

The Lebanon News

Russell County's Family Newspaper Since 1880

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LEBANON, VIRGINIA | \$2

County employees, teachers receive raises

By SHAWN STREET
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County employees and public school teachers will be receiving a raise in the new fiscal year.

Funding for school programs and a raise for teachers were topics of debate late last month as the Russell County Board of Supervisors put together a budget for the new fiscal year, which began on July 1.

After finding ways to fund any program that may have been in jeopardy, it appeared as if the raises would not happen.

However, during the July 6 meeting of the board of supervisors, the proposed raises have become a reality.

In a letter to the board, Russell County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Kim Hooker asked the county for "... the reappropriation and reversion of \$986,849.68 from the fiscal year 2026 budget back into the fiscal year 2027 budget."

Hooker stated, "The primary intent for these reversion funds is to fully cover the required local match for proposed salary increases for both board of supervisors employees and school board employees. Investing in our workforce remains a top priority to ensure we attract and retain the high-quality staff our county deserves."

The board voted to grant Hooker's request with the exception of just over \$165,000 that will go toward county employees' pay.

In other action from the July 6 meeting, Swords Creek resident Danny Hess spoke about a proposed county wide forensic audit. "Last year you voted to raise our taxes and do an audit," Hess said.

He added that his taxes went up \$200 but the audit has not been conducted. "I would like my \$200 back," he said.

Two public hearings were scheduled for the August meeting. One public hearing will focus on the sale of Oak Grove Elementary School and the other will discuss the county's tipping fee for trash.



Congressman Griffith presents Chester McGlothlin's medals to his daughter Thelma McGlothlin.

Obtaining information on school, PSA debt would cost thousands

By SHAWN STREET
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At least one member of the board of supervisors and two county residents have been asking about debt owned by the school board and public service authority in recent months.

In June, District 1's Andrew Hensley issued a statement that he had been asking for such information since March.

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

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

Since then, Castlewood's Daniel Meade and Honaker resident David Miller have both made Freedom of Information Act requests regarding the debt.

While the "when, where and why" remains unanswered, the public now knows how much it will cost to search for such information.

In replying to Meade's FOIA request, Russell County Administrator Lonzo Lester said, "This request will require many manpower hours and thousands of documents to complete."

The response to Miller was more specific. To search for records regarding the PSA's debt would require two employees working 40 hours a week with a combined labor rate of \$35 per hour. FOIA officer review and processing would be another \$200. In total, Miller's FOIA request would cost him \$1,600.

The search for school board records would require 35 hours of work at a rate of \$43.75 per hour. A two hour review by an attorney would be an additional \$400. The process would find Miller paying \$1,848.39.

World War II veteran honored for service in European and Asian theaters

By SHAWN STREET
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A World War II veteran has been honored for being among the few to have served in both the European and Asian theaters of the war.

During a private ceremony last week in Honaker, Ninth District Congressman Morgan Griffith honored the memory and service of Chester A. McGlothlin.

McGlothlin served in Company G of the 303rd Infantry, which was a part of the 97th Division. That division was one of the very few that served in both Europe and Asia.

Griffith presented McGlothlin's daughter, Thelma McGlothlin, with a number of medals earned by her father. They include: The Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, Euro-

pean-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal and the Honorable Service Lapel Button World War II.

Griffith explained that a fire was responsible for the delay in honoring McGlothlin.

"On July 12, 1973, a fire at the National Personnel Records Center destroyed over 16 million official military records including nearly 80 percent of all records for Army personnel who served between 1912 and 1960," Griffith said.

The NPRC has managed to reconstruct some records using multiple techniques to dry, preserve, and "read" burned records retrieved after the fire, but also uses alternative records such as final pay records housed elsewhere and records supplied by veterans themselves as they request medals and documents.

SEE **WORLD WAR II VETERAN** | 2A

Honaker High School band has commitment to excellence

By SHAWN STREET
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It is a commonly held belief that high school marching bands only perform at football games and take part in hometown Christmas or Independence Day parade.

For Honaker High School's band, that belief is certainly not reality. Director Shawn Matney said the HHS band has created a tradition of service, excellence and community pride, while performing over 40 times throughout the year.

"While many people recognize the Honaker High School Band for its halftime performances and marching competitions, the program's impact extends far beyond the football field," Matney stated. "Throughout the 2025-2026 school year, the band has demonstrated an unwavering

commitment to musical excellence, student development, and community service, making it one of the most active student organizations in Russell County."

Serving an average of 63 student musicians annually, the program provides music education to students from both Honaker High School and Honaker Elementary School. This year's enrollment included 22 high school band members, 18 seventh-grade students, and 23 sixth-grade students, creating a streamlined pathway for future musicians and leaders.

"The Honaker High School Band remained a constant presence during the football season, performing at 13 varsity football games," Matney said. "Whether facing rain, cold temperatures, or sunshine, the band faithfully supported the Tigers and energized fans from the open-

SEE **HONAKER BAND** | 5A



The Honaker High School marching band took part in the Cleveland Independence Day parade on July 3.

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

Neyia Beavers announced as dean of healthcare technologies

Southwest Virginia Community College announces the appointment of Neyia Beavers, MSN, RN, as Dean of Health Technologies, effective immediately. Dean Beavers' appointment reflects her extensive experience in higher education and healthcare leadership, her deep commitment to student success, and her longstanding dedication to Southwest Virginia Community College and the communities it serves.

Dean Beavers brings more than 20 years of experience in nursing education, academic administration, and healthcare workforce development. She has most recently served as Interim Dean of Health Technologies, providing leadership for the division while continuing to advance program quality, accreditation excellence, and student success initiatives. Throughout her tenure at SWCC, she has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting faculty, enhancing educational opportunities, and preparing highly skilled healthcare professionals to meet regional workforce needs.

Prior to her appointment, Dean Beavers served as RN Program Director, Associate Professor of Nursing, and in several academic leadership positions within the Virginia Community College System. In these roles, she led multiple programs through accreditation and program review processes, strengthened relationships with healthcare partners, expanded access to healthcare education, and helped develop innovative academic pathways that support both student achievement and workforce responsiveness.



Neyia Beavers

A proud graduate of Southwest Virginia Community College, Dean Beavers earned her Associate of Applied Science in Nursing from SWCC before completing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Science in Nursing Education at Old Dominion University. Her professional journey reflects a lifelong commitment to educational excellence, community service, and the advancement of healthcare education throughout Southwest Virginia.

Throughout her career, Dean Beavers has demonstrated a strong commitment to student success, faculty development, accreditation excellence, and workforce responsiveness. She has helped expand educational opportunities to meet regional healthcare workforce needs,

strengthened partnerships with healthcare providers, and advanced innovative approaches that improve access to healthcare education across Southwest Virginia.

Dean Beavers expressed her enthusiasm for the opportunity to serve in this leadership role:

"I am incredibly honored to serve as Dean of Health Technologies at Southwest Virginia Community College. As a graduate of SWCC, it is especially meaningful to have the opportunity to give back to the institution that helped launch my career. I look forward to working alongside our outstanding faculty and staff to expand opportunities for our students, strengthen partnerships throughout our region, and continue preparing highly skilled healthcare professionals who will make a difference in the communities we serve."

As Dean of Health Technologies, Dean Beavers will provide leadership for the College's health sciences programs, overseeing academic quality, accreditation processes, faculty development, student success initiatives, and strategic partnerships with healthcare providers. She will also play a key role in expanding educational pathways and workforce training opportunities that support the evolving healthcare needs of Southwest Virginia and the Commonwealth.

Southwest Virginia Community College extends its congratulations to Dean Beavers as she assumes this important leadership role and looks forward to her continued contributions to the success of the College, its students, and the region.

WORLD WAR II VETERAN

FROM PAGE 1A

"Chester McGlothlin's records from WW II were among those burned. Thanks to the records supplied by Mr. McGlothlin's family and other official records available, the NPRC was able to ascertain that Mr. McGlothlin served in Europe, the American Theater and the Pacific Theater during his service."

"It means a lot to me," Thelma McGlothlin said. "I'm very proud of my father's service."

She also thanked Griffith for the role his office played.

"I am very appreciative of Congressman Griffith and his staff in helping honor my father with these medals. It was an honor having Congressman Morgan Griffith and the others at my house. I was trying not to cry as I was receiving my father's medals."

She added that she elected to keep the ceremony private for safety reasons. "I was thinking about Congressman Griffith and his staff and their safety," she said. "I just wanted it to be private for that reason."

Born in 1925 in Drill, McGlothlin was the son of the late Larkin Davis and Rosa Belle Harris McGlothlin. He passed away in 2015.

The 97th arrived in France in March 1945. The division moved into western Germany later that month and took up position along the southern bank of the Sieg River.

In April, the division was in the Battle of Rurh Pocket and Glockner.

The 97th liberated the Hoffnungstal prisoner of war camp near Munich. Approximately 800 soldiers, including 177 Americans were held at the camp.

McGlothlin's division also liberated the Flossenburg concentration camp in Bavaria. An estimated 30,000 people were killed at that camp.

The division arrived in Japan in late September 1945. The division was tasked with confiscating and disposing of Japanese military property.

The 97th returned 198,142,046 pounds of foodstuffs, 670,226 gallons of gasoline, 8,568,857 yards of cloth and 480,343 pairs of boots and shoes to the Japanese government for distribution to civilians.

Virginia State Police report 14 fatal crashes over holiday weekend

Preliminary data shows that 15 people lost their lives in 14 crashes over the four-day Independence Day holiday counting period (July 2-July 5). The crashes occurred in the counties of Alleghany, Appomattox, Brunswick, Fauquier, Frederick (2), Nottaway, Pulaski, Roanoke, Shenandoah, Smyth, Spotsylvania, and Suffolk, and the City of Danville. One head-on crash in Smyth County on July 3rd killed two people, and on July 5th in Frederick County a motorcyclist a trooper attempted to stop for reckless driving by speed died in a crash on Interstate 81 after refusing to stop for the trooper.

"Fatal crashes are preventable" said Lieutenant Colonel Todd Taylor, Director of the Virginia State Police Bureau of Field Operations. "Seatbelts save lives, and preliminary information reveals at least four of those killed in these crashes were not utilizing their seatbelts. Excessive speed was a factor in at least four of the fatal crashes as well. The worst thing to happen to you when you do not follow the rules of the road is not a ticket but loss of your life or someone else's. Nobody involved in these crashes expected that to happen while the world was celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States, but it did. If they would have buckled up, slowed down, avoided distractions, and stayed sober, these tragic outcomes likely could have been prevented."

During the 2026 Operation C.A.R.E. (Crash Awareness Reduction Effort) initiative for the Independence Day holiday, troopers cited over 3,153 drivers for speeding and 1,540 for reckless driving. Seventy drivers were arrested for driving under the influence/driving under the influence-drugs. Troopers also wrote 474 seatbelt citations and 133 child restraint citations. Virginia State Police troopers worked 892 crashes.

Operation CARE is a state-sponsored, national program intended to reduce crashes, fatalities and injuries due to impaired driving, speeding, and failing to wear a seat belt.

Funds generated from summonses issued by Virginia State Police go directly to court fees and the state's Literary Fund, which benefits public school construction, technology funding, and teacher retirement.

Democratic congressional candidate forum Thursday in Tazewell

By SHAWN STREET

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The three Democrats vying for the party's nomination for the Ninth District's seat in Congress will be in the region this week for a candidate forum.

Voices of Southwest Virginia: Your Questions. Their Answers is scheduled for July 15 at Fuller Perry Hall at the Tazewell County Fairgrounds in Tazewell.

Registration and refreshments will be at 6:00 p.m. with the forum starting at 6:30 p.m.

The Democratic Committees of Russell, Bland, Buchanan and Tazewell Counties are hosting the event.

The forum will provide voters an opportunity to hear directly from the candidates as they discuss issues impacting Southwest Virginia and answer questions submitted by community members. The event is designed to help voters make an informed decision before the Democratic primary, which is scheduled for August 4.

Candidates on the ballot for the primary are Douglas

Crockett, Adam Murphy and Joy Powers.

Crockett is a native of Wythe County who is currently resides in Abingdon. He worked for 38 years as an ordained elder with the United Methodist Church.

For more information on the candidate, visit www.crockettnow.com.

Murphy is a 2017 graduate of Western Governor's University with a Bachelors of Science in Software Development. He designs software solutions in the field of investments and derivatives.

For more information on Murphy's campaign visit www.murphy4va.com.

Powers is a Bedford farmer. She has also served as the Superintendent of the Bedford County Fair, a member of the Bedford County Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board, Founder of Restore the Harvest and is a small business owner.

For more information about Powers' campaign, visit www.joyforva.com.

The winner of the primary will face Republican incumbent Morgan Griffith in November.

Fresh ingredients are perfect for summertime

Fresh ingredients can be components of a flavorful meal. Come the warmer weather, fresh ingredients also can help people avoid feeling sluggish after eating.

This summer, fresh ingredients like avocado and tomatoes can be just what people need when looking for a delicious meal that won't adversely affect their energy levels. The following recipe for "Bruschetta Topped With Avocado and Tomatoes" from Lines+Angles employs both foods and can make a great addition to any summertime dinner table.

Bruschetta Topped With Avocado and Tomatoes Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 2 large Hass avocados, ripe, pitted, peeled, and cubed
- 4 vine tomatoes, cored, seeded, and diced
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 8 ounces fresh mozzarella, drained and diced
- 2 to 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for brushing
- 1 large baguette, cut into 1-inch thick slices
- 1 small bunch basil, leaves only, finely sliced
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

1. Combine the cubed avocado with the tomato, shallot, mozzarella, balsamic vinegar, extra-virgin olive oil, and plenty of seasoning in a mixing bowl.



- 2. Stir and toss to combine, adding more vinegar and extra-virgin olive oil as needed. Set aside until needed.
- 3. Preheat the broiler to hot. Lightly brush the baguette slices with olive oil before toasting under the broiler for 1 to 2 minutes until golden brown.
- 4. Remove bread slices and leave to cool briefly. Carefully spoon the avocado bruschetta mix on top and serve with a garnish of sliced basil on top.

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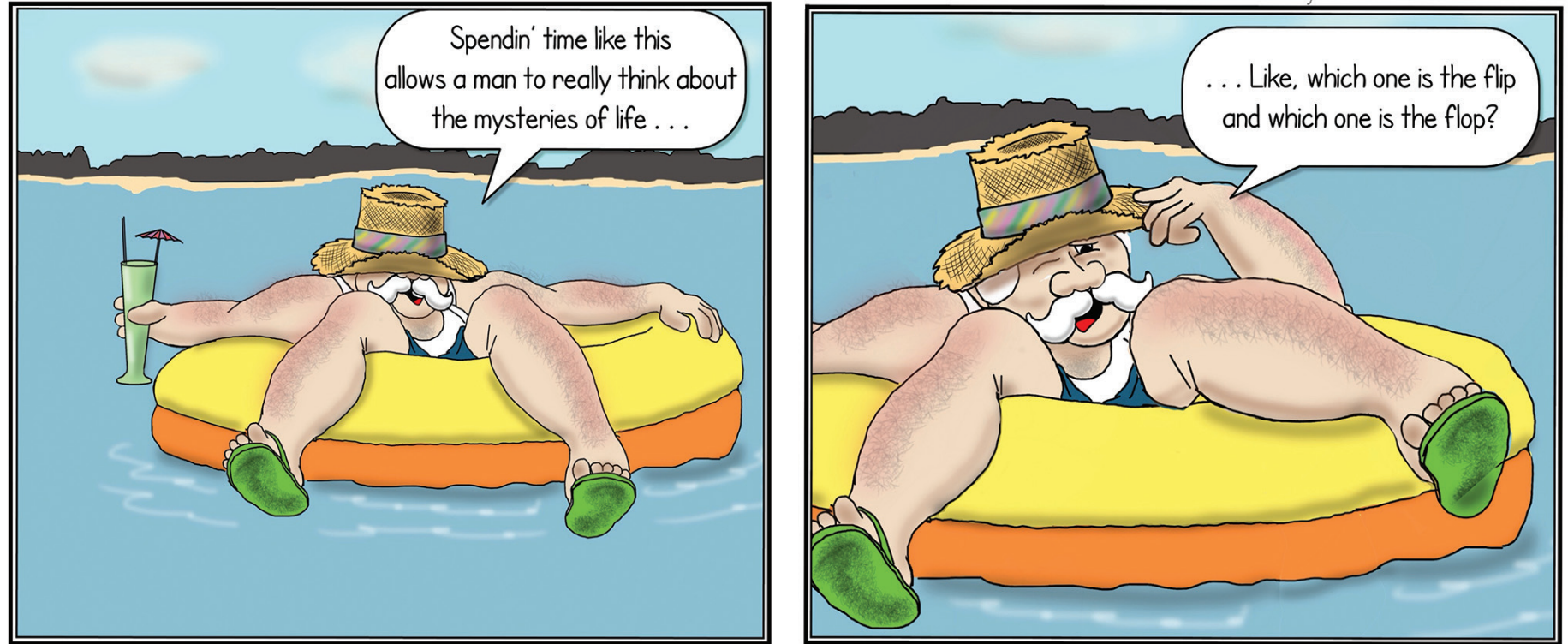
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49 Winchester fan from Sweden visits Castlewood



Winchester fan Lenny Niklasson visits Castlewood from Sweden.

By SHAWN STREET
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Much has been said in recent years about bringing tourists to Russell County. The area has many assets, proponents say, such as the Clinch River, ATV trails and events like Cedar Fest.

But it was the hometown of a country music band that prompted one man and his girlfriend to travel more than 4,000 miles to “The Russell County Line.”

Formed in 2013 in Castlewood, 49 Winchester has been climbing the ladder of country music success. The band’s music has been featured on the hit television series “Yellowstone” and they have been nominated for the Americana Music Honors and Awards Duo Group of the Year, as well as for the Academy of Country Music Awards Group of the Year.

For generations country music has been the most popular in the American South, as well as the rural West and Southwest. But in recent years the genre has experienced unprecedented growth in Europe.

So much so that when Lenny Niklasson and his girl-

friend were visiting the United States earlier this month, a trip to their favorite band’s hometown was a must.

One of 49 Winchester’s most iconic photographs was one taken at a “Welcome to Russell County” sign. This was just after the group released the single “Russell County Line.”

Niklasson happily posted a picture of himself at that sign on the band’s fan club page on July 2 with the caption, “All the way from Sweden to Virginia.”

“My girlfriend and I have seen them three times together and we love their music,” Niklasson said. “I’m amazed by them so when we were on road trip through Appalachia from Georgia to Virginia, a stop at the sign and a quick tour of Castlewood was had to be done!”

Niklasson said he could relate to the band as he too was from a small town.

“I come from a small town in southwest Sweden, almost out by the ocean,” he explained. “It’s about an hour from Gothenburg and it’s a town as small as Castlewood. We got like a grocery store and a school and that’s it.”

Niklasson said country music has been growing in popularity in Sweden.

“Country music is a big thing in Sweden right now,” he said. “But it’s always been big in a domestic way, where we got a lot of Swedish artist doing many cover of like 60’s and 70’s country songs in Swedish.”

He added, “But real country starting to get big there and people starts to wear boots and cowboy hats more now.”

Niklasson has seen the band a total of four times and has watched them rise in popularity, especially after their tour opening for Luke Combs.

“49 starting to rise in Sweden,” he said. “I’ve seen them two times in Sweden and two times in Germany. First time was with Luke Combs as openers and I think that gave them a lot of fire on the way.”

Niklasson said he was impressed with Russell County. “I love the views and I think it was really nice,” he said. “Absolutely a place I could see myself live there! I’ll be back here to travel with my girlfriend next time and will go back to Virginia again!”

49 Winchester will be back in the region later this year. The band is scheduled to perform at Freedom Hall Civic Center in Johnson City, Tennessee on December 12.



Winchester at “The Russell County Line.”

Congressman Griffith: Actions on Agriculture

A core pillar of the economy for Virginia's Ninth District is agriculture.

Whether they raise corn or cattle, cut timber or Christmas trees, agricultural producers all play a vital role in rural America's success.

Thanks to our agricultural communities, we can deliver fresh produce, supply grocery stores, feed American families, spur small business economic activity, support local communities and so much more.

Given these meaningful contributions, I explore opportunities in Congress to support America's agricultural sector.

Often that means voting for better federal policy.

In April, I voted for a bill that helps strengthen the farming industry in Virginia's Ninth District.

H.R. 7567 – the Farm, Food, and National Security Act provides funding resources for farmers.

The farm bill helps institutions like Virginia Tech with federal funding through various research grant opportunities.

The farm bill creates a pilot program for badly needed additional custom slaughter establishments. Small meat-processing facilities may be able to sell their meat inside the Commonwealth of Virginia as long as their prod-

uct has a label that says the product is not inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Further, the farm bill promotes 21st century technologies to help farmers modernize their operations to make them more efficient.

I believe there are some very positive provisions that will help Virginia farmers. That is why the bill has support from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the Virginia Agribusiness Council and the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, among others.

After Republicans helped pass this critical legislation for rural America, it awaits action in the Senate. I will continue to encourage Congressional action on policies that benefit our American farmers.

Not only do I support Congressional action, but I also work with the Trump Administration to help deliver better outcomes for Virginia's farmers.

Such was the case this year as the Commonwealth has faced harmful weather events.

In response to frost and freeze events during the spring that impacted many farms, Virginia requested a Secretarial Disaster Designation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

I helped lead efforts in Virginia's congressional delegation to urge USDA Secretary Rollins to approve Virginia's request.

In June, Secretary Rollins granted our request! Many Vir-



WEEKLY REPORT
FROM THE CAPITOL

ginia farmers who suffered crop losses from the spring can now access emergency loan assistance.

Further, severe drought this summer has caused additional challenges.

Governor Spanberger has urged Virginians to conserve water as Virginia faces its driest period since 1941.

Secretary Rollins approved parts of Virginia to be eligible for federal drought relief, with Tazewell County receiving a primary natural disaster area designation. Bland, Buchanan, Russell and Smyth Counties may also request federal drought assistance.

As growing season challenges and record temperatures threaten to destabilize farming operations, I will continue my advocacy

at the federal level for farming community access to federal disaster resources.

Our farmers need access to more than just resources. They need access to opportunity.

That is why President Trump continues to work on trade deals that create opportunities for the American farming industry to market its products globally.

Trump's trade actions have improved American beef producers' access to markets in Southeast Asia.

All the while, we continue to monitor the situation with South American beef.

Due to the deteriorating relationship with China caused by many factors, trade negotiations have been tougher.

In those negotiations, I have joined lawmakers in writing to President Trump to protect American tobacco.

One complication is likely that the Chinese Communist Party controls the expansive Chinese tobacco industry.

For many years, China was among the U.S. trade partners that annually purchased as much as 80 million pounds of American tobacco.

However, China made clear it would not buy America's superior

quality flue-cured tobacco from the 2025 crop. This announcement spelled unease and trouble for Virginia's tobacco producers.

Accordingly, I am supportive of President Trump's efforts to ensure fair treatment of American farmers and expanded market access for our farming products.

Some have not fared as well with the tariffs, and Congress is working to ameliorate those issues. Affecting our region is the export of timber products.

Whether it is crops, livestock, timber or other items, America's agricultural sector creates the best quality products in the world. Accordingly, it is only right for them to get a fair shake.

I will continue working in Congress to promote policy outcomes that make farming operations in the U.S. more sustainable, less costly and more successful.

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.

Craving What the Soul Needs

I am waiting on sweet corn. I don't want store bought or frozen corn, I want fresh corn, stripped from the stalk, shucked on newspaper, cooked, and dripping with butter and a touch of salt. I want to fix three ears and nothing else, and then I want to go sit on the back porch in the shade and eat all three of them. I'll finish my feast with a glass of sweet tea and a nap, and be a happy camper until my next craving.

I've craved a lot of things in my life. Pregnancy cravings included French toast and syrup, strawberries, tomato soup, and soup beans and cornbread. Post-surgery cravings were even stranger than pregnancy and included dried cherries, dried apricots, almonds and walnuts. Theory has it that we crave what our body needs. Today I must need corn.

As certainly as our bodies crave what we need, I think our souls do, too. Lately, I've been craving a day with nothing to do. I've tried to work myself into a position of being able to do that, but it has evaded me. Seems there is always something calling my name, be it laundry, housework, schoolwork, bookwork, or paperwork. Work has attached itself to me like glue. Now please don't get me wrong, I am grateful that I have work that does call my name. It gives me purpose, definition, financial reward, and great satisfaction; but work, and too much of it in too many different places, feels as though I'm being chased by an eight-armed octopus. As soon as I untangle from one tentacle, there are three more reaching, grabbing, and clutching.

I've also been craving a good night's sleep. I have somehow been awake until the wee hours and then when sleep does find me it is fitful. I'll wake up sometimes five or six times a night. Each time I'll look at the clock and realize that it is the middle of the night. I'll wonder what woke me up, and then I'll attempt to fall back asleep. Then this "to-do" list that is a mile and half long unfurls itself before the back of my eyelids and I am done for. I am certain that I have some sleepless cohorts out there, for I hear words being tossed around like "insomnia" and "Golden Girls Marathon." The older we get, the less sleep finds us.

Another recent craving has been for a family vacation. It has been years since we went anywhere as a family. The hunters and fishermen have hunted and fished, but



DEBBIE
GIBSON

they left the womenfolk behind when they did so. The girls have shopped and "gotten" away for a day or two from the house, but I want a vacation that takes us all to the same place. When all five of the children were home we had a hard time feeding everybody, much less taking a vacation. So I want a trip to some unknown destination, and I want all of us to go...together. I'd like to rent a big house in the mountains and call up all the family and say, "Pack your bags, we're heading for the hills. It won't cost you a thing except the gas you have to put in your car. If you don't have that then call me, and I'll mail it to you! All food, accommodations, entertainment, and sundries provided by "Big Momma and Big Daddy." I think they'd all jump at the chance to get away; and it would prove to be an interesting trip now that they are grown.

So I'm craving corn, a day of nothing, some deep sleep, and a family vacation. I am sure you have cravings, too. Your cravings may be for health, or peace of mind. They may be for a troublesome time to be over and done with. Or perhaps, you're craving the resolution to a long-standing problem. You might not need any of the aforementioned items and just be craving a tall glass of lemonade and a good book, but rest assured...we all crave something that our soul needs.

I'm going to start listening a little closer to this soul of mine. If it says, "rest" I'm going to do my best to find rest. If it says, "love," I'm going to go love somebody. If it says, "stay awhile longer," then I'll do just that. And should it say, "go" I'll do my best to do that, too. This soul of mine has a way of knowing what I need, and what I don't need. All I have to do is listen, obey, and start a savings account with the title "Gibson Vacation Fund."

Adult education connection

Did you know that being educated can have a positive impact on your health? Staying healthy is important not only for yourself, but also for your family as well.

Having a high school diploma or a GED® credential can promote a heightened sense of physical and mental well-being. Many people that are healthy both physically and mentally benefit from more job opportunities and growth. In short, having an education could just lead to better health overall.

Education deepens knowledge, inspires confidence, and equips people with the necessary skills to make money and pay for healthy lifestyles. Studies have shown that some people with a high school diploma have fewer chronic health conditions than those without. Achieving a high school credential can truly be life-changing. The GED® can open doors to further education and higher paying, more stable jobs.

There are many ways you can take direct action through education to encourage healthy behaviors and improve health outcomes throughout life. A high school equivalency diploma is a great starting point. After obtaining their GED®, many people pursue further career advancement with skills training, and others have gone on to secure a college degree.

People with more education and higher income are more likely to be spared from the stresses that frequently arise from economic hardship. These stress-inducing events can have extremely negative effects on health and might make individuals more sensitive to other types of tension. Educated adults are also more likely to have larger social circles, which in turn brings access to resources that may reduce hardship and stress which could protect them from negative health effects.

Perhaps taking a step towards being more educated could be the change you are looking for. It could help you out financially and improve your physical well-being. Also, keep in mind that adult education classes are free and convenient. For any adult who is interested in getting their GED® or gaining new career skills, there are many opportunities available. If you would like to find out more information about these opportunities, please call Southwest Regional Adult Education at 276-889-5424.

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BEVERLY
PRATER
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Delay Does Not Pay

Delay is not always the best plan but you can't do everything today.

You can delay paying your utility bills a few days but you can't delay for very long because the utility company will turn off your power or water.

You can delay mowing your grass for a few days but eventually the grass will become unmanageable if you wait too long.

You can postpone going to the doctor for a while. If you wait too long your minor problems may become major problems.

Some things in life have to be done today while some can wait a few days. We can't do everything today. Often there are expenditures we would perhaps like to make but can't afford at the pres-

ent moment. So, we have to save our money and wait until we have the money. Too often people can't wait and buy now to pay later.

There may be some purchases like this we can justify such as a house or a car. We have to have some place to live and transportation to work. How much you can afford to spend on monthly payments for housing and transportation depends on your income. Try not to overdo it because even reasonable amounts of money are not fun to pay back, especially with interest attached.

Delay depends on how much time we have. A 21-year-old feels like life is forever while a 70-year-old knows time is fleeting. If you are graduating from high school, all of life is before you. If you are



past 65, then you better move a little faster doing what you want or need to do.

Of course, nothing is for certain. A young adult has no guarantees and some old people just keep getting older. We never know for sure but we do know our chances diminish greatly with age. The body wears out.

Eighteen-year-olds should try really hard to earn some money and put \$2,000 or \$3,000 a year into a Roth IRA account. Let's say you are 18 and can rake up \$3,000

in 12 months

time to invest in a Roth IRA and never touch it until you are 68 you will have about \$184,000. For the last 50 years, the stock market has averaged about 10 percent annual growth. If you invested \$3,000 a year at age 18 and 19 you would have about \$632,000.

Do you know how many Americans have this much money? Only 3.5% of Americans or around 12 million people have \$500,000 or more in retirement savings. Only around 1% have \$600,000 or more.

Granted, \$600,000 won't buy near as much in 50 years but it will buy something. The point is, delaying investing into a Roth IRA or any 401k is very, very costly. Many 18-year-olds do the exact

opposite. They go out and go head over heels in debt.

They borrow hundreds of thousands of dollars to obtain an English or Psychology degree from a pricey college that they never use. Saving money becomes a bone crushing impossibility for years and years. Sometimes many never are able to save any. The end result, old age is not good.

A 65-year-old couple once said, "We've got to figure out a retirement." Sadly, they had never saved a penny. Today they are both on Medicaid living in a nursing home.

Mow yards, dig ditches, work at a department store or whatever it takes. Spend some time early in your life saving a few dollars. The end result will be amazing but delay does not pay.

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Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger speaks to press on April 27, 2026 at an event in Richmond touting policy accomplished during her first 100 days in office. (Photo by Charlotte Rene Woods/Virginia Mercury)

Virginia climbs to third spot in CNBC ‘Top States for Business’ rankings

Gov. Spanberger touts legislative agenda and workforce development measures, along with years-long infrastructure projects as contributing factors.

BY: CHARLOTTE RENE WOODS

The Virginia Mercury

Virginia shifted from fourth to third place in CNBC’s annual “top states for business” rankings, Gov. Abigail Spanberger announced Thursday.

States that achieve the top bracket are considered the best in the nation for attracting or retaining companies and supporting regional economies.

“I think the fact that we are on the rise to number three means that we’re moving in the right direction,” Spanberger said in a phone interview Thursday afternoon.

“It isn’t just that the cost of doing business has im-

proved; it’s that the cost of living has improved,” she said, citing a slate of new laws aimed at addressing housing, healthcare and energy affordability she signed this year.

These factors, she emphasized, can make Virginia more attractive to employers and workers considering a move to the state and give them reasons to stay once here.

Virginia also ranked second in the infrastructure category, reflecting work that has spanned gubernatorial administrations.

Spanberger noted the recently-completed improvements to the Port of Virginia, a \$450 million dredging project which

began in 2019 under Gov. Ralph Northam. The project deepened Virginia’s port, making it more accessible for commercial shipping.

The state has also allocated funding for upgrades to Southwest Virginia’s Interstate 81 in recent years, a critical artery for ground shipments.

This year, CNBC also factored ease of permitting into its rankings. Spanberger said Virginia has “established” itself with a business reputation for speed to market.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin championed investment in the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program and celebrated manufacturing deals at a megasite near

Danville during his tenure. Spanberger said she and lawmakers invested \$50 million in the program this year.

Virginia had remained consistently on top of the rankings since 2018 before falling to fourth in last summer’s report under Youngkin’s tenure. The rise over the past year, however, may also reflect deals Youngkin secured before leaving office, like pharmaceutical companies Eli Lilly and AstraZeneca facilities setting up shop in the state and creating jobs, along with Spanberger’s first half a year as the new governor.

Spanberger said among the bills she signed into law this year were ones allocating about \$5 billion in new business investment around the state and another creating Internships-VA, a statewide program that helps connect employers and college students for paid internships, and potentially stock Virginia’s talent pipeline.

The state-funded program offers grants for small and mid-size businesses to provide a 50% match for undergraduate students’ wages.

Spanberger added that it also offers more opportunities for students and younger professionals.

“There are many students or new graduates who can’t afford to do an internship and go unpaid,” she said.

Since housing and childcare directly impact employment, Spanberger touted a Hitachi investment in Halifax County as a potential model for blending new job growth while addressing housing strain.

State and local officials have coordinated with the energy company on plans to build new housing near its planned South Boston facilities and a childcare center to support workers.

“It’s in early stages,” the governor said. “Ideally it can be a model for what we do in other places.”

The CNBC ranking can serve as a progress report card for governors and lawmakers while also helping states shape new business goals.

Spanberger said her administration looks forward to working with legislators to expand the state’s latest economic development and quality-of-life measures. Another aim, she added, is to get Virginia back to the number one spot on the list, where it has ranked previously.

“We’ve medaled,” she said in an analogy to Olympics sports. “We’re still not at the top of the pillars.”

HONAKER BAND

FROM PAGE 1A

ing kickoff through the final whistle.”

The band’s commitment to excellence has produced numerous awards. Among the year’s highlights were:

Lonesome Pine Band Festival at Wise Central High School

1st Place Drum Major

1st Place Color Guard

George Wythe Band Festival

1st Place Percussion

McChesney Band Festival at Big Stone Gap

1st Place in all categories for Class A-1 bands

Drum Major

Percussion

Color Guard

Music

Marching

General Effect

Class A-1 Band

Rating: Superior at the McChesney Band Festival in Big Stone Gap. A superior rating is the highest achievement for high school bands in competition. This hasn’t been achieved in 18 years for the Honaker Tigers Marching Band.

Big Blue Classic Band Festival at Richlands High School

1st Place Drum Major

1st Place Percussion **with a score of 89 (out of 100), our percussion earned the third highest score among 23 other bands, including some AAA and AAAA bands. This is the highest score on record for any Honaker High School drumlines of the past.

1st Place Marching

The band earned the prestigious George Brown Audience Choice Award

The band’s success continued during concert season when members traveled to Williamsburg for a state-wide concert band competition. There, the ensemble earned a Superior Rating, was awarded Best in Class, and received the highest adjudicated concert band score in recent memory, with a score of 87, marking another milestone for the program.

In addition to these group accomplishments, three students were recognized for their contributions to the performance. Makenzie Dingus, a 2026 graduate of Honaker High School was awarded Best Clarinet Performance for the day; Charlie Shelton, an upcoming Sophomore was awarded Best Saxophone Performance for the day, and Bentley Mitchell, an upcoming Sophomore, was awarded Best Tuba Performance for the day.

“Throughout the year, Honaker musicians proudly represented Russell County across Southwest Virginia and Eastern Tennessee through numerous public appearances,” Matney explained.

The band participated in a total of five community parades.

“Band members also spent 12 hours in the month of June to prepare for the Cleveland and Lebanon Independence Day parades,” Matney said.

Perhaps the greatest measure of the band’s success cannot be found on a score sheet.

During the 2025–2026 school year, the Honaker High School Band completed 14 community performances, touching lives throughout the region. Performances included local celebrations, school pep rallies, concerts, and special community events such as Meet the Tigers, the WJHL Friday Morning Kickoff, the Honaker Public Library Summer Reading Program, and a performance in conjunction with some students from the Lebanon High School Band at the grand re-opening of the Lebanon Walmart.

“Some of the year’s most meaningful performances came while serving families during difficult moments,” Matney stated.

Band students visited hospice patients on two separate occasions, performing music that brought comfort during families’ final days with loved ones. One performance included performing “Happy Birthday” in the front lawn of a Honaker resident receiving hospice care, while another featured the wind ensemble performing “Amazing Grace” for a student’s grandmother in her final hours. Both families later shared their sincere appreciation for the students’ kindness during those unforgettable moments.

The band also continued its tradition of honoring America’s veterans by performing at the Honaker High School Veterans Day Ceremony, a special performance during Military Appreciation Night at Fuller Field / EMATs Stadium, and the Marion Memorial Day Parade followed by a performance at VFW Post 4667 also in Marion.

Students later visited Maple Grove Nursing and Rehabilitation Center with members of the Lebanon High School Band, where music once again demonstrated its ability to bring joy and connection across generations. The Honaker Middle School and High School Band Students have been performing at Maple Grove for the past three years as it has proven to be a rewarding experience for both the Maple Grove residents, and the band students.

Members of the International Tri-M Music Honor Society completed an impressive 160 volunteer service hours throughout the year, giving back to schools, community organizations, and local events while demonstrating the leadership expected of student musicians.

Elizabeth Sisk, a 2026 graduate, has led the Honaker Tigers Marching Band on and off the field, and served as the school’s Tri-M Music Honor Society, Chapter 9647 President for the past two years. Sisk initiated and coordinated a winter clothing drive in Fall 2025 titled, “Baby It’s Cold Outside,” as a way to seek donations of winter clothing for those in need. She was able to acquire 10 bags of warm clothing and donated them to local organizations who could distribute them to those in need.

“From football fields and concert halls to nursing homes, hospice facilities, parades, schools, and community celebrations, the Honaker High School Band continues to prove that music is about far more than performance,” Matney said. “Each appearance reflects the program’s mission of developing outstanding musicians while teaching responsibility, compassion, leadership, and service.”

As the band continues to proudly represent Russell County Public Schools throughout Virginia and Eastern Tennessee, one thing remains clear: the Honaker High School Band is not simply a school organization—it is a source of community pride whose impact reaches well beyond the final note.

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.

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.

HONAKER HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1966 REUNION

The Honaker High School Class of 1966 will hold its 60th Reunion on Saturday, September 19, 2026, at the Russell County Conference Center in Lebanon. Details about the time, as well as the cost per person will be forthcoming. Also, the Class of 1968 has asked to join us. It'll be a great time for us to reconnect! Contact Jim Baldwin for more information at the following: Phone/Text 276-608-7186, Email: jimbaldwin2@outlook.com



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ACC announces kickoff times, TV designations for five Virginia Tech football games

Hokies to open the season under the lights at Lane Stadium

CHARLOTTE, NC – The ACC and ESPN announced kickoff times and television designations for five games during the 2026 football season.

The Hokies will open the 2026 campaign in prime time against the VMI Keydets on Saturday, Sept. 5. Kickoff is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. ET on the ACC Network. It will be the first meeting between the two schools since 1984. Fans wanting to experience the magic of Lane Stadium under the lights are encouraged to secure their seats quickly.

Virginia Tech will be back at Lane Stadium the following week to host Old Dominion on Saturday, Sept. 12. That matchup is slated for a noon ET kickoff and will air on The CW.

The Hokies' first road test comes on Saturday, Sept. 19 at Maryland. Kickoff is set for 7:30 p.m. ET with television coverage on either Fox or FSI.

Virginia Tech will also host the Pitt Panthers on Friday,

Oct. 2 at Lane Stadium. The Friday night ACC matchup is scheduled for a 7 p.m. ET kickoff on ESPN.

The Hokies close out their Friday night slate on Nov. 6 at SMU in Dallas, Texas. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. ET on ESPN.

Dates and times are subject to change. Additional kickoff times and television designations for the remainder of Virginia Tech's 2026 schedule will be announced at a later date.



186 UVA Wise Student-Athletes Named to SAC Commissioner's Honor Roll

ROCK HILL, SC -- 186 UVA Wise student-athletes have been named to the South Atlantic Conference Commissioner's Honor Roll, the conference announced Tuesday.

To be eligible for inclusion on the SAC Commissioner's Honor Roll, student-athletes must have competed in a sponsored championship sport and maintained a GPA of 3.30 or higher throughout the academic year.

Overall, 3,458 student-athletes were on the list, spanning each of the Conference's twelve member institutions and six associate members. This is the seventh straight year that more than 2,000 student-athletes will be recognized for their outstanding achievements in the classroom by the conference.

Below is a list of the UVA Wise student-athletes on the list.

2025-26 UVA Wise South Atlantic Conference Commissioner's Honor Roll

NAME	GRADE	SPORT
Adams, Jonah	Senior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Almer, Dorian	Sophomore	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Blanton, Matthew	Junior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Blevins, Connor	Junior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Cline, Bobby	Junior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Collie, Luke	Freshman	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Dingus, Abel	Sophomore	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Douglas, Chad	Junior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Garrett, Hunter	Sophomore	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Ghammashi, Caleb	Freshman	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Honeycutt, Peyton	Junior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Jenkins, Xavier	Freshman	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Latham, Carson	Junior	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Seith, Logan	Freshman	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Williams, David Lee	Freshman	Men's Cross Country/Track and Field
Abshire, Hadaya	Freshman	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Adams, Grace	Senior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Aldrich, Jocelyn	Freshman	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Ansley-Cureton, Destiny	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Brodt, Kylie	Sophomore	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Cannon, Shaylen	Sophomore	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Cooper, Kaylee	Sophomore	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Cox, Raegan	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Faulkner, Haley	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Fleming, Olyvia	Senior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Fracis, Sylvie	Freshman	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Hamilton, Amelia	Sophomore	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Meares, Fairyn	Freshman	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Porter, Alexis	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Poston, Nicole	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Rogers, Nia	Senior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Sisk, Jayden	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Slemp, Lydia	Senior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Strouth, Braelynn	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Sutherland, Madison	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Taylor, Jordyn	Junior	Women's Cross Country/Track and Field
Chen, Yi Hsuan	Junior	Men's Tennis
De Rueda Medina, Miguel	Senior	Men's Tennis
Fassbender, Arne	Senior	Men's Tennis
Hsieh, Hsin Nuo	Junior	Men's Tennis
Nilaweera, Chathurya	Sophomore	Men's Tennis
Pedrero, Diego	Junior	Men's Tennis
Raja, Mustafa	Freshman	Men's Tennis
Ribas, Genis	Freshman	Men's Tennis
Ruiz, Miguel	Senior	Men's Tennis
Semenov, Dmitrii	Junior	Men's Tennis
Uzun, Ege	Junior	Men's Tennis
Viana de la Torre, Mario	Freshman	Men's Tennis
Azinhaga, Constanca	Senior	Women's Tennis
Bastidas, Juliana	Freshman	Women's Tennis
Cunliffe, Lucy	Senior	Women's Tennis
Farw, Kenzy	Junior	Women's Tennis
Knox, Kinsey	Junior	Women's Tennis
Onitoiu, Andreea	Junior	Women's Tennis
Babb, Carter	Junior	Baseball
Bright, Hank	Junior	Baseball
Bucovetsky, Harrison	Freshman	Baseball
Dailey, Jack	Freshman	Baseball
Delph, Logan	Junior	Baseball
Deneef, Jake	Senior	Baseball
Foster, Dylan	Junior	Baseball
Geilmann, Easton	Freshman	Baseball
Godfrey, Gabe	Freshman	Baseball
Hamilton, Braden	Senior	Baseball
Jones, Tanner	Junior	Baseball
Jones, Tyler	Junior	Baseball
Knight, Drew	Senior	Baseball
Martin, Justus	Freshman	Baseball
McAlarnis, Daniel	Sophomore	Baseball
Patrick, Sawyer	Junior	Baseball
Reece, Elijah	Senior	Baseball
Ruehling, Jaden	Junior	Baseball
Sarvis, Houston	Senior	Baseball

SEE HONOR ROLL | 1B

Cody Smith takes reigns of Blue Devils football

By ANTHONY STEVENS
anthony@virginiamediainc.com

CASTLEWOOD, Va. – It was recently announced that Castlewood will have a new football coach. Cody Smith, who graduated in 2005, was named to direct the football program at his alma mater.

“This is a dream come true, something I’ve always wanted since I was a sophomore in high school,” Smith said. “I’ve applied for this job a couple of times; now I have more experience under my belt. I’ve bled and sweat on this field; to be the leader is something I’ve always wanted.”

Shon Chisom's two-year reign is over; he's leaving for a job as an assistant coach in Georgia. Smith was an assistant on Chisom's staff. He has also served as an assistant at Lebanon and has been the head wrestling coach for the Blue Devils the past two seasons.

The football program has struggled. Under Chisom, they went 2-18 over the past two seasons. They were winless in 2025, outscored by an average of 44 to 6. Castlewood had a 6-43 record over their last five seasons. The latest winning campaign was in the spring of 2021, when they went 5-2 in the COVID-shortened season under Chris Lark.

“We’re working to change the culture, bringing back ‘Devil Ball’ and the Blue Devil pride that was here in the 90s and early 2000s,” Smith commented. “I want to bring the community back in and focus on the youth. That’s something I feel hasn’t been done from the varsity and high school sides. That’s the key. It’s what we can do in the next 10 years, not today or tomorrow.”

Castlewood experienced a significant impact due to graduation in May, but some talent is returning.

“We should be around 25 guys, maybe a little higher after school starts. You have some that will trickle in,” Smith noted. “We have several skill players and linemen back. I have kids who haven’t played for the past two years coming back out, and some who’ve never played before. We’re working the hallways and social media hard to bring kids in.”

Numbers have always posed challenges for the Blue Devils. This won't change overnight, but they are working to alleviate the problem.

“I’m trying to talk to kids, using a lot of outlets. Having Barry Ruff as athletic director has been a big



Cody Smith

SEE CODY SMITH | 3B



NATASHA MULLINS | For the Lebanon News
Hunter Hileman moving the football last season in the loss to Phelps.

Virginia cannabis budget language triggers legal confusion, political fallout

By MARKUS SCHMIDT
Virginia Mercury

Virginia’s decision to revive legal cannabis sales through the state budget instead of standalone legislation has triggered several days of confusion over the commonwealth’s marijuana laws, with lawmakers, local prosecutors, Virginia State Police and legislative officials offering differing interpretations of when key provisions take effect.

Much of the confusion focused on two issues: whether Virginia’s long-delayed retail cannabis market had accidentally been moved up by a year and whether existing criminal penalties for marijuana possession and distribution involving people younger than 21 were still enforceable.

For much of the week, the lawmakers who wrote the budget language, along with state officials, sought to settle the matter. They said licensed retail sales will not begin until July 1, 2027, and that Virginia’s current criminal laws remain in effect until then.

Virginia State Police Superintendent Col. Jeff Katz also publicly reaffirmed the agency’s enforcement position after questions arose from an internal email circulated earlier this week.

“VSP acknowledges that there have been rumors and questions pertaining to the agency’s posture on cannabis enforcement,” Katz said in a statement on X, formerly Twitter. “I would like to make it clear that the Virginia State Police will continue to enforce existing laws, in line with the Code of Virginia.”

The back-and-forth exposed how difficult budget language can be to interpret when it rewrites criminal statutes instead of changing them through standalone legislation.

By the time officials responded Thursday, the unclear language in the spending plan had been revised.

Budget language draws different readings

Questions about the budget language first surfaced among Virginia prosecutors after the General Assembly revived adult-use cannabis retail through the state budget rather than a standalone bill.

Gov. Abigail Spanberger had vetoed legislation creating a retail market earlier this year, and lawmakers instead folded a revised proposal into the budget passed last month instead of reintroducing the measure next year.

Williamsburg-James City Commonwealth’s Attorney Nate Green, a former president of the Virginia Association of Commonwealth’s Attorneys, told The Virginian-Pilot earlier this week that prosecutors spotted the unclear language while preparing guidance for colleagues after the state’s biennial budget became law July 1.

Green said the budget repeals existing statutes governing marijuana possession and distribution involving people younger than 21 but does not explicitly apply the same delayed effective date that lawmakers attached to Virginia’s new retail cannabis market.

He told the paper that it leaves room for competing interpretations over whether the existing criminal provisions remained in effect after July 1 or were immediately repealed.

When asked for clarification Thursday, Meg Lamb, deputy director of the Virginia Division of Legislative Services — the non-partisan agency that provides legal and legislative support to lawmakers in the legislative process — declined to comment on the budget language, referring instead to the Virginia Code Commission and its executive committee.

Del. Marcus Simon, D-Fairfax, chair of the Code Commission, said the budget language has since been revised in the online Code of Virginia to reflect lawmakers’ intent, describing the change as part of the commission’s routine work to reconcile legislation, usually before it’s formally

codified.

“This is sort of a routine process, but things like this do not happen infrequently,” Simon said in a phone interview Thursday afternoon. “We have to sort out internal cross references in legislation.”

Simon said the commission’s executive committee determined it was obvious lawmakers intended the existing criminal statutes to remain in effect until the new retail marketplace is launched in 2027.

Because the new fiscal year began less than 48 hours after the General Assembly approved the budget, he said the commission had less time than usual to complete its review and sped up the process after questions surfaced publicly.

“We did accelerate things a little bit as sort of a way to quell the controversy,” Simon said, calling the issue “an unmistakable error” the commission is authorized to correct.

Green said in an email Thursday afternoon the change eliminated the legal uncertainty that had concerned prosecutors.

“I have confidence that the action taken by the Code Commission has addressed and eliminated the argument that the General Assembly intended to repeal the prohibitions against the underage possession or distribution of marijuana before the new laws become effective next July,” Green said.

State Police reaffirm enforcement

The different interpretations of the budget language quickly reached law enforcement agencies.

Virginia Scope reported Wednesday that an internal email from a Virginia State Police lieutenant advised that, as of July 1, there were “no Code of Virginia violations related to marijuana” and instructed personnel to report any enforcement action while the agency developed additional guidance.

The email also said cases involving seizures of more than five pounds of marijuana could be referred to the federal Drug Enforcement Administration before any state enforcement action was taken. According to Virginia Scope, the message quickly circulated among prosecutors through the Virginia Association of Commonwealth’s Attorneys.

The internal guidance prompted speculation that marijuana enforcement had effectively been put on hold.

Del. Wren Williams, R-Patrick, an attorney and member of the House Courts of Justice Committee, said the unclear budget language illustrates the risks of making significant changes to criminal statutes through the state’s spending plan instead of the regular legislative process.

“The issue basically is that you’ve got this discrepancy in the budget language, and the argument is that particular language repealed the marijuana related enforcement actions in the budget, starting July 1, 2026,” Williams said in a phone interview Thursday.

“But then, they didn’t take the new laws into effect until July 1 of 2027. So the idea is that there’s a one-year enforcement gap, and that’s going to be problematic, because the ambiguity and the confusion is going to impact our law enforcement and prosecution.”

Simon acknowledged that the budget process was compressed this year and said that the confusion might have been avoided had lawmakers completed their work at the end of the regular legislative session in March.

“I don’t think anybody would argue that the process we went through this year was ideal,” Simon said. “Things did have to happen and come together quickly. It would have been a smoother process if we had gotten everything done on time.”

Democratic lawmakers clarify retail cannabis laws

After questions about the budget language spread

through legal circles and onto social media this week, the Democratic lawmakers who sponsored Virginia’s cannabis retail legislation pushed back against claims that the budget had accidentally legalized marijuana distribution or possession by people younger than 21.

Del. Paul Krizek, D-Fairfax, and Sen. Lashrecse Aird, D-Henrico, said in a joint statement Thursday that interpretations suggesting the state’s criminal penalties had disappeared until next summer were wrong.

“Let me be absolutely clear: the budget language passed by the General Assembly did not legalize cannabis possession by minors, did not legalize the distribution of cannabis to minors and did not eliminate Virginia’s criminal penalties protecting young people,” Krizek said.

“Virginia law continues to prohibit underage possession and unlawful distribution of cannabis. The enactment clauses included in the budget did not change those protections.”

Aird said the disagreement stemmed from differing interpretations of a complicated piece of legislation.

“Unfortunately, misinformation spreads quickly, particularly when it involves complex legislation,” she said. “Virginians deserve an honest conversation about cannabis policy based on the facts and what the law actually says — not on inaccurate interpretation based on political opinion.”

Krizek and Aird also pointed to the Code of Virginia, which continues to include the state’s existing prohibitions of unlawful marijuana distribution and possession by people younger than 21.

They said the retail system approved by lawmakers retains age-verification requirements, product testing, child-resistant packaging and other safeguards that will take effect when sales begin next year.

Republicans criticize process

Republicans argued the dispute illustrates why major revisions to criminal law and related legislation should move through the regular legislative process instead of the budget.

Former Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares wrote on X that lawmakers “jammed their marijuana retail scheme into the state budget instead of allowing it to go through the normal legislative process.”

Williams said the episode reinforced why legislative panels closely scrutinize criminal-law language before bills advance.

“Most people hate coming through our committee because of the nitpicking that we do on the language,” he said. “But this is the exact reason that we do that nitpicking, and it’s because you don’t want to have sloppy language that turns into a wedge argument inside of a jury trial.”

Politically-fueled fallout

Simon said he believes the controversy has been amplified by politics rather than substantive disagreement over what the law ultimately requires.

“I think people are trying to make some political advantage of it, and people are trying to argue that this was a rushed process, that this was done in a sloppy way,” he said. “But I don’t think there’s a genuine argument about this.”

Simon emphasized that the Code Commission routinely reconciles legislation before it’s incorporated into law, regardless of which party controls the government, and that similar technical corrections have been made for years under both Democratic and Republican leadership.

“It’s a routine thing, this happens countless times on all kinds of legislation,” he said. “This one’s just highlighted because of the timing, because it happened sort of late in the game. But I think it’s been politicized, and I think unfairly so.”

HONOR ROLL

FROM PAGE 1B

Varitek, Dylan	Junior	Baseball	Polaski, Bailey	Freshman	Softball
Whitson, Ryan	Senior	Baseball	Shockley, Olivia	Sophomore	Softball
Willis, Ethan	Junior	Baseball	Sutton, Morgan	Junior	Softball
Wuerdeman, John	Freshman	Baseball	Bradley, Abbygale	Junior	Women's Golf
Brown, Isabella	Senior	Women's Lacrosse	Kessler, Julia	Senior	Women's Golf
Cribbs, Parker	Sophomore	Women's Lacrosse	Zelaski, Emma	Sophomore	Women's Golf
Davis, Logen	Senior	Women's Lacrosse	Forster, Ryley	Junior	Men's Golf
Donalson, Addie	Senior	Women's Lacrosse	Loftis, Evan	Senior	Men's Golf
Harris, Kaylin	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Naphapayarksiri, Fuji	Sophomore	Men's Golf
Hatfield, Macey	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Rurkmaneeewan, Teekatat	Freshman	Men's Golf
Hiller, Noley	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Sachibit, Evan	Sophomore	Men's Golf
Hilstrom, Alexis	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Baylor, Isabella	Freshman	Women's Volleyball
Huston, Chloe	Sophomore	Women's Lacrosse	Betz, August	Freshman	Women's Volleyball
McCarthy, Kaden	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Blankenship, Morgan	Junior	Women's Volleyball
Michaels, Anna Kate	Sophomore	Women's Lacrosse	Brandon, Riley	Junior	Women's Volleyball
Paterson, Kaylea	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Curtis, Abigail	Junior	Women's Volleyball
Potter, Mia	Freshman	Women's Lacrosse	Dowell, Annabelle	Freshman	Women's Volleyball
Schrafft, Abby	Sophomore	Women's Lacrosse	Hufnagel, Mailea	Sophomore	Women's Volleyball
Schultz, Caitlyn	Senior	Women's Lacrosse	Pardue, Madilyn	Junior	Women's Volleyball
Smith, Riley	Sophomore	Women's Lacrosse	Stone, Sydney	Freshman	Women's Volleyball
Sobolewski, Samantha	Junior	Women's Lacrosse	Suddeth, Piper	Senior	Women's Volleyball
Socia, Jacqueline	Freshman	Women's Lacrosse	Williams, Braelynn	Sophomore	Women's Volleyball
Brkic, Filip	Junior	Men's Basketball	Beason, Mac	Freshman	Football
Caywood, Cole	Freshman	Men's Basketball	Boyd, Isaiah	Junior	Football
Diallo, Yoro	Senior	Men's Basketball	Burke, Parker	Sophomore	Football
Giles, Caden	Freshman	Men's Basketball	Cole, Tyler	Sophomore	Football
Hardy, Cy	Freshman	Men's Basketball	Coleman, Timothy	Freshman	Football
Pruett, Kolier	Sophomore	Men's Basketball	Corkren, Jake	Senior	Football
Ramsey, Evan	Junior	Men's Basketball	DeGeare, Austin	Junior	Football
Cheek, Alissa	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	Foster, Michael	Freshman	Football
Frazier, Brooklyn	Senior	Women's Basketball	Henry, Braylon	Freshman	Football
Hawley, Taylor	Freshman	Women's Basketball	Hrbik, Sebastien	Sophomore	Football
Helvey, Emma	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	Iezzi, Brandon	Freshman	Football
Higgins, Shelby	Freshman	Women's Basketball	Jackson, Davion	Junior	Football
Hoover, Kathryn	Freshman	Women's Basketball	King, Kyle	Freshman	Football
Jordan, Abbie	Freshman	Women's Basketball	Long, Kenneth	Junior	Football
Karst, Ella	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	McCoy, Bryan	Freshman	Football
Looney, Madison	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	Plunk, Zachary	Senior	Football
Mullins, Caroline	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	Puckett, Tristan	Freshman	Football
Nienaber, Mia	Freshman	Women's Basketball	Rettig, Brayden	Freshman	Football
Preece, Emi	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	Richard, Jackson	Sophomore	Football
Proffitt, Elisa	Sophomore	Women's Basketball	Rogers, Andon	Freshman	Football
Ruehling, Jalie	Junior	Women's Basketball	Rosser, Jonathan	Sophomore	Football
West, Kyndra	Freshman	Women's Basketball	Rudd, Bryant	Freshman	Football
Allison, Bayleigh	Senior	Softball	Rudeseal, Everett	Sophomore	Football
Baker, Kaylynn	Junior	Softball	Rudeseal, William	Senior	Football
Banks, Emmaleigh	Sophomore	Softball	Sampson, Davion	Sophomore	Football
Branch, Angelina	Junior	Softball	Scammell, Ian	Senior	Football
Clay, Taylor	Sophomore	Softball	Seals, Connor	Sophomore	Football
Easterly, Sophie	Freshman	Softball	Strong, Matthew	Senior	Football
Gibson, Adyson	Junior	Softball	Tester, Tyson	Junior	Football
Holt, Kylee	Freshman	Softball	Thomas, Daniel	Sophomore	Football
Ledger, Kaylie	Freshman	Softball	Thomas, Derrick	Freshman	Football
Miller, Kennedy	Sophomore	Softball	Thompson, Elijah	Freshman	Football
Murphy, Chloe	Freshman	Softball	Underwood, Tripp	Freshman	Football
Nichols, Riley	Junior	Softball	Wood, Reagan	Freshman	Football
Noe, Taylor	Sophomore	Softball			

CODY SMITH

FROM PAGE 1B

help,” remarked Smith. “We’re trying to get athletes from all sports walking the halls. We all have to work together and share athletes.”

Discipline will be instilled in the Blue Devil football program.

“We’re setting a high standard,” Smith said. “Discipline, honor, and integrity are our three main points. Discipline is first. These kids will say yes, sir, no, sir, or I will pull them off the field. That’s the way I was raised. Respect everyone. I’m working to change that mentality. We’re going to talk with our pads, not our mouths.”

As for Xs and Os, Castlewood won’t be a spread offense

or a pass-happy team.

“We will run the football; we’ll be a running team,” stated Smith. “We’ll probably run the ball 60 percent of the time and throw 40 percent. We’re looking to move the line of scrimmage.”

Smith is the fifth coach of Castlewood in the past nine years. He hopes to bring some stability.

“I went through something similar when I was here in high school,” Smith noted. “I played for Matthew Saunders, B.I. Salyers, and David Scammell, so I understand what they’re going through. These kids know I’ll fight for them and back them 100 percent as long as they’re in the

right. I’m at my school, and I don’t plan on leaving. I want to see this program flourish and for Castlewood football to be feared.”

The Cumberland District is tough. Eastside and Rye Cove have been perennial powers, not just in the district but at the region and state levels.

“It will be a hard climb. We were 0-10 last year. We can’t go any lower than that,” declared Smith. “Our only way is up. We have to build and compete, not just for a quarter but each down.”

The first game will be August 28th when Castlewood will host Bland County at B.C. White Stadium.

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE
1012 Purcell Road, Lebanon, Virginia 24266

In execution of that certain deed of trust in the original principal amount of \$63,280.00 dated September 30, 1994 and recorded among the land records of Russell County, in Deed Book 427, Page 421 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 Courthouse located at 53 Main Street, Lebanon, VA 24226, on: August 13, 2026 at 11:00 AM The property described in said deed of trust located at the above street address, and more particularly described as:

The following described tract or parcel of land with improvements thereon, to-wit: All that certain tract or parcel of land, situate, lying and being in the Lebanon Magisterial District of Russell County, Virginia, in the Cross-roads Community, and designated as Lot No. Fourteen (14), as shown on a plat prepared by D. R. Price Engineering & Land Surveying, Inc., dated March 14, 1994, entitled "Russell Hills Subdivision", which is of record in the Russell County Circuit Court Clerk's Office in Plat Cabinet 1, at Slide 217-G, and being more particularly described as follows: Beginning at an iron pin set in the northern right of way line of State Route No. 674, and in the southwest corner of Lot No. 15, thence with the common boundary line of Lot No. 14 and Lot No. 15 S 25 30 18 W (reversed) 251.89 feet to an iron pin in the northwest corner of Lot No. 15 and in the line of Lot No. 17; thence, with the common boundary line of Lot No. 17 S 64 29 42 E (reversed) 103.07 feet to an iron pin set in the northeast corner of Lot No. 13 and in the boundary line of Lot No. 17; thence with the common boundary line of Lot No. 13 S 25 30 18 W 226.93 feet to an iron pin set in the northern boundary line of State Route N. 674; thence with the northern boundary line of State Route No. 674 N 50 29 00 W (reversed) 103.07 feet to the point of Beginning.

TERMS OF SALE: Cash or certified funds. A non-refundable deposit of ten percent (10%) of the successful bid price, payable in cash or by certified or cashier's check to the undersigned will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Terms of sale to be complied with within 14 days from date of sale or deposit will be forfeit and property will be resold at costs of defaulting purchaser. All real estate taxes to be adjusted as of date of sale. Seller shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the purchaser in connection with their purchase or settlement, including, without limitation, state and local recording fees, title insurance or research, or any other costs of purchaser's acquisition. The property and the improvements thereon will be sold as is, without representations or warranties of any kind. The sale is subject to all other liens, encumbrances, conditions, easements and restrictions, if any, superior to the aforesaid deed of trust and lawfully affecting the property. Trustee shall have no duty to obtain possession for purchaser. All risks of casualty pass to successful bidder at conclusion of bidding. Sale is subject to post-sale confirmation that the borrower did not file for protection under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code prior to the sale, as well as to post-sale confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the

LEGAL NOTICES

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. (VA202500000126) 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-7-15-4t

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE
830 Edgar Drive, Lebanon, Virginia 24266

In execution of that certain deed of trust in the original principal amount of \$57,280.00 dated October 17, 1994 and recorded among the land records of Russell County, in Deed Book 428, Page 003 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 at the Front Doors of the Russell County Courthouse located at 53 Main Street, Lebanon, VA 24226, on: August 13, 2026 @ 11:00 AM The property described in said deed of trust located at the above street address, and more particularly described as: The following described property located in the County of Russell, State of Virginia All that certain tract, piece or parcel of land containing 0.372 acres, more or less, situate in the Town of Lebanon, Lebanon Magisterial District of Russell County, Va., on the north side of but not adjacent to U. S. Highway No. 19, and being more particularly described as follows: Beginning at an iron pin in the northwestern line of the unnamed street, and being the southwest corner of the 0.459 acre lot conveyed to Clarence Lee Wilson by deed dated February 5, 1964; thence with one line of the Wilson lot N 24 44 W 200' to an iron pin; thence, reversed S 64 04 W 81.1' to an iron pin on the northeast side of a 30' unnamed street; thence with one line of the unnamed street S 24 44 E 200' to an iron pin; thence continuing with one line of the unnamed 30' street, reversed N 64 04 E 81.1' to the iron pin, the point of beginning, containing 0.372 acres, be the same, more or less, together with a right of ingress and egress to and from said lot from the northwestern line of U.S. Highway No. 19, along and over a 40' street, a distance of 690'; thence leaving the said 40' wide street, and in a southwesterly course over a 30' unnamed street to the property herein conveyed. Property Address: 830 Edgar Drive Lebanon, VA 24266 Tax ID: 104R 3681 TERMS OF SALE: Cash or certified funds. A non-refundable deposit of ten percent (10%) of the successful bid price, payable in cash or by certified or cashier's check to the undersigned will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Terms of sale to be complied with within 14 days from date of sale or deposit will be forfeit and property will be resold at costs of defaulting purchaser. All real estate taxes to be adjusted as of date of sale. Seller shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the purchaser in connection with their purchase or settlement, including, without limitation, state and local recording fees, title insurance or research, or any other costs of purchaser's acquisition. The property and the improvements thereon will be sold as is, without representations or

LEGAL NOTICES

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. (VA202500000128) 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-7-15-4t

Public Notice Application For
Bond Reduction
Under Chapter 10,

Title 45.2 Code of Virginia
Publication Number: 26HNM01
Application Number: 1011930

Russell County Reclamation, LLC is applying for bond reduction on Permit No. 1302253 located in Russell County near South Clinchfield, Virginia off State Route 615 at the intersection with State Route 600. This permit consists of 1209.11 acres which are bonded under the Virginia Coal Surface Mining Reclamation 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 Reclamation Regulations, the Applicant is requesting a Phase I bond reduction of \$183,600.00 of on Increments 9, 10, 19 and 20 consisting 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 increments 18 and 25) consisting of 97.38 acres. The Phase I bond reduction request is based on the following 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 following reclamation: (1) The Post-Mining Land Use is Industrial - Manufacturing. Any person with a valid legal interest which might be adversely affected by this proposal, or an officer or head of any federal, state or local government agency or authority, may within 30 days of (July 29, 2026) submit written comments or objections concerning this bond reduction, 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 electronically for public inspection at https://www.energy.virginia.gov/dmlrinquiry/frm-Main.aspx?ctl=4. All correspondence concerning this application should be submitted to the Mined Land Repurposing Program (Attention: Permit Section), 3405 Mountain Empire 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 repurposingpublicno-

LEGAL NOTICES

tice@energy.virginia.gov.
LNR-7-8,15,22,29;2026

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

In execution of that certain deed of trust in the original principal amount of \$58,100.00 dated August 8, 1991 and recorded among the land records of Russell County, in Deed Book 387, Page 542 and subsequent modifications or re-recordings, if any, as amended by an instrument appointing the undersigned as Substituted Trustee dated in the land records of Russell County, Virginia, default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness thereby secured and having been requested to do so by the holder of the note evidencing the said indebtedness, the undersigned Substituted Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in front of the Russell County Circuit Court Building, 53 East Main Street, Lebanon, Virginia, on: July 30, 2026 at 11:00 AM The property described in said deed of trust located at the above street address, and more particularly described as:

All that certain lot or parcel of land, with all appurtenances thereunto belonging, lying and being in the Castlewood (formerly Cleveland) Magisterial District of Russell County, Virginia, on the south side of and adjacent to State Route 615, and containing 0.40 acres, more or less, as shown on a map and plat by Frank A. Carpenter, Certified Land Surveyor, dated March 1980, a copy of which is recorded in Deed Book 296, at Page 93, Russell County, Virginia, records, reference to which plat is hereby made for a more full and complete description of the said property conveyed. Beginning at a point in the southern right of way line of State Route 615 being the northeastern corner of the subject property which point is marked by a post; thence, N 65 degrees 15' E 111.16 feet to a post, a corner; thence, in a southern direction S 15 degrees 48' E 169.90 feet to an iron pin, a corner; thence S 68 degrees 56' W 99.77 feet to an iron pin, a corner; thence, with a line of Ronald McGlothlin N. 19 degrees 30' W 162.10 feet to the point of Beginning and containing 0.40 acres, more or less.

TERMS OF SALE: Cash or certified funds. A non-refundable deposit of ten percent (10%) of the successful bid price, payable in cash or by certified or cashier's check to the undersigned will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Terms of sale to be complied with within 14 days from date of sale or deposit will be forfeit and property will be resold at costs of defaulting purchaser. All real estate taxes to be adjusted as of date of sale. Seller shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the purchaser in connection with their purchase or settlement, including, without limitation, state and local recording fees, title insurance or research, or any other costs of purchaser's acquisition. The property and the improvements thereon will be sold as is, without representations or warranties of any kind. The sale is subject to all other liens, encumbrances, conditions, easements and restrictions, if any, superior to the aforesaid deed of trust and lawfully affecting the property. Trustee shall have no duty to obtain possession for purchaser. All risks of casualty pass to successful bidder at conclusion of bidding. Sale is subject to post-sale confirmation that the borrower did not file for protection under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code prior to the sale, as well as to post-sale confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower(s) entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, the sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the Purchaser's deposit without interest. Additional terms to be announced at the sale. FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Terra Abstract Virginia, Inc. 1581 Main Street Suite 200

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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
75 ANGEL WAY AVENUE,
CLEVELAND, VA 24225
(Parcel ID: 105L SA 2802)

Default having been made in the terms of a certain Deed of Trust dated July 2, 2024, in the original principal amount of \$220,924.00 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Russell, Virginia on July 2, 2024, as Instrument Number 240001131, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will sell at public auction on August 20, 2026 at 11:00 AM, in front of the building housing the County of Russell Circuit Court, 53 East Main Street, Lebanon, VA 24266, the property designated as BEING all of those certain two lots or parcels of land, situate, lying and being in the Lebanon Magisterial District of Russell, Virginia, near Spring City, and on the south side of but not adjacent to Secondary Highway No. 662, and being known and designated as Lots Nos. Twenty (20) and Twenty-One (21), as shown on plat of a part of the H. Cleve Gray property, surveyed by J. W. Hortenstine, Certified Land Surveyor, and which said plat is of record in the Office of the Clerk of Russell County, Virginia in Plat Book 2, at page

LEGAL NOTICES

21, reference to which is hereby made and as if set out in full herein. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, and conditions, if any, of record, or other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the premises. TERMS: CASH. A deposit of \$22,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Prior to the sale, interested bidders will be required to register with and must present a bid deposit which may be held during the sale by the trustee. The bid deposit must be certified funds and/or cash, but no more than \$9,900.00 of cash will be accepted. The successful bidder's deposit will be retained at the sale and applied to the sale price. If held by the trustee, all other bid deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders. Settlement is to be made within 15 days. The successful bidder will be responsible for obtaining possession of the property, and for all costs and fees related to recording the Trustee's Deed, including the grantors tax. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Memorandum of Trustee's Sale, available for review upon request before the sale, outlining additional terms of sale and settlement. A Trustee's Deed will be prepared by Trustee's attorney at high bidder's expense. This is a communication from a debt collector. Tromberg, Miller, Morris & Partners, PLLC on behalf of Southeast Equity Trustees, LLC and/or NFPPDS-VA LLC, Substitute Trustee(s), 5310 Markel Road, Suite 201, Richmond, VA 23230, File No. 26-001415-VA, Tel: 804-525-1570. LN-6-24,7-15,22;2026



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.



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

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Cedar Realty's backyard barbeque scene tied for first place.

Lions Club announces parade winners

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@viriniamediainc.com

The Lebanon Lions Club has announced the winners of the 2026 Independence Day parade float competition. There was a tie for first place. Cedar Realty and Leba-

non United Methodist Church will share first place hon-
ors.
The Cedar Realty float featured a backyard barbeque scene. The Lebanon United Methodist Church float paid homage to the men of Russell County who fought at the Battle of Kings Mountain during the American Revolution. Second place went to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. That

entry featured members of the local VFW.
Spring City Baptist Church placed third. The church's float featured a large American flag with a banner pro-claiming "One Nation Under God."
"The Lebanon Lions Club thanks all of the people who participated in the celebration," stated parade coordinator Larry Johnston.



Lebanon United Methodist Church shared the first place prize.

Hair Supply to bring old-school rock n roll party to The Russell

By SHAWN STREET
shawn@viriniamediainc.com

The 1980s were a time unlike any other. The famous Hollywood Strip in Los Angeles seemingly took over radio and MTV. It was a time of big hair, big guitars and big rock anthems.
As the result, we all learned how to take a ride on the "Wild Side" with Motley Crue. We were "Youth Gone Wild" with Skid Row. Ratt went "Round and Round." And over 40 years later, we still want to "Jump" with Van

Halen – if our backs, knees and hips didn't hurt so bad that is.
Those "Crazy, Crazy Nights" will be back in all their hairspray and spandex glory this weekend at The Russell Theatre in Lebanon. The 1980s tribute band Hair Supply will be at The Russell on Saturday, July 18.
"We're inviting everyone to come out and relive the soundtrack of their youth," said The Russell Director Shane Farmer. "Hair Supply doesn't just play the hits—they recreate the energy, excitement, and fun of the

greatest rock anthems of the '80s and '90s."
Based in West Virginia, Hair Supply specializes in high-energy covers of classic 1980s arena rock and glam metal hits.
The members use fun, over-the-top stage personas with stage names such as Pipes Vidovich, Jett McVain, Weedles Von Frankenberry, Seymour Tayle, Philthy Trenches and Jazz McVanderhalen.
Hair Supply will take the stage at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$25.
"At The Russell Theatre, we're planning to throw an

old-school rock party where the music is loud, the memories come flooding

back, and everyone is encouraged to sing along," Farmer said. "So, tease up your hair, dust off that concert T-shirt, and come kick it old school with us!"

Fish Day!

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Hair Supply will rock The Russell Theatre this weekend.



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