

Valley Business

FRONT

Look!

*It's a bird!
It's a plane...*

FOR THE UP AND COMING
AND ALREADY ARRIVED

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The Business of Drones in Our Region

John Coggin,
Virginia Tech UAS Test Site

A low-angle photograph of a modern building with a glass facade. The Valley Bank logo is prominently displayed on a blue sign that runs diagonally across the frame. The logo consists of the words "Valley Bank" in a white, sans-serif font with a 3D effect, set against a blue background. A red horizontal line runs beneath the text, ending in a red triangle on the right side.

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WELCOME to the FRONT

UAV. Those three letters, currently used to designate “unmanned aerial vehicles” sound rather innocuous than the term “drones.” Who knows what all these flying gadgets will be called by the time we really get into the business? Apparently, we’re far more into the business than most of us realize. According to a report by National Geographic a year ago, the U.S. had already exceeded 11,000 drone missions for military purposes alone. Credentials are hard to come by regarding covert drone attacks, but one London-based watchdog bureau claims as many as 5,261 military and civilian deaths from CIA led strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Stanford’s human rights organization disputes statistics that high; but even if terribly exaggerated, that is some scary business. Of course there is a lot of optimism for looking skyward, too. Drones can be used to save lives and improve commerce. But there’s no doubt they can easily be misused, particularly for spying and infringing on our right to personal property and privacy. How do we move into this industry and technology that is sure to come in even bigger, bolder ways? Whether we delicately tiptoe or march madly, one thing is for sure: a lot of us are going to be looking upward with more frequency.



Tom Field



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DEPARTMENTS

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**“LOOK,
UP IN THE SKY!
IT’S A BIRD!
IT’S A PLANE...”**



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Cover photography of John Coggin by Tom Field.

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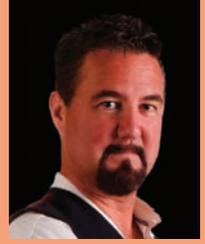
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MAY



Gayla D'Gaia



Tom Field



Anne Sampson



Dan Smith

Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 68.

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.

This board has been given the task of helping FRONT understand the issues and develop coverage. "Members essentially have a red telephone at their hand," says publisher Tom Field. "The can inform us best on what is important, what is new, what impacts the greater community. Of course, our red phone reaches right back to them as well, for assignments and insight on our coverage. Although the members are encouraged to keep FRONT updated on their own industries and the key players, they aren't limited to their area of specialty, as all commercial enterprises ultimately collaborate to impact our quality of life here in this part of Virginia." An additional contribution by the Editorial Advisory Board involves direct input on the various FRONTLists we present throughout the year.

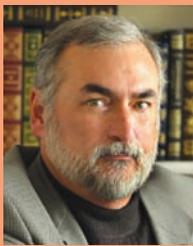
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Randolph Walker



Occupations that need a high school diploma or less will continue to represent more than half of all the jobs

— Page 42



This is a mosh pit of individuals who mostly seem to be content with the notion of taking care of themselves

— Page 46

2014 Members

Nancy Agee Carilion (Wellness)
Laura Bradford Claire V (Retail)
Nicholas C. Conte Woods Rogers (Legal)
Warner Dalhouse Retired (Seniors)
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Stuart Mease Virginia Tech (Education)
Mary Miller IDD (Tech/Industry)
Ed Walker Regeneration Partners (Development)

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.

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“LOOK, UP IN THE SKY!

IT'S A BIRD!
IT'S A PLANE...”

**A Special FRONTreport on the
Business of Drones in Our Region**



UAV Technology: No Longer Pie-in-the-Sky >

Executive Summary:

Along with the excitement and buzz over this new technology, there are so many questions about unmanned aerial vehicles. Many of the answers should come from our own region, as we launch skyward, especially around Virginia Tech.

By Michael Miller

What Is That Thing In The Sky?

An Introduction

Prior to 2013, mention of the word “drone” was likely to conjure up images of grainy black-and-white video showing strikes on military targets. The use of remotely piloted Predator aircraft equipped with lethal missiles to attack targets in the Middle East and other troubled regions has been controversial to say the least. Then Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, announced to the world that his company was developing a fleet of small aircraft capable of delivering packages directly to the doorsteps of his customers. This announcement, made on the CBS prime time Sunday night program “60 Minutes” was likely calculated more to produce buzz for Amazon than to actually announce a viable new product delivery option. But it moved the conversation about drones from the battlefield to the living room in a way that simultaneously reduced the military association with the technology and made us all think about the practical issues and applications of the next wave of life-altering technology poised to wash over us.

In late 2013, the Federal Aviation Administration, the agency charged with safeguarding and controlling traffic in US airspace, announced the selection of six test sites across the country that will provide opportunity for testing unmanned aircraft while the FAA devises appropriate regulations to maintain public safety. One of the test sites will be located at Virginia Tech, which could be a boon to the local technology economy.



Tom Field

Friend or Foe? History of Drones

The word “drone” as used to describe unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) has a dubious etymology. The fact that UAVs can be thought of as single purpose, unthinking minions certainly gives rise to bee associations, but in fact the actual use of the drone moniker is obscure and likely did not originate in a single instance. In any case, UAVs have been with us for quite a long time, especially if we adopt a somewhat loose definition.

As with many leading edge technologies, development of UAV systems has often been driven by military necessity. During the Civil War, balloons laden with baskets of explosives on a timer were floated over the enemy with limited success, and the coupling of photography with kites produced the first aerial photography in the late 1800s. The development of the airplane and the radio in the early 1900s was almost immediately followed by radio-controlled aircraft, mostly as targets for gunnery training purposes. However it’s interesting to note that the hobby of radio-controlled aircraft also began in the 1920s.

World War 2 saw an explosion of autonomous or remotely-piloted vehicle technology development. Everybody knows about the infamous German V-1 “buzz bomb”, which was essentially the first cruise missile. The aircraft was basically a flying bomb, powered by a special pulsed engine that produced its familiar buzzing sound. The V-1 was a dumb-bomb in the sense that it was

John Coggin, our FRONT cover model peering into the unknown skies, is Chief Engineer for the Virginia Tech Unmanned Aircraft Systems Test Site and the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership. John is a Virginia Tech graduate in Aerospace Engineering, and has years of experience in the local high tech industry in Tech’s Corporate Research Center. As Senior Research Engineer and adjunct faculty in the Department of Aerospace Engineering, Coggin performed structural and aerodynamic modeling and wind tunnel testing of aircraft and designed, built and flew remotely piloted vehicles. When Virginia Tech was selected as one of the six FAA test sites, Coggin was asked to move over to the Institute for Critical Science and Technology and serve as Chief Engineer for the site.



John Coggin installs equipment in ESPAARO payload bay

launched in the direction of London and when it ran out of fuel it simply fell to the ground. It was stabilized but not guided.

However, few know of the counter technology employed to take out the V-1 launch sites. The US Army converted bombers for radio control, and loaded them with explosives. Another nearby aircraft was to provide terminal guidance to the target, but real pilots had to take off and steer the plane to the control point, after which they bailed out and parachuted to the ground. In 1944, pilot Joseph Kennedy, older brother to eventual US President John Kennedy, was killed while piloting one of these UAV bombers when the explosives prematurely detonated.

The 1950s saw the widespread deployment of helicopter technology, which today provides a stable platform for many UAV applications. After Gary Powers' U2 spy plane was shot down over Russia in 1960, the military began serious development of remote reconnaissance aircraft. The Ryan Firebee, deployed in 1965, was the first remotely piloted aircraft equipped with both photographic and stealth technologies, and flew more than 34,000 missions over southeast Asia during the Viet Nam war.

While the original impetus for military UAV technology was almost always reconnaissance, it became obvious that other uses were possible. The Predator UAV was initially designed to fly for up to 16 hours, providing real time video of enemy positions to commanders on the ground. Eventually Predators were equipped with Hellfire anti-tank missiles that allowed them to be used as remote weapon platforms.



John Coggin checks the mounting on the electric motor that drives the ESPAARO propeller



John Coggin and graduate student Chris Kevorkian attach the wing to the ESPAARO fuselage

Blackbird Technologies Inc., the leading supplier of Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) tracking technology, has partnered with the **Virginia Tech UAS Test Site** to bring advanced satellite and situational awareness capabilities to the commercial UAS market. This partnership has supplied Virginia Tech with state-of-the-art satellite communications solutions to use in their UAS research and FAA commercial flight testing programs. Blackbird's devices allow for secure tracking of the UAS vehicles via satellite and approved mobile systems, and do not depend on existing UAS and commercial flight communication networks. The extremely small size, weight and power management allow for even the smallest of aircraft to be satellite equipped and tracked within real-time environments. Virginia Tech's 40 lb ESPAARO can easily carry the Blackbird hardware where traditional satellite solutions would be too large and heavy to use on this rapidly growing class of small and lightweight aircraft.

The history of UAV development demonstrates the primary utility of the aircraft. In essentially every case, the need is to send a machine to a place that is either inaccessible or too dangerous for people to go.

How Does It Work?

Technology and Applications

Outside of stealthy military applications, most UAV technology is remarkably similar to hobbyist gear. A typical UAV consists of three basic components: an aircraft with actuators that allow it to be controlled, one or more sensors, and a communication device.

Radio controlled (RC) airplanes have been around for decades, and have continued to advance in size and sophistication as electric motors produced more thrust and rechargeable batteries became smaller and more powerful. If you are an RC hobbyist, it is obvious that you are eventually going to fasten a camera to your aircraft so you can get a birds-eye view of the world.



Dr. Kevin Kochersberger

Michael Miller



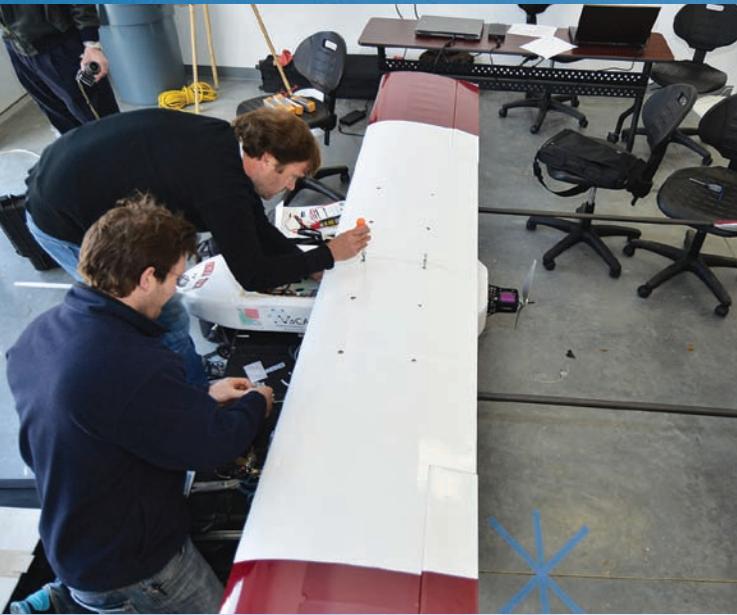
Off the shelf: Standard radio controlled hobby aircraft Rascal 110 and more sophisticated Aeroscout B1-100 are both used by the the Unmanned Systems Lab for research and development.

More recently multi-rotor aircraft, which look like helicopters with three to six propellers, have become all the rage. Hovering craft like the typical quadcopter are very stable, even in significant wind conditions, and are relatively easy to control. Plus, they can carry reasonable size payloads such as video cameras, and maneuver them fast or slow and at varying altitudes on command. A hobbyist can purchase such a craft for less than \$200, sometimes with a built-in camera, and impress friends and relatives with aerial films of vacation spots. In fact, using these aircraft to shoot movie footage provides directors with a new tool for interesting camera angles, and you have no doubt seen movie sequences shot from a UAV on your typical movie date night.

A somewhat less obvious but rapidly growing application is shooting wedding video using a quadcopter. They are relatively quiet and can be flown around during the ceremony with little disturbance to the proceedings (as long as they don't crash into the groom, that is).

Interestingly, this first wave of UAV applications is not particularly technology driven. According to Dr. Kevin Kochersberger, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Virginia Tech, the aircraft being used in Virginia Tech's Unmanned Systems Lab are simply purchased and then outfitted with appropriate sensors or other systems to perform the studies being carried out.

"The technology driver for unmanned aerial systems is the smart phone," said Kochersberger, holding up his phone. "These things are giving us most of the technology we need. As the cameras get smaller, as the processors get



John Coggin and graduate student Chris Kevorkian attach the wing to the ESPAARO fuselage



John Coggin and Chris Kevorkian carry the 40 lb. ESPAARO out of the workshop at Kentland Farms

smaller and more powerful, as the batteries get more efficient, we incorporate those elements into the aircraft and they become more capable.”

Kochersberger and fellow researcher Dr. David Schmale represent the development of new applications not possible until UAVs became practical testbeds. Their research is not about the UAV, but about what you can do with it.

Kochersberger has an interest in finding ways to use UAVs in agriculture. “Even a small farmer now has perhaps hundreds of acres to manage, and he has to be very efficient in order to have a viable operation,” said Kochersberger. “If the farmer could use an autonomous UAV, he could inspect hundreds of acres from the air and learn about the conditions of his crop in different places. Then he could make the right decisions about applying pesticides, fertilizers and water on a smaller scale. That would make him more efficient and it would also be better for the environment.”

Autonomy is the key to success in agriculture according to Kochersberger. The farmer has to be able to push a button and have the aircraft fly a pre-programmed route over the fields, returning safely to the base. “He’s not going to learn how to fly the UAV,” said Kochersberger.

David Schmale is interested in biological applications as well, but in a different way. Schmale wants to track the movement of microbes and plant pathogens over long distances in the atmosphere. Until now, this meant sampling the air on the ground over a large geographical area. But with a UAV, he can fly into the wind streams and



collect samples during transport. This provides him with better data on the movement of the microbes and allows better predictive methods to be developed.

The potential applications for UAVs are almost limitless. Aside from delivering your Amazon.com order, UAVs are perfect for inspecting dangerous areas you would not want to send a person, such as power lines or nuclear plants. They are already in use for aerial surveillance applications by military and law enforcement. And one of the more interesting applications recently announced by several large internet companies is to provide wireless internet access in areas where wired infrastructure is not currently available or impractical to build. A high-altitude aircraft with electric motors and communications powered by solar panels on the wings, capable of remaining aloft for months or years could be the answer.

Where Will They Come From? Regulations

In order to test new hardware or applications, the aircraft must actually fly. And that can be a problem, because the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) generally regulates the use of airspace. Unfortunately, the FAA has not been prepared to handle the types or amount of unmanned air traffic potentially vying for that airspace.

The current FAA regulations, which can be found on the FAA website, are a sort of hodge-podge of rules concerning unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), as they call drones. For example, if you are a hobbyist, you can operate your



(Left Picture) John Coggin and Chris Kevorkian carry ESPAARO to the Kentland Farms runway for testing. (Center Picture) VT UAS Lab personnel John Coggin, Chris Kevorkian and Eddie Hale perform final checks on ESPAARO while Blackbird Technologies personnel look on. Blackbird Technologies donated equipment to the VT UAS Lab.

radio-controlled aircraft without any license, as long as you keep it under 400 feet above ground level and generally away from regular aircraft and populated areas. You can equip your aircraft with a video camera and send live pictures back to the ground, and there is no regulation for that. However, you can't sell the photos or video to anybody, or you would be transacting business, and the FAA does not allow commerce with UAS at the present time.

If you want to develop applications, you can apply for a Special Airworthiness Certificate – Experimental Category (SAC-EC) for civil aircraft, or Certificate of Authorization (COA) for public aircraft. But there is a catch – the airworthiness certificate requires that the pilot of the UAS actually have a special pilot certificate to fly the aircraft.

This system creates some interesting dilemmas for developers. If a company purchased a radio-controlled aircraft and equipped it with video cameras and GPS gear to develop a tracking application, that company could not legally operate the aircraft without first obtaining all the certifications necessary. However, an employee of the company could take the same equipment home and legally operate it from a backyard or farm, as long as it was kept under 400 feet from the ground and didn't endanger anybody.

Danger is one of the big problems that must be dealt with. The aircraft themselves can be dangerous, and operation by untrained or irresponsible pilots could threaten others. Some of the electric motors or gas engines that power the craft can actually amputate fingers. While the craft



John Coggin removes the safety key from ESPAARO prior to flight.

themselves can weigh as little as a few ounces they can also weigh as much as a hundred pounds or more. Think what would happen if a 50-pound airplane crashed through your living room window at 40 mph.

Even more important is the possibility of operators behaving badly. In a recent case, a UAS operator was charged with interfering with a rescue operation because the UAV he was using to get footage of an emergency situation was in the way of a lifesaving helicopter, preventing the helicopter from landing. It's easy to imagine a host of other scenarios where UAS operations could potentially endanger lives or property. Addressing these issues and others is one of the reasons the FAA has selected six regional UAS test sites, including one at Virginia Tech.

Who's Flying These Things? Virginia Tech Site and Research

While the FAA only announced the regional UAS test sites in January, Virginia Tech has been experimenting with UAS for many years. The Virginia Center for Autonomous Systems (VaCAS) performs research on unmanned vehicles not only in the air, but also in and under water, on land and in space.

Dr. Craig Woolsey, VaCAS Director, says there have been three or four researchers working with UAS since 2005. Because Virginia Tech had to obtain FAA clearance to operate their research aircraft so many times, Woolsey believes Tech had an advantage in the competition for



ESPAARO on the runway ready for flight.



ESPAARO on runway at Kentland Farms test facility

one of the six test sites. "They knew we had been logging lots of safe flight hours," said Woolsey, "and we think that worked in our favor when it came to making the selections."

Jon Greene, Associate Director of Strategic Planning and Development at Tech's Institute for Critical Science and Technology (ICTAS) was instrumental in the effort that led to the site selection by the FAA. The Tech site is actually a consortium of Virginia, New Jersey and Maryland. The Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership (MAAP) as it is called, is unique among the six sites according to Greene, because it is the only one that contains a top-50 research university. "We actually have three of them," said Greene, "Virginia Tech, Rutgers and Maryland." Greene was appointed Interim Director of MAAP and served in that role until the end of April when Rose Mooney, Vice-President of Archangel Aero was tapped as a permanent director.

Greene sees the participation of Virginia Tech in the MAAP as pivotal both for Virginia and for the FAA. "We are connected with nearly all the key players for the future: NASA Langley, Naval Surface Warfare Center, Wallops Island, NAVAIR and others, and they need to have the FAA regulation problems solved," said Greene. "We provide both the talent and a favorable location to help solve those problems."

Noting that the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) has projected an economic impact of UAS in the range of almost \$90 Billion by 2020, Greene believes Virginia Tech is well positioned to enable that economic growth. "I expect this to make Virginia Tech



John Coggin holds tiny pocket-sized drone in hand

the center for UAS Research and Development in the US," said Greene.

The first step in creating that economy is to fix the regulations governing UAS operations. The FAA plans to release draft rules on small UAS (up to 55 lbs) in November, 2014. There will be a one-year period for receiving comments on the rules and six months after that the final Rules will be published. Greene believes that work going on at Virginia Tech will drive some of the key comments on the rules as they are shaped into final form. "The Virginia Tech site enables bigger applications to be tested. It has put Tech on the map in a lot of ways for UAS. Developers are starting to ask us to work with them."

The Future Over Our Heads

Summary/Wrap up

UAS are likely the next big thing that will change the way we live. At the end of the day, this is really all about a fundamental shift in society and the economic development associated with it. In the 1980s nobody would have believed that mobile phone technology would be as pervasive or as inexpensive as it is today. The markets are so large that billion dollar patent infringement judgments hardly cause the bat of an eye.

Even more astounding than the economics involved is how ubiquitous global communications provided by cell phones has fundamentally altered nearly every aspect of life. Global and immediate access to news, entertainment, education and other cultures has created a world that was



Michael Miller



Michael Miller

TOP: Graduate students Justin Stiltner and Scott Radford attach a payload module to the RMAX helicopter to test autonomous flying algorithms.

BOTTOM: Unmanned aircraft come in all sizes, from the handheld radio-controlled toy helicopter to the large Swiss-made RMAX aircraft costing hundreds of thousands of dollars.

unimaginable just twenty years ago. Whole industries have risen to replace the old economy. How does one even categorize a company like FaceBook with its \$160 Billion market cap? UAS technology will produce the same magnitude of changes in the future, and in ways we simply cannot predict yet.

Significant problems with UAS technology and application remain to be solved, especially in the areas of safety and reliability. And what about the more practical problems? Can Amazon really deliver your package to your doorstep, navigating around buildings and power lines and hunters with shotguns? The issues seem daunting.

John Provo, Director of the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development thinks it's not that bad. "The Tech test site and the others will provide the means for companies to try out their applications," he said. "It will force us to really think about the problems; to bring them out in the open and seriously consider the options."

"And then," says Provo, "we will solve the problems. Just like we always do." 

History of Drones

- 1863- Charles Perley registered a patent for an unmanned aerial bomber based on a hot-air balloon carrying a basket filled with explosives and a timer, which would float over the enemy camp and drop its deadly payload. It was used by both Union and Confederate sides with limited success.
- 1883- English inventor Douglas Archibald first took aerial photographs from a large kite. They were considered novelties until an American soldier realized the potential for wartime surveillance. Kites based on this principle were used during the Spanish-American war in 1898.
- 1917- Cooper and Sperry, inventors of the gyroscopic stabilizer which could keep an aircraft flying straight and level, converted a US Navy trainer aircraft into the first radio-controlled aircraft. It could fly 50 miles and carry one, 300 pound bomb. It was never used in combat.
- 1935- the Royal Navy developed a radio-controlled pilotless biplane for use as an aerial target for training combat pilots. 380 of the aircraft, called the "Queen Bee" were built and used until they were taken out of service in 1947. Some think the association of pilotless aircraft and the word "drone" originated with the Queen Bee.
- 1939- Hollywood actor Reginald Denny pirated a number of engineers from the Lockheed Company and started the Radioplane Company (which later became Northrop/Grumman Corp.). They built thousands of radio-controlled UAVs for the US Army and Navy, which were used as targets for anti-aircraft gunnery training.
- 1940s- World War 2 military technology developments include a number of self-guided munitions including the infamous German V-1 "Buzz Bomb", the first cruise missile. The V-1 was launched from sites in Belgium and the Netherlands, and the missiles were all pointed at London.
- 1950s- Helicopter technology became widespread in both military and commercial applications.
- 1970s- Radio-controlled hobby aircraft became readily available. Although first developed in the 1920s, widespread use of these aircraft by hobbyists became popular at this time, directly leading to the current low-cost UAV technology.
- 1990 to present- Cell phone technology advancements lead to development of low-cost, miniaturized, high quality computers, wireless communications, batteries and cameras. These technologies drive UAV applications today.



Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

Executive Summary:
Wedding wear requires careful consideration: yes, it's that important

Wedding Guest Attire >

With wedding season in full swing, it's a good time to revisit proper attire for wedding guests.

Weddings are one of those "special" events many people find confusing when considering what to wear. After all, it occurs during our leisure time and we know either the bride and/or the groom very well. Shouldn't we be able to wear our usual jeans and flip-flops? Of course, we'd wear our best, dressy jeans and add a jacket to dress it up!

Answer? No, no, no. Unless the attire is explicitly noted on the invitation as "Blue Jeans" or "Beach Attire", it is only polite to dress up for the most important day in your friend's life.

If the bride or groom is a work associate or client, it's even more important to dress appropriately. At a minimum, business casual is required.

Attire for wedding guests varies greatly depending on the style of wedding chosen by the bride and groom. If they want guests to wear formal attire they should note that on the invitation.

Here are a few types of attire and what they mean:

- **White Tie** - For men: tails, a formal white shirt, white vest and tie, white or gray gloves, and black opera pumps (shoes without laces). For women: a formal floor-length dress.
- **Black Tie** - For men: black tuxedo or evening jacket with matching trousers, a black tie, black vest or cummerbund, and suspenders. For summer, a white dinner jacket and black tuxedo trousers can substitute. Or a conservative black suit can substitute for the tux. For women: a formal floor-length gown or a short, dressy cocktail dress are appropriate.
- **Black Tie Optional**: Tuxedo not required. Guests can wear the same attire as a black tie event or go a little more casual. Men can wear a dark suit with a white shirt and conservative tie. Women can opt for dressy separates.
- **Semi-formal**: For men - a dark suit, white shirt and conservative tie is correct. For women, a cocktail dress or a long, dressy skirt and top are acceptable.
- **Creative Black Tie** – traditional tuxedo or formal dress accented by fun accessories like funky jewelry, colorful tie or cummerbund, etc. are welcome.
- **Casual**: For men - a button-down shirt and khakis are suitable. For women – a pretty sundress is appropriate.

If attire isn't noted on the invitation, ask the host for guidance. 

Comments or questions? Email kssurace@aol.com.

Wedding Guest Etiquette >

I recently had the pleasure of appearing on a local television talk show with my fellow FRONT columnist, Kathy Surace. One of the topics was “do’s and don’ts for wedding guests.” May through August are the most popular months for weddings in this area, with June being the traditional time to tie the knot.

There is a plethora of etiquette advice for the bride, groom and families. What about advice for the wedding guests? Here is a short list of do’s and don’ts that, as guests, we should follow.

Do’s:

- Do, please, RSVP! That means “répondez s’il vous plait” in French, and “respond if you please” in English. Guests not responding are probably the most distressing part of wedding planning. RSVP means respond whether or not you plan to attend. So do respond as quickly as possible. It is just good manners to do so.
- Do dress appropriately. A beach wedding requires different dress than does a formal evening wedding.
- Do arrive for the ceremony in plenty of time.
- Do sit at your assigned table – its plain tacky to change place cards!
- Do respect the couple’s religious traditions.
- Do rest assured if you are married, engaged, or have a partner, that the invitation should include your guest.

Don’ts:

- Don’t show up with an uninvited guest – that includes your children.
- Please don’t ask to add a guest. It is simply not ok, and puts the bride in an awkward position.
- Don’t dress to compete.
- Need I say it? Please don’t wear white.
- Don’t text, tweet, email or Instagram. Your job is to enjoy the celebration, not report it.
- Don’t upstage the couple by sending out photos before they do. Hurt feeling result in that!
- Don’t leave before the cake is cut.

Wedding gifts: There is a lot of conflicting advice on this! This writer agrees with Miss Manners when she says “...a wedding invitation does not constitute an invoice.” You give a present because you want to wish the happy couple well, not because you are obliged to do so. Nor are you obliged to use a wedding registry. Oh, I know I’m stepping on toes here! A wedding gift should be a thoughtful, loving gesture that reflects the giver.

Finally, do be a great guest. Introduce yourself to both sets of families. It helps to break the ice. And do help make the occasion a success by participating and enjoying the celebration! 



Etiquette & Protocol

By Kathleen Harvey Harshberger

Executive Summary:
Wedding behavior requires proper attention: yes it's that important



Small Business

By Samantha Steidle

Executive Summary:
Say what, how and why you do what you do—with precision

Your value proposition: The key to business success >

If someone asked you what your business has to offer, would you be able to articulate that clearly? Being able to present what marketers call a “value proposition” is important. It helps people understand what you do.

What is a value proposition? A well-considered one:

1. mentions your business name,
2. provides your product or service category,
3. defines your customer,
4. explains why the customer would benefit from purchasing your product or service,
5. differentiates your business from the competition, and
6. informs consumers about where your product or service is available.

Your value proposition informs every other aspect of your business, including partners, resources, customer segments, channels, and revenue streams. It affects all your communications.

It's the core of your entire business model. Indeed, your value proposition is the reason anyone would want to do anything with you. It's that important.

It's like a hypothesis

The good news: You don't have to get your value proposition “right” on the first try! Consider it a hypothesis. You are going out in to the market with an idea of what you think it wants. You present your value proposition accordingly.

Be prepared for feedback. Pay attention to messages from the public that may suggest your hypothesis is a little off. This feedback gives you an opportunity to adjust your value proposition and try again.

It's safe to say that all entrepreneurs go through this process of adjustment at some point, especially as markets change. Even experienced entrepreneurs and marketing professors (like me!) grapple with value propositions for their businesses. I experienced this recently with the launch of CoLab in Grandin Village.

My value proposition story

CoLab is sort of like the “new and improved” version of the Roanoke Business Lounge that I started on Kirk Ave. My first shot at a value proposition for CoLab emphasized it as a “hub for entrepreneurs.”

Well, my advisors did not like that description. They thought it was too limiting for the vision of CoLab. Rather, the value proposition should underscore the facility as a “hub for ideation.”

The new value proposition includes entrepreneurs within its scope without limiting itself to them only. It opens the possibility of attracting people who may not think of themselves as “entrepreneurs” (yet) but who do think of themselves as innovators, problem solvers, and creative thinkers.

I'm grateful to Jonathan Whitt, executive director of Innovation Network, and Derick Maggard, executive director of the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council, for encouraging me to think about the value proposition for CoLab.

Be brave, get feedback

If you are a business owner, consider soliciting feedback about your value proposition from people you trust. Ask them if it “fits” what they perceive.

Nobody likes to hear criticism, but be brave. The information they give you is likely to be something you could not have figured out by yourself, because you're too close to your business to see it.

It might make all the difference to your success. 



Be prepared for feedback. Pay attention to messages from the public that may suggest your hypothesis is a little off.

Damon Williams

- *Community Development Officer at First Citizens Bank*
- *Va Military Institute graduate*
- *Serves on Roanoke City Economic Development Authority*
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Financial Matters

Employees and financial wellness >

Executive Summary:

Jennifer Creech explains the key elements that make a financial wellness program successful for both employers and employees.

By Jacquelyn Wilder

Jennifer Creech believes financial literacy is an essential skill that everyone should have access to in today's society. As

director of business development at FinFit LLC, a Virginia-based provider of employee financial wellness programs with clients in the Roanoke region, including Goodwill Industries Central VA and Blue Ridge Medical Center. Ms. Creech and the FinFit team works closely with businesses to bring a sense of stability into the workplace through a combination of financial assistance and educational support.

Although the economy is on the mend, she is seeing that many employees are still struggling to make ends meet, often living paycheck to paycheck. With a lack of financial literacy tools available to the working-class individual, companies that offer a financial wellness program as part of a holistic benefits package provide a valuable service to their employees and can gain a strategic advantage over competitors. As a result, financial wellbeing and employee retention are increasingly becoming top of mind for employers nationwide.



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FinFit recently surveyed employees enrolled in the program to inquire about which aspects of a financial wellness program were most important. The results of the survey pointed to three distinct components necessary to improve financial literacy and fiscal stability.

First, employees value a tool that has an easy-to-use, intuitive online platform. When a resource is simple to employ and easily understandable, employees are more inclined to take full advantage of what the program has to offer.

Another crucial component is the ability to secure timely loan approval and swift access to funds. Those surveyed appreciated the fact that credit history did not get in the way of their ability to quickly obtain a loan when an emergency situation reared its ugly head.

The third vital element is for the online

platform to provide a stress-free navigation of budgeting and financial education tools. The main purpose of a financial wellness program is to alleviate stress, so what good is a tool if it instigates confusion and frustration?

For business owners, managers, and other employers seeking ways to better meet their staff's needs, while building a stable workforce of focused and productive employees, it's important to recognize that healthcare insurance, although critical to anyone's wellbeing, isn't the only benefit that workers are interested in receiving. Lack of control and knowledge regarding how to deal with financial responsibilities can create enormous levels of distraction.

A powerful program that includes financial help when unexpected circumstances arise, combined with online educational resources available at the click of a mouse, can deliver a great outcome across the organization. 

Dr. Guy Sims



- *Assistant VP of Student Affairs, Virginia Tech*
- *Graduate of Lincoln University*
- *VT Services Board Member*
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Lauren Ellerman

Practice in a Practically Perfect Place >

Executive Summary:

Attorney Lauren Ellerman proves that being busy is good—especially in a good community.

By Anne Sampson

Lauren Ellerman might be an influential woman, but she's pretty humble about it.

Ellerman, of Frith and Ellerman Law Firm, PC, was selected in 2013 as one of 42 "Influential Women of Virginia" by Virginia Lawyers Media, publishers of Virginia Lawyers Weekly. Honorees are chosen based on their contributions to their "profession, their communities and society-at-large."

Read the FRONT online
vbFRONT.com

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

But Lauren prefers not to dwell on honors such as her selection by the Roanoke Bar Association as Young Lawyer of the Year, her inclusion on Virginia Business Magazine's "Legal Elite –Young Lawyers", or her selection as "Rising Star in Business Litigation" by Super Lawyers Magazine. She'd rather talk about locally sourced food and her current volunteer projects.

Lauren and her husband, attorney Whit Ellerman, teamed with friends Lee and Karri Atwood to open The River and Rail, the trendy South Roanoke restaurant located in the old Lipes Pharmacy. Their menu spotlights local, seasonably available foods from commercial farms and bakeries that mostly seem to be within a two hour drive of Roanoke.

"We thought, 'Wouldn't it be neat if we could make it easy to get locally raised foods?'" says Lauren. "And then the Lipes building became available... Then one weekend, I sat down and wrote a business plan."

And then it all happened at once. In June 2012, the restaurant opened. If you'll recall, that's also when the Roanoke Valley learned the word 'derecho' and went dark for a few days. Then baby Maggie, now 20 months old, was born. Thankfully, says Lauren, they had Chef Aaron Deal.

In Brief

Name: Lauren Ellerman
Age: 34
Background: Hometown: Haymarket, VA; Became a partner at Frith Law Firm: 2006; The River and Rail opened: 2012
Takeaway: "This is the best place I've ever lived"

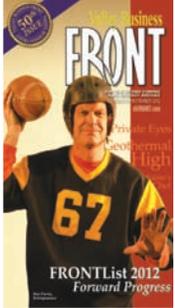
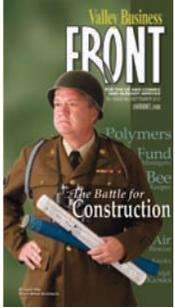
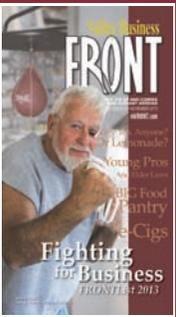
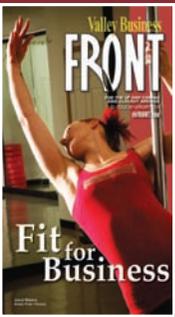
"He is just an amazing angel," she says. "He took over the administrative tasks for the restaurant. We are so lucky to have him." Deal is a North Carolina native with a decade of culinary experience, who thinks using local ingredients is just common sense.

Lauren focuses on marketing and events for the restaurant, and this area appears to be her forte in the volunteer world as well. Past volunteer efforts include Roanoke Area Ministries board member and the Roanoke Dog Park. "Campaigns are easy," she says, citing dedicated committee members as her secret to success. Her current community involvement focuses on Family Promise of Greater Roanoke, which provides mentoring and "stop-gap shelter for homeless families." Lauren heads up fundraising, her most recent effort

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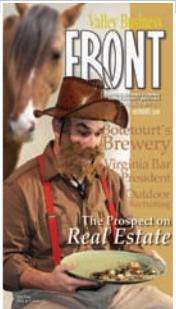
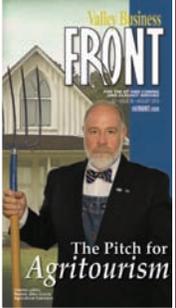
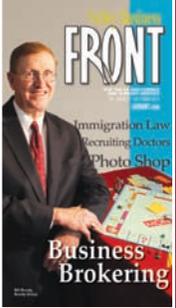
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WHEN DOES DO IT YOURSELF MEAN RISKING IT ALONE?

being the first 'Superhero 5K Run' last October. The event partnered with Go Outside Festival, and encouraged participants to "be a superhero", don a cape or costume and "run, walk or fly." They raised \$20,000 for Family Promise.

A transplant from Northern Virginia ("Roanoke was a compromise between Northern Virginia and Radford," her husband's home town), Lauren speaks of Roanoke with the zeal of the converted.

"This is the best place I've ever lived," she gushes. "I live and work within this one mile bubble. You can do that in Roanoke and it's affordable."

Roanoke's personality inhabits her law practice as well. "There's a local decorum," that must be adhered to, she says; "it's a different practice here."

A litigator who concentrates on medical malpractice, nursing home neglect, personal injury and business, Lauren has stories of out-of-town attorneys who are suspicious of the local legal system because Roanoke lawyers are nice to each other in the courtroom.

"You can be kind to the other side," she says. "It's necessary here. Roanoke is a very small world." It's easy to find yourself at church or in the grocery line with a courtroom opponent.

"I love who I work with and I love what I do. People who practice law in Roanoke have a lot of integrity."

The philosophy that ties all of Lauren's endeavors together is "making it easy." "If you want to do something for families," she says, "make it easier to be a parent. If you want to support the local economy or good nutrition, make it easier to get local foods.

It's about making it easier for people to be the best they can be." 📌



SANDRA CHINN-GILSTRAP

Spring is in the air! Sunshine and warm weather tempt us to start those DIY projects, long overdue. If you're a "Do it Yourself" person consider a few thoughts before launching into your next legal project.

DIY sites like LegalZoom, NoLo, and Rocket Lawyers may touch on just about any legal issue you can imagine, but it's critical to know when you're saving money, and when you're putting yourself at risk.

Do it Yourself legal sites and software are not always suited for your particular issues, state, jurisdiction, or exceptions to the generic form. In fact, they may not take your individual tax implications, obligations, responsibilities, or long term consequences into consideration. A misplaced comma could entangle you and your family in a costly legal battle.

Purchasing online legal documents is different than purchasing personal legal guidance. The value of legal counsel lies in the attorney's time, experience, and advice shared, not only the end product.

This spring, before you start your DIY legal project, call an experienced attorney at Woods Rogers for personal attention, legal guidance, and security.



Lurking in the basement >

Executive Summary:

If there's radon gas in your house or building, it needs to be mitigated; and there are firms here in our area that can help.

By Becky Hepler

Home should conjure up the feeling of safety and sanctuary, yet lurking in your basement and in the crawl spaces is the

danger of radon gas. Like American cars prior to mandatory seat belt laws, radon gas is deadly and ubiquitous, and just like those old classics, the consequences of it can be easily solved.

Radon gas is the by-product of the natural degradation of uranium and radium, usually found in the soil and bedrock. In the open air it disperses to levels that aren't harmful, but trapped in a basement or crawl space it can concentrate to dangerous levels. Southwest Virginia is in Zones 1 and 2, which indicate higher levels of radon gas than in the eastern side of the state, which is Zone 3. (It is thought that the sea that covered Virginia in prehistoric times left



Tom Field

“Radon George” Fardell (that’s what’s printed on his business card) of Radon Safe, Inc. says the public really needs to be aware of radon. “Get a test kit at Lowe’s or have us do it,” he says; and if present, then look up radon under inspectors or services to have it removed. He tells the story of a home that had two large empty dog beds in the basement. “When I asked them where the dogs were, the owner told me both had died of lung cancer.”

thinking of renting a house ask, “Has this place been tested for radon and what are the results?” Steve Hall of Appalachian Inspections, a home inspection company in Blacksburg, says that radon testing is now part of his regular inspection routine. Generally, fifty percent of the houses tested show high levels of the gas.

Hall offers both the short-term testing method and long term testing method. “Ninety percent of what I do is short term testing, usually because someone is buying or selling a house and needs the results quick,” he says. However, the Environmental Protection Agency suggests that consumers would get a more accurate picture of their house’s overall radon

gas exposure from the long term testing because results can vary with the season and the weather.

Homeowners can do their own testing with kits that are available from hardware and home supply stores. Dick Tabb, from the Roanoke Department of Environmental Health says consumers need to be sure to check what’s included in the kit, such as the cost of the lab work. Tabb is working with Total Action For Progress to distribute 250 kits to low-income homeowners, funded by a grant from the state Department of Health.

If the tests show radon levels of 4 pCi/L

enough sediment to seal in the bedrock and prevent the outgassing of radon in the east, but that the faulting and folding that created the mountains exposed it again.)

“Exposure to radon gas is the second leading cause of all lung cancer cases and the number one reason that non-smokers get lung cancer,” says Ryan Paris, Radon Coordinator for the Virginia Department of Health. “That’s approximately 670 cases a year in Virginia, so that’s a risk level that merits our attention.”

That attention has made anyone thinking of buying a home and even some people



Tom Field

Mitigation varies according to the location, the type of house and other factors, but it usually includes sealing cracks and crevices in the foundation, basement and/or crawlspace, installing pumps, pipes and fans for ventilation and pressurization systems to keep the radon gas out. According to George Fardell of Radon Safe, once a house is mitigated, as long as you maintain the equipment (the pump and fan) it is a permanent fix until you change the footprint of the house.

Virginia's state legislature did create a Uniform State-wide Building Code regarding radon-resistant new construction, but it is up to localities to decide whether to enforce it. In our area, only the town of Blacksburg and Rockbridge County have made it mandatory to follow these guidelines for new home construction. 

For more information, the EPA has prepared two brochures that are available at its website. (see links below). The Virginia Department of Health has comprehensive information at its site as well.

www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/citguide.html

www.epa.gov/radon/pdfs/consguid.pdf

www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/radiologicalhealth/radon/index.htm

(picocuries per liter of air) or higher, over the course of either two short-term tests or one long-term test, the Department of Health recommends radon mitigation services. Consumers have a wide range of choices, from the national firms such as SWAT Environmental and Evergreen Basements to totally local firms such as New River Radon Services, Roanoke Radon and Radon Safe, Inc, of Roanoke.

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Tech Scoop

A kiss is just a kiss... >

Executive Summary:

Cocoa's flavonoids and antioxidants are a good thing... yeah, that's why we want it.

By Michael Miller

When I was a kid in elementary school, the boys had this fun little trick we used to play on the girls. We would ask them if they wanted a kiss, and when they said yes (which they often did for reasons unknown to us at the time) we would give them a Hershey's Kiss. And then we would die laughing.

Yes, we were so stupid. Not only did we give away our chocolate, but we missed out on something much more valuable.

Anyway, the point of this column is the connection between chocolate and obesity, and it's not what you're thinking.

Rising affluence and wealth over the past generation has produced a plague of health problems due to increases in obesity and related illnesses such as diabetes. Obesity levels in all developed countries have skyrocketed. The estimated annual health care cost of obesity-related illness in the US alone is nearly \$200 billion—approximately 21% of all medical spending.

While Big Macs and KFC buckets are contributors to the problem, consumption of sugar in sweets and soft drinks seems to be major culprits. But don't discount that chocolate bar just yet. It turns out that while that Hershey Bar may be part of the problem, it may also hold the key to the solution.

It has long been known that flavonoids in certain foods, including cocoa, have



Michael Miller

shown promise in reducing arterial and heart disease. But now it appears that come of those antioxidants may also reduce obesity.

Dr. Andrew Neilson, an assistant professor of food science and technology at Virginia Tech, has found that one particular type of antioxidant in cocoa can prevent laboratory mice on high fat diets from gaining excess weight, and it also lowered their blood sugar levels.

This doesn't mean you should fill the pantry with truffles. Instead, Neilson's research means that it may be possible to produce additives that provide the desired effects, so they could be included in the ingredient list of many types of foods.

Of course, it will take time and more research before we will be able to purchase such foods, but there is something you can do now. Cooking with cocoa powder or cocoa nibs without added sugar is not only delicious, but would provide a source of the type of antioxidant Neilson identified. While this is not a scientific approach, it certainly won't hurt anything as long as you don't consume the cocoa butter and sugar that are contained in commercial chocolate candy. And if you just have to munch on a bar, go for the extra dark chocolate with 65% to 85% cocoa.

And get your kisses elsewhere. 



Dan Chitwood

The unlikely artist >

Executive Summary:

People who are color blind and dyslexic don't usually go into art. For Dan Chitwood, it was a natural.

By Dan Smith

The first thing you need to know about Dan Chitwood isn't so much that he's a dyslexic and red/green color blind. You'd want to begin by knowing he's an artist, a musician, a sculptor and a man who's had his own successful landscape design business for 34 years. You'd want to know that he

enjoys his life and he'd likely pay to play if he weren't earning money doing what he loves.

Dan's watercolors were on display recently in the upper gallery at the Grandin Theatre and some formal gallery interest has been expressed of late, even though his artwork is avocational, not something he depends on for income. His watercolors, painted on rough paper with torn edges, are realistic, though often interpretive, and can be head-turning. He was given an inexpensive watercolor set "when I was 6 or 7," by his father, "probably because oils would have been expensive and we wouldn't have been able to afford that." Funny how things happen.

That set him on a course that led to Virginia Tech (he turned down an appointment to



In Brief

Name: Dan Chitwood
Age: 58
Business: Dan Chitwood Certified Landscape Architect
Location: Roanoke
Background: Native of Chesapeake, Ohio (born across the river in Huntington, W.Va., "because Chesapeake didn't have a hospital"); graduated 1978 in landscape architecture from Virginia Tech. Moved to Roanoke 1980 and worked for Joe Griggs Associates (later Lumsden) and Smithy & Boynton (later Motley + Associates) before opening his own shop in 1990. Adjunct faculty at Virginia Western Community College. Painter, wood sculptor, musician (two CDs). Married to Melinda Chitwood, a noted CPA, for 34 years, two children.

"The brain tells the eye what it sees and my brain can make it a color, even when it's black and white. I think I probably have a fairly high IQ."

the Naval Academy, but the physical there told him he was color blind) and an interest in architecture, which led to landscape architecture. "I didn't even know landscape architecture existed until I got to Tech," he says. He took art classes, as well.

"Art is hard," he says. "Most artists are not good business people and aren't geared to sell their work. If you have to sell, it takes the fun out of the work, I think, because of the creative aspect."

He doesn't use a lot of red or green in his work, though he will occasionally feature bright reds in an almost in-your-face manner. "About 99 percent of the people who know me wouldn't know I was color blind," he says. He sees colors "mentally," he says.

Music has been an interest all his adult life, as well. He has 10 different (mostly stringed) instruments placed on stands around his house, so he can pick one up at any time. There are two didgeridoos resting by the fireplace that stand out. He plays with two different bands (Easy Pickins and one with no name) and has recorded two CDs, mostly bluegrass/old time/ballad music. The banjo is his primary instrument.

Creating lovely, functional landscapes is where his living is made. He has no other employees and charges \$75 an hour for most jobs, about what a mechanic charges, he says. A "standard" fee for a home would generally run between \$300 and \$500, he says. On big jobs, "the rule of thumb is 10 percent of the budget. The government



pays 7 percent for big jobs, 10 to 20 percent for small jobs.”

His design comprises four elements: context, space, composition and detail. Context is crucial because it helps form the rest of the design and it is often the missing piece when people do their own work, he says. He talks of landscape “choreography,” of “framing views” and avoiding “funneling the vision.” He says, “People grab at the detail without understanding how it fits. When everything else is in place, the detail is obvious.” He tries to avoid “Mr. Potatohead Design,” where elements are simply stuck on.

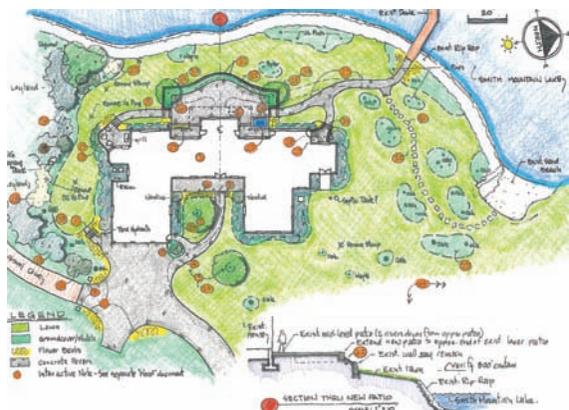
Dan has landscaped multi-million dollar

houses and even “worked with a woman in West Virginia who didn’t have indoor plumbing, but wanted to put a hot tub in” with proper landscaping. He always gets a grin out of that one.

His work is formulated through a sophisticated internet station he’s put together over the years, one that puts proper elements together to form the whole. He adds the artistry.

“It’s like a beaver,” he says of his work. “He’s got those teeth and if he’s not gnawing on something, it’ll kill him.”

www.danchitwood.com





Rock & Roll Diner

The Food Trucks are Coming! >

Executive Summary:

Mobile food vendors are no longer a rare sight in our region; they're showing up at sidewalks, parking lots, festival grounds, breweries, everywhere.

By Tom Field

When someone hollers about something coming, it could be a scary thing—like Paul Revere's famous ride and immanent warning—or it could be exciting—like the shouts that accompany the sound of an ice cream truck rolling through the neighborhood.

When it comes to the food truck business, it's a little of both. Scary. And exciting.

At least that's the sentiment of people who should know best.

The City of Roanoke Economic Development's "How to Start a Food

Truck Business Workshop" (probably the most specific and narrowly defined business session in its history) brought in food truck operators and attracted a crowd of well over one hundred "prospectors." For the entrepreneurial-minded, who attended for the purpose of getting the scoop on what it's going to take to run a food truck business, the message was clear. It's not an easy, sure thing.

"Expect challenges," says Tiffany Silva, the most animated food truck operator on the panel, and co-owner with her husband of Bruno's GastroTruck.

"You need to have a reserve fund," she advises. She tells the story of her truck catching fire. She says you must have backup generators. But at the same time, there's no question you can tell she's having fun.

"I got to go backstage with the Grateful Dead," Silva exclaims, referring to the festival and concert-circuit part of the business.

Other headache-causing challenges include parking issues, permits, and the love-



Tiffany Silva

hate relationship with brick-and-mortar restaurants. Silva prefers an “everything’s fair game” approach. “If a food truck is taking away your [restaurant] business, then step up your game,” she says.

Dave Trinkle, who owns three restaurants, Fork in the Alley, Fork in the City, Fork on the Market, and is about to launch into the mobile business with the appropriate chain-unifying name Fork in the Road, is expectedly, more reserved about the competition issue.

“I have some heartache about trucks parking right outside of restaurants,” Trinkle says. At the same time he agrees with the rest of the panel that grouping competing trucks together at events is a good thing. The panel is unanimous that groups draw more traffic, resulting in more customers. That fact is evident in this very workshop, since four competitors are publically sharing their business tips.

Trinkle also suggests that having a fixed restaurant behind your food truck operation offers distinctive advantages, from food preparation efficiencies to staffing to co-branding the properties.

Juan Urrea, who owns the popular Noke Truck, also elaborates on the identity of your food—clearly making a case that his



Dave Trinkle

business is hardly the old generic vendor on wheels model you may remember from the past. The business is growing up, even as it becomes more culturally chic. Some venues report a “following” of people for certain trucks, even as attendance increases as a direct result of their presence, as in breweries that may not readily offer food at a tasting or open house.

“This gives a chance for everybody to try you,” Urrea says. “Every day it is something different.”

At this gathering, the picture of a food truck business is more akin to a professional caterer setting up at a temporary site than a quick opportunist moving an oversized hot dog cart.

“It’s about \$125,000 to \$150,000 for a truck,” Trinkle says, by the time a vehicle is built or outfitted. He also believes you should have at least two. His first Fork in the Road truck is being fitted with a brick oven and TV monitor menu. “The more trucks the better,” he says.

Rock & Roll Diner food truck operator Charlie Hamill likes the self-directed business model that comes with his operation.

“I’ve been doing my own thing since



Juan Urrea



Charlie Hamill

getting out of school," Hamill says. "With a restaurant you got to be there every day; but with a food truck, you make your own schedule, there's no bar or waitresses... it's really just your food."

"There are enormous risks," Trinkle reiterates.

Each panelist gives examples of uncertainty. Silva says you never really know which day will pay off. She barely broke even on one huge promising festival she worked, due to the weather; and yet another virtually unknown event turned out to be a tremendous boom. All the

panelists said location was probably the single most important contributor to failure or success.

Even the workshop moderators quipped that they hoped the audience wasn't scared off from all the warnings about the difficulties that are sure to come if you decide to venture into this business.

With the growth and visibility of more and more food trucks in just the past year, too many people have visited them or seen the flashy trucks and trailers to be scared away that easily. 

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Randolph Walker

Eric Johns, 18, and his classmates in the Burton Center's Building Trades class helped build, then dismantle a stage for a dance recital at Cave Spring Middle School.

College Unbound >

Executive Summary:

The old Vo-Tech is now Career and Technical Education. Many CTE grads get further education, but most jobs still don't require a college degree.

By Randolph Walker

Does everyone need post-secondary education?

According to "Occupational employment projections to 2020," published in 2012 by C. Brett Lockard and Michael Wolf, economists at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), "occupations that typically need a high school diploma or less will continue to represent more than half of all jobs."

Positions requiring a high school diploma or equivalent will represent 39.7 percent of job openings from 2010-20, while jobs requiring less than high school diploma will represent

29.5 percent. A bachelor's degree or above will be needed for just 20.3 percent of jobs.

This isn't necessarily saying that college doesn't pay. According to the BLS, workers with bachelor's degrees earned \$1,066 per week (median) in 2012, and those with a master's earned \$1,300, while those with high school diplomas earned \$652.

However, many college grads have been unable to find work utilizing their skills, according to a 2013 report by the Center for College Affordability and Productivity. About 48 percent of employed U.S. college graduates are in jobs that the BLS suggests requires less than a four-year college education, while 37 percent are in occupations requiring no more than a high-school diploma.

Decades ago, many students planning blue-collar careers took vo-tech courses. Vo-tech has morphed into Career and Technical Education (CTE), which embraces technology and has broad enrollment.

"The old vo-tech was bricklaying or building trades," says Lorraine Lange, superintendent

of Roanoke County Schools. "Those are still very important skills, but even in automotive, the people that work in car dealerships have to know computers. The technical skills have moved into the vocational. Computers are in everything."

Some 48 percent of all Virginia high school grads are CTE completers, according to Charles Pyle, director of communication for the Virginia Department of Education. Virginia's 16 CTE career clusters include traditional vo-tech concentrations like cosmetology and building trades, but also many college-prep programs like finance, information technology, and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Most CTE completers pursue post-secondary education within one year of graduation, through a four-year institution, community college, or other training program.

Some 15 percent of CTE completers go directly into full-time employment, says Pyle, quoting an estimate from UVA's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. "Keep in mind that this isn't always a 'choice.' For some graduates, going to work directly after graduating from high school is a necessity driven by a family situation or an immediate need for income."

But for others, the choice is deliberate.

Eric Johns is a senior at Glenvar High School. He lives in the Bennett Springs area of Roanoke County. His father taught him carpentry skills. His mother delivers

papers and has a fast-food job. Every other day, Johns attends a Building Trades class at Roanoke County's Burton Center for Arts and Technology.

"We're learning all the basic carpentry, cabinet building, plumbing, electric work, all the basics of building a house from floor to ceiling," he says. "We're getting a great head start, if we go into this career."

The three-year building trades program at Burton covers electrical, plumbing and carpentry, says Burton principal Jason Suhr. In addition, there's a separate masonry class. Almost 60 students, freshmen through seniors, are enrolled. They'll graduate with either a standard or advanced studies diploma.

Johns, who graduates in June, says about half of his classmates plan to look for jobs—including himself. "I'm hoping to find a good construction business to hopefully train with. Maybe take me as like a gofer at first and work my way up in the ranks."

The construction industry suffered after the downturn of 2008. However, "things are starting to turn now and we're concerned there's going to be a [labor] shortage very quickly," says Todd Morgan, president and principal at MB Contractors. "It would be nice if we had a funnel of kids coming to us after they graduated. The next couple years is a good time for kids getting out of school that want to pursue construction trades. The opportunities are going to be there." 



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all photos: Tom Field

A Zombie Battle Van on display in the very center of New Castle's street festival.

Not Just for Zombies >

Executive Summary:

The Preppers Festival in New Castle could evolve into one of our region's most eccentric attractions.

By Tom Field

Some towns have festivals to celebrate their musical heritage, like a blues or jazz scene. Other towns hold annual festivals that rally around a local product, like apples or maple syrup.

In New Castle, Virginia, they marked the third Saturday in April with a street festival dedicated to helping you fight off the inevitable attack from zombies.

Oh, there are other practical and handy things you can pick up too, like canning and cookware, emergency food rations, weapons and survival gear. But it's good to know you can defend yourself against an army of undead brain-eating zombies at the apocalypse—even as you might prepare for the somewhat higher chances

of disasters from floods and earthquakes and hurricanes and tornados and extended power outages and wars and economic collapse.

"Yeah, we prepared for the zombie apocalypse," says festival sponsor and organizer Adam Gentry, who's the chairman of Craig County Business Association, even as you detect the grin behind his words. "But the zombie theme is just used for the draw—it's the popular thing right now, and a good way to get people out here."

The Preppers Festival (an increasingly common term for survivalists and self-sustainability proponents) is the first one for the town, even as it might appear to be a rather strange alliance for a business association. Nevertheless, the chairman scampers around through the busy venue, among a shoulder-to-shoulder crowd, consisting of soccer moms right beside pistol-packing mountain men beside colorful face-painted kiddies beside anarchist demonstrators beside off-the-grid gypsy hippies beside teenagers wearing... anything and everything teenager are apt to wear.

Yes, there's a zombie-fighting van





Mom with children competes in a preppers cookoff that makes "something out of the bare minimum."

parked smack dab in the middle of the festival, but forget the humans versus the undead. This is a mosh pit of individuals who mostly seem to be content with the notion of taking care of themselves.

"We live out here in a remote area," Gentry continues. "This is the place people pass through on their way to somewhere else. Most people drive right past Main Street; and we want them to stop."

Preppers certainly succeeded on that mission.

Although the festival officially runs from 10am to 3pm, Reggie and Dina Bennett of Mountain Shepherd Wilderness Survival School ran out of their handouts by noon. Dina had to shoot back over the mountain to pick up more, as Reggie gave a demonstration to a super attentive crowd by the courthouse.

Monica McCullough, the district emergency planner with the Central Virginia Emergency Preparedness & Response team was among the crowd, scouting out the exhibits; mentally sorting out the legitimate

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suppliers from the fringe players. A vendor with kits that included food, water, first aid, essential gear, is one of the good examples, she pointed out, because "your family should be prepared for weeks, not hours or days," she says, as even the best government agencies can't always get to victims right away during large scale events.

Zombies aside, sure enough, Preppers is not all fun and games. Beneath the surface of what appears to be the same setup as any other street festival across small town America, with its food and music and cookoffs, there is a serious mission here. You see it on the face of a weathered old man holding a semi-automatic rifle. A mother reading the label on a 20-day food supply carton. A young fellow watching a demonstration on how to start a fire.

This festival is the real deal. Not that zombies aren't real. 



Craig County Business Association's Adam Gentry: "a good way to get people out here."

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On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

Executive Summary:
It's a false belief that limited government proponents don't want services for the people; they just don't automatically assume government is the best provider.

And there you have it >

"Hallelujah."

I don't say that often enough. But today I ran across the best headline of the day. And it was a local report, so all the better. The headline reads "[an elected official] says if the [local government] won't pay for [some important cause] then she'll do it on her own." The specific issue for this headline doesn't even matter; but for the record, she's not talking about a school or a fire station or garbage disposal.

In a single sentence the headline inadvertently screams the limited government, libertarian philosophy in about the most direct way possible. The government official is threatening to act as an individual citizen. She believes in a cause that she feels is important enough to fund and execute, so she'll make it happen on her own if the governing body refuses to include it in the budget. It's as if the story is telling us she'll be a heroine.

And there you have it.

We'd have a lot more heroes if private citizens and organizations provided services instead of the automatic assumption that a benevolent society would insist its government cover it all.

There's a nasty little sandbox politics type of fight going around that works like this: If you don't believe taxes should be used to support the wonderful programs we need to progress and create a better community, then you either hate government or don't care about others.

But all our best solutions have resulted from private and entrepreneurial and philanthropic pursuits. The "government" is not a concerned citizen. The "government" is not even a market opportunist. When the government doesn't provide a service and doesn't prevent someone from doing so — good things spring up all over. In most cases, you get some passionate soul who says, "I can't believe this important challenge is not being met; by golly I'm going to do something about it."

And there you have it.

If we didn't expect our taxes to cover every challenge for ourselves and everyone around us, we'd work and save and seek out our destinies a little differently. We would help those in need in stronger and more effective ways; and we'd help ourselves in the grand pursuit of this "better society." We would build better products; we would have far more options and greater ranges for services; and we

continued on Page 50

Keep Trying >

The following commentary is a response to the short lived opening and closing of Compact Cinema in the 16 West culture community center in Roanoke. FRONT magazine covered the opening in the March 2014 edition.

I want to share that, if people visit Compact Cinema's page, one thing they will notice is that Ben Bristoll gave a full report on his venue and why he was closing Compact Cinema at 16 West. Why he started it is what you really need to understand about Ben. He had a movie theater set up in his barn as a kid. He minored in cinema. He also knew all the businesses inside 16 West were having a hard time. Having remembered his love of the documentary venues in upstate New York and how popular they were in Ithaca, he felt he would be helping to bring business and traffic into 16 West.

At the time he began modifying his store selling beautiful teak furniture made of sustainably harvested teak —called Compact Footprint— into a mini theater, he didn't think through the research. He went into action to help others with something he thought would fit well with the events focused venues held at 16 West.

As tenants, we really did not fully understand the blueprints and implications of the expansion of Cork & Crust into a much larger bar. Talks to resolve the schedule with the then manager of C&C led nowhere; so he gave his all, thinking of how slow and sluggish the place had been over December.

Once C&C opened the expanded concept, his Friday night venue was no longer possible with bands playing outside his glass doors. The bands have been successful, and his start up was simply too new to make a great impression. It became obvious that Ben would not be able to break even with the reduction of nights he would be able to count on.

He would have gladly stuck it out in other circumstances or reformatted the venue into a non-profit or film festival venue, but night time use was not really an option.

I closed my physical location of Sacred Beauty Boutique at 16 West for some of the same reasons Ben stopped offering Compact Cinema. However, retail is much harder than I realized in a brick and mortar environment... and sad as it is to see brick and mortar hitting a few walls, unless something changes with online buying, the trend in brick and mortar may continue. Check out Stand With Main Street to learn more.

Thanks [to Dan Smith and Valley Business FRONT for publishing] the first article on Ben, [because] this is important for people to understand about what's happening. Ben was

continued on Page 50



Gayla D'Gaia

Guest Commentary

By Gayla D'Gaia

Executive Summary:
A physical retail tenant explains the difficulties of staying in business.

Field / On Tap

from Page 48

would look in many, many, many more places to find our answers instead of Washington D.C. or city hall.

Until government controls and polices every activity, we still have a chance. Tell a kid he's no longer going to get his free ice cream when the ice cream truck rolls around (because the other kids suddenly decided they're not going to chip in this time and pay for his), and watch what happens. You won't hear that silly little song playing from the truck three more sunsets before you notice somehow, some way, that kid has his ice cream.

Solutions will come; and they'll come a lot faster, with more choices than the biggest ice cream truck in the neighborhood if you have an open and free marketplace.

And there you have it. 

“ ”
You can be
kind to the
other side

— Page 28

Guest Commentary

from Page 49

looking out for others and fulfilling something inside of him that's been there since he was very young. He was not motivated by profit. He's a bit stubborn about certain aspects of design and development, and he's already been offered alternatives for what's next. Thankfully, Roanoke has a great supply of business incubation support for budding entrepreneurs, like Colab Roanoke! And businesses like Noke Truck have greater flexibility. Designing the right format is worth the time it takes; however, a huge marketing budget wouldn't have done him any good with the changes that took place for evening hours at 16 West.

We showed *Hungry For Change* in 2013 [at Compact Cinema] and had 30 people come watch it, a five person panel, and tons of energy and excitement. I think Roanoke is ready for some version of a documentary venue; and perhaps Ben is just getting started with cultivating new options for the local scene...

They say, "Fail Big and Fail Quick" in the startup world, so you see right away if the template works as is or needs to be let go of and modified. Dream your dream and learn to modify as much and as quickly as needed — that is the new mantra. 

***This Just In:** Even after reporting the opening and closing of Compact Cinema in a single month, we now received yet another report of a possible revised iteration of the business at press time. Don't throw away your tiny bags of popcorn yet.*

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Letters

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Thanks for all the work you are doing to help promote area professionals.

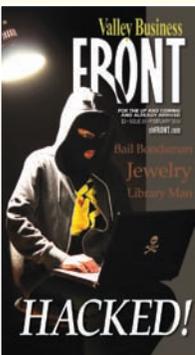
Justin Rossbacher
Lynchburg



Nemesis

Loved the cover on HACKED! Great idea having a villain rather than a hero.

Randolph Walker
Roanoke



Hugs

I just got an amazing new client that will be a lifelong client, all because of your ["Professional Tree Hugger" April 2014

FRONT Executive Profile] article! I feel like you really got the feel of who we're trying to be.

Chris Berquist
Trident Tree Care
Roanoke

Farewells

After reading your latest (wonderful) edition, it occurred to me that perhaps you might publish retirement info as well promotions etc. listed in your back pages.

Here is a short blurb to consider.

Tom Honer has retired from WSET TV as Account Executive after 31 years of service. He served as a representative in the Roanoke Valley. He was active in Ad Fed for many years, served on boards for Regional Chamber, Family Service Agency and the Virginia Museum of Natural History. His career spanned over 50 years, beginning as a radio "jock" in St. Cloud, Minnesota and progressed in sales at TV stations in Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota before coming to Virginia.

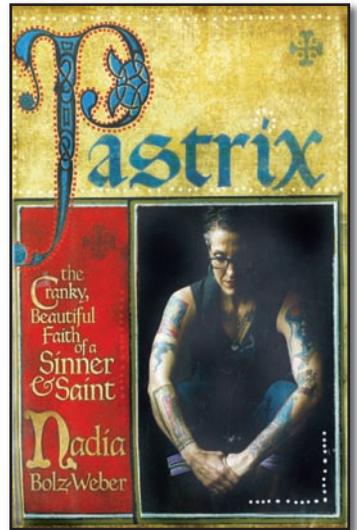
Vicki Honer
Roanoke

Publisher's Note: We haven't posted retirement notices; but instead often feature such notable recognitions that include significant contributions and accomplishments to our local business and community in either our executive profile or frequent senior profile sections. We will reconsider that practice, since indeed we agree some exits are extraordinarily noteworthy when they leave lasting impact that continues to serve.

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

Books @ the FRONT >

Following are book recommendations from our contributors and business people in the Roanoke and New River Valleys who are inveterate readers. Readers are invited to submit short 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 news@vbFRONT.com



Unorthodox Magnet

Nadia Bolz-Weber's *Pastrix* (Jericho; 2013) is Christianity... in its earthiest state. It would be easy to describe this free-spirited, gypsy-souled, tattoo-sporting, deviant delinquent Lutheran minister (yeah, no kidding) as our shock jock with a cross. But that's not exactly true. Shock jocks intend to offend for the purpose of separating people. You either hold your fist up and shout, "Yeah! Tell it like it is! Stick it to the man!" even as you're thinking you can't believe the words you just heard. Or, you brush yourself off, turn away, don't give such a grandstander any more encouragement, and think to yourself... that person certainly crossed the line.

This nasty Nadia (as many fundamentalists are sure to regard her) is indeed going to offend and separate. So did her "messiah." But listen closer—self-edit and beep out the sailor talk if you must—and underneath it all is a doctrine that's old as, well, Calvin (sorry, Nadia, we won't make a big deal of that). Our hippest preacher gal puts grace ahead of everything else. That classic reformed notion that we do nothing to get to God; he (or she) does all the meeting arrangements. "What makes the kingdom of God," Nadia observes, "is not the worthiness or piety or social justice-ness or the hard work of the laborers... none of that matters. It's the fact that the trampy landowner couldn't manage to keep out of the marketplace. He goes back and back, interrupting lives... coming to his people. Grace tapping us on the shoulder."

I'm fairly certain not many preachers ever

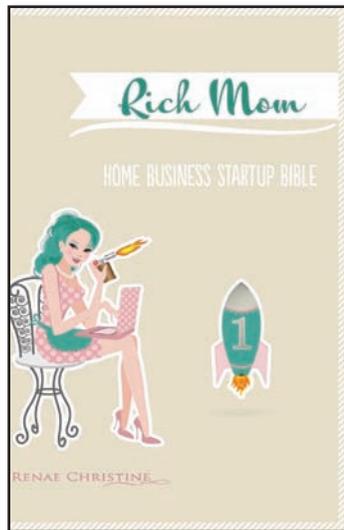
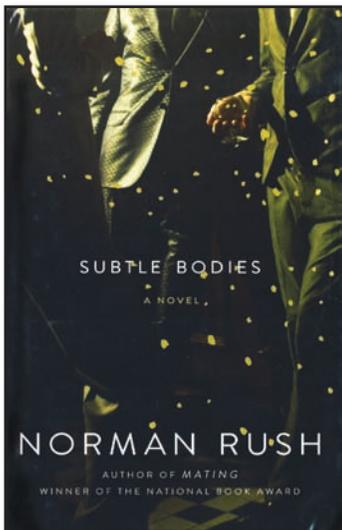
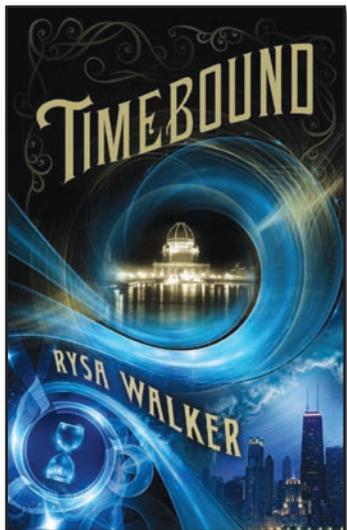
described their god as a trampy landowner. But not many preachers would ever in their wildest dreams be so attractive to the underbelly of American deviants living on the other side of the track.

—Tom Field

Travel Sickness

Timebound (Skyscape; 2014) had a unique storyline, well-researched and extremely thought out plot, and likeable characters that kept me invested in the story. My favorite part was when Kate was escaping a serial killer. It put me on edge, was totally creep-tastic, and obviously researched down to the last detail. The author did a great job of explaining the time period Kate visited, historical details, etc. and managed to keep it interesting.

That being said, time travel confuses the hell out of me and while I managed to sort of stumble along with the Cyrst religion and that plotline, I almost wished it weren't the main focus. The CHRONOS thing was cool and well-explained, but jumping back and forth with different timelines (repeatedly to where you run into your current or future self), the explanation of Katherine and Saul and their history, etc, got confusing. It was interesting and obviously propelled the story forward, but it took a backseat once Kate actually jumped into another time period. I was really confused by Saul/Pru storyline. I mean, it's like I THINK I get it, but I wouldn't be surprised if I totally misunderstood and got lost along the way. To be fair, time travel



in any explanation makes my head hurt. I still devoured the book in less than 24 hours. I'll definitely read the sequel if/when that is published to see what happens to the characters. I'll probably have to take Tylenol and re-read *Timebound* in order to understand what the heck is going on with their time travel, though.

—Liz Long

The Sublime Chill

Subtle Bodies (Knopf; 2013) is reminiscent of that tremendously popular 1983 movie, *The Big Chill*. Old college buddies reunite at a big house for the unexpected funeral of one of their own. There are complexities in relationships. And there is the inevitable contemplations of mortality and meaning of life. Yep. Exactly like *The Big Chill*—only more literary.

If Norman Rush ripped off the plot of that mid 80's American movie (and I'm not suggesting he did), he certainly didn't rip off the *dialogue prévu*. This story has a unique language and mode. Our pals here are less defined by their occupations and state in life, and more exposed by the truth that they are indeed, lost. They've lost a friend in their inner circle; but they've also lost momentum from the time when what they did was lighter, simpler, hopeful—not darker, complicated, uncertain.

Subtle Bodies has subtle differences from *The Big Chill*. Perhaps the easiest way to make the distinction is to say if this novel

were a movie, it would have a completely different soundtrack. A very good read. You're richer for being there.

—Tom Field

Home office

Home Business Startup Bible (Christine; 2013) is for all stay-at-home moms that desire the same pay as their working husbands and the same respect as a brick-and-mortar business and still stay at home with their kids. After creating dozens of successful companies for herself and others, the author has finally published her fail-proof formula that she uses when she helps personal clients each and every time to build their businesses.

Renae Christine is the owner of by Renae Christine, a company that has launched several successful businesses and has helped launch dozens more for others. A journalist, she's known for her popular YouTube videos, which use humor and pragmatism to advise others who want to launch home-based businesses. Christine is also the founder of the Rich Mom Business University and co-hosts the online TV show, "Funny Stuff and Cheese."

—Ginny Grimsley

(**The reviewers:** Tom Field is a creative director and publisher of FRONT; Liz Long is an indie author and avid reader of fantasy and mystery; Ginny Grimsley is print campaign manager and publicist.)



Tom Field



Sprung yet? >

The annual **Spring Home Show & Better Living Expo** was held March 28-30 at the Salem Civic Center to a crowd expected to be more than ever ready for warmer weather after a particularly long winter season of snow and colder temperatures in the region.



Tom Field



Girl power >

Girls Rock Roanoke held its Rocktail Party fundraiser at Hidden Valley Country Club on April 3. The organization is an all volunteer community-based network for empowering girls ages 8–16 using music and performance and education in related business endeavors. The Roanoke group (GRR) is part of a national movement that first started as a Rock-n-Roll Camp for Girls in Portland, Oregon in 2001.



Economically speaking >

Greg Ip, noted economist and editor of *The Economist*, spoke to a large crowd at The Inn at Virginia Tech on April 17. In reference to the U.S. current economic state, Ip said "a lot of the charts I've been showing you are troubling," and added that "the federal government getting its priorities correct is the first step" to improvement. He also said the government "is spending too much on reacting—such as [funding unemployment] and not enough on the proactive, such as job training."

FRONT'N ABOUT



Business exposed >

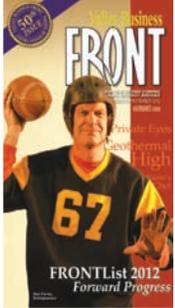
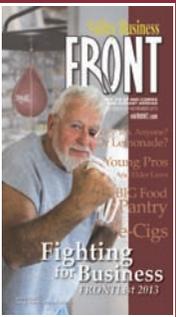
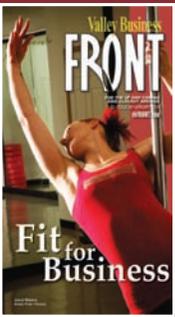
Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce **2014 Business & Technology Expo** was held April 15 at Roanoke Civic Center. About 75 vendors exhibited, and those attending included Chris Robertson of Cox Communications; Joe Miller, E.J. Miller Construction and John Francis, First Citizens Bank; and Cornelius Alston Colbert of American National University demonstrating the Oculus Rift virtual reality device.



Inn after >

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours was held at Holiday Inn Christiansburg, across from New River Valley Mall on April 17, to a mix of mingling and merriment.

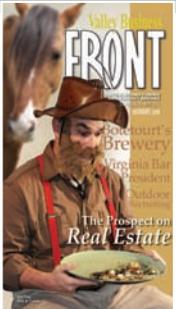
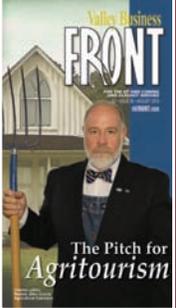
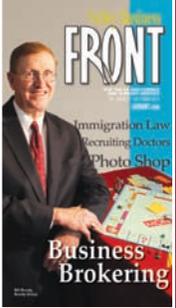
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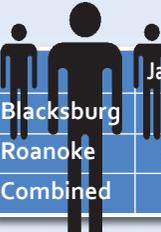


By the Numbers

The holidays and the weather had an effect on the economic indicators in the Roanoke and New River Valleys over the past few months. Unemployment rates were down in January from the previous year, but up from December. Home prices stayed fairly steady, while the number of homes sold was down over the month and the year.

Unemployment/Employment

Unemployment rates in January in the Roanoke and Blacksburg Metropolitan Statistical Areas followed the state and national averages by rising from December, but dropping significantly from the previous January. The month-to-month rise is likely due to the end of holiday hiring in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors. Virginia's unemployment rate rose from 4.8 percent to 5.4 percent over the month, but fell from 6.2 percent in January 2013. The region's January rate represents a 20 percent drop from the previous year, a sharper drop than Virginia's (12.9 percent). Nationally, the unemployment rate fell from 8.5 percent to 7.0 percent, a 17.6 percent drop.



	UNEMPLOYMENT RATES		
	Jan. 2013	Dec. 2013	Jan. 2014
Blacksburg	8.3%	5.0%	5.7%
Roanoke	6.4%	4.9%	5.6%
Combined	7.0%	4.9%	5.6%

The number of people **employed** in the region was down over the month by 2.6 percent, but up over the year by 1.2 percent.

	EMPLOYED		
	Jan. 2013	Dec. 2013	Jan. 2014
	222,573	230,881	224,965

Initial unemployment claims in the region

fell at a faster rate than the state as a whole. For Week 11 (March 7-13) initial claims fell by 77.8 percent, ahead of Virginia's drop of 69.6 percent.

INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

Week 11 2013	Week 11 2014
279	62

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Real Estate

Home prices in February were down slightly from both January and February 2013. Home prices tend to rise during the late spring and summer. The average home price in February was 0.9 percent lower than in January and just 0.4 percent lower than a year ago. Nationally, home prices rose 7.4 percent, from \$220,900 in February 2013 to \$237,300 in February 2013. Home sales followed the national trend by falling from the previous month and year. The National Association of REALTORS attributes the drop to rising home prices and severe winter weather. National sales fell 0.4 percent from January and 7.1 percent from February 2013. Locally, sales fell 6.9 percent over the month and 15.3 percent from a year ago.



	HOME PRICES	
Feb. 2013	Jan. 2014	Feb. 2014
\$176,218	\$177,306	\$175,561

	HOMES SOLD	
Feb. 2013	Jan. 2014	Feb. 2014
268	244	227

Sources: Roanoke Valley Association of REALTORS & National Association of REALTORS

—By Anne Piedmont,
Piedmont Research Associates

Career FRONT

FINANCIAL FRONT



Brookins

Harvey D. Brookins, Jr. has joined Freedom First as chief development officer.

Jason Moretz has joined Bank of Floyd as market manager in Roanoke.

Daniel Bliley has been promoted to director of marketing and market segmentation for Member One Federal Credit Union.

Ginny Riddle has joined UBS Wealth Management as wealth strategy associate.



Denardo

F. Brad Denardo has been elected president and chief executive officer of National Bank by the board of directors.

Jeannie McCoy has joined Atlantic Bay Mortgage as a mortgage banker.

Leah Osborne has

been promoted to retail specialist at HomeTown Bank.

LEGAL FRONT

Michael Preston Gardner has joined Woods Rogers as an Associate in the firm's Labor and Employment and Litigation sections.



Kuhnel

Paul C. Kuhnel, shareholder at the national law firm LeClairRyan, has been recognized as a 2014 Client Service All-Star by the BTI Consulting Group.

Sherman Lea, Roanoke City councilman, has been appointed to the Virginia Parole Board.

WELLNESS FRONT

Dr. Victor Bell has been promoted to chief medical officer, and **Lori Mullen** has been appointed finance director at New Horizons Healthcare.

Loressa Cole, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, has been appointed chief nursing officer for LewisGale Medical Center



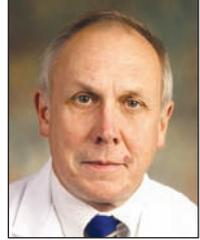
Cole



Vaughan



Abbott



Whatley

and chief nurse executive for LewisGale Regional Health System; **Richard Embrey**, MD, MBA, has been appointed chief medical officer for the market; and **Michael Abbott**, Pharm.D., MBA, BCPS, has been appointed chief operating officer for LewisGale Medical Center.



Roe



Burton



Arner



Halliwill

Steve Arner has been named president

of Carilion Medical Center (Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital and Carilion Roanoke Community Hospital); **Don Halliwill** has been named chief financial officer/executive vice president; **Rob Vaughan** has been named treasurer/senior vice president; **Ralph Whatley**, M.D., has been named chief quality officer; **Kim Roe** has been named vice president for



Sawyers



Davenport

family and community medicine; **John Burton**, M.D., has

been named vice president for medical affairs for Carilion Medical Center; **Chuck Sawyers** has been named vice president of finance; and **Paul Davenport** has been named interim chief nursing officer.

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.

TECH/INDUSTRY FRONT

Mike Sebolt has joined Advanced Logic Industries as senior account manager.

Doug A. Bowman, professor of computer science and director of the Center for



Bowman

Human-Computer Interaction in the



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Career FRONT

College of Engineering at Virginia Tech, has received the 2014 Visualization and Graphics Technical Committee technical achievement award in virtual reality from the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers.



Donnelson

Marcia Donnelson has

joined the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute senior administrative team as director of proposal development.

DEVELOPMENT FRONT

Chuck Lentz has been hired as senior project manager, **Gary Barker** and **Sterling Smith** have been hired as project engineers at MB Contractors.

Don Constable has joined real estate listing service Estateately as a broker.

Tamara Johns and **Glenda Morris** have joined Long & Foster, Realtors as real estate agents.

Frank C. Martin, III has joined Hall Associates Inc. as a commercial real estate agent.



Mayhew

Andy Mayhew has been named business

development manager for Smith Mountain Building Supply.

Christopher Whitely has been promoted to vice president at New River Electrical Corp.

Greg Hurst, PE, has been appointed executive vice president; **Steve Brooks, PE**, has been appointed president of engineering; and **Jack Murphy, AIA** has been appointed vice president of project management at Thompson & Litton.

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NEWS TALK RADIO

RETAIL/SERVICE FRONT

Jim Fischer has been named executive chef at Shula's 347 Grill and director of food and beverage at Sheraton Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center.



Gilmore

Gary Gilmore has been promoted to

vice president of creative services at Access Advertising & Public Relations.

EDUCATION FRONT

Audrey Stone has been named vice president for institutional advancement at Hollins University.

Kevin Cloran has joined HopeTree Family Services HopeTree Academy as education supervisor.

Hesham A. Rakha,



Rakha

professor of civil and environmental engineering in the College of Engineering at Virginia Tech and director of the Center for Sustainable Mobility at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute has been named the Samuel Reynolds Pritchard Professor of Engineering.

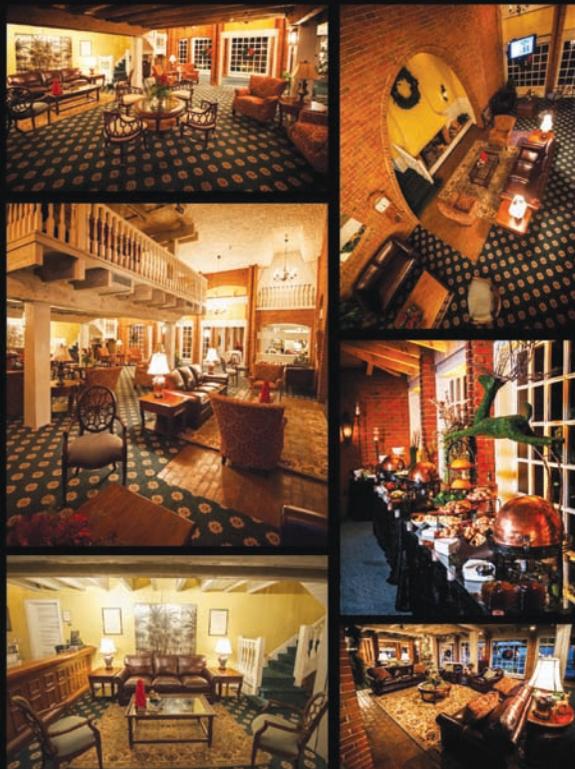


Winkler

James E. Winkler, National Council of Churches (NCC) General Secretary/ President has been named Ferrum College's next Theologian in Residence.

Dr. John Rossmeisl, associate professor of neurology and

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Career FRONT

neurosurgery at the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech, has received the Zoetis Award for Research Excellence at the college's 25th Annual Research Symposium.



Adams

Mason Adams has been named assistant editor for Virginia Tech Magazine.



Smart-Smith

Pamela Smart-Smith has been named assistant director for academics at Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute.



Kiwus

Christopher Kiwus has joined Virginia Tech as associate vice president and chief facilities officer.

OTHER FRONTS

American Red Cross / Roanoke Valley recognized "local heroes" in ten categories who saved lives and served in a humanitarian capacity consistent with the organization's mission: specialist **Eric Bryce McGuire** of Hardy (military); Roanoke City's William Fleming High School student **Kenneth Reynolds** (Good Samaritan); Carilion Franklin Memorial president **Bill Jacobsen** (medical); Roanoke City Police

officer **Paul Wyatt** (law enforcement); Roanoke County Emergency Center retiree **Sharon Reynolds** (911 Dispatch); Roanoke City's Patrick Henry High School ROTC officer **Flossie Lomax** (workplace); the Roanoke City Fire-EMS Swift Water / Salem City Fire-EMS Technical Team (firefighter); Papa D's of Roanoke restaurant owners **Kory and Trena Wolford** (community impact); Roanoke County Police Department officer **Eric Austin** and Roanoke County Fire-EMS firefighter **Barry Brown** (emergency medical responder); and Botetourt County's Lord Botetourt High School teacher **Julie Akers** (education).

Children's Trust Roanoke Valley recognized **Ellen Weinman** with the Guardian Angel award for her career commitment to helping children, along with her work at Mental Health America, Trust House, CASA, and other

activities. The organization also honored nine recipients for its Golden Halo award, including **Shannon Brabham** of Roanoke County Social Services (child protective services); Judy Barger (community volunteer); Dr. **Rita Bishop**, Superintendent, Roanoke City Schools (educator); **Michael and Shirley Bryant** (foster parents); Detective **Eric Woods** (law enforcement); **Brian Holohan**, Commonwealth's Attorney Roanoke County (legal/judicial); **April Bennett**, RN, BSN, SANE-A, SANE-P, Forensic Nurse/Examiner (medical); **Susan Owen**, Counselor, Thriving Families (mental health).

Donna Henderson of Botetourt County has been named Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's 2014 Farm Woman of the Year.

Compiled by Tom Field

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Frequently Asked Questions About Wellness Programs

I know we can't do a comprehensive program right now, so is it still worth doing anything?

Absolutely – even a small activity can plant the seeds of success for your program to grow. Engage in some of the easier things, like providing a health and wellness bulletin board or newsletter. You can also coordinate walking groups, or try a salad bar lunch day. You might want to avoid activities that are perceived as invasive, like health screenings, until you are able to offer them in the context of a larger program that includes education and support for modifying lifestyle habits.

There is so much we could do in our programs. Where do we start?

After you have secured top-level support, researching the health needs of your employees is the best way to start. After you have gathered a lot of information about employee health needs, start planning programs to meet employee interests, because they will be an easier likely gain more participation. Make sure your first programs are fun and interactive, because they will become the first impression of your wellness program. Start with programs that have broad appeal instead of those that might only be of interest to a smaller, more targeted group.

We've tried some health and lifestyle programs but participation is small. What do we do?

Keep trying, and be patient. It will take some time for your program efforts to get going. Remember that ultimately, you are trying to change the workplace culture, and that is a slow process that happens over time. A common approach is to offer incentives for attendance, which can be effective in getting people in the room. All it takes is a few freebies or a light snack. Another approach to growing your program is to invite key people in the organization who are liked, respected and followed within the company.

We have a lot of work to do in the area of nutrition, so how can our employee wellness

initiative avoid getting the reputation of being the food police?

Focus your messaging in programs, policies and practices around adding more good food. Don't make it all about the unhealthy food. In educational sessions, talk about the health issues around fats, added sugars and portion sizes, but focus the skill-building and support on choosing healthy food. Part of the psychology is that as you eat more good food, you will usually start eating less unhealthy food. Adding more good food is a more positive message as well – we already have enough guilt about the food we eat! In the beginning, make your policies about having choices. Later on as your culture shifts toward healthier behaviors, you can strengthen policies to be more restrictive.

Some employees are very suspicious about the motives of the program. How did that come about and what can we do about it?

Suspicion happens with just about every program. It can probably be attributed to human nature, the relationship between management and non-management and perhaps the economic environment. For example, if downsizing is part of the work landscape and you launch a new wellness program, rumors might spread that selection is based on health status. Timing can be significant. Before you do anything, check the current pulse of your organization. The thing that has the biggest positive impact in curtailing suspicion is honest, open communication. Tell the employees not only what you are planning, but also why you are doing it. Discuss the benefits for the company and for the employee. Talk about the high cost of health care but also about the value of employee well-being. Promise that you will ensure that no vendors share individual information – only grouped aggregate data. Addressing suspicion simply and directly will work to your advantage.

Source: Wisconsin Worksite Wellness Resource Kit

Call Becky Pollard with Business Solutions at
540-444-4000
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Foundation for Roanoke Valley awarded the American Red Cross \$50,000

Grant for catastrophes

Foundation for Roanoke Valley announced today it has awarded \$50,000 to the American Red Cross - Roanoke Valley Chapter to support the organization's Hope is Fireproof Campaign. The grant comes from the Foundation's Earl D. and Carrie Leigh Doran Fund, which, among other purposes, supports agencies that help individuals and families confronting catastrophic, life-altering circumstances.

Three more degrees

Pending an expected approval from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Virginia Tech's College of Science will offer three

new interdisciplinary STEM-H Bachelor of Science degrees, with enrollment beginning this fall: Computational Modeling and Data Analytics, Microbiology, and Nanoscience.

Electric rates up or flat?

Appalachian Power Co. received approval for a reported 3.5 percent rate increase from the Virginia State Corporation Commission that provides for a Transmission Rate Adjustment Clause that is effective mid May and 19 months following. The company also reports it is not seeking a base rate increase for 2015 and 2016, despite the possibility of a hike some utility analysts predicted from the multiple bad

storms in 2012 and 2013, specifically the derecho of June 2012. AEP spokesman John Shepelwhich says "about two-thirds of the total customer bill—remain level over the next two years. Rate Adjustment Charges (RACs) will be filed from time to time and move up and down; base rates—the majority of the bill—are filed every two years. Both elements are reviewed and must be approved by the Virginia State Corporation Commission."

Will bus include graffiti?

RIDE Solutions has partnered with Roanoke's Valley Metro and Lynchburg's GLTC and city schools to launch a

new Art by Bus project, converting several city buses into rolling art galleries, which include pieces by local and national artists as well as local students inside each bus.

Paddle out

The James River Float Company in Madison Heights has closed, citing unpredictable rainfall and river access issues.

Media merger

Richmond-based Media General. is merging with Austin, Texas-based LIN Media LLC, a deal valued at \$2.6 billion. The new company will be named Media General and its headquarters will remain

in Richmond, operating 74 stations across 46 markets. The company owns Roanoke's NBC affiliate station WSLs 10.

Green plant

Novozymes in Salem was awarded the Virginia Governor's Award for Excellence. The silver award recognized the Salem plant's requirement that all parts of its business to be ISO 14001 certified; green investments resulting in energy use reduction by 30 percent, water use by 43 percent, waste generation by 64 percent; cost savings of almost \$400,000; and its sponsorship of greenways development in the Roanoke Valley.

Heart work

Carilion Clinic has successfully implanted

the new recently FDA-approved Medtronic CoreValve system into half a dozen patients as of April. The minimally invasive device is reportedly advantageous for patients unable to have open heart surgery as the aortic valve can be delivered through a smaller tube.

Truckin' along

The Volvo truck production plant in Dublin, which currently employs about 2,350 is hiring 200 new employees during second quarter. The company cited 80 percent more sales this year at this time than last year.

Green farming

The Agricultural Lending Division of First Bank & Trust Company has been ranked among the top 100 agricultural banks in the

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nation by the American Bankers Association based on fourth quarter 2013 FDIC reports. Rankings were based on total agricultural loan volumes, and included loans secured by farmland held in domestic offices and loans to finance agricultural production loans to farmers.

Bring it to market

Botetourt Farmers Market at Daleville Town Center is seeking new vendors, sponsors and patrons for the current and upcoming season at the expanding community open air

market, which is now running Saturdays, 8am to 12pm, May through October. Prospective vendors or sponsors may contact Jeff Lunsford at 540-556-3014 or by email at Manager@BotetourtFarmersMarket.org.

If you don't build it they will sue

The City of Martinsville must pay toward development costs of a discontinued power plant in Ohio, according to a federal court ruling in early April. The City's share of the cost of an agreement with American Municipal Power (AMP) along with



Novozymes in Salem awarded the Virginia Governor's Award for Excellence

FRONT Notes



Poster for the feature film *Chesapeake*

AMP's suit against contractor Bechtel Power Corp is \$951,000. The coal-fired generating station project was scrapped in 2009, reportedly due to increased cost estimates. Other municipalities in our region, including Bedford and Danville, are also facing similar suits.

On the waterfront

The funding campaign is in full swing (www.indiegogo.com/projects/chesapeake-the-film/) for the feature film *Chesapeake*, co-produced by Sara Elizabeth Timmins, and scheduled to shoot this summer. The film stars Academy

Award winning actor Keith Carradine, and has been described as "a visual tale about a secluded waterman who finds hope when he rescues a drowning boy and woman from the banks of the Chesapeake Bay."

Bigger money jar, Gramps

In a study by Genworth Financial, the cost of long-term care in Virginia is growing 3.5 percent a year to a median yearly cost for nursing home care at \$84,315. The annual cost of care for assisted-living care facilities grew 5.2 percent to \$47,880. Nationally, nursing homes average \$87,600; and assisted-living facilities average \$42,000. Genworth CEO Thomas McInerney says the number of Americans over 65 is projected to double in the next 40 years.

Towers new food joint

Foster's Grille is expected to open in June at Towers Mall in Roanoke. The restaurant offers

hamburgers, chicken wings, beer, wine and is part of a chain with ten other locations in Virginia.

A mile longer

The Huckleberry Trail in Blacksburg has been extended with a new one-mile section, called the Hokie Bikeway that connects the existing trail just west of Route 460 near the tunnel to the trails near Plantation Drive.

No TV, please

Goodwill stores in our region will no longer accept televisions, due to the rising cost of recycling those kind of components. Donations of other electronics, such as computers and small appliances are still accepted.

Can can

Ardagh Group's new metal can manufacturing facility, still under installation in Roanoke County, has

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been recognized with a Corporate Investment & Community Impact award by Trade & Industry Development magazine for its nearly \$100 million, 100 new job investment in the new Roanoke plant. The annual "CiCi" award showcased 15 companies announcing significant developments that also result in making a big impact on the respective communities where they are located.

Smells nice

Elizabeth Arden has opened an outlet warehouse operation in Salem at the distribution center off Main Street across from Berglund Ford/Mazda. The store will sell popular fragrances and cosmetic products

at about 50 percent off retail prices.

Fit financed

Fitnet, a mobile fitness app developed by a Blacksburg team that includes Bob Summers, Daniel Burgess, and Kevin Hill, has received \$1.4 million in venture financing. The app utilizes computer device cameras to connect fitness workout clients with personal trainers. It uses prerecorded videos of instructors for strength, cardio and yoga routines; and provides real-time feedback.

No more free shots

Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business is offering a course in

responsible alcohol service. The course, taught by hospitality and tourism management assistant professor Kimberly Mathe-Soulek, includes the Training in Intervention Procedures (TIPS) program, and enables students to get certified in safe and ethical alcohol policies, covering the responsible sale, service, and consumption of alcohol.

Nuclear unclear

Babcock & Wilcox is cutting back its Generation mPower subsidiary operations that could affect the 2,400 employees at its Lynchburg location and CAER facility in Bedford. In a filing with the US Dept. of Energy, B&W reports it would

reduce spending in its mPower unit by up to \$15 million beginning in the third quarter of this year.

Lassie, sustained

Children's Trust of Roanoke has received a courthouse facility dog to be used to reduce stress and help provide a calmer environment for youth victims during criminal investigation and prosecution procedures. Currently there are 60 courthouse facility dogs working in 23 states, specifically trained for the purpose of alleviating anxiety of witnesses and victims.

Compiled by Tom Field

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



Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business offers a course in responsible alcohol service.

CONTRIBUTORS

Gayla D'Gaia is the founder of The Sacred Beauty Project and collaborator in a movement to promote holistic health, business development and ecology, arts, culture, and community-based lifestyle creation and design. She hopes to inspire individuals and groups through her home based "visioning studio" to help people step into careers they really want. [Gayla@SacredBeautyBoutique.com]

Tom Field is a creative director, marketing executive and owner of Berryfield, Inc. in Salem, and owner of Valley Business FRONT magazine. He has written and produced programs and materials for local and international organizations for more than 30 years. [tfield@berryfield.com]

Kathleen Harvey Harshberger is a graduate of Radford University and the Protocol School of Washington. She conducts seminars in business etiquette, international business protocol, and dining skills She has an

international clientele in business, government, and higher education. She is a certified Protocol Officer. [harshbergr@aol.com]

Becky Hepler lives and works as a high school librarian in Newport. She has been writing for more than 30 years. [rbmteagu@pemtel.net]

Michael Miller has worked with intellectual properties and technology innovation. His consulting company is Kire Technology. With more than 25 years as an inventor and technology consultant, working with Fortune 500 companies and startups, he screens businesses for the World's Best Technology Showcase and mentors tech startups through Development Capital Networks and the National Science Foundation. [mbmiller2@gmail.com]

Anne Piedmont is the president of Piedmont Research Associates, a marketing communications firm she has started after working for the Roanoke Regional Partnership

as director of research for more than 18 years. She's also worked in public relations and journalism. She loves numbers and wants them to make sense for you. [annepied@yahoo.com]

Anne Sampson is a photographer and writer who has been active in local arts and events for 15 years. Her work highlights the sights and people of the Roanoke Valley. She specializes in fresh looks at familiar subjects. [sampsona7@gmail.com]

Dan Smith is the former and inaugural editor of FRONT magazine and an award-winning veteran journalist, now freelancing and working on his novel. [pampadansmith@gmail.com]

Samantha Steidle is owner of the Business Lounge in Roanoke. She has an MBA from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and has worked in TV advertising, marketing, education and small business counseling. [samanthasteidle@gmail.com]

Kathy Surace is FRONT Business Dress columnist, an image consultant and owner of Peacock Image in Roanoke. She was a fashion consultant for a major clothing chain for a number of years. [kssurace@aol.com]

Nicholas Vaassen is a graphic designer with 13 years experience, specializing in publications. His design projects include FRONT, lifestyle, real estate, municipal, classified sales and cultural organization magazines in Roanoke and southwestern Virginia markets. [nvaassen@berryfield.com]

Randolph Walker graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a journalism degree in 1983. He has been a daily newspaper reporter in Roanoke and an advertising copywriter for the Edmonds Packett Group. He is now a freelance writer as well as a performing musician and guitar teacher. [rwalker25@cox.net]



This doesn't mean you should fill the pantry with truffles

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We're concerned there's going to be a labor shortage... it would be nice if we had a funnel of kids coming to us after they graduated

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