

# Merry Christmas

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

**Kids get very excited when they see Santa Clause, as James Michael did here upon seeing Saint Nick. Elated, Michael couldn't wait to tell Santa his wish list.**

## Santa made sure to bring a little 'HOHOHO' this year

**Pam Dudding**  
Contributing writer

There is little that can compare to a child's gleeful grin when they see Santa and hear his 'HOHOHO' during the holidays. When this happens, children usually become intently mesmerized by his every word.

Kids sometimes cannot contain themselves, as they jump, squeal with excitement and then run and jump into his lap (but not this year).

When the annual parade was canceled in Craig this year, a few patrons shared their concern for a little something for the kids.

Surrounding counties all had a drive-by parade and several happenings that they could go to, including the Starlite Drive-In showing Christmas movies all month long.

I personally felt that something could be done for our kids in Craig to get to see and talk with Santa.

After inquiring and going through multiple individuals to

get approved by the COVID-19 team, I asked Santa Claus (Sammy Huffman), if he would consider sitting on Main Street and have a drive-by visit with the understanding that kids would stay in their vehicles.

From there, Santa and "Mrs. Claus" decided that maybe a little more could be done, and we went to work. Quickly, it snowballed into a wonderful event at the Craig County Fairgrounds.

The Gideons, Ken and Carol Looney, greeted everyone at the back gate and gave them a Bible with a candy cane and directed them up to the people who were guiding the vehicles towards the stage where Santa Claus sat front and center awaiting every girl and boy with anticipation.

Myself, Sammy's daughter and Sam decorated the stage with a live Christmas tree, lights and large packages that held the toys for the kids.

David Givens of Dave's Live Sounds added special lighting

See **Santa**, page 3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

**This is Santa's first big visit to Craig at the Fairgrounds, and he shared that he absolutely loved it. "I have never done this before, but am ready for next year," he said. "After a night of watching these kids smile with excitement and hope for that special gift from Santa, it made me wonder why I hadn't ever done this before." He (Sammy Huffman) is pictured with "Mrs. Claus" (Pam Dudding) and his trusty Elf Will Huffman.**

## Santa's heart grew too

**Pam Dudding**  
Contributing writer

Kids love to see Santa, but what some do not realize is that Santa loves to see the kids just as much.

There is a special bond between kids and Santa. Something that no one can really put their finger on. It just "is."

The underlying reality is that Santa has a heart of love, which comes from God above.

Kids recognize that and they are drawn to it. Their innocence relates to a true heart.

This year, though the annual parade was canceled in New Castle, Santa still came to visit, and he even left a note to the citizens of Craig.

"I was asked a couple of weeks ago if I would be interested in donning

the big red coat and filling in for Santa and talk to the children of Craig County. At first I was reluctant because I didn't want to say something wrong or scare the kids, but the more I thought about the more I wanted to do it.

Since our parade was canceled this might be the only time some of these kids would get to see Santa and tell him what they wanted for Christmas.

When the time came and cars started lining up to see Old Saint Nick, I was getting a little nervous but then, when that first kid stepped out from their SUV and walked over to the carpet that they were to stand on, and a big smile came over his face,

See **Heart**, page 6



SUBMITTED PHOTO

**The well-known Christmas tree is an addition to most homes this time of the year. Many are decorated with heartfelt ornaments that say more than just decorations. The Chrismon Tree at the New Castle Christian Church is one which each ornament tells a story in itself.**

## NCCC Chrismon Tree glows with symbolism

**Pam Dudding**  
Contributing writer

At the center of most homes is the much-loved Christmas tree that is usually the first thing that goes up, then meticulously placed in the perfect spot in the home where it gets the most attention during the entire holiday season.

People flood Facebook with their pictures, saying things such as, "It's starting to look a lot like Christmas," as they show the tree and creative decorations which they have placed on it with the many packages that lovingly have been placed underneath.

It is a symbol of love, excitement and anticipation of the season.

The New Castle Christian Church has participated in a spe-

cial tradition for many years by putting up the symbolic Chrismon Tree, which glistens with white and gold beauty.

Ladies in the late 80s organized the effort and did most of the work to make the intricate ornaments.

It was explained that Sarah Graham was the one who initiated and organized the idea of the tree to the church with Edna Crowder and Kernell Lipps assisting.

Later, many church members took part and contributed by making the individual ornaments.

Edna Crowder shared that she had a crack in her thumbnail for a few years after making the ornaments.

See **Chrismon Tree**, page 6

# Letters to Santa from McCleary kids

**Pam Dudding**  
Contributing writer

From the East Coast of the United States in New Castle, to the snowy North Pole where Santa lives, letters from young students that were sent have been answered.

Several students in McCleary Elementary School recently wrote their Christmas "wish lists" to Jolly Ole' St. Nicholas.

School teachers shared that they always enjoy this time of year as the kids seem get quite creative in their letters plus they love to see the sparkle in the students' eyes as they express their desires to relay to Santa.

Several classes shared their

thoughts to their teacher or wrote personal letters themselves. The heartfelt messages make one wish they could be a kid again, even if "just for a day."

Amanda Wentz's Kindergarten-1 Class wrote:

Dear Santa, I have been good this year. I help clean. How does your one reindeer have a glowing nose? I want one. I want a truck like my blue one I had before it broke. It plays music and lights up. Merry Christmas, Santa. Love, Malakai

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. This year I have helped my pawpaw Gene fold laundry some and I have shared my toys with my brother. I was wondering

how do the reindeer sleep on Christmas Eve? For Christmas I would like to have an iPad, a Nintendo Switch gaming system, or a bike. I hope you have a Merry Christmas. Love, Landon

Dear Santa, I have been good this year. I have been sweet to my grandparents and worked hard in school. Are your reindeer ready for Christmas? I would like a Barbie dream house! Merry Christmas, Santa. Love, Zoey

Dear Santa, I love you and Mrs. Santa. I have been very good this year. I did some chores. How are the reindeer and elves? I would like a set of hair products and a baby doll. Have a good Merry Christmas. Love, Charleigh Sue

Dear Santa, I have been good. I want an Xbox. Merry Christmas. Love, Nolan

Dear Santa, I have been good being nice this year. Can I see your sleigh? Can you bring me a robot? Merry Christmas. Love, Axel

Dear Santa, My name is James Michael and I am 5 years old. I am so excited for Christmas this year! This year I have been very nice. A few things I did that were nice are: I gave lots of hugs and kisses; I make Taylor, Abby, and Jordyn laugh; and, I let everyone play with me. This year for Christmas I would like a Scooby-Doo van, a bicycle, and a Scooby-Doo snow ghost toy. I can't wait for you to visit me this year! I will leave out

a snack for you and the reindeer! Love, James Michael

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. One good thing I did is feed the animals. Do you have super powers? One gift I want is a bike. Merry Christmas. Love, Westen

Dear Santa, I have been a good girl this year. I helped a friend that got hurt. I would like an Our Generation doll and clothes. Santa, how do your reindeer fly? Merry Christmas, Santa! Love, Emma Rose

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. I be nice to my friends. How do you fly to my house? I want a twisty girl for Christmas. I love you

See **Letters**, page 6



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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY

The Craig County Public Library is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. The library is located at 303 Main St. in New Castle. For more information, call (540) 864-8978 or visit www.craiglibrary.org.

Contact 540-293-4065 for more information.

•New Castle Church of Christ will hold its Bible Study from 7 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. at 118 Main Street in New Castle.

### EVERY SATURDAY

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meeting, 11 a.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, located at 2011 Brandon Avenue in Roanoke. Contact 540-293-4065 for more information.

### EVERY TUESDAY

•Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meeting, 7 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, located at 2011 Brandon Avenue in Roanoke.

### EVERY SUNDAY

•Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 8 p.m. at New Castle Fire Hall.

•The New Castle Christian Church, located

at 282 Salem Ave, is pastored by Sheldon Cosma is having services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., with communion at each, and is on Facebook live at 9 a.m.

•St. Johns Catholic Church, on Route 615, is having virtual masses at 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. by Father Steve McNalley. They are also live on Facebook. For more information, contact (540) 864-8686 or send an email to stjohncastle@tds.net.

### SECOND MONDAY

•Paint Bank Ladies Auxiliary meeting, 7 p.m. at the Paint Bank Fire Department. Call 897-5346 for more information.

•Craig County Public Library Board of Trustees meeting at 6 p.m. at the library.

### THIRD MONDAY

Town of New Castle Council Meeting at 7 p.m. inside the New Castle Town Hall, located at 339 Market Street.

### FIRST TUESDAY

Craig County School Board meets at 6:30 p.m. in the High School Media Center.

### SECOND TUESDAY

Mountain Lodge 140 AF&AM, 7:30 p.m. at Lodge Hall, 255 Main St.

### THIRD WEDNESDAY

The Botetourt/Craig/Roanoke Farm Service Agency County Committee meets each month at 10 a.m. at the Bonsack USDA Service Center. Please call one day before the meeting date regarding possible cancellation information 540-977-2698, Ext. 2. The Bonsack USDA Service Center is located at 36 Executive Circle, Suite 1, Roanoke, VA 24012. All County Committee meetings are open to the public.

### FIRST THURSDAY

Craig County Board of Supervisors meets at 6 p.m. at the Craig County Courthouse.

### SECOND THURSDAY

Maywood Garden Club meeting at 7:30 p.m. held at Simmonsville Fire Department.

### EVERY TUESDAY AND THURSDAY

Everyone six months and up should receive a flu shot each year. A parent or guardian must accompany those under the age 18. Insurances will be billed. People are encouraged to bring their insurance card and not attend if they have COVID-19 like symptoms. The curbside clinic schedule is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment only. For more information, contact 540-864-5136.



A little boy who wanted to buy the special shoes for his mom is elated when a man standing in line at the store gave him the rest of the money needed to buy the red glitter shoes.

## Christmas Shoes play speaks



The Lighthouse Baptist Church recently hosted a play from the movie "Christmas Shoes." Afterward, everyone received an old-fashioned Christmas treat bag with candy bars and an orange.

**Pam Dudding**  
*Contributing writer*

One of the most known Christmas movies is "Christmas Shoes." This year, Lighthouse Baptist Church hosted its Christmas play with this theme, from the movie.

The story tells of a family where the mother is dying of cancer with no hope and will soon be leaving her husband and nine-year-old son behind.

The son understands that his mom will be leaving earth to live with Jesus and even his uncle that died recently.

A song was played.

Some of the words were: "I wish for one more day with you, but it would leave me wishing still with one more day with you. I'd hold you every second and say a million I love you'd, just one more sunset and I'd be satisfied but then again, I know what it'd do. It would leave me wishing still with one more day with you."

His mom had told him a story about how she liked to dance.

The little boy took every penny he had and hurried to the store on the night his dad said she may not be with them much longer and searched for the perfect

pair of shoes.

Voila! He found them. A pair of red glistening shoes. He ran to the checkout counter and dumped all his change out for the cashier. After she counted it all, he did not have quite enough to buy the shoes.

His heart fell and he told the lady he didn't know what he was going to do.

A man standing behind the boy in line overheard him. "Daddy says there's not much time and these shoes will make her smile," he said. "I want my mama to have these shoes in case she meets Jesus to-

night."

The man's heart was torn, and he laid out the remainder of the money the boy needed, thinking, "I caught a glimpse of heavens love as I watched that little boys smile."

"Thank you, sir," he said as he ran away with the shoes gripped tightly in his arms.

As he lovingly placed them on his mother's feet, she told him how much she loved them. That night, she went home to live with Jesus. The carolers sang "Silent Night."

The different scenes in the play portrayed the story. Tears welled up in some eyes, as it hit too close to home.

"This is dedicated to all who have lost a loved one during the Christmas season. So many hearts are hurting today

thinking of a lost loved one," the bulletin stated. "We pray God will help everyone to find a way to keep the sweet memories alive, to heal their broken hearts and keep them open to face another day because life will move on and the sun will shine again."

Carolers sang songs between the scenes to add to tell the gospel story of the birth of Jesus Christ, which is celebrated on December 25.

The play was written and directed by Donna Old and the music director was Donna Blankenship. Lights and sound were directed by Joey Mayo.

After the play was finished, Pastor Lee Looney asked, "What if this was your last Christmas or your last night alive? The Bible says that the

devil believes in God and trembles because he knows his destiny. If you don't know for sure, 100 percent that you would go to heaven tonight if you died, I invite you to believe in Jesus Christ." He then prayed.

Everyone was invited back, and members handed out their annual Christmas candy bag which contained two candy bars and an orange in it, depicting the olden days when that was a huge gift to receive.

There was a happiness that permeated the atmosphere within the church and a warmth that no TV movie could match. Many shared they would see them at the candlelight service they will host on December 24 at the church. All are welcome to attend.

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**CLUES ACROSS**

|   |                               |                                      |                                  |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Twos under par                       | 28. Catholic holiday service  | 2. About aviation                    | 24. Great battle of 333 BC       |
| 7. Expresses surprise                   | 33. Canadian province         | 3. Small biting flies                | 25. Salt Lake state              |
| 10. Shows exceedingly great size        | 34. Capital of Alberta        | 4. Bulgarian monetary unit           | 26. Woman (French)               |
| 12. At this place                       | 36. Large African antelope    | 5. Point midway between E and SE     | 29. A public promotion           |
| 13. One who prints from a plate         | 37. Mexican tortilla sandwich | 6. Old CCCP or U._____               | 30. Social insect                |
| 14. '95 U.S. Open golf champ Corey      | 38. Pigmented eye membrane    | 7. Rubber tree genus                 | 31. Knifed                       |
| 15. Stupefied with alcohol              | 39. Baby's food protector     | 8. Waterless                         | 32. Formal association of people |
| 16. Breezed through                     | 40. Winglike structures       | 9. Female chicken                    | 35. Toff                         |
| 17. A major division of geological time | 41. Sun-dried brick           | 10. Relating to the Hebrews          | 36. Snaps up                     |
| 18. Humble request for help             | 44. Those dull in appearance  | 11. Dig up                           | 38. Annona diversifolia          |
| 19. Part of a deck                      | 45. Basketlike baby's bed     | 12. Diacritic caron                  | 40. Opera vocal solo             |
| 21. Albanian monetary unit              | 48. Purpose or intent         | 14. Capital of Sicily                | 41. Largest continent            |
| 22. Atomic #22                          | 49. Difficult to carry        | 17. Shock therapy                    | 42. Day (Latin)                  |
| 27. Atomic #18                          | 51. More than one spouse      | 18. Cyto_____: surrounds the nucleus | 43. Sole                         |
|   | <b>CLUES DOWN</b>             | 20. Daughters of the Am. Revolution  | 44. Hit lightly                  |
|   | 1. Incredible edibles         | 23. Nincompoops                      | 45. Guy (slang)                  |
|   |                               |                                      | 46. Black tropical Am. cuckoo    |
|   |                               |                                      | 47. Screen Writers Guild         |

### Post 240 helps New Castle students



Keeping with the spirit of the season, American Legion Post 240 in Daleville has made a generous donation to the Craig County Department of Social Services. The donation will be used to feed and clothe needy students in New Castle. Here, Post 240 Adjutant Joel Eig is presenting a check to Peggy Linkenauger, the supervisor for researching people's eligibility to receive assistance.



# Santa

from page 1



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Liam and Reese were hesitant at first, but they quickly warmed up to Santa who knew how to ask the right questions. Then their requests and conversations rolled rapidly as they laughed with Santa about his reindeer. When Santa asked if they had been good boys, they looked at each other and grinned.



Little Lily was mesmerized by Santa and had a long conversation with specifics about what she would like for Christmas, guaranteeing him good cookies.



Alyvie enjoyed her visit with Santa, not wanting to leave, and giving specific details so Santa would get it right. Santa assured her he would get his elves to work on it.



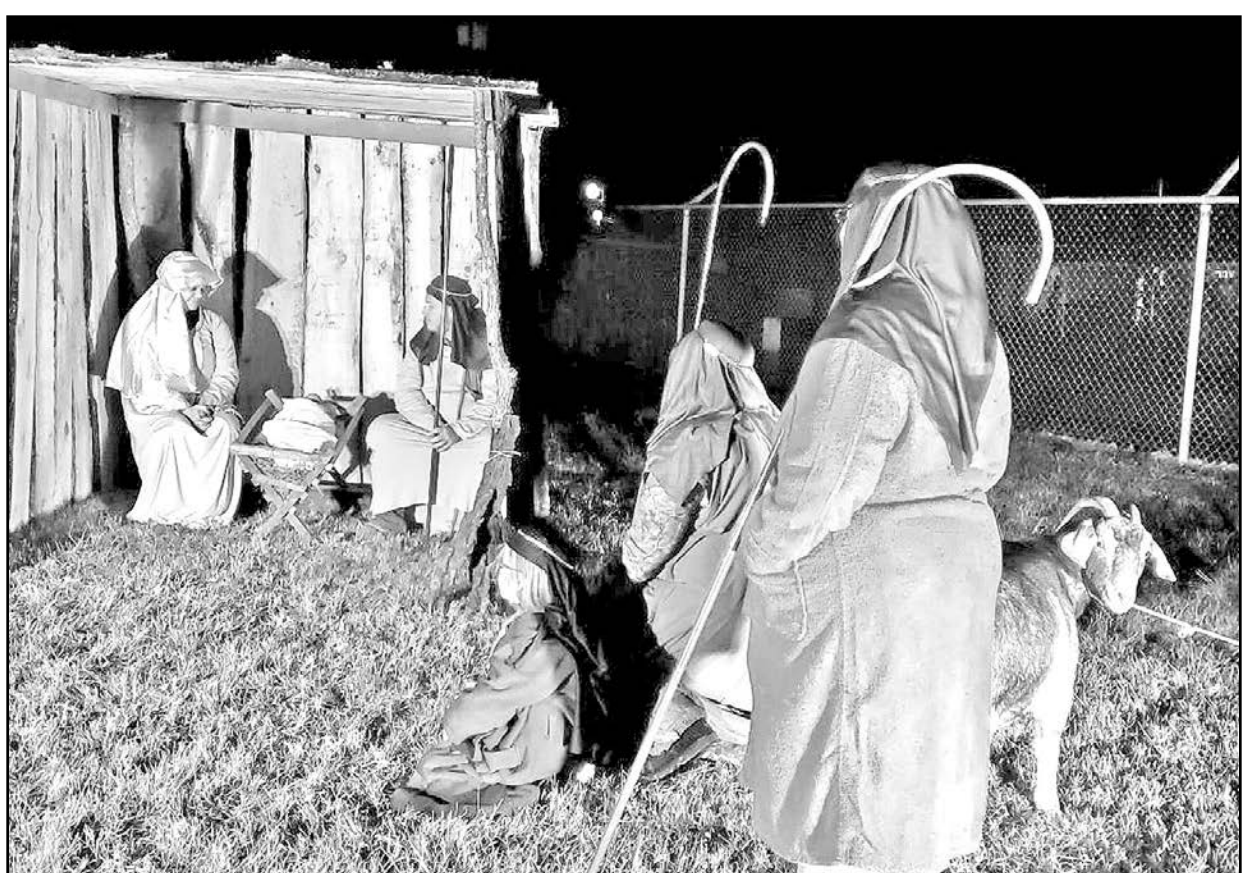
Noah gave his list to Santa and was ready to converse as long as Santa would. His grin says it all.



Maci Winebarger handed out a special book to each family to share as they read together.



Ken and Carol Looney representing the Gideons and handing out Life Bibles with candy canes, wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.



The Lighthouse Baptist Church built a wooden live nativity scene, having animals all around. They gave out the candy bags that Guthrie Insurance and Craig Botetourt had made for each child, as people drove through the exit gate, as people drove through the exit, recognizing that the season is about the birthday of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

onto each wall and the front trees which made the entire area glow with Christmas cheer.

He also played Christmas music during the evening, giving the atmosphere a special shot of a happy Santaville.

Mike's Dog House was set up for anyone who wanted a great hot dog.

At the side exit gate, The Lighthouse Baptist Church hosted a live nativity with animals, celebrating the "reason for the season," the birthday of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Kids enjoyed the scene as parents sat a little longer in their vehicles allowing them to look and talk to the animals.

Angie Guthrie and Craig Botetourt provided over 100 bags of candy and all but two were given out by Lee Looney and his church members.

Shari Winebarger and some of her friends paid for and provided a white leather throne for Santa to sit in which had large, jeweled buttons. Santa had a comfortable seat which he sat in for over two hours, talking to every kid (and even some adults that he recognized, telling them they had better be good or they would get coal).

Santa was dressed in his best suit, seated on his special throne. He was ready for all the kids. The parents were on time as they were waiting in line when the opening in line when the opening 5 o'clock hour struck.

One by one, the vehicles drove up to the

stage. Kids faces lit up as well as the adults. Some vehicles only had adults as they wanted to see Santa too.

Kids were able to get out and stand on Santa's HOHOHO rug, which was below the stage and talk with him.

Eyes seemed fixed as they listened to him talk and had lengthy conversations back and forth.

Santa asked if they had been good, how old they were, what they were going to leave him to eat, adding for them to make sure they left milk too. He also asked what they wanted for Christmas and talked to them about each toy.

Santa joked around with a few of the kids, telling them to make his favorite cookies.

He added, "Leave extras so that I can share them with my reindeer as they have to travel all the way around the world. They need that energy."

He was quick to say with a smile, "But don't give me that sugar-free stuff. Even my reindeer won't eat sugar-free cookies."

He did put an extra hint in for peanut butter cookies though.

Santa had a bell in his hand that he would occasionally ring and sometimes share with the kids that he had to be very careful and not ring it too much. "If I ring this bell a lot, my reindeer will fly down and pick me up and take me back to the North Pole, and I'm not ready to go yet."

Their eyes would glance into the sky to see if they could see them. Even Santa hesitated a few times, saying he thought he heard them.

The kids excitedly told him about Legos, Frozen Dolls and doll-houses, LOL Babies, ponies, Baby Alive, Barbie House and cars, BB guns, video games, bikes and lot of electronics.

Santa told each kid, "Now you make sure you go to sleep so that I can bring all the toys you want so then you can wake up and see all those toys under your tree." The kids then grinned so big and jumped with excitement.

After Santa finished, his little helper elf, Will Huffman, handed them a toy from the many toy boxes.

Also, Maci Winebarger handed each family a special book to take home and read.

Some parents took pictures, and some forgot as they got wrapped up in Santa's conversations.

"A special thanks goes out to the many who helped us to make this Christmas a little more special and fun too," the team shared.

A request was sent out just two weeks prior asking if each could help

just a little, hoping to get several, so no one had to donate much.

The following gave of their finances towards purchasing the toys: Kevin and Melissa Altizer, Danny and Betty Kendall, George Foster, Pam Dudding, New Castle Christian Church, Grace Assembly, Craig Valley Gospel Fellowship, Cornerstone Church - New Castle and Mountain View Baptist in Catawba.

Over 120 toys were purchased, including several binoculars that Timmy Snider donated.

Additional thanks go to Rick Dudding, Wayne

"Big Foot" Belcher and Cole Winebarger for helping to guide traffic.

Several people had hoped to decorate their vehicles and two floats, but none were able to make it.

However, parents were very appreciative of the efforts and the safe setup that helped to make their kids Christmas special to see Santa and many relayed their gratitude that evening and the next day on Facebook.

When all was done and the stage was empty once again, the thought was unanimous, "we will do this again next year, just a bit bigger."

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 And  
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*To all our neighbors, we'd like to extend our best wishes for a happy holiday season, along with a healthy dose of gratitude for your trust in us.*

**Craig County Health Center**  
 226 Market Street - New Castle, VA  
 Phone: (540) 864-6390 Fax: (540) 864-6356



# OPINION

## A letter to our community

**Library Corner**  
Empowering individuals to build a stronger community

Greetings to all patrons and friends of the Craig County Public Library! As 2020 draws to a close, it feels appropriate to reflect on this year that has been unlike any in memory. In spite of a global pandemic, our little library has persevered and continued to serve the community with technology, information, education and connection.

These resources have become even more critical and even essential for many patrons, as our county's students learn to navigate remote schooling, and the rest of us find ourselves spending more time at home, with reduced access to culture and social interaction that we may have once taken for granted. Like so many others, we've been forced to pivot and adapt, and we're proud that we've been able to continue to offer and even expand our services, when so many other libraries have been forced to shutter.

This year, we grappled with the difficult decision not to continue to pursue an expanded Resource Center. While community support for many aspects of the project was strong, some residents and local leaders justifiably questioned the project's expansive scope, vision and sustainability. While space limitations are still a major constraint on our ability to serve our mission, we've always been committed to listening and responding to the community above all else. We view this not as a setback, but as an opportunity to

better ensure our library aligns with Craig County's wants, needs, and capacity. As our future plans continue to shift to best reflect the community's shared vision, we need your voice to be included in this important conversation, as we collectively determine the best course forward for our community's library. Reach out to us and let us know your wishes and dreams for a library that effectively serves our county. Consider joining one of our committees, or volunteering behind the desk, or helping to put on a program or edu-

cational event. Of course, we know your time is precious. Support can take many forms. Your continued patronage itself shows that you value the resources we work to provide, and that support is invaluable to us. You can also sign up for Kroger Community Rewards, which costs you nothing, but we receive a small donation every time you buy groceries. Similarly, Amazon Smile donates a small percentage of every purchase you make to our library. Of course, as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, all monetary donations are tax-deductible. As our mission states, we're committed to empowering individuals and

building our community by bringing people, information, and resources together. We aim to provide the essential tools for building the community's prosperity through education, information, and social interaction. We can't do it without you. Thank you for your continued support and patronage, and your dedication to helping us build a stronger library and community in 2021 and beyond. With gratitude, Ned Savage, President Craig County Public Library Board of Trustees Craig County Public Library 303 Main Street, New Castle VA 24127 540-864-8978 craiglibrary@swva.net

## Christmas Traditions

**Morgan Griffith**  
Representative

Christmas is a time of tradition, for families, communities, and throughout our society. For those of us who celebrate, like me, we each

have our favorite customs about this season, whether attending a family gathering or town parade or just hearing a favorite Christmas carol. How those traditions become things we return to year after year make for interesting stories on their own. One story caught my eye recently on the Merriam-Webster dictionary

website about the phrase "tis the season," a phrase often said around this time of year originating in the Christmas carol "Deck the Halls." As someone with Welsh ancestry, and as chairman of the Congressional Friends of Wales Caucus, I was glad to learn that this beloved carol had notable Welsh roots. According to Merriam-Webster, the carol's tune was apparently first recorded in a 1784 book entitled Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards. The book was written by Edward Jones, a harpist for the then-Prince of Wales, the future King George IV, and Jones dedicated his work to the Prince.

Those lyrics included "tis the season," but they also include the syllables "fa la la la," and the carol's Welsh origins are important in understanding their inclusion. Merriam-Webster quotes composer John Rutter as saying the song was originally intended for performance by a group of singers and a harpist, the harp being Wales' national instrument. The singers would sing a verse, the harpist would improvise, the singers would move to the next verse, and so on. But harpists are not always available, nor do harps occupy such a prominent place in our culture as they do in that of Wales. As Rutter said, "That only worked in Wales where they had harpists on every street corner." So "fa la la la" would be sung to take the harp's place.

traditions from so many parts of the world have been blended into the celebrations in our country. You may participate in several without thinking much about it – for example, if you put up a Christmas tree in your house, a custom brought to our country by settlers from Germany. The variety of these traditions for one holiday speaks to the universal message of the Christmas season and also to the melting pot of American culture. We should be thankful that we live in a country where we can celebrate, or not celebrate, according to our beliefs. This year, the coronavirus pandemic impedes our enjoyment of some of these customs. Community celebrations have been curtailed or cancelled, families are reconsidering whether to have as big a gathering as they might normally have, and the festivities that do take place have as a backdrop the pandemic that has inflicted so much suffering. Most of us have some aspect of the season we treasure that will not take place as usual this year. I enjoy participating in Christmas parades in the different towns of

the Ninth District. After riding through a town saying "Merry Christmas" and seeing the bright eyes of children and hearing the warm wishes of the adults, I find it impossible to finish a parade without simply feeling good about the world. Christmas remains a time of hope, and the traditions we come back to each year are also the traditions we can look forward to. I invite you to share some of your own on my official Facebook page where this column is posted. If you celebrate Christmas, however you do so this year, I hope that it will bring you comfort and joy, and I wish you a happy and healthy New Year. If you have questions, concerns, or comments, feel free to contact my office. You can call my Abingdon office at 276-525-1405 or my Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671. To reach my office via email, please visit my website at www.morgangriffith.house.gov. Also on my website is the latest material from my office, including information on votes recently taken on the floor of the House of Representatives.

**THE NEW CASTLE RECORD**

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The New Castle Record encourages 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 to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Record reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length content and style. News of public interest is solicited from all sections of the county.

A century later, the Welsh tune became linked to a Welsh lyricist. In 1884, a book called The Song Book: Words and Tunes from the Best Poets and Musicians reported that the lyrics to "Deck the Halls" were a translation by Thomas Oliphant of lyrics written by John Jones, a poet who also went by the Welsh name Talhaiarn.

Email letters to the editor to shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

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# A cup of holiday cheer

**Ashley Trainque**

Craig County Health Center Medical Site Manager  
Guest Contributor

Many will hear the sound of bells ringing in front of their favorite stores decked out with Christmas decor this holiday season. We listen to Dean Martin belt out, "Baby, It's Cold Outside," and with happy smiling faces, we run frantically about buying gifts for family and friends. In neighborhoods across America, Christmas trees are lighting up living rooms. People sing Christmas carols, veg out on Hallmark Christmas movies, drink hot cocoa by the gallon and stay up late watching the ball drop in New York City on New Year's Eve.

happiness, but is this real life? For many, this is reality; for some, it is a false front, a glamorous social media double-life. And still others, this dream is out of reach. They are full of despair. During the holiday season, we want happiness. But, what if we can't seem to fill our cup of holiday cheer?

Life is full of ups and downs. We have mountain top experiences that fill us with delight, like getting married to the love of our life. We also have times of despair, such as sharing the loss of a child, parent, or spouse. For most people, these ups and downs are present at one time or another, and we live our lives somewhere in the middle between the mountain tops and the valleys. Life continues; we adjust to the day's events and keep living, laughing, crying, working.

People remind me of pack animals; we socialize. We tend to connect

with those around us that share our views, our dreams, our vision. People have a desire to feel wanted, accepted, secure, and loved. This is why groups so strongly connect, hippies, religious groups, moms of preschoolers, even! Most people view their family as a home base, the ultimate place of security, acceptance, and love. So then, the loss of group identity or family connectedness can lead to depression. The holidays are when family, friends, and loved ones gather together and well socialize. So, a loss can spiral a person into feeling off-kilter. A person who can "keep it together" most times may feel like they have sunk into a never-ending suction vacuum and can see no way out. For these people, a holiday is a dreaded event.

Depression during the holiday season can seem overwhelming and downright deadly. Yes, you heard me, deadly! Some

people may feel that their life is no longer relevant and decide to end their own lives. Combined with the COVID-19 pandemic during the holidays, we will undoubtedly see a rise in depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide rates.

I want to discuss depression or at least the tip of the iceberg related to depression. What is it, why do you have it, and what can you do about it? Webster's dictionary defines depression as a severe medical condition where a person feels incredibly sad, hopeless, and unimportant and cannot live normally. It is like living in a room alone with no windows and no door to escape. People can suffer varying degrees of depression, anything from an ever-present sadness to an overt desire to stop living. So, what causes depression?

A variety of issues can cause depression, but there is no clear answer to why. Some depression

can occur during a severe medical illness like Cancer or life changes such as moving or the death of someone we love. It can be genetic, related to verbal or physical abuse, stress, or substance abuse. Some have feelings of depression and do not know why.

What can I do about depression? Treatment options for depression include medications and psychotherapy. If you have a primary care provider or mental health professional, they can prescribe medications to reduce your depression symptoms. Those suffering from severe depression can benefit from outpatient or hospital treatment programs until their symptoms improve. Are you a person of faith? If so, seek counsel. Talk with your provider, and together you can come up with a treatment plan so that someday you may enjoy a cup of holiday cheer.

What can you do if you know someone suffering from depression? As a society, we need to recognize it. If we realize the problem, then we

can pursue a solution. As you shop your favorite stores this holiday season sipping your favorite hot cup of happiness, remember people are hurting, reach out to those you know who have a loss in their life, spend time with them, let them talk, cry or even shout. Give them your presence; show them they are wanted, accepted, and loved.

Most times, the most precious gift is you, not the gifts under the tree. If you have someone you are worried about, reach out, guide them to medical assistance if needed. And if you or someone you know needs this, here is the information for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and Crisis Text line available in the United States, 24/7; it is free and confidential. Lifeline phone number is (800) 273-8255 and Crisis Text Line: Text ASKUS to 741741. Every life is meaningful; everyone should feel wanted, accepted, secure, and loved. We all have a purpose; let's find it and pursue it. If your cup is full, share some with others

# Virginians should have faith in the election

**Senator Mark Warner**

Guest Contributor

The votes have been counted, recounted and certified. The dust has settled on President Donald Trump's undemocratic attempts to reverse the final tally. And the results are in: This election was, in the words of President Trump's own appointees, "the most secure election in modern history."

This outcome was far from given. In the weeks unning up to Nov. 3, the Senate Intelligence Committee, on which I serve as vice chairman, received multiple briefings from intelligence officials raising alarms that foreign nations intended to launch massive interference campaigns to spread misinformation designed to influence

our elections. These briefings — part of dozens of hearings our committee has conducted on the subject of election security over the past four years — were hair-raising, especially coupled with warnings from law enforcement that domestic sources would also seek to undermine the election and perhaps, incite violence in an effort to intimate Americans exercising their right to vote.

The "nightmare scenario" was even worse — an all-of-the-above situation where foreign adversaries claimed success in hacking the election and that misinformation reinforced domestic calls to violence, which would then again be used by our enemies to undermine our democracy and reinforce our divisions. Heading into Election Day, there were very real concerns at the highest levels of government that there

might be widespread violence both before and after the election — regardless of its outcome.

But that didn't happen. What did happen was that the institutions charged with protecting our democracy stepped up to the plate and hit a home run.

While misinformation about the results of the election — proliferated and promoted by no less a personage than the president of the United States — has continued to flourish in the wake of the election, foreign efforts to influence the vote were, by and large, blunted by an intelligence community that has spent four years preparing for this challenge.

Law enforcement, following the vanguard of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency under the able leadership of a since-fired Chris Krebs, worked with state and

local partners to protect voting machines. Congress provided hundreds of million dollars in aid to states and localities to secure the vote, although we still need to do much more in the future. Even the social media companies, so important to the Russian effort in 2016, acted more responsibly in 2020, working with the FBI to identify and remove foreign adversaries who were trying to use their platforms against us.

Facing a pandemic and efforts to suppress the vote, the American people rose to meet the moment. What could easily have been a low-turnout election instead saw record numbers of voters casting their ballots. With a few exceptions, Americans acted responsibly and peacefully, and the election was a remarkable success in spite of fears that COVID-19 would keep voters home. Widespread

violence that was predicted prior to Election Day failed to materialize, leaving behind intact storefront windows that had been boarded up in preparation for the worst.

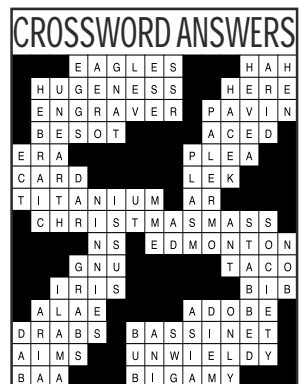
Even President Trump's half-baked attempts to steal the election have failed, as yet, to fissure our democracy. That is, in part, a testament to the work of thousands of public servants across the country, including local elections officials, both Democrats and Republicans, who stood up in defense of our nation's most sacred birthright, the free and fair election, and made sure the votes got counted.

It's been clear for months that the president had no intention of conceding an election he lost, no matter how securely it was conducted. In spite of that earth-shattering break with constitutional norms,

the institutions designed to protect our democracy have stood strong.

Our intelligence community, which learned many lessons from 2016, took steps to proactively inure Americans to the effects of foreign misinformation — issuing unprecedented warnings to Americans of efforts by Russian, Iranian and Chinese actors to influence their votes. Faced with massive political pressure to undermine the integrity of the vote, local officials and registrars refused to back down. At every opportunity, the courts have swatted down Trump's attempts to challenge the election's results. And most importantly, the American people stood up to have their voices peacefully heard.

That is an act of democracy worth celebrating.



# Citizens connecting customers to basketball

Citizens Telephone Cooperative (Citizens) is using technology to assist in many ways during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most recently, Citizens has partnered with area schools to stream and rebroadcast local basketball games for the 2020-21 season.

"With the pandemic guidelines allowing so few spectators into the gyms for the games, we are working with area schools to share links to Facebook Live, YouTube, NFHSnetwork.com streaming, and more," said Hari Berzins, Content Strategist for Citizens.

Citizens will also rebroadcast games on its local channel, CCTV - Channel 20 (SD) and 711 (HD).

"We know that having access to technology and high-speed internet is more important than ever before to enable our customers to work from home, participate in virtual learning or teaching from home, and watching local sporting events from personal devices like

phones, tablets, and of course a TV," Greg Sapp, CEO & General Manager of Citizens, said.

Watch Citizens Telephone Coop Facebook page, citizens.coop website, Bulletin Board (Channel 23), and CCTV (Channels 20 & 711) for more information as it becomes available.

For more information, visit www.citizens.coop or call 540.745.2111.

Citizens is a member-owned Cooperative providing telephone, internet, and TV to Floyd County and surrounding communities for over 100 years. Citizens also offers symmetrical business Ethernet, IT Solutions, Security and Automation Systems, and Citizens Medical Alert.

Citizens is located at 220 Webbs Mill Road in Floyd. Lobby hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

*-Submitted by Lori Saltus, EVP of Customer Relations*

Send community news and photos to shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

# OBITUARY

## Jones, Wanda Caldwell

Wanda Caldwell Jones of New Castle went to be with her heavenly Father on Monday, December 21, at age 81. She was preceded in death by her husband, Edward Jones; two sons, Brad Jesse and Eric Wade Jones; and daughter, Teresa J. Wright.

She is survived by son, Mark (Michelle) Jones; and daughter, Marsha (Sput) Jones; grandchildren, Derek, Brock, Brad, Maddy, Kelisha, Jessi, Tyler, Emily, Josh, and Stacey; 12 great-



grandchildren; sisters, Noline (Frederick) Jones and Joyce (Malcolm) Horne; and many nieces and nephews, which she loved dearly.

Funeral Services will be held 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 23, at New Canterbury Pentecostal Church in Catawba with Pastor Lee Sarver officiating. Interment will follow at Bowen Cemetery, Catawba, VA.

Arrangements by Paitsel Funeral Home. www.paitselfh.com

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# Letter To Santa



Dear Santa Claus 

Our Letter to Santa Claus  
From Craig County Kids

Hey, Santa: What's up with you, Mrs. Claus, Rudolph and all your helpers at Santa's Toy Workshop?

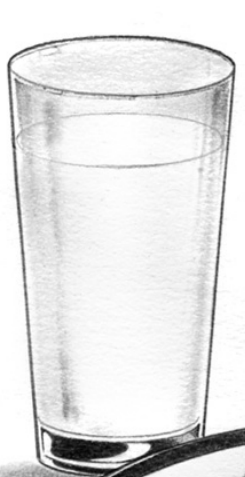
We sent our letters to you earlier. Just making sure you got them. Our Dads say the post office is slow this time of year.

Whatever we get, we will be happy. This year, we learned there are more important things than a new bike. Our grandparents have been sick, our parents have been helping us even more with our schoolwork. Of course, we always use a new bike.

We are writing this letter to you as a group. Although this has been a different year for all of us, we still believe in Santa Claus. We told Mom and Dad to leave cookies and milk for you when you come to our house.

We have all been good this year. Sometimes, we get bored not seeing our friends and family as much but we try to be good anyway.

I hope 2021 is better. Make sure that Rudolph and all the reindeer are wearing masks on Christmas Eve.



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Jimmy & Sheila DeHart  
Susan Stroup  
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*Peace  
& Goodwill to All*

*As we celebrate this holy season, let's remember to treat one another with kindness, love and understanding. We hope you'll join us in the true spirit of the season with prayers of peace and goodwill toward all mankind.*

*Best wishes for a blessed Christmas  
and a happy New Year.*

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### Legals - City of Salem

### Notice is hereby given to

all interested persons that the Council of the City of Salem, at its regular meeting on Monday, January 11, 2021, at 6:30 p.m., in the Community Room of the Salem Civic Center, 1001 Roanoke Boulevard, in the City of Salem, Virginia, will hold a public hearing, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, to consider approval of the following requests relative to the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA:

1) Request of Barry E. and Valerie T. Dick, property owners, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow a 1,288 SF detached garage on the property located at 1737 Amy Lane (Tax Map #212-1-10).

2) Request of Derbyshire Real Estate, applicant, and Sunset Ridge Holdings, LLC, property owner, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow a two-family dwelling on the property located at 703 E. Riverside Drive (Tax Map #232-2-9).

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### Legals - Craig County

### TRUSTEE SALE OF 99 Laurel Hill Pass, New Castle, VA 24127

In execution of the Deed of Trust dated September 5, 2017, in the original principal amount of \$125,190.00, recorded as Inst. 170000491, assigned as Inst. 200000407, in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court for the County of Craig, Virginia, default having occurred in the payment of the indebtedness thereby secured and at the request of the holder of the note, the undersigned, as Substitute Trustees, either of whom may act, will sell at public auction at the front entrance of the Circuit Court for the County of Craig on January 7, 2021, at 11:00 a.m., the property located at the above address and described as Lot 2, containing 4.026 acres, together with a 25 foot access easement as shown on plat recorded in Deed Book 114, pages 274-277, County of Craig. TERMS: CASH. PROPERTY SOLD AS IS WITH SPECIAL WARRANTY OF TITLE. A deposit of \$12,000.00 or 10% of the successful bid amount (whichever is lower) will be required immediately of the successful bidder, in cash, cashier's check or certified funds only payable to "BRIAN DOLAN LAW OFFICES, TRUSTEE", balance due within 15 days from date of sale. No personal checks accepted. Sale is subject to post sale confirmation and audit of the status of the loan including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower filed for and obtained bankruptcy protection, entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, or if trustee is unable to complete the sale, or if it is set aside or not fully completed for any reason except purchaser's default, the sale shall be null and void, and the purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. Upon purchaser's default, the deposit shall be forfeited and the property resold at the risk and costs of the defaulting purchaser. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, reservations and conditions, if any, of record, as well as inchoate liens and any other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the premises. Real estate taxes will be adjusted to the date of sale. All costs of conveyance, deed, examination of title, recording charges, grantor's tax and possession will be at the expense of the purchaser. All risks of casualty immediately pass to the successful bidder. Time is of the essence. Additional terms may be announced at the time of sale. THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. For Information Contact: Brian Dolan Law Offices, PLLC, and G. Benny Moore Substitute Trustee(s) 12610 Patrick Henry Dr., Ste. C, Newport News, VA 23602; (757) 320-0255

Publish On: December 23 & 30, 2020

### Legals - Montgomery County

### ORDER OF PUBLICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia VA. CODE § 8.01-316 **Case No. JJ004492-01-00 & JJ004492-02-00** RADFORD J&DR-JUVENILE DIVISION Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Commonwealth of Virginia, in re BOWLING, ALAYNA DAWN RENEE HILL, STEPHANIE /v. BOWLING, DAVID H.

The object of this suit is to: LOCATE PARENTS.

It is ORDERED that DAVID H. BOWLING appear at the above-named Court and protect his or her interests on or before 1/19/2021 2:00pm.

11/16/2020

Sally Davis Clerk

### ORDER OF PUBLICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia VA. CODE § 8.01-316 **Case No. JJ004492-01-00 & JJ004492-02-00** RADFORD J&DR-JUVENILE DIVISION Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Commonwealth of Virginia, in re BOWLING, ALAYNA DAWN RENEE HILL, STEPHANIE /v. LAPP, KRISTEN

The object of this suit is to: LOCATE PARENTS.

It is ORDERED that LAPP, KRISTEN appear at the above-named Court and protect his or her interests on or before 1/19/2021 2:00pm.

11/16/2020

Sally Davis Clerk

### ORDER OF PUBLICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia VA. CODE § 8.01-316 **Case No. JJ004494-01-00 & JJ004494-02-00** RADFORD J&DR-JUVENILE DIVISION Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Commonwealth of Virginia, in re CARSTENS-ZIEGLER, ARIANA LEIGH EAST, AMANDA /v. CARSTENS, RICHARD FRANK; III

The object of this suit is to: GAIN CUSTODY.

It is ORDERED that CARSTENS, RICHARD FRANK; III appear at the above-named Court and protect his or her interests on or before 2/16/2021 2:00 pm.

10/30/2020

Sally Davis Clerk

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# SPORTS

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## No Craig County sports in December

It's official, there will be no Craig County High School sports until at least January of 2021. Rocket basketball games

this week have been postponed until after the first of the year. At that time it will depend on the Virginia Department of

Health as to when games can be played. As long as Virginia is in "Red," as is currently the case, no games will be played.

Fans can go to the Virginia Department of Health website to check on the status of the pandemic. The lightest colors

are the best for the chance of playing sports. The first possible Craig County games are now scheduled for January 4.

## We'll still see stars



**Brian Hoffman**  
Sports Editor

The Carolina League was founded in 1945 and Salem has been a member since the 1968 season. However, the league as we've known it appears to be eliminated along with teams in 40 Minor League cities after the recent realignment by Major League Baseball.

"The Carolina League is not going to exist as we know it," said Salem Red Sox General Manager Allen Lawrence. "I don't know what league we'll be in but you can look at the Low A teams and connect the dots."

The Carolina League has been a "High A" league since Salem joined as a Pittsburgh affiliate in '68. In the past 52 years the local team has been a member of the Pittsburgh, San Diego, Texas, Colorado, Houston and Boston big league organizations, with two stints with the Pirates. The Salem team is currently owned by the Boston Red Sox, and that was a big advantage for the local team as Major League Baseball trimmed the number of minor league teams from 160 to 120 last week.

"Being owned by a Major League team, we were never in danger," said Lawrence. "But for the last 14 months many teams have wondered if they were going to be around."

The cutback in Minor League teams has nothing to do with the coronavirus pandemic. Talk of eliminating teams has been going on since 2019, and when the Professional Baseball Agreement ended on September 30 of this year Major League Baseball took control of the Minor League teams. Going forward every major league team will have four minor league clubs including Class A, Advanced Class A, Class AA and Class AAA.

Salem and Greenville flip-flopped in the Boston organization, with Greenville now an Advanced Class A team and Salem dropping to Class A.

"It has more to do with travel than anything else," said Lawrence. "Most of the teams in our area are going to be Class A."

Greenville, in South Carolina, is more aligned with other Advanced Class A teams. Former Carolina League teams Myrtle Beach, Fayetteville, Lynchburg, Carolina, Down East and Fredericksburg (formerly Potomac) are also dropping to Class A and will likely be in a league with the Sox along with some other cities. Former Carolina League members Wilmington and Winston-Salem will remain in "High A," with Wilmington moving from the Royals to the Nationals. The Frederick Keys have been eliminated.

At first glance, it appears to be a step down for Salem. However, most of the better players start in Class A and advance from there according to how they do. If you remember, when Salem had the Rockies Todd Helton never played here, skipping from Class A to Class AA. And often players like Mookie Betts begin the season in Class A and move up to High A later in the season, then go on to Class AA the following year if they do well. Betts actually played more games in Class A than he did with Salem.

"If you look at the players who played in Greenville, the great players who came through Salem also played there," said Lawrence. "We'll be seeing the same guys. I actually think this will be better for us."

The contraction from 160 to 120 teams was a move by Major League Baseball to save money. Rookie League teams like the Pulaski Yankees have been eliminated and all 30 big league teams will now have four teams. That was a tough blow for the Pulaski group, who have done a wonderful job refurbishing Calfee Park and had a lot of interest in the team as the Yankees have fans

everywhere. Pulaski will still field an independent team but it certainly won't be the same.

"We're just glad to have a team," said Lawrence. "2020 really put things in perspective."

Allen is hoping the 2021 season can begin by sometime in May. The Class A and High A teams will play 132 game schedules, down eight from past years. That means four less home games for the Red Sox.

"We'll start and end about the same time but there will be more days off, usually on Mondays," he said. "In the past our players have gone 20 or 30 days in a row without a day off."

Lawrence is optimistic baseball can be played in a safe environment, although he admits there's little use of having games without fans as was the case with the 2020 MLB season.

"With the vaccine and precautions, I'm optimistic we can have an extremely safe atmosphere," said Lawrence. "I'm feeling a little better about it every day."

The past season has been a challenge for the Sox. They did everything from "Dining on the Diamond" to movies on the fan vision to get folks in the ballpark to consume concessions. Salem hosted high school all-star games for Seniors, a 460 rivalry game with celebrities from the valley against counterparts from Lynchburg and various travel baseball tournaments.

"I never saw so many people here to watch 13 year old baseball games," said Lawrence. "Usually it's only parents for those games, but I saw some familiar faces of people who just wanted to watch some baseball. We've been able to keep our staff intact, and I'm pretty proud of that."

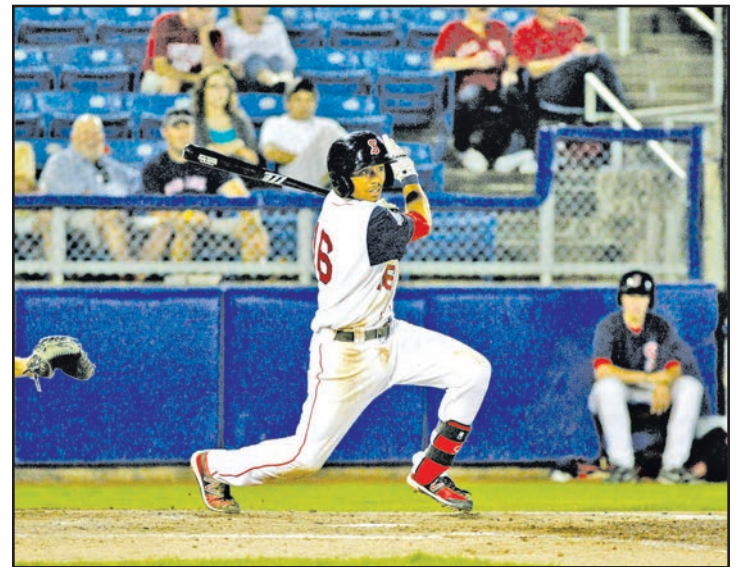
Barry Stephens, Salem's bookkeeper, credits Allen for keeping the team on the field, or at least in the front office.

"He deserves a huge amount of credit," said Stephens. "There were only two other teams in the Carolina League who didn't have to lay anyone off, and he's been the main reason. He's a good boss and he's done a good job under trying circumstances."



NCR FILE PHOTOS

Popular Red Sox mascot "Mugsy" will be back at Salem Memorial Ballpark this summer.



Big League star Mookie Betts played more games at Class A Greenville than he did with Salem when he was in the Red Sox organization.

## Salem gets tourism grant, will use for sports events

The City of Salem recently received a nice Christmas present, a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) Recovery Marketing Leverage Program. The initiative is designed to help local and regional tourism entities attract more visitors by leveraging limited local marketing dollars through a local

match of the state grants funds.

Salem will use the VTC Recovery Marketing Leverage grant funds to increase and lengthen the visits of attendees at the scheduled NCAA and CIAA Championship events. In 2021, Salem is scheduled to host NCAA National Championships in Division III

Women's Basketball, Women's Lacrosse and Softball along with Division II Women's Lacrosse.

"Before the pandemic, fans and coaches from across the nation attended these events and contributed greatly to the local economy," said Carey Harvey-Cutter, Salem Tourism Director. "This tourism grant will al-

low us to focus some of our energy on attracting non-participating coaches to attend our events by offering them special lodging and dining incentives."

More than \$1.9 million in matching grant funds were awarded to 161 local tourism initiatives through this program. During this funding cycle, local partners will provide more than \$5.6 million in-kind value to match the VTC grants. The grants will ultimately impact 483 statewide tourism entities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the tourism and hospitality industries in Virginia. As the Common-

wealth slowly reopens for business, VTC offered these grant funds as a first step to re-entry into the marketplace to spur economic activity and future travel across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

"Tourism is a crucial section of the Virginia economy and when we invest in this industry, we support local job creation and drive regional economic growth, which is desperately needed now due to the pandemic," says Governor Ralph Northam. "These funds give localities and businesses access to critical marketing resources that will help bring more travelers to our Commonwealth, increase visitor

spending, and grow demand for Virginia products."

Tourism is one of the Commonwealth's largest economic engines, with visitors to Salem spending more than \$73,469,286 in 2019, supporting 742 work opportunities and contributing \$5,669,456 in local and state tax revenue. The tourism and hospitality industries have also been among the hardest-hit by the pandemic, experiencing decreased revenue and job loss, along with the temporary closure of many tourism-related businesses. A revived tourism economy can help spur new economic activity and inject critical funds back into Virginia communities.

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The James I. Moyer Complex will be home to Division III softball

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