



Drought watch advisory lifted for 15 counties and cities in Virginia

Drought warning advisory expanded to 60 counties and cities

RICHMOND — The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), in coordination with the Virginia Drought Monitoring Task Force, has expanded the drought warning advisory to now include 60 counties and cities, and has maintained a drought watch advisory for 32 counties and cities.

Due to improving conditions related to recent precipitation, the drought watch advisory previously issued for the Chowan and Southeast Virginia drought evaluation regions has been lifted. All other regions within the Commonwealth remain affected by drought. Continued precipitation deficits in combination with sustained increased temperatures have resulted in rapid intensification of drought throughout the majority of the Commonwealth.

The following regions have been lifted from a drought

watch advisory:

Chowan: Lunenburg, Nottoway, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Sussex, Prince George, Southampton, and Surry counties

Southeast Virginia: Suffolk, Isle of Wight, Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Portsmouth, and Norfolk

A drought warning advisory indicates a significant drought is imminent and is in effect for the following areas:

Big Sandy: Lee, Wise, Buchanan, Dickenson, Scott, Russell, Tazewell, Washington and Smyth counties

Middle James: Albemarle, Amherst, Appomattox, Buckingham, and Nelson counties and the cities of Charlottesville and Lynchburg

New River: Grayson, Wythe, Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Pulaski, Giles, and Montgomery counties



COURTESY IMAGE

Northern Piedmont: Greene, Madison, Rappahannock, Orange, Culpeper, Louisa, Spotsylvania, and Stafford counties

Northern Virginia: Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Arlington, and Fairfax counties

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First Place: "Controversy in a Tilted Rainbow" by Larry Mitchell



Second Place: "Creation/Evolution" by Ali Wieboldt

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRAA

Winners announced for Blacksburg Regional Art Association Annual Juried Theme Show

BLACKSBURG – The Blacksburg Regional Art Association recently announced the winners of its Annual Juried Theme Show.

"For this year's annual show, Blacksburg Regional Art Association artists were invited to submit their interpretation of controversy," the BRAA announced. "The result is 41 pieces that cover a range of topics from serious commentary on hotly debated issues and satirical reactions to culture, to comedic plays on life's

less contentious matters."

The exhibit opened on July 10 with a reception and presentation of awards. Bonnie Moreno, MFA, served as this year's juror, and her selections are as follows:

First Place: "Controversy in a Tilted Rainbow" by Larry Mitchell

Second Place: "Creation/Evolution" by Ali Wieboldt

Third Place: "Unraveling – Mountain Top Removal" by Linda Weatherly-Shroyer

Honorable Mention: "Yes or No?" by Summer Hannah

"Congratulations to all honored," said the BRAA.

The exhibit will be on display until October 10 at The Alexander Black House in Blacksburg, open Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Blacksburg Regional Art Association

See BRAA, page 2

Summer Arts Festival brings Shakespeare to Blacksburg



Actors rehearse "A Midsummer Night's Dream. The play was performed last week in conjunction with Blacksburg's Summer Arts Festival.



PHOTOS BY ANGELICA RAMOS

Angelica Ramos
Contributing writer

BLACKSBURG- "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was performed in Blacksburg by Virginia Tech's School of Performing Arts as part of the annual Summer Arts Festival.

The play was originally to be performed in the Hahn Horticulture

Garden from July 18, 2024 to July 21, 2024, but rain changed the venue to the Creativity and Innovation District LLC Building for a portion of the performances.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" is a play written by William Shakespeare. It is a comedy set in Athens, Greece filled with love, humor, sneaky pranks and a

donkey. Director Natasha Staley explained the cast is made up of 16 actors, herself as director, a stage manager, her assistant, a sound and production manager and an event coordinator, Ariana Wyatt. The crew has sourced their own costumes,

See Shakespeare, page 3

Lights, camera, Emmy: Alumnus shares his success story

Ross Breitenbach '92 didn't have the typical college graduation experience. He didn't wear a cap and gown or walk across a stage.

Earlier in his senior year as a Hokie, Breitenbach started an internship at WSLR, the NBC affiliate in Roanoke. So rather than attending his graduation as a student, he covered the ceremony as a video intern for WSLR. He was the one capturing those special moments instead of being involved in them.

"I was there shooting everybody throwing their caps into the air instead of participating," he said. "That was writing on the wall for me for what I should be doing for a career."

Now Breitenbach, who majored in marketing with a minor in communication, is an Emmy Award winning executive producer and creator of "Hack My Home," a Netflix series about home improvement.

He's also director of "Brat Camp" on ABC and a sought-after showrunner on over 20 highly acclaimed television series.

"Hack My Home" was named outstanding instructional/how-to program at the Daytime Emmy Awards in June. Breitenbach shares the excitement of winning an Emmy and how Virginia

Tech helped shape his 25-year career in film and television.

How would you describe that moment of winning an Emmy and what it meant to you?

When we were sitting around the table at the awards and you see other tables jumping up and screaming when they win, I said, "Not me. Let's be cool." It will be great if we win. I'll stand up and get excited. But yelling, that's weird when we're adults. When they announced the show, all we heard was "Hack..." That's all that came out of their mouth and our whole table jumped up screaming. All that was thrown out the window of keeping it cool. We were as uncool as you can get, but so excited hugging and high fiving.

It was a huge crown to my career. I was just an undergraduate at Virginia Tech, but it finally felt like I got my Ph.D. in television with that Emmy because it will stick with me wherever I go. To me as a storyteller, as a producer, it was huge because I created this show. I didn't just work on it, I created it. It was a proud moment, and it still is. A bunch of articles came out and it says, "Emmy winner Ross Breitenbach" not "Producer Ross

See Emmy, page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSS BREITENBACH

Ross Breitenbach celebrates his Daytime Emmy for outstanding instructional/how-to program for his work as executive producer and series creator of Netflix's "Hack My Home."

MEMORIAL GARDENS of the NEW RIVER VALLEY

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NRV's Only Locally Family Owned Cemetery

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, July 24:

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.

Thursday, July 25:

Thursday night indoor concert

Concert will be held at the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church, 701 Church St. SE. "A Treasury of English Music," 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.

Friday, July 26:

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

Please join the Pilot Community Center for a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser; 5-7 p.m. Pilot Community Center, 4449 Brush Creek Road, Pilot. The meal is \$10 per plate and includes spaghetti, bread, salad, and a drink. Dine-in or take-out available. We'll also have a 50/50 raffle! For more information call 540-382-6537.

Friday, July 26 - Sunday July 28:

Mary Draper Ingles Festival

Multi-day festival in multiple locations featuring tours of historic landmarks, exhibits, historical interpreters, vendors, live music, performances and more. For the full schedule, go to www.glencoe mansion.org/mdifestival or phone (540) 731-5031.

Historic Smithfield's 250th anniversary

Commemoration event will include tours of the grounds and gardens, panels discussing the histories of everyone who lived on the property, a dedication of the Merry Oak Bench, activities for the little ones and book signings from authors who have written on local history. There will also be a Reunion Mixer at the Smithfield Pavilion with a welcome video and speech. For a complete schedule go to www.historicsmithfield.org.

Saturday, July 27:

Mill Mountain Zoo & their Animal Friends

At the Radford Library; 11 a.m. Mill Mountain Zoo and all of their animal ambassador friends are stopping by! Come see what animals might make their way into the library and be ready to learn about these amazing creatures.

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 28:

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/.

Thursday, Aug. 1:

American Legion Meeting

The American Legion, Harvey Howe Carper Post 30 will meet at 6 p.m. at the VFW Post Home on 102 Watts St. in Radford. For further information, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

Friday, Aug. 2 and Saturday, Aug. 3:

Lamplighters BIG Book Sale

At the Radford Public Library; 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Get great deals on books while supporting the Radford Public Library at the Lamplighters BIG Book Sale! Hardcover and DVDs are only \$1, and Paperbacks are only 50 cents. Many, many children's books and a lot of home school teaching books are available and some DVD's and CD's that are spoken in a language in India. Come and support the Lamplighters, who support the Radford Public Library.

Saturday, Aug. 3:

Radford Summer Concert- rescheduled

Chairmen of the Board will be performing. Bring a chair or blanket and come out to the fields of Glencoe Mansion, Museum & Gallery at 600 Unruh Dr., Radford. Gates open at 6 p.m. Concert begins at 7 p.m.

Alcoholic beverages can be purchased through Radford Chamber of Commerce. Food trucks and non-alcoholic beverages are also available. Admission is \$5 per person. Children 12 and under and free.

Monday, Aug. 5:

August Kids eligibility screening

The Radford Clothing Bank annual August Kids program provides a \$75 voucher for each income qualifying student in grades K - 12 attending Radford City Schools. Vouchers redeemed at the Fairlawn Walmart to purchase new school clothing and tennis shoes. Screening for eligibility is August 5, 10 a.m.-noon and 4- 6 p.m. at Central Church, 803 Wadsworth St., Radford. You MUST provide all of the following verifications: Photo ID of applicant, proof of address (June or July bill), social security card or birth certificate for each child in the home, and SNAP, Medicaid, TANF or four weeks of current pay stub for each employed family member. Questions? Call the Radford Clothing Bank at (540)633-5050 (10 a.m. -noon) Monday-Saturday. Monetary donations can be sent to: Radford Clothing Bank, PO Box 994, Radford, VA 24143.

Monday, Aug. 12:

Radford City Council meeting

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

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

Public meetings are 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, Aug. 13:

Blacksburg Town Council meeting

The council meets in regular session the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgpeith 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.

BRAA from page 1



Third Place: "Unraveling - Mountain Top Removal" by Linda Weatherly-Shroyer



Honorable Mention: "Yes or No?" by Summer Hannah

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRAA

It's not just what your legacy will be, it's where.

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Memorial Gardens of the New River Valley is dedicated to honoring your faith, heritage, & family, now & for future generations. Please contact us today for more information on starting your family's legacy at Memorial Gardens of the New River Valley, designed to be as diverse as our community. The NRV's only locally family owned cemetery, giving us the freedom to meet each family's unique needs.



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Drought from page 1

Roanoke, Patrick, Shenandoah: Augusta, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Frederick, Page, Warren, and Clarke counties

Upper James: Craig, Alleghany, Highland, Botetourt, and Rockbridge counties

A drought watch advisory is intended to help Virginians prepare for a potential drought and remains in effect for the following areas:

Eastern Shore: Accomack and Northampton counties

Middle James: Fluvanna, Prince Edward, Cumberland, Goochland, Amelia, Powhatan, Chesterfield, Henrico, and Hanover counties and the cities of Petersburg, Hopewell, and Colonial Heights.

Northern Coastal Plain: Caroline, King George,

King William, King and Queen, Essex, Richmond, Westmoreland, Gloucester, Mathews, Middlesex, Lancaster, and Northumberland counties

York-James: Hampton, Newport News, James City, York, Charles City, and New Kent counties

Several factors have contributed to the lifting of advisories, maintenance of drought watch advisories and the expansion of warning advisories in the affected regions. Precipitation over the past 7-14-day period showed localized heavy rainfall (1.5 - 4.0 inches) along the southeastern portion of the state resulted in improvements in soil moisture, stream flow, and groundwater levels. Conversely, precipitation over the central and western part of the Commonwealth has been sparse leading to exceptional dryness within large portions of the Shenandoah, Upper James, New River,

Roanoke, and Big Sandy drought evaluation regions. Stream flows are currently below the 25th percentile of normal values for seven of the 13 drought evaluation regions with three of these regions currently below the 5th percentile (Big Sandy, Roanoke River, and Shenandoah). Groundwater levels for monitoring wells in the Climate Response Network have shown continued declines within the central and western portion of the Commonwealth with nine regions currently below the 25th percentile. Of these, groundwater levels within six drought monitoring regions are currently below the 5th percentile including the Big Sandy, New River, Upper James, Shenandoah, Northern Virginia, and York-James. DEQ is working with local governments, public water works, and water users in the affected areas to ensure that conservation and drought response plans and ordinances are followed. Localities and Virginians that are supplied water from the Potomac River should consult the Metropolitan Washington Water Supply and Drought Awareness Response Plan for specific triggers and actions to be taken. All Virginians are encouraged to protect water supplies by minimizing water use, monitor drought conditions, and detect and repair leaks.

See the current drought status on the DEQ website (deq.virginia.gov).

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

All Positions Available, SALE REP, ACCOUNTANT and MANY MORE

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• Account Coordinator

• Finance • Business • Marketing

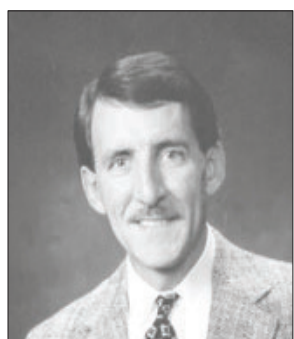
• Admissions Representative

• 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.bbarn.com@outlook.com for more details.

OBITUARIES

Margheim, Dale Edwin



The lights in the NRV educational community dimmed on July 17, with the death of Dale Edwin Margheim.

Starting as an elementary school teacher in Giles County and continuing into administration as principal for several Giles and Montgomery County public schools, Dale touched the lives of thousands of students in his 44-year career. No matter where Dale went, he was always greeted by students, parents, and teachers who had a story to tell of how he touched their lives.

Dale was born in Laredo, Texas, grew up in Houston, and earned his undergraduate degree in English from the University of Houston. He married his high school sweetheart, Linda Hale, whose family was originally from Giles County. Dale and Linda moved to Giles County in 1969, and both began teaching at Pembroke Elementary School with Sam Robinson as their principal, mentor, and friend.

Dale was a natural teacher. He was creative, innovative, and daring in his approach to teaching and helped pioneer inclusion education for special education students. He was passionate about reading and literacy. He received his master's in education from Virginia Tech and held state certifications in English, learning disabilities, reading, and elementary education. In 2001, he completed a Doctorate degree in Education 2001.

Dale and Linda were married for 27 years and had one son, Chance

Alan. After moving from Texas, they lived for many years in Narrows close to Linda's parents, Ralph and Frances Hale, and her sister, Connie Saladiner, and her family. Linda was sadly diagnosed with breast cancer in 1990, and the treatment needed was not covered by insurance. With the help of the Giles County community, Dale was able to raise the money needed. While the treatment extended her life several months, Linda died in 1992, leaving Dale and their 10-year-old son.

Five years later, Dale found Lynn Foster, and they bonded over their shared love of Jeeps and the outdoors. He won her heart by gifting her gaiters just before taking her to the Cascades on a snow-covered trail. When they married, Dale, Chance, Lynn, and her daughter Hannah established a home in Blacksburg.

Dale was an avid outdoorsman. He shared his love of the outdoors with his new family, spending time paddling the New River, camping, hiking, fishing, and hunting. He was an amazing stepfather to Hannah and supported both his children in pursuing their passions.

After Dale retired from public schools, he continued his mission of helping kids and families as an in-home therapist and counselor. His last role was at the NRV Juvenile Detention Home where he was lovingly known as "Doc." He fully retired in 2015 as Parkinson's Disease began to limit his abilities.

Dale was a voracious reader, loving history and mysteries. He enjoyed music, picking his guitar, and singing along with his warm tenor. While at times he was a quiet, reserved man, Dale also had a wicked sense of humor, a ready laugh, and a tendency to see the good in people. He will be greatly missed.

Dale is preceded in death by his parents, Dorothy and George Margheim, his first wife, Linda Margheim, and his niece Amber Saladiner. Left to mourn are his sisters Sylvia Bordovsky and Sherry Brooks (Jeb); brother Paul Margheim (Phyllis); sister-in-law Connie Saladiner (Al); nephew Shawn Saladiner (Tina); their daughter Somer; son Chance Margheim and wife Lisa Hyatt; stepdaughter Hannah Lazarte; wife Lynn Margheim, and his beloved dog Jack.

The family will be receiving friends at McCoy Funeral Home in Blacksburg Thursday, July 25, 4-7 p.m. They ask that in lieu of flowers, please donate to the Montgomery County Educational Foundation (MCEF) at 750 Imperial St., Christiansburg, VA, 24073. Please write on the memo "In memory of Dale Margheim."

Brizendine, Melanie Dawn



Melanie Dawn Brizendine, 54, of New Castle, Virginia joined her lord and savior Friday, July 19, 2024.

She was born Nov. 22, 1969, to Victoria Jones LaPrad and Ephram David LaPrad. Melanie was a faithful member of Grace Assembly of God, serving faithfully for over 20 years. Melanie was highly respected for her teaching and involvement within the youth ministry. Melanie was employed with Anthem for 25 years, before that she worked 10 years with the New Castle Sewing Plant.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Victoria Jones Francisco; brother, Travis LaPrad; and grandparents Fred and Noline Jones and Ephram and Mary Ellen LaPrad.

She will be sadly missed by her husband, Mick Brizendine; children Olivia LaPrad, Jesse Brizendine and

and mother-in-law Lloyd and Carole Brizendine. She was a cherished member of her church community and leaves behind countless friends who were impacted by her faith and unending love.

A funeral service to honor her memory was held Monday, July 22, 2024, at the Grace Assembly of God, Catawba, Va. with Pastor Loraine Taylor officiating. The family received friends prior to the service. The burial was held privately with her family at the Francisco Family Cemetery in Catawba. Pallbearers were Noah LaPrad, Cole Hedge, Trevyn Francisco, Garret Patsel, Hunter Brizendine, and Malichi Patsel. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to Grace Assembly Youth Ministry. McCoy Funeral Home of Blacksburg is serving the Brizendine family.

Tailgate Health Fair brings health resources directly to community

Virginia Poverty Law Center's Enroll Virginia program is hosting a health fair at the Linden Green Apartments, 1600 Simpson Rd., Christiansburg, to connect residents directly with community resources in the New River Valley tomorrow, Thursday, July 25, 3-5 p.m.

The "tailgate" health fair will include representatives from organizations including New River Community Action, the Area Agency on Aging, Virginia Poverty Law Center, Enroll Virginia, Molina Health Managed Care Organization, Community Health Center of the NRV and Women's Resource Center.

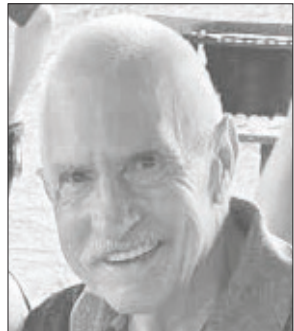
"Enroll Virginia is partnering with the Community Housing Program (CHP) and several health and human services

organizations to provide critical information and resources to residents living in NRV CHP properties," said Rhonda Seltz, Certified Navigator with Enroll Virginia. "Issues like food insecurity, loss of Medicaid coverage, and lack of transportation are challenges facing many low- and moderate-income families. Traditional health fairs and events have not been effective in reaching these struggling individuals, so Enroll Virginia and CHP will offer on-site tailgate health fairs for six CHP properties in July."

The Linden Green event is expected to be one of the largest tailgate fairs of the summer, serving approximately 200 residents.

Virginia Poverty Law Center

Hamlin, Thomas M.



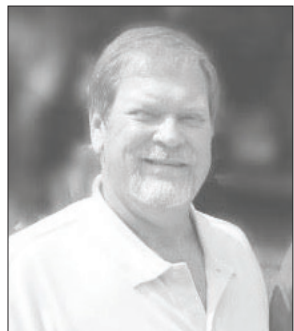
Thomas "Pops" M. Hamlin, 70, of Christiansburg, died Friday, July 19, 2024. He was born in Radford on July 26, 1953, to the late Albert Lee and Betty Jo Hall Hamlin.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Linda Hamlin; son and daughter-in-law, Bobby and Jennifer Hamlin; daughter and son-in-law, Terri and Chris Martin; grandchildren,

and Jesse Hamlin; brothers and sisters-in-law, Roger and Brenda Hamlin and Jerry and Julie Hamlin; sister and brother-in-law, Edna and Hobart Rakes; and sister-in-law, Lou Quesenberry.

Memorial services were conducted Sunday, July 21, 2024 in the Walton Pentecostal Holiness Church with Pastor Lee Sarver officiating.

Elliott, James Patrick



James Patrick Elliott, 67, of Blacksburg, died Friday, July 19, 2024, at VCU Medical Center. He was born in Radford on Aug. 9, 1956.

He was preceded in death by his father, James Guy Elliott, and stepfather, Shirley Echols. Pat retired from Virginia Tech after 45 years in the Reprographics Center. He loved golfing, bowling, and animals.

He is survived by his wife, Jeri G. Elliott; mother, Ruth Echols; sons, Matthew Blankenship (Meredith)

(Patricia); special uncle and aunt, Brownie and Jeannie Miller; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

A memorial service will be held Friday, July 26, 2024 at 11 a.m. at New Mt. Zion Lutheran Church with Pastor Brian Katz and Pastor Todd Hallinan officiating. Interment will follow in the New Mt. Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery. The family will receive friends immediately following the service in the fellowship hall.

and Luke Elliott (Solei); sisters, Kaye Endahl (John) and Rosanna Gearheart (Robert); stepbrothers, Dale Echols (Teresa) and Dennis Echols

Shakespeare from page 1

worked together to gather minimal props as the production is meant to focus more on the language and acting. The cast is a mix of experience from professional actors to students to Virginia Tech Alumni to community members.

Planning for this event began in January.


"There's nothing like live theater," Director, Natasha Staley said, "because it's 90 minutes straight of telling a story, you don't stop and start. It's live. The text is in the actor's head and it's a communal experience between the audience and the actors. For me, I grew up doing theater, there's nothing like it. I just want the actors and the audience to have a good time. I want it to be a joyful experience

for both the actors and the audience."

"My goal," Event Coordinator Ariana Wyatt said, "is to provide an opportunity for people in the community to participate in the production so there's cast members from the community and it's an opportunity for students in the summer to showcase that local talent that we

have. It's to give people an opportunity to participate in something that should be fun and rewarding and exciting. Art brings people together. Theater brings people together."

The Summer Arts Festival offers many events in Blacksburg this summer like a showing of Forrest Gump at the Lyric on July 27, 2024 or Stepping Out on the first of August.



**Route 8 (Riner Road)
Center Left Turn Lane
Montgomery County**

Find out about a project to construct 1,025 linear feet of center lane for vehicles to make left turns in either direction of Route 8 (Riner Road) in Riner in Montgomery County. The project includes installing 1,025 feet of curb and gutter along the northbound lane and 450 feet of curb and gutter along the southbound lane and reconstructing pavement and drainage structures.

Review the project information and National Environmental Policy Act document in the form of a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion at VDOT's Salem District Office located at 731 Harrison Avenue in Salem, 540-387-5353 1-800-FOR-ROAD, or TTY/TDD 711. Please call ahead to ensure the availability of appropriate personnel to answer your questions.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Ankur Patel, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153, on or prior to **August 1, 2024**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you have questions or concerns about your civil rights in regards to this project or need special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Ankur Patel at the phone numbers listed above.

UPC: 124095
State Project: 0008-060-891 M501, P101, R201
Federal Project: STP-5150-(242)
From: Route 669 (Fairview Church Road/Union Valley Road)
To: Route 671 (Five Points Road)

Treasury's Unclaimed Property Program Returns Millions to Citizens Each Year!

Look for the 2023 list of unclaimed properties in next week's newspaper.

What is Unclaimed Property?

Inactive or dormant bank accounts, uncashed checks, customer refunds, safe deposit box contents, securities, dividends, insurance policy proceeds, etc.

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Facilitated by Virginia Department of the Treasury

OPINION

Delegate reacts to former President Trump shooting

July 13th, 2024 was a watershed moment in American history. For the first time in a generation, someone attempted to kill a Presidential candidate. His actions led to an injured former President, as well as the tragic death of one attendee and critical injuries to at least two more. My family and I join Americans across the country to pray for President Trump and the families forever changed by this craven act.

The attempted assassination of former President Trump sent a shock through American politics at every level, and the cowardly attack infused a massive amount of fear and anger into an already fraught situation. The gunman nearly succeeded. Had President Trump not moved his head at the exact instant, he would have been dead, and our country would be in a much darker place today. As of this writing, we don't know if the would-be assassin was a dedicated leftist, a radicalized internet troll, or someone who was deeply mentally ill. Confirmed reports state the shooter was a registered Republican who had donated to "Act Blue," a fund that supports elected Democrats. He had no known criminal record, but I know that we will learn more as time goes on.



Delegate Jason Ballard
Virginia General Assembly

What is clear is that this was a destabilizing event in an environment that was already highly charged. This was the first serious assassination attempt on a President or candidate since 1981, in one of the most contentious election cycles in American history. We also know that Democratic rhetoric has been hyperbolic for far too long. Calling President Trump a threat to the U.S., a danger to democracy, or a tyrant in waiting is dangerous. Furthermore, Democratic efforts in Congress to remove Secret Service protection from President Trump are reckless and irresponsible. Nonetheless, both President Trump and former First Lady Melania have called for Americans to unite around this event and not give in to

fear and anger. That doesn't mean Democrats get a free pass for their incendiary rhetoric. Far from it – when the left crosses the line, we have an obligation to call it out. When the national press says Republicans need to cool down our rhetoric, we have an obligation to point out that it was the left fanning the flames for eight years.

More importantly, we have an obligation to keep fighting for our ideals and principles. The left wants Republicans to be cowed in fear. We cannot and will not let this – or any other act – keep us from working day and night to undo the damage done by the left. We will keep fighting. We will keep working. Our children and grandchildren deserve no less.

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,

The Virginia Department of Corrections celebrated its Probation and Parole Officers during Virginia Pretrial, Probation, and Parole Supervision Week (July 14-20) and will also observe the national PPPS Week (July 21-27). I encourage all Virginians to do the same. You might not personally know a Probation and Parole Officer, but you feel their contributions to

long-term public safety every day. Our officers are at the forefront of public safety. Their actions directly keep those who live, work in, and visit the Commonwealth safe from criminal activity by providing effective supervision of probationers and parolees across Virginia. This completely aligns with the agency's mission of long-term public safety. Additionally, VADOC Probation and Parole Officers provide guidance, tools,

and resources to supervisees. This directly leads to Virginia's consistently high success rate for reentry.

Probation and Parole Districts across the Commonwealth also do much more than provide effective supervision for the more than 61,000 supervisees in Virginia. Districts and our corrections team members are true servants of their community, providing money, volunteer hours, and collaboration

to schools, community resource centers, and partner law enforcement agencies.

Thank a Probation and Parole Officer for their service. It's a simple gesture, especially for the services they provide this great Commonwealth.

Sincerely,
Judge (Ret.) Chadwick S. Dotson
Director, Virginia Department of Corrections

Emmy

from page 1

Breitenbach," so that's cool." **The Emmy is the culmination of many years in the industry doing your part to get where you**

are today. Is there a particular moment in your career where it clicked, and you knew that this is what you're supposed to be doing?

I think it was as a kid. I found my dad's old Super 8 cameras [motion picture cameras], and I just loved the flickering picture and how it felt more real to my eye than what I was seeing on TV. I fell in love with the medium of Super 8. From that early influence, I knew I wanted to be in film and capture those images. What I was seeing I wanted to see in moving pictures, not just in still images. When I got to Virginia Tech, we were still editing on film. I spent all my time editing in the darkroom at Virginia Tech. I just loved it.

How have you found the interdisciplinary nature of marketing and communication work together in your career?

I found a lot of synergy with marketing and communication. You're communicating to the masses. One you're trying to convince. One you're trying to entertain or inform. Arguably marketing is the same — entertaining and informing. Right now, we're seeing a huge convergence of branded entertainment. My worlds have always collided with those two disciplines.

How would you describe the impact Virginia Tech had on you and helping you get to where you are today?

For me, Virginia Tech really provided a safe place to experiment and to try new things. Experimenting, doing things out of the box, and doing things the way you're not supposed to do them was really exciting for me. Virginia Tech gave me the blank canvas to do that and try it and fail. I'm very grateful to have that time to figure things out with myself and who I was, but also in media and what I was going to do with it. It all provided a nice backdrop for me.

Virginia Tech's motto is Ut Prosim (That I May Serve). What does that mean for you and

how you go about your work?

What I can do is help young people. I encourage them to get in touch with me. It's all about networking. You have to play the game. Because of where I live in Los Angeles, it's hard to get back to Blacksburg. Any students who want to come out here and learn this business, I've really opened myself to them. Come in and you can do an internship. I'll hire you as a production assistant. I will sit down and have a coffee with you and give you advice on who to talk to.

What would you tell students who are interested in a career similar to yours?

My advice is to manage expectations. You're going to have to start at the bottom like everyone else and you'll have to work your way up. Ask for help. Ask questions. Be curious. Find that thing you love. Find your passion and pursue it with everything you have in you. You'll never regret that. You might not end up doing that, but you'll learn a lot along the way and use that skill later on. It's amazing how things come back. People are happy to help you. You just have to ask.

What gets you out of bed in the morning and keeps you going on this journey?

I love what I do. I really have found something I'm passionate about. I like getting up and tackling my problems. I like figuring out solutions. I like the challenge of doing something I'm passionate about. That has really helped me through my career because I enjoy it. It doesn't feel like busy work. It doesn't feel like work if you're really passionate about something, and I fortunately have found something I'm really passionate about. I don't mind the downturns because I know it's just a downturn and there will be a peak over the horizon. It's been a worthwhile career. I'm grateful to have the opportunity that Virginia Tech gave me.

Jenny Kincaid Boone for Virginia Tech

News Messenger

Established 1869
(540) 389-9355
P.O. Box 1125 • Salem, VA 24153

USPS 016-490 Online: www.ourvalley.org

Michael Showell, *Publisher*
Heather Bell, *Editor*
communitynews@ourvalley.org
Aila Boyd, *Executive Editor*
aboyn@ourvalley.org
Wendi Craig, *Advertising Consultant*
advertise@ourvalley.org

Give us your view:
editor@ourvalley.org

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

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

CROSSWORD

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Droop
4. Rested in a chair
7. Thai (var.)
10. Draw out wool
12. Coatis genus
14. Taxis
15. Beige
16. Supplementing with difficulty
17. Capital of Norway
18. A personal written history
21. Cologne
22. Australian flightless bird
23. Lowest freeman; early Eng.
25. 18th C. mathematician Leonhard
28. Cabinet Dept. for homes
29. Languages of Sulu islands
33. More scarce
35. Before
36. Swiss river
37. Actress & director Lupino

CLUES DOWN

1. Point midway between S and SE
2. Genus of birds
3. Personal spiritual leader
4. Japanese rice beverage
5. Eared owl genus
6. Wood oil finish
7. Hyphen
8. Competently
9. Equal, prefix
11. Broad-winged soaring hawks
12. A collection of star systems
13. Be in accord
14. Links subject & predicate (linguistics)
19. Paddles
20. Asian river between China and Russia
23. Physicists Marie or Pierre
24. Excessive fluid accumulation

CLUES ACROSS

26. _____ Dunlap, pageant titleholder
27. Made again
28. Norse goddess of death
30. A waterproof raincoat
31. Express pleasure
32. _____ Lanka
34. Radioactivity unit
39. Clay blocks for building
40. Linear unit
42. Conductor tools
43. Whale ship captain
46. Queen who tested Solomon
48. Good Gosh!
51. A gangster's girlfriend
52. Unstressed-stressed
53. Draw through holes
54. Old Italian monetary units
55. Musician Clapton
56. Ceremonial staff of authority
57. Fabrics of camels or goats
58. A very large body of water
61. Basics

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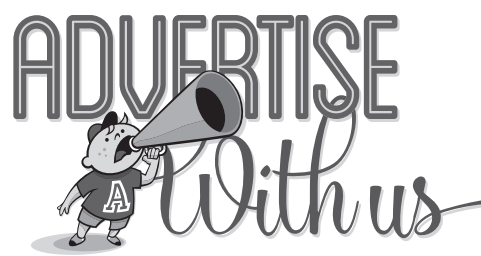
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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Sinkland partners with student-athletes for NIL

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Sinkland Farms has announced a new Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) program with six high school student athletes.

The announcement on social media said their mission is to empower young student athletes through Sinkland Farms, Agriculture to Athletes, helping them grow both personally and professionally, and assist them in achieving their dreams both on and off the field.

This is the first of its kind in Virginia focusing on high school students.

Sinkland Farms NIL is an initiative designed to provide Virginia student athletes with resources and opportunities to capitalize on their personal brand. This partnership will allow student athletes to explore various NIL activities, such as media promotion, product endorsements, personal appearances, and social media influence, all while

maintaining their academic and athletic commitments.

Sinkland Farms say they believe in the potential of these young athletes and understand the importance of supporting them in their journey.

By offering NIL opportunities, Sinkland Farms aims to:

Promote academic and athletic excellence: by recognizing and rewarding their hard work both in the classroom and on the field.

Provide financial support: through donations and assisting athletes manage their expenses and prepare for future endeavors.

Empower personal growth: by encouraging them to build their brand and develop skills that will be life benefits.

The announcement said the key is in the personal and professional development of students. Participation in sports can help build character, encourage emotional growth, and teach

players the value of honesty, respect, teamwork, dedication, and commitment.

The first group includes Leila Haley and Carter Stallard (Christiansburg High School), Malachi Coleman (William Fleming), Drew Royal (Auburn), Jeff Overton Jr. (Hayfield, Woodbridge) and Messiah Delhomme (Warwick, Hampton).

Sinkland Farms is located in Riner and serves as the hub for this initiative.

The program, according to Sinkland, works by identifying and partnering with talented student-athletes who exhibit not only athletic excellence but also strong academic performance, and community involvement.

Sinkland Farms will assist in providing them with the necessary tools and opportunities to:

Build their brand: through personalized marketing strategies and professional guidance

Engage with the community: offering

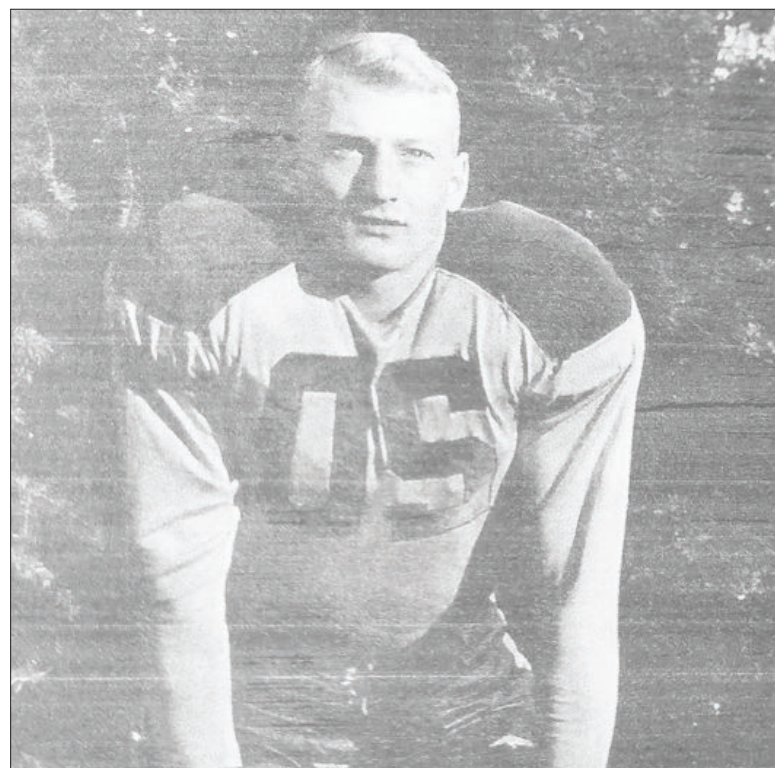
opportunities for public appearances and community service

Secure financial compensation: through endorsements, sponsorships, and other NIL activities

"We are honored to establish this partnership with exceptional student-athletes in the state. We applaud Virginia schools for their quality education and sports programs and are honored to recognize and assist in student development. Curtis Sink says, 'sports requires memorization, repetition, and learning, along with building determination and goal setting—skills that are directly relevant to classroom work as well as building lifelong self-esteem and character.'

For inquiries or to discuss potential collaborations and join Sinkland's efforts through Sinkland Farms in assisting these students, contact Curtis Sink, 540.230.9669 or sinklandfarms@gmail.com.

Five highlight second class of CHS Hall of Fame



Winfred Huff

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Christiansburg High School has announced its second class for a sports hall of fame.

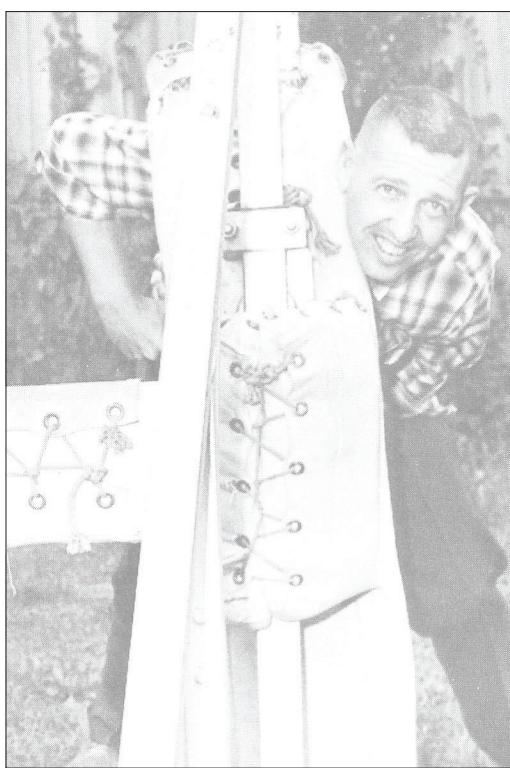
Five new members - Steve Shelton, Hollie Slusser-Porter, Winfred D. Huff Sr. ('51) and former coaches Daryl Weber (wrestling) and Omar Ross (football) - were announced this week. The committee announced its first class last April with 24 former athletes, coaches and supporters. The group spanned six decades ranging from the 1950s to the early 2000s.

The coaches included as inductees include Buddy Earp, Norma Cox, Tim Cromer, Kevin Dresser, Wally Flinchum, Dean Underwood, Mutt Byrd, Steve Wright, Randy Bailey, Jeff Custer, Debbie Sherman-Lee and Shane Guynn. Athletes included Tommy Barber, Joe Board, Clifford Dillard, Gloria Dillard, Brian Eigel, Mark Franklin, Darren Graham, Randy Lawrence, Rebecca McNeil, Billy Parker, Jeff Stanley and Betty-Jo Lester Willard.

The new group includes two coaches and three former athletes.

Shelton coached two teams, both the boys and girls cross country, each fall season for eight years between 1992 - 1999. This time included a national ranking for the boys of 18th in 1994, two state championships in 94-95, two state runner ups in 92-93, six regional titles and seven district ones.

He was a physical education teacher at Christiansburg Primary School and Christiansburg Elementary School (1993-2012), a Top 7 National Finalist for the NFL Network Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award (2011) and was an outstanding runner himself at nearby Auburn High School including school record holder in the both the 800 and 1,600 meters (1987). He would later attend Radford



Omar Ross

University and was a two-time individual runner up in 1989 and 1990.

Slusser-Porter was multi-athlete at CHS from 1988 to 1991 including as a state champion in the 800 meters and high jump. She had previously also played volleyball and basketball. She later became a nurse and currently lives in Bedford.

Ross passed away in 2019 and is known as a coach and longtime educator that includes principal of Christiansburg Elementary School and Christiansburg High School, and football coach and athletic director of the high school. He also served Floyd County as Superintendent of Schools until he retired in 1993.

Ross was assistant to legendary coach Buddy Earp of the CHS football team. In 1959 and 1960 before he became the head coach from 1961 to 1965. Ross also coached the boys' basketball team, the cross-country squad and the track and field teams while teaching history, health and physical education. His best years were ('62) 8-2 record and ('63) 8-1-2.

In addition, he was a retired colonel in the United States Army Reserves and was in the United States Army, serving in Korea.

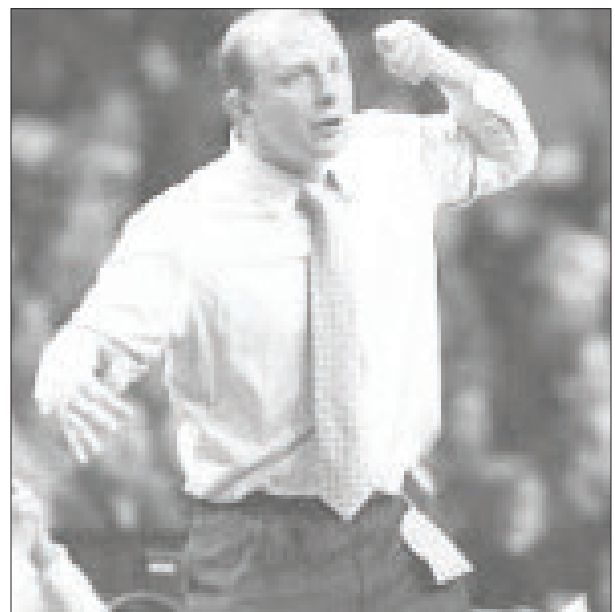
Huff played fullback for the Blue Demon football team, while being one of the fastest in the 100-yard dash. He later received a football scholarship to Milligan College. Huff was named homecoming king in 1950 and took the title of "king of football."

He continues to live in Christiansburg at the age of 91-years-old.

Weber was a Division I NCAA champ at the University of Iowa and won two high school state wrestling individual titles. In 2007, he became the head coach at Christiansburg High School after serving as an assistant for the program for



Steve Shelton



Daryl Weber

FILE PHOTOS

seven years under then-Coach Kevin Dresser.

He led the Blue Demons to nine straight team championships, had 42 state individual champs during his time there, was named the River Ridge District coach of the year for six times, region coach of the year seven times, 2011 Coach of the Year for the Western Region and the 2008 Virginia State coach of the year.

In addition, he was inducted (2008) into the Iowa High School Wrestling Hall of Fame.

The new inductees will be officially recognized during a home football game this fall.

New volleyball coach named at Eastern Montgomery

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Eastern Montgomery High School has a new volleyball coach. She is Jodi Burke, who is currently a ninth grade counselor at the school.

After spending 12 years in Colorado, the former Gateway Christian Academy volleyball player and Christiansburg native returned to the New River Valley. She is in her third year as a counselor, and also serves as the school's 504 and STE Coordinator.

Eastern Montgomery was 13-14 this past volleyball season after a 17-8 mark two years ago.

"I played volleyball in high school, college, and recreational leagues most of my life," she shared. "When the opportunity arose to coach, I knew it was something I had to pursue."

As a former player that also played in college at Carolina University in Winston-Salem, she brings a unique perspective to the team.

"This is the beginning of my coaching career, and what I lack in coaching experience, I hope to make up for with my background in counseling and playing. My goal is to bring harmony, and of course a winning season, to the team," she said.

Hokies announce non-conference schedule

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The Virginia Tech men's basketball team has stepped up its game for the upcoming season with 11 non-conference contests including seven home contests inside Cassell Coliseum and four neutral-site matchups.

Tech will open its 117th men's basketball season at home Nov. 4 against Delaware State. The season opener is the first of three straight home games for the Hokies, who will also face USC Upstate (Nov. 8) and Winthrop (Nov. 11) during the first week of the season.

As previously announced, the Hokies will head to

Baltimore, Maryland to square off with a familiar foe in Penn State as part of the Hall of Fame Series Baltimore on Nov. 15 at CFG Bank Arena. This marks the second time in three seasons Tech and PSU will clash.

The Hokies wrap up the month of November with the Fort Myers Tip-Off, which includes an on-campus game Nov. 20 vs. Jacksonville in Blacksburg. Tech drew Michigan for the opening matchup of the Beach Division on Nov. 25 at Suncoast Credit Union Arena in Fort Myers, Florida. The championship and consolation games are scheduled for Nov. 27 against South Carolina or Xavier.

Tech begins another three-game homestand by hosting Vanderbilt for the SEC/ACC Challenge on Dec. 4, followed by North Carolina A&T (Dec. 12) and Navy (Dec. 15).

In the nonconference finale, Tech will head to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for the 2024 Holiday Hoopfest against Saint Joseph's in The Palestra on Dec. 21. It will mark the seventh all-time meeting between the two former Atlantic 10 Conference foes and the homecoming for Hokies' senior point guard Hysier Miller.

The 20-game Atlantic Coast Conference slate, along with television networks and game times will be announced at a later date.

Sports notes: Hokies drafted by MLB

Seeing their professional dreams take root during Tuesday's final day of the 2024 MLB Draft, Virginia Tech pitcher Jordan Little and second baseman Christian Martin were chosen during the 15th and 18th rounds, respectively, rounding out the Hokies' record-tying, five-player draft pool.

Little was taken at No. 449 overall by the Cincinnati Reds, who have now snagged four Virginia Tech players within the last eight years (Packy Naughton – 2017, Andrew McDonald – 2018, Cade Hunter – 2022). Martin was later picked up at No. 531 overall by the St. Louis Cardinals, who have also chosen four Hokies during the same timeline (Connor Coward – 2018, Chris Gerard – 2021, Christian Worley – 2023).

Combining with Monday's trio of draft picks, Virginia Tech's five total selections during the 2024 MLB Draft tied the program record for the most selections made during the event's

opening 20 rounds (2010, 2022, 2023) – a benchmark reflective of the draft shortening from 40 to 20 rounds in 2021. On Monday, junior third baseman Carson DeMartini was chosen at No. 130 overall (fourth round) by the Philadelphia Phillies, junior pitcher Wyatt Parlamenti was taken at No. 211 overall (seventh round) by the New York Yankees and senior outfielder Eddie Micheletti Jr. was picked up at No. 247 overall (eighth round) by the Toronto Blue Jays.

With Little and Martin's selections on Tuesday, head coach John Szefc has now championed 26 MLB Draft picks at Virginia Tech since taking the reins of the program in 2018. Historically, Szefc's four draft classes of four players or more – as achieved consecutively between 2021 and 2024 (featuring 19 selections) – are the most by a head baseball coach spanning school history.

Hokie qualifies for US Amateur

Virginia Tech graduate Becca DiNunzio carded a 1-under 71 at Oceanside Country Club to be co-medalist and qualify for the 2024 U.S. Women's Amateur.

On the strength of four birdies, DiNunzio tied Valentina Marie Guertin of Boynton Beach, Fla., at the top of the leaderboard.

DiNunzio made the turn at even-par 36, then racked up birdies at holes 10 and 12 to get to 2-under. After a bogey at the par-4 15th, the Virginia Beach, Va., native reeled off three straight birdies to sign for her 71.

The 2024 U.S. Women's Am will be contested August 5-11 at Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, Okla. DiNunzio will join former teammate Katherine Lemke, who qualified for the event last week.

New sports website

Virginia Tech Athletics has announced the launch of its newly redesigned website,

in collaboration with WMT Digital. This significant upgrade brings a fresh and modern look to the HokieSports.com online experience, ensuring fans and visitors enjoy a more engaging and user-friendly interface.

The new website features an enhanced visual design that captures the spirit of Virginia Tech, alongside improved navigation that makes it easier than ever to find the information you need. With optimized performance, the site delivers faster load times and a smoother browsing experience. Dynamic content such as videos, photo galleries and interactive elements provide a more immersive experience for all users, while ticket management has been streamlined for convenience.

Fans can stay updated with the latest news, scores and highlights from all Virginia Tech sports.

Staff report

Fall Gardening Workshop with Master Gardener Wendy Silverman

As the summer gardening season draws to a close, gardeners and newbies alike are invited to join Master Gardener Wendy Silverman for an informative session on preparing for fall gardening.

Hosted by the Meadowbrook Public Library, this workshop promises valuable insights and practical tips to ensure a thriving fall garden.

Attendees will have the opportunity to learn directly from Wendy Silverman, a seasoned expert in gardening, who will share her knowledge on planting

strategies, essential tasks for fall preparation, and selecting the right plants for the season ahead.

The event will be held Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 6 p.m. at Meadowbrook Public Library, 267 Alleghany Springs Rd. in Shawsville. It is free and open to the public. For more information about the Fall Gardening Workshop, please visit www.mfml.org or call the library at (540) 268-1964.

Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library

Body found in Elliston

According to the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department, the body of a man was discovered in Elliston on

Saturday, July 20.

Shortly after 4 p.m., the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue, and Elliston Fire Department "responded to reports of a body found in the North Fork River in the area of Cannery Rd. in Elliston," the sheriff's department announced.

"The deceased had been in the water for an undetermined amount of time based on the investigation. It was

determined that the deceased was an hispanic male, approximately 50 years old based on identification found at the scene. The Medical examiner responded to the scene and custody of the deceased was transferred to the ME's office. At this time there is no indication of foul play, however this is an on-going investigation."

There are no further updates from the Sheriff's Office to be provided.

Staff report

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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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.

Taki knows she resembles a seal and she's ok with that. In the past, she's had some ear issues but that hasn't stopped her from being a friendly snuggly gal with humans. Other animals, though, aren't her favorite. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to see if Taki is your purrfect match!



Handsome hound Trapper is ready to head home. He's a younger dog with an energetic spirit. He enjoys yummy treats, which may help with training. Trapper is friendly and curious with humans and other canines.

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