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### Lynn Haven Baptist serves as Relay Center for Operation Christmas Child

**Debbie Adams**  
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Lynn Haven Baptist Church in Vinton is once again serving as a Relay Center (drop-off location) for Operation Christmas

Child. This year the church received over 1,700 shoeboxes to be distributed to children around the world.

Operation Christmas Child is an international project sponsored by the Samaritan's Purse organi-

zation, which sends gift-filled shoeboxes around the world to children living in the midst of poverty, war, disease, or natural disaster. Empty shoeboxes are transformed into "gifts of hope," filled by donors with toys,

school supplies, hygiene items, art supplies, hats, scarves, clothing, and other small items.

Area churches participating in the project dropped off their shoeboxes at Lynn Haven during National Collection Week between November 15 and 22 this year. Volunteers at the church then packed the boxes into cartons for delivery to Salem Baptist Church, the central drop-off point in the region. Collegiate Movers has been hauling the boxes to Salem for the past three years.

At Salem Baptist, volunteers including many Virginia State Troopers, loaded the boxes onto tractor-trailers for delivery to the Operation Christmas Child processing center in Boone or Charlotte, N.C. The gifts are shipped from there to over 100 countries around the world.

Lynn Haven Baptist has

been serving as a drop-off point for Operation Christmas Child for six years (one of over 4500 across the nation) and prepared shoebox gifts for many years before that, according to Shirley Hall, who coordinates the project at the church, along with Nancy Bowser. Hall has been to visit the processing center in Boone twice and says the warehouse is "huge" and very impressive.

"We are thankful for all those who participate in giving children something to look forward to," said Hall.

For some children, this is the first gift they have ever received and is meant to send a message that God loves them. While children in the United States seem to receive an overabundance of gifts, these children don't and will always remember their shoebox gift and those who sent it.

Hall's daughter, Katie

Saunders, grew up in Lynn Haven Baptist and has an interesting story to tell about one of the shoeboxes she packed years ago.

In 2003, she took part in a 10-day mission trip to Armenia with First Baptist Church. The last day of the trip was not going well; she and her fellow missionaries were not being well received in the community where they were knocking on doors to share their faith. In fact, they had some doors slammed in their faces. According to Saunders, at the last home on the last day, a little girl opened the door and was so excited to see the "Americans" she had heard were in the area.

The small apartment was crowded with the girl, her parents, siblings, and members of her extended family. The child talked about a gift

See Lynn Haven, page 4



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Members of Lynn Haven Baptist Church prepare shoeboxes full of gifts as part of the Operation Christmas Child project. Shown left to right are Harold Cook, Fred St. Clair, Dixie Snyder, Shirley Hall, Lewis Jones, Judy Jones, and Joy Cook.

### WBMS shows commitment to community service with food drive



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Students in Jamie Nichols' (on left) and Ashley Stultz's (far right) classes facilitated the collection and packing of items donated to the WBMS food drive this holiday season.

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The students and staff at William Byrd Middle School have demonstrated their commitment to community service by collecting 1,145 food and clothing items for families in need this holiday season.

According to guidance coun-

selor Lubeth Jones, who coordinated the project at WBMS along with teachers Ashley Stultz and Jamie Nichols, the Community Christmas Store, which serves the entire valley, reached out to the school to see if the students would be interested in helping collect food and warm clothing to help stock its shelves for the holidays. The organization plans

to feed about 450 families with donations from WBMS and other Roanoke County schools.

Jones asked for staff volunteers to help with the food drive—Stultz and Nichols stepped up, and also volunteered their teams of students to help with counting, labeling, sorting,

See Food Drive, page 12



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Pat Barton and her husband Bobby prepared for a Christmas party at Vinton Baptist Church.

### Who are the best cooks in Vinton?

#### Pat Barton's Cheesy Potatoes

Ingredients: 8 oz. sour cream  
6 cups mashed potatoes 1/4 cup melted butter  
8 oz. cream cheese 1 tsp. salt

Shredded cheddar cheese for topping

Optional: 1/2 tsp. garlic salt, 1/4 tsp. onion powder

Combine all ingredients except shredded cheddar and place in greased 2 qt. dish.

Top with shredded cheese. Bake at 350° for 35-45 minutes.

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With this week being Thanksgiving—when people spend a great deal of time thinking and talking about food—we asked Vinton residents to name the best cooks in town.

One name that kept coming up was Pat Barton.

Whitney Russell, the associate pastor at Vinton Baptist, said, "If you ask most people at Vinton Baptist Church who the best cook in Vinton is, they will all reply, 'Pat Barton.' Mrs. Barton spent years

serving our church in the kitchen. Mrs. Barton, her right-hand man Bobby, Ardella Hough, and her loyal and hardworking kitchen helpers spent many days and nights serving Wednesday night dinners, funeral meals, and food for all sorts of special occasions at our church.

"Everyone has their favorite dinner Pat Barton and her crew would make, but my favorite is her cheesy potatoes! The truth is...Ms. Barton doesn't really have a specialty, because everything she makes is delicious and amazing! We know the secret to her recipes too...everything she makes and prepares, she does with love. She is generous, thoughtful, hardworking, a master chef...and in my opinion...the Best Cook in Vinton!"

Pat's granddaughter, Laura Barton Bryant, says, "We are certainly spoiled to have her in

See Best Cooks, page 5

### Mark Frye of Creative Occasions goes national

Mark Frye, owner and creative designer at Creative Occasions, Events, Flowers and Gifts in Vinton, has been selected as a 2021 volunteer holiday decorator at the White House in Washington, D. C. He will leave on Thanksgiving Day and return home on Sunday, November 28 after completing his design.

Frye is much acclaimed in Vinton and throughout the Roanoke area. In addition to helping clients

create the events of their dreams, he is usually a participant and winner in The Hotel Roanoke Fashions for Evergreens United Way fundraiser each year.

Now he is going national—a well-deserved honor, say his customers and those who know him.

Frye says that although this is the first time he applied for the honor "it's definitely been a bucket list item for me for a long time and it's hard to believe it's real!"



Mark Frye

PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

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# Singing with a broken heart; coping when there seems no hope

**Debbie Adams**  
dadams@ourvalley.org

“How do I sing with a broken heart?” “How do you cope when there seems to be no hope, when God seems nowhere to be found?”

Those are some of the questions authors April White and Marilyn Nutter address in their new book, “Destination Hope: A Travel Companion When Life Falls Apart,” conceived as “a travel guide for the hard parts of life.”

“Destination Hope helps women regain their faith and footing after being knocked down by unexpected events,” said White. “What happens when a perfectly constructed life falls apart and leaves a woman in the ashes of her former life? As authors, Marilyn Nutter and I understand what it feels like when life falls apart due to unexpected life interruptions.

Destination Hope weaves our stories of loss (Marilyn) and chronic illness (me) with narratives of other women knocked off course by events.

White and Nutter are a generation apart in age but share the experience of discovering that “life doesn’t always turn out the way we planned.” They acknowledge anger and denial, bargaining, depression, and finally acceptance. They know what they are talking about firsthand and are willing to share real stories, and also their real hope. They believe the key to facing life’s difficulties is “faith and trust in God.”

White is a wife, mother to two teenagers, and a pharmacist. She and her family live in the Vinton area.

She says that until just a few years ago, her life was “idyllic.” However, in 2015, a rare illness, Hypokalemic Periodic Paralysis, threatened to derail her “sense of worth, security, and even identity.”

The chronic illness, characterized by severe muscle weakness and episodic paralysis, “hijacked” her body and led to her retirement from her career in pharmacy; however, she has refused to let it steal her hope. In fact, she says that God has used her chronic battle “as a platform to write and speak of His chronic presence.”

She describes herself now as a “writer and hope dealer.” She says she gets by nowadays “with Jesus, coffee, and afternoon naps. Life with a chronic illness is a daily fight, but God grants His strength each day.”

The authors note, “Suffering is an equal opportunity scoundrel, with no limits to age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, or education. ‘Destination Hope’ offers insight and hope for women in a variety of losses in all stages of life.”

Nutter— wife, mother of three daughters and eight grandchildren, a speech-language pathologist and Christian Higher Education faculty member— suddenly found herself a widow when her husband of 42 years died unexpectedly from a heart attack, two days before Christmas, 2,000 miles from home.

She has come to center her life around scripture from Lamentations 3: 22-23, “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every



Authors April White (left) and Marilyn Nutter.

morning; great is your faithfulness.”

What is memorable and precious about their book, is that, given the theme, it is not gloomy or burdensome or depressing. Reading the authors’ words is more like applying salve to a wound, recognizing that you are not alone in your problems, that others have faced and surmounted problems just as stultifying as yours. The real people in their stories eventually got their feet under themselves and survived— by keeping their eyes on God. Other readers have described the book as “cathartic.”

When most people hear about “loss,” they think of the death of a spouse. This book covers that topic through Nutter’s life story, but also other types of be-

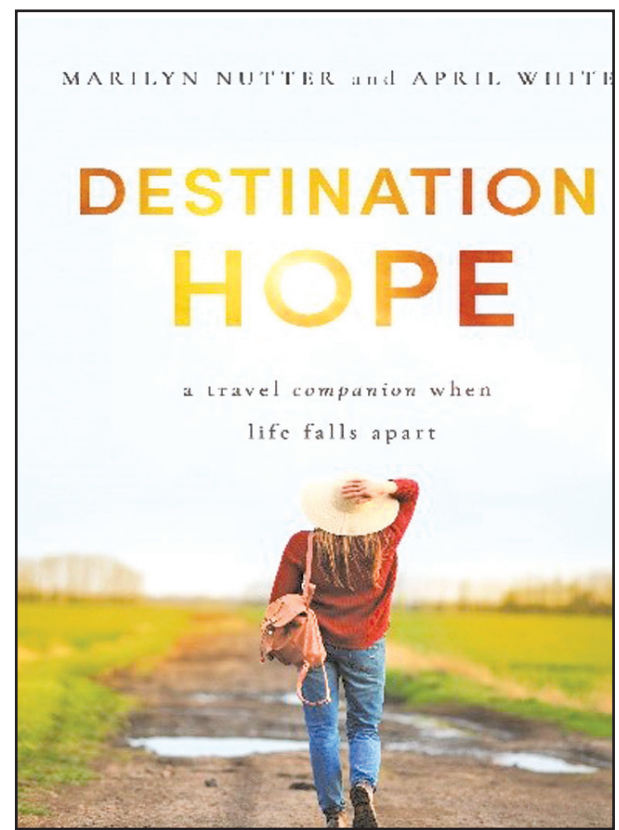
wildering life changes—the long-awaited child who is born with Down’s Syndrome, infidelity, job loss, relocation, murder of a beloved child, the loss of the senior year of high school and its festivities due to a pandemic, and more.

“Grief is not one size fits all,” they note. “Life falls apart in different ways. Some people might experience the same loss but may grieve in different ways. While circumstances change, God does not.”

One of the most timely topics they discuss is the upcoming holidays— “joyous for some, but difficult for others with empty arms, and disappointment.”

Nutter says that in navigating a loss, the one who has suffered the devastating change, and those around them, will do best to acknowledge that the holidays will most likely be difficult. Finances might be a constraint; there might be an empty chair at the table, a quiet house; some traditions can’t continue.

White talks about



April White and Marilyn Nutter have just released their new book “Destination Hope; A Travel Companion When Life Falls Apart.”

wanting to cancel Christmas after her diagnosis, caught up in anger and disappointment. Her daughter’s response was “No, Mom! We are celebrating Christmas! Christ’s birth!”

White emphasizes that the ones surrounding those who have experienced a loss should be mindful and not concentrate on platitudes, but on practical concrete ways to be of help, and what might be most beneficial for the individual and relieve a burden— like grocery shopping, running errands, housework, driving them where they need to go, going for a walk together, or out to lunch. Allow them to talk about their grief, but don’t force them to.

White and Nutter encourage women to see loss and hardship as just part of life’s journey and remind them to look up to the Provider of Hope for strength and comfort. White discourages negative “Stinkin’ Thinkin’.”

“Destination Hope” is divided into Milepost

Markers (chapters) addressing, with true stories, a wide variety of losses, disappointments, or obstacles. Each chapter concludes with a Rest Area for reflection and journaling. There is also a Postcard with a hope-filled quotation related to the topics covered in the section.

White is the columnist for the “Pressing On” column for the quarterly chronic illness magazine, Broken but Priceless and Inspire a Fire. She also writes for Reach Out Columbia and Focus on the Family’s Clubhouse magazine. Nutter is now the author of three devotional books and a contributor to other publications. Both are active in church ministries.

White’s informative website is www.AprilDawnWhite.com; Nutter’s is www.marilyn-nutter.com.

Copies of “Destination Hope” are available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and Christian-Book.com in Kindle, paperback, and hardback.

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Festivities & Tree Lighting: 6 p.m.,  
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- Susan Lewis Music Studio
- Children countdown to tree lighting!

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# Vinton Christmas Parade/Tree Lighting set for December 2

The Vinton Christmas Parade is returning in its traditional form on Thursday, December 2, starting with the Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Municipal Building at 6 p.m. followed by the parade itself at 7 p.m.

The Floyd Ward dancers will open the tree-lighting ceremony at 6 p.m., followed by the lighting of the tree at 6:30 by Vinton Mayor Brad Grose and Miss Roanoke Valley Isabella Jessee. Children will be encouraged to surround the tree and help count-down to the lights being turned on.

Once the tree is lit, students from the Susan Lewis Music Studio will perform until the parade begins.

Joey Nicely is the DJ for the pre-parade events

The parade kicks off from the Vinton War Memorial and will continue down Washington Avenue and then meander through the streets of downtown Vinton—

Maple Street, Cleveland Avenue, and Polard Street to Gus Nicks Boulevard.

This year there are again dozens of entries to be judged. The judges' viewing stand will be directly across from the Municipal Building stage. Winners will be announced online after the parade.

Keep your eye out for the highlight of the parade—Santa taking his traditional ride on a fire engine.

Sponsors for this year's Vinton Christmas Parade include Member One, the Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Vinton, Blue Ridge Beverage, the Vinton War Memorial, Roanoke County, Carilion Clinic, Winter's Storage, ServPro, Berkshire Health Care, HomeTrust Bank, Lotz Funeral Home, Neely's Accounting, Coastal Insurance Planning of Virginia, PFG, Fox Radio 910, and The Vinton

Messenger.

Another Christmas Parade tradition is returning to downtown Vinton this year—the annual Breakfast Lions Club "All You Can Eat" Spaghetti Dinner fund-

raiser at the VFW from 4 to 7 p.m. before the parade gets underway. Be sure to stop by.

While downtown for the parade, check out the storefronts of Vinton businesses partici-

pating in the "Christmas Storefront Decorating Contest."

In 2020, due to the pandemic, the Vinton parade was not held; the Santa Crawl through the neighborhoods of

Vinton took its place—which was so popular it will be held again, in addition to the traditional Christmas Parade. The Santa Crawl is scheduled for Tuesday, December 14 with details to come.



PHOTO BY TONI CUENCA

# Lions Club sponsors annual Christmas Shopping Trip, hosts annual Spaghetti Dinner

The Vinton Breakfast Lions Club have held the annual Christmas Shopping Trip for local elementary school students in need at Herman L. Horn and W.E. Cundiff Elementary Schools. Children are recommended by the guidance staff and administration at their schools.

Ten Lions Club members and six additional volunteers participated in the outing on November 17 at the Bonsack Walmart.

The Lions shopped for a total of 20 students, buying them clothing—including pants, shirts, shoes, coats, and socks—along with one toy. The club receives lists of clothing sizes for the children for the shopping trip.

In 2020, the Breakfast Lions also purchased gift cards for high school stu-

dents whose families were in need and plans do to the same again this year.

The Breakfast Lions will be hosting their annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser on December 2 at the VFW at 117 East Lee Avenue in downtown Vinton. The dinner is traditionally held the evening of the Vinton Christmas Parade. This year's dinner is scheduled from 4 to 7 p.m. The meal includes "all you can eat" spaghetti, salad, a dinner roll, and dessert with tea or coffee. Tickets are \$7 in advance from club members or at Grand Rental Station or \$8 at the door.

Proceeds from the fundraiser go to the multitude of community service projects the Lions undertake each year—including the Christmas shopping trip.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Members of the Vinton Breakfast Lions Club completed one of their annual community service projects with a Christmas Shopping Trip to buy clothing and a toy for 20 children in need in local elementary schools. They shopped at the Bonsack Walmart on November 17.

# Rosie's \$28 million expansion grand opening set for December 8



About 350 new games are being added at Rosie's Gaming Emporium in Vinton, bringing the total to 500 when they open their new expansion on December 8.

Rosie's Gaming Emporium in Vinton will be holding its grand opening celebration for its \$28 million expansion on December 8. Construction has moved along mostly on schedule since it got underway in March 2021 with the goal of opening by the end of the year.

Ground was ceremonially broken in December 2018 for the original Rosie's—a renovation of the Colonial Downs building owned by Henry Brabham. Rosie's opened for business in May 2019 and has been a huge hit—and a boon to the Town of Vinton's economy.

In November 2020, Rosie's announced the current expansion, adding 18,000 square feet

to the existing 15,200. With the expansion, they are tripling the number of Historic Horseracing Terminals (gaming machines.)

Technicians are completing the installation of about 350 new games, bringing the total to 500 in the regular gaming room and in the new smoking area. There are now four game manufacturers instead of just one, offering more variety and themes. Wiring has been completed under the raised flooring and carpet installation completed.

The bar is still getting final touches in the large gaming room. A partition between the original section and the new gaming areas will be removed soon. Rosie's plans to expand its musical en-



An awning from the new parking garage to the front entrance at Rosie's is being completed.

tertainment on the stage to every Friday and Saturday night, plus other nights during the grand opening weeks—about 12 shows total in the month of December. They have been working with J.D. Sutphin of Big Lick Entertainment on booking acts.

The Green Room for entertainers waiting to perform is complete, along with a lift for performers with special needs. There is a new office area and an employee entrance—now at the back of the building.

An awning is being completed which will allow patrons to walk from the new three-story parking garage to the front entrance of Rosie's. Pavers are busy in the parking lot and with the

access road down to Niagara Road.

The restaurant has not been replaced but is adding some tables. The current bar remains open as well.

The new parking garage includes about 280 parking spaces, has an elevator, and is ADA accessible. ADA and VIP parking is located on the first level of the garage. In addition to the parking garage (which has an additional rear entrance), there is overflow parking behind and around the building.

Colonial Downs is not only making an investment of millions of dollars with the expansion, but adding about 30 jobs. Rosie's has been able to remain open during construction with



PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

A new bar is being added to the gaming rooms at Rosie's.

little decline in business.

C.K. Bosworth is the general contractor for the job. Ernie Dellaverson continues as the general

manager of the Vinton Rosie's Gaming Emporium and is now the regional general manager for Rosie's.

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# Vinton Baptist Youth hosting Craft Fair on December 5

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 5, from 1 to 4 p.m., when the Vinton Baptist Church youth and children will host a Christmas Craft & Vendor Fair fundraiser for Passport Camps.

Vendors include Carolyn's Sparkles (jewelry), Trendy with Sindy (chalk couture), Briarwood Mountain Crafts (quilts), Gypsy Star Studio (wom-

en's clothing & accessories), Pampered Chef, Color Street, and more.

VBC is still accepting vendors, so if you're a crafter, artist, or other vendor who would like to set up a booth, register no later than November 28. Call Vinton Baptist at 343-7685 for more information.

Vinton Baptist is located at 219 East Washington Avenue in downtown Vinton.

# Lynn Haven

from page 1



Shoeboxes packed at Lynn Haven Baptist Church are transported to Salem Baptist Church where Virginia State Troopers volunteer to load them on tractor-trailers for the trip to the processing center in Boone or Charlotte, N.C. Kevin Simmons of Collegiate Movers has been moving the boxes from Lynn Haven to Salem Baptist for about three years.

she had received from America several months before. She brought out a shoebox wrapped in blue snowman paper filled with gifts she had received.

Saunders recognized it as the shoebox she had packed—containing a Beanie Baby Monkey she and her father had argued about placing in the box. The monkey apparently had become the child's favorite toy. All were amazed when Saunders explained that she had packed the very box which the little girl across the world in Armenia had received.

"It was amazing to know that the gospel had been shared and the family came to know Jesus through a shoebox of gifts sent months before," said Saunders.

This year, volunteers worked at Lynn Haven for over a week to package the boxes as they were delivered to them from churches, organizations, and individuals around the area. Donations have come in from Vinton Baptist (387 as of Nov. 20), Mount Pleasant Baptist (75 boxes), Mason's Cove Baptist (75), Gospel Light Baptist on Cloverdale Road (501), along with the 400+ from Lynn Haven.

One couple who brought in a box had heard about Operation Christmas Child while on vacation at the beach, gathered up gifts when they got back home, and Googled to find the closest location for drop-off, which turned out to be Lynn Haven.

In 2020, Operation Christmas Child faced some challenges due to the pandemic. Volunteers were masked and gloved as the shoeboxes arrived; in some instances, those donating the boxes did not want to come into the church or even leave their cars to de-

liver the shoeboxes, so the volunteers went to the cars to accept the gifts.

Participants are asked to pack the shoeboxes for a certain gender and age group (ages 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14).

Suggestions include personal care items such as a toothbrush, hairbrush, comb, band-aids, reusable plastic containers (like water bottles, cups, or plates) or a blanket. Clothing and accessory items include shirts or pants, hats, shoes, socks, underwear, mittens, sunglasses, hairbows, pocketbooks, or flashlights.

Craft or school items might include pencils, markers, crayons, coloring books, notebooks, picture books, puzzles, a sewing kit, and glue sticks.

Participants are asked to include a "Wow" item such as dolls, soccer balls, stuffed animals, an outfit of clothing, a backpack, toy trucks, a small musical instrument, plastic tools or dinosaurs, or an Etch a Sketch.

Lynn Haven has an ongoing Blanket Ministry program and volunteers use some of the leftover fleece fabric to make scarves to include in the gift boxes.

The shoebox gifts can be packed in actual shoeboxes or in plastic containers; Operation Christmas child even has a "Build a Shoebox Online" program in which participants can shop online for gifts which will be placed in a shoebox for distribution. Many of those gifts go to hard-to-reach areas around the globe.

No candy, gum, liquids or lotions, aerosols, food, toothpaste (it might be eaten), breakables, or scary or war toys are permitted.

Participants are encouraged to enclose a personal note for the child des-

igned to receive the box and to "pray without ceasing" for the recipient.

They are also asked to enclose \$9 to cover shipping and delivery costs.

According to Operation Christmas Child, the organization had its beginnings in 1983 with Samaritan's Purse President Franklin Graham who received a call from a man in England asking if he'd be willing to fill shoeboxes with gifts for children in war-torn Bosnia. Franklin agreed, but figured Christmas was months away. He forgot about the promise until he received a call around Thanksgiving asking about the gifts.

Franklin asked his friend, the late Pastor Ross Rhoads of Calvary Church of Charlotte to see if he could help with the need. A Sunday shortly afterward, Pastor Rhoads demonstrated for his congregation how to fill a shoebox with simple gifts and encouraged them to include a letter to the child as well. Within weeks, the church had 11,000 shoeboxes lining their hallways.

Due to their generosity and additional gifts from Canada, Samaritan's Purse sent 28,000 shoebox gifts to children in the Balkans that Christmas.

Every year since, Samaritan's Purse has collected shoebox gifts for children around the world. Since 1993, more than 188 million children in more than 170 countries and territories have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox.

In 2020 alone, more than 9.1 million Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts were collected throughout Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

**Christmas Craft & Vendor Fair**  
**Vinton Baptist Church Gym**  
 219 E. Washington Avenue Vinton VA 24179  
**Sunday December 5th**  
**1:00 - 4:00 PM**

Featuring Carolyn's Sparkles (jewelry), Trendy with Sindy (chalk couture), Briarwood Mountain Crafts (quilts), Gypsy Star Studio (women's clothing & acc.), Pampered Chef, Color Street, and more!

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Lynn Haven Baptist member Fred St. Clair helped pack boxes at the church for Operation Christmas Child. PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

# 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.

**VINTON CHRISTMAS PARADE**  
**Dec 2, 2021 6:00 PM**  
**Downtown Vinton Vinton, Virginia 24179**  
 Annual Christmas parade over 100 entries.  
**The Parade that kicks off the holiday season!**  
**6PM- Tree lighting ceremony and entertainment at the Vinton Municipal Building 7PM Parade**  
**Parade ends at the The Vinton Farmers' Market where you can visit and have pictures taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus while enjoying refreshments and entertainment.**  
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# Best Cooks from page 1



One of Vinton's best cooks, Arlene Carroll Scott. Photo is from 1971.



The Carroll/Scott/Sowers families around the table: (left to right) Kathryn Sowers' dad, Sam; her husband, Everette; Kathryn; her Aunt Dot and her husband Uncle Bill; Arlene Scott; and the Matriarch, Grandma Minnie Carroll (mother of eight). Photo from 1967.



Best Cook Bonnie Jones

our lives. Her cheese ball is certainly noteworthy as are her green beans and coconut cake. All so, so good!"

Pat's cheese ball is a staple at every holiday event. One year she served the cheese balls at a reception for Vinton Baptist Pastor Lewis Bates. Roanoke's then Mayor Noel C. Taylor attended the reception and "absolutely loved the cheese ball. He said he had never tasted anything like it." He asked her to write down the recipe then and there, and she sent him home with the leftovers.

"Cream Cheese Cheese Ball" is one of her most requested recipes among friends and family. Each year she prepares numerous cheese balls for her neighbors for Christmas

## Pat's Cream Cheese Cheeseball

**Ingredients:**  
2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese  
1 large can crushed pineapple, drained  
1/2 cup chopped green pepper  
1 Tbsp. chopped onion  
1 tsp. seasoning salt  
Chopped pecans  
Mix all the ingredients, except the pecans, in a bowl. (Pat says mixing it up with your hands might be the best technique.) Roll the mixture into a ball. Roll it in chopped pecans. Chill.

## Pat's Green Beans

**Ingredients:**  
1 large can green beans, undrained  
4 chicken bouillon cubes  
1/2 stick of butter  
Water to cover  
Combine all the ingredients in a pot, heat to boiling, then reduce to simmer for about 45 minutes or until they are the consistency your family enjoys.

## Pat's Thanksgiving Cake

**Ingredients:** 2 cups canned pumpkin  
1 cup Crisco oil 2 tsp. cinnamon  
2 cups flour 1 tsp. baking powder  
2 cups sugar 2 tsp. baking soda  
4 eggs 1/2 tsp. salt

Beat together Crisco oil, sugar, pumpkin, and eggs. Sift together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Stir into pumpkin mixture. Bake in greased and floured bundt pan or tube pan for 1 hour and 15 minutes at 350°. Cool cake. Invert pan to remove cake.

## Frost with Cream Cheese Frosting

**Ingredients:** 1 box confectioner's sugar  
8 oz. cream cheese 1 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 Cup Crisco solid shortening Milk as needed

Combine all ingredients. Add enough milk to make the frosting spreadable. This cake freezes well.

gifts. Kathryn Sowers says her family had many great cooks, especially her mother, Arlene Carroll Scott. (Not surprisingly, Arlene Scott and Pat Barton's mother were sisters.) "She had so many great dishes she made—most did not really have recipes," Kathryn says. "Everything from fried chicken to homemade coconut cake to green beans and the list keeps

going. I would ask her—and it was a pinch of this, a hand full of that. I would even ask her to measure it so I would know how much she was talking about. Just about everyone in Vinton who got married or had a wedding or baby shower or birthday had one of her homemade decorated cakes. "One of her recipes that I still make every Thanksgiving is her Cranberry Relish Salad."

## Arlene Scott's Cranberry Relish Salad

**Ingredients:** 1 cup chopped pecans (can be left out if there are allergies)  
2 cups raw cranberries 2 cups sugar  
2 oranges 2 cups sugar  
1 cup diced celery 1 pkg. lemon Jello  
2 apples (your favorite variety) 1 pkg. cherry Jello  
1 large can crushed pineapple 3 cups hot water

Grind cranberries, oranges and apples. Add celery, nuts, sugar. Mix well and let stand in fridge. Dissolve jello with 3 cups of water and let stand in fridge until starts to jell. Add to cranberry mixture. Place in refrigerator until firm. It will keep in the fridge for at least 1 week.

## Kathryn Sowers' Jets

**Ingredients:** Dash salt  
4-1/2 cups powdered sugar 1 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 cup salted butter Semi-sweet chocolate  
4 Tbsp. milk Coconut oil

Melt butter with milk. Add sugar, salt and vanilla and mix well in mixer. Set in fridge or freezer until cool. Roll into small balls, place on parchment paper, and return to freezer until hard (overnight). Melt semi-sweet chocolate and dip balls into chocolate to coat. If you use block semi- or un-sweetened chocolate, add about a tablespoon of coconut oil to the chocolate. Place Jets back on parchment paper and return to freezer until hard. These can be then put into air-tight containers until you want to serve or give as gifts.

## Bonnie Jones/Joy Beaman's Pimento Cheese

1 block cream cheese 1 Tbsp. vinegar  
1 8 oz. extra sharp 1 Tbsp. sugar  
Cracker Barrel cheddar 1 small jar of diced pimentos, drained  
1 pound Velveeta cheese  
1/4 cup mayonnaise

Put cream cheese, cheddar and Velveeta in food processor and blend till smooth. Add mayo, vinegar and sugar and blend. Add pimentos and stir.. Great with crackers, pretzels or to make a grilled cheese sandwich.

"I don't make many cakes, but I do make delicious deviled eggs, meatloaf and mac AND cheese," Sowers says. "My specialty is cookies and candy at Christmas. I make at

least 12 different ones. The ones most requested are Jets and Buckeye balls, strawberries, and chocolate sticks. The Jet recipe came from my aunt, Lucille Noell Carroll."

Just up the street at Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church, Pastor B. Failes also names a church cook as the Best Cook in Vinton.

"The best cook I know in Vinton is Bonnie Jones," Failes says. "She cooks for the Wednesday night dinners at Thrasher, and for many sports banquets that William Byrd held at Thrasher before the pandemic. I love her homemade spaghetti sauce. It has an amazing flavor even when she cooks for over 300 on a Wednesday night. Just the right amount of seasoning. Her pimento cheese is legendary! She is an amazing cook!"

Bonnie was willing to share that legendary pimento cheese recipe.

"I do love to cook and really enjoy being part of the cooking team for Wednesday night suppers at Thrasher each week," she said. "I majored in home economics in college and have always loved to be in the kitchen cooking for lots of people. A friend of mine gave me a recipe for pimento cheese many years ago and it has become one of my favorite recipes to share with friends and family. Thanks to Joy Beaman for sharing this with me. It's not what I would call typical pimento cheese. It is very creamy and delicious.

If you would like to suggest other great cooks in Vinton and their recipes, email [dadams@mainstreetnewspapers.com](mailto:dadams@mainstreetnewspapers.com).

# Businesses invited to join Christmas Storefront Decorating Contest

Many business storefronts in downtown Vinton will be festively decorated again this year for the 2021 holiday season.

The Town of Vinton is sponsoring the "Christmas Storefront Decorating Contest." Flyers advertising the competition are being distributed to local businesses located in the downtown business district encouraging them to participate.

All storefront decorations must be up by December 1 (in time for the Vinton Christmas Parade on December 2) and will be judged on December 13.

Winners will be chosen in four categories: Best All Around, Mayor's Choice, Most Creative, and Best Exemplifies the Spirit of Christmas.

Those who have lived in Vinton for many years remember nostalgically when all the shops in downtown Vinton decorated extensively for the holidays.

Questions about the Christmas Storefront Door Contest can be emailed to Vinton Director of Community Programs Chasity Barbour at [CBARBOUR@vintonva.gov](mailto:CBARBOUR@vintonva.gov) or call her at 540-400-1942.

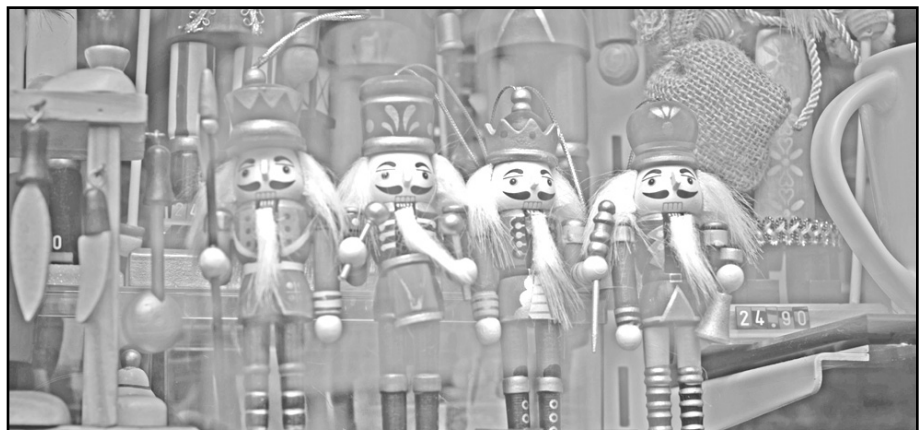
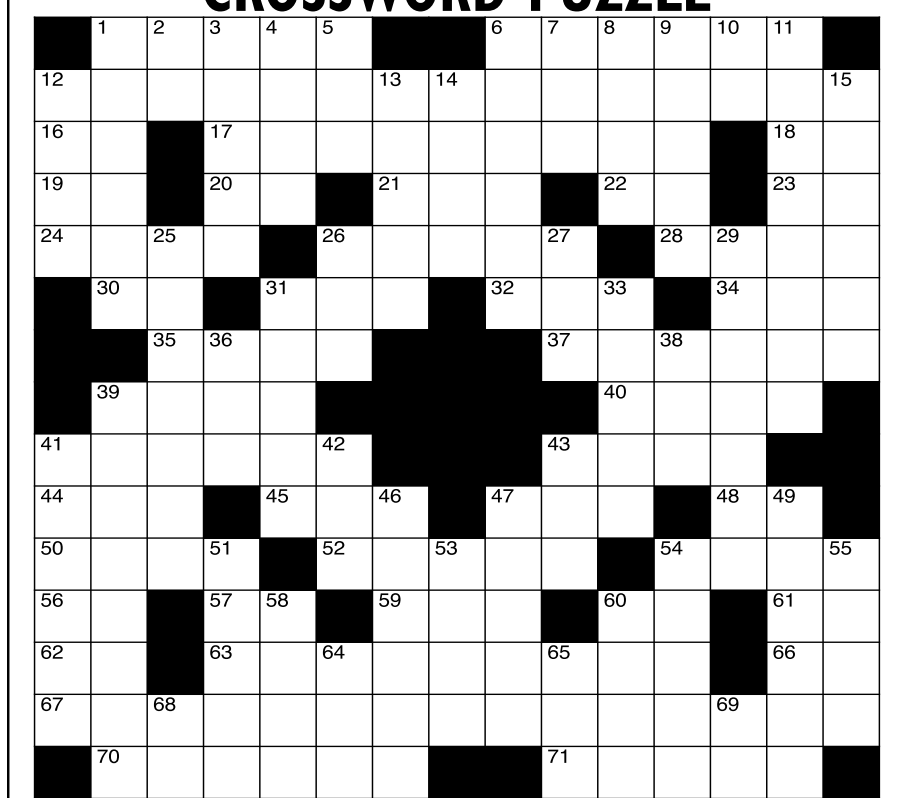


PHOTO BY SARA RUIZ

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- CLUES ACROSS**
- Member of Jamaican religion
  - Explodes
  - "Walter White" produced this
  - Promo
  - In a harmful way
  - Aluminum
  - Cerium
  - Female title
  - Singer DiFranco
  - Beloved alien
  - Free agent
  - Tax
  - Change
  - Heaviness
  - Third note of the solfège
  - Printing speed measurement
  - Pouch
  - Brew
  - Female of a horse
  - Platforms
  - Type of hemline
  - "Traffic" actor Guzman
  - Counts on
  - Inhabitant of Media
  - Pitcher's statistic
  - Beloved dish \_\_\_ and cheese
  - An association of criminals
  - Samarium
  - Describes an action
  - About oviduct
  - Holy fire
  - Audio frequency
  - Stephen King novel
  - Rocky peak
  - South Dakota
  - Gallium
  - Larry and Curly's buddy
  - One-dimensionality
  - Soldier
  - Act of foretelling future events
  - Envisaged
  - Establish by law
- CLUES DOWN**
- Regain possession of
  - Indicates position
  - Con games
  - Checks
  - Atomic mass unit
  - Large groups
  - Utah athlete
  - Abnormal sound
  - Scandal vocalist Patty
  - Atlanta rapper
  - Takes without permission
  - Apple computers
  - Hymn
  - Clue
  - Makes happy
  - Close to
  - Mimic
  - Cool!
  - Simplest
  - Preface
  - Represents the Tribe of Judah
  - Boxing great
  - Birth control means
  - English cathedral city
  - Refurbish
  - Test for high schoolers
  - "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
  - Most adorable
  - Large Pakistani tribe
  - Enemy to grass
  - Along the outer surface of a hull
  - Travels on water
  - Innermost Greek temple sanctuaries
  - Fire and
  - Singer Turner
  - "\_\_\_ the Man" Musial
  - \_\_\_ de plume
  - Frozen water
  - An alternative
  - Intensive care

# Vinton History Museum can solve your gift-giving needs

- Town of Vinton tapestry throws (\$60)
- Vinton Virginia t-shirts (\$15)
- Collector Vinton Christmas tree ornaments
- Roland E. Cook notecards
- Commemorative engraved bricks to be placed at the History

- Museum Memory Pergola (\$50)
  - Vintage William Byrd High School "Black Swan" yearbooks from various years (\$20)
  - Vinton History Museum memberships, individual yearly and life, and corporate
- Stop by the museum to see the gift sugges-

tions. It is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and every first Saturday, 10 a.m.--2 p.m. This year's Holiday Open House is scheduled for Saturday, December 4, from 10 to 2. You may also contact them at [info@vintonhistorymuseum.org](mailto:info@vintonhistorymuseum.org) or call 540-432-8634.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

The Vinton History Museum can help with your holiday shopping needs.

- Need ideas for Gift Giving
- The Vinton History Museum has some great suggestion

- Town of Vinton Tapestry Throw
- (54" x 70") is a 100% cotton Jacquard woven blanket with a 2-inch fringe. The exceptional clarity of detail and wide range of colors make your custom tapestry a work of art. Price includes sales tax.

My Story Begins Here – Vinton Virginia T-shirts, \$15.00. Price includes sales tax.

Collector Vinton Christmas Ornaments

Roland E. Cook note cards, pack of 10, \$5.00. Price includes sales tax.

Commemorative Engraved Brick at the Vinton History Museum Memory Pergola, \$50.00

Vintage William Byrd High School, the Black Swan, Annuals from various years, \$20.00. Price includes sales tax.

Vinton Historical Society Membership  
Individual \$15.00, Corporate \$150.00, Lifetime Individual \$150.00

Contact us at [info@vintonhistorymuseum.org](mailto:info@vintonhistorymuseum.org) or 540-342-8634. Or drop by the Vinton History Museum at 210 E. Jackson Ave., Vinton, VA 24179. Open M-W-F and the first Saturdays, 10-2 pm.

## 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.sttofc.org](http://www.sttofc.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).

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH

**BELMONT CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**, 1101 Jamison Ave. SE, Roanoke, VA 24013, 540-343-7502, Worship Services every Sunday at 11:00AM, Pastor Terry Brace. We look forward to seeing you this Sunday!

## 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.

## 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, [www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Spiritual-Experiences-Group), 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 how the teachings of Eckankar lead you to spiritual freedom.

## FOUR SQUARE

**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.

## LUTHERAN

**ST. TIMOTHY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**, "The Church Under The Cross", 1201 Hardy Rd, Vinton VA 24179, Pastor, Rev. Dr. James B. Davis (540) 342- 1715, Sunday

# Vinton Worship Directory

### TESTING AND COMFORT

Read Genesis 22:1 through 24:67

Rebounding from the joy of his promised son and the distress of dismissing Hagar and Ishmael, Abraham negotiated a peace treaty with King Abimelek and put down his tent pegs in Beer-sheba. Seed time and harvest became a way of life for this covenant family.

Imagine Abraham's surprise when God said this: "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you" (Genesis 22:2).

It is suggested by historians that Isaac was between the ages of sixteen and twentyfive—old enough to know what was going on. Yet he did not resist. He trusted his father's faith that God would provide. And God did! Abraham was listening for and heard the voice of God. Isaac was saved.

Fast forward to the meeting of Abraham's servant and Rebekah at the well—Rebekah knew the God of Abraham, and in His design she was in the right place at the right time. Rebekah, like Isaac, did not resist. She left immediately, willing to trust the servant of Abraham.

Challenge for Today: Dare to trust the guidance of your spiritual leader. Quicklook: Genesis 22:1–12

**If you would like to see your church services listed here in the Vinton Messenger contact Tucker Frye at 540-473-2741 or email [tfrye@ourvalley.org](mailto:tfrye@ourvalley.org)**

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 Study; Tuesdays & Thursdays Stretch Class 9:00am; 1st Tuesdays Deacons; Wednesday Choir

7:00pm; Monday Girl Scouts 7:00pm; 3rd Saturday Men's Breakfast 8:00am. Rev. Jonathan Moelker, 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.

Submit your community

news and photos to

[vintonmessenger@ourvalley.org](mailto:vintonmessenger@ourvalley.org)

# Abell updates seniors on Medicare Changes for 2022

If you are already on Medicare, or about to enroll, you should definitely talk with Shannon Abell, a volunteer with the Senior Medicare Patrol.

Abell worked for 37 years with the LOA (Local Office on Aging) and retired last December from his position as the Director of Senior Services. He was well-known for his presentations on Medicare and on scams affecting seniors during his time with the LOA and continues the informative talks in his retirement.

Sessions are generally scheduled during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period each fall (this year between October 15 and December 7) when Medicare enrollees are making the decision on whether to change their health care coverage or stick with the insurance they have.

On November 18, he updated participants at a well-attended session hosted by Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church in Vinton—with an audience of engaged, informed seniors who came prepared with questions.

According to Abell, the news on Medicare in 2022 was mixed. According to the Social Security Administration approximately 70 million Americans will see a 5.9% increase in their Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments in 2022—on average \$92 per month (clearing about \$70). That's the good news. Federal benefit rates increase when the cost-of-living rises, as measured by the Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) and help offset the costs. Typically, the COLA increase has been 1 to 2 percent each year.

Unfortunately, although

Social Security checks will be bigger, Medicare premiums are increasing as well. The reasons given for the increase include:

Rising prices to deliver health care to Medicare enrollees and increased use of the health care system. Some of the higher health care spending is being attributed to COVID-19 care

In 2021, because of the pandemic, Congress took action to significantly lower the expected Part B premium increase to only \$3 per month. Congress directed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to pay back that reduced premium over time and that payback is starting in 2022.

CMS is setting aside money in its reserves in the event it decides that Medicare will cover Aduhelm a new Alzheimer's drug. CMS is still doing an analysis to determine whether Medicare will cover Aduhelm—a high-cost drug, whose price has been estimated at \$56,000 a year.

Medicare has several parts:

Part A is hospital insurance which helps cover inpatient care in hospitals, skilled nursing facility care, hospice care, and home health care. Inpatient Hospital Part A deductibles will increase by 4.9% to \$1556 per benefit period—a \$72 increase.

Part B (medical insurance) covers services from doctors and other health care providers, outpatient care, home health care, durable medical equipment (like wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, etc.), and many preventive services, such as screenings, vaccines, and yearly "Wellness" visits. According to Abell, Medicare Part B premiums will be increasing to \$170.10 per month for most beneficiaries (up from

\$148.50), an increase of 14.5%. Medicare Part B deductibles are increasing by 14.7%, up \$30 each year to \$233—the largest ever seen.

Part D (drug coverage) helps cover the cost of prescription drugs, including many recommended shots or vaccines. Plans that offer Medicare drug coverage are run by private insurance companies that follow rules set by Medicare.

When you first enroll in Medicare and during certain times of the year, you can choose how you get your Medicare coverage. There are two main ways:

Choose Original Medicare which includes Parts A and B and allows you to join a separate Medicare drug plan to get Part D Medicare drug coverage. This choice allows you to use any doctor or hospital in the nation that takes Medicare. To help pay your out-of-pocket costs in Original Medicare (like your 20% co-insurance), you can also buy supplemental coverage (Medigap) or use coverage from a former employer or union or Medicaid. Generally, under Original Medicare you don't need a referral to see a specialist. For Part B services, you usually pay a 20% co-pay of the Medicare-approved amount after you meet your deductible. You pay separate premiums for your Part B and Part D coverage. There is no yearly limit on what you pay out-of-pocket unless you have supplemental (Medigap) insurance. Medigap may pay the remaining out-of-pocket expenses.

Choose Medicare Advantage—a Medicare-approved plan from a private company that offers an alternative to Original Medicare for health and drug

coverage. These bundled plans include Parts A and B, and usually Part D. In most cases you must use doctors who are in the plan network. These plans may have lower out-of-pocket costs than Original Medicare and even offer extra benefits that Original Medicare doesn't cover like vision, hearing, and dental services. You may need a referral to see a specialist. Out-of-pocket expenses vary. You pay Part B premiums, and also the Medicare Advantage plan premium. Some plans may have a \$0 premium and help pay all or part of your Part B premium. Plans have a yearly limit on out-of-pocket for services Part A and B covers. Once you reach the plans limit, you pay nothing for services Parts A and B cover for the rest of the year.

Abell's belief is that Original Medicare serves the majority of beneficiaries the best, despite the current spate of advertisements touting Medicare Advantage plans to "get what you deserve." He urges those considering choosing or switching to a Medicare Advantage plan to "read the fine print."

If you change from Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage, it can be difficult to impossible to switch back to a Medigap plan, especially if you are over age 80. Your physician may not be in the network, and if you are a frequent traveler, you may find yourself not just out of town but out of network.

Abell recommends checking GoodRx for drug prescriptions to get the best price. Some pharmacies are known to regularly charge more than others.

He recommended that all seniors get their COVID, pneumonia, shingles, flu, and Hepa-

titis A vaccinations.

Abell also discussed scams which frequently target seniors. He commented that the best way to deter scam artists is to not answer the phone when you don't recognize the caller. Seventy percent of scam attempts involving seniors involve phone calls.

If you answer and the call seems questionable with the caller trying to obtain your personal information, "hang up." Don't press any numbers the caller mentions, just hang up. Don't "verify" your Social Security number or Medicare number on the phone. Guard your Social Security and Medicare cards.

He noted that some scams involve stimulus checks and that "there are no more stimulus checks coming."

The IRS, Medicare, and Social Security are not calling you, especially to say the police are on the way to your home to arrest you if you don't make a trip to the store and purchase a gift card for them. These agencies make contact through the U.S. Mail. They don't ask for your Social Security or Medicare numbers over the phone.

Abell anticipates the new area code leading to some confusion and more scams in the coming months.

Don't click on links in text messages if you don't know the sender. If the web address doesn't start with "https" it's not a secure site.

Medicare is complicated. If you have questions, call the LOA at (540) 345-0451 or visit the website at <https://loaa.org/>.

Check out [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov) and [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) for information as well.

## Vinton special events and programs dates announced for 2022

The Town of Vinton and the Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce have released special events dates for 2022. The town and Chamber of Commerce work closely in sponsoring these events.

Chamber events include:

- The Chamber will be hosting Lunch and Learn programs on January 12, March 9, May 11, July 13, September 14, and November 9.
- The Chamber's Mingle

at the Market Concerts for 2022 are scheduled for June 11, June 25, July 9, July 23, August 13, August 27, September 10, and September 24.

- The always popular Senior Services Expo is

planned for March 22.

- The annual Chamber Golf Tournament is scheduled for May 26.
- The Chamber has listed a "New Event" for May 14.
- Fall Fest is scheduled

for October 8.

- The 2022 Christmas Parade is scheduled for December 1.
- The Chamber's 2022 Holiday Open House will be held on December 15.

special events include:

- The Dogwood Festival on Saturday, April 30.
- The Fourth of July Celebration on the Monday, July 4.
- The Santa Crawl on Tuesday, December 13.

## Board of Supervisors briefed on Vinton MOU, playground at Explore Park

The Roanoke County Board of Supervisors dealt with several issues involving the Vinton area at its meeting on November 17. A resolution was proposed requesting that the Commonwealth Transportation Board fund the US 460 and Alt. Route 220 intersection improvements in the Hollins and Vinton Magisterial Districts to relieve traffic congestion and improve safety at this important regional connection between the Roanoke Valley, Botetourt County, the Lynchburg area and Interstate 81. This is the intersection just past the Bonsack Walmart.

The board heard a first reading of an ordinance accepting funds in the amount of \$118,089.97 from the Commonwealth of Virginia (ARPA funding) for distribution to the Town of Vinton for the purpose of providing municipal utility assistance and authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the funding. Action will be taken in December. Vinton Town Council was briefed on this ordinance at its meeting on November 16 and

will take action at the December 7 meeting.

The board also heard the first reading of an ordinance accepting \$50,000 in funds from the Friends of the Blue Ridge for constructing a new playground at Explore Park. The total cost of the project is \$95,000.

In 2016, the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors approved the Adventure Plan for Explore Park, which outlined the direction for the park's development. As a part of the Adventure Plan and Business Plan for Explore Park, it outlined the public-private partnerships necessary for the park to develop into a destination facility. One of the new amenities identified in the Adventure Plan was providing an inclusive and destination playground.

The Friends would like to donate \$50,000 for the purposes of constructing an inclusive and destination playground at Explore Park. The playground is proposed to be constructed next to the pavilion at Explore Park in Adventure Village. This playground will have a

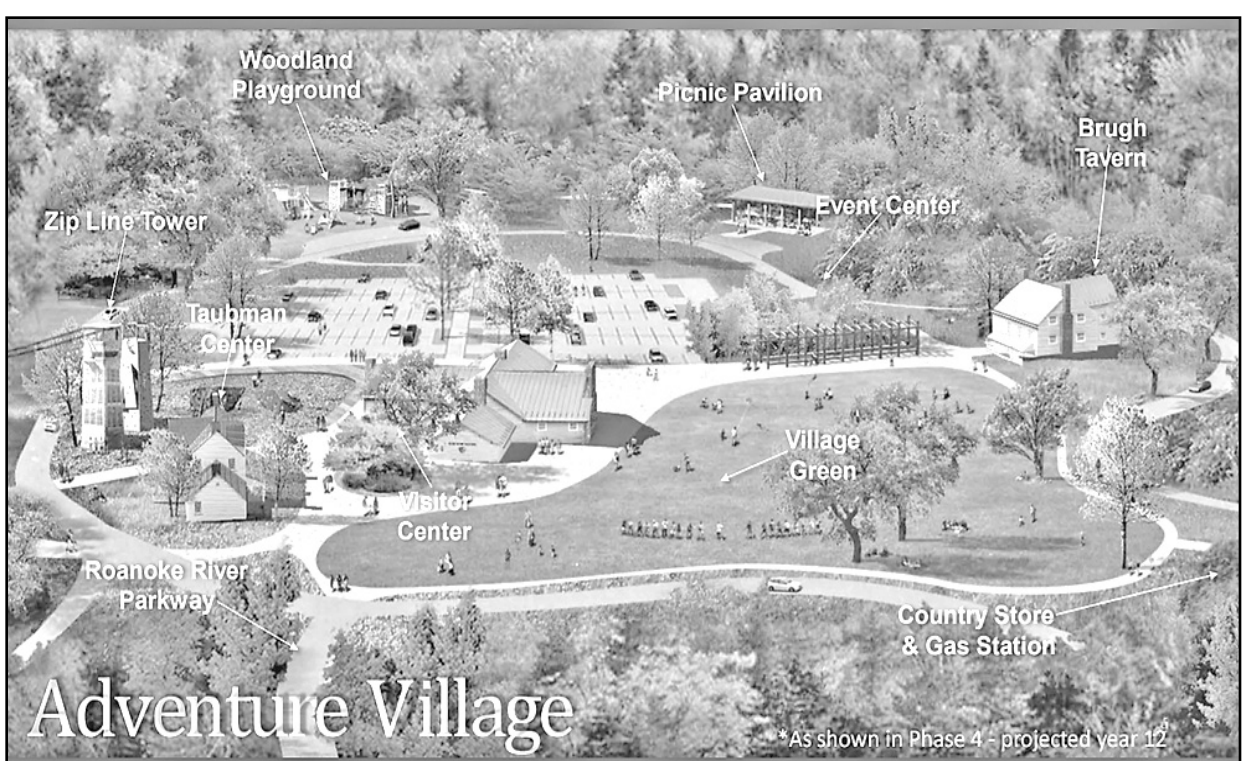


PHOTO COURTESY OF ROANOKE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM  
**The Friends of the Blue Ridge donated \$50,000 toward building an inclusive and destination playground at Explore Park in the Adventure Village area.**

woodland theme and will have features that all children can play on. The total project cost for the equipment, installation, mulch and border rail is \$95,000. This donation of \$50,000 will secure the purchase of the equipment.

The Board of Supervi-

sors held a public hearing and second reading of an ordinance accepting grant (ARPA) funding in the amount of \$23,207 from the Library of Virginia to provide hotspots which can be checked out from the county's libraries. Supervisors were told that

the current hotspots are very popular with citizens and are all checked out. The ordinance was approved.

The Library of Virginia (LVA) is dispensing funding received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to Virginia public

libraries in order to help communities respond directly and immediately "to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to related economic and community needs through equitable approaches in digital inclusion and library services."

Submit your community news and photos  
 to [vintonmessenger@ourvalley.org](mailto:vintonmessenger@ourvalley.org)



## From the Pulpit

When my wife, Whitney, and I traveled to the Holy Land about 12 years ago, some of our favorite sites were the bodies of water we visited. The largest was the Mediterranean Sea, which we saw first after landing in the metropolis of Tel Aviv.

Some of the most breathtaking views could be found on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. It was there that Jesus called two sets of brothers, Peter and Andrew, James and John, to be his disciples. It was there that Jesus calmed a storm and walked across the water. It was at the Sea of Galilee that Jesus' disciples experienced the presence of their resurrected Lord, who called to them from the shore and invited them to breakfast.

Our group also visited the Jordan River—the body of water Joshua and the Israelites had to cross in order to enter the Promised Land; the river Jesus entered for baptism. It was a high and holy moment

to stand in those waters.

The last major body of water we visited was the Dead Sea. This is a salt lake located in the Jordan Rift Valley, which is just east of Israel. Its shores are the lowest land-based elevation on earth, and its water contains almost 10 times the salt content of the ocean.

The Dead Sea is so salty that its water feels more like gel than liquid, making it impossible for swimmers to sink. The land around the Dead Sea is rocky and sandy; there are no trees, and very little plant life. It is a hot, dry, barren desert.

When I consider these bodies of water, I am reminded of an image offered by pastor and scholar, the Rev. Marvin A. McMickle, Ph.D.

According to Dr. McMickle, one of the major differences between these bodies of water is what they produce. Draining off the mountains of Lebanon, rainwater flows into

the Sea of Galilee. From the Sea of Galilee, this water flows into the Jordan River, which in turn, nourishes the land around it.

Both the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee are surrounded by fertile soil, a variety of trees and vegetation, as well as acres upon acres of crops and farmland. But the land that surrounds the Dead Sea, which is less than 100 miles from the Sea of Galilee, is empty and desolate. There are no trees or farmland; wildlife and vegetation are scarce.

According to Dr. McMickle, the reason the land that surrounds these bodies of water is so vastly different is water flow. The Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River are nothing but a conduit for the water that flows off the mountains. Not only do they provide a place for this water to flow in, but they also serve as a pathway for this water to flow out.

As a result, the land that

surrounds them is nourished and able to thrive. However, the water that flows into the Dead Sea has nowhere else to go. Without the ability to flow out, the water in the Dead Sea stops, sits, and stagnates. Consequently, so too does the land that surrounds it.

Jesus was the perfect conduit for God's presence. Through him, the presence of God flowed into human history and out into the world. Everywhere he went, people were nourished and healed by the power of God's Holy Spirit that flowed into them from the life and words of Christ. Jesus lived his life not as a destination, but a conduit for God's Spirit to flow into a human life, and out into the world.

As Christ's followers and church, we must consider whether we are a conduit or a destination. Do we provide a pathway for God's Spirit to pass through and flow out into the world? Or are we a

destination—a place where God's Spirit flows in, stops, and sits?

In order to determine whether the bodies of water in Israel are a conduit or a destination, look no further than the land that surrounds them.

I think the same can be true for us. When we consider the land that surround us—our relationships and interactions with others—is it full of fruit and life? Or are there some hot, dry, deserted places that need to be healed?

Just as water must continue to be in motion, flowing in and out, so too must the Spirit of God. Like the Jordan River and Sea of Galilee, may we be a pathway for the healing waters of God's presence to flow into us, and then out from us to nourish the land that surrounds us.

*By The Rev. Travis Russell, Vinton Baptist Church*

# A loss of freedom?

**Frances Stebbins**  
Correspondent

Although no communicator of news can ever be totally objective, in this age of so many ways to convey it, a few checks on its accuracy are possible.

Leonard Pitts Jr., award-winning columnist whose analyses are carried in "The Roanoke Times," drew a full house and a standing ovation when he spoke on Election Night at Roanoke College.

"Think Again: How to Survive the Misinformation Crisis With Your Brain Intact" was his theme.

Years ago, when on his retirement, I inter-

viewed the late Episcopal Bishop William H. Marmion, he said, "Consider the source!"

Like the columnist, the bishop had lived through his share of controversy in the 1950s years of civil rights upheavals in the church he served.

Pitts' hour-long address on trying to get to the truth these days focused on what he—and I—know best: writing a newspaper account of an event.

He's the author of a new book, "The Last Thing You Surrender."

Pitts, who has been at his craft for 43 years, said being careless with facts—especially deliberately—endangers one of America's most cherished freedoms. He said that's more serious for the nation's future than Covid 19.

Pitts is a witty man.

He began his talk to illustrate assumptions by relating a mistake he once made of diving into a "Ladies Restroom" without checking the male equivalent beside it. So people, if of a certain political or religious group, assume, without examining details, that a possible solution must be right.

The speaker suggested that such assumptions today govern people's views on controversies like climate change, trust in local, state and especially national government. Being Black, Pitts also reflected his own experiences on race; discrimination has once again been thrust upon public consciousness in the past two years with numerous instances of brutality from white law enforcement personnel against minority groups.

In regard to global

warming and the anxiety it produces, he noted that a few scientists and professors had been aware of it since at least 1959 when "The Silent Spring," a book by Rachel Carson, came out. Denial on the part of government leaders who might have started taking steps to combat the damage from fossil fuels was the result, Pitts asserted.

More recently, a young Scandinavian woman, Greta Thunberg, has stirred awareness among her generation resulting in possible needed action, Pitts noted. He used this illustration to point out what he regards as serious contributors to the political polarization currently affecting the nation. He cited these as:

- Distrust of authority which has been developing at least as far back as the Watergate scandal and the Vietnam conflict of more than 50 years ago.
- The influence of the Internet and social me-

dia which allows people to express feelings, spread misinformation and demand action without dealing with the consequences face-to-face.

- Journalistic cowardice defined by the veteran columnist as failure to present the facts on both sides of a controversy. He noted that certain publications are seen as "liberal" or "conservative," and those responsible for the placement of stories or offering opinion on the Editorial Page will reflect a certain bias. About the best that can be done is to offer facts on both sides and trust the reader to see the complexity.
- Misinformation of students which has led to more bitterness by stirring up regional differences long buried such as how the American Civil War is treated in history books and the "Critical Race Theory." The latter phrase, Pitts noted, has become a political symbol of paren-

tal dissatisfaction with their children's public schools.

{In days after the Virginia election, some political analysts attributed the defeat of the Democrat candidate for governor to a chance remark he made on this issue.}

To combat some of the "misinformation crisis," as Pitt calls it, he suggested:

- Face the crisis
- Question the source
- Verify (Both NAACP and NRA start with the same letter)
- Question those who are sure they are right
- Expect a price for lies. (Reputable news sources will run corrections)
- Social media are not news sources so should not be quoted
- Let teachers teach
- Demand accuracy and support sources that do not lie (even as a former President was known to have done)

In other words, "Think again!"

# Local restaurants receive dining awards

Several local restaurants were recognized with the prestigious 2022 Dining Awards by The Roanoker Magazine. The results were based on voters casting online ballots

in the summer of 2021.

Joe Goodpies Restaurant received the Silver Award for "Best New Restaurant" opened in the past 18 months.

Our Daily Bread re-

ceived the Silver Award for "Best Brunch" and the Silver Award for "Best Bakery."

Farmburguesa was presented the Platinum Award for "Best Burg-

ers," and the Gold Award for "Best Vinton Restaurant."

New York Pizza received the Platinum Award for "Best Pizza" and "Best Vinton Restaurant."

Famous Anthony's received the Silver Award for "Best Chili," the Platinum Award for "Best Family Friendly Restaurant," the Silver Award for "Best Breakfast Menu" and the Silver Award for

"Best 460/Bonsack area Restaurant."

Macado's was recognized with the Platinum Award for "Best Sandwiches," and the Silver Award for "Best Place for Lunch."

Sal's Italian Restaurant received the Gold Award for "Best Italian Restaurant," and the Platinum Award for "Best 460/Bonsack area Restaurant."

RND Coffee Lounge

(in Wasena) earned the Silver Award for "Best Local Coffee Shop." The Vinton location will open this month.

The Dogwood Restaurant earned the Silver Award for "Best Vinton Restaurant," and the Platinum Award for "Restaurant with Can't Miss Daily Specials."

Café Asia earned the Gold Award for "Best 460/Bonsack area Restaurant."

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## Byrd teams open high school basketball season Tuesday

The high school basketball season will begin next week with two new head coaches on the bench at William Byrd. Actually, there's just one new coach and one who has moved to a different bench.

Brad Greenway has moved from being the Byrd girls' coach to taking over the boys' program while Randy Bush is the new girls' head coach. Both teams will open Tuesday against Cave Spring with the boys at home and the girls at Cave Spring.

Greenway takes over a boys' program that Josh Cunningham coached for the past four years. Brad didn't see many games because his girls usually played on the same night as the boys at the opposite location, much like they will do next Tuesday.

"I watched more of their games on 'Huddle' than I did in person," he said. "I did get to see some playoff games, and I got to watch them some in practice."

Returning seniors for the Terriers include Camden Richardson, Trevor Ruble, Peyton Fuchs, Ethan Hairston, Ross Divers and Jayson Marvin. Senior Garrett Hendrick also returns to Byrd after playing his junior year at Glenvar. Garrett came up through the Vinton Rec. program and played at Byrd his freshman and sophomore seasons.

Juniors are Grayson Webb, Jaiden Childress and Briar Boska. Freshmen Hayden Eads and Isaiah Board are players to keep an eye on.

"Hayden has a ton of talent and an even more impressive work ethic," said Greenway. "He'll figure in at some point, he's going to be a player."

"Isaiah is in range as soon as he pulls in the parking lot. If he is able to adjust to the size and speed of varsity competition this year, look out."

Greenway takes over a team that finished the pandemic shortened 2020-21 season at 4-6, playing nine of the games against Roanoke County opponents due to rules set down by the county. At this point he's not worried about wins and losses.

"Really, our focus right now is to create a winning culture and habits, and be consistent with our effort



**Emilie McCaskill(left) and Trevor Ruble are returning seniors who will be among the key members of the Byrd basketball teams when the season starts next week.**

MESSENGER FILE PHOTOS

day in and day out," he said. "I'm not really worried about the results at this point...they will take care of themselves."

The girls' team finished 6-3 under Greenway last winter and Bush will now lead that group. He's not entirely new, as he assisted Brad with the girls last year so he hit the ground running.

"I love the work ethic of the girls at William Byrd," he said.

"They want to learn and improve."

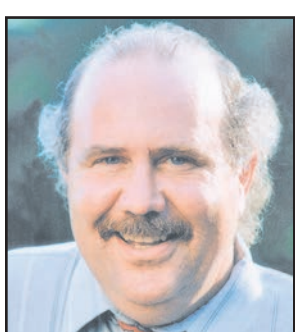
Bush has seven returning seniors, including fourth year varsity player Emilie McCaskill who was the leading scorer last season. Other seniors include Ashlyn Stover, Riley Firebaugh, Greta Walls, Jaylen Rosser, Mya Rosser and Sarah Fuchs.

Junior point guard Sophia Chrisley is a savvy veteran, junior Alexis Helton is a returning starter

and Taylor Davis is a third junior. Sophomore Jalla Barger and freshmen Samantha Martin and Jada Johnson round out the roster.

"We are looking forward to this season," said Bush. "The girls are buying in and going hard in practice. We have quite a few returners and seven seniors, but the district is going to be tough because there are many teams that can win it."

*Brian Hoffman*



showed him the door.

To be honest, I can't say I feel sorry for anyone who gets almost nine million dollars not to work. I love my job, but if you want to offer me half that I'd be happy to walk away. Heck, I'd take a million dollars if I was still allowed to stand on the sidelines at the high school football games.

While the money certainly eases the pain, Fuente most likely will uproot his family when he finds another job. His kids will leave their friends and he'll have to buy another house, and you know how real estate prices are going these days. Can you get a brick ranch with two bathrooms for eight million?

My question is, what would he be doing right now if not for a couple plays this season? Let's say Tech scored on first and goal from the one at West Virginia, then held on to beat Notre Dame in Blacksburg. They should have won both of those

games, and if they had then maybe they don't lose to Syracuse and Boston College. I'll give you Pitt, because that was a butt kicking, but the attitude would have been much different for those other former Big East schools.

If Tech wins those four games they're sitting at 9-1 after the Duke game, and there's no talk of firing Fuente. In fact, they're looking at a big time bowl, a top 20 ranking and a shot at playing for the ACC championship. At that point it doesn't matter how much Fuente didn't relate to the ex-players or whatever touchdown club he didn't speak to. He was going to be back.

And the difference is, not scoring from the one and not stopping a late drive for a field goal.

Such is life for a football coach. I've always said, in the eyes of many you're only as good as the last game. Or, the last game you should have won.

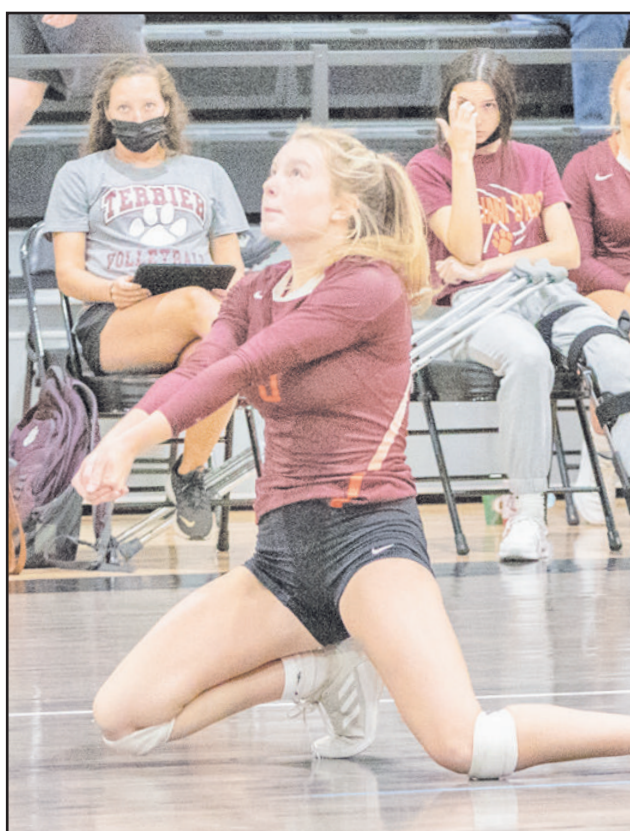
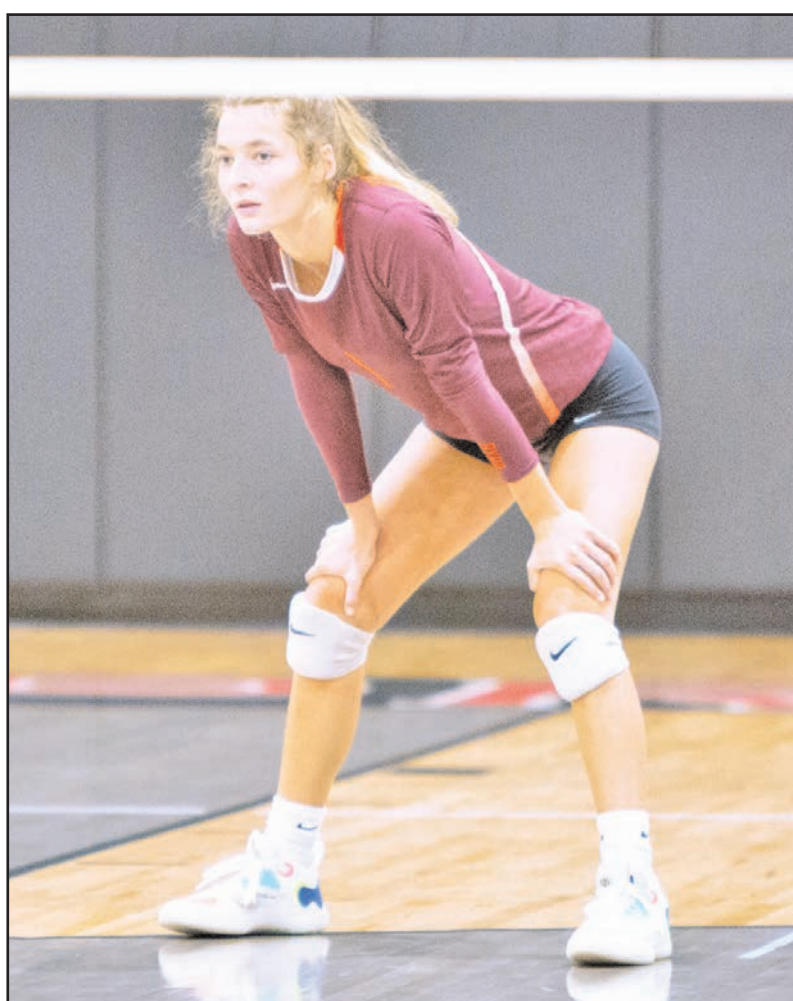
### What have you done for me lately?

Virginia Tech is looking for another football coach. After six years and a 41-31 record Tech AD Whit Babcock gave Justin Fuente 8.75 million dollars and



**All-Blue Ridge District and All-Region 3D volleyball teams were recently announced and William Byrd was well represented. Mattie Andrews, right, was named both first team all district and first team all-region in a very strong Region 3D. Far right, Carsyn Kotz was a second team all-BRD choice and was Honorable Mention all-region. Below, left to right, Terran Brown, Kamryn Sigafoes and Ella Ashworth were all named to the Blue Ridge District second team.**

PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN



# Food Drive from page 1

packing, and record-keeping of the donated items, and filling in names on raffle tickets during daily Team Time. (Stultz teaches seventh grade and Jones teaches eighth.)

Organizers came up with some enticements to encourage students to participate more fully in the food drive: students would be competing against staff to see who could bring in the most items (students brought food gifts; staff brought in hats, socks, and gloves), plus students would be able to “pie” five staff members who received the most votes in the competition.

Seventeen staff members agreed to join the competition and participate in the pie contest “for a good cause”; eight more said they would be pie targets if needed.

Students who brought in food items received a ticket for each item, which they could then place in an envelope for the staff member they wish to “pie.” Names will be drawn from the envelopes after the Thanksgiving holiday to see who gets to throw pies at the top five winners among Assistant Principal John Eggleston, and teachers Jamie Nichols, Bill Pratt, Denise Aspell, and Scott Whitehead. Eggleston seemed to be in the lead until the final day, when a huge donation changed the outcome, putting Whitehead ahead by three items.

Eighth grader Lillian Amaya’ Dogan was determined that Whitehead would be among the top five, bringing in a donation herself of \$100 for the purchase of canned goods and about 75 more canned food items at the last minute—all going toward his total. He had challenged his students to excel in the competition, promising to match their donations. He kept his part of the bargain, donating \$100 so far to match Lillian’s.

“We are so proud of her efforts,”

said Jones. She also noted that the Community Christmas Store liaison was “thrilled with the efforts of the William Byrd students.”

Different grade levels were given different food lists to fill. Sixth graders were asked to bring in brownie mix, cake mixes and icing, and soup. Seventh graders were assigned macaroni and cheese, soup, and pancake syrup and mix. Eighth graders were tasked with bringing in canned fruits, vegetables, meats, and beans. The food drive project took place over a three-week period, ending on November 19.

Eggleston thanked the students and staff who contributed so generously, saying, “Through your efforts lots of families will be provided the opportunity to have a good Thanksgiving meal, something that most of us take for granted.”

He commented that the school and school system have placed a special emphasis on diversity and meeting the needs of diverse groups this school year. This is another project which brings that topic to the forefront.

Seventh grade students on Ashley Stultz’s Team who put so much work into the project include: Jayden Hardy Lanaiya Hardy, Caiden Harnish, Aniyah Harper, Jeremiah Harper, Brihanna Harris, Bryson Harris, Emmalee Harris, London Hartman, Sarah Heitz, Braedyn Henritze, Sophie Hoagland, Dorian Hollis, and Angel Marchese, III.

Eighth graders on Jamie Nichols’ Team include: Jeremy Abbott, Bryson Albert, Joshua Allen, Blake Austin, Ceiliann Baldwin, Aiden Barton, Ashleigh Barton, Titus Beatty, Braeden Booth, Kassie Brant, Jacob Smith, Whitney Werle, Micah Wheeler, Nathaniel Whitney, and Kaleb Wooldridge.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

William Byrd Middle School eighth grader Lillian Amaya’ Dogan contributed \$100 and 75 food items to the food drive at WBMS.



## Thrasher Memorial plans Christmas events

Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church will be celebrating Christmas beginning on Sunday, December 5 at 3 p.m. with the Thrasher Christmas Trail.

“Kick off the season in

joy without fail;

Just pay a visit to the Thrasher Christmas Trail! Walk through the parking lot and stop for some treats!

Music, games, photos and soup you can eat.

Drink some hot cocoa and take home a craft

All free to you, while supplies last.”

Travel Trunk to Trunk for treats to take home. Hope to see you there - bring your friends!

The Thrasher Choir will present their annual Christmas at Thrasher Concert the following Sunday, December 12, at 6 p.m. in the Main Sanctuary.

Thrasher is located at 707 East Washington Avenue in Vinton.

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**Randi Keese**

VP of Development | Peninsula Agency on Aging



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