The Lebanon News

Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880

VOL. 104 NO. 24 | WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2026 | LEBANON, VIRGINIA | $2

Independence Day celebrations continue this weekend

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

Celebrations in honor of 250 years of independence got underway last weekend in Honaker. The parties continue this weekend throughout Russell County.

The Town of Cleveland will show its patriotism on Friday, July 3. The town's annual Independence Day festivities will get underway at 5:00 p.m. and the Cleveland Ball Field.

The Brittany Mullins Band will be performing during

SEE **INDEPENDENCE DAY | 2A**



Old Glory will be flying high as celebrations continue this weekend.

Bruce H. Russell, II elected president-elect of the Virginia State Bar

Bruce H. Russell, II, a Southwest Virginia attorney and longtime bar leader, has been elected President-Elect of the Virginia State Bar. His term as President-Elect begins July 1, 2026, and he is expected to serve as President of the Virginia State Bar during the 2027–2028 bar year.

Russell's election marks a significant moment for the Virginia legal community and for lawyers practicing outside the Commonwealth's major metropolitan centers. A native of the coalfields and a practicing attorney in Southwest Virginia, Russell is believed to be the first Virginia State Bar President-Elect from west of Roanoke in nearly three decades.

"I am deeply honored by the confidence of my colleagues across the Commonwealth," Russell said. "The Virginia State Bar belongs to every lawyer in Virginia — from the largest firms in our cities to the solo and small-firm lawyers serving rural communities, courthouse towns, and families who depend on local access to justice. I am grateful for the opportunity to support incoming President Sue Tarley, to serve our profession, and to help strengthen the legal system we all share."

Russell is the owner of Bruce H. Russell, II, P.C., with offices in Lebanon, Abingdon, and Tazewell. His practice reflects the modern evolution of the Virginia country lawyer, including criminal defense, domestic relations, civil litigation, plaintiff's personal injury, and traffic matters. He began his legal career with the boutique technology law firm of Thompson & Hagy in Charlottesville, later served as an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney in Buchanan County, and practiced with the regional litigation firm Bolling, Hearl & Russell before opening his own practice in 2009.

Russell is a 1997 graduate of the University of Virginia and a 2000 graduate of the University of Richmond School of Law. He also taught at the Appalachian School of Law, reflecting a long-standing commitment to legal education, mentorship, and professional development.

Russell currently serves on the Virginia State Bar Executive Committee (second term) and represents the 28th Judicial Circuit on the Virginia State Bar Council. He has chaired the VSB Special Committee on Bench-Bar Relations and has been deeply involved in efforts to improve access to



Bruce H. Russell II is the new President-Elect of the Virginia State Bar.

legal services, strengthen local and specialty bars, and support lawyers practicing in underserved regions of the Commonwealth.

He has served for many years as President of the Russell County Bar Association and as President of the 28th Circuit Criminal Defense Bar. He has also served for many years as a board member of the Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society, reflecting his long-standing commitment to access to justice, civil legal services, and the needs of low-income and underserved Virginians. His service also includes leadership with the Boyd-Graves Conference, the Virginia Mountain/Valley Lawyers Alliance, and numerous Virginia State Bar committees and initiatives.

In recent years, Russell has been especially active in statewide discussions about legal deserts, rural practice, attorney wellness, professionalism, access to justice, bench-bar relations, and the future of legal service delivery in Virginia. He has taught extensively for the Virginia State Bar, Virginia CLE, local and specialty bar associations, and regional bench-bar programs on topics including ethics, professionalism, criminal law, personal injury, artificial intelligence, small-firm practice, access to justice, and attorney well-being.

Russell has received numerous recognitions for

SEE **PRESIDENT-ELECT | 6A**

Sheriff's office captures man wanted for attempted murder in Tennessee

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

A man wanted for attempted second-degree murder was arrest on June 25 in Russell County.

According to Sheriff Bill Watson, the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office contacted local authorities to be on the lookout for the suspect, who was identified as Isaiah Jospeh Campbell, 29.

Sullivan County officials allege that Campbell fired a gun at a family member during an argument. He then fled the scene, which was reportedly in the Orebank section of Kingsport, and made his way to Russell County.

Campbell was taken into custody by local authorities in the Lebanon area without incident.

He is currently being held in the Southwest Virgina Regional Jail in Abingdon awaiting extradition. In addition to attempted second-degree murder, he is also charged with aggravated assault, two counts of reckless endangerment with a deadly weapon and a weapons violation.

June 24 was a busy day for the Russell County Sheriff's Office.

On that date, authorities received a report of a male subject brandishing a firearm at vehicles in the Carterton Area.

"Due to prompt information from the community to our dispatchers and swift relay of information to our deputies, the male suspect was apprehended without incident," Watson said.

The name of the suspect was not released.

Also on June 24, one person was arrested following a brief pursuit in Lebanon involving officers with the Russell County Sheriff's Office and Lebanon Police Department.

Watson said officers attempted to pull over a vehicle when the driver allegedly showed signs of being under the influence.

"When the driver opted not to stop, a short pursuit followed," Watson said. "The suspect attempted to strike officers with his vehicle during the chase. The vehicle was subsequently stopped, and officers successfully apprehended the male driver after directing him to exit the vehicle.

The name of the suspect was not released by police.

In Swords Creek on June 24, officers joined forces with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to arrest two individuals.

The suspects, an unidentified male and female, allegedly barricaded themselves inside a residence and issued threats to authorities. Following a brief standoff,

SEE **SHERIFF'S OFFICE | 6A**

Trash, schools main topics of discussion during budget talks

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

Trash sites and funding for the school system were among the main topics of discussion during the June 24 budget meeting of the Russell County Board of Supervisors.

At the beginning of the nearly two-hour meeting, Russell County Administrator Lonzo Lester presented the board with a balanced budget of $35,130,893. "It is balanced. It is fair," Lester said.

He added that the county currently has a surplus of approximately $150,000. That number of significant, Lester said, because neighboring counties have found themselves millions of dollars in debt.

Lester said one of the biggest areas of concern was the price of inflation. He said the county's fuel bill alone has ballooned to $14,000 a month.

Board members began discussing areas that could be cut to produce more savings. As has been the case in recent meetings, trash became a major topic.

Chairman David Eaton introduced a proposal to close the Drill and Blackford sites while opening a new manned site at Putnam.

Eaton made the argument that simply closing unmanned sites for the sake of saving money would prove to be a major inconvenience to residents and could lead to environmental headaches.

"I'm concerned about the alternative problems we would face," Eaton said. He added that some residents would be looking at "30-40 minutes in a car" to dump their trash.

"I don't want an environment of trash all over," he said. 'I'm afraid that's what you'll see. People will just throw it out."

District 3's Tara Dye agreed. She said closing the sites would inconvenience a lot of people, especially the elderly. "These convenient sites are not as conve-

SEE **BUDGET TALKS | 2A**

Bears reported in Honaker

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

Honaker as long been known as the "Home of the Tigers". But in recent weeks, another form of wildlife has made the town its home – bears.

The Honaker Town Hall issued a statement last week about the bears that have been reported throughout town.

"We have received numerous calls and complaints about bears in town," the statement read. "We have contacted the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, and they advised that bears are searching for food sources."

The statement went on to say, "They recommend that residents keep all dog and cat food indoors and use bear-proof trash cans. They also advised that if you see or unexpectedly encounter a bear, you should make yourself appear larger and make plenty of noise, such as setting off your car alarm, to scare the bear away."

Bear Wise, an organization devoted to helping hu-

SEE **BEARS REPORTED | 6A**

The Lebanon News
Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880

The Lebanon News is published weekly by Virginia Media, Inc. (540) 389-9355.
Periodicals postage prices paid by Virginia Media, Inc, 1633 W Main St, Salem, VA 24153

INSIDE THIS WEEK: Opinion: 4A, 5A | Sports: 1B, 3B | Puzzles: 2B | Classifieds: 4B

Daniel "Butch" Louie Glass, Jr.

DANIEL "BUTCH" LOUIE GLASS, JR., 77, a lifelong servant to his community and dedicated member of Dante Rescue Squad for fifty-seven years, departed this life on Thursday, June 18, 2026.

Dan was born May 30, 1949, to the late Daniel and Irene Hileman Glass. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters, Sherry Kennedy and Zona Austin.

Dan was a lifelong learner, completing continuing education hours even on the day of his hospitalization. Throughout his life, he earned numerous certificates, credentials, and degrees from Ferrum College, Emory & Henry University, Radford University, and Virginia Tech.

Dan devoted his professional career to education as a teacher, coach, and principal. He retired from Russell County Public Schools in 2012 after touching the lives of countless students and colleagues. He also played a key role in establishing Russell County's school safety and active shooter preparedness program. While he coached all boys' high school sports, baseball held a special place in his heart. As head baseball coach at Castlewood High School for thirteen years, he led the Blue Devils to the 1986 Virginia State Championship and was honored as Coach of the Year.

Dan's father was instrumental in founding Dante Rescue Squad in 1968. That same year, Dan joined the organization and remained an active volunteer until the time of his passing. Anyone who knew Dan knew that the rescue squad was his passion and the cause for which he fought hardest, even through his own health challenges.

Dan was far more than a volunteer—he dedicated his life to serving others. Over the course of his service, he responded to more than 13,000 emergency calls, never billing a patient or accepting compensation for his efforts. His commitment extended well beyond answering calls. He devoted countless hours serving as Captain, managing finances, organizing fundraisers, maintaining ambulances and facilities, mentoring new volunteers, teaching emergency services, and ensuring the continued success of the squad he loved so dearly. For many, Dan was the voice on the radio, the first face through the door in a crisis, and the steady presence people could count on when they needed help most.

Those left to cherish his memory include his son, Jarred Glass and wife, Carla; his daughter, Jari Glass and husband, Jim Bean; one sister, Tess Halloway and husband, Raymond; one brother, Dave Glass and wife, Gerry; a special nephew, Mike Austin; and his pride and joy, his grandson, Caiden Glass.

Funeral Services for Daniel "Butch" Louie Glass, Jr, were conducted at 7:00 p.m., Monday, June 22, 2026, at Castlewood Funeral Home Chapel, Castlewood, Virginia, with Pastor Scott Moore officiating. The eulogy was delivered by his dear friend, Mike Roberson. Committal Service and Interment was conducted at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at Temple Hill Memorial Park, Castlewood, Virginia. Family and friends met at the funeral home at 10:00 a.m. and went in procession to the cemetery leaving at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday. Pallbearers were Dr. Paul Phillips, Craig Mullins, Tommy Mullins, T.J. York, as well as his nephews, Mike Austin, Steve Austin, Marty Halloway, and Rodney Kennedy. Honorary Pallbearers were men Dan deeply admired for their friendship, character, and the way they lived their lives: Mike Roberson, Larry Shortt, and Ray Spenilla.

The family received friends from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., Monday, June 22, 2026, at Castlewood Funeral Home, Castlewood, Virginia.

Flowers will be accepted; however, those wishing to honor Dan's



memory may do so in one of the following ways:

1. Volunteer in your community.

2. Share memories and stories for a keepsake album by emailing memoriesofdanglass@gmail.com.

3. Make a monetary donation to Calvary Baptist Church, 1667 Calvary Baptist Road, Castlewood, VA 24224; Hamlin Baptist Church, P.O. Box 689, St. Paul, Virginia 24283; or Riverside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 25, Castlewood, Virginia 24224, in appreciation for the years of faithful support these churches have provided to Dante Rescue Squad.

4. Make a monetary donation to a pulmonary fibrosis research organization of your choice.

Dan and his family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to all members of Dante Rescue Squad—past, present, and future—for their dedication and service.

May your life be a testament to the belief that true service is not measured by wealth or recognition received, but by the lives touched—just as Dan exemplified throughout his life.

Online condolences may be sent to the Glass family through our website and a video tribute may be viewed at www.castlewoodfuneralhome.com. Castlewood Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Buchanan County sheriff addresses incident that sent Honaker man to hospital

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

Buchanan County Sheriff Allen Boyd has issued a statement regarding an incident earlier this month that resulted in a Honaker man seeking medical treatment at an area hospital.

Advertisements for a "Bonfire Party Part 2" circulated online in early June. The party was advertised for June 13 at 1212 Blackthorn Road near Grundy.

During the party, an alleged altercation took place that saw Honaker resident Clay Hall being assaulted.

Since that time, numerous stories and rumors have been shared online and verbally by residents of both Buchanan County and Russell County.

Boyd said the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office is aware of the social media posts and the seriousness of the allegations being made.

"While social media can bring attention to an incident, investigations cannot be based on online allegations alone," Boyd said. "Law enforcement must rely on evidence, witness interviews, medical information when applicable, digital evidence, and facts that can be independently verified."

Boyd went on to say that when alcohol or other "impairing substances" are involved, investigators must carefully evaluate the reliability and consistency of witness accounts.

"Intoxication does not automatically discredit a witness, but it can affect perception, memory and recollection," Boyd explained.

He added, "Anyone with firsthand knowledge, video footage, photographs or other relevant information regarding the Blackthorn Road incident is encouraged to contact the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office at 276-935-2313.

"Our responsibility is to follow the evidence wherever it leads and ensure any investigation is handled fairly, thoroughly, and within the law," Boyd said.

New laws go into effect July 1

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

July 1 is the beginning of a new fiscal year for Virginia. Therefore a number of new laws go into effect on that date.

Many of the new laws focus on public safety, housing, employment and criminal justice, among other areas.

Judges can now require reckless or high-speed offenders to install Intelligent Speed Assistance technology in their vehicles. The technology prevents vehicles from going more than 10 m.p.h. over the post speed limit.

On-duty law enforcement officers will be required to provide life-saving aid to those with serious injuries or life-threatening conditions when it is safe to do so.

Those operating a vehicle are not prohibited from livestreaming or interacting with a livestream. Should anyone livestreaming be involved in a traffic accident, they could face fines up to $500 and suspension of their driving license.

Localities may now place automated traffic enforcement devices, such as cameras, at stop signs, crosswalks and school zones.

Anyone convicted of certain sex offenses are permanently banned from being within 100 feet of specified park facilities such as athletic fields, playgrounds, etc. Violations are a Class 6 felony.

The definition of cyberstalking and harassment has been updated to cover online, email and social media. Misdemeanor and felony penalties are now in place for cyberstalkers.

The Clean Slate Act automatically seals many eligible misdemeanors, including disorderly conduct and possession of marijuana. Petition-based sealing is also available for some low-level non-violent felonies. Ineligible categories include violent crimes, sex offenses, and certain firearms offenses.

Employers must include good-faith salary ranges in job postings. Employers are also banned from asking about previous salary history.

Non-compete clauses in contracts will be unenforceable against employees fired without cause.

A separate ban on non-compete clauses is now in effect for many licensed health care professionals, including nurses, doctors, counselors, among others.

Landlords will now be required to accept checks and money orders for rent and deposits without including excessive processing fees.

Landlords must also give tenants up to 14 days' notice before eviction.

Phase two of the ban on Styrofoam is now in effect. This phase requires all food servers in Virginia to be Styrofoam free.

One of the most notable and hotly debated laws has temporally been halted from taking effect. The Lancaster County Circuit Court issued a temporary injunction on a law that would prohibit the import, sale, manufacture, purchase, or transfer of certain "assault firearms" and large-capacity ammunition feeding devices.

"Assault firearms" is defined as semi-automatic center-fire rifles, pistols, and some shotguns.

BUDGET TALKS

FROM PAGE 1A

nient as some of y'all would like to think," she said.

Speaking of the Finney site, Dye went on to say, "My district is the biggest by land, so it does create more of an inconvenience for my people. Closing it right now would be horrible. You don't just close it and inconvenience all those people."

District 5 representative Steve Breeding said people getting rid of their household trash was nothing more than "a matter of scheduling." He added that it was not fair to ask members of his district to use their tax dollars to keep a dump site open elsewhere.

"It is not fair to ask them to pay their share to keep that site open over there," Breeding said.

Lou Wallace, of District 2, said a major step to solving the county's trash problem was to close the unmanned sites. "The first step is to close what we have," Wallace said. "It is not fair to leave some open and close others. If a motion arises, I'm voting to close them."

As for Dye and Eaton's points about inconvenience, Wallace added, "A lot of people choose to live on a mountain top or in a holler. But you have got to figure out how to get your garbage from Point A to Point B."

After taking a short break, the meeting resumed with concerns facing the school system.

Finance Director Brooke Webb said lack of matching dollars from the county could cost the school system greatly in state funding. "It looks like, to me, I'm going to lose $5.6 million," Webb said.

Webb said cutting programs and layoffs would result.

After crunching the numbers, Lester determined the county and the school system were off by $1.2 million.

The board agreed to study the budget in detail and reconvene on June 29.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

FROM PAGE 1A

the event. The celebration will also include The Magic of Eugene Mullins, one of the nation's top escape artists.

Registration for the cornhole tournament will get underway at 5:00 p.m., with the tournament beginning at 5:30 p.m. Registration fees are $20 per team.

Lineup for the parade will begin at 5:00 p.m. at the old town hall location. The parade is scheduled to get underway at 5:45 p.m. Fireworks are scheduled to light up the sky beginning at sundown.

St. Paul's celebration will begin on July 3 with the Super Smash Brothers Tournament at the Lyric Theater. That event will be held from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

The following day will see a pancake breakfast at the St. Paul United Methodist Church from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. The St. Paul pool will have free admission from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

St. Paul's July 4 parade will begin at 4:30 p.m. with the town celebration getting underway at 5:00 p.m. at Miner's Exchange Bank. Live music, bingo, cake walks and a variety of food vendors will be a part of the celebration. Fireworks are scheduled to begin at sundown.

Lebanon's celebration will also be on July 4. The annual parade will roll through town beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Judge Don McGlothlin will serve as the 2026 parade Grand Marshal. A graduate of Grundy Senior High School, McGlothlin has been a resident of Russell County since 1989.

McGlothlin is also a graduate of the college of William and Mary, as well as the Marshall-Wythe School of Law.

McGlothlin has three sons – Sean, Nathan and Ryan. He is married to Tracy Fletcher McGlothlin.

He has practiced law in Southwest Virginia since 1973 and served as first Substitute Judge of the 29th Judicial District for a decade before being elected Circuit Court Judge, a position he held for 16 years.

McGlothlin currently practices law and conducts mediation and arbitration of disputes in Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina.

A performance of the "Star Spangled Banner" will take place on the grounds of Lebanon Middle School following the parade. Free cupcakes will be available, provided by the Lebanon Lions Club.

The Heart of Appalachia Community Orchestra will perform at noon inside Lebanon Middle School.

Divine Glory will perform on the grounds of Lebanon Middle School beginning at 1:30 p.m. and followed by Scott Mullins.

Russell Theatre will be honoring the nation's history with a special playing of "American Heritage with David Barton" at 3:30 p.m.

More than 50 vendors and food trucks are expected to be hand throughout the day.

The party will move to Tommy Bryant Stadium with a performance by Steele Cook'n at 6:30 p.m. Ricochet will headline the stage at 8:00 p.m.

Fireworks are expected to light up the sky over Lebanon at dark.



THE LEBANON NEWS

The Lebanon News (USPS:308-400) is published weekly on Wednesday by Virginia Media, Inc. Periodicals Postage Paid at Lebanon, Va. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Lebanon News, 1633 W Main St, Salem, VA 24153

OPINIONS

Views of columns and letters expressed in this section represent the views of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Lebanon News or Virginia Media, Inc. Anyone wishing to respond to a column or editorial may contact us at (540) 389-9355. Submitted letters must be signed. Please include full address and, for verification only, a telephone number where you can be reached during the day.

STAFF

MICHAEL SHOWELL
Publisher, Virginia Media, Inc

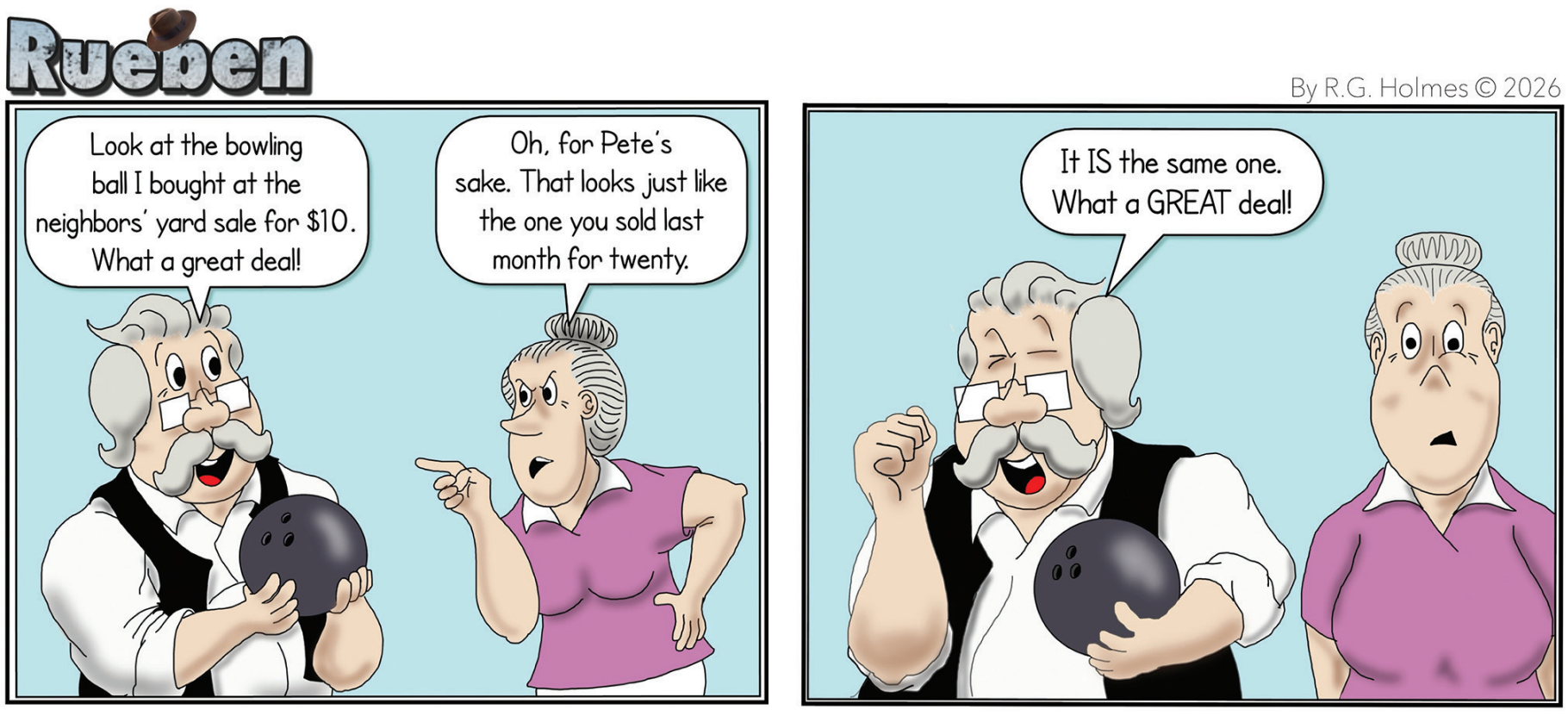
AILA BOYD
Executive Editor, Virginia Media, Inc

WENDI CRAIG
Advertising

CONTACT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
1633 W Main St, Salem, VA 24153
Telephone: (540) 389-9355

Member
Virginia Press Association





VCEDA approves loan for purchase of property in Hansonville

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@
virginiamediainc.com

The Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority approved a loan that will lead to the purchase of property in the Hansonville area.

According to VCEDA officials, the up to $360,000 loan was made to the Russell County Industrial Development Authority and will be used to finance the purchase of real estate in the Hansonville area and for costs associated therewith.

The loan approval was part of $1.65 million in funding that was approved for 26 new projects across Southwest Virginia.

VCEDA Executive Director/General Counsel Jonathan Belcher told board members since the last board meeting, activity has focused on lead generation efforts, outreach marketing events, seed capital and other applications in addition to assisting the Coalfields Expressway Authority.

• "Manufacturing, information technology and seed capital -- small business startups -- are currently the most active sectors as far as active projects," Belcher said.

• He noted a new regional image booklet has been completed and sites and buildings brochures for the region are now in the process of being updated.

• "Timmons Group continues to work on the study to identify new industrial sites in the region," Belcher said, adding, "the new lead generation campaign for the Intersection Business Park is now underway and a new site brochure for that location has been developed."

• Other loans and grants approved by VCEDA include:

An up to $404,930 grant to the Southwest Virginia Community College Educational Foundation, Inc. from the VCEDA Coalfield Workforce Development and Training Fund was approved to be used for workforce development and training, including for scholarships for the emerging workforce, training instructional costs, customized workforce training for area businesses, work-based learning opportunities, costs of assessments and costs of administering National Career Readiness Certificate and other workforce testing for residents and/or workers in the VCEDA region. The funds will also be used to purchase orbital welding units for training purposes and for funding support for the Small Business Development Center at Southwest Virginia Community College.

An up to $250,000 grant to the Buchanan County Industrial Development Authority was approved to be used to finance planning, design, engineering, permitting and costs associated for an additional new water tank to serve the Southern Gap development in Buchanan County, VA

An up to $196,667 grant to the Mountain Empire Community College Foundation from the VCEDA Coalfield Workforce Development and Training Fund was approved to be used for workforce development and training -- specifically, for costs and expenses of the Small Business Development Center at Mountain Empire Community College.

An up to $95,000 grant from the VCEDA Civil Penalties Fund to the Breaks Interstate Park Commission was approved to be used to develop infrastructure and improvements at the Breaks Interstate Park, Ratliff Hole River Access Area to include renovation of restroom facilities, repaving the entrance road and parking lot, bank stabilization and other improvements.

An up to $80,000 grant to the Buchanan County IDA was approved to be used to finance a feasibility and economic impact study and pilot test of manufacturing Small Vertical Wind Turbine Energy Recovery Systems in Buchanan County.

An up to $75,000 grant to the Napoleon Hill Foundation from the VCEDA Coalfield Workforce Development and Training Fund was approved to be used for workforce development and training to assist with the continued development and implementation of an online interactive course in entrepreneurial skills for high school students in the VCEDA region and costs associated therewith.

A number of seed capital matching grant projects were also approved. The grants are worth $10,000 each.

Grants made to Russell County businesses include: Eaton Power Solutions, LLC, Plush Frog Designs, LLC, Redbud Creamery, LLC and Roadhouse Operations LLC d/b/a Blue Nose Aerial Imaging of Southwest Virginia.

Other seed capital grants were awarded to: DMG Sewing LLC, RKB Enterprises, LLC, Rice Construction Services, Inc. and Southern Gap Enterprises, LLC, all in Buchanan County;

Tasty Treats Drive-In LLC in Dickenson County;

Appalachian Asenso LLC, Jimmy's Pit Stop BBQ, LLC, Parea & Psomi LLC d/b/a BB's Bakery & Café, all in Lee County;

Southern Ridge Design LLC in Scott County;

Big Blue Art LLC, Kandi

SEE VCEDA APPROVES | 5A



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 incredibly strong, courageous and intelligent. We are here to aid in the recovery process with individual 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

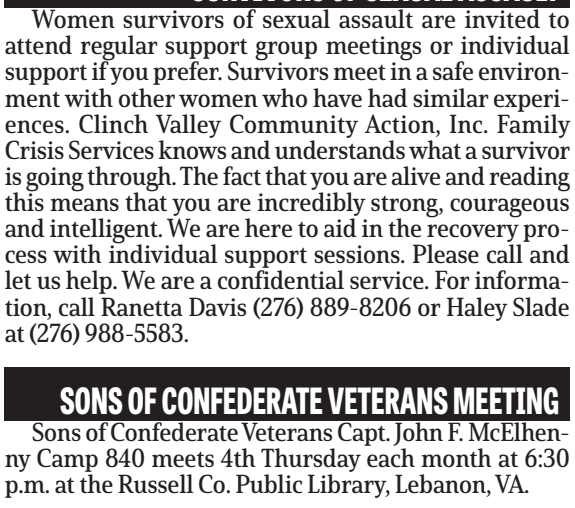
Sons of Confederate Veterans Capt. John F. McElhenny Camp 840 meets 4th Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Russell Co. Public Library, Lebanon, VA.

COMMUNITY MEN'S BREAKFAST

A Community Men's Breakfast originally organized by men of the Lebanon Memorial United Methodist 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 July 11, 2026. We hope you will join us.

MUSICK FAMILY REUNION

The Musick family reunion will be Saturday, August 1, 2026 at Weavers Creek Baptist Church 2767 Back Valley Road, Cleveland, VA 24225. Start 10 a.m.-please bring a covered dish to share.





Celebrating the Nation's 250th Birthday: Part 2

250 years of independence not only demonstratesendurance and perseverance through hardship, but it elevates the foundationsof our country.



WEEKLY REPORT
FROM THE CAPITOL

My column last week focused on some of the figures who contributed to these foundations. These leaders, whose names are honored in our Ninth District communities, helped light the revolutionary flames for independence.

Our region served as a flashpoint for these revolutionary flames.

Take what is recognized by many historiansasthe first battle of the American Revolution, the battle of Point Pleasant.

At the orders of Governor of Virginia Lord Dunmore, Colonel Andrew Lewis led forces from Western Virginia on a weeks-long trek to Point Pleasant in what is present-day West Virginia.

Interestingly, Dunmore with an army from northern Virginia was supposed to meet Lewis at Point Pleasant.

Instead, Lewis and his men faced an attempted ambush from the Shawnee and Mingo warriorsin the early morning hours of October 10, 1774.

Lewis' men felt they had been intentionally betrayed by Lord Dunmore in order to make the western part of Virginia insecure if additional trouble in the colonies was to occur.

Lewis and his soldiers responded courageously to the Shawnee and Mingo threat. The Americans fought off the Natives' attack and defeated Chief Cornstalk.

Action by Lewis and his forcesdeliveredvictory for American settlers. This opened up the Kentucky territory for westward expansion by those like Daniel Boone, who was in charge of supplies under Lewis.

This action was one of many to be taken to help fortify Virginia and its western flank.

Soon thereafter, Virginians from our region asserted our revolutionary intentions in the Fincastle Resolutions.

In early 1775, 15 Virginia frontiersmen signed onto these articles in a display of support for the Continental Congress, the revolutionary cause and liberty.

They were called the Fincastle Resolutions because they originated in what was then Fincastle County. Fincastle County would later be divided between Montgomery County, Washington County and Kentucky County.

Those who signed the Resolutions included William Preston.

Colonel William Preston, who owned the Smithfield Plantation located in present-day Blacksburg, was one of these revolutionaries.

During his experiences on the frontier, Preston had worked to survey and establish peace. Additionally, he at one time served under Andrew Lewis.

Preston was a prominent military figure during the French and Indian War.

Given his background in combat, Preston joined the revolutionary effort. He joined revolutionary campaigns to fight the British in the South, most notably the battle at Kings Mountain.

The Fincastle Resolutions fueled the sentiment that eventually led to the Declaration of Independence.

Just a few days after July 4, 1776, Andrew Lewis and Lord Dunmore met again.

Dunmore, unsafe on land, sailed to Gwynn's Island.There, the British camp was fortified from any land attack. On July 9, Lewis fired a heavy artillery barrage from Fort Cricket Hill down onto Dunmore's camp.

After taking damage, Dunmore sailed from Virginia never to return.

Dunmore's retreat marked the end of royal authority in Virginia!

While Lewis accomplished this feat on the Eastern Shore, others still took action to secure the frontier.

Governor Patrick Henry was concerned about the threat posed in the West. In 1777, Henry appointed Joseph Martin to handle Indian Affairs.

Martin had familiarity with the western frontier. Dr. Thomas Walker selected Martin to help lead an expedition west into the Powell's Valley.

In what is now Lee County, the establishment of Martin's Stationhelped serve frontiersmen looking to explore beyond.

Through his appointed role as Agent and Superintendent, Martin worked on the frontier to handle conflicts and disputes between natives and settlers. Martin's development of relations with neighboring tribes preserved peace on the frontier and protected numerous settlement communities during the American revolution.

Thanks to our region's efforts in combat and diplomacy, revolutionary success and independence were within reach.

The powerful messagethat the American independence movement sent around the world continues to reverberate.Not only did Americans gain victory but set the tone forthe American ideals of freedom to flourish elsewhere in the world. A beacon of liberty that still resonates in the world today.

This Fourth of July, we honor revolutionary successes of 250 years ago that brought about American greatness and the unprecedented liberties that millions still enjoy.

I am proud to recognize this history on our 250th birthday.

Happy July Fourth!

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.

Another letter from your mountain cousin

RJ KENNEDY

Former Newspaper Columnist for the Texarkana Gazette, the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, the Big Sandy News and The Kentuckian

Dear Cousin

My letters to you have been a bit behind lately, sort of like the newspaper delivery through the mail these days. I hear our mail now is sent clean down to Charlotte, N.C. to be sorted by "robots" so it takes awhile to get there and back again.

The other day I sent a birthday card to my sister in Knoxville, it had days to reach her, and she still got it late. I could have driven it down to her faster. Too many days it seems every time the government wants to fix something they make it worse.

Then there's the discussion about AI. A very scary thing indeed. Never trust a man that lies to you cuz, and AI can lie. (A proven fact) A lie mixed into a true is more dangerous than a straight lie.

Like the devil lying to Eve in the garden, (Genesis 3:4 "and the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die :"…) and the devil misquoting scripture to Jesus when he was tempting him. You need to ask yourself why was the devil lying. In the case of Jesus, the devil wanted him to kill himself, and computers/AI has suggested that to kids.

In the case of Eve, the same, he wanted her to die. The devil hates God's creation. (Why else would they deny creation in public schools?)

I heard a pretty smart fellow say the other day that AI is coming whether we like it or not. (Me not) That if "they" want to build a data center near you just demand they hook up their own water source (they actually don't use that much) and demand they have their own "non noisy" power supply.

Now better half who knows power plants tells me the small nukes they want to use are like the ones on submarines, which your own boys ride about underneath the ocean all the time.

We are not talking about Three Mile Island here. You can decide, do you want China's AI influencing your kids on TikTok or the USA AI. The worst of two possible evils.

Now unless someone thinks I'm in the pay of AI, let me tell you I don't even have cable or internet in the house here and I have fought tooth and nail to keep it that way.

I think these two make people way to lazy and stupid. It is so addictive, between ladies shopping online or men addicted to pornography. Between Facebook, U-tube and TikTok (the worse) our children and grandchild's attention span has went to zero.

It's time the parents demanded that chrome books/laptop computers and smart phones be removed from school and books put back in. You, (your brain) do not retain information as well when you read on line as it does from books, newspaper and the written word.

I'm so glad you're still getting these letters from me cuz. When our local paper here was sold again, I thought, well that is the end of writing to you. (I still write these letters in cursive, only I have to type them out later.)

And speaking of cursive, I was sadly disappointed to find out my last adopted granddaughter was never taught cursive.

We were looking at some old stuff I collected years ago and my eyes, not being what they were, could not read the labels on some very small bottles. I tried to get the granddaughter to read them, but she couldn't. My daughter looked at them; they were in cursive, so of course she could read them. It's a sad time when a kid cannot even sign their name!

How do they write ideas down quickly when the power off and their Apple phones are dead. I guess they have to slowly print it out! Crazy! Many believe the idea behind not letting kids learn to write in cursive, is so they will not be able to read historic documents like the Declaration of Independence.

The carving on so many ancient monuments is in cursive as well as many old gravestones. Kids need to learn cursive, to read for themselves before AI takes it all away. They need to pick up old books, and learn the true history that is being rewritten. Help open up their eyes, teach a kid cursive!

Take those phones away and teach them to write. Teach them to think for themselves, and don't let AI finish their sentences. Make them write a letter like I write to you cuz! Test it out, see how many of your grandchildren and children can sit down and write out eight hundred to a thousand words in one sitting. It will probably be a revelation.

As for here on the farm, Baby Bear is weaned and most of the hay is in the barn. We are waiting for one more baby calf to be born. By the time you get this letter most of the hay should be done.

We raced a storm the other morning, a strange dry morning with no dew or fog and had the hay in the barn before ten! Couldn't have done it without help from our daughter and her two boys! Until next week, hang in there cuz, better days are coming.

RJ Kennedy

Adult education connection



Are you an adult looking to get back into the job market, or do you need extra skills to help you progress in the job you already have?

If so, then Southwest Regional Adult Education (SRAE) offers an online program called Work Essentials that helps you build your employability skills, so that you can find a job or help keep the one you already have. Work Essentials is an online, self-paced course designed to help adults build the skills needed to enter the workforce and advance their career goals.

Using built-in assessments, the learning system creates a learning plan for each student within three comprehensive units.

The first unit is called Job Seeking. This unit is uniquely designed to help adult students learn the essential skills needed for a job search that will help them find work. Many people don't know where to begin when it comes to finding work.

With this Job Seeking module, individuals can focus on becoming successful in today's work environment. In this course section, one can learn how to: find jobs online, apply for jobs, write resumes and cover letters, make a good impression, and meet employer expectations.

The second unit is called Job Seeking. This unit has created lessons to prepare adults with the high demand work habits employers are looking for in new hires. Starting a new position comes with its own learning curve that can offset the confidence one may have after accepting a job offer.

The Job Ready module explains the skills needed to adapt to working environments in their new roles and improve their career opportunities. This unit provides learners with information on how to: communicate well, meet employer expectations for the job, show initiative and dependability, create a positive customer experience, and represent themselves in a positive manner.

The last unit is called Job Keeping. This unit is specifically structured to advise adults who may need a bit of extra support to advance in their careers. The Job Keeping module promotes the importance of building specific skills for long-term success to advance in the workplace with a promotion or higher-paying position.

Within this module, adults can gain help with the following skills: thinking critically and problem solving, working well with others, and building relationships, working work-related problems, negotiating to solve conflict, and keeping accurate records.

Anyone who is interested in taking this computer course can call SRAE at 276-889-5424 and get registered. Instructors at program locations are available for support and feedback on all online and in-person courses. Make the call and get started today!

Navigating Your Difficult Circumstances

DR. GLENN
MOLLETTE

Every human being faces everyday challengers. We all have them. No way is immune from problems, sickness and death. Hurdles to jump, mountains to climb and oceans to swim is a part of life. There is always a fire to put out or something to fix. Life is filled with repairs that await our attention.

Maintenance is a daily grind. Property maintenance, car and our physical bodies. You can't ignore either of the three very long without consequences. It's a big job staying on top of all that we need to do.

Sometimes the load becomes heavy. So much to do. This is why some people eventually get tired of too much to do and try to downsize. Sometimes you can and sometimes you can't. If you can then it's fine if you want to. Life has a lot to do with what we want to do. If you enjoy having a lot to do then changing your lifestyle may not be for you. If you would enjoy having less to be concerned about then it sounds like a good move to make.

If we have good health we can do more. If our health is declining then our major priority better be our health. Once our health is gone then we won't be doing anything.

Having blood work done by your local doctor is very important. You should do it every year. If there are some concerns you may want to do it every six months or more. The numbers will tell you if your cholesterol or sugar is too high or if there are other concerns.

If you receive a bad report then every day you have to manage what food you are not going to eat and what you will try to eat. This becomes a job because it's not easy to cut out ice cream, cheeseburgers and pizza. Usually, these three are some of the first food groups to become outlawed or at least cut way back in our routine eating.

There are more hurdles in life than our diets. Americans face financial challenges from paying the rent to buying groceries. Credit card rates, interest rates on homes and car make for almost unbearable challenges for millions of Americans.

There is never a simple answer to all the stuff that we face in every day in life. The will of the human spirit is the most critical factor in dealing with life hurdles. When the spirit is down it is easy to be overwhelms. If our spirit is strong we navigate life's problems better.

God will provide a way. He will see you through if you will look to him for guidance. Resist the devil and he will flee from you, the Bible says. He may not go too far away but remember greater is he who is within you than he that is in the world.

The strength of God is greater. You may have to make some critical life changes. Change and giving up or starting a new direction is never easy but it may be the way that God is leading you through your difficult circumstances.

A Call from Jim Necessary

I rearranged a blue gazillion books in my library on Father's Day. I figured it was best to keep busy on a day that began with enormous gulps of repressed sorrow. I discovered that work really doesn't take your mind off things; it merely inserts random and obscure thoughts in between moments of memory. I know that grief is different for everyone.

My grief, for the most part, has been immersed in activity. School started right after Daddy died, and I let seventh graders apply the balm of youthful exuberance to my life.

Then, I took a class that the state said I needed, and dove into reams of paper, Powerpoints galore, tests that took my breath away, and a final that would have scared the most seasoned student. I've journaled, I've walked, I've read, I've drawn, I've contemplated the past and the future, and I still miss him more than any word can express.

When you truly love someone, their absence does nothing to alter your longing for them. I wondered silently yesterday if anyone would miss me when I leave as much as I miss him.

It isn't so much that I miss his physical form. He was never a very demonstrative person, in terms of affection, unless you count my mother. What I truly miss is the voice. It was bigger than life, and wise. He seldom spoke unless he was making a point. When he spoke, you listened. If he said, "Let me add," you better believe that whatever he was going to say mattered.

He didn't waste any words. If one came out of his mouth, it was bound to be important. He used to joke with us that he didn't speak much because all the women in the house stole all the air and he was in a life-long struggle for breath and had to choose his words carefully. We laughed at that, but I find myself wishing I'd talked less and listened more. So, when the phone rang the other day and caller ID announced, "Call from Jim Necessary," my heart stopped briefly.

I had my hands in dish water when the call came through. It was 8:30 a.m., and when I picked the phone up I realized it was his cell number ringing my house. So many things went through my mind when I heard his name.



I pressed talk, and heard my mother on the other end of the line. I realized she had picked up Daddy's cell phone instead of hers. In my heart, I knew it was just a coincidence, but in my soul it was a gift to hear his name fill the space where I was standing. I got to thinking about what he'd have to say after being gone a year and here is what I imagined.

"Debra?"

"Yes."

"I bet your knees are like Jell-O hearing from your old Dad like this."

"For certain, how are you Daddy?"

"Oh, I'm fine as frog's hair. You?"

"Well, I miss you every day."

"I think that is normal."

"Is it wonderful there, Daddy?"

"You bet! Just wait until you see what is waiting for you here. If I had known, I'd have tried to get here sooner."

"Well, I wish you'd waited a while longer."

"Nah, when time's up, it's up, just like the good book says, my days were numbered like the hairs on my head. You did notice I had fewer and fewer of those. Didn't you?"

"Do you miss me, Daddy?"

"Well, I miss all of you, but time here is a strange thing. It's eternal and it's also shorter than a gnat's eyelash. You don't really have any awareness of time. No need for a watch. No schedules. No deadlines. It's truly a marvelous thing."

"Are you well, Daddy?"

"Oh, yes! I can see clearly, hear distinctly, I have no pain, no tears, no frustration, and I don't need a single shot, pill, spray, cream, or powder. I think before I left there I was a walking billboard for Big Pharma. The pharmaceutical business doesn't exist here. You can call Mac up and tell him I told you so. Tell him next time I see him, he'll be broke." (Belly laugh)

"I see your sense of humor is still intact."

"Oh, yeah. We actually build things out of laughter here."

"You do?"

"Yes, and while I have you on the phone, let me say this. You need to lighten up. Everybody down there is missing your laughter. There is not a single reason for you to be sad. You are not allowed to be sad for the rest of your days just because I am not there. You hear me?"

"Yes, sir, I hear you."

"So let's get this turned around, little lady. I've got a corker of a joke your Nanny told me."

"Nanny?"

"Yep, she's up here cracking everybody up. Listen, I need to go. There's a concert here in a few. Those kids sing like angels, I tell you. I'll miss you until I see you. I love you forever."

"You, too, Daddy. You, too."

St. Paul to honor veterans

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

The United States of America has been the proverbial "shining city on a hill" and offering hope to the world for 250 years. This fall, the Town of St. Paul will honor those who made our freedom possible.

Banners will be placed throughout the town on Veterans' Day, honoring local veterans for their service.

According to St. Paul Town Manager Chad Monday, the banners will highlight the veteran's name, years of service and the branch of the military they served in.

Monday said the cost of the banners will be based on the number ordered.

When asked if the banners will be for St. Paul residents only, Monday answered, "Ideally it would be for veterans from the town. But we will look at it on a case by case basis."

Anyone with questions or anyone who would like to purchase a banner is asked to contact the St. Paul Town Hall at 276-762-5297. The deadline to purchase a banner is August 1.

ACP to offer three summer camp experiences in July for students

Students who are interested in learning more about the profession of pharmacy have been invited to attend one of three free one-day summer camp events hosted by the Appalachian College of Pharmacy in July.

Pharmacy summer camps will be offered:

* Wednesday, July 22, 2026 - Roanoke Higher Education Center, Roanoke, VA;

* Thursday, July 23, 2026 - Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Abingdon, VA; and

* Wednesday, July 24, 2026 - Appalachian College of Pharmacy, Oakwood, VA.

Interested persons may register athttps://events.acp.edu/.

All three camps are offered free of charge and are geared toward high school students (entering seventh grade and beyond) and to those who are older. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Activities include learning about the profession of pharmacy from expert faculty, conducting patient assessments, exploring pharmacy compounding techniques, practicing pharmacotherapy on a human simulator, hearing from students about their experiences at ACP, attending an admissions workshop session and taking a tour.

The camps are designed to give attendees an opportunity to experience what it is like to be a college of pharmacy student and what it takes to be a pharmacist.

"This is a unique opportunity to learn a little more about the college of pharmacy and through a series of interactive events, learn a little more about what the profession of pharmacy is all about," said ACP

For questions about the camp, interested persons may contact admissions@acp.edu or call 276-498-5245.



VCEDA APPROVES

FROM PAGE 3A

Kakes, LLC, Seagull Seafood LLC and Wimmers Woodlands LLC, all in Tazewell County;

Lawson Custom Builders, LLC and K&A Customz LLC, both in Wise County.

The board set an application deadline of October 15, 2026 for the fall round of seed capital grants and agreed to work on finalizing the development of a seed capital training academy with the Small Business Development Centers at Mountain Empire Community College and at Southwest Virginia Community College to assist new business start-ups. In the future, the training program will be tied to eligibility for the VCEDA seed capital matching grant program.

In other business, the board approved its Fiscal Year 2027 budget; established an annual marketing stipend for FY2027 of up to $10,000 for each of the eight county/city industrial or economic development authorities in the VCEDA region; and approved $250,000 for the VCEDA Coalfield Jobs Investment Project (a workforce training grant program) for FY2027.

The board also approved the VCEDA/Southwest Virginia's e-Region Business Development Plan for Fiscal Year 2027 as presented and discussed the FY2026 and FY2027 marketing calendars, lead generation campaigns, business development updates, existing industry reports and active projects.

In other action, the board agreed to forgive and convert into a grant the remaining outstanding principal and interest balance of $99,854.86 on the $200,000 loan approved to Trailhead Lodging, LLC in 2016 based upon Trailhead Lodging having achieved and surpassed the job creation metrics required from 2018 to 2026 under the amended loan agreement.

The board approved a request from the Buchanan County IDA to add the construction of trails and bridges and other improvements concerning the Grassy Creek Trail Project at the Breaks Interstate Park to the eligible uses of the up to $100,000 tourism capital improvement matching fund grant approved to the IDA in 2024. It was acknowledged the Grassy Creek Trail Project is on property owned by the Breaks Interstate Park.

Loan and grant disbursement deadlines were extended on a number of projects, including those for the Scott County Economic Development Authority concerning the Tempur Sealy expansion, to June 17, 2027; Buchanan County IDA concerning the Southern Gap medical campus infrastructure, to June 20, 2028; Dickenson County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) concerning an inpatient substance abuse rehabilitation facility, to May 23, 2027; Dickenson County IDA concerning the Haysi Trails Center, to June 20, 2027; and Russell County Board of Supervisors on behalf of the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority concerning the Three Rivers Destination Center project, to September 20, 2028.

The board also agreed to approve a request from the Russell County Industrial Development Authority to extend the loan closing deadline on an up to $3 million loan approved to the IDA in December 2025 for Project Franklin to a new loan closing deadline of June 16, 2027; and agreed to approve a request from the Scott County EDA to extend the loan closing deadline on an up to $500,000 loan approved to the EDA in December 2025 for Project Delta to a new loan closing deadline of June 16, 2027.

The board also agreed to contingently approve a request from the Russell County IDA and Simmons Equipment Company for the restructuring of several loans related to the buildings leased by the IDA to Simmons Equipment Company in Lebanon, in order to assist the company in utilizing the New Markets Tax Credit program. Additionally, the board agreed to retain special legal counsel to represent VCEDA (and the Russell County IDA, if desired by the IDA) in the matter, with the cost of such representation to be charged to the VCEDA Russell County account.

Lastly, the board recognized retiring board member Tim Stuller, vice president of regional talent solutions and business outreach at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), who is retiring from VEDP. He was presented with a framed certificate of appreciation recognizing his outstanding service in economic development and for his service on the VCEDA board.

The board also recognized Ernie McFaddin, who is retiring as executive director of the Russell County IDA, for outstanding contributions to the economic development of Russell County and Southwest Virginia; and welcomed Laura Gilmer, the new executive director of the Russell County IDA.



A group of college graduates. (Photo by Getty Images)

Virginia joins initiative to create three-year bachelor's degree model

BY: NATHANIEL CLINE
Virginia Mercury

Higher education leaders in Virginia and Ohio announced Thursday that they will join forces to create a model for three-year bachelor's degrees, cutting the traditional timeframe of obtaining the credential by one year.

The move reflects Virginia's strategic plan to better align higher education with student and employer needs and increase affordability.

Currently, the laws in Virginia and Ohio require at least 120 semester credit hours to earn a bachelor's degree. By spring 2028, participating institutions are expected to propose two 90-credit degree programs.

If successful, the 90-credit undergraduate degree would likely require legislative action, depending on how programs are structured.

"Virginia's higher education institutions continue to lead the way in innovation, demonstrating a statewide commitment to ensuring higher education delivers on its value proposition to students and families," said Scott Fleming, the State Council on Higher Education for Virginia's executive director, in a statement on Thursday.

"Colleges and universities throughout the country are already offering three-year degrees, but there is no national model. This effort will create new pathways for students to pursue their life and career goals while ensuring a rigorous education experience," he added.

The effort emanates from a joint venture with Jobs for the Future, Arnold Ventures, Strada Education Foundation, the American Association of Colleges and Universities, and Ithaka S+R on the "Scaling College in 3" initiative.

The three-year degree initiative builds on the work of higher-education researchers Robert Zemsky, Lori Carrell, and colleagues through the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement. The group argued in 2023 that college takes longer and costs more than it needs to, and many students are paying for credits that aren't essential for a degree or a career.

Higher education representatives from Virginia and Ohio will meet with national experts over the next year to discuss the program's design.

Potential legislative changes may be required in some states that have statutory or regulatory minimum credit-hour requirements.

In Virginia, however, state officials indicate that the code does not prescribe credit-hour requirements for public institutions or exempt nonprofit private institutions, so any impact would likely depend on accreditation standards and institutional policies rather than state law.

The General Assembly has already supported goals to improve affordability and encourage expedited degree completion.

Feeding Southwest Virginia celebrates 45 years of nourishing neighbors

April 28th, 2026 - May 1st , 2026, marked Feeding Southwest Virginia's 45th anniversary of nourishing neighbors, with Founder, President, and CEO, Pamela Irvine, at its helm.

For 45 years, the Food Bank has remained steadfast in its pursuit of providing food to those who face hunger. Feeding Southwest Virginia proudly commemorates this milestone of hunger relief service in Southwest Virginia. The nonprofit plans to host donor events and food drives throughout the year to celebrate their anniversary and steward support for neighbors in need.

Though it began as a program of Total Action Against Poverty (TAP) in 1981, the Food Bank quickly grew in size and scope. In 1999, the Food Bank officially became a non-profit entity. Today, Feeding Southwest Virginia distributes an average of more than 20 million pounds of food to approximately 400 agency partners and direct-service programs like Kid's Farmers Markets and local pantries, saving the neighbors it serves more than $30 million in grocery costs annually.

"Our Food Bank could only reach this milestone thanks to the many community partners who support our mission. From churches, to donors, volunteers, and civic organizations their kind and caring commitment to the neighbors of Southwest Virginia helped the Food Bank become the source of charitable support it is today," says Pamela Irvine, who announced her plans to retire in December of 2026.

Irvine continues, "Feeding Southwest Virginia will be here for another 45 years to nourish those in need."

Today, more than 170,000 neighbors, including 42,000 children, face hunger in the 12,400 square-foot service region Feeding Southwest Virginia serves. Feeding Southwest Virginia's commitment to their mission of nourishing neighbors, engaging community partners, and developing solutions to address food insecurity will remain. The Food Bank is supported annually by more than 2,600 volunteers, 65 staff members, and more than 10,000 donors.

Blueberries make for flavorful additions to cookies, too

Cookies are a versatile treat that can incorporate a wide range of ingredients. There's no rules when it comes to making cookies, which means amateur bakers can take to their kitchens and whip up a batch of these beloved treats with whatever they have on hand in the pantry or refrigerator.

Blueberries might be a go-to ingredient when baking a pie at home, but they also make for a delicious addition to a freshly baked batch of cookies. This recipe for "Butter Cookies With Blueberries" from Lines+Angles is a testament to the versatility of blueberries when it comes to crafting homecooked baked goods.

Butter Cookies With Blueberries

Makes 20 to 24 servings



3/4	cup butter, softened
2/3	cup granulated sugar
2	tablespoons light corn syrup
1	pinch salt
3	large eggs
11/2	cups all-purpose flour
1	teaspoon baking soda
2/3	cup almond meal
1/2	teaspoon ground ginger
1/4	teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2	cup dried blueberries, chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the butter, sugar, corn syrup, and salt. Add the eggs one at a time, beating after each addition.

3. Add the flour, baking soda, almond meal, and spices. Stir to form a smooth mixture; fold in the dried blueberries.

4. Spoon the mixture into a piping bag fitted with a round piping tip. Pipe 1-inch rounds onto the baking sheet (or use a teaspoon to place small mounds of the mixture on the sheet.)

5. Bake until golden and set, 10 to 15 minutes.

6. Remove from the oven and carefully transfer the cookies to a cooling rack to finish cooling.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

FROM PAGE 1A

his service and leadership, including the Virginia State Bar Local Bar Leader of the Year Award, the Virginia State Bar Award of Merit on behalf of the Russell County Bar Association, recognition as a Virginia Law Foundation Fellow, and inclusion among Virginia Lawyers Weekly's Leaders in the Law. He has also been recognized for professional excellence and pro bono service throughout his career.

Beyond the law, Russell is active in civic, church, fraternal, literary, and community life. He is a lay minister in the United Methodist Church, serves as a trustee at Cedar Bluff United Methodist Church, and is a member of the Holston Conference Board of Trustees. He is also an award-winning poet, whose writing reflects his deep affection for faith, family, friendship, memory, and place. He currently serves as Vice President and a member of the Board of Governors of Alpha Delta Phi International, a literary and social fraternity.

Russell and his wife, Shannon, a public school special education teacher, live in Abingdon with their sons, Clark and Eamon, and numerous dachshunds. He often credits his family, his parents (Bruce and Ginny, both of whom are retired public school teachers and principals, and reside in Bruce's hometown of Cedar Bluff), his mentors, and the lawyers and judges of Southwest Virginia with shaping his sense of service, community, and obligation to the profession. Bruce is particularly grateful to his mentors Attorneys Bobby Altizer (former VSB President) of Tazewell, and Steve Quillen (former Chairman of the Board of Bar Examiners), may their memories be a blessing.

"This is not simply a personal honor," Russell said. "It is a chance to lift up the lawyers, judges, courthouse staffs, local bars, and communities that taught me what this profession is supposed to be about: service, example, compassion, courage, and the willingness to help. Virginia attorneys are among the best in the nation, and that includes those west of Roanoke."

BEARS REPORTED

FROM PAGE 1A

mans and bears live near one another safely, offers a number of tips:

Never feed or approach bears
Secure food, garbage and recycling
Remove birdfeeders
Never leave pet food outside
Clean and store grills
Alert neighbors to bear activity

Several Honaker residents have commented on seeing the animals.

"There was one on my porch last Friday," said Crystal Justus. "One of my neighbors watched it walk by her house and down to mine and turn the trash can over."

Allen Johnson said, "He keeps getting in my trash. I walked out to go to work and he was standing there looking at me. I turned around and walked back in my home like wow that was close!"

Sharon Pinder stated, "There's been one on Fairmont a few days in a row."

Anyone with questions or concerns is urged to contact the Virginia Department o Wildlife Resources at 804-367-1000 with any concerns or questions.



Several bears have been reported in the Town of Honaker in recent days.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

FROM PAGE 1A

the suspects gave themselves up and were taken into custody without further incident.

Two people were arrested on June 22 following the alleged breaking and entering. Firearms and other items were reportedly taken from the residence, Watson said.

The vehicle the suspects were traveling in was located in the Poor Farm area. The passenger fled but was soon captured. The driver of the vehicle was also taken into custody.

The names of the suspects were not released.

"We appreciate the assistance provided, especially the swift response from our deputies and investigations unit that led to the apprehension of both the passenger and driver," Watson stated.



Ruff Nutt back at the Wood

Barry Ruff named head boys basketball coach of Blue Devils

By ANTHONY STEVENS
anthony@virginiamediainc.com



Submitted

Barry Ruff

CASTLEWOOD, Va. – It's been a while. Barry Ruff graduated from Castlewood in 1994. He held a variety of coaching roles with the Blue Devils from 2000 to 2015, including assistant boys basketball coach, head girls basketball coach, and head softball coach. He was recently named head boys basketball coach and athletic director by the Russell County School Board.

"It's big. Coming home is a surreal feeling," Ruff said. "I've always been a Blue Devil. I graduated from here. I taught and coached here for 15 years in three sports, boys and girls. To come back here, be home, and coach at my alma mater, to take over as athletic director and be involved in all sports, is a good feeling. Hopefully, I can retire here at home."

Ruff left Castlewood to take the head girls' basketball coaching position at rival Eastside for several years. He spent the last two seasons coaching boys' basketball at Sullivan East Middle School in Northeast Tennessee. He's not the same person who left Castlewood.

"I've evolved. I say the best coaches are the best thieves; they steal and take from everywhere they go," noted Ruff. "Going to Eastside, coaching a different group of kids and being successful there, and watching the team eventually

SEE **TRU RUFF | 3B**



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News

Tru Ruff (5) moves the ball up the floor against Thomas Walker. Ruff will be the only returning starter on the hardwood for Castlewood this winter.

Former Castlewood mentor Dan Glass passed away on June 18

Dan Glass, who was the head coach of Castlewood's 1986 VHSL Group A state championship baseball team, passed away on June 18, 2026, at age 77.

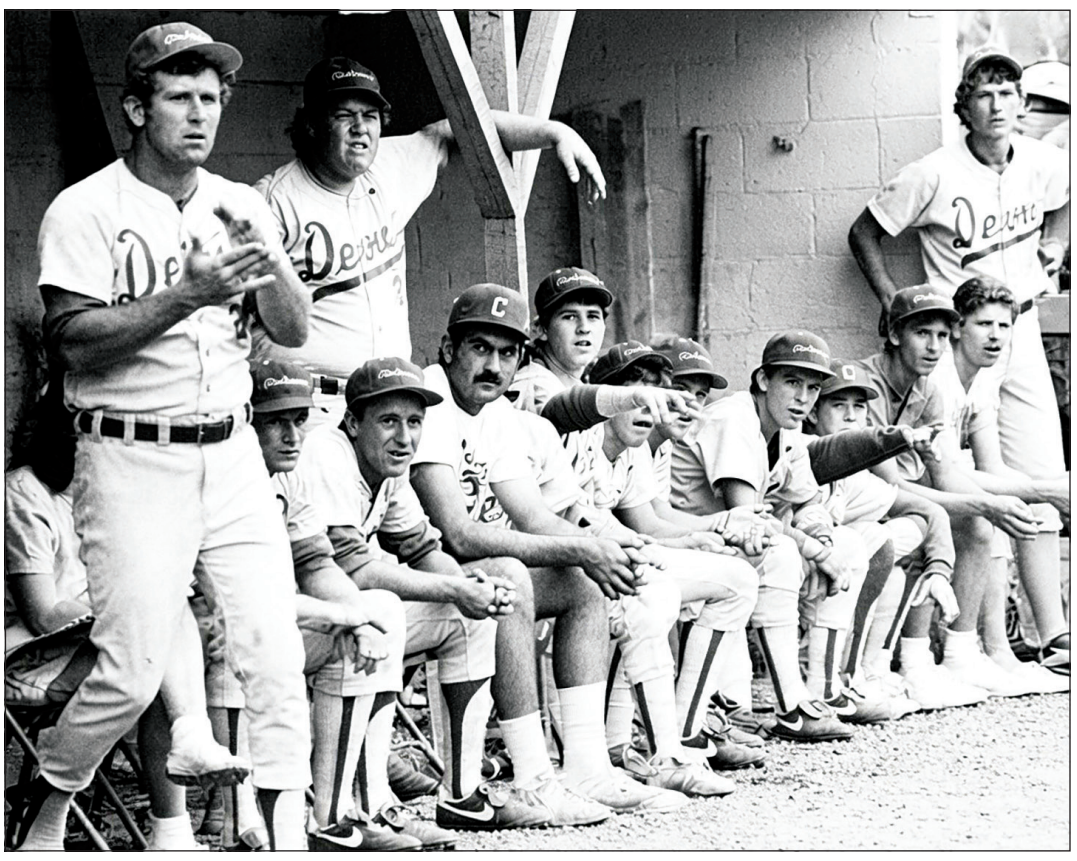
In Glass's first season as head coach of the Blue Devils, they defeated Mack Shupe's J.J. Kelly Indians 6-2 in the semifinals, then slammed Amelia County 15-2 to win the state championship in Charlottesville in 1986, with Jeff Phillips on the mound.

Glass guided the Blue Devils through 1999 after having previously served as an assistant on coach Ray Spenilla's staff. Glass graduated from Castlewood in 1967 and played for teams coached by Steve Banner.

He compiled a 187-72 record for his Blue Devils, including a Region C championship in '86, the state crown, and regional runner-up finishes in 1988, 1993, and 1994.

Glass was a fixture in the community. In addition to being a coach, teacher, and principal, Glass spent 57 years with the Dante Rescue Squad.

Below is the article on the state title, reprinted from the *Lebanon News* on June 11, 1986.



Coach Glass gives his defense a word of advice in 1986.

Castlewood Marches Home From Charlottesville With State Title

BY: CHUCK GREEVER

Before the Wise game last Tuesday and after Castlewood had thumped Mack Shupe's Indians 6-2, one could sense a heavy burden being eased from the Blue Devils shoulders.

And, again, those shining postgame eyes revealed an intense hunger for the state baseball title that had barely eluded the Blue Devils last year.

That intensity has been an incentive for Dan Glass's team all year long, and it was never more evident than in Castlewood's five postseason games, culminating Saturday in Charlottesville, with the Blue Devils thrashing Amelia County of Region B 15-2 for its first state title since 1971.

Castlewood's chance started two weeks ago against Fries and as it turned out, no matter what the obstacle or the opponent, the Bue Devils seemed to prevail.

In the Devil Den were senior Jerry Tarr (.358) a four-year starter, and fellow seniors Jeff Kite (.448), Mike White (.551) and Jeff Phillips, 9-0 winning record during the regular season. All four had started together since 1984. White, also, was 4-0 during the regular season.

There were Steve Meade (.433), Steve Jessee (.436) and William Banner (.479), all juniors and two-year starters.

Tim Jessee was in the starting lineup in right field playing his final season and hitting for him all year long was BIG Mark Hartsock (.518), a two-season senior veteran.

Last, but not least, was newcomer sophomore Maurice Hayes (.339) with a golden glove at third base.

Not to forget rookie head coach Dan Glass. This mild-mannered, strappling mentor seemed to sense every critical moment and acted accordingly, and his baseball wisdom and savvy reaped the golden fleece for his fierce competitive team.

Castlewood had averaged over 13 runs a game during the regular season, but against Fries, the runs were few and far between.

It took a Meade single in the bottom of the seventh to win 3-2 while Phillips was exceptional, going the distance for his 10th win.

Castlewood did benefit from playing at home and it showed when Tarr's seventh-inning home run was needed to beat Honaker 6-5. Phillips weakened only in the last inning but held on for the Saturday victory, his 11th such win.

With only a brief rest, the Blue Devils resumed the playoffs Monday against Drewry Mason for the Region C title and the right to meet Wise, winner of the weak Region D.

With White on the mound for the fourth time, Castlewood was ahead 6-5 on Meade's homerun, but Drewry Mason (DM) had runners on second and third with one out.

Glass replaced White with Phillips and presto, after an intentional walk, Castlewood turned a double play and it was lights out for DM which fell 9-5 and on to hosting Wise on Tuesday.

In the sub-state biggie, Phillips and the great Devils defense all but silenced the Indians (18-2) as White provided the heroics with his game-winning RBI triple in the fifth.

Phillips, not as weary as everyone thought, again went the distance for his 12th win. Pitching on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday, Phillips logged 14-2/3rds innings, picked up two huge victories and was credited with the DM save.

Onto Charlottesville on Saturday where the weather was hot and sticky and it was again time for Castlewood to bring out the power hitting.

They didn't get the homerun ball, but they produced 12 timely hits (the longest being a Kite triple), a nine-run seventh inning outburst and another fine defensive game coupled with Phillip's last brilliant mound performance for an easy 15-2 victory over Amelia County.



Lebanon girls receive soccer honors

Chloee Dillon concluded her soccer career at Lebanon High School with a school-record 66 goals. Dillon is also the only LHS girls' player to make the VHSL All-State team. She was also the Southwest District Player of the Year.

Teammate Brynlee Woods finished her career with a school record 25 assists. Woods was a first-team All-District and a second-team All-Region midfielder.

Emma Barrett was a first-team All-District and a second-team All-Region defender. Delaney Maxfield was a second-team All-District defender,



Lebanon VHSL Academic Activity winner

Eastside, Lebanon, Maggie Walker, Jefferson Forest, Clover Hill, and McLean claim 2025-26 Academic Activity crowns

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. – The VHSL recently announced the 2025-26 National Guard Cup, presented by the Virginia Army National Guard, for year-long academic activities success. For the 2025-26 season, Lebanon won the award in Class 2.

"Lebanon students take great pride in competing and representing our community," said Lebanon principal

SEE **LEBANON VHSL | 3B**

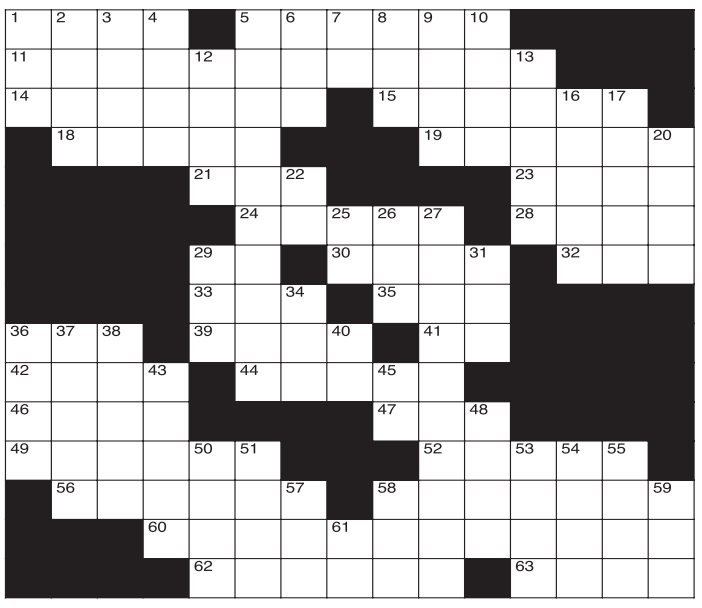
DAY AT THE PARK WORD SEARCH

S R E L A X A T I O N U K W Y E D B D N
P G P F P G X L H K Y M G P F G O S W M
G S M A R C E E A L P E F I L D L I W S
N A P F R I E S P B I M S C C S D B X P
I T H E S K Y S L L Y K N O U S Y I C O
K F T U S C X E E I O S H M G E G K A R
I K R S E H C N E B F M P M A N O I L T
H E S F W W G T M S R X W U Y L M N P S
L T E I X N A I Y Y D L A N E L Y G S U
B S U D K U R F D A W X B I G E X U L X
A C O O I E D I X W T Y Y T N W N S X P
F D B X Y S E N S H R S M Y N L H L L S
K Y A I S Y N R F T E R X B I I P A F C
R S U A M C E H G A E P D G M T Y T M X
I W I F D W I A H P S R H C S G D I D H
T I R E O L M N L E A T N O R O P L D P
R N U L K N O N C O Y L D O G U C S R P
A G F W F H A O W I Y W U E Y T W I N C
I S N T D I T O E I P N B D F S G U A B
L W M M N A T U R E D C E S S A R G E L

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

BENCHES
BIKING
COMMUNITY
FITNESS
FLOWERS
GARDEN
GRASS
HIKING
LEISURE
NATURE
PARK
PATHWAYS
PICNIC
PLAYGROUND
RELAXATION
SOCIAL
SPORTS
SUNLIGHT
SWINGS
TRAIL
TREES
WELLNESS
WILDLIFE
YOUTH



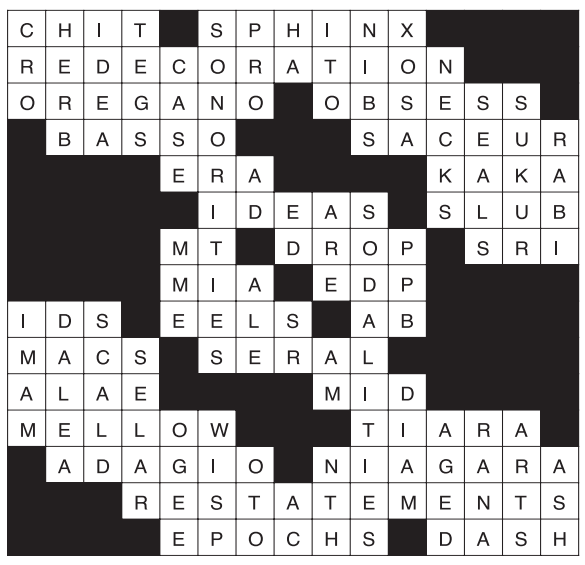
CLUES ACROSS

1. __ chat
5. Statue near the Pyramids
11. A process to change the look
14. Herb
15. Think about excessively
18. Bass vocal part
19. Supreme Allied Cmdr. of NATO
21. A major division of geological time
23. New Zealand parrot
24. Cognitive contents
28. Lump of yarn
29. Atomic #109
30. Let go of
32. Indian title of respect
33. Whereabouts unknown
35. Electronic data processing
36. Drivers' licenses count
39. Snakelike fishes
41. They precede C
42. Popular personal computers
44. Intermediate community stage in ecological succession
46. Wings
47. Indicates position
49. Pleasantly smooth or soft
52. Jeweled headdress
56. In slow tempo
58. __ Falls
60. Reassertions
62. Eras
63. Hyphen

CLUES DOWN

1. Corporate executive
2. A plant used for flavoring food
3. Opinion or belief
4. Sheep in their second year
5. Intensities of sound
6. Indicates support for
7. Expression of laughter
8. OJ trial judge
9. Pointed ends of pens
10. True bugs genus
12. Lawyers argue theirs
13. Body parts
16. Closes tightly
17. World Heritage site in Nigeria
20. Islamic calendar month
22. Commercial
25. "Westworld" actor Harris
26. They __
27. Religious guilds
29. Woman (French)
31. Parts per billion (abbr.)
34. Brew
36. Spiritual leader
37. Indigo bush
38. Burn with a hot liquid
40. Older citizen
43. Scad fish genus
45. Morning
48. Line passing through the center (abbr.)
50. Double S-shaped curve
51. Small, thin person
53. Older
54. Mars crater
55. Humanities
57. Word element meaning ear
58. To the __ degree
59. Residue
61. It cools your home

PUZZLE SOLUTION



SUDOKU

			8					6
9			7	1		3		
8	3							
		5			8			
	2						1	5
	7				2			3
	4			7		2		
2		3	6			4		
	5							

Level: Intermediate

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to parks and recreation.

S S R P O T

Answer: Sports

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born on July 2, 1990 in Australia. I earned my first acting role shortly after graduating from college, and I went on to play a character on the soap opera "Neighbours." Eventually I found fame in the United States, bringing life to films about a fallen ice skating star and a beloved doll.

Answer: Margot Robbie

CRYPTO FUN

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Solve the code to discover words related to parks. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 7 = E)

A. 23 11 15 26 7 23
Clue: Rides for kids

B. 16 24 17 15 11
Clue: Walking path

C. 16 24 7 7 23
Clue: Park fixtures

D. 25 15 7 11 26
Clue: Open outdoor area

Answers: A. slides B. trail C. trees D. field

SUDOKU SOLUTION

5	1	4	8	3	9	7	2	6
9	6	2	7	1	5	3	8	4
8	3	7	4	2	6	5	9	1
3	9	5	1	4	8	6	7	2
4	2	8	3	6	7	9	1	5
6	7	1	9	5	2	8	4	3
1	4	9	5	7	3	2	6	8
2	8	3	6	9	1	4	5	7
7	5	6	2	8	4	1	3	9

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, you are a powerhouse this week. Your energy levels will remain steady as the days go on, and people will notice your drive. Channel this energy into something positive.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

It's your week right now, Taurus, and the stars want to indulge. Indulge in something luxurious and enjoy yourself. You have earned the right to some pampering.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Use your gift of gab to mend a relationship issue that stemmed from a misunderstanding, Gemini. Expect some invitations to come your way and a surprise text mid-week.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

You are feeling extra sensitive to others' energy right now, Cancer. It is alright to decline social invitations to protect your peace of mind. A creative breakthrough may emerge while alone.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Don't shy away from the microphone or the spotlight, Leo. Whether it is at work or in your personal life, your charisma will be your greatest asset this week. You will be the star of the show.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Decluttering can go a long way to making you feel better, Virgo. Clear your desk to clear your mind. Once the physical chaos is gone, you may find the answer to the problem you have.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, the scales start to tip toward your personal life instead of your professional one this week. Focus on your spouse or special someone and make time for extra moments together.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Let go of a habit or a resentment that no longer serves you, Scorpio. Just like a snake sheds an old skin, you'll feel lighter and ready to tackle anything.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

You might be ready for a trip, Sagittarius. Even if you can't take a flight right now, explore a new neighborhood or try a different restaurant you've been meaning to check out.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

A small adjustment to your budget now may lead to a big payoff later on, Capricorn. Your financial discipline is a superpower this week, so stick to the plan.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Others are finally catching up to all of your big ideas, Aquarius. Pitch that unconventional plan you have been holding back and you'll likely have some fans.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pay attention to any coincidences that pop up during the next several days, Pisces. The universe is trying to tell you something about your next move.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 28
Mike White, Filmmaker (56)

JUNE 29
Melora Hardin, Actress (59)

JUNE 30
Michael Phelps, Athlete (41)

JULY 1
Daniela Avanzini, Singer (22)

JULY 2
Lindsay Lohan, Actress (40)

JULY 3
Patrick Wilson, Actor (53)

JULY 4
Post Malone, Rapper (31)



Gov. Abigail Spanberger announced she has created the Governor's Community Partnership Council On Corrections on June 23 at the Virginia Department of Corrections headquarters in Richmond. (Photo by Charlotte Rene Woods/Virginia Mercury)

Spanberger unveils reformed practices for Va. prisons and council on corrections

As corrections leaders work towards ongoing targeted solutions, a new council will bring advocates, families, and officials together for dialogue.

BY: CHARLOTTE RENE WOODS
Virginia Mercury

A new council convened by Gov. Abigail Spanberger aims to help solve longstanding issues in Virginia's prisons that residents and correctional officers have expressed concerns about for years.

The Governor's Community Partnership Council On Corrections, which Spanberger announced Tuesday, will bring together representatives from advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, healthcare and public safety groups and former prisoners to share their experiences and work towards solutions.

Two years ago a handful of prisoners at Red Onion State Prison, the most embattled correctional institution in the state, burned themselves in protest of living conditions and in attempts to transfer elsewhere.

Allegations of racism and retaliation by correctional officers were not ruled out by a state watchdog investigation at the prison and a class action lawsuit on behalf of prisoners who say they were abused will head to trial later this year.

"The people living in Virginia's prisons are not forgotten on our watch," Spanberger said at a press conference announcing the new council held at the Virginia Department of Corrections headquarters in Richmond.

Virginia Public Safety and Homeland Security Secretary Stanley Meador emphasized that the council will empower participants to propose solutions to problems and help the administration "see things we can't see."

Shawn Weneta, a policy strategist who has helped shape some criminal justice law changes in recent years, commended the creation of the council. He noted that some VADOC changes first began under the previous director but is pleased with the progress that the new administration is building.

Speaking as a formerly incarcerated person, he emphasized that the council's mission can best succeed by including "those most directly impacted by the system."

Ahead of assembling the official council, Spanberger's administration has already conducted engagement within prisons and implemented her Executive Order 12, which entailed enhanced training for correctional officers and building partnerships with communities.

From January to May of this year, Spanberger said use of force across all VADOC facilities has declined by 39%, serious inmate-on-staff assaults dropped 56%, lockdowns decreased by 27%, confirmed overdoses dropped 47%, while suspected overdoses dipped 12%.

Virginia prisons have stopped using five-point restraints, which can be harmful for people in mental health crises, she said.

The practice of isolating inmates in restorative housing, a persistent problem, has dropped by 20%.

Restorative housing is Virginia state code's euphemism for solitary confinement. It removes inmates from general populations and houses them in solitary cells.

Restorative housing is used when there's a threat of gang violence and as a disciplinary measure for inmates who violate prison rules.

When asked how the reduction in restorative housing was made possible, Spanberger shared that staff training refreshers since she took office have focused on deescalation, which doesn't exacerbate situations where an inmate may be in crisis or agitated.

Spanberger also said her administration is considering how to fine tune the state's Step Down program.

Step Down is supposed to offer people placed in restorative housing a pathway out by helping address root causes of why they were placed in solitary housing and giving them measures to transition out of it.

Several current and former inmates have relayed to The Mercury in recent years that restorative housing has been heavily utilized and people sometimes spend weeks or years, rather than days, in it.

A third-party report to state lawmakers in late 2024 confirmed that at least one facility had placed the majority of its residents under solitary housing.

Spanberger said her administration wants to be "making sure that every movement is documented on why someone is in restorative housing and their pathways out of it."

Under her direction, VADOC has also started to solve visitor access issues.

After hearing tales of disparate visitation access, Spanberger identified COVID-era restrictions — like less seating and fewer visitor time slots — as a contributing factor.

In recent months, VADOC has worked to restore past seating capacities in prisons' visitor centers and expand visitor time slots, the governor said. She also signed a law that creates more guidance and takes into account the needs of long-distance travelers who come to see their loved ones behind bars.

This "benefits, not just the family, but the person who is incarcerated," she said.

With Joseph Walters now serving as director of VADOC, Spanberger's administration established a new code of ethics for VADOC employees and mandated refreshed training.

Staffing issues have also plagued Virginia's prisons. Walters and Meador shared that they're very proud that their agencies' work so far has been achieved even with a 21% staffing vacancy.

This means, they said, that current staffers are working longer hours and pledging deeper commitment to their tasks. But rebuilding employee teams will be critical to halt turnover and alleviate burnout.

Walters, Meador and Spanberger also hosted in-person engagement sessions with 13 advocacy groups that the governor said had gone unheard by the state's top leaders for years.

She called it "stunning" how long some groups had tried to relay concerns to previous administrations and that she hopes her efforts to strengthen communication can "build a foundation for after I am no longer in office."





LEBANON VHSL

FROM PAGE 1B

Ryan Potts. "This mindset shows in their success across many avenues. We have students who have excelled in barrel racing, bass fishing, bricklaying, baseball, theater, track, tennis, softball, speech, cross country, esports, and countless other activities. Awards like this one help demonstrate that Pioneer Pride extends not only to sports fields and classrooms but also to all the many paths our students take to success."

The Cup, first awarded in 1990, represents 37 seasons of excellence. Each year, six Cups are given for academic activities and athletics in each of the VHSL's six enrollment classifications. Schools earn Cup points in activities such as Magazine, Newsmagazine, Newspaper, Online News, Yearbook, Broadcast, Robotics, Esports, Theatre, Scholastic Bowl, Speech, Debate, Creative Writing, and Film.

In addition to Lebanon – Eastside, Maggie Walker, Jefferson Forest, Clover Hill, and McLean claimed 2025-26 Academic Activity crowns

A point system determines the winners based on overall performance in VHSL state championship competitions. In athletics, first place earns 50 points, second place earns 45 points, third place earns 40 points, fourth place earns 35 points, fifth place earns 30 points, sixth place earns 25 points, seventh place earns 20 points, and eighth place earns 15 points. Schools earning the League's Sportsmanship, Ethics, and Integrity Award earn 50 points each.

For the five academic activities involving team champions — scholastic bowl, creative writing, debate, theatre, forensics, and robotics — points are awarded on the following basis: first place, 50; second place, 45; third place, 40; fourth place, 35; fifth place, 30; sixth place, 25; seventh place, 20; and eighth place, 15.

Scoring in publications is based on the ranking earned in the League's evaluation service: Trophy Class, 35; First Place, 20; Second Place, 5.

TRU RUFF

FROM PAGE 1B

win a state championship after I left, shows we did things the right way. Going to the Tennessee side is like going to a different world. I had 70-some kids come out for a middle school team, and we barely have 70 kids in a class here at Castlewood. I'm an older man, hopefully wiser. I've tried to be a sponge everywhere I've been."

Ruff maintained close ties with the Blue Devils. His son, Tru, played for Castlewood.

"I've been in the stands as a parent for the past few years," Ruff stated. "I've taken in how things are done and will try to build on that."

Ruff takes over for Patrick Wade, who recently resigned after five years as head coach of the Blue Devil basketball program. Ruff is the sixth head boys basketball coach at Castlewood since the 2013-14 season, and the program has seen little success.

"I'm not here to be a stopgap," declared Ruff. "I'd like to be here until I retire. I want to get a good run going. My goal in the first couple of years is to qualify for the Region 1D tournament. Get back to the time when you thought about Castlewood, you thought about Castlewood basketball."

"As I think back, I believe I'm the only one from Castlewood since Randy (Poole) among all those coaches. Some have been successful, but they weren't homegrown, from here. I played the first game in this gym in my senior year in 1994. We got beat by Lebanon, but I started that game."

You have to go back to the 2015-16 season, more than 10 years ago, when the Blue Devils posted a 15-9 record under Casey Johnson. It was the last winning season for Castlewood.

Under coach Doug Campbell, the Blue Devils secured the 2013 Region D, Division 1 title, but haven't returned to the regional tournament since.

"We have to start with the youth, implement practices for our teams together, and build a hard-nosed defense and rebounding. I think that's the cornerstone of all my teams," remarked Ruff. "My teams have always pressed and run the floor well." "Also, surround yourself with the right staff. Chris Smith, coming home with head-coaching experience, will be my assistant. That will be big. Chris is family; he's my second cousin. Have the right people in the program who care. You may not see a change in the first year; you'll see flashes of it, but they have to buy in. We will be fair, but we will push them. Most kids want to be coached."

There won't be many varsity veterans on the hardwood. Tru Ruff is the only one returning, and Gabe Cooper is expected to return after leaving the team last season.

"Gabe has come to a couple of open gyms. I think he will be back out, so it will be Tru and him," Ruff said. "That's the varsity roster from last season.

"It won't be a 'daddy ball' situation. I'm not here just to coach my son. If I'm here just to coach Tru for his senior season, I'm taking the job for the wrong reason. I want to see Castlewood succeed. I built that in the girls' program here. We started at the bottom and built it up, until we were good each year."

Ruff last had a losing season as a head coach in 2006. He compiled a 316-177 coaching record in girls basketball at Castlewood and Eastside, securing nine Cumberland District titles and leading both teams to the state semifinals. Notably, during the 2012-13 season, he led Castlewood to the VHSL Group A, Division 1 state semifinals, finishing with a 21-7 record.

"I've been above .500 for many years, and that will be a major challenge this year," commented Ruff. "But that's okay. It's not about the record; it's about building a foundation. I'm building a system with new kids who didn't play varsity last year. They're eager."

It won't be long until Ruff's troops are on the hardwood at Buddy Poole Court.

"Don't get me wrong, we will struggle, but there are some building blocks," he said. "The Cumberland is tough in boys' basketball, and that's okay. I only know one way to do this. I will try to win games. I probably have the biggest coaching job ahead of me that I've ever had. That's what I've told the boys. You're on the bottom. The only way you can go is up."

CLASSIFIEDS

CEMETERY LOTS

FOR SALE Monuments & Markers. Competitive prices year round. Call Jamie Combs 276-206-7801.

LEGAL NOTICE

TRUSTEE SALE
168 Railroad Ave, Saint Paul, VA 24283
Russell County

In execution of a Deed of Trust in the original principal amount of $58,900.00, dated July 8, 2022 recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the Russell County, Virginia, in Document No. 220001563 and modified in Document No. 240002278, at the request of the holder of the Note, the undersigned Substitute Trustee and will offer for sale at public auction at the entrance to the The front steps to the Russell County Circuit Courthouse, 53 East Main Street, Lebanon, on July 27, 2026at 1:15 PM the property described in said deed, located at the above address and briefly described as:
Parcel B, per plat recorded in Plat Cabinet 1, Slide 489B, with any improvements thereon
Subject to any and all covenants, conditions, restrictions, easements, and all other matters of record taking priority over the Deed of Trust, if any, affecting the aforesaid property.
TERMS OF SALE: CASH: A deposit of $20,000.00 or 10% of the sales price, whichever is lower, cash or certified check will be required at the time of sale, but no more than $9,000.00 of cash will be accepted, with settlement within fifteen (15) days from the date of sale. Sale is subject to post sale confirmation that the borrower did not file for protection under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code prior to the sale which affects the validity of the sale, as well as to post-sale confirmation of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. Sale is also subject to buyer providing Trustee with information needed for reporting requirements required by Federal Law including FinCen requirements (31 CFR Chapter X) within 15 days from date of sale .In any such event, the sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of his deposit without interest. Additional terms may be announced at the time of sale. Pursuant to the Federal Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, we advise you that this firm is a debt collector attempting to collect the indebtedness referred to herein and any information we obtain will be used for that purpose.
SAMUEL I. WHITE, P.C., Substitute Trustee
This is a communication from a debt collector.
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
SAMUEL I. WHITE, P.C.(96087)
448 Viking Drive Suite 350
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
757-457-1460 - Call Between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
or visit our website at www.siwpc.net
LN-6-24, 7-1;2026

TRUSTEE SALE
559 Old Fincastle Rd, Lebanon, VA 24266
Russell County

In execution of a Deed of Trust in the original principal amount of $70,325.00, dated October 13, 2022 recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the Russell County, Virginia, in Document No. 220002324, at the request of the holder of the Note, the undersigned Substitute Trustee and will offer for sale at public auction at the entrance to the The front steps to the Russell County Circuit Courthouse, 53 East Main Street, Lebanon, on August 3, 2026at 11:30 AM the property described in said deed, located at the above address and briefly described as:
All of that certain house and lot situate in the town of Lebanon, Russell County, Virginia, on the South side of and adjacent to the old location of Route 71, fronting 85 feet thereon, with the improvements thereon, and being identically the same real estate which was conveyed to K. King by deed date August 6, 1953, from G. Stoots and V. Stoots, which is of record in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Russell County, Virginia, in Deed Book No. 143, at Page 261, reference to which is hereby made for a more particular description of said real estate, with any improvements thereon
Subject to any and all covenants, conditions, restrictions, easements, and all other matters of record taking priority over the Deed of Trust, if any, affecting the aforesaid property.
TERMS OF SALE: CASH: A deposit of $20,000.00 or 10% of the sales price, whichever is lower, cash or certified check will be required at the time of sale, but no more than $9,000.00 of cash will be accepted, with settlement within fifteen (15) days from the date of sale. Sale is subject to post sale confirmation that the borrower did not file for protection under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code prior to the sale which affects the validity of the sale, as well as to post-sale confirmation of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. Sale is also subject to buyer providing Trustee with information needed for reporting requirements required by Federal Law including FinCen requirements (31 CFR Chapter X) within 15 days from date of sale. In any such event, the sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of his deposit without interest. Additional terms may be announced at the time of sale. Pursuant to the Federal Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, we advise you that this firm is a debt collector attempting to collect the indebtedness referred to herein and any information we obtain will be used for that purpose.
SAMUEL I. WHITE, P.C., Substitute Trustee
This is a communication from a debt collector.
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
SAMUEL I. WHITE, P.C.(92517)
448 Viking Drive Suite 350
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
757-457-1460 - Call Between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
or visit our website at www.siwpc.net
LN-7-1,8;2026

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE
4896 Back Valley Rd, Cleveland, Virginia 24225

In execution of that certain deed of trust in the original principal amount of $58,100.00 dated August 8, 1991 and recorded among the land records of Russell County, in Deed Book 387, Page 542 and subsequent modifications or re-recordings, if any, as amended by an instrument appointing the undersigned as Substituted Trustee dated in the land records of Russell County, Virginia, default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness thereby secured and having been requested to do so by the holder of the note evidencing the said indebtedness, the undersigned Substituted Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in front of the Russell County Circuit Court Building, 53 East Main Street, Lebanon, Virginia, on:
July 30, 2026 at 11:00 AM
The property described in said deed of trust located at the above street address, and more particularly described as:
All that certain lot or parcel of land, with all appurtenances thereunto belonging, lying and being in the Castlewood (formerly Cleveland) Magisterial District of Russell County, Virginia, on the south side of and adjacent to State Route 615, and containing 0.40 acres, more or less, as shown on a map and plat by Frank A. Carpenter, Certified Land Surveyor, dated March 1980, a copy of which is recorded in Deed Book 296, at Page 93, Russell County, Virginia, records, reference to which plat is hereby made for a more full and complete description of the said property conveyed.
Beginning at a point in the southern right of way line of State Route 615 being the northeastern corner of the subject property which point is marked by a post; thence, N 65 degrees 15` E 111.16 feet to a post, a corner; thence, in a southern direction S 15 degrees 48` E 169.90 feet to an iron pin, a corner; thence S 68 degrees 56` W 99.77 feet to an iron pin, a corner; thence, with a line of Ronald McGlothlin N. 19 degrees 30` W 162.10 feet to the point of Beginning and containing 0.40 acres, more or less.
TERMS OF SALE: Cash or certified funds. A non-refundable deposit of ten percent (10%) of the successful bid price, payable in cash or by certified or cashier's check to the undersigned will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Terms of sale to be complied with within 14 days from date of sale or deposit will be forfeit and property will be resold at costs of defaulting purchaser. All real estate taxes to be adjusted as of date of sale. Seller shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the purchaser in connection with their purchase or settlement, including, without limitation, state and local recording fees, title insurance or research, or any other costs of purchaser's acquisition. The property and the improvements thereon will be sold as is, without representations or warranties of any kind. The sale is subject to all other liens, encumbrances, conditions, easements and restrictions, if any, superior to the aforesaid deed of trust and lawfully affecting the property. Trustee shall have no duty to obtain possession for purchaser. All risks of casualty pass to successful bidder at conclusion of bidding. Sale is subject to post-sale confirmation that the borrower did not file for protection under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code prior to the sale, as well as to post-sale confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower(s) entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, the sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the Purchaser's deposit without interest. Additional terms to be announced at the sale.
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
Terra Abstract Virginia, Inc.
1581 Main Street
Suite 200
Warrington, PA 18976
(215) 572-8111, M-F Between 8:00AM - 5 P.M.
(VA202500000125)
In the event of postponement of the sale, which may be done at the discretion of the trustee, the date of the postponed sale will be announced at the sale. No new or additional notice will be provided other than the announcement at the sale.
LN-7-1,8,15,22;2026

Job Opportunity: Field Laborer

Russell County Public Service Authority
Location: Castlewood / Dante Area
Starting Base Salary: $37,440/year + Excellent Benefits Package
Application Deadline: Monday, July 13, 2026
The Russell County Public Service Authority is currently seeking a dependable, motivated individual to fill an opening for a **Field Laborer** serving the Castlewood and Dante areas. This is a full-time position offering stable local employment with a competitive benefits package.

Key Responsibilities
Duties include, but are not limited to, the general maintenance and operation of the existing water distribution system and sewer collection system, such as:
- Performing regular water meter readings.
- Collecting water and wastewater samples for regulatory compliance.
- Repairing water line leaks and maintaining system infrastructure.
- Installing new water and sewer service connections.
- Participating in a rotating schedule for required weekend and holiday work.

Qualifications & Requirements
- **Teamwork & Autonomy:** Ability to work effectively both within small groups and independently with minimal supervision.
- **Water Systems Experience:** Prior experience in water systems or water line installation is highly preferred.
- **Equipment operation:** Experience operating heavy equipment or holding a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is preferred, but not required.

How to Apply
Interested candidates must submit both an application and a resume. Applications can be picked up in person at the PSA main office:
Russell County PSA
137 Highland Drive, Suite E
Lebanon, Virginia 24266

All completed applications and resumes must be submitted no later than July 13, 2026 by 1:00PM

The Russell County Public Service Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Transform Your Bathroom and Change Your Life.
FREE TOILET + $1,500 OFF*
For your FREE information kit and our Senior Discounts, Call Today Toll-Free **1-877-591-9950**
safestep
*Free toilet with purchase and installation of a walk-in tub or walk-in shower only. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Market restrictions may apply. Offer available in select markets only. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445 13VH11096000

We are pledged to the letter and spirit of Virginia's and HUD's equal opportunity housing policies. Virginia's fair housing law makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status or handicap. This newspaper (**The Lebanon News**) will not knowingly accept advertising for real estate that violates the fair housing law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. For more information about Virginia's Fair Housing Law or to file a fair housing complaint call the Virginia Fair Housing Office at (804)367-8530. Toll free call (888)551-3247/ For the hearing impaired call (804)527-4290.

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

The Town of Honaker is accepting applications for positions in the Public Works Maintenance Department. Pay will be based on experience. Applications are available at Town Hall, 455 Heritage Drive, Honaker, VA, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. The Town of Honaker is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Town of Lebanon - PWSID No.1167455

INTRODUCTION
This Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for calendar year 2025 is designed to inform you about your drinking water quality. Our goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water, and we want you to understand the efforts we make to protect your water supply. The quality of your drinking water must meet state and federal requirements administered by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

If you have questions about this report, please contact:Steve Sweet at (276) 889-7205

If you want additional information about any aspect of your drinking water or want to know how to participate in decisions that may affect the quality of your drinking water, please contact: Drew Shortt, Town Manager (276) 889-7200

The times and location of regularly scheduled board meetings are as follows: 2nd Monday of each month at the Town Hall

GENERAL INFORMATION
The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include: (i) microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife; (ii) inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; (iii) pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses; (iv) organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems; (v) radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer who are undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

SOURCE(S) and TREATMENT OF YOUR DRINKING WATER
The sourceof your drinking water is (X) surface water ( )groundwater under the direct influence of surface water ( ) groundwater as described below:

Is there any treatment of your drinking water supply? (X) Yes ( ) No

The Virginia Department of Health conducted a source water assessment of our system during 2020. The Big Cedar Creek was determined to be of high susceptibility to contamination using the criteria developed by the state in its approved Source Water Assessment Program. The assessment report consists of maps showing the source water assessment area, an inventory of known land use activities of concern, and documentation of any known contamination. The report is available by contacting (276) 889-7200at the phone number or address given elsewhere in this drinking water quality report.

DEFINITIONS
Contaminants in your drinking water are routinely monitored according to Federal and State regulations. The table on the next page shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st,**2025**. In the table and elsewhere in this report you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. The following definitions are provided to help you better understand these terms:

Maximum Contaminant Level, or MCL - the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal, or MCLG - the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal or MRDLG: the level of drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level or MRDL: the highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

Non-detects (ND) - lab analysis indicates that the contaminant is not present

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l) - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in $10,000.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in $10,000,000.

Picocuries per liter (pCi/L) - picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

Action Level (AL) -the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Treatment Technique (TT) - a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Level 1 assessment - a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

Level 2 assessment - a very detailed study of the waterworks to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an *E. coli* PMCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU) - nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity, or cloudiness, of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person. Turbidity is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

WATER QUALITY RESULTS

Regulated Contaminants

Contaminant (units)	MCLG	MCL	Level Detected	Violation (Y/N)	Range	Date of Sample	Typical Source of Contamination
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	1.77	N	-	2/4/2025	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.028	N	-	2/4/2025	Discharge of drilling waste; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride(ppm)	4	4	ND	N		2/4/2025	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Combined Radium (pCi/l)	0	5	0.2	N	-	11/9/2021	Erosion of Natural Deposits
Chlorine (ppm)	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4	1.5	N	0.8-2.6	2025	Water additive used to control microbes
Total Organic Carbon	NA	TT, met when ≥1	1	N	0.62-0.79	2025	Naturally present in the environment
Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	NA	60	25	N	11-38	2025	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	NA	80	18	N	7.8-27	2025	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity	NA	TT,1 NTU Max	0.04	N	0.02 – 0.06	2025	Soil runoff
		TT, ≤ 0.3 NTU 95% of the time	100%	N			

Lead and Copper Contaminants

Contaminant (units)	MCLG	Action Level	90th Percentile	Date of Sampling	# of Sampling Sites Exceeding Action Level	Typical Source of Contamination
Lead (ppb)	0	AL = 15	0 ppb	7/11/2024	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	1.3 mg/L	AL = 1.3	0.0488 mg/L	7/11/2024	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

Monitoring Results for Sodium (Unregulated-No Limits Designated)			
Level Detected (unit)	Sample Date	Typical Source	Guidance
3.2 (mg/L)	2/4/2025	Naturally Occuring; Addition of treatment chemicals/processes	For individuals on a very low sodium diet (500 mg/day), EPA recommends that drinking-water sodium not exceed 20 mg/L. Should you have a health concern, contact your health care provider.

The state allows us to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data presented in the above tables, though accurate, is more than one year old.

MCL's are set at very stringent levels by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In developing the standards EPA assumes that the average adult drinks 2 liters of water each day throughout a 70-year life span. EPA generally sets MCLs at levels that will result in no adverse health effects for some contaminants or a one-in-ten-thousand to one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect for other contaminants.

VIOLATION INFORMATION – Did any PMCL or TT violation occur during the year? ( ) Yes (X) No

VIOLATION INFORMATION – Did any monitoring, reporting, or other violations occur during the year? (X) Yes () No

State Health Officials have advised us of a failure to perform required monitoring in accordance with the Virginia Waterworks Regulations. We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During November 2025, we did not complete all monitoring for bacteriological analysi. Therefore, we cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water during that time. Four routine samples were required for analysis and two were analyzed. State health officials believe that there is little need for concern about the safety of your water because past records show that our waterworks has had no documented problems, however, routine sampling and examination are required to determine the quality of water delivered to our customers. There is nothing you need to do at this time. We will attempt to collect the proper number of required samples during the next monitoring period, carefully review the results obtained by the laboratory, and collect additional samples when needed.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Town of Lebanon is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to two minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact The Town of Lebanon. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR WATERWORKS

Service Line Inventory

The Town of Lebanon has completed the required Lead Service Line Inventory and submitted the results to the Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water. Based on customer self-identification, historical records and field investigation, we have determined that there are no Lead Lines, Galvanized Lines Requiring Replacement and noUnknown materials in the system. We thank you for your help and cooperation. The full inventory is available on the Town website via interactive mapping.

Health Effects Information

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.





Mountain Highway will be headline on September 9.

Russell County Fair announces entertainment lineup

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

Officials with the Russell County Fair and Horseshow have announced the line-up of entertainment for the 2026 fair. This year's event will include two Gospel Nights, Tuesday, September 8 and Thursday, September 10.

The music portion of the fair will get kicked off on Friday, September 4. A yet to be named opening act will hit the stage at 7:00 p.m. with Seth McKay and Moonshine Rivals headlining at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 5 will see Noah Spencer taking to the stage at 7:00 p.m. Honeybadgers will follow at 8:00 p.m.

Midlife Crisis will be the headliner on Monday, September 7 at 8:00 p.m. A yet to be named opening act will get the show started an hour earlier.

The fair's first Gospel Night will be on Tuesday, September 8. Calvary's Chosen will take to the stage at 6:00 p.m. Valley Grass will follow at 6:40 p.m. The Jessee Family will perform at 7:20 p.m., with The ChuckWagon Gang headlining at 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 9 will feature Mountain Highway at 8:00 p.m.

The traditional Thursday Gospel Night on September 10 will feature Holston River Boys at 6:00 p.m., The Hubbard Family at 6:30 p.m., The Jackson Family at 7:00 p.m., Mike Upright at 7:30 p.m. and Jeff Tolbert and Primitive Road at 8:15 p.m.

Friday, September 11 will find Gents and Liars in the spotlight at 8:00 a.m. An opening act will get the show started at 7:00 p.m.

Kickin' Up Dust will headline the stage on the final night of the fair, Saturday, September 12. Kickin' Up Dust will take to the stage at 8:00 p.m., following an opening act an hour earlier.

The 2026 Russell County Fair and Horseshow will take place at the fairgrounds in Castlewood from September 4 through September 12. For more information, visit russellcountyfair.com.



Calvary's Chosen will be a part of the fair's first Gospel Night on September 8.



