



PLAZA ECONOMY DRUG



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Energy project eyed for former Twin Valley High site

Residents seek answers amid concerns over possible data center

By **CHAD COOPER**
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Buchanan County officials are considering an unidentified energy project for the former Twin Valley High School property as neighbors seek answers about what could be developed there.

Officials have not identified the company interested in the property or confirmed what it wants to build.

Some residents are concerned the proposal could involve a data center. Still, county representatives said they won't make a decision until the company explains its plans publicly and residents have a chance to ask questions.

The proposal surfaced during the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors' Sept. 14 meeting at the Buchanan County Government Center on Slate Creek.

A public hearing on a possible option for the former school property had been advertised but was postponed

because the county has not received the deed from the Buchanan County School Board.

"In regard to an option on the Twin Valley High School property, we don't have the deed yet, so we just kind of got ahead of our horses, and then we were premature on this," board attorney Lee Moise said.

Moise said his understanding is that the proposal in-

SEE **ENERGY PROJECT** | 2A



Del. Will Morefield speaks during the Sept. 18 ceremony celebrating the completion of six new cellular towers along U.S. Route 460. Morefield discussed the project's benefits for public safety, quality of life and economic development in Southwest Virginia.

Transformative wireless project delivers cell coverage along 20-mile stretch of Hwy. 460

Virginia Mountaineer

Regional Effort, Years in the Making, Results in the Construction of Six New Cellular Towers in Buchanan and Tazewell Counties

GRUNDY, Va. – The successful completion of a years-long effort to deploy wireless coverage along an unserved 20-mile section of U.S. Hwy. 460 in Buchanan and Tazewell counties was celebrated on Friday by local, state and federal officials who lauded the project's delivery of 21st-century telecommunications infrastructure between the towns of Richlands and Grundy.

The \$4.4 million project, made possible by a combination of public and private investment, resulted in the construction of six new towers along U.S. Hwy. 460, complementing the prior development of existing towers at Oakwood

and Vansant, creating an eight-tower wireless ring intended to deliver uninterrupted cellular connectivity along the highway corridor.

The regional effort, launched by the Virginia Coalfield Coalition and managed by the Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission, was conceptualized with the goal of eliminating one of the region's lingering economic development marketing hurdles – a 20-mile cellular "dead zone" that existed between the two counties. The project was engineered according to private carrier specifications to deliver cellular coverage to the highway corridor and its vehicular traffic.

Following Friday's planned event to celebrate the project's completion at the offices of Noah Horn Well Drilling near Grundy, federal

SEE **WIRELESS PROJECT** | 5A

Supervisors hire Ward as new economic development director

By **CHAD COOPER**
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After two decades serving local students and families through Buchanan County Public Schools, Jeremy Ward will now focus on creating jobs and economic opportunities in the county he has always called home.

The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors hired Ward as the county's new economic development director following a closed session during its Sept. 14 meeting at the Buchanan County Government Center on Slate Creek.

"Being named the new director of economic development is an unbelievable opportunity to help serve Buchanan County in a different role than I have as an employee of Buchanan County Public Schools," Ward said. "I am truly humbled and honored to take on this role and excited to get started."

North Grundy District Supervisor Lee Dotson made the motion to hire Ward, with Knox District Supervisor Trey Adkins providing the second.

Under the approved motion, Ward will report directly to the county administrator Craig Horn and receive an annual salary of \$96,000.

The motion passed 5-1, with South Grundy District Supervisor Roger Rife casting the opposing vote.

Prater District Supervisor David Rose, Garden District Supervisor and board Vice Chairman Jeff Cooper, Dotson, Adkins and Rock Lick District Supervisor Craig Stiltnier voted in favor of Ward's hiring.

Vice Chairman Cooper presided over the meeting in the absence of board Chairman and Hurricane District



Jeremy Ward has been hired as Buchanan County's new economic development director. Ward, a lifelong county resident, spent 20 years serving Buchanan County Public Schools as a teacher, coach and transportation supervisor.

SEE **SUPERVISORS HIRE WARD** | 2A



U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith poses with Buchanan General Hospital administrators and board members on the hospital's fifth floor during his Sept. 18 visit. From left are Chief Financial Officer Tim Matney, board Chairman Danny Elswick, board Vice President Jim Wayne Childress, CEO Robert D. Ruchti, Griffith, Pharmacy Director Scott Justus and board member Willis Smith.

Griffith visits BGH, hears concerns facing rural health care

By **CHAD COOPER**
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U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith visited Buchanan General Hospital on Sept. 18 to tour the facility and hear directly from hospital leaders about its operations and the

challenges rural health care providers face.

Griffith toured several areas of the hospital before meeting with members of its administrative staff and governing board. The meeting allowed hospital officials to discuss the services Buchanan General provides, voice concerns affecting its operations, and identify areas where Griffith and his congressional office may be able to assist.

Buchanan General Hospital CEO Robert D. Ruchti said the visit provided hospital leaders with a valuable opportunity to discuss the difficulties rural hospitals

FEMA awards \$310,799 for Buchanan County storm repairs

By **CHAD COOPER**
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Buchanan County will receive \$310,799 in federal disaster relief funding to help repair local infrastructure damaged by the severe winter storms of 2025.

The grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency will support repairs involving embankments, culverts, gabion stone and riprap, according to an announcement from U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Va.

The Commonwealth of Virginia will receive the funding first and distribute it to the appropriate local recipients.

"Following the winter storms of 2025, I assessed the severe damages to our region and facilitated federal approval of Governor Youngkin's Major Disaster Declaration," Griffith said.

"This FEMA grant for more than \$310,000 helps Buchanan County make repairs to local infrastructure."

The funding is tied to the major disaster declaration

SEE **FEMA AWARDS** | 2A



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Haysi mayor arrested following grand jury indictment

By **CHAD COOPER**
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HAYSI, Va. — Virginia State Police arrested Haysi Mayor Larry D. Yates on Thursday following his indictment on eight charges by a Dickenson County grand jury.

Yates, 72, of Haysi, was taken into custody Sept. 17 by special agents with the Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation's Wytheville Field Office.

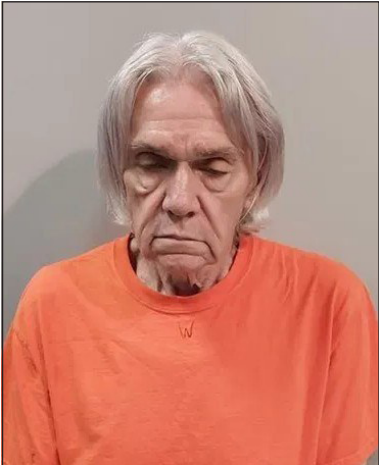
The grand jury returned indictments Monday charging Yates with

six felony offenses, including embezzlement, use of public assets for personal benefit, two counts of credit card theft, credit card fraud and receiving goods obtained through credit card fraud.

Yates was also indicted on two misdemeanor charges of credit card fraud and receiving goods obtained through credit card fraud.

The charges contained in an indictment are allegations, and Yates is presumed innocent unless proven guilty in court.

Yates was being held at the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority



Larry D. Yates, mayor of Haysi, was arrested Thursday by Virginia State Police after a Dickenson County grand jury indicted him on eight charges.

facility in Abingdon following his arrest.

He is scheduled to appear Tuesday, Sept. 22, in Dickenson County Circuit Court.



Courthouse News

- Deeds recorded**
- Aug. 20 – Norine Kennedy Harman to Debra Lynn Harman, Coal & Mineral Rights underlying Lot 12B, Loggy Bottom Garden District, deed of gift.
- Aug. 20 – Amanda Renae Blackburn to Alexandria Nicole Vanover, 0.56 acre, Left Fork Home Creek, Levisa River, Rock Lick District, \$120,000.00.
- Aug. 20 – Trustee Services LLC, ETAL to Movement Mortgage LLC, 0.40 acre, Richmond Branch, Levisa River, Garden District, \$245,700.00.
- Aug. 21 – Jerry Keith Viers, ETAL, Amanda Renae Blackburn, five tracts, Laurel Branch, Laurel Creek, Russell Fork River, Hurricane District, \$244,000.00.
- Aug. 21 – Henry A. Dobson, II, to Robert Sorvillo, two tracts, Watkins Branch, Grundy District, \$55,000.00.
- Aug. 21 – Inter Levisa Realty LTD, ETAL to John Walter Clifton, III, tracts Dismal River, Levisa River, deed of gift.
- Aug. 24 – John Pearry Boyd, ETAL to John Matthew Hackworth, ETAL, tract Contrary Creek, Levisa River, deed of gift.
- Aug. 24 – Brandon Shane Justus, ETAL, to Brandon Shane Justus, three acres Brushy Fork, Lesters Fork, Knox Creek, \$1, deed of gift.
- Aug. 24 – Joseph Melvin Mounts to James Matthew Mounts, tract Old House Branch, Paw Paw Fork, Knox Creek, Knox District, \$43,000.00.
- Aug. 25 – Michael C. Phelps to Kenneth Brian Kulig, 7.026 acres, Lick Log Fork, Home Creek, Levisa River, \$10,200.00.
- Aug. 26 – Chastity J. Branham to Angela Allen, two tracts, Knox Creek, \$30,000.00.
- Aug. 26 – Kimberly Dawn Meade to Appalachian Property Buyers, tract Levisa River, Garden District, \$17,000.00.
- Aug. 26 – Ruth Keene, ETAL to Jermiah Michael-Rober Osborne, two tracts Lynn Camp Branch, Dismal River, Garden District, deed of gift.
- Aug. 27 – Hershel Jay Street to Brandon McKinley Estep, ETAL, 4.25 acres, Youngs Branch, Garden Creek, Levisa River, Hurricane District, \$166,800.00.
- Aug. 28 – James D. Yates to Paula Yates Trent, three tracts, Little Prater Creek, Levisa River, South Grundy District, deed of gift.
- Aug. 31 – GV Reo 2026-1 LLC, to Jamie Dustin Stacy, ETAL, tract Dismal River, \$81,500.00.

- Marriages licenses**
- Auty Stallard Howard, 82, of Honaker and Aleisha Beth Deel, 41, of Rowe, September 2, 2026.
- Joseph Devin Mullins, 22, and Hannah Paige Belcher, 22, both of Oakwood, September 5, 2026.
- Earl Mason Looney, 36, and Alexis Paige Boyd, 26, both of Raven, September 12, 2026.
- Edward Hugh Tibbs, 61, and Kimberly Dawn Harmon, 57, both of Grundy, September 12, 2026.
- Brandon Shane Justus, 40, and Samantha Lynn Justus, 42, both of Grundy, September 3, 2026.

FEMA AWARDS

approved in April 2025 after winter storms and flooding caused widespread damage across Southwest Virginia. Buchanan County was among the localities included in the original request for federal individual and public assistance. Grundy and Hurley experienced significant flooding, and officials reported road closures, washed-out roads and other infrastructure damage throughout the region.

Griffith worked with U.S. Sens. Tim Kaine and Mark Warner to support Virginia's request for the federal declaration.

The latest award follows other federal disaster assistance announced for the region. In June, Griffith announced \$1.6 million for recovery work in Buchanan and Dickenson counties. In August, he announced an additional \$389,310 for debris-removal operations in Buchanan County.

GRIFFITH VISITS

face.

"I think the visit went really well," Ruchti said. "Congressman Griffith was very receptive to the concerns and issues the hospital is facing and offered to try to help us in any way he could. We were able to show him some of the facility and talk to him about what Buchanan General provides to the community and the importance of rural health care."

Rural hospitals play an important role in communities such as Buchanan County, where residents may otherwise be required to travel considerable distances for medical care. Those facilities also face financial pressures, staffing needs and other challenges that can make maintaining services difficult.

Griffith listened to the concerns raised by hospital officials and discussed ways he could work with them to support Buchanan General and its mission of providing health care to residents of Buchanan County and the surrounding region.

Those participating in the visit included Ruchti; Chief Financial Officer Tim Matney; board Chairman Danny Elswick; board Vice President Jim Wayne Childress; board member Willis Smith; public relations director Sam Bartley and Pharmacy Director Scott Justus.

Public invited to help shape Buchanan's outdoor recreation future

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

Buchanan County residents will have an opportunity to help shape the county's outdoor recreation future at a community open house Wednesday, Sept. 23.

The Gateways to Adventure Outdoor Recreation Master Plan open house will be held from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Southern Gap Outdoor Adventures, located at 1124 Chipping Sparrow Road in Grundy.

The informal event will give residents a chance to share their thoughts about the county's existing outdoor recreation opportunities and offer ideas for future projects, improvements and activities.

Members of the public may meet the planning team,

explore interactive maps and identify the outdoor places and activities they already enjoy. Participants also may discuss what they would like to see developed or improved across Buchanan County.

Organizers hope community feedback will help guide future outdoor recreation development and identify opportunities that could benefit residents, visitors and the local economy.

A community campfire will be part of the open house, and complimentary s'mores will be available.

Gateways to Adventure is a partnership involving Buchanan County, Friends of Southwest Virginia, the Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission and SE Group.

The open house is free, and everyone is welcome.

SUPERVISORS HIRE WARD

FROM PAGE 1A

Supervisor Tim Hess.

Ward previously served as acting transportation supervisor for Buchanan County Public Schools. He resigned from that position during the Buchanan County School Board's Sept. 15 meeting, one day after the supervisors approved his hiring.

A lifelong Buchanan County resident, Ward graduated from Grundy High School in 2001 and Virginia Military Institute in 2005. He has served Buchanan County Public Schools for 20 years as a teacher, coach and transportation supervisor.

Ward is married and has three children.

As he begins the new position, Ward said he wants to learn more about the economic development projects and potential opportunities already being pursued in the county.

"Looking forward, I want to learn of current projects and possible developments already being worked on," Ward said.

Supporting the businesses already operating in Buchanan County will also be among his priorities. Ward said he wants to hear directly from business owners about their needs and identify ways the county can help them remain successful and grow.

"I want to meet with existing businesses and learn about them and how I can help them retain and expand," Ward said. "As well, I want to reach out to regional partners and form relationships that can be mutually beneficial."

Ward said his ultimate vision is to bring more investment and quality employment opportunities to Buchanan County.

"Attracting new businesses that

can bring in well-paying jobs and increase growth in our economy is the ultimate vision," Ward said.

Ward succeeds interim Industrial Development Authority Director and County Administrator Craig Horn, who had been serving in the role following the resignation of former IDA Director Matt Fields.

No public discussion about Ward's appointment took place before the vote. Board members also did not announce when he would begin his new position.

As economic development director, Ward will help guide Buchanan County's efforts to attract investment, assist existing businesses and pursue opportunities to create jobs and strengthen the local economy.

The board adjourned shortly after approving the appointment.

ENERGY PROJECT

FROM PAGE 1A

volves an industrial energy project that would develop and use Buchanan County's natural gas resources in the Pilgrim Knob area.

"The understanding that I have is that, and I think the county has, is that this is going to be an energy project," Moise said.

He emphasized that the proposal remains in its early stages.

"That's all I know at this time," Moise said. "And as I say, we've kind of got ahead of ourselves."

County Administrator Craig Horn said the county plans to return to its normal economic development process. Under that procedure, the county would generally transfer property intended for industrial development to the Buchanan County Industrial Development Authority, which works with businesses and manages development projects for the county.

A public hearing on transferring the property to the IDA could be held at the supervisors' November meeting, although no date has been finalized.

Horn said people interested in the property have indicated they want to invest in Buchanan County, create jobs and develop a project that converts energy into another product.

"We have got a commitment from the people who would like to work with Buchanan County to invest some money, create some jobs and take energy and turn it into something else," Horn said.

He said the proposal could involve a substantial investment.

"But they are talking about some large investments," Horn said. "And the majority of the investments are going to be related to energy."

Horn said discussions have involved three potential energy sources.

"They're either talking about coal, gas or electricity," Horn said.

He did not say which source would be used, what it would be converted into or what the company might produce.

Some residents directly asked whether a data center could be built at the former school. County officials did not confirm or deny that possibility, saying they were not prepared to discuss the company's

specific plans.

Jim Brown, who lives beside the former school, was among those who approached the board seeking answers.

"Well, I'm James Brown," he told supervisors. "I live right next door to the school."

Brown said he and other neighbors are concerned because they would be directly affected by anything developed there.

"We live next door," Brown said. "That's the reason we're so concerned."

Residents also asked what type of business could locate on the property, whether the former school building could be demolished and what effect the project might have on the surrounding community.

Horn said those questions should be answered before the county takes action.

"My understanding is that that's going to be a process, and the county will be involved in it, and you will at least know what they're proposing before it happens," Horn said.

Company representatives are expected to visit Buchanan County in October. Horn said they will first meet with county representatives and then attend a public meeting where residents can question them directly.

"They're going to come down during October, and they're going to meet with some of us," Horn said. "And then they're going to actually have another meeting for anybody in the public that wants to ask them questions before we vote in November to go forward or not to go forward."

Horn said the company has agreed to provide more information before asking the county to decide.

"They are committed to coming in and being as frank as they can be about what they want to do before they do it," Horn said. "But that's not today. That's probably going to be next month sometime."

The county will announce the meeting date and give residents time to attend.

"We'll let everybody know what it is and give them time to be there and ask all the questions they want to ask," Horn said.



LOOKING BACK

From our files

By **CHAD COOPER**
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55 YEARS AGO

SEPTEMBER 30, 1971

Miss Linda Childers of Abingdon is now working with the expanding nutrition program being conducted by the Buchanan County Extension Office. A graduate of Radford College, Miss Childers worked with the 4-H Community Resource Development pilot project in Abingdon this summer.

The Grundy Golden Wave, led by a four-touch-down performance from junior halfback Tim Elswick, picked up their first victory of the season, a stunning 31-14 win over old foe Richlands Friday night. Garden, also on the road, turned back Twin Springs convincingly, 26-0, and Hurley dropped their fourth game, 36-to-6, at Rye Cove.

45 YEARS AGO

SEPTEMBER 24, 1981

The Garden Green Dragons JV defeated Pocahontas Indians 38-0 Monday night at Pocahontas. The Dragons, 3-1 so far this season, used a balanced attack to totally dominate the Indians. The offense, led by running backs Greg Street, Bill Mills and John Sisk, put up 250-plus yards rushing and 100-plus yards passing, with quarterback Hub McClanahan tossing to Jeff Looney and Mike Lester.

Grundy's Wavettes, led by Tracy Fletcher, scored an impressive 33 points to defeat Whitewood's Lady Indians Monday night, 89-29, in girls' basketball. The Wavettes, leading the Southwest District, dominated the Black Diamond District team throughout. Fletcher also brought down 18 rebounds.

40 YEARS AGO

SEPTEMBER 25, 1986

The Whitewood High School FHA attended camp this summer at the FFA-FHA Camp. Four students, including Michelle Cooper, Stephanie Ratliff, Eva Vencill and Kim Viers, attended the camp. Also attending was the group's sponsor, Verona Dudley.

Three Buchanan County Girl Scout officials were among the area scout leaders attending the Quality Sales Program, Training and Luncheon on September 10 at the Sheraton in Bluefield. Representatives from Buchanan County who attended were Jean Vandyke, Jenifer Slone and Becky Raines.

25 YEARS AGO

SEPTEMBER 27, 2001

Former Buchanan County Board of Supervisors member Roger Rife was selected by Virginia Gov. Jim Gilmore to receive the Patrick Henry Award, recognizing his service to Buchanan County and the commonwealth. According to a letter from Gilmore, the award honors Rife's commitment to and passion for sound government. Rife represented the South Grundy District and served as chairman of the Board of Supervisors.

Brit Coleman scored every point and accounted for most of the yardage as Twin Valley knocked off Pocahontas 22-8 in non-district football action Friday night at Pocahontas. Coleman carried the ball 23 times for 196 yards and scored all three Panthers touchdowns. The senior tailback also ran for a pair of two-point conversions for Twin Valley (3-1), which spoiled Pocahontas' homecoming and handed the Indians their third consecutive loss.



Tim Bane, Southern Gap High School's certified athletic trainer, discusses the sports medicine services available to student-athletes during the Buchanan County School Board's Sept. 15 meeting at the Buchanan County Government Building.

SGHS expands medical care available to student-athletes

By **CHAD COOPER**
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Southern Gap High School student-athletes now have access to a certified athletic trainer, a team physician and nearby orthopedic services through an expanded effort to provide comprehensive sports medicine care.

Buchanan County Career, Technology and Higher Learning Center principal Tim Bane outlined the services during the Buchanan County School Board's Sept. 15 meeting at the School Board offices in the Buchanan County Government Building. The board also approved a memorandum of understanding allowing Bane to provide athletic training services under the supervision of Dr. Dylan Campbell.

Bane has worked as an athletic trainer for more than 40 years. He is nationally certified and licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine to practice athletic training in the state.

Under Virginia law, Bane must work under the supervision of a physician. Campbell agreed to serve as Southern Gap's team physician and signed the memorandum of understanding allowing Bane to practice under his supervision.

Bane said Campbell has attended the Eagles' home games and worked alongside him on the sidelines.

"It's a big relief on me," Bane said. "It's a great service for our athletes."

Bane said he previously provided care when needed by coming out of the stands during athletic contests. With Southern Gap opening this year, however, he decided it was time to take a more active role.

"I felt like, with opening up a new school, it was time for me to come down out of the stands, so to speak, and try to provide the best medical care for athletes possible," Bane said. "That's what we've attempted to do."

Southern Gap's athletic training facility contains more than \$70,000 worth of equipment, Bane said.

"We have a facility that is equipped — it's probably second to

none in Southwest Virginia," he said. "It's beautiful, it's well-equipped, it's fully functional now, and I'm very proud of it. The athletes are very proud of it."

Bane said Southern Gap is among only a small number of school systems in Southwest Virginia with a certified athletic trainer available at the school.

Student-athletes have already made extensive use of the facility. More than 100 treatments had been provided by the time of the meeting.

Bane emphasized that the services are available to athletes in every sport, not just football. Students participating in volleyball, cheerleading, cross-country, wrestling and basketball have already received treatment or assistance.

The athletic training staff has handled several significant injuries and medical conditions since the beginning of the school year, including two leg fractures, a dislocated elbow, two concussions and two torn anterior cruciate ligaments, commonly known as ACLs. Bane and Campbell have also helped a student receive care for a serious medical condition.

Southern Gap has also partnered with an orthopedic clinic associated with Pikeville Medical Center. The relationship allows Bane to contact the clinic directly and help injured students receive appointments closer to home.

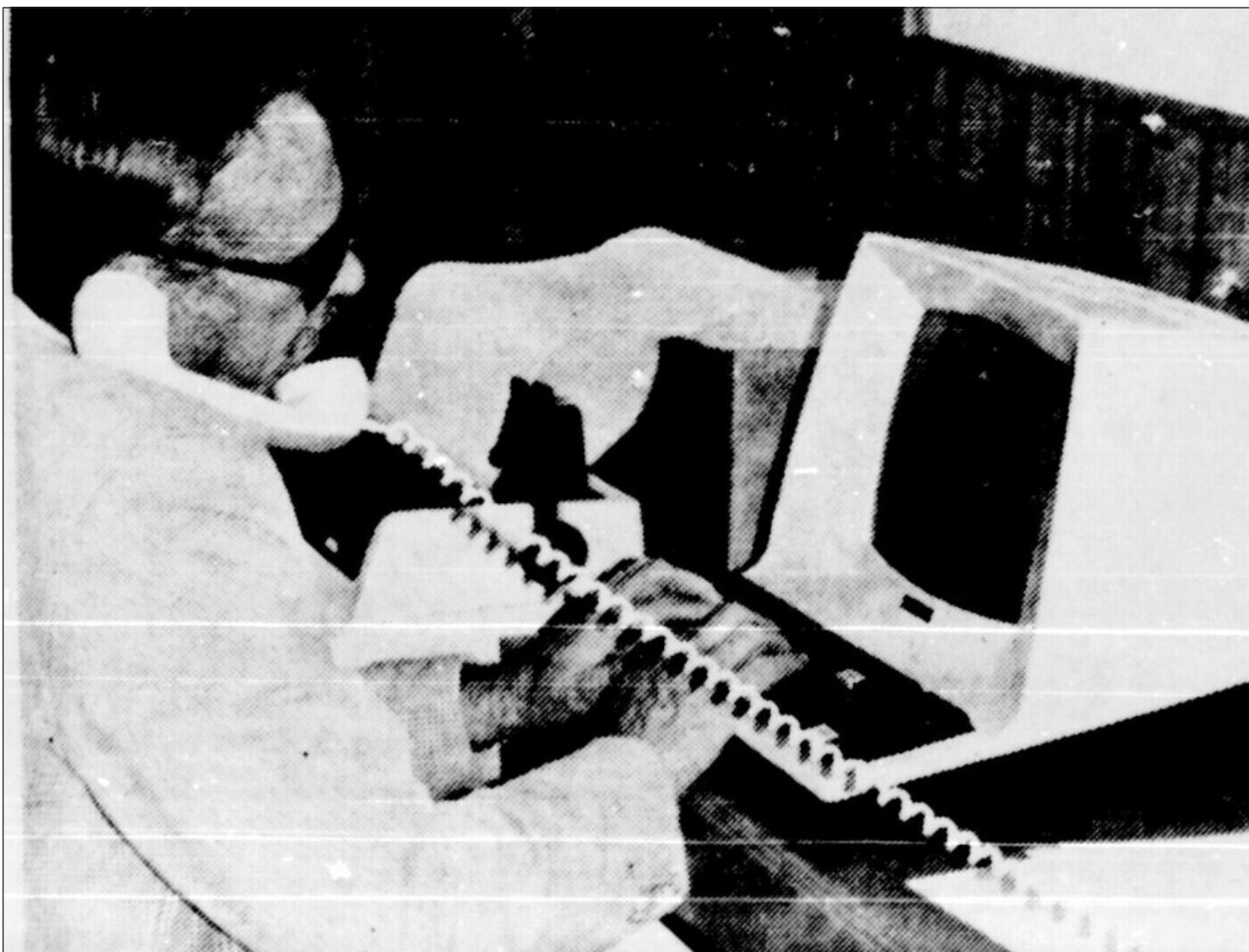
The clinic offers weekday walk-in services and access to specialists who treat injuries involving the knees, shoulders, hands and other areas. Buchanan County athletes who previously traveled to the Bristol area for orthopedic care may now have a closer option.

"Basically, we have a certified athletic trainer, we have a team physician, and we have orthopedic services for our athletes," Bane said. "That's kind of unheard of in Southwest Virginia."

After football season, Bane plans to maintain afternoon office hours and attend home athletic contests when possible. He told the board he is donating his time and is not seeking compensation from the school division.

The School Board unanimously approved the memorandum of understanding governing the athletic training arrangement.

GOOD OL DAYS



Buchanan County Office of Emergency Services Coordinator John Hash tries out equipment used with the county's computerized flood-warning system. The system used automated rain gauges, microwave radio links and computers to monitor rainfall and stream levels. This photo originally appeared in the Sept. 24, 1981, edition of The Virginia Mountaineer.

Congressman Morgan Griffith: Healthy Moms Healthy Babies

The alarming rates of maternal and infant mortality in the United States demand continued federal diligence. Reportedly America suffers from the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in the developed world. But according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 80% of our pregnancy-related deaths are preventable.

Because of my concerns about this problem, I am working with federal partners to find solutions.

One of these partners, Healthy Moms Healthy Babies America (HMHBA), which was founded in 2026 by Cara Osborne and Olivia Walton, put a meeting together of a select group of 15 officials.

Besides me, some of the others in the group included Second Lady Usha Vance, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz, Tennessee Senator Marsha Blackburn, Ohio Congressman Jim Jordan and former White House official Kellyanne Conway.

Second Lady Vance shared with us her experiences regarding her most recent pregnancy, birth and care following the birth.

One of the things she suggested was that we look at the combined medical assessments for both children and mothers.

She advocated that these visits should not be weeks after birth, but closer to when the mother and child are released from the hospital. Doing so would help identify any problems that might be developing related to either the child's health or potential emotional issues of the mother. Telehealth can help facilitate health care provider access for the mother and child.

I recall one former client of mine who struggled with exhaustion and postpartum depression as a result of caring for newborn twins. Her condition became so severe that she had to be committed to a hospital for 48 hours to ensure her safety and well-being.

Childbirth can cause great potential for stress, exhaustion and postpartum depression, among other issues.

Second Lady Vance advocated for better monitoring of the health for moms and babies in the weeks after birth.



WEEKLY REPORT FROM THE CAPITOL

Dr. Oz discussed the recent rollout of the new CMS ACCESS Model. Under this program, his agency is supporting the extension of care beyond the clinic and harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) and telehealth to reach more families.

I believe telehealth and telemedicine, now coupled with technological advances, including wearables (Ouraring and Apple watches, etc.) with AI-analyzed data, will make a huge difference in the future.

These wearables can help moms track their health, spot trouble early and connect with providers before things get urgent. She can check her vitals, get advice from a nurse over video and know she's got a team watching out for her, even if the nearest clinic is miles away.

During the same week of the HMHBA event, I held a hearing as the Health Subcommittee Chairman to consider various policies. One of the bills discussed during the hearing was the *Rural Obstetric Readiness Act* by Democratic Illinois Congresswoman Robin Kelly.

The *Rural Obstetric Readiness Act* seeks to create a new health care reality where we train more rural health providers and doctors to handle obstetric care.

The National Rural Health Association notes that more than 67% of rural counties lack hospital-based obstetrical services, with a majority of these counties lacking an obstetric clinician. That is more than double the rate of urban localities.

Accordingly, more than two million American women live in what experts call "maternity care deserts."

The spirit of Congresswoman Kelly's bill is to tackle maternal care deserts, which make pregnancy-related complications more dangerous for mothers and infants.

Earlier this year, I voted for the *Preventing Maternal Deaths Act* and *Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who Deliver Infants Early (PREEMIE) Act*, which are now law. These bills help federal agencies coordinate mortality prevention activities and promote prenatal care.

Virginia state policy is treading on a path of maternal health success as well.

In 2025, a new state law took effect to allow licensed certified midwives and nurse practitioners to access pediatric privileges where they can serve on 24-hour on-call duty for nursery care when physicians are unavailable.

Having a midwife assist in areas where there are maternal care deserts will help enhance the rural health care workforce.

Taken together, these and other policy ideas can produce dividends for maternal care.

By strengthening access to maternal health resources, mothers will be in a better position to give care to their children and live healthy lives.

I will continue to work for policies that nurture an environment supporting mothers, improving maternal care and fighting to eliminate maternity care deserts.

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/>.

Savvy Senior: Helping an Aging Parent Manage Their Money

By JIM MILLER

Dear Savvy Senior,

Since my dad passed away last year, my 82-year-old mother has struggled to keep up with her bills. She's proud and insists on doing things herself, but I worry she's falling behind. How can I help her manage her finances without upsetting her?

--Concerned Daughter

Dear Concerned,

You're not alone – lots of adult children step in to help aging parents with their finances. Whether it's paying bills, handling bank accounts, filing insurance claims, or sorting through taxes, taking on these responsibilities can feel tricky. The key is to approach it with respect, organization, and the right safeguards. Here's how to help your mom without stepping on her independence.

Have a conversation

Talking about money can be sensitive, especially with a parent who values doing things on her own. Start with a gentle, respectful conversation. Share your concerns and offer to help with her bills or other chores. If you have siblings, loop them in too. Knowing the whole family is on the same page can reassure your mom that everyone cares, not that you're taking over.

Get organized

If your mom is open to your help, the first step is getting organized. Make a clear list of her financial info, including monthly bills like utilities, phone, cable, and



SAVVY SENIOR

credit cards; bank and investment accounts; company benefits like retirement plans or pensions; insurance policies, including life, home, auto, long-term care, and Medicare; and copies of recent income tax returns. Having everything in one place will make managing her finances much smoother for both of you.

Locate legal documents

Now's also a good time to see if your mom has essential legal papers: a will or trust, an advance directive with a living will and health-care proxy, and a durable power of attorney for finances. If she doesn't, now's the time to get them in place. If she does, make sure they're up to date and that you know where to find them.

Simplify financial tasks

To make life easier for both you and your mom, set up automatic payments for her bills and have her income go straight into her bank account. If her accounts and in-

vestments are scattered, consider consolidating them – it makes everything much simpler. You can also get her banking and investment accounts online so you can pay bills and monitor everything anytime, without digging through papers or making extra trips.

Set up protections

Protect your mom from scams or risky spending. A True Link Visa Prepaid Card (truelinkfinancial.com/prepaid-card) gives her access to her money but lets you set spending limits. Online monitoring services like Carefull (getcarefull.com) or EverSafe (eversafe.com) can watch her accounts, flag anything suspicious, and send alerts if something seems off. These tools give peace of mind while letting her maintain independence.

Seek outside help

If you live far away or just need a hand, professional services can step in. SilverBills (silverbills.com) handles bill payments, while a certified daily money manager (aadmm.com) can come by once or twice a month to pay bills, make deposits, sort through health insurance statements, and keep everything organized. Think of them as extra hands to make life easier for both of you.

Helping a parent manage finances takes patience, respect, and tact. With clear communication, organization, and the right safeguards, you can support your mom while keeping her independence and peace of mind intact.

Send your questions or comments to questions@savvysenior.org, or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

The Watchman: Collision Course

By JERRY WARD

I believe America is on a collision course if we do not change course before it is too late.

The Titanic struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic at 11:40 p.m. on April 14, 1912. More than 1,500 people lost their lives. The official death toll is 1,514. They had been warned, but they did not take heed.

The Titanic received a series of warnings from other ships about drifting ice in the area on April 14, 1912, the day of the disaster. The Titanic received seven iceberg warnings. The Titanic's wireless operators told the Californian's operator to shut up, and the warnings were ignored.

It has long been known that the Titanic's lookouts lacked binoculars during their voyage across the Atlantic. It is often claimed that if they had them, they would have spotted the iceberg in time to change course and prevent the disaster.

Instead, Captain Smith disregarded multiple iceberg warnings and maintained a high speed of 22.5 knots in treacherous waters. He failed to relay all the ice warnings to his crew, contributing to the tragedy.

Today in America, I believe we are sailing in treacherous waters. Few are voicing warnings, and those who do are ridiculed and told to shut up. They have no insight into what is coming; it is just full steam ahead.

The Bible tells us in Ephesians 1:16-18 to pray that the eyes of our understanding be enlightened. Jesus wants to give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

God said in Hosea 4:6 that his people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge.

In 2 Peter 3:9, God said he is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

God told Israel in Isaiah 65:2, "I have spread out my hands all the day toward a rebellious people who walk in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts."

Is America becoming a rebellious people? I hope not. I pray we wake up as a nation founded on God's word and principles, which provide a foundation for a system of belief and behavior and a chain of reasoning based on the principles of Christianity.

Psalms 11:3 asks, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

There is a force working to undermine the foundation upon which America was founded.

"In God We Trust" is our national motto. When I started school in 1960, we began our day with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THE WATCHMAN:

Today, some people want to leave the words "one nation under God" out of the Pledge of Allegiance and remove "In God We Trust" from our money.

God said in Jeremiah 18:7, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down and to destroy it."

Verse 8 says, "If that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them."

It is time to repent and turn back to the God of our beginnings.

In Ezekiel 16:49-50, the sins of Sodom are listed before the Lord destroyed them. Verse 49 says, "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."

Verse 50 says, "And they were haughty and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good."

Compare that to what we see today, and I believe you will understand the point I am trying to make.

You may ask how you can make a difference. Start by praying more and getting involved with your church and your community. If you do not vote, you need to. If you are not registered, get registered.

Nov. 3, 2026, is Election Day. There are some important amendments that we, as Christians, need to be concerned about.

Virginia Question 2 asks voters whether the state constitution should be amended to remove its same-sex marriage ban.

A "yes" vote supports amending the state constitution to remove a provision stating that marriage is between one man and one woman. It would add a provision stating that marriage is one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness. It would also prohibit the state from denying a marriage license to two adults based on their sex, gender or race.

A "no" vote opposes amending the state constitution, thus maintaining the provision defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

This issue was voted on previously. In 2006, the amendment defining marriage in Virginia as a union between one man and one woman passed with 57% of the vote. We are being asked to vote on it again.

If you believe marriage is the union of one man and one woman, then stand up, Virginia. Stand with God and vote no on Nov. 3, 2026. In doing so, you are standing with God.

Genesis 1:26-28 says God created them male and female. Verse 28 says God blessed them and told them to be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth.

Genesis 2:24 says God sanctions marriage between a man and a woman: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

Do we believe the God of the Bible and stand with Israel, or will we turn our backs on the Jewish people?

Stay tuned.

THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEER

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OPINIONS

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AREA NEWS

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Hello Readers,

We finished up our revival this morning with Hometown Harmony Singers and Brother Rodney Stiltner bringing the message, The Power of I Am. He read Exodus 3:9-15, Exodus 4:10-12, John 3:3, Luke 17:20-21, Matthew 5:14, Ephesians 2:8, Proverbs 18:21 and Proverbs 23:7.

After the service we had our dinner, and everything was delicious as usual. I finished my plate and looked around and noticed all the couples eating together. Even though I was sitting with friends I felt so lonely, I had to get up and leave before I started bawling. Being alone is hard.

I had two dear friends come up Monday afternoon and bring food. They stayed and visited for a couple of hours, my first company. It was good to laugh and talk normally for a while. After they left I stood at the counter and ate right out of the bowls, chicken, fresh green beans and coleslaw. I had the zucchini bread for breakfast. Thank you two so much, I love you guys.

The death certificates finally came so the mountain of paperwork began. I'll be busy the next few weeks dealing with all of that.

I had to call the fire department last night just after dark. I smelled something hot and stepped out on the front porch and saw and smelled smoke, no flames. They checked but couldn't find any fire, thank God, it's been so dry. FYI...if you call the fire department and it turns out there is no fire you will not be in trouble for calling them.

Saturday morning I got up, fried some bacon and made a pan of gravy. Our little dog Minnie loves gravy, she's still hanging in there but she's so frail, and it made the house smell like it used to on weekend mornings.

I haven't even started on all the thank you cards. I can't bring myself to sit down and start them, but I want everyone to know that I appreciate every phone call to check on me and every prayer prayed for my family. All the food brought was eaten and enjoyed and all the flowers, quilts and pictures were appreciated and loved.

I appreciate the law enforcement community that honored Ray and the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office for the procession and all the behind the scenes stuff I know went on to make everything go smoothly.

And finally all the stories and experiences that have been told, some I'd heard some I hadn't. Ray was a good storyteller, I tried to get him to write this stuff down but it never happened.

I miss him so, I'm lost without him. You don't realize how intertwined your life is with someone else's until they're not here anymore.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Isaiah 41:10 KJV...

I've made it no secret that I'm struggling, physically, mentally and spiritually. The way that Ray left this earth I didn't get to say goodbye and I love you one last time. That will haunt me for the rest of my life.

Isaiah 41:10 was my daily verse for Monday and I really needed that reassurance from God. I feel lighter and less burdened today, PTL

I Am OK...

Adult Education Connection



BEVERLY
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ASHBY

For many adults who never completed high school, returning to education can seem intimidating. Life responsibilities, work, and family often take priority, and the idea of going back to school may feel out of reach. However, earning a General Educational Development (GED)® credential can be a life-changing achievement, opening doors to new opportunities and helping individuals achieve personal and professional goals.

The GED ® is a high school equivalency diploma. It certifies that the holder has high school-level academic skills in four key subjects: Reasoning Through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies. It's recognized across the United States and in many other countries as equivalent to a high school diploma.

A GED ® can significantly enhance employment opportunities. Many jobs require a high school diploma or equivalent, and without one, career options are limited. Earning an equivalency diploma opens the door to better-paying positions, promotions, and access to job training programs that would otherwise be unavailable. Adults can apply to colleges, vocational schools, and trade programs. It is often the first step toward earning a college degree or certification that leads to specialized careers. Many community colleges actively encourage GED® holders to continue their education.

Beyond practical benefits, earning a GED ® can be a deeply personal victory. It demonstrates resilience, determination, and a commitment to self-improvement. For many adults, it's a source of pride and a way to set a positive example for children and family members. Preparing for the subjects helps adults build academic skills and confidence. This renewed sense of capability often spills over into other areas of life such as parenting, civic involvement, and workplace performance.

A GED ® is more than just a piece of paper. It is a gateway to personal growth, better job prospects, and higher education. For adults who missed out on completing high school, the GED offers a second chance, a powerful reminder that it's never too late to pursue your goals. If you are ready to prepare for the GED® tests, contact Southwest Regional Adult Education at 276-889-5424. Sign up for a free class and receive a free assessment of your skills. Classes are offered free of charge at convenient times and locations throughout the region.

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State Sen. Travis Hackworth speaks during a Sept. 18 celebration at the Noah Horn Well Drilling office in Deel marking the completion of a \$4.4 million cellular infrastructure project along U.S. Route 460 in Buchanan and Tazewell counties.

WIRELESS PROJECT

FROM PAGE 1A

representatives underscored the importance of strategic public resources for coal-impacted communities and their ongoing economic and community development efforts.

“This project will help close the coverage gap along Route 460 and boost the local economy, attracting businesses and helping schools, homeowners, and commuters,” U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) said. “These cell towers will help link Virginians to one another, the country, the world, and its endless possibilities.”

“Dependable cell service and internet access aren’t luxuries; they’re necessary for economic growth, public safety, and connection,” said U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA). “I’m excited that these new towers will bring cellular coverage to parts of Buchanan and Tazewell counties. I’m proud that this project received federal funding through the Appalachian Regional Commission and AMLER program that I’ve long supported. I look forward to continuing to work together with local partners to upgrade infrastructure in communities across Virginia.”

The VCC is a seven-county and one-city partnership organization spanning the entirety of Virginia’s coalfields region. Its work is a collaborative effort between the LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau planning districts. In conjunction with private carrier partners, the VCC previously developed 12 cellular towers across the coalfields, and has provided fiber backhaul service to a dozen other non-VCC owned towers. With cooperation from private partners, the VCC’s development model helps to incentivize carriers to participate in wireless projects in areas where there’s little business justification for the companies to make private investments.

A variety of public and private funders supported the development of the VCC’s six newest towers, including grant awards from the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (\$1.4 million), Virginia Energy’s Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization Program (\$1.1 million), Appalachian Regional Commission’s POWER program (\$1 million), Thompson Charitable Foundation (\$250,000), the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (\$249,017) and the Virginia Coalfield Coalition (\$418,568), with additional land use support provided by CNX Gas Co., LLC.

“As someone who travels throughout the more than 10,000 square miles of Virginia’s Ninth Congressional District, I am no stranger to ‘dead zones’ that limit cell phone connectivity,” Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA-09) noted. “Thanks to the help of local officials, one such ‘dead zone’ poses less trouble to Buchanan and Tazewell Counties. The construction of six new cell towers along US-460 will improve mobile communication access, deliver more opportunity prospects and support growth in the coalfields region.”

The project was viewed as vital from an economic development standpoint due to the highway’s proximity to two of the region’s most notable industrial parks – Southern Gap Business Park in Buchanan County and the Bluestone Technology Park in Tazewell County. Area state representatives acknowledged the impact the project will ultimately have on regional economic development efforts as well as marketing strategies centered on regional industrial recruitment activities.

“Reliable infrastructure is the foundation for opportunity,” Sen. Todd Pillion (R-District 6) said. “This project removes a major barrier for Southwest Virginia and strengthens the connection between our communities, our workforce, and our future. I’m proud to have helped bring this investment together and deliver a project that will make a real difference for the people of this region.”

“Establishing cellular coverage along U.S 460 has been several years in the making but well worth the wait,” Sen. Travis Hackworth (R-District 5) said. “I commend all the funding partners who worked on this vital economic development project to make it a reality.”

“I am very excited about this project,” Del. Will Morefield (R-District 43) said. “I commend all of those who have been working on it. Personally, I am glad that I was able to help garner the necessary support from the Tobacco Commission for the towers. As chairman of the Commission, I have made it a priority to focus on needed communication infrastructure for Southwest and Southern Virginia. This cell tower project will enhance the quality of life for those living along and traveling on 460, as well as open up new opportunities for economic development; additionally, it will increase safety in the area for citizens and become a valuable tool for law enforcement. This is a major step forward. Again, I am proud that I was able to support it in my role on the AMLER committee, as well as the Tobacco Commission.”

Although the VCC partnered with a single private wireless carrier to initiate the project, all towers owned



Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission Executive Director Scotty Wampler speaks during a Sept. 18 ceremony at the Noah Horn Well Drilling office in Deel celebrating the completion of six new cellular towers along U.S. Route 460. Wampler also serves as co-executive director of the Virginia Coalfield Coalition, which spearheaded the project.

and operated by the coalition, including the six new towers built along U.S. Hwy. 460, are designed to support shared infrastructure, with space for multiple co-location antennas on each tower. The VCC has also assisted in the enhancement of public safety networks by providing space on certain towers within the coalfields to improve wireless communications for non-commercial purposes.

While multiple towers in the project area are already on-air and operational, all six new towers are anticipated to be active by mid-October.

“This new infrastructure addresses a critical need for our holistic economic development efforts, as well as our overall quality of life in the coalfields,” CPPDC Executive Director Scotty Wampler, who also serves as VCC Co-Executive Director, said. “We have worked diligently for many years to make the Highway 460 project a reality, and we’re thrilled to finally see it come to fruition.”

“This project is a terrific example of regional collaboration, and one that will positively impact the local economy in incredibly meaningful ways,” VCC Board Chair David Eaton said. “We are very grateful for the resources provided to the VCC to bring this project to life.”

The VCC serves the Virginia coalfield counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell and Wise, as well as the City of Norton.



Local, state and federal officials gather Friday, Sept. 18, in front of a cellular tower near Twin Valley Elementary/Middle School in Oakwood. The tower is part of an eight-tower wireless network designed to eliminate a 20-mile cellular “dead zone” along U.S. Route 460 between Grundy and Richlands.



Jeff McSwain, vice president and Mid-Atlantic lead for Talbert, Bright and Ellington, updates the Breaks Regional Airport Authority on the proposed airport's master plan and funding process during a Sept. 14 special-called meeting at the Grundy Town Offices.

BRAA weighs funding options as federal process drags on

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

After years of planning, members of the Breaks Regional Airport Authority are questioning whether waiting for federal funding is still the best path to building a new airport.

Representatives of Talbert, Bright and Ellington, an aviation planning, design and construction administration firm, updated the authority during a special-called meeting Sept. 14 at the Grundy Town Offices.

Jeff McSwain, the firm's vice president and Mid-Atlantic lead, reviewed the airport master plan and explained the federal requirements the airport must meet before it can move toward construction. He was joined by Jeff Tarkington, a principal and vice president with the firm.

Talbert, Bright and Ellington has served as an aviation consultant for the region for years, helping coordinate engineering work, grant projects and communication with state and federal agencies.

The current effort follows the closure of the former Grundy Municipal Airport and years of mining and site preparation intended to create space for a larger regional airport.

The authority began a National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) study in 2021 to return the proposed Breaks Regional Airport to the federal airport system. The Federal Aviation Administration recognized the need for an airport in the region and approved its return to the system in 2023, making the project eligible to compete for federal grants.

Eligibility, however, does not guarantee funding.

The authority is now waiting for the FAA to approve its aviation activity forecast, which projects the number of aircraft that would be based at the airport and the number of annual takeoffs and landings. The FAA will not allow the rest of the master plan to proceed until it approves that forecast.

McSwain said the district has submitted three revisions. Because the project involves construction of a new airport, the forecast must be reviewed at FAA headquarters rather than solely by a regional airport district office.

"That's been the bottleneck," McSwain said, explaining that one planner is reviewing such projects from across the country.

Once the forecast is approved, the planning process will determine which facilities can be justified under federal standards, including runway length, taxiways, aircraft parking areas, vehicle parking and other infrastructure.

FAA standards require a publicly owned airport seeking federal assistance to have at least 10 validated based aircraft and be at least 30 miles from the nearest airport already receiving federal grant funding. McSwain said the Tazewell County Airport in Richlands is slightly more than 30 miles away, allowing the proposed Breaks airport to meet the distance requirement.

Federal funding could cover up to 95% of eligible project costs, with the state paying 4% and the authority responsible for the remaining 1%. A state-funded project could require a 10% local match.

That potential support comes with strict federal requirements governing what the FAA will fund.

The consultants said federal officials are unlikely to support the full 5,100-foot runway envisioned by the authority because current data do not show enough aircraft operations requiring that length. The probability of obtaining federal support for a shorter runway was estimated at greater than 50%, while the likelihood of federal funding for the full 5,100-foot runway was described as "very low."

Several board members expressed frustration with that reasoning, noting that larger aircraft could not use the former Grundy airport because its approximately 2,300-foot runway was too short. Without a longer runway, they argued, the authority cannot generate the larger-aircraft activity the FAA wants documented.



Breaks Regional Airport Authority member Todd Elswick discusses his concerns about the proposed airport's lengthy development timeline during the authority's Sept. 14 special-called meeting. Elswick urged the authority to consider locally funding the project to move construction forward sooner.

Board member Todd Elswick said the community cannot afford to wait indefinitely while its population declines and businesses leave.

"There's one word I've heard a whole lot that I don't like," Elswick said. "It's years."

"We don't have years," he continued. "Our town don't have years. Our county don't have years. We need an airport tomorrow. What is the plan to do that?"

Elswick said the effort dates to 2008 and questioned whether an airport would still be viable if the authority waited another eight to 10 years.

"In my opinion, it's time to do something now," he said.

The consultants told the board that federal and state funding processes could take several more years and would offer no guarantee that all requested money would be awarded. Even after becoming eligible, the project would compete against airports across Virginia and the nation.

The Virginia Aviation Board has an annual budget of approximately \$30 million to distribute among 65 public-use airports, according to the presentation. More than 100 projects competed for state aviation funding during the board's August funding cycle.

Authority members discussed moving forward with local money instead of waiting for federal assistance. Elswick said he believes the only way to complete the project quickly may be for the locality to write the check and build it.

"If we wait the six years or the eight- to 10-year plan, we don't even need the airport," Elswick said.

The consultants said the authority could build an airport without federal assistance. A locally funded project could also be designed so the runway, taxiways, lighting and other infrastructure could be expanded later as demand grows.

"If you turned us loose to design it, we could design it in a year, and you could start construction," McSwain said.

Authority members discussed initially constructing a runway between 3,000 and 4,000 feet long while preserving the prepared site for a future extension. Once aircraft begin using the airport, the authority could document actual activity that could strengthen future requests for state or federal expansion money.

Any locally financed airport would still have to meet applicable design, environmental and permitting requirements. However, avoiding federal funding could shorten the environmental review process and allow design work and other preparations to move forward at the same time.

The consultants said they will develop cost estimates and possible funding plans through the master-planning process. No final decision on the runway length or funding approach was made during the meeting.



Adopt a Pet

Virginia Mountaineer

Dogs are like potato chips; you can't have just one.

This addictive addition is a seven-month-old female mixed breed. Her soft coat is colored black and white with black freckles. She has bright eyes and an inquisitive expression. Her personality is friendly, happy and fun. She's full of love and affection.

This all of that and a bag of chips canine will be available for adoption at the Buchanan County Animal Shelter until Monday, September 28, 2026.

Also available for adoption is this two-year-old male Labrador Retriever mix. His short, thick coat is colored black with white markings. He has sad eyes and a longing expression. His temperament is sweet and endearing. He's a true love bug. The Buchanan County Animal Shelter is located at 1191 Dogpound Road. For more information about these animals, please call the shelter at 276-935-4067.



Miss Black Diamond Pageant seeks contestants from across SWVA

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Contestants from across Southwest Virginia are being invited to take the stage this fall for one of the region's largest pageants.

The Miss Black Diamond Pageant will be held Saturday, Oct. 10, at Twin Valley Elementary School, located at 9017 Riverside Drive in Oakwood.

Hosted by the Buchanan County Chamber of Commerce and directed by Mary Rachel McGeorge-Young, the pageant will feature 13 age divisions, providing opportunities for contestants ranging from infants to women 40 and older.

Organizers hope the wide range of divisions will bring together contestants and families from Buchanan County and communities throughout Southwest Virginia for a day of confidence, fellowship and celebration.

Former Miss Black Diamond queens are also invited to return and walk across the stage during the pageant. Their participation will give the community an opportunity to recognize those who have previously worn a Miss Black Diamond crown and celebrate the pageant's history.

The winner of the Miss Black Diamond division, which is open to contestants ages 18 to 22, will receive a \$500 college scholarship. Additional prizes will be awarded throughout the pageant.

The pageant divisions are Wee Miss, ages birth to 11 months; Baby Miss, ages 12 to 23 months; Mini Miss, ages 24 to 35 months; Toddler Miss, ages 3 to 4; Tiny Miss, ages 5 to 6; Little Miss, ages 7 to 8; Petite Miss, ages 9 to 10; Pre-Teen Miss, ages 11 to 12; Junior Teen Miss, ages 13 to 14; Teen Miss, ages 15 to 17; Miss, ages 18 to 22; Ms., ages 23 to 39; and Elegant Ms., ages 40 and older.

A concession stand will be operated during the event by the 29th Judicial District Court Appointed Special Advocate program, commonly known as CASA. The organization advocates for children involved in the court system because of abuse or neglect.

The pageant is designed to give contestants of different ages an opportunity to represent their communities, build confidence and create lasting memories with their families.

Applications are now being accepted, and the registration deadline is Oct. 4. Those interested in participating may register online at pci.jotform.com/form/262376833520155.



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Supervisors recognize youth anglers, support local archery team

By CHAD COOPER
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The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors recognized six young anglers during its Sept. 14 meeting for representing the county in national and world bass fishing competitions.

Bobby Looney, a member of the Big Sandy Soil and Water Conservation District board of directors, intro-



Youth bass anglers Landon Ray and Joshua Smith are recognized during the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors' Sept. 14 meeting for representing the county in national and world fishing competition. From left (back row) are Derek Ray, Sara Ray, Landon Ray, Elizabeth Smith, Joshua Smith, and Roy Smith; (front) Big Sandy Soil and Water Conservation District board member Bobby Looney. Not pictured: Jaxon Deel, Brody Deel, Easton Stevens and Breese Bostic.

SEE **SUPERVISORS RECOGNIZE** | 5B

Southern Gap tops Honaker in four sets

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Southern Gap senior Leah Rasnake delivered a dominant all-around performance Monday, Sept. 15, helping the Eagles earn a four-set non-district volleyball victory over Honaker at AP Baldwin Gymnasium.

Rasnake finished with a match-high 20 kills while adding 11 digs and three aces as Southern Gap defeated the Tigers 3-1.

"I think what really led to our win was everyone doing their part and fighting for every point," Rasnake said. "My teammates did a great job getting me the ball, and I was able to stay aggressive at the net and take advantage of my opportunities. I was just trusting myself and swinging hard, and I'm really proud of the way we played together."

While Rasnake powered the Eagles' attack, Southern Gap received contributions throughout its lineup.

Adyson Bell handed out 16 assists and recorded seven kills, while Bela Hurley added 15 assists. Lucy Savage finished with seven kills and three aces, and Madison Lester contributed seven kills, four digs and four aces.

Claire Griffey anchored the defense with 25 digs, while Megan Hess added five kills.



Southern Gap senior Leah Rasnake recorded 20 kills, 11 digs and three aces in the Eagles' 3-1 victory over Honaker on Sept. 15.

Wolford leads Southern Gap girls at UVa-Wise Invitational

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Southern Gap freshman Katelyn Wolford continued the strong start to her high school career last Wednesday, racing to a sixth-place finish in a large field at the UVa-Wise High School Invitational.

Wolford completed the 5,000-meter course in 22 minutes, 24.17 seconds, leading the Eagles to sixth place in the team standings. The race attracted 81 runners to the UVa-Wise Cross Country Course.

Wolford was the top freshman finisher from a Virginia High School League member school and one of only six runners to break 22:30.

Sophomore Vieronika Silishchenko was Southern Gap's second runner across the finish line, placing 22nd in 25:27.42.

Senior Kelly Ratliff finished 31st in 26:20.69, and senior Ava Ward placed 42nd with a time of 27:19.17. Senior Madison Lester completed the Eagles' scoring five, finishing 51st in 29:04.28.

Junior Sierra Lowry also competed for Southern Gap, placing 65th in 33:31.45.

The Eagles scored 124 points and posted an average time of 26:07. Southern Gap finished 13 points behind fifth-place Tazewell and



Southern Gap freshman Katelyn Wolford led the Eagles with a sixth-place finish at the UVa-Wise High School Invitational, completing the 5,000-meter course in 22:24.17.

eight points ahead of the seventh-place Virginia Bearcats.

Union won the team championship with 57 points, placing all five of its scoring runners among the top 19. Wise County Central finished second with 74 points, followed by Eastside with 84, Honaker with 110 and Tazewell with 111.

Eastside sophomore Allie Salyer won the individual championship with a time of 20:59.71. Teammate Hailey Mays finished second in 21:29.23.

Union junior Riley Spain placed third in 21:34.35, while Eastside junior Hannah Mays was fourth in 21:51.21. Ridgeview junior Journee Perry finished fifth in 22:17.27, just ahead of Wolford.

CROSS COUNTRY
UVa-Wise High School
Invitational At UVa-Wise
Cross Country Course
Sept. 16

GIRLS

Team standings
Union, 57
Wise County Central, 74
Eastside, 84
Honaker, 110
Tazewell, 111
Southern Gap, 124
Virginia Bearcats, 132
J.I. Burton, 153

Individual results
Allie Salyer (Eastside), 20:59.71
Hailey Mays (Eastside), 21:29.23
Riley Spain (Union), 21:34.35
Hannah Mays (Eastside), 21:51.21
Journee Perry (Ridgeview), 22:17.27

IN THE LOCKER ROOM:
Little League builds Buchanan County's future

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

This week, I want to recognize some of Buchanan County's youngest athletes and the adults who make their seasons possible.

Homecoming week put the spotlight on our Little League football players and cheerleaders. Seeing them in uniform, representing their teams and communities with pride, was a reminder that the future of Buchanan County athletics is already taking shape.



CHAD COOPER
IN THE LOCKER ROOM

What fans see on game day is only part of the story. Coaches spend countless hours planning practices, teaching fundamentals and encouraging their young athletes. Parents and families give up evenings and weekends for practices, camps, games and travel.

The children are learning more than football and cheerleading. They are learning teamwork, discipline, sportsmanship and how to keep going when things get hard.

Every varsity athlete starts somewhere. For many, it begins on a Little League field with a volunteer coach patiently teaching the basics and helping a child believe in himself or herself.

Winning is exciting, but youth sports are about more than the score. They give children a place to belong, friendships to enjoy and memories they will carry for years.

I want to recognize the players, cheerleaders and coaches who make up this year's teams:

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES SMURF BLACK FOOTBALL
Players: No. 3 Kayce Hall, No. 4 Jamison Mullins, No. 5 Eli Burkes, No. 7 Byron Dailey, No. 10 Collin Hurley, No. 14 Bennett Mullins, No. 19 Jaxon St. Clair, No. 22 Archer Owsley, No. 23 Kiser Peck, No. 25 Grayson Dotson, No. 31 Myles Stevenson, No. 32 Lance Barton, No. 33 Tobias Endicott, No. 35 Cayson Ward, No. 36 Oliver Looney, No. 38 Jeryd Knopf, No. 40 Clayton Adkins, No. 41 Sam Street, No. 45 Mathias Endicott, No. 47 Mason Bland, No. 50 Corey Stacy, No. 52 Aydin Grindstaff, No. 57 Chase Stacy, No. 66 Tucker Lester and No. 83 Elijah Allen.

Coaches: Daniel McClanahan, Dathan Vanover, Jeremy Hurley, Greg Stacy, Charlie Cochran, Michael Blankenship, Cole Stacy, Glenn St. Clair, Cody Looney, Kyle Hall and Cody Skeens.

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES SMURF GOLD FOOTBALL
Players: No. 0 Cruz Rife, No. 1 Isaac Bradley, No. 2 Dax Hensley, No. 8 Karson Still, No. 9 Blaine McClanahan, No. 11 Beau Vanover, No. 12 Davis Hurley, No. 13

SEE **IN THE LOCKER ROOM** | 3B

Southwest Virginia High School Football
Week 5 Scoreboard

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Bluefield W.V. 34, Ridgeview 2
Abingdon 55, Richlands 0
Chilhowie 14, Eastside 6
Gate City 49, Marion 6

Holston 43, Honaker 41
Lebanon 40, Rural Retreat 21
Northwood 43, Bland County 12
Patrick Henry 36, George Wythe 20
Rye Cove 42, Thomas Walker 8
Union 42, Tazewell 7
J.I. Burton 21, Twin Springs 14
Wise Central 42, John Battle 14

New People's Bank

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

LEAH RASNAKE

Southern Gap High School senior volleyball player Leah Rasnake is the New People's Bank Player of the Week.

Rasnake tallied a match-high 20 kills, 11 digs, and three aces as Southern Gap defeated the Honaker Tigers 3-1 on the road on Sept. 15.

New People's Bank
www.NewPeoples.Bank

CONGRATULATIONS!

Member
FDIC

HUNTING & FISHING

WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

ANGLER
BAG LIMIT
BAIT
BLINDS
BOBBER
CAMO
CAMOUFLAGE
CASTING
CATCH
DECOY
FLETCHING
GAME
HABITAT
HARVEST
LICENSE
LURE
NET
POACHING
QUARRY
SCENT
SEASON
TACKLE
TRACKING
WILDERNESS

101112131415161718192021222324252627282930313233343536373839404142434445464748495051

CLUES ACROSS

1. A place for worship
7. Referee declaration
10. Torsos
12. Used to introduce something
13. Healing method
14. Takes to the sea
15. Make law
16. French coastal city
17. Hawaiian dish
18. Young of domestic cattle
19. Women's undergarments
21. 60-minute intervals (abbr.)
22. One after another
27. It's a hot topic these days
28. Folk band frontman

33. They precede C
34. Heavenly
36. Fiddler crabs
37. Major Hindu deity
38. Hebrew given name
39. Cost per mile
40. __ Romeo, car
41. Rural municipality in Manitoba
44. Narratives
45. "A tragedy had __ him"
48. Iranian city
49. Praises publicly
50. Founding Father Franklin
51. Herbal tea

CLUES DOWN

1. Indian unit of mass
2. "Tears in Heaven" singer Clapton
3. Part of a sailing vessel
4. Part of (abbr.)
5. Polynesian garland of flowers
6. Keyboard key
7. One who steals
8. Large oven
9. Former CIA
10. Idea
11. Solomon Islands capital
12. Afrikaans
14. Remove thatch
17. Television network
18. Jalen Brunson is one
20. Title of respect
23. Flowering trees
24. Occurring in a tube

25. Exists
26. Woman (French)
29. Expression of doubt
30. NHL legend Bobby
31. Accomplished
32. Makes slightly wet
35. National Assn. of Manufacturers
36. Not sated
38. Poe's middle name
40. Swiss river
41. Rhythmic pattern in Indian music
42. "Shane" actor Ladd
43. Popular whodunit board game
44. Bar bill
45. Ballplayer's tool
46. Indicates near
47. Feet per second

PUZZLE SOLUTION

TEMPLETHORACESTHIS
HOLISTICSAILS
ENACTCAEN
POICCALF
BRASHR
SERIATIMAI
MARCUSMUMFORD
ABEMPYREAN
UCARAMA
ANILCPM
ALFATACHE
TALESBEFALLEEN
ARADAAPPLAUDS
BENTTISANE

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to hunting and fishing.

RFELI

Answer: Rifle

GUESS WHO ?

I am an actor born on September 22, 1987, in England. I was a talented choir singer as a child and was offered an opportunity to join a prestigious choir. I ended up playing a child villain in a series of films based on books about wizards. Most recently I reprised the role on stage.

Answer: Tom Felton

CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to sports safety. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 22 = E)

A. 2 22 17 19 22 10
Clue: Protects head

B. 23 22 15 6
Clue: Equipment

C. 6 25 17 22 13
Clue: Govern play

D. 21 22 5 15 17 10 26
Clue: Punishment

Answers: A. helmet B. gear C. rules D. penalty

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

SUDOKU SOLUTION

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

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, it is time to be on the lookout for fresh financial opportunities. Set new goals for yourself, and put your finances at the top of your priority list.
TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, don't bother attracting people through false advertising. Instead, be authentic and you will find you garner much more attention and adoration.
GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
Gemini, the universe is trying to send you cues this week. But you will only receive these cues if you keep your eyes and ears open. Things may not be what they seem.
CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, if you want others to open up, you have to start the conversation by sharing something from your heart as well. Make an effort to be more open in the days ahead.
LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, this week you have the strength and motivation to accomplish your goals. You will sigh with relief when everything gets accomplished on time and in order.
VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
You have a green light to spoil yourself this week, Virgo. It isn't something you do often, so let loose a little bit and splurge on some luxuries.
LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, a dear friend or relative could use your support right now. Offer a helping hand or even a shoulder to cry on so this special person knows you're there to help.
SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
Make an effort to be a social butterfly in the week ahead, Scorpio. This will quench your thirst to be around others. Don't be afraid to reconnect with old friends.
SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, this is a great week to establish a financial strategy that fits into your lifestyle. If this involves revisiting your professional ambitions, then so be it.
CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, don't be afraid to shake things up a bit this week. You may not have time to mince words, so don't hesitate to get to the point. Others will appreciate your candor.
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
It is time to be your own teacher and become an expert in any subject you desire, Aquarius. Start doing your research and you may be surprised at the discoveries.
PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, this week you might start seeing a platonically pal in a more amorous way. The affinity you share may be the foundation for a great relationship.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER 20
Sophia Loren, Actress (92)
SEPTEMBER 21
Jason Derulo, Singer (37)
SEPTEMBER 22
Andrea Bocelli, Singer (68)
SEPTEMBER 23
Bruce Springsteen, Singer (77)
SEPTEMBER 24
Nia Vardalos, Actress (64)
SEPTEMBER 25
Bella Ramsey, Actress (23)
SEPTEMBER 26
Serena Williams, Athlete (45)



VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEER PIGSKIN PROGNOSTICATORS



THIS WEEK'S
GAMES

	CHAD COOPER	SAM BARTLEY	RYAN KEENE	TERESA MATNEY	MARK COOPER	BRIAN MOORE	
							
1	Honaker at Southern Gap	Southern Gap	Southern Gap	Southern Gap	Southern Gap	Honaker	
2	Lebanon at Richlands	Lebanon	Lebanon	Lebanon	Lebanon	Richlands	
3	Ridgeview at Lee High	Ridgeview	Ridgeview	Ridgeview	Ridgeview	Ridgeview	
4	Patrick Henry at John Battle	Patrick Henry	Patrick Henry	Patrick Henry	Patrick Henry	Patrick Henry	
5	Princeton at Graham	Graham	Graham	Princeton	Graham	Graham	
6	Northwood at Chilhowie	Chilhowie	Chilhowie	Chilhowie	Chilhowie	Chilhowie	
7	Eastside at Essex	Essex	Essex	Essex	Eastside	Eastside	
8	Oklahoma at Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	
9	Texas at Tennessee	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	
10	Texas A&M at LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU	
11	Iowa at Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	
12	Falcons at Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	
OVERALL RECORDS		38-10	33-15	35-15	38-10	36-12	33-15

Young Eagles run in tight pack at UVa-Wise Invitational

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Southern Gap's young runners stayed close together Wednesday as the Eagles earned a ninth-place finish against a large field at the UVa-Wise High School Invitational.

Only five seconds separated Southern Gap's first three finishers in the 5,000-meter race, which featured 93 runners and 14 complete teams at the UVa-Wise Cross Country Course.

Freshman Bentley Jackson led the Eagles, placing 31st with a time of 21 minutes, 24.99 seconds.

Freshman Kyler Lester was right behind him in 32nd place at 21:28.90, while sophomore Wyatt Street crossed the finish line in 33rd at 21:29.55.

Sophomore Jacob Smeltzer finished 55th in 23:57.96. Freshman Oliver Breeding completed Southern Gap's scoring lineup, placing 63rd with a time of 24:14.53.

The Eagles scored 195 points, finishing only one point behind eighth-place Rye Cove. Southern Gap's five runners averaged 22:31, with only 2:49 separating Jackson and Breeding.

The Virginia Bearcats won the team championship with 79 points. Castlewood finished second with 101, Ridgeview was third with 115, Honaker placed fourth with 140 and Wise County Central rounded out the top five with 148.

Wise County Central junior Ty Arney won the individual championship with a time of 17:34.70.

Virginia Bearcats junior Liam Pratt placed second in 17:43.65, while Rye Cove sophomore Ty Hood was third in 18:13.17. Virginia Bearcats freshman Timothe Regin finished fourth in 18:26.33, and Castlewood sophomore Isac Cooper completed the top five in 18:28.87.

Patrick Henry senior Braydon McCracken was sixth, followed by Chilhowie junior Kurt Collins, Castlewood senior Parker King, Honaker senior Hunter Dye and Ridgeview freshman Max Johnson.

CROSS COUNTRY

UVa-Wise High School Invitational
At UVa-Wise Cross Country Course
Sept. 16

BOYS

Team standings

- Virginia Bearcats, 79
- Castlewood, 101
- Ridgeview, 115
- Honaker, 140
- Wise County Central, 148
- Eastside, 150
- Twin Springs, 188
- Rye Cove, 194
- Southern Gap, 195
- Tazewell, 234
- Chilhowie, 241
- J.I. Burton, 256
- Letcher County Central (Ky.), 261
- Gate City, 261
- Individual results
- Ty Arney (Wise County Central), 17:34.70
- Liam Pratt (Virginia Bearcats), 17:43.65
- Ty Hood (Rye Cove), 18:13.17
- Timothe Regin (Virginia Bearcats), 18:26.33
- Isac Cooper (Castlewood), 18:28.87
- Braydon McCracken (Patrick Henry), 18:33.34
- Kurt Collins (Chilhowie), 18:40.75
- Parker King (Castlewood), 19:04.51
- Hunter Dye (Honaker), 19:04.71
- Max Johnson (Ridgeview), 19:06.64
- Ethan Baker (Tazewell), 19:07.71
- Lincoln Combs (Honaker), 19:25.84
- Jaxon Crisp (Letcher County Central), 19:59.72
- Evan McReynolds (Eastside), 20:11.67
- Dalten Keith (Castlewood), 20:13.79
- Avery O'Quin (Ridgeview), 20:14.29
- Landen Busler (Union), 20:14.43
- Easton Phelps (Eastside), 20:20.50
- Alex Kariuki (Virginia Bearcats), 20:21.03
- Josh DeBusk (Virginia Bearcats), 20:27.22
- Gage Garrett (Ridgeview), 20:28.98
- Carson Wallace (Ridgeview), 20:32.54
- Jason Correa (Eastside), 20:48.86
- Grayson Hylton (Union), 20:48.95



Southern Gap freshman Bentley Jackson led the Eagles at the UVa-Wise High School Invitational, placing 31st in a field of 93 runners with a time of 21:24.99.

- Jeremy Wells (Wise County Central), 20:52.97
- Colten Johnson (Twin Springs), 20:53.66
- Aayden Mullins (Twin Springs), 21:00.97
- Eli Davidson (Twin Springs), 21:05.27
- Jake Osborne (Rye Cove), 21:13.92
- Landon Adams (J.I. Burton), 21:21.71
- Bentley Jackson (Southern Gap), 21:24.99
- Kyler Lester (Southern Gap), 21:28.90
- Wyatt Street (Southern Gap), 21:29.55
- Landon Harris (Gate City), 21:41.37
- Loften Fansler (Gate City), 21:42.34
- Daniel Corell (Tazewell), 21:47.01
- Salem Hall (Castlewood), 21:52.79
- Brandon Edwards (Eastside), 22:01.93
- Keaton Cook (Honaker), 22:20.14
- Tyler Boyd (Honaker), 22:22.48
- Dylan Kellog (Virginia Bearcats), 22:26.55
- Logan Hamilton (Wise County Central), 22:27.55
- Bryce Swisher (Twin Springs), 22:37.78
- Ashton Louthian (Patrick Henry), 22:40.21
- Elijah Theurer (Patrick Henry), 22:41.34
- Joseph Skeen (Castlewood), 22:57.68
- William Sturgill (Wise County Central), 23:21.62
- Bradley Kell (Chilhowie), 23:23.52
- Bentley Hopkins (Wise County Central), 23:34.63
- Drayden Upchurch (Rye Cove), 23:36.37
- Jude Adams (Letcher County Central), 23:41.63
- Chasten Richardson (J.I. Burton), 23:44.73
- Colton Blakenship (Honaker), 23:49.33
- Max Gardner (J.I. Burton), 23:55.18
- Jacob Smeltzer (Southern Gap), 23:57.96
- William Rogers (Rye Cove), 24:03.14
- Landon Slone (Ridgeview), 24:06.13
- Jordan Potter (Letcher County Central), 24:08.47
- Sylas Blackwell (Chilhowie), 24:08.81
- Thomas Caldwell (Virginia Bearcats), 24:10.50
- Danilo Filho (Castlewood), 24:10.77
- Gavin McCann (Tazewell), 24:14.49
- Oliver Breeding (Southern Gap), 24:14.53
- Ben Stanley (Ridgeview), 24:15.71
- Seth Nunley (Tazewell), 24:19.99
- Roy May (Virginia Bearcats), 24:34.20
- Connor Blevins (J.I. Burton), 24:46.69
- Lyfe McNew (Gate City), 24:47.21
- Kodee Miller (Union), 24:51.67
- Carter Dishman (Castlewood), 25:43.84
- Bronston Williams (Eastside), 26:17.75
- Garrett Hale (Chilhowie), 26:29.91
- Robbie Stapleton (Gate City), 26:38.53
- Cayden Harper (Gate City), 26:59.10
- Carson Mullins (Virginia Bearcats), 27:12.55
- Griffen Taylor (Rye Cove), 27:27.78
- Tidus Greer (Honaker), 28:16.37
- Desmond Adams (J.I. Burton), 28:27.07
- Noah Dennison (Chilhowie), 28:51.89
- Damon Howard (Letcher County Central), 28:56.63
- Asa Rodeheaver (Tazewell), 29:12.97
- Ian McKenzie (Virginia Bearcats), 29:13.66
- Landon Rakes (J.I. Burton), 29:41.58
- Jackson Meade (Twin Springs), 29:53.28
- Tye Whitaker (Letcher County Central), 30:08.06
- Noah Takach (Tazewell), 30:10.36
- Xavier Lomans (Chilhowie), 30:33.17
- Jaden Newsome (Honaker), 30:34.49
- Carter Adams (Letcher County Central), 30:39.63
- Jacob Templeton (Gate City), 32:08.23
- Ryan Jennings (Gate City), 32:27.06
- Cam Stidham (J.I. Burton), 34:48.20
- Landon Pierce (Virginia Bearcats), 34:50.06

IN THE LOCKER ROOM

FROM PAGE 1B

Caiden Keen, No. 15 Evan Shortridge, No. 16 Max Cochran, No. 17 Eli Metz, No. 18 Tripp Boyd, No. 20 Jonah Tester, No. 21 Rhetley Coleman, No. 24 Myles Travis, No. 27 Carter Blankenship, No. 30 Colt Skeens, No. 34 Elijah Rife, No. 42 Easton Stacy, No. 44 Dylan McClanahan, No. 46 Chris Sanabria, No. 54 Easton Lee, No. 60 Dawson Clevinger, No. 67 Alex Sanabria, No. 68 Ayden Sanabria, No. 70 Xander Yates, No. 75 Brek Ratliff and No. 88 Liam Smith.

Coaches: Daniel McClanahan, Dathan Vanover, Jeremy Hurley, Greg Stacy, Charlie Cochran, Michael Blankenship, Cole Stacy, Glenn St. Clair, Cody Looney, Kyle Hall and Cody Skeens.

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES SMURF CHEER

Cheerleaders: Erin Berglowe, Olive Dotson, Emily Gallagher, Lou Hurley, Callie Justus, Everleigh Lester, Karaline Looney, Blair McClanahan, Hadley Waynick, Ember Webb, Trinity Wolford, Chrissy Coleman, Riley Coleman, Aria Dotson, Cayden Epling, Aubrey Mullins, Abigail Onate, Aubrey Owens, Maddie Perry, Oaklynn Street, Callie Yates, Sophie Yates, Catherine Adkins, Mya Armendariz, Kinsley Clevinger, Emma Horn, Rylan Hibbits, Blakely Justice, Lilith Lee, McKenlee Meadows, Blakely Owens, Stella O'Quin, Kensley Ratliff, Margot Robertson, Mary Savage, Lakota Smith and Ada Viers.

Coaches: Brittany Clevinger, Whitney Rowe, Erica Owens and Angie Wolford.

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES PEEWEE FOOTBALL

Players: No. 2 Jason Colley, No. 3 Hunter Cooper, No. 4 Logan Johnson, No. 5 Caden Charles, No. 6 Jackson Perry, No. 7 Joeden Rowe, No. 8 Jensen Dale, No. 9 Brantley Ward, No. 10 Elijah Roden, No. 11 Houston Shumate, No. 12 Colston Stacy, No. 14 Jaxon Stiltner, No. 16 Walker Yates, No. 18 Cashton Stacy, No. 20 Brayden Baldwin, No. 22 Wyatt Lee, No. 25 Jonah Shelton, No. 27 Waylon Rife, No. 33 Eli Cochran, No. 34 Keagan Davis, No. 44 Emmitt Church, No. 45 Ryker Hibbits, No. 45 Chrstopher Moore, No. 47 Eli Blankenship, No. 54 Brently Elswick, No. 55 Anthony McClanahan, No. 56 Caitlyn McClanahan, No. 62 Colton Ratliff, No. 77 Dakota Clevinger, No. 98 Conner Wolford and No. 99 Ian Charles.

Coaches: Tyler Cooper and Jason Ward.

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES PEEWEE CHEER

Cheerleaders: Lana Bennett, Tinleigh Blankenship, Kinsleigh Bostic, Kinzley Bowman, Ashlynn Brown, Ida Clevinger, Addyson Coleman, Audriana Dales, Isla Evans, Grace Hackney, Bralynn Hardin, Bailey Looney, Emalynn Looney, Lashay Looney, Savannah Looney, Charlotte Miller, Olivia Prater, Addilyn Ratliff, Whitney Rowe, Mia Stiltner and Emmy Underwood.

Coaches: Traci Evans, Hope Dales and Ashlee Miller.

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES MIDGET FOOTBALL

Players: No. 1 Jase Hardin, No. 2 Bryson Blankenship, No. 5 Lane Owens, No. 6 Luke Hensley, No. 7 John Vencil, No. 8 Mason Smith, No. 9 Westin Mullins, No. 10 Cael Savage, No. 11 Madix Taylor, No. 12 Dalton Hockman, No. 13 Zack Viers, No. 15 Canaan Yates, No. 16 Conner Yates, No. 18 Aiden Boyd, No. 19 Eli Looney, No. 21 Maddox Meadows, No. 22 Jaxon Boyd, No. 24 Uriah Whitt, No. 30 Ledger Baker, No. 34 Colton Clevinger, No. 35 Lincoln Baldwin, No. 42 Seeley Dale, No. 42 Keelan Daugherty, No. 52 Jaxson Justus, No. 54 Tank Bailey, No. 55 Kreed Lester, No. 60 Joseph Belcher, No. 65 Chase Stiltner, No. 77 Kaden Vance, No. 79 Rylan Lester, No. 88 Grayson Rice and No. 99 Ace Cochran.

Coaches: Aaron Looney, Ben Bailey, Matthew Baldwin and Wesley Meadows.

SOUTHERN GAP EAGLES MIDGET CHEER

Cheerleaders: Nadia Belachew, Sadie Blankenship, Venna Blankenship, Ariel Coleman, Ahleah Daniels, Cheyenne Davis, Bristol Grizzle, Abby Dye, Melody Hockman, Madelyn Lane, Brienne Lester, Isabella Lockhart, Paislee Looney, Gabby Perry, Sopheia Perry, Harper Prater, Autumn Quinley, Aubree Stacy, Aulora Stanley, Amelia Whitt and Rylee Wilson.

Coaches: Kayla Prater and Katelyn Blankenship.

Thank you to Glenn and Angel St. Clair for gathering the team photographs and to Ashley Boyd and Traci Evans for providing photographs and continuing to promote our student-athletes.

Every child on these rosters matters, and every coach, parent and volunteer deserves our appreciation. Their time and encouragement are helping build not only the future of Buchanan County athletics, but the future of Buchanan County.

"Thanks for joining me In the Locker Room. Until next week, let's keep celebrating the victories, learning from the defeats, and always standing behind Buchanan County's athletes."

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LEGAL NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
APPLICATION FOR RE-NEWAL/REISSUANCE OF COAL SURFACE MINING/ NPDES PERMIT NO. 1202170/0082170 UNDER CHAPTER 19, TITLE 45.2 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA**
Publication Number: 26NXA03
Application Number: 1011935

The Black Diamond Company of 1073 Riverview Street, Grundy, VA 24614 is applying to the Virginia Mined Land Repurposing Program for renewal of Permit No. 1202170, to continue the operations at the following location:
The operation is located in Buchanan County along Cow Fork of Grassy Creek and is approximately 2.3 miles NE of Breaks, VA. The permit is situated on the Elkhorn City USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Quadrangle Map. The acreage for this operation is 56.67 acres. Drainage will pass through sediment control structures and will be discharged into Tilley Fork and Abes Fork of Russell Fork of the Big Sandy River. The existing discharge locations may be viewed on the Renewal Map which is attached in Section 21.2 of the application. Additional discharge details are available in the NPDES Application attached in Section 5.15 of the application.
Any person with a valid legal interest which might be adversely affected by this proposal, or an officer or head of any federal, state or local government agency or authority, may within 30 days of October 15, 2026, submit written comments or objections concerning this application and may also request, in writing, that the Mined Land Repurposing Program hold an Informal Conference concerning this application. A copy of the application materials is available electronically for public inspection at <https://www.energy.virginia.gov/epinquiry/frmMain.aspx>
All correspondence concern-

**Kitchen Staff
Wanted**
**Mountain Mission
School (MMS)**
**is seeking a
cook/kitchen staff.**
**Position is part-time
but may develop
into full-time.**
**Please apply online
at www.mmskids.org**
or at the
**Administration
Office 1760
Edgewater Dr.
Grundy, VA**

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ing this application should be submitted to the Mined Land Repurposing Program (Attention: Permit Section), 3405 Mountain Empire Road, Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219. Telephone (276) 523-8160. Written comments and a request for informal conference may be e-mailed to the Division at repurposingpublicnotice@energy.virginia.gov.
VAM-9-24,10-1,8,15;2026

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 1058 SQUIRE BRANCH ROAD, GRUNDY, VA 24614. In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated October 20, 2006, in the original principal amount of \$132,000.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Buchanan County, Virginia as Instrument No. 060003504. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction at the front steps of the building housing the Circuit Court for Buchanan County, Main St., Grundy, Virginia, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on November 12, 2026, at 2:30 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, AND EASEMENT FOR RIGHT OF WAY, SITUATE ON SLATE CREEK OF LEVISA RIVER, IN BUCHANAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA, AND BEING TRACT NO. 1 AND EASEMENT OF THE PROPERTY ACQUIRED BY KERRY ANDREW STACY AND ANNA MARIE STACY, HIS WIFE, AS TENANTS BY THE ENTIRETY WITH RIGHT OF SURVIVORSHIP AS AT COMMON LAW, FROM GREGORY NEIL RIFE AND A. D. RIFE, III BY DEED DATED SEPTEMBER 27, 2006, AND INTENDED TO BE FORTHWITH RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BUCHANAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA, REFERENCE TO WHICH DEED BEING HERE MADE FOR A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY HEREBY CONVEYED, AND THE EXCEPTIONS THEREFROM. THE PROPERTY HEREBY CONVEYED IS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO-WIT: "TRACT NO. 1: BEGINNING AT A POINT IN THE CENTER OF SLATE CREEK, CORNER TO CONNIE SUE BARNETTE (REFERENCE DEED BOOK NO. 361, PAGE 330) AND CORNER TO A 0.079 ACRE TRACT THIS DAY CONVEYED BY GRANTORS TO GREGORY JUSTUS AND ROBIN JUSTUS, HIS WIFE; THENCE WITH THE LAST MENTIONED TRACT, S 30 46 37 W, 155.25 FEET TO AN IRON PIN; THENCE, WITH SAID JUSTUS LINE AND AN EXISTING WIRE FENCE, S 44 54 06 W, 284.16 FEET TO AN IRON PIN; THENCE N 48 32 42 W, 216.11 FEET TO AN IRON PIN; THENCE N 41 27 18 E, 331.12 FEET TO A POINT IN SLATE CREEK; THENCE, UP SLATE CREEK, S 62 04 00 E, 87.99 FEET TO A POINT; THENCE S 83 57 31 E, 145.86 FEET TO THE BEGINNING, CONTAINING 1.93 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY SHOWN ON PLAT ENTITLED, "PLAT SHOWING A PART OF THE PROPERTY IN THE NAME OF GREGORY RIFE & A.D. RIFE, SITUATE ON SLATE CREEK ***, WHICH PLAT IS INTENDED TO BE FORTHWITH RECORDED IN SAID CLERK'S OFFICE. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee

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or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.aldridgepите.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.aldridgepите.com.
VA-352668-2.
VAM-09-17,24;10-22;2026

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE COUNTY OF BUCHANAN COUNTY OF BUCHANAN, VIRGINIA, a Political Subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Complainant,

v.
ESTATE OF JAMES MEADOWS, ET AL Respondent(s).
Case No. CL25-705
ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The object of this suit is to enforce the lien of the Complainant, County of Buchanan, Virginia, for delinquent real estate taxes against certain real property located in the County of Buchanan, Virginia, described as follows:
Tax Map No. 2HH123058 Account No. 11232
All that certain lot, piece or parcel of land situate in Buchanan County, State of Virginia, on the Ridge between Prater Creek and Garden Creek and on the head of Box Camp fork of said Prater Creek and on the head of Breedings Branch of Garden Creek waters of Louisa fork of Sandy River, which is more particularly described as follows:
Beginning for the same at a water oak in the Gap of the Ridge between Garden Creek and Prater Creek at a corner of land now or formerly of John H. Street; and running thence from said place of beginning by and with said Street's line South 65 degrees West 14 poles to a chestnut on a spur; thence down said spur North 45 degrees West 41 poles to a small chestnut; thence North 11 degrees West 16 poles to two chestnut oaks; thence North 21-degrees West 14 poles to a chestnut oak; thence North 65 degrees West 8 poles to a red oak; thence North 12 degrees West 38 poles to a white oak by the side of a path; thence North 1-1/2 degrees West 44 poles to a chestnut and chestnut oak sprouts on top of a spur; thence North 69 degrees East 18 poles to a black gum at a corner of land now or formerly of I. R. Coleman on the spur between the right hand and left hand forks of Box Camp fork of said spur; thence North 57 degrees East 16 poles to a double chestnut on top between Box Camp and Breedings Branch; thence South 60 degrees East 18 poles to a black oak and chestnut oak; thence South 23 degrees East 46 poles to a chestnut and two black oak; thence South 80 degrees East 21 poles to a hickory on a hillside; thence South 64 degrees East 64 poles to two chestnut on a spur in a line of the old survey of land now or formerly of James H. Coleman; thence with same South 22 poles to a chestnut; thence South 25 degrees West 48 poles to two chestnuts and poplar; thence North 72 degrees West 50 poles to the place of beginning; containing about 70 acres, more or less.
Being the same property conveyed to James Meadows by Deed from W. J. Coleman and Sarah J. Coleman, his wife, dated October 25, 1907 and recorded among the land records of the Circuit Court of Buchanan County, Virginia on November 11, 1907 in Deed Book 34 at Page 255.
This description is made subject to all easements, conditions, agreements, restrictions, and reservations of record which affect the

LEGAL NOTICES

property herein described including but not limited to those recorded in Deed Book 220 at Page 45, Deed Book 388 at Page 475, Deed Book 389 at Page 818, Deed Book 389 at Page 822, Deed Book 389 at Page 844, Deed Book 390 at Page 455, Deed Book 390 at Page 515, Deed Book 390 at Page 518, Deed Book 390 at Page 521, Deed Book 390 at Page 527, Deed Book 390 at Page 530, Deed Book 391 at Page 650, Deed Book 393 at Page 545, Deed Book 393 at Page 548, Deed Book 393 at Page 552, Deed Book 393 at Page 557, Deed Book 457 at Page 552, Deed Book 459 at Page 17, Deed Book 459 at Page 19, Deed Book 463 at Page 693, Deed Book 465 at Page 594, Deed Book 463 at Page 695, Deed Book 463 at Page 697, Deed Book 464 at Page 490, Deed Book 464 at Page 492, Deed Book 464 at P94Deed Book 464 at Page 520, Deed Book 464 at Page 525, Deed Book 646 at Page 542, Deed Book 464 at Page 544, Deed Book 464 at Page 546, Deed Book 464 at Page 548, Deed Book 465 at Page 522, Deed Book 465 at Page 528, Deed Book 465 at Page 535, Deed Book 465 at Page 537, Deed Book 465 at Page 550, Deed Book 465 at Page 552, Deed Book 465 at Page 559, Deed Book 465 at Page 585, DEED Book 465 at Page 587, Deed Book 465 at Page 592, Deed Book 465 at Page 846, Deed Book 465 at Page 848, Deed Book 466 at Page 1Deed Book 466 at Page 3, Deed Book 466 at Page 19, Deed Book 466 at Page 21, Deed Book 466 at Page 312, Deed Book 466 at Page 333, Deed Book 466 at Page 38, Deed Book 466 at Page 40, Deed Book 467 at Page 757, Deed Book 466 at Page 832, Deed Book 466 at Page 846, Deed Book 543 at Page 395, Deed Book 553 at Page 801, Deed Book 553 at Page 807, Deed Book 553 at Page 811, Deed Book 553 at Page 817, Deed Book 553 at Page 821, Deed Book 553 at Page 827, Deed Book 554 at Page 213, Deed Book 554 at Page 270, Deed Book 557 at Page 239, Deed Book 557 at Page 243, Deed Book 557 at Page 246, Deed Book 557 at Page 249, Deed Book 557 at Page 252, Deed Book 557 at Page 256, Deed Book 557 at Page 259, Deed Book 557 at Page 263, Deed Book 557 at Page 266, Deed Book 557 at Page 270, Deed Book 557 at Page 273, Deed Book 557 at Page 277, Deed Book 557 at Page 334, Deed Book 557 at Page 336, Deed Book 557 at Page 340, Deed Book 557 at Page 343, Deed Book 558 at Page 100, Deed Book 559 at Page 103, Deed Book 564 at Page 72, Deed Book 564 at Page 76, Deed Book 564 at Page 79, Deed Book 564 at Page 84, Deed Book 564 at Page 88, Deed Book 564 at Page 92, Deed Book 564 at Page 96, Deed Book 564 at Page 100, Deed Book 564 at Page 104, Deed Book 564 at Page 108, Deed Book 564 at Page 112, Deed Book 564 at Page 116, Deed Book 564 at Page 119, Deed Book 564 at Page 123, Deed Book 564 at Page 127, Deed Book 564 at Page 131, Deed Book 564 at Page 135, Deed Book 564 at Page 139, Deed Book 564 at Page 143, Deed Book 564 at Page 147, Deed Book 565 at Page 476, Deed Book 565 at Page 594, Deed Book 565 at Page 645, Deed Book 565 at Page 649, Deed Book 565 at Page 653, Deed Book 566 at Page 657, Deed Book 566 at Page 820, Deed Book 566 at Page 824, Deed Book 566 at Page 828, Deed Book 566 at Page 832, Deed Book 567 at Page 49, Deed Book 573 at Page 53, Deed Book 573 at Page 70, Deed Book 573 at Page 073, Deed Book 573 at Page 077, Deed Book 573 at Page 80, Deed Book 573 at Page 084, Deed Book 573 at Page 088, Deed Book 573 at Page 091, Deed Book 573 at Page 094, Deed Book 574 at Page 403, Deed Book 577 at Page 066,

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Deed Book 577 at Page 069, Deed Book 577 at Page 080, Deed Book 577 at Page 083, Deed Book 577 at Page 560, Deed Book 577 at Page 564, Deed Book 585 at Page 468, and Instrument Number 080001326.
IT APPEARING that an Affidavit has been made and filed stating that due diligence has been used, without effect, to ascertain the identity and location of certain parties to be served, that the last known addresses for the Respondents herein are as follows: James Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Vester Meadows aka William Selvester Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Linda Meadows Svoboda, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Loretta Meadows Seitler, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Charles Melvin Seitler, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Hurlay Mays Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Bobby Lee Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Virgil Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Evelyn Lucille Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Sherman Louis Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Hazel Bea Meadows Whittaker, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Larry Whittaker, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Delores McGowan, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Edna Marie Meadows Boyd, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Myrtle Ann Boyd, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Joseph Daniel Boyd, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Brenda Joyce Boyd, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Thurman Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Peggy Manning Meadows, whose last known address is 6043 Winchester Avenue, Inwood, West Virginia 25428; Steve Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Je-nessa Meadows, whose last known address is 34519 Union Ridge Road, Albany, Ohio 45651; Jordan Meadows, whose last known address is unknown; Je-nessa Meadows, whose last known address is 34519 Union Ridge Road, Albany, Ohio 45710; Lisa Byrd, whose last known address is unknown; Karen Ann Roberts, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Ellis James Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Rufus McKinley Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Eva Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Leonard Alfred Meadows, whose last known address is unknown; Eunice Viola Meadows Strouth, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Carter Strouth, whose last known address is unknown; Donnie Jay Strouth, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Virginia Ethel Meadows Osborne, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Lavern Wayne Osborne, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown;

LEGAL NOTICES

Rufus Meadows, Jr., who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Amos Lee Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Susan Meadows, whose last known address is 1208 Armistead Way, Baltimore, Maryland 21205; Ruby Jean Meadows McGuigan, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Robert Russell Coleman, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Brenda C. Coleman, whose last known address is 14 Elktion Trail, Bracey, Virginia 23919; Ronnie Coleman, Jr., who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Clarence Sewell Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Jimmie Clyde Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Tammy Mounts, whose last known address is Post Office Box 654, Pounding Mill, Virginia 24637; Cindy Hess, whose last known address is Post Office Box 876, Cedar Bluff, Virginia 24609; Ernest Clyde Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Ellen Marie Rife Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Jo Ellen Meadows, whose last known address is 639 Baptist Valley Road, Cedar Bluff, Virginia 24609; Alice Irene Meadows Smith, whose last known address is 857 East Avenue, Richlands, Virginia 24641; Eddie Arnold Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; Dellie Brown Meadows, whose last known address is 2117 Walnut Crossing Run, Yackinville, North Carolina 27055; Howard Daniel Meadows, who is believed to be deceased and whose last known address is unknown; and that any officers, heirs, devisees, and successors in title of the Respondent named herein are made parties Respondent to this action individually and/or by the general description of Parties Unknown, it is hereby
ORDERED that the parties herein and all Parties Unknown and/or whose location cannot be ascertained appear on or before October 23, 2026 in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Buchanan, Virginia, and do what may be necessary to protect their interests in this cause. Entered on the 31st day of August, 2026.
Reece Hale Robertson
Judge
I Ask For This:
John A. Rife, Esq. (VSB No. 45805)
Jeffrey A. Scharf, Esq. (VSB No. 30591)
Mark K. Ames, Esq. (VSB No. 27409)
Andrew M. Neville, Esq. (VSB No. 86372)
Gregory L. Haynes, Esq. (VSB No. 37158)
Seth R. Konopasek, Esq. (VSB No. 97065)
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TACS No.: 759787
VAM-09-10,17,24;2026 10-1;2026

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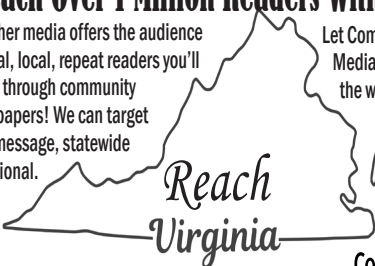
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WHAT THEY CLAIMED



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NOTICE

Buchanan County School Board



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

*Must have a CDL to drive a school bus. Deadline: September 29, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. Interested person(s) may print a Professional Application from our website at www.bcpsk12.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.

PS Form 3526 (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publication)

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Full Name Michael Showell	Complete Mailing Address PO Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24801-0429	
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a. Paid Electronic Copies	144	151
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies	1925	1813
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☒ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the 09/24/2026 issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.		
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PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2) PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

Southern Gap Dirt Drags racers battle rain, mud

By CHAD COOPER
coopkam@gmail.com

Rain and mud could not stop racers from putting on a show during the Southern Gap Dirt Drags on Sept. 12. Competitors ranging from young Power Wheels drivers to experienced ATV, motocross and UTV racers battled difficult track conditions across 15 divisions.

Event organizers thanked the racers and spectators who stayed through the wet weather. Although most divisions were completed, worsening conditions eventually forced officials to stop the event before every scheduled race could be held.

McKenzie Stiltner captured the Power Wheels division, finishing ahead of Maverick Ratliff.

Ashton Ratliff won the ages 3-8 ATV and motocross elapsed-time division, with Jenna Stacy placing second. Ian Viers took first place in the ages 9-12 division, followed by Hunter Justus and Hunter Bowman.

Maddox Hinkle won the MX 65cc-100cc heads-up division. Cameron Cole placed second, and Brantley Deel finished third.

Shaun Robinson collected two victories during the event. He won the ATV 2-Stroke Open division and took first in the ATV 201cc-400cc class. Justin Underwood and Tasha Underwood completed the top three in the 201cc-400cc division.

Robinson also placed third in the ATV 501cc and up division, which was won by Dillon Hacker. Kendall Blevins finished second.

Hacker earned another victory in the MX 251cc and up class, finishing ahead of Keaton Matney and Noah Hubbard.

Jase Hurley won the MX 101cc-200cc division, with Mikey Ratliff placing second and Maddox Ratliff third. Ryan Cline claimed the MX 201cc-250cc division, followed by Hurley and Leland Cordill.

Canaan McClanahan won the UTV 801cc and up non-turbo division, with Logan Fuller finishing second.

Dillon Stanley took first place in the UTV Turbo Stock Open class. Kyler Yates finished second, and Fuller placed third.

Fuller returned to win the UTV Non-Turbo Open division, finishing ahead of McClanahan. Homer Waters captured the UTV Turbo Open championship.

Meagan Shrader won the Powder Puff Open division, while Addy Boyd finished second.

The track records set after the event were Justin Grizzle's 4.119-second run in the SXS division, Michael Lee's 4.230-second mark in the ATV division, and Hacker's 4.617-second run in motocross.

The Southern Gap Dirt Drags are scheduled to return Sept. 26, with organizers hoping for sunnier weather and improved track conditions.

SOUTHERN GAP DIRT DRAGS

Sept. 12
Power Wheels

McKenzie Stiltner
Maverick Ratliff
Ages 3-8 ATV and MX — ET
Ashton Ratliff
Jenna Stacy
Ages 9-12 ATV and MX — ET

Ian Viers
Hunter Justus
Hunter Bowman
MX 65cc-100cc — Heads Up
Maddox Hinkle
Cameron Cole
Brantley Deel

ATV 2-Stroke Open
Shaun Robinson
MX 101cc-200cc

Jase Hurley
Mikey Ratliff
Maddox Ratliff
MX 201cc-250cc

Ryan Cline
Jase Hurley
Leland Cordill
MX 251cc and up

Dillon Hacker
Keaton Matney
Noah Hubbard
ATV 201cc-400cc

Shaun Robinson
Justin Underwood
Tasha Underwood
ATV 501cc and up

Dillon Hacker
Kendall Blevins
Shaun Robinson
UTV 801cc and up — Non-Turbo
Canaan McClanahan
Logan Fuller

UTV Turbo Stock Open
Dillon Stanley
Kyler Yates
Logan Fuller

UTV Non-Turbo Open
Logan Fuller
Canaan McClanahan

UTV Turbo Open
Homer Waters
Powder Puff Open

Meagan Shrader
Addy Boyd
Track records
SXS — Justin Grizzle, 4.119 seconds
ATV — Michael Lee, 4.230 seconds
MX — Dillon Hacker, 4.617 seconds

Eagles explore careers close to home

By SGHS STUDENT REPORTER

Southern Gap High School launches its first Industry Luncheon, connecting students with local professionals and career opportunities in Southwest Virginia.

What does your future look like?

For students at Southern Gap High School, that question can feel a long way off—but the school's new Industry Luncheon Series is helping students start thinking about their futures now.

The first-ever Industry Luncheon welcomed Pete Savage, Jessica Savage, and Chris Viers of West River Conveyors, who spent time with students sharing their experiences in education, their career journeys, and the opportunities available right here in Southwest Virginia.

West River Conveyors is a leading manufacturer and supplier of conveyor equipment and solutions for the mining industry. With its roots in Southwest Virginia, the company has become a recognized benchmark for innovation, manufacturing, and career opportunities throughout the region.

Rather than simply talking about jobs, Savage and Viers shared the personal paths that brought them to where they are today. Students heard about the decisions, education, experiences, and opportunities that helped shape their careers—and learned that there isn't always one straight path to a successful future.

For SGHS students, those conversations can make career possibilities feel more real.

"I enjoyed hearing about career opportunities right here in Southwest Virginia and learning about potential internships close to home," said SGHS student Reid

Stiltner. "It gives me a chance to see if I'm really interested in a career before I head off to college."

That opportunity to explore careers before making major decisions is one of the goals of the Industry Luncheon Series.

Southern Gap High School hopes to use these luncheons to expose students to the wide variety of industries, businesses, careers, and educational pathways available throughout Southwest Virginia. By connecting students directly with professionals, the school hopes to help students discover possibilities they may not have considered—and understand that a successful career doesn't necessarily mean leaving home.

The message is simple: there are opportunities here.

Whether students are interested in business, manufacturing, technology, healthcare, education, skilled trades, entrepreneurship, or another career field, the Industry Luncheon Series is designed to help them learn what those careers actually look like and what it takes to get there.

And sometimes, the best way to figure out what you want to do is to start by meeting someone who is already doing it.

Southern Gap High School is looking for additional local professionals and businesses interested in sharing their industries, career journeys, and experiences with students. Community members interested in participating in a future Industry Luncheon can contact Megan Wolford at megan.wolford@bcpsk12.com for more information.

The future starts with a conversation—and SGHS is giving its Eagles plenty of opportunities to start talking.

SUPERVISORS RECOGNIZE

FROM PAGE 1B

duced anglers Landon Ray and Joshua Smith, who attended the recognition with their families.

Ray and Smith competed at Lake Cumberland in Kentucky, where they placed 34th among 413 teams in national and world competition.

"It's very impressive that kids around this area can compete in the national and the world," Looney told the board.

The supervisors also recognized Jaxon Deel, Brody Deel, Easton Stevens and Breese Bostic, who were unable to attend the meeting.

The Deel team placed 217th among 411 teams in national and world competition. Stevens and Bostic placed 18th among 79 teams at a junior national and world tournament in Russellville, Arkansas.

Looney said youth fishing programs do more than introduce young people to competitive angling. They also encourage participants to understand and protect the region's waterways.

"Once we get these kids educated here, they will respect our water streams," Looney said. "In the future, maybe some of them will help get this cleaned up, or they can have more efficient tournaments around here."

The board also heard from Bobby Ratliff, who provided an update on the county's youth archery team and asked supervisors to help the program find a permanent place to practice, store its equipment and host

tournaments.

Ratliff said the team has obtained targets and a protective curtain that will allow members to practice inside the gymnasium at Big Rock. However, the addition of another youth archery team in Southwest Virginia means each participating team is expected to host a tournament.

"They're wanting each team to host a tournament," Ratliff said.

Ratliff asked whether the former Grundy Senior High School gymnasium could eventually be used by the archery program. In addition to providing enough room for a tournament, the facility could give the team a place to store its targets rather than transporting the bulky equipment to and from each practice.

"I've got to have a place to store them," Ratliff said. "There's no way I can haul them back and forth."

Ratliff told supervisors the team needed approximately \$969.15 for materials, another protective curtain and 10 tournament targets.

Rocklick District Supervisor Craig Stiltner made a motion to divide the cost equally among the county's seven magisterial districts. Knox District Supervisor Trey Adkins seconded the motion, which passed unanimously among the supervisors in attendance.

Hurricane District Supervisor and board Chairman Tim Hess was absent from the meeting.



Young performers gather backstage at The CAM. The new after-school program will introduce students to improv, character development, storytelling, movement, vocal skills and other aspects of theatre (Contributed photo).

Spotlight on the CAM

By JODI REYNOLDS
Theatre Guild of Buchanan County

Beginning this October, there will be a new reason for kids to look forward to the end of the school day. The CAM is launching a new weekly after-school theatre workshop designed to give young people a place to create, perform, build confidence and, most importantly, have fun.

Our new after-school program will offer a different theatre experience each week. Rather than working toward one large production, each workshop will stand on its own. Kids can join us week after week and continue building their skills.

One week, students might learn the basics of the stage, including stage directions, theatre terminology, projection and how to command a room with their voice. The next week, they may dive into character development, receive a character card and discover who that person is through movement and voice while staying completely in character.

Other weeks will focus on group improv, facial expressions and emotion, monologues, small scenes, storytelling, movement, vocal skills and more. As the program grows, we can explore everything from audition techniques and comedy to musical theatre and creating original characters and scenes.

While the focus will change, the

basic structure of the afternoon will remain familiar. Students will begin with a warm-up icebreaker or theatre exercise, move into a brief lesson introducing the day's skill, spend the majority of the workshop putting that skill into action and finish with a cool-down activity.

In other words, we aren't planning to spend much time sitting in chairs talking about theatre. We want the kids doing theatre.

There will be games. There will be improv. There will be characters. There will probably be some wonderfully dramatic facial expressions.

There will be opportunities to stand in front of a group and opportunities to work as part of one. Some activities will be silly. Others will challenge students to stretch a little outside their comfort zones. All of them will have a purpose.

Theatre teaches far more than how to perform on a stage. Students practice speaking clearly, listening to others, thinking on their feet, working as a team and becoming comfortable expressing ideas.

A child doesn't have to dream of Broadway to benefit from learning how to walk into a room, look someone in the eye and confidently speak.

We also want this program to have room for individual growth. Students who attend regularly may work on individual projects, such as monologues, characters or short scenes, in addition to the rotating

weekly activities.

Periodically, we hope to invite families into The CAM for an informal showcase so the kids can share some of what they've been working on.

We also know that an after-school program has to work for parents as well as children. We are exploring organized transportation options in addition to parent drop-off, and the program will provide a safe, structured place for students through the afternoon.

More information about participating ages, registration, pricing, transportation and the October schedule is available on our website at www.seeyouatthecam.com. You may also call or text our executive director, Colin Dailey, at 276-244-7121.

One of our goals at The CAM has always been to find more ways for people to use our space. For our youngest community members, that might begin one afternoon after school.

So, somewhere between an acting game, a ridiculous improv scene and the first time they hear themselves through a mic, they may discover something they didn't know they could do—which is exactly what we want happening at The CAM.

The stage is waiting. Follow along on our journey through our social media channels and on our new, improved and up-to-date website. See you at The CAM.



Young performers take the stage at The CAM, where a new weekly after-school theatre workshop will give children opportunities to develop their acting skills, build confidence and express their creativity beginning in October.

Farmers Market at Southern Gap opens with ribbon-cutting ceremony

By CHAD COOPER
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A new farmers market at Southern Gap officially opened Sept. 17 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by local officials, organizers and community supporters.

The Farmers Market at Southern Gap is located behind the large Southern Gap sign atop Lovers Gap, near the turn onto Southern Gap Road.

For now, the market will be open each Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., providing residents and visitors with another opportunity to support local growers and producers.

"The farmers market will provide a place for people to trade and sell

garden vegetables, honey, fresh eggs, etc.," Prater District Supervisor David Rose said. "We are excited to get this going for the county."

Rose said vendors will not be charged to participate in the market.

"There will be no charge to set up at the farmers market," Rose said. "A big thank you goes out to Big Sandy Soil and Water Conservation for providing this opportunity for the community of Buchanan County."

Representatives of the Big Sandy Soil and Water Conservation District joined county and economic development officials for the ribbon-cutting.

Those attending included Josh McGlothlin, chairman of the Big Sandy Soil and Water Conservation

District, and Bobby Looney, a member of its board. Associate directors Leona Wolford and Virginia Looney also represented the district.

Rose represented the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, while Pete Stiltner represented the Buchanan County Industrial Development Authority.

Brooke Charles, Glenn St. Clair, Angel St. Clair and Harold Deel were also among those attending the ceremony.

The market's location at Southern Gap makes it easily accessible to residents traveling through the area while also providing another attraction for visitors to the growing recreation and tourism destination.



Officials and community supporters gather for the Sept. 17 ribbon-cutting at the new Farmers Market at Southern Gap. Pictured from left are Leona Wolford, Glenn St. Clair, Brooke Charles, Josh McGlothlin, Bobby Looney, David Rose, Pete Stiltner, Virginia Looney, Harold Deel and Angel St. Clair.

Supervisors question use of Flock cameras in Buchanan County

By CHAD COOPER
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Members of the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors are seeking legal guidance on whether the county can prevent the use of Flock license plate recognition cameras outside Grundy and whether the town can continue operating cameras within its limits without county approval.

The cameras prompted a spirited discussion during the board's Sept. 14 meeting at the Buchanan County Government Center on Slate Creek.

Knox District Supervisor Trey Adkins said he does not believe Buchanan County needs Flock cameras anywhere. He questioned whether the county could adopt an ordinance or take other action to prevent additional cameras from being installed.

"My question is, I don't think we need any of that in the county, so would we not need an ordinance to allow anybody to put those up in the county?" Adkins asked.

Flock cameras photograph passing vehicles and record license plate information. Law enforcement agencies can search that information when investigating crimes or attempting to locate vehicles connected to alerts.

County Attorney Lee Moise said the county could prevent the cameras from being placed in unincorporated areas by refusing to approve an agreement or provide money for the service.

"It looks like the way that we can stop it is just by not approving a contract," Moise said. "Because they do this through law enforcement with a contract. I think if we don't approve the contract or the budgeting of the contract, that will stop it."

Moise said other localities have taken that approach.

The discussion then turned to cameras already being used by the Grundy Police Department within the town limits.

Adkins said his opposition extended to those cameras, noting that Grundy is located within Buchanan County.

"I don't know the reason behind putting them up," Adkins said. "I'm not a big fan of Big Brother, and I don't think the citizens are."

Adkins asked whether the Board of Supervisors could stop the town from operating the cameras.

"My question is, the town of Grundy is in the county of Buchanan, which we govern, and the question is, can we put a stop to it?" Adkins said.

Moise initially said Grundy is a separate governmental body with authority over matters within its town limits.

"The town council does have authority over the town of Grundy," Moise said. "I think that they can do what they have jurisdiction over in their town."

Adkins questioned whether the town should be able to operate the cameras without approval from the county.

"Even with the town?" Adkins asked.

Rocklick District Supervisor Craig Stiltner also questioned whether the town should have been required to obtain county approval before entering into an agreement for the cameras.

"I don't agree with that," Stiltner said. "I think that needs to be researched."

Stiltner said his understanding was that the Town of Grundy had already entered into a contract and was paying a monthly fee for the cameras.

"The town signed a contract, a month contract with them," Stiltner said. "And they pay you so much for putting them up in the town."

Garden District Supervisor and board Vice Chairman Jeff Cooper, who presided over the meeting in Chairman Tim Hess' absence, asked Moise to determine the extent of the town's legal authority.

"What we need to know from you is, can the town do that without our approval?" Cooper asked. "That's what these guys want to know. That's what Trey wants to know, and that's what Mr. Stiltner wants to know. So let's find that answer."

Moise said he believed Grundy could enter into its own agreement for cameras operating within the town. He said residents who object to cameras located within Grundy might have to take their concerns to the Grundy Town Council.

The county, however, could reject any proposed agreement involving cameras in areas outside the town, Moise said.

Adkins said he had received considerable criticism and questions from residents about the cameras.

"I'm getting blistered on this," Adkins said. "I didn't know they were up until they told me."

Moise said the matter first came to his attention approximately a month before the supervisors' meeting. He said he then spoke with Grundy Town Manager Dennis Ramey about how the town was using the cameras.

"When this came up about a month ago, I talked to Dennis Ramey," Moise said. "And Dennis has assured me that they are not using it for traffic enforcement."

Moise said he was told the cameras were intended to assist law enforcement during serious incidents, including Amber Alerts, rather than issue routine traffic citations.

"It's for, like, if there's an Amber Alert," Moise said.

Moise also referred to a theft involving an ATM at New Peoples Bank as an example of an investigation in which images collected by a license plate camera might have helped identify a vehicle or suspect.

"The reason that they actually did it was that somebody had broken into the ATM, I think, at New Peoples Bank," Moise said. "And if they had a camera like that, they might have been able to identify who did it."

Adkins was not persuaded by the example. He said the truck used during the ATM theft had itself been stolen, meaning an image of its license plate might not have identified the person responsible for the crime.

"The truck was stolen that was used at New Peoples Bank," Adkins said. "The Flock camera's not going to do any good."

Adkins compared the cameras to gun-control laws, arguing that restrictions and surveillance primarily affect law-abiding citizens while criminals find ways to avoid them.

"A Flock camera, in my opinion, is like a gun law," Adkins said. "Law-abiding citizens will follow the gun law because they're afraid to go to jail. But you've got thugs that will be packed with guns. That's why gun laws don't work."

Cooper directed Moise to research the legal issue and determine whether Grundy can operate the cameras without the county's consent.

"What you need to do, Mr. Moise, is confer with these guys and find out if that's a fact, if they can do that," Cooper said.

Cooper said the answer would also clarify where residents should take their complaints. If the town has independent authority, objections to the cameras within Grundy would need to be presented to the Town Council. If the cameras require county approval, the Board of Supervisors would address the issue.

The board took no formal action on the cameras during the meeting. Moise was asked to determine what authority the county has over the cameras already operating within Grundy and whether additional cameras could be installed elsewhere in Buchanan County without the board approving a contract or funding.