The Lebanon News

Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880

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Supervisors approve letter of intent to purchase former elementary school

By SHAWN STREET
sstreet@hdmediallc.com

The Russell County Board of Supervisors has approved a letter of intent for the purchase of the former Swords Creek Elementary School.

Steve Miller, of SNT Properties, LLC, will purchase the former school for a price of $85,000. The property will be sold "as is."

The motion to execute the letter of intent between Miller and the county was made following a public hearing on the matter. A similar public hearing was held in May.

A second hearing was needed as Virginia code requires the hearing to be advertised for seven years. The May public hearing was only advertised for five days.

Jerry Hess spoke at the June 1 public hearing and asked

SEE **SUPERVISORS APPROVE | 2A**



Swords Creek Elementary will be sold to SNT Properties.



Little Texas will headline night one of Cedar Fest.

Cedar Fest this weekend

By SHAWN STREET
sstreet@hdmediallc.com

Music fans from across the region will be coming to Lebanon this weekend for the seventh annual Cedar Fest.

The event, which is free of charge, will be held on Main Street in Lebanon near The Russell Theatre.

Festivities will get underway on Friday, June 12, at 6:30 p.m. and will continue until 11:30 p.m.

Friday night's performers include The Grascals, The Kody Norris Show and headliners Little Texas.

Throughout their 22 year career, The Grascals have released 13 albums and have been nominated for and won countless awards, including the International Bluegrass Music Association 2025 Instrumental Recorded Performance of the Year; the Society of the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America 2025 Song of the Year for "Tennessee Hound Dog"; and the 2026 Absolutely Gospel Music Bluegrass Single of the Year for "Broken Angels" with Dolly Parton.

Formed in Mountain City, Tennessee, The Kody Norris Show is the reigning Society of the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America's Entertainers of the Year. Known for their high-energy performances, clever humor and matching rhinestone suits, The Kody Norris Show offers audiences American bluegrass and traditional country music.

Country legends Little Texas are known for hits such as "God Blessed Texas", "Amy's Back in Austin", and "My Love" among a host of others.

Little Texas have been honored in the past with the Academy of Country Music's Top Vocal Group of the Year and the Country Music Association's Album of the Year.

The line up for Saturday, June 13, features Tyler Reese Tritt, Channing Wilson, and Drake White.

Three Feathers Production's recording artist

SEE **CEDAR FEST | 3A**

School board honors students

By SHAWN STREET
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The Russell County School Board honored a number of students for their accomplishments during the 2025-26 school year as part of the board's June 2 meeting.

Among those honored were the Russell County Art Contest Winners. The elementary school division was won by Jaycee Shelton, of Honaker Elementary School.

The middle school category was won by Serenity Green, of Castlewood Elementary School. Honaker High School's Sophia Turner won the high school category.

Members of Lebanon High School's 2026 Virginia High School League Class 2 Speech state champions were honored. Members of the team are: Alexis Potts - state champion Prose; Brock Keen - state champion Impromptu Speaking; Chloee Dillon - state champion Serious Dramatic Interpretation; Kali Saltz - state runner-up Prose; Landon Owens - state runner-up Extemporaneous Speaking; Sara Griffith - state runner-up Poetry; Ali Beck and Ethan Powers - state runners-up Humorous Duo; Autumn Brickman and Lilly Garrett - state runners-up Serious Duo; Abby Amos - third place Original Oratory; Olivia Sizemore and Lily Webster - third place Humorous Duo; Mercedes Raguz - third place Humorous Interpretation; Macie Ferguson - Original Oratory; Keaton Stallard - Humorous Interpretation; Hailey Smith – Storytelling; Saylor Sykes - Serious Dramatic Interpretation; Audra Dalton - Impromptu Speaking; Elliott Breeding – Poetry; Hailey Artrip – Poetry; and Sarah Stoots – Coach.

Two students from Honaker High School were honored for their performance at the VHSL Class 1 Speech championships. Kara Ratliff was second place – Prose Interpretation; and Allie Dales was fifth place – Impromptu Speaking.

Aubrey Moseley, of Honaker High School, was also honored for placing fifth in Customer Service during the 2026 Virginia Future Business Leaders of American competition.

It was also announced during the meeting that the Russell County Career and Technical Center will have a new principal for the upcoming school year. Greg Mullins was named to the position. Mullins replaces longtime principal Larry Rasnake, who announced his retirement.

School board members also voted to replace the lights at Castlewood High School's football field.

Push continues for forensic audit, board members allege information kept from them

By SHAWN STREET
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Some members of the Russell County Board of Supervisors are continuing to push for a forensic audit while allegations were made that information on various issues is being kept from the full board.

During a heated, six-hour long meeting in May 2025, a motion was made by At-Large member Nate Kiser to set the real estate tax rate at $0.579 cents per $100 of assessed value. Kiser's motion also required that a forensic audit be conducted.

More than a year later, the audit has yet to be conducted.

Kiser brought up the issue again during the June 1 meeting of the board when Chairman David Eaton asked for a motion to pay the monthly bills.

Kiser said he could not vote for such a motion "with good conscience" until the forensic audit is conducted. "The tax rate was contingent on a forensic audit and we've still not done that," he said. "We've collected taxes but we've not conducted the forensic audit."

Board attorney Tyler Starnes stated that the tax rate was not contingent on a forensic audit. "Just to clarify the water there," he said.

District 3's Tara Dye questioned Starnes. "Last month you said it was a contingency and now it's not?"

During last month's meeting of the board, when speaking about Kiser's 2025 motion, Starnes said, "There should not have been a contingency in the first place." He said the condition violated the Roberts Rules of Order the board goes by.

"If it was not a legal motion, why didn't you step up and say that?" Dye asked last month.

Starnes replied that it was his first meeting representing the board and he wasn't aware of the problem at the time. He suggested the board not overturn the May 20025 motion because; "…that leaves you in a state of limbo."

During the June meeting, Starnes said he should have used another word in the previous meeting other than "contingency."

Kiser asked if the forensic audit was considered to be "just hot air?"

Dye asked if it was considered a line item that never made it into budget.

"That's a fair way of putting it," Starnes answered.

The last item on the agenda for each meeting is "Board Discussions and Reminders" in which board members usually mention something on their minds that was not on the agenda.

Kiser used his time to bring up the forensic audit once again.

"Last meeting, Mrs. Wallace mentioned that we had stuff in our packet that I was not aware of and she said it was in an email," he said. "You may have got that email but several us of did not. There was no information about the APA in the email."

Kiser was referring to information presented to the board last month by Russell County Administrator Lonzo Lester. The information was addressing the possibility of having the state auditor of public accounts conduct an audit.

Lester said the information was not in an email to board members.

"I know it was done to embarrass me but it was not correct," Kiser replied.

District 2 Supervisor Lou Wallace attempted to get Kiser's attention. "It is my time to speak," Kiser said.

"Your last comment was uncalled for," Wallace said.

"Well, that's fine," Kiser replied. "You can say whatever you want."

Turning his attention to Starnes, Kiser continued, "In my motion in May of last year for the forensic audit, I repeat, it required a forensic audit. The tax rate required a forensic audit to be done. I don't know how much more contingent that can be."

Kiser added, "I'm afraid that that guidance is leading us

SEE **FORENSIC AUDIT | 3A**

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INSIDE THIS WEEK: Opinion: 4A, 5A | Sports: 1B, 2B | Puzzles: 5B | Classifieds: 6B

Some Days, Birdsong Saves Me



DEBBIE **GIBSON**

My son-in-law bought me a bird feeder/camera for my birthday in January. It's actually pretty snazzy.

After I charged it and set it up, my adventures began. There have been numerous visits by familiar birds, cardinals, the tufted titmouse, chickadees, doves, the woodpecker, and my all- time favorite, the grackle.

But birds are showing up that I have never known to grace my feeders. The eastern phoebe, common starling, the bobolink, grey catbird, cliff swallow, Stellar's jay, the bushtit, housefinch, and verdin have all come for seed, millet, and grubworms.

The camera takes a ten-second shot, sends an alert to my phone, and awaits the next bird. We joked when I set the camera up that I'd be the first person fired from Russell Co. Schools for birdwatching.

I have refrained from checking on who shows up at the feeder while I am at work, but that is the first app I open when the workday is done. Priorities!

The cardinal is always the first to show up in the morning. Sometimes alone, but often in pairs, they crack the sunflower seeds, feed each other, and captivate my heart every time.

Next come the fat-bottomed girls, the doves. They are the seed scatterers, and I found myself talking to them the other morning, asking why they have to make such a mess with their poor table manners.

Then the iridescent grackles arrive, and I swear I could watch them all day. The grackles appear black at first, but let the newborn sun hit their feathers and that golden eye, and it's a psychedelic, oil slick of purple, green, gold, and blue. The golden eye! Handsome, I tell you, handsome!

I am uncertain when I became a bird watcher. Gary jokes with me and calls me "Miss Jane," from The Beverly Hillbillies, but so far, I haven't seen any California condors. I do, however, wear knee socks and have short hair.

There was a time in my life when I paid no attention to what was flying around me unless it was a mosquito. I think it must have been the long hours of dishwashing at the kitchen sink. Then my husband moved the sink to a new island, created a back door where the window was, allowing access to the back porch, and here I am watching birds all day.

As I sat in the sun to warm my bones the other day, I downloaded another program called Merlin that identifies birds by their calls. I fear I have created a monster. The birds sing, and the program tells you what you are hearing. So far, the wren is the loudest, and when I say loud, I mean LOUD! The tufted titmouse sounds like he's stuck on a note, the chipping sparrow sounds like a cricket, the pewee cracks me up with its "Hey girl" whistle, and the blue-gray gnatcatcher sounds like old bed springs squeaking. Now, not only will I know what the birds look like, but I am also learning their songs. I'll be lethal by the time I leave this world.

There is much to be said for slowing down, observing nature, and co-existing with the creatures that choose to reside in the same place we hang our hat. This world is full of beauty, and we are surrounded by sounds that we take for granted.

When things become stressful and harried, there must be a place we can go to in order to reorient ourselves. For if I am honest, the day-to-day living requirements wear me out. I can only take so much news. I can only answer so many demands. I recognize my own weariness, and nature offers me the remedy.

Some days, I simply need a bird. I need to hear its song. I need to focus less on the stressors of life and just sink into an "all is right in the world" moment.

Some days, birdsong saves me.

Some days, birdsong inspires me.

Some days, birdsong heals me.

Some days, I just need a little bird to let me know everything is going to be all right.

Unless, of course, it's that hollering wren. Then I have to have a conversation about why she's up so early and squawking at me like I stole one of her babies from the nest she built under the porch roof. Tone it down, girl. Everything is OK.

P.S. I just bought a cuckoo clock.

Debbie Gibson is a guest columnist for The Lebanon News.

A Better Path: Retrocede D.C. to Maryland



MORGAN **GRIFFITH**

WEEKLY REPORT FROM THE CAPITOL

Rural community representation is important for Virginia and the United States.

Our communities have unique needs and special interests. This applies in agriculture, health care and many other fields.

Virginia's Ninth District is overwhelmingly rural.

This contrasts with other urban and suburban parts of the Commonwealth, like Northern Virginia.

I usually hear people express their concerns that politicians in Richmond and D.C. promote the interests of Northern Virginia at the expense of the rest of the state, primarily our rural communities.

These concerns simmered during the recent Democratic Party's redistricting push in Virginia. Richmond Democrats sought to reduce Republican representation in the U.S. House from 5 seats to 1 seat.

To do so, the proposed districts would force many rural communities into districts dominated by Fairfax County.

Northern Virginia's political power would grow even more!

Fights over representation extend across the Potomac River where Democrats want to make D.C. the 51st state.

In 2021, I voted against Democrats' H.R. 1 which endorsed D.C. statehood.

I also voted against Democrats' H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, which granted D.C. statehood under the name "Washington, Douglass Commonwealth."

I will continue to oppose partisan efforts that create two new seats in the U.S. Senate for the Democratic Party.

However, one proposal in Congress would impact D.C. representation and its influence on the Commonwealth.

The Make DC Square Again Act sets in motion the process for Arlington County and the City of Alexandria to retrocede to Washington, D.C.

Some argue that this move is the constitutional return of two jurisdictions back to is its rightful place.

In 1790, Congress passed the Residence Act.

This established a District of Columbia to serve as the capital seat of the national government starting in 1800.

This act had to comply with Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17 of the U.S. Constitution, which in part stipulates that Congress has the power to:

"exercise exclusive Legislation…over such District (not exceeding ten Miles Square) as may…become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State…"

In order to establish this capital in D.C., Virginia and Maryland each consented to cede land.

The 1789 Virginia General Assembly, which composed of members like Patrick Henry, signed an act that ceded area south of the Potomac River.

As President Washington outlined in his proclamation defining the boundaries of the District of Columbia, the 10-square mile boundary would be the permanent seat for the U.S. government.

These boundary lines remained in place for many years until the 1840s, when slavery was among the matters complicating Congress.

That decade, Congress voted to abandon the 10-square mile arrangement and give the area south of the Potomac to Virginia.

While Virginia accepted the retrocession, I believe legal issues on this matter may remain.

Revival of the D.C. square concept debate today creates conflicts within Democratic circles. National Democrats continue to advocate for D.C. statehood.

I believe renewal of the D.C. square bolsters those who want D.C. statehood.

I think that is wrong and constitutionally questionable because the District of Columbia was set up to be a federal district, not a state, by the framers of the Constitution!

They specifically wanted a seat of government which owed allegiance to no state.

Thus, I think the proper solution is to retrocede the rest of the D.C. square to Maryland, reserving a small federal District of Columbia where the small number of voters would be allowed to vote in Maryland.

I have a bill that will give representation to D.C. residents without accommodating Democrats' partisan demands to create a 51st state.

My Washington, D.C. Residents Voting Act retrocedes D.C. proper to Maryland. Every D.C. resident would become a Maryland resident and have Maryland representation.

Accordingly, these residents would access voting members in both the U.S. Senate and U.S. House.

Meanwhile, a new, condensed D.C. would consist of federal properties such as the White House, U.S. Capitol and U.S. Supreme Court.

My bill would unlock for Maryland a very similar process that Congress and Virginia exercised in the 1840s.

As a result, the D.C. square would be effectively buried in history.

This may turn the page on D.C. representation, but it will not change my resolve to fairly represent and protect the interests of rural communities in Virginia.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, feel free to contact my office. You can call my Abingdon office at 276-525-1405 or my Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671. To reach my office via email, please visit my website at https://morgangriffith.house.gov/. Also on my website is the latest material from my office, including information on votes recently taken on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Griffith announces ARC grants for SWCC, UVA-Wise

By SHAWN STREET
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Ninth District Congressman Morgan Griffith has announced that Southwest Virginia Community College and the University of Virginia's College at Wise have been awarded grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission.

SWCC has been awarded a grant worth $1,818,822. The funding will support the expansion of career and technical education programs with a focus in advanced manufacturing and trade-based skilled technician training.

"Local industries in Southwest Virginia rely on experienced, trained and skilled individuals," Griffith said. "This ARC grant for more than $1.8 million helps Southwest Virginia Community College expand education programs for students to access meaningful employment opportunities in the region."

SWCC will engage and collaborate with regional partners and organizations, including the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority and the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board.

UVA-Wise was awarded a grant worth $100,000. The funds will support the drafting of a strategic planning initiative to develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region.

The project is expected to help expand entrepreneurial resources, address persistent gaps in the entrepreneurial ecosystem and prepare the region for economic revitalization.

"Southwest Virginia business development is constrained by a lack of sufficient access to entrepreneurs and investors," Griffith said. "This ARC grant $100,000 helps the UVA College at Wise strategize a modeled plan that makes the region fertile ground for entrepreneurs and investors."

According to ARC, both grants are supported by the Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization initiative.

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2. Military: Joining the military is certainly an option with your GED®, and if you did not graduate from high school, earning a GED® is highly recommended for those entering the military. The military comes with great benefits such as healthcare, housing allowance, tuition assistance/scholarships for college, and retirement benefits.

3. Career: As many employers require job candidates to have a high school diploma or GED®, your credential will open the door to many more career opportunities.

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For more information on how to obtain your GED® and be able to take advantage of more opportunities, please call Southwest Regional Adult Education at 276-889-5424.

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SUPERVISORS APPROVE

FROM PAGE 1A

why the property was not offered via public auction. He said an auction could have produced more money for the county, "…instead of an individual seeing a supervisor."

District 3 Supervisor Tara Dye echoed Hess, asking if the county could have sold the property for more if it had been advertised or put up for auction.

"My issue is fairness and the potential for more money," she said.

Russell County Administrator Lonzo Lester said the county had three options. The property could have been advertised, it could have been put out to bid or a direct sale.

"It is hard to get rid of these schools," said District 4's David Eaton. He added that Miller's company will provide 32 jobs and is "not asking any money from tax payers" for repairs to the building.

Cumberland Mountain Community Services first showed interest in the closed school. However, it was determined that approximately $700,000 would be needed for renovations.

Eaton said SNT was aware of the $700,000 figure and was willing to move forward regardless. "These are great paying jobs and it's a great opportunity for Russell County," he said.

District 1 Supervisor Andrew Hensley said the county needs to make certain the purchaser provides the jobs and does not sell the property.

"I don't question the business," Hensley said. "I think the business does a great job. If we can cover our bases and insure we're getting what we're told we're getting, I think we need to."

Eaton said Miller's business has been operating in District 4 for over 20 years. "It's one of the largest VDOT contractors in Southwest Virginia. It's not going anywhere," he said.

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OPINIONS

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VA250 Mobile Museum brings history to life in Lebanon

By SHAWN STREET
sstreet@hdmediallc.com



The VA250 Mobile Museum made a stop in Lebanon on June 4.

To celebrate America's 250th anniversary and to honor the rich history of Virginia, the VA250 Mobile Museum made a stop in Russell County last week.

Supported by a partnership between Food City and Virginia's America Revolution 250 Commission, the museum made a stop at the Lebanon Food City on June 4.

The VA250 Mobile Museum Experience tells the story of Virginia's pivotal role in the American Revolution. From Patrick Henry's 1775 cry, "Give me Liberty, or Give me Death" to General George Washington's victory at the Siege of Yorktown in 1781, all Virginians played critical roles in the sacrifice, strife, and ultimate earning of American independence.

A touch screen device provided information about the battles Virginia fought in throughout the American Revolution.

"Out of Many, One: The VA250 Mobile Museum Experience" tells their stories – and America's history, made in Virginia.

The newly built VA250 Mobile Museum was specifically designed to include pertinent content relative to Southwest Virginia's rich heritage.






Drake White will be headline Saturday night at Cedar Fest.

CEDAR FEST

FROM PAGE 1A

Tyler Reese Tritt is the daughter of country music legend Travis Tritt. She is known for songs such as "You Lost Me", "Smoke", and "Another High" among others.

Channing Wilson is supporting his debut album "Dead Man". Wilson is known for his traditional, outlaw country style and was runner-up on the CBS show "The Road".

Prior to stepping into the spotlight, Wilson wrote for acts such as Travis Tritt, Zac Brown Band, Riley Green and Luke Combs.

Headliner Drake White has four full length albums under his belt. The country music star is known for singles such as "The Simple Life", "It Feels So Good", Livin' the Dream", and "Makin' Me Look Good Again."

In addition to the live performances, plenty of food trucks and vendors will be on hand for the 2026 Cedar Fest.

FORENSIC AUDIT

FROM PAGE 1A

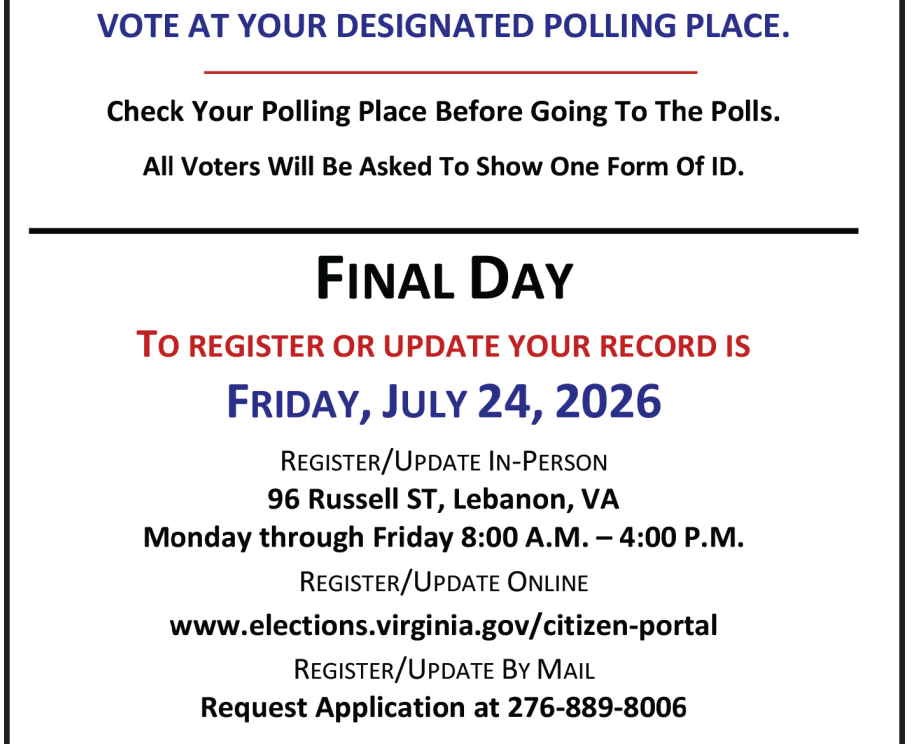
into a place where we're going to be financially exposed if we do not do a forensic audit for the tax rate that we have set."

Kiser was not the only board member making allegations that information is not being shared with the full board.

Following the meeting, District 1 member Andrew Hensley issued a statement regarding his attempts to gain information about debt owed by the school board and public service authority.

"On March 2nd, I called the county attorney to ask what the board of supervisors' legal obligation was to pay PSA and school debt," Hensley said. "I wanted to know the when, where, and why of this debt, along with who voted for all this debt."

Hensley continued, "Over the past the months, I've asked multiple times, with no answer. I asked tonight after the meeting, and did not get an answer. Since it's been three months, I thought I'd let the public know that I've tried to gain this information. The reason this is important is because the debt makes up approximately 14 percent of the Russell County real estate tax rate."





Dual Primary

TUESDAY, AUG 04, 2026

POLLS OPEN 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

VOTE AT YOUR DESIGNATED POLLING PLACE.

Check Your Polling Place Before Going To The Polls.

All Voters Will Be Asked To Show One Form Of ID.

FINAL DAY

TO REGISTER OR UPDATE YOUR RECORD IS

FRIDAY, JULY 24, 2026

REGISTER/UPDATE IN-PERSON
96 Russell ST, Lebanon, VA
Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

REGISTER/UPDATE ONLINE
www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal

REGISTER/UPDATE BY MAIL
Request Application at 276-889-8006

EARLY VOTING

OFFICE OPEN
Friday, Jun 19 – Saturday, Aug 01
Monday - Friday
8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Saturday, Jul 25 & Saturday, Aug 01
9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, Jul 19 & Sunday, Jul 26
12:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

OFFICE CLOSED
Independence Day (Observed)
Friday, Jul 03, 2026

ABSENTEE VOTING

DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR A BALLOT BY MAIL
Friday, Jul 24, 2026 at 5:00 P.M.

BALLOTS MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE
Tuesday, Aug 04, 2026

Drop-off of mailed ballots is available during normal business hours at the Office of Voter Registration & Elections. Absentee ballots shall be returned to the General Registrar before the closing of the polls.

CLASSIFIEDS

CEMETERY LOTS

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LEGAL NOTICES

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 171 HERITAGE DRIVE, HONAKER, VA 24260. In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated June 30, 2021, in the original principal amount of $80,101.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Russell County, Virginia as Instrument No. 2101505. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Russell County, 121 East Main Street, Lebanon, Virginia, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on August 4, 2026, at 1:00 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL OF THAT CERTAIN LOT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN THE NEW GARDEN MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF RUSSELL COUNTY, VIRGINIA, ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE NEW GARDEN ROAD AND IMMEDIATELY SOUTHWEST OF THE TOWN OF HONAKER, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY BOUNDED AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO-WIT: BEGINNING AT A POINT IN THE NEW GARDEN ROAD, A CORNER TO THE LANDS OF ROBY BARNHART, AND LEAVING SAID ROAD, AND RUNNING WITH THE LINE OF THE SAID ROBY BARNHART N 0-15 W 125 FEET; THENCE RUNNING IN A WESTERLY DIRECTION APPROXIMATELY 100 FEET TO THE NOTHEAST CORNER OF THE LANDS OF LEWIS TAYLOR; THENCE WITH THE TAYLOR LINE S 0-15 E 125 FEET TO A POINT IN SAID NEW GARDEN ROAD; THENCE FOLLOWING SAID ROAD N 73-45 E 100 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND BEING THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF LOT NO. G AS SHOWN ON PLAT OR SUBDIVISION MADE BY TATE-HORNEY LAND AUCTION COMPANY, BEARING DATE OF MAY 1941, PROPERLY RECORDED. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a $50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.aldridgepite.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.aldridgepite.com VA-383954-1.
LVL-466778
06-03,10;2026
07-08;2026

LEGAL NOTICES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
The Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority (Buchanan, Dickenson and Russell Counties) is seeking proposals from qualified Attorney or Law firms to 1) provide legal services and 2) to provide consultation for contracts and legal documents at the request of the Board of Directors and their Executive Director.
For any interested firm wishing to respond, a copy of the 2026 CPRWMA Request For Proposal (RFP), can be obtained by requesting a Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority RFP at tobyedwards@cprwma.com or picking up a copy at 135 Highland Drive, Suite C, Lebanon, VA 24266 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.
Evaluation Criteria for individuals or firms responding include but not limited to:
1. Experience of firm with similar projects and working with local government.
2. Consulting experience with public and private agencies (local, regional, state and federal).
3. Similar projects with local, state and federal agencies.
4. Ability to begin and complete projects quickly.
5. Cost for case-by-case basis.
Submit 2 copies:
Toby Edwards, Executive Director
Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority
Attention: Legal Services 2026
135 Highland Drive, Suite C
Lebanon, VA 24266
Phone: 276-883-5403
Cell: 276-698-9414
Deadline for submission is **4:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 17, 2026.** The CPRWMA will be conducting Competitive Negotiation in accordance with 2.2-4300 of the Code of Virginia (as amended) (The Virginia Public Procurement Act) and reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

LEGAL NOTICES

The Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer and will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, age, handicap or faith based organization. Minority and female-owned firms and local firms are encouraged to participate. All responding firms should comply with Executive Order 11246.
LVL-466006
06-04,10;2026

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF JOINT APPLICATION BY KENTUCKY UTILITIES COMPANY D/B/A OLD DOMINION POWER COMPANY AND LOUISVILLE GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY FOR TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATE, APPROVAL OF MERGER,AND DECLATORY ORDER
CASE NO. PUR-2026-00052

On April 29, 2026, Kentucky Utilities Company ("KU"), operating in Virginia under the name Old Dominion Power Company ("KU/ODP"), and Louisville Gas and Electric Company ("LG&E") (KU and LG&E, collectively, "Applicants" or "Companies") completed the filing of a joint application ("Application") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") for approval of the legal merger of KU and LG&E. Specifically, the Applicants request: (1) approval of the transfer of the certificate to furnish electric service pursuant to Chapter 10.1 of Title 56 of the Code of Virgina ("Code"), § 56-265.1 *et seq*.; (2) approval of the merger of the Companies pursuant to the Utility Transfers Act, Code§ 56-88 *et seq*., or a determination that such approval is not required; and (3) a declaration pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-100 C of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, 5 VAC 5-20-10 et seq. ("Rules of Practice"), that KU/ODP's exemption from regulation under Chapter 23 of Title 56, Code§ 56-576 *et seq*. ("Virginia Electric Utility Regulation Act"), found in Code§ 56-580 G, would continue to apply to the merged Companies.

In support of the Application, the Applicants state they are proposing to merge KU with and into LG&E, with LG&E being the surviving company. The Applicants state that they have jointly planned and operated their legally separate utilities under one holding company for almost thirty years. The Companies state that they anticipate that the combined utility would continue to operate using the fictitious, "doing business as" name of Old Dominion Power Company in Virginia for the immediate future. The Applicants assert that the combined utility would adopt KU/ODP's existing tariff and would serve KU/ODP customers under the current tariff just as KU/ODP does today. Accordingly, the Applicants maintain that the merger should be largely, if not entirely, invisible to customers from a material commercial, operational, and communications standpoint.

The Applicants assert that the approval the Companies are seeking from this Commission is expressly contingent upon the Kentucky Public Service Commission ("KPSC") and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC") approving the merger and upon the Companies determining to proceed with the merger in light of any conditions the KPSC and FERC may impose. Accordingly, the Companies represent that they will move forward with the merger only if the KPSC, FERC, and this Commission authorize the merger and do not attach conditions that render the merger impracticable, uneconomical, or otherwise unpalatable to the Companies.

In support of the request to transfer to LG&E certificates currently held by KU/ODP to provide electric service in Virginia in portions of Wise, Dickenson, Lee and Scott counties, under the Utility Facilities Act, the Companies assert that such a transfer is in the public interest. The Companies maintain that the transfer would facilitate the savings to be achieved by the merger while the combined utility would have the same ability to provide reasonable service that KU/ODP provides today.

Citing§§ 56-88.1 and 56-90 of the Utility Transfers Act, the Applicants assert that through the proposed merger of KU and LG&E, LG&E would possess the financial, technical, and managerial ability to provide reasonable utility service in Virginia, as the officers and employees of KU/ODP and service companies that support KU/ODP would not change after the merger. The Applicants further aver that the proposed merger would not impair or jeopardize the provision of adequate service to the public at just and reasonable rates. The public service company would be subject to the continuing jurisdiction of the Commission, without any reduction in the Commission's existing oversight or any diminishment in the authority of the Commission.

In the alternative, if the Commission determines that approval under the Utility Transfers Act is not required for the Companies' proposed merger, then they request that the Commission issue a declaratory order confirming that conclusion under 5 VAC 5-20-100 of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

The Applicants also request a declaratory order from the Commission pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-100 on whether the statutory exemption in Code§ 56-580 G that currently applies to KU/ODP would apply to the surviving utility, LG&E, post-merger. In support of the assertion that the exemption should apply post-merger, the Companies state that since 1926, KU/ODP has served small portions of five counties in southwest Virginia with retail electric service; that KU/ODP currently serves approximately 28,000 retail customers through transmission lines from its Kentucky electrical system; and that KU's electric generation is located entirely in Kentucky. The Companies assert that Code § 56-580 G, with four limited exceptions, has exempted KU/ODP from the provisions of the Virginia Electric Utility Regulation Act. The Companies assert, in part, that the merged company would continue to meet the conditions in Code§ 56-580 G as LG&E would continue serving the same assigned service territory located entirely within the five named counties and the merger would not alter the reasons for the exemption or the unique nature of KU/ODP's Virginia service territory. Accordingly, the Applicants request that the Commission issue a declaratory order stating that KU/ODP's exemption in Code§ 56-580 G will continue to apply to the merged Companies.

Additional details are set forth in the Application. Interested persons are encouraged to review the Application and supporting exhibits.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Comment that, among other things, directed the Applicants to provide notice of their Application and provided interested persons an opportunity to comment or request a hearing on the Application.

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission will, among other things, direct that all pleadings, briefs, or other documents required to be served in this matter be submitted electronically to the extent authorized by 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice. Confidential and Extraordinarily Sensitive Information shall not be submitted electronically and should comply with 5 VAC 5-20-170, *Confidential information*, of the Rules of Practice. At this time, any person seeking to hand deliver and physically file or submit any pleading or other document shall contact the Clerk's Office Document Control Center at (804) 371-9838 to arrange delivery.

Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice, the Commission directs that service on parties and the Staff of the Commission ("Staff") in this matter shall be accomplished by electronic means. Concerning Confidential or Extraordinarily Sensitive Information, the parties and Staff are instructed to work together to agree upon the manner in which documents containing such information shall be served upon one another, to the extent practicable, in an electronically protected manner, even if such information is unable to be filed in the Office of the Clerk, so that no party or the Staff is impeded from preparing its case.

Electronic copies of the Application and the Commission's Order for Notice and Comment may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Companies: Maty Ellen Wimberly, Esquire, Stoll Keenon Ogden PLLC, 300 West Vine Street, Suite 2100, Lexington, Kentucky 40507; marvellen.wimberly@skofirm.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

On or before August 14, 2026, any interested person may file comments on the Application by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/submit-public-comments or by filing such comments with the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All comments shall refer to Case No.PUR-2026-00052.

On or before July 15, 2026, any interested person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation with the Clerk of the Commission at the address above or at: scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties and their counsel. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice, any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent: (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent known: and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any notice of participation filed by a person not represented by counsel shall also set forth why the filer's positions in this matter are not adequately represented by another party to this proceeding and cannot be expressed through written or oral public comments as provided for in this proceeding. Any organization, corporation, or governmental body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No.PUR-2026-00052.

On or before July 15, 2026, any interested person or entity may file with the Clerk of the Commission at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling a request that the Commission convene a hearing on the Application. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file the hearing request electronically may file such hearing request by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Requests for a hearing shall include: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent: (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent known: (iii) a statement of the legal basis for such action; and (iv) a precise statement why a hearing should be conducted in this matter. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00052.

Copies of any notices of participation and requests for hearing shall be served electronically on counsel for the Applicants, Staff, and any respondents.

Any documents filed in paper form with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission's Order for Notice and Comment, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

The Application, the Commission's Rules of Practice, and the Commission's Order for Notice and Comment may be viewed at the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

KENTUCKY UTILITIES COMPANY D/B/A OLD DOMINION POWER COMPANY AND LOUISVILLE GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUPPORT GROUP FOR FEMALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT: Women survivors of sexual assault are invited to attend regular support group meetings or individual support if you prefer. Survivors meet in a safe environment with other women who have had similar experiences. Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. Family Crisis Services knows and understands what a survivor is going through. The fact that you are alive and reading this means that you are in-credibly strong, courageous and intelligent. We are here to aid in the recovery process with individu-al support sessions. Please call and let us help. We are a confidential service. For information, call Ranetta Davis (276) 889-8206 or Haley Slade at (276) 988-5583.

SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS MEETING: Sons of Confederate Veterans Capt. John F. McElhenny Gamp 840 meets 4th Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Russell Co. Public Library, Lebanon, VA.

COMMUNITY MEN'S BREAKFAST: A Community Men's Breakfast originally organized by men of the Lebanon Memorial United Meth-odist Church is held the 2nd Saturday each month at Pat's Kountry Diner at 8 a.m. All men in the area are welcome to attend. The purpose of the gathering is to share in fun, food and fellowship. Breakfast can be purchased from a buffet or menu. If not interested in eating breakfast, just show up for funny stories, a brief devotional, and community announcements. These three activities take about 20 minutes. The next breakfast is June 13, 2026. We hope you will join us.

HONAKER HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1966 REUNION: The Honaker High School Class of 1966 will hold its 60th Reunion on Saturday, September 19, 2026, at the Russell County Conference Center in Lebanon. Details about the time, as well as the cost per person will be forthcoming. Also, the Class of 1968 has asked to join us. It'll be a great time for us to reconnect!

Contact Jim Baldwin for more information at the following: Phone/Text 276-608-7186, Email: jim-baldwin2@outlook.com

SINGING: There will be a singing at the Church of Jesus Christ on Stoots Street, Lebanon on Friday, June 12, 2026 at 7 p.m. Singers will be Lost and Found, Spirit and Truth Singers. Everyone come out and worship with us.

GLEN HELTON FAMILY REUNION: The annual Glen Helton Family Reunion will be on Saturday, June 13, 2026 at the home of Chris Helton and family located in the Belfast Community. The reunion will begin at 11:00 a.m. with a potluck dinner at 12 noon. If you can be with us, please bring your favorite covered dish, dessert, etc. and join us for good food, fun, and fellowship.

GUESS WHO?

I am an actor born in Boston on June 13, 1981. I studied acting at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute. I starred on a TV series in 2000, but I'm better known as a movie actor. I've played leading roles in various films based on comic books.

Answer: Chris Evans

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to the great outdoors.

I R B S D

Answer: Birds

Feeding Southwest Virginia announces summer food program

By SHAWN STREET
sstreet@hdmediallc.com

Feeding Southwest Virginia has announced locations for its annual summer food service program.

Meals will be available to those in need at no charge. Meals will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

The sites local to Russell County residents are non-congregate localities, meaning the food is "grab and go."

Sites include:

• Aaron Feeser Ministries, 271 Railroad Avenue, in Honaker. Five-day meal boxes will be provided including breakfast and supper on Mondays from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

• Fox Meadows Apartments, Cumberland Plateau Housing Authority, 35 Fox Meadows Drive, in Lebanon. Lunch and snacks will be available Monday through Thursday from 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. A children's food truck will also serve a fresh lunch and shelf stable meals to take home.

• Lebanon Town Pool, 45 Gibson Street, in Lebanon. Five-day meal boxes, including breakfast and lunch, will be distributed on Wednesdays from 11:15 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. A children's food truck will also serve a fresh lunch and shelf stable meals to take home.

• Clinchview Apartments, 3311 Third Avenue, in St. Paul. Five-day meal boxes with breakfast and lunch/supper will be distributed on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. A children's food truck will also serve a fresh lunch and shelf stable meals to take home.

Spice up dinnertime with a Cajun classic



Experimenting in the kitchen is one of the joys of cooking. Trying new recipes or even going off-script and tinkering with an existing recipe based on your own hunch can open eyes and treat taste buds to new flavor profiles.

Home cooks who want to expand their culinary repertoires with some particularly notable flavor can look to Cajun food and its distinct dishes to accomplish that goal. If that sounds like an exciting night in the kitchen, try this recipe for "Jambalaya With Sausage and Shrimp" from Lines+Angles.

Jambalaya With Sausage and Shrimp
Makes 4 servings

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
8 ounces chorizo or andouille sausage, sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
1 lb. large raw shell-on shrimp
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
1 rib of celery, rinsed, trimmed and finely chopped
1 small red bell pepper, rinsed; trimmed, seeded, and diced
1 small green bell pepper, rinsed, trimmed, seeded, and diced
4 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced
1 1/2 cups long grain white rice, rinsed
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, minced
14 ounces canned diced tomatoes, drained, juice reserved
4 cups clam juice
1 bay leaf
Fresh parsley, rinsed and chopped (for garnish)

1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Adjust oven rack to middle position.

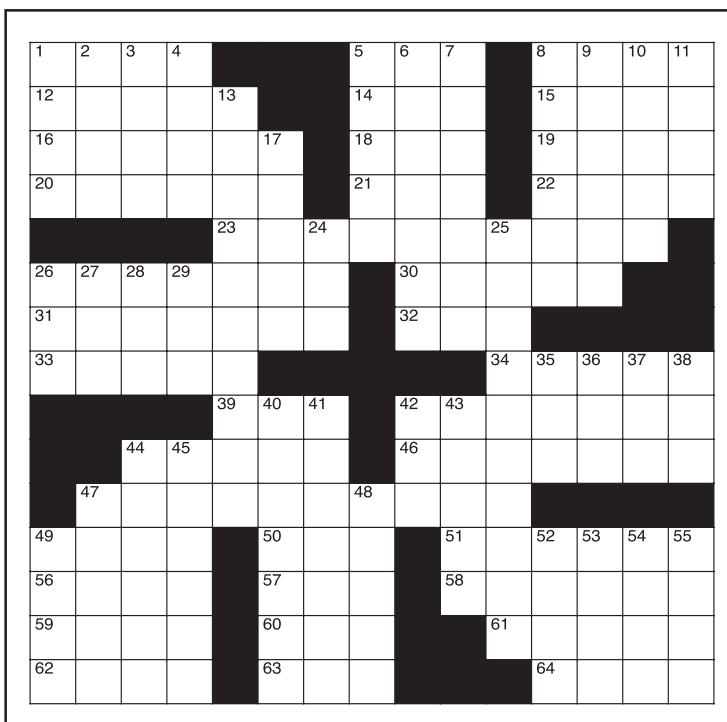
2. In a deep cast iron skillet or Dutch oven, set over medium-high heat, heat oil until shimmering, but not smoking. Add sausage and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, or until browned. Remove sausage from pan using a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Add shrimp to the pan and cook until the shells are browned on both sides, about 1 minute per side. Transfer shrimp to a large bowl and refrigerate.

3. Add onion, celery, peppers, and garlic to the pan. Reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables have softened, about 7 to 10 minutes. Add rice, tomato paste, salt, and thyme; cook until rice is completely coated with oil, about 2 minutes.

4. Stir in the tomatoes, 1/4 cup reserved tomato juice, clam juice, bay leaf, and sausage. Place a piece of aluminum foil directly on rice. Bring to a boil, cover pan, transfer to oven and bake for about 18 to 20 minutes, or until the rice is almost tender and most of the liquid is absorbed.

5. Meanwhile, remove the shrimp from the refrigerator; peel and clean, discarding the shells. Remove pan from oven, uncover and remove aluminum foil. Gently stir in the peeled shrimp. Lay the foil back down over the surface of the rice and cover with lid, return to oven, and cook until the rice is tender, all the liquid is absorbed and the shrimp is cooked through, about 5 minutes.

6. Remove pan from oven, uncover, remove foil and bay leaf. Sprinkle with chopped parsley. Divide between bowls. Serve.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Sealed with a kiss
5. Large sandwich
8. Swiss city
12. Japanese persimmons
14. When you hope to get somewhere
15. Wings
16. A name of God
18. Elected official (informal)
19. Abnormal breathing
20. "Seinfeld" character
21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
22. Something for sale
23. Gets rid of
26. One who touts
30. Blemished
31. Less than exciting
32. Born of
33. N. German town
34. Notes
39. Move away from land
42. Vulcanite
44. More ignoble
46. Child actor Kirk
47. Written works
49. Sea vessel
50. Residue
51. Engraved
56. Having sufficient skill
57. One and only
58. Erase
59. Broad inlets
60. Nightmarish street
61. Play again
62. Formerly (archaic)
63. Add a color to change the color
64. Move swiftly and lightly

CLUES DOWN

1. Scottish island
2. River in the Netherlands
3. Asian people
4. Fuzzy fruit
5. Ninth month (abbr.)
6. An idealistic social reformer
7. What you owe
8. Colorless mineral
9. Overjoyed
10. Rattling breaths
11. Tropical Old World tree
13. A citizen of Senegal
17. Greek mythological beauty
24. Wrath
25. Instrument to measure wind speed
26. Luxury carmaker
27. Bitterly regret
28. Not or
29. Google certification
35. Midway between northeast and east
36. Space station
37. Relating to the ears
38. Congressman
40. Yelled at
41. Rudely assertive
42. Defunct European money
43. Shared one's soul
44. Onion rolls
45. A way to state clearly
47. Relating to a lobe
48. Underlying message
49. Hollywood pig
52. Indicates pitch
53. Filament of a feather
54. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles
55. Diminish

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Collaboration is your secret weapon this week, Aries. Putting two heads together will be better than one. Take a walk or exercise to get away and gain perspective.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, you may find yourself getting a small bonus or increase in pay, proving your financial luck is looking up this week. Enjoy the surprise and treat yourself to something.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
Gemini, this is a great week for writing or presentations since you will have creativity flowing through you. A fun text message can be a catalyst for a great weekend.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Your nesting instincts are in full swing right now, Cancer. You might be inspired to turn your space into a peaceful sanctuary. A family-related piece of news can bring peace.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
Courage may come naturally this week, Leo. Speak your truth right when it is needed. Your warmth can be a magnet for others and new friendships may develop.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, learning a new skill will be easy for you right now. Take pride in your progress. You are becoming more versatile and vital.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Share your heart and listen closely to what a partner has to say, Libra. A romantic or platonic relationship will reach a high point. The connection built will be exciting.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
You're at peak productivity right now as you tackle your to-do list with great focus, Scorpio. By the end of the week you'll be ready to dive into a mysterious or fun hobby.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
A sense of humor will be a great asset this week, helping to diffuse any tension by laughing, Sagittarius. Start looking ahead to travel plans.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Wisdom is flowing through you and you may find you are the go-to person for solid advice, Capricorn. Your grounded nature helps everyone around you.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, innovation will help you find clever shortcuts for problems that have proven tough to solve. Your unique style may start earning you praise, but remain humble.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Empathy allows you to connect with others on a deep level, Pisces. A creative project that you have been building finally starts to bloom in unexpected ways.

Pioneers, Region 2D Baseball Champions

By ANTHONY STEVENS
astevens@hdmediallc.com

LEBANON (June 4, 2026) – What a difference a year makes. In 2025, at the Region 2D finals at John Battle, the host team secured a 10-5 win over the Pioneers. In 2026, an unexpected hero led Lebanon to a 6-0 victory over the Trojans on Thursday at Doc Adams Field to win the regional title.

The Pioneers have played 26 games this season. Junior Cannon Barton has started on the bump for two of them; make that three.

"Cannon has worked his butt off," Lebanon coach Cody Compton said. "He didn't miss a day in the fall. He didn't miss a day when we worked out. If we're doing something baseball-wise, Can-non is here working. He earned it and deserved it. It couldn't happen to a better kid."

Was Barton surprised to get the ball in the title game?

"I was a little, I thought (Isaac) Godsey might start," Barton said. "Late this week, Coach said you've worked hard, so I'm going to let you have it. I was able to come in and do my job."

"This is great, an awesome atmosphere here. I'm glad

SEE **BASEBALL CHAMPIONS | 3B**



PRESTON BALL PHOTOGRAPHY | For the Lebanon News

2026 Region 2D Baseball Champions

Lebanon Pioneers Front (L-R): Maddox Barton, Luke Garrett, Brock Keen, Samuel Crabtree, Charlie Lawson, Brady Cole, Parker Cole, Jake Hilton, Bodhi Hall, and Liam Compton. Back: Assistant coach Will Stamper, Toby Baker, Jacob Campbell, Dawson Rasnake, Isaac Godsey, Ethan Horne, Lake Baldwin, Cannon Barton, assistant coach D.J. Hall, and head coach Cody Compton.

Eastside tops Tigers to win Region 1D softball title



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News]

Jailey Yates (15) slides into third safely with a triple for the Tigers as Eastside's Mallory Durham awaits the ball.

By ANTHONY STEVENS
astevens@hdmediallc.com

EMORY (June 3, 2026) – There's an old adage in softball. You can't win if you can't score. Ho-naker did about all it could do against senior Spartan pitcher Emma Sartin, but it wasn't enough. The Tigers were shut out for only the second time this season, suffering a 4-0 setback to defending region and Class 1 state champion Eastside.

"We played a good game. They only outhit us 5-4," said Honaker coach Donovan Helton. "A couple of errors cost us, and an injury (to right fielder Peyton Marshall) shook us a bit. We put the bat on the ball pretty well against a quality pitcher. The thing that made me proud was that we didn't quit."

When Honaker (15-8) put a runner on, Sartin was up to the task. She got a strikeout when she needed it, finishing with 12 Ks and didn't walk a batter in the game at Wasps Field on Wednesday.

Sartin won her 20th game in the circle this season and has a minuscule 0.52 earned run average.

"Emma is a leader at the plate and in the circle. I can't say enough about her," noted Eastside coach Suzi Atwood. "Emma is a humble, good kid."

In the second inning, the Tigers' most promising scoring opportunity arose when Jailey Yates hit a triple to deep right-center with two outs. Sartin then struck out the following batter to end the inning.

"My team backed me up with four runs, so I felt pretty confident," remarked Sartin. "The main thing is knowing I'm in control. I'm confident in my ability. My team is all excellent fielders. I just have to take a deep breath and work hard."

Eastside (21-5) got all the runs they would need in the bottom of the inning. Peyton VanWinkle was hit by a pitch. Alexis Nixon then lofted a two-run homer just over the left-field fence.

"I had just told her, get on top of the ball, let's not have any fly balls," commented Atwood. "Lexi hit it in the air, and I thought, darn. But I was like, wait, I about had a heart attack. It was great to see. I'm glad she didn't listen to me."

The Spartans added a run in the third when sister Zoe Sartin singled and scored an unearned run after an error and a groundout by VanWinkle.

They added another unearned run in the sixth when Nixon walked and scored after a sacrifice bunt was thrown away.

The Tigers had been getting clutch hits and solid defense during their four-game postseason winning streak.

"We've been getting those hits we needed up until this game; we had been seeing the ball well," Helton stated. "We had been playing error-free. To

SEE **EASTSIDE TOPS TIGERS | 3B**

Chilhowie ends Tigers baseball season in Region 1D semis

By ANTHONY STEVENS
astevens@hdmediallc.com

EMORY (June 1, 2026) – The Tigers stayed in the game with Chilhowie for three innings, but the final two frames turned ugly. The Warriors defeated Honaker 11-0 in the Region 1D semifinals at Porterfield-DeVault Field on Emory & Henry University's campus. It marked the fourth time this season that Honaker has lost to the Warriors.

The game was close early on, with Chilhowie taking a 1-0 lead in the second inning when Brycen Sturgill singled and then scored on Brandon Miller's double.

"Brycen has been a catalyst for us in the postseason," Chilhowie coach Jeff Robinson said. "Mil-ler, too. Coming into today, he was 8-for-10 in the playoffs."

That's where the score remained until the bottom of the fourth inning. The Tigers had some oppor-tunities. Chilhowie starter Tyler Gonzalez struggled with control, walking five batters the first four innings.

Honaker (17-10) couldn't deliver a clutch hit. Landon Schneider had the Tigers' first hit in the fourth. Honaker left five runners stranded through four.

"We had a lot of opportunities early to capitalize, maybe even take the lead or cut into their lead," stated Honaker coach Derrick Murphy. "Chilhowie executed and didn't leave runners on. That was the difference."

Gonzalez had seven strikeouts and allowed only two hits in throwing the five-inning shutout.

"Tyler has pitched 14 innings against Honaker this season and allowed five singles," Robinson noted. "He

SEE **CHILHOWIE ENDS TIGERS | 2B**

CONTROVERSY

Pioneers Survive & Advance

By ANTHONY STEVENS
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LEBANON (June 2, 2026) – To sum it up, the Pioneers took a 4-2 win over Richlands in the Re-gion 2D semifinals, advancing to the Virginia High School League Class 2 baseball tournament for the seventh consecutive season. It doesn't even begin to describe what took place on Doc Adams Field late Tuesday night into Wednesday morning!

The opening regional contest between defending champion John Battle and upstart Lee High was scheduled to begin at 4:30 pm. The start was delayed, and there was another lightning delay. The Trojans, trailing 8-4 in the seventh inning, rallied for four runs and then won it with a run in the eighth, and the game ended at 10:30 pm.

In the nightcap, Lebanon starter Lake Baldwin threw the first pitch at 11:09 pm. The umpires halted play at 1:16 am due to heavy fog. The umpires conferred, and at 1:30 am, it was determined that a 30-minute wait would be allowed to see if conditions improved.

At 2 am, the teams took the field and began to warm up. Three runners were on base for the Blue Tornado, trailing 4-2 with one out and the bases loaded. The umpires then determined it was un-playable, and by rule, the game reverted to the end of the sixth inning. Game Over!

"I hate to end the game this way," Lebanon coach Cody Compton said. "But with the fog, I have to take care of my kids."

Needless to say, the few Lebanon fans still around in the wee hours of Wednesday morning were happy with the win. The Richlands faithful, players, and coaches were extremely disappointed.

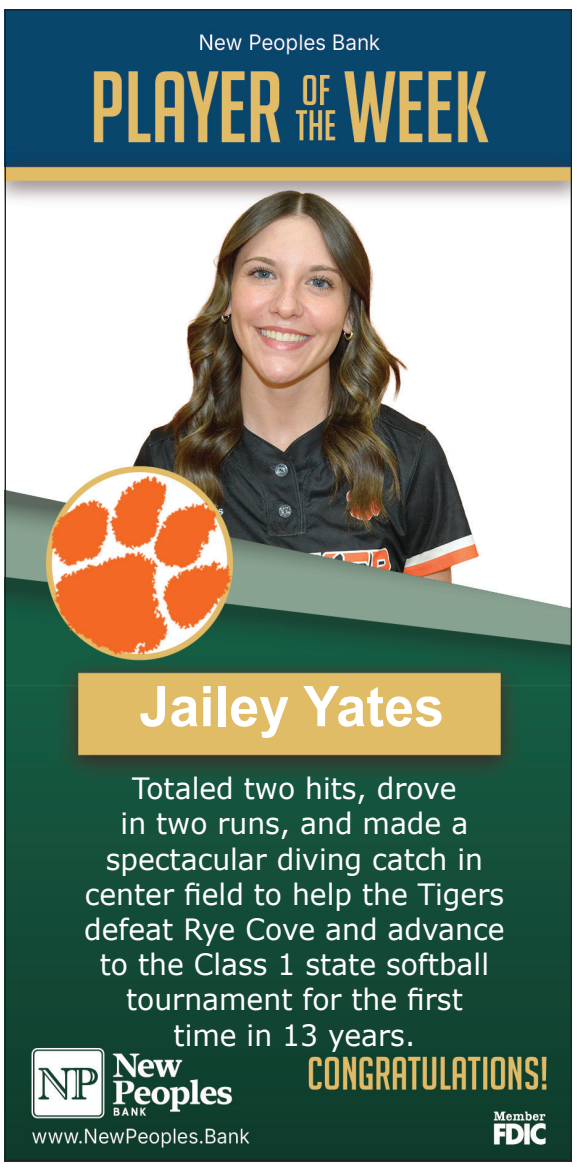
It was an unfortunate ending to say the least.

It was the 11th win in a row for Lebanon (17-8). It all came down to a two-out rally for the Pio-neers in the first inning.

Junior Parker Ryder started on the mound for the Blue Tornado and struck out the first two batters he faced. Brady Cole singled, and Baldwin and Cannon Barton drew walks, loading the bases.

Catcher Parker Cole came to the plate and drove a 1-0 pitch down the left-field line to score his brother Brady and Baldwin.

SEE **PIONEERS SURVIVE | 2B**



SPORTS DAY-BY-DAY

MONDAY (6/1)

HONAKER 11, RYE COVE 1 (SOFTBALL)

For the first time since 2013, Honaker is going to the state baseball playoffs. The Hogoheegee District tournament champions disposed of Rye Cove 11-1 in six innings in the Region 1D softball tournament to advance to the finals against the reigning state champion Eastside.

Sophie Campbell powered the offense with a two-run triple and a three-run double. Lincoln Bush, Kylee Miller, and Jailey Yates had two hits each for Honaker, who finished with 10 hits. Gracie Shelton had an outstanding day in the circle, only allowing one hit, a blooper by Gracen Chavez.

Madison Early scored the War Eagles' only run on a wild pitch.



KEITH RAY | For the Lebanon News

Jailey Yates makes a diving catch in the sixth inning on a low liner in the Tigers win over Rye Cove.

TUESDAY (6/2)

LEE HIGH 4, LEBANON 2 (SOFTBALL)

The Pioneers tried to give them an exciting finish. But Lebanon's season ended in the Region 2D semifinals. The Pioneers trailed Lee 4-0 heading into the bottom of the seventh inning before the Pioneers had a two-out rally to make it interesting.

Chloe Couch ripped a two-run double in the seventh. A flyout for the final out ended the game as Lebanon was handed a 4-2 setback.

Senior Chloe Bledsoe led the Generals, going 3-for-4 at the plate, including a solo home run, and two RBIs.



KEITH RAY | For the Lebanon News

Shortstop Cadence Rose covers ground in foul territory or an over the shoulder catch for an out, as Honaker advanced to the Region 1D softball finals with a victory over the War Eagles.



MICHELE BALL | For the Lebanon News

Cannon Barton (15) at the plate for the Pioneers. Barton reached base twice and scored a run.

PIONEERS SURVIVE

FROM PAGE 1B

"Parker is such an addition to the team," Lebanon senior outfielder Luke Garrett noted. "He started off slowly, but since the district games began, Parker has picked it up big time, and we've needed it. Especially being a freshman, he obviously has room to grow in his game, but we can't ask for much more. He's stepped up in big moments, and I can't say enough good things about him."

Garrett came to the plate next and delivered a two-run single up the middle, giving the Pioneers a quick 4-0 advantage.

"Same thing as always, grip it and rip it," commented Garrett. "Find a good pitch. Stay true to what I've been doing, middle to backside. Thankfully, that hit proved big for us."

Those four runs proved to be enough with the lefty Baldwin on the bump. He retired the first nine batters he faced. Gage Hylton broke up the no-hitter by leading off the fourth inning with a single. Baldwin sandwiched a flyout between two strikeouts to get out of the inning without any damage.

Richlands (12-10) scored in the fifth when Blake Fuller reached on an error with an infield popup dropped. He scored on a groundout by Collin Adkins.

The Blue Tornado added a run in the sixth. Riley Perkins singled, stole second and third, then scored on a wild pitch. With two outs, Max Herndon singled, and Andrew Boyd walked, ending the day for Baldwin, who allowed three hits and struck out 10.

Jake Hilton came to the hill, walked Fuller to load the bases, and then struck out Gabe Gillespie to end the inning.

It was three up and three down for the Pioneers in the bottom of the inning. That proved to be the end of the game.

"Parker came through with a huge hit for us in the first," Compton said. "It was a big inning. We have to figure out how to get a clutch hit going forward. Lake threw a great ballgame. Jake didn't have his best stuff, but he got a big out for us. It doesn't feel like it, but we're going to the state tournament. That's a small success."

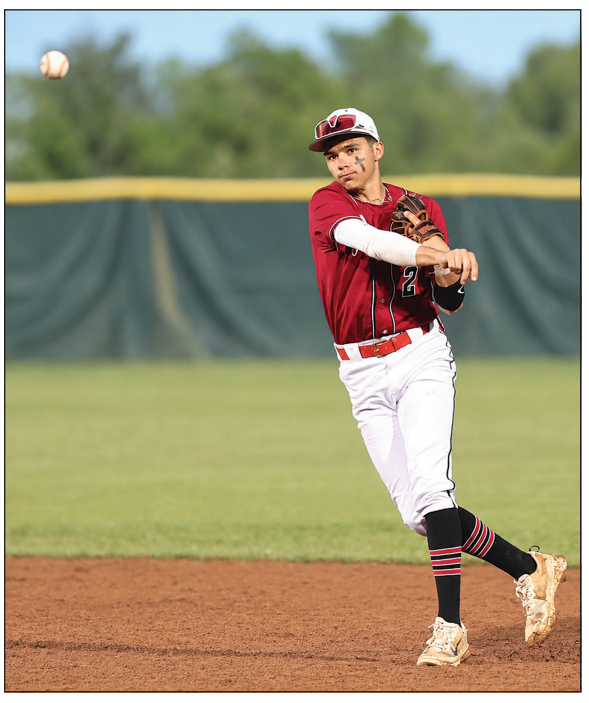
Although somewhat tainted, Lebanon advances.

"A wins a win. It's not every day you get to play a VHSL region game at one in the morning," Garrett said. "You have to do what you have to do at this point."

The Pioneers will host John Battle on Thursday with the regional title on the line. Both teams ad-vance to the Class 2 state quarterfinals regardless of the outcome.

"At this time of year, you have to take it one game at a time," Garrett stated. "All we have to do is prepare for the region championship game and play our hearts out. When we go on to the state quarterfinals, we have to go win it."

Lebanon 4, Richlands 2
Richlands000 011—2 3 0
Lebanon400 000—4 5 1
Ryder, Hylton (4) and Gillespie. Baldwin, Hilton (6) and P. Cole. W—Baldwin (4-2). L—Ryder (2-5). HR—none.



MICHELE BALL | For the Lebanon News

Booker Steffey (2) makes a throw at second base in the Pioneers 4-2 win over Richlands in the Region 2D semifinals.



MICHELE BALL | For the Lebanon News

Brady Cole (1) holds Richland's Gage Hylton close for first base in Lebanon's win.

CHILHOWIE ENDS TIGERS

FROM PAGE 1B

allowed one run against them in the extra-innings game at Chilhowie. Other than that, he's been lights out."

Chilhowie (18-7) broke it open and ended it early, scoring 10 runs in the fourth and fifth innings. Sturgill was 3-for-3 to lead the attack.

"It's wonderful just to be around a bunch of great guys," commented Sturgill. "I've met a lot of people. To be in this many playoff games, you have to have a good team around you. It means so much to me."

The Warriors play with confidence when Gonzalez is on the bump.

"When Tyler is on the mound, you can't help but feel safe," Sturgill said. "You know it will be a good start. You get to watch a good pitcher pitch and play his game. I'm more excited than ever. We're heating up. It's going to be a great season."

Chilhowie totaled 11 hits against four Honaker pitchers.

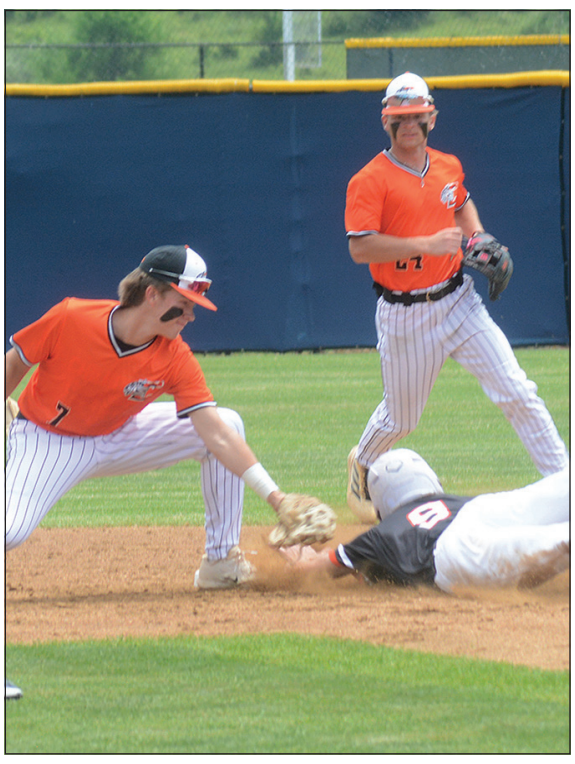
"We've been hitting up and down the lineup in the postseason," stated Robinson. "I've been wait-ing for that all season long, and it couldn't have come at a better time.

"These seniors have been to the state tournament all four years now. They know what it's like to play this deep. We're alive another week."

It was a disappointing loss, but it didn't dampen the Tigers' solid season.

"Anytime you can get this deep into the postseason, it's been a successful season," declared Mur-phy. "I told the guys we did a good job, battling through all the injuries we had to deal with all year long to get to this point."

Chilhowie 11, Honaker 0
Honaker000 00—0 2 1
Chilhowie010 46—11 11 0
P. Musick, Schneider (4), Ball (5), Reynolds (5) and Beavers. Gonzalez and Bowman. W—Gonzalez (7-2). L—C. Musick (6-4). HR—B. Robinson (C), 5th, one on.



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News

Honaker's Caden Altizer leads off first in the season-ending loss to Chilhowie.



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News

Jake Rasnake appeared safe sliding into second base, but was ruled out in the first inning of the Tigers' loss.



PRESTON BALL PHOTOGRAPHY | For the Lebanon News

Shortstop Jake Hilton goes airborne for the ball in the win over the Trojans.

BASEBALL CHAMPIONS

FROM PAGE 1B

Coach Compton believed in me enough to start this game. I only had two strikeouts, but the defense played great behind me. The outfield played great. They were able to track down some balls."

With one out in the second inning, starter Heath Preisani of John Battle ran into control issues. He walked Barton, Godsey, and Dawson Rasnake, loading the bases. That brought freshman Ethan Horne to the plate. Horne came through with a clutch RBI single.

"I wasn't trying to do too much," Horne stated. "I knew we needed some runs on the board to build momentum. I knew that if I could get something going, the rest of my team would pick it up. I just wanted to hit something hard on the ground, and I was able to get it done."

After a pop-out for the second out of the inning, Brady Cole and Lake Baldwin each followed with two-run hits, putting Lebanon up 5-0.

"That took a lot of pressure off. I was able to go to the mound relaxed," remarked Barton. "I just needed to throw strikes, and I did. The defense made the plays, and we got out of here with a win."

Barton cruised through five innings, allowing only one hit. Godsey came to the mound in the sixth and pitched two scoreless innings in relief.

"I told Cannon he was going to win the district championship last week," Compton declared. "This week, I ask him, are you ready to win the regional championship? I hope I get to ask him one more time."

The Pioneers added a final run in the sixth. Godsey walked and scored when Horne grounded into a fielder's choice.

"We had a few good at-bats," noted Compton. "Cannon was throwing the ball well, and I knew Isaac could come in and shut them down if I needed him to. I told Cannon that if he could get me three or four innings, we'd win this game. He got me five."

The second inning proved impossible for the Trojans to overcome.

"You can't focus on one inning as a team," said John Battle coach Jimmy Gobble. "I was pleased with how we put together our plate approaches, how we battled, and our contact approach. We had some good things going on. Baseball is a game of inches and opportunity. We get to play more baseball, and we're going to focus on that."

Preston Rosenbaum came in relief for Battle in the second inning and was solid for the rest of the way on the mound.

"We got to see a sophomore (Rosenbaum) do some great things," Gobble noted. "He came in and pitched absolutely phenomenal. He had a good two-pitch mix, and it was good to see that. It was fun to watch."

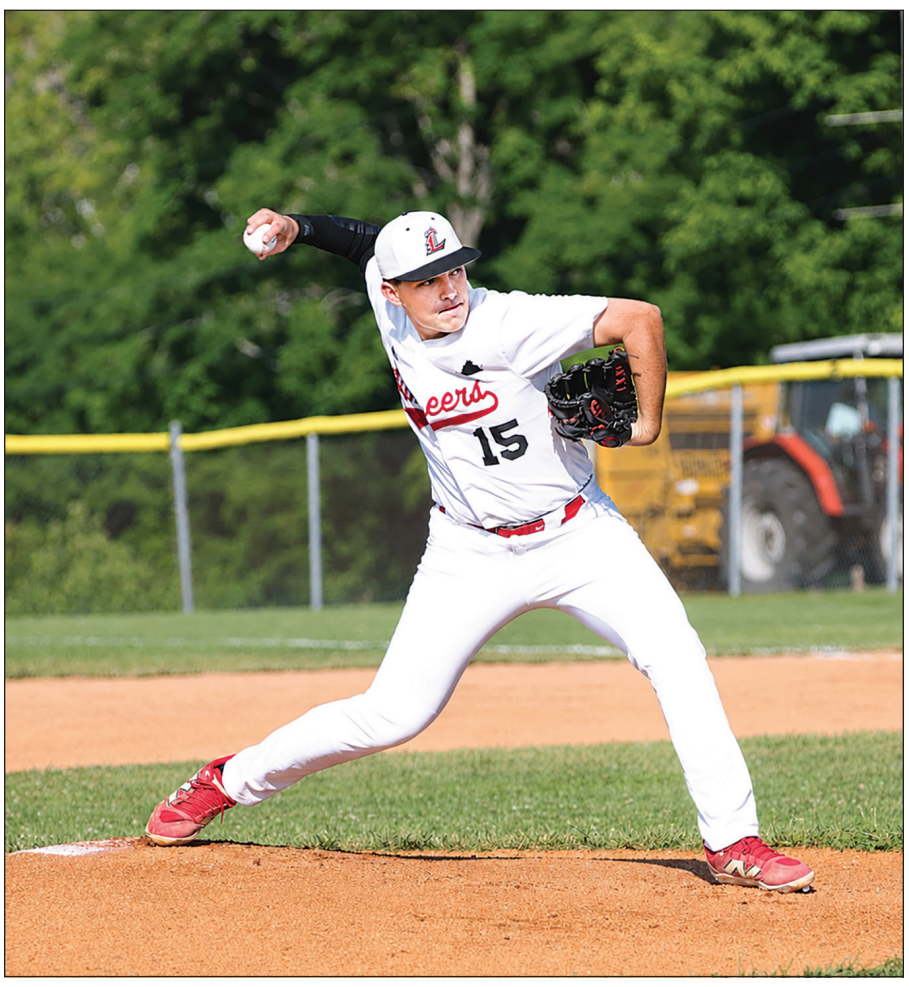
Patrick County defeated Dan River 10-4 in the Region 2C finals. John Battle (19-6) will travel to Patrick County on Tuesday (6/9/26).

"You don't change much. We are who we are," said Gobble. "We like who we are. We're the type of team that just wants to go play baseball. As long as they'll let us, we'll go play."

Lebanon (18-8) won its 12th straight. They will host Dan River (11-12) on Tuesday as well, with a trip to Salem awaiting the winners.

"We've worked so hard for this since day one," said Horne. "The ones who weren't playing other sports started in the fall. It's a yearlong thing, but we got here, and it's awesome."

Lebanon 6, John Battle 0
JS Battle000 000 0—0 4 0
Lebanon050 001 X—6 5 0
H. Preisani, Rosenbaum and Price. C. Barton, Godsey (6) and P. Cole. W—C. Barton (6-0). L—H. Preisani. HR—none.



PRESTON BALL PHOTOGRAPHY | For the Lebanon News

Cannon Barton on the mound for the Pioneers against John Battle picked up his sixth win without a loss.



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News

Zoe Sartin makes the catch at first base as Honaker's Candence Rose (13) sprints down the first base line.

EASTSIDE TOPS TIGERS

FROM PAGE 1B

win a regional championship, you have to play error-free and get clutch hits. That didn't happen, but we live to fight another day."

Yates had two hits, and Aliyah Hilton and Gracie Shelton added the other safeties for Honaker.

The Tigers will travel to face Region C champion Auburn next Tuesday (6/9/26), while Eastside will host George Wythe at UVa-Wise. The Honaker game will be played at Christiansburg High School with the first pitch scheduled for 5 p.m.

"I thought we played well today," Atwood said. "We knew coming in that Honaker would hit the ball and put it in play, and we would have to make some plays. Honaker is a good team. I'm sure they will do well in their next game."

Eastside 4, Honaker 0
Honaker000 000 0—0 4 2
Eastside021 001 X—4 5 0
Shelton and Campbell. E. Sartin and Vanwinkle. W—E. Sartin (20-3). L—Shelton (12-7). HR—Nixon (E), 2nd, one on.



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News

Honaker's Lincoln Bush attempts a slap hit in the loss to the Spartans.