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# THE NEW CASTLE RECORD




COURTESY PHOTO

Craig County Public Schools had its annual open house and some of the McCleary kids were happy to pose and hold signs up displaying their "thoughts." Teachers greeted their upcoming students with warm welcomes, high fives and many hugs.

## School open house held recently

See School, page 2

## CCPS students will receive free breakfast and lunch for 2023-24

**Pam Dudding**  
Contributing writer

Sometimes mornings get a bit hectic for some parents and breakfast is a difficult task.

However, this year Craig County Public Schools will be able to offer free breakfast and lunch to every student in the schools for the entire year.

John Buser, interim superintendent for Craig County Public Schools, announced that he was pleased to inform the community that the schools will be implementing the community eligibility provision CEP program immediately.

"This is a new option available to schools participating in the

National School lunch and school breakfast programs," he shared. "This means that for your children attending Craig County Public Schools, all enrolled students, grades PK through 12 are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch, with no charge to your household."

He added that meals are available each day school is in session.

No further action is required of any family member.

The director of school nutrition and the cafeteria staff work diligently in providing good meals for the kids at CCPS.

"This is great news for our families!"

See CCPS, page 2

## Clothes Closet in Craig County helping families



PHOTO BY OLIVIA DUDDING SLUSHER

The Clothes Closet in Craig County has become a place to purchase nice to new clothing for adults and kids. Olivia Dudding Slusher took her kids and they all got something. Pictured with the huge stuffed bags, even Slusher took home quite a few items. Most are \$3 or less.



PHOTO BY PAM DUDDING

Not only do shoppers get to purchase nice items, but the ladies working there guide visitors to help find sizes if needed. "Sam" got a big hug from Ellie and Mae was tickled that Sam helped her to find cheetah high top tennis shoes and another pair that were "Rocket blue."

See Clothes, page 3

## Johns Creek Volunteer Fire Department Fundraising Dinner set for Sept. 3

**Pam Dudding**  
Contributing writer

When a fire happens, those impacted by the fire are eager to hear sirens come to their home.

The volunteer fire departments in Craig County work diligently in raising funds to help purchase up-to-date and needed equipment to extinguish those flames and heart wrenching moments.

On Sunday, Sept. 3, the Johns Creek Volunteer Fire Department is holding a late summer fundraising spaghetti dinner at the Forks of Johns Creek Christian Church.

"The purpose of the fundraiser is to raise funds in an effort to improve the efficiency of the building's insulation properties," David Barrick, treasurer, shared. "This initiative will help improve heating in the winter when we experience extreme cold weather that would adversely affect the water in the fire trucks."

They shared that their truck bays are in dire need of updated insulation and installation of ceiling panels to keep the insulation in place which is currently lacking. "Last winter we had to install a wood stove to help



See Fire Dept., page 2

Johns Creek Volunteer Fire Department

COURTESY PHOTO



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# School from page 1



Rayen and Brayden said they were ready for school, but more ready to play football as they entered their new classes for the upcoming year.

COURTESY PHOTO

# CCPS from page 1

Busher shared. “Please encourage your students to take advantage of this great opportunity!” This is in hopes that it makes the load for parents and families a bit lighter for this year, being able to spend more time with kids and knowing they are taken care of in getting two meals. Also, the division noted it will hopefully save families money, as most grocery bills have seen quite a hike in the last few years. Those with questions should contact Sherry Crowder, director of school nutrition, at (540) 864-8209.

# Fire Dept. from page 1

prevent the tanker from freezing,” Barrick added. “The stove was manned twice a day to keep it fired. This was necessary to maintain a 60-degree temperature in the large tanker bay.” Fundraiser dinners like this are the only avenue available to make their building improvements. “There are no government subsidies or grants to help with these expenses. We rely on the local community to help with funding related to building improvements,” Barrick said. “We have always had excellent participation in these fundraising efforts, and we hope this participation continues.” The fundraiser will be held from 5-7 p.m. held at the Forks of Johns Creek Christian Church, located next door to the Johns Creek Volunteer Fire Department building which is located at 116 Dicks Creek Road in New Castle. Each meal is \$15 per meal and includes: spaghetti, salad, Italian bread, drink and dessert. “We look forward to seeing everyone there!” the department shared. Organizers are urging community members to bring their family and friends for a nice dinner or pickup and take home. Either will help the volunteer fire department to further their immediate needs to help the community in future disasters.

# Power Wheels still a favorite at the Derby



The Derby started out as usual with the tikes driving their Power Wheel cars. They also got to go to the Tower and announce their names. As Adrianna Via shared, it was small town Saturday night Demolition Derby, and her little Tia drove for the first time. She started out by driving around the outskirts assessing the other drivers before entering the hitting. “She had the time of her life,” her mom shared. “Our family cheered her on and I’m so proud of her! I love this county so much!”



COURTESY PHOTOS

Bella made \$63 doing cartwheels at the Derby. “She said she’s trying to make money for us to be able to fly to Florida next year,” her mom shared. “I love her sweetheart!”

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	51								52

**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Midway between east and southeast
4. Sun up in New York
7. Japanese honorific
8. Czech name for Prague
10. Ochocinco's first name
12. Steep cliffs (Hawaiian)
13. Scots word for "home"
14. Upper class young woman (abbr.)
16. Monetary unit of Albania
17. Raise
19. Drain of resources
20. Uncultured, clumsy persons
21. Hikers use them
25. Retrospective analysis (military)
26. Tibetan form of chanting
27. Influential European statesman

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Abstain from
2. Vast desert in North Africa
3. Cover the crown of a tooth
4. A major division of geological time
5. Urban center
6. Crook
8. Parts per billion (abbr.)
9. Questions
11. A pack of 52 playing cards
14. Recording of sound
15. Pitthy saying
18. Atomic #22
19. Soviet Socialist Republic
20. Plant with ridged seedpods

**CLUES DOWN**

22. Innate
23. Investigative body for Congress (abbr.)
24. Soda receptacle
27. Spanish stew: \_\_\_ podrida
28. Viet Cong offensive
29. Large body of water
31. Beginning military rank
32. Dissimilar
33. Counteroffensive system (abbr.)
34. Shows who you are
35. Chinese dynasty
36. Type of verse
37. African nation
38. Quite
39. Former Bucks star Michael
40. Showed again
44. Body part
47. Steal

# OBITUARIES

## Looney, Christine Rose

Christine Rose Looney, age 95 of Richmond VA was called to her heavenly home on August 11, 2023. She is preceded in death by her parents Kenneth W. and Gladys C. Rose, her sister, Carolyn R. Simmons, her brothers C. B. "Bobby" Rose and Kenneth C. Rose. She is survived by 2 daughters, Carolyn



Looney Thurston and R. Lynn Looney Larnerd of Richmond

and one son, S. Watson Looney, wife Bonnie of Reva, VA., and one Grandson, Christopher D. Larnerd of Richmond.

A Graveside Service will be held 1:00 PM Saturday, August 19, 2023 at Paint Bank Cemetery, Paint Bank, VA.

Arrangements by Paitself Funeral Home. www.paitselfh.com.

## Clothes from page 1



Rayen was assisted in finding a complete cool outfit, including the sunglasses at the Clothes Closet.

# Upcoming public meetings in Craig Co.

- Aug. 16**  
A CPMT meeting at CPMT – Department of Social Services will be at 1 p.m.
- Aug. 21**  
The New Castle Town Council will meet from 7-8 p.m. at the New Castle Town Hall at 339 Market Street in New Castle.
- Aug. 24**  
The Department of Social Services Board will meet at 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 7**  
The Craig County Board of Supervisors will hold its monthly meeting at the Craig County Courthouse at 6 p.m.
- Sept. 11**  
The Library Board of Trustees will meet at the Craig County Library at 6 p.m.
- Sept. 18**  
The New Castle Town Council will meet from 7-8 p.m. at the New Castle Town Hall at 339 Market Street in New Castle.
- Sept. 19**  
Rep. Morgan Griffith will hold a citizen comment period from 9-10:30 a.m. in the courthouse breakroom. The Planning Commission will meet from 7-8 p.m.

### Community events: Ongoing

Every Friday, Craig County Genealogy Library is open 1 to 4 p.m. 152 Main Street. High school annuals, family histories and genealogy resources. Contact 540-864-7023.

-The New Castle Record



PHOTOS BY PAM DUDDING

From clothes to shoes, purses, jewelry and makeup, the Clothes Closet has it all. Most items are \$3. Special or new items a little more, and some even less. Emma and Ellie wanted to show off their new sunglasses they got there. Emma showed everyone, even how they worked upside down.

# God's House Is Always Open

<p><b>BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b> 11599 Cumberland Gap Road/Rt. 42, New Castle, 864-5242; church phone: 544-7040 Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., Sunday School 10:30 a.m., Choir Tuesday 7:30p.m., Youth Outreach and Missions Program. Rev. San Kang.</p> <p><b>CHESTNUT GROVE CHURCH</b> Duane Wente, Minister, Rt. 42, New Castle, 540-864-5692. Sunday: Worship 10:00 a.m.</p> <p><b>CORNERSTONE CHURCH</b> 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.</p> <p><b>CRAIG HEALING SPRINGS CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)</b> 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!</p> <p><b>CRAIG VALLEY BAPTIST</b> 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</p> <p><b>CRAIG VALLEY GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP</b> 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.</p> <p><b>CROSSROADS CHURCH</b> 21892 Craigs Creek Road, New Castle. Pastor Gary Burch. 864-7520. Sunday School- 10-10:45AM, Sunday Worship - 11AM-Noon.</p> <p><b>FIRST BAPTIST</b> Pastor Kevin Altizer, Corner of Main Street &amp; 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</p>	<p>7:00PM, Reformers Unanimous Addiction Recovery every Friday evening at 7PM.</p> <p><b>GRACE ASSEMBLY OF GOD</b> 5530 Catawba Valley Drive, Catawba, VA, 540-384-7075. Pastor Lorraine Taylor, agladypastor@msn.com. Sunday service begins at 10:30 a.m.; Wednesday Evening service at 7:00 p.m.; Youth (ages 13-18) &amp; Super Church (ages 4-12) Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. You can also watch on Facebook Live at 10:30 a.m. www.graceassemblycatawaba.org</p> <p><b>GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 159 Old Railroad Ave, New Castle, 540-864-PRAY, Sunday School 9:30AM, Sunday Worship Service 10:00AM, Wednesday Night Services 7:00PM.</p> <p><b>HEBRON UNITED METHODIST</b> Pastor Rodney Longmire, Rt. 606, 1981 Caldwell Mt. Rd., New Castle, 540-400-3419. Worship 11:15AM.</p> <p><b>LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST</b> Rev. Lee Looney, Rt. 311 N., New Castle. Sunday: Sunday School 10AM, 11AM, &amp; 6PM. Wednesday Bible Study 7PM.</p> <p><b>LEVEL GREEN CHRISTIAN CHURCH</b> 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.</p> <p><b>LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST</b> Pastor Lee Looney, Rt. 311 N., New Castle, 540-525-7662. Sunday: Sunday School 10AM, 11AM, &amp; 6PM. Wednesday Bible Study 7PM.</p> <p><b>MOUNTAIN VIEW CHRISTIAN</b> 4199 Craig Valley Drive, New Castle, Jonathan Lee, pastor, 864-6622. Sunday: Worship Service 9:00 a.m., Children's Church 9:15 a.m., Sunday School 10:30 a.m.</p> <p><b>NEW CASTLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH</b> "WHERE YOUR HEART CAN FEEL THE DIFFERENCE" 282 Salem Ave., New Castle; 864-5212; Pastor Bill Frazier. Sunday Service: 10 A.M.; Wednesday night Bible study at 6:00 P.M. for K-5; If you need a ride to church, please contact Calvin Duncan by 8 P.M. on Saturday at 864-5321; www.nc-cc.org.</p>	<p><b>NEW CANTERBURY PENTECOSTAL FELLOWSHIP</b> Pastor John D. Abbott, Hwy 621 (10 miles), phone: 864-8242, Sunday Prayer 10:00-10:30 a.m.; Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday Service 6:00 pm.</p> <p><b>PAXTON CHAPEL</b> Pastor Kenny Davis, 17 Sage Brush Lane, New Castle; "Presenting God's Word Faithfully"; Sunday School 10:00 AM; Sunday Worship Service 11:15 AM; visit us on the web at www.paxtonchapelchurch.com; email at paxtonchapel@yahoo.com.</p> <p><b>THE CHURCH OF CHRIST</b> 118 Main Street, New Castle. Service Times: Sunday, Bible classes-10 a.m., Worship-11:00 a.m., Evening Worship-6 p.m.; Wednesday, Bible classes - 7 p.m.</p> <p><b>NEW CASTLE UNITED METHODIST</b> Rev. San Kang, 364 Main St., New Castle, Va. Sunday School 10AM, Worship 11AM; UMW 3rd Wednesday@1PM, Youth and other programs, Bible Studies.</p> <p><b>ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH</b> 99 2nd Street, New Castle. Tel: 540-473-3691. Email: StJohnnewcastle@gmail.com. Mass is on Sunday at 11:15 AM.</p> <p><b>CRAIG COUNTY COMMUNITY CHURCH - 'WELCOME HOME!'</b> Sunday service 9-10:15am at the VFW building in New Castle. Casual dress if you desire and contemporary praise and worship. If you don't have a 'home' church, please join us at ours with Pastor Gary Burch. Check us out on facebook or contact us at: craigcountycommunity-church@gmail.com.</p> <p><b>ST. THOMAS ANGLICAN CHURCH</b> Located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit www.sttofc.org for midweek masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).</p>
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If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Randy Thompson at 540-389-9355 or email at advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com

# OPINION

## News from the 9th: Not Their Problem



**Morgan Griffith**  
Representative

Many Democrat-controlled cities and states, which are not on the border, think the crisis at our southern border is not their problem.

But, over the past few months, we've seen a string of northern Democrat-controlled cities and states declare states of emergency and request help from the federal government due to the number of illegal immigrants living in their jurisdictions.

Massachusetts Governor Healey was the most recent official to declare a state of emergency due to an influx of immigrants to her State. According to the Governor, thousands are being housed in emergency shelters around the State (some are bona fide refugees, but many are illegal immigrants). Governor Healey said that the State's social services are overwhelmed, and the State needs help from the federal government.

Washington, D.C.,

Chicago, and New York City have all declared immigration emergencies in the last year. New York State declared an emergency not long before Massachusetts.

D.C. issued a state of emergency last September. Mayor Bowser blamed Texas Governor Abbott for the emergency when he bussed immigrants who had illegally crossed into the state to the nation's capital.

This past May, Chicago joined D.C. in declaring an emergency – by that time the number of immigrants being cared for by local and state agencies was over 8,000.

When Title 42, a public health order that allowed border patrol agents to send illegal immigrants back to their home country or the country they were most recently in, was coming to an end in May, New York Governor Hochul declared an emergency in preparation of the coming influx.

In the past few months NYC has had difficulty housing illegal immigrants living there. News reports tell of up to 2,000 being sheltered in tents on the Randalls Island soccer fields. NYC Mayor Adams said that there are currently 57,000 immigrants sleeping in city shelters. Further, hundreds of hotel rooms are being rented

for illegal immigrants by the city.

Recently, a constituent complained at a Smyth County meeting that when he went to visit his daughter in NYC, he paid for his hotel room, while illegal immigrants were getting their stay covered for free by the taxpayer.

Earlier this year when visiting the border, on my commercial flight back, there were two illegal immigrants and an ICE agent flying to the immigrants' placement location. Who do you think is covering that cost?

That's right, you, the taxpayer!

And yet, with all this hardship and struggle to manage the illegal immigrants living in their jurisdictions, these Democrat politicians support the flawed policies leading to these problems. Many have the attitude that it's not a real problem until it's their problem. But they support the lax border policies of the Biden Administration and complain when they have to deal with the real-life consequences.

And instead of supporting finishing the wall and defending our borders, these Democrat politicians are calling on the federal government to expedite work authorizations for the illegal immigrants.

When declaring a state of emergency, Governor Healey stated, "an inability for migrants to obtain work

authorization from the federal government," as one reason the crisis is so bad in her state.

She said not one word about the wall or the southern border.

Should we reward people who intentionally break the law? I say No!

I've long spoken out about how detrimental the Biden Administration's open border policies are, which have resulted in increases in human smuggling, human trafficking, drug trafficking, etc.

Republicans in Congress have repeatedly urged the Administration to change their ways, to close the border by resuming border wall construction and giving Border Patrol more resources to control the border.

We have also worked to hold the Administration accountable for the results of their policies. Congress has called Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas in to testify 12 times since becoming Secretary.

And yet, our calls to follow the law and make necessary changes, fall on deaf ears.

Instead, the Administration has shifted the blame away from their flawed policies repeatedly, saying either that the Trump Administration is to blame or that somehow it is Congress' fault.

Mind you, House Republicans have already passed a border bill, the Secure the Border Act of 2023, to address the crisis at our southern border.

Not one House Democrat voted in favor of it.

It is clear, this crisis will continue until Democrats get real about the problem and support policies that actually close the border. Further, northern Democrat run cities and states must accept that the border crisis is their problem too.

## 'Demon Copperhead' by Barbara Kingsolver

### Library Corner Marge Lewter

I have always enjoyed Barbara Kingsolver's books and was excited to read her latest novel. The title was a little scary with the images it brings to mind, but in this case the title refers to the main character's name. His name is Damon and he has red hair, thus "copperhead". Don't let the title put you off! The kids in school named him Demon, of course!

Get ready for an extended read, but you will be laughing and crying as you whiz through the pages of this all too familiar story. It is set in the mountains of southwest Virginia in Lee and Scott counties. Barbara is no stranger to this area, and she brings to life the reality of Appalachian life through the story through a child's eyes from birth through his disturbing adolescence and eventual survival as an adult.

Through Damon's life she brings to light the inside story of rural poverty, alcoholism, abusive relationships, and foster care. But before you get depressed, understand that her story is full of humor and love and appreciation for the life in the "country".

She shows how one good neighbor family can make such a difference in the lives of youth, just by having stability and love for others beyond their own kin.

She tackles dope sickness, long term addiction, loss, and recovery in Damon's story. It becomes clear how so many people became addicted to oxycontin in the coal mining areas on the Virginia-Kentucky border. It is a story of how a good heart can prevail in a life of terrible trials and losses.

I shall now admit that I listened to the 21-hour audio book, checked out from the library, on the Libby app, rather than reading the book. I think the SW Virginia accent and the voices of the characters made it all the better as I drove on a couple of long trips. There was a waiting list for the audio-book and then, in a crucial part of the story, it suddenly disappeared when it was automatically returned on the due date. After another long wait, I was able to check it out again and finish it!

I hope this review gives you the fortitude to get a copy and enjoy many hours of gut-wrenching truth-telling. Barbara, if you read this, I hope that description pleases you!

## THE NEW CASTLE RECORD

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www.ourvalley.org

Michael Showell, *Publisher*

Aila Boyd, *Executive Editor* aboyd@mainstreetnewspapers.com

Brian Hoffman, *Sports Editor* bhoffman@ourvalley.org

Debbie Nixon, *Graphic Designer* dnixon@ourvalley.com

Megan Mehre, *Graphic Designer* megan@ourvalley.com

Randy Thompson *Advertising Consultant* advertise@ourvalley.org

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The New Castle Record (USPS 378-080) is published weekly for \$46 a year in Craig County, \$50 elsewhere in Virginia, and \$54 out of state by Virginia Media Inc., 1633 W Main St., Salem, VA 24153. Periodical postage paid at New Castle, VA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE NEW CASTLE RECORD 1633 W. Main St., Salem, Va. 24153

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**ABC NOTICE**  
 THE BLUE HEN LLC., trading as THE BLUE HEN, 1465 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Montgomery County, VA. 24073

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail restaurant or caterer Application- Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Mixed Beverages, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

MAGDY GHALY, OWNER.

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required

**Legals - Montgomery County**

newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

**ABC NOTICE**  
 NOT YOUR MAMA'S PASTA LLC., trading as Not Your Mama's Pasta LLC, 301 S. Main Street, Blacksburg, Montgomery County, Virginia 24060.

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application-Wine, Beer, consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

Chris Cirenza, Owner

**Legals - Montgomery County**

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# VDOT ROADWATCH

## Interstate 81

**SLOW ROLLS TO IMPACT I-81 IN ROANOKE** - AEP will be performing a slow roll operation for two crossings in both directions over I-81 near mile marker 135.41 and 135.91 on Thursday, Sept. 14 from 12 a.m. to 5 a.m.

**INTERSTATE 81 LANE WIDENING CONSTRUCTION PROJECT EXIT 137 TO EXIT 141** - A \$179 million design-build project to widen both directions of I-81 between mile markers 136.6 and 141.8 from two to three lanes is set to begin. Starting in February and continuing into the early summer, work will be performed on the inside and outside shoulders along a five-mile section of both northbound and southbound Interstate 81 in Roanoke County and the city of Salem. The shoulders will be built up before barrier wall can be installed for road crews to work behind. Barrier wall will be installed along the shoulders in the spring and summer. Two lanes of I-81 traffic in each direction will remain open during the project with periodic lane closures scheduled during nighttime hours or outside of peak travel times as needed. Drivers can expect the following lane closures and upcoming impacts on northbound and southbound I-81:

**ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC IMPACTS:**

**TRAFFIC SHIFT ON WILDWOOD ROAD:** Expect a traffic shift with narrow width on Wildwood road after exiting I-81 southbound heading towards Salem. Southbound and northbound I-81 exit and entrance ramp narrows possible at Route 311.

**WORK ZONE SPEED:** With narrow spacing in lanes due to barrier walls, lack of shoulders and lane shifts in various locations, drivers should adhere to posted 60 mph speed limits in the work zone and allow space when following a vehicle.

**RAMP CLOSURES:** Ramp closures are possible during nighttime hours, 12 a.m., to 5 a.m. Drivers should watch for message boards dates and times the ramp will be closed.

**LANE CLOSURES:** Alternating left and right lane and shoulder closures during nighttime hours between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., Sunday through Thursday, are possible. Lane widths will be reduced to 11 feet. Nightly lane closures may be in place along the right lane with possible nightly ramp narrows as needed for guardrail and shoulder strengthening.

The project also includes replacing six bridges, widening two bridges, installing approximately 2.6 miles of sound barrier walls along northbound I-81, improving the southbound exit 137 off-ramp intersection at Wildwood Road and adding interchange lighting at exits 137, 140 and 141 are also included in the project. Expected completion in early 2026.

**I-81 NORTHBOUND AT EXIT 105 NEW RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY** - Traffic on northbound I-81 has been switched onto the newly constructed bridge over the New River at the Montgomery/Pulaski

County line. The old bridge is being demolished. Lane and shoulder closures may be in place near exit 105. Lane closure may be in effect during the week from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. Shoulder closures may be in effect at any time during the week. Slow rolls may be performed on I-81 in the north and southbound lanes from mile marker 98 to 109. Speed limit is reduced to 60 miles per hour in the work zone. Shoulder closures will remain in place though the duration of the project. Project completion is estimated by summer 2023.

**ROUTE 605** - There will be intermittent lane closures on Route 605 under the bridge maintained by flagging operations.

**SLOW ROLLS:** A slow roll operation may be in place daily, Monday through Friday, between mile marker 101 and 105 northbound and between mile marker 109 and 105 southbound, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Slow rolls may be utilized periodically on both the northbound and southbound lanes from mile marker 98-109 for structural steel deliveries and setting beams.

**LANE CLOSURES:** Nighttime alternating lane closures will be in place on I-81 northbound between mile markers 104-106 from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning.

**ROUTE 605:** Alternating lane closures and flagging operations will be present on Route 605, located under the New River Bridge, for work overhead on the bridge.

**I-81 PAVING OPERATIONS** - Weather permitting, crews will be performing paving operations along Interstate 81. Right and left lane closures may be in place along northbound and southbound lanes during nighttime hours, 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. Drivers should watch for moving vehicles and equipment. Expect possible delays.

**I-81 BRIDGE DECK REPAIRS** - Weather permitting, crews will repair bridge decks on Interstate 81. Between mile markers 170 to 95, right and left lane closures will be in place northbound and southbound during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

## Interstate 581

**I-581/220 EXPRESSWAY PAVING OPERATIONS** - Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place during nighttime hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

**I-581/220 LANE & RAMP CLOSURES FOR PAVING AND MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS IN ROANOKE COUNTY**- Weather permitting, crews will be milling and paving along Interstate 81. Right and left lane closures will be in place along northbound and southbound lanes during nighttime hours. Drivers should expect possible delays.

## Roanoke City

**13th STREET SE IMPROVEMENTS WITH**

**DETOUR** - A project to improve a portion of 13th Street SE in Roanoke is underway. Located in a residential neighborhood just east of downtown Roanoke, this project will improve traffic flow and connectivity along 13th Street SE from Tazewell Avenue to Norfolk Avenue. The project entails reconstructing about 0.2-mile of 13th Street as an improved, two-lane roadway with 10.5-foot-wide travel lane and a raised median. A new roadway will extend 13th Street to Norfolk Avenue and the intersection at 13th Street and Wise Avenue will be reconfigured to include a roundabout. Bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks and curb and gutter will also be added. Southbound 13th Street traffic has a detour in place using Norfolk Avenue onto 12th Street to Tazewell Avenue. This detour will be in place throughout the duration of this project. Signs will be posted to designate the detour route. Northbound 13th Street will remain open to traffic. Flaggers may be possible and the speed limit through the work zone is 25 mph. Alternating lane closures maintained by flagging operations may be in place. The project is expected to be completed in late summer 2023.

For the next week, expect periodic flagging and lane closure for pavement marking operations.

## Roanoke County

**STARKEY ROAD AND BUCK MOUNTAIN ROAD ROUNDABOUT** - A road project to construct a single-lane roundabout at the intersection of Route 904 (Starkey Road) and Route 679 (Buck Mountain Road) is underway. Drivers should be aware of a new three-way stop to be implemented in the work zone at the intersection. A flagging operation will be in place between the 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at the intersection of Starkey Road and Buck Mountain Road. The new roundabout is expected to be open to traffic sometime this summer. Once the roundabout is open, drivers should still expect lane closures with flaggers controlling traffic for final paving, additional concrete pouring and pavement marking until the project is finished. Final completion expected in late spring 2024.

**LANE CLOSURES WITH FLAGGING OPERATIONS:** Lane closure times of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resumed on Monday, July 31 to allow preparation for school to begin.

**THREE WAY STOP:** Stop signs will be in place on each road approaching the intersection. This means drivers on Buck Mountain Road who do not stop currently will be required to stop while the intersection is under construction.

**TRAFFIC SHIFTS:** In addition, drivers should also be alert to traffic shifts and changing traffic patterns while the roundabout is under construction.

**MOUNTAIN VALLEY PIPELINE** - Mountain Valley Pipeline is expected to begin full construction again by mid-July. Temporary intermittent flagging operations will be in place in the county throughout the remainder of the project (with a tentative completion date of February

2024) to load/unload equipment at crossings and construction entrances. Scheduled completion is February 2024.

**PAVING OPERATIONS** - Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place and flaggers may control traffic at times during daylight or nighttime hours. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

## Botetourt County

**DALEVILLE INTERSECTION PROJECT FOR FIELDSTONE DEVELOPMENT ACCESS** - Lane closures northbound and southbound on Route 220 in Daleville will be in place for construction of a median with crossover, a right turn lane and a new traffic signal. This work is associated with construction of the Fieldstone Development through a permit. Lane closures will be set up on various days and noise disturbances may be in place through August 2023.

**ROUTE 11 BUCHANAN BRIDGE PROJECT** - A construction project on the Route 11 Bridge in the Town of Buchanan is underway. Water Street is closed for the duration of the project. Drivers should expect delays due to a single lane closure across the bridge with a flagging operation. The jacking and bearing replacements have been completed. Contractors are now applying protective paint underneath the bridge and will replace expansion dams on the bridge deck. Message boards are present to alert and update drivers. Expected completion in late summer 2023.

**FLAGGING OPERATION** - A flagging operation will be in place on the bridge Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. until early part of August 2023. Drivers should expect delays.

**PAVING OPERATIONS** - Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place and flaggers may control traffic at times during daylight or nighttime hours. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

## Craig County

**PAVING OPERATIONS** - Weather permitting, crews will pave, patch and repair pavement on various routes. Lane closures may be in place and flaggers may control traffic at times during daylight or nighttime hours. Drivers should watch for signs and expect possible delays.

**MOUNTAIN VALLEY PIPELINE** - Mountain Valley Pipeline is expected to begin full construction again. Temporary intermittent flagging operations will be in place in the county throughout the remainder of the project (with a tentative completion date of February 2024) to load/unload equipment at crossings and construction entrances. Scheduled completion is February 2024.

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# SPORTS

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## SPECIAL KIDS TAKE THE CHALLENGE TO PLAY BASEBALL



Little League Challenger players, coaches and parents gather for a group shot prior to a day of baseball at Northside High School.



Sid Witt II and Averie Jones practice infield grounders.

The District 12 Little League Challenger program had its best year ever in terms of participants this summer. That's a good thing, but it's also a sad thing.

"We had 104 sign up," said Sid Witt II, District 12 Assistant Administrator for Challenger Little League Baseball in Virginia. "It's good to have a lot sign up, but that also means we have a lot of disabled kids."

The Challenger program is a non-profit division of Little League Baseball that provides boys and girls four years of age and older, with mental or physical disabilities, the opportunity to experience the fun of playing baseball. Craig County is part of District 12 and kids in the county qualify for the program.

"Challenger allows every child the chance to experience the rewards of being part of an athletic team while motivating and increasing emotional development, high self-esteem, confidence, and pride, regardless of their ability," said Witt.

Sid has been with the program since its inception in 1989. At the time the late Willis Walrond, who was heavily involved with Little League baseball, and Sid's dad, Sid Witt, Sr., had a meeting on the back porch to talk about the idea of starting a Challenger program here.

"It all started on dad's back porch," said Witt II. "They started talking about it and I got up to go in the house and dad said, 'stay here, I want you to be involved in this.'"

All three have since been inducted into the Salem-Roanoke Baseball Hall of Fame for their unselfish dedication to these less fortunate kids, Waldron in 1998, Witt, Sr. in 2005 and Witt II in 2014. Witt, Sr passed away two years ago but was involved with the program right up until the end. Witt II continues the tradition 34 years later. He shows up to play with the kids on hot days and rainy days, organizes banquets and fund-raisers, gives out and receives many, many hugs and is a deserving hero to special needs kids of all

ages. And his only pay is the satisfaction he gets from being a part of it.

"My dad told me you take home more than you ever bring," said Witt II. "I was called into doing this."

The District 12 Challenger team has had a good year. The program has grown from eight players in 1989 to a six team league with about 17 players per team. Recently 60 players participated in the Commonwealth Games at Liberty University in Lynchburg. They split up into four teams for a doubleheader in the "Able Games."

"They call it Able, as opposed to disabled," said Witt. "It was hotter than blue blazes but the kids had a great time. They all got a t-shirt and a big ol' medal, and the Commonwealth Games provided lunch. It didn't cost us a dime."

The next item on the agenda is the annual Challenger Benefit Golf Tournament. It will be held on September 30 at the Ashley Plantation course in Daleville. There are about 150 spots for golfers and it's also a great way to promote a business through advertising.

"The annual expense for a single Challenger baseball season for six teams is approximately twenty-five thousand dollars," said Witt. "Please know that any assistance you can provide will be greatly appreciated by all of the Challenger athletes and their families."

Cost to play is \$85 per golfer or \$340 for a team of four. It's a Captain's Choice tournament with lots of prizes and gifts. The price includes green fees, cart, range balls, lunch and beverages.

Sponsorships are also available from a \$100 "On Deck Batter" to a \$2,500 "Home Run" sponsor. The latter will get you two team entries (total 8 players), a 3x5 Company Banner, your name as a title sponsor on the tournament shirt given to all participants, four Tee or Green sponsor signs and lots of good will.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

Owen Conley crosses the plate for a run.

"All proceeds from this annual event will assist in providing registration fees, uniforms, equipment, team pictures, trophies, an awards banquet and many other benefits for the Challenger athletes in our community," said Witt. "Together we can continue to make the goals and ambitions of the Challenger athletes a reality."

To sign up for the tournament, become a sponsor or to learn more about Challenger Baseball, go to [challenger-baseball@comcast.net](mailto:challenger-baseball@comcast.net).

## ROCKETS PRACTICE FOR FALL SPORTS SEASON



Craig County athletes practice football, volleyball and cheerleading as they prepare for the fall season. The football team will open on August 25 at Bland while the volleyball will open with a tournament at Eastern Montgomery a day later.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN