



PLAZA ECONOMY DRUG

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Warner coming to Grundy to announce federal funding

By CHAD COOPER
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U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., will visit Buchanan County on Wednesday, July 1, to celebrate recent federal funding secured for local projects aimed at flood recovery, public safety and infrastructure improvements.

The event is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. at the Southern Gap Transportation and Logistics Center, located at 1102 Ovenbird Road in Grundy, and is open to the public and members of the media.

During the visit, Warner will join local community leaders to present ceremonial “big checks” recognizing federal funding awarded to two Buchanan County projects.

One grant will support the Appalachian Service Project’s efforts to replace homes damaged by flooding, helping families continue to recover from recent natural disasters. A second award will provide funding for the Town of Grundy to purchase a new fire truck, strengthening emergency response capabilities for the community.

SEE **FEDERAL FUNDING** | 6A



Contributed photo
U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., will visit Buchanan County on Wednesday, July 1, to present federal funding for the Appalachian Service Project and the Town of Grundy. Warner will also discuss ongoing efforts to support flood recovery, public safety and infrastructure improvements in Southwest Virginia.

KCVFD Independence Day celebration draws a nice turnout

By CHAD COOPER
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Early rain cleared in time Saturday night for the annual Knox Creek Volunteer Fire Department Independence Day celebration at the Hurley track, where families gathered for an evening of music, local food vendors and fireworks.

The communitywide event brought residents together to celebrate the holiday weekend and, for many, served as one of the area’s signature summer traditions. As the evening went on, the fireworks show became the highlight of the night, drawing cheers from the crowd as bursts of color lit up the sky over Hurley.

Jaklyn Lane, a Knox Creek resident attending the event for the first time, said the show exceeded expectations.

“This was the first time that I have attended the Independence Day fireworks at the Hurley Middle School, and I have to say, I wasn’t expecting such an awesome show,” Lane said. “Whoever put this beautiful show together did an awe-

SEE **INDEPENDENCE DAY** | 2A



Sheriff urges patience in Blackthorn Road investigation

By CHAD COOPER
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As public concern continues to grow over an alleged assault involving a juvenile at a gathering on Blackthorn Road, Buchanan County Sheriff Allen Boyd is asking residents to allow investigators to follow the evidence as the case continues.

The incident has generated widespread attention on social media, where hundreds of comments and posts have called for justice for the victim while questioning the status of the investigation.

In a public statement released on June 23, Boyd acknowledged both the public interest and the seriousness of the allegations.

“The Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office is aware of concerns and social media posts regarding an incident at a gathering on Blackthorn Road in the Rockhouse Mountain section of the county. We understand the seriousness of the allegations and the concern expressed by those involved and the community.”

Boyd said while social media has brought attention to the case, investigators must base their decisions on evidence rather than public opinion.

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

According to Boyd, investigators are reviewing wit-

SEE **SHERIFF URGES PATIENCE** | 6A

No PILT funds for Buchanan as nearby counties receive federal payments

By CHAD COOPER
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More than \$2.37 million in federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding is headed to communities across Virginia’s Ninth Congressional District, but Buchanan County is not among the localities receiving an allocation this year.

The U.S. Department of the Interior announced on June 23, that it will distribute \$2,379,637 through the PILT program, which provides annual payments to local governments that contain certain federally owned lands exempt from local property taxes.

Counties across Southwest Virginia receiving funding include Dickenson County, \$60,724; Lee County, \$66,633; Scott County, \$120,582; Smyth County, \$269,066; Tazewell

County, \$38,023; Wise County, \$111,641; and Wythe County, \$206,588. Buchanan County did not receive a payment.

After asking why Buchanan County was excluded, Congressman Morgan Griffith’s office explained that eligibility is tied to the amount of qualifying federal land within a county.

“It looks like to me that PILT eligibility depends on federal lands tied to the National Park Service and Forest Service in each community,” Griffith’s office said in a statement. “It appears that Buchanan County has little to no National Park Service or Forest Service acreage.”

The office later provided additional information explaining how payments are determined.

“The formula used to compute the payments is



Contributed photo
Congressman Morgan Griffith announced more than \$2.37 million in federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding will be distributed to communities across Virginia’s 9th Congressional District this year. Buchanan County was not included among the recipients because the county has little to no qualifying National Park Service or U.S. Forest Service land, according to Griffith’s office.

SEE **NO PILT FUNDS** | 2A

Two Grundy residents arrested following Pike Co. traffic stop

By CHAD COOPER
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Two Grundy residents are facing multiple felony charges after Kentucky State Police said a traffic stop in Pike County led to the discovery of suspected methamphetamine, fentanyl, drug paraphernalia and a handgun.

Tammy Lynn Smith, 43, of Bear Crossing Road, and Eric Brandon Ratliff, 39, of Density Drive, were arrested after troopers stopped a 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee on Ky. Route 194 in Phelps. According to Kentucky State Police, the vehicle was stopped because its temporary paper registration tag had flipped upside down, making it unreadable.

Trooper Zachary Burgess initiated the stop, and Trooper Brennan Eckart responded to assist, according to arrest ci-

tations.

Police said Smith, the driver, was unable to provide proof of insurance. While speaking with the occupants, troopers observed Ratliff, a passenger, attempting to conceal a folded piece of aluminum foil. Ratliff exited the vehicle at officers’ request and allegedly admitted the foil contained drugs, telling troopers he believed the substance was either fentanyl or methamphetamine and that he had found it on the ground at a gas station.

After Ratliff was detained, officers removed the remaining occupants from the vehicle. During that process, police reported seeing Smith quickly close the center console after they observed what appeared to be a glass pipe inside.

While searching Smith, troopers noticed what they described as a bulge in

SEE **RESIDENTS ARRESTED** | 2A



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Ronnie James Mullins

RONNIE JAMES MULLINS, 77 the of Breaks, VA passed away Monday, June 15, 2026 at Pikeville Medical Center. Ronnie was born in Buchanan County, VA on June 11, 1949 to the late Narmel and Helen Blankenship Mullins. Ronnie is survived by his wife Janice Sue Mullins, two daughters; Tammy (John Duty) Mullins Lane

and Veronica (Shad) Skeens all of the Breaks, VA. Ronnie Is also survived by five grandchildren; Brandy Swiney, T.J. Lane, Brianna Johnson, Kayleigh Skeens, and Chloe Skeens as well as five great grandchildren; Cameron Stacy, Tolby Lane Jr., Ariana Swiney, Jessie Lane, and Ciara Lester and one on the way.

Visitation was held Thursday June 18, 2026 at the Bailey Funeral Home Chapel. Friends called from 6 - 10 PM. Services were held at 7:00 PM with Clinton Stewart officiating. The funeral was conducted Friday, June 19, 2026 at 2:00 PM from the Bailey Funeral Home. Burial followed at the Bailey Cemetery, Breaks, VA.



Ronnie James Mullins



Courthouse News

By CHAD COOPER
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Marriage licenses

Hunter Cole Cline, 20 and Kailey Danielle Mullins, 18, both of Mohawk, West Virginia, June 13, 2026. Harold Daniel Cantrell, 47, and Heather Nicole Adkins, 50, both of Jewell Ridge, June 20, 2026.

Deeds recorded

Changes in the Buchanan County Circuit Court record-keeping system have resulted in the weekly electronic deed report being unavailable at the present time. Deed transfer information for the prior month will be provided monthly during the second week of every month.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

FROM PAGE 1A

some job. It was very organized and never a dark moment in Hurley, Va. tonight for 30 solid minutes, Hurley lit up the skies. Between a few Rebel squeals and the smoke, it made my night to see the kids smiling and enjoying what little we have left in our community. Again, congratulations on a well-organized event.” The celebration offered a festive start to the holiday weekend and a chance for neighbors across the area to gather in a family-friendly setting.

NO PILT FUNDS

FROM PAGE 1A

contained in the PILT Act and is based on population, revenue-sharing payments, and the amount of Federal land within an affected county,” Griffith’s office said. “PILT payments are made in addition to other Federal payments to states, such as those for oil and gas leasing, livestock grazing and timber harvesting.” According to the Department of the Interior, the federal government has distributed more than \$13.4 billion in PILT payments since the program began in 1977 to eligible governments in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In announcing this year’s funding Griffith said the payments help offset the loss of local tax revenue in jurisdictions containing federal lands. “Virginia’s Ninth District is home to numerous local jurisdictions that include federal lands. Because of this arrangement, activities on those lands are tax-exempt and local governments are limited in its collection of tax revenues,” Griffith said. “I am a proud supporter of the PILT program to help local communities. As someone who voted to reauthorize PILT payments, I am delighted to see more than \$2.3 million in PILT funds go to Ninth District communities.” The largest payment in Virginia’s Ninth District this year went to Craig County, which received \$417,201, followed by Bland County at \$271,902 and Smyth County at \$269,066. The PILT program was established by Congress in 1976 and provides annual payments to counties and other local governments to help offset the impact of tax-exempt federal lands. Funding is appropriated each year through the Interior and Environment Appropriations Act.

RESIDENTS ARRESTED

FROM PAGE 1A

her waistband. Smith identified the object as a small leather purse but became nervous when officers asked to inspect it, according to the citation. Police said Smith claimed the purse did not belong to her and that another occupant had placed it in the vehicle. She also allegedly told troopers she believed the bag contained illegal drugs. According to Kentucky State Police, the purse contained four bags of suspected methamphetamine, including quantities ranging from 1 to 5 grams, along with a digital scale. Although all three occupants denied ownership of the purse, troopers said Smith’s cell-phone, wallet and credit cards were found inside. During a search of Ratliff, troopers recovered two syringes. After he was removed from the patrol vehicle, officers discovered a .22-caliber revolver on the floor-board where he had been seated. Investigators also determined Ratliff is a convicted felon and prohibited from possessing a firearm. Police said Ratliff repeatedly provided false names before his identity was confirmed through a Virginia law enforcement agency. Troopers also learned he was wanted in Buchanan County on a fugitive warrant for failing to appear in court on previous drug charges. Smith was charged with first-degree trafficking in a controlled substance involving 2 grams or more of methamphetamine, second offense; possession of drug paraphernalia; failure to produce proof of insurance; and other traffic-related offenses. Ratliff was charged with first-degree possession of a controlled substance (fentanyl), possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a handgun by a convicted felon, giving false identifying information to law enforcement and being a fugitive from justice. Both were lodged in the Pike County Detention Center pending court proceedings. Court records show the third occupant of the vehicle was not charged. The charges are allegations, and Smith and Ratliff are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.



KAMRYN COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

A large group of area residents enjoys a local band on Saturday, July 5, 2025, in Downtown Grundy.

Grundy fireworks show, Big Wheel Bash set for July 3

By CHAD COOPER
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The Town of Grundy and the Grundy Volunteer Fire Department are inviting Buchanan County residents to celebrate Independence Day with an evening of family-friendly activities, live music and fireworks on Friday, July 3, in Downtown Grundy. The annual celebration will begin with the Big Wheel Bash, hosted by the Grundy Fire Department from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in front of the Grundy Community Center. The free event will allow children and families to get up close with a variety of emergency and heavy-duty vehicles. Attendees will be able to explore fire trucks, police vehicles, ambulances, tow trucks, coal trucks and other large equipment while learning how they operate and speaking with local first responders who use them every day. Organizers describe the event as a hands-on experience that allows children to see, touch and ask questions about the vehicles that play important roles throughout

the community. Following the Big Wheel Bash, the Town of Grundy will host its annual Independence Day celebration at the Grundy Town Center. Live music will begin at 7 p.m. and continue until 9 p.m. with a performance by Blue Reign. The concert is free and open to the public. The evening will conclude with the community’s annual fireworks display at dark. Town officials encourage residents to bring family and friends to enjoy the festivities and support local businesses during the holiday celebration. This year’s celebration carries added significance as communities across the country mark the upcoming 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The event also coincides with Buchanan County’s sesquicentennial celebration, marking 150 years since the county’s establishment in 1875, after it split from Tazewell County. Both events are free to attend. Organizers encourage visitors to arrive early and plan for increased traffic in the downtown area as crowds gather for the celebration.

VDH lifts water advisory for Levisa River, Slate Creek

By CHAD COOPER
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After more than 15 months, the Virginia Department of Health has lifted the recreational water advisory for portions of the Levisa River and Slate Creek in Buchanan County, clearing the way for residents to once again enjoy fishing, kayaking, swimming and other recreational activities. The Cumberland Plateau Health District announced that the advisory was lifted effective immediately on June 26, after testing confirmed that water quality has returned to acceptable levels following repairs to flood-damaged sewer infrastructure. The advisory had been in place since March 20, 2025, when severe flooding damaged sewer mains, resulting in an ongoing sewage overflow into the waterways. The advisory covered the Levisa River from approximately one-half mile east of the Anchorage Shopping Center along U.S. 460 to the Kentucky state line, as well as portions of Slate Creek from the Buchanan County Department of Social Services on Route 83 downstream to the Levisa River. According to the Virginia Department of Health, re-

pairs to the damaged sewer system have now been completed and full wastewater flow has been restored. The Buchanan County Public Service Authority collected water samples from the affected areas to measure bacteria levels. Laboratory analysis found that E. coli concentrations in the Levisa River are now at or below historic levels, allowing state health officials to remove the advisory. With the advisory lifted, the public may once again safely participate in recreational activities on the affected sections of the river and creek. Health officials noted that while the advisory has ended, residents should continue to use common sense when recreating in natural waterways, particularly following heavy rainfall, when bacteria levels can temporarily increase due to stormwater runoff. The lifting of the advisory marks another step in Buchanan County’s recovery from the devastating flooding that damaged infrastructure throughout the region in 2025. Repairs to the county’s sewer system have restored normal operations and improved water quality in one of the county’s primary waterways. The Virginia Department of Health said recreational users may resume normal activities in the Levisa River and Slate Creek effective immediately.

Local students earn dean’s list honors at ETSU

By CHAD COOPER
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Several local students have been named to the East Tennessee State University Dean’s List for the spring 2026 semester in recognition of their outstanding academic achievement. Students earning the honor include:
Lauren Clifton of Hurley
Madison Stiltner of Grundy

Madison Yates of Grundy
Madelyn Goins of Honaker
Erin Joyce of Honaker

To qualify for the Dean’s List, undergraduate students must complete at least 12 credit hours, excluding audits, incompletes, repeated courses and pass/fail classes, while earning a grade-point average of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. Students also must not receive a grade below a B- in any course during the semester.



LOOKING BACK

From our files

By **CHAD COOPER**
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55 YEARS AGO

JULY 1, 1971

Arthur Stiltner was named president-elect of the Grundy Kiwanis Club at a meeting of the club Tuesday, June 22. Stiltner will be installed as president in September and will take office Oct. 1, succeeding Gomer Evans to the post. Other officers elected were Clancy Mullins, first vice president; Cecil Preece, second vice president; Joe Weller Sr., treasurer; and Frank Spraker, secretary. Elected to the Board of Directors for a two-year term were Sam Jones, E. Russell Belcher, Miller Richardson and H. Street. Cecil Preece was elected to a one-year term as director.

Dr. Marcus Arnold Jr., of Grundy, was awarded the highest and most coveted degree of the Loyal Order of Moose in a solemn ceremony held on June 12 at Moose Heart, the famed Moose City of Children. Arnold, a member of the Haysi Moose Lodge, was awarded the Pilgrims' degree of Merit for his outstanding service and continued dedication to the humanitarian program of the fraternity.

50 YEARS AGO

JULY 1, 1976

Grundy Rotary Club installed new officers for the coming year on Monday evening at a Ladies Night Meeting at the Dixie Cafeteria. The new officers were Ford Hubble, past president and board of directors' Onsbay Yates, vice president; Larry Shrader, president; Bill Mills, secretary; Jeff Beinhorn, treasurer; and Dr. Tom Penn, board of directors. Rotarian W. Clyde Dennis was the installing officer.

Vansant's Little League baseball team won the regular season crown in the Eastern Division of the Buchanan County Little League Baseball organization. The team consists of Mark Coleman, Jamie Yates, Tim Smith, Brian Altizer, Joey Deel, Frankie Glasscock, Calvin Cline, Kevin Ramey, Greg Geahart, Phillip Cook, Tom Smith, Craig Vandyke, David Rife, Brad Mullins, Junior Coleman and David Cook, coached by Tobe Rife and Harold Cline.

35 YEARS AGO

JULY 4, 1991

Renita Nicole Fletcher was crowned Miss Buchanan County during a Rotary Club-sponsored pageant last Thursday. Fletcher was congratulated by last year's Miss Buchanan County, Meredith Blankenship. Fletcher was chosen from among a field of 22 contestants.

Charlie Rice of Harman recently retire from Harman Mining Corporation. During his 37 years of employment at HMC, Rice performed numerous jobs. Most recently he served as a heavy equipment operator. He was recently presented a engraved watch as a retirement gift and was awarded a certificate of service by Tom Deskings, vice president of operations at HMC.

20 YEARS AGO

JUNE 29, 2006

The life and work of retired Judge Pat B. Hale was remembered last Thursday during a memorial service hosted at the Appalachian School of Law by the Buchanan County Bar Association. Bar Association President Janice Davis served as moderator of the brief program and presented Hale's daughters, Commonwealth Attorney Sheila Tolliver and Teresa Seitz, with an engraved silver plate memorializing his years of service.

Monday was a bittersweet day for Buchanan County Department of Social Services Director Harold McClanahan as he bid farewell to the job and the people he considers "family," hanging up a 35-year career and heading toward retirement. Since he became director in October 2001, McClanahan says he has developed an even greater appreciation for what each department of the agency and its employees do.



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

Homemade jams and jellies were among the popular homemade goods featured at Garden Day.

Garden Day draws a large crowd despite early rain

By **CHAD COOPER**
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What began more than a decade ago as a reunion for former Garden High School classmates has blossomed into one of Buchanan County's signature community celebrations.

Hundreds of people gathered Saturday at the former Garden High School, now home to the Appalachian College of Pharmacy, for the 13th annual Garden Day celebration. Al-

though a brief afternoon rain shower forced organizers to move activities indoors, it did little to dampen the enthusiasm as visitors filled the historic campus to enjoy local food, music, crafts and fellowship.

The event has grown far beyond its roots as a school reunion. Former students still return each year to reminisce about their days as Garden Green Dragons, but they are now joined by families, tourists and residents from across Southwest Virginia who have made Garden Day an annual tradition.

Visitors spent the day browsing vendor booths featuring handcrafted items by local craftsmen and artists. Displays included woodwork, quilts, handcrafted jewelry, sculptures, handmade jams and jellies, custom knives and locally produced artwork. Bakers also offered homemade cookies, pastries and other sweets, while collectors found nostalgia in tables filled with vintage Garden Green Dragons memorabilia.

SEE **GARDEN DAY** | 6A



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

Local author Tracie Wallace stands at her booth during Garden Day in Oakwood.

GOOD OL DAYS



Attending the meeting Monday night: Don Lurtz, Elmer Stacy, Barbara Berry, Joe Gary Street, Shirley Lester, Max Willard and James Baldwin.

Virginia Mountaineer

Members of the Buchanan County Planning Commission and regional planning officials met June 28, 1976, to continue work on the county's comprehensive plan. Pictured are Don Lurtz, Elmer Stacy, Barbara Berry, Joe Gary Street, Shirley Lester, Max Willard and James Baldwin during the planning meeting. The comprehensive plan was being developed to guide Buchanan County's long-range growth and development through 1996.

Celebrating the Nation’s 250th Birthday: Part 2

250 years of independence not only demonstrates endurance and perseverance through hardship, but it elevates the foundations of our country.

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

Our region served as a flashpoint for these revolutionary flames.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Those who signed the Resolutions included William Preston.

Colonel William Preston, who owned the Smithfield Plantation



WEEKLY REPORT
FROM THE CAPITOL

located in present-day Blacksburg, was one of these revolutionaries.

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

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

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

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

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

Dunmore, unsafe on land, sailed to Gwynn’s Island. There,

the British camp was fortified from any land attack. On July 9, Lewis fired a heavy artillery barrage from Fort Cricket Hill down onto Dunmore’s camp.

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

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

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

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

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

In what is now Lee County, the establishment of Martin’s Station helped serve frontiersmen looking to explore beyond.

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

communities during the American revolution.

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

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

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

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

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

Rocklick News: Happy Father’s Day

Hello Readers

I got to watch Brother Rodney preach live this morning on YouTube. He brought the message, Respect and Appreciate. He read Matthew 7:11, Romans 8:14-17, Matthew 16:24 and Matthew 28:18-20. Our Heavenly Father deserves our respect and appreciation.

Harman Freewill Baptist Church has announced the dates for their upcoming Vacation Bible School. The theme is Glow Go Light Our World! It will be held July 26, 27 and 28th from 6:00pm until 8:30pm. Everyone is welcome!!

The mobile food truck, Feeding Southwest Virginia, an equal opportunity provider, was at the Grundy Community Center today. They served 182 households.

Happy 4th anniversary to Shawn and Paige Kidd! You two are still on your honeymoon! We love you !!

Happy birthday Trish!!

I went to the store Thursday and stopped at Double Kwik for my turkey and dressing, delicious! There was enough for lunch and supper.

Our friend, Tina Decker, had both knees replaced today, at the same time! Her husband sent a video of her walking very slowly. Pray for her and her husband!

My prayer list is long: Shannon and Christine (needs urgent prayers!), Sarah, Maranda, Shawne,



DEBBIE
FOSTER

ROCKLICK AREA NEWS
276-935-8296

Brad, Joann, Michelle, Linda, Alvin, Mac, Gary, Jerry and Vicki, Betty and Arlene, Leroy, Linda and James, Martha, Amelia, Teresa, Gary and Tammy, Jacob, Shawn, Charles, Eugene, Melinda, Stanley (broken heel) and Crystal, Steve, Scotty, Brother Kenny, Freddie and Sheila, Darrell and Vicki, Hudson, Amber, Dennis (urgent prayers needed!) and Kathy, Courtland, Amy, Anthony, Henry, Jerry, Farley and family, Pastor Gene and Joyce Miller, Lilly, Clarence and Reba, Matt, Jerry and Lona, Brenda, Justin, Glenda (needs urgent prayers!), Shirley, JJ, Mike, Jack, Pastor Ronnie and Alma Sliger, Timmy, Riley, Darrell, Debbie (pray hard for my sweet friend!), Maryann, Brian, Miss Gertrude (keep praying for answers for this sweet lady!), Patty, Bill, Charles and Von, Ann, Jack and Annette, Curtis, Susie, Carol (blood clot), Ronnie and Carol, Mike, Thelma, Kim, Judy, Malva, Gary and Linda, Randy, Tyler, Miss Jean, Jerry, D.C., June, Rachel, Jason, Lonie, Dean,

Ralph, Blakely, Ashleigh, Jim, Brenda, Barbara, Rodney, Chris and family, Lillian,

Geraldine, Colin, Snoda, Judy, Mike and Dee, Bryan and Tina (double knee replacement) PPTA, Pam, Phillip, Peggy and Family, Renee, Melissa, Charlie, Linda, Gordon, Miss Irene, Elmo, Teresa, Chris, Anthony, Miss Pauline, Henson and his family (very urgent prayers needed!), Margie, Melinda, Archie and Cathy, Martha, Colton, Ira, Jennifer, Daniel, Tracy, Glenda, Anderson, Nicole, Dave, Hope, Liz, Barbara, Danny, Brenda, Nancy, Joe and Sherry, Gail, Bobby, Christie, Kenny, Baby Weston, Baby Leon, Sandy, Buck and Harriet, Raymond, Mary, Wanda, Lois, Darrell, Sue, Jeff, Shirley, little Zach (keep praying!), Bobby, Mary Lou, Dreama, and Ray and I. God knows every need...

If any of my Rocklick neighbors have anything they want me to share please call me at 935-8296 or email me at dfoster_59@yahoo.com

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Revelations 3:20 KJV
Until next week...
Jesus is soon to come...

Adult education connection

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BCPS schedules in-service for new substitutes, July 29

By CHAD COOPER
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Buchanan County Public Schools has scheduled an in-service training session for new substitute teachers, instructional aides, cafeteria staff, custodial staff, coaching staff and volunteers.

The in-service will be held July 29, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at the Buchanan County School Board Office. Attendance is required for those who are new to these positions.

Participants must bring several items to the training, including two forms of identification, such as a driver’s license and Social Security card, along with direct deposit information and a voided check. Those who have a college degree also should bring an official transcript.

Several fees are required for the in-service and must be paid in cash the day of the training. Those fees include \$27 for a Live Scan fingerprint service, \$17.05 for TB screening, \$96 for a lab service drug screen and \$12.30 for a Central Registry background search. The

total amount due to BCPS is \$135.30, and exact cash and change are required.

The Live Scan fingerprinting must be completed at the Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office, while the TB screening can be performed at the Buchanan County Health Department.

BCPS said the next in-service training for new substitutes will be held in January 2027.

The substitute pay scale includes \$172 per day for teachers with bachelor’s or master’s degrees and a valid Collegiate Professional license who work as long-term substitutes, \$107.25 per day for bachelor’s or master’s degree substitutes working periodically, \$98.25 per day for those with associate degrees or the equivalent and \$95.78 per day for high school graduates or those with equivalent credentials. Cafeteria or custodial substitutes are paid \$12.77 per hour.

All substitute teachers will be paid on the high school pay scale until an official transcript is sent to Becky Harrison at the Buchanan County School Board Office.

For more information, contact Becky Harrison, human resources director, at 276-935-4551.

THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEER

The Virginia Mountaineer (USPS NO. 660-760) is published every Thursday by Virginia Media, LLC., 1633 W Main St, Salem, VA 24153. Entering in the Grundy Post Office as periodicals May 11, 1922, under Act of March 2, 1879. Periodicals postage paid at Grundy, VA 24614. Postmaster Send address changes to The Virginia Mountaineer.

OPINIONS

The views expressed in our opinion section represent the views of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Virginia Mountaineer or Virginia Media, LLC. Anyone wishing to respond to a column or editorial may contact us at (540) 389-9355.

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Savvy Senior: What to Do When Medical Bills Pile Up

Dear Savvy Senior,
I'm 63 and recently had a hospital stay that left me with bills I can't afford to pay. I had Affordable Care Act health insurance, but after my premiums went up in January, I had to drop my coverage. Now I'm overwhelmed by medical bills. What can I do?
--Struggling Patient

Dear Struggling,
You're definitely not alone. Medical debt is very common. About 1 in 12 Americans are dealing with it, and many had insurance when the bills started piling up. The good news is there are ways to reduce what you owe and make it more manageable. Here are some steps that can help.
Check your bills
Medical billing errors are more common than you might think, so start by taking a close look at every bill and explanation of benefits you receive. Watch for

duplicate charges, services you did not receive or prices that seem off.
If something does not look right, call your provider's billing office and ask for an itemized bill. Do not be shy about asking questions. Even small mistakes can add up.
Ask about help
Most hospitals, especially non-profit ones, are required to offer financial assistance programs, often called charity care. Depending on your income, you may qualify to have part or even all of your bill forgiven.
Call the hospital billing office and ask specifically about financial assistance. You can also visit DollarFor.org, a nonprofit that helps patients apply for charity care programs at no cost.
Negotiate costs
If you do not qualify for assistance, you still have options.

Many hospitals and doctors are willing to work with patients, especially if you reach out early.

JIM MILLER
SAVVY SENIOR
Ask if they can lower the bill or offer a discount if you can pay something upfront. You can also request a no interest payment plan to spread the cost out over time.
If this feels overwhelming, a medical billing advocate can help. The Alliance of Professional Health Advocates, at aphadvocates.org, can connect you with professionals who review bills and negotiate on your behalf.

Find programs
Since you recently lost coverage, it is also worth checking whether you qualify for Medicaid, especially if your income has dropped. You can apply through Healthcare.gov or your state Medicaid office.
Another helpful tool is BenefitsCheckUp.org, from the National Council on Aging, which can point you to programs that help lower health care and prescription costs.
Get support
You do not have to handle this on your own. There are several trusted organizations that offer free or low-cost help. The Patient Advocate Foundation (patientadvocate.org) provides case management services and can help you find financial assistance. The National Foundation for Credit Counseling (nfcc.org) offers non-profit credit counseling and

guidance on managing debt. You can also visit NeedyMeds.org to locate programs that can help lower the cost of prescriptions and other medical expenses.
The most important thing is to act sooner rather than later. Ignoring medical bills can lead to collections and added stress, but many providers are willing to work with you if you reach out.
Start by reviewing your bills, then explore assistance programs and payment options. With some persistence, you can often lower what you owe and set up a plan that fits your budget. Medical debt is common, even among people who had insurance, but it is often negotiable, and there are real resources available to help you through it.
Send your questions or comments to questions@savvysenior.org, or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

Spotlight on The CAM: Acting Camp 2026

By JODI REYNOLDS
Theatre Guild of Buchanan County

The countdown is on for one of The CAM's most anticipated summer traditions. Registration is now open for Acting Camp 2026, and we can't wait to welcome young performers for four unforgettable days of creativity, confidence-building, and theatrical fun.

From July 20–23, children and teens ages 5–17 will step into the spotlight as they explore the world of acting through games, storytelling, dance movement, teamwork, and imagination. Best of all, the camp is completely free, thanks to the generous support of The United Company Charitable Foundation and volunteers who believe every child deserves the opportunity to experience the arts.

This year's camp will feature four exciting themed days designed to spark creativity and keep campers engaged from start to finish:

Day 1: Red Carpet Day
Campers will dress to impress and discover what it feels like to be a star. From dramatic entrances to performance games, we'll kick off the week with plenty of Hollywood-style excitement.

Day 2: Safari Day
Adventure awaits as campers journey into the wild through acting challenges, creative activities, and animal-inspired fun.

Day 3: Under the Sea Day
We'll dive beneath the waves for a day filled with imagination, colorful characters, and ocean-themed adventures.

Day 4: Around the World Day
The final day takes campers on a theatrical trip around the globe, exploring different cultures, stories, and traditions through performance and play.

To ensure every camper has an age-appropriate experience, participants will be divided into three groups:

- Little Limerights (Ages 5-7)
- Actonauts (Ages 8-11)
- Drama Llamas (Ages 12-17)



Whether your child dreams of center stage or simply wants to build confidence, make new friends, and try something new, Acting Camp offers a welcoming environment where everyone can shine. Throughout the week, campers will develop communication skills, creativity, teamwork, and self-confidence while having an incredible amount of fun.
For many young people, Acting Camp is their first introduction to theatre. For others, it's a chance to return each summer and continue growing as performers. Either way, campers leave with new skills, new

friendships, and memories that last long after the final curtain call.
Space is limited and spots fill quickly each year, so families are encouraged to register early.
Join us July 20–23 and discover why Acting Camp continues to be one of The CAM's favorite summer traditions. The stage is set, the spotlight is waiting, and your next adventure begins here!
Visit our new website at www.seeyouatthecam.com to register. While there, be sure to check out our many upcoming events. See you at The CAM.

The Watchman: Survive for Now

Iran will survive, for God has a plan for Iran and a great surprise in store. Iran, the great supplier of world terrorist groups, has for many years said death to America and death to Israel. Iran has said for many years that it plans first to destroy the big Satan, America, and then the little Satan, Israel.

They have made their intentions and plans known. Satanic powers drive them. The Bible, in Ephesians 6:12, tells us that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. II Corinthians 10:4-5 calls them strongholds against the knowledge of God.

The spirit that is controlling Iran and the IRGC is the very essence of evil. You may ask why God allows this to exist. This is not God's plan; this is the work of satanic powers controlling this nation.

The same satanic powers that controlled Germany and Adolf Hitler during WWII. Hitler was the dictator of Germany in the Nazi era, from 1933 until his suicide in 1945. Evil always comes to an end. So will Iran and any other nation that comes against the knowledge of God.

We see this same Hellish spirit trying to establish a stronghold in America. God said in Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." To see evil and not call it evil is evil. Why is there not a great cry against the evils taking place in our great nation? If good men do nothing, evil will take over.

Are we going to be like the people in the German countryside on a fresh spring morning, when a train ran close behind the church building, then suddenly a new sound joined the usual sounds, a sound they would not soon forget?
Through the noise of the train, sounds came from the boxcars it pulled, moans, wails, and cries for help. There were people inside, Jews on their way to the Auschwitz death camp.

Everyone in the church pressed toward the windows. Tears sprang to the eyes of some, and others shook their heads, but no one did anything about it.

Instead, they changed the time of the service, as the train continued to pass the little country church every week on its way to Auschwitz.

Every week, the cries of men, women, and children interrupted the Sunday sermon, and every week, the congregants did nothing about it. Instead, they changed the time of their service so they would be singing as the train went past.

We sang as loud as we could to drown out the cries, recalled one of the church members years later. If, by chance, we still heard them, would we sing a little louder instead of pleading their cause?

The church chose to ignore the problem. They became desensitized to the cries of those who needed them the most.

Let's not forget the cries of the October 7, 2023, attacks on Israel by Hamas, a surrogate of Iran. Approximately 1,195 people were killed, including 36 children.

Some were baked in ovens, and some were raped. About 250 Israeli and non-Israeli Americans. What would the church do? Would we sing louder or lift our voice like a trumpet against evil? As for Iran's future, it has a destiny with God, which is why it will survive for now.

Read Ezekiel 38:1-16. God says in verse 5 that Persia, which is Iran, will be a part of an invasion of Israel. Verses 8 and 16 tell the time frame in the latter days.

God will fight for Israel against those who come against Israel at that time, and Persia, which is Iran, will be part of the invasion. In Ezekiel 39:4, they are among the bands that came against Israel in the latter times.

Ezekiel 39:7 tells us why God has allowed this. Verse 7 says, "So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not let them pollute my holy name anymore, and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the holy one in Israel."

It will be known that God delivered Israel, not any man, but God himself. Galatians 6:7 says, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Judgment is not always speedy, but be sure it will come. Ezekiel 39:8 says, "Behold, it is come, it is done, saith the Lord God. This is the day whereof I have spoken."

Don't forget to mark your calendars for Generations United Revival and youth worship night, Come Alive Virginia. Aug 6-8 at the stage at Roger and Susie Rife Park at Popular Gap.

Speakers and guests include Joel Horn and youth from his church on Thursday, August 6th, at 7:00 pm, and on Friday, August 7th, Steven and Lori Ward of the Living Room Program are coming from California to be with us, along with many others from other states. Steven and Lori will be with us all three nights. Saturday, August 8th, at 7 pm, J.T.

Harman and the youth singing group, along with Jeremy and Amy Mickles, the founders of youth worship night, will be ministering each night in song or skit. Please come out and be with us. It's going to be awesome. Bring a chair, and we will be outside.

The Watchman



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GARDEN DAY

FROM PAGE 3A

Outside, food vendors served a variety of meals and snacks throughout the day, including offerings from Zimos Food Truck Catering, Just Poppin’ Snacks, Chillers and Dave’s Dawgs. Live music from The Darlin Chorus and Thomas Taylor added to the atmosphere, while Dr. Joey Trivette and The Jazz Favorites were among the featured entertainment.

Featured authors Patty Lester Street, Schools of Buchanan County, Linda Hudson Hoagland, the Appalachian Authors Guild, Victoria Fletcher and Tracie Wallace also met with readers, signed books and shared stories about the history and culture of Buchanan County and the Appalachian region.

The Buchanan County Historical Society displayed and sold items, including renderings of Old Buchanan County and coal figures honoring the county’s mining heritage.

Garden Day was co-sponsored by the Appalachian College of Pharmacy, the Buchanan County Chamber of Commerce and the Garden Alumni Association.



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

Outstanding woodworking was among the many handcrafted items on display at Garden Day.



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

The Buchanan County Historical Society booth featured local history items and coal-inspired pieces during Garden Day.



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

Crowd members gather at tables inside the ACP gymnasium to enjoy music during Garden Day in Oakwood.



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

A long line formed at the Zimos food truck as attendees waited for lunch during Garden Day.



CHAD COOPER | Virginia Mountaineer

Patty Lester Street shares a moment with daughter Deanna Compton during Garden Day Saturday at the Appalachian College of Pharmacy in Oakwood.

FEDERAL FUNDING

FROM PAGE 1A

Warner is also expected to discuss his continued efforts in the U.S. Senate to secure federal resources for Southwest Virginia communities recovering from flood damage while investing in local public safety and critical infrastructure.

The Buchanan County stop is part of a four-day tour across Central, Southside and Southwest Virginia. During the trip, Warner will participate in economic development, health care, agriculture and manufacturing events, highlighting federal investments and meeting with local leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

Following his stop in Grundy, Warner will travel to Clintwood for a tour of Dickenson Community Hospital and discussions focused on protecting rural health care and Medicaid funding.

Check out next week’s Mountaineer for coverage of Warner’s visit.

SHERIFF URGES PATIENCE

FROM PAGE 1A

ness statements and available evidence before determining whether criminal charges are appropriate.

He also noted that allegations stemming from gatherings where alcohol or other impairing substances may have been involved require investigators to carefully evaluate witness accounts.

“When allegations involve gatherings where alcohol or other impairing substances may have been involved, investigators must carefully evaluate the reliability and consistency of all witness accounts. Intoxication does not automatically discredit a witness, but it can affect perception, memory, and recollection. Statements must be compared against physical evidence, video, and other investigative findings.”

Boyd said responsibility for any criminal acts will be determined through the investigative process rather than public speculation.

“Responsibility and accountability are determined through the investigative process and based on each individual’s actions—not assumptions or social media narratives.”

The sheriff’s statement also addressed advertisements circulating online promoting another party scheduled for June 27 on Compton Mountain Road.

“Additionally, a new advertisement promoting another party scheduled for June 27, 2026, on Compton Mountain Road has recently surfaced. Similar to previous advertisements, it contains the statement that ‘cops won’t show up.’ I want to make it clear that law enforcement will be present and will respond appropriately to any violations of the law.”

Boyd added that the property’s owners have informed the Sheriff’s Office the location is private property and warned that individuals entering or remaining there without permission could face trespassing charges.

“The property owners have advised that this is private property and have stated that individuals who enter or remain on the property without permission will be considered trespassers. Anyone found violating the law, including trespassing, may be subject to enforcement action as provided by Virginia law.”

The Sheriff’s Office is asking anyone with firsthand knowledge of the Blackthorn Road incident to contact investigators directly.

“Anyone with firsthand knowledge, video footage, photographs, or other relevant information regarding the Blackthorn Road incident is encouraged to contact the Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office directly at 276-935-2313 rather than relying solely on public discussion.”

Boyd concluded the statement by reaffirming the Sheriff’s Office’s commitment to conducting a thorough investigation.

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

As of press time, no arrests or criminal charges related to the Blackthorn Road incident had been announced by the Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office, and the investigation remains ongoing.

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WHAT BURNED

WHAT THEY CLAIMED

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STAMP OUT FRAUD

VIRGINIA STATE POLICE INSURANCE FRAUD PROGRAM

Fletcher sets new track record at Southern Gap Dirt Drags

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Competitors from across the region squared off in a full day of ATV and UTV racing June 20 during the Southern Gap Dirt Drags, where Shane Fletcher highlighted the event by setting a new 300-foot track record.

Fletcher posted a winning run of 4.433 seconds to establish the new mark while also capturing the Outlaw Open money class championship.

The event featured competition in youth, ATV and UTV divisions, with racers battling for trophies and cash prizes.

Hunter Bowman claimed two first-place finishes, winning both the Ages 9-12 division and the MX 65cc-100cc class. Clay Stalker added a victory in the MX 101cc-200cc division after finishing third in the Ages 9-12 class.

Kobe Blankenship earned victories in the ATV Modified Open and MX 201cc-250cc classes, while Kaden Watkins swept the premier motocross divisions by winning both



The Southern Gap Dirt Drags track in Grundy has become a popular destination for dirt bike, ATV and side-by-side racers from across the region. The facility hosts races throughout the season, with the next event scheduled for July 4, 2026.

SEE FLETCHER SETS RECORD | 2B

GHS grad McClanahan wins gold with Team USA in Spain

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Grundy High School graduate Ethan McClanahan added another international chapter to his basketball career earlier this month, helping lead Team USA to a gold medal at the Euro Youth Basketball Cup along Spain's northern coast.

McClanahan, representing PhD Hoops USA, competed in the U18 division of the tournament held June 19-21 in Blanes, near Barcelona. The event featured teams from 27 countries, with 12 teams in the U18 boys bracket alone.

The opportunity came together quickly. While attending orientation at Bluefield University on June 12, McClanahan received a call from PhD Hoops founder Richie Sheuler, who needed a last-minute addition to the roster.

Two days later, McClanahan and his mother Angie were on a flight to Spain.

"I want to thank God for allowing me to be in this position," McClanahan said. "To win a second gold medal was surreal... to put on a USA jersey again with a different group of guys from all over the country who had one common goal, which we achieved, was truly unforgettable."

After several days of practices and cultural tours in Barcelona, Team USA opened tournament



Ethan McClanahan, a Grundy High School graduate, is draped in the American flag following Team USA's gold medal victory at the Euro Youth Basketball Cup in Blanes, Spain.

SEE GHS GRAD | 2B

GWC's youth summer camp draws a large turnout

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Wrestlers from across the region gathered at Grundy High School June 15-18 for the annual Grundy Wrestling Club Summer Camp.

More than 150 wrestlers representing multiple states attended the camp, which has grown into one of the premier youth wrestling events in the Commonwealth. Participants came from Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Ohio this year.

The camp featured an experienced group of clinicians led by Chris Marshall, a two-time NCAA Division I All-American widely regarded as one of the nation's top youth instructors.

This year's Grundy Wrestling Camp was really great. We had kids of all ages," Grundy Wrestling Club president Tass Robertson said. "They came from several states. The youth got to have individual instruction from Chris Marshall (2x NCAA All American), who is nationally known as the best youth clinician in the country."

Marshall, who once attended the camp himself in the 1990s, was joined by a group of accomplished wrestlers with strong ties to Grundy. The staff included Ethan Smith, a former All-American at Ohio State; Wyatt Bush, a former Grundy standout and current Bloomsburg University wrestler; Carson Griffey, now competing at Reinhardt University; Bryce Looney of the University of Pikeville; and Gabe Fiser, a Grundy assistant coach and collegiate All-American.

SEE YOUTH SUMMER CAMP | 2B



Middle school and high school wrestlers pose for a group photo during the Grundy Wrestling Club Summer Camp at Grundy High School.

In the Locker Room

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

One of the things I enjoy most about the NBA is how it keeps the momentum going after the Finals. Unlike the NFL, which makes fans wait months between the Super Bowl and the draft, the NBA holds its draft just days after a champion is crowned. The excitement of the Finals carries right into draft night, making it one of the most entertaining weeks on the basketball calendar.



CHAD COOPER
IN THE LOCKER ROOM

This year's draft certainly lived up to the hype. Between franchise-changing prospects, blockbuster trades and teams reshaping their futures, the NBA once again proved why its offseason can be just as exciting as the regular season.

The biggest storyline leading up to the draft wasn't even about the incoming rookies. It was where former Milwaukee Bucks superstar Giannis Antetokounmpo would end up. For weeks, rumors linked him to several contenders, including my beloved Boston Celtics. As a Celtics fan, I was hoping to see Giannis in green.

Instead, Milwaukee struck a blockbuster deal with Miami, sending Antetokounmpo and Bobby Portis to South Beach. The Heat parted with All-Star guard Tyler Herro, Kel'el Ware, Jamie Jaquez Jr., Kaspars Jakucionis, three first-round draft picks (2026, 2031 and 2033), a future pick swap and a 2033 second-round selection.

Boston's reported package centered around All-Star Jaylen Brown, who could still find himself on the trade market this summer. With Jayson Tatum out during this year's regular season after suffering a torn ACL during last year's playoffs, Brown carried the C's and quietly put together an MVP-caliber season. Myself, I understand Boston needs to revamp their roster but with Brown still under contract for the next three years I would try and mirror the championship team a few years ago and build around the two superstars and Derrick White.

As for the draft itself, there was plenty of debate over who would become the No. 1 overall pick. Most NBA analysts believed the Washington Wizards would choose between BYU's AJ Dybantsa, Kansas standout Darryn Peterson or Duke forward Cameron Boozer.

Washington ultimately selected Dybantsa, who averaged 25.5 points per game during his lone season at BYU. I really like what the Wizards have done over the past two years. They've surrounded their young core with proven veterans by adding Trae Young and Anthony Davis while continuing to develop Alex Sarr, Bilal Coulibaly, Kyshawn George, Bub Carrington and Tre Johnson. Washington suddenly looks like a team on the rise.

Utah may have impressed me even more.

General Manager Danny Ainge continues to build one of the NBA's brightest young rosters. The Jazz selected Peterson with the second overall pick to pair with last year's No. 5 selection Ace Bailey, rising point guard Keyonte George, All-Star Lauri Markkanen and defensive anchor Walker Kessler. Add former Defensive Player of the Year Jaren Jackson Jr., Kyle Filipowski, Isaiah Collier, Cody Williams and Jusuf Nurkic, and Utah suddenly has one of the deepest collections of young talent in the Western Conference.

Memphis also came away as one of the biggest winners of the draft by selecting Cameron Boozer with the third overall pick. Pairing Boozer with Zach Edey, who enjoyed an outstanding rookie campaign, gives the Grizzlies one of the league's most intriguing young frontcourts. Cedric Coward also showed flashes of becoming a future star during his rookie season. The biggest question now is whether Memphis plans to keep Ja Morant as the face of the franchise.

Another team that quietly had an outstanding draft was Sacramento.

The Kings selected Arkansas guard Darius Acuff Jr., the SEC leader in scoring and assists, with the seventh overall pick to provide another offensive weapon in the backcourt. They followed that by taking two-time NCAA champion Alex Karaban from Connecticut late in the first round before adding Houston guard Emanuel Sharp in the second round after his impressive NCAA Tournament run.

I also loved what Chicago accomplished.

The Bulls landed North Carolina freshman Caleb Wilson, who many analysts projected as a top-four selection because of his length, versatility and playmaking ability. They followed that by drafting Texas standout Dailyn Swain before pulling off one of the steals of the draft by acquiring Purdue point guard Braden

SEE LOCKER ROOM | 2B



Ethan McClanahan (USA) drives to the basket through traffic during U18 play at the Euro Youth Basketball Cup in Blanes, Spain.

GHS GRAD

FROM PAGE 1B

play with a dominant 92-53 win over Sweden's Sollentuna White team. The Americans continued their strong run with victories over Ireland's Bantry BC (94-30) and Great Britain's Surrey Rams (75-55). In the championship game, Team USA defeated Sweden's Sollentuna Blue team 76-54 to secure the gold medal.

McClanahan contributed across the board during the tournament, finishing with 28 points, six steals, six assists, two blocks, and 11 total rebounds. Team USA's defensive effort proved decisive, particularly in key wins over Great Britain and Sweden.

"The gold medal game was the best one out of all of them," McClanahan said. "The gym was packed and louder than any high school game I've been a part of."

This marked McClanahan's second international gold medal with PhD Hoops, having previously competed in Barbados. Despite the unfamiliar roster, he said the team quickly developed strong chemistry.

"These guys were all super athletic, and we all went to Spain with one common goal and weren't leaving without it," he said.

Off the court, McClanahan said the experience of

traveling abroad — including touring Barcelona and learning about its culture — made the trip even more meaningful.

He also expressed appreciation for the support from home.

"I truly cannot thank them enough," McClanahan said, noting messages from friends, recognition on social media, and family members who woke up early to follow games despite the time difference. "It makes me proud to represent Buchanan County."

Team USA brought five teams to the Euro Youth Basketball Cup — three boys and two girls squads — and returned home with four gold medals and one silver.

For McClanahan, the whirlwind trip was both unexpected and unforgettable.

"It felt so good to be able to do it again," he said, "knowing that I was able to represent not only my country but Buchanan County as well."

McClanahan had an impressive high school career at Grundy High, surpassing 1,000 career points and earning the title of Black Diamond District Player of the Year as a senior. He will continue both his academic and basketball pursuits at Bluefield University this fall.



Ethan McClanahan (USA) applies defensive pressure during U18 competition at the Euro Youth Basketball Cup in Blanes, Spain.

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP

FROM PAGE 1B

Camp sessions were divided by age groups, allowing wrestlers from pre-kindergarten through high school to receive focused instruction. Athletes worked on fundamentals such as takedowns, escapes, positioning and match strategy, while also participating in live drills and competition.

"We had over 150 kids for the duration of camp," said Southern Gap High School head coach Travis Fiser, who previously led the Grundy program. "The camp continues to be a great opportunity for our young kids to get better. It was a very successful camp."

Beyond the mats, the event included community activities such as a free movie night and a pool party at the YMCA, bringing together athletes and their families throughout the week. The camp concluded with a pig roast and alumni gathering, which was moved indoors due to weather.

"It's been a bittersweet last year of Grundy High School," Robertson said. "The last camp for GHS was the

best way possible to close the doors on an amazing chapter in our history, before we open the doors to our future."

For many instructors, the camp also served as a chance to give back to the program that helped shape their careers.

"It was awesome, man. We had kids from eight different states show up," assistant coach Gabe Fiser said. "It was awesome to see Alumni Wyatt Bush giving back to the camp and to see him grow. The same goes for seeing Carson Griffey and Bryce Looney; seeing them give back is awesome. Ethan Smith and Chris are true professionals; you can always expect the best when they show up."

With the transition to Southern Gap High School ahead, leaders say the mission will remain the same.

"We will be back next year in a new school, but we will keep the same commitment to helping kids grow towards becoming successful adults," Robertson said. "The future is bright, and the best is yet to come."



Camp clinician, Chris Marshall, poses with youth wrestlers during the Grundy Wrestling Club Summer Camp at Grundy High School.

IN THE LOCKER ROOM

FROM PAGE 1B

Smith, the NCAA's all-time assists leader.

The draft wasn't the only thing making headlines. Shortly afterward, Charlotte traded All-Star guard LaMelo Ball and Josh Green to Minnesota for Naz Reid, an unprotected first-round pick, three future first-round pick swaps and three second-round selections. If Ball can stay healthy, pairing him with Anthony Edwards could give the Timberwolves one of the NBA's most explosive backcourts.

Minnesota also moved on from Julius Randle, sending the veteran forward to Brooklyn for an early second-round selection in this year's draft.

Now comes one of my favorite parts of the NBA calendar—the Summer League.

For many fans, Summer League is simply exhibition basketball. For basketball junkies like me, it's the first real look at the future of the league. Every year, lottery picks make their NBA debuts, second-year players try to prove they're ready for bigger roles, and undrafted players battle for roster spots. More often than not, a few unknown names emerge in July before becoming key contributors during the regular season.

This year's Summer League begins with the California Classic from July 3-6 in San Francisco and Sacramento. The Salt Lake City Summer League follows July 4, 6 and 7 before all 30 NBA teams converge in Las Vegas from July 9-19 for the league's premier offseason showcase.

If this rookie class is anywhere near as talented as many scouts believe, basketball fans are about to get their first glimpse of the NBA's next generation of stars.

As for me, I'll be watching every chance I get.

FLETCHER SETS RECORD

FROM PAGE 1B

MX 251cc & Up and MX Open.

Nick Lester enjoyed one of the strongest days among ATV competitors, winning the ATV 501cc & Up and ATV Open divisions while placing third in the ATV 401cc-500cc class.

In UTV competition, Dean Ward claimed victories in both the UTV Turbo Open Trophy and UTV Turbo Stock money classes. Danny Boyd topped the UTV Turbo Open Modified money division and also won the UTV 801cc & Up Non-Turbo money class.

Noah Hubbard captured the ET Bracket Open money division and added a second-place finish in MX Open and a victory in the ET Bracket Open Trophy class.

All racers must have a number plate on their machine, and dirt bike front rims must be covered. Racers must sign a waiver before practicing, and racers under 18 must have a parent or guardian sign a waiver before practicing or racing.

The 2026 Southern Gap Dirt Drags schedule continues with races set for July 4, July 18, Aug. 1, Aug. 15, Aug. 29, Sept. 12, Sept. 26, Oct. 10 and Oct. 24. The Oct. 24 race is scheduled as the season finale. Organizers noted that the schedule is subject to change due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.

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ASL to host Duck Duck Bingo fundraiser July 11

By **CHAD COOPER**
coopkam@gmail.com

The Appalachian School of Law's Canary Club will host its inaugural Duck, Duck, Bingo fundraiser on Saturday, July 11, offering an afternoon of games, prizes and community fellowship while raising money to support law students.

The event will be held in the Appellate Courtroom on the Appalachian School of Law campus. Doors will open at 1 p.m., with bingo games beginning at 2 p.m.

Participants can expect 20 rounds of bingo with a variety of prizes, including local getaway packages, memorabilia, event tickets, gift cards and other giveaways. Food and drinks will also be available during the event.

Tickets are \$25 and include six bingo cards, one jack-

pot card and a dabber. Members of the ASL Canary Club may purchase tickets for \$20. Presale tickets are available.

Additional bingo cards and supplies may also be purchased at the door. Extra six-card sheets will be available for \$20, jackpot cards for \$5 and dabbers for \$2.

According to event organizers, Duck Duck Bingo is designed to provide a fun, family-friendly atmosphere while supporting the Appalachian School of Law and its students.

All proceeds from the fundraiser will benefit ASL students through the Canary Club, an organization dedicated to supporting the future of Appalachian School of Law.

Community members interested in attending are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance or at the door on the day of the event.



The Appalachian School of Law campus in Grundy will host the inaugural Duck Duck Bingo fundraiser on July 11 in the Appellate Courtroom.

ACP alum named Kentucky Pharmacist of the Year

VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEER

OAKWOOD, VA (JUNE 25, 2026) – Appalachian College of Pharmacy Alumna Jordan Smith has been named the Kentucky Pharmacist of the Year by the Kentucky Pharmacists Association (KPhA).

Smith, who resides in Newport, Ky., with her husband, Jim McDaniel, graduated from ACP in 2016. She received the award Saturday, June 13 during the President's Dinner and Annual Awards Ceremony held during the 2026 KPhA annual meeting in Louisville, Ky.

The Pharmacist of the Year Award recognizes a pharmacist for outstanding professional activities undertaken during the current or previous calendar year, which resulted in a demonstrable benefit to the profession of pharmacy.

"We are very proud of Jordan and we congratulate her on this statewide recognition of her contributions to the profession of pharmacy," said ACP Provost and Dean Susan Mayhew. "The recognition is well-deserved and indicative of her commitment to her career through not only her work with a national pharmacy chain, but through her own consulting business and now, a foundation focused on further improving community health."

"Receiving the award means a lot to me," Smith said. "While the award is incredibly humbling, what means the most to me is knowing that the work happening in communities matters and hopefully, it inspires others to get involved."

Smith, who is from Versailles, Ky., and who graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in biology, found the Appalachian College of Pharmacy as she was looking into going to pharmacy school somewhere close to home. She was working as a pharmacy technician for Walgreens and decided it was time to up her game and become a full-fledged pharmacist. She ran across ACP in her research of pharmacy schools and said she liked the three-year accelerated program, which was important to her in her goal setting.

In looking back, she said, her study at ACP was the start of what led her to where she is now.

"It was such a blessing," she said.

Her time at ACP was the beginning of what she said was a real understanding of rural healthcare and the needs of rural communities.

"It really gave me a better understanding of health literacy, access to healthcare issues and all that's embedded in the Appalachian region," she said. "My experiences at ACP are where my health equity passion was inspired."

She noted health literacy, vaccine confidence and access to care in underserved communities have been a significant part of her professional journey as a pharmacist and remain as something that continues to drive her today.

Smith continues to work for Walgreens, where she is currently a district pharmacy supervisor, overseeing 27 Walgreens locations in Northern Kentucky, Lexington, Ky, and the upper half of Eastern Kentucky.

"I grew up in the company," Smith said, noting she has a 20-year history of working with them since her days pre-pharmacy school as a pharm tech to where she is now.

And while Walgreens is her full-time job, she still finds time to volunteer at local Remote Area Medical (RAM) events when they are held. RAM was something she learned about while at ACP and volunteering as a student at the Grundy event held annually. It's something she said she never forgot and has sought to continue and grow her involvement in through the years.

Smith has also founded her own company, MedicinLogic (medicinlogic.com), a personalized healthcare consulting business which seeks to help everyday people



make sense of their medication. The business offers various services, including pharmacist-led consultations, pharmacogenomic testing, medication reviews and wellness guidance.

The business model includes a membership option called The Logic Lounge which provides ongoing support and guidance from a pharmacist who knows the patient's history and goals. Membership includes benefits like monthly quick med checks, ask-a-pharmacist access and member pricing on testing and labs.

"MedicinLogic aims to provide patients with a deeper understanding of their medications and health, helping them feel more confident in their care," she said.

Smith was recognized as a Next Generation Leader during an awards ceremony last year in the Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati community.

She also recently formed a non-profit foundation, the Jordan Smith Community Care Foundation, which she created to expand access to healthcare education, to support community initiatives and empower future healthcare leaders. The foundation is dedicated to improving community health through education, access, empowerment and innovation. Key initiatives include community leadership programs, community innovation grants, healthcare service development programs and scholarships.

This fall, the foundation will host a summit, the Next Dose Summit, October 14-15, 2026 in Covington, Ky. The summit will serve to build connections, inspire ideas, support future community care initiatives and to create conversations around what's possible beyond the traditional path, Smith said. Funds raised in part will be used so the foundation can work to host a RAM event in her community. Registration for the summit is open now at www.jscommunitycare.org.

"A common thread throughout my career has really been meeting people where they are, improving access and helping people better understand and navigate healthcare," Smith said. "I think that's what connects my work at Walgreens, MedicinLogic, the foundation and community outreach efforts."

Smith is a current member of the Kentucky Pharmacists Association and the American Pharmacists Association. She has been a member of the KPhA board and was installed as secretary of the association at the June 13 meeting as her term as a board member came to an end.



VDOT release traffic alerts for Buchanan and nearby counties

By **CHAD COOPER**
coopkam@gmail.com

The Virginia Department of Transportation released traffic alerts for Buchanan and the surrounding counties.

To keep motorists informed, VDOT provides weekly updates on highway construction and maintenance projects throughout Southwest Virginia.

The following are current VDOT projects in Buchanan, Dickenson and Tazewell Counties that may cause traffic delays from June 29 through July 5, 2026:

Buchanan County

Route 460/121 Poplar Creek Phase B: Be alert to a new traffic pattern on Route 460 at Grundy due to the construction of Route 460/121 Poplar Creek Phase B. The switch is approximately 1.1 miles west of the Route 460/Route 83 (Riverside Drive/Edge-water Drive) intersection in Grundy. Motorists should be alert to flaggers in the area. (Completion: Late 2027)

Dickenson County

Route 83 roundabout at Route 637: Construction continues for a roundabout and a new park-and-ride lot at the intersection of Route 83 and Route 637 in Dickenson County. Be alert to lane shifts and closures. Pay attention to flaggers, signs, and message boards in the area. (Completion: October 2026)

Russell County

Route 19/460 and Route 610 intersection improvements: An intersection improvement project is underway on Route 19/460, from the intersection of Route 19 with Route 460 at Adair Drive, to the intersection of Route 19/460 with Route 610 in the Claypool Hill area of Tazewell County. Anticipate shoulder and lane closures in the area. (Completion: December 2026)

Tazewell County

Route 19/460 and Route 610 intersection improvements: An intersection improvement project is underway on Route 19/460, from the intersection of Route 19 with Route 460 at Adair Drive, to the intersection of Route 19/460 with Route 610 in the Claypool Hill area of Tazewell County. Anticipate shoulder and lane closures in the area. (Completion: December 2026)

Several interstate projects are also going on during this time on Interstate 81 and Interstate 77, including the following:

Interstate 81 – Exit 50 and mile marker 52 bridge rehabilitations (Smyth County): A project that includes bridge rehabilitation work on six bridges north and southbound at exit 50 and mile marker 52 in Smyth County is coming soon. Be alert to construction crews mobilizing in the area. Night-time lane closures will be in place for the duration of the project. Also, Be alert to flaggers and/or lane closures on Kiawana Road and Nick's Creek Road. Pay attention to signs and message boards. (Completion: November 2027)

Interstate 81 – Exit 45 deceleration lane extension (Smyth County): A project to extend the deceleration lane at exit 45 northbound in the Marion area of Smyth County is underway. The project includes replacing the northbound I-81 bridge over Matson Drive. Be alert to periodic nighttime lane closures and shifted traffic over Matson Drive. (Completion: December 2027)

Interstate 81 – Bridge rehabilitation at mile marker 68 (Wythe County): Due to a bridge rehabilitation project on I-81 north and southbound over Reed Creek at mile marker 68 in Wythe County, be alert to periodic extended lane closures and a width restriction of 14 feet. Pay attention to signs and message boards. (Completion: September 2027)

Interstate 81 – Roadway improvements (Wythe County): A project is underway to construct an auxiliary lane southbound between exits 73 and 72. Be alert to periodic lane closures in this area. (Completion: Fall 2026)

Interstate 81/77 interchange at Wytheville: Due to improvements on I-81 and I-77 at the interchange at Wytheville, pay close attention to signs and message boards. Be alert to possible lane restrictions and traffic shifts. (Completion: Summer 2027)

Interstates 81 and 77 maintenance activities — be alert to the following lane closures:

Interstate 81

Daytime ditching cleaning northbound at the Exit 10 off-ramp in Washington County. The off-ramp will be partially closed.

Nighttime bridge deck repairs northbound at mile marker 9 in Washington County.

Nighttime bridge deck repairs northbound Monday – Thursday between Exit 67 and mile marker 69 in Wythe County.

Nighttime bridge deck repairs southbound between exits 5 and 3 in Bristol.

A super load will be traveling northbound from Bristol to the West Virginia state line, June 29 – July 4.

Interstate 77

Nighttime tunnel maintenance southbound at the East River Mountain Tunnel in Bland County. All wide loads over 12 feet must stop before entering the tunnel.

Nighttime bridge deck repairs northbound near mile markers 67 and 47 and southbound near mile marker 63 in Bland County.

Nighttime pothole patching north and southbound between Exit 41 and mile marker 67 in Bland and Wythe counties.

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DAY AT THE PARK

WORD SEARCH

S R E L A X A T I O N U K W Y E D B D N

P G P F P G X L H K Y M G P F G O S W M

G S M A R C E E A L P E F I L D L I W S

N A P F R I E S P B I M S C C S D B X P

I T H E S K Y S L L Y K N O U S Y I C O

K F T U S C X E E I O S H M G E G K A R

I K R S E H C N E B F M P M A N O I L T S

H E S F W W G T M S R X W U Y L M N P S

L T E I X N A I Y Y D L A N E L Y G S U

B S U D K U R F D A W X B I G E X U L X

A C O O I E D I X W T Y Y T N W N S X P

F D B X Y S E N S H R S M Y N L H L L S

K Y A I S Y N R F T E R X B I I P A F C

R S U A M C E H G A E P D G M T Y T M X

I W I F D W I A H P S R H C S G D I D H

T I R E O L M N L E A T N O R O P L D P

R N U L K N O N C O Y L D O G U C S R P

A G F W F H A O W I Y W U E Y T W I N C

I S N T D I T O E I P N B D F S G U A B

L W M M N A T U R E D C E S S A R G E L

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

WORDS

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

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12 13

14 15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28

29 30 31 32

33 34 35

36 37 38 39 40 41

42 43 44 45

46 47 48

49 50 51 52 53 54 55

56 57 58 59

60 61 62 63

CLUES ACROSS

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

CLUES DOWN

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

PUZZLE SOLUTION

C H I T S P H I N X

R E D E C O R A T I O N

O R E G A N O O B S E S S

B A S S O S A C E U R

E R A K A K A

I D E A S S L U B

M T D R O P S R I

M I A E D P

I D S E E L S A B

M A C S S E R A L

A L A E M I D

M E L L O W T I A R A

A D A G I O N I A G A R A

R E S T A T E M E N T S

E P O C H S D A S H

SUDOKU

8 6

9 7 1 3

8 3

5 8

2 1 5

7 2 3

4 7 2

2 3 6 4

5

Level: Intermediate

WORD SCRAMBLE

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

SSRPOT

Answer: Sports

GUESS WHO ?

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

Answer: Margot Robbie

CRYPTO FUN

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

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

B. 16 24 17 15 11
Clue: Walking path

C. 16 24 7 7 23
Clue: Park fixtures

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

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

SUDOKU SOLUTION

5 1 4 8 3 9 7 2 6

9 6 2 7 1 5 3 8 4

8 3 7 4 2 6 5 9 1

3 9 5 1 4 8 6 7 2

4 2 8 3 6 7 9 1 5

6 7 1 9 5 2 8 4 3

1 4 9 5 7 3 2 6 8

2 8 3 6 9 1 4 5 7

7 5 6 2 8 4 1 3 9

WORD SEARCH SOLUTION

S R E L A X A T I O N U K W Y E D B D N

P G P F P G X L H K Y M G P F G O S W M

G S M A R C E E A L P E F I L D L I W S

N A P F R I E S P B I M S C C S D B X P

I T H E S K Y S L L Y K N O U S Y I C O

K F T U S C X E E I O S H M G E G K A R

I K R S E H C N E B F M P M A N O I L T S

H E S F W W G T M S R X W U Y L M N P S

L T E I X N A I Y Y D L A N E L Y G S U

B S U D K U R F D A W X B I G E X U L X

A C O O I E D I X W T Y Y T N W N S X P

F D B X Y S E N S H R S M Y N L H L L S

K Y A I S Y N R F T E R X B I I P A F C

R S U A M C E H G A E P D G M T Y T M X

I W I F D W I A H P S R H C S G D I D H

T I R E O L M N L E A T N O R O P L D P

R N U L K N O N C O Y L D O G U C S R P

A G F W F H A O W I Y W U E Y T W I N C

I S N T D I T O E I P N B D F S G U A B

L W M M N A T U R E D C E S S A R G E L

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

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

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

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

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

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

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

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

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

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

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

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

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

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

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

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

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

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

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

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

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

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

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

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

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 28

Mike White, Filmmaker (56)

JUNE 29

Melora Hardin, Actress (59)

JUNE 30

Michael Phelps, Athlete (41)

JULY 1

Daniela Avanzini, Singer (22)

JULY 2

Lindsay Lohan, Actress (40)

JULY 3

Patrick Wilson, Actor (53)

JULY 4

Post Malone, Rapper (31)

Prater Fire & Rescue to host July 2 fireworks at Southern Gap

By **CHAD COOPER**
coopkam@gmail.com

Prater Fire & Rescue is inviting residents from across Buchanan County to kick off the Independence Day holiday with its annual fireworks celebration on July 2 at Southern Gap.

The free, family-friendly event will be held at Prater Fire & Rescue Station 1, located at 1028 Killdeer Lane in Grundy. Food vendors will be set up at 4 p.m., and the event will feature a fireworks display scheduled to begin after dark. Organizers are asking spectators to be in place by 9:30 p.m.

Several food vendors will be on site throughout the evening, including Pig-N-Out, Chiller-Z Ice Cream, Donuts & More and Haysi Supply Kettle Corn.

Prater Fire & Rescue encourages families to arrive early, bring lawn chairs or blankets and enjoy an evening of food, fellowship and patriotic celebration before the fireworks begin.

Organizers said the event is free and open to the public and encourage attendees to follow directions from firefighters and event staff when entering and leaving the venue to help ensure a safe experience for everyone.

Fireworks will be launched in the area surrounding Prater Fire & Rescue Station 1 at Southern Gap.



Photo courtesy of PVFD

Prater Fire and Rescue is holding an Independence Day celebration at the Prater Fire & Rescue Station 1, located at 1028 Killdeer Lane in the Southern Gap section of Buchanan County.

CLASSIFIEDS

LEGAL NOTICES

**TRUSTEE’S SALE
1016 SAINT CLAIR ST
OAKWOOD, VA 24631**
In execution of the Deed of Trust in the original principal amount of \$232,323.00, dated May 13, 2025, and recorded as Instrument Number 250000500 in Buchanan County land records, the appointed Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction on the front steps of the Buchanan County Circuit Courthouse, Grundy, VA 24614 on August 05, 2026 at 4:55 PM, the property described in said deed of trust, located at the above address and more particularly described as follows: THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF REAL ESTATE, WITH ALL IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: TRACT NO. 1. MAP NO.: 2HH055036; ACCOUNT NUMBER: 15298 SITUATE ON LEVISA RIVER, AT THE MOUTH OF

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RICHMOND BRANCH, AND LOCATED APPROXIMATELY ONE (1) MILE EAST OF KEEN MOUNTAIN, ON OLD U.S. ROUTE 460, IN THE GARDEN DISTRICT OF BUCHANAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA, REFERRED TO AS CONTAINING 0.40 ACRE, MORE OR LESS, AND BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: “BEGINNING AT THE CENTER OF A DRAIN PIPE HEAD IN A WALL AT THE LOWER EDGE OF THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THE STATE HIGHWAY; THENCE WITH SAID RIGHT OF WAY LINE S. 36° 00’ E. 222 FEET TO A STAKE IN SAID RIGHT OF WAY LINE; THENCE LEAVING SAID HIGHWAY RIGHT OF WAY S. 75° 00’ W. 197 FEET TO A LARGE ROCK; THENCE N. 19° 00’ W. 178.00 FEET TO A STAKE; THENCE N. 70° 00’ E. 132.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING” PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1016 ST CLAIR ST OAKWOOD, VIRGINIA 24631

LEGAL NOTICES

BEING THE SAME PROPERTY ACQUIRED BY JOHN SCOTT BLILEY AND AMBER LAVONNE BLILEY FROM JOE FRANKLIN ST. CLAIR AND CATHERINE BUCHANAN ST. CLAIR BY DEED OF EVEN DATE AND RECORDED HERewith IN THE CIRCUIT COURT CLERK’S OFFICE OF BUCHANAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA. The property and improvements will be sold in “as is” physical condition without warranty of any kind. TERMS OF SALE: A non-refundable bidder’s deposit of 10% of the sale price or 10% of the original principal amount of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, by cashier’s or certified check required at time of sale except for the party secured by the Deed of Trust. Risk of loss on purchaser from date and time of auction. Balance of the purchase price must be paid by cashier’s check within 15 days from sale date. Except for Virginia Grantor tax, all settlement costs and expenses are purchaser’s responsibility. Taxes are pro-rated to the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining possession of the property. If purchaser defaults, deposit may be forfeited and property resold at the risk and cost of the

LEGAL NOTICES

defaulting purchaser who shall be liable for any deficiency in the purchase price and all costs, expenses and attorney’s fees of both sales. If Trustee does not convey title for any reason, purchaser’s sole remedy is return of deposit without interest. This sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan secured by the Deed of Trust including but not limited to determining whether prior to sale a bankruptcy was filed, a forbearance, repayment or other agreement was entered into or the loan was reinstated or paid off; in any such event this sale shall be null and void and purchaser’s sole remedy shall be return of deposit without interest. This communication is from a debt collector and is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE: RAS Trustee Services, LLC, 101 North Lynnhaven Road, Suite 104, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23452

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: RAS Trustee Services, LLC, Substitute Trustee c/o Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC

LEGAL NOTICES

11350 McCormick Road, Executive Plaza I, Suite 302 Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031 (844) 442-2150 (470) 321-7112

VAM-07-02,09;2026

**ORDER OF PUBLICATION
COMMONWEALTH
OF VIRGINIA
Va. Code §§1-211.1;
8.01-316,317, 20-104
Case No. CL26-550
Buchanan County Cir-**

LEGAL NOTICES

**cuit Court 1012 Walnut
Street/PO Box 929
Grundy, VA 24614.
Nichole Elaine Palmer
v.
Richard Arthur Palmer**
The object of this suit is to: Obtain a divorce on the grounds of one-year separation. It is ORDERED that Richard Arthur Palmer appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before August 4, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. VM-6-25, 7-2,9,16;2026

**Notice or Advertisement
BCPS New Policy: Anyone attending the new in-service will be responsible for paying all in-service fees the day of the in-service.**

Buchanan County Public Schools has scheduled in-service training for **new substitute** teachers, instructional aides, cafeteria staff, custodial staff, coaching staff, and volunteers. Please attend the in-service scheduled for July 29, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. at the Buchanan County School Board Office. **This in-service is required for those who are new substitutes teachers, instructional aides, cafeteria, custodial, coaching staff and volunteers.**

The following items will be needed for this in-service:

- \$27.00 Live Scan Fingerprint -You must go to the Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office to get this scan and bring the scan with you on the in-service day. The fee for this service is payable to Buchanan County Public Schools.
- TB Screening -This service can be performed at the Buchanan County Health Department. The fee for this service is \$17.05 payable to the Buchanan-County Health Department.
- \$96.00 Lab Service (drug screen) payable to Buchanan County Public Schools.
- \$12.30 Central Registry Background Search payable to Buchanan County Schools.
- Two (2) proofs of identification (Driver’s License and Social Security Card).
- Direct Deposit information (voided check).
- All fees will need to be paid the day of the in-service with cash. The total amount of fees payable to BCPS is \$135.30 (exact cash and change).
- If you have a college degree please bring an official transcript the day of the in-service.
- Please note: The next in-service training for new substitutes will be in January 2027.

The pay scale for a substitute personnel is as follows:

- Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree Teacher possessing a valid Collegiate Professional license and working as a long-term substitute for an extended period of time- \$172.00 per day.
- Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree Substitute Teacher not working as a long- term substitute but working periodically for different teachers- \$107.25 per day.
- Associate Degree -two (2) years of college -64 semester hours -96 quarter hours -\$98.25 perday.
- High School Graduate or Equivalent -\$95.78 per day.
- Cafeteria of Custodial Substitute -\$12.77 per hour.

Please be advised that all substitute teachers will be paid on the high school pay scale until an official transcript is sent to Becky Harrison at the Buchanan County School Board Office. If you have any questions, please contact Becky Harrison, Human Resource Director at 276-935-4551.

Buchanan County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Buchanan County Public School System is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Notice of Public Hearing Town of Grundy, VA

Tuesday, July 14, 2026, 6:50 pm
1185 Plaza Drive, Grundy, VA 24614

RE: Converting existing Loans from the Town of Grundy to the Town of Grundy IDA into a Grant.

Authorized By:
Dennis A. Ramey
Town Manager

Notice or Advertisement Returning Substitute In-service 2026-2027

Buchanan County Public Schools has scheduled an in-service training for returning substitute teachers, instructional aides, cafeteria staff, custodial staff, nurses, coaching staff, and volunteers. If you would like to remain on the 2026-2027 substitute, coach, and volunteer list, you must attend the in-service scheduled for July 28, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. at Riverview Elementary/Middle School. This in-service is required for those who are returning substitutes, coaches, and volunteers.

The pay scale for substitute personnel is as follows:

- Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree Teacher possessing a valid Collegiate Professional license and working as a long-term substitute for an extended period of time- \$172.00 per day.
- Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree Substitute Teacher not working as a long- term substitute but working periodically for different teachers- \$107.25 per day.
- Associate Degree -two (2) years of college -64 semester hours -96 quarter hours \$98.25 per day.
- High School Graduate or Equivalent -\$95.78 per day.
- Cafeteria of Custodial Substitute -\$12.77 per hour.

****Please be advised that all substitute teachers will be paid on the high school pay scale until an official transcript is sent to Becky Harrison at the Buchanan County School Board Office. If you have any questions, please contact Becky Harrison, Human Resource Director, at 276935-4551.**

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Notice or Advertisement

The Buchanan County School Board is accepting applications for the following position(s):

- **Finance Director**
Minimum qualifications: Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration and a minimum of 5 years of financial administrative experience in a public agency.

Deadline: July 9, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. Interested person(s) may print a Professional Application from our website at www.bcpskl2.com or call to have an application sent to you. Return the completed application to Becky Harrison.

Buchanan County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The Buchanan County Public School System is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Wellmore Hollow Road bridge over Levisa Fork Buchanan County Bridge Replacement

Find out about the proposed bridge replacement project for Wellmore Hollow Road over Levisa Fork in Buchanan County. The new single-span bridge will be 22 feet wide and located approximately 90 feet upstream from the existing one. Traffic would continue to use the existing bridge during construction.

Review the project information and National Environmental Policy Act documentation in the form of a categorical exclusion at VDOT’s Bristol District Office located at 2111 Bonham Road in Bristol, Virginia, 276-669-6151, 800-FOR-ROAD, or TTY/TDD 711. You can also review the project information at VDOT’s Lebanon Residency Office located at 1059 Fincastle Road, Lebanon, VA 24266, 276-889-7600. Please call ahead to ensure the availability of personnel to answer your questions.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Ron Flanary, VDOT, 2111 Bonham Road, Bristol, Virginia 24201, on or before **July 15, 2026**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing will be posted.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT’s Civil Rights Division at 276-669-6151 or TDD/TTY 711.

State Project: 9999-013-012, B601, C501, P101, R201
Federal Project: BROS-013-1(092) UPC: 121738
From: Route 460 Int. To: 0.2 miles to Dead End

ACP’s Bowman named to Roanoke Higher Ed. Authority Board

By VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEER
OAKWOOD, VA (JUNE 24, 2026) – Appalachian College of Pharmacy Assistant Dean for Strategic Partnerships and Engagement Dr. Andy Bowman has been appointed to serve on the Roanoke Higher Education Authority (RHEA) Board of Trustees.

Bowman, who is also an associate professor of pharmacy at ACP and who serves as Roanoke Higher Education Center site coordinator for ACP, was appointed to the position by ACP President Mickey McGlothlin after Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger signed legislation adding an Appalachian College of Pharmacy representative to the RHEA. Bowman’s appointment takes effect July 1, 2026.

ACP classes are currently offered at the Roanoke center, in addition to being offered at the college’s Oakwood campus and as a distance learning option at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. Classes began at the Roanoke Center in the fall of 2025. Current ACP students completing their first year of pharmacy school at the Oakwood campus are given the opportunity to apply for the distance learning option in Roanoke for the second year of their education. There, curriculum content is delivered synchronously by electronic means from Oakwood with in-person faculty supervision.

“We congratulate Dr. Bowman as he becomes ACP’s first representative on the Roanoke Higher Education Authority Board,” said ACP Provost and Dean Dr. Susan Mayhew. “Dr. Bowman has been our site coordinator at the Roanoke center since we first partnered with them as a location for one of ACP’s off-campus sites. The Roanoke Center was chosen because of its successful record of serving higher education, as well as for its proximity to numerous undergraduate colleges and universities. Dr. Bowman brings a wealth of experience which will offer perspectives in administration, in the classroom and through his involvement in various state and national pharmacy boards, perspectives which will



Photo courtesy of ACP
Dr. Andy Bowman, assistant dean for strategic partnerships and engagement at Appalachian College of Pharmacy, has been appointed to the Roanoke Higher Education Authority Board of Trustees. Bowman, who also serves as ACP’s Roanoke Higher Education Center site coordinator, will begin his term July 1, 2026, becoming the college’s first representative on the board.

enhance his service on the RHEA board.”

Bowman joined ACP in April 2024. A graduate of the Campbell University School of Pharmacy in 1993 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree, he also completed his undergraduate study at Campbell in the pre-pharmacy curriculum.

For 24 years prior to coming to ACP, Bowman taught at Campbell University College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences and served as the director of continuing professional education and as a clinical assistant professor of pharmacy practice. He also previously served as director of continuing education and alumni relations at Campbell University and served on a number of committees including the PharmD Admissions Committee, Faculty & Staff Development Committee, Scholarship Committee, the Athletics Committee, Student Life Committee; and was an

advisor to Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity, Phi Lambda Sigma and the Pre-Pharmacy Club.

Bowman is a former president of the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy, having served two terms as president during his eight years of service on the board. He was first elected to the board in 2016 and was re-elected to a second term in 2021.

He is also a previous member of the board of directors of the North Carolina Professional Health Program; a member of the American Society for Pharmacy Law; a North Carolina Board of Pharmacy representative on the NC DHHS Medicaid Managed Care Quality Committee and the NC DHHS Opioid Prescription Drug Abuse Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the American Pharmacists Association and the Virginia Pharmacists Association (VPhA) and the American Academy of Colleges of Pharmacy.

His pharmacy work experience includes numerous community pharmacies. He was the first pharmacy manager at the Campbell University Health Center Pharmacy. He is a registered pharmacist in Virginia and in North Carolina and is a certified trainer for APhA Pharmacy-Based Immunizations for Pharmacy Technicians; and an APhA Immunization Training Program facilitator.

He has been published on numerous occasions, including in an “Ask Andy” column of the Senior News, Blue Ridge Edition, in Roanoke; and in the magazine, “U.S. Pharmacist.” Bowman also provided a weekly radio call-in show, “Ask Andy” on 960AM WFIR in Roanoke in the 1990s.

“As a native of Roanoke, Virginia, I am honored to represent the Appalachian College of Pharmacy on the Roanoke Higher Education Authority Board of Trustees,” Bowman said. “I look forward to collaborating with my fellow board members to strengthen educational opportunities and enhance pathways to success for students throughout the greater Roanoke Valley.”

ADOPT A PET



Some pups are sent from above, but you came stamped with a little extra love.

This blessed babe is a twelve-week-old, female, Labrador Retriever mix. Her shiny coat is colored black with four white paws and a perfect white cross marking on her chest. She has a soulful expression and a cute black nose. Her personality is friendly, sweet and affectionate. She shares her kennel at the shelter with two adorable sisters, colored gold.

These cut above canines will be available for adoption at the Buchanan County Animal Shelter until Monday, July 6, 2026. The animal shelter is located at 1191 Dogpound Road. For more information about these animals, please call the shelter at (276) 935-4067.

Also available for adoption is this two-year-old, male, Pomeranian mix. His fluffy coat is colored all black. He has bright eyes and a fun countenance. His temperament is happy and playful. The animal shelter is located at 1191 Dogpound Road. For more information about these animals, please call the shelter at (276) 935-4067.



R.O.P.E.S. program receives \$814,060 grant

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Residents in recovery from substance use disorder in Buchanan County will continue to have access to employment and support services through the R.O.P.E.S. program after the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority awarded \$814,060 in funding to support the initiative for Program Year 2027.

The funding, announced through a cooperative agreement with the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board, will allow the Reengagement Opportunities and Pathways to Employment Success (R.O.P.E.S.) program to continue serving individuals in Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell and Wise counties, as well as the City of Norton.

The R.O.P.E.S. program is designed to help individuals in substance-use recovery overcome barriers that often prevent them from obtaining and maintaining employment. The program assists participants with challenges such as transportation, driver’s license restoration, healthcare access, education and job training.

Program officials said the goal is to help participants maintain sobriety while securing employment that provides a self-sustaining wage.

Since launching in 2019, the program has served nearly 300 individuals across Southwest Virginia who are working to rebuild their lives through recovery and employment.

“Dickenson County was pleased to serve as the fiscal agent for this project because we recognize the valuable work the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board is doing to strengthen the recovery ecosystem in Dickenson County and throughout the region,” said Dana Cronkhite, economic development director for

Dickenson County.

Existing funding sources that previously supported the program are nearing completion, making the new VOAA funding critical to maintaining services throughout the region.

“We are incredibly grateful to the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority and our local government partners for helping ensure this program remains available to Southwest Virginians who are in recovery and transitioning into the workforce,” said Rachel Patton, executive director of the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board. “The R.O.P.E.S. program has helped countless individuals regain their independence, maintain their recovery, and achieve meaningful employment. It remains in high demand throughout the region. In addition, the program has helped create a pipeline of skilled workers for regional businesses. We appreciate the opportunity to play a role in strengthening the region’s recovery ecosystem.”

The Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board administers workforce programs funded through the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Those programs provide employment, training and workforce development services to adults, dislocated workers and youth throughout the region.

Officials said the services are designed to help individuals enter high-demand occupations and earn livable wages while remaining in their local communities.

The Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board serves eight jurisdictions across far Southwest Virginia, including Buchanan County.

Residents interested in learning more about the R.O.P.E.S. program or other workforce development services may visit the workforce board’s website for additional information.



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