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Town /Roanoke County cooperation on hotel project continues

Debbie Adams
dadams@ourvalley.org

At their first meeting of the new year, members of Vinton Town Council (Mayor Brad Grose, Vice Mayor Laurie Mullins, Sabrina McCarty, Keith Liles, and Mike Stovall) took action on resolutions involving the Vinton/ East Roanoke County Hotel Project and the appointments of several town employees.

The Town of Vinton and Roanoke County previously adopted Memoranda of Understanding and a First Amendment for the Vinton Hotel Project. The new resolution allows

Town Manager Pete Peters to execute a Second Amendment of the MOU which includes: a change in the name of the developer from McDevitt Company to KARA Roanoke, LLC; the seven hotel parcels have been combined and are listed as 525 South Pollard Street; Roanoke County will be reimbursing all net new taxes generated by the hotel project for up to five years (it was originally three years) with total payments not exceeding \$500,000 (it had been \$300,000). Payments by the county will commence during January of the year after the hotel receives



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

The Town of Vinton and Roanoke County adopted a second amendment in the understanding agreement which includes the county reimbursing all net new taxes generated by the project for up to five years.

occupancy.

Peters noted that the second amendment has already been approved by the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors at a recent meeting.

Council approved several appointments to boards, commissions, and committees. Allen Kasey was reappointed to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a term which

ends in February 2030. Mayor Brad Grose and the deputy town manager were reappointed to new four-year terms on the Western Virginia Regional Industrial

Facility Authority which will end in February 2030. With the resignation of Finance Director/ Treasurer Andrew Keen

See **Hotel**, page 4



The Town of Vinton Mountain View Road FDR Project won the statewide Engineer's Choice Award at the 2025 Mid-Atlantic Asphalt Expo.

Town of Vinton innovative project receives VDOT Engineer's Choice Award

At the 2025 Mid-Atlantic Asphalt Expo hosted by the Virginia Asphalt Association and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Mountain View Road Full-Depth Reclamation (FDR) Project in Vinton won the statewide Engineer's Choice Award.

The Engineer's Choice Award annually recognizes projects that demonstrate collaboration, effective communication, proactively identifying and solving challenges, and going above and beyond. This project was quite an accomplishment and required outside-of-the-box thinking and collaboration between VDOT Preliminary Engineering, VDOT Pavement Management, VDOT Construction, VDOT Materials, the Town of Vinton, and others, to rebuild the road within the available budget.

"This [award] is a great testament to

the collaborative spirit of this project!" said Deputy Town Manager Cody Sexton. "We know that we cannot do all our work on our own, so we look for ways to highlight our partnerships and celebrate every win we can for the public."

"This project was a road reconstruction project that had been planned for several years; however, the cost of the project exceeded the available funding and the Town of Vinton was unable to go to advertisement using conventional reconstruction means such as demolition of the existing pavement, regrading, placing new subbase stone and asphalt," said VDOT engineer Travis Higgs.

"Reconstruction estimates were approximately \$2 million. Full-Depth Reclamation was suggested as an

See **Award**, page 4



The Mountain View Road FDR Project involved milling down the existing asphalt, recycling asphalt, soil, concrete, and gravel to create a new base layer, and adding more than two inches of asphalt on top.



PHOTOS/ COURTESY TOWN OF VINTON

A stretch of Mountain View Road near Mountain View Cemetery being rebuilt

Town of Vinton announces interim Finance appointments



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Tiffany Stewart (left) and Kimberley Ramsey have been named as interims in the Vinton Finance Department/Treasurer's Office.

Town Manager Richard W. "Pete" Peters has announced two interim appointments in the town's Finance Department/ Treasurer's Office following the departure of Andrew Keen, the previous Finance Director/Town Treasurer.

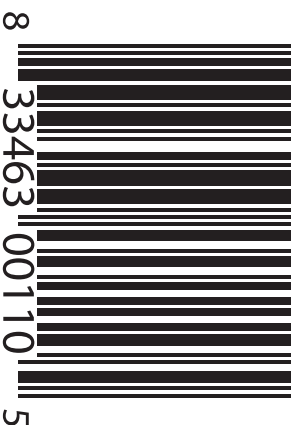
Effective immediately, Tiffany Stewart has been appointed Interim Finance Director to oversee the day-to-day functions of the department. Stewart currently serves as the Assistant Finance Director

after coming to the town in June 2021 from the private sector. She holds associate and bachelor's degrees in business administration from National College and a Master of Science degree in accounting from Liberty University. She also is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) candidate and an active member of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

Also, effective immediately, Kimberley

Ramsey has been

See **Vinton**, page 4



New laws took effect in Virginia on Jan. 1

Several new laws took effect in Virginia on Jan. 1.

Virginia's minimum wage increased to \$12.77 per hour, up from \$12.41 in 2025, in accordance with state law that requires the minimum wage increase at the rate of inflation. Tipped employees must be paid \$2.13 an hour, but total earnings, including tips, must meet the minimum wage rate.

Unemployment benefits are also increasing. A new law increases individuals' weekly benefit amounts by \$52 for claims effective Jan. 1 or after. The exact amount people receive is calculated by the Virginia Employment Commission and takes into account factors such as past wage earnings, but the previous minimum

was \$60 a week and the previous maximum was \$378 a week.

Another new law requires more stringent baby food testing. The Baby Food Protection Act requires manufacturers to test the levels of lead, arsenic, mercury and cadmium, heavy metals that can make their way into food products and can be toxic. The new law requires baby food manufacturers to disclose the testing results on their website and by QR code on certain product labels. The law also directs the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to study how levels of toxic heavy metals in baby food are being enforced, and whether any further action is necessary.

Virginia's HB 1828/SB 1436 will require

health insurance companies to no longer charge patients extra for breast examinations like mammograms, MRIs and ultrasounds. Patients ordered to undergo those screenings will not have to pay out-of-pocket for them, no co-pays co-insurance, or deductible. Instead, insurance providers will have to cover those costs.

Another new law mandates that prostate cancer screenings such as blood tests and rectal exams will be covered by insurance carriers as well in the new year. This law requires exams to be up-to-date and reflect American Cancer Society guidelines and findings.

Hospitals with emergency rooms will now be required to test for fentanyl during drug

screenings.

The Virginia Telephone Privacy Protection Act restricts text message solicitations meaning you can now respond to advertising texts with "UNSUBSCRIBE" or "STOP" — and they must in fact stop texting you for at least 10 years.

Social media companies will be required to make their best efforts to determine if users are younger than 16 years old and limit their platform time to one hour per day. Parents will have the ability to raise or lower that limit. The law was passed unanimously by the General Assembly in 2025 and was signed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin. Big Tech companies like Google and YouTube are suing over the legislation, arguing it is



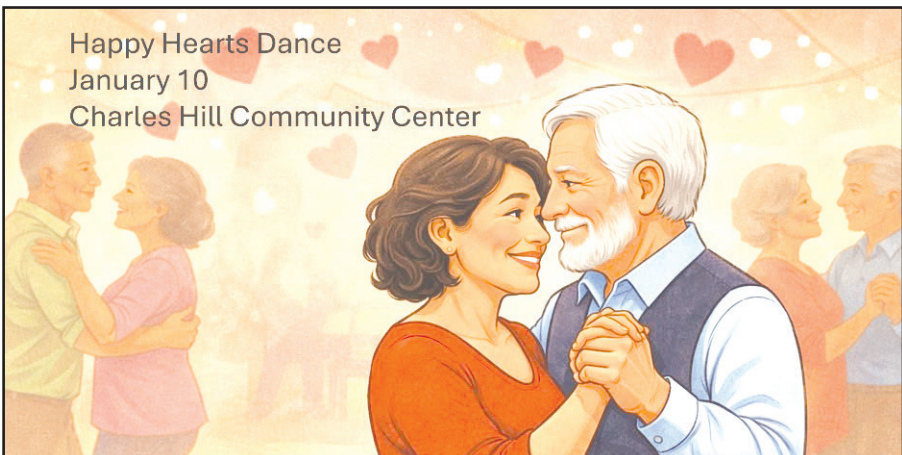
PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXABAY

an infringement on First Amendment rights.

The law states "commercially reasonable methods, such as a neutral age screen mechanism," like a drop-down menu requesting date of birth, will be used to determine if the user is younger than 16.

Beginning Jan. 1, anyone convicted of a criminal or traffic offense required to pay a fine, restitution, forfeiture, penalty, or assessed any other court costs may request an itemized bill that is required to be given to them. The clerk must also provide an updated statement of the outstanding balances or payment history upon written or electronic request of the defendant.

Another batch of new laws will be taking effect on July 1, 2026.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF TOWN OF VINTON

Charles Hill Community Center sponsoring Happy Hearts Dance on Jan. 10

The Charles R. Hill Community Center will be hosting the Happy Hearts Dance this Saturday, Jan. 10, from 7 to 10 p.m. Happy Hearts Dance is a social dance focused on music, movement, and connection.

All are welcome. Admission is \$10. Concessions will be available for purchase. The Charles Hill Community Center is located on the Vinton War Memorial campus on Washington Avenue in Vinton.

Other programs available at the Community Center include

- Mexican Dominoes from 9:45 to 1:45 on Mondays
- Music Jam from 2-5:30 on

Mondays

- Advanced Beginning Line Dancing on Tuesdays from 10-11
- Beginning Line Dancing from 11:30 to 12:30 on Tuesdays
- Canasta from 1 to 5 on Tuesdays
- Advanced Line Dancing from 5:30-7 on Tuesdays
- Tai Ci from 9-10 on Thursdays
- Canasta from 10 to 2 on Thursdays.

Call 540-682-9401 or email vintoncommunityprograms@vintonva.gov for more information.

-Submitted by Town of Vinton

DAR: Patriot Ancestors



General Joseph Martin Jr. served during the American Revolution.



Martinsville was named for General Martin.

General Joseph Martin, Jr: A Revolutionary War hero and diplomat

Members of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) are required to trace their lineage to a Patriot who aided in achieving American independence in the American Revolution.

Shannon Walker Campbell, a member of the local Roanoke Valley Chapter of the NSDAR, is a descendant of General Joseph Martin, Jr., a Revolutionary War hero and diplomat.

Joseph Martin, Jr. was born on Sept. 18, 1740, in Caroline County, Va. He was the son of Captain Joseph Martin, Sr., a planter, and Susannah Chiles, a descendant of Colonel John Page.

Raised in a Virginia gentry family, Martin's early life was marked by a blend of privilege and responsibility. His military career began in earnest during the American Revolutionary War. He served as a brigadier general in the Virginia militia, where his leadership and strategic insights were instrumental in several key battles. One of his most significant contributions was his role in frontier diplomacy with the Cherokee people. Martin's efforts helped avert potential Cherokee attacks on American settlers, which was crucial in securing victories at the Battles of Kings Mountain and Cowpens.

These victories were pivotal in turning the tide of the Revolutionary War in favor of the American forces. Martin's ability to maintain neutrality among the Cherokee and prevent them from siding with the British was a testament to his diplomatic skills and deep understanding of frontier dynamics.

Beyond his military exploits, Martin was a key figure in the complex relations between American settlers and Native American tribes. Appointed as Virginia's agent to the Cherokee Nation by Governor Patrick Henry in 1777, Martin played a crucial role in negotiating peace treaties and maintaining stability on the frontier. His work as an Indian agent and

his efforts in frontier diplomacy were vital in ensuring the safety and expansion of American settlements.

Martin was also a notable pioneer and explorer. He established Martin's Station, a frontier outpost in present-day Lee County, Virginia, which served as a critical hub for settlers moving westward. His explorations and surveys of the Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia borders helped shape the early American frontier.

In addition to his military and diplomatic achievements, Martin held various political positions. He served in the legislatures of Virginia, Georgia, and North Carolina, contributing to the governance and development of these states. Martin was also a close friend and ally of prominent figures such as Governor Patrick Henry and General Thomas Sumter.

Martin's legacy extends beyond his lifetime. The city of Martinsville, Va., was named in his honor, reflecting the lasting impact of his contributions to the region. His efforts in frontier diplomacy, military leadership, and political service have cemented his place as a significant figure in American history.

Martin's life was marked by a series of remarkable achievements that spanned military, diplomatic, and political realms. His contributions to the American Revolutionary War, his pioneering spirit, and his efforts in maintaining peace on the frontier have left an indelible mark on American history. As a soldier, diplomat, and leader, his legacy continues to inspire and remind us of the complexities and challenges of the early American frontier.

Community members interested in learning more about the DAR's mission and volunteer activities are encouraged to connect with the Roanoke Valley Chapter at <https://rvncnsdar.wixsite.com/rvncnsdar> or email rvncnsdar@gmail.com.

-Submitted by Shannon Walker Campbell

CANNED FOOD DRIVE

SOUP FOR SENIORS

Give a senior a hot meal on a cold day.

January 28 - February 4, 2026

Winter is difficult for seniors in our community living at or below the poverty line. You can help!

What We Need:

Soup

Peanut Butter

Canned Meats

Canned Fruit

Canned Vegetables

Crackers

Oatmeal

Boost or Ensure

Low sodium items preferred. No glass containers.

Please check expiration dates.

Bring non-perishable food items to St. Peter and St. Paul Anglican Church at 4909 North Lake Dr, Roanoke, VA 24019 February 2 - 4, 9 AM-4 PM or to one of our community collection sites between January 28 - February 4.

Visit loaa.org/soupforseniors for a complete list of drop-off sites or call (540) 345-0451.

Collaborating Partner:

Flagship Sponsor:

Unable to collect food?

Scan the code to DONATE NOW!

Roanoke County Planning holding informational meeting on I-81 widening, seeks volunteers for projects

Roanoke County Planning will be hosting informational meetings and recruiting volunteers for several projects in January.

The Virginia Department of Transportation, in conjunction with design-build contractor Branch Civil, Inc., will hold a "Pardon Our Dust" public information meeting on Jan. 22 at Lord Botetourt

High School to discuss construction impacts and traffic management for upcoming roadwork on Interstate 81 in Roanoke and Botetourt Counties. The meeting is open from 5 to 7 p.m. with presentations at 5:15 and 6:15 p.m.

Interstate 81 will be widened to add one lane in each direction between Exits 143 and 150. The

project also includes replacing bridges over eight crossings on I-81 and installing more than 1.5 miles of sound barrier along the northbound lanes. Two ramps at Exit 150 will be realigned and one will be removed. The improvements are intended to reduce crashes, lessen

See Planning, page 4

PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

New Town of Vinton 2026 calendars have been mailed to residents.

By Bootie Chewning

Happy New Year!! Does everyone have their resolutions ready? As we welcome the New Year, I want to take a moment to wish our community a happy, healthy, and prosperous year ahead. I am continually inspired by the support, dedication, and pride shown by our local businesses and residents. Thank you for all you do to make

our community such a wonderful place to live, work, and grow. I look forward to another year of connection, collaboration, and continued success together. Wishing you a joyful New Year filled with new opportunities and exciting possibilities.

Town calendars are out and available at the Town Finance office, The Vinton Chamber office and the Vinton Library. Pick yours up and stay “IN.”

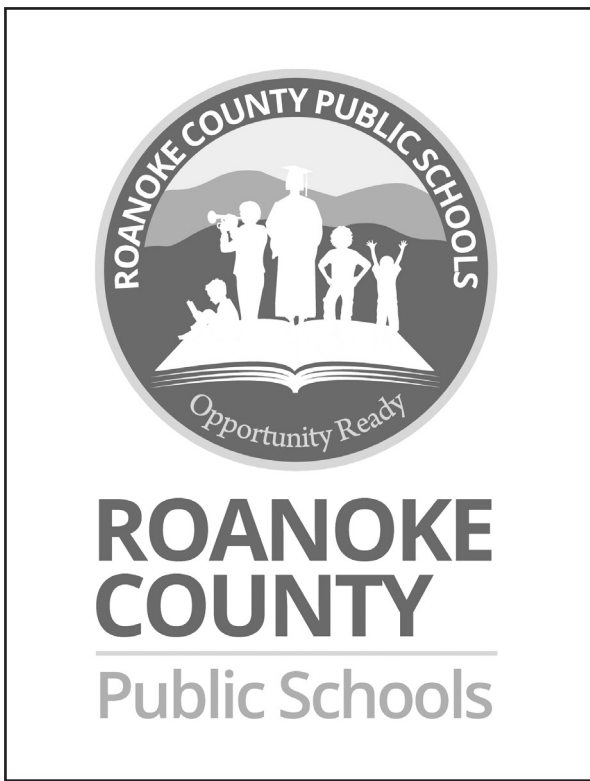
Submit your community news and photos to
vintonmessenger@ourvalley.org.

Roanoke County Schools accepting preschool applications for 2026-2027 school year

Roanoke County Public Schools promote a developmentally appropriate learning environment to foster individual skills and understanding that will enable children to make sense of the world and to succeed. They create an environment that invites children to observe, be active, and to make choices and experiment.

The Roanoke County Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) Program is a grant-funded program that provides high-quality preschool education for 3- and 4-year-old children residing in Roanoke County who have been identified as at risk and are not served by Head Start programs.

Through a strong focus on effective interactions and intentional instruction, VPI programs help ensure that all Virginia children enter school fully prepared for



GRAOHIC COURTESY OF RCPS

success.

If you are concerned regarding your child’s development and wish to have a child study, please contact RCPS to make a referral.

If your child will be age 3 or 4 by Sept. 30,

2026, your child may be eligible to attend an RCPS preschool program.

Visit <https://www.rcps.us/departments/preschool> for more information.

-Submitted by RCPS

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 Avenue, Vinton. Rev. Dr. Travis Russell, 343-7685. Sunday Services (year-round): Sunday School 9:15 AM, Morning Worship 10:30 AM; Wednesday Services (during the school year): Worship, Bible Study, Children’s Choirs & Youth Ministry 6:15 PM.

CHURCH OF CHRIST DALE RIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST - Will you “come back to the Bible”, learn more and follow Him? If you live locally in this beautiful Roanoke Valley or Botetourt County area, there is a Church, you will know it’s the ONE when you see the name on the end of the building that reads Church of Christ. 7165 Cloverdale Rd., NW, Roanoke, VA 24019. We offer a free 3 lesson, OPEN Bible course entitled “Back to the Bible.” Only available in home or where our Church meets: Sign up now on our website, daleridgechurchofchrist.net or email us at comeback2thebible@gmail.com and request to be scheduled for lesson #1 of 3 entitled “who has the Authority In Religion today”. You will be contacted promptly. All studies are conducted by 2 individuals, never alone. May God Bless you in choosing this “open book Bible study.

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 a simple teaching that focuses on the Light and Sound of God to help people find more love in their life. We offer a Spiritual Event on the 2nd. Sunday of each month. The program may be a Light and Sound Service, a Spiritual video and discussion, or other topics and techniques to help Raise Your

VINTON

Perfect



A sleeping infant seems so close to heaven...resting with a peace that is near perfect. As he sleeps so soundly, could he be dreaming of the angels he’s just left behind as he begins the journey of life?
A newborn has a soul not yet flawed by human frailty, a soul innocent and pure. A newborn has perfect trust that he will be loved and cared for. What faith!
As you worship God this week, do so with the faith of a newborn, perfect and pure. “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! ...From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise” (Psalm 8:1-2). You can trust that your father in Heaven will love and care for you!

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; cmnpc2verizon.net Sunday school 9:45am, Worship 11:00am; Communion 1st Su.ndays;

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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www.VintonMessenger.com

Award

from page 1

option by VDOT as a cost-effective way to reconstruct the roadway and stay within the available budget.

“Boxley/Superior and Slurry Pavers were able to perform a 2-inch mill, 11-inch FDR, and placement of 2” SM-9.5D BMD asphalt.

“The existing road was in an urban setting with numerous entrances and cross streets, shallow utilities and culverts, manholes, curb and gutter, severely deteriorated asphalt, and construction under traffic requirements. The existing conditions placed an emphasis on good collaboration and effective communication between VDOT, Superior, Slurry Pavers, the Town of Vinton, and the traveling public. Despite all of the challenges, the contractor team was able to complete the project for approximately \$700K.”

According to the Town of Vinton, “After more than three years of study, planning, and grant work, the town signed a contract in October 2023 to completely rebuild Mountain View Road from Washington Avenue to the town limits (near Shalon Circle). The project was a cost-sharing partnership with the town (which owns all of its own roads) and VDOT, to split the cost 50/50, with VDOT administering the project as part of their annual road improvement work. (The Town of Vinton is part of VDOT’s Salem District Office.)

“The unique aspect of this particular project is the failure of the subgrade

of the existing road due to it being underbuilt when it was a farm access road. For this reason, VDOT has chosen a different approach in road construction for our part of the state, called Full Depth Reclamation (FDR).

“This process mills down 8-10” of material and recycles the asphalt, gravel and soil with concrete to create a new base layer, then adds 2+ inches of finished asphalt on top. In the future, the town will only have to mill and repave the top two inches, as part of their annual paving maintenance every 8-12 years.

“This project has always been more than simply a repaving project,” said Sexton. “While the asphalt on top certainly has issues, we have been more concerned about what is underneath Mountain View Road. The FDR project allowed us to essentially rebuild and restabilize the road’s substructure in a uniform manner, allowing the pavement to stay intact longer.”

The project began in June 2024, just after the Roanoke County Schools released for the summer, to have minimal impact on nearby Herman L. Horn Elementary School. The project required various detours and flaggers for residents within the immediate area.

View the “before” street view map of Mountain View Road at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/cXd1e2xKEs2QKUkX8>.

- Town of Vinton

AARP Fraud Alert: Fake Jobs, Real Losses

If your New Year’s resolutions include finding a new job, work-from-home opportunities may sound appealing. While many remote positions are legitimate, some aren’t what they appear to be. Criminals often pose as legitimate employers on job boards, social media, or send unsolicited texts, promising easy money, flexible hours, and a quick hiring process.

What they’re really after is personal information or your money by asking to pay upfront for “training,” purchase expensive equipment, or provide sensitive details— such as your Social Security number— as part of the application.

Be cautious of sudden, unusually

high-paying opportunities that require little to no experience. Avoid sharing personal data until you’re certain the job offer is legitimate and take time to research the company by searching for its name along with the words scam, complaint, or fraud. If you see concerns from other job seekers, consider it a clear red flag.

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

Vinton

from page 1

appointed Interim Town Treasurer to oversee the collection, safeguarding, and disbursement of town funds. Ramsey currently serves as the Deputy Town Treasurer after coming to the town in October 2021 from the private sector. She has completed the Master Governmental Deputy Treasurer (MGDT) certification classes from the Treasurers’

Association of Virginia (TAV) and is an active member of the TAV.

“We are blessed to have two sets of steady hands at the wheel as our Finance Department navigates this time of transition,” said Peters. “Tiffany and Kimberley are consummate professionals who are unwavering in their dedication to the town’s finances.”

In the coming weeks, town administration will continue to evaluate the ongoing staffing needs of the Finance Department/Treasurer’s Office and will post any job advertisements based on that evaluation. The department will continue to report to the Deputy Town Manager.

-Submitted by Town of Vinton

Hotel

from page 1

to accept a position as town manager in his hometown of Marion, Pete Peters was appointed to finish Keen’s term on the Greater Roanoke Transit Company Board which ends on June 30, 2026.

The Town of Vinton Charter provides for the appointment of deputies to each of the appointive officers by Town Council.

Adam E. “Cody” Smith was named as Deputy Town Manager; Kimberley A. Ramsey as Deputy Town Treasurer; Julie S. Tucei as Deputy Town Clerk;

Michael W. S. Lockaby as Deputy Town Attorney, and Timothy J. Lawless as Deputy Chief of Police.

According to the resolution, the appointed deputy officers may fully serve in the capacity of his or her respective appointive officer, in the absence, disability, or vacancy of the appointive officers. All appointments were effective January 1, 2026.

Council also passed a resolution authorizing Town Manager Pete Peters, Deputy Town Manager Cody Sexton, Deputy Town Treasurer Kimberly Ramsey, and Town Clerk Megan Lawless to countersign checks. This is consistent with past policy.

In the Town Manager’s Update, Peters recognized Tiffany Stewart and Kimberley Ramsey. Stewart will be serving as Vinton’s Interim Finance Director; Ramsey will be serving as Interim Town Treasurer.

He noted that town employees Mandy Adkins

and Nathan McClung had been recognized in the Roanoker Magazine’s “40 Under 40” issue.

He commended Deputy Police Chief Lawless for applying for and receiving a \$90,000 grant which will be used for a 3D imaging camera for the VPD to assist with investigations. Lawless said that “it’s expensive equipment, but much needed.”

Peters also recognized the Planning and Zoning Dept. for receiving an \$80,000 grant for traffic audit and design for Hardy Road. This is a follow-up to “Safe Streets for All.”

Peters also announced the statewide VDOT Award received for the Mountain View Road paving project.

Council members Mike Stovall and Sabrina McCarty announced that they will be running for re-election to their seats in the November 2026 election. Stovall was first elected to council in 2018; McCarty, in 2014.

Planning

from page 2

delays and enhance crash response times.

This segment of I-81 experiences frequent congestion and major delays related to significant crashes and incidents with 662 crashes occurring between 2015 and 2019. Traffic volumes range between 35,000 and 39,000 vehicles per day with 22-23 percent heavy trucks.

This widening project is part of the Interstate 81 Corridor Improvement Program which aims to improve safety, increase reliability and foster economic growth.

The county is seeking volunteers for its Stream Monitoring Program. Do you have a passion for the

outdoors? Do you love clean streams? Do you like to get your feet wet and your hands dirty? If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, volunteer to participate in Roanoke County’s new Citizens Stream Monitoring Program. You will learn to collect meaningful water quality information to help identify water pollution problems. The county will share information collected by volunteers with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to assist this agency in filling in data gaps where current stream monitoring efforts have not yet been initiated or where sampling data is limited. To learn more and to sign up, visit <https://www.roanokecountyva.gov/356/Volunteer-Opportunities> and scroll to the Stream Monitoring section.

Roanoke County is also looking for volunteers to assist with its Storm

Drain Stenciling Program. Stenciling storm drain inlets is an easy way to provide a visual reminder that stormwater goes, untreated, to nearby waterways. It is a direct and cost-effective project to remind people not to dump anything into the drainage system. Volunteer storm drain stenciling projects offer an educational pollution prevention activity with a lasting effect. Storm drain stenciling is a practical, positive, easy first step toward public education, investment, and support. Stenciled storm drains will raise citizen awareness and educate the public about stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution. Volunteer today by filling out the volunteer form at <https://www.roanokecountyva.gov/356/Volunteer-Opportunities>.

Roanoke County and the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

have partnered using grant funds from the Virginia Environmental Endowment to provide a “no-cost septic tank pump-out program” to qualified Roanoke County residents. This program aims to reduce the environmental impacts and property damage caused by failed septic systems.

Households with an annual income level at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line are eligible to apply for the program. Watch an informational video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeuqC_KevTU and complete the form at <https://www.roanokecountyva.gov/FormCenter/Stormwater-Management-11/Septic-Pump-Out-Program-Application-139> to apply.

For any questions, contact Terra Famuliner with RVARC at tfamuliner@rvarc.org or (540) 343-4417.

OBITUARY

Arrington, Alberta Elkins

September 17, 1944 – December 24, 2025

Alberta “Bertie” Elkins Arrington, 81, of Moneta, passed away Wednesday, December 24, 2025.

Bertie was born on September 17, 1944, in Pulaski to the late Douglas Silvers Elkins and Edith Irene Phillips Elkins. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother, Charles Douglas Elkins.

Bertie graduated from Pulaski High School, Class of 1962. She then graduated from Lewis-Gale Hospital School of Nursing in 1965. Bertie worked as a registered nurse for 36 years. She married Clarence Gibbs “Sonny” Arrington Jr. in 1965.

She is survived by her devoted husband of 60 years, Sonny Arrington; daughters, Tracy Suzette Arrington Blanchard (Mark) and Tiffany Sunette Arrington (Christian Shaltis); and her cherished granddaughters, Caitlyn Elizabeth Murray, Kyla Nicole Murray,

and Hannah Grace Violet Shaltis. She is also survived by her sister, Patricia Irene Elkins Viers.



Bertie leaves behind her loving in-laws, including Donna Gilbert (Wayne) of Myrtle Beach, S.C., Kathy Toler of Columbus, S.C., and Jan Arrington (Wanda) of Goodview, as well as numerous nieces and nephews who will miss her dearly.

A devoted member of Belmont Christian Church, she enjoyed her family, friends and her faith and the simple pleasures of life. She especially enjoyed working on puzzles, reading, and shopping.

There was a visitation from 1 to 3 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, January 2, 2026, at Oakley’s Vinton Chapel. A funeral service was held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, January 3, 2026, at Belmont Christian Church. Burial followed in Mountain View Cemetery in Vinton. Condolences may be shared with her family by visiting www.Oakeys.com.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

		1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	
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13	14					15				16			17 18
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54								55					
56							57 58				59		
							61				62		
							64				65		

CLUES ACROSS

1. Atomic mass unit
4. Criticize mightily
7. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
10. Stand in for
11. Everyone has one
12. Brew
13. Rectify
15. Popular Dodge truck model
16. Beef or chicken intestine
19. Satisfy
21. Of a particular people or localized region
23. Movements in quick tempos
24. Able to pay one's debts
25. Fleshy bird beak covering
26. Dueling sword
27. Helps
30. Court is in it
34. Touch lightly

35. Airborne (abbr.)
36. Of one
41. Baked good
45. Jai __, sport
46. About aviation
47. Low oval mound
50. Rugged mountain ranges
54. Compel to do some-thing
55. A way to carve
56. Sao __, city in Brazil
57. Mustachioed actor Elliott
59. American Idol runner-up Clay
60. A way to soak
61. Car mechanics group
62. Born of
63. Time zone
64. Sea eagle
65. Even's opposite

CLUES DOWN

1. Sharp mountain ridge
2. Thin, fibrous cartilages
3. Provides new details
4. Muscular weaknesses
5. Ottoman military title
6. Banes
7. Horse-riding seats
8. Arms of a shirt
9. Narrow path along a road edge
13. Viper
14. Disfigure
17. Variety of Chinese language
18. Portray in a show
20. Wrongful act
22. No (slang)
27. State of agitation
28. __ Diego
29. One point east of due south
31. 007's creator
32. The NBA's Toppin
33. Midway between north and northeast
37. Examples
38. __ Gould, actor
39. The habitat of wild animals
40. Artful subtlety
41. Infielders
42. Keep under control
43. Herb
44. Distressed
47. A way to go down
48. Type of acid
49. Take by force
51. Collected fallen leaves
52. Shout of welcome or farewell
53. Monetary unit
58. Swiss river

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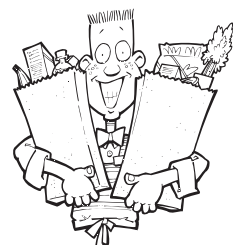
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They were there when men's fast-pitch softball was king

Terriers look make move in BRD

"We got out to a hot start and were able to maintain and build on it," said Greenway. "Really happy for our guys to see some success in this game. Got all of our guys in the game

Next week Byrd will be at undefeated Hidden Valley for a non-district game on Monday, followed by a home game BRD game with Lord Botetourt on Tuesday.



Above, Jaden Holmes wraps a pass around two Salem defenders in a game last week. Below, David Foster drives to the hoop.



PHOTO BY REGINA DEVINNEY

Byrd girls open Blue Ridge District season with win over Northside

Next week William Byrd has a non-district game with Hidden Valley at home on Monday and a Blue Ridge District game with Lord Botetourt in Daleville Wednesday.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

	A	M	U	P	A	N	S	S	B
	R	E	P	A	G	E	A	L	E
A	M	E	N	D	R	A	M	E	D
S	A	T	I	A	T	E	E	N	D
P	R	E	S	T	O	S	S	O	L
		C	E	R	E		E	P	E
A	S	S	I	S	T	S	S	E	S
D	A	B							A
O	N	E	S	E	L	F	B	R	O
		A	L	A	I		A	E	R
D	R	U	M	L	I	N	S	I	E
I	N	S	P	I	R	E	E	N	G
P	A	U	L	O		S	A	M	
	R	E	T		S	A	E	N	E
	P	S	T		E	R	N	O	D

SPORTS

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



PHOTOS BY SUZANNE WITCHER

The William Byrd wrestlers competed in the Takedown the New Year tournament at Heritage High School last weekend. Above left, Byrd's Logan Williams is close to pinning him man at 126. Above right, Jayden Omiyo is on top and in control in his 190 pound bout and, below, Gabe Campbell works over the arm of his 120 pound foe.

William Byrd will host annual Big Orange Classic this week

The highlight of the William Byrd wrestling season will be this weekend when the Terriers host the annual Big Orange Classic wrestling tournament. The tournament will begin Friday at 5 pm and resume Saturday morning at 10 am with finals set for early Saturday evening.

The Big Orange is the longest continuously running wrestling tournament in the Roanoke Valley. It has been held over the holiday break in recent years but this season it was moved to the second weekend in January.

"The dates and times have been moved around over the last few years," said Byrd coach Thomas Kessler. "It was moved to Christmas break but the weekends during that break don't always align for the tournament to be on the same weekend."

This year's tournament will include 24 teams, with most of the local schools participating. The lineup includes Bassett, Blacksburg, Brookville, Charlottesville, Christiansburg, Floyd County, Franklin County, Giles, Glenvar, Heritage, Hidden Valley, Liberty, LCA, Lord Botetourt, Martinsville, Northside, Parry McCluer, Riverheads, Roanoke Catholic, Rustburg, Salem, Western Albemarle, William Fleming and the host Terriers.

This is a big deal for the Byrd crowd. Many former Terriers attend the tournament.

"This is always a fun event for our kids and for wrestlers of the past," said Kessler. "It's almost like a homecoming for wrestling because a lot of past wrestlers will show back up to watch the Big Orange. It's an exciting time for our kids because they know wrestlers from the past will be here watching them compete. It's always a goal for our kids to perform well in front of the home crowd." Kessler should know, as he wrestled for Byrd as a high school student.

"I was always super excited to wrestle in the Big Orange," he said. "I had



attended them growing up and it was always a goal of mine to make it to the finals and compete under the spot light. Luckily I got to do that my senior year and was able to win a Big Orange title."

Byrd is coming off a third place finish in the "Takedown the New Year" tournament at Heritage High School last weekend. It was a 26 team affair and two Terriers won first place medals, Darin Witcher at 132 and Lane Brunk at 113. Davion Wade wrestled back to take a third and Zane Taylor was fifth.

Next Wednesday, January 14, the Terriers will host a dual event at the high school and on the 16th and 17th they'll wrestle in the Big Blue in Christiansburg.

Byrd grad Shoemaker is Academic All-District

The Roanoke College football team had six players honored this week with the release of the 2025 College Sports Communicators (CSC) Academic All-District Team, including William Byrd graduate Lane Shoemaker. The Maroons honored were: Charlie Davis, Nathan Johnson, Silas Fitzgerald, Ethan Cyr, Arlie VanDyke and Shoemaker.

Shoemaker, a sophomore health and exercise science major, is a defensive back for the Maroons. Davis, a linebacker, is a sophomore education major from Radford, VA. Johnson, a Glenvar High graduate,

majors in health and exercise science and is a sophomore offensive lineman. Fitzgerald, a senior elementary education major, is an offensive lineman from Hidden Valley High in Roanoke County. Cyr, a sophomore business administration major, is a kicker from Stuarts

Draft and VanDyke, a sophomore long snapper from Stanardsville, VA, is a health and exercise science major.

The 2025 Academic All-District® Football Teams, selected by College Sports Communicators, recognize the nation's top student-athletes for

their combined performances on the field and in the classroom. The CSC Academic All-America® program separately recognizes honorees in four divisions — NCAA Division I, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III and NAIA.



PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

Lane Shoemaker returns an interception for Roanoke.

Dawgs Bremner gets 200th win

The Rail Yard Dawgs grinded their way to a massive road victory last Friday night, as Roanoke prevailed with a 4-2 road win over the

first-place Pensacola Ice Flyers at the Pensacola Bay Center. With the win Roanoke head coach Dan Bremner became just the eighth coach in SPHL history to record 200 wins.

Noah Finstrom and Travis Broughman each had one goal and one assist, Chris Mott and Matt O'Dea added goals, Joe Widmar had two assists, while rookie Gabe Rosek stopped 33-of-35 shots in his SPHL debut for the Dawgs in

notching his first career win in the league.

Season ticket packages and group tickets are on sale by contacting the Rail Yard

Dawgs' front office. Single game tickets for the season are on sale now online and at Berglund Center box office.

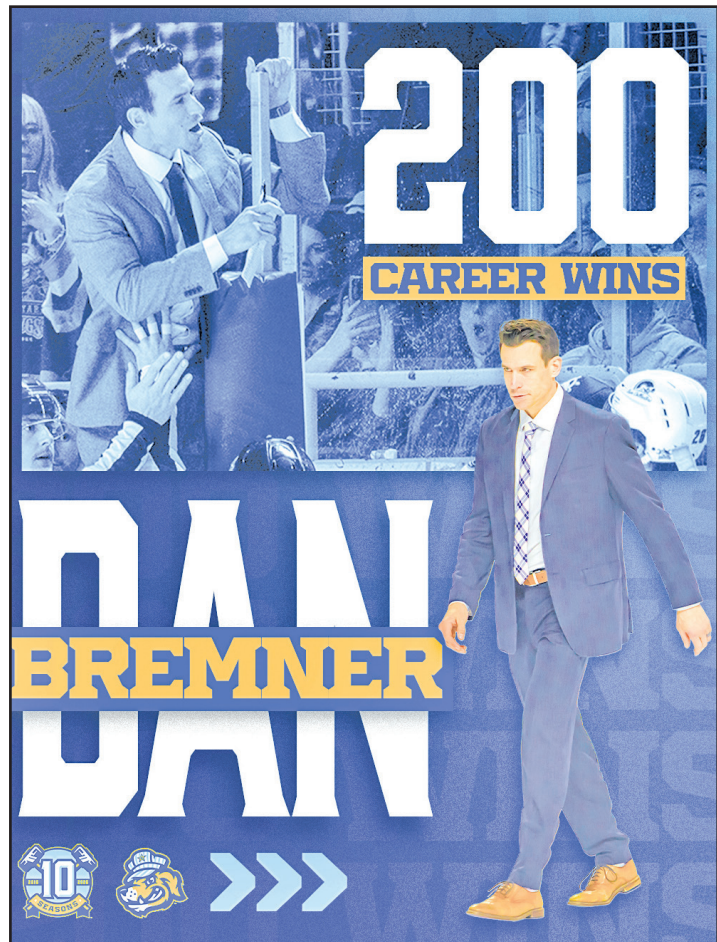


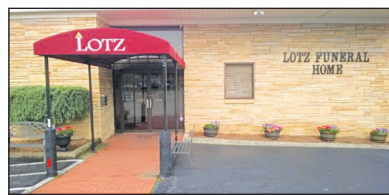
PHOTO BY MARY WRAY

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