

The
Changing
Face of
Retirement

Valley Business

FRONT

FOR THE UP AND COMING
AND ALREADY ARRIVED

\$3 • Vol II: ISSUE 5 • FEBRUARY 10



small Business
small Loan

“Co-opetition?”

OPEN WIDE!
DENTAL HEALTH

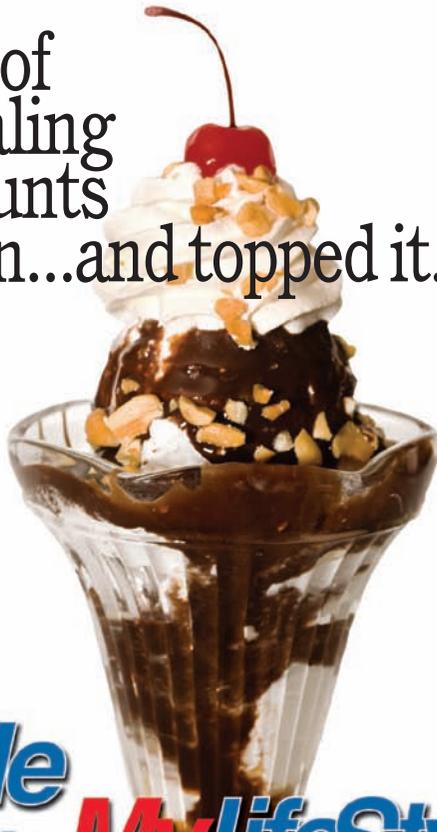
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XTREME Seniors

Evelyn Blake,
resident of The Glebe

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WELCOME to the FRONT

Here at the FRONT, we are not normally given to breaking readership into sub-groups based on race, gender, age, or any of a variety of other designations that tend to fragment, rather than coalesce.

Beginning with this issue, however, we have determined that one group is so large, so influential and so important that it will have its own FRONT. FRONTs are those nine color-coded sections inside the magazine that give us our variety in an attempt to cover the broad spectrum that is business. In order to accommodate our new Senior FRONT, we have combined Recreation and Culture into a single division, retaining the magic nine sections.

Older Americans have always occupied a special place in our culture, but with the aging of the Baby Boom, the largest generation in history, and with the special demands of our economy, this group has a new importance. Seniors are no longer retiring as they have in the past for of a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that many simply don't want to. They're enjoying work and life and aren't ready to go fishing quite yet.

Their numbers, spending power, interests and needs have helped shape a whole new sub-economy and some of that will be in our area of focus as we seek to cover this important segment more thoroughly. We kick off our new focus on seniors this month with both a new FRONT and a cover story by Pam Hartle. Enjoy it.

Tom Field

Dan Smith

Wytheville, Virginia... Intersection of Interstates 77 and 81:

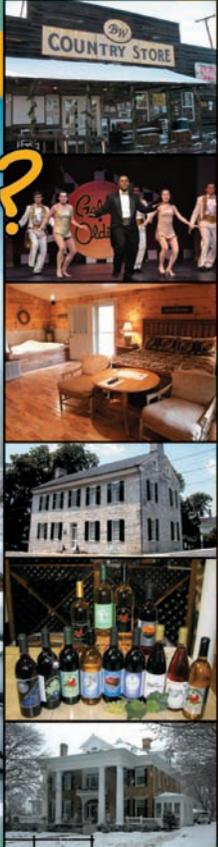


How About... A Winter Getaway?

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2 a.m., fever 104°

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Valley Business FRONT

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Cover photograph of Evelyn Blake
by Greg Vaughn Photography.
Motorcycle, apparel, accessories
by Roanoke Valley Harley Davidson.

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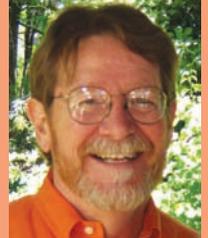
Rachael Garrity



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Dan Smith

Editorial Advisory Board

Valley Business FRONT has organized an Editorial Advisory Board in order to help direct coverage. FRONT selected a group of 16 diverse business professionals, who will serve as a sounding board throughout the 18 month rotational term that will turn over every year and a half.

The board will be given the task of helping FRONT understand the issues and develop coverage. "We're journalists," says Editor Dan Smith, "and not business experts. This group of distinguished business professionals—whose range in age, experience, level and specialty is impressive—will give us a solid handle on how business runs and what the primary issues and key players are in this region. My guess is that our coverage of business will be especially useful because of this group of people."

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Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 50.

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John Williamson RGC (Tech/Industry)

You will note that the Board is comprised of experts in many different business / industry "fronts." This is intentional, as we are reporting on all the areas that affect our regional economy and are important to you. In keeping with our policy of being "the voice of business in the valleys" we ask each reader to join us as an editorial partner by calling or e-mailing us your ideas. You know more than we know about your business—or you certainly should—and that inside knowledge shared with our readers will make us all better at what we do.

“There’s more to success here than how the football team’s doing

— Page 39

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Our FRONTcover model Evelyn Blake, 91, resident of the Glebe. She doesn't ride a Harley now, but "Give me time!" she says.

RETIREMENT

DOWN THE ROAD

The changing face of retirement >

Executive Summary:

We're there. The largest class of our population is beginning its retirement years. But can Baby Boomers retire and if so, how and where?

By Pam Hartle and Dan Smith

The numbers are scary. Consider these from the Small Business Development Centers:

- About 77 million members of the Baby Boom (who hold 70 percent of U.S. assets and half of our expendable income) will retire during the next decade. The front edge of the boom has already begun to leave the workforce and head for the "golden years" promise.
- Life expectancy increases almost daily, meaning more time in retirement and more of a nest egg required to make that retirement comfortable. At this point, retirees can expect 20 years of retirement and that's increasing almost daily with medical technology improvements.
- A million Americans live in retirement facilities and that is expected to double during the next 20 years. The downside is that the construction market is in a depression and building those facilities has reached a crawl.

Staying home >

"We've learned that 95 percent of seniors want to stay where they are; don't want to move," says Chris Head, owner of Home Instead Senior Care in Roanoke. "Our name derived around that concept."

Home Instead is such a timely concept that it earned the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce 2009 Small Business of the Year Award.

"We provide non-medical in home care to anyone over 18, with the majority of our clients being in the 70 to 80s age bracket," says co-owner Peggy Head, Chris Head's wife.

"And it depends on where they call 'home,'" says Chris Head. "We go to them in their personal homes, or their retirement community or nursing home. They can expect to pay from \$16.95-\$20.95 per hour for

continued to Page 11

- The average cost of residence in an assisted living facility is between \$3,000 and \$4,500 a month. The cost trend is up, as well. Because of the tanking of the stock market, many have lost much of their portfolio, putting those numbers out of reach for them. Many considering retirement are looking at other countries—Mexico is popular—where cost of living is much lower.
- Specialty services in eldercare facilities—Alzheimer's care, for example—appear to be stable and growing, despite the difficulty with the economy.
- The U.S. Census bureau estimates that the number of people in the country between the ages of 65 and 84 will increase by 38.8 percent between 2010 and 2020. The population over 85 will increase by 18.7 percent.
- The future of health care, housing and of older Americans in general is being debated and revised in Congress, in board rooms, at the water cooler and on the golf course.

Income and lifestyle in retirement may be dramatically different from the 1970s vision of most 30-somethings, who planned to pay off the mortgage and live debt-free on Social Security and stock market investments.

Attorney Rhona Levine of Coleman & Massey in Roanoke, who specializes in estate planning, administration and elder care, says, "Right now, healthcare and long term care costs are the big pickle and a huge issue for seniors because of all the potential changes and unanswered questions we're all facing. The structure we all once depended upon is no longer there."

"In the past, most of our clients didn't even know what to ask," Levine continues. "I've noticed my clients are better informed now than they were 8-10 years ago, but many are still in crisis mode by the time they get to me."



Rhona Levine: "The structure we all once depended upon is no longer there."



This garden at Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg is tended by the residents.



Most of our residents place being in a faith-based community at the top of their lists, and find a great sense of peace and comfort in having their future plans in place.

—Katherine Morris,
The Glebe



Katherine Morris of The Glebe, a retirement facility in Botetourt County, has noted this phenomenon, as well, and says, “A time of crisis is never a good time to begin to plan for your future health care.”

Complexity everywhere

Care for retirees and the insurance and programs that provide for them are as individual and complex as there are facilities and retirement communities administering them. But one thing is consistent. It’s never too early, nor too late to educate yourself and form a plan.

Just how much should one plan to spend annually on retirement? And what payment options, including health and long term care insurances, are available to potential retirees? The Roanoke and New River Valleys offer a range of options.

At the Glebe, art is a focus for residents (from left): Marlene Short, Charlotte Yeatts, Dana Belle Kinzie, Evelyn Hokanson, Clara A. Hart, Marjorie E. Vuich, Lorraine Doolittle, Trudy Faber.



Pam Hartle



Know your options. Do the research and have a plan – for you and your parents.

—Bonnie Allison,
Brandon Oaks

Staying home >

continued from Page 9

a companion, and additional services are offered at additional cost.”

“The majority of our clients don’t use insurance and are private pay, and on average, spend about \$100 a week on this type of care,” says Chris Head. “The Veteran’s Administration has a program to fund our services, and there’s a program for Alzheimer’s patients.”

Says Small Business Administration literature, “Medicare pays 73 percent of the money allocated for the long term care industry to individuals living in nursing homes, despite the fact that the majority of individuals prefer to live at home or in a retirement community. The amount of Medicaid spent on one individual in a nursing home can support almost three individuals in a retirement community.”

However, Home Instead’s biggest challenge is that “Medicare won’t cover our services, and since Virginia has the second lowest Medicaid waiver reimbursement rate in the nation, we can’t provide the quality of care that we do to Medicaid recipients at Virginia’s approved rate.”

—Pam Hartle

There are a number of levels of care and some facilities have them all under one roof. Bonnie Allison of Brandon Oaks, a nonprofit community in Roanoke, says, “We’re one of two CCRCs (Continuing Care Retirement Community) in the area, which means we offer independent living, assisted living and nursing care.”

“Our rates are lower than the national average and vary based on the level of care needed,” says Tandra Meredith of Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg. “Since we offer a continuum of living options, choices range from home ownership starting at \$325,000; to a life lease option on our independent living townhomes starting at \$116,000; to assisted living in full-sized apartments starting at \$2,649 per month; to Memory Care and long-term nursing care starting at \$188 per day.”

At The Glebe, “Everyone pays an entrance fee and a monthly fee,” says Morris. “We offer a lifecare contract, as well as a fee for service contract. The lifecare is more expensive up front because you are pre-paying most of your future care in assisted living and nursing in this entry fee. The fee for service also has an entry fee, but it is less expensive. Under this plan, care will be paid for when the person needs it. Overall, the fees are based on the size of the apartment or cottage and whether this is for a single person or a couple.”

The SBDC says the four largest assisted living companies in the country comprise only 13 percent of the facilities and the remaining 87 percent are divided among the non-profits and for-profits.

The population

So who’s choosing life in retirement communities today?

“Our residents range in age from 53 up towards 100,” says Warm Hearth’s Meredith. “We are a nonprofit retirement community whose mission it is to serve seniors of all

A rock legend >

By Tom Field

"Let me tell you about him."

That's what you hear when you bring up the name Clyde Sisson within a 50-mile radius of Shawsville.

Everyone's got a story.

Of course, when you're co-founder of a half-century old quarry and you're 91-years old, there's bound to be a story or two. But watch the faces of the storytellers light up when they speak of a man who's no less than a legend in the region and in the construction business.

"He's the only person I've ever worked for," says David Ryan, vice president of operations and son of the other co-founder, Norvel

White Ryan, after telling another story and talking about the value of hard work. He and Clyde sit in an old Ford Bronco at the quarry. They're on their way to another appointment. Ryan says Clyde continues to show up at work every morning at 10 minutes 'til 7, but he's adamant to point out that there's more to the story than a lesson about work.

"He's honest. That's the number one thing about him, and why he's been successful."

Clyde B. Sisson was born in Shawsville on September 18, 1918. His three children live within a mile of him, and he still stays in his own house, by himself. He always worked in construction, since he was 17, making his way through the Great Depression, serving in the Army in World War II, working in the coal fields, and building the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the Radford arsenal before he and N.W. Ryan formed Sisson & Ryan in 1953, to put in the main waterline for Shawsville's public water system. The business performed landscaping for state roads and the "new"



According to The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS), about 60 percent of individuals over age 65 will require at least some type of long term care services during their lifetime. Save, save, save so you are not solely dependent on Social Security in your later years.

—Kandy Elliott,
Friendship Retirement
Community

socioeconomic backgrounds, so we serve low income seniors through HUD subsidized apartments, our townhomes appeal to middle and upper-middle income seniors and WoodsEdge (an active 55-and-older housing community) picks up from there."

"About half our residents are couples and we have a large group of single men," says Morris of The Glebe. "We start at age 62 but several of our residents are still working." Respite care results in "people from all over the country coming to interact and bring new experiences to our permanent residents," she says.

How residents live in retirement settings varies widely, from the minimal care facilities that look like motels to lavish estates.

"Our residents have brought their boats, an RV, and when the snow flies, a number of sleds appear on the slopes behind The Glebe's community center," says Morris. "They're from all over the U.S. which makes for a diverse community. We have retired doctors here and also farmers; former nurses and homemakers.

"Residents love our rural setting—seeing the wildlife, the mountains and the open land—while the city of Roanoke and all its amenities is in close proximity," she continues. "They like having transportation provided to the symphony, theatre, etc., as well as to their doctors in Roanoke. They value the

Interstate system before it changed to primarily a quarry.

Today, Clyde Sisson is still working. He has a logging project running, and he's building a new entrance to his farm. It's not easy to tell a man is legally blind and partially deaf when he's on the job site every day, hopping in and out of equipment, and talking as plainly and clearly as any other active CEO. You get the idea that he blends in with all the other workers the same way he seems to blend in with the very stone cut away from the mountain behind him.



Clyde Sisson

Tom Field

"Go to work!" is Sisson's advice at age 91.

"For me, work was it. Education has changed things today, but it didn't take you long to get educated when you're out in the world working. If a man got 25 cents an hour, another man would say 'I'll do it for 20 cents.' I don't mean to say it's worse now, but it's just different."

In stark contrast to his business, his history, and his environment, Sisson seems not to be hard or cold. His handshake is warm and there's a softness in his words. But there's no question his perspective is rock solid.

That's what you hear in the stories, anyway. 

closeness and sense of community, the warmth of family and a support system."

Kandy Elliott, a VP at Friendship Retirement Community in Roanoke, says "Our residents tell us they appreciate a good value for the services offered. They want security and peace of mind, and having options available on campus for whatever their particular individual needs may be."

Brian Runk, CEO/Owner of Runk and Pratt's senior living communities based throughout the region, says residents "value most the stability of living in an environment where they're surrounded by familiar faces that help and provide routine to their lives. [They also value] safety and security when it comes to medical needs."

Sometimes it's the small things says Elaine Lavinder of United Methodist Homes in Roanoke: "Our residents have especially enjoyed new dining options thanks to our new Executive Chef, Chris Rossi."

United Methodist Home's Susan Robertson; Chef Chris Rossi; marketing director Helen Burnett; and Executive Director Elaine Lavinder.



Pam Hartle



Pam Hartle

World Travel's Virginia Savage



Plan for the things you can plan for, and be knowledgeable about the contingencies. In elder care, we call it 'navigating the maze.' I wish we could plan for common sense and logic, but now we have to plan for contingencies because frameworks are no longer there.

—Rhona Levine,
Coleman and Massey

Not quite ready

Ginny Savage, president of World Travel Service might be in the majority of Boomers when she says, "I guess I'm old enough, but I'm not ready to retire. I certainly do not feel old enough. Even when I officially retire, I want to always continue to do things I love; like painting, handling special travel groups and hosting cruises."

The other factor in readiness for retirement is financial. A recent study by the Boston Globe says about half of boomers couldn't retire if they wanted to because they can't afford it.

The Web site accumulatingmoney.com says planning for retirement appears to be the exception rather than the rule: "Thirty-six percent of older baby boomers, age 50-59, with an average net worth (not including primary residence) of \$1.7 million plan to retire in the next 6-10 years and 28 percent



It was quite the buzz at the afternoon photoshoot at Roanoke Valley Harley Davidson. General Manager Zack Shiffer provided bikes and gear, Shelby Zook (in green shirt) assisted in suiting up our supermodel biker chick Evelyn Blake, and customers on the cold, wintery day, hung around a little longer than usual to watch the commotion.

plan to retire in less than 5 years. Of those planning to retire, 62 percent do not have a written financial plan for retirement. Furthermore, the vast majority of younger affluent boomers, age 41-49, with an average net worth of over \$900,000, who have a longer retirement horizon of between 6-15 years, have no written financial plan for retirement."

Says Tambra Meredith of Warm Hearth, "It's estimated that long-term health care will cost more than \$300,000 on average nationally by 2030 compared to \$75,000 right now. Planning is key and it revolves around the lifestyle you want to live."

Ginny Savage has a plan, though—or maybe just an idea: "I envision a smaller house or retirement home, albeit many years down the road." She says that even though she and her adult son, Ned, have a great relationship, moving in with him is not a consideration. He lives in Chile. 🇨🇱



Nan and Phil Young chose Warm Hearth over independent living options in other states. Avid bird watchers, they enjoy the 12 miles of paved and unpaved woodland trails.



FRONT creative director Tom Field, photographer Greg Vaughn, and assistant TJ Wells did not take it easy on the model, who was asked to change clothes often, jump on, off, and straddle the bike on command. "You're the ones working," Blake said. "I'm just here to look good."



A few tips on the business lunch >

Conducting business over lunch can be a wonderful way to establish and build relationships with clients. Generally, it is expected that the one who issues the invitation for lunch will be the one who pays the bill regardless of gender. Confusion or an argument about who will be picking up the tab at the end of a meal can leave an awkward ending to a pleasant experience.

For a successful business lunch with a client:

- Select a restaurant that you are familiar with that is in close proximity to the client's office. Choosing a restaurant where you are familiar with the menu, pricing and servers helps to ensure a successful meeting.
- Make a reservation and re-confirm the day before.
- Call or visit the restaurant ahead of time and give instructions for handling the bill when you make the reservation. (You can leave your credit card number and ask them to add the customary 20 percent tip to the total.) The bill never arrives at the table. By doing this, there will not be any awkward conversation interrupting the business at hand. If your guest inquires about the bill, simply inform him/her that it has been taken care of in advance.
- Arrive early to meet your server and check your table. (Having a table in a location that is too noisy (i.e. next to the kitchen doors or in the middle of the room) is not ideal for conducting or discussing business.
- Meet your guest at the entrance to the restaurant. Give your guest the best seat at the table and seat yourself to the left of the guest.
- When your server arrives to take orders, allow your guest to order first.
- Limit the lunch to one hour.

Among co-workers and colleagues of equal rank, each individual should expect to pay his own tab. The server should be informed of splitting the tab when orders are placed, not after the bill has been presented.

If the service or the quality of the food is not up to par, express disappointment in a calm and diplomatic manner. It is neither dignified nor healthy to dine with anger. Remember to treat the service staff with as much respect and consideration as those with which you are dining. 

Business Etiquette

By Donna Dilley

Executive Summary:

It's about conducting business and enjoying the meal. To ensure each gets attention, try this.

Dealing with a bossy know-it-all >

Dear Getting a Grip: *Hey, I recycle, I wash and reuse my plastic storage bags—I even compost. So, why at work does Miss Greener Than Thou have to constantly nag me with her passive aggressive, "You sure are making a lot of copies." and "Do you really need that many paper napkins?" She doesn't seem to realize that her green evangelism isn't converting me, but turning me into a resistance fighter. I know it's immature, but whenever she feeds me her born-again greenisms, I feel like taking, horrors, two whole paper towels in the washroom instead of just one. Who put her in charge of my conservation efforts?*

Dear Compost: While "going green," "conservation," and "sustainability" are important to define and take action upon both at home and at work—and you and Miss Greener Than Thou seem to share this view—with regard to Miss GTT's communication style, you seem to be seeing red rather than green. Your frustration with her tactics makes sense. Regardless of her purported intentions, she seems more interested in controlling your behavior than in inspiring you to join her cause.

Getting a Grip: When people believe the actions of others have dire consequences—destruction of a soul, destruction of a planet, destruction of human rights—they can develop minds as zealous and dogmatic as those they want to change. As you point out, aggression, passive or otherwise, results in resistance. Confrontation, especially in public, results in shaming, humiliation, and resentment. Adopting a position of moral or behavioral superiority pushes people away. By using force, those with the most humane messages can create deaf ears.

You have several choices. You could leave a copy of this column on her desk, but that's passive-aggressive. (Still, I bet it shows up on the desks of a lot of eco-evangelists out there.) You could share your frustrations with her and ask her directly to desist with monitoring your behavior, but zealots tend to want to harangue rather than listen. Or you could take the high road, devise your own "green" initiative beyond Miss GTT's paper-counting, and invite others to join you. If they do, fine, if they don't, fine. Whether it's a goal of yours or not, you'll probably have more influence on others than does Miss GTT's micromanagement. Instead of reacting to someone else's intrusions, you'll be taking action on what you value—responsible, individual choice. 📧



Workplace Advice

By Anne Giles Clelland

Executive Summary:

Need to start "Getting a Grip" on a personal problem at work?

E-mail your question to grip@handshake20.com.

Read the FRONT online **vbFRONT.com**

Also get more stories and pictures at morefront.blogspot.com



Staying competitive in a tough market >

Remaining competitive amid high unemployment is essential and requires each of us to examine the image we project. New graduates and experienced workers must strive to appear knowledgeable, energetic, savvy and professional.

Experienced workers often resist change and grow complacent, assuming that their experience alone will keep them employed. However, change is constant in our society and they should consider the following points to stay competitive.

- Wear clothing that fits your current size and flatters you. Wearing too-loose clothing for comfort or to hide overweight adds years to the appearance.
- Avoid out-moded or worn out clothing—it only makes you look worn out.
- Update your look without sacrificing professionalism by experimenting with current styles in a favorite brand.
- Update classic pieces in your wardrobe with this season's accessories and colors, and have a tailor update the lines of outmoded styles when possible.
- Keep your body fit and your complexion healthy, and don't neglect the appearance of your teeth. All of these contribute to a youthful appearance.
- Don't neglect the rest of your image. Join Facebook and/or LinkedIn, learn how to text, and keep up with current technology and the language surrounding it. Employers use the Internet to learn more about potential employees—use it to promote yourself appropriately.

New grads are usually knowledgeable about the latest technology and have the required degree, but they lack experience and, often, a reassuringly professional appearance. Their wardrobe needs professional polish to balance their lack of experience. The fashion industry promotes casual dress for the workplace, but new grads should understand that employees are the face of the business and must represent it in a professional way.

Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

Executive Summary:
The way you look has a lot to do with how you're received as a prospective employee.

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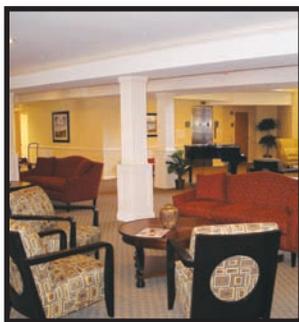
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Therefore they should consider the following:

- Decide what image you want to project in the workplace and invest in clothing that creates and supports that professional image.
- Never wear flip-flops, jeans, revealing or ripped clothing, or similar casual wear while in the workplace.
- Get a good haircut and schedule regular trims.
- Adopt a businesslike demeanor when working rather than a casual attitude.
- Monitor your Facebook, Twitter, and other social media to ensure that your professional image isn't sabotaged by your social life. "Too much information" can be career ending.

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Metwood, Inc. (OTCBB-MTWDE) >

Compiled by Paulette Jayabalan

Overview:

Metwood, a privately held Virginia corporation, was incorporated in 1993. It was acquired in 2000 by Nevada-based EMC Energies Inc. Following the acquisition, EMC Energies approved a name change to Metwood, Inc. (From Metwood's Amended Annual Report, filed Sept. 28, 2009.)

Metwood is a publicly traded company located in Boones Mill, and it employs 24 people. The company has been awarded four patents for its innovative building products and is constantly researching and developing other patentable products. (From Google Finance; [investing.businessweek.com].)

Metwood Inc. (OTCBB-MWTDE), based in Boones Mill, provides construction-related products and engineering services and manufactures light-gage steel construction materials, usually combined with wood or wood fasteners, for use in residential and commercial applications. The company's subsidiary is Providence Engineering.

Market Commentary

"Metwood Inc. reported earnings results for the third quarter ended March 31, 2009... [showing] a net loss of \$175,950. In contrast, the company posted a net income of \$39,768 for the same quarter in the previous year." [investing.businessweek.com] May 13, 2009.

"Metwood Inc.'s common stock has been deleted from OTC Bulletin Board effective March 5, 2009 on account of its failure to comply with NASD 6530. The company has been added other NBB [sic]." [investing.businessweek.com] March 4, 2009.

"Effective February 26, 2009, Metwood Inc. will change its OTCBB stock ticker symbol to MTWDE from MTWD." [investing.businessweek.com] February 24, 2009.

"On 02/17/2009, Metwood Inc. announced that [it] will be

unable to file [its] next 10-Q by the deadline required by the SEC." [investing.businessweek.com] February 17, 2009.

"T12-NEWS says that trailing 12-month revenue for Metwood (OTC:MTWD.E) for its 12-months ended September 30, 2009 decreased by -37.25% to \$2,737,314. This compares to revenue of \$4,362,378 for Metwood over the previous comparable 12 months ended September 30, 2008. The -37.25% decrease over the latest 12 months compares with a revenue decrease of -43.32% for its first quarter ended September 30, 2009 as compared to the previous comparable first quarter... The industry, Building Materials, in which Metwood is a member, generated a revenue increase of 37.5% over its most recent 12 months which compared to a decrease of -37.25% in revenue for the company over the earlier or comparable 12 months. The industry's revenue statistics compared to a decrease in aggregate revenue of -6.48% for the S&P 500's non-financial companies and an aggregate decrease in revenue of -9.22% for the Dow Jones Industrial's non-financial companies ... The Building Materials industry is ranked at 24 out of 229 industries based on the revenue growth rates for all industries over the latest 12 months according to T12-NEWS." [stocktrendnews.com]

Total Executive Compensation

Name	Title	Amount
Robert M. Callahan	President CEO, Director	\$81,832
Shawn A. Callahan	CFO, VP, GM, Secretary Treasurer, Director	--

Source: [edgar-online.com]

Board of Directors

Name	Primary Company	Age
Robert M. Callahan	Metwood Inc.	60
Shawn A. Callahan	Metwood Inc.	--

Source: [investing.businessweek.com]

Institutional Stock Ownership

No institutional shareholders are listed for Metwood. The company has 1.22 million shares outstanding. Source: [www.ft.com] / [Google Finance]

Sources

[ft.com] / [reuters.com] / [stocktrendnews.com]
[Google Finance] / [investing.businessweek.com]
[metwood.com]

Note

This article is meant for information purposes only and is not intended as an investment guide.

A preference for small business >

Executive Summary:

The new federal ARC loan is specifically intended for small businesses struggling in a difficult economy. But it's limited, so you'd better hurry and get in line.

By Dan Smith

It is a loan program whose target audience is so small and so narrowly defined that the \$750 million set aside for it by the Small Business Administration should disappear quickly. It's part of the American Recovery Act (ARC) of 2009 and the goal is to get small businesses a quick infusion of between \$5,000 and \$35,000 to help get them through the economic downturn.

Basically, here's what's required:

- The applicant must have been in business for two years.
- It must have a FICO score (the most commonly-used credit rating) of 650 or more with no recent marks against its credit.

And here's what the business gets:

- A loan that is interest free to the business with no fees to the SBA.
- Loans are provided over six months.
- Re-payment is deferred for 12 months after the last disbursement.
- After the 12 months, the business repays loan principle over five years.
- The interest rate of two percent above prime is paid to the lender by the SBA.

Rich Frank, an executive vice president for special lending management for StellarOne, estimates that an average of 200 loans per state are available, but that some states will make more than others. Virginia, he says, has



Dan Smith

StellarOne's Gretchen Weinnig

not made a lot of the loans. "It's a great concept," says Frank, "but it is difficult to find borrowers who can use the program. Their economic distress has to have been caused by the economic downturn. They must prove to the SBA and to the bank that they will be viable after they start repayment."

Gretchen Weinnig, VP of corporate banking with StellarOne in Roanoke, said she was working with four different clients for this loan at the time of the interview and "we're likely to close on three of them." She says the loans can be processed quickly, but "I like to say two weeks because it can take a while to get the last pieces of information. It can be processed in a day because the SBA portion goes quickly, but that is not likely. Frankly, the clients can speed up the process" by being organized.

Rich thinks the program will be out of money by the end of 2010 and has no notion it will be extended. He says the program should not be looked at as a small business version of Cash for Clunkers because "it's not a moneymaker for banks" in the same way the C for C earned money for automobile dealers. Besides, he says, "\$35,000 normally has a two- or three-year repayment period and this has 60 months."

Unlike some banks that are taking part in the program—and not all are—StellarOne is limiting the loans to its current customers. Community banks, Rich says, "are most prevalent" in the use of the loans. StellarOne, he says, "has probably done 15 percent of those approved" in Virginia. 



W&L's Joshua Fairfield

The legal side of e-commerce >

Executive Summary:

A Washington & Lee professor has developed a growing interest in the future of Internet relationships and how they can be a legal threat.

By Stephanie Hardiman

Are you "friends" with your customers? Are you "following" them? Ten years ago, this question wouldn't have existed, but now it's essential.

Today, being friends is more than an exchange of kind words between transactions; it's interacting with customers on Facebook—the largest worldwide social networking site with more than 350 million users—Twitter, LinkedIn or Myspace, where "friend-ing" means gaining recognition and publicity.

Ninety three percent of Americans using social media believe a company should have a presence in social media, according to a 2008 study from Boston-based Cone Research.

"Online presence is absolutely critical," says Joshua Fairfield, a professor of e-commerce law at Washington and Lee University Law School. Fairfield says it's the equivalent today of a business having a phone number.

Fairfield's love for massive multiplayer online games led to his interest in how the law applies to video games and virtual worlds like Second Life, a role-playing game where users interact with each other through online personas in a virtual world. Players of the games can purchase virtual items to use in play.

"People are willing to spend real money for virtual objects. It's a new and growing e-commercial phenomenon," he says.

And while Fairfield says that not all companies will want or need a presence in a virtual world, the spread of virtual technology into social networking sites and iPhone applications is



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worth noting. "There's no denying that that business model has made a lot of money," he says. Publicly-traded Forrester Research estimates that by 2014, interactive marketing will be a \$55 billion business.

"The way to get in on this is creating highly social, visually limited but still expressive applications for social networking applications," Fairfield says. While important, online interaction will not completely replace face-to-face contact, Fairfield says.

"As our electronic experience grows, the value of person-to-person contact becomes more valuable . . . the personal touch becomes a luxury," Fairfield says. Businesses specializing in a handmade or personal touch should work that into an online presence, he says.

When considering if an online presence is best for your company, Fairfield says one

question is more important to ask than all the rest: Am I going to be liable for things my customers will do with my technology?

Both Facebook and online classifieds site Craigslist have been held responsible for things users have done on their sites, such as preying on children or promoting prostitution.

While Section 230 of Communications Decency Act of 1996 gives a Web site operator total immunity from things users might say or do, Fairfield says the law has not been tried on how it might apply in a mixed reality situation.

Fairfield is teaching an e-commerce practicum in the spring at the law school to meet, what he says will be, a growing field of law. "All commerce is going to be e-commerce. These basic principles are something law students should know," Fairfield says. 

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Shine



Preventive oral health can make your smile shine

Did you know that a healthy mouth can help create a healthier body? Researchers continue to find evidence that suggests good oral health can positively impact many medical conditions. This means that regular dental checkups and good oral health behaviors can improve whole body health.

Delta Dental is a leader in promoting good oral health to all Virginians. Our goal is that all of Virginia's children have equal access to dental care and the proper education for the development of good oral health habits. Therefore, we have established oral health programs toward achieving that goal.

Teeth on the Go 2.0 is an oral health educational program offered to all Virginia elementary schools. Additionally, Delta Dental's Smart Smiles® provides dental care to underprivileged children through Boys and Girls Clubs and we offer support and assistance to Give Kids A Smile® Day. Through these programs, our early prevention message has reached more than 54,000 of Virginia's children.

Over the years, Delta Dental has improved a lot of smiles by giving back to the communities in Virginia. Our efforts to promote the importance of education and access to oral health care play a critical role in fulfilling our mission of advancing the public's health. That's The Delta Dental Difference®!



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The Smart Smiles program helps poor children achieve dental health and teaches them why it is important

Dental health vital—and often lacking >

Executive Summary:

Dental health has strong connections to general health and a number of organizations are trying to make sure the message gets out, especially to the poor.

By Gene Marrano

George Koumaras talks about an "oral-systemic connection," linking the condition of one's teeth and gums to the health of the rest of the body. "Studies ...have demonstrated that there's an association. You can say that the mouth is a mirror to the rest of the body," he says.

Current research links gum disease to diabetes, with an increase in blood sugar making it more difficult for diabetics to control their own sugar levels. The retired oral surgeon notes that periodontal conditions have been associated with cardiac disease, as well. The research is relatively new, but dentists have known

about it for years, says Koumaras.

More than 100 diseases show early symptoms in the mouth and may be first detected by a dental exam. A dental exam, for example, "does the pregnant mother a lot of good and doesn't harm the fetus," says Koumaras.

Koumaras is dental director for Roanoke-based Delta Dental of Virginia, which issues group dental plans and will start offering individual policies in 2010. Delta Dental provides additional exams and cleanings for those in certain high-risk health categories, including pregnant women and diabetics.

The company co-sponsors clinics across the state for children who do not receive regular dental care. Delta Dental transports young patients if and sits with them at the Smart Smiles clinic when necessary. "It's a nice way of getting a lot of these underprivileged kids ... in to dental care," says Koumaras.

Children have made more than 6,000 visits to the clinics since 2001. "These are usually the first visits, ever, for these kids," says Koumaras. The rate of cavities has dropped by more than half between the first and second visits, says Koumaras.

Signs of Heart Attack

1. **PRESSURE** or squeezing in the center of the chest
2. **SHOOTING PAIN** that spreads to shoulders, arms, neck or jaw
3. **NAUSEA**, dizziness, fainting or sudden abnormal sweating
4. **SHORTNESS of BREATH**
5. **HEARTBURN or INDIGESTION**-like pain

Women may also experience abdominal pain and weakness.

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The Roanoke Rescue Mission is remodeling a building on its 4th Street campus to be a new free clinic for the homeless that will include dental, psychiatric and medical care. The projected open date is mid-February.

Roanoke dentist Wharton Ramsey says many in his profession make a “major contribution,” to the Bradley Free Clinic and its annual Give Kids a Smile day in February. It features free dental care for poor children.

Overall, compared to other localities, Ramsey rates the level of dental care in the Roanoke area as “excellent. We’re lucky. We’ve got an awful lot of good, caring dentists here.”

Brian Alexander, a Rocky Mount dentist and treasurer for the Roanoke Valley Dental Society, says many members of the 78-year-old, 100-member organization participate in the Mission of Mercy project held annually, where a thousand or more typically show up to receive free dental care at the Roanoke Civic Center. (The dates this year are March 26-27.)

“We play it up at our monthly meetings and try to get folks to give up their time and talents,” says Alexander. “A lot of people don’t have health insurance – let alone dental insurance.”

Alexander says in many cases dental insurance policies are “inferior,” to health care plans; often the annual limit on benefits has not kept pace with the rate of inflation. A gold



George Koumaras of Delta Dental

crown that may have cost \$200 15 years ago may be four or more times that now. “It’s just more out of pocket for patients and if [they] don’t have the money the care doesn’t get delivered.”

“I would love to see more education [about dental health]. Unfortunately habits are hard to change,” says Alexander. Hard-to-quit habits like smoking can have adverse effects on dental well-being.

George Koumaras says the information is out there for those that want the full story on good dental health: “It’s getting more play.” 

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Choose a domain name that works >

Executive Summary:

A new column on using the Internet in your business. Picking the right domain name is increasingly important and there are ways to select the best one for your business.

By Janeson Keeley

Before Web sites became as ubiquitous as business cards, the people in charge of

choosing business domain names had a pretty easy job: name of business= nameofbusiness.com. This provided branding for the business and made the domain name easy for prospective visitors to remember. If a company's desired .com domain name was taken, the owner could register a .net, .biz, .info, or .us version.

Then, in an attempt to improve their search engine rankings, some companies started using domain names that contained their targeted keywords, rather than using their business names. The idea was that search engines would consider keywords in domain names more relevant, and therefore give those sites a higher ranking than their competitors. Until recently, this practice was not particularly effective.

But something changed. On June 29, 2009, Microsoft officially announced its Bing search engine. On July 29, 2009, Microsoft and Yahoo! finalized a 10-year agreement whereby the Bing search engine would power Yahoo! search results, essentially merging the two. Bing and Yahoo!'s combined search engine share in June, 2009 was 28 percent.

Suddenly Bing became a much more important



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player than it had been when Microsoft search had only an 8.4 percent search share. Business owners began to check their rankings in Bing, and some found that those rankings were much lower than they had been in the old Microsoft search engine. Why? One major factor is that Bing places much more importance on keywords in domain names than the old Microsoft search engine did.

Now it is more important than ever for a new business owner to do keyword research and take SEO into account before she selects and registers its domain name. "A business' domain name is a critical part of its business strategy. It engages, transmits power, and positions your company in the search engines," says Roanoke marketing strategist Ira Kaufman of Entwine Inc., Beyond Integrated Marketing. "It's not just what sounds good. The choice of

domain name is a 'science' and has lasting consequences as part of your brand image."

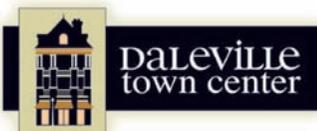
Roanoke Realtor Kim Stone has experienced this firsthand: "My first Web site's domain name used my name. When I decided to develop a second Web site, I opted to use my targeted search terms in my domain name. My new Web site, www.homesforsaleroanokeva.com, ranks much better for searches on those keywords than my first one does."

If your existing site is not ranking well in Bing, do not panic. If you make changes solely to improve your rankings in Bing, you run the risk of damaging your position in Google. Consult a search engine optimization specialist. Adjustments to your Web site can be made that will help your Bing rankings. A knowledgeable SEO professional will take all search engines into account and prevent you from making costly mistakes. 



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Jon Hagmaier: "We were all overwhelmed and out of money."

David Perry

Teaching to the test >

Executive Summary:

New software helps teachers predict what their students' SOL successes will be.

By David Perry

Jon Hagmaier can flat-out teach.

That much is clear as he completely captivates the three kids he's mentoring at Westside Elementary School in Roanoke on a cold Friday morning.

Hagmaier is the CEO of Interactive Achievement, a Roanoke-based company that has created software to help teachers gauge their students' performance on the Virginia Standards of Learning. A former teacher and assistant principal in Franklin

County, Hagmaier came up with the idea for Interactive Achievement while out of town for a wedding in May of 2007.

Childhood friend Matt Muller told him it was great idea, and asked him why he hadn't done it yet.

Hagmaier said, "I don't have a programmer. I'm just a guy with an idea."

Turns out Matt could program. Before they even arrived back in Roanoke, they had started a company. They beta-tested their software in the Botetourt County school system.

The early months were tough. "I was trying to be an assistant principal and take a day off to go sell and do this and that," says Hagmaier. "We were all overwhelmed and out of money."

Matt, Hagmaier, and Hagmaier's wife, Mary, pow-wowed on the couch one evening to determine the company's future. Hagmaier recalls the conversation: "Mary said, 'Will it

sell?' I said, 'Absolutely.' She said, 'We need to find somebody to sell it.' I said, 'I've got the guy.'"

Enter Jacob Gibson, a friend who taught under Hagmaier in Franklin County, and who had just left teaching to go into sales. In six months Jacob was a partner, bringing in seven school districts in the first year. As the client list grew, the office space improved. The company went from a back room in Matt's house, to a basement, then an office on Peter's Creek Road and today, a newly renovated space in downtown Roanoke.

Hagmaier, Mary, Matt and Jacob form the leadership team for this home-grown startup. With 55 school districts using their software (including the City of Roanoke and Franklin, Botetourt and Montgomery Counties) and 18 full-time employees, the company has plans to expand into North Carolina.

Teachers use Interactive Achievement's software to see how well their students are prepared for Virginia's standardized testing. Students can be assessed online or with paper and pencil, and the teachers receive instant feedback. Hagmaier says that's invaluable. The teachers "can see exactly where to help this child. ... If a kid gets a 67 on a test, he failed the test," explains Hagmaier. "But he knows 67 percent of the material. So why re-teach him the whole thing?"

In Brief

Name:	Jonathan Hagmaier
Age:	38
Company:	Interactive Achievement, Inc.
Location:	Roanoke
Type of business:	Educational software
Title:	CEO
History:	Hagmaier is a native of the Pittsburgh area and a dyed-in-the-wool Steelers fan who once bought Cleveland Browns season tickets because it was a cheap way to see his team play. He played football at Sterling College in Kansas, taught in Arizona, and moved to Virginia after going through a divorce. Hagmaier has an 11-year-old daughter and met his second wife Mary, a real estate agent, when she sold him his house.

Hagmaier credits much of the company's quick success to nearly all of the staff being former educators. The assistant principal in Hagmaier is quick to give the people in the trenches credit: "Any great result is a result of teachers being proactive." 

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Certified building analyst Joe Mugavero checks the ducts at a Blacksburg home.

A home without a breeze >

Executive Summary:

You can save a lot of money by keeping the warm air in and the cold air out of your house, but mostly, it's about creating your comfort zone.

By Laura Purcell

"Quit heating the neighborhood," grandma yelled if the front door was left open too long on a cold day. You've probably gotten—or given—similar admonitions for leaving the refrigerator door ajar, or blasting the air conditioning too hard, for too long.

Cecile Newcomb of EnergyCheck (www.wecheckenergy.com) in Blacksburg says the average home leaks 88 percent or more of its heat and air outside the house.

While the sexiness of insulation may be debatable, Newcomb distills her business's goals to two elements: comfort and savings. To help homeowners save money and be more comfortable in their homes, Newcomb and her crew study each home to discover how it works, and then looks for efficiencies.

EnergyCheck's home energy performance assessments cost between \$350 and \$600, depending on needs and priorities. The audit can include duct blaster testing, blower door testing with infrared scan (which involves rigging a huge fan to the front door of a residence and then sucking the air out of a home, to find the drafts), and carbon monoxide, or combustion, safety testing. They also deal with moisture issues,



EnergyCheck staff Joe Mugavero, home performance assessment director; Ed Tuchler, owner and manager; Nick Hanson, home performance contracting director; and Cecile Newcomb, business director.

identifying stinky smells and exploring moldy crawlspaces.

EnergyCheck presents a report to the homeowner with a prioritized list of the home's issues and recommendations for repairs. EnergyCheck offers contracting services and can perform any task the audit suggests, or homeowners can contract or do the work.

The most common repairs and retrofits include air sealing, duct sealing and insulating. "Ninety percent of the work we do is in attics and crawl spaces," says Newcomb.

EnergyCheck opened in August, 2007, and is an affiliate of Shelter Alternatives, a building and design company in Blacksburg. The company only serves residential properties.

After adding insulation and having her ducts sealed, one client noticed a \$100 reduction in her gas bill after one month. In addition to the long term benefits of making a home more energy efficient, there are federal and state tax incentives available to encourage improvements.

But Newcomb reminds that while savings are nice, the biggest bonus of this work is comfort. 

A New Building for an Old Neighborhood



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Pond outside next to the main entrance.

all photos: Monica Fritz

Work Spaces

Novozyymes Biologicals Inc. >

Executive Summary:

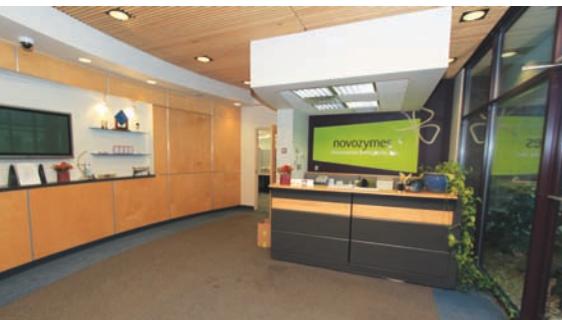
At Novozymes Biologicals the green feel goes well beyond the company's leading-edge natural products and into the very core of the workspace.

By Monica Fritz

You might not expect to find "the world's leader in bio-innovation" tucked away in the hamlet of Dixie Caverns, but it's right there, close by the kitsch and tourist ticky-tack surrounding the caverns themselves.

Novozyymes Biologicals is helping the planet by using safe microorganisms to clean up hazardous waste (think "oil spills"), and providing biological answers to tough questions for various industries. These microorganisms are giving back to the earth by providing more of the good bacteria it needs. Think of it as good bacteria for your gut. You've heard of pro-biotics, advertised in products such as yogurt to help aid digestion. You can think of these microorganisms in the same way. They are making our planet healthier by helping it digest nutrients as they eliminate unwanted waste.

The Novozymes building (one of the FRONT's best buildings in our September issue) has an "on-the-cutting-edge-of-science" feel. A sharp-looking logo and bright colors are a reflection of the World Headquarters in Denmark. Novozymes acquired the building in 2001, when it expanded and customized the workspace. A garden setting with running water greets visitors in the lobby. President Ted Melnik says, "The idea here is to bring some of the outdoors inside."



Main lobby



Pond inside

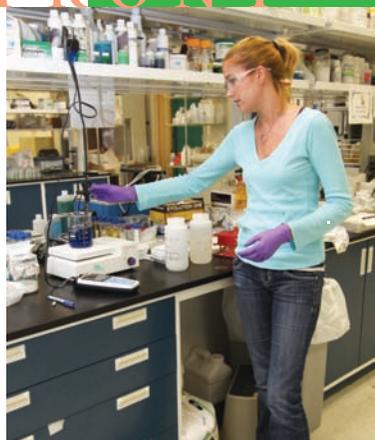
DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Brandon Knight,
Lab Technician



Ultra Low Freezer -80°C,
Lindsay Schaffer



Chrissie Edwards,
Lab Technician

Novozymes is not only helping the planet with its biological innovation, but also by being a “green” workspace. Avid recyclers, employees are in the process of phasing out all foam cups from their employee kitchen and have given everybody in the building (an estimated 40) refillable water bottles and mugs. The landscaper uses organic materials and all company vehicles are hybrids.

The building houses office space, including research and development, customer service, marketing and sales, finance and more. The feeling throughout is warm and friendly. Voices of people eagerly working together rise over the cubicle walls. Beyond the office space is a lab, which makes up about 40 percent of the 28,000 square foot building.

The lab is home to about 15 lab technicians and scientists. Each team member has a workbench and station where she performs a diverse range of tests and growth projects. These young lab techs and scientists fill the lab with energy.

In the lab, safety glasses are worn at all times and latex gloves are used when handling special solutions and microorganisms. Refrigerators, freezers, growth-chambers, incubators, and closets are stocked with strains, enzymes, components and chemicals. There is also a closet for flammable products and solutions, as well as cans for hazardous waste.

Behind the main building, there are two green houses, about 2,100 square feet of space for growing plants in three separate climate-controlled (a moist 90 degrees) areas. This is part of the BioAgriculture division of the company. One of the spaces on this day is growing sweet yellow corn plants as part of a BioFertility project.

Novozymes Biologicals improves the resources of many industries including agriculture, aquaculture, institutional and industrial cleaning and wastewater treatment. Saving water, energy, raw materials and chemicals is just the beginning of how they are helping set the sustainability bar. 



Young Sweet Yellow Corn.
Part of the BioFertility Project



Inside growth chambers



Bob Kaplan, Dominion Chrysler with some of his new, small electric cars

Jay Conley

For Dominion's Kaplans, it's Plan B >

Executive Summary:

And, frankly, Plan B isn't a comedown. It's a change of direction that many will appreciate and approve.

By Jay Conley

Bob Kaplan has made a living selling Dodge Caravans, among other Chrysler products, over the last 30 years.

It's no secret, however, that 2009 marked a rough stretch of road for the auto industry and the big name American car manufacturers. What's news is how Kaplan is responding to the crisis.

"I would be lying to you if I told you the last five or six months haven't been turbulent," Kaplan says.

He and his business partner and brother, Andy Kaplan, learned in May that their Dominion Dodge dealership in Salem would be among 789 dealerships nationwide that Chrysler cut loose as

part of its bankruptcy proceedings.

The Kaplans were able to keep their other dealership in Bedford that sells and works on three Chrysler brands (Chevrolet, Dodge and Jeep). That didn't stop Bob Kaplan's stomach from turning into knots over what to do about the Salem facility.

"We'd been in the Dodge business since 1976 and it was the livelihood of a lot of employees here that was put on the line," he says. "We have customers who are angrier than we are about it. They're not mad at us. They're mad a Chrysler."

The Dominion lot sits mostly empty now along a stretch of East Main Street in Salem that's been home to car dealers for as long as many people can remember. The showroom inside houses a handful of low-speed, battery operated GEM cars (Global Electric Motorcar), that Kaplan thinks could become popular on college campuses and among municipalities and small cities like Salem and Roanoke.

Dominion moved its sales people over to Bedford and renamed the Salem facility Dominion Parts and Service. The independent repair shop performs general repairs and specializes in maintaining Chrysler vehicles, Cummins diesel trucks and small fleets.

It's been a challenge attracting customers to an independent shop.

"In some ways it's a rebirth of ourselves," Kaplan says. "We look for new and creative ways to bring people in and to find customers. Some things work. Some things don't."

Word of mouth has often been more effective than print and direct mail advertising. "It's amazing to me," says Kaplan. "It seems like every day there's a new customer who's never been in here before. That's generally word of mouth."

The Kaplans have weathered economic downturns before. They opened their original Dodge dealership on an ill-suited lot in Roanoke on the corner of Franklin Road and McClanahan. Double digit inflation and interest

rates soon followed and nearly shuttered the business. "It was in many ways even worse than it is now," Kaplan says.

Dominion moved over to the Salem location after a competitor went out of business. Then Lee Iacocca took the helm of Chrysler in 1979 and breathed new life into the company and Dominion Dodge.

New car sales in Bedford "have done what we hoped it would do out there. Nobody's business is really great these days," he says. But Kaplan is looking forward while falling back on his 30-year old sales philosophy.

"I don't think there's any magic to it. You have to gain the trust and confidence of the customer," he says. "We try to put the best foot forward that we can. It has worked for us for all these years." 



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all photos: Laura Purcell

License to thrive: Harnessing the Hokie spirit >

Executive Summary:

All that orange and maroon merchandise you see floating around doesn't just show up. There's a process and it's rigorous.

By Laura Purcell

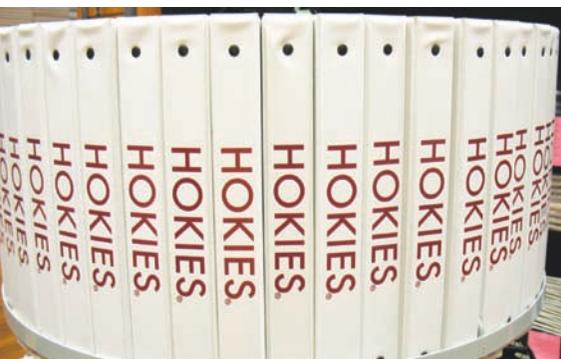
A sea of maroon and orange merchandise is not an uncommon sight on the shelves of Blacksburg businesses. This is Hokie country, after all. Fact is, Hokie country spreads far beyond Blacksburg with the tee-shirts, baseball caps, and mugs, as well as grill toppers, shower curtain hooks, and ceiling fan blades emblazoned with the Virginia Tech logo.

Not just anyone can use the VT logo, slogan or Hokie bird mascot on products. Companies and individual vendors wishing to use the trademarked emblems on their products

must apply and adhere to the university's strict regulations regarding use.

Prospective vendors need to have a thoroughly mapped-out business plan, ready to present. Applicants list the kinds of products they hope to sell, the manufacturing process, the price, and describe where and how products will be advertised and sold. The application costs \$50 and businesses must disclose their financial information to the university.





If approved, the vendor signs a licensing agreement, pays a \$250 advanced royalty guarantee and agrees to pay a 10 percent royalty rate to the university. After passing this approval process, each piece of merchandise also must be approved by the licensing office.

This is where some vendors get tripped up, says Melissa Richards, director of marketing and strategic communication at Tech. It may take a couple of submissions before an item is approved. "They can't change the colors, or take too many liberties with the logo," Richards says. Revenue from licensed products runs to about \$1 million for Tech, which helps support scholarship funds.

Richardson insists there's more to success here than how the football team's doing. "We've gone back and looked at the figures, and sales are not really tied to wins and losses," she says. "It's really the Hokie spirit." You're much more likely to see Virginia Tech students walking around in licensed gear

than students at UVa or Maryland, she says.

The university first registered for trademark protection in 2000. "Many universities were making that move at the time," Richards explains. The idea was simply to generate revenue and ensure that Virginia Tech's image is used in a tasteful way. The Hokie bird in front of Lane Stadium on a bottle of Chateau Morrisette's wine—approved. A stoned Hokie bird on a bong—avoided.

Although the university has strict guidelines regarding fonts, colors, logos and images, there is room for creativity. For example, baseball caps that combine Virginia Tech colors with Major League Baseball logos have been popular with the teen and tween crowd, according to Richards. For a vendor to create such a product, he'd need to get the approval of both the MLB and Tech.

The university has about 600 approved vendors producing Tech merchandise, and that number has remained stable despite changes in the economy, says Richards. 

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Memory care unit at Richfield Retirement Community in Roanoke

Learning to care for Alzheimer's patients >

Executive Summary:

Alzheimer's remains something of a mystery disease and residential care centers are at the front edge of learning how to treat it.

By Gene Marrano

Data quoted by the Central and Western Virginia chapter of the Alzheimer's Association (51 cities and counties), based in Charlottesville, reveals that more than five million people nationally have been diagnosed with the disease. It is the most prevalent form of dementia and the sixth-leading cause of death.

A new case is diagnosed every 70 seconds and that number is expected to jump considerably as Baby Boomers age. Some are even diagnosed in their 30s and 40s.

Ongoing training for retirement center employees and education conferences (one was held last fall in Roanoke by the Charlottesville chapter) are part of the organization's mission.

Chapter president and CEO Sue Friedman talks of the "huge bubble," of Boomers (13-16 million) becoming vulnerable is putting the issue on the front burner: "It's going to be a huge financial burden for Medicare and Medicaid, to the point that it will bankrupt both. The figures are clear."

Federal funding for research (about \$500 million) pales in comparison to the dollars doled out for cancer and other major



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diseases. Identifying more people earlier—possible with new techniques—is a hollow victory, unless there are better methods of treatment, says Freeman. “The key will be when indeed there is ... a disease-modifying research result that deals with treatment.” According to Friedman that means stopping progression of the disease, reversing it or finding an outright cure.

Memory care for Alzheimer’s patients at retirement facilities revolves around making them comfortable, keeping them “as much as possible engaged with life at a level to which they can be engaged,” says Friedman.

Richfield Retirement Community in Salem brought in a nationally-renowned expert on Alzheimer’s to work with its staff after establishing the Memory Care & Enrichment Center about five years ago. Lanny Butler also suggested design and layout changes at Richfield that would make life easier for those with dementia.

When not traveling with his Dementia Possible Care Program, the University of Virginia graduate and Crozet resident provides ongoing training and support locally at Richfield and at another retirement home in Lynchburg. Butler estimates that he has spoken to more than 30,000 therapists about dementia; he was in 49 states last year. “Traditional approaches don’t work,” he contends.

After three decades of research Butler thinks he has a good read on the stages of dementia and the early warning signs, which often stem from other medical conditions like

diabetes. A huge majority of those living in long term care facilities are eventually diagnosed with Alzheimer’s or some other form of dementia, which is “a group of symptoms,” according to Butler and not a stand-alone disease itself.

A pilot project he created for caregivers at Richfield was so successful that now all related personnel there are trained in his program. New learning, says Butler, is “almost impossible, but knowledge of how you’ve always done [certain tasks] never goes away.”

Meanwhile, Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg promises “specialized care and support for those with early and middle-stage,” Alzheimer’s at The Arbor. That unit also features residential-style living accommodations and a secure, monitored outside walking area/ garden.

Pheasant Ridge in Roanoke also offers special memory care, with “Life Engagement,” programs developed around “each person’s specific interests, abilities, past history and routine,” according to its literature. Twenty-four-hour supervision from a specially trained staff is part of the Life Engagement program.

“The research is moving forward exponentially now,” says Freidman. “Annually if not every six months there’s a new group of research results. It’s pretty exciting.” Until then retirement facilities will do what they can with enhanced memory care programs. 

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Devi Gnyawali (right) chats with accounting professor Patrick Fan, co-author of a social networking journal article with Gnyawali

Working with competitors (yes, really) >

Executive Summary:

OK, so "co-opetition" is a clunky word. The concept and its implementation are much clearer and much easier to pronounce.

By Rachael Garrity

2010 is not exactly a "comfort zone" for small and mid-sized businesses. The overall economy is fragile; the specter of unemployment has even seasoned employees on edge; financing is tough to come by; and technological advances—because they continue to burn through the marketplace like Sherman through Atlanta—require constant attention and consistent evaluation.

Investors and managers alike are looking for winning strategies, but as Virginia Tech Associate Professor of Strategic Management Devi Gnyawali knows well, "winning" may require actually working with competitors in order to create value for each other.

"The concept of 'co-opetition'—the ability to compete and collaborate at the same time—has so far received very little attention in this country, compared with Europe and Asia," Dr. Gnyawali explains.

One excellent example he cites is the decision

of Sony and Samsung, fierce competitors for a long time, to invest nearly \$1 billion each in 2004 in a joint venture for the development and manufacturing of LCD panels for flat panel television.

"Remember three or four years ago when LCD and plasma televisions seemed roughly equivalent? It is in large part because of this joint venture that LCD has now virtually captured the market," he explains. "And, despite the fact that some in Japan described Sony as a 'traitor' for working with a Korean company, both of these collaborators have already doubled their original investment."

It is no accident that these companies are focused on a technological venture, since that is the field with the most potential for co-opetition according to the research Gnyawali and a team of colleagues from other universities have conducted, and the advantages may accrue exponentially for smaller companies.

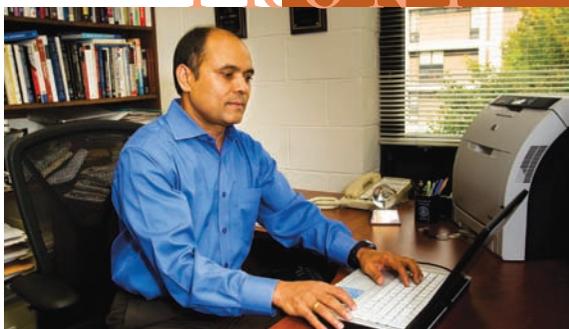
"We see three important factors," he points out. "First, the huge convergence of different technological advances—such as cell phones and navigation systems—makes it difficult for one firm to both develop a product and bring it to market. Second, the costs for research and development are increasing to the point that smaller enterprises simply can't compete if they work alone. And finally, product life cycles are becoming very short."

What companies are the most likely to collaborate with competitors? Those with

what the researchers call a “prospecting strategy”—the goal of being either the first mover or a close follower within a given industry—and where managers perceive greater vulnerability. “Essentially, you want to share and thereby diminish the risk,” says Gnyawali. “It’s also important that the business culture allows experimentation and the top managers are able to handle conflict and are not worried that a collaborator/competitor ‘outlearn’ them.”

The next year may well bring interesting co-opetition in both the cell phone and the e-book markets, with large players like Google, Apple and Amazon leading the way, and smaller ones attuned to the advantages not far behind.

Having both consulted on the international level and led education programs for graduate students, Gnyawali is in a prime place to both inform and interpret the process. As he and



Devi Gnyawali: “Enterprises simply can’t compete if they work alone.”

his student and co-author Byung-Jin (Robert) Park wrote in a recent article published by the Journal of Small Business Management, co-opetition is likely not only to jump-start the development of unique products, but also create the market for them and develop integrative technologies that will offer customers better products with multiple functions.

Now, then, where is the talking remote? 

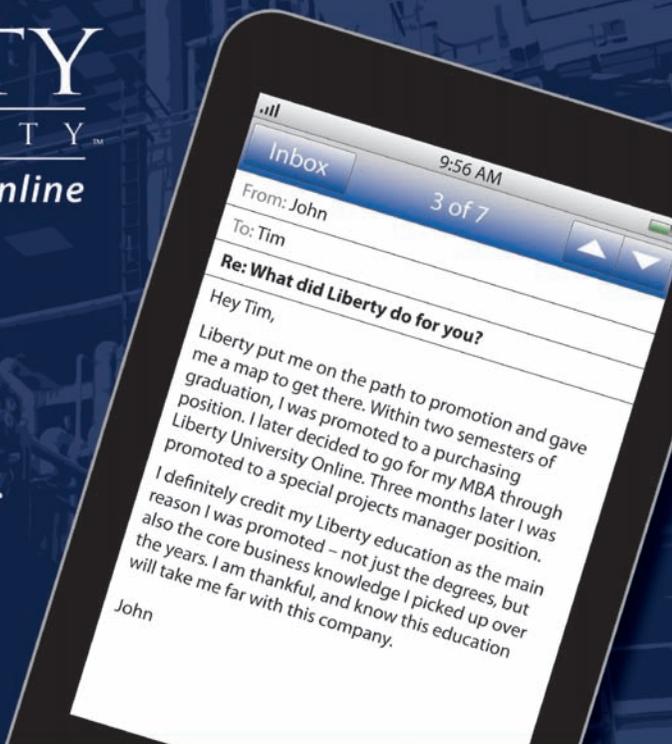
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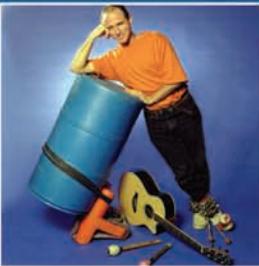
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Ken Rattenbury: “People want to pick [instruments] up and handle them. Can’t do that online.”

Dan Smith

Change is part of the deal for Fret Mill >

Executive Summary:

Ken Rattenbury has been on Roanoke City Market for 30 years and the pending construction does not intimidate him.

By Dan Smith

It’s not like the coming storm on Roanoke City Market is going to move Ken Rattenbury toward desperate measures. He’s seen so many changes in 30 years as one of the senior merchants in Roanoke’s city center that this one has a distinctly similar smell and feel.

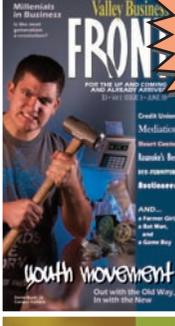
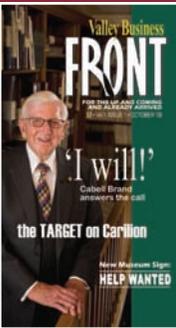
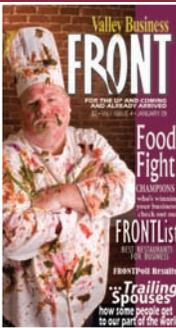
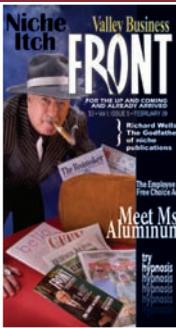
Rattenbury has owned Fret Mill Music on Salem Ave., dead center on Roanoke City Market, for 30 years now and his longevity ranks right in there behind Sam’s clothing store, which some insist predates dirt.

He made it through a period when hookers

and transvestites did business outside his door (“The day center in the Square opened in November of 1979,” he says, “they were gone”). He suffered the disruptive construction of the 22-story Wachovia Building across the street and the Taubman Museum of Art a block the other way. He’s seen the City Market Building struggle through some trying times lately and he has listened to the farmers talk frequently of treatment they don’t like.

At this moment, he’s anticipating a major disruption when the Market Building closes for a re-fit and Center in the Square looks at some major upgrades of its own. It will be noisy, dirty and disruptive and Fret Mill Music will likely play on.

Rattenbury believes it can be minimally disruptive with a little professional consideration. He talks of the contractor who worked on the art museum who put his equipment out of site and arranged for workers to be minimally disruptive. On the flip side of that, work at the Market Building, overseen by the city, was much more disruptive than it had to be, he says. “I don’t expect much from the city,” but, he says,



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businesses seem to understand each other and he believes that even with the major construction, commerce can proceed.

Rattenbury opened the Fret Mill with money he and his wife Debby made selling their California home. Both are from West Virginia and wanted to get back east after a foray to the land of fruits and nuts to Roanoke's City Market, at a time when the Fiddle and Banjo Club was so big it was talking about replacing the Mill Mountain star with the Mill Mountain banjo. Seriously. A 100-foot-tall banjo. Acoustic old time music was that big here 30 years ago and it played right into Ken Rattenbury's business plan.

"We were looking in Huntington, W.Va.," he says, "and there was a music store on every corner. We tried several Virginia cities, and we hit Roanoke during one of those Market festivals. 'Wow, this is it,' we said."

Jim Lindsey, who at the time owned Captain Books and was something of a goodwill ambassador for the Market at the time, "gave us the nickel tour" and helped the Rattenburys find a home (a sublease from Lindsey's sister, Julie Hunsaker, says Rattenbury). Two years later, he moved to Salem Avenue into a building he wanted for years to buy. He expanded next door, and ultimately moved his entire shop into the expansion because the owner did not want to sell the corner building.

The Fret Mill has been one of the most stable businesses in the history of the market,

rarely having spectacular success and rarely seeing the bottom of the economic pit. It sells instruments and the expertise to play them and has a staff that rarely turns over. Two of its teachers, Wes Chappell and Phil Holland, have been with Fret Mill almost as long as Rattenbury has. "People are going to learn to play their instruments somewhere," says the always understated Rattenbury, "and I think our teachers give them value; they don't just take their money." Turnover is rare at Fret Mill and now Rattenbury's son Jack is working there.

Still, there's a different dynamic these days. When the drinking age went from 18 to 21, says Rattenbury, bars closed and "the guys who were playing in those bars at night and teaching here on some days and weekends" found other gigs.

Rattenbury never intended for this to be a lifetime career, he says, and there have been times when he's "thought about jumping off." Being in business for himself, though, allowed him to be there for his eight-year-old daughter during the time of intense sickness in 1990. She died of leukemia.

The primary competition for Rattenbury these days—as it is for so many retail shops—is the online sale of musical instruments, but, he says there is a saving grace to selling musical instruments: "People want to pick them up and handle them. Can't do that online." And until they can, that's one change Ken Rattenbury won't have to face. 

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Gene Marrano, a former sales and marketing executive in various manufacturing fields, is one of the most prolific journalists in the Roanoke Valley. He not only writes for several publications, but he has a television show ("Interview With Gene Marrano" on Cox Channel 9) and a radio show ("Studio Virginia," WVTF Public Radio). [gmarrano@cox.net]

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Dan Smith is editor and co-owner of Valley Business FRONT. A native of Asheville, N.C., he has been a journalist for more than four decades and has won many journalism awards (writing, photography and design), and several awards for Public Radio essays. He was recently named to the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame and was a 2009 recipient—with Tom Field—of the Arts Council of the Blue Ridge's first Perry F. Kendig Literary Award. He was Virginia's Business Journalist of the year in 2005. He is the founder of the Roanoke Regional Writers Conference. He is married, has two grown children and a grandchild. [dsmith@vbFRONT.com]

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Alison Weaver

JANUARY 2010 >
Contributor of the Month

Valley Business FRONT congratulates **Alison Weaver**, who receives the Publisher's Choice and Editor's Choice for our "Contributor of the Month" including a "One Who's in the FRONT" certificate and gift.

Editor Dan Smith is emphatic about Alison Weaver's January cover story, "ITT Fiat Pack": "It is the best cover we've had at the FRONT and I think it is better than any cover we did in 20 years at the Blue Ridge Business Journal. Simply splendid work. Alison is a real pro and this story took all of her professionalism, a bulldog-like tenacity, considerable patience, and the organizational skills of a high-level librarian to produce. We understand Alison is considering a book on the topic and we sincerely hope that comes about. The topic is rich with stories."

You can read any of Alison Weaver's contributions in selected back issues at vbFRONT.com

“
Am I going
to be liable?”

— Page 23

Public Radio makes a few changes >

Executive Summary:

The region's public radio station refines its operations as it takes over the top ratings spot in Charlottesville.

By Dan Smith

WVTF Public Radio General Manager Glenn Gleixner says there was nothing special about the timing of a recent staff re-organization: "We'd been thinking about doing it for years. It's not a reaction to anything; it's pro-active in an effort to make us more unified and more efficient."

Veteran news director Rick Mattioni has been named program director for WVTF and RADIO IQ. WVTF had not had a program director for years. Mattioni has been in public radio for 26 years. WVTF is one of the strongest local public radio stations in the country. It's Charlottesville facility is rated first in that market, which is almost bizarre for a public station. But the recent Artibrons put it there, ahead of No. 2, country station WCYK and No. 3 adult contemporary WQMZ.

Other changes are being made, as well. Susan Geary, who has been in the local Morning Edition chair at WVTF for more than two years has determined that going to work at 4 a.m. is something she'd rather let somebody else do. Geary says she was also running a resume-writing business she's had for nine years and "having both jobs was wearing on me." She's also doing segments for PBS's JobQuest.

Geary has left that assignment to Bev Amsler, who has been reporting for the



Rick Mattioni

station for several years and has been the morning person before. Connie Stevens, the veteran reporter at WVTF, has been assigned coordinating duties for the news department.

Finally, Sandy Hausman, who arrived at WVTF's Charlottesville operations from Chicago Public Radio, will be the bureau chief in the new Charlottesville bureau.

Gleixner says the elevation of Mattioni was a natural: "Rick understands music and can work with our personnel" to maintain the station's sound, as well as keeping an eye on news and production. He has "music experts to work with and we know what we want to accomplish in programming.

Outside the news operation, Cynthia Gray, the former major gifts officer for the stations, is the new director of resource development for WVTF and RADIO IQ.

Mattioni has worked in broadcasting since the mid-1970s and he joined WVTF as news director in 1987, having previously worked at Syracuse's NPR member station WAER. In 2002, Mattioni became program director WVTF's all-news station RADIO IQ while continuing to supervise the WVTF news department. 

Finally, a break from the smoke >

My View

By **Dan Smith**
Editor

BLOG: [fromtheeditr.blogspot.com]

Executive Summary: *Virginia's smoking ban could have far more positive results than most of us realize.*

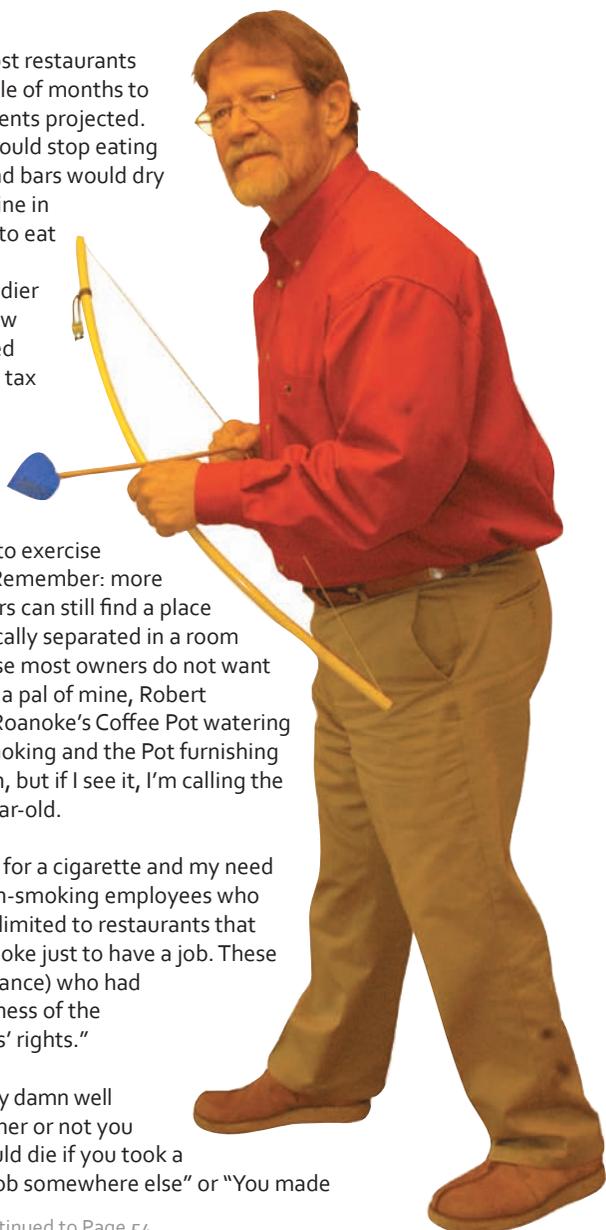
My sympathy is minimal for those having to search out a restaurant in this region that will let them smoke. For years, I've had to ferret out restaurants that banned cigarettes or at least separated them and me by a wall. I often told the person seating my party to get me as far away from cigarettes as possible because the slightest whiff made me projectile vomit. That usually got good seats.

Virginia, of course, banned smoking in most restaurants and bars Dec. 1 and now we've had a couple of months to ponder the dire consequences that opponents projected. Foremost among them was that people would stop eating and drinking out in droves. Restaurants and bars would dry up and blow away. I haven't seen any decline in their customer numbers in my many trips to eat out in the last few weeks and I don't really expect declines (except in some of the seedier bars). Studies in New York and Boston a few years ago, after they enacted bans, showed an increase in diners, cleaner air and more tax revenues.

My guess is that for every smoker lost, the restaurants gain one or more non-smokers who are giddy about being able to enter a restaurant without having to exercise the sniff test to determine if it's suitable. Remember: more than 75 percent of us don't smoke. Smokers can still find a place to eat and smoke, but they must be physically separated in a room with its own ventilation system, an expense most owners do not want to bear. On my blog Jan. 16, I wrote about a pal of mine, Robert Turcotte, who attended a music event at Roanoke's Coffee Pot watering hole. He was astonished to find people smoking and the Pot furnishing ash trays. That's probably going to happen, but if I see it, I'm calling the cops. It's illegal as selling booze to a 12-year-old.

Let's think for a minute beyond your need for a cigarette and my need to be clear of your smoke. Think of the non-smoking employees who either saw their employment possibilities limited to restaurants that banned smoke or chose to breathe the smoke just to have a job. These are people (generally without health insurance) who had two negative choices based on the selfishness of the smoking public and its perceived "smokers' rights."

That included the right to smoke where they damn well pleased, whether or not you liked it. Whether or not you were allergic or especially sensitive or would die if you took a breath. The rationale was always, "Get a job somewhere else" or "You made



continued to Page 54

Wise old advice >

By Tom Field
Publisher

On Tap from the Pub

BLOG: [ontapfrompub.blogspot.com]

Executive Summary: *Absorbing the wisdom of accumulated years around you.*

Wait!

Before you pass along that business advice book to your fellow employees or associates: hold on a second! Before you send your people to that popular conference coming up: take a breath!

You know who you are. You're the super-manager, sales director, human resource expert who values training and education and professional development so much. You want your people to be well-equipped, knowledgeable, and operating with the latest cutting edge practices. You're using your resources, your time, your money to ensure you have the best and brightest working for you, beside you, and for the company.

Good for you. I can see you now. You're about to schedule that next workshop. Call in that newest motivational speaker you heard about. Swipe your credit card for an order of books from that high energy performance technique we're hearing in the news.

Go see your granny.

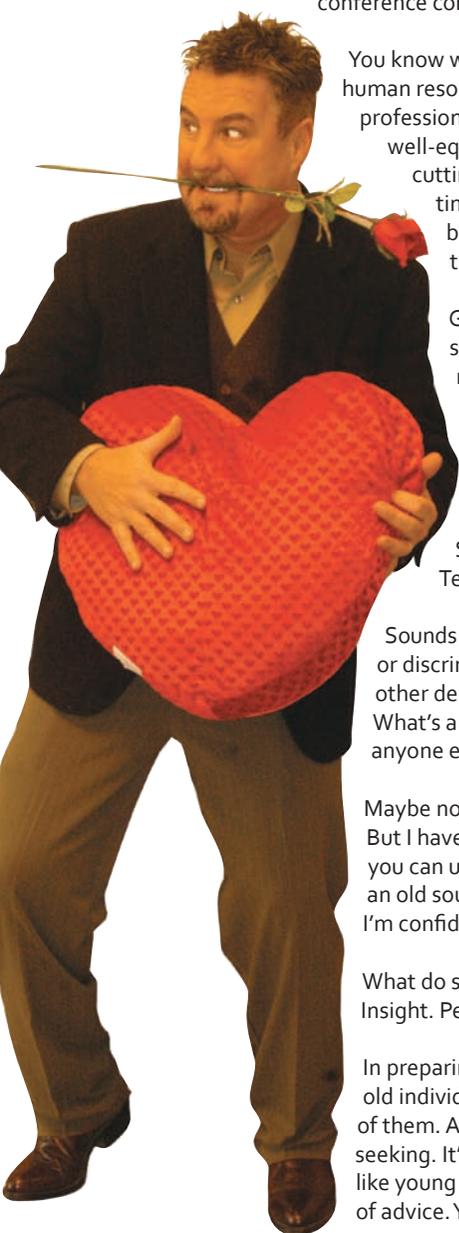
Spend some time with an old person.
Tell your fellow employees to visit a senior.

Sounds trite, doesn't it? Even worse—it sounds patronizing or discriminatory. Older people are no different than any other demographic. You got your good ones—and bad ones. What's a senior or retiree got to say that's any better than anyone else?

Maybe nothing. Maybe everything.
But I have a suspicion your chance of getting something you can use is greater from an afternoon spent with an old soul than a new expert you paid for.
I'm confident your return on investment is improved.

What do seniors have that others do not?
Insight. Perspective. Understanding. Discernment.

In preparing for this issue of the FRONT, I talked to more old individuals than I usually do. No, I didn't. I *listened* to more of them. And I learned it's not really "advice" we should be seeking. It's much deeper than that; especially since old people—like young people—and middle aged people—have plenty of advice. You just have to listen to the words beneath the



continued to Page 54

Smith / My View

from Page 52

the decision to work here knowing it was a smoking environment." Thank God we don't have to listen to that self-absorbed claptrap any longer.

I am fully expecting most of us to be happier because of the ban. Some will be especially happy in a few months because the ban led them to think about quitting and then do it. That is freedom and in this case, it's free.

A ban at a publication where I used to work helped me decide to quit after I was given the option of stopping the weed or standing in the snow and ice to smoke it. It wasn't just the snow and ice, either. It was the stares of the people passing who had to be thinking, "Is that guy really stupid or so thoroughly addicted that he needs a hospital?" Peer review has its benefits. Did with me, anyway.

So, here's to Virginia trudging into the 21st Century with a law that made sense many, many years before we got it. But, hey, better late than never. 

Field / On Tap

from Page 53

information. The lessons surrounding the stories. The treasure trove that money can't buy.

Would Stephen Covey make the point that a good *habit* is to just get to work, and quit trying to figure things out? Would James C. Collins dress up when he goes to the grocery store, calling that *great* versus *good*? Would Donald Trump illustrate how putting on an apron and serving customers behind a counter is far more rewarding than brokering the *art of the deal*?

Maybe.

But Clyde, Evelyn, and Mike did.
Ages 91, 91, and 69, respectively. 

RIISING STARS:

A New Constellation of Arts & Culture

Join us in celebrating Women in the Arts! March 1-June 30, 2010

Rising Stars Kick-Off!

When: Friday, March 5, 7 pm – 8 pm

Where: Jefferson Center

The event is FREE and open to the public.



Toni Blackman: A Lyrical Ambassador

When: Immediately following the kick-off event, March 5, 8 pm

Where: Jefferson Center

Roanoke Symphony Orchestra presents: Eternal Light

Featuring Soprano Angela Maria Blasi

When: Sunday, March 21, 3 pm – 4 pm

Where: Jefferson Center



RisingStarsintheArts.com

Letters

'Brilliant'

Editor,

Re: Alison Weaver's January, 2010 cover story ITT Frat Pack: Brilliant. Resourceful. Complex. Very personal. Great research. Thank you so much for doing this, and you should write the book.

Frank Akers
Techulon
San Francisco

(Note: Akers is the cover model for ITT Frat Pack.)

Have courage

Editor,

Re: Dan Smith's "Begone, cowardly ones" (January, FRONT): I thought it was just me! What started this and when? I left corporate business in 1999 to start my retail firm and I sure don't remember this fear of speaking up back in the 1990s. Perhaps it's the management style where I work now. Your column would indicate that it's not. Never in my memory was I made to wear a muzzle like this. Being the person that I am I do take the muzzle off from time to time but the result is invariably that I get bitten.

Sue Stengel
Lynchburg

Shiny penny

Editor,

I'm not sure what the purpose of your piece on Penelope Kyle was ("These are difficult days for Penny Kyle," January FRONT), other than to give her the kind of positive press she can't seem to generate on her own.

The author of the piece (Rachael Garrity) makes no effort to dig to the bottom of the criticism that Kyle has endured, and to a very large degree, generated. The basic theme of the article seems to be, "Doggone it, why are people saying mean things about this lady who has such a nice smile?" When profiling a person

who by your own article's assertion is controversial, wouldn't it make sense to seriously question the nature of the opposition?

Her disapproval rating from the faculty is something near 90 percent. That's a leader you choose to profile? Are the faculty 90 percent morons? Or is Kyle such a poor communicator that she is wholly unable to make her own case? Or is she as bad at her job as the faculty thinks? Your article didn't change the way I look at Kyle, but it changed the way I looked at the VBF.

Chris Burgoyne
Blacksburg

Bike trails safe

Editor,

Re: "Can bikes and trains get along?" (January FRONT): I'll ask you, would you feel safer riding on a bike or walking next to a train on a fixed track, or riding along U.S. 220, three feet from a tractor trailer going 55 mph as the driver is talking on a cell phone or texting? Are the rails with trails, "... fraught with safety issues ..." as Norfolk Southern's Robin Chapman says, or a much safer alternative to riding or walking in our communities?

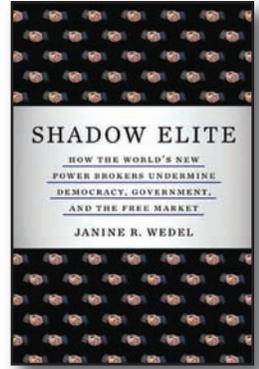
These corridors are safe and effective transportation alternatives for our citizens. If the railroads want our limited tax dollars to upgrade their property (rather than, perhaps, using those dollars to upgrade our roads and highways) they should make us want to help create transportation alternatives that benefit the railroads and all our citizens for years to come.

Champe Burnley
Virginia Bicycling Federation
Richmond

Send letters to news@vbFRONT.com or any FRONT contact of your choosing (page 6). Submissions may be edited. You can see, read, print any current or back issue online at www.vbFRONT.com

Books @ the FRONT >

Following are book recommendations from our publishers and business people in the Roanoke and New River Valleys who are inveterate readers. Readers are invited to submit 125-word reviews of books you've read during the past six months. Our goal is to recommend good books on any topic and in any genre. Send reviews to Editor Dan Smith at dsmith@vbfront.com



Who's in control?

George Mason University Professor Janine Wedel explores the phenomenon of an ever increasing bureaucracy, a growth in size accompanied by a growing lack of accountability to the governed in *Shadow Elite: How the World's New Power Brokers Undermine Democracy, Government, and the Free Market* (Basic Books, \$27.50).

As administrations change, the players do not leave the field of action, they merely change positions—the same way mercenary soldiers may fight for whoever is paying the bill.

Wedel's research led her to surmise that this is new phenomenon, but how new? In his double biography, *The Hawk and The Dove*, Nicholas Thompson tells the story of Paul Nitze and George Kennan. Nitze and Kennan were the architects of America's Cold War strategy and worked in successive administrations from the beginning of the Cold War until its end—two powerful men unaccountable to the normal checks and balances of democracy. Unlike Nitze and Kennan, Wedel's subjects are people pushing their own agendas without regard for the common good.

This book will likely be welcomed by the shadow soldiers of the various militias and other groups that dot the American landscape, groups of people who distrust the government because they believe it no longer serves the people. The book brought to mind that old bromide from psychology class: "Even paranoid people have enemies."

—Mike Ramsey

Environmental president

Those of you who adored "Ken Burns National Parks: America's Best Idea" will not be able to resist Douglas Brinkley's *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America* (Harper, \$34.99). It's a big (910 pages), impressively researched, carefully and artfully written volume that clearly profiles the president we like to think of a man's man.

While Roosevelt was clearly an environmentalist who helped define the movement (and who hung out with giants like John Muir and Pinchot and was heavily influenced by Audubon and Darwin, he was also prone to shoot huge populations of game in a single hunt.

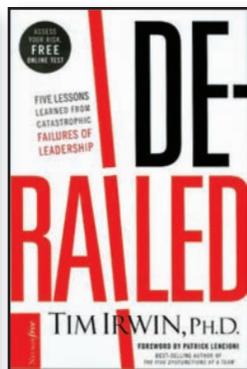
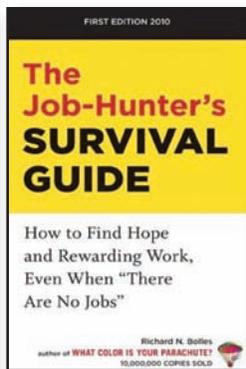
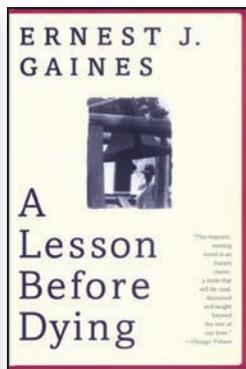
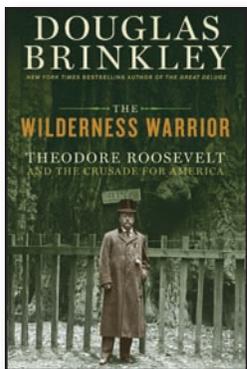
This is the book Roosevelt deserves, though; an intensely detailed and thorough assessment of the man who gave America a sense of self in so many ways.

—Dan Smith

Big, slow read

You'll be hearing a good bit about Ernest J. Gaines' classic *A Lesson Before Dying* (Vintage, \$12.95, paperback) in the next few weeks because is the featured selection in this year's The Big Read. The Big Read is a community-building exercise, based around a single book at a time and a number of events are planned around the Gains book.

This is a slow-moving, intense work involving



an African-American man who was in the wrong place at the wrong time when a crime was committed and wound up being sentenced to death. Whether or not a wrong is being done here is not the point of the story. It is a matter of preparing a man—who believes himself to be inhuman—for a dignified death, and the interplay of a full cast of characters creates a good bit of tension. This book is not my taste, especially, primarily because of its pace, but it remains a must read for anybody trying to understand our obsession with the death penalty.

—Dan Smith

Looking for work

Richard Bolles, author of the most successful job search book of all time (*What Color is Your Parachute*), deviated from his annual update of the timeless classic to write a cheap (\$9.99), short (96 pages), and very timely book to help jobs seekers during the current Great Recession. Every current job seeker should read *The Job-Hunter's Survival Guide* (Ten Speed Press).

The strategy, statistics and practical, common sense approach gives hope to the hopeless and a path for the pathless. The best part of the book is highlighting his 18 ways people get jobs and singles out the best and worse based on research. He also created a condensed version of his flower petal to identify the job you used to have and your dream job. The one-hour read and 10 bucks can easily save you hundreds of

hours and thousands of dollars.

—Stuart Mease

Avoiding train wrecks

In *Derailed* (Thomas Nelson Publishing, \$24.95) Tim Irwin provides examples of spectacular leadership failures of prominent CEOs ranging from Carly Fiorina at Hewlett-Packard to Dick Fuld at Lehman Brothers. He contends that these high profile failures (derailments) were the result of character flaws (hubris, lack of self awareness, arrogance, lack of empathy, ignoring warning signals) and that they can be corrected.

Irwin believes that character traits such as authenticity, humility, openness, empathy and courage can be developed and nurtured through a purposeful process designed to improve self awareness and self management. If you believe successful leaders are made rather than born and you want to improve your leadership skills and lessen the likelihood of a personal derailment, then this book is worth reading.

—John Williamson

(The reviewers: Mike Ramsey is a business-to-business salesman and chairman of the Roanoke Public Library Foundation. Stuart Mease is with Rackspace in Blacksburg. John Williamson is president/CEO of RGC Resources in Roanoke. Dan Smith is editor of FRONT.)



photos: Dan Smith



Home Show stampede >

The **Greater Roanoke Home & Garden Show** brought out a shoulder-to-shoulder crowd to the Roanoke Civic Center Jan. 8 and it appeared to be a giddy group that had been pounded by bad winter weather for too long. The show, which featured demonstrations from well-known

chefs and gardeners had a wide variety of displays and a long line at the door. Even a stiff entry fee didn't discourage many of the curious escaping cabin fever.

Ads Going Once, Twice... >

The **AdFed** (Advertising Federation of the Roanoke Valley) held its **2010 Media Auction** at Schaal's Metamorphosis in Roanoke on January 14. The annual event allows businesses to purchase donated advertising packages in an auction format. Event organizer **Allan Mower**, WSLS-TV account manager (center) is joined by **T.J. Wells** of Thomas Wells Photography, and **Krystal Profitt** of Comcast Spotlight.



photo: Tom Field

Valley Business FRONT is FRONT'n About at many events each month. Check the blog links at www.vbFRONT.com for more coverage.



photo: Dan Smith

Leadership training >

Abrina Schnurman-Crook, director of Hollins University's Batten Leadership Institute, announced the new **Emerging Leaders Forum** Jan. 22 at the Jefferson Club in Roanoke. The forum "provides an opportunity for women to learn more about leadership and improve their effectiveness in the workplace" and it comes at an affordable price of \$45 for each session. For more information, call 540-362-7488.

So much
more.

vbFRONT.com

- > The Grandin Lesson: Who's in charge?
- > **Roanoke Projects Get Funds Infusion**
- > Synchrony Gets Huge New Investment from Third Security
- > **Luna Innovations Emerges From Bankruptcy**
- > Tech Team to Study Potential Bio-Weapons
- > **John Carlin Leaves Access; Starts Agency**

morefront.blogspot.com

So many FRONTreaders just can't get enough in our monthly magazine. "Give us more!" they say. Well, we say, "OK." Read more stories and latebreaking updates on our moreFRONT blog.

- > Roanoke To Auction Properties in City
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- > **Cellular Sales Opens in Christiansburg**
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- > **Roanoke Optics Company Goes Electronic With Japanese Partner**
- > Boxley Hits Environmental Mark
- > **FRONT Available in Racks Across Region**

and much more (of course; hence, the name)



New Precision Fabrics Plant Manager Mike Maust with retired Ali Khan

David Perry

Master of change makes one of his own >

Executive Summary:

Ali Khan saw where the fabrics business was going in the early 1980s—most of it overseas—so he made some changes and saved his plant. Now he's retired and still involved at the edges.

By David Perry

"It's like following Lou Holtz at Notre Dame," says Mike Maust of replacing Ali Khan as the plant manager at Precision Fabrics in Vinton. While Lou Holtz won a national championship at Notre Dame, his successors haven't had much luck. But Khan isn't worried.

"Mike will make an excellent plant manager," says Khan, who handed Mike the keys on

October 1 after 26 years in charge. "We have the same philosophy of how to treat people: that if we show them respect and dignity, then they will do a good job for us."

That philosophy helped Khan guide Precision Fabrics, a weaving plant that employs 300 workers, through some difficult times in the industry over the last three decades.

When Khan arrived at the plant, it was manufacturing products such as printer ribbons, jackets, bathing suits and running shorts. But in the early 1980s, much of that business was lost to Asian competitors.

Some businesses may have folded their cards. Khan doubled down.

"You need to adapt with the changes that take place," says Khan. "The environment is constantly changing. Technology is changing, people's behaviors are changing, Their outlooks are changing.

"We in management, if we don't see those things and we don't make changes, then we're left behind."

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Change meant new markets and new manufacturing equipment.

"We spent quite a bit of money between 1978 and 1984," Khan says. "I'd say this plant spent between \$45 and \$50 million. That was a significant investment for the textile industry."

And change meant more than just buying new machines. Managers and workers had to buy in to new ways of doing things: "You have to have people accept the change. This plant had a progressive attitude," Khan says.

Khan also made sure the company looked forward and wasn't caught flat-footed when certain businesses dried up.

"It was not just changing equipment, it was changing product lines, because the product does change—it has a life cycle," he says. "If you don't look at the life cycle and plan ahead for the next thing you're going to do, you'll have a difficult time."

Today, Precision Fabrics is a highly-diversified company working in specialized commercial, medical, industrial and military markets—a far cry from making bathing suits and parachute fabric.

Khan has been a part-time consultant since stepping down as plant manager, but he says it's not necessary.

In Brief

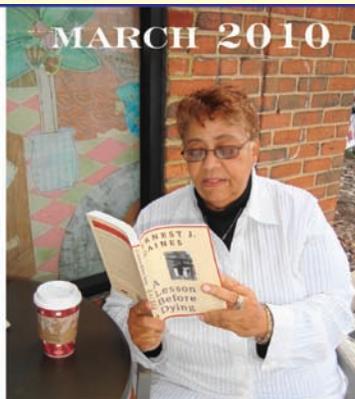
Name: Ali Khan
Age: 67
Company: Precision Fabrics Group, Inc.
Location: Vinton
Type of business: Fabric weaving
Title: Retired plant manager
History: Born in Hyderabad, India, Khan earned a degree in mechanical engineering from Osmania University before coming to Mississippi State for his master's degree. He taught for a year before entering the textile business, and had stops in South Hill and Alta Vista before moving to the Roanoke Valley 32 years ago. Today, he lives with his wife Tehniat in Botetourt County and enjoys putting his engineering background to use around the house.

"The people here are fully prepared. They don't really need me," jokes Khan. His confidence stems in no small part from his relationship with Maust: "Mike has the same philosophy I have. We're like two peas in a pod. That's why we get along so well." 

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Virginia Foundation
For the Humanities

FOUNDATION
FOR THE ROANOKE VALLEY

Career FRONT

FINANCIAL FRONT

Accounting

Brown Edwards in Roanoke has added **Paul Price** as a senior associate in information technology.



Ping Ma



Salamoun

CPA **Maggie Ping Ma** has joined the tax professional staff at McLeod & Company in Roanoke. **Michael Salamoun** has joined the consulting and auditing staff.

Goodman & Company has announced that **Sarah "Beth" Kelley** has joined the firm's Roanoke office as a Supervisor.



Crawford

Banking

Member One Federal Credit Union in Roanoke has named **Scott Crawford** VP of

business development and member education. Crawford was director of education at the Taubman Museum of Art.

Insurance

Rich Roberts of Farmers Insurance in Salem has completed the Insurance Agent Career Accelerator Course.

Investing

Jim Furlong has been named manager of the Scottrade Roanoke office.

Mortgage

Jennifer Clemmons, Vanessa Agee, Angela Newman and Zachery Reed have been named loan originators at Valley Tree Mortgage in Roanoke.

WELLNESS FRONT

Administrative

Becker's Hospital Review magazine has named **Dr. Ed Murphy**, CEO of Carilion Clinic in Roanoke, among its 30 best physician executive leaders of hospitals and health systems. "These are physicians who excel on the leadership side of healthcare in an extraordinary manner," says the press release. Murphy is the only physician on the list from Virginia and one of only two from the region (the other is from Chapel Hill, N.C.).

Chiropractic

Tuck Chiropractic Clinic's **Dr. Lee Matthis** of Christiansburg has



Matthis

been named team chiropractor for the Virginia Tech Cycling Team.



Jones

Eldercare

David Jones has been named director of events and volunteer programs at Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg.



McGrath

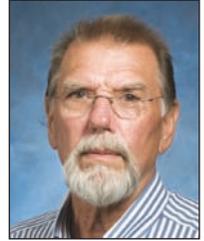


Simms

Health Care

Diane McGrath and Jane Simms of the Image Recovery Center at the Centra Alan B. Pearson Regional Cancer Center in

Lynchburg have completed the requirements and been certified as mastectomy fitters.



Coleman



Hickman



Sydnor

Organizations

Three new members have joined Lynchburg's Centra Foundation Board of Directors. They are: **A.C. (Buzzy) Coleman Jr.** of Coleman-Adams Construction; **Dr. Janet G. Hickman** of Dermatology Consultants and The Education Research Foundation; and **Malcolm K. Sydnor** of Old Dominion Footwear.

Research

Dr. Yunbo Li, a professor of pharmacology at the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, has been awarded an

Have a career announcement?

Send announcements to news@vbFRONT.com. Photos should be color, 300dpi. A contact / source must be provided. Inclusions are not guaranteed and all submissions are subject to editing.



Li

NIH grant to investigate the molecular signaling pathways that typically lead to heart attacks and to develop new drugs to prevent heart disease.

TECH/INDUSTRY FRONT

Computers

SiteVision in Roanoke has named **Steven Gunter** as its IT manager.



Solanki

Communication

Jigar Solanki, Devdatta Kulkarni and **Eddie**



Kulkarni

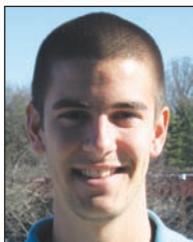


Sheffield



Wani

Sheffield are new software developers at Rackspace Email & Apps in Blacksburg. **Basharat Wani** is a new



Evans

software development manager and **Andrew Evans** is the new billing specialist.



Brooks

DYNIS LLC, serving the telecommunication and telephone industry, has named **Henny Brooks** business development manager for the Roanoke region.

DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Mangus

Associations

William G. "Bill" Mangus, Jr., associate broker with Coldwell Banker Townside Realtors has been named 2009 Realtor of the Year by the Roanoke Valley Association of Realtors.

The Roanoke Regional Home Builders Association, Inc. (RRHBA) has named **Brent Fortenberry** of Bench Mark Builders in Roanoke 2010 Member of the Year-BUILDER Award and **Brett Bennett** of Roanoke Gas the 2010 Member of the Year-Associate Award because of their support

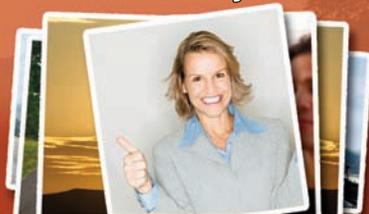
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Career FRONT



Fortenberry



Judd



Flippo



Bertrand



Bennett



Engel



Annarino



Callahan

of and dedication to the construction industry. Other award winners are: rookies of the year **Jack Engel** National Window & Door in Christiansburg and **Joe Annarino** Roanoke's of Stanley Steemer. The SPIKE-Builder Award went to **Shawn Callahan**

of Metwood Building Solutions in Boones Mill and the SPIKE-Associate Award was won by **Gary Judd** of 84 Lumber Company in Troutville. New officers are: vice president **Neal Frank-Rempe**, Zia Construction & Remodeling, Roanoke; secretary **Kit Hale LLC/MKB REALTORS**, Roanoke; treasurer **Frank Caldwell IV**, Chandler Concrete Co. of Virginia, Roanoke; VP/associate **Gary Judd**, 84 Lumber Company, Troutville; and executive committee members **Jimmy Butler**, First Citizens Bank, Roanoke; **Frank Caldwell III**, Caldwell White Associates, Roanoke; **Donna Moses**, Wells Fargo Mortgage, Roanoke; **Jeff Sowder**, Jeff Sowder Incorporated, Roanoke.

The National Association of Realtors has awarded its Green Designation to **Karen Mabry**, **Pat Tracy** and **Alison Whittaker** of Caldwell Banker Townside Realtors in Roanoke and **David Land** and **Karen Cox** of Long & Foster in Roanoke.

The National Association of Realtors has given **Sheila Stump** of Roanoke's SAS Builders its green designation.

Deborah K. Flippo, business development manager for Draper Aden Associates in Blacksburg, has been elected to the board of the Virginia Economic Development Association (VEDA).



Limroth



Sutliff



Bridges

Real Estate

Richard Limroth of RE/MAX Valley Realtors has been elected president of the Roanoke Valley Association of Realtors for 2010. **Joe Sutliff** of RE/MAX All Starsis president-elect. **Barry Bridges** of Weichert,



Bibb



Brooks

Realtors Bridges & Company, was inducted as vice president. Newly installed directors are **Karen Bertrand** of Long & Foster, **Kathy Bibb** of MKB and **Barbara Brooks** of RE/MAX Lakefront Realty.



Niccum

Gabe Niccum, a director in Thalhimers Roanoke office will serve as membership coordinator for the Institute of Real Estate Management's Chapter 38 Roanoke/New River Valley.

Orchard Villas in Roanoke has named **Susan Brickhouse** sales counselor.

MKB Realtors Roanoke agent **Rick Payne** has earned the Accredited Buyer Representative designation.

Roanoke Long & Foster's **Walter Grewe III** has earned the Short Sales and Foreclosure certification.

RETAIL FRONT

Clothing

Lorrie and Marcelino Guzman have opened a Western wear store, Tienda El Ranchero/The Ranch Store in Glade Hill, 1.8 miles north of Rocky Mount.

EDUCATION FRONT

Ad/PR

Advance Auto Parts in Roanoke has named **David Nitzel** VP of commercial operations excellence.



Drysdale

Aimee Drysdale has joined tba (the becher agency) in Roanoke as advertising account coordinator.

Colleges

The Jefferson College of Health Sciences Board of Directors has appointed



Bishop

Dr. Nathaniel L. Bishop to serve as interim president, following the retirement of Carol Seavor in April. Bishop, a Carilion Clinic vice president, is also a member of the JCHS board.



Ahmed

The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine (VTC) has named **Saleem Ahmed** as an assistant professor who will manage and deliver the anatomy curriculum at the new medical school.



Crawford

T. Daniel Crawford, professor theoretical chemistry at Virginia Tech, has been awarded the 2010 Dirac Medal for the world's outstanding computational chemist under the age of 40.

CULTURE FRONT

Adam Cohen of Roanoke's Structures



Cohen

Design/Build is been named to the board of Clean Valley Council.

OTHER FRONTS

Advertising/PR

Chad Pomajzl has been named president of the new Lynchburg office of the Pickering Creative Group, a marketing communications firm headquartered in Lincoln.

Communications

Lynda Foster has been appointed director, client marketing strategies for five Wheeler Broadcasting radio stations in Roanoke.

Farming

The Virginia Farm Bureau has named **W.P. Winston Jr.** of Moneta as its Federation Young Farmers Environmental Stewardship Award winner and **Scott and Mendy Sink** winners of its Young Farmer Excellence in Agriculture award.

Government

Spencer H. Suter has been named assistant Botetourt County administrator. Suter was hired in 1996 as E911/GIS Coordinator and is a James Madison University graduate. He is a student in the

Virginia Tech/Virginia Local Government Management Association's Graduate Certificate Program. He previously worked at Hayes, Seay, Mattern and Mattern and the Stafford County Planning Department.

Organizations

Charles Robbins, Southwest Virginia Regional President of BB&T, has been elected chairman of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce for 2010. Other officers are: **Harold McLeod**, Wachovia Bank, vice-chairman; **Kathy Baske Young**, Blue Ridge Resources, past-chairwoman; vice chairmen **Steven Anderson**, Integrated Textile Solutions; **Jim Lee**, JBL Consulting; **Kenneth L. Lanford**, Lanford Brothers Co.; **Joe Miller**, E.J. Miller Construction; **Kim Stanley**, Cox; and **Joyce Waugh**, Roanoke Regional Chamber, president and secretary. New members of the board are: **Bill Figaro**, Grow Inc.; **Ken Randolph**, Rockydale Corp.; **Greg Feldman**, StellarOne; **Todd Leeson**, Gentry Locke Rakes & Moore; **Sean Luther**, Downtown Roanoke Inc.; **Jeff Parkhill**, Hughes Associates Architects; and **Sarah Powell**, Advance Auto Parts.

Ward H. Robens Jr. has been named interim executive director of the Alleghany Foundation in Covington. The appointment comes after the recent death of Elizabeth (Beth) Webb, who had been the organization's executive director since 2007.

FRONT Notes

Couvrette convictions overturned

The conviction of former **Couvrette Building Systems'** accountant Richard R. Jenkins, who worked for a Utah-based church that worked to lower its members' tax levies, has been set aside by a U.S. District Court judge in Roanoke.

Couvrette's recovery from losses in a fraud was the topic of a cover story in Valley Business FRONT in December. Judge Samuel Wilson put aside a guilty verdict and dismissed two other charges, all related to obstruction of justice in the case. The judge wrote that the indictments were not specific enough in detailing the charges.

The U.S. Attorney's office is looking at a retrial on the one count where there was a deadlocked jury. Jenkins and two others (officers with the Church of Healing Arts and Sciences), as well as former Couvrette CFO Roy A. Dickinson, were charged with federal

crimes. Dickinson is serving time in California.

New facility opens

Roanoke-based **Cycle Systems**, one of the region's largest recyclers, has opened a new facility in Covington, its ninth location in Virginia. The expansion will enable Cycle Systems to collect additional scrap metal to feed its metal shredding and shearing operations in Roanoke and Lynchburg while boosting production of processed scrap metal. The company sells that metal to steel mills and other customers in the region.

Plants achieve level

All eight of Roanoke-based **Boxley Concrete** plants throughout Virginia and West Virginia have achieved Green-Star Certification by the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) in 2009. The NRMCA Green-Star program recognizes Ready

Mixed companies who maintain environmental management systems that aid in reducing negative environmental impacts resulting from operations. Of the more than 5,000 concrete plants in the U.S., only 60 have achieved Green-Star status. Boxley plants are the only plants in Virginia and West Virginia to achieve Green-Star Certification.

Liberty buys airport

Liberty University, which has a relatively new school of aviation, now has its own airport. The Lynchburg university purchased **Falwell Aviation**, named for Calvin Falwell, cousin of Liberty founder Jerry Falwell, who founded the fixed base operator, private airport. The deal between Falwell Aviation and Liberty will be final Jan. 1, but no price has yet been set because an inventory must be completed.

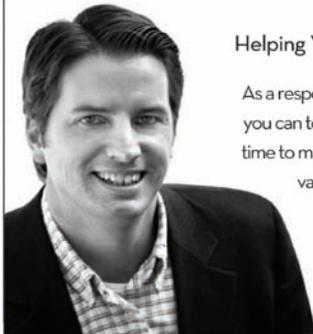
Liberty bought three maintenance and storage hangars, maintenance workspace, flight

operations, classrooms, aircraft dispatch, student study areas and customer service facilities, a total of 55,000 square feet. Five planes are also part of the deal. Founders Calvin and Lawrence Falwell are the owners, but they are in their 80s. Lawrence Falwell's son, Jimmy, is director of operations. He says the Falwells asked Liberty to buy Falwell Aviation. Calvin and Lawrence Falwell own Falwell Airport, which will not be part of the sale.

Wins three awards

Anstey Hodge Advertising Group in Roanoke has received three awards from the Southeastern Museums Conference Publication Competition for its work with the Eleanor D. Wilson Museum at Hollins University. The awards recognized outstanding design and content of the museum's marketing materials.

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Carla Finkelstein in her lab
Tech prof wins grant

Virginia Tech biologist **Carla Finkelstein** is one of three faculty members from the College of Science who have been awarded prestigious Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) grants by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the largest single award funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, \$1.08 million. Her study is of circadian control of cell division and homeostasis.

training to small business owners, and works to secure local funding partners for the RRSBDC.

Flippen, a Virginia Tech graduate with a degree in industrial engineering and operations research, has more than 35 years of technical, managerial and operational experience, and most recently was employed as general manager at John C. Nordt Co. Inc.

The Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center was established in 1990 and is a program of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce. It provides free business counseling, training, and a resource center to support the growth of small businesses.

Luna emerges

Roanoke-based **Luna Innovations**, a company whose great promise seemed to be shut down less than a year ago, has emerged from Chapter 11 reorganization. The emergence was confirmed by Judge William F. Stone Jr. of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Virginia, Roanoke Division. Luna's creditors will receive a 100 percent of their claims and Luna's current shareholders will retain their shares.

Luna filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy July 11, in

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Send announcements to **news@vbFRONT.com**
A contact / source must be provided. Inclusions are not guaranteed and all submissions are subject to editing.

response the loss of a lawsuit to California-based Hansen Medical Inc. The companies settled in December with a development and supply agreement between and a license of Luna's fiber optic shape sensing technology to Hansen in the fields of medical robotics and certain medical non-robotics.

Luna CEO Kent Murphy said, "From the outset, our intent during this restructuring has been to continue to serve our customers, keep the pace of our key development initiatives, maintain employment at our four facilities in Virginia, settle with Hansen, provide our creditors with a full recovery on their valid claims, and allow current shareholders to retain their shares. Today, we can say we succeeded in those goals and did so in a relatively short time frame."

Access accepted

Access Advertising & Public Relations in Roanoke has been named a VALET Program Partner by the Virginia

Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). The two-year Virginia Leaders in Export Trade (VALET) program assists exporters in the Commonwealth that have firmly established domestic operations and are committed to international exporting as an expansion strategy.

Program for professionals

James Madison University is offering the Master of Public Administration program at the Roanoke Higher Education Center beginning in May. The program seeks applications from current public servants and those interested in pursuing public service careers. Students will take all classes in Roanoke during evening sessions and the program consists of nine core courses that develop essential administrative competencies. Students also complete a three course concentration in public and nonprofit management. The program can be completed in 22 months.



Wayne Flippen

Chamber hire

Wayne Flippen has been named director of the Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center, replacing the recently-retired Roy Baldwin. As director of the SBDC, Flippen counsels new and existing small businesses, offers

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