

One door
shuts...

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doors
Open.

Valley Business

FRONT

FOR THE UP AND COMING
AND ALREADY ARRIVED

\$3 • Vol II: ISSUE 4 • JANUARY 10

Foreign-Owned
Companies Here

Stuttering
Releasing
the Burden

MILITARY
LOGISTICS

Roanoke's **BIG
KITCHEN**

Bikes &
Trains

the
FRAT PACK
from **ITT**

Frank Akers,
Techulon



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WELCOME to the FRONT

You might wonder why we're reaching back 37 years for a story with "ITT Frat Pack" by Alison Weaver. Simple, it's as fresh as today's sushi.

When these men and women were let go by ITT as it closed its fiber optics division, each of them faced the unexpected and stunning realization that they were not indispensable, as so many people have understood in today's economy. Their remarkable response—almost as a group—is what sets them apart.

These engineers and professionals in other areas simply set about taking responsibility for finding or creating new ways to be of value to the market. They got a living and we got inventions, new companies, new ways of doing things and an entire group of people to admire for their intelligence, tenacity, creativity and leadership.

Getting canned does not have the stigma it once held. Like divorce, you'll have to look around to find somebody inexperienced in losing a job through no fault of his own. It's the way business works these days and workers must take that into account when they get a job that was not created by them. Owners don't often lay themselves off, but there's probably less security in ownership of small, startup businesses than anywhere else.

Read Alison's marvelous piece and get your inspiration for today. These people are simply amazing. Even Charles Barkley might admit that they're role models.

Tom Field

Dan Smith

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Valley Business FRONT

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very much a science**



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Never Changes*

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**One BIG
Kitchen**

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Greg Vaughn Photography

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JANUARY



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Greg Vaughn

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 48.

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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.

“ Racecar drivers have the attention span of a ferret on crack

— Page 47

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Dan Smith

This group of former ITT employees gathered at Optical Cable, which was founded by one of their group. The group represents about a tenth of those who worked for the fiber optics division of ITT. Pictured are (from left) 1 Steve White, 2 Ken Ferris, 3 Ted Leonard, 4 Pete File, 5 Don Taylor, 6 John Holland, 7 Nelson Sarver, 8 Jim Bowen, 9 Karen Smith, 10 Russ May, 11 Gary Thornton, 12 Barney Dean, 13 James Moras, 14 Jerry Fleming, 15 Paul Oh, 16 Tom Wilson, 17 Glenn Prather, 18 Wanda Hutchison, 19 Stephen Baldwin and 20 Willis Muska.



ITT Spinoffs >

Executive Summary:
When ITT hired a group of top-level engineers, inventors and scientists to operate its new fiber optics division in the 1970s, then eliminated the division 25 years ago, it had no idea what it had created. Neither did the rest of us.

By Alison Weaver

Nearly 40 years ago, the perfect storm was brewing in a sleepy section of Roanoke County. An elite fraternity of engineers and scientists was recruited to a predominately blue-collar area not known for high-tech endeavors. Over the next decade, they would become largely responsible for developing a new technology—fiber optics—that would revolutionize communications throughout the world.

Unlike stereotypical frat boys prone to forgoing work in favor of keg parties, this tight-knit group quietly labored around the clock to lay the groundwork for using beams of light to transmit vast amounts of data. And when they outgrew the company, an extraordinary number went on to head multimillion dollar companies, rack up patents and publish seminal works on the fiber optics field they helped make a reality.

One member even went on to garner the world's perhaps most coveted recognition: the Nobel Prize.

* * *

When ITT went looking for a place to develop the new science of fiber optics, Roanoke seemed like a dubious choice. In 1973, Roanoke had an airport with two main departure gates and its



The original ITT Fiber Optics division was housed in this strip center on Peters Creek Road



Frank Akers

schools had only recently been racially integrated. General Electric had a major presence but Roanoke was still mostly a Southern railroad town off the beaten track.

ITT had established a plant in Roanoke County in 1958 to build components for military avionics systems. A night vision division arrived four years later. But it startled many when ITT chose the Roanoke Valley as the home for its sole North American operation to develop the science of fiber optics.

Jim Goell was brought to Roanoke to direct the Electro-Optical Products Division (EOPD). According to him, his bosses “decided that fiber optics would fit in Roanoke because of similarities they saw between processes used to manufacture image intensifier tubes [for night vision applications] and to make fiber optics.”

Frank Akers, who came to ITT as an engineer, reports, “Turns out there was very little synergy, and our growing fiber-optic business was constantly fighting for resources that were mostly committed to the night vision business.”

A humble frat house

The EOPD originally was housed in part of a modest office complex on Peters Creek Road, several miles from the main plant on Plantation Road. Jerry Fleming, a senior technician at the time, remembers the tiny group referring to the facility as “the country club” because of its isolated location.

Despite the less-than-glamorous work environment, ITT quickly began amassing an astounding collection of brain power. Goell, who was in charge of hiring for the fiber optics group, says, “Roanoke was not a place where you found technical people. As a result, we brought many people from outside the area. Furthermore, we made it a point to emphasize the opportunity in the new field of fiber optics, and the risk. All of this led to having a staff of risk-takers.”

Breaking high-tech stereotypes >

More than three decades later, many of the former ITTers have branched out on some surprisingly non-high-tech pursuits, dispelling the stereotype of geeky scientists and engineers who only excel in a limited arena. A few examples:

Ken Ferris: Helped found two churches of different denominations and has been a leader in several nonprofit groups including Blue Ridge Women’s Center, Angel Food Ministries and Great Dads.

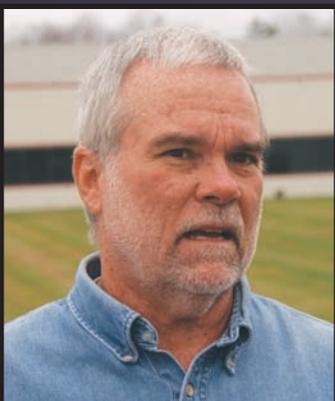
Pete File: After a career that included serving as lead engineer on several Apollo missions and his pioneering work in the field of fiber optics, File founded a chain of popular Famous Anthony’s restaurants in the western portion of Virginia.

Bob Hoss: Founded DreamScience, a nonprofit organization dedicated to researching the meaning of dreams. A frequent lecturer and guest on radio and TV, Hoss wrote “Dream Language,” and he and his wife, Lynne, are authors of another book, along with Zig Ziglar and others.

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Mike Bowman



Barney Dean



Ken Ferris

(Some of) ITT's illustrious alumni >

ITT's relatively small Electro-Optical Products Division spawned dozens of innovators and entrepreneurs, many of whom established multimillion dollar ventures that led the way in technological advances. Here's a sampling:



Charles Kuen Kao:

Commonly referred to as "The Father of Fiber Optic Communications," Kao won the 2009 Nobel Prize in Physics. He arrived at ITT in 1974, serving as chief scientist and director of engineering during his nearly eight years in the Roanoke Valley.

continued to Page 12

Some of the early employees speculate that the EOPD's somewhat remote location may have weeded out run-of-the-mill engineers and scientists, luring only the best and the brightest who were more interested in the technology than the location.

Phil Couch, an ITT employee from Great Britain, notes that because "fiber optics was new, it may have attracted more maverick engineers."

The mavericks came for myriad reasons.

Akers, a local high school chemistry teacher, saw an ad in the newspaper for a materials scientist. He submitted a handwritten cover letter, which his interviewers chided him for, but he landed the job. After years of teaching, he jokes, "I was ready for something a little less challenging."

Unlike Akers, many of the recruits hailed from far more metropolitan areas and had never heard of Roanoke.

A head hunter brought Ray McDevitt in from Harris Corporation in Florida. "The calm beauty of the Roanoke Valley, and the exciting spirit of being on the top of the biggest wave in telecommunications since television was a great match."

Art Hoffman was recruited to Roanoke by a former supervisor in Pennsylvania. The same man had arranged a blind date for Hoffman years earlier that resulted in his meeting his future wife, so Hoffman was amenable to his suggestion to come to Roanoke.

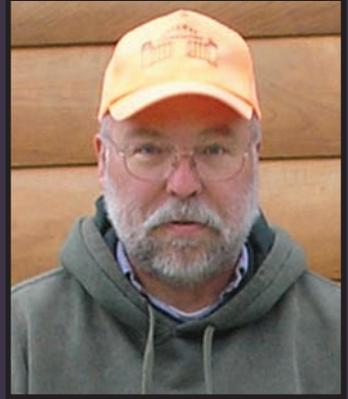
When ITT brought British researcher Charles Kao to the facility in 1974, recruiting became even easier. Kao already had a stellar reputation in the nascent field of fiber optics. Few of his former co-workers were surprised when he went on to earn the Nobel Prize in Physics last year for his pioneering work.



Pete File



Jim Goell



Art Hoffman

The 'Roanoke Phenomenon'

Once the group of mavericks gathered, it quickly bonded into a unique fraternity of like-minded individuals hell-bent on proving that fiber optics could be a viable means of conveying data. Four decades later, members still marvel at what Couch calls "the Roanoke phenomenon."

"We were really breaking new ground with techniques, technology and equipment," recalls Wanda Hutchison, the first female engineer in the group. "The atmosphere was filled with brainstorming and new ideas (designs on a napkin, or the wall, or even the back of a hand) which infected us with the vision of how fiber optics would and could be used in the future. We were future-driven and would be known to forget about the time of day, or lunch, or at times that we needed to go home for the evening or weekend."

Pete File says that all of the key elements were in place to achieve the seemingly impossible. "If you take a group of talented, innovative people and give them a goal and give them the support to get there, you get some incredible results."

"The technical talent employed at ITT during 1975-1985 was incredible. It was engineering paradise," Fleming says. "We had challenges, we had aggressive deadlines and we were able to perform miracles."

Early EOPD workers emphasize that working in uncharted territory triggered an "anything is possible" mentality that sent them into creative overdrive.

"The field was so new that by necessity we had to develop everything," Ted Leonard says. "In the fiber-optics group alone we made our own optical fiber, cable, light emitting diodes, semiconductor lasers, detectors, couplers, splices, transceivers and electronics. ITT provided a critical mass of very talented people ... building things which had never been made before."



Everything we did was new and had never been done before.

—Nelson Sarver

Breaking high-tech stereotypes >

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John Holland: Founder of Equine Welfare Alliance, a not-for-profit group advocating for the protection and preservation of wild mustangs.

Art Hoffman: Hoffman and his wife, Kathy, established a certified American Tree Farm, where they produce a line of all-natural syrups, lotions and soaps and raise championship Collies.

Elaine Tuttle: Former ITT vice president who founded a successful consulting business and was a founder of the New Century Technology Council (now NewVa Corridor Technology Council), she sold furniture for a while for Roanoke-based Twist and Turns. She lives in Norfolk and is a consultant there.

—Alison Weaver

(Some of) ITT's illustrious alumni >

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Bob Martinet, Jack Freeman and Al Bender: The trio left ITT in 1982 to start FiberCom, an industry leader that employed about 200 at its peak. Litton Industries purchased the company in 1994. Bender went on to head NetEdge Systems, LVL7 Systems and Cirrex Corp., and currently is founder/CEO of NanoVector in Raleigh, N.C.

George Gasparian: After leaving ITT in 1982, Gasparian took part in two start-ups before founding Sensors Unlimited, which was acquired by Finistar for \$700 million.

Frank Akers: In 1990, he joined Raychem Corp. as manager of a start-up division, leading it to annual sales of \$60 million within five years. He left to co-found GoDigital Networks, which was purchased by CTDI in 2006. Akers is now with another start-up, Techulon, in Blacksburg.



Fred McDuffee: Joined Sumitomo Electric Lightwave in 1985 and became the first non-Japanese president and COO in the U.S. to head a Sumitomo manufacturing subsidiary.

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What about Bob? >

By Alison Weaver

Perhaps one of the most asked-about and puzzled-over former ITT employees is Bob Kopstein.

Kopstein and Bob Thompson left ITT to start Optical Cable Corp. in 1983. The Roanoke County-based manufacturer is recognized for pioneering the design and production of fiber-optic cables for commercial and military applications. In 2004, it was second only to Corning in terms of kilometers of cable produced.

In 2000, Virginia Business Magazine gave Kopstein, who was then 50, an "A" confidence rating for a company whose net sales in 1999 were \$50.7 million. Kopstein was worth \$918 million, VB said. It said he "saw technology's commercial potential and co-founded Optical Cable. Stock price is soaring, even after business press criticism for its valuations. Optical Cable is now moving into online sales."

Kopstein, described by former co-workers as an "innovative genius," owned 54 million of OCC's 56.3 million outstanding

New initiates

For the engineers and scientists recruited straight out of school, the EOPD was a fantasy land. They knew they were helping make history happen and remain agog at the level of talent they were exposed to.

Mike Bowman was hired as a process engineer directly from Virginia Tech in 1980 and recalls being in awe of many of his colleagues. "We were surrounded by very smart scientists and, by necessity, forced to learn and understand the basic technology. Everyone at that time seemed to be an innovator."

Russ May also joined ITT fresh out of Virginia Tech. In 1978, he had taken a course on fiber optics—the first one Tech had ever offered. "At that time, most people were looking at using laser beams through the air between buildings as a way to communicate, instead of using optical fibers."

Professor Rick Klaus invited an ITT engineer to give a lecture on fiber optics, and May was smitten. "Working at ITT at that time was a wonderful opportunity for a new engineer. When I started, there were already in Roanoke several of the pioneers of optical fiber technology (including Charles Kao) and more joined the company during the time I was there," he says. "I remember having a cubicle next to a guy who had authored several of the seminal papers on optical fiber theory in the '70s."

Fred McDuffee, another Tech student, jettisoned his plans for

shares at the beginning of 2001, a nest egg worth more than a \$1 billion at one point. However, later that year the stock's value plummeted when news surfaced that Kopstein had borrowed from various brokerages, using his OCC shares as collateral, to invest in the stock market. When Kopstein's investments soured, the brokerages began selling the OCC stock.

Kopstein was ousted as CEO and later faced claims that he owed \$88.2 million to six brokerage firms. In July 2003, he failed to appear at an arbitration hearing in Richmond, and the National Association of Securities Dealers panel ruled in favor of A.G. Edwards & Sons, ordering Kopstein to pay the firm \$35.1 million.

Kopstein has disappeared from public view, and has variously been reported to be living in Singapore, Thailand or mainland China. Tony Mattera, a spokesman for Wells Fargo Advisors, which acquired A.G. Edwards, said, "As a matter of policy, Wells Fargo does not comment on arbitration decisions."

Meanwhile, under the guidance of new CEO Neil Wilkin, OCC has rebounded, reporting several hefty new contracts and acquisitions during 2009.

grad school when he learned about the field that ITT was exploring. "The workplace had a high energy level because most everyone was excited to be working on the new technology. It seemed like we had an invention or breakthrough every day."

Revenge of the nerds

Despite the long hours and frequent seven-day work weeks—or perhaps because of them—the EOPD quickly developed a reputation for all sorts of high jinks. And with a group of electronic wizards, inventors and scientists, the shenanigans were sophisticated stuff.

Workers would hijack the corporate easy-listening music system to pipe in music more to their liking. They would program in changes to the lighting, causing mysterious patterns to appear.

As John Holland describes it, "ITT corporate was mentally very staid, very militaristic. It was not the personality that matches the personality of mavericks. Perhaps because of that, we drew together. The team spirit, the camaraderie and the humor were amazing."

Others recall this "us against them" mentality, saying it became a good-spirited diversion from long hours to prank the company, and one another.

"The EOPD people were intelligent and most had a great

““”

This was not a job.
This was our life.

—Wanda Hutchison

““”

We were a true 'Skunk Works,' developing the first fiber optics systems for telecommunications, weapons such as fiber-guided missiles, and many classified programs.

—Ray McDevitt

““”

When asked if ITT encouraged entrepreneurs: "Ha, perhaps through layoffs but not otherwise."

—Frank Akers

““”

The experience at ITT was special. There was something in the water. Few people get the opportunity to work in the environment we were in.

—Steve White



John Holland



Wanda Hutchison



Luke Huybrechts

(Some of) ITT's illustrious alumni >

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Dave Huber: Started Ciena, which had an initial public offering of \$300 million, then went on to found Corvis. Cisco Systems reportedly had a standing offer to purchase Corvis for \$10 billion before the telecommunications crash. Corvis acquired Broadwing Corp. and sold it in 2007 for about \$1.4 billion.



Kent Murphy: Founder, president and CEO of Luna Innovations. Murphy holds nearly three dozen patents and was named 2004 Industrialist of the Year by Gov. Mark Warner.

sense of humor which made the drudgery and long hours bearable if not enjoyable," Glenn Prather says.

Couch speculates that having a relatively young work force fostered the mischievous environment. "This was mostly a young group, new grads, [there were] a lot of practical jokes and camaraderie, perhaps a hangover of college life in a way."

Holland recalls that he took to wearing earphones to listen to classical music and to block out the noisy plant background. One day as he was busily designing, an NPR newscast came on with breaking news of violence in nearby West Virginia coal mines. The report told of at least a dozen people killed and bizarrely, three chokings.

Holland rushed to a break room to find a TV. As he flipped channels, various co-workers gathered. He excitedly told them of the news, and one asked, "Really? And how many chokings were there?" Holland discovered that his colleagues had recorded a fake newscast and were transmitting a signal over top of NPR's.

Holland retaliated in part by integrating a microprocessor into the wiring harness of one of his co-worker's cars, programming the horn to bleat a tune every 36 hours.

"You had to be a good sport if you worked there, or at least very creative and vengeful," May says.

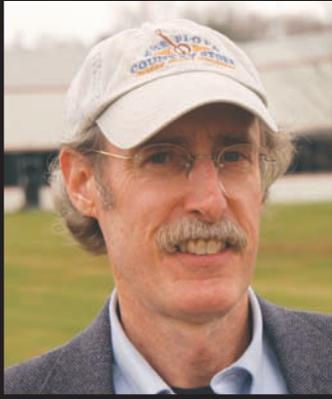
The party's over

By the early 1980s, many of the EOPD frat boys were growing restless.

"Since ITT depended heavily on government funding, the business had its financial ups and downs, meaning there were cycles of heavy hiring followed by small and large layoffs," Akers recalls. "I had to lay off over 20 engineers one day, for



Ted Leonard



Russ May



Paul Oh

example, and some of those went on to start their own companies or work at start-ups.

"Piedmont Airlines at the time had a plastic card found in seatback pockets that said, 'This Seat Occupied by a Through Passenger' and many of those were posted in engineers' cubicles reflecting that phenomenon."

As ITT began transferring workers to other locations, those who had grown to love the Roanoke Valley or who didn't want to uproot their families began seeking alternate paths.

Luke Huybrechts, EOPD marketing manager from 1976-86, says, "A combination of frustration with ITT, and the lure of the commercial markets for the knowledge and experience they possessed, led many of the employees to start ventures to achieve the commercial success they knew could not be achieved by ITT."

"The ITT strategy was to leverage the government funding to develop technologies that would further their fiber optic business. They had no path, basis or capability, from their military/government business structure, to convert the results ... into commercially successful products. Think of the \$600 million spec coffee pot."

Ken Ferris recalls lamenting the loss of a steady stream of "brilliant talent." One departing colleague told him he didn't want to wake up one day and realize he'd missed the opportunity to be part of a start-up.

The time was right and entrepreneurial bug was contagious. "The engineers who developed their skills at ITT were well-positioned to spin off ventures to exploit the new and growing market for optical communications," May explains.

"In the long run, people who worked at ITT certainly benefited from involvement in fiber optics more than the company," says McDuffee. 

““”

Never since have I worked with such a brilliant collection of people.

—John Holland

““”

We made it a point to emphasize the opportunity in the new field of fiber optics, and the risk. All of this led to having a staff of risk-takers.

—Jim Goell

““”

The experience and time I spent working at ITT-EOPD and FiberCom will always be one of the most rewarding times of my life.

—Karen Smith



Networking, up close and personal >

There is a lot of discussion today about the importance of using social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and others and while these sites are helpful tools for building and maintaining relationships, a far better strategy for making connections is face-to-face networking. There is no better way to build relationships and establish new ones.

Some important rules to follow when attending networking events:

- Be the first to say hello. It is not necessary to wait for an introduction when meeting someone new. Forget what your mom told you as a child. As adults in a networking situation, it is OK to talk to strangers.
- Approach individuals who are standing alone. If you do not know many people at an event, look around for others you have not met before and appear approachable.
- Remember to be approachable yourself. The best way to appear approachable is to smile.
- Do not spend time talking only with people you know. Make it a goal to meet a specific pre-determined number of people prior to attending an event.
- Pay particular attention to the person's name and use it during the conversation. The best way to remember someone's name is through repetition.
- To be interesting, be sincerely interested in others. Studies prove that those that are considered the best conversationalists are people that have the ability to get others to talk about themselves.

For the new year, make it a goal to get out and spend time meeting others face to face. Your professional and personal life will be richer for it. 

Business Etiquette

By Donna Dilley

Executive Summary:

There is no substitute for old-fashioned face-to-face networking. Here's how to do it.

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To look or not: The choice is yours >

Dear Getting a Grip: *The women at my office and their low-cut blouses ... What are they thinking wearing bare attire to work? A guy's gotta look, doesn't he? I'm not a creep, a stalker, or a predator. I'm a healthy, heterosexual male. Will you tell the ladies to at least button up one more button so I can get back to work?*

Dear Not a Creep: While I don't have the power or interest to impose a dress code, I can see your point of view. Literally and figuratively. People select clothing for reasons ranging from indifference, to adornment, to intent. *Should* co-workers wear this and not that? Unless a company dress code exists and management enforces it, the question doesn't really matter. Our particular morals or taste have no control over what, how much, or how little our co-workers wear.

A guy may think he's gotta look, but it's dangerous corporate territory. Whether you look, joke about the desire to look with co-workers, or talk over the looking with a manager, you're right that you can look like a creep. You may also be accused of sexual harassment, which is legally actionable.

Getting a Grip: What we give our attention to ultimately is a matter of choice, whether to an office mate's cleavage, to the plumber's half-exposed rump, or to a rose-tinted sunrise. None of those "makes" us look, although we may not be fully conscious of choosing. When we feel like something outside of us is driving our choices, we've given our control to it and we're no longer behind the wheel. While it may feel natural to look, it's natural to feel hunger and wait to eat. Figure out what's taking your sense of choice and power from you at work, and take back that wheel. After work, places abound where it's not only permissible, but expected, that you choose to sit back and look and look and look. 



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.

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Unexpected, recycled treasures >

As the dust settles from the holiday whirl you may find yourself short a few wardrobe necessities. How can you best fill in the gaps without breaking the bank or any New Year's resolutions to start saving money?

Of course, sale prices will be low in many stores as retailers anticipate the approaching slow season and rid themselves of excess inventory. However, January is the month when most people decide to clean up, clear out and turn over a new leaf. Before hitting the mall, consider consignment shops where consumers can take gently worn clothing to be "recycled." You might just get lucky and find exactly what you need.

We're all familiar with thrift shops run by Goodwill, the Salvation Army, the Rescue Mission and other non-profit groups. Their diverse donations occasionally yield a gem of a garment. However, the recession has spawned many consignment shops that sell higher end used clothing that is practically new. In fact, they seem to pop up overnight in strip malls and merit a visit because their wares are quite nice.

Roanoke has consignment shops for every shopper. Most focus on womenswear; some specialize in clothing for children and teens; a few carry menswear. The Discovery Shop and The Golden Shoestring have a variety of gently worn, good quality men's sportcoats, trousers, and suits at reasonable prices. A man needing a navy blazer for an interview will be in luck, with a bonus dress shirt and khakis or trousers to complete his outfit. Wool and cashmere vests or sweaters are also typical finds.

Some resale shops accept only upscale women's clothing, organize and present their clothing impeccably, and attract savvy shoppers. Euro Exclusives offers a wide variety of suits and separates by brands including Pierre Cardin, Garfield & Marx, Neiman Marcus, Worth, and Dana Buchman to name a few. The Golden Shoestring accepts well-known luxury brands in excellent condition including, but not limited to, Armani, Sigrid Olson, Lilly, and Lafayette 148. Both stores have racks of suits and separates in great condition for reasonable prices. It's a pleasure to browse through their organized racks and well worth the trip to see what treasures await the persistent shopper.

Consignment shops recycle great merchandise, provide income for sellers, save consumers money, and offer the satisfaction of finding a bargain. Shop them often and with an open mind to make going "green" fun and profitable. 



Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

Executive Summary:
Whatever you have thought about consignment shops and businesses like Goodwill, forget it and start over. The bargains are genuine and many of the clothes top-end.

Foreign-owned companies in the region >

Overview:

Foreign ownership is increasingly evident as an economic development factor in the nation, the state and in our region. Foreign ownership of some of the region's most successful companies has come to mean jobs and investment, as well as control from outside. Following is a listing of foreign-owned companies in the Roanoke and New River Valleys, Lynchburg and Danville areas.

Key to Listings:

VIRGINIA COMPANY NAME
Address, City, State, Zipcode,
Foreign Parent Name,
Virginia Product or Service,
Type of Operation:
M = Manufacturing
H = U.S. Headquarters
D = Distribution/Warehousing
SV = Services
S = Sales/marketing
A = Agricultural

Australia

BORAL BRICK, INC.
P.O. Box 740,
Madison Heights, VA 24572,
Boral Brick, Bricks, D

Austria

USA FOOD PRODUCTS LTD
Lynchburg, VA, Chevideco,
Horse meat products, S

Belgium

FOOD LION, INC.
6500 Enterprise Drive,
Disputana, VA 23842,
Delhaize, Food, D

Canada

CANADIAN AMERICAN
TRANSPORTATION, INC.
Rte. 1101, Low Moor, VA 24426,
C.A.T., Inc., Transportation
services, SV

MUNDET-HERMETITE INC.

21st Street, P.O. Box 949
Buena Vista, VA 24416,
Mundet Canada Ltd.,
Cigarette tipping, M

RENE COMPOSITES

P.O. Box 393,
Pearisburg, Va 24134,
Rene Composite Materials
Corp., Truck body parts, M

TRANSKRIT CORP.

1825 Blue Hills Cir. NE,
Roanoke, VA 24012,
Rogers Communications,
Business forms, M/H

France

ALCATEL
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLE
7635 Plantation Rd, NE,
Roanoke, VA 24019,
Alcatel Alsthom, Optical
fibers, M

B & W NUCLEAR FUEL CO.

Nuclear fuel, M/H/SV/S
B & W NUCLEAR SERVICE CO.

Nuclear power plant
maintenance, H/SV/S
B & W NUCLEAR
TECHNOLOGIES
3315 Old Forest Road,
Lynchburg, VA 24502,
Framatome S.A. / COGEMA
S.A., Nuclear products and
services, H/M

BGF INDUSTRIES, INC.

401 Amherst Avenue,
Altavista, VA 24517-1513,
Porcher Group, Fiberglass
fabrics, M

CARBONE USA CORP.

P.O. Box 1189, S. Branch Dr.,
Salem, VA 24153,
Pechiney Corp., Heat
exchangers, M

WHEELABRATOR

ABRASIVES, INC.
1 Abrasive Ave., P.O. Box 804,
Bedford, VA 24523
Wheelabrator - Allevard
S.A., Steel abrasives, M

Germany

AMERICAN HOFMANN CORP.
Balancing and testing eqpt.
M/SV/S
HOFMANN CORP.
Automotive service equip., M/S
HOFMANN MONDIAL, INC.
3700 Cohn Place,
Lynchburg, VA 24506,
Hofmann Mondial GmbH
Automotive equip., defense
technology, H/M/SV/S

HERMLE BLACK FOREST

CLOCK CO.
P.O. Box 670, Amherst, VA 24521
Franz Hermle & Sohn, Clock
movements, machine parts, M

HOECHST CELANESE CORP.

P.O. Box 1000, Narrows, VA 24124
Hoechst AG, Cellulosic
man-made fibers, M

MRI TANGLEWOOD RENTAL

INVESTMENT, INC.
4302 Electric Rd,
Roanoke, VA 24014,
Otto Versand, Commercial
rental property, SV

MOOG USA, INC.

740 Industrial Ave,
Bedford, VA 24523, Moog
GmbH, Bridge inspection &
repair equipment, M/H/SV

NSW CORP.

530 Gregory Ave., NE,
Roanoke, VA 24016,
Norddeutsche Seekabelwerke
AG, Plastic products, M

SIEGWERK, INC.

4225 Murray Place, P.O. Box
10064, Lynchburg, VA 24506,
Siegwerk Farbenfabrik Keller
Dr. Rung & Co., Printing ink, M

STOROPACK, INC.

1602 Midland Rd.,
Salem, VA 24153, Storopack
Hans Reicheneker GmbH,
Plastic packaging materials, M

THEYSOHN CORP. USA

2 Corporate Drive, Suite F,
Radford, VA 24141,
Friedrich Theysohn
Maschinenbau GmbH,
Extrusion machinery
components, S/SV

Greece

ROANOKE CONCRETE SUPPLY
51 Reserve Ave.,
Roanoke, VA 24016,
Titan, Concrete, M

Japan

CIT GROUP FACTORING
134 Wooding Ave.,
Danville, VA 22541,
Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank of Japan,
Financial service center, SV

MAGNOX, INC.

720 Commerce Str.,
P.O. Box 431, Pulaski, VA 24301,
Mitsui Mining & Smelting Co.,
Ltd, Magnetic iron oxides, H/M/S

SEABOARD FARMS, INC.

P.O. Box 214,
Bent Mountain, VA 24059,
Kabushiki-Kaisha-Toyama &
Ise Shokuhin, Eggs, A

TOKAI DENKO USA, INC.

P.O. Box 299, Gretna, VA 24557,
Tokai Denko Co., Ltd.,
Wire harnesses, M

YOKOHAMA TIRE CORP.

1500 Indiana Ave.,
Salem, VA 24153,
Yokohama Rubber Co.,
Ltd., Tires, M

Netherlands

ELIZABETH ARDEN
4411 Plantation Rd., N.E.
Roanoke, VA 24012,

Unilever N.V., Cosmetics,
injection molded plastic,
M/D/SV

Norway

BOEN HARDWOOD
FLOORING, INC.
Rt. 2 Hollie Dr., Bowles Industrial
Park, Martinsville, VA 24112
Johan G. Olsen Industrier A/S,
Hardwood flooring, H/D/S

Sweden

ERICSSON GE MOBILE
COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
Mountain View Rd.,
Lynchburg, VA 24502,
Telefon A.B. L M Ericsson,
Land mobile radio systems,
cellular systems, M/D/S/SV

VOLVO-GM HEAVY

TRUCK CORP.
P.O. Box 1126, State Rte. 643,
Dublin, VA 24084,
Volvo A.B., Trucks, M

Switzerland

ABB POWER T & D, SMALL
POWER TRANSFORMER DIV.
P.O. Box 920,
South Boston, VA 24592,
Asea Brown Boveri Ltd., Small
power transformers, M/S

ABB POWER T & D,
TRANSFORMER & SWITCH DIV.
P.O. Box 38, Bland, VA 24315,
Asea Brown Boveri Ltd.,
Dry-type transformers, air
disconnect switches, M

ADIA PERSONNEL SERVICES
9100 Arboretum Parkway,
Suite 100, Richmond, VA 23236
(statewide offices),
Employment services, SV

D-SCAN FURNITURE, INC.

P.O. Box 1067,
South Boston, VA 24592,
Diethelm, Furniture, M/H

NESTLE REFRIGERATED FOOD

201 Airdise Dr.,
Danville, VA 24540,
Nestle' S.A., Fresh pasta &
sauces, M/D

XALOY, INC.

P.O. Box 1441,
Pulaski, VA 24301, Saurer
Gruppe Holdings AG, Bimetallic
cylinders, screws, M/H

Taiwan
DELTA POWER ELECTRONIC LAB, INC.
1861 Pratt Dr.,
Blacksburg, VA 24060,
Delta Electronic Industries Co. Ltd., Electronics R&D lab, SV

United Kingdom
ACCO CHAIN & LIFTING PRODUCTS
Rt. 91 North, Drawer A,
Saltville, VA 24370,
Babcock International Plc,
Hoists, trolleys & lifts, M

BBA FRICTION, INC.
3994 Pepperell Way,
Dublin, VA 24084, BBA Group Plc,
Automotive brake pads, drums & linings, M

CONNEX PIPE SYSTEMS, INC.
1 Connex Way,
Troutville, VA 24175, Whessoe Group Plc,
Fabricated pipe, M

COURTAULDS PERFORMANCE FILM
P.O. Box 5068,
Martinsville, VA 24115,

Courtaulds Plc, Polyester film, M/H/S/SV

DRAKE EXTRUSION INC.
Henry County, VA, Readicut Holdings International,
Carpet fibers, M

GENERAL SHALE PRODUCTS CORP.
Route 4, Box 127,
Marion, VA 24354,
Marley Plc

GENERAL SHALE WEBSTER ROANOKE
770 Webster Rd.,
Blue Ridge, VA 24064,
Marley Plc, Bricks, M

GULLICK DOBSON, INC.
P.O. Box 845,
Abingdon, VA 24210,
Gullick Dobson Ltd., Longwall mining supports, H/S

HAARCROS LUMBER & BLDG. SUPPLIES, INC.
P.O. Box 2908,
Roanoke, VA 24022,
Harrossons & Crosfield Plc,

Lumber & bldg. supplies, H/D

HICKSON DANCHEM CORP.
1975 Richmond Blvd.,
Danville, VA 24540,
Hickson International Plc,
Chemicals, M

HILDEN-HALIFAX, INC.
P.O. Box 1098, Railroad Ave.,
South Boston, VA 24592
Hilden Manufacturing Co. Ltd,
Table & bed linens, fabrics,
H/S/D/J/M

MW MANUFACTURERS, INC.
P.O. Box 559,
Rocky Mount, VA 24151,
Hanson Plc, Windows & doors, M

MAGNETIC BEARINGS, INC.
5241 Valley Park Dr.,
Roanoke, VA 24019,
T. I. Group Plc, Active magnetic bearings systems, M/SV

MARLEY MOULDINGS
P.O. Box 610, Marion, VA 24354
Marley Plc, Decorative moldings, M

PRILLAMAN CHEMICAL CORP.
1100 Madison,
Martinsville, VA 24115,
Ellis & Everard Plc,
Industrial chemicals, D/SV

ROBERTSHAW CONTROLS CO.
P. O. Box 188,
Independence, VA 24348,
Siebe Plc, Refrigeration controls, thermostats, M

SIMPLIMATIC ENGINEERING CO.
P.O. Box 11709,
1320 Wards Ferry Rd.,
Lynchburg, VA 24506,
CMB Engineering & Systems,
Packaging equipment, M

TOMKINS INDUSTRIES / LASCO
P.O. Box 1177,
South Boston, VA 24592,
Tompkins Plc, Fiberglass reinforced bath fixtures,
M/D/S/SV

Sources
[<http://www.geography.vt.edu/vga/data.html>]

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ITT Corporation >

Compiled by Paulette Jayabalan

Overview:

ITT Night Vision, based in Roanoke, is the world's leading developer, producer and supplier of Generation (Gen) 3 image intensifier technology for U.S. and allied military forces, as well as homeland security. It employs approximately 1,800 with more than 1,400 in Roanoke. The company has 430,000 square feet of floor space between its two locations in Roanoke and Springfield, Mass. ITT Night Vision is part of ITT Defense—a global company of more than 20,000 people.

ITT Defense is part of ITT Corporation (NYSE: ITT), a \$9 billion company that employs more than 40,000 people making advanced defense, fluid technology and other industrial products and services.

[www.nightvision.com] / [itt.com]

Market Commentary

"ITT Corporation (NYSE: ITT) has been awarded a \$19.3 million delivery order from the U.S. Army's Research Development & Engineering Command Acquisition Center under the OMNI VII contract for AN/PVS-14 night vision monocular devices—ITT's most popular and utilized night vision goggle. Eighty percent of these goggles are destined for the U.S. Air Force with the remaining quantities for the U.S. Navy and U.S. Army." [itt.com]

"ITT Corporation reported third quarter 2009 net income from continuing operations of \$190 million or \$1.03 per share, exceeding the Zacks Consensus Estimate of 89 cents. The results included the effects of improved operating performance primarily driven by productivity initiatives. Revenue for the quarter was \$2.7 billion, down 6 percent year-over-year and down 4 percent excluding the impact of foreign exchange and acquisitions on a comparable basis." [finance.yahoo.com]

"We are maintaining our fair value estimate for ITT after reviewing the firm's third-quarter business performance. Though revenue slipped 13 percent at fluid technology and 22 percent at motion and flow control, ITT's defense electronics and services improved 2 percent from the previous year, and total revenue fell a modest 6 percent. The firm's operating margin followed a similar route, falling at fluid technology and motion and flow control, but improving at defense electronics and services. However, ITT took a one-time \$223 million pretax charge related to its asbestos exposure, and operating earnings fell \$235 million from the previous year to \$93 million. Consequently, diluted earnings per share crumbled \$0.85 to \$0.32. Like other industrials we cover, ITT reduced working-capital investment to boost free cash flow. During the first nine months of 2009, ITT's cash from operations less capital expenditures improved 21 percent from the previous year to \$916 million." [quicktake.morningstar.com]

"We believe ITT's performance continues to validate the benefits of a balanced portfolio that is focused on

addressing a diversified set of enduring issues such as clean water and global safety and security," said Steve Loranger, ITT's chairman, president and chief executive officer. "While market challenges will remain into the near future, we believe the Company is doing what is required to emerge from the current economic environment as a much stronger company that is well positioned to grow and improve its financial performance over time." [nasdaq.com]

Total Executive Compensation

Name	Title	Amount
Steven R. Loranger	CEO	\$1,119,615
Denise L. Ramos	Senior VP/CFO	\$533,077
Nicholas P. Hill	Senior VP	\$428,192
Vincent A. Maffeo	Senior VP/ General Counsel	\$473,231
Gretchen W. McClain	Senior VP & President, Fluid and Motion Control	\$426,462

Source: [itt.com]

Board of Directors

Name	Primary Company	Age
Steven R. Loranger	ITT Corp.	57
Curtis J. Crawford	XCEO	61
Christina A. Gold	Western Union	61
Ralph F. Hake	Former Maytag CEO	60
John J. Hamre, PhD	Center for Strategic & International Studies	58

Paul J. Kern	AM General	63
Frank T. MacInnis	EMCOR Group	62
Surya N. Mohapatra	Quest Diagnostics	59
Linda S. Sanford	Enterprise Transformation, IBM	56
Markos I. Tambakeras	Former Kennametal CEO	58

Source: [reuters.com] / [itt.com]

Institutional Stock Ownership

Institutions hold 80.9 percent of ITT Corp. shares.

Source: [nasdaq.com]

Major Non-institutional Stockholders

Name	Shares held
Barrow, Hanley, Mewhinney & Strauss	13,747,135
Vanguard Windsor II Fund	10,843,820

These entities hold a 5 percent ownership in ITT; ITT has 183.0 million shares outstanding.

Source: [moneycentral.msn.com]

Sources

[www.nightvision.com] / [itt.com]
 [finance.yahoo.com] / [quicktake.morningstar.com]
 [nasdaq.com] / [reuters.com]
 [moneycentral.msn.com]

Note

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

Life Insurance as an Investment? >

Executive Summary:

Life insurance isn't a self-generating, no-maintenance product. It needs to be watched and tended carefully.

By Joel S. Williams

Modern life insurance has evolved into a complex financial vehicle with many intricate moving parts. It is no longer prudent to simply buy a policy, put the paperwork in a drawer, make payments and assume that it will pay when needed.

Faulty assumptions, like erroneous life expectancy pricing and inappropriate premium funding, could put the entire policy at risk. The nature of life insurance now demands that it be actively managed as an investment through its entire life, not unlike a stock portfolio.

Most consumers and many advisors believe the premium is the "cost" for the policy benefits. Instead, the premium often represents the financing terms the agent arranged for the policy purchase. This premium amount may be too high or it may be too low. Time and changing policy elements often render the original financing terms detrimental to the policy's integrity. Here are a couple of real examples:

The \$1,544,000 Total Loss. Alice, 84, suddenly received an additional \$65,000 premium demand in the mail with a notice stating that she must pay that amount in less than 30 days or her policy would be foreclosed upon. Although she had been faithfully paying a \$34,000 annual premium for her \$1 million policy, it was insufficient to cover the true internal costs.

Had Alice contacted a knowledgeable advisor she would have discovered that she should have been paying a slightly higher premium for the last 16 years. Instead, Alice lost not only her \$1 million in life insurance, but also the \$544,000 she had paid in premiums over the years.

It was later determined that by paying only \$500 more a year, Alice could have maintained the financial integrity of her life insurance. A third party review early is advisable.

The \$24,000 Annual Gain. An active male aged 83 was paying annual premiums of \$48,000 each for two \$1 Million policies. A third party review of his life expectancy and policy showed the policy to be well funded and the company sound. However, the man's actuarial projected life expectancy was half the planned policy projection. This client is now saving \$24,000 annually (\$12K each) and is closely monitoring the plans with an annual review to be sure both policies continue to remain funded without being overfunded.

Today, it is important to strategically manage life insurance to maximize your return on investment. 

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Lawyer Paul Thomson at the Roanoke City Mills brownfield site: "I'm seeing more rigidity in the criteria that the banks have for a commercial loan."

Dan Smith

Tight credit a brownfield problem >

Executive Summary:

Cleaning up properties where hazardous materials have leaked is more problematic these days with banks being more timid with loans than usual.

By Gene Marrano

Turning so-called brownfields into productive tracts of land has been one way for many localities to turn eyesores and hazardous sites into something positive over the past several decades. It has happened in Roanoke (S. Jefferson St., the Ivy Market complex on Franklin Road) and other places in the region, often using federal funds as seed money for cleanup efforts.

The economic slowdown means that the brakes have been applied in some cases to brownfield conversions, according to attorney Paul Thomson of Woods Rogers in Roanoke. "It's something I've had a lot of interest in," says Thomson, who estimates that he has been in on several dozen such projects since he left a post with the Environmental Protection Agency and went back into private legal practice.

An old mill in Danville on the Dan River that will "re-purposed" is the latest brownfield project where Thomson has helped wade through any legal land mines associated with

cleanup. The process starts with due diligence, in this case called "all appropriate inquiry," according to Thomson.

The federal Superfund law provides some protection for parties looking to clean up and reuse tracts of land. A consultant team usually evaluates a site for potential hazards, then works with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality brownfields group, says Thomson, seeking a "prospective purchaser letter" once a baseline has been established.

He calls the process "a framework to approach how you want to acquire the property. You build off of that to determine what your remedial effort is going to be." Residential development might require more cleanup than sites destined for commercial projects.

Contaminated parcels "that didn't rise to a Superfund issue ... but would make the average buyer nervous" have benefited from Thomson's expertise. Not every developer has the gumption to take on property that must be rehabilitated, but Thomson says the state's voluntary remediation program can make that process easier.

New property owners must cooperate with regulatory authorities that come in later for further cleanup, should another problem be detected. Before programs were put in place to encourage brownfield conversion, Thomson says owners weren't sure what they were getting into, or how much they would have to spend for remediation.

What level of risk was accepted at the time of purchase helps determine who is on the

hook. "There can be a lot of creativity between buyer and seller," says Thomson, who helps orchestrate some of those deals.

Funds made available through DEQ and the EPA have allowed municipalities to evaluate brownfield sites, before they try to persuade housing authorities and industrial development organizations to take a look.

As the credit markets have tightened, however, fewer banks are willing to loan money to investors that want to buy brownfield sites. "I'm seeing more rigidity in the criteria that the banks have for a commercial loan," says Thomson. He notes that there is some money trickling down from the federal stimulus package passed by the Obama White House that can be used to help evaluate brownfields.

Thomson also hopes for a more "reasoned approach" to lending in the near future. "It doesn't at the moment include many

brownfield opportunities." Lenders are nervous about risk these days, and even those property owners who have commissioned repeated hazardous material evaluations and perhaps some cleanup "cannot guarantee they've caught everything. You can miss a spot [before excavation]."

He's not a newcomer to environmental issues by any stretch: Thomson was the assistant administrator for criminal enforcement with the Environmental Protection Agency from 1987-1990, prosecuting polluters, and was General Counsel for Pittston Coal before that.

Taking a developer's vision of what a brownfield property can become, evaluating that tract for environmental issues while considering the economics of a deal is where Thomson's legal background comes in to play. "That's really the challenge and the fun part of it." 

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Authorized by Nicholas C. Conte, Chairman, on behalf of the firm.



Pam Hartle

These new mothers, all students in a childcare education class, will wear many different hats, conquering sleep deprivation and a tough economy. The moms and mothers-to-be are (from left) Adrian Bryant, Susan Clonch, Lauren Bullen, Allison McClintic Martin, Tanya M. Huff and Somer Floyd.

Taking a little time for the new kid >

Executive Summary:

Here's how two local businesses teamed up and started helping families work together to stay afloat in challenging economic times.

By Pamela Hartle

Mothers-to-be and new mothers are flooding the workplace these days by necessity as much as by choice. They are joining employers who, like those moms, are facing increasing economic challenges.

A mother's choice of where and when to return to work after baby is born is determined not

only by crucial decisions for the well being of her children, but for the reality of her earning capacity and preservation of her position in this increasingly competitive environment.

April Lovern, an occupational therapist at Carilion Clinic in Roanoke, returned to work 12 weeks after giving birth this year to her second child. She says, "My biggest challenge was sleep deprivation, but my 7 a.m. starting time at work was also a main reason I love my job. Starting work early gives me the whole afternoon with my kids.

"Returning to work has meant financial security, and daycare gives each of us the opportunity to develop independently. Then we can also grow as a family unit." For Lovern, staying home permanently wasn't a consideration.

Sheri Sigmon, Carilion's leave management nurse says, "Carilion employs 12,000 people,

Internationalization: BROADENING OUR ECONOMIC IMPACT

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Many Thanks to:
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and approximately 900 leaves [of absence] per month are evaluated and managed. Sixty-five to 70 of those leaves are childbirth related, and only one employee or less typically doesn't return."

The Family Medical Leave Act governs employers' and employees' allowable time off for childbirth, and Sigmon says Carilion is "ahead of the general population," and talks about cutting edge facilitation of those relevant policies. Carilion created special teams, structured and condensed administrative duties via new software, and thus can now concentrate on employees on a consistent and one-on-one basis, Sigmon says.

"Every person and every situation's unique," says Sigmon. "We spend less time on administration, more time on personal solutions—complying with FMLA guidelines—and deferring to the team approach versus each manager having to manage employees individually. It's better managed, and has a better financial impact on Carilion now."

Transitioning into working parents encompasses many issues; raises many questions. Sigmon sends home large packets of information and advises working parents to "keep their minds and their bodies active."

"The Honeytree [Learning Center] discount is an excellent benefit and incentive to return to work here," says Sigmon. "It's all about the bottom line." Honeytree is a child care

center with a school-like curriculum.

Michelle Hillis, family support coordinator for Honeytree Learning Center, says, "We work hard to create a family support system. The only good mother is a happy mother."

Sigmon credits the economy and society with most new moms' decisions to predominantly take only six weeks of the 12 weeks FMLA allows. "Pressure to be the perfect mom, perfect daughter, perfect worker, is driven by society and women feel a need to be successful outside the home, so are assuming more positions of authority now," Sigmon says.

Neither Sigmon nor Hillis has noticed a recent change in the number of fathers choosing to stay home while the new mother becomes the main bread winner, but Sigmon says, "Their roles are definitely more non-traditional now, and driven by finances. FMLA allows men up to 12 weeks to care and bond with their new baby, but that's rare and most take only two weeks off," she says.

"There are occupational differences," Sigmon notes: "Professionals and management typically take more time off than hourly employees. They can afford it, they've been there longer, accrued more time, and another manager can cover their position."

One thing's consistent, though. "Everyone would love more time," she says. 



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Dr. Ronald Webster: "I thought it was a terrible problem to be neglected."

all photos: Huong Fralin

Stuttering: Finally, an avenue of treatment >

Executive Summary:

Helping patients work through their stuttering is a significant step in giving them back their lives.

By Huong Fralin

Imagine not being able to say your own name or order what you really want to eat at a restaurant. Imagine never having the experience of enjoying friendly conversations on the telephone, let alone ever using one. Imagine not having the confidence to use your talents to their fullest potential for

fear of embarrassment because of a speech impediment.

These, and many other normal, every-day situations, are a daily challenge for those who stutter. They are constantly misunderstood, mocked and laughed at.

Scientists at Hollins Communications Research Institute (HCRI) have developed an innovative treatment program that helps those who stutter learn how to retain fluent speech.

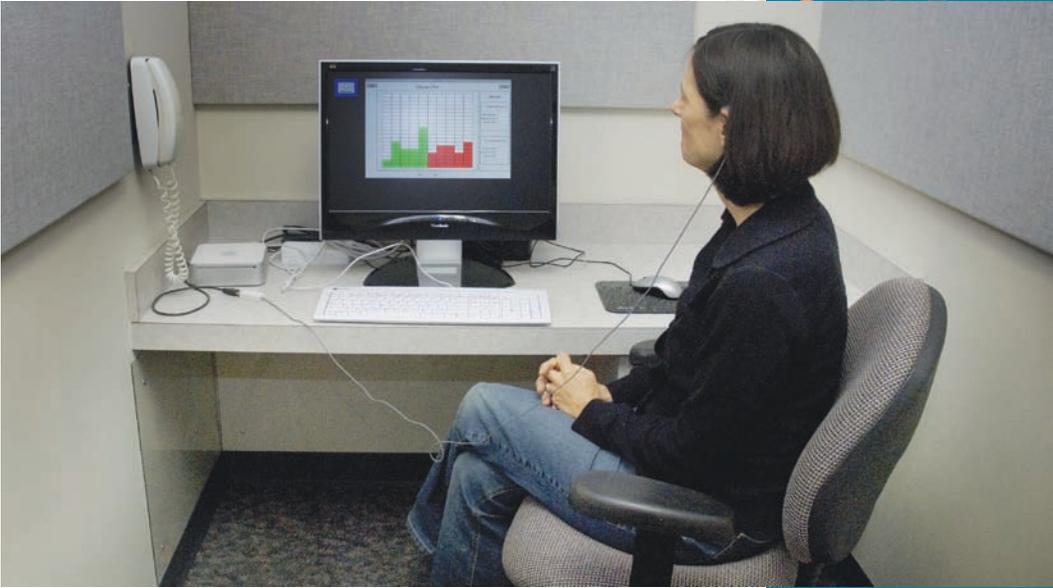
Dr. Ronald Webster, who had been a professor of psychology at Hollins University, started the HCRI not-for-profit organization in 1972. HCRI has no affiliation with the university, but when he started teaching at Hollins, he was conducting research on babies, trying to understand how they develop the language they hear. While



Clients use Apple iPod Touch and iPhone during training.



The EAR3 device is used to measure the danger/safety levels of anything loud that you use in your everyday life.



Clinician Candice Smith: “Unless you have communication issues, I don’t think that you realize the doors this program opens up for people.”

trying to categorize sounds that babies make, he hired a speech pathologist to help.

“She started talking about stuttering and the fact that clinicians avoided treating people who stuttered because nothing worked and they were at a loss about it,” says Webster. “I thought it was a terrible problem to be neglected and that’s when I began testing ideas on changing speech.”

HCRI has found that stuttering has to do with physical rather than mental issues and has developed a treatment to help reconstruct and train abnormal speech muscle contractions, which cause stuttering. HCRI offers 17 stuttering therapy programs annually consisting of 12 days of therapy in the Hollins Fluency Program: Advanced Speech Reconstruction for Stuttering. Clinicians use advanced behavioral, electronic and computer technologies to help reconstruct clients’ speech muscles.

A typical therapy session consists of clients working in sound-proof cubicles for 20-minute intervals with specialized computer programs. They then go over what they’ve learned and practice it with other clients. Clients, by the second week, make phone calls, give speeches and go out to a public place to apply what they’ve learned.

Scientists at HCRI have also developed a

voice monitoring application for use on the Apple iPod Touch and iPhone, which evaluates and scores speech behaviors. Clients can use the device during training in outside situations by practicing asking questions and seeing how well they do, which makes them feel secure, before they actually approach someone to ask a question.

The application also records speech samples that can be e-mailed to a clinician, reviewed, and then the clinician can comment.

“Unless you have communication issues, I don’t think you realize the doors this program opens up for people,” says Clinician Candice Smith. “We have clients from all walks of life: business people, actresses, teenagers who can’t participate in class discussions or go through a drive-thru.”

Webster says, “We take people who have almost no chance of having a free and open form of communication in their daily life and release the burdens of stuttering. Suddenly the human potential just flowers.”

Webster says HCRI has treated over 5,700 people, 93 percent of whom have achieved fluent speech by the end of the program, and 70-75 percent who have retained fluent speech when evaluated one to two years post therapy. 

Seeing Opportunity.



“Caution ahead,” the pundits said when asked about the fiscal future. While some see the light as yellow, LeClairRyan chooses to see possibility and investigates accordingly. No matter the situation, our law firm continually searches for opportunities to better serve our clients.



Yes, Virginia, there is a green light.

Slowing down and waiting is not our style. Coast to coast our presence continues to grow despite a turbulent economy. Over the last 12 months, we opened a new office in Hartford, CT; expanded four other offices (including Roanoke); and added 56 attorneys to better allow our clients to take advantage of these changing times. And we have been fortunate enough to be recognized by clients and peers alike for the service we provide and the business environment we create.

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Pamplin Dean Richard Sorensen with Steve Skripak, associate dean for graduate programs.

Pamplin, VCOM give docs business boost >

Executive Summary:

Physicians are often at a disadvantage going into practice because of a lack of business expertise. This new degree at Virginia Tech should help with that.

Special to the FRONT

Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business Dean Richard Sorensen is convinced of the need for a business education for medical professionals. "After medical school, many osteopathic physicians go directly into private practice for which a certain amount of business education is needed," he says. "A business education is particularly valuable for physicians seeking positions as hospital or other health-care administrators or those seeking to manage their own practice."

With that in mind, Pamplin and the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic

Medicine (VCOM) at Tech have worked out a two-degree program that allows students to earn both the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine and Master of Business Administration.

Under the dual-degree program, VCOM students would complete the requirements between their third and fourth years of medical school. "We may later offer students an option to complete the MBA before starting medical school," Sorensen says.

Steve Skripak, Pamplin associate dean of graduate programs, says the program expects to admit three to five VCOM students a year, to be selected jointly by VCOM and MBA administrators. Students would be required to meet academic benchmarks for admission to the dual-degree program, he says, and would have passed their first round of medical board exams. They would take a combination of existing MBA courses, new hospital administration courses to be created by VCOM, and free electives from either courses in the Pamplin College or from within an approved set of VCOM courses. 



These are renderings of the new facility for engineering.

It's not just 'welding' any more >

Executive Summary:

A college level program in Lynchburg takes the basic skills needed in "materials joining" and expands them into a full engineering program with jobs calling.

By Lori White

"This is going to be an exciting program," says Ron Sones, dean of Liberty University's School of Engineering and Computational Sciences. He was talking about the new

materials-joining program.

An extensive engineering campus planned for approximately 160 acres at the intersection of routes 29 and 460 will expand the university's academic and research concerns significantly.

Liberty will christen its expansion with an 8,000-square-foot facility dedicated to the welding engineering discipline, complete with labs and classrooms. It is the third university in the nation to have a materials-joining program (so-called because it is not as limiting or as misleading as "welding"), joining the ranks of Le Tourneau University in Texas and Ohio State.

Le Tourneau offers a bachelor's in materials joining, while Ohio State offers a PhD. "The plan for LU's program is to expand through a



Professor Robert Rich.

Lori White



Lori White

Welding engineer candidates Eric Peterson (green shirt) and Nathan May in class.



Ron Sones heads the engineering department.

Lori White

master's once the program is mature, and thus offer a fit in the middle of the two," says Sones.

Once off the ground and mature in its returns, the program promises to be "very beneficial," according to Sones. "With all of the nuclear companies in the area, and Northrop Grumman down on the coast, there are scores of welding engineers needed in the vicinity."

Welding engineering, says Sones, "is very much a science, not a guy in jeans with a blow torch going out to put two pieces of steel together." Sones says it is a scientific research discipline involving detailed knowledge of chemistry, metallurgy and how heat impacts the composition of metals.

Welding engineers who have completed a materials-joining program stand to earn considerably more than "the guy in the jeans," upwards of \$50K. They are coveted by nuclear and aerospace corporations for their expertise and relative rarity.

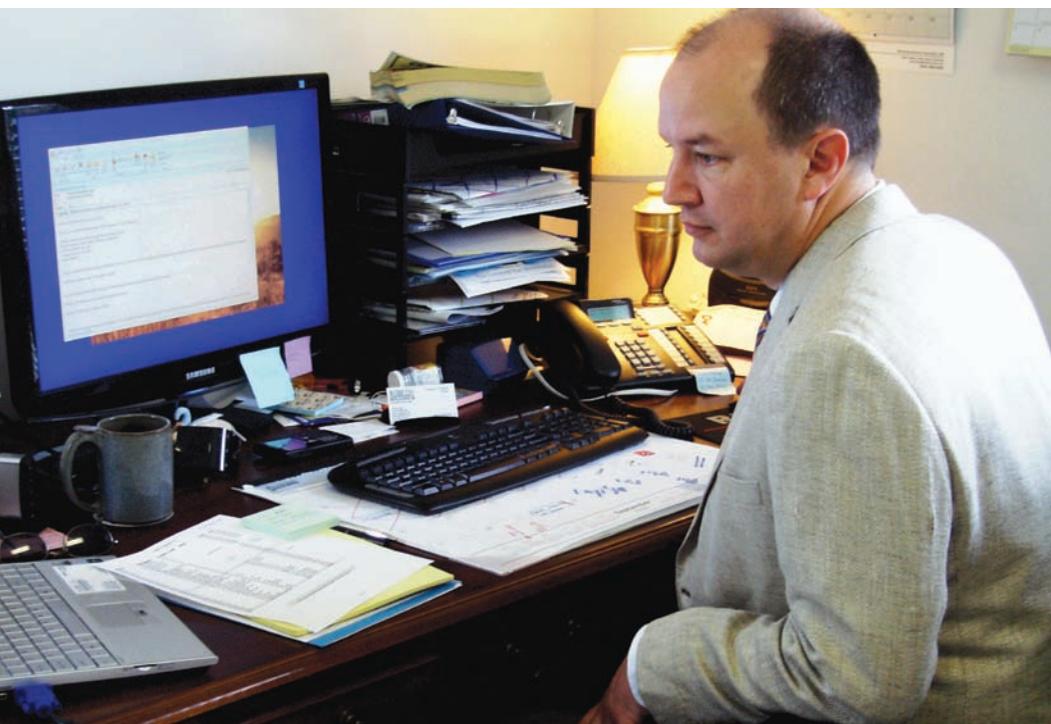
The greater vision includes completion of various other engineering facilities by the fall of 2011, including a larger one dedicated to such things as mechanical and aerospace engineering. This will be an approximate 115,000-square-foot facility, consisting of

offices, classrooms, a library, and labs where classified research can be done.

To this end, LU is working closely with Virginia Tech and other engineering schools in the state to "find ways we can enhance the overall engineering portfolio of the state," says Sones. "We have a very good working relationship with them ... they've offered us all kinds of advice, and on occasion equipment, to help us get started. They've been exceptionally kind.

"The University of Virginia has been very good to us, as have many of the local companies. We're not trying to duplicate what some of these other schools have already established, but augment for the greater benefit of the Commonwealth what we are all able to provide our students."

Math and science departments at Liberty are seeing "a culture shift for the university," Sones says. "We're hiring professors who have research grants. Instead of hiring teachers to come in primarily just to teach and support their students ... they're also engaging in research. We're working to beef up our programs in the hard sciences like physics and chemistry. We're not abandoning our liberal arts roots, but we are expanding the character of the school." 



Rubicon President Edward Kirmse.

Lee Ann Roman

'To follow in Dad's footsteps' >

Executive Summary:

At Rubicon Planning in Vinton, the footsteps are big prints left by a man who helped the military develop a key system.

By Leigh Ann Roman

One size does not fit all, and Vinton-based, family-owned Rubicon Planning makes its living finding the right size for military installations.

Established two years ago by the children of Jim Kirmse, who was one of the founders of Roanoke-based R&K Engineering Inc., Rubicon builds on his legacy of automated military installation planning with an emphasis on the installations' day-to-day needs, says Victoria Leslie, Kirmse's daughter and the vice president of Rubicon.

Rubicon is a family business that includes siblings Ed Kirmse, president; Victoria Leslie, vice president; Christina Huffman, office manager; Mathew Kirmse, and Sandy Hollar, who is a part owner.

"Our focus is helping the army installation

figure out where to put its next rotation of troops," Leslie says. "That's where the rubber hits the road in automated systems. Is the answer right and if not, why not?"

When her father was working as a civil engineer in the early 1980s, there was no automated answer to military master planning. Leslie's father's idea to take the army force structure and marry it to standard army criteria in a computer program resulted in the Facility Planning System (FPS), which has been the foundation of automated military planning since 1985, she says. When her father died 13 years ago, his partner bought out his portion of R&K; some of the Kirmse children stayed on at R&K or went on to work for other companies.

The decision two years ago to start their own military planning installation business equated "crossing the Rubicon," says Rubicon Planning's President Edward Kirmse. "It's actually something we always wanted to do, to follow in Dad's footsteps," says Kirmse who worked for R&K for a while before going on to similar companies in Maryland and Northern Virginia.

Rubicon Planning now includes all five of the Kirmse children as employees or part owners of the business, which employs seven. Most work from the Vinton office. But Matthew Kirmse, who formerly worked in the U.S.

Army's housing office, works from his home office in Fredericksburg.

R&K, which celebrated 25 years this year, focuses on systems development while Rubicon uses existing automated systems to help military installations answer basic but important questions such as, "How large should the motor pool be?" Leslie says.

The first thing Rubicon does is enter the numbers, and then a staff member visits the military unit to get more information about what is required of the facility. "We start with the standard Army answer and then we make it right on the ground," Leslie says. "We right-size everything and then get out of the way."

Rubicon works primarily as a sub-consultant for larger firms that go after major construction and planning contracts that require a master

planner. It has worked with Ecology and Environment Inc., an environmental services company based in New York that also does some military planning.

"Rubicon came highly recommended by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers in the Fort Worth district," says Sean Ebersold, a project manager for Ecology and Environment. He calls Rubicon "one of the best firms in that [niche] market because of their history, experience and knowledge of military facility requirements."

The presence of Virginia Tech and a high percentage of talented young professionals makes the Roanoke Valley attractive, says Leslie. Rubicon will turn a profit for the first time this year (its third), Leslie says. Plans are to continue to grow the company to a maximum of 15 employees but to remain small and flexible, she says. 



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The real 'third place' >

Executive Summary:

If you've lost your easy chair, take heart. The Easy Chair book store in Blacksburg will more than compensate.

By Rachael Garrity

In every economic downturn there are survivors who make the tough decisions that keep a business solvent, even when that means abandoning a dream. Then there are those who find a way to keep at least a part of the dream alive. Meet Russ Chisholm, owner since 1996 of the Easy Chair coffee shop at University Mall in Blacksburg, and a man who believes strongly in what is often referred to as the "third place," a term coined by social scholar Ray Oldenburg in his book *The Great, Good Place*.

Adopted by Starbucks as part of its marketing ploy to become a home away from home for customers, and by Sony when it presented PlayStation 2 in Europe, the idea derives

from Oldenburg's theory that an individual's home is the "first place," and work environment the "second place," but a true sense of community requires another, creative arena—the third, or great, good place.

"I've read that book over and over," Chisholm stresses. "When I found out The Printer's Ink was closing the store here—there is still one in Roanoke—I just couldn't accept the idea that a town like this one would be without an independent bookstore that could be truly a gathering place."

So, he partnered with Steve Andrews, owner of the Backstreet Café, and Brian Babcock, owner of Nova Roast, to open the Easy Chair bookstore in downtown Blacksburg. Then, in the summer of 2006, the space behind the Easy Chair coffee shop became available, and the bookstore was moved there.

While it might make good marketing copy to say the move was meant to combine operations and add coffee service to the bookstore experience, Chisholm is candid when he tells the story: "It only took a year for us to realize that we'd taken on too much





Even if I'm selling for a fraction of the cost, I'm selling good books, and providing good energy.

—Russ Chisholm

space and too much inventory, and at the same time our plans for coffee service there fell through for various reasons.”

The partnership dissolved—with no rancor. Chisholm filled the smaller space with a smaller inventory, but by this time Books-a-Million was headed for the new shopping center on South Main. The numbers refused to become viable.

“I thought hard. I wanted to keep the energy of the ‘gathering place’; couldn’t give it up. I decided that shelves full of books are part of that energy. So, last July 1, I simply announced that this would henceforth be a used bookstore. There were real upsides: I incurred no extra expense to make the change, the management of University Mall (about whom I can’t say enough good things) found a tenant for the rest of the space, the book clubs who come here still have a place, and there are now

small, informal groups of people who meet weekly in the bookroom.”

Customers donate books in exchange for a cup of coffee and conversation. Customers also, as it turns out, are avid word-of-mouth marketers.

“In the beginning, I worried that maybe the donations would not be the quality of book that is appealing. I didn’t want a yard sale atmosphere. It’s turned out to be the opposite. Even if I’m selling for a fraction of the cost, I’m selling good books, and providing good energy,” he muses, spinning a double shot of espresso on the table. Then he looks up and grins. “I’ve taken myself out of the prediction business. I know I have to focus on the bottom line, but I have to say I haven’t felt this good in a long time. Book lovers know the feeling.”



RETAIL FRONT



2009 Ended on a High Note.

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2. Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects Jury Citation Award – Roanoke Valley Visitor’s Center and O. Winston Link Museum.
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Tom Field

"If you're sending something for business, make it memorable"
— Bill Burtch, Marizel's Flowers

Old Fashioned in a New Economy >

Executive Summary:

Marizel's Flowers on Salem's Main Street may not be the most modern shop, but its service seems to keep up with the times better than ever.

By Tom Field

"If ever there was a time when service and integrity was important—this is it."

So says Bill Burtch, florist and proprietor of Marizel's Flowers on West Main Street in Salem. A former advertising copywriter, Burtch bought the flower shop when he turned 40 (from Mary and Hazel, hence the name). That was nearly 30 years ago, and a lot has changed. Not that you'd notice it in his shop.

The work is creative, often depicting objects made from flowers, and described as "colorful, unstructured European design." But there's no question the business is old fashioned. You get the sense this florist doesn't mind that characteristic one bit.

"We'll make her happy today."

That seems to be Burtch's standard conclusion when taking a phone order. But there's something else old patrons recognize along with his slow talking, calming and reassuring voice. He's not the timid, demure order-taker, holding tiny pliers and cutters, hiding behind a little green apron.

Bill Burtch will actually tell you what he thinks. He's no—*ahem*—shrinking violet.

Want cheaper? He'll point you to Kroger, right down the road. Know exactly what you want beforehand? He may encourage you to reconsider.

But that's what makes him an artist. An expert. And why individuals and businesses keep returning.

To the shop that never changes.

Still, the new economy is on his mind. "You give service in good times so people will still come to you in bad times," he says.

Sage advice from an old-fashioned florist. And since many of his customers are now into the third generation, the arrangement is still blooming fresh, apparently. 



Executive Sous Chef Nazim Khan and Executive Chef Billie Rapers

all photos: Huong Fralin

Work Spaces

Serving the masses a good meal >

Executive Summary:

Getting all those meals served at exactly the right moment to exactly the right table is a symphony of organization and efficiency at The Hotel Roanoke.

By Huong Fralin

The kitchens at The Hotel Roanoke are constantly bustling because the chefs have mastered the art of timing and organization in the midst of what could be utter chaos.

Every restaurant and kitchen has the same basic tasks: place orders, prepare ingredients, create menus, and comply with rules and regulations with the same health departments and associations. The difference between the kitchens at The Hotel Roanoke and many other restaurant kitchens is one of volume.

Certified Executive Chef Billie Rapers, who has worked in the hotel kitchen for 14 years, and Executive Sous Chef Nazim Khan, who brings high-profile New York City experience and has been at the hotel for more than a year and a half, are the men who run the kitchen at the exclusive Regency Room,



Pine room



Kitchen



Pots



Lunch buffet

lighter-fare Pine Room, room service and banquet flow for all events that are held at the hotel. The Regency Room has 32 cooks and 15 full-time waiters caring for a 180-seat facility.

Crisp white tablecloths, crystal stemware and more than just your basic set of flatware can be found at each table setting. Everything is trim and proper and has its place; food is served from the left, cleared from the right, and patrons are addressed as "ma'am" or "sir." The Virginia Room, a private room toward the front of the restaurant, seats 15 in privacy.

The kitchen consists of eight stoves, eight double-decker ovens, and various tilting steam kettles that hold 50-80 gallons of liquid. Oversized and comedic-looking whisks are on standby to mix the soups that are made in these kettles. Numerous plate warming carts and cold carts and rolling hot boxes are used to keep food at temperature as the cooks prepare the rest of the dishes that need to be served at the same time.

Everything comes down to organization and timing; "Each person has a station to take care of and a list of tasks to complete when they come in for the day," says Joseph Koefer, assistant food and beverage director. "Once the opening staff is finished with setting everything up, we do a line-up where we check their uniforms, make sure they're clean, give updates. If there is something on the menu that's unavailable, customers can be told up front, not when they try to order it." Uniforms have employees' names and hometowns on nametags as conversation pieces.

Chef Raper works with local growers and regularly partners with a Floyd County cooperative called Good Food, Good People, and buys from Border Springs Farm in Patrick County. The Regency Room is only one of two restaurants in the area that is a certified Virginia Green restaurant, part of a statewide program that works to reduce the environmental impacts of the tourism industry. 



Room service



Virginia Room



Regency Room



This trail beside a railroad track is in Minnesota



When gas hits \$10 [a gallon], and one day it will, having safe facilities for biking and walking to work ... won't seem like such a far-fetched idea.

—Champe Burnley

Can bikes and trains get along? >

Executive Summary:

Bicycles have supplanted trains on some old rail beds, but can they live peacefully side-by-side? Railroads say no; bikers say yes.

By Dan Smith

Bikers have long had the reputation of a contentious, cranky, troublesome lot, but that was almost almost always motorbikers, not bicyclers. These new gladiators, however, have a clear goal of making the United States friendly to their recreation and these days they're more like bulldogs than skinny obsessive-compulsives looking for hills to climb.

The most recent goal for bikers as a group is to ride beside live railroad tracks, something that is distinctly unappealing to railroad companies, who envision bad publicity, soaring liability costs and dead bicyclists cluttering their rights of way. In recent years, bicycles have claimed some abandoned railroad beds with considerable success, both for the recreation crowd and the railroads, which got tax breaks for their contributions.

Bikers see no problem with the new proposal, calling out, "Oh, pshaw! Safety is our middle

name, and besides show me one biker who's been flattened by a train in the last 10 years and I'll shut up."

There's another part of the argument, though, that seems to be giving bikers some teeth to their plan: the federal government's \$8 billion infrastructure stimulus money for transportation, much of that for the railroads. Says Champe Burnley, a board member of the Virginia Bicycling Association, "The railroads have not shown much enthusiasm for these projects—it doesn't do much for their bottom line. It may take input from citizens whose hundreds of millions of state (and billions of federal) tax dollars are going to these private corporations to revamp their tracks and increase their profitability. Perhaps the citizens need to let the railroads know we expect more in return."

Counters Norfolk Southern spokesman Robin Chapman, "This is not a good idea from a safety standpoint ... It is fraught with safety issues and we believe public use of railroad rights of way is not a good idea." Chapman says the railroads are pretty firmly opposed to sharing these rights of way, but "never say never. We'll listen."

Barbara Duerk of the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, based in Roanoke, says these clubs "encourage railroads that when they upgrade their infrastructure to include space for walking, biking and horseback riding." She points out that there are 200

such trails in the U.S., covering nearly 2,000 miles.

Burnley says Rails With Trails has been proven safe in studies: "Despite fears that RWT exposes users to greater danger by their proximity to active rail lines Rails With Trails appears to be just as safe as other trails. Our survey of trails found only one incident between a trail user and a train. This is the same single incident identified in the March 1996 report that occurred on a trail otherwise operating safely for 34 years. In fact, using a rail with trail may well be significantly safer than walking or cycling next to a busy main road and it may serve to keep people from walking on active tracks."

Duerk says she appreciates the railroads' resistance because when there is an accident involving trains "there are huge awards."

In the short run, Duerk would like to see the Roanoke Valley's greenways connected with those of Montgomery County and for those connections to continue in a spiderweb (some beside tracks) all over the state and the country. Burnley says, "Virginia's long-range transportation plan ... would really benefit our citizens and communities by providing safe, sustainable transportation and recreation corridors for our citizens. When gas hits \$10 [a gallon], and one day it will, having safe facilities for biking and walking to work ... won't seem like such a far-fetched idea."

Burnley says there are side benefits to having

more bike/walking trails: "Providing facilities to get people out of their cars and off their couches in order to get some exercise ... helps keep our population healthy and reduces [health care] costs. Most people are too scared to ride a bike on a typical urban street. Giving them greenways and RWTs makes this possible for many casual users."

Says Duerk, "People say, 'Well, duh, why not? This is public money; why can't we create multi-use [transportation corridors] with it?'" But the railroads see all those piled up bodies and that's a tough image to erase. 



Dan Smith

Barbara Duerk of the BRBC talks up Rails With Trails at a recent trade show



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I don't think I wove myself into the faculty culture as well as I could have in the beginning ... I probably could have pulled from a wider and more diverse cross-section and addressed up-front what they expected from their first female president.

—Penny Kyle

Radford University President Penelope Kyle: "I find it surprising that I rarely am asked what I am doing to preserve faculty positions and university funding."

These are the difficult days for Penny Kyle >

Executive Summary:

For Penny Kyle, returning home has meant a period of intense change, misunderstanding and controversy at Radford University. But she continues to charge ahead with her ideas.

By Rachael Garrity

When Radford University President Penelope Kyle assumed her position in 2005, she was, in many ways, returning home. Homecomings, though, are often a good bit warmer than what she's experienced in recent months.

Having grown up in Galax, she attended sporting events in Radford, both as an athlete and as a cheerleader. Her mother and sister still live in Galax and a number of her former classmates live in Radford.

A graduate of UVa law school, with an MBA from William and Mary, she brought to her position a series of impressive professional accomplishments in education, private industry and government service: teaching at Thomas Nelson Community College, and service on boards at James Madison University, Virginia Commonwealth University and Saint Christopher's School; a stint as the first female

officer (vice president) at CSX; and nearly a dozen years as executive director of the Virginia Lottery, serving under three different governors.

Still, even before she arrived on campus, Kyle read an article that positioned her as something of an outlier. In the years since, the questioning has continued, and the answers, it seems, have not always trumped the rumor.

A case in point: Kyle's contract states that she will live in the home her predecessor inhabited. Despite the fact that long-distance marital arrangements are anything but unusual in academe, critics took issue with her husband, an attorney with McGuire Woods in Richmond, not moving to Radford. Then, as controversy swirled about the elements of her compensation package, it was rumored that the RU foundation was building a large new home for her across the New River from campus. "I knew it was to become The River Company, a restaurant, but that didn't seem to stop the gossip," Kyle says.

Indeed, her compensation seems to be a lightning rod, drawing even more attention with current changes in state funding as part of the overall economy. There's also what seems to be continuing confusion over an incentive package that many see as part of her salary when, in fact, it depends on performance. More recently, resignations and personnel changes on the campus have fueled the fire.

Disarmingly honest, Kyle says, "I don't think I wove myself into the faculty culture as well as I could have in the beginning. For example, I had meetings with the faculty, but I probably could have pulled from a wider and more diverse cross-section and addressed up-front what they expected from their first female president."

Still, she clearly has refused to take her eye off the ball. Unlike some college presidents who "face out," and leave internal management issues to provosts and deans, she has been charged by the board to work on fundraising, improve the university's position vis-a-vis the state government and take a hands-on role on campus. After she'd been in office only six months, for example, the board moved the Division One athletic department to report directly to the president.

And, she's taken a number of steps that already have borne fruit. To name a few:

- Despite a 15 percent state budget cut, there has been no release of full-time faculty so far.
- RU has achieved Level II status, a designation that affords university faculty and administration greater autonomy in working with the State Council for Higher Education.
- Graduate programs have expanded to include a doctor of physical therapy, a doctor of nursing practice and a master's of occupational therapy.

- There is \$211 million in funding for capital improvements.
- RU has endowed its first departmental chair.

Perhaps the hottest issue currently on Kyle's plate is the streamlining of majors and degree programs, a process the faculty has criticized severely. Here, too, her equanimity is as apparent as her forthrightness. She has convened a series of President's Roundtables for faculty so she can listen in small-group sessions, respond and discuss. Will the move be successful?

"I remain hopeful, but also realistic," she admits. "I find it surprising that I rarely am asked what I am doing to preserve faculty positions and university funding. I've been asked instead lots of personal questions. Clearly we need to elevate the discussion, and I know—and have said—a la Truman, the buck stops here."

Creating change is never easy. Articulating ideas that are new is often misunderstood. And doing both at a time and in a place that hold special meaning in one's life requires a can-do approach.

Unlikely as it may seem, a Radford-red suit, sparkling smile, and lively eyes may be the package for just that kind of strength. Asked if she was the agent of change, Kyle said "yes" and added, "Maybe, here, that's not a good thing." At least for the moment. 

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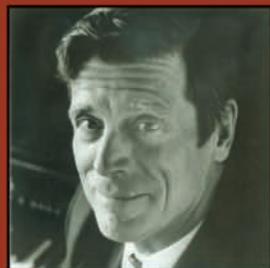
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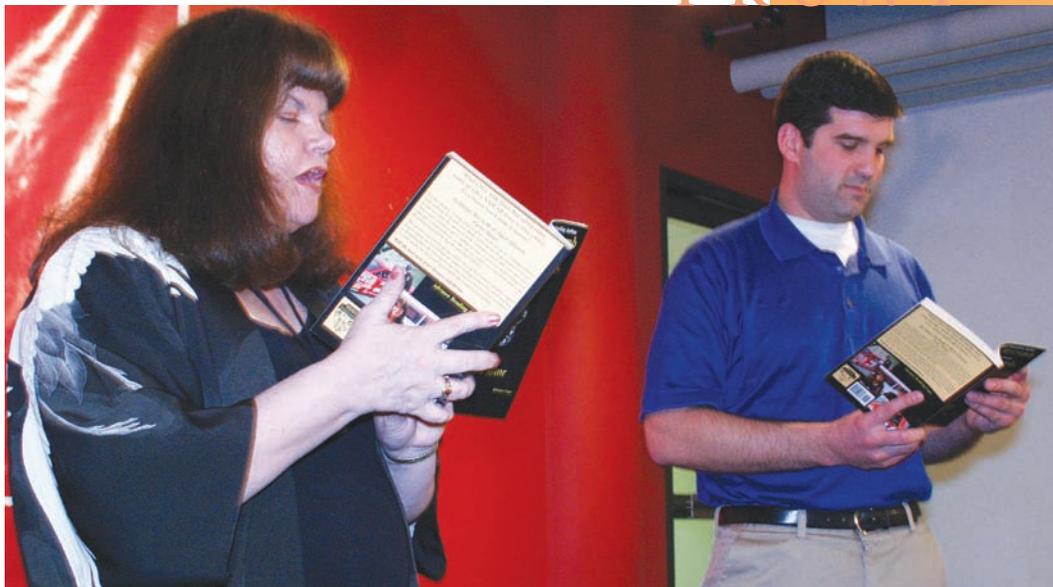
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WTF PUBLIC RADIO



Sharyn McCrumb and Adam Edwards read from their new work at the Arts Council of the Blue Ridge Writers Workshop Series in November

David Perry

The write to drive: A collaboration >

Executive Summary:

In this scenario, the writer was the driver of the driver and the driver was left to write for the writer.

By David Perry

Sharyn McCrumb just wanted to be left alone. So how did this Roanoke County-based best-selling novelist end up writing a book with a race car driver?

"I had never co-authored a novel before, and I would have bet you I would never have done it, because I don't work and play well with others," she says. "Race car drivers have the attention span of a ferret on crack."

Sharyn and former ARCA RE/MAX circuit driver Adam Edwards recently co-authored *Faster Pastor*, a humorous tale set in rural Tennessee that is due out in the spring. In the book, NASCAR driver Camber Berkley finds himself in trouble after crashing his car into the funeral service for an elderly racing fan. He has to choose between jail time or teaching 10 local ministers how to race in their quest to win a

\$2 million prize left by the deceased fan.

"We were friends before we became collaborators," says Sharyn. The unlikely pair met in Bristol while Adam was doing promotional work for Tyson Foods and Sharyn was promoting an earlier racing-themed book, *St. Dale*. The black cover and angel-winged number 3 caught Adam's eye, and he asked the woman behind the book signing table if it was a good read.

"It had better be a good book—I wrote it," replied Sharyn.

Adam was soon offering technical advice on Sharyn's book *Once Around the Track*, and was the model for the character Tony LaFon.

Sharyn soon came to realize that "he can actually write action really well," she says. She approached Adam about writing a book together. "If you say to somebody, 'Do you want to write a book?', 99 out of 100 will say yes. One will actually do it," she says. "When Adam said yes, I thought, 'yeah, right.'"

"When she suggested writing a book together, I thought she was indeed crazy," says Adam, a Northern Virginia native.

The two began to exchange 1,000 word snippets of what would become *Faster Pastor* via e-mail.

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Jill Elswick

DECEMBER 2009 > Contributor of the Month

Valley Business FRONT congratulates **Jill Elswick**, 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.

Jill's cover story on the challenges facing marketing in a technologically changing world was impressive. Jill has been a consistent presence in FRONT, virtually from Day 1 and her work has been at the top in quality. Her selection is especially impressive for December because of the "Betrayed" article by Rob Johnson, which was a riveting story and in many months would have taken the recognition. We're happy and extremely fortunate to have people like Jill and Rob working with us.

You can read any of Jill Elswick's contributions in selected back issues only at vbFRONT.com

"Finally we got to 18,000 words," Sharyn says. She told Adam, "As far as I'm concerned, 22,000 words is a viable fetus in the literary sense. If we get to 22,001 words and you quit, I will hunt you down."

With little else to do in small ARCA circuit towns after races, Adam kept his word. "I would sit in the motor home and type out a chapter," he says. Sharyn would direct the action, saying, "This is the scene, take it from here."

Sharyn blended their two perspectives together, she the accomplished author, he the racing expert.

"We kind of smoothed it over so the styles mesh," she says. "When it's something technical, it's probably him. If it's wise-cracks in dialogue, it's probably me."

Adam was responsible for writing the character of Camber, who is based on

Adam's life. Sharyn compares the fictional character to a proverbial oyster, with a tiny speck of fact at its center. "The grain of sand is Adam's biography," she says.

"You can't write about something you don't know," says Adam, who is also a racing instructor. When plotting how Camber would make race car drivers out of the ministers, Adam says, "I had ample material to take these ministers and have them make mistakes I had seen."

Adam and Sharyn finished the book in a year, wrapping it up in September of 2008 and signing on with a regional publisher. Is *Faster Pastor* the motion picture next? Adam, who recalls cooking up movie scenes with a buddy in a middle school journalism class, thinks so. "That's how I write," says Adam. "That's how my brain works. The whole time I was writing this book I was thinking" movie. 



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Parking at the Taubman Museum of Art hasn't been a problem so far

Jan Conley

Downtown culture faces disruption >

Executive Summary:

Many in the Roanoke Valley balk at going downtown because of what they perceive as problem parking. That's not really the case, but all that construction coming up won't help the image.

By Jay Conley

When you operate an experimental theater like Studio Roanoke, a nonprofit dedicated to nurturing new playwrights and embracing off-beat themes, attracting an audience can be a challenge.

"Sometimes it depends on the night, it depends on the show, it depends on which way the wind is blowing," says Kenley Smith, who opened the 60-seat theater in a former clothing store at 30 Campbell Avenue in downtown Roanoke last April. "I think the best thing we have going for us is word of mouth."

Smith and the rest of the downtown arts and cultural community may need to start getting

the word out to patrons on where to park over the next two to three years. That's the time frame for major renovation projects planned for the Roanoke City Market Building, Center in the Square and the Patrick Henry Hotel.

During that time period, downtown street parking and sidewalk access will be limited. It comes at a time when the arts community is fighting to survive in an economy where donations for nonprofits are down and consumers are more frugal about how they spend their dollars.

There are thousands of off-street public parking spaces in downtown garages and lots. There is ample parking around the corner from Studio Roanoke at the Church Avenue parking garage (about 850 spaces), and at either ends of Campbell Avenue (the Campbell Garage across from the Roanoke City Jail has about 350 spaces; the Center in the Square Garage closer to Market Square has over 200 spaces).

"It's not terribly hard to find parking as long as you're not looking for it last minute," Smith says.

But will consumers, many of them raised on parking at suburban restaurants and malls at no charge, pay an average of \$2 to park in a

garage, on top of having to walk a few blocks to Studio Roanoke and pay \$15 for a ticket, or \$10.50 to get into the Taubman Museum of Art on Salem Avenue?

Kimberly Templeton, the museum's director of external affairs, says museum officials already direct visitors to the Tower Garage nearby on Salem Avenue.

In the museum's first year, the economy has forced it to cut staff and attendance figures haven't reached original projections. Still, it has drawn well over 100,000 visitors and Templeton says the museum is prepared for some street disruption on Salem Avenue during the Market Building's renovation.

"I think that overall, we're just assuming that it's going to run pretty smoothly, and that we'll be okay," she says. "It may be a question to ask in six months."

Smith hopes Studio Roanoke has some appeal to the growing number of residents moving into downtown. Two newly renovated residential properties—the Hancock Building across from the theater on Campbell Avenue and the Cotton Mill Lofts on Marshall Avenue—are within walking distance of



A scene from "Donnie and the Monsters" performed at Studio Roanoke with (from left) Stephen Glassbrenner, Ross Laguzza and Brian O'Sullivan.

Studio Roanoke, the museum and the Jefferson Center. The Patrick Henry Hotel, which will have 100 apartments when finished, is a short walk, as well.

Jefferson Center, across the street from the Cotton Mill, has free parking and is home for performing and visual arts. It houses the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, which also uses the Roanoke Civic Center and Salem Civic Center as venues.

"I think that's one of the huge advantages we have," says Kim Bratic, the Center's marketing director. "People call and ask if they have to pay to park at Jefferson Center. And they're happy to find out that they don't." 

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Begone, cowardly ones >

My View

By **Dan Smith**
Editor

BLOG: [fromtheeditr.blogspot.com]

Executive Summary: *To those screaming loudest and most anonymously: shut up and crawl back in your hole.*

A while back, I made the blunt announcement on my blog (fromtheeditr.blogspot.com) that I would no longer allow comment on my posts if that comment was critical and unsigned. Critical and signed is perfectly fine, but, as I mentioned at the time, I'm just damn tired of cowards having the floor.

Of course, a howl went up from those using the excuse that they couldn't take a public position because they were afraid they'd lose their job, their home, their boat, their Bahamas vacation, their friends, their Kiwanis Club membership, their daughter's starting position on the basketball team and blab, blab... I mentioned that they'd already lost their freedom of speech, so what in the devil did the rest matter?

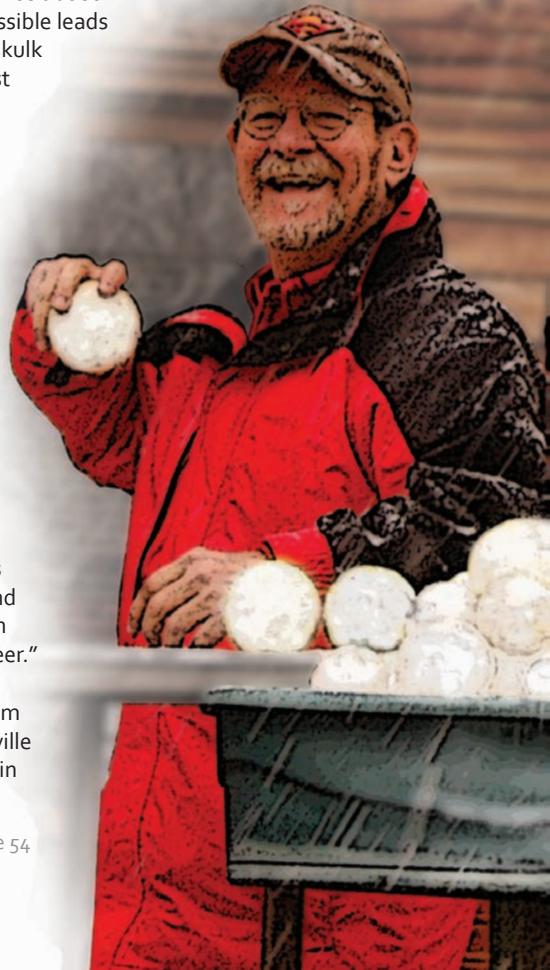
I am exhausted by the level of cowardice in our population. I was not an adult during the 1950s when the House Un-American Activities Committee and Sen. Joe McCarthy were conspiring to make shivering, hovering, spineless ninnies out of the population, but my guess is that since 9/11 our Brave and True American Eagle has been shaking uncontrollably with the best of the 1950s chickens.

This is not just about politics, though that creeps in. It's about business where the effort to be as inoffensive as possible leads to goods and services that are inferior. Employees skulk around, terrified of losing their jobs for being honest and direct. It's in our youth leagues where parents' obsessively overprotective suspicion has led many people—me included—to refuse to coach and teach because we've seen good people destroyed by a casual and baseless accusation. It is in the acceptance of our leaders' cowardice and the explanation that "well, if they didn't do that they'd be banished."

The health care issue has brought the cowards to the front crawling and sniveling their way around a monumental issue that affects every person in this country. We need a national policy and we need it now, but we're allowing things like abortion determine the impact of a bill that has almost nothing to do with abortion. We are letting stupid lies and assertions ("death squads for grandma") get in the way of honesty and the kind of backbone necessary to make this kind of decision and say "damn the consequences to my political career."

I got a lift recently when freshman Congressman Tom Perriello, who represents a district from Charlottesville to Rocky Mount to Martinsville and Danville, voted in a manner guaranteed to bring him grief in the next

continued to Page 54



Let's Eat >

By Tom Field
Publisher

On Tap from the Pub

BLOG: [ontapfrompub.blogspot.com]

"Did you notice the waitress had a tattoo of a swastika on her forehead, just like Charles Manson?"

She didn't. But I wanted to say so. As a test.

I'm sitting at the table, and all four of my fellow diners have their heads buried in the menu. Oblivious to the world around them—at least during the meal selection process—it's remarkable to me how much they resemble students taking the bar exam. I haven't taken the bar, but I imagine the environment is pretty intense. Certainly, no one is looking around or trying to cheat off the neighbor's paper. (But then again, they are prospective lawyers.)

Let me introduce you to the students. We'll go counter-clockwise, to the left, just like a game of cards—or the direction you're *supposed* to pass the items at a dinner (butter, salad dressing, coffee cream at an upscale dinner if you're required to pass anything... the bucket of chicken or bowl of taters if you're at the family free-for-all).

To my immediate left is "nothing white." He says following that rule, forty-five pounds drop out of sight like dandruff on a bald scooter operator. He's beside himself (forty-five pounds lighter) with delight, because the restaurant offers whole-wheat pasta.

Next, is our new recruit to the land-of-the-lost-former-menu and now-new-restricted-diet. Reluctantly, he repeats the whole-wheat request. Sheepishly, he still manages to grab one piece of bread out of the bowl, but I spot a tear in his eye as he may very well regard it as a rare treasure only to be secured in a far away and distant land.

After him is our student who sadly changes her beverage to water once she hears the tea comes sweet. She's been down from the north long enough to know better, but she spins the bowl of sweeteners with pink and yellow packets like the chamber of a gun in Russian Roulette, praying to the almighty none of the bullets are white or refined.

Finally, there's the cheese-less wonder. Getting first dibs at the salad before Charlene Manson can grate all over it, she clearly sings the song of the lactose lament, until she eventually gets her own bowl. She doesn't care for the big demonstration caused by discriminatory salad distribution; but she suffers greatly, as her ties are to the Paula Deen-ish low country of crawfish tails simmering in rich

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REVIEWS & OPINION

Letters

Editor,

I read with interest the "Betrayed" article (Dec. FRONT) concerning Ed Couvrette's former COO. As we operate our Businesses in today's world, it remains imperative that we maintain a degree of trust among our employees as they perform their respective jobs. Unfortunately at Couvrette, this trust was breached by the former COO, resulting in significant hardships among the remaining employees and Ed Couvrette.

I'm sure many would ask how this could happen to a company, but I have seen similar situations in the Roanoke Valley where rogue employees have attempted to ruin a firm. I especially agree with Rob Johnson's comment to closely monitor tax payments as crooks know that it is not difficult to hide and divert these payments. Once this illegal activity is discovered, the funds are usually long gone.

I commend Ed Couvrette as he is one of the good guys standing strong against those who try to destroy others. Hopefully your article will serve as a reminder that even though bad things can happen to good people, perhaps in the end good people such as Ed Couvrette will prevail.

Bob Swindell Jr.
Chas. Lunsford Sons & Associates, Inc.
Roanoke

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

Smith / My View

from Page 52

election. Asked about it, his top staffer said, "He didn't come here to get re-elected," the implication being that his job is to do the right thing.

U.S. Sen. Jim Webb has acted with similar courage in his powerful efforts at prison and drug reform, popular issues only among those who want more draconian measures and more prisons operated like castle dungeons. We're better than that and Webb knows it and is trying to do something about it, even though the issues have no voting constituency.

There remains a little bit of courage out there and every time I see it, I wish to God I could put it in a bottle and pass it around. Whatever's being drunk now by our populace is making us a laughing stock among those who hate us. 

Field / On Tap

from Page 53

cream Parmesan sauce.

Unlike my fellow student ostriches, I didn't study for the test.

I sat. I looked. I ordered.

But I haven't been to my middle-age doctor appointment yet, either.

When, for the first time in your life, it's the order of a restricted diet you dread—over the rubber glove—you know it's serious.

P.S. Coming next month, we introduce our new FRONT. It's for the senior market. 

To Tweet or Not to Tweet? >

Executive Summary:

Twitter, when used properly and with maximum effect, can help your business' marketing. (This is the fourth in a series of columns by local experts on social media.)

By Bonnie Cranmer

In case you haven't been paying attention, social media is rocking the business world. The ability of any business to create a message, take it directly to the public within seconds, and have it all be measurable, has created a new challenge and unlimited new opportunities.

One of the popular social media tools or services is Twitter. Choose your "user name" and upload your "avatar" then add your Web site and a bio and you're "Tweeting."

This is where it gets tricky: who actually sees your tweets? If you haven't thought out the process and done your homework, no one will get your message. One of the keys to success with Twitter is finding "followers" who are interested in what you have to say.

There are new tools popping up all the time to support this new social media marketing frenzy, especially Twitter. Some are absolutely useless. Others make using social media much easier. There are too many to cover them all but here are a few that have value to the business community.

Twitter Local is a service that can be searched by ZIP code or city and state. Conversations can be viewed and you can get a sense of who's tweeting in your area, find key tweeters of influence and what is being talked about at different times of day. Twellow is another service that connects you with other Twitter users in an industry or profession.

Twitter Search allows general searches by key words or hash tags, any term that is



Bonnie Cranmer

preceded by the # symbol. Localities, groups, events and topics often use hash tags to create community and some even become trending topics. Using the Advanced Search format in Twitter Search is extremely helpful when more specific results are required.

If your business already has a Web site or a newsletter, let your network know there's a new way to connect with your business through social media. Sometimes following your Chamber of Commerce and sending it an "@ " message will get it to retweet to its following, creating the viral visibility your business is seeking.

Just remember the same rules apply to social media marketing that apply to in person networking: don't be all sell, sell, sell. Be professional and share your knowledge about your industry, business or hobby. Remember, every tweet is an independent Web page that will stay around a very long time. Listen first, then join the conversation. 

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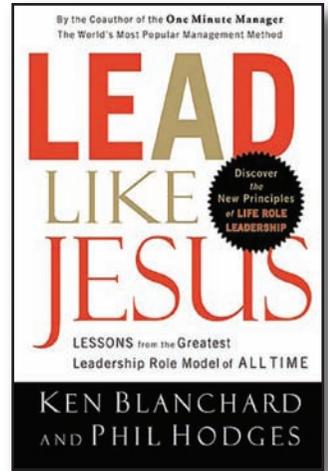
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Books @ the FRONT >

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



On leadership

Lead Like Jesus (Thomas Nelson, \$14.99) by Phil Hodges, a Christian focused leadership book written by the co-author of *The One Minute Manager* highlights the ultimate leader – Jesus Christ. Servant leadership is the key theme of the book and it clearly defines those who live it and those who do not through EGO - Edging God Out and Exalting God Only.

The first demonstrates a leader whose ego is self-centered and the latter's ego as selfless. The book continues to outline the Heart, Head, Hands and Habits of a servant leader. Finally, the book concludes with reasons why Christ's servant leadership is desired and practical next steps for your leadership style to model that of Jesus.

Perhaps the best accolade of this book was made by management guru Patrick Lencioni: "This is without a doubt the most important management book I have ever encountered."

—*Stuart Mease*

Laugh out loud

Imagine what happens when an irresponsible young NASCAR driver crashes his car into a funeral in a blink-of-an-eye Tennessee mountain town and is forced to perform two weeks of community service by teaching the town's ministers how to race stock cars. Camber Berkley, the hapless protagonist of Sharyn McCrumb's new novel, *Faster Pastor* (Ingalls Publishing Group, \$25, available in

April), can't afford his fine and court costs, so he has no choice but to turn 10 ministers into race drivers competing for a \$2 million prize.

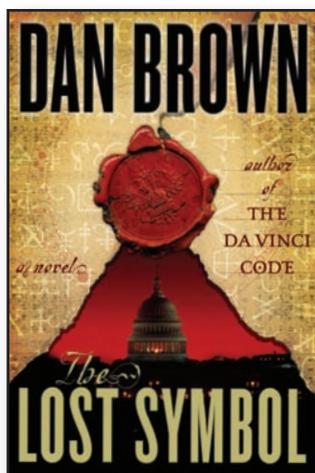
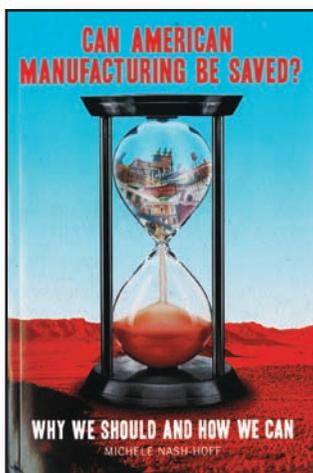
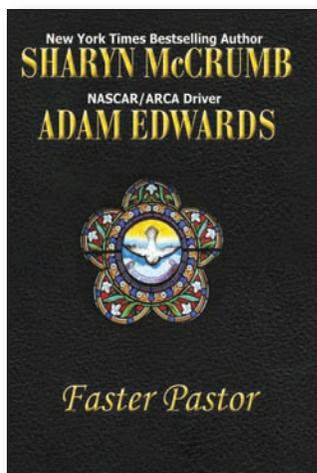
Faster Pastor is McCrumb's third entry in her popular NASCAR series and the first novel written with a collaborator, Adam Edwards, a NASCAR/ARCA driver. McCrumb is at her best in this laugh-out-loud comedy romp around a country short track.

—*Betsy Ashton*

Made in the U.S.A.

Can American Manufacturing Be Saved? (Why We Should and How We Can) by Michele Nash-Hoff (MM Bernard Publications, \$29.95) is encyclopedic. Great if you're writing a paper or preparing a speech. Not so great if you're rallying the troops or advocating real change. The title fails to answer its own question. And the subtitle's provisions are too numerous and scattered and read like a Stephen Colbert title, though comedy and satire are far from our author's intention. Still, the book is well-researched and useful. But its cover is so melodramatic in comparison to its guts, you have to wonder if the author actually agreed to it.

The book is an excellent resource and a worthy history (impact of technologies, effects of wars and depression). At page 225, the book finally gets to practical solutions, but in 47 pages, you'll get 73 bullets, 113 sub-bullets and staccato citations. The weighty recommendations (logical, solid, sensible) are



almost diminished by the author's cute, pithy, personal touch at the end: buy American, start a business, join a trade association, give good customer service, become outraged.

—Tom Field

It ain't literature, but ...

The literati hated *The Da Vinci Code* and thought less of *Angels and Demons*. I hear their derisive laughter upon the mention of Dan Brown's new bazillion-seller *The Lost Symbol* (Doubleday, \$29.95). And I ignore it all. Dan Brown's no Steinbeck. He's not even a Crichton or a John Grisham, but the guy can tell a story. I like his stories. I like the fact that if you read three chapters, you can advance two rounds on "Jeopardy!" and if you read a whole book, you can qualify for the "Jeopardy! Tournament of Champions."

Dan Brown loves facts, loves mystery, loves a story. He doesn't love language and therefore he doesn't do well with it. He's clumsy, self-conscious and thoroughly amateurish at times. But his stories are good, his facts are fascinating and I'll take the good with the bad.

Symbol was written on the same template as the novels that preceded it, and I don't care. I enjoyed the book. You will, too, if you can take the language abuse.

—Dan Smith

(The reviewers: Stuart Mease works for Rackspace in Blacksburg. Betsy Ashton is a writer who lives at Smith Mountain Lake. Tom Field is publisher of VBFront. Dan Smith is editor of FRONT.)

JOIN THE BIG READ



A classic tale of challenge and redemption...

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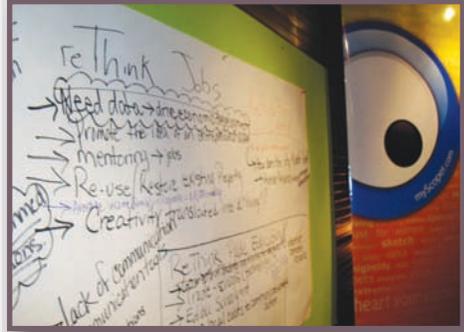
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March 2010 for film, art, music, book discussions and more!

THE BIG READ
ROANOKE VALLEY

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photos: Jill Elswick

reThink Meet >

Jeremy Holmes, program director for **RIDE Solutions** and one of the organizers of **reThinkRoanoke**, starts the meeting on December 2 at The Water Heater, a privately owned space on 5th Street in Roanoke's Old Southwest neighborhood. The goal of reThink Roanoke is to get input from the community on issues that are important to raise during the next city council election. More than 80 citizens attended as organizers captured ideas from the audience on a long scroll of paper posted at the front of the room.



photos: Dan Smith

Best of 2009 >

Valley Business **FRONT** Publisher **Tom Field** addresses a room full of **FRONT** contributors Dec. 9 at the publication's Writers Awards Luncheon at Hunting Hills Country Club. Top award winners among the writers were (from left) **David Perry**, Contributor of the Year; **Alison Weaver**, Story of the Year; and **Kathy Surace**, Editor's Award, shared with **Rachael Garrity**, who was not present. **Jane Dalier** was Most Valuable Player.



photos: Dan Smith

Press talk >

Carilion Clinic Public Information Director **Eric Earnhart**, whose organization has faced a great deal of what many would consider negative coverage from the press in the past two years, talked about the organization's approach at the December meeting of the **Public Relations Society of America's Blue Ridge Chapter** meeting at Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. Earnhart's primary point: "We try to stick with the high road," regardless of the coverage and "we don't say bad things about other people even though they may say bad things about us."

FRONT 'N ABOUT



photos: Jane Dalier

Handshake's Video >

Handshake 2.0 released its corporate video premiere at Bull & Bones Brewhaus and Grill in Blacksburg on Dec. 1. Among those in attendance were (left to right) **Melissa Richards**, Virginia Tech; **Jim Flowers**, VT KnowledgeWorks; **Iain Clelland**, Radford University. Handshake owner **Anne Clelland** mingles with **Cecile Newcomb**, Energy Check; and **Cathy Hanks**, Draper Aden. The video is available for viewing on YouTube.



photos: Jane Dalier

Woods Rogers Workshop >

Woods Rogers Attorneys at Law held its 28th Annual **Labor & Employment Seminar** in Danville, Lynchburg, and Roanoke. The Dec. 10 workshop at Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center featured **Dan Summerlin** and **Tom Winn**.



photos: Dan Smith

Looking for souvenirs >

The house was packed Dec. 12 at Goodwill Industries where an initial sale of fixtures, furniture and artwork from the **Patrick Henry Hotel**, which is being renovated, was held to benefit Goodwill and Habitat for Humanity. **Denise Stewart** is reflected in the mirror in her basket (left) and Carilion marketing director **Shirley Holland** (light coat) looks over the artwork (she bought a couple of pieces).

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



Daphne DePuy Turner: “Our people are seeing results from their investment of their time.”

David Perry

Battling a monster of an enemy >

Executive Summary:

Daphne Turner knows all about cancer and she takes this battle personally.

By David Perry

For Roanoke's Daphne DePuy Turner, fighting cancer is more than a paycheck. It's personal.

She is the Virginia state vice president of the American Cancer Society (ACS), and she knows first-hand what a cancer diagnosis means. Her mother died from leukemia, and her husband, Roanoke builder Jay Turner, is a two-time cancer survivor.

“Our organization was able to help her in some really profound ways,” says Daphne of her mother's care. ACS provided assistance with cosmetics to help her mother cover up facial bruising related to her treatment and feel comfortable going out in public. Jay's prostate cancer was detected with a standard PSA test which ACS developed.

Says Daphne, “I attribute the quality of life of my mother and my husband to the organization that I've spent 31 years dedicating my professional life to.”

ACS battles cancer on a variety of fronts, from research to patient services and advocacy. “In a world where cancer



The Cancer Society's recent Relay for Life

EXECUTIVE PROFILE



Our organization has decided to focus on a handful of very important and very specific activities.

—Daphne Turner

is a disease of 200 different varieties, it would be easy to be spread too thinly,” says Daphne. “Our organization has decided to focus on a handful of very important and very specific activities: prevention, nutrition, physical activity, skin cancer, tobacco use and early detection of breast, colon and prostate cancer.”

Many of the services ACS provides are carried out by legions of volunteers: 1,000 volunteers for every paid staffer, of which there are just 30 in six offices. “The cause attracts people because they want to do something about this horrible disease,” says Daphne. “Our people are seeing results from their investment of their time.”

The success is obvious with Relay for Life, a marquee event. The region’s 58 relays generate \$3.42 per capita, first in the nation for the last two years.

As the new state VP, Daphne says she’s “tried to carry over the successes in western Virginia” to the rest of the state. “When I started I discovered there were some areas that were not being serviced adequately,” including

In Brief

Name: Daphne DePuy Turner

Age: 56

Company: American Cancer Society

Location: Roanoke

Type of business: Nonprofit health organization

Title: State Vice President

History: The D.C.-area native came to this region to study biology at Roanoke College. After working in pharmaceutical sales, she joined the American Cancer Society in 1978 and worked her way up through the organization. She became State Vice President in July, and when she’s not fighting cancer, she rides horses, gardens, and rides her bike. Married to Jay Turner of J.M. Turner Construction in Roanoke.

rural central Virginia and eastern Virginia. She’s since reorganized the staff in those areas and adjusted job duties.

In this economy, she says, “The average contribution has fallen, but as many or more people are giving.” In fact, Daphne says she was thrilled to have a “flat” giving year last year when many other nonprofits struggled. Donations in the Roanoke Valley were up 2.8 percent over the previous year. 

A New Building for an Old Neighborhood



Valley Bank South Roanoke Branch

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Roanoke, Virginia
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Career FRONT

FINANCIAL FRONT

Accounting

The accounting practice of **Charles Equi Jr.** has moved into the practice of R. William Johnson Jr. & Company in Roanoke.

Banking

Bill Cross and **Ted Martin** are co-managers of the new Beach First National Bank center in Roanoke. **Jonathon Wyatt** is office coordinator.

Insurance

Richard Jennell and **Henry Monsour** of Roanoke's New York Life Insurance Company office have been named President's Council Agents.



Furlong

Investing

Scottrade has promoted

Jim Furlong to manage its Roanoke branch office in the Keagy Village Shopping Center.

LEGAL FRONT



Willis

Law Firms

Heather R. Willis has joined the law firm of Gentry Locke Rakes & Moore in Roanoke as an associate attorney in the firm's business law practice group.

WELLNESS FRONT

Chiropractic

Tuck Chiropractic Clinic in Roanoke has named **Dr. Lee Matthis** a partner.

Dental

Liz Burford has joined Delta Dental of Virginia's



Burford

marketing team in Roanoke as market manager.

Eldercare

Generation Solutions in Roanoke has named **Linda Hazlett** geriatric care manager.



May

Organizations

Melissa C. May has been named the Executive Director of the Roanoke Adolescent Health Partnership located in Roanoke.

DEVELOPMENT FRONT

Construction

Stan Breakell has been named CEO and **James Breakell** president of Breakell Inc. in Roanoke.

RETAIL FRONT

Auto Parts

Advance Auto Parts in Roanoke has named **Brian Dan** VP contract and real estate counsel.

RECREATION FRONT



Robarge

Sports

The Salem Red Sox, the Advanced Class-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox, have announced the hiring

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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.

of **Dennis Robarge** as the team's new director of sales. Robarge, a 26-year veteran of professional sports, will oversee all areas of ticket, hospitality and corporate sales. He was assistant GM from 1990 to 1996 and played a role in the team's move to its new stadium. Robarge was president of the NBA Development League Roanoke Dazzle from 2002-2006 and was GM of the Atlanta Dragway in 1996.

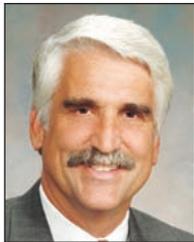
EDUCATION FRONT*Ad/PR*

John Bedor has been named VP of business development for Neathawk Dubuque & Packett in Roanoke.

Colleges

ITT Technical Institute in Salem has hired **James Dick**.

Randy Holley has been named director of institutional effectiveness with National Business College in Salem.

OTHER FRONTS**Rordam***Government*

Blacksburg Mayor **Ron Rordam** was elected to a three-year term as an at-large member of the Virginia Municipal League Executive Committee during the association's annual conference in Roanoke.

The U.S. Census Bureau has appointed a slate of managers for its new office in Christiansburg. The new managers are: **Kathryn Martinson**, local census office manager; **P. Barry**

Orndorff, assistant manager for field operations; **Charles Rinker**, assistant manager for quality assurance; **Margaret Cunningham**, assistant manager for administration; **Val Coluni**, assistant manager for recruiting; and **Bill Turpin**, assistant manager for technology.

**Tuttle***Organizations*

John Tuttle, business development coordinator for SERVPRO of Roanoke, Montgomery & Pulaski Counties, has been named Volunteer of the Year by the

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce.

The Virginia Transit Association has elected Blacksburg Mayor **Ron Rordam** vice president.

Read the FRONT online

vbFRONT.com

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

FRONT Notes

Property condemned

A circuit court has ruled that the **Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority** has the right to condemn property on Reserve Avenue in the shadow of Carilion Clinic and the Virginia Tech Carilion medical college. The land is owned by Stephanie and Jay Burkholder and a building on the property houses Surfaces, a flooring company. The housing authority had offered \$1 million for the property in the past, but the offer was considered to be too low by the owners. Surfaces is expected to continue operating indefinitely. An appeal, which could take years, is anticipated.

Centra honored

Centra in Lynchburg has been named to the HomeCare Elite, the only performance recognition of its kind in the homecare industry, for the fourth straight year. The 2009 HomeCare Elite is a compilation of the most successful Medicare-certified home health care providers in the United States.

Rackspace products

Rackspace Email & Apps in Blacksburg has announced the launch of two new apps designed to help businesses work more efficiently. With Rackspace Cloud Drive and Rackspace Server Backup, businesses

can now organize, back up, and share their files in the cloud securely. Rackspace Cloud Drive is essentially an online hard drive—a hard drive that is in the cloud. Your Cloud Drive allows businesses to access and store files online, via a network drive on your computer. It works across Windows, Mac and Linux operating systems without any additional hardware. The cost is \$4 per user per month, which includes 10 GB of storage space in the cloud. Rackspace Server Backup enables customers to automatically back up Windows or Linux-based server data to the cloud.

Synchrony gets big contract

Roanoke County-based **Synchrony Inc.**, which makes rotating machinery and power conversion systems, has received what could eventually be a \$16 million order from McQuay International for serial production of integrated drive trains to be used in high efficiency chillers. McQuay will incorporate Synchrony's technology into its line of frictionless chillers. The chillers are designed for commercial and industrial buildings demanding high performance heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

OCC division wins

Applied Optical Systems Inc., a subsidiary of Roanoke-based **Optical Cable Corporation** since October, has won a patent infringement lawsuit brought three years ago by Amphenol Fiber Systems International, a subsidiary of Amphenol Corporation. The jury in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas unanimously determined that an AOS' fiber-optic connector design does not infringe on FSI's patent. The fiber optic connectors at issue are most often used in military and other harsh environment applications.

Grid innovation

Dominion Virginia Power is working with **Virginia Tech** to make the "smart grid" smarter by developing and testing technology that will improve the electric grid's efficiency and reliability. The technology ("synchrophasors") provides dynamic real-time information about conditions on the transmission grid. The project is funded by a \$1.5 million Department of Energy grant. Tech professor Arun Phadke's work with synchrophasor technology, which provides precise, real-time data on transmission system conditions, began nearly 27 years ago. He invented the key building block of this technology—the phasor measurement unit.

Scott Martin leaves

Scott Martin, the dynamo who in effect brought a kind of adventurous and successful economic development to Franklin County—based on what it is, rather than what some would have it be—is leaving for a job in Louisville, Ky. His leaving follows closely behind his virtual twin in Roanoke, Stuart Mease, who left his position in economic development a couple of months ago for a job with Rackspace Email & Apps in Blacksburg, where he has lived for years. Mease and Martin were considered two of the brightest young stars in government in this region and maybe in Virginia. Martin is moving to Louisville, where he will join a community led nonprofit initiative (21st Century Parks) that is seeking to construct a 3,000+ acre park within the city limits.

Building resumes

Construction on the Cambria Suites 127-room hotel on Reserve Avenue near the Carilion Riverside developments has resumed and could be finished as early as March, according to reports. Telemark Hotel Developers has reportedly settled its debts to contractors and subcontractors and hired Maple Creek Construction of Wisconsin as the new general contractor. The construction company has also suggested that a high-rise condo project in the area is a possibility.

FRONT Notes posted daily online at moreFRONT.blogspot.com.

Read extended versions of items listed above, plus photos and many more current listings each day on the [moreFRONT](http://moreFRONT.com) blog, also available by link at vbFRONT.com.

Roanoke growth strong economic growth.

A leading index of economic growth shows a dramatic improvement for the **Roanoke Region**. Roanoke rose 42 positions to No. 126 out of the 200 largest U.S. metro areas, according to the 2009 Milken Institute/Greenstreet Real Estate Partners Best-Performing Cities Index. The Roanoke Region was the highest-ranking of Virginia's major metropolitan areas for high-tech GDP growth from 2007-08. The overall index ranks U.S. metropolitan areas by how well they are creating and sustaining jobs and



Northside

Spectrum wins award

The Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) has awarded **Spectrum Design** of Roanoke the 2009 Distinguished Design Award in the category of Outstanding Renovation. The award is for Spectrum's redesign of Northside High School in Roanoke County.

Have an announcement about your business?

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

Ranks No. 1

Virginia Tech's undergraduate landscape architecture program, in the **School of Architecture + Design, College of Architecture and Urban Studies**, has been ranked No. 1 in North America in the 11th annual America's Best Architecture and Design Schools study

by DesignIntelligence on behalf of the Design Futures Council.

PR award winners

tba (the becher agency) in Roanoke has won eight Summit Awards—the most of any entrant—from the Blue Ridge Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America



Virginia Western Workforce Development— Partnering with Organizations for Solution-Focused Results

“Virginia Western Community College is an approved training provider for Goodwill Industries of the Valleys’ Workforce Development facility. Virginia Western offers vocational training at reasonable costs for the clients that Goodwill serves. This enables our Workforce Development staff to meet Goodwill’s mission of helping people and families in the community achieve a better life through work and independence.

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*Phil Jones
Vice President, Human Resources
Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, Roanoke*

For more information on how Virginia Western’s **LearnConnect** team can design customized training, go to our web site at www.virginiawestern.edu/learnconnect/ or call (540) 857-6076.

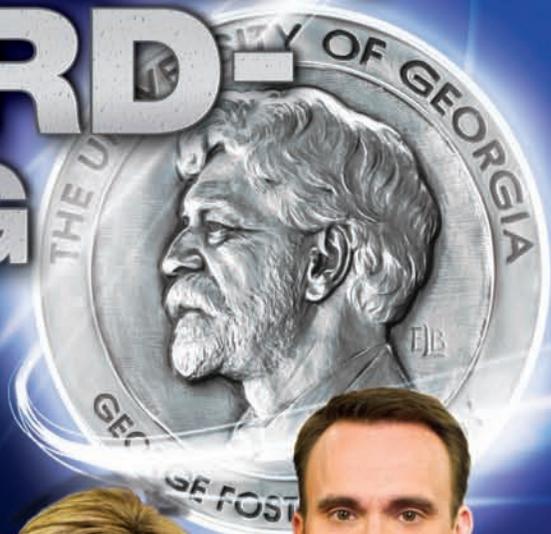
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FRONT Notes

in recognition of excellence in public relations. Golds were won for ads for United Way Roanoke Valley, Roanoke Regional Partnership, Oak Hall Cap and Gown and Lanford Brothers. There were four silvers, as well—one for crisis management support for Luna Innovations' Chapter 11 filing.

Access Advertising & Public Relations

in Roanoke won three gold awards for work for Virginia Hospitality and Tourism Association, Citizens for Positive Growth-Glenvar Asphalt Plant Opposition and Lewis-Gale Medical Center. The Compass Award went to **Darren Jackson**, CEO of Advance Auto Parts. Other gold winners include: **Roanoke County Public Schools**; **Heidi Kettler**, APR, NEWSource; **City of Roanoke**.

Tech gets turkey grant

Virginia Tech and the University of Minnesota have been awarded a two-year, \$908,280 grant by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to complete sequencing the genome of the domesticated turkey.

Access honored

Access Advertising & Public Relations in Roanoke has received the Citizen Recognition Award from the Roanoke Police Department in recognition of the firm's pro bono efforts in developing the "SaferCity Roanoke" crime prevention and awareness campaign.

Service to consolidate

U.S. Food Service

plans to close its Virginia Beach center of distribution and send its customers to facilities in Salem and Raleigh. The Salem plant has 425 workers and it is not yet certain if that will increase. The consolidation of the facilities will increase efficiency, officials say.

Car lot sold

The former Dave Sarmadi Mitsubishi automobile dealership lot in West Salem has been purchased by a division of the **Shelor Automotive Group** for \$3.7 million with no plans to create another car lot, say the new owners. A report in Roanoke's local daily says that the new owners have no definite plans for the eight acres, but that it will be developed in some way. Sarmadi moved his dealership to Roanoke where, he says, his customers are.

Education

Simio, an industry leader in simulation software, has awarded a \$300,000 grant to the School of Engineering & Computational Science at **Liberty University** in Lynchburg. The grant is in the form of the Simio Software Academic Edition allowing the engineering program to learn and create simulations using Simio's innovative software, which allows users to rapidly model almost any system without programming. The faculty will use Simio to teach students the core competencies

of Engineering and Systems Design.

Culture

The Arts Council of Blue Ridge has received a \$5,000 Tourism and the Arts Grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the Virginia Tourism Corporation. The grant will support *Rising Stars: A New Constellation of Arts and Culture as Southwest Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts*.

Transportation

Two Blacksburg firms, Draper Aden Associates and Baker Hughes, have partnered with **RIDE Solutions** to offer environmental and cost-saving commute options to their employees. These new Workplace Partner participants are working with RIDE Solutions to encourage employees to carpool, bike, walk, or take the bus to work.

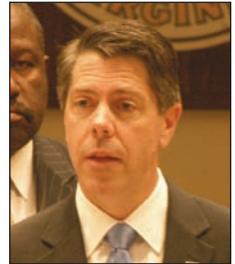
Luna reaches deal

Luna Innovations and **Hansen Medical** have reached a lawsuit settlement that will include a supply and development agreement over a period of years that will integrate Luna's fiber optic sensing technology into Hansen's surgical products. That is huge and positive news for this region of Virginia, where Luna has made a significant economic impact and has promise of even greater success.

The settlement resolves the outstanding litigation between the companies. Roanoke-based Luna

Innovations develops and manufactures new-generation products for the health care, telecommunications, energy and defense markets. Hansen Medical, based in California and a former partner with Luna on projects, designs and manufactures medical robotic instruments.

Luna has filed with the bankruptcy court its First Amended Joint Plan of Reorganization and other bankruptcy documents to implement the Settlement Agreement and allow the company to emerge from Chapter 11 reorganization as quickly as possible.



Morrill

New city manager

Roanoke City Council has appointed **Chris Morrill**, an assistant city manager in Savannah, Ga., as its new city manager, replacing the retiring Darlene Burcham. He will be paid \$170,000 a year. Morrill worked with a staff of 2,600 and a budget of \$280 million in Savannah. The former Peace Corps volunteer has an extensive background in budgets and economic development and was called by City Councilwoman Gwen Mason "a perfect fit" for Roanoke.

Compiled by Dan Smith

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Mayor Roger Hedgepeth (Retired)
Rebecca Hepler,
Blacksburg High School
Linwood Holton, former governor
HomeTown Bank
Dewey Houck, Rural Appalachian
Improvement League, Inc.
Debbie Howard, MLA, Bank of
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Howlin Dog Designs
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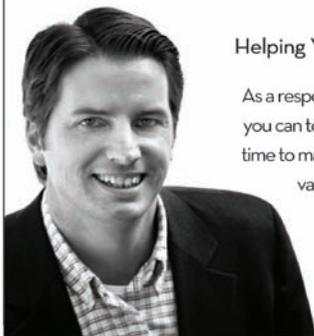
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“ ”
It was engineering
paradise. — Page 11

“ ”
Her equanimity is as apparent
as her forthrightness. — Page 45

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