



Town of Blacksburg receives Virginia Environmental Endowment grant for Heritage Park

BLACKSBURG – The Virginia Environmental Endowment has awarded \$232,335 to the Town of Blacksburg to pursue a major ecological restoration project in Heritage Park.

The project will take approximately two years to complete and will focus on removing invasive plants from both sides of Toms Creek within Heritage Park, re-establishing a diverse mix of native trees and shrubs in the riparian area, and developing a long-term stewardship plan for the park. The project will also involve extensive outreach to increase the public's understanding of the impact of invasive species on natural landscapes and the value of re-establishing native plant communities to better support native and migratory wildlife.

"This grant will allow the town to be proactive in combating the invasive plant issue in the Heritage Park," offered Director of Parks and

Recreation Dean Crane. "This will help restore the diversity of tree species that will enhance the beauty of the park and help improve the quality of the Toms Creek stream that runs through the park."

This funding will allow the town to add 17 additional acres to a two-acre pilot restoration project already underway in Heritage Park, made possible by a partnership with the New River Conservancy.

"Addressing invasive species can feel like an overwhelming endeavor," said Sustainability Manager Carol Davis. "This new funding from the Virginia Environmental Endowment allows us to tackle the challenge in a meaningful, sustained way and puts us on a path to improving ecological integrity and biodiversity in Heritage Park."

Throughout the project's implementation, there will be numerous opportunities for the public



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSBURG

Aerial view of Heritage Park

to get involved via on-site workshops and volunteer opportunities. For more information, or to ask a question about the Heritage Park Riparian Restoration Project, please visit the Let's Talk

Blacksburg project page or reach out to Town of Blacksburg staff who are involved with this project.

Town of Blacksburg



PHOTO COURTESY OF WENDY BALDWIN

Blacksburg Breakfast Lions smiling with "Dolly."

Blacksburg Breakfast Lions Club supports New Imagination Library affiliate

Angelica Ramos
Contributing writer

BLACKSBURG- The Blacksburg Breakfast Lions Club celebrated becoming a founding donor of the new Montgomery County affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library on May 15, 2024.

The Blacksburg Breakfast Lions Club became a founding donor for the new Imagination Library affiliate and celebrated with a life-size cut-out of Dolly Parton. The Blacksburg Breakfast Lions Club has donated \$5,000 in funding to the

Imagination Library that debuted in February. Members of the Lions Club enjoyed taking a picture with "Dolly" and say they were honored to become founding donors.

"We were honored and happy to become founding donors to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Montgomery County," Lions Club President Peter Hartmann said, "Blacksburg Breakfast Lions club strives to improve the community by supporting the wellness and success in of its youth."

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a program that supports

the passion of reading in children from ages newborn up until their fifth birthday. Once enrolled, a child will receive a personalized book in the mail every single month until they turn five. Each child's first book from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library is The Little Engine that Could but the books differ from child to child from there as they are age-graded per what is appropriate for each child's current age-range. This program is completely free to sign up for. Since its opening in

See Lions Club, page 3

Riner student among recipients of prestigious Hattie M. Strong scholarship

RADFORD - Radford University Classroom supplies. Rent. Spring tuition.

Those are just a few things Caroline Bryant had on her budget list just before beginning 14 weeks of student teaching and her final semester at Radford University in the spring of 2024.

Finding money to make ends meet can be difficult for those entering the teaching profession, but Bryant received some much-needed support. She was one of six students in Radford University's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) teacher preparation program who were each awarded \$5,000 in scholarship support from the Hattie M. Strong Foundation.

"I am so proud to be a recipient of this scholarship because it makes my hard work at Radford feel recognized," said Bryant, who graduated on May 4.

The Hattie M. Foundation made its first gift to Radford in 2012 and, since then, has generously provided \$350,000 in scholarship support. The support helps alleviate financial burdens students face during their student-teaching semester, when they are working full time in the classroom and are unable to offset expenses with outside employment.

Recipients of the Hattie M. Strong scholarship must have a 3.0 GPA or better for the two semesters prior to student teaching, exhibit outstanding success and enthusiasm in previous field experiences, show strong leadership skills and demonstrate financial need. Recipients must intend to pursue a career in teaching. Preference is provided to applicants with a demonstrated record of helping others help themselves.

Radford University is one of 24 institutions whose teacher candidates are supported through this program.

This year's Radford recipients are:

Michael Mangrum of Gretna, Virginia. (Music education)

Caroline Bryant of Radford, Virginia. (Elementary education)

Abigail Wilson of Riner, Virginia. (Special education)

Justin Meyers of Salem, Virginia. (Elementary education)

Angela Kinzie of Newport News, Virginia. (Middle grades social studies education)

Kayla Witt of Roanoke, Virginia. (Elementary education)

On April 18, the university's College of Education and Human Development hosted a dinner to celebrate the scholarship recipients. It was an opportunity for the students to meet Hattie M. Strong Foundation Executive Director Robin Tanner and share with her their student-teaching experiences, the scholarships' impact on their lives and their plans following graduation.

Recipients were introduced by faculty members Melissa Lisanti, Carol Bland, Jennifer McDonel, Darren Minarik and Mary Evans.

"This is always a special time, and it is clear how invested our faculty members are in the success of their student teachers," said CEHD Associate Dean Debora Bays Wilbon. "The pride is palpable in the room!"

The scholarships are intended to allow the students to "focus on becoming the best educator they can be," Wilbon said. For many of the scholars, the scholarship allows them to cover living expenses

See Scholarship, page 3

Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg presents Youth Awards



Seniors from Montgomery County High Schools were recognized for their adherence to the Rotary Code of Ethics by the Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg at their annual Youth Award ceremony on May 6.

The Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg presented its 2023-2024 Youth Awards to Montgomery County Public School students at the Club's May 6 meeting.

Fifty-nine juniors and seniors from Auburn, Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Eastern Montgomery High Schools were recognized in the areas of academic achievement, career and technical education, and ethics. Rotary Code of Ethics Awards were presented to the senior boy and girl at each school, nominated by their teachers, who best exemplify the traits delineated in the Rotary Four-Way Test: "Of the things we think, say or do: Is it the TRUTH? Is it FAIR to all concerned? Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?" Leah Kouns and Carson Miller of Auburn High School; Evan McGrory and Amelia Webster of Blacksburg High School; Dylan Car and Eliane Lyons of Christiansburg



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROTARY CLUB OF CHRISTIANSBURG-BLACKSBURG

Students from Montgomery County High Schools were recognized for excellence in Career and Technical Education by the Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg at their annual Youth Award ceremony on May 6.

High School; and Naomi Ramos-Mendoza and Drew Smith of Eastern Montgomery High School received this award.

Career and Technical Education Awards were presented to two students from each school, nominated by their teachers, who have achieved excellence in their chosen field of vocational education. Kasey Rosenbaum and Coleman Wright of Auburn High School; Gabriel Mendoza and Lorelia Spradlin of Blacksburg High School; Joseph Baines and Kaylee Luu of Christiansburg High School; and Hayden Hall and Riley Ollis of Eastern

See Awards, page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF RADFORD UNIVERSITY

(From left) Abigail Wilson, Caroline Bryant, Hattie Strong Executive Director Robin Tanner (seated), Justin Meyers, Angela Kinzie and Michael Mangrum. Not pictured is Kayla Witt.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, May 22:

Blacksburg Farmers Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 2 – 6 p.m. The Blacksburg Farmers Market is a local, family-friendly gathering place in downtown Blacksburg featuring farmers of locally grown produce and meats, alongside artisans of baked goods and handmade crafts. For more information, visit <http://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com>.

Thursday, May 23:

Spring into Summer Event

Join the Town of Christiansburg at Christiansburg Huckleberry Park for the park's plaque unveiling at 11 a.m., and a full day of free activities, including petting zoo, warrior challenge course contest, guided telescope stargazing, ultimate frisbee, 40-yard dash contest, yoga, bingo, dog training demo, fitness programs and horticulture walking tour. Be sure to check the Facebook event discussion regularly for updates: <https://www.facebook.com/events/4004717339799280/>.

Beach Bash

Join the Christiansburg Aquatic Center at 5:30 p.m. for an evening of music, food, games and swimming. The Beach Bash is a kid friendly event that will feature mermaids, a pirate, corn hole, pirate coin toss and raffles to win membership giveaways. Live music on the patio by Last Chance Duo, also compete in a limbo contest to win prizes. Tickets are now available for purchase with a limited number being sold. Each ticket is \$12 per person (for ages three and up) and will include a meal and drink provided by Simple Fixins. To purchase tickets, visit cacpool.com or call 540-381-7665.

Saturday, May 25:

Wilderness Road Ride

The 33rd Annual Wilderness Road Ride starts and finishes in Radford's Bisset Park. The Wilderness Road Ride is a scenic and historical adventure that follows part of Daniel Boone's Wilderness Road. This is a

recreational ride on paved roads for all cycling levels to enjoy, with something for everyone - five routes to choose from ranging from a 26-mile relaxed journey for novices and e-bikes, to a century challenge for the fittest cyclist. This is a great ride for cyclists of all ages and athletic abilities. Rest stops are fully stocked to fuel the riders. For times and registration information, log onto wildernessroadride.org.

Blacksburg Farmers Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. The Blacksburg Farmers Market is a local, family-friendly gathering place in downtown Blacksburg featuring farmers of locally grown produce and meats, alongside artisans of baked goods and handmade crafts. For more information, visit <http://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com>.

Radford Farmer's Market

Every Saturday through October; 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. on the grounds of Glencoe Mansion, 600 Unruh Dr. Visit weekly for an ever-changing supply of homemade goodies, crafts, plants, meats, produce, and more.

Sunday, May 26:

Vintage Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. The market is made up of a carefully chosen group of vendors selling a wide selection of quality vintage items, upcycled crafts, and occasional antiques. For more information, visit blacksburgfarmersmarket.com/vintage-market/

Monday, May 27:

No Radford City Council meeting

Due to Memorial Day, the Radford City Council will NOT hold its regularly scheduled meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 10.

Va. Dept. of Veterans Services Memorial Day ceremony

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) will again host four Memorial Day Ceremonies on

Monday, May 27, 2024, including at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin. The ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. The keynote speaker will be Vice Admiral Evan M. Chanik, (U.S. Navy, Retired). The cemetery address is 5550 Bagging Plant Road, Dublin, Va. 24084. Admission is free. The public is invited and encouraged to attend and participate.

Tuesday, May 28:

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.

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

Due to the Memorial Day holiday, the BOS will meet Tuesday, May 28. Public meetings are normally held 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.

Saturday, June 8:

Red Cross blood drive

At St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 103 E. Main St., Christiansburg; 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Appointments: <https://www.redcrossblood.org>

PETS OF THE WEEK

These pets and many others are available for adoption at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center, 480 Cinnabar Rd., Christiansburg. Phone: (540) 382-5795.



Meet Oliver. He's a handsome boy and he might know it! He enjoys lounging and taking in the sights around him. He likes attention but tends to show an independent spirit and will let humans know when he wants time alone.

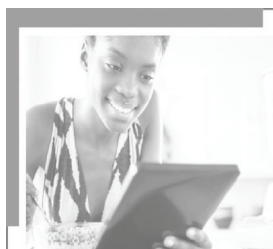


Draco is a shy, sweet cat who loves a good nuzzle or scratch under the chin. He is bonded with fellow feline Ashton. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to meet Draco and Ashton. They could be your purrfect match!

All Positions Available, SALE REP, ACCOUNTANT and MANY MORE

- Bookkeeper • Cashier • Payroll
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- Account Coordinator
- Finance • Business • Marketing
- Admissions Representative
- Office Clerk • Help Desk Assistant

As part of our expansion program, our company is looking for part time Work from home Account Manager and sales representatives, it pays \$1700 monthly plus benefits and takes only little of your time. Please contact us for more details. Requirements - Should be computer literate. 2-3 hours access to the internet weekly. Must be over 24yrs of age. Must be Efficient and Dedicated. If you are interested and need more information, contact: Kenneth.bbraun.com@outlook.com for more details.



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Beta Sigma Phi sorority names Woman of The Year



PHOTO COURTESY OF BETA SIGMA PHI

Sharon Legg

The Alpha Mu Master Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority of Christiansburg has named Sharon Legg their Woman of The Year for 2023-24.

To be chosen as Chapter Woman of the Year is one of the greatest honors a chapter pays to members. Legg participates in all chapter areas, has a special fondness for the service projects, and loyally represents the chapter for donation opportunities. She has contributed to planning specific service projects and is known for hosting fun socials.

Legg pledged to Beta Sigma Phi's Alpha Pi Chapter in December of 1982 while residing in Covington, Virginia and has served in various offices and committees through the years. She currently is serving as Recording Secretary for

Alpha Mu Master, a position she has championed for a number of years. She has previously been honored as Valentine Queen, and has received the Order of The Rose, the Silver Circle Ritual and the Torchbearer Ritual.

Legg is retired from Virginia Tech and resides in Christiansburg with her husband, Jimmy. They have two children and one grandson.

The presentation took place at the Beta Sigma Phi Founder's Day Banquet, hosted by Radford's Xi Tau Chapter in Fairlawn, on April 27. The presentation was made by last year's recipient Phyllis Durham. Legg received an engraved trophy and a Woman of the Year charm to commemorate this honor.

Beta Sigma Phi

2024 FORTY under 40



PHOTO COURTESY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The 40 under 40 awardees include young professionals from throughout Montgomery County and in the City of Radford.

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce names '40 under 40' awardees

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce our 2024 Forty under 40 recipients.

This group of individuals showcases exactly what it means to be an Emerging Leader, and we cannot be more grateful to have this kind of talent right here in the New River Valley.

At the Chamber of Commerce, we believe it's important for our members to recognize and support the talent we have in our community, especially these emerging leaders who have been acknowledged in the Forty Under 40. We appreciate the contributions these individuals make both to their respective organizations and our community's overall growth. These emerging leaders are crucial for promoting our area as an attractive place for talent retention and growth. We're grateful to our businesses that have taken the initiative to recommend these promising young professionals, and their involvement highlights our collective effort to foster a leadership environment that benefits our community and its future.

Remember, it's not about celebrating age, but highlighting our

emerging leaders that will one day become our community's decision-makers, and the companies that are investing their time and efforts to educate and empower.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate this year. We had 108 submissions, and 74 nominees, both record-breaking numbers for this award.

Recipients include: Anita Zatori, Ben Tuck, Brooke Brinson, Carrie Williams, Chase Brinson, Courtnie Nichols, Daria Chicosky, Emily Cochran, Erica Mooney, Fredy Wright, Harmony Tripp, Ian Friend, Jay M Tucker, Jessica Shelburne, Josh Smith, Kadra Ochoa, Kassie Reese, Kayla Mullins, Kaylee Graves, Kelly Kendrick, Laura Davis, Lauryn Marshall, Liam Watson, Lily Oliver, Luke Brugh, Luke Williams, Madison Webb, Mariah Thompson, Marissa Smith, Max Bareiss, Michael Abraham, Michael Sutphin, Michelle Jones, Patrick Moran, Rachel Waters, Scott Whyte, Sergio Render, Stephanie Byers, Stephanie Kirkner and Tiffany Vaden.

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

Scholarship

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such as rent, food and transportation while reducing or eliminating part-time employment during the semester.

"The student-teaching semester is a full-time, intensive experience, leaving little time for extra employment," Wilbon explained. "The students may be student-teaching up to an hour's drive away from Radford, so there may be extra travel expenses added on to the typical semester costs. The scholarships are impactful!"

For Meyers, the Hattie Strong scholarship meant he could apply more

focus to his Radford education. "I did not have to stress about my finances," he said. "This was also a relief for my wife, who is also an educator."

Bryant added that she is "very appreciative of the Hattie M. Strong committee for looking after the teachers going into a field in need of educators and who are dedicated to creating a safe and joyful learning environment. This scholarship helps put me on my way to doing that myself!"

Chad Osborne for Radford University

Lions Club

from page 1

February, the Imagination Library has enrolled more than 1,100 children in Montgomery County. The Montgomery County branch of the Imagination Library is organized through the Mt. Tabor Ruritan Club to help support and encourage reading in the children of Montgomery County.

"Thanks for the opportunity, Ruritans," said Hartmann. "We all love Dolly."

With the help of donors like the Blacksburg Breakfast Lions, Kiwanis, 100+ Women Who Care, and many more community organizations and businesses, The Imagination Library has been able to catapult into the community. Local businesses such as Blacksburg Books, Fringe Benefits and O'Charley's have hosted donation days to help support this new and beneficial

organization. Red Robin donated 20 percent of their receipts to the Imagination Library on May 15 as well and O'Charley's is set to donate 15% of their receipts on May 23 in community support for this new endeavor.

"We hustled," Wendy Baldwin, executive

director, said regarding how hard her and her team have worked to bring this opportunity to the community quickly.

The Imagination Library has displays at the Lyric Theatre or at the Mt. Tabor Ruritan Club Fish Fries on every second Saturday of the month.

New Virginia Department of Forestry program provides free riparian buffers

Improving Virginia's water resources with free assistance to landowners

CHARLOTTESVILLE – The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) is announcing a new program that provides landowners free, flexible riparian forest buffer installation plus one year of maintenance. The Riparian Forests for Landowners (RFFL) program is a unique watershed-based partnership including DOF, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Friends of the Rappahannock, James River Association, Terra Habitats LLC, and York River Steward.

Riparian forest buffers are transition areas that protect streams, creeks or other water features by capturing sediment, nutrients and pollutants in the soil before they reach the water.

This program is open to all Virginia private property owners including homeowner associations and civic leagues in rural, urban and suburban areas. Funding is provided by the Inflation Reduction Act through the USDA Forest Service and the Commonwealth of Virginia's Water Quality Improvement Fund Act. Complete this survey-style Landowner Interest Form and a DOF forester or partner organization representative will contact you.

"This turnkey program covers free services including planning, site preparation and planting of buffers, as well as one year of maintenance," said RFFL Program Coordinator Deya Ramsden. "Trees established in these buffers will act as filters to provide cleaner water, reduce erosion and flooding, and help replenish underground aquifers."

DOF is accepting continuous

sign-ups for this program until funding depletes. Eligible projects will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis with planned buffer establishment from fall 2024 to spring 2025, with follow-up maintenance support through 2026.

Buffer installation details:

Buffers can be installed on open land adjacent to a water feature where a forested buffer of at least 35 feet in width from the water's edge can be planted.

Existing buffers may be expanded up to 300 feet from the water's edge.

Buffers may be planted with pine seedlings, hardwood seedlings or a mix of both.

Buffers must be at least 35 feet wide and no greater than 300 feet wide per side from the water's edge.

Land must have less than 20% coverage by invasive plant species to qualify for this program.

Landowners must agree to retain the buffer as forest for 15 years.

The water feature may be any of the following bodies of water, including streams, rivers, lakes, ponds and reservoirs/municipal water supplies, seeps and springs, karst features, sloughs, wetlands, water features within wetlands, fresh and saltwater marshes and irrigation ditches, canals and other man-made water features.

For more information, visit the DOF website at <https://dof.virginia.gov/>.

Virginia Department of Forestry

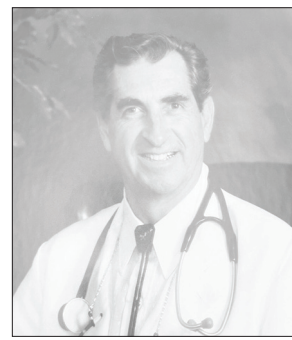
OBITUARY

Skewes, MD, David Jessop

David Jessop Skewes, MD, 93, passed away peacefully at his home in Dublin on Wednesday, May 15, 2024.

He was a member of the Dublin Presbyterian Church and a former Captain in the U. S. Air Force. David graduated from the Medical College of Virginia in 1956, and began his medical practice in Coalwood, W.Va. He later moved to Dublin, where he practiced until his retirement in 1999. After retirement he enjoyed many years of grouse and pheasant hunting, and wildlife management and conservation in Virginia and South Dakota. Known to everyone as "Doc", he enjoyed spending time with his family and many friends, as well as his beloved dogs. He will truly be missed by all who knew him, please hold tight to all the memories.

He was preceded in death by his parents, William Jessop and Effie Anna Gardner Skewes.



Survivors include his wife and sweetheart of over 46 years, Sherry S. Skewes of Dublin; sons, David Skewes of Dublin, Dr. Matt Skewes (Tara) of Radford, and John F. Smith (Tammi) of Suffolk; daughter, Erin Lattanze (Greg) of Front Royal; nephew, William Gardner "Rusty" Skewes of Mooreville; grandchildren, Jessop, Sable, Jacob, Drew, Nick, Tom, Teaghan, Miranda, Audrey, Sophia, Max, and Josie; great grandson, Danny; very special friends and caretakers, Tommy and Lisa Akers; beloved dogs, Savannah, Sue and Hank; and many other relatives and friends.

Doc's family would like to give a very warm thank you to Dr. Jose Rivero and all of his staff for the care that they provided to Doc over the years.

The family will receive friends 4 - 7 p.m. Friday, May 24, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 25, 2024, at Dublin Presbyterian Church, 409 Church St., Dublin, VA, with Rev. Tim Boyd and Rev. Mary Ann Armbrister officiating. Graveside services with full military honors will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery.

Immediately following the funeral service on Saturday, May 25, there will be a Celebration of Life luncheon at the Skewes residence, 5892 Hanks Avenue, Dublin, Va.

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

2024 Real Estate Taxes

Due: June 5, 2024

TOWN OF Blacksburg

Town of Blacksburg Real Estate Tax invoices for the first installment of 2024 have been mailed and are due by Wednesday, June 5, 2024. If you have not yet received a tax statement, call the Department of Financial Services at 540.961.1105.

Payment may be mailed, made in person or placed in the drop box at 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, paid by phone with a credit card or paid online at www.Blacksburg.gov/payments. Visa, MasterCard and Discover are accepted.

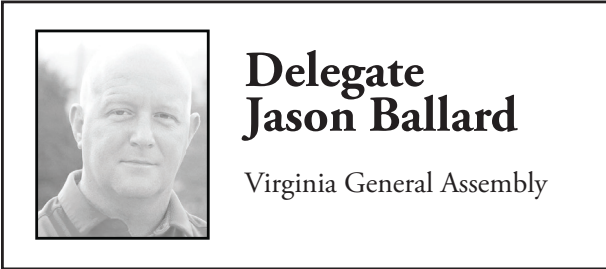
A 10% penalty will be charged if not paid by June 5, 2024. Interest will be charged at the rate of 10% per year beginning July 1, 2024.

OPINION

Final budget includes wins and losses for both sides of the aisle

On Monday, May 13, members of the Virginia General Assembly returned to Richmond for a special session to complete work on the Commonwealth's budget. As you may recall, the initial budget passed by General Assembly Democrats contained tax increases and a return to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI); costly programs that Governor Youngkin amended or vetoed out of the spending plan. Since then, the governor and budget negotiators came back to the table to negotiate in good faith, and although not perfect, I'm happy to announce a budget agreement that contains no tax increases, nor a commitment to RGGI.

The budget passed by the Democrat-controlled House and Senate is similar to the last Appropriations Committee conference report in most ways. It spends roughly the same amount of money, but with a few changes. Bills vetoed by the governor had their funding removed, and the proposed sales tax on online streaming services was also removed. In addition, projected revenues from skill games and recreational marijuana sales expansion were also removed. Spending will be paid for through increases in revenue above forecasted levels – \$525 million – and moving \$516 million of capital projects from cash into bonds. The budget also adds back \$60 million for lab schools that had been cut in the conference report but includes a requirement that



Delegate Jason Ballard

Virginia General Assembly

the schools demonstrate financial stability before they are approved in the future. Speaking of education, I'm pleased to report that a 3% salary increase for teachers has been approved over the next biennium. This is something I'm strongly in favor of and was pleased to see included in the final budget compromise. It also includes \$70 million in General Fund dollars to expedite projects in the I-81 Corridor Improvement Plan. Additional language earmarks up to \$175 million from year-end revenue surpluses for the I-81 improvement program.

One item of disappointment was the lack of additional support for the Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP). This program was set up by the General Assembly 25 years ago to provide education benefits to spouses and children of Veterans who are permanently disabled. As passed,

the budget would limit these educational opportunities to an associates or bachelor degrees, when in the past, graduate degrees were also included. The narrowing of benefits has been described by some as necessary due to the rapid growth of the program – it started with 50 beneficiaries and has since grown to over 400 – but this is no excuse to minimize benefits that our veterans and their families have come to rely upon. Restoring and increasing this funding must be an area of focus in future General Assembly sessions to ensure Virginia remains the best state in the nation for Veterans services.

It was not an easy – nor pleasant – process, but the final budget looks like what middle ground should be, with wins and losses for both sides. I am pleased that the core functions of our government will continue to be funded, but it's clear that there is more work to be done in the future.

As the Delegate representing the 42nd House District in the Virginia General Assembly, your concerns are my greatest priority. If ever I may be of assistance to you and your family, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at DeljBallard@House.Virginia.Gov. You can also follow me on Twitter @JasonBallardVA or like my Facebook page, Jason Ballard for Delegate, to keep up to date with what I am doing in Richmond and in our community on your behalf.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

National Law Enforcement Week is observed from May 12 to May 18, 2024, and it is a time to honor, remember, and support our brave police officers who dedicate their lives to protect our communities. I express my heartfelt gratitude to these courageous men and women who serve with professionalism, dedication, valor, and sacrifice. I also extend my appreciation to their families for their sacrifice.

Our law enforcement community is one of our greatest assets and they work

tirelessly with integrity and honor to make a positive difference. They risk their lives every day to keep us safe and secure.

As community leaders, they serve on and off duty, whether coaching life skills and character through sports, mentoring to youth groups or building lasting positive relationships with students as school resource officers. In addition, police officers volunteer in our schools, churches, fire and rescue departments, and non-profit organizations. They collaborate with our business communities to strengthen

economic wellness and growth.

For those who swear an oath, police work is not just a job; it's a calling, a resolve to serve and protect. These courageous officers are devoted to upholding our freedoms and Constitutional rights, even if it means making the ultimate sacrifice. Sadly, according to the Officer Down Memorial Page, there were 137 line-of-duty deaths in the country in 2023, and so far, this year, 56 officers have been killed in the line-of-duty.

As we honor all who serve and have served, let us never forget to pay tribute

and remember our fallen officers and their families. In Montgomery County, we remember Christiansburg Police Officer Terry Griffith, Christiansburg Police Officer Scott Hyton, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Corporal Eric Sutphin, and Virginia Tech Police Officer Deriek Crouse for their ultimate sacrifice.

I encourage everyone to reflect on our freedoms and to remember and honor our law enforcement officers.

*Sherri Blevins
Christiansburg*

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Awards from page 1



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROTARY CLUB OF CHRISTIANBURG-BLACKSBURG

The Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg recognized the top 5% of juniors from Montgomery County High Schools for their academic achievement at their annual Youth Award ceremony on May 6.

Montgomery High School received this award.

Academic Achievement Awards were presented to the top 5% of the junior class based on grade point average to Madison Booth, McKenzie Booth, Tanyon Cauley, Callie Gallimore, and Shane Riggins of Auburn High School; Sephr Agah, Tea Bissell, Anthony Du, Clara Guo, Tess Larsen, Grace Lee, Alexander Li, Marina Li, Radia Lu, Max Matthews, Thomas Monaghan, Minh Nguyen, Emily Paul, Abigail Schnitz, Joshua Shi, Kyler Williams,

and Elizabeth Zhang, of Blacksburg High School; Cole Abbott, Cole Arnold, Dalton Arnold, Ainsley Altizer, Lucile Burningham, Gracie Conner, Nora Cross, Bryson Fisher, Norah Hall, Abigail Hewitt, Micah Newcomb, Bisan Rai, Ava Rose, Samuel Seife, Alexandria Swenson, Micaiah Widrig, Benjamin Willey, and Cosette Williams of Christiansburg High School; and Olivia Wilbon, Gracie Walthall, and Meghan Kidwell of Eastern Montgomery High School.

The Rotary Club of Christiansburg-

Blacksburg celebrated 100 years of Service Above Self in 2023. The Rotary Youth Awards, Professional Leadership and Citizen of the Year Awards, youth development programs, and community service projects, as well as participation in Rotary International programs such as PolioPlus exemplify this motto. For more information, find @ChristiansburgBlacksburgRotary on Facebook.

Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg

CROSSWORD

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CLUES ACROSS

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

LEGAL NOTICE
A public auction will be held on Wednesday May 29, 2024 at 10 a.m. at Grand Storage of Vinton 1119 Vinyard Rd, Vinton, VA 24179, to sell personal property in the following units: Matthew Bowden C27 Loretta Dooley C34

Help Wanted - General

HELP WANTED
Part-time Minister at Snowville Christian Church, Disciples of Christ For more information email: office@snowvillechristianchurch.com or call 540.320.1194

Help Wanted - Software Engineer

Software Engineer, Autonomy TORC Robotics, Inc. seeks a Software Engineer, Autonomy, in Blacksburg, VA.
However, this is a telecommuting/work-from-home position whereby the employee may reside anywhere within the U.S. This position will be responsible for various software development and engineering activities supporting the delivery of autonomy algorithm software to the overall system solution within an autonomy software algorithms components; perform software development activities such as software architecture, design, coding, unit testing, integration, deployment, and maintenance within their assigned autonomy algorithms software component, among other duties. Up to 10% domestic travel required per year. Any applicant who is interested in this position should email their resume to careers@torc.ai. Reference job number 750.

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Legals - City of Salem

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the Board of Appeals (Building) of the City of Salem, Virginia will hold a public hearing,

in accordance with the provisions of Section 18-38 Code of City of Salem, Virginia, on May 29, 2024, at 4:00pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia. The purpose of the meeting and hearing shall be to determine if certain structures are dangerous to the inhabitants of the City and whether such structures should be ordered to be repaired or demolished. The structures are located as follows:

- (1) Dilapidated accessory structure located at 702 Front Avenue, Salem, Virginia (Tax Map # 201 - 10 - 2)

All parties in interest at the public hearings will be given an opportunity to be heard, present evidence, and show cause why action by the City and Board to remedy a potentially dangerous situation should or should not be granted. For additional information, contact the Building Official's Office, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia (Phone 375-3036).

THE BOARD OF BUILDING APPEALS OF THE CITY OF SALEM
BY Troy D. Loving
Troy D. Loving, Building Official

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the Council of the City of Salem, at its regular meeting on May 28th, 2024 at 6:30 p.m., in Council Chambers of the City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, will hold a public hearing to consider the sale of a portion of Tax Map # 91-1-2.1 consisting of an approximate 867 square feet; together with a permanent drainage easement consisting of an approximate 1,139 square feet; together with a temporary easement consisting of an approximate 1,499 square feet, to the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Transportation.

Questions concerning the proposed sale may be addressed to the office of the City Manager, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia, at 540-375-3016.

At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard relative to the said request.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA
H. Robert Light
Clerk of Salem City Council

Legals - Montgomery County

Order of Publication
Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316.20-104
Case No. **CL23001539-00**
MONTGOMERY COUNTY Circuit Court, 55 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 1, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073 Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* REBECCA LYNN AKERS BOYD v. TIMOTHY RALPH BOYD
The object of this suit is to: DIVORCE. It is ORDERED that TIMOTHY RALPH BOYD appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before JUNE 26, 2024.
April 22, 2024
Robert M.D. Turk, JUDGE

RESOLUTION SETTING RATE SCHEDULE AND AUTHORIZING PUBLIC HEARING

PROPOSED RESOLUTION:
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montgomery County Public Service Authority does hereby agree to set the following proposed preliminary schedule fixing and classifying rates, fees, and charges for water and sewer service:

WATER RATE
Proposed 9.99% Increase
From: \$13.11 to \$14.42 per 1,000 gallons

SEWER RATE
Proposed 1.44% Increase
From: \$10.40 to \$10.55 per 1,000 gallons

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Montgomery County Public Service Authority, that the Public Service Authority hereby authorizes the Director to advertise a public hearing in accordance with Section 15.2-5136G of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, to be held on June 05, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke Street, Board Room, in order to receive citizen comments on the preliminary schedule fixing and classifying rates, fees and charges for water and sewer service.

Notice of Public Hearing Town of Blacksburg Planning Commission Tuesday, June 4, 2024

Notice is hereby given that the Planning Commission of the Town of Blacksburg will conduct the following public hearings on Tuesday, June 4, 2024 during its meeting beginning at 6:30 PM in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Council Chamber, 300 South Main St, Blacksburg, VA on the following item:

RZN-24-1/ORD 2051- Request for an amendment to previous rezoning RZN 19-0002/ORD 1895 on 33.87 acres at the former Old Blacksburg High School site at 520 Patrick Henry Drive (Tax Map Numbers: 227-A 4, 227-A 4C and 227-A 4D) by Balzer and Associates (applicant) for HSI Development LLC and the Town of Blacksburg (property owners). Requested amendment applies to an 11.15 acre portion of the 33.87 site. The request alters unit mix, layout, density and circulation on the site, and also includes changes to the proffer statement. A maximum of 73 townhomes is proposed (6.6 units per acre); this is a reduction from 100 townhomes previously approved by RZN 19-0002/ORD 1895. The maximum number of bedrooms proposed is 284 (approximately 26 bedrooms per acre), which

Legals - Montgomery County

is less than the 30 bedroom-per-acre density approved in RZN 19-0002/ORD 1895. The Future Land Use Designation for this parcel is Medium Density Residential, which allows up to 10 units per acre, or up to 20 bedrooms per acre for multifamily use, whichever is less. This proposed density represents an increase over the residential density envisioned in the future land use designation.

CUP-24-1-Conditional Use Permit Request for a drive-in restaurant in the GC-General Commercial zoning district on 1.02 acres at 1421 South Main Street (Tax Map Nos. 287-22 1-5 & 287-22 102-105) by Balzer and Associates, LLC (applicant) for Blacksburg Square, LLC (owner).

This is a request for a drive-thru coffee shop for Seven Brew Coffee. There will be no exterior speaker boards, internal seating, or customer parking proposed on the site. The proposed site will contain two structures for the main coffee stand and a freezer building with three wraparound drive-thru lanes. Two entrances will be from the existing Blacksburg Square shopping center parking lot, with one entrance off of Ardmore Street. The existing single family home and driveway at 1421 South Main Street will be demolished. The Future Land Use (FLU) is Commercial and Mixed Use E.

ROW-24-1/ORD 2055- Request to vacate approximately 111,464 square feet of unbuilt right-of-way at the end of Progress Street by James Taylor of Balzer & Associates (applicant) on behalf of S & S Construction, LLC and CC & B Development, LLC (property owners).

This request will vacate approximately 114,464 square feet (2.63 acres) of Town-owned Right-of-Way at the end of Progress Street NW (adjacent to Tax Parcels 166-A 4C; 166-17 B; 166-17 A; 166-10 A & 166-10 B) known as future Progress Street. The future Progress Street ROW is current unbuilt. The application also includes dedication of approximately 138,158 square feet of right-of-way to accommodate realignment of the future roadway. The request also includes vacation of several utility easements, access easements, and a trail easement. The process will include dedication of a new public utility easement and a new greenway easement. The existing trail would be relocated as part of subdivision of the adjacent tax parcels.

AFD-24-1/ORD 2052- Withdrawal of 3.036 acres of land from the Agricultural and Forestal District at 701 Bishop Road (Tax Map No. 137-T-A-1, Parcel # 006339) by James and Carol Burger (property owner).

Request to withdraw 3.036 acres of land from the Town of Blacksburg Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD) at 701 Bishop Road by James and Carol Burger. A minor subdivision application (SUB 23-0006) for the creation of three (3) parcels is currently under review by the Planning and Engineering Departments.

Persons affected by or interested in the rezoning or right-of-way vacation requests, the conditional use permit request or Agricultural and Forestal District withdrawal may appear and present their views. After hearing, the Planning Commission may take action. Copies of the requests and all related items may be found online at www.blacksburg.gov/public hearings or reviewed in person at the Blacksburg Planning and Building Department, 400 South Main Street, Blacksburg,

Legals - Montgomery County

Virginia. You may also call the office at (540) 443-1300 for more information. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in the public hearing on the above should contact the Planning & Building Department at (540) 443-1300, or (540)-443-1000-TDD.

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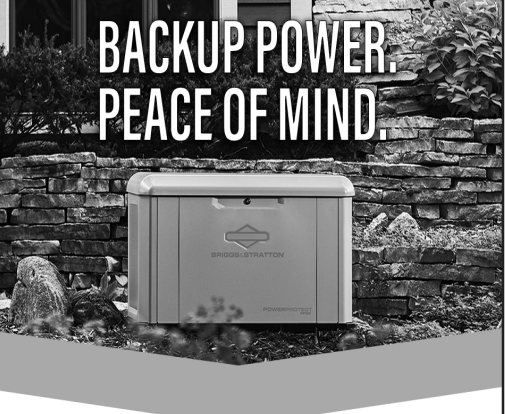
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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Weekly reports: Lady Bruins regular season, tourney champs



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL

Both the boy's and girl's track teams claimed this past week's Mt. Empire District outdoor meet. The Auburn boys outraced Giles 156 to 99 with George Wythe third with 90 points. The Auburn girls scored 198 points to second place Ft. Chiswell's 95 and third place Giles' 93 points.

The Blacksburg High School girls' soccer team won the River Ridge District Tournament Friday night with a 4-0 win over Salem at Thompson Field at Virginia Tech.

Erin Bishop had two goals with Isabel Vikesland and Tasia Marmagas also scoring. This was the third time this season Blacksburg has defeated Salem.

Blacksburg improves to 15-0-2 on the season and Salem concludes the season

at 9-8.
Auburn wins MED baseball title
On a rainy night in Bland, the Eagles won the MED Tournament with a rain shortened 4-1 victory over Ft. Chiswell.

The Eagles scored four in the bottom of the first on a 2-run double by Brady Hale and a 2-run single by Zac McGlothlin.

Jared Lavergne singled in the third to extend his consecutive on base streak to 20. His streak did end in the fourth on a



PHOTO BY JON FLEMING

Blacksburg's Erin Bishop scored twice in a 4-0 win over Salem on Friday for the River Ridge District Championship.

groundout. Lavergne also picked up the win in relief throwing 3 1/3 scoreless and hitless innings with two walks and three strikeouts.

The Eagles begin Region C play on Thursday when they will host an opponent yet to be determined.

Auburn soccer teams advance

In was an all-Auburn semis in Mt. Empire District play. The Auburn girls' downed Galax 8-0 to advance to the championship match.

Senior Logan Mundy had three goals and three assists. Senior Katie Light had three goals and two Assists. Senior

goalkeeper Jose Agee-Helms recorded the shutout. Auburn is now 14-4 overall on the season.

Meanwhile it took a shootout with Giles, but the boys' soccer team pulled out a 1-0 win in two overtimes to advance to the MED championship game.

Auburn Senior goalkeeper Coahan Gordon kept a shutout through regulation, two over times and then made stops in three of the four Giles County PK attempts to seal the Auburn victory.

Staff report



PHOTO COURTESY OF CONCORD ATHLETICS

Drew Bailey

Christiansburg native named new Concord coach

Concord University has selected former Bluefield State head coach Drew Bailey as the next CU head baseball coach, co-athletic directors Luke Duffy and Tesla Southcott announced Thursday.

Bailey, a former standout on the mound for the Mountain Lions, succeeds his college coach Kevin Garrett in the dugout at Anderson Field.

In four seasons at Bluefield State, Bailey compiled a record of 95-79, highlighted by the most successful season in program history as BSU went 33-15 this spring and won its second HBCU World Series last week in Montgomery, Alabama—the second such title in the last four seasons. Under Bailey's guidance, Bluefield State steadily improved from 15 wins in his first season to the program-record 33 wins.

"I would like to thank President Boggess, co-athletic directors Luke Duffy and Tesla Southcott and the hiring committee for giving me the opportunity to be the next head baseball coach at Concord University," Bailey said. "I am very fortunate to be presented with the opportunity to return to my alma mater and lead a group of young men at a place that helped mold me into the person I am today.

"I'd also like to thank my wife for all of her support and always being by my side. Bluefield State gave me an opportunity to become a head coach again and for that I am forever thankful and will always cherish my four seasons there," Bailey concluded.

While Bluefield State was Bailey's most recent head coaching stop, the Christiansburg native brings nine years of coaching experience to Athens. From 2014-17, Bailey was an assistant coach at Bluefield University where he helped the Rams to a 32-21 record in his final season. The first head coaching opportunity Bailey received was for the 2018 season at Division III Averett University in Danville, Virginia.

Beginning in 2018, Bailey was the head softball coach at Bluefield University. After his stint as the head softball coach in Bluefield, Virginia, Bailey was a volunteer assistant coach

for Concord during the fall of 2020 before being hired away by Bluefield State in January 2021.

"I'm excited for Coach Bailey to return to his alma mater, a place where he succeeded as a player," Southcott said. "His playing and coaching experience speaks for itself and is only magnified by the 30-win season that Bluefield State had this year. He will only heighten the expectations of a program that has seen a great deal of success over the last 25 years.

"Coach Bailey is a great recruiter off the field and he will find great young men that are not only good players, but guys that fit the culture of Concord University."

On Bailey's watch, the Big Blues set program records for pitcher strikeouts and stolen bases in 2023. He also coached BSU's first two all-region players in program history (Tahir Meulens and Jordan Varela-Payne) last spring.

"I am excited to get to work and continue to build on what Kevin Garrett has built here in Athens for so many years," Bailey said. "I won't take this opportunity for granted and will see to it that we produce the best product on the field possible, but more importantly our guys graduate and are prepared for the real world when they leave Concord."

As a player for Concord from 2008-10, Bailey was named All-WVIAC Second Team twice and was the program leader in saves until the 2022 season. Additionally, Bailey was inducted into the Concord Hall of Fame in 2017. He helped the Mountain Lions to a national ranking in 2008 and capped his career by being drafted by the Oakland Athletics in the 35th round of the 2010 MLB Amateur Draft.

Bailey spent parts of two seasons in the Athletics' farm system, making it to low-A ball in 2011. With the Vermont Lake Monsters, he posted a 5-0 record with a 2.34 ERA in 42.1 innings in 2011. From 2012-13, the newest CU head coach pitched in two different independent leagues, the American Association and Frontier League.

Concord Athletics

RU's Roberts earns player of the year

The Big South Conference recently announced Wedne three Highlanders have been named to all-conference end of year awards highlighted by Lexie Roberts being named Player of the Year.

Roberts was also named to first-team all-conference and all-academic while Kari Shedrick, Abby Wilson and Rachel Smith also earned all-conference honors.

Roberts becomes the first Highlander since 2012 to earn the conference's coveted Player of the Year nod. Leading off the top of the order for the Highlanders all season, she set top marks in the Big South for steals, hits, batting average and runs. Those same marks were all top-10 single season records in Highlander program history as well. Her 29 stolen bases rank 15th in the nation.

That wasn't the only award the sophomore took home as she also earned first team all-conference honors and the all-academic award. In conference play, she reached base in 13 of 18 games hitting .475 over 18 games which was a by-far best mark in the Big South. Her 16 runs and 3 triples also rank best in the conference. Roberts was perfect in center field, committing zero errors on 89 chances. Off the field, she's achieved a 4.0 GPA as a sports management major so far in her career.

Shedrick had a break-out year for the Highlanders and made the conference's all-conference lists for the first time in her career landing on the second team. Leading the power department, she slugged a career-high eight home runs and nine doubles. Her four homers inside Big South play rank tied for second. Shedrick was a primary source of Radford's offense as she finished the year with 31 RBI, 20 of which came in conference play which led the Big South. Her .759 slugging percentage against Big South foes also led the conference.

The preseason all-conference member was as-advertised for the Highlanders all season and made her debut on the conference's postseason awards list on the second team. Wilson split time for the Highlanders in the DP spot and as a catcher. Defensively, she set a career-high for fielding percentage at .989. She struck home 27 RBI tying her previous career-best while hitting a new career-best six home runs and 12 doubles.

The beat went on for Smith this year as she earned honorable mention honors from the Big South. The junior had a power surge to the tune of a career-high eight home runs on the season. Three of those home runs came in conference play, which ranked tied for fifth-most. Her season batting average, hits, and doubles were all also career-best marks in her third season at Radford. On the base paths, she was a perfect 11-11 swiping four of those bags in Big South games.

2024 BIG SOUTH CONFERENCE SOFTBALL AWARD WINNERS
FIRST-TEAM ALL-CONFERENCE

- OF - Lexie Roberts, Soph., Radford
- OF - Denver Lauer, Jr., USC Upstate
- OF - Lauren Fox, Sr., Longwood
- 1B - Sophia Knock, Soph., Longwood
- 2B - KaDedra Temple, Gr., Winthrop
- SS - Lauren Taylor, Gr., Longwood
- 3B - Celeste Delorenzo, Sr., USC Upstate
- C - Gracie Prince, Jr., Charleston Southern
- P - Nealy Lamb, Fr., Charleston Southern
- P - Reese Basinger, Jr., Winthrop
- DP - Andrea Lyon, Gr., Gardner-Webb
- UTL - Megan Powell, Jr., Winthrop
- Second-Team All-Conference
- OF - Emily Vinson, Jr., Longwood
- OF - Kayley DeVivi, Sr., Longwood
- OF - Adrienne Visintine, Gr., Gardner-Webb
- 1B - Kari Shedrick, Jr., Radford
- 2B - Maddy Lee, Soph., Charleston Southern
- SS - Alanna Deal, Jr., USC Upstate
- 3B - Korynna Anderson, Gr., Longwood
- C - Abby Wilson, Gr., Radford
- P - Sierra Maness, Fr., USC Upstate
- P - Maggie Chapin, Soph., Longwood
- DP - Carsten Sandvig, Fr., Charleston Southern
- UTL - Kasey Wolfe, Fr., Presbyterian
- Honorable Mention All-Conference
- BriAnna Brooks, OF, R-Soph., Charleston Southern
- Rachel Smith, SS, Jr., Radford
- Peyton Rivas, OF, R-Sr., Winthrop
- Annicka McLaughlin, 2B, Soph., Gardner-Webb
- Abigail Pippen, C, Soph., USC Upstate
- All-Freshman Team
- Nealy Lamb, P, Charleston Southern
- Sierra Maness, P, USC Upstate
- Abby Polk, 2B, USC Upstate
- Kasey Wolfe, UTL, Presbyterian
- Carsten Sandvig, DP, Charleston Southern
- Maggie Hiatt, C, Longwood
- Cierra Gawryluk, P, Longwood
- All-Academic Team
- Annah Junge, P, Gr., Charleston Southern
- Andrea Lyon, P/OF, Gr., Gardner-Webb
- Korynna Anderson, 3B, Gr., Longwood
- Kaitlyn Tucker, 2B, Sr., Presbyterian College
- Lexie Roberts, OF, Soph., Radford
- Cassie Norris, 1B, Sr., USC Upstate
- Reese Basinger, P, Jr., Winthrop
- Player of the Year
- Lexie Roberts, OF, Soph., Radford
- Pitcher of the Year
- Nealy Lamb, Fr., Charleston Southern
- Newcomer of the Year
- Megan Powell, UTL, Jr., Winthrop
- Freshman of the Year
- Nealy Lamb, Fr., Charleston Southern
- Coach of the Year
- Chris Hawkins, USC Upstate

Radford University Athletics

Hokie signs professional soccer contract

Goalkeeper Alia Skinner joins a revered list of Virginia Tech women's soccer alumni competing at the professional level signing a contract with Brommapojkarna in Stockholm, Sweden.

"The opportunity to sign with Brommapojkarna (BP) has been a dream come true," said Alia Skinner. "My entire life I have been dreaming of playing professionally and to sign my first contract, truly means the world to me. The opportunity to start my career with a club like BP, and in a city like Stockholm, is such a blessing. I feel so thankful for the opportunity.

"Since my college career ended in November (2023) and I graduated in December, I have been busy training and preparing for the start of my professional career. I have collaborated with my agent to find opportunities worldwide. In February, I was fortunate enough to be called into preseason with the Houston Dash, an NWSL team. I was there for about two months training with the team while my agent was working hard to find me a contract. I then signed my contract with BP at the beginning of April and headed home to Tampa to get ready to make my journey to Stockholm, Sweden."

"We are very excited and proud to see Skinner signed in Sweden," said head coach Chugger Adair. "We have always thought of her as a professional and knew that she would be able to play with the professional ranks. This is exciting for us as a program, and a big congratulations to Alia and her family! We look forward to seeing her play at the professional level for many

more years to come." While at Tech, Skinner tallied 55 career starts, 235 saves, and 14 shutouts. She ended the 2023 season ranked second in saves (79) with a save percentage of .823, and third in shutouts (seven) in the ACC. In 2021, she logged the third most minutes (1,788), fifth most saves (73), and the sixth best save percentage (.760) among ACC goalkeepers. Collected Tech to its first NCAA tournament victory since 2018, chalking four saves during the Hokies' 3-1, opening round win against Ohio State (Nov. 12).

"Playing collegiate soccer allowed me to gain experience and play at a very high level for multiple years," said Skinner. "In Europe, most of the professional clubs have youth academy teams that are run similarly to a professional team. In the states, that isn't the case and to me college soccer sort of took the place of that experience. Arriving to Houston, as well as Sweden, I felt very prepared to jump right into action. Playing in the ACC with Virginia Tech allowed me to grow immensely, gain vital experience, and understand what it means to truly compete for something bigger than yourself."

"Having been in Sweden for a couple weeks now, I have experienced some new and exciting cultural differences, walking and biking everywhere being the main difference in my life so far. Although, IKEA is still the same over here!

Prior to moving here, I had never been to Sweden. However, my grandmother is actually Swedish. I am expecting and excited to visit some family I have never met while I am living over here.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

Former Virginia Tech soccer player Alia Skinner is bound for Sweden to continue her playing career.

Swedish food is something I grew up eating little bits of here and there when my grandmother prepared some of it in the states for us, but having it here is a different experience. Real Swedish meatballs are unbelievable and something worth visiting for!

"Competing in Sweden is comparable to competing anywhere else. You have to show up everyday, put in the work, hope some things on the pitch align, and repeat. Every training matters and even more so, every game matters. In Europe, the leagues run on a promotion / relegation foundation meaning that each season teams get relegated from the top division down and teams get promoted from the lower divisions up. With that pressure added onto our season, it is really important that we use every minute we get on the pitch to work

hard. Every point matters for the season when promotion/relegation time comes in November.

"Playing professional women's soccer has evolved into a legitimate career over the past several decades. Being a college athlete is already an incredible accomplishment and something to hang your hat on, however, if you desire to take your talents further, don't shy away from it. There are so many opportunities worldwide and each year they continue to develop. Moving across the world can definitely be scary, but what I have learned being over here is that soccer is always a constant. It's just a game that people play and love all together worldwide. So if you are able, and hopeful, to play professionally, just do it!"

Virginia Tech Athletics

Blacksburg LAX advances in regional play



Blacksburg's Emeline Swift catches a pass against Hidden Valley in a first-round regional tournament game Friday night.



PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

Blacksburg's Hayli Williams is a member of the Bruins senior class that led to a successful 10-4 regular season and a first-round win over Hidden Valley in the first round of the Region 4D tournament.

Sports notes: ACC baseball tournament set to begin

Coastal Division champion North Carolina and Atlantic Division champion Clemson are the top two seeds for the 2024 Atlantic Coast Conference Baseball Championship, which got underway Tuesday, May 21, and runs through Sunday, May 26, at Truist Field in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The championship will feature a pool-play format, leading into a four-team, single-elimination bracket to determine the league champion.

A consensus top 10 team in the country in the most recent national polls, North Carolina (41-12, 22-8 ACC) earned the No. 1 overall seed and will headline Pool A. The Tar Heels will be joined by eighth-seeded Wake Forest (36-19, 15-15) and 12th-seeded Pittsburgh (26-26, 10-20).

Atlantic Division champion and No. 2-seed Clemson (40-13, 20-10) will be the top seed in Pool B, along with seventh-seeded Louisville (32-22, 16-14) and 11th-seeded Miami (24-29, 11-19).

Earning the No. 3 seed, NC State (32-19, 18-11) is joined in Pool C by No. 6-seed Duke (35-18, 16-14) and No. 10-seed Virginia Tech (32-20, 14-16).

No. 4-seed Virginia (40-14, 18-12) drew the top seed in Pool D, which also features No. 5-seed Florida State (39-14, 17-12) and No. 9-seed Georgia Tech (31-21, 15-15).

Each team in the four pools will play one game against each of the other two opponents in its pool Tuesday through

Friday (May 21-24). The four teams with the best records within their respective pools will advance to Saturday's semifinals, with the winners playing on Sunday in the ACC Championship Game.

Highlander on second team

The National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) announced all-region teams Thursday afternoon revealing that Lexie Roberts has earned yet another impressive award being named to the Mid-Atlantic Region's second team.

Roberts is the first Radford University Highlander since 2022 to earn a selection to an NFCA regional team, and the sixth player overall to do so. Roberts was previously named Big South Player of the Year, a member of the first-team all-conference and all-academic teams.

This past season, she set top marks in the Big South for steals, hits, batting average and runs. Those same marks were all top-10 single season records in Highlander program history as well.

Her 29 stolen bases ranked 15th in the nation during the regular season. Roberts was perfect in center field, committing zero errors on 89 chances. Off the field, she's achieved a 4.0 GPA as a sports management so far in her career.

RU left out of tourney

For the first time in program history, Presbyterian College is the No. 1 seed in the Big South Baseball Championship following the conclusion of the regular season this afternoon. The Blue Hose clinched their first outright Big South regular-season championship since becoming league members in 2007 and are seeking their second Big South Tournament title and first since 2021. The top four

teams in the final standings qualify for the league's postseason championship, which will be contested May 23-25 at Truist Point in High Point, N.C.

Presbyterian won the regular-season crown after finishing 18-6 (.750 winning percentage) in league play, while High Point is the No. 2 seed after finishing second at 17-7 (.708 winning percentage). USC Upstate posted a 16-8 record to earn the No. 3 seed, while Charleston Southern clinched the No. 4 and final seed in this year's tournament at 12-12.

Doyle named director of recruiting

Virginia Tech women's basketball head coach Megan Duffy tabbed Kathleen Doyle as the program's director of recruiting and player personnel Friday.

The 2020 Big Ten Player of the Year, Doyle averaged a career-high 18.1 points, 4.6 rebounds and 6.3 assists while starting all 30 games for the Hawkeyes during the 2019-20 season. Doyle was named third team AP All-American and started 114 of 123 games played with Iowa from 2016-20.

A second-round selection of the 2020 WNBA Draft, Doyle played for the Indiana Fever for one season before playing abroad in Poland for AZS AJP Gorzow and later in Turkey with Bursaspor and Botas Spor through the 2023 season.

At Tech, she will assist with coordinating on an off campus recruiting operations, on-court basketball development, scouting, analytics, camps and student-athlete development program. She was a three-time academic All-American and graduated with bachelor's degrees in journalism and Spanish from Iowa in 2020.

Staff report

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