



Valley Business FRONT

**VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE
BUSINESS JOURNAL**
ROANOKE/NEW RIVER VALLEYS & REGION
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Growler Guy

Mike Scutellaro,
Star City Growlers

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WELCOME to the FRONT

Welcome to the 100th edition of Valley Business FRONT. Whether you are a brand new reader or someone who has been with us since the beginning, we appreciate your patronage. We know you have a ton of options when it comes to your news and information about this great place where we work, play, and get on about our business. We appreciate your selection of FRONT in that barrage and will try our best to continue to earn your trust, keep your loyalty, and win your favor.

I have to thank our stakeholders who have made this enterprise possible.

Our readers and advertisers keep the FRONT in... well... front. There's no guarantee our region and community will be served by its own independent, locally owned and operated business journal; but as long as there are readers and advertisers sustaining our mission, we publish. It's that simple.

And then we have the individuals who bring you this product each month. Our contributors include writers, columnists, photographers, staff and freelancers, all working with diligence and professionalism to produce what we intend to be a quality publication with each release. I find it especially satisfying to employ diversity in both our degrees of experience and the very voices themselves. Unlike some publications or media, we do not enforce the kind of standardization that makes every article sound the same. Not only do we refuse to pre-publish an editorial calendar, we actively seek out contributors who can bring their own character to the pages of FRONT (even as we hold fast to our principles and maintain a model that serves our market effectively). Our FRONTcovers—often creative or even symbolic or metaphoric—are a testament to that approach, even as our guts remain the quintessential business journal we've produced now for 29 years (counting our predecessor).

I wish I could name all the contributors who have helped us along the way. If you look back through our archives (we post every issue in full at www.vbFRONT.com) you'll see an impressive lineup. It might take you a while, however.

Here's to a grateful look back, and a optimistic look forward.

Thanks for being in the FRONT with us.



Tom Field

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COVER STORY

**Brewery boost
gets served by
first peripheral
manufacturer**



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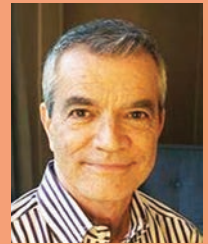
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JANUARY



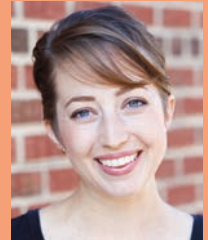
Pete Deaver



Dan Dowdy



Mike Leigh



Ariel Lev



Nicholas Vaassen



Randolph Walker

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



Tom Field



Keith Finch



Kathleen Harshberger



Christine Liana



Jeff Lighthiser



Kathy Surace

“Don't rush.
Slow down.”

— Page 15

“Organizations are either green
and growing or ripe and rotting

— Page 19

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

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)
Nanci Hardwick Aeroprobe (Tech/Industry)
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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.

“They're going to
switch jobs and
careers twelve
to fifteen times
in their lifetime

— Page 37

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Chris with growlers

Brewery boost gets served by first peripheral manufacturer

If your great-grandfather was a working man, he might have owned a growler. The growler of 100 years ago was a bucket, maybe with a lid on it. Fathers sent their sons to the corner tavern, growler in hand. The barkeep filled it with beer and the son carried it home.

The word “growler” might have come from the sound of carbon dioxide bubbling under the lid, or the sound the old man made if Junior spilled the brew, or the sound customers made if the barkeep didn’t fill the bucket all the way up.

Stoneware jugs with cork stoppers were occasionally used instead of buckets.

With the coming of Prohibition, some states specifically outlawed growlers, and when Prohibition was over, beer was widely available in bottles, and then cans. Growlers were largely forgotten.

Fast forward to the end of the 20th century. Microbreweries become fashionable, and not all of their products were available in cans and bottles. Thus, the new, improved growler—a jug with a pressure cap, allowing patrons to take draft beer home.

Microbreweries typically sell filled growlers for \$10 to \$15. Beer kept in a growler will stay pressurized for about a week.

Star City Growlers expects to capitalize on the region's craft brewing explosion >

Executive Summary:
Star City Growlers seeks to tap into connoisseurs' enthusiasm for all things beer-related.

By Randolph Walker



**Hector with growler
in mold**

Mike Scutellaro and Chris Lemons play in an alt-country band called Black Mountain Revival that plays a lot of microbreweries.

Scutellaro is owner of Mario Industries, which manufactures lighting for the hospitality industry, including ceramic lamps. Pondering how to increase business, he noticed the inexpensive glass growlers sold at microbreweries and hit on the idea of making good-quality ceramic ones. He bounced the idea off his bandmate, Lemons, and Star City Growlers was born.

With the proliferation of craft beer in Roanoke, their timing is good. Roanokers are thirsty for beer-related products, says Lemons, sales manager for Star City Growlers. Like wine drinkers, beer drinkers have become connoisseurs. "Everyone is so brand-loyal to [their favorite] brewery. They're wearing the hats, they're wearing the hoodies, they're wearing the T shirts. They're spending money, not just on beer. It becomes a culture for them."



Two growlers in kiln



Star City Growlers logo



**Chris Lemons and
Mike Scutellaro**


Scutellaro and Lemons hope that lots of connoisseurs will want a 64-ounce ceramic jug with a latching cap, proudly displaying the logo of their favorite microbrewery. Other potential buyers include corporations, which might order growlers with the corporate logo as Christmas presents for clients. There's also an idea for a Heritage Roanoke series, to be sold at craft stores.

Scutellaro started researching production methods in April, 2016. Lemons, who also works at a mortgage company, is now contacting potential retailers. The growlers are made



in the Mario factory on Patterson Avenue, a family business now in its fourth generation. "It's a fun side project, and it's a business that can increase our workers here," says Scutellaro. "I want to keep the factory busy."

Consumers who'd like a Star City Growler can get one at Fork in the Alley. Potential corporate customers can contact Chris Lemons at chris@starcitygrowlers.com.

Bring home some of your favorite brew in a growler and have one in memory of your great-granddad. 



Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

Executive Summary:

"Dress Up" is not just a game to play when you are on the pursuit of success.

Dressing well *does* lead to success >

For years it's been said that dressing well leads to business success. Now businessinsider.com is citing studies showing a direct correlation between dressing well, being perceived as confident, and earning big bucks.

In a study concluded at Yale in 2014, about 128 young adult men role-played business negotiations involving buying and selling. According to the businessinsider.com, "Those dressed poorly (in sweatpants and plastic sandals) averaged a theoretical profit of \$680,000, while the group dressed in suits amassed an average profit of \$2.1 million. The group dressed neutrally averaged a \$1.58 million profit."

The authors concluded that the participants who dressed very casually "would defer to the suited ones and these suited participants could sense this heightened respect, backing down less than they might have otherwise."

Another study by Michael J. Slepian at Columbia Business School showed that people who dressed up were more likely to employ "big picture" thinking, like a CEO might, while people who dressed down focused more on details.


Slepian, co-author of the study and adjunct assistant professor at the business school noted, "People who wear that kind of clothing feel more powerful. When you feel more powerful, you don't have to focus on the details."

This doesn't come as a surprise to most of us, but some diehards will still need more reasons to dress well at work.

Consider this: if we're all dressed casually, how do we identify the people with power and authority in an organization and how do we show what job we aspire to in the organization?

In previous decades everyone dressed in formal business dress. Our attire helped us understand who ranked highest, lowest, and in between. Now that we're all dressing down, it's hard to distinguish between the boss and the lowest-ranking employee.

This casual trend can pose a dilemma. Recently a young attorney related a situation where a partner asked that he stop wearing a tie, saying he looked too formal and made co-workers uncomfortable. He complied, but feels the open collar under a suit jacket looks "messy".

The partners may be dressing down to mirror client attire, look contemporary or be comfortable at work. Whatever the reason, young professionals should never dress better than the boss. Dress to fit into office culture but a notch more polished to show a desire to advance. 

Comments? Email Kathy@peacockimage.com

All about the pause >

A friend, who knows I conduct etiquette seminars for professionals, asked me for advice on public speaking. I said, "It's all about the pause." Let's talk about the power of a pause in our professional lives, whether speaking in public, making a presentation, or engaging others in a social setting.

Successful people always project the appearance of confidence and authority. I advise my business protocol students to pause briefly in the doorway before entering a meeting or a social gathering. This is a deliberate, purposeful action to make one's presence known. Actors do it, models do it, singers do it, sports figures do it, and so do politicians. As a professional person, so should you.

Some of you are thinking, "I don't want to be noticed!" Think of this, then, as another tool in your professional toolbox. You want to stand out from your competition, and the pause, along with good eye contact and a good handshake, is an additional way of presenting yourself well.

Let's get back to public speaking. Think of the good speakers you have heard, or heard about. Winston Churchill was a master of the pause, so was Martin Luther King, and certainly Steve Jobs.


The speaker who talks quickly without pausing can irritate an audience, in part because it can't easily assimilate verbal information when it is delivered in haste. Speakers who rush through their message are telegraphing nervousness, making their audience nervous and irritable too. They can be considered losers, not leaders.

Think of the speakers that have bored you. They probably spoke in a monotone, giving every word the same weight. If they pause, they usually pause far too long. We've all been tortured by that kind of speaker.

Three reasons why you should master the pause:

- It gives your audience/coworkers a chance to reflect on your message, and gives the message time to imprint.
- It gives you the chance to make your point, and also gauge the audience's reaction to what you have said.
- It makes you look like a leader and in control. Remember you want your audience to hear, understand, respect and remember you and your message.

So don't rush. Slow down, and remember the power of the pause. Your message will be remembered longer, and you will gain credibility. You might even gain the reputation for being an excellent speaker!

"The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause." Mark Twain 



Etiquette & Protocol

By Kathleen Harvey
Harshberger

Executive Summary:
Here's a practical technique often overlooked in our effort to perform, produce, and get things completed.



David Allen with tellers (left) Amanda Lemons and (center) Crystal Hooper at BNC's downtown Roanoke location.

From philosophy major to bank executive >

Executive Summary:

The new face of BNC Bank didn't take the usual route, but he had a plan all along.

By Randolph Walker

David Allen can move the decimal points around. No one gets far in banking without knowing accounting and finance.

But Allen is just as comfortable debating the fine points of philosophy. In fact, his college transcript looks like a professor's, not a bank executive's.

Allen, the recently appointed president of BNC Bank's Virginia region, has an undergrad degree in philosophy from St. Andrews, a small college in North Carolina, and an M.A. in religion from Yale, with a focus on ethics.

At Yale, his thesis compared the fox-hunting culture of England with the culture of hunting

in America. "I'm not taking a stance on hunting either way," he says. "The culture of what hunting is in Europe versus what hunting is in America is very different. I studied it from an ethical standpoint, how they approach it on both sides."

So how did he end up in business? Actually, that was the plan going back to his undergrad days.

"I remember being in college and looking at the door of one of my philosophy professors and it talked about the Fortune 500 CEOs. Ten percent of all CEOs at that time were philosophy majors," says Allen, 45. "That resonated with me. I knew I didn't want to teach and that's what most philosophy majors do. I wanted to be in business. I thought, hey I can do this. Philosophy teaches you how to think, how to relate to people and critically analyze a situation. The great thing about philosophy is, there's never a black and white answer."

Also instrumental in his development was debate training in his High Point, N.C., high school, where he learned to have engaged conversations with people of differing points of view.

Philosophy, ethics, religion, debate—Allen

could hardly have had better training in listening and responding. He brings that sensitivity to his clients and employees at BNC.

"I hope that I bring a different approach to what banking is. Certainly numbers are important, but what's more important is understanding who people are, and having real conversations with clients about how did you get to where you are today, where do you want to be in the next two, four, 10 years, and how can we be a resource for you. I could tell you so many stories about how the bank is engaged in helping people be successful."


The ability to listen is often described as critical for leaders of organizations undergoing change.

North Carolina-based BNC moved into the Southwest Virginia market in 2015 by acquiring Valley Bank, which was founded in Roanoke in 1995. Allen came to Roanoke in September of 2016, having previously been BNC's commercial relationship manager. He is responsible for managing BNC's commercial and consumer banking initiatives in the southwest Virginia market. BNC has nine Roanoke Valley locations and serves clients ranging from the New River Valley to Richmond.

Allen and his wife, Jennifer, will soon be fully vested residents of the Roanoke Valley. They are selling their home in Greensboro and looking at homes, schools, churches and athletic programs in Roanoke. Son Fletcher, 12, plays golf and soccer, and daughter Campbell, 9, does dance and gymnastics.

Maintaining continuity with the community was, and is, high on BNC's list. Most of Valley's

customer-service staff—some 70 in the Roanoke Valley—remained with BNC. And Valley's commitment to community service continues as well. In an interview at BNC's regional headquarters in downtown Roanoke, Allen mentioned some of the organizations that BNC continues to support through volunteering and donations, including the Taubman Museum of Art, RADAR, Feeding America and the United Way's Bank On initiative for the underbanked or unbanked. "It's very much a continuation of all the good work Valley did," Allen says.

BNC's focus on nurturing organizations and individuals is internal as well as external. "With our employees, we are really focused on understanding what their career goals are, and then providing a pathway for them to accomplish that with training and mentorships." And, he says, every employee has stock in BNC. "You're not just an employee, you're an owner in the company. We all have a vested interest in doing the right thing the right way." 






The balancing act >

Early career professionals talk a lot about a “work-life balance.” This phrase typically describes the elements that make up one’s 24 hour day, and how each person decides to value and prioritize them. In discussion with a very busy, overcommitted, brilliant friend, I mentioned the so-called “balance,” to which she responded, “hah — more like work-life integration!” In that moment, my friend simultaneously broadened my perspective and made me queasy.

A true work-life balance, a flexible schedule, the ability to maintain hobbies and commitments beyond the 9-5...these are trademarks of the most desirable early career jobs sought by young professionals. For many of us, though, “work” bleeds into “life” in ways that are often hard to spot. For example, networking events can muddy the waters of what is actually “work,” especially when they happen after one has clocked out or voluntary.

As the public face of an organization, I can attest to this feeling of being “on” every time I’m in public — and have had peers echo this sentiment. Whether in sweatpants at the grocery store or at a bar 2 glasses of wine in on a Saturday night, I am always ready to talk about my job, because in reality, there is no clocking out.

This situation is not unique and, in some jobs, is unavoidable. Public officials and high-profile jobs allow for limited privacy. In my opinion, the key to work-life balance satisfaction is setting realistic job-related expectations early. If in a hiring position, be sure to express this clearly in the hiring process. If applying for jobs, this could be a question to ask at the interview.

And finally, if you are considering starting a business, well, you can guess where this is going. Prepare for integration: work is life, life is work — at least for a little while. 

Young Professionals

By Ariel Lev

Executive Summary:

Some additional perspectives on the age-old question of work-life balance.



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Organizational survival >


All organizations fail. As sure as the sun sets, every business and institution today will one day cease to exist. Eventually, Starbucks will turn cold and the lights will go out at GE. It's inevitable. Of course, some organizations live for hundreds of years, while others may only last a few months.

This is the 100th issue of Valley Business FRONT—an excellent sign! What will determine if FRONT makes it to issue 110 or 1000? My own business has now begun its 5th year since I left the corporate world. Will it last to year 10? Or 100?

There are many factors that determine the strength and longevity of institutions, but ultimately it comes down to this – like life itself, organizations are either green and growing, or ripe and rotting ...there is no in between.

There are many signs of a green and growing organization: innovation, continuous improvement, vision, engagement, development, goal-setting. Some individuals and organizations I'm proud to be affiliated with or have worked with, such as Chris Morrill at the City of Roanoke, David Todd at EZ Rampz, and Sheldon Bower at Parker Design Group, have exhibited these signs and are doing well, while similar organizations are struggling to survive.

My mother-in-law is a special woman. She is 81 years old, proficient using a computer and smart phone, and among other things she is a certified doula, a certified yoga instructor, a talented water painter, and has traveled to India, Morocco, Egypt, Costa Rica, Spain and the Galapagos. What makes this more remarkable is that she started and did these things within the past 20 years in "retirement"! Although she is 81, she is certainly not ripe and rotting!

Tom Field (Valley Business FRONT editor) recently asked me for my ideas on how we can improve the magazine. He wants to be innovative. He wants to be relevant. And he's keeping VB FRONT a green and growing publication. I'm looking forward to the next 100 issues. 

Send your questions or comments to
Mike@OpXSolutionsllc.com



Business Operations

By Mike Leigh

Executive Summary:

*What keeps a business going?
Look for the signs.*



New River Cakes

Right in Radford >

Executive Summary:

Leigh Anne Kelley's business journalism class at Radford University contributes profiles on small businesses in the City of Radford.

By Radford University business journalism students

Radford University relations with the downtown strip >

By Colton Rhea McConnell

Like all small college towns, the community relies heavily on the business that stems from a high student enrollment, and Radford University is no different.

The City of Radford, especially the downtown area, is speckled with locally owned businesses that hope to thrive off the hustle and bustle of the university's students. For some storeowners that hope for success does not live up to their expectations.

Bob Hopkins, of New River Cakes, opened up his bakery expecting to see lots of business from university students, but was let down by lack of business.

"We don't get a lot of students, we anticipated a lot more, just because of the downtown location," said Hopkins. "We were just wrong about Radford, everyone drives through, and nobody walks."

New River Cakes receives most of its business from faculty and staff rather than the students. The business's main challenge is forming relations with the University, and they are unsuccessful due to lack of information, according to Hopkins.

Unlike New River Cakes, which has only been open in the downtown location for a year, the more seasoned local business owners have witnessed many new stores come and go over the years.

Robert Roy, owner of the Game Quest Inc. has been in business for 22 years and has made more of a connection with the university, unlike the newer establishments.

"In my workings in the community I have had lots of opportunity to work with the administration of Radford University, for many different things," said Roy. "When the Highlander Festival began in its first three years, the city and the university worked together. I would help mark it out and have a huge festival here and up at the university."

In recent years that connection has weakened, closely related to the falling interest in the



Game Quest, Inc

Highlander Festival. This could be due to the late administration's movement of the festival to the Bisset Park instead of hosting the festival on campus, which really severed the university's connection.

Roy also believes that University use of outsourcing has affected the city and could really benefit the local businesses and increase relations if the University would advertise its needs locally.

"Business wise, the university needs certain things done and they're basically refusing to

announce that here locally to local businesses," says Roy. "Instead they announce it to places like Richmond, so we get a lot of businesses from outside the area coming in."

Other local businesses seem to love and thrive on what the university has to offer. Especially P.R. Sturgill Fine Jewelry and Radford City Florist.

"I love Radford University," said Philip Sturgill, owner of P.R. Sturgill Fine Jewelry. For over 37 years Sturgill has been in business, making his establishment one



Inside P.R. Sturgill Fine Jewelry



Radford City Florist

of the oldest locally owned businesses in the downtown area.

Sturgill is a firm believer that the university is the best thing to Radford City and its local business owners and that without it, all the shops would dry up along with the town.

"They add a lot to the community since they are the community," said Sturgill. "It would be nice though if they had a little more interaction."

Across the street, Curtis Graham, co-owner of the Radford City Florist has benefited directly from Radford University.

"We have a good amount of business with the university, especially with events and graduation," said Graham. "But we are associated mostly with the parents and family members of the students."

Almost half of Radford City Florist's sales are oriented towards the university and its students. Graham claims that one of the main reasons that his business is continuing to prosper is due to the university's lack of a similar service on campus.

Graham, like many of the other store owners

are looking forward to Radford University's newest president, Brian Hemphill's contribution to the community.

"We haven't had a chance to meet him yet, so we're looking forward to an event so we can have a chance to meet him," said Graham. "We think he seems very personable from what we've seen so far."

The majority of the locally owned businesses have high hopes that Hemphill will strengthen relations between the university and the local community.

Computer Tyme helps students never sweat over broken phones again >

By Amy Caudill

Down on Main Street in Radford, there are strips of different stores lining each sides of the sidewalk. Each one is uniquely different, serving their own purpose and having different business goals as cars pass by on the busy street. One of those stores in particular is something unlike anything else neighboring it: Computer Tyme, with its sign sticking proudly out from in front of it. The sign is



the store's logo which consists of the shop's name and a design of a computer power off button next to it.

Inside, hardwood covers the floor right in front of the entrance door. The area is small but spacey, the room used well to make customers not feel crowded. Two walls are lined with different technology for sale; mostly laptops, a few desktops, keyboards, and mice. The wall farthest from the entrance displays different technician certificates. The wall to the right is accompanied by a desk and a register, with a tablet used in place of a cash drawer.

Also on the back wall in the left corner is a square cut-out with the words "Service Check-In" engraved into the wall just above it. Through this hole in the wall lies another room consisting of tons of technology pieces on different tables. The man standing at the Service Check-In is John Mills, the owner of the (just over) 4-month-old computer repair shop. Mills wears a gray shirt with the Computer Tyme logo printed on it.

California-born Mills started in the Air Force straight out of high school, and having taken three years of electronic lab classes prior, it was only natural he ended up working on computers there. After doing that for seven years, he switched to a technology company and became a field technician for 20 years. He moved up to network administrator for the company for another 15 years before deciding he wanted to branch out on his own.

In 2010, Mills was part of a Facebook group

for amateur photographers, which is where he met his wife Katie. Katie is originally from Pulaski, and with Mills still settled out in California then, it was only a matter of time before he took their relationship to the next level. He moved from California with his middle son, Matthew, to be with her.

"Katie talked about how good it would be to have our shop on Main Street," Mills recalled. So when the opportunity presented itself, he took it.

Mills said starting a company is scary, and can be tight at first. "We're not making an hourly wage yet," he said of himself, his wife, and his son Matthew who all equally own the store. "We're still investing in stock and tools."

To compare, Mills said as a field technician in California he was making \$60,000 a year. But to be living in California, that was not much at all.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, network administrators in Virginia make an annual mean wage of \$93,150. But in his own shop, Mills is doing something different. He and his son repair computers, phones, and like technologies.

"I'm just a computer repair guy," Mills said with a big smile on his face.

Computer repairers make an annual mean wage in Virginia of \$40,990—just around what Mills guessed he would be making with a salary. This type of work can require



Inside Computer Tyme

a degree, but Mills said a good knowledge-base is necessary in this field of work.

Mills says he knows his line of work will be something that is always in demand. "As long as there are computers and phones to be broken, there are guys that need to fix them, and that's me."

Ever since he was a child, Mills liked fixing things. Being in his 60s, Mills said the only technology around when he was little was the TV. He initially wanted to become a TV repairman for that reason, but considers himself "one for the new century."

His son takes care of new computer and phone repairs, while Mills repairs old desktop computers and does interfacing. His wife Katie is the bookkeeper who also works a fulltime job at Carillion doing patient paperwork. On top of old desktop repairs and interfacing, Mills called himself the "front man" of the business as he handles most money decisions as well.

Mills said his biggest accomplishment as a computer repairer is retrieving data that was thought to have been lost forever.

"A student brought in a broken thumb drive that had his term papers on it. Hope seemed lost. We messed around with it and ran the wires of the thumb drive into a new one and he was able to retrieve his papers."

As for people interested in a position like Mills, he said that being a people person and being modest are two key traits to have. "Too many technicians can be arrogant. Put your customers first, not the money, and they'll come back to you."

Reviews stand by what Mills said. On Computer Tyme's website that Mills made himself, Lee C. said, "They are knowledgeable, honest, courteous, and they care about you and your equipment."

On Yelp, customer Heather G. said, "I was very happy to find this shop...Extremely fair prices, friendly, and quick service."

When Computer Tyme first opened, there was a phone repair shop on the same street as them. Because of that, Mills didn't want to "move in on their territory" and firstly only offered computer repair. After the phone repair shop left, he decided to start offering phone repair, too.

A lot of their demographic tend to be students that have dropped their phone in water, cracked their phone screen, or accidentally stepped on their laptop.

"Those things happen all the time," Mills said.

When asked if he would do it again, Mills was straight to the point.



Greeting at Radford Coffee Company

"Absolutely. I've been doing this all my life and this is what I love to do. It feels good to be able to help someone in a jam. Sometimes we'll give students their fixed phone back and they'll start crying. They're very attached to their technology and it is nice to be able to help them out."

Computer Tyme is open Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mills encourages anyone who needs their broken technology looked at to stop by during those hours.

Radford Coffee Company serves coffee with a mission >

By Austin Martin

The Radford Coffee Company opened its door for business in 2015 and since has become a staple of Radford "past the bridge." This coffee shop is different than most though; only two others in the world operate on their business model and contribute as much money as it does to schools and charities in Nicaragua.

The shop is unique from other non-profits in the area in that it is operated completely by volunteers, cutting down on costs of operation and allowing the shop to send

more money to the charities they fund.

"We've been able to send about \$30,000 to the river and about \$15,000 to local charities," said Barbara Johnson.

Shop owners Barbara and Eric Johnson have traveled to the Rio Coco area to do mission work and help maintain schools along the Rio Coco River and bring basic living necessities such as clean drinking water to the area. The shop doesn't only benefit areas outside of the New River Valley but also contributes to local charities here as well.

The other two shops are owned by couples similar to the Johnson's. One is located in Honduras and the other in Florida.

"We also have a couple we met down at the river and they are looking to open a shop in Germany," said Johnson. "We're traveling out there, hopefully soon to help them start renovating their space."

Johnson also describes the challenges that the shop faces, including being only staffed by volunteers.

"It's been a great year with very few complaints, except for our hours. People



Inside Radford Coffee Company

want us to stay open later and maybe more on the weekends, but finding that many people who are able to give that much time is pretty tough," Johnson said.

The coffee shop is on track to repeat profits for the next year and no changes in the way the shop is operated are in the near future.

"Just the same great coffee, and lots of new friends," said Johnson.

Kibbles on Main gives pet owners service...and advice >

By Aubrey Woodward

Kibbles On Main is a high quality pet store that recently opened their second location in Radford. The first location is in Blacksburg. They've pretty much monopolized their 'niche' as they are the only official pet store in such a small town. However, that isn't to imply that they are entirely financially oriented.

Michelle Valcourt is the store manager for the Radford location of Kibbles. She is also a Radford University student. She emphasized one of the store's biggest goals when interacting with customers

is education. "We're all about trying to educate and get everyone on the best plan for their four legged family."

When you're competing with other businesses, having an emotional tie to the community is helpful in setting your business apart. Kibbles has that type of connection. They care about the community and that is what makes this business unique. They care about students as well as their more furry customers.

Valcourt stressed how committed the store is to educating students in order to help them avoid making mistakes that could negatively affect their animal partners. "You've got to make sure, especially when getting an animal, that you're mentally prepared and you've done the research and you know the best things for everything. Different breeds of dogs, different mixes, they all have different nutritional needs and in this day and age where there's so much information out there, it's hard to decipher what's advertising and what's actually realistic. Any marketing scheme is going to say 'our dog food is the best dog food', period, and we have to be really versed on what actually is a good option for animals."


If students are having trouble it is incredibly



Michelle Valcourt, store manager of Kibbles

helpful to be able to walk into their local pet store and get help from an informed party. "Come on into Kibbles and we'll take the time to help you make the good calls for him. We've got all sorts of little tricks for training and for teething. There are certain toys that work better for others, there are certain chews that work great for older dogs but younger puppies shouldn't have because their teeth are still developing." Valcourt solicits cheerily.

Valcourt has some advice for students looking to acquire a pet. "The biggest

thing I could suggest is don't let it be an impulse decision, because it's going to impact you and that animal for their entire lifespan. The worst thing you could do for that animal—and honestly for yourself if you're going to be conscious, socially conscious, about this animal—is getting it before you're ready." 

Stories by Aubrey Woodward, Amy Caudill, Colton McConnell and Austin Martin. Photos by Colton McConnell. All are students in Leigh Anne Kelley's business journalism class at Radford University.





It it ain't baroque... >

The hair salon owner was annoyed. "For months our receptionist has been getting phone calls from this company called Sleestak or something," she said. "Then today I got a registered letter from them. Can you please make them stop?"

I took a look at the letter:

"You have indicated that it is not your intention to obtain a SESAC Music Performance License. Performance of SESAC affiliates' copyrighted compositions without permission represents infringement of copyright and violation of Federal law. Damages for copyright infringement are expensive — but avoidable. To become licensed, please complete, sign and return the enclosed agreement together with appropriate payment . . ."

"Isn't that ridiculous?" she said. "I mean, we're not performing any music in the hair salon, we don't have a band or singers or anything like that."

"Do you have any music at all in the salon?" I asked.

"Sure, we have a stereo," she said. "Usually one of the stylists plugs in her phone and plays pop music from Spotify or Pandora. When I get a chance, though, I like to play a CD of classical music."

"Well, legally any public playing of music is considered a performance," I said, "and if you do that without the permission of the copyright owner, then it's copyright infringement."

"Even with a CD that I paid for?" she said.

"Yes," I said. "When you buy a CD, you only get the right to play the music for your own personal enjoyment. You don't get the right to play it to your customers. To do that, you have to buy a public performance license from the copyright owners. SESAC is one of the companies that collects the money for the copyright owners. The others are called BMI and ASCAP."

"My stylists pay for Spotify and Pandora, so can we play those in the shop?" she said.

"Same thing," I said. "If you want to play Pandora, then you have to pay for a separate service called Pandora for Business, which includes a license allowing public performance."

"I can't believe this!" she said. "It just doesn't seem right to have to pay again for something you've already paid for."

"I suppose you could listen to the radio," I said. "A business

Shark Patrol

By Keith Finch

Executive Summary:

You can't play music CDs or streaming music in your place of business without obtaining a license from the owner of the copyright in the music.


of up to 2000 square feet can play broadcast radio free of charge. And if it's a restaurant then it can be up to 3750 square feet. So can bigger businesses, although then there are some other special rules. But when I say 'radio' I mean FCC-licensed radio — no SiriusXM or internet radio, etc."

"Nah, I can't stand the radio," she said. "I hate the ads. And frankly I don't like their pop music much, either. I prefer classical music. Bach, Vivaldi, Handel."

"Well then, all you need to do is find some copyright-free classical music," I said. "Recorded music is protected by two kinds of copyrights. There's a copyright in the composition, and a copyright in the recording. Now, your favorite composers have all been dead for centuries, so their compositions are all in the public domain, free of any copyright."

"But what about the copyright in the recording?" she said.

"There are websites full of recordings by performers who have donated their copyrights to the public domain," I said. "Or, you could perhaps find some recordings of baroque music made by U.S. Government entities. Anything created by the federal government is copyright-free."

That evening she hit the internet, and before long she had assembled a healthy playlist called "Public-Domain Bach" made up of baroque tracks that artists had put into the public domain, along with a few recordings by the U.S. Army Concert Band. Best of all, she was able to ban her stylists from playing their awful music, and she had a really good excuse. 

Note: *facts have been changed to preserve confidentiality. Oh, and this isn't legal advice—you should consult a lawyer when deciding whether you need to purchase a music license, whether a particular recording is copyright-free, etc.*

“ ”

Recorded music is protected by two kinds of copyrights. There's a copyright in the composition, and a copyright in the recording.

“ ”

A business of up to 2000 square feet can play FCC-licensed broadcast radio free of charge. And if it's a restaurant then it can be up to 3750 square feet. So can bigger businesses, although then there are some other special rules.

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all photos: Pete Deaver

Rewarding work >

Executive Summary:

Virginia Varsity Transfer sets a work culture in motion to build a positive image of moving companies from the industry's often negative expectations.

By Pete Deaver

A lounge area, a Playstation 4, a full gym, several full baths with showers included, and a full kitchen that they will use to cook the staff a Thanksgiving dinner this year. These are just a few of the amenities that John Lugar of Virginia Varsity Transfer has implemented into one of his locations to increase morale and encourage hard work

from his employees. There is no doubt that Lugar's dedication to his employees has paid off, with the company's recent expansion to another location in the valley totaling four so far.

The company has come a long way since the first initial move that inspired it all. It was a spur of the moment opportunity for John Lugar and a friend to move a family from Raleigh Court to Jacksonville, Florida in 1987. "It was November and it was snowing like crazy," Lugar remembers, saying that he drove two stressful hours out of the 12 hour trip, stopping only occasionally. "It was such an adventure, it was crazy."

After that move and a subsequent move to just above Atlanta, Georgia, he and the friend decided to buy a business license.



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"We didn't have any customers, we had no money, no equipment, no anything. Our strategy was to market through the real estate offices." For years they operated by renting trucks from Penske, and paid what was due at the end of the day until they could afford to buy their own equipment. "There was no silver spoon, there was no funding or easy way," Lugar recalls.

But that did not stop them from striving to be the best.

John Lugar always had a bad taste in his mouth when it came to professional movers. "I built this bridge out of toothpicks

and one of the guys stepped on it," Lugar said when discussing one of the five moves his family had undergone while he was growing up. This experience would help shape a valuable business model later, when Virginia Varsity Transfer was in its stages of inception. "I always had the perception that movers don't care, they're expensive, they're impersonal, bad service, they're scary people; and I just thought that if we could take all those negatives and turn them upside down it could actually be a huge positive."

Virginia Varsity Transfer sets itself apart from the stereotypical "dregs of society" by maintaining a high morale and discipline




amongst its employees. "We spoil the guys pretty hard, but we push them hard too," Lugar said. The team is required to uphold a dress and attitude code, detailed by a banner hanging in the facility that lists expectations such as, "good attitude and ready to serve" and "shirt clean and tucked."

"When I was younger and started when I was 18, the whole idea was to be essentially a younger, clean-cut, student athlete moving company," Lugar details about the roots of the company title. "Not the jock in the negative sense but in the positive. An athlete versus a non-athlete is going to be better at doing physically demanding things like moving big awkward [objects] up impossible angles."

It was also appealing to the company to have students on board for the logistics and brain power that they could bring to

the table. "When you're moving a family or a whole household out, you're always encountering little and big issues. So we want smarter guys; and that's something we're always pushing for."

It is clear that after decades of being in business, John Lugar is most proud of his team. "The team we've assembled here is remarkable," he says, struggling to contain his praise. "I'm super proud of all of the people we have here. It's almost like having an all-star team where you get to the point where it's just a ball to come work." He has worked hard to implement many employee benefits that go above and beyond many workplace expectations and that cultivate a sense of loyalty and camaraderie between the employees. Virginia Varsity Transfer strives to set the example that workplace quality directly correlates with a high quality of work. 

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FRONT Celebrates 100th Edition >

You're reading the 100th issue of Valley Business FRONT.

Thank you for your patronage. Our advertisers, readers, contributors, staff, and other stakeholders make this venture possible. We thought it would be timely to reflect on some of our favorite editions over the past volumes (even though every issue contains great stories). Such an exercise also serves as a poignant reminder to keep ever vigilant.

The list below only includes our cover stories; but even in this very moment we always realize we have so many ideas and topics and industries and relevant activities to cover. We're looking forward to bringing you the business and community news in our future volumes. Let us know what you think and how we can continue to serve.



September 2009

Our first cover story on the development front was a big hit. We introduced examples of best buildings, and presented the architecture/construction/engineering and real estate market here in our region in a very tangible way.



September 2010

The international edition. What a favorite! Not only was our cover story about the impact and influence of other nationalities here in our region, but we ensured every inside story featured a business owned or operated by a person from another part of the world. An award-winning magazine for sure (if we entered such things).



October 2008

Our first issue. Jazzed about this one (launched right in the lowest point of the recession) because it verifies our new business journal formula: not a newspaper tabloid, no pre-published editorial calendar, compact format, progressive design, covering all our region's business and industry fronts, locally owned and operated, independent voice.



December 2010

Oh, the response we got from our cover story on alternative medicine. Apparently—not so alternative after all, maybe. People loved this edition. A boost for area practitioners.



January 2009

Our first industry-specific FRONTList. This one was on our local restaurants. This cover became a classic; setting the stage for even more creative approaches.



September 2011

Our cover on "microbrews" (we call them craft breweries today) wouldn't be considered all that special now; but we jumped well in "front" of the big splash and arrival of breweries that came later. This one kind of solidified our expertise on insider knowledge.



March 2009

Who doesn't love entrepreneurs? FRONT was the first to introduce a crop of entrepreneurs to our greater business community before using the e-word became so commonplace.



August 2012

How about a FRONTcover feature on a sub-sub-industry? That's what you get with our collection of a most unique demographic: parentpreneurs. Who doesn't want to read these stories? We cover all businesses of all scopes and scales.



July 2009

Executive recruiters are, in fact, headhunters. Why not show an actual headhunter on the cover? Probably our edgiest cover to date. We're still cleaning up from that mess of tribal markings and what that poor model had to go through.



August 2013

Agritourism is another subject we hit with all the penetration of a thrusting pitchfork. We helped spread the news that this industry is not just a side-job used for extra income by "real" farmers.

What's been covered on 100 FRONTcover stories?



May 2014

Drones, drones, drones. They're everywhere. Well, we were the first on the runway with what was about to come, at least with a brief technical review for our business community. You're welcome; now *DUCK!*



June 2014

What fun we had with the hanging judge. Many of our FRONTcovers use metaphorical images and characters. The proprietor of a local landmark was a perfect fit as we explored how online reviews affect our businesses. Some people are so judgmental.



March 2015

Our technology front selection for this issue's cover story features an interesting startup. But it wasn't just the story of this unique business, we showed how the process works. It's certainly not easy or automatic.



April 2015

Shine on. A lot of people didn't even know moonshine was legal in our state, until this issue came out. (Well, legal if you bust your tail with regulators and produce it on their very specific terms.) A delightful "ride-along-with-the-moonshiner" tale that readers adored.



February 2016

Again with the uncanny timing. Our story on a local chocolatier hit the streets before the death of Willy Wonka (actor Gene Wilder). But this issue also showed how flexible we are as we can "promote" a standard business profile to the cover—just because.



September 2016

Unusual businesses. People are still talking about this one. We rounded up some of the most unique and specific business operators we could find (that were legitimate and legal). The result wasn't Ripley's Believe-it-or-Not, but still a worthwhile attraction.

Philanthropic Enterprises
Blogging (before it was a big deal)
Restaurants Vying for Your Business
Local Publishers and Publications
Rising Entrepreneurs
Fashion in Business
Business Predictions and Forecasting
Youth in Business (before Millennials became the word to use)
Executive Recruiting
Mission-Related Organizations
Architecture/Construction/Engineering Consultants
Fraud and Other Business Misdeeds
Technology Startups
Active Seniors
State of Education
Environmental Issues Affecting Business
Employment and Staffing
Building Maintenance and Services
Lodging, Hospitality and Resorts
State of Real Estate and Agents
Immigrants in Business
Angel Investors and Venture Capitalists
Alternative Medicine
Dealing with Business Hardships
Virginia Tech's Impact on Business
Veterinarians
Customer Service
Manufacturing Report
Recreational Sports Impact
Multitasking
Impact of Fuel Costs
Breweries
The State of Unions
Young Entrepreneurs
Tattoos in the Workplace
Wine and Our Regional Vineyards
Country Club Culture
Business Style
Grantwriting
Grocery Stores
Volunteerism and Service
Parentpreneurs
The State of Construction
Roanoke's Economic Future
Top Salespeople
Roanoke's Airport (called Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional now)
Meeting Places and Conventions
Personal Hardships and Work
Wind Energy
Wedding Services
The Business of Festivals
Agritourism
Political Rhetoric and Business
Business Brokers
In-Home and Multilevel Sales
Fitness Businesses
Cyber Security
Office Ergonomics and Configurations
Video Producers
The Business of Drones
Online Reviews
Business History Lesson
Economic Development
Food Safety
Organization and Association Membership
Relocating to Your College Town
The Railroad
Ethnic Grocers
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Tech Startup
Moonshine Production
Office Organizers
Center for Higher Education
Franchises
Seniors Moving
Reinventing Coal Towns
Human Resources
Informatics, Analytics, Big Data
Digital and Online Business Leaders
Broadband Networks
Television Station Ownership
Community Recruiting and Advocacy
Online Followers and Subscriptions
Mechatronics
Uncommon Businesses
Cultural Affairs and Nonprofits

(and these are just cover stories; not to mention the 1000+ inside stories) More to come.



Career Services beyond job one >

Executive Summary:

Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech has launched an expanded program at its career services, taking the graduate beyond that first job.

By Pete Deaver

Today, the most integral goal for almost all people is to land and keep a good, stable job. It is essential in order to survive and thrive in this increasingly competitive world. Yet, according to Stuart Mease, the Executive Director for Student Advancement in Career Services at Pamplin College of Business, research indicates that your first job out of college only lasts a short fourteen months. That is hardly a stable jumping off point for a new graduate who just entered the working world.



That is where Pamplin's Lifelong Career Services Program comes in.

"Long term employment now is measured by if you've been with the company longer than three years. The next graduating class, they're going to switch jobs and careers twelve to fifteen times in their lifetime," says Mease. The Lifelong Career Services Program is in place to not only help students find that first job out of college, but also the second and third, if need be. "I knew

that there was a demand from employers where they valued the Pamplin degree and they wanted more access to our alums. While that was going on, we'd have graduates who said, 'Hey Stuart, you helped me with my first job, can you help me with my second or third job out of college? I need some contacts, can you introduce me, what do you think I should do, what about this area, etc.'"

The program is designed to help graduates



find a career that suits them by connecting to businesses and companies that value the Pamplin brand. Graduates will consistently be notified of a potential job through the program and they can then take the steps to be hired for that job.

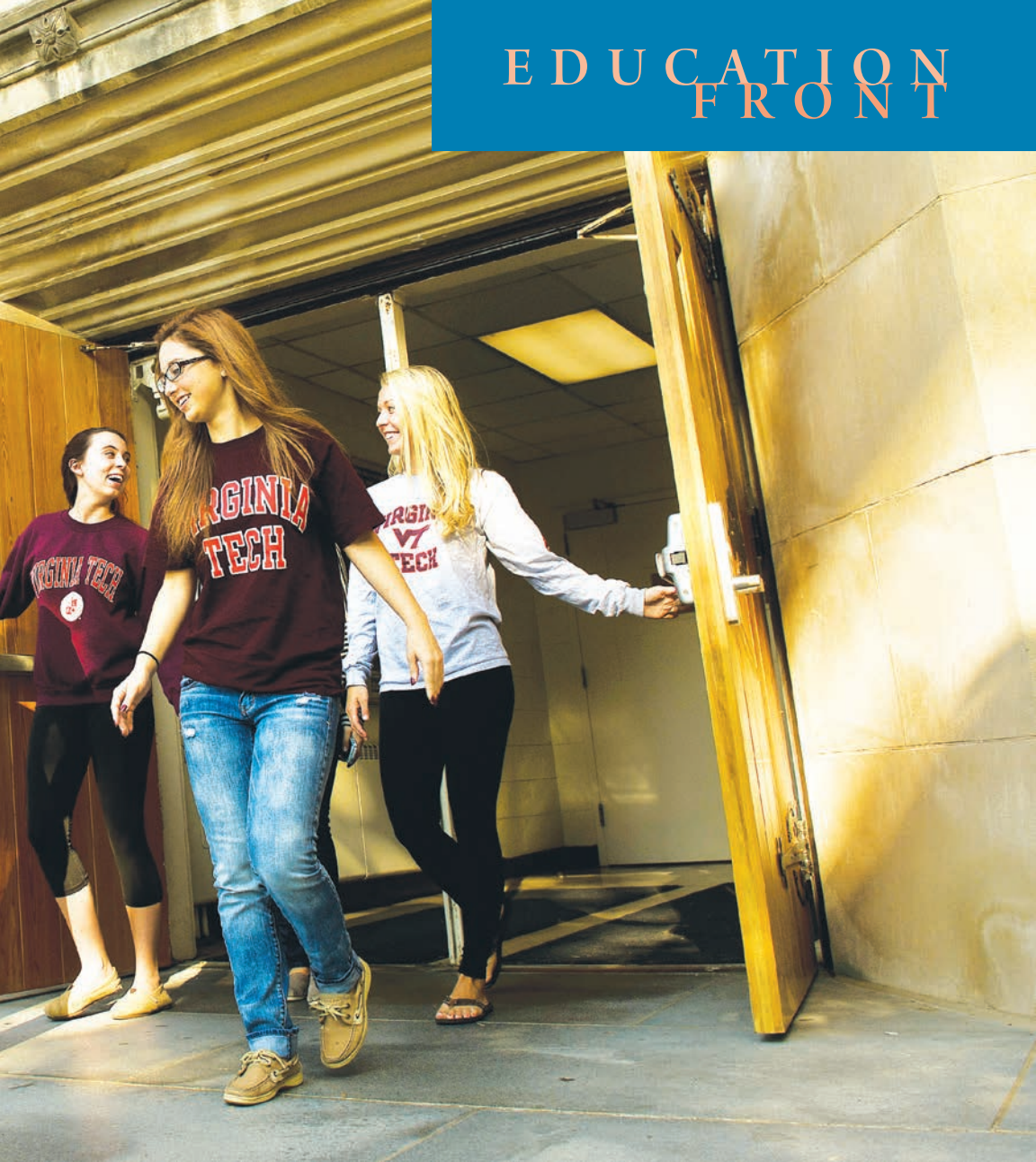
But the program does not stop there.

Once a company hires a graduate, that company can make a contribution to Pamplin that will then be used as a scholarship for an incoming freshman. The freshman who received the scholarship will then be entered into a unique mentoree program.

"And then that student is going to benefit from the money that they would receive and then they would have to go through our mentoree program and the [newly hired alum] would have the ability to mentor that scholarship recipient," Mease added.

The mentoree program is called the Pamplin Undergraduate Mentoree Program, or P.U.M.P. The mentor will meet with the mentoree at least once a semester to answer questions and give guidance.


"Now you have the perspective of someone who is 24 or 25 years old and a couple of



years out being able to say, 'This class really helped me.' or 'If I had to do it over again, I would do X.' or 'Here's something you really want to think about in managing your career.'"

Although the program is still in its early stages (with a launch date of November 2nd, 2016) and true results have yet to be revealed, some graduates are already beginning to see its potential. One graduate, Thomas DuScheid, acknowledges that although he is happily employed, the program could have helped him move faster in his search after graduation. "What makes this program so desirable

for alumni is that it is made up of very good companies that are specifically looking for Virginia Tech Pamplin alumni," DuScheid added.

The Lifelong Career Services program is cleverly structured in such a way that it creates a self-sustaining cycle of helping its students. According to Mease, the true scope of its potential will not be revealed until around 2020, yet its benefits are clear. "I don't know who loses on this. It truly is a win - win - win for everybody." 

For more information about the program, visit the website at www.pamplin.careers.



Dis-trustworthy >

Do you discriminate?

I hope so.

I hope you can tell the difference between a well-made product and one that is poorly made. I hope you know which restaurant is a better choice over another. I hope you are extra observant in unfamiliar territory.

And I hope you don't expect truth from the news you receive.

Fake news is hardly a new phenomenon. It's not even elevated—unless you're talking about the occurrences of fake news due to the sheer quantity and barrage of sources we have today.

I was going to provide handy steps and points to assist all of us in determining when news is fake and when it is not. Maybe I'll still have to compose that instructional explanation for the most naïve among us or blindly indiscriminate minds that continue to respond to fake news.

But if we first accept the premise that no news is truly unbiased—that will be a good start. If we quickly throw out the trash, discard the sources that are obviously inaccurate, overtly sensational, and blatant propaganda pushing an agenda—that will further serve our reasoning faculties.

And then, we still run all these processes through the remaining sources we accept as somewhat credible.

We discriminate. We exercise judgment. We remain skeptical.

Fun, eh?

Actually... yes.

It's good to be on your game, to have a sharp mind. It's good to be especially guarded when it comes to social media feeds, "breaking" news, and the rush-to-be-first reporting—a perfect recipe for fake and false information. And it's even better to strengthen your discriminating skills for research-driven or investigative news, as those productions can be particularly deceptive or downright sneaky in slipping you the kool-aid.

Is this FRONT magazine trustworthy?

You be the judge. We can make mistakes. We can get inaccurate input. And we can mess up simply due to our mission to serve as an advocate for business here.

We encourage you to discriminate.

We'll do the same. 

On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

Executive Summary:
Fake news is all around us! (Always has been).

Landing in our region >

As the local, statewide, and national land development and engineering sectors become increasingly competitive, it's imperative that our industry identify and prepare the next generation of leaders. Estimates from civil engineering departments at leading universities in the United States show that as many as a quarter to a third of graduates work in the land development sector. Yet for years no academic institution had a dedicated program to prepare students to tackle the unique issues associated with land development and design. That changed a decade ago when Virginia Tech's Charles E. Via, Jr. Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering launched a new program: the Land Development Design Initiative ("LDDI"). The program is the first of its kind in the United States and its primary goal is to educate and prepare civil engineering students for a career in the land development industry, including positions with engineering firms, developers, home builders, equipment manufacturers, and contractors.

Now in its 10th year, LDDI is an exceedingly successful program and national model. More than a thousand students have participated in LDDI, which has a 100 percent placement rate after graduation. Notably, this placement rate remained 100 percent even during the Great Recession, an indication of the true extent of need from engineering firms and other businesses involved in land development and design.

A key component of the program's success has been its innovative partnership with the private sector. That partnership takes many forms. For example, firm leaders at dozens of engineering firms in Virginia serve as mentors for students. They also are guest lecturers in classes and assist students on project work. These engineering firms benefit by tapping students for internships and eventual fulltime positions in their companies. Many LDDI graduates join businesses around Virginia, including those in the Roanoke area and New River Valley. Several leading engineering firms in the New River Valley support LDDI. In fact, the demand is so robust for students trained in the LDDI program that national firms are attracting students to all corners of the country.

LDDI also has had a direct impact on Southwest Virginia through projects with the City of Roanoke, the Town of Blacksburg, and Montgomery County. These efforts have focused on pressing land development and design issues, such as stormwater management and regulation. These research projects have been advantageous for the students by giving them real world experience and to the localities that benefit from this new expertise.

continued on Page 42



Guest Commentary

By Jeff Lighthiser

Executive Summary:
Virginia Tech's Land Development Design Initiative is a national model for academic and business partnerships.


Guest Commentary

from Page 41




LDDI is a vital program that builds bridges between Virginia Tech and the business community. Both the school and private sector gain from this partnership. In return, those private businesses help educate the next generation of professionals and offer valuable financial support for the program.

The strategy of a partnership with private businesses is an established approach for many university departments. However, it wasn't common practice in 2006 for the land development sector. Virginia Tech's LDDI program was the first in the nation to create a partnership with land development firms and establish a dedicated track of course work to address this topic. Among the program's most significant benefits, three stand out. First, since the program specializes in land development and design, new professionals can contribute to projects immediately rather than need months of on-the-job training. Thanks to a program that cultivates and enhances land development skills, graduates can tackle complex issues right away, from regulatory and zoning requirements to design challenges to sustainability concerns. Second, it's critical that those professionals who design sites for development manage stormwater and erosion controls. Not only can universities deliver the educational background needed on these topics, but they can help develop new insights and solutions. Third, programs like LDDI can address the labor shortage in the engineering and land development fields. Gary Bowman, founder and president of Virginia-based Bowman Consulting, noted that as one of the fastest growing engineering firms in the country, it's vital that they have a robust pipeline for talent from college campuses. More than half of the new grads that Bowman hires come from LDDI. He believes that the program offers long term and tangible benefits to his firm and the students.

LDDI is a vital program that builds bridges between Virginia Tech and the business community. Both the school and private sector gain from this partnership. In return, those private businesses help educate the next generation of professionals and offer valuable financial support for the program. It's important to note that LDDI is funded by the land development and engineering community in Virginia. Only by raising funds from the private sector and leveraging that support through the university, can the program continue to thrive. It's paramount that the engineering and land development sectors continue to support programs like LDDI. 



Virginia Tech's Land Development Design Initiative program was the first in the nation to create a partnership with land development firms and establish a dedicated track of course work.




Where are
you going?

View of downtown Roanoke, VA

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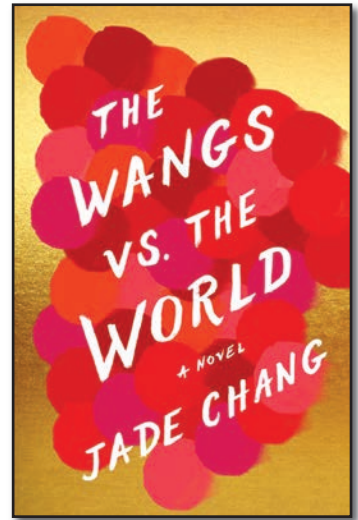


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Books @ the FRONT >

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



Empire strikes forward

Talk about a story that hooks you from the very beginning, carrying you all the way through—Jade Chang's *The Wangs vs. the World* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 2016) has it all. Lost fortune, family reunion, road trip, personal flaws and mishaps, all wrapped up in a snippet of cross-cultural contemporary Chinese-American timeline and spearheaded by one who is essentially—a dad.

Deeper than the iconic National Lampoon's Griswold family, but every bit as farcical and colorful, you can't help but graft yourself into this family tree as you ride along in the outdated but meticulously maintained Mercedes wagon.

I know Charles Wang. Thanks to a most clever and well-crafted character development, I know this man as well as his three children, his second wife, and the man himself. That make good story. Even choppy dialogue stay with you. You spend time with Wang family, ok? More from Jade Chang be alright by me.

—Tom Field

Chase on rail

Michael Abraham's latest nonfiction book, *Chasing the Powhatan Arrow* (Pileated Press; 2016) takes you on a journey following the rails of the

Powhatan Arrow. From Virginia, to West Virginia, to Ohio, Abraham stops at several locations along the line to talk with people about their area and what they remember from the passenger service line.

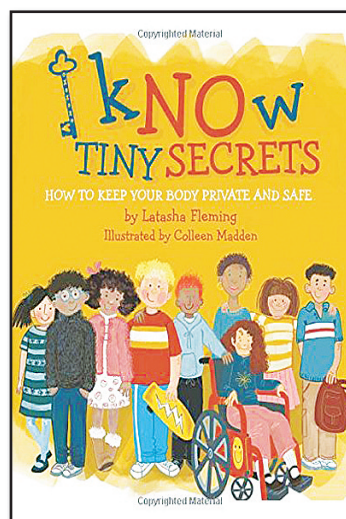
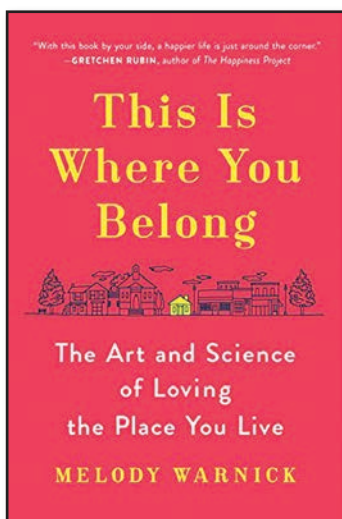
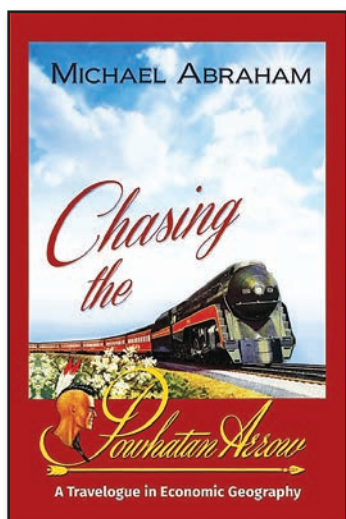
From Norfolk to Cincinnati, Abraham brings to life the stories of the railroad. How Claytor Lake was named, the story of Mary Ingles Draper, among others, Abraham takes you inside the lives of the people who lived along this route. Interspersed with the history of the Norfolk Southern line, the economic and geographic changes, and the personal histories of places along the line, *Chasing the Powhatan Arrow* immerses you in a time gone by.

As with Abraham's other nonfiction books, the stories will draw you in, placing you in the midst of the towns, the locations, the people's lives as they tell their stories. Climb aboard and start your own journey.

—Sally Shupe

Rooted

Would you consider yourself mobile, stuck, or rooted in southwest Virginia? Do you feel that you "belong" here? In her book *This Is Where You Belong - The Art and Science of Loving the Place You Live* (Viking; 2016) Melody Warnick of Blacksburg unravels the complexities



of why people choose a particular locality to settle down. Her diligent research reveals what amenities and social interaction people seek in a community. Chapters like Buy Local, Commune with Nature, and Eat Local Food highlight what people find important in the place they live and she provides excellent personal examples from SWVA.

From my perspective one of the most important topics Melody discusses is the "local multiplier effect." This means that the more we choose to buy from local business, the more positive impact it has on the local economy overall. She highlights a number of Blacksburg businesses and explains how a personal commitment to invest a few dollars each month with them enriches the entire community. The book becomes a reference guide with checklists on specific things you can do to ensure rootedness where you live and maximize your enjoyment while making a contribution to the community. The book is a great read for anyone seeking to support local economies.

—David Seriff

Child protection

The organization, Know Tiny Secrets LLC is based in Charlotte, North Carolina. Its goal is to get this book into as many children's hands as possible to help children learn to speak up against sexual abuse. This book is written by a survivor

of sexual abuse for young children to teach them about sexual abuse and to empower them.

Know Tiny Secrets (CreateSpace; 2015) by Latasha Fleming teaches children how to keep safe and how to talk about sexual abuse. It is geared toward young children, with pictures, simple words, and a powerful message.

If there a young child in your life get them this book and teach them what is sexual abuse and stop it in its tracks. All children are special and unique. They need to know they can say no, and they need to know who they can trust if they need to talk to someone.

Explanations of what sexual abuse is, signs of sexual abuse, and situations to avoid are talked about in this book in a language that young children can understand. Let's keep our kids safe and teach them how to be in control of their bodies. Teach them who they can trust, who they can talk to.

—Sally Shupe

(The reviewers: Tom Field is a creative director and publisher of FRONT; Sally Shupe lives in Newport, works at Virginia Tech, and is a freelance editor; David Seriff is a training manager at AT&T and the perpetrator behind "The League of Interesting Gentlemen" a business leadership conversation group in Blacksburg.)



Investment advice shop >

Lopez Wealth Management, headquartered in Abingdon, has opened a Roanoke location at 5604 Starkey Road; the announcement celebrated by ribbon-cutting on Dec. 5.



Fan-tastical >

A "Harry Potter & The Magical Holiday Ball" event was held at Barnes & Noble Roanoke Tanglewood Mall bookstore on December 9, featuring music, demonstrations, theatrical readings, and costume awards from GEEK MOB Roanoke.



Santa's cookie plate >

Glazed Bisque-It hands-on craft shop in Roanoke holds a children's holiday ornament painting event where their handprints and Santa's are placed on a cookie plate.





On the good ship >

Casarock Travel of Roanoke took its 2016 Travel Conference aboard the NCI cruise ship Escape.



Opened cage >

The Bird Cage held its grand opening of its downtown Roanoke location on Dec. 14; owner Gwenda Kellet, who also runs the Salem boutique on College Avenue, opened the second store on Franklin Street.

FRONT 'N ABOUT



Wine & Design

Fun for all >

Wine & Design of Christiansburg served the Pi Beta Phi chapter at Virginia Tech's Squires Student Center at the end of October; more than 140 attended the alcohol-free event, part of the ArtBuzz, Kids, Teen, Student program lineup for the year.

Just some friends >

Carter Brothers of Spilman Thomas & Battle law firm, **Bruce Bryan** of B2C Marketing, and **Harvey Brookins** of National Bank meet for a holiday lunch, a tradition the "business associates-turned friends" have honored since 2013.



Courtesy of Harvey Brookins

CONTRIBUTORS

Pete Deaver is a freelance writer, currently attending Virginia Western Community College and managing Salem Valley 8 movie theater. [petedeaver@yahoo.com]

Dan Dowdy is the business development director for Valley Business FRONT and owner of The Proofing Prof proofreading services (www.proofingprof.com). His background includes service in the U.S. Air Force and an extensive career in education, including teaching college-level writing competency and business courses, and working for a Fortune 100 company. [ddowdy@vbFRONT.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]

Keith Finch is an attorney with Creekmore Law Firm in Blacksburg [keith@creekmorelaw.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]

Mike Leigh is president of OpX Solutions, LLC, a performance improvement company that helps organizations pursue operational excellence. A retired naval commander and former GE manufacturing manager, he has extensive experience in leadership development and process improvement. [Mike@OpXSolutionsLLC.com]

Ariel Lev is the director of Grandin

CoLab. She has a B.S. in communications and broadcasting from Appalachian State University, a M.A. in communications, culture and technology from Georgetown University, lives in Roanoke with her husband, and enjoys her work with CityWorks (X)po and other business development activities. [akleath@gmail.com]

Christine Liana is a business writer and licensed insurance agent. Her 27-year career includes banking, insurance, law and local government, in which she's worked with a diverse management and client base. Christine earned a Certificate in Management from Darden Graduate School of Business, University of Virginia. [businesstalk@protonmail.com]

Jeff Lighthiser, PE is the President and CEO of Draper Aden Associates, an engineering, surveying, and environmental services firm. He has previously served as the

LDDI Advisory Board Chair. [jlighthiser@daa.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 15 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 is a journalism graduate of the University of North Carolina, 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]

“People who dressed up were more likely to employ 'big picture' thinking — Page 14

“A good thing can't be kept a secret for long — Page 61

FRONT 'N ABOUT



Morning after >

Better Building Works, LLC is "the place to work!," says Monica Rokicki-Guajardo; as this photograph shows the contemplative environ the morning after the Christmas Vesper and USGBC gathering in mid-December.



Swing >

Westlake Golf Course at Smith Mountain Lake hosted the Swing 50 campaign in honor of the lake's 50th anniversary; Dr. Ken Thelan won the promotion, which involved at least 50 rounds of golf between June 1 and November 20.

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

Career FRONT

FINANCIAL FRONT



Hall



Schang



Levan

Stacy Hall has joined as account manager; **Jennifer Schang** has been promoted to senior vice president, operations; and **Mollie Levan** has been promoted to assistant vice president, client services manager at Dominion Risk Advisors in Roanoke.

Dana Tiller has joined as retail loan processor at the Bank of Fincastle.

Adam Armstrong has joined as mortgage banker at New River Valley office of HomeTown Bank.

Shannon Miller and **Stephen Anderson** have joined as



Armstrong



Miller



Anderson

vice presidents of commercial banking in the Virginia market of BNC Bank.

LEGAL FRONT



Calton



Coleman

Charles Calton and **Lauren Coleman** have joined as associates at the Roanoke office of Gentry Locke.

WELLNESS FRONT



Hudgins



Schleider

Paul Hudgins has joined as senior vice president of human resources and chief human resource officer, and **Barbara Schleider** has joined as vice president and associate chief information officer at Carilion Clinic.

TECH/INDUSTRY FRONT

Rex Geveden has been named president and chief executive officer of BWX Technologies Inc.

DEVELOPMENT FRONT

Vic Coffey of RE/Max All Start Realty has

been named 2016 Realtor of the Year by the Roanoke Valley Association of Realtors.



Poe

Bill Poe has joined as manager broker at Cushman & Wakefield / Thalheimer Roanoke office.

RETAIL/SERVICE FRONT

Harry Carrion has been appointed president of Haley Automotive Group.

Susan Amos has joined as managing director; **Rob Ruthenburg** has been promoted to general manager; **Suzanne Gandy** has been promoted to community partner manager; **Michael Williams** has been named business manager; and **Chris Conners** has joined the staff at WVMP 101.5 radio station.

EDUCATION FRONT

Pareena Lawrence will be installed as new president of Hollins University in July.

Dr. Fidel Valea has

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.



Lawrence



Valea

joined Carilion and the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine as chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology.



Dunkley

Leanna Blevins has been appointed executive director of New College Institute.

Kay Dunkley has been named executive



Taylor

director of Roanoke Higher Education Center.

Lindsay Murray of W.E. Cundiff Elementary School

in Roanoke County is the recipient of the national \$25,000 Milken Educator Award.

Adam Taylor has been named manager of the Catawba Sustainability Center.

Gerelt Tserenjigmid has been named assistant professor in Department of Economics; **Gang Wang** has been

Thinking of Medical School?

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Tserenjigmid



Wang



Hungerford

appointed assistant professor in Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering; **Susan Gill** has been named director of new media; **Laura Hungerford** has been named head



Brown



Clinton



Hodes

of the Department of Population Health Sciences; **David Brown** has been named associate professor of human nutrition, foods, and exercise; **Sarah Clinton** and **Georgia Hodes** have been

named associate professors at the School of Neuroscience at Virginia Tech.

CULTURE FRONT

Stephen Moret has been named chief executive officer of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.



Sharp

Elijah Sharp has been designated deputy executive director of New River Valley Regional Commission.

Paul Moody received

the 2016 Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Society's Merit Award on behalf of the ReNew the New Committee.

MUNICIPAL FRONTS

Kenneth Gillie Jr. has been named director of community development for the City of Danville.



Clark

Michael Clark has been named director of Parks and Recreation for City of Roanoke.

Compiled by Tom Field

“ ”
We want smarter guys

— Page 33



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Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport allows Uber

Money shop

Lopez Wealth Management, headquartered in Abingdon, has opened its Roanoke office at 5604 Starkey Road.

S.W. training opps

The U.S. Department of Labor has allocated \$6 million in funding for disadvantaged workforce training to be managed by **New River / Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board** in a "Pathways to the American Dream" program serving Southwest Virginia.

Unloading

Volvo Trucks North American is laying off around 500 jobs in the first quarter of 2017 at its manufacturing plant in Pulaski County; a move following significant layoffs throughout 2016. Over the past decade the

plant's employee pool has varied from less than 1,000 to nearly 3,000; company officials citing long-haul market demands for the fluctuations.

To the nines

GO Virginia a statewide economic development initiative under the General Assembly, has formulated nine districts to be served by regional councils. The initiative includes funding for projects it oversees in its first two-year \$35 million budget.

Buffalo trails

Aim High Driving School has opened in Floyd, offering driver education and improvement training.

Family line

Fink's Jewelers has released a private label brand jewelry collection

under the Sabel name, taken from CEO Marc Fink's mother's maiden name.

Male squirrels

Mary Baldwin University in Staunton has announced it will allow men to live on campus; a change from its founding and 175 year tradition as a women's college.

Report card

Virginia Chamber Foundation has deployed an economic performance online review dashboard currently available at www.juiceboxdata.com/vcdashboard where the state is compared to other states on various criteria.

Million mark

Super Carlin Brothers, a Roanoke-based entertainment review channel on YouTube

[featured in FRONT January 2016 edition] hit its 1-million subscriber mark on Dec. 1.

Co-co sites

TechPad coworking site in Blacksburg has been acquired by James Creekmore, an attorney who also owns the studio2.0 coworking space.

Turkey treats

Roanoke Rescue Mission reported its largest annual fundraiser netted a record-breaking \$265,400 at the 2016 Drumstick Dash; over 12,500 people participated in the downtown walk/run on Thanksgiving morning.

Uber allowed to fly

Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport now officially recognizes the **Uber** ride sharing app and

service at the airport, with its Dec. 2 announcement of the agreement.

Run to top 50

Fleet Feet Sports in Roanoke was listed as one of two stores in Virginia in "The 50 Best Running Stores in America" 2016 list published by Competitor magazine.

Towering

Blue Ridge Towers, a cell tower provider and leasing business serving companies such as Verizon, ShenTel, and T-Mobile in a five-state region, has opened an office in downtown Roanoke.

Something fishy

Blue Ridge Aquaculture, a producer of tilapia for restaurants and grocers, is expanding in Henry County with a \$3.2 million investment.

Bigger label

Smyth Companies consumer products labeling manufacturer in Bedford is expanding with a \$4.6 million investment and at least 16 new jobs.

Tea party transfer

White Oak Tea Tavern is moving from its

historical landmark site in Botetourt County to another historical structure in Salem, the Preston Place house; an expected opening of the tea, snack, and gift business in February.

Rolled and cold

Champloo Dessert has opened in downtown Salem, a rolled ice cream treat popularized in Asian cultures.

Med center

Centra has opened an ambulatory care medical center in Amherst County behind the Ambriar Shopping Center.

Manning the unmanned

TORC Robotics is expanding its facility at Blacksburg Industrial Park, including the hiring of about 20 new positions.

Branches grafted

Branch Group construction company in Roanoke has consolidated two of its subsidiaries, Branch Highways and E.V. Williams, into a new company called Branch Civil Inc.

Opening doors

Novatech sliding door manufacturer is expanding in Henry County; 50 jobs

Have an announcement about your business?

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

expected in the next three years.

Strong support

Canatal Steel USA is expanding its steel fabrication operations at its Botetourt County facility with a \$1.5 million investment along with 38 jobs.

All aboard

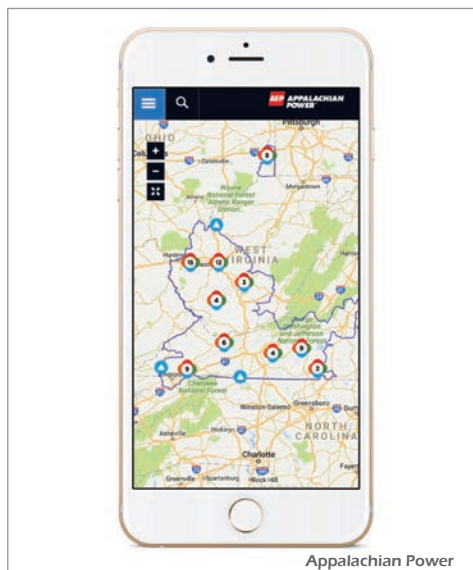
Faulconer Construction Company has been selected to build the Amtrak boarding platform in downtown Roanoke;

an \$11 million project expected to complete for the train's operation in fourth quarter 2017.

Power app

Appalachian Power has released a new online interactive map that provides real-time information about power outages without requiring customers to log into their accounts; available at AppalachianPower.com/outagemap

Compiled by Tom Field



Appalachian Power

APCO App

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, also available by link at vbFRONT.com.



Roanoke Regional Partnership Staff 2016

Doing Business In Southwest Virginia > [start here]

Executive Summary:

If your business is looking to locate or expand, the Roanoke Regional Partnership and the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance are good places to start.

By Christine Liana

Welcome to a season of new! New year ... New presidential administration ... New year's resolutions ... your new issue of *Valley Business FRONT*. And, of course, *new business* ... two words that evoke hope and anticipation of a profitable year.

With the barrage of competition in the marketplace, providing quality services or products isn't enough for businesses to succeed. Large and small companies must have a smart marketing plan, and, unless it's strictly web-based business, they need the right site in the right locality. This process can be daunting, especially for companies new to the area ... unless, of course, they



know where to start. This begins with Virginia's regional economic development organizations.

Location, Logistics, and Learning

Virginia is ranked #6 according to Forbes' *Best States For Business* in 2016. (Rounding out the list is: Colorado #5, Texas #4, Nebraska #3, North Carolina #2, and Utah at #1.)

The Roanoke Valley is home to a diverse mix of industry, including: transportation manufacturing; advanced manufacturing;

outdoor recreation, outfitters and retailers; health care; medical device manufacturing. It's also home to finance, insurance, and real estate companies.

The New River Valley's major industries include education, technology, defense, transportation equipment manufacturing, and electrical equipment manufacturing. The largest employers include Virginia Tech and Radford University, Montgomery County School Board, Moog, Inc., Walmart, and Carilion New River Valley Medical Center.

What's the attraction to the Roanoke Valley



Eldor Announcement

and New River Valley? Let's start with a look at *location, logistics, and learning*:

- Proximity to Interstates 81, 64, and 77
- Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport
- Fixed Base Operators providing aircraft maintenance, rentals, charters
- General aviation service at New River Valley Airport, Dublin
- Virginia Tech - Montgomery Executive Airport, Blacksburg
- Air freight services and interstate trucking services
- Rail freight service by Norfolk Southern and CSX
- Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine
- Virginia Tech Transportation Institute
- Virginia Tech Center for High Performance Manufacturing
- Advanced Technology in Mechatronics at Virginia Western Community College
- Advanced Manufacturing & Packaging Technology Program at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College

The Connector

When you're looking to do business, it's been said that it's not just what you know, but who you know. It always helps to have the right connections in business - someone who knows somebody who needs what you have (products or services), or who has what you need (location). The Roanoke Regional Partnership is one such connection.

The Roanoke Regional Partnership, founded in 1983, is a regional economic development organization that helps companies locate, expand, and retain their businesses in the Roanoke Valley. As a public-private partnership, it represents the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Franklin and Roanoke; the cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; and the Town of Vinton. The Partnership is a joint effort among these localities, plus hundreds of private sector businesses. As the "connector," the Partnership finds opportunities, raises business visibility in the Roanoke region, and provides a marketing service.

"Since its establishment in 1983, the Partnership has helped attract more than \$1.3 billion in investment and 16,000 primary jobs," says Executive Director Beth Dougherty. "The Roanoke Regional Partnership is an example of 21st century economic development. One in which attracting business investment is only one part of the program. Developing our outdoor assets has changed our community narrative

from an old railroad town to an active outdoor community. Attracting talent and sharing market intelligence for decision making are other modern ways the Partnership helps grow our region and its prosperity."

"The Partnership also is responsible for the Roanoke Outside Foundation, which has developed our outdoor assets into an economic sector. Projects of Roanoke Outside include www.RoanokeOutside.com, Radical Reels film festival, Blue Ridge Marathon and GO Fest, which have been phenomenally successful," said Dougherty.

The Go-To Source

If you're looking to locate or expand your business in the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, or Pulaski, any of the 10 incorporated towns, or the City of Radford, your first call should be to the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance (NRVEDA).


As a non-profit organization established in 1990 and co-funded by public and private contributions, the NRVEDA attracts and helps retain jobs, investment, and skilled workers in the New River Valley. As the first point of contact, they help companies locate and expand to the area. Through their marketing and collaborative partnerships with local governments, schools, and businesses, the New River Valley is a

viable area for living and doing business.

Area Development magazine ranked the Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford metropolitan statistical area in the New River Valley as #30 overall out of 394 for economic strength in its *Leading Locations for 2016*.

Global Business ... Locally

A good thing can't be kept a secret for long. And since the Roanoke and New River Valleys are Foreign Trade Zones, it's not only U.S. companies that recognize the value of doing business here: the list of foreign companies doing business in our region looks like a United Nations *Who's Who* and include: Austria, Brazil, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Japan, Mexico, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, and The Netherlands.

So as you develop your organization, consider what so many other companies have discovered: the Roanoke and New River Valleys are good places to do business, and the Roanoke Regional Partnership and New River Valley Economic Development Alliance can help your business with the right resources. 

Sources: *Roanoke Regional Partnership; New River Valley Economic Development Alliance; Forbes; Area Development magazine.*



Deschutes Announcement

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“

She was able to ban her stylists
from playing their awful music

— Page 29

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Roanokers are thirsty for
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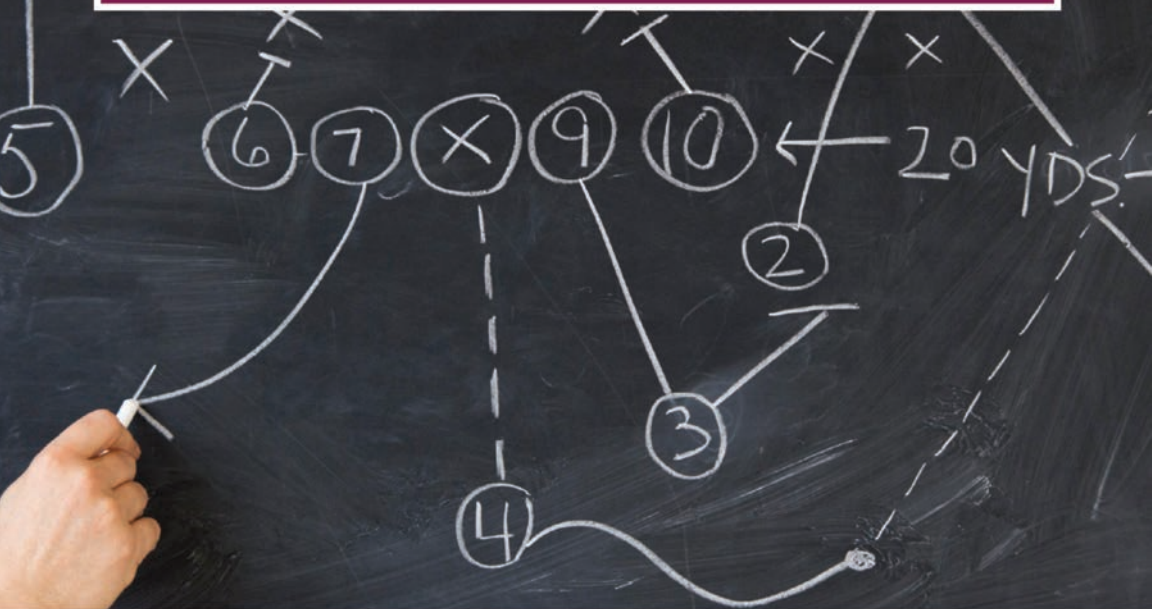
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