



PHOTO COURTESY OF GILES COUNTY

Cora Gnegy (Giles) Erika Tolbert (Pulaski), Kathleen Legg (Floyd), Peggy White (Pulaski) and David Rotenizer (Montgomery) with award at the Celebrate Tourism Summit. The VisitNRV website also includes the City of Radford.

Area tourism offices recognized for new VisitNRV website

On Tuesday, August 1, the Southwest region of Virginia's travel and tourism stakeholders gathered together at the Wytheville Meeting Center for the fourth annual Celebrate Tourism Summit.

Attendees included destination management organizations, hotels, attractions, Chambers of Commerce, elected officials, and tourism stakeholders from across the 19 county and four independent cities that make up the Southwest Virginia region.

During the luncheon portion of the summit the Friends of Southwest Virginia hosted the SWVA Tourism Awards. The 38 award categories were presented to worthy recipients in tourism marketing, visitor services, special events, and industry leadership.

"Our tourism partners have shared with us over the last year how much momentum they can feel in the tourism industry in Southwest Virginia," said Kim Davis, Executive Director of Friends of Southwest Virginia. "We are proud to celebrate the accomplishments of each of our tourism and hospitality partners who have made this possible through their promotion and development throughout the region."

The Tourism Offices of Virginia's New River Valley were the category winner in the Best New Website for a Locality, Marketing Budget \$50,000 or More. The newly designed and relaunched website was made public in May of 2023. The destination management organizations (DMOs) of Virginia's New River Valley began this project in late 2022. The project also resulted in new travel tourism

branding for the entire region.

The website, VisitNRV.com, highlights opportunities for visitors to explore the amenities of the region, build their own adventure around popular travel themes to the area, and learn more about the communities and people that make up the New River Valley.

"We are proud to highlight the amazing activities and places visitors to our region can discover through this new website," said Cora Gnegy, Tourism Director for Giles County. "This resource presents the opportunities within our region in a beautiful and thoughtful way, so that visitors and potential visitors have confidence in their travel inspiration and further planning."

The Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) for Virginia's New River Valley include the localities within the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the City of Radford.

Tourism is big business in Virginia's New River Valley, based on recent annual data from the Virginia Tourism Corporation, travelers to the region had a total economic impact of \$383 million dollars, averaging nearly \$77 million dollars across the region – with the food & beverage sector leading the way, followed by lodging. Nearly 4,000 residents, with a labor income of \$26 million dollars, are attributed to the local travel industry.

Submitted by Cora Gnegy, Giles County Tourism Director & Economic Development Coordinator

Still time to sign up for IDA golf tournament, set for Aug. 14

Intellectual Disabilities Agency of the New River Valley (IDA) is one of the few agencies in the New River Valley that provides services to members of the community with intellectual disabilities.

IDA provides activities for clients of all ages including bingo, stretchercise, cooking, craft and art classes. The agency also sponsors social opportunities such as fishing excursions, picnics, and the popular seasonal themed dances.

In order to support these activities, IDA is holding its 26th Annual Golf Tournament on August 14 at the Blacksburg Country Club golf course in the Ellett Valley. This is one of only two fundraising events that occur annually to support IDA. Everyone who enjoys golfing is invited to participate in this event.

Registration is available online at www.idanrv.org/home/golf-details and payment can be made via check to IDA

at PO Box 42, Christiansburg VA 24068 or online using PayPal. Fees for the day are \$100 per golfer and include golf cart lunch, and multiple prizes. If you are not a golfer, you can also support IDA with Tee sponsorships. Email Denise@idanrv.org for details.

Earl Brown, President of the IDA Board of Directors said the agency's services are a big help to its clients.

"The children and adults who participate with this agency will always need these services and activities," said Brown. These provide opportunities for clients to achieve a more balanced life, increase their self-esteem and social skills. The IDA Board of Directors thank you in advance for your generous support."

Submitted by Intellectual Disabilities Agency of the New River Valley

The 42nd Annual Steppin' Out brings another great festival to downtown Blacksburg



PHOTOS BY LORI GRAHAM

The Kind, a local New River Valley band that has been rocking since 1986, performs at Steppin' Out 2023.

Lori Graham

Contributing writer

BLACKSBURG - Thousands of people decorated the streets of downtown Blacksburg for Steppin' Out 2023 on Aug. 4 and 5.

Vendors, artisans, food trucks, music groups, community organizations, and local talent filled the streets delighting newcomers and longtime visitors of the event.

The Blacksburg Police Department

provided a police presence but also enjoyed greeting the festival goers. Police officers, recruits and staff handed out toy police hats, badges, and other items to children from their tent situated near the bouncy house.

Recruits Seth Walker and Brian Lesser were also present at the event and are currently in the police training academy. Police Lt. Kale Craver explained the

See Steppin' Out, page 2

Vehicle connected with missing Blacksburg teen spotted in Texas

There has been a confirmed sighting in Fort Worth, Texas of the vehicle Blacksburg missing teenager Celena Hosig is believed to be traveling in.

The Blacksburg Police Department is asking anyone any information on the whereabouts of Hosig to

please contact the Blacksburg Police Department at 540-443-1400 or email at bpdtipline@blacksburg.gov.

On July 29, the Blacksburg Police Department received a report that Hosig was missing. She was last seen on Wednesday, July 26, 2023 wearing unknown clothing. She is described

as a white female with long red hair with a height of 5'06", weighing 115 pounds. She has ears, nose, lip, and septum piercings and tattoos on her back and ankle (unknown description). She is also known to change her hair color.

Hosig is possibly riding in a

silver Chevrolet HHR with Virginia registration, TRW-8305. This vehicle should have a pushed up rear bumper, possibly from an accident. She is known to frequent the river areas in Pulaski and Radford.

Staff report

Kabuki Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi closes for Sunday lunch hours

Owner says he is humbled by strong support from community



PHOTO BY LORI GRAHAM

Kabuki Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi restaurant owner Yoshi Koeda is pleased a decision to close during Sunday lunch hours has led to community support.

Lori Graham

Contributing writer

CHRISTIANSBURG - Kabuki Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi restaurant owner Yoshi Koeda had no idea that a decision to close during Sunday lunch hours would be received with such a positive outpouring of community support.

During the month of July, Koeda made the decision to temporarily close during Sunday lunch hours to provide his employees and himself a break. The restaurant owner felt that it was important to spend more time with loved ones during the summer; however, it proved to be a better decision than he imagined. So, he recently made an announcement that they would continue to stay closed for the Sunday lunch meal.

The response from the community was extremely positive, with many people applauding his decision to close to allow his employees and himself time to rest, improve mental health, and spend time with loved ones.

The staff and owner found just closing those additional few hours, as they are still open for dinner, made a big difference. The change in hours also gave the Saturday workers the added benefit of leaving on time after their shift.

"It helps Saturday nights, for the staff staying late to clean up and getting ready for Sunday," Koeda said.

Kabuki employees approximately 50 workers, many in high school and college. Koeda said that many employees began working there at a young age, as teenagers, and choose to stay on at the restaurant for years.

"I call them all kids and many of them call me Dad, even though I am 37," Koeda said. "They look to us as aunts and uncles, providing a safe place for them to be themselves."

Koeda grew up in the Japanese cuisine restaurant business watching his father, who founded the original Kabuki in Roanoke in 1982. Koeda's father then expanded the business opening another restaurant in Christiansburg.

"I have been working in a hibachi restaurant since a young age. Even before cooking, I was eating there," Koeda said. "My Dad would have new chefs cook for me and my brother because we were very good critics."

Work ethic was something Koeda also learned at a young age, earning money by washing dishes to buy his first computer at the age of 11 years old. Now married with a four-year old of his own, he values that dedication to his business and hopes to pass on this knowledge to his own child.

The restaurant is busier than ever, with some of the same customers frequenting the restaurant daily.

"The grill is obviously the highlight for customers," Koeda said. "Everything is cooked fresh, and you can see it coming out fresh, having a live interaction with the person cooking it."

The chefs and servers work hard to give good customer service. Even if they make a mistake, Koeda says everyone works hard to try to make it right for the customer. For Koeda, the business is his

life, he said. Koeda believes that good customer service and quality food makes all the difference. He also enjoys getting to know his customers, their families and seeing their children grow.

Koeda took ownership of Kabuki approximately six years ago. He said he has made small changes from what people may remember of his dad's restaurant, but probably 90% is the same that everyone expects.

"People want to know when they come here that they are getting exactly what they are expecting; it is very rare to be disappointed," Koeda said. You know what tastes and flavors you are getting. Once in a while, we change it up, but me and my servers can walk up to someone and say you want this, this, and this. This makes the personal touch you get at the restaurant different from what customers experience in a franchise."

The restaurant offers a substantial menu with appetizers, hibachi and sushi entrée options, desserts, an array of cocktails, beer, and wine, as well as dine-in or take-out options. Takeout orders can include to-go alcoholic drinks as well.

They are located at 120 Arbor Drive NE, Christiansburg, and are open Monday-Thursdays 5-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 4-10 p.m., and Sunday 4-9 p.m. Reservations are not necessary but making one can allow customers to avoid waiting for a table as well as helping the staff in preparing fresh food every day.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, August 9: Monday, August 14:

Pre-K Yoga with 'The Whole You'

At the Radford Public Library; 11- 11:30 a.m. Join us for a session of Pre-K Yoga with Kelly McCoy of "The Whole You"! There is no registration necessary for this event.

Friday, August 11:

Jet Engine and Rig Testing

There will be solid fuel scramjet/ramjet rig testing at the Advanced Propulsion and Power Laboratory, located at 1670 Innovation Drive, between 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Rig will be run multiple times during the indicated time period producing a venting like noise for a duration of around 10 minutes for each run. For more information, contact Jason Doby at doby2017@vt.edu.

Saturday, August 12:

Fish Fry

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its August Fish Fry; 5 - 7 p.m. at Slusser's Chapel Picnic Shelter, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. Serving fish, fries and slaw; homemade desserts; and beverages. Adults-\$12, children under 12-\$6, (under 3)-free, carry-outs-\$12. This month we will be entertained by The Panjammers Steel Drum Orchestra. The fish fry is a fundraiser for the Ruritan Club's community service projects and scholarships. Held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan.

Reptiles at the Library

At Meadowbrook Library; 11 a.m. – noon. Virginia Master Naturalist and State Park volunteer, Judith McCord will bring a ball python, a blue-tongued skink, a Russian tortoise and an Eastern box turtle for folks to learn about and interact with. Learn about reptiles commonly found in our state parks. All ages.

Page to Screen Movies: Maltese Falcon

At the Radford Public Library; noon- 2 p.m. Come see Humphrey Bogart in the 1941 adaptation of Dashiell Hammett's The Maltese Falcon! Gourmet popcorn from Lil'Bit Corny LLC will be available while supplies last. NR; 100 min.

Steppin' Out

from page 1



PHOTOS BY LORI GRAHAM

Members of the Blackburg Police Department (left to right) Michele Dudash, Recruit Seth Walker, Lt. Kale Craver, Jason Elliott, Sgt. Loven Livesay, Chief Todd Brewster, Recruit Brian Lesser, and Ofc. Micah Kobia attend Steppin' Out.

process the recruits are going through to become a police officer.

"They go through a 22-week training program, then they'll eventually, once they graduate the academy, they will come out and they'll go through our field training program, and they'll become police officers after that," Craver said.



North Franklin Street (Route 460 Business) at Laurel Street Pedestrian Improvements Town of Christiansburg

Find out about a project to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of North Franklin Street (Route 460 Business) and Laurel Street in Christiansburg. The project entails adding pedestrian signals and two crosswalks to the intersection and constructing approximately 280 linear feet of sidewalk next to the eastbound lane of North Franklin Street to connect to an existing section of sidewalk.

In addition, a pedestrian refuge island also will be constructed in the median of North Franklin Street. Curb and gutter and drainage improvements are also included in the project.

Review the project information and National Environmental Policy Act document in the form of a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion at VDOT's Salem District Office located at 731 Harrison Avenue in Salem, 540-387-5353, 1-800-FOR-ROAD, or TTY/TDD 711. Please call ahead to ensure the availability of appropriate personnel to answer your questions.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Mr. Jason Patrick, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153, on or prior to **August 17, 2023**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you have questions or concerns about your civil rights in regards to this project or need special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Jason Patrick at the phone numbers listed above.

UPC: 122866

State Project: 0460-060-880, P101

Federal Project: HSIP-5150(228)

From: Intersection of Route 460 North Franklin Street/Laurel Street
To: 0.11 mile southeast of the intersection Route 460 North Franklin Street/Laurel Street

IDA golf tournament

Intellectual Disabilities Agency of the New River Valley 26th Annual Golf Tournament at the Blacksburg Country Club golf course. Registration at www.idanrv.org/home/golf-details and payment can be made via check to IDA at PO Box 42, Christiansburg VA 24068 or online using PayPal. Fees for the day are \$100 per golfer and include golf cart, lunch, and multiple prizes. If you are not a golfer, you can also support IDA with Tee sponsorships. Email Denise@idanrv.org for details.

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.

Have You Been Counted? Using Census Records in Genealogy Research

At the Radford Public Library; noon – 1 p.m.. This

informative program will consist of information about each of the census years, what information is included, where to find the records, and strategies for using census records in your genealogy research.

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.

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.

A very young future recruit is Jason Elliott. Elliott may be 10-years old, but he is very confident of what he wants to be when he is grown. Dressed in a police officer uniform, complete with a protective vest, he was readily available to help with whatever the police team needed.

Local artisans and craft makers could be found in abundance with woodworking, pottery, jewelry, clothing, artwork, and lots of fun things for kids to do and see.

Dragon Ocarinas & Fanciful Fun, owned by Fred and Deborah Harris, was an eye-catching vendor to passersby with their whimsical trailer carved and decorated like a traveling gypsy. The Floyd-based business sells ocarinas, fairy stones, face and body products, and other creations. Deborah Harris gave demonstrations of the musical ocarina, a hand-crafted and painted traditional flute-sounding instrument, historically dating back thousands of years.

Harris also shared her gift for art with face painting for the many children at the festival who lined up outside of her ornate trailer.

Matt and Kelly Beeken, long-time members of Blacksburg United Methodist Church greeted eventgoers as well in their location at the Farmers Market square. Their tent offered a prayer loom, activities for the children along with information about their services and their preschool, which is currently open half-days throughout the week. The church also has an upcoming community event that they are welcoming people to attend.

"We have a big community cookout at the church on [August] 20th after our 11 o' clock service," Matt Beeken said.

Area citizens interested in checking out the church's services, preschool, or local community events can visit their website at blacksburgumc.org.

Music and entertainment could be found in three different locations during the festival: The Main Stage, the Community Stage, and the Acoustic Stage. The main stage featured many wonderful music acts including a local New River Valley group that began in Blacksburg

in 1986. The Kind delivered a great performance that had people on their feet with what they call their hillbilly psychedelic folk-rock music.

The Community Stage at the festival offered a variety of entertainment including dance, a drum ensemble, vocalists, a science show, and even a young group of budding stringed-instrument players.

The Virginia Tech String Project is a program that reaches out to youth in the area with music education as well providing an opportunity for Virginia Tech undergraduate music students to gain experience in instruction.

Corbin Surface, a bass player with the VT String Project, enjoyed taking the stage on Friday at the festival.

"I was really nervous because I was the only one playing the bass. It was really fun though," Surface said.

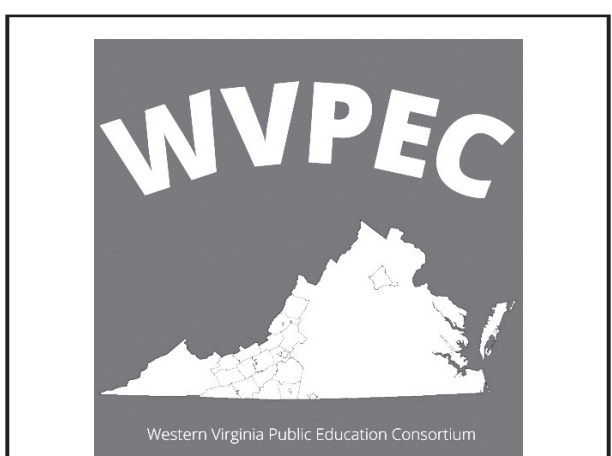
Surface also enjoyed walking along the tents in downtown Blacksburg with his family.

"I liked spinning all the wheels to try and get free stuff. I also bought a leather belt at one of the tents. They put my name on it," Surface said.

The Acoustic Stage provided instrumental and vocal entertainment adjacent to the Farmer's Market square. Performers did not disappoint, with a variety of musical stylings for those stopping by the stage or passing by.

Steppin' Out visitors lined up for the many food options available at the event as well. In addition to the local downtown storefronts, almost every type of food could be found along the street vendors at the event. Hethwood Market, Bollos, Centro Taco Bar, Next Door Bake Shop, and Ridiculous Chicken were just some of the food options visitors could find. After a bite to eat, there was also something for the sweet tooth with Big Lick Ice Cream, The Cotton Candy Lab, Carly's Kettle Korn, or Spoon's Shaved Ice Cream.

The beer and wine garden provided by Virginia Eagle Distributing and Iron Heart Winery as well cocktails at J.H. Bards Spirit Company were also a hit at the event.



HIRING

Part Time Executive Assistant,
Western Virginia Public Education Consortium (WVPEC), 20 hours or less per week. Word, Excel, event planning, and website experience are a must. Located on Tyler Ave. near RU.

Send resume to office@wvpec.org. resume and two references are required. Go to WVPEC.org for more information.

PETS OF THE WEEK

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

Meet Dave the dog! He's a fun-loving younger pup who is friendly and energetic. Dave is looking for a home where he's the only pet. Any prospective human friends would need to be a little older and over the age of 12. Dave knows a few commands, including "sit" and "down." He would benefit from additional training to make him the most pawsome dog he can be!



Red is looking for his purrfect match. He has been at the Animal Care and Adoption Center for a short time and has shown that he's a sweet, gentle boy. He's a younger cat who is FIV+. Red enjoys delicious cat treats and attention from his favorite people.

OBITUARIES

McMullin, Barbara Nester

Barbara "Bobbie" Nester McMullin, 79, passed away Wednesday, August 2, 2023, at her home in Fairlawn.

She was a hairdresser and volunteered at the Women's Resource Center. She received her Associate Degree in Social Work from the New River Community College. She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert Clyde Nester and Ethel Craig Nester; brothers, Arnold and Roger (Drema) Nester; and sisters, Melissa "Margie" (Jack) Sinnes, and Jean Semones.

Survivors include her husband of 64 years, John William McMullin, Jr.; daughters, Carolyn M.



Southern, Barbara (Sue) (Tracey) Collom, and Virginia M. (George) Walker; 10 grandchildren, Scott Southern (Brook), Candace Lamb (Jon), Todd Southern, Ashley Jean, B. J. Munsey (D.D.), Leslie Youngs (Corey), Tracey Collom, Jr., (Cindy Waters), Sam Walker

(DeAnn), Toni Walker and Kyle Walker; 17 great grandchildren; brother, Kenneth (Debbie) Nester; sister, Edwina "Bunny" (Rev. Tom) Gulbranson; brother-in-law, Jessie Semones; and many other relatives and friends.

The family received friends Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Graveside services followed in Sunrise Burial Park with Rev. Gina Rhea officiating.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Fairlawn Presbyterian Church.

The McMullin family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

Epling, Jewell Vaught

Jewell Vaught Epling, died peacefully on Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023, surrounded by her loving husband, Bill, and family. She succumbed to complications due to a long battle with dementia. Jewell lived a life of devotion and caring, especially centered on her family.

Jewell was born in Newport, Va., to the late Elizabeth "Lizzie" Cook Vaught and Leonard Christian Vaught. She was the eighth of 11 children and grew up as a hardworking farm girl. Her future husband, Bill, was also born and raised on a farm two miles away on Spruce Run Road. They were married on September 13, 1953. Their love for each other has sustained them throughout their 70 years of married life, and it has been an inspiration to their family and many others.

After their marriage, Jewell and Bill continued to live on Spruce Run for 11 years. Their three children, Billy, Janet, and Carol were born during this time. Jewell's life was full: caring for Bill, her young children, her mother, Bill's father and brother, and farm work.

In 1964, Jewell and Bill moved their family to Salem, Va., and soon became members of Fort Lewis Christian Church. As always, family, and hard work remained the center of Jewell's life. While



raising her children, Jewell continued to care for her mother in their Salem home. In later years, Jewell took a job with General Electric, where she worked for three years. She also worked at ITT Corporation for 13 years, retiring in 1991.

After retirement, Jewell enjoyed many years traveling throughout the United States with Bill and their friends. She loved antiquing with her family. She enjoyed spoiling her grandchildren when they came to visit (without their parents). And no one could make better chipped beef gravy and biscuits, or pound cake.

Jewell is survived by her husband, William Brady Epling; her son, William Brady Epling, Jr. and wife, Debbie of Aiken, S.C.; her daughters, Janet Epling Shaw, and husband, Rusty of Herndon, Va., and Dr. Carol Ann Epling, and husband, Dr. Brad Gaynes of Chapel Hill, N.C. She has six grandchildren, Brad (Jennifer), Beth, Kathryn

(Nathan), Margaret, Helen, and Ben; as well as many nieces and nephews. Jewell is also survived by three siblings, Leon Vaught of Floyd, Sylvia Vaught Pace of Newport News, and Howard Vaught of Roanoke.

Jewell lived the last 11 years of her life receiving memory care at Richfield Living in Salem. Her family is grateful for the many compassionate people at the Joseph C. Thomas Center and the Health Center in Salem who knew and cared for her. Jewell's family is also especially grateful to Lynnette Smith who was Jewell's dear companion for many years.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 12, 2023, at the Richfield Living - Town Center Chapel, 3730 Richfield Ln., Salem, VA 24153, with Chaplain Gary Kingery officiating. Interment will follow at Sherwood Memorial Park in Salem.

Friends may begin gathering to visit with the family after 9 a.m. on Saturday in the chapel.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Fort Lewis Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2931 West Main Street, Salem, VA 24153.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.johnmoakey.com.

McMillion, Mary Jane

Mary Jane McMillion, 86, of Christiansburg, joined loved ones in Heaven on Aug. 4, 2023.

Mary Jane was born in Renick, W.Va., to Elmer and Stella Brown. Mary Jane graduated from West Virginia University and remained a lifelong Mountaineer, cheering on her home team through every football and basketball season.

Mary Jane and her late husband, Martin, traveled extensively, making cherished and lifelong friends wherever they went.

Mary Jane was preceded in death by parents, Elmer and Stella Brown; husband, Martin



McMillion; and sister, Helen Dotson.

Mary Jane is survived by daughters Teanna Day (Tim) and Myra McMillion Conner (Kirby); grandchildren Kate Day, Bethany Day and Mason Conner; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Mary Jane was a long-time member of Christiansburg Presbyterian Church. Mary Jane's love and faith in Jesus comforts her family in the days ahead.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, Aug. 9, 5-7 p.m. at the McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Drive S.W., Blacksburg, Virginia. The funeral service will be held Thursday, Aug. 10 at 11 a.m. in the McCoy Chapel with Reverend Kris Moore officiating. A graveside service will follow Thursday at 2:30 p.m. at Greenbrier Memorial Gardens in Lewisburg, W.Va.

Touch-a-Truck NRV drives into town this weekend



PHOTO COURTESY OF NRHBA

The 8th Annual Touch-A-Truck NRV event is set for this Saturday, Aug. 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Uptown Christiansburg.

CHRISTIANSBURG — Get the kids ready to honk the horns, blare the sirens and explore all the vehicles this weekend.

The New River Valley Home Builders Association (NRVHBA) is proud to present the 8th Annual Touch-A-Truck NRV event this Saturday, Aug. 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Uptown Christiansburg, 782 New River Rd., in the back parking lot. For those with sensitive ears, the event will be horn and siren-free from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Children will get to have a safe and hands-on learning experience by climbing into the driver's seat and exploring vehicles such as squad cars, dump trucks, bucket trucks, construction vehicles and more. Many business and non-profit organizations have plenty of activities to keep the kids busy, local food trucks will be there to satisfy your cravings, and there will be the chance for the kids to build their very own toolbox at the event. Get ready for a day filled with giant tires, horns, sirens and fun.

Touch-a-Truck NRV is a family event open to all. Tickets are \$2 each or \$5

per family ticket (valid for up to four attendees.) Children two and under are free. Proceeds from the event go towards the New River Valley Home Builders Association and the NRVHBA Builders Care Fund, which helps to fund scholarships for future construction and trade students, community charitable contributions, and future workforce development initiatives.

To pre-purchase tickets and learn more about the event, please visit <https://www.touchatrucknr.com/>.

Event Sponsors include: Big Rig Sponsor- 84 Lumber; Media Sponsor- Shentel; Snowplow Sponsors- Foresight Design Services and Green Valley Builders; Bucket Truck Sponsors- Beverage Tractor & Equipment, Capps Home Building Center, Chandler Concrete, New River Heating and Air, Summit Community Bank, SAS Builders, Slate Creek Builders and Tyris Homes; and Supporting Sponsors- Christiansburg Pharmacy, Lux John's LLC, NRV Macaroni Kid, Town of Christiansburg, and Uptown Christiansburg.

Surface, Charlotte Frances Jones

Charlotte Frances Jones Surface, 89, passed away to be with her family in heaven, July 30, 2023, at 7:25 p.m., warm and peaceful with family by her side.

She was born in Ellett, Va., on June 10, 1934, to Allen Showalter and Cora Brumfield Jones. She was preceded in death by her parents and loving husband, Shirley T. Surface.

She is survived by her children, Teresa Surface



Sheppard, Jerry Surface, and Keven Surface; seven grandchildren, 11 great

grandchildren; one great-great grandchild; a brother, Marvin Jones; a sister, Darlene Simmons; numerous nieces and nephews; and one special lifetime friend, Josephine "Jo" Jones.

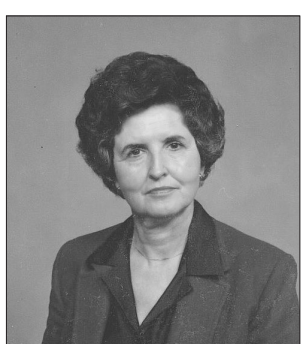
A memorial service will be conducted Sunday, August 13, at Christiansburg Assembly of God, 1861 Mud Pike Road, Christiansburg, with a service at 2 p.m. and visitation 1-2 p.m. prior to the service.

Moricle, Geraldine Roop

Geraldine "Jerri" Roop Moricle, 93, of Christiansburg, passed away on Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023.

She was preceded in death by her parents, William McKinley and Ollie Dobbins Roop; and her loving husband, Wilfred Lane Moricle.

Survivors include her great nephew, Dale "Buddy" Moricle; caretaker and special friend, Debbie Quesenberry; special



friend, Lee Simpkins; niece, Donna Sparks; and many other family

members and friends.

A graveside service was held Monday, Aug. 7, 2023, at Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin with Pastor Timothy Worles officiating.

In lieu of flowers, Jerri's family and friends request that donations be made to your local animal shelter.

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

AUGUSTA GREEN JACKETS VS SALEM RED SOX	
	<p>AUGUST 8TH 7:05PM GAME 1 - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM</p> <p>AUGUST 9TH 7:05PM BARK IN THE PARK - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM</p> <p>AUGUST 10TH 7:05PM AREA 51 NIGHT - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM</p> <p>AUGUST 11TH 7:05PM DINOS AT THE DIAMOND - GATES OPEN AT 6:00PM</p> <p>AUGUST 12TH 6:05PM MILITARY APPRECIATION NIGHT - GATES OPEN AT 5:00PM</p> <p>AUGUST 13TH 3:05PM GAME 6 - GATES OPEN AT 2:00PM</p>

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Legals - Town of Vinton

TOWN OF VINTON NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

AND INVITATION TO BID

PROPOSED GRANT OF INGRESS AND EGRESS EASEMENT OVER PARCEL 060.15-02-01-000 TO VIKING FENCE COMPANY, INC., AND INVITATION TO BID

Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 15.2-2100 et seq., of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, the Town Council of the Town of Vinton, Virginia, hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. or immediately thereafter, in the Council Chambers of the Vinton Municipal Building, 311 South Pollard Street,

Legals - Town of Vinton

Vinton, Virginia. The purpose of the public hearing is to consider approving an Ordinance granting an ingress and egress easement over and across parcel 060.15-02-01.00-000 to Viking Fence Company, Inc. in conjunction with the Town's development of the Walnut Avenue bicycle and pedestrian path. The easement shall be valid for 40 years unless extended. The parcel over and across which the easement will run is owned by the Town. In addition, the Town will publicly receive bids for the proposed easement from other interested parties. Other interested parties must submit sealed bids for the proposed easement in writing by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 14, 2023, to Antonia Magallon, Town Clerk, 311 South Pollard Street, Vinton, Virginia. Any

Legals - Town of Vinton

bids received will be opened in public session and marked for identification by the Town Clerk. The Mayor shall cause a brief summary of any such bids to be read aloud in the public session. The cost of this advertisement shall be paid by the Town which shall be reimbursed by the entity to which the easement is granted. The Town reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Copies of the proposed Ordinance and proposed easement may be examined at the office of the Town Clerk, located in the Vinton Municipal Building, 311 South Pollard Street, Vinton, Virginia, (540) 983-0607, or at the Town's website, www.vintonva.gov. Citizens are invited to attend the public hearing and comment on the proposed Ordinance and proposed easement. Individuals requiring special

Legals - Town of Vinton

assistance to attend and participate in the public hearing, or requiring additional information about the proposed Ordinance or proposed easement, should contact the Town Manager's Office, at 311 South Pollard Street, Vinton, Virginia, (540) 983-0607.

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Motor Mile raceway's future up in air

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Officials from the Rusty Wallace Racing experience are in the final year of a contract at Motor Mile Speedway near Radford, and now its future and extension are up in the air.

Track General Manager Mark Ebert posted the following statement on social media:

"I rarely address the rumor mill or Facebook posts, but there are some crazy posts and even crazier rumors that need to be corrected. I thought it was best to put some things to rest for the good of our racers and the racing community."

Ebert said the group ownership has not renewed the lease at the track and that it appears that 2023 will be their last season running at the southwest Virginia track. He thanked the track ownership, David Hagan and the Shelor Group, for their support and incredible opportunity to operate this track.

There had been some confusion earlier this summer

when Ebert and Pulaski County leaders announced a name change to the facility. In May, Motor Mile Speedway announced plans to change its name. During a press conference, local officials gathered to hear the new name "The Pulaski County Motorsports Park."

In 2020, the Rusty Wallace Racing Group took over the speedway, which is celebrating its 34th year anniversary this year. The track has been known over the years as the New River Valley Speedway and has changed its name four times since its opening over 20 years ago.

The multi-year lease agreement allowed RWRE to take over venue operations, with the speedway becoming the home track for the RWRE and its companion companies.

At the time, former NASCAR driver Rusty Wallace called Motor Mile Speedway and Dragway one of the finest grassroots motorsports facilities in the nation.

"We worked tirelessly to rebuild the fan base at the racetrack, and it is tremendously disappointing to me that we could not bring back the fans in the numbers that would allow us the revenue to pay a reasonable lease

or purchase the racetrack," Ebert said.

The general manager also pointed to the criticism the operating group had received through social media, pointing to the fact none of it is fair to the current situation.

"Maybe one of my mistakes was not addressing rumors earlier, I have to say that I really don't think that perception is reality. The negativity of social media is sometimes overwhelming and creates its own false reality, and some truly crazy rumors. We don't have the car count of the glory years, but we do have an awful lot of great racing. We run a good crisp Saturday night show, fans here will stop me and comment on the racing nightly. Most of the negativity online is from people who have not been here in years or aren't involved," Ebert said.

Ebert has not released any additional information, and it is not known if an operating extension could still be in the track's future. But for now, 2023 looks to be another shutdown for the track with more questions than answers.

Draper Mile Race brings runners to Steppin' Out

BLACKSBURG – Nearly 300 runners came out for the annual Draper Mile Race, held Friday, Aug. 4.

The 41st annual Draper Mile, a one-mile downhill race held in conjunction with the Steppin' Out Festival and part of the 2023 RunAbout Race Series, included awards for a variety of age groups. The course is mostly downhill, starting and ending on Draper Road, with the finish in the middle of the street festival. Times

are generally about 10–12 seconds faster than for a track mile.

The first Draper Mile was in 1982, with 97 participants.

Top 50 results include:

First, Willy Fink, 3:57.13; 2) Alex Watty; 3) Matt Denlinger; 4) Jonathan Goerlich; 5) Jonas Roach; 6) Samuel Haynes; 7) Thomas Fulcher; 8) Noah Jones; 9) Ryan Bagchi; 10) Harrison Whitfield; 11) Henry Strahm; 12) Andrew

Parkins; 13) Nate Lehman; 14) Anderson Norton; 15) Tamir Zharmagambetov; 16) Kevin McGuire; 17) Fenton Tracy; 18) Connor Cormack; 19) Anthony Du; 20) Jonathan Lowry; 21) Alex Kolar; 22) Bennett Hunter; 23) Daniel Duarte; 24) Donovan Forbes; 25) Dillon Craig; 26) Mecom Lawson; 27) Kevin Byrd; 28) Evan Bruce; 29) Keldon Warner; 30) Louis Semtner; 31) Glen McGuire; 32) Tyler Warren; 33) Rivers Matthews; 34)

Jeremiah Jones; 35) Ignacio Moore; 36) Alisha Ebert; 37) Junwen Wang; 38) Aaron Paytner; 39) Benjamin Bailey; 40) John Delinger; 41) Caleb Warner; 42) John Peter Kitching; 43) Ethan Lillycrop; 44) John Matthews; 45) Robert Crnkovich; 46) Katie Wardinski; 47) Nathaniel Evans; 48) Scott Shepherd; 49) Logan Ramsey; 50) Isaiah Peters.

Staff report



Siblings Ward and Renee Kees of Christiansburg race against each other in the kids' fun run Friday evening at Blacksburg's Steppin' Out.



Blacksburg's Willy Fink set another sub-four-minute time in the Draper Mile Friday evening, winning in a time of 3:57.13. Fink is the course record holder with a time of 3:53.



Alisha Ebert was the women's Draper Mile winner with a time of 5:02.



Thomas Hash (left) and Reid Nicholson lead the Open Race during the 41st running of the Draper Mile.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING



Kyron Drones (left) and Grant Wells are battling for the starting QB position this preseason at Virginia Tech.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

QB battle continues in Blacksburg

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

BLACKSBURG - Virginia Tech football coach Brent Pry says no decision has been made on a starting quarterback as fall practice continues this week. Instead, everything remains up in the air.

Pry spoke to reporters this past week and said no decision has been made as of yet, and probably will not until after plenty of practice time.

For the second straight year, the Hokies enter preseason camp with a quarterback competition,

with incumbent Grant Wells and newcomer Kyron Drones battling for the starting job. Both signal callers showed flashes of success during spring practice and the competition could extend deep into fall camp.

Wells started all 11 games for the Hokies in 2022 as a transfer from Marshall. He threw for more than 2,000 yards and nine touchdowns while rushing for another six scores. The Charleston, West Virginia native has 35 games worth of college experience

See Battle, page 8

Johnson named to national watch list

Virginia Tech linebacker Matt Johnson was named to the Wuerffel Trophy watch list, an award that honors a student-athlete's commitment to serving his community.

He is also a nominee for the Allstate AFCA Good Works Team, which recognizes FBS student-athletes for their academics and service efforts in the community.

The Wuerffel Trophy, the premier award in college football for community service, is awarded to the FBS player that best combines exemplary community service with athletic and academic achievement.

The award honors its namesake, Danny Wuerffel, who won the Heisman in 1996 as the quarterback for the Florida Gators.

Johnson (6-0, 226) missed the 2022 season with a knee injury. During his time at Tech, the Richmond, Virginia native has positively impacted the New River Valley. He has been an active participant with Micah's Backpack (St. Michael Lutheran Church in Blacksburg), a program providing food assistance

for students experiencing food insecurities in 10 local schools.

The redshirt senior also took part in a Planting Progress project at Auburn Elementary School in Riner earlier this year. Johnson and other Tech student-athletes planted a community garden to educate students on the benefits of growing your own food and making healthy lifestyle choices.

Among his many other community-outreach efforts, he has served alongside Kroger and the Feeding Southwest Virginia Food Bank, packing and delivering holiday boxes for those in need. Johnson also helped conduct a youth football clinic at Blacksburg High School with the Blacksburg Recreation Department and is often a fixture at Virginia Tech's Child Development Center, participating in various activities with children, including pumpkin painting at Halloween.

The Wuerffel Trophy recipient will be announced in December.

Virginia Tech Athletics

Battle from page 7

under his belt and the benefit of a full season in the Tech offense.

Drones is a Pearland, Texas native and a former four-star recruit. He spent the last two years at Baylor, appearing in five games as a redshirt freshman in 2022.

Drones completed 14 of his 23 passes for 219 yards while picking up another 49 yards and two touchdowns on the ground. He has three years of eligibility remaining and his combination of size, arm strength and athleticism makes him an intriguing option.

Pry said he plans to rotate Wells and Drones with the first team receivers and will be watching a lot of film and doing some major evaluation after each practice.

"You can kind of have your gut and your instincts when you leave the practice field, but you gotta be careful til you watch the film and really see what happened. Could've been a good defensive play, could've been some new coverage in there, could've been not getting open, wrong route, or miscommunication, or just bad ball. So, you evaluate it, you hear from the receivers coach, the quarterbacks coach, and you get a better idea of what really happened."

Wells, a transfer from Marshall, was named Tech's starting quarterback after a strong performance in fall camp last year. While at Marshall, he completed 460 of 715 passes (64.3%) for 5,623 yards with 34 TDs while also running the ball 115 times for 237 yards with nine scores. Wells became the first freshman QB to earn first-team All-Conference USA honors before receiving honorable mention all-conference accolades in 2021 after ranking 15th in the nation with 3,532 passing yards.

The 6-2, 225 Drones arrives in Blacksburg following two seasons at Baylor. As a redshirt freshman in 2022, he played in five games off the bench as a reserve QB. Drones was 14-of-23 for a TD and 219 yards, throwing one interception, and rushed eight times for 49 yards and two TDs. He rushed for a nine-yard TD and was 5-of-7 for 100 yards in his collegiate debut in the season opener vs. UAlbany.

Drones was pressed into service early

in the third quarter at West Virginia after an injury to QB Blake Shapen, going 7 of 14 for 95 yards and a score and rushing twice for 24 yards, including a career-long of 17. He appeared in two games as a freshman in 2021 before redshirting. Drones was a member of the 2022 Second-Team Academic All-Big 12 team and was named to the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll.

The Pearland, Texas native prepped at Shadow Creek High School where he passed for 1,239 yards and 16 touchdowns as a senior in six games while rushing for 228 yards and two scores helping his team to 2019 UIL state championship and a 16-0 record. He earned Offensive MVP honors in the championship game and was named as the 10-5A Overall MVP as well as a Third-Team All-State selection. Drones was rated four stars by 247 Sports, the No. 7 dual-threat quarterback, the No. 20 player in Texas and No. 125 nationally. He was the No. 10 dual-threat quarterback earning a four-star rating from ESPN and ranked No. 60 overall in Texas. He had a three-star rating by Rivals, the No. 45 player in Texas and No. 15 dual-threat QB.

NOTES:
Wells has made 34 career starts under center

Wells has 21 completions of more than 40 yards in his career

Wells was the team's third leading rusher in 2022

Drones was pressed into service early in the third quarter at West Virginia last season, going 7 of 14 for 95 yards and a score and rushing twice for 24 yards, including a career-long of 17

Drones completed a 50-yard pass in a win over Albany

Both Wells and Drones will have a new quarterback coach this season as offensive coordinator Tyler Bowen moves over from the tight ends room

Wells or Drones will be the starter on Sept. 2, but there is plenty of promise in the quarterback room in the form of talented freshmen Dylan Wittke and William "Pop" Watson III, who tossed a touchdown pass to Tucker Holloway in the spring game.

National Farmers Market Week highlights connection between food and communities

RICHMOND — National Farmers Market Week is Aug. 6-12, just in time for peak-season produce like berries, peaches, peppers, sweet corn and tomatoes.

While fresh summertime bounty is certainly reason to celebrate, it's also important to recognize farmers markets' significant contributions to their communities.

"The week highlights the positive impact of farmers markets across the state and across the country," said Kim Hutchinson, Virginia Farmers Market Association's executive director. "We take this week each year to celebrate those hardworking farmers, vendors and the farmers market managers who truly make markets happen."

Farmers markets help spur local economies by giving producers opportunities to sell their products directly to the consumer. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. has over 8,700 farmers markets, accounting for \$514 million in farmers' direct-to-consumer sales in 2020.

"Farmers markets are a

good place for beginning farmers to access the market with few entry barriers," said Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. "They also allow farmers to test-market new varieties of fruits, vegetables or other products."

Many markets often host promotions and events that draw big crowds, acting as social hubs and "allowing farmers to reach a larger or different audience than they might see visiting their farm or shopping their online stores," Banks noted.

This all helps build connections, bridging the gap between urban and rural communities. According to the National Farmers Market Coalition, 72% of consumers know nothing or very little about farming—local markets can start conversations between farmers and consumers and act as educational sites.

They also can help address food insecurity, acting as a resource for those who might not have much access to fresh produce, as many markets accept Supplemental

Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, participate in Virginia's Fresh Match program and Virginia's Senior & WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

According to the VFMA, the commonwealth has over 300 farmers markets. Some have been agricultural commerce centers for centuries, like the Alexandria Old Town Farmers' Market. It was founded in 1755 and is America's oldest farmers market operating continuously at the same site. The Historic Roanoke City Market, founded in 1882, is one of Virginia's oldest, continuously operating open air markets.

To find a farmers market near you, visit vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown or vafma.org/virginia-markets. For fun day-trip ideas to agritourism attractions connected to farmers markets, check out the Virginia is for Farmers Market Lovers Trail at lovevamarkeets.org.

To learn more about some of Virginia's historic farmers markets, visit bit.ly/45924uL

Submitted by Farm Bureau Virginia

Beliveau Farm Winery takes gold in international competition

Beliveau Farm Winery, located on the outskirts of Blacksburg in Montgomery County, took home a GOLD medal in the 2023 Finger Lakes International Competition for its 2022 Cabernet Franc

"Fireside Chat," a full-bodied dry red wine with

red fruit flavors and spicy overtones.

In addition, Beliveau's Vidal Blanc "Sandy Ridge" took home a silver medal. The dry white wine has soft mellow flavors and is "great for sipping on a hot summer day," says Beliveau.

The Finger Lakes International Wine Competition (FLIWC) showcases the exceptional craftsmanship and diversity of wine and spirits from around the world and has become one of the largest wine competitions in the world to benefit a charitable organization, Camp Good Days. This year's event attracted an unprecedented number of uncredited entries, reaffirming its status as

a premier competition in the industry.

Since 2018, Beliveau has made all of their wines from estate grown grapes which are produced

and bottled on site at their Blacksburg location, a part of the North Fork of the Roanoke AVA. An AVA designation is awarded by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) to areas with unique viticultural capabilities after examining the climate, soils and terroir.

Beliveau Farm Winery is open Thursday to Monday from 12-6 p.m. and until 9 p.m. on Fridays. For more information visit BeliveauFarm.com.

Submitted by Beliveau Farm Winery

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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.

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