



# News Messenger

Blacksburg

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Saturday, August 19, 2023

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## County fire and rescue members receive recognition for dedication and service to the community

**Lori Graham**  
Contributing writer

Michael Geary, Emergency Services Coordinator, along with Fire Chief Billy Hanks of the Christiansburg Fire Department presented service recognition awards to members of the community who have provided both fire and rescue support to Montgomery County at the recent Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting.

Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad members David Caldwell, Leslie Combs and Kelly Levine, were present to receive their award for 20 years of service, and Robert Rogers was recognized for 40 years of service in front of Board members and guests.

Todd Chrisley and Barry Simmons, from the Christiansburg Volunteer Fire Department were there to receive their 20-year service recognitions, Jeremy Williams was recognized for 30 years, and Alan Shaw received a 35-year service award.

From the Riner Volunteer Fire Department, Ron Baldwin was present to receive a 30-year service award, and both Gary Francis and Patrick Saylor have served the Riner community for 35 years.

Kenneth Turner was present to be recognized for an outstanding 45 years of service with the Riner Volunteer Rescue Squad and the Christiansburg Volunteer Rescue Squad.

Those individuals that were not able to be present at the meeting but were

recognized are: from Longshop McCoy Volunteer Fire and Rescue, Wayne Akers with 21 years, Michael Barnett with 20 years, Clarence (C.J.) Sherman with 22 years, and Keith Williams with 25 years of service.

Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad's Kate Mahive has served for 25 years, John O'Shea with 29 years, and Paul (P.J.) Fleener with 30 years of service.

The Blacksburg Volunteer Fire

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## Prices Fork Road roundabout one of top road concerns at Board of Supervisors meeting

At Monday's Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting, Supervisor Mary Biggs opened up a discussion as a result of citizen concerns about the Prices Fork Road roundabout.

Biggs said she has previously brought this up to the Board but has continued to receive complaints from a citizen asking what could be done about the situation. "He's worried that when those developments are built and the traffic gets on that road and goes around the round, somebody's going to get hurt," Biggs said.

"It's got a speed limit on there and the roundabout is to the standard for the traffic, so, I don't know any other signage or



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MONT. CO.

anything like that could be done," Clarke said.

Also responding to complaints about the Prices Fork Road roundabout, Supervisor Sherri Blevins mentioned a previous instructional video that might be helpful in teaching drivers the proper way to enter and exit a roundabout.

"If you could slow down the speed limit down to 25 on both sides as you approach would help a lot," Supervisor Darrell Sheppard said. "I've seen vehicles come from Blacksburg and go through that thing, because it's almost straight, 50 mile an

See Roundabout, page 4



Group in breathing apparatus preparing to make entry into confined space. Pictured: Joshua Quesenberry, Catherine "Kitty" Kresmer, Andrew Manzella, and Jeffrey Dumars. Christopher Yon and Murjan Hammad are also pictured and working in a support role.

## Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad Technical Team applying unique skills to specialized rescues

The Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad is a fully volunteer-supported organization, so when special situations come up that require technical expertise in saving a life or recovering a loved one, the Technical Team steps up.

Using skills from their full-time jobs or other areas of expertise, they aid in areas including heavy technical extrication, trench, structural collapse, and confined space or light technical water, rescue, cave rescue, rope rescue, and search and rescue, according to www.blacksburgrescue.org.

The Technical Rescue Division formed through the consolidation of the SAR (Search and Rescue) team, Cave Rescue Team, and the BVRS Heavy Technical Rescue team under a single structure. The SAR team, formerly known as the Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group (SWVaMRG), was formed in 1985, joined BVRS in 2006, and specializes in locating missing persons and extricating them from remote areas. The Cave Rescue Team, formerly known as the Blacksburg Cave Rescue Group (BCRG), was formed by a group of VPI Cave Club members specially trained in rescue and joined BVRS in 2015. By these teams being under a single structure they're able to benefit from additional funding, a unified administrative team, and strong training programs that often overlap between disciplines.

"Our cave team is one of the best cave rescue teams in the nation, I believe," Joshua Quesenberry, Heavy Technical Rescue Coordinator for the Technical Rescue Division, said.

Technical Rescue Team members train for situations in which an individual needs to be rescued from a confined space, but it is difficult to find this kind of specialized training. The Blacksburg Rescue Squad, including the Technical Rescue Team/Division, attend the

Virginia Association Volunteer Rescue Squad, or VAVRS, Rescue College for training.

"Previously, the Rescue College was an avenue for confined space rescue training, but 10-15 years [ago] the class stopped being offered," Quesenberry said.

This past spring, the Technical Rescue Team was able to pay for a 40-hour Confined Space Rescue Technician course, which 14 of their members completed. Additionally, they continue to train on their own.

"We will do an exercise, and I fully expect that the exercise will go in one direction, but sometimes it is something that it is not what we do in confined space rescue, but it is done in cave rescue, and it works for both," Quesenberry said. "There must also be a unified agreement on the choice of rescue technique the squad will use for safety reasons. If I don't feel safe to go in, I'm not going in."

What is considered a confined space? Per OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, a space large enough that an employee can enter with their body and perform a task is a confined space. You may have one way to get in and that is the same way to get out. Thirdly, it is not intended for long-term occupancy. Some examples of a confined space are a crawl space in a house, an attic, manholes, grain silos, technically trenches are confined spaces, as well as vats.

In this region of southwest Virginia, Roanoke city, Roanoke County, and Salem have a combined technical rescue team, but none exist in Montgomery County.

"So, we kind of fill that void," said Quesenberry. We respond statewide for missing persons too. If a surrounding

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PHOTO BY LUKE HAYES FOR VIRGINIA TECH

First-year and transfer students have spent the past week moving into their respective residence halls in preparation for the fall semester

## Incoming class set to kick off semester

BLACKSBURG - Virginia Tech students started returning to campus this week, signifying both the end of summer and the kickoff of the fall semester. Virginia Tech's Office of Undergraduate Admissions is preparing to welcome another academically strong and diverse entering class for the 2023 fall semester.

The university won't have official fall enrollment numbers until after its fall census in September, but the Office of Undergraduate Admissions' latest snapshot of the incoming class indicates that the university is on track to achieve its goals of 7,085 first-year students and 1,026 transfer students drawing from a record pool of 47,128 first-year and 3,209 transfer

applications.

The snapshot reveals an academically strong group.

Here's a look at some other numbers among the first-year students:

72 countries represented  
47 states represented  
2,244 high schools represented  
4.08 average GPA of the group — the 2021-22 group was 4.04

"We are excited to welcome this incoming class, which is the strongest when measured by GPA," Juan Espinoza, associate vice provost and director of admissions, said. "It is clear that they are a talented group, and we are excited to be part of their journey as we prepare them to be our future leaders."

Looking at the fall transfer students

As with the first-year students, this group is geographically diverse and academically robust:

59 percent come from Virginia Community College System institutions  
25 countries represented  
22 states represented  
413 high schools represented  
3.49 average GPA of the group — the 2021-22 group was 3.51

Financial aid a focal point

In his State of the University address this past January, university President Tim Sands advanced affordability and student success as key institutional priorities, citing the need of many students to work while in college

See Class, page 4



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOSH QUESENBERRY

A training has rescuers Murjan Hammad and Isaac Barnard in breathing apparatus packaging "patient" Catherine Kitty Kresmer into a Sked stretcher.

# Moss Arts Center announces 2023 season performances

BLACKSBURG - Tickets are on sale for the Moss Arts Center's 10th anniversary season beginning at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 3. The 2023-24 season is brimming with vibrant voices and fresh perspectives from around the world — from legendary performers, family-friendly cirque, and spectacular Broadway productions, to jazz and global music, innovative dance and theatre works, and classical favorites.

A special collection of programs examines the impact of climate change, encouraging conversations about the world's environmental challenges and inspiring hope for the future. North Carolina artist Shirlette Ammons returns this season as the center's independent guest performing arts curator. Ammons brings a new perspective to the center's lineup, creating a focus on artists who effortlessly cross genres.

Complementing the center's performances and exhibitions are a lineup of free experiences offering deeper connections with artists, ideas, and community members, including pre- and post-performance talks with artists and Virginia Tech faculty members on timely topics. Virginia Tech students will have exclusive access to master classes and other special

on-campus engagement events with renowned artists and ensembles, and area school-aged students will be treated to special matinee performances and in-school workshops with artists.

Moss Arts Center 2023-24 performances include:

Brentano String Quartet with Hsin-Yun Huang, viola

Friday, Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Having first performed at the Moss in 2014, the ensemble returns for the center's anniversary season, joined by leading violist and Juilliard faculty member Hsin-Yun Huang. The program includes Haydn's string quartet, "The Bird;" Brahms' exuberant "Quintet for Strings in G Major;" and the premiere of Scottish composer James MacMillan's "Viola Quintet."

"The Book of Life"

Tuesday, Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m.

Rwandan writer and activist Odile Gakire "Kiki" Katese takes the stage with Ingoma Nshya, the Women Drummers of Rwanda, for "The Book of Life," a deeply moving perspective on life, loss, and recovery. The performance is filled with personal letters, stirring shadow

puppetry, and joyous live drumming.

Mountain Stage with Kathy Mattea

Sunday, Oct. 1, 7 p.m.

Join Grammy-winning country and bluegrass star Kathy Mattea for an episode of "Mountain Stage" recorded live from the Fife Theatre, featuring Hot Tuna, Malcolm Holcombe, Mick Flannery, and Viv & Riley. Airing on nearly 300 public radio stations across America, the radio show features musical performances from seasoned legends and emerging stars.

Arooj Aftab, Vijay Iyer, and Shahzad Ismaily

"Love in Exile"

Saturday, Oct. 7, 7:30 p.m.

Spellbinding vocalist Arooj Aftab is the first Pakistani American to win a Grammy. MacArthur genius Vijay Iyer is an influential pianist, and multi-instrumentalist/composer Shahzad Ismaily has performed with Lou Reed and Tom Waits. Together, they create timeless, one-of-a-kind performances of haunting improvised soundscapes.

Winona LaDuke

"The Next Energy Economy"

Monday, Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m.

Native American activist, economist, and author Winona LaDuke has devoted her life to advocating for Indigenous people's rights and environmental justice. The

grassroots organizer is an Anishinaabekwe (Ojibwe) member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg and was a leader of the 2016 Dakota Access Pipeline protests.

Garage Dance Ensemble

"Krummelpap, Scandals Wrapped with Prayer"

Thursday, Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m.

Garage Dance Ensemble from South Africa brings this deeply personal and socially charged contemporary dance-theatre work that captures the personal and political circumstances and aspirations of the people of South Africa's former mining community, Namaqualand.

Vox Luminis

Lionel Meunier, artistic director

Thursday, Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m.

Experience the pure, rich tones of Belgium's early music vocal and instrumental ensemble Vox Luminis in this performance of Bach's sacred, brilliant, and dazzling early cantatas.

Pink Martini featuring China Forbes

Friday, Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m.

Audience favorite Pink Martini brings its infectious, bubbly sounds back to Blacksburg. With vintage jazz vibes, the band takes the audience on a musical trip around the world, from a samba parade in Rio to a French nightclub.

Javon Jackson with Nikki Giovanni and Nnenna Freelon

"The Gospel According to Nikki Giovanni"

Friday, Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m.

A historic collaboration between poet and Virginia Tech legend Nikki Giovanni and saxophonist-composer and former Jazz Messenger Javon Jackson features hymns, spirituals, and gospel numbers hand-picked by Giovanni. They are joined by celebrated jazz vocalist Nnenna Freelon.

Seongbukdong Beedoolkee Theatre

"MEDEA on Media"

Wednesday, Nov. 8, and Thursday, Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m.

This Seoul, Korea-based innovative contemporary theatre company delivers a completely original take on the enduring Greek tragedy of "Medea," recasting the ancient tale as a commentary on contemporary media. With plenty of physicality and a dash of silliness, "MEDEA on Media" is also clever and profound. In Korean with English subtitles.

Invoke

Thursday, Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.

Adding banjo, mandolin, fiddle, and voice to the string quartet, Invoke is reinventing classical music. Encompassing traditions from across America, including bluegrass, Appalachian fiddle tunes,

jazz, and minimalism, the vibrant ensemble is fueled by its passion for storytelling.

Deantoni Parks

Thursday, Nov. 30, 7 and 9 p.m.

Experimental composer and percussionist Deantoni Parks uses technology, hip-hop, sampling, and electronica to create sonic experiences. He has been a member of band Kudu and art rock group Bosnian Rainbows and has worked with John Cale, the Mars Volta, and other greats.

Roanoke Symphony Orchestra

"Holiday Pops Spectacular"

Saturday, Dec. 2, 4 p.m.

A much-anticipated audience favorite returns to the Moss, filling the Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre with holiday cheer as only the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra and its "Holiday Pops" program can. Audiences of all ages love this spirited holiday event.

Blacksburg Master Chorale

"Messiah"

Sunday, Dec. 17, 4 p.m.

The New River Valley's own Blacksburg Master Chorale is joined by a professional orchestra and soloists to present one of the most iconic works of the holiday season, Handel's "Messiah," which features 80 singers performing the glorious and resounding "Hallelujah Chorus."

Susan Bland for Virginia Tech

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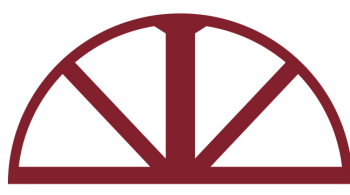


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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Saturday, August 19:

### BBQ and craft fair

Annual Raise the Roof BBQ; 4 – 7 p.m. at Slusser’s Chapel, 1543 Mt. Tabor Rd., Blacksburg. All-you-can eat menu includes smoked pulled pork, chicken, hamburgers, and hot dogs, homemade sides: baked beans, potato salad, cole slaw and desserts. Eat in or take out. Tickets at the door. Price: Adults \$10 and children 12 and under \$5. For more information call 540-951-1757 www.slussers-themount.org.

### Radford Summer Concert

Music from Chairman of the Board on the Glencoe Lower Field at Glencoe Mansion, Museum & Gallery. Enjoy the 2023 Summer Concert featuring R&B and beach music from Chairman of the Board. Food trucks will be on-site and beer will be available for purchase for those 21 & older. Tickets for Saturday’s concert are \$5 per person and children under 12 are free. IDs are required to purchase alcohol. Bring a chair and enjoy! Gates open at 6 p.m. and the concert begins at 7 p.m. Glencoe is located at 600 Unruh Dr. in Radford.

### Heritage Day Festival

The Montgomery Museum of Art & History presents Heritage Day Festival; 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. in downtown Christiansburg. Free, family-friendly event at the museum, on East Main St. and at the Museum Gardens at 300 South Pepper St. Vendors including craft, art, antique cars, native plants, baked goods, and many children’s activities. Hay wagon ride, historical reenactors, and a beer/wine garden managed by Christiansburg Kiwanis Club. Live performances at the Downtown Christiansburg stage with performances by Amelia Empson, Virginia Hollow, Pathway, The Panjammers, and Appalachian Space Train. Food trucks, including Scoops Arcade Food Truck and Community Pizza will be next to the beer garden.

## Monday, August 28:

### 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 29:

### Ice Cream Social and Bingo

Beat the heat and join Blacksburg Parks and Recreation for a fun afternoon of ice cream followed by a game of Bingo, 1- 2:30 p.m., at the Blacksburg Community Center. Ice Cream and drinks provided; you bring a topping to share. If you want to play bingo, bring \$1 in quarters for bingo prizes. Event is co-sponsored with Warm Hearth Village. The event cost \$3 for residents and \$6 for non-residents. To register, click the link listed above or call 540-443-1100.

### 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.

### On-going:

### 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’s 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? The annual family-fun event is on Saturday, Aug. 26 at 8:30 a.m. Register at www.lvnrv.org.

## Skills from page 1

state wants to request us, they can. We like serving anywhere that we can get to, not just locally.”

However, the technical rescue team must follow the protocol of a (MOU) Memorandum of Understanding, which takes care of all the legalities for them to enter a different locality. They do not and cannot self-respond but must be requested to aid in rescue.

Recently, the Blacksburg Rescue Squad has increased to approximately 150 members. Less than half of the squad does Technical Rescue, with confined space rescue groups consisting of a much smaller number.

“Our goal is in the coming months and years to get a better understanding of what kind of confined spaces are in the area,” Quesenberry said. At the end of the day, our area is Blacksburg, and

then we branch out from there. Virginia Tech is technically the responsibility of their rescue squad, but I am working with them to explore our plans in case something happens there. There is a lot we don’t know about that is right in our backyard.”

A Confined Space Rescue Pre-plan is a very important survey that is conducted, prior to entering a confined space, and helps rescue teams in an unfortunate situation that a rescue is needed. A pre-plan survey is also a part of training that each technical rescue member must be able to complete. The plan should involve things like knowing the expert authorities at the location that know about the confined space. These individuals can provide necessary and quick information to the technical team in determining the safest pathway to take.

Other information such as dangerous chemicals in the location or machines that could injure a rescue member can help as well.

Quesenberry and his team are doing several things to work with the community to provide better plans for businesses that may have confined spaces in their environments.

“Currently, we are in conversations with the 9-1-1 Center to make the response time more streamlined,” he said. “A confined space mock rescue with Virginia Tech is in the works with a date yet to be determined; possibly happening in the spring. The Technical Rescue Team tends to train once a week on average, with heavy technical team training once a month focusing on confined space and vehicle extrication to be the exercises more recently.”

If a company is regularly performing risky or potentially dangerous tasks, they should train and maintain their own standby rescue team, utilizing those individuals that are trained and authorized to enter their confined spaces.

“Assisted rescue is always the first thing we want people to try to do,” Quesenberry said. “If the ambulance shows up, they can’t go in until someone with higher training arrives, but if someone that works in the space regularly can safely get the person out, preferably through non-entry rescue, then it is a much better situation.”

If you have questions about creating your own confined space pre-plan, or other questions about the Blacksburg Rescue Squad in general, please reach out to them at their website at www.blacksburgrescue.org.

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### Auctions

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
The contents of the listed unit will be sold at Public Auction August 25, 2023 at 11am at 1st Security Self Storage 5 Midway Plaza Dr. Christiansburg, VA. D020 D025  
1st Security reserves the right to refuse any bid. Terms: CASH OR CREDIT CARD AT SALE.

### Legals - Montgomery County

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,**  
By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia that the Board of Supervisors hereby schedules a public hearing

### Legals - Montgomery County

for Monday, August 28, 2023, at 7:15 p.m. or as soon thereafter, at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to receive citizen comments on the intent to adopt a resolution amending the FY 2023-2024 budget by more than one percent of the total expenditures shown in the currently adopted budget not to exceed \$9 million by appropriating MCPS FY 23 Year-End Operating Fund Carryover, Purchase Order balances and School Nutrition reimbursement.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

F. Craig Meadows  
County Administrator

### Legals - Montgomery County

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on AUGUST 28, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Board of Supervisors intention to act on the following Special Use Permit request:  
A request by PRIMO-CON INC., dba WACO INC. for a

### Legals - Montgomery County

Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Contractor’s Service Establishment in existing structures. The site is located at 6604 and 6620 Roanoke Road, Shawsville (St. Rt. 11), and is located approximately .5 miles west of Alleghany Spring Road (St. Rt. 637). The property is further identified as Tax Maps 083-C1-A71, 083-C1-A73, 083-C1-A72, 083-C1-A70 (Parcel IDs: 013297, 071261, 070708, 070709), 1.547 acres, zoned General Business (GB) in the Shawsville Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Village Expansion in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan and is further designated as Civic in the Shawsville Village Plan.  
Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and

### Legals - Montgomery County

GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on August 28, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. in the County

### Legals - Montgomery County

Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Board of Supervisors intention to act on the following Special Use Permit request:  
A request by John and Stacy Lloyd for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Contractor’s Storage Yard, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance, on vacant land. The property is located at the intersection of Batts Road (Private) and Coal Bank Hollow Road (St. Rt. 649), approximately 0.01 miles from the intersection of South Jefferson Forest Lane (St. Rt. 818) and Coal Bank Hollow Road. The property is further identified as Tax Maps 028-A 15 and 028-A 16 (Parcel IDs: 009224 and 009225), 6.8 acres, zoned Agricultural (A-1) in the Mount Tabor Magisterial

### Legals - Montgomery County

District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Residential Transition in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>

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# Class

from page 1

and thus limiting their opportunities for internships and research.

Sands launched the Virginia Tech Advantage for in-state students in 2022. This initiative seeks to provide greater financial resources so that students can benefit from the full Virginia Tech experience.

The president has charged a steering committee with providing recommendations and implementing various strategies to increase the university's ability to meet student needs and enhance measures of student success outcomes.

In the 2022-23 cycle, 4,714 incoming students —

both first-year students and transfers — are receiving some form of financial aid, including student loans. The total amount of financial aid being awarded to this group is more than \$62.1 million.

"The university's commitment to the Virginia Tech Advantage allowed us to double our

Presidential Scholarship Initiative freshman cohort to an unprecedented 205 in-state students and provide additional financial support to an additional 500 first year and transfer students," said Beth Armstrong, director of the university scholarships and financial aid. "It has been exciting to read the reactions

we are getting from those students and their families. It is having an immediate impact."

The fall census on the class is expected to be released in late September or early October.

Michael Stowe for Virginia Tech

# Roundabout

from page 1

hour." "It's a good idea," said David Clarke, who presented Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) updates to the Board during the meeting.

Along with machining and hauling stone to unpaved areas, Clarke reported that they will continue to do brush cutting on many roads in the county. Recent storms

have created an increased need for clearing away of brush and debris that may have prohibited the flow of traffic. Mowing along roadsides to allow for sight of distance are also ongoing projects that will continue with VDOT.

County citizens that travel along Pilot Road may have noticed some patching work completed, as well as

Alleghany Springs, North Fork Road, Keister's Branch, Mash Run, and on 114, according to Clarke.

Clarke said that pipe replacement has been going on as well.

"There's a big one on Merrimac Road the other day that took a while, but also replacing pipe on Catawba Road, Jenelle Road, and on Glade Road," Clarke said. "We are getting ready to start, it's kind of a rural rustic road project, but it is in your six-year plan. It's when we can fit it in this summer."

The rural road Clarke referred to is the second section of Craig Mountain Road.

Additional information shared with the Supervisors by Clarke is the start of the design group that has begun meeting on the approved Smart Scale projects. These include projects on Alleghany Springs and Route 11.

Supervisor Todd King asked for additional information relating to a citizen request concerning Rosemary Road. Clarke assured King that he would check into it personally.

Supervisor April DeMotts requested additional information on a timeline or schedule

for the improvements on Interstate 81 in Salem and Roanoke County.

"I'm thinking this is a particularly crazy time on 81 with all of Virginia Tech and Radford University students starting back to school and I know you've already experienced some delays, just because of accidents," DeMotts said.

"I don't know that I have the completion... it's on schedule," Clarke said. "I'll have the schedule on that one and when the next one will get started."

Supervisor Sara Bohn echoed King's comments concerning Rosemary Road.

"So, there's potholes, pretty extensive brush cutting, and I made a note for siding," Bohn said. "He brings it up, I bring it up, because the Planning Commission; somebody wanted to do some business back there and all the residents came out and just were beside themselves about the fact that they maintain the road themselves for the most part, which they need obviously VDOT to take responsibility for that."

Bohn also asked for information on an email sent to VDOT

concerning the Mill Point Road.

"We've done quite a bit of work up there and I'm guessing it's not what the resident of the road was looking for," Clarke said. "We do have certain constraints as far as what we can do with drainage within the road and where some of that stormwater might be coming from and how to handle it. We'd be glad to review it again."

Supervisor Darrell Sheppard brought a couple of concerns for review with VDOT as well. Sterling Drive in the McCoy area presents road issues with travel but also with the rescue squad using that road. Potholes as well as roads that have been patched but are creating a rough surface are some of the issues that have been mentioned by residents. Low-lying limbs are also a problem for higher profile vehicles traveling the roadway.

Supervisor Steve Fijalkowski also referred to low-lying branches as a road issue in the Eastern Montgomery area. Many roads were listed by Fijalkowski, some of which are impacting school bus routes.

"Some of them that I've seen, there's no way around them, you have

to hit them," Fijalkowski said.

Biggs also had a question concerning the Big Falls area of McCoy along the New River's bank. There is a history of locals parking along the water and across the road at the foot of the railroad easement. A portion of the land is owned and maintained by the Junction, a camping and water tubing business. It is unclear to Clarke and Supervisor Sheppard as to what the legal ramifications are, if anything, for those choosing to park there.

In Supervisor's reports, Steve Fijalkowski was happy to report to citizens that fiber is going into parts of Alleghany Springs. This funding came from the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) grant allocation to provide internet access to rural communities.

"I'm not sure where else they might be working but it is going on and it is happening," Fijalkowski said.

Blevins also reminded citizens to please be aware of speed limits and school buses that are stopping to load or unload children as Montgomery County Public schools are now back in session.

# News Messenger

Established 1869

(540) 389-9355  
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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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# Recognition

from page 1

Department's M. Douglas Epperly has provided an astonishing 50 years of service as well as C. Robert Carner with his incredible service of 45 years. Dennis Price has also served the Blacksburg community with 35 years, as well as Anthony Wilson with 30 years.

Elliston Volunteer Fire Department's Clyde Hodges also has served his community with

45 years of dedicated service.

Members of the Board of Supervisors congratulated the fire and rescue members for their commitment to their neighbors and friends.

"You represent something that we really cherish, we really want to hang on to, as long as we possibly can," Supervisor Steve Fijalkowski said. "So, I thank you

for all your service."

"Just looking out on the crowd tonight, it's so comforting to know that when the citizens of Montgomery County have an emergency, that we have this level of experience and dedication that's there to answer that call," said Supervisor April Demotts. "Thank you all for your decades of service."

**CROSSWORD**

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- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Hyrax
  - 4. Considerateness
  - 8. Expressed pleasure
  - 13. 1896 Ethiopian battle
  - 15. Hawaiian dance
  - 16. Khaki colors
  - 17. Southern soldiers
  - 18. Musician Clapton
  - 19. 58703 ND
  - 20. Letterman's hometown
  - 23. Fr. Riviera resort
  - 24. Wrath
  - 25. Put up with something
  - 27. Divertimento
  - 32. Comportment
  - 33. Toward the mouth
  - 34. Take in marriage
  - 35. Composer of Rule Britannia
  - 36. Central parts of fruits
  - 38. Ice hockey goal
  - 39. Lair
  - 40. A citizen of Denmark
  - 41. Algeria's 2nd largest city
  - 42. Buildings
  - 44. Extensive landed property
  - 46. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
  - 47. Cereal grass spikelet bristles
  - 48. Gives you instant long locks
  - 55. Umbrian industrial city
  - 56. Cheremis language
  - 57. Wm. the Conqueror's burial city
  - 58. Beach (French)
  - 59. 7th Hindu month
  - 60. Tightly curled hairstyle
  - 61. Niches
  - 62. Connects the keel & sternpost
  - 63. Take a seat
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Persian dialect
  - 2. Yemen port & gulf
  - 3. Switchboard (abbr.)
  - 4. From that place
  - 5. Invisible emanations
  - 6. Shear
  - 7. Mexican tortilla dish
  - 8. Highly regarded
  - 9. Said of a city that "rose up"
  - 10. Turkish district
  - 11. Of a very dark black
  - 12. Fall back time
  - 14. Inanely foolish
  - 21. Furnish with help
  - 22. Former Italian monetary units
  - 25. Made public by radio or television
  - 26. Aka sesame
  - 27. Skin infections
  - 28. Before
  - 29. Being cognizant of
  - 30. Ballet dancer impressionist
  - 31. Eve's garden
  - 32. Produced
  - 36. Hiding place for storage
  - 37. A single unit
  - 38. Napoleon's birthplace
  - 40. Daily journals
  - 43. Hanging threads edging
  - 44. A canvas canopy
  - 45. Central nervous system
  - 47. Nest of an eagle
  - 48. Assist
  - 49. FATHER of Aeaethyrea
  - 50. Yuletide
  - 51. A piece of work
  - 52. Clods
  - 53. St. Philip, Patron of Rome
  - 54. Arrogant & annoying person
  - 55. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)

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# OBITUARIES

## Caldwell, Thelma Juanita Robinson

Thelma Juanita Robinson Caldwell, grandchildren Jaelynn, Maddox, Silas, and Jackson; and many extended family and wonderful friends.



Thelma was born in Blacksburg on Nov. 13, 1928 to Samuel (Sam) and Bessie (Granny) Robinson. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Harlan, and their special friend, Muffin; brothers and sisters Douglas (Doug), Lutitia (Tish), Georgia (Georgy), David, Joyce Ann, Kathleen, and Korine; and two great grandchildren Spenser, and Austin.

Thelma is survived by her brother, Billy (Jacksonville, Fla.); sons Donnie, Larry and his longtime partner Julie, and Jerry; daughters Harlene Ottolini and husband Larry, Peggy Maes and longtime partner Bennett, and Connie. She is also survived by her grandchildren John, Tina, Christine, Amy, Mark, Daniel, Angela, Melissa, and Lauren; great grandchildren Avery, Nick, Luke, Justin, Kiele, Bryce, Kayla, Andrew, and Peyton; and great great

worked; to her there were no strangers just opportunities to meet new friends. Everyone she met fell in love with her and she will truly be missed by many.

The family would like to acknowledge Blue Ridge Cancer Center, especially Dr. Sheela and Venessa Coates, where our mom was afforded kind and compassionate healthcare. Mom was a face and not a number. Special thanks also to Carilion Clinic Home Care and Good Samaritan Hospice who attended to mom and the family in her last month.

A memorial service to celebrate Thelma's life and legacy will be held in the near future.

## Gravely, David Lee

David Lee Gravely, 69, passed away on Tuesday, Aug. 15, 2023. He was preceded in death by his parents, Amos O'Dell and Sarah Reed Gravely.



He is survived by his loving wife of 16 years, Susan Simpson Gravely; daughter and son-in-law, Jenny and Alden Hess; son and daughter-in-law, Brian and Tonya Gravely; stepchildren, Shelley Quesenberry, and Jay and Amber Summers; grandchildren, Olivia, Cami, Riley, Jacob, Charleigh and Link; brother and sister-in-law, Tommy and

Janice Gravely; canine companion, Sam; and many other family members and friends.

The family received friends Friday, Aug. 18, 2023, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 2 p.m. with Pastor Frankie Graham officiating. Burial will follow in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

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

See Obituaries, page 6

Send community news and photos to communitynews@ourvalley.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**EPISCOPAL**  
**Grace Episcopal Church**, 210 Fourth Street Radford. Welcoming and accepting, we have been a part of the Radford community for more than 130 years. ALL ARE WELCOME. Grace offers an 8:00am Contemplative Eucharist and a 10:30am Eucharist with organ music and a choir, with refreshments served afterwards. The 10:30am service is also available on YouTube for those unable to

# Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

## Peace in the Chaos

Read Luke 21:1 through 22:71

Do we ever look at our world and ask, "What happened?"

The moral climate seems to have plunged. Sin is rampant. Nuclear war threatens. A bad economy has become the new way of life. And what's with all these record-breaking natural disasters?

It's easy to wonder if the end of world is near and become so afraid that we panic.

"When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away" (Luke 21:9).

Many times through the past two thousand years, people have panicked over the state of the

world. Jesus had a word for them and for us: "Do not be frightened."

The world may change, but God is still in control.

Bad times can bring good results. As society disintegrates people tend to turn to God, and revival can occur. Challenges even make believers depend on God more. Our survival plan should be to prepare ourselves spiritually for whatever God brings—in good times or bad.

Challenge for Today: Think of a way to point people to Jesus when they express their fears about the future.

Quicklook: Luke 21:5-18

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

leave their house. Find us on Facebook and www.graceradford.org.

**St Thomas Episcopal Church**, 103 East Main Street, Christiansburg VA, 24073. Worship and communion at 10:00 a.m., each Sunday, followed by hospitality coffee and Adult Sunday Adult Seminar. Our service is also streamed. Contact for more info: mystthomasoffice@yahoo.com. http://www.stthomaschristiansburg.dioswva.org.

## LUTHERAN

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

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

**St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Road**, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Worship service each Sunday at 10 AM, Sunday School 9 AM. We are a community of God's people where people gather for worship, learning and service. Visitors and new members are always WELCOME! Google comments: "Wonderful, welcoming congregation...A place where all are truly welcome... Nice, friendly, competent staff." You will like our minister, The Rev. Michelle L. Stramiello.

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

## MULTI-CULTURAL NON-DENOMINATIONAL

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

## PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

**Compassion Church**, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Chandler Jones brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:30 AM

& 11:00 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services. Our vision is to see all Saved. Freed. Restored. Fulfilled. Find us on Facebook and Instagram

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

**Piedmont Pentecostal Holiness Church**, 5007 Jewell Dr., Shawsville Va. Sunday morning service 11am. Pastor Tim Clyburn. 8 miles from Shawsville Rt 460, on Alleghany Spring Rd.

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

## UNITED METHODIST

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

**Central Church**, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am; 9:45am Sunday School; and 11:00a.m. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com.

**St. Paul United Methodist Church**, 220 W. Main St., C'Burg. Rev. Mike Derflinger (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship 10 a.m., Sunday School 9 a.m. Live streaming Sunday Service - www.twitch.tv/stpaulumc

## WESLEYAN

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

# Walmart and Warm Hearth Foundation partner to aid seniors

BLACKSBURG – The Walmart Community Grants Team and the Christiansburg Walmart has again awarded a \$1000 grant to the Warm Hearth Foundation for the Micah's Program at Warm Hearth Village (WHV).

The program provides fresh produce, gardens to grow and tend, shelf-stable food, personal care supplies, pet food and more to village seniors who meet Federal low-income guidelines who then shop at no cost at Micah's Pantry. Facility #1292 is thrilled to support the Foundation's work in the community and strives to provide local impact through grant funding.

Resident Gi Conger said the pantry makes a big difference for those who don't have cars. "We can't always get to the store when we need something," she said. "The pantry has more than food.

We can also get paper towels, toilet tissue, and personal items," she added. Gi also donates fresh produce she grows in her garden spot at the Village back to the pantry for other residents to enjoy. It's a real community effort.

"Micah's Pantry serves 120 seniors each month. This program is a vital service to our seniors living on social security income alone, said Karen Nelson, Associate Director of Development. She went on to say, "Thanks to our supporters we have provided more than \$175,000 in assistance to our residents this past year allowing them to stretch limited dollars farther each month."

If you would like to donate to Micah's Pantry, please contact Karen Nelson, Associate Director of Development, at (540) 443-3406.

*Submitted by Warm Hearth Village*



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARM HEARTH VILLAGE  
Melissa Holland, Store Lead, Karen Nelson, Associate Director of Development, Michael Harrison, Store Manager

# New bank lending office comes to Radford

RADFORD – A community bank with nearly 150 years of history and heritage is coming to the New River Valley in the form of a new lending office at 220 West Main in Radford.

The Bank of Marion - New River Valley will officially open on Friday, August 18 at 10 a.m.

The Radford Chamber of Commerce will preside over a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new business at 12:30 p.m. that day. Open House for the public is 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Bank of Marion - New River Valley will specialize in mortgage lending. Among the bank's many home loan offerings is a no down payment home loan made and serviced by the bank. That loan, the bank says, is for individuals and families who have solid employment and a good credit rating but haven't been able to save enough money for a down payment on a home.

Business loans, personal loans, and financing of new home construction and land purchases will also be offered by the bank.

Mark Arney, a resident of the Poplar Hill community in Giles County near Pearisburg, has been named branch manager and loan officer at The Bank of Marion - New River Valley. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, Asheville and has over 23 years of experience in the mortgage industry. He is a Virginia-licensed Mortgage Loan Officer.

Arney is a Board Member of the Shady Grove

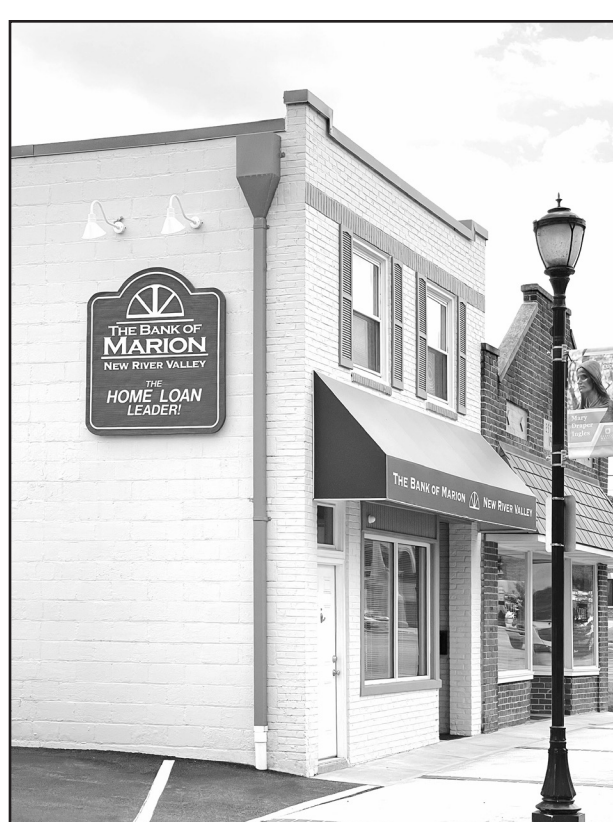


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BANK OF MARION

**The Bank of Marion - New River Valley will officially open on Friday on West Main Street in Radford.**

Church in Poplar Hill, the White Gate Ruritan Club, and a volunteer with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Outdoor Program. In his free time, he enjoys cattle farming, woodworking, kayak fishing, and spending time with his wife, Susan Carr Arney, and their Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, who, Arney says, "...thinks she is a farm dog."

"We are very pleased that Mark has joined our bank as manager of our New River Branch," said Chris Snodgrass, President, and CEO of The Bank of Marion. "His vast experience as a mortgage lender and his commitment to community service will

be a valuable asset to a community bank such as ours and to this great region of Virginia."

Arney said he was proud to be instrumental in opening the New River Valley branch bank.

"I could not be more excited about the future of this branch," he said. "Living and working in the New River Valley and doing what I love is a dream come true."

The bank was established in 1874 and is the third oldest bank in Virginia. Its New River Valley branch is the bank's 19th branch or office in Southwestern Virginia and the Virginia-Tennessee Tri-Cities. The bank's branches are named for the communities they serve.

*Submitted by The Bank of Marion - New River Valley*

CROSSWORD ANSWERS												
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**Fall Leagues Schedule 2023**  
Many Leagues Begin Middle of August

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**LEAGUE SCHEDULE**  
Monday Moose (Meeting August 14th)  
Tuesday Open (Begins August 15th)

Call 540-382-5525 for information about all leagues

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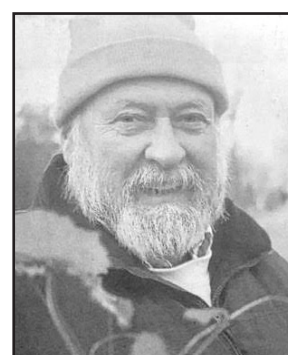
www.montcova.com

## Obituaries from page 5

### Ford, John M.

John M. Ford was born Jan. 31, 1948 and departed this world on June 30, 2023 for a greater destination.

John spent his time on this earth as a seeker of knowledge, justice and peace. John gave of his time and his many skills and talents to protect nature and to



create beauty and tranquility within our community. John's kindness and gentleness will be remembered by the many who knew and loved him. He was a brother to one and a friend to many. May his soul be free and find rest in our Heavenly Father.

### Hurst, Nancy Carol Thomas

Nancy Carol Thomas Hurst, 71, O'Dell, Allen Semones, III "Trey", passed away on Sunday, August 13, 2023.

Nancy was a member of Max Creek Baptist Church and an employee of CVG in Dublin and previously worked at Rowe Furniture in Salem. She was preceded in death by her parents, Moyer Clifton and Lillie Hill Thomas; brother, Jerry Wayne Thomas; and her grandsons, Steven Duncan and Cody Semones.

She is survived by her husband, Roger Dale Hurst; son, Allen Ray Semones, Jr.; daughter, Frankie Lea Trivette; grandchildren, Zachery



Adriane Semones and Wyatt Semones; sister and brother-in-law, Brenda and Johnny Shelton; stepdaughters, Serita Melton and Wendy Hurst; and many other family members, cousins and special friends.

The family received friends Friday, Aug. 18, 2023, at Max Creek Baptist Church. Memorial services followed with Pastor Mike Coleman officiating.

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

### Rombow, Veronica Anne White

Veronica Anne White Rombow, 43, passed away at her home in Pulaski on Sunday, Aug. 13, 2023. She was preceded in death by her step-father, David Woodyard.

Survivors include her mother, Anne Woodyard; brother, Stanley William White (Julie); sons, Nathaniel Hart and Ethan White; daughter, Skarlytt Lytton;



step-brothers, Steven Woodyard and Jonathan Woodyard; and many other relatives and friends.

The family gathered to greet friends Friday, August 18, 2023 at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

The Woodyard/White family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory.

### Wolfe, Nancy

Nancy Wolfe, a cherished wife, devoted mother, and adoring grandmother, passed away peacefully at the age of 86 on Saturday, Aug. 12, 2023.

Her departure leaves a void that can never be filled, but her legacy of love and care will forever remain in the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to know her.

Nancy's life was a testament to selflessness and compassion. As a mother, grandmother, friend, and registered nurse, she radiated warmth and kindness in every role she undertook. With a heart that knew no bounds, Nancy gave tirelessly, always going above and beyond to ensure the well-being and happiness of those around her. Her thoughtfulness, empathy, and unwavering love were the cornerstones of her character.

Hailing from central Pennsylvania, Nancy's journey of caregiving began when she discovered her passion for nursing during her college years. It was there that she cultivated the skills and compassion that would define her life's work. Fate brought her together with James Wolfe, her high school sweetheart, and their love story blossomed into a beautiful 64-year marriage. Together, they created a bond that was a testament to commitment and enduring love.

In 1965, Nancy and James embarked on a new chapter, moving to Blacksburg where they carved out a fulfilling life. Nancy's dedication to her nursing profession



continued to shine as she worked at Virginia Tech Student Health, where she cared for countless college students with a nurturing spirit that made a lasting impact on their lives. The couple's passion for their community extended to their love for Virginia Tech athletics, becoming devoted Hokies and enthusiastically supporting their teams for over five decades.

Nancy's legacy of caring and nurturing will live on through her daughter, Carolyn; her son, John; and her five beloved grandchildren: Sawyer, Thomas, Niklas, Hayden, and Carson. Her memory will forever remind them of the profound impact a loving heart can have on those who are fortunate to experience its embrace.

A memorial service to celebrate Nancy's life will be held at a later date, allowing her family and friends to gather and remember the incredible woman who touched their lives. For those who wish to honor Nancy's memory, contributions can be made online at <https://www.vcom.edu/in-memory-james-f-wolfe> or sent to the James and Nancy Wolfe Memorial Scholarship at 2265 Kraft Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060.

Nancy Wolfe's legacy is one of love, compassion, and care—an inspiration to all who were blessed to know her. As we say farewell to this remarkable woman, we carry her spirit forward by continuing to spread the kindness and empathy she embodied throughout her life.

# MONTGOMERY SPORTS

## Radford U announces women's basketball 2023-24 non-conference schedule

Radford University women's basketball head coach Mike McGuire announced on Wednesday, Aug. 16 the program's 2023-24 schedule, which includes an exciting slate of first-time opponents and first-time locations.

"We have an exciting and challenging non-conference schedule this season," said McGuire. "Including our exhibition game, we have seven contests in the Dedmon Center against some high quality mid-major opponents. This is the most home games we have had in quite some time. We are excited to continue our Education Day game with the local school systems on November 15. We also have some challenging yet exciting road trips to Puerto Rico and Niagara Falls this season. This non-conference schedule will prepare us for a wide open Big South Conference race this season."

After an exhibition against Bridgewater on Nov. 2, the 52nd season of Radford Women's Basketball officially gets started on November 6th in a bout with Concord in the Dedmon Center. The Highlanders will then travel to Cullowhee, N.C. on Nov. 9 before returning home to finish the week with a home battle against Norfolk State on November 12.

The Highlanders will utilize the home court throughout November, as the next three games will be played inside the Dedmon Center. On Nov. 15 Radford hosts ETSU for the team's annual Education Day game. Radford will then host UNC Greensboro on November 18 in a rematch of a 2022 meeting. The final home game of the month, and until mid-December, comes against Virginia University of Lynchburg on Nov. 20.

The Highlanders will catch a plane south for their first unique road trip of the season as the program travels over 1,500 miles to Puerto Rico to compete in a Thanksgiving Tournament against two opponents. Radford is currently scheduled for a Thanksgiving battle with Indiana State, a first-time opponent, and will face another program-first on

**2023-24 NON-CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

<b>BRIDGEWATER (EXH.)</b> NOVEMBER 2 - RADFORD, VA	<b>NORTHERN ILLINOIS</b> NOVEMBER 24 - PUERTO RICO
<b>CONCORD</b> NOVEMBER 6 - RADFORD, VA	<b>PENN STATE</b> NOVEMBER 29 - UNIVERSITY PARK, PA
<b>WESTERN CAROLINA</b> NOVEMBER 9 - CULLOWHEE, N.C.	<b>NIAGARA</b> DECEMBER 2 - NIAGARA UNIVERSITY, NY
<b>NORFOLK STATE</b> NOVEMBER 12 - RADFORD, VA	<b>VIRGINIA TECH</b> DECEMBER 10 - BLACKSBURG, VA
<b>ETSU</b> NOVEMBER 15 - RADFORD, VA	<b>LIBERTY</b> DECEMBER 13 - LYNCHBURG, VA
<b>UNC GREENSBORO</b> NOVEMBER 18 - RADFORD, VA	<b>QUEENS (N.C.)</b> DECEMBER 17 - RADFORD, VA
<b>VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY OF LYNCHBURG</b> NOVEMBER 20 - RADFORD, VA	<b>COLL. OF CHARLESTON</b> DECEMBER 21 - CHARLESTON, S.C.
<b>INDIANA STATE</b> NOVEMBER 23 - PUERTO RICO	<b>VANDERBILT</b> DECEMBER 31 - NASHVILLE, TENN.

HOME AWAY NEUTRAL

PHOTO COURTESY OF RU ATHLETICS

November 24 in Northern Illinois. "During Thanksgiving week, we have the opportunity to travel to Puerto Rico to compete in a two game MTE against Indiana State and Northern Illinois," commented McGuire about the trip. "This is a once in a lifetime trip for our program and we are grateful to the Big South Conference and our athletic administration for helping to make this possible. Not only will we compete against two excellent institutions, this will provide an outstanding educational experience for our ladies."

The road trip flips from south to north as the Highlanders will make two visits in the American Northeast. Closing out November, Radford and Penn State will meet for the first time since a Highlander victory in overtime of the first round in the 2018 WNIT tournament.

"We are returning to Penn State for the first time since 2018," said McGuire about the return to University Park. "The last time we were in State College, we competed in the post season WNIT and were able to come away with an overtime win. Returning to Penn State will bring back a lot of great memories with our 2017-18 team - which is a special one to me."

From there, Radford travels all the way to the United States-Canadian border to face Niagara on Dec. 2. To close out the six-straight road

games, the Highlanders will play a pair of games much closer to home. Radford and Virginia Tech renew an NRV rivalry facing off on December 10. Radford also reignites another rivalry with a former conference rival in Liberty on December 13.

"We are also returning to Virginia Tech this season. What Coach Brooks has done to lead his program is remarkable," said McGuire about Radford's scheduled contest against Virginia Tech. "It will be a great opportunity to compete against a program that competed in the Final Four and was very close to playing for the national championship last season. I want our ladies to know what it feels like to play a high-level NCAA tournament team and helps us value high level preparation heading into Big South Conference play."

Radford finally returns home on December 17 for their final home game of the nonconference slate. In a return visit, Queens (NC) makes their first-ever visit to the Dedmon Center. From there the Highlanders close out the first half of their season with contests against College of Charleston (December 21) and ring in the new year with Vanderbilt (Dec. 31).

Radford University Athletics

**2023-24 NON-CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

<b>COPPIN STATE</b> NOV. 6
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b> NOV. 10
<b>CAMPBELL</b> NOV. 15
<b>WOFFORD</b> NOV. 19
<b>BOISE ST.</b> NOV. 23
<b>IOWA ST./VCU</b> NOV. 24
<b>TBD</b> NOV. 28
<b>AUBURN</b> NOV. 29
<b>VALPARAISO</b> DEC. 9
<b>VERMONT</b> DEC. 16
<b>AMERICAN</b> DEC. 21

HOME AWAY NEUTRAL

PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

## Hokies announce non-conference schedule

Virginia Tech men's basketball revealed its 2023-24 non-conference slate Tuesday, featuring 11 matchups over the first two months of the season. Season tickets are now sold out. Interested people can sing up for a list to be the first to know when additional ticket options become available, including non-conference single game tickets going on

sale in September. The Hokies will tip-off head coach Mike Young's fifth season in Blacksburg on Nov. 6 vs. Coppin State in a season-opening doubleheader with women's basketball. As previously announced, Tech will compete in the Hall of Fame Series vs. South Carolina on Nov. 10 at the Spectrum Center in Charlotte, N.C. The Hokies return home for a pair of games against

Campbell (Nov. 15) and Wofford (Nov. 19), the latter marks the first time Young will face his previous squad as Tech's head coach. Young spent 17 seasons in Spartanburg, S.C., leading the Terriers to five NCAA tournaments and five Southern Conference tournament titles.

Tech then makes its return to Orlando, Fla., for the ESPN Events Invitational (Nov. 23-26) inside State Farm Field House. The tournament will serve as a homecoming for Orlando native Hunter Cattoor, who has a knack for playing well in his home state. Matchups for the Thanksgiving event were announced last week, with the Hokies opening against Boise State, which has qualified for back-to-back NCAA tournaments.

From there, VT will swing up to Auburn, Ala., to square off

with the Tigers in the inaugural ACC/SEC Challenge on Nov. 29. Tech closes out its non-conference slate with three home games against Valparaiso (Dec. 9), Vermont (Dec. 16) and American (Dec. 21).

The ACC schedule has yet to be announced, but the Hokies will welcome Boston College, Clemson, Duke, Florida State, Georgia Tech, Louisville, Miami, Notre Dame, Virginia and Wake Forest to Cassell Coliseum. On the road, Tech will clash with Florida State, Louisville, Miami, North Carolina, NC State, Notre Dame, Pitt, Syracuse, Virginia and Wake Forest.

Game times and television designations for non-conference games will be revealed at a later date.

Virginia Tech Athletics

## Softball adds Bailey, Hanson to staff

Virginia Tech softball and head coach Pete D'Amour announced the addition of Jayme Bailey and Madison Hanson to the 2023-24 softball staff on Tuesday, Aug. 15.

D'Amour completes his staff with Bailey as a student assistant coach and Hanson as the director of player engagement.

"Having Jayme and Madison continue to be involved in our program will be very beneficial to our players," D'Amour said. "Both of these young ladies exemplified what it means to be a Hokie softball player."

"Jayme and Madison were great teammates, accountable, played hard and excelled in the classroom. I'm thankful that both of them thought enough of their playing experience here that they want to stay around and help us out this year."

The Virginia Tech softball total bases leader, Bailey spent five seasons in a Hokie uniform, appearing in 243 games for Tech, starting in 241 of them. She ended her impressive career with a .329 batting average, finishing second in school history with 11 triples and 47 doubles. She also had 36 home runs and a .577 slugging percentage.

During her time with the Hokies, Bailey was named to the All-ACC team three times, as well as NFCA All-Region and a NFCA National Freshman of the Year Top-

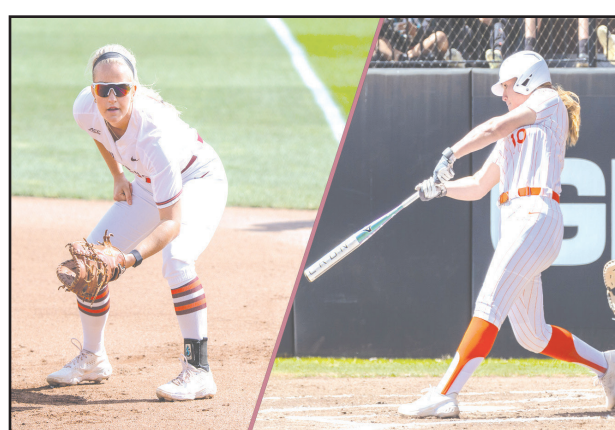


PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

25 finalist. At first base during the 2023 season, Bailey did not record a single error the entire season with 290 putouts. She ranked third on the team with 12 home runs and a .318 batting average.

A four-year member of the Hokies, Hanson appeared in 62 games, hitting three home runs with two doubles and 14 RBI. During the 2023 season, Hanson appeared in 30 games for the Hokies, making nine starts as the

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See Staff, page 8

# Sports notes: RU men finish third, Hokie recognized as true freak

**Marty Gordon**  
 NRVsports@mainstreetnewspapers.com

Radford University will bring a bronze medal from the World University Basketball Series this past week in Japan.

The Highlanders downed Ateneo de Manila University 77-68, in the final day of competition. Radford had the upper hand early in the game as it ended the first quarter with a 10-point advantage, 26-16, before eventually ending the first half in their favor at 45-31.

Lawson to Freak List  
 Bruce Feldman, one of the most respected college football writers nationally, released his 2023 Freaks List on behalf of The Athletic and Virginia Tech linebacker Keli Lawson was named to the list.

This is what Feldman had to say about the Hokie:

“One of the gems of the Hokies’ 2021 signing class, Lawson flashed some of that potential in his debut season last fall, making 23 tackles and also had an interception. Tech is hoping he can take another big step in 2023. The 6-5, 220-pounder with an 82-inch wingspan’s athleticism is intriguing. This offseason, Lawson broad-jumped 11-2, hit 39 inches on the vertical and clocked a 4.6 40.”

Football themes  
 With Virginia Tech football roughly halfway through fall camp, the Virginia Tech athletic department has announced promotional plans and theme days for the Hokies’ upcoming campaign.

Virginia Tech Athletics offers group tickets to any groups of 10 or more who would like to attend ticketed events in Blacksburg (while supplies last). Depending on group size and wishes, the athletic department can create memorable and unique experiences such as prize packs, pregame sideline access and more. Group leaders have the opportunity to work with a dedicated account executive to assist with obtaining tickets, planning and gameday experiences. Group packages are selling fast so group leaders are encouraged to act quickly. Click here To be contacted about your group.

It was previously announced in April which contests were Effect Games, including Orange Effect for Purdue, White Effect for Pitt and Maroon Effect for Wake Forest. Hokie Effect is a program through the Undergraduate Student Senate (USS) that designs and sells spirit shirts for football and basketball games at Virginia Tech. The Hokie Effect games encourage fans to wear a certain color in order to show school spirit and create a blanketed color effect through the venue. The best way to

do this is to wear the Hokie Effect T-shirt designed specifically for that game. View here to find the Orange and Maroon Effect T-shirts and view here to find the White Effect Military Appreciation gear.

**VIRGINIA TECH vs. OLD DOMINION**  
 Saturday, Sept. 2

Recognize the Hokies’ ACC Co-Dual Champions Wrestling team and ACC Champion and Final Four participant and ACC Champion Women’s Basketball during a timeout

HokieKids’ Club Day: Complimentary ticket offer for members (Deadline was Aug. 11)

Pyrotechnics show throughout the game

Group themes: Marching Virginian for a Day & Virginia Tech Faculty/Staff Appreciation

**VIRGINIA TECH vs. PURDUE**  
 Saturday, Sept. 9

Orange Effect  
 Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame recognition at halftime

HokieBird Birthday Party

HokieKids’ Club Day: Complimentary ticket offer for members (Deadline was Aug. 11)

Group themes: Mental & Healthcare Appreciation Day and Faith & Family Day

Corps of Cadets Homecoming

Recognizing 2023 NCAA Champion Swimmer Youssef Ramadan  
 Virginia Tech vs. Pitt: Saturday, Sept. 30

White Effect  
 Group themes: Scout Day & Ticket For Troops

Military Appreciation  
 Recognizing 2023 ACC Champions Men’s & Women’s Indoor Track & Field teams and NCAA Champion Julia Fixsen

Special military-themed performance by the Highy Tighties at halftime  
 Virginia Tech vs. Wake Forest: Saturday, Oct. 14

Maroon Effect  
 Homecoming  
 Virginia Tech vs. Syracuse: Thursday, Oct. 26

Group themes: Local College Night and Virginia Tech Faculty & Staff Appreciation Day

Pyrotechnics show throughout the game

Skydiving performance from Team Fastrax during pregame

Virginia Tech vs. NC State: Saturday, Nov. 18

Senior Day  
 Group themes: Education Day & Youth Team Day

Recognition for former Virginia Tech standout Corey Moore and his induction into the College Football Hall of Fame

# Regional jet ski competition in NRV

Pulaski County is announcing the American Jet Sport Association (AJSA) will be holding its 2023 Regional Championship at Claytor Lake State Park on September 9 and 10.

AJSA was originally formed as the Chattanooga Jet Ski Club in 2019. During its early stages, the club experimented with different jet ski courses and buoy riding at a local lake. By 2022, the club had grown to over 500 members and, that same year, hosted the largest race in the country with nearly 100 racers.

Shortly after, the American Jet Sport Association was born.

Today, AJSA is focused on hosting races exclusively in the southeast region of the country. With its headquarters located in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the group works to limit its races to within a six-hour circle of the city so that participating racers will not have to drive extreme distances to compete.

On Saturday, September 9, and Sunday, September 10, AJSA will be hosting its Regional Championship at Claytor Lake State Park in Pulaski County. The event is open to both spectators and jet ski riders of different classifications.

Saturday’s racing events will begin at 10:00 am and conclude

around 5:00 pm. Sunday’s racing events will also begin at 9:00 am, but will end around 3:00 pm. Start and end times along with delays are dependent upon the weather and other varying circumstances.

“Pulaski County is thrilled to have landed an event of this caliber at Claytor Lake for our local and regional competitors to race, and spectators from around the southeast to come and enjoy,” stated Laura Walters, Chair of the Board of Supervisors. “It takes a tremendous amount of planning and coordination to host such a prestigious championship event and we

done it without Claytor Lake State Park, the Pulaski County Administration and Tourism Team, the AJSA, Pulaski County ACCE, and many others. We are grateful for this opportunity and look forward to it being a successful day on the lake.”

On both Saturday and Sunday, gates will open to spectators at 9:00 am. It is suggested that spectators bring their own chairs and tents to the event. Food trucks will be present on both days. The cost of AJSA admission will be \$8 for kids and \$10 for adults with \$3 of each ticket being donated toward the Pulaski County ACCE program through New River Community College. Claytor Lake State Park will charge its parking fee as normal. Anyone wishing to participate in racing events may email Keith McAfee at keith@ajsaracing.com or call at (423) 341-6416. Featured jet ski racers at this event are several national and world champions including two-time amateur ski division world champion and seven-time ski division national champion, Jimmy Wilson, and Pro Women Runabout World Champion, Sophie Francis, and many more.

*Pulaski County Tourism*

# OUTDOOR REPORT: Study reveals disappearance of Hellbenders

The gigantic, slimy salamanders known as hellbenders, once the apex predators of many freshwater streams, have been in decline for decades, their population constantly shrinking. No one knew why.

William Hopkins, professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation and director of the Global Change Center at Virginia Tech, suspected the hellbenders’ plight had connections with environmental changes engineered by humans.

Hellbender males select nesting sites on stream bottoms and guard the eggs laid there by females — and occasionally the salamander dads snack on the eggs, consuming them before they ever get to hatch. A study that Hopkins led, conducted through eight years of snorkeling in ice-cold Southwest Virginia streams and scheduled to be printed July 1 in *The American Naturalist*, determined that in deforested areas, hellbender fathers are far more likely to eat their entire brood than in areas that still have lush foliage.

This behavior, known as filial cannibalism, probably evolved as a survival tactic for enduring harsh conditions. Prior to Hopkins’ results, scientists were not aware that hellbenders’ filial cannibalism drastically increased in cleared lands, actively speeding

the species out of existence. “This is an animal that has been resilient over millions and millions of years, and something that we’re doing to the planet is severe enough that it’s causing them to disappear, and disappear quickly,” Hopkins said. “I feel like we have an obligation to solve this problem.”

A solution to the mystery of the large salamanders’ accelerating disappearance stayed out of reach because the animal’s reproductive cycle was so difficult to study. “These animals nest under large boulders in streams, and you can’t get under the boulders to study the nest,” Hopkins said. “Even if you could lift the boulder, you would destroy the nest site and there would be nothing left of it.”

Years ago at a conference, Hopkins learned of a project undertaken in concert with the Saint Louis Zoo that involved placing concrete boxes in streams where hellbenders live. Hellbenders nested in the boxes, from which eggs could be collected for captive rearing at the zoo. “I almost came out of my seat. I realized this could be a research tool, something we could actually apply in the field to study these animals. I wanted to have these out all over the place in good habitats, bad habitats, so we could start to study this

animal’s reproductive biology.”

Once the study began, it took years of trial and error to perfect the use of the concrete boxes in the Tennessee Valley streams. Yet almost right away, Hopkins and his team noticed a pattern that became increasingly evident as more and more of the salamanders used the boxes as nest sites. “Within a couple of years, I started to realize that what was happening with reproduction was really different in bad habitats and good habitats,” Hopkins said. “We were immediately seeing this pattern, that males were eating their eggs and that this was more pronounced at these degraded sites.”

Scaling up and conducting the study was a cold, wet, painstaking process. “We put out hundreds of these shelters underwater and observed them closely. We do it all by snorkeling, and you wear a full wetsuit because the streams are so cold,” he said. “It took us eight years of field work to collect enough data to publish that paper.”


The unprecedented long-term access to these creatures has yielded more than the study originally sought. “We’ve discovered two parasites new to science that nobody knew existed, one is a leech that we think specializes on hellbenders, and the other is a microscopic blood parasite, a trypanosome. We’ve also

been able to describe the hellbenders’ hormone cycles. Now we’re equipping these boxes with infrared underwater video cameras that record nonstop, so we can document their behaviors for the first time.”

There’s plenty more to investigate. “We still don’t know the mechanism that triggers this cannibalistic behavior in males. But by showing that this abnormally high frequency of the behavior is related to upstream forest cover, we answered this really big question, and potentially we’re getting closer and closer to solving this entire mystery, which can lead to solutions.”

Yet even without the specific mechanism identified, the results suggest urgent steps to take. “Things we can do include protecting and re-establishing forest cover around streams, and adopting best agricultural management practices that prevent livestock from entering streams,” Hopkins said. “The benefits of doing so are far reaching — what is good for hellbenders is also good for other aquatic animals like mussels and fish, many of which are also declining. Reforesting stream corridors is also good for terrestrial wildlife like migratory birds. And of course, better water quality is good for us.”

*Mike Allen for Virginia Tech*



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## ACC Network announces fall Tech coverage

Virginia Tech’s Olympics fall sports will be on ACC Network eight times this fall, with women’s soccer and volleyball appearing three times and men’s soccer appearing twice, as announced by the network on Monday.

- Sept. 10, 1:30 p.m. - Northwestern at Virginia Tech Women Soccer
- Sept. 15 8, p.m. - Virginia Tech at Louisville Men Soccer
- Sept. 24, noon - Miami (Fla.) at Virginia Tech Volleyball
- Oct. 5, 8 p.m. - NC State at Virginia Tech Women Soccer
- Oct. 13, 6 p.m. - Notre Dame at Virginia Tech Men Soccer
- Oct. 15, 1:30 p.m. - Virginia Tech at No. 5 Virginia Women Soccer
- Oct. 29, 4 p.m. - Virginia Tech at Virginia Volleyball
- Nov. 12, noon - NC State at Virginia Tech Volleyball

ACC Network (ACCN), the 24/7 national platform dedicated to ACC sports, will present extensive coverage of the 2023 fall sports seasons with over 70 field hockey, men’s and women’s soccer and volleyball matchups. Additionally, ACC Network Extra (ACCNX), the network’s digital platform available on the ESPN app, will carry more than 400 ACC events.

*Virginia Tech Athletics*

## Staff

from page 7

designated player. She tallied eight hits, including her first career home run against No. 5 Oklahoma State, hitting a two-run shot in the second inning to give the Hokies the lead. Hanson recorded a career-high

three RBI in the win over Mount St. Mary’s with two hits, including a home run. She also hit a home run in Virginia Tech’s win over Nebraska in the Clearwater Invitational. Hanson finished her final season

with a .486 slugging percentage and a .319 on base percentage.

*Virginia Tech Athletics*