



World premiere of “Mosaic for Earth” puts composer’s message in spotlight

Pat Brown
Contributing writer

When 250 musicians take to the main stage at Virginia Tech’s Moss Arts Center on Sunday, April 3, at 7 p.m. they will follow the lead of composer/conductor Dwight Bigler as they bring to life the world premiere performance of his original composition “Mosaic for Earth.”

Bigler says he has composed throughout his life, “but never this large” a project. His message in the work is serious: “We are much more aware of the real and huge climate changes” that are upon us, he said, “but humans have got to start acting.”

Bigler said he asked himself how he could help.

“The power of music is so often used as a motivator,” he said. “It connects to the heart.” His goal was to create a work that reminds listeners of nature’s beauty and inspires them to take action to help preserve the planet.

“I specifically included parts for the children’s chorus,” he said, referring to the Blacksburg Children’s Choir, which will be part of the performance.

Bigler took inspiration from his own family’s frequent camping trips in Idaho, from fellow professors and from his own research. He credited Mary Denison Moore, a Virginia Tech English professor and an alto in the Blacksburg Master Chorale, for guiding him toward texts culled from her knowledge of environmental literature.

He used the positive text from Psalm 104 and created contrast



Dwight Bigler is surrounded by choir members who volunteered to give up part of a Saturday afternoon to polish their parts for his newest composition, “Mosaic for Earth,” Bigler’s largest creative undertaking to date. It will be performed by 250 creative artists (four choirs, one orchestra and four soloists) on Sunday, April 3, at 7 p.m. at the Moss Arts Center. Blacksburg Presbyterian Church is the scene of the rehearsal.

by telling of man’s impact on the environment.

Bigler took a sabbatical from his duties at Virginia Tech in the 2019-2020 school year to read, to travel to some of the world’s natural wonders, and to study with a host of artists at the Hambridge Center in North Georgia. He said his travels and studies “were essential to my creative process.”

In the book “Finding Beauty in a Broken World,” he discovered the title he would use for his budding work: “Mosaic for Earth.”

During the concert, some of Bigler’s photographs will be part of the natural scenes that will fill screens surrounding the stage and the performers. Created by

Virginia Tech’s David Fransulich, the evening’s video effects will include sweeping drone shots.

In March of 2020, Bigler’s musical project suffered the same shutdown as the rest of the university and the nation.

He smiles when he recalls that the Blacksburg Master Chorale and the Virginia Tech Student Ensemble had already begun to work on some of the music for a premiere date of, ironically, April 3, 2020.

The composer used the rehearsal pause to his advantage, reworking and refining some sections. “It was very useful,” he said. In-person rehearsals resumed in the fall of 2021, with

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High winds and waves Friday night broke the floating boat barrier that keeps boaters away from the intake side of Smith Mountain Dam.

Boaters beware: Smith Mountain Dam floating boat barrier broken by winds and waves

Appalachian Power is warning boaters to avoid the intake side of Smith Mountain Dam.

High winds and waves Friday night, March 25, broke the floating boat barrier that keeps boaters away from the dam’s forebay between the Bedford and Pittsylvania county sides of the 800-foot-wide Smith Mountain gap. Attempts to make repairs Saturday, March 26, were unsuccessful.

Efforts to fix the barrier resumed Sunday, March 27, at daybreak, the calmest part of the day.

Appalachian Power has extended a sincere thank-

you to the Smith Mountain Marine Volunteer Fire Department for their efforts assisting the power company with fixing the barrier.

Used to keep boaters away from the intake side of the dam, the barrier is about 840 feet in length to allow for flexing during normal plant operations and inclement weather. The barrier floats are three feet in diameter and four feet in length. They are made of thick wall plastic and are visible with a bright orange finish. They are connected with galvanized chains and hardware and meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements.

Glencoe Mansion, Museum to change hours of operation

Effective April 6, 2022, Glencoe Mansion, Museum, and Gallery will have new operating hours.

Glencoe Mansion’s new hours of operation will be Wednesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The change in operating hours applies to both the museum and the gift shop.

According to museum director Scott Gardner, “By making these changes, we’re going to

be able to serve a broader group of visitors and make Glencoe Mansion an even greater museum and asset for the community.”

As always, everyone is welcome with no admission fee. Glencoe offers a 3-in-1 museum experience with the gift shop, the adjoining Mary Draper Ingles Cultural Heritage Park with the statue of the frontier heroine, and the New River Train Observatory. The park is open dawn to dusk, seven days a week.



As of April 6, Glencoe Mansion and Museum will change its operating hours to 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

Virginia Tech Board of Visitors to meet April 3, 4

The Virginia Tech Board of Visitors will hold its quarterly board meeting on Monday, April 4, at 1:15 p.m. in Room 2100 in Torgersen Hall, 620 Drillfield Drive, on the Blacksburg campus.

All other committee meetings held during the two-day session will be held at the Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center, 901 Prices Fork Road, in Blacksburg unless otherwise noted.

On Sunday, April 3, the board’s selection committee will meet in closed session from 9 a.m. to noon in the Solitude Room to interview candidates for the 2022-23 undergraduate and graduate student representatives. At noon, all board members will meet in open session and attend an information session in Latham Ballroom.

During the board’s two-day session, the following committee meetings will be held:

On April 4, the Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee will meet in open session beginning at 10 a.m. in Latham Ballroom A/B. On April 3, the committee will meet jointly with the Finance and Resource Management Committee in closed session at 4:30 p.m. in the Latham Ballroom A/B.

Also on April 4, the Buildings and Grounds Committee will assemble in the lobby of The Inn at 7:50 a.m. for a tour of Holden Hall and the Data and Decision Science building. Following the tour, the committee will meet in open session at 10 a.m. in Solitude Room.

On April 4, the Compliance, Audit, and Risk Committee will meet in closed session at 7 a.m., followed by an open ses-

sion at 7:30 a.m. Both meetings will be held in the Old Guard Salon.

The Finance and Resource Management Committee will meet April 3 in open session beginning at 3 p.m. in Latham Ballroom A/B. On April 4, the committee will meet jointly with the Buildings and Grounds Committee in closed and open session at approximately 11:30 a.m. in the Solitude Room.

During the two-day meeting, board members will consider resolutions on 2022-23 tuition and fee rates, 2022-23 compensation for graduate assistants, and will begin planning for a new Pamplin College of Business building.

Public comments will not be received at the meeting. More information may be found at the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors website.



Christopher Guthrie, 23, of Brewton, Alabama, passed away early March 19, 2022. He was in his fifth academic year as a Midshipman First Class in the Virginia Tech Naval ROTC program and was a 2021 graduate of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets.

VT cadet Christopher Guthrie, 23, dies

Christopher Guthrie, of Brewton, Alabama, passed away early March 19, 2022. He was 23 years old. Guthrie was in his fifth academic year as a Midshipman First Class in the Virginia Tech Naval ROTC program and was a 2021 graduate of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets.

He excelled in his studies, earning a place on the Commandant’s List each semester. He was near completion of a degree in aerospace engineering with minors in

leadership/service and Russian.

Guthrie was born in Lawrenceville, Ga., on January 14, 1999, the son of Cristi Harwell Guthrie. He was a member of the First Baptist Church in Brewton.

He was an Eagle Scout and a member of the Order of the Arrow, a second degree Black Belt, a proud member of the High-Tighty Regimental band brass ensemble,

See **Christopher Guthrie**, page 2

UPCOMING EVENTS

Through April 30

Free prom dresses
By appointment only at the Meadowbrook Public Library, which has prom dresses of all sizes available for free to anyone in Montgomery County, Floyd County, and throughout the New River Valley. Call (540) 268-1964 to make an appointment to try on and choose a free prom dress.

Wednesday, March 30:

Sustainable Blacksburg Lunch and Learn: Start Planning for Gardening Season
At the Blacksburg Library; noon. This is a presentation on community gardens, LWEG (Live, Work, Eat, Grow, the local nonprofit that oversees the community gardens) and getting ready for the coming garden season.

Thursday, March 31:

Bad art afternoon
At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 3 p.m. Participants can come prepared to create some art . . . bad art. A variety of supplies will be provided, and artists can draw, paint, and glue to create the best worst art. A trophy will be given to the creator of the best bad art. All ages are welcome. Registration is required. Contact Spahl@mfrl.org for more information.

National Crayon Day: Crayon crafts.
At the Christiansburg Library; 4:30 p.m. Participants will make crayon keychain pendants and crayon art.

DIY terrarium jars
At the Blacksburg Library; 6:30 p.m. Participants will create do-it-yourself terrarium jars for a decorative splash of greenery to brighten the home. All supplies will be provided. Registration is required. All ages.

Friday, April 1:

Spring cookie decorating
At the Christiansburg Library; 3 p.m. The library will provide the supplies for participants to bring the creativity.

Registration is required.

Radford University Masters of Fine Arts Show

Opening reception; 5-7 p.m. RU Art Museum on Tyler (214 Tyler Ave). Exhibition runs Friday, April 1 – Saturday, April 9, 2022.

Friday, April 15:

Radford University Graphic Design Show

Opening reception; 5-7 p.m. RU Art Museum on Tyler (214 Tyler Ave). Exhibition runs Friday, April 15 – Saturday, April 23, 2022.

Saturday, April 2:

Blacksburg leaf compost pickup

Loose and bagged leaves collected by the town are composted into leaf mulch. This mulch can be used as a soil additive for composting and is available to Blacksburg residents for pickup. This is an important service as composted leaf mulch keeps leaves out of the landfill. Leaves can take up valuable landfill space and produce harmful greenhouse gasses.

This year, the compost can be picked up on April 2 from 8 a.m. until noon. To arrange for pickup, residents must register and follow these guidelines: Leaf compost service is for Blacksburg residents only. Register for a 15-minute time slot. Do not arrive more than 10 minutes early. Remain parked in the upper lot until town staff provide directions to the compost zone. There the staff will load up the vehicle. The limit is two cubic yards per vehicle. Do not block access to the road leading to the compost zone. Once the vehicle is loaded, please exit promptly.

Creative writing

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 10:30 a.m. In person or on Go-To-Meeting for support, feedback, and writing tips. Email cminnick@mfrl.org or call 540-268-1964 for more information. A Go-To-Meeting account is not necessary to join.

All ages storytime

At the Blacksburg Library; 11 a.m. Families can share stories, rhymes, music and movement, and a craft as they de-

velop early literacy skills and encourage a love of reading.

PAWS to read with Derek
At the Blacksburg Library; noon. Sign up for a 10-minute time slot to read with a therapy dog. Call the library at 540-552-8246.

Caturday

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; noon. Sign up at the Meadowbrook Public Library for a 15-minute slot to read to a cat from the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center to practice reading and socialize shelter cats. For all ages. Due to limited availability of the guest cat(s), participants are urged to call ahead at (540) 268-1964 before coming to verify that Caturday has not been canceled.

We Are Stardust: A storytime celebration of the planet

At the Meadowbrook Public Library; 1 p.m. Rachael Nunn and Trisha Rushing will use the book “You Are Stardust” by Elin Kelsey about finding hope and joy in the face of the Earth’s ever-changing natural world. This event will combine reading from “You Are Stardust” and Soyeon Kim’s picture books with art observation techniques, performance, visual art making, and discussion to celebrate the parts of nature that amaze and surprise.

Teen DND

At the Blacksburg Library; 2 p.m. DND for Teens.

Lettuce bowl gardening

At the Christiansburg Library; 11 a.m. to noon. Limited space doesn’t have to stop would-be gardeners from growing food. The library’s master gardener will show how anyone can start a salad bowl garden in a container. Participants should bring their own container with a drainage hole at least 6 inches deep and 10 to 12 inches long. Supplies are limited. This event will occur outside unless inclement weather interferes. Registration is required.

Sunday, April 3:

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.

Tuesday, April 5:

50 Years in the Making: Celebrating old time, blues and bluegrass music

Ticket sales for this concert, presented by the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM), will benefit the Montgomery Museum of Art and History. At the Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Children 12 and under are \$5. Seating is limited and tickets are now available online at <https://montgomerymuseum.org/events/50-years-in-the-making/>.

Tickets can also be purchased in person at the Moss Arts Center box office during certain open hours. For more information, call the box office at 540-231-5300. A mask, photo ID, and proof of COVID-19 vaccination or a negative test within 72 hours of the event are required for admittance.

Montgomery County Chamber minority business accelerator meeting

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce invites minority business owners to attend the 2022 visioning meeting for the Minority Business Accelerator to support these local businesses. At 10 a.m. at the chamber office located at 210 Laurel St., Christiansburg, VA 24073 or via Zoom. Register now at <https://bit.ly/mba2022mcc>. Chamber membership is not required to participate. This meeting is free.

Thursday, April 7:

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. For further information, call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

Tuesday, April 12:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at Aly’s Family Italian Restau-

rant, 3204 Riner Road. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are invited to attend. For further information, call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Thursday, April 14:

River City Quilt Guild

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

Radford Army Ammunition Plant community meeting

At the Christiansburg Public Library at 6 p.m. This community meeting will discuss modernization and environmental projects and compliance and corrective actions at the Radford Army Ammunition Plant. Staff members from the U.S. Army and BAE Systems will be on hand to engage with the public. Questions ahead of the meeting may be emailed to usarmy.radford.peo-eis.list.rfaap-public-affairs@mail.mil.

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce’s legislative wrap-up

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce’s legislative wrap-up will explore what occurred during the most recent legislative session in Richmond. Attendees will have opportunities to hear from their legislators and ask business-related questions during the Q&A portion of the program. At 7:30 a.m. at Warm Hearth Village, 2387 Warm Hearth Dr, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Reservations to attend are due April 12 at noon: <https://bit.ly/april22legislative>. \$25 Chamber Members / \$35 Non-members

Saturday, April 16:

Radford Easter Egg Hunt

At Bisset Park; 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The schedule by age groups is as follows: noon: ages 3-5; 12:25 p.m.: ages 6-8; 12:30 p.m.: ages 9-12; 12:45 p.m.: ages 3 and under. Bounce houses, fire trucks, police cars, food trucks, and photos with the Easter Bunny will be a part of the fun. Children should bring baskets.

Be sure to ‘Like’ the News Messenger on Facebook.

Mosaic for Earth

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singers socially distancing and wearing masks, some designed especially for singers.

Two Virginia Tech choirs and four featured soloists will join in the singing on Sunday under Bigler’s direction.

Danielle Talamentes, a Virginia Tech alumna, will sing the soprano solo. She is currently with the Metropolitan Opera. Jami Rhodes will sing mezzo soprano, Isaac Hurtado will sing tenor, and Christopher Holmes will sing baritone.

Recently, the Virginia Tech Philharmonic Orchestra has been re-

hearsing to accompany the combined choirs for this weekend’s performance.

Bigler thanked Dr. Annie Pearce, another alto in the chorale and VT faculty member. Pearce headed up four outreach events that are occurring separately but in conjunction with the world premiere.

Two outreach events are still ahead. On Monday, April 4, at 4 p.m. a reading from the book “Lost Mountain” will take place. The book documents humanity’s negative impact on nature.

On April 16, an on-

line Webinar designed as a planning workshop on personal sustainability will be presented.

The world premiere of Bigler’s composition “will be much more than a concert,” promised the composer. The multimedia performance will be recorded and will eventually be available on CD and on major streaming platforms.

“In a way the concert is not the culmination, but the beginning,” said Bigler of his work’s premiere. “We have to get the piece out there so it can fulfill its mission” as inspiration for action.

Christopher Guthrie

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and was a volunteer member of the Appleton Fire Department. He held numerous positions during his four years in the Corps: Platoon guide, Cadre, Tuba Section leader, fire team leader, squad leader, and Honor Court Defense Counsel. He also served one year as the Virginia Tech Housing Authority Secretary. He loved the outdoors and especially loved camping and hunting. He was a member of numerous campus clubs including scuba, fencing, swim, mixed martial arts, and ski.

Guthrie was described as a loving son and brother willing to help anyone, anytime. He was a kind-hearted young man with a dry sense of humor, strong opinions, and a love for debate. He enjoyed intellectual conversations and was known for his directness.

In addition to his mother, he is survived by a sister, Taylor Guthrie; his maternal grandmother, Pat Harwell; his paternal grandfather Gregg Guthrie; his paternal grandmother Judy Guthrie; and numerous aunts and cousins. He was preceded in death by his maternal grandfather, Huey Harwell,

and his father Greg Guthrie, Jr.

The family received visitors at 1 p.m. Saturday, March 26, at Brewton First Baptist Church with funeral services by the Rev. Ron Headley following at 2 p.m. The burial was at Flomaton Cemetery. A livestream of the service may be viewed at www.fbcbrewton.com.

A memorial service on campus at Virginia Tech will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, gifts to Chris Guthrie’s memory can be made through the Virginia Tech Foundation to create a memorial scholarship for Chris in the Corps of Cadets. If the goal to establish a scholarship is not reached, all donations will be applied to honor him in the Corps. Make checks payable to the Virginia Tech Foundation, in the memo line list Memorial Scholarship for Chris Guthrie and mail to Attn: Sandi Bliss, 902 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg, VA 24061. Or online: www.givingto.vt.edu/ corps select “other” and in the comments section list Memorial Scholarship for Chris Guthrie in the Corps of Cadets.



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Children make bird houses at Christiansburg Library



From left, Angel, Victoria, and Amy Haro all found different ways of making bird houses during a library activity Thursday afternoon at the Christiansburg branch of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library system.

Madeline Hodge, age 5, of Christiansburg, adds color to her bird house made of found materials. Hodge and a dozen other children participated Thursday afternoon in a Christiansburg Library activity spearheaded by Shaylee Hodges, a children's program specialist with the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library system.

YMCA at Virginia Tech to hold 50/50 raffle

The YMCA at Virginia Tech is holding a 50/50 raffle limited to 2,000 tickets on sale through May 17, 2022.

The raffle has a potential jackpot of \$50,000. Half of the proceeds after expenses go to support the Y's community outreach programs while the other half goes to the lucky raffle winner.

That means those who buy raffle tickets have a 1 in 2,000 chance of winning up to \$22,000. The purchase of two tickets improves the odds to 1 in 1,000.

Tickets cost \$25 each and will be sold until 4:00 p.m. on May 17, 2022. Tickets can be purchased only at: <https://vtymca.org/50-50-raffle/>.



the YMCA at Virginia Tech 2022 '50-50' RAFFLE

DRAWING TO BE HELD:
Tues, May 17, 2022 at 5:00pm at the Y Center

YMCA at Virginia Tech
1000 N. Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060

540-961-9622
www.vtymca.org



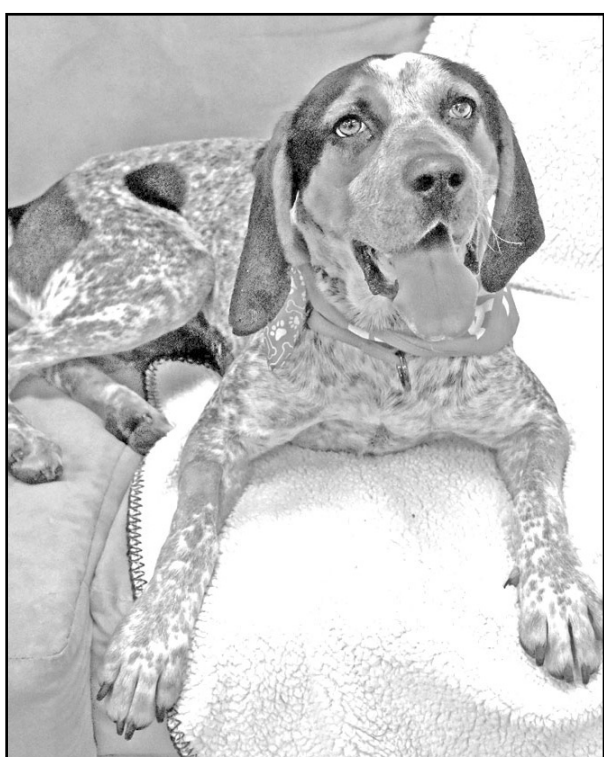
One (1) raffle ticket for \$25.
One drawing, one winner
for 50% of the proceeds of the
2022 '50-50' Raffle.
Only 2000 raffle tickets available.

Gaming permit number: G-22-24631-093514
Ticket Number: 0000

PETS OF THE WEEK



Caramel has lived at the Animal Care and Adoption Center for a very short time and is ready to hop into her new home. She is sweet and doesn't mind receiving pets and pats from short-eared humans.



Jethrine is an energetic hound who loves to play with stuffed toys. She also enjoys meeting new people and gets along with fellow canines. She would benefit from a future home with a yard to run in or a family who can provide leash training for walks around the area.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING SOLID WASTE AND REFUSE DISPOSAL SERVICE RATES, FEES AND CHARGES TO BE IMPOSED BY THE MONTGOMERY REGIONAL SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY

Notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held on April 21, 2022 at 1:30 pm at the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority, 555 Authority Drive, Christiansburg, VA 24073 concerning MRSWA's proposed rates, fees and charges for solid waste and refuse disposal services. Such proposed rates, fees and charges are as follows:

SOLID WASTE SERVICES

Clean brush, wood & pallets	\$53.00 per ton (\$2.65 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Construction waste	\$44.00 per ton (\$2.20 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Dead animals	\$62.00 per ton (\$3.10 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Industrial waste	\$44.00 per ton (\$2.20 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Leaves	\$62.00 per ton (\$3.10 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Municipal solid waste – jurisdictional	\$62.00 per ton (\$3.10 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Municipal solid waste- commercial	\$41.00 per ton (\$2.05 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
Sludge	\$62.00 per ton (\$3.10 minimum charge up to 100 lbs.)
White goods/appliances – containing freon and propane tanks containing propane	\$17.00 per unit freon/propane surcharge
Direct Haul – non friable asbestos	Contact NRRA
Mulch sold to public	\$20.00 per ton
Untarped/unsecured loads	\$10.00 per load (in addition to the per ton material fee)

Member clean-up events \$62.00 per ton

Special waste: Must be of a type allowed by law and acceptable to the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority. Rate charged will be a rate set by the New River Resource Authority plus cost of transportation and handling.

RECYCLING SERVICES

Tires \$0.18 per pound (\$3.60 minimum charge up to 20 pounds)

Single Stream recycling processing fee: \$62.00 per ton charge for loads of single stream recyclables unless contaminated and rejected then the processing fee is \$67.00 per ton.

All interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard at the public hearing.

OPINION

Home Country

There's something so satisfying about getting out of bed when the world is still dark and quiet and resting. Making the coffee gives us time to scratch and think. Well, scratch, anyway. Most of that thinking will start after about the third cup of coffee.

But it's a quiet time. A private

time. When the world is dark, and there isn't yet a hint of pink over the eastern mountains, it's very good. We can relax. No one is expecting anything from us right now. Our guilt can take some time off, and we can listen to music or work a crossword puzzle or turn on the TV and watch the

weather guy discuss millibars and troughs.

Soon enough, we'll have to be out there living for others: our bosses, our customers, our animals, our fields. But right now no one needs us except the dog, and she does well on kibbles and an ear rump.

We can look out the window at the eastern glow and wonder what will happen in the hours until our world turns dark again. People will be born and people will die.

People will win honors and people will go to jail. People will create things today that live past them and people will disappear forever. Some people will write about these things and other people will read about these things.

And then the world will go dark on us again and we'll think about what happened in our tiny portion of this huge moving amalgam and hopefully we'll sleep easily tonight. Then, when we arise tomorrow and head for

the coffee pot, we can think about what happened today, and how it has made us slightly different for taking on the next tomorrow.

Come to us, Daylight. Bring us the new day. But do it gently, please, and slowly enough for one more cup.

By Slim Randles

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

Up the Creek

Acts 1: 8 "You will receive power and the Holy Ghost will come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

We were in Malindi, Kenya working with a team of twenty people, mostly from Texas. Our church assignment was Kua Munu about ten miles inland.

The church building was concrete block which was unusual in itself. Most churches were sticks and mud with a grass or palm frond roof. Some of our

most productive and spiritual church services were held under a canopy of acacia trees.

As typical, in any church, a collection plate was passed. As normal in Africa, items other than money were placed in the plate. It is not unusual to see ears of maize (corn) or a coconut in the offering in an African church. A few Kenyan shillings, but very few, were also collected.

The men sat on one side of the church and the women on the other side. Children made no noise, what-

soever, and did not dare leave the service. If a baby began crying, the mother and child left immediately.

One morning when we arrived at the church, an old car was there we had not previously seen. All the other days we had walked to surrounding villages. The pastor told us we were going to a remote area where no white people had ever been seen by many of the villagers so be prepared to be stared at. By then we were used to that experience.

Margie and I rode in the backseat of the car. I'm not sure the make of the vehicle but it appeared similar to a 1950 American made automobile. The floor was rusted out and we could see the reddish dirt road passing under us.

As we traveled deeper into the interior, the jungle became thicker and we saw few signs of human habitation. A canopy of vegetation over the road blocked out the sunlight to make it seem as night.

Finally, we came to the end of the road. We were still some distance from the village and the closest thing to a road was a dry creek bed. That creek was a tributary to the Athi-Galana-Sabaki River that flows into the Indian Ocean near Malindi.

The driver started up the creek bed. Margie and

I looked at each other and her eyes said, "Why do I let you get me into such places?" She didn't fool me though; she wouldn't have taken a ranch in Texas for that experience!

We finally reached the village and spent several hours explaining Bible concepts to the villagers. Margie often reminds me of how sleepy one can become in the African sun with a slight breeze blowing, and the drone of a Kenyan army plane going overhead and following a five mile hike.

The Kua Munu pastor served as our interpreter. Tribal dialects vary from village to village but he managed to explain very adequately. I could say a sentence of five or ten words and it seemed like he would spend twenty minutes explaining what I'd said. Possibly, he added a little of his own flair to it, maybe? We've found, in so many cases, when people hear the gospel for the first time, they are eager to embrace it.

When we started back to Malindi, the driver chose a different creek bed; this one had water. Several times we drove through water deep enough it came through the holes in the car floor.

Margie rode with her feet up in the seat. I imagine she was wondering what besides water might come into the car with us. We

had come quite a way and one water hole was deeper than our driver assumed. You guessed it; the car drowned out. So, here we were, in the jungle of East Africa, up a creek without a paddle. Margie just loves our little adventures.

I climbed out through a window and waded to the creek bank. We found a log and slid it around for Margie to have a bridge out. She came out the window with her skirt pulled up and with her new walking shoes tied around her neck and made it to dry land. The log rolled but she maintained her balance and managed not to fall.

And, off we went for another hike. Margie walked for a while in her sock feet before pulling the socks off to put on her shoes. We were only a couple of miles from a road going into Malindi. We walked a path along the creek to the road. There was a bus stop not far from where we came out.

The bus finally came. It looked like a 1940's model. The floor was rusted out in places but we were getting used to that. The bus was full of passengers; all were African Muslims.

One man gave his seat to the "white lady." They stared at us a few seconds and went back to their reading and talking. They were very courteous and not at all intimidating. One that

spoke English asked where we were from and then conveyed the information to the others in Swahili.

The man that gave Margie his seat had admired her hat. When he left the bus, she gave him the hat for his wife to say "thank you" for his kindness. Our interpreter left the bus outside Malindi and the driver had stayed with the car and was recruiting local villagers to help pull it out of the creek.

As the other passengers exited at their stops, they smiled at us and wished us well. We finally arrived back in Malindi. When we arrived there, we recognized the street. We finally started to feel we were in familiar surroundings. The final bus stop was still about a mile from our hotel. And, yes, we were tired!

By the time we arrived at the hotel, we definitely felt like we had been to the uttermost. Now we know where Jesus was talking about when He said in Acts 1: 8, "The uttermost parts of the earth."

By Van Yandell

Van Yandell is a retired industrial arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist, and a former Christian missionary. He writes articles as a ministry in his older years with the hope of reaching someone with Biblical teachings.

News Messenger

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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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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Gas Prices

This should make Americans ask the fundamental question: What is the difference between what a public non-profit utility company provides and what a private for-profit oil company provides? After all, they both sell energy to all United States citizens. The difference is that natural gas and electricity are sold in the form of a public good whereas oil is sold in the form of a private good.

Accordingly, on the grounds of

promoting national security, the United States Congress should convert all oil companies to utility companies. This would eliminate the windfall profits and force the oil industry to earn just enough income to cover operating expenses just as natural gas and electric utility companies are required to do. The resulting drop in gasoline prices would further stimulate the economy and lighten the energy stranglehold upon the United States by the Middle East. It would also eliminate the influence of the oil lobby.

In this case, desperate times call for deliberate measures. But as pathetic as the energy policy is in the United States the effort to develop alternative sources of energy won't really be accelerated until the oil dries up and the Saudiss place solar cells all across their desert and then sell us the electricity.

Joe Bialek
4233 River Ridge Drive
Cleveland, OH 44109
216-744-8352

Obituary

Teel, Gene Atkins

Gene Atkins Teel, lovingly known to all as "Bull," departed this earth for his heavenly home on Friday, March 25, 2022. Bull passed peacefully, his family by his side, following a lengthy illness.

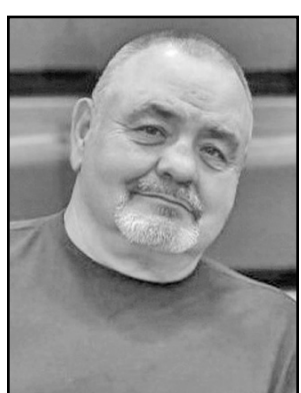
Bull was born on Nov. 23, 1951, the second son born to J. Willard and Mary Mangus Teel. Along with his older brother, Lee, the Teel family operated a dairy and beef farm in the Riner area. Until his illness, the two brothers, along with his nephew, Randy, continued to run the farm his late parents had established.

Bull was a kind and generous soul, and many affectionately referred to him as a pillar and staple of the Riner Community. The unofficial mayor of Riner, Bull supported his hometown in many ways. A 1970 graduate of Auburn High School where he played basketball and was actively involved with the FFA, Bull was a long-time supporter of his alma mater. He was a member of the Auburn High School football program's "Chain Gang," carrying the chain at home football games for many years.

When Auburn had a home basketball game, Bull sat at the scorer's table where he kept the clock for 50 years. He used to attend agriculture classes at Auburn as a guest lecturer. To acknowledge and recognize their contributions, AHS renamed the gymnasium after Bull and Lee.

Recognizing the need to further serve the Riner Community, Bull and Lee made land along Route 8 available to the county for the purpose of building a new fire department and recreational facilities.

Bull was also an avid supporter of Virginia Tech Athletics, and he attended football and



basketball games for decades. He was a member of the UT Prosim Society at Virginia Tech and was an active member of the Radford Church of Christ. He said the most important day of his life was April 2, 1964, the day he was baptized into Christ. He loved his church family, and leaves behind many special friends. He served on numerous civic and service boards throughout his lifetime.

Serving his community was important to him, and he wanted to continue to help his community after his death. His desire was to establish a scholarship supporting AHS students. This scholarship will be called The Teel Family Scholarship. In lieu of flowers, monetary donations can be sent to the Bull Teel Educational Trust Fund, C/O Lee Teel, 2150 Meadow Creek Road, Christiansburg, VA 24073.

Surviving are his wife, Sue Teel; a brother and sister-in-law, Lee and Roberta Teel; nieces and nephews Leigh Ann Teel, Kim (Joe) Wilson, and Randy Teel; a great-niece and nephew, Debra (Cody) Hopper and Tyler Wilson; an uncle, Don (Cathy) Teel; an aunt, Peggy (Roger) Sheppard; numerous cousins; and many friends and neighbors.

The family would like to thank all Bull's caregivers.

The family will receive friends from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 2, 2022, at Auburn High School in the Teel Gymnasium. A celebration of Bull's life will begin at 3 p.m. with Mr. John Croft officiating.

Per Bull's request, no flowers will be accepted.

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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- CLUES ACROSS
- Hillsides
 - A way to ingest
 - Large number
 - Southeastern Minnesota city
 - Cronies
 - Having sufficient skill, knowledge
 - Supplements with difficulty
 - Former VP nominee Palin
 - Cambodian monetary unit
 - Where coaches work
 - Secret political clique
 - A type of lute
 - Tan
 - Empire State
 - Where golfers begin
 - For each
 - Muslim inhabitants of the Philippines
 - Bird genus
 - Popular Dave Matthews Band song
 - Domesticates
 - "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
 - Asian antelope
 - One who takes apart
 - Kin
 - Dresses
 - Says something about you (abbr.)
 - Doctor of Education
 - One quintillion bytes (abbr.)
 - Overcharge
 - Sailboats
 - Indian musical patterns
 - Predisposition to a condition
 - Share a common boundary with
 - Wide
 - Skin disease
 - Monetary unit of Samoa
 - Source of the Blue Nile
 - Instrument
 - Red deer
 - Unidentified flying object
 - Bar or preclude
 - CLUES DOWN
 - Flying insects
 - Strong alcoholic spirit
 - Old
 - Moves in slowly
 - Symbol for tin
 - Having certain appendages
 - Expression of sorrow or pity
 - Type of hormone (abbr.)
 - One with an unjustified mistrust
 - Hebrew calendar month
 - Pure
 - LSU football coach
 - Unbroken views
 - Fathers
 - Part of a race
 - Hairstyle
 - Fifth note of a major scale
 - Body art
 - Amounts of time
 - Designed chairs
 - Sensational dramatic piece
 - Arrangement of steps
 - Classifies
 - Young child
 - Oh, no!
 - Astronomical period of about 18 years
 - Not or
 - Poke fun at
 - Consisting of roots
 - "Humbug!"
 - A way to remove
 - A confusion of voices and other sounds
 - Keyed instrument
 - Varnishes
 - Unpleasantly sticky substance
 - Unable to hear
 - A short erect tail
 - Indicates interest
 - Flow or leak through
 - British thermal unit
 - Iron

OBITUARIES

Correll, Dorothy Gearldine

Dorothy Gearldine Correll, 77, of Pilot passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Friday, March 25, 2022.

Gearldine was born on Oct. 19, 1944 to the late Percy and Jessie Allen Jones.

In addition to her parents, Gearldine was preceded in death by husband, Grady Hoyle Cromer and her husband, Arnold Lee Correll; and her brothers, Dennis Jones and David Jones.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Grady and Jessica Aaron Cromer; a grandson, Grady Bennett Cromer; sisters and brothers-in-law Mae Henderson, Janie and Sam Martin, and Darlene and Wayne Ratcliff; brothers Codell Jones, Bill Jones, and Tommy Jones; a sister-in-law, Jeannie Jones; and numerous nieces and nephews.



Gearldine.

A funeral service will be held today, March 30, 2022, at 11 a.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Simon Jones officiating. Interment will follow at Westview Cemetery. The family received friends on Tuesday evening at McCoy Funeral Home 150 Country Club Drive SW, Blacksburg.

Gearldine loved children and animals, both of which she worried were never warm enough or fed enough. Although she referred to everyone as "honey" or "sweetheart," the true lights of her life were her son and grandson.

The family would like to thank Carilion Hospice and special caregiver and friend Cynthia "Bobbi" Conner for their wonderful care of

Hawkins, George Winfred

George Winfred Hawkins, 95, of Blacksburg died Wednesday, March 23 after a brief illness. He was born in Stokes Co., N.C. on Feb. 17, 1927 to the late Sam Frank Hawkins and Annie Lane Highfil Hawkins. He grew up in Rockingham, N.C.

At the age of 18, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was part of the commissioning crew on the USS Dogfish from 1945-47. He earned his BS degree in Agronomy from North Carolina State University in 1952. He completed his Master's degree in Soil Science at North Carolina State University in 1956. He received his PhD from Iowa State University in 1963. After 27 years of service as Professor of Agronomy and Extension Agronomist, Soil Fertility at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, he retired in 1989 as Professor Emeritus. Later he worked part time as President of Specialist Farm Management Service of Blacksburg and as a private consultant for Southern States. His love of sharing knowledge and stories with the county agents and the farming community of Virginia was known throughout the state.

He was a member for 60 years at Blacksburg Baptist Church and gave of his time and talents such as teaching Sunday school, coordinating Senior Adult programs, and serving as a Deacon. He was always ready to help in any capacity where he was needed, from the church kitchen serving Saturday breakfasts to serving on numerous committees. He will be remembered for his steadfast belief in his Lord and Savior and wanting to share that love with others.

He was active in his community through



many years of service with NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Assoc.); his beloved ROMEOS (Retired Old Men Eating Out) and many other outreach groups. He was honored to receive the Gunnar Teilmann Award Lay Person of the Year from the Montgomery Co. Blacksburg Kiwanis Club in 1997.

George was preceded in death by his loving and de-

voted wife of 63 years, Clara A. Hawkins. He is survived by his daughter, Anne Faris of Blacksburg; sons and daughters-in-law, Gregg W. and Crystal Hawkins of Apex, N.C. and Michael D. and Cecilia Hawkins of Broadway, Va.; grandchildren, Jonathan (Stephanie) Faris, Jeremy (Janell) Faris, Kate (Fernando) Ramirez, Allison (Wes) May, Grayson Hawkins, Camden Hawkins, and Gerek Hawkins; great grandchildren, Samantha Faris, Madeline, George, and Hazel Faris, Santiago and Lucas Ramirez, Alexis and Olivia Fitzwater and Eva May. He is survived by brothers, Francis (Linda) Hawkins and Bryon Hawkins; sister, Jen Stutts; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral service will be conducted Saturday, April 2, 2022 at 3 p.m. in the Blacksburg Baptist Church with Dr. Tommy McDearis, the Rev. Todd Millsaps and Dr. Don McKinney officiating. Interment will follow in the Westview Cemetery. Family will receive friends from 6-8 p.m. Friday evening at McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Dr. SW, Blacksburg. Donations may be made to Blacksburg Baptist Church Land of Promise Fund, 550 N. Main St., Blacksburg, Va. 24060. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

Leonard, Margaret Newcomb

Margaret Newcomb Leonard, 85, passed from this life on March 28, 2022, after a long battle with dementia. She spent much of her life in the New River Valley and was proud to be descended from many families who had an impact on local history. Margaret attended Bluefield College and completed her bachelor's degree at the Women's Division of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Soon after, she met an engineering student who became the love of her life, and they enjoyed 62 years of marriage.

Margaret was a mother, educator, businesswoman, volunteer, and friend to many. She taught history and English in Pulaski County and maintained contact with students throughout her life. She helped establish the learning center at Purdue University. She was actively involved in faculty wives' clubs at Penn State, Purdue University, and Virginia Tech. She volunteered at area hospitals and served as an officer in the Virginia Auxiliary of Hospital Volunteers. She was proud to have been appointed to the Bluefield College Board of Trustees and was honored to be inducted into the Gallery of Distinguished Graduates of that school.

Margaret was a cunning card player and a lifelong fan of many sports. She was welcoming, gracious, and generous to everyone



she encountered. She enjoyed meeting new people and embodied Southern hospitality so well, she could make everyone feel at ease and could learn the entire life stories of strangers within minutes of meeting them. She thought of friends of her children and grandchildren as family and she always welcomed everyone with open arms. She always had extra food on hand for unexpected guests (especially her homemade brownies).

Margaret leaves behind her husband, Robert Leonard; sons Robert Leonard Jr. and John Leonard; children-in-law Lori Davis Leonard and Bobby Bell; granddaughters Danielle Akers and Stephanie Weber; grandsons-in-law Andrew Akers and Charles Weber; and three beloved and loveable great-grandchildren Connor, Sutton, and Landon.

Don't be sad but remember the good times. Be glad that her pain is gone, and she is reunited with her beloved parents and has begun her new life in the ever after where she will welcome us one day. Her family will honor her with a private graveside service.

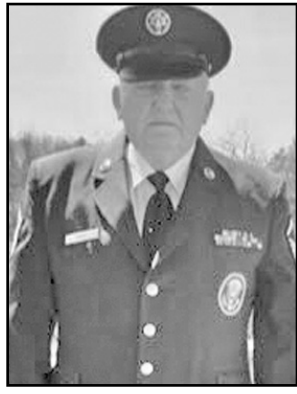
The Leonard family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford, Virginia. www.mullinsfuneralhome.com.

Rice, Billy Lewis

Billy Lewis Rice, 89, of Pilot, passed away on March 25, 2022.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Sharon Kay Rice; three daughters, Renee Buckner and husband, Dale, Regina Rice, and Denise Rice; six grandsons, Brett Buckner (Jesse), Brock Buckner (Devon), Blake Buckner (Brooke), Tayler Grice (Haley), Jacob Grice, and Dustin Sparks; one granddaughter, Misty Sparks; and two great-grandchildren, Alania and Brooks Grice.

He was a Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force, serving his country for 21 years. He is a graduate of the Non-



Commissioned Officer's Air Force Academy. He served with Air Force One under the Presidency of Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter from 1968-1979 and served during the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Dad, we all love you and you will be greatly missed. Psalms 23.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, March 29, 2022, at the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Craig Reed and the Rev. Richard Kingrea officiating. Interment followed at Sunset Cemetery Christiansburg. The family received friends prior to the service at McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Drive SW, Blacksburg.

Montgomery, Susie Fisher

Susie Fisher Montgomery, 73, of Lake Wylie, S.C., formerly of Radford, passed away Wednesday, March 23, 2022.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Matthew and Willie Mae Fisher.

Survivors include her husband of 53 years, Roger Montgomery; children Darrell, Rhonda, Mark, and Beth Montgomery; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; a special niece,



Crystal Cluver; sisters Patty (Dennis) Carden, Martha Hall, and Betty Bolen; a brother, Jesse Allen; a special friend, Sandra Bailey; and many other relatives and friends.

Graveside services will be held today, March 30, at 11 a.m. at the Hickman Cemetery in Pulaski County.

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

Walker, Sr., Alfonso

Alfonso Walker, Sr., 96, of New River, passed away Saturday, March 26, 2022.

He was a member of New Hope United Methodist Church and was an auto mechanic.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Isabel Walker; a son, Lorenzo Walker; brothers Manford and Oliver; and sisters Geraldine, Nettie Mae, and Edna Allen.

Survivors include his wife of 73 years, Noma Minter Walker; a son and daughter-in-law, Alfonso Walker, Jr. and Norma; daughters Marie Walker, Beverly Walker, and Freda Crockett; grandchildren Ebonie Walker, Dezeray Walker, Dalvyn Walker, Ronald Walker, Dana Austin, Carnell Walker, Bridg-



et Lester (Matthew), Thomas Boyd, Sonya Walker, Tonya Walker, and Lorenzo Walker, Jr.; 18 great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces and nephews, other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends from noon until 1 p.m. today, March 30, 2022, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

Funeral services will follow with the Rev. Betsy King officiating. Interment with full military honors will be held at 2 p.m. in the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin.

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

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA
FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 TAX LEVIES AND BUDGET

Pursuant to Section 58.1-3007 of the Code of Virginia, notice is hereby given that a public hearing be scheduled for 6:00 P.M. April 7, 2022 on the proposed intention to address the below listed local tax levies for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 upon which matter citizens will have the opportunity to be heard. Said hearing will be held at the Montgomery County Government Center Board Room, 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia.

FURTHER, notice is given of the Board's intention to propose no increases in the following tax levies for Fiscal Year 2022-2023:

Real Property tax levy remains at \$.89 per \$100 of assessed value.

Personal Property tax levy remains at \$2.55 per \$100 of assessed value.

Machinery & Tools tax levy remains at \$1.82 per \$100 of assessed value.

Merchant's Capital tax levy remains at \$3.05 per \$100 of assessed value.

Mobile Homes tax levy remains at \$.89 per \$100 of assessed value.

Notice is also given that the Board of Supervisors of Montgomery County scheduled a public hearing for 6:15 P.M. or as soon thereafter, April 7, 2022 on the **Advertised Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget** in the amount of \$220,385,913. Said hearing will be held at the Montgomery County Government Center Board Room, 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia.

BY THE ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
F. CRAIG MEADOWS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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'It was like my 9/11': Heartbroken Virginia Tech students, faculty from Ukraine keep tabs on family in midst of conflict

Tim Covert was finishing his homework when his roommate texted him. Some cadets needed Covert, who is fluent in Russian and a member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, to translate a speech by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Covert peered at the laptop screen, translating each sentence into English. He struggled with what he was hearing. Putin planned to invade Ukraine, Covert's home country.

He grabbed his phone. It was 2 a.m. in Ukraine. His grandmother answered.

"You guys have to get out of the city right now," said Covert, a senior majoring in history and Russian, who also serves in the Marine Corps Reserve.

He heard an explosion in the background as his grandmother explained that the family planned to hide in the basement of their apartment building in Kyiv, Ukraine, the capital city. Then, he didn't hear from them.

"It was like my 9/11," Covert said. "I sobbed and cried for six hours straight. I thought my family had died. I didn't sleep for three days."

That was Feb. 24, the day Russia launched its military invasion into Ukraine, with a focus on Kyiv. Since then, hundreds of civilians, including children and those who volunteered for the Ukrainian defense forces, have been killed. Others have fled to different parts of Ukraine or to neighboring countries.

As the conflict continues on the other side of the world from Blacksburg, Virginia Tech students and faculty from Ukraine watch in agony. Many are trying by phone to help their families find safety, either in Ukraine or in neighboring countries.

Covert and his parents spent four days on the phone with his grandparents and cousins

in Ukraine, helping them move from village to village at night as they fled Kyiv for Lviv, where his aunt lives. While they were traveling, the family's Kyiv apartment was destroyed by a cruise missile. His uncles stayed behind to defend the city.

"It's something that I never saw myself doing," said Covert, who was born in Kyiv and moved to the United States when he was 5 years old with his parents and brother. Growing up, he continued to visit his family in Ukraine often and went to middle school in Russia.

"Ukraine for me was always a safe space growing up," he said. "I went from having a family who was totally happy and healthy to overnight becoming wartime refugees."

Similarly, Iuliia Hoban begged her family to flee Kyiv when the invasion began. Hoban, a native of Kyiv, is assistant director for intercultural learning in the Cranwell International Center at Virginia Tech. She also is program director for Mozaiko, a living-learning community.

As she watched the news unfold on Feb. 24, Hoban frantically called her parents. It was 4 a.m. Ukraine time.

"You have to leave now," Hoban told them. "I could hear the bombs."

She said her parents initially resisted, then agreed and packed some possessions. They left by car and headed to the western part of Ukraine, where they are living now.

"You need to be forceful in those circumstances," Hoban said. "When there's a lack of safety, you need to have someone to say what you're doing. Time is a rare commodity and one day can slow you down."

She said her parents' trek normally would have taken six hours by car. This time, it took



Tim Covert (third from left), a Virginia Tech senior who was born in Ukraine, with his grandparents and his brother. His grandparents and other family members who live in Ukraine fled their home in Kyiv, the capital city, after Russia invaded the country. Photo courtesy of Covert.

24 hours. "It's the most traumatic event I have ever experienced," Hoban said as she watched the conflict from Virginia. She's coping by taking in the information day by day, rather than many days at a time.

"If you even try to think about it a little more, you can't handle it," she said.

Similarly, Bogdan Ivanytsia, a Virginia Tech sophomore, is struggling to process all that is happening in his home country. He was born and grew up in Kyiv, coming to live in the United States as a Hokie last July.

His entire family, including his parents, three siblings, and grandparents, were able to escape Kyiv, traveling through neighboring Slovakia and reaching Germany, where they are now. He has friends living

in bomb shelters in Kyiv or who have joined the defense forces.

"On one side, I am incredibly lucky to have my family safe and out of the country, and I am incredibly lucky to be safe myself," he said from his campus residence hall in Blacksburg. "But on the other side, I'm pretty sure I completely lost my home. I don't think I'll be able to have my childhood pictures. I'm seeing all of these places I grew up — places I celebrated my middle school and high school graduation — being completely destroyed."

Ivanytsia, who is majoring in geography, has been so distraught that he has not been able to attend classes since the invasion began. He has worked with the Dean of Students Office and directly with Dean of Students By-

ron Hughes to arrange his workload with professors.

Ivanytsia said he's grateful for the support from Virginia Tech, especially one of his first-year engineering professors, Diana Bairaktarova, who has checked on him and brought him food. Bairaktarova is an assistant professor in the Department of Engineering Education, an affiliate faculty member in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, and a faculty member in Human-Centered Design at Virginia Tech.

Both Covert and Ivanytsia encouraged people not only to support Ukrainians, but Russians, too. Each has friends and family in Russia.

"This war is a tragedy on all fronts," Covert said.

By Jenny Kincaid Boone

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Legals - Botetourt County

Trustee's Sale
3772 Lithia Road, Buchanan, VA 24066
 (Parcel ID: 77-38B)
 Default having been made in the terms of a certain Deed of Trust endorsed on April 13, 2012, in the original principal amount of \$136,694.30 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Botetourt, Virginia on April 27, 2012, as Instrument Number 120001762, and modified by a Loan Modification Agreement recorded on January 11, 2017, as Instrument Number 170000150, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will sell at public auction on April 27, 2022 at 2:00 PM, in front of the building housing the County of Botetourt Circuit Court, 1 W. Main Street, Fincastle, VA 24090, the property designated as New Parcel 38A-1, containing 1.250 acres, more or less, as more fully shown on that certain "Family Division for Ralph L., Jr. and Rebecca S. Watts", dated October 31, 2006, prepared by Kyle D. Austin, Land Surveyor, and recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office in Plat Book 39, Page 20. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, and conditions, if any, of record, or other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the

Legals - Botetourt County

premises. TERMS: CASH. A deposit of \$13,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Prior to the sale, interested bidders will be required to register with and must present a bid deposit which may be held during the sale by the trustee. The bid deposit must be certified funds and/or cash, but no more than \$9,900.00 of cash will be accepted. The successful bidder's deposit will be retained at the sale and applied to the sale price. If held by the trustee, all other bid deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders. Settlement is to be made within 15 days. The successful bidder will be responsible for obtaining possession of the property, and for all costs and fees related to recording the Trustee's Deed, including the grantors tax. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Memorandum of Trustee's Sale, available for review upon request before the sale, outlining additional terms of sale and settlement. A Trustee's Deed will be prepared by Trustee's attorney at high bidder's expense. This is a communication from a debt collector. Tromberg, Morris & Poulin, PLLC on behalf of Southeast Equity Trustees, LLC and/or Auction.com-VA, LLC, Substitute Trustee(s),

Legals - Botetourt County

413 Stuart Circle, Suite 314, Richmond, VA 23220, File No. 21-000116, Tel: 561-338-4101.

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Remembering two local sports icons



The area lost two sports personalities this past week in the passing of Bull Teel and Stephen Barber.

People will remember Bull Teel as the smiling face from Riner who could remember 100s of people's birthdays, calling out of the blue to sing "happy birthday."

Barber was a former Radford University basketball player and coach who had settled in a home nearby in Glenvar.

Teel never failed to call me every year to wish me a happy birthday. I was always amazed that he remembered. This year, I didn't receive that call, and I admit it left a void in my day. He had fought illnesses off-and-on for the past two years, thus shutting down the annual call.

I remember the first day I met him holding the chains at an Auburn football game. Be careful, young man, he said, you're going to trip over the chain if you're not careful.

Two years ago, Bull and his brother Lee, received a special honor with the renaming of the Auburn High School gymnasium in their honor. He joked with me that he would never have to pay for admission as they were presented with lifetime passes to any future athletic events. Trust me, the two never had to pay admission at Auburn.

Bull worked more than 230 football games in the span of 44 years as part of the chain gang. He had also kept the clock at basketball games since December 4, 1970, checking off 1,380 games. His brother, Lee, helped to maintain the football field for close to 35 years.

"It was an awesome feeling to be honored in this way. In no way did we deserve it," Bull said after the unveiling of a sign in the school gymnasium that bears the "Teel" name.

Athletic Director Paul Dominy said the two brothers have done everything over the years.

"We had always gone to games, growing up and attending the old Auburn High School. So, after graduation, we just started doing things to help the athletic program,"



PHOTO BY JAMES PERKINS

Two years ago, the Auburn High School gym was officially renamed the Teel Gymnasium after two longtime athletic supporters, Bull and Lee Teel. Pictured at the presentation (left to right) were Auburn Principal Chris Stewart, Gene "Bull" Teel, Lee Teel and Athletic Director Paul Dominy.

Bull said earlier this week.

Lee worked for several years opening the school's gym on the weekend to allow area children to play basketball. "He even mopped the floors," Bull said.

The Teel family has also been involved in the development of the new school grounds, and a former family farm is set to become home to a new Riner Fire

Station and future park.

I worked the sports information table at Radford University basketball games in the mid-80s, getting to know the different players. Stephen Barber or "Fonz" was one of those as he was joining the Highlanders as I graduated. He was a member of the team from 1988-1992.

Barber ranks #13 in ca-

reer points at Radford and #5 in career blocked shots. He also served on the bench under then-RU coach Ron Bradley as the team won the Big South Championships in 1998 for a team that took a trip to the NCAA Tournament.

Thanks, guys, for the memories and everything you have given to local athletics.

Virginia Tech spring practice in full swing



Virginia Tech freshman Gunner Givens (left) and former Lord Botetourt Cavalier is matched up against teammate C.J. McCray in a defensive line drill during a Hokie practice session.



PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Former Radford Bobcat P.J. Prioleau runs through a wide receiver drill during practice at Virginia Tech's indoor facility. The Hokies continue to fine tune during spring drills.

East Mont girls soccer defeats Honaker High 7-0



Madison Bruce takes advantage of space and attacks forward in Eastern Montgomery's 7-0 defeat of Honaker High School Friday.



Madeline Mirolli beats her defender and dribbles the ball to the goal. Mirolli scored three goals in the Mustangs' win.



Eastern Montgomery defender Morgan Bahnken volleys the ball back into play.

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Outdoor report: Spring turkey season is here

Virginia's spring gobbler enthusiasts have two weekends in their sights right now with the Youth and Apprentice Weekend on April 2 and 3 and the season opener kicking off on Saturday, April 9.

Katie Martin, the deer, bear, and turkey biologist for the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), gives insight on what kind of action we can expect.

"The best news is that the Northwest Mountain region had a poul-to-hen ratio of 4.0 in 2020," Martin said. "That region from Botetourt County to Northern Virginia has a lot of national forest land, and many of those counties, such as Highland and Bath, have had decreased turkey numbers in recent years, especially on public land. The improved reproduction is a much-needed boost.

"So this could be a very good year to hunt in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest," Martin said. "Hunters looking for a place to go and individuals that don't normally hunt public land might want to check things out. The Forest Service has worked hard to

improve wildlife habitat with prescribed burns and with the creation of more, early successional habitat. Areas where habitat work has been done could draw turkeys in the spring and hens with their poults in the summer."

Unfortunately, Martin said, the rest of the region endured reproduction below the long-term average of 2.5 in 2020. Those regions (with the poul-to-hen ratio in parenthesis) were Tidewater (1.8), Southern Piedmont (1.4), Northern Piedmont (1.3), and Southwest Mountains (1.9).

However, Martin noted that an important caveat exists concerning these figures in that the survey was done during the heart of the COVID pandemic, making data more challenging to gather with fewer staff able to participate. This makes the year and its figures possibly something of an outlier.

Also of note is that there should be more jakes prowling Virginia's forests and fields this spring. The 2021 poul-per-hen ratio was 2.7. The figures per region were Tidewater (2.3), Southern Piedmont (2.7), Northern Piedmont



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA DWR

Virginia's spring turkey season kicks off on April 2-3 with Youth and Apprentice Spring Turkey Hunting Weekend. Spring Turkey Season runs from April 9 to May 14.

(3.2), Southwest Mountains (2.4), and Northwest Mountains (2.6).

"Of course, jake behavior is much more unpredictable than that of 2-year-old gobblers, which annually usually make up the majority of the harvest," Martin said. "But with the increased number of jakes that will likely be in the woods this spring, there could be a

lot more gobbling, especially after some of the older gobblers have been harvested."

Additionally, Martin encourages veteran sportsmen and women to consider taking youth and novice adult hunters afield during the Youth and Apprentice Weekend. "It's an excellent time to introduce people new to the outdoors because the

turkeys haven't been pressured in a long time and the hunting pressure is light," Martin said.

Finally, Martin notes that all-day hunting will last a week longer this year with that part of the season beginning on April 25. The biologist says the likely cooler evenings in April may lead to more active and vocal turkeys. Bottom line? The biologist

believes that turkey enthusiasts should expect a good season with the total harvest varying little from ones in recent springs. For tips on where to hunt, how to be successful on public land, regulations, recipes, and more, see DWR's Spring Turkey Hunting in Virginia.

—Bruce Ingram,
Virginia DWR

Blue Ridge Junior Golf Tour to begin

The Blue Ridge Junior Golf Tour is ready to tee up for another season of junior golf.

Celebrating its 24th

year, the tour returns offering golfers up to age 18 the opportunity to learn golf rules, etiquette, and skills while

playing golf courses in Southern West Virginia and Southwest Virginia.

Participants make

friends, improve their skills, and live up to the tour's motto of "building character and sportsmanship through the game of golf." Executive Director Dewayne Belcher says, "We've conducted the tour with the same motto since the beginning in 1999. With that foundation, players have not only become better players, but they have honored the fundamental principles of the game by playing with fairness and integrity. This has yielded many social skills helpful in producing good community citizens. To that end, we are most proud."

Action will begin with the usual golf academies in May with a different twist this year. In an effort to get young players involved earlier in life, the "Teach a Child to Play Golf" campaign will be offered for ages 6-12.

The academy will include five sessions and will be held at Fincastle in Bluefield, West Vir-

ginia on Saturdays May 5, 12, 19, and June 4.

A one-on-one session will be provided for participants after that.

"This is a new extended version of an academy for ages 6-12 taught by golf professionals," Belcher said.

The other two academies are similar to previous years and are designated for ages 13-18. They are being conducted at Draper Valley Golf Club in Draper on Saturday, May 21, and at Fincastle in Bluefield on Sunday, May 22.

The "Golf by the Rules" clinic will also be held at Fincastle on Sunday, June 12. Tournament play begins in early June with stops at the River Course, Draper Valley, Fincastle, Pipestem State Park, Glade Springs Resort, Blacksburg Country Club, and the season-ending Tour Championship at Wytheville Golf Club.

Interested junior golfers can find all dates, events, and sites at brjgt.com. Registra-

tion can be completed on the website. Cost to join the tour is \$30, and each tournament is \$20 except for the season-ending Tour Championship. That is a two-day event that costs \$40. Through the experience, the junior golfer will receive a number of Blue Ridge Junior Golf Tour gifts including the official 2022 cap. Also, the players will become better golfers, make many good friends, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Age groups are divided into the following categories: 17-18, 15-16, 13-14, (play 18 holes), 10-12 and 9 and under (play 9 holes). Also, an additional developmental group will play for those ages 13-18 who are brand new to the game. A coach to accompany them for nine holes during selected tournaments.

"2022 promises to be another fun season filled with many rewarding experiences. Please register soon," Belcher said.

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