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Saturday, July 27, 2024

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Blacksburg town council member arrested on election fraud charges

Angelica Ramos
Contributing Writer

BLACKSBURG - Blacksburg Town Council member Liam Joseph Watson, 24, was arrested July 24, 2024 on felony charges related to election fraud.

Watson was arrested on four indictments by a Montgomery County grand jury. According to the Virginia State Police, Watson turned himself in Wednesday, July 24, 2024. State police began an investigation in March of this year after an allegation was made regarding election fraud and was assisted by the United States Postal Inspection Service. Watson was arrested on four fraud indictments: three counts of

felony election fraud and one felony count of illegally voting. Watson has been released on bond and no further information has been released.

Watson's attorneys, Fishwick & Associates PLC, released a statement regarding Watson.

"Liam Watson has served the citizens of Montgomery County in various roles for a number of years and was most recently elected in 2023 in a write in campaign by the citizens of Blacksburg for a seat on the Blacksburg Town Council. He is 24 years old, with a heart for public service, and has worked diligently for the citizens who elected him. We look forward to appearing in court."



TOWN OF BLACKSBURG PHOTO

Blacksburg Town Council member Liam Watson



PHOTO BY MARTY GORDON

A former passenger rail station still sits near tracks in Cambria. The first is privately owned, while a second is being used by Norfolk Southern as a maintenance facility.

NRV passenger rail takes new path

Marty Gordon

NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Rising costs for a preferred route for passenger service through the New River Valley has quickly changed the whole project.

The project took on a whole new path this past week or, in the case of the train, a whole different rail line.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority has agreed to sell approximately 28 miles of track back to Norfolk Southern. Initially, the Commonwealth had bought this same line from Salem to Christiansburg to enable passenger service to be on its own set of tracks with no

See NRV, Page 6

Republican VP candidate JD Vance holds rally in Radford

RADFORD - Republican vice-presidential candidate Senator JD Vance (R-Ohio) held a rally in Radford on Monday.

The rally, held at Radford University's Dedmon Center, was Vance's second solo event since being named former president Donald Trump's running mate in his bid for reelection. Congressman Morgan

Griffith, Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares and several other speakers also took the stage.

The rally occurred one day after President Joe Biden withdrew from the presidential election. Vice President Kamala Harris will now face Trump in the November election.

Staff report



PHOTO BY CHRIS BELL

Republican vice-presidential candidate Senator JD Vance (R-Ohio) speaks to the crowd in Radford University's Dedmon Center during a rally held Monday, July 22.

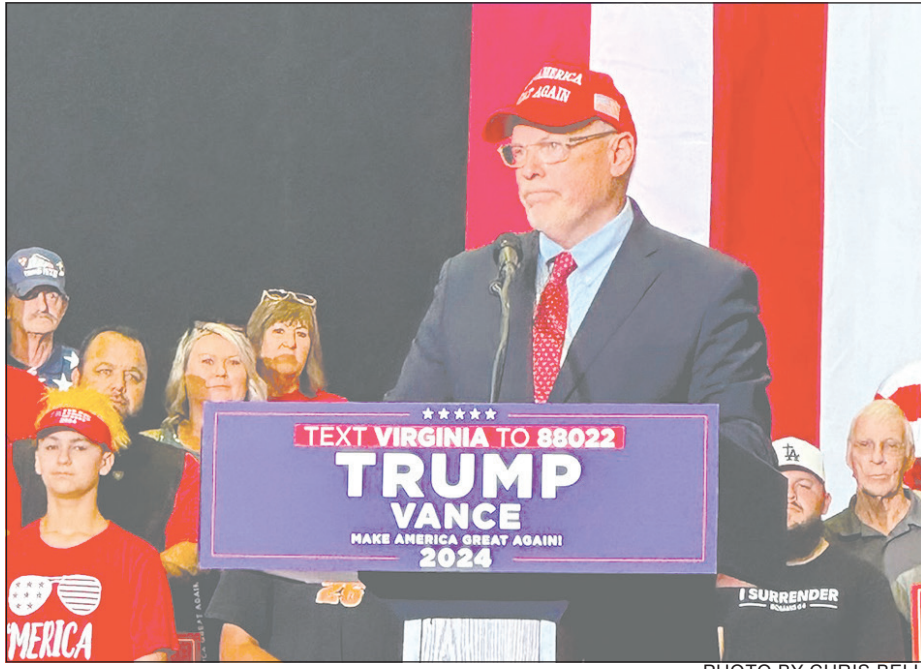


PHOTO BY CHRIS BELL

Ninth District Congressman Morgan Griffith makes remarks at Monday's rally for JD Vance in Radford.



PHOTO BY CHRIS BELL

The line to gain entrance to the JD Vance rally winds around the Dedmon Center parking lot prior to Monday's event.

MCPS to implement division wide student cell phone use policy

CHRISTIANSBURG - The MCPS School Board has adopted a division-wide student cell phone use policy, effective immediately.

The policy prohibits students from using cell phones during the school day without prior written permission from the school's principal. Earbuds, smart watches, and other devices are included in this policy. The goal is to further promote a "conducive learning environment" throughout all MCPS buildings, according to MCPS.

"It's important for our school division to take this step together to ensure we have the best learning environment possible for our students," MCPS Superintendent Bernard F. Bragen, Jr. said. "We understand the need for connectivity in this day and age, but we are confident that eliminating distractions in our buildings will push students to be the best they can be."

"I'm proud of our administration for developing this policy," MCPS School Board Chair Linwood Hudson said. "I think it will make a significant, positive impact on our students' daily lives. Cell phones are a constant distraction in our schools, we need our students to put them away and focus on learning and engaging with their peers. We also need a commitment from everyone involved: students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Together we can make this policy work and give the phones a rest."

Students may bring their devices to school, but they must be turned off and out of sight during the school day. This includes school-sponsored events both on and off school grounds.

Exceptions will be made for medical reasons, IEP/504 Plan accommodations and legal compliance.

MCPS

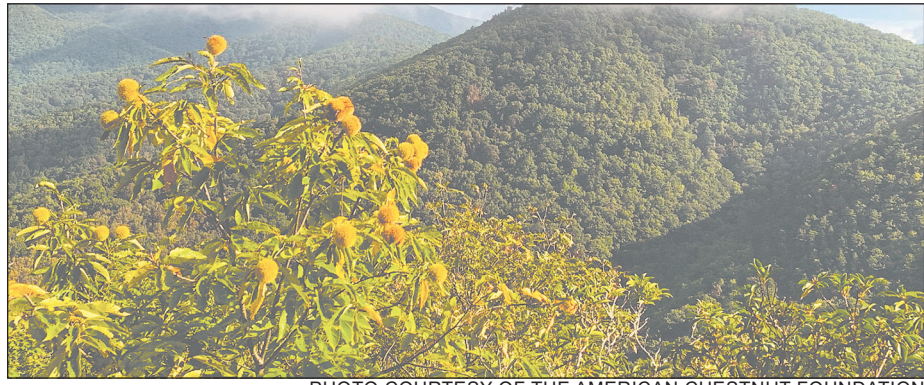


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT FOUNDATION

An American chestnut tree (in foreground).

Genome study informs restoration of American chestnut tree

Native trees adapt to the climate and environmental conditions of their area to survive.

Researchers in the Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources and Environment in collaboration with the American Chestnut Foundation confirmed this by examining the genome

of American chestnut trees sampled throughout the Appalachian Mountain range and grouping the samples according to their specific environmental region.

The research, recently published in the Proceedings of the National Academy

See GENOME STUDY, Page 8

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, July 27 - 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.glencoeplantation.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/.

Wednesday, July 31:

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, 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.

Saturday, Aug. 10:

Fish Fry

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its August Fish Fry 5 - 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 age three -free, carry-outs -\$12. This month, Ronnie Toney and Friends will be playing some Bluegrass for the diners. Held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan.

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. 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.

Sunday, Aug. 18:

Faith and Democracy presentation

The local group Defending Democracies will host a special presentation and discussion featuring Chris Crawford, Policy Strategist for Protect Democracy. We'll hear why democracy is important to faith communities and consider actions we can take, both as individuals and as faith communities, to support the defense of our democracy. Join us, 2:30-4 p.m., at Blacksburg United Methodist Church, Whisner Building, 111 Church St. SE, Blacksburg (parking in lots off of Lee St.).

Habitat for Humanity of the New River Valley announces openings for AmeriCorps and VISTA candidates

CHRISTIANSBURG - Habitat for Humanity of the New River Valley (HFHNRV) is announcing openings for AmeriCorps and VISTA candidates. These positions offer a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact in the community by supporting Habitat's mission to provide safe, decent, and affordable housing. The available positions include Homebuyer Services Coordinator, Repair Program Coordinator, and Marketing and

Communications Specialist. **Homebuyer Services Coordinator** The Homebuyer Services Coordinator will play a crucial role in building and maintaining the pipeline of homeowners by leading efforts to recruit and educate qualified individuals and families. This AmeriCorps member will work closely with the family services committee, a group of core volunteers, and area housing organizations to develop a pre-purchase education program. The goal is

to support Habitat's mission of providing lasting homeownership. The coordinator will conduct outreach with community stakeholders to increase the number of program applicants and serve as the main point of contact throughout the application process.

Key Service Activities: Coordinate programs to recruit homeowner applicants.

Conduct applicant orientations and assist with the housing application process.

Research homebuyer education opportunities and best practices.

Work with the homeowner services committee and housing organizations to develop educational opportunities.

Occasionally build alongside homeowner families.

Repair Program Coordinator

The Repair Program Coordinator is vital in strengthening community relationships through planning, coordinating, and implementing projects in partnership with local residents and organizations. This role will be the main point of contact for low-income homeowners seeking affordable critical home repairs, weatherization projects, and accessibility modifications. The AmeriCorps member will help organize skilled volunteers and local housing organizations to achieve the goal of providing affordable home repairs.

Key Service Activities: Build relationships with community residents, organizations, and stakeholders.

Engage skilled volunteers for local improvement projects.

Identify and implement home improvement projects.

Meet with homeowner families to review repair program eligibility.

Develop repair project tracking systems.

Coordinate and document repair projects.

Research funding opportunities for targeted populations.

Marketing and Communications Specialist

The Marketing and Communications VISTA member will create and implement a comprehensive plan for engaging communication with stakeholders, including donors, volunteers, Habitat ReStore customers, homeowners, and the public. The aim is to increase commitment to Habitat's mission through well-documented and evaluated communication strategies.

Key Service Activities:

Research best practices and marketing needs.

Develop a marketing and communications plan, including social media, print materials, and website management.

Establish relationships with local media and community partners.

Implement and review the marketing and communications plan.

Ensure the plan's sustainability through manuals, SOPs, and training.

These positions provide a unique opportunity for individuals to gain valuable experience while making a significant impact in the community. AmeriCorps and VISTA members will receive a living allowance, education award, and professional development opportunities.

How to Apply:

Interested candidates can learn more and apply by visiting <https://www.habitat.org/about/careers/ameri-corps/serve-where-you-are-needed-most-50-cities-choose-7273br> or contacting habitatameri-corps@habitat.org.

Habitat for Humanity of the NRV

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News Messenger

Call for Artists: Aviation Theme Art Show

The next history exhibit at the Montgomery Museum of Art and History is Above: An Aviation History of Montgomery County, sponsored by Wing, a subsidiary of Alphabet.

In addition to historical aviation artifacts, the museum will have a modern commercial delivery drone hanging from the ceiling.

Montgomery Museum of Art and History is calling artists to participate in the accompanying art theme show "Aviation/Flight" so let your imagination soar! This exhibit will run from Sept. 11 to Nov. 2, 2024.

Registration is free for museum members, \$20 for non-members. No images are required to register. Several days before the opening you will be asked to register your title and price (if any). Up to three pieces may be submitted.

Show parameters: Any 2D or 3D artworks representing anything to do with aviation or flight themes, and that are family-appropriate will be accepted. This is a non-juried show. However, the museum reserves the right to reject art that does not adhere to these conditions. This show will be installed on Sept. 9. Montgomery Museum of Art and History



PHOTO COURTESY OF MMHR

The next history exhibit at the Montgomery Museum of Art and History is Above: An Aviation History of Montgomery County, sponsored by Wing, a subsidiary of Alphabet.

Commonwealth Transportation Board awards \$361 million contract for Interstate 81 widening project

Design is underway with construction expected to begin in fall 2025

SALEM – The Commonwealth Transportation Board at its July 16 meeting in Richmond awarded a design-build contract valued at \$361.6 million to Branch Civil Inc. of Roanoke to widen northbound and southbound Interstate 81 to three lanes between exit 143 in Roanoke County and exit 150 in Botetourt County.

Project design is still being completed, and construction is expected to begin in fall 2025 and to finish in summer 2031.

This widening project is part of the Interstate 81 Corridor Improvement Program (CIP), which aims to improve safety, increase reliability and foster economic growth. It is one of the largest and most complex I-81 CIP projects and includes replacing eight bridges on I-81 and installing more than 8,500 feet of sound barrier along the northbound lanes.

"This is a big step forward," said Dave Covington, I-81 program delivery director for the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). "It is the largest contract that we've awarded for I-81 to date, and it reinforces our commitment to improving this vital corridor."

"VDOT has a long history of working with Branch Civil, and we look forward to a continued strong partnership to successfully deliver a project of this magnitude," said Ken King, district engineer for VDOT's Salem District.

The new lanes will be built on the existing right and left shoulders of I-81 with most of widening to take place

in the median. At exit 150, the ramp from northbound Route 220 (Roanoke Road) onto southbound I-81 will be realigned and the southbound I-81 off ramp will be modified to connect with Route 220 at a new signal at Tinker Mountain Road. Interchange lighting will be installed at exits 141, 143 and 150.

Virginia Department of Transportation

VDOT has produced a podcast and a video to

provide more information about the widening project between exits 143 and 150. Additional podcasts and videos about the I-81 CIP can be found on the News & Multimedia page of Improve81.org.

The I-81 CIP includes 65 capital projects and numerous operational improvements throughout the interstate's 325-mile corridor in Virginia. The \$3 billion program was signed into law in spring 2019. More information is available at Improve81.org.

AARP Virginia Fraud Alert: Homebuyers and owners beware

With today's tight real estate market there is often pressure to act quickly when you find that perfect place. Scammers know this and are waiting to pounce. Here are three things to be aware of when shopping for a home.

Wire fraud can happen when a criminal impersonates a real estate or title company and asks you to send the closing costs to them. Before wiring any funds contact your real estate company and confirm the account information, routing instructions and total amount needed.

Criminals are also in the market to take advantage of those at risk of foreclosure. Beware of anyone promising to make your mortgage payment issues go away -- especially if they ask for an upfront fee.

Lastly, if you are looking to rent a home, make sure and visit in person before paying a deposit. Rental scams happen often with criminals creating legitimate looking websites offering great deals on homes that aren't really up for rent.

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

AARP Virginia



Marketplace



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Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on August 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Planning Commission's intention to act on the following requests:

A request by DW, LLC (Agent: Michael Gay, P.E.) to rezone 49.17 acres from Agricultural (A-1) to Rural Residential (R-R), to allow for the development of a fourteen (14) lot single-family residential subdivision. The property is located at the end of Brammer Lane, approximately 0.50 miles east of the intersection of Houchins Road (State Route 758) and Brammer Lane. The property is further identified as Tax Map 080-5 1 (Parcel ID: 033688), in the Shawsville Magisterial District. The property lies in an area designated as Rural in the 2025 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan.

AND
A request by DW, LLC (Agent: Michael Gay, P.E.) to allow the construction of private streets to service the proposed fourteen (14) lot single-family subdivision. The proposed private street network would connect to Brammer Lane, approximately 0.50 miles east of the intersection of

Legals - Montgomery County

Houchins Road (State Route 758) and Brammer Lane. Section 8-152 of the Code of Montgomery County requires approval of all private streets by the Board of Supervisors.

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

Notice of Public Hearing Town of Blacksburg Planning Commission Tuesday, August 6, 2024

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

Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) #60/ORD #2001-An amendment to amend the text of the Town's Zoning Ordinance to create a new Downtown Northwest zoning district for the area bounded by North Main Street, Turner Street, and Prices Fork Road. In 2019, the Town adopted the Downtown Strategic Plan which identified six sub districts for Downtown including the Downtown Northwest district bounded by North Main St., Prices

Legals - Montgomery County

Fork Rd., and Turner St. The proposed amendment will create a new floating zoning district applicable to the Downtown Northwest area. Creation of the new district does not change existing zoning and property owners would need to rezone to the new district through a public hearing process. The district includes an applicability criteria, permitted use table, definitions specific to the new district, building dimensional standards, building design standards, site development standards and signage provisions. The district incorporates many new form-based zoning regulations, which have more specificity in building and site design requirements than typically found in traditional zoning districts.

Persons affected by or interested in the zoning ordinance amendment may appear and present their views. After hearing, the Planning Commission may take action. Copies of the ordinance, staff report and all related items may be found online at www.blacksburg.gov/publichearings or reviewed in person at the Blacksburg Planning and Building Department, 400 South Main Street, Blacksburg, Virginia. You may also call the office at (540) 443-1300 for more information. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in the public hearing on the above should contact the Planning & Building Department at (540) 443-1300, or (540)-443-1000-TDD.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Legals - Montgomery County

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on August 12, 2024 at 7:15 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Board of Supervisor's intention to act on the following Special Use Permit request:
A request by Jonathan L. Yates for Arcola Towers for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a 197-foot monopole wireless telecommunications tower, freestanding. The property is owned by Reginald L. Duncan and is located at 3936 Childress Road, northeast of Fairview Church Road (State Route 669) and southwest of Piney Woods Road (State Route 600). The property is further identified as Tax Map 127-A 3, 4 (Parcel ID: 019114), 50.4383 acres, zoned Agricultural (A-1) in the Riner Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Rural in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 140 SUMMIT RIDGE ROAD, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated May

Legals - Montgomery County

15, 2003, in the original principal amount of \$60,800.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No. 2003007685. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Montgomery County, 55 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on August 26, 2024, at 12:00 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows:
ALL THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, WITH THE IMPROVEMENTS THEREON AND THE APPURTENANCES THEREUNTO BELONGING, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING ON SUMMIT RIDGE ROAD, IN THE OF CHRISTIANSBURG, RINER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:
ALL OF LOTS 23 AND 26, AS SHOWN ON THE PLAT SHOWING LOTS 25 AND 26, EDIE PARK, SECTION B PERPARED BY CURTIS W. SUMMER, L.S. DATED 30 JANUARY 1984, JOB NO 3769, A COPY OF WHICH MAP IS OF RECORD IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA, IN DEED BOOK 482 PAGE 800 AND TO WHICH MAP REFERENCE IS MADE FOR A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY HERBY CONVEYED.

TERMS OF SALE:
ALL CASH.
A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale

Legals - Montgomery County

price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid.

The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwvsales.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically.

This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWV Law Group, LLC, attorneys for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: www.bwvsales.com. VA-355083-2.

Classified Advertising DELIVERS

National Farmers Market Week highlights markets' impact

RICHMOND—Picking out farm-fresh produce, mingling with growers and supporting the community are all part of a day's fun when visiting a local farmers market.

As National Farmers Market Week kicks off Aug. 4-10, communities are celebrating the role farmers markets play in supporting local agriculture, building connections and delivering fresh local produce to patrons. Now in its 25th year, the annual event is sponsored by the Farmers Market Coalition, which aims to highlight markets' impact on the nation's food system and economy.

"The food sales at farmers markets create stronger local economies because a greater share of the money spent there is more likely to remain in the community—supporting local jobs and services, compared to the money being sent to a distant corporate office," explained Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation.



The Radford Farmers Market, pictured here, is one of several local farmers markets available to consumers.

U.S. Department of Agriculture that reports growers selling locally create 13 full-time farm operator jobs per \$1 million in revenue earned, compared

to only three jobs created by those who don't.

Additionally, of \$2.9 billion in direct-to-consumer sales, on-farm stores and farmers markets accounted for \$1.7 billion. And 78% of farms selling directly to consumers sold their marketed food within 100 miles of the farm.

Farmers markets also play a crucial role in addressing food insecurity. Many markets accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits and participate in Virginia Fresh Match.

In 2021, over \$100 million in

federal nutrition benefits was redeemed nationally at farmers markets and through direct market sales, according to the USDA.

Marketgoers can find an abundance of fresh produce at any of Virginia's 250 farmers markets, including peak-season berries, heirloom tomatoes, melons, snap peas and sweet corn. Beyond fresh produce, markets are hubs for local meats and seafood, artisan wares, fresh flowers and value-added products like cheese, baked goods, jams, pesto and salsas.

"Consumers may find cherished varieties or foods prepared from old-time favorite recipes that aren't available in grocery stores," Banks noted.

Farmers market fans can vote for their favorite market through the America's Farmers Market Celebration. Hosted by American Farmland Trust, the contest highlights farmers markets' importance and is the only annual ranking of top farmers markets in the U.S. as voted by the public. Voting is open through July 31 at markets.farmland.org.

The top five farmers markets will receive a combined \$15,000, which they can use to help with marketing, communications and other needs to expand the market's reach and impact.

According to the AFMC website, the Charlottesville City Market ranks third nationwide. The Portsmouth Olde Towne Farmers Market ranks fifth among the Southeast region's top markets.

Virginia Farm Bureau

NAMI New River Valley announces upcoming Family-to-Family class

The local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness has scheduled upcoming classes in the New River Valley.

The Family-to-Family (F2F) education program is a free nine-week course taught by trained facilitators who have family members with a mental illness. The course focuses on knowledge and skills to help family members cope more effectively with potential challenges. Family members can include parents, children, siblings, partners, as well as close friends who support people who have mental illness.

In the fall, 2024, the F2F class will be offered in Radford on Wednesdays

in September and October (9/4/24 – 10/30/24) from 6 – 8:30 p.m. at Nineveh Lutheran Justice Ministry, 201 Harvey Street, Radford, VA.

This spring, an additional class will occur: Wednesday, March 5 to April 30 2025 from 6 – 8:30 p.m. at Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, 107 West Main Street, Christiansburg.

Please contact naminrvva@gmail.com or 540-585-1627 to register. Please indicate which class you are interested in, and if applicable, the spring information will be sent to you for your consideration.

NAMI New River Valley

Gas prices lower than last week

Average gasoline prices in Virginia have fallen 5.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.41/g today, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 9.3 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 0.3 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 4.0 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.79 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.93/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$3.99/g, a difference of \$1.06/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.93/g while the highest was \$3.99/g, a difference of \$1.06/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 1.9 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.47/g today. The national average is up 3.5 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 9.9 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Virginia and the national average going back ten years:

- July 22, 2023: \$3.42/g (U.S. Average: \$3.57/g)
- July 22, 2022: \$4.16/g (U.S. Average: \$4.38/g)
- July 22, 2021: \$2.97/g (U.S. Average: \$3.15/g)
- July 22, 2020: \$2.01/g (U.S. Average: \$2.19/g)
- July 22, 2019: \$2.53/g (U.S. Average: \$2.75/g)

- July 22, 2018: \$2.62/g (U.S. Average: \$2.82/g)
- July 22, 2017: \$2.09/g (U.S. Average: \$2.28/g)
- July 22, 2016: \$1.97/g (U.S. Average: \$2.17/g)
- July 22, 2015: \$2.53/g (U.S. Average: \$2.75/g)
- July 22, 2014: \$3.38/g (U.S. Average: \$3.56/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:

- Roanoke- \$3.31/g, down 3.4 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.34/g.
- Richmond- \$3.42/g, down 8.2 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.51/g.
- West Virginia- \$3.41/g, down 3.6 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.45/g.

"Most of the country has seen a reprieve from rising gasoline prices, thanks to weaker-than-expected gasoline demand, building supplies and a quiet period in the tropics," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "While a good portion of the nation saw average gas prices decline, severe weather completely knocked out power to a major refinery outside Chicago early last week, immediately impacting gasoline supplies to Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana and Michigan, and pushing prices up considerably. We've often said how critical refineries are, and with a long power outage, we're seeing the impact very quickly, but relief will eventually arrive. For now, as we approach the end of summer vacations, I'm hopeful gas prices will continue to edge slightly lower in the week ahead."

GasBuddy

News Messenger

Established 1869

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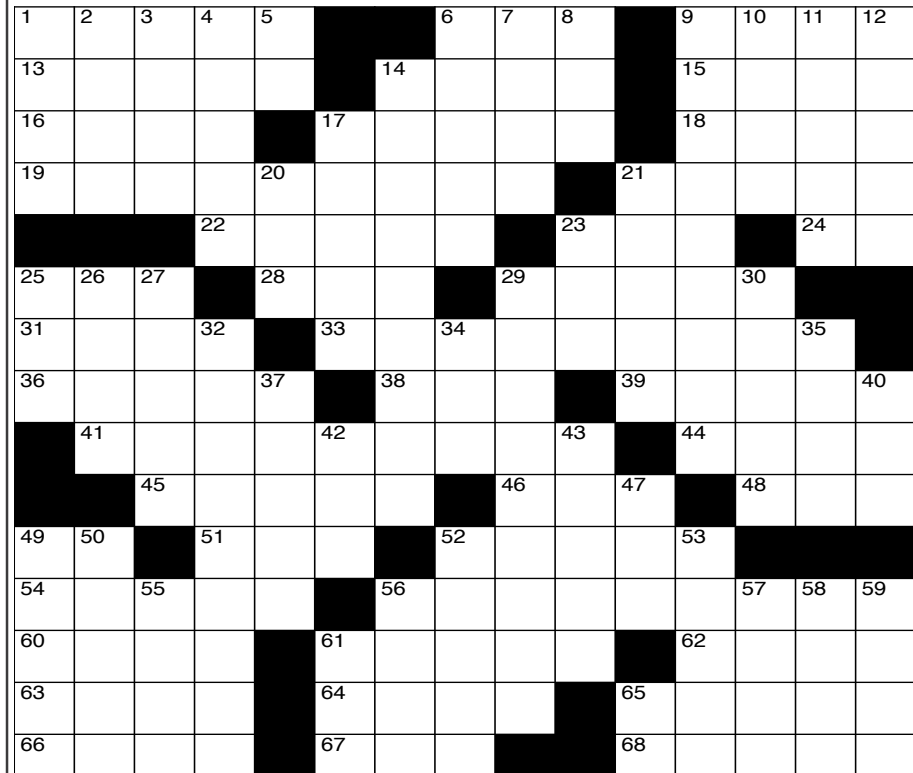
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The News Messenger is a newspaper of, by and for the people of Montgomery County. We encourage letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone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

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Dried corn kernels (pl.)
 - 6. A dog is one
 - 9. Medieval feline
 - 13. Appeal emotionally
 - 14. Uncommon
 - 15. Chinese currency
 - 16. Gain as interest
 - 17. Habitat
 - 18. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
 - 19. 2015 NL batting champ
 - 21. Makes wet
 - 22. Discounts
 - 23. Beavers build this
 - 24. Between south and east
 - 25. Promotional materials
 - 28. Arbitrator
 - 29. Ancient Greek ruler
 - 31. Ruse
 - 33. Where coaches spend their time
 - 36. LA landmark _ House
 - 38. Nothing
 - 39. Chickpea plant
 - 41. Revolutionary War militia member
 - 44. Civil rights organization
 - 45. Fathers
 - 46. Carries things
 - 48. Frequently
 - 49. Location of White House
 - 51. Small amount
 - 52. A structure forming a covered entrance
 - 54. Soothes
 - 56. Shameless
 - 60. Middle Eastern nation
 - 61. Footsteps
 - 62. Russian river
 - 63. Once-influential student organization
 - 64. Jags owner Khan
 - 65. Bura-_: Nigerian language
 - 66. Small boy
 - 67. Belonging to a thing
 - 68. Mosses
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Went too fast
 - 2. Protruding ridge on worms
 - 3. Insignificant
 - 4. Pains
 - 5. South Dakota
 - 6. Greek island
 - 7. Emerald Isle
 - 8. Golfers know this well
 - 9. Desire to set fire to things
 - 10. A glow
 - 11. Levels
 - 12. Enzyme
 - 14. Explains again
 - 17. City in South of France
 - 20. Paddle
 - 21. Sallian
 - 23. Split pulses
 - 25. Consumed
 - 26. Small drink of spirits
 - 27. Indigenous people
 - 29. Elaborated
 - 30. Painting technique
 - 32. Repentance
 - 34. Not bright
 - 35. Kansas hoops coach
 - 37. Koran chapters
 - 40. Dead end
 - 42. Foul-mouthed bear
 - 43. Nostrils
 - 47. Game Cache File
 - 49. One who believes in a supreme being
 - 50. Carnival worker
 - 52. Gnawing animals
 - 53. German town
 - 55. Conquer
 - 56. Thai money
 - 57. Taxis
 - 58. _ Clapton
 - 59. A form of Persian
 - 61. Pounds per square inch
 - 65. Nighttime



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OBITUARIES

Robinson, Paul Michael

Paul Michael Robinson, 75, of Christiansburg, passed away peacefully at his home into the arms of his loving savior on Sunday, July 21, 2024.

Paul was born in Pikeville, Kentucky on Sept. 22, 1948, and later made his home in Christiansburg.

Paul was predeceased in death by his parents, Zollie and Gelois Robinson; his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Elmer and Elizabeth Brammer; and his brother-in-law, Corlis Brammer.

Paul is survived by Linda, his loving and faithful wife of 57 years. He is also survived by his daughter, Leigh Anne Ryals (Dale) of Robertsdale, Alabama; his son Drew Robinson (Nicole) of Braselton, Georgia; his brother Don Robinson (Linda) of Christiansburg; his sister Elizabeth Brooks (Darrell) of Live Oak, Florida; brother-in-law, Dennis Brammer; his beloved grandchildren, Taylor Austin (Griffin) of Austin, Texas, and Mackenzie, Skylar, and Michael



Robinson of Braselton, Georgia, and a host of wonderful friends.

Paul was the owner of First Stop Auto Sales and worked for several car dealerships over the years. He was an avid golfer and loved to hunt and fish.

Paul was a devoted Christian and had served the Lord in various positions in his church throughout his years. He was a faithful and

devoted member at Faith Missionary Baptist Church and served as the adult Sunday School teacher and in the Men's Fellowship. He loved working to prepare food boxes for Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Angel Tree and with any task needed.

The family will receive visitors Sunday, July 28 from 2-4 p.m. Monday, July 29 there will be a brief visitation at 1 p.m. followed by the funeral service at 2 p.m. The viewings and service will be held at McCoy Funeral Home Chapel. The services will be conducted by Pastor Dale Ryals.

Whittaker, Pamela Jean

Pamela Jean Whittaker, 63, of Newport, Virginia, entered the kingdom of Heaven (where she undoubtedly received a joyous reception from her Mommy, Daddy, and the love of her life for over 45 years, Donald) Tuesday, July 23, 2024, at Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

She was born in Radford March 21, 1961, to the late Eugene Roger and Elva Lou Pearman Poff. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Donald Lee Whittaker and her father-in-law, Mark (Dick) Whittaker, Jr.

Left to cherish her memory are her son, Randy Whittaker (Cassie Miller); grandchildren, Wyatt, Waylon, and Oaklee Whittaker, Aaron, Jalen, and Nolan Miller; sisters and brothers-in-law, Dodie and Billy Webb, Kim and Heath Haug and Mandy and Mark Huff; brother and sister-in-law, Kevin and Joy Poff; mother-in-law, Shirley Whittaker; numerous nieces and nephews; and special friend, Glenda Lucas.

Pammi will forever be remembered because of her enormous presence in the



lives of everyone who was lucky enough to know her. Her infectious laughter and sense of humor, her ability to make you laugh with the perfect inappropriate comment, her deep love of her family and friends, her love of her pets, her happy place in her camper by the river, and the immense pride she had for her son and her grandsons, will live on in our hearts forever.

We'll think of her when we visit the beach, when we see a good yard sale, a every cookout (where her macaroni salad will be sorely missed), and especially during the Christmas season where she always had a gift for every kid in the room. Her generous spirit and selfless nature when it came to her family and friends was a true blessing to witness and a privilege to experience.

Funeral services will be conducted today, Saturday, July 27, 2024, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Scott Obenchain officiating. The family will receive friends from 1-2 p.m. prior to the service.

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

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

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

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

BAPTIST

First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave., 215 Third Ave at the corner with Downey St. We nurture meaningful connections to God and others through worship, spiritual growth, and community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: fbradford.org 540-639-4419. Worship is in-person and live-streamed on Facebook and on our YouTube channel: First Baptist Church Radford.

Trinity Community Church, 1505 N. Franklin Street, C'burg. John Altizer, Lead Pastor, Brian Cockram, Associate Pastor, 382-8121. Worship at 10:45 a.m., Outreach Ministries - 6:00p.m. Wednesday, Growth Groups - 5:00p.m. Sunday, Youth and Children's Ministry - 5:00p.m. Sunday, www.trinitycburg.org

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Blacksburg Church of Christ, 315 Eakin St., 552-1331. Sun. Bible Classes 9:30 a.m., Sun. Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m., Wed. Bible classes, 7 p.m., Outreach Minister Curt Seright, Dean Meadows, Campus Minister.

Faith Christian Church of Christ, 305 3rd Street, Christiansburg, David Rhudy, Minister, 382-4628, Sunday School 10 am; Worship 11 am; Evening Worship 6:30 pm; Wednesday night Bible Study for Women and Men 6:30 pm. We welcome you to any and all of our services.

CHURCH OF GOD

New Hope Church of God, 1404 Mud Pike Rd., C'Burg. Rev. T. Michael Bond, pastor, 731-3178. Sun. School 10 a.m., Worship 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m. Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

West Radford Church of God, 1824 West Main Street, Radford, VA 24141, Sunday School-10:00A.M. Morning Worship-11:00A.M., Children's Church 11:00A.M. Sunday Evening - 6:00P.M., Wednesday Night - 7:00P.M., Pastor Danny Newman, Church Office - 540-639-6562 or 804- 921-0828.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Christiansburg Church of the Brethren, 310 South Franklin Street. Pastor: Hal Sonafrank, 1-336-583-4822. Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Wednesdays. Website: www.christiansburgcob.org. A loving family, fueled by the Holy Spirit, grounded in God's Word, and delivering Jesus forgiveness and love to all people. Come as you are... you are welcomed!

(DOC - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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

EPISCOPAL

Grace Episcopal Church, 210 Fourth Street Radford. Welcoming and accepting, we have been a part of the Radford community for more than 130 years. ALL ARE WELCOME. Grace offers an 8:00am Contemplative Eucharist and a 10:30am Eucharist with organ music and a choir, with refreshments served afterwards. The 10:30am service is also available on YouTube for those unable to leave their house. Find us on Facebook and www.graceradford.org.

St.Thomas Episcopal Church, 103 East Main Street, Christiansburg VA, 24073. Worship and communion

Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Declare the Truth

Read Isaiah 43:1 through 45:25

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me" (Isaiah 43:10).

When the people of Israel persisted in looking to the gods of the nations that surrounded them, the Lord was provoked to address their unfaithfulness. He called Israel to make a thoughtful examination of exactly what the gods of other nations had to offer. He then contrasted these false gods with himself.

These gods of the nations, which were no gods at all, could not choose Israel. But

God, who is the only God, did make a choice. In His choosing, He had a purpose. He wanted Israel to know that He alone is God, to believe in His character, and to understand His love for His chosen.

Then He wanted one more thing. He wanted His people to acknowledge Him before all others and declare His glory. Instead of seeking false gods, Israel should have been declaring: "Only our God is God; no other is like Him."

Thought for Today: God wants our love for Him to be evident to all.

Quicklook: Isaiah 43:9-13

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

at 10:00 a.m., each Sunday, followed by hospitality coffee and Adult Sunday Adult Seminar. Our service is also streamed. Contact for more info: mystthomasoffice@yahoo.com. http://www.stthomaschristiansburg.dioswva.org

LUTHERAN

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church ELCA, 600 Prices Fork Rd, Blacksburg. Weekly Online Worship at www.lmlc.org. We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes and affirms all people just as they are. For information on Bible studies and Wednesday Vespers, email lutherememorialblacksburg@gmail.com, or contact the church office, (540) 951-1000. Rev. Monica Weber, pastor.

Our Saviour Lutheran Church ELCA, 1845 Cambria St NE, Christiansburg. Celebrate Word and Sacrament as we worship with varied liturgy, hymns and music. Join our inclusive community in person or online Sundays at 10:00 am(youtube.com/@OSLCCburg), followed by refreshments and fellowship. Ministries include Bible study, choir, food ministry, and crafters. Little Free Pantry and Library available 24-7 by the parking lot. Parent's Morning Out offers faith-based activities and play for children 16 month - 5 years select weekdays. Wheelchair accessible. Learn how you may contribute to our ministries at www.oslc-cburg.org. 540-382-2223.

St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Worship service each Sunday at 10 AM, Sunday School 9 AM. We are a community of God's people where we gather for worship, learning and service. Visitors and new members are always WELCOME! Google comments: "Wonderful, welcoming congregation." A place where all are truly welcome." You'll love our minister, The Rev.

Dr. Wes Jamison, who engages us in God's word. St. Michael started and administers Micah's Caring Initiative which includes Micah's Backpack, Soup for Seniors, Garden, Closet, and Mini Pantry, with tremendous community impact. Partnering with Rainbow Riders and Total Action for Progress, we opened the first Early Childhood Head Start in our community (6 weeks to age 3). We sponsor an awesome Scouting program of Scouts Boy & Girl Troop, Venture Scouts for older youth, and a Cub Pack for girls & boys kindergarten - 5th grade, amongst many other programs. Directions: From Price's Fork Road, turn onto Merrimac Road. St. Michael is ~quarter mile on the left. For more information: Phone 540.951.8951; Email hope@stmcl.us; Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

MULTI-CULTURAL

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

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

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

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Compassion Church, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Chandler Jones brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:30 AM

& 11:00 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services. Our vision is to see all Saved. Freed. Restored. Fulfilled. Find us on facebook and Instagram

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

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

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

UNITED METHODIST

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

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

WESLEYAN

Christ Wesleyan Church, 525 Harkrader Street, Christiansburg. Public Worship service at 11:00 AM. Sunday School for adults - 10:00 AM. Pastor: Gale Janofski 540-510-0952. The building is totally handicapped accessible. Website: christwesleyanchurch.org

OBITUARIES

Buhi, James Ray

James Ray Buhi, 69, passed away Friday, June 14, 2024, at his home in Radford. He was retired from the U. S. Army. James was preceded in death by his parents, James C. and Catherine F. Buhi; brothers-in-law, Randy Widau and Bob Koebelin; and mom, Pauline Buhi.



Survivors include his son, Jason Buhi; daughter, Amy (Stephen) Bernick; grandchildren, Josef and Edward Bernick; sisters, Annie Koebelin and Betty Widau; and many other relatives and friends.

Services will be private. The Buhi family is in the care of the Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

Gilbert, Patricia Carolyn

Patricia Carolyn Gilbert, 78, of Pulaski, died Tuesday, July 23, 2024. She was a loving wife, mom and Nanny who touched everyone she came in contact with.



Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents, Arnold W., Sr., and Frances Louise Hinkley; her daughter, Kimberly Dawn Lowery; and two brothers. She is survived by her husband of 59 years-and-eight-months, Fred C. Gilbert; son, Justin Gilbert (Tiffany); daughter, Rhonda Gilbert; six grandchildren; numerous great grandchildren; four sisters; and many other relatives and friends.

There will be no services. The Gilbert family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

Swift, Camilla Antoinette Churchwell

Camilla Antoinette Churchwell Swift, 67, of Fairlawn, passed away Tuesday, July 22, 2024. She was preceded in death by her parents, Leon D. and Gwendolyn Webster Churchwell.



Survivors include her loving husband of 27 years, Norton O. Swift; son and daughter-in-law, Aaron Lee Anglin (Holly); grandson, Elijah Aaron Anglin; brothers and sister-in-law, Jose Churchwell, Anthony Churchwell

(Charlotte), and Hiwatha Spraggins; nephew, Leon Churchwell; cousins, Laryssa Haskins, Pedro Haskins, James Webster (Angel), Gorrell Webster (Betty), Keith Webster, and Tim Wilson; and numerous other relatives and special friends.

The family received friends Friday, July 26, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford.

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

Moore, Woody

Woody Moore passed away suddenly June 28, 2024 at Lewis Gale Montgomery Hospital.



He was born at Montgomery County Hospital in Blacksburg on July 30, 1975. He was a kindhearted, fun-loving man. He graduated from Bible Holiness Christian Academy, formerly of Christiansburg, in 1994.

He loved his wife of almost 12 years, Marcy, with his whole heart. He loved spending time with his family and his friends. One of his favorite things to do was going fishing with his nephew, Jeffrey. He was a deli worker at Kroger, S. Main St. Blacksburg for many years and prior to that he worked at Virginia Tech in the printshop making deliveries. His first job was at Wades deli, formerly S. Main St. Blacksburg.

Woody was preceded in death by his grandmother, Ruth Moore; grandfather, Woodrow Moore; aunts Brenda Moore and Barbara Stimpson; uncle, John Stimpson; mother, Shirley Moede and mother-in-law, Susan Brookman Craft. He is survived by his loving wife Marcy and their two fur babies Faith and Samson; his brother, Jesse Moore (John); sister, Rogenia Craft Wright; nephew, Jeffrey Hannah (Molly) and great nephew Bracksley; cousin, Connie Slusher and many more cousins and friends.

The family would like to thank McCoy Funeral Home for their kindness during this time. A memorial service will be planned at a later date. In lieu of flowers the family has set up a GoFundMe account to help with bills. <https://gofund.me/327c0f42>.

Bowden, Jr., Dr. Robert Lee

Dr. Robert Lee Bowden, Jr., passed away Sunday, July 21, 2024 in Blacksburg at the age of 91.



Always a scholar, always reading, always learning, always teaching and always in a loving way. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Gail Bowden; son Todd Bowden of Blacksburg; and son Brent Bowden and daughter-in-law Crystal Bowden of Salem.

He was born April 10, 1933 in Paris, Tennessee and grew up in Murray, Kentucky where he always enjoyed playing basketball and competing with his friends to see who could be the best in everything from movie trivia to horseshoes. He graduated from Murray State in 1955, enrolling in 1957 at Virginia Tech as a graduate student and earning his M.S. and Ph.D in Physics. After graduation he was asked to join the faculty where he served for 35 years, always enjoying challenging his students.

In 1968 he met his wife Gail and they spent a year traveling Europe and Asia where he taught for a year at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey.

He returned to Blacksburg where he continued to teach in the Physics department, being promoted to Full Professor and authoring numerous publications. He retired in 1997 as Professor Emeritus. In 2008 he established the Robert Lee Bowden Jr. Essay Prize to encourage and reward excellence in scientific writing. In his retirement he enjoyed working on his computer, cheering on the Hokie Football team and keeping up with the latest technology.

Service to be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers please consider donating to Robert Lee Bowden Jr. Essay Prize in the Department of Physics at Virginia Tech or the charity of your choice.

NOTICE OF TRUSTEES' SALE OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

100 W Main St, Christiansburg, VA 24073

Pursuant to the terms of a Credit Line Deed of Trust dated March 29, 2017, recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Montgomery, Virginia (the "Clerk's Office"), as Instrument No. 170002368; modified by a Promissory Note and Loan Modification Agreement dated October 23, 2017, recorded in the Clerk's Office as Instrument No. 20170008310, a Promissory Note and Loan Modification Agreement dated August 27, 2018, recorded in the Clerk's Office as Instrument No. 2018006322, and a Modification Agreement dated September 23, 2022, recorded in the Clerk's Office as Instrument No. 2022007443, (the "Deed of Trust"), and an Appointment of Substitute Trustees dated July 15, 2024, recorded July 16, 2024, in the Clerk's Office as Instrument No. 2024003950, the property briefly described below (the "Property") will be offered for sale at public auction on August 15, 2024, at 1:30 p.m., at the main entrance of the Courthouse of the Circuit Court of the County of Montgomery, Virginia, located at 55 East Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073.

100 W Main St, Christiansburg, VA 24073 (Tax Map Nos. 527-A-66 and 527-A-68)

ALL those certain lots, pieces, or parcels of land, with all improvements thereon and appurtenances thereunto belonging, situate in the Town of Christiansburg, Riner Magisterial District, Montgomery County, Virginia, being known and described as follows:

PARCELS One, Two, Three, Four, Five and Six, as described in deed recorded in Montgomery County, Virginia Circuit Court's Clerk's Office as Instrument Number 2009002529, and shown on Sheet 2 of a plat of survey entitled, "Boundary Line Relocation of the Main Street Baptist Church Properties", prepared by Ronald B. Fink, L.S., dated March 12, 2013 and recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office as Instrument Number 2013002323.

LESS AND EXCEPT a lot containing 0.230 acres, Tax Map No. 526-A201, as shown on sheet 1 of a plat survey entitled, "Boundary Line Relocation of the Main Street Baptist Church Properties", prepared by Ronald B. Fink, L.S., dated March 12, 2013 and recorded in the aforesaid Clerk's Office as Instrument Number 2013002323.

AND BEING the same real property conveyed to ON MAIN STREET, INC., a Virginia Corporation, from MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, a Virginia Corporation, by deed dated March 17, 2016, which said deed is recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Montgomery County, Virginia, as Instrument Number 2016001810.

SUBJECT TO all easements, covenants, restrictions, agreements, and conditions of record and legally applicable to the Property.

Tax Map Numbers: 527-A 66 & 527-A 68

Parcel ID Numbers: 070462 & 015853

Property Address: 100 West Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073

Terms: A deposit in the form of cash or certified funds in the amount of ten percent (10%) of the successful bid will be required at the time of sale. Closing within thirty (30) days of sale. Time is of the essence. The Property is being sold "AS IS" without representation or warranty of any sort or nature concerning its condition. Obtaining possession of the Property shall not be the responsibility of the Trustee or the holder of the note secured by the Deed of Trust, but shall be at the sole cost, risk, and expense of the successful bidder. The successful bidder shall pay for all recording charges, examination of title, settlement fees, and all costs of conveyancing, which shall be by Special Warranty Deed. The Trustee reserves the right to reject any bid(s), withdraw the Property from the sale at any time before the termination of the bidding, keep the bidding open for any length of time, postpone the sale, reject any and all bids, review the qualifications of all bidders, and amend and/or supplement the terms of sale by verbal announcements prior to and/or during the sale.

Klementina V. Pavlova, Substitute Trustee

For information contact:

Klementina V. Pavlova, Esq. (VSB #92942)

Sands Anderson PC

P.O. Box 1998

919 East Main Street, Suite 2300,

Richmond, Virginia 23219

804-783-6795 (telephone)

804-783-7291 (facsimile)

NRV from page 1

freight traffic.

Norfolk Southern could then move freight traffic back to the older line. Five years ago, the plan included a small platform and possible station to be located across the street from the Christiansburg Aquatics Center. After a community study, the location was then moved to a site near the Uptown Mall. Gradually, the plan then pushed the site closer to the Virginia Line's Merrimac connection.

This where the cost started to skyrocket. In February, officials from the Virginia Rail Authority said bringing passenger rail service to the New River Valley could cost a staggering \$1 billion.

At the center of that play was a train tunnel that is almost one-mile long. The Merrimac tunnel was built in the early 1930's and has undergone some work in the past 10 years to allow "double-stacked" freight cars. But with the increase in speeds from a planned Amtrak service and the need for new safety measures, the tunnel is facing some major improvements.

Under the National Fire Protection Association standard, this would include construction of three ventilation fan banks that would be installed throughout the tunnel. In addition, work would have to be done to widen the tunnel to accommodate emergency walkways at the track level.

Also, a 15-story and a 20-story shaft would have to be driven to the surface to allow for emergency access.

The state of Virginia had purchased the former Virginia Line, which runs from Salem through the tunnel. Any travel westward would have had to progress through the tunnel and a secondary track would have to be laid down to allow a train to move into Christiansburg.

The initial plan was to have passenger

service up and running to the New River Valley by this year. Now, the earliest any type of service could start is 2028.

Officials deeper in western Virginia including those in Bristol are hoping the service can be extended all the way there, but again would require some major work to the infrastructure including the Merrimac tunnel.

The new plan will include moving everything again, thus pushing the project even further down the road. But it would include eliminating the large amount of money needed to deal with the Merrimac Tunnel. Now, the major cost would be to provide the stop in Christiansburg while upgrading the rail lines from Salem to the NRV.

Additional monies have been approved for infrastructure improvements in Roanoke to accommodate more trains and rights to run passenger service on Norfolk Southern's Main Line to Christiansburg. The funding will also cover costs to build a platform and siding track at the former Cambria station site.

A new agreement between Norfolk Southern and the state would also support the expansion of two Amtrak round trips to Christiansburg and provide for a third, operating between Roanoke and Christiansburg.

When considering the station itself, it could become easier as two former sites still exist in Cambria near the rail line. One is privately owned while a second is being used by Norfolk Southern as a maintenance stop.

There could be a question on what type of amenities would be also be needed, but the Authority hopes to discuss the details over the next few months.

For now, passenger rail to the NRV is still on the drawing board and not any closer as it was six years ago.

MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Pry optimistic about upcoming season

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Virginia Tech coach Brent Pry is excited and optimistic about the upcoming football season.

Virginia Tech football took the podium on Tuesday morning for ACC Football Kickoff 2024. Pry was joined by Quarterback Kyron Drones, defensive lineman Antwaun Powell-Ryland, and cornerback Dorian Strong.

The Hokies are coming off a 7-6 season which included a Military Bowl victory over Tulane in December.

Pry made it clear when he stepped to the podium the culture has definitely changed in Blacksburg, especially with the large number of players returning this season.

“Yeah, I think that’s valuable for anybody. You want that,” he said. “I think it goes into bringing the right people into your program. Guys that want to be at Tech for the right reasons. I think it goes back to being a strong brotherhood. These guys love playing together. They believe in each other. They believe in team first. They enjoy Virginia Tech. I say it all the time. I meet with each and every player at the end of the spring. And the last question I ask them is, ‘Do you like it here?’ And to a man all but four or five, the response was, Coach, I don’t just like it here, I love it here. And [we’re] thankful for our collectives, for the Hokie Way and for Triumph. We don’t go outbid anybody for anybody. But we’re going to be competitive and aggressive in that space. Our guys deserve that.”

The expectations because of that returning nucleus are high, and the former Tech graduate assistant admitted that standard is one of the reasons he returned.

“I want those expectations. I understand those standards. People talk about how you handle the expectations. Well, we all know that has nothing to do with the team that we can be when we go to Nashville. But at the same time, we all came to Virginia Tech because of those expectations. This is a place where you should expect to compete for the playoffs and expect to compete for a championship. That’s who Tech is.”

Pry is on the radar of the Dodd Trophy committee, making the preseason watch list for the 2024 season.

Pry also talked about the experience of running out of the tunnel at Lane Stadium to the booming “Enter Sandman.”

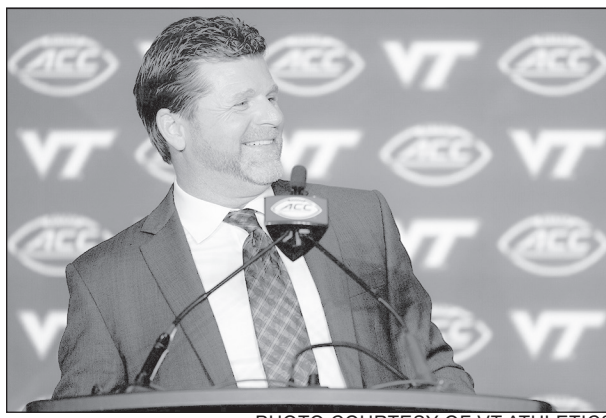


PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

Virginia Tech head coach Brent Pry is excited about the upcoming season. He expressed that optimism as he spoke to the media during this week’s ACC kickoff session.

“I love running out of that tunnel. Even when I watch the highlight video of it, I get chills. It’s special. I think for all of us, you love the competition, you love playing in front of big crowds, the excitement of the entrance.”

“Our fans are some of the best in the country. They pack the place. They’re jumping to that tune. We come out of the locker room and Johnny Cash’s ‘God Will Cut You Down’ is slow playing as you take that walk. By the time you hit that tunnel, man, it’s the best.”

He joked that he just tries to make sure he doesn’t stumble coming out.

After EA Sports released its top 25 toughest places to play, various media outlets offered their perspectives on the most challenging stadiums in college football.

The Athletic’s Bruce Feldman, with his 30 years of experience covering the sport, curated his own top 10 list. Notably, he ranked Virginia Tech’s Lane Stadium/Worsham Field at No. 5, placing it between Ohio State’s Ohio Stadium and Florida’s Ben Hill Griffin Stadium as one of the NCAA’s premier battlegrounds.

The Athletic lauded Lane Stadium for its ‘unique’ atmosphere, drawing a comparison to the environment of No. 1 ranked LSU’s Tiger Stadium.

“It only takes the first two seconds of ‘Enter Sandman’ to play, and I get goosebumps,” Feldman commented. “It happens every time, even more than a decade later.”

Former Blue Demon signs with Yankees

Marty Gordon
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Two years ago, former Christiansburg High School pitcher Brady Kirtner was drafted by the New York Mets. He decided to return for his sophomore year at Virginia Tech, and this past week, he



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

sat and waited to hear his name in the current Major League Baseball draft. He would have to wait a little bit longer, but he received a phone call afterwards from the New York Yankees they were interested in him as a free agent.

Kirtner (6-0, 180) signed the six-year deal earlier in the week and is now at the Yankees training facility in Tampa, Florida.

“I’m feeling excited,” he said in a phone interview.

This past season, Kirtner made 23 appearances as a Hokie, posting a 1-1 mark with a 4.62 earned run average and striking out 36 batters across 25.1 innings.

Kirtner earned three varsity letters playing for Coach Dale Nelson at Christiansburg. As a junior in 2019, posted an 8-1 record with a 1.56 ERA and 91 strikeouts in 58 innings and added a 1.08



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

WHIP and opponents batted just .152 against him. He attended the WWBA Perfect Game showcase in Jupiter, Florida in fall 2019.

Of course, this week has been a transitional one for a player who didn’t grow up as a Yankees fan.

“I want to become the best player possible, and we will see where it goes,” he said.

Blacksburg middle schooler named national wrestling champ

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Reza Massjouni has been dominant as a middle school wrestler, going undefeated this past season, but the biggest accolade for the Blacksburg youngster came this past week in Iowa where he was crowned national champion for his age group.

He had never competed in this big of a tournament, adding to the accomplishment.

“It was pretty overwhelming,” he said.

Of course, this recent title is nothing new for the 14-year-old. Massjouni is a two-time Freestyle Nationals Champion (2018 and 2024), one-time Greco national

champion, a three-time Southeast Regionals Freestyle Champion, three-time Southeast Regionals Greco Champion, six-time Youth Folkstyle State Champion, four-time Freestyle State Champion and a three-time Greco State Champion. He has also won various big national level folkstyle wrestling tournaments such as Super 32, AAU Nationals, Dixie Nationals, and the Ohio Tournament of Champions.

His father and two younger siblings are also wrestlers, and he credits his dad for his extra training.

Massjouni’s next stop is the U.S. Open in April of next year, and a chance to wrestle at the high school level at 126-pounds.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMI MASSJOUNI

Reza Massjouni brought home a national title in the 14-year-old age group against competitors including the championship belt.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMI MASSJOUNI

Rising Blacksburg ninth grader Reza Massjouni downed every opponent in this past week’s national tournament in Iowa.

The article highlighted how Lane Stadium transforms into an electrifying fortress, with “Enter Sandman” mirroring the Hokies’ aggressive defensive style and their respected special teams.

Under Pry, the Hokies maintained a 4-2 home record in 2023, with The Athletic noting that Lane Stadium is poised to become ‘an opponent’s worst nightmare’ under his leadership.

Tech’s home opener will take place on Saturday, Sept. 7, versus Marshall after kicking off the 2024 campaign on the road in Nashville against Vanderbilt.

Looking ahead to another familiar nonconference foe, the Scarlet Knights will make their way to southwest Virginia on Saturday, Sept. 21, after hosting the Hokies in New Jersey last year. Rutgers is led by head coach Greg Schiano, who received a contract extension this past offseason. Following a victory in the Pinstripe Bowl, the program’s offensive prowess is powered by running back Kyle Monangai and dual-threat quarterback Gavin Wimsatt. The duo accounted for 16 touchdowns on the ground in 2023 and will provide a good early test for the new-look defensive line operating under defensive coordinator Chris Marve.

One of the biggest areas of improvement for Pry and has team is simply re-establishing recruitment in the state of Virginia.

“To me that’s home turf. It’s too easy to get to Blacksburg from the DMV. There’s too many relationships that we have on our staff with coaches and programs in the DMV. There’s too many great programs to not return to the DMV each and every year. We treat it like home turf,” he said.

“We’ve made some good strides there. We’re invested there, like we are in the Commonwealth. Just makes too much sense for us.”

High expectations for the Hokies

From the sidelines
Marty Gordon

No pressure on the Hokies as they come into this football season with a lot of fanfare. Over 80 percent of the production is back on both sides of the ball. Failure is not an option.

This week, the media placed Virginia Tech in the middle of the pack.

Clemson is favored to win the 2023 Atlantic Coast Conference football title for the eighth time in the last nine years, according to a preseason poll of 176 media voters.

The Tigers went 11-3 last year, posting their 12th consecutive double-digit win season while winning the 2022 ACC Football Championship Game.

The 2023 ACC Preseason Poll was conducted via a vote of a media panel, including those who were credentialed for last week’s ACC Football Kickoff in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Clemson was predicted as the 2023 ACC champion on 103 ballots. Coming off a 10-3 season and a win in the Cheez-It Bowl, Florida State racked up 67 first-place votes. North Carolina (5) and NC State (1) also earned first-place votes.

Clemson paced all teams with 2,370 points, while Florida State held the second slot with 2,304 points. North Carolina was third with 1,981 points, and NC State nabbed fourth with 1,662 points.

The next three teams were tightly bunched, with Miami in fifth with 1,553 points and Duke and Pitt tied for sixth with 1,511 points apiece.

Louisville (1,344) was eighth in the preseason prognostications, while Wake Forest (1,181) took ninth. The 10 through 14 spots were held by Syracuse (826), Virginia Tech (678), Georgia Tech (633), Boston College (561) and Virginia (365).

The 2023 ACC schedule features a new scheduling model, which eliminates divisions. The 2023 ACC Football Championship Game will be played Dec. 2 at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, North Carolina, and will feature the top two teams based on winning percentage.

2023 ACC

reseason Poll

1. Clemson (103), 2370
2. Florida State (67), 2304
3. North Carolina (5), 1981
4. NC State (1), 1662
5. Miami, 1553
- T6. Duke, 1511
- T6. Pitt, 1511
8. Louisville, 1344
9. Wake Forest, 1181
10. Syracuse, 826
11. Virginia Tech, 678
12. Georgia Tech, 633
13. Boston College, 561
14. Virginia, 365

My prediction is simple, the Hokies will live up to the hype and take advantage of a favorable schedule. A 11-1 record is not out of the question, but this would include wins over Rutgers and a better than average Clemson squad. The good thing is that latter is at home, thus leaning the advantage to the Hokies.

A loss at Miami could be in the cards and out-of-conference Rutgers could be a slight problem.

So that means, an ACC championship game against Florida State in November. But we all know, the unexpected can happen. This year, the Hokies have depth, and that will be a biggie.

My predicted finish of the 2024 ACC:

1. Virginia Tech
2. FSU
3. N.C. State
- C4. lemson
5. SMU
6. Pitt
7. Miami
8. Syracuse
9. Ga. Tech
10. UNC
11. Boston College
12. Wake Forest
13. Duke
14. Louisville
15. UVA
16. Stanford
17. Cal

We will wait for the dust to clear come November. Now, just count down the days until opening weekend.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

S	A	M	P	S	P	E	T	P	A	R	D		
P	L	E	A	R	R	A	R	E	Y	U	A	N	
E	A	R	N	A	E	R	I	E	R	U	N	A	
D	E	E	G	O	R	D	O	N	S	O	A	K	S
			S	A	L	E	S	D	A	M	S	E	
A	D	S	R	E	F	B	A	L	A	S			
T	R	A	P	S	I	D	E	L	I	N	E	S	
E	A	M	E	S	N	I	L	C	I	C	E	R	
M	I	N	U	T	E	M	A	N	A	C	L	U	
S	I	R	E	S	B	A	G	O	F	T			
D	C	T	A	D	P	O	R	C	H				
E	A	S	E	S	B	A	R	E	F	A	C	E	D
I	R	A	N	P	A	C	E	S	N	A	R	A	
S	N	C	C	S	H	A	D	P	A	B	I	R	
T	Y	K	E	I	T	S	M	U	S	I	C	I	

MONTGOMERY SPORTS

RU announces Hall of Fame class

Radford University Athletics has announced five new members that will be inducted into the Radford Athletics Hall of Fame in October.

The Class of 2024 will include Che' Brown (Women's Soccer), Roz Groce (Women's Basketball), Alex Gregory (Baseball), Nichole Beall (Softball) and Greig Denny (Athletic Director). The five-member class will be the 21st to be inducted into the Radford Athletics Hall of Fame. This year's induction ceremony will once again help kick off Homecoming Weekend festivities and will be held inside the Highlander Hotel on October 4.

Che' Brown

Women's Soccer (2010-13)

The most decorated goalkeeper in Radford and Big South history, Che' Brown played a key role leading the Highlander to three regular season championship and a pair of NCAA Tournament trips during her time as a Highlander. Her 304 saves and 33 shutouts rank first in program history and her career mark of 0.69 goals against average is a Big South record that still stands today. Her various awards include Big South Freshman of the Year, three-time Big South Defensive Player of the Year, Big South All-Decade team, Big South Tournament MVP, United Soccer Coaches All-Region selections, and an All-American nod. Brown is also one of just six Highlanders to ever earn first-team all-conference honors four times in her career.

Roz Groce

Women's Basketball (1988-92)

A member of the most dominant stretch in women's basketball history at Radford, Roz Groce played a special part in making that history. Groce was



PHOTO COURTESY OF RU ATHLETICS

a member of the 1989, 1990 and 1992 regular season championship teams as well as the 1990, 1991, 1992 three-peat stretch of tournament championships. In 1991, she was named tournament MVP after hitting a buzzer-beater shot against Campbell in the title match to give Radford its fourth title in program history. That same season she set a single-year program record for Radford in free throws made with 170. Capping her career, she was named to the conference's second team in 1991 and 1992.

Alex Gregory

Baseball (2006-09)

A prolific power hitter and all-around incredible player for the Highlanders, the numbers speak for themselves in Alex Gregory's Highlander career. He owns program records for hits (272), home runs (38), on base percentage (.465), and became the first player in program and conference history to ever hit better than .400 in three straight seasons, paving the way to becoming the first player to

ever win three Big South batting crowns. Gregory also ranks top-10 in program history for runs, RBI, walks, slugging, total bases, games, at bats, average, and doubles. He is one of just five players in program history to ever hit three home runs in a single game. The 2008 Scholar-Athlete of the Year was also a three-time all-conference member and was named to the Big South's 2000's all-decade team. At the end of his Radford career, he was drafted in the 17th round of the MLB Draft by the New York Mets becoming the 11th player to ever be drafted in program history.

Nichole Beall

Softball (2009-12)

One of the best all-around players to ever hit the field for the Highlanders, Nichole Beall is synonymous with Radford's success during the most dominant stretch in program history. She owns program records that still stand today in total bases (459), RBI (158), walks (96), slugging (.686), and

home runs (52). Beall also owns top-five program marks for runs, stolen bases, hit by pitches, on base percentage, average, hits, doubles, triples and fielding percentage. Beall was a member of the 2009 and 2010 tournament championship teams while also helping guide the team to regular season championships in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. She is the only Highlander to ever win the Big South Player of the Year award twice and is also the only Highlander to be named Virginia Player of the Year and an NFCA All-American.

Greig Denny

Athletic Director (1996-2007)

Greig Denny helmed Radford Athletics for 11 years guiding the Highlanders through a growing college athletics atmosphere with eight regular season championships and seven tournament championships while also overseeing various upgrades to facilities Radford still calls home today. In 2003, Radford would complete construction of Patrick D. Cupp Stadium, one of the largest soccer facilities in southwest Virginia, which plays host to the women's soccer, men's soccer, track and field, cross country, and lacrosse programs. Radford's dedication to academic success continued under Denny as well, seeing 22 Highlanders earn Big South Scholar Athlete of the Year. Beginning in 2016, Radford would start honoring a student athlete per academic year with an award named in their honor that recognizes a senior student-athlete who excels in academics, athletics, and has made significant contributions to the community. Prior to his time as an athletic director, Denny also served as Radford's baseball coach in 1986 and 1987.

Radford University Athletics

The legacy of the Lunch Pail

How a rusted box inspired generations and became the heart of Hokie football

Hokie Pride. Ultimate Teamwork. Dominating Defense.

These are just a few of the characteristics that make the famed Lunch Pail what it is, a battered and rusting box that became the identity of Virginia Tech football's defense.

The tradition of the Lunch Pail began in 1995 when legendary Virginia Tech coach Bud Foster was named defensive coordinator. The original lunch pail, which once belonged to a coal miner, was acquired by the mother-in-law of then co-defensive coordinator Rod Sharpless.

The rest is history.

The pail included the defense's mission statement, keys to success and goals. Each week, the hardest working player on the defense earned the privilege of carrying the pail to and from practice during the week and to the sideline on game day.

Over time, Hokie players collected turf from playing fields after road victories and deposited blades of grass in the box. Tech painted on the side the letters W-I-N, which Foster said stood for "What's Important Now."

Foster's triumph in defense cemented the legend of the Lunch Pail. From 1995 to 2013, his team consistently ranked among the top ten nationally in total defense, achieving this feat eleven times. They led the nation in total defense

in 2005 and 2006, and also topped the charts in scoring defense twice and rushing defense once.

Under his leadership, Tech accumulated more sacks and interceptions than any other FBS program, with only Alabama and Ohio State ranking higher in scoring defense during his tenure. In 2006, Foster received the Broyles Award as the top assistant coach in America.

But the lunch pail symbolizes more than just team triumphs. It also represents the blue-collar work ethic and pride of the community at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

In 2007, following the tragic shooting on campus, the lunch pail took on an even greater meaning. The names of the 32 victims were listed on a laminated card and placed inside the pail with a maroon ribbon. Underneath the victims' names is an inspirational reminder from Nikki Giovanni's Convocation remarks: "We will remember. We will prevail. We are Virginia Tech."

The Hokies have carried on their memory ever since.

"[The shooting] was a horrible tragedy," former defensive end Orion Martin said when he took possession of the lunch pail during preseason camp in '07. "To have those names in there, it



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

makes it even more of an honor to have the lunch pail."

The honor of carrying the iconic Lunch Pail cannot be overstated. Current safeties coach and former defensive back Pierson Prioleau will never forget the moment he laid hands on it in after Virginia Tech's season-opening win against Rutgers in 1997, especially after watching watch a lot of really good players carry it around, guys like J.C. Price, Cornell Brown, Torrian Gray and Myron Newsome.

Only two Hokies have ever received a permanent pail: former star defensive end Darryl Tapp, who carried it for nearly two years during Tech's early ACC days, and former defensive line coach Charley Wiles, one of the longest tenured and most respected of Tech's defensive coaches.

When Foster retired in 2019, Virginia Tech honored him with a banner in Lane Stadium displaying his last name

and an outline of the lunch pail. During the post-Foster transition, Virginia Tech phased out the lunch pail tradition out of respect for Foster as Justin Hamilton, a protégé of Foster, established himself as the new coordinator.

But the decision to bring back the Lunch Pail was a no-brainer for head coach Brent Pry as he ushered in a new era of Tech football. And it doesn't come as a surprise. After all, Pry learned how to coach that side of the ball from Foster and his Lunch Pail defense during his time as a graduate assistant with the 1995 Hokies.

Bringing back the Lunch Pail marked a return to Virginia Tech football's roots. The beloved tradition holds a reminder of Hokie Nation's strength and symbolizes an aggressive, rough and tumble defense, one that finished the 2023 season ranked fourth in passing defense.

Virginia Tech Athletics

Genome Study

from page 1

of Sciences journal, has the potential to help the foundation restore the American chestnut population and adjust breeding to the changing climate.

"To understand historical local adaptation to climate, we sequenced the genomes of many wild chestnut stump sprouts and identified relationships between the genome in these different places and the environment of those places," said Jason Holliday, professor in the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation.

What the team found, not surprisingly, according to Holliday, was a great deal of genetic adaptation to different environments in chestnut trees. Next, team members divided the Appalachian region into three areas based on similar adaptations of the native trees — a group in the North, one in the center, and a third in the South.

Fungal blight decimated the American chestnut tree in the early 20th century, killing billions of trees and altering the life cycle of the species native to the Appalachian Mountain region. Because of chronic fungal blight infections, the species is unable to reproduce, migrate, or evolve in response to climate

change. The American Chestnut Foundation has spent the last 40-years creating a genetically modified, blight-resistant species, but adaptive diversity has not been a focus until now.

"The breeding program at the American Chestnut Foundation used pollen from a variety of places in the range, so one question is, have they captured the adaptive diversity that's present in the wild American chestnut range in a way that would allow them to develop families that are well suited for specific planting locations," said Holliday.

Using deep learning software, researchers were able to predict the geographic origins of a particular genome sequence by training this model using trees with known origins. Results showed the foundation was doing a good job producing trees with adaptive diversity, although attention must be paid to not losing this diversity through further breeding for blight resistance.

Moving forward, this information, in addition to providing guidance for collecting and conserving more of this diversity from the three regions established by the study, can help the foundation restore specific

blight resistant American chestnut families according to regions in which their genome is best matched.

Alex Sandercock, lead author for this paper, was a doctoral student in the genetics, bioinformatics, and computational biology program during the study and an Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Sciences graduate fellow.

Jared Westbrook, co-author of the paper and director of science for the American Chestnut Foundation, said Sandercock's work developed feasible targets for how many American chestnut trees should be conserved from each of the three regional populations.

"We learned that the American Chestnut Foundation has more work to do to conserve trees from the southernmost American population, which is especially important to conserve because it is most genetically diverse and it is likely to be the best adapted to the warmer climates of the future," said Westbrook.

Funding for this research was provided in part by the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Sciences at Virginia Tech and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Zeke Barlow for Virginia Tech