



Sherri Blevins, Sue Kass elected chair of supervisors, school board

This past week, Sherri Blevins, who represents District B, was elected chair of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, and Sue Kass was elected chair of the Montgomery County School Board.

Mary Biggs was elected vice chair of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors. Penny Franklin was elected vice chair of the Montgomery County School Board.

Blevins, who was first elected to the county board in 2019, recently failed in her bid for the Republican nomination for the House seat left vacant when Christiansburg's Nick Rush stepped down. Blevins operates a small business and has been active in the local GOP for the past few years.

District F's Biggs is the longest sitting supervisor, having been first elected in 1996. She is a retired elementary school teacher. Biggs balances the board as a member of the county's Democrat party.

Across the hall in the county ad-

ministration building, school leaders elected Sue Kass (District F) as chair. She was first elected to the board two years ago. Representing District B, Franklin is the school board's longest sitting member, having been elected in 2000 and repre-

sents District B.

Meanwhile in Blacksburg, Susan Anderson was named vice mayor for the upcoming year. She was elected to the council in 2006 and previously served three terms as vice mayor.



Blacksburg Town Council vice mayor Susan Anderson



Montgomery Co. Board of Supervisors chair Sherry Blevins



Montgomery Co. Board of Supervisors vice chair Mary Biggs



Montgomery Co. School Board chair Sue Kass



Montgomery Co. School Board vice chair Penny Franklin

All aboard: Passenger rail takes another step toward reality

Gov. Ralph Northam spent his last day on the job with the announcement that Virginia leaders have finalized a rail agreement with Norfolk Southern that will bring passenger service to the New River Valley in the next three years.

On Friday, Northam said the Western Rail Initiative expands passenger rail service to the New River Valley and complements his historic \$3.7 billion Transforming Rail in Virginia program, the commonwealth's roadmap for building a 21st-century rail network. The agreement was executed following authorization from the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Board of Directors.

"Transforming Rail in Virginia is an investment not only in our rail system, but also in the residents and businesses along the corridor and in the New River Valley," said Governor Northam. "Together with our partners at Norfolk Southern, we are making essential improvements that modernize our transportation infrastructure and connect communities across the commonwealth. We look forward to continuing this important work to help move people and goods

efficiently, reduce congestion and pollution, fuel tourism, and drive economic growth."

A historic investment in Southwest Virginia's rail network, the Western Rail Initiative will add a second state-supported round-trip train between Roanoke and Boston later this year, which will be extended to the New River Valley upon completion of a new station and track and signal improvements. The agreement also allows for a third train to operate in the future between Roanoke and the New River Valley.

The expanded intercity rail service, which will create significant economic benefits and provide additional multimodal options for travelers along the Interstate 81 and Route 29 corridor, is expected to add approximately 80,000 new passengers in the first year after service is extended to the New River Valley. Further, the agreement preserves the existing freight rail service provided on the lines, helping to move the goods and materials for the commonwealth's economy.

In an agreement with Norfolk Southern, the commonwealth is ac-

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Christiansburg Lions Club craft show yields funds for charities

After a year's absence because of the COVID virus, the thirtieth annual Christiansburg Lions Club's holiday craft show in December made a successful return as between 3500 and 4000 shoppers came out to do some early Christmas shopping from the approximately 140 vendors on hand and to raise money for the many charities and community programs the club supports.

The craft show is the club's major fundraising event of the year. The money raised supports the club's efforts toward vision conservation, eye-glass screening, and eye-leader

dogs for those with vision and sight issues. The club also supports early childhood diabetes research, environmental concerns, various prosthesis programs, and local charities and programs such as Fire and Rescue, scouts, boys and girls state, and scholarships for county high-school graduates.

Key to the success of the craft show was the show's sponsors, especially the location sponsor, the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Local businessman Joe Simmons helped by opening up the parking area behind the recreation center for the shoppers.

The show's platinum sponsors were Horne Funeral Home, New River Recycling, McCoy Funeral Home, Thomas and Wall Realtors, and Town and Country Veterinary Clinic.

The show's gold sponsors were Dehart Tile Co., Inc., G&H Appliance, and Rice Realty and Land Sales.

Twenty-two silver sponsors also contributed to help the show reach its financial goal. Several sponsors also helped support the show's snack bar: Kroger, Food Lion, Hardee's, Walmart, Pizza Inn, Papa John's Pizza, and Little Caesar Pizza.



Between 3,500 and 4,000 shoppers turned out to support the Christiansburg Lions Club's 30th annual holiday craft show in December with the money raised used by the club to support various charities and club projects.

VTTI's Sharing the Road with Trucks program puts research into practice

The Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI)'s Division of Freight, Transit, and Heavy Vehicle Safety has developed and implemented a safety education and outreach program. Called Sharing the Road with Trucks, the program grew out of research that showed teen drivers initiated more than 75 percent of incidents involving heavy trucks that were — in part

— due to a lack of driver education.

"We are putting the research into practice," said Matt Camden, team leader for VTTI's Research to Practice and Outreach group. "With the research we've conducted at VTTI, we're leveraging naturalistic driving data to understand how people drive around trucks and the consequences of unsafe driving. This program [puts] these les-

sons learned into practice to help a specific group of drivers — teens — remain safe while driving passenger vehicles around these larger commercial vehicles from the beginning when they start driving."

Camden, with VTTI researchers Mark Golusky and Scott Tidwell, leads the VTTI Sharing the Road team that travels to

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Mentor Day setup conversations tailored to both student and mentors' interests.

VT College of Veterinary Medicine hosts mentoring day

Successful mentoring does not happen by chance. The reality is that it requires significant, consistent work and a strong desire to see students succeed. Mentoring is a fundamental part of learning. For professional graduate students, it is critical as they need in-depth knowledge, a set of skills, and techniques for networking, collaborating, and gaining a perspective on how their profession operates in the real world.

The mentorship program at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine started in 2003 and is a partnership with the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA). This long-established arrangement connects students with pro-

fessionals in the field and allies in veterinary medicine. Though the main event occurs one day a year, the forged relationships have ongoing benefits for students to reap throughout their graduate education and professional careers.

Rocky Deutsch DVM '85 participates in the mentorship program to help give students the perspective of a practicing veterinarian and help them sculpt their careers in whatever discipline they choose to follow.

Throughout the day, meetings between students and paired mentors set up conversations tailored to both interests. Mentees

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Researchers with the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute have developed a curriculum to educate teen drivers on how to apply safe driving practices when they encounter large commercial vehicles.

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

Montgomery Floyd Regional Library's adult winter reading program challenges participants 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/>.

Wednesday, Jan. 19:

American Business Women's Association luncheon meeting

At the Holiday Inn Christiansburg-Blacksburg, 99 Bradley Dr., Christiansburg, from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$14.25. The guest speaker is Ann Custer, a 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 who have fines and 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 prep 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. Come make some fun snowstorm slime. 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; 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

This is 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.

Movie Pajama Party

At the Radford Public Library; 2 p.m. The best kind of movie night: a pajama party. Come in your coziest PJs and watch the movie "Smallfoot." Popcorn and hot cocoa will be provided. The movie lasts 96 minutes and is rated PG. This event may end up requiring registration or other mitigating measures as COVID case counts continue to rise.

Sunday, Jan. 23:

Chess Club

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

Monday, Jan. 24:

Crafternoon

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

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 will be provided, and this is

a free event. Recommended for ages 10 and up. Please pre-register since spaces are limited.

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

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

Thursday, Jan. 27:

Healthful choices for the New Year

At the Radford Public Library, 12-12:45 p.m. The presenter is registered dietician Annie Reed. Register by Wednesday, Jan. 26, for a free vegetarian or turkey boxed lunch from Panera Bread. Start the New Year with a new perspective on healthful food and drink choices. And learn about an exciting new research program called "iSIPsmarter" after the info session. Email elizabeth.sensabaugh@radfordva.gov to reserve a seat and lunch.

Saturday, Jan. 29:

Click Smarter photography Q and A

At the Radford Public Library from 11 a.m. until noon. Talk to professional photographer Charlie Whitescarver about photography. He can look at any photographs participants bring and provide tips on how to improve them in an informal and helpful question-and-answer session. Masks are required for in-person attendance. 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. - 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

At the 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 will be provided; registration is recommended. Call the library at 540-552-8246.

Sunday, Jan. 30:

Chess Club

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

Monday, Jan. 31:

Talking About Books

At the Blacksburg Library; 11 a.m. To be discussed is "The Long Petal of the Sea" by Isabel Allende. Call (540) 552-8246 to reserve a copy.

Teen Game Day

At the 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.

Stuffed Animal Taxidermy

At the Christiansburg Library; 3 p.m. Create a new wall hanging for your room. Transform stuffed animals into a unique work of art. The library will supply all the materials. Recommended for ages 10 and up. Contact spahl@mfrl.org for more information. 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. with the speaker to be determined. Registration is required by clicking the "register here" link on the Chamber's website (www.radfordchamber.com).

Thursday, Feb. 3:

American Legion meeting

American Legion, Harvey-Howe-Carper Post 30, will meet at 7 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in Radford. If Radford City Public Schools are closed on Thursday or Friday of this week due to weather, the meeting is cancelled. For further information, call 250-2283 or 239-9864.

Tuesday, Feb. 8:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784, will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Family Italian Restaurant at 3204 Riner Road. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are invited to this meeting. Member William Reed will continue his series on "Small Arms of the Confederacy." If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week due to weather, the meeting is cancelled. For further information, call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

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.

Mentoring Day

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were able to have conversations with seasoned professionals about navigating student life, with the opportunity to ask questions helpful for excelling in their veterinary school careers, such as studying and the curriculum.

In addition, there was a sort of "speed-dating" mix-and-match where students had a certain amount of time to rotate through all the mentors' tables. In doing so, students learned more about what other mentors from different specialties do and areas of the profession they didn't know about or, conversely, were interested in further.

"My mentorship experience has allowed me to pursue my veterinary education more boldly," said Caitlin Swecker, a fourth-year veterinary student in the mixed animal track with mentor Brian Neumann DVM '14. "Knowing that I have the support and confidence of my mentor has encouraged me while in veterinary school. Dr. Neumann is also very open to hosting me at his clinic whenever I can travel to that area."

The mentorship program not only serves students while they are students though, but it also expands their veterinary student network and prepares them for professional development later. Robin Schmitz, executive director of VVMA, says, "The greatest success is when students are in their fourth year, and they get a job with or through their mentor," said Robin Schmitz, executive director of the VVMA. "Veterinary medicine is a small profession, and a lot of people make connections over the years, so if I see a student get a job, that's a success."

That's a benefit Swecker said she intends to capitalize on. "With graduation in just a few short months, I am sure I will be asking Dr. Neumann a lot of life-advice questions regarding the transition from student to doctor. I feel as though I'm not as nervous

as some of my classmates about that transition, and I would attribute that to having such a great support network, including my mentor."

While the benefits for students are numerous, perhaps what makes the mentorship program so successful is its symbiotic nature.

"I can't think of a better way to give back to veterinary medicine than my participation in the [Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine] mentor program," said Jay Margolis, past president of the VVMA, said. "The program allows members of the VVMA, [Maryland Veterinary Medical Association], and [District of Columbia Veterinary Medical Association] direct contact with veterinary students and allows us to offer our experience and guidance as those students want and need. I have had students work in my hospitals, stay in my home, and I try to always be an open book for guidance and advice regarding a class, a case, or just how to handle the stresses that we all feel day-to-day. The program also allows me to stay up to date on what's happening in veterinary education and to meet other mentors from around the region."

Schmitz elaborated on the benefits for mentors. "It's a two-way street," Schmitz said. "Mentors can learn from students, and we want to connect to the future of veterinary medicine. Veterinary medicine is changing every day so the students can bring what they're learning to their practices."

This symbiosis encourages mentees to return and participate as mentors, further strengthening the longevity of the mentorship program. Swecker, who has participated as a mentee throughout her time at the veterinary college, said, "I am also very excited to become a mentor one day as well, having seen the impact that the program has."



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Rituals honor Beta Sigma Phi members



Doris Caldwell was honored recently with the Beta Sigma Phi sorority's Welcome Ritual after she relocated to Christiansburg from Leesburg, Fla.

Doris Caldwell of Christiansburg, was recently honored with the official Beta Sigma Phi Welcome Ritual.

She was a member of the Iota Beta Chapter in Leesburg, Fla., where she pledged in May 2012, prior to relocating to Christiansburg.

Chapter President Nancy Jo Waters conducted the ritual and welcomed Caldwell to Christiansburg's Alpha Mu Master Chapter. The honoree was presented

with the sorority's official flower, a yellow rose.

Libby Pettigrew of Christiansburg was honored with The Torchbearer Ritual, the highest level a Beta Sigma Phi can qualify for. It is based upon years of outstanding service and study to the sorority and the community. Sue B. Warden conducted the candlelight ritual with Carolyn K. Sowers and Nancy Jo Waters serving as assistants.

Pettigrew has been in



Libby Pettigrew, a retired accountant who lives in Blacksburg, was recently honored by Beta Sigma Phi sorority with the Torchbearer Ritual, the highest level a sorority member can qualify for.

Beta Sigma Phi for 49 years and has received numerous awards and recognitions from the sorority. She served as the Chapter's 2019 Valentine Queen and was honored with her selection as a member of the Beta Sigma Phi International Empress Court, published in The Torch, the official sorority magazine. Pettigrew currently serves as the chapter extension officer, the chair of the program committee, and as a member of

both the social committee and the ways and means committee. She is a retired accountant and resides in Blacksburg.

The Golden Circle Ritual was recently bestowed on Phyllis Durham of Christiansburg, honoring her for completion of 50 active years of membership in Beta Sigma Phi Sorority. Durham pledged in 1970 to Beta Delta Chapter in Christiansburg.

During her 50 years of membership, Durham



Phyllis Durham of Christiansburg, who is retired from the Montgomery County Public School system, was honored by the sorority with the Golden Circle Ritual, recognizing her 50 years of membership in Beta Sigma Phi.

has served in a variety of offices and on numerous committees. She has been honored as Woman of the Year and as Valentine Queen for the chapter and has received the Order of The Rose Ritual and the Silver Circle Ritual.

Durham has contributed to the betterment of the chapter and has given special participation and leadership to the varied service projects that help members of the community in a number of ways.

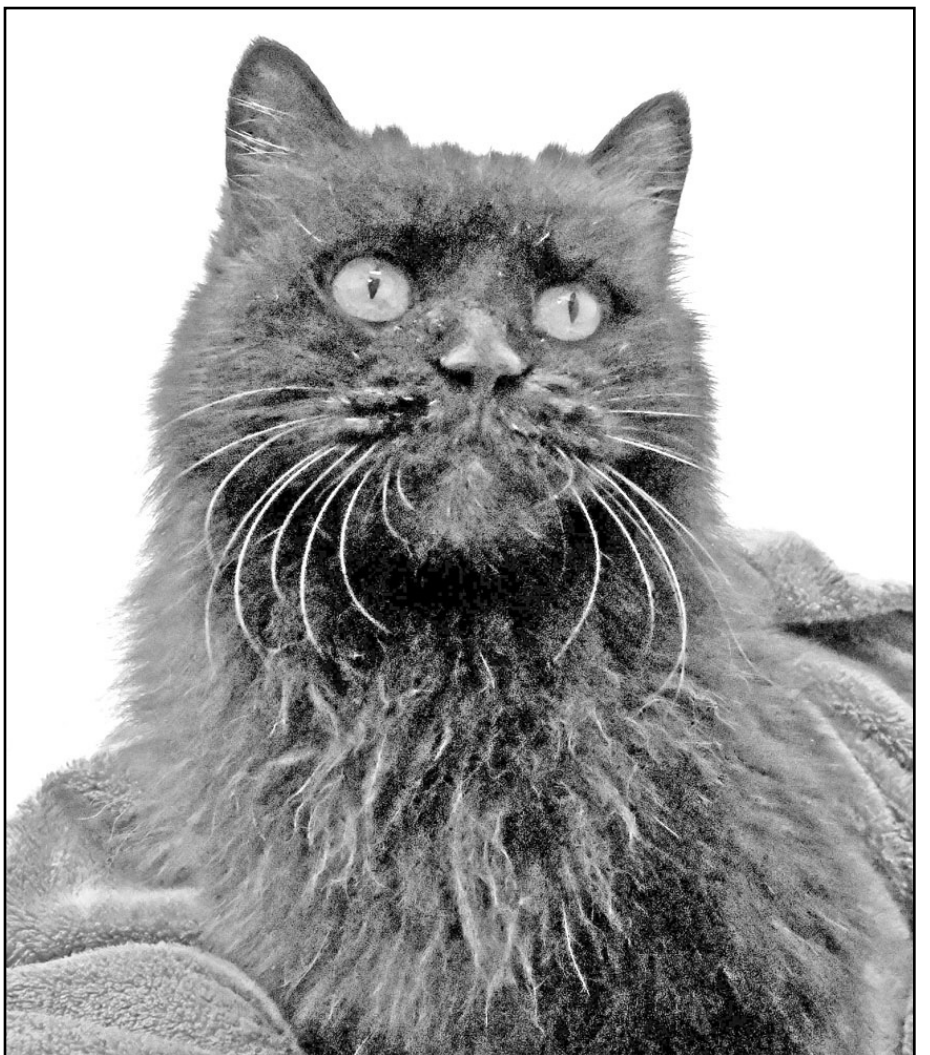
A candlelight ritual was conducted for Durham by Officiant Carolyn K. Sowers with Sue B. Warden and Nancy Jo Waters assisting. The chapter presented the recipient with a 50-year pin and a dozen yellow roses.

Durham is retired from the Montgomery County Public Schools and resides in Christiansburg with her husband, Larry. They have two children and seven grandchildren.

PET OF THE WEEK



Yuno is ready to find her forever home. She may do best where she can keep her attention focused on her favorite human, as opposed to living with a large family. Yuno appears to have good indoor doggie manners: staying off furniture and waiting until outside to take care of business.



Snickers may win an award for "Most Affectionate Kitty." She's a sweet gal who loves to give and receive attention and affection. In a previous home, Snickers happily lived with a smaller dog and enjoyed occasional visits with children. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to see if Snickers is your purrfect match.

NRCC spring semester begins Jan. 24

Registration is still open for the spring semester at New River Community College, which begins Monday, Jan. 24.

The spring semester offers courses in 90 degree, diploma, and certificate programs, as well as short-term workforce development offerings. Several programs available this spring include early childhood development, engineering design technology, forensic science, human services, police science, and paralegal administrative support.

They are all part of the G3 Program, a tuition assistance program for any Virginia resident who qualifies for in-state tuition and whose fam-

ily income falls below an identified threshold. Eligible students may enroll in designated programs leading to jobs in high-demand fields.

The spring class schedule is available at www.nr.edu/schedule/. To enroll for the spring semester, visit www.nr.edu/registernow.

NRCC will also offer 10-week and 7-week sessions this spring. The 10-week session begins Feb. 21. The first 7-week session begins Jan. 24, and the second 7-week session begins March 21.

Summer 2022 class registration is also open to those who need to catch up on classes, who want to plan to get ahead in their program of study, or who want

to take classes that can transfer to four-year colleges or universities.

Currently more than 150 classes are scheduled at NRCC this summer

including transfer classes in art, biology, chemistry, economics, English, history, math, music, psychology, and religion.

The full summer

schedule can be found at www.nr.edu/schedule/. The 10-week summer session and first 5-week

summer session begins May 18, and the second five-week session begins June 24.

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Nice office spaces available in the McCraw Building in Radford. 616 West Main Street Off Sreet parking. Heat Pumps. Ins. Windows. Internet available. Space 1. 3 large offices with rest room. Coffee room. Nice. \$650 a month. Space 2. Nicer office space with 3 private offices plus large open receptionist/waiting room. 2 restrooms. Owner furnishes water, garbage pickup, and hot water. \$850 per month Agent owned. Available now.

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OPINION

Virginia gas prices on the way back up

Virginia gas prices rose 1 cent per gallon in the past week, averaging \$3.15/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia.

Gas prices in Virginia are 2.7 cents per gallon lower than a month ago but stand 84.9 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.75/g Monday while the most expensive was \$3.89/g, a difference of \$1.14/g.

The national average price of gasoline rose 1.3 cents per gallon last week, averaging \$3.31/g Monday. The national average is unchanged from a

month ago and stands 93.3 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

"Average gas prices saw a slight boost over the last week as the rising price of crude oil continues to push prices up," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy. "While the rise was fairly tame, some states still

saw slight declines. Gasoline demand, aside from motorists filling up ahead of the weekend winter storm, has been lackluster. The real pain at the pump will start in about 4-6 weeks," De Haan said. "Oil prices continue to edge higher as oil production remains a concern due to unrest in Libya and Kazakhstan; however, some improve-

ment in the latter situation could lead to oil prices being more subdued."

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://prices.GasBuddy.com>.

All Aboard

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quiring approximately 28 miles of the Norfolk Southern-owned "V line" right-of-way and existing tracks from Christiansburg to the Salem Crossovers and a passenger rail easement between the Salem Crossovers and the Amtrak Roanoke station platform. Norfolk Southern will continue to provide freight service on the line.

In addition, the commonwealth will invest in infrastructure improvements between Manassas and the Roanoke Yard to improve the reliability of passenger rail service over Norfolk Southern Railway-owned right-of-way.

The acquisition and infrastructure improvements are partially

funded by contributions from the I-81 Corridor Multimodal Improvements Fund, Commonwealth Rail funds, and the General Assembly's 2021 Transportation Initiatives. The commonwealth anticipates reaching financial close with Norfolk Southern in mid-2022.

On May 5, 2021, Governor Northam announced in Christiansburg that the commonwealth reached an initial agreement with Norfolk Southern to expand passenger rail service from Northern Virginia to Southwest Virginia. The finalization of the agreement announced today represents a major milestone that will allow

construction to advance on significant rail infrastructure projects along the corridor between Manassas and the New River Valley, resulting in more frequent and more reliable passenger rail service.

"This agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia is a great example of government and business partnership," said James A. Squires, Chairman and CEO of Norfolk Southern. "Together, we have created a path forward to increase passenger rail service and ensure that freight rail customers continue to move the goods that power our economy. Importantly, this will yield economic dividends from

Northern to Southwest Virginia, both through the necessary infrastructure improvements and additional use of the rail lines."

Amtrak regional daily service in Southwest Virginia began in October 2009 with one round-trip between Lynchburg and Washington, D.C. During the first year of operation, ridership outperformed forecasts by more than triple. In November 2017, the commonwealth expanded service to Roanoke, and, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the route was one of the most profitable intercity passenger rail routes in the country.

Based on this proven success, the common-

wealth is strategically investing in additional passenger rail service along the corridor and to Southwest Virginia. Like the current state-supported Roanoke train, the second train, for which service is expected to commence in 2022, will serve Alexandria, Burke Centre, Manassas, Culpeper, Charlottesville, Lynchburg, and Roanoke and travel to and from Washington, D.C., and Amtrak's Northeast Corridor. Finally, the agreement acknowledges the potential for a future station in Bedford.

The commonwealth's Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative is a path to connecting the communities

and increasing economic opportunities through strategic investments in rail. The commonwealth is advancing capital improvement projects, including the new Long Bridge across the Potomac; acquiring railroad track and right-of-way to provide more rail capacity; expanding high-quality, modern passenger rail service across the commonwealth by making it more frequent, reliable, and convenient; and providing additional choice in moving people and goods efficiently across Virginia while accommodating growing travel demand. The initiative is expected to grow Virginia's economy by more than \$2 billion annually.

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VTTI

from page 1

high schools in Virginia, West Virginia, and Delaware to provide engaging learning opportunities for new teen drivers.

Through the support of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Delaware Department of Transportation, the Virginia State Police, and the Delaware State Police, law enforcement personnel are also available at most of the demonstrations to discuss driver safety. In addition, the Virginia Trucking Association and the Delaware Motor Transport Association are active partners who help coordinate trucks and drivers to assist in the demonstration. Although most of

the demonstrations have occurred in the Mid-Atlantic, the VTTI Sharing the Road team can travel to any state with its goal of becoming a nationwide program.

During a sharing-the road-demonstration, teen participants have the opportunity to see a semi-truck up close and experience the large blind spots from a semi-truck driver's perspective.

The program also addresses five key strategies for sharing the road:

Don't hang out in the no-zone; don't cut off trucks; maintain a safe following distance; properly pass a truck; and don't get squeezed.

"We see every day on the highway

that passenger vehicle drivers of all experience levels aren't driving safely around the trucks," said Tidwell, VTTI senior field research technician and Class A CDL holder. "We want this program to help teach new car drivers safe practices from the beginning to create a generation of drivers that know how to safely drive near a truck."

The goal of the demonstrations is to show the perspective of a truck driver and help teens have a better understanding of the everyday difficulties faced by truck drivers on the road. Since 2018, the team has reached over 8,100 students across 82 school visits.

Winter storm delivers much-needed moisture to Virginia farmland

Dropping over a foot of snow in some Virginia localities, an early-January storm stole national headlines and wreaked havoc throughout the mid-Atlantic.

Though the storm left many travelers stranded and hundreds of thousands

without power in Virginia, the plentiful precipitation came at a crucial time for the state's grain farmers.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service December crop report, Virginia entered 2022 with "abnormally dry to severe drought conditions" across the state.

NASS statistics also indicated the Lynchburg and Norfolk regions each ended 2021 with precipitation deficits of 8.8 inches compared to normal annual precipitation totals. The Roanoke area recorded a 4.4-inch deficit, and Northern Virginia ended the year with a 7.9-inch shortage.

Only the Richmond region saw above-average precipitation last year, with a 2.5-inch surplus.

As small-grain crops begin to emerge in some areas of Virginia, farmers said the influx of moisture came at a pivotal time.

"We've been really dry.

It was one of the driest falls I can remember," said grain producer Glenn Dye, who farms in Appomattox, Fauquier and Stafford counties. "We definitely needed more moisture for the fall crops and some subsoil moisture for the spring crops, and the snow we got definitely helped the crops that are in the field."

Dye, who also serves on the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Soybean and Feed Grains Advisory Committee, skipped planting winter wheat this year, opting instead to plant rye as a cover crop.

Before the Jan. 3 storm, Dye said the crop was "hanging on," but he wasn't sure it would remain healthy enough to benefit the soil for spring planting. However, the storm brought between 8 and 9 inches of snow to his Appomattox property and 13 inches to Stafford, which allowed the crop to rebound.

"(The snow and rain)

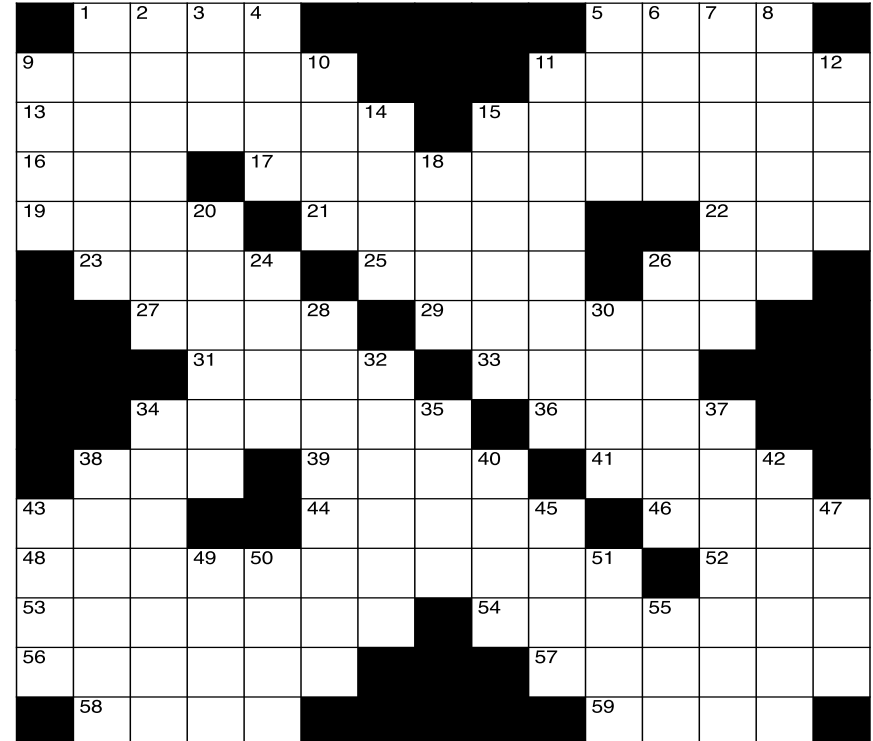
we've had has been beneficial," Dye added, noting he and other Virginia grain farmers saw additional rain and snow on Jan. 6 and 7. "Any moisture is a good thing at this point."

Bedford County grain farmer W.P. Johnson said he and other nearby farmers struggled to plant small grains in the fall due to soil aridity.

Johnson planted oats and wheat, and said he only managed to get his seeds deep enough in the ground because he recently rebuilt his planters' drill. With the benefit of moisture from the Jan. 3 storm—he received 4 inches of wintry mix on his farm—each crop is progressing well.

"The moisture from the snow really pulled out our small grain crops and let them emerge, and I can actually see what kind of stand I have," he said. "Without the snow, I don't know my emergence would have been what it is. We got lucky."

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| CLUES ACROSS | 33. Witnesses | CLUES DOWN | 28. Earnings |
| 1. Breathe noisily | 34. Caulked | 1. Illinois city | 30. Close by |
| 5. ___ Nui, Easter Island | 36. Satisfy | 2. One of the original disciples chosen by Christ | 32. Small integers |
| 9. Reddish browns | 38. R&B performer ___ Lo | 3. Young form of a louse | 34. Fixed in place |
| 11. Simple shoes | 39. Monetary units of Macao | 4. Type of powder | 35. Used to treat Parkinson's disease |
| 13. Produce alcohol illegally | 41. Give advice, explain | 5. Finger millet | 37. Large, imposing building |
| 15. Home to famed golf tournament | 43. Possesses | 6. Share a common boundary | 38. A rooflike shelter |
| 16. Tax collector | 44. Turn back | 7. Assumed as a fact | 40. Stiff, hairlike structure |
| 17. Famous people | 46. Gentlemen | 8. Provide clear evidence of | 42. Print errors |
| 19. Urban area | 48. One who fertilizes | 9. Invests in little enterprises | 43. To show disapproval |
| 21. Units of syllable weight | 52. Italian monk title (prefix) | 10. A way to be | 45. Body of traditions |
| 22. Pituitary hormone (abbr.) | 53. Parties | 11. Monies given in support | 47. Without |
| 23. Dismounted | 54. Type of horse | 12. Fashion accessory | 49. ___ Clapton, musician |
| 25. Actor Damon | 56. Cuts in half | 14. Steal | 50. Dangerous illegal drug |
| 26. Vietnamese offensive | 57. Raises | 15. Becomes less intense | 51. Infrequent |
| 27. Retail term | 58. Expresses contempt or disgust | 18. Geological times | 55. Sound unit |
| 29. Netted | 59. Ancient Italian-Greek colony | 20. Hooray! | |
| 31. Partner to carrots | | 24. Monetary unit | |
| | | 26. Male reproductive organs | |



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OBITUARIES

Akers, Barbara Bryant

Barbara Bryant Akers, 91, passed away Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022, at her home in Christiansburg.

She was a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church and retired after 25 years with Sears.

She was preceded in death by her husbands, George Midkiff and Harold Akers; a son, John Keith Midkiff; a daughter, Deborah Myers; and a sister, Patricia Kesling.

Left to cherish her memories are her children, Eddie and Vickie Midkiff, Martha Lynn Akers, David and Debbie Akers, and Richard Myers; grandchildren Tracy and Brian Lytton, G. E. and Amanda Midkiff, and Tanner Akers; great-grandchildren Breanna, Jacob, Kaleb, and Parker; a sister-in-law, Janice Jones;



many nieces and nephews; very special friends Richard and Lizzie King; her caregivers Mary, Ann, and Happy; and many other relatives and friends.

The family would like to give special thanks to Good Samaritan Hospice.

The family received friends on Tuesday, Jan. 18, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford, followed by funeral services.

Interment followed in West View Cemetery in Radford.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks to consider donations to the American Cancer Society or to the charity of your choice.

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

Webb, Dr. Willis Keith

Dr. Willis Keith Webb (93) passed peacefully on Jan. 15, 2022, at his daughter's home in Bumpass, Va.

Born in McCoy, Va., to Frank Webb and Ruth Shaffner, he joined the Air Force while still in high school serving as a radio mechanic.

Willis attended the University of Tennessee afterwards where he met and married Wanda Virginia Farris in 1950. After graduating from Texas A&M as a veterinarian, he went to work as an animal pathologist. Retiring in 1991, Virginia and he enjoyed many trips abroad as well as within the U.S.

He was a gentleman farmer for many years and enjoyed raising cattle and the farm life. He loved sports and being ac-



tive. He won many medals in the senior olympics, and bowling was a true joy for him. He was a kind father and husband.

He is survived by his wife of over 71 years, Wanda Virginia Webb; their five children and their spouses: Cheryl Farmer (Billy), Mark Webb (Shelby), Karen Moore (Howard), Katherine Dibert (Bruce) and Laura Webb.

He is also survived by many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The last few weeks of his life, he was lovingly attended by his daughter, Laura and his granddaughter, Shanna McKenzie. Willis chose to donate his body to science and there will be no funeral. Donations may be made to your favorite charity in his memory.

Spencer, Charlie Eugene

Charlie Eugene Spencer, of Pilot, was born Aug. 8, 1939, to Charles and Clara Coleman Spencer and left this earthly life to go to his heavenly home to meet his precious Tenny (Christine Eanes, married Nov. 26, 1960) on Tuesday Jan. 11, 2022, at the age 82.

He was retired from Montgomery Furniture. After retiring he joined his son, Ronald, working in Spencer's Chimney Sweep, driving for the Montgomery County School System, and in his great love of farming. He was the pastor of Bible Truth Tabernacle in Shawsville for 41 years. His greatest love was to testify to everyone about his Lord Jesus Christ and all he had done for him in his life and the Message of the Hour.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Christine (Teeny); his parents, Charles and Clara Spencer; sisters Ruth Roop and Ruby Lawson Rice; and a brother, Garland Spencer.

Charlie is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law, Ronald Dean Spencer and wife, Connie, and Mark David Spencer and wife, Khristy; grandsons Mat-



thew Spencer and wife, Cassie, Andrew Spencer and wife, Katie, Michael Spencer and wife, Alexa, Gabriel Spencer and wife, Sarah, and Malachi Spencer; granddaughters Whitney Breeden and husband, Davey, and Charity Spencer; great-grandchildren Titus, India, Rheagan, Allie, Aleigha, Leighton Spencer, Isaac, and Zoe Breeden; sisters Carlie Stump, Rhynie Jones, Nancy Linkous, Martha Sefick, Betty Clowers, and Linda Henderson and husband, Turman; brothers, Paul (Junior) Spencer and wife, Ernestine, Luther Spencer and wife, Willa Mae and Johnny Spencer; sister-in-law Brenda Eanes; and numerous nephews and nieces.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 22, 2022, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Ronald Spencer and Pastor Mark Spencer officiating. Interment will follow at Sunset Cemetery, Christiansburg. The family will receive friends from 1 to 2 p.m. at McCoy Funeral Home prior to the service.

Musser, Dawn Elizabeth



that year, and they lived in numerous locations before moving to Blacksburg in 1998 when he became Commandant of the Cadet Corps at Virginia Tech.

Dawn's career is closely related to the many moves (22) she made with her husband during his U.S. Air Force career, living in 10 states and two foreign countries. Depending on where they lived, her life and career was a combination of teaching physical education in the public schools, teaching baton twirling, being a homemaker, taking leadership roles in many officers' wives clubs, hosting functions required of an officer, various jobs with the Heart Association, and many other volunteer jobs.

In her daily prayers, she thanked God for the many blessings she had received that had provided her with such a wonderful life that included two loving husbands and family, and numerous caring friends. After her first husband Stan, died in 2012, she was adamant that she would never marry again, but God had other plans. He arranged for Dick Arnold and her to meet, and they were married in 2016 and had a wonderful life together.

er. They often praised God for placing them together in the winter of their lives. She had a strong faith, nurtured through active participation in the Blacksburg United Methodist Church. In the community, she was a member of the Blacksburg Country Club, the Blacksburg Sports Club, and at Virginia Tech she was a member of the Ut Prosim Society and the Hokie Club, and was a longtime advisor to Delta Gamma Sorority.

She loved to travel, especially in the family's RV and on cruises, being a homemaker, attending Virginia Tech athletic events, theater, and concerts. She lived life fully.

Dawn is survived by her second husband, Richard M. Arnold of Blacksburg; her son Scott (Janeal) Musser of Niceville, Fla., and daughter Shari (Greg) Jones of Spring, Texas, sisters Alta (John) Richardson and Joyce Melhorn; a brother Earl (Dawn) Burg; grandsons Cole and Clay Jones, Sean (Star), Ryan, Alec, and Bret (Tiffany) Musser; great-grandchildren Briar, Arya, and Eowyn Musser; stepchildren Brad (Irena) Arnold, Sharon (Greg) Johnston, Stephanie

Doyle, John Sanderson

Our kind, funny and loving youngest brother, John Sanderson (Sandy) Doyle passed peacefully Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022, from renal failure in Blacksburg with family by his side.

We take great comfort in imagining him now with our mother, to whom he was devoted. Sandy's compassion and care for her at the end of her life will be forever remembered and greatly appreciated by our family. Sandy was always ready to laugh and share his sense of joy and irreverent views on life. He was the center of attention at every family gathering and his unique humor and gentle ways endeared him to everyone he met.

In 1975 Sandy graduated from First Colonial High where he was a skilled basketball player. He later played ball at Virginia Wesleyan College. In October 1985 he received a kidney donated by his brother Jim. Twice Sandy competed in the National Transplant games held in Indiana (1500 meters) and then in California (tennis).

His declining health played a key role in his decision to become an executive chauffeur. That he held this position for more than 10 years is testament to his discretion, reliability, and service. In 2003 he joined the Team-



sters Union in Wilmington, N.C., and worked in the film and television industry as a driver. He loved the wonderful friendships he made with the cast and crews of his assigned films and shows, especially "One Tree Hill."

Sanderson's big, caring personality will be missed by many, most deeply by his three brothers and three sisters who adored him: Stephen and Jana Doyle of Blacksburg; Jim and Kerry Doyle of Severna Park, Md.; David Doyle and Annabel Grice of Newcastle New South Wales, Australia; Cherry Reynolds, Holly and Steve Hepner of Stephenson, Va.; and Sally and Marvin Miller of Sterling, Va.; and his lifelong friends, Winston and Molly Carlyle of Richmond, Va.

He was a beloved uncle to many nieces, nephews, and their children. Thank you to the staffs at Lower Cape Fear LifeCare, Wilmington, N.C., and Carilion Clinic New River Valley, Radford, for their excellent care of Sandy and his family. If possible, he would express his love, sincere gratitude, and appreciation to his wonderful family for all their support, compassion, and encouragement throughout his lifetime. "Be happy, healthy and safe."

Rowland, Naomi Underwood

Naomi Underwood Rowland, 88, of Warm-inger, Penn. passed away peacefully on Jan. 9, 2022.

She was born Nov. 15, 1933, in Montgomery County to the Rev. Noah J. Underwood and Edna Ward Underwood of Blacksburg.

She was preceded in death by her mother and father; her husband Robert V. Rowland of Philadelphia; and her brother, Cecil Underwood of Blacksburg.

Naomi is survived by her son, Louis Gibson Whitlock and daughter-in-law Kathryn of Blacksburg; her brother, Bobby Underwood and his wife, Jenny, of Christiansburg; and her brother, Tommy Underwood and his wife, Lori, of Tacoma, Wash.; and her loving close friends who were like family: Patti, Irv, and Nicole Loun.

She leaves many nieces and nephews; wonderful friends, neighbors and an amazing church family that she dearly loved and appreciated. She was a gentle person who showed kindness to all. She was devoted to her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Growing up in Blacksburg, Naomi



worked for the National Bank of Blacksburg for many years. Later, as she continued working in the financial field, she met and married Robert Rowland. Together they enjoyed many friends, their church family, and traveling throughout the world.

They often opened their home to all the children and families in their community for swimming parties and get-togethers. Naomi regularly hosted Christmas parties for her co-workers and all their children. She was a grandmother to many children.

Naomi was a voracious reader and had a large library. She stayed active and enjoyed her pets and watching professional baseball and football games, as well as solving computer puzzles for fun. Most of all, she loved the people in her life, and they loved her. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Naomi's service will be held at 11 a.m., at Crossway Community Church, 3805 Mill Road, Willow Grove, PA 19090 followed by her burial at Hillside Cemetery, 2556 Susquehann Road, Rosslyn, PA 19001.

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

VT finally picks up ACC win

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Virginia Tech's basketball team finally scratched its first win in the Atlantic Coast Conference in a nail-biter Saturday against Notre Dame.

Tech shot a season-high 59.2 percent from the field (29-49). Beyond the arc, the Hokies shot 50 percent (10-20), which is the second-highest number of the year. Saturday's game marked the second time Virginia Tech shot 50 percent or higher in both categories (Cornell).

The large crowd in attendance seemed to bring energy and provide that spark for the win, even catching the attention of Notre Dame head coach Mike Brey.

"First of all, what a great atmosphere. I thought the Virginia Tech crowd kept their team believing the whole time," he said afterwards.

The win gave the Hokies three straight wins over Notre Dame for the first time ever and snapped the Irish's six-game win streak. In addition, Notre Dame was 4-2 in Blacksburg until Saturday afternoon's game.

The biggest key was the fact the win kept Tech from dropping to 0-5 in the ACC for the first time since 2014. The team also

improved to 6-2 at home this season and gave Mike Young his 40th win as head coach of the Hokies.

Keva Aluma has the greenlight to shoot from behind the arc, and he spotted up for the shot several times on Saturday. This is all surprising as he only attempted one 3-pointer in two seasons for Young at Wofford before he transferred to Blacksburg.

In two seasons for the Hokies, Aluma has attempted 57 threes, knocking down 20 at a 35.1 percent clip.

Graduate transfer Justyn Mutts is approaching a 1,000 point milestone. He put up 24 on Saturday to give him 942 for his career.

A big question this year is what impact Tech's bench would have on the season. So far, the reserves are averaging 15.6 points per game.

ACCsports.com has released its Mid-Season All-ACC squad with Tech's Keve Aluma being named to the second team. The first-team included Duke's Paolo Banchemo and Wendall Moore Jr., Alondes Williams of Wake Forest, Armando Bacot of UNC and Pittsburgh's John Hugley.

While speaking with media this past Friday, ACC commissioner Jim Phillips spoke against expanding the College Football Playoff.

"Now is not the time to expand the College Football Playoff," he said.

Saturday's Notre Dame game was also an opportunity for new football coach Brent Pry to introduce his new staff of assistants. They received a loud applause.

Blacksburg boys take Battle of the Burgs



Christiansburg's DJ Barnes puts up a three-point attempt against Bruins Tucker Halsey and Sam Davis. Blacksburg took the 64-49 win as Halsey led the team with 19 points. Tyrique Taylor dropped in 19 for Christiansburg, which fell to 6-7 overall and 1-3 in the River Ridge District.



Blue Demon Kenyon Johnson-Buchannon (center) scores against Blacksburg defenders Matt Joyce (left) and Tucker Halsey (right). Johnson-Buchannon finished with eight points. With the win, Blacksburg is now 9-3 overall and 2-2 in district play.

PHOTOS BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY

Sports briefs, local updates: Baseball nights highlight at VT, RU



From the Sidelines
 Marty Gordon

One month away from hosting its 14th annual Baseball Night in Blacksburg — as headlined this year by keynote speaker Jeff Passan (ESPN's MLB insider) — the Virginia Tech baseball program has locked in special event details and information for its season kickoff banquet on Saturday, Feb. 12, at The Inn at Virginia Tech. Tickets to Baseball

Night in Blacksburg are available for \$75. Guests may also purchase tickets for \$100 that include three free drink vouchers to the event's cash bar, available to all patrons of age.

All Baseball Night in Blacksburg proceeds go to support the Virginia Tech baseball team and its continual enhancements to English Field at Atlantic Union Bank Park, as well as to the James C. Weaver Baseball Center. Past banquets have supported the installation of artificial turf and expanded dugouts among other general ballpark overhauls and additions.

Passan will become the Hokies' latest high-profile special guest, joining the names of notable speakers Cal Ripken, Jr. (2008), Mike Williams (2010), Billy Wagner (2011), Bobby Valentine (2012), Chuck Hartman (2014), Tim Kurkjian (2018), and Ken Rosenthal (2020).

An iconic byline in American baseball coverage, Passan is a revered writer and analyst who has spent close to two decades reporting on professional baseball and its athletes.

Radford University baseball alumni, fans, and supporters are invited to join the program for the third annual First Pitch Dinner on Saturday, Jan. 29, at 6 p.m.

The evening will include a wide variety of auction items for attendees to bid

on, as well as a catered dinner and an autograph session with the team. Washington Nationals manager Davey Martinez will give a keynote speech as the guest of honor.

All proceeds from the First Pitch Dinner go towards supporting the Radford baseball program as it prepares for the upcoming 2022 season.

Cindy Chace '86 has been selected as the keynote speaker for the inaugural "Champion Her Future" leadership dinner, which will be held on Friday, Feb. 4, at 6 p.m. in the Dedmon Center's Sport Performance facility.

Prior to her retirement in 2020, Chace had been a director of sales for the government sector at United Parcel Service (UPS) for 34 years. Chace is a director and founding chair of the Florida-based nonprofit Go for the Greens Foundation Inc, where she serves on the sponsorship, golf, mentorship, logistics, and marketing committees. She also is co-founder and co-chair of the Go for the Greens conference. Since 2019, Chace has made it possible for two Radford women's basketball players to attend the conference.

Chace works with business organizations focused on minorities and women. Her service to these organizations was recognized by The International Alliance for Women, which honored her as a Leader in Global Development, and the National Association of Women Business Owners, which named her the National Corporate Partner of the Year. She also was recognized with the Corporate Advocate Award from the Women's Business Enterprise Hall of Fame.

She is a former Radford student-athlete who was a member of the women's basketball team from 1983-1986.

The "Champion Her Future" leadership dinner is open to the Radford community and general public.

The Radford University women's tennis program announced Friday afternoon the addition of Brooke Murphy, who will join the team for next year's 2022-23 season.

Murphy hails from Stanley, N.C., and was most recently ranked 11th in the state and 87th in the southern region. She began her athletic career as a competitive gymnast for seven years and did not start playing

tennis until the eighth grade. She played for Southlake Christian where she was conference champion along with being named to all-conference and all-state teams.

The Radford men's and women's tennis teams were predicted to finish second in the Big South's 2022 preseason poll, the league announced Tuesday.

The men's tennis team had a 12-7 overall record and a 4-1 Big South record last season, placing second in the regular season before finishing as the runner-up in the Big South tournament. The team lost in a tightly contested 4-3 championship game last year to the 2022 preseason favorite, Presbyterian.

The Highlanders received three first-place votes, matching their total of first-place votes received in last season's preseason poll. While the team is replacing a veteran presence in former Highlander Yevhen Sirous, all other players returned from last season's team.

The women's tennis team out-performed expectations last season after being picked to finish fourth in the preseason poll. The team finished with a 4-2 conference record, tying for second place, and advanced to the Big South championship match before falling 4-1 to this season's preseason favorite, Charleston Southern.

The student-athletes of Radford University Athletics recorded yet another excellent academic performance during the Fall 2021 semester with 77% earning a grade-point-average of 3.0 or better.

An impressive 225 of Radford's 261 total student-athletes reached the 3.0 mark, helping 13 of the Highlanders 16 varsity athletics programs report a team GPA of 3.0 or better. The term GPA for the department ended at 3.20.

Just as impressive are the 171 Radford student-athletes who reached the 3.4 GPA mark, placing them on the Radford University Dean's List. Our of those 171, 45 of them had a perfect 4.0 GPA.

The women's cross-country program led all Highlander squads with a 3.73 GPA while men's cross country came in just behind with a 3.65. Women's soccer finished the term with a 3.57 while boasting 23 student-athletes with a 3.4 GPA and 11 reaching a sterling 4.0 GPA.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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get your flu shot today.

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VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Life is short.
Don't make it shorter.

Choose life. Make sure your kids get their HPV vaccine and protect them against cancer.

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