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Messenger

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The cast of “Pete the Cat” (from left), Dad and Mom Biddle, Pete the Cat, Jimmy and Olive Biddle

Mill Mountain Theatre presents ‘Pete the Cat’ at Vinton Library

Debbie Adams
 dadams@ourvalley.org

Each summer the Mill Mountain Theatre (MMT) for Young Audiences program presents a children’s musical at the Vinton Public Library. The 2026 production on June 25 was “Pete the Cat: A Live Rock Musical” based on the hit book series of everyone’s favorite guitar-playing cat. MMT performed the play at libraries and other venues throughout the Roanoke and New River Valleys June 1 to June 28.

A synopsis of “Pete the Cat” says, “The musical tells the story of the Biddle family who rescue Pete the Cat

from life on the streets as a stray and take him into their home. The Biddles’ son, Jimmy (the most organized second grader on the planet), is worried about finishing second grade and doubts both himself and his creative abilities. Pete comes to the rescue, encouraging Jimmy to use his imagination and embrace the more adventurous aspects of life. Together, Pete and Jimmy embark on a globe-trotting journey all the way to Paris in Pete’s unique VW bus, providing the inspiration Jimmy needs to trust his artistic talents. Along the way, Pete teaches Jimmy and his family that believing in yourself and being willing to try new things are essential ingredients in life’s greatest adventures.”



Olive and Pete the Cat

PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

The cast of characters included five recent college graduates from around the country completing a seven-month internship with MMT.

Reid Williams (from Alabama) was completely engaging in the title role of Pete, delighting the young audience and their families with his free-spirited, rock star persona. Noah Cuoco (from Florida) played the role of Jimmy Biddle. Jimmy’s sister, Olive, was played by Shea Grande from Tennessee. Veronica Washington (Florida) and Elijah LaRue (Indiana) played Jimmy’s parents. Alaya Lewis (from Virginia) was stage manager

See **Pete**, page 7



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

An interior view of 7 Walnut Avenue which Defy Gravity will occupy

Renovations underway at 7 Walnut Avenue

Work is well underway on renovations to the commercial property located at 7 Walnut Avenue in downtown Vinton. The 12,000-square-foot building in its history has housed McClung’s indoor lumber yard, a metal powder coating operation, and a laydown yard and office for a commercial roofer.

Vinton Town Council took action at its meeting on June 16 to transfer

the town’s lease and option to purchase the space to Shadwell Properties, LLC, (Dale Wilkinson and David Spigle) who plan to redevelop the building into two leasable commercial units.

One of those units is Defy Gravity Training Center, which will be moving downtown to a much larger space

See **Renovations**, page 7

WBMS football team cleans up the greenway

This week, 24 William Byrd Middle School football players, coach Cody Underwood, and Vinton Breakfast Lion Ryan Mason spent two evenings cleaning-up Vinton.

On June 29, the team picked up litter along the Glade Creek Greenway from Gus Nicks Boulevard to Virginia

Avenue; on June 30 they picked up litter along Meadow Street and at the Multi-Generational Park.

Vinton Town Council member Sabrina McCarty helped organize the team; Courtney Plaster with the Clean

See **Greenway**, page 7



PHOTO BY ANITA MCMILLAN

The WBMS football team joined with the Vinton Breakfast Lions Club to clean up the greenways of Vinton.

Chewning receives ‘Living Legacy Award’ from Miss Virginia Organization

By Angie Chewning

Thia past Saturday was a busy one. Not only was it the Chamber’s second Mingle at the Market, but it was a special day for my mom, Bootie. I was asked to bring her to a “Royal Luncheon” for the Miss Virginia Organization. She didn’t know about the secret, but I did. So of course, I made sure she was there.

Mom has been a part of Miss Virginia for as long as I can remember. My children, Drake and Abbie, have been a part of Miss Virginia for most of their lives; it’s just part of us. This year Mom was given the “Living Legacy Award.”

When Nancy Glisson Lucy, co-executive director of Miss Virginia, along with Mark Schreier, read the following about Mom, not only were tears shed by Mom and myself, but by so many of the wonderful people that are involved with the organization. Afterwards, they were all on their feet, giving Mom the “Standing O” she deserves.

Nancy read, “There are people who serve an organization for a season. And then there are those rare individuals whose dedication becomes part of its very foundation. Today it is our great privilege to honor one of those extraordinary people. Bootie Chewning



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANGIE CHEWNING

Bootie Chewning with Miss Virginia 2025 Madison Whitbeck

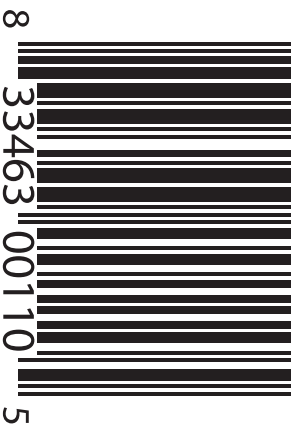
has been a faithful friend, a trusted leader, and unwavering champion of the Miss Virginia Organization for decades.

“Her journey began as a cheerleader for Virginia Tech, but it certainly did not end there. Over the years, she became one of Miss Virginia’s greatest cheerleaders, not from the sidelines, but through her tireless service, wise counsel, and steadfast belief in the mission of this organization.

“With her background in public relations and communication, Bootie

has helped tell the story of Miss Virginia; with grace and professionalism as a longtime member of our board of directors,

See **Chewning**, page 7



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Annual Four on the 4th Race this Saturday in Vinton

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia, Fleet Feet, and the Town of Vinton are excited to partner for the 15th Annual Four on the 4th race/walk, presented by The Vinton Moose Lodge. This race generally attracts over 500 runners each year.

This year's event will be especially meaningful as the community comes together on July 4 to celebrate America's 250th Birthday while supporting youth across Southwest Virginia. The Town of Vinton looks forward to welcoming runners, walkers, families, volunteers, and community supporters for this patriotic tradition.

The Four on the 4th annual fundraiser benefits Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia, which serves youth ages 5–18 through summer and after-school programs across nine Clubs, located in Montgomery County, Franklin County, Roanoke County (including Vinton), and Roanoke City.

The race raises more than \$30,000 each year to support safe places, caring mentors, academic support, field trips, healthy summer meals and snacks, and life-changing opportunities for local kids and teens.

“As the CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia, I am immensely grateful for the incredible support

we receive through Four on the 4th,” said Rebekah Meadows. “This year is especially exciting as we celebrate the 15th anniversary of this race and America’s 250th. It is heartwarming to see our community come together on America’s birthday to support local youth and help create great futures.”

Registration is open to all ages. The four-mile race will begin promptly at 8 a.m., followed by a Kids Fun Run at 9 a.m. Registration will remain open until 7:30 a.m. on July 4. Registration is \$44.

Community members can learn more and register by visiting: <https://runsignup.com/Race/VA/Vinton/Fouronthe4th>.

The starting/end point of the race has changed this year from the Vinton War Memorial to the Vinton Farmer’s Market in downtown Vinton due to renovations underway at the War Memorial. Free parking is available in several downtown parking lots.

For \$50, join the VIP Runners Tier and receive a commemorative t-shirt, finishers medal, and raffle tickets for an exclusive prize at the Post-Race Party drawing. (No deadline for VIP runners.)

All Kids Fun Run participants will receive a medal at the finish line. The Kids course is about a half-mile in length.



FILE PHOTO

Runners may register on-site on the morning of July 4 beginning at 7 a.m.

Kids run for free in the 4th Kids Fun Run and receive a medal at the finish line.

The awards ceremony will start at 9:30 a.m.

- Top awards will be presented to: Top 3 Males, Top 3 Females, Top Male Master (40+)

- Top Female Master (40+), Top Male Grand Master (50+), and Top Female Grand Master (50+).

- Age group awards will be presented to Top 3 Males and Females in each age group category: 1-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70 and up

- The Top 3 Males, Top Females, Top Male Master, Top Female Master, Top Male Grand Master and Top Female Grand Master will win a pair of shoes from Fleet Feet!

In case of inclement weather, the race becomes virtual. There is no refund. Dogs and other pets are not permitted. Strollers are allowed.

Sponsors include the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia, Vinton Moose Lodge #1121, the Town of Vinton, Fleet Feet, Branch, BJ’s, Mizuno, and First Bank.

-Submitted by Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia



From left, Betty Gardner, Betty Wall, Carolyn Yopp, and Sandy Lucas met at the Charles R. Hill Community Center Monday morning for a game of Mexican Train Dominoes.



PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Shirley Pazdan, Liz Finney, Andrea Reed, and Dot Beavers made up another Mexican Dominoes team.

Mexican Train Dominoes group invites you to join for fun and to keep your brain young

On Mondays from 9:45 to 1:45, a group meets at the Charles R. Hill Community Center in Vinton to play a game called “Mexican Train Dominoes.” They have been meeting for about three years and are always happy to welcome players new to the game or new to the group. On June 29, nine ladies came to play (men are welcome, too), forming a team of four and a team of five.

Mexican Train Dominoes is

a variation of regular dominoes. Players compete to be the first to play all their dominoes by building trains that connect to a central hub, known as the “station.” The goals are to finish first and force the other players’ remaining dominoes to be scored against them. The lowest scorer wins.

In the game sets used at the Community Center, all the dominos are large print numbers instead of tiny dots.

Each person is given a wooden tray to hold the dominos so that you can see them all without holding them in your hand and avoid knocking them over when they are set up on edge on the table in front of each player.

The game can be played by as few as three people. The center has enough games to accommodate up to four tables of six players. If you get there late, you still will be able to play because the game itself is

divided into 12 segments, and you just start with whatever segment the group is playing at that time. Yes, they do keep score, but it’s not cutthroat competition.

You don’t need to register—just show up on Monday morning and join the group, as often as your schedule allows.

Player Sandy Lucas said she comes to socialize and have fun, but that Mexican Train Dominoes also “works your

brain.”

Several from the Mexican Train Dominoes group also come to the Community Center for other activities, especially to play cards, namely Hand and Foot Canasta, which meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For more information on classes and events at the Vinton Charles R. Hill Community Center, visit the Facebook page.

- Vinton Messenger staff report

Town of Vinton invites community to annual Fourth of July Celebration

The Town of Vinton invites residents and visitors to celebrate Independence Day at its annual Fourth of July Celebration on Saturday, July 4, at the Vinton War Memorial grounds.

This year’s event is especially meaningful as communities across the nation commemorate

the 250th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. As part of this historic milestone, the Town of Vinton extends its appreciation to Roanoke County for its support of this special event through the Virginia 250 initiative. The contribution helps

enhance this year’s Independence Day festivities as communities across the nation celebrate America’s 250th birthday.

While the Vinton War Memorial is currently undergoing renovation, the annual Fourth of July Celebration will continue as planned on the War Memorial grounds. The



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town is proud to carry on this cherished community tradition while investing in the future of one of Vinton’s most treasured gathering spaces.

This free, family-friendly event will feature live entertainment, delicious food, children’s activities, and a spectacular fireworks display.

Festivities begin at 6 p.m., followed by a patriotic program at 6:30 p.m. Music throughout the evening will be provided by DJ FLEX, with fireworks lighting up the sky beginning at 9:30 p.m.

Returning this year is the crowd-favorite foam pit, providing summertime fun for children and families.

Attendees can also enjoy a variety of local food vendors, including:

- Copper Dog
- Deb’s Lemonade
- Get Glazed
- La Shunca
- Munsey’s Smoke Shack
- The Local Lemon
- The Tot Box

- Tinker Mountain Kettle Corn
- Tinker Mountain Shaved Ice

Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating on the War Memorial lawn. For the safety and enjoyment of all attendees, leave pets, alcohol, fireworks, firecrackers, and similar items at home.

Several roads throughout the town will be closed at various times on July 4 to accommodate both the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Virginia’s Four on the 4th Run (early morning) and the Fourth of July Celebration. Motorists should plan for additional travel time when traveling through Vinton. For the safety of event attendees and to support event operations, Vinton War Memorial Park will close at 6 p.m. on July 4 and reopen at 7 a.m. on July 5.

For event details and a complete list of road closures, visit www.vintonva.gov/july4th.

- Vinton Messenger staff report

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From the Pulpit

From Seating to Sending

By Pastor Bryan Crouch

It is easy to measure church health by attendance numbers. Full parking lots feel encouraging. But Scripture measures health by transformation and mission. Before ascending to heaven, Jesus commanded His followers, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations”

(Matthew 28:19, NIV). The command was not to gather, but to go. The Church gathers for strength. It goes for impact. When believers view Sunday as the culmination of their faith, growth stalls. But when Sunday becomes preparation for the week ahead, purpose expands.

See Pulpit, page 7

Reimagining learning in the classroom – how competency, transparency and purpose are reshaping high school classroom instruction

Walk into most American high school classrooms and you'll find a familiar arrangement: a teacher at the front, students in rows, a textbook or screen between them. The lesson may be standards-aligned. The teacher may be skilled. But ask the students what they're learning and why it matters, and the most common answer is some version of: because it's on the test.

This isn't a failure of individual teachers: it's a failure of design. For decades, the architecture of American secondary education has separated what students learn from why it matters—fragmenting knowledge into isolated disciplines, measuring achievement through point accumulation, treating skills like collaboration, critical thinking and self-direction as extras rather than core outcomes.

The Carnegie Foundation and XQ's Future of High School Network (FHS Network) have brought together 24 school systems working to move American secondary education beyond the limits of the Carnegie Unit—the century-old system that measures learning in seat time rather than demonstrated competency. Across the

network, systems work together, undertaking R&D to tackle shared challenges.

Roanoke County Public Schools is one of those school systems in the network addressing a shared set of questions to reimagine learning in the classroom, where educators are redesigning daily instruction so that rigorous, real-world, competency-rich learning isn't an add-on or a pilot: it's what school has become.

When Roanoke County Public Schools first introduced its C-Change Framework more than a decade ago, Superintendent Dr. Ken Nicely asked for feedback. At a summer leadership retreat, principals placed sticky notes on a wall listing one hope and one fear. The number one hope: that the vision could be made real. The number one fear: that it would turn out to be another flavor of the month. That was 2013. The framework emerged from a recognition that Roanoke County was good at a particular kind of success—standardized test scores— but that this success was too narrow.

When the district surveyed parents, teachers and community members, hardly anyone mentioned

test scores. The things they cared about were transferable skills, hands-on application and classrooms where students felt respected and intellectually engaged.

The framework defines “deeper learning” as learning that is engaging and purposeful, not just emotionally engaging. Nicely is careful to add—but intellectually and cognitively engaging. It balances standards alignment with learning culture, school climate, and the resources teachers need to teach differently. The turning point came when leadership decided to shift the district's Opportunity Ready Graduate Profile from aspiration to promise.

Mike Riley, who leads the division's secondary innovation work, puts it plainly: “A lot of divisions have them. But unfortunately, when you talk to a lot of divisions, it's a beautiful poster.” Roanoke County wanted something measurable. The profile includes six skills, but the team focused on three: collaboration, critical thinking and communication.

“They built ‘I Can’ statements describing what each skill looks like at every grade level through high school—conceived from the start

as a K-12 continuum, not a high school initiative with an elementary add-on.

“The capstone is a senior portfolio defense. Students curate artifacts of their growth that are drawn from classwork, extracurricular activities, jobs and volunteer experiences— and then they stand before a panel of adults to tell the story of their learning journey.

“The panel scores the defense and asks probing questions designed not to trip students up but to draw out evidence they may have undersold. The defenses have proven to be the single most powerful tool for converting skeptical teachers.

“And then they sit, and they hear the kids tell their story,” Riley says.

Not a single teacher who has participated on a panel has come away unconvinced.

One student, a weekend volunteer EMT, described the communication, collaboration and critical thinking required to manage an accident scene. Another talked about skills built as a night manager at a local restaurant.

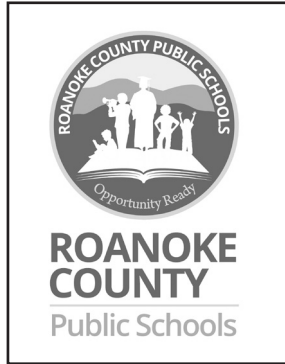
The defenses create a space where the student council president and the restaurant night manager are both valued for the same thing: transferable

skills demonstrated in real contexts.

Student feedback has reshaped the work. Early on, the division emphasized the artifact. Students pushed back, noting they didn't realize how far they'd grown, until they started reflecting on the journey. So, the team deepened the reflective component, asking students to trace not just what they produced but who they became.

Nicely describes one of his proudest moments: hearing two students casually mention that they'd failed their defense the first time, received feedback, and came back to pass. For him, this was proof of two things at once: the standards were real, and the students had the resilience to meet them.

Last year, approximately 300 seniors earned the Opportunity Ready diploma seal across the division's five high schools. This year, Roanoke County is aiming for close to 80% of graduates. Nicely remembers the father who approached him during the early design process, hopefulness visible in his eyes: “This is all so wonderful, but do you think we can actually make it real?” A decade later, he now has an



FILE GRAPHIC

answer.

The mission of the Carnegie Foundation is to catalyze transformational change in education so that every student has the opportunity to live a healthy, dignified and fulfilling life. Established by an act of Congress in 1906, the Foundation has a rich history of driving significant change in the education sector, including the creation of TIAA-CREF, the Education Testing Service (ETS), the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Pell Grants and the Carnegie Classifications for Higher Education. Today, the Foundation is dedicated to the transformation of the American high school and making the postsecondary sector a more vital engine for economic mobility.

-Submitted by Roanoke County Public Schools

VINTON HISTORY: Heart-Shield Bible

During the Second World War, spiritual and physical armor went hand in hand for young American soldiers. A physical manifestation of this was the “Heart-Shield Bible,” which was carried in the left breast pocket over the heart. Sent away with soldiers, these small and often New Testament Bibles provided psychological comfort during strenuous campaigns and long periods away from home.

One such example in the Vinton History Museum collection is the Overacre

Bible, which is a 4.5” by 3” Bible with a brass cover and yellow-stained page ends. On the brass cover is stamped, “May God be with you.”

Some testimonies indicate that the brass cover did indeed work against enemy shrapnel, but it was known to be susceptible to regular small arms ordnance, making the spiritual protection far more valuable than its defensive capabilities. This Bible itself was owned by Vintonite Beverly Overacre, who served from 1942-1945 in the U.S. Army. He made it

through the war and married Grace Hodges upon his return, carrying this Bible through it all.

More war relics and stories thereof can be found at the Vinton History Museum. However, the museum will soon be closed for an extended period due to construction on the west wing, but calls and inquiries will be accepted at 540-342-8634 or info@vintonhistorymuseum.org.

-Submitted by Volunteer Levi Whitcomb



PHOTO BY LEVI WHITCOMB

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

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 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”

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; cmpe2verizon.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.

VINTON

WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Wits' End Corner

Read Psalms 106:1 through 109:31

Life can be like riding a ship rolling in the midst of a stormy sea: up one second reaching for the stars, the next second plummeting to the depths. The Psalmist wrote about those who “went out on the sea in ships.”

They reeled and staggered like drunkards; they were at their wits’ end. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress (Psalm 107:27-28).

A. G. Ward wrote in the Pentecostal Evangel eighty-three years ago, “We have passed through many tests in the

past twenty-four years, often we have been at ‘wits’ end corner’ but again and again we have found ourselves singing.”

Are you at the end of your rope? Cry out to the Lord. Your prayer life will be different. Your praise life will open up.

Your prayer should be like that of Jehoshaphat as he led God’s people when they were under attack: “We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you” (2Chronicles 20:12).

Prayer Suggestion: Lord, I trust You to still the storms in my life.
Quicklook: Psalm 107:23-32

If you would like to see your church services listed here in the Vinton Messenger contact Tucker Frye at Cell: (540) 389-9355 tfrye@ourvalley.org

TINKER CREEK CLEANUP

August 8th
8 am - 12 pm

Sign up at Facebook/Roanoke Stormwater
Sign up closes July 22nd, noon

LUNCH PROVIDED





FREE BEER!
For ages 21+

Time to register for annual Tinker Creek Clean-up

The annual Tinker Creek Clean-up, hosted by the City of Roanoke Stormwater Division, is scheduled for August 8, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Sign-ups close on July 22, so register now for a day of fun and community service.

Clean up participants will receive lunch, beverages and a few extra goodies from the event sponsors. The kick-off meeting starts at 8 a.m. in Fallon Park where crew work maps, information and supplies will be handed out.

Choose between land- and canoe-based clean up along Tinker Creek and the Roanoke River. There are different physical activity levels between sites, so choose according to your physical ability.

Register at Facebook/Roanoke Stormwater. Let them know if you would like to use your own canoe, and if you will bring your own PFD (personal floatation device). Don't forget to give a T-shirt size. If you have food allergies or needs, put a note in the T-shirt comment box and someone will follow up with you.

Fill out our waiver ahead of time here: <https://www.roadnokeva.gov/FormCenter/Stormwater-23/Volunteer-Application-and-Release-from-L-196> or the waiver for Minors here: <https://www.roadnokeva.gov/FormCenter/Stormwater-23/Parental-Consent-and-Release-Form-197>.

~ Vinton Messneger staff report

RECIPES OF THE WEEK



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Watermelon Basket

By Debbie Adams

A watermelon basket is one of the easiest appetizers to prepare for a summer party and you can make it ahead of time. (I once made one shaped like a baby cradle for a baby shower.) You only need a ripe watermelon, a variety of fruits, and a sharp knife to carve with.

Ingredients

Ripe watermelon, use any size or shape

Other fruits: cantaloupe, honeydew, strawberries, grapes, kiwi, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, pineapple, whatever you prefer.

Instructions

Be sure to choose a ripe melon. They usually make a hollow sound when you thump them and have a yellow field spot on the bottom. (At the Vinton

Farmers' Market, Rueda's Produce will do the thumping and help you choose the ripest melon.) Wash and dry the outside of the melon.

Using a very sharp knife, cut a thin slice from one side of the melon to make a base to help the melon sit without wobbling. Then cut a thick slice off the top of the melon and use a melon baller to remove the pulp. You can just chunk the pulp, but the balls are prettier.

Carve evenly spaced V-shaped notches around the top edges of the watermelon bowl, forming a zigzag shape around the top.

Chill the shell.

Use the melon baller for the other types of melon. Mix all the fruits in a bowl. Chill another 30 minutes or so.

Place fruit in watermelon basket and place the basket on a tray or bed of ice to serve.

I-81 nightly ramp closures have started from mile markers 143-150

The I-81 widening project from mile marker 143 in Roanoke County to mile marker 150 in Botetourt County is now underway with survey and preparation work.

Shoulder strengthening work will require northbound and southbound lane closures during nighttime hours. Barrier wall installation is possible in late fall or early winter. The expected completion for this project is summer 2031.

Various closures and narrowing of ramps will be in place over the next few weeks. Drivers can use alternate exits at 150 during any of the ramp closures or use exit 146 for access to Route 11 to return to the area at exit 150.

Message boards will alert drivers of the closures; they should watch for any changes or updates as these closures



FILE GRAPHIC

are weather dependent.

- On Sunday, June 28, from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning, the off-ramp of I-81 northbound at exit 150B was narrowed.

- Thursday, July 2, the on-ramp of exit 150A onto southbound I-81 will be closed from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following morning.

- Monday, July 6, from 11 p.m. until 6 a.m., the on-ramp at exit 150B onto I-81 southbound will be narrowed.

- Tuesday, July 7, and Wednesday, July 8, from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m., the off-ramp from I-81 southbound at exit 150A will be closed.

- In addition, from

Monday, July 13, through Tuesday, July 21, the southbound I-81 150B ramp may be closed or narrowed from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Southbound traffic on I-81 is shifted to the right shoulder from exit 150 in Botetourt County to exit 146 in Roanoke County.

Periodic right and left lane and shoulder closures will be in place during nighttime hours of 9 p.m. to 6 a.m., on northbound and southbound I-81.

Ramps on I-81, northbound and southbound, may be narrowed at exits 150, 146, and 143.

Drivers will see barrier

See VDOT, page 7

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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46								47		48	
49				50	51			52		53	54
	56					57		58			59
				60			61				
					62						
										63	

CLUES ACROSS

1. __ chat
5. Statue near the Pyramids
11. A process to change the look
14. Herb
15. Think about excessively
18. Bass vocal part
19. Supreme Allied Cmdr. of NATO
21. A major division of geological time
23. New Zealand parrot
24. Cognitive contents
28. Lump of yarn
29. Atomic #109
30. Let go of
32. Indian title of respect
33. Whereabouts

CLUES DOWN

1. Corporate executive
2. A plant used for flavoring food
3. Opinion or belief
4. Sheep in their second year
5. Intensities of sound
6. Indicates support for
7. Expression of laughter
8. OJ trial judge
9. Pointed ends of pens
10. True bugs genus
12. Lawyers argue theirs
13. Body parts
16. Closes tightly
17. World Heritage site in Nigeria
20. Islamic calendar month
22. Commercial
25. ÕWestworldÕ actor
Harris
26. They __

CLUES DOWN

27. Religious guilds
29. Woman (French)
31. Parts per billion (abbr.)
34. Brew
36. Spiritual leader
37. Indigo bush
38. Burn with a hot liquid
40. Older citizen
43. Scad fish genus
45. Morning
48. Line passing through the center (abbr.)
50. Double S-shaped curve
51. Small, thin person
53. Older
54. Mars crater
55. Humanities
57. Word element meaning ear
58. To the __ degree
59. Residue
61. It cools your home

SALEM RIDGEYAKS VS DELMARVA SHOREBIRDS

JULY 17th 6:35 PM
Faith and Family Night
JULY 18th 6:35 PM
Lilo and Stitch Night
JULY 19th 4:05 PM
Bark in the Park

VS AUGUSTA GREENJACKETS

JULY 21st 6:35 PM Two for 1 Tuesday
JULY 22nd 6:35 PM

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News Messenger

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Yard Sale

Legals - City of Salem

Legals - Montgomery County

Legals - Montgomery County

Legals - Montgomery County

Legals - Montgomery County

STATEWIDE ADS

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9 am to 4 pm
2200 Irish Circle Salem
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furniture, Christmas
decorations, appliances,
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Legals - Botetourt County

NOTICE
To improve emergency 911 communications, Botetourt County plans to collocate antennae onto a rooftop at 20 E Back St, Fincastle, VA. Terranext seeks comments from all interested persons on any potential significant impacts on the quality of the human environment pursuant to 47 C.F.R Section 1.1307, including impacts to historic or cultural resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Comments regarding potential effects to historic properties should be submitted in writing, including the property's address, to Terranext, 1106 Mill Hill Road, Richmond Hill, GA 31324, or via email to jgrover@terranext.net

Legals - City of Salem

Notice is hereby given
to all interested persons that the City of Salem Planning Commission, at its regular meeting on July 15, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 North 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 approval of the following requests relative to the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA:

1. Consider the request of Community Church Inc, property owner and Cornerstone Classical Academy, lessee, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow for an Educational Facility, Primary/Secondary, on the property located at 1923 East Main Street (Tax Map #78-1-14).
2. Consider the request of Robertson Family Revocable Trust, property owner and Amer Alsayadi, lessee, for the issuance of a Special Exception Permit to allow a retail sales, smoke shop, on the property located at 501 West 4th Street (Tax Map #143-3-14).
3. Consider the request of The Preston Place Preservation Foundation Inc., property owner, for a Special Exception Permit to allow an assembly hall, nonresidential uses in an accessory structure, and nonresidential uses out of doors, and a Use Not Provided for Permit for outdoor gatherings of less than 500 people on the property located at 1936 West Main Street (Tax Map #138-2-7).

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

Order of Publication
Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316;-317,20-104
Case No.CL26-1177
VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF ROANOKE, VIRGINIA, Complainant, v.
RUBY C. BONHAM, *et al*, Respondents.
The object of this suit is to: enforce the lien for taxes assessed by the County of Roanoke, Virginia against certain real property designated as Tax Map Parcel No.064.01-

03-17.00-0000.
An affidavit having been made and filed that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain the location of Ruby C. Bonham and that there are or may be persons with an interest in the subject property, including heirs, devisees, and successors in title of Ruby C. Bonham, who may be deceased, whose names and addresses are unknown, it is hereby ORDERED that each of the parties appear on or before the August 14, 2026, and do whatever is necessary to protect their interests in said land. It is further ORDERED, pursuant to Va. Code Ann.§8.01-321, that this order of Publication be published once a week for FOUR successive weeks in the *Salem Times Register*, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Roanoke, and that a copy be posted at the front door of the Courthouse in County of Roanoke, Virginia. Entered this 18th day of June, 2026.

Honorable James R. Swanson, Judge
I ask for this:
Amy H. Geddes, Esquire
VSB#38650
OPN Law
3140 Chaparral Drive, Suite 200-C
Roanoke Virginia 24018
Phone: (540)725-8181
Fax: (540)772-0126
Email:
ageddes@opnlaw.com
Counsel for Complainant

Order of Publication
Commonwealth of Virginia VA Code§§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316;-317,20-104
Case No.CL26-1091
VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF ROANOKE COUNTY OF ROANOKE, VIRGINIA, Complainant, vs.
CHARLIE L. PHELPS, a/k/a CHARLES L. PHELPS, *et al*
Respondents.
TO; THE RESPONDENTS; The object of this suit is to: enforce the lien for taxes assessed by the County of Roanoke, Virginia against certain real property designated as Tax Map Parcel No. 087.11-03-25.00-0000.
An affidavit having been made and filed that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain the location of Charlie L. Phelps, a/k/a Charles L. Phelps and that there are or may be persons with an interest in the subject property, including heirs, devisees, and successors in title of Charlie L. Phelps, a/k/a Charles L. Phelps, who may be deceased, whose names and addresses are unknown, it is hereby ORDERED that each of the parties appear on or before the August 1, 2026, and do whatever is necessary to protect their interests in said land. IT is further ORDERED, pursuant to Va. Code Ann.§8.01-321, that this Order of Publication be published once a week for four successive weeks in the *Salem Times Register*, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Roanoke, and that a copy be posted at the front door of the Courthouse in county of Roanoke, Virginia. Entered this 9th day of June, 2026.

Honorable James R. Swanson, Judge

I ask for this:
Amy H. Geddes, Esquire
(VSB #38650)
OPN Law
3140 Chaparral Drive, Suite 200-C
Roanoke Va 24018
Phone: (540)725-8181
Fax: (540) 772-0126
E-mail:
ageddes@opnlaw.com
Counsel for Complainant

Legals - Montgomery County

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
The Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, July 14, 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:
A street vacation request by GAD Management Inc. for the vacation of the existing temporary cul-de-sac located on the east side of the property located at 425 Industrial Drive NE. The

adjoining property is identified as Tax Parcel 500-(A)-5H (Parcel ID 032660). The temporary cul-de-sac is shown on a plat recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Montgomery County, Virginia, as Instrument No. 2005008100. Information on the preceding ordinance, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073-3029 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the Planning Department by phone at (540) 382-6120 ext. 1902 or by email at planning@christiansburg.org with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations. Written comments may be sent to the preceding address; please allow adequate mailing time.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 3426 MOUNT ZION ROAD, BLACKSBURG, VA 24060.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated March 11, 2005, in the original principal amount of \$177,800.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No.2005002842. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for the City of Radford, 619 Second St., W., Radford, VA, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on September 3, 2026, at 12:45 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: BEGINNING AT A POINT, A ROD SET ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MT. ZION ROAD (VA. RTE. 655), CORNER TO PROPERTY OF RALPH L. AND THERESA P. RUPERT; THENCE LEAVING MT. ZION ROAD AND WITH THE RUPERT LINE, N. 00° 24' 13" E. 284.49 FEET TO A POINT, AN EXISTING ROD FOUND AND CORNER TO THE PROPERTY OF GLEN E. AND DENISE G. PRICE; THENCE LEAVING RUPERT AND WITH THE PRICE LINE, S. 88° 21' 17" E. 76.84 FEET TO A ROD FOUND AT AN ANGLE POINT; THENCE CONTINUING WITH PRICE, S. 01° 31' 00" E. 191.00 FEET TO A ROD SET AT AN ANGLE POINT; THENCE STILL CONTINUING WITH PRICE, S. 64° 26' 19" E. 33.48 FEET TO A POINT, A ROD SETCORNER TO THE PROPERTY OF ROY B. MILLER, JR. AND DONNA C. MILLER; THENCE LEAVING PRICE AND WITH THE MILLER LINE, S. 15° 23' 00" W. 108.00 FEET TO A POINT, AROD SET ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MT. ZION ROAD (VA. RTE. 655); THENCE LEAVING MILLER AND WITH MT. ZION ROAD, N. 72° 15' 48" W. 79.15 FEET TO A ROD FOUND ON SAME; THENCE CONTINUING WITH SAID ROAD, N. 72° 45' 29" W. 10.50 FEETTO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND BEING ALL OF THAT PROPERTY NOW OR FORMERLY BELONGING TO JAMES PATRICK ELLIOTT, AS MORE PARTICULARLY SHOWN ON A PLATOF SURVEY AND BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT DATED FEBRUARY 23, 2005, PREPARED BY JOHN R. CHRISTMAN, LAND SURVEYOR, A COPY OF WHICH IS RECORDED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY,VIRGINIA, IN PLAT BOOK PAGE 25, PAGE 81. 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 Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.alldridgepите.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.alldridgepите.com. VA-353027-3.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,
By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia that the Board of Supervisors hereby schedules a public hearing for Monday, July 13, 2026 at 7:15 pm or as soon thereafter, at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to receive citizen comments on the Board of Supervisors intent to adopt a resolution amending the FY 2026-2027 Budget by more than one percent of the total expenditures shown in the currently adopted budget by adding carryover funding appropriated in FY 26 for county ARPA funds, donations and grant funds, encumbrances, earmarked and one-time county projects, county capital funds balances and encumbrances that were not completed at year end, and school capital balances and encumbrances, not to exceed \$79 million. BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Angela M. Hill
County Administrator

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, July 20, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Conditional Use Permit request by Jeffrey T. and Jamie M. Zoellner, Applicants, and Ray D. Cragett Trust, c/o Anna C. Rogers, Trustee, Property Owner, to allow a Planned Housing Development consisting of one Two-Family Dwelling in the General Business (B-3) zoning district on property located at 185 New Street NW, identified as Tax Parcel 526 - ((A)) - 238; (Parcel ID 004144), and consisting of approximately of 0.465 acres. The property is designated as Business/Commercial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

B. Conditional Use Permit request by Samuel Bishop, Property Owner and Applicant, to allow residential use in the General Business (B-3) zoning district on property located at 465 Stuart Street NE, identified as Tax Parcel 527-(3))-50A and 527-(3))-49B; (Parcel ID 001756 and 001755), and consisting of approximately 0.18 acres. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use

Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Town Hall will be open and available to receive public comments in-person at the time of this Public Hearing. A copy of the application, 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.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 4366 BRADSHAW RD, ELLISTON, VA 24087.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated May 19, 2016, in the original principal amount of \$127,645.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No. 160003643. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for the City of Radford, 619 Second St., W., Radford, VA, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on July 30, 2026, at 11:30 AM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: PARCEL 1: A PARCEL OF LAND CONTAINING 1.063 ACRES AS SHOWN ON A PLAT ENTITLED "PLAT FOR DAVID E. VANDER VLIET OF AN UN-NUMBERED 1.063 AC. LOT NEAR ROUTE 622 MT. TABOR MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA" PREPARED BY NEAL H. WIRT, L. S., DATED 5 NOVEMBER 1992, DESIGNED AS PLAT NO. 92-688, WHICH PLAT IS OF RECORD IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA, IN DEED BOOK 766, PAGE 561. PARCEL 2: A PARCEL OF LAND CONTAINING 5.153 ACRES AS SHOWN ON A PLATENTITLED, "SURVEY FOR DAVID E. & ALTHEA L. VAN DER VLIET OF A 5.153 ACRE PARCEL SITUATE IN. THE MT. TABOR MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA", PREPARED BY JACK G. BESS, C.L.S., DATED JULY 24, 1995, DESIGNATED AS N.B. W-9 0-95648, A COPY OF WHICH PLAT IS RECORDED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF MONATGOMERY, VIRGINIA, IN DEED BOOK 886, PAGE 759. 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 Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.alldridgepите.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The

sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.alldridgepите.com. VA-372257-1.

STATEWIDE ADS

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New laws take effect in Virginia this month

More than 1,000 new laws approved during the Virginia General Assembly's latest session took effect July 1.

Among legislation introduced by State Sen. David Suetterlein are:

- **E x p a n d i n g workplace learning opportunities:** Allows students age 16 and older to participate in apprenticeships and other work-based learning programs related to culinary arts and information technology.
- **Career and technical education licensure:** Requires the Board of Education to issue renewable three-year licenses to qualified individuals teaching career and technical

education courses in Virginia public high schools.

- **School calendar flexibility:** Allows all local school boards to begin the school year as early as Aug. 17 while maintaining existing exemptions.
- **P a r e n t notification for course selection:** Requires middle and high schools to notify parents by email or text at least 30 days before course enrollment deadlines and explain how to request schedule changes.
- **Electricity supplier choice:** Expands options for certain large electricity purchasers.

Other new laws taking effect include:

- A statewide expansion of the Styrofoam food container ban, requiring all remaining food vendors to stop using foam takeout containers.
- A minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour by Jan. 1, 2028, through incremental increases.
- A law requiring employers to include salary ranges in job postings and prohibiting them from asking applicants about salary history.
- A requirement that landlords accept checks for rent payments and limits on excessive processing fees.
- New restrictions on kratom, including

raising the minimum purchase age to 21, requiring ingredient labeling and secure behind-the-counter storage.

- A law keeping the identities of Virginia Lottery winners confidential unless winners consent to disclosure.
- A new 10% tax on paid fantasy sports contests.
- **E x p a n s i o n** of automated traffic enforcement cameras to certain high-risk speed corridors, highway work zones and school crossing zones.
- Authorization for localities to use bus-mounted cameras to issue parking citations for vehicles blocking bus stops or transit lanes.
- A prohibition on the commercial sale of consumers' precise geolocation data by digital networks and data brokers.
- The Clean Slate Law, providing for automatic sealing of certain misdemeanor convictions, marijuana possession offenses and traffic infractions.
- Limits on how often public utilities may increase monthly payments for

customers enrolled in budget billing plans, along with a 60-day advance written notice requirement.

Several education-related laws also took effect. Standards of Learning tests now use a 100-point scoring system, count for 10% of a student's final grade and must be administered during the final two weeks of the school year.

Adult adoptees may now request access to their original birth certificates, while birth parents may submit contact preference forms that accompany those records.

Additional legislation addresses data centers by requiring disclosure of projected water usage and mandating noise assessments and comprehensive site reviews before approval.

Several measures involving firearms and immigration were also approved. These include restrictions on firearm purchases by adults under age 21, a ban on privately made unserialized "ghost guns" beginning July 1, 2027, and changes limiting certain forms of cooperation between state and local law

enforcement agencies and federal immigration enforcement in civil immigration matters.

The General Assembly also approved legislation guaranteeing access to contraception, increasing the waiting period before landlords may initiate eviction proceedings for unpaid rent from five days to 14 days, establishing age 11 as the minimum age for juvenile delinquency proceedings, and requiring the Virginia Employment Commission to begin implementing a paid family and medical leave program beginning in 2028, funded through employer and employee payroll taxes.

Legislation banning the sale and transfer of many semiautomatic firearms classified by the state as assault firearms, along with certain ammunition magazines, has also been approved but is currently being challenged in court.

For a complete list of legislation passed during this year's General Assembly session, visit the Virginia Legislative Information System at <https://lis.virginia.gov/>.

~ Vinton Messenger staff report

VDOT

from page 4

walls in place throughout the project.

Shoulder closures will be in place with additional barrier walls to be installed next year.

Drivers should adhere to posted 60 mph speed limits in the work zone and allow space when following a vehicle. Speed reminders are posted for drivers.

While pink detour signs are in place on I-81 and routes around the project such as Route 11 and Plantation Road, these do not designate a permanent or scheduled detour. The signed detour route is suitable for all traffic during incidents including tractor-trailers and other large vehicles. These signs are used for traffic incident detours only.

The purpose of this project is to increase capacity and improve safety on I-81 between exits 143 and 150. These improvements are intended to reduce crashes, lessen delays and enhance crash response times and include:

- Adding one additional lane within the existing median in each direction of I-81.
- Replacing the pairs of bridges over Route 1836 (Belle Haven Road), over Route 648 (Reservoir Road), over Tinker Creek and Norfolk Southern Railway, and over Route 220/Route 220 Alternate.
- Improving the vertical clearance beneath the bridge on Route 115 (Plantation Road) which may require a detour during construction.
- Realigning the ramp from northbound Route 220 (Roanoke Road) onto southbound I-81 at exit 150.
- Realigning the southbound I-81

off ramp at Exit 150 to connect with Route 220 at a new signal at Tinker Mountain Road.

- Removing the ramp from southbound I-81 onto southbound Route 220 at exit 150 and rerouting southbound I-81 traffic to use realigned ramp at Tinker Mountain Road.
- Constructing approximately 8,553 feet of sound barrier along the northbound lanes.
- Eliminating existing concrete pavement between exit 146 and exit 150.
- Adding interchange lighting at exits 143, 146 and 150.
- Extending acceleration and deceleration lanes, where needed.
- Installing concrete barrier walls in narrow median sections.

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.

As part of the widening project, two ramps at exit 150 will be realigned and one will be removed. The southbound off ramp will be realigned to connect with Route 220 at a new signal at Tinker Mountain Road.

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

~Submitted by VDOT and Roanoke County

Greenway

from page 1

Valley Council provided supplies for the two events— vests, grabbers, gloves, and trash bags.

Mason said that all went well. The original plan was to pick up litter on the greenways, but the young men finished

more quickly than anticipated and added the Multigenerational Park to their list for Tuesday.

“Thank you so much for all of your help in making this go smoothly and helping these students find an opportunity to give

back to their community!” Mason said to McCarty and Vinton Director of Planning and Zoning Anita McMillan.

~Submitted by Anita McMillan and Ryan Mason

Pete

from page 1



Jimmy Biddle and Pete the Cat tour Paris in a VW bus.

PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

for the production.

The musical was created with 4- to 10-year-olds in mind, based on the “Pete the Cat” books. Artist James Dean is the original creator and illustrator of “Pete the Cat,” based on his own cat, Pete. The little blue cat first appeared as a character in Dean’s artwork around 1999 and has been a permanent fixture ever since.

The book was self-published in 2008 and sold 7,000 copies in 10 months before it was picked up by HarperCollins, which had been alerted by a YouTube meme in which two young girls read the book. It was then distributed throughout the United States and Canada and rose to number 8 on the New York Times Best Seller list for picture books.

The book series started with four books illustrated by Dean with text by

Eric Litwin; since then, James Dean and his wife Kimberly Dean have written and illustrated a series of the books. There are now almost 100 “Pete the Cat” books for children to enjoy.

Amazon explains why Pete has become so popular, “The series features Pete, a cool and collected cat who finds himself in various situations. The books include catchy rhymes and bright illustrations, and the stories depict Pete’s positive attitude and resilience as he deals with challenges, from getting his white shoes dirty to losing buttons on his favorite shirt. These stories are known for their engaging repetition and focus on overcoming obstacles with a positive mindset.”

The MMT shows were free to the community.

Pulpit

from page 2

The world does not need more comfortable Christians. It needs courageous ones— men and women willing to live distinctly, love sacrificially, and speak truth graciously. The Kingdom of God advances through relationships, conversations, service, and sacrifice. Those opportunities rarely happen inside a sanctuary. They happen

in neighborhoods, offices, schools, and homes. Attendance remains important because we need encouragement and accountability. But if the Church never leaves the building, it fails its mission. The Church at its best is not merely seated— it is sent. And when it goes in obedience, the Kingdom grows far beyond the walls that once contained it.

Renovations

from page 1



Exterior view of 7 Walnut Avenue with its large parking area

PHOTO BY DEBBIE ADAMS

from its current location at River Park Shopping Center once renovations are complete.

Shannon McCulloch of Defy Gravity said, “Dale Wilkinson has been amazing to work with, leading me to such a cool area of Vinton. The downtown area has so much to offer and the walking distance to restaurants and more will be so amazing for our athletes and families.

Can't wait to be part of their upcoming growth to the area!”

Renovations to the huge space Defy Gravity will occupy have included raising the ceiling height. A grand staircase will be added, leading to a glass-paneled area for parent viewing above the exhibition area.

~Vinton Messenger staff report

Chewning

from page 1

she has guided this organization through seasons of growth, transition, and change through every chapter.

“Her leadership has remained constant, her perspective valuable, and her commitment unwavering. Perhaps more importantly, Bootie has been a friend. She has encouraged generations of volunteers, directors, and title holders, always leading with kindness, integrity, and a servant’s heart. Her faithfulness to this organization is truly unparalleled, and the impact of her service can be seen in the lives she has touched and the legacy she’s helped preserve.

“We are especially

grateful to her daughter, Angie, whose own commitment to serving our community as executive director of the Vinton Chamber of Commerce, reflects the same spirit of leadership and service that Bootie has modeled throughout her life. Angie, thank you for bringing your mother here today and allowing us the opportunity to celebrate someone who has given so much to all of us.

“Bootie, words cannot fully express our gratitude. Thank you for your decades of leadership, friendship, your wisdom, your unwavering belief in the Miss Virginia Organization. Your

legacy will continue to inspire us for generations to come. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in recognizing our dear friend and one of the true pillars of Miss Virginia Organization, Bootie Chewning.”

Thank you from the bottom of my heart to everyone who made this possible for Mom.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS												
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SPORTS

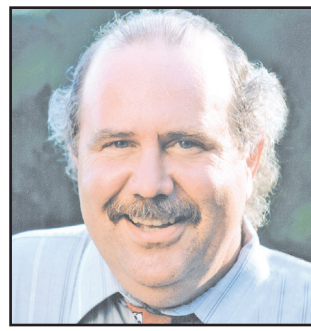
Send story ideas & announcements to bhoffman@ourvalley.org, or PO Box 1125, Salem, Va, 24153 • ourvalley.org



Football Camp

The Vinton Booster Club held a free football camp for kids last week at the RCCC fields. Above, William Byrd High School coach Brad Lutz instructs some future Terriers. Below right, middle school coach Cody Underwood (standing with cap) and son Peyton demonstrate the proper way to tackle. The camp was capped at 50 players with the kids rotating to five stations focusing on specific football skills.

PHOTOS BY SUZANNE WITCHER



Brian Hoffman

FEVER PITCH

Have you caught “World Cup Fever?” Are you watching “futball” games day and night, rooting for Ghana to pull out a draw with England? Are you avoiding housework so you can see Messi?

I’m somewhat interested in it. I don’t watch every game, but I’ll switch to our local Fox Channel after Jeopardy and flip back and forth between the soccer and baseball games. Last Tuesday I had a round robin with baseball and soccer between picks of the NBA draft. And, I’ll always tune in when the United States or Scotland is playing.

A couple observations. I’m astounded at how good these players are. Most of the soccer I watch is high school or Roanoke College, and I’m amazed when a Blacksburg player puts a free kick in the top corner for a goal, wrapping it around a wall of players lined up with their hands over their privates.

In my many years of covering high school soccer I’ve run into all kinds of styles and coaches. Former William Byrd School coach Jeff Highfill would get his players in tip top shape to outrun the other team. He’d find a player who could throw the ball in really far, then put some football players in front of the cage to outmuscle foes and score goals. The “pure” coaches hated this style but most of the time Highfill’s teams won the game. In fact, the “pitch” at the stadium is now named in his honor.

When I write about high school soccer I always try to throw in some “futball” terms. A scoreless game will be “nil-nil” and I always use “pitch” for the playing surface, much like I’d use “gridiron” for American football. A team won’t score a goal to “tie the game,” but to “level the score.”

Getting back to the World Cup, its incredible how

much better these players are than the ones I watch in the ODAC games. It shouldn’t really surprise me, because the Kansas City Chiefs are much better than the Randolph-Macon football team, but none the less I’m fascinated how they control the ball, pass with precision and run up and down the field just as fast with the ball as without.

There aren’t a lot of scores, it seems like four goals in a World Cup game is like 40 in pro football. And while the scores are few and far between, when someone does score they celebrate like the folks on the street in France at the end of World War II. I’m sure if women and babies were allowed on the pitch there would be lots of kissing and crying. In fact, I think there is some crying already.

Also, if you think the players in the NBA are floppers you haven’t seen flopping until you watch a World Cup game. Obviously there are some collisions, and the players wear minimal equipment for protection, but many times a small bump will result in the offended player hitting the turf like they’ve been shot. Think of an old black and white cowboy movie where the guy on the roof is shot and falls to the awning below.

So far, as I write this column, the host United States has done well in making the round of 32. They opened with a 2-0 win over Paraguay that had everyone talking about how good our team is. My question is, aren’t we supposed to beat Paraguay? They’re a country with a land size smaller than California and a population of 7.1 million people. Virginia alone has 8.8 million people.

I guess we’re just not a “futball country” just yet. It seems to be the most popular sport in the world but probably doesn’t rank in the top five in the USA. If I had to list them in order I’d put our football first, baseball second, then basketball, ice hockey and probably even auto racing ahead of soccer. That’s hard to say because a lot of little kids play soccer in this country and very few compete in auto racing.

It’s funny that my wife has become a big fan of these World Cup games, as she hasn’t watched soccer since our grandchildren played in the eight and 10 year old recreation leagues. She became especially enamored with the Scotland team and their fans. They’re a heavy drinking, heavy partying bunch that has been featured on the national news wearing traffic cones on their heads and parading through the streets on 100 degree days to the sound of bagpipes. Personally, I like the Norwegian fans who “row” up

the escalators.

And here’s something I question. The opening round features 12 groups of four countries with each group playing a round-robin schedule to determine who advances to the “knock-out” round. You’d think each of the 12 would play their games at the same site to save on travel expenses, both for the teams and their fans. However, Scotland opened with games in New England, then traveled all the way to Miami to play Brazil. So, the Scots had to travel pretty much the length of the East Coast from one game to the next when it would have been simple to play all the “Group C” games in New England. I’m sure there’s a reason for that but it doesn’t make a lot of sense to me. Maybe they expected gas prices to be back under three dollars a gallon by now.

The good thing is, the Miami folks got to party with the Scots, and you know Miami is a party place. In fact, all the foreigners seem to be enjoying their time in the United States. I was watching a show the other day where the visitors were overwhelmed by the size of the portions at our restaurants, the great “ranch dressing” we have and one guy was even excited that a mint was included in his order at Sonic.

And then you have the soccer fans who visited Buc-ee’s. If you’ve ever been to a Buc-ee’s you can understand how that would make an impact. The first Buc-ee’s in Virginia opened one year ago this week, on June 30, 2025 in Rockingham County. My wife and I were driving up 81 a week or so after the opening and saw the big beaver blow-up alongside the interstate. We decided to stop in on the way back, when time wouldn’t be a factor, to see what all the fuss was about.

Well, I can honestly say I’d never seen anything like it. First of all, before you went inside you’ll notice around 100 gas pumps as you drive around the immense parking lot. Once you go in you can find about anything you want, and the food is absolutely delicious. The best barbeque sandwich I’ve ever had, and that’s saying something. To call Bucc-ees’ a convenience store is like calling Disney World an amusement park. I assume there are no Buc-ee’s in Bosnia, so you can imagine how those folks felt.

It’s so fun to see our soccer visitors’ faces light up as they experience life in the USA. We get a bad rep sometimes due to world news coverage, and it’s nice to see folks from another country see that the people here are, for the most part, nice.