



PHOTO COURTESY OF WALTER P. JOHNSON

(Left to right) Senior FAA members, Jeff Slaughter and Maurey Dacey present the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award to Walter L. Johnson, with son (far right) Walter P. Johnson.

## Walter L. Johnson receives the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award

### Johnson honored for over 50 years of military and civilian skilled piloting

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

BLACKSBURG - Walter L. Johnson has been passionate about airplanes since his early childhood.

In his hometown of Villamont, just outside of Roanoke, he began learning to fly at Woodrum Field. One week after his sixteenth birthday, he took his first solo flight, and so began a life-long love of flying into the vast, blue skies.

Johnson's flying career has taken many forms, from flying for the United States Air Force in Vietnam, working with nuclear ammunition, to instructing civilian pilots in the New River Valley. Recently, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) presented Johnson with an achievement that few pilots receive.

"We are here today to recognize Walter L. Johnson, member of our flying community with the very prestigious FAA Wright Brothers Award. This award is named after Orville and Wilbur Wright who were engineers and founded the Wright Cycle Company in Dayton,

Ohio in 1892. While the bicycle business sustained them, they began to experiment with kites, gliders, and other flying machines, always with an eye to creating the powered machine that could one day carry a man aloft. Their first successful flight, with Orville at the controls, took place at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December 17th, 1903" Slaughter said at the presentation.

To qualify for the Wrights Brothers Master Pilot Award, a pilot must have at least 50 years of safe, skilled piloting service since their first solo flight, and be a United States citizen. This is a lifetime achievement for those who receive the award, and Walter L. Johnson's name will join those listed on the Wrights Brothers Master Pilot Award Roll of Honor.

"To this date, there are 8,139 receptive recipients of this award" Slaughter said.

Walter L. Johnson received the award during a presentation held in Blacksburg at the Virginia Tech Montgomery Executive Airport on Oct. 18. Johnson's

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## Police Chief presents new Christiansburg Police Department command staff at council meeting

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

CHRISTIANSBURG - Police Chief Chris Ramsey presented the new command staff of the Christiansburg Police Department during the Christiansburg Town Council meeting on Oct. 24.

The new Assistant Chief of Police is Major Derek Altizer, who has served in law enforcement for over 30 years, with the last 14 years as the Captain of Support Services.

Altizer has served in many positions including "a general instructor, a defensive tactics instructor, a hostage negotiator and member and later supervisor for the Department's honor guard," Ramsey said. "He has extensive command level experience with all agency administrative and operational functions and I'm confident he'll be an excellent assistant and chief."

Captain Carson Altizer has 28 years of law enforcement service beginning with the Game and Inland Fisheries and has been with the Town of Christiansburg since 2002. Serving in many roles throughout his time as an officer, he has also instructed courses and led the emergency response team for ten years.

Captain Randy Bonds law enforcement career began in Blacksburg in 1997. In addition to the roles he has filled throughout his 28 years of service, Bonds has been the Lieutenant of Criminal Investigations for the past 14 years. He has also worked in several programs to reduce domestic abuse and with crimes against children.

These are just some of the accomplishments of these highly trained and decorated officers and leaders.

"I chose them not just for their qualifications and experience, but

because of the kind of men they are, because they are not just leaders in the department, they're also leaders with their families and the community. These are the finest we have to offer and I'm proud to work beside them," Ramsey said.

Also during the Oct. 24 meeting, Valerie Tweedy, Director of Finance for the Town of Christiansburg, presented some changes to the FY 2023-24 Budget in the form of Amendment 1 to the Council members during the public hearing session of the meeting. According to the agenda, the amendment was a rollover of all capital projects and capital items to finalize the previous fiscal year.

Two of the items listed are \$15,000 for the new park security gate and \$24,800 for design and engineering fees for the Gathering Space Project that is also supported through the Appalachian Regional Commission. There was also an adjustment made for fiber in relation to the wastewater treatment plant.

"So, the total amendment is for \$3,226, 245 from the general fund and most of that amendment is rolling over unspent capital projects that will continue into 2024," Tweedy said. "That totals a little over three million dollars and the remainder is primarily for succession planning, and retirements."

Additional added budget items mentioned in the agenda are for the previously Council-approved Launch Christiansburg, a reallocation of EMS billing, a new grant-funded item for two new Christiansburg police vehicles, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs funding.

As part of Council's public hearing, the Town of Christiansburg

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## First Steps honors early childhood champions

BLACKSBURG - First Steps, an initiative of the Community Foundation of the New River Valley (CFNRV), recently celebrated 14 early childhood educators and advocates at the third annual Early Childhood Champion Awards.

First Steps is a network of more than 60 New River Valley organizations that support young children and families through education, childcare, healthcare, advocacy, and more.

The award ceremony kicked off the annual Igniting Connections Symposium, a free, day-long conference for early educators held at the Inn at Virginia Tech and sponsored by Early Childhood Education Initiatives at Virginia Tech. More than 100 people gathered to honor the 14 nominees and five award winners. In addition to educators and caregivers, those in attendance included local and state government officials, Virginia Tech

employees, and business leaders.

The ceremony drew the attention of the U.S. Senator Tim Kaine, who in a video message, praised the NRV's childcare workers and shared how he is working to bring more funds to the industry. "Early childhood educators are so critical to providing a solid foundation for Virginia's children and the childcare industry plays a critical role in our country's economy," said Kaine. "Our families need and deserve safe, nurturing, and affordable childcare options. Our childcare providers and workers deserve to be supported and appropriately compensated for the important work that they do."

The 14 nominees received a total of 22 nominations from colleagues, parents, and family members. Five nominees were selected as this year's awardees and received cash prizes from the CFNRV. Angie Muncy,

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PHOTO COURTESY OF CFNRV

2023 Early Childhood Champion Angie Muncy (left), Owner and Director of Milestones Childcare with Margaret Hurst (right), the CFNRV's First Steps Program Coordinator.

## Daughters of the American Revolution give Day of Service to Ingles Tavern



PHOTO BY MADELINE HOGE

Members of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) from four chapters join together at Ingles Tavern for NSDAR National Day of Service. Pictured (back row L to R) Lynn Reed, Vickie Green, Ron Green; (front row L to R) Peggy Hemmings, Karen Finch, Jeri Wallace, April Martin, Diane Catley, Debbie Haught, Margie Sentelle, Jeanne Butler, Sherry Nack, Dennis Phillips, Rhonda Phillips and (not pictured) Hope and Hank Ingram, and Bob and Melinda Tabor.

Members of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) from four chapters (Alleghany, Count Pulaski, Floyd Courthouse and George Pearis) joined together at Ingles Tavern and the western Ferry landing for NSDAR National Day of Service on Oct. 16.

The members picked up trash along the bank of the New River, trimmed back overgrowth from the stone remains of the Ingles Covered Bridge pier and remains of the toll house foundations, and cleaned the inside of the Ingles Tavern buildings. The National Day of Service and activities during October honor the founding of NSDAR on Oct. 11, 1890.

William Ingles started Ingles Ferry in 1762, after his wife Mary escaped from

the Shawnee and made her famous "long walk home." The ferry helped move settlers over the New River as they were traveling west. The tavern, built about 10 years later, became a popular stop for travelers. By the 1840s, to accommodate increased traffic on the Wilderness Road, a covered bridge was added but it was burned during the Civil War. Ferry service was once again introduced after the destruction of the bridge and remained active until the late 1940s.

For more information about Ingles Tavern and the western side ferry landing, please contact Wilderness Road Regional Museum at wrrm5240@gmail.com.

Debbie Haught, April Martin and Karen Finch

## Accident involving Blacksburg Transit Bus sends two to hospitals

BLACKSBURG - A motorist hit a stopped Blacksburg Transit bus on Sunday, sending both the vehicle driver and bus driver to the hospital.

On Sunday morning just before 11:30 a.m., the Blacksburg Police Department (BPD) responded to the crash, which occurred at the

intersection of Patrick Henry Dr. and Givens Lane.

"A vehicle traveling west on Patrick Henry crossed four lanes of traffic and struck a stopped Blacksburg Transit bus head on," according to the BPD. "The driver of the vehicle was transported via Lifeguard to

Roanoke Memorial Hospital and the bus driver was transported to Lewis Gale Montgomery. No passengers or pedestrians were injured in the collision."

News Messenger staff report

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Thursday, Nov. 2:

### American Legion meeting

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

## Friday, Nov. 3 and Saturday, Nov. 4:

### Book Sale

At the Radford Public Library; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Along with our regular items, there will be an abundance of children's, science fiction, fantasy, young adult, and Christmas items for sale. Come and get a bargain and support the Radford Public Library.

## Friday, Nov. 3 – Sunday, Nov. 5:

### New River Stage presents "Last Word on Jesse James"

New River Stage (NRS) announces their fall production of Last Word on Jesse James. Performance location is Proclamation Theatre at Knights of Columbus Hall in Christiansburg. Proceeds benefit New River Community Action's To Our House program. The play depicts the famed outlaw through the eyes of a story telling Mississippi River fisher. Living on the streets, telling big fish tales, the fisher becomes an internet celebrity who attracts people from all over meet them person. Tickets are available at proclamationtheatre.com.

## Saturday, Nov. 4 and Sunday, Nov. 5:

### Women with a Vision Bible Study's Holiday Bazaar

At First Baptist Church, 555 West Rock Rd., Radford. Saturday 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. and Sunday 12:30 – 3 p.m. Hot dogs, baked goods, coffee mugs, aprons, stockings, estate jewelry, cards, unique gifts, decorations, much more.

## Wednesday, Nov. 8:

### MCCC hosts Buy Local showcase

The Montgomery Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Buy Local Showcase, 3:45 – 6 p.m. at the Inn at Virginia Tech. How important is it

that you buy local this holiday season? Shopping local supports area businesses, their employees, our schools, and services. Showcase will include over 75 local businesses. Door prizes and raffles every 15 minutes. Event exclusive discounts and deals. Great place for holiday shopping and free to attend.

## Monday, Nov. 13:

### Radford City Council meeting

The Radford City Council will hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Radford Municipal Building, 10 Robertson St., Radford. See the agenda at www.radfordva.gov.

### Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

Public meetings are the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg. Closed sessions begin at 6 p.m. if needed. Open sessions begin at 7:15 p.m. Citizens are invited to attend and allowed to speak at each meeting. All regular meetings of the Board of Supervisors are rebroadcast on Montgomery County Comcast and Shentel Channels 190 daily.

## Tuesday, Nov. 14:

### Blacksburg Town Council meeting

The council meets in regular session the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 S. Main St. These meetings are open to the public and televised live on WTOB Channel 2.

### Christiansburg Town Council meeting

Regular Town Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall (100 E. Main Street). The public is welcome and encouraged to attend, with a citizen hearing time reserved at each meeting for residents to bring any matter they desire before the entire council.

## Thursday, Nov. 16:

### 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 on 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. Member Johnathan McPeak will give a talk on the Battle of Cloyd's Mountain. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

## On-going:

### Eligibility applications for Christmas Store 2023

Online applications are being accepted and reviewed now through Dec. 6, 2023 to shop at the Montgomery County Christmas Store in December. Please go to the Christmas Store website at www.mcchristmasstore.org and click on Apply to Shop. First, you will see the documents you need to have ready to upload before beginning the application process. Then scroll down some more to see the criteria you must meet to see if you are eligible to apply to shop at the Store in December. If you qualify to shop at the store Dec. 5-9, you will receive the link to select your shopping appointment.

### Call for participants: 2023 Blacksburg Annual Holiday Parade

Citizens are invited to participate in Blacksburg's annual Holiday Parade, organized by Blacksburg Parks and Recreation. This year's theme is "Miracle on Main Street". Parade entries may be floats, bicycles, wagons, marchers, walkers, antique/classic cars, Jeeps, trucks, scout groups, bands, sports teams and more. The parade will be held on Friday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the parade will be rescheduled to Saturday, Dec. 2. For more information on how to get involved, contact David Goodman, Community Programs Supervisor at degoodman@blacksburg.gov or 540.443.1106.

### 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.

## First Steps from page 1



PHOTO COURTESY OF CFNRV

**At the 2023 Early Childhood Champions Awards, four of the winners pose for a photo. Left to right: runner-up: Oma McReynolds, Family Consultant at Intercept Youth; honoree: Stefi Schäfer, Lead Teacher at, Blue Mountain School; honoree: Kaydan Appea, Assistant Teacher at Virginia Tech Child Development Center for Teaching and Learning; and honoree: Sidney Nelson, Assistant Director at Radford Early Learning Center.**

the owner and director of Milestones Childcare in Floyd received a total of eight nominations and won the top award, 2023 Early Childhood Champion of the Year.

"Angie's work over the years has been a true inspiration. Her ability to administer a program that provides consistent, quality, and individualized care and education to the children and families that she serves is amazing," said Kim Thomason, program manager for Virginia Tech's Early Childhood Education Initiatives. "Angie is a reflective and dedicated childcare program owner and director evident by her commitment to best practice and the educators that work for her and their commitment to Milestones Childcare Center, the children, and families they serve."

This year's Early Childhood Champion runner-up is Oma McReynolds of Intercept Youth, where she serves as a family consultant. Her nominator, a former client, said in part, "Because of Oma and her knowledge, support, and compassion our family is intact. We credit her for the restoration of our family and will forever be grateful for her consistent, dedicated, and empathic investment in us."

Additionally, First Steps recognized three honorees: Kaydan Appea, an assistant teacher at the Virginia Tech Child Development Center for Teaching and Learning in Blacksburg; Sidney Nelson, an assistant director at the Radford Early Learning Center; and Stefi Schäfer, a lead teacher at Blue Mountain School in Floyd.

The full list of nominees is below. Nominations for the 2024 awards will open next spring. More information on First Steps can be found at cfnrv.org/firststeps. To support or get involved with the work of First Steps, please reach out to Jessica Wargau at jessicawargau@cfnrv.org or 540-381-8999.

Awardees include:  
2023 Early Childhood Champion: Angie Muncy, Owner and Director, Milestones Childcare

Runner-Up: Oma McReynolds, Family Consultant, Intercept Youth

Honoree: Kaydan Appea, Assistant Teacher, Virginia Tech Child Development Center for Teaching and Learning

Honoree: Sidney Nelson, Assistant Director, Radford Early Learning Center

Honoree: Stefi Schäfer, Lead Teacher, Blue Mountain School

Additional nominees include:  
Lisa Bass, Preschool Program Instructor, Christiansburg Parks & Recreation

Christi Caldwell, Preschool Teacher, Pearisburg Head Start

Emily Gruver, Board President, The June Bug Center

Kysha Marshall, Teacher, Virginia Tech Child Development Center for Teaching and Learning

Resa Mattson, Program Coordinator, The June Bug Center

Chesley Mercado, Instructor, The June Bug Center

Chelsea Naughton, Director, Heart 'n Hand Childcare Center

Linda Naughton, Owner and Teacher, Heart 'n Hand Childcare Center

Dawn Sullivan, Owner, Sullivan Family Day Home

Submitted by Community Foundation of the New River Valley

VOTE NOVEMBER 7TH | Early voting September 23–November 4

# COUCH FOR CLERK

EXPERIENCE THAT MATTERS

Dedication to our future,  
dedication to our community

"Tiffany has been a key player in helping us achieve our accomplishments in the clerks office, and I have confidence she will continue and build upon the progress we have made.

**I wholeheartedly endorse Tiffany, and request that you join me in supporting her as the most qualified candidate for Circuit Court Clerk."**

ERICA W. CONNER, retired Circuit Court Clerk

EXPERIENCE \* SERVICE \* DEDICATION

# COUCH FOR CLERK

EXPERIENCE THAT MATTERS

Paid For By Couch For Clerk  
 P.O. Box 6731  
 Christiansburg, VA 24068

- Current Interim Circuit Court Clerk
- Master Deputy Clerk Certified
- Four Years of Deputy Clerk Experience

"Tiffany is a very professional public servant, dedicated to her work and our community. During her years in the Montgomery County clerks office, she has worked to learn all the jobs in the office and has achieved Master Deputy Clerk certification. **I fully endorse Tiffany Couch to be our Clerk of Circuit Court.**"

TOMMY WHITT, retired Sheriff

**VOTE NOV 7 | Polls are open 6 AM – 7 PM**  
Early voting Sept 23 – Nov 4

For voting information or to find your polling place, scan or visit [vote.elections.virginia.gov](http://vote.elections.virginia.gov)

# Pilot

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**Walter L. Johnson, Korean and Vietnam War veteran and recipient of the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award.**

son, Walter P. Johnson, attended the special event, and has also been a pilot for many years, recently retiring from United Airlines. The younger Johnson shared some background information of his father's journey in flight.

"In 1952, the Korean War was gaining momentum. Uncle Sam was calling on all good people, Walt with approximately 85 hours of flight time under his belt, volunteered to join the United States Air Force as an Aviation Cadet. He started training on the North American T-6 at Marana Air Force base in Arizona. From there, he went on to advanced training in the North American B-25 at Reese AFB in Lubbock, TX. After this, he was sent to train in the B-29 Superfortress. After Korea, Walt met the new "jet era" and flew the Lockheed T-33. Later, he transferred to Langley AFB here in Virginia and flew the T-33 and Cessna-310 liaison aircraft. It was during this time that he flew with Scott Carpenter, a pilot and Mercury astronaut," Walter P. Johnson said.

"Walt" Johnson would go on to fly the Cessna Skymaster in Vietnam as a forward air controller, and it was there that he received the bronze star. He finished his 20 years of enlistment service stateside at Andrews AFB, Maryland as a USAF Major and instructor pilot on the Condor T-29.

"He would go on to use his GI Benefits to get trained as an aircraft mechanic at the Washington Technical Institute at the National Airport in Washington DC. He started working at Hyde Field and was able to do test flying after maintenance. He also earned his civilian

flight instructor certificate," Johnson said of his father. Johnson's son, Walter P. Johnson, followed in his father's footsteps with also a love of flying machines. He recently retired as a pilot for United Airlines, to his home in Texas. The two men shared a passion for aircraft and still enjoy it discussing them to this day.

"We always talked airplanes," Walter P. Johnson said. "The fact is, he is 94, and he is sharp, and he can remember names. Walter L. Johnson demonstrates to the community that with a passion to be the best and safest pilot, everyone around you will notice and look to you with admiration."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WALTER P. JOHNSON

**Walter Johnson stands in front of the Cessna O-2 Skymaster he piloted during the Vietnam War.**

## NRCC hosts early childhood event for future educators



PHOTO COURTESY OF NRCC

**Students interested in the early childhood field participate in New River Community College's recent "Early Childhood Career Day: Those Who Can, Teach!" event.**

New River Community College (NRCC), in partnership with Virginia Tech Early Childhood Initiative and The Community Foundation of the New River Valley, First Steps, recently hosted "Early Childhood Career Day: Those Who Can, Teach!" to focus on recruiting and developing the early childhood workforce.

Forty-one students interested in the early childhood field from Floyd County High School, Giles County Technology Center, Pulaski County High School, Radford High School, and Blacksburg High School participated in the event. The students and their teachers rotated through six different childcare related sessions. Students had the opportunity to explore information provided by community agencies and resource exhibitors.

The event also included sessions for career and technical education directors, high school early childhood teachers, high school counselors, and Virginia Preschool Initiative coordinators to discuss developing the early childhood workforce and strengthening the career pathway. The educator session was presented by Bonnie Graham, NRCC professor of early childhood education.

"It will take everyone in our New River Valley communities to strengthen the early childhood workforce and career pathway," noted Graham.

The session and discussion were

facilitated by Kim Thomason, Virginia Tech, Early Childhood Initiative; Margaret Hurst, Community Foundation of the NRV, First Steps; Kathryn Thompson, Community Foundation of the NRV, First Steps; and Audrey Kirk, United Way Southwest Virginia, Workforce.

"The most overlooked and powerful influence in the quality of life and economic development of a community is the quality of early childhood education or childcare," said Graham. "A significant piece of high quality is related to the quality of the professional adult providing the experiences and interactions that are developmentally appropriate and lead to strong, positive neural brain circuitry. It is not about forcing academics earlier and earlier."

"We believe a credential in early childhood from our local high schools to NRCC and beyond will significantly strengthen the early childhood career pathway, improve the quality of the workforce, and yield greater success for children and families. Qualified providers and teachers are the pillars of childcare. The investment we make in the early years gives the best possibility of success and will pay off greater economic dividends."

*Submitted by New River Community College*

## Police

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has also requested an exchange of a 0.2665-acre property parcel at 1025 West Main St. in Christiansburg with another parcel of equal amount also on West Main Street, by request of owner, Jimmy Martin. The property, formerly recognized as Jack's Garage by residents, is for the College Street Stormwater Project.

Town Council was presented with information from Ginny Snead, of A. Morton Thomas and Associates, Inc., whose firm has been working with the Town on a Flood Resilience Plan. College Street has historically been an area of flooding concern, as mentioned by Snead in her presentation, and numerous drainage studies have been conducted by the Town. Other studies have been performed as well to assess stormwater management and flood planning for Christiansburg. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) also offers the Community Flood Preparedness Fund that can assist areas like Christiansburg in finding a resolution to areas prone

to flooding, Snead said.

"There are a number of different types of grants and one of them is capacity and planning," Snead said. So, that was the first grant that the Town went after with DCR and was successful. So, this plan actually was 95% funded by DCR, which is a pretty nice percentage that they put forward."

The unanimous approval by Council members will help in setting up the Town for a flood resilience plan that will also ease in applying for future grant money in the aid of flooding preparedness.

Council members approved the road closures for the Veterans Day parade to happen on Friday, Nov. 10 from 8:30 am to 12 p.m. According to Council member Samuel Bishop, the parade route will begin on Main Street and head southeast to Dunley Street. Due to the construction at Christiansburg High School, they will not be able to offer the meal they typically have for veterans, but will have gift bags for those veterans that want to come by and pick one up.

## PETS OF THE WEEK

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

*Meet Tara! She can be a little shy in her kitty condo at the Animal Care and Adoption Center, but when she is out and about she is a sweet cat who loves affection. Stop by to meet this purrecious gal!*



*Stu is such a very good boy. He's friendly, curious, and enjoys meeting people. He's a charming pup who knows some commands, including "sit." Stu also has lived with other dogs in the past and is housebroken, too.*

## NRCC sees enrollment increase for fall 2023



PHOTO COURTESY OF NRCC

**Enrollment has increased this year at New River Community College.**

Enrollment has increased this year at New River Community College (NRCC). At this point in fall semester, headcount enrollment stands at 4,147 compared to 4,103 at the same time last year, an increase of 3.3 percent.

The increase builds on a modest increase seen in 2022 reversing a years-long trend of declining enrollment similar to those experienced throughout the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and in two-year colleges across the nation.

While students are slowly returning to the classroom after a couple of years battling the pandemic is certainly part of the increase, the college's efforts to reach out to the community have been concentrated and intentional.

NRCC's outreach includes attending community events and high school athletic games as well as hosting outreach hours at local libraries and community organizations. The college's popular Access to Community

College Education (ACCE) program, which provides a debt-free path to college education for local high school students, has also been a factor.

"We are pleased to see this positive trend in enrollment and to have so many students back on campus with us again," said NRCC President Pat Huber.

New tuition assistance programs like the statewide G3 program also encourage students to return to college by helping with tuition. G3, which launched 2021, is a last-dollar tuition assistance program for low and middle-income Virginians focusing on early childhood education, health care, information technology, public safety and skilled trades.

Data for this report was based on information available on Oct. 20. Final fall semester enrollment information may change slightly. For more information about NRCC or how to enroll in classes, visit [www.nr.edu](http://www.nr.edu).

*Submitted by NRCC*

# OPINION

## A tribute to the soothing predictability of Katy Sue's supertime

Evans "Buddy" King

Columnist

In writing a few columns for my old hometown newspaper and trying to connect with old friends, and maybe make a few new ones, a lot of my stories have been about my dad. So, I decided after my last piece (about football shoes in eighth grade) that I needed to turn my attention to my wonderful mom.

I have written a few things about "Katy Sue," and about her sisters - the "Weaver sisters" (three girls raised on a farm in Riner, all of whom graduated from Radford College during the Depression years and went on to significant teaching careers), about their passion for dragging me to Roanoke on their shopping forays where little was bought but much looked at while I should have been home playing, and about how my mom made me feel guilty for leaving home during my

college years. She deserves some more attention.

In considering the topic, I decided that no look back at these years would be complete without reminiscing about mealtimes and my mom's cooking during my years on Cherry Lane.

First, I need to emphasize that lives were much simpler then, or at least so it seems now. Particularly in comparison to my adult life and my observations since

See **Katy Sue**, page 5

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I write to you today as the most recent elected Clerk of Circuit Court of Montgomery County, having served the citizens for nearly 16 years. In our rapidly evolving world, the qualifications, education, institutional knowledge, and experience are essential aspects that warrant voters attention when electing local office holders to do the important job of the County. Politics, or personal political preferences should be down on the list of importance when voting for a candidate to perform a job that that requires strict adherence to what the laws in Virginia are. Tiffany Couch brings a level of understanding and expertise that is an asset in a Clerk's Office. Her experience working as a Deputy Clerk and subsequently as a Master Deputy Clerk has allowed her to develop a deep understanding of the intricacies of the office's operations, many of which I personally trained her to do. This practical experience is something that should not be underestimated when considering the role of a Clerk. She can perform all the duties of the Clerk,

without hesitation.

Moreover, Tiffany Couch's degree in criminal justice from Radford University, and continuing professional education, showcases her ability to approach challenges from a diverse range of perspectives. This multidisciplinary approach is beneficial in a public service role. It is crucial to acknowledge that Tiffany Couch's years of practical experience as a Deputy Clerk and Master Deputy Clerk provides her with a unique skill set that her opponent lacks. This experience directly pertains to the responsibilities of the Clerk, ensuring continuity and effective leadership. Ms. Couch has completed the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Program, gaining valuable insight, knowledge, and connections into the things that drive commerce in Montgomery County. Ms. Couch completed the Leadership Program offered by the Human Resources Department of Montgomery County, to learn and study skills for best practices for leaders in local government organizations. The County and the Clerk's Office have invested in Ms. Couch's

ability to lead the Clerk's Office, and perform the duties required by law.

Ms. Couch's extensive institutional knowledge and practical experience make her a strong candidate for the role. This position requires a candidate who can immediately step into the role with a solid foundation of knowledge and experience. A true leader shows you how to do tasks, a boss tells you what to do.

I encourage voters to not be distracted by politics and political games, nor what ANY previous clerks have or have not done. Ms. Couch has her own vision and goals for the Clerk's Office in 2023, and I enthusiastically encourage voters to give Tiffany Couch a chance when casting their ballot on Nov. 7.

Respectfully,  
Erica W. Conner  
Retired Clerk of Circuit Court, Montgomery County (2008-2023)  
Master Circuit Court Clerk & Certified Court Manager

Dear Editor,

I attended the Montgomery County League of Women Voters forum for the Blacksburg Town Council candidates on October 5th. One question that was asked of the four candidates was about the 30% average increase in property taxes approved earlier this year by the current town council. Residents saw much larger tax increases on their homes, some approaching 80%. Blacksburg Town Council's decision to move forward with such a large increase is in stark contrast to Montgomery County's decision to lower their tax rate so that property tax bills would increase only modestly.

A thoughtful, measured approach to such decisions is needed. Rick Johnson is running as a write-in candidate for town council and was clear during the forum that he did not support the decision to levy such a tremendous tax increase in one year. He said that such a large increase should have been spread over multiple years rather than implemented at one time.

How can we address the issue of making Blacksburg an affordable place to live when the town council chose to add so significantly to the cost of owning a home in Blacksburg?

Rick Johnson has extensive experience managing budgets in excess of \$90 million and directing a total of \$750 million in construction budgets during his time at Virginia Tech and Duke University. His business and negotiation experience has prepared him to address matters affecting our town such

as improving and maintaining our town's infrastructure and enhancing services to town residents during a period of extraordinary enrollment growth at Virginia Tech. He will ask the tough questions and keep the interests of all residents in mind when making decisions.

I support Rick Johnson because he is independent, thoughtful, and cares deeply about Blacksburg. He will bring new ideas and a fresh perspective to our town's government.

I encourage all Blacksburg residents to support Rick Johnson for Blacksburg Town Council. Just "fill in the oval" and write-in Rick Johnson.

Greg Jenkins  
Blacksburg

Dear Editor,

Montgomery County is blessed to have Tiffany Couch as our Clerk of the Circuit Court. Couch brings five years of experience to the office. Her supervisors were so impressed with her passion for the job that they sent her to workshops where she received her Master Deputy Clerk certificate.

She was appointed acting Clerk of the Court when her supervisor retired. Couch has a strong team of trained

deputy clerks assisting her.

The clerk's office handles over 800 constitutionally mandated responsibilities. It takes years to become proficient in handling real estate transfers, court records, marriage licenses, managing and paying jurors, issuing concealed gun permits, swearing in law enforcement officers, etc. Couch has excelled at all of these. We can't afford to replace her with a wannabe with no experience and wait while the newbie learns the ropes.

Tiffany Couch's family has a history of public service. Her husband is a retired U.S. Marine. Her parents are both involved with our public education system. Public service is in her blood.

Let's not fix something that is not broken. Tiffany Couch is a keeper. I hope you will vote for her in this election.

Ernie Bentley  
Pilot

Dear Editor,

Though they tend to be underattended, local elections are incredibly important. That is where and when citizens vote for candidates who directly impact their lives and communities. Many positions are, and probably should be, tied to political parties, but there are some that should not be; most especially our Constitutional Offices. I urge voters to put politics aside and vote for the experience, knowledge, and best intentions of both of the presently serving Clerk of Court and our Commissioner of Revenue.

Tiffany Couch is an experienced and knowledgeable Clerk of Court. She knows everything there is to know about the logistics and legalities of the position. She has been doing the job because she is passionate about both her duties and Montgomery County citizens (no matter their party affiliations). Tiffany Couch is, hands down, the only qualified choice for Montgomery County Clerk of Court.

The same is true of Brenda Winkle. She has worked in the Commissioner of Revenue office for 23 years! Her opponent knows nothing about the office. Brenda is also obviously the only choice for Commissioner of Revenue.

I feel political participation is important and believe the quote: "The citizens of a Democracy get the government they deserve." That said, I strongly align with Democratic candidates, but believe our constitutional offices should not be partisan.

Tiffany Couch and Brenda Winkle are highly qualified, and highly experienced, and should receive votes based on their experience, knowledge, and commitment to their offices.

Their opponents are unqualified and are running as partisans. Tiffany and Brenda are running because they are informed and they care deeply about the work they do. Their records are the proof.

Gretchen Distler  
Blacksburg

## News Messenger

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

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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- CLUES ACROSS
- 1. Nuclear undersea weapon
- 5. Partner of Syria al-\_\_
- 10. Partner to flows
- 14. "Snow" in Welsh
- 15. Famed Mexican painter
- 16. Song
- 17. ticks outward from the crown
- 18. Doddering
- 19. Resist authority (slang)
- 20. Antsy
- 22. Wrath
- 23. Spills the beans
- 24. Past
- 27. The woman
- 30. One has 24 hours
- 31. Talk
- 32. It can sting
- 35. Astronomy unit
- 37. Halfway
- 38. Chinese dynasty
- 39. Australian river
- 40. Software to transfer audio (abbr.)
- 41. Fabric
- 42. Crucifix
- 43. Defunct European economic group
- 44. "Hotel California" rockers
- 45. Michael Knight's car
- 46. Actress Ryan
- 47. A digital tape recording of sound
- 48. Insecticide
- 49. Scientific instrument
- 52. Golden-\_\_ corn
- 55. Israeli city \_\_ Aviv
- 56. Sword
- 60. Ottoman military title
- 61. Aromatic plants
- 63. Cold wind
- 64. Large, semiaquatic reptile (slang)
- 65. Political unit
- 66. Indiscreetly reveal secrets
- 67. Comfort food dish
- 68. Actress Zellweger
- 69. Romanian city
- CLUES DOWN
- 1. One point east of southeast
- 2. Italian monetary unit
- 3. Warship prison
- 4. Tropical American tree
- 5. Alias
- 6. Normal or sound powers of mind
- 7. English county
- 8. Not compatible with
- 9. Female deer
- 10. Not late
- 11. La \_\_ Tar Pits, Hollywood
- 12. "Jupiter's Legacy" actress Leslie
- 13. Impudence
- 21. Advises
- 23. Founder of Babism
- 25. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 26. Male parent
- 27. A type of plug
- 28. Capital of Vietnam
- 29. Fungal disease
- 32. Shelter
- 33. Finished
- 34. Excrete
- 36. Unhappy
- 37. Partner to cheese
- 38. Coffee receptacle
- 40. Spend time dully
- 41. Makes full
- 43. Snake-like fish
- 44. Take in solid food
- 46. \_\_ student, learns healing
- 47. A way to take away
- 49. Impart a lesson to
- 50. "Transformers" actress Fox
- 51. Spiritual leader
- 52. Every one of two or more things
- 53. Indian city
- 54. 17th stars
- 57. Weapon
- 58. Amounts of time
- 59. Isodor \_\_, American Nobel physicist
- 61. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 62. Witness

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# Virginia Tech's global reach: Hokies take maroon and orange around the world



PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN BAGALKOTKAR

**Over the past year, Hokies have flown the Virginia Tech flag over all seven continents and more than 50 countries.**

In every corner of the world, Virginia Tech students, faculty, and researchers are exploring scientific and societal issues and bridging on-campus learning to activities and experiences around the globe — and they're bringing their maroon and orange banners with them.

In just the past year alone, the Virginia Tech flag has flown on all seven continents as Hokies traveled to over 50 countries engaging in study abroad experiences, pursuing global research collaborations, and tackling international service projects.

"I am constantly amazed by and so very grateful for the work that Virginia Tech faculty do with our students abroad. No less diverse than the locations they go to are the disciplines they teach and the types of hands-on experiences they make available to students: from undergraduate research to much-needed service and community engagement, and from insider industry and NGO [nongovernmental organization] visits to participation in global political processes. These faculty members set our students on a path toward understanding themselves and their place in the wider world, preparing them to graduate as engaged citizens of our global community," said Theresa Johansson, director of the Global Education Office.

Part of Outreach and International Affairs, the Global Education Office oversees the university's study abroad programs and collaborates with academic units across campus to integrate global education experiences into the curriculum.

Here is a sample of Hokies flying their flag around the globe:

**Antarctica**  
In January, geography Professor Lynn Resler led students on a field expedition to the Antarctic Peninsula.

During the nine days they spent sailing in and around Antarctica's harbors and coves, the students landed on the continent multiple times, conducting research and learning more about its history, geology, climate, and marine and terrestrial diversity.

**Australia**  
In Tasmania and Queensland, students conducted field research around the Great Barrier Reef, learned from local scientists, and participated in service-

learning restoration efforts.

Robert Bush, professor of sustainable biomaterials, led this 25-day program.

Between the work, students enjoyed snorkeling, hiking, exploring hot springs, and camping in the outback.

**Botswana**  
Virginia Tech students and faculty members work year-round with local volunteers and NGO and government employees in this landlocked country in Southern Africa to support the conservation of native wildlife.

Kathleen Alexander, a professor of wildlife conservation in the College of Natural Resources and Environment, has been conducting research in Botswana for decades, as well as leading study abroad experiences. In 2001, she co-founded the Centre for African Resources, Animals, Communities, and Land Use (CARACAL), a nonprofit organization on the edge of Chobe National Park that promotes conservation efforts while also improving the lives of the people through outreach and educational efforts.

**Costa Rica**  
Studying at the Wayra Institute and staying in homes of local residents, a group of students spent winter break learning about the culture, literature, and language of Costa Rica.

When they weren't in class, the students could be found walking the beaches of Tamarindo or zip lining through the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve.

The program is led by Alejandra Sobrado and Nancy Lopez-Romero, instructors in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures.

**Croatia**  
The 14 students in the Real Estate in Croatia and Montenegro study abroad program led by Jeffrey Robert, collegiate assistant professor in the Blackwood Department of Real Estate, got a firsthand look at global real estate.

Meeting with local real estate developers, financial lenders, property managers, and municipal leaders, they learned about the opportunities and challenges involved in developing, owning, and managing investment real estate in a dynamic international market.

They also examined the implications of historical preservation, social, environmental, and governance on real estate development in the two Balkan

nations.

**Czech Republic**  
This European nation is one of the many countries students spent time in during the Sustainable Policy-Making and Planning in Europe program led by Todd Schenk, associate professor in the School of Public and International Affairs.

In addition to the Czech Republic, the program takes students to Hungary, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and France to examine some of Europe's most pressing challenges and innovative solutions and see a variety of cities through the eyes of locals.

The program is open to all undergraduate and graduate students from across the university.

**Germany**  
In May, 143 students in the College of Engineering's Rising Sophomore Abroad Program spent two weeks studying abroad. Collectively, six groups visited 12 countries.

Students expanded their understanding of global engineering, learned about the importance of cultural competency, and explored the ways differences in cultural, social, and economic contexts influence engineering practice.

Student Nate Blackwell said his time in Italy and Germany provided many learning experiences — not only about engineering through company and factory visits, but also about the ways of life in the two countries.

"This was also just such a great way to expose myself to other countries and cultures, and it made me so much more aware of the world around me and how I fit in it," he said.

**Oman**  
This summer, 15 students joined Professor Ragheda Nassereddine for a six-week intensive study of Arabic.

Studying at the DHAD Institute at the University of Nizwa, students expanded their knowledge of the language and culture of this Middle Eastern country. They also had the opportunity to explore Oman's historical, natural, and cultural sites.

**South Korea**  
With only one week to see both South Korea and Taiwan, students in this track of the Rising Sophomore Abroad Program had a busy schedule

of seeing multinational engineering labs and corporations and taking in both the ancient and modern marvels of the two Asian nations.

Cultural excursions and lectures from local experts rounded out their experience.

**Switzerland**  
During their semester-long stay at the Steger Center for International Scholarship in southern Switzerland, students in the European affairs and food science programs enjoyed a quick excursion 25 minutes south to Lake Como, Italy, for their Italian course.

Many students use the center — located just north of Milan in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland — as a place to launch excursions, filling their semester with weekend trips around Switzerland and across Europe.

The Steger Center also offers opportunities for faculty and staff members to develop semester-long and short-term programs.

**Tanzania**  
Six Virginia Tech faculty members, two graduate students, and four Virginia-based high school teachers spent four weeks traveling through Tanzania and Kenya for a monthlong intensive curriculum development program called the East Africa Summer Institute for Educators.

Participants traveled through nine cities and visited four university campuses and several schools.

The program was developed by the Global Education Office and led by Tom Hammett, a professor in the College of Natural Resources and Environment's Department of Sustainable Biomaterials.

**United States**  
Forty international students from a wide range of countries hiked to the Cascades as part of their welcome and orientation to Virginia Tech the week before the start of the fall semester.

Virginia Tech partners with dozens of international universities to give students the opportunity to trade places through international reciprocal exchange. It's a type of study abroad where students from each institution can spend either a semester or a year at the host institution as nondegree-seeking students.

*Rich Mathieson for Virginia Tech*

## Katy Sue from page 4

those days. Orderly. That is the word I would use to describe the evening meals of my childhood. We called it supper, not dinner. Dinners were what happened on Sundays right after practicing our Methodism at St. Paul, or at Thanksgiving. I never remember hearing the folks say, "come to the table, it's dinner time". It was "supper time" in our house, as I think it was across most of Christiansburg.

Secondly, "supper" always occurred at the same time - 5:30 Eastern. It was as predictable as the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. During these years, my dad was superintendent of schools, the first several years with his office in the beautiful old courthouse on the square in town, the last several at the old schoolhouse on Junkin Street directly across the street from my grandmother and aunt's house. No more than a five- or ten-minute drive home, depending on rush hour traffic! LOL. Regardless of how busy my dad was (almost every night he had to go out after dinner for school board or church or civic meetings), he was at the dinner table at 5:30, and my mom, who stayed at home after I was born like many mothers of her day, had dinner ready. Practices in high school threw a bit of a monkey wrench in things, but the folks would eat and keep mine "warm" till I walked in. Sort of warm, pre-microwave days. Otherwise, no excuses for not being at the table at 5:30.

My dad had also been raised on a farm (albeit a subsistence farm, not dairy like the relatively "affluent" Weavers) and later in a small house on Craig Street, the oldest of nine, so he took his eating seriously. Dirt poor upbringing. Like most dads of our era, mealtime was the highlight of the day. Mine had a black belt in eating and really was just grateful for having decent food put in front of him. He had worked in the cafeteria in college primarily for free meals. He relished his meals.

Also as typical of the times, my dad was basically a "meat and potatoes" guy. He particularly wanted potatoes at every meal. Baked, mashed, boiled, French fried, it didn't matter. I remember him talking about the Irish potato famine and that one of the great things about America was "potatoes are 13 cents a pound, always have been, always will be, you can even grow your own in the backyard." Bread was also usually required, but if anything was missed, it better not have been the potatoes.

I also remember many of the very predictable meals my mom put in front of us. There was not a lot of

variation. Salmon patties from a can, fried in the skillet. I dreaded that night. Spaghetti, usually on Wednesday nights, basically just ground beef with Hunts tomato sauce and no seasoning (I was in college before I ever had garlic). Frozen fish sticks and frozen fries - my mother was afraid of all other kinds of seafood or freshwater fish except for frozen shrimp, which she really didn't trust either but tolerated because they reminded her of the beach. Like many people raised in the mountains during that time, she was convinced that very little good and plenty of bad could come from eating anything that swam. If you didn't get choked on bones, food poisoning would get you.

Another weekly mainstay was what she called "goulash", much like her spaghetti except she substituted potatoes and carrots for noodles - it was ground beef with generous helpings of Hunts tomato sauce. I ate around the carrots.

One of my favorite meals was "minute steak" - it came from Angle's Market, from the great butcher shop there run by the "Page brothers" and Ralph van Hoosier and is still better than any facsimile I have found since. It looked like cube steak but had the texture of hamburger and was pretty much the only form of steak I knew of until I was out of college. Later in life, the "rents", feeling more affluent with me out on my own, would get filet mignon at Angle's and my mother would put it in the oven, or my dad would put it on his grill, a proud possession, and proceed to burn the steak beyond all recognition. There's rare, medium rare, medium rare plus, medium, medium well, well done, and then there's hockey puck. My mom did hockey puck.

On my birthday, which coincided with my mom's, I got to pick our dinner, and I always, always, went with pork tenderloin cutlets and Spanish rice. Just like the minute steaks, I have never found cutlets anywhere that came close to those at Angle's. My mom put their pimento cheese in the same world class category. (You might note that I still miss Angle's even though it's been gone for probably 40 years. Part of the monstrous courthouse and municipal building complex that dominated Main Street sits where the market once was.)

Fried chicken or roast beef (again, with all hint of moisture sucked out) were Sunday "dinner" absolutes and came at 1 o'clock in the afternoon although the time might be moved up for Redskins or Yankee games on the tube. I still remember hearing the pressure cooker

whistling as the Skins were about to come on the air. Country ham was for holidays and my favorite meat of all time.

Except for canned tomatoes and vegetables from neighborhood gardens in the summer, my experience with vegetables came from the can. Canned asparagus and canned broccoli and canned peas and canned "other green stuff" pretty much set the course for my lifelong disdain for vegetables. I was shocked in adulthood when, at a dinner party, the hostess said "we were lucky enough to find asparagus at the market" - lucky? I never considered it luck (or at least good luck) when I saw it on my plate.

The highlight of the Weaver sisters' cooking skills though was their baking. My Aunt Alma and my mom made great toll house cookies. My cousins Bobby and Joe preferred my mom's while I preferred their mother's. My Aunt Maggie preferred to put her chocolate chips in "blonde brownies" which were every bit as good as the other sisters' tollhouse cookies.

Christmas time was when the sisters became competitive - like their mother, they all felt the season required fruit cakes. They would start around Thanksgiving and bake enough fruitcakes to feed the town. Each took great pride in their cakes.

I came to realize later in life that not everybody likes fruitcake, that in fact they are the butt of jokes and a frequent subject of regifting. But I have to admit that I liked the ones the Weaver sisters made. Perhaps it was the jellied fruit, perhaps it was the absence of black walnuts which make them taste like mold. Most likely it was the abundance of sugar used in the "family recipe." These cakes required so much sugar that my dad would need help carrying the bags in from the car.

My great childhood friends would find me remiss if I didn't mention something we all had to endure in our dads' diets while growing up. Cornbread. Dumped in milk, particularly stromach turning when they used "buttermilk". While I now can eat and enjoy "good" cornbread, I have never tried buttermilk. Forgive me dad.

All kidding aside, I would love to enjoy one more meal scorched by my mom and served in that little kitchen off of West Main. Unless it would be the one meal that should go unmentionable, one my folks would "ooh and ah" over. Liver and onions. Nuf ced.

# OBITUARIES

## Minnick, William Franklin

William Franklin Minnick, 77, of Radford, passed away Friday, Oct. 27, 2023. He was a retired truck driver. He was preceded in death by his parents, Peter Buford and Emma Kathleen Minnick; daughter, Melissa Kay Minnick; brothers, Jerry Buford

Minnick and James Robert Minnick; and sister, Lois Ridpath. Survivors include his wife, Carolyn Minnick; son, Kelly Minnick (Karen); grandchildren, Nathan and Gavin Minnick, and Jessie, Kevin, Ryan and Allen Bugg; great grandchildren, Lilly,

Brayden, Mia and Kayden; sister, Pansy Robinson; brother, John Woodrow Minnick; and many other relatives and friends. Services will be held at a later date. The Minnick family cares for the Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

## Green, Debra Jean Brogan

Debra Jean Brogan Green, 66, of Radford, passed away on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023. She was preceded in death by her parents, James Earl and Shelby Bane Brogan; and

her loving husband, Richard Allen Green. Survivors include her brothers, Randy Wayne Brogan and Ricky Lee Brogan; aunts, Barbara Giles and Reba Blevins; uncles, Charlie Bane and Lewis Bane; and

many other relatives and friends. Per the family's wishes, no services will be held at this time. The Brogan family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

## Simon, Jr., Jonas Ephriam

Jonas Ephriam Simon, Jr., 95, of Radford, passed away Sunday, Oct. 29, 2023. He was preceded in death by his parents, Jonas, Sr. and Bernice Simon; and his wife, Estrue Fazio Simon. Jonas is survived

by a daughter, Nancy Burnside (John); son, Jerry Fazio (Kathy); grandchildren, David Burnside, Christi Brummitt, Jeff Fazio, Lisa Frelief, and Nick Fazio; numerous great and great great grandchildren; and

many other relatives and friends. Services will be private. The Simon family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

## Pavoni, Sergeant (retired) Nicolette

Sergeant (retired) Nicolette "Nikki" Pavoni, 73, of Blacksburg, went to be with the Lord on Oct. 27, 2023 at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Salem.



Born May 27, 1950 in Lakewood, Ohio, she was one of four children of Subby J. and Jeanne L. Pavoni. Nicolette served in the US Army for 21 years, achieving the rank of Sergeant and retiring in 1993. While stateside she was stationed at Ft. Sheridan, Ft. Devons, and the Defense Nuclear Agency in VA. Foreign service posts were held in Germany, Japan, and Korea. During her military career, Nicolette received numerous awards and commendations, including the Expert Marksmanship Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the Meritorious Unit Commendation,

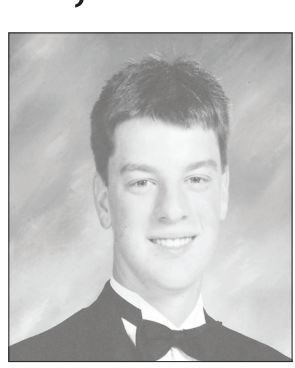
Nicolette is preceded in death by her parents; a sister Therese Paul; and her brother Peter Pavoni. Those left to cherish her memory include her sister, Suzanne Smith of LaCross, Wisc.; and numerous family and friends.

Friends and family will join to remember Nikki on Nov. 11, 2023 with a funeral mass held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 355 Independence Blvd NW, Christiansburg, with private military honors at a future date. McCoy Funeral Home is serving the family. Online condolences may be left at mccoymccoyfuneralhome.com. In lieu of flowers, charitable donations may be made to the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center.

## Hughes, Daniel Aaron

Daniel Aaron Hughes, 36, went peacefully to his heavenly home on Oct. 26, 2023, where his beloved dog, Sandi greeted him. Daniel graduated from Pulaski County High School in 2005 and earned his associate degree from New River Community College in 2009. He loved Hokie Football, Marvel Comics and WWE Wrestling. Daniel was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Maury Shepherd, Lillian Dunnigan and Raymond Dunnigan and his paternal grandparents, Mary Edwards and Henry Hughes. Left to cherish his memory are his parents Gary and Gwen Hughes, his brother Blake Hughes, sister-in-law Vickie Hughes, and nephews Eric

and Evan. Also surviving him are his aunts and uncles Lynn and Butch Jackson, David and Betty Shepherd, Debbie Hughes, and Roger and Anita Hughes, along with many other extended family members. Daniel is now free from the earthly constraints of his degenerative condition. He never lost his sweet, loving spirit. Being with family meant more to Daniel than



anything. The family will receive friends 10 - 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 1, 2023, at Fairlawn Baptist Church. Funeral services will begin at 11 a.m. with Rev. Greg Harrell and Rev. Danny Collins officiating. Interment will follow at Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the National Niemann-Pick Disease Foundation (nnpdf.org), which has guided the family through this journey. The family would like to thank the staff at Carilion New River Valley Medical Center. The Hughes family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

## Virginia gas prices decline

Average gasoline prices in Virginia have fallen 6.2 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.28/g on Monday, Oct. 30, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 23.2 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 21.5 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 3.4 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.43 per gallon.

Average: \$2.46/g  
October 30, 2016: \$2.07/g (U.S. Average: \$2.20/g)  
October 30, 2015: \$1.96/g (U.S. Average: \$2.18/g)  
October 30, 2014: \$2.78/g (U.S. Average: \$3.00/g)  
October 30, 2013: \$3.12/g (U.S. Average: \$3.26/g)

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.75/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$1.54/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.75/g while the highest was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$1.54/g.

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:  
Roanoke- \$3.26/g, down 1.2 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.28/g.  
Richmond- \$3.18/g, down 7.8 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.25/g.  
West Virginia- \$3.32/g, down 2.0 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.34/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 5.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.45/g today. The national average is down 36.3 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 27.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

"Average gasoline prices have fallen for a sixth straight week in nearly every state, with the national average now at its lowest level since March," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "The West Coast has been home to some of the largest declines, with California seeing an impressive 80-cent drop in the last four weeks, dispelling the myth that prices don't fall as fast as they go up. In this case, they have gone down extremely quickly, a trend that will see Arizona fall back below \$4 this week. Nevada could join the sub-\$4 club by Thanksgiving, and some stations in California will soon see a three-handle price return. For now, I believe we could see a further 10-20 cent drop in the national average in the weeks ahead, but any jolt in the delicate Middle East still holds the potential to disrupt the drop we're seeing."

Historical gasoline prices in Virginia and the national average going back ten years:  
October 30, 2022: \$3.49/g (U.S. Average: \$3.72/g)  
October 30, 2021: \$3.30/g (U.S. Average: \$3.39/g)  
October 30, 2020: \$2.06/g (U.S. Average: \$2.12/g)  
October 30, 2019: \$2.33/g (U.S. Average: \$2.61/g)  
October 30, 2018: \$2.60/g (U.S. Average: \$2.80/g)  
October 30, 2017: \$2.27/g (U.S. Average: \$2.46/g)

- Submitted by GasBuddy

### Legals - Montgomery County

**Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year/500-year Floodplain and Wetland**  
To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals  
This is to give notice that the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC) has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988 and 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under the Appalachian Regional Commission POWER grant program and the Department of Housing and Community Development Project (22-PW-02A). The proposed project is located at 5277 Whitethorne Rd Blacksburg, VA 24060. The proposed project area includes the development of an enhanced concrete boat launch on the bank of the New River in Montgomery County. The project area is approximately 1.7 acres, located entirely within the 100-year Floodplain and partially within a riverine. The project provides enhanced motorized and non-motorized boat access to the New River at the most utilized boat launch in Montgomery County, thus expanding the recreational opportunities and access for Montgomery County residents and tourists. This project will benefit the livability of our region and the burgeoning outdoor recreation economy. The Montgomery County boat launch at Whitethorne is one of four new/enhanced boat launches that will extend the existing 37 miles of the New River Water Trail (Giles County) to the rest of the region, totaling 61 miles upon completion. The project includes several related components: enhancements/expansion of current boat launch with an accessible path to

### Legals - Montgomery County

connect extended parking, suitable for vehicles with trailers, potential adjacent parking on a secondary site north of the boat launch, and a potential surface re-ventment. The NRVRC has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values: Because the nature of the project the boat ramp must be located in the floodplain/wetland in order to provide sufficient access to the waterway. Alternatives were considered and based on land availability and proximity to maintained roads with easy access for boat trailers, the choice of suitable sites are limited. Additionally, rail right-of-way reduces potential developable land with public access potential along the river. Alternatively, no action at all will not provide any benefit for the public. Any perceived and/or realized effects on alternative sites would be similar to any of the effects on current, selected site. The regulatory agencies involved with the permitting of the boat launch will dictate the least impactful design of the boat ramp to mitigate adverse effects. Mitigation measures include acquiring all necessary permits through the Army Corp of Engineers, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and Virginia Marine Resource Commission. The permits obtained from the regulatory agencies will dictate any requirements for mitigation measures and compliance with state and local floodplain/wetland protection procedures. Sediment and erosion mitigation controls will be utilized throughout project construction/site disturbance. NRVRC has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain and wetland and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. Environmental files that document compliance with

### Legals - Montgomery County

steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988 and 11990, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments. There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains and wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts Rev. 04/02/2014 Appendix 2.E: Final Notice and Notice of Explanation 48 to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains and wetlands it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk. Written comments must be received by the NRVRC at the following address on or before November 8, 2023 New River Valley Regional Commission, 6580 Valley Center Drive Suite 124 Radford, VA 24141. 540-639-9313 Attention: Kathleen Armstrong, Regional Planner II/Community Designer. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 9am to 5pm at the above address and electronically by request. Comments may also be submitted via email at karmstrong@nrvc.org. Date: November 1, 2023

### Legals - Town of Vinton

**ABC NOTICE**  
SANTA RITA 2 LLC, trading as BIG BELLY PIZZA AND SUBS, 105 W LEE AVE., VINTON, ROANOKE COUNTY, VIRGINIA 24179.  
The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC)

### Legals - Town of Vinton

AUTHORITY for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application- Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.  
Nasim Faltas, Owner  
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license

### Legals - Town of Vinton

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

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Legals - Botetourt County

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 17 KNOLLWOOD DRIVE, TROUTVILLE, VA 24175.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated August 1, 2003, in the original principal amount of \$111,000.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Botetourt County, Virginia, in Book 0000 at Page 0167 as Instrument No. 0307051. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Botetourt County, Main Street, Fincastle, VA 24090 or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court on December 4, 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 THE COUNTY OF BOTETOURT, STATE OF VIRGINIA, AND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO-WIT: LOT 1, BLOCK 1, ACCORDING TO THE MAP OF SECTION 1, KNOLLWOOD, MADE BY T.P. PARKER AND SON, ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS, DATED FEBRUARY 2, 1973, OF RECORD IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR BOTETOURT COUNTY, VIRGINIA, IN PLAT BOOK 7, PAGE 76. 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.bwvsales.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: BWV Law Group, LLC, attorneys for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: www.bwvsales.com. VA-208643-6.

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE COUNTY OF BOTETOURT

COUNTY OF BOTETOURT, VIRGINIA, a Political Subdivision Of The Commonwealth Of Virginia, Complainant, v. MARILYN LEIDECKEER AKA MARILYN L. LEIDECKER, Respondent. Case No. CL23-359

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The object of this suit is to enforce the lien of the Complainant, County of Botetourt, Virginia, for delinquent real estate taxes against certain real property located in the County of Botetourt, Virginia, described as follows:

Tax Map No. 86-31 Account No. 25712

All that certain lot or parcel of land, with all appurtenances thereunto belonging, lying and being in the County of Botetourt, Virginia, and being more particularly described as

Legals - Botetourt County

follows: Tract A, consisting of 1.00 acre, more or less, as shown on plat of survey prepared by Charles R. McMurry, CLS, dated September 12, 1990, and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Botetourt County, Virginia, in Plat Book 13, Page 170. There is further conveyed unto parties of the second, all rights in the "Cesspool" and drain lines for septic system purposes along with an easement to repair and maintain the same reserved in a deed to the adjacent property dated November 21, 1951 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Botetourt County, Virginia, in Deed Book 105, Page 143. And being the same property conveyed to Alan J. Leidecker and Marilyn Leidecker, husband and wife, as tenants by the entireties with the right of survivorship as at common law, from Ann Gladwell by Deed dated September 24, 2004, and recorded September 28, 2004 in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office of Botetourt County, Virginia, as Instrument 040006603. This description is made subject to all easements, conditions, agreements, restrictions, and reservations of record which affect the property herein described.

IT APPEARING that an Affidavit has been made and filed stating that due diligence has been used, without effect, to ascertain the identity and location of certain parties to be served, that the last known address for the Respondents herein are as follows: Marilyn Leidecker aka Marilyn L. Leidecker, whose last known address is 4704 Showalter Road NW, Roanoke, VA 24017; and that any officers, heirs, devisees, and successors in title of the Respondent named here in are made parties Respondent to this action individually and/or by the general description of Parties Unknown, it is hereby ORDERED that the parties herein and all Parties Unknown and/or whose location cannot be ascertained appear on or before November 30, 2023 in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Botetourt, Virginia, and do what may be necessary to protect their interests in this cause.

Entered on the 12th day of October, 2023. Sherry L. Perry, Deputy Clerk.

I Ask For This: Seth R. Konopasek, Esq. (VSB No. 97065) John A. Rife, Esq. (VSB No. 45805) Jeffrey A. Scharf, Esq. (VSB No. 30591) Mark K. Ames, Esq. (VSB No. 27409) Andrew M. Neville, Esq. (VSB No. 86372) Paul L. LaBarr, Esq. (VSB No. 91609) Gregory L. Haynes, Esq. (VSB No. 37158) Garrett W. Patton, Esq. (VSB No. 98345) Taxing Authority Consulting Services, PC P.O. Box 31800 Henrico, Virginia 23294-1800 Phone: (804)864-0080 Facsimile: (804)545-2378 TACS No.: 851479

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BOTETOURT COUNTY IN RE: ESTATE OF JOSEPH LARRY HENDERSON, DECEASED

NOTICE

Having been requested to do so by Lenden Eakin, attorney for James McClure, administrator of the estate of Joseph Larry Henderson, Deceased, and in accordance with Section 64.2-550 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, all creditors of Joseph Larry Henderson, and all persons in any way interested in his estate, are hereby notified that I have fixed the 29th day of November at 10 o'clock a.m., at my office at 13 South Roanoke Street, Fincastle, Virginia as the time and place for determining an account of the debts and demands against said Joseph Larry Henderson or his estate, the priorities among them, and the names of the persons to whom they are due.

All creditors of Joseph Larry Henderson, deceased, and persons interested in his estate should appear at the time and place named, or any other time or place to which the proceedings may be adjourned, and protect their interest.

Given under my hand this the 26th day of October, 2023. Malcolm McL. Doubles Collector of Accounts

Legals - Botetourt County

ABC NOTICE

Santa Rita LLC., trading as Lentini's, 1396 Roanoke Road, Daleville, VA. 24083.

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application- Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Consumed On and OFF Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

Nasim Faltas, Owner.

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

Legals - City of Radford

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316; -317, 20-104 Case No. CL23007009-00 RADFORD CITY CIRCUIT COURT, 619 SECOND STREET, RADFORD, VA 24141 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re CHRISTINA NICOLE HAMBLIN v. RONALD GLENN HAMBLIN The object of this suit is to OBTAIN DIVORCE. It is ORDERED that RONALD GLENN HAMBLIN appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before DECEMBER 13, 2023. OCTOBER 13, 2023 MELISSA WHITE, DEPUTY CLERK

ABC NOTICE

VISTARA LLC, trading as EASY DAY #2, 1123 FAIRFAX STREET, RADFORD CITY, RADFORD, VA 24141-5342

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Convenience Grocery Store license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

Jyoti Sansoa, MEMBER.

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

Legals - City of Salem

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the City of Salem Planning Commission, at its regular meeting on November 15, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council

Chambers of City Hall, 114 N. Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, will hold a public hearing, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, to consider approval of the following requests relative to the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA:

- 1. Consider the request of GKM Properties, LLC, property owner, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow a two family dwelling on the property located at 800-802 Maryland Avenue (Tax Map # 147 - 2 - 1). 2. Consider amending Chapter 66, Article I, in General, Section 66-7, Nonconforming signs and 66-9, Removal of signs no longer advertising existing bona fide business, of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA pertaining to signs. 3. Consider amending Chapter 106, Zoning, Article II District Regulations, Sections 106-208.2, 106-214.2, 106-216.2, and 106-218.2, pertaining to permitted uses; Section 106-216.3 pertaining to site development regulations; Article III Use & Design Standards, section 106-304.21 pertaining to short term rentals; section 106-316.3 pertaining to accessory uses, residential; Article IV Development Standards, section 106-404 pertaining to parking requirements; section 106-406 miscellaneous provisions pertaining to storage

Legals - City of Salem

containers; and Article VI Definitions and use types, section 106-600 pertaining to definitions of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA.

Copies of the proposed plans, ordinances or amendments may be examined in the Office of Community Development, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia.

At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard relative to the said requests.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA BY: H. Robert Light Deputy Executive Secretary

Legals - Montgomery County

Trustee's Sale 1551 Fire Tower Road, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073 (Parcel ID: 006374)

Default having been made in the terms of a certain Deed of Trust dated April 8, 2022, in the original principal amount of \$201,188.00 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Montgomery, Virginia in Instrument No. 2022002914, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will sell at public auction on December 1, 2023, at 1:00 pm, in front of the building housing the Montgomery County Circuit Court, 55 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, the property beginning at an iron rod set located on the west line of State Route No. 600, thence with State Route No. 600, s. 10 deg. 00 12 e 138.98 feet to an iron pipe; thence s. 80 deg. 43' 48 w. 199.82 feet to an iron rod set; thence n. 10 deg. 13 41 w. 137.88 feet to an iron rod set by a post; thence n. 80 deg. 24 48 e. 200.35 feet to the point of beginning; and containing all the land of an un-numbered lot on State Route No. 600, as shown by a plat of survey of land entitled, physical survey of an un-numbered lot on state route number 600 in Montgomery County, Virginia, dated January 31, 1989, of record in the aforesaid Clerk's office in deed book 639, page 83. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, and conditions, if any, of record, or other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the premises. TERMS: CASH. A deposit of \$20,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Prior to the sale, interested bidders will be required to register with and must present a bid deposit which may be held during the sale by the trustee. The bid deposit must be certified funds and/or cash, but no more than \$9,900.00 of cash will be accepted. The successful bidder's deposit will be retained at the sale and applied to the sale price. If held by the trustee, all other bid deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders. Settlement is to be made within 15 calendar days. The successful bidder will be responsible for obtaining possession of the property, and for all costs and fees related to recording the Trustee's Deed, including the grantors tax. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Memorandum of Trustee's Sale, available for review on the Foreclosure Sales page of www.glasserlaw.com, outlining additional terms of sale and settlement. A Trustee's Deed by Trustee's attorney at high bidder's expense. This is a communication from a debt collector, Glasser and Glasser, P.L.C. on behalf of Atlantic Trustee Services, L.L.C., and/or Auction.com-VA, LLC, Substitute Trustees, Crown Center Building, Suite 600, 580 East Main Street, Norfolk, VA 23510, File No. 232844-01, Tel: (757) 321-6465, between 10:00 a.m. & 12:00 noon only.

I ask for this Ryan L. Pry (VSB#74181) RYAN L. PRY PC P.O. Box 3785 RADFORD VA 24143 (540)838-2233 Ryan@PryLawOffice.com Counsel for plaintiff

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316.20-104 Case No. CL23-1004 MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT, 55 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 1, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re THE ESTATE OF CHARLES F. BOWLES. KIMBERLY REED, Plaintiff v. NELVA KOSTRICH Defendant THIS DAY came Justin Steele, Counsel for Plaintiff, Kimberly Reed, and filed a complaint to probate will for the Estate of Charles F. Bowles and a motion for entry of a default judgement and for other relief, and a hearing will be held in this Court, 55 East Main Street, Suite 1 Christiansburg VA 24073, on Dec 6th, 2023 at 10:00 AM or as soon after as may be heard. NOW, THEREFORE, it is ORDERED that all defendants, unknown heirs and others interested in said Estate appear at the hearing and be heard why the petition and motion for default judgement should not be granted. The Clerk shall send a copy of this order to the Christiansburg News Messenger to be published once a week for four consecutive weeks. Enter the 11th day of October 2023. Robert M. D. Turk, Judge I ask for this: Justin A. Steele III (VSB No. 94358) THE LAW OFFICE OF JAMES STEELE PLLC 304 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke, VA 24015 Tel: (540) 339-7775 Fax: (540) 492-42544

TOWN OF BLACKSBURG - NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

BLACKSBURG TOWN COUNCIL will hold public hearings on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, regarding the following items: Ordinance 2031: An Ordinance Vacating a Greenway Trail Easement on Land Located at 1505 Bradley Lane. The proposed ordinance request is to release the Town's interest in a Greenway Trail easement located at 1505 Bradley Lane. All persons affected by or interested in the proposed items above may appear and present their views. After each public hearing, Town Council will consider action on the item. Copies of materials related to the above items are on file and can be obtained in the Office of the Town Clerk, 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, weekdays between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. For land use matters, copies of applications and all related items may also be found online at www.blacksburg.gov/public hearings or reviewed in person at the Blacksburg Planning and Building Department, 400 South Main Street, Blacksburg, Virginia. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in this meeting should contact Lorraine Spaulding, Town Clerk at (540) 443-1025 or 443-1000 (voice or TDD).

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316.20-104 Case No. 121CL22300149600 MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT, 55 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 1, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re WAYMON RODNEY PACK v. GAIL WILLIAMS, et al.

The object of the complaint in the above styled case is to quiet the title via adverse possession to that certain parcel identified as 4792

Legals - Montgomery County

Piney Woods Rd., Riner, VA 24149 (Montgomery County Tax Map #'s 127-A-72), Located in Montgomery County, Virginia.

It is ORDERED that any of the following persons shall appear at the above named Court and take such action as he/she deem necessary to protect his/her interests on or before November 17, 2023.

- Gail Williams -LaShavio Diggs -Robert Beale, Jr. -Raymond Beale -Barbara Ann Beale -Freddie Hart, Jr. -Any Descendant of Alvia Ellen Pack Jones, deceased

Any person desiring a copy of the Complaint, Survey, or any additional information should contact Ryan L. Pry, counsel for plaintiffs, at P.O. Box 3785, Radford, VA 24143, or at 540-838-2233 prior to the above date. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this OREDER OF PUBLICATION be published once a week for four successive weeks in the Christiansburg News Messenger, a newspaper of general circulation in Montgomery County, Virginia. Entered this 2nd day of October, 2023. By K. Mike Fleenor, Jr. Judge I ask for this Ryan L. Pry (VSB#74181) RYAN L. PRY PC P.O. Box 3785 RADFORD VA 24143 (540)838-2233 Ryan@PryLawOffice.com Counsel for plaintiff

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316.20-104 Case No. CL23-1004 MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT, 55 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 1, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073 Commonwealth of Virginia, in re THE ESTATE OF CHARLES F. BOWLES. KIMBERLY REED, Plaintiff v. NELVA KOSTRICH Defendant THIS DAY came Justin Steele, Counsel for Plaintiff, Kimberly Reed, and filed a complaint to probate will for the Estate of Charles F. Bowles and a motion for entry of a default judgement and for other relief, and a hearing will be held in this Court, 55 East Main Street, Suite 1 Christiansburg VA 24073, on Dec 6th, 2023 at 10:00 AM or as soon after as may be heard. NOW, THEREFORE, it is ORDERED that all defendants, unknown heirs and others interested in said Estate appear at the hearing and be heard why the petition and motion for default judgement should not be granted. The Clerk shall send a copy of this order to the Christiansburg News Messenger to be published once a week for four consecutive weeks. Enter the 11th day of October 2023. Robert M. D. Turk, Judge I ask for this: Justin A. Steele III (VSB No. 94358) THE LAW OFFICE OF JAMES STEELE PLLC 304 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke, VA 24015 Tel: (540) 339-7775 Fax: (540) 492-42544

Legals - Montgomery County

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA, a Political Subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Complainant, v. KELLY M. HESLEP, ET AL, Respondent(s). Case No. CL23-1257

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The object of this suit is to enforce the lien of the Complainant, County of Montgomery, Virginia, for delinquent real estate taxes against certain real property located in the County of Montgomery, Virginia, described as follows:

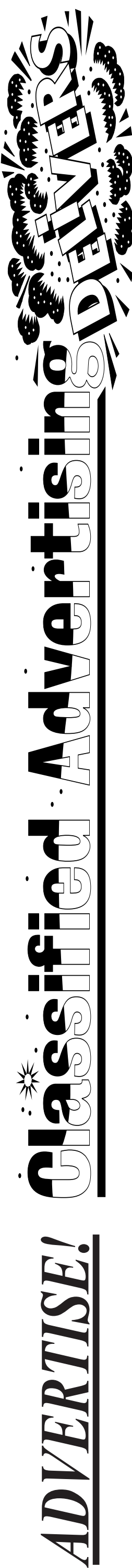
Tax Map No. 058-A 61 Account No. 008614

All that certain tract or parcel of land, with the improvements thereon and the appurtenances thereunto belonging, situate, lying and being in the Mount Tabor Magisterial District of Montgomery County, Virginia containing 85.69 acres, more or less, further designated as Parcel ID 008614, Tax Map Number 058-A 61. And being a portion of the same real property conveyed to Kelly M. Heslep, from W. L. Underwood and S. E. Underwood, husband and wife, by Deed, dated November 15, 1933 and recorded November 22, 1933 in the Montgomery County Circuit Court Clerk's Office in Deed Book 96 at Page 339.

This description is made subject to all easements, Conditions, agreements, restrictions, and reservations of record which affect the property herein described including but not limited to those recorded in Deed Book 119 at Page 358, Deed Book 144 at Page 467, Deed Book 255 at Page 294, Deed Book 255 at Page 299.

IT APPEARING that an Affidavit has been made and filed stating that due diligence has been used, without effect, to ascertain the identity and location of certain parties to be served, that the last known addresses for the Respondents herein are as follows: Kelly M. Heslep aka Kelly Morris Heslep, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Minnie Aline Heslep, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Donald D. Heslep, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Carl Douglas Heslep, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Kelly Eugene Heslep, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Gary W. Heslep, Sr., who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Lloyd M. Heslep aka Lloyd Morris Heslep, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Pamela Sue Heslep Laprad, whose last known address is 3758 Southway Dr. SW, Apt 69, Roanoke, Virginia 24014; Penny S. Heslep McNabb, whose last known address is 2448 Westover Ave. SW, Roanoke, Virginia 24015; Phoebe S. Heslep Rakes, whose last known address is 8127 Running Deer Ln, Roanoke, Virginia 24019; Peggy Sue Dickson Heslep, whose last known address is 2965 Reesedale Rd, Elliston, Virginia 24087; and that any officers, heirs, devisees, and successors in title of the Respondent named herein are made parties Respondent to this action individually and/or by the general description of Parties Unknown, it is hereby ORDERED that the parties herein and all Parties Unknown and/or whose location cannot be ascertained appear on or before November 23, 2023 in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Montgomery, Virginia, and do what may be necessary to protect their interests in this cause.

Entered on the 23rd day of October, 2023 K. Mike. Fleenor, Jr. I Ask For This: John A. Rife, Esq. (VSB No. 45805) Jeffrey A. Scharf, Esq. (VSB No. 30591) Mark K. Ames, Esq. (VSB No. 27409) Andrew M. Neville, Esq. (VSB No. 86372) Paul L. LaBarr, Esq. (VSB No. 91609) Gregory L. Haynes, Esq. (VSB No. 37158) Seth R. Konopasek, Esq. (VSB No. 97065) Garrett W. Patton, Esq. (VSB No. 98345) Taxing Authority Consulting Services, PC P.O. Box 31800 Henrico, Virginia 23294-1800 Phone: (804)545-2500 Facsimile: (804)545-2378 TACS No.: 779604



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# MONTGOMERY SPORTS



FILE PHOTO

Radford High School's Landen Clark has been a deadly signal caller this season, passing for over 2,000 yards and leading the team to a 10-0 regular season record.

## Clark to play at Elon

Marty Gordon  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Landen Clark, one of the top quarterbacks in southwest Virginia and maybe the state of Virginia, has announced plans to continue his playing career next year at Elon University.

Clark was last year's All-county/All-city player of the year, completing 146 passes 216 on attempts with only one interception. He threw for 2,668 yards and 40 touchdowns and rushed 104 times for 412 yards with seven individual scores.

This season, he has continued that success, leading the Bobcats to a 10-0 season while passing 133 for 219 with 2,247 yards and 17 touchdowns. He has also rushed 73 times for 792 yards with 20 scores.

The Bobcat said Elon checked all the boxes for the school and its campus to the football program itself.

"I hope to bring as much success to the school in athletics and academics that is possible. I know the coaches will push me

to get my best, day in and day out, and that's what I love about the school," he said this weekend.

Elon University is a private university in Elon, North Carolina with a current enrollment of 7,177 students. The school is known as the Phoenix and joined the NCAA's Division I Colonial Athletic Association in 2014.

The football team competes in the Division I Football Championship Subdivision (formerly I-AA) and is currently 4-4 on the season and includes a 14-7 win over William and Mary.

This fall, Tony Trisciani began his fifth season at the helm of the program. In 2022, Elon went 8-4 overall and 6-2 in CAA Football play. The team defeated three ranked teams in No. 14 William & Mary, handing the eventual national seed its only regular season loss, No. 17 Richmond and No. 25 Delaware. The team ended the season ranked No. 17 in the country, the program's second-highest end-of-season ranking in FCS history.

Clark plans on majoring in Business with a minor in Sports Management.

## Radford finishes season unbeaten, Blacksburg cancels Salem contest

Marty Gordon  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Radford High School will finish the season at 10-0 and slide into the Region C Class 1 playoffs as the top seed, thus hosting games throughout the regionals.

But that's where lies the question about stadium capacity.

Radford's visitors' bleachers have been out-of-commission this year because of structural problems, meaning the home side is shared seating for both schools that might play there on a Friday night.

Athletic Director Greg Wade says the school will host games at its stadium despite that fact.

Meanwhile the 10th game for Blacksburg and Salem has been cancelled. Blacksburg principal Chris Stewart issued this statement:

"With student safety as our primary focus, BHS will forfeit the varsity football game with Salem High School. This decision comes in response to the high number of injuries our student-athletes have experienced that prohibit their ability to return to play and out of an abundance of caution for the limited number of student-athletes that remain active on the roster."

The administration and coaching staff have determined that this decision is in the best interest of the safety and well-being of our student-athletes.

"We also believe that this is the best decision for the long-term success of the program, we want to see our younger student-athletes stay in the sport and build upon the positive outcomes they have gained during the JV season," Stewart said.

This week's junior varsity contest between Salem and Blacksburg has now been moved to the Blacksburg turf on Thursday at 7 p.m.

Stewart said this will give BHS the opportunity to recognize its senior

football, cheerleaders, and golf student-athletes prior to the start of that game.

In addition, the Blacksburg Marching Band has agreed to hold a community performance on Friday, so the marching band can perform their show one last time and recognize their seniors at that community performance.

The contest will count as a forfeit for Salem, and they will finish the season 9-1.

So, we are down to just two games in the area this Friday night. Both Eastern Montgomery and Auburn will take to the field.

Player of week: Javier Joplin was on the field for all but four offensive plays for Christiansburg in a loss to Salem. The junior running back tallied 145 yards on 24 carries and a touchdown.

Area Top Five: 1) Salem, 2) Radford, 3) Narrows, 4) Christiansburg, 5) Glenvar.

This week's games: Parry McCluer at Eastern Montgomery (2-6)

Parry McCluer (5-4) is coming off a 55-0 loss to unbeaten Bath, where they turned the ball over five times.

Eastern Montgomery's Friday night game against Twin Valley was moved to this past Monday night. Their last outing was a 60-6 loss to Narrows.

Prediction: Parry McCluer 33, Eastern Montgomery 7.

Auburn at George Wythe  
Auburn was shutout 40-0 by Eastside last week.

George Wythe (6-3) handed Grayson County a 23-0 loss as Tandom Smith rushed 20 times for 145 yards and a touchdown. He completed three of nine passes including a 64-yard touchdown to Brayden Rainey. Smith also caught a pass and picked off an interception.

Prediction: George Wythe 44, Auburn 7.

## Christiansburg rec teams participate in NRV Superbowl



Seniors' Carter Hughes is dragged down in the endzone by Narrows after scoring a TD for the Senior Blue Demons.



Two Christiansburg Mite defenders wrestle down a Pulaski County ball carrier during their game halting his progress.



Christiansburg Mite's QB Emmett Jones rolls out for a shot gain in Saturday's game at Christiansburg High School. The Mites lost 7-6 to Pulaski.



On a quarterback keep, Bryson Dow scores a touchdown for the Senior Blue Demons against Narrows.



PHOTOS BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY

Christiansburg's senior squad poses with their Superbowl trophy and cheer squad. The Seniors downed Narrows 40-0 to bring home the trophy. The Christiansburg Mites team finished as runnerup after a 7-6 loss to Pulaski Saturday at Christiansburg High School.

## RU women third at Big South meet

Radford University hosted the 2023 Big South Cross Country Championships on Sunday morning at Green Hill Park in Salem. The women ran a 5k and placed third overall and the men competed in an 8k and landed fourth place against their conference rivals.

Natalie Preston was also awarded Big South's Scholar Athlete of the Year. Not only did she excel on the course, earning a personal record at the Virginia Tech Invitational and Big South Championship, she also has maintained a 4.0 GPA as a nursing major over her past two years at Radford University.

Mackenzie Brownrigg also earned kudos with the Big South being named Women's Newcomer of the Year. Her personal best at Radford is 15:26.4 (4k) and 18:16.2 (5k).

In the men's competition, Joshua Daggett finished in

14th place at 25:14.4, while Maxton Sowers was close behind with a run time of 25:16.4 putting him in 15th place with a new personal best and in Radford's record book.

Luke Richards came in at 25:52.4, earning the 24th spot. Sam Sikora earned not only 27th place (26:01.7), but he also found a spot on the 2023 Men's Cross Country All-Academic team. In 34th place, Nick McCumsey completed the race with a time of 26:40.3.

To close out the men's performance, Liam McDonald hurled himself over the finish line to earn a spot in the top-50 (49th place) at 27:39.0. To round off the team, Alejo Cobos accomplished the course within 28:58.7, placing him in 63rd place.

Meanwhile in the women's division, Chloe Wellings and MegAnne Gilmore both earned themselves medals

and new personal records after coming in fifth and sixth place, respectively. Wellings flew in at 17:16.4 and Gilmore at 17:17.3, who is also putting her name in Radford's record book.

Another PR setter was Abby Seigel's 18:30.3 landing her in 16th place. The aforementioned Preston's best new time is 18:50.8 putting her in 23rd place. Back-to-back Rachel Millirons (28th place) and Kate McLearn (29th place) ran a second apart with Millirons speeding in at 19:04.6 and McLearn right behind with 19:05.7.

Freshman Kayla Fields and Mia Farley hurled in at 19:11.2 and 19:18.0, producing 32nd and 34th place. This is Farley's best 5k time so far at Radford. Newcomer

# Big South from page 9

of the Year, Mackenzie Brownrigg, rounded out the Highlanders in 39th position at 19:32.8.

**MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY**  
Individual Champion  
Micah Gilpatric, Charleston Southern  
Freshman of the Year  
Conan Harper, Charleston Southern  
Newcomer of the Year  
Reuben Kosche, High Point  
Coach of the Year  
Adam Puett, UNC Asheville  
Scholar-Athlete of the Year  
William Johnson, Presbyterian College  
All-Conference (Top 14 Finishers)  
First Team  
Micah Gilpatric, Charleston Southern  
Conan Harper, Charleston Southern  
Sam Waldin, Charleston Southern  
Adam Hessler, UNC Asheville  
Hunter Steinau, High Point  
Jaden Kingsley, Charleston Southern

Jan Malek, UNC Asheville

Second Team  
Daniel Hopkins, UNC Asheville  
Caleb Kenyon, Charleston Southern  
Griffin Gillespie, Charleston Southern  
Graham Ferguson, High Point  
Jeff Wedding, Charleston Southern  
Kyle Spencer, High Point  
Joshua Daggett, Radford  
All-Academic Team  
Jaden Kingsley, Charleston Southern  
Ryan Morita, Gardner-Webb  
Hunter Steinau, High Point  
Alec Daniel, Longwood  
William Johnson, Presbyterian College  
Sam Sikora, Radford  
Dylan Major, UNC Asheville  
Jared Keklak, USC Upstate  
Nolan Weisdorfer, Winthrop  
**WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY**  
Individual Champion

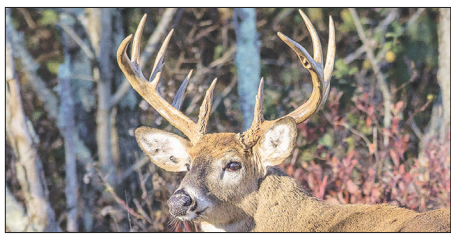
Brianna Malone, High Point  
Freshman of the Year  
Brianna Malone, High Point  
Newcomer of the Year  
Mackenzie Brownrigg, Radford  
Coach of the Year  
Remy Tamer, High Point  
Scholar-Athlete of the Year  
Natalie Preston, Radford  
All-Conference Team (Top 14 Finishers)  
First Team  
Brianna Malone, High Point  
Sarah McCartney, Charleston Southern  
Keerstin Augustin, Charleston Southern  
Katie Taylor, High Point  
Chloe Wellings, Radford  
MegAnne Gilmore, Radford  
Anne Akagi, Charleston Southern  
Second Team

Isabel Richardson, UNC Asheville  
Charli Montalvo, High Point  
Elizabeth Ritter, High Point  
Anna Ritter, High Point  
Ella Moore, UNC Asheville  
Paris Stankewich, High Point  
Taylor White, Charleston Southern

All-Academic Team  
Taylor White, Charleston Southern  
Jessica Perriello, Gardner-Webb  
Katie Taylor, High Point  
Kiersten Witte, Longwood  
Caroline Rairigh, Presbyterian College  
Natalie Preston, Radford  
Sophie Lundin, UNC Asheville  
Heaven Bennett, USC Upstate  
Olivia Kemp, Winthrop

*Radford University Athletics*

# Outdoor report: Deer outlook for upcoming season



COURTESY PHOTO

Ladies and gentlemen, the most wonderful time of year is upon us: deer season! Before we dive into what we might expect for 2023, here's a quick recap of last year.

**2022 Virginia Deer Season Review**  
During the past deer season 186,788 deer were reported killed by deer hunters in Virginia. This total included 90,349 antlered bucks, 12,117 button bucks, and 83,058 does (44% females).

Archery (including crossbows) accounted for 16% of the deer kill; muzzleloaders, 24%; and firearms, 60%. The numbers above do not include deer taken on out-of-season deer kill permits or those deer hit and killed by vehicles. Deer hunters who would like to know the annual deer kill totals by county dating back to 1947, including the county-specific 2022 totals, can find them on the Department's website (a really cool feature!).

**What's New For Fall 2023**  
Deer regulations in Virginia are evaluated and amended every other year. This past year was a regulation cycle and hence there are several changes that were adopted by the Board of DWR which will go into effect for the 2023 season.

An early (September) antlerless-only firearms season has been added on private lands in Carroll, Floyd, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties. These are all counties within CWD disease management area 3.

An early (September) and late (January-March) antlerless-only firearms season has been added to York County.

An early (September) and late (through January 31st) antlerless-only firearms season has been added to Bedford County.

The general firearms season on private lands in Roanoke County has been extended from two to four weeks.

All cities and towns which allow deer hunting now have a seven-week firearms season.

The early and late muzzleloader seasons on private lands in Smyth County will be full season either-sex.

The counties of Lee, Russell, Tazewell, and Wise have added one additional either-sex day during the early muzzleloading season on private lands.

The counties of Craig, Giles, and Scott will have full season either-sex hunting on private lands during the late muzzleloading season.

Private lands in Dickenson County will have either-sex deer hunting during the last six days of the late muzzleloading season.

Earn-a-buck (EAB) has been added to private lands in Augusta, Botetourt, and Page counties.

EAB has also been simplified to be 1:1 for all counties in EAB, rather than 2:1 in certain counties.

The antler point restriction (APR) in Augusta County has been removed due to a CWD detection within 25 miles of the county border.

Either-sex deer hunting days have been increased on private lands in all of the following counties: Bland, Chesapeake, Chesterfield, Gloucester, King George, Lancaster, Northumberland, Nottoway, Richmond, Suffolk (east of the Dismal Swamp Line), Virginia Beach, and Westmoreland. Please see the 2023-2024 Hunting Digest for season dates.

Either-sex deer hunting days have been increased on public lands in Bland (National Forests), Craig (National Forests & Department-owned lands), Giles (National Forest), Nelson (Tye River WMA), Sussex (Big Woods WMA and Flippo-Gentry WMAs, Big Woods State Forest), Wythe (National Forest & Department-owned lands). Please see the 2023-2024 hunting digest for season dates.

More counties have been added to our CWD Disease Management Areas (DMAs): Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William Counties have been added to DMA2, and Patrick County has been added to DMA3.

DMA3 (Carroll, Floyd, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties)

Mandatory CWD testing will be held in Carroll, Patrick, and Pulaski Counties the first day of the firearms deer season on November 18, 2023.

Virginia deer hunters should be advised that the CWD management changes enacted above and those adopted in the past will not get rid of or "solve" the CWD issue in Virginia. At best, they will hopefully slow the rate of increase in the prevalence rate in established areas (e.g., Frederick and northern Shenandoah counties) and also hopefully slow the dispersal of CWD from established areas into new areas.

There is still much to be learned about CWD management in white-tailed deer. At this time, there appear to be two major emerging CWD deer population management approaches. First, to reduce deer herd densities by increasing the antlerless deer kill and, second, to increase the buck mortality rate in CWD-affected areas. In addition, it's important to limit the congregation of deer around artificial food sources (bait piles, feeders, mineral licks, etc.).

Voluntary Statewide CWD Testing

New for the 2023 season, DWR will be offering free CWD testing statewide through use of refrigerator stations at selected DWR offices. Please see our website to see locations of these stations.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance

When the subject is CWD, there is no good news; but the semi-good news in Virginia is that we did not identify any new totally unexpected CWD counties or areas in 2022. While new detections were picked up in Fairfax and Pulaski counties,

these were not completely unexpected. Pulaski was already in DMA 3 (along with Carroll, Floyd, and Montgomery) while Fairfax sits adjacent to DMA2. The detection in Fairfax was found ~6.6 miles from the Loudoun County border and within 22 miles of a previous detection within Loudoun County. Due to the Fairfax detection, Fairfax, Arlington, and Prince William counties will become part of DMA 2. Additionally, due to a detection within 10 miles of the Virginia border in North Carolina, Patrick County will now also become part of DMA 3.

The boundaries of DMA3 will now include Patrick County, due to a detection within 10 miles of the Virginia border in North Carolina. North Carolina sampled heavily throughout the 2022 season in their new CWD surveillance zone, which adjoins Virginia along our DMA3 border. An additional eight positives were detected within this surveillance area in North Carolina, plus one additional positive in southeastern North Carolina. During the 2022 season a total of 1,191 samples were taken within the Virginia DMA3. This sampling effort yielded positive detections in Floyd (3), Montgomery (4), and the first detection in Pulaski (1).

**MAST CONDITIONS**

2022 gave us an above-average acorn crop across most of the state, making hunting a bit tougher but allowing deer to really pack on the fat for winter. It looks like it's going to be a different story for 2023 for much of the state. Preliminary reports from our annual mast surveys indicate a pretty poor mast crop, especially for white oaks and chestnut oaks. Red oaks appear to be doing okay, but not spectacular. You may have to hunt hard to find acorns this fall, but if you find some, you should see plenty of activity (at least early in the season).

**DROUGHT**

Early in the year, conditions were really lining up for an extremely productive season for 2023. A great mast crop last fall sent deer into winter on a higher nutritional plane, and we had a mild winter, and we had a relatively wet start to the growing season. However, somebody turned off the rain in many places in the state. The northern mountain and northern piedmont regions have especially suffered this summer from severe drought. Lactating does and weaning fawns key in on eating forbs (non-woody, broadleaf plants) in the summer, but these preferred plants lose nutritional quality or are non-existent during severe droughts. We've had plenty of photos of relatively thin deer sent to us this summer from concerned citizens thinking something was wrong with them, but it's just been a tough summer. Many acorns did not fully develop this year because of the lack of rainfall, contributing to the poorer mast crop.

West of the Blue Ridge Mountains

Deer management in western Virginia has been about the same for the past couple of decades and remains two VERY different deer management situations.

First, deer herds on private lands over most of western Virginia have been fairly stable to increasing over the past two-plus decades (with the exception of Alleghany, Bath, and Highland counties). The last major deer management event west of the Blue Ridge that affected both private and public land was a winter mortality event

back in the winter of 2010 due to deep and persistent snow. Relatively stable deer herds are expected on private lands west of the Blue Ridge. If there is a change, hopefully it will be a slight decline, as the productive valley soils on private land yield productive deer herds.

Second, with the obvious exception of CWD in the northern Shenandoah Valley and now the New River Valley areas, the biggest challenge in deer management in western Virginia over the past 20 to 30 years has been, and continues to be, the public land deer management situation. Over the past 25 plus years there has been an approximately 40 percent decline in the number of deer hunters on western public lands (primarily National Forest) and a corresponding 66 percent decline in the deer kill. To address this decline, the number of either-sex deer hunting days on western public lands has been reduced significantly over the past decade or more to conservative levels. These changes have been successful in reducing the female deer kill. The decline in the western public land deer kill has been halted, but the western public land deer population has not and is not expected to recover to past deer population levels unless there is a significant change/major improvement in deer habitat conditions. HD does not traditionally play a major role in deer management west of the Blue Ridge, but with a warming climate, this could change.

Southern Mountains Forecast

The Southern Mountains are best described by three different deer management approaches. In nearly all the counties in the New River Valley area, the Department is trying to reduce deer populations, especially in CWD DMA3. In far southwest, the Department is trying to maintain current/stable deer populations, and lastly in the two of the three coal field counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, and Wise the Department is still trying to increase deer populations. These efforts have been and continue to be successful.

So what is the forecast for the fall 2023 deer season? Unless there is a late, significant HD event, deer populations and the deer kill across most of the state should be stable to increasing. A major increase or decrease in the statewide deer kill total is not expected. Over the past 30 years, the statewide annual deer kill has been relatively stable and ranged from about 179,000 to 259,000 and averaged about 212,300.

Past experience indicates that the ups and downs in annual deer kill totals are in part attributable to mast—acorns, mostly—conditions and/or HD outbreaks. In years of poor mast crops, the deer kill typically goes up as deer move more in search of food and are more likely to be seen by hunters. In years of good mast crops, the deer kill typically goes down. We'd expect a slight uptick in total deer kill numbers this fall due to a quiet HD season and a below-average acorn crop.

Good luck to all this season! Please support the Virginia Hunters for the Hungry program, do not feed the deer, be safe, and introduce someone new to deer hunting this year—the future of our sport depends on it.

*Justin Folks is DWR's deer project leader and Katie Martin is DWR's deer-bear-turkey biologist*

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