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Vinton Town Council, Roanoke County officials, and KARA Hospitality representatives break ground for the new Vinton Hotel.

The Year in Review 2025

Debbie Adams
dadams@ourvalley.org

As 2025 comes to a close, the Town of Vinton can look back on a year marked by growth, community pride, and forward-thinking progress. From major development projects and long-range planning initiatives to packed festivals, student achievements, and moments of remembrance, the year reflected both momentum and meaning. The following highlights capture the events, accomplishments, and milestones that shaped life in Vinton throughout the last year.

"The Town of Vinton enjoyed another very successful and exciting year in 2025," said Vinton Mayor Brad Grose, in a statement about the town's year. "God truly blessed us this year with continued growth in our economic sector and important improvements in the quality of life in our town."

"In addition, I think 2025 should be considered a foundational year for Vinton due to the completion of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan and the nearly complete Strategic Plan. The importance of these planning documents cannot be overstated. The planning process was very exciting and comprehensive as input was collected from many sources including our citizens, business operators, professional consultants, town staff and Vinton Town Council."

A few examples of economic growth include the new multi-story hotel, the reopening of Big Lots, the Vinton Café, and the multi-use Cleveland Commons which contains beautiful apartments and an awesome space for future business. The redevelopment of the Gish Mill property continues at an accelerated pace.

Quality of life improvements include the opening of a new section of Glade Creek Greenway, public restrooms on the Wolf Creek Greenway, new street signs, removal of blighted properties, and an extensive street paving project.

The Community Park on the Vinton War Memorial grounds is nearing completion, and the Vinton War Memorial building is currently undergoing renovations.

In partnership with several citizen groups, the Town of Vinton experienced many highly successful community activities. A partial listing would include the Independence Day Celebration, the Dogwood Festival, the Fall Festival, Downtown Trick or Treating, the Four on the 4th race, the Santa Crawl, the Christmas Parade, the Field of Honor (flags), the Veterans Ruck-Run and numerous activities at the Vinton Farmer's Market.

"I would venture to say that no town that is the size of Vinton has as many excellent community events as Vinton. We are very grateful for all the groups that help our staff provide quality events for our citizens to enjoy, throughout the year."

The Town of Vinton was blessed with economic progress, numerous activities, and extensive planning throughout 2025. Through collaboration with our many community partners we have had another highly successful year. I certainly want to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the Town of Vinton in 2025 including our town staff and Vinton Town Council.

The outstanding performance of the town staff demonstrates that they are a group of well-educated, highly motivated individuals who really care about our town. Vinton Town Council continues to be very active and productive. In addition to their duties in Vinton, each council member serves on at least one regional or state committee. I think our council has been successful because, although we all have different opinions, we always come together to do whatever is 'best for Vinton.'

"Thank you for your time, may God bless you and may God continue to bless the Town of Vinton."

Notable events in 2025

The Vinton History Museum and Vinton's Creative Occasions were named as winners of the Hotel Roanoke Fashions for Evergreens competition. The museum won third place in the People's Choice Award category for its Santa Claus tree. Creative Occasions, owned by Mark Frye, won first place in the Professional Judges Category for his Dr. Seuss-themed tree.

The Town of Vinton partnered with local businesses for their first St. Patrick's Day Block Party, closing off the streets of downtown Vinton for the celebration.

The Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce hosted their annual and popular Senior Expo in March at William Byrd Middle School since the Vinton War Memorial was closed for renovations.

Vinton Town Council recognized Rosie's Gaming Emporium for its contributions to the community through donations to a variety of non-profits, totaling \$100,000 each year. In 2025, Rosie's donated funds for the Vinton History Museum cargo/personnel lift, the WBMS food pantry and to the Lions Club to be used for the multi-generational park.



Vinton Mayor Brad Grose crowns 2025 Vinton Dogwood Festival Queen Jada Johnson.



The softball field at William Byrd was named Greg Barton Field for long-time coach of the Lady Terriers.



Scouts from local troops prepared flags for retirement in observance of Veterans Day.

The Pine Spur Hunt Club held the first Draft Horse Pull in April with pairs of Percherons and Belgian Draft horses in tandem amazing the crowd by pulling up to 7,000 pounds of concrete blocks behind them.

May 2025 is remembered for the 70th annual Vinton Dogwood Festival and its giant 70th anniversary cake. Kroger donated 1,000 cupcakes for the crowd in honor of the occasion. Ten William Byrd seniors competed for the title of Dogwood Queen. Jada Johnson was chosen by a panel of judges and crowned queen by Vinton Mayor Brad Grose.

Vinton observed its 23rd annual Arbor Day celebration in May at the Vinton Library, with guests Smokey Bear and Forester Denny McCarthy.

The Town of Vinton's Veteran Outreach Committee hosted the town's second Field of Honor at the Vinton War Memorial with a display of 300 American flags to honor fallen heroes.

In June, the Class of 2025 (270 in number) celebrated their graduation from William Byrd High School, with 57 valedictorians.

Mingle at the Market concerts began in June, sponsored by the Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce, and continued through September.

The Town of Vinton hosted another greenway ribbon-cutting ceremony, this time for the Glade Creek Greenway.

Vinton maintained tradition, holding its annual Fourth of July fireworks celebration at the Vinton War Memorial, again a spectacular show which drew crowds from across the region.

Earlier that day, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia hosted the Four on the 4th Race, benefiting the Boys and Girls Clubs, one of which is housed at Vinton Baptist Church. Nearly 500 runners participated in the race sponsored by the Vinton Moose Lodge 1121. The event included a half-mile Kids' Race following the four-mile regular race.

Senator Tim Kaine stopped by Vinton Baptist Church on July 12 for a round-table discussion about a potential loss of funding which could impact the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia. The panel included Mayor Brad Grose, School Board representative Tim Greenway, Town Council member Mike Stovall, elementary school principals Ashley McCallum (W.E. Cundiff) and Julie Sandzimer (Herman L. Horn), parents, a representative from Congressman Ben Cline's office, and several BGCSWVA representatives, including Daphne Sargent, director of the program at Vinton Baptist. Their program opened during the COVID pandemic to provide services to children at Herman L. Horn and W.E. Cundiff schools during the day and remains now as an afterschool program.

Virginia was set to receive \$108 million from the \$6 billion appropriated by Congress in the 2022 Safer Communities Act with some of those dollars going to fund the BGCSWVA. The funds had been frozen by the Trump administration. The administration subsequently released the funding the following week.

In August, Vinton Police hosted their annual National Night Out celebration to build partnerships between citizens, the police, and the community. There were free hot dogs, games, kids' activities, and an appearance by caricaturist Kyle Edgell.

The Lancerlot and Virginia's Blue Ridge Figure Skating Club teamed up for Theatre on Ice, featuring a

See Year, page 2



PHOTO COURTESY TOWN OF VINTON

Work continues on the War Memorial Community Park that will be complete in early spring.



WBHS seniors Dawson Young and Addison Clark were selected as Homecoming King and Queen for 2025.



FILE PHOTOS

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Year

from page 1



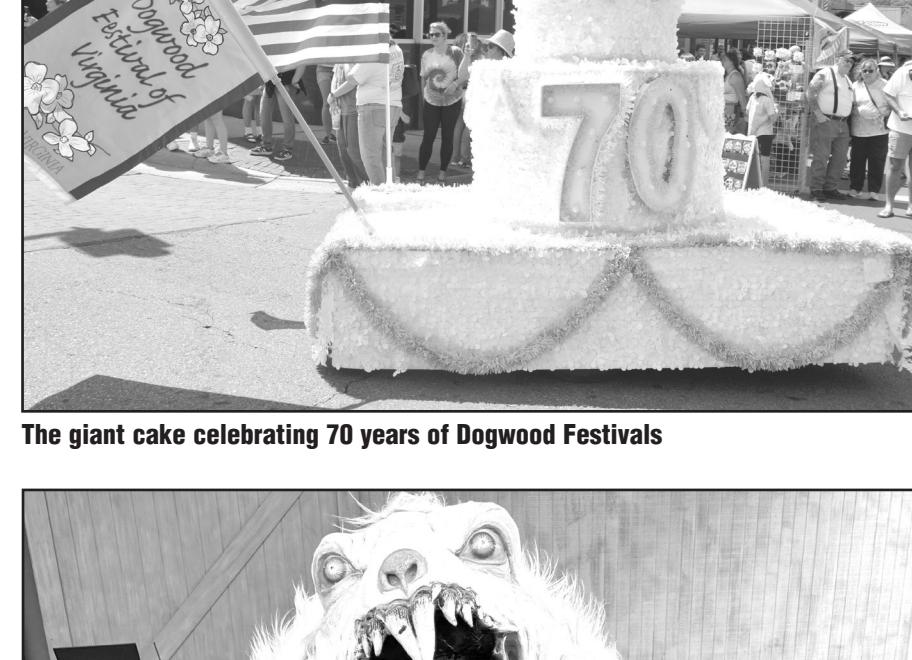
Enrico won first place in the annual Fall Festival Doggie Costume Contest.



VFW Post 4522 celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2025.



William Byrd Middle School celebrated a successful community food drive with a faculty/student basketball game and the "pieing" of some teachers—including Kevin Lewis.



The giant cake celebrating 70 years of Dogwood Festivals



Darin Witcher was named Top Terrier at WBHS—the highest honor an individual student can receive.



FILE PHOTOS

performance of "Mama Mia" in mid-August.

The ice skating show was followed by the community favorite Dog Days of Summer at the Lancerlot on Aug. 23. Dogs were welcomed to the ice rink and outdoor swimming pool. This year's event also included a Rounds for Hounds grappling competition, benefiting animals in need.

The Vinton Breakfast Lions held their annual awards dinner and officer installation banquet on Sept. 11. New officers include President Justin Fix, 1st Vice President Ryan Mason, 2nd Vice President Sabrina McCarty, and Past President Zach McCarty. The Lions continue to live out their motto, "We Serve," with numerous community service projects. One project of the Lions is completing vision screening in the local public schools in grades K, 3, 8, and 11 each year, as well as anyone new to the school system.

Roanoke County Schools welcomed a new Naval Science Instructor, Shawn Wingle, to their Navy National Defense Corps, which is based at William Byrd High School. One of their first events was a commemoration of 9/11, held in front of the school as students were entering the campus that morning.

Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church members continued their September tradition of forming a prayer circle around the exterior of the church to pray for the church, the community, and the world beyond.

William Byrd inducted 72 seniors into the Beta Club honor society at a ceremony on Oct. 6.

The Vinton Fall Festival is virtually always held on the second Saturday in October. There are vendors galore, performers from local groups such as the WBHS Jazz Band and the Floyd Ward Dancers. A highlight is always the Doggie Costume Contest and the petting zoo. The day always kicks off with the Lions Club Pancake Breakfast.

Vinton Town Council thanked the Vinton Moose Lodge for the generous donation of \$10,000 towards a UTV for the town at a council meeting in October.

In honor of Veterans Day, members of Scout Troops 235 in Vinton and 584 in Bonsack and their leaders held a Flag Retirement Ceremony. Numerous flags, no longer fit for use, were folded and then committed to the flames.

Vinton Town Council and the leadership team held their Strategic Retreat at Carvins Cove in November, reviewing the past five years and planning for the next five.

The Cadet Corps at William Byrd celebrated the 250th birthday of the U.S. Navy with guest of honor School Superintendent Dr. Ken Nicely, a 16-count Manual of Arms drill by the cadets, and a cake-cutting.

Vinton drew crowds from around the area for its annual Downtown Trick or Treat event on October 30—the estimate was approximately 4,000 attendees. There were not only treats from local merchants and organizations, but awards for best costumes in several categories.

The Vinton Police Dept. and Vinton Veteran's Outreach Committee held their second annual Field of Honor with 300 flags flying on the front lawn of the Vinton War Memorial. They also sponsored the second annual Ruck March, wearing weighted backpacks through the streets of Vinton. The town also hosted a "Salute to Service" ceremony at the War Memorial honoring town employees who have served in the military. The town honored veterans from the VFW at a Town Council meeting in November.

The Vinton Breakfast Lions held their annual Christmas shopping trip to Walmart for children in need, accompanied by their guidance counselors.

The Vinton History Museum was once again invited to participate in the Hotel Roanoke Fashions for Evergreens competition. Their theme this year was "Snowmen," and included hundreds of snowmen on and around two trees.

Bonsack Elementary held its annual Balloons over Bonsack Parade, similar to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Fifth graders designed balloon puppets and paraded them through the hall for the lower grades on the day before Thanksgiving break.

Vinton topped off the year 2025 with its Christmas Parade—generally the first in the valley. This year Cam Thepsimuong, a William Byrd graduate diagnosed with bone cancer in 2024, was named Grand Marshal of the parade, and many vehicles ridden in his honor, although he was unable to attend. There were over 100 units in the parade—one of the most spectacular in memory.

The Santa Crawl returned for the sixth year with Santa, Mrs. Claus, and their elves meandering through the streets of Vinton delivering candy, gifts, dog treats, and treats for seniors.

Virginia's Blue Ridge Figure Skating Club presented their traditional "December to Remember" holiday ice skating show at the Lancerlot.

The Roanoke Chapter of the DAR planted wreaths on the graves of veterans at Mountain View Cemetery as part of "National Wreaths across America Day."

William Byrd Middle School ended the year by "pieing" some of its teachers as a reward for a successful community food drive.

Bonsack Elementary hosted the annual "Music and Dancing" program in which the fifth graders perform ballroom dances while the fourth graders play holiday music on their recorders.

The year ended with a celebration of life at William Byrd for Camden Thepsimuong who passed away on Dec. 17. The gym was packed for the service. Camden and his family were escorted through the halls of the school after the ceremony, led by a bagpiper.

Economic development and redevelopment projects

Work began on the Vinton Hotel (Extended Stay America Premier Suites) with demolition of the Vinton Dry Cleaners Building, tree removal, and site grading. September 2025 was memorable for the groundbreaking ceremony held for the Vinton Hotel, which included members of Town Council, managing partner of KARA Hospitality Mitesh Amin, and county officials.

Renovations continued at the historic Gish Mill, preserving the town's founding structure. Contractor E.J. Miller built a pier foundation under parts of the building and leveled the floors—the most intensive work of the redevelopment project, done super-slowly to prevent cracking of the several-hundred-year-old structure. All of the original wood in the mill was preserved with every nail painstakingly removed. The project has been in the works since 2016 with plans for completion in 2026.

Virginia awarded a Site Remediation Grant of \$500,000 to the Town of Vinton from the Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic Development Gish Mill Fund to be used on the redevelopment of Gish Mill.

The Vinton War Memorial closed for renovations on

Jan. 1, 2025, for extensive renovations and upgrades. It first opened in 1948 as a memorial to those who perished in service in World War II.

The iconic Dogwood Restaurant in downtown Vinton celebrated an expansion project—nearly doubling its space. The original restaurant opened in 1942. Owner Keith Poff bought the restaurant in 1994, surprising his new bride. In 2011, Jamie McCarthy came onboard as general manager and eventually became a partner. The interior changes are dramatic with lots of glowing wood. They added a patio as well.

Roanoke County celebrated the grand opening of the Bonsack Fire and Rescue Station in January, which dramatically cut response times for the growing Bonsack area—and reduced the demands on the Vinton fire station.

In February 2025, the Town of Vinton purchased the D.R. Music property with plans to help redevelop the site. The business was destroyed in a catastrophic fire in July 2022.

Roanoke City and Vinton announced they would be launching a joint demonstration project on Gus Nicks Boulevard to determine the feasibility of transitioning the roadway from four lanes to three to improve public safety and traffic efficiency. Lanes were to be marked with orange traffic cones. Once the traffic reconfiguration project got underway in March, it did not sit well with many citizens. Several came to Town Council on March 4 to express their frustrations.

VDOT held a public hearing on the proposed roundabout at the intersection of Hardy Road/Bypass Road and Route 634 near CVS in Vinton. Council announced it would be renaming Bypass Road to Dogwood Boulevard.

Owners of Cleveland Commons Chris Dowdy and Dominic Basile joined with Vinton Town Council for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of their mixed-use redevelopment project on Cleveland Avenue, which contains apartments and a commercial office space.

By October 2025 major progress had been made on the War Memorial Community Park rising on the hillside behind the Vinton War Memorial and former site of the Vinton Municipal Pool. A very elaborate playground with climbing towers, bridges, swings, pickleball, and beginner skateboard ramps is almost complete.

Vinton Town Council awarded a contract for the renovation project at the Vinton War Memorial near the end of the year.

In November 2025, W.E. Cundiff Elementary celebrated the opening of a new administrative wing, cafeteria, and kitchen as part of their renovations and expansion project. Plans are for the school to be completed in Fall 2026. The renovation and expansion project at Cundiff is funded by the Roanoke County School Board and Board of Supervisors.

As 2025 has come to a close, the Vinton Hotel has become more visible with the construction of its elevator shaft.

Local names in the Vinton news

The William Byrd softball field was named in honor of Coach Greg Barton, who had played sports at Byrd back in the late '70s (track, wrestling, and football) and has coached the girls' softball team for over 16 years. The highlight of his coaching career so far has been the state softball championship his team won in 2019.

See **Review**, page 7

Congratulations to Vinton employees

Mandy Adkins and Nathan McClung

Congratulations to Town of Vinton employees Mandy Adkins and Nathan McClung who were selected by Roanoker Magazine for its prestigious "40 Under 40" list of "innovators, doers, and community-minded changemakers," for 2026.

Adkins is the Director of Cultural Placemaking and Events for Vinton. She oversees the Vinton War Memorial, the Charles R. Hill Community Center, the Farmers' Market, and most of the popular events which draw the community together and bring visitors to Vinton. She works as a liaison with many other agencies and departments in the planning of these events, and even on capital improvement projects as applicable.

McClung is the Vinton Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning. He has secured millions of dollars in economic development grants for the town, guided the rewriting of the zoning ordinance, the writing of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan, and serves on the executive board of the Greenway Commission. If you have a question about transportation, zoning, the floodplain, housing, recreation, or seemingly indecipherable codes, he's the one to ask.

The January/February 2026 Roanoker Magazine has more information about these two Vinton employees and other honorees.

~ Vinton Messenger staff report

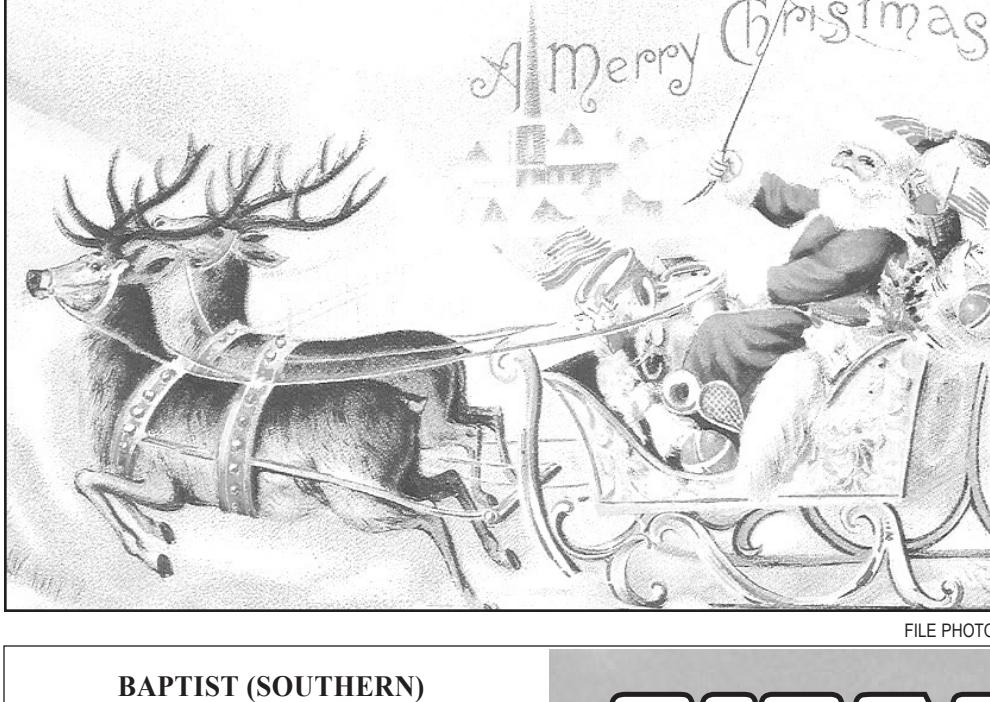


Mandy Adkins



Nathan McClung

FILE PHOTOS



FILE PHOTO

Donate Christmas cards to the Vinton History Museum

The Vinton History Museum would love to have your Christmas cards – vintage and new cards, used or unused. They will be recycled for an upcoming museum project.

You may cut off the personalized portion if you don't want to share

that. They mainly just need the artwork from them, but will take the entire card, too.

The museum located at 210 East Jackson Avenue in downtown Vinton is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and every first Saturday (except

January), from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The museum volunteers thank everyone in advance for their support of the Vinton History Museum and its projects and events.

~ Submitted by Vinton History Museum

VINTON

WORSHIP

DIRECTORY

Almighty God

Read Genesis 40:1 through 41:57

Joseph spent two years in a dungeon after interpreting the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer. Joseph had asked this man to mention him to the king upon being reinstated, but, as each day dragged on, no communication came from the Pharaoh. When Pharaoh had a dream and told it to all his wise men, no one could interpret it. The cupbearer finally remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him. So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh (Genesis 41:14).

We have the privilege of an audience at any time with our King, Jesus Christ. May we never forget His majesty or approach Him with less than honor and adoration.

Thought for Today: Consider the majesty of God.

Quicklook: Genesis 41:1-14

If you would like to see your church services listed here in the Vinton Messenger contact Alixandria Wall at Cell: (276) 732-6083 awall@mountainmedianews.com

Spiritual IQ. The Roanoke ECK Center is located at 1420 3rd. St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. For more information visit www.eck-va.org or call 540-353-5365. People of all faiths are welcome.

FOURSQUARE

EVANGEL CHURCH - 2360 Hardy Road, Vinton (corner of Hardy Road and Feather Road), 540-982-3694, www.evangel4sq.com, Pastor

Tim Wright. Contemporary Worship Service Sunday, 10AM. Bible

Study Wednesday 11AM-12PM.

"Building People to Change Our

World"

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, Worship 11:00am, 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; cmpc2verizon.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

PARKWAY CHURCH VINTON -

246 Jefferson Ave., 540-345-3385;

Sunday Service 10:30 AM.

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Cam's Year

For many in the Vinton and Bonsack communities, and even beyond, the year 2025 will often be remembered as "Cam's Year."

Honors student Cam Thepsimuong was a student athlete in football and tennis at William Byrd, a young man of faith and courage with a tremendous sense of humor and grace, a beautiful smile, and a devoted family supporting him as he dealt with osteosarcoma—bone cancer—diagnosed in the summer of 2024.

The entire community rushed to support him in any way they could come up with. It turns out that

more often, Cam was the one supporting everyone else.

He was so loved that his family and the community arranged for Christmas 2025 to come in September with parades, outdoor decorations, cards, and gifts.

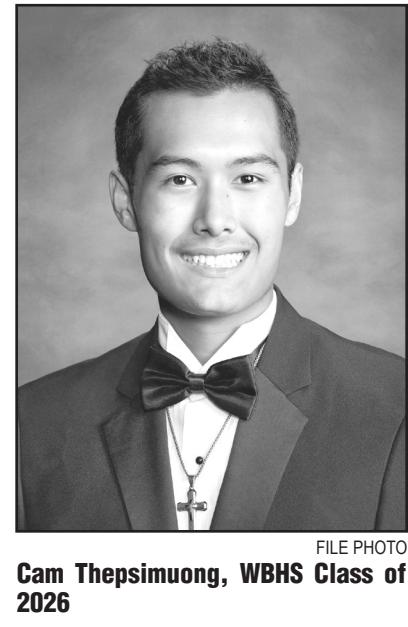
His family established the "Cam's Purpose" Facebook page which allowed Cam and his family to share their strong faith and perseverance and kept the community updated on his health.

Nearly every sports team at WBHS held a fundraising event in his honor in the past two years, as did teams from other



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLENE THEPSIMUONG

Cam's Purpose Christmas Jeep Parade in September in his neighborhood



FILE PHOTO
Cam Thepsimuong, WBHS Class of 2026

the spiritual lives of many and will continue to have an impact on thousands on a daily basis."

- Vinton Messenger staff report

Nominations being accepted for RCPS Golden Apple Teacher of the Year Award

The Roanoke County Public Schools Education Foundation is now accepting applications for the 2026 Golden Apple Teacher of the Year Award. Any teacher in Roanoke County Public Schools is eligible to be nominated. For more information and to submit a nomination, visit <https://www.rcps.us/departments/education-foundation/golden-apple-teacher-of-the-year-awards>.

The deadline to submit nominations is Jan. 15, 2026. Nominations are kept confidential and will not be shared with nominees.

The Education Foundation Golden Apple Teacher of the Year program was created to recognize and honor teachers who have made an impact on their students, either academically or personally. Each year, teachers from across Roanoke County Public Schools are nominated by students, parents, co-workers and administrators to receive the Golden Apple Teacher of the Year Award, the highest award presented to a teacher by the Education Foundation.

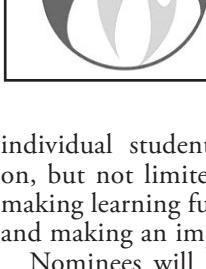
The award goes to a teacher who has demonstrated accomplishments in the classroom and/or with

schools and even school systems that learned of him. Organizations and businesses in the community and region offered their support.

Byrd fans who attended

football games often checked to see if Cam was present for the game and sitting on the bench showing his support or in the huddles when prayers were offered.

WBHS Principal Evan Noell said at the memorial service for Cam on Dec. 22 that he was amazed by the "power of one single person to touch so many other lives. He changed



Roanoke County Public Schools Education Foundation, Inc.

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF RCPS

individual student performance. Criteria is based on, but not limited to, effectiveness as a role model; making learning fun and exciting; mentoring students; and making an impact on students' lives.

Nominees will be notified and asked to complete an application. To be considered for the Golden Apple Award, nominees must submit an application. Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. on Feb. 1, 2026. Several applications will be chosen as finalists for the Golden/Green Apple Award and will be required to submit a short video of a typical classroom lesson. The finalists will be notified in mid-February. Videos will be due before the start of Spring Break.

Five winners will be chosen by a selection committee made up of Foundation Board members, administrators, teachers, parents and community members. One grand prize winner will be chosen as the Golden Apple Teacher of the Year; one Red Apple winner will be chosen for each level of education—elementary, middle and high school levels; and one winner will be chosen for the Green Apple, a teacher who has taught less than three years. The winners will be announced at the Golden Apple Award celebration in mid-April.

The Golden Apple Teacher of the Year winner will also advance to the Salem-Roanoke County Chamber of Commerce as the Educator of the Year for Roanoke County and will be the Roanoke County Public Schools nominee for the 2028 Virginia Teacher of the Year.

Vinton area schools have had many Apple Award winners through the years, including Wendy Niday (Red Apple at the elementary level) and Barbara McGrath (Red Apple at the high school level) in 2025.

Since 2004, several Vinton teachers have won the Golden Apple Award: Cheryl Brenton from W.E. Cundiff in 2006, Suzanne Witcher from Bonsack Elementary (2007), Kathy Barber from W.E. Cundiff (2009), Katie Sandlin from William Byrd Middle (2010), Melissa Carr from WBHS (2013), Dana Hoos from Mt. Pleasant Elementary (2014), Betsey Miles from Herman L. Horn (2015), Barbara McGrath from WBHS (2016), Tracey Broughman, Mt. Pleasant Elementary (2017), Ashley Williams from WBMS (2019), and Marianne Nester from Bonsack Elementary (2020).

-Submitted by RCPS

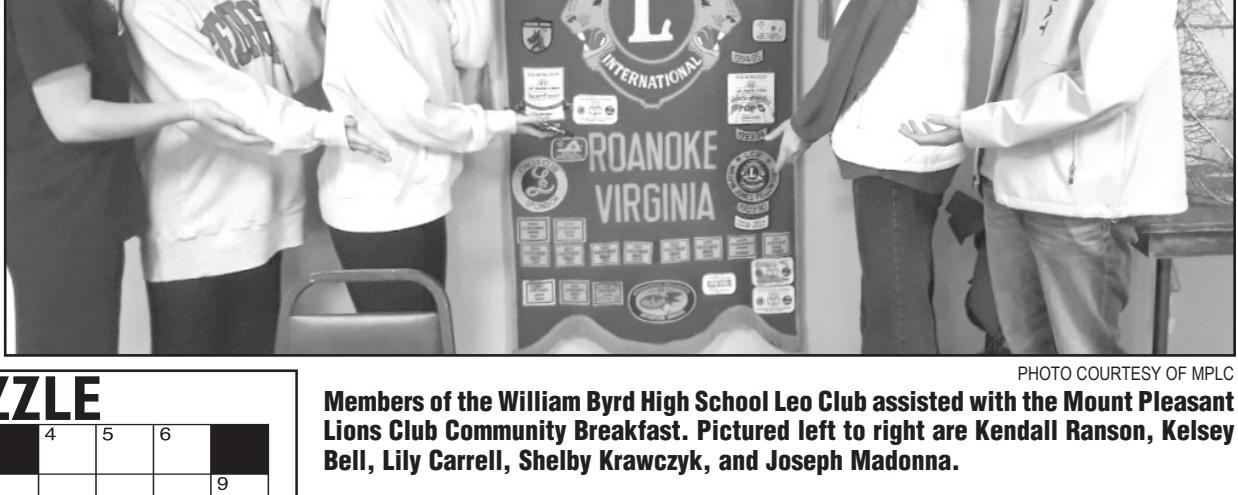


PHOTO COURTESY OF MPLC

Members of the William Byrd High School Leo Club assisted with the Mount Pleasant Lions Club Community Breakfast. Pictured left to right are Kendall Ranson, Kelsey Bell, Lily Carrell, Shelby Krawczyk, and Joseph Madonna.

Mount Pleasant Lions go to 'Plan B'

For the last 20 years or so, the Mount Pleasant Lions Club has hosted a "Breakfast With Santa" for the community on the first Saturday in December. The free event provided pancakes, sausage, biscuits, gravy and beverages for youngsters, their parents and grandparents, while Santa listened to Christmas wishes. This year, however, Mother Nature intervened by dropping three-plus inches of snow on the day before the planned Dec. 3 date, so with the Lions Club's parking lot being sketchy, the decision was

made to postpone the fete. Unfortunately, the only weekend date that was not already spoken for was Saturday, the 27th.

Pivoting quickly, the Lions designated the meal as a "Community Breakfast" and put the word out that the spread would go on, just without Santa. Somebody needed to eat the already-purchased food ingredients. "Plan B" was born.

The 27th turned out to be a clear warm day, the Lions showed up early, fixed sausage, biscuits, pancakes, scrambled eggs,

coffee and juice. Five members of the William Byrd Lions Club came to help cook and serve. (Leo Clubs are sponsored by Lions Clubs.) The Mount Pleasant Fire Department and Rescue Squad brought their respective vehicles for in-depth inspection by the kids attending and a good number of area residents dropped by to chow down. The food was consumed, "dad jokes" were told, and community spirit was stoked.

-Submitted by the Mount Pleasant Lions Club

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Cemetery Plots For Sale

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 Good Shepherd, near
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 Burke, 540-639-6966.
 Leave your contact
 information.

For Sale 2 Burial Plots located in Roselawn Cemetery in Christiansburg, Va.
 located in Garden of Devotions.
 Price is \$1,500.00 per plot.

This price is several hundred dollars UNDER market value.

Contact Philip or Shirley Gilley at gilley1325@mns.com or at 540-320-4755

Legals - City of Salem

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
 Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that the Council of the City of Salem, at its regular meeting on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 N. Broad Street, in the City of Salem, Virginia, will hold a public hearing, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, to consider the following requests relative to the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA:

1. Consider the request of Khalili LLC, property owners and Jay Patel or Assigns, contract purchaser, to rezone the property located at 1000 Electric Road (Tax Map #221-2-1) from RB Residential Business District to HBD Highway Business District to allow the installation of fuel tanks and a canopy for operation of a gasoline station.

2. Consider amending Chapter 66, Article I, in General, Section 66-11, Application of chapter to certain types of signs, Article IV, Permitted signs by use and district, Sections 66-105, Permitted signs and 66-107 Prohibited signs, and Article V, Definitions, Section 66-151 Definitions, of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA pertaining to signs.

Copies of the proposed plans, ordinances or amendments may be examined in the Office of Community Development, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia.

At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard relative to the said requests.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA BY:

H. Robert Light

Clerk of Council

1. Consider the request of McDonald's Corporation, property owner, to rezone the property located at 101 Electric Road (Tax Map # 80 - 4 - 1) from HBD Highway Business District with condition to HBD Highway Business District.

Copies of the proposed plans, ordinances or amendments may be examined in the Office of Community Development, 21 South Bruffey Street, Salem, Virginia.

At said hearing, parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard relative to the said requests.

THE PLANNING

COMMISSION OF THE

CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA

BY:

Christopher J. Dorsey

Executive Secretary

Legals - Botetourt County

Trustee's Sale
187 SPRING HOLLOW RD,
TROUTVILLE, VA 24175
(Parcel ID: 11123)

Default having been made in the terms of a certain Deed of Trust dated 1/5/2024, in the original principal amount of \$264,926.00 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the Botetourt County, Virginia on 1/8/2024, as Instrument No. 240000041, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will sell at public auction on 3/4/2026 at 2:00 PM, Front of building of the Circuit Court Building For Botetourt County, 1 West Main Street, Fincastle, Virginia 24090, the property designated as 187 SPRING HOLLOW RD, TROUTVILLE, VA 24175.

Located in the County of Botetourt, Commonwealth of Virginia:
 Lot 15, Block 2, according to Map No. 2 Subdivision, Portion of Property of S. E. Wilkinson and G. W. Wills, made by C. B. Malcolm & Son, S.C.E., dated November 21, 1951, recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Botetourt County, Virginia, in Plat Book 3, page 184, and being further described as follows:

BEGINNING at the intersection of Lot 14 and Lot 15 at an iron pipe in the edge of Spring Hollow Road; thence along the property line of Lots 14 and 15, N. 30° 22' W. 203.14 feet to an iron stake in the property line of Lots 2 and 3; thence N. 58° 44' E. 100.01 feet to an iron stake in the property line of Lots 15 and 16; thence S. 30° 22' E. 204.71 feet along the property line of Lots 15 and 16 to an iron stake in Spring Hollow Road to the point of Beginning; and BEING the same property conveyed by the Grantor herein by Deed dated January 4, 2024, recorded contemporaneously with this Deed of Trust.

TERMS: CASH. A deposit of \$26,492.60 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Prior to the sale, interested bidders will be required to register with and must present a bid deposit which may be held during the sale by the trustee. The bid deposit must be certified funds and/or cash, but no more than \$9,900.00 of cash will be accepted. The successful bidder's deposit will be retained at the sale and applied to the sale price. If held by the trustee, all other bid deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders. Settlement is to be made within 15 days. The successful bidder will be responsible for obtaining possession of the property, and for all costs and fees related to recording the Trustee's Deed, including the grantor's tax. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Memorandum of Trustee's Sale, available for review upon request before the sale, outlining additional terms of sale and settlement. A Trustee's Deed will be prepared by Trustee's attorney at high bidder's expense. This is a communication from a debt collector. Vtta Solutions - Virginia, LLC, 283 Constitution Drive, Suite 102, Office B, Virginia Beach, VA 23462, File No. 25-37622, Tel: 888-313-1969

Legals - City of Radford

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 904 17th Street, Radford, VA 24141

In execution of a Deed of Trust in the maximum principal amount of \$107,500.00 dated February 14, 2008 recorded among the land records of the Circuit Court for City of Radford on February 20, 2008 as Instrument Number: 200800177, the undersigned appointed Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction, at the Main entrance of the courthouse for the Circuit Court of City of Radford, 619 Second Street, West Radford, VA 24141 on January 30, 2026 at 02:30 PM the property described in said deed of trust, located at the above address and briefly described as: All that tract or parcel of real estate located, lying and being in the West Ward of the City of Radford, Virginia, and more particularly described as follows:

TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the

Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to

Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's

Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the

Mortgagor's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwvsales.com.

Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any

Legals - City of Radford

Trustee's Sale
187 SPRING HOLLOW RD,
TROUTVILLE, VA 24175
(Parcel ID: 11123)

Legals - City of Radford

72.00 feet from the intersection of the westerly boundary of Taylor Street with the northerly boundary of Seventeenth Street, thence S. 43 deg. 03' E. a distance of 209.90 feet to a point thence S. 63 deg. 23' W. a distance of 68.50 feet to a point; thence N. 41 deg. 27' W. a distance of 224.00 feet to a point; thence all of Lot 17-B, of the Re - Subdivision of a portion of P.L. Carter's Lots" as shown on a plat prepared by E. Staley Clements, Jr., C.L.S., dated September 3, 1962. Tax ID: 16-(2)-17B. TERMS OF SALE: A bidder's deposit of \$10,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required in the form of a certified or cashier's check. Cash will not be accepted as a deposit. Settlement within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Trustee will forfeit deposit. Additional terms to be announced at sale. This is a communication from a debt collector. This notice is an attempt to collect on a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.bwvsales.com. VA-380049-1.

Legals - City of Radford

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Legals - Montgomery County**LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

Street vacation request by Zack Bracket to vacate an approximately 206-foot

unimproved right-of-way on the west side and an approximately 82-foot unimproved right-of-way on the north side of property located at 301 Radford

Street NW, identified as Tax Parcel 526 - ((23 BK 2)) - 1; Parcel ID 009163.

Information on the preceding ordinance, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the Planning Department at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1902 or by email at planning@christiansburg.org.

With any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia

that the Board of Supervisors intent to consider a proposed

Ordinance to Delay the Assessment of Penalty and Interest on the 2025 Real

Estate B Taxes and the 2025 Personal Property

Taxes Due on December 5, 2025 to December 8, 2025

to be considered by the Board of Supervisors at their regularly scheduled

meeting on Monday

January 12, 2026, at 7:15 p.m., or as soon thereafter

at the Montgomery County Government Center, 2nd floor Board Room, 755

Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia.

A copy of the full text of the

Ordinance is on file in the

Office of the County

Administrator and is

available on line on the

County Website

Montva.com for public

inspection or copying.

BY ORDER OF THE

BOARD OF

SUPERVISORS

Angela M. Hill

County Administrator

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Ordinance is on file in the

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BY ORDER OF THE

BOARD OF

SUPERVISORS

Angela M. Hill

County Administrator

A copy of the full text of the

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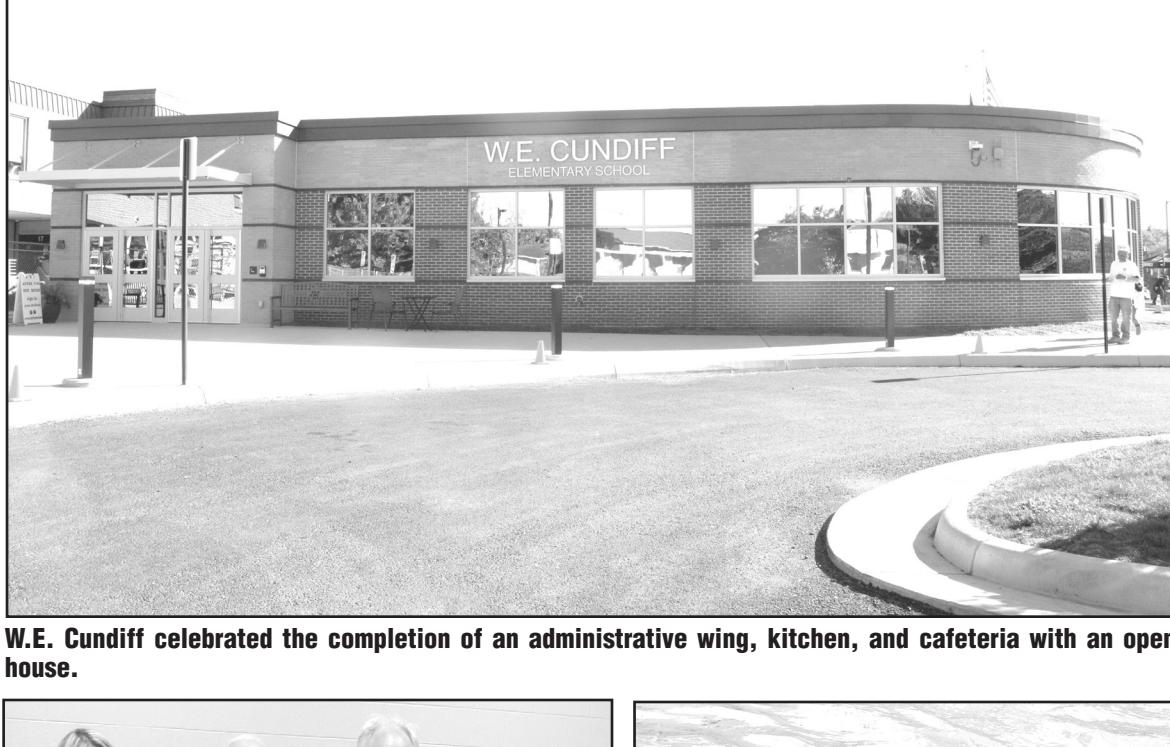
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Review

from page 2



W.E. Cundiff celebrated the completion of an administrative wing, kitchen, and cafeteria with an open house.



Senator Tim Kaine met with town, school, and Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia representatives last summer to discuss frozen funds for the program.

In July 2025, Vinton Police Corporal Jesse Dibble was named Vinton Police Officer of the Year for 2024, nominated by his peers.

Vinton Baptist called a new Minister of Children and Families—Vinton native and Byrd graduate Jodi Estienne.

The Roanoke County School Board introduced newly appointed administrators at Vinton-area schools: Evan Noell, principal at William Byrd Middle School, was named principal at William Byrd High School for the 2025-26 school year; Katie Hutchison, assistant principal at WBMS was named principal there.

The middle school's Rory Grant won first place in the Roanoke County Spelling Bee (for the second time), advanced to the regional bee where he came in first, and then competed in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

Seniors in the Class of 2025 were recognized at the annual Honors Banquet and Scholarship Ceremony. The most coveted "Best All Around" awards were won by Greg Stiltner and Meera Raichura.

Darin Witcher was named Top Terrier for the 2025-2026 school year—the single highest honor bestowed on a student at William Byrd.

William Byrd senior Jada Johnson was nominated by her teachers and chosen by a panel of judges as the 2025 Dogwood Festival Queen.

William Byrd seniors Dawson Young and Addison Clark were selected as the 2025 Homecoming King and Queen and crowned at the homecoming game on Oct. 3.

On Oct. 19, William Byrd High School senior Camden Thepsimuong graduated in a commencement ceremony held in the high school's auditorium—the first member of the Class of 2026 to complete his studies. Cam had been diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a form of bone cancer, in July 2024 and had worked diligently to complete the requirements for his diploma. He received a gold Honor Graduate tassel, signifying a GPA of 3.5 or higher, and a pin indicating he had earned the prestigious Advanced Studies Diploma.

The William Byrd Middle School YOVASO Club was recognized by

the School Board for being named Club of the Year; Sheriff's Deputy and school SRO Joe Mullins was named School Resource Officer of the Year for his support of the club.

Gabriel Wilson earned the highest honor a Scout can attain—the Eagle Scout Award. Wilson built a "Friends of the River" kiosk on the Franklin County Blueway on the Blackwater River for his Eagle Scout project.

Spencer Peters and Dawson Brinkley were named William Byrd Prom King and Queen.

William Byrd apprentices were recognized at a Salem Red Sox game—Royce Apple (Hotel Roanoke), Lucas Partleton (Hopkins-Lacy), and Ashley Arven (YMCA).

RCPS School Superintendent Dr. Ken Nicely was named Virginia Association of School Superintendents Region VI Superintendent of the Year.

WBHS senior Emma Rupe was named DAR Good Citizen of the Year—another prestigious honor.

Vinton area teachers were also recognized with the Golden Apple Awards program. Barbara McGrath who teaches at WBHS won the Red Apple Award for the high school level; Wendy Niday from Herman L. Horn Elementary received the Red Apple Award on the elementary level.

Mark Frye, owner of Creative Occasions, Flowers, and Events, celebrated 30 years of "floral excellence." He was recognized by The Scout Guide and Scout Guide Roanoke in an article entitled, "Local Florists We Love: The Best Flower Shops in the Southeast."

Meghan Lawless was named as the new executive assistant to the town manager and, then, as town clerk.

Mount Pleasant Lions Club member Ray Price was presented with the coveted Melvin Jones Fellow Award, the highest honor a Lion can receive.

Eric Thomas was recognized by the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors for his 25 years of service on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Coach Norm Lineburg, beloved football coach at WBHS, passed away on July 17. He coached the 1963 William Byrd team, remembered as one of the best in school history. He spent the last



The Lancerlot held its annual Dog Days of Summer again in 2025.

Politics in Vinton

Three members of Vinton Town Council were re-elected in the November 2024 election and were sworn in in January 2025—Mayor Brad Grose, Laurie Mullins, and Keith Liles. Mullins was selected as vice mayor.

Tammy Shepherd was re-elected to the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors in the November 2025 election.

Tim Greenway was re-elected to the Roanoke County School Board.

Anniversaries in the news

Vinton VFW Post 4522 celebrated its 80th anniversary and renamed the post's meeting room after the late Bill Scott, a veteran and VFW member.

The Vinton Public Library celebrated its 10th anniversary in November.

Magnets USA celebrated its 35th anniversary, the last 10 of those in Vinton.

Thirteen student athletes at WBHS committed to continuing their educations and athletic careers at the post-secondary level on National Spring Signing Day 2025—Sara Lang, Ian Sigmon, Brogan Dent, Stephen Underwood, Ethan Haston, B.J. Cheatwood, Maurice Burnette, Jonathan Rosser, Jerrett Shepherd, DeShawn Austin, Landon Martin, Grace Onwi, and Greg Stiltner.

Lily Perez was named Field Event Athlete of the Year for Region 3D at the regional track meet.

DeShawn Austin won the 55 hurdles and the triple jump. He went on to win the State Championship in 55 hurdles.

William Byrd junior Darin Witcher won his second straight championship in wrestling. He won his 100th victory in the first meet of the season against Hidden Valley.

WBHS senior Isaiah Board scored his 1,000th

point in a basketball game against Hidden Valley.

The William Byrd girls' swim team won the Blue Ridge District Championship. Lindsay Murtaugh and Hadyn Terrell were named Blue Ridge District Female Swimmers of the Year. Byrd Coach Krista Martin was named BRD Coach of the Year.

William Byrd's Big Orange wrestlers won the BRD wrestling tournament. Byrd Coach Thomas Kessler was named BRD Coach of the Year.

The Byrd boys' and girls' track teams won the BRD Championship in May.

The William Byrd Terriers won first place in the Blue Ridge District golf tournament.

The WBHS Terriers won the regional quarterfinals in football this fall and advanced to the semifinals, where their season ended.

The VHSL honored WBHS with the "Stay in the Game" award for sportsmanship—no Byrd athletes were ejected from high school sporting events during the fall sports season.

The William Byrd cheerleaders hosted their annual Battle at Byrd competition which always supports a cause. This year the event benefitted Camden Thepsimuong.

The William Byrd cheer team was named the Blue Ridge District champions.

Terriers named to the All-Blue Ridge District team were Kaidence Stores, Lily Carrell, and Jahniya Coles. Coaches Dee-Anne Dillon, Maddy Angle, and Darla Kay were named BRD Coaches of the Year.

At regionals, Jaanya Rosborough, Braelynn Gibson, Michal Hamlar, Aubrey Booze, and Carleigh Leonard were named to the All-Region team.

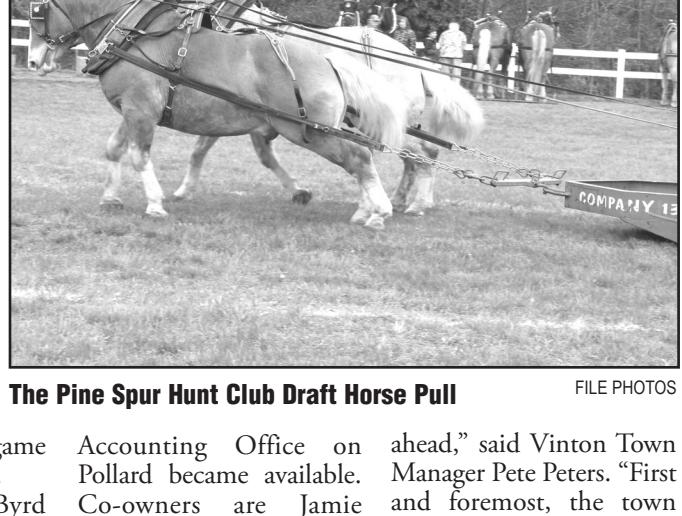
William Byrd High School welcomed three new varsity coaches with the opening of the new school year—Cam Cassady (baseball), Ben Munsey (girls' basketball), and Jordan Persinger (volleyball).

William Byrd High School celebrated a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the move to a new location in Vinton.

The original building on Lee Avenue was severely damaged in the fire of July 2022, and the business had moved into temporary quarters until the Neelys



Miss Virginia appeared in the 2025 Vinton Christmas Parade



The Pine Spur Hunt Club Draft Horse Pull

FILE PHOTOS

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The town's 2004 Comp Plan produced some lofty goals for our neighborhoods, transportation enhancements, the redevelopment of

underutilized property, and the repositioning of our downtown as an entertainment hub, most of which has been accomplished over the past decade. It's exciting to see where we've come from and where we are headed with this new updated Comp Plan with the land-use targets, walkability improvements and the 'big-ideas' that are packed into the mighty 2050 plan.

"Council is currently also in the final stages of finalizing the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan, which will prioritize budgets and staff work plans for the next five years, to accomplish the most important targets of the next 25-year vision.

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"Other notable accomplishments of 2025 include the completion of the Glade Creek Greenway Phase 2, the installation of a public restroom on Wolf Creek Greenway, the final stage of redevelopment of Gish Mill, breaking ground on the town's first large-scale hotel, the beginning of a much-needed renovation to the Vinton War Memorial, and the near completion of the War Memorial Community Park, which is slated to open in March of 2026."

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From the Pulpit

"The Christ Candle"

**By Pastor Bryan Crouch,
Lynn Haven Baptist Church**

The final candle of Advent—the Christ Candle—stands at the center because Jesus Himself is the center of our faith, our hope, and our salvation. After weeks of anticipation, we celebrate the moment when the Word became flesh and dwelt

among us. The light we've been waiting for has come.

John writes, "In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

When this candle is lit, its

bright flame reminds us that Jesus is the fulfillment of every promise God ever made—hope realized, peace delivered, joy fulfilled, and love revealed. He came not just to be born in a manger, but to die on a cross and rise again so that we could

have eternal life. Christmas is not simply the story of a baby; it is the story of our Savior.

As you reflect on this candle, consider what it means for the light of Christ to shine in your own life. Where do you need His presence, His power, or

His healing? And how might you shine His light to others? We rejoice: Christ has come—and because He lives, darkness cannot win. I invite you and your family to join us at Lynn Haven Baptist Church this Christmas Season.

RECIPES (LEFTOVERS) OF THE WEEK

By Debbie Adams

If you have leftover chicken or turkey, these are good recipes to use it up.

Grandma's Creamed Chicken and Biscuits

Ingredients:

1/2 large onion, chopped
1 1/2 tsp. butter
4 cups chopped, cooked chicken (or turkey)
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup chopped pimento (optional)
1 cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese, divided
6 frozen biscuits, thawed—like Grands
Can of Veg-All, if desired

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease the bottom and sides of an 11x7 baking dish. Chop the onion. Heat butter in nonstick skillet over medium high heat until melted. Stir in onion. Sauté until tender.

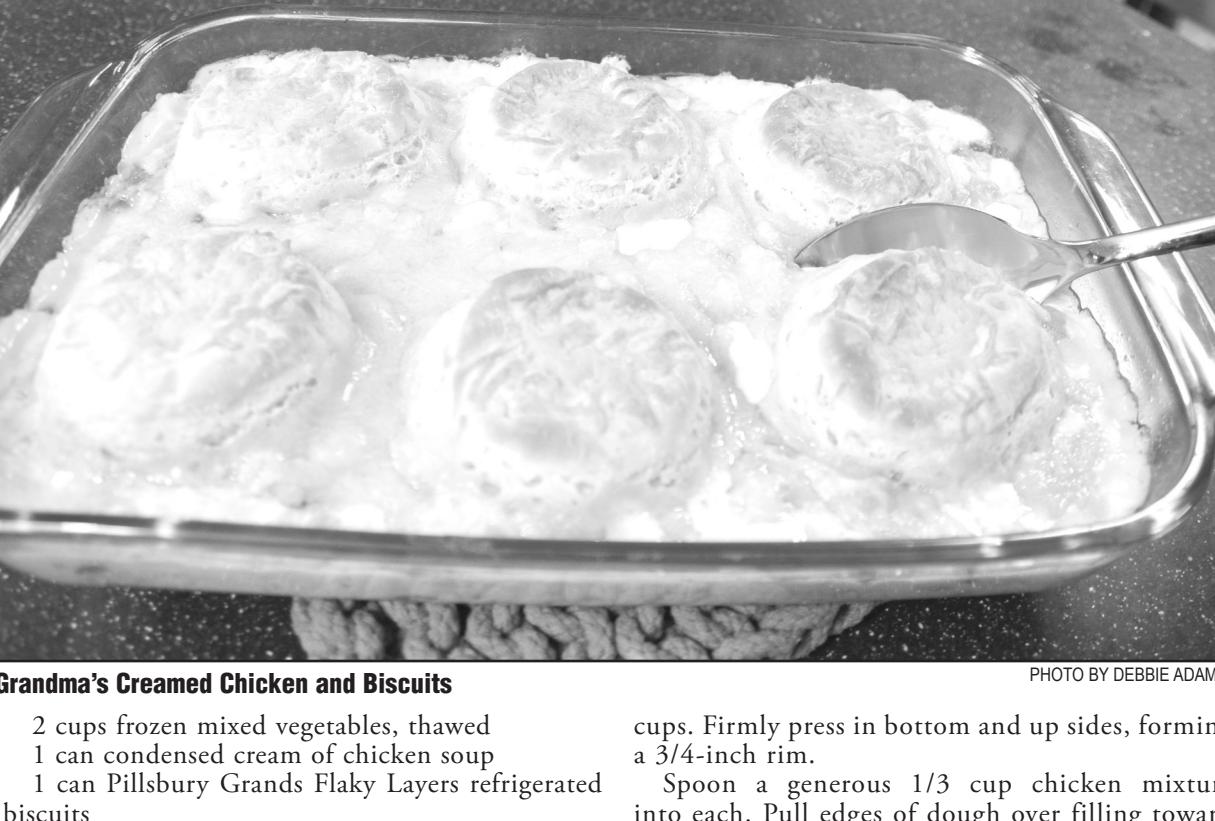
Combine onion, chicken, soup, sour cream, milk and pimento (optional) in medium bowl and mix well. Spoon into prepared baking dish. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove from oven.

Sprinkle baked layer with 3/4 cup Cheddar cheese. Arrange biscuits in single layer over top. Sprinkle with remaining Cheddar cheese. Bake until biscuits are golden brown and the sauce is bubbly, about 20 minutes longer.

Mini-Chicken Pot Pies

Ingredients:

1 cup diced, cooked chicken or turkey



Grandma's Creamed Chicken and Biscuits

PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

2 cups frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
1 can condensed cream of chicken soup
1 can Pillsbury Grands Flaky Layers refrigerated biscuits

Heat oven to 375°. In medium bowl, combine vegetables, chicken, and soup. Mix well. Press each biscuit into a 5 and 1/2-inch round. Place one round in each of 8 greased regular-sized muffin

cups. Firmly press in bottom and up sides, forming a 3/4-inch rim.

Spoon a generous 1/3 cup chicken mixture into each. Pull edges of dough over filling toward center; pleat and pinch dough gently to hold in place. Bake at 375° for 20-22 minutes until biscuits are golden brown. Cool one minute and remove from pan.

PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANGIE CHEWNING

The Chewning Family celebrate the holidays. Front, left to right, Abbie Lewis, Bootie Chewning, Drake Lewis. Back row, Angie Chewning and Greg Chewning.

By Angie Chewning

I love Christmas, and celebrating with family and friends is the absolute best. Hosting Christmas Eve and Christmas morning breakfast is certainly one of Greg's and my favorite traditions. Our Christmas Eve guests included Bootie; Greg Chewning; Drake, Hannah, and Lainey Lewis; Tara and Steve Jones; Emilee, Holden, and Adely Oboyle; Elena Boitnott; Jim Bell; and Vicki and Kent Smith. Many of the same friends

returned for Christmas breakfast—along with, of course, Santa. I hope everyone had a great Christmas and wish you all a Happy New Year.

I want to thank everyone who helped us at the Vinton Chamber of Commerce with our annual Angel Tree. This year we were able to help 167 local Roanoke County school children. This takes a lot of coordinating, but it is so worth it. Thank you to the school counselors, parents and to everyone who shopped for these Angels. You are the real angels!

AARP Fraud Alert: Spot fake charity donation scams

As the year winds down and the season of giving sets in, many people look to support causes they care about—but telling a legitimate charity from a fake one can be tough. While reputable organizations make their year-end push for donations, criminals also take advantage of this opportunity to line their own pockets.

Common signs of a charity scam include requests for payment via gift cards, wire transfers, or cryptocurrency, as well as high-pressure demands to donate immediately. Legitimate charities may also encourage timely giving, but they will welcome your support at any time.

To help ensure your donation reaches those who truly need it, do your research. Check organizations on sites such as give.org, CharityNavigator.org or CharityWatch.org to confirm legitimacy and find out how much of the funds are used to serve its stated mission versus overhead and fundraising.

Pay close attention to the charity's name and web address, as criminals often mimic the names of familiar, trusted organizations to deceive donors. Also, be

cautious of links in unsolicited emails, texts, or social media messages, which can lead to fake donation websites and expose your device to malware.

When you do donate, use a credit card. It's easier to track your contribution, and if your card is misused, you have protection against loss. To avoid feeling pressured by unexpected solicitations, consider having a set list of charities you support. That way, you can give confidently and on your own terms.

Report scams to local law enforcement. For help from AARP, call 1-877-908-3360 or visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

AARP



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF AARP

Wishing you a Happy New Year!

VintonMessenger.com



Left, William Byrd's Mia Martin(#14) defends a Glenvar girl in the Terriers' win in Vinton. Right, Logan Andrews scores for Byrd.

PHOTOS BY SUZANNE WITCHER

Byrd will host four basketball games against Bassett Saturday

The William Byrd basketball teams will ring in the New Year with a girls-boys quadrupleheader this Saturday against Bassett. The high school gym in Vinton will be buzzing with action from noon until well into the evening.

The first game of the day will be a girls' jayvee game against Bassett, with a tip-off at noon. The girls' varsity game with the Bengals will follow at 1:30 pm, then the boys' will play a jayvee game against Bassett at 4:30 pm. A big day of hoops wraps up with the boys varsity game at 6 pm.

The girls have gotten off to a good start with a 4-2 record thus far. The Terriers won their last two games before Christmas, including a 71-20 thumping of Glenvar on December 19. Mia Martin hit three threes and finished with 17 points, Logan Andrews and Maggie Zimmerman nailed four threes each and

finished with 15 and 14.

"It was a great shooting night for us and we completely controlled the defensive end," said coach Ben Munsey. "Great balanced team."

On January 22nd the girls won 45-34 at Cave Spring. Andrews led the team with 15 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists. Skye Williams had eight points and eight rebounds and Zimmerman had eight points and four assists.

"It was an inspired effort by these girls to overcome a tough deficit in the second half," said Munsey. "Great game overall."

The boys were still looking for their first win with the New Year closing in. Byrd was scheduled to play at Salem Tuesday but results were too late for publication. The Terriers were 0-5 to that point including a 66-57 loss at Glenvar in their last game before

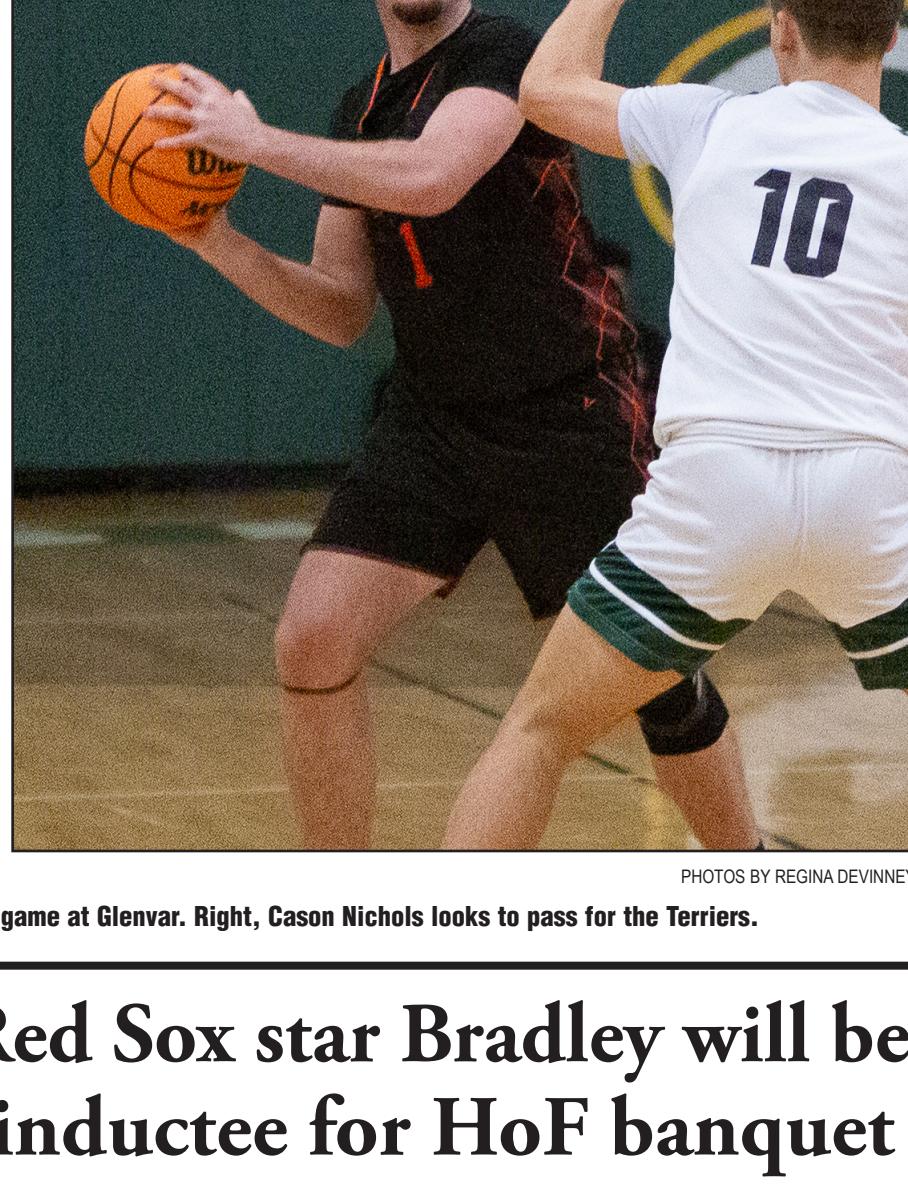
Christmas.

"We came out early and didn't handle their press well, and Glenvar controlled the game from start to finish," said Byrd coach Brad Greenway. "Turned the ball over a lot, shot the ball very poorly, and just didn't handle everything Glenvar threw at us."

Byrd trailed 19-8 after the first period and 32-21 at the half. David Foster led the Terriers with 17 points. Jesus Leon had 13 and Jaden Holmes had 10.

"Give credit to Glenvar for playing a great game defensively," said Greenway. "They shot the ball very well, but a lot of that is we have to be better on both ends. That starts with me. We will figure out a way to keep getting better and improving as a team."

Next Tuesday, January 6, the boys are at Northside for a Blue Ridge District game and the girls' will host the Vikings at Byrd.



Left, William Byrd's Reid Divers (dark uniform) defends a Glenvar opponent in Byrd's game at Glenvar. Right, Cason Nichols looks to pass for the Terriers.

PHOTOS BY REGINA DEVINNEY

Former Red Sox star Bradley will be speaker, inductee for HoF banquet

Former Boston Red Sox standout Jackie Bradley, Jr., who began his pro career with the Salem Red Sox in 2012, will be the guest speaker and one of five inductees into the Salem-Roanoke Baseball Hall of Fame at the 34th hot stove banquet and induction ceremony. Bradley will be joined by four additional inductees, Drew Bailey, Allen Lawrence, Wes McMillan and Donald Minnick. The banquet will be held at the Salem Civic Center on Sunday, February 1st, 2026.

A native of Prince George, Bradley helped lead South Carolina to the 2010 College World Series championship, earning CWS Most Outstanding Player honors. Selected by Boston in the 2011 MLB draft, he highlighted the Opening Day roster for the 2012 Salem Red Sox, quickly becoming a fan favorite showcasing elite defense, strong plate discipline and a .359 average over 67 games that fueled his rise through Boston's farm system.

Bradley joined the Boston Red Sox in 2013, just one year after playing in Salem. From there, he became one of Major League Baseball's best defensive outfielders, showing his range, strong arm and spectacular highlight catches. He was named

an All-Star in 2016 and then earned a Gold Glove Award in 2018 while helping the Red Sox win the 2018 World Series, also claiming American League Championship Series MVP honors.

Jackie later played for Milwaukee, Toronto and Kansas City. Post-MLB, Bradley has worked as a college baseball analyst with the SEC Network and recently joined the Indianapolis Clowns of the Banana Ball League.

The Salem-Roanoke Baseball Hall of Fame was founded in 1991 and honors players and contributors from the counties of Alleghany, Roanoke, Bedford, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Franklin and Montgomery and the independent cities located within the boundaries of those counties. The Hall of Fame building is located on the grounds of the James E. Taliaferro Complex, next to the Salem RidgeYaks administrative office behind the third base seating area of Salem Memorial Ballpark. It is open to the public on selected nights during the Carolina League season and upon request.

For information on tickets, tables or ads in the program, contact 540-761-6751.



PHOTO BY JOHN WACHER

Jackie Bradley, Jr. played for the Salem Sox in 2012.

SPORTS

Send story ideas & announcements to bhoffman@ourvalley.org,
or PO Box 1125, Salem, Va, 24153 • ourvalley.org

Terriers shut out of all-state team but fill 14 spots on All-Region 3-D

The Virginia High School League announced the Class 3 All-State football team just before Christmas and, for the first time in several years, William Byrd did not have a player on the team. However, Byrd filled 14 spots on the All-Region 3D team and also was well-represented on the All-Blue Ridge District team.

As far as all-state, Lake Taylor senior running back Keon Johnson is the Class 3 Offensive Player of the Year and Lake Taylor senior linebacker Devaughn Powell is the Class 3 Defensive Player of the Year. Lake Taylor head coach Hank Sawyer is the Class 3 Coach of the Year after the Titans defeated Kettle Run in double overtime in the Class 3 championship game.

Byrd had five players named to the All-Region 3D first team. On offense senior Jamez Toler was named at running back and sophomore Caleb Wrye was named on the offensive line. On defense three seniors made the first team, Titus Beatty on the line, Justyn Rosenboom at linebacker and Tate Kotz at defensive back.

Second team all-region choices on offense include senior Cannin Lutz at quarterback, Kotz at receiver and kick return, junior Thomas Purcell at tight end, junior Nick Toney at center and sophomore Gray Matthews at all-purpose. Defensive second teamers include Lutz at punter, Kotz at punt return,

junior Zane Taylor at all-purpose and sophomore Mason Hershel on the defensive line. Junior Connor Whitehead received honorable mention at place-kicker.

Magna Vista's Simeon Moore was named region Offensive Player of the Year and Warriors coach Joe Favero is the Region 3D Coach of the Year. Lord Botetourt's Quinten Jones is the Defensive Player of the Year.

The Terriers put seven on the All-Blue Ridge District first team offense, including Toney at center, Wrye on the line, Toler at running back, Kotz at receiver, Purcell at tight end, Matthews at all-purpose and Whitehead at kicker. First team on the All-BRD defense are Beatty on the line, Rozenboom at linebacker, Lutz at punter and Kotz at both defensive back and punt return.

Second team all-district offense are Lutz at quarterback and Matthews at running back. On defense second team selections are Hershel at defensive end, Jamari Toler at defensive back, Maurkese Burnette on the line and Taylor at all-purpose.

William Fleming's Nick Leftwich was named BRD Coach of the Year after winning the district title. Jovanny Gonzalez of Fleming is the Defensive Player of the Year and the Offensive Player of the Year was shared by Fleming's Zhiy Sheelman and Quinten Jones of Lord Botetourt.



PHOTO BY SUZANNE WITCHER

William Byrd senior Tate Kotz made the All-Region 3D football team at four positions. Tate was first team at defensive back and second team at receiver, kick return and punt return.



Right, William Byrd's Garrett Brunk is pulled down in his match with Salem. Above, Brandon Hurley has a head lock on his opponent on his way to a win and, left, Jonah Wilkerson is on top and in control in his match.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN & SUZANNE WITCHER



Big Orange will have busy month of January

The William Byrd Big Orange wrestlers will open the New Year in Lynchburg. Byrd will compete in the "Takedown the New Year" tournament at Heritage High School on Friday and Saturday.

"This will kick off our big month of January," said Byrd coach Thomas Kessler. "We have five tournaments and two duals. It will be an action

packed month."

The highlight of the month will be the annual "Big Orange" tournament at William Byrd High School. It will be held January 9 and 10 this season after several years of the tournament being wrestled over Christmas vacation. The later date is expected to attract more teams and spectators without hav-

ing to compete with Christmas vacations and other holiday events.

"We currently have 22 teams coming and it is looking to be a big weekend for us," said Kessler.

Byrd has not wrestled since December 17 when the Terriers competed in a dual in Salem and lost 46-30.



PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING

The William Byrd indoor track team competed at the East Coast Elite Meet #2 at the Roanoke College Kerr-Cregger Indoor Fieldhouse in Salem on December 20. Left, Byrd's Emma Thierry races in the girls 1600 m event, placing 25th overall (6:53.83). Right, Byrd freshman Ryan Carroll throws the shot. Carroll placed 41st overall with a distance of 33-9.25. The Terriers are scheduled to return to RC on Saturday, January 10.

Terriers compete at RC