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THE NEW CASTLE RECORD



24 HOUR
PAY AT THE PUMP

Cigarette tax damaging revenues to local businesses



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Local businesses have already experienced a 15 percent drop in sales since the Board of Supervisors imposed the 40 cents per pack tax on cigarettes.

Pam Dudding
Contributing writer

(BOS) voted to pose a 40 cents per pack tax on cigarettes.

With many prices having escalated in the last year, including gasoline and groceries, cigarettes have now also been taxed in Craig County.

For years, no such tax existed. As some neighboring counties have already assessed, Craig remained one of the area localities that held off the "inevitable."

In July 2021, the Board of Supervisors

This caused a concern in the community, not only by the people who purchase the cigarettes, but by the businesses who sell them, as their fear it will take away many other convenient purchases. This in turn will decrease their revenue, affecting their abilities to keep employees or having the means to pay competitive wages.

See **Cigarette Tax**, page 4



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Awards were presented to several youth who entered the VFW Patriot's Pen Writing Contest. Pictured from left to right are Commander Billy Lee of the Craig Valley VFW Post 4491, second-place winner Kammie Fisher, first-place winner Mackenzie Lucas, third place winner Kallie Fisher, fourth place winner Natalie Fisher and Bill Burleson, VFW Post 4491 Quartermaster.

VFW contest poses the question, "What makes a good American?"

Pam Dudding
Contributing writer

who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?"

subjects, stating, that the competition is "dedicated to encouraging a better understanding and appreciation of America."

President George Washington once said, "A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those

Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) hold this same heartfelt view.

The VFW throughout the United States annually hosts local competitions in middle and high schools, challenging students to submit their writings on patriotic

There are two writing contests. The Patriot's Pen is a written essay for middle schoolers and their question this year was, "What Makes a Good American?"

See **Contest**, page 2

Carter Bank closing its doors in Craig

Pam Dudding
Contributing writer

The Carter Bank and Trust recently announced they will be closing their doors in Craig County.

On December 27, 2021, a letter was sent to inform bank employees that they will be closing their Craig County location at the end of March, the 31st to be exact, according to Area Manager Lorinda Sigmon.

Wrote Chief Retail Banking Officer Tami Buttery of Martinsville:

"Dear Valued Customer,

After careful consideration, our New Castle office, located at 181 Main Street in New Castle will be closing and consolidating with our Cave Spring office, located at 3132 Electric Road, SW, Roanoke, Virginia. This closure will occur at 12 p.m. on Wednesday,

day, March 30. Your accounts will be transferred automatically to the consolidating branch. No action by you will be necessary. Please refer to the enclosure for reference on Carter Bank & Trust locations and the digital tools we offer to help meet your banking needs, whether in person or online."

If you currently have a safe deposit box at the New Castle office, you will receive additional information in a separate mailing.

Any person wishing to comment on this proposed branch closing may file comments with the FDIC, the bank's primary regulator, at: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 10 Tenth Street NE, Suite 800, Atlanta, GA 30309-3906.

Comments should be received at the FDIC by the proposed closing date, but remember, the

FDIC has no authority to approve or prevent this closing.

Brooks Taylor, Marketing Officer, shared their reasons for Carter Bank & Trust moving out of New Castle.

"There are a number of business factors included in any decision to make a change to our branch network. The decision to consolidate is in no way a reflection on our associates or our customers in the New Castle market," he said. "When we consider the potential to make a change such as opening, closing, or consolidating branches, the bank does a review of potential impacts to the community. This includes, but is not limited to, availability of other Carter Bank and Trust branches in the area and the availability of other full service financial services institu-

See **Carter Bank**, page 3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

With saddened hearts, the citizens of Craig County have to say goodbye to their hometown Carter Bank & Trust at the end of March.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The VFW Voice of Democracy Writing Contest often brings out great patriotism amongst teen students. Kylee Clifton took second place in the contest with her personal views on, "A Divided Nation Cannot Stand."

VFW Voice of Democracy – A divided nation cannot stand

Pam Dudding
Contributing writer

Patriotism has a stronghold in many hearts of Americans.

The Craig Valley VFW Post 4491 often brings out those feelings whenever they host their annual writing contests.

Placing second in the Voice of Democracy contest this year was Kylee Clifton. When asked why she entered, she quickly answered, "I wanted to enter the contest because I want my voice to be heard."

Her heartfelt words ring true for many Americans. This is her submission for the VOD contest with the

theme, "America: Where Do We Go From Here?"

"America, land of the free and home of the brave. To understand where America is going from here, we will need to understand where America is currently and then take things from there.

The American people have lost sight of right and wrong. Assuming that all officers are bad, because a few are, is just lunacy. It's always the few that ruin it for the many.

Putting down, and rioting against police officers, isn't going to help anyone in the long run. At what point do the officers step aside? Leaving the American people unpro-

ted. This is something we should think about.

Why are they getting put down? Because people don't like how police handle situations - the way they are trained to deal with people. Not having enough training on how to deescalate a situation could kill someone.

The people's response was to defund the police. When has defunding any type of program helped it get better? The Americans need to put more money into the police forces, to help make longer, more efficient training.

Erasing Americans' own history,

See **VFW**, page 3



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY

visit www.craiglibrary.org.

Library Board of Trustees meeting at 6 p.m. at the library.

in the High School Media Center.

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.

Courthouse.

EVERY SUNDAY

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

THIRD MONDAY

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

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

FIRST THURSDAY

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

A spaghetti dinner at Upper Craig Volunteer Fire Department will happen from noon to 4 pm. Dine in, carryout and drive through options are all available. Any desserts or financial contributions would be greatly appreciated.

Craig toddler enjoys the snow around her house



SUBMITTED PHOTO

When young Sophia woke up and saw all of the snow outside, she couldn't contain her enthusiasm. Her giggles were contagious, and she played in the piles of snow for over an hour.

All critters enjoy the snow that falls in Craig County



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The critters at Michelle Ballard's didn't seem to mind the snow at all as Julie (the calf), Mary Jane, Lucy and Rosie came out to play. Said Ballard, "we love all of our critters."

Contest

from page 1

Craig Valley VFW Post 4491 was elated that so many students entered their writings.

First-place honors were awarded to Mackenzie Lucas. Some of her submission read, "What does it mean to be a good American? According to the Webster Dictionary, a citizen is defined as a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country. But there's so much more to it. So, what does it mean to be a good American?"

I believe that a huge part of being a good American is being patriotic. You should show love and devotion to your country. Most people don't realize how insanely blessed they are to live in the Land of the Free.

A good American should not only follow their civic duties as they are mandated, but also go the extra mile to respect their country in doing their civic responsibilities. These include obeying the law, paying taxes and serving on a jury when summoned. However, there is a list of civic responsibilities that we don't have to do but should do. This subsumes voting, volunteering, and staying informed of the issues affecting your country or community.

As I mentioned earlier, a good American should know how blessed they truly are to live in the greatest country. Really think about our country's history. Think about the men and women who died so we can be free, and all the rights and freedoms we have as a democracy.

Another part of being a good American is supporting our troops. America has a strong military that shall not be weakened. They need our support. The brave men and women fight and some die for the freedom and eminence of our country. As Billy Ray Cyrus once told us, "All gave some, some gave all."

To be a good American, I believe it is important to respect our flag. The meaning of the flag is beyond words. To respect it, stand for the National Anthem, let the stars and stripes fly high, and may it never touch the ground in disrespect. It is absurd to see people's disrespectful choices. This cannot be, for we should respect the flag, in honor and remembrance of their sacrifice.

To be a good American, we should recognize how blessed we are to live in God's country. We should obey the law, vote, support the military, and show patriotism. I love my country and so should you. America is great, and any American should know that.

Kammie Fisher earned second-place honors and part of her paper read: "How

can you be a good citizen if you dislike your country? If a large quantity of people felt this way, the country wouldn't thrive, and may even be destroyed. In conclusion, virtues such as patriotism, honesty, respectfulness, and integrity make up the definition of being a good citizen. It can be difficult at times, but these people are vital to the country, and the world. Showing these traits define whether or not you are a good citizen. If wielded correctly, these attributes can make a dynamic difference, can make you a better citizen, and an impactful individual in general."

Third-place went to Kallie Fisher as she included in her writings: "A good American loves and respects his country, and does everything in his power to make it a better place for all. If you want to be a better American, you also should vote when you come to age. Participating in your government's actions makes you a better American because you are working in the direction of making the country better. You are partaking in an important right that some people around the world can't even dream about. You get to choose who you think will do a good job and your vote does count. There are so many ways to be a better American, from helping an older lady cross the road, to voting for the next president. It is up to you on how you decide to make yourself a better American."

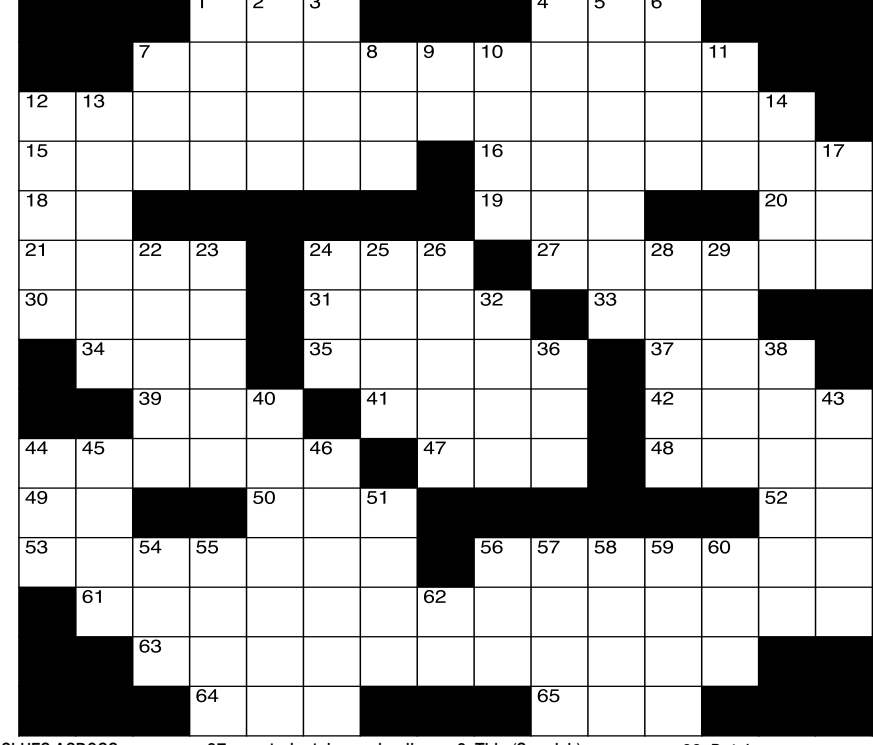
The fourth-place finisher was Natalie Fisher. A part of her paper read: "You need to learn to cooperate and help others; working with a team helps us improve ourselves and other people. Plan Two: I can start a program for the Veterans. I would get kids from my school to help make something special for them, to show our love, support, and how much we care that they put their lives on the line for us. So, we need to support the Veterans for everything they have done for us. I also need to be an example for other people."

Children learn much while they are young. Their atmosphere saturates their minds and these students have been steered towards being a part of the country, learning about it and choosing to speak up for what they believe in.

Each winner received accolades from the VFW members as well as a certificate and a gift card.

The Craig Valley VFW Post 4491 shared that they are elated to have words written with such heartfelt integrity, showing the honor and respect for the United States of America, striving to keep it "united."

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Brew
 - 4. NY ballplayer
 - 7. Rigid external covering in some animals
 - 12. Promotional materials
 - 15. More high-pitched
 - 16. Widely cultivated cereal
 - 18. Dormitory employee
 - 19. Bad act
 - 20. One's mother
 - 21. Scored perfectly
 - 24. Space station
 - 27. Exchange for money
 - 30. Edible seaweed
 - 31. Iranian city
 - 33. Lakers' crosstown rivals
 - 34. Nothing
 - 35. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
 - 37. ___ student, learns healing
 - 39. Military official (abbr.)
 - 41. Matchstick games
 - 42. Gasteyer and De Armas are two
 - 44. Distant planet
 - 47. A type of residue
 - 48. Punk art icon Jimmy De_
 - 49. Millihenny
 - 50. Canadian media firm
 - 52. Type of withdrawal
 - 53. Spicy
 - 56. Dish of minced meat or fish
 - 61. Noted previously
 - 63. Happily
 - 64. "Partridge" actress Susan
 - 65. Not present
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. In a way, brought to an end
 - 2. Scandalized actress Loughlin
 - 3. This (Spanish)
 - 4. Essay
 - 5. Continuing indefinitely
 - 6. Tool for lifting food
 - 7. Partner to Adam
 - 8. Dry white wine drink
 - 9. Spanish be
 - 10. Smaller quantity
 - 11. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
 - 12. (Scottish) island
 - 13. Church officer
 - 14. Large wrestler
 - 17. Polite address for women
 - 22. Famed Susan Lucci character "___ Kane"
 - 23. Mason ___ Line
 - 24. Disfigure
 - 25. Asian nation
 - 26. Rage (Span.)
 - 28. Khoikhoi peoples
 - 29. Opera solo
 - 32. Database management system
 - 36. Similar
 - 38. Move up and down playfully
 - 40. Alfalfa
 - 43. Satisfied
 - 44. Baseball official
 - 45. Large, flightless bird of S. America
 - 46. Money given in support
 - 51. Flower cluster
 - 54. Beginning military rank
 - 55. Russian weight measurement
 - 56. Explosive
 - 57. An individual unit
 - 58. Midskirt
 - 59. Weapon featuring balls
 - 60. Used of a number or amount not specified
 - 62. Unit of measurement

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Agricultural Conservation assistance funds available

Agricultural lands within the Chesapeake Bay watershed of Craig County continue to be eligible for conservation assistance funds from Mountain Castles Soil and Water Conservation District (MCSWCD). The funds are to be used for stream exclusion fencing, establishing rotational grazing fields, developing water resources, wells, springs and stream access points, reforestation of critical areas, and establishing or enlarging buffer areas along waterways. Funds

are also available for nutrient management plan development and implementation, cover crops and numerous other conservation practices. "The Commonwealth is making a huge commitment to get producers into voluntary conservation programs before any federal deadlines on Chesapeake Bay restoration projects arrive. A lot could change with program options and opportunities in the next few years as the Chesapeake Bay restoration deadline of 2025

approaches," said Tim Miller, the education and outreach coordinator for MCSWCD. Although significant program sign-up recently occurred under last year's record levels of funding, additional funds continue to be available. Now is a good time to contact District staff and explore project options. MCSWCD expects program funding to remain available into next year although funding amounts beyond that are unknown. Program funding decisions are

made in Richmond, typically one year at a time. MCSWCD encourages producers to explore opportunities now since program options have recently been revised and significantly improved for the producer. MCSWCD has highly skilled employees who are well trained in both the technical aspects of conservation management and program delivery. Staff members assist producers in developing conservation plans that work for

their operation and navigating program opportunities. Not all programs are created equal and staff members assist applicants in understanding the options and choosing the program that suits their farm's needs. Interested individuals are encouraged to contact 540-400-0707 for more information.

Submitted by Tim Miller, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Roanoke College appoints new members to Board of Trustees

Two alumni have joined Roanoke College's Board of Trustees. Micah Spruill '11 and Dan Strelka '89 have been elected to the Roanoke College Board of Trustees. Each will serve a term through 2025. The new trustees officially began their service in 2021. Spruill serves as managing partner and co-chief investment officer for S2F Capital. He founded MS2 Capital, an Atlanta-based digital asset management and consulting firm. Spruill also co-founded XSquared Ventures, a tech-focused angel fund. Previously, he was a managing partner at Aurora Investment Advisors, an Atlanta-based wealth management firm. Spruill has more than 12 years of experience as a trader and investor in U.S. equities markets and commodities. His background includes a wide array of practices ranging from scientific research to wealth management, trading, and serial entrepreneurship. Spruill holds a B.S. in biology from Roanoke College. Today, he serves as a Maroon Mentor, an alumni mentor program offering job shadowing, career mentoring expe-

riences, internships, or job opportunities to students as they define their career path. Spruill also was a member of the President's Advisory Board prior to joining the Board of Trustees. Strelka is executive vice president and chief financial officer for Carter Machinery Company, Inc. He joined Carter Machinery in 1997 as a finance manager. After holding various positions in accounting and rental operations, Strelka was named corporate controller in 2004 and CFO in 2007. Strelka earned a B.B.A. with an accounting major, at Roanoke College and the M.B.A. in finance from Virginia Tech prior to becoming a certified public accountant. Strelka was also a Maroon Mentor to Roanoke students and a member of the President's Advisory Board prior to joining the Board of Trustees. He also served on the Roanoke Valley Regional Campaign Committee and the Alumni Executive Council.

Submitted by Roanoke College News



Micah Spruill



Dan Strelka

Virginia announces \$11 million available in upcoming Land and Water Conservation Fund grant round



The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation will hold an open grant round for \$11 million in federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State and Local Assistance grants from Feb. 1 through March 15. An informational session and application workshop will be held Feb. 9 at 10 a.m. Register for the workshop at www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Eligible LWCF projects include acquisition, development, combination of acquisition and development, or rehabilitation of parks and other outdoor recreation areas. Eligible applicants include state agencies, local units of government (state po-

litical subdivisions such as cities, counties and park authorities) and federally or state-recognized Indian tribes. The LWCF is a 50-50 percent matching reimbursement program. Grantees must be able to fund 100 percent of their project while seeking periodic reimbursements. The minimum grant award in this round will be \$250,000, with a minimum total project cost of \$500,000. The maximum grant award is \$2 million. An updated program manual, application materials, and applicant resources will be posted to www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf by Feb. 1. Applications will be due via email no later than March 15 at 4 p.m. For more information, contact the DCR Recreation Grants Team via email

at recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov. The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 established a federal reimbursement program for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas. In Virginia, the program is administered by DCR on behalf of the National Park Service. The program represents a federal, state and local partnership. A key feature of the program is that all LWCF-assisted areas must be maintained and opened, in perpetuity, as public outdoor recreation areas. This requirement ensures their use for future generations.

Submitted by Dave Neudeck, Communications and Marketing Director

VFW from page 1

monuments, and statues also isn't right. They are getting corrected for being too 'racist' or 'offensive.' Thomas Jefferson was one of our nation's founding

fathers as well as him being a main author of the Declaration of Independence. These two things were very important in creating our nation. So many

people today just want to throw out his good name. Because he owned slaves in a time when it was legal. You might as well just erase every man that had a hand in forming our nation. Because more likely

than not, they had a slave or beat their wife, it was a different time. Americans need to stop erasing our historical monuments, and celebrate things aren't like that anymore. The American people

are so divided today. Two people of different political views can barely agree to disagree. We need to realize we are all Americans. After all, Abraham Lincoln said, 'A divided nation cannot

stand.'" VFW members are honored to encourage the younger generation to not only keep up with the current happenings, but to also be a "voice" for the nation.

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Carter Bank from page 1

tions in the area to effectively serve the community." When asked why they chose the bank in Cave Spring to consolidate Craig residents accounts, he replied, "Customers have the choice to bank with any Carter Bank & Trust branch, and there are five other branches in the Roanoke area. Cave Spring was chosen due to its proximity to the New Castle branch. This was included in an insert with the letter. They also have access to and can conduct their banking business through online and mobile banking." In reviewing the letter, some clients at the bank questioned this statement in the bank's letter as it seemed like an avenue that is a waste of time for anyone to write to. Taylor noted, "This is a requirement by the FDIC in order to ensure that feedback from the community is officially received and shared with the bank." The client's letters ended with, "At Carter Bank & Trust, we appreciate your business! Our goal is to keep you informed of the changes that affect you, and to continue to provide quality customer service. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at (833) 275-2228." Many community members commented on the closing, both those who bank there and those who do not. Many expressed they are saddened by the closing and hope another bank comes in to have a choice (and competition) as well as another business to provide employment for local citizens. Sigmon, however, reiterated that they "encourage employees in Craig to apply for any open positions at the bank. Currently, we have several openings." Employees are appreciative of the offer, yet agree that for some, traveling with the expense of gasoline, wear and tear on their vehicles as well as adding almost two hours traveling time, adds to potential childcare issues and other concerns. Others have shared that they believe Craig should have two banking options and are hoping that the County works diligently in making that happen.

Old Books by Raven Meadowbrook

Library Corner

Empowering individuals to build a stronger community

I was riveted to the story of the woman flying alone over the plains of Africa, and I was transported to the cockpit of her craft. Beautiful descriptions of flying by starlight kept me reading. The book was called *West with the Night* by Beryl Markham. I noticed then that the Craig County Public Library stamp was in the front and back of the book. One of those stickers in the back where the due date would be stamped was blank as though nobody had ever checked out the book. Perhaps that is why it was culled and ended up in the book barn for the book sale. How sad.

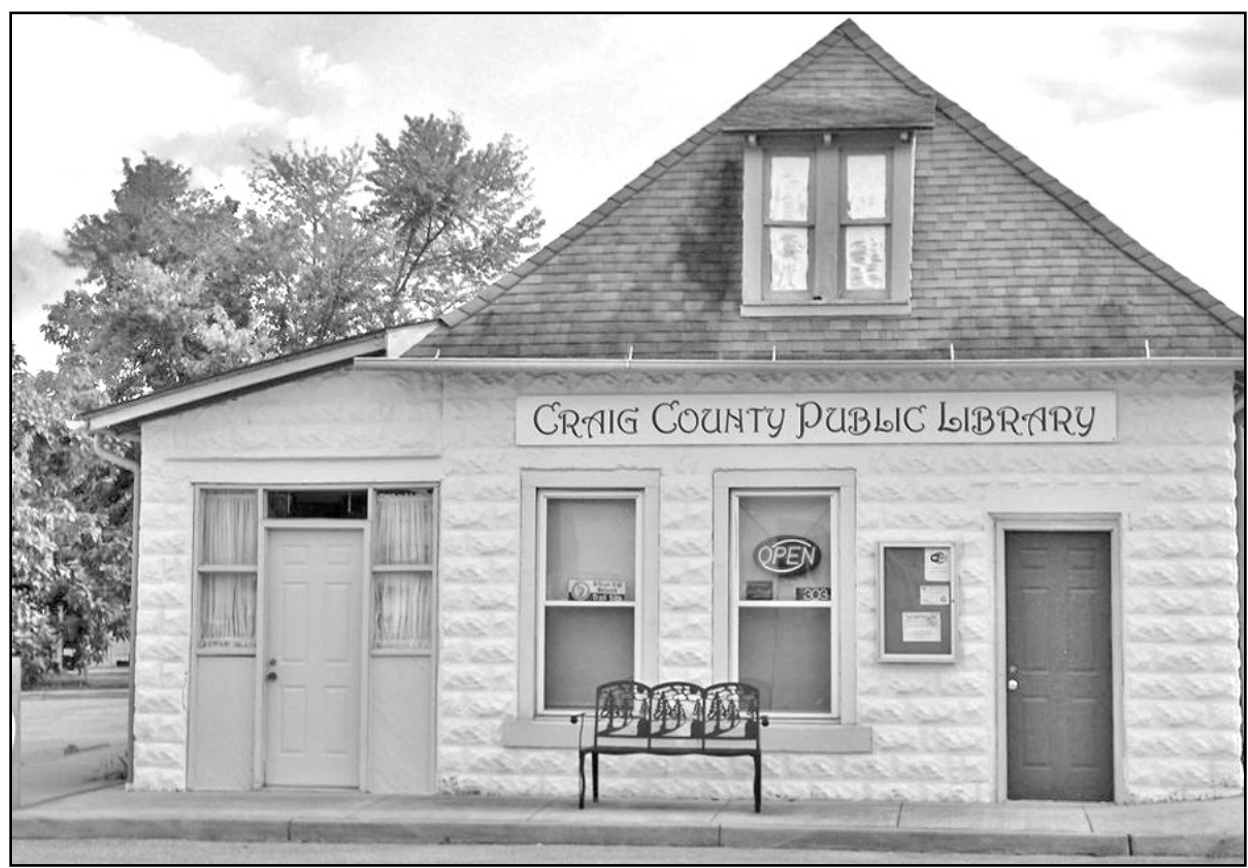
It is a fabulous book, but who knew, from its unassuming cover? It contains some of the best descriptive writing I have ever read. There is a glowing review of the book from Ernest Hemmingway. Its copyright date

is 1942. The tales of Ms. Markham's life growing up on a horse farm in Kenya, and encounters with wildlife are remarkable. She has a chance encounter with a pilot who becomes her mentor and instructor for becoming a pioneering female pilot. The descriptions of east Africa's evolution as a British colony gave history a new light for me.

According to Wikipedia, Ms. Markham has been long gone, having died in 1986. After long years of obscurity, her book only became popular after she reached the age of 80. I am glad to say she was finally appreciated for her creativity before she passed away.

Is the age of a book a reflection of its quality? Once as a library volunteer, I was instructed to remove all books with copyrights over ten years old. I now argue that age is not a factor in quality of the collection. Certainly, all new books are not worth my time to read and the "classics," though old, should never be discarded.

Is the number of times a book is checked out a



The Craig County Public Library is at 303 Main Street.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

reflection of its quality? I would argue that that is more a reflection of the library patrons' demographics, and the library's ability to attract readers to all genres of the collec-

tion. This little jewel was sadly missed by everyone but now stands proudly in my collection. Some of the best books I have read have been recommended

by others and I enjoy loaning my books out to friends. I will definitely see that all of the aviators I know get an opportunity to break their earthly chains and fly with Beryl

above the mists of Kenya. If you have a favorite old or obscure book, please share that information with us at the library. We welcome book reviews for the library corner!

Cigarette Tax

from page 1

At the January BOS meeting, it was revealed that the

reasoning for the tax was to provide enough tax base to

pay for two additional EMS workers.

Many in Craig County know that these positions have been difficult to keep filled due to competitive salaries in nearby counties. It remains a great concern.

Still, the questions remain, "Why such a drastic increase?" and "Why wasn't this drastic change made more public?"

BOS County Administrator Dan Collins shared, "We placed it on the county website, at the courthouse and in the newspaper in July 2021 when the proposition was made."

The Carper family, who own the Gopher Market and IGA Express Exxon, presented a written petition with the Board with 492 names on it.

The statement made was that most of those 492 people do not get on the county website nor enter the courthouse (unless paying taxes or have a court date) or purchase the New Castle Record to read the notices.

Concerned citizens asked why it wasn't shared in more

public places, being as it impacts so many citizens, especially the revenue of small businesses who struggle to keep employees.

A business owner pointed out that there was not a notice placed elsewhere in the county last year or for previous meetings on this subject until the January Board meeting, where one was placed on the Food Country community notice board. This was said to have been a great avenue of communication to the people who smoke and to the community in general who wish to be a part of this major decision that impacts some many businesses and citizens. Even more attended the meeting.

As of January 19, the Carpers revealed, "We are disappointed in the BOS decision to not reduce the cigarette tax. Already, we have had a 15 percent decline in cigarette sales at both locations. This will get worse as customers find a cheaper price."

They added, "Also, it affects all sales when customers

find another location to purchase their taxed cigarettes and additional commodities. These notices should have been placed on our stores and in other more noticed places."

Many customers find it more convenient to purchase their drinks, lottery tickets, fast food, and gasoline as they pick up their cigarettes for the day or week.

Unfortunately, David Stephens, store manager at Food Country has also seen a drop in sales. "Many of my cigarette shelves are empty as people are no longer buying here so I am not ordering," he said.

"People are going to Roanoke and Salem because it's cheaper," Stephens stated. "I thought the suggestion of \$2.00 per carton was a much better option. They will revisit in a year, which the Board of Supervisors suggested is not going to do anything, because by then, the damage is done. We are fighting to keep everyone shopping in New Castle."

Stephens added, "I think

the meetings and other notices should be put on our community bulletin board in front of the store. Everyone already stops and reads the flyers. It would help with getting people to the meetings. We are fighting to keep the business in town and hoping people will continue to shop local."

Other places that the notices would have been seen are gas stations and bank windows; places people frequent weekly.

Most agree that suggestions such as to decrease the cigarette tax less than our neighboring counties is a better idea so then other counties would buy in Craig instead of citizens looking to other counties, therefore increasing the revenue instead of decreasing it and putting local businesses in jeopardy.

"Right now, the tax is driving business out of the county and is hurting our local businesses," Stephens stated. "Again, we have a huge bulleting board when you walk in the store, and anyone is welcome to post on it."

THE NEW CASTLE RECORD

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Glenn Youngkin inaugurated as Virginia's 74th Governor - Commonwealth's Chief Executive vows to keep commitment to Roanoke Valley

Shawn Nowlin

shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

On January 15, a new Government Administration was sworn into office. The first Republican to win statewide since 2009, Glenn Youngkin was inaugurated as Virginia's 74th Governor two Saturdays ago in the state's capital. Attorney General Jason Miyares, the first Hispanic and Cuban American to serve the position, and Lt. Governor Winsome Sears, the first African American woman to hold that distinction, were sworn in shortly thereafter.

Themed "Strengthen the Spirit of Virginia Together," the ceremony was attended by significant GOP figures, including former US House Speaker Paul Ryan, RNC Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel, former EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler, former head of the Heritage Foundation Kay Coles James and former Secretary of Transportation and wife to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Elaine Chao.

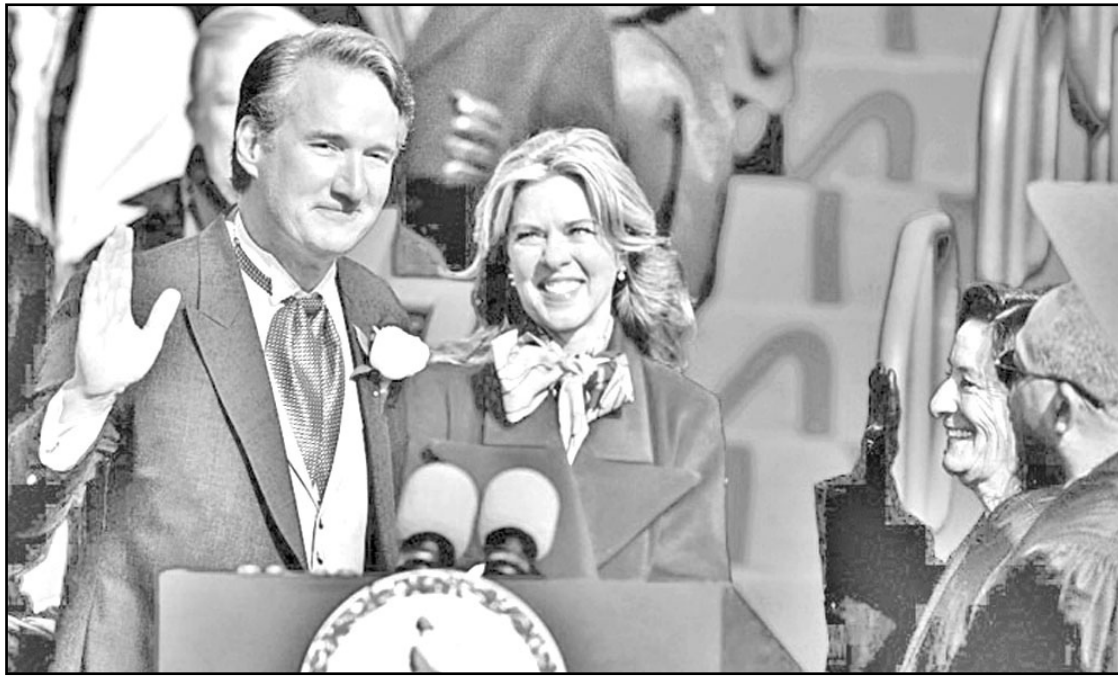
During his inauguration address, Youngkin said, "Today we gather, not as individuals, nor as Republicans or Democrats but as Virginians. And for the 73rd time in the history of Virginia, the home of American Democracy, we're participating in the

peaceful and orderly transfer of leadership. The will of the people grants a license to serve. A temporary license extended with trust, with faith, and with expectations to deliver on promises made. And therefore, as I reflect on my Virginia home and my love for this great nation and its founding principles, I'm so very humbled to be sworn in as the 74th governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia."

He added, "The solemn oath sworn today in the name of the almighty Father is done so with the love of my life by my side, your new First Lady, Suzanne Youngkin. And with the pride and joy of our lives, our four children Grant, Anna, John and Thomas. I'm so grateful for their love and support. And to my sister Dottie, I can feel mom and dad smiling down upon us today."

The executive orders that Gov. Youngkin swiftly signed address a multitude of areas, which are:

- Declaring Virginia open for business
- Empowering Virginia parents in their children's education by allowing them to make decisions on whether their child wears a mask in school
- Combating human trafficking and providing support to survivors



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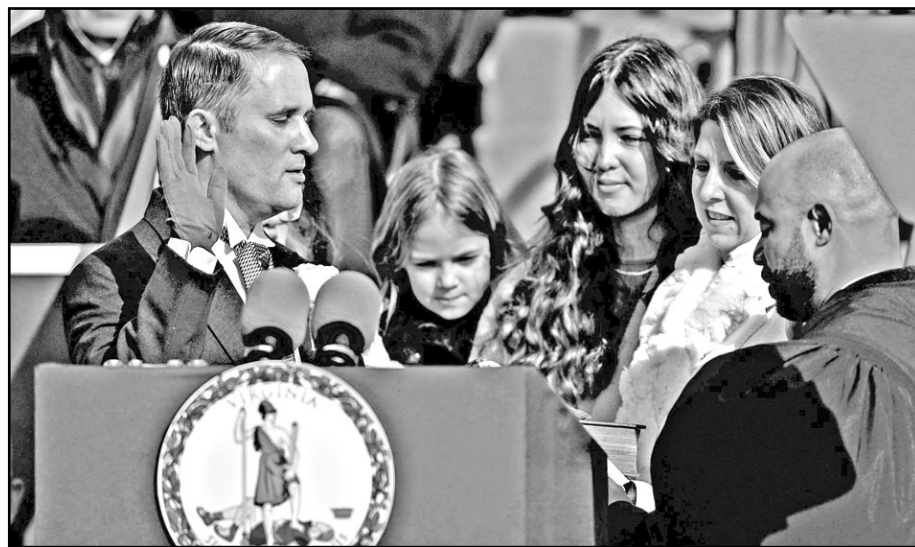
With his wife of 22 years, Suzanne, by his side, Gov. Glenn Youngkin took an oath of office in Richmond on January 15.

- Restoring excellence in education by ending the use of divisive concepts, including Critical Race Theory, in public education
- Withdrawing from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)
- Restoring integrity and confidence in the Parole Board of the Commonwealth of Virginia
- Establishing a commission to combat antisemitism
- Making government work for Virginians by creating the

Commonwealth Chief Transformation Officer

Along with the executive orders, Youngkin also signed two executive directives that are expected to cut job regulations by 25 percent and rescind the coronavirus vaccine mandate for state employees. Among Youngkin's advisors are former Republican Governors James Gilmore III, George Allen and Robert McDonnell as well as former Democrat Governor Douglas Wilder.

Shortly after winning the November 2 election against former Governor Terry McAuliffe, Youngkin returned to CommUNITY Church in Salem to thank his supporters and make them a promise. "Without your support, this outcome would have not happened. Things will look drastically different once my Administration is in office. We know the task at hand is going to be difficult at times, but we are ready to get to work on day one."



COMMERCIAL FREE USE PHOTOS

Prior to Jason Miyares, Virginia never had an Attorney General of Cuban and Hispanic descent.



Winsome Sears is the first African American woman to serve as Virginia's Lt. Governor.

LewisGale Medical Center expands cardiac services with renovated state-of-the-art Cardiovascular Catheterization Lab

LewisGale Medical Center recently announced the opening of its newly renovated, state-of-the-art Cardiovascular Catheterization Lab. The new cardiac lab is part of an ongoing investment the hospital has made in enhancing the delivery of cardiovascular services.

The new equipment and renovated lab provides advanced treatments that enhance patient care, make complex procedures safer and simpler, and provide

physicians with leading edge technologies, including a laser-steered platform, to perform a comprehensive range of diagnostic and interventional procedures.

"The renovation of our Cardiovascular Catheterization Lab reflects our commitment to providing the highest-level cardiac care in southwest Virginia," said Michele Gillespie, vice president of cardiovascular services. "This updated facility brings next-level precision of care to our

patients. Coupled with our exceptional team of experts, we are proud to bring innovation, quality care and service to our community."

Richard Konstance, MD, medical director of interventional cardiology, recently performed the first procedure in the new lab. The upgrades reassure patients that their providers have the best possible tools at their fingertips to perform life-saving procedures.

"This new lab is state-of-the-art, not only in imaging,

but in air flow for infection prevention, ergonomics, and comfort for our patients," said Dr. Konstance. "This investment reinforces that LewisGale Medical Center is invested in this community."

LewisGale Medical Center serves the cardiovascular needs of patients from across the Roanoke Valley and beyond. Led by Drs. Richard Konstance and Andrew Maiolo, the diversified cardiology team comprised of expert cardi-

ologists, interventionalists, and surgeons, perform a wide variety of elective and emergent therapies ranging from open surgery and Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI), to the latest approaches in minimally invasive cardiovascular techniques such as peripheral vascular interventions, carotid stenting, transcatheter aortic valve replacement/implantation and cryoablation, among others.

Submitted by Christopher Finley, Public Relations Marketing Director

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CHESTNUT GROVE CHURCH
Duane Wente, Minister, Rt. 42, New Castle, 540-864-5692. Sunday: Worship 10:00 a.m.

CORNERSTONE CHURCH
Pastor Don Brown, Corner of Salem and Wagner, New Castle, 580-3228. Sunday Worship 10:30am (Children meet separately, Nursery provided). Bible Study - Wednesday 6p Teens - Wednesday 6p. Ministries: Men, Ladies, Young Adult, and Seniors. Times vary, call for details.

CRAIG HEALING SPRINGS CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)
Pastor - Kenneth W. Davis, Jr., 6 Grannys Branch Road (Johns Creek), New Castle, Phone: 864-6102. Sunday School at 10 am. Sunday Worship at 11 am every Sunday. Fellowship meal after Sunday Worship on second Sundays. Everyone is welcome!

CRAIG VALLEY BAPTIST
171 Salem Avenue, New Castle, 864-5667; Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m., Wednesday: Prayer Service and Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Youth Group 6:30-8:00PM, Bible Buddies at 6:30-8:00PM. Transportation provided - call the church. Hearing devices also available. www.craigvalleybaptist.com

CRAIG VALLEY GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP
HWY 621, Pastor Roy Lee Law Jr., "Jay", 864-8984. Sunday School 10:00am; Worship 11:00am., Wednesday night Bible study 7pm, from HWY 311, up HWY 621, 8 miles on left.

CROSSROADS CHURCH
21892 Craigs Creek Road, New Castle. Pastor Gary Burch. 864-7520. Sunday School- 10-10:45AM, Sunday Worship - 11AM-Noon.

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Pastor Kevin Altizer, Corner of Main Street & Boyd Ave., New Castle. Church phone 864-5919. Sunday School 10:00AM, Sunday Worship 11:00AM and 6PM. Wednesday Evening Bible Study 7PM, Youth Group

7:00PM, Reformers Unanimous Addiction Recovery every Friday evening at 7PM.

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GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
159 Old Railroad Ave, New Castle, 540-864-PRAY, Sunday School 9:30AM, Sunday Worship Service 10:00AM, Wednesday Night Services 7:00PM.

HEBRON UNITED METHODIST
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LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST
Rev. Lee Looney, Rt. 311 N., New Castle. Sunday: Sunday School 10AM, 11AM, & 6PM. Wednesday Bible Study 7PM.

LEVEL GREEN CHRISTIAN CHURCH
3388 Cumberland Gap Rd. Newport, Duane Wente, Minister, 540-544-7179. Sunday School 10:00am, Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am, Children's Church 11:00am. Choir Practice, bi-weekly 7:00pm, Ladies meeting first Monday of each month at 7:00pm.

LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST
Pastor Lee Looney, Rt. 311 N., New Castle, 540-525-7662. Sunday: Sunday School 10AM, 11AM, & 6PM. Wednesday Bible Study 7PM.

MOUNTAIN VIEW CHRISTIAN
4199 Craig Valley Drive, New Castle, 864-6622. Sunday: Worship Service 9:00 a.m., Children's Church 9:15 a.m., Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

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NEW CASTLE UNITED METHODIST
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Rockets hope to get back on the court after a week of hoop postponements



PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

Layton Huffman of Craig County(#14) guards the lane at a recent game.



Zachary Peters handles the ball for the Rockets.

The January 16 snowstorm wiped out all Craig County High School basketball games last week, as both the boys and girls had three district games postponed.

The Rockets were scheduled to play Bath County, Narrows and Eastern Montgomery last week and all three dates, for both boys and girls, were weathered out. The boys were

scheduled to makeup the game at Narrows on Monday and the girls will host Narrows tonight, Wednesday. The boys were home to North Cross on Tuesday and they're also home Friday against Narrows.

The girls were scheduled to play at North Cross Monday but that was cancelled due to illness at North Cross. After Wednesday's home game

with Narrows the girls will turn around and play the Green Wave at Narrows on Friday.

Below is the entire home schedule for the boys and girls beginning with tonight's game. The time listed is for the start of the junior varsity game, with the exception of the girls-boys varsity doubleheader against Highland on February 4.

1/26: GB @Craig vs. Narrows: Game 5:30 : Rescheduled from 1/20
 1/28: BB @ Craig vs. Narrows: Game 5:30:
 1/31: BB @ Craig vs. East Mont: Game 5:30: Rescheduled from 1/21
 2/01: BB @ Craig vs. Covington: Game 5:30:
 2/2: GB @ Craig vs. Giles: Game 5:30:

2/4: VG &VB @ Craig vs. Highland: Game: 5 pm:
 2/7: GB @ Craig vs. Bath: Game 5:30: Rescheduled from 1/18
 2/8: GB @ Craig vs. Parry McCluer: Game 5:30:
 2/10: GB @ Craig vs. Covington: Game 5:30: Rescheduled From 1/7



PHOTOS BY REGINA DEVINNEY

Hannah Caldwell brings the ball up.



Hannah Ratliff dribbles the ball.



PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

Left to right: RC graduates Sam Rasoul and Shelley Olds and college president Michael Maxey attended the press conference announcing the relocating of the women's pro cycling team to the Roanoke Valley at a Saturday press conference at the Hotel Roanoke. Rasoul is a member of the Virginia House of Delegates from the 11th district and Olds was a member of the United States Olympic Cycling team at the 2012 games in London.

Women's Pro-Cycling Team Relocates their Base of Operations to Virginia's Blue Ridge

ROANOKE, VA— On Saturday at the Hotel Roanoke leaders of Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge and the Virginia Tourism Corporation announced that Team TWENTY24, a diverse team of female professional and junior cyclists, will officially relocate their base of operations from Idaho to Virginia's Blue Ridge. The team's name will now be Virginia's Blue Ridge TWENTY24 (VBR TWENTY24).

For more than 17 years, America's premier women's cycling team has been responsible for developing and managing many of the most successful American female cyclists, establishing a consistent pipeline for talented road, gravel, and Zwift eSports athletes. The team has earned 14 Olympic and Paralympic medals, 17 world championships, and countless national championships.

The 2022 roster consists of six professional athletes racing road and gravel, five Zwift eSports athletes, and 27 junior athletes (ages 9-17 yrs). The team is led by Tokyo Olympic gold and bronze medalist Jennifer Valente (USA), a 10-year member of the team. Valente will be joined by 2-time Olympian and current Pan American Time Trial Champion Marlies Mejias (CUB) who will establish Roanoke, VA as her home base while competing in the United States.

Rukhsar Habibzai, former Afghan national team captain and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, now calls Virginia her home and will compete in the United States with her eyes set on the Paris Olympic Games. The full VBR TWENTY24 roster and schedule of events will be announced in the coming weeks.

The multi-discipline team includes 2021 number one ranked Zwift eSports female rider Kristen Kulchinsky (USA) and 3-time Olympic gold medalist Kristin Armstrong (USA), who continues to bring her high-performance guidance and coaching expertise to the team through a newly launched partner platform, KX3 Lifestyle and Coaching. The KX3 coaching philosophy centers around helping athletes at any level take a holistic approach to their goals and to pursuing their own personal gold.

Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge (Visit VBR), the region's destination marketing organization, including the cities of Roanoke and Salem as well as the counties of Roanoke, Botetourt and Franklin, is excited to embrace the diversity of female athletes, inspire youth in the community and welcome the economic development opportunities presented as Team TWENTY24's title sponsor for the next three years.

"On behalf of the Visit VBR Board, we are invested in Virginia's Blue Ridge TWENTY24 underscoring the diversity, equity and inclusion these athletes represent and the inspiration they will share with our community," said Landon Howard, President of Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge. "In addition to increasing the visibility of the VBR brand nationally and internationally, this will prompt many new stories about VBR as an outdoor destination playground."

With the support of platinum level sponsor Virginia Tourism Corporation, the partnership with the team became a reality.

"We are fortunate to become part of the road to Paris as we welcome some of the world's top cyclists to Virginia to train and prepare for the 2024 Olympic Games," said Rita McClenny, President and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation. "This program supports female athletes at the highest level while spotlighting Virginia's Blue Ridge as an ideal destination for outdoor recreation. This relocation is the latest in a series of outstanding cycling news for the region and represents a major opportunity for economic impact. We look forward to showing Virginia's Blue Ridge TWENTY24 why Virginia is for Mountain Lovers."

Virginia's Blue Ridge has been gaining momentum as a preferred cycling destination since earning a Silver-Level Ride Center designation from the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) in 2018 and hosting the inaugural Carilion Clinic IRONMAN 70.3 Virginia's Blue Ridge triathlon in 2021, including a highly competitive 56-mile bike route along one of the most scenic byways in the country, the Blue Ridge Parkway. Mountain biking and cycling are huge parts of the culture in Virginia's Blue Ridge. Go to BikeVBR.com to learn more about cycling in the region and for additional information on this initiative go to VBR-TWENTY24.com.

VBR TWENTY24 plans to embrace the outdoor landscape of the Virginia Mountain Region.

"The vibrant cycling culture in Virginia's Blue Ridge (VBR) makes it a natural fit for Team TWENTY24," said Nicola Cramer, Founder and General Manager of Virginia's Blue Ridge TWENTY24. "The rich mix of outdoor gravel and road assets solidifies VBR as a premier cycling destination for our athletes. Our first year in Virginia will have a strong focus on connecting with the community, developing our new athletes through training camps on the beautiful and challenging roads of the region."

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