



News Messenger

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Blacksburg

Christiansburg

Saturday, March 2, 2024

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USPS 016-490

\$1.00

MCPS budget statement of needs shows increase of over \$13 million for FY25

Lori Graham
Contributing writer

On Monday, Feb. 26, Montgomery County Public Schools administrators presented their Budget Statement of Needs to the Board of Supervisors and public with a budget of over \$153 million for FY2024-25, compared to the previous year's over \$140 million.

Superintendent Dr. Bernard Bragen presented the Board of Supervisors with the FY2023-24 budget accomplishments, budget development process, an overview of the governor's proposed budget, the 2024-25 budget development goals, and the school

board's funding request that includes both their operating and school nutrition funds.

"We should never lose sight of what we are doing here. This is not about buildings, it's not about adults, it's about children," Bragen said. "It's about providing children in a public school forum the opportunities for them to become all their capable of becoming and the core of our democracy is public education, and we want to make sure we ask for all that we think is needed for us to provide the opportunities for all of our children."

Deputy Superintendent for Operations Dr. Annie Whittaker presented on

the past accomplishments of Montgomery County Schools. A 5% salary increase in the fall of 2023 plus another 2% increase, effective Jan. 1, 2024, salary corrections for individual staff as part of a staff study, self-funded health insurance account without an increase to employee-only premiums, and eight additional positions, four athletic trainers and four custodians, were the main points of Whittaker's presentation.

In October of 2023, the administration began meeting with representatives in preparation of group budget presentations, Whittaker said. This was followed in November by

a budget request template provided to individual schools and departments. In December, these group representatives presented their recommendations for consideration to the school board. Youngkin released his proposed 2024-2026 budget on Dec. 20, 2023.

On Jan. 4, the VDOE sent the budget calculation tool, which is based on the governor's proposed budget, and the Superintendent's Statement of Needs was then presented to the School Board on Jan. 23. The superintendent's proposed budget was presented Feb. 6 and the school board approved their request for funding on Feb. 20.

"The budget proposed



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MCPS

Montgomery County Public Schools forecasted a decline of over 300 enrolled students in FY2024-25 but will need to fill several necessary positions in the County and meet with rising operating costs.

by the governor includes an increase in support for K-12 education over the biennium," Whittaker said. "It funds staffing requirements for the See MCPS, page 4



PHOTO BY DIANE DEFFENBAUGH FOR VIRGINIA TECH

Rhondda R. Thomas (at far left) welcomed Virginia Tech faculty members from Outreach and International Affairs — including Susan E. Short (second from left), associate vice president of engagement, and Julie Walters Steele (second from right) — and three descendants of the Reynolds Homestead enslaved community — Kimble Reynolds Jr. '88, M.S. '95, Kevin Reynolds, and Kenneth Reynolds — to Clemson University last summer.

Professor helping Clemson uncover legacy of slavery aims to inspire efforts at Virginia Tech

Rhondda R. Thomas was drawn into a sacred journey when she came upon a list of 50 enslaved people as part of the 1854 deed marking the sale of a South Carolina plantation owned by former U.S. Vice President John C. Calhoun that would later become Clemson University.

"That moment was so important to me. If that's the only thing I ever found, then those names would be

what I'd share with the public for the rest of my life," Thomas said. "I had no idea there would be so much more."

Working tirelessly to find more information, the literature professor became the driving force behind Call My Name, a collaborative initiative designed to create a space where anyone can contribute to the documentation and sharing of stories

of the Black community. From that initial list of 50, the project has grown to encompass more than 1,000 names, shedding light on the enslaved and other Black individuals who played significant roles in Clemson's history.

Collaboration with Virginia Tech In March, Outreach and

See Thomas, page 3

Man arrested in NRV sentenced to life in prison

An Alabama man, who was arrested in the New River Valley six years ago, will spend life in prison for a 2006 murder of Auburn University student. Derrill Richard Ennis, 41, had been a person of interest in the case, but it wasn't until a cold case investigator reexamined the missing person and possible homicide that they zeroed in on him.

Ennis had moved away after the 2006 slaying of Lori Ann Slesinski. The two had been in a relationship.

Police had lost track of Ennis until they found him to the Pilot area of Montgomery County. He had been building yurts for a Floyd County company when he was arrested.

The Alabama prosecutor had initially sought the death penalty, but this past week agreed to the judge's decision for life without parole.

At the center of the case was the fact that the body of Slesinski has never been found. Ennis has maintained he did not kill her nor hid her body.

Virginia State investigators searched the Montgomery County property where Ennis had been living. Nothing was ever discovered.

Prosecutors say the co-ed was killed when she turned down romantic advances from the defendant. The case had been delayed several times after the Covid outbreak.

Her vehicle was found burned and abandoned just days after her disappearance. DNA samples from Slesinski's home were linked to Ennis, who admitted to having consensual sex with her on or around the day of her disappearance. He said Slesinski left to purchase drugs.

During the trial, he also accused investigators of planting evidence.

Staff report

BOS meeting features update on NRCC president search, Volunteer Montgomery

After the retirement announcement of President, Dr. Pat Huber earlier this year, a search for a New River Community College President is underway, with a posted timeline of how the process will unfold.

Eric Johnson, who serves on the New River Community College Advisory Board, as appointed by the Board of Supervisors, gave an update on their search for a new president. President Pat Huber has announced her retirement from the position effective Jan. 10, 2024; however, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College Dr. David Dore has requested she stay until the end of the year, Johnson said.

The search for the next candidate for the NRCC president will be national, Johnson said. In April, an official announcement will be posted and listed on many university websites and national job recruiting locations; however, Johnson said this doesn't mean there will not be internal candidates as well.

A full list of the recruiting process timeline can be viewed at the www.montva.com website in the Feb. 26 meeting agenda.

Alexandria Strickler, Human Services Director, also presented on Volunteer Montgomery, the former Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP),



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MONT. CO.

Volunteer Montgomery, formerly Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, welcomes all ages to participate.

during the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting.

"We decided about a year ago to go in a little bit different direction and get away from the grant funding because it wasn't a significant amount and it was really constraining us some, so these ladies are here to share with us. I'm excited to hear about it," County Administrator Angie Hill said.

This program has been ongoing for over 50 years, changing to the new Volunteer Montgomery in April 2023.

"Volunteer Montgomery networks to

See Volunteer, page 4



FILE PHOTO

Free prom dresses are available at the Meadowbrook Public Library for high school students in the NRV.

Free prom dresses for NRV high school students

The Meadowbrook Public Library is once again thrilled to announce, in partnership with generous donors, the library is offering free prom dresses to area high school students.

The library invites New River Valley high school students to drop in during regular library hours to browse and choose a stunning prom dress, absolutely free of charge. With sizes ranging from

petite to plus-size and styles to suit every taste, there's something for everyone. The dresses are available until one hour before the library's closing time. Participants will also have the opportunity to select complimentary jewelry to complete their prom night look.

For further information, please contact the Meadowbrook Public Library at 540-268-1964.

The library is located at 267 Alleghany Spring Road, Shawsville, VA, 24162.

Don't miss this opportunity to find the perfect prom dress without breaking the bank. Join us at the Meadowbrook Library and let us help you make your prom dreams come true!

Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Mar. 2:

Free Income Tax Prep with VITA

At the Christiansburg Library; 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program is returning with free income tax preparation. Walk-ins only. Income limits apply. Contact NRCA for more information at 540-320-3217 or <https://www.facebook.com/VITAatNRCA>.

Monday, March 4:

Author Talk with David Craig: A Good Shadow

At Christiansburg Library; 6 -7 p.m. Join author David Craig as he talks about his book A Good Shadow: The Real Story of the Mine Wars: Guns, Lies & Spies. Books will be available for sale via cash, check, Venmo, or Paypal. Paperbacks will be \$17.00 and the hardbacks will be \$25.00.

Tuesday, March 5:

Medicaid and Personal Care lecture

“Steps To Take When Applying for Medicaid and Personal Care” Lecture Program at 2 p.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center for an informative

program led by Chris Conner and her team from Medi Home Health & Hospice to learn the important steps that should be taken when applying for Medicaid and personal care. This program is free, but registration is required. To learn more, call 540-443-1142.

Thursday, Mar. 7:

American Legion meeting

The American Legion, Harvey Howe Carper Post 30 will meet at 6 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in 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, March 9:

Mount Tabor Ruritan Biscuit Breakfast

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will be serving up hot biscuits topped with delicious sausage gravy, or with the latest batch of our “world-famous” apple butter. We will also have scrambled eggs, orange juice and coffee. Breakfast will be served in the Fellowship Hall of Slusser’s Chapel, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg, 8 – 10 a.m. This is below the Sanctuary, on the lower church parking lot level. This is a fundraiser for our club to help us as we serve our community, and donations will be accepted for the breakfast.

Monday, Mar. 11:

Radford City Council meeting

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

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

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

Tuesday, Mar. 12:

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, Mar. 21:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly’s Family Italian Restaurant at 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. Member Dana Jackson will speak on the “History of the Confederate Veterans Home in Richmond.” If Montgomery 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.

On-going:

NRV Virginia Passenger Rail Survey

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority is conducting a survey seeking input on planning, designing, and constructing rail infrastructure improvements to extend passenger rail service to the New River Valley. To participate in the survey, please visit <https://form.jotform.com/240044027996054>. For more information on the New River Valley passenger rail expansion, please visit the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority’s website at <https://vapassengerailauthority.org/nrvproject/>.

ONLINE AUCTION

Ends Thursday, April 11th at 3 PM
Income Producing Homes for Sale Near Radford University
Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141

Bid Now at VAAuctionPro.com



- Offering #1 - 1201 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
- Offering #2 - 1205 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
- Offering #3 - 1207 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
- Offering #4 - 1211 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141
- Offering #5: 1217 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141

Looking to expand your real estate portfolio with high-income properties? We have an unmissable opportunity for you! Presenting 5 homes that are currently used for student housing which are in the vibrant city of Radford, VA. They are just a short walk away from Radford University. These properties are perfectly situated for consistent rental demand and substantial returns on investment. Don't let this chance slip away!

Terms: 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$10,000 per offering is required on day of sale. Close on or before May 28th, 2024. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence before placing a bid. Auction starts ending at 3 PM on April 11th, 2024. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at VAAuctionPro.com.

CONTACT – Auctioneer Matt Gallimore at 540-239-2585 or email Gallimore.Matt@gmail.com or Realtor Dari Cupp at 540-250-1839. Auction is in cooperation with Realtor Stephanie Carfagna with Long & Foster; contact Stephanie at 540-230-9357 or email stephanie.carfagna@gmail.com

102 S. Locust Street, Floyd, VA 24091
(540) 745-2005
VAAuctionPro.com
Lic# 2907004059

United Country Real Estate

Blue Ridge Land & Auction Co., Inc.

Facing Eviction?
Know Your Rights!

Location:
206 3rd Avenue, Radford, VA

Monday, March 4th, 6 PM

Southwest Virginia Legal Aid & Causeway Community Action invite you to join us to learn about basic tenants' rights under Virginia State Law with focus on landlord-tenant relationships.

For more information, contact
Kristi Murray, Senior Staff Attorney
at kmurray@svlas.org or
540-382-6157

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF SVLAS

Public Education Seminar to discuss tenants' rights

SWVA Legal Aid, Causeway Community Action host the event in Radford

RADFORD – This Monday, Mar. 4, at 6 p.m., Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society and Causeway Community Action will host a public education seminar on basic tenants’ rights under Virginia state law, applicable to all types of landlord-tenant relationships.

There will also be a specific focus on the rights of tenants who receive various types of federal subsidies, including Housing Choice Vouchers and Project-Based Vouchers. We will discuss the HUD regulations that govern those tenancies, including the process of household and income recertifications, and how a failure to complete those timely under the HUD regulations, can prevent a property owner from applying rent calculations retroactively. We will also discuss Virginia law surrounding what a tenant should and should not do upon receiving eviction notices, being served with an Unlawful Detainer, or being offered repayment plans on balances the tenant does not believe they owe.

Avenue, Radford.

There will also be staff members on-site from Southwest Virginia Legal Aid providing eligibility screening to any interested individuals who are seeking free legal services.

For more information, please contact Kristi Murray, Senior Staff Attorney at kmurray@svlas.org or 540-382-6157.

SVLAS serves low-income citizens in the 17-county service area of Southwest Virginia handling matters involving family law, housing, domestic violence, elder justice, and consumer law. If you need legal assistance, call Legal Aid to apply for services at 1-888-201-2772. The call is free, and intake staff are available to take your call Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.; 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. You can also apply online 24 hours a day at www.svlas.org.

Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society

The location will be 206 Third

Thomas

from page 1

International Affairs will host Thomas and members of her team. They will visit historic Virginia Tech sites that are also working to reshape their narratives, including the Reynolds Homestead in Patrick County and the Solitude and Fraction houses on the Blacksburg campus.

At each, Thomas will meet with faculty, staff, descendants of the enslaved community, and leaders throughout the region to share expertise.

“When I started working on Call My Name, I realized that I needed the help of the campus and local communities to develop the impactful project I was envisioning,” Thomas said. “I hope to bring that same spirit of collaboration to the work being done at Virginia Tech. It’s not easy work, and you can’t do it alone, but it is essential work.”

Thomas will present a free lecture from 3-4 p.m. March 12 during which she will discuss how adopting a collaborative approach to community history has not only enriched the narrative at Clemson but has also become a beacon for understanding and acknowledging the past.

The lecture — part of the university’s Principles of Community Week from March 11-16 — will be held at 5313 Gilbert Place, 220 Gilbert St., Blacksburg; participants may also connect virtually via Zoom. Space is limited and registration is required.

If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation, please contact Susan E. Short, associate vice president for engagement, at 540-231-9497 during regular business hours at least 10 business days prior to the event.

“I don’t want anybody to reinvent the wheel. We can share what we’ve done, lessons that we’ve learned. But we also expect to learn from work that’s being done at Virginia Tech and Reynolds Homestead,” Thomas said.

Reynolds Homestead

The Reynolds Homestead, located 70 miles southeast of Blacksburg in rural Patrick County, was built in 1843 as the Rock Spring Plantation. It was the boyhood home of tobacco magnate R.J. Reynolds and A.D. Reynolds, whose son founded Reynolds Metals. In 1970, Nancy Susan Reynolds, daughter of R.J. Reynolds, deeded the home and 717 acres to Virginia Tech.

The former plantation has since been transformed, serving as part forest research lab, part community gathering place, and part educational and cultural center. In addition to the historic home, the university also operates the Forest Resources Research Center and a 4,000-square-foot Community Engagement Center on the property. It is also raising funds to create a commercial kitchen for culinary classes and cooking demonstrations and to serve as a food-based business incubator.

For many years, the homestead, now part of Outreach and International Affairs, has worked to document and tell the stories of the enslaved people who helped build the wealth of the Reynolds family.

“Over the past decade, the Reynolds Homestead has learned more about the men, women, and children who were enslaved at Rock Spring Plantation. Previous research has provided a strong base that we can build on, including the names of 57 individuals interred in the cemetery for enslaved Africans and their descendants that is located on the property,” Director Julie Walters Steele said.

She hopes that Thomas’ visit will spark the imaginations of the community, including descendants of those who were enslaved at Rock Spring Plantation, and help focus the effort to honor their ancestors.

“We want to start by collecting oral histories that we can then share with other descendant families and visitors to the Reynolds Homestead,” Steele said. “Gathering this information will ultimately provide a better understanding of what life was like for the enslaved people on the plantation — both before and after emancipation.”

The Reynolds Homestead has ensured that descendants of the enslaved community will have a voice in steering the facility’s work by adding dedicated seats for them on its advisory committee and developing another committee made up entirely of descendants.

“Every individual brings forth a name and legacy,” said Kimble Reynolds Jr. ’88, M.S. ’95, whose great-great-grandparents Kitty and Anthony Reynolds were enslaved at the plantation. “The work at Clemson is a reminder of how much value my ancestors provided in creating what is now referred to as the Reynolds Homestead, how the entire community benefits from their existence, and how

deserving they are to be honored for their rightful place in history.”

Fraction Family House at Solitude

Meanwhile in Blacksburg, the university has re-envisioned the historic Solitude and Fraction houses as spaces to tell the stories of the Indigenous, settler, and enslaved people who once lived there.

The two structures sit adjacent to each other near the Duck Pond. Solitude was originally built in 1801 and was owned by the family of Robert Preston, who enslaved people including the Fraction, McNorton, and Saunders families on the surrounding plantation.

The smaller, three-room structure was identified through in-depth architectural analysis as the dwelling for multiple generations of enslaved families who worked on the Solitude estate. In 2019, the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors acknowledged by resolution the outbuilding as the Fraction Family House at Solitude.

Thomas will tour the Fraction house as well as the installations and exhibits in Solitude and then talk with staff about their efforts.

“Attitudes change over time and how we interpret history evolves. As we look at a space like Solitude/Fraction, the land it sits on, and the people and cultures who occupied the space, we realize the depth of cultural history available to enlighten,” said Victoria Ferguson, director of the Solitude-Fraction site. “A goal for the program at Solitude/Fraction is to honor the past by sharing truths, many long hidden. There will be many questions to answer and hopefully many opportunities to make the most of the contested space that became the heart of our land-grant university. May it serve us well and help heal wounds.”

Short said she is looking forward to collaborating with the Call My Name team and drawing upon the invaluable lessons and insights gleaned from Thomas’ pioneering work. “By tapping into her knowledge, we’re poised to deepen our understanding and storytelling about our historic spaces right here at Virginia Tech,” Short said.

Rich Mathieson for Virginia Tech



THE FINCASTLE HERALD The Vinton Messenger THE NEW CASTLE RECORD SALEM TIMES REGISTER News Messenger RADFORD News Journal

Legals - City of Radford

Public Notice is hereby given that pursuant to VA State Code 15.2-1719

Radford City Police Department

is advertising a list of found and unclaimed property which is currently being stored in our evidence room. If you have lost property and it matches the descriptions below, please call (540)731-3624 to identify and claim your property. Bicycles, Wallets, Backpacks, U.S. Currency, Cell Phones, Computers, Firearms, Flashlights, Chainsaws, Medical Equipment, Baby Strollers and Carriers, Tobacco Products, Hygienic products, Documents and Paperwork, Machetes, Knives, Personal Defense Devices, Keys, Purses, Jewelry, Coins, Cameras, Clothes, Radios, Electronics, Fishing Equipment, Construction Materials/ Equipment. You must show proof of ownership or provide a detailed description of your property. All unclaimed property will be disposed of after March 16th, 2024.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF REAL PROPERTY

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 15.2-1800 and 15.2-1813, the Radford City Council will hold a public hearing on March 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the City Municipal Building, 10 Robertson Street, Radford, VA 24141.

The purpose of the public hearing will be to receive public comment on the proposed grant by the City to the Economic Development Authority of the City of Radford of a portion of that property commonly known as the “Foundry Property,” located in the City of Radford, Virginia, identified as Tax Map Number 17-(1)-1B, and described in Instrument No. 202300638, recorded in the Radford City Circuit Court Clerk’s Office.

Copies of the proposed ordinance to approve the disposition of real property may be obtained by

Legals - City of Radford

contacting the Office of the City Clerk at (540) 731-3603 or Melissa.Skelton@radfordva.gov.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING CITY OF RADFORD FY 2024-2025 HUD ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

The City of Radford will hold public meetings to gather input into housing, homelessness, public service and community development needs for the FY 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan for CDBG Funding, in accordance with the City of Radford’s Citizen Participation Plan: March 12, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. March 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. City Council Chambers 10 Robertson Street Radford, VA 24141 The meeting will include information about the amount of anticipated CDBG funds that will be available and the range of CDBG eligible activities. CDBG funds must be used to benefit low- and moderate-income people and areas, and special populations.

Please contact the Community Development Department at (540)267-3188 or Melissa.Skelton@radfordva.gov for any questions. Accommodations for persons with disabilities and non-English speaking residents will be provided upon request.

Legals - Montgomery County

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG

TOWN COUNCIL

The Town of Christiansburg Town Council will hold a

Legals - Montgomery County

March 12, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning: A. Rezoning request by Radford Development of Virginia, LLC, Property Owner, and Hy-Tek Collision, LLC, Applicant, to rezone property located on the East side of the intersection of Badger Street NW and Elk Drive NW, identified as Tax Parcel 525-(A)-44A; (Parcel ID 026060), consisting of approximately of 2.265 acres, from B-3 General Business District to I-1 Limited Industrial District. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. B. Conditional Use Permit request by Radford Development of Virginia, LLC, Property Owner, and Hy-Tek Collision, LLC, Applicant, to allow for automobile and truck or recreation vehicle assembling, painting, upholstering, repairing, rebuilding or reconditioning, body or fender work, including a commercial garage, towing service, or automobile body shop in the I-1 Limited Industrial zoning district on property located on the East side of the intersection of Badger Street NW and Elk Drive NW, identified as Tax Parcel 525-(A)-44A; (Parcel ID 026060), and consisting of approximately of 2.265 acres. The property is designated as Residential 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, 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, with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

Legals - Montgomery County

Town of Christiansburg Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that on March 12, 2024 the Town Council of Christiansburg, Virginia (the “Town”) will conduct a public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, as required under applicable law, in accordance with Section 15-2-2606 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, with respect to the adoption by the Council of a resolution or resolutions, as may be necessary or convenient, regarding the proposed financing of the development, renovation, equipping and improvement of the Town’s waste water treatment facilities in Christiansburg, Virginia. The Town proposes to fund the project in part by the issuance of a general obligation bond to be issued in a principal amount not to exceed \$15,500,000. The purpose of the financing is to pay for the costs of improvements needed and required as described above. The public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, will be conducted at 7:00PM or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, by the Town Council in Council Chambers at the Town Hall located at 100 E. Main St, Christiansburg, Virginia. Interested persons may appear at such time and place and present their views whether orally or in writing or submit written comments prior to the hearing. The Town may set time limits on speakers and other rules and procedures for the conduct of this public hearing. Any persons with disabilities are urged to contact the Town Manager’s Office at (540) 382-6128 prior to the public hearing to arrange for any necessary accommodations. For additional information, please contact the Town Manager’s Office.



Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Planning Commission intention to act on the following Special Use Permit request: A request by Sara Jones for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a dog grooming business as a Home Business. The property is located at the intersection of Shilo Way (State Route 1106) and Mount Tabor Road (State Route 624). The property is further identified as 1723 Mount Tabor Road, Tax Map 028-145,46.49 (Parcel ID: 007792), 2.292 acres, zoned Agricultural (A-1) in the Mount Tabor Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Residential Transition in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

MAKE AN “A” IN ADVERTISING! Call 389-9355

Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of Virginia Code § 15.2-2100, et seq., the Town of Christiansburg proposes to grant a non-exclusive Solar Power Purchase Franchise for a term greater than 5 years. A copy of the template Solar Power Purchase Franchise Agreement, and the proposed Ordinance authorizing the Town to enter into the agreement, may be reviewed by the public in the Town Manager’s Office located at 100 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. Notice is hereby given that the Council of the Town of Christiansburg will hold a public hearing on the above matter at its regular meeting to be held on March 26, 2024, commencing at 7 p.m., EST, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the Council Chambers 100 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. Further information is available in the Town Manager’s Office, (540) 382-6128 ext. 1114. All parties and interested citizens may appear on the above date and be heard and give comment on the matter. If you are a person who needs accommodations for this hearing, please contact the Town Manager’s Office at (540) 382-6128 ext. 1114 before 12:00 noon on the Thursday before the date of the hearing listed above.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Pursuant to the provisions of Virginia Code § 15.2-2100, et seq., the Town of Christiansburg proposes to adopt an Ordinance to grant a Solar Power Purchase Franchise to a responsible solar photovoltaic (PV) system provider with experience designing, engineering, building, operating, owning, financing, maintaining, and decommissioning turn-key installations of similar rooftop solar PV systems on publicly owned property. Such franchise shall be for a term greater than 5 years. A copy of the proposed Ordinance and template Solar Power Purchase

Legals - Montgomery County

Franchise Agreement is on file in the Town Manager’s Office and is available for public review.

All responsible solar photovoltaic system providers are invited to bid to enter into such a non-exclusive franchise with the Town of Christiansburg. All Proposals will be submitted by 3:00 p.m. EST, Tuesday, March 19, 2024. Proposals may be submitted via courier, mail, or may be hand delivered. Proposals will be delivered to the attention of the Procurement Officer.

1. To deliver hard-copy proposals to the Town, envelopes should be clearly marked “Proposal for RFP 24-004, Solar Power Purchase Franchise Agreement Proposal”, and addressed to Tara Vance, Procurement Officer.
2. All proposers are responsible for ensuring proposals were received by the Town.
3. Proposals received after the deadline shall not be accepted.
4. No other delivery or distributions of proposals will be required of proposers. Each Proposer will submit, and sign if requested, one complete proposal to:

Tara Vance
Procurement Officer

Email: tvance@christiansburg.org
Phone: 540-585-7605
Fax: 540-382-3762

Questions regarding this RFP should be sent to Wayne Nelson (wnelson@christiansburg.org), Special Projects Coordinator, (540) 382-6128 ext. 1205.

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Call 540-389-9355

Volunteer from page 1

create volunteer opportunities and serve as a resource for area organizations,” the Feb. 24 agenda stated. “The program links the skills, knowledge, and experience of volunteers with the needs of their community. The program provides support while providing volunteer opportunities. In April 2023, RSVP transitioned to Volunteer Montgomery. This program is now fully funded by Montgomery County. There are no longer age restrictions, so any resident of Montgomery County is eligible to volunteer. Although the program name and age restrictions have changed, our valuable programs that we provide to the community remain the same.”

Some of the events Volunteer Montgomery does annually are Patriot Day Baskets and Flowers for Vets. The Patriot Day Baskets are put together by volunteers and contain goodies for first responders that are delivered throughout Montgomery County, Strickler said. The Flowers for Vets campaign partners with Gates Florists for flowers and take in

donations of flower vases all year.

“This last year we were able to take 55 flower arrangements throughout Montgomery County,” Strickler said.

Two of the biggest programs, Stricker said, are the Holiday Tote Bags and Supplies for Seniors to be presented to individuals in local nursing homes. Donations are accepted for these programs.

“A record number of 36 volunteers came out and packed 230 bags,” Strickler said, for the Supplies for Seniors program.

Also, a recent program is Valentines for Veterans, which this year had children as young as three-years-old to come out and assist with making almost 500 cards that were delivered to the Salem VA Medical Center.

As of Feb. 26, Volunteer Montgomery has over 200 volunteers with the largest number of new volunteers falling in the 65+ and 18-24 age ranges. Seven volunteers under the age of 18 have also signed up.

“I am happy to see such a spread of

age in new volunteers,” Strickler said.

Some of the challenges Strickler presented to the supervisors are seeking family-oriented volunteer opportunities and chances for volunteers of all ages to participate. Additionally, with the rising number of volunteers and programs the group is offering, there is a need for more administrative and supervising roles.

Deena Flinchum said she has volunteered with the organization for at least 16 years and has lived in the New River Valley for 22 years. Her main work is with the Agency on Aging where she is a representative on their board, previously as chair and now serving as treasurer.

“My area of volunteer work there is in Medicare counseling,” Flinchum said. “[Policies] can change every year and we help people find the ones that would work best for them... In 2023, two agency staff members, five volunteer counselors, and three volunteer support staff helped 600 people in the New River Valley save over \$477,000.”

Flinchum also said since 2013, a total of 5.4 million dollars has been saved for New River Valley residents through the support of this agency.

Rosemary Jones is a second-generation volunteer. Her mom volunteered prior to her and now the family tradition of volunteerism has been passed on to her son as well.

Jones said she clips coupons for overseas veterans, fill bags for seniors, write cards, and helps deliver totes to seniors in Montgomery County. Through Jones, supervisors heard how important these programs impact, for example, the seniors who receive the totes of supplies that the volunteers deliver to them.

One NRV senior Jones delivered to said, “Oh, I needed these things, and was all out of money.”

Residents interested in donating funds to Volunteer Montgomery may visit the website at www.givelocalnrv.org, or sign up to volunteer time at www.montva.gov.

MCPS from page 1

Literacy Act, includes a 1% bonus in FY25, 2% salary increase in FY26, bolsters teacher retirement fund in

VRS, and it also includes technical adjustments to lottery proceeds, sales tax and incentive programs,

and removal of sales tax hold harmless.”

The superintendent expressed goals during the presentation to continue the programs currently in place, increase staffing, increase minimum starting pay to \$15 an hour, extend work day for paraprofessionals and nursing staff, increasing employee salaries by 5% with a possible 1% bonus based on the Governor’s proposal and local funding, coping with the rising cost of healthcare, increase funding for services, supplies, materials, and equipment, purchase 750 Chromebooks, and purchase four new school buses.

“Our fleet is about 125 school buses or so,” Bragen said. “Ideally, we would like to replace about 10 a year. They have a lifespan of about 15 years, but we are turning in some of the electric school buses that we are going to get reimbursed for brand new diesel/gasoline, so that would get us to those eight buses we had wanted in the beginning.”

Specific strategic goal information was also presented and included along with the full, detailed budget statement, which has been made available by MCPS administrators on the Montgomery County website at www.montva.com.

“Once those requests come up, are they looked at in aggregate,” said Supervisor Anthony Grafsky. “Is there any chance that there are duplicate requests that make their way into the final budget?”

“We will look at it as a

district or division level...I don’t think there is anything duplicated across schools or divisions,” Bragen said.

Whittaker said that they will however look at repeated requests from different schools in that it shows a greater need for something across the division.

“I’ve heard it come up a couple of times where we need to add custodians, we need to add maintenance staff, we’re still kicking it in the average was about \$36,000, try to word this right, supported to the best ability that they could for the amount of work that they do. So, I just want to annotate that because I only saw maybe four positions being added for custodial staff,” Supervisor Derek Kitts said.

“And three maintenance staff,” Bragen said.

“You want to raise minimum wage to \$15 and right now they are making \$14, is that...if you raise them to \$15 is that plus the 5% you are asking for the raise,” Supervisor Todd King said.

“For those groups it would take them up, if they are less than 5%... everyone would get at least 5%,” Whittaker said. “It would not be \$15 and 5% additional.”

Whittaker also said that the minimum custodial staff currently makes is approximately \$13 an hour.

Supervisor and Vice Chair Steve Fijalkowski requested a detailed explanation of the number of staff in each category that are receiving an increase, for example the

paraprofessionals and nurses. The vice chair also requested more detail explaining carryovers, or the amount of money not spent and integrated into the new fiscal year.

“For many years, your carryovers have been huge and I’m sure it’s a percentage and I’m sure it averages out over time so, with this much of an increase I expect your carryovers are also going to increase,” Fijalkowski said. “Have you all ever looked at where the major source of the money that is not spent is coming from, do y’all have an idea of that?”

“I can speak to what I understand from last year,” Bragen said. “Our last year-end was not very significant from \$134 million budget; it was around \$900,000 and change and I believe most of that money we are planning on putting in our health reserve account. I think it would typically come from salaries, what we didn’t expend.”

This was agreed by Whittaker to be from people retiring and new employees coming in at a lower rate of pay.

An expected enrollment decline in the county of over 300 students is offset by an increase in positions needed for additional preschool programs in the Eastern Montgomery and Riner areas of the county. There are also mental services needs in the county, Bragen said, requiring more support. An additional gifted

teacher and an additional nurse, along with grounds and maintenance positions previously mentioned.

Supervisor April DeMotts asked for an explanation of the Dean of Students position, which is the only position MCPS is asking for additional funding to support.

Bragen said that this position is a retired administrator, previously paid for by ESSR’s funds, “in one of our middle schools that more discipline infractions and more behavioral issues than some of our other schools and we wanted to provide the additional support there, and it has been really successful this year working with the administration and staff at that school, they’ve done a really nice job in reducing those discipline infractions as well as increasing the students’ attendance.”

King also requested the expense report of what MCPS has spent on collective bargaining, which will be shared with all supervisors following the meeting.

During the next MCPS Board meeting, individuals completing the AMPS, Alternative Model for Professional Studies certification will be celebrated. The 30-month program is designed to meet the need of teacher shortages and provides a pathway for individuals that meet educational requirements to teach but lack the K-12 endorsement.

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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- CLUES ACROSS
1. 007 Connery
 5. Presides over meetings (abbr.)
 9. Trefoil
 10. Father of Paris
 12. Asian nut for chewing
 13. Machine gun from the air
 16. The communion table
 17. His razor
 18. Father
 19. Doctor of philosophy
 22. Cologne
 23. Black tropical Am. cuckoo
 24. Diversifies
 28. Razor author 14th C
 31. Maple sugar fluid
 32. A corp.'s first stock offer to the public
 34. The premier bike race
 42. References author's initials
 43. Extremely high frequency
 44. Actress Farrow
 46. Not good
 47. State of annoyance
 48. S. China seaport
 51. Bengal quince
 52. Provide the means
 54. A large and imposing house
 55. Excessively fat
 57. Spars
 58. Former wives
 59. Repeat
- CLUES DOWN
1. Podetiums
 2. Frankenberg river
 3. Feel ill
 4. 12th state
 5. "Anything Goes"
 6. Daily time units (abbr.)
 7. Cagiva ___; motorcycle
 8. Drug agent (slang)
 9. Study of poetic meter
 11. Ceremonial staffs
 12. Russian pancake served with caviar
 14. Supervises flying
 15. Large Australian flightless bird
 16. As fast as can be done (abbr.)
 19. Before
 20. Hall of Fame (abbr.)
 21. Constitution Hall org.
 24. Atomic #35
 25. Ducktail hairstyle
 26. Independent ruler
 27. Oval water scorpion
 29. Modern London Gallery
 30. On top
 33. Identicalness
 35. 2002 Olympic state
 36. Tease or ridicule
 37. Arrived extinct
 38. Opposite of begin
 39. Ol' Blue Eye's initials
 40. South Am. nation
 41. Type of salamander
 42. S. China seaport
 44. Woman (French)
 45. 007's Flemming
 47. ___ Domingo
 49. A French abbot
 50. Gorse genus
 51. An uproarious party
 53. Point midway between E and SE
 54. A waterproof raincoat
 56. Spanish be
 57. Of I

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OBITUARIES

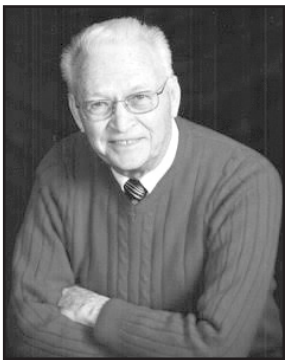
Alls, Ronald Stafford

Ronald Stafford Alls, 83, of Greg Cook; grandchildren, Jennifer Blackburg, went to be with the Lord Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024.

He was born in Blacksburg April 23, 1940, to the late Mark Redmond and Opal Stafford Alls. He was also preceded in death by his daughter, Vickie Alls McClintock; granddaughter, Kristen McClintock; great-granddaughter, Blakely Compton.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, and retired from Virginia Tech Crops, Soils, and Environmental Sciences, with over 30 years of service. Ronald and Becky loved to travel and volunteer at the Blacksburg Food Pantry. Ronald also loved restoring classic cars, and baseball. He was a member of Blacksburg Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), where he served as a Deacon.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Becky Alls; daughters and sons-in-law, Jody Alls Compton, Kathy and Chris Watters, Karen and



Robosson (Ralph), Eric Compton (Leslie), Amanda Adams (Patrick), Marcus Ilardo (Lydia), Lauren Potts (Dustin), Katie Watters, Susan Watters; great-grandchildren, Christian, Abby, Izzy, Lori Lynn, Judah, Clark, Aurora; sister, Phyllis Price; brother

and sister-in-law, Curtis and Betsy Alls; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024 in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor J.B. Beane and Pastor Gary McCoy officiating. Interment followed at Westview Cemetery. The family received friends prior to the service at McCoy Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Blacksburg Christian Church, Blacksburg Rescue Squad, and/or Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry.

Duncan, Vance Vernon



Vance Vernon Duncan, 96, passed away Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024.

He was the 13th child of John Ben Duncan and Virgie Phillips Duncan. He grew up on the family farm in Indian Valley, Floyd County. Vance was drafted at the end of World War II and entered the Army on Dec. 14, 1945. After training he was part of the occupational forces in Japan.

Vance married Lena Hollandsworth on June 30, 1951. He was a member of the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church and also served as deacon and treasurer until his death.



He retired in the late 1980's after an almost 30-year career with Clover Creamery/Meadow Gold Milk Company as a door-to-door milk delivery man. He loved the interactions with all of his customers over those years and was saddened when the grocery stores took over the milk business.

Vance was always ready to pull out his guitar and play the current songs that he was working on. He played with a group of musicians for many years who visited and entertained all of the local nursing

See Obituaries, page 6

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

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

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

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

BAPTIST

First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave., 215 Third Ave at the corner with Downey St. We nurture meaningful connections to God and others through worship, spiritual growth, and community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: 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

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. 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

Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

WHAT WE NEED

Read Judges 17:1 through 21:25

Cities are racked by chaos. Innocents are cruelly victimized. People of all stripes—leaders and followers alike—lie and steal, thinking nothing of it. Rage, destruction, and brutality are the stuff of daily headlines. When did things get so bad?

This world is no stranger to dark times, including the period of the Israelite judges. Today's reading is full of horrific violence and inhumanity. After the miracles that brought the Israelites into the Promised Land, how did everything fall apart? Was it because they had no ruler to keep them in line? After all, it was repeatedly emphasized that "Israel had no king." But there's more to it than that.

In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit (Judges 21:25).

Our world is what it is because fit. God's every action demonstrates that He desires peace, compassion, and community—things sorely missing from this world. Until we have the mind of Christ, politics will never offer hope. Our world doesn't need a king. It needs God.

Prayer Suggestion: Father, remake my will from the inside out, so that I will desire what You desire.

Quicklook: Judges 21:15-25

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

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/oslccburg> 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@stmic.us; Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

MULTI-CULTURAL

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

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

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

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Compassion Church, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Chandler Jones brings relevant messages

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

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

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

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

UNITED METHODIST

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

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 220 West Main Street, Christiansburg. Rev. Mike Derflinger (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship at 10a.m. with Children's Church at the same time, Sunday School at 9 a.m. Worship is in-person and Live-streamed on our YouTube Channel: StPaulUMCChristiansburgVA. All are welcome. Website: www.stpaulvaumc.org

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

Town of Christiansburg announces new planning director

CHRISTIANSBURG – The Town of Christiansburg is pleased to announce Retta Jackson has joined the staff as the new Planning Director.

Jackson is from Wytheville and has lived in Christiansburg since 2022. Before joining the Town of Christiansburg, Jackson served as the Town Manager and Zoning Administrator for the Town of Hillsville.

Jackson joins the Town with nearly 10 years of professional experience in municipal management, zoning administration, fiscal planning, and policy development. She has been credited with leading her previous locality into better financial stability and helping with the revitalization of multiple derelict properties. Her unique role as Town Manager and Zoning Administrator brings an all-encompassing perspective to the Christiansburg Planning Department.

“Retta joins us with an extensive background in local government and will undoubtedly provide valuable perspective to the role of Planning Director,” said Town Manager Randy Wingfield. “Her background in planning and economic development will help the town continue

its commitment to exceptional services for residents and businesses. We look forward to having her join the team.”

As a Southwest Virginia native, Jackson spent many days exploring Christiansburg and is extremely familiar with the area and all it has to offer. She received a Bachelor of Science in Human Development from Virginia Tech, as well as her Master of Business Administration from Western Governors University. Additionally, she has received a graduate certificate in Local Government Management from Virginia Tech, as well as participation in the Virginia Women’s Municipal Leadership Institute.

“I am honored to have been chosen as the Planning Director for Christiansburg,” said Jackson. “I will work hard to take care of the town and the community to the best of my abilities, and to be a cohesive link to all vested parties. We are all interested in the same thing, and that is the success of our community. I’m excited to be a part of that.”

Jackson began serving as Christiansburg Planning Director on Monday, Feb. 26.

Town of Christiansburg

Community colleges in Southwest Virginia participate in historic economic impact studies

Community colleges in Southwest Virginia (SWVA) including Mountain Empire Community College, New River Community College, Southwest Virginia Community College, Virginia Highlands Community College, and Wytheville Community College participated, both collectively and individually, in studies to determine specifically how having community colleges in the southwestern part of the state contribute to the local and regional economic landscape. The results reveal that these community colleges play a vital role in the economic growth as each college in the region serves its respective communities by providing accessible, affordable education and workforce training.

The economic impact study prepared by Lightcast, a company that researches global labor markets, shows a positive correlation between the colleges and their communities’ economies.

The study revealed that community colleges in SWVA contributed to the economy by adding \$560.4 million in income to the Southwest Virginia economy, a value approximately equal to 5.4 percent of the region’s total gross regional product (GRP), supporting 8,424 jobs, employing 1,501 full-time and part-time

faculty and staff with a payroll totaling \$61.6 million, and, spending \$59.7 million (including construction) on day-to-day expenses related to facilities, supplies, and professional services.

According to the study, “the activities of SWVA colleges and their students support one out of every 14 jobs in Southwest Virginia.” “The findings of this recent study reaffirm the profound impact that community colleges have on our region. These institutions, both collectively and individually, serve as catalysts for economic growth and life transformation. By offering accessible and affordable education, providing essential workforce training, and facilitating job placement, community colleges play a pivotal role in strengthening our local and regional economy,” said AJ Robinson, who is a Southwest Virginia representative on the Virginia Community College System Board of Directors.

The results of the study show that SWVA colleges influence both the lives of their students and the regional economy by enhancing the overall quality of life, making higher education and workforce training accessible and affordable, preparing students to meet

the needs of employers, and giving those students the skills they need to secure higher paying jobs.

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) also recently participated in an economic activity study to analyze the economic impact of community colleges in the Virginia communities that they serve. The study revealed that Virginia’s community colleges had an estimated impact of \$11.6 billion on the state’s economy during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Since 2021-2022, enrollment continues to climb throughout the VCCS; therefore, the economic impact from the colleges’ existence is growing and will continue to have a positive impact on the communities in which their students live.

Mountain Empire Community College, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, <https://www.mecc.edu/>

Southwest Virginia Community College, Cedar Bluff, Virginia, <https://sw.edu/>

New River Community College, Dublin, Virginia, <https://www.nr.edu/>

Virginia Highlands Community College, Abingdon, Virginia, <https://www.vhcc.edu/>

Wytheville Community College, Wytheville, Virginia, <https://www.wcc.vccs.edu/>

Obituaries

from page 5

and assisted living homes in the New River Valley.

Vance loved his country and was proud to have had the chance to serve in the Army. He believed in doing the right thing and in working hard. He was determined to live independently as long as he could and thankfully was able to do so until the last three days of his life.

He is leaving behind his wife of 72 years, Lena Hollandsworth Duncan; his daughter Pat Duncan, Norfolk, Va.; his son Kai A. Duncan, Christiansburg; his granddaughter Gabrielle Duncan Dunham, Auburn, Ala.; his grandson Sean Duncan Dunham, Austin, Texas;

brothers in law and sisters in law: Lora and Sonny Gunter, David Haynes, Eloise Funkhouser, and Phyllis and Glenn Boyd; and many nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be at Horne Funeral Service in Christiansburg Thursday, March 7 at 1 p.m. The service will begin at 2 p.m. with Elder Raymond Goad officiating.

The family would like to thank the Christiansburg Rescue Squad for their help and LewisGale Montgomery Hospital with a special thank you to the Second Floor Care Team for their empathy and kindness in his final days. You are greatly appreciated.

Hackney, Patsy Gail

Patsy Gail Hackney, 65, passed away Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, at her home in Pearisburg.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Margaret Meade and Elbert Huff; and brothers, Larry and David Huff.

Survivors include her husband, David Hackney; sons, Todd Christopher Hackney, and Timothy Eugene Hackney (Jana Glass); daughter, Letina Michele



Shaffer; nine grandchildren; two great grandchildren; brother, Rodney Huff; sisters, Sharron Marshall, Phyllis Huff, Sandra Chafin, and Janie McCoy; and many other relatives and friends.

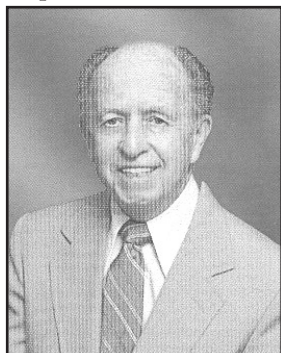
Services will be announced at a later date.

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

Mottesheard, Donald G.

Donald G. Mottesheard passed away at Commonwealth Senior Living in Christiansburg, on Feb. 21, 2024. Don was a member of Unity Christian Church in Radford. He graduated Milligan University in Elizabethton, Tenn. and then served in the U.S. Army. After teaching school for a few years in Pulaski, he then worked for the City of Radford for 38 1/2 years.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence Ray and Allie Hurst Mottesheard; sisters Helen Augusta Mottesheard and Geneva Leona Mottesheard; brothers Clifton Hurst Mottesheard; and Samuel Ray Mottesheard; and a nephew Gary



Noel Mottesheard.

Survivors include his brother Max Garland Mottesheard; nieces, Candace Mottesheard Smith (Lenny) and Donna Jean Laux (Richard Slagter); nephews Jerry Wayne Mottesheard, Jeffery Mottesheard (Linda), Phillip Mottesheard (Jenny) and many others family members and friends.

The family received friends at Unity Christian Church Thursday, Feb. 29. The funeral service followed. Interment was Mar. 1 in the West View Cemetery in Radford with a military service.

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

Price, Dr. Wanda Leigh

Dr. Wanda Leigh Price, 78, passed away peacefully Feb. 20, 2024. Wanda was born on April 29, 1945, and raised in Blacksburg.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Fred Ribble Price and Myrtle Kathleen Swaim Price; her sisters, Odessa Price Phillips and Peggy Price McKendree; and her brother Derl Dudley Price.

She was also preceded in death by her brother-in-law Jack Cromer.

She is survived by her sister, Freda Jean Price Cromer of Hickory N.C., and many nieces and nephews.

After graduating from Blacksburg High School (class of 1963), Wanda set her sights on education and travel. She attended and graduated from Warner Pacific University (Class of 1967). She then earned her master’s degree from Radford University (Class of 1972). Wanda later attended Virginia Tech and graduated in the Class of 1985 with her Doctoral Degree.

Early in life Wanda traveled and even lived in many areas outside of her home state of Virginia, but her love for the community and the people of her hometown would always bring her back to Blacksburg. She retired from Montgomery County Public Schools after many years of



teaching and working Church.

Wanda enjoyed laughter and will be remembered for her unique ability to remember and share jokes. She saw beauty everywhere, from the laughter of children to the sounds of the ocean, and even in a simple wildflower. She loved the birds in her backyard, her beautiful flower gardens, playing tennis, and anything she could capture through the lens of her camera. Wanda traveled extensively including to many foreign countries, capturing memories, landscaping, and people along the way with her photography. She would want those left behind to search for the beauty of this world just like she did.

Wanda once delivered the commencement at a graduation of her students at Blacksburg High School. She read from Dr. Seuss, “Oh, the Places You’ll Go.” Her favor quote from that address: “Congratulations! Today is your day. You’re off to Great Places! You’re off and away.”

A Celebration of Life will be held April 29, 2024 (her birthday) at 11 a.m. at Blacksburg Christian Church, 240 Watson Ave., Blacksburg. At Wanda’s request we will have chocolate cake and yellow roses. If you can’t join us that day, please have a piece of chocolate in remembrance of Wanda. In lieu of flowers it was Wanda’s request that donations be made in her name to Animal Hope Alliance or your local hospice.

NOTICE OF MASS MEETING Montgomery County Republican Party

As Chairman of the Montgomery County Republican Party Unit Committee, I, Robert Barbatti, do hereby issue this call for a Mass Meeting to be held at Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St, Christiansburg, VA 24073, starting at 12 noon local time (with registration opening at 11am) on Saturday March 16, 2024 for the following purposes:

1. To elect a unit chairman, and members to the unit committee
2. To elect Delegates to the Republican Party of Virginia State Convention

Filing Requirements

Candidates for election at said mass meeting shall file a written statement by mail which must be received not later than 12 noon Saturday March 9, 2024 and accompanied by any fees required. See detail and official filing forms online at montgomerycountyvagop.com.

Paid for and authorized by the
Montgomery County Republican Party Unit Committee
Robert Barbatti, Chairman
website: montgomerycountyvagop.com

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Magic Johnson subject of new book by former RU, VT professor

Marty Gordon

NRVsports@mainstreetnewspapers.com

Former Virginia Tech and Radford University journalism professor Roland Lazenby has written over 70 books with a dozen being full-length and biographies. His latest is titled: Magic, The Life of Earvin "Magic" Johnson and hit the shelves this past October. On Dec. 24, it was picked as the cover of the New York Times Book Review. The book is a biography of the revolutionary NBA point guard, Magic Johnson, that looks deeply into his life and his family background.

"After writing biographies of Michael Jordan (now translated into 22 languages worldwide), Kobe Bryant (now in 12 languages), Jerry West and Phil Jackson, Magic was the player most logical for me to do. I have written a number of books about the Lakers, including two LA Times bestsellers," Lazenby said earlier this week.

In addition to the long list of biographies, Lazenby who taught college for 21 years, then taught at RU part time in 2013, has also written five books with the late basketball legend Billy Packer, but it's the link to Lakers that seem to be his specialty.

"In the 1980s, I wrote a history of the Final Four with Billy Packer that sold well. The publisher asked me what I wanted to do next, and I suggested the Boston Celtics Greenbook, which came out every year for five years. The publisher then asked me to also do the Pistons, which also came out every year for five years," the author said.

He then suggested they add the Lakers to the mix, and the Lakers happily agreed, which has led to him doing a number of different books about the team.

Working with these NBA teams created the opportunity to travel and cover games. Then in 1993, the Chicago Tribune Book Division hired him to write about the Chicago Bulls, leading to a series of books, according to Lazenby, that changed his life.

Of course, no one can forget their first. Lazenby's was about Ralph Sampson, "Sampson, A Life Above The Rim," which came out in 1983. It was excerpted by The Sporting News, in three parts and also by the Associated Press, which got his book writing career off to a roaring start.

At the time, he was a Roanoke Times reporter. Previously, he had been a 24 year-old coach at Blacksburg High School.

"I was a high school varsity head coach from 1975-1978, and a year before that I coached football at Peabody Jr. High in Petersburg on a powerhouse team. Both were formative experiences. In Petersburg, I was the coach for an eighth grade linebacker named Ricky Hunley who became a first round draft pick of the Broncos in 1984 and enjoyed a special NFL career," Lazenby said.

"Likewise, my experience at Blacksburg High working

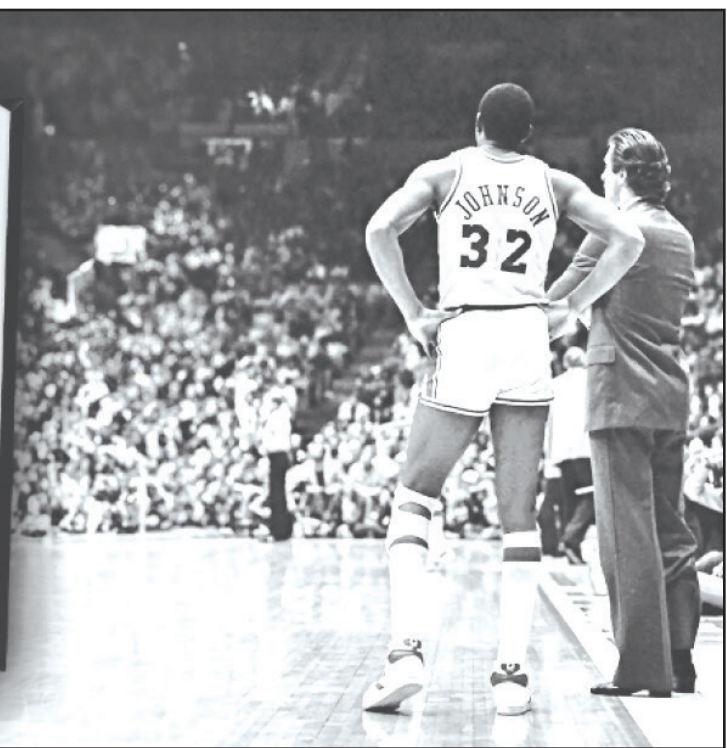
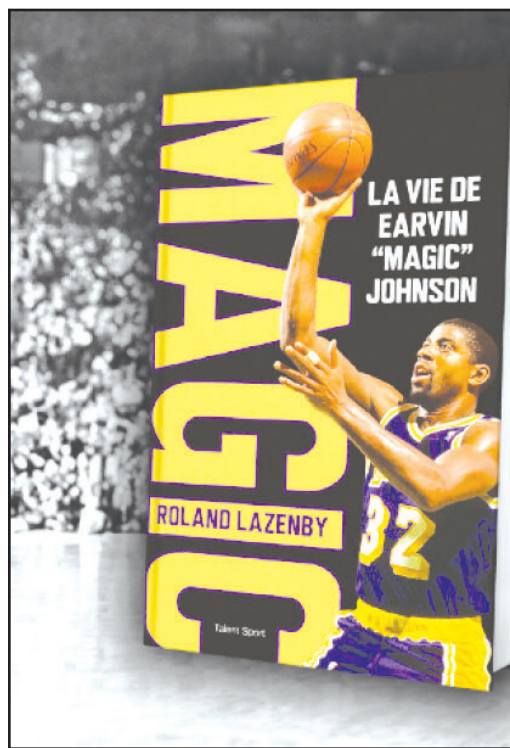


PHOTO COURTESY OF ROLAND LAZENBY

with so many special young people in that era set the stage for me to research and tell the story of Magic Johnson in his hometown of Lansing, Michigan, the untold part of his story. I did more than 50 interviews each with his head coach, the varsity assistant coach, and school psychologist Charles Tucker, who became Johnson's representative for the first seven seasons of his pro career."

He says it was only natural that he write a book about Johnson.

The biography, according to Lazenby, offers all kinds of unknown details, such as the time he walked out of practice to quit the team but was told to return by his father, an event that had never been reported, along with details of his conflict with and also substantial respect for coach Jud Heathcote.

Magic Johnson is often regarded as the "greatest" point guard of all time. He spent his entire career with the Los Angeles Lakers. After winning a national championship with Michigan State in 1979, the Lakers drafted him as the first overall pick in the NBA draft. He would lead them to five NBA championships and honored as one of the 50 Greatest Players in NBA History and inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

The former player has also garnered plenty of attention off the court, including most recently as a minority business owner in the Lakers and now the Washington Commanders.

"I have written numerous books about the Lakers including biographies of Jerry West, Kobe Bryant, Phil Jackson as well as several popular histories of the team, have interviewed everybody involved with the franchise dating back to when it began as the Detroit Gems, everybody from George Mikan and Jim Pollard and John Kundla to West, Elgin Baylor, their coaches, the great Pete Newell, right through all of Showtime, Pat Riley, Paul Westhead, Bill Sharman, Kareem, Magic and all the players. Two of my Lakers books have been LA Times bestsellers," continued Lazenby.

"In some ways it is a familiar story (Magic

Johnson book). In other ways much of what really happened has been obscured. I like to think the Magic biography brings a vast array of new information from my research and interviews that casts much of the history in quite a different light, beginning with things like who really was Lakers owner Jerry Buss and why did he do the things that he did. The Buss relationship with Magic was absolutely unprecedented and caused all sorts of problems."

Johnson is nowhere near as popular as Jordan or Bryant or Jerry West or even Phil Jackson these days. His story, though, is quite amazing, Lazenby points out. "He has his failings, but that doesn't mean he isn't a great American. He is, just a publicly flawed one. All of that he has managed to overcome."

Lazenby said the response to this 800-page Magic Johnson book has been good but slow.

"Still, it has not sold as well as my Jordan or even my Kobe biography. As Johnson's representatives have said over the years, and warned me when I started this project, when Johnson announced he was HIV positive in 1991," it killed the hero," Lazenby said.

Already, the book like many others from Lazenby have been translated and appear on bookshelves around the globe.

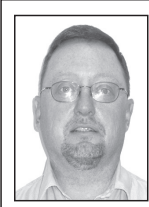
"The critical response from the New York Times was fabulous, but sales have been average. As my editor told me, sales of non-fiction books are slow across the industry. Fortunately, my Jordan book, Michael Jordan, The Life, is a locomotive of sorts. It came out in 2014 and has been selling like a champion around the globe for a decade," he said.

Locally, you can find the book at "Book No Further" owned by Doloris Vest. All of his books are available online (Amazon) or in any Barnes and Noble in America, plus many, many other bookstores.

Where does he go next? Are there more books in the wings? Lazenby said maybe, but he is working on three different projects, all with film ties.

"They are all moving down the bunny trail," he said. "The fun part for me is doing the interviews."

Storming the court, good and bad



From the Sidelines

Marty Gordon

The definition of storming the court is simple: "Actions that occur when a person or a crowd of people spectating a sporting event run onto the competition area, usually to celebrate or protest an incident, or sometimes as a publicity stunt. In most sporting events, this includes jumping over the rail or fencing to join hundreds, sometimes thousands on the field and/or court.

This all intensifies when the home team takes down a rival or in some cases a nationally-ranked opponent.

I think the action gives fans something of a celebratory time in history, but it does set up a dangerous situation for the opposing team and its staff.

This was seen just this past week when Duke lost to Wake Forest in men's basketball on Wake's home court. Duke player Kyle Filipowski was injured when he got caught in a "sea" of Wake fans. A fan seemed to collide with the Duke player as individuals poured onto the court.

Duke says Filipowski suffered an injured knee.

After the game, his coach Jon Scheyer asked, "When are we going to ban court storming?"

Of course, this conversation is nothing new.

In 2015, Kansas basketball coach Bill Self got trapped in a court storming at rival Kansas State after UK's loss.

In 2018, a West Virginia basketball player threw a punch at a Texas Tech fan who stormed the court.

Court storming has become human nature in college basketball, but it can also be a black eye, as you can see by the previous incidents.

There has to be a way to make it safer. While it's tough to stop, college leaders have to find a way and make changes for everyone.

"How many times does a player have to get into something where they get punched,

or they get pushed, or they (get) taunted right in their face? It's a dangerous thing," the Duke coach told the media.

"You look around the country, Caitlin Clark, something happens," Scheyer said. "And now Flip, I don't know what his status is going to be."

Iowa's Clark collided with a fan and fell to the floor during a similar incident during her team's loss to Ohio State.

Athletic directors and those from the NCAA must step up with some strict consequences instead of blowing off the issue.

In 2004, a high school volleyball player was trampled and is partially paralyzed.

In the recent Wake Forest incident, event staff and security had rehearsed procedures to protect the visiting team and game officials.

It just didn't work when you have security and event staff outnumbered and overwhelmed by the crowd.

The simple fix is to hire more staff, but that starts to be costly. Some schools have put up ropes along the court, but this is not going to stop hundreds of fans.

One of the best options might be a delay at the end of the game in order to delay the court storming. This would allow players and coaches an opportunity to exit the arena.

I would also propose eliminating the ceremonial handshake by players and coaches.

Beyond that, there's no simple solution.

There are some consequences, and the Southeastern Conference has stepped up to the plate.

The SEC fine for court storming one time is \$100,000. For the second offense, it's \$250,000. For the third, \$500,000. The fines are paid directly to the school that is "rushed upon," per an SEC official.

Currently, the ACC has no such penalty. Maybe they need to add it, or the NCAA should take it a step further and make it a much bigger fine across the board for all divisions and all sports.

Court storming may be a beloved college basketball tradition, but no tradition is worth preserving if it is inevitably going to lead to an ugly scene or brutal injury one day.

Court storming must not continue in its present state.

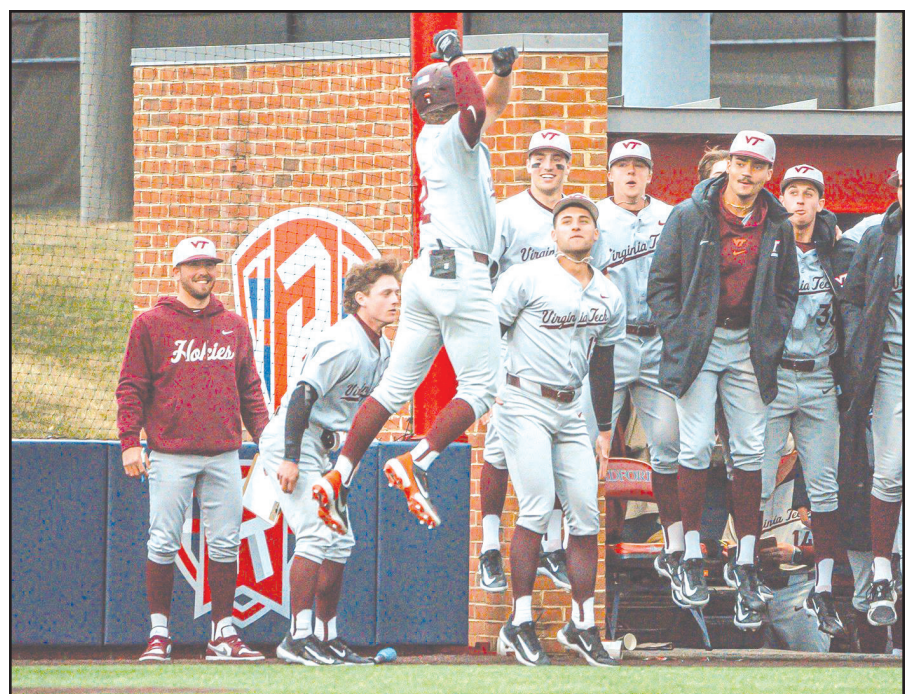


PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

The Hammerin' Hokies mashed four homers in this week's 14-4 win at Radford.

Hokies down RU in New River battle

Swinging for the fences on Tuesday against its New River Valley rival, the Virginia Tech baseball team combined to hammer four home runs and put up three crooked numbers at Radford as the Hokies won their fourth straight game in 14-4 fashion at Sherman Carter Memorial Stadium.

Chris Cannizzaro, Garrett Michel, Sam Tackett and Ethan Gibson accounted for Tech's four home run swings against the Highlanders — tying

for the most the squad has compiled during a game this season. Through eight games, the Hammerin' Hokies have mashed 21 team home runs (2.6 per game), powering three or more as a unit on five occasions.

Virginia Tech (6-2) busted out to the 5-0 lead after a half inning of play and never looked back, adding three runs during the third inning, one run during the fourth inning and five more runs during the fifth inning. Seven of the Hokies' nine offensive

starters landed in the hit column, producing all nine of the team's extra-base knocks.

Three batters into the ballgame, Tech was presented the 3-0 lead as Cannizzaro used the deepest part of the ballpark to drop his fourth home run of the season, scoring infielders Christian Martin and Carson DeMartini. With Michel and Eddie Micheletti Jr. aboard behind Cannizzaro, the

See Hokies, page 8

MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Auburn wins, advances to state semis



Auburn's Nick Millirons with the lay-up, will get fouled and score the three-point play in Tuesday's state quarterfinals in the 78-56 win over Chilhowie. Auburn advances to the state Class One semi's to face Honaker.



Drew Royal celebrates with his Auburn teammates after hitting a three pointer. Auburn pulled away from a stubborn Honaker squad in the second and continues their road to the state championships.

PHOTOS BY ASHLEY AKERS

Blacksburg's Wade Bland, Christiansburg's Kaleb Robinson All-River Ridge

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@mainstreetnewspapers.com

The River Ridge District has announced its end-of-the season all-star teams. Blacksburg's Wade Bland and Christiansburg's Kaleb Robinson were named to the boys' first team. Bland's teammates, Chanler Montgomery, Xavier Bland and Mason King, were given second-team honors. Blacksburg's Trey Saville and Christiansburg's Ian Velickovic were second teamers.

Christiansburg's Katy Hoover and Blacksburg's Riley Price were named to the girls' first team. Blacksburg's Byrnn Ferguson and Kailyn Brawley were second teamers. Kaleb Robinson of Christiansburg were named to the boys' All-Region 3D honorable mention. Blythe Akers of Christiansburg was named to the girls' All-Region 3D second team, and Katy Hoover was honorable

mention. The Pioneer District also announced its end-of-the-year all-district team with Eastern Montgomery's Camden Sutphin being named to the first team for boys. Teammates Cyrus Underwood and Talen Bruce were second team. On the girls' side of the court, Eastern Montgomery's Macie Akers, Hailey Akers and Caiden Roupe were all second team. Eastern Montgomery's Oliva Boone and Ajia McHone were honorable mention.

Hokies from page 7

Hokies added their fourth run after back-to-back fly balls by Sam Tackett and Ben Watson, tacking on their fifth game-opening run when Henry Cooke cracked his RBI double into the gap in right center field. Radford (2-5) scraped back for two runs against Tech starter Jeremy Neff (transfer from Richmond), who lasted two innings and picked up his 200th career strikeout. Conner Butler's double to left center field put two runners in scoring position for the Highlanders, both of whom came home on a pair of RBI groundouts by Zack Whitacre and Carson Bell. Virginia Tech separated itself from Radford by dialing up its home run power during the middle innings, building the 9-2 lead by the fourth inning. Michel opened the third inning with his fourth home run of the season, clearing the right field fence easily with his two-run shot that scored Cannizzaro. Two batters later, Tackett drove a solo shot to center field for his first homer of the season - a feat freshman shortstop Ethan Gibson would soon match at the start of the fourth inning. Tech brought 10 batters to the plate during its five-run fifth inning, witnessing three early doubles by Michel, Tackett (earning one RBI) and Watson (earning

two RBIs). DeMartini collected an RBI on his second of three walks during the afternoon, despite having to settle for the end of his eight-game hitting streak. Cannizzaro went two-for-four with four RBIs; Watson went three-for-three with two doubles and three RBIs; and Michel went 3-for-4 with three runs scored and two RBIs, finishing a triple short of hitting for the cycle for the second time spanning three games. Gibson also came away with his first two collegiate hits during his first collegiate start (fourth career game). Fifth-year right-hander Grant Manning carried the Hokies' offensive thunder onto the mound, tossing four innings in relief of Neff while racking up six strikeouts. Manning retired the Highlanders in order during both the fourth and fifth innings, answering Zack Whitacre's solo home run during the sixth inning with back-to-back, inning-ending strikeouts of Bell and Brady Whitacre. Matthew Siverling, Jacob Stretch and Jordan Vera mopped up the final three innings for Virginia Tech, uniting to allow a run on two hits while registering seven strikeouts.

Virginia Tech Athletics



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ACC

ACC announces new partnership with Dr. Pepper

Dr Pepper is the newest official sponsor of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) as part of a new multi-year agreement with the ACC and Disney Advertising. Through 2026, Dr Pepper will introduce several new sponsorship elements as the brand returns as an official ACC sponsor for the first time since 2019, having served as a media sponsor for the last four years. As the exclusive carbonated soft drink sponsor of the ACC, Dr Pepper and its sister brand, Crush, will be featured across ACC signage and branding at championship events. "It is tremendous to have Dr Pepper, which is an amazing brand, as an official partner of the ACC," said ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips, Ph.D. "Having Dr Pepper and Crush's support will directly benefit the ACC's soon-to-be 18 member institutions, 28 sponsored sports and more than 12,500 student-athletes. We look forward to building upon the incredible relationship with Dr Pepper and we

appreciate our partners at Disney and ESPN in further elevating the ACC." "Disney and Dr Pepper have a longstanding relationship, especially when it comes to supporting college athletics," said Marco Forte, SVP of Sales, Disney Advertising. "Whether it's on the field, on the court or through the ACC Network, Disney Advertising continues to prioritize and identify new, unique ways for brands to connect with audiences." As the premier sponsor of all ACC Championship events, Dr Pepper will have a prominent on-site presence throughout the season during ACC Network (ACCN) events and at the ACC Football Championship Game. Through a variety of branding, signage, and activation opportunities, Dr Pepper will play a vital role in providing hospitality, tickets, and unforgettable experiential moments to the ACC's biggest fans. Additionally, both Dr Pepper and

Crush will enjoy full access to ACC intellectual property and marks, integrating the conference's promotional rights into national marketing campaigns. During the college basketball season, Crush will sponsor the ACC Network's signature basketball show, Nothing But Net, featuring integrations throughout live games alongside an interactive fan voting feature, powered by Telescope, in select ACC evening shows. Across college football and basketball, Dr Pepper will retain its existing sponsorship activations, including: Presenting sponsor of weeknight college football on ACCN Sponsor of custom Dr Pepper Fansville Studio Updates Tuition Throw Halftime Promotion at ACC Football Championship Atlantic Coast Conference