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THE NEW CASTLE RECORD

IGA EXPRESS

WE SELL KEROSENE

Girl Scouts in Craig kickoff 2024 with cookie sales

Pam Dudding
Contributing writer

There are not too many people who have not tried a box of Girl Scout cookies in their lifetime. For many, they look forward to the annual sales to order their favorite or favorites. "Yes, our Girl Scout Troop 793 has officially launched their annual cookie season, and they are ready to satisfy the sweet tooth of the community," shared co-leads Shelby Crotts and Angie Spence as they take on year two of the cookie season. "With their uniforms and badges proudly displayed, the young members of Troop 793 are eager to embark on this time-honored tradition," Crotts shared. "These dedicated girls, ranging

in age from 6 to 12, have been preparing for this moment for months, learning valuable skills such as goal setting, money management, and teamwork." Under the guidance of their troop leaders, Troop 793 has set ambitious goals for this year's cookie season at 3,000 cookies, hoping that many will contact them and purchase. In fact, their first cookie booth sale was at the Farmers Market on Saturday, Jan. 13 and they are hoping to have more. Their primary objective is to raise funds to support various community service projects and educational activities. From organizing food drives to volunteering at local shelters, these young scouts are determined to make a positive impact

on their community. The troop offers a delectable selection of cookies, including all-time favorites such as Thin Mints, Samoas, and Tagalongs as well as the newly fav Adventurefuls, Oatmeal Sandwich, Lemon-Ups, S'mores, Trefoils and Toffee-tastics. "Each box of cookies sold not only satisfies the taste buds but also contributes to the personal growth and development of these young girls!" Crotts exclaimed. This year the price stayed at \$6 per box. "In addition to the traditional door-to-door sales, Troop 793 has embraced technology to reach a wider audience. They have set up an online ordering system, allowing customers to

See cookies, page 3



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Girl Scout cookies are now for sale. For more information about Troop 793 and their cookie season, visit their website at girlscouts.org.

Craig County representatives in Richmond for 2024

Robert Freis
 robert@mountainmedianews.com

Craig County's representatives are among 140 legislators currently meeting in Richmond for the 2024 General Assembly session. The legislature convened at the State Capitol on Jan. 14 and is scheduled for a 60-day session. It is the oldest continuous law-making body in the Western Hemisphere, having begun in 1619 as the House of Burgesses. It met in Jamestown from 1619 until 1699, when it first moved to the College of William & Mary near Williamsburg, Virginia, and from 1705 met in the colonial Capitol building. It became the General Assembly in 1776 with the ratification of the Virginia Constitution. The government was

moved to Richmond in 1780 during the administration of Gov. Thomas Jefferson. Del. Tery Austin represents Craig County in the state House of Delegates. Austin, a Republican from Bptetourt County, was elected in November to represent House District 37, which includes all of Craig County, Botetourt County and Alleghany County, part of Rockbridge county and all of the cities of Buena Vista, Covington and Lexington. Austin, 68, is a former Botetourt County Board of Supervisors member and has served in the 100-member House of Delegates since 2014. He is the president and CEO of Austin Electric Co. In Richmond he serves on the Appropriations, Transportation, and Rules committees.

Sen. Chris Head is Craig County's representative in the 40-member Virginia Senate. Head, a Republican, is in his first term in the Senate, having previously served in the House of Delegates. He was elected in November to the new District 3 created by redistricting. District 3 includes Craig County in addition to Alleghany, Botetourt and Rockbridge counties, part of Augusta and Roanoke counties, and the entire cities of Buena Vista, Lexington, Covington, Staunton and Waynesboro. Head, 60, owns a senior care business and served in the state House since 2012. In Richmond he has been assigned to the Education and Health, General Laws and Technology, and Rehabilitation and Social Services committees.

Constituents can reach Del. Austin in Richmond via email at DelTAustin@house.virginia.gov or by calling his office at (804) 698-1037. He also has a Facebook page and an account at <https://twitter.com/TerryAustin4HOD>. Sen. Head can be emailed at senatorhead@senatevirginia.gov or by calling his office at (804) 698-7503. He has a Facebook page. The 2024 General Assembly is characterized by narrow Democratic Party majorities, 51-49 in the House and 21-19 in the Senate. However, Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin is a Republican. Also unique to the current legislature is that Del. Don Scott, a Democrat from

See Craig, page 2

DAR gives out its Good Citizens Award



COURTESY PHOTO

Karly Potter received her certificate from Tina Crawford, chapter regent.

Karly Potter has been named the 2023 Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizens Award recipient for Craig County High School. Craig Valley Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution has sponsored this award to a deserving high school senior every year since 2010. The DAR Good Citizens Award is given to students who exemplify the qualities of dependability, service, leadership, and patriotism. Only one senior from high schools all over the country are recognized as Good Citizens annually based on rules of the National Society, DAR. Karly was enthusiastically nominated by her school faculty and administration. Her activities and awards include three years on Varsity Volleyball and Softball; 2022 Junior Class President; 2023 Senior Class President; 2022 Second Tea All District Pitcher

(softball) and 2023 Honorable Mention (softball). In 2022 she was crowned Snow Queen for the Craig County High School Snow Court fundraiser, raising \$488 for the cause. Karly is currently enrolled in the Technical Education Program for Nurse Aide II, which upon completion will allow her to graduate with her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credential. She plans to attend Virginia Western Community College and major in nursing and minor in child psychology to earn the Associate of Applied Science in Nursing (RN) degree. She hopes to continue to a four-year school to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing and ultimately work in the labor and delivery department of an

See DAR, page 2

Vaccinations readily available as COVID-19 persists

Robert Freis
 robert@mountainmedianews.com

More than four years into the epidemic, The COVID-19 virus and its many variants continue to be a threat to the health of Craig County residents. Many people know those who have recently caught the virus, some for the first time, others for the second. While COVID-19 has become less lethal, it

continues to affect individuals differently and unpredictably. The Virginia Department of Health has statistics that show in mid-January about 35,000 people were admitted to state hospitals due to COVID-19. The state also reports that only 5.9% of Craig County residents who are eligible have received the latest COVID-19 vaccinations. This is despite the ready availability

of vaccines, which are administered free of charge to Medicaid and Medicare patients. The Craig County Health Department is the local public vaccine dispensary. It is located at 161 Main Street in New Castle, with weekday hours of operation from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For people with private health insurance

See COVID, page 2

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OBITUARIES

DAR page 1

Carper, Steven Allen Jr.

Steven Allen Carper, Jr., 63 of New Castle, went to be with the Lord on January 19, 2024, at his home. He is preceded in death by his son, Jesse Allen Carper; mother, Edith Dawn Carper; grandparents, Roy & Bea Carper and Lawrence & Beatrice Bostic.

He is survived by his loving wife Donna Mills Carper; father, Steve Carper, Sr.; brother, Robert "Bob" Carper (Michelle); sisters, Melissa Wrenn (Timmy) and Carolyn Harless (Joseph); many special nieces and nephews; special daughter, Brianna Herman; and special grandchild, Ripp Peters.

He retired from Roanoke County after over 30 years of service. Steve was the owner of Dominion Electrical Service, where he met many loyal customers.

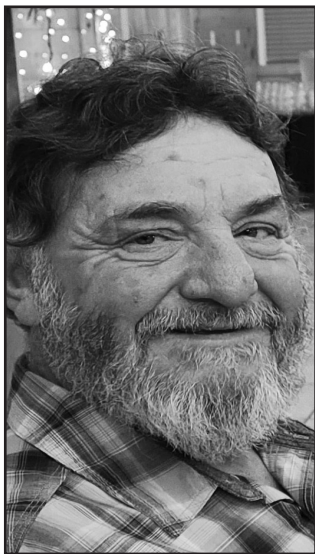
He loved bear hunting, farming and bluegrass music. He was in many bands

over the years, including the Locust Mtn. Boys.

The family wants to thank Carilion Hospice, especially Megan. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to New Castle Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad. The family would also like to thank all the family and friends for helping us with the farm and dogs.

Funeral Services will be held 3:00 PM Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at Paitsel Funeral Home with Pastor Raymond Christian officiating. Interment will follow at Huffman Memorial Park. The family will receive friends Monday, January 22, 2024 at Paitsel Funeral Home 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

Arrangements by Paitsel Funeral Home. www.paitselfh.com



Karly Potter

COURTESY PHOTO

accredited medical facility.

Karly currently works part time at Market Street Pharmacy and the Swinging Bridge Restaurant in Paint Bank. Those who know her well consistently describe her as kind, with an outstanding work ethic and always generous and helpful. For these reasons and more, the Craig Valley Chapter said it is delighted to name Karly Potter its 2023 DAR Good Citizens Award recipient. In addition to a pin and monetary award, she has earned the privilege of wearing the DAR Good Citizens red/white/blue cord at her high school graduation next May.

-Submitted by Craig Valley Chapter, NSDAR

Craig page 1

Portsmouth who is Winsome Earle-Sears, African American, an African American and serves as House Republican, is presiding speaker, the first Black Virginian to do so. Additionally, Lt. Gov.

COVID page 1

or employer-sponsored health insurance: because vaccines are considered a preventive health service, most people will continue to pay nothing out-of-pocket for COVID-19 vaccines. People must go to a pharmacy or medical provider that is "in-network" with their insurance in order to receive the vaccine at no cost. Additionally, households can order as many as 8 free COVID-19 test kits from the website COVIDtests.gov.

Upcoming meetings are scheduled in Craig County

Jan. 25

The Department of Social Services Board will meet at 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 1

The Craig County Board of Supervisors will meet at the Craig County Courthouse on Court Street in New Castle from 6-7 p.m.

Feb. 12

The Library Board of Trustees will meet at the Craig County Library on Main Street in New Castle from 6-7 p.m.

Feb. 19

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.

Feb. 20

Rep. Morgan Griffith will hold a citizen comment period from 9-10:30 a.m. in the courthouse breakroom.

The Craig County Planning Commission will meet at 7 p.m. in the Administration Building on Court Street in New Castle.

Feb. 21

A CPMT meeting at CPMT – Department of Social Services on

Court Street in New Castle will be at 1 p.m.

Feb. 22

The Department of Social Services Board will meet from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Court Street in New Castle.

Ongoing

Feeding southwest Virginia will be offering food twice a month on the second and third Wednesday of the month from 3-5 p.m. and 4-5 p.m., respectively. All community members are welcome to purchase fresh produce and other canned and boxed items. EBT recipients receive 50% off their fruits and vegetables.

Booster Club of Craig Schools meet on the third Monday of each month in the school cafeteria at 6 p.m. Community members are encouraged to attend and to join to support the kids of Craig County as they need the participation of more people.

- The New Castle Record

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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42						43

CLUES ACROSS

1. Tax collector

4. Fishes without the line touching water

8. Brooklyn hoopsters

10. Actress Lathan

11. A metric for athletes

12. Food storage location

13. Colossus

15. Desolations

16. Accustom to something unpleasant

17. ___ Kubrick, filmmaker

18. You might ask this at Thanksgiving

21. Arkansas city

22. Gave food to

23. Request

24. V-shaped open trough

25. Make lively

26. It accompanies feather

27. Blonde bombshell

34. One who revolves

35. Bluish greens

36. Charity

37. Having the shape of a cube

38. Unwind

39. Believed by some to be the supreme being

40. Checks or guides

41. Leak slowly through

42. Top-quality

43. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

1. Part of your foot

2. It's at the back of the eyeball

3. Where things stand together

5. Contains pollen

6. Boisterous get-together

7. Asserts out loud

9. They're in the sky

10. Canonized

12. A politician's official stances

14. It can catch fish

15. British thermal unit

17. Helps little firms

19. Where patients go for treatment

20. Large red deer

23. Pokes holes in

24. "Star Wars" hero Solo

25. One in a hospital

26. Scandinavian god of battle

27. Famous cat

28. ___ Angeles: City of Angels

29. Type of drug (abbr.)

30. City along the Rhine

31. Animal disease

32. Martini ingredients

33. Get away

34. Rare species of rodent

36. Suppress

Be sure to 'Like' the New Castle Record on Facebook.

Recipe of the Week



Shelly Koon
Contributing Writer

related dehydration. Refined sugar and junk food -a little won't hurt, but you really need nourishing foods to help you recover. Coffee and Sodas contain caffeine, sugar, and the carbonation in them can make your stomach hurt. Fried or fatty foods take longer to move through the digestive system and can make nausea worse and trigger acid reflux.

Hydration is important in feeling your best daily and when you are sick it is even more important. Your body requires extra fluids when you are sick so drink plenty. To help with this, I have a pitcher of lemonade on hand to refill my cup all day. I use a powdered mix with coconut water. Coconut water is a great source of both water and naturally occurring electrolytes. It is also neutral-tasting and gentle on the stomach. Also, flavored gelatin has long been associated with hospital food and liquid diets. I use Gatorade G2, the low sugar variety or coconut water to make gelatin. An hour or two before you're ready to make your gelatin, pop a bottle of either liquid in the freezer. You don't want it frozen, but well-chilled. Slightly slushy is even better. Boil the water and mix in the gelatin powder as usual. Then instead of adding cold water, add in the same amount of cold liquid. Chill gelatin as directed. G2's flavors are light, making them gentle on upset stomachs, so they don't change the flavor much. I have mixed fruit punch with cherry gelatin and can barely tell a difference.

It can be tempting to skip out on eating sufficient calories and healthy calories when you are sick. Cold symptoms can be miserable, prompting you to forgo food or reach



COURTESY PHOTO

for comfort foods instead. Growing up my mom used the BRAT diet, Bananas, rice, applesauce, and toast, when I was sick. This diet is no longer recommended since it is such a restricted diet. Because BRAT diet foods are low in fiber, protein, and fat, the diet lacks enough nutrition to help a person's gastrointestinal tract recover. The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends that kids resume eating a normal, well-balanced diet appropriate for their age within 24 hours of getting sick. So, a bowl of warm soup is a good option.

Feel better soup
Ingredients:
1 (32 oz) box of low-sodium chicken broth
½ cup whole wheat couscous (dry, uncooked)

2 eggs
⅔ cup finely grated parmesan cheese
Optional: chives
Optional: a pinch of salt

Instructions:
In a medium pot, bring the chicken broth to a boil. Add the couscous (and the pinch of salt if using) and cook until very, very soft. While the couscous is cooking, in a small bowl, beat together the eggs and cheese with a fork. Once the couscous is fully cooked, turn the burner off and stir in the egg/cheese mixture one forkful at a time until all the mixture has been added. Add in some snipped chives and serve.

Cookies page 1

conveniently purchase their favorite cookies with just a few clicks. This innovative approach has proven to be a game-changer, enabling the troop to expand their customer base and increase their sales," Crofts explained.

She added, "The cookie season is not just about selling cookies; it is also an opportunity for the scouts to learn essential life skills. Through interacting with customers, Troop 793 members develop confidence, communication skills, and a sense of responsibility. These experiences will undoubtedly shape their future and empower them to become leaders in their communities."

As always in Craig County, Troop 793 is supported by a dedicated group of parents and volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure the success of the cookie season. From coordinating logistics to providing transportation, these individuals play a crucial role in making this annual event possible.

As the cookie season kicks into high

gear, Troop 793 invites the community to support their efforts. Whether it's purchasing a box of cookies or donating, every contribution goes a long way in empowering these young girls and helping them achieve their goals. "So, the next time you see a group of enthusiastic Girl Scouts in their uniforms, don't forget to indulge in a box (or two... or three) of their delicious cookies. By doing so, you are not only satisfying your cravings but also supporting the growth and development of the future leaders of our community," said Crofts.

For more information about Troop 793 and their cookie season, visit their website at girlscouts.org.

For January, they will meet at the Craig Valley Baptist Church the second Friday of the month, 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Contact Angie Spence or Shelby Crofts on Facebook for information. Cookie sales end March 16.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Girl Scout Troop 793 meets at the Craig Valley Baptist Church, the second Friday from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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THE NEW CASTLE RECORD

The New Castle Record is looking for a new freelance writer to cover stories in Craig County. We're looking for someone who is interested in covering government meetings, community events, and human interest stories. **No experience is required.**

Please email the editor, Aila Boyd, at aboyn@mainstreetnewspapers.com.

God's House Is Always Open

BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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.

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.

FIRST BAPTIST
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.

GRACE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
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) & 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

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
Pastor Chanmi Lee, 347-684-2607, Rt. 606, 1981 Caldwell Mt. Rd., New Castle, 540- 400-3419. Worship 11:15AM.

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, 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.

NEW CASTLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH "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.

NEW CANTERBURY PENTECOSTAL FELLOWSHIP
Pastor John D. Abbott, Hwy 621 (10 miles), phone: 540-580-5837, Sunday Prayer 10:00-10:30 a.m.; Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday Service 6:00 pm.

PAXTON CHAPEL
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.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
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.

NEW CASTLE UNITED METHODIST
Rev. San Kang, 364 Main St., New Castle, Va. Sunday School 10AM, Worship 11AM; UMW 3rd Wednesday@1PM, Youth and other programs, Bible Studies.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
99 2nd Street, New Castle. Tel: 540-473-3691. Email: StJohnnewcastle@gmail.com. Mass is on Sunday at 11:15 AM.

CRAIG COUNTY COMMUNITY CHURCH - "WELCOME HOME!"
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.

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

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

OPINION

News from the 9th: Update on the border



Morgan Griffith
Representative

Nearly one year ago, myself and other members of the Energy and Commerce (E&C) Committee's Oversight Subcommittee and Health Subcommittee traveled to McAllen, Texas, to hold a joint field hearing, which I chaired, on the state of our southern border. We heard from witnesses who had real-life experience dealing with the consequences of the Biden Administration's poor border policies. A year on (and three years since the start of the Biden Administration) not much has

changed. In fact, things have only gotten worse. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported an astounding 2.47 million encounters at the southwest border for fiscal year (FY) 2023. In comparison, CBP reported roughly 450,000 encounters for FY 2020. Incredibly, November 2023 (the latest month for which we have data) has been reported as the worst November on record, according to CBP, with 242,418 encounters at the southwest border alone. Further, the Biden Administration's border policies are so inadequate, based on information from the CBP, we are even having issues now with our northern border. Encounters there by the CBP have increased by 160% since November 2021.

I recently held a hearing in the Oversight Subcommittee of the E&C Committee to reexamine the health, safety, and educational effects of the border crisis. Fentanyl continues to flood over our southern border, causing tens of thousands of deaths every year. On one day alone, border patrol seized 304 pounds of fentanyl in between ports of entry at our southern border. We've seen a rise in child labor trafficking, due in large part to the exploitation of unaccompanied minors in our country. I have long called for reforms in how unaccompanied minors are looked after by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), especially after the New York Times reported that 85,000

children went missing in HHS' care. Our nation's schools are also experiencing challenges. Many schools are facing strained resources as cities struggle to meet the educational needs of the illegal immigrants entering our country, on top of our nation's own children. Recently, in New York City, students at one school were told they had to learn remotely, like they did during COVID, because officials moved illegal immigrants into the school due to inclement weather. Why should our children be negatively affected by poor Biden border policies? Some Members of Congress recently visited a hospital in Eagle Pass, Texas, which is currently providing care for illegal immigrants. According to one of my colleagues,

they learned that out of that particular hospital's five ambulances, one ambulance is solely dedicated to transporting illegal immigrants from the border. Additionally, at the hospital, illegal immigrants are prioritized over American citizens due to acuity concerns. Another hospital in Denver, Colorado, reported that they have not been compensated for \$136 million in care due in part to 8,000 illegal immigrants in the city making 20,000 visits to the health system in 2023. And still, the Administration does all it can to shift the blame away from their failed policies. "Border Tsar" Kamala Harris recently did an interview in which she blamed Republicans for the border crisis, stating that since it's an election year Republicans are weaponizing

See **The Ninth**, page 5

Sen. Christ Head offers legislative update from Richmond



Christ Head
District 3

The General Assembly session is now at full steam. Committees are considering long dockets of legislation submitted by the Senators and bills are beginning to come to the floor for consideration by the full Senate. **CRACKING DOWN ON FENTANYL DEATHS** As part of our effort to keep Virginians safer, my Republican colleagues in the Senate and I want to crack down on illegal

sale of fentanyl and other dangerous drugs that often lead to deaths from overdoses. These deaths are tragic and the heartbreak and grief families and loved ones go through is indescribable. They also add to the burdens placed on first responders and health care services. It is so important that we do everything we can to prevent these deaths and hold accountable those who played a role in these tragedies. Republicans supported legislation (SB 52) to crack down on those who play a role in deaths due to dangerous illegal drugs. Under the Republican bill, an individual illegally providing drugs that are responsible for the death

of the user could be charged with second degree murder—even if no money was involved. My Republican colleagues and I think it is just common sense that with the number of deaths due to substances like fentanyl increasing, it is time to hold the people who provide these drugs that result in death accountable for their actions. Most Democrats on the Courts of Justice committee refused to support this common-sense measure and the bill died on a 8-7 vote. **RETURNING CONTROL OVER AUTO EMISSIONS TO VIRGINIA** A few years ago, Democrats passed a law requiring that Virginia's rules related to auto

emissions and electric vehicle mandates mirror those set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). This means that California bureaucrats—who work and live 2,500 miles from here, and are not even elected by Californians, never mind Virginians—are setting rules Virginians are forced to live by whether they are right for us or not. Because of this, Virginians are on course to phase out sales of gasoline-powered vehicles by 2035--the same schedule California has set for itself. Whatever CARB decides for California automatically becomes law in Virginia. It doesn't matter that companies like Ford are cutting electric

vehicle production because sales are below expectations. It doesn't matter that battery life is lousy in cold weather here. It doesn't matter that it will cost billions to upgrade the electric grid to give us the capacity to charge all these cars. Because of the bill passed by the Democrats a few years back, Californians make our rules, not Virginians. My Republican colleagues and I want to change that. A bill (SB 3) was put forward to return control over these rules to Virginia, co-sponsored by every Republican in the State Senate. Even with all that support, Democrats used their majority on the Agriculture,

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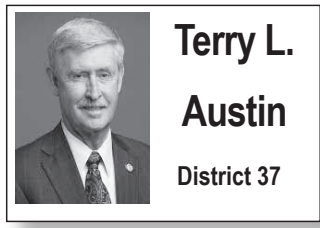
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The New Castle Record encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. 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.

Del. Terry Austin offers legislative update from Richmond



Terry L. Austin
District 37

The first full week of the 2024 General Assembly session has concluded. More than 1,500 bills have been introduced in the House, and the process of hearing them in committee and subcommittee has begun in earnest. Public safety, constitutional rights, and transportation infrastructure policy were the themes of the week. Republicans have introduced legislation that will begin the process of holding fentanyl dealers accountable for the lives they take with this poison. On average, five Virginians a day die from a fentanyl overdose. Under our legislation, anyone who gives or sells a lethal dose of fentanyl is liable for murder. Unfortunately, the Senate has

already voted down one version of this legislation. Firearms are also at the forefront, as Democrats have introduced a raft of legislation about guns. One example requires Virginians to obtain a license from the State Police before they can legally purchase a firearm of any kind. It is important to remember that the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Bruen* significantly restricts the limits that can be placed on our Second Amendment rights. It is my understanding that most, if not all, the bills proposed are unconstitutional, and I will not vote for them. Republicans are also working to end the mandate tying Virginia to California's emission standards and requiring that all new cars sold be electric vehicles by 2035. This policy is unrealistic, and industry experts have stated that it is impossible to implement. The technology requires long charging times, works poorly - or not at all - in the cold, and is more expensive than gas powered vehicles. The dearth of charging stations and transmission line capacity further exacerbates the

problem. Republicans will continue to point out these flaws. As for my bills, I am carrying three that promote the VA250 Commission, of which I am Chair. Virginia is the birthplace of our nation, and the VA250 Commission is responsible for implementing and promoting Virginia's leadership role in the founding of our nation and the celebration of its 250th birthday in 2026. It is a privilege to serve as Chair and I look forward to leading the Commission's efforts to acknowledge and honor our shared history and progress. In today's world, it is vital that we ensure our future generations understand how we developed as a country and why it should not be taken for granted. The first bill, HB839 makes technical changes in line with previous statewide commemorations. The second, HB840 creates a revenue sharing license plate celebrating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. The third bill is a Joint

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God's House Is Always Open

<p>BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 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>CHESTNUT GROVE CHURCH Duane Wente, Minister, Rt. 42, New Castle, 540-864-5692. Sunday: Worship 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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!</p> <p>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</p> <p>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.</p> <p>CROSSROADS CHURCH 21892 Craigs Creek Road, New Castle. Pastor Gary Burch. 864-7520. Sunday School- 10-10:45AM, Sunday Worship - 11AM-Noon.</p> <p>FIRST BAPTIST 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</p>	<p>7:00PM, Reformers Unanimous Addiction Recovery every Friday evening at 7PM.</p> <p>GRACE ASSEMBLY OF GOD 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) & 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>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.</p> <p>HEBRON UNITED METHODIST Pastor Chanmi Lee, 347-684-2607, Rt. 606, 1981 Caldwell Mt. Rd., New Castle, 540-400-3419. Worship 11:15AM.</p> <p>LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST Rev. Lee Looney, Rt. 311 N., New Castle, 540-525-7662. Sunday: Sunday School 10AM, 11AM, & 6PM. Wednesday Bible Study 7PM.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST Pastor Lee Looney, Rt. 311 N., New Castle, 540-525-7662. Sunday: Sunday School 10AM, 11AM, & 6PM. Wednesday Bible Study 7PM.</p> <p>MOUNTAIN VIEW CHRISTIAN 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>NEW CASTLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH "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>NEW CANTERBURY PENTECOSTAL FELLOWSHIP Pastor John D. Abbott, Hwy 621 (10 miles), phone: 540-580-5837, Sunday Prayer 10:00-10:30 a.m.; Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday Service 6:00 pm.</p> <p>PAXTON CHAPEL 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>THE CHURCH OF CHRIST 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>NEW CASTLE UNITED METHODIST 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>ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH 99 2nd Street, New Castle. Tel: 540-473-3691. Email: StJohnnewcastle@gmail.com. Mass is on Sunday at 11:15 AM.</p> <p>CRAIG COUNTY COMMUNITY CHURCH - 'WELCOME HOME!' 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>ST. THOMAS ANGLICAN CHURCH Located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit www.sttofc.org for midweek masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).</p>
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If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445 or email wendi@mainstreetnewspapers.com

The Ninth, page 4

the border situation. Meanwhile it is House Republicans who have passed a comprehensive border bill, which Democrats in the Senate refuse to take up.

Additionally, Republicans here in the House have begun impeachment proceedings against Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, for his inaction over the

border crisis.

Need we remind the Biden Administration that we did not have this historic flood of illegal immigrants during the Trump Administration. Remember there were 450,000 encounters at the southwest border for FY 2020 vs. 2.47 million for FY 2023. That is nearly a 450% increase at the southwest border.

Americans are fed up. Unfortunately, it seems that no matter how bad things get, nothing can get the Biden Administration to act with regard to the border.

Radford testimony

As a side note, Radford University student Meredith Page recently testified before the Innovation, Data, and Commerce Subcommittee of

the E&C Committee at a hearing about protecting student athletes' dealmaking rights. She is on the NCAA's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and did a great job testifying. I was glad to be able to ask her a few questions about college athletics, the importance of protecting athletes, and her excellent experience at Radford University.

Head, page 4

Conservation and Natural Resources Committee to kill the bill. Sadly, that leaves Californians in charge of telling Virginia what our auto emission standards should be.

KEEP AN EYE ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As always, I want to encourage you to watch the General Assembly session. Of course, you are always welcome to visit us in person in Richmond and view the proceedings from the gallery. Session typically begins at noon each weekday, although that time can vary based on the workload.

LEGISLATION

Two of my bills (SB 133 and SB 154) successfully reported out of the Senate Committee on Education and Health this week—both unanimously—and are currently on the Senate Floor with their Second Reading on Monday.

SB 133 allows physician

assistants employed by a hospital or employed in certain facilities operated by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services or in Federally Qualified Health Centers designated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to practice without a separate practice agreement if the credentialing and privileging requirements of the applicable facility include a practice arrangement, as described in the bill.

SB 154 amends the list of documents that may be submitted to the Advance Health Care Directive Registry to include any other document that supports advance health care planning. The bill also changes the name of the Advance Health Care Directive Registry to the Advance Health Care Planning Registry. The bill directs the Department of Health to amend certain Advance Health Care Planning Registry regulations.

B U D G E T AMENDMENTS

On Thursday, each senator had the opportunity to highlight several of their budget amendments before the Senate Committee on Finance & Appropriations. Some of the budget amendments I have filed this year include measures to:

Help complete the replacement of the existing Roanoke County Career and Technical Education (CTE) facility built in 1964. This enhancement to the planned Roanoke County CTE facility will have the potential to serve students beyond Roanoke County, including the City of Salem and Botetourt County.

Establish the Virginia Health Care Career & Technical Training and Education Fund to support health and health science training and education to public high school students.

Assist the Craig County-New Castle Public Service

Authority (PSA) in refurbishing their existing water tower and constructing a second water tower.

Help construct and equip Goodwill Industries of the Valley's Excel Center.

Help construct the Waynesboro Campus of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

Establish the Virginia Museum of Transportation as a state agency.

Increase agency-directed personal care, respite, and companion services rates based on the Burns & Associates Rates Model developed for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services in 2021. It will provide funds for competitive wages, address wage compression created by minimum wage increases, and address rising costs for personal care providers employed by agencies.

Allow eligible Virginia cadets of the Virginia Women's

Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University to access the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant directly and clarifies that funds may be used for both financial incentives to students and programmatic and financial administration.

CONSTITUENT VISITS

The office has been abuzz this week with visitors! Thank you to the many constituents and advocates who have stopped by (both in person and virtually) to talk about a range of issues including economic and workforce development, the 2nd Amendment, healthcare, and education—just to name a few! If you are in Richmond during session, please come by and see us in Room 619 in the General Assembly Building.

As we continue into Week 3 on Monday, please let me know where you stand on legislation impacting you. You can email my office at senatorhead@senate.virginia.gov or call us at (804) 698-7503.

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Resolution encouraging public institutions of higher education to display the VA250 logo on men's and women's athletic uniforms. College sports are a major part of our culture and there few better opportunities to promote positive discussion of our nation's founding than through these venues.

To that point, the popularity of college athletics and the revenue generated for institutions and ancillary business has grown to the point that there is broad agreement in the nation that student athletes should have the opportunity to share in the economic success. As of 2022, Virginia allows student athletes to benefit from their Name, Image, and Likeness, otherwise known as "NIL". But in the year since, states like Missouri have passed laws to give more flexibility for NIL opportunities, leaving

Virginia's athletic programs at a significant disadvantage when it comes to recruiting

in-state and out-of-state students. HB1505 seeks to level the playing field by preventing athletic organizations from limiting how

Virginia's institutions can choose to support their athletic programs.

As former Chairman of Transportation I am also carrying bills that expand transportation options for K-12 students, conform

Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL) to federal regulations, enhance the ability to expand rail capacity, and streamline processes for auto franchise dealers and the abandoned vehicle industry. HB842 expands the availability of alternative public school transportation options for

localities that choose to do so. The bill allows vehicles other than school buses to be used for transporting students to and from school to CTE centers, governor schools, and extracurricular activities.

All while maintaining safety standards. Doing so will create economic efficiencies for school systems, especially those in rural areas with logistically challenging bus routes. Expanding transportation options will decrease barriers for students and address the chronic bus driver shortage we continue to experience.

HB844 places into State Code federal regulations related to drug violations and CDL training. Failure to conform State Code would result in lost federal funding for the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP)

Grant Program. This federal program provides financial assistance to states to reduce the number and severity of crashes and hazardous materials incidents involving commercial motor vehicles. HB1452 provides an exemption to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority in the Uniform Statewide Building

Code (USBC) related to the construction and maintenance of bridges and tunnels. This exemption is currently granted to VDOT and acknowledges that the USBC is not the most efficient tool by which to determine safety of these assets as they are constructed and maintained.

The upshot is shorter construction timelines without sacrificing safety protocols. Rail is crucial to taking vehicular traffic off our roads and this bill will help enable this effort.

Two of my bills seek to streamline economic processes related to auto franchise sales and transactions concerning abandoned vehicles. Many auto franchise operations are family-owned businesses spanning multiple generations. Currently, franchise sales must be approved by the manufacturer and these approvals have not been occurring in a reasonably

timely manner, causing friction in the market between buyers and sellers. HB191 aims to streamline this sale process, creating objective measures for approval and establishing a 60-day timeline for which approval can be granted. HB845 creates efficiencies for the abandoned vehicle purchase process. Currently, DMV must contact other jurisdictions to obtain lienholder and owner information for abandoned vehicles. This process often takes up to six months. This bill allows for third-party databases to be used, significantly reducing purchase times and costs for the salvage industry.

It is an honor to serve you in the Virginia House of Delegates. If I can be of assistance to you, or you would like to share your position on legislation, please do not hesitate to contact me at DelTAustin@House.Virginia.gov or 804-698-1037.

VDOT Roadwatch

Interstate 81

SOIL TEST BORING ON I-81 IN ROANOKE COUNTY - SEQ Drilling will be performing soil test boring within the median of I-81 near mile marker 143.2 in Roanoke County on Tuesday, January 23 and Wednesday, January 24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There are no direct impacts to traffic for this project such as lane or shoulder closures, but traffic may be delayed due to location and onlookers.

INTERSTATE 81 LANE WIDENING CONSTRUCTION PROJECT EXIT 137 TO EXIT 141 - The \$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 underway. Work is being performed along a five-mile section of both northbound and southbound Interstate 81 in Roanoke County and the city of Salem. Barrier wall is in place along the shoulders. Two lanes of I-81 traffic in each direction are expected to 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 traffic impacts in this area on northbound and southbound I-81:

ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC IMPACTS:

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

TRAFFIC SHIFTS ON WILDWOOD ROAD: Expect a work zone with traffic shifts and narrow width on Wildwood road after exiting I-81 southbound on exit 137 heading towards Salem. Southbound and northbound I-81 exit and entrance ramp narrows are possible at Route 311.

TRAFFIC SHIFT ON EXIT 140: Drivers may experience a periodic quick merge into traffic onto the Thompson Memorial Drive from the southbound exit ramp of exit 140. Work zone located at bottom of the ramp for work on the

I-81 bridge at the underpass.

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. Expected completion in early 2026.

I-81 NB & SB BRIDGE REHAB OVER ROUTE 100 AT EXIT 98 - Beginning late March 2024, work will begin on I-81 rehabbing the northbound and southbound bridges over Route 100 at Exit 98. Lane and shoulder may be in place on Route 100 north and on I-81 northbound and southbound, 8 p.m. - 6 a.m. Flagging operations may also be in place on Route 100 north for up to eight-minute slow rolls. Both northbound and southbound on and off ramps at exit 98 for I-81 traffic will remain fully operational for the duration of this project. Estimated completion date is summer 2024.

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. 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 for Summer 2024.

LANE CLOSURES: Beginning December 10, nighttime alternating lane closures are possible 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 may be present on Route 605, located under the New River Bridge, for paving operations and work overhead on the bridge.

SLOW ROLLS: A slow roll operation will be in place on Monday, January 22 and Tuesday, January 23 on I-81 northbound from mile marker 104

and 106 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 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.

I-81 BRIDGE DECK REPAIRS - Weather permitting, crews will repair bridge decks on Interstate 81. Between mile markers 170 to 89, 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.

LANE CLOSURES WITH FLAGGING OPERATIONS: Lane closure times of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. have resumed due to school now being in session.

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SPORTS

Send story ideas & announcements to bhoffman@ourvalley.org

Rockets snowed out of last week's basketball games

Last week's snowstorm wiped out the Craig County High School basketball schedule, as all games last week were postponed or cancelled. The Rockets are hoping to get their games in this week with better weather predicted.

The Craig girls were scheduled to play at Narrows on Monday of this week with the boys hosting the Green Wave on Tuesday. Then, on Friday, the boys are at Bath County and the girls are at home

against Eastern Montgomery.

Next Monday, January 29, the Craig girls will be at East Mont for a 6 pm "varsity only" game, and next Tuesday the boys will host the Mustangs for a jayvee-varsity doubleheader in New Castle. The Rockets will begin February with the boys at Parry McCluer and the girls hosting the Blues on Thursday, February 1.

All this, of course, is "weather permitting."



Jaycob Wolfe passes the ball up the floor.

BRIAN HOFFMAN AND CHELSEA LOUDEN PHOTOS



Matthew Lucas is open for a shot.



Logan Reynolds shoots a three in a recent game.



Jenna Boitnotte of the Rockets drives the baseline.

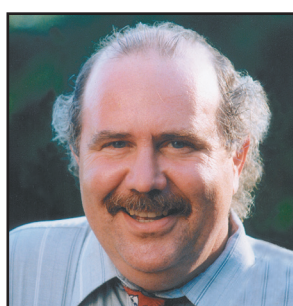


Madison Underwood dribbles the ball for the Rockets.



Ashley Cayton brings the ball up the floor.

Rose to appear at Harvester Performance Center



Brian Hoffman
bhoffman@ourvalley.com

A couple weeks ago my wife and I were at the Harvester Performance Center in Rocky Mount to hear my daughter-in-law's band, Rachael Hester and the Tennessee Walkers. I'd been there several times before, and always to hear music. It's a great place to watch a show, very comfortable and the acoustics are great.

So, I was somewhat surprised to see that Pete Rose was going to be there on Friday, February 23. My first thought was, what kind of band does he have? Pete is 82 years old, two years old than Mick Jagger, and I never heard Pete sing before.

Well, rest assured he won't be singing. He certainly didn't "sing" for Bart Giamatti when he was investigated for gambling on baseball, using the word "sing" in a mafia kind of way. With that said, what will Pete be doing in Franklin County in February?

Apparently he's going to sit in a comfortable chair and talk about baseball, and I'm sure he has some interesting stories to tell. There will be a moderator named Brittany Morgan, who is described as a Northern Virginia native who has spent her professional career either at the ballpark or as a sports anchor on TV. The bio says she spent the 2017 and 2018 seasons in the entertainment department for the Washington Nationals.

This could be interesting if you care what Pete Rose has to say, and you believe him. I'm old enough to remember Pete as a rookie player for the Reds in the early '60s, and he was the first baseman for my favorite team, the Phillies, when they won the World Series in 1980. My feeling is they wouldn't have won it without him, because he was a great player and a great leader. . . .but he's also somewhat of a rascal and that could be entertaining if you're a baseball fan old enough to remember Pete's hey day.

I watch just about every Phillies game during the summer, and there was one occasion in 2022 when Pete was at the ballpark for a reunion of the 1980 team and they had him join in on the telecast. It turned out to be somewhat controversial as

he made a couple off color comments about women and said he knew Phillies analyst John Kruk when he still had two testicles. That caused the station to issue an apology, and one of the writers covering the Phillies noted that Pete "doesn't have a filter."

Rose has always been an interesting character. From his early days as "Charlie Hustle," running to first base on a walk and making the head first slide popular, Pete has been admired as a baseball player. He's the all-time hits leader and he still holds a long list of baseball records, things like "most career winning games played" and "most seasons of 200 hits or more." In the promo for his appearance there are 19 MLB records listed that Pete still holds.

So why isn't this guy in the Hall of Fame? As most of you know, he was accused of betting on baseball and he's never really come clean on it. Will he do so at the Harvester Performance Center on February 23? Well, you can find out if you go.

Tickets are \$77 for a reserved seat, \$97 for a premium reserved seat and \$440 for a table of four. To me, that seems like an awful lot to hear someone most folks under 50 could care less about. I would expect the crowd to be a lot of



Pete Rose acknowledges the crowd during a 2022 celebration honoring the 1980 Phillies championship team.

old folks like myself who grew up with Pete Rose being one of the great players of the era.

I'm wondering if an autograph comes with this? While Rose was a great player, he's also famous for trying anything he can to make a buck. He's been known to set up a table near the grounds of the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY during induction week and charge for autographs. And, of course, his gambling is well documented.

Rose has always insisted he never bet against his own team. However, the argument made was on the days he didn't bet on his team he was saying he didn't think they would win. It will be interesting to

see what kind of answers he gives to questions about the gambling. Will he "have a filter" in that regard?

I'd love to see it, but the last week of February is right in the middle of high school basketball playoffs and the ODAC basketball tournament is at the Salem Civic Center that weekend. And I can't see paying \$77 to sit in the back of the room and listen to Pete Rose talk about baseball. Maybe \$20, but not \$77. Does a meal come with it? I think not.

It will be interesting to see what kind of crowd he gets. For all I know they might pack the place, but I wouldn't bet on it.