

# Valley Business FRONT

**VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE  
BUSINESS JOURNAL**  
ROANOKE/NEW RIVER VALLEYS & REGION  
FREE • ISSUE 120 • SEPTEMBER 2018

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

## Trends in Construction

Bob Fetzer,  
Building Specialists Inc.





Reuse project for Bedrock Community Church in Bedford, Virginia - Before & After

# It's not what we build. It's how.

After 40 years in the building industry we at BSI have learned a few things. How the original purpose of most buildings does not limit their future use. How saving and recreating existing structures can not only, be more economical, but also environmentally friendly. Most importantly we have learned how teaming with the right architects, engineers and subcontractors will assure the success of our projects.

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# WELCOME to the FRONT

A lot of things sort of serendipitously aligned in remarkable fashion for this month's edition.

Our FRONTcover story—while celebrating great strides in regional construction—laments the shortage in the labor pool... particularly skilled trades.

The very next story is about project management, and the increasing importance of having people on board with those credentials and competencies.

Right after that—girl scouts. So? Well, it's all about equipping our young ladies to step into STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) industries as a way to empower their vocations while filling a much-needed pipeline that's sure to explode.

Then, low and behold, our Technology FRONT profile features a company with an intentional mission to support local economic development (enriching our own instead of outside investors).

Lastly, a flower shop. Again... so? Well, if you read it closely (and we suggest you read all our stories closely!), you'll see a business owner who understands he has to adapt to changing market demands. You think flowers are moving because of one pressing stream, but depending on conditions, they move for another stream altogether.

This is what makes our business journal exciting and dynamic. Our readers and patrons get intuition of the greater business landscape and what could be happening from the collective view. Sure, we all grab gems of inspiration and innovative ideas from our individual stories of businesses, industries, and the people behind it all. But notice what happens when you start placing the little pieces together—like a puzzle.

It's an amazing picture you have there.  
Have you figured it out?

  
**Tom Field**

“Starting is the  
most important  
step. — Page 38



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“They want to see other people do well. — Page 43



Cover photography of Bob Fetzer by Tom Field.

# Valley Business FRONT

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# SEPTEMBER



Bruce Bryan



Emily Cohen



Tom Field



Keith Finch



Michael Shelton



Nicholas Vaassen

## Editorial Advisory Board

Valley Business FRONT has organized an Editorial Advisory Board in order to help direct coverage. FRONT selected a group of diverse business professionals, who will serve as a sounding board throughout the rotational term.

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



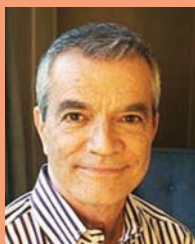
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**Alison Weaver**

Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 56.

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**Laura Bradford** Claire V (Retail)  
**Nicholas C. Conte** Carilion (Legal)  
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**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.

“

Pride in  
workmanship  
is much more  
important than  
the various perks  
companies use to  
improve morale.

— Page 32

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# CONSTRUCTION ZONE:

## What's Going On Behind That Sign

### A designer's and builder's perspective on construction >

**Executive Summary:**  
*The construction industry in Virginia's Blue Ridge is always adapting; a combination of economic climate and immediate market demands.*

**By Alison Weaver**

As the nation's economy shifts from the doldrums of recession to the frenzy of the current boon, professionals in commercial construction are seeing a variety of trends in Southwestern Virginia.

Bob Fetzer, president of Building Specialists Inc., and architect Jeffry Parkhill, of Hughes Associates Architects & Engineers, used their combined 85 years of experience in commercial construction to detail the trends they've seen developing in the past couple of years.

### SPIRALING COSTS

With demand skyrocketing for all types of construction, contractors are so busy that they're able to charge more for their services. But it's not about greed; many companies were barely able to hang on during the recession and are simply trying to recoup losses and pay off debt. With the influx of capital, they're taking care of routine maintenance, adding staff and upgrading equipment – expenditures that were limited or axed during the recession.

Higher costs are also due to higher costs of materials. "In almost all categories, we've seen increased costs across the board," says Fetzer.

Manufacturers of everything from appliances to lighting to steel are trying to ramp up production after years of difficult uncertainty. Like the contractors, they're struggling to shore up their facilities and hire more workers.

The recent tariffs on steel (25 percent) and aluminum (10 percent) from certain foreign countries have had a tremendous impact on prices. Prices for U.S.-made steel have jumped by 41 percent since January, as





**Jeff Parkhill**

domestic companies try to expand their facilities to handle the increased demand.

Parkhill is pragmatic about the changes. "Construction is a cycle. Next year at this time, we could be in a decline and prices will come down," he says. "When there are massive fires in California, hurricanes or severe flooding, prices spike. It's all normal supply and demand."

## LABOR SHORTAGES

"Almost every [construction-related] trade has major shortages of skilled workers," Fetzer says. "It's undermining the ability to complete projects."

““”

Construction is a cycle. Next year at this time, we could be in a decline and prices will come down

# BOB THE (RE)BUILDER

Have you ever driven past a rundown building under renovation and wondered, "Is it really worth it? Wouldn't it be cheaper just to raze it and start anew?"

Bob Fetzer has made a career out of proving that repurposing old buildings does make sense.



Bob Fetzer

Fetzer founded Building Specialists Inc. in Roanoke in 1975, and quickly became one of the first contractors to renovate and repurpose old structures rather than demolish them.

One of his early projects was to purchase an old house on Day Avenue at the edge of downtown Roanoke and convert it into office space which the company still occupies today.

"Adaptive reuse of buildings has become the trend now," Fetzer says. "We're seeing nontraditional use of buildings to put them back into service."

While Fetzer has a reputation for historic preservation, it also comes down to simple economics. "The value of purchasing the square footage is still less expensive than constructing a new building," he explains.

An existing structure already has a cleared and compacted building site; water, sewer and electrical hook-ups; curb cuts; and, in many cases the mother lode: ample parking.

"We see a lot of people who have older structures that were built with a specific purpose 100 years ago," says BSI's Vice President Daniel Hurst. "Our challenge is how to modernize those and adapt them to new uses."

Fetzer points to a recently completed project in Bedford as a prime example: Bedrock

Many experienced workers were forced to leave the industry during the recession, either by retiring early or by making career changes. The result has led to a deficit of qualified workers.

A survey last year by the Associated General Contractors and Autodesk warned that "chronic labor shortages could have significant economic impacts absent greater investments in career and



Community Church on East Main Street.

Bedrock Community Church started as a group of five families in 2008 but by 2016 had grown to a congregation of more than 500. Parishioners were cramped in their rented space in the Liberty High School auditorium and began searching for a larger home.

Church elders began eyeballing a former Kroger that had later become offices of the Bedford Bulletin newspaper. The long-vacant building was decrepit, but it had 14,000-square-feet of space and tons of parking. The prominent location on Main Street was also appealing.

A member of Bedrock's sister church was familiar with Hughes Associates Architects & Engineers, a Roanoke-based firm that has designed more than 300 church projects.

Hughes architect Jeffry Parkhill was tapped to help Bedrock find a suitable – and affordable – new location.

"I met with them to discover their wants, needs and budget," Parkhill recalls. "I looked at the building they were interested in buying and told them it was feasible."

Parkhill's advice for anyone seeking to repurpose an old building is to "look closely before you purchase. You can get yourself in trouble if it's not code compliant or just not financially feasible."

The old Kroger needed a new roof, new electric and new HVAC. Grocery stores have a lot of under-slab utilities which can be challenging and

expensive to work with, Parkhill says. "Also, the existing plumbing doesn't usually match the client's needs."

The building had an existing sprinkler system, which at first seemed to be a positive. However, the system was built according to the prior city of Bedford's code. When the city reincorporated itself into Bedford County, it fell under different building code regulations.

Bringing the sprinkler system up to code was a \$4,500 expense no one had anticipated.

BSI's project manager Michael Bennett says the unexpected expense is par for the course with repurposing projects. "You have to count on unforeseen issues, and adapt to them."

In Bedrock's case, staying on budget was essential. BSI and Parkhill presented options to the church's building committee and tweaked the interior design to cut costs. Members of the congregation did the interior painting, and the ceiling was left as a vaulted space with exposed ductwork and pipes.

"It resulted in a more open, theater style," Parkhill says. "People expect to see the exposed beams and ducts, especially in older buildings. They like the edgy look."

Bennett says the church is very happy with its spacious, new facility which features much-needed classroom space and a huge sanctuary. "They saw potential in an old building. They weren't looking for anything high-end. They wanted to stay on budget, and we helped them accomplish that."

technical education." The nationwide survey of those in the industry indicated that a whopping 70 percent of construction firms said they were having difficulty filling "hourly craft positions that represent the bulk of the construction workforce."

Fetzer laments the loss of skilled craftsmen, noting that "we need to increase the supply of intelligent, trained workers. We've got good jobs and need to fill them."



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## HEARD IN THE WORK ZONE

- It's all about saving money.
- Almost every trade has major shortages of skilled workers.
- Unexpected expense is par for the course with repurposing projects.
- Our customer's are examining every detail.
- Manufacturers aren't maintaining high inventories.
- Customers are clenching their checkbooks tightly... leading to a sharp rise in value engineering.
- We've got good jobs and need to fill them.
- We've seen increased costs across the board.
- There's more of a team-build approach.
- It's all normal supply and demand.
- They like the edgy look.

## MATERIAL SHORTAGES

During the recession, many suppliers adopted "just in time" inventory practices to limit the cost of warehousing unsold goods. Now, those lean larders are seriously affecting builders' ability to complete projects.

"One thing that is common among all of us in the construction industry is the shortages," Fetzer says. "Manufacturers aren't maintaining high inventories. A little thing like not being able to get hardware for doors can delay the entire project for weeks. And, if the items arrive damaged or broken, that stalls things for even longer. It seems crazy that a grand opening can be delayed for a month because of doors, but it happens."

## VALUE ENGINEERING



Clients are seeking input from architects, engineers, designers and contractors early in the process

Customers are clenching their checkbooks tightly and are adamant about staying on budget, leading to a sharp rise in value engineering. Instead of drawing up blueprints and interior design plans and then soliciting bids, clients are seeking input from architects, engineers, designers and contractors early in the process.

"We get involved even before the client purchases a building that is to be repurposed," Parkhill says. "We examine all of the systems – roofing, insulation, electrical, plumbing – to help them determine if a project is feasible for their budget. We do a lot of negotiated projects where we involve contractors early in the design



## NO LONGER OMINOUS

The 110,000-square-foot Heironimus building in downtown Roanoke appears to finally have a buyer, after sitting vacant for about two decades.

In its prominent location at the corner of S. Jefferson Street and Church Avenue, the 5-story structure is one of the largest remaining buildings in the downtown core ripe for redevelopment.

Cushman & Wakefield | Thalhimer announced on Aug. 14 that Tom Dickey and Chris Johnson, principles of Richmond-based The Monument Companies, had signed a purchase contract, with the deal expected to close at the end of September.

The building is assessed for tax purposes at \$3,128,500. The purchase price was not disclosed.

process. By involving contractors earlier, we can help control costs so the owners aren't surprised."

According to Fetzer, "Value engineering has become the norm. At almost every project, we meet with owners to determine what their true needs are. As the cost of goods rises or unforeseen expenses emerge, we ask what they're willing to sacrifice [to stay on budget]. Can they settle for paint rather than wall-covering? They can always upgrade later."

In an effort to cut costs, customers are much more likely to ask for work to be done in phases. "We might rough in electrical connections and plumbing for a future second floor expansion that isn't part of the first phase," Fetzer says. "There's more of a team-build approach and negotiative work."

Cushman & Wakefield | Thalhimer became the exclusive sales representative only 4 months prior and will also serve as the commercial leasing representative for the building.

The Monument Companies plans to redevelop the building into 25,000-square-feet of commercial space and approximately 80 apartments with an onsite pool and fitness center.

"The Heironimus building is an impressive and unique historic building," Johnson said. "We are in a fortunate position to be involved in the last major redevelopment project in downtown Roanoke."

Joyce Waugh, president and CEO of Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce said she was "thrilled" with the announcement. "With all of the restaurants, music venues, outdoor spaces and activities that abound, it makes perfect sense to have this type of additional offering."

The building was constructed in 1915 to house Heironimus, a department store founded in the late 1890s by Stewart H. Heironimus and Lynn K. Brugh. The store sprouted other locations in Roanoke and Lynchburg before

succumbing to a shift toward suburban shopping malls.

The downtown store closed in January 1996.

While the blocks around the building's location at 401 S. Jefferson St. flourished, the building seemed immune to attracting a buyer.

"It might be a while before we know whether it's a base hit or a home run, yet it's certainly meaningful in the broader context," Waugh said.

"Feedback from members and downtown businesses as a whole has been very positive to this announcement," said Jaime Clark, marketing and communications specialist for Downtown Roanoke Inc.

DRI advocates for strategies to strengthen and promote the economic vitality of downtown. Its membership includes businesses, property owners, cultural and civic organizations and government agencies.

"As the heart of Virginia's Blue Ridge, downtown is critical," Clark says. "The more successful downtown is, the more successful we are as a region."

—Alison Weaver





## SMART TECHNOLOGY

“

They want...  
'smart' features

One of the biggest surges has been in customers' demand for technology to be incorporated in the earliest design stages.

"Our customers are examining every detail. They're asking for automated lighting – lighting that shuts down when people aren't in the area. They want security systems built in and 'smart' features that let them monitor and adjust the heat or air-conditioning from their mobile phones. That was unheard of just a few years ago," Fetzner says.

## GREEN NOW THE NORM

"A number of years ago, more people were seeking LEED-certification. They wanted that silver, gold or platinum plaque to display," Parkhill says. "I rarely hear that anymore."

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design movement began in 1993 in an effort to encourage owners and builders to consider factors such as energy efficiency, safety and water management when undertaking new construction or renovations.

It's not that people have become less environmentally conscious; new building codes now require many of the LEED recommendations. "Customers don't have to ask for these features. Builders have to comply with the energy code, which mirrors LEED certification," Parkhill explains. "You have to do it; it's not a choice."

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) took effect in July 2014 and follows federal standards. It encompasses every aspect of construction for new structures, additions, repurposing of existing structures and many types of repair work.

The USBC dictates exacting requirements for water efficiency and drainage, fuel-burning appliances, insulation, indoor environment and foundations. The massive code establishes guidelines for everything from allowable emissions of elemental sulfur from gypsum wallboard to how tight the mesh must be on window screens.

"Our customers are definitely looking at the bigger picture of long-term energy costs," Fetzner says. "They want more efficient lighting, better insulation ... it's all about saving money."

## EYE IN THE SKY

One national trend that has – quite literally – taken off in Southwestern Virginia is the use of drones on construction projects. Roofing contractors are using them as opposed to sending estimators up on building tops, inspectors use them to assess properties and contractors are using them to keep their clients updated on progress.



New building codes now require many of the LEED recommendations



One national trend that has taken off in Southwestern Virginia is the use of drones on construction projects





Hazlegrove Architectural Photography

## Our Lady of Nazareth


Parkhill says drones are already popular among surveyors and real estate agents, and that more drone companies are popping up in the region. During a recent renovation at Our Lady of Nazareth church in Roanoke County, “a member of the congregation would fly the site [via drone] periodically to show the progress,” Parkhill says. “The congregation really loved seeing the building take shape.”

## PREFAB?

While national publications tout the growth of prefabricated and modular buildings, it still accounts for a tiny market share in Virginia.

The Charlottesville, Va.-based Modular Building Institute reports that 3.53 percent of commercial construction projects in the Commonwealth used modular or prefabricated construction as of 2016.

Fetzer predicts that will be changing. “Due to the cost increases and shortage of labor, I think we’ll see more people using prefab,” he says. “We’re seeing projects where they put the walls in place and then the trusses are manufactured off-site. Or, foundation walls are being prefabricated and brought into place.

“We’ll see more of that in the overall scheme of things as people look for ways to increase efficiency and save money.” 



FRONT



## BOONES MILL DEPOT

Building Specialists Inc. completed the first phase of a historic preservation project on the Boones Mill train depot in late August.

Norfolk Southern Railway planned to demolish the 1892 depot because the crumbling building was too close to modern tracks. Citizens stepped in and waged a campaign to save the building, which involved

moving it several hundred feet to a field of dirt.

Funded by a \$76,000 VDOT grant, the preservation group hired BSI to shore up the building, add electrical connections, provide site drainage and begin preliminary landscaping.

Boones Mill plans to use the depot as a gathering spot and music venue.



## Professional Development

By Lesa Hanlin

### Executive Summary:

*To find out what's the most important thing you can give to your team—you can start by asking.*

### That most important thing >

Today I did an exercise with my work team. I wanted to ask each one the same question, and create this column inspired by their answers. I did not know what to expect. Here are the answers I received to the question “What’s the most important thing you can give to your team?”


1. Empathy
2. Reliability
3. Reliability
4. Experience
5. Being open to new ideas

The answers didn’t surprise me. Each matched the employee’s approach to their work, were authentic to the individual, and something I truly valued about them. Their words rang true. So what is the lesson here?

The unintended thing I learned is that being heard is also one of the most important things you can bring to a team. Everyone had a chance to participate and give their answer, and we were able to have a brief conversation about their choice and about how that characteristic was helpful to our team.

Most of the time we are so busy at work that we don’t take time to connect, hear, and be heard. When is the last time you had a leadership conversation with your teammates? How about an individual conversation about something professional other than a task? I’m guilty too. Here are some other ways to be deliberate about listening to one another.

1. Make it intentional— take time each week to speak with each of your team members one on one.
2. Ask questions like in this exercise. You’ll find the answers interesting. Try Gregory Stock’s *The Book of Questions* for some ideas, or start with “What is the most important thing you can give to your team?”
3. Have a quality conversation about the answer you hear.
4. No judging! The answer you receive is the right answer for the person.
5. Be last to speak at meetings, especially if in a leadership role. Or better yet, listen then ask “why”?

People who don’t listen will be surrounded by people who don’t say much. The value for me in this exercise ended up not being about the answers, but about the process. 

“Being heard... is one of the most important things.

## Mingle with skill and confidence >

Many professionals approach the idea of networking with trepidation, even though they know that one-to-one encounters are still considered one of the best ways to generate new business opportunities. Consider the following ways to enjoy your next networking event and negotiate it with skill and confidence.

Prepare for the event. When Benjamin Franklin wrote “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail,” he probably wasn’t thinking about networking, but nevertheless, his observation serves our purpose. Without a plan, all we will probably do is schmooze with colleagues, hang out at the bar, and eat the hors d’oeuvres.


Have your plan in place to promote yourself and your company. How will you describe who you are, and what you do in a quick, interesting way? Practice speaking with confidence, so that you don’t stumble your way along.

Expect to have fun and enjoy the event – that way you probably will. While it is in our best interests to behave professionally, it’s fine to lighten up and build a connection. It could be by finding a common interest outside of work - sports, theatre, or pets. Note I said “common interest” here. Don’t make it all about you.

Try to have positive, meaningful, interactions with potential clients. Don’t whisk around the room collecting a pocketful of business cards from people you probably won’t follow up with anyway. A business card is an extension of the giver and who he or she is, so treat the card with respect. Look at it and read it before pocketing it.

Listen, listen, and listen. Yes, I know I’ve written about that before, but it bears repeating. Remember the saying, “When you are interested, you become more interesting?” It’s true. So ask sincere questions of people, then stop, and allow them time to speak. I believe this one practice is a very powerful way to engage and interest those with whom you want to connect.

Think about how you can help others. Connect other people in the room to each other, especially those who seem a little lost. Don’t have a scarcity mentality and hold onto your contacts like a miser. Steven Covey said: “People with a scarcity mentality tend to see everything in terms of win-lose... The more we develop an abundance mentality, the more we are genuinely happy for the successes [and]...achievements...of others... we believe their success adds to, rather than detracts from, our lives.”

So, prepare to have a successful networking event. Expect to have fun. Listen and help others. You may be surprised at the unanticipated positive outcomes! 



## Etiquette & Protocol

By Kathleen Harvey Harshberger

**Executive Summary:**  
*Networking... business professionals are constantly told to do it; but many still fear or are intimidated by the very idea.*





## Project managers hone skills >

### Executive Summary:

*The Project Management Institute / Southwest Virginia Chapter supports project managers from the most experienced to the "accidental."*

**Submitted by PMI/SWVA**

On October 19th, you will find a gathering in the Roanoke Valley like no other. Over 140 professionals will be attending the annual SW Virginia Project Management (PM) symposium – at Roanoke College. You may hear them talking about techie stuff like agile sprint cycles, earned value and burn-down charts. Then again, they may be networking and recalling the last chapter meeting held at a local brewery where they played (you guessed it!) project management trivia. One thing's for sure, they will be enjoying a fall day



on the Roanoke College campus, while they learn, share and participate in an ever growing community interested in project management.

This symposium is brought to you by the local Project Management Institute (PMI) chapter – an organization that promotes the profession and topics of project management. Their mission is ***"To foster a community of Project Management excellence in Southwest Virginia"*** and that's just what they do! The chapter

meets the second Tuesday of each month (Roanoke, Lynchburg and Blacksburg) with dinner, networking and a topic/talk provided for each chapter meeting. The group is always looking for fun topics and venues, from the brewery visit, baseball games and visits by the proprietors of Floyd Fest and how the annual festival is a project that requires creative project management.

Meet two project managers who have been a part of this organization for many years.





Darryl Agee has been an active member for most of the chapter's 15-year existence. He is a local project manager who also teaches, coaches and prepares students to take the profession's credentials such as the Project Management Professional (PMP) and Agile certifications. "Project management is oftentimes something that happens accidentally. You might be good at organizing 'stuff,' so your boss gives you a whole project and tells you 'go, make this happen!' It's nice to learn that there are tools, strategies and processes that help make the experience less bumpy! We

help facilitate a community that supports project management for everyone – from the new, accidentally project manager, all the way to the NASA project manager!"

Emily Cohen, another local project management professional, is a Strategic Project Manager for PowerSchool and got involved with the chapter after taking one of Darryl's classes. She volunteers on the SWVA PMI board as the VP of Marketing. "A few years ago, I was at a crossroads in my career. I was looking for a certification that brought together my skill set and found Darryl's PMP class. Getting my





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PMP and later my PMI-ACP has provided great opportunities both within PowerSchool and working with other professionals in Southwest Virginia.”

For more information about the chapter, visit their website at [www.pmi-swva.org](http://www.pmi-swva.org). You can reach Darryl at [dagee@cox.net](mailto:dagee@cox.net) or Emily at [emily.cohen@powerschool.com](mailto:emily.cohen@powerschool.com). 

## FROM SUDDEN STROKE TO SINKING PUTTS

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– John Parrott (Martha’s husband)

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## Shark Patrol

By Keith Finch

### Executive Summary:

*An employee isn't allowed to volunteer for his or her employer. A charity in particular should be wary of paying volunteers, because this can turn the volunteers into employees, who thus become ineligible to volunteer for the charity (and eligible to demand payment for all their volunteer hours).*

## Volunteer work >

My friend Tom's life revolves around the volunteer fire department. He spends several nights a week sleeping at the fire station, ready to jump out of bed if there's an alarm. I ran into him recently.

"You know I'm between jobs," he said. "Do you know anyone who's hiring?"

"I've been asking around for you," I said. "But I thought you said you were doing some part-time work?"

"Yes, just a bit," he said. "You know I'm a volunteer at the fire department."

"Sure!" I said. "For years I've been begging you to let me in so I can slide down the pole, but you keep saying it's against the rules!"

"Yup, sorry," he laughed. "Anyway, in addition to volunteering most nights, I've been doing a little part-time work at the fire station."

"Really, what sort of work?" I said.

"As you know, we have two full-time paid staff members," he said. "But there's still always a shortage of volunteers during the day, because most volunteers have to do their regular jobs during the day. So the station usually pays a couple of volunteers to come in during the day and do things like answer phones."

"So you've been getting paid to answer phones during the day?" I said.

"Yes," he said. "And I'm still volunteering at night of course."

"OK, you're going to have to make them stop that," I said. "They can't pay volunteers to work. You should talk to someone on the board about it."

"Volunteers can't do part-time work?" he said.

"No," I said, "not for the same organization. If you get paid for doing part-time work, then you aren't a volunteer any more, you're an employee."

"Can't I be an employee during the day and a volunteer at night?" he said.

"No," I said. "You can't. An employee isn't allowed to volunteer for his or her employer."

"So what happens if an employee does volunteer?" he said.

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

"An employee is entitled to receive minimum wage for every hour worked for the employer," I said. "So for example, if you work as an employee for four hours, and then 'volunteer' for four hours, then you should be paid at least the minimum wage for all eight hours."


"But are you sure?" he said. "A friend of mine is paid to work for a local charity full-time, but she also volunteers for the charity on weekends, because that's when the charity holds most of its public events."

"I understand that that sort of thing happens," I said. "However, legally that's no different from working 'off the clock.' The law draws a bright line here. Otherwise employers would constantly be asking employees to punch out and then 'volunteer' for a few more hours. So if your friend works on weekends, then she should be paid for those hours. She may be entitled to be paid overtime too."

"Wow, I definitely will tell the board of the volunteer fire squad about this," he said.

"Yes, every charity should know," I said. "Not least because today's happy employee (or volunteer) sometimes turns into tomorrow's disgruntled wage-and-hour plaintiff. Charities that allow employees to volunteer are playing with fire."

"I really appreciate you telling me about this," he said. "What can I do to thank you?"

"Just sneak me into the firehouse some night," I said. "I still really want to slide down that pole, just once, please!" 

Keith can be reached at [keith@creekmorelaw.com](mailto:keith@creekmorelaw.com)

**Note:** *facts have been changed to preserve confidentiality. Oh, and this isn't legal advice—you should consult a lawyer before deciding whether to treat someone as an employee or a volunteer, verifying minimum-wage and overtime compliance, etc.*

““”

If you work as an employee for four hours, and then 'volunteer' for four hours, then you should be paid at least the minimum wage for all eight hours.

““”

The law draws a bright line here. Otherwise employers would constantly be asking employees to punch out and then 'volunteer' for a few more hours.



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Girl Scouts Doing STEM Activity

## Badging up >

### Executive Summary:

*The Girl Scouts unveil over 30 new "STEM-focused" badges.*

**By Ashlyn Davidson**

Founded on March 21, 1912 in Savannah, Georgia, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) was formed to provide girls between the ages of five and 18 with experiences to build courage, confidence and character. More than a century later, the organization has grown to 2.6 million members across the world, and 9,500 members across 36 counties in southwest Virginia.

One aspect of Girl Scouts is the well-known badge program. Upon completing a new skill or exploring an interest, scouts are awarded a badge or pin. Recently, GSUSA announced the addition of over 30 new badges with a strong science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) focus. According to a press release, the goal of the new badges is to encourage scouts to address society's needs surrounding computer science, mechanical engineering, environmental advocacy, cybersecurity and more. In November 2017, GSUSA announced the integration of STEM-focused programs to reduce the gender gap in related fields.

"We truly believe this direction of engaging girls in STEM through fun badge activities will help more and more girls move into these careers. Girl Scouts, locally and nationally, are



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Girl Scouts Doing New Badge Activities

working with corporate and educational partners to expand upon our STEM programs so that more girls participate in STEM,” explained Jennifer Pfister, Marketing and Communications Director of Girl Scouts of Virginia Skyline. “The more engagement

girls have with the exciting platforms of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, the more likely girls may consider a career within these areas. Our programming is girl-inspired, girl-led and girl-forward thinking. We hope this makes

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#### New Girl Scout Badges

a difference in reducing the gender gap within the STEM area.”

Examples of the new badges include environmental stewardship badges, presented to scouts who address environmental issues. Robotics badges are available to scouts in grades six to 12 and teach girls how to program, create and showcase robots. A college knowledge badge is awarded to members in grades 11 and 12 who explore

the college admission process, financial aid opportunities and more.

“Girl Scouts inspires girls to take all of that fun badge work and then put it to work in bettering our local communities,” Pfister explained.

“Our program is developed to progress girls over the years through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience — a collection of engaging, challenging and fun activities like earning badges, going on awesome trips, selling

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cookies, exploring science, getting outdoors and doing community service projects."

Young women across our community are leading the charge on important discussions happening across the country. Being a Girl Scout empowers young women to make the world a better place through lifelong friendship and one-of-a-kind growth opportunities.

"A Girl Scout discovers, connects and then takes action. As girls grow older in Girl Scouting, they take on the three top awards: Bronze Award, Silver Award and Gold Award. We have a Girl Scout down in Danville, Mae Gayle Dalton, who took on the Gold Award project of ending rape stigma via introducing state legislation that would require Virginia's public schools to teach "yes means yes" as a standard for sexual consent. A local Girl Scout from Lynchburg, Lora Callahan, worked with Staunton River State Park to reduce light

pollution thus creating the first Dark Sky state park in Virginia as well as earning her an international award."

The new badges are an additional aspect of Girl Scouts that give girls the ability to change the world. According to a study, Girl Scout alumnae are more likely to describe themselves as competent, capable and contributing to the well-being of others compared to those who were not members. It's easy to see why the future of Girl Scouts across the country and world is bright, and Pfister is confident that many exciting things are on the horizon for the organization nationwide and in our local area.

"I believe that the future for Girl Scouts lies in the blazing of new trails within STEM as well as the great outdoors, said Pfister. "Through Girl Scouting, girls will redefine what was possible for themselves and for girls everywhere." 



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# Business Operations

By Mike Leigh

**Executive Summary:**  
*Don't underestimate the value of "a job well done."*

## Pride of workmanship >

This month we continue the series on W. Edwards Deming's 14 points for management to follow as covered in his book, *Out of the Crisis*. Each point will be discussed in a separate article.

**Point #12** – *Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship.*

For nearly 25 years, I was a successful operations leader as a military officer and a manufacturing manager. I was regularly promoted and given additional responsibilities. But when I reflect on those years, I realize I could have been much more effective as a leader. My motivational skills were poor, I didn't regularly provide feedback and coaching, and I didn't take enough interest in the personal lives of my team members.

I often tell those in my leadership courses that despite all my shortcomings as a leader, there was one thing I did very well that allowed me to be successful. I worked hard to provide my team members what they needed to do their jobs well. The impact of this was greater pride of workmanship in my team.

Dr. Deming puts strong emphasis on the need to remove the barriers employees face that prevent them from doing a good job and rob them of pride of workmanship. In fact, Deming states that pride of workmanship is much more important than the various "perks" companies use to improve morale, such as free Friday ice cream, and has a strong impact on employee engagement and turnover.

Consider some of these barriers that are pervasive in organizations today:

- Inadequate training
- Shortages of components and supplies
- Inferior tools and equipment
- Unreliable equipment and poor maintenance
- Uncomfortable working conditions such as temperature and air quality
- Rush jobs due to poor planning
- Confusing and inadequate documentation and work instructions

Often, I've heard leaders complain about employees who are "whining" about this, or "complaining" about that. As a leader, these are opportunities for improvement. If you want them to stop, listen to them and fix their problems!

If you are a manager of people, there is no other responsibility you have that is more important than breaking down these barriers. This is the role of a servant leader. By eliminating these barriers, you will improve productivity, quality, safety, turnover, morale and engagement. And as a leader, your own job satisfaction will increase as you help your team members be more successful.

Next month: *Point #13 – Education and self-improvement.* 

## Factoring isn't so hard >

### The Rule of 72

Have you heard of the rule of 72? It's a neat, easy way to predict your future money. The rule's concept is to figure out how long it will take for your money to double. This can also be used to find the amount of time it takes for your money's value to halve due to inflation.

So how does it work? You take the number 72 and divide it by the number of years you want to double your money. The result ends in what rate of return you need to obtain to double your money.

Here's an example. Let's say you want to double your money in eight years. Divide 72 by eight to come up with nine. That means you'll need an annual return of 9% to make it so. Conversely, if you're earning 8%, it will take you nine years to double your money.

It's remarkable to see how much you can simplify your financial planning with this fascinating principle for getting to the bottom line of your financial figuring.


The estimates are rough, but close enough to help you predict the future.

### The 4% Rule

The 4% rule is applied to how much a retiree should withdraw from a retirement account each year. The goal is to provide a steady income stream while keeping the account balance high enough to keep money flowing through retirement.

### The Rule of 100

The Rule of 100 applies to retirement savings. Some are now arguing this is outdated given increased life expectancy and lower returns, but basically, it suggests you subtract your age from your total savings to determine what percentage of your investments should be in equities. So, if you're 60, 40% is a safe bet for the riskier stock holdings, but 60% should be in conservative assets such as high-grade bonds.

Calculating a brighter financial future can be fun and simple with these shortcut tips. It's not exact but allows you to quickly guesstimate what your money may look like years from now. Why not give it a try to see what possibilities lie ahead for your retirement joy? 

*Michael Shelton owns 360 Financials Solutions and 360 Tax Solutions. Email him at [michael@discover360Financial.com](mailto:michael@discover360Financial.com) with questions, story ideas or for help with your financial issues.*



## Financial Figures

By Michael Shelton

### Executive Summary:

*You don't have to be strong in math to let these simple tricks put a smile on your face; your friends will be amazed at the genius you've been hiding.*





At a recent MOVA staff event, Austin Stromme (black couch) and Justin Brown (wooden table) perform their duties, while Brandon White and Nick Gavirati take a break for a game of foosball.

## Conduit of cutting-edge >

### Executive Summary:

*MOVA Technologies—and its clean energy solutions—is well on its way to move up and beyond its original patents.*

**By Jennifer Poff Cooper**

The need to create a more environmentally friendly power infrastructure is a problem

facing the world today. Another need is for economic development in southwestern Virginia. Pulaski-based MOVA Technologies, Inc., pulls these ideals together with a revolutionary new concept.

MOVA is an emerging technology company whose panel-bed filtration technology helps create cleaner energy for future generations by allowing carbon-based fuel facilities to operate more efficiently and effectively. Panel-beds can meet the specific emission filtration needs of various industries by filtering out their respective gaseous and solid pollutants through the use of solid

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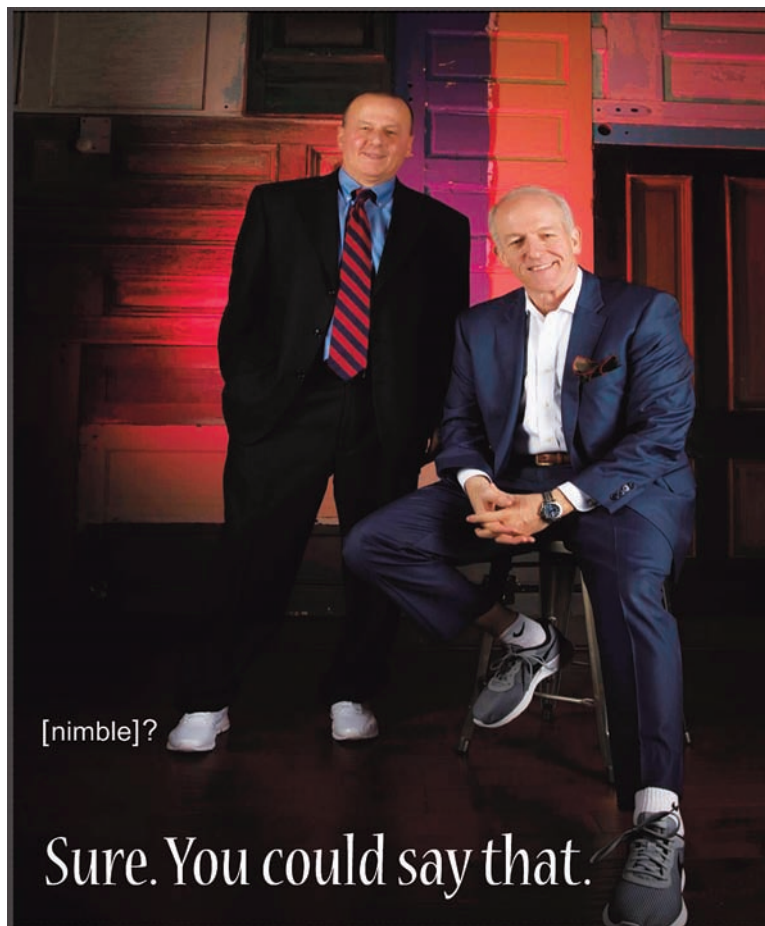
sorbents. Additionally, its clean filtration practices are designed to convert captured pollutants into an economic asset for industry use.

According to Steven Critchfield, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors for MOVA Technologies, the problem with current technology is that captured pollutants are a "toxic soup" sitting in containers with no one wanting them. MOVA's technology is about making sure everything gets recycled. Critchfield described MOVA's product as a "new generation of technology" in which pollutants are siloed and separated, then sold back into industry. For example, nitrogen could be converted into fertilizer without burning natural gas, reducing global warming potential.

MOVA Technologies, Inc., was formed to commercialize the panel-



**Steven Critchfield, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors for MOVA Technologies, Inc., works the phones getting the business up and running.**



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**MOVA's office is located in picturesque downtown Pulaski at 29 West Main Street.**

bed filtration technology, a particulate matter and gaseous substance filter system originally invented and patented by the late Arthur M. Squires, University Professor Emeritus of Virginia Tech in the area of Chemical and Carbon Emissions.

Critchfield met Dr. Squires through his grandmother; both were opera enthusiasts. Dr. Squires invested in Critchfield's previous companies and, when he died in 2012, left the patent for this technology in a trust. MOVA Technologies has subsequently secured the rights to develop the technology described in the patents.

Moving from preliminary patent to permanent patent has been a process. Critchfield has spent the past five or so

years testing the viability of the new technology. VT KnowledgeWorks, which provides business formation and growth support services, assessed the market opportunity of the patent and determined it had the potential for \$500 million to \$1 billion in annual revenue.

The technology is about two-thirds of the way to commercialization, said Critchfield. Currently, MOVA has a request for proposal out to find a laboratory to test a prototype. Potential markets include incinerators, power plants, factories using diesel, refineries, and the Department of Defense. MOVA's handful of employees are pursuing these customers already. The scope of the technology could span the globe with markets in



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Dr. Squires tapped Critchfield for the good business and entrepreneurial sense necessary to get the technology company started. Critchfield estimates research will be done in about two years, at which point he fully expects to hand over the reins to people with "knowledge of the industry."

MOVA is also working with local community colleges to develop a fabrication program to teach building the filters. "These would be good paying jobs for southwest Virginia," said Critchfield.

That is not the only local economic benefit. Critchfield said that the investors in MOVA Technologies are local to the Roanoke and New River Valleys. He hopes to "make millionaires" of them, instead of enriching investors from elsewhere.

Why locate in Pulaski? Critchfield said that he "fell in love with the downtown," which had "good bones." He wanted to help revitalize it. Pulaski has been one of the most accommodating towns in which Critchfield ever started a business. Plus, the cost of renting space was \$120K compared to \$650K for the same square footage in Blacksburg. The value is only increasing, he added, as Pulaski grows.

According to James Compton, Operations Officer, MOVA retains the rights to eight patents, one of which is the panel-bed filter and two of which "also have the potential to be revolutionary technologies." Those two place more emphasis on chemical and solids processing than on clean energy purposes. "Long term plans are focused on achieving commercialization of the technologies," said Compton. 



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## About those improvement initiatives >

### Time<sub>2</sub>Improve

People want to improve. Well, most people do anyway.

They'll talk the improvement game. They'll go to conferences. They'll read those books. Most will target a start date of January – the official biggest improvement month of the year.

The trouble is I see too many people who talk about improving, but, by the month of February, they regress to their comfortable habits. They do the same things the same way they always have. Routines are grounded into most folk's normal day. And change is hard – really hard.

## A Little Insight

By Bruce C. Bryan


**Executive Summary:**  
*Improvement is an action.*

### Make Time<sub>4</sub>Improvement

A friend of mine recently commented in an off-hand way, "If someone never sets aside time to improve, they'll never improve." It was a simple statement, but as soon as I heard it I knew I had to write about it. In previous entries, I've shared about how busy people in the world are today. There are fewer of you working in companies and you're doing more and the deadlines seem to come quicker and quicker.

You move from crisis to situation to trouble to meeting. It's just the way it is whether you are in marketing, leadership, medicine, human resources, running a non-profit, or consulting other businesses.

So here is my challenge to you. You're not going to magically make yourself better. You're only going to get better if you carve time out of your calendar to do so. Make it a routine and start *this week*. No matter how much pressure you get from clients, bosses, or the teams you lead, it is critical you create space to actually improve. You owe it to your people, your company, and – most of all – to yourself.

Block out thirty minutes twice a week for the next three weeks. Plan it right after you finish reading this article and before you begin your next task. At this point it doesn't even really matter what route you select to improve. You've marked a start and starting is the most important step. 

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## For our children >


You have a small business, and you're working flat out to make it grow. You hear a news report that claims there were nearly 400 cases of child abuse – not just reported to be, but investigated and found to be – in Roanoke County last year. "Not my child," you mumble, "and probably not in my neighborhood." Why should you care?

Aside from the fact that if you stop to think about it, you care just because you want to be the kind of person who shudders at the thought of child abuse, you probably also want to live in a safe, thriving community. Research supported by the Centers for Disease Control indicates children who suffer abuse are much more likely to have economic, social and health problems later in life.

Fortunately, Roanoke leaders have not ignored this issue. Founded in 1979, the Children's Trust comes at the problem from multiple perspectives.

"Any time we can, we prevent, and children don't become victims" Executive Director Janice Dinkins Davidson explains. "We also work with a team of public and private partners to intervene when children report abuse."

Children's Trust currently employs 20+ people and works with 40 to 50 volunteers. Many of the volunteers are part of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, which focuses on assuring that abused and neglected children have a voice in court, as well as in Roanoke County and the town of Radford.

The total number of abuse cases reported, investigated, and confirmed in that service area last year was 1,164, or between two and three a day. The mission is clearly a daunting one, but as Frederick Douglass famously put it: "It is easier to build strong children than it is to repair broken men." 



## Good Work

By Rachael Garrity

**Executive Summary:**  
*Children's Trust and the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program work today to protect our tomorrow.*



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## Flower power >

### Executive Summary:

*Staying on top of how people select and use a florist is the exciting—and colorful—part of Creative Occasions flower shop and service.*

**By Cara Cooper**

Mark Frye believes he made his first flower arrangement when he was about three years old after picking flowers out of a flower bed in his yard and putting them in a mayonnaise jar. But it took a lot of twists and turns before he got to where he is today.

Frye is the owner of Creative Occasions Florals and Fine Gifts in Vinton, which he has owned for more than 18 years. Even though

he worked in a flower shop as a delivery driver in high school, where the owner would show him basics like how to make bows and bud vases, he stepped away from business in college, instead taking a different route.

He has a degree in communication disorders, and a masters in speech pathology, working in that field in schools for five years. He then moved on to become a lumber salesman for Georgia Pacific for 13 years.

So how did make the transition back to flowers?

"If my department at school had an open house or something I'd say, 'Oh I'll do flowers for the table,'" Frye said. "So people would see them and go, 'Those are really gorgeous where'd you get that?' and I'd say I made it. 'No you didn't. Where did you get it?'"



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Frye would make arrangements for the altar at this church, and said working as a salesman helped him learn about following commodities markets, all the while he kept his hands in flowers as a hobby.

That was until someone at his church asked if he would be interested in doing the flowers for their son's wedding. After being very hesitant to take on such a big task, especially given it had been 20 years since he had worked in that first shop, he decided to give it a try, with some help from the daughter of his first flower shop boss.

"She said, 'here's how you do a quote, here's how you count how many flowers you need to do a bouquet,' and she even volunteered

to come down and help for the wedding,'" Frye said. "'You'll be fine.' She kept saying that over and over.

"I've found this to be the case of people in the industry. They're very helpful and they're very kind and they want to see other people do well. I don't know if that's just the nature of florists or the creative type, I don't know."

Within six months of that first wedding, Frye had done four more, mostly thanks to word of mouth, and a friend working behind the scenes telling all of her friends with daughters of the marrying age to 'call Mark.'

Fast forward five years, and Frye and his wife, Debbie, are working their own wedding flower





business out of their house, often times doing multiple weddings a week. Frye was still working his day job at Georgia Pacific, and the couple were also raising two small children.

Eventually, one Saturday night while still up and finishing a wedding at 2 a.m., Debbie told Frye it was time to take the jump.

"Debbie looked at me and said, 'We can't continue to live like this. You've got this. You're good. it's going to work. You need to take the jump.' So that kind of led to looking for a flower shop or a location for a flower shop."

The couple originally wanted to open their own shop, but realized that from a business standpoint it's better to buy an existing shop.

Thankfully for them, they found the perfect location. They bought Obenchain's Florist, a Vinton institution that had been open for more than 40 years, and were able to take orders and make deliveries from Day 1.

"Mrs. Obenchain stayed on for first 30 days of ownership... And she would introduce me to every customer who came in because she knew them all. 'This is Mark, he's going to be the new owner here. He's going to take good care of you, and if he doesn't, you call me,'" Frye said with a laugh. "They were here for a long time and were really well-respected in the community which helped because they had that reputation, so that really helped me when I was starting out because people still had that nice warm cozy feeling about Obenchain's."



Frye quickly found out there was a lot more to owning a florist than just doing weddings. While he said he got into the business originally because he wanted to just do special events, he realized that the daily work – birthday, anniversary, hospital, and funeral flowers – was what kept the business afloat.

The former staff of Obenchain's all stayed on to help him learn that element of running a shop. Even though none of those who were there during the transition are still working at the shop now, Frye said having them was the key early on, and their work with building relationships with customers has carried over to the new staff. He currently has 11 on the weekly payroll, including four designers.

Now the business, from a dollar volume

revenue standpoint, is almost half and half between daily work and events. Daily work is what ultimately supports the business, but he and other florist across the country found during the recession of 2008 that for small shops to stay afloat they needed to do much more in events.

"Flowers are very much an expendable income item, and when people didn't have much expendable income for birthday flowers or sympathy flowers or hospital they still spent money on weddings," he said. "A lot of flower shops that went by the wayside and couldn't make it were shops that had not specialized in special events. It was the special event piece that sort of carried us through that time... So fortunately we were able to hang on and even build that





to where we do more special events now.”


Just like relationships are important in the shop for daily work, Frye said building relationship with wedding planners, venues and other vendors around town has been equally important for his event work.

But he sees a shift in the future when it comes to daily flowers. Mainly, how does he continue to reach and stay relevant to the younger generations that doesn't typically send flowers as gifts. That's where his focus is now.

“Do we change the way we go to market? Do we change the look of arrangements? Are they too old fuddy-duddy to really speak to someone in that age bracket? That's really the challenge for us now,” he said. “As our old

customer base sort of ages out we have to support that with something coming in. Weddings I think are always going to be part of that. But this daily work, it changes every day.

As with any business, there are ups and downs, but after two different career changes, Frye said finding his love in flowers is what makes it worth it.

“Lots of clients say this, and I hope it comes across, I really love what I do,” Frye said. “That's what keeps me here and that's what keeps it fresh. I've been through career changes before and I know what it feels like to go 'oh, this is not what I want to be doing forever.' And I haven't felt that way yet, 27 years in. so I guess that's okay.” 





# On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

**Executive Summary:**  
*Renovation in the construction world (and real job site) is probably not as easy as those portrayed on television.*

## DIY, yeah right >

Gee, thanks HGTV.

No other network has caused so much heartache, guilt, dissatisfaction, and frustration.

No one runs up to me because the Food Network shows a great dish, expecting me to recreate it.

*"Why can't you do what the Pioneer Woman does... maybe help out in the kitchen once in awhile?"*

Family members aren't bringing me my tool box with demands of fixing their vehicles after watching Top Gear or Garage Squad on the automotive network.

*"Surely you can fix that annoying noise when I make a right turn up a hill, dad... how hard can it be compared to the jobs they do in those shops on tv?"*

God forbid someone shows up at my door with a couple of fishing rods, a well-stocked cooler, and an invitation to jump up in the brand spanking new pickup truck with the comfort ride Bass Pro Package.

*"Hey, pal... I was watching that fishing show on the Outdoor Network and said to myself, 'Tom deserves to hit the water with me... Get in—now!'"*

No, apparently the television shows that prompt the MOST motivation of all... are the fixer-upper, flippin' and forget-all-about-having-an-enjoyable day programs.

You know the ones.

The ones where the hosts magically move between "before" and "after" without so much as snagging a fingernail, and yet managing to inspire all of our domesticated deprived homeowners who equate the tearing down and replacement of entire load-bearing walls to the same task as changing the battery in the smoke alarm detector.

I'm not kidding. I had a "project" described to me as if it were the simplest thing in the world to do. Like attending a Paint Night. And it always begins the same way...

*"All I'd like to do is..."*

Followed by tactical maneuvers that would cause great consternation over at our building permit office; even though, of course, our shiny happy HGTV hosts merely dance from one little disaster to the world's greatest improvement. Job after job after job after job.

# REVIEWS & OPINION

"Ya' see? Ya' see what they did there? Didn't take them hardly any time! Hardly cost anything!"

Oh, our attractive hosts will occasionally feign a little frustration. Admit some difficulties. But any hardship (*Why, I believe my belt loop suffered a tear there, darlin'*) pales in comparison to the great reward. A finished project that converts any hopeful red-blooded do-it-yourselfer to an I'm-done-and-over-it-myselfer—if attempted in real life.

Oh, I admire the handyman. Handywoman. I'm in awe of people who take on a structure and completely re-structure it. Efforts that are often far more complex and amazing than building the whole thing from scratch. I can certainly appreciate the after, after seeing the before.

I just wish they'd quit acting like "you can do it!" and just admit they're professionals. In fact, a cautionary "you should NOT try this at home" would be the polite thing to do.

Otherwise, I might have to open my mouth to make regrettable remarks every time I sit down at the family meal:

"You know, you could make this just like Pioneer Woman, right?"

It's probably best just to rename HGTV from Home & Garden to a more befitting identity.

Hell's Gate Television. 

“  
I just wish they'd quit acting like "you can do it!" and just admit they're professionals.

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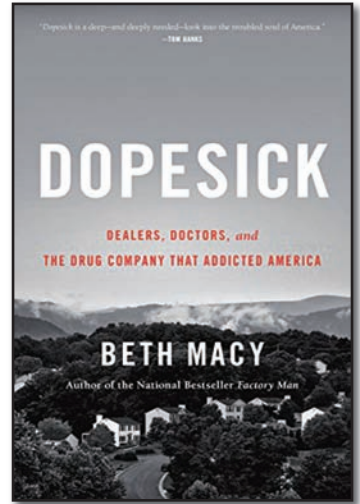
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## Books @ the FRONT >

Following are book recommendations from our contributors and business people in the Roanoke and New River Valleys who are inveterate readers. Readers are invited to submit short reviews of books you've read during the past six months. Our goal is to recommend good books on any topic and in any genre. Send reviews to [news@vbFRONT.com](mailto:news@vbFRONT.com)



### *A critical report*

Roanoke author Beth Macy's third book, *Dopesick* (Little Brown; 2018) looks at the opioid crisis and how communities and families are dealing with the effects, with varying degrees of success. Looking through the eyes of family members, especially mothers, of those struggling to free themselves of addiction, Macy paints a bleak picture of the struggle faced by users and families alike.

Startling statistics and stories bring to light the severity of the opioid issue: "Opioids are now on pace to kill as many Americas in a decade as HIV/AIDS has since it began." Many descriptions seem ripped from crime show scripts.

Those portrayed in the book range from well-meaning parents enabling their children—teens and adults—to cycle through addiction, recover, relapse and repeat—to family members making the tough decisions to get users into treatment programs or to cut ties when their efforts fail. Many of the young people described in the book are dead before the end of the chapter.

Macy's book is structured much like her previous efforts — *Factory Man* and *Truevine* — in which she allows herself to be part of the story; how the information was gathered and told becomes an integral part of the story.

*Dopesick* is not a fun read but is a good read

in that readers can't help but get a deeper understanding of the prevalence of addiction and its non-discriminatory destruction of those caught in its grasp.

—Doloris Vest

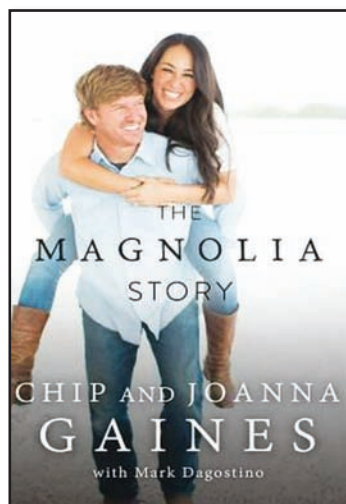
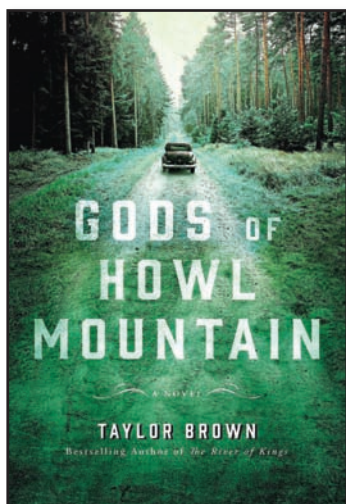
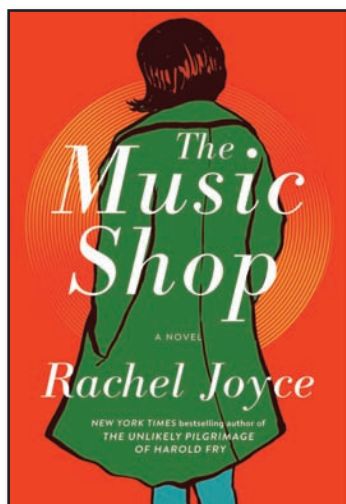
### *Music appreciation*

Kind of like watching a Neil Simon play or getting caught up in the old *Friends* television sitcom, Rachel Joyce's *The Music Shop* (Random House; 2018) was a fun romp with your fellow merchants on the old side of town. The character development was delightful, but the burrowing in to all the trivia and backgrounds of music and the musicians who brought it all to us—from diversity as wide as classical to R&B—was more than revealing. You discover that old mantra that "music is life" is about as true a philosophical perspective that ever was.

There was only one chapter that utterly befuddled me... where the idea that an old married couple's intimacy was restored simply after hearing a song by Shalamar. Really? Of all the songs our storyteller gives us on a most amazing playlist throughout the whole book... she credits early 80's Shalamar? But that's part of the point. The music moves us. You can't stop its influence... whether it's JS Bach or James Brown.

Of course, the worship of playing everything only on vinyl is a big part of our story. Maybe Shalamar works on vinyl.





I don't think so; but that's up to your ears.

—Tom Field

## Runnin' 'round the mountain

Okay, FRONTreaders, don't snatch up your pitchforks and torches, but there's a book out there naming Wilkes County, North Carolina as the "Moonshine Capital of the World." That's okay, our narrator gently admits only "one magazine called it that," and to be honest, there's a spot in Georgia that also makes that claim (Dawson County). We're all more than aware (and Google, Wikipedia, Appalachia folk and all other most reliable authorities confirm and understand) Franklin County, Virginia is assuredly the capital.

Despite those-there fighting words, Taylor Brown's *Gods of Howl Mountain* (St. Martins; 2018) is a pleasure to absorb. The details on Maybelline, the outfitted shine-running Ford was enough to put you right in the driver's seat; you feel the rumble. The character development and sense of time and place were produced with authenticity. But my favorite part throughout was simply the drives on switchbacks, the holding of shotguns on your own front porch, the run-ins with the law, herbal remedies, and the near equivalent treatment of visits to the bawdyhouse as well as the snake-wielding charismatic church revivals.

—Tom Field

## Some real in reality

Success is planned... or, you can just take it.

It's the second half of that statement that fascinates me the most about *The Magnolia Story* (W Publishing; 2016) by the Home & Garden (HGTV) reality television show sensations Chip and Joanna Gaines. This dual autobiography follows the couple's foray into meeting each other and then building what would become an empire from purely entrepreneurial pursuits involving house flipping, construction, interior design, and home décor. Chip and Jo certainly seized the opportunity.

But unlike some of the success stories we cover as a business journal that involved dogged pursuit of riches based upon strategic planning or personal ambition—here's one of those beloved stories where success more or less found the person(s). They were just doing what they loved—working hard at it, no doubt—but moving through one business dealing to another, while going about like what we all do, building their lives and their family. Along with a gentle Christian perspective weaved in their timeline, *Magnolia's* a story of great accomplishment from that ordinary and friendly young couple you know next door. You can't help but smile and root for them all along the way.

—Tom Field

**The reviewers:** Doloris Vest owns Book No Further book shop in downtown Roanoke; Tom Field is a creative director and publishes FRONT.



## B'burg's big bash >

The 38th annual **Steppin' Out** street festival in Blacksburg turned out great crowds and great weather on Saturday, Aug. 4, after a Friday of worrisome rain. Over 200 artists and crafts people displayed their wares, among the food and music and other activities.



## Floyd fans >

**FloydFest** "Wild 18" held its wildly popular outdoor music festival July 25–29 off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Floyd County, with its 100 bands and 8 stages... and plenty of vendors to boot, including Alex Zinn of Savannah, GA and his booth, who appreciated the "good vibe."



# FRONT 'N ABOUT



## Look up >

Drone-delivery company Wing conducted a test "several mile" delivery of popsicles and ice cream from Virginia Tech campus to two homes; part of the UAS Pilot Program and VT's Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership.



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# Flowing in the streets >

Downtown Roanoke was packed at the 21st annual **Microfestivus** epic craft beer festival which featured more than 200 beers and served to benefit The Square Society. We lost count after 85 breweries.



# Crafty >

**Explore Park** in Roanoke County hosted a small but appreciated turnout at its Artisan Saturday affair on August 11; including this demonstration where one youngster saw how arrowheads are made out of rock.

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.



For the children >

**Turner Long Construction** and CEO Boyd Long hand over a \$20,000 check (presented at the newly renovated 11th floor playroom) to **Carilion Children's Hospital**; the donation a result on fundraising from the construction company's annual golf classic.



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Wednesday, January 9, 2019 - Roanoke



# Career FRONT

## FINANCIAL FRONT



Agee

**Steven Agee** has joined as vice president and LPL financial advisor at HomeTown Investments.



Barne



Shaffer

**Justin Barnes** has joined as vice president of commercial lending

and **Mendy Shaffer** has joined as vice president of accounting at ValleyStar Credit Union.



Smith

**Christine Smith** of Smith and Associates of Ameriprise Financial Services qualified for the company's 2018 Circle of Success recognition program.



Adkins

**Arnie Adkins** has been named regional vice president for Western Mid-Atlantic commercial lending operations at Wells Fargo.

**Kimberly Cook** and

**Jessica White** have been promoted to managers, Lynchburg; **Cara Levinson** has been promoted to in-charge associate, Lynchburg; **Bridgette Burchett, Andrea Schindler, Larry Taylor, and Carolyn Vaughn** have been promoted to in-charge associates, NRV; **James Wienke** has been promoted to director, Roanoke; **Marie Wimmer** has been promoted to senior manager, Roanoke; **Amanda Dearing and Justin Mummey** have been promoted to managers, Roanoke; **Phillip Carcione and Brad Lester** have been promoted to senior associates, Roanoke; and **Seager Wilson and Benjamin Ziccardy** have been promoted to in-charge associates at Brown Edwards.

**Fonda Coffey** has joined as vice president at Bank of Botetourt Lexington office.

**Patience O'Brien** has been promoted to



O'Brien

senior vice president, corporate projects at MemberOne Federal Credit Union.

## DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Hasty

**Kristin Hasty** has been promoted to events and social media manager at Southern Trust Home Services. **Brian McNinney** has joined as senior engineering technician and design and **Joshua Costo** has joined as assistant engineer at CHA Consulting.



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**Kris Layell, Anthony Emerick, and Matthew Miller** have joined as agents at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Premier, Realtors.



Settle

**James Settle** has joined as sales and leasing agent at Waldvogel Commercial Properties.

## SENIOR FRONT

**David Jones** has been named administrator for Showalter Center at Warm Hearth Village.

## EDUCATION FRONT

**Roger Edelen** has been appointed associate professor in the Department of Finance, Insurance, and Business Law at



Edelen



Kumar

Pamplin College of Business; **Pankaj Kumar** has been appointed assistant professor in the Department of Management at Pamplin College of Business; **Idris Adjerid** has been appointed associate professor in the Department of Business Information



Adjerid



Garey

Technology at Pamplin College of Business; **Bryan Garey** has been named vice president for human resources; **Hallema Sharif** has been named public relations and communications director for the Office for Inclusion and Diversity; **Cayelan Carey** received the

ASLO (Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography) 2018 Yentsch-Schindler Award; **Karen Herrington** has been appointed director of data analytics and visualization in the Division of Information Technology; **Cal Ribbens** has been named interim executive director of the Biocomplexity Institute at Virginia Tech.

**Dr. Ken Nicely** has been named superintendent of Roanoke County Public Schools.

## CULTURE FRONT

**Andy Washburn** has been named director of history at Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation.

*Compiled by Tom Field*

## 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.



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with Roanoke and Lynchburg area residents age 55+ who want to ensure they won't run out of money before they die. He currently holds his Series 6, 63 & 65 licenses and received the prestigious Chartered Financial Retirement Counselor designation. He's an Iraqi Freedom War Veteran. As owner of both 360 Tax Solutions and 360 Financial Solutions, he takes client satisfaction seriously and makes himself available to every client and prospect of his firms. Tune into Fox radio for his weekly Small Business Figures show. [ [michael@discovery360financial.com](mailto:michael@discovery360financial.com) ]

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Many of the people described in the book are dead before the end of the chapter. — Page 48



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**MVP project at Franklin County's Cahas Mountain.**

## Pipe down

**Mountain Valley Pipeline** construction has temporarily suspended operations in compliance with environmental regulatory court ruling primarily due to runoff issues from recent rains and permitting; about half of the contracted workforce has been released and

the job completion date extended to late 2019.

## Clearly, new business

**Press Glass**, a Poland-based European leader in glass manufacturing, is locating a US facility at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre in Henry County; a \$43 million investment

and development starting the end of this year with the promise of over 200 jobs.

## Flying honorably

The **Boeing** Company contributed \$3 million to Virginia Tech's Calhoun Honors Discover Program, the first founding partner

of the pilot program of transdisciplinary collaborative learning that launched in March.

## Tanks a lot

**MELD Manufacturing Corporation** has been selected by the US Army to collaborate on an "xTechSearch" program for modernizing

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## *Long time coming*

The former **Heironimus** building in downtown Roanoke, a large iconic landmark, is being redeveloped to apartments and commercial operations by The Monument Cos; the structure has been vacant since 2005.

## *Leaping for grant*

**Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP)**/Virginia Fresh Match—a collaborative

between farmers markets, grocery outlets and neighborhood communities— received a three-year \$1.8 million grant from the USDA's \$21 million Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINIA) program to support the SNAP (food stamp) access.

## *County exercises own authority*

**Botetourt County** board of supervisors voted to end the agreement with Roanoke Valley Resource Authority for solid waste and recycling disposal services and landfill operation and closure to instead

contract with private contractor County Waste of Southwest Virginia LLC, resulting in an estimated \$11 million savings.

## *City plans*

**Virginia Tech's School of Public and International Affairs** has launched two new

undergraduate majors: Smart and Sustainable Cities and Environmental Policy and Planning.

## *From preservation to reservations*

Popular landmark **Liberty Trust Building** in downtown Roanoke is slated to be renovated, restored, and converted

*Have an announcement about your business?*

Send announcements to **news@vbFRONT.com**

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

## Coming Events

**30<sup>th</sup> Season**  
**First Fridays**  
**Party with a PURPOSE**  
**ROANOKE VA**

**September 7**  
**SuperHold**  
**September 21**  
**The Worx**  
**October 5**  
**The Kings**

**Presented by:**



# FRONT Notes

to a historic boutique hotel by Fairfax-based JS Project LLC and the Savara Development group.

## Pass the salsa

Although **Chipotle Mexican Grill** restaurants announced the closing of over 50 locations nationwide this year, a second Roanoke location is opening at Valley View Mall.

## Bigger, closer in

**Eastern Divide Brewing Company** plans to open a 12,000-square-foot facility at the Blacksburg Industrial

Park; owned by the same operators of Rising Silo brewery nearby.

## Counting on leadership

**Brown Edwards**, a Roanoke-based CPA firm, was ranked 95th in the nation's top 100 largest public accounting firms by INSIDE Public Accounting (based on 2017 US net revenue).

## Dope tv

Fox 21 Television Studios has optioned Roanoke author Beth Macy's *Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and*

*the Drug Companies that Addicted America* for a television series produced by Littlefield Co.

## School time

**Centra Health** plans to redevelop the former Piggly Wiggly grocery store on Roanoke's Riverland Road to a school for students with autism; planned to open in 2019.

## Giraffe makes room

**Ollie's Bargain Outlet** is opening a store at the former Toys R Us location at Roanoke's Valley

View Mall.

## Print happening

**Bison Printing** is expanding in Bedford County, an investment of \$650,000 and about ten jobs.

## Mouse grounded

**Flying Mouse Brewery** in Botetourt County has announced it will close at the end of the year.

## Radford revival

**City of Radford** has been accepted into Virginia's Main Street downtown



**Epic Summer Saturdays!**

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**Daleville town center**

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\$5 Admission

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revitalization program as a Commercial District Affiliate.

*Brrrrr—ing it on*

**InterChange Cold Storage** is building a 250,000-square foot cold storage facility in Rockingham; a \$41 million investment expected to support over 80 jobs.

*Smile for Mr Officer*

**Virginia Tech Police**

**Department** has issued body-worn cameras to all officers on campus.

*High five for low number*

Virginia's **unemployment rate** has decreased again, now at 3.1% (July 2018) which is the lowest it has been since August 2007.

*Hoppy trails*

A "Cheers Trail" passport program has

been released by **Virginia's Blue Ridge** to incentivize visitors and locals to visit about 25 local craft breweries to redeem merchant exclusive offers.

*Second station*

**WDBJ 7** television Roanoke CBS affiliate has purchased Channel 24 from Liberty University; to become WZBJ 24; part of the Gray Television company (which also is in an

agreement to purchase Raycom Media).

*Retire to the hills*

**Woodland Hills**, a new 85,000-square-foot structure and senior living community off Ogden Road in Roanoke County is under development and expected to open in late 2019, by Retirement Unlimited.

*Compiled by Tom Field*

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The more engagement girls have with [STEM], the more likely girls may consider a career within these areas.

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1983 ... 2018 ... tomorrow

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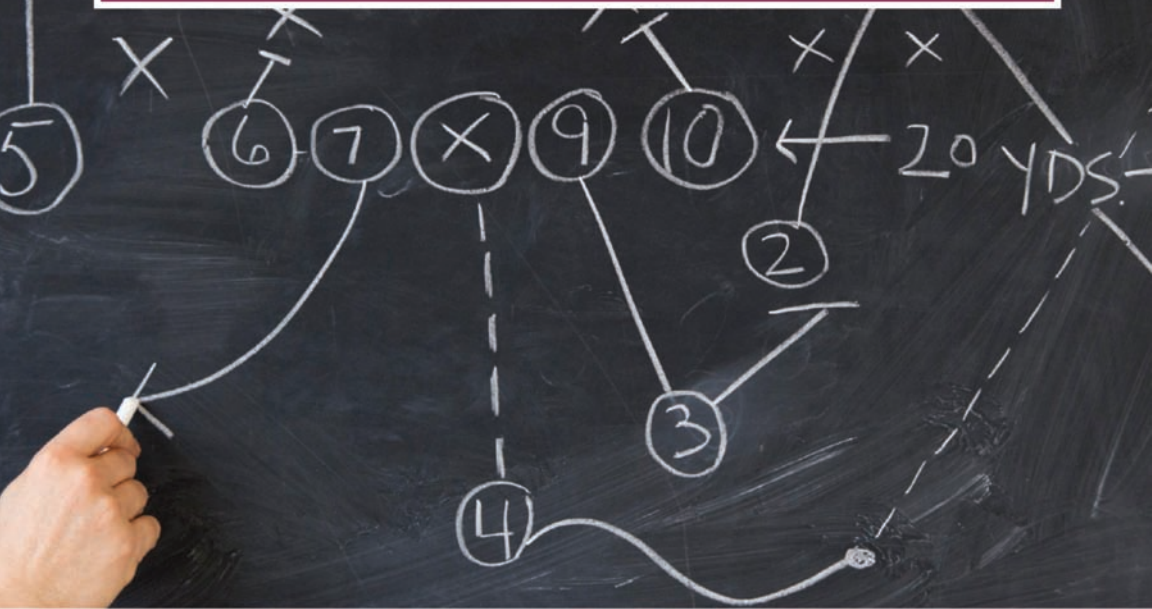
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