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# The Vinton Messenger

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## Vinton Town Council May elections could be moving to November

**Debbie Adams**  
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Last week, members of Virginia Senate narrowly passed SB 1157 which says, in part, that “beginning with any election held after January 1, 2022, elections for mayor, members of a local governing body, or members of an elected school board shall be held at the time of the November general election for terms to commence January 1.” The bill advances to the House of Delegates and, if it passes there, needs a signature from the governor.

The bill goes on to state, “Mayors and members of a council or school board who were elected at a May general election and whose terms are to expire as of June 30 shall continue in office until their successors have been elected at the November general election and have been qualified to serve.”

In the Town of Vinton, mandated by the Town’s Charter, the mayor and four Town Council members are elected in May and take office on July 1, serving four-year terms. The mayor and two council members were elected in May 2020. The other two council seats come up for election in May 2022.

If the bill became law, it would override election dates currently set by existing city and town charters.

SB 1157 was proposed by Senator Lionell Spruill of Chesapeake, who contends that May elections result in substantially lower voter turnouts.

Vinton’s representative to the Senate, Senator David Suetterlein, voted against the bill.

“Vinton council elections should be focused on issues facing Vinton,” Suetterlein stated. “They deserve their own attention away from the big spending, federal November elections.”

That is the stance of Vinton Mayor Brad Grose, Vice Mayor Sabrina McCarty, and Councilwoman Laurie Mullins.

“May elections are important,” said Mayor Grose, who has served on Vinton Town Council since 2000. “They allow people to run who do not want to be part of the November hoopla.”

“I am not in favor of moving May elections to

November,” McCarty said. “I feel that May is the best time for Town of Vinton election. It allows the community to truly focus on what they want for their local government and vote for the best representative, without being consumed with distractions from political views that occur during November.”

“I would prefer the elections stay in May,” said Mullins. “Local governments and their officials should be distanced from politics in my opinion. Most of the Washington or Richmond back and forth and party lines have no place in our town. We run as independents and stay that way when we are considering what is best for Vinton and our citizens. I feel like candidates would get lost or overshadowed if they’re on a ballot with state or national big names. The focus should be on local candidates because that’s where the change starts.”

Former Vinton Vice Mayor Wes Nance, now the Commonwealth’s Attorney in Bedford County, said, “I was disappointed to hear about the movement to push all local elections to November. I think it will have a profound, and overall negative impact on local races, such as for Vinton Town Council. Although candidates for council have always had political affiliations, opinions, and preferences, I think the Spring elections allowed for candidates to focus on local issues as opposed to the platforms of the national parties. If the legislation passes, I’m afraid that local issues will take a back seat to where candidates stand in relation to statewide or nationwide issues and candidates.”

“I also fear that local races will be drowned out by the din coming from larger races that spend much more money than local candidates ever could. I believe it is inevitable that local races will be overwhelmed by the campaign machines of statewide or national races. They will have to attach themselves to such narratives or risk being completely ignored. Media attention, except for local newspapers such as The Messenger, will ignore the local races and focus on the

See **Town Council**, page 6



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

The Vinton Moose Lodge partnered with the Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Vinton for the Santa Claus Crawl through the neighborhoods of Vinton when the Christmas parade was cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020.

## Vinton Moose celebrates 60 years of service

By Debbie Adams

Several years ago, Dr. Jessica McClung, then Supervisor of Special Education for Roanoke County Schools, received a phone call “out of the blue” from Clark Crawley, administrator of the Vinton Moose Lodge. He was calling to ask how the Moose could help the Special Education students in Roanoke County. McClung said she was somewhat taken aback by his call at first, but, during the conversation, they arranged a “Breakfast with Santa” for children with disabilities in grades preschool through high school in the banquet hall at the Moose Lodge.

“When we got to the Moose Lodge, they had it set up as if the

kids were princes and princesses, and treated them like royalty,” McClung shared. “Santa came on the fire truck. The Moose had built a sleigh for photos for the kids with Santa. The Vinton Police Department attended. It was magical.”

“The Moose members took care of everything. They cooked; they served; they even provided breakfast for the bus drivers who transported us. The kids, their parents, and teachers, and tons of kind people from the Moose Lodge filled up the banquet room. We found out there is never any stress working with Clark and the Moose. They are phenomenal.”

McClung is not the only one

who has received those calls. Countless organizations have been invited in.

According to Angie Chewning, executive director of the Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce, “The men and women in the Moose work diligently to seek out the needs of other organizations and support them in any way they can.”

The Vinton Moose Family Center No. 1121 was chartered on January 3, 1961 and this year celebrates its 60th anniversary.

What is known as Moose International was founded in 1888 by Dr. Henry Wilson, who established the first lodge in Lou-

See **Moose** page 5

## Mayor supports May elections

By Vinton Mayor Brad Grose

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion and concerns about moving the local elections from May to November. My perspective is based upon the 21 years that I have served as an elected official in the wonderful Town of Vinton.

By many measures, we have experienced tremendous success in the Town of Vinton, especially over the past few years. We have been blessed with growth and improvements in many areas of our town. There are many reasons for our recent progress including the blessings of God, a powerful professional staff, supportive citizens, and a Town Council that works well as a team. As individuals, we do not always agree, but all of us want, as we often say, “whatever is best for the town.”

During my tenure as part of Town Council, it has been completely void of partisan politics. I fear that moving the elections to November would introduce partisan politics into the Town Council that could prove very harmful to the current cooperative atmosphere. I believe there would be an unavoidable association with political parties.

I am further convinced that many highly qualified, passion-

ate individuals would not run for Town Council if the elections were held in November. Some awesome people simply want to serve their community by sharing their God-given talents to make this a better place to live, not for political recognition. It is that simple!

The May elections allow our citizens to become familiar with the local candidates and the local issues. If the elections are held in November, the state and national issues and candidates would surely consume the attention and interest of the media and thus the voters. Can you imagine any local issue such as refuse collection or street conditions trying to compete with national issues such as abortion or national defense? The local issues, although highly impactful upon our everyday lives, would simply disappear.

The COVID-19 pandemic had an enormously negative impact upon the most recent local election in May 2020. Many elements of running for Town Council such as meeting with the citizens, knocking on doors, or placing yard signs (all of which I love) simply could not occur. Usually, candidates can be seen and easily contacted

for their opinions and answers to questions about local neighborhood issues. I submit that with November elections, the questions would concern state and national issues, not local.

There is also a great amount of tradition in having local elections. I believe that many of our citizens enjoy the May elections and all the attention it brings to our town and local situations. Many of our citizens enjoy the fact that they know the candidates personally and consider them to be friends with common interests.

Finally, I believe that local elections are representative of how government should work in our country; the smaller, the better! I believe that countless problems exist in our nation because many of our citizens feel that their voice is not being heard. They are correct. Moving the elections from May to November would further dilute the individual voices of our citizens. Instead of a local vote being one of hundreds, it would be one in thousands. May elections are an important part of our American tradition that should not be taken from us. I hope we will continue to have May elections “In Vinton.”

## Joe Goodpies plans to open February 3

Joe Goodpies restaurant at Vinyard Station has modified its schedule and now plans an official opening for the public on Wednesday, Feb. 3.

Owner Jack Winston, developer Dale Wilkinson, and general contractor Greg Rhodes have scheduled a “soft opening” for invited guests on February 1.

Joe Goodpies is located at the corner of Washington Avenue and Pollard Street in downtown Vinton in the iconic Vinton Motors building. Vinton Motors was in business for 77 years.

Operating hours will be normal restaurant hours from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekdays and 11 p.m. on weekends.

Winston is the owner of Jersey Lily’s Roadhouse Grill on Orange Avenue and Jersey Lily’s in Salem.

The Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a ribbon-cutting for Joe Goodpies in the coming weeks.

According to Vinton Town Manager Pete Peters, the Town of Vinton will host a separate ribbon-cutting for the entire Vinyard Station

Complex later in the spring, possibly in April, inviting members of Town Council, the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, the Roanoke County and Town of Vinton administrations, and the developers to celebrate the project and recognize all those who have made contributions to a successful completion of the project.

There will be speeches by council and board members, tours of the property, and recognition of partners and businesses who participated in making the project a reality.



# Virginia limits vaccine supply to population size

After a troubled roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine, Virginia health officials announced its limited supply will now be divided based on the population of the region.

During a telephone press conference last week, Dr. Danny Avula, Richmond City and Henrico County Health Department director, said local health departments will soon receive information on how much of the state's 105,000 doses they are receiving on a weekly basis, but those doses must be shared with medical providers, pharmacies and hospitals.

Dr. Avula said the challenge of this new system is localities that receive only a couple thousands doses each week and must share them with a host of other medical institutes.

"How do you do that in a way that even comes close to meeting the demand," he asked. "The answer is you don't. And understandably that has led to a great deal of confusion and frustration on the part of the public."

Prior to the new system, Virginia's Department of Health was giving out doses requested by health systems and health districts when those vaccines were limited to health care workers.

However, when the state expanded its pool of people available for vaccination and increased the numbers of Virginians available for Phase 1b, which includes about 50 percent of Virginia's population, orders were coming in for three times as many doses as the state could handle.

Critics of the state's handling of the vaccination program claim the state is not being transparent in its doses accounting and that its COVID-19 website lacks how many doses have been shipped and how many injections were administered. Under pressure, the state Health Department released limited information about doses administered by five health regions, but not how many doses were shipped to those regions.

Some regions are reporting they received no doses to give patients, mainly in rural areas. Local health officials in rural areas have told media outlets the distribution should be based on COVID positivity rates, which are extremely high in rural areas.

During the conference call, Dr. Avula said there are hiccups in the system, but health officials think the most "equitable way" is to release doses based on a region's population.

If additional doses become

available, the state health department would consider expanding the vaccine to localities with a population of older and vulnerable people.

While Dr. Avula is pleased with the new Biden Administration plans to arm jab 100 million doses in people during the first 100 days, he warned that will not start until the end of February. And, he added, Virginia is not expected to see a jump in doses.

Approximately 40 percent of the 420,000 COVID deaths in the U.S. were nursing home residents.

In a recent opinion piece published by The Virginia Mercury, Tinglong Dai, a professor of operations management and business analytics at John Hopkins University, compared Virginia's rollout to neighboring West Virginia, which leads the nation in nursing home COVID vaccinations.

Dai contends The Mountain State opted out of a federal partnership that depends on two giant chain pharmacies — Walgreens and CVS — to administer vaccines to nursing homes, whereas West Virginia relies on both chain and local pharmacies.

"The big difference is in the numbers," he writes. "Under

the federal partnership, CVS planned to have about 1,000 of its pharmacies as vaccine hubs to serve some 25,000 nursing home facilities across the nation.... Similarly, a Walgreens official said his company would have 800 to 1,000 Walgreens pharmacies to serve as a hub for about 23,000 nursing home facilities."

In West Virginia, state health officials decided to mobilize independent and chain pharmacies alike, rather than rely on the two giants. More than 250 pharmacies offered to help vaccinate residents and workers in 214 nursing homes. "In other words, each nursing home on average is served by more than one pharmacy," he wrote.

Dr. Cynthia Morrow, director of the Roanoke City and Alleghany Highlands Health District, (RCAHD), shared the following statistics in her weekly briefing. As of January 26, 2021, Roanoke County had 257 active COVID cases for a total of 6,110 cumulative cases. The county's death total from COVID is 73. However, health officials said the death count is based on death certificates being released to them and that can take four to six weeks.

According to Dr. Morrow, 1,950 first doses were received by

the RCAHD in the week ending on January 22 and 2,300 were distributed. (Vaccine received/used is the number of vials x advertised doses/ vial. For Moderna, there are 10 doses/ vial, for Pfizer, 5 doses/ vial. The actual total number of people vaccinated exceeds the number of doses by vial because it is common to get an extra-dose out of the vials). A total of 5,280 doses have been distributed out of 5,950 received, not including 350 doses to pharmacies. In addition, over 6,000 doses were administered through partnership clinics with Carilion Clinic from Friday, Jan. 22, through Sunday, Jan. 24.

Dr. Morrow also issued the following statement along with her weekly update, "Unfortunately, those trying to take advantage of others don't take a break during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are getting reports that people in our area are getting emails from companies stating they will help with vaccine appointments. This is not true. The only messaging regarding vaccines at this time will be coming from the Roanoke City Alleghany Health District, PrepMod or VAMS registration services. Please be mindful of the links that you click in regards to the COVID-19 vaccine."

# Roanoke County Schools hold strategic planning session



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

The Roanoke County School Board discussed construction plans for W.E. Cundiff Elementary at its strategic planning session on January 21.

**Debbie Adams**  
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The Roanoke County School Board met in a strategic planning session on January 21 to discuss school construction cost estimates involving W.E. Cundiff and Glen Cove Elementary Schools and the Burton Center for Arts and Technology (BCAT). W.E. Cundiff is located on Hardy Road in Vinton.

The School Board would like to begin construction on a brand new BCAT in 2023 and the two elementary schools in 2024. The board intends to ask the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors for more funding for these projects.

Chairman Don Butzer has previously implored the Board of Supervisors to fund and advance the construc-

tion schedule for many of the antiquated schools in the county, which were built decades ago and are not scheduled for renovations for decades to come.

Before the pandemic struck, the Board of Supervisors had agreed to increase its annual debt issue from \$10 million to \$12 million to speed things along. Funding is designated for the schools in two out of three years of the funding cycle. In their strategic planning session in January 2020, Butzer favored a 15-15-15 funding formula.

Estimates for replacing BCAT with a new building total approximately \$50.8 million. The new school would be located near the RCPS Central Administration building off of Cove Road. It is currently located in Salem.

School Board members have long discussed the drastic need for the replacement of BCAT, "a hidden gem," which serves students from all five county high schools in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Students attend BCAT for part of their day and then return to their home schools for the remainder of their classes.

The current campus includes three buildings all of which are outdated, built in the 1960s and '70s. To a great extent because of space limitations, BCAT is unable to accept all of those students who apply each year. (Some classes are limited by OSHA regulations of no more than 20 students in a class during any given time. Other classes have caps set at 30 students.)

In February 2020, 924 students were enrolled at



PHOTO COURTESY OF RCPS

The Burton Center for Arts and Technology (BCAT) was built in the 1960s and '70s. The School Board hopes to replace the antiquated building as soon as funding is available.

BCAT; 234 of those were from William Byrd High School.

Building A at BCAT, built in 1966, originally offered academic and vocational programs including cosmetology, vocational office training, drafting, typing, data processing, and library. Currently, Building A houses the Center for Visual Arts and in addition offers classes in Cosmetology, Nursing, Early Childhood Education, STEP, SWAP, Project Discovery, Game Design, Cybersecurity, ASTEP, and the Center for Engineering Math classes.

Building B at BCAT, built in 1979, originally offered academic courses, along with Drafting, Commercial Art, Electronics, Electricity, Auto Mechanics, Horticulture, and Cafeteria and Kitchen. Classes currently offered include: Cafeteria, Culinary Arts, English Language Learners on the middle and high school levels, the Individual Student Alternative Education Program (ISAEP), Auto Service Technology, Welding, Motorsports, Emergency Medical Technician, along with housing the Center for Mass Communications and the Center for Performing Arts.

Building C, built in 1964, originally offered classes in Auto Body, Carpentry, Machine Shop, Masonry, Practical Nursing, and Data Processing. Current programs include Computer Information Technology, Criminal Justice, Masonry, Building Trades, and Mechatronics/Robotics, along with housing the Center for Engineering.

According to a presentation by BCAT Principal Christian Kish and Director of Career and Technical Education Jason Suhr, the center, originally named Roanoke County Education Center when it opened in 1962, has evolved throughout the years, changing with the needs of the labor market.

Over the last 50 years, only Cosmetology and Masonry have remained in the same locations on campus and kept the same program

names. Other programs have evolved. For example, Carpentry has morphed into Building Trades, Practical Nursing was eliminated and recently returned as Introduction to Nursing Careers as the demand for health care workers has increased in the Roanoke Valley.

Since the auto industry has increasingly shifted toward utilizing computer technology, the Auto Body and Auto Repair program has given way to Automotive Service Technology.

As industry has modernized, so has the machining program; therefore, what was formerly the Machine Shop is now the Mechatronics/Robotics lab.

Some of the facilities currently being used as instructional spaces at BCAT were never meant for their current purpose.

For example:

- The current dance studio was formerly an electronics classroom.
- The "black box" acting classroom was previously the drafting classroom.
- Both the dance studio and the black box have painted over garage doors that cannot be opened as one of their walls.
- What is currently the Center for Engineering used to be the learning space for the Small Engines program.
- The room that houses the Center for Visual Arts III and IV used to be the Library.
- The room that used to contain the LPN program now is the classroom for Center for Visual Arts I and II.
- Recently, the Horticulture program was phased out in favor of adding an Emergency Medical Technician program.

The current BCAT facility has several insurmountable shortcomings: most of the campus is located in a flood plain making major renovations to the existing buildings impossible; several classrooms have abandoned garage doors as exterior walls; the restroom facilities are inadequate and some lack basic privacy expectations; the intercom system does not effectively reach all

programs, particularly programs like Automotive and Welding where the shop areas can get noisy; there is no on-site facility conducive for public performances for the arts programs; electrical panels are at capacity in several areas; circuit breakers are often located in different areas of the building than the equipment they control.

The School Board believes that "a new facility would demonstrate Roanoke County's commitment to providing a highly skilled, trained workforce to existing and potential businesses."

As for the two elementary schools under discussion, the cost to replace W.E. Cundiff is estimated at \$23.9 million, and Glen Cove, \$20.9 million. Glen Cove was built in 1971, Cundiff in 1972.

Originally, the plan was to renovate Cundiff, but upon further examination of the project, the building would be completely replaced. Glen Cove and Cundiff both were built using the outdated open pod classroom design. Open pod classrooms present an instructional challenge for teachers and students. Security concerns are another main problem encountered with open pod classrooms.

The cost to renovate is estimated at \$220 per square foot; the cost for new construction is estimated at \$250 per square foot. Given the "relatively small differences in cost," School Superintendent Dr. Ken Nicely said that new schools would be preferable to renovated ones.

New construction would allow students to remain in their schools while the new ones are being built, rather than moving into trailers, which add to construction costs significantly. W.E. Cundiff is situated on a large parcel of land that would allow the new school to be constructed in close proximity to the current building.

William Byrd High School is scheduled for extensive renovations beginning this spring at a cost of \$23.3 million, with completion planned for 2022.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Warm-blooded vertebrates
  8. Semitic peoples
  13. Supervise
  14. Historical German territory
  15. Sweat
  19. The Wolverine State
  20. China
  21. Violent disturbances
  22. A way to commemorate the dead
  23. Midway between east and southeast
  24. Bird genus
  25. Trim
  26. Disparaged
  30. More coherent
  31. Abnormal rattling sounds
  32. Healthy appetizers
  33. Partner to "shocked"
  34. French pianist Pascal
  35. Jokes
  38. Marks to omit print
  39. Tall
  40. Coverage
  44. "A Death in the Family" author
  45. Role of highlights
  46. Fixed-radio access
  47. Partly digested food
  48. "Lamb Chop" puppeteer Lewis
  49. In support of
  50. Aluminum
  51. Reduction in value over time
  55. Running events
  57. Portuguese region
  58. Slovenly women
  59. Strongly criticized
- CLUES DOWN**
1. Wiped up
  2. Opposed to
  3. Macon, GA, university
  4. Wife
  5. Small viper
  6. Polynesia garland of flowers
  7. Saw-like
  8. Maltese-Italian composer
  9. Moved faster than walking
  10. Commercial
  11. Covered with mud
  12. Marksman
  16. Buenos
  17. Tailless amphibian
  18. Belonging to a thing
  22. Mars crater
  25. Most fair
  27. Citrus fruit
  28. Awkward
  29. Brews
  30. Beloved late broadcaster
  32. All alone
  34. Copies
  35. Poster
  36. Symmetrical
  37. Grew older
  38. Makes tractors
  40. Not the front
  41. State as fact
  42. Long, narrow cut
  43. Worked hard for
  45. Indicates position in a box score
  48. Tax
  51. "Lookout Weekend" singer
  52. Unhealthy
  53. Imam name
  54. A woolen cap of Scottish origin (abbr.)
  56. The Golden State



## From the Pulpit

### A Stopgap

By the Rev. Travis Russell,  
Vinton Baptist Church

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is one of the greatest Christian martyrs of the 20th century. Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor, scholar, and theologian during Nazi Germany who opposed Hitler and publicly encouraged all Christians to denounce Nazism.

He was one of the founding members of the Confessing Church, which condemned government-sponsored efforts to unify all Protestant churches into a single pro-Nazi Protestant Reich Church. In April of 1943, Bonhoeffer was arrested and imprisoned by the Gestapo. Two years later, he was falsely accused of trying to assassinate Hitler and executed for a crime he did not commit.

During his incarceration, he wrote letters that were smuggled out of prison by some of his sup-

porters and posthumously published in a book entitled "Letters and Papers from Prison." Out of all of the atrocities Bonhoeffer witnessed, he believed one of the biggest challenges facing Christ-followers in the modern era was a tendency to relegate God to the "gaps" of life.

In one of his letters from prison, he wrote: "God is often used as a 'stopgap' for the incompleteness of our knowledge. If, in fact, the frontiers of knowledge are being pushed further and further back (and that is bound to be the case), then God is being pushed back with them, and is therefore continually in retreat. We are to find God in what we know, not in what we don't know."

Bonhoeffer was concerned that due to modern advances, turning to God was becoming a last resort (i.e. a "stopgap") for people of faith. When there was a "gap" between what could not be explained scientifically or managed technologically, only then was God called upon to in-

tervene. Moses had a similar concern as the Israelites were preparing to enter the land of Canaan.

He said to them: "When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the Lord your God (Deuteronomy 8:12-14a)."

Moses feared that rather than "living by every word that comes from the mouth of God" as they had in the wilderness, the people of Israel would soon begin to call upon God as a last resort. When there was a "gap" between what the Promised Land did not supply and their resources could not provide, only then would they turn to God as they had in the desert.

By definition, a stopgap is "something added to augment weight or size or fill space"; it is "something that fills the place of something else that is lack-

ing." A stopgap is a temporary substitute—a backup, standby, or stand-in.

According to Moses, our strength and ability to overcome life's obstacles are not accomplished merely through God's ability to come behind us and fill in the gaps, but rather his willingness to go before us. As Joshua was about to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land, Moses said to him: "Be strong and bold . . . [For] it is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed (Deuteronomy 31:7-8)."

Moses called upon the people of Israel to turn to God in plenty and in want, in healing and in suffering, in understanding and in confusion, in success and in failure.

Bonhoeffer challenged Christians to seek God in what is known and unknown, in life's advances and setbacks, in progress and in recession.

Both of these incredible leaders of faith wanted God's people to be reminded that God is our solution, not our substitute.

Rather than a stopgap—something added to our lives wherever there is space; a temporary supplement for the "gaps" in our knowledge and resources—he is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Revelation 22:13)."

In Christ we find the one who "was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people (John 1:2-4)."

Rather than a backup for life that comes behind us, Jesus is the creator of life that goes before us. Rather than a provisional stand-in when life is dark, Jesus is the "light of life" itself.

How might we strive for the fullness of God this day, rather than settling for a mere stopgap?

# Latinas Network and Gauntlet partner to help women and minority entrepreneurs

On Friday, January 22, Latinas Network partnered with the Gauntlet to sponsor a member of Latinas Network, Ivana Savany, with full tuition to the Seventh Annual Gauntlet Business Program & Competition. The presentation was made at the Vinton War Memorial.

"I couldn't be more thankful for the partnering of Latinas Network and The Gauntlet to have chosen me as the recipient of the tuition to participate in this program; this is what Latinas Network is for," said Savany. "We believe in each other as women and business owners alike and it's that support that helps us to realize and achieve our goals."

Latinas Network, a branch of Nuestro Comercio Latino, an online platform to highlight Latino/Hispanic-owned businesses, kicked off its first event in November 2020.

Latinas Network's mis-

sion is to grow business and professional opportunities for women in the Roanoke Valley and NRV.

"I was standing to the side watching the room and the joy and relief we felt to know we are one, to know the next destination, the successes and our failures we face will be together in sisterhood," said JoJo Friday, president of Sisters of Change and founding partner of Latinas Network. "We had the support to encourage those who are and always were. Thank you to The Gauntlet program for being the cheerleader of our dreams and inspiring us to lead our future."

"Latinas Network wants to recognize and thank the organizations, like The Advancement Foundation and The Gauntlet program who support minority and women professionals," said Kat Pascal, owner of Farmburguesa, executive director of Latinas Network, and graduate of The

Gauntlet program. "This partnership and continued efforts will help professional Latinas continue to build exposure and relationships with the community and generate economic growth."

The Gauntlet is a 10-week business program that begins on February 9 and is inspiring business development, growth, and innovation. Through mentorship and sponsorship, Kat Pascal, founder of Latinas Network, helped bring a group of six Hispanic women entrepreneurs through The Gauntlet Business Program and Competition in 2019.

This program helps small business startups and current businesses develop new strategies for growth.

"Collaborating with professional Latina women is important to me because we are better, stronger, and smarter when we unite together," said Shannon Dominguez, di-



PHOTO COURTESY OF LATINAS NETWORK

Ivana Savany of the Latinas Network was presented a check to cover tuition for the 2021 Gauntlet Business Program and Competition that begins on February 9. Shown left to right are Savany, Shannon Dominguez, and Kat Pascal.

rector of the Gauntlet and associate director of Latinas Network. "Women supporting women creates stronger communities and more opportunities to move forward as a community. We all have strengths and weaknesses. Working together as a team and putting our minds together allows for more advancement for ev-

eryone. This is exactly why a partnership between Latinas Network and The Gauntlet program is easy and makes sense."

Latinas Network welcomes new members from the Roanoke, NRV, and Lynchburg areas. You can find them at Latinas Network on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and the website at [www.latinas-networkva.com](http://www.latinas-networkva.com).

Gauntlet applications are now open <https://www.TheAdvancementFoundation.org/the-Gauntlet>.

For more Information, interested entrepreneurs, mentors, sponsors, and community leaders can visit: <https://www.TheAdvancementFoundation.org/the-Gauntlet>.

## PETS-OF-THE-WEEK



**"Maize", 2yrs old, Spayed female**  
Maize is one of our longest shelter residents. She loves people and playtime! If you need a hiking buddy, Maize will surely keep up all the way to the top. Dogs that are a similar size make for perfect friends for her.



**"Tammy", 2.5yrs old, Spayed female**  
Tammy would do best in a home with another dog who could teach her to build confidence. She is shy at first, but with some love and patience opens up into an affectionate pup.



**"Blossom", 1yr old, Spayed female**  
Blossom would make for a great house cat. She warms up quickly to new people. She is FIV positive, so she would need to be kept indoors.

## Eagle Scout project fundraising underway

Jayden Sink, a Life Scout with Troop 137 in Troutville and Senior Patrol Leader, is working on earning his Eagle Scout rank, and in order to do so, he must complete an Eagle Scout Project.

"I have chosen to build an inclusion playground at the church where my Troop meets, Troutville Church of the Brethren," said Sink. "Things look different this year with the COVID-19 pandemic which makes traditional fundraising efforts very challenging. Because of this, I have been allowed to set up a fundraising page as a way to fundraise safely and with no contact, to hopefully diminish health and safety concerns.

"You may be wondering what an inclusion playground is, what makes it different from any other

playground, and why I chose this as my project," Sink commented. "I chose this project because my younger brother has autism. Every day he fights to be included and accepted, and many times he is turned away or bullied due to not always understanding how to act in social settings. He has handled more disappointment and ridicule than I could ever imagine, and he has handled it with class, dignity, and courage. He is so resilient, determined, and brave, but he shouldn't have to be.

"Everyone needs to be, and feel, included. Being included in play and social situations is necessary. I have witnessed how being excluded and turned away can impact feelings, mood, self-esteem, and self-acceptance. Even though kids may not show it, it hurts. No one

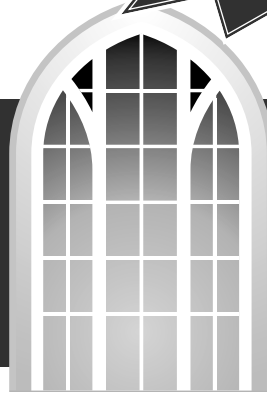
wants to see a child left out," he said.

"I feel that regardless of a child's preference or abilities, that there are activities for them to engage in," said Sink. "They should not be limited to certain types of equipment because of their abilities. Instead, the space should be able to engage all children and have ample opportunities for mixed interaction. An inclusion playground will allow children of any ability to play and be included. By making sure that the playground includes elements of play for all, children will be able to have fun without the segregation or lack of accommodation."

To make a donation to Jayden's Eagle Scout Project visit: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/inclusion-playground-eagle-scout-project>.

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# William & Mary recognizes local Dean's List students

The following local residents were recently named to the Dean's List at the College of William & Mary for the 2020 fall semester:

Haley Cook of Vinton, Elizabeth McDowell of Bedford, and Brian Bao, Alexander Blanton, James Blanton, Jacob Davidick, Bryce Fothergill, Mills Harris, Luke Jenkusky, Margaret Lawrence, Sariann Reyes

Dye, Emma Rogers, and Nathan Seidel of Roanoke.

In order to achieve Dean's List status, a full-time degree seeking undergraduate student must take at least 12 credit hours and earn a 3.6 Quality Point Average during the semester. William & Mary is the second oldest institution of higher learning in the United States.

# Shepherd named to Dean's List at Palmer College of Chiropractic

Brian Shepherd of Vinton has been named to the 2020 fall quarter Dean's List at Palmer College of Chiropractic's Florida campus in Port Orange, Fla.

Palmer College of Chiropractic, the first

and largest college in the chiropractic profession, has campuses in Davenport, Iowa; San Jose, Calif.; and Port Orange, Fla. Palmer College of Chiropractic was founded in Iowa in 1897 by Daniel David Palmer.

# Hardy resident earns award from WGU

Ashley Burns of Hardy has earned an Award of Excellence at Western Governors University College of Health Profes-

sions in Salt Lake City, Utah. The award is given to students who perform at a superior level in their coursework.

# Backpack Run returns to Green Hill Park on March 20

The Backpack Run, presented by the Roanoke County Public Schools Education Foundation, is back and all new. This year's Backpack Run offers the best of both worlds—in-person and virtual races for the 5K and 10K distances.

The in-person races will take place on March 20 at Green Hill Park, starting at 9 a.m. The 5K and 10K races will both begin at the same time. Runners participating in an in-person race will be randomly assigned a corral to stagger start times.

Also new this year is a virtual half marathon featuring a custom finisher's medal and an all-new

Backpack Challenge—participate in all three race events (5K, 10K, and half marathon) to earn all three individual finisher medals and a fourth exclusive custom Backpack Challenge medal. Challenge runners participate in all three events virtually or have the option to substitute one virtual event for an in-person race (5K or 10K).

Registration fees for the 5K (virtual and in-person) run \$25-\$40. Fees for the 10K (virtual and in-person) are \$40-\$60. Registration for the half marathon (virtual only) is \$65-\$80. The Backpack Challenge (5K, 10K, and half marathon) is \$140-\$160. Prices

vary depending on age (student or adult) and team participation.

Register for the in-person 5K, 10K or Backpack Challenge by March 1 to guarantee an event T-shirt on March 20. Finisher medals and event T-shirts for virtual events will be available for pickup or shipping in late April. Register at [www.supportroanokecountyed.org](http://www.supportroanokecountyed.org).

Proceeds go to support the Roanoke County Public Schools Education Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that, since 1991, has provided more than \$1.5 million in support including grants for teachers and scholarships for students in Roanoke County.

# Tax filing season delayed until February 12

The Internal Revenue Service has announced that the nation's tax season will start on Friday, Feb. 12, when the tax agency will begin accepting and processing 2020 tax year returns.

The February 12 start date for individual tax return filers allows the IRS time to do additional programming and testing of IRS systems following the December 27 tax law changes that provided a second round of Economic Impact Payments and other benefits.

This programming work is critical to ensuring IRS systems run smoothly. If the filing season was opened without the correct programming in place, then there could be a delay in issuing refunds to taxpayers. These changes ensure that eligible people will receive any remaining stimulus money as a Recovery Rebate Credit when they file their 2020 tax return.

To speed refunds during the pandemic, the IRS urges taxpayers to file electronically with direct deposit as soon as they have the information they need.

People can begin filing their tax returns immediately with tax software companies, including IRS Free File partners. These groups are starting to accept tax returns now, and the returns will be transmitted to the IRS starting February 12.

"Planning for the nation's filing season process is a massive undertaking, and IRS teams have been working non-stop to prepare for this as well as delivering Economic Impact Payments in record time," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "Given the pandemic, this is one of the nation's most important filing seasons ever. This start date will ensure that people get their needed tax refunds quickly while also making sure they receive any remaining stimulus payments they are eligible for as quickly as possible."

Last year's average tax refund was more than \$2,500. More than 150 million tax returns are expected to be filed this year, with the vast majority before the Thursday, April 15 deadline.

Under the PATH Act, the IRS cannot issue a refund involving

the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) before mid-February. The law provides this additional time to help the IRS stop fraudulent refunds and claims from being issued, including to identity thieves.

The IRS anticipates a first week of March refund for many EITC and ACTC taxpayers if they file electronically with direct deposit and there are no issues with their tax returns. This would be the same experience for taxpayers if the filing season opened in late January. Taxpayers will need to check "Where's My Refund" for their personalized refund date.

Overall, the IRS anticipates nine out of 10 taxpayers will receive their refund within 21 days of when they file electronically with direct deposit if there are no issues with their tax return. The IRS urges taxpayers and tax professionals to file electronically. To avoid delays in processing, people should avoid filing paper returns wherever possible.

To speed refunds and help with their tax filing, the IRS urges people to follow these simple steps:

- File electronically and use direct deposit for the quickest refunds.

- Check IRS.gov for the latest tax information, including the latest on Economic Impact Payments. There is no need to call.

- For those who may be eligible for stimulus payments, they should carefully review the guidelines for the Recovery Rebate Credit. Most people received Economic Impact Payments automatically, and anyone who received the maximum amount does not need to include any information about their payments when they file. However, those who didn't receive a payment or only received a partial payment may be eligible to claim the Recovery Rebate Credit when they file their 2020 tax return. Tax preparation software, including IRS Free File, will help taxpayers figure the amount.

- Remember, advance stimulus payments received separately are not taxable, and they do not reduce the taxpayer's refund when they file in 2021.

There are several important dates taxpayers should keep in mind for this year's filing season:

- January 15. IRS Free File opens. Taxpayers can begin filing returns through Free File partners; tax returns will be transmitted to the IRS starting Feb. 12. Tax software companies also are accepting tax filings in advance.

- January 29. Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day to raise awareness of valuable tax credits available to many people—including the option to use prior-year income to qualify.

- February 12. IRS begins 2021 tax season. Individual tax returns begin being accepted and processing begins.

- February 22. Projected date for the IRS.gov "Where's My Refund" tool being updated for those claiming EITC and ACTC, also referred to as PATH Act returns.

- First week of March. Tax refunds begin reaching those claiming EITC and ACTC (PATH Act returns) for those who file electronically with direct deposit and there are no issues with their tax returns.

- April 15. Deadline for filing 2020 tax returns.

- October 15. Deadline to file for those requesting an extension on their 2020 tax returns.

The filing season open follows IRS work to update its programming and test its systems to factor in the second Economic Impact Payments and other tax law changes. These changes are complex and take time to help ensure proper processing of tax returns and refunds as well as coordination with tax software industry, resulting in the February 12 start date.

The IRS must ensure systems are prepared to properly process and check tax returns to verify the proper amount of EIP's are credited on taxpayer accounts—and provide remaining funds to eligible taxpayers.

Although tax seasons frequently begin in late January, there have been five instances since 2007 when filing seasons did not start for some taxpayers until February due to tax law changes made just before the start of tax time.

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The Vinton Messenger encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified by telephone before publication. The Messenger reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length content and style.

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# Celebrating The Town of VINTON!

The Town of Vinton, a community nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, welcomes you to our community. Vinton, a town rich with history, has over the years found itself to be one of a few communities that continue to relish the past by offering an environment of a comfortable lifestyle with the feeling of being a part of a large community family. The town, with its proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Smith Mountain Lake, provides many opportunities for those who wish to stop and shop at our local farmers market or one of our unique specialty shops.

If festivals are your interest, the Vinton area hosts several festivals throughout the year from the Vinton Dogwood Festival to the Vinton

Fall Festival. Each festival offers its own unique atmosphere. When you are away from home it's always nice to feel as if you never left.

The Town of Vinton provides small town character with urban services and amenities located nearby. The small town atmosphere is characterized by a low crime rate; small, locally, and regionally owned businesses; and moderately priced homes. Views of the mountains and Blue Ridge Parkway abound.

Vinton represents the ideal type of community, small enough to provide a feeling of belonging, yet progressive enough to provide the facilities, services, and conveniences that are necessary to make a community feel like home to its citizens.

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# Moose

from page 1



**Clark Crawley (left) accepts a Letter of Appreciation from Councilman Doug Adams in recognition of the Moose Lodge's contributions to the Vinton Needy Family project—both in donations and use of their space.**



**The Vinton Moose Lodge looks deceptively small from Washington Avenue, but houses social quarters, a game room, a massive banquet hall on the lower level, and a picnic pavilion out back.**

isville, Ky. In the early years, the goal as a fraternal organization was to offer men “an opportunity to gather socially, care for one another’s needs, and celebrate life together.”

The Vinton Lodge started out meeting downtown above the Swan Restaurant on Lee Avenue with 50 charter members. Membership grew to 900 at one time and now stands at about 400. But the members of today are “not your grandfather’s Moose Lodge.” Over the years their focus has become community service, especially helping children and the elderly. The Moose International philosophy has become “a burden heavy to one is borne lightly by many.”

The Moose organization is known for establishing Mooseheart Child City and School, a 1000-acre campus near Chicago to care for children and teens in need, and Moosehaven, a 70-acre retirement community near Jacksonville, Fla.

The school and retirement community, along with countless local projects, are financed and supported by the Moose members with their membership dues, donations, volunteer hours of service, and funds from “charitable gaming” available at the lodge.

In 1965 the Vinton Moose purchased land on East Washington Avenue from Martin Bush and built their lodge, a 4,800-square-foot structure which is the core of the building today. In 1972, 1,200 square feet was added to the upper level as a “social quarters.” In 1978, more land was purchased and another 4,800-square-foot expansion on the lower level was completed in time for the first Christmas dance. In 2002, the members added an upstairs game room and a picnic pavilion. In 2010, the downstairs dance hall was remodeled with plans to become a special event venue for all occasions, with probably the largest dance floor in Vinton, a raised stage, bar and kitchen area, and bridal parlor.

The seemingly small building passers-by see driving past on Washington Avenue hides a huge space inside and out back.

Clark Crawley has served as administrator of the Vinton lodge for 11 years. Formerly a building contractor, he renovated the massive banquet hall on the lower level. He was invited to join the lodge; his role has steadily grown from there, both at the Vinton lodge and at district and state levels. He is currently president of District 11 and serves

as audit chairman, Mooseheart admissions chair, and Virginia house chair on the state board.

“I have been amazed at all the things the Moose does to help the community,” said Chris McCarty, president of the Vinton Breakfast Lions Club and a member of the Moose Lodge. “They have pancake breakfasts for WBHS softball and baseball teams, buy all the supplies, host the breakfast, and then give all of the proceeds to the teams.”

They offered their space to the Breakfast Lions for their annual pancake breakfast on the day of the Vinton Fall Festival and their traditional spaghetti dinner, usually held on the evening of the Vinton Christmas Parade. The Moose volunteered to save the day when a Mingle at the Market concert was rained out and turned it into “Mingle at the Moose.”

“Since the pandemic started in 2020, Clark has provided the Moose Lodge for meetings and events that wouldn’t have happened without the Moose,” McCarty said. “The Breakfast Lions are one of the few clubs that have been able to continue to hold meetings and events during the pandemic. With the Moose’s large room, the club is able to space people out for safety. Clark

and the Moose not only helped us with our Children’s Christmas Shopping event, but also provided us with a place to wrap the gifts and made a donation towards the project. It’s easy to go on and on about Clark and the Moose’s involvement with the community.

“About two years ago, I asked Clark to the Vinton Breakfast Lions Club; he has helped the club plan the Drawdown money giveaway fundraiser at the Moose,” McCarty said. “It has been a great success with Clark and the Moose Lodge’s help.”

Last December, with the cancellation of the Vinton Christmas Parade due to COVID, the Moose partnered with the Chamber of Commerce and Town of Vinton for the Santa Claus Crawl through the neighborhoods of Vinton.

The International Moose organization, including Vinton, supports Special Olympics softball on a national basis, the Safe Surf-in’ Internet safety program which protects children from predators, and St. Jude, to name just a few of their causes.

Crawley says the organization is always looking for new events to host and new community service projects to support. Unbeknownst to many, the legendary

Galax Fiddler’s Convention is sponsored by the Galax Moose Lodge. Crawley would like to establish their own signature event to bring crowds to the Vinton Moose Lodge. He would also like for the community to become more aware of what the Moose members do for the community and what they offer.

Chewning, who recently helped organize the informal Sassy Sisters of the Moose, says that “being involved in the Vinton Moose organization has been a true joy. The Moose organization is so much more than what people think. They are a leader in community involvement and an asset to our town.”

The Sassy Sisters provided Thanksgiving dinners for struggling families in the Vinton area and are currently collecting for the Soup for Seniors campaign. There have been coat collections and plans to volunteer at Ronald McDonald House coming up in the spring.

Crawley says that he is hoping to attract younger members to continue the Moose community service tradition.

The Vinton Moose Family Center is located at 2127 Washington Avenue. Email the lodge at [Vintonmoose1121@gmail.com](mailto:Vintonmoose1121@gmail.com) for more information.



**The Vinton Moose Lodge has hosted many Breakfasts with Santa for area children and their families through the years.**



**The Vinton Moose Lodge is a pillar in the community, always ready to lend a hand. Here, the members host a Mingle at the Market concert with Low, Low Chariot rained out at the Farmers’ Market.**

PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

## Roanoke County Schools modify February calendar

Following the success of the initial K-12 vaccination event for Roanoke County school employees on January 22, facilitated by the Roanoke City-Alleghany Health District and Carilion Clinic, a follow-up second dose vaccination event is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 12.

As with the first vaccination event, schools will be closed on February 12 for a teacher workday to give the staff the opportunity to receive the second vaccination dose.

Below is the schedule for the week of February 8-12:

- Monday, Feb. 8:** Regular school day for grades PK-4. Group 1 for grades 5-12 (A day for secondary students).
- Tuesday, Feb. 9:** Regular school day for grades PK-4. Group 2 for grades 5-12 (A day for secondary students).
- Wednesday, Feb. 10:** Schools closed for a Teacher Workday (at home) – This was previously scheduled. Teachers will not schedule synchronous learning. This is an opportunity for students to complete assignments. No teacher

- instruction/student services will be provided on Feb. 10.
- Thursday, Feb. 11:** Regular school day for grades PK-4. Group 1 for grades 5-12 (B day for secondary students).
- Friday, Feb. 12:** Schools closed for a Teacher Workday (in school) and second dose vaccination event. Teachers will not schedule synchronous learning. This is another opportunity for students to complete assignments. No teacher instruction/student services will be provided on Feb. 12.

Submit your community news and photos to [dadams](mailto:dadams@mainstreetnewspapers.com)  
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## Highland County Maple Festival cancelled, but maple syrup still flows

The Highland County Chamber of Commerce has cancelled both weekends of the 2021 Highland County Maple Festival, originally scheduled for March 13-14 and 20-21. This announcement was made after months of deliberation, input, and research for how to safely hold the event given the current state guidelines concerning the ongoing global coronavirus pandemic.

Thankfully, the coronavirus does not stop the sugar water flowing from the trees, nor does it stop

producers from producing their maple syrup as they have done for decades. Even though the festival is cancelled, certain Chamber member businesses and organizations, including sugar camps, have made plans to be open in the late winter and spring, following the state guidelines specific to their designated business type. More information about Chamber member offerings will be forthcoming at [www.highlandcounty.org](http://www.highlandcounty.org) in the coming weeks and months.

## Lancerlot ice rink reopens

The Lancerlot ice rink was scheduled to open at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27. All previous policies and procedures instituted prior to the closing will remain intact and will be strictly enforced. See below for some friendly reminders:

Standard locker rooms and showers remain closed. Temporary locker rooms/changing areas remain available for all player usage. Standard locker rooms are closed to all players except the following: goalies, referees, and female players. All other players/on-ice participants must use temporary locker rooms/changing areas.

Masks must be worn while in designated rooms and social distancing must be respected at all times.

All persons entering the complex must wear masks. This means all players/ice participants must wear a mask at all times except while on the ice. All coaches must leave masks on while coaching. Referees may wear masks on ice at their own discretion.

Social distancing must be respected. Green X's are marked on seating areas throughout the rink to illustrate appropriate social distancing requirements. If standing, be cognizant of the distance from one another.

Spectators for all programs will be prohibited. The only personnel allowed inside the ice rink during hockey programming are on-ice participants, coaches, and Lancerlot staff.

One exception is that one par-

ent/guardian will be allowed to enter for players who cannot tie skates (Learn to Play, Mites, Lower House). The one parent/guardian can remain in the building at a socially distant spot during the activity but must exit the rink with the child immediately at the conclusion of the session.

Open ice-skating sessions will resume. Sessions will be capped at 100 participants and everyone must wear a mask while on and off the ice.

Use common sense. If you are sick, don't feel well, have to quarantine or have been around someone possibly exposed to COVID-19, don't come inside.

View the ice rink schedule at <https://lancerlotsportscomplex.com/ice-rink-schedule/>.

## Town Council

from page 1

candidates at the top of the ticket.”

Former Councilwoman Janet Scheid says she has mixed feelings about the issue, but that “moving elections to November might draw more attention to the local elections and encourage more dialogue on local issues and more spirited debate. Citizens might get more involved.”

One former council member said they might not have run for council during a particularly contentious presidential election year several years ago if the town election had been in November.

Some candidates have said that frequently when campaigning for May elections, they get questions during door-to-door campaigning about their stand on immigration, abortion, and other polarizing national issues,

rather than local issues. They are often asked if they are Republicans or Democrats.

The Virginia Municipal League (VML) is also opposed to moving local elections to the November general elections.

In a press release, the VML stated, “Across Virginia, 44 percent of cities and 57 percent of towns hold their local elections in May, rather than November. These localities choose to separate their elections from those for state and federal offices for a variety of reasons—doing so keeps the focus of local elections on local issues and keeps the cost of campaigning more accessible for new candidates. The option to hold elections in May gives localities the flexibility they need to best meet the needs of their communities.

“The coincidence of local elections with those at the state and federal level inherently raises the level of partisanship of all elections, regardless of whether candidates are running without any party affiliation. By the same token, it introduces partisan politics to nonpartisan local issues; political parties make little difference when it comes to community projects like paving roads and keeping the streetlights on. This also raises the cost of campaigning for local candidates—especially for candidates new to the field—who have to compete for name recognition from the bottom of an even longer ballot.”

Spruill contends that it would be more fiscally responsible to consolidate the local elections onto the November ballot—more conve-

nient and accessible for voters, and more cost efficient.

Town Executive Assistant Susan Johnson said that in 2020, the town's cost for the May election was \$3,540.72.

Many favor letting municipalities continue to decide independently for themselves when to hold local elections, holding referendums on the issue, amending their charters or adopting ordinances if they want to make the change.

Statistics from past Vinton elections seem to indicate that the numbers of voters is influenced by the competition for seats. In recent years, candidates for Town Council have mainly run unopposed.

In the May 2020 election, the vote count for the two Vinton precincts combined was 415 for Mayor Brad Grose, 373 for Keith

Liles, and 343 for newcomer Laurie Mullins—all running unopposed. In the 2018 May elections, Sabrina McCarty and Mike Stovall ran unopposed and received 193 votes each.

However, in the 2016 election, with three candidates running for two seats, the vote count was 695; in 2014 with five candidates running for three seats, the count was 786.

In comparison, in the 2020 November 3 General Election, 1,283 citizens cast votes in the two Vinton precincts combined.

Some see low voter participation and uncontested elections as a widespread lack of interest in local issues in general. Plus, “in a time of such dissension, politics has gotten a bad name,” said one past candidate.

### ANGLICAN

**ST. THOMAS ANGLICAN CHURCH** - located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit [www.sttof.org](http://www.sttof.org) for midweek masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).

### BAPTIST (SOUTHERN)

**MINERAL SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH & CHRISTIAN SCHOOL** - 1030 Bible Lane, Vinton, Va. 24179. Church Phone 890-4465. Rev. Jason Gault. Sunday Services: Traditional Service, 8:45 AM, Sunday School, 10:00 AM, Contemporary Service, 11:00 AM, Evening Worship 6:00 PM, Wednesday Services: AWANA 6:30 PM, Bible Study 7:00 PM

### BAPTIST (COOPERATIVE)

**VINTON BAPTIST CHURCH** - 219 Washington Ave., Vinton, Virginia. 343-7685. Rev. Travis Russell. Sunday Services: Contemporary Service 8:45 a.m., Sunday School 9:50 a.m., Traditional Service 11:00 a.m., Wednesday Services: Family Dinner: 5:30 p.m., Bible Study 6:15 p.m., Children's Ministries 6:15 p.m., Youth Ministry 6:30 p.m. [www.vintonbaptistchurch.org](http://www.vintonbaptistchurch.org)

### CHURCH OF CHRIST

**CHURCH OF CHRIST VINTON** - 2107 Feather Road, Vinton. Terry Hodge, Minister, 540-890-1170. Sunday Bible Study 9:45 a.m., Sunday Morning Service 10:45 a.m., Wednesday Bible Study 10 a.m.

**COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF CHRIST**, 3679 Sandlewood Road, Roanoke VA 24018, (540) 206-6160. Repent & Be Baptized... Acts 2:38. Come study the Bible with us! Sunday Bible Study 10 a.m., Sunday Worship 11 a.m., Wednesday 6:30 p.m., [www.christianchurchof-christclearbrook.org](http://www.christianchurchof-christclearbrook.org)

### ECKANKAR

**Eckankar, the Path of Spiritual Freedom**, is located at 1420 3rd St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. However, due to COVID-19, the Light & Sound services and other ECK programs are currently available online through Zoom. Visit [www.eck-va.org](http://www.eck-va.org) for program listings or call 540-353-5365 and leave a message. We will return your call. Also visit [www.eckankar.org](http://www.eckankar.org) for more information about the spiritual freedom of Eckankar.

### FOURSQUARE

**EVANGEL CHURCH** - 2360 Hardy Road, Vinton, (corner of Hardy Road and Feather Road), 982-3694. Pastor-Tim Wright. Sunday, 10 AM - Worship Service, SuperChurch for Children; Wednesday 6:30-8PM - AWANA Clubs for ages 3-5th grade, Adult Bible Study.

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### I Do Not Understand

Read Leviticus 11:1 through 13:59

God's Law seems obscure. Reading kosher requirements or cleanliness rules is difficult. Following them must have been even more so.

“I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy” (Leviticus 11:45).

In the middle of God's requirements stands this abrupt justification. What God demanded may not appear reasonable. Purification requirements seem tedious. Differences in provisions are not explained. We seek answers and might find solace in some explanations, but questions remain. Why must relationship with God

demand obedience to things not understood?

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Challenge for Today: Demonstrate fidelity to God even if you do not understand why.

Quicklook: Leviticus 11:44-47

1201 Hardy Rd, Vinton VA 24179, Pastor, Rev. Dr. James B. Davis (540) 342- 1715, Sunday School 10:00am, Worship 11:00am, [sttimothy1201@verizon.net](mailto:sttimothy1201@verizon.net).

### NAZARENE

**FIRST CHURCH OF NAZARENE**, 728 Highland Ave., SE, Roanoke, Virginia. 342-4003. Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Wednesday Night Bible Study 7 p.m.

### PRESBYTERIAN

**CAMPBELL MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**, 1130 Hardy Rd, Vinton, VA, 540-343-1842; [cmcp2verizon.net](http://cmcp2verizon.net) Sunday school 9:45am, Worship 11:00am; Communion 1st Sundays; 2nd Sunday Session; Monday Noon Bible School; Tuesdays & Thursdays Yoga 9:00am; 1st Tuesdays Deacons; Tuesday Evening Bible Study 6:45pm; Wednesday Choir 7:00pm; Thursday Girl

Scouts 7:00pm; 2nd Monday Supper with Rev. Skip at Famous Anthony's 6:30pm; 2nd Tuesday Luncheon with Rev. Skip at Famous Anthony's; 3rd Saturday Men's Breakfast 8:00am. Rev. Skip Hastings-Interim Pastor.

### UNITED METHODIST

**THREE OAKS FELLOWSHIP UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** - 1026 Gravel Hill Road, Vinton, Va. 540-512-8070. Pastor: Rev. Dr. Rob Colwell. Sunday School - 9:45 a.m., Worship 11 a.m.

### WESLEYAN

**VINTON WESLEYAN CHURCH** - 246 E. Jefferson Ave. Pastor Ricardo Rodriguez, 345-3385; Sunday Worship Service 11:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Sunday School for all ages 10:00 AM, Wednesday Night Life Ministries - Children - Awana; G-5 Youth Ministry; Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM.

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# County foes challenging for Terrier boys

Due to the coronavirus pandemic the William Byrd boys' basketball team is only playing Roanoke County opponents this season, and that's no piece of cake. The county opponents are all formidable, with Northside and Cave Spring both winning state championships in recent years.

"Obviously Northside and Cave Spring are two of the better teams in the state, and Glenvar is solid," said Byrd coach Josh Cunningham. "This is a good area for basketball. We've played some really tough games."

The Terriers are 1-3 after one trip through the county, defeating Hidden Valley. Byrd had a rematch with Glenvar in Vinton on Wednesday but results were too late for publication.

Last Wednesday the Terriers played host to Cave Spring, the defending Class 3 champion, and dropped a 79-64 decision. The Knights led by 25 after three quar-

ters before Byrd outscored the visitors 25-15 in the fourth quarter to make it look closer.

"We turned it over too many times," said Cunningham. "But we're improving every game."

Tyler Martin led Byrd with 21 points and he also had 10 rebounds. Jamie Cawley had 11 points and Camden Richardson had 10.

Last Friday night at Hidden Valley the Byrdmen bounced back with a 66-59 win over the host Titans. The Terriers trailed by a point at the half but came out strong in the third quarter, outscoring the Titans 21-11 in that period to take control. Byrd had six players with at least eight points, led by Trevor Ruble with 16. Richardson had 13, Cawley and Martin had 10 each, Ethan Tinley had nine points and Seth Williams had eight.

"We played a solid second half and had balanced scoring," said Cunningham. "That was good to

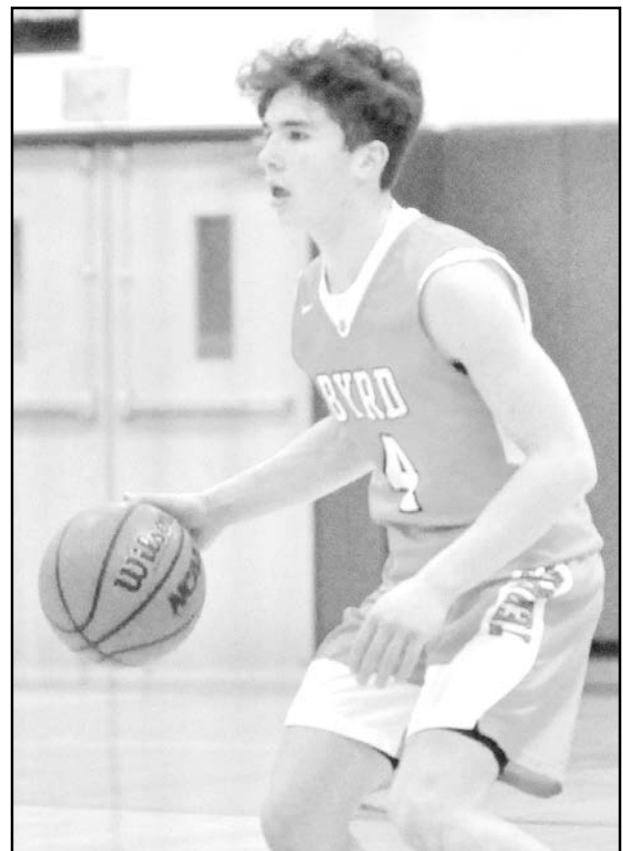
see."

On Monday at home the Terriers hosted Northside and fell by a 62-49 score. Byrd went down early, 21-5, but battled back to make it a game. Cawley had 15, Richardson 13 and Ruble 10.

"Outside of the first five minutes we outscored them," said Cunningham. "We dug in and got better."

Byrd is off this Friday, returning for three games next week to end the abbreviated regular season. The Terriers are at Cave Spring for a game in the Knights' new gym on Monday. Next Wednesday Byrd's last home game is against Hidden Valley and it will be "Senior Night," and on Friday, February 5, the boys finish up at Northside.

The Roanoke County School Board will vote today on whether the team will be allowed to participate in post-season play.



Trevor Ruble handles the ball for Byrd.

PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN



Gabria Mutz shoots a free throw for Byrd.

PHOTO BY JIM DEVINNEY

## William Byrd girls are 3-1 after one trip through the Roanoke County round robin

The William Byrd girls' basketball team improved to 3-1 with wins over Hidden Valley and Northside in the past week. The Terriers have now played all four Roanoke County opponents one time each.

The Terriers only loss thus far was at Cave Spring last Wednesday, 49-38. Byrd led for much of the first half before the Knights made a run to take the lead. Cave Spring then went on to win, hitting 10 three-pointers for the game.

"We competed hard," said coach Brad Greenway. "I thought we had a good plan for the second half, but Cave had other plans. We just couldn't keep up with them offensively. Sometimes you tip your hat when someone has a better night and this was one of those times."

Emilie McCaskill led Byrd with 13 points and Sophia Chrisley had 10.

On Friday night in Vinton the Byrd girls downed Hidden Valley, 42-14. Byrd had six three-pointers, including three by Chrisley, two by Gretta Walls and one by Ashlyn Stover.

"We were able to play all of our players and get some younger players in there for good minutes while resting some of our players we usually depend on for

30 minutes a night," said Greenway. "Hidden Valley played hard, I give their coaching staff and players credit despite the score."

On Monday at Northside the girls completed the county round robin with a 46-30 win over the Vikings. Byrd trailed 20-19 at the half but outscored the Vikings, 27-10, after intermission.

"We made a couple adjustments at halftime to what we were doing on both ends and it just seemed like a light bulb came on for us," said Greenway. "We played a stretch of basketball that was probably the best we've had in this short season so far."

Chrisley led the Terriers in points with 14 and McCaskill put in 11 on a bad leg.

"There were a lot of positives outside of just what shows up on the stat sheet," said Greenway. "I'm really proud of how we finished that game after a tough start."

Byrd was at Glenvar Wednesday but results were too late for publication. The girls are off Friday, returning to the hardwood Monday to host Cave Spring. Next Wednesday Byrd is at Hidden Valley and February 5 is Senior Night at home against Northside.

## Terriers await ruling to see if they can swim in regional Sat.

The William Byrd swimmers took on Hidden Valley at the Gator Center last week and split, with the boys winning 103 to 32 and the girls falling to a strong Titan team, 137-20.

First place finishes included the Boys' 200 Medley, 200 Freestyle and 400 Freestyle relay teams. Individually, Austin Nielsen won the 200 Individual Medley and 100 Breaststroke, Colin Murtaugh won the 100 Free and 100 Back, Aiden Brinkley won the 200 Free, Matthew Hoyos won the 100 Fly and Michael Hoyos won the 500 Free.

The Terriers also celebrated their only senior, Elizabeth Recktenwald, who is also team captain. Elizabeth has been on the team for five years.

"It has been such a privilege to watch her grow from eighth grade exhibition swimmer to leader of our team as a senior," said coach Krista Martin. "Elizabeth takes initiative and she leads by example, I am so proud of her. Her best events are the 100 breaststroke and the 500 free. She plans to go to a four year university and major in business and pre-health."

The Terriers were back at the Gator Center on Wednesday of this week to swim against Glenvar but results were too late for publication. Tonight the Roanoke County School Board will meet to decide if Roanoke County Schools are allowed to participate in the post season. The Regional swim meet will be held at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center this Saturday, January 30th, with no spectators and the Terriers will find out this evening if they are allowed to participate.



Terrier swimmer Elizabeth Recktenwald, center, was honored on Byrd's "Senior Night" with her parents, John and Paulette Recktenwald.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Vinton Booster Club is taking signups for spring recreation baseball and softball

The Vinton Booster Club is now taking signups for the spring recreation baseball and softball seasons. Youth players must sign up prior to evaluations, which will be held in of March.

Vinton missed the baseball and softball seasons last spring due to the coronavirus pandemic, but the club is currently moving forward like games will be played this year. However, due to issues from the pandemic the teams will not be playing in Little League this year, has had been previously

announced. Vinton baseball teams will be back in the Dixie League for at least one more season and the softball teams will also be under the Dixie umbrella. In recent years Vinton softball participated in the Roanoke Area Youth Softball Association. In Dixie the Vinton teams will be eligible to go to post-season tournaments.

To sign up, or for more information, go to the booster club website at vintonboosterclub.com or check the club's Facebook page.



Buffalo Wild Wings in Roanoke celebrated the William Byrd High School 2019 softball State Championship team last Wednesday, January 20, with the unveiling of a jersey and photo display at the Tanglewood location. Many of the girls attended the ceremony along with Terrier coaches.

PHOTO BY DANNY CRUFF

## Byrd 2019 state softball champs celebrated

## Big Orange wrestling

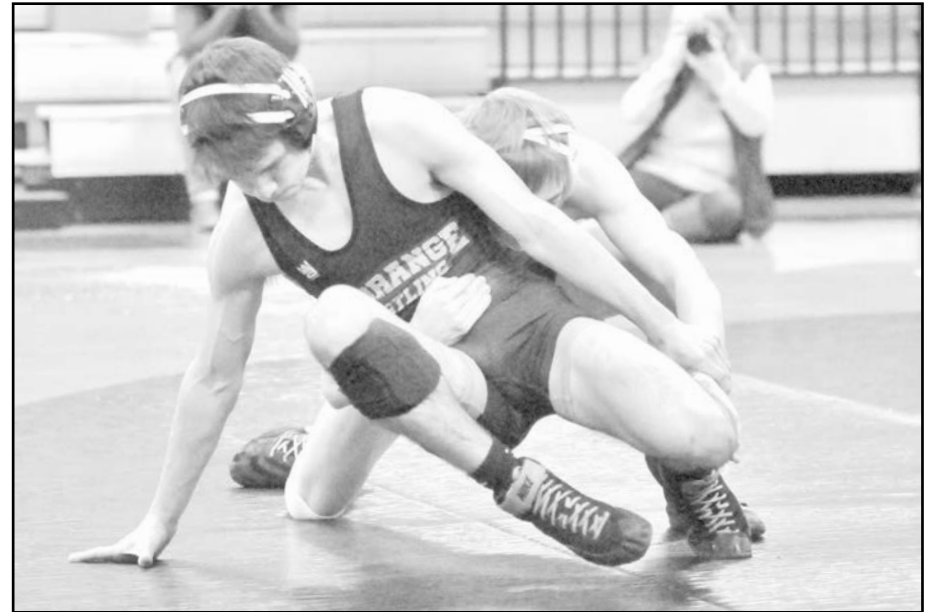
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Valley the Big Orange will wrap up the regular season with a dual against

Northside on Tuesday. The regional follows, and the Roanoke County School Board will vote tonight on whether to allow the team to compete against non-county rivals, allowing them to

participate in the regional.

"Hopefully we will know sooner than later if we will be able to participate in the regional tournament," said Kessler.



Byrd's Gavin Ellis(left) battles in last week's tri-match at Northside.

PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

# SPORTS

Send story ideas & announcements to [bhoffman@ourvalley.org](mailto:bhoffman@ourvalley.org), or PO Box 1125, Salem, Va, 24153 • [ourvalley.org](http://ourvalley.org)



The William Byrd indoor track team ran an outdoor “Polar Bear” meet last week at Patterson Stadium. Above, left to right, Byrd’s Emma Dalton, Sela Beatty and Chloe Harilla are off and running in the 55 meter dash. Below left, Keaton Band(white jersey) is on his way to a win in the 1000 meters. Center below, Remi Figart competes in the long jump and, right, Jacob McKinney puts the shot.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN



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## Terriers host “Polar Bear” meet

The William Byrd Indoor track and field team had their first track meet of the year last week. The indoor team went outdoors to host Cave Spring and Glenvar in a “Polar Bear” meet at Patterson Stadium in Vinton.

Both the Byrd girls and boys had a great day and they did well despite the temperatures and wind on the track. On the women’s side Sela Beatty won the 55m dash with a time of 7.79 seconds while Sydney Blewett finished 2nd (8.24), Chloe Harrilla was 3rd (8.38) and Emma Dalton took 5th (8.60).

In the 300m dash Remi Figart finished 2nd with a time of 46.91 and Kelsey Roth was 3rd with a time of 50.86 seconds. Harrilla won the long jump with a leap of 15’2” and Beatty was 2nd with a jump of 15’1/2”.

On the men’s side Noah Thompson finished 2nd in the 55m with a time of 7.20 seconds. In the 300m dash Isaac Roth won with a time of 39.53 seconds while Dakota Bell finished 3rd (42.61) and Case Crawford was 6th (46.31).

Keaton Band won the 1000m run with a time of 2:57.51 and Reagan Lilley was 4th (3:38.64). Ryan Krawczyk took 2nd in the Mile at 5:22.32. Isaac Roth won the long jump with a jump of 16’4”, Jacob McKinney finished second in the shot put with a throw of 28’9” and Jack Hinkle was 3rd in the shot with a throw of 21’1”.



Byrd’s Dustin Richardson has his Cave Spring opponent in trouble at Northside last week. Dustin is a talented heavyweight who can’t crack the regular lineup because his older brother, Hunter, is also a Byrd wrestler and one of the top heavyweights in the state.

PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

## Big Orange still undefeated

The William Byrd wrestlers will observe “Senior Night” when they host Hidden Valley tonight in Vinton. Starting time is 5 pm.

The Big Orange has been doing well in the abbreviated season against fellow Roanoke County teams. Last Thursday at Northside the Terriers beat Cave Spring, 58-6, then handed the host Vikings a 39-28 defeat in a tri-match. Seniors Derek Burton (126) and Jerze Webb (170) led the way with big pins against Northside. Xavier Preston, at

152, also pinned his opponent as well and Steve Tingler grinded out an overtime victory at 138.

On Tuesday Byrd whitewashed Cave Spring, 66-0, and also did the same to Hidden Valley, winning 58-3. The Terriers are undefeated in dual matches.

“I’ve been really proud of our effort in practice and how much better we’ve gotten over the last three weeks,” said coach Thomas Kessler.

After tonight’s match with Hidden Valley, the Terriers will have a record of 12-0.

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