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Thursday, October 15, 2026 • Dogwood Capital of Virginia • Covering Vinton, Bonsack, and East Roanoke Co. (USPS-660-020) OurValley.org • \$1.50



Doggie Costume Contest winners at Vinton Fall Festival were (from left) Yuki, second place; Snoop Dog and Martha Stewart, first; and Hank and Cooper, third.

Vinton Chamber of Commerce hosts annual Fall Festival

The streets of downtown Vinton were blocked off on October 10 for Vinton’s annual Fall Festival, which turned out to be as spectacular as usual— despite the threat of rain.

Nearly 200 vendors (food, retail, and organizations) lined Pollard, Maple, Poplar, Jackson, Lee, and Cleveland.

There were street performers, on-stage entertainment at the Farmers’ Market and Municipal Building, horseback riding with Little Creek Equine, the Little Critters Petting Zoo, a Kids Zone sponsored by the Vinton Moose Lodge, face painting, DJ Tyrone from Flex LLC, and a pet adopt-a-thon.

There was a “Holidays and Collectibles Benefit Porch Sale” (due to the early morning rain) at the Vinton History Museum.

Lots of honey, lots of hot dogs, apple butter, crafts, Cheveyo Leather Works, holiday décor, Native American style flutes, jewelry, stuffed animals, you name

it, were available at the festival.

The Vinton Breakfast Lions Club held their annual all-you-can-eat at Vinton Baptist Church, assisted by the William Byrd High School Leo Club. World renowned pancake-flipper Sam Cundiff was on the job once again.

Performers at the Vinton Farmers’ Market included the Fame All-Stars and the Floyd Ward School of Dance, followed by the annual Doggie Costume Contest.

Snoop Dog and Martha Stewart won first place in the contest sponsored by Pawsh Salon for Dogs in Vinton; Yuki, the Dragon Dog, took second place, with Hank and Cooper coming in third.

The first Vinton Fall Festival was held over 20 years ago to celebrate the completion of improvements to the downtown area and has grown exponentially since then.

- Vinton Messenger Staff Report



Famous flapjack-flipper Sam Cundiff with Tammy Newcomb at the Vinton Breakfast Lions Pancake Breakfast



Girl meets Little Creek Equine at Vinton Fall Festival



PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS
That’s Grayson Arthur behind the face paint.

Rosborough and Harper crowned Homecoming Queen and King



Jamya Rosborough and Jeremiah Harper were crowned Homecoming Queen and King for 2026 at William Byrd. Pictured left to right are last year’s King Dawson Young, Jeanie Harper, Senior Homecoming Court member Austin Kroner, King Jeremiah Harper, Principal Evan Noell, Queen Jamya Rosborough, the WBHS Mascot, Jemal Rosborough, and last year’s Queen Addison Clark.

Debbie Adams
dadams@ourvalley.org

Jamya Rosborough and Jeremiah Harper were crowned Homecoming Queen and King for 2026 during halftime at the William Byrd football game on October 9. They were chosen by their classmates to represent the pride, tradition, and spirit of WBHS.

Jamya Rosborough is the daughter of Sintoria David and Jemal Rosborough. She is a member of the competition and sideline cheer teams, Beta Club, SCA, and Leo Club.

Jeremiah Harper is the grandson of Jeanie Harper. He is a member of the varsity basketball team and Beta



Homecoming Court senior Elena Mullen



The Marching Terriers in the Homecoming Parade



8
 33463 100110
 5



The first signs of activity at the Vinton WaWa in June



Demolition was begun and completed within about a week at the former Rite Aid location on Hardy Road.

PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

Wawa development gets underway in Vinton

Back in June crews were first noticed at the former Rite Aid Pharmacy at the intersection of Hardy Road and Clearview Drive in Vinton going about the business of disconnecting utility services. Weeks went by with no visible movement at the site until last week, when demolition of the former pharmacy was begun October 5. Working at a fast pace, even the rock and brick had already been hauled away by October 13. Now that the Rite Aid building has come down, a new Wawa will be built. Wawa is a convenience store chain which had its beginnings in Pennsylvania, near the town of Wawa. That word comes from an Ojibwe word which means snow goose. There's a goose on the Wawa logo, albeit a Canada goose, not a snow goose. The chain is famous for hoagie sandwiches, coffee, seasonal favorites, and specialty drinks. Strangely enough, the Wawa business began as an iron foundry then moved on to dairy farming and then food markets. The chain extends along the East Coast currently, with over 700 locations.

- Vinton Messenger staff report

Community meeting scheduled to gain public input on McGimsey property development

The public is invited to help imagine the future of the area adjacent to River Park Shopping Center and downtown Vinton. It is one of Vinton's last remaining large tracts of land available for development. The developer has agreed to gather input from the community before finalizing plans. The town's consulting team will lead a collaborative design session (a charrette) to explore the site's opportunities and challenges, in order to develop initial concepts. A second meeting, most likely in November, will present the emerging development concepts based on that input. Residents are invited to attend and share their ideas and help develop Vinton's future.

-Submitted by Town of Vinton



GRAPHIC COURTESY TOWN OF VINTON

Donation & Resource Fair builds community connections

The September 25 Donation & Resource Fair at Charles R. Hill Community Center in Vinton brought community members and local organizations together to explore resources for donating, recycling and finding new uses for belongings. Even with some cancellations, plenty of organizations were represented. Visitors connected with local resources, and participating organizations said they connected with each other and learned how they could help one another. Those unexpected connections were one of the most rewarding outcomes of the day. The book drive collected eight boxes of books for TAP. Donors also contributed multiple bags and cans of cat food, which were taken directly to Saleeba's after the event. Susan F. won the cat-food donation drawing and received a gift certificate donated by Vinton Cafe Kitchen and Bakery. Urban Reblokd Inc. provided electronics recycling collection. Participating organizations included The Agape Center Vinton-Roanoke, St. Joseph's Furniture Closet, Angels of Assisi, Rescue Mission of Roanoke, Peace by Piece, Scrap Collective, The Lampstand, Sweet Union Baptist Church, Salvation Army and the Vinton Museum. A special thank you goes to Charles R. Hill Community Center for continuing



PHOTO COURTESY OF MPLC

Lions Anne Ferguson (left) and Nicola Cranmer perform a typical SPOT machine eye screening.

Mount Pleasant Lions complete sight screenings

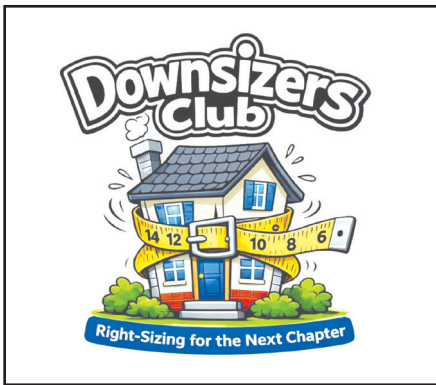
This past week the Mount Pleasant Lions completed their elementary schools eye screenings. The screenings are mandated by the State of Virginia, and the Roanoke County and City of Salem schools are handled by local Lions clubs. This year the Mount Pleasant club was assigned four county schools, Back Creek, Penn Forest, Clearbrook and Mount Pleasant. At each school the preschool, kindergarten and third grade students had their eyes screened using the SPOT machine. Mount Pleasant Lions purchased the new \$6,500 machine this past summer, replacing their 10-plus-years-old instrument. The machine can recognize five different eye abnormalities by having the student look into the camera-like device for about three seconds. The procedure is that the student sits in a chair about three feet from the machine operator, stares into the lens, which has some flashing lights and can produce bird-like sounds to hold the attention of the participant. If an anomaly is "spotted" in either eye, a paper printout is made and given to the school nurse for review. Should the concern be deemed sufficient, the nurse can pass the printout to a parent for further exam by an eye professional. There were 78 students screened at Back Creek, 152 at Clearbrook, 125 at Penn Forest and 80 at Mount Pleasant. The printouts averaged a little more than 10 percent at each school. A child having an eye problem may not be aware of it, as what he or she is seeing seems normal to them. This service is a result of the challenge by Helen Keller for all Lions to be Knights for the Blind and pursues the main cause that Lions Clubs International champions— sight preservation and blindness prevention.

-Submitted by Mount Pleasant Lions Club

to welcome community events and being willing to try new ideas. Thank you to everyone who attended, donated and shared resources. The conversations and connections were a valuable part of what we accomplished together.

For information about upcoming Home with Heart events and Downsizers Club, contact Beth Powell at 540-209-1255 or beth@homewithheartva.com.

- By Beth Powell, Home with Heart



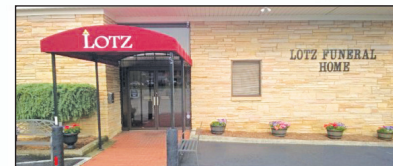
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BEAP Grant applications now being accepted

Applications are now open for the Roanoke County Economic Development Authority's Business Equipment Acquisition Program (BEAP) Grant. This reimbursement program helps eligible businesses purchase qualifying capital equipment that improves productivity, efficiency, capacity, safety, and competitiveness. Applications are due by November 15. Grant recipients will be notified in January 2027.

For-profit businesses in Roanoke County or the Town of Vinton with 2 to 49 full-time equivalent employees (30 or more hours per week) may qualify for up to \$15,000, while those with 50 or more may qualify for up to \$20,000.

Grants reimburse up to 50% of qualifying equipment costs. Eligible purchases and reimbursement requests must be made within 180 days of the award. Applicants must provide at least a dollar-for-dollar match.

Several Vinton businesses have received BEAP grants in the previous two years of the program, including Creative Occasions, Magnets USA, Pok-e-Joe's BBQ, RND Coffee, Firehouse Skate and Play, and Prestige Gymnastics Academy.

Applicants must:

- Be a for-profit business located at a permanent commercial or industrial location in Roanoke County or the Town of Vinton
- Have operated locally for at least one year
- Employ at least two full-time-equivalent employees
- Hold all required licenses and permits
- Be current on local taxes and fees and comply with applicable laws
- Not have received a BEAP award during the previous two fiscal years.

Eligible equipment must be a tangible capital acquisition used in the applicant's business operations and taxable as business personal property or machinery and tools, as applicable.

Examples include:

- Machinery and production equipment
- Business tools and equipment
- Furniture and fixtures
- Office equipment
- Computer hardware

The following are not eligible for reimbursement:

- Vehicles
- Software and subscriptions
- Leased or rented equipment
- Sales tax
- Delivery, freight and shipping charges
- Payroll and salaries
- Rent, insurance and utilities
- Real estate
- Licenses, permits and fees
- Construction, buildouts and renovations
- Signs

Department staff will evaluate eligible applications using the criteria of business need and project description, business and economic impact, and community and workforce engagement.

Call 540-772-2070 for more information or email Lindsay Webb, Assistant Director of Business Retention and Operations, at lwebb@roanokecountyva.gov.

-Submitted by Roanoke County



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ROANOKE COUNTY

OBITUARY

Simpson, Solon Francis

Solon Francis Simpson, 94, of Vinton, comfortably and peacefully passed away on the evening of September 27, 2026, at the Davis & McDaniels Veterans Care Center in Roanoke. A loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, he is survived by his son, Robert Solon Simpson, and his wife, Elizabeth A. Bowers; their children, Joshua Schulteis, and Catherine Schulteis Sauer and his son, Radi Mark Simpson, his children Tyler Solon Simpson and Morgan Wells Simpson.



He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 70 years, Claudine Pearman Simpson; his father, George Filmore Simpson; his mother, Margarite Colburn Simpson; brother Robert and sister Jane Simpson Shay. Solon was born June 8, 1932, in Abingdon, Mass., and spent his childhood growing up in East Pembroke, Mass. He graduated from East Pembroke High School in 1950 and immediately joined the US Navy. He enlisted in the Seabees and served four years constructing boiler systems at U.S. Naval bases in Vieques, Puerto Rico and Wallops Island, Va. Upon his discharge in 1954 he moved to Roanoke, where he met and married Claudine Elizabeth Pearman. The couple happily spent the rest of their lives in the Roanoke Valley. Solon was an avid and accomplished woodworker, also enjoying wildflower photography, hiking, picnics with his family along the Blue Ridge Parkway, with annual fall trips to Mabry Mill and Peaks of Otter. In his retirement he traveled to different parts of the U.S. with his wife Claudine as well as visiting his sons and their families. He was a member of Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church, volunteering for church activities and giving time to the church's sponsored Boy Scout Troop 235 and Vinton Masonic Lodge 131.

The family wishes to thank the wonderful and caring staff at the Davis & McDaniels Veterans Care Center in Roanoke. The family also wishes to thank Lynn and Katrina Milton for the love and care they showed Solon during his last years.

The immediate family asks family and friends to join them in a service at Blue Ridge Funeral Home, 5731 Airport Road, Roanoke, on October 24 at 11 a.m. The service will be immediately followed by a celebration of life where everyone is encouraged to share their remembrances and stories of Solon. He will be laid to rest beside his wife, Claudine, in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Virginia Veterans Service Foundation. Checks can be made payable to Virginia Veterans Service Foundation with "Solon Simpson-DMVCC" in the memo line and sent to 101 North 14th Street, 17th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219.

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Pastor Catina, thank you for answering God's call, for the love you pour into our congregation, and for being such a beautiful example of faith in action. We are truly blessed to have you as our shepherd! We love and appreciate you more than words can say!

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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

CHRISTIAN (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
Belmont Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 1101 Jamison Ave SE, Roanoke, VA 24013. Growing God's Kingdom one neighbor at a time. At Belmont Christian Church, we focus on faith, family and community. We invite you to join us this Sunday and share in our worship and fellowship services, Sunday School 9:45am, Youth Sunday School 9:45am, Worship Service 11:00am. For more information visit www.belmontchristian.net or call 540-343-7502

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; cmpc2verizon.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

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!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Matthew 2.1-15	Matthew 2.16-23	Matthew 3.1-17	Matthew 4.12-25	Matthew 8.1-17	Matthew 8.18-34	Matthew 9.1-17

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society
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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

Homecoming

from page 1

Club.

The game was preceded by the annual Homecoming Parade which begins in the nearby Spring Grove subdivision and continues down Route 24 and up the hill to the high school, assisted by the Roanoke County Sheriff’s Department.

The parade includes floats from each class—freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors—and members of the Homecoming Court, riding in convertibles, waving to the crowd. Several organizations and clubs participated

in the parade, led off by the Navy National Defense Cadet Corps, the Marching Terriers Band, the Leo Club, and WBHS cheerleaders, and students from W.E. Cundiff Elementary School.

At half time, the Homecoming Court was introduced to the audience midfield, accompanied by a family member. Principal Evan Noell, flower girl Jeannie Pannell (daughter of Jay and Caitlin Pannell) and crown bearer Bear Parrish (son of Mat and Alexis Parrish), crowned the new king and queen, with

assistance from last year’s 2025 Homecoming King Dawson Young and Queen Addison Clark, along with the Terrier Mascot.

Other seniors on the Homecoming Court included:

- Heidi Dixon is the daughter of Chris and Lori Dixon. She is an officer of FCA, a member of SAC, SCA, Leo Club, Beta Club, and Young Life. She is also the 2026 Top Terrier.
- Elena Mullen is the daughter of Josh and Virginia Mullen. She is a member of the varsity soccer and basketball teams, Leo Club and Beta Club.
- Austin Kroner is the son of Mark and Anna Kroner. He is a member of the varsity football and baseball teams and the Leo Club.

- Tyler Williamson, the son of Jay Poff and Heather Williamson

Representing the Sophomore Class were:

- McKinley Edberg, the daughter of Jacob and Morgan Edberg
- Reid Divers, the son of Corey and Lindsay Divers
- Kennedi Shifflett, the daughter of Trey Shifflett and Lindsay Hastings
- Briggs Kotz, the son of Mitch and Shawna Kotz

Representing the Junior Class were:

- Jahniya Coles, the daughter of Jonathan and Hollie Coles
- Logan Blevins, the son of Eric and Sarah Blevins
- Emma Thierry, the daughter of Paul Thierry and Mariel Fuhrman, and the stepdaughter of Amanda Thierry

- Stephen Byars, the son of Adam and Sarah Byars
- Haleigh White, the daughter of Jesse White and Kendra Sotherdon
- Milton Clark, the son of Milton and Cheryl Clark

Flowers were provided for the ceremony by Mark Frye of Creative Occasions in Vinton.

The William Byrd Marching Terriers performed their show “The Power of One” prior to the game. The William Byrd Chorus, led by Choir Director Matt Bartley, sang the national anthem as cadets from the Navy National Defense Cadet Corps raised the flag over the scoreboard.

The Terriers football team topped off a great Homecoming night by continuing their 6-0 winning streak, defeating the Northside Vikings, 21-7.

The Vinton
Messenger

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Droop

4. Rested in a chair

7. Thai (var.)

10. Draw out wool

12. Coatis genus

14. Taxis

15. Beige

16. Supplementing with difficulty

17. Capital of Norway

18. A personal written history

21. Cologne

22. Australian flightless bird

23. Lowest freeman; early Eng.

25. 18th C. mathematician Leonhard

28. Cabinet Dept. for homes

29. Languages of Sulu islands

33. More scarce

35. Before

36. Swiss river

37. Actress & director Lupino

CLUES DOWN

38. Edges

41. Thousand Leaves prefecture

44. Soldier hero of Spain

45. Gains through work

47. To the front

49. I (German)

50. Price label

51. Barack's 1st lady

58. Drench with liquid

59. Child (scot.)

60. "Aba ____ Honeymoon"

62. Disappearing shade trees

63. Cricket frog genus

64. Union busting worker

65. A priest's liturgical vestment

66. Previously The Common Market

67. Upper left keyboard key in tissues

CLUES DOWN

1. Point midway between S and SE

2. Genus of birds

3. Personal spiritual leader

4. Japanese rice beverage

5. Eared owl genus

6. Wood oil finish

7. Hyphen

8. Competently

9. Equal, prefix

11. Broad-winged soaring hawks

12. A collection of star systems

13. Be in accord

14. Links subject & predicate (linguistics)

19. Paddles

20. Asian river between China and Russia

23. Physicists Marie or Pierre

24. Excessive fluid accumulation

26. ____ Dunlap, pageant titleholder

27. Made again

28. Norse goddess of death

30. A waterproof raincoat

31. Express pleasure

32. ____ Lanka

34. Radioactivity unit

39. Clay blocks for building

40. Linear unit

42. Conductor tools

43. Whale ship captain

46. Queen who tested Solomon

48. Good Gosh!

51. A gangster's girlfriend

52. Unstressed-stressed

53. Draw through holes

54. Old Italian monetary units

55. Musician Clapton

56. Ceremonial staff of authority

57. Fabrics of camels or goats

58. A very large body of water

61. Basics



Homecoming organizers Marissa Kopera (left) and Carly Graybill wrapped up the parade with Principal Evan Noell (driving) and Asst. Principal Kevin Richardson.



PHOTOS BY DEBBIE ADAMS

The Navy National Defense Cadet Corps led off the Homecoming Parade.

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A full-page action photograph of a football player in a brown jersey with the number 8, running with the ball. He is wearing a brown helmet with a white face mask and a white jersey with brown sleeves. The background is a blurred football field.

"We've already started back in the weight room and will start the process of building for the 2027 season. We're excited about the future and the kids we have coming up through."

PHOTOS BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

various locations and Sandlot Super Bowl championship games in all three divisions will be at Salem Stadium on November 7.



PHOTOS BY SUZANNE WITCHER



PHOTOS BY SUZANNE WITCHER

“Additionally, this is our annual Soldier Tribute Game so our players will be playing for more than themselves”

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SPORTS

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“Comeback Kids” are atop Region 3D football rankings

Byrd rallies for Homecoming win over Northside, Military Tribute this week

It was a happy Homecoming for the William Byrd football team last Friday, but it almost wasn't. Down 7-0 to Northside after three quarters, the Byrdmen rallied for three fourth quarter scores to pull out a 21-7 win.

This was the second time in a row Byrd had to come from behind to win. In the previous game, at Radford, Byrd fell behind 21-0 before rallying for a 40-35 victory. It's something coach Brad Lutz would just as soon not make a habit, but on the other hand it might help the Terriers if they face similar circumstances down the road.

“Our team has gained a lot of confidence and experience in the last two weeks, but both of those games have proved that we need to create more opportunities earlier in the game,” said Lutz. “That will be a huge emphasis this week in practice. We want to be a complete team, and scoring and getting stops earlier in the game needs to be a priority.”

The only score of the first half was a one yard plunge by Northside quarterback Casey Hall. It was still 7-0 in favor of the Vikings after three quarters and the folks on the home side at Patterson Stadium were starting to get a little nervous. But not to worry, Gray Matthews to the rescue.

Matthews, who rushed for just 33 yards in the first half, scored three touchdowns in the fourth quarter on runs of 21, 23 and 26 yards. A poor snap on a Northside punt attempt and an interception by Byrd's Jamari Toler helped set up the scores.

“The fourth quarter proved to be the turning point again,” said Lutz. “Our defense played well for four quarters, but our offense started to take over with seven minutes left in the game. Our team takes a lot of pride in finishing games, and our team played really well collectively during the last seven minutes of the game.”

Matthews finished with 169 yards on 27 carries. He had all but five of Byrd's rushing attempts for the game.

On defense there were a host of standouts. Mason Hershel was huge with nine tackles and five sacks. Caleb Ireson had eight tackles while Thomas Purcell had seven tackles and a sack. Zach Taylor, Davion Wade and Braedyn Henritze had six tackles each. Zach also blocked a field goal attempt and Braedyn had two sacks and two tackles for losses.

With the win Byrd remained unbeaten after six games and the Terriers stand atop the rankings in Region 3D with four

continued on page 7



Above, Davion Wade (#10), Mason Hershel (#17) and Briggs Kotz tackle a Viking ballcarrier as Thomas Purcell(#44)moves in. Left, Jamari Toler returns a fourth quarter interception that helped the Terriers down Northside last Friday night.

PHOTOS BY SUZANNE WITCHER



Left, William Byrd's Elliana Ruble controls the ball as Lauren Toney(#12) looks on. Right, Caroline Johnson (#14) and Heidi Dixon(#4) go up for a block.



PHOTOS BY REGINA DEVINNEY

Byrd girls can tie for district lead with win

First place in the Blue Ridge District will be on the line tonight when the William Byrd girls host Lord Botetourt in volleyball. The visiting Cavaliers are 7-0 in district matches and Byrd is 6-1, with the only loss to LB in Daleville two weeks ago.

The Byrd girls have not lost since that defeat to Lord Botetourt on a special cancer benefit night. They've ripped off four wins in a row, going from 5-8 to over .500 at 9-8. In the past week they defeated Northside and William Fleming, both by three sets to none.

Last Thursday at Northside the Terriers won 25-12, 25-17 and 25-15. Emma Olivit had eight kills and four blocks for Byrd while Haleigh White had six kills and six aces. Heidi Dixon had seven kills, Catalina Patterson had 13 assists and Maggie Zimmerman had a dozen assists and four aces.

On Tuesday of this week Byrd was at William Fleming and the host Colonels were no match for the streaking Terriers. Byrd dominated the match by scores of 25-4, 25-5 and 25-13 as Dixon hammered down nine kills. Olivit had seven kills, Memphis Simmons had six and Zimmerman served up nine aces.

Next Tuesday the Terriers head to Franklin County and a week from tonight they'll host Staunton River.

Byrd boys take second in Metro Cross Country meet

The William Byrd cross country team had two meets last week. On Wednesday they competed in the annual Metro Cross Country meet in Blacksburg and on Saturday they were in Poplar Forest for the “Runnin’ with the Wolves” event.

There were eight teams in the Metro, held at Blacksburg High School, and the host Bruins swept both the boys and girls championships. In the boys meet Byrd took second with 60 points behind Blacksburg's 25. The Bruins had seven of the top 11 finishers, including individual champ Bebo Himes with a time of 17:40.14.

Byrd runners broke up the Bruin streak with Carston Dibenedetto finishing fourth at 18:19.25 and Colton Sotherden taking fifth at 18:23.39. Also scoring for Byrd were Max Reeves in 19th, Vincent Liu in 22nd and Grant Bartley in 25th place.

“Metro is a challenging course, and the team delivered strong performances,” said Byrd coach Kayland Bond.

There were only four full teams in the girls' race, and Byrd had three runners. Emma Thierry was 30th, Keeli Emery was 34th and Bindi Whitenack was 40th. Blacksburg had eight of the top 10, including champion Sally Prince.

On Saturday in Forest it was a bigger field with 15 teams and 113 runners in the boys' meet. Hanover High won the boys' championship with Byrd taking seventh. Dibenedetto led the Terriers with a 19th place finish, Sotherden was 24th and other scorers were Reeves in 35th place, Bartley in 49th and Jack Petersen in 65th. Camden Ward was a second and a half behind Petersen in 66th place.

In the girls' meet Hanover had eight of the first nine finishers to sweep the team title among nine full teams. Again, Byrd did not have a full team but had some outstanding runs by individuals. Jadyn St. Clair was 50th among 90 finishers, Thierry was 52nd and Whitenack was 79th.

“Many of our runners finished close to their

personal-record times despite the hilly and demanding course,” said Bond. “These performances reflect the progress our athletes have made throughout the

season, and we're looking forward to carrying that momentum into the Blue Ridge District and Region 3D meets over the next two weeks.”



Left, William Byrd's Emma Thierry placed 30th at the Metro Cross Country championship girls race in Blacksburg last week. Right, Carston Dibenedetto took fourth as the Terriers placed second overall in the boys' team competition.

PHOTOS BY JON FLEMING