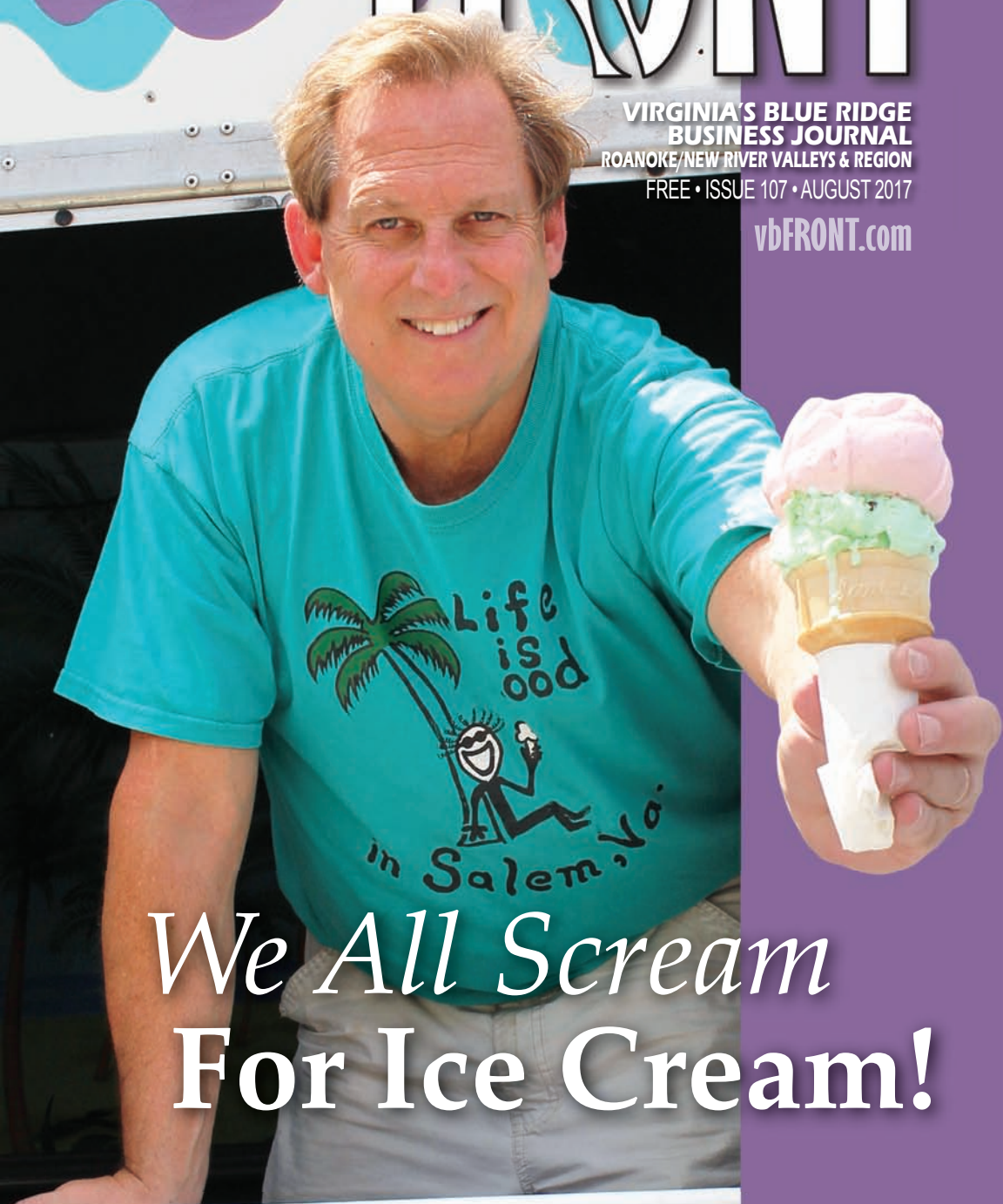


Valley Business

FRONT

VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE
BUSINESS JOURNAL
ROANOKE/NEW RIVER VALLEYS & REGION
FREE • ISSUE 107 • AUGUST 2017

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*We All Scream
For Ice Cream!*

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Salem Ice Cream Parlor

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So, let me throw all these pieces of evidence on the table. What we have here is an ice cream cone, a large storage container, a racing helmet, a string of software code, and a donut. May I approach the bench? What the evidence would indicate, your honor, is that we have too many mixed items to recreate what really happened. It's too confusing to describe one story. Nothing seems to go together.

Yes, we have multiple testimonies; but, in fact, there is one story. It's a case of making business happen. Regardless of the product, the service, the industry, the market. Diversity in business is what makes our business journal an anticipated publication and why we like doing what we do.

Throw in some abstracts and arguments and objections on everything from copyrights to interruptions to gossip to brick-and-mortar shopping to the Emerald Isle, and you have quite the fascinating transcription.

It's all a judgment call. The publication in your hands right now rests with you. Rule in favor, against, acquit, or confirm. We're just glad you showed up and didn't skip bail.



Tom Field

“ I challenge you right now to turn off all your notifications — Page 26

1983 . . . 2017 . . . tomorrow



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“Copyright doesn't protect ideas — Page 27



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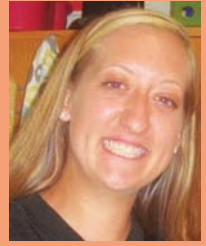
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AUGUST



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Caitlyn Scaggs



Kathy Surace

Editorial Advisory Board

Valley Business FRONT has organized an Editorial Advisory Board in order to help direct coverage. FRONT selected a group of 14 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. "They 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.

CONTRIBUTORS



Dan Dowdy



Tom Field



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Christine Liana



Nicholas Vaassen

Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 52.

2017 Members

Nancy Agee Carilion (Wellness)
Laura Bradford Claire V (Retail)
Nicholas C. Conte Carilion (Legal)
Warner Dalhouse Retired (Seniors)
John Garland Garland Properties (Development)
Nancy Gray Hollins University (Education)
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Nancy May LewisGale Regional Health System (Wellness)
Stuart Mease Virginia Tech (Education)
Mary Miller ACI (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.

“”

Plan your interruptions

— Page 26

“”

I'll be you \$1000 that you cannot bring me municipal or bottled water that will test purer than the water I catch off my home's roof

— Page 24

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It's Ice Cream.

But It's Still Business.

"Come on now, Anna. Tell the girl which one you want," the tall man in khakis says as the line behind him bottlenecks and pushes impatiently closer to him at the ice cream shop.

"But daddy," the little girl says, fidgeting and peering into the glass freezer with all its colored bins. "I just can't make up my mind!"

The choices this adorable customer has at the ice cream shop in Salem far exceed the number of ice cream shops (or parlors, as some refer to them) we have all throughout Virginia's Blue Ridge region. There aren't as many ice cream shops in this part of the state as you might think.

That could be surprising if you're inclined to compare this business to others in the discretionary treats sector, like doughnut and coffee shops. But it's no surprise to Joe McNamara.

Let's Get Ice Cream >

Executive Summary:
Despite their popularity, there is only a small handful of independently owned and operated ice cream shops in Virginia's Blue Ridge; of course that didn't stop us from visiting.

By Tom Field

Double Dip

"It's very hard to be in this business," says the owner/operator of two of the Roanoke-Salem area's most popular independent ice cream shops. Joseph "Joe" McNamara (who also serves as Windsor Hills District representative on the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors) owns the long time running Salem Ice Cream Parlor and Katie's Ice Cream and Chocolates. The business is difficult, he says, due to the "strict financial management" that is required — through the slower times, in particular.

It's true that so many ice cream shops and businesses related to treats and desserts have "come and gone" in various neighborhoods and commercial districts over the years. And yet it's not true that ice cream is a trendy enterprise, anymore than coffee or doughnuts. Frozen



Joey mans counter at Salem Ice Cream Parlor

yogurt and custard? Perhaps. But never ice cream.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, ice cream sales overall didn't fluctuate more than five percent in the past decade (June 2007–June 2017); but kept pace with the population. And reports from the US Department of Agriculture and other food, restaurant and retail trade organizations all confirm that ice cream is as popular as ever. We're consuming the product in all its forms from the original dairy versions to exotic and specialized for dietary preferences or restrictions (soy, almond, coconut, gluten-free, substitutions for the lactose intolerant).



There's no other business in the world where you get up every day and make people happy —*Joe McNamara*

Kai Feng of Blacksburg enjoys a sundae with his father at Salem Ice Cream Parlor





Finishing touches make all the difference as Salem Ice Cream Parlor's Elijah Hairston pours shake and Lauren Field makes banana split



"It's the truth," say patrons in Salem



Sophie Griffin scoops at Katie's



Although it may be a challenge to successfully run an ice cream business and keep it going, without a fault, every owner and operator we talked to agreed that it is "the" business where everyone is happy.

"There's no other business in the world where you get up every day and make people happy," says McNamara. (It's almost as if he never even said it was "hard" earlier.) "We're in the business of selling happiness," he says, referring to the family enterprise and dozen part time employees. (Joe's wife, Cheryl, along with three of their children—sons Joey and Corey, and daughter Colleen—work at the business.) The truck, Joe says, referring to the Salem store's large, brightly colored box truck,

Okay if you insist, I'll share

Nothing says community quite like Salem Ice Cream Parlor's bulletin board of satisfied patrons





The boys and their truck: Joe, Joey and Corey McNamara

especially, makes people happy when it pulls up. "Everybody likes the ice cream truck."

"We get to meet so many wonderful people," McNamara says—perhaps the best part of the business.

Rolling Along

Champloo Desserts (also in Salem) is new to the ice cream scene, tantalizing its growing customer base with an exotic flair. The Asian-inspired rolled ice cream treat boutique opened adjacent from Roanoke College in November of 2016 (not exactly an expected entrance for what is usually thought of as a summer indulgence). Owners Nguyen

Customers Morgan Jackson and Antavia Stevens get their fix at Champloo



"Khanh" Ha and Elmer Nguyen are young and ambitious. They speak of the business in energetic fashion and in constant regard as a mission. Along with a third partner, Hong Bui, the operators talk more about their purpose than they do about the eye-catching desserts they fabricate on the spot, like performance art.

"We want to bring desserts from all around the world to Roanoke," says Kahn. "The word 'champloo' means mixture" and that's an adept description, he says. And so far, it's catching on. "We have new customers all the time," Kahn says, "but also a high percentage of repeat customers."

Elmer concurs. "We wanted to do something new," he says. "Not just pizza and hot dogs. Since we began, we have had an impressive turnout."

Kahn and Elmer see the potential and the region as "booming" and even cite the new local Amtrak station scheduled for Roanoke's downtown opening in October as a good sign. Like sprinkles on ice cream, they like to use words like "pioneering" and "inspiring" when they illustrate the objectives at their boutique — an interesting perspective on one of America's oldest and traditional pleasures.

Kiddie Cone

"The kids growing up here," begins Anna Robertson as she describes Pop's Ice Cream & Soda Bar in the Grandin Village of Roanoke... "I've watched them have first dates here," she



We want to bring desserts from all around the world to Roanoke

— Kahn Ha

Champloo's Elmer Nguyen and Khanh Ha (Left). Preparation takes a bit longer at Champloo than the conventional scooper (Right).





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Anna Robertson of Pop's Ice Cream & Soda Bar



One of the rarest sightings at Pop's: an available table

reminisces on the verge of getting downright emotional. "I've seen them for years, from when they were in school" (both Virginia Heights elementary and Patrick Henry High School are planted in the neighborhood) and now some of them bring their own little ones in, she says, as Pop's Ice Cream moves into serving next generational levels in its eleventh year of operation.

Pop's is a classic in Grandin Village; but people from all over make a special trip to visit, even as the "locals" claim it as their own, in almost protective-like fashion, eyeing visitors suspiciously.

There is little doubt Anna loves her small business here,

“ ”

Pop's is one of those ice cream shops that would serve well as a model for a Norman Rockwell painting.

The Turner family likes Pop's Ice Cream





Blue Cow's Carolyn Kiser

“ ”

The community has embraced us, and the response has been amazing

—Carolyn Kiser

Menu at Blue Cow has a way of prompting samples

despite the fact that it has changed hardly at all in more than a decade. Pop's is one of those ice cream shops that would serve well as a model for a Norman Rockwell painting or illustration. Smiles abound from every booth and countertop, as regulars and not-so-regulars order their banana splits, sundaes, shakes, and dips.

Plain Vanilla, Not So Much

Pop's, Katies, and Salem Ice Cream Parlor are as conventional and traditional as can be. The ice cream gramps gets here isn't much different than what he got as a kid. Customers here are quite loyal and are perfectly satisfied with not changing something that has worked just fine for them for decades.



Ice Cream Near Me?

INDEPENDENT

Blue Cow Ice Cream

1115 Piedmont Street SE / Roanoke

Bratcher's Ice Cream Parlor

3436 Orange Avenue / Roanoke

Champloo Desserts

9 S College Avenue / Salem

Homestead Creamery

7254 Booker T Washington Hwy / Wirtz

Katie's Ice Cream & Chocolates

3530 Electric Rd / Promenade Park / Roanoke

Pop's Ice Cream & Soda Bar

1916 Memorial Avenue / Roanoke

Salem Ice Cream Parlor

(and Joe's Deli)

404 W Main Street / Salem

Sweet Things Ice Cream Shoppe

106 W Washington Street / Lexington

FRANCHISE

Ben & Jerry's

Valley View Mall / Roanoke

New River Valley Mall / Christiansburg

Bruster's

6498 Williamson Road / Roanoke

Cold Stone Creamery

2445 N Franklin Street / Christiansburg

308 Tyler Avenue / Radford

Dairy Queen

14 Wildwood Road / Salem

3226 Brandon Avenue / Roanoke

2350 Orange Avenue / Roanoke

995 Franklin Street / Rocky Mount

8021 Timberlake Road / Lynchburg

520 Scruggs Road / Moneta - SML

1502 Longwood Avenue / Bedford

950 N Franklin Street / Christiansburg

1304 W Gretna Road / Gretna

2909 Riverside Drive / Danville

4980 S Amherst Hwy / Madison Heights

5149 State Park Road / Dublin

8006 S Scenic Hwy / Bland

2113 Confederate Blvd / Appomattox

1755 Virginia Avenue / Harrisonburg

Kline's Dairy Bar

906 Greenville Avenue / Staunton

1235 W Main Street / Waynesboro

2425 S Main Street / Harrisonburg

58 E Wolfe Street / Harrisonburg

Richee Freeze

4405 Williamson Road / Roanoke

Sweet Frog

1339 Towne Square Blvd / Roanoke

But where Champloo offers a new presentation on an old idea, Blue Cow keeps the traditional packaging, but adds a whopping new array of ingredients, flavorings, and combined recipes. The first clue that something is a little different here is when you hear Carolyn Kiser mention the "chef."

Okay, so you can find vanilla on the menu, but that poor fallback has to feel a bit insecure with options like honey lavender, toasted sunflower, chocolate cayenne, and blue cow patty surrounding it in enticing colored lettering.

Blue Cow Ice Cream Co.—which just opened on Memorial Day 2017 at the foot of Roanoke's Mill Mountain — makes its own ice cream (a small batch creamery). Owners Jason



Blue Cow staff Kunika Tiwavi, Delaney Waller and Mason Reyer train on waffle cone preparation

and Carolyn Kiser say they prefer having "complete control" over the business where they don't even have to rely on a distributor.

"Everyone likes it," says Carolyn, referring to the initial response of the new ice cream shop (that opened from a previous one that closed in the same location). "The community has embraced us, and the response has been amazing."

Jason is responsible for the operations and the recipes, while Carolyn primarily manages the marketing. In addition to the organic recipe combinations that you can't find elsewhere, Carolyn says they enjoy collaborating with other local businesses, from independent coffee shops and restaurants to the arrival and explosion of all the new breweries to formulate Blue Cow creations.


Who knows what might pop up on the menu next?

GPS Meltdown

Pick an app... Google, Yelp, any other map-based search service. Look for your local and independently operated ice cream shop, and you'll find limited options in Virginia's Blue Ridge. You can drive up to a franchise like Dairy Queen or Bruster's or settle for a fast food or convenience store type of soft serve. And there are always a few restaurants that have ice cream as an add on. If you're extraordinarily lucky, you might run up on an old Main Street drugstore where you can order a homemade milkshake at the soda fountain counter. But a store that is independent and exclusively operated for ice cream? Not so much.

Unless we're misreading the market, there is no prognostication of an ice cream shop explosion like the craft breweries in this region. The good news is, customers tell us the businesses we do have here, are the best.

Or as we overheard from a patron at Joe McNamara's shop in Salem after the sun had already went to bed on a hot Friday evening in July:

"It's like I get a scoop of happiness every time I come here." 

**New Ice Cream Shop
opening spotted at Oak
Grove in Roanoke**





Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

Executive Summary:

Online shopping for fashion might be convenient, but misses the mark on some significant advantages to visiting your local businesses.

Shopping made easy >

Boy, things have really changed. Time was, when a man needed a new shirt or trousers he went to his local menswear store and selected garments off the rack or got measured to have pieces made to his specifications, all with advice from a clothier.

In an effort to make shopping easier, our trusty fashion industry has spawned companies, which, for a subscription fee, will ship a box of selected fashions to a shopper based on his fashion profile. Every month (or on demand) a box of clothing shows up and the recipient can accept them and pay for them – or send them back.

Additionally, he can subscribe to receive grooming supplies like razors or fragrances, accessories like socks, pocket squares or ties, or even stock up monthly on beer, whiskey or coffee.


For some, this is a lifesaver – but what do we lose by doing subscription wardrobe shopping from home?

Here's a quick list that comes to mind:

- We're surrendering our chance to develop our unique style through trial and error.
- We're missing out on the widest range of fashion choices in history. Why let a company choose for us?
- We'll hurt our local businesses and governments by reducing traffic in their storefront and therefore sales taxes collected locally.
- We're causing storefronts to close and unemployment figures to rise.
- We'll contribute to the over-consumption of products in the US and the resulting environmental overload.

Certainly subscription services have cropped up to fill a perceived need. Some men (and women) lack the time, skill and interest to shop for their wardrobe and find shopping to be confusing and exhausting. No wonder – lately fashion trends change several times throughout the season.

Elizabeth Cline, author of "Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion," asserts that fashion is "a powerful, trillion-dollar global industry that has too much influence over our pocketbooks, self-image, and storage spaces. It behaves with embarrassingly little regard for the environment or human rights. It changes the rules of what we're supposed to wear constantly, and we seem to have lost our sense of self along with changing trends."

It's likely that subscription service shoppers will end up with a lot of garments they don't love and seldom wear. It seems smarter to personally select an interchangeable wardrobe you love – and then stop shopping. 

Comments? Email kssurace@aol.com

Socializing in Ireland >

The Sixteenth Annual Protocol Officers Association's Forum was held in July in Dublin, Ireland, the country of my birth.

Pamela Eyring, President of The Protocol School of Washington had the following advice:

If you are making a trip to Ireland, here are some specific dining tips that will make you eat—and drink—like a local.


Formal Meals: Dining etiquette in Ireland resembles that of the British. Formal meals often begin with soup or a starter dish. Meat dishes are usually served to each individual at the table, but vegetables are provided on one serving platter for the entire table, family style.

Business Dinners or Lunch: In Ireland, business lunches are preferred to dinners. Dinners tend to be more social, and spouses/partners are often included. Dining in restaurants is also a popular way of socializing with business associates.

A wee bit of small talk: If you're invited to a business dinner, remember that the Irish will want to get to know you before doing business with you, and initial meetings may begin with a period of small talk. If you are invited to dinner by an Irish counterpart, conversation will probably be more personal than corporate. So relax, break some bread and enjoy the company of your new Irish colleagues. (Also, restaurant food servers tend to be friendly, and chatting with them throughout a meal is common and appropriate.)

Pub crawl: If you are invited for drinks, remember that pubs are the center of Irish social life, and many even allow for socializing in the evening with children in tow. Be aware that, while the Irish attitude toward drinking is more tolerant than in some other countries, drunk driving is illegal here as in most parts of the world.

To Your Health: Toasting is common in Irish pubs and at dinner. The host usually initiates the first toast, and it is considered polite to propose a toast in return. A common Irish toast is sláinte, pronounced "SLAWN-cha"; roughly translated, "to your health." And if the party goes on a bit, remember that it's considered good form to take turns buying a round of drinks for everyone in the party.

Pamela's advice is spot on, and I might add the following: The Irish love Americans, and they are fascinated by our country. They also love good conversation, a good story, poems, and song. So, as the party continues, don't be shy about showing your talent. You'll be welcomed a hundred thousand times! Better steer clear of politics, though! 



Etiquette & Protocol

By Kathleen Harvey
Harshberger

Executive Summary:
Paying a wee bit of extra attention while in Ireland is more than just blarney.



Shawn Crawford with catchment control unit

Answers from the sky >

Executive Summary:

Its story published in FRONT back in 2008, needs to be told again—as Rainwater Management Solutions original business trickle begins to pour.

By Michael Abraham

Have you ever seen a newspaper photo where victims of a municipal water poisoning are standing in line to receive bottled water, and it's RAINING? Problems like this have driven David Crawford to new variations and technologies of an age-old solution: capturing rainwater from roofs and using it for drinking, bathing, cleaning, and irrigation.

David is president of Rainwater Management Solutions in Salem and is also current president of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association. His son Shawn is national sales manager. After 17 years in business, their company has switched from primarily

residential to primarily commercial systems, and is a national leader in the burgeoning field of rainwater catchment, a business that in typical entrepreneurial style began on a whim in David's garage. David was working in the supply industry to health care facilities, and got two free soap barrels he washed and then equipped with spigots to use them as rain barrels. "I was shocked at the orders I got!

"Big industrial laundries in hospitals typically use fifteen to twenty pounds of linens per patient per day. They use five gallons of water per pound to wash them. If a laundry is doing 40,000,000 pounds of linen a year, that's 200,000,000 gallons of water." David was burned out in his occupation and saw an opportunity to do something more fun and rewarding. "I saw something that was environmentally friendly but also had that fun factor. I call it 'Doing well by doing good.'"

He was able to source as many barrels as he wanted for free. His twenty or so prototypes eventually led to a workable rain-barrel. He strapped on wooden slats to make it look like a wooden rain-barrel and he was in business, selling his product for \$199 with maybe \$5 in



David and Shawn Crawford with industrial catchment unit

parts. An architect specified 29 of them for a job, and David convinced him to specify a single, larger barrel.

"For every 1000 sq-ft of roof, with 1-inch of rain, this will yield 620 gallons of water," he said. "A 55-gallon barrel will fill up right away."

Most customers were using them to water the garden. Now RMS configures and installs systems for large industrial buildings. They found a company in Germany that marketed filters. And they began receiving orders to equip massive buildings, 100,000 sq-ft and more.

Shawn said, "In order for our systems to work, they needed to be low maintenance, efficient, and simple. We learned that with proper filtering into the tank, they could be used for years without cleaning. This knowledge separated us from anybody else in the industry."

The Crawfords are messianic in their efforts to capture rainwater. Water falling on roofs, if channeled to parking lots and the ground picks up contaminants that pollute the streams. It's non point-source pollution, but it's a major contributor to contaminated streams and lakes. "When we started," David said, "we were looking merely at water conservation." Now it's about cost savings as well. "The Gates Foundation building has a 1,000,000 gallon system buried under the building. They use the water to flush toilets and feed the cooling the towers."

There are three "qualities" of water: rainwater, grey water, and black water. Grey water is from showers, laundries, and such. Black water is kitchen waste and toilet waste.

"There is an aging infrastructure in the US," Shawn noted. RMS's systems reduce the burden of wastewater management by the

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Shawn Crawford with catchment barrel at RMS facility in Salem

municipalities. And less pollution reaches the streams. So the municipalities are encouraging these systems. "It's scary to think about the quality of water coming out of your tap. Now with fracking chemicals and many others in the ground, lots of municipal water is contaminated."

David concurred, "I'll bet you \$1000 that you cannot bring me municipal or bottled water that will test purer than the water I catch off my home's roof."

The recent tragedy in Flint, Michigan, has made the nation more aware of the perils of contaminated water. "Twenty-percent of the wells in America are contaminated worse than (the water in) Flint," David claimed. "Perhaps five-percent of the municipal water systems are as contaminated as Flint."

Shawn said, "There are sewage treatment plants upstream of municipal water intake pipes on rivers throughout the country. It's typical that our systems provide cleaner, purer water than almost all municipal systems. We start with a higher quality of water than what comes out of the rivers."

"Everybody is downstream of somebody,"

David claimed. "except the rainwater."

Imagine the plight of the economic development officials where spills happen, trying to encourage new business development in an area where nobody can use the water! Protection of our water is good for business.


David said, "People at UC (University of California) Berkeley are telling me now that companies are looking to move to the East (Coast) to get out of California because of the water issues. Here in Roanoke, the city has a permit that any time it rains more than 1-inch in an hour, it will overwhelm their stormwater management system and they can legally allow dumping of raw sewage into the Roanoke River. That flows right to Smith Mountain Lake."

Bottom line: Once installed, their systems require little maintenance. Customers don't have to pay for municipal water. Less groundwater becomes polluted. Piping and fixtures last longer and require less cleaning because rainwater is naturally softer and purer. Less energy is consumed because water is consumed at the source rather than being pumped there. And a thirsty world has more good water to drink. What's not to like?

Shawn said, "Our potential is huge."

The company has undertaken a significant capital funding plan to raise money for expansion, as their current sales will not provide the funding necessary to adequately address the opportunities they now envision. "We are flooded with calls. We need more people," David claimed.

Shawn said, "If there's anything that keeps us awake at night, it's not being able to keep up and take advantage of the opportunities in front of us. Our industry is exploding right now."

David echoed, "We are passionate about leaving a better world for our kids and grandkids. We've got to preserve our water resources. We never want to give up our mission of doing well by doing the right thing. And having fun, every day." 



David Crawford with home catchment barrel

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Do you have a minute? >

One of the most frequent complaints I hear from leaders is that they can't get enough work done each day due to interruptions. Although many leaders realize they are losing productivity, most have no idea how much interruptions are costing them.

According to research at the University of California Irvine, the typical office worker is interrupted or switches tasks on average every three minutes, five seconds. Other studies have shown that interruptions can lead to higher levels of stress, greater fatigue, and even physical ailments such as headaches and backaches. To make matters worse, on average it takes over 20 minutes to get back into the "flow" of the work. Why? Because immediately after an interruption, we tend to check other things such as email and other distractions.

Here are three simple techniques to limit interruptions and greatly improve your productivity:

- Shut off notifications. With the proliferation of smart phones, social media, and other technology that connects us, you need to disconnect. Incoming email, Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, instant messaging, and news alerts provide a barrage of distractions. You don't think you can do that because it's too important for others to reach you? Think again. I've lost count of the number of clients I've convinced to shut off their notifications, and not one has ever regretted it. I challenge you right now to turn off all your notifications.
- Schedule 1-2 hours a day of uninterrupted work time. Put it in your calendar, then do whatever it takes to not be disturbed (shut your door, close your email, hang a 'do not disturb' sign, shut off your cell phone, etc.). If you believe that you cannot be unreachable for only an hour, then you probably have some additional challenges with delegation, people development or process effectiveness.
- Plan your interruptions. With those who "need" to interrupt you multiple times a day, schedule a couple 5-10 minute meetings instead. Between these meetings, when something arises that either of you needs to discuss, add it to an agenda list for the next meeting. By doing this, both of you improve your productivity.

Finally, are there certain individuals, or certain reasons most commonly causing your interruptions? This might indicate a training or process issue that needs to be resolved. 

Send your questions or comments to Mike@OpXSolutionsllc.com

Business Operations

By Mike Leigh

Executive Summary:
Your productivity level will rise when you keep the interruptions at bay.

In his own words >

Until that day, I'd never seen our client without a smile on his face and a spring in his step. But when he came to our office door, he was distraught. He walked mechanically into our conference room and dropped two books onto the conference table. I recognized one of them. It was our client's best-selling sales method book, called "The Ultimate Sales System."

"That's your book," I said. "We registered your copyright in that book last year."

"Yes," he said. "Now, take a look at this other book, which is by a guy who took my week-long seminar last year. The seminar covers the same material as my book."

The title of the other book was "The Supreme Sales Technique." I scanned its table of contents and then flipped from chapter to chapter. Within a couple of minutes it was clear that the sales technique described in "The Supreme Sales Technique" was identical in every respect to the sales system that our client had outlined in his book.

"He has completely ripped me off," our client said. "Every idea that I put into my book is in here too. Look, the self-improvement plan that he discusses in his chapter six is the same as the strategy that I talk about in part four of my book. And do you see his section on 'conscious training?' That's the same as my 'deliberate practice' concept."

He kept pointing out similarities as we flipped back and forth from book to book. I had to agree that the concepts in the other book were essentially identical to those in our client's book, although the other book gave them different names and described them in a different order.

"You registered the copyright in my book, right?" said our client. "Well, now I want to sue this guy for copyright infringement."

"Did he copy any of your text word-for-word?" I asked.

"No," he said. "He just copied the ideas."

"So when he describes those ideas, is any of his language similar to yours?" I asked. "Or is it all his own wording?"

"It's his own original wording," he said. "But these are all clearly my ideas, and since we know that he took the seminar, it's obvious that he copied the ideas from me."

"I agree, it's clear that he copied your ideas," I said. "However, you can't sue him for copyright infringement. Copyright doesn't protect ideas."



Shark Patrol

By Keith Finch

Executive Summary:
Even if you've spent a lot of time and money developing ideas or researching facts, those ideas and facts are not protected by copyright. Instead, copyright only protects the manner in which you creatively express those ideas and facts.



Copyright protects creative expression. It doesn't protect facts or ideas.

"It doesn't?" he said.

"No," I said. "Copyright protects creative expression. It doesn't protect facts or ideas. Instead, it protects the creative way that you express those facts or ideas."

"But my ideas are creative!" he said.

"Yes, you created the ideas, and they indeed are creative," I said. "But copyright only protects the words that you used in your book to describe those ideas. If it were otherwise, then the first person to write about a given idea would be able to prevent everyone else from writing about it. That would stifle freedom of expression."

"But what about all the effort that I put into developing those ideas?" he said. "Shouldn't that give me some protection?"

"If it's not protected by copyright, then the amount of effort you put into it doesn't make it protectable," I said.

WORKPLACE wisdom

By Christine Liana



Q I'm dedicated to my work and get along well with people. But lately I've had to work with a colleague who spreads gossip about others and about our company. We work well together, but his gossiping is creating conflict in our department. How can I politely shut him down?

A Your forked-tongue friend may use gossip as a "one-up" mentality to compensate for his insecurity. Whatever the reason, hold him accountable. Gossip is malicious and slanderous. It creates misunderstandings and lies. The more it's repeated, the more it's distorted. But gossips eventually discredit themselves because people will find out, and no one will trust them. The next time he starts, say: "We need to deal with facts; not opinions or rumors." Or, "That's the problem with hearsay; it creates misunderstandings. It's better to let people speak for themselves." Or, "Let's talk about something positive." Then change the subject. If he gossips about others, he'll do the same to you. To discredit his poisonous words, continue to work with integrity, guard your words, and be consistent in your behavior. Set the facts straight when necessary and don't over-explain. See if the others affected by his gossip are willing to collectively discuss this problem with him. If that doesn't help, consider taking the next step: collectively meet with your manager, describe how morale and productivity are being undermined by his gossiping, how your group tried to resolve it directly, and ask for your manager's reinforcement. This should be also be a good opportunity for management to step in and set the facts straight about company rumors.

Got a question or an issue you're dealing with at work?

Send it to businesstalk@protonmail.com


This column does not constitute legal advice. Readers are advised to use their own best judgment for responding to a situation and to consult a credible personnel or legal professional if appropriate.

PERSPECTIVES

"For example, a few years back a phone-book company spent lots of time and money researching local names and addresses to put into its phone book. Then a competitor just copied all of that information and put it into its own phone book. The first phone-book company sued the second phone-book company for copyright infringement. It lost the case. The Supreme Court said that the names and addresses were just facts, and that facts were not protectable, despite all the time and money that the first company had spent collecting those facts."

"So it's OK for this guy to steal my ideas, so long as he writes them up in his own words?" he said.

"Yes, I'm afraid so," I said. "And he seems to have done a pretty good job of that. His expression is completely different from yours. He hasn't copied any of your expression. So his book just isn't copyright infringement."

We spoke for a long time after that about ways that our client might protect his ideas in the future. Eventually we decided that our client's new seminar—which contained completely new material, and which he had not yet given anywhere—would be offered only to customers who agreed to sign a confidentiality agreement. But the ideas in his original seminar and book were already available to the public, and so they could not be protected in that way. It was an expensive lesson. 

Note: *facts have been changed to preserve confidentiality. Oh, and this isn't legal advice—you should consult a lawyer when trying to protect intellectual property, registering a copyright, deciding whether to file a lawsuit, etc.*



If it's not protected by copyright, then the amount of effort you put into it doesn't make it protectable.

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HEART
IS HERE**



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*Waiver amount varies by account type.



Love and donuts >

Executive Summary:

An American traditional favorite spur-of-the-moment treat has rolled into the most formidable occasion.


By Caitlyn Scaggs

Wedding season is upon us and if you are lucky the next wedding you attend will feature donuts! That's right, the days of a mandatory multi-layer, elaborate wedding cake are gone and new approaches to a celebratory confection are here. Route 8 Donuts, located in Christiansburg, caters many weddings with their unique and delicious donuts.

Route 8 Donuts opened in September 2016 and business has been booming since. This donut shop is owned and operated by husband and wife team, Kristen and Chris Nietzold. Kristen explained, "At night my husband works with a team of talented bakers making the delicious treats, and I come in during the early morning with an awesome crew to sell them to all the donut lovers." It may surprise you to learn that each day they make 40 different kinds of donuts—yeast and cake donuts alike. Kristen said, "We have product offerings that others don't have and can't get."

The unique flavors, like S'Mores, Cinnamon Toast Cruncher, and Fruity Peb, are one of the reasons Route 8 Donuts are ideal for weddings. The donuts are also decorated with the occasion in mind, often with icing that compliments the wedding color pallet or with elaborate sprinkles. The variety of donuts also means wedding guests get a choice in their sweet treat, which turns dessert into an experience. For the couple getting married there is the benefit of cost savings. Kristen said, "Most couples have a small cake used for cake cutting pictures and then do donuts, cupcakes, cookies or a mixture of the three for guests."

While weddings are an excellent fit for Route 8 Donuts the catering possibilities don't stop there. Their donuts are often part of other celebrations like corporate gatherings, baby showers, and graduation parties. During gender reveal parties the donut contains either pink or blue filling and when it is opened the gender of the baby is made known. Additionally, they have letter cutters for the donuts so words and phrases can be spelled out in donuts! Kristen shared a recent example, "One guy asked his girlfriend to prom by spelling it out with donuts."

It is fitting that Route 8 Donuts would have a role at so many weddings and special events across the New River Valley. The business has a foundation of love—love between the husband and wife team and a love for donuts. 

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On track, full speed >

Executive Summary:

Martinsville Speedway contributes to the business and economic impact of Virginia's southside (and beyond) in ways far beyond the recreational impact.

By Cara Cooper

Earlier this month, the grounds of the Martinsville Speedway were transformed into a carnival, complete with rides in the parking lot, a stage in the infield for a concert by Ohio Players and a fireworks show that lit up the Martinsville sky for a Fourth of July celebration.

And it was all free for everyone. For the 19th year in a row the Speedway offered Celebration as a way to give back to the community.

"That's our biggest event besides racing," said Martinsville Speedway President Clay Campbell. "It's not a revenue producer, we actually lose money on it, but it's to give back to the community. We like to say it's for the community and by the community because all the businesses in the area help fund it."

Martinsville Speedway has seen several other transformations just this year on top of the July 4th carnival. In June it housed a job fair for the Martinsville/Henry County Chamber of Commerce, with 50 businesses recruiting hundreds of people in the infield garages and the media center serving as a hub for people to fill out online applications. A month earlier Martinsville High School held its After Prom in the infield of the Speedway. Other charitable walks and Christmas toy drives are also held on the track throughout the year.

With all the other events that go on at the Speedway, it's hard to believe that they also hold three big NASCAR races each year.

A recent study found that Martinsville Speedway brings in about \$171 million to the state of Virginia each year, according to Amanda Witt, President of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce. That mostly comes from two NASCAR Cup Series and Camping World Truck Series races held in April and October every year, as well as the Valley Star 300, a nationally known NASCAR Whelan All-American Series late model race held in September. All of those weekend-long races bring up to 50,000 spectators to the Martinsville and Henry County area, which provides for the economy in more ways than just ticket sales.



"When the race is in town it changes everything around here" – Clay Campbell, president, Martinsville Speedway

"There's definitely a trickle-down effect," Witt said of the races' impact. "Our community is full and buzzing. People are staying in our hotels, eating in our restaurants, shopping our stores, and spending their money in Martinsville and Henry County."

"There's no denying that that is our biggest economic driver as far as tourism goes. Probably not only for Martinsville and Henry County but most of the surrounding areas as well because our hotels fill up and they're staying in Danville and they're staying in Greensboro and Roanoke; so I would say other localities definitely experience some of that economic impact."

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are you
going?



View of downtown Roanoke, VA

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The Speedway, which is celebrating 70 years of holding races, typically hires around 2,500 people to work during the Cup Series race weekends, the majority of which Campbell said are locals who have been coming back year after year simply for the love of the sport. Given the magnitude of putting on three races each year, Campbell said he feels it is the track's responsibility to give back during the other months.

"Obviously when the race is in town it changes everything around here so it's a way that we can work with our community and the citizens of Martinsville and Henry County. We've got the facility so if we can use it for good causes then we're all for it. It's just to give back to the community for accepting us and helping us through 70 years of racing."

Outside of race weekends, the Speedway employs about 20 people full time, and Campbell said the work never ends even when the races do.

In fact, he said race weekends are often the easy part.

"If you look at the two weekends in March and October, everything you see on that race weekend didn't just happen on that race weekend," he said. "We're just kind of taking care of problems and issues and

making sure our guests have a great time. Everything that happens in that weekend happens in the six months prior to that. We work probably a year in advance on our events so everything we do for planning and preparation, marketing, ticket sales are yearly things. They're busy all the time. Our operations department, they really have a full plate year round. This is a huge facility and I like to say it's a huge beast that needs feeding on a regular basis. So the operations people, they keep everything looking good and keeping it up."

The extent of the planning has grown over the years. Campbell said it used to be that summer and winter were considered the "slow time" for Speedway staff, but now those are actually the busiest times of the year. Once the NASCAR season ends and the calendars turn, the chaos to get ready for the next race takes off.

That year round preparation and work is worth it for Campbell though, who grew up in Martinsville and has children who attended or still attend Martinsville High School. He has never left despite having the chance to several times. For him, he prefers to be a big fish in a small pond than to be at a track in a bigger city that may not have as much impact on the area as a whole.

To Campbell, Martinsville Speedway is more

than just a NASCAR track. It's an indelible part of Southern Virginia.

"We've got tracks in some areas that people know that it's there but it's not recognized to the extent of this place is to this area and the state of Virginia," he said. "I think it's fortunate for Martinsville and Henry County to have an event like that. It's basically two Super Bowls in a year. Think of the communities throughout our great land who would jump through hoops to have what we have here.


"So I think to that extent the area is fortunate and I think we're fortunate that we're in this area because we get the attention, we get the resources from the people who want us to be here. So it's a win-win situation for both."

While NASCAR may not be everyone's

thing, Campbell said he always tells people he can make them a race fan if they just come and experience it one time.

And if that doesn't work, he hopes they can at least be a fan of the work they do and the impact they have on the community.

"If any track went away in a major market, it's a loss and it would be recognized to some degree. If this went away in this area it'd be devastating. So I've fought tooth-and-nail over the years so we don't lose our two races and this area does not lose what it's known for and we're in good shape for the future," Campbell said.

"They are our gem," Witt said. "They are just so community oriented and always giving back and that's huge. He's from here, of course he loves this community and he is just definitely a shining star." 



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Smile, you're on camera >

I wouldn't want to be a criminal these days. It's too difficult a profession, what with all the video cameras. In fact, I'm going to try and remember this as helpful advice the next time I'm addressing youth or working a career fair. "Kids, you should pursue your passion," I'll say. "But I have to tell you, I would reconsider tobacco farming, coal mining, and illegal activities."

Like workers in the tobacco and coal industries, today's criminal — especially the hard working common street thug kind — really struggles with the decreased opportunities and the increased risk. Unless you're highly skilled and competent in the most sophisticated technologies, or perhaps entering politics, crime just doesn't pay like it used to. I can't, in good conscience, recommend a life of crime for even the most aspiring and promising young person. I'd feel really bad about such vocational advice, because the ambitious young fellow or gal is sure to have his or her professional career halted — most likely before ever reaching the second or third project. A really good criminal might make it as far as five jobs; but I'm convinced most will never break the half-dozen milestone. And in today's economy? Depending on the scale of the job, a kid's going to need multiple jobs in a given year. That's an awfully short lifespan for a career. One can hardly build a resume or advance to the next level with just a job or two, regardless how successful.

And what caused the demise of the common criminal enterprise?

One word: video.

You can't lift a tube of lipstick out of a WalMart. You can't pick the pocket of the guy standing in front of you in line at the movie theatre. You can't ask the cashier at the convenience store for money out of the register without buying something. Cameras are recording everything. And try to step it up a notch? Snag a car from someone's driveway out in a rural spot where you already know there are no cameras? Not smart enough: there are enough cameras at other homes, businesses, streets, interstates, towns, flying drones, and regular ol' folks themselves walking around with mobile phones to find and catch you.

I just wouldn't even bother with being a criminal.

But as someone taught us in business school, or we more likely picked it up subtly from way back at the kindergarten playground, where there are challenges, there are opportunities.

So, where all the cameras are becoming intrusive,

On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

Executive Summary:

A prevalence of video capturing by average citizens is becoming something we have to address more and more.

obnoxious, and downright annoying, perhaps we can fight fire with fire. Flip it around, just like you do with your camera phone when snapping a selfie.

Be the one who shoots instead of being the one who'd always getting shot.

I stumbled on this idea long ago by simply watching similar opportunists on Facebook postings; but just this very week, in a span of under 24 hours I witnessed two local examples of effective video use.

The first example featured a patron at a local business who recorded an unfortunate experience. Thanks to that production, now we are all aware of the incident and can make our own judgments about what happened based on what we saw and heard, with a perspective that would likely be much different if we only read about it or heard a description about it from one of the parties.

The second example? Well, it's just imaginary I suppose, because I didn't use my camera. But after watching example number one above, it smacked me in the face how effective such a video would have been had I simply pressed "record" on my phone. I can tell you that we visited an emergency room doctor who used a Sharpie to outline a snake bite on my wife's heel, and then told us to go home and watch it (no treatment, no medicine, not even a band aid) which was promptly followed by a young man carrying a laptop, who handed us a bill for \$2,374.75 — but you might suspect I'm certainly exaggerating. I'm not. And a video would have confirmed it. From start to finish.

It's a wonder we don't all wear body cams.

But there is a wonderful lesson, a remarkable observation in all of this Big Brother world. A lesson we might be forgetting that would be reason enough for the potential criminal to reconsider his or her career path.

What would happen if we all *thought* we were being recorded?

I saw the difference when I watched video example one, above—just as you would. One subject tempers his response. Another appears incredibly civil, given the circumstance. Still another tries not to sound unintelligent. Whether you prefer to phrase this phenomenon as "Good cops want body cams" or "God is watching you" that whole original Golden Rule idea continues to prevail as a reasonable approach to how we could all live our lives and get along.

I know the medical profession is quite aware everyone is disgusted with the cost of healthcare, but I still can't imagine anyone wanting the whole world to see you "live on camera" charging \$2,374.75 for using a Sharpie.

I don't want to see cameras everywhere. I don't like cameras snapping license plates at toll booths or shooting cars running red lights (even in the interest of fairness or public safety); or cameras at places of business watching my every move, or even annoying regular ol' folks pointing their mobile phones at every outing you happen to attend.

But I would like more people to act like they're being recorded.

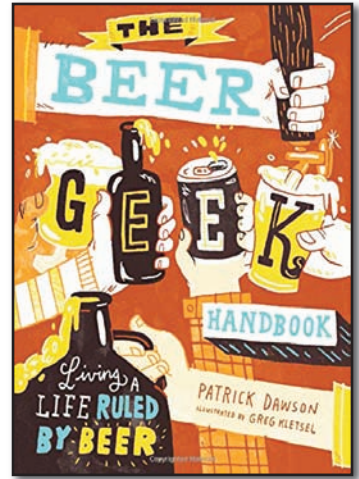
So, be good, kid. Somebody's watching you. 📹

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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



Guide for our exploding brew scene

Patrick Dawson is a proud beer geek, and from the very first line of *The Beer Geek Handbook* (Storey; 2016) he wears his geekdom on his brewery t-shirt sleeve. The prose is laced with wit, verve and snide humor, and the book is loaded with tips, tricks and the history of beer geekdom the world over. Numerous how-to's and suggestions are also present, such as how to trade beer online, the types of bars that serve the best beer and how to host a perfect bottle share. He crams a truly impressive amount of stuff into this book's 192 pages (similar to the amount of ingredients in collaboration beers, of which Dawson is not a fan) including various quizzes to decide what kind of Beer Geek you are. There's even a section written by Dawson's wife about being the spouse or significant other of a beer geek (something she is obviously well-acquainted with).

While the organization of the book might be a little scattershot, the omnipresent humor and singularity of vision from Dawson makes it an engaging, entertaining and informative read. Also, almost every page in the book has eye-catching graphics and blurbs, as well as terrific, amusing artwork from Dawson's collaborator Greg Kletsel. His cartoony portraits of some of the founding fathers of craft brewing are worth the price of admission alone.

This book has been a constant fixture on my desk since it crossed the transom, and with good reason. Dawson's sparkling prose coupled with Kletsel's kooky drawings kept me picking up *The Beer Geek Handbook* again and again

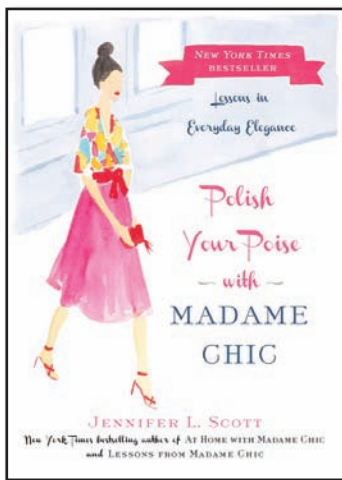
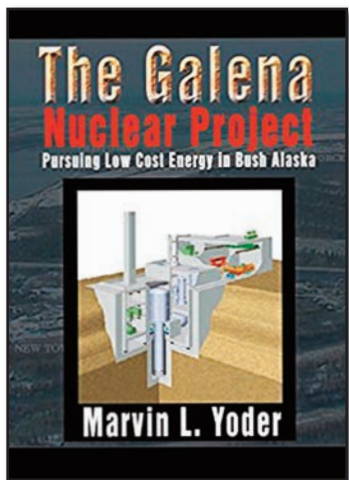
for both entertainment and information.

Read the full review at: beerconnoisseur.com/articles/book-review-beer-geek-handbook

—Chris Guest

Social graces... or graceless?

Rude, arrogant, selfish. Unacceptable behavior is spreading like a disease in business and social situations because our society tolerates it. Those of us who confront inappropriate behavior can lead by example. And in *Polish Your Poise*, by Jennifer L. Scott, (Simon & Schuster, New York, 2015), there are many excellent examples. Readers are inspired to conduct themselves with civility and self-respect. If you can remember a time when men and women looked and acted like ladies and gentlemen, then you'll appreciate this gem of a book even more. If you're a typical Millennial and Generation Z (with certain exceptions), this is a perfect starting place. Scott describes how cultivating poise and practicing (un)common courtesy will positively affect your life and influence others. Encouragement for getting through life's difficult moments by taking the high road will give you that push to truly be your best self. Tips on deportment, communicating face-to-face and electronically, cleaning up your speaking habits, and cultivating your mind will increase your confidence and credibility. Scott's simple solutions for clothing and grooming will have you easily looking your best. Pearls of wisdom for dining gracefully and being a respectful houseguest will garner more invitations. And so much more This charming book is written for women, but men can also derive value from its personal conduct tips that



apply to all of us. This small book packs a positive punch for a society desperately needing a return to decency. Pass it on.

—Christine Liana

The project to turn Alaska nuclear

Galena, Alaska, has a population of less than 500 people. But, the little bush town near the Arctic Circle made big headlines when it was targeted to build a nuclear plant by the TOSHIBA Corporation. In *The Galena Nuclear Project: Pursuing Low-Cost Energy in Bush Alaska*, by Marvin L. Yoder (XLIBRIS, May 23, 2014), the former city manager describes the journey to get power to his small town off the electrical grid. “We were generating power from diesel engines,” Yoder said. “We needed to find a low-cost energy solution that could power and sustain our small town. TOSHIBA had the vision to recognize that small, nuclear technology could provide reliable energy and other infrastructure in economically disadvantaged communities.” TOSHIBA proposed putting a small, nuclear plant in the city. The Galena City Council agreed to consider it and Yoder’s book chronicles the evaluation process and the city’s testimony before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

—Lindsey Gobel

Subscription renewal

Name a business sales and marketing process that has had greater impact in recent years

than the subscription-based model? In one sense, gaining subscribers is the oldest methodology in the world; because even though we didn't always think of customer acquisition as “subscribers” if the success of your business had anything to do with loyalty and retention and the satisfaction of existing customers (accounts, consumers, etc.) then that’s precisely what growing businesses were doing all along—getting people to sign on.

Robbie Kellman Baxter’s *The Membership Economy* (McGraw-Hill; 2015) offers a good explanation of how subscription companies work, and specifically the newest techniques. When Baxter says “the former video rental empire Blockbuster gave way to Netflix, and we haven’t ever looked back,” that reference rather acknowledges the catalyst for this big switch when companies turned their marketing investments to serious (almost scientific-like) strategies for long-term relationship building. Amazon, Blue Apron, Spotify, Salesforce, Stitch Fix, Peloton, Fuzzy, and LinkedIn are among Baxter’s favorite subscription brand examples, and when you see some common threads among these consumer-patron-communities working under such diverse products and services, the message is clear. Subscribers rule.

—Tom Field

(The reviewers: Chris Guest is a contributor to The Beer Connoisseur magazine; Christine Liana is news editor and columnist for the FRONT; Lindsey Gobel is a publicist in Phoenix, Arizona; Tom Field is a creative director and publisher of FRONT.)



You Can Bank on This >

Feeding America Southwest Virginia recently began renovating a 3,900 sq. ft. building on Melrose Avenue NW in Salem for its Community Solutions Center. The food bank received a \$350,000 gift from Food Lion Feeds for the capital costs of renovating and equipping the new facility and providing Food Lion Feeds with a naming opportunity. The Community Solutions Center will house a production and training kitchen for preparing meals for the food bank's "Café to Grow" children's food truck, a fresh market, a community room, and a sub-station for Roanoke police. Support from Carilion Clinic, SunTrust, and long-time volunteer and supporter Mrs. Lorene Pearman also helped the food bank to fund the building's initial purchase. The Community Solutions Center is expected to open in the summer of 2018.



Keeping the Pantry Stocked >

Feeding America Southwest Virginia received \$40,000 from the Walmart Foundation in June through a grant with the Walmart Foundation State Giving Program. This award provides support for the food bank's Mobile Produce Program, also known as the Veggie Mobile, and includes funds for food purchase and operations.

FRONT 'N ABOUT



Art in August >

The Market Gallery's next Art By Night is on Friday, August 4, from 5:30 - 9:00 p.m., featuring artists Kim Lashley-Sutliff, Barbara Norman-Lashley, Anne Way Bernard, Steve Bernard. The show hangs from August 1 to August 26. The Market Gallery, a regional artists' cooperative, is located on Roanoke's downtown market at 23 Salem Avenue. For more information, call 540-342-1177, or visit www.marketgallery.com.



Puzzling Entertainment in Salem >

Escape Key held its grand opening in June at Mill Lane Commons, 1334 West Main Street, Salem. The game masters set up rooms full of puzzles that, if solved in an hour, lead to the discovery of the escape key and the way out, making it the first escape game in the valley where players will actually escape. If you're worried the game might be too difficult, the game masters are there to help. Will and Emily Bebout, co-owners and founders of Escape Key decided to start Escape Key after doing 30+ escape rooms across the country and wanting to bring their passion and expertise home to Salem. For more information, visit: www.escapekeysalem.com.



Senior Takes Silver >

Dick Skutt (left) took second place in the Mens Singles Racquetball competition in the 2017 National Senior Games in Birmingham, Alabama in June. At 86, Skutt was one of over 10,000 athletes nationwide, age 60 to 94, who competed in the event. Sports included basketball, pickleball, swimming, and track and field. Skutt is a resident of Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg.



Michael Orr, Wells Fargo

Building a Better Future >

Habitat for Humanity was presented with a \$15,000 grant from team members in the New River Valley, who participated in a home build to bring affordable housing for a single mother and her two children in Virginia. Work involved hanging house wrap and roof trusses, and helping to clean up debris from the build site. The grant was made possible in part by funding through the Wells Fargo Housing Foundation. Those who volunteered over 100 hours of community service include Karen Beckner, Michael Orr, Michael Shaver, Tim Knott, Susan Brown, Susan Stroup, Crystal Clayton, Joseph Habenicht, Dana Cox, Cynthia Todd, Bryan Duker, Emily Shortt, Steve Johnson, Ryan Clayton, and Jane Meyer.



New River Valley Regional Commission

Clean Up Your Act! >

On Saturday, August 26, 2017, citizens of the **New River Valley** have the opportunity to come together for the ReNew the New Regional River Clean-up. These events will be in Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, and the City of Radford. Each locality is holding separate clean-up events on the same day to improve the entire New River watershed and its tributaries. For more information and to register for the event, visit www.renewthenew.org.



United We Stand >

United Way of Montgomery, Radford, and Floyd recognized local businesses, individual donors, and volunteers who supported the organization throughout the 2016-2017 campaign year. A luncheon was held on June 29 at HazelBea Catering's dining room in Radford, sponsored by Union Bank & Trust. Kymn Davidson-Hamley, United Way executive director and Adam Alexander, president of the board of directors, presented awards to 22 companies and individuals. Over 40 companies and individuals were recognized and received a plaque for their support of the United Way community efforts.



Beer Flowing in the Street >

Deschutes Street Pub Roanoke was held in downtown Roanoke on July 15; a second annual event featuring more than 50 types of Deschutes beer on tap. Proceeds from the festival benefitted Bradley Free Clinic, Roanoke Outside Foundation, Pathfinders for Greenways, and Blue Ridge Land Conservancy. Preliminary estimations showed 25,000 people and \$67,500 in fundraising support. The Roanoke event represents record numbers for the company's sponsored street festivals across the US.



Slide that Horn >

Jazz in July, the City of Salem's annual summer concert at Longwood Park was held July 15, featuring Vosbein-Magee Big Band, Robert Jospe & Express Quartet, Lenny Marcus and Jane Powel, and headliner Ari and the Alibis; vocalist Ari McManus captured the crowd's attention in effortless fashion as trombonist James Dabone amazed everyone with his skilful accompaniment.

FRONT 'N ABOUT



Art in the Airport >

The **Roanoke Regional Airport Commission** launched the Art in the Airport program. This exhibit is part of the Commission's Arts at the Airport initiative featuring local talent to over 1,000,000 visitors to the terminal each year. Each quarter, the Commission will send out a request for art from one of the 19 counties the airport serves. The theme for this series is art representing summer in the region. The three artists representing Roanoke are Betsy Bannan, Gerald Hubert, and Susan Oller. Their works are on display on the second floor of the west side of the terminal building. Paintings are available for purchase directly through the artist, but the paintings must remain in place until September 14.

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



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Career FRONT

FINANCIAL FRONT



Nosenzo

Jeff Nosenzo, sales agent with Brown Insurance in Blacksburg, received the Certified Authority on Workers' Compensation.



Clark

Chase Clark, vice president of business credit, has joined Freedom First.



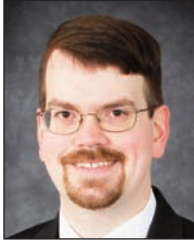
Hayter

William H. Hayter of First Bank & Trust Company was named chairman of the Virginia Bankers Association.

LEGAL FRONT

Kevin Walker Holt, partner at Gentry Locke, was named president of the

Roanoke Bar Association.



Mack

Brian T. Mack, associate attorney for real estate law, has joined the Shaheen Firm, P.C. in Blacksburg.

DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Enslow

Roy Enslow, REALTOR®, joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Smith Mountain Lake Real Estate.

EDUCATION FRONT



Holbrook

Steve Holbrook was named head of the Department of



McCoy

Geosciences; Professor **Andrew McCoy** was named head of the Department of Building Construction at Virginia Tech.



Carmack

Connie Carmack, **Randolph Garrett**, **Frank Martin**, and **Dr. Thomas McKeon** were appointed as community board members to the Roanoke Higher Education Center Foundation Board.



Martin

joined the Roanoke Higher Education Center.



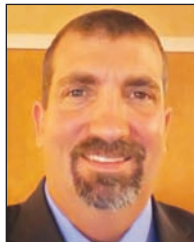
Sumpter



Shen

Justina Sumpter was named director of alumni relations for the College of Architecture and Urban Studies; **Wenqi Shen** was appointed assistant professor in the Department of Business Information Technology at Pamplin College of Business; **Juan Luis Nicolau**, joined the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Pamplin College of Business and was named the Marriott Professor of Revenue Management by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.

Bevlee A. Watford, associate dean for



Mohr

Jeffrey Mohr, director of facility services,

academic affairs and director of the Center for the Enhancement of Engineering Diversity at Virginia Tech, assumed yearlong tenure as president of the American Society for Engineering Education. Watford is the first African-American female president in the society's 124-year history.



Fang Ng



Crawford

Su Fang Ng was named the Clifford A. Cutchins III Professor of English by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors and joins the faculty of the College

of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences; **Tom Crawford** was named chair of the Dept. of Geography in the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech.



Shaffer



Stevens

Clifford A. Shaffer, professor in the Department of

Computer Science in the College of Engineering, and **Ann Stevens**, professor of microbiology in the Department of Biological Sciences are the 2017 recipients of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award at Virginia Tech.



Hammett

A.L. Tom Hammett, associate dean of academic programs and professor at the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech, was appointed visiting professor at the Agriculture and Forestry University

in Nepal.

W. Christopher Headley, Hume Center; **Vuk Marojevic**, College of Engineering; **Deepam Maurya**, Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science; **Brigitte Scott**, College of Agriculture and Life Science Extension office, were promoted to research assistant professors for 2016-17; **Daniel Catlin**, College of Natural Resources and Environment, was promoted to research associate professor at Virginia Tech.

CULTURE FRONT

William J. Lemon of Martin, Hopkins & Lemon, PC; and **Susan K. Still**, president and CEO

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CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Abraham is the owner of The Threshold Center, an industrial shell facility in Christiansburg and co-owner (with his wife Jane) of publisher Pocahontas Press. He has written eight regionally themed books (four each fiction and non-fiction), the latest of which is Chasing the Powhatan Arrow, a travelogue in economic geography from Norfolk through Roanoke to Cincinnati. <michael@mabraham author.com>

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“ “ “
I call it 'doing well by doing good' — Page 22

“ “ “
Everything that happens in that weekend happens in the six months prior to that — Page 36

Career FRONT



Lemon

Hall of Fame by Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia.

Brian J. Sanders, executive vice president, and legal counsel **W. David Paxton** were added to Positive Alternative Radio's Board of Directors. PAR owns and operates Spirit FM, Lynchburg.



Still

of HomeTown Bank were named to the Southwest Virginia



Hart

Nick Hart, director of marketing and business development at Member One Federal Credit Union, was appointed to a three-year term on the board of directors of Opera Roanoke.



Hoff

vice president and chief information officer at Carilion Clinic, was elected chapter president of Virginia Chapter of the Healthcare Information and Management Society.

*Compiled by
Christine Liana*

WELLNESS FRONT

Joseph M. Hoff was chosen as president and chief executive officer at Friendship senior living and rehabilitation.

Keith Perry, senior

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FRONT Notes

Winery Expansion

Whitebarrel Winery of Christiansburg, formerly the Attimo Winery, will expand its operations with wine and tapas bar in The Brownstone building at 301 South Main Street in Blacksburg. The 1,600 sq. ft. facility will feature Whitebarrel's wines with other wines and ciders from across Virginia. A tapas bar will have Virginia produce and cheeses.

Dance Academy Grand Opening

The **New River Valley Academy of Dance** in Christiansburg celebrated its grand opening and ribbon cutting on July 22, 2017. Located on Main Street, the dance school offers classes for ages three to adult, in styles of tap, ballet, jazz, lyrical, hip-hop, musical theater, pointe, and more.

Golf Club Demise

The Meadows Golf and Swim Club in Christiansburg is scheduled to be sold at auction later this year and may be converted into residential property. The club's shareholders voted to sell the business to a private owner in 2002. Eventually, 19 local business people formed NRV Golf and Swim Club LLC and bought the property to keep it going. Despite this, membership declined. Foreclosure trustees filed an application with the county to rezone the property, and have divided the 117-acre course into nine lots. The property is

assessed at just over \$1 million.

Driver Not Required

Founded in 2005, **TORC Robotics** of Blacksburg has worked in the military and mining industries. TORC started developing driverless auto technology with Virginia Tech in 2007. And working with Caterpillar, TORC developed independent equipment. Now, TORC is getting into driver's seat of the self-driving car industry by using their robotics in automobiles from major manufacturers. Self-driving cars can be one solution to reducing wrecks caused by distracted drivers playing with their phones.

Outfoxing the Cyber Crooks

FoxGuard Solutions of Christiansburg keeps software current on critical infrastructure of power grids, wind turbines, and nuclear power plants. Any disruption or break in these power supplies can have devastating effects on our lives. FoxGuard uses a \$4.3 million cooperative agreement from the U.S. Department of Energy to develop tools to track software updates and patches for 128 companies in the critical infrastructure industry. Over the past five years, FoxGuard's security business had compounded growth of 42%. FoxGuard's software is used in 40 different states and 35 countries. It employs over 110 people, including

22 positions created by the Department of Energy award.

Online Shopping Helps Martinsville

Martinsville-based **Radial** plans to hire 2,000 seasonal workers to work at its warehouse as it prepares for a busy season of order fulfillment and transportation. Besides competitive wages, overtime and holiday pay, flexible schedules, and employee discounts, Radial may offer temporary employees transportation to and from its Martinsville facility.

Open House at Higher Ed. Center

The **Roanoke Higher Education Center** is hosting an open house on October 5, 2017, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in Room 212. Over 200 degree, certificate, and licensure programs are currently offered at the Center. Member representatives will be available to discuss admission, tuition, and program specifics. Free parking. For more information, call Carla Jackson at 540-767-6010.

Compare Before You Fly

The **Roanoke Regional Airport Commission** announced a new booking service that allows customers to compare on the Internet for fares from multiple airlines all on one page. With www.flyroa.com/ book-trip, customers enter the destination and dates of travel, and the

website will show fares from travel booking websites and airlines that serve the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport.

Virginia Ties for Sixth Place in 2017 Prosperity Cup

In **Site Selection** magazine's 2017 Prosperity Cup rankings, Virginia and Ohio tied for sixth place. The Prosperity Cup determines states' competitiveness based on new and expanded facilities, job creation, capital investment, and tax climate.

A Martinsville Project With Vision

The **Roanoke Valley Center for Sight**, an affiliate of Vistar, plans to open a 5,000 sq. ft. ophthalmic ambulatory surgery center on Commonwealth Boulevard in Martinsville. The cost of the project is approximately \$1 million.

New Business-Class Hotel Coming to Bedford

The **Town of Bedford's** Economic Development Authority and Dogwood Development Company, Inc. plan to work together to bring a 70-90 room business-class hotel in the Harmony commercial park on U.S. 460. The three-acre site is next to the U.S. Army's Reserve Training Center 903 Blue Ridge Avenue and is about one mile from the D-Day Memorial. The land will be deeded to the EDA as part of the development agreement. Highlander Construction and Development plans

to build the hotel, with construction expected to start in spring 2018. The hotel should be open in late summer 2019.

program's \$90,000 cost was funded through private-sector sponsorships.

Bikeshare Program a Success

RIDE Solutions began the Bikeshare program in May, with 50 bikes at 10 stations for members to use locally. In just four weeks, the program registered 728 members. Bike rides are free for the first hour, then \$3.00/hour after that. Riders can pay hourly or sign up for annual membership. Find bikes by using the free Zagster mobile app or go online to zagster.com/ride solutions. \$81,000 of the

YMCA Expands in the Region

YMCA of Roanoke Valley changed its name to **YMCA of Virginia's Blue Ridge**. In July of 2016 the Rockbridge Area YMCA merged with the YMCA of Roanoke Valley. The YMCA of Roanoke Valley currently has 550 employees, 18 after school sites, and serves over 17,000 members. Its community outreach programs includes feeding over 40,000 meals and snacks through subsidized feeding

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programs and providing financial assistance to youth, families, and senior citizens.

RVARC Publishes 2017 Regional Report Card

The **Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)** publishes the Regional Report Card to bring awareness about the

level of regional cooperation among local governments working together on issues concerning businesses and citizens. The report includes 99 cooperative programs and/or projects, ranging from two governments working together to involvement by 10 or more governments on a specific activity. It also indicates how local governments are working

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FRONT Notes

cooperatively with federal and state agencies and non-profit organizations on issues affecting this region. RVARC is one of 21 regional planning agencies in Virginia. Member governments include the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; the cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; and the towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. The 2017 Regional Report Card will be available online and at the Commission office.

Broadcasting Award

Blue Ridge PBS received a 2017 Virginia Association of Broadcasters Award in June for "Lakeside: 66 Years of Fun in the Sun" about the former Lakeside Amusement Park. The program took top VAB honors for Best Documentary/Public Affairs Program, making it one of the best new documentary programs in the Commonwealth.

New College Has

a New Plan

Martinsville's **New College Institute** has a new plan for the school that includes an expanded partnership with **James Madison University** and a stronger emphasis on four main study areas. New College will offer local students the chance to earn a bachelor's degree in cybersecurity, engineering, or advanced manufacturing fields from JMU at New College's Martinsville campus. Students can complete their first two years of these programs at any Virginia community college, then finish at New College before graduating with a degree from JMU. This program should benefit Martinsville and Henry County, which faces some of Virginia's highest unemployment rates due to outsourcing of advanced manufacturing jobs.

Automotive Manufacturing Plans on Track

Eldor Corporation, the Italian manufacturer of ignition systems, engine

control units, and electronic systems is on track with construction on its 250,000 sq. ft. production plant and distribution center in Botetourt County's Greenfield industrial park. Test runs are expected in January 2018 and occupancy in the spring. Eldor plans to hire approximately 350 employees within five years, with another 300 after that.

The Numbers Look Bleak

According to the University of Virginia's **Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service**, as population in Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Richmond continues to grow, almost every locality in southwest Virginia's coalfields region will lose population through 2040, with Buchanan County projected to be the hardest hit. The region includes Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Scott, Russell, Tazewell, and Wise counties and City of Norton. The study indicates high unemployment, lower birth rates, and an aging

population causing the shrinking population numbers.

.... But There's a Light at the End of the Tunnel

Dominion Energy Inc. is looking for sites in Virginia's coalfields region to build a hydroelectric facility. As a result of a new law that recently went into effect, bills would fast-track hydroelectric pumped storage facilities in the coalfields by stating that these energy projects are in the public interest and allowing electric utilities to petition the state to recover the costs of their investments once a facility is operational. State Senator Ben Chafin (R-Russell) and Delegate Terry Kilgore (R-Scott) pitched building a pumped storage facility in an abandoned coal mine. Legislators suggested that a pumped storage facility in one locality shares revenue with the rest of the region.

Keep On Truckin'

After a difficult 2016 with an industry slump and

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employee layoffs, **Volvo Truck** got beyond the bend in the road. The company recently showed off its new 36,000 sq. ft. customer center showroom and new line of rigs to executives and media from around the globe at its Dublin plant in Pulaski County. This was part of a \$38.1 million plant investment in 2015. The showroom overlooks a mile-long test track, and has an event space, meeting rooms, and trucks on display. Volvo Truck's new VNL truck line comes equipped with new features like

refrigerated seats, five USB power outlets, 21 steering wheel buttons, improved fuel efficiency, and active crash avoidance technology. Prices range from around \$117,000 to \$180,000. Volvo offered jobs back to those who were laid off, and is now accepting applications for new workers. Employment is now at approximately 2,400.

A Program That Works

Virginia's **Region 2000 Workforce Development Board** coordinates

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs. Since July, the Board is working with HumanKind to lead the WIOA Title 1 **Adult Worker program**, helping those who need to develop life and job skills. Virginia Employment Commission staff will operate the WIOA Title 1 **Dislocated Worker program** at the One Stop Center at 3125 Odd Fellows Road in Lynchburg. Here, people who've lost their jobs can get help and connect with WIOA partner organizations. The Board's staff will operate

the **Youth Works** program, providing those aged 14-24 with training, apprenticeships, and career development services with local schools, social services departments, adult education providers, Boy Scouts of America's Explorer Posts, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and 4-H. For more information, visit: www.region2000works.org, or contact Ben Bowman at 434- 845-1932.

*Compiled by
Christine Liana*

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In January 2017, Qualtrax received a 3 million dollar growth investment.

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Executive Summary:

Qualtrax, a compliance software solutions provider in Blacksburg, was the RBTC technology council's "Rising Star" recipient for 2017.

By Caitlyn Scaggs

Working in compliance and within heavily regulated industries can be grueling. There is a need for extreme attention to detail, documentation, and clearly defined processes. To say careers in compliance are often paired with stress is an understatement. Qualtrax Inc., a Blacksburg-based company, is on a mission to ease the burdens associated with compliance, through its software product.

Qualtrax is the most widely used software in the forensics industry—a testimony to

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Qualtrax is a fun-loving team with a passion for their product.

its commitment to helping others ensure accuracy and quality through software solutions. In addition, the company's software is also used within medical examiners offices, testing labs, manufacturing and utility companies.

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Qualtrax was founded in 1993, as a result of an internal need for compliance software.

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Qualtrax is located in Blacksburg and recently remodeled a building built in 1927. This building is part of the original 16 blocks of Blacksburg.

At that time, the parent company, CCS-Inc., was seeking ISO Certification, and was ultimately the first computer firm to achieve this. The intranet software they created proved so valuable in facilitating their own compliance that a new company and new product was born.

The growth of Qualtrax over the last 24 years has been consistent and healthy. However, the growth rate recently became accelerated. In January 2017 it was announced that the company received a 3 million dollar growth equity investment from Common Wealth Growth, Lyden Capital, and investors Marty Muscatello and Tim Lawson. Qualtrax Chief Executive Officer, Amy Ankrum, said, "This investment helps us reach more organizations and enter new industries. We are excited to be fueling our innovation efforts, starting with how we are reaching companies and extending into new product capabilities."

This exciting growth was recognized at the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology

Council's 2017 awards ceremony, TechNite. At this regional gathering of nearly 500 technology professionals Qualtrax received the "Rising Star" award, which signifies it is a company to watch. When reflecting on this award, Ankrum said, "Our team is excited about the difference we are making, and to have that celebrated by our peers in the technology industry was very rewarding for all of us."

Qualtrax has thrived over the years with consistent success in addition to this recent increased growth trajectory. For Ankrum, it is clear that the quality of the people who comprise the Qualtrax team is one key to their achievements and promising future. Ankrum shared, "Perhaps what is most important, and I find often undervalued today, is we put our focus on our people. We care for our people and they in turn care for our customers. We work hard to find people who believe in our purpose, share our values and give them the freedom to create something great." 

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