



# News Messenger

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Saturday, January 27, 2024

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## NRV Amtrak plans pushed back to 2028

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority holding public information meeting Jan. 29

Costs for a proposed Amtrak line through the New River Valley have now skyrocketed to over \$360 million.

Officials with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority say most of the cost is associated with work on a train tunnel in the Merrimac area of Montgomery County. The work could push Amtrak's arrival to 2028.

But this week, Karina Romero, communications manager for the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, said the state still hopes to bring Amtrak service to the NRV. The key, according to Romero, is building the infrastructure.

Because of the preliminary work, the overall cost could even double the \$360 million. It's expected 40,000 people would use the service every

year.

In 2021, then-Governor Ralph Northam announced that the Commonwealth had reached an agreement with Norfolk Southern to extend passenger rail service along the former Virginian Line from Roanoke to the New River Valley (NRV) for the first time since 1979. The Governor's announcement marked the beginning of negotiations with Norfolk Southern for Virginia to purchase 28 miles of right-of-way and tracks along the Virginian Line from the Salem Crossovers west of Roanoke to Merrimac (Christiansburg).

A year later, an agreement was reached with Norfolk Southern Railroad to purchase 28 miles of track from Salem to Christiansburg.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF AMTRAK

Improvements to that line would include minor bridge repairs, rockslide fences, at-grade crossings and the expansion of the tunnel.

All of this would facilitate speeds of 40 mph through the Roanoke yard to the Salem Crossovers and then to Christiansburg.

The New River Valley Passenger Rail Project will bring passenger rail service to the region for the first time since 1979.

Last month, \$2 million in federal funding was approved to study improvements and the extension of Amtrak deeper into southwest Virginia, possibly to Bristol. An estimated \$500,000 of the overall funding is slated for the Bristol plan.

A 2022 report said the Commonwealth planned to double Amtrak service over the next 20 years. Initially the NRV project had been slated for

construction in 2024 and be completed by 2026 with plans for a passenger station near the NRV Mall.

As part of the that project, a passenger train would have to travel through the tunnel and join a current rail line near the Corning plant along N. Franklin Street.

The New River Valley Passenger Rail Station Authority met in mid-December and elected officers. Christiansburg

Mayor Mike Barber was elected chair, Vice-Chair Angie Hill from Montgomery County, Secretary Lynsay Belshe from Virginia Tech, and Treasurer Dirk Compton from Pulaski County.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority is holding a public information meeting Jan. 29 at 4:30 p.m. at the Blacksburg Recreation Center.

Staff report



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MONT. CO.

## Board of Supervisors receives good news on FY23 annual audit

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

MONTGOMERY CO. – The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors received positive financial news at its regular meeting, held Monday, Jan. 22.

John Aldridge with Brown, Edwards & Company, L.L.P. presented Montgomery County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2023, which ended June 30, 2023.

The county received positive marks, showing a good financial positioning in the new 2024 year.

"The way it works is, every locality in

the state of Virginia has to have an audit done," Aldridge said. "It's on the June 30th year-end, and that audit has to be filed with the state by Dec. 15th. So, that is what we are here tonight, to just go over that audit."

Included within the audit is the economic development, PSA, and the school board, Aldridge said, which was completed on time this year compared to previous years when it had been late.

The county, according to the financial analysis results, is in a stable financial position with just over three months of reserve or unassigned funds totaling \$38

See Audit, page 4

## Auburn Middle School among statewide teen seat belt challenge winners

Teen seat belt use increases 4.9% percent among participating schools

Auburn Middle School is the statewide 2023 winner of middle school level Youth of Virginia Speak Out About Traffic Safety's (YOVASO) Drive for Change: Buckle Up and Slow Down campaign.

Poquoson High School in Poquoson City is the high school level winner.

The yearly challenge, which aims to encourage youth and teens to develop a lifelong, buckle-up habit, saw a 4.9% increase in seat belt use among students at participating schools that completed pre- and post-seat belt checks. The campaign also focused on speed-prevention for young drivers.

REACH Homeschool Group (Fredericksburg City) placed second and North Stafford High School (Stafford Co.) placed third in the high school division.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMS

Auburn Middle School YOVASO club members work on seat belt campaign activities at the school.

YOVASO is also recognizing two middle schools for their outstanding work over the course of the three-month campaign. Auburn Middle

School in Montgomery Co. placed first in the middle school division and Forest

See YOVASO, page 4

## Town of Blacksburg presents 2024 legislative priorities

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

The 2024 legislative priorities were presented at the Blacksburg Town Council meeting Jan. 23, 2024. Larry Spencer, Town Attorney, touched on a couple of main points of interest in the priorities.

"Well, the town does this every year, it tries to find things, and generally, there are some statements in there we're concerned about," said Spencer. "Things that would take away the town's land use authority and taxation authority. There are references to certain

bills that are out there that may be doing that. There's also a lengthy part to the back where Carol Davis analyzed a whole bunch of sustainability measures, and she conferred with me, and she picked the ones that she thinks will have the most impact."

The legislative priorities document states, "The town supports a constitutional amendment (HJ18) that automatically reinstates voting rights after a convicted felon is free from any term of incarceration."

Additionally, Spencer's comments on taxation are

most likely referring to the town's comments that the General Assembly should consider taxation on "lawful" manufacturing, distributing or sales of marijuana. Gaming legislation of electronic devices were also mentioned in the document concerning the effects that adopting this legislation would have on zoning in Blacksburg.

Measures were also included to avoid situations of rent gouging in the town, along with other points that would mitigate for better approaches for citizens in

See Priorities, page 3

## Montgomery Museum of Art & History receives ArtStars Award from Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation

CHRISTIANSBURG – The Montgomery Museum of Art & History has been awarded a \$10,000 ArtStars Award from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation.

The Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation named five nonprofit arts organizations across the Commonwealth as 2024 Dominion Energy ArtStars for inspiring people of all ages in creative endeavors. The organizations, each with an annual operating budget under \$1 million, represent five regions across Virginia. Each received a \$10,000 grant to support its winning arts or cultural education programs.

"We are honored to represent Southwest Virginia and accept this gift from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, which supports our mission to promote the arts within the region while offering creative and impactful art exhibits and programs to the community," said Casey Jenkins, the Executive Director of the museum.

"These organizations have found



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF DECF

opportunities where the arts can make a meaningful difference in young people's development and in the overall quality of life in their communities," said Hunter A. Applewhite, president of the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation. "Relying largely on donations and volunteers, they make Virginia a better place to live for us all."

The grant award, which celebrates the museum's endeavors to combine arts and education in the community, will be used to highlight how the Montgomery Museum is expanding the definition of the arts through cultural programming to include performing arts, literary arts, culinary arts, and much more.

See Award, page 3

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Saturday, Jan. 27:

### Family Movie Matinee

At the Radford Public Library; 11 a.m. "Paw Patrol: The Mighty Movie." The PAW Patrol pups end up with superpowers after a meteor crash-lands nearby. Rated PG; 88 minutes.

### Grownup Board Game Club

At the Radford Public Library; 2- 4:30 p.m. Bring a friend, bring a game, or just bring yourself! Come play board games with us at the library. You can pick a game from our collection or bring something from home and teach us how to play!

### Winter Starlight Storytime & Craft

At the Radford Public Library; 6:30 -7:30 p.m. Stop by the library for a winter-themed evening children's storytime! Wind down for the day with stories and friends at the library. There will be a craft after! Pajamas and stuffies encouraged!

### Quilting Marathon

At the Meadowbrook Library; 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. The Meadowbrook Quilters are hosting a quilting marathon! The public is invited to see these skilled individuals quilting. The group will be working on individual projects. This is a great opportunity for you to see their handiwork and bring your quilting projects or questions for assistance. This program is open to all ages!

### So, You Want to Be a Beekeeper?

At the Christiansburg Library; 1- 3 p.m. Are you interested in beekeeping but not sure where to start? Now is the time to get all the answers to your questions! How much does beekeeping cost? How much time will it take? How much honey will I get? How important are honeybees for pollination? Can I keep bees in town? Learn about all this and more in our beginner's class - a free presentation/ discussion, no sign-up required.

## Monday, Jan. 29:

### Enrollment Opportunities for Homeschoolers with NRCC

At the Christiansburg Library; 2- 3 p.m. Enrollment Coach, Matthew Spring of New River Community College will host an informational session as part of a new effort to reach out to our homeschool and private school populations. Matthew will give a brief presentation and a financial aid advisor will be present to help with questions about enrollment and affordability.

## Tuesday, Jan. 30:

### Virtual Author Talk with Dr. Robert Lustig

Hosted by the Radford Public Library; 2- 3 p.m. Launch your New Year healthy with Dr. Robert Lustig, a pediatric neuroendocrinologist who has long been on the cutting edge of medicine and science. Dr. Lustig's book, *Metabolic: The Lure and the Lies of Processed Food, Nutrition, and Modern Medicine*, weaves the interconnected strands of nutrition, health/disease, medicine, environment, and society into a completely new fabric by proving on a scientific basis a series of iconoclastic revelations, among them: Register: <https://libraryc.org/radfordlibrary>.

## Thursday, Feb. 1:

### American Legion meeting

The American Legion, Harvey-Howe-Carper Post 30 will meet at 6 p.m. at the VFW Post Home, 102 Watts St., Radford. If Radford City Public Schools are closed on Thursday or Friday of this week due to weather, the meeting will be cancelled. For further information, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

## Saturday, Feb. 3:

### Book Sale

There will be a book sale at the Radford Public Library 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Lots of selections and low prices. Come and support the Radford Library.

### Southwest Virginia High School Art Show

The art of high school students from throughout Southwest Virginia will be on display at The Art Museum on Tyler (214 Tyler Ave., Radford) Feb. 3 - Feb. 17. Opening reception: Saturday, Feb. 3 at 1 p.m. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 12- 4 p.m. Saturdays.

## Monday, Feb.12:

### Radford City Council meeting

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

### Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

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

## Tuesday, Feb. 13:

### Blacksburg Town Council meeting

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

### Christiansburg Town Council meeting

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

## Thursday, Feb. 15:

### Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Family Italian Restaurant, 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. Member Will Reed will speak on "Animals of the War Between the States". If Montgomery and/or Floyd County Public Schools are closed on Thursday or Friday of this week due to weather, the meeting will be cancelled. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

## Monday, Feb. 19:

### The Dinos are coming!

Looking for a fun, family-friendly activity to enjoy together? Join us 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center for Dino Squad! Explore fossils, cast replicas and museum models of dinosaurs during this interactive, educational program. \$3/child, \$2/ additional child. Adults free when accompanying a child. Register in advance online, or in-person at the door. Keyword search "Dino Squad", activity number: 201014. For more information, call 540.443.1100.

# Marijuana seized at Roanoke/Blacksburg Regional Airport

Several pounds of marijuana were seized last week at the Roanoke/Blacksburg Regional Airport.

According to the Virginia State Police, on Friday, Jan. 19, 2024, members of the Star City Drug and Violent Crime Task Force "conducted a narcotics interdiction at the Roanoke/Blacksburg Regional Airport in the City of Roanoke" after task force members discovered two suspicious pieces of luggage on an inbound passenger flight. A narcotics K-9 was used, and members received a positive alert on the two pieces of luggage."

Task force members then obtained and executed a search warrant on the two bags and the luggage was found to contain 33 pounds of illegal marijuana. The marijuana was seized, and a suspect was identified. The suspect has not yet been named by police, and the incident is still under investigation.

The Star City Drug and Violent Crime Task Force is Comprised of the City of Roanoke Police Department, Salem City



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE VIRGINIA STATE POLICE  
**Several pounds of marijuana were seized last week at the Roanoke/Blacksburg Regional Airport.**

Police Department, The Roanoke County Police Department and the Virginia State Police.

Staff report



PHOTO COURTESY OF BAE SYSTEMS

**U.S. Army and BAE Systems leadership at Brush Mountain Park. From left to right: (Back) Chief Ray Meals, Pierre Franco, Commander LTC Adrien Humphreys, John Swift, Tom Yates. (Front) Rob Davie, Stephanie Chatagnier, Laura McLaughlin.**

# BAE Systems supports Brush Mountain Park project

BAE Systems Ordnance Systems Inc. (OSI) sponsored the Brush Mountain Park project with the New River Land Trust, providing funding to create a new multi-use park trail.

"BAE Systems is an excited sponsor of this key environmental resource for the New River Valley community," said John Swift, vice president and general manager of BAE Systems Ordnance Systems Inc. "Employees at the Radford Army Ammunition Plant are looking forward to using the Brush Mountain trail to maintain a healthy work-life balance. It is part of our company's purpose to contribute to the prosperity of the community where we live and work."

The New River Land Trust is dedicated to protecting farmland, forests, open spaces, and historic places in Virginia's New River region. The land trust has protected 57,000 acres, 27 miles of New River waterfront, and 758 acres of new parkland in Blacksburg,

Virginia.

"We are thrilled to welcome BAE Systems as a supporter of the Brush Mountain Park," said John Eustis, executive director of the New River Land Trust. "The sponsorship supported the completion of a new section of the trail, and improved a popular existing trail at the Park's second property, Stonecutters Hollow. The Land Trust's conservation efforts would not be possible without support from the community, including the business sector. It is great to have BAE Systems, one of the region's largest employers, support conservation of and public access to ecologically and culturally important open space."

"BAE Systems is an excited sponsor of this key environmental resource for the New River Valley community."

Brush Mountain Park contains more than 13 miles of trails and is visited by pedestrians on foot for hikes and runs, along

with mountain bikers and horseback riders. Members of BAE Systems' leadership team and Radford Army Ammunition Plant Army staff attended a hike with Eustis to preview the sponsored trail.

"The employees of Radford Army Ammunition Plant are dedicated to giving back to our community," said Lieutenant Colonel Adrien Humphreys, Radford Army Ammunition Plant Commander. "The Army is deeply committed to environmental preservation and conservation efforts, and in collaboration with BAE Systems, this project allowed us to do just that."

The Brush Mountain Stonecutters Hollow project construction is complete and open for community use.

BAE Systems OSI has been the operating contractor of the Radford Army Ammunition Plant since 2012.

BAE Systems

# Business REVIEW

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Write your own story & advertisement with pictures of your staff and/or business - Deadline February 21st

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# Town of Blacksburg seeks input on Prices Fork Road, Route 460 Bypass interchange study

The Town of Blacksburg has selected architectural and engineering firm Whitman, Reardon & Associates (WRA) to design conceptual plans for a bicycle and pedestrian crossing at the Prices Fork Road and U.S. Route 460 Bypass Interchange. The work will also include a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Operational and Safety Analysis Report (OSAR), and a traffic analysis to determine current usage and circulation patterns, which will inform proposed interchange improvements.

The Prices Fork corridor sees a significant flow of bicycle and pedestrian travel, in addition to vehicular traffic. This area is home to a sizable population of Virginia Tech students, numerous residential developments in the Town of Blacksburg and Montgomery County, and three public schools situated

west of the Prices Fork Road and U.S. Route 460 Bypass Interchange. The existing bridges on the Prices Fork Road and U.S. Route 460 Bypass Interchange, designed and built in the 1970s, were not constructed to handle the large volume of bicycle and pedestrian traffic that is seen today and is predicted in the future.

The central objective of this project is to enhance bicycle and pedestrian mobility through the existing Prices Fork/Route 460 interchange area by incorporating a 10-foot wide Shared Use Path. Potential future interchange modifications to accommodate traffic growth are also being studied to ensure the compatibility of a new Shared Use Path through the area. It is anticipated that a bicycle/pedestrian crossing, along with providing safe access to the bridge, will require revisions to the entrance and/or exit ramps of

the existing interchange. This project is in the early stages of design.

The Town is seeking feedback on the project from January to February 2024. Input gathered will help the project team assess designs that best address community need. In March 2024, several proposed designs will be provided to the town by WRA, and a public engagement meeting will be held. Conceptual design plans will be ready for the VDOT SmartScale funding application by mid to late summer.

Share your feedback or ask a question about this project by visiting: <https://letstalkblacksburg.org/pricesfork-460-bypass-interchange-study>.

Town of Blacksburg

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

### Katie Forbes earns President's List honors at Shenandoah University

WINCHESTER - Katie Forbes, of Blacksburg, is one of 519 students who made the President's List at Shenandoah University for the Fall 2023 semester. To qualify for this prestigious academic recognition, students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs must complete at least 12 semester hours and earn a semester GPA of 3.90 or higher. All President's List honorees are also recognized on the university's Dean's List, reserved for students who complete at least 12 semester hours and earn a semester GPA of 3.50 or higher.

### Owen Embree named to Fall 2023 Dean's List

IRVING, Texas - Owen Embree of Blacksburg was named to the fall 2023 dean's list at the University of Dallas for earning a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher. Embree is a Senior Mathematics major. Undergraduate students at the University of Dallas must complete two years of fundamental coursework in the humanities, sciences, politics, mathematics and fine arts. Students must also complete coursework in Ancient Greek, French, German, Italian, Latin or Spanish.

### Avery Carver named to Dean's List Fall 2023

CEDARVILLE, OHIO - Avery Carver of Christiansburg was named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Cedarville University. Students receive this recognition for obtaining a 3.5 GPA or higher for the semester and carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours.

### Sarah Weatherspoon named to Trine University President's List

ANGOLA, IN - Sarah Weatherspoon of Blacksburg was named to the President's List for the fall 2023 semester. Weatherspoon is majoring in Elementary

Education/Special Ed Dual Licensure. To earn President's List honors, Trine University students must complete a minimum of 12 hours and have a grade point average of 3.750-4.000.

### Freed-Hardeman University announces Fall 2023 President's, Dean's lists

HENDERSON, Tenn. - FHU has released the names of students who made the President's and Dean's Lists for the Fall 2023 semester. To be on the President's List, a student must be full-time and have a 4.0 grade point average. Students on the Dean's List have earned a minimum 3.4 grade point average for the semester. Kenna Smith, a junior from Christiansburg, was named on the Dean's List. Smith is earning a Bachelor of Arts in Photography.

### Addie Vice named to the College of Charleston Fall 2023 President's List

CHARLESTON, S.C. - Addie Vice of Radford was named to the College of Charleston Fall 2023 President's List (Highly Distinguished). Vice is majoring in Undecided. To qualify for the President's List (Highly Distinguished), students must earn a GPA of 3.800 or higher and complete a minimum of 12 semester hours. To qualify for Dean's List (Distinguished), students must earn a GPA of 3.500 or higher and complete a minimum of 12 semester hours.

### James Madison University announces fall 2023 dean's list

HARRISONBURG - James Madison University is pleased to announce that the following students made the dean's

See Achievements, page 6

### Iowa State University announces fall semester 2023 Dean's List

AMES, Iowa - More than 10,800 Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the fall semester 2023 Dean's List, including Leah May Greiner, 4th year student, Animal Science, of Christiansburg. Students named to the Dean's List must earn a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work.

## Award

from page 1

"We are very grateful to Dominion Energy and their support of our vital work in the community," said Jenkins. "This funding will have a

direct, local impact on Montgomery County and the New River Valley and enable the museum to be a positive agent of change through our

cultural programming."

Montgomery Museum of Art & History

## Priorities

from page 1

addressing local issues. However, one of the most important items included in the priorities, according to Spencer, is the need for mental health support in the region.

"To me, one of the most important is to, a call for more mental health funding to avoid situations where our citizens can't get help and our officers are stuck at the hospital waiting for them to be able to get help," Spencer said.

The full legislative priorities

document can be found at [www.blacksburg.gov](http://www.blacksburg.gov).

Town council members shared announcements for upcoming local meetings and events as well.

The General Passenger State Rail Authority will be hosting a public meeting on Monday, Jan. 29 at the Blacksburg Community Center from 4:30-8:30 p.m., Council member Jerry Ford said.

"This is to give the public an update on the efforts being made to bring

Amtrak and passenger rail service to the New River Valley," Ford said. "It will be just a lot of good information to keep everyone up to date. Larry and I serve on the Passenger Station Rail Authority. Our community is in charge of building the station, where the state is in charge of building the platform and the rail line."

A survey will be conducted, both at the meeting and online, according to Ford.

The Dialogue on Race will be

occurring today, Saturday, Jan. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Christiansburg Middle School. Coffee with Cops will also be held at 9 a.m. prior to the discussion, according to council member Susan Anderson.

The town council retreat will also take place Tuesday, Jan. 30 in Radford. Additionally, the Virginia Municipal League Government Day will be held in Richmond, Thursday Feb. 1 which will allow an opportunity for many of the Council members to speak with elected officials, Anderson said.

**Legals - Montgomery County**

**LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, January 29, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Conditional Use Permit request by Roger Woody, Registered Agent, RWW 36 LLC, Property Owner, and Denise E. LaCour, Managing Director, Denstock LLC, Applicant, to amend a previously approved Planned Housing Development ("The Verge Apartments") from 209 multi-family residential dwelling units to 206 multi-family residential dwelling units and to change the proposed layout on approximately 18.82 acres located at the terminus of Farmview Road NE, consisting of all of Tax Parcel 436-(A)-41, Parcel ID 017576; a portion of Tax Parcel 436-(A)-36, Parcel

**Legals - Montgomery County**

ID 021677; all of Tax Parcel 436-(A)-37, Parcel ID 032861; a portion of Tax Parcel 436-(A)-38, Parcel ID 021678; all of Tax Parcel 436-(A)-39, Parcel ID 021679; all of Tax Parcel 436-(A)-40, Parcel ID 021680; and a portion of 436-(6)-35, Parcel ID 033701; zoned General Business District B-3. The property is designated as Mixed Use with Buffer (Residential/Business) on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

B. Conditional Use Permit request by Rockstep Christiansburg LLC, Property Owner, to allow a Carnival from April 28, 2024 through May 12, 2024 on the property located at 782 New River Road NW, Tax Parcel 435-(A)-41, Parcel ID 007741, zoned General Business District B-3. The proposed time period includes the set-up and operation of the Carnival. The property is designated as Business/Commercial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the applications, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office,

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100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Andrew Warren, Assistant Town Manager, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1130 or by email at [awarren@christiansburg.org](mailto:awarren@christiansburg.org), with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

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**Legals - Montgomery County**

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**Legals - Montgomery County**

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**Legals - Montgomery County**

the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through

**Legals - Montgomery County**

Friday. Contact Andrew Warren, Assistant Town Manager, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1130 or by email at [awarren@christiansburg.org](mailto:awarren@christiansburg.org), with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

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# YOVASO from page 1

Middle School in Bedford Co. placed second. As the statewide winners, Poquoson High School and Auburn Middle School will each receive \$500 to go towards future driver and passenger safety programs. REACH Homeschool and Forest Middle School will receive \$250 and North Stafford will receive \$100. All campaign prizes were funded by a grant from State Farm®, which also supported campaign materials.

“State Farm congratulates the participating schools for educating teens on the importance of wearing a seat belt,” said Dwayne Redd, State Farm spokesperson. “We hope the students develop a lifelong habit of buckling up, both as a driver and a passenger.” The grant from State Farm® also supported campaign materials.

Sixty-eight high schools, youth groups, and other traffic safety organizations participated in the annual campaign that ran throughout the months of September, October, and November. Winners were selected based on their campaign involvement which included developing one



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMS

**Auburn Middle School YOVASO club members and School Resource Officer Deputy Steve Parks prepare to do seat belt checks at the school.**

large-scale creative event to reach the entire student body. The creative event was judged on content, creativity, and number of students reached. Additionally, schools and youth groups conducted behavior changing activities each month to emphasize the importance of the campaign's theme to buckle up and slow down. Other judging criteria included the results of pre and post campaign seat belt checks to encourage buckling up among students. Among the schools that completed checks, seat belt use increased an average of 4.9% from pre-campaign to post-campaign.

“We are excited by the increase in seat belt use among students at participating schools during the Drive for Change campaign,” said Mary King, YOVASO Program Manager. “The participating schools, youth groups, and student leaders did an outstanding job in developing creative ways to encourage teens to buckle up and slow down and educating young students about the importance of always wearing a seat belt. We hope our schools and student traffic safety advocates will continue to improve seat belt use rates in their communities by reminding peers and loved ones to always buckle up.”

During the campaign, participating schools sponsored

hundreds of activities and events aimed at increasing seat belt use and/or preventing speeding. Some examples include buckle-up themed tailgate parties and halftime events, safety demonstrations, driver and passenger safety themed trunk-or-treats, and impaired driving prevention obstacle courses. Students who participated in activities were rewarded with YOVASO buckle up flashlight key chains, wristbands with safety messages, and stickers imprinted with a buckle up message. Other materials were also given out including buckle up reminder cards, mandala art activity sheets, and Halloween safety activity books and treat bags for elementary-age programs.

YOVASO is Virginia's Peer-to-Peer Young Driver and Passenger Safety Program and is a program of the Virginia State Police with grant funding by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. YOVASO is free and open to all Virginia high schools, middle schools, and youth groups. YOVASO currently has 110 schools and youth groups that actively participate in the program.

*Youth of Virginia Speak Out About Traffic Safety (YOVASO)  
Virginia Department of State Police*

## News Messenger

Established 1869

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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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## Audit from page 1

million.

Additionally, capital improvements are listed in the report at, “\$43 million in cash and \$98 million in investments, a total of \$142 million,” Aldridge said.

Although some of the projects have not happened yet from borrowed money, almost \$4 million has been earned in the investments already made, the audit report shows. Aldridge did point out that it is not good to have borrowed money earmarked for a project, but not being allocated yet.

County Administrator Angie Hill said, “When we talk about our capital projects funds, we talk about the schools and county's funds separately. For the financial reporting purposes, they are combined. The \$90 million that John is referring to that we borrowed is for the Christiansburg High School renovation.”

“That's a unique thing again, for you all that are new in Virginia,

schools can't issue debt,” Aldridge said. “So, if a school needs to build a building, the locality, meaning the primary government, for example in your case, Montgomery County has to issue the debt. The debt stays on your books because they don't have the ability to tax to pay for that debt.”

Aldridge also pointed out the report included an audit of the \$35 million of federal expenditures this year by Montgomery County. The largest categories are typically education and public safety within counties or districts.

“The cool thing is though...in testing all those programs, there were no instances of non-compliance that we found,” Aldridge said. “We don't look at all of it, we look at a percentage. In all those programs we looked at, we are able to say that you complied. No instances there of money being spent that we tested, inappropriately. So, again, that was

something to be proud of.”

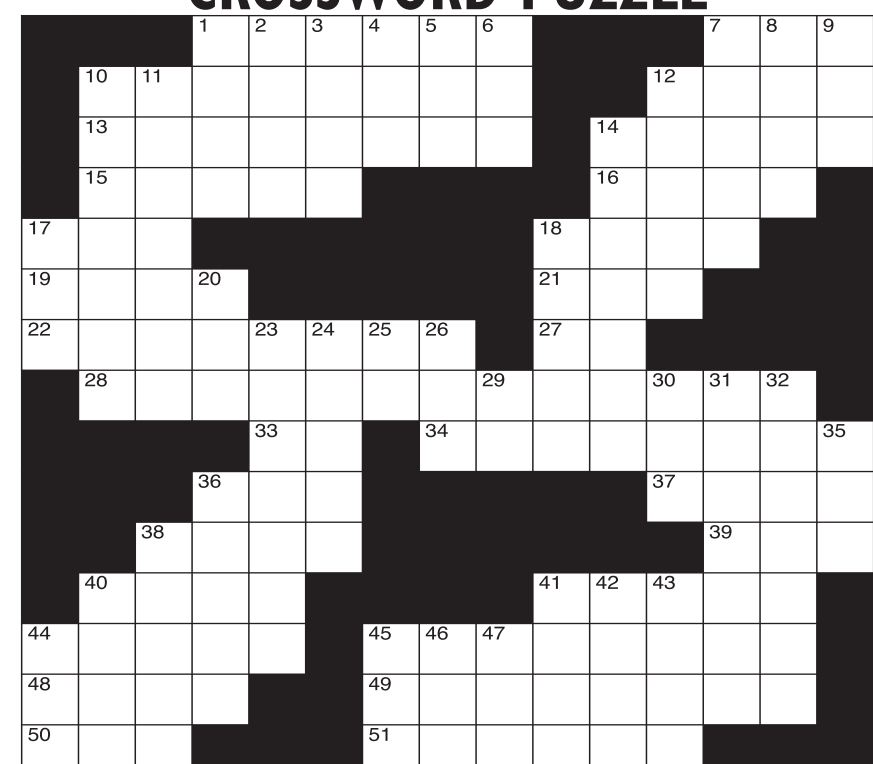
This is unique, according to Aldridge, because of the many people that are involved in these programs and how they play a part in money spent for various programs in the County. Some of the examples of programs mentioned during the meeting by Aldridge are school activities and special education departments. There are many others listed in the report, available in its entirety at www.montva.com.

Supervisor Sara Bohn pointed out that the report also showed a creation of approximately 2100-2200 jobs but was interested in seeing the unemployment rate of the County for the past 10 years, which was not included in the audit.

“Generally, we are lower than the state of Virginia,” Bohn said.

Hill confirmed that Montgomery County does typically have an unemployment rate far lower than the state's rate.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Switches
  - 7. Legal financial term (abbr.)
  - 10. Sweeties
  - 12. Competition
  - 13. Measures electrical resistance
  - 14. Psychotherapy researcher
  - 15. Causes injury to
  - 16. Open
  - 17. Polish peninsula
  - 18. Hebrew calendar month
  - 19. Whale ship captain
  - 21. Children's accessory
  - 22. Unknown point
  - 27. Exists
  - 28. Extremely confident
  - 33. Expression of disgust
  - 34. The government has many
  - 36. Small constellation
  - 37. Northern Indian city
  - 38. The best pitchers
  - 39. Naturally occurring solid
  - 40. Apple computers
  - 41. Portuguese city
  - 44. Ancient Greek war dance
  - 45. More reliable
  - 48. Sailboat
  - 49. Newspapers
  - 50. Frequently flooded area
  - 51. They dig for coal
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Partial
  - 2. “Mad Men” leading man
  - 3. The \_\_\_ of March
  - 4. Healthy
  - 5. Where golfers begin
  - 6. Soviet Socialist Republic (abbr.)
  - 7. Of the cheek
  - 8. Injury reminder
  - 9. Statesman Franklin
  - 10. For an unknown reason
  - 11. Brain parts
  - 12. Islamic calendar month
  - 14. Avenue where ad men work
  - 17. Possesses
  - 18. Accept
  - 20. Stake
  - 23. Former British PM May
  - 24. US battleships circa 1939
  - 25. Greek alphabet letter
  - 26. When you hope to get there
  - 29. Top lawyer
  - 30. Fiddler crabs
  - 31. Intolerant
  - 32. Persons that cause extreme fear
  - 35. Car mechanics group
  - 36. Capital of Ghana
  - 38. Famed ballplayer Hank
  - 40. Emphasizes insignificance
  - 41. Light-colored
  - 42. Distinctive smell
  - 43. Muckraking journalist Jacob
  - 44. Sunscreen rating
  - 45. Short-term memory
  - 46. Japanese delicacy
  - 47. One point north of due east

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# OBITUARIES

## Bishop, Frank Roger

Frank Roger Bishop, 81, of and William Bishop; sisters, Patsy Belspring, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2024.

He was a talented craftsman for over 50 years. Frank enjoyed spending his time trout fishing, hunting, and spending time with his grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Oakley Homer, Sr. and Mamie Snider Bishop; his loving wife, Judith Scaggs Bishop; and 11 of his siblings. Survivors include his son and daughter-in-law, Steve and Lisa Bishop; grandsons, Caleb



Young and Patricia Tinley; and many other nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

The family received friends Friday, Jan. 26, 2024 at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed with Teresa Tolbert officiating. Burial followed in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

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

## Brockway, III, Jack Wolston

Jack Wolston Brockway, III, 57, of Papadopoulas (John); brothers, Radford, passed away at his home with his family by his side Monday, Jan. 22, 2024.

He was preceded in death by his father, Jack Wolston Brockway, Jr.; and his canine companion, Lucy.

Survivors include his wife of 36 years, Traci Taylor Brockway; daughters, Hannah and Emma Brockway; mother, Maria Radford.



Anthony and Brian Brockway; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Trudi Alberts (Frank); and many other family members and friends.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

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

See Obituaries, page 6

Send community news and photos to [communitynews@ourvalley.org](mailto:communitynews@ourvalley.org)

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://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: [fbcradford.org](http://fbcradford.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](http://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 Sonafank, 1-336-583-4822. Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Wednesdays. Website: [www.christiansburgcob.org](http://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](http://www.SnowvilleChristianChurch.com) (and Facebook), Office: 540-633-3761, Email: [office@SnowvilleChristianChurch.com](mailto: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](http://www.eck-va.org), [www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences](http://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.

# Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

## DEAR DIARY

Read Ezekiel 40:1 through 42:20

How do you handle the pain of loss or tragedy? Our natural tendency is to hold on to past pain and keep track of hurtful events. "Fifteen years ago today, my wife asked for a divorce." "Four years ago this week, our son drowned." "It's been twenty years, but I vividly remember the day dad died of cancer."

Remembering tragedy is not wrong, but God wants us to see our pain in light of what He can do to bring healing to our lives.

In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the fall of the city—on that very day the hand of the Lord was on me and he took me there. (Ezekiel 40:1).

Ezekiel and the exiles of Israel would always remember the painful years, but God was at work even during this dark season of their history. In our own lives, we can expect "that very day the hand of the Lord" will become evident in our circumstances.

Thought for Today: Are you measuring the days since your last heartache, or looking to the day of God's provision?

Quicklook: Ezekiel 40:1-4

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

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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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 we 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." You'll love our minister, The Rev. Dr. Wes Jamison, who engages us in God's word. St. Michael started and administers Micah's Caring Initiative which includes Micah's Backpack, Soup for Seniors, Garden, Closet, and Mini Pantry, with tremendous community impact. Partnering with Rainbow Riders and Total Action for Progress, we opened the first Early Childhood Head Start in our community (6 weeks to age 3). We sponsor an awesome Scouting program of Scouts Boy & Girl Troop, Venture Scouts for older youth, and a Cub Pack for girls & boys kindergarten - 5th grade, amongst many other programs. Directions: From Price's Fork Road, turn onto Merrimac Road. St. Michael is ~quarter mile on the left. For more information: Phone 540.951.8951; Email [hope@stmclc.us](mailto:hope@stmclc.us); Website [www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org](http://www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org)

### MULTI-CULTURAL

### NON-DENOMINATIONAL

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

### PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

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

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

**Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church**, Rev. Richard Hall (540) 552-7194. [pastorhall29@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://christwesleyanchurch.org)

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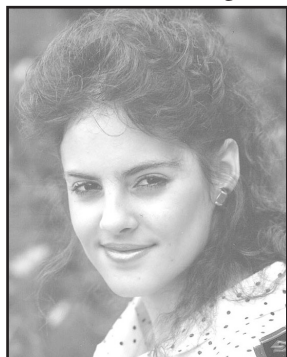
# Obituaries from page 5

## Brugh, Kimberly Terrell

Kimberly Terrell Brugh, 51, of Dublin, passed away Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Herman Farris and Joyce Ann Riggins Brown; and her sister, Sandra Woolridge.

Survivors include her daughter, Hailey Brugh (Eli Conrad); grandchildren, Colten, Trinity and Ashton; sister, Angela Brun; niece, Heather Martin (Jamie); and many other



nieces, great nieces and nephews, relatives and special friends.

The family will receive friends 5 - 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Memorial services will begin at 5:30 p.m. with Jerry Martin officiating.

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

parent.

Robert liked to laugh and tell jokes. Quite often, he'd forget that he had told you a joke and would tell it again. Most would laugh at it again because he was laughing.

Robert was predeceased by his mother and father, brothers James Stigger, William Stigger and sisters Laura Delapp, Alma Beaver, and Hazal Miller. He is survived by a host of nieces, nephews and other

family members.

Services will be held at Mullins Funeral Home, 120 West Main St., Radford today, Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024, at noon.

Interment with full military honors will be held Monday, Jan. 29, 2024 at Southwest Virginia Veteran's Cemetery, Dublin.

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

## Tuck, Judith Darlene Kirtner

Judith Darlene Kirtner Tuck, 80, passed away Friday, Jan. 19, 2024, at her home in Christiansburg.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Woody DeWitt and Mary Kirtner; her husband, Peter John Barth, Jr.; and granddaughter, Sierra Akers.

Survivors include her daughter, Laura Davidson (Justin Gillespie); son, Duane Tuck (Stacy); grandson Isaiah Tuck (Makayla); great grandson Westin; special nephew, Jeffrey Dobbins; brother, Roger D. Kirtner (Shelia); former husband, Charles



Tuck; best friend, Barbara Coalson; and many other nieces, nephews, other family and friends.

The family will receive friends 4 - 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 29, 2024, at the Max Creek Baptist Church. Funeral services will begin at 6 p.m. with Pastor Mike Coleman officiating. Interment will be held at a later date in the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin.

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

## Helms, Donald Dempsey

Donald "Don" Dempsey Helms, 92, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2024, at his home in Pulaski. He was a member of the 82nd Airborne and a retired Iron Worker.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ervin and Nora Helms; brothers, Ervin, Rudy, Richard, James and Samuel Helms; and sisters, Dorothy Fulks, Maxine Wren, Phyllis Humphries and Pamela Clay.

Survivors include his wife of nearly 70 years, Lelia Helms; sons, Jeffrey Helms (Laura), Randy Helms (Debbie),



Johnny Helms (Tammy), and Larry Helms (Teri); daughters, Beverly Amburgey, and Cindy Carroll (David); 15 grandchildren and 26 great grandchildren; sister-in-law, Hilda Helms; and many other nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Graveside services with full military honors will be held at 1 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 29, 2024, at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin.

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

## Stigger, Robert Levi

Robert Levi Stigger, 92, of Warm Hearth Drive, Blacksburg, peacefully passed away Jan. 18, 2024, at Heritage Hall, Blacksburg.

Robert was born Oct. 12, 1931, to William Levi Stigger and Anna Lucille Lester, Stigger in the bustling little county of Pulaski.

Robert enlisted into the 25th Army Infantry Feb. 26, 1953, as Private-1st Class. He later transferred to the Army Reserve to complete his eight years service, under the Universal Military Training and Service Act. Afterwards, Robert worked for



in food service at the Tyler Hotel. In his spare time, he pursued his love of fishing and spending time with his family and friends.

Robert had a lifelong relationship with Christ, being reared in a home of devout Christians, he often told stories of them attending

New Hope Methodist Church in New River on the Sundays the boys went to church with their mother and First Missionary Baptist Church in New River, when they went with their father. The girls of the family would go with the other

## Whittaker, Donald Lee

Donald Lee Whittaker, 62, of Newport, died Monday, Jan. 22, 2024, at his home.

He was preceded in death by his father, Mark Whittaker, Jr., and his infant sister, Debbie Whittaker. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Pamela Jean Whittaker; son, Randy Whittaker and girlfriend, Cassie Miller; grandchildren, Wyatt, Waylon, and Oaklee Whittaker; mother, Shirley Ann Whittaker; brothers and sisters-



in-law, David and Wanda Whittaker, and Michael and Teresa Whittaker; as well as numerous nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Friday, Jan. 26, 2024, at 11 a.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Pastors Steve and Lou Akers officiating. Interment followed at Westview Cemetery, Blacksburg. The family received friends prior to the service at McCoy Funeral Home.

www.montcova.com

# Achievements from page 1

list for the fall 2023 semester.

Emily Clark of Fairlawn who is majoring in Dance - BA.

Natalie Jones of Radford who is majoring in General Psychology - BS.

Ashleigh Bethea of Radford who is majoring in Health Sciences - BS.

Jonathan Woods of Radford who is majoring in Sport and Recreation Management - BS.

Erin Wilson of Radford who is majoring in Theatre - BA.

Radford resident named to James Madison University president's list

HARRISONBURG - Ragan Hale of Radford has been named to the president's list at James Madison University for the fall 2023 semester. Students who earn president's list honors must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of 3.900 or above. Hale is majoring in Nursing - BSN.

James Madison University announces fall 2023 graduates

HARRISONBURG - James Madison University is pleased to announce the following students who graduated during the December 2023 commencement exercises.

Kerrigan Quesenberry of Radford has graduated with a degree in Health Sciences - BS.

Alexander Walter of

Blacksburg has graduated with a degree in Marketing - BBA.

Ragan Hale of Radford has graduated with a degree in Nursing - BSN.

Emily Clark of Fairlawn graduated Cum Laude with a degree(s) in Dance - BA

Abigail Barnes named to Fall 2023 Provost's List at Hofstra University

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y.- Abigail Barnes of Radford achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA during the Spring 2023 semester, earning a spot on the Provost's List at Hofstra University. Abigail's major is Speech-Language Hearing Sciences.

Shenandoah recognizes Dean's List students for Fall 2023

WINCHESTER - Shenandoah University recognizes the 1,126 students who made the Fall 2023 Dean's List. Students who were named to the Dean's List include: Katie Forbes of Blacksburg, Nicklas Bissey of Christiansburg and Madison Bruce of Elliston. To qualify for the Dean's List, students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs must complete at least 12 semester hours and earn a semester GPA of 3.50 or higher. Dean's List students who achieve a semester GPA of 3.90 or higher are also recognized on the university's President's List.

Brian Bush named to Western Carolina University's Fall 2023 Chancellor's List

CULLOWHEE, N.C. - Congratulations to Brian Bush of Blacksburg for being named to the Western Carolina University Fall 2023 Chancellor's List. Bush was among more than 1,600 students to achieve

this honor. To qualify for the Chancellor's List, students must earn a GPA of 3.8 or higher while completing a minimum of 12 credit hours.

Spencer Amacher earns Fall Semester Dean's List Recognition at Ohio Wesleyan University

DELAWARE, Ohio - Spencer Amacher of Blacksburg has been named to the 2023 fall semester Dean's List at Ohio Wesleyan University. To earn Dean's List recognition, Ohio Wesleyan students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale in all applicable classes.

Billie Woodward named to SNHU Dean's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. - Billie Woodward of Radford has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Fall 2023 Dean's List. The fall terms run from September to December. Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List.

Sherif Mahmoud named to SNHU President's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. - Sherif Mahmoud of Radford has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's (SNHU) Fall 2023 President's List. The fall terms run from September to December. Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List.

Emory & Henry students named to Fall 2023 Dean's List

EMORY, Va. - Emory & Henry College congratulates students named to the fall 2023 Dean's List. To be named to the Dean's List, a student must be a full-time student and earn a 3.6 GPA for the semester. Anna Beeken of Blacksburg, Makayla Dowdy of Blacksburg, Mary Graham of Radford, Sophie Graham of Radford, Molly Keller of Fairlawn, and Baylee Reasor of Christiansburg have been named to the Dean's List.

Audrey Mosby of Radford earns Midway University Dean's List honors

MIDWAY, Ky. - Midway University is pleased to announce Audrey Mosby has been named to its Dean's List for the 2023 Fall Semester. To be named to the list, a student must be classified as full-time and obtain a 3.60 grade point average for the semester. There were 419 students who made the Dean's List.

Caroline Jones recognized by UNG president for earning 4.0 GPA

DAHLONEGA, Ga. - Caroline Jones of Blacksburg has been named to the President's Honor Roll at the University of North Georgia (UNG) for achieving a 4.0 grade point average during fall 2023. Dr. Micahel P. Shannon, president of UNG, recognized students who reached this academic achievement during the fall 2023 semester. Students enrolled in 12 or more credit hours in bachelor's degree programs who achieved a 4.0 grade point average were named to the President's Honor Roll. Students enrolled in associate degree or dual enrollment programs who

met the same level of achievement were named to the President's List.

Chandon Thomson named to Berea College Dean's List

BEREA, Ky. - Chandon Thomson, a resident of Christiansburg, has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Berea College. A student is named to the Dean's List who achieves a GPA of 3.4 or higher while passing at least four total credits, a course load equivalent to 16 semester hours.

Tanner Long of Christiansburg awarded gold stars for fall 2023 at The Citadel

CHARLESTON, S.C. - Tanner Long of Christiansburg is one of the more than 650 cadets and students recognized for their academic achievements during the fall 2023 semester. Gold stars are awarded to cadets and students at The Citadel who achieved a 3.7 grade point average or higher. Cadets and students who achieve gold star recognition are also placed on The Citadel's dean's list. Those cadets may wear gold stars on their uniforms throughout the semester following their academic achievement. A gold star recognition certificate is awarded to non-cadet students who meet the requirements; veteran and active-duty students are also awarded challenge coins.

Chase Beams of Blacksburg named to University of Alabama Fall 2023 Presidents List

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. - Chase Beams was named to The University of Alabama Presidents List for fall semester

2023. A total of 13,950 students enrolled during fall semester 2023 at The University of Alabama were named to the dean's list with an academic record of 3.5 (or above) or the president's list with an academic record of 4.0 (all A's). These driven students are making waves across UA's more than 70 undergraduate programs and 12 colleges and schools.

Carson-Newman University recognizes fall Dean's List students

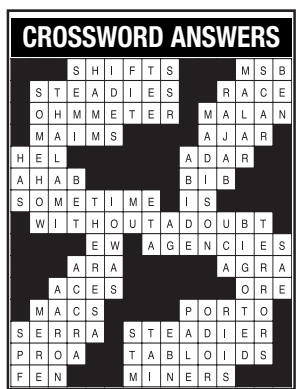
JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. - The following Carson-Newman University students made Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester: Luke Goforth of Blacksburg and McKenna Spaulding of Christiansburg. The university awards Dean's List honors to students earning a grade point average of 3.5 to 3.9 while taking 12 or more credit hours.

Carson-Newman University celebrates 2023 fall graduates

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. - The following student graduated from Carson-Newman University at the conclusion of the institution's fall semester: Luke Goforth of Blacksburg, Bachelor of Science.

Sadia Alam Shammi among Mississippi State University's fall 2023 graduates

MISSISSIPPI STATE, Miss. - Sadia Alam Shammi, of Blacksburg, VA, is among more than 1,500 students graduating from Mississippi State University in fall 2023. Shammi received the Master of Science from MSU's Bagley College of Engineering.



# MONTGOMERY SPORTS

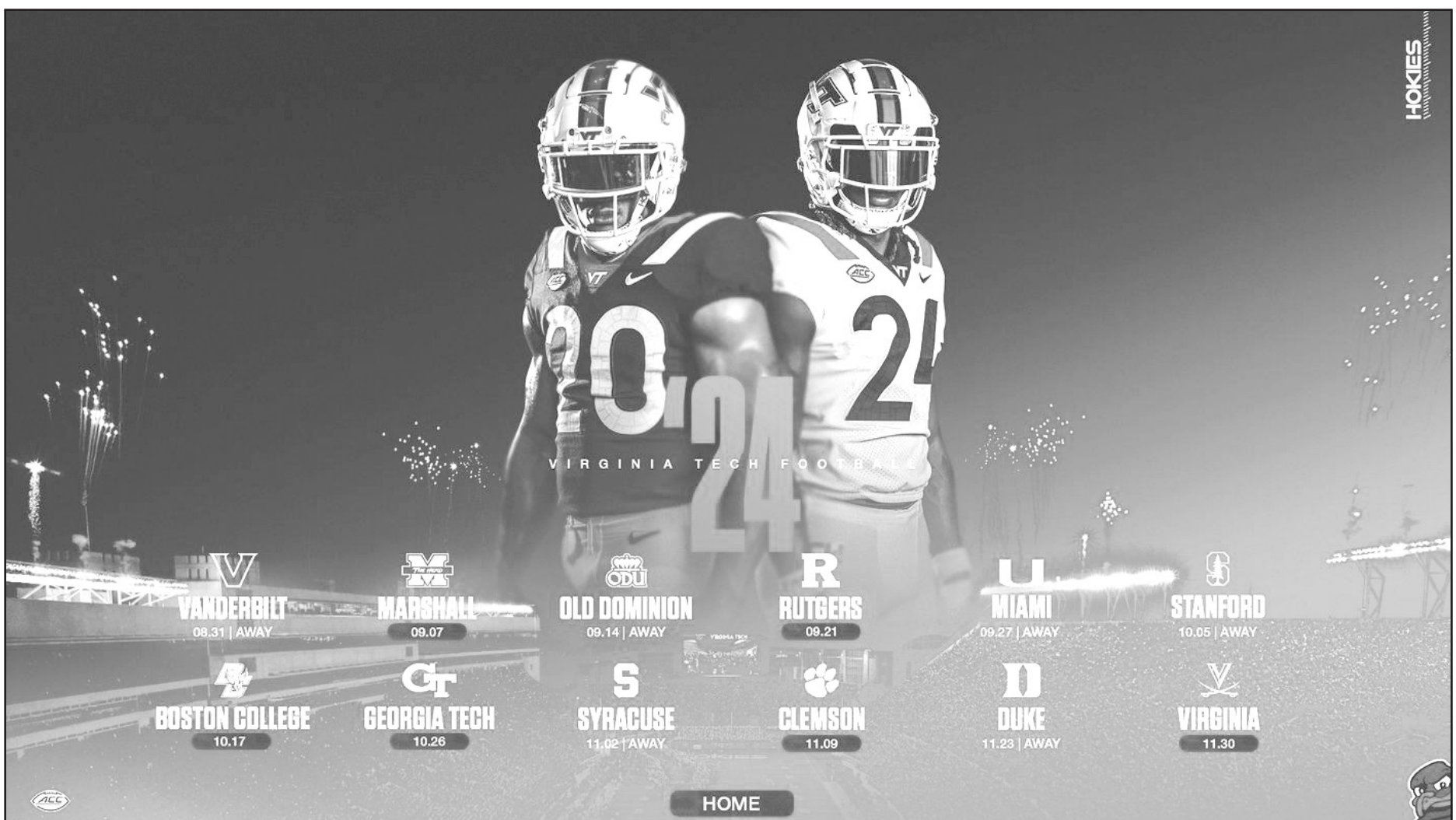


PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

## Hokies open 2024 season on the road

The Virginia Tech football team will open the season on the road against Vanderbilt on Saturday, Aug. 31.

The following week, Hokie Nation will be jumping again inside Lane Stadium, with Marshall coming to Blacksburg on Saturday, Sept. 7.

Virginia Tech football's full 2024 schedule was officially announced during ACC Network's Schedule Release Show on Wednesday. Each matchup is finalized for the Hokies' 12-game slate, including exciting matchups against nationally-ranked Clemson and in-state rival Virginia, as well as the electric Thursday night atmosphere of Lane Stadium.

Entering his third season at the

helm, Brent Pry returns the majority of his offensive playmakers, alongside quarterback Kyron Drones, and numerous starters on defense, which finished fourth nationally and first in the ACC in fewest passing yards allowed. Tech has a great opportunity ahead to build upon its 2023 season, ending the season by winning five of its last seven games, which ended in a Military Bowl victory.

A Big Ten opponent will make its way to Blacksburg for the second straight season with Rutgers facing Tech on Sept. 21, and two ACC programs in Clemson (Nov. 9) and Georgia Tech (Oct. 26) will find themselves competing on Worsham

Field.

The Hokies will play on Thursday night for the third consecutive season as they host Boston College on Oct. 17. They will also play during Friday Night Lights when they travel to South Florida for a matchup with the Miami Hurricanes in late September, beginning conference play.

A small change from recent seasons, the Hokies will enjoy two open dates, one in mid-October and the other in mid-November.

With five conference games in November, Pry and staff will face off against two new head coaches in the ACC. Pry and the Hokies will travel

to Syracuse on Saturday, Nov. 2, for a meeting with the Orange and head coach Fran Brown. Three weeks later, they hit the road again in a matchup against Duke and new head coach Manny Diaz.

Tech will travel to the west coast and face Stanford on Saturday, Oct. 5, in what will be the inaugural season in the ACC for the Cardinal.

To wrap up the season, the Hokies will host the Smithfield Commonwealth Clash against Virginia on Saturday, Nov. 30 for the first time since 2020.

Kick times for the first three games of the season will be announced at a later date.

*Virginia Tech Athletics*

## Blacksburg Striders claim national title

A team representing the Blacksburg Striders running club won the national team title in the men's 50+ team competition at the USA Track and Field Cross Country Championships in Richmond on Jan. 20.

The Striders team included 12 runners from Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Radford, and Roanoke. In total, 460 athletes from 40 states competed in the championships.

In the men's 50+ team competition, the Blacksburg Striders won the national title scoring 46 points as they defeated the Santa Barbara Running Club of

California by two points with the Colonial Road Runners capturing the team bronze with 78 points. Team members for the Blacksburg squad (in order of finish) were Anderson Norton, Ignacio Moore, Kevin McGuire, Durelle Scott, Michael Stowe, and Sean McGinnis.

In the men's 40+ team competition, the Blacksburg Striders team finished in fifth place. Team members (in order of finish) were David Angell, Matthew Wisnioski, Daniel Kolasa, Kevin Byrd, Bradley Paye, and Glen McGuire. Angell also excelled as an individual,

finishing fifth overall in the men's masters race and first in his 45-49 age group.

The Blacksburg Striders running club was created more than 50 years ago to provide community involvement and a source of camaraderie for local runners to enjoy group events, races, social activities and community service. The group hosts weekly group runs and races, including the Blacksburg Classic 10-miler and 5K run on Feb. 10, 2024. Register at [runsignup.com/BlacksburgClassic](https://runsignup.com/BlacksburgClassic).

*Michael Stowe*



PHOTO BY ELLA BYRD

A group of individuals representing the Blacksburg Striders running club have won a national championship for 50-plus men.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD ATHLETICS

Alumni Weekend for the Radford men's and women's basketball programs is taking place the weekend of Jan. 27-28, with a game day doubleheader slated for today, Saturday, Jan. 27.

## Radford Basketball Alumni events set for today, Jan. 27

RADFORD – Alumni Weekend for the Radford men's and women's basketball programs is taking place the weekend of Jan. 27-28, with a game day doubleheader slated for today, Saturday, Jan. 27.

Women's basketball takes the floor first with a 2 p.m. tip off against Presbyterian College. Men's basketball also takes on the Blue Hose of Presbyterian, with a start time of approximately 4:30 p.m. inside the Dedmon Center.

Alumni of both programs are invited back to the New River Valley for a celebration of their contributions to the success of the Highlanders over the years.

Halftime of the men's basketball game will feature a special recognition of the 1998 men's basketball team. The '98

team was the first in program history to win a Big South title and secure an NCAA Tournament berth, exactly 25 years ago.

Tickets for all home Radford basketball contests are now on sale at [RadfordTickets.com](https://RadfordTickets.com).

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

Radford University Volunteer Summit - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Women's Basketball vs. Presbyterian - 2 p.m.

Basketball Alumni Social (located on back court inside Dedmon Center) - 3:30 p.m.

Men's Basketball vs. Presbyterian - 4:30 p.m.

*- Radford Athletics*

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photos to  
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# MONTGOMERY SPORTS

## Local swimmers shine in competition at CAC



Blacksburg senior Theo Villaneva executes a clean entry on a reverse tuck dive during a Monday night competition at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center.



Christiansburg's Luke Rawlings performs a reverse 1.5 somersault dive.



Christiansburg's Grace Wright gets started in the 200-yard freestyle with teammate Kaitlyn Brown on Tuesday night.



Blacksburg's Sam Reilly swims the opening butterfly leg in the 200-yard IM during a Tuesday night meet at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

## National Bankshares, Inc. to acquire Frontier Community Bank

National Bankshares, Inc. ("National Bankshares" or the "Company") (Nasdaq: NKSH) and Frontier Community Bank ("Frontier") have jointly announced they have entered into a definitive merger agreement for National Bankshares to acquire Frontier.

As of Sept. 30, 2023, Frontier had total assets of approximately \$154 million. Upon completion of the transaction, National Bankshares is expected to have total consolidated assets of approximately \$1.7 billion based on September 30, 2023 financial data.

"We are pleased to

announce our partnership with Frontier Community Bank, and we believe that our compatible cultures and shared values will enhance our position as a true Virginia community bank," said Brad Denardo, Chairman, President and CEO of National Bankshares. "This acquisition will also help us achieve a higher level of financial performance for our shareholders by gaining meaningful entry into markets with attractive growth opportunities. We look forward to continuing Frontier's commitment to its customers and the communities it serves."

Alan Sweet, President and CEO of Frontier, added, "We are excited to combine Frontier

Community Bank into the National Bankshares team. This transaction allows Frontier to improve the products and services we offer our customers while continuing to operate with the culture and values of a community bank. National Bankshares' trading on the Nasdaq stock market provides Frontier's shareholders with the opportunity to benefit from enhanced stock trading liquidity."

Under the terms of the merger agreement, shareholders of Frontier will have the right to receive either 0.4250 shares of National Bankshares common stock or \$14.48 in cash for each share of Frontier common stock they hold. Shareholder elections are

subject to adjustment so that the overall mix of consideration to be paid to Frontier shareholders consists of at least 90% National Bankshares common stock. The aggregate value of the transaction is approximately \$17.1 million. Upon completion of the acquisition, Frontier will merge into The National Bank of Blacksburg, the wholly owned bank subsidiary of National Bankshares.

The transaction, which received unanimous approval by both National Bankshares' and Frontier's Board of Directors, is subject to customary closing conditions, including the approval of the merger agreement by Frontier's shareholders

and the receipt of all required regulatory approvals. All executive officers and directors of Frontier have entered into support agreements to vote the shares of Frontier they own in favor of the transaction. The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of 2024.

Piper Sandler & Co. served as financial advisor to National Bankshares, and Williams Mullen served as its legal counsel. Performance Trust Capital Partners, LLC served as financial advisor to Frontier, and Woods Rogers Vandeventer Black served as its legal counsel.

National Bankshares, Inc.

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