

# News Messenger

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Blacksburg

Christiansburg

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

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## Board of Supervisors approves 50% pay increase for themselves

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

MONTGOMERY COUNTY – The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors voted 6-1 in favor of a 50% salary increase for themselves at the Feb. 24 meeting.

Supervisor Todd King voted against the resolution.

“As each of you know, we had our extended work session on a Saturday when this was brought up. I let you know that I was not in support of this,” King said. “First, last year citizens got their taxes raised and I did say that at the meeting. Right now is not the time for this and I will not support it.”

According to Montgomery County Attorney Marty McMahon, the board must adopt the resolution for the increase by July 1 of this year, with an effective date of January 2026. Additionally, the board must vote during an election year, which is the current year.

The last year of an effective annual

compensation increase was Jan. 1, 2020, of \$14,000, with the board chair receiving an additional \$2,000 and the vice chair an additional \$1,400. The new compensation will be \$21,000 per board member with the chair and vice chair each receiving \$2,000 and \$1,400 respectively.

Additionally, the board voted 6-1 in favor of appropriation and then the option agreement to purchase .764 acres in the amount of \$925,000. King voted against both resolutions. The property, located at 305 Roanoke St., will be utilized to house administrative offices for the county’s career department of both fire and EMS.

Supervisor Sara Bohn said, “I guess everyone knows, but we’ve established this department, and they don’t have a home.”

County Administrator Angie Hill addressed questions and concerns from citizens due to a large discrepancy in the property’s assessed value compared to the

agreed purchase price accepted by the county.

“The tax assessment is performed by the Commissioner of Revenue’s office currently, and so they conduct that. It’s reassessed, I can’t speak to why it is the value it is,” Hill said. “We did receive an independent appraisal and as Chair DeMotts said, we are in the lower end of that, so I don’t know what the discrepancy is due to.”

“The assessed value is based on the purchase of the property in 2020, which does change the assessed value. The actual value of real estate is determined by market factors, which is why I think you will remember that I requested, and I think it’s our process anyways, that we have an appraisal during our due diligence period to make sure that the purchase price, with a private appraisal does actually make sense for us,” DeMotts said.

A public hearing is not required for the purchase of this property, Bohn clarified.

## School board budget requests 10 percent increase in funds from county

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

MONTGOMERY COUNTY – Montgomery County Public Schools Superintendent Bernard Bragen, Jr. presented the MCPS FY 2025-2026 proposed budget to the Board of Supervisors during the BOS’s Monday, Feb. 24 meeting.

The proposal requests a 10% increase in funds from the county than requested in the previous year.

Joining Bragen at the podium was Chief Financial Officer Angie Bland, along with fellow office member, Trevor Bennett. The trio fielded questions from supervisors following Bragen’s presentation.

“So that’s a \$ 6.6 million increase, represents a 10% increase from what we were given last year, not of the overall budget, of the portion that comes from the county,” Bragen said.

The top budget items discussed during the meeting are a three percent salary increase for all staff employees, a change in salary guides to 15 steps, no increases in employee health benefits’ contributions, and a

minimum wage increase to \$16 an hour.

“You shouldn’t be able to make more money working at Wal-Mart or working at Hardees’ than working in our schools and trying to help us achieve that laudable mission in the beginning,” Bragen said. “So, we landed on making sure at least the lowest of our employees are making \$16 an hour, which I would argue that you can’t live on that in this county.”

Bragen also proposes a raise for the MCPS board members that would be “modest,” which the members have not seen in recent years.

Free meals through the nutrition program for all MCPS students is included for the next fiscal year as well, receiving warm support from Supervisor Anthony Graftsky.

“I love the inclusion of the school nutrition program and providing those meals to all students across the county,” Graftsky said.

Supervisor Steve Fijalkowski expressed concern over free breakfast and lunch for all students though.

See Funds, page 14

## Anti-Trump protests continue in Christiansburg near Trump Store



Protestors line the street adjacent to Trump Store in Christiansburg, bearing signs in disagreement of the current presidential administration.

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

CHRISTIANSBURG – The corner of Franklin and Depot Streets has been the location recently for protests. A group of citizens are protesting the Trump administration for recent executive orders and decision making that they say is destroying America.

As the number of protestors continues to grow, however, so do the frustrations of business owners near the protests.

Locals and visitors to Christiansburg who drive by 219 North Franklin St., cannot help but notice the red and white striped building with the blue shutters. A sign on the side of the building displays President Donald Trump picture along with the

business sign “Trump Store.” In the business’s parking area stands a display that reads “Get your D.O.G.E. sign here,” representing Trump’s recent initiative, the Department of Government Efficiency. The sign has been redesigned to read “Democrats Officially Getting Exposed.”

On the sidewalks adjacent to the Trump Store, and just across the street from the long-time business Pizza Inn, the number of protestors has continued to grow over the last few weeks. On Wednesday, Feb. 26, individuals lined the streets from the edge of the Trump Store to the corner of Franklin and Depot Streets at the busy intersection. Some

See Protests, page 14



Protestor Holly Marrow calls for citizens to “Fight Back” against “Trump, Musk, and their minions,” according to her sign.

PHOTOS BY LORI GRAHAM

## Four RAAP chemical totes still MIA

Marty Gordon  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Officials at the Radford Army Ammunition Plant say four totes, which were washed away in September’s floods, are still missing.

Nine of the totes filled with the chemical, dibutyl phthalate, have been located.

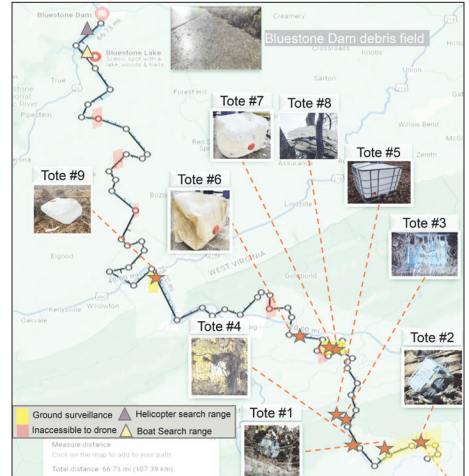
By the numbers, RAAP officials say they have covered 67 miles by boat, 13 square miles by foot, 67 miles by helicopter, 60 miles by drone and another 22 by local and state responders. One

tote was found as far as the West Virginia state line.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, dibutyl phthalate is used in making flexible plastics that are found in a variety of consumer products.

In information from the EPA website, Dibutyl phthalate is used in shower curtains, raincoats, food wraps, bowls, car interiors, vinyl fabrics, floor tiles, and other products, and appears to have relatively low acute (short-term)

See RAAP, page 14



COURTESY IMAGE

## Teel Park named in recognition of Teel family’s contributions to Riner community and county

Lori Graham  
Contributing writer

RINER – The official name of the new park in Riner HAS BEEN unanimously approved and announced by the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors. The newly named Teel Park sits on approximately 45 acres along Route 8, purchased from the Teel family.

“The Board of Supervisors hereby name the new County Park in the Riner Community, Teel Park, in recognition of the Teel family for their lifelong devotion, contribution and dedication to the Riner community and to all of Montgomery County,” Board of Supervisors Chair April DeMotts read from the resolution included in the Monday, Feb. 24 meeting agenda.

“This is a generational goodwill that the Teel family has given to

Montgomery County,” DeMotts said. “Thank you doesn’t seem like enough, but we will have Teel Park to remind us.”

The farmland was previously owned by Williard “Casey” Teel and Mary “Shorty” Teel, along with their sons Lee and Gene “Bull” Teel. According to the resolution, the family owned and operated a farm on the property in Riner, where they raised beef and dairy cattle, pigs, corn, and hay.

The park provides multiple sports playing fields and facilities, restroom facilities, a picnic area, playgrounds, and a walking trail.

In 2019, a new Riner Volunteer Fire station was also built on property adjacent to the park.

An opening event for Teel Park will be held in March, County Administrator Angie Hill said.



PHOTO BY LORI GRAHAM

Newly named Teel Park, the Riner area recreation facility is located just past the Riner Fire Department at 3595 Riner Rd.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Wednesday, March 5:

### Farewell to Winter luncheon and bingo

Join Blacksburg Parks and Recreation for food, fun, and great company on Wednesday, March 5 at 11:30 a.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center. This event costs \$7 and the fee includes a meal of sandwiches, sides and dessert. Bring a \$1 in quarters for bingo prizes and stay and play after lunch. To register, contact Joy Herbert at jherbert@blacksburg.gov or 540-443-1142.

## Thursday, March 6:

### American Legion meeting

The American Legion Harvey Howe Carper Post 30 will meet at 6 p.m. at the VFW Post Home, 102 Watts St. in Radford. If Radford City Public Schools are closed on Thursday or Friday of this week due to weather, the meeting will be cancelled. For further information, please call 540-250-2283 or 540-239-9864.

## Saturday, March 8:

### Mount Tabor Ruritan Biscuit Breakfast

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will be serving up hot biscuits topped with delicious sausage gravy, or with the latest batch of the club's "world-famous" apple butter. Breakfast also includes scrambled eggs, juice and coffee. Breakfast will be served in the Fellowship Hall of Slusser's Chapel, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg, 8 -10 a.m., below the sanctuary, on the lower church parking lot level. This is a fundraiser for the club to help serve the community, and donations will be accepted for the breakfast. More information at <https://fb.com/MtTaborRuritan>.

### Blacksburg Farmers Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 10 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 [blacksburgfarmersmarket.com](https://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com).

## Monday, Mar. 10:

### 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](http://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, Mar. 11:

### 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. The meeting will be live streamed to the Town's YouTube page at [www.christiansburg.org/YouTube](http://www.christiansburg.org/YouTube). Please copy and paste the URL into your browser and be sure to select Live videos to view. Agendas and minutes can be viewed at [www.christiansburg.org/agendasandminutes](http://www.christiansburg.org/agendasandminutes).

## Wednesday, March 12:

### Summer Camp Fair

Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Dr., Blacksburg, 4:30 -6:30 p.m. Get a head start on your summer planning. Open to the public. Vendor tables available for \$20. Vendor questions, call 540-443-1145.

### NAMI NRV Family-to-Family Mental Health Education Program

The National Alliance on Mental Illness, New River Valley launches its renowned Family-to-Family program, starting Mar. 12, 2025. NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, eight-session educational program for family members, friends and loved ones of adults

living with mental health conditions. Program provides valuable information on anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and other mental health challenges. The course is designed to enhance participants' understanding and advocacy skills while promoting self-care. Classes held Wednesdays 6- 6:30 p.m., March 12- April 30 at Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, 107 Main Street, Christiansburg. NAMI NRV invites anyone with a family member or close friend affected by mental illness to participate. Space is limited and early registration is encouraged. To register, contact [NAMInrvVA@gmail.com](mailto:NAMInrvVA@gmail.com) or 540 585-1627.

## Sunday, March 16:

### Blacksburg Community Band Spring Concert

Blacksburg Community Band Spring Concert, 4 p.m., Blacksburg High School, 3401 Bruin Ln., Blacksburg.

## Thursday, March 20:

### Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Italian Family Restaurant, 3204 Riner Rd. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are also invited to attend. If Montgomery or Floyd County Public Schools are closed on Thursday or Friday of this week due to weather, the meeting is cancelled. For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

## Saturday, March 29:

### Warm Hearth Village Arts and Crafts Fair

Come to the Warm Hearth Village Center, 2387 Warm Hearth Dr., Blacksburg to shop handmade items from local artists and crafters, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. The Huckleberry Cafe will be open until 3 p.m. serving a variety of sandwiches, baked goods, and drinks. If you would like to be vendor, contact Mardy Baker: [mbaker@warmhearth.org](mailto:mbaker@warmhearth.org).

## On-going:

### Radford Fiddle and Banjo Jam at Bee & Butter

Bee & Butter restaurant, in the Highlander Hotel on Tyler Ave., is now open on Monday nights during the Radford Fiddle and Banjo Jam. The jam is held at the restaurant 6- 9 p.m. each Monday evening.

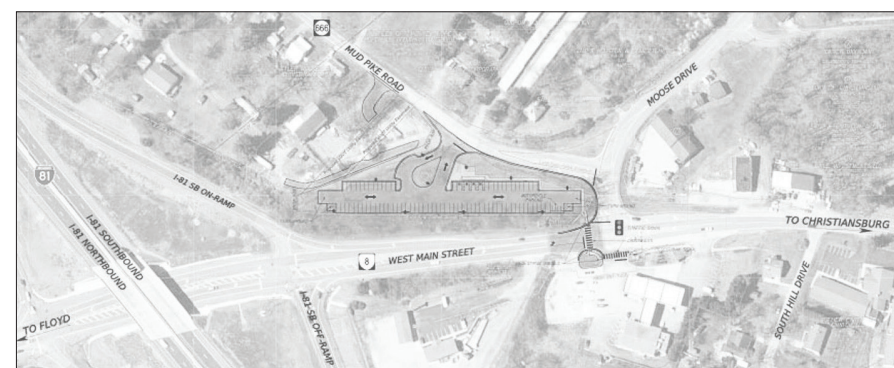
# PETS OF THE WEEK

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



*Rowdy and Shiloh are a bonded pair of older dogs who would do best going to the same forever home. Both are friendly and enjoy interacting with people. They also enjoy tasty treats. Stop by the Animal Care and Adoption Center to meet them. Their adoptions are sponsored by Montgomery County Friends of Animal Care and Control.*

## Park-and-ride planned for I-81 Exit 114



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF VDOT

**The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has announced a park-and-ride lot to be located off Exit 114 at the corner of Route 8/Main Street and Mudpike Road.**

### Marty Gordon

[NRVsports@ourvalley.org](mailto:NRVsports@ourvalley.org)

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has announced a second park-and-ride lot for Montgomery County.

The facility would be located off I-81 Exit 114 at the corner of Route 8/Main Street and Mudpike Road.

The 1.5-acre facility will be located about 0.2 mile north of the exit 114 interchange and be accessed from Route 666 (Mud Pike). The new park and ride will include approximately 80 parking spaces, a bus shelter, bike racks and lighting. Sidewalks and a crosswalk across Route 8 to tie into the existing pedestrian facilities also

will be constructed.

Construction is expected to begin this spring and be completed by the winter of 2027. The estimated cost of the project is \$6.7 million.

This is the second park-and-ride to be located in the Christiansburg area. In 2017, a space near the Falling Branch Elementary School was moved along Roanoke Street to with 270 spaces. The site has a location for the Mega and Smart Way bus stoppage.

The new park-and-ride is to be located on a site that initially had been earmarked for the expansion of Exit 114 off Interstate 81. VDOT is currently examining that future project and what it would look like.

# Blacksburg Downtown Commercial Façade Program offers funding for storefront improvements

### Lori Graham

Contributing writer

BLACKSBURG – Blacksburg Town Council HAS approved Downtown Commercial Façade Program Guidelines.

The program offers incentives for local businesses needing exterior building improvements. The maximum grant award for qualified applicants to restore or maintain a Blacksburg business facade is up to \$20,000.

A memo to the Blacksburg Town Council from Business Solutions Manager Angie Marcolini dated Feb. 18, 2025, reads "The Façade Grant Program regulations will help improve the aesthetics of the Downtown

Commercial District, and to help stimulate reinvestment in commercial properties."

Guidelines for the grant program include three different levels of funding. Level One is to be utilized for non-architectural elements such as painting and awnings, with a 20% reimbursement of up to \$4,000 to the building owner. Level Two has a maximum reimbursement of 30% of the recipient's costs up to \$6,000 and can be applied to building exterior routine maintenance as well as ADA compliance expenses. Level Three can be used for either of the first two levels of improvements and additionally applied to costs from architectural improvements to windows, trim and other exterior details. Specific

information about the program can be found on the [www.blacksburg.gov](http://www.blacksburg.gov) website.

Also at the meeting, held Tuesday, Feb. 25, citizens expressed concerns about a proposed housing project at 801 North Main St. Blacksburg resident Laura Purcell said, "I understand that our community simply needs more bedrooms...however, this building is too tall, too dense, and too disruptive for this community."

Leslie Harwood of Blacksburg also expressed disagreement with the proposed housing site.

"There are several reasons that I and others are concerned about the proposed development, including the size, scope, and parking issues," Harwood said. "In 2019, Resolution

2F19 was passed and ultimately stated in part, student housing proposals in commercial districts should include significant square footage dedicated to commercial and office uses."

Harwood also raised concerns about the proposed site focusing on student housing needs more than those of the local Blacksburg town residents. A need for affordable housing amid the current housing crisis is what the town should be working towards, she said.

The council also announced the appointment of Jason Karas to the Montgomery Regional Economic Development Commission. Paul Lancaster previously had stepped down from the position requiring the appointment outside of the normal schedule.

# OBITUARIES

## Agee, Naomi Marie Wells

Naomi Marie Wells Agee, 81, of Christiansburg, left this life to be with the Lord Jesus on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025.

She was born in Roanoke on July 3, 1943, to the late Asa Elbert and Beulah Marie Altizer Wells. She attended Auburn High School in Riner until 1959 and graduated from Radford High School in 1962. She was proud of her Riner roots and would attend Auburn class reunions.

Naomi was a faithful member of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church serving as secretary. She and Donald loved bowling and were members of the Senior Bowling League and she served as treasurer. She retired from Montgomery County Public Schools where she taught for 28 years, retiring in 2003. She received Teacher of the Year 2000-2001. She was a member for 25



years and served a term as president of the Virginia RHO Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa for women educators.

She was preceded in death by grandson, Caleb James Brizendine; infant brother; and great granddaughter, Orabell Rose Scott.

Left to cherish her memory is her loving husband of almost 60 years, Donald Lee Agee; daughter, Angela Marie Agee and Caroline Agee Brizendine (Billy); grandchildren, Billy Brizendine, III, Rynne Lee Scott (Kayla), Jordyn

Marie Edmondson (Denny), Bradan Garrett Brizendine, and Connor Aaron Brizendine; great grandchildren, Isla Rose Scott, Elin Marie Scott, and Vivian Leigh Scott; and many other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Mar. 5, 2025, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Mar. 6, 2025, at the funeral home with Elder Raymond Goad officiating. Interment will follow in Roselawn Memory Gardens in Christiansburg.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Valley View Primitive Baptist Church, Care of A. R. Quesenberry, 1611 Hummingbird Lane, Copper Hill, VA 24079.

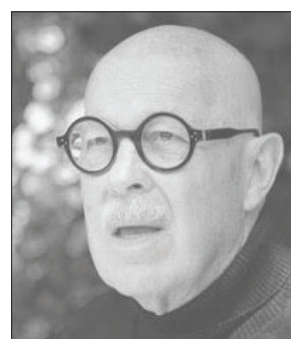
The Agee family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory in Radford.

## Leonard, David William

David William Leonard, 91, of Blacksburg, died Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2025. He was born in Johnson City, Tennessee on April 18, 1933 to Leroy Leonard and Opal Flora Hutchison.

Leonard graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1956 with a Bachelor of Science in Building Design, followed by a Master of Architecture in 1957. He was a member of the Corps of Cadets.

Leonard moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts to work in the department of internationally renowned Harvard Architect Josep Lluís Sert at Sert, Jackson, and Courley Architects. From 1958-1963, Leonard was Project Manager on Le Corbusier's Visual Arts Center at Harvard, Addition to Fogg Art Museum, Harvard Health Center, New England Gas & Electric Building, Harvard World Religion Center, Bagdad Embassy. In 1961, Leonard



received a Master in Architecture from Harvard University.

Leonard moved back to Tennessee and established David Leonard Associates, a private design firm in Kingsport, Tennessee in 1965. For the next 35 years, his practice was focused on state, university and medical projects across the state, including the Charles C. Sherrod Library and Basler Center for Physical Activity on East Tennessee State University's campus.

He was married to Mary Ann Price (deceased) with whom he had one son, Leroy Leonard, born in 1972. In 1996, Leonard met

and married his soulmate, Kathleen Curtis Wilson. Their blended family included her two children, Amber Haskett and Mark Haskett, and his son Leroy. He was a devoted grandfather to six grandchildren. He is survived by a brother, Leland Leonard, sister-in-law Connie, and nieces and nephews.

Leonard and Wilson move to California in 2001 after Ansher and Allen Architecture Company, San Francisco hired him to work on a Stanford University Medical Center. He retired in 2009.

As a dedicated long-distance bicycle rider, Leonard cycled across the United States and in France. He continued bicycling well into his eighties. After retiring, Leonard began painting seriously, taking numerous classes in abstract art. The couple traveled abroad frequently.

A gathering of friends and family will be scheduled in the spring.

## McPeak, Betty Farmer

Betty Farmer McPeak, 89, of Fairlawn, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 27, 2025.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert and Mary Farmer; husband, Charles A. McPeak, Sr.; daughter, Patricia McPeak Bishop; brothers, David Farmer, Pete Farmer, Vernon Farmer, Emmett Farmer, Ed Farmer, and Mac Farmer; and sisters, Belle Furrow, Mary Alger and Lillie Nester.

Survivors include her daughters, Pam Lyons (Tommy), Charlotte



McGinnis, and Sharon Overstreet; sons, Chris "Moe" McPeak and Charles McPeak, Jr.; grandchildren, Mandy, Jessie, Steven, Thomas,

Jessica, and Laura; great grandchildren, Guin, Ben, Geoff, Aliyah, Arianna, Levi, and Bethany; special nieces, Betty Graham and Pat Odham; and many other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends 11 a.m.- 12 p.m. on Saturday, Mar. 8, 2025, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will follow with Pastor Doug Testerman officiating.

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

## Turpin, William

William "Bill" Turpin, 74, of Radford, passed away suddenly Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2025, while holding the hand of his beloved wife of 30 years and surrounded by his loving family.

He was beloved and will be deeply missed by all that knew him. He was an excessively hardworking man who appeared to work for enjoyment. He served as a sergeant in the Air Force for four years and retired from Verizon after 33 years. After retiring he dedicated his life to the church and the food ministries for over 23 years. He was always looking for ways to serve his community and anyone in need. He enjoyed working outdoors. He was jokingly called "the gardener" or "lawnmower" man by some. He had an interesting and unique sense of humor that at times left many scratching their heads.



Bill was preceded in death by his father, Bentley Turpin. He is survived by his mother, Mildred Turpin Mills; his loving wife, Joyce Haynes Turpin; children, Shawn Turpin (Melissa), Dawn Turpin-Orgetas (Dino), Stacy Stull (Parker) and Derek Turpin; step-children, Diana Livingston (Jason), Charlotte Lane, Rusty Lane (Lauren), Mandi Montgomery (Adam) and Daniel Lane (Cheyenne); grandchildren, Tori Ketron, Courtney and Chase Turpin, Jacob, Christopher, Jameson

and Ava Stull, Mia and Nicolas Orgetas, Bradley and Sting Williams, Damen Roton, Jada Livingston, Grace, Elsa, and Cora Hoyt, and Robbie Turner; seven step-grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren; sisters, Nancy Holder (Marvin), Barbara Bell (Wayne), Doris Hayes (Paul), Bernice Hagaman (Don), and Bonnie Miller (Andy); and brother, Ben Turpin (Alice).

The family received friends Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed with Pastor Chandler Jones officiating with graveside services following at the Southwest Virginia Veteran Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to your local food bank.

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

## Muncy Jr., Paul "Skeeter" Estes

Paul "Skeeter" Estes Muncy Jr., beloved father, brother, and grandfather, passed away peacefully Feb. 23, 2025, at 5:35 p.m. at the age of 56. He was surrounded by his loved ones at the time of his passing.

Paul was born June 30, 1968 in Riner to Linda Brown and Paul Muncy, Sr. He grew up in Riner and built a life rooted in love, kindness, and integrity.

As a father, Paul was a guiding light to his three children. Michael A. Muncy, John W. Muncy, and Amy O. Muncy, teaching them the values of hard work, compassion, and resilience. His legacy will live on through his children and his cherished grandchildren, who knew him as a source of wisdom, comfort, and joy.

He was a devoted brother to Kevin Muncy,



sharing a bond of laughter and support that lasted throughout his life. Paul's generosity and warmth extended beyond family, touching the lives of many friends and community members.

Paul approached life with a spirit of adventure and gratitude. He left a lasting impression on everyone he met.

He is survived by his wife, Theresa L. Muncy; his two sons Michael A. Muncy and John W. Muncy and his wife Tia

Muncy, and his daughter Amy O. Muncy, her husband Mathias Buhr and his granddaughter Clara E. Buhr. He is also survived by his brother Kevin Muncy and his wife Lisa Muncy. They will carry his memory forward with love.

A celebration of Paul's life was held Feb. 28, 2025 in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel, where friends and family are invited to share stories and honor his memory. Interment followed in Roselawn Memorial Gardens. There was a visitation before the service. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the family.

Paul Muncy's gentle spirit, unwavering love, and enduring strength will be deeply missed but fondly remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

## Randall, Michael Alan

Michael Alan Randall, 88, of Christiansburg, died Monday, Feb. 24, 2025, at his home. He was born in Sioux City, Iowa on Dec. 24, 1936, to the late Frank and Leona Smith Randall. He was also preceded in death by two sisters, Marilyn Jaynes and Elizabeth Wilson.

Mike volunteered as an enlisted man in the armed forces at the age of 18. During his service to his country, he served in the Republic of South Vietnam on three separate occasions. He was awarded three bronze stars, numerous service medals, and the Expert Infantryman's Badge. He successfully completed the U.S. Army Ranger and Airborne (parachutist)



training. He worked his way up through the ranks and retired as a Major in the regular Army in 1982.

While in the military, Mike attained a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska, a master's degree from Eastern Kentucky University and a certificate of advanced graduate studies from the College of William and

Mary. He is survived by his wife, Joyce J. Randall; son, Zachary A. Randall (Sabine); daughter, Stephanie L. Davis (Chuck); stepson, Walter L. Blount (Robin); stepdaughter, Amanda B. Cottone (Greg); grandchildren, Madelyn, Gavin, Dominic, Angelica, Michael, and Presley.

A memorial service was held Thursday, Feb. 27, 2025, at 1 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with Brother Don Leonard officiating. Interment followed at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery. The family received friends prior to the service at McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg.

## Hilton, Mardell W.

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, Mardell W. Hilton on Feb. 23, 2025.

She was born Feb. 7, 1932, in Giles Co. to the late Edward Issac and Lura Williams. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Coleman Hilton, and her son, Melvin Meredith.

Left to cherish her memory are her four sons, Randy Hilton, Ricky Hilton, Darnell



Harvey and Charles (Johnny) Meredith and wife Kathy; daughter-in-

law, Joan Meredith; five grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and five sisters.

She liked to sing and play the guitar and her keyboard, she also played piano in the church that she attended for many years. Mardell was employed at Virginia Tech for 38 years.

Graveside services were held Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025, at the Westview Cemetery, Blacksburg.

## Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources announces Annual Virginia Birding Classic

The Virginia Birding Classic is a statewide birding competition in which teams of birders search the public lands of Virginia every spring for as many species as they can find in 24 hours.

All registration proceeds will benefit the Virginia Wildlife Grant Program, which awards annual grants to non-profit programs focused on connecting youth to the outdoors. Registration is open Feb. 12 - April 10, 2025.

Choose to participate in either The Cardinal Cup—the Virginia Birding Classic's preeminent category of competition in which teams of 2-6 scour the Commonwealth's many public lands to find as many species as possible in 24 consecutive hours—or The Big Sit—a tailgate party for birders in which teams of as many members as you'd like choose a circle 30-feet in diameter within the boundaries of one of Virginia's many public lands and record how many bird species your team can identify in

24 consecutive hours from within the circle.

How does it work?

Pick a team name and register online: Register your team by April 10, 2025. Youth under 16 years old can register for free but must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Pick when your team goes birding: Your team chooses a consecutive 24-hour period between April 15 and May 15 to go birding on federal, state, county, and municipal parks in the Commonwealth to identify as many species of birds as possible.

Share your team's results: Your team submits one official team eBird trip report for their tournament day to Virginia eBird. Final eBird trip reports must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on May 17, 2025.

Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

## Call to Artists: Signal cabinet public art project

The Town of Blacksburg Public Arts Committee is seeking design submissions from artists who are local, regional, or familiar with the Blacksburg area.

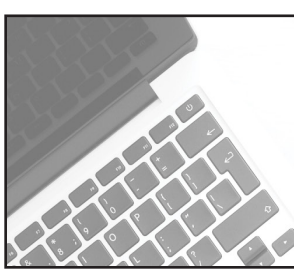
Designs will be installed on traffic signal cabinets at selected intersections around town beginning in summer 2025. Submissions are accepted via email to [signalboxproject@blacksburg.gov](mailto:signalboxproject@blacksburg.gov) and must be submitted by Monday, Mar. 31, 2025, to be considered by the

selection committee.

Before submitting a design for consideration: artists should visit <https://letstalkblacksburg.org/publicarts-signalcabinet> to learn more about the project details, guidelines, and requirements.

Questions: contact Kenna Jewell, [kjewell@blacksburg.gov](mailto:kjewell@blacksburg.gov), 540.443.1092.

Town of Blacksburg



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# OPINION

## Delegate lauds state budget, legislation passage

The 2025 Virginia General Assembly legislative session has officially concluded, and I am excited to announce that my HB 2621, the “APCo Rate Reduction Act” has passed the House of Delegates and Senate of Virginia unanimously! It now awaits Governor Glenn Youngkin’s signature in order to become law. This legislation will provide the most significant electric bill relief to APCo customers in years. For too long, my constituents – and those throughout APCo territory – have suffered through unreasonably high electric bills that put people in the unwinnable position between paying their electric bill or putting food on the table.

The APCo Rate Reduction Act includes several mechanisms that will provide APCo customers a break. First, HB 2621 allows for securitization, which will provide relief on each customer’s monthly bill. Also, there is a six-month moratorium on interest and late fees, as well as a nine-month moratorium on disconnect and reconnect fees, which will assist those among us who have the least means to pay. Importantly, there will be no increase in electric rates during the winter months (November through February). Similarly, APCo must propose seasonal rates that are meant to minimize the impact of cold winter months and high electricity usage. Also, APCo must propose alternatives to current billing practices, which are designed to lessen the burden of high monthly bills during peak seasons. APCo must also file for a reduction in fuel costs, which saves customers money on monthly bills. And finally, HB 2621 directs the State Corporation Commission to consider public input and comments during all rate cases.

This legislation was a heavy lift during a short legislative session. However, doing nothing was not an



### Delegate Jason Ballard

Virginia General Assembly

option. I appreciate every constituent who shared their story with my office – this is how to get things done in Richmond!

In other news, the General Assembly adjourned on-time and with a budget. Some of the highlights of this year’s budget include my request for \$2.1 million for the Radford University nursing program to attract and retain qualified nurses, as well as \$325,000 for the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Unique Military Activities program. Additionally, I secured \$15 million for a Pulaski County business-ready site that will benefit everyone in my legislative district with revenue sharing. Additionally, the budget includes: \$200/\$400 tax rebates for single and joint filers, an increase in the standard tax deduction to \$17,500 for joint filers, puts \$50 million toward disaster relief for those of us affected by Hurricane Helene, adds \$782 million in state funding for our public schools, a \$1,000 bonus to teachers in June (with no local match required), and a raise for E-911 dispatchers and state employees, among other items. While it is not the perfect budget that a Republican-led House would have written, it reflects a responsible, balanced set of investments for the overall

good of Virginia and its citizens.

Unfortunately, General Assembly Democrats continued their legislative overreach by passing legislation that is simply too extreme and out of touch with the views of everyday Virginians. This includes an attempt to enshrine abortion rights into the Virginia constitution – a policy that is so poorly conceived, it would end Virginian’s parental consent laws, leaving teenage girls seeking an abortion with no parental input whatsoever. Democrats also passed a law holding manufacturers of firearms liable if someone uses them in the commission of a crime, which is like holding Ford responsible if someone is convicted of drunk driving their F-150. And General Assembly Democrat also passed a law banning so-called “assault weapons” and “high capacity magazines over 10-rounds,” which would make the owners of countless popular handgun models criminals. Fortunately, the Commonwealth has a reliable backstop against these policies in Governor Glenn Youngkin, and it will be up to the voters to send a Republican General Assembly back to Richmond in the upcoming November elections to bring commonsense leadership back to legislating.

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

## Taking care of our children – opportunities for Virginia’s Legislature

Last week’s paper included an article suggesting the need for improving protection for our children through the legislative process. To do that well, first we need to know what puts them at most risk.

A little netsurfing shows where we have need for improvement. The latest data I could find, from 2023, reported an infant mortality rate (deaths per 1000 live births up to one year of age) at 5.6 in the U.S. and 6.2

### Gary Silverman

Columnist

in Virginia. Depressing numbers to be sure. Clearly there is a lot of room for improvement. The U.S. falls badly behind some of the leading nations in protecting their infants (e.g. Iceland at 1.6, Norway at 1.8, and Japan at 1.9). Our neighbor to the north, Canada, experiences only 4.3 infant deaths per 1000 births. Protecting our children means we need to improve prenatal care, and nutrition and health care for our infants. That is something that surely could be done through state legislative initiatives – frankly it is difficult to understand how a rich state like Virginia could be well below the national average!

More netsurfing reveals that the two leading causes of death in children ages 1-19 years old were from gun violence and motor vehicle injuries. Our firearm related death rate of about 6 deaths per 100,000 children and teens is about 10X more than the rate of the next highest of the economically advanced countries, Canada. This is frightening but also presents guidance on how to better

protect our kids. States can do things to help prevent shooting deaths. And – we are alone in the developed world in having so many kids die from guns – clearly showing that improvement can be done! It is not okay to have our kids at more than 10X the risk of dying from gun violence compared to kids living in any other developed country.

Data on children dying in other countries from car crashes was more difficult to come by (as key government web sites have recently been closed) but appears only moderately higher than that in Canada. While opportunity surely exists to help our kids through programs focused on vehicle safety, looking at data from our peer group reveals that we are not an outlier. Of course, that does not mean that we can’t do better!

Even this quick collection of data makes clear that we could best help our kids through actions that help moms have healthy babies, have those babies well taken care of, and prevent deaths from gun violence in older kids. All these issues can be addressed through appropriate legislation. Of course, regularly getting in the way are culture wars. Engaging in culture wars may be the way politicians believe they can get votes – but let’s hope they are wrong. Allowing culture wars to stop progress keeps our kids at risk and is not an excuse for inaction. Last week we read about a perceived issue that is extremely rare or nonexistent that can divert attention away from real problems. Let’s call instead for the legislature to address problems that truly present dangers to children.

## News Messenger

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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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## Test drive your retirement plan

Two emotions are common for those who are nearing retirement – excitement and fear. Leaving the working world behind can feel empowering, however, apprehension about entering a new life stage may also creep in. If you’re nearing retirement, you’ve likely taken steps to prepare financially for the future. But there’s one important thing you might not have considered adding



### Josh Smith, CRPC

Financial Advisor, Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC

to your pre-retirement checklist – a practice run. Test driving aspects of your plan before you’re actually in retirement can help provide a sense

of security for this next phase of life. **Consider what an ideal retirement looks like in the long term.** How you choose to spend your time (and in many cases, your money) in retirement is your decision to make, but it’s not always an easy one. As we age, our interests, hobbies and relationships change. What you

See Smith, page 8

CROSSWORD

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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. European Common Market
4. Poetic go quickly
7. Parts per thousand (abbr.)
10. Pigeon pea
12. Sao \_\_, city in Brazil
14. Longest division of geological time
15. \_\_ Alto, California city
16. Small terrestrial viper
17. Coming after all others
18. Penetrate with a sharp fork
20. Still-hunt
22. Chinese frying pan
23. Cave-dwelling salamander
24. Any thick messy substance
26. About the moon
29. AKA Tao
30. Jet cabin requirement
35. Prince Hirobumi, 1841-1909
36. An easy return in a high arc
37. Italian commune
38. L. Comfort’s illuminator
44. Foot digit
45. Minute tunicate genus
46. Green regions of desert
48. Direct a weapon
49. \_\_ de Janeiro
50. Equestrian animals
53. Access Tomei
56. Head of the RCC
57. Twines
59. Scientific workplace
61. Minerals
62. Hypothetical original substances
63. Hit with the open hand
64. Political action committee
65. Winged goddess of the dawn
66. W. states time zone

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Electronic data processing
2. Man or boy (Br.)
3. W. African nation
4. Fault’s incline from vertical
5. Method of birth control
6. City founded by Xenophanes
7. Legumes
8. Beckham’s spice girl
9. Explosive
11. 1936 Nobel winner Otto
12. Greenbay teammate
13. Brass that looks like gold
14. School graduates
19. Lively, merry play
21. Make indistinct
24. Egyptian mythological figure associated with floods
25. Washing sponge
27. Old name for nitrogen
28. Impounds for lack of payment
29. Radiotelegraphic signal
31. MN 55731
32. Sun in spanish
33. Helps little firms
34. Cease living
39. Flames up
40. Egyptian sacred bull
41. To wit
42. Mire
43. Bring two objects together
47. Filths
50. Israeli dance
51. Oil cartel
52. A particular instance of selling
53. Microelectromechanical system
54. Var. of 45 across
55. Goat & camel hair fabrics
56. Soda
58. A firm’s operational head
60. Seaport (abbr.)

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# Claytor Lake debris removal complete, state park resumes normal operation

DUBLIN – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with FEMA, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Friends of Claytor Lake, has completed post-Hurricane Helene debris removal at Claytor Lake and demobilized the operations center at Claytor Lake State Park.

Debris was collected using modular barges, tugboats, excavators and a 40-cubic yard roll-off container and sorted into categories: green waste, construction material, general trash and hazardous materials. Then, it was transported to a designated dump site

for disposal.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers takes pride in rapidly responding to natural disasters and restoring impacted areas,” said LTC Anthony Funkhouser USACE Norfolk District, acting commander. “Working closely with our federal, state and local partners, we successfully removed all floating and submerged debris returning Claytor Lake to its pre-storm conditions, ensuring it remains safe and accessible for the community. We appreciate the patience of residents and visitors as we completed this critical effort.”

Claytor Lake State Park sits on the northern shore of the lake and offers

water access, four miles of lake frontage, including a swim beach, and more than 470 acres of fields and woodland. The park served as the operations center for the USACE during the cleanup.

With the operations center demobilized, the Claytor Lake State Park boat ramp and Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources boat ramp located off Bear Drive are operating as normal, seven days a week.

“The cleanup of Claytor Lake is a testament to the resilience and dedication of our federal and state agencies, park rangers and community members,” said DCR Director Matt Wells. “Their combined efforts have restored this

natural space, demonstrating what can be achieved when we work together for the benefit of our public lands.”

Due to damage caused by large equipment, the park’s boat ramps and parking lots will need to be repaired, and DWR’s parking lot will also need regrading. This work will require temporary closures, which will be announced at a later date.

For more information about Claytor Lake State Park, please go to [virginiastateparks.gov/claytor-lake](http://virginiastateparks.gov/claytor-lake).

*Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation*



Claytor Lake State Park shelter after debris removal



Claytor Lake State Park shelter before debris removal



Claytor Lake State Park dock after debris removal



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE VA. DEPT. OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

Claytor Lake State Park dock before debris removal

## Blacksburg receives rezoning request for new housing development

The Blacksburg Planning and Building Department has received a request for a new development called Catalyst Blacksburg PRD rezone at 3503 Holiday Lane.

It is a rezoning request from GC General Commercial to PR Planned Residential to construct four multifamily buildings for up to 300 units and up to 380 bedrooms (45 units/acre or 56 bedrooms/acre). The buildings will be a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units with one entrance to the site from Yellow Sulphur Road.

The applicant is requesting an exception to Use and Design Section 4216(a)(3) to not require a street-oriented entrance along Yellow Sulphur Rd.

A neighborhood meeting is set for Thursday, March 6, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

in the Blacksburg Motor Company Building at 400 South Main St.

A planning commission public hearing is set for Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 300 South Main St.

The date for a town council public hearing will be scheduled after the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to town council. Please see the Town’s website for updated schedules.

For more information, review the application summary and visit the public hearings page at <https://www.blacksburg.gov/town-council/meetings/public-hearings>, or call the Planning and Building Department at 540-443-1300.

*Town of Blacksburg*

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# LAND TRANSFERS

## December 2024 Montgomery County Land Transfers:

Zero Dollar Considerations:  
Garrett Lee McGuire to Garrett Lee McGuire, Metes and Bounds See Legal Riner Magisterial District

Margaret Shaw Shrader to William D Shrader Trust, Lot 11 Evergreen Cluster Development Town of Blacksburg

Lee F Knowles to Lee and Charlotte Knowles Living Trust, Lot 8 Block 5A2 Pheasant Run Townhomes Town of Blacksburg

Kipps Farms LLC to Westhill Subdivision Homeowners Association; 0.156 Acre Open Space Parcel 1, 0.15 Acre Open Space Parcel 2, 0.161 Acre Open Space Parcel 3 Prices Fork Magisterial District

Libraries LLC to Libraries 1 LLC, Lot 70 Block 5B3 Pheasant Run Townhomes Phase 2 Town of Blacksburg

Libraries LLC to Libraries 2 LLC, Lot 3 Block 5A2 Pheasant Run Townhomes Town of Blacksburg

Anthony Jason Phillips to Robert A Phillips, 1.066 Acres Metes and Bounds Riner Magisterial District

Michael Shawn Abbott to 703 Tom's Creek LLC, Lot 3 Tom's Creek Village Town of Blacksburg

Ruth G Nunley to Debbie Cupp Dove, Lot 158 Belmont Farms Unit 7 Riner Magisterial District

Benjamin L Lafon to Nicole F Lafon, 2.6944 Acres Lot 79 Brush Mountain West Phase 8 Prices Fork Magisterial District

Danny H Lee to Danny H Lee, Lot 10A Town of Christiansburg

Jo Hylton Oliver to Jo Anne Hylton Oliver Trust, Condo Unit 102 Building A Sundance Village Parcel 1 and Condo Unit F Building 509 Sundance Ridge Parcel 2 Town of Blacksburg

Paula Toews Markham to Anna Markham Sanders, Lot 31 Phase 1 Shadowlake Village Prices Fork Magisterial District

Elizabeth A Heinemann Executor to Elizabeth A Heinemann, 1.299 Acres Parcel 1 and 0.428 Acre Metes and Bounds Parcel 2 Town of Blacksburg

Elizabeth A Heinemann to Lindsay Renee Holman, 1.299 Acres Parcel 1 and 0.428 Acre Metes and Bounds Parcel 2 Town of Blacksburg

Elizabeth A Heinemann Executor to Mary A Henderson, Lot 12 Section D Airport Acres Town of Blacksburg

Choice Storage Christiansburg LLC to Moss and Rocovich Attorneys At Law, 2024006854

Cathy M Hudgins Trust to Cathy M Hudgins Trust, 22.98 Acres Metes and Bounds Parcel 1 and 4 Acres Metes and Bounds Parcel 2 Mount Tabor Magisterial District

Peter W Jackson to Katharine Jackson, Lot 16 Millstone Ridge Subdivision Phase 2 Prices Fork Magisterial District

Robert C Wickline to Hazel P Wickline, Metes and Bounds See Legal Town of Christiansburg

Gilbert L Button to Gilbert Lee Button Declaration of Trust, Metes and Bounds See Legal Shawsville Magisterial District

Scott Gontarek to Scott Gontarek, Lot 4 Longview Estates Section 1 Town of Blacksburg

RWW36 LLC to RWW34 LLC, 002244

Walter Lee Daniels to Booze-Daniels and Daniels Living Trust, Lot 57 and 58 Miller Addition Town of Blacksburg

Kimberly Homer to Homeraway LLC, 8.253 Acres New Lot 2 and 4.995 Acres New Lot 1 Parcel 2 Shawsville Magisterial District

Adam Scott Tripp to Adam Tripp Living Trust, 2 Acres New Lot A Riner Magisterial District

BCCS LLC to Brett L Jackson, 0.076 Acre 12 Foot Strip Town of Blacksburg

Kevin Meadows to Kevin Meadows, Lot 27 Kingston Court Town of Christiansburg

Clint Edward Collins to Clint Edward Collins, 2 Parcels See Legal Town of Christiansburg

Eugene J Gardener to Eugene Joseph

Gardner Revocable Trust, Lot 18 Phase 5 Mossy Spring Town of Blacksburg

Jerry D Mills to Jonathan Brian Mills, Lot 563 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 2 Prices Fork Magisterial District

Mary C Harp to Billy G Harp Trust, Lot 11 Evergreen Cluster Development Town of Blacksburg

F&B Land LP to R Fralin Construction Inc., 0.126 Acre Lot 51 Kensington Phase 10 Town of Christiansburg

920 McBryde Reverse LLC to H Fulton Sensabaugh Jr., Lot 18 McBryde Village Section 3

Frederick W Bremer to Frederick William Bremer Trust, Condo Unit 303 Clay Court Condo Town of Blacksburg

Sharon Deborah Zinn to Nicole A Moskowitz, Lot 65 Haymarket Square Phase 4 Section 1 Town of Blacksburg

Frazier L McNew to Ashley J McNew, Lot 5 Section 1 McCoy Estates Prices Fork Magisterial District

Ena Beatriz Arias Mantero, Lot 57 Oak Tree Townhomes Phase 3 Town of Christiansburg

David M Elmor to Matthew J Elmore, 0.2693 Acre Metes and Bounds Parcel 1 and 140 Feet by 205 Feet See Legal Parcel 2

Frances Geraldine to Patrick L Saylor Three Parcels Metes and Bounds See Legal Riner Magisterial District

Deetta R Compton to Deetta Jean Ray, 2.644 Acres Riner Magisterial District

Scott Saunders Perfater to Scott Saunders Perfater, 25.057 Acres Mount Tabor Magisterial District

Lucas A Still to Lucas A Still, 26.232 Acres Prices Fork Magisterial District

Barbera L Felty to Sheryl Felty Earnhardt, 1.2534 Acres Lot 1 Dickenson Estate Alleghany Magisterial District

Eric Alexander Rosenweig to Eric Alexander Rosenweig Trust, Lot 5 J B Lucas Subdivision Town of Blacksburg

Katherine Booth Mogelinsky to 1006 Montgomery LLC, Lot 4 Town of Blacksburg

Katherine Booth Mogelinsky to 1004 Montgomery LLC, 0.2089 Acre Lot 3 Town of Blacksburg

Michael John Hackert to Hackert Living Trust, Lot 98 Section 10 Northside Park Town of Blacksburg

Kathaleen Moses Shelor to Kathaleen Moses Shelor, See Legal Former Alleghany Magisterial District

Sherry Akers Dauel to Natasha Dawn Akers, 2 Acres More or Less

Jody S Keith to Jody S Keith, Lot 6-A Oakwood Subdivision Town of Christiansburg

Susan L Meacham Trust to Susan L Meacham, 4.86 Acres See Legal

F&B Land LP to R Fralin Construction Inc., 0.305 Acre Lot 56 Kensington Phase 10 Riner Magisterial District

Martin E Muscatello to Martin E Muscatello Revocable Trust, 32.223 Acres Prices Fork Magisterial District

Radford Hotel LLC to Narayan Hotel LLC, 2024005021

Aly M Sultan to Cinderella Aly Sultan, 0.403 Acre Parcel 1 Riner Magisterial District

Jimmy K Legg to Denise M Beiler, Lot 15 Windmill Hills Phase 3

Steven J Schug to Steven J Schug, 169.3 Acres Metes and Bounds Less and Except 9 Parcels See Legal

Steven J Schug to Steven J Schug Trust, 169.3 Acres Metes and Bounds Less and Except 9 Parcels See Legal

Samantha Reesie Yopp to Gary Lewis Yopp Jr., 4 Acres More or Less Alleghany Magisterial District

Barry L Hunter to Tya Danielle, Lot 2 Walton Farms Section 1 Riner Magisterial District

Adam Kenneth Shoemaker Trust to Four Elves Realty 95 LLC, Lot 74-A Section 10 Phase 2 Windmill Hills Town of Christiansburg

Linda A Gallagher to Thomas Bernard Gallagher Jr., Lot 3 Long View Estates Section 3 Town of Blacksburg

Russell Wayne Stump to Tabitha Ann Stump Greenhalgh, 1.25 Acres More or Less Shawsville Magisterial District

Monetary Considerations:

Kathleen Harrison to David Howard Cline, 53 Acres and 15.75 Acres Metes and Bounds, \$120,000

Ashley E Glass to Deanna L Dickerson, New Lot 130 Town of Christiansburg, \$386,000

Carolyn Lawson Furrow Executor to Cozy Mountain Homes LLC, Lot 23 Court Drive Lee Highway Court Town of Christiansburg, \$110,000

William Andrew Wirt to Nelson Morales, Lot 30 Hans Meadow Phase 2 Town of Christiansburg, \$275,000

Gregory D Duncan to Shah Development LLC, 0.319 Acre Lot 5B Town of Christiansburg, \$75,000

Hilltop Park LLC to 220 Professional Park LLC, Units 8-13 Town of Blacksburg, \$1,100,000

Julie Earthman Trust to Nadav Mer, Lot 15 Stroubles Mill Section 2 Town of Blacksburg, \$590,000

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 3 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$143,039

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 63 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$145,439

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lots 257-259 Planned Residential Development Westhill Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$291,234

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 256 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$97,078

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 260 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$97,078

Jay F Shultis to Shannon Marie Murray, All of Lot 1B Graham Manor Subdivision Town of Blacksburg, \$420,000

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 154 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$125,429

Sergei Dubograev to Earl W Hacker, Condo Unit 614 Building 6 Cascades Condos, \$200,000

Randy Leroy Weddle to Matthew Wayne Weddle, 2.726 Acres Less and Except 0.063 Acre, \$165,000

Paul M Dimaio to Edward J Williams Revocable Trust, 10.3103 Acres Lot 1 Parcel 1 and 17 Acres Tract 3 Parcel 2 Riner Magisterial District, \$1,173,000

Bennie A Roberts to AJ1 RE LLC, 3 Parcels Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$90,000

Jeffrey C Parker, Lot 22 Maple Ridge Village Town of Blacksburg, \$220,000

Rochelle H Johnson to Kenneth R Price, Lot 27 Carriage Hill Townhouses Section 2 Town of Blacksburg, \$220,000

Simon Aubert Johnson to Sandra L Myers, Lot 44 Kensington Phase 1, \$329,900

BCP Development LLC to Jackson Moulton, Lot 16 and 20 Foot Strip of Lot 16 Mockinghill Subdivision Town of Christiansburg, \$355,000

Grant P Hinson to Braeden Jacob Wallace, Lot 9 Walnut Grove Section 2 Town of Christiansburg, \$290,000

Mitali Sharma to Simon Aubert Johnson, Lot 8 Walnut Creek Phase 1 Shawsville Magisterial District, \$440,000

Jerry Allen Cooper Jr. to Isaac Jones, 14.99 Acres More or Less Shawsville Magisterial District, \$22,000

Roger Burke to Hiawatha Logan, Lot 43 Town of Christiansburg, \$337,792

Leslie Mitchell Trust to Megan Roschelli, Lot 5 Henley Place Townhouses, \$235,000

Cindy Lou Macmackin to Encarnacion Amaya Lemus, 1.28 Acres Lot 4, \$47,000

1403 Crestview LLC to Sandra Reynolds, Lot 47 Highland Park Addition Town of Blacksburg, \$356,000

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Woolwine Properties LLC, Lot 139 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 4, \$365,245

Steven H Branch to Julie H Carter,

0.156 Acre Lot 5 Auburn Hills Villas Phase 6 Riner Magisterial District, \$449,900

Stateson Homes LLC to Concept Softtech LLC, Lot 136 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$860,613

Jacob Alexander Witt to Rachael Asbury, 0.256 Acre More or Less Lot 178 New River Village Phase 7, \$360,000

Deborah Martin to Paul Hale, Lot 13 Town of Christiansburg, \$350,000

Wanda H Garrison to Jessie Willard Reeves Jr., Lot 2 Reagan's Pointe Town of Christiansburg, \$370,000

RWW36 LLC to NRV Store LLC, 4.224 Acres Riner Magisterial District, \$1,500,000

Julia Louisa La Berge to Amelie Smucker, Lot 30 Preston Forest Phase 3 Mount Tabor Magisterial District, \$450,000

Martha D Pearman to Eric Burdette, 8.75 Acres More or Less Metes and Bounds Shawsville Magisterial District See Legal, \$280,000

John J Stramiello to Guber Bishop Living Trust, Lot 30 Preston Forest Phase 3 Mount Tabor Magisterial District, \$400,500

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Metes and Bounds See Legal Riner Magisterial District, \$196,300

Howard M Thornton Jr. to Jordan Dzubak, Lot 16 Diamond Pointe Phase 3 Section B, \$480,000

Christopher L Spencer to Braiden Quinlan, Lot 26 Phase 1 Robin Hood Estates Town of Christiansburg, \$387,000

Steven R Lyons to Bradley R Morgan, 1.154 Acres Tract 2 Riner Magisterial District, \$243,000

Ras Trustee Services LLC to Rocket Rental Company, 465-20 20, \$286,000

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 2 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$143,039

Ola Abdelkareem Mohai Elshaar to Jonathan Watkinson, Lot 20 Kingston Court, \$315,000

Brett L Jackson to 1324 North Main Street LLC, 2 Parcels See Legal, \$1,800,000

Carl Stephen Graham Trust to Ace Investors Group LLC; 10.8 Acres Parcel 1, 9.9 Acres Parcel 2, and 9.77 Acres Parcel 3 Prices Fork Magisterial District; \$1,500,000

Yitao Bai to Noelle Anastasi, Condo Unit B5 Brightwood Manor Condominium Town of Blacksburg, \$186,000

Lifu Huang to Annie Sauer Booth, 0.164 Acre Lot 3 The Villas on North Main Phase 1 Town of Blacksburg, \$428,000

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Jerry D Mills, Lot 563 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 2 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$627,475

Catherine Barnett to Joseph Paul Bruzgul, Metes and Bounds See Legal Town of Blacksburg, \$535,000

Michael Kevin Hamed to Amy D Marshall, 4.3226 Acres Lot 82 Brush Mountain West Phase 9 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$789,000

Joshua Webb to Patricia Isabel Aguirre Garcia, See Legal Town of Blacksburg, \$495,000

William Mills Jr. to Christopher Lee Brumfield, Lot 20 Riner Magisterial District, \$25,000

R Fralin Construction Inc. to Dylan Saunders Andrews, 0.126 Acre Lot 51 Kensington Phase 10 Town of Christiansburg, \$354,950

Grace A Hight to Caleb Michael Forehand, Lot 5 Kamran Drive Subdivision Town of Christiansburg, \$259,900

Atlantic Union Bank to New River Valley Regional Commission, Arborview Plant Legal Description 2 Lot 9, \$2,000,000

Johnny Graveley to Leo N Priddy, 0.47 Acre Town of Christiansburg, \$260,000

Fast Idle LLC to Haibo Huang,

See Land Transfers, page 7

# Land Transfers

from page 6

Condo Unit M Building 509 Sundance Ridge Condominium of Blacksburg Town of Blacksburg, \$173,000

Dee Ann Mims West to Beverly Suzette Freeman Trust, Lot 36 Oak Tree Townhomes Phase 10 Town of Christiansburg, \$350,000

Michael L Brunelli to Therese K Walters, Lot 8 Highland Park Town of Christiansburg, \$259,000

Catherine Barnett to Samuel H Haines, Lot 9 and Part of Lot 8 Metes and Bounds See Legal Town of Blacksburg, \$215,000

Tulika Chaudhary to Brooke E Brunelli, Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$310,000

Shah Development LLC to Eagle Construction of VA LLC, Four Parcels See Legal Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$1,614,250

Sharon Jennelle Snyder Executor to 788 Davis Street LLC, Lots 8 & 9 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$399,500

Harland L Brown to Asal Sleiman Almanasir, Lot 4 Myers Acres Subdivision Metes and Bounds Town of Blacksburg, \$370,850

Terra Ashworth to ANB Investments LLC, Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$110,000

Elsie Lorraine Martin to Franklin J Vishneski, 5.87 Acres More or Less, \$18,800

Diversified Investors XIII LLC to MVF RAJ Hospitality LLC, 1.711 Acres Lot 3 Rugby Field Town of Blacksburg, \$1,000,000

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Chet Prasad Bhatta, Lot 12 The Reserve at Round Meadows Town of Christiansburg, \$604,462

Kipps Farms LLC to Stateson Homes LLC, Lot 152 Westhill Subdivision Prices

Fork Magisterial District, \$125,429

David Lee Wayne Rupe to Lisa Matteson, Two Parcels Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$14,500

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Michael C Missett, Lot 505 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 2 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$1,027,596

Ashley M Peele to Joseph S Woods, See Plat 2024007271, \$500

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Scott Mutchler, Lot 417 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 1 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$677,000

Constance Cedras to Karl Sorensen, Lot 6 Section 1 Stroubles Mill Town of Blacksburg, \$610,000

Rocket Rental Company LLC to Pankaj Kumar, Lot 401 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$389,500

NRV Market Square LLC to Niver Valley Association of Realtors, 0.991 Acre Lot 21-A Phase 5 Arbor View Plantation Town of Christiansburg, \$450,000

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Kathleen A Swistock Revocable Trust, Lot 47 The Reserve at Round Meadows Town of Christiansburg, \$1,017,346

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Patrick H Post, Lot 140 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 4 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$344,832

Calque Inc. to Jordan Benedict, 0.3444 Acre Lot 22 Craig Mountain Section 1 Town of Christiansburg, \$257,250

Shantel M Mason to Joseph Moulton, Lot 21 Highland Park Number 3 Metes and Bounds Town of Christiansburg, \$240,000

Adam Charles Perfater to Bruce A Roberts, 17 Acres Mount Tabor Magisterial District, \$210,000

Avia Blythe Gui to Zarianne Morehouse, Lot 20 Mount Tabor Village Town of Blacksburg, \$375,000

Linda D Craft to Sherrie Keith, 009672, \$149,100

Elizabeth Anne Coe to Daryn E Cockram, 7.444 Acres Riner Magisterial District, \$775,000

Evelyn Ruth Estes Harrison to Desirae Booth, 3 Parcels Riner Magisterial District, \$200,000

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Shah Development LLC, 10.344 Acres Lot 48 The Reserve at Round Meadows Town of Christiansburg, \$200,000

R Fralin Construction Inc. to Clarence Wayne Patty Jr., 0.305 Acre Lot 56 Kensington Phase 10 Riner Magisterial District, \$418,182

Stateson Homes LLC to Danbi Sinicope, Lot 118 Westhill Subdivision Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$538,899

Melray Sunset Investments LLC to Beatrice Wilson Galbreath; 40 Feet of Lot 25, All of Lots 27, 29, 31 Lucinian Heights Town of Blacksburg; \$735,000

Nelson Jose Morales to Aly M Sultan, Lot 23 Craig Mountain Section 1 Town of Christiansburg, \$275,000

Selena A Caldwell to Aly M Sultan, 5.467 Acres Riner Magisterial District, \$125,000

Autumn Sunrise Properties LLC to Claude B Linkous Jr., Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$40,000

Rose Mary Wilson to Charles Louthen, 2 Parcels Metes and Bounds See Legal Shawsville Magisterial District, \$175,000

Michael S Eggleston to Lisa Kay Spears, 1.866 Acres Lot 2C Mount Tabor Magisterial District, \$225,000

L&H Investments LLC to KRJLM LLC, Lot 124 Section 1 Pheasant Run Phase 4 Town of Blacksburg, \$350,000

Michael J Taczak to Qiuyun Dong, Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$384,586

Michael Wayne Holland to Kristy M Collins, 2024003583, \$379,500

James E Montgomery to Ana Ruth Rodriguez Sosa, 1.955 Acres Riner Magisterial District, \$415,000

Christopher J Anderson to Kenneth R Pendergrast, 4.464 Acres Revised Lot 3 Parcel 1 and 19.59 Acres New Lot 7 Parcel 2 Riner Magisterial District \$755,000

Ella Mae Millirons to Cavalier Warrior Properties LLC, 0.793 Acre parcel A Town of Christiansburg, \$500,000

JJB Blacksburg LLC to 1705 S Main Street LLC, 2 Parcels See Legal, \$1,950,000

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Kevin Finn, Lot 138 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 4 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$391,749

Nancy Graham to Charles A Halsey, See Legal Shawsville Magisterial District, \$3,300

Eagle Construction of VA LLC to Kathleen Agis, Lot 561 The Preserve at Walnut Springs Section 2 Prices Fork Magisterial District, \$586,652

Miranda Kay Bowman to Alexia O Zarco, 0.6 Acre More or Less Metes and Bounds See Legal, \$289,000

LB-Ranch Properties LLC to Ismael Santiago-Hernandez, \$47,500

John Steven Smith to Rent One Development LLC, Lots 5-7 Tract 1 and Lot 7 Tract 2 Mount Tabor Magisterial District, \$190,000

## NRV Indivisible leads protest at Congressman Morgan Griffith's office



NRV Indivisible organized the protest, which centered on Griffith's budget vote.

CHRISTIANSBURG – Community members gathered at Congressman Morgan Griffith's Christiansburg office Saturday to protest his vote for the House Republican budget plan that critics say prioritizes tax cuts for the wealthy while slashing healthcare and food assistance for vulnerable Americans.

The protest took place at noon on Saturday, Mar. 1, 2025, at Griffith's office located at 17 Main St. in Christiansburg. According to NRV Indivisible, which organized the event, "the demonstration aims to highlight concerns about Griffith's support for a budget that would provide substantial tax breaks to the top one percent of earners while potentially eliminating healthcare coverage for approximately 72 million Americans, including children and seniors. The budget also targets SNAP food assistance programs that many families in the district rely on.

"Congressman Griffith has

chosen to support a budget that helps the wealthy at the expense of his most vulnerable constituents," said Alexa Casey, Co-Coordinator of NRV Indivisible. "We're gathering to make it clear that his constituents oppose these priorities that would strip healthcare and food assistance from children, seniors, and families in our community."

The House Republican budget plan has drawn criticism from policy experts who note it would significantly reduce funding for Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act marketplace subsidies while extending and expanding the 2017 tax cuts that disproportionately benefit high-income households.

NRV Indivisible is a grassroots organization dedicated to advocating for policies that support all members of the New River Valley community and promoting civic engagement throughout Virginia's 9th Congressional District.

NRV Indivisible



Community members protest at the Christiansburg office of Congressman Morgan Griffith Saturday, Mar. 1.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NRV INDIVISIBLE

# Second annual Future of Talent Summit coming to Radford University

BLACKSBURG – Influential leaders in talent attraction and retention from GO Virginia Region 2 will gather at the second annual Future of Talent Summit on Thursday, Mar. 13, 2025, at Radford University.

The goal of this event is to align the efforts of employers, educational institutions, workforce and economic development, and government as they collaborate to develop sustainable talent pipelines, form meaningful connections with students, and attract top-tier talent to area employers. This year's theme, Turning Data into Action, will underscore the role of data analytics in creating collaborative workforce development strategies and provide a framework for how data can be leveraged to drive talent attraction and retention efforts.

The New River Valley, known for its regional collaboration and remarkable economic performance in 2023, has emerged as an ideal location to drive these efforts. In the latest State of The Commonwealth report by Old Dominion University, the Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA (known as the New River Valley region) experienced a 3.7% increase in gross domestic

product (GDP) in 2023, positioning it as one of the fastest-growing economies in Virginia, just behind Charlottesville (4.2%).

The Future of Talent Summit will be held inside the newly constructed Artis Center for Adaptive Innovation and Creativity on the campus of Radford University from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and is open to representatives from government, educational institutions, regional employers, as well as human resource and marketing professionals. The program will begin with a welcome message from Radford University President, Bret Danilowicz, followed by keynote addresses from state representatives, Rachel O'Brien, Interim Executive Director and Research Director at the Virginia Office of Education Economics, and Emily Eller, Marketing Director at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

"We are honored to host the Future of Talent Summit at Radford University and to bring businesses, governments and economic development organizations from across Southwest Virginia together to help chart a course for mutual future success," said Radford University President, Bret Danilowicz. "This event

is a valuable forum for ideas, actions, and engagement to further understand our region's present and future needs in the workforce. We look forward to telling our story and to helping build more meaningful connections during the Summit."

In the afternoon, the Summit will host an employer panel, moderated by President Danilowicz, which will feature a distinguished group of employers from GO Virginia Region 2 who are at the forefront of creating impactful talent development initiatives. Following the employer panel, attendees are invited to participate in an optional strategic doing session facilitated by Franklin Solutions. This session will provide attendees with an opportunity to identify collaborative solutions to solve workforce-related challenges across the New River Valley, Roanoke, and Lynchburg regions.

Collaborative partners working to host the second annual summit include Onward NRV, Radford University, the Roanoke Regional Partnership, the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council, the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership, GO Virginia Region 2, the New River/Mt. Rogers Workforce Development Board,

and the Greater Roanoke Workforce Development Board.

"Onward NRV is proud to host the 2025 Future of Talent Summit along with many of our valued partners across GO Virginia Region 2," said Katie Boswell, Executive Director of Onward NRV. "Talent attraction and retention is a crucial component of our region's economic success, and we look forward to a day of engaging, collaborative conversations on this topic."

The 2025 Future of Talent Summit is one of the many ways that regional partners are working together to leverage the asset of higher education density and create talent pathways that directly benefit our region's employers. This work is made possible thanks to grant and support from GO Virginia, the Commonwealth's initiative by senior business leaders to foster private-sector growth and job creation through state incentives for regional collaboration by business, education, and government.

For more information about the 2025 Future of Talent Summit contact Max Davenport at max@onwardnr.org.

*Onward NRV*

## Smith from page 4

may consider your "ideal" retirement when you're 55 may not be the same as when you're 65. This evolution can make it hard to plan accurately for retirement. Consider sitting down with your spouse or family members to explore how aging and future milestones may alter your retirement. Your financial advisor can help you make a plan that aligns your ideal retirement with your financial situation.

**Test drive your retirement lifestyle.** Many people pledge a significant amount of savings towards a particular lifestyle in retirement. This could be a home in another part of the country, a timeshare or a trip abroad every year. Problems can arise if you have cemented a financial commitment to a certain lifestyle but change your mind down the road. It's natural to change your mind about what you want, but it's better to understand the potential implications of altering your plan before you actually

retire.

For example, those who have based their financial plan for retirement on the idea that they will be living in a new location may benefit from a practice run before making the big move. Consider an individual who has lived their entire life in New York, but moves to Florida when they retire – where taxes and cost-of-living are generally lower. Deciding after several years to relocate back to New York to be near family – where cost of living and tax rates differ – can mean savings may not go as far as planned. Be prudent and build some flexibility into your plan to avoid unintended consequences.

**Simulate your retirement expenses.** Practice can also be beneficial in another way – simulating how to manage your expenses in retirement. The idea that your cash flow no longer comes from a reliable paycheck, but from other sources like Social Security and personal savings

can come as a shock – even to those who are well prepared for this change. One idea to accomplish a sense of financial security is to run two accounts for a certain period of time. Through one account, manage all of your household and lifestyle expenses that you expect during retirement. This includes the costs for necessities like food, clothing, shelter, utilities, taxes and insurance as well as "nice-to-have" items like dining out, traveling, etc. Keep in mind that you may have to estimate or inflate your lifestyle expenses for retirement as they could rise when you have more free time.

Through the second account, manage all of your expenses that are expected to end in retirement like principal and interest on a mortgage payment (if your home will be paid off), current car payments (although car payments can certainly happen again in retirement), college costs for your kids

and contributions to retirement plans. Keeping these two separate accounts will help you more appropriately plan for and quantify your expenses in retirement. The best way to get a handle on these expenses is to experience them while you're still working. Take that trip to Europe before retirement and find out first-hand what you can do within your budget. If the cost is different than expected, make adjustments to your financial projections to more accurately reflect reality.

**Perfecting life in retirement.** A little practice can go a long way toward easing emotional and financial concerns when it comes to making the jump into retirement. Consider working with a financial advisor who can help you determine a budget and a retirement income plan that fits your needs and desires.

### 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

### BAPTIST

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

### 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.

### (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.

### LUTHERAN

**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/@OSLCEburg), 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, Pastor James Henricks, who is a guiding light for our lives. 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@stmlc.us; Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

### ECKANKAR

**Eckankar, The Path of Spiritual Freedom**, is a simple teaching that focuses on the Light and Sound of God to help people find more love in their life. We offer a Spiritual Event on the 2nd. Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. The program may be a Light and Sound Service, a Spiritual video and discussion, or other topics and techniques to help Raise Your Spiritual IQ. The Roanoke ECK Center is located at 1420 3rd. St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. For more information visit www.eck-va.org or call 540-353-5365. People of all faiths are welcome.

### 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. Sunday Worship at 11 AM with Nursery available. Sunday School at 10 AM with Adult and Children classes. Adult Midweek Refuel and Youth Group on Wednesdays from 6-7:30 PM. Mission: Seeking to exalt Christ by sacrificially caring for one another and our community. Pastor: Colby Callaway. Office Phone: 540-250-3864. Website: cwc4u.org. We Also Livestream on Youtube Every Sunday at 11AM!"

# Montgomery County WORSHIP DIRECTORY

## WALK IN HIS STEPS

Read Deuteronomy 32:1 through 34.12

"What would Jesus do?" Pastor Charles Sheldon of Topeka, Kansas, asked his congregation this question in 1896 when he preached a series of messages on the topic. Sheldon then wrote a book of fiction titled In His Steps. The book asks what Jesus would do when confronted with poverty, racism, pride, and homelessness. In the 1990s the motto was revived and people wore bracelets and T-shirts with the letters WWJD?

Before he died, Moses reminding the Israelites to consider God's truths.

"Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life" (Deuteronomy 32:46-47).

Teaching the next generation is the responsibility of the present generation. We do this best by leading by examples. When we face tough issues, we can be sure people are watching our reactions. At these times, it is good to ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?"

Prayer Suggestion: God, with Your help, I will walk as Jesus walked.

Quicklook: Deuteronomy 32:44-47

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



Help Wanted

Liturgical Musician
The Church of the Transfiguration Catholic Church is seeking a part-time. This position provides musical accompaniment for Masses (Saturdays at 4:30pm and Sundays at 8:30am), special liturgies, weddings and funerals. The abilities to play the keyboard/piano competently and to sight read music when required are essential. Vocal skills and knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgy are preferred but not required. Interested applicants should send an email of interest and a resume to Suzanne Bowling at office@churchofthetransfiguration.com.

Cemetery Plots For Sale

For sale
Cemetery plots mountain view cemetery Vinton evergreen memorial 2 plots side by side beautiful location near road and tree good deal /best offer 540.339.9397

Legals - City of Salem

IF YOU USED TALCUM POWDERS
and were diagnosed with Ovarian/ Gynecological Cancers, you may be entitled to compensation. Contact Attorney Charles H. Johnson 1-800-535-5727.

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC VEHICLES, TAXICABS, AND FOR HIRE CARS FOR WHICH CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY SHALL BE ISSUED DURING THE NEXT YEAR AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING TO WHICH PERSON OR PERSONS SUCH CERTIFICATES SHALL BE ISSUED. IN THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA: Pursuant to the provisions of Section 98-94 of The Code of the City of Salem, Virginia, the Council of the City of Salem hereby gives notice that at the regular meeting of said Council, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., in Council Chambers of the City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia, a public hearing will be held for the purpose of determining the number of public vehicles, taxicabs, and for hire cars for which certificates of public convenience and necessity shall be issued during the next year and for the purpose of determining to which person or persons such certificates shall be issued. At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard, present evidence, and show cause why such certificates should or should not be granted. THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA BY H. Robert Light Clerk of Council

BAG A GREAT DEAL IN THE CLASSIFIEDS! To place your ad, call 389-9355

Legals - Craig County

AMENDED NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE,
of all that certain lot, tract or parcel designated as Lot Three (3) containing 29.204 acres in the Simmonsville Magisterial District of Craig County, Virginia, designated as Tax Map Number 115-A-17C (previously incorrectly designated as Tax Map Number 114-A-17), in execution of a Deed of Trust, in the original principal amount of \$72,000.00, with an annual interest rate of 6.0% dated November 3, 2015, recorded among the land records of the Circuit Court for the COUNTY OF CRAIG as Deed Instrument Number 150000517, the undersigned appointed Trustee will offer for sale at public auction all that property located in the COUNTY OF CRAIG, at the front of the Court House building for the County of Craig located at 182 Main Street, New Castle, Virginia 24127, on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., the property with improvements to wit: 2288 Northside Road, Newport, VA 24128, containing approximately 29.204 Acres - Tax Map Number 115-A-17C; THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. TERMS OF SALE: CASH OR CHECK. Additional terms to be announced at sale. Trustee, John N. Spicer, C/O Spicer, Olin & Associates, P.C., 504 South Main Street, Blacksburg, VA 24060 (540) 552-0007.

Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 19, 2025 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 Ordinance: A request by Fotheringay, LLC (Agent: Balzer and Associates) for an amendment to the 2025 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan to change the policy map designation of approximately 633.72 acres of property, located off Route 11/460 (Roanoke Road) between Crozier Road and Graham Street, from Resource Stewardship to Village Expansion. The request would further designate 307.72 acres of the total 633.72 acres in Village Expansion as Open Space, with the remaining 326 acres designated as Medium-Density Residential, within the Elliston Lafayette Village. The Medium-Density Residential policy designation permits single-family housing at a density of no greater than five dwelling units per acre. The property is further identified as Tax Map Numbers 072-A-2, 54.343 acres (Parcel ID: 023523); 072-1 56, 37.824 acres (Parcel ID: 013681); 059-3 58, 15.3 acres (Parcel ID: 013682); 059-3 57, 59, 60.7 acres (Parcel ID: 013683); 072-1 60, 73(1)6, 304.4 acres (Parcel ID: 013684) 072-A 4A, 0.04 acres (Parcel ID: 180205) and a 162.15 acre portion of Tax Map 072-A-4, 188.1 acres, (Parcel ID:013680). 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.

Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 12, 2025 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 Special Use Permit request: A request by Amazonite, LLC for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Short-Term Tourist Rental within an existing single-family dwelling on property located at 940 Nellies Cave Road, approximately 0.4 miles east from the intersection of Grissom Lane, 0.05 miles east of the Town of Blacksburg jurisdictional line. The property is further identified as Tax Parcel 055-A 8 (Parcel ID: 012766), 0.183 acres, zoned Residential (R-3) in the Mount Tabor Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Residential Transition 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 montva.com/pc.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 12, 2025 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 Special Use Permit request: A request by J. William Colbert II Declaration Trust and Jo Ann Bandi Colbert Declaration Trust for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Short-Term Tourist Rental within an existing single-family dwelling and attached accessory dwelling on property located at 1480 and 1482 Clay Street, approximately 0.07 miles from the end of state maintenance, 0.22 miles east of the intersection of Cedar Orchard Drive (State Route 1237). The property is further identified as Tax Parcel 041-A 63G (Parcel ID: 032846), 1.082 acres, zoned Residential (R-2) in the Mount Tabor Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Residential Transition 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 montva.com/pc.

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Legals - Montgomery County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 19, 2025 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 Ordinance: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 10 ENTITLED ZONING OF THE CODE OF THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA BY AMENDING SECTION 10-52 TO CLARIFY THAT ZONING COMPLIANCE OFFICERS AND ASSISTANT ZONING ADMINISTRATORS ARE AUTHORIZED TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR IN ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE AND BY ADDING DUTIES AND POWERS AUTHORIZED BY STATE LAW AND BY UPDATING THE CRIMINAL AND CIVIL VIOLATION PENALTIES Copies of the proposed ordinance 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 OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on March 12, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Montgomery 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 Ordinances:

A request by Carriage Road, LLC to rezone 1.571 total acres from Agricultural (A1) to Traditional Neighborhood Development Infill (TND-I), to allow a mixed-use development. The proposed mixed-use development will mainly consist of a community center, coffee shop, and soccer practice facility. The property is located at 1708 & 1714 Carriage Road, Riner, at the intersection of Carriage Road (State Route 704) and Five Points Road (State Route 671). The property is further identified as Tax Maps 119-A A 8, 9 (Parcel IDs: 070635, 070611), 1.571 acres, zoned A-1 Agricultural in the Riner Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Village Expansion in the 2025 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, and is further designated as Mixed Use in the Pricess Fork Village 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.

Legals - Montgomery County

CczC-3101 VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY IN RE: ESTATE OF JAMES P. WIGHTMAN, DECEASED SHOW CAUSE AGAINST DISTRIBUTION ORDER

It appearing that a report of the accounts of National Bank of Blacksburg, Executor of the Estate of James P. Wightman, Deceased, and of the debts and demands against his Estate have been filed in the Clerk's Office, and that six months have elapsed since the qualification, on Petition of National Bank of Blacksburg, Executor, it is ORDERED that the creditors of, and all others interested in, the Estate to show cause, if any they can, on the 19th day of March, 2025, before this Court at 8:30 a.m., against the payment and delivery of the Estate of James P. Wightman, Deceased, to the distributees with or without requiring refunding bonds as the Court prescribes. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the foregoing portion of this Order be published in The News Messenger, a newspaper published in Montgomery County, Virginia, once a week for two successive weeks. ENTER this Order this 19th day of February, 2025. Honorable Robert M.D. Turk JUDGE

I ask for this: Bettye Ackerman CAMPBELL & ACKERMAN 320 Clay Street SW Blacksburg, VA 24060 540-951-2953 phone 540-951-2966 fax VSB #72564 Counsel for National Bank of Blacksburg, Executor of the Estate of James P. Wightman, deceased

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# MONTGOMERY SPORTS

## Five local wrestlers bring home state championships

Several local wrestlers traveled across the state this past weekend for competition with five bringing home championships. Christiansburg's Brady Hand led the way with his third straight title. He was joined by teammate Jake Robie, who also claimed first place in

Class 3. Radford's Taven Williams at 165 pounds and Cole Martin at 175 scored titles in Class 2, while Blacksburg's Thavin Sventanant won at 144 pounds. Team-wise, Blacksburg finished ninth with 73.5 points. Woodgrove was the

Class 4 champion with 209 points with Loudoun County second and Gloucester third. Christiansburg totaled 98 points in Class 3 as Skyline slipped by Staunton River for the team title with 218 points. Staunton River finished with 178.5

points. In Class 2, Radford picked up 64 points for ninth place. Poquoson claimed the team title with 242 points. Strasburg was second with 173 points.

Staff report



Christiansburg's Brandy Hand (left) wrestles Elliot Crews of Liberty Christian in the Class 3 State Finals match weight 144. Hand won first place over Crews by a fall. This is Hand's third state championship.



Christiansburg's Jake Robie wrestles Joey DiVello of Skyline in the 175 weight in the Class 3 State Finals match. Robie won by major decision over DiVello (10-2)

PHOTOS BY KYMN DAVIDSON-HAMLEY



Radford's Cole Martin (left) and Taven Williams, both won state wrestling titles this past weekend, Williams at the 165-pound class and Martin at 175 pounds.



Radford's Maggie Page (third from left) took third place at 152 pounds in the 2025 girls wrestling championships. She had four pins in the tournament.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RHS

## Mchone commits to Lees McCrea



FILE PHOTO

Aija Mchone drives the ball into the scoring zone in Eastern Montgomery's state championship season two years ago.



PHOTO COURTESY OF EMHS

Aija Mchone signed her letter of intent this past week in the Eastern Montgomery High School library to continue her soccer career in college at Lees McCrea College.

Marty Gordon  
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

An Eastern Montgomery multi-sport athlete has announced plans to continue her soccer career at Lees McCrea College.

Aija Mchone says she chose the Banner Elk, North Carolina school because it felt like home.

"The environment and people were so kind, and it was just extremely welcoming," she said.

Lees McCrea College has a current enrollment of 855 students and compete for athletics in NCAA Division II as a member of Conference Carolinas.

Two years ago, Mchone helped the Eastern Montgomery girls' team to their second state championship. This past year, there were not enough girls to field a team, but that didn't stop her from playing as she joined the boys' team.

Mchone called this season an incredible experience.

"It was like learning a whole different game and it challenged me in ways I'd never been challenged both mentally and physically," she said. However, playing

with this team gave me what seems like 15 older brothers. They always have my back on and off the pitch and I'm very grateful for them," she said.

As a freshman, she was named all-Pioneer District, all-region and all-state as she scored 36 goals and had 14 assists. She followed that up with all-district, all-region and all-state as a sophomore as she had 49 goals and 20 assists.

Last year as a member of the boys' team, Mchone was again all-district and all-region, tallying 10 goals and 15 assists.

She has also played basketball and volleyball while running track at Eastern Montgomery. Off the court and field, Mchone is a member of the National Honors Society, BETA, student government association and the FBLA and has been all-district and all-state choir. She recently received the Susan B. Anthony & Fredrick Douglas leadership award.

Mchone plans on majoring in Criminal Justice and Business with a possible minor in sports management to hopefully become a sports attorney.



## RU men fourth seed in Big South

The seedings and pairings for this week's Hercules Tires Big South Conference Men's Basketball Championship at Freedom Hall Civic Center in Johnson City, Tenn., have been determined following the conclusion of the conference's regular-season schedule.

Regular-season champion High Point (14-2) is the No. 1 seed - its second consecutive No. 1 seed in the Big South Tournament and the first league member with back-to-back top seeds since 2010 and 2011. UNC Asheville and Winthrop tied for second in Big South play at 11-5. The teams split the season series, and the Bulldogs earned the No. 2 seed based on their 1-1 record vs. High Point (WU went 0-2 vs. HPU), with the Eagles in the No. 3 slot. Radford ended league play in fourth place at 9-7 and will be No. 4.

Presbyterian and Longwood tied for fifth in the standings at 7-9, and the Blue Hose clinched the No. 5 seed based on its season sweep of the Lancers -- PC's highest-ever seeding in the Big South Tournament, with the defending champion Lancers in the No. 6 slot. Charleston Southern (6-10) secured the No. 7 spot for the final auto-berth into the quarterfinals.

Gardner-Webb finished the league slate at 5-11 for the No. 8 seed, with USC Upstate (2-14) at No. 9. Those two teams will go head-to-head in the first round on Wednesday, Mar 5 at 7:30 p.m.

The GWU-Upstate winner will advance to the quarterfinals on Friday, Mar. 7, and play No. 1 High Point at 12 p.m. No. 4 Radford vs. No. 5 Presbyterian will follow at 2:30 p.m., with No. 2 UNC Asheville vs. No. 7 Charleston Southern at 6 p.m. No. 3 Winthrop vs. No. 6 Longwood will conclude quarterfinal day at 8:30pm. The semifinals will be held Saturday, Mar. 8 at 12 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., with the Championship game on Sunday, Mar. 9 scheduled for 12 p.m.

The 2025 Hercules Tires Big South Men's Basketball Championship will be televised on ESPN+ Wednesday-through-Saturday, while Sunday's Championship game will air live on ESPN2. The title game will also be broadcast nationally on Westwood One Sports. The Big South's Tournament champion receives an automatic bid to the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament.

Big South Conference



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

### Virginia Tech football Defensive Coordinator Sam Siefkes

## New defensive coordinator's new mindset

Virginia Tech football is ushering in a new era under Head Coach Brent Pry, and the Hokies are already seeing the effects of his transformative vision.

Pry has made headlines by bringing in NFL-caliber talent to reshape the program, with defensive coordinator Sam Siefkes at the forefront of the revamp. With a coaching career that spans the NFL, FBS, FCS and Division III, Siefkes brings a wealth of knowledge and a fresh perspective to the Hokies' defense.

Siefkes' coaching journey began with notable collegiate stints at the University of Wisconsin in 2015, where he contributed to the Badgers' nation-leading defense, helping them rank No. 1 in scoring defense and No. 2 in total defense. As a coordinator at Wofford from 2018-2020, Siefkes' defenses ranked first in total and rushing defense, leading the program to back-to-back Southern Conference Championships and FCS playoff appearances. Under his leadership, Wofford's defense ranked eighth in the nation for scoring defense in 2018, helping the team advance to the second round of the FCS playoffs with a 9-4 record.

Reflecting on his time at Wofford, Siefkes highlighted the importance of establishing solid fundamentals and building a strong defensive culture—values he aims to bring to the program.

"The biggest thing is, if you have foundational pieces for what you're trying to do within the culture of the defense, that kind of sets the parameters and pillars of who you want to be," Siefkes explained. "We want to play with great effort and be violent at the point of attack. In order to play great defense, you've got to do those things. And, of course, we'll be founded on stopping the run, which has always been important to me. That's the first thing, and the rest comes as you go through the process of playing great defense."

That defensive mindset was reinforced during his transition to the professional level, where he spent two seasons with the Minnesota Vikings. After building stout run defenses at Wofford, Siefkes took on a new challenge in the NFL, first serving as a defensive quality control coach in 2021 before being promoted to assistant linebackers coach in 2022. In that role, he helped linebackers Eric Kendricks and Jordan Hicks combine for 265 tackles, both finishing among the league's top 20 in that category. Hicks also ranked second among NFL linebackers in passes defended.

Siefkes' time with the Vikings also provided the chance to learn from legendary defensive coach Mike Zimmer, who became a key mentor in Siefkes' development.

"Zimmer was really influential in opening my eyes to a different world," Siefkes said. "Probably the best third down guy I've ever been around, he taught me different ways to attack protections and offenses. That was really beneficial for my growth and getting to a spot like this."

Siefkes' time in Minnesota not only expanded his defensive knowledge but also paved the way for his next opportunity in the NFL. Following his

stint with the Vikings, he most recently spent two seasons as the linebackers coach for the Arizona Cardinals, where he played a pivotal role in developing standout talent on the defensive side of the ball. During his tenure, he worked with linebacker Kyzir White, who finished 15th in the NFL with 137 tackles in 2024, and worked closely with safety Budda Baker, who earned Pro Bowl honors after ranking second in the league with 164 tackles.

Now, as Siefkes transitions to working with a defensive unit that includes highly talented linebackers like Caleb Woodson and Jaden Keller, he's excited to continue building on the defensive foundation already in place. With strong leadership and playmaking ability within the group, Siefkes sees an opportunity to elevate the linebacking corps even further.

"The biggest thing I look for in linebackers is their ability to run and hit," Siefkes stated. "[Woodson and Keller] are always around the ball, and that's something you can't really coach into them. They have that natural instinct and desire to always be near the football."

Broadening from linebackers, Siefkes' defensive philosophy extends to the entire unit, with a focus on simplicity and adaptability. The coach believes in creating a system that's straightforward to teach, yet complex enough to challenge opponents. Having coached every position on the defense, from the defensive line to the secondary, Siefkes is confident in his ability to tailor the system to the strengths of his players.

"I've coached every position on defense," he said. "That flexibility helps when running a system where players need to take on multiple roles. It allows me to adjust and maximize their potential."

With the new defensive scheme in motion, Siefkes is now turning his attention to the immediate task at hand: preparing the team for spring practices. Winter workouts have begun, and this phase of preparation is crucial for laying the physical foundation for the challenges ahead.

"This time of year is all about building endurance, muscle mass and physical strength—creating the 'armor' our players need," Siefkes explained.

Looking ahead, the new defensive coordinator knows the importance of cultivating both physical and mental toughness. "Winter workouts set the tone for spring ball," Siefkes stated. "It's about creating hunger, a drive for competition. We want our guys physically and mentally ready to hit the ground running when spring practices begin."

With his focus on developing versatile, well-rounded athletes, Siefkes is confident that Virginia Tech's defense is ready to rise to the challenge. As the RenewALL deadline approaches, now is the perfect time to secure your 2025 season tickets and experience Siefkes' inaugural season at the helm of the Tech's defense. Be a part of the action as the Hokies embark on this exciting new chapter.

Virginia Tech Athletics

## Sports notes: RU women third seed

The seedings and pairings for next week's Hercules Tires Big South Conference Women's Basketball Championship at Freedom Hall Civic Center in Johnson City, Tenn., have been determined following the conclusion of the conference's regular-season schedule.

Regular-season champion High Point (13-3) is the No. 1 seed — its third No. 1 seed in the Big South Tournament in five years, and the first league member with back-to-back top seeds since 2012 and 2013. HPU has secured the Big South's automatic bid to the WBIT should the Panthers not win the tournament. Longwood (11-5) is the No. 2 seed, its best seeding since being the No. 2 seed in 2022 when the Lancers won the championship.

Radford and Charleston Southern tied for third in the standings at 10-6. The teams split the season series, and the Highlanders earned the No. 3 seed based on their 1-1 record vs. High Point (CSU was 0-2 vs. HPU). The Bucs are the No. 4 seed for the second-straight year. Winthrop (9-7) is the No. 5 seed, followed by Gardner-Webb (8-8) in the No. 6 slot. USC Upstate (6-10) locked in the No. 7 seed for the final auto-berth

into the quarterfinals.

Presbyterian finished the league slate at 4-12 for the No. 8 seed, with UNC Asheville (1-15) at No. 9. Those two teams will go head-to-head in the first round on Wednesday, Mar. 5 at 5 p.m.

The Presbyterian/UNC Asheville winner will advance to the quarterfinals on Thursday, Mar. 6, and play No. 1 High Point at 11:30 a.m. No. 4 Charleston Southern vs. No. 5 Winthrop will follow at 2 p.m., with No. 2 Longwood vs. No. 7 USC Upstate at 6 p.m. No. 3 Radford vs. No. 6 Gardner-Webb will conclude quarterfinal day at 8:30 p.m. The semifinals will be Saturday, Mar. 8 at 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., with the Championship game on Sunday, Mar. 9 scheduled for 6 p.m.

The 2025 Hercules Tires Big South Women's Basketball Championship will be televised on ESPN+ Wednesday-through-Saturday, while Sunday's Championship game will air live on ESPN2 for the second consecutive year. The Big South's Tournament champion receives an automatic bid to the NCAA

See RU, page 13

## RU falls to Hokies in softball

The Radford University softball program put forth an incredible effort Sunday afternoon in the finale of the Hokie Invite in Salem, rallying back from down three to tie late before ultimately falling in walk-off fashion 5-4 to #15 Virginia Tech. The Highlanders had some big moments throughout Sunday's battle with the Hokies, starting right away in the first inning. After Virginia Tech got its lead batter on, starting pitcher Dakota Redmon responded with a strikeout and groundout. The Hokies would load the bases, but Radford caught the runner on third attempting to steal home to end the inning. Redmon would toss another scoreless frame in the second while the offense looked to string some hits together. In the third inning, Virginia Tech plated their first two runs with a two-out double to take the 2-0 lead. Rachel Smith got Radford's first hit of the day in the fourth, but with two outs in the inning already she was left stranded. Now in the circle for Radford was Morgan Cooper, who pitched a perfect inning of relief in the bottom of the fifth. Radford kept fighting and in the fourth broke through. Abby Bossler began

the inning with an infield single, followed by Grace Hogie who had the first big of the day. Hogie launched a ball past the centerfielder and all the way to the wall for an RBI triple. She would be stranded at third, however, as Radford trailed just 2-1. The Hokies tacked on a pair of runs in the bottom of the fifth via two solo home runs to push their lead to 4-1. In the sixth, the Hokies threatened to add on more with the bases loaded and just one out. Abby Peace entered in relief, picking up two huge outs to end the threat and keep the game within reach. Bossler would begin the rally once again with a single in the seventh. Hogie would draw a walk, forcing Virginia Tech pitching change. Grace Bechtol would add a big infield hit to load the bases. Isabel Harrison would clear the bases, roping a three-RBI double to center field that scored everybody and tied the game at 4-4. The Hokies would get three straight on base to begin their half of the seventh, however, walking off the game on a wild pitch to escape Radford's upset attempt in the 5-4 finish.

Radford University Athletics

## Auburn alum picks up win over PSU



PHOTO COURTESY OF JMU

**Former Auburn High School softball pitcher Kirsten Fleet picked up a win this past weekend at the Hokie Invite in a 4-1 win over Penn State.**

Kirsten Fleet dominated in her second complete game in as many days, as James Madison softball hit three home runs to roll past Penn State, for its four straight win on day two of action at the Hokie Invite in Salem. The Auburn High School alum held Penn State (7-10) to just one run over seven innings of work, while striking out six. It was the sophomore's first time throwing a complete game in back-to-back days, and the first time a JMU (6-7) student-athlete has achieved the

feat since Odici Alexander against Oklahoma and Oklahoma State on June 3 and 4, 2021, during the Women's College World Series.

On Saturday, Fleet dominated Bucknell (4-6), holding the Bison to just one run on two hits in seven innings, her third career complete game. Fleet is now 3-2 on the season. Over her last three appearances, Fleet has thrown 19 innings, allowing just three runs and fanning eleven.

JMU Athletics

## Hokies named Weaver-James-Corrigan-Swofford recipients

The Atlantic Coast Conference is set to recognize 59 student-athletes, highlighted by 35 who were selected as 2025 Weaver-James-Corrigan-Swofford Postgraduate Scholarship Award recipients and three student-athletes who will receive the 2025 Jim & Pat Thacker Scholarship Award. Virginia Tech is represented by Anna Summers (women's swimming and diving) and Charlotte Cartledge (women's tennis). In addition to those chosen as scholarship award recipients, 24 additional student-athletes who plan to pursue professional careers in their chosen sports or career field of study, were named to the 2025 ACC Excellence Award list (formerly called Honorary Scholarship nominees). "This year's class of ACC Postgraduate Scholarship recipients showcases the best of collegiate athletics," said ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips, Ph.D. "The student-athletes in the ACC consistently excel in both academics and athletics, as demonstrated by this remarkable group of nearly 60 individuals. Their dedication and commitment to excellence in competition and in the classroom is truly impressive. The future is extremely bright for these outstanding student-athletes, and we are excited to continue supporting them." The Weaver-James-Corrigan-Swofford and Jim & Pat Thacker postgraduate scholarships are awarded to selected student-athletes who intend to pursue a graduate degree after completing



PHOTO COURTESY OF VT ATHLETICS

**Two Virginia Tech student athletics, Anna Summers (left) and Charlotte Cartledge have been honored by the Atlantic Coast Conference.**

their undergraduate requirements. Each recipient will receive \$9,000 toward his or her graduate education. Those honored have performed with distinction in both the classroom and their respective sport while demonstrating exemplary conduct in the community and were approved by the league's Faculty Athletic Representatives (FARs) at the ACC Winter Meetings. To be eligible for ACC Postgraduate Scholarships, nominees must have distinguished themselves both academically and athletically with an overall minimum accumulative grade point average of 3.0 or its equivalent. The student-athlete must have completed at least seven semesters and completed or will complete their baccalaureate degree, at an ACC institution, prior to receiving the postgraduate scholarship, and performed with distinction as a member of a varsity team specifically represented by local, conference, regional and/or national athletic recognition. The nominees also must have conducted themselves, both on and off the field, in a manner that has brought credit to themselves, their institution, intercollegiate

athletics, and the ideals and objectives of higher education. The ACC has selected postgraduate scholarship recipients annually since 1971. Over that time, the league has provided nearly \$4.7 million to more than 1,000 ACC student-athletes. Each member institution may nominate a maximum of two candidates to be eligible for the postgraduate scholarship awards. Institutions are recommended to nominate a student-athlete from one men's and one women's sport. Student-athletes nominated for the ACC Excellence Award are also eligible for the ACC Postgraduate Scholarship. This year's class of postgraduate scholarship recipients will be highlighted on ACC Network during live programming from March through June. Each of the ACC's 18 member schools will also recognize their respective honorees on each of the leagues 18-member schools. In addition, the ACC's 18 member schools will also recognize their honorees on each of their respective campuses.

Virginia Tech Athletics

# Results announced for 40th annual Blacksburg Classic

BLACKSBURG - The 40th annual Blacksburg Classic 10 Miler & 5K was held Sunday, Feb 23.

The run is the first event of the RunAbout Sports 2025 Race Series. Both races started at Margaret Beeks Elementary School and featured a course that runs briefly through the Miller Southside Neighborhood before hitting the popular Huckleberry Trail. The event also included a one-mile Fun Run.

Blacksburg Classic results include:

10-Miler (top 40):

First, George Tolton, 00:56:04.98;

2) Alexander Mortimer; 3) Andrew Parkins; 4) Ryan Bagchi; 5) Jackson Feezel; 6) Derek Scheidt; 7) Anderson Norton; 8) Justin Polcha; 9) Kevin Byrd; 10) Durelle Scott; 11) Lucas Nachman; 12) Cooper Dereszynski; 13) Scott Huxtable; 14) Nicholas Hernandez; 15) Sarah Edwards; 16) Daniel Kolasa; 17) Junwen Wang; 18) Maike Holthuijzen; 19) Gabriel Jellum; 20) Noah LeCain; 21) Joe Feeney; 22) Katie Wardinski; 23) Mark Lattanzi; 24) Chris Diehl; 25) Bebo Himes; 26) Joseph Yeager; 27) Marc Edwards; 28) Emma Semones; 29) Kathryn Buss; 30) Scott Murphy;

31) Bryce Cannon; 32) Robert Rooney; 33) Doug Sterk; 34) Colin Newton; 35) Ryan Semones; 36) David Cutchins; 37) Kevin Ayoub; 38) Amy Silverbush; 39) James Penven; 40) Will Channing.

5K (top 40):

First, Benjamin Burtram, 00:16:49.43; 2) Nico Demarinis; 3) William Burtram; 4) Benjamin Schneider; 5) Tyler Stapleton; 6) Josiah Humphreys; 7) Chris Webb; 8) Graham Day; 9) Jason Little; 10) Michelle Lowry; 11) Sarah Levy; 12) Kelly Smith; 13) Oliver Jones; 14) Johnny Fritz; 15) Jonathan Ravid; 16)

Patrick Feucht; 17) Alex Balchik; 18) Daniel Fischer; 19) Grayson Harris; 20) Henry Vikesland; 21) Veronica Barajas; 22) Kylee Harrell; 23) Kevin Hamed; 24) Joseph Hibshman; 25) Maggie Connolly; 26) Joshua Biesterveld; 27) Aaron Beger; 28) Serena Miller; 29) Victoria Seymour; 30) William Peeples; 31) Dewayne Shelton; 32) Joey Bachert; 33) Jaden Ringley; 34) Taj Davis; 35) Jackson Garst; 36) Benjamin Gozzi; 37) Brian Rowe; 38) Parker Garst; 39) Jake Costa; 40) Oliver Brantly.

Staff report

# Outdoor report: Top Virginia waters for trophy bass

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) is tasked with managing freshwater fisheries across the state of Virginia using best available science. DWR biologists utilize a variety of fisheries methodology to collect information on the health of our fisheries. Data derived from scientific fisheries methodology is known as fishery-independent data and is key to managing our fisheries for the best interest of the public. Examples of fishery-independent surveys include electrofishing, gill netting, and trap netting surveys that our biologists implement to manage these public resources.

Additionally, angler-derived data or fishery-dependent data is data that is collected from recreational and or commercial sources. Fishery-dependent data can also play a supplemental role in the management of our freshwater fisheries.

The Online Virginia Angler Recognition Program (OVARP) is one unique source of fisheries-dependent data that our agency collects annually. The OVARP is a voluntary program where anglers can be recognized for the catch of trophy-sized freshwater fish. Different minimum lengths and weights are required to reach trophy "citation" size for the 30 different species in the program. Of particular interest to Virginia anglers are the numbers of citation largemouth bass that are caught annually from public waterbodies throughout the state.

Largemouth bass must be a minimum of 22 inches long to be a length citation and 8 pounds to be a weight citation. You can receive a citation for either length, weight, or both. Regardless, we are talking about exceptionally big largemouth bass here! Below are the top five waterbodies by total numbers of largemouth bass citations from 2024. It should be noted that this is a voluntary program based on the honor system. Not every citation caught in Virginia is entered into the program, and the below ranking is simply a reflection of the data collected from the past year within the OVARP.

1) Smith Mountain Lake might be best known for its trophy striped bass fishery, but anglers searching for trophy largemouth bass should not overlook this top destination. Smith Mountain Lake ranked as the #1 waterbody for citation largemouth bass with 24 trophy fish being caught and entered into the OVARP in 2024. This scenic impoundment is large, at 20,600 acres, and located in Bedford and Franklin counties. Smith Mountain Lake provides deeper water habitat in addition to rock shoals, submerged brush piles, fallen trees, DWR habitat structures, coves, and numerous big points. In the spring, anglers can target boat docks and piers—just remember to be courteous to local landowners. Smith Mountain is one of the large impoundments involved in DWR's F1 largemouth bass program, which is aimed at enhancing the quality of largemouth bass fisheries in Virginia. "DWR electrofishing catch rates for largemouth bass eight inches and larger in 2024 remain at the highest levels ever recorded since the current sampling



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA DWR

## A citation largemouth caught at Smith Mountain Lake in 2024.

protocol was established in 2000," said Dan Wilson, DWR fisheries biologist. "Additionally, the numbers of larger bass increased to the highest levels in 2018 and have remained stable through 2024."

2) Coming in at #2 on the ranking, Briery Creek Lake is located within DWR's Briery Creek Wildlife Management Area in Prince Edward County. This 845-acre lake has long been popular amongst anglers targeting trophy largemouth bass and 11 citations were caught here in 2024. Regulations on Briery Creek help to support this trophy fishery with a protective slot of 16-24 inches. Bag limits are still five fish per day, but only one can be above 24 inches. Springtime is the best time of year to chase trophy largemouth bass on Briery Creek. "Even though Briery Creek may be a shadow of its former self, which challenged the largemouth bass state record in the early 2000s, the lake continues to turn out trophy-size fish at a respectable rate relative to other lakes around the Commonwealth," said Hunter Hatcher, DWR fisheries biologist. "Briery offers anglers a challenge with abundant standing timber that makes every inch of the lake look fishy. For best success, take note of forage activity and target creek channels and other areas with distinct depth changes."

3) Lake Burton is a 76-acre impoundment located in Pittsylvania County. This small impoundment is owned and managed by DWR and has

been around since 1950. In 2024, a total of eight citation largemouth bass were caught and entered into the OVARP from Lake Burton, giving it the #3 ranking for top waterbodies by largemouth bass citation numbers. While this smaller lake does produce some quality-sized largemouth bass, getting them to eat can be a challenge due to the abundant forage base consisting of gizzard shad and small bluegill. "Lake Burton is regulated with a 'trophy' largemouth bass regulation which prohibits the harvesting or even retaining any size largemouth bass," said Wilson.

4) Seven citation largemouth bass were entered into the OVARP from Sandy River Reservoir in 2024, giving this impoundment the #4 ranking for producing citations last year. Sandy River Reservoir is a 740-acre water supply impoundment located in Prince Edward County just east of Farmville. With construction completed in 1994, this relatively new impoundment is a scenic resource nestled in the rolling hills of Virginia's Piedmont. A variety of habitats support a robust largemouth bass population including standing timber, submerged aquatic vegetation, stumps, down trees, flats, and drop-offs. "Sandy River Reservoir offers largemouth anglers a unique combination of high catch rates and opportunity to catch quality fish," said Hatcher. "Citation records from 2024 reveal what many in Central and Southside Virginia have known

for years—Sandy is a big bass factory worthy of every bit the acclaim its sister lake, Briery Creek, just down the road, receives."

5) Lake Anna is a 9,600-acre impoundment located in Louisa, Orange, and Spotsylvania counties. A total of five citation largemouth bass were entered into the OVARP from Lake Anna in 2024, giving it the #5 ranking for top waterbodies by largemouth bass citation numbers. With that said, Lake Anna frequently hosts bass fishing tournaments throughout the year and undoubtedly there are more citation fish seen in these tournaments than we may be seeing entered into the OVARP. Lake Anna follows a productivity gradient where the upper portions of the lake above "the splits" are the most productive and the lower portions of the lake near dike 3 are less productive with exceptional water clarity. Anglers can fish for largemouth bass in a variety of habitats from offshore islands, bowls and drop-offs to rocky shorelines, down woody debris, and submerged aquatic vegetation. Lake Anna is an exceptional inland striped bass and hybrid striped bass fishery as well. Additionally, DWR has been stocking saugeye there for numerous years and growth rates have been very impressive. You never know what you could run into while bass fishing at Lake Anna.

Alex McCrickard/DWR

## RU from page 12

Women's Basketball Tournament.

### Crew chief change for Hagan

Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) has announced that Mike Knudsen has been promoted to crew chief on Matt Hagan's Funny Car, with Phil Shuler joining the championship-winning team heading into 2025.

Veteran co-crew chief Mike Knudsen, who is getting promoted to crew chief, has been with Hagan since 2013, having made the move to TSR from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) in 2022 with the formation of the new team. The pair has earned three championships together in 2014, 2020 and 2023. Knudsen started his career in Funny Car with Jim Head Racing and later moved to Funny Car with Jerry Toliver. In 2005, Knudsen joined DSR, where he worked with Whit Bazemore, Gary Scelzi, Cory McClenathan and Spencer Massey, before joining Hagan's crew.

Joining Knudsen in co-crew chief duties will be Phil Shuler. Shuler has a notable background in the NHRA, most recently serving as assistant crew chief at Maynard Family Racing on

Tony Schumacher's Top Fuel operation. From 2003 to 2006, Shuler worked for Don Prudhomme, before joining Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) in 2006, where he collaborated on Jack Beckman, Gary Scelzi, Jerry Toliver, Cory McClenathan, and Spencer Massey's cars through 2016.

### Sox coaching staff

The Salem Red Sox, in conjunction with the Boston Red Sox, have announced their coaching staff for the 2025 Carolina League season, including four returning staff members.

Ozzie Chavez has been promoted to Manager after spending the last two seasons as bench coach. He previously managed the Red Sox' Dominican Republic Academy from 2019-22 and has been with the Boston Red Sox since 2015.

Nelson "Pepe" Paulino returns for his 28th season with the Red Sox organization as the hitting coach. Paulino brings extensive experience spending seven seasons in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Additional Red Sox MiLB stints include the Greenville

Drive and Lowell Spinners.

Kyle Schmidt returns to the Red Sox organization as the Defensive Coach after serving as the Seasonal Affiliate Coach in 2025. Before joining the Red Sox organization, Schmidt had a minor league playing career with the Minnesota Twins organization from 2019-23.

### Kinneberg returns to Pulaski

Manager Bill Kinneberg is returning to helm the Pulaski River Turtles as the organization embarks on its fifth season of competition in the Appalachian League.

2025 will mark Kinneberg's third season in the Appalachian League. Kinneberg led the River Turtles to a third-place finish in the East Division in his first season managing the team last year after he captained the Bristol State Liners in 2023.

Kinneberg's current stint in the Appalachian League is the latest chapter in his decorated college baseball career.

Regarded as one of the most accomplished head coaches in the history of the University of Utah's

baseball program, Kinneberg amassed 381 wins, two NCAA Tournament appearances, one Mountain West tournament championship and one Pac-12 conference title during his 18-year career (1996, 2005-21). Kinneberg received the Pac-12 Baseball Coach of the Year award in 2016. He retired from full-time coaching following Utah's 2021 season.

Head coaching stints at UTEP (1985) and Wyoming (1986-92) preceded his tenure at Utah. His teams established school records for victories in a season at UTEP in 1985 and Wyoming in 1990, an achievement that earned him WAC Coach of the Year honors.

Kinneberg's extensive coaching career also includes three seasons on the staff of the USA National Team, with one season as manager of the program in 2010. He coached two seasons in the Chicago White Sox Minor League system. He has held assistant coaching positions at UTEP, Arizona State and Arizona, where he played his final two seasons of college baseball as a pitcher in 1978 and 1979.

# RAAP from page 1

and chronic (long-term) toxicity. No information is available regarding the effects in humans from inhalation or oral exposure to dibutyl phthalate, and only minimal effects have been noted in animals exposed by inhalation.

Neither BAE Systems nor Army officials have said what they use DBP for in the production at the Radford facility.

Givens said the flooding also led to the release of potentially calcium sulfate wastewater and several large amounts of diesel fuel.

Plant officials do not believe there is a risk to public health or wildlife from any of the incidents.

During an online community meeting last week, several onlookers said the plant should have done a better job communicating with the public about the missing totes in a more-timely manner.

In the past 60 days, the plant contracted with Tangent Outfitters to continue searching for the totes. Tangent searched a 70-mile area from Radford to the Blue Stone Dam in West Virginia.

BAE Systems is asking the public to notify local law enforcement if they see any of the totes, and not to drain chemicals from the container.

# Protests from page 1

cars honk their horns in support as they drive by, while others exchange words of disagreement.

Linda Skeens, holding a sign that states "I Stand with Ukraine" said she has been standing on the street in protest periodically since before the recent presidential election.

"After the election, some of us just got together and said, you know, we can't stop there," Skeens said. "We have to get our message out. Not that we just don't like Trump or Musk, but what is being affected by his presidency and who elected Musk, and he has all this power and makes all these cuts. These are issues important to all Americans."

Another protestor in attendance Wednesday, Holly Marrow, has been getting the word out about the protests through social media. Marrow appeared Wednesday in a shirt that read, "When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty," a quote often associated with US Supreme Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

"We are out here because we are the people who are paying attention to the fact that Trump and Musk are leading us to war and a fascist dictatorship, and people seem to be blind to it, a lot of them. There are no checks and balances. He's disrespecting and willfully ignoring the judicial system of our government," Marrow said. "We are very upset about that, and we plan to fight back."

Inside the Trump Store, owner JoAnne Price spoke about the protestors impact on her business.

"This is not right, coming in my business, and I'm a local business here, and protesting because they disagree with what 77 million people voted into office," Price said. "They are targeting my store. That is wrong and I'm not going to stand for it."

Price has also struggled with keeping protestors out of parking areas designated for her store's customers, she said. For the third week, Price said this has been going on and it is inhibiting the running of her business, as well as nearby businesses.

"Last week we had to have a tow truck out here and it's costing me money," Price said. "It's my business. This is the American dream. To show you their ignorance, on their Facebook page they said, we don't want to hinder local businesses and Black businesses. I'm Black! The idiots!"

The Trump Store provides Trump supporters with an opportunity to purchase merchandise such as t-shirts, signs, coffee mugs, and hats, among many other things. Price said that 90% of her business includes young customers in the high school and college age range.

"They love what Trump is doing," Price said.

# Annual message from Leslie Hager-Smith, Mayor of the Town of Blacksburg

2025 in Blacksburg dawns with a rich mix of possibilities glinting on our horizon. We have one of the strongest economies in the state. GDP growth, according to the latest figures available, is at 3.7% for our area. We are also showing statewide strength for job growth, labor force and taxable sales.

Virginia Tech, ever the region's economic driver, has an endowment that now stands at \$1.9B dollars; new facilities on multiple campuses; and, applications that have tripled to 58,000 in ten years. Enrollment is beyond the 30,000 milestone which has fueled the university's drive to grow since 2014.

In town, we have a new Business Solutions Manager, whose goal will be to cultivate community by assisting small businesses. We are also set to begin construction of a retail incubator, along with continued improvements to the downtown streetscape.

There is good news about housing in Blacksburg. Using a multi-pronged approach, Town Council has adopted half a dozen remedies to expand housing options for all. This year we should begin to see construction of new homes at Stroubles Ridge; Habitat townhouses on Airport Road; and apartments on South Main St., each project with an affordable component. 73 market rate townhomes have been approved off Patrick Henry Drive. We've also joined neighboring localities by investing in a Housing Trust Fund and a regional land trust to address "missing middle" housing.

On the administrative side, the Town is working to speed up its paperwork pipeline.

With expert guidance from local builders, we've committed to greater efficiencies for approving street design, construction sequencing, infrastructure timing, subdivision design and administration. We've initiated a whole-cloth rewrite of our Zoning Ordinance to modernize Town code. Most significantly, we approved small-lot neighborhoods to reduce the cost of residential development. Approximately 300 acres of land within Town limits will qualify for this zoning. It reduces parking requirements, and allows a variety of housing types, sometimes with alleys, inspired by Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND).

The Town has more than doubled its parkland since 2020, amounting now to over 1,000 acres. Recreational opportunities are expanding with the notable help of intrepid citizen volunteers and nonprofit partners. This has allowed the Town to hire a Parks and Natural Lands Coordinator to actively oversee our parkland, work that includes trail maintenance, creek restoration and the removal of invasive species. Town trails connect with a network of paved and natural surface trails exceeding 60 miles regionally.

Importantly, Town Council has also committed \$10M to active recreation facilities in the next five years. This will allow us to replace lighting and bring our fields up to a modern standard.

On a more somber note, the university has added 5,000 students in the last 10 years, an increase of 22%. It stresses the Town's street

grid, public works, transit system, and police services. More students means more tax base, but not enough to cover the increase in services they require. So long as the trend continues, Blacksburg will bear the brunt of the university's ambitions. Surrounding localities prosper; my peers in elective office do not share our sense of loss or obligation. Their response isn't unneighborly: It is human nature.

Change is never easy, especially for longtime residents who loved and lived in this town before 2014. They cite longer commute times, loss of natural habitat, a diminished sense of place, and damage to the social fabric. Some question whether our community should be accommodating this growth in the first place. A proposal for student housing at 801 N Main St. illustrates the tension.

The project is for 750 beds in an 8-story building, with retail on the first floor and a parking garage underneath. It "significantly improves the tax base at that location, places students closer to campus—reducing the need for car traffic—and adds density to downtown in a way that generally makes sense. It's also mixed-use, which we need more of," as one resident observes. It's also precisely where our Comprehensive Plan calls for student housing.

Critics scorn the architecture, the height, the people who might live there, and the out-of-town developers who are proposing it. To them, the prospect feels personal. But the people we don't hear enough from are those who understand that Blacksburg is a climate refuge, making population growth a certainty, even without VT.

A popular book has dubbed this "the age of grievance." It calls to mind a sage quip from lifelong townie Michael Abraham: "Blacksburg isn't what it used to be – it never was."

We don't get to choose who is choosing us. What we can do is to make strategic choices about where we can accommodate growth, while preserving the things we value most about Blacksburg. Putting more people next to schools, shopping and work is a good start. This proposal achieves a walking score of 88 and a bike score of 90. Making development fit our Town, not the other way around, is primary. To wit, the proposal includes a \$1.1M investment in the Town's affordable housing fund.

Topography would put this building lower than Gilbert Place and lower still than the Moss Arts Center, helping to preserve the view shed we all treasure. Commuter inflow to Blacksburg stands at 16,000 daily trips, and this project could reduce that number by hundreds. Like it or not, two thirds of Blacksburg's population is students, and that figure is only increasing. Town Council has not approved a major student housing project since 2019, but this one may be the sensible exception.

We live on top of the world – both literally and figuratively. Wherever we fall on the issues, nothing is more important to our residents than quality of life. This is our common ground, and I have every confidence that we will unite in preserving it with creativity and civility.

Town of Blacksburg



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# Funds from page 1

Fijalkowski said, "Why now? Why do we need that now?"

Bragen responded that some students who do not qualify for free or reduced lunch could be provided with the proposed nutrition program. Additionally, students who might qualify for free lunches and do not feel comfortable in completing the forms could also benefit from the program. Six schools in the county are currently receiving free meals for their students due to

meeting the requirements for the overall percentage of students in need, according to Bragen. These six schools are not included in the proposed nutrition program for next fiscal year.

Two budget reductions are also proposed to be implemented in the next fiscal year. Eliminating the Dean of Students position would be one reduction. Bragen said the position was useful during a transition period in the school year but is now no longer needed. Additionally, due to reduced elementary enrollment, which is "slightly declining over time," Bragen said, less elementary school teacher positions would be favorable while still maintaining student to teacher ratio.

Grafsky asked Bragen for current numbers on elementary school teacher to student ratios and what

is trending in strands across the area.

"Right now, our pupil to teacher ratio for this year right now, we have 224 elementary teachers, it's around 17.84%," Bragen said. "If we don't do anything next year, with our projected enrollment, our pupil to teacher ratio is going to be 15.26%, with the same number of teachers."

Bragen went on to say that a demographic study had been completed by the county schools about a year ago, projecting a slight decline in enrollment. However, Bragen also said that this decline is not projected to continue and should level out in coming years.

Supervisor April DeMotts reminded everyone that further discussion on the proposed budget would happen during a scheduled joint meeting on Mar. 17.

### CROSSWORD ANSWERS

E	C	M		H	I	E		P	P	T		
D	H	A	L	P	A	U	L	O	A	E	O	N
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