



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY O'DELL

Christiansburg Middle School students created cards with special messages for local nursing home seniors in a recent project.

CMS students connect with community seniors in heartfelt art project

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

CHRISTIANSBURG - Christiansburg Middle School students have reached across generations to make a difference in their community with a recent art project.

Using materials such as cardstock and tissue paper, the sixth, seventh

and eighth grade students made cards shaped like hearts for seniors in the area. They wanted nursing home residents to have something to brighten their walls. The cards also contained special messages inside from the local middle school students.

Kathy O'Dell, sixth grade math teacher at CMS said it all began

one day when she saw an art project on Pinterest that piqued her interest. She approached her administration about the project idea first, and with approval introduced the idea to CMS teachers and staff. Everyone quickly got on board and readied materials and instructions; however, it was the students that

See Students, page 4

Blacksburg Town Council approves FY 2023-24 budget and tax rates

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

The Blacksburg Town Council voted 7-0 in approval of the FY 2023-24 budget during their regular meeting, April 25.

Ordinance 2019 amending Blacksburg Town Code 22-900 was approved by council to increase the cigarette tax to \$0.02 per cigarette prior to sale in the town limits, effective July 1, 2023. The real estate property tax will be \$.26 per \$100 assessed value for the calendar year 2023, according to Ordinance 2020. Additional appropriations to local organizations and other funding approved by council are also listed per ordinance 2020 on the town's website.

Ordinance 2021 was approved by the council to increase water and sewer services, meter fees, and solid waste and recycling fees.

Frustrated local citizens were also heard by Blacksburg Town Council during the meeting, in relation to a proposal for a low-density development of 44.85 acres of rural residential land at 1006 Glade Spring Road.

Meredith Jones, P.E. Edén & Associates, P.C. has submitted a district rezoning application on behalf of the owner, Cary Hopper of Blacksburg, for the property to be changed to planned residential, and for the use of mixed-income residential housing. Comments during the meeting addressed concerns relating to environmental, safety, and traffic issues that the housing project would potentially present to the locality.

"Town code states that the purpose of the planned residential district is encouraging ingenuity, imagination, and high-quality design to create a superior living environment," said Casey Hodges. "It states that variations can be made provided that no such action shall prejudice or diminish the protection of the health and safety of the citizens and the development shall provide meaningful benefit such as reduced erosion, protection of health and safety of forested areas for the preservation of scenic use. Many citizens believe this development does not meet this criterion."

Resident Amy

Burton has asked that the town "hire a third party independent firm to complete a thorough assessment of all traffic conditions to include actual speeds on Glade Road and not the posted 25 miles per hour."

Another resident suggested the town council should deny the proposal as it stands and send it back to the planning commission. Voting in approval would force residents to begin an appeal process causing further conflict between the town and citizens, said Guy Acciai.

"Bottom line, we can work together now, or we can work as adversaries in front of the Board of Zoning Appeals," said Acciai.

According to the www.blacksburg.gov website, the planning commission voted 5-2 in denial of the application's proposed change in land use on March 7, 2023. A revised proffer statement was submitted on April 24 and is now available on the town's website. The town council is scheduled to hold a public hearing and take final action on the proposal during their May 9 meeting.

Virginia Tech graduate programs rated among the best nationally

BLACKSBURG - Virginia Tech's ongoing emphasis on research and faculty resources continue to be reflected in university rankings, with several academic programs being rated highly in the U.S. News & World Report annual graduate school rankings released Tuesday.

The graduate programs in the university's College of Engineering, the Pamplin College of Business, and the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine all earned high marks, supporting Virginia Tech President Tim Sands' mission to make the university a top-100 global research university.

Virginia Tech's part-time Evening MBA program, offered by the Pamplin College of Business, led the way among the university's programs, coming in tied for No. 21 nationally out of 299 schools. The program, based in Falls Church, holds in-person courses in the evening and offers online elective classes in the summer.

"National rankings play an important role when selecting an MBA program because the reputation of a well-respected, highly ranked degree allows portability in this transient area and Virginia Tech provides graduates of the MBA program the credential to pursue their careers across the globe," Associate Dean for Graduate Programs Parviz Ghandforoush said. "As Virginia Tech's presence in and commitment to the Washington, D.C., region grows, the Evening MBA program is excited to continue to be a driver in graduate business education as a top choice of MBA programs."

Of note, the Evening MBA program continued its trend of being recognized nationally. The program has been ranked in the top 30 nationally for nine consecutive years.

"The enduring value of the Virginia Tech MBA program is reflected by the continued strong placement among the best part-time programs nationally, as

ranked by U.S. News & World Report," said Dana Hansson, director of MBA programs at Virginia Tech. "Earning a spot among the highest 10 percent of part-time MBA programs in the nation including many Virginia Tech and Pamplin aspirational institutions, the latest ranking of No. 21 places the Evening MBA as the top choice in Virginia and is among the top three offered in the highly competitive market in the Washington, D.C., area."

Also, Virginia Tech's College of Engineering continues to receive national acclaim. Overall, the college's programs were rated tied for 30th nationally out of 202 schools, and nine of the college's specialty programs were in the top 20.

That list includes environmental engineering (tied No. 5), industrial (tied No. 6), civil (tied No. 7), agricultural (tied No. 12), aerospace (No. 14), electrical (tied No. 16), mechanical (tied No. 17), nuclear (tied No. 18), and petroleum (No. 19). In addition, the College of Engineering's computer engineering program was tied for No. 23 out of 152 schools, and the computer science program ranked tied for No. 35 out of 208 programs. This ranking was a three-spot



PHOTO BY LOGAN WALLACE FOR VIRGINIA TECH. Two Virginia Tech students work on a research project at the Center for Space Science and Engineering within the College of Engineering. The college's graduate programs continue to receive national acclaim.

increase from a year ago.

"We're pleased that the College of Engineering graduate program as a whole remains in the top 15 percent of ranked schools with multiple programs ranked among the top 10 nationally," said Holly Matusovich, associate dean for graduate and professional students within the College of Engineering. "We are also excited that several programs have advanced in ranking, including electrical engineering, environmental engineering, mechanical engineering, and computer

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Kiwanis Club of Christiansburg provides gift cards to schools

CHRISTIANSBURG - As part of its continuing program of providing support to local schools' need for clothing and supplies, the Kiwanis Club of Christiansburg delivered Walmart gift cards to Montgomery Central, Falling Branch Elementary and Christiansburg Elementary School.

The cards, in the amount \$550 (\$500 from the Kiwanis Club and \$50 from Walmart) were delivered to

schools that had a low balance on their cards and had requested additional funds. This program was started several years ago for the seven schools in Christiansburg, and cards are replenished by the Club as needed. Before this program was introduced, often teachers and staff members would personally pay for the needed items that the children could not afford.

The cards were delivered by Oliver Lewis, MCPS

Tiered Intervention Specialist and a Kiwanis member and Ernie Wade, Kiwanis member.

Kiwanis is a global organization of members, clubs and partners who are dedicated to changing the world, one child at a time. The Kiwanis Club of Christiansburg has provided service to the local community since its charter was granted in 1949.

-Submitted by the Kiwanis Club of Christiansburg



Left to right, Oliver Lewis, MCPS Tiered Intervention Specialist and Kiwanis member; Christy Sparks, Christiansburg Elementary School Assistant Principal and Ernie Wade, Kiwanis member.



Oliver Lewis; Anne Mitchell, Falling Branch Elementary Principal and Ernie Wade.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE KIWANIS CLUB OF CHRISTIANSBURG
Anne Lawson, Montgomery Central Counselor, and Ernie Wade.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, May 4:

American Legion meeting
The American Legion, Harvey Howe Carper Post #30 will meet at 6 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in Radford. For further information, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

Friday, May 5 and Saturday, May 6:

Book Sale
There will be a book sale at the Radford Public Library, 10 a.m. -5 p.m. Along with the usual subjects, there will be many, many children's books, cookbooks and jigsaw puzzles. Come to the sale and help support the Radford Public Library.

Saturday, May 6:

Free Comic Book Day
The Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library will be giving away free comics in celebration of Free Comic Book Day on Saturday, May 6. Free comics will be available for children, teens, and adults (limit two per person, while supplies last). All branches, all day event.

Afternoon Tea

You are cordially invited to an afternoon tea at the Meadowbrook Library; 1 -2:30 p.m. Come out for an afternoon tea in the lovely Carilion Community Room. The tea will feature tea, light refreshments, a garden treasure hunt, and much more. Enjoy music by harpist Chloé Scales. Wear your tea party clothes and your hat if you wish to do so, but it is not a requirement. Recommended for ages 4-99. Space is limited, registration is required, sign up early. Children must be accompanied by an adult. This program is free! For more information contact the Library at 540-268-1964.

Monday, May 8:

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, May 9:

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.

Wednesday, May 10:

Virtual Author Talk with Jena Friedman
Hosted by the Radford Public Library; 8 -9 p.m. Celebrity comedian and Oscar-nominated screenwriter Jena Friedman's debut collection, Not Funny, takes on the third rails of modern life in Jena's bold and subversive style, with essays that explore cancel culture, sexism, work, celebrity worship, and...dead baby jokes. In a moment where women's rights are being rolled back, fascism is on the rise, and so many of us could use a breather as we struggle to get by, Jena applies her unique gifts to pull a laugh from things deemed too raw, too precious, and too scary to joke about. She shares her stories of taking on those who told her she was too brash, edgy, and "unlikable" to make it. She deftly dissects how we get coerced into silence on the issues that matter most until they've gone too far afield to be turned back around again. Register now! <https://library.org/radfordlibrary>.

Saturday, May 13:

Mount Tabor Ruritan fish fry
Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its May Fish Fry 5 to 7 p.m. at Slusser's Chapel Picnic Shelter, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. Serving fish, fries and slaw; homemade desserts; and beverages. DJ Earl Brown will be spinning some hits to get the 2023 fry season off to a swinging start! Adults-\$12, children under 12- \$6, (under 3)- free, carry-outs- \$12. Held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further

information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan.

Wednesday, May 17:

VR Wednesday
At the Radford Public Library; 2- 3 p.m. Come take a hike, paint a masterpiece, or explore the international space station at the library! Try all these things and more using our new Meta Quest 2 VR headset. If that's not a good time for you, email duncan.hall@radfordva.gov to schedule a time for a 30 minute demo!

Thursday, May 18:

Sons of Confederate Veterans
The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Italian Family Restaurant on 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are also invited to this meeting. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864

On-going:

Glencoe Mansion announces call for art for Mary Draper Ingles Show
Glencoe Mansion is calling for art for its July-August 2023 Gallery Exhibit, "A Journey For All," a multi-artist show themed on the life and times of Mary Draper Ingles. Accepted artwork should reflect the life and times of Mary Draper Ingles, expressions of life during the colonial period, and histories of all the peoples, from settlers to indigenous cultures to enslaved people, who called the frontier home. This includes, but is not limited to, depictions of local landmarks (for example, Ingles Farm, the Cultural and Heritage Park, Ingles Tavern and other connected sites in the region), and Colonial style art. All fine arts and fine craft media including painting, plein air, illustration, digital media, textiles, mixed media and photography will be considered. Artists may submit up to three (3) artworks for consideration. Applications will be accepted through 5 p.m. on June 13. Participation, which is subject to acceptance, is open to artists in and around the NRV area. Entry forms for "A Journey For All" can be found at www.glencoe mansion.org or by contacting arts@glencoe mansion.org.

Radford Farmers Market

2023 season of the Radford Farmers Market kicked off Saturday, April 22 on the grounds of Glencoe Mansion, Museum and Galley, located just off West Main Street, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. each Saturday until October 14.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF VIRGINIA
Pictured (from left): Anthony Smith, Immediate Past Chair of AGCVA, Bud Foster, Founder of the Lunch Pail Defense Foundation, and Brandon Robinson, CEO of AGCVA.

Bud Foster's Lunch Pail Defense Foundation receives donation

The Associated General Contractors of Virginia presented a donation to Bud Foster's Lunch Pail Defense Foundation on Thursday, April 27. The donation will support a debt-free education option for area high school students, with an opportunity to pursue education in the construction industry. The foundation, created by retired, notable coach of Virginia Tech football Bud Foster, provides 38 academic scholarships to area high school students via the New River Community College ACCE program. This program offers students a debt-free educational option, with certificate opportunities such as construction technology and electrical-construction technology to prepare them for careers in the construction industry.

-Submitted by the Associated General Contractors of Virginia

Art opening and whiskey-tasting coming up at Montgomery Museum

CHRISTIANSBURG – The Montgomery Museum of Art & History is inviting the public to “an unforgettable evening of art, history, and whiskey” on May 4.

“We’re excited to host two incredible exhibitions: “The Cotswolds and More” by local photographer Susan Lockwood, and “Owning the Stereotype: The History of Hillbilly Iconography,” featuring the private collection of Montgomery Museum Board President Dr. Jean Haskell, retired professor of Appalachian Studies at Virginia Tech and East Tennessee State University and co-editor, Encyclopedia of Appalachia,” the museum announced.

“Explore the stunning beauty of the Cotswolds region of England, [along with photographs from other areas of Europe], through Susan Lockwood’s lens, and get a glimpse into the rich history of Appalachia with the fascinating history exhibition. And what better way to enjoy the evening than with a Whiskey Tasting provided



PHOTO COURTESY OF MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY
“The Cotswolds and More,” an exhibit by photographer Susan Lockwood, is on display starting May 4.

by JH Bards Spirit Co. and history enthusiasts.” The event is 5 – 7 p.m. at the museum, located at 4 East Main St., Christiansburg.

George Washington and Jefferson National Forest emphasize safety when hiking in bear country

It's important to practice safe food storage when in bear country, whether you are picnicking in a remote area near the Appalachian Trail or taking a long hike through the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest.

“We want everyone to stay safe and be bear aware in the great outdoors,” said Joby Timm, Forest Supervisor. “Black bears have an exceptionally keen sense of smell. That’s why hikers should pack all food and any personal items that have a smell, like toothpaste and soap, in a bear-proof container so bears and other animals can’t detect the scents.”

Bears can learn to associate people with food, and they are tenacious in their pursuit of something to eat. Good food storage habits greatly reduce the chance of aggressive interactions between bears and hikers during daytime activities and when sleeping

in the forest.

Leave No Trace partners with the USDA Forest Service to provide safety tips for outdoor recreation. Their video <https://youtu.be/H0YDtPW6ntU> shows how to pack a bear-resistant container, plus important safety tips for camping and cooking in bear country.

Bears are typically shy by nature and keep their distance. Hikers can avoid bear encounters by making noise, whistling or talking. These noises alert nearby bears, giving them a chance to move away and not feel threatened by humans who traverse their habitat.

While hiking, the best way to avoid a bear encounter is to be bear aware. Don't hang out near a bear's favorite food sources: berry patches, decaying logs swarming with insects and streams

and rivers teeming with fish. Also stay alert. Don't wear headphones and approach blind corners on the trail with caution.

Because black bears inhabit the Appalachian Trail corridor (also called the A.T.) and can smell food from long distances, the Forest Service has a food storage policy for all hikers within 1,000 feet of the trail — a distance the equivalent of three football fields. It was developed in coordination with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest, the Cherokee National Forest, the National Forests in North Carolina, and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. The order applies to the southern section of the A.T. that traverses Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

Students from page 1

made the project both exciting and meaningful. "We were supposed to do it before Valentine's Day but due to a weather delay, it was completed the last week of March," O'Dell said. "The kids really enjoyed it, even those resistance to these types of projects wanted to do it. Personal messages were often shared by the students. Some of the kids were extremely excited about it and even made additional

ones." Some students made cards for other seniors in the community as well, such as their own grandparents and elderly neighbors that might enjoy a special card. "I wanted to show the students that, even though they might be 11, 12, or 13-year olds, they can make an impact on their community. Advisory is a time

when we talk about core values, being responsible and respectful, so it was an opportunity to put that in there to a positive influence" O'Dell shared. This was the middle school's first attempt at making a cross-generational connection, but they hope to continue doing something like this on a regular basis, potentially reaching out to other community organizations as well.

Virginia Tech from page 1

science. Aligning education and research for impact remains a critical aspect of the College of Engineering's strategic plan, as does increased focus on graduate education. In combination, we are confident our efforts will continue to lead to sustained progress for our programs overall." The Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine earned a top-20 ranking. The college, which focuses on biomedical sciences and pathology and health sciences in addition to small and large animal clinical sciences, was ranked No. 19. "It's a validation of all the hard work," said Ansar Ahmed, associate dean of research and graduate

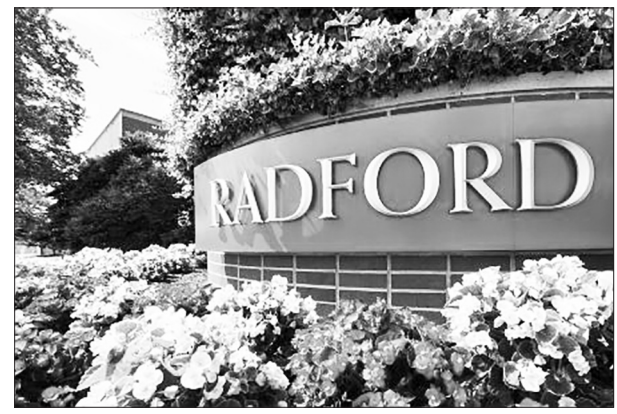
studies in the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine. "It's exciting, I know our students have been doing well, and so this ranking comes as a pleasant surprise to me. The metrics that we use, we've been increasing productivity. You must present two papers, you must go to national meetings, and you must take leadership in organizing symposiums and seminars, so I know we've done all the right things." The university's College of Science fared well in the report, too, with the earth sciences (tied No. 33 out of 165 schools), physics (tied No. 50 out of 190 schools), math (tied for No. 51 out of 193 schools) and chemistry (tied No. 67 out of 212 schools) programs

earning recognition. The physics and math programs jumped eight spots from last year's rankings. In the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, the public affairs and education programs earned high marks. The public affairs program was tied for No. 53 nationally of out 269 schools, and the education program was rated No. 83 out of 272 schools. The U.S. News Best Graduate Schools ranking is based on two types of data — expert opinion about program excellence and statistical indicators that measure the quality of a school's faculty, research, and students. *-Michael Stowe for Virginia Tech*

Tuition and fees increase at Radford University for 2023-24

RADFORD – Tuition at Radford University will increase by three percent for the 2023-24 year. The Radford University Board of Visitors discussed and voted on the tuition and fees for the 2023-2024 academic year at a special meeting April 28. "The Board of Visitors' primary goal is to maintain the highest standard of education for Radford University students while minimizing the financial burdens on students and addressing increased inflationary pressures," according to a

statement by the university. The increased rate applies to both in-state and out-of-state students and includes undergraduate and graduate students at all locations, including Radford University Carilion in Roanoke. With admissions and deposit deadlines for the fall approaching, the special meeting was called "to allow students and their families to make informed decisions about financial commitments for the upcoming year," the announcement reads, adding the BOV could revisit the decision depending on the outcome of the state budget.



FILE PHOTO
Radford University tuition is set to increase three percent for 2023-24.

"These adjustments allow for Radford University to continue delivering high quality academic programs and to make future investments for student success," said Rector Deb McMahon. "We made a decision that best minimized the impact on students while addressing inflationary realities." "We believe in our positioning as one of the most affordable institutions in the Commonwealth," President Bret Danilowicz said. "As a result, there is sensitivity to the challenges that students and families face when the cost of education rises. Radford University remains committed to providing significant financial support for students to ensure that our prestigious degree remains accessible and affordable alongside a high-quality student experience." McMahon said Radford's cost versus nationwide economic trends over the past six years show the increases are lower than average. Radford University's total cost - tuition, room and board, and fees - has grown 13 percent for undergraduate Virginia residents since 2017-18, "less than the average rate of the state's four-year public institutions," including "three years of flat tuition fees, and a fourth where rebates were made available to in-state undergraduates," and the national Consumer Price Index (CPI) "showed a 19 percent rate of change over the same period."

"This was neither a quick or easy decision," said McMahon. "For the fiscal health of the university, and to continue delivering a high quality of service to our students, this move was necessary." The BOV also voted to increase fees, including room and board fees that "provide more inclusive services to limit additional out-of-pocket costs students have incurred in the past and meet their demand." Radford University remains one of the most affordable universities in Virginia, with the third-lowest total cost of education when tuition, fees, and room and board were combined among the state's 15 public four-year institutions in 2022-23. In 2021-22, more than 60 percent of full time undergraduates at Radford University received financial assistance. "With the increase in need-based financial aid in the state budget, Radford University will continue its commitment to maintaining student affordability," according to the university statement. *Radford News Journal staff report*

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USPS 016-490 Online: www.ourvalley.org

Michael Showell, *Publisher*
Heather Bell, *Editor*
communitynews@ourvalley.org
Aila Boyd, *Executive Editor*
aboyn@ourvalley.org
Randy Thompson, *Advertising Consultant*
advertise@ourvalley.org

Give us your view:
editor@ourvalley.org

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Hot meal
5. Razor clams
10. Blood-sucking African fly
12. Chauvinists
14. Windy City football player
16. An alternative
18. Federal Housing Administration
19. Styles hair
20. Arabic female name
22. Paddle
23. Area once separated from Germany
25. Marketplace
26. Gode Airport
27. Upset
28. Where wrestlers sweat
30. Garland
31. Robert __, poet

CLUES DOWN

1. Type of whale
2. Type of medication
3. Land of the free
4. Formed an opinion of
5. Logo
6. No (Scottish)
7. Leaves tissue
8. Sacred state to Muslims
9. Thus
10. African nation
11. Someone who has a stake in
13. Parties
15. Subsystem producers
17. Large, flightless birds
18. Compromises visibility
21. A ballet enthusiast
23. More (Spanish)

CLUES ACROSS

33. An iPad is one
35. Fruit of the oak tree
37. Della __, singer
38. Women's clothing retailer
41. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
42. Pouch
44. Radioactivity unit
45. Month
48. Nanosecond
50. Domestic
52. What a boy becomes
53. Breezes (anc. Greek)
55. Jogged
56. At the stern
57. Lawrencium
58. Destructive to both sides
63. Arterias
65. Removes

CLUES DOWN

24. Skeletal muscle
27. Hands (Span.)
29. Weighed
32. Businessman
34. Famous clock Big __
35. Unkeyed
36. Break between words
39. Ink (slang)
40. Disappointed
43. Stroke
44. Curdled milk
46. Restaurants
47. Explosive
49. Type of terrier
51. Disfigure
54. Innermost cell layers
59. Bar bill
60. Distinct period of history
61. Mode of transportation
62. Equal (prefix)
64. Operating system

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OBITUARIES

Cressell, Rosa Elizabeth

Rosa Elizabeth Cressell, 70, of Parrott, passed away at her home on Thursday, April 27, 2023.

She was preceded in death by her parents, William Sherwood Nester and Rosa Blevins O'Dell; and her son, Mark Edward Roope.

Survivors include her loving husband of 26 years, Ralph Stanley Cressell; sons, Le Roope and Chris Roope (Sara Anderson); grandchildren, Rosetta, Ashley, Tyler,



Carla and Michael; great-

grandchildren, Trey, Kaytlyn and Forest; great-grandchildren, Kyler and Kalem; and many other siblings, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

A celebration of life will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2023, 3 - 5 p.m. at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

The Cressell/Roope family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory in Radford.

McNeill, Melva James Nizer

Melva James Nizer McNeill was an early Christmas gift to her parents Ludell Albert Nizer, Sr. and Ada Mae Carr Nizer on December 13, 1948.

Melva was educated in the public schools of Christiansburg and Alexandria, Va. She continued her education at Norfolk State College, receiving a B.A. in Childhood Education and a Masters in Reading Education from Radford University.

Melva married the love of her life, George Richard McNeill, on December 30, 1969. To this union were born two gifted children: Marvin Nizer McNeill, musician, and Tamia Melody McNeill, artist. In December 2019, Melva and George celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Melva was an active and dedicated member of Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church, where she sang in the choir, taught Sunday school, and served on Hospitality Committee preparing meals in the kitchen. Melva loved her church family, proudly serving in the church in which her grandfather was a pillar in its early establishment. Melva's faith was very strong. She not only lived her faith strongly, but she happily shared it with others at every opportunity. "Blessed Assurance" was among many of her favorite hymns and was also a favorite of her dear mother, Ada Mae.

Melva was a teacher at heart and began her teaching career in the Baltimore City Public School System. During their overseas tour of duty in Japan, Melva served as the principal of the preschool on the military post where they lived. Upon returning to the United States, Melva taught preschool and kindergarten at The Little Red School House at Ft. Meade, Md. After moving back and settling

in Christiansburg, Melva would go on to proudly teach second grade at Belview Elementary School in Montgomery County for over 20 years. After retiring from Belview, Melva continued to hold "Nana's School" in her home to prepare her grandchildren for public school.

Melva loved family, cherished friends, and advocated for the children. She understood that reading development was fundamental to a child's success and dedicated her time and talent to helping as many students as she could. Melva was



an avid reader and poet who would compose and present her poetry as gifts for friends and family. Melva was affiliated with and engaged in several organizations, including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and Alpha Delta Kappa Rho.

Melva was preceded in death by her parents, Ludell Albert Nizer, Sr. and Ada Mae Carr Nizer; her brother, Ludell Albert Nizer Jr.; and her brother-in-law Raymond McMichael.

Melva's life memories will be cherished by her husband, George Richard McNeill; her son, Marvin Nizer McNeill; her daughter, Tamia Melody McNeill; her sister, Marva Jean Nizer McMichael; her brother, Francis Randolph Nizer; her grandchildren: Quinton Clayborne, Tyrique Taylor, Isaiah Davenport, Brooklyn Grace McNeill, Trey Dallas III, and Roman Dallas; daughter-in-law, Rebecca McNeill; son-in-law, Greg Dallas II; nieces: Karen Brooks, Tisha Nizer, and Velta Dawson; devoted friend, Alana Rhodes; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Funeral services will be conducted, Thursday, May 4, 2023, at 11 a.m. in the Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church with Pastor Lee Suggs officiating. The family will receive friends, Wednesday, May 3, 2023, from 5-7 p.m. at the McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Dr. S.W., Blacksburg.

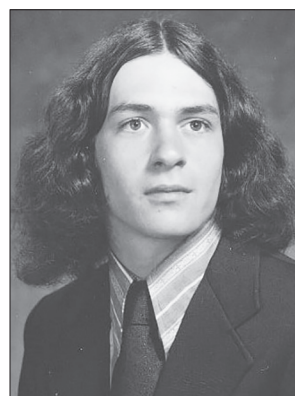
Painter, Steven Campbell

Steven Campbell Painter, 69, of Fairlawn, passed away at Pulaski Health and Rehab on Thursday, April 27, 2023.

He was preceded in death by his father, William Buxton "Buck" Painter, Sr.

Survivors include his daughter, Cara Lee Painter Epperly; grandson, Jackson Thomas Epperly; mother, Patricia M. Painter; brothers and sisters-in-law, William B. "Buck" Painter, Jr. (Vicki), and Richard "Rick" Painter (Kay); sister and brother-in-law, Karen "Kippy" Roberts (Audie); nephews, William "Buck" Painter, III (Tracey), Thomas Painter, and Jason Roberts

(Paula); niece, Jessica Roberts; and many great and great-great nieces and nephews, family members



and friends.

The family wishes to thank the staff of Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital (Neuro &

Palliative Care Unit), Pulaski Health and Rehab, and Good Samaritan Hospice for the care they all provided Steve during his illness.

The family received friends on Monday, May 1, 2023, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. A graveside service followed in Hickman Cemetery in Pulaski County.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made to the Marcus Allen Ford Scholarship Fund, 7649 Brooklyn Road, Fairlawn, VA, 24141.

The Painter family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory.

Steiss, Patricia "Patsy" Foster

Patricia "Patsy" Foster Steiss passed away peacefully at her home with her husband by her side on April 28, 2023, at the age of 85.

She was born to Charles and Hazel McClintock on July 2, 1937, and grew up in Turtle Creek, Penn., a small suburban town just outside of Pittsburgh. She graduated from Turtle Creek High School in the top 10 of her class in 1955 and continued her education at Bucknell University. There she would meet her future husband, Alan Steiss.

After graduating from College with a Degree in Commerce and Finance, she and Alan married on June 13, 1959. Together they had three children: Carol Jean, Darren, and Todd. Patsy first moved to Blacksburg in 1967, where her husband, Alan began his career at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). They relocated to Ann Arbor, Mich. in 1988 and then returned to Blacksburg in 1999 and remained in the area until her passing.

Patsy enjoyed singing, cooking, playing bridge,

knitting, reading mystery novels, and traveling. She was involved in many social activities. She was a member of the Blacksburg Master Chorale, Sweet Adeline, bridge clubs, Virginia Tech Women's Club, Blacksburg Women's



Club, volunteer at the Montgomery Regional Hospital (now Lewis Gale), bowling league, and worked in several women's retail clothing stores.

She was lovingly known as "Moma Pat" to her grandchildren, whom she adored. (Cory, Kaitlyn, Robert, and Ryan). Her favorite time was the annual family beach trip and Thanksgiving. But her greatest love

was her husband of over 60 years. Patricia is survived by her loving husband Alan; daughter, Carol Whaley (Wes); sons, Darren (Wendy), and Todd (Sandy); four grandchildren, Cory, Kaitlyn, Robert, and Ryan; first great grandchild due in June; and a niece, Deborah.

The family would like to thank the staff of Good Samaritan Hospice for their gentle, empathetic care. In lieu of flowers, please donate to one of the organizations below: • Blacksburg Master Chorale: <https://www.blacksburgmasterchorale.org/support-the-bmc-donation> • Moss Arts Center: <https://artscenter.vt.edu/> • American Cancer Society: <https://www.cancer.org/involved/donate>.

A celebration of life will be June 10, 2023, at The McCoy Funeral Home, located at 150 Country Club Drive, SW, in Blacksburg. A celebration of life presentation will begin at 7 p.m. Guests are welcome to arrive beginning at 6 p.m. to meet with family and friends.

Sinclair, James Vernon, Jr.

James Vernon Sinclair, Jr., 53, of Blacksburg, died Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at his home.

He was born in Tampa, Fla. on July 27, 1969, to the late James Vernon, Sr., and Jean Ellen Sinclair. He was also preceded in death by his sister, Mary Jean Fox.

He is survived by his wife, Debra Sinclair; sons, Shane, Sr.

(Salomae) Sinclair, James



Jr., Cierra, Hayden, Kyla, Michael, Autumn, Hayden, Mason, Joshua, and Scarlet; brother, Robert (Linda) Sinclair; aunt, Joanie Gearhart; and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, May 2, 2023, in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel. Interment followed in the Roselawn Memorial Gardens cemetery.

Yanhko, Michael Walter

Michael Walter Yanhko, 77, of Radford, passed away Thursday, April 27, 2023. Mike was a P.E. teacher and coached baseball and football in Jefferson Township, N.J. where he was inducted into the New Jersey Coaches Hall of Fame. He was a choir director at Sussex United Methodist Church in New Jersey and a member of Central United Methodist Church in Radford.

Mike was preceded in death by his parents, Adam, Sr., and Julia Yanhko; his wife, Patricia Yanhko; and brothers, Adam, Jr. and Robert Yanhko.

Survivors include his daughters, Melissa Lynn Yanhko, of Radford, and Heather Noelle



Poe (Bryce, IV) of Colorado; grandchildren, Michael Alexander

Obiso, Christopher Erik Obiso, Bryce Poe V, Elizabeth Kelly Poe, and Christopher Poe; adopted daughter, Filippa Skogberg and Conrad; and many other relatives and friends.

The family will receive visitors from 4:30 until 6 p.m. on Wednesday, May 3, 2023, at Auburn United Methodist Church in Riner.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a contribution to either Girls on the Run or Hero Boys.

The Yanhko family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory in Radford.

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Hahn Horticulture Garden unveils long-range plan for expansion

BLACKSBURG - Virginia Tech's Hahn Horticulture Garden has completed a new \$4 million planning study outlining potential growth and expansion for the six-acre public teaching and display garden, a popular destination on the Blacksburg campus.

Elements proposed in the study, driven by gifts, would significantly upgrade the Hahn Horticulture Garden's amenities for holding events and vastly expand its array of gardens and sustainability features. Highlights proposed in the study include a spacious open-air marquee structure, a Japanese-style Zen garden, a glass house, a formal garden, water-conserving rain gardens, and multiple spaces for teaching, learning, and relaxing.

Hahn Horticulture Garden Director Scott Douglas said the goal of the planning study is to recommend ways to elevate the garden as a regional attraction and to capitalize on its allure to host more revenue-producing events, such as weddings, conferences, and reunions.

"Items identified in the study help us better utilize our six-acre footprint," Douglas said. "It allows people to stay longer, see more things, and be exposed to different styles of gardens. I'm hoping this will make us more of a destination."

Open 365 days a year from dawn until dusk,

the Hahn Horticulture Garden is western Virginia's largest public garden and serves students and the community as a hands-on learning resource for gardening, landscaping, and environmental awareness. It operates entirely on donations and public generosity.

"People assume that because we are on Virginia Tech's Blacksburg campus, we are in the university's budget," Douglas said. "We are an independent operator, so we are heavily dependent on people renting this place, making donations, and attending the Garden Gala in June. We are looking for donors to help us make the long-range plan a reality."

Douglas said event rentals cover more than 50 percent of the garden's operating costs. To increase

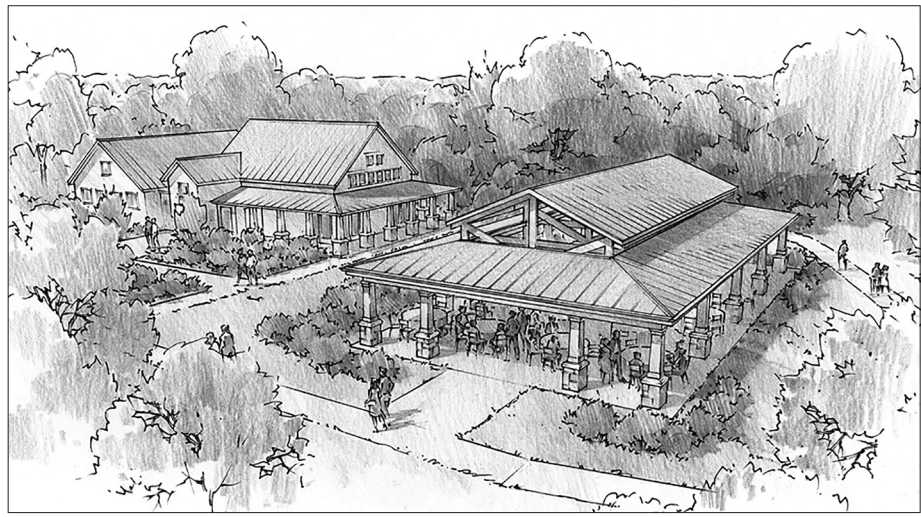


IMAGE COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH

A rendering of the new covered patio structure, which is the first improvement slated for construction.

that potential, the garden is proceeding with design and construction of a 2,800-square-foot open-air marquee structure to be built on the lawn next to the Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion. The wood framed structure, designed by Hill Studio in Roanoke, will have a concrete floor, wood columns with Hokie Stone bases, and a dramatic green metal roof that matches the neighboring pavilion. It will meet the demand for a large open-air covered event space while eliminating the need for tent rentals that damage the lawn.

The marquee is the first project slated for completion. Douglas said his hope is to break ground as early as November so it can be completed for the 2024 wedding season and Hahn Horticulture Garden's 40th anniversary.

To complement the marquee structure, the study proposes a caterer hut with a roof and concrete floor that would be placed between the new building and the parking area, enabling a convenient, sheltered workspace for event caterers. When not in use, the hut would offer a shaded, dry location for students and visitors.

A new "glass house" is also proposed to display a variety of tropical plants and orchids and house temperature-sensitive plants over the winter and seed-starting each spring. The glass house would function as a unique space for smaller rental events.

The study additionally proposes the introduction of a formal garden to feature clipped boxwood hedges and a variety of flowering plants to expose students and the public to a highly managed and controlled landscape style that is distinctly different from other spaces in the Hahn Garden.

Also under consideration is a Japanese-style Zen garden with an open-air tea house surrounded by a raked stone garden and bordered by a small pond. The garden would introduce an international style and provide a peaceful space for relaxation and meditation.

Other improvements proposed in the planning study include:

A prominent Hokie Stone entry gate at the garden's main entrance on Washington Street.

Directional signs to the Hahn Horticulture Garden from Route 460 and additional directional campus signage to guide visitors to the garden.

Rain gardens to capture building runoff, highlight water conservation, and demonstrate a bog area.

A plant collection database presented on a searchable map interface so students and visitors can locate and learn about the wide variety of plants in the garden.

Landscape lighting to increase the overall safety of the garden for night events.

A home gardening demonstration area featuring a collection of raised garden beds and a composting area.

A shade garden with pathways, rhododendrons, a seating area, and a sculpture.

A sidewalk along Garden Lane to provide a safe walkway from the greenhouse parking spaces to the pavilion.

New accessible pedestrian pathways throughout the property.

The growth plans create more opportunities for students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' School of Plant and Environmental Sciences and Agricultural Technology program, who intern, work, volunteer, and take classes in the gardens throughout the year. Douglas said students will have a role in the installation and maintenance of many of the projects outlined in the study, from planting and pruning to building ponds and walkways.

"We've been so grateful to our community and volunteers who have supported the garden over the last 40 years," Douglas said. "We look forward to involving them in the next chapter of growth to make the Hahn Garden the premier venue to visit, learn, relax, gather, and celebrate."

To learn more about how to support the Hahn Horticulture Garden, please contact Emily Wong at ewong03@vt.edu or visit <https://hahngarden.vt.edu/support.html>.

-Max Esterhuizen for Virginia Tech

Legal Notice

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY FOR A 2023 TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF ITS BASE RATES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO § 56-585.1 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA CASE NO. PUR-2023-00002

- Appalachian Power Company ("APCo") has filed its 2023 triennial review of its base rates, terms and conditions pursuant to § 56-585.1 of the Code of Virginia.
- Among other things, APCo requests a revenue increase in the amount of approximately \$212.6 million. The overall impact of the Company's proposals would increase the monthly bill of a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month by approximately \$25.03, or 15.9%. For low-income customers qualifying for the proposed basic service charge waiver, the Company's proposals would increase the monthly bill of a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month by approximately \$16.53 or 10.5%.
- A Hearing Examiner appointed by the State Corporation Commission will hold a telephonic hearing in this case on August 23, 2023, at 10 a.m., for the receipt of public witness testimony.
- An evidentiary hearing will be held on August 24, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.
- Further information about this case is available on the SCC website at: scc.virginia.gov/Case-Information.

On March 31, 2023, Appalachian Power Company ("APCo" or "Company") filed an application ("Application") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to § 56-585.1 A 3 of the Code of Virginia ("Code") and the Commission's Rules Governing Utility Rate Applications and Annual Informational Filings ("Rate Case Rules"), for a triennial review of the Company's rates, terms and conditions for the provision of generation, distribution and transmission services.

The Application states that this proceeding entails, among other things, determinations regarding: (i) APCo's cost of service during the three successive 12-month periods ending December 31, 2022 ("Earnings Test Period"); (ii) whether prospective changes to APCo's rates for generation and distribution services are necessary; and (iii) the Company's prospective fair rate of return on common equity ("ROE").

The Application states that, pursuant to Code § 56-585.1 A 8, the Company's earned ROE during the Earnings Test Period is compared to a 140 basis-point band of earnings that ranges from 70 basis points above a previously authorized ROE to 70 basis points below that ROE ("ROE band"). The Application further notes that Code § 56-585.1 A 8 states that if earnings fall below the ROE band during the Earnings Test Period, the Commission shall order increases to APCo's rates necessary to provide the opportunity to fully recover the costs of providing the Company's services and to earn not less than such fair combined rate of return, using the most recently ended 12-month test period as the basis for determining the amount of the rate increase necessary. Finally, the Application states that Code § 56-585.1 A 2 g provides that if APCo's combined earned return is below its authorized return, "whether or not such combined return is within 70 basis points of the return as so determined," the Company may request that the Commission approve "an increase in rates in accordance with the provisions of subdivision 8 a as if it had earned more than 70 basis points below a fair combined rate of return, and such proceeding shall otherwise be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section."

APCo states that the ROE band for the analysis of the Earnings Test Period is based on an ROE of 9.20%, which is the return authorized by the Commission in APCo's 2020 Triennial Review. APCo states that the Company earned a return of 5.39% on its common equity during the Earnings Test Period, which is the equivalent of over \$124 million in pre-tax earnings below 8.5%, the bottom of APCo's authorized ROE band for the Earnings Test Period.

Based on this analysis, APCo requests approval to implement retail base generation and distribution rates that are designed to implement an overall increase in the Company's revenues of approximately \$212.6 million over revenues from current base rates. APCo states that this is a 14.3% increase to overall revenues. The requested increase includes a \$5.4 million increase to the generation function and a \$207.2 million increase to the distribution function.

The requested revenue increase reflects, among other things, APCo's requested authorization of a prospective ROE of 10.6%. APCo also requests that the Commission approve depreciation rates that will result in an annual increase in depreciation expenses. APCo also requests to increase distribution O&M expenses by \$47.8 million to allow it to improve its vegetation management program. APCo states that its proposal for an increased level of vegetation management funds should improve the reliability of targeted circuits and reflects higher costs of materials and labor. APCo also proposes an adjustment to increase federal tax expense in the cost of service to reflect the Company's expected increased tax obligations under the federal Corporate Alternative Minimum Tax. Additionally, APCo requests authority to establish a regulatory liability for the credit that will offset future tax obligations and deferral authority to ensure the Company only collects its actual tax obligations from customers.

With this Application, the Company proposes to eliminate the basic service charge for qualifying low-income customers, which for these purposes the Company defines as customers who receive assistance from one (or more) state agency. At the same time, the Company proposes an increase of \$0.54 to the basic service charge from \$7.96 to \$8.50 for all other residential customers, which APCo states is designed to be revenue-neutral for the Company when combined with the estimated level of customers who will be eligible for the basic service charge waiver.

APCo states that even if the Commission finds that it should not increase the Company's rates, the Company nevertheless requests that the Commission approve revised rates to reflect the changes in the underlying costs since 2010. APCo states that its proposed rate design reflects updates to both the functional and class allocations to reflect the current costs of serving the Company's customer classes. Additionally, APCo proposes to incorporate Schedule MGS (Medium General Service) customers into Schedule GS (General Service) and eliminate Schedule MGS from the Company's standard service tariff.

The foregoing is not an exhaustive list of all the proposals contained in the Company's Application. Interested persons are encouraged to review APCo's Application and supporting documents in full for details about these and other proposals.

TAKE NOTICE that the Commission may apportion revenues among customer classes and/or design rates in a manner differing from that shown in the Application and supporting documents and thus may adopt rates that differ from those appearing in the Company's Application and supporting documents.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo's Application. On August 23, 2023, at 10 a.m., the Hearing Examiner assigned to this case will hold a telephonic hearing, with no witness present in the Commission's courtroom, for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before August 17, 2023, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide to the Commission (a) your name, and (b) the telephone number that you wish the Commission to call during the hearing to receive your testimony. This information may be provided to the Commission in three ways: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting; (ii) by completing and emailing the PDF version of this form to SCCInfo@scc.virginia.gov; or by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting.

On August 24, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Hearing Examiner will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission's Staff.

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission has directed the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and required electronic service on parties to this proceeding.

An electronic copy of the public version of the Company's Application may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: Noelle J. Coates, Esquire, American Electric Power Service Corporation, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or ncoates@aep.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies of the public version of the Application and other documents filed in this case from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/Case-Information.

On or before August 17, 2023, any interested person may submit comments on the Application by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/casecomments/Submit-Public-Comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2023-00002.

On or before June 23, 2023, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel, if available. The respondent simultaneously shall serve a copy of the notice of participation on counsel to the Company. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, Participation as a respondent, of the Rules of Practice, any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, Counsel, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2023-00002. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing.

On or before July 14, 2023, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served on the Staff, the Company, and all other respondents simultaneous with its filing. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, Filing and service, and 5 VAC 5-20-240, Prepared testimony and exhibits. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2023-00002.

Any documents filed in paper form with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, Copies and format, of the Rules of Practice.

The public version of the Company's Application, the Commission's Rules of Practice, the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, and other documents filed in the case may be viewed at: scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information.

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Perkins declared ineligible by NCAA

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

RADFORD - A former standout pitcher from Christiansburg was slated to be one of the aces of this year's Radford University staff when he received a halt to his playing career thanks to the NCAA.

Alex Perkins' collegiate career is done. He had hoped to pitch this season for the Highlanders.

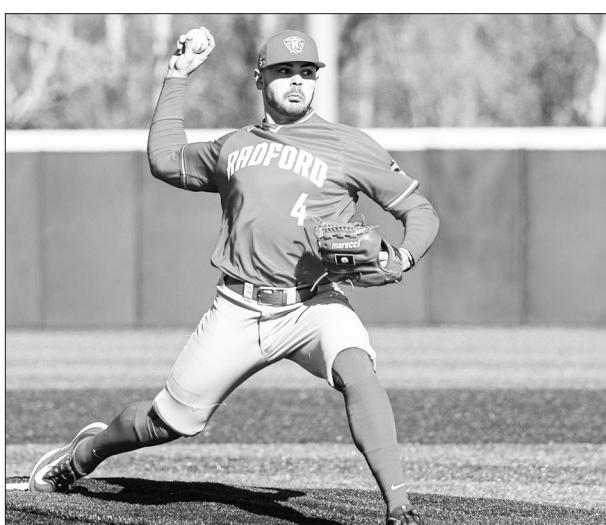
The RU compliance office released a statement stating Perkins was past his five-year clock of eligibility.

He did receive a medical hardship waiver last season (2021-22), but the NCAA still denied his extension of eligibility waiver, therefore making him ineligible to play a sixth year.

Last season, Perkins earned a medical redshirt, appearing in two games with a short season earned run average of 1.35, while posting a 0.90 WHIP.

Initially, transferred to RU in 2020 and sat out a season to NCAA transfer regulations after coming over from Bluefield College. As a junior in 2021, he finished with a 2-1 record, appearing in 17 games, totaling 37 strike outs on the season with a 2.86 ERA.

He spent two seasons at Bluefield College (2017-19), posting a record of 13-13 with a 4.30 ERA across those seasons as a starting pitcher, earning NCCAA All-Tournament honors with the Rams in 2019 after helping lead the team to the NCCAA World Series. He recorded a complete game 15-strikeout performance against Trinity Christian in the NCCAA World Series and also had a complete game 15-strikeout game



FILE PHOTO

Alex Perkins was a former standout pitcher at Christiansburg High School and had been clocked in the high 90s during the preseason at Radford University.

against Oakland City College in the NCCAA Regional Tournament.

Perkins was a two-way player at Christiansburg, helping lead the Blue Demons to three postseason appearances. He earned first team all-conference honors as a pitcher, third baseman and utility player and earned all-region honorable mention honors.

Perkins also threw a no-hitter against Cave Spring his senior year.

Auburn softball #2 in state, East Mont #1 in girls soccer

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Virginia's top rankings in spring sports has several local teams in the top five in almost every category.

The Auburn softball team is #2 in Class 1 with a 13-1 record, trailing top ranked Rappahannock who is 12-0 as of this past week. In Class 3, Christiansburg is #10 with Turner Ashby first and Cave Spring fourth.

In baseball, Cave Spring is #2 in Class 3 with Liberty Christian Academy at #1. Christiansburg is ranked seventh.

Lebanon leads Class 1 in baseball with Auburn #2, Narrows #3, Rural Retreat #6 and George Wythe in 13th.

The Blacksburg boys' soccer team is ranked #1 in Class 4 with King George second. Blacksburg is ranked fourth in the overall soccer ranking across all classifications. Christiansburg is #8 in Class 3.

In Class 1, undefeated Galax is in first with Eastern Montgomery seventh and Auburn 13th.

The Blacksburg girls' soccer team is ranked third in Class 4, while Christiansburg is eighth in Class 3.

Eastern Montgomery is first in the girls' Class 1 soccer rankings.

Racing season continues at Motor Mile Speedway



Mike Looney won both of Saturday's Late Model twin races at Motor Mile Speedway near Radford. Looney leads the Late Model standings at the track by 10 points over Kyle Dudley and 16 over Derrick Lancaster.



Jimmy Mullins won the Super Street competition on Saturday night.



Kyle Dudley won the Sportsman series race.



Kevin Cantern wins mod-4 race.

For the first time since the season-opening night in March, engines roared around Motor Mile Speedway for the Southern Ground Pounders night this past Saturday.

The .416-mile track welcomed racers from six different divisions and hosted seven different races for the nearly 1,000 fans in attendance. On a beautiful Saturday evening that luckily escaped the wrath of Mother Nature, track officials decided to move the green flag up to 6 p.m. in hopes to ensure a full night of racing.

The action started when the Blue Ridge Church Pure-4 Series took to the track for 25 laps. Kirby Shipman started in fifth place and dominated the race, leading over 20 laps and earning the victory from the back half of the field. Shipman pulled his white number seven machine into Victory Lane for the second time this season, but ultimately earned his first win of the year after failing post-race inspection at the Ice Out Opener a few weeks back. A mid-race push from William Hale put a little pressure on Shipman, but Hale ultimately brought his car home in position number three. Javon Parker finished third, earning his second-straight podium finish. The next race that hit the asphalt was the first 50-lap twin for the Price's Body Shop Late Model Stock Car Series.

Following a sweep of the two races back in March, Mike Looney proved once again why he's a force to be reckoned with in the New River Valley. Looney, who started at the tail end of the field, quickly fought his way through the pack and found himself in second behind defending track champion Kyle Dudley. Looney and Dudley continued to battle for nearly 15 laps before contact between the two gave Looney the advantage. Some noticeable damage on Dudley's car affected his ability to get back to Looney but they both manage to secure the top two spots for the third race running. Polesitter Karl Budsevski led the first few laps of the race and managed to bring his car across the line third.

The special race of the night belonged to the Southern Ground Pounders Vintage Racing Club Series. With two different classes of cars on the track, the sportsman class and the modified class, it provided the fans with some truly exciting racing. Jimmy Mullins got behind the wheel of his hot pink 1974 Gremlin and flew to the front, leading the majority of the race and earning the win in the modified class. Bobby Griffin, in a beautifully painted racecar dedicated to his father, started on the pole and led the sportsman field for the entirety of the race and even raced

alongside Mullins for a little bit.

The Total Car Care Mod-4 Series then took to the track for their race of the 2023 season. A quick, 25-lap race went the way of Abingdon, Virginia's Kevin Canter. He started to the outside of polesitter Doodle Lang and was able to get to the top spot early and never look back. Lang maintained his spot in second while Brittany Cockram earned the final podium spot.

Dudley returned to the track to headline a strong field of Collision Plus Sportsman Series competitors. There were a handful of drivers that pulled double duty on Saturday night, and Dudley's dominance in his 40-lap event gave him the victory. He started in the top spot and led every lap of the race; the first three starters actually all finished in the same three top spots.

Despite many cautions and a rather lengthy red flag, Dudley was able to thrive on each and every restart to fend off Jacob Porter. James Sweeney finished in third, crossing the line just a few car lengths behind the top two.

In the penultimate race of the night, the DCT Towing Super Street Series took to the short track for 30 laps. In a list of competitors that included last month's winner Mullins as well as the veteran Looney, it was

some of the young guns that proved to be some of the stoutest competition. Mullins ended up winning the event for the second race in a row, but it was Tristan Barnes that continued to impress at such a young age. Barnes earned his second consecutive P2 finish. Daniel Eakin rounded the podium in the third spot.

The final event of the evening was 50 more laps for the late Looney and, again, it was Looney that dominated the race. He worked his way through the field and found himself alongside Dudley again, but this time he was in the lead. After Dudley tried to dive to the inside, the defending track champion got loose and brought out the caution. That was enough for Looney to pull away on the ensuing restart and make it a perfect 4-for-4 start to the year.

Christiansburg, Va. native Derrick Lancaster finished with a season-best second place finish, his third podium finish in four races. Dudley managed to battle back after his spin and came across the line third, capping off his 140-lap night.

Racing returns to Motor Mile Speedway on Saturday, May 20 for the Super Cup Series Night presented by Shively Electric. There will be seven races across five divisions, and the green flag will drop at 7 p.m.

Points standings (as of 4-30-23):
Late Model Division: 1) Mike Looney 200 points, 2) Kyle Dudley 190, 3) Derrick Lancaster 184, 4) Cory Dunn, 5) Karl Budsevski, 6) Ezekiel Shell, 7) Trenton Kilgore, 8) Chase Dixon, 9) Blayne Harrison.

Sportsman: 1) James Sweeney 136 points, 2) Jacob Porter, 132, 3) Charles Smith 128, 4) Kyle Barnes, 5) Jonathan Hall, 6) Drew Bond, 7) Ryan Collins, 8) Richard Caldwell, 9) Daryn Cockram.
Super Street: 1) James Mullins 100 points, 2) Tristen Barnes 96, 3) Taylor Ransom 84, 4) Ray Sowers 83, 5) Daniel Eakin 80, 6) Joseph White, 7) Matthew Gusler, 8) Dennis Turman and Jerry Hollander.
Pure 4: 1) Javon Parker 94 points, 2) Christeena Crosler 86, 3) Anthony Sheppard 84, 4) Adam Crosler, 5) Kirby Shipman, 6) Caleb Sewell, 7) William Hale.
MOD-4: 1) Kevin Canter 50 points, 2) Doodle Lang 48, 3) Brittany Cockram 46, 4) Rocky Yates 44, 5) Tony Sarver Jr., 6) Jeff Martin, 7) Daniel Hutson.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MOTOR MILE SPEEDWAY
Jimmy Mullins (pictured) is this year's Southern Ground Pounder modified winner Saturday at Motor Mile Speedway. Jimmy Griffin was the Southern Ground Pounders Sportsman winner.

RU softball honors seniors



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS

Before Saturday's game action, the Radford University softball team honored their three seniors on the team with a pre-game ceremony: Abby Wilson (right), Skyler DeHart (center) and Laura Thompson (left). Wilson and Dehart, both played at Auburn High School and led that program to two state titles.

University hosts annual Beyond VT event

Virginia Tech Athletics and the Lombardi Student-Athlete Development Office held its annual Beyond VT event on Monday, April 17 inside Lane Stadium, allowing 2023 graduates an opportunity to celebrate, reflect and network with former student-athletes and professionals as they begin to prepare for life after Virginia Tech and after athletics.

Understanding that Hokie student-athletes have multiple options to choose from after graduation, the event allowed student-athletes to select one of four paths: employment, grad school, going pro or unsure.

"We want to see our student-athletes to be successful once they graduate from Virginia Tech," Senior Director for Student-Athlete Career Development within the Lombardi Student-Athlete Development Center Sarah Lage said following the event. "We want to see them be more than just a student, be more than just an athlete. We want to see them develop personally and professionally."

"I think this is just one event to help them with that."

Tech welcomed back the likes of 12 former student-athletes to both help make up a well-rounded panel and divide up the four paths, with former women's track and field standout Sarah Edwards serving as the

keynote speaker to lead-off the evening event.

Centering her focus on both her personal experiences and her struggles after college, the well-accomplished distance runner during her time with the Hokies emphasized continuing to prepare for life after athletics, and the need to find a new sense of accomplishment after that competitive chapter comes to a close.

"It meant a lot to be able to try and help the current student-athletes start to make this transition into their next phase of life and give them some guidance that I wish I had been able to have," Edwards said. "It's really cool that Virginia Tech puts on this event for athletes and helps them prepare for that."

"I'm glad I was able to share my experience and hopefully be able to help people have a better transition than I did."

Citing her daily struggles about the lack of competition of being away from a team in the immediate aftermath in the post-graduate era, Edwards talked about having to deal with the daily woes of finding herself away from the track, and hammered home a couple of major takeaways to help surround that constant confusion.

"It's ok to not be ok," Edwards said. "I really did feel invincible as a student-athlete with successes, with the highs

and lows you go through. It's just like 'I can do anything.'

"It's [tough] when sport is taken away. [My] sport was sacred to me. Sport is sacred to a lot of people. So it really is ok to not be ok, and to realize that, yeah, you're not invincible."

With nearly 40 student-athletes in attendance to educate themselves at yet another highly serviceable event, the buy-in was reciprocated from the side consisting of the current student-athletes to suit up in the orange and maroon.

There's certainly that sense of appreciation, too, from those who will soon sit in the opposite shoes.

"It's really important for us to have a smooth transition for the next stages of our lives," men's tennis standout Frank Thompson said. "For them to put on an event like this with so many Hokie alumni, former student-athletes who have come to share their stories. ... It's just beyond caring about us as athletes in our time here."

"It means a lot from the department to be committed to us beyond our time at Virginia Tech."

"[This experience] is invaluable," football's Matt Johnson said. "You can't really put a price on it. Having people come in and talk to you about their experience and pass that knowledge on ... I'm just very appreciative that they've done this for us."

-Virginia Tech Athletics

RU Athletics celebrate annual RUBY awards

The Radford University athletics department came together to celebrate the accomplishments of its student-athletes at the annual RUBY's awards banquet on Monday night.

In the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee's 11th year organizing the event, the evening inside the Dedmon Center was all about honoring programs and individuals who have made contributions to the Highlanders' great success during the 2022-23 campaign in the classroom, in competition and in the community.

Strength & Conditioning Award - Amy Swain, Women's Soccer and Alex Perkins, Baseball

Amy Swain is a true leader in the weight room and on the field by setting the example of the right way to do things. Her athletic accomplishments are a direct reflection of her dedication to strength training and conditioning. She is able to power clean more than her bodyweight, deadlift and squat almost two times her bodyweight, all while still being the fittest female athlete out on the soccer field.

Alex Perkins is a leader in the weight room and on the field. We look at him as an extension of our strength staff in the weight room, as he is able to effectively coach and motivate his teammates to push themselves past levels they never knew they could. He holds the school record for deadlift at 615lbs and was also able to back squat 475lbs. He is the perfect example of how we want our student-athletes to invest in strength & conditioning and its ability to enhance performance.

Newcomer Of The Year - Ashlyn Traylor, Women's Basketball and DaQuan Smith, Men's Basketball

Traylor became just the fourth player in program history this year to earn the Big South Freshman of the Year award after dominating opponents on the court. Her 405 points, 100 assists and 65 steals were top-five totals in the Big South and led the team. Her seven Big South Freshman of the Week awards are a program record and second-most ever in the Big South.

Smith was the very first player to commit to Radford in last summer's transfer class and his belief in the program paid off. The dynamic guard played in all 36 games this season, averaging 13.6 points, 3.3 rebounds, 1.7 assists and 1.0 steals per game to lead the Highlanders to a 21-15 record that included

two wins in the College Basketball Invitational. Smith earned tons of awards as a result, being named Second Team All-Big South, Second Team All-State and Second Team All-NABC District 3.

Scholar Athlete Of The Year - Ameer Batth, Women's Tennis and Nicholas Taliaferro, Men's Golf

Ameer has had an impressive academic and athletic career here at Radford carrying a perfect 4.0 GPA throughout her career. Ameer will graduate this fall with a bachelor's degree in Media Studies.

A scholar off the course and a fantastic player on it, this year's male scholar-athlete of the year Nick Taliaferro carries a 3.91 GPA as a double major in Accounting and Finance. Nick was named a GCAA All-America Scholar and also tabbed to the 2020 and 2023 Big South All-Academic Team.

Senior Leadership Award - Margaret Gleason, Women's Lacrosse/Natalie Welsh, Women's Golf and William Flanagan, Baseball

In the words of Coach Hurley: "Margaret is known for her transparency, goofy, hardworking and motivated demeanor. You may know her as Margaret Gleason, but she is our nudge, a one-of-a-kind student-athlete that we're proud to call our own. She is 100% present and committed to the task at hand, whether she's scoring goals for our lacrosse program or saving lives while working towards completing her nursing degree. She is always giving her best while keeping others accountable, raising the bar and cracking a joke. She can grab the attention of an entire room but can also become someone that you can confide in. As a two-year captain, she has played a significant role in helping propel this program forward by never compromising her principles and integrity. Congratulations on this amazing award of recognition, Nudge!"

In the words of Coach Beeler: "As a freshman in 2018, Natalie arrived on campus with plenty of talent but was missing several intangibles to become an impactful Highlander. 4 1/2 years later, two-year captain Natalie Welsh found those intangibles and has placed her name amongst the best in the women's golf record books. Often thought of as an assistant coach, Natalie's ability to take over a huddle and lead by example has provided a blueprint for Highlanders of the future. You can never replace someone like Natalie, but you can cherish the impact she has left on our university and program for many years to come. Congratulations Natalie Welsh!"

In the words of Coach Guerra: "Flanny has played a vital role in the shift in culture for our program. He leads by example in every facet of

his life both on and off the field. Even though he has been sidelined with a season-ending injury, his leadership shines bright on a daily basis. Flanny has such a bright future in our baseball program and those skills will allow him to flourish when he graduates from Radford! We are so lucky to have Flanny be the perfection representation for RADFORD Baseball and the RWay culture we are creating!"

Highlanders 4 - Highlanders Award - Women's Lacrosse

Team support is vital to the success of any athletics program. Radford Student-Athletes consistently support each other's programs by displaying spirit during competition and this award recognizes a team who has exhibited what being a Highlander is all about, by showing up and cheering on each of our programs.

The Ruby Cup - Women's Soccer

The Ruby Club recognizes a team that achieved over a 3.0 GPA, displays team spirit at competitions, and is active in the community throughout the year.

Not only is this team high achieving on the field of play, but also consistently shows support to other programs by displaying spirit during competition and are very giving of their time and service to the community.

Jennifer Norton Courage Award - Tanner Barrs, Baseball

The Courage award is given to an individual who has possessed strength and courage in the face of adversity and the willingness to display positivity following a hardship.

Athlete Of The Year - Helena Willson, Women's Soccer and Bryce Corbett, Men's Golf

Willson was a staple in the Highlanders' dominant season, starting in all 20 games setting career-highs for goals, assists, points and game-winning goals. After netting the game-winner in the Big South Championship, Willson was named the Tournament MVP. Radford shutout opponents eight times when she was on the back line for a career-high 1,778 minutes.

A standout on the course all season, Bryce led the Big South in stroke average and then accomplished what no Highlander has ever done at the conference championships. Shooting a 4-under par, he topped the field to win the first individual title in program history while leading Radford to the program's first-ever first-place finish in stroke play. Bryce was then voted Big South Golfer of the Year and earned First Team All-Conference honors for the second straight year. He'll have yet another opportunity to go out and dominate this season thanks to an automatic bid to NCAA Regionals.

Radford University Athletics

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