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Community Health Center of the NRV receives significant funding boost

The Community Health Center of the New River Valley (CHCNRV) has been chosen to receive a 1.9-million-dollar gift from Yield Giving, a charitable organization focused on providing resources to proven non-profits to use to benefit others.

"This is among the largest gifts ever received by the Community Health Center and is life-changing," Michelle Brauns, MS, APR, CEO of CHCNRV, said. "This donation reflects the success of our staff, the strength of our leadership, and the vision for our future."

Established by philanthropist MacKenzie Scott to share a financial fortune created through the effort of countless people, Yield Giving is named after a belief in adding value by giving up control. Since 2019, Yield Giving has provided over \$14,000,000,000 to 1,600+ non-profits across the world.

Yield Giving privately vets the chosen non-profits and the Community Health Center of the New River Valley met the organization's criteria, including: strong leadership in an organization; strategy, vision and focus; measurable multi-year success in achieving outcomes for populations, as well as communities; and stable or thriving assets.

Brauns said that the leadership team and volunteer board of directors are being intentional in plans for the gift, which she describes as "transformational." Ultimately, Brauns said that the funds will be used to secure the long-range future and growth of the organization that serves nearly 6,000 patients through the provision of family medical, dental, substance use, and behavioral health services. Prior to the award, CHCNRV leadership had developed a 2024 growth plan, which includes an expansion of the Christiansburg Center. In the meantime, funds will be invested to allow CHCNRV to grow the donation and further enhance investment in patient services.

The Community Health Center of the New River Valley provides affordable and high-quality family medical, dental, behavioral, and preventive health care services to people of all ages, regardless of ability to pay. CHCNRV has been recognized as performing in the top 10% nationally in terms of patient outcomes by The Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). For more information about the Community Health Center's services and programs in Dublin, Christiansburg, Pearisburg,



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF CHCNRV

and Pulaski County High School, visit yieldgiving.com, our website at www.chcnrv.org or call 540-381-0820.

Learn more about Yield at www.chcnrv.org Community Health Center of the New River Valley



Supervisor Darrell Sheppard



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Supervisor and Chair Sherri Blevins

Board of Supervisors, community members bid farewell to Supervisors Blevins and Sheppard

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

Montgomery County Board of Supervisor and Chair Sherri Blevins, and Supervisor Darrell Sheppard received well wishes from the County Board and community members as they participated in their last supervisor's meeting Dec. 11, 2023.

Christopher Tuck, attorney and former Montgomery County Board of Supervisor, commended Sheppard and Blevins for their work and dedication to the County during the public address session of the meeting.

"I want to thank both of you for your service to our community," Tuck said.

Tuck first addressed Sheppard in his commitment to the county for the past eight years he has served on the board.

"Our family has been on this board for over three decades, in one member or another. You've done it for all the right reasons to make a difference in the community that you grew up in. For all the right reasons, you ran, didn't run ugly campaigns, always ran positive campaigns, and always looked for the commonsense solution, and I want to

See Supervisors, page 4

Blacksburg Town Council recognizes council member John Bush for service



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSBURG

(Left to right) Council members Michael Sutphin, Susan Anderson, John Bush, Susan Mattingly, and Lauren Colliver recognize Bush for his 14 years of service to Blacksburg Town Council.

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

Councilmember John Bush chose not to seek re-election in this year's 2023 election, ending his 14-year service to Blacksburg Town Council, and previous years dedicated to civic service.

"This is a bittersweet night for me," Vice Mayor Susan Anderson

said. Anderson went on to say that Bush's community support began prior to his 2009 election to Blacksburg Town Council, serving on many committees. Anderson pointed out Bush had first ran in 2009, with a campaign that focused on sustainable development and a community-centered approach to

progress that listens to the voice of Blacksburg Town members. "He had great civic service prior to 2009. He was Chair of Blacksburg Historic Design Review Board from 1999 to 2009. He was also Chair of Blacksburg Historic Architecture Review Board from 1998-99, also serving on that

See Bush, page 4

Montgomery County employees receive two Virginia Association of Counties Achievement Awards

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

Montgomery County has earned two achievement awards from the Virginia Association of Counties.

Joe Lerch, Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Director of Local Government Policy, presented the awards at the regular Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting on Dec. 11, 2023.

"We've been around since 1934 to serve the interests of Virginia counties. We primarily do this through our advocacy efforts both at the state and even at the federal level, but we also have education programs, member services,

and communications," Lerch said. "We established the achievement award program in 2003, so this now coming on 20 plus years."

According to Lerch, 2023 is the 21st annual achievement award program, receiving 135 entries and 33 winners were selected from 20 counties.

"This is your eighth and ninth award for Montgomery County," Lerch said.

The Employee Engagement Committee received one of the awards. Amy Marshall, who leads the committee, along with several of the 21 dedicated members were present to accept the

award. The committee works to organize activities for county employees that provide unity and appreciation for their commitment in their roles as employees of Montgomery County.

"We sincerely appreciate all of your Board of Supervisors' support and the recognition received from the Virginia Association of Counties tonight," Marshall said.

The second award was presented for the Wetland Mitigation Project for Crab Creek.

"I think an additional five acres of wetlands are being created that's going to be under easement, but there was also the 4,000 plus linear feet of Crab



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEN HARRIS, MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Wetlands Mitigation Project receives VACo Achievement Award (left to right) Chris Lawrence, Todd King, Darrell Sheppard, Mary Biggs, Sherri Blevins, Chair, Brea Hopkins, Joe Lerch, April DeMotts, Sara Bohn, Angie Hill, and Steve Fijalkowski.

Creek that was being redone," Lerch said. "In my experience in working with cities and counties over my professional career, I really

love stream mitigation projects. When you restore that sinuosity to the creek, you get the vegetation there, the wildlife comes

back, it really has a big benefit."

Lerch also pointed out

See Awards, page 3

UPCOMING EVENTS

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.

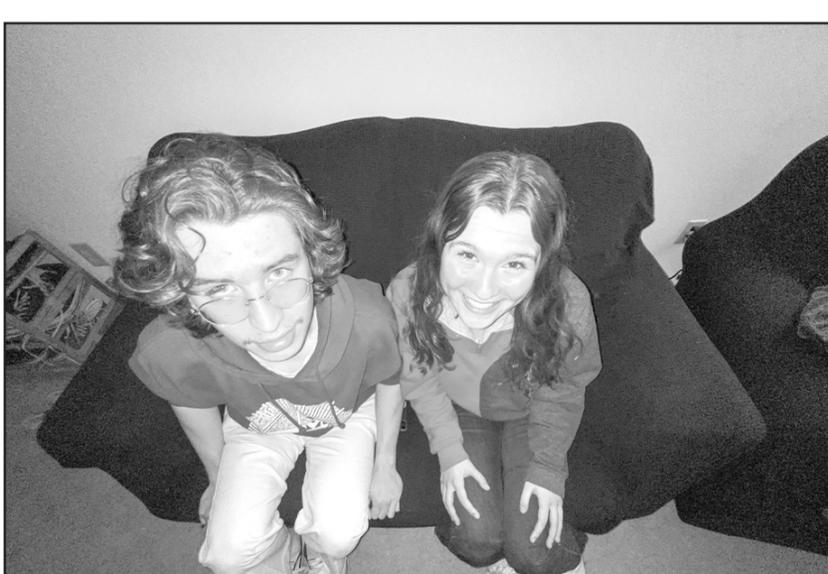
Blacksburg stormwater utility credit application deadline

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.



Crack In The Sidewalk members Adrian Shirazi and Caroline Holomon posing for a silly photo.



Dripping Candles taking a break in the studio lounge area after recording new songs for their upcoming album.

The hidden gem of the south: Blacksburg's alternative music scene

Elizabeth Gill

Contributing writer

BLACKSBURG – From themed house shows to eccentric venue performances, Virginia Tech students have built a thriving underground music scene in their small college town.

“When I first came to Virginia Tech, I didn’t even know there was a Blacksburg music scene,” said Adrian Shirazi, the guitarist for Crack In The Sidewalk. “You start talking to people who have the same music interests as you and realize there’s a whole community of people that love coming out to see live music. It’s a tight knit group of people.”

The Blacksburg alternative music scene connects a variety of people with musical interests spanning from rock to punk to metal. For a school that uses Metallica’s “Enter Sandman” as their football entrance and created a minor earthquake on a seismograph scale, it’s no wonder the students are so passionate about heavy music.

Despite Blacksburg being a small town with not much to do outside of Virginia Tech’s directly affiliated activities, the music scene has taken off and brought many students together, both fans and musicians alike. Nearly every week there is an event happening, whether it be an intimate house show, a hole-in-the-wall concert at the Milk Parlor, a lawn jamming session led by the WUVT student radio, a vodka-fueled gig at the Top of The Stairs nightclub or enjoying a cup of coffee to an acoustic set at the renowned Southpaw Café.

“Nirvana was a pipeline for me discovering music,” said Emma Marshal, the vocalist for Dripping Candles. “I believe that’s how it is for many other people in the scene. They hear an older band and they fall in love.”

Marshal lays back in her chair and rests her bulky Doc Martens on the stool in front of her. Her eyes pan the room, taking in the ambiance of the music studio. She takes a moment to pause and reminisce on her teenage years. “I grew up watching MTV Unplugged and a majority of the shows they will have candles lit around the stage that are just

dripping everywhere,” Marshal said with a big grin on her face. “The aesthetic of the messy candle wax seemed so fitting because we all grew up inspired by those grunge bands that played on MTV. From that, we became ‘Dripping Candles.’”

Dripping Candles can be classified as one of Blacksburg’s heavier bands and has a sludgy, distorted sound. Marshal’s raspy layered vocals, Remington Swisher-Davis’s thick echoing drums, Dylan “Bubbles” Shoemaker’s lowered guitar buzzing and Tanner Close’s dirty guitar complete the group to make the ultimate modern day grunge-influenced Southwestern Virginia band. The band attributes their rough-edged style to their Appalachian roots. Dripping Candles is to Blacksburg what Alice In Chains was to Seattle.

One of the greatest features of the Blacksburg music scene is how kind and supportive the people are. Like many underground music scenes, you may have to ask around to find out about shows initially but unlike other scenes, the people are accepting of newcomers. If you’re willing to put yourself out there in terms of discovery, there is a place for you in Blacksburg as both a musician and a fan.

“After graduating high school, one of the things I said to myself was ‘I want to join a band when I go to college,’” said Caroline Holomon, the bassist for Crack In The Sidewalk. “That was one of my hopes and dreams because it was just something I wanted to do since I was a kid. Everyone in the Blacksburg music scene was welcoming of me.”

With a fluffier rock sound, Crack In The Sidewalk has rapidly gained recognition within the Blacksburg community as alternative music continues to stay on top with 45% of adults listening to it in 2023.

“Each member in the band is extremely different,” said Holomon. “We do a good job of representing the people in our community because anyone who comes to our shows can see themselves in one of us. We like to think of ourselves as for the people, which I believe is why we have the fans that we do.”

The band’s versatile style coupled with their notorious character themed



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ELIZABETH GILL

Spilt Milkshakes playing the closing set for the Dec. 1 show at the Birdhouse.

performances ensure each house show is packed full and nearly busting out the roof. Their recent themes include Wizard of Oz, Romans from the Roman Empire, and the Men In Black. “Our band is for people who just want to leave their dorm or house on a Monday night and forget about their responsibilities,” Holomon noted regarding their silly costume parties and upbeat rock music.

With the nearest major music venue over 200 miles away in North Carolina, students tend to get creative in their improvisation of concert venues. A more personal and affordable experience to college students at just five dollars is Blacksburg house shows. Birdhouse, Treehouse and Dawg house are a few of the common houses used for these shows.

On Friday, Dec. 1, hundreds of students poured into the Birdhouse to jam with their favorite local bands before finals week. Fueled by Redbull and Miller Lite, students seemingly were able to relax as they sang along to the lyrics of “Graduation” by Spilt Milkshakes. Sweaty mosh pits took place in the center of someone’s townhouse with music blasting so loudly that you couldn’t even hear the creaking floorboards. Front and center of the imaginary stage is Dripping Candles to cheer on their buddies in Spilt Milkshakes. The Blacksburg alternative music scene is such a close community that seeing your classmates crowd surf over your head will become a regular occurrence. Everybody knows each other.

“We try to keep our shows very fun and casual,” said George Salcedo, the vocalist for Spilt Milkshakes. “At our last show, we took a shot with the crowd before the beginning of one of our songs.”

Salcedo takes pride in making sure his band’s presence is lighthearted. His playful tattoo of a duck with a guitar confirms this. “One of our most fun shows we ever played was a cat’s birthday party,” Salcedo recalled, which sent the rest of the band into loud laughter. “These girls messaged us on Instagram about playing a gig for their cat’s birthday and we agreed to do it because it was funny in an unusual way. Next thing you know, we were playing for a whole crowd of college students to celebrate someone’s pet’s birthday.”

Spilt Milkshakes, a self-proclaimed “emo pop-punk” band, consists of guitarist Umar Tariq, bassist Levi Keilholtz, drummer John Kizer and singer Salcedo. Spilt Milkshakes can be best described as vibrant and quirky in their performances. Each member of the band plays in a way that exuberates energy on different level playing fields yet piecing together their own styles to create one large collective masterpiece.

Tariq’s introspective vibe mixed with his outward personality make the crowd gasp in awe as they try to figure out what’s going on in his head. With each count, he bends his knees, kicks up his feet and headbangs to the tune of the shredding of his own guitar with pure determination. He displays himself with such confidence while seemingly looking off into the distance of the crowd, as if caught in his own thoughts.

Keilholtz vividly portrays her playful personality within the first moment of taking the stage. Ironically, she carries the rhythm for the cover of Joyce Manor’s

Music

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“Constant Headache,” giving herself a constant smile rather than a headache. She looks down at the four strings on her bass guitar, gently plucking while giggling with the crowd. She seems happy to just be there, not knowing that she is making history within the Blacksburg music scene.

Kizer is perhaps the most expressive of the bunch. When he first sits down at his drum kit and he seems to be the typical angry drummer. However,

once his drumsticks smash into those cymbals, a series of facial expressions make wave across his face. In mere seconds, he goes from smiling to frowning to surprised. These faces closely resemble Melpomene and Thalia’s comedy and tragedy theatrical masks. Watching him play is quite intriguing, almost like attending a Broadway show. In between songs, Kizer breaks character to present his dark humor through his very own “John’s fun facts” while his bandmates tune

their guitars.

Salcedo’s singing is very personable. No matter if you’re separated by a platform stage or just a simple cord plugged into the kitchen counter, his purposeful eye contact makes the audience feel exposed. The way he exerts himself in your face enough to make sure you pay attention to his emotional lyrics, which resembles a best friend explaining to you their juicy gossip. His voice will take you on a journey through the story of life.

“Even when we’re not playing

shows, we’re still active participants and we’ll go cheer on the other bands any chance we get,” said Holomon when remarking on her own band’s relevance to the scene.

Each person in this community is so supportive of the music around them. When a person is crowd surfing, it is general knowledge to hold them up. Figuratively speaking, that’s what the people within the Blacksburg music scene do for each other. The students at Virginia Tech acknowledge how

they can help others and choose to share their love for heavy music, rather than gatekeeping it from outsiders. The community continues to rapidly grow as more students discover their first dingy bar show through a classmate or overhearing loud bass and whiny vocals while walking downtown. Calling Blacksburg’s alternative music scene a hidden gem would be an understatement but there is no other word to capture the charm this small college town holds.

Bush

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committee in 1997. He Squares subcommittee also was Chair of the 16 from 2006 to 2009,”

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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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Anderson said.

Additionally, Bush’s expertise in architecture lent to his servitude with the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) from 1997 to 2009, as stated on his biography on www.blacksburg.gov website.

Bush has resided in Blacksburg for the past 25 years; as a graduate student earning a master’s degree in architecture in 2001 from Virginia Tech University, working for the Office of University Planning at

Virginia Tech, and as a parent of two Blacksburg students along with his wife Elizabeth. Bush will remain connected to Blacksburg through community activities and will be missed by Council and community members, Anderson said.

Council member Michael Sutphin added to Anderson comments expressing the impact Bush has had on the Blacksburg community.

“He is someone who lives in the 16 Squares and advocates for our

neighborhoods and our community in Blacksburg, and I think that John has done something that John has done extraordinarily well over the past 14 years,” Sutphin said. “So, thank you so much for your service.”

Councilman John Bush expressed his heartfelt appreciation to Blacksburg’s people and the Council members he has worked with over the years.

“I sincerely thank the citizens of the Town of Blacksburg for the honor

and their trust in me to ably represent them the past 14 years as an elected official for the Town. The town has given so much to our family, I can only hope I have been able to give back in service to all the citizens that live in the town and call our town their home. The town is well served both by our elected officials, the professional staff and all the good folks who work for and in the town. Keep up the good work,” Bush said.

Supervisors

from page 1

thank you for that,” Tuck said.

In response to Blevins’ term of service Tuck stated that she “knocked it out of the park these last four years.”

County Attorney Marty McMahon also recognized Blevins and Sheppard’s service to the County, expressing how much they will be missed.

“I want to take the opportunity to thank both you Madam Chair and Darrell. It’s been a pleasure for me to be able to work with you guys and represent you, and really not just work, but I’ve really enjoyed your company and your companionship, and all the communications we’ve had together,” McMahon said. “I also want to thank you for your commitment to the county and as Madam Chair always says, your service to the county...it’s a hard job and a lot of times it’s thankless, but not from my point-of-view.”

Supervisors Todd King, April DeMotts, Steve Fijalkowski, Sara Bohn, and Mary Biggs each shared fond memories and congratulations

on time well-served on the Board to Sheppard and Blevins.

“I remember the day that my wife and I were sitting around talking and wondering who was going to replace Chris Tuck, and you know, it’s one of those moments you think, well there’s you know, 100,000 people in this county, who are you going to pick, and we both immediately thought of Sherri Blevins,” Fijalkowski said.

DeMotts was emotional in her farewell to both Supervisors.

“I’m really going to miss both of you and wish you all the best in everything that you do,” DeMotts said.

Additional recognitions of service were approved by the Board of Supervisors for Commissioner of Revenue Helen Royal, Clerk of Court Erica Conner, Treasurer Helen St. Clair, and Senator John Edwards.

“Ms. Royal served three terms as the Commissioner of the Revenue and retired June 30,

2023. Ms. Royal served a total of 36 years in the Commissioner of the Revenue’s Office,” according to the Board agenda.

Circuit Court Clerk Erica Conner retired Feb. 28, 2023, serving 16 years in the county.

Treasurer Helen St. Clair completed one term as treasurer but had a total of 39 years of service in the treasurer’s office.

Senator John Edwards will also be retiring effective January 2024, serving 28 years.

In new business, Montgomery County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved two increases to the fiscal year 2024 budget. Appropriations of \$3,043,887 will go to Montgomery County Public Schools and specifically will support transportation and instruction costs. Additionally, the Montgomery Museum of Art and History will receive \$100,000 in support of a needed HVAC system upgrade. The museum has also been successful in their fundraising efforts to raise part of the money as well.

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| <p>CLUES ACROSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Syrian president 6. Grand Caravan brand 11. Immeasurably small 14. Myriagram 15. Yellow-fever mosquito 16. Radioactivity unit 18. Anklebone 21. Adobe house 23. Direct to a source 25. Piper __, actress 26. Leuciscus leuciscus 28. Moral excellences 29. Describes distinct concepts 31. Rubberized raincoat 34. Inhabitants of the Earth 35. Distress signal 36. Destroyed by secret means | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39. Skin abrasions 40. Caesar or tossed 44. Supplied with a chapeaux 45. Fictional elephant 47. Forced open 48. Pole (Scottish) 50. Browning of the skin 51. Boy Scout merit emblem 56. British thermal unit 57. Decomposes naturally 62. Freshet 63. Lawn game <p>CLUES DOWN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fished in a stream 2. Left heart there 3. Yes in Spanish 4. Nursing organization 5. Cease to live 6. River in NE Scotland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Former CIA 8. Didymium 9. Gram 10. Audio membranes 11. 8th Jewish month 12. Touchdown 13. Madames 14. Metric ton 17. Fabric colorants 19. Capital of Bashkortostan 20. Extra dry wine 21. An Indian dress 22. Expenditure 24. Ribbed or corded fabric 25. Can top 27. So. African Music Awards 28. Weather directionals 30. A scrap of cloth 31. Gin & vermouth cocktails 32. A way to lessen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33. Contended with difficulties 36. Egyptian beetle 37. CNN’s Turner 38. A quick light pat 39. Shipment, abbr. 41. Resin-like insect secretion 42. Goat and camel hair fabric 43. Superficially play at 46. Network of veins or nerves 49. Atomic #44 51. Wager 52. The time something has existed 53. Physician’s moniker 54. Talk excessively 55. Pre-Tokyo 58. Out of print 59. Ducktail hairstyle 60. Carrier’s invention 61. Canadian province |
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OBITUARIES

Dix, Donald



Donald Dix was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He was reunited in Heaven with the love of his life, Brenda, on Dec. 9, 2023.

Donald was a compassionate, gentle, and selfless man. He loved his family unconditionally and thought of them as his proudest accomplishment.

Although he was a quiet man, he was there at every moment for his family - big or small. His big heart and contagious smile will be missed dearly.

Donald is survived by his two daughters; Kim, Amy, and Amy's husband, Decota; six grandchildren

Chad, Kayla, Cody and his wife Rebekah, Austin, and Cheyene; great-grandchildren Anthony, Tessa, Noah, Emma, Lainey, and Walker; as well as his special furry companions Lettie, Frankie, and Blaze.

The family would like to give a special thanks to his nurse Missy.

Per his wishes, the family will have a private ceremony at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital on his behalf.

Calloway, Danny Lee



Danny Calloway entered into eternal rest peacefully on Dec. 9, 2023.

Danny was born on July 28, 1954, in Radford. He was born to the late Clifton Norman Calloway and the late Doretha Hendricks Calloway. He was also preceded in death by his half-brother, James Arthur Taylor, and sisters, Golda Reed and Norma Calloway James.

Danny attended Dublin High School followed by attendance at New River Community College in Dublin, and later completed his Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics at Virginia State College in Petersburg, Va. He also completed post baccalaureate work in Information Systems at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va.

Danny served in various private and state employment capacities including at the Small Business Administration and at Virginia Commonwealth University from which he retired.

Danny gave his life to Christ in the 90's and continued to faithfully serve until God

called him home. Danny was a kind, loving and generous person who placed the needs of others above those of his own. His faith was evident in all that he did including serving as Sunday school teacher at First United Methodist Church in Hopewell, Va.

Danny is survived by his wife, Sun Kim, and her three children Donny, Daryl, and "Little Sun"; four grandchildren, Christian, Micah, Alexander, and Layla; brothers and sisters-in-law, Jesse and Ann Calloway of Chesterfield, Clifton (CT) Calloway of Richmond, and Roy Calloway of Christiansburg; and numerous other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 12 p.m. with Rev. Monte Brown officiating. Interment will follow in New River Cemetery.

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

Send community news and photos to communitynews@ourvalley.org

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Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

THE CHOICE IS MINE

Read 1 Samuel 25:1 through 27:12

David, a fighting machine, was not squeamish about shedding blood. However, before he went into battle, his habit was to seek the Lord's direction. He forgot this wisdom when one fool's decision enraged him.

Nabal, a wealthy man, refused to feed David's men although they had protected Nabal's shepherds. His arrogant remark infuriated David. Blinded by anger, he bypassed the Lord and ordered his men to arm themselves for battle. The plan: Wipe out Nabal and his entire household.

Meanwhile back at the estate, a servant begged Abigail, Nabal's wife, to do something because David had been good to them. She immediately sent food to David and then followed to ask for mercy.

"May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands" (1 Samuel 25:33).

When we are wronged, instead of plotting revenge, we could seek the Lord's help to set aside anger and leave vengeance to Him. We should also pray for the offender.

Thought for Today: I can focus on God's blessings or the offense. I can pray or scheme. The choice is mine.

Quicklook: 1 Samuel 25:32-34

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

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

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

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

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

BAPTIST

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

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

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

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

CHURCH OF GOD

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

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

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Christiansburg Church of the Brethren, 310 South Franklin Street. Pastor: Hal Sonafrank, 1-336-583-4822. Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Wednesdays. Website: www.christiansburgcob.org. A loving family, fueled by the Holy Spirit, grounded in God's Word, and delivering Jesus forgiveness and love to all people. Come as you are... you are welcomed!

(DOC - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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

ECKANKAR

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

EPISCOPAL

Grace Episcopal Church, 210 Fourth Street Radford. Welcoming and accepting, we have been a part of the Radford community for more than 130 years. ALL ARE WELCOME. Grace offers an 8:00am Contemplative

Eucharist and a 10:30am Eucharist with organ music and a choir, with refreshments served afterwards. The 10:30am service is also available on YouTube for those unable to leave their house. Find us on Facebook and www.graceradford.org.

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

LUTHERAN

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

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

St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Worship service each Sunday at 10 AM, Sunday School 9 AM. We are a community of God's people where people gather for worship, learning and service. Visitors and new members are always WELCOME! Google comments: "Wonderful, welcoming congregation...A

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

MULTI-CULTURAL

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

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

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

Sunday Worship Experience at 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services. Our vision is to see all Saved Freed. Restored. Fulfilled. Find us on facebook and Instagram

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

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

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

UNITED METHODIST

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

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

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

WESLEYAN

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

Less ice on the road leads to more salt in the soil, air, and water



PHOTO BY PETER MEANS FOR VIRGINIA TECH

At the Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory, civil and environmental engineering researchers test water for salt content and other contaminants.

When temperatures drop and roads get slick, rock salt is an important safety precaution used by individuals, businesses, and local and state governments to keep walkers, cyclists, and drivers safe. However, according to a new scientific review paper from a team of researchers at Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland, the human demand for salt comes at a cost to the environment.

Published in the journal *Nature Reviews Earth & Environment* with researchers Stanley Grant, Megan Rippey, and Shantanu Bhide from Virginia Tech's Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory, findings revealed that human activities are making Earth's air, soil and freshwater saltier, which could pose an existential threat if current trends continue.

"This is a slow-moving train wreck," said Megan Rippey, assistant professor in civil and environmental engineering. "It's playing out so slowly that it's easy to overlook that our streams, lakes, and drinking water resources are becoming progressively saltier."

Disrupting the natural salt cycle
Salts are compounds with positively charged cations and negatively charged anions, with some of the most abundant ones being calcium, magnesium, potassium, and sulfate ions. When dislodged in higher doses, these ions can cause environmental problems by impairing water supply for humans and wildlife. The study conducted at the Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory considered a variety of salt ions that are found underground and in surface water.

Although geologic and hydrologic processes bring salts to Earth's surface over time, human activities such as mining and land development are rapidly accelerating the natural "salt cycle." Agriculture, construction, water and road treatment, and other industrial activities can also intensify salinization, which harms biodiversity and makes drinking water unsafe in extreme cases. This research is establishing for the first time that humans affect the concentration and cycling of salt on a global, interconnected scale.

"Ecosystems are finely tuned to a certain level of salinity, and as that increases over time it can lead to big impacts, for example loss of important species, including fish. That applies to humans too. Too much salt in irrigation water can cause crops to fail, and salt in drinking water supplies has been linked to human health effects like preeclampsia. This is happening in the U.S. and around the world," said Rippey.

Over the course of the study, Rippey, Grant, Bhide and University of Maryland researchers showed that human-caused

salinization affected approximately 2.5 billion acres of soil around the world — an area about the size of the United States. Salt ions also increased in streams and rivers over the last 50 years, coinciding with an increase in the global use and production of salts.

Salt has even infiltrated the air. In some regions, lakes are drying up and sending plumes of saline dust into the atmosphere. In areas that experience snow, road salts can become aerosolized, creating sodium and chloride particulate matter, which lowers air quality and can be detrimental to wildlife and crops.

"One way that humans are upsetting the natural salt cycle is through our use of rock salt for deicing roads and parking lots in the winter," said Bhide.

Finding new deicing methods
Stanley Grant, director of the Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory, said road salts have an outsized impact in the U.S., which churns out 44 billion pounds of the deicing agent each year. Road salts represented 44 percent of U.S. salt consumption from 2013-17, and they account for 13.9 percent of the total dissolved solids that enter streams across the country. This can cause a "substantial" concentration of salt in watersheds, according to the paper. To prevent U.S. waterways from being inundated with salt in the coming years, policies limiting road salts or encouraging alternatives can be beneficial, the researchers said. Washington, D.C., and several other U.S. cities have started treating frigid roads with beet juice, which has the same effect but contains significantly less salt.

"There's a lot of interest in how we can change the way roads are maintained in the winter to reduce road salt use and its impacts on ecosystems and drinking water supplies," said Bhide. "It's a tricky issue, because deicing roads also reduces traffic accidents and saves lives."

Salinization is also associated with "cascading" effects. For example, saline dust can accelerate the melting of snow, which can harm communities — particularly in the western United States — that rely on snow for water supplies. Because of their structure, salt ions can bind to contaminants in soils and sediments, forming "chemical cocktails" that circulate in the environment and have detrimental effects. These significant environmental and health implications are creating a need for a more sustainable approach to salt usage.

"History is littered with ancient civilizations that collapsed because they couldn't balance their salt budget. I'm hoping this article will raise awareness and lead to action on this issue, so that history doesn't repeat itself," said Grant.

Chelsea Seeber for Virginia Tech



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF NRVHBA

NRVHBA announces 2023 microgrant program recipients

CHRISTIANSBURG — The New River Valley Home Builders Association (NRVHBA) is dedicated to their Workforce Development and community outreach endeavors and is pleased to announce the first round of funding for their new Microgrant program which was funded by the proceeds from the annual community Touch-a-Truck NRV event.

In its inaugural round, the NRVHBA awarded three educators in the local community with funding for special projects that align with the workforce development interests of both the home building and construction industry. The NRVHBA hopes that this program will provide the opportunity for teachers to enhance their curriculum, maximize opportunities for their students, and encourage interest in construction trades careers.

Grant recipients were required to propose how their project helps to either raise awareness of careers in the construction trades or

give students practical experience in a trade that they can use outside of the classroom. The grant recipients are:

Marc Eaton with Eastern Montgomery High School - EMHS currently has a thriving Career and Technical Education program and by receiving funding from the NRVHBA Microgrant Program they will be pouring a concrete patio for future outdoor classroom space where their students will be protected from the elements.

Veronica Spradlin with Blacksburg High School — With the NRVHBA Microgrant Program, the current Drone Competition Team will be applying the funds to the purchase of a new drone package. Not only do the students utilize multiple aspects of the construction process when building the drone competition course, drone technology is utilized through site surveys, property management, equipment management, and project marketing programs.

Rupert Cox with Blacksburg Middle

School — Mr. Cox's animal husbandry class will build multiple animal cages for indoor use and create outside containment for the animals. The class will be learning basic carpentry and framing skills and will be improving the life of their class animals.

The NRVHBA is excited to see what the microgrant recipients will complete during their school semester and look forward to providing updates regarding their projects.

The Spring 2024 funding cycle and application opens Dec. 1, 2023. Teachers and CTE Directors from the following districts are eligible to apply: Montgomery County, Giles County, Pulaski County, Floyd County, City of Radford, Wythe County, and Carroll County. For more information, visit <https://www.nrvhba.com/microgrant-program/>.

The New River Valley Home Builders Association

Obituaries from page 5

Duncan, Kelsey Woodson

Kelsey Woodson Duncan, 65, wife, Jane Banes Duncan; sons of Pulaski, passed away Monday, Dec. 11, 2023. He was a straightforward man who had a deep love for music. Kelsey was especially known for his precision Banjo picking, teaching many others including his son. He loved watching wildlife from his window, and most importantly, his family. Kelsey would give you the shirt off his back, but if he didn't like you, you knew it. His family will miss him, his big personality, and sunbathing with him on the porch. Kelsey was preceded in death by his parents, Grover Woodson and Mozelle East Duncan; his sister, Cathy Darlene Duncan Lafferty; and his brother-in-law, John Cox.



Survivors include his loving

brother-in-law, Sandra Duncan Cox and Hallie Pifer-Burton (Thomas "Jr."); mother-in-law, Betty Banes; canine companions, Max and Charlie; and many other relatives and friends.

Per his request, no services will be held at this time.

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

Marshall, Eunice Mae

Mrs. Eunice Mae Marshall, 86, Marshall and wife Lisa Marshall. She of Radford, went home to be with her Lord and Savior on Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023.

Eunice was born Oct. 19, 1937, to the late Amos Alexander O'Dell and Minnie Annie O'Dell in Hiwassee, Va. Eunice was a faithful and godly wife, mother, and grandmother who most cherished the special times spent with her beloved family. She loved to walk in her neighborhood and was passionate about visiting and ministering to people. Over the years Eunice has been a faithful church member serving as Awana leader, Deacon's wife, Sunday School teacher, and choir member. At the time of her death, Eunice attended Gethsemane Baptist Church where she enjoyed worshipping weekly with her family in Christ.

Along with her parents, Eunice was preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, Robert Daniel Marshall; her brother, Otis Alexander O'Dell and wife Lois O'Dell; her brother, Junior Ray O'Dell (her twin); and her sister, Annie Zelma Jonas.

She is survived by her sister Francis Orin Thompson; her brother, Elbert Norris O'Dell; her two daughters, Debby Marshall Hodges and husband Dean Hodges, and Penny Renee Marshall; and her son, Daniel Keith



grandchildren, Charlotte Marshall, Evelyn Thompson, Caroline Marshall, and Walker Marshall. The family would like to express gratitude to those who helped with Eunice's care, including Medi Home Health and Hospice, especially Zeb, Kimberly, and Amy whose compassionate and loving attention to her during this difficult time will not be forgotten.

The family received friends Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023, at Mullins Funeral Home, 120 W. Main Street, Radford. Funeral services followed with Pastor Brent Strouf officiating. Interment followed in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Gideon's International, Memorial Bibles, PO Box 923, Radford, VA 24143.

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

Warm Hearth Village promotes new Directors of Nursing from within

BLACKSBURG — Warm Hearth Village is pleased to announce Shaunna Andrews, BSN, RN has been chosen as the new Director of Nursing for Kroontje Health Care Center, The Cove, which includes skilled rehab and long-term care.

Formerly the Director of Nursing at Showalter Center, Andrews said, "I have a passion for nursing — geriatrics specifically. I enjoyed my time at Showalter. I had missed the more complex clinical cases



Shaunna Andrews

that skilled and long-term care brings. I love the continuum of care that WHV offers and am excited to take advantage of the opportunities to grow afforded by the career ladder at WHV. I'm proud to work for a nonprofit that gives so much back to seniors in this community and its staff."

Larissa Gilbert, RN has been chosen as the new Director of Nursing for Showalter Center, the assisted living residence at the Village. She will fill the position vacated by Andrews. Gilbert started working for



Larissa Gilbert

WHV in 2015 as an LPN. "Nursing and working with seniors is the only job I have ever seen myself doing. My goal was to one day be the director of nursing, so I went back to school to make that happen and now it has," Gilbert said.

Warm Hearth Village is proud to have Andrews and Gilbert as part of the team and pleased to help all employees along their career paths for growth and advancement.

Warm Hearth Village

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Two sports, two degrees, and a whole lot of opportunity for Beck

In just five years at Virginia Tech, Cole Beck, a dual Division I athlete, engineer, and soon-to-be Master of Science graduate, will have accomplished more than many people will in their lifetime.

Dubbed the fastest football player in the world, he also holds the Virginia Tech track record for 100 meters in the outdoor season sprint, won first place in the 200-meter and 4x100-meter races, and was named Atlantic Coastal Conference Track MVP for both the indoor and outdoor seasons, all of which happened in the past year. On the gridiron, he set a career-long 40-yard kickoff return record and is capping off 2023 with his team going to the Military Bowl in Annapolis, Maryland.

In addition to athletics, Beck is doing double the work in the classroom as he prepares to graduate this December with a master's degree in building construction science and management. He is building upon the skills he learned while completing his bachelor's degree at Virginia Tech in apparel, housing, and resource management in 2022.

It's a hard list of accomplishments to keep up with, much less live out. Beck attributes his ability to balance and excel with his busy schedule by staying disciplined.

"I grew up as an athlete who has had trials, failures, and successes to learn and grow from which ultimately has helped in the academic world," said Beck of his journey from Blacksburg High School to Virginia Tech.

Beck calls football his first love, but in middle school, he turned to track to stay in better shape for his favorite sport.

On his first day of middle school track practice, Beck beat the fastest high school student in a 100-meter race. He didn't stop there and went on to win numerous state meets that earned him the 2018 All-Timesland Boys Athlete of the Year. His confidence continued to grow in both football and track, and he graduated from Blacksburg High School in 2018 with offers from multiple universities to play football.

In the end, he decided to continue his career just up the road at Virginia Tech. Here, his successes have continued as he has held multiple positions on the football team as well as set track records, impressively excelling at both sports.

"I feel very rewarded in what I do. I love to stay busy, and I love to accomplish what I'm doing in the academic world and on the football and track field," Beck said.

While a Hokie, he has tied the

university's 60-meter and 200-meter indoor record. Assistant head coach Tim Vaught said Beck's positive attitude and Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) spirit has not only made him, but also his teammates, a better athlete.

"Cole knew the work was going to be hard, but he knew the rewards were going to be greater than any pain he was going through at practice," said Vaught. "To me, it was like having an extra coach with Cole sometimes leading warm-ups at practice."

Leadership and service are threaded throughout Beck's college career, especially football. His special teams coach, Stu Holt, said Beck comes ready to work every day with a detailed approach, but his spirit to step up and play special teams this season is what strikes him the most.

"There's no question in my mind that he is capable of playing at the highest level of professional football when the time is right for him," said Holt.

In the classroom, Beck's motivation has been simple: create meaningful change for those who need it. With an undergraduate degree in property management under his belt and more time left to play football, Beck was faced with a choice: Get another undergraduate degree in a secondary area of study or go for a master's degree.

"I was unsure of what path I wanted to take. When I looked at the big scheme of what I want to do, it was ultimately to help people," Beck said.

Joe Gabbard, a family friend and Virginia Tech professor, introduced Beck to Philip Agee, a building construction professor whose work includes affordable housing. Agee introduced Beck to the Myers-Lawson School of Construction and its master's program in 2022. The educational opportunity was a winning combination of hands-on learning and advanced technologies with a focus on the area Beck wants to pursue in the future.

With that, the pieces fit into place for Beck and he focused on utilizing the knowledge from his prior degree and his goal to give back. Adding even more to his plate, Beck set forth toward a master's degree that would align with his long-term career goals post-graduation. But it was a transition that took some time to get adjusted to.

"The first semester of my master's degree was like a shockwave. Over this last year, I feel like I've become more mature and determined to achieve, learn, and grow in the industry," said Beck. "It's



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

In addition to setting records in football and track, Cole Beck now has doubles degrees at Virginia Tech.

difficult, and coming from my undergrad to my master's, I had to almost relearn."

With that determination, Beck has spent hours focusing on the advanced technologies engineers utilize across construction. He now dedicates hours of his schedule to learning the ins and outs of software such as Revit, a staple on job sites. Despite the long hours of learning, he calls the end product "satisfying" and something that will help him further his career outside of athletics.

"I've always wanted to be more than just an athlete. I wanted to further my education. So when I'm ready to start my career, I have something I really want to do," said Beck.

Along with learning the tools of the trade, Beck also has taken a deep dive into the world of affordable housing. Learning under Andrew McCoy, they have walked through the process of conceptualization to reality to create more housing opportunities for communities. Alongside the push for change, McCoy has shown Beck how to weave in innovative technologies to solve some of the industry's most complex issues.

"The housing industry has experienced severe shortages in labor, supply disruptions, record-level cost increases, and a resulting lack of affordable options for large parts of our population, especially those in need," said McCoy. "In class, Cole has been instrumental in considering new ways our industry can solve these complicated problems and provide needed housing options for our communities."

Beck's spirit of giving back is more than just a mission. This past semester, he used his coursework to create an immediate opportunity to make a difference. As part of a construction leadership course, he and a team of graduate students organized a veterans donation drive. The group, with support from the Virginia Tech and Blacksburg communities, encouraged people to give back ahead of the holidays. It's a project that hits close to home for him and many of his peers with families who have served in the military.

Backed by a service mentality, Beck is already helping the next generation of athletes as a mentor and example of what is possible with a dedication to greatness.

"The hard work that he puts into achieving his goals will only open doors for him long after he graduates from Virginia Tech," said Vaught.

As Beck prepares to graduate, his athletic successes are far from over. Later this month, he will cheer on his Virginia Tech football teammates at the Military Bowl against Tulane. With high hopes for his next steps, Beck has had two goals written down for over a year: participate in the NFL Combine and compete in Olympic trials in June 2024. But first, he will get to add another degree to his roster, this time, sporting an orange hardhat as he builds the life he has worked so hard to have.

The Military Bowl on Dec. 27 will kick off at 2 p.m. on ESPN.

Ashley Williamson for Virginia Tech

Hokies host second annual Shoes 4 Hope event



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

Over 25 families participated in a special pediatric cancer awareness initiative Wednesday with the Virginia Tech basketball teams.

In conjunction with Carilion Children's to fight pediatric cancer, Virginia Tech basketball held the second annual Shoes 4 Hope event on Wednesday morning inside the Hahn Hurst Basketball Practice Center.

The event included players and coaches from both the men's and women's programs partnering with Carilion Pediatric Hematology-Oncology patients, with the effort centered around raising awareness for pediatric cancer.

"Anytime you get to see kids engaged in things that just bring smiles to their face, it's an incredible opportunity," Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Carilion Clinic Don Halliwell said. "Then when you get to see their parents sitting beside them watching them, especially given what some of those children have been through and are still going through with their parents alongside them, it really brings home the reason that Carilion Clinic exists and the benefit that a partnership between Carilion Clinic and Virginia Tech and Learfield can bring to our communities."

More than 25 participating children and teens were able to paint custom shoes for the coaches and basketball staff to wear later this season, with the women set to do so on Jan. 7 against NC State and the men slated to lace them up on Jan. 13 against Miami.

"This is what it's all about," Tech women's basketball head coach Kenny Brooks said. "I know we're here to win basketball games, but you're also here to help build character. Anytime [our young ladies] can go and spread joy and cheer through their celebrity, they feel like it's a privilege."

"For them, it's not a burden, they come out here with big smiles on their faces, and we're able to give back to the community. It makes me feel good as a coach because you know you're doing things the right way. You're teaching young people how to go out and make a difference in the world."

Though the event certainly is aimed at making a difference in each patients'

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PHOTO COURTESY OF BHS

Madison Stewart of Blacksburg High School will continue her lacrosse playing career at Emory and Henry after graduation this year.

Stewart to play lacrosse at Emory & Henry

Madison Stewart Lacrosse. Stewart officially signed a letter of intent on Thursday. The ceremony took place in the school's auditorium as Stewart joined six other previously announced student-athletes who will continue their careers at the next level.

Stewart signed her national letter of intent to continue her academic and athletic career at Emory and Henry College. Stewart has played lacrosse for nine years and has been a varsity starter for Blacksburg High School lacrosse since her freshman year. She has participated in travel lacrosse since her sophomore year with Valley Select and 460

Stewart has served in a leadership position on every team, being a captain for Blacksburg Lacrosse since her Junior year and was first team all-district her sophomore year as well as an All-Region honorable mention both her sophomore and junior year. She has served the community by supporting future lacrosse players in the New River Valley by coaching at multiple NRVL Rattlers Lacrosse Camps and intends to study Health Science at Emory and Henry.

Reese Bradbury, a senior cross country and track athlete, signed her national letter of intent

to continue her academic and athletic career at High Point University. She has run competitively for five years, the last three at Blacksburg High School. Bradbury's all state performances led her team to a Class 4 state title in cross country and runner up finish in indoor track in the 2022-2023 school year.

During her time at Blacksburg, she has achieved seven individual All-State performances in addition to three All-State finishes, including one state championship. Bradbury has been around running her entire life and cannot wait to

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Blacksburg, Christiansburg face off in wrestling



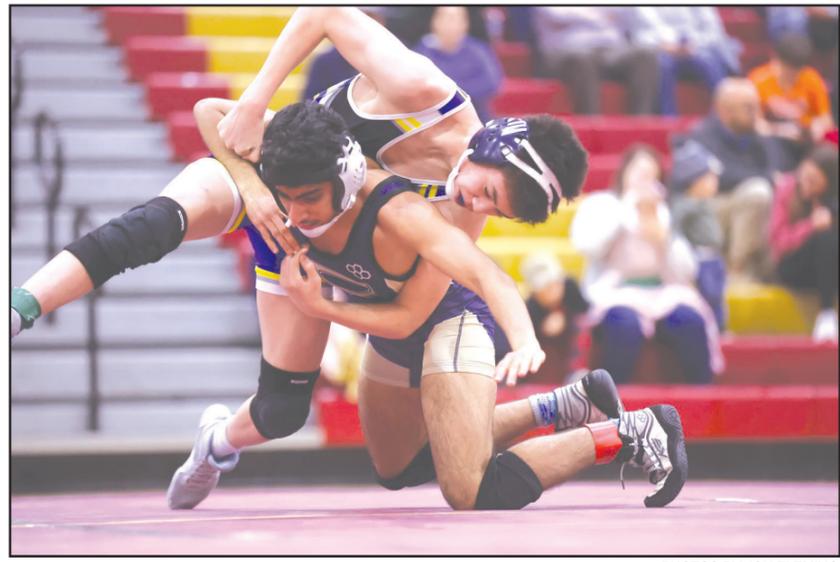
Christiansburg's Brady Hand takes down Blacksburg's Jake Henry on the way to a win by fall in the 138-lb class at a Wednesday night quad meet hosted by Pulaski County.



Christiansburg's Evan Mefford defeated Blacksburg's Brady Ankrum in the 144-lb class.



At 150 lbs, Blacksburg's Patrick Dickans works to eventually pin Christiansburg's Marcus Ojeda.



Blacksburg's Tharin Svetanant takes down Christiansburg's Avi Gandhi on the way to a pinfall win at 126 pounds.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Blacksburg boys fall to Patrick Henry



Blacksburg's Xavier Bland scores two of his 11 points on a layup against Patrick Henry in a Tuesday night game. Blacksburg is now 4-3 on the season.



Blacksburg junior guard Paul Distler fires a 3-point shot against Patrick Henry. Distler scored 19 points to lead the Bruins, but the team would fall 63-81 in the Tuesday night game.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

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continue to run in college. At High Point, she plans to study psychology to become a sports psychologist.

Kallan Malabad, a senior soccer player, signed her national letter of intent to continue her academic and athletic career at Saint Michael's College. Malabad has been on the varsity soccer team since 9th grade. She helped the Bruins win the region championship in 2021 and 2022 as well as the district championship in 2021, 2022, and 2023. Malabad also helped the team get to the state semifinals her Freshman year and the state quarterfinals her sophomore and junior year.

She received all district honorable mention in 2022 and all district 1st team in 2023, is also captain of her club soccer team, Virginia United FC, and was selected First team all ECNL RL Virginia in 2023. In addition, Kallan is a three-year letter recipient in Track. Malabad

plans to study Digital Media & Communications at Saint Michael's College.

Katey Mathena signed a National Letter of Intent to continue her academic and athletic career as an Eagle at Carson-Newman University in Jefferson City, Tennessee. She has been a starter on the varsity softball team since ninth grade. Her primary position is catching but she also plays middle infield and outfield. Mathena helped the Bruins make it to the Region Semi-finals in her sophomore and junior years. She also helped the Bruins clinch the District Championship in her junior year and made First-Team All-District in both her sophomore and junior years and Second-Team All-Region her sophomore year. She has played softball for 12 years and is a member of the Virginia Scappers travel softball organization. Mathena is looking forward to studying Graphic Design with a Marketing minor at Carson-Newman University while having the opportunity to continue playing the sport she loves.

Lindsey Polan is headed to the University of Virginia's College at Wise. She has been on Blacksburg's Varsity team for three years, helping them win the District Championship in 2023, where she hit a homerun in each of the three playoff games.

She also helped them advance to Region Quarterfinals in 2022, and 2023 and has played softball since 2019. When her schedule allows, Polan helps coach a 10u Five Star Mafia team because she enjoys giving back to

the younger generation. She plays for Virginia Phoenix 18u- Wood. Lindsey plans to study Elementary Education at UVA Wise.

Lorelei Spradlin is off to Carson Newman University. She has been on Blacksburg's Varsity team for four years, helping them win the District Championship in 2023, and helping them advance to Region Quarterfinals in 2022, and 2023. She received first-team all-district pitcher and second-team all-region pitcher in her sophomore and junior years.

Spradlin has been on the diamond for as long as she can remember and has played travel softball for eight years and currently enjoys her time with the Virginia Scappers Showcase team. Spradlin plans to study Exercise Science at Carson Newman University.

Hayli Williams, a senior lacrosse player, will sign her national letter of intent to continue her academic and athletic career at Longwood University. She is a 3-year letter winner in Girls Lacrosse and plays attack and takes the draw.

Williams was team captain and MVP in 2023 and led the Bruins in scoring with 100 career goals over two seasons, earning First Team All-Region honors as a sophomore and junior. She has been playing lacrosse for 13 years and has been a part of the Valley Select travel team and plans to study Kinesiology at Longwood.

Staff report

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lives, it's designed to resonate with the Tech student-athletes that participated, too, something that resonated with men's basketball standout guard Hunter Cattoor.

"It's awesome to take the time away from basketball and enjoy time with [these kids]," Cattoor said. "It means a lot to them, but I think it means more to us. Just to kind of sit down with them, have a laugh, joke around and paint some shoes. I was joking around, I can't remember the last time I colored something or painted something, probably since last year when I did this."

"So, it's a super cool experience to kind of put me back as being a kid and kind of just experience this with them. ... You make a friend every single time."

The event also is part of the NCAA's ongoing "Coaches vs. Cancer" initiative, where collegiate basketball coaches and staff nationwide wear sneakers at designated games to raise awareness for the cause.

Each pair of shoes will be up for auction following the conclusion of both contests. To help support the cause, you may donate today. An

auction link to bid on the specially designed shoes will be available as we get closer to the designated basketball games.

"[This] is why our 14,000 employees do what they do every day," Halliwill said. "[We're] trying to bring smiles or return smiles to people's faces. There are a lot of times that there are also tears and we're there for that, too, but when you can do things that are contributing to the smiles, that makes it all worth it."

Virginia Tech Athletics

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