five cups of fruits and vegetables daily for college-aged people, Dining Services’ most recent survey of student eating habits indicates that less than 6 percent of Virginia Tech female students and less than 3 percent of male students met this recommendation.

Virginia Tech dining has embraced plant-forward on multiple fronts. “We are leaning into the principles of healthy and sustainable menus,” said Marks. “We buy fresh, seasonal, and local. Not just where possible from



Campus dining patrons enjoy a plant-forward meal outside. Photo by Darren Van Dyke for Virginia Tech.

our industry partners, but through our support of Homefield Farms,” the Dining Services-supported certified organic farm that locally grows around 50,000 pounds of produce for campus dining centers each year.

“Plant-forward is such a helpful approach” because we can market healthy plant-based foods that will attract all students rather than just vegans and vegetarians,” said Ashley Foster, assistant director of nutrition.

“In student focus groups, we hear vegans, vegetarians, and even meat eaters looking to diversify their diet all say

that they like seeing more whole plant-based proteins.”

While plant-based eating may not be mainstream, its presence is growing among foodies. Vegetarian- and vegan-friendly dishes took seven of the 10 most popular orders on the online ordering platform Grubhub in 2019. That year, Virginia Tech students placed more than 1.2 million orders with Dining Services using Grubhub.

“We hear from our students that they prefer more plant-based options, so it is our job to bring those dishes to life for them,” said Scott Sur-

ratt, executive chef of West End Market. “With plant-forward cuisine, there is more thought going into flavor for dishes that were once secondary. By bringing these items to the center of the plate and of our culinary attention, we can give students a more satisfying experience eating them.”

“The future of plant forward on campus will reflect the students’ desire for healthy and savory dining experiences,” said Randall Van Dyke, executive chef of Dietrick dining center.. “That’s what we’re going to give them, and it’s exciting for us as chefs.”

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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.

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Va. Dept. of Transportation roadwatch

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

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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

LANE CLOSURES:

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 early 2022.

LANE CLOSURES: Alternating lane closures may be in place for milling and paving on I-81 southbound during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the next morning. Expect lane closures on Route 8 between the on and off ramps of I-81.

RAMP CLOSURES: Weather permitting, the I-81 southbound exit 114 on and off ramps may be closed during nighttime hours for milling and paving from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. Message boards will update drivers. Only one ramp will be closed at a time.

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

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

ROUTE 615 CULVERT REPLACEMENT – Beginning April 11, 2022, Route 615 (Pilot Road) will undergo a culvert replacement located at the intersection of Pilot Road and Old Pike Road, across from the Pilot Post Office. Single lane closures will be in place and will be maintained by utilizing temporary traffic signals. Lane closures on RTE 615 are expected to begin on 5/2/2022 and will be in place through August 2022. Expected completion is October 2022.

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

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

ROUTE 636 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT SENECA HOLLOW - Work has begun replacing the bridge on Route 636 over the Roanoke River at Seneca Hollow. The contractor is planning to pour the last pier footing and stem within the second week of January and then cure for 14-20 days. 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 February 2022.

UTILITY WORK ON ROUTE 460 - MMI will be installing fiber optic along Route 460 and Route 8 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.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Point one point E. of due S

4. Slithered

8. The brain and spinal cord (abbr.)

11. Direct the steering of a ship

13. Chops with irregular blows

15. Plural of hilum

16. Incline from vertical (geo.)

17. Simple word forms

18. Paddles

19. Roman garment

21. Meat skewers

23. Ethiopia (abbr.)

25. The cry made by sheep

26. Beatty-Bening movie

30. Concealed

33. Political action committee

34. High rock piles (Old English)

35. Scottish County (abbr.)

36. Goat and camel hair fabric

37. A very large body of water

38. Fabric stain

39. Israeli city ___ Aviv

40. Shoe's underside

42. Military legal corps

43. Patti Hearst's captors

44. Undecided

48. ___ death do us part

49. Supervises flying

50. Many headed monsters

54. Literary language of Pakistan

57. Halo

58. Hawaiian hello

63. Lubricants

65. Mild exclamation

66. Greek fresh-water nymph

67. Nickname for grandmother

68. A restaurant bill

69. Automaker Ransom E.

70. A young man

CLUES DOWN

1. Schenectady County Airport

2. Small water craft

3. Opposite of ecto

4. The woman

5. Skeletal muscle

6. Devoid of warmth and cordiality

7. Decameter

8. Italian goodbye

9. Mediation council

10. Impudence

12. A desert in S Israel

14. Japanese seaport

15. Nob or goblin

20. Ingested

22. Swiss river

24. Protects head from weather

25. Lava rock

26. Designer identifier

27. 34470 FL

28. Petrified ancient animal

29. Gas used in refrigeration

30. Journeys to Mecca

31. Eighth month, Jewish calendar

32. Small indefinite quantity

33. Taps

41. Extremely high frequency

44. Iguanidae genus

45. From the Leaning Tower's city

46. Cologne

47. Moses' elder brother (Bible)

50. A minute amount (Scott)

51. Hindu name for 4 epochs

52. Faded and dull

53. Radioactivity unit

55. The face of a clock

56. The inner forearm bone

59. Tai language of the Mekong region

60. Embrocate

61. Possessed

62. Public promotions

64. Sorrowful

OBITUARIES

Akers, Larry Isaac

Larry Isaac Akers, 76, born and raised in Christiansburg, residing in Round Hill, Va., went home to be with his heavenly Father on Jan. 9, 2022.

Larry was preceded in death by his son, Kelly Wade Akers, and brothers and sisters, Calvin, Alvin, Leona, Ruth, Kenneth and Eugene.

He is survived by his sister, Maybelline Holcomb, and his brother, Leon Akers. He was also preceded in death by his beloved doggies, Harley and Sam.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife, Sharon Oliver Akers; daughters Angelique Lovern and Stephanie Dulaney (Jeff); his treasured grandchildren Cody (Lauren), Kyle, Chelsea, and Holly Berry; great-grandchildren Bennett and Bexley, and a host of family and friends.

Larry served his country in the

U.S. Army (Vietnam era); he was a member of Company B – 2nd Battalion, 101st Airborne. He received a National Defense Service Medal for Sharpshooter, Rifle M-14 and Parachutist Badge. He trained in Fort Campbell, Ky.

He loved his Virginia Tech Hokies, Boston Celtics, New York Yankees, Green Bay Packers, and the trips taken on his Harley motorcycles.

Visitation was Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022, at Horne Funeral Home. Funeral Services were held on Friday, Jan. 14, 2022, at 11 a.m. in the Horne Funeral Home Chapel. Interment followed in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

In lieu of flowers please make donations to your local Animal Shelter or SPCA.



Cooper, Bob Amon

Bob Amon Cooper, of Pilot, went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022.

He was born June 3, 1958, in Radford. He was preceded in death by his mother, Ethel W. McPeak, and his father, Wesley H. McPeak.

He is survived by his three children, Kelly Cooper of Blacksburg, Christopher Cooper of Christiansburg, and Kimberly Cooper of Pilot; five grandchildren, Alex

Cooper, Shane Burton, Devin Adkins, Shylynn Guidry, and Kyley Sanson; and a brother, Willy Cooper.

Bob took pride in riding his motorcycle and loved taking care of his dogs.

The family will have a private memorial service at a later date.

The Cooper family is in the care of Mullins Funeral



Home in Radford.

www.montcova.com

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

UNDESERVED GRACE

Read Genesis 42:1 through 44:34

On March 8, 2009, a man walked into the First Baptist Church of Maryville, Illinois, and shot and killed Pastor Fred Winters. His family and church were in shock.

CBS News interviewed Pastor Winters’ wife, Cindy, the next week regarding her husband’s assailant. What type of a reaction would she have? She said, “I do not have any hatred, or even hard feelings towards him. We have been praying for him. One of the first things that my daughter said to me after this happened was, ‘You know, I hope that he comes to learn to love Jesus through all of this.’ ” What an example of grace!

Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they didn’t recognize him (Genesis 42:8).

Joseph was in a position to get revenge on his brothers, but he showed them grace instead. He recognized God’s hand at work through the circumstances of his life and so could forgive what his brothers had done to him.

No one expects this type of grace from people who have been greatly harmed by others. Only through knowing a God of grace is it possible to extend such grace.

Challenge for Today: Are you showing others the grace God has shown you?

Quicklook: Genesis 42:6–18

If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Randy Thompson at 540-389-9355 or email at advertise@ourvalley.org

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

MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Christiansburg Aquatic Center hosts high school swim meet



Auburn's Adison Martin dives in at the start of the 50-yard freestyle. Martin placed 17th overall. Auburn's boys' squad finished 1-3, and the girls finished 1-4 in the competition.



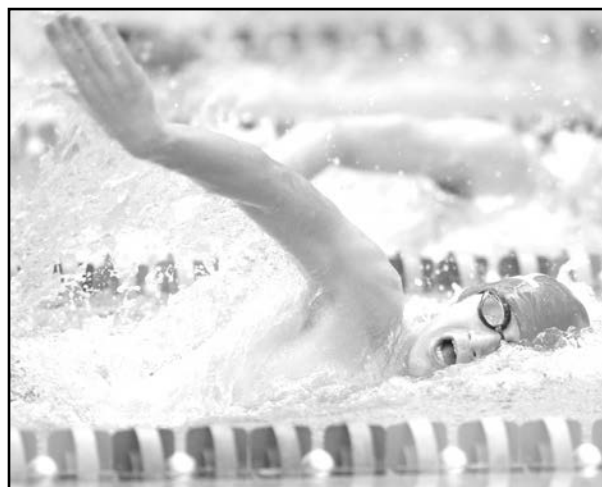
Christiansburg's Marcus Gallager dives in at the start of the 50-yard freestyle. He placed sixth overall at Tuesday's CAC swim meet.



Christiansburg's Shelby Jones swam to a second-place finish in the 200-yard freestyle in a time of 2:12.85 at the Tuesday night swim meet hosted by the Christiansburg Aquatic Center.



Christiansburg's Harmony Fentress swims the opening butterfly leg in the 200-yard IM at the CAC Tuesday meet. The Christiansburg boys' team finished 3-1 on the evening while the girls were 3-2.



Auburn's Kade Hamilton placed third in the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 59.01 at the meet at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Christiansburg's Raena Worley excels at gymnastics for University of Kentucky

Marty Gordon

NRVsports@ourvalley.org

As a sophomore this past year, Christiansburg's Raena Worley was named second-team Women's Collegiate Gymnastics Association All-American in the all-around event, the seventh gymnastics All-American in University of Kentucky history.

She was also named to the All-Southeastern Conference team and the SEC Community Service Team.

Worley had her early start in the mountains of Southwest Virginia. She did not participate in the sport in high school. Instead, she developed her talent at the Virginia Techniques gym located on Roanoke Street in Christiansburg.

"It played a huge role in developing my gymnastics career and helping me become the gymnast that I am today," Worley said. "I learned so many things from them that I still use to this day. Techniques taught me how to balance the importance of sport and life and how to develop relationships with peers and teammates to grow bonds and make the team stronger."

As a sophomore this past year, she competed in every meet for the Wildcats, earning three first-places on the bars, four on the floor, and six in all-around. Worley then scored a 9.7875 score on the vault at the NCAA championships and tied her career high of 9.950 on the beam in a tie for first place at the NCAA's.

She was also named the SEC All-Freshman Athlete of the Year.

Virginia Techniques hosted its annual Rockstar Invitational this week at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Worley said she always enjoyed the event here in her own backyard.

"I have so many memories from this meet," she said. "It was always one that I got super excited for, similar to the thought of Excite Night (at the University of Kentucky). It is the home crowd, and we are able to get super involved with family, friends, and fans throughout the competition. I remember there were many times the team would get so excited at Rockstar Invitational. A lot of work was put into this meet, and it will always be a special memory to me."

Worley was offered a scholarship to UK when she was just 14 years old after her success on the national level.

In 2019, she finished second in the Women's Junior Olympic Championships and along the way received more than 60 national awards.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UK ATHLETICS

Christiansburg native Raena Worley is in her third season for the University of Kentucky gymnastics team.

Worley admits it's crazy to think she is going into her third year at UK. "It has gone by so fast, and I wish there was a way I could slow it down," she said. "I am very pleased with how it has gone so far. I personally set goals for each season, and my coaches help me to reach them by challenging me throughout practices daily. Going into this season, I have high expectations for both me and the team."

Worley personally would like to attend nationals for the All-Around event.

She also took time this past week to give advice to the Rockstar Invitational participants.

"One thing I would like to say is to keep persevering," she said. "Gymnastics is a difficult sport, and there are going to be so many mental, physical, and emotional challenges thrown at you. Working through these challenges will not only grow your strength and toughness, but it will also help you grow your character, which is the most important thing in sports."

Gymnastics can be mainly an individual sport, but Worley is keeping her eyes on a team prize.

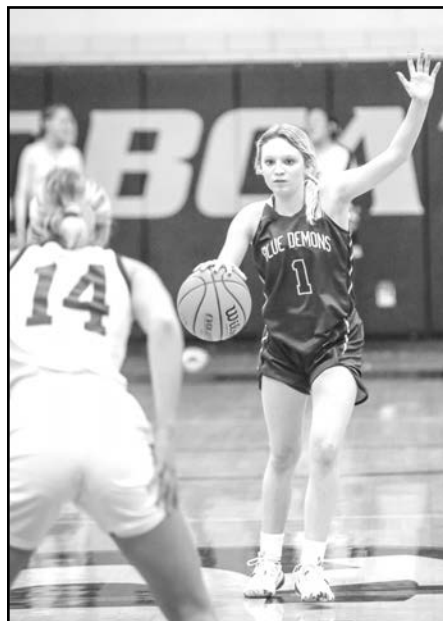
"The future is a national championship," she said.

Off the mat, Worley is a double major in communications and the athletic training program at UK.

Radford girls down Christiansburg girls 49-33



Katy Hoover shoots a jumper over a Radford defender for two of her four points in the 49-33 loss Monday night.



Kyrstin Lowe calls out the offensive play against the Bobcats.



PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

Christiansburg senior Antwanniqua Banks scores from the free-throw line in Monday's game. She finished with seven points.

www.montcova.com

CROSSWORD ANSWERS												
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Hokie Sivert Haugli selected in MLS SuperDraft

Sivert Haugli became the tenth Virginia Tech men's soccer player drafted on Tuesday, as he was selected with the 27th pick in the third round (No. 83 overall) by the Portland Timbers.

Haugli, a four-year starter for the Hokies, recorded three goals and an assist in his senior campaign last fall. The captain and anchor of Tech's back line, Haugli's two goals against No.-1 Marshall spurred the Hokies to their 3-2 comeback win in August. At the midway point of the 2021 season, the Norwegian was named the No.-39 best player in the country by Top Drawer Soccer.

"It's surreal to get selected in the MLS Draft," said Haugli. "I want to thank everyone at VT who contributed to making the goal of getting drafted possible. I couldn't have done it without all my teammates, friends, coaches, staff, and anyone who supported us in the stands or from afar. You all have meant the world to me, and I thank each and every one of you for opening up this exciting new chapter of my career and life that I can't wait to get started on."

Since his arrival in Blacksburg from Oslo, Norway, in 2018, Haugli has been a staple in Virginia Tech's lineup in a defensive role. He made 71 appearances for Virginia Tech, all of them as a starter.

Haugli is part of the third class in Virginia Tech men's soccer history that can

say it went to the NCAA Tournament each of its four years at Tech. The Hokies went 4-2-2 in the tournament while Haugli was part of the squad, earning a national seed twice and making three Sweet Sixteen appearances.

In Haugli's senior campaign, Tech earned two ranked wins, downing No.-1 Marshall and No. 23- Louisville with its season coming to an end after a 1-1 draw against No.-21 West Virginia. In previous seasons, the Hokies earned wins over No.-15 Oregon State and No.-16 New Hampshire in the NCAA Tournament.

Along with success on the national level, Tech's reputation in the state landscape changed while Haugli was in Blacksburg. The Hokies went 2-2-2 in the past four seasons against in-state foe Virginia and VT was the only Division I school from the commonwealth to make the 2021 NCAA Tournament.

In the summer of 2021, Haugli was a member of USL League Two side Des Moines Menace, which won the 2021 USL League Two national championship.

Haugli graduated from Virginia Tech in December of 2021 with a degree in management.

With his selection, Haugli became the tenth player drafted into the MLS from Virginia Tech and the fourth in three seasons.

Labovitz named VaSID Player of the Year

Four Virginia Tech men's soccer players and men's soccer head coach Mike Brizendine have earned accolades in the 2021 Virginia Sports Information Directors (VaSID) All-State team.

Jacob Labovitz was named the Player of the Year while Kyle McDowell and Ben Martino earned first-team honors and Danny Flores received second-team recognition.

This year marks the second season in a row that Tech has claimed the Player of the Year (Daniel Pereira, 2020) and the

Coach of the Year awards.

Labovitz, a first team All-ACC selection last season, led the Hokies in scoring this season with nine goals, matching his tally from the 2020 season. Following his two-goal performance against Virginia that included a double-overtime winner, Labovitz was named ACC Offensive Player of the Week. In 2020, Labovitz was named to the VaSID All-State first team.

McDowell also earns his second All-State recognition from VaSID, although this is the defender's debut on the

first team. The West Sussex, England, native led the Hokies with eight assists, a tally good for fourth in the ACC and second amongst defenders.

Martino stepped up in goal in his rookie season, starting 18 matches and recording five clean sheets.

The goalkeeper from Pittsburgh, Penn., averaged 3.56 saves per game, the third-best number in the conference. At the end of the season, Martino was named the No. 20 freshman in the country and second-team All-Freshman by Top Drawer Soccer.

Flores, who was named to the ACC's All-Freshman team and first team All-Freshman by Top Drawer Soccer, picked up second-team VaSID honors. The midfielder from Half Moon Bay, Calif., started 19 contests for the Hokies. Flores recorded three assists on the season and one goal, a game-winner in overtime against Notre Dame.

Brizendine claimed his third VaSID Coach of the Year award. His first came in 2016, the season that kickstarted the Hokies' ongoing six-year streak of making the NCAA Tournament. This season Tech was the only Division I school in Virginia to qualify for the tournament.

Virginia Tech also claimed its fourth victory over a No.-1 ranked team (the third since Brizendine became head coach) when it defeated Marshall.

The members of Virginia Sports Information Directors (VaSID) also voted Radford University men's soccer forward Yoshiya Okawa as Rookie of the Year and Second Team All-State.

Okawa appeared in 16 games, made 13 starts, and tallied six goals and one assist for 13 total points. Fifteen of his 27 shot attempts landed on frame, giving him an impressive .556 shots-on-goal percentage.

The Tokyo, Japan, native delivered several dazzling long-distance strikes this fall, earning himself a place on the All-Big South Second Team as well as the Big South All-Freshman Team. He ended the year ranked in the top 10 in the conference in both goals per game and total goals.

Virginia Sports Information Directors (VaSID) name 44 all-state teams in 23 sports each year as well as an Academic All-State squad and an all-sports champion in both the university and college divisions.

Membership in VaSID is open to all media relations professionals working at a university or conference in the state of Virginia.

Blacksburg boys defeat Auburn boys 58-42



Blacksburg's Matt Joyce applies the defensive pressure in the Bruins' 58-42 defeat of Auburn Wednesday night.



Auburn's Ethan Millirons floats in the lane and splits the Blacksburg defenders for the shot as the Eagles tried to keep the contest close.



Auburn's Nick Millirons absorbs the contact to pass the ball to draw the Blacksburg defense in.



PHOTOS BY JAMES PERKINS

Blacksburg's Cody Miller drops the shoulder and drives in from the wing in Wednesday's win over Auburn.

Virginia Tech basketball senior Keve Aluma on mid-season watch list

Virginia Tech men's basketball redshirt-senior Keve Aluma remains in the hunt for the 2022 Lute Olson Award as the mid-season watch list was announced Wednesday.

The award, which is presented annually to the top player in Division I college basketball, is named in honor of Hall of Fame coach Lute Olson, who won 776

games in 34 seasons, 24 of which were spent at the University of Arizona.

Aluma is one of five ACC players on the mid-season watch list. The other four are Armando Bacot from North Carolina, Paolo Banchero from Duke, Wendell Moore from Duke, and Alondes Williams from Wake Forest.

Since follow-

ing head coach Mike Young to Tech, Aluma has started all 36 games and is averaging 15.2 points per game. The Berlin, Md., native has scored in double figures nine straight games and leads the ACC in scoring for conference-only games. For the season, Aluma has three double-doubles and is shooting 50.9 percent from the floor.

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- ★ **December 7:** Pearl Harbor Day
- ★ **January 6:** U.S. Capitol Day

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