



# News Messenger

Blacksburg

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Christiansburg

Saturday, September 16, 2023

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\$1.00

## Auburn Park project in Riner completion date anticipated in spring 2024

**Lori Graham**  
Contributing writer

The Auburn Park Build Out project, which will include baseball fields, multipurpose fields, walking trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and bathroom facilities, now has a projected completion date of Spring 2024, according to Scott Woodrum, Director of General Services for Montgomery County.

Woodrum provided an update on the project, along with three other capital improvement projects, to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors during their regular meeting on Sept. 11, 2023.

"In the current schedule, it had an ad date of September 25th, which again may be impacted by the site plan comments," Woodrum

said. "It is anticipated this project would last about six months and could be completed by May of 2024."

The total cost is approximately 8.2 million dollars.

Supervisor Todd King expressed concern over the timeliness of the Auburn Fields project. The previous date of completion had been projected to be December of 2023. Craig Meadows, County Administrator, assured King that everything was being done to move things forward.

"I know that citizens are anxious to get this thing underway, but I think the process of making sure that everything is as it should be...you know as Scott mentioned earlier, and I think the last conversation we had was the hope, just a couple of weeks ago, was that



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MONT. CO.

we would have it out to be, at the middle of this month... have an award and a ribbon cutting sometime in October," Meadows said. "We're just not there."

The Auburn facility would provide a much-needed larger field for older team practices that otherwise are limited in the county.

"There are pros and cons to looking at the various fields, which ones you want to expand," Woodrum said. "Working through some of those issues may take 4-6 weeks, so that would add another month or six weeks to the ad date."

Woodrum provided updates on three additional capital projects in the County.

The Blacksburg Library Outdoor Improvements will provide a space for outdoor children's programs. Some of the

features of the new area will be a new patio with bench seating, shading, new lighting, power and data for events, and fencing to enclose the area along with alarm gates.

"We anticipate advertising the project in November or December this year and mobilizing February or March. The length of construction I anticipate approximately four months and would anticipate substantial completion in June 2024," Woodrum said. "The current estimate for the project is indicated in the CIP is \$423,500."

The Magistrate and Court Services Facility in Christiansburg would provide a safer and more secure location for arrestees that are standing before the magistrate. Court services would also reside in the facility.

See Riner, page 4

## Blacksburg Brew Do set for today at Historic Smithfield



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF THE BLACKSBURG PARTNERSHIP

Blacksburg Brew Do, hosted by The Blacksburg Partnership, is today, Saturday, Sept. 16, 1 - 5 p.m., with VIP early access at noon.

The event goes on rain or shine and will return to the grounds of Historic Smithfield, adjacent to the Virginia Tech campus. The regional festival is returning for its 14th year and, as before, will feature the best in craft beers from across the mid-Atlantic, popular food trucks and delicious fare, live music, and a variety of culinary and unique merchandise from Blacksburg, the New River and Roanoke Valleys, and beyond.

"We are so excited to showcase more than 70 different beers and ciders this year at one of

Blacksburg's favorite fall festivals! In addition to the fantastic selection from breweries throughout the mid-Atlantic, Blacksburg Brew Do offers attendees the opportunity to try regional food vendors, encounter a variety of local specialty products, and listen to some incredible live music," says Ann Cassell, president of The Blacksburg Partnership.

Powerhouse band Music Road Co will kick off the festival entertainment at Noon offering original music and select covers with a fusion of genres including funk, rock, island reggae, afrobeat, and Latin tunes. Then at 3 p.m., Roanoke-based artist Seph Custer & The Flatbreaks will perform a special duo show of rock, jazz, funk, blues, hip hop, and alternative tunes to close out the remainder of the festival. Both performers will be featured on the Moss Arts Center Main Stage, which makes use of Historic Smithfield's blacksmith cabin as the backdrop.

Tickets are on sale and available for purchase online at [www.blacksburgbrewdo.com/tickets](http://www.blacksburgbrewdo.com/tickets).

Attendees are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance. VIP tickets were pre-sale only. Regular admission tickets can be purchased on-site the day of festival.

Regular admission ticket (Ages 21+): \$40 day of at the gate-- Allows ticket holder access to festival grounds, 15 beer tastings, food trucks, culinary and merchandise vendors, live music, and complimentary roundtrip shuttle transportation.

Non-drinking admission only ticket: \$10 pre-sale and at the gate

Children 12 and younger are FREE with accompanying adult (18+).

Photo ID is required for age verification of all attendees. Festivalgoers must be of legal drinking age, have a ticket for entry, and receive a sampling wristband to participate in tastings.

More than 125 volunteers help execute a variety of festival tasks. All volunteers receive a Blacksburg Brew Do volunteer t-shirt, complimentary access to the festival, and (if 21+ years old) a six-tasting wristband for sampling. Volunteers are still needed, especially for the afternoon shift! To become a volunteer or to learn more, please visit: [www.blacksburgbrewdo.com/volunteer](http://www.blacksburgbrewdo.com/volunteer).

The festival receives incredible sponsorship support as well. Duncan Ford-Lincoln is the main gate sponsor. Lewis-Gale Hospital Montgomery provides free bottled water to all attendees as the Hydration Station sponsor. First & Main provides tasting glasses for all festivalgoers. And, of course, William Preston's Smithfield serves as our hosting venue, providing use of their gorgeous and historic grounds and Pavilion.

All proceeds from the event support The Blacksburg Partnership in its mission to improve the quality of life in Blacksburg. The Blacksburg Partnership is a non-profit, independent organization focused on economic development and community improvement with the goal of making Blacksburg a more vibrant place to live, work, learn and play!

Partnership projects include the revitalization of retail districts, NRV Passenger Rail, Blacksburg Young Professionals, and community arts endeavors such as Gobble de Art (the HokieBirds you see all over town). In addition, The Partnership is known for two, long-standing signature events: Blacksburg Fork & Cork and Blacksburg Brew Do.

- The Blacksburg Partnership

## Den Hill Farm and Fungi offers year-round mushrooms and more

Den Hill Farm and Fungi plans to expand their offerings into the colder weather, and with Blacksburg Farmers Market fall and winter hours, customers will reap the benefits.

Benjamin Harder and his farm team bring a variety of mushrooms, kombucha, and vegetables to local customers. This year though, he is hoping to go big over the winter. The Blacksburg Farmers Market has seen growth in recent years, and with their winter season, there is even more opportunity to bring farm-raised fresh produce and mushrooms to customers in the area.

This is also Harder's third year utilizing a mushroom lab.

"Before we were using low-tech growing and buying spawn from different suppliers, but now we make spawn, so we can have control over the varieties and what we are growing," Harder said.

Some mushrooms common to the southwest Virginia region like the mitake or "hen of the woods", Chicken of the Woods, or the infamous and elusive morel mushroom are great for expert foragers who know where to find them. However, for commercial mushroom farms, it would not be lucrative to depend on foraging alone. Additionally, some states may require a certified and licensed forager to commercially sell foraged mushrooms.

See Fungi, page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF BENJAMIN HARDER

Pre-orders are one way local customers can be sure to get their selection of mushrooms according to owner Benjamin Harder (pictured).

## Montgomery County names deputy county administrator

MONTGOMERY COUNTY - Christopher "Chris" S. Lawrence has been named Montgomery County's deputy county administrator, effective Oct. 16, 2023.

"While we had a very strong applicant pool for the deputy county administrator position, Chris definitely brings the leadership, experience and skills we were looking for in the role," said Angie Hill, current deputy county administrator. "He is an excellent addition to our leadership team, and I look forward to working with him."

Hill will assume the county administrator role on Nov. 1, 2023.

experience in leadership roles in local government will help Montgomery County as we continue to address infrastructure needs and strategic planning throughout our community," said Hill. As deputy county administrator,

See Lawrence, page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
**Christopher Lawrence**



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF VDOT

## Virginia Department of Transportation gives BOS road updates

**Lori Graham**  
Contributing writer

David Clarke reported on transportation maintenance and concerns in Montgomery County during the Montgomery Board of Supervisors meeting, held Monday, Sept. 11.

Many Blacksburg residents were met with localized flooding, while other citizens in the county received greatly reduced rainfall totals.

See Road updates, page 2



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Now through Sept. 17:

**Welcoming Week at the YMCA at Virginia Tech**  
Welcoming Week brings New River Valley neighbors of all backgrounds together to build strong connections and affirm the importance of welcoming and inclusive places. The YMCA at Virginia Tech is proud to host our 3rd annual Welcoming Week with support from the Town of Blacksburg, Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library, Blacksburg Farmers Market, The Lyric Theatre, Blacksburg Museum & Cultural Foundation, local businesses, community groups and individuals. More information can be found at: <https://vtymca.org/welcoming-week/>

## Saturday, Sept. 16:

**Mornings with the Mayor**  
Join Mayor Leslie Hager-Smith on Sept. 16 and Sept. 23, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. to learn how the Town of Blacksburg operates. Tour the new police station, explore the Town's history and geography and learn how to get involved at any age! Program admission is free. Open to ages 8 – 12 years. Program admission is limited to 12 participants. Participants must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. To register, call 540.443.1026 or email [lsaulding@blacksburg.gov](mailto:lsaulding@blacksburg.gov).

### Wilderness Trail Festival

The 50th annual Kiwanis Wilderness Trail Festival will take place in downtown Christiansburg, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Location of vendors will extend on Main Street all the way from Town Hall to Burger King. A record number of vendors have registered this year. The event will include the usual local arts and crafts vendors, craft demonstrations, an enhanced children's area, two stages, an emergency services location, great food all day, classic cars, raffles, a silent auction, and more.

### Ladies Night Out Workshop

At First Missionary Baptist Church, 7318 Manns Dr., Fairlawn, Va., 5 p.m. Speaker will be Ruth Wolford New Mount Olive UMC—Radford. Sponsored by Deaconess Ministry—FMBC. Refreshments will be served.

### Shred-A-Thon

Town of Blacksburg Shred-A-Thon; 9 a.m. – noon, 725 Patrick Henry Dr. Free event is a great opportunity to recycle unneeded household documents, records, etc. Please bring documents in a box, tote or paper bag and observe the limit of five containers per vehicle. Items that cannot be shredded include metal, three-ring binders, composition notebooks, hardback books, and non-paper materials. This is a drive-thru event only. Remain in your vehicle during drop off. For more information, call the Town of Blacksburg Recycling office at 540-443-1212.

## Thursday, Sept. 21:

### Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

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

## Friday, Sept. 22:

**Dailey and Vincent concert**  
Bluegrass musicians Jamie Dailey and Darrin Vincent will perform at 7:30 p.m. at New River Community College in Dublin as part of the NRCC 2023-2024 Concert Series. Reserved seating tickets are \$35 and available for purchase online only at [www.nr.edu/concerts](http://www.nr.edu/concerts). General seating tickets are \$25 in advance and available online or in-person at the NRCC Business Office, 23 Godbey Hall (cash and checks only for in-person sales). General seating tickets will be \$30, and reserved seating tickets will be \$40 when purchased at the door.

## Saturday, Sept. 23:

**Radford Summer Concert**  
Last installment of 2023 concerts, featuring country artist Ryan Perry and opening act Sofie Lynn. Held on grounds of Glencoe Mansion, just off West Main St. (600 Unruh Dr.). Gates open at 6 p.m., music starts at 7 p.m. Cost is \$5 per person; children under 12 are free. Food trucks and adult beverages.

### Mornings with the Mayor

Join Mayor Leslie Hager-Smith, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. to learn how the Town of Blacksburg operates. Tour the new police station, explore the Town's history and geography and learn how to get involved at any age! Program admission is free. Open to ages 8 – 12 years. Program admission is limited to 12 participants. Participants must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. To register, call 540.443.1026 or email [lsaulding@blacksburg.gov](mailto:lsaulding@blacksburg.gov).

## Monday, Sept. 25:

### Special Education Advisory Committee

A Radford City Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee meeting will be held at 4:30 p.m. at McHarg Elementary School, 700 12th St., Radford. The public is invited to attend. The meeting will also be available virtually using Google Meet. To be invited using Google Meet, contact Anne Goodman, Chair, at 540-267-7144, or Kate Leeper, Vice Chair, at 540-267-7223, to obtain a virtual meeting link. We hope to see you there!

### 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](http://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, Sept. 26:

### 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.

### NRCC Campus Cruise-In

New River Community College's Campus Cruise-In; 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in parking lot A at NRCC in Dublin. Features classic cars from regional car club members, sponsored by the NRCC automotive technology department, and automotive students will judge the cars. Trophies will be awarded for the first three places. The event is family-friendly, open to the public and free of charge. Registration will be held on the day of the event and is a \$10 donation per competing vehicle. Call (540) 674-3600, ext. 4285 for more information.

## On-going:

### Hydrant Testing

The Town of Blacksburg will test fire hydrants in the Southwest Quadrant of Town between Sept. 12 – Oct. 5. Hydrant testing can cause temporary pressure fluctuations and discolored water. These conditions will subside after the testing is completed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Town of Blacksburg Engineering Department at (540) 443-1300.

### Market Square Jam

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

### Free GED classes

New River Community College is offering free GED at the Meadowbrook Library every Monday and Tuesday through Tuesday, Dec. 12. For more information or to sign up please call the Library at 540-268-1964.

# Inmate dies after falling ill at Western Virginia Regional Jail

An inmate at the Western Virginia Regional Jail has died after becoming ill at the facility and being transported to the hospital.

According to WVRJ, "on the morning of Sept. 13, 2023, inmate William Harbor, 48, became ill. WVRJ security and medical staff immediately addressed

his illness and activated 911. Roanoke County Fire-EMS personnel responded to the jail and transported him to the hospital."

"Harbor was seen at Roanoke Memorial Hospital where his condition worsened," the announcement continued. "While being treated, Harbor experienced what

is believed to have been a cardiac arrest. He was pronounced deceased at 12:52 p.m."

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Roanoke will perform an autopsy.

"All information at this point indicates this death was due to natural causes,"

according to WVRJ.

Harbor was committed to WVRJ on June 28, 2023 and was awaiting trial for larceny-auto theft.

*News Messenger staff report*

# MCEA-PAC recommends candidates for school board, board of supervisors

The Montgomery County Education Association Political Action Committee (MCEA-PAC) has voted to recommend four candidates for Montgomery County Board of Supervisors: Derek Kitts, in District B; Anthony Grafsky in District E; and re-electing Mary Biggs in District F and April DeMotts in District G.

"As a member of the Board of

Supervisors, Mary Biggs and April DeMotts have shown support for the students and educators in Montgomery County. They, as well as Mr. Kitts and Mr. Grafsky understand the pivotally important role of public education in our community and sees education funding as an investment in the future of Montgomery County," said Erin Bull, chair of the Education Association's PAC.

For school board, the MCEA-PAC has endorsed Penny Franklin for re-election in District B and three candidates for open seats: S.Derek Rountree in District E, Laura Purcell in District F, and Ed Gitre in District G.

"We need board members on both the MCPS School Board and the Board of Supervisors who not only support public education and public educators, but who see

the value of public education. We need board members who will advocate for our students and our staff in both opinion and action," said Katie Seidemann, President of the MCEA.

"We believe the candidates that we have recommended value public education in Montgomery County and represent the future of our school system," said Erin Bull, chair of the Education Association's

PAC.

In order to be considered for recommendation by MCEA-PAC, candidates must complete a questionnaire and participate in a personal interview.

*Submitted by MCEA-PAC*

# Road updates

from page 1

"We're trying to machine a lot of the gravel roads we can, when it's not too dry... and then deal with some of the heavy rains that have been localized these last couple weeks," Clarke said.

Clarke added that patching is going on in the Merrimac and Catawba communities, patching work is happening in Alleghany Springs and Catawba Road, and brush cutting in a variety of locations throughout Montgomery County.

Additional work was done on the six-year plan project, which involved the middle section of Craig Mountain Road receiving treatment.

Supervisor Darrell Sheppard shared concerns about improvements needed on Sterling Drive, which is under consideration for surface treatment. A continuing complaint concerning overhanging brush on McCoy Road was also directed to Clarke by Sheppard.

"I think hanging over the guard rail it's pretty close to the road and then some places like down there next to Whitethorne Road, it's, the trees overtake the road," Sheppard

said. "I mean they're not hitting anything but they're shading."

Supervisor Todd King addressed concerns with Clarke about an ongoing conversation they have had regarding the speed limit on route 8 past the Shell gas station.

"I might save that for next time and do that, because I want to get, I'll get the actual speed study...because they did look at it, and they got the reasoning in there," Clarke said. "They look at kind of long sections, and in general, it's a less populated section south of Riner. I know we could look at a more specific spot within a half a mile of there, and they've even been reluctant to change that."

"You know, just my concerns and theirs, you know, that stretch of Route 8 is really curvy," King said.

King also mentioned another speed study that had been previously proposed as well, between route 8 and Union Valley Road in Riner. Clarke said he would reach out to King and get more information, as well as following up on the proposed study with traffic engineering.

Supervisor and Vice Chair, Mary Biggs requested an update on the Interstate-81 project. According to Clarke, work will be continuing for several years with incremental sections occurring up to near the 116-mile marker, which goes over Franklin Street in Christiansburg. Advertisements have been published asking for public comment on the sections of I-81 from exits 143-150. A VDOT public hearing will be held at Lord Botetourt High School at 1435 Roanoke Road in Daleville from 5-7 p.m. Additional information about the proposed project to widen the seven miles of interstate can be found at [www.roanokecountyva.gov](http://www.roanokecountyva.gov).

Funding for this project was a concern with BOS Chair Sherri Blevins.

"I see with the General Assembly, with their amended budget, did we get money back in on 81? I know that was looking particularly at the projects at 143 to 150," Blevins said.

County Administrator Craig Meadows followed up Blevins' question, saying he believed this money did not get added back

to the project. Blevins said a delay in funding for the project could potentially affect funding for future 81 projects impacting the Montgomery County district surrounding the interstate. Updates will be provided as the project continues.

In other business, the BOS unanimously approved the rezoning of a 122.6-acre parcel in the Mount Tabor area on Bradshaw Road. The property is currently zoned as Rural Residential (RR) with proffered conditions to Agricultural (A-1). The property was previously designated to be developed as a subdivision but that did not happen. The current buyers, Jennifer and Jeffrey Frayser, wish to develop a family subdivision consisting of three residential areas.

"In our analysis of the application, it does return the parcel back to its previous zoning designation that it held prior to 2008. It utilizes private infrastructure, so places no burden on the public system," Justin Sanders, Montgomery County Senior Planner said. "The Planning Commission did recommend approval of the rezoning with a 7-0 vote, with two absences."





# Marketplace



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THE NEW CASTLE RECORD

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News Messenger

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## Employment

### Crew Leader @ Edko LLC

in Roanoke, Craig, Botetourt, Bedford, Montgomery, Salem, Giles, Franklin & Alleghany counties & Roanoke, Bedford, Lynchburg & Franklin cities, VA. Explain work expectations to crew. Drive comp veh's to transport crew according to work plans & schedules. Supervise 4-5 laborer crew members (only tech oversight; no hire/fire responsibilities). Comm w/ customers & forestry professionals re: work plans, procedures & schedules. Must work in mountainous terrain. No min exp or edu reqd. Driver license reqd. Pre-employment criminal bg check & post-employment drug testing upon employer's rsbl susp of drug use. Emplr transp provided to/from worksites. Send resumes to Adam Anderson, 2314 Patterson Ave SW, Roanoke, VA, 24016. EOE.

## Legals - Montgomery County

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY ELECTION INFORMATION November 7, 2023 General Election

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, October 17, 2023

In-Person Early Voting at the MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF ELECTIONS 1546 North Franklin Street, Christiansburg, VA. September 22 – November 3, 2023 from 8:30am – 5pm

In addition, we will be open from 9am to 5pm Saturday, October 28, 2023 and Saturday, November 4, 2023

Note: The last day qualified voters can apply for an absentee ballot by mail: Friday, October 27, 2023 by 5:00 PM

A Ballot Drop Box will be available inside the Montgomery County Office of Elections from September 22, 2023 – November 6, 2023, during normal business hours.

The Constitution of Virginia requires that in order to be qualified to vote in the General & Primary Election you must be a citizen of the United States, be eighteen years of age on or before the next General Election, have domicile and a place of abode in Montgomery County and that you be registered in the precinct in which you reside.

An acceptable ID will be required when you vote. A voter may show either voter registration confirmation documents, valid Virginia Driver's License, valid United States Passport, or any other identification issued by the Commonwealth, one of its political subdivisions, or the United States; any valid student identification card issued by any institution of higher education located in the Commonwealth; any valid student identification card issued by any institution of higher education located in the Commonwealth; any valid employer identification card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by an employer of the voter in the ordinary course of the employer's business or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter.

Contact the Montgomery County Office of Elections if you have any questions at 382-5741 or the Department of Elections at elections.virginia.gov. Connie Viar Director of Elections/General Registrar



To place your ad, call 389-9355

## Legals - Montgomery County

### BWW# VA-347735-2 TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 1370 ROANOKE STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated October 24, 2018, in the original principal amount of \$131,313.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No. 2018007744. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Montgomery County, 55 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court on October 23, 2023, at 11:00 AM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: LOT 3, 0.386 ACRE, PURSUANT TO A PLAT OF SURVEY DATED APRIL 8, 1982, PREPARED BY E. STALEY CLEMENTS, JR., CLS, DESIGNATED PLAN NO. L-5366, WHICH PLAT IS OF RECORD IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA, IN PLAT BOOK 468, AT PAGE 106. SUBJECT TO A 12' RIGHT OF WAY, FOR THE BENEFIT OF A 0.512 ACRE PARCEL AS SET OUT IN DEED BOOK 398, AT PAGE 811 AND DEED BOOK 454, AT PAGE 734. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwwsales.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWW Law Group, LLC, attorneys for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: www.bwwsales.com. VA-347735-2.

**MAKE AN "A" IN ADVERTISING!**

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## Legals - Montgomery County

### TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 5070 GOLD RUSH RD, PILOT, VA 24138.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated February 12, 2007, in the original principal amount of \$324,000.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No. 07001815. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Montgomery County, 55 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court on October 23, 2023, at 11:00 AM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A 1" IRON PIPE FIFTEEN (15) FEET SOUTH OF A THREE (3) FOOT MAPLE TREE WHICH IS 502.5 FEET SOUTH OF STATE ROUTE 726 AND AT CORNER OF MRS. A. P. NAFF'S PROPERTY; THENCE S 04 DEG. 18' 18" E 585.50 FEET TO A 1" PIPE; THENCE IN A EASTERLY DIRECTION 122.83 FEET TO A 1/2" PIPE, A THENCE CONTINUING IN AN EASTERLY DIRECTION 210.66 FEET TO A 1" PIPE; THENCE IN A NORTHWESTERLY DIRECTION 84.87 FEET TO A 9" HICKORY; THENCE CONTINUING IN A NORTHERLY DIRECTION 79.58 FEET TO A 14" WILD CHERRY; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY 151.00 FEET TO A PIPE; THENCE CONTINUING IN A NORTHWESTERLY DIRECTION 200.00 FEET TO A 1" PIPE; THENCE CONTINUING IN A NORTHWESTERLY DIRECTION 34.17 FEET TO THE EAST CORNER OF A CONCRETE CATTLE GUARD; THENCE WEST 46.2 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. TOGETHER WITH A RIGHT-OF-WAY FROM THE HEREIN CONVEYED PROPERTY TO STATE ROAD 726 FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS TOGETHER WITH THE RIGHT TO ERECT OR PLACE UPON THE PROPERTY ALL UTILITIES NECESSARY FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF SAID PROPERTY TOGETHER WITH THE RIGHT TO MAINTAIN, REPAIR, REPLACE AND IMPROVE ANY AFORESAID FACILITIES. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwwsales.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWW Law Group, LLC, attorneys

for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: www.bwwsales.com. VA-208631-2.

## Legals - Montgomery County

### TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 1524 WALTON RD, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated April 26, 2007, in the original principal amount of \$107,950.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No. 2007004900

The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Montgomery County, 55 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court on October 23, 2023, at 11:00 AM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, WITH ALL IMPROVEMENTS THEREON AND APPURTENANCES THEREUNTO BELONGING, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN THE RINER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA AND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A ROD IN THE NORTHEAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF VIRGINIA STATE SECONDARY ROUTE NUMBER 663, CORNER TO NOW OR FORMERLY ROY D. BURTON; THENCE FROM SAID BEGINNING POINT WITH THE LINE OF ROY D. BURTON, THE FOLLOWING LINES: N 81 DEG. 28' E 241.14 FEET TO A POST; THENCE N 17 DEG. 00' E 29.06 FEET TO A POST; THENCE N 44 DEG. 15' E 20.87 FEET TO A DEAD LOCUST; THENCE N 54 DEG. 07' E 54.23 FEET TO A POST; THENCE N 50 DEG. 11' E 119.67 FEET TO A LYNN TREE ON BANK OF BRANCH; THENCE N 41 DEG. 35' E 25 FEET TO A STAKE; THENCE LEAVING THE LINE OF ROY D. BURTON, A NEW LINE, IN A SOUTHEASTERLY DIRECTION 100 FEET TO A STAKE; THENCE S 54 DEG. 07' W 250.0 FEET TO A STAKE; THENCE IN A SOUTHEASTERLY DIRECTION 241.14 FEET TO A STAKE IN THE NORTHEAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF VIRGINIA STATE SECONDARY ROUTE NUMBER 663; THENCE WITH THE NORTHEAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF VIRGINIA STATE SECONDARY ROUTE NUMBER 663, N 24 DEG. 29' W 36.85 FEET TO A ROD; THENCE STILL WITH THE NORTHEAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF VIRGINIA STATE SECONDARY ROUTE NUMBER 663, N 27 DEG. 30' W 73.15 FEET TO A ROD IN THE LINE OF ROY D. BURTON, THE POINT OF BEGINNING. TOGETHER WITH THAT DEED OF EASEMENT DATED 11/25/2003 AND RECORDED 12/8/2003 AS INSTRUMENT NUMBER 2003020733. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the

Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwwsales.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWW Law Group, LLC, attorneys

## 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 September 25, 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 RDH LLC for a Special Use Permit (SUP) on property to allow a Short-Term Tourist Rental within a newly constructed one-bedroom dwelling. The property is located at 2157 Harding Road, Blacksburg (St. Rt. 785), and is located approximately .28 miles west of Lusters Gate Road (St. Rt. 723). The property is further identified as Tax Map 042-A 50A (Parcel ID: 035257), 1.349 acres, zoned Residential (R-2) in the Mount Tabor Magisterial 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., 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>.

### LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning: A street vacation request by Carter Machinery Company, Inc. for the vacation of the existing 40-foot right-of-way known as Alma Street in its entirety from Simmons Road SE to the VDOT park and ride property. Information on the preceding ordinance, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073-3029 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Andrew Warren, Assistant Town Manager by phone at (540) 382-6120 ext. 1130 or by email at [awarren@christiansburg.org](mailto:awarren@christiansburg.org) with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations. Written comments may be sent to the preceding address; please allow adequate mailing time.

### Notice

The Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning a proposed amendment to the Christiansburg Town Code Chapter 26 to add Section 26-136 for cost reimbursement for fire services. The amendment proposes reasonable fees to be charged for fire services provided by all fire services personnel, whether provided by volunteer or town employees. The schedule of rates for services is proposed to be established by resolution of the Town Council. The funds received from the payment of these fees will be used to aid in defraying the cost of providing fire services. Information on the preceding ordinance may be viewed in the Town Manager's Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073-3029 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Andrew Warren, Assistant Town Manager by phone at (540) 382-6120 ext. 1130 or by email at [awarren@christiansburg.org](mailto:awarren@christiansburg.org) with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations. Written comments may be sent to the preceding address; please allow adequate mailing time.



## Legals - Montgomery County

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## Legals - Montgomery County

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**Classified Advertising Delivers**

**Classified Advertising Delivers**



# Lawrence from page 1

Lawrence will assist the county administrator with special projects and daily administration of Montgomery County. In addition, the position is responsible for leadership of assigned county department directors, as well as conducting fiscal, policy, management, operational, and organizational analysis for the county.

"As a Virginia Tech alum, this community is home for me and my family," said Lawrence. "This new role will allow me to continue to collaborate with local leaders, serve the citizens, and support and plan for the growth we are seeing throughout our region."

Prior to joining Montgomery County, Lawrence was the deputy town manager for the Town of Blacksburg for the past seven years. Prior to joining Blacksburg, Lawrence served as town manager of Vinton from 2008 through 2016. Prior to his time at Vinton, he served in various roles at the Town of Blacksburg, including assistant to the town manager; senior

comprehensive planner; and development administrator. Lawrence also serves as an adjunct instructor in the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia Tech.

Lawrence is a member and credentialed manager of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). He is also a member of the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) and the American Planning Association (APA).

Lawrence holds a master's degree in public administration from Virginia Tech, as well as a bachelor's degree in public and urban affairs from Virginia Tech. Lawrence attended the Senior Executive Institute at the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. Lawrence lives in Blacksburg with his wife and three children who attend Montgomery County Public Schools and Virginia Tech.

*Submitted by  
Montgomery County*

# Fungi from page 1

"We have a licensed forager on our team; however, we grow almost 100 percent of the mushrooms we sell," Harder said. "For example, we grow shitakes on logs; we cut our own logs in the spring and plug them with a needle-injector and then they sit for a whole year. The following year you can fruit them every eight weeks. That is a summer crop."

Shittake inoculated logs can continue fruiting for approximately four years.

Den Hill Fungi and Farm also utilizes blocks made of a sterilized medium of a seed, such as oat, wheat, or soy, to grow mushrooms. Through ultra pasteurization, the sterilized blocks are then opened in a lab with a HEPA filter.

"It is like 100 percent success. You get the highest yields the fastest," Harder said. "For shitakes, it reduces the time to grow from one year to three months."

For customers wishing to experience growing their own mushrooms, Den Hill sells five-pound bags at the market for \$18 each. Harder explained that the bags provide a shorter amount of time to wait for your mushrooms to mature. Harder also said that mushroom growers must tend to the bag-system of growing fungi more carefully than, for example, an inoculated log.

Growing in popularity now is the mushroom extract powders. Lion Mane, Reishi, and cordyceps, which are used to make a powder that can be included in a variety of things such as coffee.

Mud water is a product some customers may have recently noticed in a few local coffee shops that provide organic options for coffee, containing a bit less caffeine as well, and is derived from organic materials. Den Hill Farm and Fungi are working with local roasters to make mushroom coffee. Some individuals like the mushroom chai tea that is a mixture of tea and mushroom powders, which can also be added to brewed coffee of a customer's choosing.

There are so many health benefits associated with fungi edibles as well.

"Lion mane is linked to cognitive health and cordyceps oxygenate our blood," Harder said. "We grow it on rice...to simulate the inside of an insect and then inoculate it with the cordyceps spawn, so we don't actually grow the cordyceps on dead insects. It is so new and going to be such a big deal, there's a lot of space for innovation and creation."

Portabella mushrooms are mostly available in the grocery stores, but if a customer has tried that type

and was turned off by the taste, Harder said not to be discouraged. The mushrooms Den Hill brings are fibrant and flavor-filled, bringing tastes and textures that customers would not expect. Kombucha is also one of their permaculture products.

Permaculture is about recycling nutrients and also bringing a balance to their farm. They use the compost bags from mushrooms as a base for compost and fertilizers.

"We have worms that eat the medium and make that into fertilizer for plants and use it for the vegetable farms," Harder said.

Customers interested in finding new mushrooms to try or purchasing their favorites, as well as other products Den Hill Farm and Fungi have for sell, can find them at the Blacksburg Farmers Market or through their website at [www.denhillfarmandfungi.com](http://www.denhillfarmandfungi.com).

"The main way to communicate with customers is through the newsletter and you can sign up through our website," Harder said. "We are still doing pre-orders and you can pick them up at the farmer's market, so you don't have to get there early. The other place for pickup is Annie Kay's anytime after 8 a.m. on Saturday. If you can't make the farmer's market, you can pick up there."



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF VDOT

# News Messenger

Established 1869

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Michael Showell, *Publisher*

Heather Bell, *Editor*

hbell@mainstreetnewspapers

Aila Boyd, *Executive Editor*

aboyd@ourvalley.org

Randy Thompson, *Advertising Consultant*

advertise@ourvalley.org

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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.

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

# Riner from page 1

"The scope of this project includes 7,000 square feet of new office space and 3,800 square feet of a new sally port," Woodrum said.

Plans are currently under review for the project, but Woodrum expects advertising for the project to happen around Oct. 16 and bids to be received approximately one month after. The project mobilization has a start time expected to be around January or February, taking about one-and-a-half years with an estimated cost of 7 million dollars.

The Shawsville EMS Facility is the last project Woodrum presented to the Board of Supervisors and citizens.

"The new facility consists of 11,113 square feet; 6,300 of that is office, training, and residential space and three apparatus bays consisting of 4,800 square feet," Woodrum said.

Advertising is projected to be spring of 2024, construction is project to take approximately 16-18 months, with a cost potentially being 10.6 million dollars.

In other new business, Supervisors unanimously approved to schedule a public hearing on Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023, on a proposed ordinance

amending Chapter 2, Division 5, Section 2-107 of the county code that would entitle a tax exemption and deferrals for elderly and handicapped citizens by increasing the net combined financial worth and the income limits to be eligible for relief.

Supervisors also unanimously approved, along with the Commissioner of the Revenue that "due to current circumstances, an assessment ratio of 90% shall be applied to the fair market value of each of those automobiles, trucks of less than two (2) tons, heavy trucks, tractor trailers, antique motor vehicles, taxicabs, motor vehicles with specifically designed equipment for use by the handicapped, motorcycles, mopeds, ATVs, off road motorcycles, boats under five (5) tons, boat trailers, boats or watercraft greater than five (5) tons, RVs, campers, travel trailers and utility trailers" according to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors' agenda at [www.montva.com](http://www.montva.com).

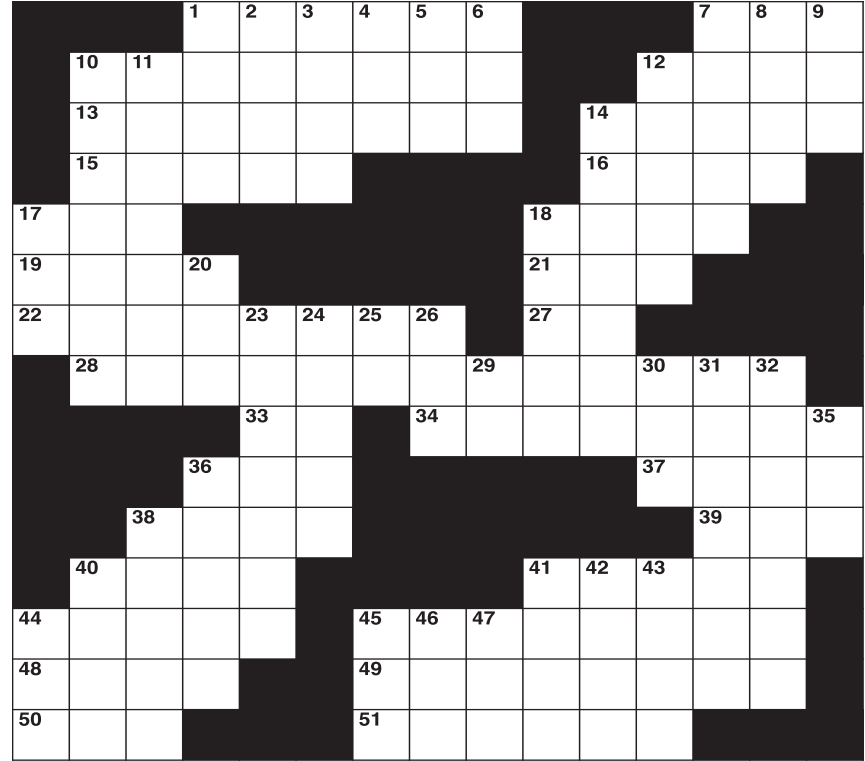
This assessment ratio will apply solely to qualifying assessments for the calendar year beginning Jan. 1, 2023, and ending Dec. 31, 2023.

In final notes of the new business, The Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, have proclaimed Sept. 11, 2023, as Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance recognized the 22nd anniversary of the attack on the United States of America, honoring and remembering the victims and heroes that lost their lives on Sept. 11, 2001.

National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September was recognized as well by the Board of Supervisor in promoting awareness of mental health care and those living with mental health disabilities. September was first declared as National Suicide Prevention month in 2008. Additional information on the staggering statistics of mental health, suicide, and mental health care needed in our communities can be found in the Supervisors' agenda.

The 988 Lifeline "provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones and best practices for professionals in the United States." Information can be found on their website at [www.988lifeline.org](http://www.988lifeline.org).

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Used to serve wine
  - 7. System to code a number
  - 10. Meddled
  - 12. A type of discount
  - 13. Dependent on
  - 14. Type of wrap
  - 15. Nigerian people
  - 16. Nuclear missile
  - 17. Scientists' tool (abbr.)
  - 18. \_\_\_ and feathers
  - 19. It cleans you
  - 21. Doctors' group
  - 22. Silvery marine fish
  - 27. Atomic #58
  - 28. Popular March holiday
  - 33. Pa's partner
  - 34. Sickneses
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Military leader (abbr.)
  - 2. Celery (Spanish)
  - 3. Pay heed
  - 4. The products of human creativity
  - 5. Surcharge
  - 6. Doctor of Education
  - 7. Hurtful remarks
  - 8. Marine mollusk
  - 9. The habitat of wild animals
  - 10. Pieces of body art
  - 11. Refusing to budge
  - 12. Triangular back bones
  - 14. Type of cat
  - 17. Type of web browser (abbr.)
  - 18. Small, broad-headed nails
  - 20. Man City coach
  - 23. Periods of food short-ages
  - 24. European nation
  - 25. Jr.'s father
  - 26. Concealed
  - 29. One who works with the police (abbr.)
  - 30. Lawyers
  - 31. Look of disapproval
  - 32. Longed
  - 35. Type of power cable (abbr.)
  - 36. Hindu cymbals
  - 38. Young women (French)
  - 40. Swiss river
  - 41. Expression of annoyance
  - 42. Where criminals go
  - 43. Inwardly
  - 44. Luck
  - 45. One point north of due east
  - 46. Originally called
  - 47. Defunct airline

## YOUR LOCAL NEWS



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# OBITUARIES

## Blackburn, Patricia Colleen Viers

Patricia Colleen Viers Blackburn, granddaughter, Evelyn Meade; step great grandson, Weston Patterson; sister, Euna Spence; and many other relatives and friends.



She was a member of Snowville Baptist Church and was an administrative assistant for over 23 years with Radford OBGYN Office. She was preceded in death by her parents, Henry and Rosa Viers; and her husband, Cadell Blackburn.

Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law, Jason and Susan Blackburn of Riner; daughter and son-in-law, Michelle and Joe Curtis of Riner; grandchildren, Hannah Brown (Travis), Emily Meade, Alicia Blackburn, and Brayden Blackburn; step grandchildren, Jordan Patterson and Cole Curtis; great

Everette Andrew Pack, 82, of however, was his family. He was a Radford, passed away Thursday, Sept. 7, 2023.



Everette graduated from Carson-Newman College (now University) in 1962 where he obtained a Bachelor of Science in Physics. He relocated his family from East Tennessee to Radford, where he applied his degree to a highly accomplished 35-year career at Hercules (RAAP). He was a dedicated and highly involved member of Bethel Community Church for 51 years. An avid sports fan, in his spare time he could be found on The River Course or cheering on the VT Hokies.

Everette was the eternal cheerleader, coach, and mentor, always beside us, encouraging us, and supporting his family and others through life's challenges. To know Everette, was to love Everette, and everyone who knew him, loved him.

Interment will follow in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributions to Carilion Hospice of the New River Valley.

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

Everette's greatest accomplishment,

See **Obituaries**, page 6

### ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

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

**St. Philip's Anglican Church**, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, www.stphilipsblacksburg.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: fbradford.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, 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 Sonafrank, 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.eck-va.org, www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences \* Group\* or call 540-353-5365 for other Eckankar programs and for more information about how the teachings of Eckankar can lead you to spiritual freedom.

### EPISCOPAL

**Grace Episcopal Church**, 210 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

### Living Water

Read Ezekiel 47:1 through 48:35

Many old Western movies show parched travelers, desperate for water. Their boots shuffle in the dust, their legs give way. Finally, they see water in the distance. One cowboy runs up, cupping his hands into the watering hole, but his companion stops him short. Soon, we realize why. The camera pans the watering hole. There are no living things—not one sign of life. A skeleton or two reinforce the scene. Stagnant water brings death.

By contrast, where water is flowing, life thrives. This water can quench, refresh, and sustain the thirst of a weary traveler.

"Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live" (Ezekiel 47:9).

Feeling fatigued? Parched? Are our souls thirsty for a drink? Or maybe you're fine. Whatever the case, we can kneel, cup our hands in prayer, and soak up the satisfying, living water God provides.

Challenge for Today: Immerse yourself in God's living water today.

Quicklook: Ezekiel 47:1-12

**If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445 or email at advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com**

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/oslcchristiansburg to learn more about us. Little Free Pantry and Little Free Library located in our parking lot. Pastor Joshua L. Copeland; church office 540-382-2223.

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

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

Send community news and photos to communitynews@ourvalley.org



# DAR invites public to plaque dedication

The Roanoke Valley Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution is inviting the public to the dedication of an American 250 Patriot's plaque on Sept. 24, 2023 at 3 p.m. at the Wilderness Road Regional Museum, located in Newbern.

DAR Virginia State Regent Laurie P. Nesbitt will be the guest speaker. The National Society's goal is to place markers in advance of the celebration of the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary.

"This dedication is designed to raise appreciation amongst current and future generations of Americans of our Patriots' sacrifice for their benefit," the chapter stated. "Our hope is that this marker will become a source of pride for this community to celebrate the brave Patriots who founded our nation and a reminder of the importance of emulating their conviction, courage



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF THE DAR

and cooperation toward national unity."

Adam Hance and his family built the home which is now a museum on the Wilderness Road in Newbern, the town he established. Hance was an entrepreneur who saw the good sense in establishing

a town along the main wagon road taking settlers westward into Kentucky and beyond and was a DAR Patriot.

Submitted by DAR - Roanoke Valley Chapter



Media bias expert Mike Horning of the School of Communication



Computer scientist Eugenia Rho with the College of Engineering

# Two networks, two realities, one big problem

National news coverage from the two largest broadcast outlets, CNN and Fox News, not only reflects growing political polarization in America, but in a recent publication, researchers at Virginia Tech have shown that partisan and inflammatory broadcast coverage has increased over time and can exacerbate growing divides in the new public square of social media.

Collaborative insights Eugenia Rho is assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science with a background in political science and a passion for using artificial intelligence to better understand people and institutions.

"When we're talking about language that is mediated and played over and over and over by actors who are influential, how does that affect the way the public talks about important social issues?" Rho said. "Rigorous analysis of big data sets like this opens whole new avenues of understanding

media and its impact."

Mike Horning is a journalist-turned-associate professor in the School of Communication. He studies how fake news and misinformation affect civic debate and political participation. He often collaborates with computer science researchers.

"Historically, if we were to tackle a question that was about media bias in the past 40 years, it's going to be somebody looking at a data set of maybe 500 articles. That is very limited," Horning said. "But computer scientists are now able to help us tackle some of these tough, tough questions by analyzing massive amounts of data, which we've never been able to do before. So that's why I think it's super cool to be able to work with them."

Big data, nuanced knowledge

Using a branch of artificial intelligence called natural language processing, the researchers analyzed nearly 300 billion words spoken on CNN

and Fox News and nearly 133,000 tweets from the networks and their followers to determine if national broadcast news contained partisan and inflammatory content, how that partisanship changed over time, and if partisan content affected debate among the networks' followers on social media.

They used two big data sets.

Transcribed closed captions from news shows that were broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week by CNN and Fox News from Jan. 1, 2010, to Dec. 31, 2020. The data was provided by the Internet Archive and the Stanford Cable TV News Analyzer.

All tweets between 2010 and 2020 that were written by users who followed both @CNN and @FoxNews, mentioned or replied to either @CNN or @FoxNews, and contained keywords associated with six politically contentious topics: Racism; Black Lives Matter and its abbreviation, BLM; Police; Immigration; Climate change; and Health care.

Democracy in the balance

Americans get their news from television five times more often than from online and print outlets, the researchers wrote, and viewers are more likely to choose their news source

See Networks, page 7

**CROSSWORD ANSWERS**

C	A	R	A	F	E	B	C	D
T	A	M	P	E	R	E	S	A
A	D	D	I	C	T	E	D	S
T	A	R	O	K	S	A	R	A
S	T	M	T	A	R	S	I	C
S	O	A	P	A	M	A	S	
B	O	N	E	F	I	S	H	C
S	T	P	A	T	R	I	C	K
M	A	L	D	I	S	E	A	S
T	I	L	S	K	A	W		
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A	L	L	E	D	J	I	N	N
H	A	L	L	S	E	N	T	R
A	R	E	S	B	E	W	A	I
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# Radford trucker named 'Highway Angel' for containing drunk driver after crash



Keith Rahn PHOTO COURTESY OF TCA

The Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) has named truck driver Keith Rahn, of Radford, a TCA Highway Angel for stopping a drunk and belligerent driver from leaving the scene of the accident, and helping police contain him.

Rahn drives for WEL Companies out of De Pere, Wisc.

It's an incredible story: On Aug. 29, 2023 around 10:15 p.m., Rahn was in the Everett, Pa. service plaza on the Pennsylvania Turnpike when an intoxicated motorist entered the facility. The motorist hit a parked Landair truck, and his car engine stopped.

"He slams into the front of another semi—just slams into him," Rahn said, so he called 911 and then exited his truck to check on the driver of the car. He and another trucker walked over to the crashed car and discovered the driver was extremely intoxicated.

"We could smell the alcohol," Rahn said, "so I called 911 back."

The driver of the car became belligerent and was trying to start his car and kept repeating "I have to get out of here." Rahn reached into his car and removed the keys from the ignition, determined that this driver was not going to leave and hurt himself or others.

The driver of the car was agitated, the police were contacted and were enroute.

While Rahn was waiting for the police to arrive, the driver of the car attempted to leave (but couldn't) and get away from Rahn. The Pennsylvania State Police arrived, and the driver of the car was not cooperating. Repeatedly

the State Trooper told the driver to get out of the car, but he ignored the order. The Trooper decided to remove him by force. Keith and another driver assisted, and while they were pulling him out of his car, they discovered his pants and underwear were falling off, and that he had a cup of wine in his lap.

"We got him down, got him handcuffed, and literally carried him to the back of the police SUV—he passed out," Rahn said. Eventually an ambulance arrived and Rahn and the other trucker assisted EMTs getting him into the ambulance. The driver was to be taken to the ER to check for alcohol poisoning.

Why did Rahn offer so much assistance?

"I had a daughter who was killed by a drunk driver," Rahn said, adding that he has alcoholism in his family.

"I really don't have any tolerance for drunk drivers, but I also respect the law," he said. "I know how dangerous drunks can be—there was no way in the world I was gonna let that guy get back on the road."

Since the TCA Highway Angels program's inception in August 1997, nearly 1,300 professional truck drivers have been recognized as Highway Angels for exemplary kindness, courtesy, and courage displayed while on the job. Thanks to the program's presenting sponsor, EpicVue, and supporting sponsor, DriverFacts, TCA is able to showcase outstanding drivers like Rahn.

Truckload Carriers Association

# NRV Master Gardener Association accepting grant applications for 2024 projects

The NRV Master Gardener Association, a volunteer organization of the Virginia Cooperative Extension, is now accepting grant applications for 2024 gardening projects.

Grants will be awarded based on merit to any educational, care-giving or community-based organization seeking to educate, involve, and/or improve quality of life for participants through a gardening-related project. Organizations in the counties of Floyd, Giles, Pulaski and Montgomery (and towns within), and the City of Radford, are encouraged to apply.

In the past, grants have been awarded to public and private schools, 4-H groups, public libraries, other educational groups, as well as community gardens and nursing homes. Funding has been provided for, but not limited to, creating public gardens

(vegetable and flower), raising plants for sale (4-H), composting, purchasing plant labels and gardening tools, to name a few.

Applications will be evaluated on the following (in this order): Educational value; plan clarity, viability, and explanation of use of funds, including a proposed detailed line-item budget; positive environmental impact (please research plant selection options to avoid use of invasive plants. We encourage use of native plants when possible.); active involvement of participants; and long-term maintenance, if an on-going project.

Requirements include: follow the proposed budget; complete the project as approved—usually by the end of the growing season or Nov. 1; progress

See Applications, page 8

# Obituaries from page 5

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clyde and Mildred Pack, and brothers, Robert and Carl Pack.

Survivors include his wife, Sandra Pack; sons, Michael Pack (Jolie), and Jeff Pack (Marilyn); grandchildren, Bethany Hinkley (Derek), Aaron Pack (Christina), Jessica Pack (Brenner), and Rachel Pack; great grandchildren, Emily and Anna Hinkley, and Alice, Andrew, Ezra and Eli Pack; sister, Carolyn Joyce Peters; special "daughter", Diana Knowles (Richard); and many other relatives and friends.

A celebration of life service will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford with Pastor Aaron Pack officiating. The family will receive friends following the celebration.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Bethel Community Church, 1060 Lovely Mount Drive, Radford, VA 24141.

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

# Pagans, Cynthia Diane Covey

Cynthia "Cyndi" Covey Pagans, 68, of Christiansburg, went home to her Lord and Savior on Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023, after battling cancer.

She was born on March 10, 1955, to the late Simon "Pete" Kenton Covey and Darlene June Via Covey in Pulaski. She graduated from Pulaski High School and worked for Montgomery County Social Services for many years before retiring in 2020. Cyndi loved reading, her cats, and spending time with her family.

In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by sister Jennifer Sue Covey Graham, niece Christy Sue Landreth Pampley, and former husband Robert Jackson Carter.

She is survived by husband of 13 years, Daryl A. Pagans; sons, Clayton Thomas Carter and Lucas



Diane Scott Covey and wife Amanda Covey; stepdaughter Brittany Ann Pagans Hawley and husband Brandon Hawley; and four grandchildren: Amelia Covey, Evelyn Covey, Mazyne Covey and Madelyn Grace Hawley. She will be greatly missed by all her friends and family.

The family will receive friends 12 - 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 2 p.m. with Pastor Keith Weaver officiating. A bagpiper-led burial will follow at Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin, VA.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the American Cancer Society.

The Pagans family cares for the Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

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# MONTGOMERY SPORTS

## Ritter applies principles learned from her youth

Time management, work ethic, and competitiveness. These principles were instilled in Emma Ritter from an early age. Work ethic came from her father, who owns a landscaping company in Maryland. The others? Those came from the field.

Ritter quickly found out it takes a lot to be a successful athlete, especially at the collegiate level. Even more so for those on a baseball or softball diamond, where a hit rate at the plate of 30 percent is considered great.

That's a 70 percent rate of failure. "It's just a game in the end, but it feels so much bigger when you're in it. I've spent my whole life dedicated to hitting a yellow ball with a stick," said Ritter, who balances being on the softball team while a student in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "I worked on my short-term memory. I learned that if you allow yourself to dwell on a poor result, it impacts other parts of your life. The same applies to class. If I didn't do as well as I wanted to on something, I need to focus on how I can take advantage of the next opportunity."

And while balancing the schedule of being a student along with an athlete is tough, her professors in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics made it much easier.

"All of my professors have been extremely helpful, welcoming, and understanding," Ritter said. "I've gotten so much out of my time in the department so far. I've been able to build meaningful connections with faculty and the other students in my major."

These connections go beyond the norm.

Through her professors, Ritter learned how they were successful in their careers and built connections with



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

**Emma Ritter is a senior outfielder for the Virginia Tech softball team, who posted a team-high .368 batting average this past season and led the team with 68 hits, 46 RBI and 124 total bases.**

industry.

That includes Ritter being a teaching assistant her junior year, while balancing her already demanding schedule as a part of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, which allows for a more direct line of communication between the individual sports team and the NCAA, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

In her time at Virginia Tech and the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Ritter found that business – not just economics – was a passion of hers. From marketing to associated communication techniques, Ritter was enthralled.

"Business is such a wide sector and covers so much," Ritter said. "The courses I've taken in Agricultural Economics, combined with my other learning opportunities in the department, really opened my eyes to what is possible in the field. I have so many options."

And in her time as student, Ritter applied the same principles she learned from her youth and from the field to academic success.

*Max Esterhuizen, Virginia Tech Athletics*



PHOTO BY STEVEN MACKAY

**Trish Hammer, associate dean for faculty affairs in the Virginia Tech College of Science, says her mathematical training gives her a competitive advantage on the pickleball court.**

## Finding the mathematics of pickleball

Trish Hammer, an alumna who is now associate dean for faculty affairs in the Virginia Tech College of Science, will compete in the USA Pickleball National Championship in Dallas in November.

Unlike most of her opponents, Hammer is utilizing her mathematical training and analytical thinking skills to give her an edge.

With a bachelor's, master's, and doctorate in mathematics from Virginia Tech, Hammer's perspective as an applied mathematician reframes the popular sport.

"You use [math] all the time," Hammer said. "You don't even know that you're using it."

Because Hammer is aware of the concepts of math in pickleball, she is upping her game.

"One big application of math in the calculus courses I teach is optimization, and for me, pickleball presents itself as one big optimization problem. I am trying to

maximize output based on the variables I can control," said Hammer. "Maximizing means winning and I'm always thinking about adjusting the variables to beat an opponent."

Variables include techniques, shot selection, game strategies, conditioning, diet, and instruction. Hammer pulls from these resources which translates into one big optimization problem.

"You are constantly adjusting the different skills, strategies, and conditioning, and I approach it all, surprisingly, very analytically," said Hammer.

In addition to analyzing the game through a lens of optimization, other areas of mathematics also come into play. Hammer uses angles and margins of error to determine shot placement.

"I'm trying to place a shot that optimizes my chances for success," said Hammer. "With each of those shots, you have to think

about the angle, like 45 degrees, 80 degrees, and 10 degrees, while also thinking about the margin of error."

If your opponent is standing in the back of the court, hitting a tighter angle is usually a more effective shot but it also comes with a greater margin of error. The goal is to find the "sweet spot" between angle and margin error.

"If I wanted to minimize my margin error, I would just hit it straight back to the opponent. Safe, but not very effective, so you're always trying to weigh that balance," said Hammer.

A pickleball player might be tempted to choose a hit farthest from an opponent, but Hammer said that may not be the hardest shot to return, yet another variable for optimization.

"Take into account how quickly your opponent moves in different directions," said Hammer. "An opponent may move more slowly side to side, and if so, it may be more effective for me to hit it a little closer to them by their side which has a smaller margin of error."

The same concept applies to reacting to an opponent's shots.

"Should I move up and then over? Should I just take the shortest path? What movement puts me in the best position to react? I think about it all the time, that the direct distance may not necessarily be the quickest distance," said Hammer.

Permutations in pickleball is where the mathematical possibilities really expand according to your skill level. Take the dink shot for example. It's a soft hit, a little like pingpong, where players hit the ball softly back and forth at the no-volley zone.

"The dink is a key to the game because you're trying to move the opponent and you're trying to get them to hit it high enough that you can smash it and win a point," said Hammer.

Though it's a very nuanced and delicate shot, there are lots of dink possibilities. At a very basic level, there are three places for

a player to hit the dink: straight across the court, toward the center of the court, or diagonally across the court. A rally might involve three shots, which means with three choices for each shot, there would be 27 ways to sequence three shots.

However, an advanced player is also considering placement, speed, and spin.

"All of a sudden for every dink you hit, you have three placement choices, two speed choices, and three choices for spin. Every time I hit the ball, I have 18 different ways to hit this one shot which translates to 5,832 ways to sequence three shots. Imagine the possibilities if the sequence is 10 or more shots. So this whole idea of permutations is a big deal. The idea is you want to consider these permutations in a way that optimizes your chances for success," said Hammer.

Pickleball comes down to patterns, and mathematics describes those patterns.

"When you're playing an opponent, you're always looking for patterns," said Hammer.

A fellow pickleballer told Hammer that when opponents get ready to hit a shot, he analyzes it this way: There is a 75 percent chance the shot will land in one place, a 20 percent chance it will land in a second location, and a 5 percent chance it will go in yet another direction. Based on that calculation, he prepares for the locations the shot is most likely to land.

"And I said, 'Oh my gosh, I do the same thing, but I had never heard it explained quite that way.' That's exactly how you're thinking when you play," said Hammer.

Although Hammer's friend and most players are not mathematicians, they all use mathematical calculations, in pickleball and in everyday life.

"People don't think that there's math around them, that they never use it, but we all do without realizing it," said Hammer. "I'm aware of it and the more aware of it I can be, this becomes a strength of my game."

*Lindsey Byars for Virginia Tech*

## Networks

from page 6

based on partisan views. They maintain their partisan news diets over time, too.

Rho and Horning have demonstrated that the language used in broadcast coverage also predicts how viewers debate important national issues on social media. More concerningly, their analysis further showed that viewers of CNN and Fox News not only hold different political views but interpret the same words very differently.

Words such as "illegal," "enforcement," and "order" often came up in immigration discussions on Fox News; whereas CNN used words such as "parents," "family," "children," "daughter," and "communities."

When discussing racism, CNN coverage often mentioned "protests," while on Fox "crime" often came up.

Within two to three months, the data shows that audiences on Twitter, now known as X, echoed the same language patterns of the broadcast news they favored. And vice versa. Different audiences spend their media time in partisan echo chambers that reinforce their existing views, the researchers found.

"This country was founded upon the Declaration of Independence. Words have immense, immense power, and a tangible impact on people's lives," Rho said. "When we have this consistent pattern in which major broadcast networks diverge completely, to the extent that they're portraying an almost different reality in which topics are discussed, then you have this irreconcilable division across audiences. That's something that I hope

this paper is able to foster more discussion around."

And there may be no simple way to combat this polarization because of economic drivers.

"Part of the motivation for it has been the increasing decline of viewership in cable news. They are competing against everything on the web," Horning said. "How can you cut through all the noise? The solution often is to become more outlandish and more rowdy. Because TV news is driven by ratings, the incentive is to make market-driven decisions that probably are not democratic."

Real life impact

"The lede is that partisan broadcast news is contributing to levels of polarization amongst the electorate," Horning said. "And we have terabytes of data to prove that. It's not just some college professors who studied something for two weeks. We now have 10 years of data. But getting the news to cover itself is going to be the hard part."

Convincing broadcasters to change their business model could be difficult, too. This research could help viewers make more informed media choices.

"As a computer scientist, being able to show this pattern at scale, I hope that it generates the necessary conversations around what's good for the collective society," Rho said. "Because if people just can't be on the same page to talk about important issues, where do we go from here?"

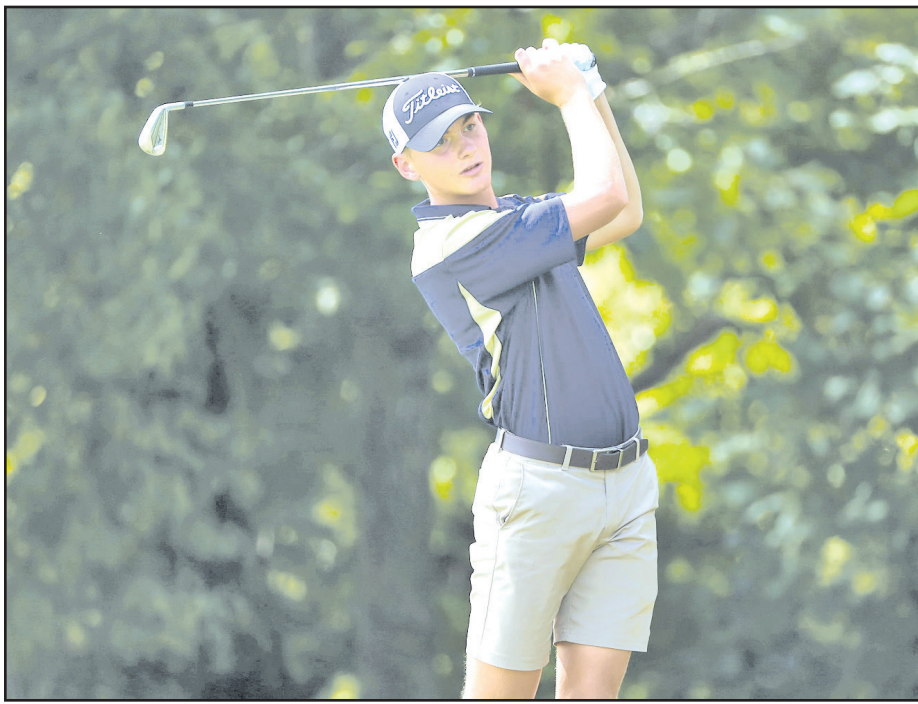
*Chelsea Seeber for Virginia Tech*

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# Blue Demons host River Ridge district golf



Christiansburg's Josh Cummins tees off on hole number 12 at Auburn Hills as the Blue Demons hosted a River Ridge District tournament on Monday afternoon. Cummins carded an 80, which was matched by teammate Calvin Rezac. Carter Dudash shot a 73 which tied him for ninth individual on the day.



Blacksburg's Pierce Campbell watches his drive on number 10 at Auburn Hills. Campbell shot a 73 (tied for ninth) on the day, and the Blacksburg team won with a low score of 283. They were led by Cameron Sharp and Jack Skinner, who both shot 70 (tied for third).

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

## Ashlyn and Evie's Big Adventure

The best part of college is being able to experience new opportunities and getting out of your comfort zone.

The nerves of starting something new, the unknown of what to expect, and the excitement making your heart feel like it is going to beat out of your chest. These were all feelings Evie Gee and Ashlyn Grogan felt when they were selected to play lacrosse in Europe this past summer.

Gee and Grogan found themselves traveling to Prague to play the game they love, but this time would be different. This time, they would be representing the United States of America.

Their adventure started when Grogan received a text from her previous coach reaching out to put together a team of female college players to play in Europe. He also shared he needed one more midfielder, resulting in Grogan sharing Gee's

name. The duo saw this as an opportunity to "gain confidence and a different experience," according to Grogan. Not only was Grogan traveling solo, but her story also started rockier. Immediately, she found herself challenged with flight troubles. She stated this trip "forced [her] to be independent."

In the beginning, they did not know anybody else on the team except each other. However, much to their surprise, their teammate, Cameron Counts, was traveling to be a manager with the U.S. Men's Lacrosse team. This allowed the three women to have some comfort in knowing they had each other when traveling so far from home. Not only were they surprised to see Counts, Radford's men's basketball player, David Vidor, a Hungary native, drove to watch them play. Additionally, they met another Radford men's basketball player's close family friend.



Ashlyn Grogan

The team's first day together was also their first day of practice and the first four days of their trip was dominated by lacrosse. The other teams involved in the tournament were the Czech Republic National team, Honk Kong, Netherlands National team, Croatia, and Germany.

The championship game consisted of the United States vs. the Czech Republic. Unfortunately, the U.S. fell to the Czech Republic. They noted how different the culture and style of play was compared to America. There were

multiple languages spoken during the games, resulting in referees having to translate for teams.

The following six days the team spent their time in Munich having fun and simply enjoying what the country had to offer. "When we weren't playing lacrosse, we got to see the little towns which I thought was really cool," noted Gee. This gave the women some time to bond off the field. These bonds were so impactful both Gee and Grogan remain in contact with the girls they met and have plans to visit each other. Gee also shared, "It was so



Evie Gee

cool because we made a lot of connections... girls you would never meet any other way."

The excitement beamed from Gee and Grogan when discussing their experience across the pond. They noted Prague is the only original city not burned down during World War II. They shared photos of numerous churches, the Charles Bridge, and photos from the lacrosse tournament (Grogan #0, Gee #27). While in Europe, the team attended various tours whether it be by bike or on foot then, as long as they had no practice, and

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RU ATHLETICS

had the rest of the day to themselves.

When asked what their favorite part of the experience was, Grogan said, "My goal was so be put out of my comfort zone." Gee referred to it as a "truly life changing experience," noting, "Seriously when else can you say you just played against the best team in Honk Kong." This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience the duo with cherish forever. You can see the duo hit the field in the upcoming 2024 lacrosse season.

Radford University Athletics

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This brick country home located in Pilot VA is a spacious and well-equipped property. With 2,362 sq. ft. this home features 3 bedrooms and 2.5 baths. Enjoy the beautiful sunroom located off the master suite. This property offers comfortable living quarters but also significant potential for personal and professional pursuits. The full basement is also a plus!

It features a paved driveway providing ample parking. Situated on 6.07 acres of land, the property provides plenty of outdoor space for various activities and entertainment. The large metal garage, spanning approximately 3,000 sq. ft., is equipped with 14ft. doors. It can accommodate vehicles, and equipment, or even serve as a workspace for a small business. It's also suitable for storing large vehicles such as RVs or boats.

The home is in the Pilot VA area of Floyd County. Within a short commute of Floyd, Riner, Christiansburg, Blacksburg, Roanoke and Salem VA.

**PREVIEW - Friday, September 15th at 4 PM**

**Terms** - 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$5,000 required on day of sale. Close on or before November 13th, 2023. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence. Auction starts ending at 4 PM on September 28th, 2023. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at [VAAuctionPro.com](http://VAAuctionPro.com).

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## Applications from page 8

report (due June 1, 2024): communicate progress with Master Gardener liaison until project is complete; submit receipts for expenditures funded by the grant; submit a project completion report (due Nov. 1, 2024) at the close of the project with photographs; be willing to give a tour or program on the project at a meeting of NRVMG or the board; and grants will not be awarded for labor, services or salaries.

Applications must be electronically received (if

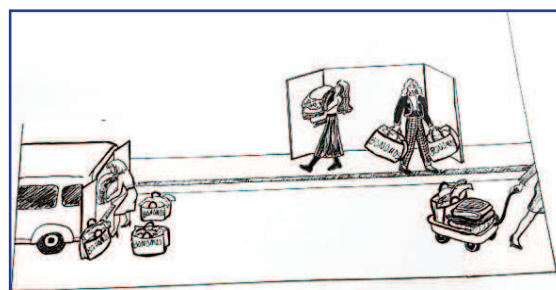
emailed) or postmarked (if mailed through the USPS) by Oct. 15, 2023. No late applications can be accepted.

Grant recipients will be announced no later than Jan. 6, 2024 and grant funds dispersed by Jan. 31. Project must be started within three months of funding and completed within one year of grant receipt. All unspent funds at the completion of the project shall be returned to NRVMG by Nov. 30, 2024.

Grant amounts will vary

depending on the number and quality of applications received. Submit a completed application form to the address below. Extra pages may be used for plan images and illustrations. For more information and to submit your project application, contact Carol Trutt: [nrvmastergardenerassoc@gmail.com](mailto:nrvmastergardenerassoc@gmail.com) email is preferred or mail to Carol Trutt: 95 N Surry Circle, Christiansburg, VA 24073.

Submitted by NRV Master Gardener Association



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