



## Local, district Rotary clubs provide wheelchairs to people in need *Club members recently returned from distributing chairs in Ecuador*

**Heather Bell**  
Editor

Mary Alice Barksdale, of the Radford Noon Rotary Club, and two members of the Blacksburg Rotary Club recently returned from a trip to Ecuador to distribute life-changing wheelchairs.

“Rotary Districts 7570 and 7360 collaborated with the Wheelchair Foundation and Rotary Clubs in Guayaquil and Cuenca to provide 270 wheelchairs to those in need,” said Barksdale. “I’ve been profoundly impacted by my involvement in this project and feel that I no longer wish

to go on vacations to see parts of the country and the world that I haven’t seen simply for the pleasure of seeing them. I only want to go on “vacations” in which there is some type of giving back mission. Seeing places is great and I’ve seen much of the world. If I’m going to see more places, I want to see them in combination with helping others. I had no idea of the desperate need for wheelchairs worldwide before becoming involved.”

Barksdale explained Rotary Districts 7570 and 7610 collect the funding for half of one container of wheelchairs (about 265-270).

“We send the funds to the Wheelchair

Foundation, who matches what we have contributed,” she said. “The Wheelchair Foundation orders the container of wheelchairs to be made in China. The container is shipped directly to the country where the chairs will be distributed, so we avoid entry fees in the US and then the country we are going to.”

Barksdale said Rotary Clubs in the country they are visiting make the arrangements to collect and store the wheelchairs and members of those clubs identify people in the community who

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PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY ALICE BARKSDALE  
**Mary Alice Barksdale, a member of the Radford Noon Rotary Club, along with other Rotary members, puts a smile on the face of one of the people who received a wheelchair.**

## Christiansburg and Blacksburg celebrate the Fourth of July with a bang



**Festivalgoers dance in the street in Christiansburg on Independence Day.**

**Angelica Ramos**  
Contributing writer

MONTGOMERY Co. - The towns of Christiansburg and Blacksburg celebrated Independence Day with their residents with fireworks and a day full of events.

Christiansburg started the day with their annual 4th of July Festival on Main Street in Christiansburg. The event began at 10 a.m. and went well into the evening with live music and vendors from around Montgomery County. The

fair had a Grub Zone for popular food vendors like The Taco ‘Bout and Space Rabbit Coffee. There was also a kids section that had a clown, face painting and Christiansburg Fire and EMS trucks for the little ones and the young at heart to enjoy. The live music had something for everyone with local bands like Solacousix, Lonesome Heart and Isaac Hayden. Residents were encouraged to walk around or bring their own chairs to watch the music. Some residents even danced in the street



PHOTOS BY ANGELICA RAMOS

**Fireworks light up the sky on the Fourth of July.**

to the live music and in celebration of the holiday.

Blacksburg hosted their annual Downtown Parade sponsored by the Mount Tabor Ruritans at 2 p.m. The parade started on Eheart Street,

went through Main Street Blacksburg and ended on Alumni Mall. This year’s theme was “A Child’s Fourth of July.” The parade hosted marchers,

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PHOTO BY RAY MEESE FOR VIRGINIA TECH

**Virginia Tech's Holtzman Alumni Center**

## Five appointed to Virginia Tech Board of Visitors

Gov. Glenn Youngkin recently named five appointees to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.

They are Starlette Barker Johnson of Dallas, Texas; Ryan McCarthy of Mclean, Virginia; Jim Miller of Waterford, Virginia; J. Pearson of Fort Myers Beach, Florida; and Jeanne Stosser of Blacksburg, Virginia.

“Our new board members possess a broad range of experience and expertise that will be especially valuable as we explore the best ways to serve the commonwealth in the years ahead,” said Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. “We look forward to working with them to elevate our university’s global distinction, while providing an outstanding university experience that is accessible and affordable for Virginia families.”

Johnson is board chair for Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory and serves on the board for Jack’s Family Restaurant Group. She has held leadership positions with global brands throughout her career, including director of finance at KFC, president and chief operating officer of Dave & Buster’s, and executive president and chief strategic officer for Brinker International. Johnson earned a bachelor’s in finance from Virginia Tech and an MBA from Duke University. She is a member of the university’s Ut Prosim, Legacy, and

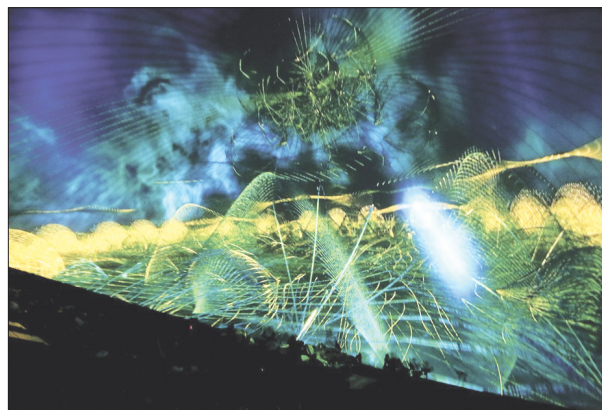
Pylon societies of donors; chaired the Virginia Tech Foundation Board; and has served on the Advisory Council and Cabinet and the Hospitality and Tourism Management Advisory Board for the Pamplin College of Business.

McCarthy was U.S. Secretary of the Army from 2019 to 2021. Prior to that, he was appointed by both Presidents Bush and Obama as the special assistant to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. McCarthy served in the 75th Ranger Regiment during the United States invasion of Afghanistan. In 2019, he was inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame. McCarthy’s private sector career includes working at HSBC and at Lockheed Martin. As a Lockheed Martin vice president, he was responsible for the sustainment, customer solutions, and program integration of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. McCarthy earned a bachelor’s degree in history from the Virginia Military Institute and an MBA from the University of Maryland.

Miller has spent the majority of his career supporting the United States intelligence community and Department of Defense. He has founded and served as president and CEO of four companies since 2002, most recently Quantum Leap, which

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## Mesmerica 360 coming to Radford University Planetarium



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MESMERICA

**Mesmerica 360, a stunning sensory journey bringing together the music of award-winning composer James Hood with visually-hypnotic animated 3D art curated from artists around the world, is coming to the Radford University Planetarium next week.**

RADFORD - Mesmerica 360, a stunning sensory journey bringing together the music of award-winning composer James Hood with visually-hypnotic animated 3D art curated from artists around the world, is coming to the Radford University Planetarium next week.

The show is now breaking all existing records for full-dome/planetarium music shows.

The show is a 360° light and sound projection spectacle creating

a family-friendly experience designed to transcend time and create an environment in which to relax while simultaneously captivating the senses. It’s a combination which has audiences coming to experience it time and again.

“The power of immersive music and art is like no other art form, it has the ability to create unique moods and brain states, and we’re so thrilled and honored to be able to showcase this full-dome

presentation in such wonderful venues as the planetariums,” said creator James Hood.

The show will be shown at the Radford University Planetarium July 12 and 13 at 5 p.m., 6:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets from \$20 at <https://tickets.mesmerica.com/radford/>.

Mesmerica is suitable for all ages six and above with a running time of approximately 60 minutes.

Mesmerica

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Wednesday, July 10:

### 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>.

### Market Square Jam

Blacksburg's Market Square Jam is an official Crooked Road affiliated venue that provides fun and entertainment on Wednesday evenings, June through September. The Jam takes place at Market Square Park from 7-9 p.m. For more information and a list of hosts, please visit [blacksburg.gov/marketsquarejam](http://blacksburg.gov/marketsquarejam).

## Thursday, July 11:

### Thursday night indoor concerts

Two indoor concerts will be offered, including one community sing event. Concerts will be held at the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church, 701 Church St. SE.

"Shakespeare's Music," July 11 - A concert of music inspired by Shakespeare.

"A Treasury of English Music," July 25 - Music by Handel, Purcell, and others. This event is a community sing. Rehearsals began on July 1. Contact the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church to get involved.

## Saturday, July 13:

### Fish Fry

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its July Fish Fry, 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. Adults- \$12, children under 12- \$6, under 3-free, carry-outs- \$12. This month, the Panjammers Steel Drum Orchestra will be playing. Held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at

## Wheelchairs

from page 1

are most in need of new wheelchairs.

"When we arrive, we pay our own hotels and meals, otherwise, we could not give out so many wheelchairs," she said. "The clubs in the target country really want representatives from the US clubs to come and be involved in distributions, in part because it makes the gift of a wheelchair more highly valued than an unknown giver from a US organization."

Barksdale said the day after their arrival, they begin traveling to locations and distributing the wheelchairs to the people that have been identified as needing them. She said the need is overwhelming.

"We have had hundreds of children brought in who have been carried every moment of their lives by parents and other family members, people who have lived their lives on crutches or with canes, people in modified strollers and office chairs, and some people arrive in wheelchairs that are decrepit, held together with duct tape," she said. "For about seven days, we travel to locations by bus and distribute wheelchairs."

This was Barksdale's second trip to distribute wheelchairs, and another may be planned for this fall.

"Last year, we were in Jamaica, this spring Ecuador, in the fall there will be a trip to Bolivia if enough funding is there," she said. "They are planned one at a time, always a collaboration between Rotarians in Districts 7570 and 7360, the Rotary Clubs in the country we will visit, and the Wheelchair Association."

Barksdale, who has been a Rotary Club member since 2009, was not the only New River Valley resident to go on the trip. Christy Brown and 90-year-old Walter Pirie, both members of the Blacksburg Rotary Club, also participated in the trip and have been involved with the effort for

the past two years.

Barksdale said she has a lot of personal reasons to help people receive the wheelchairs they need. "Grandmother Barksdale in Gary, West Virginia lost her right leg to bone cancer at age 16," said Barksdale. "She lived her life on crutches until she was finally able to get a wheelchair at age 65. Wheelchairs weren't affordable and weren't covered by health insurance programs for coal miners' families."

"Grandmother St. Clair spent much of her final 20 years in wheelchairs, living to age 96," she continued. "My mother had her right leg amputated and lived her final years in wheelchairs. She was lucky enough to get a rechargeable motorized one that my brother found on Craig's list. An electronic wheelchair wasn't covered for mom by Medicare."

Barksdale said he travels have also taken her to places where the need for wheelchairs is great.

"[I've had] many years of observing survivors of polio in Malawi, who spent their lives crawling because their legs couldn't support their trunks," she said. "I never saw a single wheelchair in Malawi. Many hospitals and clinics didn't have doctors available on a regular basis."

"Also, during a Fulbright Scholar opportunity in South Africa, I saw many people in the townships, including children, who were carried everywhere they went in their lives," she added. "These children didn't go to school because classrooms had 40 or more students with one teacher, and there was no one who could provide support for children who needed to be carried."

To make a donation to the effort, log on to <https://fundraise.wheelchairfoundation.org/give/504194/#!/donation/checkout>.

MtTaborRuritan.

### 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, July 14:

### 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/](http://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com/vintage-market/).

## Thursday, July 18:

### Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Italian Family Restaurant on 3204 Riner Road. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. Member Seth Gravely will speak on the "29th Virginia Infantry Regiment". For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

## Monday, July 22:

### Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

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.

## Tuesday, July 23:

### 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.

## On-going:

### Applications open for healthcare workshop for people with disabilities

Individuals with disabilities who live in Radford City and Floyd County can apply for a program presented by the New River Valley Disability Resource Center. "Improving Health Literacy Through Technology" is a program help people with disabilities gain better access to healthcare. Participants receive a free iPad after completing six weekly, one-hour workshops exploring how to use technology to take better control of health and social support needs. Workshops run Aug. 1 through Sept. 5. Applications available at [www.nrvdc.org](http://www.nrvdc.org) or by calling 540-266-1435 or email at [outreach@nrvdc.org](mailto:outreach@nrvdc.org), and at the Radford and Floyd libraries. The application deadline is Fri., July 12.



The local Rotary districts provided 270 wheelchairs in their most recent distribution trip.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARY ALICE BARKSDALE

Many of the recipients are getting their first-ever wheelchair through the project.

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# OBITUARIES

## Shelor, Thelma J.



Thelma J. Shelor, 91, of Warm Hearth Village, Blacksburg, passed away peacefully into the arms of Jesus, Wednesday night, July 3, 2024.

Thelma was born Feb. 3, 1933, to the late Alvie H. and Hazel W. Jones. She was preceded in death by her husband Kelly Shelor, daughter, Kathy Shelor Bennett, and sisters, Barbara Jones and Bonnie Jones Linkous.

Left to cherish her memory are children Leah Tate (Jessie), Kelly Rex (Doris) Shelor, Dwight "Dickie" (Phyllis) Shelor, Micky Eugene "Gene" (Mary) Shelor, and Crystal Eckberg (Erik); nine grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren; sisters Maggie Alene Jones and Diana Jones; brother-in-law Rev. Buford Linkous; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family and close

friends.

Thelma loved the Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, where she attended all her life and served in many capacities, including Sunday School teacher and Women's Ministries Director for many years. She was also active in community volunteer programs and Red Hat Society. Thelma was a resident of Warm Hearth Village for 24 years where she also took active part in activities and surrounded herself with new friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to:

Women's Ministry of Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, 894 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060; or Warm Hearth Foundation, send donations to the Village Center, 2387 Warm Hearth Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060.

The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff at Kroontje Health Care Center for their care and helpfulness during Thelma's stay. We would also like to thank the Good Sam Hospice staff for their excellent care.

The family received friends Saturday, July 6, 2024, at McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Drive SW, Blacksburg, Virginia, 24060. Funeral services were conducted Sunday, July 7, 2024 in the Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church with the Rev. Richard Hall officiating. Interment followed in the Jennelle Cemetery.

## Rakes, Janice Ann Rupe



Janice Ann Rupe Rakes, 78, of Shawsville, passed away peacefully in her home July 2, 2024 surrounded by her family. She was born in Radford Feb. 23, 1946. She was preceded in death by her parents Henry and Helen Rupe, brother Henry "June" Rupe, sister Diane Murdock, and daughter Kim "Kimmie" Rakes. She is survived by her loving husband of 60 years, George W. "Bill" Rakes; sister Beatrice Linkous and brother Donald "Tony" Rupe; children Lisa Shepherd; Billy Rakes and Hope; Shawn Rakes and Kim; grandchildren Amber Perdue (Daniel), Josh Rakes (Chelsea), Megan Hopkins, and William Rakes; and great-grandchildren Paisley

and Piper Perdue, Steven and Macy Rakes, and John, Theo and Caroline Hopkins.

Janice was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother and she had a special place in her heart for children. She was always kind and would go out of her way to help anyone she could. She loved her family and gave everyone treasures she found just for them while thrifting. She

enjoyed finding beauty in nature especially with her flowers and her yard decorations. Janice carried her sense of humor until the end. She was quick to make you laugh, even without trying. She loved family celebrations, so there is no doubt that she is now celebrating in heaven walking the streets of gold!

Funeral services were conducted Friday, July 5, 2024 at 11 a.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Mike Johnston officiating. Interment followed in the Sunset Cemetery. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Open Door Baptist Church PO Box 2524 Christiansburg, VA 24068.

## Treat, Dawn Carol Gridley

Dawn Carol Gridley Treat, 55, of Max Meadows, passed away Wednesday, July 3, 2024. She was preceded in death by her sister, Beth Lovingood.

Survivors include her daughter, Hannah Riley Gridley; father and stepmother, Donald and Doris Gridley; mother and stepfather, Sharon and Walter Lane; former husband, Michael Treat; puppy, Ani; two nieces

and one great niece; and other relatives and friends.

Services will be private at a later date.

The Treat family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory in Radford.

## Wolfe, Jerry Alvin



Jerry Alvin Wolfe, 71, of Christiansburg, passed away Tuesday, July 2, 2024.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Joe Franklin Wolfe and Maggie Owens Parrish; his brother, Donnie Wolfe; and his sister, Linda Smith.

Survivors include his son and daughter-in-law, Scottie Wolfe (Penny); daughter, Lisa Leftwich; fiancé, Lisa Linkous; grandchildren, Saige, Zeb, Chainey, Tryston, Nacoma, and Sara; great-grandchildren, Case,

Alizah, Adalyn, Caden, Ellington, and Axel Rafe; sister and brother-in-law, Juanita Cochran (Bob); special friends, Larry Knowles and

Frankie Burton; canine companion, Noodles; and many other nieces, nephews, relatives and special friends.

A memorial service was held Friday, July 5, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 in memory of Jerry.

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

## Worthington, Jo Ann



Jo Ann Worthington, 83, of Radford, passed away Friday, July 5, 2024. She was born December 21, 1940. Jo Ann is now in heaven walking with angels, with her beautiful smile and sweet giggles.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 40 years, William Worthington, who passed away June 17, 2024. She was also preceded in death by her brother, John Justice and two sisters, Ada and Shirley.

Survivors include her son, Billy Worthington and daughter-in-law Kathy Worthington; daughter, Kennette Jones; son, Jeff McPeake; daughter, Tammy Dye;

four grandchildren, Koty Jones, Carlie McPeake, Shaelyn Harmon, and Wyatt Harmon; one great granddaughter, Brielle Jones; and Peekaboo, her beloved cat.

Jo Ann Worthington (Jodie) worked at Kmart in Fairlawn for 30 years. She was so proud of all of her customer service

awards and employee of the month awards. She loved all her customers. She loved to fish and could shoot a rifle better than most men. Jodie was a very hard worker and supported her family. She enjoyed being able to be home with her granddaughter, Carlie, and watching her grow up.

Services were held at the church she loved so much, River City Christian Church, 1301 West Main St. Radford VA, 24141, on Tuesday, July 9, 2024.

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

# Paralyzed Veterans of America Kicks Off Annual Food City / Richard Petty fundraiser

### In-Store donation drive through July 30, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Paralyzed Veterans of America — the nation's premier nonprofit of choice for disabled Veterans, their families, and caregivers — today launched its annual in-store checkout campaign with long-time partner Food City and seven-time NASCAR champion Richard Petty. The promotion helps PVA ensure disabled veterans receive the benefits they earned, the specialized health care they need, the meaningful careers they want, and more. Since 2011, Food City has raised nearly \$3.69 million dollars, with last year's campaign raising nearly half a million dollars for PVA.

Customers can select \$1, \$3, or \$5 donations at Food City checkouts and their gift amount will be added to their total grocery bill. Food City will also offer customers an opportunity to donate as part of a charity round-up feature on their registers at checkout.

"As a long-time PVA supporter, I have had the privilege of seeing the impact that their partnership with Food City has had on so many veterans," said Petty. "There's no better way to celebrate the holiday than giving back to those who have given so much."

"We are thankful to our dedicated team of associates and loyal customers for making this campaign a success year after year," said Steven C. Smith, Food City president and chief executive officer. "Together, we have been able to support PVA and make our communities stronger. We look forward to working alongside PVA and Richard Petty again this year."

To learn more about the Food City/PVA partnership and this month's activation visit FoodCity.com.

"Partners, like Food City, are essential to PVA as they allow us to better serve and empower veterans with spinal cord injuries and diseases, like MS and ALS," said U.S. Army Veteran and PVA national president Robert Thomas. "We are eternally grateful to them and their generous customers, as well as our long-time supporter Richard Petty for the invaluable role they play in helping our veterans regain their independence and live fulfilling lives."

This year's in-store donation drive will run at Food City's supermarket chain

Food City

## Fourth

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PHOTOS BY ANGELICA RAMOS

### Main Street is lined with vendors for the Fourth of July festival in Christiansburg.

old school cars adorned with American flags, and Blacksburg Police, Fire and EMS. After the parade, at 6 p.m., Blacksburg had live music at Municipal Park for residents to enjoy and residents could stay there to have the best view to watch the fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

Christiansburg's fireworks were at 9:15 p.m. and residents were encouraged

to park in the Uptown Mall parking lots or Walmart parking lots for the best view. Residents came out and watched the fireworks from the beds of their trucks, lawn chairs and even blankets. When the Christiansburg fireworks were done, residents could turn their heads and see the Blacksburg display as well.

## Board

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focuses on solutions to projected challenges to U.S. national security. Miller's earlier ventures include Applied Security Inc., Vulnerability Research Labs, and Strategic Resources International. He earned a bachelor's in computer science from Virginia Tech. Miller is a member of the university's Ut Prosim, 1872, and Pylon societies of donors. He served on the advisory boards for the College of Engineering and its Department of Computer Science. The college inducted him into its Academy of Engineering Excellence in 2023.

Pearson was raised on his family farm in Midland, Virginia. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1987 with a bachelor's in agricultural economics. While at Virginia Tech, Pearson was a member of the Corps of Cadets, earning a commission as a second lieutenant in the Virginia Army National Guard, serving for nine years. In 1996, he founded Carry-On Trailer, with seven plants in six states and 1,200 employees. Pearson is currently executive chairman of Vehicle Accessory Inc., a leading supplier of vehicle accessories with over 1,000 employees in the United States and Canada. He is a Virginia Tech Foremost Benefactor and a President's Circle member of the university's Ut Prosim

Society of donors. Pearson also serves as a tri-chair of the Boundless Impact Campaign Steering Committee. He is the past chairman of the Corps of Cadets Alumni Board and a former member of the Virginia Tech Foundation Board. Pearson serves as a professor of practice for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, where he is also a member of the Advisory Board and earned the Outstanding Alumni Leadership Award. He is married to Renae Pearson '90 and has two grown children, Anna Kate Bills '18 and Will Pearson '20.

As president of SAS Construction and CMG Leasing, Stosser is among Southwest Virginia's

leading developers and property owners, responsible for a broad range of residential and commercial locations. She is a member of Virginia Tech's Ut Prosim, 1872, and Pylon societies of donors, and serves on the Blackwood Department of Real Estate Industry Advisory Board, W.E. Skelton 4-H Education Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake Board of Directors, and Virginia Tech Athletic Fund Board of Directors. Stosser is also a member of the Front Court group of Hokie Men's Basketball supporters. Additionally, she serves on the Virginia Advisory Board of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine.

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OPINION

Coach Curtis Campbell left lasting impression in short time at CHS

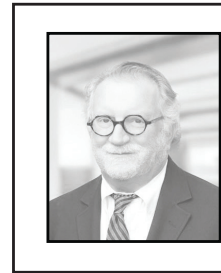
Many of us who attended Christiansburg High in the mid to late 1960's had the privilege of being taught or coached, or both, by Curtis Campbell. Coach Campbell, like most of the coaches at CHS of that era, had been hired out of Emory & Henry College by my father. He had been a star football and baseball player for the Wasps and was inducted into the E & H Sports Hall of Fame in 1980.

I have previously written about the "Emory & Henry Mafia" at CHS - Buddy Earp, Omar Ross, Ken Stickley, Joe Rusek, and other Emory alums who were brought into the Montgomery County school system by my dad during this time, either while he was serving as principal at CHS or as county superintendent. He was unabashed in his affection for his alma mater, and it showed in his hiring decisions. Unfortunately, Coach Campbell was only in our county for a few years before relocating to Wytheville, where he went on to a distinguished career as a teacher and administrator. Wytheville's gain was Christiansburg's loss. I doubt he will even remember me, but my memories of his time at CHS are plentiful and endearing.

As is my ilk, I thought it would be fun to reflect on Coach Campbell and his "too short of a time" as a Blue Demon. I hope it will rekindle warm memories in the hearts of some of my classmates and contemporaries and maybe for others paint a small picture of the influence that coaches and teachers can have on the lives of their wards. While the time with coaches and teachers is short, the impact can last a lifetime.

Curt came to CHS in the fall of 1964, as assistant varsity football coach under Omar Ross and as a physical education and Latin teacher. One of the great incongruities of life to me has always been that this big, physical man, a star offensive tackle in college, was a Latin teacher! I didn't personally have him for that subject, but rather I had the lovely Priscilla Fleshman, who came to CHS a couple of years later. But I did have Coach Campbell for three years of P.E. class, and as a football coach when he was generous enough to dress a bunch of my jayvee teammates and me for varsity games at the end of our ninth and tenth grade seasons.

Now for some memories. I remember Coach Campbell walking through the locker room while we dressed for two-a-days in August, yelling, "boys, the 'humaditty (humidity) is gonna be high today, get your salt tablets (yeah, that's what they gave us), make



Evans "Buddy" King

Columnist

sure you get your O2" (he had trouble pronouncing oxygen); jokingly calling me a hillbilly when I put my football socks under my regular socks (like you wear in baseball, the opposite of how football socks are worn) the first time I dressed for a varsity game; going crazy at the referees in the game that same night when a bad spot on fourth down cost us a chance to beat Narrows (I happened to be standing beside Coach when he jumped five feet in the air and screamed); winning four or five straight at the end of his second season, after we lost our first five, but perhaps becoming too close to a great returning class the next season. Curt was only a few years older than the stars on that team and ultimately they were probably too close in age for him to have the control over them that was needed. Poignant memory.

I especially remember phys. ed the spring of my freshman year when Curt had decided to install a new offense the next fall (from the Wing T to the I if you're curious). He pulled Tony Price and me and another couple of football guys from class and took us on the field to develop his playbook, leaving the other P.E. teacher to handle the remaining 70 or so boys in the gym. Instead of a football, Curt brought a silver milk pitcher to use for handoffs. He said that made the offseason practice "legal." I was very excited by all of this of course and one night at the dinner table I told my father (then superintendent) all about it, even the milk pitcher part, and how that "didn't violate the rules." I remember my dad sighed, rolled his eyes, and said not to mention it to him again.

Despite being a football coach in an era when practices were like Marine basic training, and the most a coach would say to an injured player was "walk it out," Curt had a lighthearted and deeply caring side. Two instances stand out.

First, my classmate, the aforementioned Tony Price, was a standout athlete and his potential shone through in eighth and ninth grade, but he was also shy, and Coach Campbell focused encouragement and attention on him during the softball games we played in P.E. class. In Curt speak, Tony's name evolved from Tony to Anthony to Andy to Andrew to Drew. Many of us called him Drew through school. Tony went on to be an excellent athlete and leader at CHS.

Another great example of Curt's caring nature was Billy Childress. Billy was a young mailman in town when he was struck by a car and suffered serious brain damage. What I think they now call a "closed head injury." Billy recovered but was never the same. He had two things in life that sustained him - Christiansburg High sports and Virginia Tech sports. He rarely missed a football or basketball game at either school and was the bane of many a referee's existence. When Billy clapped his hands you could hear it in the next county and when

he chewed out a referee you could hear him in West Virginia.

After he became head coach, Curt decided to make Billy "official" - he gave him a clipboard and put him on the sideline to chart plays. Billy's job was to walk alongside Coach Campbell or his assistant Milton Gross (another great coach and educator, my position coach) with the backup quarterback and put down on paper what play had been run and how many yards had been gained (or lost). Billy was in seventh heaven - I think he loved the Blue Demons even more than his Hokies. As I recall, Curt even took Billy to preseason camp with the team one year when our boosters rented a church camp for us.

Unfortunately, as I also recall, Billy's temper, which could be almost uncontrollable because of his head injury, sometimes would get the best of him and he would throw his clipboard and scream at the referees. After he got an unsportsmanlike penalty or two, Curt had to send him back to the bleachers. If you have seen the movie Radio, you know Billy's story with Coach Campbell.

One final "Coach Campbell story," told many times by my dad. Perhaps Curt's first summer in town, maybe his second, a lot of the male coaches and teachers met up one hot Saturday morning to help erect a press box at the football field. The group probably consisted of Coach Ross and Coach Earp and my father and agriculture teacher Billy Stanger and two other great members of the CHS family, Dick Ballengee and Wayne Booth. And Coach Campbell of course. This was a simpler time, and these guys enjoyed each other's company and the press box project presented a great opportunity to be together and tell stories and help the community.

Holes four to six feet deep were drilled and heavy pipe, probably 40 feet in length, was delivered, ready to be dropped into the holes to be the support for the press box. The only thing missing was the backhoe which was to pick up the pipes and drop them in the holes.

The backhoe was a no-show and eventually someone said that completion of the project would just have to be postponed. Coach Campbell, probably 20 years younger than most in attendance, and fresh off his time as an all-star offensive tackle in college, said something to the effect that he thought he could pick up the pipes and put them in place. My dad said Curt wasn't bragging, he just knew his own strength.

Mr. Stanger, beloved teacher and jokester at CHS that he was, made some disparaging remarks about how it couldn't be done. And to emphasize his point, he made a bet with Curt that was common for the time and added more spice by saying he would pay off in front of the liquor store at high noon the next Saturday and give Curt a week to gather a crowd.

Well as urban legend has it, Coach Campbell picked up each of the pipes, carried them a few feet, and dropped them in the holes. And legend has it further that Coach Ross or one of the guys had engraved invitations made for the big event the next Saturday.

When Buddy Earp died a few years ago, I attended his funeral and heard that Curt was in attendance, but sadly I was not able to catch up with him before he left. Once again, my loss.

News Messenger

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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.

Delegate details some of Virginia's new laws

On July 1, over 800 pieces of legislation from the 2024 General Assembly Legislative Session became law. Since the Commonwealth's legislature is controlled by the Democratic party and the executive branch is controlled by Republicans, new laws that were proposed needed bipartisan support to successfully pass through the General Assembly and be codified into the Virginia Code. While I have written in the past about some of the adverse bills that were defeated this year, I'd like to update you on some of the measures that have passed and are now effective.



Delegate Jason Ballard

Virginia General Assembly

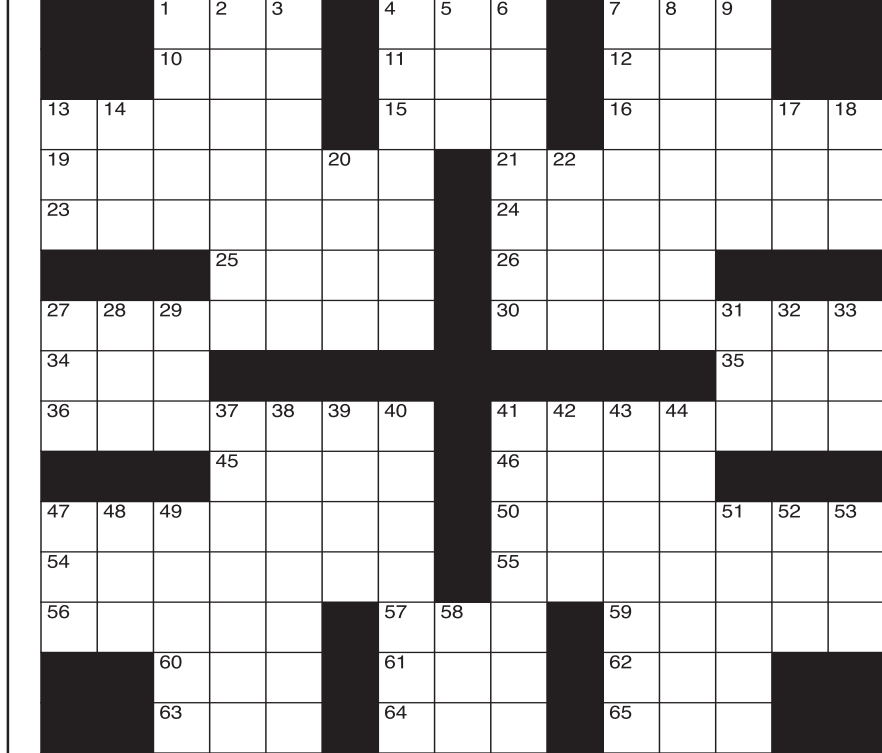
HB 1349 standardizes the eligibility requirements for performing arts centers and sports facilities to serve mixed beverages, which has been an issue in the past. Formerly, these facilities had patchwork approval in state code depending on where they were located in Virginia, and smaller venues especially had a harder

time applying for these licenses. I was approached by a local venue with this very problem, and while my HB 559 would have remedied this situation locally, I was happy to see the more inclusive HB 1349 eventually pass.

Due to the passage of HB 48, college admissions are now more fair to applicants because of the new ban on the practice of so-called "legacy admissions." This means that the relatives of donors or alumni of institutions of higher education will

See Ballard, page 8

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>CLUES ACROSS</b>                  | <b>CLUES DOWN</b>                         |
| 1. Sr. enlisted Army member          | 1. Small stem bearing leaves              |
| 4. Payroll firm                      | 2. Female Bacchanalians                   |
| 7. Monetary unit of Macao            | 3. Mediterranean city                     |
| 10. Cooking vessel                   | 4. Measures electric current              |
| 11. Cow sound                        | 5. Arrived extinct                        |
| 12. Hairpiece                        | 6. Edible butterfly                       |
| 13. Spoon-shaped surgical instrument | 7. Causing wonder or astonishment         |
| 15. Mother                           | 8. Behaviors showing high moral standards |
| 16. Remove from record               | 9. Ancient Irish alphabets                |
| 19. Foolish                          | 13. Footballer Newton                     |
| 21. Mailman                          | 14. Utilize                               |
| 23. Unit of data size                | 17. Sum of absolute errors                |
| 24. Stirred                          | 18. Opposite of the beginning             |
| 25. Deceptive movement               | 20. Shoe company                          |
| 26. We all have one                  | 22. Algerian port city                    |
| 27. Direct from pasture beef animal  | 27. Girls organization (abbr.)            |
| 30. A person's own self              | 28. Type of cell (abbr.)                  |
| 34. Helps little fish                | 29. Swiss river                           |
| 35. Deep, red-brown sea beam         | 31. When you hope to get there            |

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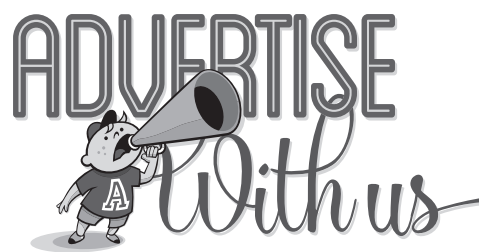
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# MONTGOMERY SPORTS



COURTESY IMAGE

## ACC welcomes Cal, SMU and Stanford

The Atlantic Coast Conference is adding three new institutions with the addition of the University of California, Berkeley (Cal), Southern Methodist University (SMU) and Stanford University as full members with full voting participation.

SMU's first official day in the ACC was July 1, 2024, while Cal and Stanford will become official members on Aug. 2, 2024. All three institutions will begin conference competition this fall.

The additions of Cal, SMU and Stanford enhance and strengthen the ACC academically, athletically and financially as well as create a true national conference that spans coast to coast. The incoming universities enrich the league's competitiveness in all sports and further demonstrate the ACC's commitment to broad-based programs for both women and men. More than 2,200 student-athletes from Cal, SMU and Stanford will join the nearly 10,000 current ACC student-athletes competing at the highest level of intercollegiate athletics.

"This summer marks a momentous occasion for the ACC with the addition of three prestigious institutions - Cal, SMU, and Stanford," said ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips, Ph.D. "Since our announcement last September, the conference has been diligently preparing to become an 18-member league that spans from coast to coast. We look forward to the future of this incredible league and extend a warm welcome to the student-athletes, coaches, staff, campus communities, alumni, and supporters of Cal, SMU, and Stanford into the ACC."

Established in 1953 with seven charter members, the ACC's expansion is the seventh in the league's history and gives the league the most members that it has had in the conference's illustrious history. The conference moved to eight members right away in December of 1953 with the addition of Virginia. After Georgia Tech joined the league in 1979 to remain at eight, the conference expanded to nine members in 1992 with Florida State. The ACC added three members in 2004 and 2005, as both Miami and Virginia Tech joined the league in 2004, followed by Boston College in 2005. Syracuse and Pitt joined in 2013, as did Notre Dame, who agreed to join the ACC in all conference-sponsored sports except football. Louisville accepted an invitation to become a full member of the ACC in 2014.

Cal, SMU and Stanford will begin competing in the ACC across their

respective sponsored sports beginning in the 2024-25 academic year. No conference offers more than the ACC's 15 women's sports and 28 total sponsored sports.

The University of California, Berkeley, is the flagship of the 10-campus University of California system. Enrolling more than 42,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

Cal Athletics is a broad-based NCAA Division I athletic department that sponsors 30 varsity sports and includes over 900 student-athletes. The department has approximately 300 staff members. Cal Athletics has produced 104 team national championships and 223 Olympic medals. Notable alums include Aaron Rodgers, Jason Kidd, Natalie Coughlin, Marshawn Lynch, Jaylen Brown, Layshia Clarendon and more.

Southern Methodist University is the nationally ranked global research university in the dynamic city of Dallas. SMU brings the highest level of collegiate competition to Dallas, which was recently named the No. 1 city for sports business by the Sports Business Journal, and continues to build on recent success, with all 17 programs reaching the postseason and 16 programs winning conference championships since 2013. SMU is the only NCAA FBS program in Dallas, and has claimed 10 overall national championships, almost 200 team conference championships, over 100 individual national championships, more than 150 NCAA top-10 finishes, nearly 2,000 All-American honors and over 150 Olympic appearances.

Founded in 1885, Stanford University campus is home to seven schools, a distinguished faculty that includes 20 living Nobel laureates, and more than 7,800 undergraduates and 9,600 graduate students. Stanford's Department of Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation leads the nation with 136 NCAA team championships, has won the Women's Capital One Cup four of the last seven years, and has achieved the LEARFIELD Directors' Cup for 27 of the 30 possible seasons. Nearly 900 Cardinal student-athletes compete as members of 36 intercollegiate athletics teams.

Stanford is the nation's all-time leader in NCAA team championships, having won 136 NCAA titles (71 men, 65 women) and 167 national championships overall (77 men, 88 women, 2 coed).

Atlantic Coast Conference

## Long distance relationships do not work



Marty Gordon  
FROM THE  
SIDELINES

Have you ever been on a blind date and didn't want to be there? That's the feeling the Atlantic Coast Conference got going as of this weekend. The University of California, Southern Methodist and Stanford are now a part of the ACC.

It's hard to understand who needed each other more. The three newbies were looking for a home, while the ACC just needed to stay above water. The problem, there is no lifeguards in the deep end of the pool to save anyone from this new relationship.

Problemo number one is the fact two of the three new members are from the west coast. The other is from the great state of Texas and is only remembered for its "Death Penalty" a few years back. Cal is still an unknown. Stanford brings an outstanding women's basketball program and a lot of similarities to UVA.

Then there is the fact about travel. Believe it or not, Virginia Tech is the closest school to all three of the newbies.

SMU is the closest at 1,080 miles. Cal is 2,706 and Stanford 2,381. The latter means 39 hours in a car. Of course, tennis teams and others won't be making that trip by four wheels. They will typically fly, meaning 10-11 hours.

Whoopsie. Long distance relationships do not work.

There is talk of playing at neutral sites. So, Virginia Tech might wrestle Stanford in Iowa. It still seems a lot of extreme to play the "non-revenue" sports.

Again, the con outweighs much of the pros. We also have to examine how many Hokie fans would be in the stands for West Coast dates. Hokies travel well but might be lacking on this one.

Mark the calendar, Virginia Tech plays football at Stanford on Oct. 5.

Now, back to this date. There is always a feeling-out period. I guess there can be lots of late-night phone calls, and those non-revenue sports will be staying overnight on a more frequent cycle.

Of course, Florida State and Clemson do not want to be on this blind date. They keep looking across the room at the likes of Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama.

Sorry Charlie, you have to dance with whoever is at your party. The Southeastern Conference might be flirting with you, but they were not invited on this date.

The dance card is still out on the ACC's move. We will just have to wait it out and see how this date turns out.

Maybe, the ACC should've tried Match.com before locking itself into the arrangement.

I guess we will be watching those 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. games on the ACC Network.

## Highlanders named All-American Scholars



PHOTO COURTESY OF RU ATHLETICS

Shea Smith, Mckenzie Weddle, Caroline Gilreath, Grace Addison and Macy Johnson of the Radford women's golf team were each named 2023-24 All-American Scholars by the Women's Golf Coaches Association, the organization announced earlier this week.

The 2023-24 WGCA All-American Scholar Team features 1,497 women's collegiate golfers from 412 programs who were recognized with this prestigious honor. The criteria for selection to the All-American Scholar Team are some of the most stringent in all of college athletics, including a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50 and having played in 50% of the college's regular scheduled competitive rounds during the year.

Each of the five Highlanders on the list eclipsed the 3.50 GPA mark with

Smith majoring in Pre-Business, Weddle studying Allied Health Sciences, Gilreath beginning her collegiate career as a pre-major, Addison majoring in chemistry, and Smith Johnson working towards a management degree.

The Women's Golf Coaches Association, founded in 1983, is a non-profit organization representing women's collegiate golf coaches. The WGCA was formed to encourage the playing of college golf for women in correlation with a general objective of education and in accordance with the highest tradition of intercollegiate competition.

Today, the WGCA represents over 650 coaches throughout the U.S. and is dedicated to educating, promoting and recognizing both its members and the student-athletes they represent.

Radford University Athletics

## VHSL releases master football schedule Interesting matchups for area high schools

Marty Gordon  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The Virginia High School League released its statewide Master Football schedule this past week with some interesting matchups.

For our area schools, there will be plenty of intriguing out-of-district matchups.

Christiansburg will play former mentor, Tim Cromer, in Floyd on August 30. Abingdon will travel to the NRV on September 6. Then in the middle of its schedule, the Blue Demons will host perennial-state power Riverheads on October 4.

Blacksburg will also have a game with Cromer and his Floyd squad on September 13 and then longtime rival Giles to jumpstart the season at home on August 30. Two other out-of-district games include road games at Rockbridge and Lord Botetourt.

Radford will continue to open the season at former New River District-rival George Wythe (August 30) with former Virginia High now-Radford Coach Michael Crist facing a familiar face in Virginia High on September 18. The Bobcats will face its second former NRD foe in Giles on September 6.

Eastern Montgomery continues to dive deep into southwest Virginia with games against Holston (August 30), Rural Retreat (September 6) and Northwood (September 13). The Mustangs also pick up a contest with Ft. Chiswell on September 27.

Meanwhile, Auburn will tangle with out-of-district foes in Narrows (August 30), Craig County (September 6) and a cross-county matchup with Eastern Montgomery on August 20. The Eagles will also play Bath County on October 11.



FILE PHOTO

The Virginia High School League released its statewide Master Football schedule this past week with some interesting matchups for area schools, including Radford, pictured here.

# Sports notes: Former Hokie on Canadian Olympic team

**Marty Gordon**

*NRVsports@ourvalley.org*

Former Virginia Tech guard Sami Hill has been named to Canada's Olympic roster, the federation announced this week. For Hill, it will be her first Olympics when she heads to Paris later this month to represent her country.

The Canadians will face the hosts France in their first matchup in Group B on July 29 and will also compete against Australia and Nigeria.

Canada Basketball's senior women's national team qualified for their fourth consecutive Olympic Games by finishing third in one of four FIBA Women's Olympic Qualification Tournaments this past February. Paris 2024 will be Team Canada's eighth appearance in the Olympic women's basketball tournament since it debuted at Montreal 1976.

Canada's best Olympic result in women's basketball was a fourth-place finish at Los Angeles 1984. Currently fifth in the FIBA rankings, Canada also finished fourth at the most recent FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup in 2022.

### Peebles gains national attention

Newly transferred from Duke, Virginia Tech defensive lineman Aeneas Peebles claimed the ninth spot on Pro Football Focus' (PFF) list of the top 10 returning interior defensive linemen for the 2024 season. Peebles is the only player in the top-10 who will be playing for a new school in 2024, finishing as one of the nation's best defensive tackles in pressuring the quarterback last season.

This honor adds to an impressive list of accolades for Peebles, including being named to the 2023 All-ACC First Team by PFF and the 2023 All-ACC Third Team as a defensive tackle. He was also recently featured in On3's Top 100 Players in College Football, alongside new teammates cornerback Dorian Strong and defensive end Antwaun Powell-Ryland.

The 290-pound lineman played in 12 games for the Blue Devils last season, making his lone start against No. 11 Notre Dame. In total Peebles registered 40 total tackles, four quarterback hurries, two pass breakups, one forced fumble and one fumble recovery.

### Cross on all-star roster

Former Virginia Tech outfielder Gavin Cross has been selected to the MLB All-Star Futures Game, Major League Baseball announced this week. The number nine pick in the 2022 MLB Draft, Cross, who plays in the Royals organization has been playing for the club's Double-A affiliate, the Northwest Arkansas Naturals.

In 62 games this season, he's batting .279 with an OPS of .798. He's tallied 65 hits, 39 RBI and has eight home runs on the campaign.

The 25th annual showcase will feature 39 members of MLB Pipeline's recently updated Top 100 Prospects list in a seven-inning game on July 13, at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas.

The All-Star Futures Game features the brightest stars of tomorrow in an annual seven-inning matchup of the game's top prospects that are nearing the Majors. Many of today's All-Stars made their first appearances on a Major League stage at the All-Star

Futures Game.

In his three seasons at Virginia Tech, Cross tallied 174 hits in 124 games with a .340 batting average.

### New assistant coach

Virginia Tech women's tennis announced the addition of Megan Forster as an assistant coach for the program on Tuesday.

Forster, who played at Colorado and North Florida, comes to Blacksburg after a season-long stint as a women's tennis student assistant coach and men's tennis director of operations for the Ospreys.

While in her most recent roles, the London, England native assisted with planning and managing tennis and conditioning sessions, organizing community opportunities, complying with NCAA rules and schedule regulations, marketing and social media outreach and stringing rackets for the women's program. Furthermore, Forster assisted the men's program with organizing travel.

### ACC leadership

The Atlantic Coast Conference and its Board of Directors have announced the conference leadership structure for the transformative 2024-25 year, which will see the ACC expanded to 18 members with the addition of Cal, SMU and Stanford beginning July 1.

University of Virginia President James E. Ryan will serve as the league's Chair of the Board of Directors for the second year of his two-year term. He will be joined by Wake Forest University President Susan R. Wentz as the Vice-Chair of the league's Board of Directors, announced by the Board of Directors following the annual winter meetings in February.

## Ballard

from page 4

no longer receive an unfair advantage when applying to colleges or universities. Virginia is one of only two states that have now banned this practice.

My HB 292 also became law last week, which changes the name of "Drug Treatment Courts" to "Recovery Courts" in state code. This is something I've written about extensively, but it's an important piece of the puzzle as we seek to resolve the ongoing opioid crisis and rehabilitate those who would otherwise be productive members of our community. Graduates of these programs have spoken to me at length about how important and powerful the term "recovery" is, and I'm proud to

have played a part in getting this bill into state code.

SB 951, which was passed in 2023 but became law this year, removes the option for motorists to pay a \$500 uninsured motorist fee in lieu of carrying motor vehicle liability insurance. I've had constituents contact me in the past describing frustrating situations where they were involved in an accident, and the at-fault driver didn't carry liability insurance. This is a commonsense bill that protects motorists financially in the unfortunate occurrence of an auto accident.

HB 707 prohibits - subject to a parental consent requirement - a data

company from processing personal data of a child for the purposes of targeted advertising. This is an important law to safeguard our children from predatory advertising practices. I am certain that the General Assembly will continue to address this topic in future sessions as online data harvesting becomes more and more prevalent.

A complete listing of bills passed in the 2024 Legislative Session can be found at [lis.virginia.gov](http://lis.virginia.gov), and a selection of laws now on the books can be read in the Virginia Division of Legislative Service's publication, "In Due Course" (which can be found easily online). I'd encourage you to read up on this

document so you can learn about the priorities of your state government. I hope you and your family enjoyed your Independence Day!

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](mailto: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.



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## Montgomery County Chamber CEO completes year one at Institute for Organization Management

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Institute for Organization Management, the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, is pleased to announce that Steve Baffuto, President and CEO, of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, has recently completed his First year at Institute for Organization Management, a four-year nonprofit leadership training program at Athens in Georgia.

"Institute graduates are recognized across the country as leaders in their industries and organizations," said Raymond P. Towle, IOM, CAE, the U.S. Chamber's vice president of Institute for Organization Management. "These individuals have the knowledge, skills, and dedication necessary to achieve professional and

organizational success in the dynamic association and chamber industries."

Since its commencement in 1921, the Institute program has been educating tens of thousands of association, chamber, and other nonprofit leaders on how to build stronger organizations, better serve their members and become strong business advocates. Institute's curriculum consists of four weeklong sessions at four different university locations throughout the country. Through a combination of required courses and electives in areas such as leadership, advocacy, marketing, finance, and membership, Institute participants are able to enhance their own organizational management skills and add new fuel to their organizations, making them run more efficiently and effectively.

Institute for Organization Management is the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. It is the premier nonprofit professional development program for association and chamber professionals, fostering individual growth through interactive learning and networking opportunities.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business organization representing companies of all sizes across every sector of the economy. Our members range from the small businesses and local chambers of commerce that line the Main Streets of America to leading industry associations and large corporations.

MCCC

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Jennifer O'Connor, PA

## AARP Virginia fraud alert: The latest in Amazon impostor scams

Criminals love to impersonate big businesses and the bigger the better. One of the largest targets of impostor scams last year was Amazon. According to the Federal Trade Commission, 44,000 reports about scammers using Amazon's name were filed last year, with \$19 million reported lost. Here are two of the latest versions of an Amazon impostor scam to be on the lookout for.

Complex scams that involve an Amazon impostor, a bank impostor and someone pretending to be a law enforcement investigator are trending. These scams have a heightened sense of legitimacy because the victim believes they are speaking to different

independent entities who are all confirming the same threat. In reality they are talking to multiple criminals who are all part of the same scheme.

False membership renewal messages are another trending form of Amazon impostor scams. Because many customers aren't aware of when their membership expires these messages can seem legitimate. The criminals also create real looking websites where you can share your payment information.

Whenever doing business, renewing a membership or dealing with a suspicious charge with any retailer, it is safest to do so at their official website or through their official customer service lines. Do not rely on links or phone numbers emailed or texted to you. These run a higher risk that you'll be connected directly to a crook.

Be a fraud fighter! If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam.

AARP Virginia

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