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SALEM TIMES-REGISTER

Thursday, January 7, 2021 • (USPS 631-140) • \$1.00

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OurValley.org

Downtown construction on Main Street expected to be finished by April

Shawn Nowlin

shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

Every time that Salem native Jaime Smith has walked down Main Street over the last several weeks, the same thought has always crossed her mind, "I wonder when all of this construction will be done?"

According to Department of Community Development City Planner Benjamin Tripp, construction began last September and will conclude this spring, weather dependent.

In addition to the brick sidewalks, new historic light poles, landscaping and overhead festival lighting, the city will also be adding left turn lanes at the intersections downtown to help with the flow of traffic.

"Most of the funding for the renovation project was awarded several years ago. The phase currently under construction cost approximately \$900,000 and is a mix of Transportation Alternatives and Community Development Block Grant funding. The previous phase on College Avenue cost approximately \$1,400,000 and



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The previous phase of construction on College Avenue cost approximately \$1,400,000 and was a Revenue Sharing Program Project

was a Revenue Sharing Program Project," said Tripp.

He added, "The section of streetscape between Thompson Memorial Drive and Market Street was awarded \$3,629,869 in Smartscale funding, which has no local share. Two additional phases

are funded through VDOT's Revenue Sharing Program having been awarded around a million dollars each as well. The phase currently under construction also directly supports roughly 15 construction jobs."

The definitive center of the

city's small business scene, Salem's Main Street contains more than a dozen businesses ranging from craft stores to restaurants and is considered the heart of the community.

"It carries our identity, the story of who we are. The streetscape

project is about taking control of that story. Salem is an old and historic place, and it deserves a downtown that is worthy of our place in the region," Tripp said. "These streetscape improvements will help make Downtown Salem a more desirable business location, more of a regional destination and ensure that it has a bright future."

The Streetscape project is made up of several phases, and construction will continue over several years before the project is officially complete. "The plan also reorganizes the on-street parking in a more efficient manner, allowing us to add the bump-outs for restaurants without losing parking, and in most cases adding to the number of public parking spaces," Tripp said.

The upgrades being made downtown is expected to benefit Salem residents for years to come. Smith, like many others, is relieved that an end date is finally in sight. "I can't wait until everything is done. My family and I will definitely be spending more time in the downtown area," she said.

More information can be found at saalemva.gov.

Making a difference: Salem Rotary Club spreads love to the less fortunate



Salem Rotarians Andre and Tom Bowers sanding bed boards outside of the barn.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Rotarian Todd Hester branding a board.

Shawn Nowlin

shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

Approximately 35,000 rotary clubs, defined as "international organizations of businesspeople who raise money to help the sick or poor in their local area," exist throughout the United States.

As the Rotary Club of Salem eyes its 72nd anniversary, its motto of "Service Above Self" remains as adamant as ever. The Rotary Club of Salem is currently led by President Jeff Howard who is serving a one-year term. In addition to overall leadership, Howard is also responsible for the management and organization of the club.

"Our club performs our mission through a variety of community service programs that include Olde Salem Days, the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) Tournament, and the Star BBQ, in conjunction with Salem Parks and Recreation," he said. "These three main activities provide financial support for the club to give annually in excess of \$50,000 to service organizations."

Howard added, "We also run programs such as Little Free Library, Christmas for Kids, as well as provide dinners for families at Thanksgiving and Christmas, provide dictionaries for every third-grader in Salem and various other programs and services."

Two Saturdays last year, November 7 and 14, were spent by the Rotary Club of Salem, their families and Salem High students building beds for children at Pete and Margaret's Barn on Catawba Road in Troutville. Teamwork was critical in making the selfless gesture a reality for those in need.

Through club services and the Glenvar Ro-

Virginia hands-free law now in full effect

Shawn Nowlin

shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

Virginia State Police have a message for all drivers: no cell phones in the hand while behind the wheel. After getting passed in the General Assembly, a new state law went into effect on January 1 making it illegal to have a cell phone in hand while driving.

While talking is allowed, texting, fiddling with social media or anything else that puts the phone in one's hand while behind the wheel is prohibited. There are some exceptions to the rule: drivers can hold devices while parked or stopped, drivers can hold devices when reporting emergencies, drivers of emergency vehicles can use handheld devices and VDOT vehicle drivers can use handheld devices while performing traffic incident management services.

For first ticket offenders, there will be a \$125 fine. Subsequent violations will be a \$250 fine.

Roanoke County Sgt. Spencer Hoopes, like

many others, thinks this law will be a welcomed change. "I have three teenage children, and they all have their driver's license. When I am with them, they are always on their best behavior. The same can't be said I'm not. This law will put at ease a lot of parents," Salem native Amy Walker said.

The hands-free law is an effort to stop distracted driving in the Commonwealth, said Governor Ralph Northam who added, distracted driving is a serious problem, and we need everyone to work together.

He continued, "Last year, believe it or not, there were more than 23,000, I repeat that, 23,000 crashes in Virginia that were caused by distracted driving. And 120 of those individuals, unfortunately, lost their lives."

Over nine deaths and approximately 1,100 injuries are reported every day due to distracted drivers, according to the Centers for Disease and Control. Data also

See Another law, page 5



PHOTO BY SHAWN NOWLIN

With few exceptions, talking, texting or anything else that puts the phone in one's hand while behind the wheel is prohibited.



See Salem Rotary, page 8

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

The City of Salem has been monitoring the potential spread of COVID-19, and like you, we have been processing a great deal of information. The safety of citizens, school children and visitors is always the number one priority from the Salem Civic Center to City Hall. Emergency Management team members are in constant contact with the Virginia Department of Health, the Roanoke-Alleghany Health Department and area health professionals at our local hospitals. During this time of uncertainty, people are encouraged to monitor the website (salemva.gov) for official city details on closings or cancellations. This site will be updated daily whenever there is new information.

6:30 p.m., dinner and a program, Salem Civic Center.

SECOND MONDAY

Paint Bank Ladies Auxiliary meeting, 7:00 p.m. at the Paint Bank Fire Department. Contact 540-897-5346 for more information.

EACH TUESDAY

•Practice for the Salem Choral Society, 7-9 p.m. each Tuesday in the choir room of Salem Presbyterian Church, corner of Main and Market streets in downtown Salem. Membership is open to anyone who enjoys singing. For more information, go to www.salemchoralsociety.com or contact director Reed Carter at reed.salemchoralsociety@gmail.com.

•Salem Chess Players meet at the Salem Senior

Center, 110 Union Street in Salem from 7-11 p.m. Open to anyone 16 years or older. Instructions are available.

•Salem Kiwanis Club meets 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. for lunch, Salem Civic Center.

•Glenvar Rotary Club meets 12:15 - 1:15 p.m. for lunch in Richfield Retirement's Recovery and Care Center cafeteria, first floor. Guests welcome.

•Knights of Columbus hosts bingo for charity. Proceeds support local charities including RAM House, Madonna House, the Roanoke Rescue Mission, Saint Francis House, food pantries and various youth projects. Games are played from 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. at Gator Hall, at 5301 Williamson Road, near Happy's Flea Market.

•Infinity Acres Ranch Fundraiser from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Christ Episcopal Church at 321 E. Church

Street in Blacksburg. Tickets are \$8 while children eight and younger can eat for \$4. For more information, contact 276-358-2378.

•All ages are welcome to TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly) at 5:15 p.m. at the Salem Senior Center. For more information, contact Linda at 540-389-4207.

•Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meeting, 7 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church at 2011 Brandon Avenue in Roanoke. Contact 540-293-4065 for more information.

•From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., a chair caning and basket weaving class will occur at the Salem Senior Center. While free, attendees are encouraged to bring their own lunch. For more information, contact 540-375-3054.

THIRD TUESDAY

The monthly meeting

for National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) Roanoke Valley Chapter #226 locations and times will now vary. Learn more details by emailing us at nawicroa226@gmail.com.

THIRD WEDNESDAY

Alzheimer's /Dementia Caregiver Support Group at 2 p.m. at Salem Terrace at Harrogate.

FIRST THURSDAY

Roanoke County Woman's Club meets at 10:30 a.m. in the conference room at College Lutheran Church in Salem. New members are welcome.

EACH THURSDAY

The Salem Senior Center's Social Club, known as the 49ers Plus Club, originally started the

senior program in Salem over 40 years ago. They have different speakers and/or activities practically every week. New members are always welcome to show up at the Salem Senior Center at 11 a.m. Contact 540-375-3054 for more information.

EACH SATURDAY

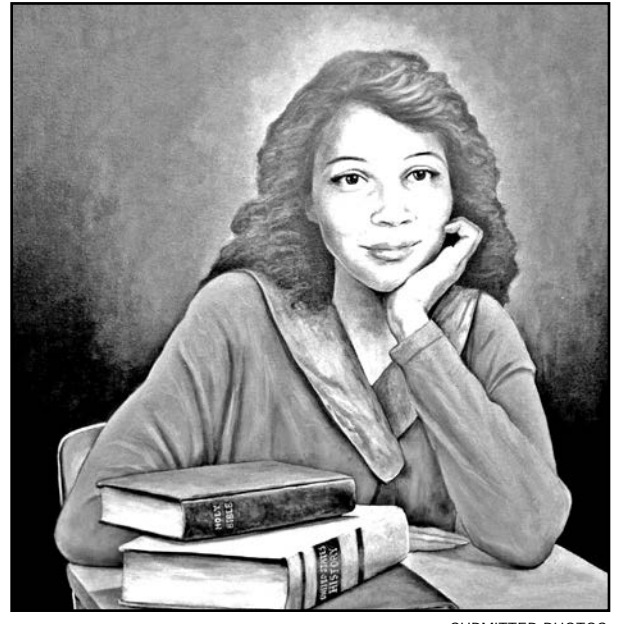
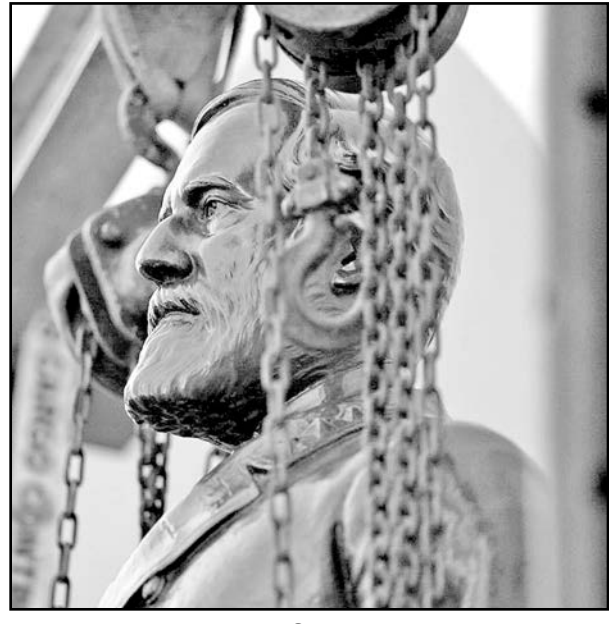
•Salem Farmers Market from 9:30 a.m. to noon, weather permitting. Select vendors will have country sausage, cage-free eggs, grass-fed beef, cage-pasture-raised chicken, homemade rolls, pieces of artisan bread, muffins, seasonal greens and more.

•Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meeting, 11 a.m. at Christ Lutheran Church at 2011 Brandon Avenue in Roanoke.

Be sure to 'Like' the Salem-Times Register on Facebook.

Virginia removes Confederate Statue from U.S. Capitol

Commission recently selected civil rights icon Barbara Johns to represent the Commonwealth with new statue



It is well past time, said Governor Ralph Northam, that we tell our story with images of perseverance, diversity and inclusion.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Governor Ralph Northam recently announced that Virginia's statue of Confederate general Robert E. Lee was removed from the United States Capitol overnight. A representative from the governor's office was present for the removal along with United States Senator Tim Kaine and Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton.

Each state is entitled to display two statues in the National Statuary Hall Collection, and for 111 years, the Confederate statue has stood along with America's first president George Washington as Virginia's contributions. The two statues were added in 1909, which was 44 years after the Confederacy rebelled against the United States and was defeated. The Lee statue had been one among 13 located in the Crypt of the Capitol, representing the 13 original colonies.

"We should all be proud of this important step forward for our Commonwealth and our country," said Governor Northam. "The Confederacy is a symbol of Virginia's racist and divisive history, and it is past time we tell our story with images of perseverance, diversity, and inclusion. I look forward to seeing a trailblazing young woman of color represent Virginia in the U.S. Capitol, where visitors will learn about Barbara Johns' contributions to America and be empowered to create positive change in their communities just like she did."

Earlier this year, Governor Northam signed legislation establishing the Commission for Historical Statues in the United States Capitol charged with studying the removal and replacement of the Robert E. Lee statue. The eight-member

commission, chaired by State Senator Louise Lucas, voted unanimously on July 24, 2020 to recommend removal of the statue. At the request of the Commission, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture in Richmond, Virginia will accept ownership of the statue.

"Confederate images do not represent who we are in Virginia, that's why we voted unanimously to remove this statue," said Senator Louise Lucas. "I am thrilled that this day has finally arrived, and I thank Governor Northam and the Commission for their transformative work."

On December 16, 2020, the Commission selected civil rights icon Barbara Rose Johns to replace the Robert E. Lee statue, after receiving public input from Virginia residents during several virtual public hearings. In 1951, sixteen-year-old Barbara Johns

led a student walkout at Robert Russa Moton High School in Farmville, protesting the overcrowded and inferior conditions of the all-Black school compared to those of White students at nearby Farmville High School. This garnered the support of NAACP lawyers Spottswood Robinson and Oliver Hill who took up her cause and filed a lawsuit that would later become one of five cases reviewed by the United States Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* when it declared segregation unconstitutional in 1954. Historians consider Johns' protest a pivotal moment that launched the desegregation movement in America.

"As of this morning, Virginia will no longer honor the Confederacy in the halls of the United States Capitol," said Delegate Jeion Ward, who spon-

sored legislation creating the Commission. "When I think of Barbara Johns, I am reminded of how brave she was at such a young age. It's time for us to start singing the songs of some of the Virginians who have done great things that have gone unnoticed. This is a proud moment for our Commonwealth, and I am humbled to have been a part of it."

The General Assembly must approve the replacement before a sculptor can be commissioned. If approved, Johns would complement the statue of Washington, and would be the only teenager represented in the collection. Governor Northam has introduced a budget that includes \$500,000 to replace the statue.

-Submitted by Alena Yarmosky, Office of the Governor

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Southwest Virginia Deputy Commissioners of the Revenue donate \$3,500 to foodbank

In its December meeting, the Southwest Virginia Deputy Commissioner of the Revenue Association voted to donate \$3,500 to Feeding Southwest Virginia, a regional branch of the Feeding America Organization. Association President and Smyth County Master Deputy Sara Kegley remarked, "This action is yet another example of how giving deputy commissioners of the revenue are of their services and resources."

The motion to appropriate a portion of the fund was offered by Wise County Master Deputy John Mullins in response to the association's quest to give to a worthy cause. "This year has been a year many of us would like to forget," said Mullins. "It has changed our lives, at home and the workplace. But Southwestern Virginians are strong and resilient. We are our best when we are helping others."

In an overwhelming show of support, association members voted to donate the entire amount to help foodbanks throughout the region. After receiving news of the very gracious gift, Feeding Southwest Virginia associate Joe Kessler offered his heartfelt appreciation.

"Thanks so much for contacting us with regards to the donation being made by the Deputy Commissioners of the Revenue Association," he said. "We are so grateful in having your support to help us fight hunger all across our 26-county, nine-city region. With the Association's gift, we will recognize you as an official civic partner under our Funds, Fun, and Food partnership initiative - our posts on LinkedIn and Facebook will recognize that the Association has made a donation that will help us to provide 17,500 meals to the region. Thank you for helping us feed our neighbors this winter."

The Southwest Virginia Deputy Association was one of the first Deputy Commissioners of the Revenue organizations to form in the Commonwealth. Its members have always stressed the desire to grow in professionalism, knowledge and service. In a subsequent email communication to the group, Kegley stated, "Bless you one and all...I am so very proud of our deputies for supporting this program. This is truly a team effort."

-Submitted by Sara Kegley, Master Deputy Commissioner of the Revenue

Additional \$20 million to rebuild VA Economic Recovery Fund committed on state level

~ Funding will fulfill pending grant awards for over 300 eligible small businesses and nonprofit organizations ~



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Said Gov. Northam, "Small businesses and nonprofits are among those hit hardest by the pandemic, and many are bracing for an uncertain few months ahead as the virus surges and we await the widespread availability of the vaccines."

Governor Ralph Northam recently allocated an additional \$20 million in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to the Rebuild VA economic recovery fund to meet demand for

the program and fulfill pending grant applications. This new funding will bring the program total to \$120 million and will enable more than 300 small business and nonprofit organizations that applied before the last round of

funding was exhausted in early December to receive grants. Eligible applicants that are still in the pipeline have been notified via email that their applications have been re-opened.

Earlier this month, Governor Northam announced that Rebuild VA

had fully committed the \$100 million in federal funds previously allocated to the program, which provided grants to 2,500 small businesses and nonprofits whose normal operations were disrupted by the COVID-19 pan-

demic. More than 45 percent of the available funding was awarded to nearly 1,000 small businesses and nonprofits located in low-income and economically disadvantaged communities and about \$50 million was awarded to women, minority, and veteran-owned businesses. To date, Rebuild VA has received nearly 20,000 applications and the average grant award was \$35,636.

"Small businesses and nonprofits are among those hit hardest by the pandemic, and many are bracing for an uncertain few months ahead as the virus surges and we await the widespread availability of the vaccines," said Governor Northam. "Virginia's small business community remains diligent in protecting the health and safety of their employees and customers, and we must continue to support them in every way we can. With Congress finally acting on a long-overdue relief package, I am also grateful that Virginia businesses will now have another opportunity to apply for the Paycheck Protection

Program in the near future."

Administered by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD), Rebuild VA launched in August with \$70 million in CARES Act funding. Governor Northam directed an additional \$30 million to the program in October and SBSBD expanded eligibility so that businesses with less than \$10 million in gross revenue or fewer than 250 employees could apply.

"Getting these dollars to more small businesses and nonprofits that have been impacted by COVID-19 is a top priority for our administration," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball. "The large number of applicants still in the pipeline for Rebuild VA funding demonstrates the tremendous need for this and additional financial support."

For additional information on Rebuild VA, visit governor.virginia.gov/RebuildVA.

~Submitted by
Alena Yarmosky,
Office of the Governor

Plan now for healthy bird habitat year-round

Winter is the perfect time for homeowners to make landscape changes to protect birds in cold weather and to provide year-round habitat.

"Here at my feeders, I've seen a Cooper's hawk every winter," said horticulturalist Mark Viette. But he takes intentional steps to ensure the hawks are safe from predators.

"Last night my barn cat was hiding under a shrub waiting for birds to come," he said. To protect birds from predators, homeowners should shear bushes near bird feeders to eliminate hiding places. "At the same time, your

birds can see if there are hawks or other dangers," Viette said during an In the Garden segment on Virginia Farm Bureau's Real Virginia television program.

He recommended tying up any shrubs that may provide cover for ground predators, as well as trimming plants to provide at least three feet of clear space around bird feeders. Some wildlife experts recommend feeders be as far as 15 feet from shrubbery.

Landscape plants that provide quality habitat for birds include evergreens like hollies, Viette said. Other suitable

bird habitat plants include tall grasses and hydrangeas. Homeowners can provide cover for birds in the winter even if they don't have these plants.

"If you have a garden, and you don't have any evergreens, you can take your trimmings from the garden - your limbs, your stems, your branches - and make piles of them in the garden. Probably about two-to-three-feet high," he said. "That's a great place for birds to hide from predators."

Virginia Cooperative Extension horticulture specialists recommended us-

ing native plants in gardens whenever possible.

In an article on the Extension website titled, "Backyard Wildlife Habitats," the horticulturalists said native plants are adapted to local weather and soil conditions, they better resist local insects and diseases, and they provide foods that are familiar and timed to the life cycles of the animals in the region. Using native plants also reduces the potential for introducing invasive plants that can cause serious problems to existing native populations.

Extension specialists also

shared that bird feeders should not be placed close to large windows because of the risk of birds flying into them.

Other bird-friendly tips from Viette included providing fresh water for birds year-round. And Extension specialists said feeders and waterers should be regularly cleaned. At least once a week, remove waste under feeders, and provide multiple feeders spaced apart rather than clustered together to reduce competition for food.

~Submitted by Norm Hyde,
VFBB Communications

New law takes effect to protect Virginians against surprise medical billing on January 1

~ Arbitrators currently sought to mediate payment disputes under the new law ~

Starting January 1, individuals enrolled in either fully insured managed care health insurance plans issued in Virginia or the state employee health benefit plan cannot be balance billed successfully by an out-of-network provider for emergency services. Additionally, out-of-network providers cannot balance bill these individuals for certain non-emergency services during a scheduled procedure at an in-network hospital or other health care facility.

Although the new balance billing law does not apply to self-funded group health plans and certain other self-funded plans, those plans may opt in so that the law's protections apply to their enrollees. These plans are known as elective group health plans. More than 200 elective group health plans have already opted in beginning January 1, 2021. A list of plans that have chosen to opt in is available on the State Corporation Commission's (SCC) Bureau of Insurance (Bureau) website at Search Elective Group Health Plans | Balance

Billing (virginia.gov).

Plans that wish to opt into the balance billing protections beginning at a later date can find the application on the Bureau's website at Virginia SCC - Balance Billing. To opt in, these groups or their third-party administrators must complete and submit an on-line application at least 30 days before either the beginning of their plan year or January 1 of any subsequent year.

The new law works, in part, by requiring insurers and providers to resolve balance billing disputes - rather than the provider simply sending the consumer a balance billing. When a consumer is treated by an out-of-network health care provider for services covered by the new law, the provider will submit the claim to the consumer's insurer or health plan. The insurer or health plan will pay the provider a "commercially reasonable amount" that is based on payments for the same or similar services in a similar geographic area, thereby eliminating any balance payment by the consumer to the provid-

er for services rendered.

If they cannot agree on the amount due, the provider and the insurer or health plan may begin a claims resolution process. As part of that process, the insurer and out-of-network provider must first try to agree on a payment amount. If they cannot agree, one of the parties may request that an arbitrator determine the final payment amount and resolve disputes. Arbitrators must report their final decision to both arbitrating parties and to the Bureau using the Arbitrator Decision Reporting Form, which is available on the Bureau's website at Vir-

ginia SCC - Balance Billing.

The Bureau is currently accepting applications for individuals interested in serving as arbitrators for balance billing disputes. Arbitrators should have training and experience in arbitration or dispute resolution and matters related to medical or health care services. For more information, including an application and a list of approved arbitrators, visit Virginia SCC - Balance Billing.

Additionally, the new law requires health care facilities and medical providers to notify consumers about balance

billing protection for out-of-network services. Among other things, these notifications must inform consumers how to determine if they are protected from surprise billing, when they can be balance billed, and what to do if they are billed too much. Providers must notify consumers (on their websites or otherwise) about which networks they participate in; refund to consumers any overpaid

amounts within 30 business days; provide to consumers a notice of their rights under the balance billing law, and refrain from asking consumers to limit or give up their rights under the balance billing law.

Managed care health insurance plans regulated by the Bureau also must notify enrollees regarding if and when they are subject to bal-

See Billing, page 7

Williams Carpet Cleaning



"I am the slowest carpet cleaner in the Roanoke Valley."

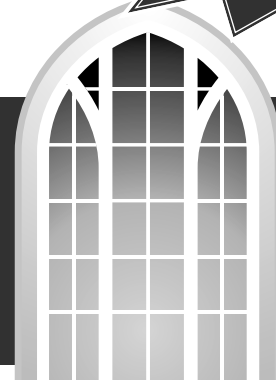
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OPINION

Give Light ~ Happy 2021 / Farewells ~

{This is a memory from the six decades the author has spent writing about faith communities in daily, weekly and monthly news publications covering the western third of Virginia.}

This begins the fourth year that these columns I call "Give Light..." (and the people will find their own way, as a noted 19th Century editor is reported to have said). Despite my long life and the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic, we all wish we hadn't experienced; I hope to continue writing them.

A few thoughts about comments readers of the newspapers published by Mountain Media based in Lewisburg, West Virginia, have offered in the three years since I retired from actively covering nearby religion events and began the memoir columns.

Readers connect with famous people when I have written about hearing or interviewing folk like Norman Vincent Peale or Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. Several called or emailed me about some personal connection they had with this noted preacher of the 1950s or the Swiss female pioneer in the Hospice movement.

Women readers also connected with the column I wrote about the three roommates I had when in Roanoke

Memorial Hospital for the births of my children. Some like the recollections of my Piedmont, Virginia, childhood. The columns are intended to recall my years as a newspaper reporter on religion issues, but some inevitably go back further to when I was reared on the edge of a small town by a widowed mother who herself died when I was a Richmond collegian.

I call it a "divine coincidence" that I met my newspaper reporter husband, Charles Harvey Stebbins Sr., the same month my mother died. We had nearly 57 good years together. In 2002, we were profiled in a short-lived magazine, "Prime Living" for what, I suppose, was a somewhat unusual sharing of careers.

Not everyone is fortunate enough to remember a bit about the Great Depression and a lot about World War II, but those world-shaking events and the religious heritage important to both sides of my family made me the writer I am today.

Perhaps it's my age, but I've noticed in this year of the COVID-19 pandemic how many print columnists are reminiscing. Old people are inclined to recall their pasts because as their years increase, they can see less into their future. However, writers much

Frances Stebbins Correspondent

younger than I - like some I knew who are still employed by the daily Roanoke newspaper - are also looking back. It provides an inexhaustible source of material, and it appears to interest readers who are doing the same thing!

In the past year especially, I have mentioned folk I have known as colleagues and friends who have come to the end of their lives. The pandemic has been responsible for some of these while the death of others came inevitably as friends reached their ninth or tenth decades.

Earlier I mentioned Chris Gladden, known as a movie reviewer for the daily newspapers and for several other pastimes, as well as Judy Paxton with whom I sang in our church choir; Peter Rippe, museum promoter; Dwayne Westermann, Lutheran pastor; Mildred Slater, World War II Navy veteran; Jack Creasy, interior designer and Richmond Professional Institute (RPI) alumnus as well perhaps others.

In November of the past year, the Rev. Bob Porter, a Roanoke street preacher in the early 1970s, died. Porter, 84, made news when he allegedly blocked the sidewalk in downtown Roanoke, and police stopped him. My story at the time noted that he had been a successful insurance man before his evangelical Christian conversion. He told police that he had been permitted to preach in public in Alexandria before coming to the Star City.

Porter had an office on Plantation Road Northwest and for many years carried on an evangelistic ministry to congregations of conservative Baptist persuasion. He and his wife of 65 years, Babs, also became part of other churches when he served as an interim pastor. He retired in 2013; his obituary indicated he suffered from Alzheimer's Disease.

Besides Chris Gladden, two other persons who worked for the daily newspapers also died at the end of the year.

Cody Lowe, who wrote of religion activities and was, to a degree, my successor in that role after both Charlie and I were involuntarily retired in 1996, succumbed to COVID-19. Best known for his Sunday religion column, "The Back Pew," Lowe, 68, had been retired for several

years. Readers had learned of his health issues; a love of Southern food was part of his appealing nature.

He underwent successful heart surgery and, his family told a feature writer for the news story about his death, he was granted several more years. But dependent on kidney dialysis, he may have contracted the virus at a facility and it was fatal to his weakened system.

My professional life touched Cody's many times. As columnists do, he wrote of his earlier years as a Methodist in Botetourt County. Divorced, he re-married Betty Strother, a newspaper Editorial Page writer long active in Christ Episcopal Church familiar to me. She survives him.

Finally, the death notices revealed the name of Virginia Swartz Shaver, who supervised the newspaper's Reference Library - "the Morgue" - it used to be called in the later years that Charlie and I were part-timers at the paper. A gracious and competent woman, Mrs. Shaver also was a long-time South Roanoke United Methodist member.

I was astonished to see that she lived to 104. Born in 1916 in Buchanan, she was a small girl when the first flu pandemic frightened the world.

Send letters to the editor at shawn.nowlin@ourvalley.org

Operation Warp Speed: A Success Story of 2020

Morgan Griffith Representative

The year 2020 was a difficult one, but as the year draws to a close, I want to highlight something about the year that went right.

Operation Warp Speed accomplished what had been considered nearly impossible: the development, manufacture, and distribution of a safe and effective vaccine to combat COVID-19.

President Trump announced Operation Warp Speed in May. His Administration recognized that meeting the challenge posed by the coronavirus pandemic would require the investment of Federal Government resources, partnership between the public, private, and scientific sectors, and cutting red

tape that would impede delivery of a safe and effective vaccine.

This effort was supported by almost \$10 billion in funding included in the CARES Act passed by Congress with my support.

The project focused on six vaccine candidates. Seven months after Operation Warp Speed was launched and less than one year after COVID-19 began spreading widely around the globe, two vaccine candidates were approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for emergency use.

On December 11, the FDA approved for emergency use the first vaccine created by Pfizer. After clinical trials including over 43,000 participants, the vaccine was found to be 95 percent effective.

A vaccine developed by Moderna was subsequently approved for emergency use on December 18. Thirty thousand people participated in its clinical trials, and its efficacy rate is 94.5 percent.

These vaccines are the fastest ever produced for a novel pathogen. In fact, the average development timeline for a vaccine is eight to twelve years. Operation Warp Speed reduced the time needed by maximizing the number of participants in Phase 3 trials and manufacturing vaccine doses while waiting for the FDA's emergency use authorization order.

While bureaucratic hurdles were lowered, the vaccine development process did not skimp on safety.

As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee,

which has jurisdiction over health matters, I was briefed repeatedly throughout the process or involved in hearings featuring public health officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, and the FDA, as well as the vaccine manufacturers. I am confident that they maintained high safety standards as they pursued a vaccine.

While the vaccines were under development, the Trump Administration planned ahead for their delivery and administration to Americans. It purchased millions of doses of the prospective vaccines and made agreements with pharmacies that would be able to vaccinate people.

While enough vaccine doses will be manufactured to cover most of the population, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended the priorities for vaccination while supplies remain limited. It suggested health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities be first in line, followed by older adults and frontline essential workers, all groups with a higher susceptibility to the coronavirus than other parts of the population.

The vaccines are broadly safe, but caution is appropriate for people with allergic reactions and certain other conditions. The CDC recommends that you talk to your doctor if you have had a severe allergic reaction to other vaccines or injectable therapies to determine if a COVID vaccine is a safe decision for you. Further, if you have had a severe allergic reaction to any ingredi-

ent in a COVID vaccine, the CDC recommends not getting that vaccine.

I also believe that vaccinations should not be mandatory. This would be true particularly for people who object to taking it due to their religious principles or as a matter of conscience. I also reject the idea of individuals being required to carry around a vaccination certificate, which is too close to the identification papers of highly restricted societies for my comfort.

Operation Warp Speed is just one component of the Federal Government's efforts to combat the coronavirus. Other therapeutics and treatments have also been developed at a rapid pace and are also being deployed as the pandemic still inflicts widespread sickness.

The United States has long excelled at scientific innovation, but even among our country's long list of achievements, from the light bulb to the first manned landing on the Moon, Operation Warp Speed stands out - for its scale, speed, safety, and ultimately lives saved. Amid all the bad news of 2020, this accomplishment is one worth praising.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, feel free to contact my office. You can call my Abingdon office at 276-525-1405 or my Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671. To reach my office via email, please visit my website at www.morgangriffith.house.gov. Also on my website is the latest material from my office, including information on votes recently taken on the floor of the House of Representatives.

SALEM TIMES-REGISTER

A newspaper of, by and for the people of the City of Salem and Roanoke County.

USPS 631-140
(540) 389-9355
1633 West Main Street

www.ourvalley.org

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The Times-Register (USPS 631-140) is published weekly for \$41 a year in Salem and Roanoke County, \$45 in adjoining counties and \$49 out of state by Virginia Media Inc., P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901. Periodical postage paid at Salem, VA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE SALEM TIMES-REGISTER, P.O. Box 1125, Salem, VA 24153

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| CLUES ACROSS | music | CLUES DOWN | 29. Small constellation |
| 1. Homestead | 34. Pharmacy chain Duane | 1. Grave | 35. Indicates near |
| 5. More (Spanish) | 39. First responders | 2. Alright | 36. Consumed |
| 8. Type of notification | 42. Mysterious | 3. Sharp tooth | 37. Criticize |
| 12. Approves | 44. Leisurely stroll | 4. Bird genus | 38. Shock therapy |
| 14. Mandela's party | 46. Most naughty | 5. Important | 40. Type of cigarette |
| 15. "Mom" actress Faris | 47. Plant tissue | 6. One who studies carefully | 41. The fashionable elite |
| 16. Predatory insects | 49. Small fish | 7. Not very big | 42. Shed tears |
| 18. Where honey goes | 50. Men's fashion accessory | 8. Astronomy unit | 43. Arm or branch of a bone |
| 19. Canadian flyers | 51. Distant planet | 9. A way to open up | 44. Quell anger |
| 20. Of an earlier time | 56. Destroy | 10. Trap | 45. Where rock and rollers play |
| 21. Indigenous people of Australia | 57. Location in Norse mythology | 11. Handle of a knife | 47. "The Alchemist" author Coelho |
| 22. Organize | 58. One who is deliberately cruel | 13. Indicates one from a part of W. Africa | 48. Choppers |
| 23. All over | 59. ___ Romeo, car | 17. Lucky number | 49. Lacks brightness |
| 26. Made it through | 60. Of the ear | 24. Doctor of Education | 52. Port in Yemen |
| 30. Between-meals food | 61. Former name of Tokyo | 25. Legendary Cubs broadcaster | 53. Brood of pheasant |
| 31. A quantity upon which an operation is performed | 62. Female children | 26. Mimi parent | 54. Approves food |
| 32. German mythological god | 63. French/Belgian river | 27. Mimic | 55. A type of sign |
| 33. "Heavy" type of rock | 64. Tide | 28. Connects to the rim | |

Griffith statement on Omnibus Appropriations Legislation

Congressman Morgan Griffith (R-VA) issued the following statement on the omnibus appropriations legislation funding the Federal Government for the rest of fiscal year 2021:

"As a supporter of more relief in response to the coronavirus pan-

demic, I consistently urged congressional leadership to keep any relief package separate from any omnibus appropriations bill to fund the Federal Government. Omnibuses tend to be bloated, filled with unrelated provisions, and cobbled together in

backrooms with little time for Members of Congress to read them, much less understand their provisions. They are a terrible way to exercise Congress' power of the purse.

"The omnibus spend-
See Griffith, page 5

“Just A Hand” found a permanent home



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Just A Hand has finally found a home in New Castle in the former Craig Printing building.



Just A Hand is currently accepting donations in hopes to open its doors at the end of January.

Pam Dudding
Contributing writer

During 2020, it seems many people extended their hands, regardless of how little they felt they had to share.

Last year, a new service blessed Craig County residents with a building full of clothes, books, toys, and household goods at Club Camp Mitchell. People that heard, flooded in, and picked out their necessities for their children and other neighbors.

This event, “Just A Hand,” is a non-profit organization created by Lynn

and Bill Morgan of Spotsylvania, Virginia. It was brought to Craig by Nichole Persinger who organized the connection with the Morgan’s and her son Dustin Persinger, a CCPS School Counselor.

Locals who attended were seen and heard and expressed how thankful they were.

This tugged on their hearts and they went to work searching for a permanent place to house such a wonderful idea.

This week, Derek Persinger announced that “Just A Hand” officially has a home.

“Starting this month, we are located at 1945 Craig Valley Drive in the Former Craig Printing Building,” he said. “With the help of many individuals from the community, our non-profit organization is off to a great start.”

The goal of Just A Hand is to help support families in communities by offering free access to clothing, kids’ books and toys, household goods and other necessity items.

They are accepting donations and will officially open the doors to the public closer to the end of January.

“Lastly, during our first day of donations in the new location, one individual from our community saw our potential and has been working effortlessly to raise funds to further support our community. We are so very thankful to Jordan Labiosa for the kindness he has shown Just A Hand,” Persinger mentioned. “We appreciate all of the individuals who are working to make our community a place where everyone can thrive.”

Just A Hand is also on Facebook for the community to view. <https://www.facebook.com/justahand>.

“We encourage those who are interested in donating or would like to know more about the organization to contact Dustin Persinger at dpersinger@craig.k12.va.us or look at the Facebook Yard Sale page with regular updates on when the shop will be open,” he said.

Persinger also shared that when he was recently talking with another family who was visiting Just A Hand, the true goal came to life.

“Our goal is to create a space where families in our community can come and take what they need and leave behind something for someone else who may need it,” Persinger shared.

Lynn Morgan, the Founder and CEO of Just A Hand, shares her story to Craig County.

“Hello to all in New Castle, Virginia! Thank you so much for welcoming Just A Hand. We are excited to have others learn about our efforts. Any assistance, be it word of mouth, volunteer-based, collection-based, fundraising or monetary donations is greatly appreciated and tax-deductible per IRS guidelines. Just A Hand is a 501(c)3 non-profit that I founded in Spotsylvania, Virginia in February of 2009.”

Morgan shared that in the past, they have hosted holiday giveaways and have been delivering to families to reach even more. They spearheaded multiple natural disaster relief missions with the help of their local communities. Because of this, their mission has

inspired many new organizations to start, including their Sheriff’s office hosting a Christmas event.

She believes that what has made their efforts extra special is the fact that they are an all-volunteer organization that is run and operated in her home without the need for high overhead and fundraising.

“My husband and I are able to meet the local demands for many families. Last year for Christmas, we provided toys for 146 children in December. When we plan larger events, our board of directors helps us to recruit volunteers to meet our needs. Our home has been filled at times and our days filled with sorting and preparing items for families. We recycle as much as possible,” Morgan shared.

Morgan added that her connection to Craig County is family.

“It is always my heart. My father David Greenway (RIP) is somewhere in heaven moving things to help make this happen, I am sure of it! I am from Roanoke and was born at the old Lewis Gale and my mother’s family ran the mail routes through this county so many years ago. She still resides in Roanoke. Most of my family either reside or are buried on or in these mountains somewhere,” she said.

“We have just recently secured a much-needed space in Craig County. The plan is to house items for distribution to families in that community after a successful giveaway at Camp Mitchell showcased the greater need. My sister Nicole is helping to make this all possible and has no idea how much work it will take. Please, no one tell her,” she jokingly said.

Morgan added that the building they have found has a reduced rent and are in hopes that they will have it for a while as it is for sale.

“We ask that those we help not sell any items they no longer need. They may return them or give them to someone else in need,” Morgan said.

There are no income guidelines to qualify for help. Families will only

need to fill out a brief sheet which includes their name, address, phone number, number of kids, ages and genders form and sign that they know items are used and must be checked for age appropriation, cleanliness and safety.

Ideas for suggestions for kids donations are: clothing - birth to size 16 and diapers, outer wear- coats, hats, gloves, scarves, shoes - (tennis shoes, play shoes, boots, dance and sport) books - (any and all including coloring books, school supplies), linens (blankets, towels, sheets, bedding sets for crib, toddler, twin and full sizes, throw pillows, curtains, shower curtain sets, toys - (all types, games, puzzles, dolls, play sets, sports equipment, train tables, kitchens, doll furniture, barbie houses, dollhouses, Legos, chalkboards, musical instruments, craft kits, stuffed animals, art supplies), furniture - (cribs, crib mattress and changing pads, changing tables, rockers, toddler beds, twin and full size beds, chests, nightstands, small desks, kids size table and chairs, bookcases, toy boxes and lamps) as well as baby Gear-all types (Pac-n-plays, bassinets, swings, car seats, boosters, baby gates, bouncy seats, potty seats, set me up seats, monitors, play yards, kid dishes, sippy cups, boppy pillows, bathtubs, strollers, humidifiers, breast pumps, bottles, baby bags, carriers).

Other donation items can be: clothing racks, metal free standing shelving, display racks, baskets, plastic hangers, re-useable shopping bags, folding tables, saw horses, large clean trash cans and laundry bins.

New or unopened items only of underwear, formula, baby food, wipes, Pedialyte, toothbrushes, snacks, cereal and canned goods may be accepted.

“Our mission statement is simple as are our goals,” Morgan said. “Give of yourself and teach others to give. No matter how small the gesture, if you help to ease the burdens of another, you help to create a better place for us all.”

Another law from page 1

shows that nearly six million distracted drivers hit the roads in the United States daily.

Said Virginia State Police Sgt. Dylan Davenport, “You

cannot have a phone in your hand so get those things set up before you hit the road. Set up your playlist before you hit the road. Get your GPS and your mapping set

up before you start driving so you can still take advantage of those tools and not have them distract you while you’re on the road.”

Roanoke County resident

James Anderson says he’s already seen a difference since the hands-free law went into effect. “I was not surprised that this law passed the General Assembly. I haven’t seen

any of my neighbors, friends or family driving with their phones in hand at all this year. At the end of the day, this law is about keeping the roads safer for everybody.”

Structure fire at 415 Stonewall Circle contained within minutes

The Salem Fire & EMS Department responded to a structure fire at 415 Stonewall Circle on January 4 at approximately 12:57 p.m. Two people were home at the time of the fire, and each escaped without injury.

The first units arrived within three minutes of receiving the emergency call and found smoke coming from the lower section of the home. Crews were able to bring the fire under control within ten minutes and keep it from spreading beyond the basement area of the house.

Approximately 27 personnel from the Salem Fire & EMS Department (Truck 1, Engine 2, Engine 3, Medic 801, Medic 802,

Medic 803, Medic 804, Battalion 1 & Fire Medic 1) and the Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Department (Wagon 9 & Battalion 1) responded to the call.

The Salem Fire Marshal’s Office has ruled the fire accidental in nature and determined that it was caused by an electrical issue. The basement section of the house did sustain smoke and water damage that is estimated at less than \$10,000. Two residents were displaced by the fire and they are being assisted by family.

-Submitted by Mike Stevens, City of Salem Communications Director

Griffith from page 4

ing bill for fiscal year 2021 is the longest bill I’ve been asked to vote on in Congress. It was split into two parts running nearly 5,600 pages. The first totaled roughly 500 pages and included funding for the military and border security, including the border wall. I read this part and found its spending to be largely reasonable, so I voted for it.

“The second part

containing the remaining 5,000 pages, while reportedly including some provisions I support, also reportedly featured far too many items that have no place in a spending bill. Members of Congress had only a few hours to read and analyze this overstuffed monstrosity. As I have pledged to the constituents of the Ninth District, I will not vote for a bill I have not read in its

entirety. I voted no.

“I continue to believe Americans need help in the face of the pandemic, and I know most of my colleagues agree. Legislation that would provide help would likely pass Congress easily, and there is no good reason to tie it to the overall omnibus bill.”

-Submitted by Kevin Baird, Communications Director

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BAPTIST (INDEPENDENT)

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH-7th and Florida Streets, Salem VA. Pastor: Roger D. Counts, 540-389-3818. Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Morning Worship 11:00 a.m., Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m., Wednesday Night Prayer Service, 6:30 p.m.

LAKESIDE BAPTIST CHURCH - 447 Dalewood Avenue, Salem, 986-0062, Pastor Carl Goodman. Coffee Bar 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Children & Student Ministry 5:30-7:30 p.m.; Thursday 7:00 pm Young Single Adults, Wednesday Morning Prayer Service 10:00, Lifegroups meeting throughout the week. www.lbcva.com.

SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH, 2721 120'Clock Knob Rd., Salem, Pastor: Tim York; Sundayschool, 9:45AM, Sunday morning worship, 11:00AM, Sunday evening, 6:00PM, Wednesday evening, 7:00PM.

TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH - 4339 Daugherty Road, Salem, Greg Irby, Pastor, Church: 380-3567; Home: 389-7240, Sunday School 10:00 AM, Worship Services 11:00AM & 6:00PM, Mid-week Prayer Meeting Wednesday 7:00PM, www.templebaptch.com.

BAPTIST (SOUTHERN)

BETHEL BAPTIST-1601 S. Colorado St., Salem, Pastor Hilton Jeffreys, 389-2376, Sunday: - 9:30 Sunday School; 10:30am Morning Worship; 6:00 Evening Worship; Wednesday 6:15 Preschool & Children Awana and Youth and Adult Bible Study. www.bethelbaptistva.com

MOUNTAIN PASS BAPTIST CHURCH - 311 Catawba Valley Dr., (Ro. Co.) Salem, VA 24153. Rev. Jack Richards, Jr., Pastor, Study 384-6720, Home 427-1508. Sundays: Sunday School 9:45 a.m.; Morning Worship 11:00 a.m., Evening 6:00 p.m. Wed: 7:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting and Bible Study.

RIDGEWOOD BAPTIST-703 Hemlock Road N.W. Roanoke, 342-6492. Roy E. Kanode, Pastor. Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship 11 a.m., Awana 5:15 p.m., Adult Bible Study and Youth Fellowship 6:00 p.m.; Wednesday Prayer Service 6:30 p.m.; Fellowship Meal 5:45 p.m.; Praiz Kidz 6:00 p.m.; Family Night Activities 6:30 p.m. website: www.ridgewood-baptist.com.

SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH- 103 North Broad Street, Salem, Pastor, Dr. Heath Rickmond, 387-0416. Sunday School 9:15-10:15 a.m.; Sunday Worship 10:30-11:45 a.m. & 5:00 p.m. Wednesday Services 6:15 p.m. www.salembc.net

FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY CHURCH - Ken Nienke, Pastor, 387-3200. Salem Campus: 1226 Red Lane Extension, Salem, Worship Times: 8:00AM, 9:15AM & 11:00AM. North Campus: 7210 Williamson Road, Roanoke, Worship Times: 9:15AM & 11:00AM. Southwest Campus: 3585 Buck Mountain Road, Roanoke, Worship Times: 9:15AM & 11:00AM. www.fcclife.org.

BRETHREN

GREEN HILL CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN, 2699 Harborwood Rd (Ro. Co.) Salem, (540) 389-5109, Email: greenhillcob@verizon.net, find us on Facebook. Continuing the work of Jesus, Peacefully, Simply, Together. God's Work Our Hands

CHURCHES OF CHRIST/CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

SALEM CHURCH OF CHRIST - 401 West Main Street. 540-389-2400. Minister Eric Evans; Family Life Minister Taylor Plott;

Salem

WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Almighty God

Read Genesis 40:1 through 41:57

Joseph spent two years in a dungeon after interpreting the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer. Joseph had asked this man to mention him to the king upon being reinstated, but, as each day dragged on, no communication came from the Pharaoh. When Pharaoh had a dream and told it to all his wise men, no one could interpret it. The cupbearer finally remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him.

So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh (Genesis 41:14).

Joseph was going to be taken into the presence of the nation's highest ruler. His first order of business was to make himself presentable. His prison clothing and his haggard appearance were hardly appropriate to stand before royalty. Joseph prepared to see the king, honoring the authority and majesty of Pharaoh.

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

Thought for Today: Consider the majesty of God.

Quicklook: Genesis 41:1-14

To list your church, contact Randy Thompson at 540-230-1129 or email advertise@ourvalley.org

9:00-9:45am Sunday Bible Study; 10:00am & 5:30pm Worship Service; Wednesday Bible Study: 6:00 - 7:00pm. For more info contact the Church Office.

WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST - 1705 Starview Drive, Salem. Minister Neil Richey, 389-9139, Sunday Bible Study: 9:30 AM, Morning Worship: 10:30 AM, Evening Worship: 6:00 PM, Wednesday Bible Study, 7:00 PM.

CHURCH OF GOD/ANDERSON

COVENANT COMMUNITY CHURCH- 955 Bird Lane, Salem, Va 24153, 389-5639. Pastor: Scott Hudson. Sunday School 10:00AM, Worship 11:00AM; Bible Study 6:00PM.

CHURCH OF GOD/CLEVELAND

SALEM CHURCH OF GOD - 600 Craig Avenue, Todd Stiffler, Pastor, 387-2068, Sunday School 9:30am: Worship and Kids Church 10:30 am, Wednesday Bible Study and Classes at 7:00 pm. www.salemcog.church

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

First Christian Church, 712 Front Ave. Salem, Pastor Dan Netting (540) 389-6831. www.firstchristiansalemva.com. Adult and Children Sunday School - 9:45 am, Worship - 10:45 am. Nursery Provided for both. Everyone welcome

FORT LEWIS CHRISTIAN CHURCH - 2931 West Main Street, Salem, Pastor, Rev. Ben Moore, 380-4636. Website: www.flccsaalem.org. Adult and Children Sunday School, 9:30 AM, Worship 10:30 AM, Disciple Players Drama Ministry, Wednesday 6:00 PM, followed by Adult Choir Practice at 7:00 PM.

ECKANKAR

Eckankar, the Path of Spiritual Freedom, is located at 1420 3rd St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. Eckankar is a spiritual path that offers a Light & Sound Service on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 11:00 a.m. However, due to COVID-19, the Monthly Service and other ECK programs are now available online through Zoom. Visit www.eck-va.org for program listings or call 540-353-5365 and leave a message. We will return your call.

EPISCOPAL

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - 42 East Main Street, Salem, 389-9307. The Rev. Dr. David Compton. Sundays at 10:00 am Holy Communion in church and livestream on Facebook. Wednesday Morning Prayer livestreamed at 11:30 am. facebook.com/st.pauls.salemva/

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN

COLLEGE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH - 210 S. College Avenue, Salem VA 24153. Please visit our website www.collegelutheran.org for information on services.

FOUR SQUARE

the BRIDGE SALEM CHURCH - 4335 West Main Street, Salem. 540-404-1414 | bridge.salem@icloud.com • www.salemva.church Saturday service, 6pm (Nursery & Kids Church available). Mail: PO Box 1954, Salem. Twitter/Instagram: @thebridgesalem Joey Lyons, Senior Pastor | joey@salemva.church | 540-831-9864

INDEPENDENT

RESTORATION CHURCH - a Community on Mission Following Jesus into the World

- 10:10am Sundays at the Salem YMCA - 1126 Kime Lane, Salem - 540-384-1601 - www.restorationsalem.org. Watch Live at: YouTube: Restoration Church-Salem, VA. Facebook: RestorationChurchSalem

NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, U.S.A., INC.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH-226 South Broad Street, Salem. Rev. Melton Johnson, 389-9648. Sunday School 9:30 AM, Sunday Morning Worship Service 11:00 AM, Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting 7:00 PM.

SHILOH BAPTIST- 201 South Market Street, Salem, Rev. Adrian E. Dowell, H) (389-0409). (Sundays) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, (Wednesday) Prayer Meeting & Bible Study for Youths & Adults, 7:30 p.m. (Saturday) 8:00 a.m. - Intercessory Prayer Service, Women's Bible Study Fellowship 9:30am Fridays, Men's Bible Study 7am Saturdays.

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

CHRISTIAN LIFE INT'L - 1 CLI Way, Salem, Ryan Linkous, Pastor, 343-3801, Sunday Worship Service 10:15 AM, (Children's Church and Nursery) Wed, MidWeek Service (Adult, Awaken Youth, Impact Girls & Royal Rangers) 7 PM. Nursery Provided. Email: office@clchurch.org. Find us on facebook.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

SALEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH- 41 East Main Street, Salem, VA . 389-3881. Associate Pastor Rev. Janet Chisom, Interim Pastor: Rev. Tupper Garden. Until further notice: Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m. are online only. Please contact the church for online details for Sunday School and worship with us at www.salempres.org, or Facebook, or YouTube.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

(Evangelical Presbyterian Church EPC)
NEW LIFE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH -101 Keesling Avenue, Salem, VA, 387-1311, Rev. Cameron Smith, Sunday 9:15 Prayer/Communion, Sunday School 9:45 am., Sunday Worship 11:00am, 2nd & 4th Sunday children & youth ministry, Wednesday Choir Practice 7:00pm, 1st Wed of month Richfield Ministry. Nursery and children's church available each week. Email: newlife.epc.salem@gmail.com, Web: www.newlifesalemEPC.org. Facebook: facebook.com/newlife.epc.salem

ROMAN CATHOLIC

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP -314 Turner Road, Salem. 387-0491, Rev. Ken Shuping, Saturday Mass - 5:00 p.m., Sunday Mass 10:30am, Daily Mass: Mon 12noon, Wed 6:30pm, Thur 12noon & Fri 12noon; Mass on Sunday at 1:00 pm in Spanish; Confessions Wednesday 5:30-6, Saturday 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. and by appointment.

UNITED METHODIST

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 125 W. Main St, Salem, VA. 540-389-5459. Pastor Alan Combs, Traditional Worship - 8:45am, Sunday School - 9:45am, Genesis Contemporary Worship 10am; Traditional Worship - 11:00am. www.fumcsalemva.org.
LOCUST GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH- 3415 Locust Grove Lane, Salem, 380-4303, Pastor Logan Hollenbeck. Drive-In service each Sunday Traditional Worship 9:30 a.m.

Additional health insurance coverage options for Medicare-eligible Virginians under age 65

New insurance coverage options are now available to Medicare-eligible Virginians under the age of 65.

Individuals are now able to enroll in Medicare Supplement (also known as Medigap) plans if they are:

- Under age 65 and live in Virginia
- Eligible for Medicare by reason of disability, and
- Either enrolled in or will be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B by the effective date of coverage.

Medigap is sold by private

companies and helps fill coverage gaps in original Medicare. A Medigap policy can pay for copayments, coinsurance and deductibles for covered services. In some cases, it can also pay for services that original Medicare doesn't cover, such as medical care when traveling outside the U.S.

A new law passed by the 2020 Virginia General Assembly requires each insurer, health service plan and health maintenance organization that issues Medigap plans in Virginia to offer the option to buy at least one of its Medigap plans to in-

dividuals who meet the above criteria for eligibility.

The Medigap plans are guaranteed for eligible individuals. In other words, the insurer must issue and maintain coverage as long as premiums are paid on the policy or certificate. In addition, insurers cannot exclude benefits based on pre-existing conditions under certain circumstances.

Enrollment periods may vary depending on one's circumstances and eligibility. To learn more, contact companies that sell Medigap policies in

Virginia or visit the State Corporation Commission's (SCC) Bureau of Insurance (Bureau) website at Virginia SCC - Tips, Guides & Publications and select Medicare Supplement.

In Virginia, individuals have a 30-day "free look" period for a Medigap policy that allows them to return the policy for a full premium refund within 30 days of purchase if not satisfied.

Upon turning 65, individuals who have purchased a Medigap policy under the pre-65 coverage option, will receive a new six-month open enrollment

period and can purchase any of the standardized Medigap plans, which may offer a wider choice of plans and lower premiums.

For more information about Medigap plans, a list of insurance companies that sell Medigap policies to disabled Medicare-eligible individuals under age 65, and a list of premiums, visit the Bureau of Insurance website at Virginia SCC - Tips, Guides & Publications and select Medicare Supplement.

-Submitted by
Katha Treanor

Billing

from page 3

ance billing, as well as notify enrollees of their rights under the new law. If an enrollee is subject to balance billing, the new law requires that their financial responsibility must be based on what they would pay an in-network provider or in-

network facility in their area.

If health care providers have a pattern of violations under the new law without attempting corrective action, they are subject to fines or other measures by the Virginia Board of Medicine or the Virginia Com-

missioner of Health. Similarly, insurance companies that are found to engage in a pattern of violations of the new law are subject to fines or other sanctions by the SCC.

For more information, contact the Virginia Bureau of

Insurance toll-free at 1-877-310-6560 or visit scc.virginia.gov. Questions related to the arbitrator application, requests to arbitrate, or questions regarding the self-funded opt-in process may be emailed to BBVA@scc.virginia.gov. Consumer

questions and complaints about balance billing may be emailed to BureauofInsurance@scc.virginia.gov.

Submitted by
Katha Treanor,
Communications Manager

OBITUARIES

Ritter, Doris May Chambers

Doris May Chambers Ritter, 94 of Salem, passed away on Sunday, January 3.

Doris graduated from Troutville High School and later was a part of Roanoke College's Class of 1948. She was a medical technologist and worked for the National Institutes of Health. She served as a past President of the YWCA of Roanoke. Her longstanding church membership was held at the College Lutheran Church of Salem, and she has recently attended St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Roanoke.

Preceding her in death were her parents, Ivan and Deborah McAlexander Chambers; husband of 58 years, Rev. Guy A. Ritter Jr.; son, Charles A. M. Ritter; and brother, Clyde I. Chambers.

Her surviving family includes her children, Ivan C. Ritter and wife, Nancy, and Paul A. Ritter and Penny Hooker; step-



grandson, Scott Thomas and wife, Melissa; step-great-grandchildren, Ashlynn Thomas, Isabella Carr, and Dexter Thomas; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

The family extends special appreciation to the staff at Brandon Oaks, both in Assisted Living and the Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, for their excellent care.

A graveside service was conducted on Wednesday, January 6, at 11 a.m. at Sherwood Memorial Park in Salem with the Rev. James Armentrout officiating.

In lieu of flowers, charitable contributions may be made to the Guy A. "Tex" Ritter Jr. '48 and Doris Chambers Ritter '48 Endowed Scholarship at Roanoke College located at 221 College Avenue in Salem, Va. 24153. Online condolences may be expressed at www.johnmoakey.com.

McClung, Margaret "Maggie" Burwell Graves

Margaret McClung, of Salem, joined the church triumphant on December 23, 2020.

She was born on September 16, 1931, and was predeceased by her parents, Dr. Kenneth and Margaret Graves; her children Blair Burwell McClung and David Gwin McClung; her sister Blair Smith (Brenton); and nephew Kenneth Smith.

She is survived by her loving husband of 67 years, David Simmons McClung, II; their children, Frances Ferguson (Norman), Lew McClung (Michele), and Tom McClung (Gail); grandchildren Julia Ferrantino (Peter, daughters Blair and Emily), Robert Ferguson, Marshall McClung (Kate), Harper McClung (Meredith Bean, son Will), Carol Prickett (Erron), Lauren Conner (Chad), Elijah and Maggie McClung; near-grandchildren Athena Jean-Charles and Cayden Looney; and numerous other relatives, including nephews Philip Smith (Debra, daughters Maggie and Catherine) and Brenton Smith (Kristy, children Emma and Dawson).

Margaret was a proud graduate of



Jefferson High School and Sweet Briar College. Over her lifetime, she was active in the Junior League, the Girl Scouts, the Salem Garden Club, the Blue Ridge Orchid Society, and Salem Presbyterian Church in many roles, including as a teacher, an elder, and in the leadership of the flower committee. She worked in advertising for

the family business, McClung Lumber Co. Margaret was a gifted artist and delighted in sharing her creativity with others. She cherished time with her family and provided her children and grandchildren the gift of international travel. She entertained and enjoyed a large circle of friends, both near and far, and was a member of the Roanoke Assembly and the Salem Junior Guild.

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection was held on Wednesday, December 30, at 10 a.m. at Salem Presbyterian Church. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests those who wish to make a contribution in Margaret's memory consider Salem Presbyterian Church or Sweet Briar College. Arrangements by John M. Oakey & Son.

Lynch, Jan Heyn

Dr. Jan Heyn Lynch, 73, of Salem, passed away on Monday, December 28, surrounded by her family. Dr. Lynch began her educational career after obtaining her undergraduate degree from Columbus State University, and Master's and Ph.D. from the University of Georgia.

After graduation, she began her career at Roanoke College in 1980, and taught Psychology for nearly 35 years. Jan's outgoing personality is legendary throughout the RC campus. It was often said that Carol Burnette sought out Jan for pointers on being an extrovert, and Lady Gaga approached Jan for advice on fashion accessories.

If you knew Jan, you knew that she loved flamingos, so much so that her 60th birthday surprise to everyone was a flamingo tattoo. Dr. Lynch had a special appreciation for her grandchildren, perhaps because they kept her young at heart. She and her husband, Larry, loved traveling the world. Sailing was their passion on many of their adventures; one of the most mem-



orable of these was sailing around the Greek Islands.

On Monday evening, Jan set "sail again," this time reuniting with the love of her life, Dr. Larry A. Lynch. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by her parents, Clarence W., and Lucille Cromarti Heyn; and one brother, Patrick Heyn.

Those left to cherish her memory include her step-daughter, Kimberly Lynch Cash, and husband, Anthony; grandchildren, Ryan Cash and fiancée, Kaylee, Carly Cash O'Keefe and husband, Patrick, Cullen Cash, and Braden Cash; brothers, Chris Heyn, and wife, Gail, Dennis Heyn and wife, Ann, and Michael Heyn; sister-in-law, Libby Heskett, and husband, Ken; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, friends and her Roanoke College Family.

A celebration of life will be held for Drs. Jan and Larry Lynch when it is safe to do so.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.johnmoakey.com.

Dougherty, Wade Hawks

Wade Hawks Dougherty, 51, of Salem, went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, January 3, from his home surrounded by his family.

He was born on April 25, 1969, son of the late John Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Swan Dougherty.

As a student at Rowan College of South Jersey, Wade took criminal justice courses which assisted him in earning a position in Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino. However, his passion for cooking was prominent and was evident in his skills as a short order cook at Ms. Kitty's Restaurant in Salem.

He remained faithfully employed at Ms. Kitty's, where numerous friendships were made for numerous years until his health declined and he was forced to retire. Wade continued to keep up with the friends he made as he transitioned into staying at home helping care for his grandchildren.

When not at work, Wade was known as an avid hunter, as well as his skill in crocheting. As a member of Unity Church of the Roanoke Valley, Wade was a proud member of the choir and love to spend time practicing and being with



the other choir members. Along with this, he also crocheted prayer shawls for the church members and others who were ill. Above all, he will be remembered as a loving grandfather, father, husband and friend to many. No one was ever a stranger to Wade.

In addition to his parents, Wade was preceded in death by his aunt, Ruth Ann Schermerhorn and her husband Glen; and his brother, Michael Patrick Dougherty.

Family remaining to cherish his memory includes his wife of 26 years, Alisia Bender-Dougherty; children, Brandi Bender, Joe Bender (Sabrina), Wade Dougherty, Jr. (Alisha), and Kevin Dougherty; grandchildren, Michael, Christian, Dylan, Isis "Sissy", Amythest, Claire, Saffyre, Ruby, and Reid; siblings, John "Jack" Dougherty, Ruth Ann Turner, Thomas Dougherty, Joseph Dougherty, Joann Murray, and Marie Monperosso; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Wade's life will be announced at a later date.

Expressions of sympathy may be expressed to Wade's family by visiting www.johnmoakey.com.

Wright, Leonard Daniel

Leonard Daniel Wright, 58, of Salem, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, November 28, 2020. Lenny was born October 27, 1962, the son of the late Leonard and Irene Wright. Lenny was preceded in death by his brothers, Tommy and Charles Wright and brother-in-law Wayne Garst.

He is survived by his wife, Donna, son and daughter-in-law Zachary and Kallie, sons Trenton and Caleb, his beloved furb-

abies Lucy and Watson, sister Jean Garst, sister and brother-in-law Brenda and Paul Jenkins, as well as many extended family and friends.

There will be a Celebration of Life gathering Saturday, January 9, at 11:00 a.m. at Green Hill Church of the Brethren in the Fellowship Hall. Masks and social distancing will be required. Please come with stories to tell of the good times you shared with Lenny.

Be sure to 'Like' the Salem-Times Register on Facebook.



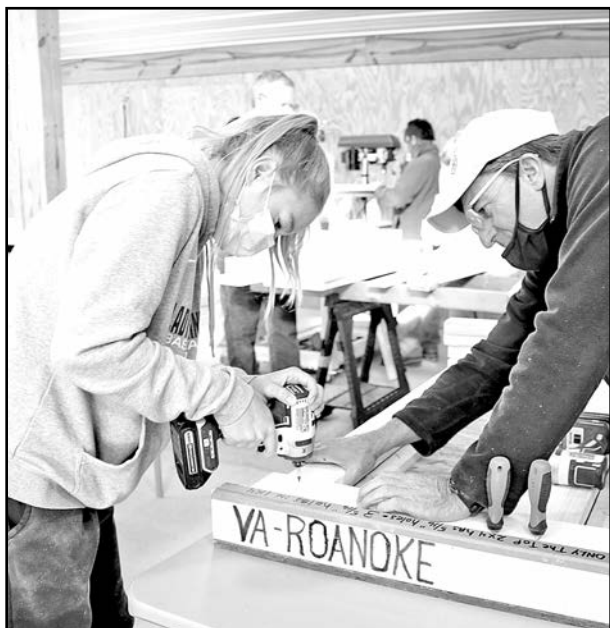
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Salem Rotary from page 1



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Left, Salem High student Brook Bowers drilling a hole while Club President Jeff Howard holds the board in place. Right, group photo of everyone who helped build the 33 beds.

tary Club, President-elect Tom Bowers was able to secure \$5,750 in 2020. Rotary District 7570 matched that amount for a total of \$11,500 which was enough to build 33 beds for the Roanoke Chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

Explained Bowers in more detail, "The Rotary Club of

Salem in a joint venture with City of Salem Directors, Constitutional Officers and employees raised funds jointly for an initial build of 15 beds that occurred on February 22, 2020. Based on the success of the initial build and on the identified need, we then raised \$5,750 from within

the club, and that \$5,750 was matched in August by the District Matching Grant Program. The \$11,500 paid for 33 bunk beds that were built. All raised funds were solely used for purchasing the necessary building materials."

David Jones, President of the Roanoke Chapter of Sleep

in Heavenly Peace, recently came to a Rotary meeting and spoke about his non-profit organization. He said, in part, "Child bedlessness is a national problem, and as a national non-profit throughout the country, SHP (Sleep in Heavenly Peace) has provided the solution."

In all of Bower's years that he has been affiliated with the Rotary Club of Salem, he says that kindness and selfless gestures are needed more than ever. The Sleep in Heavenly Peace motto, he noted, of "No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town" is a great challenge for our nation.

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Legals - Botetourt County

ORDER OF PUBLICATION
Commonwealth of Virginia VA. Code Ann. §§ 8.01-316, -317
Case No. 20-649
Botetourt County Circuit Court
Mary Elizabeth McKenney v. Richard Lee McKenney
The object of this suit is to: Obtain a divorce based on separation of 1 year. It is ORDERED that Richard Lee McKenney appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before 02/01/2021. 12-28-20

Sherry Perry
Deputy Clerk

Legals - City of Salem

Public Notice
Notice is hereby given that the City of Salem, Community Development is requesting authorization from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to amend VMRC permit (2019-1802) issued for this project, to include the installation of temporary work platform, measuring 27 feet by 45 feet, suspended beneath the Mill Lane Roadway Bridge a minimum 12-inches above the Ordinary High Water mark of the Roanoke River to allow access for bridge repair work.

Send comments/inquiries within 15 days to: Marine Resources Commission, Habitat Management Division, 380 Fenwick Road, Building 96, Fort Monroe, VA 23651 or jpa.permits@mrc.virginia.gov

Legals - Craig County

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia VA CODE § 8.01-316
Case No. JJ002182-04-00, JJ002182-05-00, JJ002182-06-00
CRAIG COMBINED COURT- JUVENILE
Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* PAITSEL, RAYNE, AKA BABY GIRL GARMAN
The object of this suit is to:

Terminate the residual parental rights of the father of Rayne Paitsel, aka Baby Girl Garman thought to be either Daniel Garman, Christopher Allen Paitsel or Unknown Father pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 16.1-283 B and C, and which child is under the age of twelve (12) months and was born to Kristen Nicole Garman. Residual parental rights are defined in Section 16.1-228 of the Code of Virginia (1950, as amended) as the rights and responsibilities remaining with a parent after the parent loses custody of a child, including but not limited to the right to visitation, consent to adoption, the right to determine religious affiliation, and the responsibility for support. The termination of your residual parental rights will permanently end all of your rights and responsibilities to the child named in the petition. The ties between you and your child are severed forever and you become a legal stranger to the child.

It is ORDERED that Daniel Garman, Christopher Paitsel & Unknown Father appear at the above-named Court and protect his or her interests on or before 02/17/2021 09:30 AM.

12/29/2020
Patty Taylor
Deputy Clerk

Legals - Montgomery County

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC is requesting a permit from Virginia Marine Resources Commission to install turbidity monitors in multiple streams with drainage areas greater than five (5) square miles, which are considered to be State-owned subaqueous bottomlands of the Commonwealth, to monitor suspended stream sediment levels along the designated pipeline corridor in Giles, Montgomery, Franklin, Roanoke and Pittsylvania Counties for the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) project. Send Comments/inquiries within 15 days to: Marine Resources Commission, Habitat Management Division, 380 Fenwick Road, Building 96, Fort Monroe, VA 23651 or jpa.permits@mrc.virginia.gov.

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301 AG

continued from page 12

I try to look on the bright side, even though that's hard to do with people dying and the map of virus action creeping toward us here in southwest Virginia. Still, here a few ways to look at things, good and bad, as we try to get through this difficult time in our lives.

GOOD- If you're a Yankee fan, it gives Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton more time to get better.

BAD- If you're NOT a Yankee fan, it gives Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton more time to get better.

GOOD- The University of Virginia will be the reigning NCAA basketball champs for another year.

BAD- There are no NCAA basketball games to watch until November(hopefully).

GOOD- Gas has dropped to under \$2 a gallon.

BAD- There's nowhere to go.

GOOD- Haven't lost any money betting on games.

BAD- Haven't won any money betting on games.

GOOD- Plenty of time to work on the yard.

BAD- No baseball games being played at "The Yard"

GOOD- There's still no crying in baseball

BAD- There's crying because there's no baseball

GOOD- Finally will have time to go to the pool.

BAD- Pool's closed

MAY 7, 57 DAYS

Well, it's now day 57 AG. That's "After Gobert," the date when Rudy of the Jazz was found to have the virus and all sports as we know it came to a halt.

Are you dying to watch baseball, like me? Are the World Series games from the past 20 years not doing it for you? After all, we know who won. What fun is that?

Well, did you know we have live baseball on TV this week, and we don't know who will win. We may not even care, but at least its baseball.

Beginning Tuesday of this week ESPN will televise six games a week from South Korea's professional league. Opening day in Korea was Tuesday in the KBO(Korea Baseball Organization).

You might want to record the games. Tuesday's opener was at 2 pm, Korean time, but that's one o'clock in the morning here. I stayed up to watch some of it, but as luck would have it the game was rain delayed for the first half hour and I fell asleep. However, I did record it and watched an inning or two the next morning.

"The KBO League is one of the greatest baseball leagues with world-class players and many exciting initiatives," KBO commissioner Un-Chan Chung said. "During this unprecedented and difficult time, I hope the KBO League can bring consolation to the communities and provide guidelines to the world of sports. I am pleased that the KBO League can be introduced globally and hope this can be an opportunity for the development of our league and the sport."

There are a few names on the Korean rosters you'll recognize. For one, former Salem Red Sox player Casey Kelly is a pitcher for the LG Twins. Once considered the top prospect in the Red Sox organization, Kelly was one of four players the Sox traded to San Diego for Adrian Gonzalez in December of 2010. Former Salem standout Anthony Rizzo also went to San Diego in that trade and was later dealt to the Cubs, where he blossomed as a big league star.

Dan Straily, who pitched close to 500 innings in the majors with the Reds and Marlins, is on the Lotte Giants. Aaron Altherr, who was the starting leftfielder for the Phillies a couple years ago, is on the NC Dinos along with former Orioles pitcher Mike Wright. There are a few other names baseball fans might recognize, but no one you'd consider a star, or even a regular, who played in the United States.

But what the heck, its baseball and its' all we have right now. I'm going to give it a chance and maybe even find a favorite Korean team to root for. Can you buy a Kiwoom Heroes hat on the Internet?

JULY 2, 113 DAYS

Today is day 113 AG, or 113 days "After Gobert" tested positive for Covid-19 and all sports came to a halt. But the good news is, it looks like we're going to have big league baseball this summer after all. At least that's the plan as I write this column three and a half months after the Jazz walked off the court.

"Spring" training is supposed to start this week, followed by a 60 game schedule beginning July 23 or 24. It sounds like it will be a lot like the Korean games, with no fans and lots of rules to keep people safe. I should be plenty safe watching from the recliner in my basement.

Major League Baseball has put out a 101 page "operations manual" for the 2020 season. It includes playing rules, health protocols, travel, media regulations and anything to do with playing the games, and I'm sure lots of stuff will come up that wasn't anticipated once the season begins.

A couple different rules of note include an expanded 30 man roster. That will go down to 28 after two weeks and 26 after four weeks, but there will also be a "taxi squad" where other players will be available. Remember, there's no minor league baseball so teams might want to give some of their better prospects an opportunity to see the field.

The "Designated Hitter" rule is always a point of contention and both leagues will use the DH for the abbreviated season. However, it won't be used in the National League in 2021 if things are back to normal as next year is the final year of the collective bargaining agreement. Then, after next season, it will be on the table to make it universal starting with the 2022 season. Of course, that's if the players don't strike over the next agreement, which is always a possibility with baseball.

Another rule of interest is the one used in girls' softball, where you put a runner on second to start any inning after regulation. In baseball that would be the 10th inning, and the idea is to make for more scoring opportunities to keep games from running long.

Being a traditionalist, I don't know that I care for that rule. However, as a baseball fan if that's what they feel they need to get the game back on TV then I'm okay with it.

There are lots of rules in the operations manual

about safety measures, and some of them are going to be hard to enforce. People aren't going to break the rules on purpose, but life-long habits are hard to break.

Players won't be allowed to spit, and baseball players like to spit. They won't be chewing tobacco or spitting sunflower seeds, and those are habits that will be hard to break for some.

Pitchers cannot lick their fingers to get a better grip on the ball. From personal experience I have a habit of licking the tips of my fingers when I count paper money. Probably not a good thing, but you know how it is when bills stick together.

Well, I've been wearing a mask to the grocery store and when I get to the checkout and pull out my bills I instinctively go to lick the tips of my fingers. I don't even realize I'm doing it until my fingers hit the mask, usually drawing a chuckle from the cashier.

Pitchers are allowed to carry a small wet rag in their back pocket, but they must dry their hands before pitching so what good does that do? Only water is permitted on the rag and the umpire is allowed to check the rag at any time, but must put on gloves to do so.

See where this is going? There are a lot of rules that seem to be ridiculous among first inspection, but are deemed important to keep the coronavirus from spreading. Players not in the game are allowed to sit in the empty stands to allow for "social distancing," and leaning on the dugout railing is discouraged. There is not a rule against it, but if you do lean on the rail you have to put a towel on the rail before leaning.

My question is, what is the penalty for failing to abide by these rules? Will someone get thrown out of the game for licking their fingers or leaning on the rail without a towel?

Of course charging the mound or fighting is strictly prohibited due to "social distancing." Then again, fighting has always been prohibited but players do it anyway.

What happens the first time a pitcher comes high and tight to an Astros' batter, sending a message they didn't appreciate last year's trash-can-banging cheating scandal? Will the umpire warn the pitcher or throw him out on the spot, knowing the batter has little recourse other than to duck. And, as the old saying goes, weren't rules made to be broken anyway.

It's going to be interesting, if it happens at all. As I'm typing numbers continue to rise and people are getting stressed out. I look at everything as being day-to-day anymore.

Or, as NBA commissioner Adam Silver succinctly noted months ago, "we're in uncharted territory."

AUGUST 6, 148 DAYS

It's now day 148 AG, or "After Gobert." Can you believe it's been 148 days since Rudy Gobert came down with COVID-19 and the sports world as we knew it came to a halt?

Next week will be four months and things aren't back to normal in the sports world, but at least they're better. We've had pro golf and auto racing for a while, and having no fans in the stands hasn't been a big deal in that regard. Now we have Major League Baseball, NBA basketball and NHL hockey games to watch while college and pro football teams are opening camp. Are we back to normal? I think not.

I'm waiting for the bubble to burst on baseball any day now. The MLB is playing a 60 game schedule with few off days, and the Phillies and Marlins have already missed an entire week of games due to the virus. Through Tuesday the Phillies were three games behind the 8-4 Atlanta Braves in the National League East but, at 1-3, they were one game ahead of the Braves in the loss column.

I love baseball, but I don't see how you can call this fair competition. Players are dropping out in fear of getting the virus. Teams like the Marlins, who had over a dozen players test positive, are just trying to field a full team. How can it be fair when one team is playing the Yankees and trying to catch a division rival who is playing what amounts to a AAA team?

I covered "The Last Inning" baseball event for high school seniors at Salem Memorial Saturday night and the rumor going around was that baseball was going to be shut down after Sunday. It wasn't, but who knows what's going to happen by the time this column comes out.

The struggles that baseball is having certainly don't bode well for NFL football. You have about 20 more players per team, and a whole lot more contact. That's a much higher chance to spread the virus, even with great precaution. Eagles coach Doug Pederson was saying how safe he felt at the practice facility last week, and a couple days later he tested positive.

College football could be even worse. First of all you're dealing with younger people, who don't seem to fear the virus as much as the older folks do. Also, they're used to being the big men on campus with lots of party opportunities, and that's a recipe for disaster. I'm sure every precaution will be taken, but when it gets down to it the college season depends on players in their late teens and early 20s behaving. And, it only takes a few to spoil it for the rest.

The best case is the NBA, where the players are in a bubble and have a real chance of staying away from the virus. Unless a lot more players start going to strip clubs to buy chicken wings(see Lou Williams) the NBA should relatively safe.

Of course, that's okay for this season but how about next season? If things aren't any better will these players and surrounding game personnel be willing to spend nine months in a bubble for a safe regular season? Would you want to be away from your family for that long? I think not.

We've already seen the high school sports throw in the towel until Christmas and the more sane college conferences, like the ODAC, are doing the same. Personally, I don't see it getting better any time soon until there's a vaccine that will keep everyone safe.

And the guy who is responsible for that should get one of those Patrick Mahomes-type contracts.

SEPTEMBER 10, 183 DAYS

Today is day 183 AG, or 183 days since "After Gobert" tested positive for COVID-19 and all sports as we knew them came to a halt. Friday will be six months, half a year, since all sports stopped due to that NBA game.

You can certainly say all sports "as we knew them" were curtailed at that point. If you remember, and who doesn't, the NBA, NHL and Major League Baseball all shut down and the NCAA basketball "March Madness" made everyone mad when it was cancelled. We had no NASCAR, no horse racing, not

even golf back in March.

Things have changed since then, and mostly for the better. We still can't go to sports but at least we can watch some stuff on TV. Last Saturday I watched big league baseball, Stanley Cup hockey, NBA basketball playoffs and the Kentucky Derby all on the same day. We've had NASCAR and golf for quite some time, although spectators aren't included. Still, it's better than nothing.

College football is here, although I won't be there. When Virginia Tech plays host to the University of Virginia on September 19 it will mark the first time since I started working for the paper in 1974 that I won't be at the Tech football games. I suspected as much, but I got the official word last week that photographers won't be allowed on the sidelines this year except for the team photographer and a pool photographer from the ACC. I really don't need photos of a pool, but whatever.

This pandemic has stopped many other individual streaks of mine. This will be the first year since 1966 that I will not have attended a Philadelphia Phillie baseball game other than the 1994 strike season, when we had tickets but the games were cancelled due to the strike. It will be the first season since the Nationals moved from Montreal to Washington that I won't see the Nats play live in DC.

This will likely be the first time since I was eight years old that I won't see a high school football game in the fall. That's still up in the air, as North Cross will be playing a fall schedule and it remains to be seen what kind of "crowd" will be allowed at the game. One of the opponents on the Raiders' schedule is some school named St. Michael the Archangel, and don't tell me that won't be a war. They play a home school team on September 18. Do they practice in someone's back yard?

As you know the National Football League begins on Thursday of this week and I'm going to be watching a lot of those games, as I normally do anyway. I was hoping they'd play some games on Friday and Saturday, just for this season, to make up for the games we don't have on those days.

Last week would have normally been the beginning of college football season, and we did have some games. In the afternoon we were excited to see Marshall beat Eastern Kentucky, 59-0, and Army didn't appear to be a bunch of losers and suckers when they shut out Middle Tennessee, 42-0. In the evening the games were a little closer as SMU beat Texas State, 31-24, and Memphis downed Arkansas State, 37-24. By that time, however, I was switching back and forth between baseball, basketball and hockey.

This week is a little better with Syracuse at UNC, Duke at Notre Dame and Georgia Tech at Florida State highlighting the schedule. I assume there will be no fans and any of these games could get cancelled depending on how the virus goes.

Hopefully this virus will magically go away soon like the president assures us. He wouldn't lie to us, would he?

OCTOBER 22, 224 DAYS

It's now 224 AG, or 224 days "After Gobert" tested positive for Covid-19 and all sports as we knew them came to an end. Some of them have since returned, but certainly not like it was before March 12th, seven months ago on Monday of this week.

Last week, for the first time in the crazy year of 2020, I watched a high school football game on Friday night. Only thing is, it was on the video board at the baseball field.

Last Friday at Salem Memorial Ballpark football fans came to see a replay of Salem's 2015 state championship win over Lake Taylor at Liberty University. Nate Craft was on hand to watch himself kick a field goal in the second overtime as the Spartans took an exciting 17-14 win. It was nice, but it certainly wasn't as exciting as it was the first time around.

The promotion was a combined effort of the Salem Recreation Department and Salem High School, along with the Salem Red Sox who had the concession stand open to try to make up for some of the money they lost by not having baseball this year. The Salem Sports Foundation sold 50-50 raffle tickets, the cheerleaders danced to "Salem Born" and the Spartans won the football game.

It was okay, but it was a far cry from the real thing. I don't know what the announced attendance was but I was a somewhat disappointed by the turnout. It was a little nippy, but if there had been a real game going on it would have been described as a "perfect night for football."

If not for the pandemic, last Friday would have been the week the Spartans would have been in Martinsburg, West Virginia for a highly anticipated rematch between two of the best teams in bordering states. That was the only team to beat the Spartans in a 9-1 regular season last year as Salem finished 12-2 overall. I firmly believe more Salem fans would have been in West Virginia last Friday than showed up at Haley Toyota Field. Way more.

It really hit me when Salem coach Don Holter introduced the seniors, all wearing masks, on the Red Sox infield prior to the game. There they were, a bunch of strong, young, talented football players who were missing the fall football season they'd been looking forward to since they were kids. Sure, a spring season is planned but there's really no guarantee that's going to happen. I hope so, because I really felt bad for those kids. I'll be here for years to come, God's willing, but this is their last shot at putting on the maroon jersey with the block letters "SALEM" over the number.

I applaud the Red Sox and the Salem folks for giving these boys the chance to get some recognition. It would be a good idea for Glenvar to do the same, and that 2014 state championship, when Zack Clifford ran for the winning touchdown to beat Wilson Memorial in overtime, would be a great game to relive. The Sox could even reach out to Northside for their last championship. Anything to sell some hot dogs and nachos.

Last Friday was a good time, but the best times are when the Spartans run out of the Salem Stadium field-house, not when they walk onto the baseball infield. Hopefully better days are coming soon.

TODAY, 301 DAYS

We're 64 days away from a year, but now we have a vaccine. We also have a new strand of COVID that's been found in four states that's supposed to spread more easily. And, a lot of crazy people out there.

Please wear your mask, wash your hands and get the vaccine when available. Our lives depend on it.

SPORTS

Thursday, January 7, 2021

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

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No high school sports again this week

Botetourt County returns, Roanoke County trying to work out plan to get sports back

The old year went out like a lion and the new year is roaring in but it's business as usual at Salem and Glenvar High Schools. No sports events again this week.

The metrics as reported from the local Health Department are still in the "Red," meaning no sports for the schools abiding by those recommendations. That includes Salem and Glenvar High Schools as well as the rest of the Roanoke County schools along with Roanoke City, Alleghany County, Craig County and Covington.

Botetourt County was in that group until last Tuesday, December 29, when the county school system broke away from the group. Lord Botetourt and James River High Schools have been given the okay to resume games amid the coronavirus pandemic and basketball games, wrestling matches and a swim

meet are all on the schedule this week.

"We're excited about this," said River wrestling coach Bobby Stewart. "Let's hope we can get them all(matches) in and have a region and a state in February."

All high school events will be played under strict guidelines. No more than 25 fans are allowed to attend, fans will need a ticket beforehand and everyone will be required to wear a mask. The 25 also includes cheerleaders, and in most cases each player will be allowed to have one parent or family member in attendance.

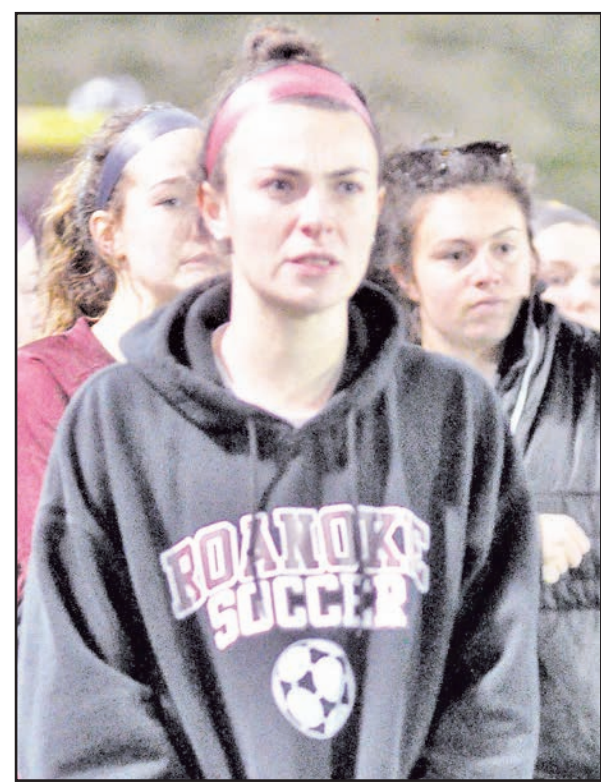
Fans who would like to view the events in the Lord Botetourt or James River gymnasiums can do so by live stream on the NFHS Network, but must have a subscription to do so. To subscribe go to nfhsnetwork.com. The individual has a choice of a monthly subscription for \$10.99 or an

annual subscription for \$69.99. The subscription gives the individual access to watch any event from any school participating.

"Many of our opponents have, or are having installed, this camera system," said Lord Botetourt Athletic Director Chuck Pound.

The next possibility for Salem or Glenvar games, meets or matches is Monday, January 11, if the metrics improve. The Roanoke County School Board was discussing scenarios on Tuesday afternoon to get the teams back in action as soon as possible in a safe environment.

County schools, including Glenvar, were given the green light to begin regular workouts for varsity teams beginning Wednesday of this week. The county is also trying to work out schedules where Roanoke County teams just play each other, and only varsity games.



MEG RYAN PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

Ryan stepping down as SHS girls soccer coach with undefeated record

Meg Ryan has left the Salem High girls soccer team before coaching a regular season varsity game. Ryan has resigned from the program to take a job as an assistant coach at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky.

Ryan was hired prior to the 2020 spring high school season but the season was put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic, then cancelled. Meg coached the Spartans in preseason workouts and in one scrimmage before the pandemic.

A graduate of Roanoke College, Ryan played for the Maroons under coach Phil Benne of Salem and later returned to serve as assistant coach for the 2019 fall season. She was hired to replace long time Salem High girls' coach Josh Jones.



Glenvar girls basketball coach Jeff Johnson goes over plays with the girls without using a basketball at Monday evening's practice in the GHS gym.

PHOTO BY BRIAN HOFFMAN

Brian Hoffman



301 Days Later !!

I'm usually not big on those end-of-the-year stories that recap what happened in the past 365 days. You lived it, you saw it, not much use in recapping it.

However, last year was a little different. Today is January 7, the first sports section of 2021, and thank God 2020 is over. There's no guarantee that 2021 will be any better, but I'm always the optimist and I'm looking forward to getting back into my normal sports routine soon.

It's now day 301 since Rudy Gobert tested positive for COVID-19 just prior to a Utah Jazz NBA basketball game. I call it day 301 AG(After Gobert), as I've been documenting the time since all sports as we knew them shut down last March. In rapid succession the NBA and NHL seasons were put on hold, NASCAR turned off the engines, baseball spring training stopped and March Madness was sheer madness when the NCAA basketball tournament was canned.

For the high schools, the VHSL basketball championships were scheduled for Richmond but after one day of play the rest of the championship games were called off and co-champions were declared. High School spring sports were scheduled to begin the following Monday but, as you know, we've had no high school sports to speak of since. . . in 301 days!!

Salem's Shawn Price and Dan "Dipper" Stallard started a travel baseball team when their kids were little. The team went by "MMXX", which is the Roman Numeral for 2020, and was formed to get the boys the best competition to challenge for the state tournament when they were seniors, in 2020. Thankfully the Spartans won the state championship when those boys were sophomores, because they never got to play last year. Those team baseball caps with "2020" on the front are a sad reminder of what the past year denied our high school athletes.

So, as 2021 begins, there's little to report once again in the world of sports so I decided to rerun a few columns I wrote in the past 301 days detailing the struggle against this pandemic. Hopefully it will soon be over and I can go back to covering real games again.

MARCH 19, EIGHT DAYS

I had planned on a three-day trip to see the Hornets play both the 76ers and Lakers in North Carolina this week, and last week I wrote about how I was worried it might not happen. Well, the ink was hardly dry on

the paper when Rudy "The Stifle Tower" Gobert was discovered to have the coronavirus. The next thing you know the Utah-Oklahoma City game was cancelled, and about an hour later the entire NBA schedule was put on hold, including the two games I had tickets for this week.

I'm disappointed, but I'm certainly not the Lone Ranger. I'll get my money back, and the tickets for the Lakers game weren't cheap. Unfortunately, the student-athletes planning to play in the NCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments won't ever get that experience back. And pity the poor kids who lost their chance to play in the VHSL hoop championship games last week, having the rug pulled out from under them hours before the scheduled games in Richmond.

It is incredible how this virus has spread in a short period of time, and the impact it is having on the country. This was supposed to be the start of my busiest season. The fall and winter high school sports seasons pale in comparison to the many spring sports. Schools that play lacrosse offer 10 different sports in the spring, counting boys and girls separately. Then you add in the Red Sox and youth sports and nine different Roanoke College spring sports and you can see how it would be a very busy time.

Instead, I spent the weekend sitting on the porch reading and trying to find something to watch on TV that didn't require a ball or a puck. I was thinking this is how it might feel to be retired, only without sports to watch. What kind of hell is this?

Then, when they asked the folks if they believed people were actually dying from this disease, one lady replied, "I don't believe anything the Democrats say."

And that's where we are politically right now. Another thing I don't understand is the run on toilet paper? I can understand bread and milk, and I can certainly understand stocking up on paper towels since it's important to wipe everything clean. However, the only thing I wipe clean with toilet paper shouldn't be any more active at this point.

I saw an item on the web Monday where the police department in Newport, Oregon has put out a notice urging residents to stop calling 9-1-1 because they don't have any toilet paper! Honest! Reading stuff like that makes me glad I work for a "newspaper."

Also, I find it strange that last Friday's Salem High soccer scrimmage was postponed, an event that might draw 50 or so fans at the most. That same day, however, I went for a walk and passed a brewery that was packed with people, elbow to elbow, consuming alcohol. And many of them were outside smoking, a habit that killed over 480,000 folks in the United States alone last year from inhaling or exposure to second hand smoke. I wonder how long it would take to kill that many high school soccer fans with coronavirus?

They tell you not to touch your face. Apparently no one told the third base coaches at the baseball and softball scrimmages I attended before all games were shut down. How many baseball coaches in the country do you think contacted the virus last week by calling for a bunt or a hit and run?

No one is sure how long this will go on, and it seems to be getting worse every day. I'm writing this column on Tuesday and I have no idea what to expect by Thursday, when it hits the newsstands. Like I said, when I wrote last week's column I was still hoping to go to those NBA games, and two days later the whole darned season was suspended. Randy in our advertising department had advertisements ready to go for our "March Madness" contest and I had the car gassed up for a trip to Richmond for the high school championships. Instead, I ended up at that terrible movie with two other people in the theater.

What to do, what to do? Well, right now I'm glad I live in Salem because we seem to be pretty safe at the moment. I'm watching a lot of the NFL Network as they're beating "Free Agency" to death, but at least that's something current. I really can't get into watching reruns of past games where I know who won. To me, most of the thrill of sports is not knowing who is going to win.

It looks like I'm going to have to deal with this for a while. Often times we have so many sports at this time of year I don't have room for a column, but now I'm going to have to write one or two every week just to fill up space.

APRIL 2, 22 DAYS

I heard some great news this week. The NBA, NHL and Major League baseball are all going to start up in a week or so and the Salem Red Sox will also begin their season on time.

April Fool!!

Today, April 2nd, is the 22nd day without sports as we know it. It was three weeks ago Wednesday that Rudy Gobert of the Utah Jazz was tested positive for coronavirus, stopping the sports world cold. In rapid succession the NCAA basketball men's and women's tournaments were cancelled along with all professional sports. Only professional wrestling has continued, without fans, and I don't really count that.

It's been three weeks, but it seems like three years. I've read every magazine in the house, watched all seven episodes of "Tiger King", went for at least one walk every day and played "Horse" with my wife on the basketball court behind our house. On the one hand it's boring as can be but, on the other hand, it's somewhat relaxing.

You see, during normal times I have very little "down time." This is an area where people love their sports and there's always something going on. My two slowest times are Christmas and the middle of summer, but even then we have basketball tournaments over the holiday break and things like swim meets and recreation baseball and softball in the summer, and I love that stuff.

If I'm not attending everything I can I feel like I'm slacking. But, I equate this virus pandemic to a long series of snow days. When it snows and everything is off, I don't feel guilty about staying home because there's nowhere to go. This is much the same thing, only warmer and without sports to watch on TV. And, that's a big difference if you haven't noticed.

continued on page 11