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New Year's Eve traditions, observances date back at least 4,000 years



In the United States, the most iconic New Year's tradition is the dropping of a giant ball in New York City's Times Square at the stroke of midnight. Over time, the ball has ballooned from a 700-pound iron-and-wood orb to a brightly patterned sphere 12 feet in diameter and weighing in at nearly 12,000 pounds.

Civilizations around the world have been celebrating the start of each new year for at least four millennia. Today, most New Year's festivities begin on December 31 (New Year's Eve), the last day of the Gregorian calendar, and continue into the early hours of January 1 (New Year's Day). Common traditions include attending parties, eating special New Year's foods, making resolutions for the new year and watching fireworks displays.

The earliest recorded festivities in honor of a new year's arrival date back some 4,000 years to ancient Babylon. For the Babylonians, the first new moon following the vernal equinox—the day in late March with an equal amount of sunlight and darkness—heralded the start of a new year. They marked the occasion with a massive religious festival called Akitu (derived from the Sumerian word for barley, which was cut in the spring) that involved a different ritual on each of its 11 days. In addition to the new year, Akitu celebrated the mythical victory of the Babylonian sky god Marduk over the evil sea goddess

Tiamat and served an important political purpose: It was during this time that a new king was crowned or that the current ruler's divine mandate was symbolically renewed.

Did you know?

In order to realign the Roman calendar with the sun, Julius Caesar had to add 90 extra days to the year 46 B.C. when he introduced his new Julian calendar. Even today, though, most countries still use the more modern Gregorian calendar.

As part of his reform, Caesar instituted Jan. 1 as the first day of the year, partly to honor the month's namesake: Janus, the Roman god of beginnings, whose two faces allowed him to look back into the past and forward into the future.

In medieval Europe, Christian leaders temporarily replaced Jan. 1 as the first of the year with days carrying more religious significance, such as December 25 (the anniversary of Jesus's birth) and March 25 (the Feast of the Annunciation). Pope Gregory XIII reestablished Jan. 1 as New Year's Day in 1582.

New Year's traditions and celebrations from around the world

In Spain and several other Spanish-speaking countries, right before midnight people bolt down a dozen grapes symbolizing their hopes for the months ahead.

In the Netherlands, Mexico, and Greece, ring-shaped cakes and pastries, a sign that the year has come full circle, round out the feast.

In Cuba, Austria, Hungary, and Portugal, because pigs represent progress and prosperity, pork appears on the New Year's Eve table.

In Sweden and Norway, rice pudding with an almond hidden inside is served on New Year's Eve in the belief that whoever finds the nut can expect 12 months of good fortune.

The practice of making resolutions for the new year is thought to have first caught on among the ancient Babylonians, who made promises to earn the favor of the gods and start the year off on the right foot. (They reportedly vowed to pay off debts and return borrowed farm equipment.)

~ History.com

Wilderness Road Chorus presents Singer of the Year awards

Wilderness Road Chorus, a women's barbershop-style singing organization in the New River Valley founded in 1986, presented its annual Singer of the Year award to two leaders this year, Lavelva Stevens, director, and Jean Shock, assistant director.

"The chorus was able to rehearse and continue singing and follow the pandemic health recommendations because of the work of these leaders," said Gail Gulbenkian, president of the chorus.

"They worked to use what was possible—Zoom technology, outdoor rehearsals, masking," she said, "and the singers were able to thrive. And this year do some performances."

Stevens, who lives in Pulaski, is music director at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Wytheville. She joined Wilderness Road in 1991 and sang with several quartets. She became director in fall 2005.

Shock teaches at the Tall Oaks Montessori School and sings in other area choruses. She joined wilderness Road Chorus in 1995 and has been assistant director for several years.

Barbershop harmony is, along with jazz, one of only two styles of music developed in the United States. The four-part a cappella harmony chords are specific and produce a sound barber-shoppers call "ringing the chord."

Wilderness Road Chorus takes its name from the road that goes through the communities in which the members live.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WILDERNESS ROAD CHORUS
Jean Shock, of Blacksburg, at left, and Lavelva Stevens, of Pulaski, lead Wilderness Road Chorus and received its annual honor.

It welcomes women, 16 years of age and older to learn and perform the style.

More information is on the chorus website www.wildernessroadchorus.org.

Submitted by Wilderness Road Chorus

NRCC to offer new EMT program

Beginning in 2023, New River Community College will offer a new program, an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) career studies certificate.

The 16-credit program consists of five courses that can all be completed in one semester.

The new EMT program is designed to lead to entry-level employment opportunities in the emergency medical services field. The program prepares students to assess and care for patients at the basic life support (BLS) level. Students who successfully complete the

required courses can sit for the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians EMT certification exam.

Program courses include HLT 105 Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), EMS 111 Emergency Medical Technician, EMS 120 Emergency Technician—Clinical, BIO 141 Human Anatomy and Physiology I, and ENG 111 College Composition I.

The program is based on the Virginia EMS Education Standards (VEMSES) which are derived from the National EMS Education Standards (NEMSES). The EMT program is also approved

by the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services.

Classes begin Jan. 23, 2023. A required American Red Cross basic life support (BLS) course will be held on Saturday, January 21. For more information, including Virginia Department of Health eligibility requirements, visit www.nr.edu/ems or contact Sheila Hart in Admissions & Records at (540) 674-3600, ext. 4204 or shart@nr.edu.

Submitted by New River Community College

Mountain Valley Pipeline leads headlines into new year

One of the biggest headlines grabbing stories for the past two years has and will continue to be into 2023, protests against the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

As proposed, the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) project is a natural gas pipeline system that spans approximately 301 miles from northwestern West Virginia to southern Virginia – and as an interstate pipeline will be regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

One of the last major protests, which had stopped or slowed the pipeline work, was in Elliston where tree sitters had held out for almost two years.

The company building the pipeline, Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC (Mountain Valley) announced total project work was approximately 90% complete in 2019. But protests and federal approvals for such things as stream crossings and national forest paths have been held up for as much as three years.

Now, the question remains what does the future

See Pipeline, page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOUNTAIN VALLEY WATCH

Just over a year ago tree sitters were removed from sites near Yellow Finch Road in Elliston, which had been one of the last places protesters had been able to block work on the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

Survey: \$77,438 is the highest salary that young Virginians expect to earn – ever

The online course platform Teachable conducted a survey by questioning 3,300 18-to-24 years olds in Virginia to determine the highest salary they expected to earn in their lifetime: The result was \$77,438. The survey also determined that the average young Virginian believes he/she will achieve his peak salary when he is 30 years old.

In light of the record levels of debt, high inflation and the trend of tech giants shedding tens of thousands of jobs, it isn't surprising that young people in America today have a somewhat pessimistic view of their financial futures. Despite the bleak financial climate, however, young people's long-term optimism has not been blunted.

That optimism is reinforced by Virginians' hopes for a salary of \$77,438 when the national average in the United States today is \$65,206.

The survey results reveal that young people today in Virginia expect that, on average, they will earn a maximum income of \$77,438 per year in their lifetime (compared to a national average of \$65,206).

Bearing in mind that the average salary in the US is \$42,589, that's a sizable 53% more than the average (or \$22,617).

Over half (52%) of the young people surveyed in Virginia said they have a side hustle to help boost earnings outside of their current employment. This is in line with other reports of a rise in young people taking on side gigs, particularly since the start of the pandemic. And the potential for extra earnings is ample—from driving for a rideshare company, delivering groceries, dog walking, or even turning knowledge and skills into an online course on a platform like Teachable.

According to Teachable's survey, 42% of Virginia's young people feel they need to leave small towns and move to a large city to earn the highest salary possible.

And it appears that many young people feel they will not be able to fulfill their potential in small towns—in fact, according to Teachable's survey, 48% of them think they would need to move to a large city to earn the highest salary possible.

See Survey, page 4

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Dec. 31:

Family Movie Matinee: Ratatouille

At the Radford Public Library; 11 a.m. Take a trip to Paris through Disney Pixar and meet a rat who dreams of becoming a gourmet chef at one of Paris’ finest restaurants. Rated G; 111 minutes.

Sunday, Jan. 1:

Town of Blacksburg Holiday Schedule

The Blacksburg Community Center will be closing at 5 p.m. There will be no Blacksburg Transit service.

Monday, Jan. 2:

Town of Blacksburg Holiday Schedule

All town administrative offices will be closed. Blacksburg Transit will operate on Reduced Service. Blacksburg Transit offices will be closed.

Libraries closed

The Radford Public Library and all branches of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library will be closed.

Tuesday, Jan. 3:

NRV Cares Parent Education: Parenting Young Children

At the Radford Public Library; 5 – 7 p.m. A free eight-week parenting class presented by NRV Cares. FREE dinner is provided from 5-5:30 p.m., and free childcare will be included for the duration of the class. Please register by email at Keli@nrvcares.org or by text to Julie at (540) 494-0806.

Thursday, Jan. 5:

American Legion meeting

The 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 Public Schools are closed on Thursday or Friday of this week due to weather, the meeting is canceled. For further information, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

Monday, Jan. 9:

Radford City Council meeting

The Radford City Council will hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Radford Municipal Building, 10 Robertson St., Radford. See the agenda at www.radfordva.gov.

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

Public meetings are the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg. Closed sessions begin at 6 p.m. if needed. Open sessions begin at 7:15 p.m. Citizens are invited to attend and allowed to speak at each meeting. All regular meetings of the Board of Supervisors are rebroadcast on Montgomery County Comcast and Shentel Channels 190 daily.

Tuesday, Jan. 10:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly’s Family Italian Restaurant at 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. UDC member Cindy Akers will speak on the “Union Prison at Rock Island, Illinois”. If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week due to weather, the meeting is cancelled. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Blacksburg Town Council meeting

Town Council meets in regular session the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 S. Main St. These meetings are open to the public and televised live on WTOB Channel 2.

Christiansburg Town Council meeting

Regular Town Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers of Town Hall (100 E. Main Street). The public is welcome and encouraged to attend, with a citizen hearing time reserved at each meeting for residents to bring any matter they desire before the entire council.

Thursday, Jan. 12:

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 Ave., Radford. If you are willing to share your knowledge and learn from others, this guild is for you. We welcome all skill levels of quilters. For more information call Anna Handy, 540 320 7791.

On-going:

Help the Veterans with your donations

The Meadowbrook Public Library is a collection point for items needed at the VA Medical Center in Salem. Bring your donations of the following items to the library during December: deodorant, denture adhesive, 3-in-1 body wash/shampoo/conditioner, body lotion, toothpaste, nail clippers, sweatpants, sweatshirts, t-shirts (size M, L, XL) , and new baseball caps. Co-Sponsored by VFW Post 5311 and Montgomery-Floyd Regional libraries.

Free GED Classes

At the Meadowbrook Public Library, 5 – 8 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. New River Community College is offering free GED at the Meadowbrook Library every Tuesday and Thursday until Thursday, Dec. 15. For more information or to sign up please call the Meadowbrook Library at 540-268-1964.

Virginia-sourced Christmas trees fill emergency demand for urban retailer

Talk about last minute.
Tom Leonard of Tom Leonard’s Farmers Market in Henrico County was notified in October that his Canadian supplier of Christmas trees could not fulfill the market’s annual 5,000-plus tree order. So with a fast-approaching Christmas kickoff, Leonard reached out to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for help.
“The VDACS marketing team often receives calls for assistance, but Tom Leonard’s call was unique due to its urgency and size,” said Rob Davenport, VDACS director of marketing and development. “Wholesale Christmas trees are usually pre-sold by the end of summer. Fortunately, Virginia is home to Bottomley Farms in Grayson County, which has over 6,000 acres of trees and has grown into one of the largest shippers and suppliers of Christmas trees in the U.S.”
Like most retailers, Leonard’s market places Christmas tree orders a year in advance.
“Everybody wants those 7-to-8-foot trees,” Leonard

said. “So we knew we had a problem. It’s very difficult to replace so many trees in October. I might say it’s almost impossible because they’re all sold out already.”
Leonard remembered hearing the governor promote Virginia-grown commodities, and his store has a “local” atmosphere, so he asked about sources closer to home. The VDACS team helped secure 5,000 excess Christmas trees from Bottomley.
“We saved so much on transportation that we were able to keep the price the same as last year,” Leonard said. “We’re very happy. Customers loved the quality and how fresh they are. Bottomley and VDACS saved our neck.”
His trees sold out, and Leonard said his market will source Virginia trees from now on. He also joined the Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association.
“We’re going to expand operations next year and make our Christmas shop even bigger,” he said.
Bottomley cuts around 600,000 trees annually, said Carlos Taylor, Bottomley’s Christmas tree manager.

Trees go to Texas, parts of New Jersey and New York, Ohio, part of Florida and down to Puerto Rico. Now the farm will add Short Pump to the list.
“It was short notice,” Taylor said. “But we worked it out. We hope to continue doing business with them in the future.”
Agriculture and forestry businesses are eager to help meet the needs of consumers and national and international buyers, Davenport said.
“This is a very good example of the state working with farmers to fill a need and encourage local purchases of Virginia-grown products,” said Ben Rowe, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation field services director.
Virginia Christmas tree sales top \$10 million annually, and the state is ranked seventh nationwide for harvest and production.

- Virginia Travel Tips



Marketplace

ourvalley.org













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Help Wanted

Part Time Newspaper Production Help
Salem Times Register has openings for afternoon/evening shift work- inserting, labeling and bundling newspapers for delivery. No experience necessary. Hours may vary. Will train. \$11 per hour. Contact Lynn Hurst, General Manager, Salem-Times Register (540)389-9355 or email lhurst@ourvalley.org

Legals - Montgomery County

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL

The Town of Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on, Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning: A. Rezoning request by Town of Christiansburg, Property Owner, to rezone an approximately 50.539-acre portion of the property located on Booker T Washington Pkwy NW; Tax Parcel 435 - ((A)) – 3A, Parcel ID 270079, commonly known as

Legals - Montgomery County

“Christiansburg Huckleberry Park”, from Agricultural District (A) to Single-Family Residential District (R-1) and an approximately 12.25-acre portion of the same property from Agricultural District (A) to General Business District (B-3). The property is designated as Business/ Commercial and Parks/ Open Space on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. Town Hall will be open and available to receive public comment in-person at the time of this Public Hearing. A copy of the application, the Town’s Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through

Legals - Montgomery County

Friday. Contact Benjamin Tripp, Planning Director, at (540) 382-6128 ext. 1120 or by email at btripp@christiansburg.org with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

Legals - Montgomery County

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as

Legals - Montgomery County

amended. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning: A. Rezoning request by Southwest Investment Co. LLC, Property Owner, and Southwest Excavating, Inc., Lessee, to rezone an approximately 1.87 acre portion of the property located at 200 Scattergood Drive NW, Tax Parcel 496 - 24 - 5; Parcel ID 033540, from General Business District B-3 to General Industrial District I-2. The property is designated as Mixed Use with Buffer (Industrial) on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Town Hall will be open and available to receive public comment in-person at the time of this Public Hearing. A copy of the application, the Town’s Zoning Map,

Legals - Montgomery County

Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Benjamin Tripp, Planning Director, at (540) 382-6128 ext. 1120 or by email at btripp@christiansburg.org with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.



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PHOTO BY SAM DEAN FOR VIRGINIA TECH

Virginia Tech faculty are collaborating with institutions across the United States to advance the use of drones in agriculture.

Virginia Tech researchers earn national recognition for advances in drone practices

By Mary Hardbarger

Several faculty members in Virginia Tech’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are among a national group of university researchers awarded the 2022 Excellence in Multistate Research Award for an ongoing project that has helped accelerate the use of drones in agricultural systems. The award-winning project, “Research and Extension for Unmanned Aircraft Systems in U.S. Agriculture and Natural Resources,” evaluates and identifies the most reliable, cost-effective, and user-friendly drone platforms and sensors for monitoring and managing stressors in agriculture and natural resources. To maximize the accuracy of the data collected, project members developed hardware, software, and detailed protocols for calibrating and using drones. Maria Balota, a professor in the School and Plant and Environmental Sciences and Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center; Daniel Fuka, a postdoctoral associate in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering; Cully Hession, a professor and graduate program director in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering; and Joseph Oakes, the superintendent of the Eastern Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Center, represented the university on the team of scientists. They have been part of this project, which was recently renewed, since

2016. “The contributions of this group to the multistate effort were on large-scale water quality monitoring and high-throughput phenotyping of various crops and varieties by drone imaging,” said Balota, project chair. “Our multistate, multidisciplinary research and outreach have helped overcome barriers and accelerate broader use of drones.” Virginia Tech is the leading institution for the first year of the renewed project, which runs from September 2022 to October 2023. When the project was conceived in 2016, Balota said, university researchers had multiple challenges to acquire and utilize an unmanned aircraft system. Before major changes in Federal Aviation Administration guidelines, research programs needed licensed pilots, medically certified visual observers, and government authorization permitting flight in only specified areas. Regulations also were strict regarding use of unmanned aircraft systems for non-research applications including education, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and private use. Against this backdrop, the project was created to leverage strengths that could advance this field. As awardees, team members received funding to cover costs for two participants to attend the awards ceremony and to support activities that enhance and contribute to the research or outreach objectives of the project.

Blockchain Certificate Program creates a space for new ideas and applications

With the support of a GO Virginia grant and a gift from Block.one, Virginia Tech’s Department of Computer Science has initiated several projects in the interest of exploring non-fungible tokens (NFTs), cryptocurrency, and more broadly, blockchain. Blockchain acts as a digital ledger, said James Harder, external engagement project manager with the Department of Computer Science. “It functions like a large interactive spreadsheet, similar to Excel or Google Sheets,” he said. “People have the ability to add things to the ledger, and those changes are accepted into the blockchain by distributed users. And what everyone generally accepts as the record becomes the blockchain.” The technology is usually associated with things like banking and cryptocurrency, but it has the potential to be used for much more, which is partly why the department’s new Blockchain Certificate Program is so exciting for

Harder. The Blockchain Certificate Program, launched in the spring semester and offered again in the summer, provides participants — both mid-career professionals and students — the opportunity to better understand blockchain. “We want participants to have the ability to understand the applications and the basic jargon around the technology,” Harder said. “It’s thrilling to see students conceive inspiring and exciting new applications and ideas. Students get exposure to NFTs, blockchain ethics, business applications, decentralized autonomous organizations, and fintech.” Neal Henshaw, technical director at the Calhoun Honors Discovery Program at Virginia Tech, said he participated in the program this spring to help his students better understand the use cases around blockchain technology. “When I first heard them mentioning

blockchain, I was confused because like a lot of people, I had only associated it with Bitcoin,” said Henshaw. “I had no idea there were other uses for it. So I knew I needed to learn more. I feel now that I am better equipped to help my students see it as a possible solution to one of their problems.” Nelson Chu, a managing director at Kinetic Ventures, was prompted to enroll this past summer because the growing technology has been on his company’s radar for several years. “I’ve been in the venture capitalist business since 1998, and it’s part of our role to determine the types of companies in which to invest,” Chu said. “In this class, there were many interesting applications I hadn’t thought of before, like simplifying vehicle loaning processes or raising funds for new businesses. I’m very glad I took the class. It was definitely worth the time.”

~ Submitted by Virginia Tech

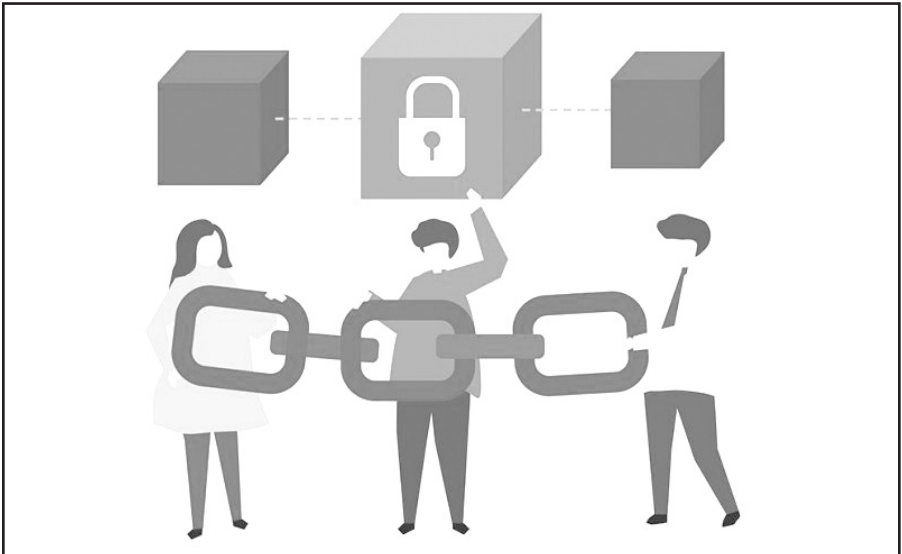


IMAGE COURTESY OF RAWPIXEL.COM

Launched this past spring with the support of a GO Virginia grant and a gift from Block.one, the Blockchain Certificate Program offers both mid-career professionals and students the opportunity to better understand blockchain and related technologies.

Virginia Tech alumnus promotes North Carolina trail from mountains to sea

By Jimmy Robertson

On those beautiful fall or spring afternoons during his undergraduate days, Brent Laurenz often found himself debating between taking a hike on one of Southwest Virginia’s numerous trails or making the prudent decision of going to class. Class won out every time. “Of course,” Laurenz said, smiling. Laurenz ’02 found a passion for the outdoors during his days at Virginia Tech, and he now has turned that passion into a dream career. In January, he took over as the executive director of Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, a nonprofit organization based in Raleigh, North Carolina, dedicated to improving and preserving the popular cross-state pathway. Laurenz graduated with a degree in psychology from the College of Science with minors in English and sociology. After working for nonprofit organizations in Washington, D.C., and pursuing his master’s degree from George Washington University, he moved to Raleigh in 2009, continuing his work in the

nonprofit realm. Last year, an advertisement for his current job flowed to his email inbox, and he was intrigued. “I kind of fell in love with North Carolina and all the great outdoors stuff that it had to offer, and one of the first things I stumbled across when I moved here was the Mountains-to-Sea Trail,” he said. “It’s just a place to hike and enjoy nature and kind of get out into the world, in the forest, in the woods.” “Then this job popped up, and I felt like it was a great time in my career for something like this. Some of my nonprofit experience lined up nicely with what the organization was looking for, and then just bringing that personal passion for hiking and being outdoors, it really was the perfect marriage of the two.” The Mountains-to-Sea Trail stretches 1,175 miles from Clingman’s Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains on the Tennessee-North Carolina border to Nags Head on the Outer Banks. Portions of the trail run in tandem with parts of North Carolina’s 12 official state trails, and some

currently follow roadways while off-road options are pursued. Most hikers use the trail for day hikes, though many have taken the three to four months needed to hike the trail in its entirety. Laurenz, who oversees a six-person staff, represents

the nonprofit organization at public events, works with volunteers and contractors to repair sections and build bridges along the trail, helps plan new sections of the trail, assists volunteer outings to maintain the trail, manages marketing efforts, and

connects with donors whose financial gifts are important to the trail’s existence. “That’s really been one of the fun parts, just getting to know people who care about something and either devote time, energy, money, whatever it is to help see

it be successful and keep growing,” Laurenz said. “It’s been a lot of fun. The first half year was a lot of acclamation and getting my feet under me, but I feel like I’m getting the hang of everything and excited for year two, for sure.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRENT LAURENZ

Brent Laurenz, seen here with his two children, hopes to preserve the Mountains-to-Sea Trail for generations to come.

Public Notice
Board of Equalization
Montgomery County, Virginia

Public Notice is hereby given that the Board of Equalization of Montgomery County will meet on the days hereafter listed for the purpose of hearing complaints of inequalities including errors in acreage or for making decisions on such complaints. Upon hearing complaints, either oral or written, the Board will give consideration and INCREASE, DECREASE OR AFFIRM SUCH REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENTS. Before a change can be granted the taxpayer, or agent, must overcome a clear presumption in favor of the assessment. The taxpayer or agent must prove that the property is not uniform with other similar properties or prove that the property is assessed in excess of its fair market value.

Beginning Monday, January 9, 2023, to request an appeal hearing before the Board of Equalization call 540-394-3126 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday – Friday. THE DEADLINE TO REQUEST AN APPEAL BEFORE THE BOE IS FEBRUARY 10, 2023. Appointments will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals.

The Board of Equalization will begin hearing appeals on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at the Reassessment Office, 16 N. Franklin Street (Back Entrance), Christiansburg, Va on the following days:

Wednesday, February 22, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Thursday, February 23, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Friday, February 24, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Tuesday, February 28, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 1, 2023	1:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 2, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Saturday, March 4, 2023	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 8, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Friday, March 10, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Tuesday, March 14, 2023	9:00 a.m. (as needed)
Thursday, March 16, 2023	9:00 a.m. (as needed)
Friday, March 24, 2023	9:00 a.m. (as needed)
Monday, March 27, 2023	9:00 a.m. (as needed)
Wednesday, March 29, 2023	9:00 a.m. (as needed)

The Board of Equalization offices will be closed on days that the Montgomery County Public Schools are closed for inclement weather. “As Needed” dates may be cancelled at the direction of the Board if all business/hearings are concluded prior to March 29, 2023.

By Order of the County of Montgomery, Board of Equalization
Louise Baker, Chair

Survey

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It appears inflation (and its eroding effects on purchasing power) is a significant factor when young people consider their financial futures. Only about 1 in 3 (38%) of those Virginia young people surveyed feel they will be able to achieve the same levels of financial security as their parents did in their lifetimes.

Finally, two-thirds of 18 to 24 year olds surveyed in Virginia said they would settle for a job that wasn't a

preferred career path just for a higher salary.

“Young people are, no doubt, navigating challenging economic conditions right now,” said Vera Hanson at Teachable. “But the survey’s overall finding of long-term optimism among 18 to 24 year olds rings true to other trends we’ve witnessed in the last few months, particularly a continued rise in the number of new U.S. business applications.

“Whether testing the waters with a side gig or diving headfirst into full-time entrepreneurship, launching an online course can be one of the best ways to build an enduring business online today,” Hanson said. “We believe that’s because the pursuit of knowledge—of all kinds—is not going anywhere. And the demand for more affordable and engaging ways to access that knowledge is only going to skyrocket.” ~ *News Messenger staff report*

Pipeline

from page 1

News Messenger

Established 1869

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editor@ourvalley.org

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

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



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOUNTAIN VALLEY WATCH

A section of the unfinished Mountain Valley Pipeline near Virginia’s Brush Mountain in July 2020. Many of those pipes still lie above ground today, more than two years later.

hold for all those pipes underground or lying above ground along that path.

MVP LLC says more than 300,000 miles of interstate and intrastate natural gas transmission pipelines operate every day across the U.S., safely and reliably transporting natural gas for use in homes and businesses to power modern life.

“None of these existing pipelines have undergone the extensive level of environmental research, analysis and review that has been performed on the MVP project, and we appreciate the strong support and ongoing efforts of so many men and women who, for the past seven years, have continued to work diligently to complete this important project,” the company said in a press release in September.

“With a vast supply of natural gas from Marcellus and Utica shale production, the Mountain Valley Pipeline is expected to provide up to two million dekatherms per day of firm transmission capacity to markets in the Mid- and South Atlantic regions of the United States.”

Diana Charletta, president and

chief operating officer of EQM Midstream Partners, LP, operator of MVP, said the company has encountered unforeseen development challenges; however, they continue to make progress towards ultimate completion.

“While the temporary setbacks have caused schedule delays and cost overages, completion of the MVP project is critical to serving the growing demand for domestic natural gas in the mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions of the United States; and we appreciate the oversight of the various state and federal agencies that have helped guide our construction activities,” he said.

The slowdown has increased the price of the pipeline to nearly \$9 million.

The company says as of the end of 2022 the total project work is roughly 94% complete. In a statement MVP LLC said it remains committed to working diligently with federal and state regulators to secure the necessary permits to safely and responsibly finish construction.

The new completion date is set for the second half of 2023.

The United State Forest Service is in the process of developing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) in response to a proposal from Mountain Valley, LLC to construct and operate a buried 42-inch interstate natural gas pipeline that would cross National Forest System lands on the Jefferson National Forest along a proposed 3.5-mile corridor.

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register on December 23, 2022. This publication initiates a 45-day public comment period on the Draft SEIS through February 6, 2023.

The public may submit comments about this DSEIS at <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=50036>, or mail them to George Washington & Jefferson National Forests, MVP Project, 5162 Valleypointe Parkway, Roanoke, Va. 24019.

~ *News Messenger staff report*

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- CLUES ACROSS
- organization

35. Most thick

40. Sleeve indicator of mourning

44. Far East housemaid

45. Hmong

46. With three uneven sides

49. Tempts

53. Jewelry finding

55. Showed intense anger

56. Black tropical American cuckoo

57. Sculpture with a head

58. A single entity

59. What part of (abbr.)

60. Before

61. Confined condition (abbr.)

62. Hurrah

63. Transport faster than
- sound

CLUES DOWN

1. Sorli's Tale hero

2. A musical master

3. Speech

4. Swiftest

5. Opaque gem

6. Origins

7. Proceed from a source

8. Rechristened

9. Liquorice flavored seed

13. Small amount

14. Mineral aggregate

17. Prefix for wrong

18. Point midway between E and SE

20. A single instance

21. French river

26. Undeveloped blossom

27. One pip domino

28. Fled on foot
30. Sheep bleat

31. One point N of due E

32. Father

36. A projecting part

37. Improved by editing

38. Made melodious sounds

39. Treatment

40. Agreeableness

41. Bell sound

42. Tennis contests

43. Furnace vessels

46. Sirius Satellite Radio (abbr.)

47. Licensed accountant

48. Crude potassium bitartrate

50. Insert mark

51. Election Stock Market (abbr.)

52. A health resort

54. So. Am. Indian people

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OBITUARIES

Alderman, Archie Lee

Archie Lee Alderman, 87, passed away Friday, Dec. 23, 2022, at his home in Max Meadows surrounded by his family. Archie was a U. S. Veteran having served in the U. S. Army during the Korean Conflict and was a member of Draper United Methodist Church. He retired from Burlington Mills, the Virginia Department of Corrections and was a Pulaski County school bus driver for over 22 years. He was preceded in death by his parents, Wise and Essie Alderman.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Mary Lawson Alderman; son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Lynn Alderman; daughter and son-in-law, Debra and Stephan Boyd; grandchildren, Michael Alderman, Jr. and Ashley, Natasha Smith and Kacey, and Delainey Boyd; great grandchildren



Collier, Cash and Boone; and many other relatives and friends.

The family would like to give special thanks to Intrepid Home Health and Hospice for their wonderful care given to Archie.

The family received friends on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

Funeral services followed with Pastor Jason Crandall officiating. Interment followed in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

Flowers will be appreciated, or donations may be made to Draper UMC, 3080 Greenbriar Rd. Draper VA 24324.

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

Bradley, Kaye Allen

Kaye Allen Bradley, 65, of Bradley; grandchildren, Nathan, Newport, went to be with the Lord, Sunday, Dec. 25, 2022. She was born on Dec. 24, 1957 to the late James Monroe and Reba Ellen Linkous Allen. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Gary Dennis Bradley; a daughter, Jessica Lynn Bradley; and two sisters, Deborah Bale, and Faye Smith.

She was a loving mother and friend with a heart of gold. She always put others before herself and was the greatest memaw to her beautiful grandchildren. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Jeremy and Kristy Bradle; daughters, Jennifer Bradley (Wil Johns), and Amber



Lorelai, Marshall, and Remington; step-mother, Wanda Allen; brother and sister-in-law, Daniel Joseph and Amy McGuire; sisters and brothers-in-law, Loretta and Matthew Wilburn, and Rhonda and Bobby Mitcham; special brother-in-law, Rodney Smith;

several nieces and nephews, and special friend and neighbor, Donna Graham.

Graveside services were conducted Thursday, Dec. 29, 2022 in the Level Green Christian Church Cemetery, Newport, Va. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

See Obituaries, page 6

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

St. Peter the Apostle Anglican Church, 230 W. First St., Christiansburg, VA. Fr Peter Geromel OHI Th.M., Vicar, Fr. Alex Darby, “Associate”, 540-382-0432/540-270-9166. Sundays: 8:00 am & 10:00 am Holy Eucharist followed by Christian Education and refreshments. Holy Communion most Thursdays at 12Noon, other Holy Days as announced. Traditional services use the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and 1940 Hymnal. Handicapped accessible. All are welcome. Come worship with us! Website: www.stpetersacc.org. Follow us on Facebook

St. Philip’s Anglican Church, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, www.stphil-ipsblacksburg.org. Reverend Fr. Wade Miller, Priest. Eucharist Sundays at 11am and Wednesday’s at 12pm.

St. Thomas Anglican Church - located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit www.sttofc.org for midweek masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).

BAPTIST

First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave., 215 Third Ave at the corner with Downey St. We nurture meaningful connections to God and others through worship, spiritual growth, and community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: fbcradford.org 540-639-4419. Worship is in-person and live-streamed on Facebook and on our YouTube channel: First Baptist Church Radford.

Trinity Community Church, 1505 N. Franklin Street, C’burg. John Altizer, Lead Pastor, Brian Cockram, Associate Pastor, 382-8121. Worship at 10:45 a.m., Outreach Ministries - 6:00p.m. Wednesday, Growth Groups - 5:00p.m. Sunday, Youth and Children’s Ministry - 5:00p.m. Sunday, www.trinitycburg.org

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Blacksburg Church of Christ, 315 Eakin St., 552-1331. Sun. Bible Classes 9:30 a.m., Sun. Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m., Wed. Bible classes, 7 p.m., Outreach Minister Curt Seright, Community Minister Tom Gilliam, Dean Meadows, Campus Minister.

Faith Christian Church of Christ, 305 3rd Street, Christiansburg, David Rhudy, Minister, 382-4628, Sunday School 10 am; Worship 11 am; Evening Worship 6:30 pm; Wednesday night Bible Study for Women and Men 6:30 pm. We welcome you to any and all of our services.

CHURCH OF GOD

New Hope Church of God, 1404 Mud Pike Rd., C’Burg. Rev. T. Michael Bond, pastor, 731-3178. Sun. School 10 a.m., Worship 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m. Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

West Radford Church of God, 1824 West Main Street, Radford, VA 24141, Sunday School– 10:00A.M. Morning Worship– 11:00A.M., Children’s Church 11:00A.M. Sunday Evening – 6:00P.M., Wednesday Night – 7:00P.M., Pastor Danny Newman, Church Office – 540-639-6562 or 804- 921-0828.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Christiansburg Church of the Brethren, 310 South Franklin Street. Pastor: Hal Sonaf Frank, 1-336-583-4822. Sunday School 10 a.m.; Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays. Website: www.christiansburgcob.org. A loving family, fueled by the Holy Spirit, grounded in God’s Word, and delivering Jesus forgiveness and love to all people. Come as you are... you are welcomed!

(DOC - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Snowville Christian Church, 5436 Lead Mine Rd., Hiwassee, VA 24347, Pastor: Jerry King, Website: www.SnowvilleChristianChurch.com (and Facebook), Office: 540-633-3761, Email: office@SnowvilleChristianChurch.com, Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 a.m., Sunday School: 10:00 a.m., Thursday Bible Study: 6:00 p.m., We are: “Inspiring hope, helping people grow their faith, and sharing God’s love with others!”

ECKANKAR

Eckankar, the Path of Spiritual Freedom, is a simple teaching that focuses on the Light and Sound of God to help people find more love in their life. The Roanoke Eckankar Center is located at 1420 3rd St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. The Center was closed during the COVID crisis but is now open. A spiritual event is held on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. Since contracting COVID-19 may still be possible, please take the health steps that are best for you. It is appreciated that by attending you are taking responsibility for your own health. Visit www.eck-va.org, www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences Group or call 540-353-5365 for other Eckankar programs and for more information about how the teachings of Eckankar can lead you to spiritual freedom.

EPISCOPAL

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

Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

READY OR NOT

Read Revelation 22:1–21

At the turn of the century, the world was in a panic. On the eve of a new millennium, no one was sure what midnight would bring. Experts claimed a programming glitch could cause computers to struggle with the date change. The acronym Y2K became a household phrase connected to the possible collapse of computer-dependent industrialized nations.

Some scoffed, but others prepared. They stockpiled canned goods and bottled water. They outlined a strategy for living without electricity. They took the doomsday warnings seriously and wanted to be ready.

John’s Revelation contains a similar foretelling of a future event that will change life on earth.

“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done” (Revelation 22:12).

Whether or not you prepared for Y2K, the forewarned tragedy did not amount to anything. As believers, however, we all must be ready for Christ’s return. The events prophesied in Scripture will come to pass. So, as 2012 comes to a close, ask yourself this question: Am I ready?

Prayer Suggestion: Lord, help me be ready for Your soon return.

Quicklook: Revelation 22:7–17

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

Fellowship and refreshments follow services. Find us on Facebook: Grace Episcopal Church and www.graceradford.org.

LUTHERAN

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church ELCA, 600 Prices Fork Rd, Blacksburg. Weekly Online Worship at www.lmlc.org. We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes and affirms all people just as they are. For information on Bible studies and Wednesday Vespers, email luthermemorialblacksburg@gmail.com, or contact the church office, (540) 951-1000. Rev. Monica Weber, pastor.

Our Saviour Lutheran Church ELCA, 1845 Cambria St NE, Christiansburg. Worship each Sunday at 10 am, in person and online at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMsB-gbyjmV5ce9mr43dbCw. Please visit our website at www.oslc-cburg.org and our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/oslcchristiansburg to learn more about us. Little Free Pantry and Little Free Library located in our parking lot. Pastor Joshua L. Copeland; church office 540-382-2223.

St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Worship service each Sunday at 10 AM, Sunday School 9 AM. We are a community of God’s people where people gather for worship, learning and service. Visitors and new members are always WELCOME! Google comments: “Wonderful, welcoming congregation...A place where all are truly welcome... Nice, friendly, competent staff.” You will like our minister, The Rev. Michelle L. Stramiello. Her previous service was as Family Faith Formation Director at Cross and Crown Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, IN, Pastor of St Matthew Lutheran Church, Paducah, KY, and Hospice Chaplain in Largo, Fl. St. Michael started

and administers Micah’s Backpack which has great community impact, Micah’s Soup for Seniors, Micah’s Garden, Closet, and Mini Pantry. Also, partnering with Rainbow Riders and Total Action for Progress, we opened open the first Early Childhood Head Start in our community (6 weeks to age 3), and have numerous other programs including a Justice & Mercy Fund providing assistance for those needing emergency assistance with critical bills. Further St. Michael sponsors an awesome Scouting program of Boy & Girl Scout Troops, Venture Scouts for older youth, and a new Cub Pack for girls & boys kindergarten - 5th grade. Directions: From Price’s Fork Road, turn onto Merrimac Road and St. Michael is 3/10ths of a mile down on the left. For more information about any of our activities: Phone 540 951-8951. Email hope@stmlc.us or visit our Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

MULTI-CULTURAL

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Christian Growth Center, 1850 Electric Way, Christiansburg, VA 24073 (beside Hubbell Lighting). Sunday Worship: 9:30am Prayer, 10:00am Service *Nursery Available. Lead Pastor: Todd Hallinan. Founding Pastor: Rob Sowell. Mission: Sow, Grow, & Go Sow Faith! Grow in Righteousness! Go into all the world in the authority of the believer! 540-382-2908.

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, Rev. Richard Hall (540) 552-7194. pastorhall29@gmail.com. Sunday School at 10 a.m. and morning worship is 11 a.m. Evening service at 6 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Compassion Church, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Chandler

Jones brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services. Our vision is to see all Saved. Freed. Restored. Fulfilled. Find us on facebook and Instagram

Walton Pentecostal Holiness Church, 4003 Morning Glory Rd., off Walton Rd. on Rt. 114. 731-1755. Lee Sarver, pastor. Sun. School 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6: p.m., Wed., 7 p.m.

UNITED METHODIST

Asbury United Methodist Church, 500 Stuart Street, Christiansburg. 540-382-0743. Rev. Dr. Patricia Jones. Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship, 11:00 a.m. All are welcome.

Central United Methodist Church, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am (interpreter provided); 9:45am Sunday School (interpreter provided); and 11:00a.m. Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30p.m. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com.

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 220 W. Main St., C’Burg. Rev. Mike Derflinger (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship 10 a.m., Sunday School 9 a.m. Live streaming Sunday Service - www.twitch.tv/stpaulumc **Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church**, 350 Stafford Drive, Christiansburg, VA 24073, Sunday School 10am, Sunday Worship Service 11am.

WESLEYAN

Christ Wesleyan Church, 525 Harkrader Street, Christiansburg. Public Worship service at 11:00 AM. Sunday School for adults - 10:00 AM. Pastor: Gale Janofski 540-510-0952. The building is totally handicapped accessible. Website: christwesleyanchurch.org

Obituaries

from page 5

Bullion, Eddie Joe

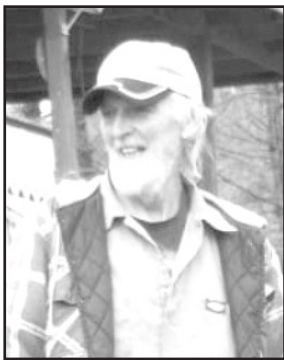
Eddie Joe Bullion, 76, passed away Monday, Dec. 19, 2022. He was preceded in death by his parents, Cecil C. and Julia Turner Bullion; his brother, and sister-in-law, Cecil Webster and Sue Sifford Bullion; and his sister, Jean Bullion Gravely.

He is survived by his loving wife of 26 years, Fredia (Peggy) Bullion; sons and daughters-in-law, Eddy Dwayne Bullion and Cindy, Chris B. Bullion and Amiee, and Joe Wilson; daughters and sons-in-law, Tina Bullion Carroll and Jeffrey, and Amber; stepson and his wife, William (B.J.) Barton and Caitlin; stepdaughter and her husband, Rebecca Barton Morgan and Timothy; grandchildren, Amber Gravely Long and Kevin, Jessica Gravely Tallant, Chris Gravely,

Cody A. Flinchum, Ashley Buckner, Christopher Bullion, and Kaitlyn Bullion; step grandchildren, Nevaeh Barton, Sydney Morgan, Kentleigh Morgan, and Hank Barton; five great-grandchildren; brother and sister-in-law, James Robert Bullion and Jane; sister and her companion, Connie Bullion Matusevich and David Price; brother-in-law, Thomas F. Gravely, Jr.; and many other nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

A private family service will be held at a later date.

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



Craig, James R. “Jim”

James R. “Jim” Craig, of Blacksburg, Virginia Waste Management Board, passed away on Friday, Dec. 23 after a long battle with Parkinson’s Disease.

He was born Feb. 16, 1940, in Philadelphia to Harry R. and Evelyn M. Craig. He was preceded in death by his parents, as well as a sister-in-law, Candy Craig, and a niece, Candace Craig. He is survived by his high school sweetheart and wife of 60 years, Lois Watson Craig; his daughter, Nancie Willett (Charles Stoll) of Mt. Pleasant S.C.; and son, James M. Craig (Donna Mabry) of Christiansburg VA; and four grandchildren: Daniel Willett, Samuel Willett, Jessica Craig and Thomas Willett. He is also survived by two brothers: Harry R. Craig Jr., (Barbara) and Douglas M. Craig; nephews David Craig (Kelly) and Martin Craig, and a niece, Joy Craig.

He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a BS degree, and from Lehigh University with MS and PhD degrees, all in geological sciences, and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at The Carnegie Institution of Washington.

His career as a university professor and research scientist spanned 35 years. He was designated a Professor Emeritus of Economic Geology following his retirement from Virginia Tech in 2002. In addition to teaching and research, he had served as the Head of Department for the Department of Geosciences at Virginia Tech and as chairman of the



certificates of Teaching Excellence. In 2002 he was named SCHEV’s Outstanding Faculty Member for the State of Virginia. His research and academic work took him around the globe, conducting work on all seven continents.

Throughout his life and especially in his retirement, he was an avid bird watcher, and his binoculars were always nearby. He wrote a weekly nature column for many years, and he and Lois enjoyed traveling the globe, often to see and enjoy birds and nature in other parts of the world. He enjoyed the beach, riding his bike, playing racquet sports, fishing, and loyally following the ups and downs of his much-loved Philadelphia Phillies and Philadelphia Eagles.

A celebration of life will be held at Blacksburg United Methodist Church, where he was a member, on Thursday, Jan. 5 at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials to The Warm Hearth Foundation or The Michael J. Fox Foundation. Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home.

Miller, William Carlton

“Daddy Bill” was called home on Dec. 20, 2022, ending a two-and-a-half year experience with cancer and a lifetime of service to his family, friends and the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was born on July 11, 1934, in Christiansburg, and was preceded in death by his parents H. Andrew Miller and Helen Dixon Miller; his grandparents Morris, C. Miller and Bertie Miller; and brother H. Andrew Miller II (Jackie).

He is survived by his wife, Nancy Woolwine Miller; sons Steven W. Miller (Sheila) of Marion, Kenneth C. Miller of Henrico, and Thomas A. Miller (Delina) of King, N.C.; brother, F. Michael Miller (Dru) of Roanoke; grandchildren Stacy L. Burchett of Marion, Brian C. Miller (Shannan) of Bristol, Tenn., Allison M. Richards (Matt) of Jonesborough, Tenn., Charles W. Miller of Winston Salem, N.C., Lauren D. Miller (Fiancé David) of Winston Salem, N.C., Morgan M. Miller (Fiancé Cody) of Midlothian, Va., and Madeline A.



Miller of Richmond; and seven great-grandchildren.

Daddy Bill was a lifelong member of St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Christiansburg and most recently attended Cambria Baptist Church in Christiansburg.

He was employed by General Electric for 19 years, taught Electricity at Christiansburg High school 11 years and retired after 10 years with New River Valley Workshop. Daddy Bill is loved and will be missed by all.

The funeral service was held Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022 at Cambria Baptist Church. Interment followed at Sunset Cemetery. In lieu of flowers the family requests that donation be considered to Cambria Baptist Church and Christiansburg Rescue Squad.

For additional information or to read/ leave a tribute please visit www.hornefuneralservice.com.

Arrangements by Horne Funeral Services, Christiansburg.

Perdue, Arnold Wayne

Arnold Wayne Perdue, 76, of Dublin, died Sunday, Dec. 25, 2022 at Lewis Gale Hospital- Montgomery. He was born in Montgomery County on March 3, 1946 to the late Warren Black and Edith Hortence Smith Perdue. He was also preceded in death by his wife, Kathleen Dove Perdue.

He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Mendie and Tommy Cook; sons and daughter-in-law, Willie Dove, and Tony and Dawn Dove;

grandchildren, Jeffrey (JD) and Elizabeth, Katlyn (KC) and Robbie, Norman Ray (Bubber), Nyoka (Nickel), and Rayna (Bright Eyes); sisters and brother-in-law, Linda and Tommy Hamlin, and Louise Quesinberry; several nieces and nephews; and special friends, Sonny Smith, Chipper Duncan, and Arleta Early. Memorial services were conducted Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2022 in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Lee Sarver officiating.

Noblin, Charles Donald

Charles Donald Noblin was born in Jackson, Miss. in 1933 and departed this earth on Dec. 25, 2022 at the age of 89. He left all of his worldly possessions behind and will spend eternity in the presence of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. At the time of his death he and his wife Alice resided in Blacksburg.

He graduated from Jackson Central High School in 1951; received a B.A in psychology from Mississippi College in 1955; an M.S. in clinical psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1957; and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Louisiana State University in 1962. Following completion of his pre-doctoral clinical internship at the Biloxi/Gulfport U. S. Veterans Administration Hospital and graduation from LSU, he served for 41 consecutive years on the faculty at six universities: LSU; University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Rutgers University Medical School; Virginia Commonwealth University; Virginia Tech; and the University of Southern Mississippi.

While in graduate school he received honorable mention status in the American Institute of Research’s Creative Talent Awards program. His primary research interest was clinical and experimental psychopathology and his primary teaching interest was that of training psychology students for a career in public service. Much of his research was funded by grants from public and private agencies such as the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH); the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the United States Department of Justice; the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); the United State Public Health Service (USPHS); Hoffman-La Roche Pharmaceutical Company; the Trubeck Foundation; the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program; and the Virginia Department of Mental Health. He is listed in Who’s Who in America; Who’s Who in the World; and Who’s Who in Science and Engineering. Of far greater importance, however, is that his name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

While on the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro he served as secretary-treasurer of the North Carolina Psychological Association. As a faculty member at Rutgers Medical School he coordinated the grant for construction of a comprehensive community mental health center and established a behavioral science program for first-year medical students. During that era there was no doctoral program in clinical psychology in Virginia. Accordingly, he was recruited by Virginia Commonwealth University to move to Richmond as their Director of Clinical training for the purpose of establishing a clinical doctoral program. While at VCU he also served as the psychologist on the Commonwealth of Virginia’s first Multidisciplinary Traffic Crash Investigation Team under the aegis of



the Virginia Highway Safety Division. He then moved across state to Blacksburg as Department Head at Virginia Tech where he established the state’s second doctoral program in Clinical psychology. Following eleven years at Virginia Tech, he returned to his home state of Mississippi where he joined the faculty at the University of Southern Mississippi and served as Director of Clinical Training; Director of the Psychology Clinic; Department Chair; and Professor. He retired from USM as Professor Emeritus. While at USM he was appointed by the Governor of Mississippi to a five-year term on the Mississippi Board of Psychology which is the legislatively created authority for regulating the practice of psychology in Mississippi, and served, variously as Recording Secretary, Continuing Education Coordinator, and Chair of the Board. During the time he spent in academics, he consulted for numerous hospitals, clinics, and behavioral science projects. Prior to retirement he was licensed to practice psychology in New Jersey, North Carolina, and Mississippi; and was certified to conduct civil commitment examinations in Mississippi.

He shared with his wife Alice a long-standing interest in vintage and antique art glass, especially French art glass of the art deco era. He liked classic country music; music of the big band era; Southern gospel music; Mississippi farm-raised fried catfish; and LSU football. Up to the time of his death he was on the Board of the Montgomery County (Virginia) Sheriff’s Office Citizen Support Group and was a member of the Southern Gospel Music Association, and the Alumni Associations of Mississippi College, VCU, and LSU. He was also a life member of the American Psychological Association, the Mississippi Psychological Association and the Mississippi State Board of Psychological Examiners.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles Thomas Noblin and Margaret Byrne Noblin, and a daughter-in-law Mary Noblin. He is survived by his wife, Alice Forth Noblin; two sons and daughter-in law, Paul Noblin of Wilmington, NC and Mark and Sherry Noblin; one granddaughter Hope Noblin of Hattiesburg, MS; one step-son and step daughter-in-law, Chris and Carri Lucas; and two step-grandsons, Aaron Lucas and Jacob Lucas of Blacksburg.

Visitation was Thursday, Dec. 29 at McCoy Funeral Home and services were conducted Friday, Dec. 30 in the Blacksburg First Church of God with Pastor Jeff Crowder officiating.

In lieu of flowers, Charles requested that memorial contributions be made to his undergraduate alma mater, Mississippi College, PO Box 4005, Clinton, Mississippi 39058 which he described as “the best and most influential academic years of my entire life.”

Ranjan, Shefali

Shefali Ranjan, 71, of Radford, passed away Saturday, Dec. 24, 2022. She was preceded in death by her parents, Trilakhya and Renubala Mukherjee; a brother and three sisters.

She is survived by her husband, Manas Ranjan; son, Vishal Ranjan; daughter and son-in-law, Vandana Ranjan and Adam Carlesco;



two brothers and two sisters; and many other relatives and friends.

The family received friends on Friday, Dec. 30, 2022, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed.

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

Shealor, Peggy Vaught

Peggy Vaught Shealor, 78, of Blacksburg, died Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2022. She was born in Montgomery County on Sept. 10, 1944 to the late Minor A. and Lucille Jarrells Vaught. She was also preceded in death by her husband Marshall L. Shealor; one son, Clinton A. (Petey) Linkous; a grandson, Jesse Linkous; and sisters, Barbara Winters, and Phyllis Keister.

She is survived by her son, Henry R. Linkous; one grandson, Jerry Linkous (Michaela); four great-grandchildren, Amanda, Alix, Addy, and Conner; sister and brother-in-law, Brenda and James Boffey; and brothers and sisters-in-law, Edison and Linda Vaught, Jeff and Diana Vaught, and Richard and Pamela Vaught. Services will be held privately.

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

National Signing Day nets VT dozens of signees

Marty Gordon
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BLACKSBURG – Highlighted by 21 high school captains and 19 state championships as a class, Virginia Tech football head coach Brent Pry proudly welcomed his second early signing class to Blacksburg on Wednesday, as the Hokies introduced 25 signees and four transfers on National Signing Day.

Recruiting the most within its geographic footprint, Tech’s 12 in-state signees (six within the top 25 per 247Sports) marked the Hokies’ largest Virginia signing class since 2014. In total, 12 signees committed within a 220-mile radius of Blacksburg, including their two 4-star recruits: defensive back Antonio Cotman, Jr., (Richmond, Virginia) and offensive lineman Layth Ghannam (Charleston, West Virginia).

Four Tech signees hailed from Tennessee with one each signing from Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and West Virginia. The Hokies also welcomed two international signees, including 6-foot-4, 240-pound defensive lineman Ishmael Findlayter (Toronto, Ontario) and 6-foot-7, 275-pound offensive lineman Hannes Hammer (Cologne, Germany).

On the offensive side of the ball, Tech welcomed 13 signees, comprised of two quarterbacks, two running backs, five wide receivers, and four offensive linemen. Defensively, the Hokies inked 12 players, featuring two defensive lineman, three linebackers, and seven defensive backs.

Among Tech’s incoming transfers, the Hokies



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH

welcomed redshirt sophomore quarterback Kyron Drones (Baylor), redshirt junior wide receiver Da’Quan Felton (Norfolk State), senior wide receiver Ali Jennings (West Virginia, Old Dominion) and junior defensive lineman Darian Varner (Temple).

Virginia Tech’s 2023 National Signing Day class ranks as the sixth best in the ACC according to

247Sports Composite and Rivals.

The class achieved a composite win-loss record of 255-70 (.785 winning percentage), including nine state titles that were earned during the 2022 season.

Get ready to start jumping as the Hokies welcome Old Dominion to Lane Stadium on Sept. 2.

Big games from Kitley, Soule, and Traylor lead Virginia Tech over High Point 86-66



COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

VT guard Kayana Traylor scored 22 points and handed out seven assists in the Hokies’ 86-66 defeat of the High Point Panthers Wednesday.

HIGH POINT, NC - -Elizabeth Kitley, Taylor Soule and Kayana Traylor each notched at least 20 points to help lead the Virginia Tech women’s basketball team past the High Point Panthers 86-66 on the road Wednesday.

Kitley led the Hokies (11-1) with 25 points, seven rebounds, seven assists, and four blocks. Soule tacked on 24 points, seven rebounds and two steals and Traylor chipped in as well with 22 points and seven assists.

Virginia Tech out-rebounded High Point 32-20 in Wednesday’s game, led by Kitley’s

seven boards. The Hokies also collected 12 offensive rebounds and scored 10 second chance points.

The Hokies forced 17 High Point turnovers while committing only nine themselves in Wednesday’s game. The Tech women turned those takeaways into 23 points on the offensive end of the floor. Soule’s two steals led the way for Virginia Tech.

- Virginia Tech Athletics

Donation helps RHS golf program

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The Radford High School golf program has received a Christmas gift, which will help grow the sport throughout the community even introducing it to a young age group. The estate of a Blacksburg family turned over a check this past week in the amount of \$121,679.

The money is thanks to the Estate of Ralph W. Petron in honor of his mother Juanita W. Petrone. Initially, the golf program received \$55,000, but this week the second amount was given to the school.

Dr. Robert Graham, superintendent of schools for Radford, said the Petrone family has a passion for helping to grow the game of golf in the Radford City School Community, especially for student-athletes

who may not be able to afford the traditional golf experience (ie, membership to a country club, private golf lessons or 21st Centruy golf equipment).

This is what Ralph W. Petrone envisioned to honor his mother, Juanita. She played golf for years both locally and throughout the east coast enjoying the game of golf and graciously helped kids who wanted to learn the game whenever she got the chance.

Graham said this generous donation/grant will help us add another golf simulator, a practice putting green simulator and potentially a curriculum and golf equipment to use for a golfing unit at John Dalton Intermediate and Belle Heth Elementary physical education

classes.

“We also think we will have enough money to provide some opportunities for our students to join Operation 36, which is a junior golf program that focuses on growing the game of golf for young students interested in learning how to play,” he said.

The school hopes they will be able to provide opportunities for students at the elementary and middle school to learn about golf at a younger age and better prepare them to compete at a very high level if they choose to compete on the RHS golf team.

“More importantly, we hope to introduce the game of golf at a young age so that it can be a life long sport for those who choose to play it. There are many valuable lessons in golf that can last a lifetime,” Graham said.

Kitley: 2022 ACC Player of the Year

Center Elizabeth Kitley became the first Virginia Tech women’s basketball player to win ACC Player of the Year in 2022, capping off a sensational junior season. The 6-foot-6 Kitley also became the first Hokie to earn consecutive First Team All-ACC accolades and was named to the 2022 All-Defensive Team.

Prior to the ACC Tournament, when the award was handed out, Kitley averaged 17.6 points, 10.1 rebounds and 2.6 blocks per game while shooting a league-best 53.8%. She earned four ACC Player of the Week honors, the most in the league.

The Summerfield, North Carolina native

secured 14 double-doubles, the most in the conference and also registered 12 20-point performances this season. An All-Defensive Team selection, Kitley had six games with five or more blocks. She scored 34 points twice, and on one of those occasions, she scored 17 field goals, a program record.



COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

Virginia Tech junior center Elizabeth Kitley has become the first Hokie basketball player to win ACC Player of the Year honors. The award was handed out at the ACC Tournament.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS														
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Send community news and photos to community news @ourvalley.org

Altizer all-county, all-city defensive player of year




Curtis Altizer led Christiansburg High School this past season with 128 tackles, 86 solos with 3.5 sacks.

PHOTO BY BRYANT ALTIZER

Marty Gordon
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Curtis Altizer was the top defensive player for a Christiansburg High School team that finished one step away from a state championship opportunity. “The playoffs were really hard. This program had grown so much since Coach (Alex) Wilkens got here,” the honoree said. Altizer tallied 128 tackles with 86 solos and two interceptions. For his effort, he has been named the 2022 all-county, all-city defensive player of the year. Additionally, he totaled 623 yards from his running back position and even played quarterback for five snaps this season. He scored four touchdowns on offense. Earlier this week, the 5-10, 215 pound linebacker gave his own scouting report of himself. “He (Altizer) is a hard guy to block, hard to take down and hard to tackle,” he said. Almost every game this season, Altizer

caught double-teams from opponents. He even saw three during this year’s Cave Spring contest. “It was tough, but I think it helped the team and other players to get their own tackles,” he said with a grin. In most cases, the double teams did not keep him from making life unsettling for opposing quarterbacks. Altizer starting playing football at the age of five and would toss the rock around in the backyard with his brother, Travis, who graduated this past year from CHS. “I’ve always wanted to play football. I just love to hit,” he said. Altizer gained 20 pounds of muscle between his junior and senior season, and feels that will continue to help the Christiansburg program in the future. He also served as the team’s punter playing eight kicks inside the 10-yard line this season and hopes to play football in college and possible major in physical therapy.



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BONOMOS
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East Mont girls win tournament title



PHOTO COURTESY OF EMHS

The Eastern Montgomery High School girls' basketball team brought home the trophy of last week's Danny Jonas Memorial Christmas Tournament at Ft. Chiswell High School. The Lady Mustangs downed Blacksburg 38-32 in the championship game. Lilly Underwood led Eastern Montgomery with 58 points, 28 rebounds 18 rebounds and 10 steals in three games.

Evans all-county, all-city offensive POY

Marty Gordon
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Tanner Evans rushed 193 times for 1,467 yards with 12 touchdowns this season as a multi-purpose player for the Christiansburg High School football team. He also passed 38 of 73 yards for 696 yards with another 13 scores as he led the Blue Demons all the way to the state Class 3 state semi-finals. Christiansburg stretched a 10-win season deeper than they have ever been in the past 12 years before losing to Heritage. Evans was a big part of the success as everything ran through him on both sides of the ball with him typically not coming off the field for offense, defense and special teams. Thus, he has been given the unofficial title of “Swiss Army knife.” All not bad for a youngster who just turned 16-years-old during the last week of the season. He started eight games at quarterback and another five at tailback. For his effort, Evans has been

named the 2022 all-county, all-city offensive player of the year. The junior football player has worn the #4 jersey number for the past two seasons with a little unknown reason. It has special meaning for Evans as the number belonged to Ashlyn Poole, a CHS volleyball and softball player who was killed in a tragic 2018 auto accident. “She and my sister Madelyn were best friends so I thought it would be a fitting way to remember her when I take the field,” Evans said. The all-around athlete has also garnered some admiration from a little three-year-old little boy. Kash Lewis, whose father is a track coach and teacher at CHS, always high-fives players as they come on the field and when they leave. But from Day 1, Evans has stopped and given the youngster some special attention. Kash knows the QB by name and definitely recognizes him on the field even when watching a game on television. The “awe” effect was caught on camera by several people after the team’s second home game. Evans said it’s like Kash is his best friend, and it’s kind of cool as he looks up to him. The football player admits he really did not want to play quarterback this season, instead favoring his tailback position. Coach Alex Wilkens said Evans could probably play on the offensive line or receiver if asked upon. “He is just that gifted of an athlete. He is a talented player,” he said. Evans is also an outstanding baseball player and is leaning on trying to play the sport in college. This year’s success on the football field has brought some inquiries from several football programs, he says football is secondary to baseball. Looking ahead to his senior season, Evans believes the team and program can take the next step next year. “The Christiansburg program is still coming up, and I think we will have more progression next year,” he concluded.

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Happy New Year !

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