

Valley Business

# FRONT

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

FREE • ISSUE 106 • JULY 2017

[vbFRONT.com](http://vbFRONT.com)

## A Simulating Experience

Mannequin,  
Carilion Clinic

# Financial Solutions for Growing Valley Businesses

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**Loan**

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I imagine there are all kinds of ways to simulate situations that add stress to the required response. When I was a young lad in Civil Air Patrol, we conducted mock search-and-rescue maneuvers all over the hills and through the woods here throughout Virginia's Blue Ridge. On a much smaller and individual scale, I would "help" my daughter in her position as a catcher for her softball team by intentionally throwing balls right smack in her face (with her catcher's mask on, of course... what kind of dad do you think I am?). I would scream and holler insults at the same time to add intensity (though such activities never quite rose to my simulated level at her real games). And we did the same thing to our basketball players attempting simple foul shots. This hollering and flailing of arms and such as a player simply goes to catch a ball or take a shot or pass a ball inbound is a pretty effective technique to show how strong one's focus and concentration has to be to perform in the highest manner even in the most intense games.

Imagine taking all of this to life-and-death scenarios. That's what the Carilion Clinic's Sim Lab is all about. Imagine a medical team scrambling around as a patient's vital signs plummet or multiple Code Blues hit the deck, or a crisis drops down from the helipad with victims from a multi-car accident or natural disaster. It's here, in a simulation laboratory, where professionals prepare for the worst. So they can be at their best.

Now, there's one place where I've always wanted to try the "screaming-in-your-face as you attempt to take a shot" test, just because I have this secret desire to annoy these players. What sport? you asked? Golfers. I don't think they would respond all that well.



**Tom Field**

““

A business is a meter of needs and wants, nothing more — Page 45

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## EMERGENCY CARE

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## **New Simulation Lab About to Open in Roanoke**

*Prepares Medical Professionals Operating  
in High Stress, Crisis Situations*



Cover photography by Tom Field.

# Valley Business FRONT

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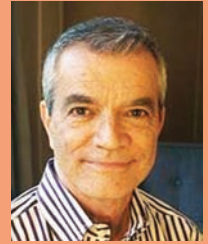
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JULY



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## 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



Carissa Mulahn



Anne Sampson



Nicholas Vaassen

Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 44.

## 2017 Members

**Nancy Agee** Carilion (Wellness)  
**Laura Bradford** Claire V (Retail)  
**Nicholas C. Conte** Carilion (Legal)  
**Warner Dalhouse** Retired (Seniors)  
**John Garland** Garland Properties (Development)  
**Nancy Gray** Hollins University (Education)  
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**John D. Long** National D-Day Memorial (Culture)  
**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.

“

So, I can't fire someone because of the color of his skin, but I can fire him because of the color of his shirt? — Page 27

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Mannequins in Sim Lab function like patients and cost about \$80,000 each

FRONT

# New Simulation Lab About to Open in Roanoke

*Prepares Medical Professionals Operating in High Stress, Crisis Situations*

## Carilion Sim Lab to grow 15-fold starting this month >

**Executive Summary:**  
*Carilion Clinic's simulation lab is designed to improve processes and outcomes during high risk situations; and now it's about to expand dramatically.*

By Nanette Levin

The Center for Simulation, Research, and Patient Safety, fondly referred to as the Sim Lab by those running the facility at Carilion Clinic, is in the process of being recreated. The current 800 square foot space, adapted in 2005 when the Sim Lab Department was created, will be replaced by a 12,000-square foot facility come the end of December 2017. Groundbreaking for renovations at the old trolley repair building begin this month for this enhanced, expansive resource.

Simulation labs were initiated by the airline, defense, nuclear and other high-risk industries to allow learning prior to needing to act in sudden crisis situations. This idea became popular in hospital and similar medical backdrops more recently as health care professionals (and insurance companies) discovered how significantly outcomes could be changed in real-time. The idea is to practice life-threatening situations through simulated practice that replicates these circumstances in a controlled setting. Much of the work being done in the Sim Lab at Carilion includes practice on high tech mannequins and urgent care teams running through drills to improve technical skills, reaction times and communications during high stress situations.

# COVER STORY

Carilion's current Sim Lab has several anatomically correct, reactive and responsive mannequins, worth about \$80,000 each, as well as dozens of other body parts that can be practiced on for specific procedures.

Any training done on the life-sized mannequins requires a simulation technologist to run them. Basically, the technologists work behind a glass window in the current set up, adjusting vital signs and other information as the team in training responds to issues. Often a physician is also present behind the curtain to direct responses to actions made by the practitioners. This offers an enhanced learning experience that's as close to what would happen with living patients as possible.

The rooms are replicas of what residents, seasoned health care professionals and students face in actual hospital settings with warm, heart-racing, rapid-breathing subjects (of course, the mannequins simulate heart beat and respiration too). These high-tech learning tools are sensitive enough to measure everything from the exact pressure someone is applying to an area to the accuracy of insertion points while also simulating blood flow, urine leaks, vomit and a slew of other reactions to simulated issues and associated trainee responses.

## Simulating stress for better outcomes

Through a partnership with Carilion Clinic and Virginia Tech known as the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute (VTCRI) initiative, the Sim Lab is also being used to help individuals and teams get better about how they handle stressful situations. Spearheaded by Sarah Henrickson





Carilion Clinic

**Sarah Henrickson  
Parker, Ph.D.**

Parker, Ph.D., with the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute, work done in the Sim Lab through her efforts focuses on improving emergency responses of teams. Those participating include seasoned health care professionals as well as residents, med students and undergraduates.

"This is truly a multidisciplinary place. We get the opportunity to work across multiple disciplines . . . train as a team," Henrickson Parker explains. She is a researcher studying human performance in complex settings. She uses simulation as a tool in her research.

Her research involves teams dealing with critical situations in which the teams' actions can mean the difference between life and death. "Simulation requires learners to react as they would in a hypothetical situation, and gives them the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them without having to learn on a real patient. They have practiced doing their work in acutely stressful situations and know what it feels like. Our goal is that when they encounter a similar situation in the real world, they've had practice so they're ready," Henrickson Parker explains.

"While, I think initially, when people walk into a simulation, they think "this is silly; it's not real," once they get into it they start acting like the situation is real life," she continues. "We want to create those real-life situations so learning can happen without any threat to human life," Henrickson Parker asserts.

Simulation is beneficial for both technical skills, such as putting in an IV or starting a central line, as well as teamwork skills, such as leadership, stress management and decision making under pressure.

## Considering horrors in Roanoke and beyond

Carilion Clinic has the only Level 1 Trauma Center in a 100-mile radius. As such, the hospital is the go-to facility for grave emergency situations in this 22-county area serving 40 hospitals. The Sim Lab on the Belevue Avenue hospital campus not only offers teaching and training opportunities for the employees and students directly connected with the facility, but also was created to be available for study and practice simulations for a variety of health care professionals throughout these geographies and institutions.

With the new Sim Lab facility plans underway, strategies are already being formalized to include training for crews of the three helicopters designated for emergencies medical transports as well as the 40 ambulances serving Carilion. In fact, that total number of road worthy vehicles just jumped to 41 with the purchase of a refurbished ambulance by the





Sim Lab to be fully equipped for simulation drills.

One of the more interesting projects on the horizon with the expanded Sim Labs and associated facilities and focus involves plans to simulate catastrophic incidents from occurrence through hospital care. The simulation ambulance will include a high-fidelity mannequin that is also enabled for video capture in live time.

The team is working on orchestrating simulation capabilities to, for example, respond to multi-vehicle accidents on I-81. With the tools being developed for the new facility, crews will be able to practice transporting patients from ambulance, to helicopter, to the emergency room then to specific specialized areas of the hospital with all the necessary associated care occurring and being assessed throughout the practice sessions.

The closest Sim Labs offering similar learning opportunities are in Richmond and at Wake Forest (Winston-Salem, North Carolina). While Lynchburg and Radford do have Sim Labs designed for nurses, they do not have the range or scope of the Carilion Center resource.

## Pregnancy crises averted

Some of the most heartbreaking moments in emergency care can occur with issues such as shoulder dystocia and post partum bleeding. Because these potentially-deadly situations happen infrequently, hospital staff can be ill-prepared to deal with them when they do. As part of the Sim Lab, Carilion invested in a child birth simulator mannequin to give all related healthcare staff the opportunity to practice situations where rapid response is critical.

**Blueprint of the new expanded Sim Lab makes the current one seem like a closet**



FRONT

Sim Lab manager Misty Flinchum stands at control room



Misty Flinchum, Manager of the Center for Simulation Research and Patient Safety (the Sim Lab), explains that providing a means for staff and students to practice before these generally unexpected and always dramatic situations occur has been proven to save lives. This is underscored by the fact that insurance companies provide malpractice discounts to facilities where such simulated training and learning can occur.

## Expanding to the need

Flinchum is currently booking three months out for time in the Sim Lab. That means health care providers and others have to wait to hone their skills for life-threatening situations they may encounter with patients prior to working through all scenarios during simulation time.

With the planned new facility and the hopeful addition of two to three more full-time staff members, this will no longer be an issue. The current Sim Lab is staffed by three full-timers, including Flinchum along with one part time employee. Since a simulation technologist is required each time a mannequin is used for learning purposes, there's a lot involved in the production that unfolds with practice in the Sim Lab.

The facility will expand from one Sim Lab to four, which will allow for a lot more practice time.

Some of the teaching and learning that goes on in this space, such as the work Henrickson Parker is doing to

**Construction begins  
on the new Sim Lab**



FRONT





Carilion Clinic

**David Musick, Ph.D.**

explore and improve the effects of induced stress on teams, does not necessarily include the need for real-time responses from the mannequin tools. Still, eliminating the three-month backlog that's the current reality in the existing space will involve additional demands on technicians' time plus require more people to man the shop once the group moves to the larger space.

In addition to the full-sized mannequin practice and procedure sessions, there are also a wide variety of body parts and other tools designed for learning and performing. These include devices as simple as oranges for injection practice to simulators specific for catheter insertions and items to help surgeons practice laparoscopic techniques. New hire nurses also come in to hone critical thinking skills they can draw from when they're put out on the floor.

The Sim Lab is even used for testing new equipment such as defibrillators, IV infusion pumps and other items prior to purchase. Sim Lab staff and specifically relevant professionals supporting particular activities provide purchase recommendations to the hospital. These suggestions are based on what they discover through simulations using the tools.

With a goal of medical education, quality care and patient safety, the Sim Lab expansion will enable staff, residents, undergraduate students, emergency transportation crews and visitors from surrounding schools, hospitals and areas to practice before lives are in their hands with critical issues. Some of the most life-saving activities of the Sim Lab involve high stress, low incident scenarios that many may not have been seen through residency tenure or prior

professional health care service support. These are the kinds of situations where Sim Lab practice helps providers develop quick, smart decisions that save lives.

Code Blues (indicating a patient requires immediate resuscitation) are practiced with nurses, respiratory therapists, physicians and pharmacists. The results of such sessions have made a big difference in how incidents unfold in actual hospital trauma center situations. Staff participate in simulations designed to ensure the right team gets to the right place as quickly as possible when emergencies occur.

## Evolving Technology

Dr. Timothy J. Fortuna, DO, FACEP, provides the physician support for the Sim Lab. He's Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine for Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. His background includes military service as well as time spent serving as a doctor in the emergency room. He states that the \$80,000 mannequins currently being used in the Sim Lab will be obsolete in three years.

He sees the initial mission of the Sim Lab continuing with the new construction, namely to provide training for health care professionals and to offer a teaching tool for patient safety accessible to students, staff and residents. What he envisions beyond the current focus, though, are a lot more opportunities with the new facility. This will include space to accommodate a much wider variety of scenarios (part of the plans for the space include building a trauma center for simulated emergencies) available to more people. Dr. Fortuna admits there's an expectation to prove a return on investment for the \$80K mannequins and recognizes that as the facility expands, it will be important to keep an eye on inflows, outflows and opportunities for revenue generating activities.

The future may include special events and training focused on developing specific skills sets. Ultimately, the goal is to design the new facility in a way that allows it to expand to meet its own needs so that it can progress toward self-sufficiency.

The Sim Lab is already being used to save money for the hospital and create better patient experiences. Sim lab practice has been proven to decrease infection rates with procedures like inline catheters and reduce harmful outcomes.

Lawsuits, particularly those related to fatal pregnancy issues and the like, tend to result in multi-million dollar rewards. There's a risk management aspect the Sim Lab offers as a return on investment too, in the form of reduced insurance costs and fewer patient complications.

Funding for the new facility came from Carilion Clinic.

Carilion Clinic



Tim Fortuna, D.O.



## Partnering for a healthier tomorrow

The VTCRI is an unusual public-private partnership. Began in September of 2010, the Institute now has 25 research teams led by a faculty members of Virginia Tech. Hendrickson Parker is the liaison for the Sim Lab. She puts primary time into supporting the efforts of this entity.

Twenty percent of those currently capitalizing on the Sim Lab and associates resources are med students. There are about 270 residents and fellows also using the facility. Residents spend about eight hours per month in the Sim Lab over a three-year period.

Currently, the biggest users of the resources contained in the Sim Lab are front line health care professionals, including nurses and physicians. This will not change when it's moved to the new facility.

The space is also used by undergraduates of Virginia Tech as well as the 168 School of Medicine enrollees as well as Jefferson College of Health Sciences 1,100 students.



# COVER STORY

The location of the new Sim Lab facility is along the innovation corridor. Christopher R. Turnbull, Manager of Public Relations for Carilion Clinic says he hopes the development of this initiative will spur additional growth supported by others.


It's just behind Dr. Pepper Park, so if you're out attending social events in the City and wonder what's going on over there, now you know.

This expansion of the Sim Lab is a big undertaking for the small crew currently keeping the current relatively tiny space running, but stakeholders are excited about what this larger resource will mean.

Henrickson Parker sees expanded research possibilities and better equipped teams in her future.

Flinchum is looking forward to being able to serve those in need more quickly with the additional practice rooms while also gaining more staff support to give greater access to more people.

Dr. Fortuna is excited about outfitting the new space with some of the latest simulation support technology.

All speak to how this 12,000 square foot facility will help create better prepared healthcare providers for the community living in and around Roanoke. 

**New Sim Lab sits under Walnut Bridge at foot of Mill Mountain**



FRONT



## Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

### Executive Summary:

*How you dress may convey a lot about yourself; but it can also convey respect for others.*

## Did You See It? >

Did you see it? It was fleeting, like a shooting star moves quickly into sight and then away, leaving us wondering if we really saw it. Mark Zuckerberg showed up to give a commencement speech at Harvard dressed in a suit, dress shirt and necktie.

Noted for sporting his signature jeans and hoodie at his company's initial Wall Street IPO, I'm sure he considered carefully what to wear on his triumphant return to his alma mater – from which he departed early sans degree to found Facebook.

He probably asked his wife's opinion on what he should wear – the black hoodie, jeans and sneakers or a traditional business suit?

The hoodie/jeans uniform has been a symbol for tech-savvy entrepreneurs and programmers of the millennial generation. They thumbed their nose at traditionalists, claiming they didn't have to prove their worth to anyone through their wardrobe. They created a world where they were free from typical societal expectations. And that was that.

So, why is Zuckerberg's attire notable and what does it say to us?


Obviously, Zuckerberg is conveying appreciation for the honor of serving as commencement speaker.

And while Harvard is showing that they're proud of him and the financial empire he's built, his choice of attire is saying to Harvard, "I see all the positive accomplishments of this institution, graduates and alumni. I respect that. I'm confident enough of my own value, that I will dress in a way to pay respect to yours."

He's conveying to the graduates, "This is an extremely important day in your life and I'll give it the respect and attention it deserves. I won't trivialize it with casual words and clothes. I don't need to make a point about my right to be comfortable. Today is not about me."

And to the alumni he's communicating, "I may not have completed my work here but I respect this institution and acknowledge all that you accomplish daily. I'm proud to be part of this tradition."

This uncharacteristic embracing of traditional business attire may be the result of fatherhood, financial success or simply maturity. Whatever the reason, it was a welcome sight on an important day for many.

A simple choice between the comfortable and casual outfit and the solemn and formal outfit - but it spoke volumes about feelings of gratitude, respect, and generosity. Well said, Mr. Zuckerberg! 

Comments? Email [kssurace@aol.com](mailto:kssurace@aol.com)

## American and European styles of eating >

I conducted an etiquette dinner for a well-known university that had a highly successful football program. Imagine me, all five feet of me, trying to instruct these huge young men, looking down at me from an enormous height (and who were not the least bit interested), on proper dining skills! Knowing that most of these young athletes would go on to some sort of professional career, either playing or coaching, I challenged them with the notion that they, if successful, would attend a lot of banquets. Asking them if they felt comfortable using the silverware and glasses that were laid out in front of them, most admitted that they did not. Ah, the teachable moment!

The conversation led to the differences between the American style and the European or Continental styles of eating. A little history: until the 1840's Europeans and Americans ate in the same style, knife set on the right, fork on the left, laying the knife down on the side of the plate after cutting the meat, and moving the fork to the right hand. Then the English stopped shifting their forks back and forth, and began eating with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. In 1853 the French decided that the English way was correct, and before long all of Europe was eating in the English style. Not the independent Americans, though! They stayed with the original method and style of eating.

The athletes were fascinated to learn that, during WWII, American spies in Germany, often blew their cover by the way they handled a knife and fork. You will sometimes see that in old WWII movies. American spies might have spoken the language perfectly, had an excellent grasp of the culture and customs, but they betrayed themselves by eating in the American style.

Some etiquette books insist that one must eat like an American in America, and use the Continental method when in Europe. This is a complete fallacy. In today's world, whether it be business or social, using both styles is correct, no matter which side of the pond you are on. Using a combination of both is also correct.

The student/athletes enjoyed learning how to eat in the European or Continental style. In fact, some of them preferred the latter style, saying it was more practical and more efficient, since it skipped a step. Try it at your next dinner party – but practice first! 🍴



During WWII, American spies in Germany often blew their cover by the way they handled a knife and fork



## Etiquette & Protocol

By Kathleen Harvey Harshberger

**Executive Summary:**  
*How you handled your utensils used to identify from which side of the pond you resided.*





## The 8-year old business owner >

### Executive Summary:

*A Ginger Kid toys is a family business that teaches from both sides: for the owners and the customers.*

### By Caitlyn Scaggs

In many ways the toy company, A Ginger Kid, exists today thanks to the hit TV show Shark Tank. Nicole Haskins and her son Hudson enjoyed watching this show as a family with dad Adam Harman. Together, they dreamed about owning their own business someday and building it together. Nicole said, "We used to talk about it and joke about what we would actually sell, build, make." All jokes aside though, they eventually acted on their dreams to go into business together as a mother-son team and are now the proud owners of A Ginger Kid.

Going from watching Shark Tank and dreaming big dreams to actually owning a company was a progression. As Nicole, a Giles county resident, continued to mull over the idea of forming a company, Christmas time rolled around. Nicole endeavored to buy gifts for all the children in her life and she found herself frustrated with the options. They were all plastic, noisy, and cheap-looking toys. She could not find what she had in mind; something

that made an impression on the child, created an adventure for the family, and would last for generations.

"I started looking for traditional toys that helped me when Hudson was young. Specifically, a toy that taught how to tie shoes, or helped teach colors," said Nicole. That melded with the lingering thoughts about starting a company. Nicole sat down with Hudson and asked if he wanted to start a toy company. Nicole said, "Here we sat, two red heads with this fiery business idea. It is a kid product, by a mom and son Ginger team, and we decided to call it A Ginger Kid. It only seemed fitting."

Nicole conducted research and considered the toys from her childhood that were particularly meaningful. The first toy from A Ginger Kid was a wooden shoe created for children learning to tie their shoes, a fitting name of "All Tied Up." That was just the start.

A Ginger Kid toys are sold online, as fundraisers for schools, and at events like Steppin' Out, happening this August in Blacksburg. There are currently 16 toys within the product line with plans to roll out four new toys each year. Each new toy is carefully evaluated to ensure it aligns with the mission of A Ginger Kid and is designed and reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of both parents and kids.

A Ginger Kid sells "tools and toys that teach." As Nicole shared, "Our purpose is trying to solve the busy parents problems."




Parents are busier now more than ever. As many can attest to, it doesn't leave a lot of time for fundamental teaching or fun for that matter. This is where A Ginger Kid toys enter the picture. Their products are all brightly colored, wooden, heirloom-style toys designed to teach the fundamentals through 2nd grade. They also help parents pause and take a moment to be intentional with their children.

Hudson is proud of his involvement with A Ginger Kid and he takes his role with the company very serious. In fact he even questioned the lighthearted logo initially because he wanted it to be serious. Hudson is a man on a mission to run a successful company alongside his mom. Nicole describes him as, "curious and confident." He is also eager to soak up as much as he can about running a business.

Nicole spends time teaching Hudson about business planning and principles. They talk

about budgets, how to set sales prices, taxes, and occasionally even politics.

"Every single simple thing that we expose him to turns into 10 more teaching moments. He keeps us on our toes," said Nicole. The ideals of A Ginger Kid are lived out daily between Nicole and Hudson as she interacts with him in intentional ways designed to instill confidence, invoke curiosity, and equip him for success.

While A Ginger Kid is about equipping parents and helping children learn with confidence it also has a very personal purpose for Nicole. She shared, "I started A Ginger Kid toys, for my son, so we have something to connect over. This is our shared adventure; it has pulled our family together in more ways than one. My husband Adam and I are very proud of what we have developed with our son and if we sell toys in the process and help a lot of families, it will be been worth it." 

**MONEY**

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**2.10%** APY\*

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**SHARE CERTIFICATE**

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**MAKING**

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<b>60</b> MONTH	<b>10K</b> MINIMUM
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Scott Thomasson with truck





*Granny Layman's Finest*

*"Granny Layman was born in 1909 and raised in Floyd, VA. She started Layman Distributing with her husband in 1948. Her delicious made from scratch recipes were legendary among her family and friends. From our table to yours - we hope you enjoy Granny Layman's Finest!"*

Poster in lobby reflects family tradition

## They still call us candy >

### Executive Summary:

*Salem-based Layman Distributing is about to hit 70 years strong; but the family business isn't just the candy company these days.*

### By Tom Field

Everybody likes candy. But that's only part of the \$135 million in annual sales from inventory Layman Distributing moves from its warehouse just off West Main Street in Salem.

"Yes, people still associate us with Layman Candy, and they even think we make it," says Scott Thomasson, vice president. "But we actually sell more with food services than candy."

The company, started by Thomasson's great grandfather in 1948 and still holding its registration as Layman Candy Company, Inc., remains a family enterprise, and its brand and official "divisional" name as Layman Distributing is plastered all over its trucks the locals see pulling in and out

of convenience stores. Of course what are the colorful images wrapped all around those trucks? Candy.

It's a wonder kids aren't running through the parking lots chasing Layman truck drivers like ice cream trucks on a hot summer afternoon.

Layman Distributing operates out of a its warehouse in Salem (Thomasson says they'll be expanding soon). At 75,000-square feet holding over 10,000 items, with 15 trucks, 90 employees, 800 customers, and serving a tri-state region (Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina) the business hit \$135 million in sales in 2016—a significant increase from its \$50M position just a few years ago, Thomasson reports. The inventory Layman moves includes much of the product you see in convenience stores, with the exception of beer and soft drinks that are distributed through other DSD (direct store delivery) channels. Layman delivers the snacks and candies and food products, as well as tobacco. Although its trucks are frequently seen at convenience stores, Layman also serves other institutional accounts, including restaurants and college/university bookstores. The business even moves dining staples like milk and steaks.

There are basically two competitors to Layman—other large scale distributors



**Front Seated: Justin Keen, VP; Juanita Layman, president; Kenny Keen, VP; Back Row Standing: Scott Thomasson, VP; Judy Ross, CFO; Glenn Bowe, VP**

(like US Foods and Sysco) and retail (like Sam's warehouse, where some smaller operators choose to buy and transport select items themselves). Thomasson says customers are extraordinarily loyal; and that when you walk into a store, 80-percent of everything in the store comes from Layman.

He attributes the long-standing relationships to several factors from the family business.

"We are absolutely customer-focused," Thomasson says. "We refer to our model

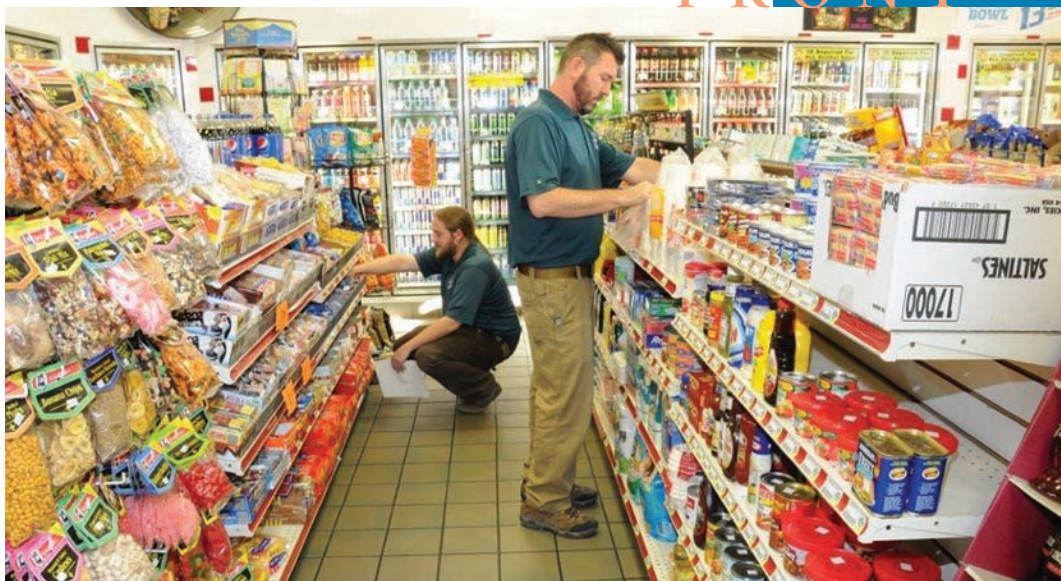
as 'partnering' and we see our customers in person every two weeks. We also offer everything the largest competitors do, but we treat both employees and customers like family."

Even from the vendors' perspective, Thomasson says Layman has gained the trust and reputation as an expert. The family knows the distribution business inside and out, but "we still ask the vendor: how do you help us sell your product," Thomasson says. The two parties work together with



**Just two rows of tobacco product represent more than \$2 million in inventory**






**Merchandisers stock a convenience store**

"planograms" to configure the best way to set up and move product for each customer and environment.

If there is any question Layman is a family business, one needs only to look at the executive management. Juanita Layman is grandmother and president; Judy Ross is mom and chief financial officer; and "the boys" serve as vice presidents: Scott Thomasson, Glenn Bowe, Justin Keen, Kenny Keen.

"My cousin Justin and I have done every job here," Scott says, recalling how he grew up in the business. "And we do it the way my mother and grandmother taught us."

Layman Distributing is old-fashioned in many ways ("never an automated attendant!" says Justin) and its customers know who is distributing to them. But the business does implement inventory controls, scanning, and best-practices in warehousing ("our most popular products travel the least amount of distance" and "we touch it as few times as possible" says Thomasson). Glenn says "the young people" coming into the business has been a good thing since technology changes will be the most important area to address as Layman moves ahead.

Candy isn't the largest slice of Layman's inventory pie; but the family will tell you the business... is still pretty sweet. 



**Automated inventory control**




## Why bother with strategic planning? >

Strategic planning sometimes gets a bad rap. Creating a vision and a set of goals for the next three to five years seems like a waste of time when it doesn't get executed. And let's face it...some of you would rather have a tooth pulled than sit through strategic planning sessions. So why bother?

If your strategic plans are put on a shelf and forgotten, then I agree; it's a waste of time. But that's a leadership execution problem, not a strategic planning problem.

Developing an effective strategic plan requires significant effort, and discipline and tracking are necessary to execute it. But all organizations should have a current strategic plan because the benefits are substantial. Strategic planning execution will:

- Engage and motivate people. Your team will only be committed if they have a clear understanding and belief of where the organization is heading. Employees also want to know what the plan is.
- Clarify priorities and purpose. A strategic plan of action provides clear priorities to everyone in the organization. Decisions are quicker, and communication is clear because there are fewer conflicting initiatives. Clear goals assure the investment of capital in the areas that will produce maximum return.
- Eliminate confusion and waste. Effective strategic plans will define areas of responsibility and accountability, thereby reducing overlapping efforts. Fewer valuable resources are wasted from a lack of focus.
- Provide feedback on progress. Methods to track and communicate progress are part of strategic plans. As progress is made, success is celebrated and motivation remains high as team members believe in the possibility of success.
- Maximize productivity. When valuable resources are not wasted working on non-important tasks, and each person's responsibilities are clear, productivity soars.

If these benefits are important to you and your organization, the time and effort you spend developing and executing your strategic plan will be rewarded many times over. 

Send your questions or comments to [Mike@OpXSolutionsllc.com](mailto:Mike@OpXSolutionsllc.com)

## Business Operations

By Mike Leigh

**Executive Summary:**  
*Strategic planning itself, requires a strategy, if the endeavor is to be worthwhile.*

## You're fired! >

The restaurant owner was livid. "I thought that Virginia was an employment-at-will state!" he said.

"It is," I said. "Under Virginia's at-will employment system, you can fire an employee for pretty much any reason—so long as it's not an illegal reason, like race, religion, sex, age, refusal to break the law, etc."

"So, I can't fire someone because of the color of his skin, but I can fire him because of the color of his shirt?" he said.

"Pretty much, yes," I said. "Although I wouldn't recommend that from a management perspective."

"OK then, tell me how this guy can file for unemployment," he said. "It's one of our bartenders. He's been with us for years, but lately he kept on missing work, even though I told him repeatedly that I would fire him if he didn't show. So eventually I fired him. Isn't that legal?"

"Oh yes, certainly," I said. "You've fired him legally. But just because you had a legal reason for firing an employee doesn't mean that he can't claim unemployment benefits."

"You mean that I'm actually going to have to pay for his benefits?" he said.

"Based on what you've told me, yes," I said. "An employee who is fired for misconduct is not entitled to unemployment benefits, but under the unemployment statute, the word 'misconduct' is narrowly defined. For example, an employee fired for missing work is only considered to have committed 'misconduct' if you've given him a written warning first. It sounds like you didn't do that."

"A written warning?" he said. "No, I told him over and over again, but it was just verbal, never in writing. Damn. OK, never mind." He sounded like he was about to hang up the phone.

"Wait a moment," I said. "He might have committed some other kind of misconduct. Was he a bad employee in other ways?"

"Well, yes," he said. "He used to be quite a good employee, but lately things have gone downhill for him. Mostly drugs and alcohol, I think. I tried to help him out. But he kept failing drug tests. Could I fire him for that?"



## Shark Patrol

By Keith Finch

**Executive Summary:**  
*Virginia allows an employer to fire an employee for pretty much any reason (except for reasons like discrimination) but only employees fired for "misconduct" are not allowed to claim unemployment benefits; and that definition under the unemployment benefits law is very narrow.*





Under Virginia's at-will employment system, you can fire an employee for pretty much any reason—so long as it's not an illegal reason, like race, religion, sex, age, refusal to break the law, etc.

"A confirmed positive drug test is 'misconduct' for unemployment benefits purposes," I said. "But you have to do it as part of a workplace drug policy, and the test has to be performed by an accredited lab."

"Ah, I just used those drugstore tests," he said. "And we don't really have a drug policy."

"How about the drinking?" I said. "Did he ever drink on the job?"

"Oh yes, all the time," he said. "That was one reason why he kept missing work. He'd mix three drinks and take one himself, and then show up late the next day, or not at all. I was terrified that I'd lose my ABC license."

"OK, that's your misconduct," I said. "Under the unemployment benefits statute, an employee commits misconduct if he deliberately violates a regulation that could cause the employer to have a license suspended by the State of Virginia. Since a bartender who drinks could cause you to lose your ABC license, that's

## WORKPLACE wisdom

By Christine Liana



**Q** I've been put in charge of coordinating a project for my department, overseeing a small team of employees. Most are reliable, but one is a complainer and another is a procrastinator. Since I've not led a team before, how can I bring them together and execute this project in four months?


**A** Since you're in a leadership role, start with a planning meeting and explain the project details to your team. Set a positive tone, and let them know that everyone's effort is required for the project's success. Delegate assignments by matching their strengths to the appropriate tasks. Give clear deadlines and instructions. People want to be heard, understood, and appreciated, so encourage their ideas and perspectives, and give credit for their contributions. Let them know that they can come to you with concerns, and encourage problem-solving. Point out any mistakes tactfully, in private. Allow your team the autonomy to do their jobs, while making periodic progress checks to ensure the project is on task and on budget. Give the procrastinator firm deadlines ahead of your deadlines, letting him know he will be accountable for his role in the project. Counter the complainer by listening to her concerns, letting her know that honest criticism is welcome if she's willing to help with the solution. And keep your supervisor apprised of the project's development, in case you encounter any setbacks that can mitigated with his/her oversight.

Got a question or an issue you're dealing with at work?  
Send it to [businesstalk@protonmail.com](mailto:businesstalk@protonmail.com)

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

# P E R S P E C T I V E S

misconduct. So when you fire him for that reason, you won't have to pay unemployment benefits."

A few weeks later we assisted our client at a telephone hearing with an officer of the Virginia Employment Commission. Our client explained the situation, including the bartender's history of drinking on the job, and the officer agreed that the bartender was not entitled to unemployment benefits. Our client also now has a written absentee policy, a written tardiness policy, a written drug policy, and several other written rules that should help reduce the chances that he might have to pay unemployment benefits to a fired employee in the future. Oh, and now he always calls us first, before actually firing anyone. 

**Note:** *facts have been changed to preserve confidentiality. Oh, and this isn't legal advice—you should consult a lawyer when preparing to terminate an employee, drafting workplace policies, participating in a hearing on unemployment benefits, etc.*

“

An employee who is fired for misconduct is not entitled to unemployment benefits, but the word 'misconduct' is narrowly defined. For example, an employee fired for missing work is only considered to have committed 'misconduct' if you've given him a written warning first.

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Some of the rides at HOG multi chapter rally, mid-June 2017, Sheraton Roanoke

## Let's go motorcycling! >

### Executive Summary:

*Motorcycle riding clubs attract passionate enthusiasts who enjoy the comradery as much as the scenic Virginia's Blue Ridge roadways.*

**By Michael Abraham**

Okay, motorcycling is dangerous. Let's get that out of the way here at the beginning. We all know this, even the thousands of people in Southwest Virginia who do it. None of us have a death wish, but we're passionate people and the thrill of riding and the camaraderie and fellowship of like-minded folks make the risks worthwhile.

There are many brands and styles of bikes and riding these days, each attracting its





FRONT

own following. One group I belong to is Twin Valley Riders. Founder Hank Pfister told me his motivation was not to form a club, but to simply look for people to ride with.

"I rode in the 1970s and gave it up in the 1980s while I raised a family," Pfister said. "I got a BMW and was looking for people to ride with. In the spring of 1998, I took out an ad in the newspaper's

classifieds under 'Motorcycles for sale,' with some jargon BMW people would recognize, inviting them to join me for a ride to the nearest dealer in Lynchburg."

He soon took out another ad for a breakfast in Dixie Caverns, and the club was born. Twin Valley riders is chartered as a BMW MOA (Motorcycle Owners of America) club, but is an all-marque club that has no requirements that members





Courtesy of Tom Austin

#### 2016 Twin Valley Riders Rally

ride a particular make. It is oriented to sportier riders who seek out area's amazing backroads.

"We have regular breakfasts and often go for impromptu rides afterwards. We have some cruiser riders and they're always welcome. But sometimes they find that our pace is a little brisker than they're comfortable with.

"I'm a bit surprised we've survived this long. But then I'm not. We're not highly organized. We don't have many rules. We

have an annual rally in September (at Meadows of Dan) that draws 175 to 200 riders. It's been very successful.

"We continue to attract new riders. We have about 45 dues-payers and an equal number who are behind. We always need new people and new ideas."

We say there are "motorcyclists" and there are "bikers." Robb Lipes is a biker, chapter director of the Roanoke Valley Harley Owners Group. We met in the basement clubhouse of the local dealership where



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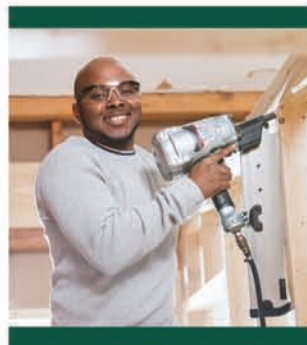


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**Twin Valley Riders**

he told me he'd been involved with the group for 25 years.

"I've done everything for this chapter from activities officer to safety officer to road captain. We're big on moving safely and efficiently."

Harley Davidson owns a fanatical, borderline maniacal loyalty. There's a joke in motorcycling

circles that nobody tattoos "Kawasaki" on their chest.

"We are here to promote the brand and lifestyle of Harley Davidson. And to ride and enjoy our machines. Harley started their owners group in the 1980s to leave behind the stigma of Harley riders, from the Hells Angels and other ruffian, outlaw clubs. Harley wanted to distance themselves

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Roanoke Valley HOG Chapter

Courtesy of Chris Powell

from that image by creating a family-friendly, service oriented group. The Harley Owners Group is the biggest volunteer organization in the world!”

They do benefits for many charitable organizations. The demographic mix of members is working people and professional people, mostly over 40 years old, and many are college educated and make six figures. The bikes are expensive, ranging from \$8000 to more than I’ve ever paid for a car.


Robb said, showing me his Harley tats, “The bike I’m riding cost \$30,000. I’ve been riding Harleys since I was 17. I’m 53 now. I’ve had a

string of them and I love them. I feel blessed to have the greatest motorcycle ever made and to have the friendship and fellowship of 300 like-minded people. The name of the game for us is riding. Being in the front of a group of riders and watching in the mirror as we go into corners leaning smoothly, that’s great to see.”

Cecil McBride is the appointed “scribe” of a loose organization of motorcyclists from the bifocal set he calls the “New River Valley Motorcycle Group,” a successor to a local chapter of the Retread Motorcycle Club International, an organization of riders aged 40+.

Cecil himself is 84 and has been announcing breakfast meetings for over 20 years. I meet with them when I can, and they’re more like a breakfast club that likes motorcycles than a motorcycle club that meets for breakfast. “That’s what happens when you get over 75 years old,” he laughed, “You eat better than you ride.” Typically 15 to 25 show up for breakfast. “Everybody’s welcome! Newcomers like the fellowship. The age range is perhaps 40 to 86.”

So motorcycling is a lifetime pastime, filled with fellowship, fun, and exploration. Cecil says he’d found many new roads and special places. “With all the older guys, the rides now are shorter. Our younger guys ride further, the guys with more spizzierinctum.”

If you’ve got spizzierinctum yourself, there is a local motorcycling group that is waiting for you. 

Members of the biker community love their events



A photograph of several green chili peppers and one red chili pepper lying on a rustic, weathered wooden surface. The peppers are arranged in a cluster, with the red one standing out prominently in the center-left. The lighting is natural, highlighting the glossy texture of the peppers and the grain of the wood.

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## Home town scents >

### Executive Summary:

*Blacksburg gift shop t.r. collection fits the product offering to the "essence" of the community.*

**By Caitlyn Scaggs**

Buying a gift is an experience that is typically accompanied by a variety of emotions. Perhaps it is excitement over another year that has come and gone. The feelings could be bittersweet, as graduation approaches and a new journey is about to begin. Alternatively, the gift giving experience could be a manifestation of gratitude. Understanding the significance of the gift giving experience



is what prompted Michelle and Tom Raub to open their neighborhood gift shop, t.r. collection.

Located in downtown Blacksburg, on Main Street, t.r. collection is filled with classy, chic, and modern gifts. While some of the gifts celebrate the tight-knit spirit of the Blacksburg community, to include Hokie themed gifts and décor, there is








variety to choose from with widespread appeal. This store, which opened in September 2015, sells gifts ranging from handbags and jewelry to picture frames and serving dishes.

Perhaps the product line that best embodies Michelle and Tom's relentless commitment to meaningful gifts is the Ella B. candle line. These candles smell inviting and have names such as, "I Miss Blacksburg" and "Start Jumping." If you are part of the Blacksburg community or a Hokie fan you know that those themes are very fitting for the region.

Michelle and Tom collaborated with Ella B. to create those unique product offerings, only sold at their store in downtown Blacksburg.

The passion Michelle has for the gift-giving experience is evident. Michelle said, "We are stewards of the community and here to help people buy a gift and make an emotional impact. We are so much more than a gift shop." Michelle has witnessed the role her store has had in developing other business connections and supporting the health of downtown Blacksburg. Truly, t.r. collection is building community one gift at a time. 

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*View of downtown Roanoke, VA*

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Abe Loper, White Hart Café





## Lynchburg café all about satisfying >

### Executive Summary:

*White Hart Café in Lynchburg puts positive employee practices in place to keep customers satisfied.*

**By Carissa Mulahn**

If summer means the ripening of fruits blossomed from cold winters and bright springs, then it is certainly the summer season of business for The White Hart Café on Main Street Lynchburg. Owner Abe Loper forecasts nothing but happy harvesting in 2017 for this well known local Lynchburg treasure. The White Hart has been serving Lynchburg coffee lovers for 10 years. Rumors circled that it might permanently close after briefly shutting down in spring and summer of 2013. That's when Abe stepped in with a

vision to bring new life to the space and the brand. The White Hart faced a myriad of challenges, including much needed renovations, the evolution of the brand, and backlash from diehard fans of the long time café. Abe credits a clear set of expectations delineated to his staff as one of the biggest factors in The White Hart's current success. The turn-around has astonished many, so we sat down with Abe to discuss his approach.

Abe describes his intentions toward employee development like this: "The four things we look for in employees are Honesty, Dependability, Diligence, and Positivity. If I hire well enough to believe that my new hires can reasonably be expected to adhere these four simple expectations, then I can expect that my staff will 1) Show up on time, 2) Work hard while at work, 3) Not steal from me or lie to me, and 4) Do all of these things with a good attitude. If you can give me an employee like that, I can teach them how to do just about anything else." We pressed



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further, knowing that TALKING about expectations like these and ACTUALLY GETTING an expected result are two significantly different things. Abe immediately responded in agreement: "You're right; 'say' does not equal 'do'", he affirmed, and went on to explain that creating an environment where the staff feels loved and safe leads to much better performance, both across the counter toward customers and behind the counter amongst coworkers.

"Our customers come first, which is why taking care of our staff is the top priority. It's a little paradoxical, but it works. We love our staff and they love one another. They spend their days off in the shop. They drive one another to work when cars break down. They raise money for one another when tragedy strikes. It's a family of good people who stand side-by-side behind the counter to ensure that they brighten the day of each of our customers. I don't know how we could give the same service to our patrons if we didn't take care of those on our team."

This key ingredient of intentionality toward optimal team environment is very easily overlooked in today's businesses, says Abe. "Customer service is usually touted as the top priority for a business, but I think most businesses fail to achieve their full customer service potential because the staff members behind the counter aren't happy, don't like their coworkers, and are generally upset to be at work. Our customers



come first, which is why taking care of our staff is the top priority."

Abe offers another significant insight that has driven The White Hart's success over the last four years; when the time comes to pivot, he uses sales as a gauge. "A business is a meter of needs and wants, nothing more. So, I listen to my customers. I listen to how they spend money, at my shop and at others. If you really want to know what menu item needs to drop off the menu in order to make room for your new idea, then look at your sales, not your reviews." With reviews still topping the charts, and expansion at hand (in the form of two sister stores, City Place Foods in Forest and Blackwater Coffee Company in River Ridge Mall), Abe Loper's business model will likely harvest for decades. 

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## On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

**Executive Summary:**  
*FRONT publisher  
expresses sentiment  
to someone extra  
special in his life.*

### In Step >

I don't know much about dancing (just ask my kids). But I did notice something recently about how dancers step. All along, I just figured two dancers worked together in harmony, floating across a dance floor like a singular graceful figure across a flat sea of pure ice. A beautiful expression of unity, with feet working effortlessly together as the duo commands the whole room, even though the two don't seem to be intent on actually commanding anything. Just dancing. As one.

Keep in mind, I'm old enough now to have watched everything from American Bandstand to Soul Train to the Roanoke Ballet. I've witnessed Saturday Night Fever, Grease, Flashdance, Footloose, High School Musical, and Dirty Dancing. I saw both Patrick Swayze and Napoleon Dynamite bust a move.

From a purely observational point of view, I've been around the floor—both clock and counter clock wise. But I'm more than a little late to this dance party.

You see, a curious thing happened on the way to a wedding this June of the two-thousand seventeenth year of our Lord. I saw what really happens underneath the basic steps of the Waltz, Foxtrot, Tango, Rumba, and Hustle.

First, those steps aren't really exactly together-together. Maybe this is what separates dancers from soldiers. Sometimes, the steps are going in the same direction, but of course, they're not placed exactly in the same spot (otherwise, one foot would be on top of another... an apparent undesirable technique in modern dance, I'm told). Other times, the steps are going in opposite directions. Dancers are seldom the exact same amount of inches apart. At times, dancers pull together; but they also push away from one another. Sometimes, the step goes in between the partner's stance; other times on one side or another and at this or that angle. The way you face, the way you hold... all different based on the dance. And the lady... oh, my. The lady... does more than her fair share of stepping backwards.

My lord. It's marriage.  
Dancing is marriage.

My daughter, Hayley, is getting married (tomorrow, as I write this). I want her to know about this most significant dance of a lifetime. It's an expression of beauty; and something that should be enjoyed beyond measure, although that calibration isn't always celebrated today in the way that it should be.



Like dancing, a marriage should be the highlight of the whole affair. But the steps of you and your partner remain unique. Sometimes, you are stepping in exactly the same direction, the same pattern, your bodies remaining fixed in the same position from one another. One steps forward; the other steps backward. Then there are just as many times when you rather mirror each other. One steps back, the other also steps back. Often, you face each other, but sometimes you're offset. You could turn in—or out. And then there are the times where your individuality is as strong as your coherence. You can be together, but back-to-back.

Stepping in identical fashion isn't what makes a dance beautiful, nor is it the same thing as being in step.

This dance: wow.

This marriage, your marriage, Hayley: wow.

I want you to applaud the celebration with your whole heart. Your wedding day and every day thereafter. Enjoy each step and capture each song. Appreciate the movement now even as you learn new ones. I've watched you dance these 23 years; and I know a fabulous dancer when I see one.

The phrase everyone cites at this milestone says "dance



It's an expression of beauty; and something that should be enjoyed beyond measure, although that calibration isn't always celebrated today in the way that it should be.



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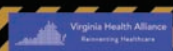
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# CONTRIBUTORS

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of Roanoke is a marketing and sales specialist with a public relations degree from Virginia Tech. [ ashlynd@vt.edu ]

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**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 ]

Waking up with the peaceful sound of bird chatter while watching the sun rise over the mountains is one of **Nanette Levin's** simple pleasures. Still

considered a foreigner by some local residents (she moved to Roanoke at the end of 2015), Nanette's determined to illuminate local treasures for business and pleasure through her company, Roanoke Revealed. When she's not enjoying nature and writing or creating marketing strategies for clients, she's growing fresh vegetables & herbs, seeing the sights in the area and occasionally hopping on a horse. [ nlevin@fulcrumny.com ]

**Christine Liana**

is news editor and business writer for Valley Business FRONT. Her background 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. [ cliana@vbfront.com ]

**Carissa Mulahn**

is a highly engaged networking professional who recently opened the Roanoke office of Sales Recruiters of Virginia. A graduate of Liberty University and Leadership Roanoke Valley, she has completed multiple trainings and seminars with Cortex Leadership Consulting, and considers her successful launch of her daughter, Jessica's

professional career in NYC as her proudest accomplishment. [ CMulahn@Salesrecruitersofva.com ]

**Anne Sampson**

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

**Caitlyn Scaggs**

is the director of communications and marketing for Polymer Solutions in Christiansburg. [ caitlyn.scaggs@polymersolutions.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 ]



The camaraderie and fellowship of like-minded folks make the risks worthwhile — Page 30



## Letters

### Concerned architect

President Trump has announced plans to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, which is a major step back in the fight against climate change. On top of being one of only three countries that are not a part of this first-ever international climate deal, U.S. withdrawal creates a big obstacle for architects who are competing for work throughout the world.

At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries – including the United States – adopted this agreement

that sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid devastating effects to our environment. The agreement sets out to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C. Architects have worked hand-in-hand with the federal government to help make the profession – and Uncle Sam in particular – competitive global leaders in the quest to eliminate fossil fuel use in the built environment.

Withdrawing from the Paris climate accord would clearly be a step back for America's global leadership in sustainable design.

**Tim A. Colley, AIA, LEED AP**  
Blacksburg

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

like no one's watching." But I hope you don't mind that someone just outside of the ballroom spotlight can't keep his eyes off his precious daughter as she steps this way and that way.

I want you and Matt to love this dance. You don't need to step in identical fashion. You just need to stay in step the best you can as you two negotiate the simple beats, the complex rhythms, the exotic compositions, the everyday tunes.

Let's move. They're always playing your song.

Love, Daddy 

1983 ••• 2017 ••• tomorrow



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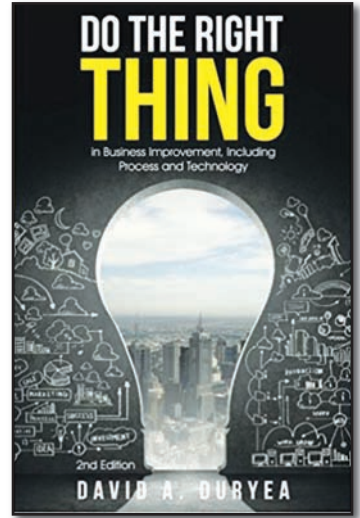
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**ENTRÉ**

## 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](mailto:news@vbFRONT.com)



### *Business Expert Called on by Courts to Determine What Went Wrong*

Billions of dollars are wasted on failed business projects every year. One business expert, David A. Duryea, has been called on by the courts to determine why. In his new book, *Do the Right Thing: in Business Improvement, Including Process and Technology* (WestBowPress, July 28, 2015), Duryea provides a manual for success to save businesses time and money and to keep himself off the witness stand. Duryea has been in the business improvement industry for over 32 years and has expertise in more than 16 different industries. He performs project forensics, as a legal business expert for the court, to determine why projects lose money and do not succeed.

—Lindsey Gobel

### *Motivational Speaker Leaves Rat Race for the Wild Life*

Diane de Mere led a successful career as a corporate trainer and motivator. But something was missing. Instead of teaching about managing stress and making the most of life, De Mere wanted to actually live it.

After deciding to practice what she

taught, De Mere embarked on a mission to gain control of her own stress, while helping others follow in her path. In her new book, *HappyTales: How to Manage Stress and Find Peace and Joy*, (WestBowPress / Thomas Nelson & Zondervan, 2017) De Mere documents her journey, peppered with stories of her rescued dogs, cats, and the wildlife of the Pacific Northwest. An avid animal-lover and supporter of non-profits and animal rescue organizations, De Mere weaves her animal stories into her tips for stress management, mindfulness, and meditation.

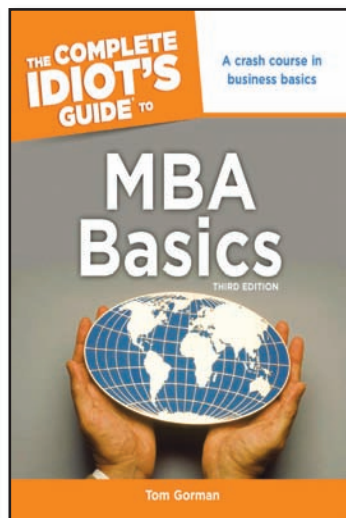
—Lindsey Gobel

### *Best of times*

America's 1927 summer contained well-known and forgotten people, famous firsts, and coast-to-coast fascination. On America's east coast, fans crowded New York's Yankee Stadium during the Yankees last season game to see powerful Babe Ruth score his record sixtieth home run. Twenty-five year old Charles Lindberg first flew from New York to Paris. His Spirit of St. Louis airplane, when custom manufactured by Ryan Aircraft Company, saved the business from bankruptcy. "Lucky Lindy's" successful flight set off the largest public celebration to that time.

On America's west coast, the now forgotten





Philo Farnsworth combined new radio technology with his ingenuity to first transmit a crude scanned television image in San Francisco.

From New York to San Francisco, newly emerging radio media reported these and other events. America's favorite past time? Reading. In every format, the publishing business thrived.

Award-winning author Bill Bryson is a practiced storyteller in *One Summer: America 1927* (Anchor; 2014). He consistently pulls his readers into his interwoven historical vignettes using essential details and well-written transitions. America's 1927 summer shines vividly in this captivating 456-page book.

A helpful librarian at the Salem main library suggested this book, available in hardback and on audio CD. The author reads the audio book, revealing his warm interesting voice. On a long road trip, the librarian said that he listened and the hours melted away. Indeed they did!

—Robert Turcotte

## *MBA Learning in Real-Life Language*

For those running a small business or otherwise involved in the business world who can't spare the time or expense of

going to graduate school, this book is for you. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to MBA Basics, Third Edition*, by Tom Gorman (Alpha/Penguin Group, Inc., New York, NY, 2011), is definitely not for idiots but for the intelligent. Condensing the language of business into an easily understood book, *MBA Basics* instructs readers on key principles, including: people and operations management, leadership skills, the business cycle and economic indicators, quantitative analysis for decision-making, budgeting, accounting and finance, investment decisions, marketing, risk management, business law, and ethics.

With a MBA from New York University's Stern School of Business and experiences as a banker, executive recruiter, marketing consultant, and manager of product development for a Fortune 500 company, Gorman's refreshingly realistic style focuses on relevancy. He points out that not all managers are qualified for their jobs and advises how to avoid being useless deadweight through effective management and leadership. Well worth the read for anyone who wants practical knowledge without the academic pomp or arbitrary principles of other books on the same subject.

—Christine Liana

(**The reviewers:** Lindsey Gobel is a publicist in Phoenix, Arizona; Robert Turcotte is a FRONT reader; Christine Liana is news editor and writer for the FRONT.)



## GoWork in Botetourt County >

**GoWork** recently opened at the **Daleville Town Center** on Route 220 in Daleville. According to Director Josh Wilson, the model for GoWork is similar to the Grandin CoLab in Roanoke, where micro-businesses can network and use as a work space. GoWork has an open floor plan for work sites, closed-door offices, and a meeting space. It's designed to give members access to a physical office without the high overhead expenses and commitments typical of traditional office spaces. Part-time membership rates are \$99 a month and full-time rates are \$150 a month, Fixed-Desk is \$250/month, and 6x6 Workstation is \$400/month. GoWork is owned by Patrick Henderson and Chris Copenhaver. For more information, call 540-632-1390.



## An Epic Journey in Radford >

Three sculptures are on display in the **City of Radford's** first juried outdoor sculpture competition. The exhibition, titled *An Epic Journey*, runs through September 15, 2017, in the Mary Draper Ingles Cultural Heritage Park and features: *He Always Carried It With Him Wherever He Went* by Charlie Brouwer, *November Wind* by Bob Doster, and *Moon and Sky* by Hanna Jubran. All three sculptures are for sale. The exhibit is partially supported by funding from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.



# FRONT 'N ABOUT



Jeanne Lawrence, SVH Services, BRAAC, Katie's Place

## All the Pieces in Place >

**Blue Ridge Autism and Achievement Center (BRAAC)** and the Salem-Roanoke County Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony in May. Community members, officials, Chamber representatives, and BRAAC celebrated the \$1.7 million, 12,650 sq. ft. expansion at the BRAAC site on Whitwell Drive in Roanoke. The new space includes the Joseph W. Webb Center sponsored by the Roanoke Women's Foundation, a vocational training center, athletic center, transitional classrooms, and larger STARS classrooms. BRAAC unveiled a sculpture designed and built by mechatronics and welding students from Burton Center for Arts and Technology.



## The Beauty and Benefit of Gardens >

Staff and residents at **Showalter Center**, the assisted living residence at Warm Hearth Village of Blacksburg, are reaping the benefits of the herb gardens they've planted. The gardens contain a variety of herbs that are used in preparing meals in the dining room. Nate McCutcheon, dining production manager says, "I see the residents enjoying the tranquil scenery around the gardens where birds and butterflies frequent. We use the basil we grow in pesto, sage on our pork and chicken, lemon balm in beverages, cilantro for fresh Pico de Gallo and parsley to garnish our plates."



## Helping Women of the NRV >

**Member One Federal Credit Union** donated \$1,000 to the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley, which provides free and safety-centered services to victims of sexual and domestic violence in the New River Valley. The donation was a result of Member One's quarterly Denim Days for Charities whereby employees donate money in return for wearing jeans on a specific day. Member One supports the communities that it serves through financial and volunteer help, with the belief that strengthening local communities is everyone's responsibility.

*Valley Business FRONT is FRONT'n About at many events each month.  
Check the social media links at [www.vbFRONT.com](http://www.vbFRONT.com) for more coverage.*



# FRONT 'N ABOUT



Anne Sampson

## A night to remember >

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation / Virginia Chapter inaugural **2017 Brewer's Ball** in Roanoke was held June 8 in downtown Roanoke. The event served as a fundraiser benefitting those affected by cystic fibrosis and advancements toward the cure. Valley Business FRONT was the media sponsor of the campaign and ball, which featured local brewers and restaurants as well as "10 of Roanoke's Finest" business, professional, entrepreneurial leaders.

# Career FRONT

## FINANCIAL FRONT



McMillan

**Jerry McMillan**, wealth advisor, joined the Beacon Wealth Consultants, Inc. in Roanoke.



Chernault

**Amie A. Chernault**, branch manager, joined Bank of Botetourt at its Cave Spring Office.



Gibson

**Robert Gibson**, sales agent for central and southwest Virginia, joined Brown Insurance.



Ross

**Jason B. Ross** and



Gilliam

**Billy C. Gilliam** joined the certified public accounting firm of Brown Edwards.

## WELLNESS FRONT



Benedict

**Jordan Benedict** was named activities director at the Kroontje Health Care Center at Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg.

## DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Tipps

**Gretchen Hager Tipps**, director of marketing, joined The Willard Companies of Smith Mountain Lake.

## RETAIL/SERVICE FRONT



Witcher

**DeShea Witcher** was promoted to director of digital marketing at Access Advertising & Public Relations.



Williams



Qiao

## EDUCATION FRONT



Ye



Harding

**Pengfei Ye** was appointed assistant professor in the Department of Finance; **Michelle Harding** was appointed assistant professor in the Department of Accounting and Information Systems at Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business.

**Christopher Williams** and **Rui Qiao**, associate professors of

mechanical engineering at the College of Engineering, were awarded the John R. Jones III Faculty Fellowship in Mechanical Engineering by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.



Panneton



Stokes

**Robin Panneton** was named associate dean for undergraduate programs; **L. Wade Stokes** was named assistant dean of advancement at the College of Science at Virginia Tech.



## Have a career announcement?

Send announcements to [news@vbFRONT.com](mailto: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.



Faulkner

**Ted Faulkner**, director of Dining Services at Virginia Tech, was recognized by the 2017 International Foodservice Manufacturers Association (IFMA) as a Silver Plate Award recipient in the colleges and universities category.



Neu

**Wayne Neu** and **Conrad Heatwole** were conferred the title of associate professor emeritus; **Gregory Boardman** was conferred the title of professor emeritus;



Heatwole



Boardman



Lindner

**Douglas Lindner** was conferred the title of



Ross

associate professor emeritus; and **Julia Ross** was named the Paul and Dorothea Torgersen Dean of Engineering by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors. Ross becomes dean of the College of Engineering on July 31.



Dwyer

## MUNICIPAL FRONT

**Mike Warner** was named interim director of the Regional Center for Animal Care and Protection (RCACP), operated by the City of Roanoke, the Counties of Roanoke and Botetourt, and the Town of Vinton. Warner replaces David Flagler who retired on June 30.

*Compiled by  
Christine Liana*

## CULTURE FRONT

**Shayne Dwyer**, director of communications, joined the Virginia Museum of Transportation.



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## Pressing News

### The Roanoke Times

is transferring its printing and inserting processes to its associate newspaper locations in August. 53 jobs will be eliminated as a result of this effort to use modern printing equipment. The newspaper will be printed at The Lynchburg News & Advance. Printing of advance sections and assembly of advertising inserts for Roanoke, Lynchburg, and other newspapers printed in Lynchburg will be moved to the Richmond Times-Dispatch. The rest of Roanoke's business operations will stay at its current location at 201 Campbell Avenue.

### Covington Drone Zone

Plans for the former Edgemont Primary School in Covington are underway. A public-private partnership with the city of Covington and Alleghany County may result in a "drone-zone" for the small, unmanned aircraft. Drones are a growing industry in which they deliver packages, take photographs, conduct surveillance from the air, and help with search and rescue missions. Governor McAuliffe announced that he recommended \$100,000 in Appalachian Regional Commission funds for a project called the Alleghany Highlands Drone Zone. The recommended funding for the drone facility was part of a \$2.7 million package for 10 projects that McAuliffe recommended receive funding through the

Appalachian Regional Commission.

### Hospital Merger

#### Martinsville Memorial Hospital and Danville Regional Hospital

recently announced plans to merge into SOVAH Health (Southern Virginia Hospitals), forming one regional medical center with a location in Danville and Martinsville. Both hospitals continue to be owned by Lifepoint. SOVAH Health will have one board of directors, one medical executive committee, and one patient advisory board. Alan Larson, currently serving as CEO of Danville Regional, will be CEO of the new healthcare system. Michael Ehrat will continue as CEO of Memorial Hospital. As one medical center with two locations, SOVAH is expected to make patient records more easily transferred in compliance with state and federal privacy laws.

### Housing Help

#### Community Housing Partners (CHP) of Christiansburg, a

member of the NeighborWorks network, is receiving \$579,167 in flexible grants from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. This FY 2017 grant funding will support CHP's affordable housing and community development activities. NeighborWorks organizations will use the grants to develop and manage high-quality affordable housing; make loans to homeowners

and small businesses; offer financial and homeownership education and counseling; and revitalize and strengthen communities. Established in 1975, CHP serves the needs of low-income and low-wealth individuals by creating homes and communities that are healthy, sustainable, and affordable.

### Branching Out in the New River Valley

#### Montgomery County

plans to expand its 175-acre Falling Branch Corporate Park. The Economic Development Authority (EDA) entered into a contract with Cox Family Farms LLC to purchase 124 acres adjacent to the County's corporate park for \$2.5 million, or about \$20,161 per acre. The EDA's preparation involves a rezoning request and geotechnical and environmental studies before deciding to purchase the property. Current occupants of Falling Branch Corporate Park include Aeroprobe Corporate, Backcountry, Dish Network, Ferguson Enterprises, Inc., Inorganic Ventures, Polymer Solutions Inc., and PreStar Packaging.

### Better Living Through Sustainable Farming

#### Wolf Farm Natural Elements on 25245

Lee Highway in Abingdon opened in April, specializing in natural farming methods. Natural, "organic" farming is nothing new; it was used decades ago by using plant materials as pesticides and animal waste for the soil.

Owners Steve and Becky Wolf are serious about sustainable farming, and sell organic fertilizers, animal and plant nutrients, organic seeds and plants, cover crop seeds, soil amendments, and pest control. Their store also sells garden tools, seed starting trays, drip line irrigation supplies, landscaping fabric, frost protection covering, and paper and plastic mulch. Consumers are rightly concerned about genetically modified foods, which are plants and animals produced from organisms in which DNA is altered by genetic engineering. The Wolfs purchase organic and non-genetically modified organisms (GMO) feeds from a company in Waynesboro, Virginia, where they can order feed for farm animals.

### Day Resource Centers to the Rescue

The **Rescue Mission** opened two new Day Resource Centers at its site at 402 Fourth Street SE, Roanoke in May. Housed in the Men's Shelter and the Women and Children's Center, each Day Resource Center has centralized case management offices, computer stations for job and housing searches, charging stations, telephones, and storage lockers and closets for day use. The Men's Shelter has a new laundry facility and the Women and Children's Center has a space for children to watch educational videos and play games while parents meet with a case manager. Helping



homeless guests attain self-sufficiency, the Rescue Mission receives no government funding and is supported by donations of community partners.

## Phone Home

The **Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport** and other U.S. airports will have a donation box at each Hudson News gift shop counter for donations towards phone cards for U.S. military personnel. These pre-activated AT&T cards, sold in Hudson and Hudson News stores nationwide, allow troops to call home to their families and friends and connect

to the Internet for free. Since 2014, Hudson has donated nearly 258,000 phone cards within care packages to USO chapters across the U.S.

## The Last Chapter

Chicago-based LSC Communications, formerly known as **RR Donnelley & Sons**, is closing its book-printing in Roanoke's ValleyTech Park on July 23. Roanoke County plans to work with company officials to put the 278,000 sq. ft. facility on the market. RR Donnelley has been in Roanoke since 1997. Sluggish sales and a recent \$1 million net loss contributed to the

*Have an announcement about your business?*

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A contact / source must be provided.  
Inclusions are not guaranteed and all submissions are subject to editing.

closure. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, the number of commercial printing companies is declining.

## Airport Allegiance

The **Roanoke Regional Airport Commission** is partnering with **Allegiant Air** for the new Allegiant Honors program, whereby U.S. active duty

military, retired military veterans, members of the National Guard, military reserve and their dependents are eligible for free services when they fly with Allegiant. Benefits include courtesy boarding pass printing at the airport and free seat assignments (pending availability). Active duty military may board flights with priority boarding at no charge, and will not

# First Fridays

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## Botetourt Brews & Food

**Ballast Point Brewing Company** recently opened a Tasting Room & Kitchen at its production facility in Botetourt Center at Greenfield in Daleville. Accommodating approximately 200 guests for lunch and dinner, the Tasting Room & Kitchen will be open seven days a week. Ballast Point also has a 100-person banquet room and a 14-tap growler filling station

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## Brick-and-Mortar Retail Beats Online

**J&J Fashions** at 275 Franklin Street, Rocky Mount, celebrates 50 years in business. Owner Sheila Copenhaver runs the clothing boutique that her mother, Jewell Hunt and her aunt Juanita (J&J) began in early 1968. At 82, Jewell continues her involvement in the family business. According to the principals, J&J's success is attributed to business savvy through personal service and interaction with customers, and sustained by their Christian values by helping the community through fashion shows benefitting charities or college scholarship funds, donations to women who lost their possessions in a fire or need an outfit for a job

interview, and allowing women seeking a business degree to observe them in business.

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## What's Brewing in Lynchburg

**Lickinghole Creek Craft Brewery** is expanding in Goochland County and downtown Lynchburg. Over the next three years, the \$14 million expansion is expected to create 59 new jobs. Plans include additional production space of 50,000 sq. ft. and a new tap room at the Goochland location, and a brewery in a leased building in Lynchburg. The project is helped by a grant from the Governor's Agricultural and Forestry Industries Development Fund, matched by local funds. In return, the brewery will purchase over \$550,000 in Virginia farm products for its operations over the next three years.

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## "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall .....

**Parkway Brewing Co.** is expanding its operation in Salem, creating 13 new jobs over the next three years. Parkway will invest \$750,000 in new equipment and purchase \$20,500 of Virginia-grown agricultural products to expand the company beyond Virginia. The City of Salem will match the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund award of \$150,000 with a cash grant of \$150,000 to be paid to Parkway Brewing. The

city's matching funds will be used for building improvements. Parkway Brewing is eligible for approximately \$4,800 in grant funds from the Virginia Jobs Investment Program for job training.

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## Bedford Brewery

**Beale's** brewery recently opened at 510 Grove Street in Bedford. The 12,000-sq. ft. facility has a 30-barrel production brewery, taproom, and kitchen. Beale's also has a barbecue restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating. The \$2 million project is expected to create 30 jobs. Beale's became a reality through state and federal historic tax credits, and a \$600,000 grant from the Virginia Department of Community and Housing Development's Industrial Revitalization Fund. James Frazer of Bedford is the brewmaster, and Jared Srsic, local restaurateur of Town Kitchen & Provisions and Millstone Tea Room, will oversee the taproom's barbecue. Curious about the name? It's derived from a legend that treasure was buried in Bedford by Thomas Jefferson Beale in the 1800's.

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## Get Up and GO!

The **Virginia Initiative for Growth and Opportunity (GO Virginia)**, created by the General Assembly in 2016, will receive \$28 million in the current two-year budget. Nine regional councils were certified by the GO board in April, and will submit priority plans in the coming months. The

Virginia Chamber of Commerce plans to include the regional plans in its Blueprint Virginia 2025 program. Working together, localities can apply for project grants that match plans by the regional councils, such as workforce development and solving the skills gap problems in the workforce, business incubators and accelerators, and joint site development for small and midsize businesses. Grant requests must come from at least two localities and provide non-state funding that's at least equal to the grant requests from the Commonwealth.

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## Henry County Truly a New Place to Stay

**Tru by Hilton** is the latest hotel development planned for Roanoke County. The four-story, 82-room hotel is expected to bring an \$8 million investment and over 30 jobs. Its location is planned near Gander Mountain in Hollins. The hotel coincides with the Plantation Road Project, with approximately \$4.2 million in federal, state, and local funds allocated for improvements to the commercial corridor. Phase I on Plantation Road's west side includes a 10-foot-wide shared-use path from Williamson Road to Lila Drive, a sidewalk from Lila Drive to Walrond Drive, street trees, curb and gutter, and a "Welcome to Hollins" sign. Future developments include a traffic signal with pedestrian crosswalks



and signals at the Lila Drive intersection. Construction of the Tru by Hilton hotel is planned for this fall, with an expected opening in summer 2018.

## Manufacturing Expansion

**Eastman Chemical Co.**, producer of advanced materials and specialty additives, will invest \$11.7 million to expand its manufacturing operation in Henry County and create 15 more jobs.

By adding a new equipment line in its performance films business, the expansion will meet a growing market for paint protection and window film. Governor McAuliffe approved \$50,000 from the Commonwealth's Opportunity Fund to help the Henry County with the project. The Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission approved \$110,000 in Tobacco Region Opportunity Funds. Eastman is eligible to receive benefits from the Virginia Enterprise Zone Program, administered

by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

## Passenger Train to Return to Roanoke

**Amtrak** is running non-scheduled trains between Lynchburg and Roanoke for locomotive engineers and train conductors to learn the tracks and territory. This is a collaboration with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and Norfolk Southern. Amtrack Northeast

Regional expects to have passenger rail service in Roanoke this fall, although it was originally projected approximately two years ago. Service is to operate one round-trip, seven days a week. The Northeast Regional service will provide service to and from Roanoke and to Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, and other cities along their Northeast Corridor.

Compiled by  
Christine Liana

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Here we sat, two red heads  
with this fiery business idea

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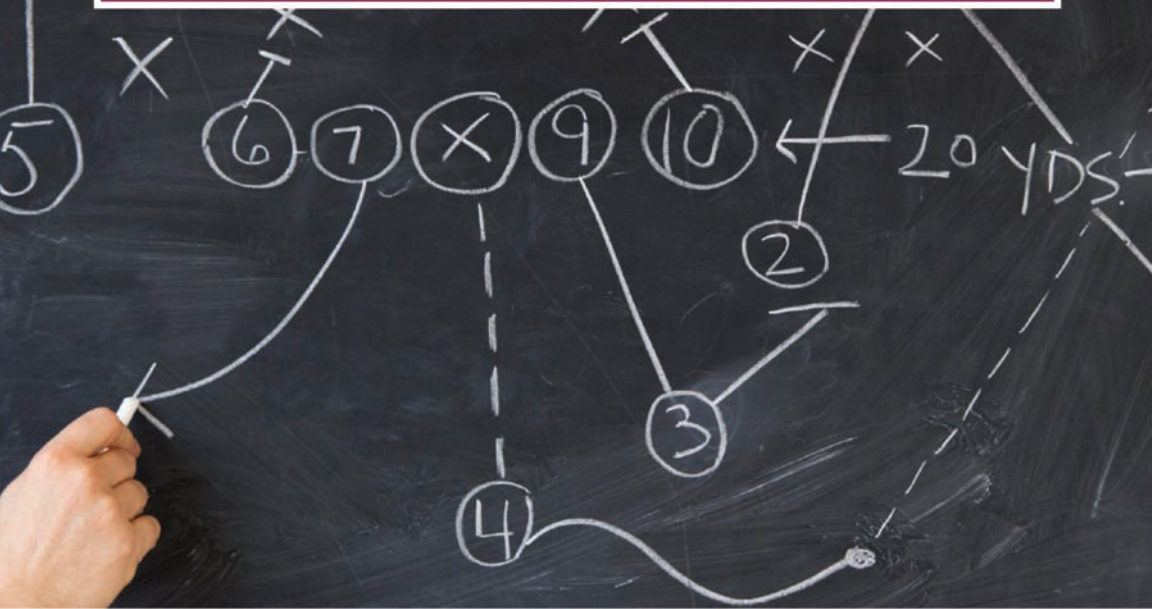
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