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Blacksburg

Christiansburg

Saturday, May 11, 2024

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\$1.00

Christiansburg businessowner jailed for tax offenses

A Christiansburg businessman was sentenced Tuesday to 78 months in prison for evading the payment of employment taxes, filing false tax returns and obstructing the IRS.

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, between approximately January 2008 through December 2009, James C. Jones Jr. owned and operated Lifeline Ambulance Service Inc. He was responsible for paying to the IRS approximately \$200,000 in Social Security, Medicare and income taxes withheld from his

employees' wages. After Jones failed to do so, the IRS assessed the outstanding employment taxes against him personally.

When the IRS attempted to collect those taxes, Jones lied, claiming that he did not have the assets to pay the taxes. In fact, Jones owned several Caribbean beachfront condominiums, multiple foreign bank accounts and a classic "muscle" car collection. Jones later continued trying to thwart the IRS's collection efforts by filing false 2013 through 2018 tax returns that did not report the rental income



from his Caribbean properties and claimed false deductions.

After Jones received a subpoena for records of foreign

bank accounts from the Justice Department, he falsely reported that he did not have any responsive records, when in fact, he possessed those records as the director and owner of a number of foreign holding companies.

Jones's conduct caused a tax loss to the IRS of at least \$1.5 million.

In addition to his prison sentence, U.S. District Judge Michael F. Urbanski for the Western District of Virginia ordered Jones to serve three years supervised release and pay a fine of \$250,000 and \$394,508 in

restitution to the United States. Jones was also ordered to pay the costs of prosecution.

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division, U.S. Attorney Christopher Kavanaugh for the Western District of Virginia and Special Agent in Charge Kareem Carter of the IRS Criminal Investigation Division's Washington D.C. Field Office made the announcement.

U.S. District Court, Department of Justice

Warm Hearth Village residents honored with Quilts of Valor

BLACKSBURG — Warm Hearth Village (WHV) resident Cindy Rethwill, who received a Quilt of Valor (QOV), in 2022, and Jenny Fields of the New River Valley QOV quilters recently coordinated the nominations for six WHV residents and one volunteer to recognize them for serving in the armed services.

All seven quilts were made by the New River Valley QOV quilters.

A Quilt of Valor is a quality handmade quilt that can be quilted by hand or machine. The quilts are awarded to service members or Veterans who have been touched by war to say thank you for their service and sacrifice for this country. A QOV must be a specific size, have the appropriate label, be awarded and recorded. Including this ceremony, 379,981 quilts have been awarded.

The recipients were: Stefan Jaronski for serving in the U.S. Air Force; Joseph Flanigan, Pascal Hovis, Myrl Jones, Kim Kirk (WHV volunteer), and Sanford Ritchey for serving in the U.S. Army and Tyler Will for serving in the U.S. Navy.

"I was very proud to be recognized for what I have always



WHV residents and volunteer Quilt of Valor recipients pictured with their quilts.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WARM HEARTH VILLAGE

felt was a privilege to serve my country even in a small way," said Rethwill. "I wanted other Veterans in our village to receive the same honor. I was pleased with how many of our residents came to the ceremony," she added. Rethwill also recently orga-

nized a Veterans Social Group so Vets could gather monthly to talk to about their experiences. Rethwill explained, "For some this is the only form of therapy for PTSD, etc. they may ever get and it's helpful to have a sort of group therapy.

Recipient and resident Joe Flanigan has a family history of service.

"I didn't want this for myself," he said. "I was happy to receive this on behalf of my stepson and dad who were in the Navy, my uncle who was in the Army and

my grandfather who was in the Marine Corps. I am saving the quilt to give to my children," he added.

Warm Hearth Village congratulates everyone on receiving this honor and thanks all Veterans for their service.

Warm Hearth Village

Montgomery County School Board recognizes student achievements

Angelica Ramos
Contributing Writer

MONTGOMERY COUNTY- The Montgomery County School Board meeting May 7, 2024 was full of recognition for the exemplary students of Montgomery County Public Schools.

Starting off the meeting, Board Chair

Linwood Hudson recognized the Student School Board representatives. The students act as a voice for the students within Montgomery County. Each representative received a plaque commemorating their achievement. Congratulations to the Student Board Representatives: Alexandra Jobst (AHS), Lishu Wang (BHS), Jomana Amin (CHS) and Naomi Ramos-Mendoza (EMHS).

The Administrator of Gifted Programs presented the Montgomery County winners of the Virginia Stock Market Game. The Virginia Stock Market Game is part of Montgomery County's I-lead program

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Montgomery County Public Schools adopts new curriculum

Angelica Ramos
Contributing Writer

MONTGOMERY COUNTY- The Montgomery County School Board voted May 7, 2024 to adopt a new addition to Montgomery County Public Schools' Curriculum: the Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum.

Social and Emotional Learning, or SEL, is a research-based learning strategy that works to promote self awareness, social awareness, self management and more.

The Virginia Department of Education defines SEL as, "The process through which all young people and adults acquire

and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships and make responsible and caring decisions."

The SEL Adoption team consists of 49 members, where all 20 schools will be represented. At the elementary and middle school levels, the SEL company and resources will be from Move this World. For Montgomery County high schools, the company and resources will be from

See Curriculum, page 2

Floral expert lists favorites, shares how to make them last

Mother's Day means big day for floral industry

Mother's Day celebrations in the United States bring family together — and bring a lot of business to the floral industry, with flowers one of the most popular gifts.

"Mother's Day is one of the top floral holidays. It is in the running with Valentine's Day," said Barbara Leshyn, floral design instructor for Virginia Tech's School of Plant and Environmental Sciences. "Although floral sales on Valentine's Day can top Mother's Day, Valentine's Day has competition — for example, chocolates and teddy bears — but what do you get mom for Mother's Day? Flowers!"

Q: What are the most popular Mother's Day flowers?

"Interesting enough, bedding plants are hugely popular for Mother's Day gifts. It is planting season, and everybody has the gardening bug, especially moms.

Most often, these gifts are annuals meant to give color to flower beds and for building decorative pots. Favorites include geraniums, impatiens, hydrangea, coleus, snap dragons, celosia, and marigolds, to name a few. Most purchases are made based on what's 'mom's favorite.'"

Q: How about flowers selected for Mother's Day bouquets?

"With cut flowers, we have reached a point where flowers are very personalized. Roses, carnations, lilies, and peonies are historic favorites, but tulips, orchids, and Gerbera daisies are definitely in the running, too."

Q: What tips do you have for making bouquets last?

"Use a vase that is the proper size for your flowers. Height and the size of the mouth of the container are important. You want your flowers to sit a good two



A Mother's Day bouquet.

PHOTO COURTESY PEXELS VIA VIRGINIA TECH

inches above the rim of your vase. The wider the mouth of the vase, the more flowers you will need to fill it, and of course the smaller the mouth, the less flowers it will take to make the arrangement look full. Following the directions on the flower food packet, mix and fill

your vase with water. Remove all the leaves that would be below the rim of your vase. Using garden pruners, not scissors, cut the stems at a sharp angle before you place your flowers in the vase."

Mike Allen for Virginia Tech

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, May 11:

Fish Fry

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its May Fish Fry from 5 to 7 p.m. at Slusser's Chapel Picnic Shelter, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. Serving fish, fries and slaw; homemade desserts; and beverages. DJ Earl Brown will be spinning some hits to get our 2024 fry season off to a swinging start! Adults-\$12, children under 12-\$6, (under 3)-free, carry-outs-\$12. Held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan.

Spring Fever Handcrafted Market at Glencoe Mansion

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the grounds of Glencoe Mansion. Support local artisans, explore Glencoe Mansion and the Mary Draper Ingles Park, and view beautiful works of art. Over 20 vendors selling a variety of goods from jewelry to soaps. Snacks and drinks will be available for purchase from the Radford High School Performing Arts. Also, explore Glencoe Museum, the Mary Draper Ingles Cultural Heritage Park featuring the statue of Mary Draper Ingles and the New River Train Viewing Observatory.

Invasive species service project at Heritage Park

Community members are invited to help support a restoration project in Heritage Park along Toms Creek 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. Volunteers will be removing invasive bittersweet vines from around native trees in a two-acre section of the park. Please plan to arrive at the Heritage Park Gateway Parking and Trailhead by 9 a.m.; parking is limited, so carpooling is recommended. Bring your own preferred hand tools for vine removal (pruners, loppers, hand saws) and wear clothing that will be sufficiently protective against sun, ticks, thorns. Long pants, sleeves, close-toed shoes and gloves are recommended. Bring your own water bottle. Additional water and light snacks will be provided. For more information, contact Sustainability Manager, Carol Davis at sustainability@blacksburg.gov.

Monday, May 13:

Radford City Council meeting

The Radford City Council will hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Radford Municipal Building, 10 Robertson St., Radford. Citizens are invited to attend and allowed to speak at each meeting. 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, May 14:

Blacksburg Town Council meeting

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

Christiansburg Town Council meeting

Regular Town Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall (100 E. Main 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, May 16:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Family Italian Restaurant, 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the

United Daughters of the Confederacy are also invited to attend. Tiffany Lloyd will do a presentation on the Sam Davis Youth Camp. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Celebrate Bike to Work Day

Hop on your bike for your morning commute and take part in National Bike to Work Day! Join event sponsors from 7:30 – 9 a.m. for fun and refreshments at the tent located on Draper Road in downtown Blacksburg before you head to work. Program sponsored by the Town of Blacksburg, NRV Regional Commission, Ride Solutions, the New River Valley Bicycle Association (NRVBA) and Sustainable Transportation at Virginia Tech. May is National Bike Month. Everyone who tracks at least one bike trip to work via the ConnectingVA app (connectingva.agilemile.com) can enter to win an electric bike and helmet. Questions? Visit ridesolutions.org or call 540.639.9313.

On-going:

The Art of Happiness at The Montgomery Museum of Art & History

Join the Montgomery Museum of Art & History for their various Art of Happiness sessions during Mental Health Awareness Month. Remaining sessions May 11 and 18 at 2 p.m., as well as May 30 at 6 p.m., and will cover different art form variations such as Kinesthetics Painting, Clay, Bubble Prints, and Worry Stones. For more information, <https://montgomerymuseum.org/events/arttherapy/>.

Route 460 Business Corridor Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Study

The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization is seeking input for the Route 460 Business Corridor Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Study. The study will look at the segment of the corridor, from Industrial Park Road in Blacksburg to the Uptown Christiansburg Mall, for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements. Materials are posted online at www.newrivervalleympo.org and will be available for comment until May 9 at 5 p.m.

Montgomery County School Board receives update on CHS construction, textbooks at board meeting

Angelica Ramos

Contributing Writer

MONTGOMERY COUNTY- Montgomery County School Board called to order their meeting on May 7, 2024 at 7 p.m. to discuss budget, textbooks, and construction.

During Tuesday's school board meeting, the board voted unanimously to approve the proposed budget and any monthly bills as they stand.

The board received an update on the construction schedule at Christiansburg High School.

The construction for CHS is on track for ribbon cutting in August 2026. Dante Harris, Director of Facilities, presented an update on the trajectory of the Christiansburg High School renovation along with Randy Campbell, the project man-

ager, and Phillip Hash, who is the Health and Safety point person. The renovation is split into five milestone phases from now until August 2026. So far, the project has cost \$6.6 million for FY 2024 and the total spent thus far is \$12 million. The renovation team is keeping an eye on the budget and it has been on track for the original projections. Milestone One has already started with a classroom expansion in the form of an addition. By the end of summer 2024, work on the cafeteria and gym will begin. By the end of construction, CHS will not only have an addition, but classrooms and facilities, including bathrooms, will be updated as well.

Another focus during the May 7, 2024 meeting was addressing textbooks for English and Language Arts, Science and Science electives. The motion to ap-

prove ELA textbooks has been approved to be put on hold until the committee has price quotes for both textbook companies. Currently the bids for textbooks are between two companies Benchmark Advanced and Amplify and there is an updated quote for Benchmark Advanced but not Amplify. In order for the Montgomery County School Board to vote on either company, they need to be able to fully compare each bid.

"I was ready to make a decision this evening," Board Member Penny Franklin said, "until I heard the issue around pricing and the opportunity that wasn't given because that's a problem for me even though I absolutely agree; We need to be doing what's best for our students and I appreciate you all for conveying that to our teachers, but when I get a presentation in front of me, despite what other further negotiations there may be; I don't have the information I need."

The board moved to hold a special meeting to review both bids and vote at a later date.

Approval for new science textbooks for the county was approved during the meeting. These textbooks are for larger sciences, not any science electives that are taught by a handful of teachers in each school.

Adam Simpson, Director of Secondary Education, presented a timeline for new science elective textbooks for Montgomery County Public Schools. Because these classes are smaller and typically taught by a few teachers, the committees for each class are smaller than say for ELA or the larger Sciences as a whole. Simpson explained that each committee for the science elective textbooks are made up of one administrator, one teacher and a parent. This item on the meeting's agenda was categorized as a presentation, so there will be a vote on this matter at a later date.

Curriculum from page 1

Ripple Effects. These programs contain professional learning and development for educators like classroom instruction support, interactive videos for real-world learning and self-directed learning, and community engagement learning and tools. The curriculum will change how the school day is structured in terms of period or block scheduling, but Montgomery County educators say they see a need for this new curriculum. The core values of the SEL curriculum were already things stated in the Montgomery County School Board's Strategic Plan for the district and were highlighted as key focuses for the next six years.

"I believe any tool we can use to help our children understand themselves and those around them is valuable to the dis-

trict," Board Member Penny Franklin said, "Helping other students recognize and advocate for folks who may not be able to advocate for themselves, I think, is important and actually is something we ask our students to do: help support each other."

"In my opinion," Board Member Dr. Steven Rountree said, "teaching kids how to react to their feelings is a good thing. Teaching them that there are a variety of feelings is a good thing."

"It might not fix everything," Board Chair Linwood Hudson said, "but I see it as a positive step in a good direction."

The adoption of Social and Emotional Learning curriculum was approved by vote with five for and two opposed.

Call for artists: Agriculture themed show



Painting by Sue Hossack

CHRISTIANSBURG - The Montgomery Museum of Art and History's next Art+History theme show is "Agriculture."

There will be exhibits on historical agricultural artifacts, including an antique tractor on the lobby floor of the museum. Registration for the show is free for museum members and \$20 for non-members. For details and registration information log onto montgomerymuseum.org.

Any 2D or 3D artworks representing anything to do with agricultural themes, and that are family-appropriate will be accepted. This is a non-juried show. However, the museum reserves the right to reject art that does not adhere to these conditions. Artists may submit up to three pieces. This show will be installed following the ArtsNRV Market on June 7 and 8 and will be on view during Heritage Day on August 24.

Montgomery Museum of Art and History

Subscribe today!

540-389-9355

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Town of Blacksburg launches Toms Creek Basin Planning Study

BLACKSBURG – The Town of Blacksburg is kicking off the Toms Creek Basin (TCB) Planning Study, an effort that will engage the public and local stakeholders and guide a strategy for the future of TCB.

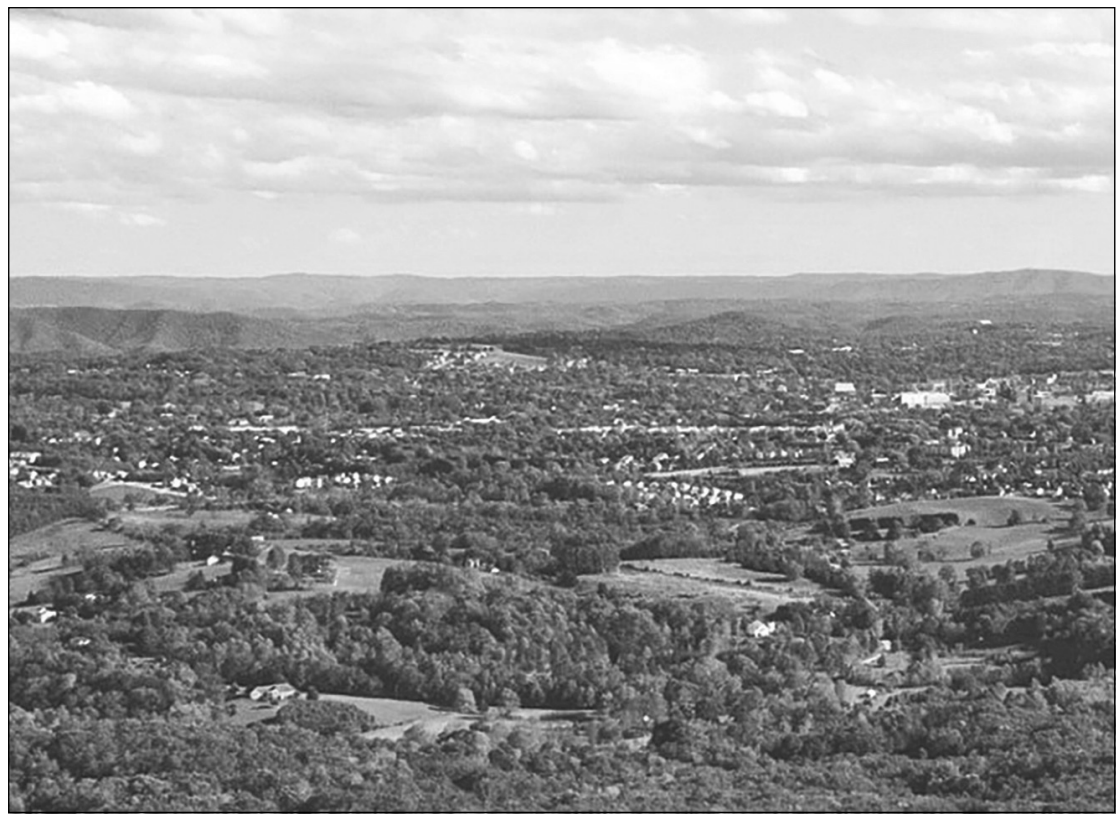
The study will take approximately one year to complete and will be led by planning and community development firm Development Strategies, in close partnership with a steering committee and town staff. Throughout the project, the team will talk extensively with the community in a variety of ways and use data to evaluate key TCB characteristics, including open space and conservation, ecology and environmental elements, past and future developments, recreational amenities, transportation, and infrastructure.

“This is an important moment that will greatly affect the long-term future of the TCB,” said Toms Creek resident and Steering Committee member Bob Freyman. “Residents in the basin and the town at-large need

to provide input to be sure the results of the study reflect their values and desires for the TCB.”

The kickoff started this week with a tour of the basin and included a presentation to town council and the planning commission. There will be numerous public engagement opportunities throughout the project, both online and in-person. These activities and conversations will allow the town to gather community insight that will ensure future actions and policies align with a common vision for TCB.

“As Blacksburg continues to develop over time it is critical that the town takes proactive steps to create a clear vision for the Toms Creek Basin that aligns with our community and town council values for the area,” said Deputy Town Manager Matt Hanratty. “There are many competing interests in the TCB including the need for housing, recreation, environmental preservation, open space management, and connectivity. It’s important that these are bal-



Toms Creek Basin as seen from Brush Mountain

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSBURG

anced in a plan that allows the town to grow sensibly in the basin. This study will be the foundation for that growth moving forward and provide a roadmap for decades to come.”

TCB comprises approximately 4,000 acres west of the US Route 460 Bypass and north of Prices Fork Road. The area was

annexed into the Town in 1973. When surveyed in 1996, residents stressed the importance of preserving the rural character, open spaces, and scenic views of TCB. Blacksburg Town Council re-affirmed this sentiment in 2022 at its biannual retreat.

For more information about the TCB Planning Study, to

ask a question, or make comments visit the Let’s Talk Blacksburg project page or reach out to Project Manager and Town Planner Kinsey O’Shea at KO-Shea@blacksburg.gov or 540-443-1304.

Town of Blacksburg

MCPS superintendent discusses “Graduate with a Plan” program and Exemplar Award

Angelica Ramos
Contributing Writer

MONTGOMERY COUNTY-Superintendent Dr. Bernard F. Bragen Jr., during the Montgomery County School Board meeting May 7, 2024, spoke of his appreciation for Montgomery County teachers, discussed Harding Avenue Elementary School’s Exemplar Award and highlighted Montgomery County’s Graduate with a Plan program.

With the week of May 6, 2024 to May 10, 2024 being Teacher Appreciation Week, Dr. Bragen began his portion of the

school board meeting thanking Montgomery County educators for the work that they do.

“It shouldn’t just be at one point of the year where we thank them and acknowledge them but this is Teacher Appreciation Week,” Bragen said. “I, personally, as school superintendent, want to say how proud I am to lead a division with so many dedicated and passionate and compassionate professionals and I just simply want to say thank you.”

Harding Avenue Elementary School received an award from the Virginia Board of Education and became one of 37 schools

in the commonwealth to be recognized. Harding Avenue Elementary School was awarded an exemplar award of highest achievement.

“To get this award,” Dr. Bragen said, “you have to have assessments for schools that exceed board established performance requirements. So, great amount of respect and credit to the teachers, administrators, and professionals in that building for all that they have done to ensure that those scores were where they are, and our children are provided with the greatest opportunities to be successful. That’s something we should be

very proud of.”

A unique program that Montgomery County offers students is the Graduate with a Plan program. Through this program, Montgomery County Public Schools will pay for up to two college applications in order to help encourage students to go on to higher education if that’s what they wish for themselves. Students are encouraged from elementary school to begin thinking of a plan for graduation. Students may go on to higher education, join the military, enroll in a trade school or join the workforce. The goal of this program is to ensure Mont-

gomery County students have support for their graduation plans and choices.

“We certainly understand that many colleges do not require application fees,” Dr. Bragen said, “and that some families qualify for fee waivers, but we would never want a student to be discouraged from applying for college due to a fee. We are proud to be a part of this process.”

Currently, out of 677 seniors throughout all four high schools in the county, 287 college applications have been submitted. Congratulations to the Class of 2024 for Montgomery County.

Marketplace ourvalley.org

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

Legals - Montgomery County

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ELECTION INFORMATION

June 18, 2024
Republican Primary for US Senate

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, May 28, 2024

In-Person Early Voting at the MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF ELECTIONS

1546 North Franklin Street, Christiansburg, VA. May 3 – June 14, 2024 from 8:30am – 5pm

The office will be closed for the holiday on May 27, 2024.

In addition, we will be open from 9am to 5pm Saturday, June 8, 2024 and Saturday, June 15, 2024

Note: The last day qualified voters can apply for an absentee ballot by mail: Friday, June 7, 2024 by 5:00 PM

A Ballot Drop Box will be available inside the Montgomery County Office of Elections from May 3, 2024 – June 18, 2024, during normal business hours.

For this election ONLY, if your polling location is Belview Elementary School, Precinct B-3, you will have a Temporary change. Your polling place will be the Belmont Christian Church, Precinct B-2, located at 1500 Peppers Ferry Rd, NW, Christiansburg. This is due to major HVAC renovations at the school.

Legals - Montgomery County

The Constitution of Virginia requires that in order to be qualified to vote in the General & Primary Election you must be a citizen of the United States, be eighteen years of age on or before the next General Election, have domicile and a place of abode in Montgomery County and that you be registered in the precinct in which you reside.

An acceptable ID will be required when you vote. A voter may show either voter registration confirmation documents, valid Virginia Driver’s License, valid United States Passport, or any other identification issued by the Commonwealth, one of its political subdivisions, or the United States; any valid student identification card issued by any institution of higher education located in the Commonwealth or any private school located in the Commonwealth; any valid employer identification card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by an employer of the voter in the ordinary course of the employer’s business or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter.

Contact the Montgomery County Office of Elections if you have any questions at 540-382-5741 or the Department of Elections at elections.virginia.gov.

Connie Viar

Director of Elections/General Registrar

Legals - City of Radford

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED PLAN OF FINANCE AND REFUNDING REVENUE BOND REFINANCING BY THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF RADFORD, VIRGINIA FOR THE BENEFIT OF PROVIDENT GROUP – RADFORD PROPERTIES LLC

Notice is hereby given that the Economic Development Authority of the City of Radford, Virginia (the “Authority”), whose address is 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141, will conduct a public hearing on the application of Provident Group – Radford Properties LLC, a Virginia limited liability company, including any subsidiaries, affiliates, successors or assigns thereof (the “Borrower”), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Provident Resources Group Inc., a Georgia nonprofit corporation (“PRG”), whose address is 5565 Bankers Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, for the issuance by the Authority of up to \$30,000,000 of its refunding revenue bonds (the “Bonds”) at one time or from time to time in one or more series as part of a plan of finance to assist the Borrower in financing or refinancing certain of the costs of (a) refunding the outstanding Economic Development Authority of the City of Radford, Virginia, Revenue Bonds (Provident

Legals - City of Radford

Group – Radford University Hotel Project), First-Tier Series 2021A-1 (Taxable), the Economic Development Authority of the City of Radford, Virginia, Revenue Bonds (Provident Group – Radford University Hotel Project), First-Tier Series 2021A-2, and the Economic Development Authority of the City of Radford, Virginia, Revenue Bonds (Provident Group – Radford University Hotel Project), Second-Tier Series 2021B (collectively, the “Refunded Bonds”), which financed a portion of the cost of the acquisition, construction and equipping of an approximately 124-key hotel consisting of approximately 88,000 gross square feet, including approximately 4,000 gross square feet of conference space (the “Hotel Facilities”), and the funding of a debt service reserve fund, capitalized interest fund, operations reserve fund, working capital fund, and costs of issuance fund; and (b) the costs of issuance relating to the Bonds (collectively, the “Refunding Project” and the “Plan of Finance”). The Hotel Facilities are open for business to the public, known as The Highlander Hotel Radford, and located at 600 Tyler Avenue, in the City of Radford, Virginia 24142. The Hotel Facilities are owned, operated and principally used by the Borrower for the benefit of Radford University (the “University”) and the Radford University Foundation, Incorporated, a Virginia nonstock corporation, or a wholly owned subsidiary thereof (collectively, the “Foundation”) and for the purpose of lessening the burdens of the City of Radford, Virginia (the

Legals - City of Radford

“City”), by fostering economic development and promoting the public good and general welfare of the City. All or a portion of the Bonds are expected to be issued as “qualified 501(c)(3) bonds” as defined in Section 145 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”). The Borrower is a disregarded entity for federal tax purposes, and each of PRG and the Foundation is exempt from the payment of federal income tax under Section 501(a) of the Code, as an entity organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. When all of the Bonds have been repaid, ownership of the Hotel Facilities will be transferred to the Foundation for the benefit of the University.

The issuance of the Bonds as requested by the Borrower will not constitute a debt or pledge of the faith and credit of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the City of Radford, Virginia, or any other political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, including the Authority, and neither the faith and credit nor the taxing power of the Commonwealth of Virginia or any political subdivision thereof will be pledged to the payment of the Bonds. This notice is intended to comply with the public notice requirements of Section 147(f) of the Code. The public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, will be held at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Time, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on May 23, 2024 before the Authority, in the Council Chambers of the City Administrative Building located at 10 Robertson

Legals - City of Radford

Street, Radford, Virginia 24141. Any person interested in the plan of finance, the issuance of the Bonds or the location or nature of the proposed Hotel Facilities may appear at the hearing and present his or her views, or submit written comments prior to the hearing to the attention of the Authority in care of Kim Repass, Economic Development Director, City of Radford, 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141. The hearing shall provide the fullest opportunity for the expression of opinion, for argument on the merits, and for the introduction of documentary evidence pertinent to the plan of finance, the issuance of the proposed Bonds and the refinancing of the Hotel Facilities.

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Classified Advertising Drivers

Expert offers homeowners safety advice for yard equipment care to prevent injuries

Most equipment used in lawn care and landscaping is simple and straightforward to use. However, if it is not operated carefully, it has the potential for accidents and injuries.

“Proper lawn equipment safety is not just about protecting yourself, but also those around you,” said Mike Goatley, a professor in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences and a Virginia Cooperative Extension specialist. “By following safety guidelines, you not only prevent injuries but also ensure the longevity of your equipment. Proper handling and maintenance not only protect you from harm but also enhance efficiency and effectiveness.”

To make the equipment safer and to reduce the number of mishaps, it's important to follow

general safety rules:

Receive training prior to operating a machine.

Use personal protective equipment and protective clothing for personal protection.

Never allow additional riders on machines. Most machines are designed only for one person — the operator.

Ensure that no bystanders are present.

Refuel the equipment only when its engine is turned off and cold.

Turn off the engine and remove the switch key when the equipment is parked or left unattended, or when troubleshooting, unclogging, and repairing a machine.

Make sure that all safety guards and shields are in place and intact prior to operating a machine.

Equip all tractors with

rollover protective structures.

Display a slow-moving vehicle emblem on lawn care equipment that is taken on roadways.

Maintain proper speed.

Avoid operations on steep slopes to prevent equipment rollover.

Additionally, personal protective equipment is important for lawn equipment because it helps prevent injuries and ensures the user's safety. Wearing personal protective equipment while operating lawn equipment can reduce the risk of accidents and long-term health issues, Goatley says.

Personal protective equipment includes: Protective glasses or goggles to shield the eyes from debris; hard hats to protect from bumps and falling objects; gloves to protect hands from cuts, abrasions, and skin irritations; and protective devices for ears.

Continuous exposure to high noise levels can cause hearing loss, and workers should be protected from outdoor power equipment noise. Hearing loss may



PHOTO COURTESY PEXELS VIA VIRGINIA TECH

Most equipment used in lawn care and landscaping is simple and straightforward to use, but it has the potential for accidents and injuries if it is not operated carefully.

occur when one is exposed to noise levels of 85 decibels or greater continuously. The sound level and the sound pressure level double for every 3 dB and 6 dB rise in sound level, respectively.

The safe exposure period halves for every 5 dB rise in sound level. In other words, if the allowable exposure time to a noise level of 90 dB is eight hours per day, it goes down to four hours per day when one is exposed to a noise level of 95 dB.

Don't operate yard or lawn equipment if: you have health issues, extreme weather conditions exist, air quality is poor (and you lack proper protective

equipment) or sun exposure is extreme.

While it is impossible to control the weather, it is possible to protect the human body. When working in the cold, one should dress appropriately to keep warm. For example, bulky clothes, such as a snowmobile suit, may not be appropriate when working in the cold.

In hot, humid conditions, people may lose a significant amount of water due to excessive perspiration. Under these conditions, people must drink enough water to compensate for the loss and to maintain normal body temperature. Working in high temperature and

high humidity conditions may also cause the body to overheat quickly due to reduced evaporative cooling resulting from reduced sweat evaporation.

It is also important to wear protective clothing for the sun and, if allergic to bees, wasps, hornets, and/or yellow jackets, to take safety precautions.

“Do everything you can to protect yourself from the harmful effects of repeated exposure to the sun, especially the generous use of sunscreen,” Goatley says.

For additional information, view Virginia Cooperative Extension's publications on lawn equipment safety.

Virginia Tech

News Messenger

Established 1869

(540) 389-9355
P.O. Box 1125 • Salem, VA 24153

USPS 016-490 Online: www.ourvalley.org

Michael Showell, *Publisher*

Heather Bell, *Editor*

hbell@mainstreetnewspapers

Aila Boyd, *Executive Editor*

aboyd@ourvalley.org

Wendi Craig, *Advertising Consultant*

advertise@ourvalley.org

Give us your view:

editor@ourvalley.org

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

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

School Board

from page 1

curriculum. The program gives students \$100,000 to invest throughout the school year. They may also invest in NASDAQ and the New York Stock Exchange. Their investments are meant to mirror the daily gains and losses of today's market. The top elementary team statewide for the year was won by Falling Branch Elementary School students. They grew their \$100,000 to \$125,113.19. That team was led by Brenda Mash. Congratulations to the team members from Falling Branch Elementary School: Gwen Herzog, Gavin Valines and Watson Hughes.

The student who was named this year's state winner of the Invest Right competition was Franklin Lou from Harding Avenue Elementary School with help from educator, DAnn Dickerson.

The students who earned state awards were recognized Friday, May 10, 2024 at the annual Stock Market games luncheon at the Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond.

Montgomery County Seniors of the Month were presented by Adam Simpson, the director of secondary education, and each high school's principal: David Herd (AHS), Chris Stewart (BHS), Shane Guynn

(CHS) and Todd Lewis (EMHS). Congratulations to Montgomery County Seniors of the Month for the month of May: Kasey Rosenbaum (AHS), Evelyn Covey (BHS), Karly Bush (CHS) and Tyler Atkinson (EMHS). Some students who were Seniors of the Month were recognized at the May 7, 2024 meeting as well because they were unable to attend April's recognition. Congratulations to Brandon Chaney (AHS), Ava Landers (CHS) and Drew Smith (EMHS) for the month of April.

Coach Mary-Louise Maas of the Blacksburg High School Scholastic Bowl Team, presented on the achievements of her team. The Blacksburg High School Scholastic Bowl Team is composed of over 20 students. The team practiced four hours a week and competed in 18 competitions (some full day). For the majority of their competitions, the team brought home a first or second place trophy (sometimes both). The Blacksburg High School Scholastic Bowl Team were undefeated in their postseason sectionals, regionals and state tournaments. They played 14 rounds undefeated. At the end of the month, the Bowl Team will be going to Atlanta, Georgia for the National Competition where

they will play and compete against approximately 200 schools from throughout the country.

Blacksburg High School recognized 12 students whose research received honors or awards after being presented at the Virginia Blue Ridge and Highlands Regional Science Fairs as well as the Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research Symposium. Several students advanced to the state and national levels. Students design an independent research project on a topic that is of interest to them and spend a year researching it. They present their findings in a variety of forms: essays, poster presentations and conference format presentations. This research is part of the Dual-Enrollment Program through New River Community College and is also part of the AP Capstone Diploma Program. Two students from Blacksburg High School will be going to Los Angeles next week to participate in the International Science Fair.

The Montgomery County School Board applauded all the students present at the May 7, 2024 meeting for their outstanding work and exemplary achievements.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	
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CLUES ACROSS

- Easy as 1-2-3
- Goat and camel hair fabric
- A women undergarment
- British bathrooms
- Assemblages of parts into one entity
- Semitic fertility god
- Dull & uninteresting
- Yemen capital
- Stare impertinently
- Banished persons
- Heart failure & energy supplement
- Reduction in force
- Women's ___ movement
- Polynesian wrapped skirt
- Double-reed instruments
- Own (Scottish)
- Summer window dressings
- Many not ands

CLUES DOWN

- Vestment worn by priests
- The trunk of a tree
- Transmission line cable
- Freshwater duck genus
- Bulk storage container
- Oil obtained from flowers
- Shopping containers
- Abnormal breathing
- Brew
- Bake eggs in their shells
- Serviceable
- A person in the navy
- A child's slight injury
- Fain
- Supports trestletree
- Parian Chronicle discovery site
- Greek famous for fables
- Farcical afterpiece
- Dispatches by mail

CLUES ACROSS

- Paddle
- Being a single unit
- Silly behavior
- Insecticide
- A blank area
- Reduces stress
- Morning moisture
- Tear away roughly
- Elevated
- Cristobalite
- Baseball's Ruth
- Indian monetary unit
- Contest of speed
- Having a slanted direction
- Gross receipts
- A river in NE Spain
- The brain and spinal cord (abbr.)
- Dyneq Inc. on NYSE
- Japanese monetary unit

CLUES DOWN

- Hall of Fame (abbr.)
- Aah
- Unnaturally pale
- Before
- Fixed in one's purpose
- Madames
- Frosts
- City drains
- Baseball playoff
- Cruise
- Steeple
- Precipitation
- A unit of two
- Viewed
- Taxis
- 4840 square yards
- London radio station
- Perform work regularly
- Longest geological time

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OBITUARIES

Reinhold, Peggy Lou Thomas

Peggy Lou Thomas Reinhold, formerly of Dublin, passed away April 26, 2024 in Bridgewater, Va. at age 100.

Peggy grew up in Clearwater Fla. and graduated from Florida State College for Women in 1945 with a degree in Psychology. She received her master's degree in Christian Education from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, where she met and married the Rev. Robert William [Bob] Reinhold. The Reinholds served as missionaries in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 1949-1974 where Peggy worked with many programs educating women. On returning to the States, Peggy taught kindergarten in Washington Co., Va. and Preschool in Paris, Missouri where Bob led Presbyterian churches. They later retired to Claytor Lake. Peggy was an avid student of the Bible and often taught the Bible lessons for Presby-



terian Women Circles. She was also a faithful member of PEO, an education-based organization for women, and took special interest in their programs for international students. In her retirement, Peggy spent many hours processing canceled postage stamps for "stamps for Missions" to help fund education for evangelists in the Congo. She moved to Harrisonburg, and then to Bridgewater in recent years as her health declined.

Peggy is survived by her five children, Bill Reinhold (Ginnie) of Bridgewater, Va.; Tim Reinhold (Kay) of Tampa, Fla.; Beth Gold (Ron) of Pittsboro, N.C.; Ruth Low Reinhold (Russ) of Albuquerque, N.M.; and Martha Kincaid (Scott) of Radford, along with 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

A family memorial service will be held at New Dublin Presbyterian Church at a later date.

Long, Juanita Semones

Juanita Semones Long, 97, passed away Sunday, May 5, 2024, at her home in Radford.

She was a member of The Presbyterian Church of Radford. She was preceded in death by her parents, John Forest and Nora Kenley Semones; and her husband, John Carl Long, Jr.

Survivors include her sons, Carl, Garry and Cameron Long; granddaughter, Alyssa Long; Home & Crematory in Radford.



and many other relatives and friends.

The family received friends Thursday, May 9, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed with Pastor Morgan Whitfield officiating. Interment followed in West View Cemetery in Radford.

The Long family is in the care of Mullins Funeral

Send community news and photos to
communitynews@ourvalley.org

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

St. Peter the Apostle Anglican Church, 230 W. First St., Christiansburg, VA. Fr Peter Geromel OHI Th.M., Vicar, Fr. Alex Darby, "Associate", 540-382-0432/540-270-9166. Sundays: 8:00 am & 10:00 am Holy Eucharist followed by Christian Education and refreshments. Holy Communion most Thursdays at 12Noon, other Holy Days as announced. Traditional services use the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and 1940 Hymnal. Handicapped accessible. All are welcome. Come worship with us! Website: www.stpetersacc.org. 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 Sonafrank, 1-336-583-4822. Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Wednesdays. Website: www.christiansburgcob.org. A loving family, fueled by the Holy Spirit, grounded in God's Word, and delivering Jesus forgiveness and love to all people. Come as you are... you are welcomed!

(DOC - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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

ECKANKAR

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

EPISCOPAL

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

Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

ON GUARD

Read 1 Chronicles 7:1 through 9:44

It was a great privilege and honor to be one of the men chosen to be gatekeepers at the entrance to God's house. Even more awesome was the responsibility of four principal gatekeepers who guarded the rooms and the treasures.

They would spend the night stationed around the house of God, because they had to guard it; and they had charge of the key for opening it each morning (1 Chronicles 9:27).

No doubt some nights must have felt especially long, but falling asleep while on duty was not an option. The gatekeepers needed to remain alert to any sound or movement that might indicate the treasures they guarded were in danger.

Today many churches install electronic security systems, although they probably rely on a person to make sure all the windows and doors are locked each night. But when it comes to guarding that which is most important—our children and youth—nothing can replace the prayers of parents and the church family.

Challenge for Today: Ask the Lord for the name of a young person He wants you to safeguard with prayer.

Quicklook: 1 Chronicles 9:22-27

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

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. Celebrate Word and Sacrament as we worship with varied liturgy, hymns and music. Join our inclusive community in person or online Sundays at 10:00 am (youtube.com/@OSLCCeburg), followed by refreshments and fellowship. Ministries include Bible study, choir, food ministry, and crafters. Little Free Pantry and Library available 24-7 by the parking lot. Parent's Morning Out offers faith-based activities and play for children 16 month - 5 years select weekdays. Wheelchair accessible. Learn how you may contribute to our ministries at www.oslc-cburg.org. 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@stmcl.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 11:00a.m. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com.

Christian Metho 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

OBITUARIES

Epperly, Lois Wimmer

Lois Wimmer Epperly, 92, of Christiansburg, passed away Sunday, May 5, 2024.

She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Charlie Epperly; her parents, Edgar and Claude Wimmer; and siblings Lamar Wimmer, Harless Wimmer, Marie Wimmer, Daphne McNeil, Winston Wimmer, Wesley Wimmer, Ray Wimmer, and Dorothy Meredith. She is survived by her son, Terry Ep-



perly and fiancé Debbie Moser; and daughter Lisa Marie and husband Denie Marie.

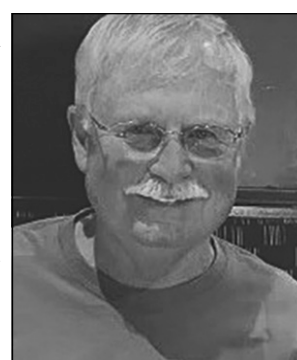
A private graveside service will be held at Huffville Cemetery.

Memorials in her memory can be made to Huffville Cemetery Fund, 1004 Huffville Rd, NE, Pilot, VA 24138 or Gentiva Hospice, 5330 Peters Creek Rd, D1, Roanoke, VA 24019.

Sims, Jimmy Albert

Jimmy Albert Sims, 76, of Radford, passed away Saturday, May 4, 2024. He was preceded in death by his parents, Albert Marion and Lena Albert Sims; and his canine companion, Cooper.

Jimmy is survived by his loving wife of 50 years, Tina Marie Young Sims; daughter, Amy Sims Bond; grandchildren, Devin Bryce Bond and Ryder Owen Bond; brother and sister-in-law, Rickey Sims (Joyce); sisters-in-law, Christine Akers and Vickie Carden; special friends, Justin



Johnson and Javier "Wedo" Barocio; and many other family members and friends.

The family received friends Friday, May 10, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed with Pastor Timothy Worles officiating. Interment with full military honors followed in the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin.

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

Gilmore, Donna Marie Wright

Donna Marie Wright Gilmore, 74, went to be with her Heavenly Father Saturday, May 4, 2024, at Radford Health and Rehab.

She was so loved and will be missed by her family, church, and her many friends.

Donna was born in Radford Feb. 19, 1950, to parents, Robert H. and Gaynell Beamer Wright. She graduated from Radford High School and attended Radford College. She met her husband of 54 years, Guy Gilmore, on a date set up by her Aunt Gilda Williams and they married in 1969.

Donna gave birth to two children, Chadwick Alton Gilmore in 1972 and Laura Marie Gilmore Robinson in 1975. Donna devoted her life to raising her children. After being a stay-at-home Mom for many years, she entered the workforce when her children got older at Legg Mason with family members. She worked there for over 20 years utilizing her sweet spirit and helpful mindset with the clients there.

One of Donna's greatest joys was being a GG to her five grandchildren, Hunter, Clayton, Kyle, David and Hope. In 2011-2012 she stepped in to help raise Laura's children, Kyle and Hope, while Laura was at UVA hospital with David who was fighting cancer. That could not have been easy but she did it with grace and love, supporting all of us like she always did.

In retirement Donna not only loved



being a GG, but she was active at the Radford Clothing Bank and loved cooking for family and friends when they were going through a hard time. If you were ever on the receiving end of one of her home cooked meals delivered to your door you were indeed blessed. She loved others so well and her gift of thoughtfulness and hospitality inspired us all.

Donna was predeceased by her parents, Robert H. and Gaynell Wright; brother, Robbie Wright; and in-laws, Russell and Katherine Gilmore. She is survived by her husband of 54 years, Guy; and children, Chad (Annette) of Moneta, Va., and Laura (Mike) of Marion, Va. She had five grandchildren, Hunter Ison (Karleigh), Clayton Gilmore, Kyle Robinson, David Robinson, and Hope Robinson. Donna also had many special friends, extended family members, and church family.

Donna's celebration of her beautiful life was held Wednesday, May 8, 2024, at Calvary Baptist Church. Graveside services were held immediately after the service in Highland Memory Gardens in Dublin.

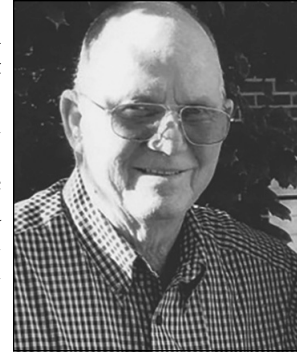
In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Radford Clothing Bank, 2000 West St., Radford, VA 24141, as Donna loved serving there with her friends.

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

Larry Steven Wrenn, 80, of Christiansburg died Monday, May 6, 2024, at his home.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Maxine Helms Wrenn; mother, Beatrice Wrenn; a sister, Sandra Loan; son, John Steven Wrenn; and stepson, Tim Huff.

Larry was a lifetime member of Montgomery County Moose Lodge and a longtime employee of the Town of Christiansburg. Larry was also very active with the Christiansburg Recreation Department as a coach, umpire, and referee for numerous years, influencing many children's lives through



sports. He is survived by his daughter, Tammy Sartini; stepdaughter, Roxanna (Terry) Garrett; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; sister, Lois Loan; brothers, Bill Wrenn and Jack Wrenn (Dee); sisters-in-law, Hilda Helms, Lelia Helms, and Vicki Helms; many nieces, nephews and special friends, Jerry and Delores Gilley.

Graveside services were conducted Thursday, May 9, 2024 in the Roselawn Memorial Gardens with Rev. Neal Turner officiating. The family received friends before the service at McCoy Funeral Home.

Wright, Sylvia Christine Austin

Sylvia Christine Austin Wright, 95, of Radford, passed away Monday, May 6, 2024, at her son's home in Macon, Ga.

She was a longtime member of The Presbyterian Church of Radford and retired from the Radford City Clerk of Courts Office. She was preceded in death by her parents, Albert "Bunk" and Lucille Kirby Austin; husband, Joseph O. Wright; daughters, Emily Wright and Deborah Wright; and siblings, Iris Irene Cox, Ernestine Miller, Lottie Virginia Marasco, William Albert "Bunk" Austin, and Mary Jolene Cox.

Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law, Russ and Jeanne Wright of Ma-



con, Ga.; granddaughters, Sarah and Allison; grandson, Brian; great grandchildren, Julianna, Gaiya, Faye and Jayden; and many other relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 11, 2024, at The Presbyterian Church of Radford with Rev. Robin Williamson and Rev. Morgan Whitfield officiating. Interment will follow in West View Cemetery in Radford. The family received friends Friday evening at the funeral home.

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

Researchers search for solutions to construct a comprehensive workforce

At the perimeter of any construction site, you will find large fences designed to keep construction materials in and danger out.

But those aren't the barriers that keep more people from joining the construction workforce.

Virginia Tech researchers say it's the invisible barriers that need to be deconstructed. While many in both industry and academia tout best practices to recruit and retain a more diverse crew, Myers-Lawson School of Construction researchers have found the "perfect answer" doesn't exist — yet.

"A lot of companies present what they're doing as a best practice, and yet in some cases, they don't even know if it works within their own organization because the data isn't there," said Josh Iorio, assistant director for Myers-Lawson. "There's a ton of space here for improvement."

With more than a decade of experience at Virginia Tech, Iorio has seen efforts to grow the construction industry in many shapes and sizes. In 2014, he began to join the university's InclusiveVT efforts. During that time, he coordinated a speaker series, poster projects, and mentorship programs to boost knowledge about diversity and inclusion in construction education. But in the industry, he heard stories of women being treated differently, people being harassed, and racial slurs.

"I'm sitting across from parents with concerns about their daughter going into the industry. Initially, I told them things were changing and getting better and that's the old industry, but I didn't know," said Iorio. "I saw it as being unethical to basically say things are getting better without any evidence."

Iorio said that honesty set him on a path to take a real look at representation in the industry. Through years of leading inclusion and diversity efforts within the school of construction, Iorio saw a further disconnect between industry and academic efforts. Both acknowledged problems such as a lack of women, a lack of a diverse and robust workforce, and low retention rates, but there was little to no research about how to fix the problems.

Merging theory and practice

Enter building construction Assistant Professor Alireza Shojaei. While the majority of his work is focused on revolutionizing the construction industry through digital innovation, he also seeks to innovate hiring and retention practices using data.

"This work is personal for me. I lived in three different countries on three different continents and saw firsthand the impact and the importance of working with people from different backgrounds and different societies," said Shojaei.

Shojaei sees workforce challenges as complex issues involve economics, social sciences, and political initiatives. He and graduate student Mohammad Hossein Heydari are taking an in-depth look at the individual pieces of the bigger puzzle. Their first deep dive focused on the areas where academic leaders offered ideas for potential best practices.

Their research found several scholars offering suggestions for an industry standard including: female mentorship or role model programs; increasing the number of women in managerial positions; unifying communication practices; flexibility in work-life balance

Transparent promotion criteria; return-to-work



PHOTO BY PETER MEANS FOR VIRGINIA TECH

Students stand at perimeter of jobsite during classroom tour.

training for new mothers; and sharing success stories.

Based on those suggested measures, they then looked at the last 13 years of construction labor data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for indications of whether those ideas translated into noticeable changes within the construction industry. Combining the qualitative data from the literature and the quantitative data from the labor statistics, they uncovered trends that pointed them toward future exploration:

Women make up roughly 11 percent of the workforce, but 50 percent of the population. They are by far the most studied group. Efforts have been made to increase the number of women in the workforce, but so far, the data trends do not indicate significant growth.

Female students outside of construction programs mention the industry's poor image as a deterrent, even in some cases where they have family ties to construction.

When women are on a job site, there tend to be lower accident rates and higher safety performances, but it's not known if one causes the other.

There is a high rate of injury among Hispanic workers in construction. While many say this is caused by a communication issue, the researchers found that it is only one of many factors including higher productivity pressures, poor safety climates, and supervisor pressures.

There is limited information about other ethnic groups, LGBTQIA+, and people with disabilities. Researchers say it's not because those sections of the population are not in the construction industry, but rather a hesitation to self-report due to external fears or pressures.

"The research over time is increasing, but not fast enough to generate the knowledge we need to be able to solve the problems that we've identified. We need a concerted effort between the people whose job it is to conduct research and the people whose job it is to recruit and retain within construction," said Iorio, who is serving as the connection point between construction industry executives and researchers. "What we found is that there aren't any obvious best practices, right? That's the punchline."

Data can unlock solutions to help both individual companies and the industry as a whole, but that data needs to come from the companies themselves, which requires buy-in and transparency.

"Hopefully, what comes of this is that the industry will see there's still a lot of work to be done. The researchers need access and support from those in the industry. We don't need all of your data, but rather specific kinds of data so that we can prove some of these theories that we're presenting here," said Iorio.

With specific data, the researchers could investigate subfactors that affect recruitment and retention within companies including location, sector of construction, safety, company policies, profits, and more. The research team recently added graduate students Hossein Naderi and Reachsak Ly to review industry articles and journals for similar suggestions about best practices.

"We need to talk to people; we need to conduct surveys, collect data, and see if we can connect these policies to the results that we are seeing and see what is and is not effective," said Shojaei.

Partnership for industry progress

The researchers found companies are hesitant to provide data due to fears of being judged or facing consequences. With over a decade of work in this area, Iorio is helping companies dismantle those fears through transparency. In 2021, he began to host "elephant in the room" discussions to bring together people who work on inclusion and diversity efforts within their own companies. There, the group had honest conversations about the issues and potential solutions that exist across the spectrum.

"The future of the industry is focused on smart construction and technology. But if we don't have people, there's no industry of the future," said Iorio. "This type of work takes time and money, both of which are valuable resources for a company's bottom line. What we want to offer is research-backed inclusion and diversity models that have tangible results so companies can invest in the best areas to yield the best results."

Over the years, Iorio has worked closely with several companies that believe in this vision for the future of the industry, including construction management consulting firm MBP and its co-founder and CEO, Blake Peck. He has seen the industry change over many decades and envisions a partnership with the research team as a pathway for more people to enter the industry and keep the story of this dynamic industry alive.

"We have a great story here in the construction industry, but we unfortunately keep it a secret," said Peck. "I hope this research sheds light on the great work we do, our desire to increase representation and the importance of implementing strategies and processes that are specifically designed for the rewarding and dynamic nature of construction."

In the long run, researchers hope these efforts not only elevate the experience of current industry workers, but open more doors for a new generation of leaders. This summer, Shojaei and his team plan to publish a knowledge database to give people a chance to access the available data.

Chelsea Seeber for Virginia Tech

MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Hunter named AD at Christiansburg

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Christiansburg High School has a new athletic director, and it is a familiar face.

The school made it official as of Wednesday. Former boys' basketball coach Mike Hunter is stepping into the administrative post as of July 1.

In a social media post, the school said "Hunter embodies the qualities of being respected, responsible and connected. He has embedded himself in the Blue Demon community, building strong relationships every step of the way. His dedication to CHS is reflected in all that he does."

Just two years ago, Hunter stepped away after seven years from the basketball program. In his last season, the team finished 10-14 including a 4-8 River Ridge District mark. His best year was in 2019 when they finished 14-9 overall. Hunter also spent time as the girls' coach at Eastern Montgomery.

Previously, he also coached at Roanoke Catholic High School. He is an Alleghany High School and Ferrum College graduate. He has taught special education for the past eight years at CHS.

Hunter replaces longtime athletic director Tim Cromer who is leaving at the end of the school year to become head football coach at Floyd County High School.

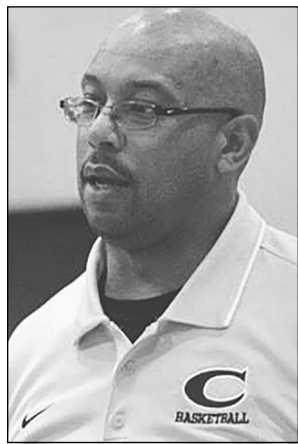


Photo courtesy of Mike Hunter
Mike Hunter

Two more Auburn athletes to play at next level

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Auburn student-athletes Kasey Rosenbaum and Katie Light will each take their game to the next level in college.

On Tuesday, the two made it official during a signing ceremony in the school's library. Rosenbaum signed to run Cross Country and Track and Field at Radford University. Light will play soccer at Ferrum University.

Both are leaders in their individual programs at the school.

Rosenbaum is Auburn's record holder in the 1600 and 3200 meters and is considered one of the school's all-time distance runners. She will also run cross country at Radford.

As a junior, Light was named to soccer's first team all-state for Class 1 schools. She also scored her 100th goal for Auburn in last week's game against Glenvar.

This coming fall, she will play for Ferrum University in Rocky Mount. The school has an enrollment of 860 undergraduate students.

The university is a

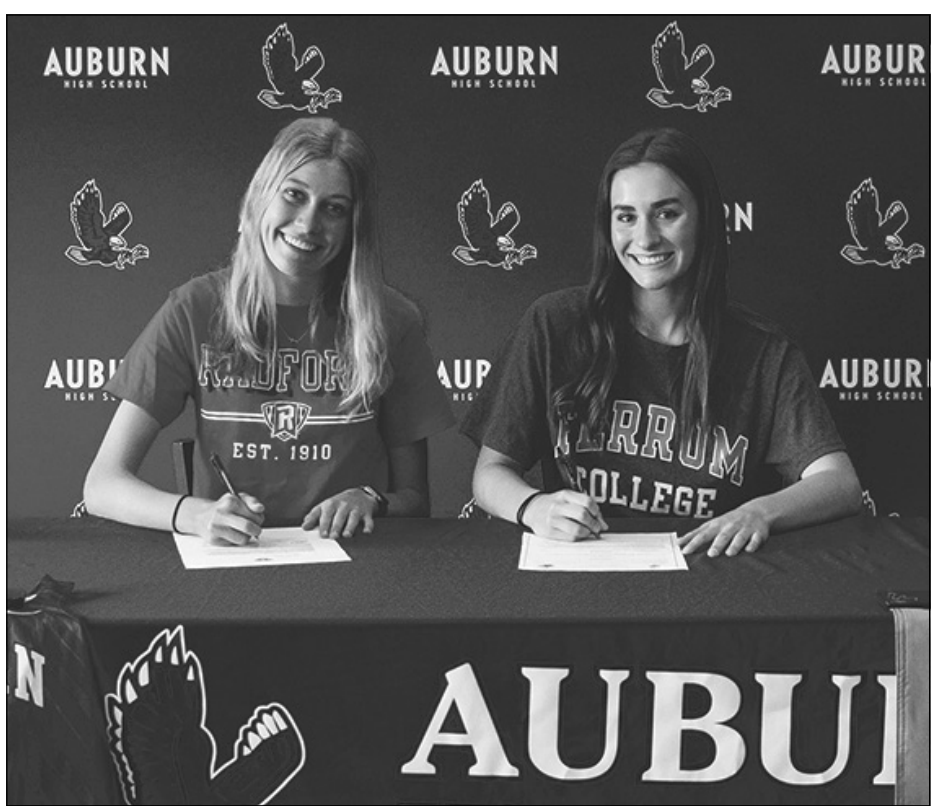


PHOTO BY ASHLEY AKERS

Two student-athletes from Auburn High School sign letters of intent Tuesday to continue their playing careers in college. Pictured are Kasey Rosenbaum (left) and Katie Light with family and friends in the school's library. Rosenbaum will be running cross country and track at Radford University, and Light will be playing soccer at Ferrum College.

member of the Division III of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), primarily competing in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) since the 2018-19 academic year. The Panthers

previously competed in the USA South Athletic Conference (USA South) for most of its sports from 1988-89 to 2017-18.

In 2025, Ferrum will move to NCAA Division II as a member of Conference Carolinas.

Light will join sophomore goalie Anna Blaine and Jamie Adams, both from Christiansburg and forward Ashlynn Mitcham from Giles. Ferrum finished 7-9-1 this past season.

Auburn's Wilson signs with Coker

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

A member of the Auburn High School track team hopes to continue his career in college. On Monday, Michael Wilson signed a letter of intent to attend Coker University.

"I chose Coker university because their program really stuck out in my college search," Wilson said. "When I went to visit, I had nothing but amazing things to say about Coker University."

His best marks for the past years are: high jump of 6-3, long jump of 20-3, triple jump of 39'11.1/2, pole vault 9-6, 55m hurdles 8.4, 110m hurdles 16.65, 300m hurdles 43.65 and 400m dash 56.65.

Coker is based in a private university located in Hartsville, South Carolina and has an enrollment of 834 undergraduate students. The school is a Division III program, which competes in The South Atlantic Conference.

Last year, Eugene Galloway was named Coker University's head men's and women's track and field and cross country. He joins the Coker program after serving in the same role at Roanoke College since 2018.

During his five years as a head coach of the Maroons, he has coached eight NCAA All-Americans, 16 NCAA DIII Champion Qualifiers, 56 ODAC Conference



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL

Auburn High School Track and Field athlete Michael Wilson signs a letter of intent to attend Coker University Monday at AHS.

Champions, and 102 All-ODAC South/Southeast All-Region, performers.

In 2022, Galloway was named the ODAC Women's Outdoor Track & Field Coach of the Year and he also

coached the ODAC Women's Outdoor Rookie of the Year.

Wilson hopes to major in sports Management at Coker.

Sports notes: Big South Mental Health Month

The Big South Conference announced today its first-ever conference-wide partnership with long-standing partner Hercules Tires.

Hercules Tires and Big South student-athletes will partner during the month of May for Mental Health Awareness Month to raise awareness about the importance of mental health in the lives of student-athletes. As part of the campaign, Big South student-athletes will highlight their own thoughts on mental health and how mental health motivates them as athletes, which will be shared on the Big South's social media platforms.

"Today, we proudly announce Hercules Tires' groundbreaking partnership with the Big South Conference, marking a historic milestone for both organizations," said Nakia Medlin, Sr. Director of Marketing Hercules Tires. "As we kick off

Mental Health Awareness Month, we are committed to championing the well-being of student-athletes. Together, we embark on a journey to raise awareness about the vital significance of mental health not only in student-athletes but young people in general. This partnership signifies our shared dedication to fostering a supportive environment where student-athletes thrive both on and off the field. Through our collaboration, we aim to empower and inspire, igniting conversations that promote understanding, empathy, and resilience. Let us stand united in breaking barriers and nurturing a culture where mental health is prioritized, celebrated, and supported."

The NIL opportunity across all Big South member institutions is the latest innovative partnership between Hercules Tires and the Big South in the college

athletics world. Hercules Tires serves as the Official Tire of the Big South and Title Sponsor of the annual Men's and Women's Basketball Championships.

Former CHS player recognized

The Concord University baseball team has placed six players on the All-Mountain East Conference Teams that were released Tuesday afternoon by the league office. The list included Christiansburg alum MJ Hunter.

Hunter, who is a junior, proved his importance to the Concord lineup after landing All-MEC Second Team honors for a second straight year. Hunter played both middle infield spots, both corner outfield positions and pitched in 2024. At the plate, he hit .301 with a pair of home runs and 28 RBI. He added a team-best 13 stolen bases, which was 10th in the MEC. On the mound, Hunter piled up six saves, ranking second

in the conference, as he tossed 18 innings. He sported an ERA of 3.50 and held teams to a .232 batting average. Eight RBI for Hunter came in a four-game sweep of Davis and Elkins (April 7-8).

Highlander pitcher honored

Radford's Morgan Cooper (Man, W.Va.) is the Big South Freshman of the Week honoree.

Cooper helped the Highlanders to their first conference series win of the season thanks to a complete game, 1-hitter vs. Presbyterian in the final game of the season. Pitching through the rain, she tossed 6.1 innings of no-hit ball before allowing her lone hit of the day early in the final frame. Cooper fanned six batters and walked two in tossing her second shutout of the season.

Bobcats recognized

Two student-athletes from Radford High School, Landen Clark and Daniel Nealey, have

been named 2024 All-Americans by the National High School Coaches Association (NHSCA). Each athlete must carry at least a 3.6 grade point average. This award is given annually to a high school athlete who has demonstrated outstanding achievement on and off the field regarding strength and conditioning, athletic performance, academics, and leadership.

Hokies add assistant

Virginia Tech volleyball head coach Marci Byers announced that William Tatge will be joining the staff as an assistant coach Tuesday afternoon. Tatge comes to Blacksburg after most recently serving as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at Bradley University.

Tatge joined the staff at Bradley in February of 2023, with the Braves securing victories against Indiana State, Evansville and Albany.

Prior to his tenure at

Bradley University, Tatge was an assistant coach and primary recruiting coordinator at Georgia State. While Tatge was with the Panthers, they earned Sun Belt victories against Marshall and Louisiana-Monroe.

Prior to his time with the Buckeyes, Tatge was the head women's volleyball coach at Lees-McRae (DII), where he led them to postseason appearances in 2015 and 2016. He additionally served as the assistant coach for men's volleyball at Lees-McRae.

Staff report

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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Weekly reports: Christiansburg picks up softball win

Christiansburg faced off with Staunton River on Wednesday in a tough battle that went into extra innings.

Starting the onslaught for the ladies in Blue, Kady Camper stroked a double the gap then came an intentional walk of Addison Reasor. Reagan Smith stepped to

the plate hammering in Christiansburg's first two runs.

Staunton River would tie it up with a walk, hit and error, but Christiansburg kept it together and started once again like clockwork. Camper took the win 5-2 over Staunton River.

Auburn boys fall to Galax

Galax freshman Eduardo Rosales scored in the first half and Junior Joel Solis scored in the last two minutes as Galax wrapped up the regular season Mountain Empire District title. Auburn fell 2-0 and is now 10-3-1 overall on the season.

Auburn girls blank Galax

Senior Logan Mundy had three goals and two assists and Sophomore Grace Harris had two goals and three assists as Auburn rolled in an 8-0 win over Galax. Auburn is now 13-4 on the season. Blacksburg girls take win on road

Blacksburg defeated Hidden Valley

1-0 on Tuesday night in Roanoke. Erin Bishop scored two goals and Kailyn Brawley added a goal as well. Kallan Malabad had an assist. Paige Miller had two saves to collect her 14th shutout of the season.

Blacksburg improves to 13-0-2 on the season and 9-0-2 in the RRD. Hidden Valley drops to 9-5-1 and 5-5-1.

Blacksburg boys remain unbeaten
Craig Huxtable (15-0) led the Bruins with three goals and one assist, and Addison Bass tallied once with two assists. Gabriel Smith had seven saves in goal for the Titans.

Staff report

Radford takes the win over James River in soccer



PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

Brody Shull gathers in a loose ball and scores a goal to increase the lead to 3-0 as Radford improved to 11-2 on the season.



PHOTOS BY BRYANT ALTIZER

Seniors were recognized during the game. (Left to right) Jackson Hodock, Dawson Martin, Shawn Seagraves, Charlie Davis, Drew Edwards, Eli Goff and Brody Shull.

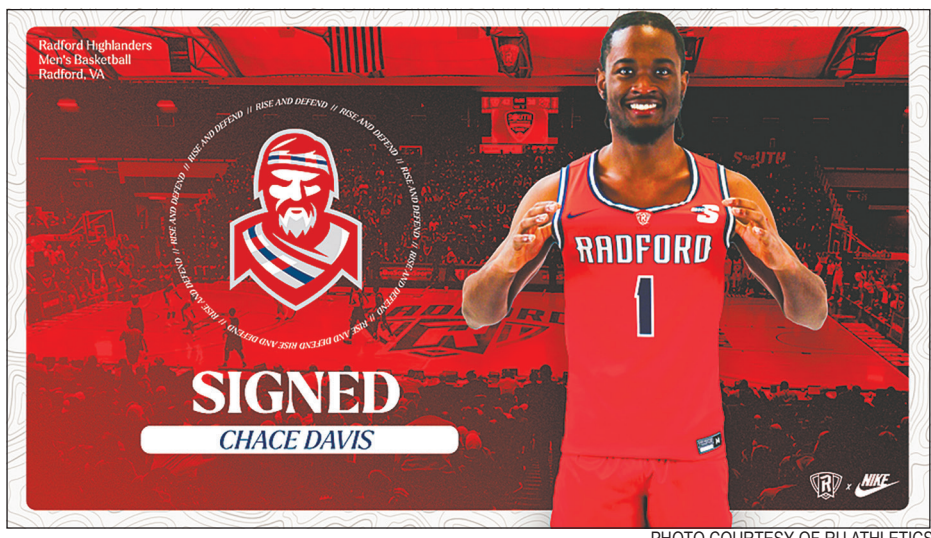


PHOTO COURTESY OF RU ATHLETICS

RU hoops adds another transfer

Radford head men's basketball coach Darris Nichols has announced the addition of guard Chace Davis.

He will join the Highlanders for the 2024-25 season after attending University of Maryland Eastern Shore for three seasons.

"We are excited to add Chace Davis to our team and program; he is a high energy guy with a motor and can make shots," said Nichols. "Great team guy and will make an impact on this team."

The Fort Washington, Md. native averaged 6.4 points per game and achieved 84.8% of his free throws during the 2023-24 season. During the 2022-23 season, Davis shot 37.5% from the three-point line to rank in the top-10 in the Mid-Eastern Atlantic conference as a sophomore.

Additionally, the 6'3" 180 lb. guard made the All-MEAC Freshman Team and was voted Preseason All-MEAC.

Radford University Athletics

Send community news and photos to
communitynews@ourvalley.org



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