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Highway marker to note Craig County Poor Farm Program

Anita Firebaugh
Special to The Record

A new highway marker noting the location of the first Craig County Poor Farm should be visible in the near future on Virginia Rte 42, about 13 miles outside of New Castle in the Sinking Creek area.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) announced in July that it had approved the new highway marker.

The marker will read: “After the Revolutionary War, care for people facing poverty in Virginia ceased to be the responsibility of Anglican parishes and instead was managed by county-appointed “overseers of the poor.” Craig County, formed in 1851, initially assisted the poor outside of institutions but in 1892 established a 250-acre working farm here as a residence for those unable to support themselves, often because of age or disability. Residents provided labor as they were able. The property, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, included three cottages, a superintendent’s house, outbuildings, and a cemetery. The county

sold the property in 1921, opening a new poor farm north of New Castle.”

Members of the local historical society are excited about the new marker. “We are always pleased when the history of Craig County is acknowledged and shared with the public. This marker is a welcome addition,” said Diane Givens of the Craig County Historical Society.

The Poor Farm was created in 1892 when Craig County purchased the property for \$9,000, according to the VDHR nomination form.

It appears that the county may have constructed the poor farm superintendent’s two-story house, a simple dwelling of frame construction with vernacular Greek Revival elements. Next to the house stands an 1892 poorhouse cottage, one of three residential cottages that stood on the grounds in 1909. The two-bay, two-room cottage is reminiscent of servants’ quarters of the 19th-century era and conforms to the standard poorhouse lodging form in Virginia at the turn of the 20th century.

The property also retains from its poor

farm period a stone cellar structure, a frame granary-corncrib, the County Farm Cemetery where poor farm residents were buried, and a frame barn. In 1921 the county sold the farm to a family who used the superintendent’s house as their farmhouse and converted the surviving poorhouse cottage to a chicken house.

The poor farm’s superintendent’s house from 1892 still remains. It served as the home of the overseer of the poor and his wife, who together operated the farm and cared for the residents. At the Craig County Poor Farm, the first overseer husband and wife team was Josh and Rebecca Looney.

The superintendent’s house is a fairly simple dwelling for its era and is much plainer than some of the elaborate Queen Anne houses built in New Castle around the same time. However, it is larger than the one-story worker houses that populated many of the region’s industrial and mining communities. An overly elaborate dwelling would not have been justified for a county facility, built with taxpayer money,

See Farm, page 2



The Poor Farm was created in 1892 when Craig County purchased the property for \$9,000, according to the VDHR nomination form.



COURTESY PHOTOS

It sits about 13 miles outside of New Castle in the Sinking Creek area.

2024 Year in Review

Jan.:Program to educate Program to educate families about mental health

Robert Freis
robert@mountainmedianews.com

Craig County schools are offering a unique program early next month to help educate families about the mental health and well-being of their children. ‘Your Child’s Anxiety’ is the name of the Feb. 7 program, which begins at 6:30 p.m. at Craig County High School. Participation is free.

It will be the first workshop planned during what the school system is calling a ‘Mental Health Series.’

Of the workshop, the school system says parents can “learn simple strategies that will help parents respond to their children’s anxiety. When applied, these skills will help the child and parent bond, allowing the child to identify

and work through their anxiety more effectively.”

The program is being conducted cooperatively by Craig County Public Schools and a national mental health organization called parentguidance.org. It is affiliated with a Utah-based non-profit called the Center for Human Connection.

“Parenting is hard,” says parentguidance.org on its website. It also quotes statistics stating 50% of parents worry that their child is struggling but don’t know what to do; 32% of parent feel their child is unhappy; and an estimated 10-20% of adolescents experience mental health conditions.

“The mission of the Cook Center for Human Connection is to bring together the best organizations, programs, and

products to prevent suicide, provide mental health support, and enhance human connections essential for people to thrive,” according to the center’s website.

“The foundation’s current focus is on supporting children, families, and schools in eradicating suicide, as well as offering resources and support for those with mental health issues and their caregivers. This is done through a variety of grants to schools, programs for parents, and global resources to bring greater awareness to the support needed for those affected by suicide,” according to the center’s mission statement.

“We are proud to partner with this organization to help provide important information and support to our parents and community. We hope to see you

there as we continue to strengthen the ties between school and home to be the best we can be for our children,” according to a statement from Craig County schools.

The school system says everyone is invited to attend the event, either in person or remotely via Zoom.

Also, a dinner will be held at the high school at 6 p.m. on Feb. 7 before the event. There is no cost to attend this meal and attendees will be entered into a drawing.

County schools are asking any interested attendees to register for the event online at <https://cookcenter.info> and to complete a survey.

More information is available at the Craig County Public Schools website or Facebook page.

Feb.: School Board discussed budget during February meeting

Anita Firebaugh
Special to The Record

Cutting expenses and crossing fingers for a little more money in the budget in fiscal year 2024 was one of the many topics at the Craig County School Board meeting on Feb. 13. The meeting was held at the school campus auditorium and is available to view online.

The School Board held a public hearing on the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, but no one from the public spoke. The amount of the new school budget was not discussed during the meeting.

The school system last year had a \$7.8 million budget, with the county paying approximately \$1.8 million of that, Superintendent Dwayne Huff said at the school board meeting. The county has funded only basic needs for the last five years, and Huff said that an additional \$270,000 in local funding would bring in about \$600,000 more in state dollars.

As part of the budget discussion, the school board heard a presentation from Schneider Electric in Richmond. A company representative stated that Craig County Schools spend approximately \$200,000 annually on water, electricity, and fuel oil.

The company proposed an energy savings program and forecast savings of between 15 and 30 percent of the amount the schools currently spend on energy items if the program were implemented.

One of the major expenses is fuel oil. The Board briefly discussed converting to propane and noted the two boiler systems in the schools need to be

replaced.

Other energy-saving items the company would utilize include LED lighting, motion sensors, low flow water systems, and solar options.

The company representative said the schools could see a \$450,000 to \$750,000 savings over a 15-year period.

Huff said that in addition to the proposed energy savings, he already has cancelled most cell phones for personnel, saving approximately \$800 a month. He told the board members that he had identified approximately 25 software programs, some purchased in previous years with federal Covid funding, which could be “axed,” for a savings of approximately \$115,000.

He has also initiated a health insurance review and has found a different company to service the copying machines for less money.

However, the schools do have needs. He cited capital improvement projects that included the purchase of two new school buses plus some minivans. The boiler replacements at the school campus could cost as much as \$500,000, he said.

Other CIP items the school board would like to see include new roofing on parts of the school campus, construction of a new school bus garage, which could cost approximately \$1.2 million, and teacher raises.

Huff noted that with the new reassessment, the county-wide value increase of taxable real estate went up about 39 percent. While he expects the Board of Supervisors to cut the tax rate from 63 cents per \$100 value to equalize the tax rate, “now is a good time

for the county to raise additional revenue without it being a huge burden to the tax payers,” he said. “I understand we need to give some relief there, but also it’s a good opportunity to bring our school budget up. We’ve been locked in at about \$1.8 million [from the county] for about 5 years. With inflation we’ve actually been losing money.”

Huff also noted that the school systems daily attendance has dropped to 448. The school had budgeted for daily attendance of 450. State funding depends on daily attendance numbers.

The school board is scheduled to hold a joint meeting with the supervisors on April 4 about the budget.

In other matters, the school board learned that most of the county’s students qualify to receive free breakfast and lunch. The school board also discussed the computer use policy, noting that “questionable accidents” could be costly. Huff suggested a policy change that ensured parents know that they are responsible for computers assigned to their children so that the schools could recoup the cost of the computer from the parents if necessary. He also suggested that children be assigned a computer in the ninth grade and that it be given to them upon graduation, in hopes that the laptops might fare better if the students thought they would eventually own it. The school board members agreed to review the issue at a later date.

The school board also heard from the After Prom

See Year in Review, page 2

Farm

from page 1

but the house had to be sufficient to attract a qualified overseer and his family.

Near the superintendent's house stands the 1892 poorhouse cottage, one of three residential cottages that stood on the grounds in 1909. The poorhouse cottage has a two-bay two-room form reminiscent of servants' quarters of the 19th century era and was the standard poorhouse lodging form in Virginia at the turn of the 20th century.

Also from the poorhouse period are a stone cellar, a frame granary/corncrib, the cemetery, where residents of the poor farm were buried, and possibly a frame barn.

Four recipients of assistance are known for 1892, all of whom died that year: William Caldwell (ca. 1827-1892), Delilah "Lila" (Hackett) Hughes (ca. 1812-1892), Eliza Reynolds (ca. 1852-1892), and a second William Caldwell (d. 1892). Reynolds and the first William Caldwell were African American; Hughes and the second William Caldwell (whose birth date is uncertain)

were white. Note that these are only poorhouse residents who died in 1892—there may have been other residents who did not die.

The 1900 census listed eight poorhouse residents, six females and two males. The majority of the residents were over 50 years of age, one was 80, and one, Alexander Sarver, born in 1815, was 85.

In 1910, the poorhouse had a new overseer, Charles Allen "Bub" Keffer (1866-1929), who lived there with his wife, Mary Ellen (Johnston) Keffer (1862-1942), a young daughter and son, and a farm laborer. Five poorhouse residents, three females and two males, lived in the cottages.

VDHR research has determined the names and sometimes the condition of some of the poor farm's residents, including individuals like John F. "Cats" Myers, whose "mind never developed beyond that of a child," and "a one-legged white man, who is very nervous."

On the hill above the farm complex is the County Farm Cemetery

(also called the Poor Farm Cemetery) with a single marble tombstone. VDHR archaeologist Thomas Klatka investigated the cemetery in 2010. Klatka identified one tombstone, that of Benton Thomas, and several unmarked grave depressions. According to one source there are thirty-nine unmarked graves in the cemetery.

The small marble Thomas tombstone is of standard military form and is inscribed Co C 22 Regt VA Inf (a Virginia company active during the Civil War). According to notes at the VDHR website, in a 2018 interview by Jane Henderson with Scott Jones, who grew up on the farm in the 1950s and 1960s, "The Benton Thomas marker is not at the grave site. At the time the [Craig County] Historical Society placed it, they were not allowed to put a single headstone in the middle of the field, so it was placed near the fence. Also, there is some question about Benton being buried there or his brother who also served in the Confederate Army."



The marker will note the location of the first Craig County Poor Farm.



The property consists of about 145 acres.

Year in Review

from page 1

committee and agreed to the use of school buses for the event.

Additionally, the school board approved a modest increase in pay rates for

substitute teachers. "Since I started in September I don't think we've had one day where we have had every absence covered," Huff said. The school system needs more

substitute teachers, he added.

The school board members also discussed the school's "no hat" policy. Students are allowed to wear hats on special occasions, such as an FFA day

where students can pay to wear their hats that day. It is school policy that no hoodies or other head gear be worn during school hours.

"It's all about character,"

Huff said. He wants the schools to teach students to respect those around them and themselves. "If we win that battle," he said, "the academics will take care of themselves."

March: Craig County Gun Ordinance

An ordinance that has been on the books for 50 years came under scrutiny by the Craig County Board of Supervisors in recent meetings. As a result, the Board voted at its March 7, 2024 meeting to hold a public hearing to repeal an ordinance prohibiting the discharge of firearms within residential districts on April 4, 2024 at 6 p.m. in the Circuit Court Courtroom at the Craig County Courthouse.

The supervisors in 1973 had adopted an ordinance that states, "It is unlawful for any person to shoot any gun, pistol, or other firearm within the limits of residential districts of the county, except in the case of urgent necessity. This section shall not apply to licensed gun dealers within the confines of their business property." The local

ordinance makes the violation a class 4 misdemeanor.

In January, the Board began discussions about repealing the ordinance after Supervisor Jordan Labiosa asked about the ordinance. According to the minutes of the February meeting, the supervisors agreed that the county code should be repealed as redundant. Instead, the county would rely on Virginia Code § 18.2-56.1 (A), which states: "It shall be unlawful for any person to handle recklessly any firearm so as to endanger the life, limb or property of any person. Any person violating this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor."

The state statute also says that, "Any person who handles any firearm in a manner so gross, wanton, and culpable

as to show a reckless disregard for human life and causes the serious bodily injury of another person resulting in permanent and significant physical impairment is guilty of a Class 6 felony."

Sheriff Trevor Craddock stated in a follow-up phone call on March 13 that the supervisors had discussed the matter with him and he had told them there were state statutes he could use if necessary. "We don't have a lot of issues over here," the sheriff said of gun complaints. "We've had some pop up occasionally but a lot of times it's more related to the noise of the shooting than its being unsafe. Sometimes the bullets are going on somebody's property maybe damaging trees or something, but most of the time it's somebody

doing extended shooting. We have a noise ordinance that would cover that. It's not something that we deal with a lot."

Labiosa in a follow-up email of March 13 stated that he pursued removal of the ordinance for several reasons. "In my view, the original aim of the County Code section, which prohibits the discharge of firearms within any residential zone, was intended to prevent reckless firearm use. However, the Code of Virginia (§18.2-56.1.) already outlaws the reckless handling of firearms that could endanger human life or property. Given this, repealing the County Code section to strongly uphold 2nd Amendment Rights seems both logical and necessary," Labiosa wrote.

He noted that the county code as written, "includes prohibitions in rural residential zones, which constitute a significant part of our county. These zones are characterized by larger distances between homes than in more densely populated areas, naturally reducing any risk associated with firearm discharge."

He also pointed out that neighboring counties do not have a similar ordinance and that, "Craig County's prior declaration as a "2nd Amendment Sanctuary" by the Board of Supervisors underlines our commitment to protecting the rights of firearm owners. Amending this code section aligns with that declaration."

-- *AJF, Special to The New Castle Record*

April: VFW #StillServing Campaign Spotlights Veterans' Service After Military

Nearly 5 Million People Engaged with Campaign That's Seen 2,000 Veterans' Personal Stories Shared

KANSAS CITY, Mo.— The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) launched #StillServing, a campaign to highlight how America's combat veterans continue to serve in their local communities after transitioning from the military, in March 2020. What started as a campaign became a movement as veterans across the country stepped up to share stories of how they are still serving.

"Veterans are the pillars of our communities," said Duane Sarmiento, VFW national commander. "Their unwavering dedication to service echoes beyond their time in the military. The VFW #StillServing campaign was launched in 2020 to acknowledge and highlight the service leadership veterans bring to our society. Now, in its third year, the stories of veterans who're still serving in meaningful and impactful ways continue to pour in from around the world."

New Castle veteran Joann Smith is being honored for dedication to country and community in the national Veterans of Foreign Wars #StillServing campaign. Smith is #StillServing with the New Castle VFW Post as quartermaster and adjutant. She can be seen around town representing the VFW in local parades like the Craig County Fourth of July Parade where the float won the Most

Patriotic award, Veterans Day and Christmas parades. In addition, she helps at recruiting events at the food pantry, high school Land Lab Fair, Ruritan Flea Market and county Fall Festival. She hosted a Veterans Day event at the high school football game for veterans and military members to get in free and raffled off a flag set.

When not volunteering in New Castle, Smith works at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Roanoke where she ensures that when a veteran is injured the responsible party pays for the medical care instead of the American taxpayers.

According to the 2021 Veterans Civic Health Index1, veterans average nearly 30 percent more volunteer hours per year and outpace civilians by 15 percent in charitable donations. Additionally, nearly 40 percent more veterans belong to a group working on community issues and veterans are more likely to be registered to vote (7 percent) and have recently voted (6 percent).

Since its launch, 4.8 million people have engaged with the campaign through the website, videos and social channels. Additionally, 2,000 veterans have shared their personal stories of sacrifice and service, and the stories have been covered by more than 700 media outlets worldwide.



Smith

COURTESY PHOTO

Building on a legacy of service that spans more than a century, #StillServing represents the heart of the VFW and its members and conveys what today's VFW embodies. The VFW encourages all veterans to share stories on social media using #StillServing to show how they continue to answer the call to serve in ways big and small. In addition, family or friends are asked to use

#StillServing in social media posts to honor a veteran in their lives who believes the spirit of service transcends military life.

The VFW urges Americans to visit vfw.org/stillserving to learn more about the campaign, make a shareable image honoring veterans in their lives, watch videos of VFW members making a difference and see a collection of user-generated content.

May: Craig County experiences population loss, according to Census

Anita Firebaugh

Special to The Record

Craig County has had a slow loss of population over the last 13 years, with numbers declining by

6.45% since the 2010 Census.

At that time, the county had 5,190 people. A recently released report from the Weldon Cooper Center for Population indicates that as of July 1, 2023, the county had a population estimate of 4,855.

In the 2020 census, the county had a population of 4,892, for a loss of just under 1 percent of the population in the last three years.

The statistics echo a statewide trend of population

See **Year in Review**, page 4

Recipe of the Week



Shelly Koon
Contributing Writer

Ahhhh, a new year. A fresh start. New goals. Or a time to just relax, ease in and be gentle with yourself. I will make a batch of muffins and sit down with a cup of coffee and just enjoy the outlook of the new year. Muffins were one of the first things I learned to bake in 7th grade home economics class.

I love how muffins are truly just one of those foods that you can eat anytime, anywhere. Breakfast with coffee? Sure! Mid-morning snack? Yup. After lunch treat to make it through the rest of the day? You got it! Dessert after dinner with a cup of tea? Sure!

Muffins are small cup shaped single serve quick breads that are often sweet and usually served warm. The type of muffin we enjoy is a decidedly American treat and can be traced back to the mid 1800's. The first written recipes of American style muffins began to appear during the middle of the 19th century. Muffins often contain fruit, nuts and spices. They may also contain meat, vegetables and cheese. They are usually eaten for breakfast, but the sheer variety

of flavors available makes them an appealing addition to any meal or as a snack. The 1920's saw the first muffin mix created by Mr. McCollum of New Brunswick, NJ. Packaged mixes were not widely available until the 1950's. The 50's also saw muffins being marketed as baked goods for the first time since preservatives kept them from going quickly going stale.

The most popular flavors of muffins are blueberry, banana nut, bran, corn and poppyseed. Muffins whether homemade or bought in a coffee shop are a small cake that is okay to eat whole. It's easy for us to see what we are getting nutritionally in a single serving, and to quickly factor into our daily allowances.

This week's recipe is for Nothing Muffins. These basic muffins are good plain with butter and jam, they can take the place of a dinner roll with a salad, or try some add ins for a sweet or savory option.

Nothin' Muffins
YIELD 12 muffins

Ingredients

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/3 cup neutral oil (like avocado

or canola)

- 1 large egg

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Arrange a rack in the center of the oven. Grease each cavity of a muffin pan with cooking spray or butter. Mix the dry ingredients: Whisk the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and any additional add-ins (if using) in a large bowl. Whisk wet ingredients and combine: In a small bowl, whisk the milk, oil, and egg until combined. Pour the milk mixture into the bowl with the flour mixture. Use a flexible spatula and mix just until no flour is visible. The batter will be thick and lumpy. Resist the urge to mix until it's perfectly smooth, you'll end up with tough muffins instead of tender ones. Bake: Fill each muffin cavity halfway (about 2 heaping tablespoons). Bake in the center of the oven until the tops are slightly golden and firm when lightly pressed, about 15 minutes. Cool the muffins in the pan for 5 minutes and then move to a cooling rack. Serve the muffins warm or at room temperature with butter and jam. Store remaining muffins in an airtight container on the counter for up to 2 days.

Make them either sweet or savory: Here are a few ideas for add-ins that make these muffins sweet or savory.

Add them to the dry ingredients.

Savory add-ins:

- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese,
- ½ cup chopped crispy bacon
- 1/4 cup chopped black olives
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried herbs, such as rosemary or thyme

Sweet add-ins:

- 1 tablespoon citrus zest and 1 tablespoon poppy seeds or chia seeds
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries, chopped strawberries, or raspberries
- Sprinkle with a mixture of 3 tablespoons sugar and 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon before baking
- 1 cup chocolate chips or chopped nuts



COURTESY PHOTO

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Parkway is ‘America’s most scenic drive’

From the March 4, 1994 edition of The New Castle Record

The Roanoke Valley offers access to the Blue Ridge Parkway—ranked “America’s most scenic drive” by leading travel writers.

But visitors should be warned: Those who choose to take their time to visit should take their time to enjoy the nation’s skinniest national park as it should be—meandering among the 469 miles past spectacular scenery, with plenty of opportunities to stop in charming towns, visit adjacent attractions or to be pampered mountain resorts and other comfortable accommodations.

Starting in Virginia, travelers can pick up the Blue Ridge Parkway in Waynesboro, where Virginia’s 105-mile Skyline Drive ends in Shenandoah National Park. Of course, there are entry points all along the Parkway including several in the Roanoke Valley.

The Skyline Drive starts in Front Royal and offers great panoramic views of the Shenandoah Valley below. The Blue Ridge Parkway is markedly different, equally beautiful, but in a more rugged robust way. Linking the two drives together, visitors can travel more than 320 mountainous miles just in Virginia.

The Blue Ridge Parkway motor road is a two-lane curvy mountainous road beginning in Waynesboro and ending in Cherokee, N. C., connecting the Shenandoah National Park to the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. Speed limit along the BRP is 45 mph.

The primary tourist season for the Blue Ridge Parkway is May through October with most concessions and lodges open during this time period. October because of the fall foliage, is the busiest month for traffic along the Parkway. Reservations for lodges are recommended, especially in October.

For those who thrive in hearty outdoor experiences, stops along the Blue Ridge Parkway offer leisurely picnicking and camping in the mountain meadows, hiking, swimming, canoeing and boating in the refreshing coolness of mountain summers.

Activities as diverse as hang gliding and cross-country skiing are available along this four-season Parkway to visitors who bring their own equipment and travel to areas where they are permitted. And for those interested I the rich mountain heritage, The Parkway has encouraged the preservation and interpretation of the area’s natural and cultural Regular scheduled visitor activities begin in mid-June and continue through October. Schedules are posted weekly in all visitor centers and campgrounds along the Parkway.

The best time to view spring blooms is usually mid-June. The fall color season begins in early September and can last until Mid-November, depending on the weather.

Locally a popular Parkway attraction is the Peaks of Otter. Located nearly 25 miles northeast of Roanoke, the rustic splendor of the mountain area includes a lodge, country cuisine, hikes along self-guided nature trails, watching hawks circle above a

trout-filled lake and riding a bus to the summit of Sharp Top for a breathtaking view of the mountains.

Fairy Stone State Park is also popular with many happy hours spent there at the park’s housekeeping cabins, tent and trailer campgrounds and activities along the 168-acrelake adjoining the Philpott Reservoir. The lake offers a sandy beach, picnic shelters and pleasure boats. In addition, there are hiking trails and a visitors’ center.

Mabry Mills is also a must-see stop. The water-powered grist mill and working blacksmith shop in the picturesque mountain setting are among favorite spots for photographers. The self-guided trail features old-time mountain industry. A restaurant offers a variety of homecooked food, including buckwheat cakes made from flour ground at the mill.

Whether on the Blue Ridge Parkway, May through October, is characterized by moderate temperatures while I late spring and early fall the temperatures may range from 30 degrees at night to 70 degrees mid-day.

Backpack camping is allowed in two areas on the Parkway—Basin Creek in Doughton Park and Rock Castle Gorge in Rocky nob. You must obtain a permit in each area. There is no charge.

The Monarch butterfly migrates about the middle of September. A good spot on the Parkway to view this migration is Wagon Road Gap (Milepost 412.2).

-Prepared by Shelly Koon

Upcoming public meetings scheduled in Craig County

Jan. 2

Board of Supervisors Monthly Meeting will meet at the Craig County Courthouse at 6 p.m.

Jan. 7

Economic Development Meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m., at the Craig County Administration Building.

Jan.14

Tourism Commission Meeting

will be held at 5:30 p.m at the Craig County Administration Building.

Feb.6

Board of Supervisors Monthly

Meeting will meet at the Craig

County Courthouse at 6 p.m.

-The New Castle Record

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

	1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	
		10				11			12			
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Atomic mass unit

4. Criticize mightily

7. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)

10. Stand in for

11. Everyone has one

12. Brew

13. Rectify

15. Popular Dodge truck model

16. Beef or chicken intestine

19. Satisfy

21. Of a particular people or localized region

23. Movements in quick tempos

24. Able to pay one's debts

25. Fleshy bird beak covering

26. Dueling sword

27. Helps

30. Court is in it

34. Touch lightly

35. Airborne (abbr.)

36. Of one

41. Baked good

45. Jai __, sport

46. About aviation

47. Low oval mound

50. Rugged mountain ranges

54. Compel to do something

55. A way to carve

56. Sao __, city in Brazil

57. Mustachioed actor

59. American Idol runner-up

60. A way to soak

61. Car mechanics group

62. Born of

63. Time zone

64. Sea eagle

65. Even's opposite

CLUES DOWN

1. Sharp mountain ridge

2. Thin, fibrous cartilages

3. Provides new details

4. Muscular weaknesses

5. Ottoman military title

6. Banes

7. Horse-riding seats

8. Arms of a shirt

9. Narrow path along a road edge

13. Viper

14. Disfigure

17. Variety of Chinese language

18. Portray in a show

20. Wrongful act

22. No (slang)

27. State of agitation

28. __ Diego

29. One point east of due south

31. 007's creator

32. The NBA's Toppin

33. Midway between north and

northeast

37. Examples

38. __ Gould, actor

39. The habitat of wild animals

40. Artful subtlety

41. Infielders

42. Keep under control

43. Herb

44. Distressed

47. A way to go down

48. Type of acid

49. Take by force

51. Collected fallen leaves

52. Shout of welcome or farewell

53. Monetary unit

58. Swiss river

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July: Craig County is part of Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail

Anita Firebaugh
Special to The Record

If the screech of a hawk or the coos of a dove are the kinds of sounds that make you want to head to the mountains, then Craig County may be just the place to be.

Maybe you'd rather see a bear, watch a raccoon, or catch a glimpse of an elusive bobcat. You can do that in Craig County, too.

Craig County is part of the Mountain phase of the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail. Its Iron Ore Loop highlights prime birding and wildlife viewing locations. The Iron Ore Loop encompasses several distinct habitats, making it an ideal destination for nature enthusiasts of all levels.

The Iron Ore Loop takes in seven sites in the county. The designated bird watching and wildlife sites are the Craig Creek Recreation Area at Oriskany, Fenwick Mines, the Lion's Club Park (also called New Castle Town Park) in New Castle, the Hall Road Raptor Viewing Area, the Paint Bank Trout Hatchery, the Paint Bank General Store - Depot Lodge - Hollow Hill Farm (all considered one site), and Sweet Road (Forest Service Road 350), which starts in Craig and goes into Alleghany County.

The online guide includes regional and loop maps, travel directions, and site descriptions. The entire Mountain phase spans all of Virginia west of U.S. Route 29 and includes 310 sites, some of which are state and local

parks, wildlife management areas, and privately owned lands.

The birding and wildlife trail is more a car tour than a hiking tour, although some hiking trails are reachable from the birding sites. Visitors can watch birds, return to their vehicle, and go to the next spot to see a variety of wildlife. There are also places to park for picnics, walking, or biking excursions.

The state opened the trail about 20 years ago. At that time, county leaders hoped the project would be a boon for Craig County, enticing tourists to the area. According to the Virginia Wildlife Viewing Plan, about 35 percent of Virginia's population viewed wildlife in 2016, amounting to 2.1 million wildlife viewers in the state. The 2016 National Survey of Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation reported that wildlife viewers in Virginia spent \$1.4 billion on wildlife viewing activities that year. Wildlife viewing is one of the most popular outdoor recreation activities in the United States and in Virginia.

"Craig County is known for its outdoor recreation and its miles of National Forest where there are lot birds, and we welcome birders to the county," said Diane Givens of the Craig County Tourism Commission.

"We now have a variety of unique lodging and dining that didn't exist 20 years ago," she added, noting that visitors could stay in a tiny house,

several apartments, Air B&Bs, and other "houses and lofts people are renting out."

Birds to be seen in Craig County include hummingbirds, herons, ospreys, raptors, eastern phoebe, American goldfinch, song sparrows, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, Carolina wren, blue jay, Northern cardinal, turkey vultures, hawks of various kinds, red-eyed vireo, worm-eating warbler, scarlet tanager, and downy woodpecker, among many others.

The Iron Ore trail in Craig County reflects the county's heritage of iron ore mining communities. For example, one stop, the Craig Creek Recreation Area, is located east of Oriskany on Old Rail Road (Rt. 817) and not far from Lignite, now a lost iron ore mining community. At Craig Creek Recreation Area, visitors can see meadows and woodlands that follow Craig Creek. This area is known to be home to the northern bobwhite that can be heard giving their characteristic, "bob-white," whistle at any time of the day.

Fenwick Mines offers a wheelchair accessible trail that winds through woods and across wetlands. Located off Rt. 615 (follow signs), this easy walk takes the wildlife watcher first into relatively young woodland that has grown back since the area was cleared for mining. This area rings with the sounds of woodpeckers.

After a few hundred yards

the woods give way to a series of shallow ponds with a tremendous diversity of dragon- and damselflies. The trail climaxes at an overlook of the marsh. This spectacular view presents a good example of how nature can return from a strained to a growingly stable ecosystem. Additional trails that are not handicap accessible continue down Mill Creek.

New Castle Town Park, also known as Lion's Club Park, is the perfect stop for a picnic or short walk. The brushy woodland along the rear of the park supports a variety of wildflowers, insects, birds and other wildlife.

Heading into the Paint Bank area, visitors can learn more about this mining town that once supported a railroad depot and flourishing hotel. When the mines closed, the town faded. In the 1990s, the area became home to the Hollow Hill Farm, which supports American bison. Wildlife watching starts right on the grounds of the General Store and Depot Lodge, which follow Potts Creek through the Town of Paint Bank. The creek here is perfect for a relaxing walk.

The gardens at the Depot Lodge support a variety of songbirds. After visiting the buffalo at Hollow Hill Farm, visitors may also see white-tailed deer and black bear.

The Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, including the Iron Ore Loop, plays a vital role in conservation efforts aimed at protecting the

state's natural heritage. By promoting ecotourism and environmental stewardship, the trail fosters a deeper connection between people and nature, inspiring a sense of responsibility to preserve these invaluable resources for future generations.

Planning Your Visit

Before setting out on the Iron Ore Loop, visitors and locals alike should familiarize themselves with trail maps, regulations, and seasonal considerations. Dressing appropriately for the weather and bringing along binoculars and a field guide can enhance the experience, allowing for closer observation of birds and wildlife. Additionally, practicing Leave No Trace principles ensures that the natural beauty of the trail remains unspoiled for all to enjoy.

For those seeking an immersive nature experience, the Iron Ore Loop in Craig County offers a journey of discovery through some of the area's most captivating landscapes. Whether marveling at the diverse birdlife or encountering elusive wildlife, the trail invites visitors to connect with the wonders of the natural world in a meaningful and unforgettable way.

To learn more about the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, visit <https://dwr.virginia.gov/vbwt/>

Other websites to check out include vawesternhighlands.com, Virginia.org, and visitcraigcounty.com.

Aug.: Local VFW is hosting a spaghetti dinner, TV raffle

Bonnie Cranmer
Contributing writer

The Craig Valley VFW Post 4491 has been busy. After the successful July 4th parade entry, Crossing the Delaware, winning Most Patriotic for the third year in a row, they are on the move again. The 82 member group meets on the second Monday each month at 7:30 p.m. Not all members are in attendance at each meeting, but all support

the work in spirit.

One of the annual projects is the raffle for Fall Festival. Tickets are available from club members between now and festival Saturday in October. This year the prize is a 55-inch Vizio 4K Smart Color TV. The funds support the ongoing work of the club. and maintenance of their facility. With the upgrades made in the past few years, it is now available for Craig County community members

to rent for meetings, reunions, weddings and birthdays.

On Saturday, Sept. 7, the VFW will host a spaghetti dinner with all the fixings at the Craig Valley Post at 295 Hunters Drive in New Castle, past Camp Mitchell. The meal will be an opportunity for the community to meet and show appreciation to the club members for their service and hear their stories. The dinner will include generous portions of spaghetti, garlic

bread, salad, drinks and a selection of homemade desserts. The dinner tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and 2 years old and under are free.

Another project the club is focused on is the upcoming tour of The Wall That Heals, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Replica and Mobile Education Center. The replica will arrive in Lexington on Oct. 2. It will be part of a parade from Lexington to the

Jackson River Sports Complex in Covington. "VFWs, motorcycles, and antique cars will be there," said David Caldwell, commander of Post 4491. The memorial will be open to the public Oct. 3 - 6, 24 hours each day. The VFW and other organizations are providing support, donations, and volunteers for this important project. Those who would like to donate or volunteer should contact cdrpost4492@vfwwa.org.



Billy Lee Sr., vice commander, Joann Smith, quartermaster, and David Caldwell, commander

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Legals -
Montgomery County

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia

hereby schedules a public hearing on Monday, January 13, 2025 at 7:15 p.m. or as soon thereafter in the Board Room in the Montgomery County Government Center located at 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, in order to hear citizens comments on a proposed ordinance approving the 2025 Organizational Cooperative Agreement Between Montgomery County and the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg for the Creation and Implementation of the Joint Tourism Program.

A copy of the full text of the Ordinance is on file in the Office of the County Administrator and is available 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for public inspection or copying.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Angela M. Hill
County Administrator

Legals -
Montgomery County

currently lies in an area designated as Residential Transition in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>

Legals -
Montgomery County

TOWN OF BLACKSBURG - NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

BLACKSBURG TOWN COUNCIL will hold public hearings on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, regarding the following items:

Ordinance 2068: An Ordinance Rezoning 1.59 ± Acres of Land at 402 Clay Street from R-5 Transitional Residential to Planned Residential Zoning. The proposed ordinance would rezone the property at 402 Clay Street from Transitional Residential (R-5) to Planned Residential (PR), which would permit the construction of two 3-story multifamily buildings with up to a maximum of 72 bedrooms. Twenty percent (20%) of the units will be income restricted to households earning less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).

Recommended Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2025/2026 to 2029/2030: A summary of the proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is being published as a stand-alone advertisement in the December 25, 2024 edition of this newspaper.

All persons affected by or interested in the proposed items above may appear and present their views. After each public hearing, Town Council will consider action on the item. Copies of materials related to the above items are on file and can be obtained in the Office of the Town Clerk, 300 South Main Street, Blacksburg, weekdays between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. For land use matters, copies of applications and all related items may also be found online at www.blacksburg.gov/public hearings or reviewed in person at the Blacksburg Planning and Building Department, 400 South Main Street, Blacksburg, Virginia. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance to attend and participate in this meeting should contact Lorraine Spaulding, Town Clerk at (540) 443-1025 or 443-1000 (voice or TDD).

Legals -
Montgomery County

Order of Publication

Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316.20-104
Case No. **CL24001914-00**
MONTGOMERY Circuit Court, 55 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 1, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073

Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* BRITTNEY FAYE TILSON v. WILLIAM MATTHEW TILSON
The object of this suit is to: DIVORCE. It is ORDERED that WILLIAM MATTHEW TILSON appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before February 6, 2025 @9:00 am
December 4/2024
November 6, 2024
Robert M.D. Turk, Judge

Legals -
Montgomery County

TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)

The Town of Christiansburg, as a recipient of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to prepare the 2023 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The CAPER is an evaluation and performance report detailing accomplishments toward meeting the goals outlined in the 5-year Consolidated Plan. The CAPER compares the actual performance measures with those measures listed in the 2023 Annual Action Plan. Please note the Town of Christiansburg has requested and received an extension to the standard September 28, 2024 deadline.

PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING

Town Staff will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 5:30 PM in the Admin Conference Room, Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street to provide an opportunity for any interested citizens to discuss the plan with Staff. Town Council will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM in the Council Room, Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street to receive comments on Council's intention to adopt the 2023 CDBG CAPER. A draft copy of the 2023 CDBG CAPER is available for review and may be viewed in the Office of the Town Manager, Town of Christiansburg, 100 E. Main Street during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. In addition, a draft electronic copy is available on the Town's Web Site. A copy is also available for review at the Christiansburg branch of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library located at 125 Sheltman Street. Any interested party whose participation in this meeting would require reasonable accommodation of a handicap or language services should contact Retta Jackson at (540) 382-6128 ext. 1120 or by e-mail at rjackson@christiansburg.org

Legals -
City of Salem

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the **City of Salem Planning Commission, at its regular meeting on January 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, will hold a public hearing, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, to consider approval of the following requests relative to the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA:**

1. Consider the request of Heather Pollard, contract purchaser, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow a personal service, beauty salon, on the property located at 707 South Colorado Street, Tax Map 160-7-3.

2. Consider the request of Patrick and Jamie Snead to amend Chapter 106 Zoning, Article III Use and Design Standards, Section 106-304.17(B)(6) Townhouse, of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA pertaining to setbacks for townhouses.

3. Consider amending Chapter 66 Signs, Article IV Permitted Signs by Use and District, Section 66-105 Permitted Signs, of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA pertaining to wall signs.

Copies of the proposed plans, ordinances or amendments may be examined in the Office of Community Development, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia.

At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard relative to the said requests.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA
BY: Christopher J. Dorsey
Executive Secretary

Legals -
City of Salem

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the Board of Zoning Appeals of the City of Salem, Virginia will hold a public hearing, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2309 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, on January 23, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, to consider the following applications.

1. The request of Phillip Investment, LLC, property owner, for a variance from Section 106-226.7 pertaining to development restrictions in a floodway, for the property located at 2011 Cook Drive, Tax Map # 256 – 1 – 1.1. The petitioner is requesting to remove fill material, regrade the slope, and place riprap to improve slope stability in the floodway.

At this hearing, all parties in interest will be given an opportunity to be heard, present evidence, and show cause why such requests should or should not be granted. For additional information, contact the Office of the Zoning Administrator, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia (Phone 375 3032).

THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS OF THE CITY OF SALEM
BY: Mary Ellen H. Wines, CZA, CFM
Planning & Zoning Administrator



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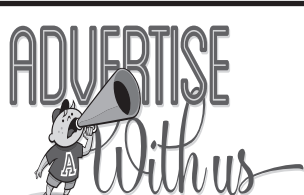


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Rocket basketball teams close out 2024 with doubleheader at Faith Christian

The Craig County basketball teams will back on the floor this weekend for both boys' and girls' games at the teams head into the 2025 portion of their schedules.

This Friday, January 3rd, the Craig boys will host Highland County in Pioneer District action in New Castle. The jayvees will play at 5:30 pm with the varsity to follow.

This Saturday the Rockets will host a quadrupleheader against visiting Giles. It opens with a girls' jayvee game at noon, followed by a boys' jayvee game at 1:30 pm. At 3 pm the varsity girls

will play, and a big day of hoops will wrap up with a varsity boys game at approximately 4:30 pm.

Both teams were scheduled to wrap up the 2024 portion of their seasons with a girls-boys doubleheader at Faith Christian School on Monday of this week but results were too late for publication due to early holiday deadlines. The same can be said of last weekend's two games in the Brookville Tournament for boys. Craig was scheduled to play host Brookville on Friday and then play in the consolation or championship game Saturday.

The Rockets went to Brookville with an 0-7 record

after losing their last game before Christmas to James River on Thursday, December 19. The Knights took a 46-40 win in New Castle.

The Craig County girls played in the Knights Christmas Classic in Buchanan last week, hosted by James River High School. The Rockets dropped three games in the tournament to fall to 0-8, losing 45-30 to Northside, 57-31 to Amherst County and 57-27 to Auburn in the seventh place game. Staunton River won the tournament, defeating host James River in the final, 59-33. Craig County's Daileigh Donithan was named to the All-Tournament team.



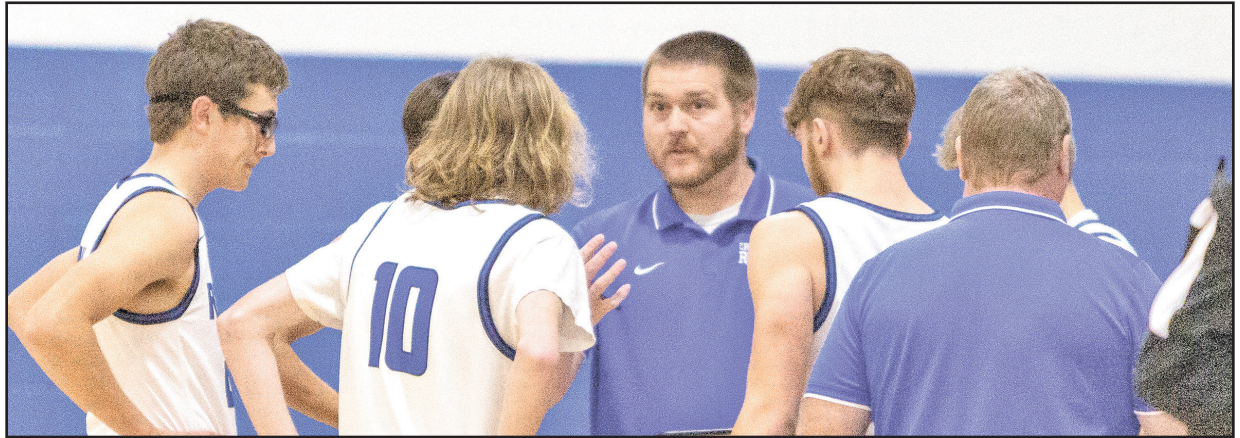
Talon Ritter drives on a River defender.



Tristan Dooley passes the ball.



Luke Potter scores against James River.



Craig coach Ryan Frazier talks to the team during a timeout.

PHOTOS BY JIM AND REGINA DEVINNEY



Top: Brooklyn Caton (#5) pushes the ball against Northside.



Left: Craig's Daileigh Donithan was named to the All-Tournament team at the Knights Classic.



Morgan Underwood(#24) drives to the hoop.



Kallie Fisher (#12) scores for the Rockets.

PHOTOS BY LEIGH DOWNEY

Fisher returning for another season with Rocket football

Craig County football coach Jimmy Fisher announced this week that he'll be back for the 2025 season.

That's good news for county football fans, as Jimmy has been one of the most successful coaches in the history of the program. A graduate of New Castle High School and a former player for the Rockets, he took over a team that had a 9-61 record in the seven seasons prior to his taking the job. With Fisher at the helm the team has won 12 games in the past four years, including a 6-5

record this past season and the first trip to the VHSL playoffs in a dozen years. Craig lost in the first round to Grayson County, who went on to win Region 1C and play in the state championship game at Salem Stadium.

With a young roster, Fisher expects the team to be even better next year.

"Next season has the potential to be better," said Fisher. "(All-Region junior Carter) Calfee returns and there are several other really good backs as well. Isaiah Nichols is going to be a

beast and Noah Paxton is going to run over some opponents. Dreydin Smith ran for well over 200 yards in the last JV game and will also be in the backfield mix. All of the offensive linemen are underclassmen."

Not only did the varsity have a winning season but the jayvees finished 4-1 and were just six inches away from going 5-0. They'll only get better.

"We have a really solid 10th grade class and an outstanding freshmen group," said Fisher. "The freshman class has everything. . . a bunch

of big linemen, running backs, receivers and a couple of kids that throw the ball really well."

Fisher also sells real estate in addition to coaching the team and serving on the Craig County High School faculty. He didn't promise a long run as head coach when he took the job, but he's built the program up and decided to stick around to see the job through.

"We lose three offensive starters and four or five defensive starters," he said. "The proverbial cupboard is loaded."



PHOTO BY REGINA DEVINNEY

Craig County's Jimmy Fisher is returning to coach the Rocket football team.