



Montgomery County Public Schools

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MCPS

Montgomery County Public Schools' employees state higher wages as top priority at Board meeting

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

Employee budget suggestions were provided by several county employees, covering each group division that provides student services, during the Montgomery County Public School Board meeting on Dec. 5, 2023.

This is in preparation for the board as they analyze the needs of the school system for the 2023-2024 budget.

Robbie Jones, MCPS Custodial Manager, provided information to the board about the custodian group's needs for the next year's budget. Along with new equipment used by custodial staff to replace the old and sometimes mismatched equipment and regular materials such as toilet paper, paper towels, hand soap and all associated cleaning materials, Jones also expressed a need for a better living wage for the custodial staff at MCPS.

"So many of our custodians who are starting at the bottom of the pay bands

make less money per hour than going out and working a job in fast food. This is something that needs to change if funding is allowed in addition to custodians," Jones said. "I also know that many of our warehouse and grounds crew employees are in the same boat."

Administrative Aide, Instructional Aide, Lunch and Recess Aide positions, and Registrar Aide budget recommendations were presented by Para Educator Connie Blose.

Blose pointed out to the board that with the bus study time at the middle and high schools that occurs in the morning and evening times outside of the academic day, aides are utilized yet are not paid for their time. Aides are typically paid for 6.5 hours yet work a total of seven hours.

Electrical and Plumbing Lead Jamie Warren presented on behalf of the Carpenter, Buildings and Grounds, Electrician, HVAC, Painter, Plumber,

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Blevins receives 2023 Distinguished Government Leader of the Year award



PHOTO COURTESY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors Chair Sherri Blevins

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce awarded Montgomery County Board of Supervisors Chair Sherri Blevins the 2023 Distinguished Government Leader of the Year award at the annual dinner on Dec. 7. The criteria for the award included an individual's ability to demonstrate and model professional excellence; promote the community; and develop and mentor others.

"I'm humbled and honored to be recognized by the Chamber with this

award," said Blevins. "It has truly been my greatest honor to serve the citizens and businesses of Montgomery County and work alongside the dedicated and amazing staff of Montgomery County."

Sherri Blevins was elected to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to represent District B in 2019. She has served as Board Chair for two consecutive years, 2022 and 2023. In 2013, Blevins was one of the parents who advocated

the Virginia Department of Transportation park-and-ride lot in Christiansburg, which was previously across the street from Falling Branch Elementary School, be relocated out of safety concerns for the elementary school students. Due to her dedication and leadership, a new location for the park-and-ride was approved in 2014. By 2017, it was relocated to a new permanent home.

In addition to the Board of Supervisors, Blevins serves on the Montgomery County Public Service Authority; Road Viewers Board; AFD Advisory Board; County / School Liaison Committee; Economic Development Commission; Fairview District Home Board of Directors; Library Board; NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority; and Social Services Board.

During her tenure on the Board of Supervisors, she supported several initiatives to include the renovation of numerous school facilities; several measures related to law enforcement and public safety; and many services and activities related to the health and well-being of citizens throughout Montgomery County.

Submitted by
Montgomery County

Virginia Tech to honor more than 2,600 at fall commencement

BLACKSBURG - On Dec. 15, 2,664 Hokies will graduate, walking across the stage at Cassell Coliseum to receive their diplomas.

The University Commencement ceremony will begin at 10:30 a.m. ET, and the Graduate School ceremony will follow at 2:30 p.m. ET. Doors will open an hour before each event. Each ceremony is expected to last about two hours. Both events will be available via livestream video from the university homepage for those unable to attend in person.

The keynote speaker for the University Commencement ceremony will be Amy Pruden, University Distinguished Professor and the W. Thomas Rice Professor in the Charles E. Via, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, where her research program focuses on using DNA-based tools to track pathogens and antibiotic resistance in the environment. For the Graduate School commencement, three student speakers will speak: Imani Lewis, who is earning a master's degree of public and international affairs; Ikhlas Rabab'ah, who is earning a doctoral degree in architecture and design research and graduating this semester with her master's degree; and Norovbanzad Tsogt-Ochir, who is earning a master's degree in civil engineering.

During the University Commencement ceremony, 1,669 undergraduates will be recognized for earning bachelor's degrees.

The College of Engineering will feature the most undergraduates receiving degrees with a total of 416. Virginia Tech's six other colleges and the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine will award the following bachelor's degrees to summer and fall graduates:

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences: 149

College of Architecture, Arts, and Design: 24

Pamplin College of Business: 361

College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences: 286

College of Natural Resources and Environment: 71

College of Science: 381

Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine: 20

A total of 995 students will receive advanced graduate certificates. The graduate degree candidates include 632 master's degrees, one education specialist degree, 173 Ph.D.s, and five doctors of education.

Of the degree recipients, 102 Ph.D. students and 230 master's degree students are expected to attend the ceremony in-person, as well as 900 undergraduate students.



VIRGINIA TECH PHOTO

Virginia Tech fall graduation is Dec. 15.

The Graduate School also will recognize its Alumni Achievement Award recipient, Owen Wagner '07, during its ceremony. The Graduate School established this award in 2003 to recognize outstanding graduate alumni who have demonstrated extraordinary national or international achievement and exemplary contributions to their profession, discipline, community, and society.

Wagner, vice president and senior analyst for North American markets at Rabobank, is researching sustainable aviation fuel utilizing agricultural

feedstocks, such as oils, corn, and cellulosic biomass, to supplement conventional jet fuel. Wagner's research advises Rabobank's wholesale agribusiness and rural clients about risks and opportunities in the biofuel space. He is also exploring the sustainability of cotton versus polyester textiles. "My degree from Virginia Tech provided me with the knowledge to relate to our clients while having a global economics understanding of markets," he said in a July interview.

Virginia Tech

Family creates scholarship to support blue collar students



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CFNRV

RINER - There are few roads in the New River Valley that do not have a house for which Kent Quesenberry of Riner did the plumbing.

As a Master Plumber and Class B contractor, Kent could often be seen leaning on his shovel at a worksite, taking the time to get to know everyone and to pass along advice and encouragement.

"He was an awesome person and had a hello for every single person he met. He made it feel like you had known him your whole life," said Billie, one of Kent's daughters. "He was always a jokester, always laughing, and always had a twinkle in his eye."

After Kent passed away unexpectedly in 2021, his family discussed how best to honor his legacy and continue to impact the community that had given them so much through Kent's business. They thought about conversations that

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PHOTO BY LORI GRAHAM

Christiansburg Recreation Center welcomes families to their Winter Wonderland, held Dec. 9, with a festive archway.

Christiansburg Parks and Recreation brings holiday cheers with Winter Wonderland event

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

Hayrides, bingo, a snow machine, reindeer races, Mrs. Claus's hot cocoa kitchen, and of course the big man himself, Santa Claus, welcomed families

Dec. 9 at the Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Center.

Anyone that wishes to visit the event was welcomed, and you did not have to

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, Dec. 13:**Blacksburg Farmers Market**

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW. The Blacksburg Farmers Market is a local, family-friendly gathering place in downtown Blacksburg featuring farmers of locally grown produce and meats, alongside artisans of baked goods and handmade crafts. For more information, visit <http://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com>.

Thursday, Dec. 14:**Blacksburg Community Band's Winter Concert**

At the Blacksburg High School auditorium; 7 p.m. This is a free concert. We hope you can come out and hear some of your favorite holiday tunes!

Friday, Dec. 15:**Community Mobile Food Distribution**

Feeding America Southwest Virginia Community Mobile Food Distribution in the Central Lumber Parking Lot, 725 West Main St. Radford; 3 – 5 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 17:**Luminary display**

The annual Stroubles Mill Neighborhood Association Luminary display will begin at 5:30 p.m. in Blacksburg (Hethwood). Rain date is Monday, Dec. 18.

Monday, Dec. 18:**Pre-K Music Class with Alice Armentrout**

At the Radford Public Library; 10 – 10:30 a.m. Local music teacher Alice Armentrout will be at the library to lead a Pre-K music class! There is no registration necessary for this event.

Tuesday, Dec. 19:**Coffee Club for Adults (age 50+)**

At the Radford Public Library; 10 – 11 a.m. Cultivate community by making new friends at RL! Adults 50+ years are encouraged to come out and enjoy coffee and baked goods, provided by local Arabica Café & Bakery, while making new friends. This informal gathering will be hosted by staff member Monika. Please join us and share your stories!

Genealogy: Newspapers

At the Radford Public Library; noon- 1 p.m. Local genealogy professional Rebecca Novy will teach about how to use newspapers in your genealogical research.

Wednesday, Dec. 20:**CommUNITY Yoga for Self-Care for Adults**

At the Radford Public Library; 5:45 – 6:45 p.m. Join Kelly McCoy of The Whole You for an all-level yoga class for adults. Learn poses to help strengthen and lengthen your muscles as well as some breathing and meditation techniques to help calm the nervous system. This class is free to the public and is funded by grant money via the Virginia Department of Health.

Thursday, Dec. 21:**Photo Club meeting**

The Radford Photo Club will meet at 6 p.m. at Radford Public Library. Bring your three favorite photos from 2023 on a thumb drive to share and select one as a print for the photo contest.

On-going:**Dec. 14- Jan. 15:****Blacksburg Transit reduced service**

Blacksburg Transit will operate on reduced service for the holiday season beginning Dec. 14. Reduced service will remain in effect until Jan. 15. There will be no bus service on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. For more information, please contact 540-443-1500.

Dec. 15 – Jan. 1:**Free downtown Blacksburg parking**

Free holiday parking will be in effect downtown. Normal parking rates will resume on Tuesday, Jan. 2.

Blacksburg stormwater utility credit application deadline

Deadline for Stormwater Utility Credit Applications is Jan. 1, 2024. If you are located within the Town of Blacksburg and have a stormwater management facility on your site, you may qualify for a credit on your monthly stormwater utility fee. Go to www.blacksburg.gov/stormwaterfund and review the Stormwater Utility Credit Manual to know more. Stormwater management facilities are typically ponds (either dry ponds/dry detention basins or wet retention basins). Other types include underground storage structures (usually located under parking lots in commercial areas), vegetated areas like bio-retentions, and mechanical filters that remove oil and sediment from stormwater runoff. Questions, contact stormwater@blacksburg.gov or call 540-443-1354.

Blacksburg Comprehensive Plan Amendment application process

In 2021, Town Council adopted the updated Comprehensive Plan. As part of the mid-way evaluation between five-year updates, the town accepts privately initiated applications for amendments to the plan. Amendments include changes to Future Land Use Map designations or the text of the Plan. Applications due on Jan. 15, 2024. A pre-application meeting is required prior to submittal. Contact Maeve Gould, Comprehensive Planner, at (540) 443-1300 or CompPlan@blacksburg.gov, with questions, or to schedule a pre-application meeting.

Hanratty accepts position as Blacksburg Deputy Town Manager

The Town of Blacksburg has hired Matt Hanratty to serve as its Deputy Town Manager following the departure of Chris Lawrence in October.

In 2006, Hanratty began work as the Housing and Neighborhood Services (HNS) Manager for the Town of Blacksburg. In this role, he was responsible for all aspects of the town's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which assists Blacksburg residents with housing and supportive services, in addition to creating community spaces such as the Blacksburg Farmer's Market. In addition, Hanratty worked with communities across the region to create the New River Valley (NRV) HOME Consortium to provide affordable housing opportunities

to households across the NRV. To date, the HOME Consortium has created over 350 affordable homes for NRV residents, many of which are located in Blacksburg.

Under his guidance, HNS also oversaw nuisance code enforcement and various relationships with Virginia Tech including the Town Gown Committee, which strives to improve Blacksburg's neighborhoods through the creation of learning opportunities and collaborative problem solving.

Hanratty became Blacksburg's Assistant to the Town Manager in 2015. Alongside his existing duties as the HNS manager, he took on the responsibility for the management of Blacksburg's sustainability efforts and led the town's revenue-sharing program, which provides

funding for roads, sidewalks, and trails in coordination with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Hanratty also managed the town's public parking programs and helped lead several community-wide planning projects including the 2019 Downtown Strategic Plan, and the Town's COVID response funding for town businesses and non-profits.

"We are excited to work with Matt in his new role," said Town Manager Marc Verniel. "His education and 17 years of experience with the Town have prepared him to step into the position of Deputy Town Manager. He has a strong understanding of Town operations and a love for the Blacksburg community that will continue to serve our citizens well."

In addition to holding a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Policy and Planning, and a Master's degree in Public Administration, Hanratty earned a graduate certificate in Local Government Management from Virginia Tech.

"I'm honored and humbled to be selected as the next Deputy Town Manager for Blacksburg," said Hanratty. "I look forward to continuing to work with our citizens, Town Council, staff, and community stakeholders to carry out our strategic goals and work to continuously improve this wonderful place we all call home."

Hanratty began his duties as Deputy Town Manager on Dec. 1, 2023.

Town of Blacksburg

Bomb threat draws 60 days in jail

BLACKSBURG - A Blacksburg man has been given a short jail sentence after threatening to blow up the Blacksburg Police Department.

The investigation showed that Jaden Eubanks made the threat on Oct. 14. This past week, charges for threatening to bomb or damage a building were amended to trespassing.

A Montgomery County judge found him guilty and initially gave him 60 days in jail with all but 10 days being suspended. He will also be on probation for one year.

Staff report

A holiday fixture steeped in tradition grows in Virginia

BLACKSBURG—Mistletoe lore dates back centuries—to the Celtic druids and Norse mythology—as a symbol of fertility, peace and love

The plant's legends eventually made their way across continents when European settlers immigrated to North America and discovered a plant that closely resembled the mistletoe from their homeland.

"(European mistletoe) is actually a different species and different genus, but they look really similar," explained Jordan Metzgar, a biologist and curator for the Massey Herbarium at Virginia Tech. "When Europeans came to North America, there was this other mistletoe here, so they just transferred a lot of the mythology and traditions with it."

Metzgar explained that of the seven native mistletoe species in the U.S., only one grows in Virginia—Phoradendron leucarpum—commonly called American mistletoe or Eastern mistletoe. And while it's the plant of holiday

romance, its true characteristics are a little more ominous.

"It's in the genus Phoradendron, which literally translates to 'tree thief,'" Metzgar said. "It grows on trees, taps into their vascular systems and steals nutrients and water from them."

Mistletoe's tiny white flowers form into clusters of snow-white berries during the late fall and winter, and are a favorite among birds, which spread them from tree to tree. The seed's sticky coating adheres it to limbs and trunks where "it'll germinate and make a little seedling, and right away it bores into the tree it's growing on" using a special rootlike organ called a haustorium, Metzgar explained.

A hemiparasite, the woody shrub needs trees to survive, but it also photosynthesizes, allowing it to stay a festive green throughout the winter. But despite being closely associated with wintertime holidays, "it's really not cold-tolerant at all," Metzgar noted. "We're pretty close to the northern edge of its range here in the Eastern U.S."

Mistletoe thrives in the temperate climate of Virginia's coastal plains and swampy forests. Its bushy clumps can easily be spotted standing out against bare branches during the late fall, winter and early spring.

And though the large clusters can damage trees and girdle limbs, mistletoe is a long-established native and a normal part of the forest ecosystem. It grows on a range of trees, particularly oaks, red maples and gum trees.

Some landowners harvest Virginia mistletoe on their own, but others can find sprigs for their holiday decorations at local florists, garden centers, nurseries and other holiday retailers. Many tree farms also sell it alongside their Christmas trees. Mistletoe may be favored for holiday décor, but it's best to keep away from children and pets. It contains a toxic protein called phoratoxin, which can cause nausea, vomiting, weakness and other issues when accidentally consumed.

Farm Bureau Virginia

Meeting

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Program Manager and Project Manager positions group.

The Facilities Department needs a bucket truck or lift that is necessary to safely replace lights such as those located in parking lots, as well as the lights themselves that are being slowly converted to LED.

"It's becoming a safety issue because we have no way to reach them," Warren said.

Additionally, two new zero-turn mowers, two trucks fitted with snowplows and a salt spreader, and HVAC materials and replacement parts that would allow for quick repair of units.

The Transportation Department's budget presentation, which includes positions of Bus Aide, Bus Driver, Car/Van Transport, and MCPS mechanics, was given by Kim McGhee.

"Our buses look pretty good; we've got some new buses, and even our old buses look pretty good, so thank you for that," McGhee said. "I want to thank you all for the new bus washing machine that we were able to purchase, and it's been very efficient and effective."

However, McGhee shared a similar story to the board that other departments are experiencing in keeping positions filled, specifically bus drivers. She stated that benefits and health insurance were what bus driving positions, and Aides, were lacking in keeping those roles filled.

Rachel Smith, Lead Speech Therapist for MCPS, spoke for the areas of school employees of Interpreter, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Psychologist, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), and Speech.

Smith's primary budgetary concerns focused primarily on an increase in salary for the speech therapy employees of MCPS, which she says is impacting their ability to recruit individuals needed in these roles.

According to Smith, current first-year speech therapists with a required master's degree are "making around \$4,000 less than a MCPS first-year licensed teacher with a master's degree. What's even more alarming is their salary is \$1,700 less than a MCPS first-year licensed teacher with a bachelor's degree."

Representing MCPS's nursing staff was Tracie Martin, serving the County as a nurse for 17 years, with a total service time of 30 years.

"I love being a school nurse," Martin said. "I am thankful I can have a positive impact on our schools."

Martin stated, that in addition to seeing students for daily needs such as injuries and illness, health administrators in the schools also provide hearing and vision screenings, provide CPR certifications, and many other services along with providing trainings for staff that are needed.

Nurses are also some of the other school employees that are paid for 6.5 hours when they often work a longer shift. Martin is also one of the employees that works additional hours at another job outside of her position in the schools. The nursing group is asking for an increase in pay for positions of all full-time and substitute nurse positions.

Lori Walls for the positions of Administrative Assistant, Bookkeeper, and HR/Payroll Specialist, echoed the thoughts of other presenters at the Board meeting, asking for additional pay for the group.

Technology- Specialist, Systems Integrator, Technician, and Testing Coordinator employees were represented by Tara Almone. Almone stated that with 15,000 Chromebooks in use, maintaining and repairing computers is a huge undertaking for the technology group. Security technology is also a high priority that the group is working to maintain and grow in the school system. Software programs and database

systems are also numerous and require consistent management.

Housed in what is known as the old Christiansburg Middle School building, the historical building needs some renovations, according to Almone. Along with improvements on windows, heating, and a men's bathroom door, is potable drinking water in the building.

Almone also suggested to the board that an increase in wages, funding for the department, or materials and equipment for the purpose of conducting their jobs would be welcomed.

Mike Hall spoke for the Purchasing and Warehouse groups. Hall expressed a consideration for vehicle purchase, as the four vehicles they are currently using for the entire district all have \$150,000 or more miles on them and are driven approximately 90 miles or more each day.

Katie Seidemann, a teacher, and President of the Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) delivered a message supporting Superintendent Dr. Bernard Bragen's 5% increase in salary for teachers in MCPS.

"Virginia's average teacher salary is \$6,787 below the national average," Seidemann said. "Additionally, teachers in Virginia are paid an average of 67 cents for each dollar paid to their similarly educated peers in other professions."

Avoiding an increase in health insurance and funding to support positions in health and safety of the schools were also priorities mentioned by Seidemann.

Last to speak at the Board meeting was the Nutrition group, who also requested an increase of wages. The group is requesting a \$2.00 an hour increase in pay. Their employees are currently being paid a wage of \$13.00 an hour.

OBITUARIES

Boyd, Arleta Lively

Arleta Lively Boyd, 85, passed away Friday, Dec. 8, 2023, at Pulaski Health and Rehab Center. She was born Aug. 12, 1938, the daughter of James Frank and Nettie Boone Lively. She was a lifelong member of Fairlawn Grace Brethren Church and retired as department secretary of the Plant Pathology and Weed Science Department at Virginia Tech. Arleta was a member of the NRV Community Chorus for many years and also enjoyed quilting, sewing and the senior bowling group.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 52 years, Robert Merrill Boyd; mother and father, Frank and Nettie Lively; sisters, Zelda Boyd and Betty Craft; brother and sister-in-law, Pete and Betty Lively; and great



granddaughter, Leila Hamad.

Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law, Keith and Joby Boyd; daughter and son-in-law, Vanessa and Kelly Rutherford; grandchildren, Savannah Funkhouser (Chad), Samantha Hamad (Amir), Shauna Rutherford, and Robert Boyd (Stephanie); great grandchildren, Scarlett, Atticus and Camilla Funkhouser, Hazen and Hanna Hamad, and Jack Boyd; brother-in-law, Leslie

Boyd; sister-in-law, Mary Boyd; and other nieces, nephews and cousins, and friends.

The family would like to thank Pulaski Health and Rehab and Commonwealth Senior Living for the loving care Arleta received.

The family will receive friends noon-2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2023, at Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 2 p.m. with Pastor Cameron Mitchell officiating. Interment will follow in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Fairlawn Grace Brethren Church, 6893 Mills Avenue, Radford, VA 24141.

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

Vengrin, Michael Vincent



A philosopher, scholar, carpenter, chef, gardener, and loving husband, father, and grandfather, Michael Vincent Vengrin, 82, of Christiansburg, passed away peacefully at the home he built himself surrounded by his family on Dec. 9, 2023.

He was born on July 4, 1941, in Clarksburg, W.Va., to Joseph and Catherine Vengrin. Michael was the first in his family to attend college, attending West Virginia University, earning both a Bachelor's and Master's degree. Michael was a Professor at Radford University, teaching in the Philosophy Department until 1996, when he retired with the distinction and honor of Professor Emeritus. As a man who could not sit idle, he then earned his contractor's license and opened Mill Creek Construction, operating it until his second retirement in 2013. He continued an active life in retirement, taking up running at the age of 71 and completing several 5K and

10K races. He loved caring for his garden and orchard, traveling, hiking and biking with his wife, and was equally devoted to helping others by volunteering with the Wesley Foundation at Radford University, serving on its board, and contributing his time to Bethel United Methodist Church and the Old Brick Presbyterian Food Bank. Michael was preceded in death by his father and mother, Joseph and Catherine Vengrin; and sister, Joan Yoho.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Jean Vengrin; son and daughter-in-law, Joel Vengrin and

Liz Lauck; daughter, Allison Vengrin; daughter and son-in-law, Courtney Vengrin and Stephen Kelley; grandchildren Charlotte and Miles Vengrin; brother and sister-in-law, Joseph Edward (Eddy) and Loretta Vengrin; and numerous extended family and loved ones.

A private family burial will be held with a celebration of life to follow on Dec. 28, 2023, 10 - 11:30 a.m. at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in his memory to Old Brick Presbyterian Food Bank, PO Box 323, Radford, VA, 24143, the Wesley Foundation at Radford University, 1022 Downey St, Radford, VA, 24141, or the Montgomery County Humane Society, 1183 Flanagan Dr, Christiansburg, VA, 24073.

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

Winter

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Hayrides, bingo, a snow machine, reindeer races, Mrs. Claus's hot cocoa kitchen, and of course the big man himself, Santa Claus, welcomed families Dec. 9 at the Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Center.

Anyone that wishes to visit the event was welcomed, and you did not have to be a member of the recreation center to attend, Director of Christiansburg Parks and Recreation said.

"We have a variety of different games, one being pin the heart on the Grinch," Epperley said. "Kids always love the snow machine too."

The Grinch was the theme this year, with last year being Elf, from the popular Christmas movie.

This was the fourth year of the event with one year missed due to COVID, and the following year held outside in the wake of the pandemic.

Santa greeted eventgoers in the multipurpose room, where he was met with wide-eyed and excited children wanting to tell their Christmas wishes in hopes they would find them under the tree Christmas morning.

Epperley shared that when the Recreation Center first started the

event, their goal was to create a free family-oriented, holiday event.

"We had done a couple other items indoors, with the Halloween and some of those others and thought this would be really neat...and it was a huge event for us," Epperley said. "It is held from 6-8 p.m., and some folks come, and they stay for 15-20 minutes and people come and stay for the entire time. It is really up to them as to what they want to do."

Epperley said last year they had close to 2,000 people come through. The large space provides for this number of people to enjoy themselves

and visit the different stations set up by the Department's employees.

The Christiansburg Recreation Department also manages the parade that happened the evening before on December 8th. Epperley said that the parade this year drew the largest crowd and the largest number of entries to date.

Residents of the New River Valley as well as visitors to the area can check out future events held by the Christiansburg Recreation Department on their website at www.christiansburg.org.

Scholarship

from page 1

RINER - There are few roads in the New River Valley that do not have a house for which Kent Quesenberry of Riner did the plumbing.

As a Master Plumber and Class B contractor, Kent could often be seen leaning on his shovel at a worksite, taking the time to get to know everyone and to pass along advice and encouragement.

"He was an awesome person and had a hello for every single person he met. He made it feel like you had known him your whole life," said Billie, one of Kent's daughters. "He was always a jokester, always laughing, and always had a twinkle in his eye."

After Kent passed away unexpectedly in 2021, his family discussed how best to honor his legacy and continue to impact the community that had given them so much through Kent's business. They thought about conversations that Kent and his wife, Joni, had when Billie and her younger sister Jessie were both in college at the same time. Kent and Joni had discussed how they wanted to eventually help other blue-collar families navigate paying for college, especially because both of their daughters benefitted from scholarships.

Eventually, Joni reached out to the Community Foundation of the New River Valley (CFNRV) to gather information about setting up a scholarship fund, but life got busy, and the idea was shelved for the time being. About a year after Kent's passing, they reached back out to the Foundation.

Since 1994, the CFNRV has worked with donors to establish endowed funds that award grants to nonprofits and scholarships to students. A new fund is considered fully endowed when it reaches a specific minimum - \$15,000 for scholarships - but the amount varies based on the type of fund. Once the fund becomes endowed, the money is invested, and the earnings are used to award grants or scholarships for the purpose set by the donor. Today, the Foundation manages more than 200 endowed funds and has given out \$8 million to nonprofits and students in the NRV.

"Everyone at the Foundation made this a

welcoming and supportive experience. The Blue Collar Scholarship would not be a reality without their help," said Joni. "Learning all the rules and laws involved in setting up a scholarship would be overwhelming without their expertise and guidance. With the Foundation at our side, we now feel like the scholarship will continue to grow and be around for generations."

Together with the CFNRV team, Joni, Billie, and Jessie worked out the parameters of the fund, to provide scholarships to students in the NRV from blue collar families to pursue a degree at a two-or-four-year college, university, trade, or technical school. The scholarship selection criteria include demonstrated financial need and a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Preference is given to students already in college. This is one of more than 50 scholarship funds at the CFNRV, each with specific criteria developed by the donor to help the CFNRV Scholarship Committee select recipients each year. Many of the funds are created in honor of a loved one like the Blue Collar Scholarship.

"We're a blue-collar family and it is very close to our hearts. We learned that being a second, third, and fourth year in college makes it much harder to get scholarships," said Jessie. "We want to help families like ours by helping their kids go to college or further their education in whatever way."

The Quesenberry family have been surrounded

by the support of their community since Kent's passing, with many individuals and businesses contributing to the scholarship fund. With dozens of donations coming from the community, the fund reached the endowment minimum in the fall of 2023 and will award its first scholarship in 2024. But the Quesenberry family is not stopping there. They plan to continue to grow the fund with the goal of giving out larger scholarships with each passing year.

As Kent's family reflects on the future, they hope that the scholarship comes to someone at the right time and helps them do something - just like scholarships did for Billie and Jessie. All three women find comfort in knowing they are helping to continue Kent's legacy of encouraging people along their path in life. They hope that receiving a scholarship from the fund inspires those students to one day help others in a similar position and that it continues to grow each year.


"It would be our greatest joy to know that Dad's legacy will continue and enable others to continue their education," said Billie.

To learn more about this scholarship or to donate, visit givelocalnrv.org/story/Bluecollar. For more information about setting up a scholarship fund, contact the CFNRV team at cfnrv@cfnrv.org or 540-381-8999.

Community Foundation of the NRV

Full-time Radiologic Technologist

Monroe Health Center is seeking a Full-time Radiologic Technologist for our **Craig County Health Center in New Castle, VA**. Position requires current Virginia license, **experience in a clinic setting is ideal**. Ability to work in a busy environment, experienced with Electronic Medical Records, good communication skills, ability to establish a good rapport with patients and staff. Great Benefit package includes, 11 paid holidays, paid time off, Anthem health insurance, Paid long term disability, life insurance, and WV Public Employees Retirement System. Hours of operation are Monday - Friday 8am to 4:30pm. NO Weekends. Please send completed employment application and resume to Monroe Health Center, P.O. Box 590 Union, WV 24983, Attn: Stephanie Aliff, HR Director, or by e-mail at saliff@monrohealthcenter.com You can obtain an Employment application at any of our locations or it can be downloaded at www.monrohealthcenter.com. We value diversity - in backgrounds and in experiences. Monroe Health Center is an equal opportunity employer.



Virginia Department of Transportation

**Northbound Interstate 81
Exit 105 (Radford)
Ramp Extension
Montgomery County**


Find out about a project to extend the ramp onto northbound Interstate 81 at exit 105 (Radford) in Montgomery County. The on ramp will be extended approximately 2,000 feet and a new chain-link barrier will be installed along the nearby rock face.

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

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Eli Mannon, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153, on or prior to **December 21, 2023**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

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

Federal Project: STP-5150(212) UPC: 116198
State Project: 0081-060-862, C501, P101, R201
From: 0.202 mile north of Route 232
To: 0.827 mile north of Route 232



Virginia Department of Transportation

**Route 663 (Walton Road)
Bridge Replacement
Montgomery County**

Find out about a project to replace the Route 663 (Walton Road) bridge over Crab Creek in Montgomery County. The bridge is located 2.7 miles north of Route 11 (Lee Highway). The existing bridge will be replaced with a wider structure with shoulders. Traffic will need to use local detour routes for approximately 12 months during construction.

Review the project information at VDOT's Salem District Office located at 731 Harrison Avenue in Salem, 540-387-5353, 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623), TTY/TDD 711. Please call ahead to ensure the availability of appropriate personnel to answer your questions.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Tyler Teer, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153 on or prior to **December 21, 2023**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

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

UPC: 117012
State Project: 0663-060-865, B668, C501, P101, R201
Federal Project: NHPP-5150(232)
From: 2.7 miles north of intersection with Route 11
To: 2.95 miles north of intersection with Route 11

OPINION

Ballard says legislation submissions will benefit community

In last week's column, I filled you in on Virginia House Democrats' attempts to enact wide-ranging restrictions on Second Amendment rights in the upcoming 2024 legislative session. Today, I'd like to give you a quick peek at some of the bills and ideas that I will be supporting when legislators head back to Richmond in January.

A big reason why I ran for office was to ensure that our region's localities have the support they need from state government. While the 2023 election results took important political leadership away from rural Virginia and placed it in Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia, it's important that we stick together to ensure our region's priorities don't fall by the wayside. In consultation with our local governments, I have submitted several pieces of legislation that, if successful, would be beneficial to our communities.

One such bill is meant to crack down on those who move to our region from other states and communities and refuse to update their vehicle registration. Not

only is it unfair to the rest of us who obey the law, but it also deprives localities (and the Commonwealth) of revenue for infrastructure improvements. I'm hopeful that this commonsense measure will be successful, even with a new majority taking power in the House.

Another piece of legislation I plan on submitting has to do with adding our local 9-1-1 dispatchers to the list of local government employees eligible to receive enhanced retirement for hazardous duty services. Our dispatchers — on a daily basis — deal with some of the most stressful situations imaginable. It's my belief that they should be afforded the same benefits as other public safety officials as they all work to keep us safe.

I also plan on resubmitting legislation that would extend the reach of the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission to include Giles, Pulaski, and Montgomery counties. The Tobacco Commission distributes funding to member-localities due to a 1998 settlement with the four major tobacco companies. Our region has a history with the tobacco industry,

and I'll continue to fight for any possible funding that could help our communities.

These are just a few pieces of legislation that I plan on introducing in the 2024 legislative session. Stay tuned as I provide more information on other legislation of interest in future columns!

It is my honor to represent you in Richmond, and I want you to be fully informed what your government is doing for you. As the Delegate representing the 12th District (soon to be the 42nd District due to redistricting), your concerns are my greatest priority. If ever I may be of assistance to you and your family, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at DelJasonBallard@House.Virginia.Gov. You can also follow me on Twitter @JasonBallardVA or like my Facebook page, Jason Ballard for Delegate, to keep up to date with what I am doing in Richmond and in our community on your behalf.

*Del. Jason Ballard
Virginia General Assembly*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The morning of November 7th, 2023 came very early. It was election day! A date I had been looking forward to getting over with! My wife, Lindsay Rich, was a candidate for School Board in District E of Montgomery County, and she had spent months campaigning. Together we had nearly accomplished her goal of knocking on every single door within our district. Many doors we knocked on multiple times. She would get up early and stay up late posting to social media, organizing events, scheming with her campaign volunteers, and trying to further her cause. Just a quick drive down Prices Fork Rd. or McCoy Rd. and you would instantly be aware of her campaign presence as you would notice a large number of

pinkish, red Lindsay Rich for School Board signs. She personally designed the sign background with the Appalachian Mountains because of her love for hiking. I was ready to get this election over so that I could have our evenings, weekends, and ultimately my wife back.

I arrived at the Prices Fork Elementary School just before the polls opened at 6 a.m., ready to welcome voters to the polls and hopefully supply them with a sample ballot encouraging them to vote for my wife. I know I am biased, but she would represent our District on the School Board so well. Who better to elect than a mother of five kids in every level of public school system, who would be directly impacted by all her policy decisions! Representing our kids and the families of District E was a cause my wife was very passionate about.

The morning hours seemed busy, and it was fun seeing lots of members from the community, friends, church family and acquaintances showing up to cast their vote. Opposite from me members representing my wife's opponent stood handing out their sample ballots. I enjoyed getting to meet a few of them, sharing some jokes, learning about who they were. It was hard for me to believe that some of these people were those who were so nasty to my wife online, posting such hateful comments on social media! Yet, here they were, so pleasant and likable in person. This really proves the "online disinhibition effect" where their social boundaries are reduced by lack of personal, face to face, interaction with the target of their comment. This is one of the reasons I have personally removed myself from social media.

As the day wore on, we remained optimistic regarding my wife's chances. However, by late afternoon we began to hear reports that there would be large numbers of provisional ballots at Virginia Tech. Virginia law has changed and beginning with the 2022 General Election, individuals can register to vote as late as Election Day and still cast a provisional ballot. After the election, the registrar will research that the ballot to ensure the individual is both qualified and eligible to vote. Rumor had it that someone brought a food truck to Virginia Tech, was registering individuals to vote, providing them with a democratic sample ballot, and offering a free meal at the food truck if they would

See Rich, page 8

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.

The News Messenger (USPS 016-490) is published twice a week for \$46 a year in Montgomery County, \$55 elsewhere in Virginia, and \$59 out of state by Virginia Media Inc., P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901. Periodical postage paid at Christiansburg, VA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NEWS MESSENGER 1633 W. Main St., Salem, VA 24153.

Virginia gas prices fall over last week

Average gasoline prices in Virginia have fallen 8.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.02/g today, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 11.1 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 8.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 8.4 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.10 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.29/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$2.00/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.29/g while the highest was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$2.00/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 9.6 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.11/g today. The national average is down 23.7 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 10.1 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.

Historical gasoline prices in Virginia and the national average going back ten years:

December 11, 2022: \$3.10/g (U.S. Average: \$3.21/g)
December 11, 2021: \$3.20/g (U.S. Average: \$3.34/g)
December 11, 2020: \$2.07/g (U.S. Average: \$2.17/g)
December 11, 2019: \$2.32/g (U.S. Average: \$2.58/g)
December 11, 2018: \$2.26/g (U.S. Average: \$2.41/g)
December 11, 2017: \$2.28/g (U.S. Average: \$2.45/g)
December 11, 2016: \$2.11/g (U.S. Average: \$2.21/g)
December 11, 2015: \$1.85/g (U.S. Average: \$2.01/g)
December 11, 2014: \$2.48/g (U.S. Average: \$2.61/g)
December 11, 2013: \$3.18/g (U.S. Average: \$3.24/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:
Roanoke- \$2.99/g, down 6.1 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.05/g.

Richmond- \$2.99/g, down 8.6 cents per gallon from

See Gas, page 8

AARP Virginia fraud alert: Check it twice before donating

It's the season of giving, and for those in the spirit, telling the difference between a real charity and a con can be a challenge. Legitimate charities make a big push at year-end for last-minute annual donations. Scammers know this and make their own end-of-year push to line their pockets.

If a charity solicits you for a

donation, even if your first instinct is to contribute, be careful. Many fake charities have legitimate-looking websites and names, making them hard to discern as fraudulent. Others are registered nonprofits but devote little of the money they raise to the programs they promote.

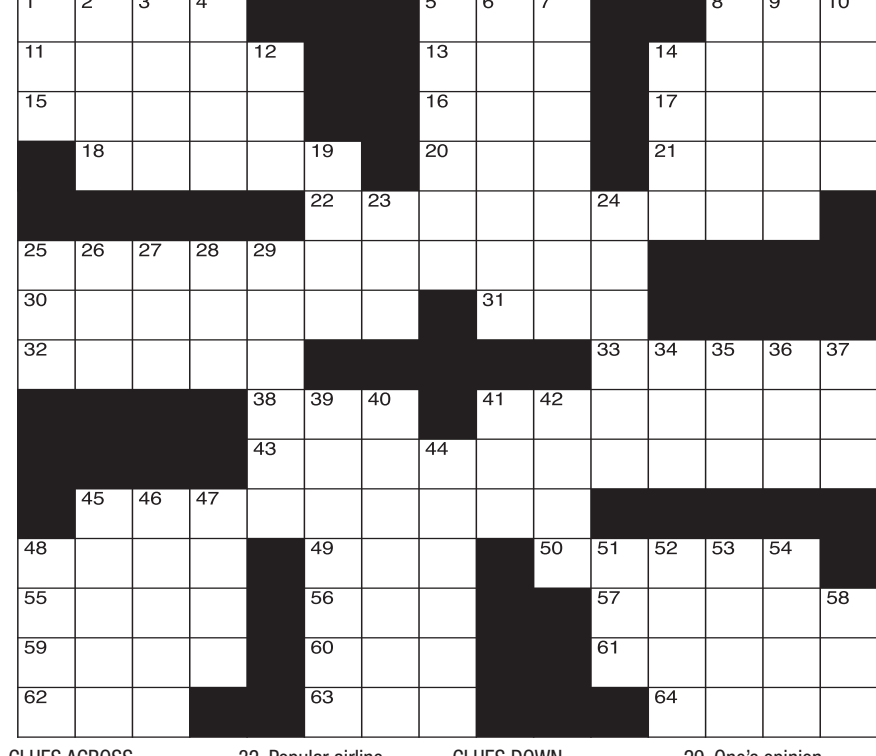
Research the charity on sites such as give.org, CharityNavigator.org

or CharityWatch.org to make sure that it's legitimate and to find out what percentage of their donations are actually used to serve their stated mission versus paying for overhead and fundraising.

Be a fraud fighter! If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam.

AARP Virginia

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUES ACROSS
1. A people of Eastern Afghanistan
5. Supervises interstate commerce
8. Touch lightly
11. Relating to bees
13. Mauna ____, Hawaiian volcano
14. Mosuo culture religion
15. Italian village
16. Stiff bristle
17. Wealthy enclave in Rio
18. Cause to lose courage
20. Examines animals
21. Ethnic group of Laos and Thailand
22. Gets rid of
25. Having easily perceived thoughts
30. Removed surgically
31. Principle underlying the universe

CLUES DOWN
32. Popular airline
33. Antelopes
38. Peacock network
41. Utter repeatedly
43. One from the Golden State
45. Photographers
48. Father
49. Popular BBQ dish
50. Cavalry sword
55. Ancient Greek sophist
56. Atomic mass unit
57. Afflicted in mind or body
59. Indian mythological figure
60. Mild expression of surprise
61. Jewish spiritual leader
62. Brew
63. Doctor of Education
64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN
1. State attorneys
2. Imitated
3. Latvian capital
4. Irish goddess
5. Taste
6. Dried
7. Spanish saloon
8. Mother of Perseus
9. Evergreen coniferous trees
10. Refuse to comply
12. Negative
14. Hyphen
19. A way to record
23. Not good
24. One who tends the furnace
25. Small amount
26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
27. The whole quantity
28. __ King Cole, musician

29. One's opinion
34. Holds ashes
35. Stablecoin cryptocurrency
36. Side-blotched lizards genus
37. Legislator (abbr.)
39. Concentrated bombardment
40. Took for oneself
41. Nigerian City
42. Thousands of pounds
44. Inspired
45. Secret clique
46. Expression
47. Dough made from corn flour
48. Comedian Carvey
51. Swiss river
52. Prejudice
53. Actor Idris
54. Resistance fighters
58. Criticize

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Employment

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For Rent

For Rent

2-3 BR, 2 Bth ranch in Blue Ridge area, Botetourt. No pets, No smoking. Need good credit score. Call 540-529- 6537.

Help Wanted - Drivers

Part Time Newspaper Driver
Salem Times Register has openings for afternoon/evening drivers/delivery. No experience necessary. Hours may vary. Will train. \$12 per hour. Contact Christine, Salem-Times Register (540)389-9355

Help Wanted - General

Part Time Newspaper Production Help
The Salem Times Register has openings for afternoon/evening shift work inserting, labeling and bundling newspapers for delivery. No experience necessary. Hours may vary. Will train. \$12 per hour. Contact Christine, Circulation Manager, Salem-Times Register (540)389-9355 or email customerservice@ourvalley.org



TOTAL ACTION FOR PROGRESS CEO Recruitment Profile

Total Action for Progress (TAP) is a community action agency that serves eleven localities in the Roanoke Valley and adjacent communities: the counties of Alleghany, Bath, Botetourt, Craig, Roanoke, and Rockbridge, and the cities of Buena Vista, Covington, Lexington, Roanoke, and Salem. TAP helps individuals and families achieve economic and personal independence through education, employment, affordable housing, and safe and healthy environments. Every TAP employee shares in TAP's responsibility to "Mobilize Community Resources" in support of TAP's anti-poverty efforts.

TAP is seeking an experienced CEO who is responsible for maintaining an organizational culture that embodies the following values: Advocacy for the oppressed, the disadvantaged, and disenfranchised. Results orientation. Fiscal and programmatic accountability. Teamwork, collaboration with others and partnership building. Excellence in performance. Innovation. The passion to make a difference. Responsiveness to the needs of the community. Maintenance of an agency-wide focus on Whole Family and Trauma Informed services.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsible for carrying out the mission of the organization and the strategic plan as set forth

Help Wanted - General

by the Board of Directors. Responsible for meeting with key board committees especially Finance, Property, Personnel and all others at the request of the Board Chair. Responsible for carrying out the policies and procedures set forth by the Board of Directors. Responsible for final approval of the hiring and termination of all staff. Responsible for the financial health of the organization, the development and prudent expenditures of the same according to budgets prepared by staff and approved by the Board of Directors and audited by financial and program auditors. Responsible for making sure that staff are provided with wages comparable to similar employment and benefits necessary for their well-being and that of their families. Responsible for developing a creative work environment where employees and volunteers are stimulated to take initiative, develop leadership and carry out their responsibilities with dedication, warmth and initiative. Responsible for inspiring others in the organization to be passionate about caring for the needs of our families. Responsible for stimulating collaborative ventures with other organizations, the private sector and federal, state, and local governments to strengthen services for low-income Virginians. Responsible for representing the organization publicly before public, private, and network organizations.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:
An understanding of the specific nature of a community action agency, its history, and commitment to the same. Advanced understanding of a variety of programming that includes early childhood development, youth and adult education and training, housing development and management and a wide range of economic development programming including business start-ups and loan pools. Excellent presentation, writing and public relations skills.

High emotional and cultural intelligence enabling the person to connect with a wide range of people from a variety of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds. High energy level and proven ability to manage stressful or extenuating circumstances. Bilingual ability is a plus.

QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:
Master's degree or equivalent experience. Ten to twenty years in a senior management position of an organization with similar complexity and size of TAP. Experience writing grant submissions and managing a team of grant writers. Experience working with a board of directors. Experience working effectively with the public and representing an agency before the public. Experience working effectively with local, state, and national public officials on issues vital to the organization. Experience and passion for working with a highly diverse organization. Essential computer skills and the experience and ability to oversee IT operations.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:
Must pass a comprehensive background and drug check. A valid Virginia driver's license and reliable transportation is required. TAP participates in the Virginia DMV Driver Alert

Help Wanted - General

Program. Employees who operate a TAP vehicle or their personal vehicle to conduct TAP business may be subject to driver record monitoring through the Virginia DMV Driver Alert Program.

SPECIAL NOTE:
This description provides information regarding the core functions of the designated position, and general nature and level of work associated with the job. It should not be interpreted to describe all the duties whose performance may be required of such employees or be used to limit the nature and extent of assignments such as an individual may be given. TAP is an Equal Opportunity Employer with a Drug Free Workplace. We only hire individuals legally eligible for employment in the United States.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:
Salary range is \$90k to \$115k depending on qualifications and experience. The successful candidate will be offered a generous benefits package including health, dental, vision, retirement plan match and gift, paid time off, sick leave, free short-term disability, long term disability, life insurance/AD&D, and professional development support, 14 paid holidays.

APPLICATION PROCESS:
To be considered, please submit a cover letter and resume with salary expectations, and three professional references to **Tabatha Cooper, HR Director, via email at Tabatha.Cooper@tapint.ohope.org or via mail to: TAP, Human Resources, PO Box 2868 Roanoke VA 24011**

This position will remain open until filled. Inquiries may be directed to: **Tabatha Cooper - HR Director PO BOX 2868 Roanoke, VA 24001 Email: Tabatha.Cooper@tapint.ohope.org Phone: 540-283-4800**

Legals - City of Radford

NOTICE: December 13, 2023
A white 550 Jet Ski FL8258GV HIN KAW447440482-B. A yellow 400 Jet Ski VA4511AK HIN KAW 051850676. A yellow 400 Jet Ski VA4512AK HIN KAW051690676. Are located at 4923 Clement Lane Radford VA 24141. If these watercraft are not claimed by the titled owner within 30 days, I will apply to the Department for registration/title in my name. Mark A. 540-639-0610

Legals - City of Salem

DIVORCE NOTICE

Granville County Civil Court in Granville County, NC will be hearing a plea for the decree of divorce for which suit is pending and as filed by Larissa L. Peluso-Fleming of 4010 Pastor Lane, Wake Forest, NC 27587 (petitioner/wife) versus Andrew Taylor McDonald of 1619 Valhalla Court, Salem, VA 24513 (defendant/husband) The defendant must enter a defense to such pleading within 30 days after the date of receipt of divorce filing as delivered by the Roanoke County Sheriff's Department. Should the defendant fail to make a defense within that time period, the plaintiff shall apply to the court for relief.

Legals - City of Salem

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the Board of Zoning Appeals of the City of Salem, Virginia will hold a public hearing, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2309 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, on December 27, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, to consider the following applications.

The request of Elizabeth G. Lane, property owner, for a variance from Section 106-208.3(B)(2) of the City of Salem Zoning Ordinance pertaining to site development regulations, for the property located at 111 Poplar Avenue, Tax Map # 127-3-5. The petitioner is requesting a variance to allow the placement of a 12 x 20-foot carport in the front yard, to be located no closer than 16 feet to the front property line. Section 106-208.3(B)(2) states that accessory structures must be built behind the rear building line of the principal structure (or in the rear yard).

At this hearing, all parties in interest will be given an opportunity to be heard, present evidence, and show cause why such requests should or should not be granted.

For additional information, contact the Office of the Zoning Administrator, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia (Phone 375 3032). THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS OF THE CITY OF SALEM BY: Mary Ellen H. Wines, CZA, CFM Planning & Zoning Administrator

Legals - Roanoke County

LEGAL NOTICE

Roanoke County Board of Supervisors Seeking Applicants to Fill Vinton District Vacancy

The Board of Supervisors of Roanoke County is searching for candidates to fill the vacancy in the Vinton Magisterial District as the result of P. Jason Peters' election to the Roanoke County Commissioner of the Revenue. The person appointed shall be a qualified voter of the Vinton Magisterial District and hold office until a special election in November of 2024. The person elected at the special election will serve the remainder of Mr. Peters' term, which expires December 31, 2025. If any qualified voter in the Vinton Magisterial District would like to be considered for the vacancy, please mail or email a 300-word essay on why you want to be the Supervisor for the Vinton Magisterial District and why you feel you are qualified to serve to the Chief Deputy Clerk at the following address or email by January 1, 2024. Deborah C. Jacks Chief Deputy Clerk to the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors 5204 Bernard Drive Roanoke, Virginia 24018 Telephone: 540-772-2003 Email: djacks@roanokecountyva.gov

Dated: November 26, 2023
Deborah C. Jacks
Chief Deputy Clerk to the Board

Legals - City of Salem

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Radford wins Class 2 state football championship

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Radford High School is the 2023 Class 2 state football champs. Yes, let that set in.

Radford caps off a 15-0 season, by bringing home a trophy that had eluded them since back-to-titles in 1971 and 1972. Riverheads saw its streak of 32-straight playoff wins come to an end after moving up this season to Class 2. They had won seven straight championships in Class 1.

Radford rolled in a 39-21 win over Riverheads in front of a capacity crowd Saturday at Salem Municipal Stadium

Riverheads' running back Cayden Cook-Cash had 196 yards with three touchdowns on 33 carries in the loss. He will finish the season with over 1,500 yards in just 11 games and finish his career with over 3,000 yards and 105 touchdowns.

But it was the Landon Clark and Max Kanipe show on Saturday as Radford dominated on the offensive side

of the ball, while Charlie Davis led a defense that stayed in Riverheads' face the entire game.

Clark completed 15 of 22 passes for 254 yards with four touchdowns. He also rushed 14 times for 114 yards. Kanipe was Clark's main target as he has been for most of the season. Kanipe had 218 yards with 179 coming in the first half. He also scored twice. J.D. Grubb also caught a pass for a touchdown.

Coach Michael Crist, who is in his third season at Radford, follows in the footsteps of his father, Dave Crist who ironically won a state title in his third season at Blacksburg.

Riverheads came in with a very potent offense, but the Radford defense said "not on this Saturday." Charlie Davis and Ricky Bailey had 20 total tackles apiece in the contest, while Dawson Martin had 11 that included 2.5 tackles for a loss. Defensive tackle Dawson Martin put the cherry on top with an interception in the end zone for Radford late in the Fourth Quarter.

The victory comes a day after the Three Rivers District released its all-star team for this past year. Clark was named the offensive player of year and Davis was

name the defensive player of year. Crist took coach of the year honors.

First team offense players included center Nolan Dalton, running back J.D. Grubb and receivers Sincere Taylor and Max Kanipe. On defense, lineman Ricky Bailey was named first team along with Davis at linebacker and Clark at defensive back.

Second team honors were given to offensive lineman Dawson Martin, receiver Luke Woodward, tight end Brandon Thompson, offensive all-purpose Sincere Taylor, defensive lineman Martin and Daniel Nooley, linebacker Brandon Thompson and defensive back Bryant Weaver.

Clark will finish his Bobcat career with 3,363 yards passing in his senior year going 206 of 339 with 40 touchdowns. He will also finish this season with 1,207 yards rushing to lead the team on 134 carries with 26 touchdowns.

Kanipe will finish his season with 74 receptions for 1,598 yards with 17 touchdowns. Taylor added 51 for 804 yards. Davis has tallied 157 tackles this season with 62 solos.

Radford Bobcats state champs after 50-plus years



Trailing 7-0, Landon Clark fires a pass toward the sideline in the Bobcats' first offensive possession. Radford would outscore Riverheads enroute to a Class 2 state title.



Receiver Max Kanipe runs away from defenders and picks up yardage after breaking the first tackle.

PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

See **Bobcats**, page 8

Christiansburg's Evans named All-River Ridge

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Tanner Evans was knocked out of Christiansburg High School's season in the seventh football game of the year. Friday, he was named first-team All-River Ridge quarterback and defensive all-purpose player of the year.

Evans suffered a season ending knee injury and had surgery two weeks ago. He finished the season with 117 rushes for 1,208 yards with 22 touchdowns and passed 50 of 84 for 782 yards with 12 touchdowns and just one interception.

Evans was joined on the first team by offensive lineman Carter Stallard, defensive lineman Jaiden Edwards, defensive end Donovan Richardson, defensive back Brody Blount and linebacker JT Thompson.

Edwards was named to the second team as an offensive lineman, along with Thompson at receiver.

Christiansburg's Xavier Joplin was named second-team kick returner along with Izaiah Cotto as offensive all-purpose and Matt Annis as running back.

Blacksburg's Luke Poff was named second team receiver.

Christiansburg's Josiah Ratley was named second team linebacker, and Cotto second team kick receiver. The Blue Demons placed three players on the honorable mention list (Richardson at tight end, Brody Blount at half back and Spener Conner at kicker). They were joined by second team defensive punter Matt Annis.

Blacksburg had five players on the honorable mention list: Thomas Boyd at linebacker, Javier Waldron as a receiver, James Rich at linebacker and Poff at defensive back.

Evans led a contingent of Christiansburg players named to the Region 3D team. Evans was the offensive and defensive all-purpose players of the year. Carter Stallard was named first team as an offensive lineman. JT Thompson was first team linebacker, and Jaiden Edwards first team defensive lineman.

Edwards was named to the second team as an offensive lineman, joining Donovan Richardson as tight end.

Richardson was also placed on the second team on the defensive side of the ball. He was joined by Josiah Ratley at linebacker, Brody Blount at defensive back and Izaiah Cotto as punt returner.

Christiansburg girls remain unbeaten



Christiansburg's McKenzie Harris scores on a fast break layup against William Byrd in a 52-27 win Friday night.



Christiansburg's Sathara Kane blocks a shot by William Byrd's Sam Martin.



Christiansburg's Katy Hoover was the high scorer for the Blue Demons with 24 points in a home win over William Byrd.



Christiansburg's Blythe Akers fires from 3-point range against William Byrd.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Hokies dominate cross river rival RU

Virginia Tech held Radford University to only 19.3 percent shooting from the field and the Hokies took down the Highlanders 85-40 at home Sunday.

The Hokies (7-2) had four players score in double figures, led by Elizabeth Kitley, who recorded a double-double with 16 points and 13 rebounds. Georgia Amooore tacked on 15 points and three blocks and Matilda Ekh chipped in as well with 12 points.

The Virginia Tech offense was strong from beyond the arc, knocking down eight threes on 27 attempts. Cayla King hit two treys for the Hokies in the contest.

The Hokies' defense held Radford shooters to only 19.3 percent from the field, including 26.3 percent from three-point range. They also kept Ashlyn Traylor-Walker to 2-of-16 shooting in the game.

Virginia Tech started out the scoring by going on an 11-0 run, culminating in a bucket from Kitley, to take an early lead with 5:20 left in the first quarter. The Hokies then added seven points to that lead by the end of the period and entered the quarter break with a 22-4 advantage. Virginia Tech took advantage of five offensive rebounds to score seven second chance points out of 22 total in the period.

Virginia Tech kept its first quarter lead intact before going on an 8-0 run starting at the 1:22 mark in the second period to increase its lead to 48-22, a score that would hold until halftime. Virginia Tech saw non-starters score 11 of its 26 total points off the bench in the quarter.

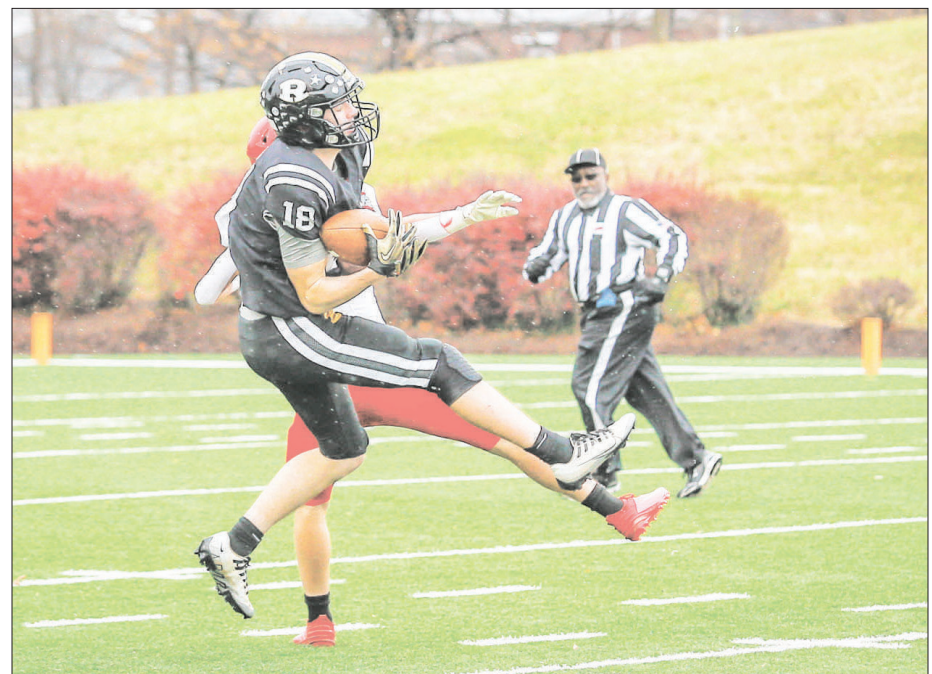
Virginia Tech wasted no time building on its lead, going on a 19-0 run to expand its lead further to 67-22 with 2:48 to go in the third. Before the third period was over, the Hokies added one point

See **Hokies**, page 8

Bobcats from page 7



Radford's defensive effort against the Gladiators' rushing attack was a key to holding their offense in check for most of the game.



Max Kanipe beats a receiver for a catch deep down the field to put the Bobcats in position for a second score.



Senior Ricky Bailey (#77) takes down Riverheads' star running back after senior Brandon Thompson (#28) tripped him up.



Landen Clark carries a defender for another yard before stretching out to score another Radford touchdown in the fourth quarter.

PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

Rich from page 4

return with their "I Voted" sticker. We are huge advocates of everyone voting. The more the merrier! Everyone should have their voice heard. But something about this just felt wrong. Oh well, it was just a rumor and there was nothing we could do about it at this point.

When the polls closed at 7 p.m., I was absolutely exhausted. I gathered up all the political signs at two precincts and headed to our watch party. As the votes began to come in, it quickly became very evident that this election was going to be very close. It was very close indeed. At the end of the night, my wife was down 19 votes. A near 50/50 split! Even though she was slightly behind, it felt good to know that our community of mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles, grandparents, those affected by the school board actually voted for my wife. It wasn't until you throw in votes from students who live on campus at Virginia Tech did my wife's opponent, the more progressive candidate, finally pull ahead. All that remained were the provisional ballots.

In the days following the election, I began poking around the internet to either confirm or dispel the food truck rumors and found out they are true. A group called NextGen America had taken a short-term interest in Virginia Tech. I believe their real target was to catapult Lilly Franklin (Democrat Candidate for Delegate) to victory over Chris Obenchain (Republican Candidate for Delegate). On November 8th they posted on the social media platform X (formally called Twitter), boasting that they provided over 5000 meals to "folks at Virginia Tech" in order to "fuel voters to the polls." While the location of provisional ballots are not published in the election results, it is easy to see that the districts with student populations (Districts A, E, F, and G) had high counts of provisional ballots, while the remainder of the county had much lower levels of provisional ballots. It is hard to know the exact numbers, but

around 885 provisional ballots were cast in Montgomery County and it appears somewhere between 650-850 provisional ballots cast by Virginia Tech students. These would likely be individuals who registered to vote on election day and voted. To further put the impact in perspective, four years ago, last time Montgomery County District E elected local officials, there were zero provisional ballots. Once all the provisional ballots were counted, my wife lost by 102 votes. More drastically, prior to counting all the provisional votes, Darrell Sheppard, Candidate for Board of Supervisors, Montgomery County District E was leading his opponent by 114 votes. However, after these provisional ballots were counted, he lost by 31 votes.

I know that many will expect that I am advocating to make it more difficult to vote. That's not my point. I truly do want everyone's voice to be heard! But at the same time, I do question whether students who live on campus, most of whom come from outside Montgomery County, don't know anything about or care anything for the local candidates and issues, should have such a major impact on local elections. Does the fact that they have to use a taco rather than the major issues of our time to attract votes not seem suspect? How do local candidates compete? How can a local candidate, with their limited campaign funds, afford competing food trucks feeding thousands of students? How do local candidates meet and influence this voter base, educating them about our local issues? While flipping the Virginia House into Democratic hands may have been the goal, local candidates were the collateral damage! Local Montgomery County elections have been forever changed and will be controlled by the voting direction of the Virginia Tech student population.

Daniel Rich
Montgomery County

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Meet Macaron! She is looking for her purrfect match to bring her home. She has a shy but affectionate nature. Macaron has lived with other cats in the past and will likely do well with them in a new home. Visit her at the Animal Care and Adoption Center.

Gas from page 4

last week's \$3.07/g.
West Virginia- \$3.10/g, down 9.7 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.20/g.
"For the 12th straight week, or three straight months, the national average has continued to decline, now at its lowest level of 2023 heading into the prime of the holiday season as oil prices continue to struggle amidst cooling demand," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "With nearly 80,000 gas stations in the U.S. now priced below \$3 per gallon, and 23 states

also seeing average prices of \$2.99 or less, motorists are getting substantial relief at the pump in time for the holidays. The trend is likely to continue in most states this week, while the national average could soon fall below \$3.05 per gallon, the lowest since 2021. The good news may continue into 2024, with GasBuddy's annual Fuel Outlook being released in just a few weeks."

Submitted by GasBuddy

Hokies from page 7

to that lead and entered the fourth quarter with a 72-26 edge. Virginia Tech took advantage of seven Radford turnovers in the quarter, scoring 14 points off of takeaways.

The Hokies then held on for the victory in the fourth quarter. Virginia Tech took advantage of its opportunities in the post,

scoring eight of its 13 points in the paint.

Elizabeth Kitley notched a double-double for the Hokies with 16 points and 13 rebounds.

Virginia Tech lit it up from beyond the arc, knocking down eight treys in the game.

The Hokies put together a stellar defensive performance, holding the Highlanders to only 19.3 percent shooting from the field.

The Hokies never trailed after taking a 22-4 first quarter lead.

Virginia Tech tallied 17 total assists in the game.

The Virginia Tech bench made an impact by scoring 30 points to its

scoring output. Virginia Tech had a 48-36 edge on the boards in the win.

The Virginia Tech defense forced 20 turnovers.

The Hokies were active in affecting shots on the defensive end, recording 12 blocks as a team.

Virginia Tech cleaned up on the offensive glass, collecting 20 offensive boards in the game.

Elizabeth Kitley led the Hokies with 16 points.

Elizabeth Kitley grabbed a game-high 13 rebounds to lead Virginia Tech and Clara Strack contributed 10.

Virginia Tech Athletics

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