

News Messenger

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Blacksburg

Christiansburg

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

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Sinkland Farms Sunflower Festival provides family-friendly fun for all through July 30



Sinkland Farm-built wooden sunflowers provide the perfect backdrop for family and friend photos.

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

July days are hot and sultry in the New River Valley but attending the Sunflower Festival at Sinkland Farms, will certainly refresh anyone's spirit. Sinkland Farms, owned by Susan Sink, has received numerous awards including their recent recognition of being voted "Most Unique Festival" by Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine.



PHOTOS BY LORI GRAHAM

With over 200,000 sunflowers in bloom, childrens' play area, craft and artisan vendors, food trucks, music, and a beer garden, there is something for everyone at the Sunflower Festival.

This year's venue offers many new features like the 150-foot MEGA slide and wine slushies, but also local favorite craft and food vendors, live music, and scenery that many expect when they visit the location. The children's play area will keep little ones busy with an inflatable jumping house, playground equipment, slides, play farm animals and vehicles to climb on, and even a mini barn children can run through. Adults visiting the Sunflower Festival will find their own respite with food, beverages, local artisans, music,

and beautiful scenery to take in. The strawberry and peach wine slushies are a new highlight this year at the Sunflower Festival that visitors will not want to miss. These delicious treats are sure to provide refreshment after touring the sunflower fields and picking a sunflower or a bouquet to bring home. According to Sinkland Farm's website, there are over 200,000 blooms of 20 different varieties on their

See Sinkland Farms, page 3

Appalachian drinking water quality and health data lacking, Virginia Tech-led study finds

Faced with a drought of data concerning Appalachian drinking water quality and resulting health outcomes, researchers dug deeply to find what trickles they could. Alasdair Cohen, assistant professor of environmental epidemiology in public health, has studied drinking water and health challenges in rural areas internationally and in California. Since arriving at Virginia Tech in 2019, he has been studying similar issues in rural Appalachia.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERRY VLISIDIS VIA UNSPLASH

Sciences at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine. "I was waiting for someone to say, 'Oh, we have the data, here it is,' as far as these are the contaminants of concern for a particular region. But increasingly it became apparent that data on water quality and related health outcomes in rural areas are limited."

Amanda Darling, a doctoral student in the College of Engineering's Charles E. Via, Jr. Department of Civil

and Environmental Engineering who is mentored by Cohen, is the lead author on a recently published systematic review and meta-analysis peer-reviewed study in the journal Science of the Total Environment. The study examined 3,452 scientific publications from the past 20 years to find data that met pre-established criteria for gauging microbial and chemical drinking water contamination in

See Water, page 3



PHOTO BY ANDREW MANN FOR VIRGINIA TECH

Small Animal Community Practice re-energized in its commitment to local clients and students

CPRAC is back on track. Small Animal Community Practice (CPRAC, commonly pronounced "SEE-prak") is a clinic within the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine that accepts pets from a 35-mile radius of Blacksburg. "It's small animal

primary care here at the veterinary college," said Jenny Marin, who joined the community practice as a clinical assistant professor in 2022. "We do a lot of preventive care, vaccines, parasite prevention, disease prevention, things like that. A lot of holistic care, looking at the whole animal and making sure we're addressing every little thing from their eyes and their ears to the heart and their ability to get around." These are not referrals, but community members who bring their pets for checkups and basic health care, as they would with any private-practice veterinarian. "CPRAC, along with the emergency room, are the only two services that you don't need a referral to

See Animals, page 3

Working to save the trees and wildlife is one woman's passion

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

Jordan Thompson has dedicated her life and research to making the region's vegetation a little bit healthier through her work as an arborist and environmental horticulturist. Now, she is the co-owner of a company that works to do just that. Jordan Thompson, and her husband Eric Thompson, recently purchased TIPCO, or Tree Injection Product Company, that provides products to improve the health of trees and plants. Working the company together, Eric brings the business experience to the table and Jordan provides years of field experience and research. In addition to her years of

environmental studies and research, Thompson has ten years of experience in estate gardening, plant healthcare techniques, and woody ornamental maintenance. TIPCO was founded in 1977 by Jim Cortese, an arborist who started the company to sell tree injection products to other arborists. The products provide a way to treat a tree for a fungus or other disease by making injections into the trunk or root system. "We have a website where we sell these products. Most are commercially for arborist professionals, but some are available to homeowners," Jordan Thompson said. "They [homeowners] might call and say, 'I have these white fluffy things on my tree' and we can suggest something. It is encapsulated, so very safe

and you don't touch the product." Thompson's education began at Northern Virginia Community College where she attended their horticulture technology program and became VNLA, Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association, certified. Her undergraduate studies led Thompson to become certified as an ISA, International Society of Arboriculture, arborist. She is licensed in the state of Virginia for the use and application of commercial pesticide applications. As a graduate student at Virginia Tech University, she is now studying entomology. Thompson is currently studying Vegetable Entomology, specifically an invasive Asian jumping

See Thompson, page 3



COURTESY PHOTO

Jordan Thomas, certified arborist and horticulturist, injects an oak tree to treat for a fungicide.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, July 27:

Thursday night indoor concert
 Concert will be held at the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church at 701 Church St. at 7 p.m. Joseph Haydn's "Lord Nelson Mass." Performance is a community-singing event.

Friday, July 28:

Friday night outdoor concert
 Live music will take place Friday evening on Henderson Lawn at the corner of Main Street and College Avenue, from 6-7:30 p.m. In case of inclement weather, the event will be canceled. Performer is Music Road Co. (funk/rock/reggae/afrobeat/Latin fusion).

Thursday, August 3:

Wildwood Park Nature Lecture Series
 The Wildwood Park Nature Lecture Series takes place in the heart of Wildwood Park at the Outdoor Classroom (pavilion). To get to the site, attendees can park at the Sundell Drive parking lot for Wildwood Park and take the walkway into the center of the park. The talks start at 7:30 p.m. and are held rain or shine unless there are thunderstorms. August 3: Geology (Liz McClellan, Radford University).

American Legion meeting

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

Saturday, August 5:

Genealogy Saturdays
 At the Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation, first Saturday of each month, 1-4 p.m. Ancestry experts will be on hand to assist you as you explore your family tree. Come with questions about research and discovering your roots.

Monday, August 14:

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, August 15:

Blacksburg Town Council meeting
 The 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 the 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, August 17:

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

The Town of Blacksburg will continue to flush fire hydrants in the northwest section of Town during the month of July. Hydrant flushing can cause temporary pressure fluctuations and discolored water. These conditions will subside after the flushing is completed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Town of Blacksburg Engineering Department at (540) 443-1300.

Market Square Jam

Held Wednesdays, June through September, in Blacksburg on the corner of Draper Road and Roanoke Street; 7 – 9 p.m. Catering to traditional Old-Time music, Blacksburg's Market Square Jam brings musicians together to pick a tune, enjoy fun times with friends and family, and take in all that downtown Blacksburg has to offer. Blacksburg Market Square Jam is an official Crooked Road affiliated venue that provides fun and entertainment.

Blacksburg Farmers Market

Hours now through October: Wednesdays 2 – 6 p.m. and Saturdays 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Located at Market Square Park, on the corner of Roanoke Street and Draper Road in downtown Blacksburg. Features growers of locally grown produce and meats, alongside artisans of baked goods, prepared foods, cheese, handmade crafts, and more.

Christiansburg Farmers Market

Thursdays; 3 – 7 p.m. Located in the Recreation Center parking lot. Features local farmers and vendors. Seasonal produce, plants, fresh baked goods, crafts, fresh flowers, handmade jewelry and more. Items for purchase vary week-to-week. Check our Facebook page for details about weekly themes, prizes, vendors, and live music.

Radford Farmers Market

Held 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. Features produce, plants, baked goods, artisans, fresh squeezed lemonade, eggs, meats, cheeses and more.

Registration open for Potter in the Park race

Calling all wizards of Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin! Have you signed up for the TriWizard TriMile Potter in the Park Race yet? It's time to venture out from the cupboard under the stairs, get your wizard robes ready, and join us for this annual family-fun event on Saturday, August 26 at 8:30 a.m. Register at www.lvnrv.org. Also, if you know a local business or individual who would like to be a sponsor, please send them our way! From door prizes to sponsorships, we rely on our supporters to make this a truly impactful and entertaining event.

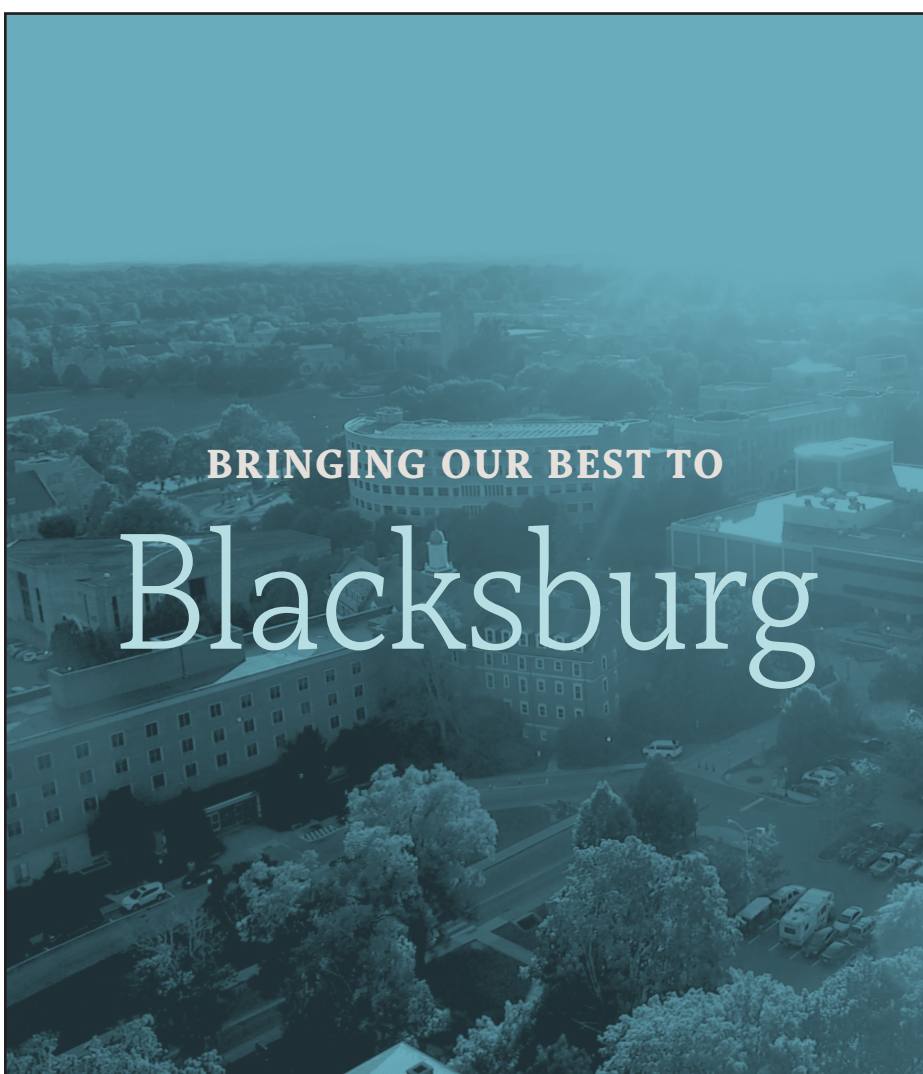
On-going:

Hydrant Flushing Work



LYNCHBURG HILLCATS VS SALEM RED SOX

- JULY 25TH 7:05PM**
BARK IN THE PARK - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM
- JULY 26TH 7:05PM**
GAME 2 - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM
- JULY 27TH 7:05PM**
GAME 3 - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM
- JULY 28TH 7:05PM**
CHRISTMAS EVE IN JULY - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM
- JULY 29TH 6:05PM**
CHRISTMAS IN JULY - GATES OPEN AT 5:00PM
- JULY 30TH 3:05PM**
GAME 6 - GATES OPEN AT 2:00PM



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Blacksburg


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ONLINE AUCTION
Ends Wednesday, August 23rd at 4 PM
Multi-Use Barn for Sale at Auction in Pulaski County!
4241 Lee Highway, Dublin, VA 24301
Bid Now at VAAuctionPro.com

We present a remarkable opportunity for investors, entrepreneurs, and nature enthusiasts alike! This multi-use barn style structure sits on 10 acres of pristine land in Pulaski County.

This extraordinary property, built in 1960 and in good condition, offers endless possibilities and holds immense potential for various purposes. The barn would be perfect for conversion into an auditorium, event center, barndominium residence, or even a mini farm. The main structure has 7,824 square feet with gathering areas and an office. The exterior is brick and metal roof. Property has public water and private septic. Mini-split units for heating and cooling. The interior is wood and concrete. There is also a machine shed and a brick building with a kitchen and restroom.

The barn, with its rustic charm and sturdy construction, invites creative minds to explore the vast potential within. With ample space and a versatile layout, you can customize this structure to suit your specific needs. Transform it into an auditorium or event center, hosting memorable gatherings and celebrations. Alternatively, convert it into a cozy barndominium residence, embracing the unique blend of rural aesthetics and modern comfort. For those seeking a slice of country living, this property is ideal for establishing a mini-farm or a family retreat, surrounded by nature's beauty.


Sprawling across 10 acres of picturesque landscape, while being situated in a highly desirable area. This property offers great potential for commercial use, benefiting from a strategic and accessible location. Whether you're envisioning a commercial establishment or a tranquil family retreat, this property is suitable for a range of ventures. The property is currently under agriculture zoning. Bidders are expected to research and verify what uses are permitted by Pulaski County.

Investors will appreciate the commercial prospects that this property holds, thanks to its prime location. With high visibility and easy access, you can tap into the growing demand for commercial spaces in Pulaski County, making it an excellent opportunity for various business ventures.

Terms - 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$10,000 required on day of sale. Close on or before October 9th, 2023. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps.

CONTACT – Broker & Auctioneer Matt Gallimore at 540-239-2585 or email gallimore.matt@gmail.com. You can also contact Realtor Jason Underwood at 540-230-9516 or underwoodlandman@gmail.com

102 S. Locust Street, Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 745-2005 VAAuctionPro.com Lic# 2907004059



Blue Ridge Land & Auction Co., Inc.

Sinkland Farms from page 1

eight-acre sunflower farm.

Other adult-beverage options are also available, according to Sink.

“We have a whole fleet of craft beer and a couple of domestics. We have a whole bevy of different kinds of wines that won’t be in the slushies,” Amanda Sink, Sinkland Farms family member said.

Another big hit at the event this year is the 150-foot outdoor MEGA slide, which is the only one like it in Virginia. After zooming down the slide that overlooks the beautiful sunflower fields, take a walk on the farm trails where visitors can find many opportunities for pictures. Large sunflowers made from wood, an outdoor LOVE sign, and of course, the thousands of sunflowers can all be great backgrounds for family and friends to memorialize the event with a photo.

“The big wooden sunflowers were made here on the farm as well,” Sink said.

Another favorite of the farm is the animal barn

Water from page 1

Appalachia and associated health outcomes.

The study found only 85 such publications, with a scarcity of studies involving the Central Appalachian region or asking questions about health outcomes.

“As someone who has been working on issues related to water and sanitation in Appalachia for over a decade, I was not surprised by these results,” said Leigh-Anne Krometis, associate professor of biological systems engineering in the College of Engineering and a co-author of the study. “Unfortunately, while Appalachia has long been recognized as a region with acute infrastructure needs, on-the-ground data sets are incredibly limited, which makes the identification and prioritization of effectiveness interventions very difficult.”

The researchers cast a wide net to find any prior studies that are relevant.

“We also included papers whose research questions may not have even been focused just on drinking water quality and contaminants we’re interested in,” Darling said. “Some were focusing just on impacts from fracking, but we took the data, still being under our big research umbrella of things we were looking at. So even though we did find 85 eligible papers, a lot of them weren’t intended to answer the questions we are interested in.”

Animals from page 1

access,” said Anthony Grafsky, hospital administrator. “These are our services that are open to everybody.”

After some loss of personnel and other challenges during the pandemic years, the community practice is fully staffed once again, and looking to expand its clientele.

The clinic recently added Mary Songster-Alpin as its newest clinical assistant professor in community practice. Erin Phoenix ’11, DVM ’17, hired last year as an instructor in the Animal Care in Education program, has also been added as a clinical assistant professor.

They join Marin, Mark Freeman, hired in 2012 and recently promoted to clinical associate professor, and Michael Nappier, hired in 2015 and promoted to clinical associate professor in 2020, as full-time clinicians, giving the clinic a complete lineup.

Additionally, Rebecca Persons DVM ’20 has stepped in as a clinical instructor and Kelly Mallette — a major in the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps — has been serving as a resident. The community practice also has five licensed veterinary technicians and a veterinary assistant to support the clinicians.

Grafsky said the clinic saw 2,854 cases between March 2022 and February 2023, down 3.5 percent from the previous year. But with plans to increase caseload from 12 to 18 a day soon, those numbers could jolt upward in the year ahead.

While the clinic serves the community by providing another option for veterinary care, it also provides an important educational opportunity for veterinary students, about three-quarters of which will enter

Animals from page 1

worm, which came over to the United States in the early 1900s.

“It populates extremely rapidly, can self-populate asexually, and one egg will hatch up to 100 worms. It eats all the organic soil matter, transforming the ecosystem, and our native microfauna and microflora cannot survive. In a month, it can change everything. It is detrimental to the backyard farmer, agriculture, and to turf,” Thompson said.

Thompson and others studying the jumping worm want to understand better what it does to the soil and the other insects that are soil dwelling.

“It pushes out any other earthworms and arthropods in the area. We have done bioassays to see what can kill it,” Thompson said. “Unfortunately, it doesn’t have any predators here, and will flip itself a foot in the air as a defense mechanism.”

This flipping action of the worm has been working quite well to scare off predators like birds that normally consume these insects in their native regions of Asia. With a lack of natural predators in this area, the number of worms are growing and destroying the region’s soil.

where children and adults can see peacocks, chickens, sheep, goats, rabbits, and a pig called Mr. T.

There are a lot of artisans providing handmade local crafts for visitors to peruse as well. Vendors can vary throughout each weekend and are dependent on their availability. Crafts and retail product options may include handmade pet accessories, jewelry, children and adult clothing items, recycled and repurposed handbags, handmade rugs, and clay products.

“I make clay earrings, farmhouse décor signs, tumblers, signs, magnets, car fresheners, all kinds of things,” Lisa Shark of Bubble Clay Company said. Shark’s vendor tent was one of many that had braved the humidity of the event’s first weekend. The forecast for the venue’s second weekend provided much more tolerable weather for visitors.

Our Living Room Couch was among the new vendors coming to the venue this year with handmade rugs, coasters and new signs.

Darling said many of the existing studies were conducted in response to various contamination events, such as chemical spills in rivers.

Five of the seven co-authors are associated with Virginia Tech. Besides Darling, Cohen, and Krometis, co-authors include Hannah Patton, who recently finished her Ph.D. in biological systems engineering, and Md Rasheduzzaman, a postdoctoral researcher in the population health sciences working with Cohen. Two undergraduates at the University of Virginia at Wise are also co-authors, Rachel Guevera and Joshua McCray.

“The benefit of a systematic review and meta-analysis study is that it provides a rigorous way to review a body of literature and then systematically extract data and analyze it,” Cohen said. “In a way, it’s like a lab experiment. This is where this type of study differs from a narrative review. In a systematic review, you also review the literature, but you do so in a way that, like a lab experiment, could be replicated and ideally is pre-specified.”

The study will help researchers from Virginia Tech and elsewhere know what gaps need to be filled, which in the case of Appalachian drinking water quality and contaminants are many and wide.

The study also provided an important opportunity

companion animal primary care upon graduation.

“The reason community practice is here, is to give our students an opportunity to have a primary care, or regular general practice, companion animal experience, within the confines of the teaching hospital,” said Nappier. “We’re a regular general practice with the addition of vet students. Whereas your regular practice’s goal is solely focused on you and your pet, we’re focused on you and your pet and teaching the next generation of veterinarians how to take care of them.”

“The vast majority of our students go into general practice,” said Freeman, whose arrival in 2012 was only a couple of years after the community practice started. “So we feel it’s really important for students to get an experience that replicates what they will be doing in practice, day to day.”

As a result of the teaching aspect, the appointments take longer for clients than those at most private practices, but “we have more eyes on things,” Nappier said.

“I think a lot of our clients who come here enjoy interacting with the students,” Nappier said. “It’s just fun for them. Many of our clients are in some way involved in education, whether here at the university or local K-12 schools.”

One advantage to clients utilizing the community practice is the resources of the full Veterinary Teaching Hospital and its many specialties being easily accessible.

“When I need to get an echocardiogram, it’s usually the same day,” Nappier said. “I can get an ultrasound exam the same day, we have anesthesiologists to consult,

“The humic layer, humus, that is where these worms love to dwell. They will turn it to dust and will look like coffee grounds on the ground,” Thompson said.

If landowners have questions or concerns about their trees and plant life, Thompson believes that the best thing they can do is take advantage of her free consultation.

“I don’t always find something, but it is better to get me out there before you see symptoms,” Thompson said. “It is much cheaper to have them treated than to have them removed. The signs and symptoms appear when it is almost too late.”

Thompson has a passion for conservation and eco-wildlife and knows the value that the environment adds to everyone’s lives. She says that maintaining the health of the trees not only adds value to a person’s home by providing shade, but also adds to the aesthetics and beauty while keeping the wildlife around.

Interested consumers with questions or wishing to schedule a consultation can find information at the company’s Facebook page, www.tipco.green. There are products available on the website at www.tipco.green, that

Serena Belle’s Kettle Korn, Aloha Eddie flavored ice, Giggles plant-based food, 800 Degree wood fired pizza, and many more food trucks and tent vendors will be providing a variety of food options to festival goers.

Live music will be performing each night of the festival and visitors can enjoy lots of outdoor seating near the main barn or by the scenic pond.

The last weekend is July 28-30 and is jam-packed with all activities still available to enjoy.

The event is open to the public Fridays 4-8 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Additional information can be found on their new Facebook page at Sinkland Farms, LLC or their website www.sinklandfarms.com. Tickets can be purchased ahead of time on their website or at the entrance of Sinkland Farms. Various packages are available for couples, families, photography passes, and MEGA slide ride passes.

for graduate and undergraduate students to participate as authors on a publication in an important scientific journal, starting with the lead author, Darling, a Via Scholar in the College of Engineering. Darling completed her undergraduate work at the University of Illinois and has received master’s degrees in environmental engineering and public health at Virginia Tech.

“I try to provide opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to be involved in research that can lead to co-authorship opportunities on journal papers,” Cohen said. “For me, that’s a really important part of mentoring to try to provide those opportunities. I think it’s exciting for anybody to contribute to a scientific publication, but I’ve found from my experience it’s especially so for undergrads.”

Cohen is leading multiple research studies in rural areas in partnership with local utilities and nonprofits in Southwest Virginia and with collaborators at Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, and East Tennessee State University. Together, they are collecting water samples, survey and health data, and sharing water testing results with households, all to help fill some of the research gaps identified in this new publication.

-Andrew Mann for Virginia Tech

we have a lab that I can just run my samples to on foot.”

“When they come to see us, they are essentially coming to see the whole hospital,” Freeman said.

Freeman said the clinic strives to make its care affordable for clients.

“I feel like the one area of emphasis that we have tried to consistently provide, and I think we’ve done well on is providing what is now being referred to, and very heavily focused on, as spectrum of care,” Freeman said. “We always offer the very best we have to offer. But we do understand that there are limitations to what clients can do. And if they can’t meet us at our gold standard, we can offer other more affordable options. And I think we’ve managed to do that consistently.”

There is much optimism about the future of the community practice and its opportunities for students and clients in years to come.

“We’re excited to expand our primary care education for students,” Marin said. “COVID was hard on everybody. And there were some changes. We needed some more people to replace folks who had left. Now, we’re adding doctors. The goal is to get more appointments for students to see and be able to help as many patients and their people as we can. COVID hit that a little bit hard, we didn’t have as many patients coming in. There’s a lot of interest in refocusing on primary care education for students. That is what we do.”

-Andrew Mann for Virginia Tech

include not just tree injections, but fertilizers and other healthcare products for plants.

“If you have a picture of your tree or plant, you can send it through the Facebook messenger, or you can just call. You will get Eric or I, and we do free consultations,” Thompson said.



COURTESY PHOTO
Jordan Thompson next to the TIPCO Mobile vehicle.

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OBITUARIES

Mullins, Kathleen June

Kathleen June Mullins, 76, of Blacksburg, passed away May 30, 2023, surrounded by family. She was the daughter of the late Walter and Martha Tooke, cherished wife of Donald Mullins, adored mother of Heather Crislip (Andrew) of Richmond and Aaron Mullins (Kara) of Fort Lauderdale, and grandmother of Grace Crislip, Renna Crislip, Fox Mullins, and Hart Mullins.

many aspects of their lives for nearly 55 years.

Her artistic life embraced three themes: scientific and natural science illustration, humorous entomological caricature work, and in more recent years realism with a spiritual touch. She produced numerous scientific illustrations which appeared in published works



and several textbooks. Her artwork was exhibited in local venues through several regional art associations. Two notable exhibitions were "Cows, Inside and Out" and "32 Butterflies." She labored over 32 Butterflies for a year as therapy following the April 16, 2007 tragic shooting at Virginia Tech, and the ambitious piece has been utilized in many

commemorations of the community heartbreak.

In addition to the art that anchored her life, her vocation was science. She earned a master's degree in Dairy Science at Virginia Tech where she served as a laboratory specialist for over 20 years, specializing in microscopic and tissue culture techniques. She contributed in similar capacities at the Veterinary School, PPL Therapeutics, and the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute. She was a Master Naturalist, a member of Sigma XI, and an early member of the Guild for Natural Science Illustrators.

In her home, a love for animals offered an open invitation to dozens of rabbits, a 15-pound iguana, abundant home aquaria, and numerous cats and canines. Her favorites were Golden Retrievers and Corgis, and with her children raised one litter of each.

She participated as an active member in many community organizations, including the Blacksburg United Methodist Church, P.E.O. Chapter AH, Torch International, Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry, Montgomery County 4-H, and the Montgomery County Christmas Store.

June had a keen sense of observation and was committed to untangling and resolving problems of all sizes. An active member of her book club, she pursued learning new perspectives and she was a bright spirit and tremendously warm person. She took great joy in her family, walking her dogs, canoeing, and camping.

Family visitation will be 5-7 p.m. Friday, July 28 at the McCoy Funeral Home. A Memorial Service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, July 29 at Blacksburg United Methodist Church. The service will be live streamed at <https://youtube.com/live/APNMWmx0s-s?feature=share>.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations be made to PEO Chapter AH. Please include "In memory of June Mullins" (Send checks to: Cathy Stripling 132 3rd St NW, Pulaski, VA 24301), or to the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry. Please include: "In memory of June Mullins" send checks to: Blacksburg United Methodist Church POB 931, Blacksburg, VA 24060) or online donations at <https://newrivercommunityaction.org/IFP/donate/>.

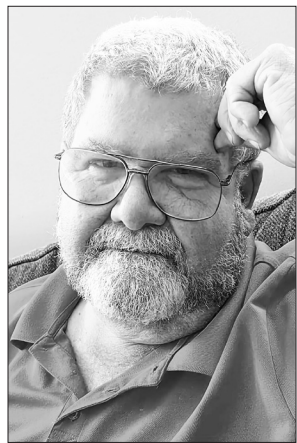
Johnston, William "Bill" Clyde

William "Bill" Clyde Johnston, 67, passed away after an extended illness on Saturday, July 22, 2023.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clyde William and Hazel White Johnston.

He is survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Valerie Oder Johnston; daughter and son-in-law, Caroline Mora (Andres Mora Guevara); son, Tyler William Henry Johnston; grandchildren, Austin, Andrew, Ariana, William and Julianna; and

numerous close family



members and friends.

The family will receive friends Friday, August 4, 2023, 12 - 1 p.m. at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Memorial services will begin at 1 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Boy Scouts of America, Blue Ridge Mountains Council, P.O. Box 7606, Roanoke, Virginia, 24019.

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

Flinchum, Eugene H. (Pete)

Eugene H. (Pete) Flinchum, 81, of Pilot, died Friday, July 21, 2023, at his home.

He was born on November 14, 1941, to the late Jessie Ross and Charity Kirkner Flinchum. He was also preceded in death by his wife, Nancy Gearheart Flinchum; sister, Velma Rice; brothers, Paul, Marvin, Herbert, Jessie, Jr., Henry, and Bud; brothers-

in-law, Larry Rice, and Sidney Hodge; sisters-in-law, Hilda, Margaret, and Donna Flinchum.

Pete was a longtime minister in the area.

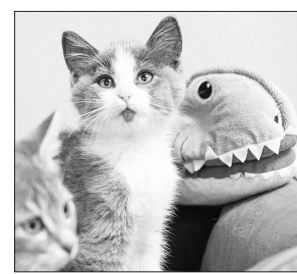
He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Eugene H. Jr. and Susan Flinchum; grandson, Jeremiah Flinchum; sister, Shirley Hodge; sister-in-law, Betty Flinchum; as well as numerous nieces

and nephews.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Darrell Linkous and Rev. John Collins officiating. Interment will follow at Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Christiansburg. The family will receive friends from noon - 2 p.m. prior to the service.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Hugo is a lovable SharkDog who is ready to dive into a new home. He has a serene personality and is friendly and sweet. He enjoys meeting landlubbers who will give him hugs and affection. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to meet this very good boy.



Cotton

SharkCat Cotton would love to set anchor in a home with fellow SharkKitties. She enjoys their company as well as batting around toys.

Cotton's favorite activity is watching re-runs of The Undersea World of Shark Cousteau.

These pets and many others are available



Hugo

for adoption at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center, 480 Cinnabar Rd., Christiansburg. Phone: (540) 382-5795.

News Messenger

Established 1869

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

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Virginia has 5th best school system in America

Securing a child's academic success begins with choosing the right schools. But how can parents decide where to enroll their kids? Because children develop and learn at different rates, the ideal answer to that question varies based on each student's needs. Those needs have become even more specialized in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused significant learning loss and decreased test scores for many students.

Unfortunately, most parents can't afford to place their children in exclusive, private or preparatory schools that give their students greater individual attention. For the majority of U.S. families, public education is the only option. The quality of public school systems varies widely

from state to state, though, and is often a question of funding. Public elementary and secondary education money usually flows from three sources: the federal, state and local governments. According to the U.S. Department of Education, states contribute nearly as much as local governments, while the federal government supplies the smallest share. Some researchers have found that more resources — or taxes paid by residents — typically result in better school-system performance.

Unlike other research that focuses primarily on academic outcomes or school finance, WalletHub's analysis takes a more comprehensive approach. It accounts for performance,

funding, safety, class size and instructor credentials. To determine the top-performing school systems in America, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 32 key metrics. The data set ranges from pupil-teacher ratio and dropout rate to median standardized-test scores.

Quality and safety of schools in Virginia (1=Best; 25=Avg.): 15th — math test scores, 28th — reading test scores, 27th — pupil-teacher ratio, 23rd — median SAT score, 6th — median ACT score, 15th — dropout rate, 5th — bullying incidence rate, 24th — percent of threatened/injured high school students, and 1st — existence of digital learning plan.

-Submitted by Wallet Hub

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CLUES ACROSS

- Droop
- Rested in a chair
- Thai (var.)
- Draw out wool
- Coatis genus
- Taxis
- Beige
- Supplementing with difficulty
- Capital of Norway
- A personal written history
- Cologne
- Australian flightless bird
- Lowest freeman; early Eng.
- 18th C. mathematician
- Leonhard
- Cabinet Dept. for homes
- Languages of Sulu islands
- More scarce
- Before
- Swiss river
- Actress & director Lupino

CLUES DOWN

- Point midway between S and SE
- Genus of birds
- Personal spiritual leader
- Japanese rice beverage
- Eared owl genus
- Wood oil finish
- Hyphen
- Competently
- Equal, prefix
- Broad-winged soaring hawks
- A collection of star systems
- Be in accord
- Links subject & predicate (linguistics)
- Paddles
- Asian river between China and Russia
- Physicists Marie or Pierre
- Excessive fluid accumulation
- Fabrics of camels or goats
- A very large body of water
- Basics

CLUES DOWN

- Dunlap, pageant titleholder
- Made again
- Norse goddess of death
- A waterproof raincoat
- Express pleasure
- Lanka
- Radioactivity unit
- Clay blocks for building
- Linear unit
- Conductor tools
- Whale ship captain
- Queen who tested Solomon
- Good Gosh!
- A gangster's girlfriend
- Unstressed-stressed
- Draw through holes
- Old Italian monetary units
- Musician Clapton
- Ceremonial staff of authority
- Fabrics of camels or goats
- A very large body of water
- Basics

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Garage Sale - Botetourt County

GARAGE SALE! FINCASTLE!
734 BLACKSBURG ROAD
 This Friday & Sat. 7/28 & 7/29
 7:00 – 11:00 AM
 Owner is downsizing and must sell home contents including:
 Pots & pans, Electric Grill, Crystal d'Arques faceted glassware, Barbie collectibles, Star Trek Hallmark ornaments, Honeywell heater
 Costume Jewelry, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Decorations Items, Mugs of all varieties, dog crates, Tupperware, Pampered Chef, dried arrangements, gardening items....

Yard Sales - Craig County

HUGE Moving Sale - Rain or Shine (under carport)
 90 Green Acres Lane, New Castle
 Saturday, 05 August from 8am-4pm
 Sunday, 06 August from 10am-4pm
 Women's Clothing/Baby Clothes
 Heaters - Kerosene/Electric
 Christmas Lawn Decorations
 Misc Pet Merchandise Books
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 Mini-Fridge
 Assorted Household items
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Auctions



Online Only Estate Auction of Mr. Milton Hale in Daleville, Va
 Bid on Collectibles, Tools, Furniture, and MORE!
 Bidding Begins to Close Thursday, July 27th @ 7:30 p.m.
 Preview will be Wednesday, July 26th and Thursday, July 27th from 4-6 p.m.
 Pick-up will be Saturday, July 29th from 1-6 p.m.
 Visit www.CircleCAuction.com to register and Bid

Employment

Application Admin & DevOps Programmer, Blacksburg, VA.
 Architect/design cloud infrastructure (ASW or Azure). Build, improve, & enhance CI/CD pipeline for all applications TLOS supports. Telecommuting: Hybrid – must be on campus at least 3 days a week (work from home possible but need local presence). Apply online at <https://jobs.vt.edu/>

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Services - Elderly Care

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 For the Catawba, VA area. 15.00/per hour
 We are seeking a Non Medical Care Giver For Elderly to join our team. You will assist in the daily care of elderly or disabled individuals.
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Services - Elderly Care

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 Contact Melissa Boone 540-440-0571 or boonemelissa@aol.com

Events

Chittum Family Reunion
 Sunday, July 30th 2023
 Charles Hill Community Center (Senior Citizen Building). 820 E Washington Ave, Vinton Va

Legals - Botetourt County

ABC NOTICE

NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY, INC., trading as NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY, 555 International Parkway, Daleville VA 24083.
 The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine and Beer DISTILLERY AND BREWERY license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.
 BRIAN WOLF, SECRETARY

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316,20-104
 Case No. **CL23000124-00**
 BPTETOURT CIRCUIT COURT COURTHOUSE, 1 WEST MAIN STREET, #120, FINCASTLE VA 24090,
 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re JENIFER M. ARRINGTON and AARON M. MUSSELWHITE, plaintiffs v. AARON W. SELLS, KRISTIN COLLINS, RICK G. WILLIAMS, EVALYN M. WILLIAMS, BENJAMIN I. GIMBERT, ELIZABETH M. GIMBERT, JEFFREY S. WRIGHT, MORGAN R. WRIGHT, AND UNKNOWN PARTIES, defendants TO THE DEFENDENDANTS AND INTERESTED PARTIES, This matter before the Botetourt County Circuit Court upon the filing of a Motion for Quiet Title on the 15th day of March, 2023, asking that the Court to confirm the ownership of real property located in Botetourt County known as Tax Map No. 108-1A comprising approximately 5.971 acres, currently titled in the name of Jennifer M. Arrington and Aaron M. Musselwhite, as more particularly described in the Deed dated July 7, 1997 recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Botetourt in Deed Book 533, Page 865.
 It appearing to the Court that because all parties with a potential claim to said property are unknown and based off the Affidavit filed by Plaintiff's counsel in this case, it is hereby Ordered that this Order of Publication shall be posted as an Order of Publication at The Botetourt Circuit Court Courthouse, 1 West Main Street, #120, Fincastle, VA 24090, and published once a week for four consecutive weeks in the Fincastle Herald, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Botetourt.
 Any person with an interest in the aforementioned property should appear, answer or otherwise respond to the allegations set out in the Motion in this matter no later than the 15th day of September, 2023. Entered this 25th day of June, 2023.
 Joel R. Branscom, Judge I ASK FOR THIS: John K. Prillamen, ESq. VSB #81306 OPN LAW, PLC

Legals - Botetourt County

3140 Chapparral Drive, Suite 200-C
 Roanoke, Va 24018
 P: 540.725.8194

Legals - City of Radford

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316,20-104
 Case No. **CR23007031-00**
 RADFORD CITY Circuit Court, 619 Second Street, Radford, VA 24141
 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re DAVID FERRARO v. MERCEDES FERRARO
 The object of this suit is to: OBTAIN A DIVORCE. It is ORDERED that MERCEDES FERRARO appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before AUGUST 24, 2023.
 JUNE 26, 2023
 MELISSA WHITE, DEPUTY CLERK

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316
 Case No. JJ004181-01-03
 RADFORD J&DR- JUVENILE DIVISION
 Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Commonwealth of Virginia, in re VELAZQUEZ, DAMIAN XALVADOR, MADRID, ANGEL RAMOS v. ALVARADO, NICOLE MICHELLE
 The object of this suit is to: AMEND CUSTODY ORDER AND HAVE A SHOW CAUSE ISSUED. It is ORDERED that the defendant ALVARADO, NICOLE MICHELLE appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before 8/11/2023, 3:30 PM.
 7/05/2023 SALLY DAVIS, CLERK

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF RADFORD

In re Last Will and Testament of Hywyn Russell Owen Churchill dated July 12, 1997, Petition to Establish Holographic Will and to Qualify Executor
 Case No. CL22006832-00
 ORDER OF PUBLICATION
 The reason for this cause is proper under Va. Code 8.01-316(A)(1). An affidavit having been made and filed showing that the Respondent Michael Robbins cannot be found and that due diligence has been used without effect to ascertain his location and last known mailing address is unknown. Upon consideration, this Order of Publication is granted, and it is ORDERED that the above-named Respondent shall appear in the Circuit Court of Radford City on or before 31st day of July, 2023, after proper publication of this Order, to protect his interest in this cause.
 Entered: 6/2/2023
 Teste: Melissa White DEPUTY CLERK
 CIRCUIT COURT, RADFORD, VA.
 Written Answer may be filed in lieu of Court appearance. Reply should be received by 31st day of July, 2023.
 Kristen L. Mynes (VSB No. 94905) Counsel for Petitioner 323 Second Street SE #700 Charlottesville, VA 22902 (434) 977-2569

Legals - City of Salem

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316,20-104
 Case No. **CA23-04, CA23-05**
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF SALEM
CRYSTAL YVONNE TERRY, petitioner
IN RE: Children to be known as:
Landon Jordan Pierce Birth certificate:145-16-074993 DOB: 9/21/2016
 And
Lukas Wayne Pierce Birth certificate:145-16-074992 DOB: 9/21/2016
 The object of this suit is to: Enter a Final Order of Adoption allowing Crystal Yvonne Terry to adopt Landon Edward Scott Pierce and Lucas Roman Wayne Pierce and change their names to Landon Jordan Pierce and Lukas

Legals - City of Salem

Wayne Pierce.
 An affidavit having been made and filed showing that the biological parent, Stephanie Marie Hudgins, cannot be found and that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain the address of Stephanie Marie Hudgins, for service purposes.
 It is ORDERED that this Order of Publication be published once a week for four successive weeks in the SALEM TIMES REGISTER, 1633 W. Main Street, Salem, Virginia 24153.
 It is further ORDERED that Stephanie Marie Hudgins appear at the above named court located at 2 E. Calhoun Street, Salem Virginia on or before August 30, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.
 Entered this day 28th day of June, 2023.
 Chance Crawford, Clerk

ABC NOTICE

Stave & Cork, LLC., trading as Stave & Cork, LLC, 115 E. Main Street, Salem, Roanoke County, VA. 24153.
 The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application-Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.
 Bobby and Susan Baker, Owners

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

Legals - Montgomery County

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316,
Case No. JJ019985-03-00
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, 55 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073
 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re Baby Girl Doe v. Unknown Father
 The object of this suit is to: Terminate the residual parental rights of Unknown Father, legal parent of Baby Girl Doe, a minor, in that said parent has, without good cause, failed to correct the conditions which resulted in the child entering foster care and it is not reasonable likely that they will be able to do so in a reasonable amount of time, failed to maintain continuing contact with the child and substantially plan for the child's future. Residual parental rights include, but are not limited to the right to visitation, consent to adoption, the right to determine religious affiliation, and the responsibility for support. The termination of your residual parental rights will permanently end all of your rights and responsibilities to the child named in the petition.
 It is ORDERED that the t Unknown Father appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before AUGUST 21, 2023.
 JUNE 29, 2023
 Amie Blankenship, CLERK

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Legals - Montgomery County

TOWN OF BLACKSBURG - NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

BLACKSBURG TOWN COUNCIL will hold public hearings on Tuesday, August 8, 2023 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, regarding the following items:
 CUP 23-0003: Conditional Use Permit Request for hotel use and additional height in the Downtown Commercial Zoning District at 501 South Main Street. This Conditional Use Permit request for is for hotel use and increased height above 60 feet in the Midtown Development at 501 South Main Street. The request is for a 144-room hotel in the Downtown Commercial (DC) zoning district. It is proposed to be located on the parcel known as Midtown DC Parcel 2. The height of the hotel building is proposed to be a maximum of 75 feet. A Hotel/Motel use is permitted as a Conditional Use in the DC zoning district. The Future Land Use (FLU) is Downtown Commercial, and the proposed use is consistent with this designation.

Ordinance 2025: An Ordinance Vacating a Waterline Easement on Land Located at 615 Southgate Drive. The proposed ordinance request is to release the Town's interest in part of a waterline easement located at 615 Southgate Drive at the Town's airport.

Ordinance 2016: An Ordinance to Amend the Westview Cemetery Rules and Regulations to Establish Green Burial Regulations. This proposed ordinance will amend rules and regulations at Westview Cemetery to allow for green burial.
 Ordinance 2029: An Ordinance to Amend Town Code Sections 7-100, 7-103, 7-104, 7-105, 7-108 and 7-109 Pertaining to the Town Cemetery. The proposed ordinance will amend the Town code sections governing the Town's Westview cemetery.

All persons affected by or interested in the proposed items above may appear and present their views. After each public hearing, Town Council will consider action on the item. Copies of materials related to the above items are on file and can be obtained in the Office of the Town Clerk, 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, weekdays between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. For land use matters, copies of applications and all related items may also be found online at www.blacksburg.gov/public hearings or reviewed in person at the Blacksburg Planning and Building Department, 400 South Main Street, Blacksburg, Virginia. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in this meeting should contact Lorraine Spaulding, Town Clerk at (540) 443-1025 or 443-1000 (voice or TDD).

ABC NOTICE

WYATT'S COUNTRY STORE, LLC, trading as WYATT'S COUNTRY STORE, 1790 ALLEGHANY SPRING ROAD, SHAWSVILLE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA. 24162-1702.

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a OFF PREMISES Wine and Beer, license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.
 BETHEL WYATT, CEO.

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

STATEWIDE ADS

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Nichol probation extended after failed breath test

A Radford City general district judge has extended Radford University's basketball coach Darris Nichols probation from a Driving Under the Influence (DUI).

The new court appearance dealt with a positive reading on an ignition interlock device, which was placed on his vehicle after a February traffic stop.

The court could have revoked all of his probation and sent Nichols to jail, but the Commonwealth Attorney and Nichols' attorneys agreed the coach should have another chance.

He faced up to 180 days of a suspended sentence. Now, Nichols will remain on probation through April 2024.

During the initial arrest, Nichols had a blood alcohol level of .025, twice the legal limit. He was fined \$2,500 and had his driver's license suspended for a year. He was also required to use the interlock device, which alerted the court to the use of alcohol.

Nichols made no statement following the ending of hearing.

All of this comes just a month after his mentor and former coach at West Virginia University faced similar charges. Bob Hudgins, who spoke at a Radford University athletic dinner earlier this year, was arrested in April after a traffic stop in

Pittsburgh.

According to the report, a breath test determined that Huggins' blood alcohol content was 0.21%, more than twice the legal limit of 0.08% in Pennsylvania. He resigned a short time later.

Nichols, a Radford native, was hired two years ago after serving as an assistant at the University of Florida. Nichols played basketball at West Virginia University and climbed the ranks as an assistant coach all the way to the University of Florida in the SEC.

Nichols helped lead Radford High School to four appearances in the state Group A playoffs, averaging in double-figures every season. He coached seven seasons at Florida, helping lead the Gators to a 108-65 record, including four straight 20-win seasons and three consecutive NCAA Tournament bids.

Nichols garnered a spot in ESPN.com's 40 Under 40 in the summer of 2020, rated #17 on the national list that included both head coaches and assistant coaches. He was also rated the #2 assistant coach in the SEC in a Stadium poll of coaches around the league.

A four-year letter winner at West Virginia under Bob Huggins

and John Beilein, Nichols helped the Mountaineers to a 26-11 record and a trip to the 2008 NCAA Sweet 16 his senior season.

At WVU, Nichols shined as a player in the Big East. He scored 993 career points and dished 399 assists while shooting at a .375 clip from 3-point range. He averaged 10.7 points per game as well as 3.2 assists per game as a senior on the way to WVU's Sweet 16 run. He was also a member of the 2007 NIT

Championship, 2006 Sweet 16 and 2005 Elite Eight teams and finished his collegiate career as a top five most winningest player in Mountaineer history. After graduation, he played professional overseas in the Hungarian League.



Darris Nichols

FILE PHOTO

Bruce, Evans named players of year

Tanner Evans excelled this past year on both the football and baseball fields for Christiansburg High School, and Maddie Bruce picked up honors for volleyball, basketball and soccer for Eastern Montgomery.

For their efforts, the two were named the All-County/All-City players of the year.

Evans played several positions on the grid iron including quarterback, tailback and defensive back. He rushed 193 times for 1,467 yards with 12 touchdowns this season as a multi-purpose player. 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.

This spring, Evans was named to the Class 3 first-team baseball squad.

Bruce led Eastern Montgomery to a state soccer championship and was named the Class 1 state player of year.

Bruce, who was also last year's Class 1 2021 girls' player of the year, totaled 52 goals and 32 assists for the Mustangs this season. Her 32 assists and 136 points this season place her in the top 10 single-season totals in VHSL girls soccer history. The Shenandoah University signee's career totals of 113 goals and 91 assists (missing the 2020 season because of COVID) place Bruce among the all-time top players in



FILE PHOTO

Maddie Bruce

goals and assists in VHSL history.

She was also named to the second-team all-state basketball team.

The coach of the year was familiar to Bruce. Whitney Shaver has three state titles in just four years at a program, which was started from scratch. Earlier this month, she was named the Class 1 coach of the year. Monday, she was named the All-County/All-City coach of the year.



FILE PHOTO

Tanner Evans

Shaver led Eastern Montgomery (22-0) to its third-straight Class 1 state title with a 2-1 win over Auburn, with the decisive goal coming in the third overtime period. The Mustangs have now won 54 straight games. Shaver has a four-record of 68-3 since taking over the Mustangs program in 2019, not including the 2020 COVID missed season. East Mont defeated Auburn in last year's final, 5-0, and West Point, 5-1, in 2021.

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Hoses prevail in Guns and Hoses softball tournament

Firefighters, police and EMS personnel throughout the area joined forces Saturday night for a good cause during

the Seventh Annual Guns and Hoses softball tournament at Harkrader Sports Complex in Christiansburg. The

game, which was won by the Hoses in extra innings, benefited Virginia Special Olympics.

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Grantham to play baseball at RU

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The son of former Pulaski County and Virginia Tech football player Todd Grantham will play baseball this fall at Radford University.

Corbin Grantham, who has two years of eligibility left, made his announcement this past weekend.

He said the Radford coaching staff made an impression on him.

"I loved the coach (Guerra) and feel he will do everything he can to get you better," he said.

This past season, Grantham played at Shelton State Community College in Alabama where he hit .367 in conference play with a .551 slugging percentage and stole 17 bases. After graduating (2020) from F.W. Buckholtz High School in Gainesville, Florida, the 6-1, 185 outfielder attended Mississippi State University. He then transferred to Shelton State.

Corbin's father, Todd, coached at Virginia Tech in the early 90s after a playing career at the school. Since then, he has had coaching stops at Michigan State, Georgia, Louisville and Florida. Todd is now the defensive line coach for the New Orleans Saints and has also coached in



FILE PHOTO

Corbin Grantham

the NFL at Houston, Dallas and Cleveland.

Alex Guerra recently completed his first season leading the Radford baseball program and will enter his second season at the helm during the 2023-24 school year.

In their first season under Guerra's guidance, the Highlanders experienced the ups-and-downs that the game of baseball inevitably creates. Despite the challenges of kicking off a full rebuild of the program, Radford earned big wins over crosstown rival Virginia Tech and Big South-foe Longwood.

Guerra emerged from an extremely competitive pool of head coaching candidates to be named the seventh head coach in Radford baseball history, separating himself as someone with an undeniably strong track record of success at all levels of the game and an unrelenting passion for Radford University and its community.

Guerra had been on the staff at James Madison for the previously seven years. Before his time at JMU, Guerra was a part of

Joe Raccuia's staff at Radford, where he had served the Highlanders as an assistant coach since 2013.

Before beginning his coaching career, Guerra played two seasons at Division III Greensboro College before transferring to Radford for his final two collegiate campaigns. As a Highlander, he batted .311 and drove in 94 runs while playing second base, shortstop and third base, tacking on 11 home runs across his junior and senior seasons.

Now at Radford, Guerra has continued to rebuild the program with a highly touted recruiting class coming to the area including Grantham.

Corbin's grandparents still live in Pulaski County. He plans to major in sports management at Radford and has a long-term goal to coach football or baseball. Corbin would not rule-out the possibility of playing baseball at the new level. But first, he joins the Highlanders, who finished 10-45 this past year and 2-25 in the Big South Conference.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

S	A	G	S	A	T	D	A	I
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Be sure to 'Like' the News Messenger on Facebook.

Sports notes: Hokies swimming update, RU names new soccer coach

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Virginia Tech and its home at the Christiansburg Aquatics Center continues to be the destination for several other top swimmers from around the world. Swim Swarm online sports site is reporting Jakub Poliacik from Bratislava, Slovakia has announced his commitment to Virginia Tech beginning in the 2024-2025 school year.

Poliacik swims for XBS Swimming out of Samorin Slovakia. Last August, Poliacik swam at the World Junior Championships. There he finished 11th in the 200 free (1:51.30), 13th in the 800 free (8:18.67), and 18th in the 400 free (4:03.80).

In December, he competed at Short Course World Championships. There he was 19th in the 800 free (8:05.91), 24th in the 400 free (3:49.93), and 33rd in the 200 free (1:47.48).

The Blacksburg school last lost a top freshman swimmer to the transfer portal.

Carl Bloebaum, who was the #5 recruit in the high school class of 2022, came out of high school as the Ohio State Champion in the 100 fly (45.68). He was also the 2021 US Olympic Trials Wave 1 Champion in the 20-meter fly and finished as high as eighth in the 50-meter fly at the 2022 International Team Trials.

Virginia Tech swimming and diving has 11 Hokies attending the 2023 World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka, Japan.

During this non-Olympic year, the World Aquatics Championships will host close to 2,400 athletes from 195 countries. The events began on July 14 and include diving, water polo, swimming, synchronized swimming and open water swimming.

The swimming portion of Worlds began on July 22 with prelims and the rest of the competition follows and will conclude on July 30.

Following prelims, the top 16 in each event will advance to semifinals and the top eight will compete in finals (not including relays). All heats and final sessions will be covered on NBC Sports and Peacock.

Hokies attending:
 Sergio Lopez Miro – Mexico (Assistant coach)
 Youssef Ramadan – Egypt
 100 fly, 100 free
 Carmen Weiler Sastre – Spain
 100 free, 50 back, 100 back
 Carles Coll Marti – Spain

200 breast, 200 IM
 Mario Molla Yanes – Spain
 50 fly, 100 fly
 Luis Dominguez – Spain
 100 free, 200 free
 Madelyn Moore – Bermuda
 50 free, 100 free
 Ian Ho – Hong Kong (alumni)
 50 free, 100 free, 50 fly
 Athena Meneses Kovacs – Mexico (Incoming freshman)
 50 back, 100 fly
 Emil Perez – Venezuela (Incoming freshman)
 50 fly
 Daniil Pancerevas – Lithuania (Incoming freshman)
 50 free, 200 IM
 RU coach to IUPAC
 IUPUC recently added to its Athletic Department with the hiring of Kevin Nolan as Head Men's Soccer Coach.

Nolan comes to Columbus from Radford University in Virginia, a Division One school, where he served as Assistant Soccer Coach. He has 12 years of coaching experience at both the junior college and university levels.

Six different races held at Motorsports Park

The month of July has been very busy at Pulaski County Motorsports Park. It continued this past weekend as over 1,000 people came to the racetrack for Fan Appreciation Night. Fans were treated to six different races – 195 laps across five different divisions. Seven drivers earned a trip to victory lane, the most of any race this season.

Kevin Canter picked up the first win of the evening as he led the Total Car Care Mod-4 division across the line. Tony Sarver Jr. was the only other competitor to lead any part of the 25-lap race. Gary Fitzgerald rebounded from an early spin to claim a second-place finish while Doodle Lang earned the final podium spot. Canter's victory helped him extend his points lead in the championship standings.

The Price's Body Shop Late Model Stock Cars then hit the track for their first 50-lap twin. Mike Looney won each of the previous five races this season, and he extended his streak to six on Saturday night. After starting at the rear of the field, the former Martinsville 300 winner worked his way to the front of the pack to claim the checkered flag. Kyle Dudley surrendered the lead with just a few laps remaining and ultimately brought it home in the second spot. Zeke Shell pieced together an impressive run; the Bluff City, Tenn. native started on the final row but fought his way up to the top three.

For the first time this season, the New River Valley welcomed the East Coast Flathead Racing Association to town. Six vintage Flathead Fords competed in a 20-lap dash for a chance to be crowned as either a sportsman or modified winner. Johnny Johnson came across the line first to earn the overall win. The 82-year-old driver was the leader of the modified division while Wayne Lawson came across the line second to earn the top spot in the sportsman class.

As the sun began to set behind the mountains, it was the DCT Towing Super Streets that took to the track next. Tristan Barnes dominated the night as he laid down the fastest lap in qualifying and led all 30 laps to secure his third victory of the season. The points leader Jimmy Mullins finished second, continuing his streak of top-five finishes in all seven races this year. Ray Sowers piloted his machine up to third, notching his first podium finish as a recent addition to the Barnes' race team.

The late models returned to the oval for their final race of the night. After settling for second in the opener, Dudley was able to get past Looney early in the nightcap. Despite Looney's efforts to rattle the reigning track champion, Dudley was able to keep Looney behind him and pick up his first win of the season. Another strong run from Shell gave him his second podium finish of the night. He methodically ran down Karl Budzevski and took over the third spot with just a few laps remaining.

The Stock-6 Series closed out the night with a 20-lap feature. Darrell Allen made a strong jump from the outside of the first row and never looked back. While Allen claimed the victory, the remaining two podium spots went to Houston Miller and Caleb Sowers.

Action returns to the track this Thursday with Tony Stewart's Superstar Racing Experience. The SRX series will feature a star-studded field that includes NASCAR Cup Series champions Kyle Busch and Brad Keselowski, Daytona 500 winner and current SRX points leader Ryan Newman as well as Indy 500 winners Helio Castroneves and Josef Newgarden. Thirteen of the world's best drivers will bring "Thunder in the Mountains" for a national audience. The sportsman division will open the night before the SRX series will take the green flag around 9 p.m. on ESPN.



Joanna Epperly celebrates after recording a hole in one on Hole #7 this past week at Auburn Hills.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AUBURN HILLS
 Ronnie Worrell revels in his eighth hole in one of his career also on #7 at Auburn Hills.

Two holes in one at Auburn Hills Golf Club

-Pulaski County Motorsports Park

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