The Lebanon News

Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880

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Lebanon's Maddie Marchant crowned Miss Virginia

By SHAWN STREET
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Lebanon's own Maddie Marchant has been crowned Miss Virginia.

The Miss Virginia Pageant was held on June 26 at the Berglund Center in Roanoke.

Marchant is the first Miss Virginia from this region in nearly 30 years. Pounding Mill's Kelli Quick was crowned Miss Virginia in 1997.

Wearing the crown of Miss Virginia is a lifelong dream of Marchant's. "I entered my first pageant when I was eight-months old," she said. "I even dressed as Miss America for career day in school."

The Lebanon News talked to Marchant just a few days after her dream became a reality. When asked if it has set in yet, she replied with a laugh, "I'll be so honest, no, it has not. I feel like I'm living with imposter's syndrome, like I'm living as someone else. But it has been so awesome."

Marchant's platform is helping those with invisible disabilities and diseases feel seen through InvisABILITY. Her goal of helping such individuals is based on her personal experiences while growing up.

She lives with celiac disease and a thyroid disorder. Marchant is also deaf in her right ear. "I was bullied in school because of my hearing aid," she said.

Marchant said she hopes she can be a role model to children who are currently being bullied.

SEE **MADDIE MARCHANT | 6A**



Miss Virginia Maddie Marchant.



Judge Don McGlothlin was the grand marshal for the parade in Lebanon.

Russell County celebrates independence

By SHAWN STREET
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Russell County honored 250 years of freedom with celebrations in Honaker, Cleveland and Lebanon.

Despite temperatures being almost as hot as the fireworks, each town had large and enthusiastic crowds for their festivities.

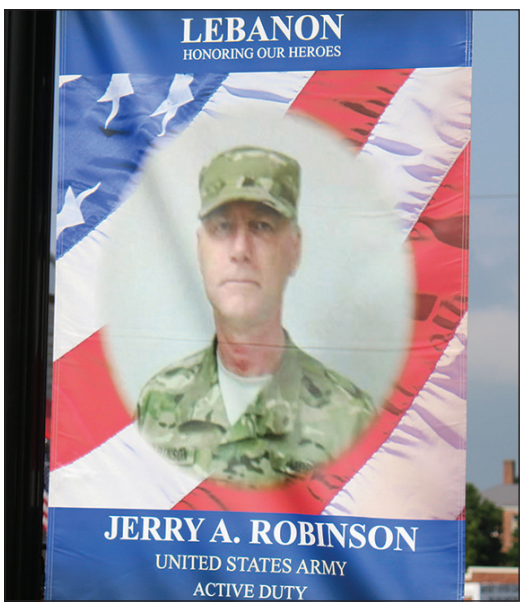
Honaker got America's birthday party started on June 27. Plenty of vendors, the town's new splash pad, live music and fireworks were all a part of the town's festivities.

Cleveland took the spotlight on July 3. The town's annual Independence Day parade, live music, cornhole tournament and fireworks were among the highlights.

Lebanon's celebration began with the town's annual parade on the morning of July 4. Judge Don McGlothlin served as grand marshal.

Marching bands from Southern Gap High

SEE **RUSSELL COUNTY CELEBRATES | 2A**



Banners honoring hometown heroes lined the streets of Lebanon.

Supervisors, school board pass balanced budgets

By SHAWN STREET
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Both the Russell County Board of Supervisors and Russell County School Board has passed their budgets for the new fiscal year of 2026-2027.

During the June 24 budget workshop meeting, the supervisors were discussing a proposed budget that Russell County Administrator Lonzo Lester said was balanced.

However, late in that meeting, Russell County Schools' Finance Director Brooke Webb addressed requirements from the Virginia General Assembly's budget. Brooke said requirements from Richmond created a difference of just over $1 million in what the supervisors set aside for the school system and what the school system needed.

In the lead up to the June 29 meeting of the board of supervisors, Superintendent of Russell County Schools Dr. Kim Hooker sent out a notification of a potential reduction in workforce. Numerous social media posts were made by school system employees and supporters, urging them to attend the June 29 meeting.

With such a crowd potentially coming to the meeting, calls went out to move the meeting into the Russell County Government Center's Conference Room. However, that room was already booked by Salt and Light Ministry for a free showing of a faith-based movie.

"We didn't want to run the church people off," said David Eaton, Chairman of the Russell County Board of Supervisors, at the onset of the meeting.

As for the budget, he added, "We're going to do the right thing and take care of our people."

Asking Hooker to join him at the podium, Lester said, "We have worked diligently on this. We've made different cuts and we've come to a solution."

Hooker said capital improvements have been cut at all locations, "…so we don't have to cut programs."

Lester said the county made cuts to salary bonuses and will not hire replacements for those retiring from certain positions. Budget expenditures such a travel costs were also cut.

District 3's Tara Dye asked for clarification on three issues. Those were if the budget was balanced, the schools were fully funded and the Finney trash site would remain open.

"Yes," Lester answered. "Those three items are correct."

Several supervisors stressed that the two boards need to work closely throughout the year in order to

SEE **BALANCED BUDGETS | 6A**

250 Years of US mural unveiled

By SHAWN STREET
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A brief ceremony was held on July 1 to unveil the 250 Years of US mural in Lebanon.

The vinyl mural features the Bart Long and Associates Reality and Auction Clydesdales that have traditionally led the town's Christmas parade. The mural also features an eagle soaring high, an American flag, the Town of Lebanon's seal and the phrase "250 Years of Us."

The mural is located on the corner of West Main Street and Church Street.

Alan Tuhacek was the artist behind the mural. Tuhacek is a student at Southwest Virginia Community College School of the Arts.

"I am really grateful for the opportunity," Tuhacek said. "I had a good time working on this."

Tuhacek's instructor, Morgan Wallace Gilbert, said, "It

SEE **US MURAL UNVEILED | 6A**



The 250 Years of US mural

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Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880

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

Jerry Wayne "Bucky" Smith

JERRY WAYNE "BUCKY" SMITH, 72, passed away on Monday, June 29, 2026.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Fred Smith and Iristena Kiser Smith; brother, Geary Smith; sister, Joyce White; brother-in-law, George White and sister-in-law, Eileen Reynolds.

Jerry retired from R.H. Boulghany. He loved to ride horses and farm.

Survivors include his loving and faithful wife of 46 years, Alice Smith; son, Chad Smith; sister, Tammy Smith; sisters-in-law, Linda Dye, Anita Farmer and Faye Tignor; brothers-in-law, Ronnie Mullins and Hank Mullins; special little friend, Draven Hicks. Several nieces and nephews also survive.

The funeral service was conducted at 7 pm on Wednesday, July 1, 2026 in the Combs-Hess Funeral and Cremation Service chapel with Randy Williams officiating. The family received friends from 5 pm until 7 pm at the funeral home. Burial was conducted at 11:30 am on Thursday, July 2, 2026 at Temple Hill Memorial Park. Those who attended met at the funeral home at 11:00 am and went in procession to the cemetery.

Pallbearers were Daniel Farmer, Wesley Alexander, Thomas Duty, Randy Smith, Ronnie Bush and Nick Bush.

Expressions of sympathy may be made on Combs-Hess Funeral & Cremation Service Facebook page and our website at www.chfunerals.com. Combs-Hess Funeral Service, 291 Highway 71 Fincastle Road, Lebanon, VA 24266, (276) 889-4444.



Jerry Wayne "Bucky" Smith

Richlands man arrested for 2025 robbery in Belfast

By SHAWN STREET
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A Richlands man has been arrested for allegedly robbing the Belfast Sunoco last year.

On July 18, 2025, an armed suspected demanded access to the store's cash register. The suspect, who wore a bandana over his lower face, helped himself to the money inside the cash register and then fled the scene.

Since that time, the Russell County Sheriff's Office has been investigating the robbery, with assistance from the Virginia State Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

On July 2, Junior Earl Rowe, 43, was taken into custody and charged with armed robbery. Rowe is currently being held in the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail in Abingdon.

"The Sheriff's Office has continued to pursue all leads involving this crime and ultimately it has led to criminal charges today," said Sheriff Bill Watson. "Today shows our continuing efforts to protect the community."

Russell County Commonwealth's Attorney Zack Stoots added, "Charges have been placed on the defendant and the Russell County Sheriff's Office never gave up on solving this case."

RUSSELL COUNTY CELEBRATES

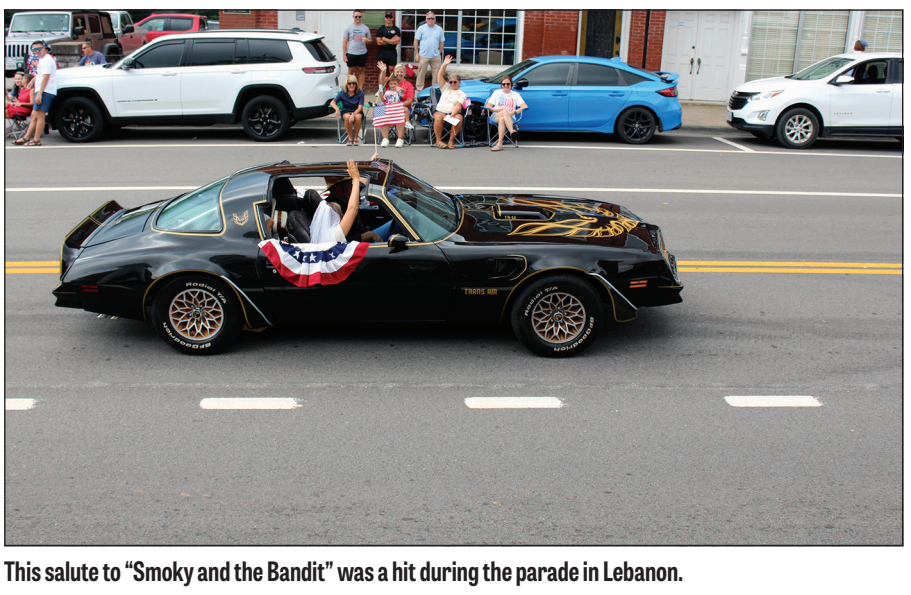
FROM PAGE 1A

School and Honaker High School took part in the parade. The parade also featured plenty of emergency response teams from across the county, beauty queens, hot rods, tractors and floats from churches, civic organizations and businesses.

The celebration continued throughout the day and well into the evening on the grounds of Lebanon Middle School. Plenty of vendors, live music, fireworks and a special showing of "American Heritage with David Barton" at the Russell Theatre, sponsored by New Life Fellowship, were all a part of the celebration.



Those who fought at the Battle of Kings Mountain in 1780 were honored.



This salute to "Smoky and the Bandit" was a hit during the parade in Lebanon.



Russell County's 4H students were a part of the July 4 parade.



George and Martha Washington made the trip to Russell County.



Honaker High School's marching band entertained the crowd.



The celebration continued throughout the day and into the evening on the grounds of Lebanon Middle School.



There are always plenty of hot rods in Lebanon's Independence Day parade.



Spring City Baptist Church celebrated political and spiritual freedom.

THE LEBANON NEWS

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OPINIONS

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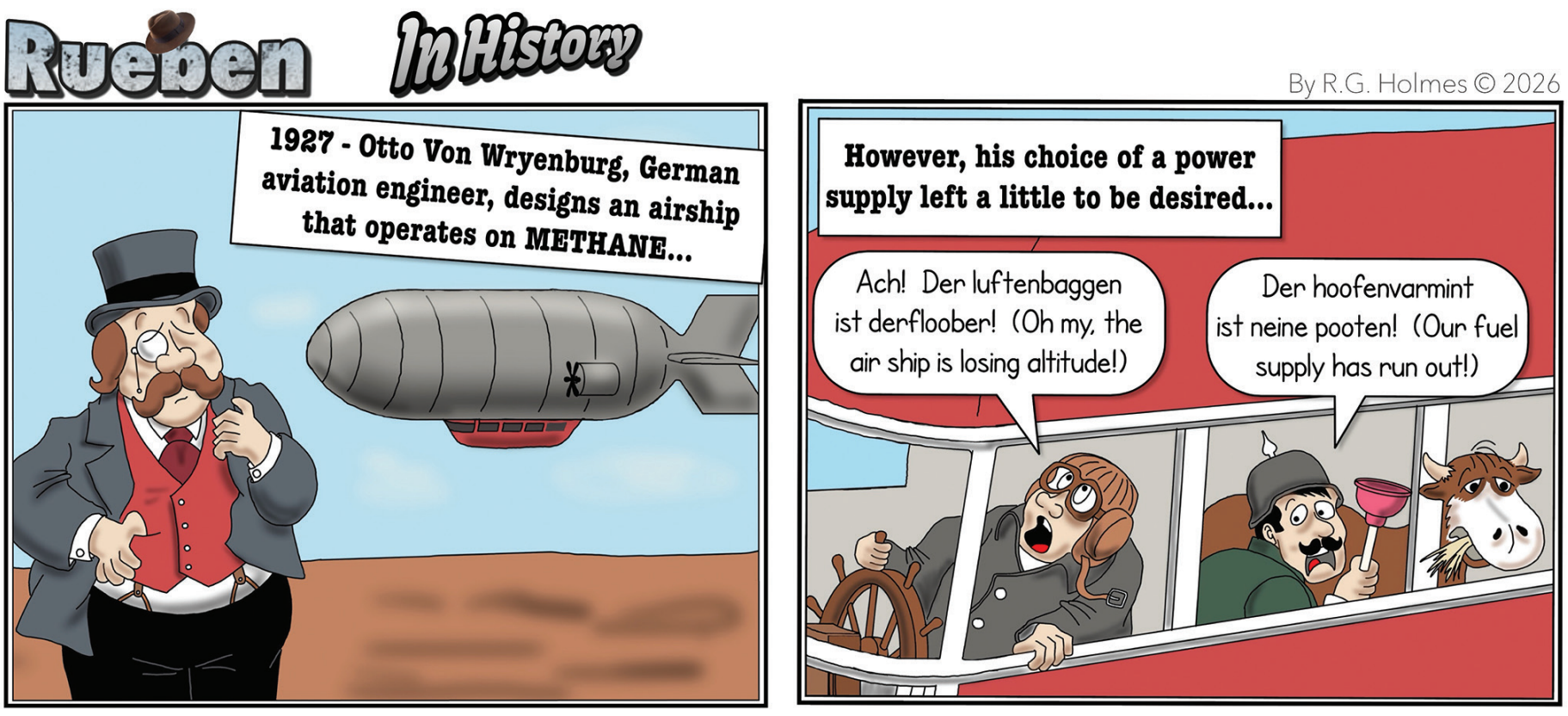
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Sheriff's Office mourns the loss of K9 Art

By SHAWN STREET
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"Today, I say goodbye to more than just my K9 partner—I say goodbye to my best friend."

Those were the words of Deputy Cameron Ball with the Russell County Sheriff's Office when announcing the passing of his K9 partner Art.

"For the past three years, K9 Art stood by my side with unwavering loyalty, courage, and dedication," Ball said. "During his service with the Russell County Sheriff's Office, Art was deployed 121 times, located seven individuals on tracks, assisted in the arrest of 36 people, and helped seize 81 items of narcotics and drug paraphernalia, including more than 163 grams of methamphetamine."

Ball went on to say, "But to me, his accomplishments and statistics only tell a small part of his story. Art was my partner, my protector, and my best friend. He taught me patience, loyalty, and what it truly means to trust someone completely. We spent countless hours together, faced difficult situations side by side, and built a bond that can never be replaced."

K9 Art was named after the lead character in the "Terrifier" movie franchise, Art the Clown. He lived up to his name, striking terror in the hearts of bad guys, not only from Russell County, but throughout the region.

K9 Art assisted the Lebanon Police Department, St. Paul Police Department, Washington County Sheriff's Office, Wise County Sheriff's Office, Virginia State Police and the United States Penitentiaries.

"The silence left behind is overwhelming, and there are no words that can fully describe the loss I feel," said Ball. "Yet I take comfort in knowing that Art lived a life of purpose and honor and made a lasting impact on everyone who had the privilege of working alongside him."


Russell County Sheriff's Office K9 Art.

He concluded, "Thank you, Art, for every track, every deployment, every long night, and every moment of friendship. You served with courage and left this world as a hero."



Art dressed up as his namesake.

Eaton explains budget concerns, process

By SHAWN STREET
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July 1 of every year is the beginning of a new fiscal year in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Meaning, localities must have a new budget in place by that date.

When it comes down to crunch time, emotions have a way of dictating budget conversations and fingers are often pointed at those with those of differing viewpoints. Add to that volatile mixture modern social media, and it soon becomes difficult to determine what is fact and what is fiction.

In an effort to explain the Russell County School System's point of view, District 3 school board member J.J. Eaton issued a statement.

"I do want to inform everybody on a few statements that have been made," he said.

"The state this year inflated our budget by $1.4 million and by doing this they passed the burden on to the locality to match seven different programs," Eaton added. "Some of those programs include; K3, K4, algebra readiness, technology, SOL Readiness, and our Pals program."

Eaton said the programs were fundamental to the school system and would be hard to do without. He said eliminating the programs would affect over 70 employees.

"The state inflated our budget and we didn't know the final amount until Wednesday (June 24)," Eaton said. "This made it difficult for us and the board of supervisors to come up with a solution within a short period of time.


JJ Eaton

The school system has made substantial cuts and came up with the majority of the funds along with the BOS in order to keep these programs and the employees."

In recent weeks, much has been said about recent school closings and upgrades to athletic facilities.

"We did not close down the schools for the raises," Eaton said, referring to the closure of Swords Creek Elementary School and Copper Creek Elementary School.

He went on to say, "We closed two schools to start the new pay scale. Anyone can go back and watch the April and May meetings in 2024, myself and Dr. (Kim) Hooker said that the money's from those two schools were going to the new pay scale. Not once did we say it was for raises. The raises, pay scale, and step are all different, and are paid with different funding mechanisms."

Eaton addressed the installation of stadium lights at Castlewood High School's football field and installation of new field turf at Honaker High School.

"The money that we used for both the Honaker Football field and Castlewood stadium lights were reimbursed ESSER money from last year's budget and were already contracted. That money cannot be used for raises. If we could have used that money to make up the difference to give our teachers that 4 percent increase we would have."

He added, "Reminder, the Honaker Football field did not pass the safety test and had to be replaced. The field has been there for 18 years. That's 18 years of basically no maintenance and that's a big cost savings."

Eaton said if anyone has questions about the budget or the budget process, they can reach out to him or anyone at the central office.

"We will be glad to explain or help with any concerns that you may have," he said. "Don't spread misinformation, gather the facts. If you have any questions feel free to call me or send me a message. I will help you any way I can."

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.

GOSPEL SINGING

There will be a singing at the Church of Jesus Christ on Stoots Street, Lebanon, VA on July 10, 2026 at 7 p.m. The singers will be The Hubbard Family, Cause One, and the Spirit and Truth singers. Come out and worship with us.

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.

MEADE FAMILY REUNION

Meade Family Reunion at N. C. Meade Picnic Shelter. Everyone Welcome.

Food City kicks off school bucks challenge

Food City has once again pledged $800,000 in contributions for the upcoming school year. With Food City's School Bucks Challenge, earning rewards for your school is simple. For every dollar spent using your Food City ValuCard, you'll earn one point.

This year, Food City has introduced a new feature to make points collection easier than ever. During designated Spirit Weeks, customers can earn bonus points by purchasing participating items.

"Our Food City School Bucks Program has provided much-needed support for schools across our market area. Our School Bucks Challenge makes points collection quick and easy," says Steven C. Smith, Food City president and chief executive officer.

The 2026-2027 School Bucks Challenge runs from July 1, 2026, through April 30, 2027. To ensure your points are credited to the school of your choice, visit foodcity.com/schoolbucks and link your ValuCard to your preferred school.

Food City has pledged $800,000 for the upcoming school year. These funds will be distributed based on the percentage of customer purchases assigned to each school. Schools can track their progress online at foodcity.com.

"Food City is committed to supporting the education of our youth," said Smith. "Since the program's inception, we've awarded over $23.7 million in essential educational equipment and tools to more than a thousand participating area schools".

For more information about the Food City School Bucks Challenge, contact your local school, visit foodcity.com/schoolbucks, or reach out to the Food City School Bucks Coordinator - Lisa Johnson at 1-800-232-0174.

Congressman Griffith: WFTC

The Republican Congress continues to use the reconciliation process to produce conservative wins for the American people.

Not only were the Working Families Tax Cuts (WFTC) done in a reconciliation bill, but earlier this June, Congress passed another reconciliation bill to fully fund federal immigration enforcement agencies through the rest of President Trump's term.

This had to happen after "open borders" Democrats refused to fund the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Because of their obstruction, the DHS shutdown was the longest agency shutdown in U.S. history.

With Republicans' passage of this immigration enforcement reconciliation package, we blocked Democrats from defunding the federal agencies responsible for removing criminal illegal aliens.

I will continue to support policies that protect American communities from Biden-Harris "open borders" policies.

A potential reconciliation package is also being discussed to help with things ranging from defense funding to voter ID policies. As of right now, a final draft of a potential reconciliation bill has yet to be produced.

Delivering conservative wins through the reconciliation process is evident from the Working Families Tax Cuts that President Trump signed into law on July 4, 2025.

I was proud to back this transformative package, which prevented tax hikes on working families and delivered other meaningful tax relief reforms.

Data is now available on how these reforms are helping Americans.

According to the U.S. Department of Treasury, 97% of tax filers accessed these tax cut benefits. The Ways and Means Committee in Congress notes that IRS data shows Americans received an average refund of nearly $3,300, marking a greater than 11% increase in average individual refunds year over year.

By passing this legislation, the Ways and Means committee notes that we stopped a tax increase of 22% for the average taxpayer.

Additionally, tax filers took advantage of new opportunities.

More than 7 million Americans claimed a deduction for tips. This follows on President Trump's "No Tax on Tips" promise.

But Republican lawmakers did not stop there.

We also created a deduction for those who work hourly overtime. This tax season, nearly 30 million filers claimed this deduction.



WEEKLY REPORT
FROM THE CAPITOL

Further, an enhanced senior bonus deduction allowed seniors on social security to keep more of their money. The $6,000 bonus is in place for single filers and $12,000 for joint filers.

Whilewe strengthen economic prospects for working families through this tax relief, Republicans also advance businesses with a focus on 'Made in America.'

Johnson & Johnson, a pharmaceutical manufacturer, is one company expanding domestic operations in the United States.

The company's CEO, Mr. Joaquin Duato, credited Republicans' legislation for his company moving forward with the $55 billion expansion.

The reconciliation bill also delivers vital health care funding to rural communities through the Rural Health Transformation Program.

Virginia is the recipient of more than $189 million thanks to the Rural Health Transformation Program.

This pot of money helps rural hospital providers in Virginia's Ninth District. That includes Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon, to which Virginia awarded its first Program grant.

This award will help the College expand healthcare workforce training opportunities. As medical deserts threaten health care access, grants like these can help close the provider gap, develop a pipeline of rural health care workers and better serve rural patients.

As more Rural Health Transformation Program awards flow to our region, I will continue to advocate for tax policies that help our region.

Such policies include the New Markets Tax Credit, which we permanently extended in the Working Families Tax Cuts.

This tax credit has been credited for the construction of a new medical office building in Tazewell County!

This facility is creating new options for health care, which in turn is helping Carilion Tazewell Community Hospital.

Further, I believe that the reconciliation package's boosted tax incentives for Opportunity Zones in rural areas can unlock more potential health care opportunity. A tax structure that promotes investments in rural communities can produce dividends!

These ideas show that the tax policies we advanced in the Working Families Tax Cutssupport our economic prospects.

Further, I will continue to consider reconciliation ideas that produce prosperity, opportunity and freedom for the American people.

If you have ideas, please feel free to contact our office.

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,

By the time you get this letter our country will have celebrated its 250th anniversary!

Hope you had a great 4th of July! We are facing some very hot temperatures this week, and I think hitting the river is probably the best thing to do. A cookout at the park perhaps? The kids are coming home to the farm and I think perhaps I'd better pull out the kiddie pool for the "little fellow".

I sure hope we make it through this holiday without the crazies coming out of the woodwork. We plan to watch the parade and later the fireworks; hopefully it will be cooled down by that time.

We should all be thankful cuz to live in a country with the freedom we have. There are people living in this country, free citizens, who hate this country and yet want to open our borders for all to enter.

Did you ever stop to think, you hate it, but these people are dying to get here? They love the ideal of freedom, of prosperity, of working and sending money home to take care of their elderly parents. Now there are plenty of bad eggs among them, terrorist, drug dealers and the like, that need to be stopped. To those who hate this country, I say LEAVE!

You don't deserve to live here. Go live somewhere else and see how you like it. But first remember, not every country wants you and you won't be allowed to just go there and live without showing proof you can support yourself. Many countries you will be only allowed to visit and then you must leave.

Here on the farm, we've been busy mowing grass, bush hogging weeds and trying to get everything ready for company. We are thankful for the rain, but with it comes lots more weeds and mowing and squash in the garden!

Lois the cow finally had her baby calf, a tiny little thing when compared to those born in February. It is solid black except for a tiny bit of white on her belly.

The newborn calf got out of the pasture and Lois was standing there, sack filled to the brim, in pasture number 3 and looking out at pasture number 2 and bawling. Her baby was over there and she couldn't get it. Better half went looking for it while I sprayed the cows down with fly spray (they have been terrible this year) and gave the donkeys their candy.

I then opened the gate and momma went flying to her baby, and together they went back into pasture three. The next day we went up to check on the cows and had to ask Lois where her baby was. She looked towards the back 40 and better half headed that way.

She took off running and finally led us to where she had hidden the baby in the woods under cool shade trees. She stayed there giving it some milk and we headed back to the house.

Cuz, I feel so sorry for those cows stuck in those feed pens roasting under the hot sun, no shade to be found. We make sure that every pasture here has some shade trees where the cows can go and get out of the sun.

I think they should make a law against treating cows like that. I never want to sell my cows at market and send them to a horrible life like that, even though the price is very high right now.

So many farmers out west are replacing the cows they had to sell after the fires when they had no feed/ hay for them. We have still not found that crazy cow over in the holler, I hope she shows up in somebody's cowherd when they round up the mommas and babies in the fall. I'd love to get her sold to another farm. That's a huge investment to loose.

Well cuz, I'm going to make this letter short as I've got to get it out to you, and I still have to get out and buy plenty of goodies for the coming holiday.

Holiday it is, but the farm work will continue, goats still got to be penned up and chickens fed. Momma hen is doing well with her four little babies. Her little rolling chicken house is closed up tight in the garage every night, seeing as before the raccoons tried to tear the roof right off to get one of the chickens and her babies.

I hate to see anything be killed but the population of raccoons around here is going crazy, and apparently, the coon hunters these days just tree the coons and don't kill them. Apparently, there is no market for furs or else no one wants to bother with skinning coons these days.

Until next week!
RJ Kennedy

Adult education connection

Returning to school as an adult is an exciting step toward achieving personal and professional goals. Whether you're earning a diploma, learning new job skills, or pursuing a college degree, balancing school with work, family, and other responsibilities can sometimes feel overwhelming. While dedication is important, it's equally important to recognize the signs of burnout and take steps to prevent it.



Burnout is more than simply feeling tired after a long day. It is a state of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion caused by prolonged stress. Adult students experiencing burnout may struggle to concentrate, lose motivation, feel constantly fatigued, or even question whether continuing their education is worthwhile. However, burnout can often be prevented with healthy habits and realistic expectations.

One of the most effective ways to avoid burnout is by setting achievable goals. Instead of focusing only on the finish line, break larger assignments or long-term goals into smaller, manageable tasks. Completing small milestones creates a sense of accomplishment and keeps motivation high.

Time management is another essential skill. Creating a weekly schedule that includes study time, work responsibilities, family commitments, and personal time helps reduce stress. Even setting aside 30 to 60 minutes of focused study on certain days, if possible, can be more effective than trying to complete everything at the last minute.

It's also important to recognize that rest is productive. Many adult learners feel guilty about taking breaks, but regular periods of rest actually improve concentration, memory, and overall performance. Another matter to consider is asking for help when it is needed. Instructors, tutors, advisors, and classmates are valuable resources when coursework becomes challenging. Reaching out early can prevent small difficulties from becoming overwhelming obstacles.

Remember that earning your education is a marathon, not a sprint. Progress doesn't require perfection. By managing your time wisely, maintaining healthy habits, seeking support, and giving yourself grace along the way, you can reduce the risk of burnout and continue moving confidently toward your goals. Your educational journey is an investment in your future. Taking care of yourself today ensures you'll have the energy, resilience, and determination to be successful.

A Deal With Iran is Never Really a Deal

DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

I give our President Trump, Vice President Vance, Marco Rubio and everyone else an A for effort. They have worked hard to try to bring about Peace in the Middle East. The negotiations have gone on now for a long time. The problem is Iran is incapable of keeping an agreement.

The Iranians are all about kicking the can down the road. They love the stall tactics. They are big talkers. They love to keep the conversation going and everyone engaged in deliberation. While all the talking is going on than this gives them time to build a few more missiles or plot an attack on a neighboring country.

I want to see peace in the Middle East. You want to see peace in the Middle East. Most of the world wants to see peace in the Middle East. The main players who do not want peace in the Middle East are the evil leaders of Iran. The majority of the population of Iran want's peace. Can you imagine how disruptive to their everyday lives war has to be?

There have been some deals throughout the years In 2979there was the Israel-Egypt Peace treaty1974-1978, Disengagement Agreement between Israel and Syria and Israel and Egypt. However, these periods of peace have been interrupted by conflicts.

Unfortunately, Middle Eastern Conflicts date back thousands of years to Ancient Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq). There were conflicts between Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians and the Assyrians around 4500-539 BCE.

Ancient Egypt and Nubia, modern day Egypt, and Sudan conflicts around 2500-656 BCE.

The Persian Empire, modern day Iran, vs. Babylonian empire. These conflicts lasted around 550-539 BCE. Arab -Israel conflicts date back to the 7th century CE. The Ottoman empire, modern day Turkey. Persian Empire around 1514-1821.

If you want to go back further you must go back to the beginning when two Old Testament brothers linked to the Middle East conflict are Esau and Jacob.

They were the sons of Isaac and their conflict began when Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of lentils. This led to a perpetual hatred between the two brothers and their descendants. Esau's descendants, the Edomites becoming a source of constant affliction for Jacob's descendants, the Israelites.

Who are the Edomites today? They have been absorbed into various cultures and their direct descents are unclear. However, they are believed to be among modern day Jordans an. d Palestinians as well as some Jewish people, especially Sephardic Jews They are also believed to be among some Bedouin tribes in Jordan and the Arabian Peninsula. These descendants have never gotten along well.

In 1979 Iran took United States hostages violating the Algiers Accords. In 1995 they violated the Iran Libya Sanctions Act by purchasing Russian arms. In 2005They resumed uranium enrichment, violating the Paris Agreement.

In 2018 they violated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action after US withdrawal. In 2019 they attacked Saudi oil facilities violating the September 2019 Saudi Iran talks agreements. In 2020 they violated the 2015 JCPOA by enriching uranium to 4.5%. In 2024 they violated the 2015 JCPOA by enriching uranium to 84 %.

A deal with Iran is just an opportunity for them to buy time so they can do what they what to do. A deal with Iran is never really much of a deal.

I Peek, You Peek, We All Peek

I watched a video this weekend on TED TV that has had me pondering the way technology is peering into spaces and places that perhaps should best remain hidden.

In this video, Maurizio Seracini used infrared technology to peek beneath the finished paintings of Leonardo da Vinci. What he discovered was amazing, but it made me sad that world is now privy to da Vinci's artistic changes of character, mood, color, and theme.

If da Vinci had been content with the art beneath the art, he would have never covered it up in the first place. But we, being the curious creatures we are, had to go and peek.

I liken this to going through the trash can of a writer. Writers write, and much of what originally comes from the brain and flows out the fingertips goes in the trash.

Imagine if the same invasion happened to Charles Dickens or John Milton. Tiny Tim might not have originally been tiny, and paradise might have been found, not lost.

I suppose we are curious creatures, though. We want to know who our ancestors were. We dig through desert sands for shards from ancient civilizations. We collect fossils. We count the rings inside of trees. We examine history and those who helped alter it for better, or worse.

But I could have gone a long time without knowing that a host of faces were beneath the garments of the warriors in da Vinci's painting. I could have gone even longer without knowing that there was also a poorly drawn elephant that looked like a kindergartener had drawn it in the same painting.

The way I see it is if Leonardo da Vinci wanted to leave those faces and that primitively drawn elephant in his painting, he would have never covered them up. We're always peeking.

We're even peeking in on the babies now. Ultrasound, now 3 and 4D, will show us a sweet baby's face, fingers, toes, and other pertinent details before it even arrives. The nursery colors are chosen based on that information, and the wardrobe fills with blue or pink.



DEBBIE GIBSON

We know which little ones have momma's nose and which little ones have daddy's ears. We are also aware of problems that show up in ultrasounds and some little ones even have surgery while in the womb to correct those problems. That might be a good thing in regard to peeking.

I suppose that despite my dislike of peeking in the above-mentioned painting I have done my fair share of it during my life.

I remember each Christmas going to the tree after making sure that no parent was nearby and ever so gently pulling back the tape on the ends of my presents. Sometimes momma had thwarted me by putting the real box inside another box. Sometimes if the packaging was too large she'd just wrap it up and

I'd accidentally poke a finger through and peel back the paper to gaze at what my eyes would behold on Christmas Eve. I guess I'm a peeker, too.

I peek in the oven before the cake is done. Every single time. I peek in the bread machine, never trusting the process or the mechanism. When I hear a strange noise outside, I peek out the front door and look around. I peek, you peek, and we all peek.

So I should not have been surprised, or even saddened, that Seracini was snooping behind the brushstrokes of a master. If anything, I should have realized that as soon as we had a way to peek we would do it.

I just wonder if Leonardo da Vinci knows. Is he sitting up in heaven, slapping his forehead and telling himself that he should have never drawn that little elephant for that group of kids who stopped by to watch him paint?

He's probably saying to himself that had he known that infrared technology would reveal his folly that he'd have thought twice about that one. I feel for him.

Seracini was so proud of his discoveries. People in the audience "oohed" and even laughed when he revealed what he had found. And me? I just got sad, for I know how messy creative work is.

I know how a person doesn't want the general public to peek in until the work is fully formed. I know what revision and second thoughts will do to a creative work, and I wonder if perhaps we should not go there, even if we have the technology to do so.

We could debate it. We could discuss all the pros and cons of peeking, and we probably would just have to conclude that curiosity is something that everybody suffers from at one point or another in their life.

Then, we would have to agree that the drawing of goofy elephants is best left to scrap pieces of paper that serve as fire starters. I bet Leonardo would agree.

Happenings of the Drill Senior Citizens

By JANIE THOMAS

June 26th was the latest meeting of the Drill Senior Citizens. When we arrived, the men were already busy peeling the potatoes for lunch.

Betty Sue Hess called the meeting to order. She read the prayer requests, Rev, Chester Ball did our devotions today, he asked Gary Thomas to open devotions with prayer. Then he read from his Bible 1 Kings chapter 13, verses 7-23. We can be weak at times. God will tell us to do something, and we let people talk us out of it. We must listen to God always.

After devotions Betty Sue called the roll. We had 26 members and one visitor present today. Welcome to our newest member, Martha Thomas. We then stood and made our Pledge of Allegiance to our flag. I then gave the financial report. We did our Father's Day Tote Raffle today and Ella Mae Peck was the Winner of this tote.

Tommy Meade was not with us today, but Joyce Baldwin, Linda Wilson and Janet Combs sang for us while the girls were getting the food on the tables. They sang; "Thank You For The Roses", and "Stroll Over Heaven With You"

Our menu today was potluck. Betsy Newton asked the blessing over the food today. As always, our tables were full of good food. Too much for me to remember. We had ice cream left over from our last meeting so that was an added sweet touch to the already full dessert counters.

After lunch was over and clean up was complete, it was bingo time! John Combs gave out the bingo cards and Gary Thomas brought in the bingo prizes. Stock getting low about time to go shopping again. Our winners today were: winning one game each; Don Hess, John Combs, Martha Thomas, Linda Baldwin, Nancy Childress, and Linda Wilson. Our big winners today winning two games each were: Joyce Baldwin, Thelma Massie, Gary Thomas, Bruce Baldwin, and I won two games before I took over calling the numbers for Betty Sue.

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 10 beginning at 11 a.m. Our menu will be garden potluck. Everyone welcome! Come be with us, we will make you smile.

Remember to pray for one and another. When prayers go up, blessings come down!

Letter to the editor

We would like to give a great big thank you to Clyde Gerry F. Johnson of Castlewood VA for managing up keep of both Chaple and the Cemetery 30 state route 823 Seven Springs Road, Castlewood Virginia.

Clyde has been serving in this position since 2010 he has worked hard to manage this weighty task with joy.

We thank the many relatives, friends, neighbors and church family for donating not only financially to this cause but working on your own time with love sweet.

If I have missed anyone please take this thank you with appreciation you all know who you are.

Clyde at age 92 Y/O has been devoted to Adams chapel he recalls since age 4. If you see Clyde please thank him for his devotion.

I will come along side of Clyde to help continue caring for our families Heritage Adams, Johnsons, Meads, Gibson and all others.

We will be putting a work crew together in September to work on the cemetery erosion and repairs to prevent any more washing away erosion of cemetery

Sincerely

Virginia Adams Walsh Alva & Maude Adams Granddaughter. Great granddaughter of Jona Adams & Martha (Maddie) Johnson Adams

SWCC receives $15,000 Gene Haas Scholarship Grant

By SHAWN STREET

shawn@virginiamediainc.com

Southwest Virginia Community College has received a Gene Haas Scholarship Grant worth $15,000.

According to SWCC officials, the grant will support students pursuing careers in precision machining and advanced manufacturing.

"This scholarship will help students further their educational goals by providing financial support for tuition, and we are incredibly grateful for this continued investment in our students," said Steven Olinger, Assistant Professor of Machining/CNC Technology and Industrial Safety.

The Gene Haas Scholarship is awarded to students who are currently enrolled, or are planning to enroll, in a machining-focused training program at SWCC, such as the Precision Machining Career Studies Certificate.

This marks the fourth time the College has been selected to receive this prestigious award, further demonstrating its commitment to workforce development and technical education.

Students enrolled in the Precision Machining and Advanced Precision Machining Career Studies Certificate programs have the opportunity to earn a variety of industry-recognized credentials.

These include certifications from the National Institute for Metalworking Skills, National Coalition of Certification, as well as First Aid/CPR/AED and OSHA 10 certifications, enhancing graduates' readiness for the workforce.

The Precision Machining Career Studies Certificate can be completed in just one year and features hands-on coursework in areas such as Machine Shop Practices, Blueprint Reading, Introduction to Computer-Aided Manufacturing, and Computer Numerical Controls.

For more information about the Precision Machining Career Studies Certificate or other programs offered through the Business, Engineering, and Industrial Technology Division, contact SWCC at 276-964-7277, or email beit@sw.edu.





THIS ITALIAN COMFORT FOOD HITS THE SPOT

"Comfort food" is an umbrella term that refers to a wide array of dishes. For fans of Italian food, there may be no dish that fits the comfort food mold better than lasagna. Lasagna can be made with a wide array of ingredients, and each iteration of it qualifies as comfort food. That's certainly the case with this recipe for "Lasagna With Zucchini and Meat Sauce" from Lines+Angles.

Lasagna With Zucchini and Meat Sauce
Makes 9 servings

- 2 large zucchini, rinsed and trimmed
- Salt
- 12 dried lasagna noodles
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1½ teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1 small green bell pepper, rinsed, trimmed and diced
- 1 onion, peeled and diced
- 8 ounces tomato paste
- 15 ounces canned tomato sauce
- 3½ tablespoons red wine
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 cups low-fat ricotta cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups grated Parmesan cheese



1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Coat a deep 9 x 13-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Slice zucchini lengthwise into very thin slices. Sprinkle slices lightly with salt; set aside to drain in a colander.

3. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the noodles and cook until al dente, 8 to 12 minutes. Drain, immerse in cold water to cool and drain again. Lay the noodles in a single layer on a baking sheet and cover with plastic wrap.

4. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, set over medium-high heat, cook and stir the ground beef and black pepper for 5 minutes. Drain excess grease from pan. Add in green pepper and onion; cook and stir until beef is no longer pink. Stir in tomato paste, tomato sauce, wine, basil, and oregano. If sauce is too thick, add a small amount of warm water. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer sauce for about 20 minutes, stirring frequently.

5. Meanwhile, stir egg, ricotta, and parsley together in a bowl and mix well.

6. To assemble lasagna, spread 1/3 of the meat sauce into the bottom of prepared pan. Then layer 1/3 of the cooked lasagna noodles, 1/3 of the zucchini slices, 1/2 of the ricotta mixture, 1/3 of the mozzarella cheese. Repeat the layers ending with a layer of zucchini followed by a layer of noodles. Spread Parmesan cheese evenly over the top; cover with foil.

7. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove foil; increase oven temperature to 350 F, and bake an additional 15 minutes. Let stand for 5 or 10 minutes before serving.

Tip: This may be assembled a day ahead. Refrigerate until ready to bake.

US MURAL UNVEILED

FROM PAGE 1A

is really cool that the town does these kinds of things. It not only brightens the town, it gives opportunities to artists."

Gilbert added, "It shows our culture, our history and who we are."

The mural also pays homage to one of Lebanon's favorite sons. "You might even recognize somebody driving the horses," Gilbert said.

That somebody is former longtime member of the Lebanon Town Council, Doyle Fields. Field passed away in 2023.



Town officials Nina Fields, Deanna Jackson, Tony Dodi and Drew Short along with artist Alan Tuhacek and Morgan Wallace Gilbert.

MADDIE MARCHANT

FROM PAGE 1A

"You are not defined by your disabilities," she said. "You are so much more than that. God made you exactly the way you are for a purpose. Let that be your passion."

Marchant has created the Buddy Bunch Club for those with disabilities to gather and make new friends.

Her fight with celiac disease has also led her to work with Senator Todd Pillion in an effort to have schools offer gluten-free meals and staff training to prevent cross-contamination of food.

Marchant has competed in pageants her entire life. In the past several years, she has used her experience to help others chase their dreams.



Maddie Marchant was crowned Miss Virginia on June 26 in Roanoke.

"My first pageant was the Miss Russell County Fair," she said. "It was a full circle experience. For the past three years I've been the Executive Director of the Miss Russell County Fair Pageant."

During her tenure, the pageant made history. The Miss Russell County Fair Pageant is the only pageant to have back-to-back winners of the Virginia Association of Fairs Pageant. Natalie White won the state pageant in 2025 and Izzy Horn was crowned in January 2026.

"I am thankful to be able to pour into these young women and help them succeed to their fullest potential," Marchant said.

A graduate of Lebanon High School, Marchant now attends East Tennessee State University, where she is majoring in Media and Communications, while pursuing a minor in Political Science.

She said her goal is to be a broadcast news anchor and help bring live news to areas that do not have local access.

Another dream of Marchant's is to see the heavy metal band Metallica with her dad. "My favorite song is 'One'," she said. "My dad used to play that in the car all the time. And some of the softer rock bands like Nickleback, Creed, and 3 Doors Down. To this day that is still my favorite genre of music. But I have to see Metallica with my dad. That is a must."

Marchant can be scheduled for school bookings or other appearances by contacting her at maddiemarchant.com, on Facebook at Facebook.com/TheMaddieMarchant, or on Instagram @TheMaddieMarchant.

Marchant will compete for the Miss America crown on September 6 in West Palm Beach, Florida.

BALANCED BUDGETS

FROM PAGE 1A

avoid the chaotic environment that seems to plague budget cycles.

"If we don't work on it we'll be in the same situation next year," explained Steve Breeding, of District 5. "Hopefully we won't be in this situation next year."

"We need to work at lot closer together," Dye said. "We'll need to meet a lot."

Rebecca Dye, of District 6, said, "We need to work on this or we'll be in the same shape next year or far worse."

"We need to pray for our county and pray for one another," Eaton added.

Referring to the General Assembly's practice of passing monetary requirements that must be funded of localities, Eaton added, "Northern Virginia doesn't care about us. We're going to have to take care of ourselves."

Lester agreed. "We got shorted down here in Southwest Virginia, if that surprises anybody," he said.

Lester added that previous administrations had been more kind to other areas of the Commonwealth than the current administration of Governor Abigail Spanberger. "Previous administrations were more generous," he said. "This administration was not."

He said now that the region has a better understanding of the new administration, "We'll be prepared."

The Russell County School Board passed its budget the following evening on June 30.

"Thank you all for your hard work with that budget this year," stated Cynthia Compton, Chair of the Russell County School Board.

Federal funding secured for farmers impacted by frost and freeze

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

The United States Department of Agriculture has issued a Secretarial Disaster Declaration for 43 primary counties and 61 contiguous counties. Russell County is among the contiguous counties.

The declaration is in response to damage sustained by crops during late spring frost and freeze events.

Virginia Governor Abagail Spangerger made the request for assistance on May 27.

"Virginia agriculture is the cornerstone of our economy — supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs, securing our food supply, and protecting the Commonwealth's natural beauty for future generations," Spanberger said.

She added, "The unprecedented frost and freeze event this spring devastated farmers across Virginia, many of whom will not be able to harvest a crop until the 2027 growing season. This federal disaster declaration provides vital resources to help hardworking family farmers navigate a difficult year and prepare for their next crop. I am grateful to Secretary Rollins and our federal partners for listening to the concerns of our farmers and producers, and I look forward to remaining in close contact in the months ahead."

Ninth District Congressman Morgan Griffith stated, "This USDA action is necessary to support farmers in Virginia's Ninth District. Spring frost and freeze events followed by severe drought continue to impact Virginia's agricultural health. This disaster designation sets in motion opportunities for eligible groups to request emergency loan assistance."

He added, "My office is ready to help facilitate access to federal assistance. Additionally, I will continue to advocate for our farming communities as they navigate through growing season challenges and record temperatures."

The Virginia Cooperative Extension reported that losses during the frost and freeze events were well above 30 percent. Some growers anticipate a 100 percent loss.

The Secretarial Disaster Declaration makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for FSA emergency loan assistance, credit extensions, and potential future relief programs through FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met.

Farmers in eligible counties have eight months to apply for emergency loans. These programs provide essential assistance to farmers who now face the prospect of paying for inputs, labor, and debt-service for crops that will not yield a harvest and generate income in 2026.

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Lebanon's Seth Buchanan performing well at VMI

By ANTHONY STEVENS
anthony@virginiamediainc.com

LEBANON, Va. – Moving from Lebanon High School to Division 1 baseball at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia, is a significant transition. Seth Buchanan starred for the Pioneers, an integral part of two state championship teams. Lebanon compiled a 65-7 record over Seth's three varsity seasons. His freshman season was lost to COVID.

His high school career didn't account for much at VMI. Buchanan set a lot during his freshman and sophomore seasons.

"It's tough at first. You pretty much just restart," Buchanan stated. "Every guy up there was a star for their respective team. It's a collection of good ball players, and you figure that out really quick during fall and inter-squads. Everyone has to go through it. It's just a hump you have to get over."

It's a big adjustment learning to balance academics, military demands, and D1 baseball at VMI.

"At times, you'll have all three on the same day," noted Buchanan. "Obviously, you'll have class, but some days they sprinkle in the military, too. It's a lot to manage. It's nothing that's impossible to do. It gets a lot busier in season. You just have to make sure you study and get your homework done."

When you become more accustomed, VMI can help improve both your skills and character.

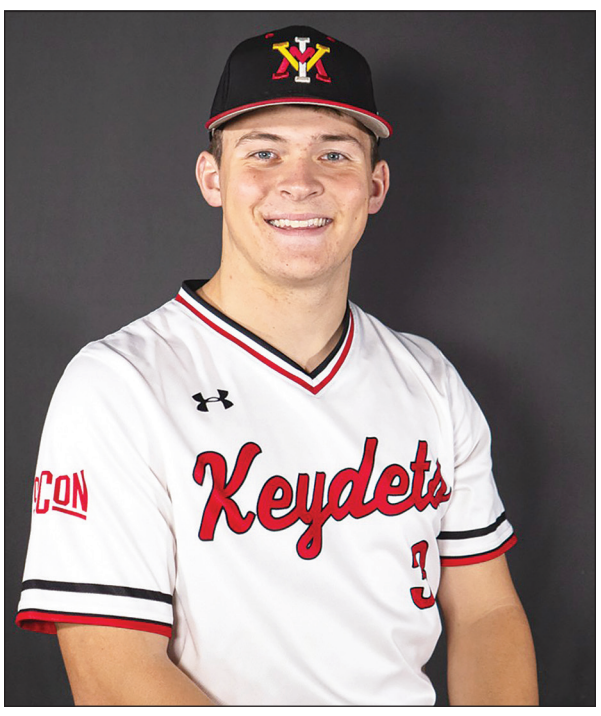
"The schedule at VMI is tough," Buchanan said. "You're up early, sometimes you have military obligations throughout the day, and then, obviously, baseball practice. I think the schedule you're on at VMI helps you build a routine, which I've brought into my baseball career. I think it's helped me a lot in learning how to manage my time and get what I need to do done."

Buchanan has benefited from this approach.

"Seth has been a tremendous representative of our program both on and off the field," remarked VMI coach Sam Roberts. "His toughness, work ethic, and selflessness are attributes that we want all of our players to have. He has been a valuable part of the culture we are building and has developed into someone younger players can look to as an example of how to approach both the game of baseball as well as the everyday life that each Cadet-Athlete has to go through."

The Keydets finished with a 28-27 overall record in the competitive Southern Conference. After limited ac-

SEE **SETH BUCHANAN | 6B**



Submitted
Seth Buchanan



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News
Aliyah Hilton (2) slides in safely to third base against Northwood.

Honaker's Musick & Hilton named All-State

Several from Russell County make All-Region teams

By ANTHONY STEVENS
anthony@virginiamediainc.com

HONAKER – Two athletes from Russell County earned All-State honors. Honaker senior Connor Musick, a Tusculum University signee, was named to the first team in baseball. Another Honaker athlete, junior Aliyah Hilton, was named to the second team in softball.

Musick had a fantastic season, hitting .425 with a .571 on-base percentage. He finished with 13 ex-

SEE **MUSICK & HILTON | 3B**



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News
Aliyah Hilton



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News
Connor Musick



ANTHONY STEVENS | Lebanon News
Connor Musick (1) on the mound at Tom Harding Field pitching against Chilhowie.



Emory & Henry Announces 2026 Football Game Day Promotions

EMORY, Va. – Fans can look forward to an exciting lineup of themed game days and special promotions as Emory & Henry Football unveils its promotional schedule for the 2026 home season at Fred Selfe Stadium. Throughout the fall, Wasps fans, students, alumni, and community members will have opportunities to celebrate traditions, honor special groups, and showcase school spirit with a series of themed events and color-outs. The promotional schedule includes:

September 12 – Community Day / Gold Out

The 2026 home opener against Tusculum will feature Community Day as Emory & Henry welcomes local families, organizations, and supporters to campus. Fans are encouraged to wear gold and help create a Gold Out atmosphere throughout Fred Selfe Stadium.

September 26 – Hall of Fame Weekend / Military & First Responders Appreciation Day

Emory & Henry will celebrate Hall of Fame Weekend by recognizing the newest class of athletic inductees while also honoring military members and first responders for their service and sacrifice. All military and first responders will also receive free admission to the game. Fans are encouraged to wear army green in support of the day's theme as the Wasps take on Newberry.

October 10 – Homecoming / Lou Out Luau / Blue Out

One of the most anticipated weekends of the year returns with Homecoming festivities across campus. The popular Lou Out Luau in honor of Hall of Fame coach Lou Wacker will add to the celebration as alumni, students, and fans reunite to cheer on the Wasps against Mars Hill. Supporters are encouraged to wear their best island attire or Emory blue for the Blue Out.

October 31 – The Haunted Hive / Black Out

Halloween comes to Fred Selfe Stadium as The Haunted Hive takes over game day versus Lenoir-Rhyne. Fans can enjoy a festive atmosphere while helping create a Black Out by wearing black and bringing the energy for a spooky afternoon of football.

November 14 – Southwest Virginia Bowl / Senior Day / White Out

The regular-season home finale will feature the Southwest Virginia Bowl and Senior Day as Emory & Henry recognizes its graduating student-athletes for their contributions to the football program. The Wasps will be looking to make it five straight wins over rival the University of Virginia's College at Wise. Fans are encouraged to wear white as part of the season's final color-out.

Several coaches named in Russell County

LEBANON, Va. (June 30, 2026) – Several coaching positions were filled during a meeting of the Russell County School Board on Tuesday.

At Lebanon, Jonathan Neece was named the new head wrestling coach, and Jacob Campbell was named a volunteer golf coach.

Brian Summer was named JV boys basketball coach at Castlewood. Timothy Witt and Thomas Wayne Hall were approved as volunteer football coaches for the Blue Devils.

There were also moves at Honaker. Rick Hess will be the new golf coach. Lucas O'Quinn and Chandler Hubbard will be assistant football coaches on Aaron Lowe's staff.

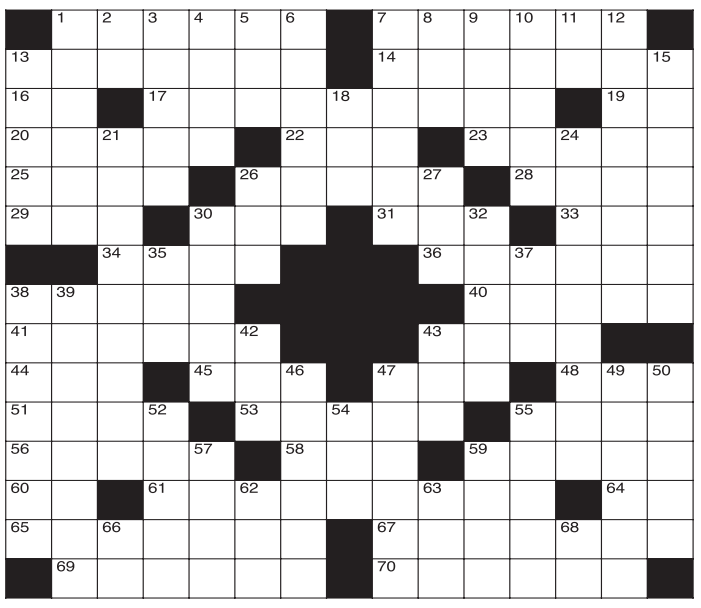
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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

AUTHENTIC
BOUTIQUE
BUSINESS
COMMUNITY
ECONOMY
ENTREPRENEUR
GROWTH
HANDMADE
LOCAL
LOYALTY
MARKET
NICHE
OWNERSHIP
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SUPPORT
UNIQUE
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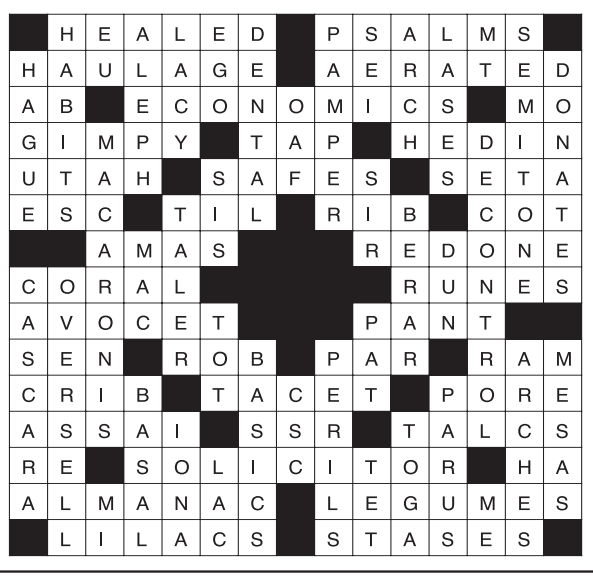
CLUES ACROSS

1. Mended
7. Hymns
13. Commercial transport of goods
14. Poked holes in the ground
16. They precede C
17. Branch of knowledge concerned with wealth
19. Larry and Curly's pal
20. Injured
22. Popular type of dance
23. Moon crater
25. American state
26. Places to lock valuables
28. Stalk that supports the capsule
29. Keyboard key
30. '__ death do us part
31. A type of cage
33. A place to sleep
34. Annual music awards show
36. Made over
38. Hard, stony substance
40. Incantations
41. Long-legged, wading bird
43. Breathe noisily
44. Congressman
45. Rip off
47. Golf score
48. Popular pickup truck
51. Where infants sleep
53. Music term
55. Small opening in a surface
56. Musical term meaning "very"
58. Soviet Socialist Republic
59. Treats with powder
60. Email subject line feature
61. A British lawyer
64. Expression of laughter
65. Farmer's calendar
67. Seeds used as food
69. Eurasian shrubs
70. Periods of inactivity

CLUES DOWN

1. Hard things to kick
2. Collective of countries
3. Letter of Hebrew alphabet
4. One-time Alabama running back Eddie
5. One's sense of self-esteem
6. Of the teeth
7. Treat with care
8. Type of whale
9. Curved structure
10. Emits coherent radiation
11. One of the Gospels (abbr.)
12. Smallest interval in western music
13. Netherlands seat of government
15. Gives to charitably
18. Lout
21. Pastas
24. Release from restrictions
26. Female sibling
27. Title of respect
30. Silver coins
32. Region in India
35. Partner to cheese
37. Dark or dusky
38. Pacific Northwest tree
39. Exaggerate
42. Toddler
43. Touch lightly
46. Fundamentals
47. Jeopardies
49. Curved structures
50. Isolated, flat-topped hills
52. Forming the bottom layer
54. Reciprocal of sine
55. Genus of Old World birds
57. New York college
59. Cloak
62. Kawhi Leonard's team (abbr.)
63. Vietnamese offensive
66. "The Great Lakes State"
68. "__, myself and I"

PUZZLE SOLUTION



SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to retailers.

T C I D R E

Answer: Credit

GUESS WHO?

I am an actor born in New York on July 5, 1954. I have a strong background in dancing, martial arts and bodybuilding. I've had various roles, but I'm best known for playing a character on a show that takes place in the 1970s.

Answer: Don Stark

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 independent retailers. Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 1 = P)

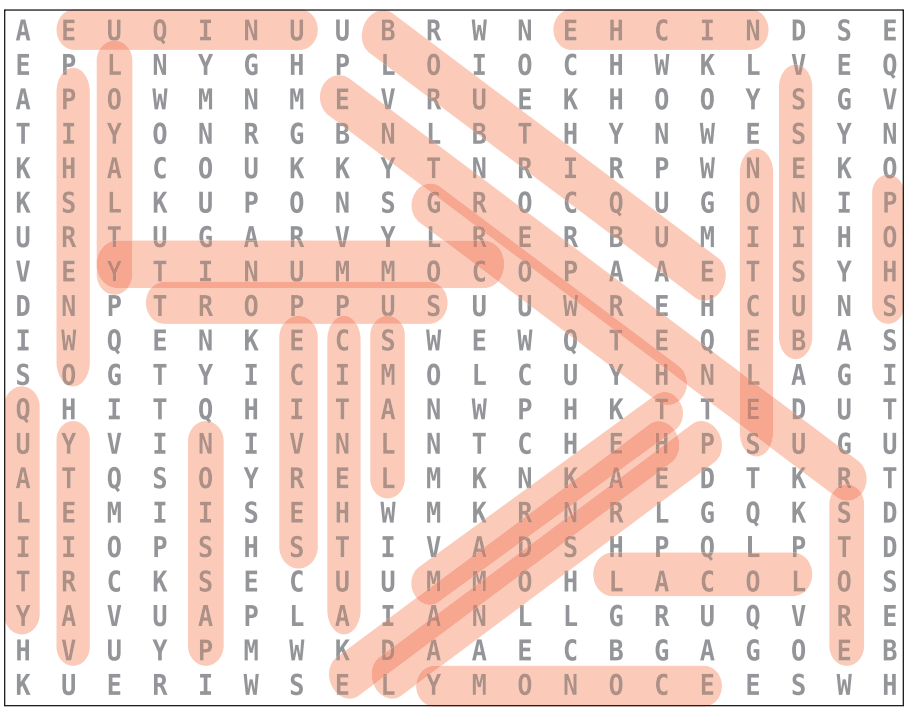
A. 13 22 19 1 1 6 17 24
Clue: Buying goods

B. 13 21 19 15 11
Clue: Retailer

C. 1 20 15 14 22 4 13 11
Clue: Acquire by paying for something

D. 1 15 19 9 6 21
Clue: Make money

Answers: A. shopping B. store C. purchase D. profit



SUDOKU SOLUTION

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

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

There is nothing that you cannot handle this week, Aries. Expect to juggle a lot at the same time, but somehow you make it look easy. A calm demeanor is a big asset.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

This week will be fairly quiet for you, Taurus. You are likely to connect with a task and dig down deep until it is completed. If someone tries to persuade you to take a break, you likely won't.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Many forces are working together to provide insight, Gemini. Take a step back and consider all of the variables in play. The solution may be simpler than you can imagine.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, there is no time for daydreaming right now. You will be tasked with managing multiple projects in the days head. Remain focused.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Are you getting pummeled by obstacles, Leo? It could be that you need to set aside more time to yourself to complete the tasks expected of you. You also may need to ask for help.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, an ability to communicate clearly is among your most notable assets. If you have thoughts about explaining your ideas to others, keep reinforcing your goals.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, your projects will take some time to set up. A patient approach will pay off as results begin to materialize. Your ability to multi-task will drive you forward.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Life isn't an individual sport, Scorpio. You don't have to do everything alone. Interact with others as much as you can this week.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, when a person has found his or her path, naturally the desire is to start walking down it. You are eager to get started on something that has been on your mind.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, keep an open mind so you can discover new experiences. You don't have to completely reinvent yourself, but make a concerted effort to be open to new ideas.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

The horizon is clear and you have all of the information you need to navigate what life is throwing at you right now, Aquarius. Keep the faith that you are on the right path.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, share your experiences and feelings with someone close to you. Let your feelings out and express your gratitude to the person who lends a listening ear.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JULY 5

Edie Falco, Actress (63)

JULY 6

Kevin Hart, Comic (47)

JULY 7

Jack Whitehall, Actor (38)

JULY 8

Maya Hawke, Actress (28)

JULY 9

Tom Hanks, Actor (70)

JULY 10

Sofia Vergara, Actress (54)

JULY 11

Alessia Cara, Singer (30)

State budget includes $7 million for Coalfields Expressway

Seven million in funding to continue construction on a connectorsegment of the Coalfields Expressway in Buchanan County, VA, was approved in the Virginia statebudget finalized Monday in Richmond, VA.

The Coalfields Expressway, designated as U.S. Rt. 121, is designed to improve connectivity, enhancepublic safety and create new opportunities for economic growth throughout the coalfield region. Whencomplete, the new highway will improve access to industrial sites, support tourism, strengthen regionaltransportation networks and provide safer travel routes for residents and businesses.

"We are extremely grateful to Delegate Will Morefield and Senator Travis Hackworth for submitting the$7 million request for FY27 state funding for the Coalfields Expressway project and to Senator ToddPillion for securing that $7 million as a state budget conferee," said Virginia Coalfields ExpresswayAuthority Executive Director Jonathan Belcher, who also serves as the Virginia Coalfield EconomicDevelopment Authority executive director/general counsel. "Sen. Pillion's work as a budget confereeand Del. Morefield's role as a member of the House Appropriations Committee helped ensureSouthwest Virginia had a voice in the room when budget decisions were being made. We alsoappreciate the support of all our state legislators who supported it."

Belcher noted the project is possible because all three levels of government (county, state and federal) recognized the importance of the four-lane to the region and stepped up to provide the funding.

Buchanan County provided match funding of $1.75 million and is also seeking Virginia Department of-Transportation revenue sharing funds for the project.

"This project has long been a priority for local leaders and state officials who recognize its importance tothe region's economic future," Belcher said.

He also expressed his appreciation to Congressman Morgan Griffith, Senator Mark Warner and SenatorTim Kaine for $3 million in federal CDS funds approved in the FY26 federal budget, as well as forallocations of funding for the expressway project in prior years.

The state funding just approved will be used to add two lanes to the existing two lanes on the U.S. 460Connector Phase IIA segment which is a four-mile section near the Breaks Interstate Park in BuchananCounty, making it a four-lane road.

"Once that section is widened to a four-lane, it will be four lanes all the way from Grundy to Pikeville,KY," Belcher said. "We felt it was important to get it all four-laned now, while the rest of that project isfinishing up with the bridge at Grundy, rather than face the difficult task of raising funding and doing ityears later."

The funding builds upon previous local, state and federal investments that have advanced constructionof the expressway and reflects ongoing bipartisan support for infrastructure improvements in SouthwestVirginia, Belcher said.

He also noted that concurrently with the work to secure funding for the four-mile section in Buchanan-County, the expressway authority has been working to secure federal funding for improvements toRoute 23 Business and Route 83 in Pound, VA, as well as for Rt. 83 from Pound to Clintwood, VA.

Two U.S. Department of Transportation BUILD grant applications totaling some $30 million advancingpriority safety and connectivity improvements for Rt. 23 and Rt. 83 sections related to the project inWise and Dickenson counties were filed in February 2026.

"We expect to hear a decision on that funding in the coming days, which hopefully will be favorable,"Belcher said. "We continue to look for all opportunities to advance the CFX and Rt. 83 corridors in Wise,Dickenson and Buchanan counties for the future of our region."

MUSICK & HILTON

FROM PAGE 1B

tra-base hits and drove in 17 runs. He also had a 7-4 record on the mound with one save, posting a 2.95 ERA. Musick had 82 strikeouts in 54 innings pitched.

Hilton hit at a .345 clip with a .450 on-base percentage. She scored 29 runs. Hilton had 30 hits this season, including 11 doubles.

Lebanon's Cody Compton, the Class 2 Coach of the Year, led the state-champion Pioneers. Unbelievably, no Lebanon players were awarded all-state honors.

Honaker's Hilton and Cadence Rose were named first-team all-region, with Gracie Shelton named second team.

Musick was awarded first-team All-Region in baseball, along with Castlewood second baseman Jayden Clark. The Blue Devils had three players named to the second team: Jared Glovier, Aden Phillips, and Jake Bush.

In softball, Lebanon had three players named to the Region 2D second team: pitchers Chadyn Musick and Raelyn Huff, and outfielder Kaitlyn Morrison.

Second team all-region in baseball for the Pioneers were pitchers Lake Baldwin and Isaac Godsey, along with first baseman Brady Cole, second baseman Booker Steffey and outfielder Jake Hilton.





A look at a section of Southwest Virginia's Coalfields Expressway.

NOTICE OF DELINQUENT TAXES AND JUDICIAL SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

On August 10, 2026, or as soon thereafter as may be effected, actions will be commenced under the authority of Virginia Code §58.1-3965, et seq., to begin proceedings to sell the following parcels of real estate for the payment of County of Russell delinquent real estate taxes:

Property Owner(s)	Tax Map No.	Account No.	TACS No.
Barton, David J. & James C.	105L-2848	4457	468101
Barton, David J. & James C.	105L-2852A	4466	468101
Brooks, Verlin & Brooks, Faye Heirs	159R-IC-2257	8924	468464
Byrd, Charles Adam	164R-1750A4	229428	808654
Castle, Carl Eugene & Castle, Betty Ann	160R-II-2538	9219	808425
Clark, Carlos	104L-307A	15591	1020144
Clatterbuck, Richard, Jr. or Clatterbuck, Janessa	106L-918	7247	678080
Coleman, Stephanie M.	30L-IF-24	325	1020146
Cook, Darrell A.	105L-2747	4294	1181595
Dye, Scott E. or Keeta D.	68L-3135C	58723	808669
Dye, Scott E. or Keeta D.	68L-3135A	58722	808669
Edwards, David Carl & Edwards, Kimberly & (Carpenter) Forest, Dawn & Forest, Anita & Bumgarner, Hillman, Dawn	103R-IE-1081	1853	1181614
Fife, C. Harry or Fife, Larraine B.	106R-954	7288	808387
Foster, Nancy A.	104R-IQ-572	15872	808299
Gordon, Elmer Odell	159R-IC-2260	8927	808700
Hall, James	155R-2119B	3312	808665
Hensley, Jesse O. or Hensley, Angela	157R-ID-1733	8303	678089
Hess, Bonnie L	76R-211	15069	699560
Hicks, Norma Lee	157L-SA-2750	9482	1020226
Honaker, Tammy	64R-3104A	75427	158773
Hubbard, Eric Y. or Hubbard, Brenda S.	69L-1714	12803	1020253
Huff, Mary Margaret	79R-3499	5460	1181643
Huffman, Larry M. & Huffman, Linda S.	115L-1402	7859	808690
Jewell, Sabrina	34R-SF-2461	13716	1020240
Judd, Jeremy	158R-SB-1813	8398	1181393
Justice, James E. & Hill, Jo Ann J.	160R-IE-2336	9001	808428
Keen, Carrie Rose or Keen, Nicholas	119R-IA-1267C1	190039	1020198
Kenyon, Shane D. or Kenyon, Elizabeth	160R-II-2541A	9223	677850
Lampkins, Mabel Brandi Whited & Kerns, Glen	138R-2419B1	3778	467909
Laster, Connie	116L-741	7002	157829
Lawrence, Dewey	137R-2366A	3653	1020209
Milam, Keith E. or Milam, Patricia C.	144R-2045	8683	1020058
Morales, Jessica Marie	160R-II-2519	9201	1020042
Musick, S.P	112R-2060	8699	468459
Musick, Tavis O. or Gladys Hicks	115L-IA-1207	7613	808390
Musick, Tavis Odell or Gladys Hicks	115L-IA-1206A	7611	808390
Newberry, Kendal or Newberry, Jennifer	140R-1324F	228613	677993
Osborne, Kyle Stanley & Osborne, Gail	67L-2027	13197	677899
Osborne, Regina N. & Harris, Danny O.	37R-IA-159	618	158706
Owens, Farrell Duane	76R-1027	11929	1020065
Owens, Jonathan M. & Owens, Amy L.	69R-2821	14160	1020124
Owens, Ruth Alene & Lester, Ruby Ida & McGlothlin, Roberta & Austin, Hurley Jr. & Gennette, Robin	76R-11	14861	1181476
Perkins, James Roger or Perkins, Terri Lynn	105L-ID-3	229294	808651
Perkins, Ray, Sandra Christine	68L-1774C	171693	699337
Scales, Pearl Martin Heirs	104R-442	15739	468366
Singleton, Shaun Albert	159R-IC-2227	8893	1020132
Snead, Rebecca J. Heirs	37L-486	1106	1020131
Street, Hazel L.	76R-347	15203	468351
Strouth, Wanda Dye	68R-3032	14379	677463
Taylor, Floyd E., III	158R-IA-2595	9285	677835
Taylor, James Harper	37R-IC-204	674	1020085
Ward, Lorraine	34R-SF-2458	13713	808267
Ward, Lorraine E.	34R-SF-2458A	229686	808267
Ward, Lorraine	34R-SF-2465B	40722	808267
Winebarger, April	157L-IE-2955	16348	1181421
Woods, Teresa	158R-IB-2602A	230135	808339
Wright, Frances Elkins	34L-SE-2761B	14081	699526

Properties subject to delinquent real estate taxes may be redeemed by paying all accumulated taxes, penalties, interest, costs and fees. Payments should be made payable to County of Russell and mailed to Taxing Authority Consulting Services PC, Post Office Box 31800, Henrico, Virginia 23294. Interested bidders and inquiries regarding the above-listed properties should be directed to TACS at (804) 545-2500, taxsales@taxva.comor www.taxva.comor by mail to:

Jeffrey A. Scharf, Esq.
Re: Russell County Delinquent RE Taxes
Taxing Authority Consulting Services, PC
Post Office Box 31800
Henrico, Virginia 23294

CLASSIFIEDS

CEMETERY LOTS

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

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA VIRGINIA GAS AND OIL BOARD HEARING JULY 21, 2026

Pursuant to Sections 45.2-1609.C and 45.2-1624.B of the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Gas and Oil Board will hold its scheduled monthly hearing commenc-ing at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, July 21, 2026.

Location: Southwest Vir-ginia Community College Auditorium Room B115 @ the Russell County Government Center, 139 Highland Drive, Lebanon, Virginia 24266. Those who wish to join the meeting online, please contact the Gas and Oil office at 276-393-5507, prior to the day of the hearing. If you wish to call in to the meeting, you may do so by dialing 1-434-230-0065, Conference ID: 847072378#.

1. The Board will review/ approve the remote atten-dance resolution(s) for any Board Member (s) that will be attending the meeting remotely.
2. The Board will receive public comments.
3. The First Bank and Trust Company, Escrow Agent for the Virginia Gas and Oil Board, will appear to address the Board on the Quarterly Report (April 2026 - June 2026).
4. A petition from Pocahon-tas Gas LLC, for (1) the disbursement of escrowed funds heretofore deposited with the Board's Escrow Agent, attributable to a portion of Tract 1F, as de-picted upon the annexed table; and (2) authorization to begin paying royalties directly to Swords Creek Land Partnership, Frank Dye, Brenda Mae Richard-son, Linda Faye Wilson, Shirley M. Dye, Lowell E. Batton, Carol Diane Mann, Lisa Ann Hess, Terry Ralph Dye and Ebbie C. Dye. Unit AZ117. Docket Number VGOB 11-0419-2930-04.
5. A petition from the Divi-sion of Gas and Oil - on behalf of others for Diversified Production LLC, appealing the decision of the Director issued on 3/3/2026, for Ob-jection Number 77 regard-ing Application Number 64170 from Pocahontas Gas LLC, for proposed well CBM F37A W/PL, located in the Garden Magisterial District, Buchanan County, Virginia. Docket Number VGOB 26-616-4326.
6. A petition from the Divi-sion of Gas and Oil - on behalf of others for Buchanan Energy Company LLC
- James O. Bunn II, Manager, appealing the deci-sion of the Director issued on 3/3/2026, for Objection Number 78 regarding Ap-plication Number 64170 from Pocahontas Gas LLC, for proposed well CBM F37A W/PL, located in the Garden Magisterial District, Buchanan County, Virginia. Docket Number VGOB 26-616-4327.
7. A petition from the Divi-sion of Gas and Oil - on behalf of others for Diversified Production LLC, appealing the decision of the Director issued on 3/3/2026, for Ob-jection Number 79 regard-ing Application Number 64222 from Pocahontas Gas LLC, for proposed well CBM G37B W/PL, located in the Garden Magisterial District, Buchanan County, Virginia. Docket Number VGOB 26-616-4328.
8. A petition from the Division of Gas and Oil - on behalf of others for Diversified Production LLC, appealing the decision of the Director issued on 3/3/2026, for Ob-jection Number 80 regard-ing Application Number 64223 from Pocahontas Gas LLC, for proposed well CBM G37C W/PL, located in the Garden Magisterial District, Buchanan County, Virginia. Docket Number VGOB 26-616-4329.
9. The Board will receive an update of Board and Division activities from the staff.
10. The Board will review the May 2026 minutes for approval.

Information concerning the above docket items can be viewed electronically at: https://www.energy.vir-ginia.gov/DgoInquiry/frm-main.aspx?ctl=68. All questions concerning the agenda should be directed to the Gas and Oil Team by telephoning 276-415-9700.

Special accommodations for the disabled and other extenuating circumstances will be made available at the hearing on request. Anyone needing special accommodations for the July 2026 hearing should contact the Virginia Depart-ment of Energy in advance of the hearing at 276-415-9700 or by calling the Vir-ginia Relay Center TTY/ TDD at 1-800-552-7917 or 711 by July 14, 2026.

The deadline for filing of petitions to the Board for the August 2026 hearing is 5 p.m., Friday, July, 17 with the August hearing scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2026 at the Southwest Virginia Community Col-lege Auditorium Room B115 @ the Russell Coun-ty Government Center.

LN-7-8;2026

Public Notice Application For Bond Reduction Under Chapter 10, Title 45.2 Code of Virginia Publication Number: 26HNM01 Application Number: 1011930

Russell County Reclama-tion, LLC is applying for-bond reduction on Permit No.1302253 located in Russell County near South Clinchfield, Virginia off State Route 615 at the in-tersection with State Route 600. This permit consists of 1209.11 acres which are bonded under the Virginia Coal Surface Mining Rec-lamation Fund (Pool Bond) for $ 2,686,800.00 in the form of certificate of deposit. As provided by §§4VAC25-130-800.40 and 4VAC25-130-801.17 of the Virginia Coal Surface Mining Rec-lamation Regulations, the Applicant is requesting a Phase I bond reduction of $183,600.00 of on Increments 9, 10, 19 and 20 con-sisting of 102.16 acres and the Applicant is requesting the current bond amount of $291,000.00 be released (a Phase III final release of increments18 and 25) con-sisting of 97.38 acres.

The Phase I bond reduction request is based on the fol-lowing reclamation:

(1) Backfilling and regrade work has been completed.
(2) The reclamation work performed occurred between 2019 and 2024.
(3) The reclamation work has returned the disturbed areas to AOC.
(4) The Post-Mining Land Use is Unmanaged Forest Land.

The Phase III bond release request is based on the fol-lowing reclamation:

(1) The Post-Mining Land Use is Industrial – Manufac-turing.

Any person with a valid legal interest which might be ad-versely affected by this pro-posal, or an officer or head of any federal, state or local government agency or au-thority, may within 30 days of (July 29, 2026) submit writ-ten comments or objections concerning this bond reduc-tion, and may also request, in writing, that the Mined Land Repurposing Program hold an Informal Conference concerning this application. A copy of the application materials is available elec-tronically for public inspec-tion at https://www.energy. virginia.gov/dmlrinquiry/frm-Main.aspx?ctl=4.

All correspondence concern-ing this application should be submitted to the Mined Land Repurposing Program (Attention: Permit Sec-tion), 3405 Mountain Em-pire Road, Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219. Telephone (276) 523-8160. Written comments and a request for informal conference may be e-mailed to the Division at repurposingpublicnotice@energy.virginia.gov.

LNR-7-8,15,22,29;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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

EMPLOYMENT

THE TOWN OF HONAKER IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR A PART TIME POSITION ON THE SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT.
APPLICANT IS REQUIRED TO POSSESS A VALID CDL LICENSE.
RATE OF PAY EXPECTED IS BETWEEN $17- $23 PER HOUR DEPENDING ON EXPERIENCE.
APPLICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TOWN HALL, 455 HERITAGE DR., HONAKER, VA 24260
THE TOWN OF HONAKER IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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.

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.

VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS – SNOW REMOVAL

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites heavy equipment owners to sign up for the rental of their equipment with operators for SNOW & ICE REMOVAL purposes in Lebanon Residency which includes the counties of Buchanan, Russell, Tazewell, during the winter of 2026-2027. Price per hour shall include operators, fuel, tire chains, supplies, required insurance and any other incidentals necessary for snow removal operations. VDOT will need single axle and tandem dump trucks with plow and spreaders. Along with a limited number of 4x4 pickups with plows and spreaders. All equipment should be equipped for night work and be in good mechanical condition to ensure a safe and dependable 24/7 operation. All equipment must have current registration, tags, certificate of insurance and inspection sticker at the time of contract submittal. Equipment must also pass a VDOT equipment inspection. VDOT reserves the right to determine acceptability of equipment size and condition for the task. Contractors submitting the lowest responsive and responsible bids will be awarded contracts for "on-call" services as deemed necessary by VDOT. Certified Small Business/micro vendor preferred, registered eVA vendor required. VDOT will be paying a $2,000 Signing Bonus, and Minimum Guaranteed Payment on awarded contracts. To be eligible for the Signing Bonus all contract requirements shall be submitted in Plow4VA by September 1, 2026.

M7B Contract Snow Meeting will be held: **Wednesday, July 22, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m. Location-Town of Lebanon Parks & Recreation, Clinch Mountain Room.** All interested contractors are encouraged to attend this meeting.

Snow Removal Equipment Packages, which includes contract requirements, may be obtained on eVA after July 10, 2026, at http://eva.state.va.us/vendors, and contracts must be submitted online through https://plow4va.vdot.virginia.gov
EEO/AA Employer

Castlewood introduces Blue Devil Little Free Library

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@virginiamediainc.com

A free library has been set up on the grounds of Castlewood High School.

Known as the Blue Devil Little Free Library, the library will offer books for students, family members, and the community as a whole.

The library came about when math instructor Brittany Hale was awarded a Russell County Mini Grant. Jonah McMican helped construct and install the library.

According to a statement from CHS, "She is an avid reader and believes everyone should have access to books. Last year, she started a student book club, and those students are still meeting throughout the summer to read and discuss books together."

Each side of the library celebrates the joy of reading in a unique way.

The side facing the elementary school features signs pointing to beloved childhood destinations like The Hundred Acre Wood, Who-ville, and Wonderland.

The side facing the high school highlights locations from popular modern books, including Erid, from "Project Hail Mary" and Arrakis of "Dune".

The side facing the new gym pays tribute to the community with signs for local favorites like Blue Devil Circle and Honey Branch.

Located at the flag pole entrance of CHS, the library is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"During the school year, we simply ask that visitors avoid stopping by during 7:30–8:45 a.m., when students are being dropped off, and 3:00–4:00 p.m., when buses are loading and students are leaving for the day," the statement read.

The top shelf is stocked with children's and middle grade books, while the bottom shelf includes adult books and magazines. Adult books meaning books such as Danielle Steele, C.J. Box, and Janet Evanovich to name a few.

Those interested in visiting are encouraged to browse and borrow a book, leave a book, or return one when finished and exchange it for another.

"We also welcome donations of like new or gently used books to help keep the library stocked for readers of all ages," the statement said."If the library is full, please contact Mrs. Hale and she will gladly hold your books until there is space for them."



The Blue Devil Little Free Library is now open.

CLASSIFIEDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

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

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

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY FOR A 2026 BIENNIAL REVIEW OF ITS BASE RATES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO § 56-585.8 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA
CASE NO. PUR-2026-00044

On May 29, 2026, Appalachian Power Company ("APCo" or "Company") filed an application ("Application") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to § 56-585.8 of the Code of Virginia ("Code") and the Commission's Rules Governing Utility Rate Applications and Annual Informational Filings of Investor-Owned Electric Utilities, for a biennial review of the Company's rates and terms and conditions for the provision of generation and distribution services. Pursuant to Code § 56-585.8 D, the Commission must issue a final order regarding the Application by January 15, 2027, and any revisions in rates ordered by the Commission pursuant to the rate review shall take effect no earlier than March 1, 2027.

In the Application, APCo represents that this proceeding entails, among other things, determinations regarding: (i) APCo's cost of service and earnings during the two-year period ending December 31, 2025; (ii) whether prospective changes to APCo's rates for generation and distribution services are necessary; and (iii) the Company's prospective fair rate of return on common equity ("ROE").

APCo states that it files this Application under Code § 56-585.8, which requires APCo to file a biennial review, utilizing "the two successive 12-month test periods ending December 31 immediately preceding the year in which such proceeding is conducted" to determine any excess or deficiency in the Company's earnings, which in this case are 2024 and 2025. The Company outlines the statutory parameters for the Commission's review of APCo's earnings in a biennial review case, including the circumstances under which the Commission must order revisions to APCo's rates.

Additionally, APCo represents that under Code § 56-585.8 F, if the Commission determines that APCo's existing rates will, on a going-forward basis, produce revenues above or below the Company's authorized rate of return, then the Commission "shall order any reductions or increases, as applicable and necessary, to such rates . . . that it deems appropriate to ensure the resulting rates for generation and distribution services (a) are just and reasonable and (b) provide the utility an opportunity to recover its costs of providing services" over the next biennial period, and earn a fair rate of return as authorized by the Commission.

APCo avers that, for the purposes of the earnings test in this case, APCo's authorized ROE is the 9.75% that the Commission approved in the Company's 2024 biennial review, Case No. PUR-2024-00024. APCo asserts that it earned a combined return of 4.655% on its common equity in 2024 and 2025.

In this case, APCo requests approval to implement retail base generation and distribution rates that are designed to increase the Company's revenues by approximately $61.4 million, which represents a 3.3% increase to overall revenues. The requested increase includes a $14.3 million decrease to the generation function and a $75.7 million increase to the distribution function. The requested revenue increase reflects, among other things, APCo's requested authorization of a prospective ROE of 10.5%.

APCo asserts that an increase to its rates is necessary to ensure the Company can continue providing safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates to its customers over the coming years. According to APCo, the requested rate increase is primarily the result of general inflation, increased investment in distribution and generation, increased capital costs, and the costs of required programs to support electric vehicles and low-income solar.

Included in the Application, the Company is proposing two Electric Vehicle ("EV") pilot programs: (1) the EV Charger Rebate Pilot, a charger rebate program for Level 2 and DC Fast chargers, and (2) the Residential Managed EV Charging Pilot, a managed charging program offering both active and passive managed charging options to customers. Additionally, the Company proposes changes to its economic development rider, Rider EDR, by: (1) limiting participation to new customers; (2) increasing the economic development required to participate; (3) requiring the service to be in an Environmental Justice Community; and (4) limiting the 40% adjustment factor to all customer generation charges. The Company is also proposing changes to its line extension policy for non-residential customers. Further, the Company also proposes to cancel Rider VWS because no customers are currently enrolled. The Company also proposes to increase the basic service charge for residential customers from $7.96 to $9.00 per month.

According to APCo, the overall impact of the Company's proposals would increase the monthly bill of a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month by approximately $9.10.

Interested persons are encouraged to review APCo's Application and supporting documents in full for additional details.

TAKE NOTICE that the Commission may apportion revenues among customer classes and/or design rates in a manner differing from that shown in the Application and supporting documents and thus may adopt rates that differ from those appearing in the Company's Application and supporting documents.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo's Application. On October 19, 2026, at 10 a.m., the Commission will hold a telephonic portion of the hearing, with no witness present in the Commission's courtroom, for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before October 15, 2026, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide required contact information to the Commission. This information may be provided to the Commission: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting; or (ii) by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting.

On October 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Commission will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission's Staff.

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission has directed the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and required electronic service on parties to this proceeding.

An electronic copy of the public version of the Company's Application may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: Elisabeth M. Bruce, Esquire, American Electric Power Service Corporation, 1051 East Cary Street, Suite 1100, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or ebruce@aep.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies of the public version of the Application and other documents filed in this case from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

On or before October 15, 2026, any interested person may submit comments on the Application by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/submit-public-comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044.

On or before August 26, 2026, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding must do so by filing a notice of participation at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties and their counsel. A copy of the notice of participation as a respondent also must be served electronically on counsel to the Company, any other respondents, and Commission Staff. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Rules of Practice and Procedure, 5 VAC 5-20-10 *et seq.* ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any notice of participation filed by a person not represented by counsel shall also set forth why the filer's positions in this matter are not adequately represented by another party to this proceeding and cannot be expressed through written or oral public comments as provided for in this proceeding. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing.

On or before August 26, 2026, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served electronically on the Company, any other respondents, and the Commission's Staff. In all filings, respondents shall comply with the Rules of Practice, as modified herein, including, but not limited to: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service,* and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits.* All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2026-00044.

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

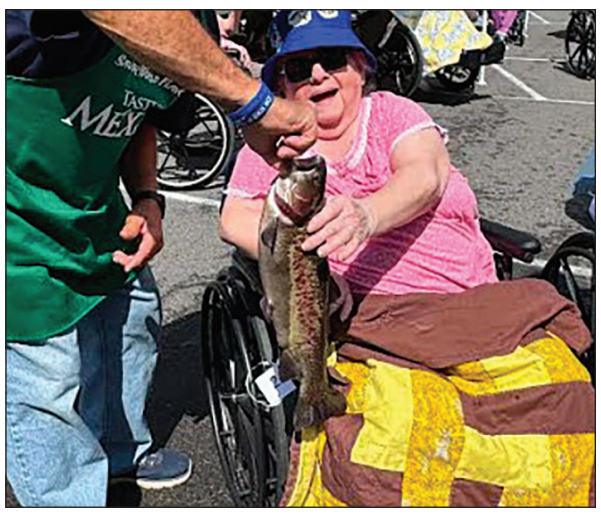
The public version of the Company's Application, the Commission's Rules of Practice, the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, and other documents filed in the case may be viewed at: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY

Maple Grove residents enjoy fishing

By AMANDA DOWELL

Maple Grove residents recently enjoyed a delightful fishing experience, all made possible by the generous efforts of the Cooper Creek-Moccasin Volunteer Fire Department.



Maples Grove residents were happy to show off their catch.

Chris Vance and his dedicated team turned a cherished dream into reality for many in our community. They went above and beyond by not only supplying the fishing tank but also bringing a truck to fill it, ensuring everyone could fully participate in the event. Their commitment made the day memorable and brought immense joy to our residents.

Rod Slate from Sweetwater Springs Farm provided the stunning rainbow trout for our event, ensuring everyone had the opportunity to enjoy a memorable fishing experience.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to the members of New Covenant Fellowship—Randall and Robin Jackson, Sarah Vanhoozier, Larry and Carolyn Turley, and Eugene Johnson. Their generous assistance in both fishing and filleting the catch afterward contributed greatly to the success of our event.

We look forward to hosting this wonderful event again in the future, providing another opportunity for our community to come together.

Maple Grove Nursing and Rehab will also be having a back-to-school Drive in Movie night on July 31st. It will be a free community event. A movie on the lawn with popcorn and snacks. Stay tuned for more information.



This Maple Grove resident was thrilled with the fish she caught.

Paralyzed Veterans of America and Food City Team Up with NASCAR father-son duo for in-store donation drive

Paralyzed Veterans of America – the nation's premier nonprofit of choice for disabled Veterans, their families and caregivers – launches its annual in-store checkout campaign with long-time partner Food City. This year features a special father-son duo, as NASCAR legend Kyle Petty joins his dad, seven-time NASCAR champion Richard Petty, to support the campaign.

Since 2011, Food City has raised more than $4.5 million dollars, fueling PVA's mission to ensure disabled veterans receive the benefits they earned, the specialized health care they need, the meaningful careers they want, and more.

"PVA is honored to partner once again with Food City and Richard Petty and welcome Kyle Petty to our family of supporters," said U.S. Army Veteran and PVA National President Robert Thomas. "The generosity of Food City's customers and staff directly changes the lives of veterans with spinal cord injuries and diseases, like MS and ALS. This annual campaign reflects the incredible impact we can have when local communities show up for our nation's heroes."

This year's in-store donation drive will run at all Food City locations from July 1-28, 2026. Customers can select $1, $3, or $5 donations, donate the amount of their choice, or round up their order total to the next dollar amount as they checkout. Customers who are shopping online can also donate.

"For more than a decade, I've had the privilege of giving back to the men and women who have served this country," said Richard Petty. "This year is even more meaningful having my son Kyle join me in support of PVA and the veterans whose lives this partnership continues to change."

Kyle Petty added, "I was blessed during my NASCAR career to drive the PVA race car, and that experience showed me firsthand the difference this organization makes in veterans' lives. Together, PVA and Food City have built something with real impact, and I am thrilled to be part of carrying that forward with my dad."

"We would like to thank our dedicated team of associates and loyal customers for making this campaign so successful year after year," said Steven C. Smith, Food City president and chief executive officer.

"Together, we have been able to provide vital support to PVA and make our communities stronger. We look forward to working alongside PVA and Richard Petty again this year and we are excited to welcome Kyle Petty to the campaign."

To learn more about the Food City/PVA partnership and this month's activation, visit foodcity.com.

SETH BUCHANAN

FROM PAGE 1B

tion for two seasons, Buchanan started 50 of 55 games during his junior season.

Buchanan hit for a solid .257 average with a .762 on-base plus slugging percentage, eight doubles, four homers, and 30 RBIs. He also stole 15 bags.

"I had a change, not mechanical but philosophical, starting this year," Buchanan stated. "It helped me a lot. Just getting in the box confident, eliminating a lot of thoughts, and focusing on keeping it simple. It's just a game. I try to play hard and have fun. It was a good year. I was glad I got to get in there and play. I had to work through some mistakes, but it was good."

Buchanan played mainly at shortstop, but he is adaptable with a few starts at third and second base.

"Seth's biggest strengths are his versatility and his competitiveness," Roberts noted. "Defensively, he can play multiple infield positions and provides stability wherever he plays on the field. Offensively, he is a tough at-bat who understands the strike zone, puts together quality at-bats, and does the little things that help the offense."

Seth considers his father, Aaron Buchanan—who tragically died in 2024—as his greatest influence.

"The biggest influence was my dad (the late Aaron Buchanan)," he said. "We would always go hit when I was younger. My dad started us out in baseball. I still try to play for him."

Seth has a year of baseball remaining. What sort of goals has he set for his senior season?

"I'd like to swing it better," declared Buchanan. "I had a decent year, but I think I can get better. I've learned how to work through the ups and downs."

The best is likely to come in 2027 for Buchanan on the diamond.

"Seth has become stronger physically, more confident in his abilities, and has continued to improve his understanding of the game," stated Roberts. "As he continues to mature, I expect him to be a key contributor and leader for our program. We believe his best baseball is still ahead of him, and I expect him to continue impacting games on both sides of the ball."

Submitted

Seth Buchanan (3) enjoying a game with the Keydets.



Submitted

Seth Buchanan making a throw from shortstop for VMI>



