



Valley Business

# FRONT

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

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## A Family (Tree) Business

James Poff,  
Brown Hound Tree Service



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# WELCOME to the FRONT

The four best ways to combat a disease are to: 1) fund medical research and drug development; 2) promote individualized treatment; 3) ensure access to high-quality, specialized care; and 4) educate as many people as you can about the progress and advancements. How do we know this? Because that's what the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has done.

And it works.

More than 30,000 people in the U.S. have cystic fibrosis—a complex, progressive disease and genetic disorder that affects the lungs (clogging airways) and other organs, resulting in a shortened lifespan. “Tremendous advancements in specialized CF care have added years and quality to the lives of people with cystic fibrosis. There have been dramatic improvements from the 1950s, when a child with CF rarely lived long enough to attend elementary school—to today, when many living long enough to realize their dreams of attending college, pursuing careers, getting married, and having kids,” CFF reports.

That's why we're proud to support Cystic Fibrosis Foundation / Virginia Chapter and its annual fundraising campaign for our third year. You'll see our Special Feature on the campaign and our Roanoke's Finest / Brewer's Ball event in this edition of FRONT. We invite you to join us on June 6 and support this most worthy organization. What a great two-word report we have with CFF/VA:

It's working.



Tom Field

“

I knew I needed a tribe

— Page 22



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**vbFRONT.com**

“I guess mothers  
know best! — Page 39





EVERYTHING

OLD

IS

NEW AGAIN

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16 CHURCH AVENUE  
DOWNTOWN  
ROANOKE

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# Valley Business FRONT

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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 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



Jennifer Poff Cooper



Dan Dowdy



Tom Field



Lesa Hanlin



Mike Leigh



Obinna Morton

““  
Here you can leave your  
worries at the door... — Page 23

Biographies and contact information on  
each contributor are provided on Page 42.

## 2019 Members

- Nancy Agee** Carilion (Wellness)  
**Laura Bradford** Claire V (Retail)  
**Nicholas C. Conte** Carilion (Legal)  
**Warner Dalhouse** Retired (Finance)  
**John Garland** Garland Properties (Development)  
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**Nanci Hardwick** Aeroprobe (Tech/Industry)  
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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.

““  
We got a taste  
of owning our  
own business,  
and we won't  
go back!  
— Page 15

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**James and Carrie Poff with Avery  
Mae (age 1) and Alexander (4).**

All project site photography by FRONT



# A TREE NEEDS TO GO

The trucks roll in on a cool wet gray morning on a homeowner's property in western Roanoke County. Two men and one woman pile out of the vehicles and begin grabbing equipment and gear as if they had already been given orders, not unlike a military operation. There's no sitting around on this job site. There's a job to be done, there's another one right after this one, and in fact, there are other jobs before this one still in the works. And all the while the clock is ticking.

Who's responsible for this morning's invasion?

A tree. One tree.

Brown Hound Tree Service and its crew gets calls for anything tree-related. And many times—like this morning—it can be one big problem tree. Today's task? A towering white oak tree that is leaning precariously over a fence for horses, and power and utility lines overhead on poles just across the road. If the overhead issues aren't enough, there is also the water pipe from Spring Hollow Reservoir and even more underground power and cable lines that traverse right up beside the trunk of our massive tree.

It's not a job most homeowner's can tackle. It's a job requiring expertise and skill in almost surgical-like extraction—along with labor and equipment designed for specific maneuvers. And often, there is urgency. Our tree here is noticeably leaning, its roots on one side beginning to pop up out of the driveway. With the extraordinary wet winter season, anyone can see this big tree is GOING to come down. It might be with the next rainfall (including this very one that's coming in as the crew begins to work), it might be with the next high wind, it might be within the week, or it could possibly hang on somehow, not quite falling, for another year or so. We don't really know.

## A family (tree) business >

**Executive Summary:**  
*James and Carrie Poff see the trees—and the forest—in building their Brown Hound Tree Service and Heart Wood Tree Salvage business.*

**By Tom Field**





**The BEFORE shot: Large white oak leans precariously towards fence, overhead power lines, and roots coming up in proximity of both underground power line and water pipeline. AFTER felling the tree it was discovered one more rain and/or wind could have resulted in toppling as much of the root system had separated.**



# COVER STORY

"Don't wait too late!" says James Poff, owner of Brown Hound who also works alongside his crew. "Sometimes, the cost to take care of a problem will be much higher if you wait until the problem is much worse. A tree that is already dead or unstable can get to where it's much more difficult to remove in a safe, non-destructive way."

James can cite examples of all kinds of tree work requiring careful if not creative solutions. He doesn't seem overly concerned with this morning's challenge. It must be a common occurrence. The crew and equipment are moved into position (as if there was already a briefing beforehand); and everyone already knows his or her task—in order. Who grabs chainsaws, who pulls ropes and guylines, who climbs into the "cherry-picker" bucket and ascends 70-feet upward, who picks up sticks and branches, who sets up cones and directs traffic, who feeds the shredder, who makes the final cut, who grinds the stump, and who loads up the big logs onto the trailer—it's all been assigned.

What's required to take down a tree doesn't seem terribly complicated; we've all seen trees sawed down or have cut down some ourselves. But to do this in a way that's both efficient and safe—particularly with a large tree or in challenging environments—that requires a level of tactical skill that involves some knowledge of physics and an understanding that often only comes from years of experience in the woods. Consider the following possibilities:

- a tree can be unstable in its roots, trunk, branches—breaking unexpectedly with any stress



**Travis Butterworth and  
Briana Gillespie, Brown  
Hound Tree Service**

**A most-popular "tool" today; the lift on this truck gets workers where they need to be; Brown Hound also recently acquired a new 98-foot bucket truck as well as a second Vermeer chipper and mini-skid—expanding its "tool box."**







- a tree does not always fall in the direction it leans
- any part of a tree can whip back or shoot in a different direction when cut (often from other branches or forces unaccounted)
- notches, angled cuts, blocks, guylines, cables and straps can redirect the way a tree falls, but aren't always accurate
- sawing above shoulder height should be avoided
- there are times when you cut from the top and times when you cut from underneath
- a saw blade generally should extend at least 2 inches longer than the diameter of the log
- multiple cuts are often required before you make the final cut you intend
- notched undercuts or felling back cuts are often required before felling larger trees
- you usually cannot cut all the way through logs in single cuts when bucking (saws should never go into the ground, and logs can roll on you)

And that's hardly a complete list of all the things that can happen when you work with trees.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports an average of 200 tree-related fatal injuries each year. The work is in the top three on the Census of Fatal Occupational Industries ranking. It's not only the trees that claim the deaths or injuries, the tools are dangerous and can be easily misused.

Brown Hound Tree Service takes most of the day to remove this tree. Add in the preparation time, wood chipping, pick up and removal, stump removal, and clean up, and this job ticks up about 12 total hours... with shorter daylight hours in the winter, that's a solid day and a half on the job.





Even if a homeowner had the basics in equipment to do his or her own tree work on the property, there are a number of activities that require a professional service for today's job.

- “Swinging” — you can’t just saw off and drop branches on the road, cars, people, structures below; our guy ties ropes and swings his cuts out to top highest and far-extending branches, which are then dropped to specific spots

#### Timber!

**Grinder removes stump, instead of extracting entire root system which would disturb underground utilities or leave a large hole to fill.**








**Larger sections head  
to inventory at Heart  
Wood Tree Salvage**

- “Reaching” — Brown Hound’s boom and bucket is required to get our tree-cutter to the highest branches in order to top the tree and strip to primary trunk before felling (not a single ladder in sight throughout this entire project)
- “Grinding” — the stump and root system could not be dug up on this job; there are underground utilities, and digging up large root systems often present additional problems from the hole, drainage issues, landscaping, disposal, etc.
- “Hauling” — taking down the big tree is only PART of the job here; there are sticks and branches that need to be chipped up and removed; then the wood itself—small firewood pieces to large sections have to be picked up, placed on trailers, hauled off, discarded properly (or used for other purposes, as in our story on Heart Wood)

In our region there is no question we need professional tree service companies. We have hardwood / deciduous trees, softwood / conifers, old forests and new growth, and real estate development as well as constant maintenance in an environment that gets hit with all four seasons.

And that’s what Brown Hound Tree Service is counting on. A robust market indeed. 



## A SEED, SPROUTING UP, BRANCHING OUT

*The business story behind Brown Hound Tree Service and Heart Wood Tree Salvage*

James and Carrie Poff own and operate Brown Hound Tree Service as a family business. A small but formidable enterprise, James mostly works the job sites, actively, alongside his crew... tackling one assignment to the next. Carrie is intense with the business-building side, recently winning a Platinum award in "The Gauntlet Business Competition" offered by The Advancement Foundation in Vinton.

Recently, the Poffs decided to diversify into a second business line—one that is directly related to the first.

"We're not tree-huggers," says James. "But we hate to see a tree go to waste."

With that perspective in mind, James and Carrie are opening a mercantile outlet that sells the wood resources and repurposed materials from the very trees they harvest. The tree in our story above, for example, will be used for anything from live-edge slabs (furniture, home décor) to handcrafted items. All of this to be inventoried, milled, fashioned, constructed, and displayed for sale online and at a new facility the Poffs are hoping to renovate in the Shaffer's Crossing area of Roanoke (near the locomotive and rail car repair and maintenance shops for Norfolk Southern). Getting that "shop and store front" facility ready for use and the public has been more challenging than any tree work the family has faced, Carrie says.

They've named that business Heart Wood Tree Salvage.

The couple admit there is a great sense of personal satisfaction from re-using and re-purposing the trees they get from Brown Hound over to Heart Wood. They're creating beautiful product (or supplying the material for others to use) instead of discarding material for scrap or landfills or small firewood batches on the side. It's a dual business model that kind of feels like "working both sides," but environmentally responsible at the same time.

A fun and exciting venture for the family.  
But not an easy one.

"Our business-building experience has been tumultuous," says Carrie. "I believe that's true for anyone who attempt to build something from the ground up... many start, but few finish. We did it because we want to, and because we feel like we have to. We got a taste of freedom from owning our own business, and we won't go back! We're building this for our kids and ourselves."

“

We hate to see a  
tree go to waste



We're artists who  
horde ugly wood  
and weird trees

Carrie is proud to call herself a “mompreneur,” and says her “hard-working, busy-bodied, leader husband” and her are constantly changing directions, even as they agree, disagree, create, and dream together.

“We pay our employees before we pay ourselves,” she says, “and being a grassroots operation, we’ve had our share of ‘starvation winters.’”

Although different kinds of jobs happen all year long, a majority of tree work is still seasonal, and Carrie said they learned about that the hard way. Learning the business as you go, in a sense, likely contributed to the idea of the second business line—an opportunity to capitalize on a revenue stream not so dependent on the season, the weather, the fluctuations in development or commercial/residential property maintenance.

“We’re business-minded and we’re artists,” Carrie explains. “Artists who horde ugly wood and weird trees. This hording is going to get us through those future winters,” she predicts. “We’re diversifying and learning every day about business building and the tree care industry.

“Recently, we discovered one of the coolest words we’ve ever heard: xylopolist. It means ‘seller of wood.’ We’re going to be the only full-service tree care and removal company in the Roanoke region that not only takes the trees down, but salvages them and sells that locally-harvested material to woodworkers,

**Hand-Carved Viking  
Stargazer Chair  
by Wayne Hannah**



**Spalted Pecan Table with Copper  
Wrapped Base by Tim Guzior**





# COVER STORY

artisans, contractors, and the like. To bring it more full-circle, we're creating a showroom for those woodworkers to sell their creations."

Carrie says she was encouraged by hearing the stories of struggles and successes from other entrepreneurs at The Gauntlet Business Competition. She and James continue to face struggles as they work both businesses, while currently dealing with regulatory compliance roadblocks they face as they fix up the building for Heart Wood.

Despite the challenges the Poffs say they have a lot of support and have also become allies with other small businesses in their line of work, including MIB Tree Service and DC Tree Service.

"By combining forces, we help each other grow," Carrie says. "When we work together we are better for our clients. It's very symbiotic. MIB Tree Service owner Thomas Craddock and his business partner own the building that we hope to turn into our store. We couldn't do it without them, or our employees."

Meanwhile, there's still tree work to be done. Brown Hound just won Roanoke City's tree removal project, where the Poffs will also be able to salvage the wood for local woodworkers.

Some trees are clean and easy to deal with; others are unruly gnarly messes.

Ahh, the lessons in growing your own business. 

**Spindle Leg Table with Walnut Top by Ben Crooks**



**Turned Goblet by Ronnie Comer**

All product photography by Sunnyyography






## Coopetition >

There's a scene in the movie "Race" that epitomizes good sportsmanship. Jesse Owens is America's fastest track athlete at the 1936 Olympics that were held in Nazi Germany. Jesse had scratched his first two attempts at qualifying for the long jump. He had one final attempt. The German athlete Luz Long went to Jesse and despite language barriers suggested he move the starting point back so as not to scratch. Jesse complied and went on to win the long jump gold medal, and a lifelong—albeit unlikely—friend in the German Luz Long.

Coopetition is putting aside your competitive nature to partner for the greater good. Luz Long wanted the best man to win, and was willing to forgo a victory to help a competitor. Too often we keep our competitors at arm's length, missing out on what could be powerful partnerships. Coopetition can reduce costs, double your market reach, expand your reach, and keep you on your toes.

In addition, partnering with competitors raises both eyebrows and interest. It's fascinating to consumers. How do you get started? First, think of your biggest competitor whose services and products are most like yours. Consider what they do better than you, and what you do better than them. What would be possible if you partnered on a project? Think of the mutual benefits, then call personally to set up a face to face meeting. Eyebrows are already being raised!

Next, create a "pilot" program together. Using the term "pilot" takes off some of the pressure because everyone understands you are giving this a try to see how it goes. Implement your new program and you've got yourself Coopetition. What are three companies you can try this with this year? Let us know what develops from your Coopetition pilot! 

## Professional Development

By Lesa Hanlin

### Executive Summary:

*Working with businesses you compete with could result in surprising success.*



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## Want some good tax news? >

We're finding most of the people we work with on tax preparation and accounting at 360 Tax Solutions are enjoying the tax changes. Leisure dreaming middle-agers, retirees, and small business owners have some cause to celebrate.

Not that long ago, businesses endured years of hassles depreciating even relatively small purchases. Changes in the language of section 179 of the IRS tax code ended that. Basically, it allows business to deduct expenses immediately. This applies to leases and financed purchases too.

There are those pesky qualifying caveats, but most equipment or software a typical small business owner would buy or lease up to \$1 million are allowed in the same tax year. Both new and used equipment qualify. Used didn't used to.


This will likely be increasing in 2019 as it's indexed for inflation. Eligible write offs have been added for 2019 too. Small business growth is the goal. More money in your pocket is the result.

You can't buy that Hummer on the business dime, though. That loophole was plugged with a \$25,000 limit. Go past \$1 million and you'll be depreciating up to \$2.5 million then seeing nothing once \$3.5 million is reached. That's good news for us little guys. We're not big enough to be buying that much stuff.

Section 199A QBI is enough to make you cross-eyed trying to decipher the jargon. No worries, this is happy news. Enacted on December 22, 2017, this was part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. In short, it provides a deduction up to 20% of income for pass-through entities including sole-proprietorships, partnerships, LLCs and S-Corps. This applies to trusts and estates too.

It's currently short-lived, encompassing 2018-2025 tax years. Final regulations this year also outlined guidance on calculating W-2 wages and included REITs. Lots of liberties have been added for those in healthcare, arts, sports, financial sectors and other industries where reputation or skill is an income factor.

Retirees are smiling too. The standard deduction increased to \$12,000 for individuals (from \$6,350) and \$24,000 (from \$12,700) for married filing jointly. Most will see lower taxes with no need to itemize moving forward.

Sure, there are irksome challenges, particularly for business owners earning what seems like less than a living wage, but we've been able to come up with creative solutions to make the new tax laws work for them too. It's complicated decoding all that's new, but chin up – for the typical resident in this area, you'll owe less taxes on your 2019 returns. Of course, that assumes they're done right. 



## Financial Figures

By Michael Shelton

### Executive Summary:

*When you dig into it, there are some tax advantages for the small business owner and savvy preparer.*



**FemCity member/officers include: Sunny Wasiela, photography chair, Sunnyography; Laura Leighty Wade, public relations chair, Thrive by Heart; Monica Bryant Nicely, member ambassador; Monica Nicely Roanoke Realtor; Beth Bell, president, Licensed Health & Life Agent Bailey Insurance Group; Nichole Looney, community ambassador, The Healing Thistle massage therapy; Beth Garrett, community outreach chair, Elevating Your Image; Crystal Harris Knuttgen, financial services professional, The Conner Group; Getra Hanes Selph, member ambassador, Getra Hanes Mortgage Banker**

## Especially for the female entrepreneur >

### Executive Summary:

*Roanoke entrepreneurs connect in women business group, FemCity.*

**By Obinna Morton**

Beth Bell, president of the women business

community, FemCity Roanoke, invited me to a coffee networking event with the group one crisp March morning. The event was hosted at Morning Brew Coffee Company, a woman-owned coffee shop attached to the Taubman Museum.

It was quite the event.

Seated in the midst of freshly-brewed coffee and driven women entrepreneurs, members (referred to as “fems”) stood up and shared who they were, details of their business and a woman that inspires them. Realtor Monica





Nicely and photographer Sunny Wasiela, both FemCity members, sponsored the event.

I left the coffee networking event ignited by the presence of a local yet global space that encouraged business ownership among women, in a holistic way.

Beth Bell started FemCity as a way to personalize networking events. "The focus in most other networking groups is passing business cards and obligatory transactions, instead of getting to know the business on

a deeper level so you want to share their business with others. Most of the time, when I'm being introduced to someone, I'm thinking about how I can help them and who I should connect them with," she says.

Bell joined the Roanoke chapter as President in 2017 during a transformative period in her life. She had left the corporate world to start her own business, which was also during the time her children, two boys, had become teenagers. "They needed my time a little less as a mom, and I was focused on my businesses, but also feeling



FiftyCentLove Photographie

**“We build relationships” — Beth Bell, FemCity Roanoke president**

a little lonely in it. I knew I needed a tribe.”

FemCity Roanoke holds social and networking events and workshops every month. Events range from coffee networking events to workshops on how to use Facebook ads to self-care events. FemCity’s Roanoke chapter includes more than 300 members across industries.

What makes FemCity Roanoke unique is its focus on helping women entrepreneurs in business as well as in life, and ability to find strength in collaboration, rather than competition. The group is not a non-compete group, which allows only for one industry to be represented per meeting. “It works out beautifully because competition is not

an issue,” says Bell. “We build relationships, and people in similar professions can collaborate.”

For example, a member who is a photographer has collaborated with a member who is a realtor to teach a photography class to all of the realtors in and outside of the group, she says.

The group’s overall goal is to support women by helping them grow their businesses through education, inspiration and support. And just as important as supporting FemCity business owners is the goal to support Roanoke businesses as well. Businesses such as the woman-owned coffee shop of their March networking event.






As a native of Roanoke, Bell is a keen supporter of local businesses and takes pride in sharing places and events that other Roanokers don't know about. "I am from Roanoke and I have a love of Roanoke that is unique. So I know about places and events that other don't know about or take for granted. I know when I've brought my group into an event, they come back after that," she says.

So the coffee shop will likely nab a few new customers; just as the CoLab did after a workshop event hosted at the CoLab inspired a number of FemCity members to book a classroom at the space for their own workshops.

By supporting women-owned businesses, FemCity simultaneously provides support

for women, who have different struggles than men, says Bell. "Here you can leave your worries at the door and it's going to be okay if you have to leave to get your kid or you're late because you had to put them on the bus. Or miss events for a month because you're taking care of an aging parent. We're still here for you. It's a completely different feel for women everywhere, which is why FemCity is so powerful globally."

FemCity is an innovative blend of business, education, mastermind, and networking, crafted with a diverse pro-women environment and filled with positivity and gratitude. To join one of their monthly connection events, connect with Beth Bell, President at [roanoke@femcity.com](mailto:roanoke@femcity.com) or [roanoke.femcity.com](http://roanoke.femcity.com). 



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## A Mission of Quality Service, Excellent Support and Advanced Technology

Citizens began with a vision, a need for communications in rural America. From the front steps of the Floyd County Court House evolved what would become Citizens Telephone Cooperative. From that February day in 1914 to today, the mission to provide quality service, excellent support, and advanced technology remains steadfast.

Today, with just over 60 employees, Citizens continues to be a leading-edge technology provider offering services that complement its core services of voice, video, and data. Citizens has grown from a local telephone company to the technology company of the future. With full-service offerings for residential, small and global businesses, Citizens brings it all together for you.

Citizens lets you Bundle **YOUR** Way! Get the best prices on the most reliable services for your home and business.



DCJS #11-984



## Shark Patrol

By Keith Finch

### Executive Summary:

*If you don't update your company's registered agent address, then you could get hit with a lawsuit but not find out about it until it's too late.*

## Sleeper agent >

Our client was desperate. "You need to help me!" he shouted into the phone. "There's been some kind of screw-up! The bank says our company account is empty, and payroll is tomorrow!"

I met him in the bank parking lot. He had already been inside and spoken with the bank vice-president, who had handed him a single sheet of paper addressed to the bank, entitled "Garnishment Summons." He waved the paper at me.

"They say that this ex-contractor sued our company and cleaned out the bank account!" he said. "But this is ridiculous, no one ever sued us!"

I looked at the paper. It was an order that the court had issued following the conclusion of a lawsuit against our client's company by a former contractor, and it directed the bank to pay the contents of the company bank account to the former contractor. The lawsuit had been filed at least a year previously.

"I never got served in any lawsuit!" our client said.

I called up the court website and showed it to him on my phone. "Here's the electronic docket in the case," I said. "It looks like you got hit with a default judgment."

"A default?" he said. "Like, because I didn't show up?"

"Right," I said. "You got sued but didn't appear in court, and so you automatically lost."

"But I never heard about any lawsuit," he said.

"It looks like they tried to serve you but couldn't," I said. "This docket shows that after a process server tried several times to serve you personally, they finally just mailed the lawsuit documents to your last known address. Maybe they had the wrong address?"

"Our address is on our web site," he said.

"Say, didn't you move your company from Floyd a while back?" I said. "How long ago was that?"

"About four years," he said.

I called up the web site of the Virginia State Corporation Commission. "Yep," I said. "That Floyd address is still listed as your company registered agent address. I'll bet they tried to serve you there."

"Registered agent address?" he said.



"Yes, every company doing business in Virginia has to give the address of its registered agent in Virginia," I said. "If anyone wants to sue that company, then they start the lawsuit by sending someone to that address to serve a copy of the documents on the registered agent."

"But our old address is just an empty warehouse now," he said.

"Well then that's probably what happened," I said. "They probably got your registered address from the State Corporation Commission and tried to serve process on you there."

"And what happens if no one is ever there?" he said.

"If after making diligent attempts a plaintiff can't serve a company at its registered address, then it can serve process on the Virginia Secretary of State instead," I said. "However, all that the Secretary of State does is to send a copy of the documents to the same address by certified mail."

"That old warehouse doesn't even have a mailbox," he said.

“ ”

Every company doing business in Virginia has to give the address of its registered agent in Virginia. If anyone wants to sue that company, then they start the lawsuit by sending someone to that address to serve a copy of the documents on the registered agent.



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If after making diligent attempts a plaintiff can't serve a company at its registered address, then it can serve process on the Virginia Secretary of State instead. However, all that the Secretary of State does is to send a copy of the documents to the same address by certified mail.



It's best for your registered agent address to be an address where someone is present during regular business hours.

"And of course there's no mail forwarding after four years."

"So then, if the plaintiff serves process on the Virginia Secretary of State and you still don't show up in court to defend yourself, you automatically lose," I said. "The court gives the plaintiff a default judgment, which it then can use to seize your property or clean out your bank account."

"Why couldn't they have just checked our web site for our current address?" he said.


"Maybe they did," I said. "But they're legally entitled to assume that your company's registered agent address is correct and up-to-date."

"This is terrible! How can this sort of thing be prevented?" he said.

"Well, the only way really to prevent it is to make sure that when you change addresses, you update your registered agent address with the State Corporation Commission," I said.

"Damn, I should have used my home address," he said.

"Yes, that might have helped in this case," I said. "But actually it's best for your registered agent address to be an address where someone is present during regular business hours. That's one reason why many companies have law firms serve as their registered agents."

That very day our client's company appointed our firm as its registered agent. Solving the problem of the default judgment took longer, however. In the end we were able to negotiate a settlement with the former contractor at a somewhat reduced amount, but it was still a very expensive lesson for our client. He'll certainly never forget to change his registered agent address again. 

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 appointing your registered agent, deciding whether a given address is suitable for service of process, etc.*



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# 9

## of Roanoke's Finest



**CYSTIC FIBROSIS FOUNDATION**



**Zach Agee**

Woods Rogers PLC

- Associate
- Works with Business and Corporate and Emerging Growth practice groups
- Board of Directors, The First Tee of Roanoke Valley



**Martie Byrd**

UnitedHealth Group

- Navigate4Me Clinical-Led Service Supervisor
- Author of two books: *Little Ideas/Big Results* and *The Kids Drank Pickle Juice*
- Lafayette College graduate

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's mission is to cure cystic fibrosis and to provide all people with the disease the opportunity to lead full, productive lives by funding research and drug development, promoting individualized treatment and ensuring access to high-quality, specialized care.





## **Matt Edwards**

Edwards Investments, LLC

- MKS Holdings, LLC and Little Caesar's Franchise owner
- Active Feeding America volunteer
- Proud father of two



## **Stephanie Frost**

Comcast Spotlight

- Account Executive
- Advisor, Leadership Roanoke Valley and Board Member, Presbyterian Community Center
- Enjoys hiking, kayaking, and playing softball



## **Sterling Evans**

Walgreens

- Certified Store Manager
- Roanoke native and Virginia Western Community College graduate
- Enjoys hiking, camping, and collecting Hawaiian shirts



## **Leigh Ann Hamlin**

North Cross School

- Director of Counseling
- Member, Virginia Counselors Association North Cross Schools Summer Internship Program coordinator
- Proud mom to two kids, Grace & John Henry

When the CF Foundation was established in 1955, most children with CF did not live past elementary school. Due in large part to the Foundation's aggressive investments in innovative research and comprehensive care, today, many people with CF are living into their 30s, 40s and beyond.



## Allen Lawrence

Salem Red Sox

- Vice President / Interim General Manager
- Board Member, Salem-Roanoke County Chamber of Commerce and Salem-Roanoke Baseball Hall of Fame
- Enjoys college sports, Major League Baseball, traveling, and spending time with his family



## Bobbie Mountcastle

Local Real Estate Investor

- Board Member, Science Museum of Western Virginia
- Former Board Member, The Grandin Theatre Foundation
- James Madison University graduate



## Nic Miller

PowerSchool Group LLC

- Deployment Project Manager
- University of Mississippi graduate
- Taught English in Hanoi, Vietnam with Oxford English Academy

### 2019 Roanoke's Finest Brewer's Ball Steering Committee

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### Cystic Fibrosis Foundation / Virginia Chapter

**Terri Quinan** Executive Director  
**Ellyn Kirtley** Development Manager

Cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that affects about 30,000 children and adults in the United States and 70,000 people worldwide. A defective gene and its protein product cause the body to produce unusually thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and leads to lung infections; and obstructs the pancreas and stops natural enzymes from helping the body break down and absorb food.

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Courtesy of Hope To Walk

**Hope To Walk's youngest recipient, Andy, from Honduras stands in front of a banner photograph taken of his first time ever walking with a prosthetic leg at 5 years-old; he returned to the clinic to get a new leg to accommodate his growth; shown here with his father and Dr. Phil.**

## \$15,000? How about \$300? >

### Executive Summary:

*Hope To Walk works to provide prosthetics to people in Central America at a fraction of the cost—the challenge is difficult and now countries elsewhere are calling.*

### By Jennifer Poff Cooper

Thirty million people in need of prosthetics... one amputation every 30 seconds worldwide... the minimum cost of a prosthetic leg at \$5,000. These are statistics the humanitarian organization Hope to Walk is built on. But the personal connections are what keep its people motivated.

Michael Mabry, Chairman of the Board, recalls his most memorable interaction with a recipient. A Honduran man, Juan, was electrocuted on the job and had both legs amputated. He was depressed but heard a voice saying, "Don't worry, I'm going to send my people to bring you legs." One year later, Hope to Walk arrived and fitted him with prosthetics. He drove his family home that day and is now back at work. Mabry says, "I get chills thinking about it."

Mabry, a family physician resident, helped found Hope to Walk with Phil Johnson. The men met when Mabry went to Johnson for shoe orthotics (Johnson has five board certifications and 35 years of experience in prosthetics and orthotics). The two immediately hit it off.

Johnson told Mabry of how a nurse had asked him, after Hurricane Mitch, to donate a prosthetic part. Instead, Johnson hand carried the device to a child named Mario in Guatemala. Johnson awoke the next day to see a line of people waiting for similar treatment, but he was not prepared. Mabry asked, "What are we going to do about it?"

So in 2014 the men formed Hope to Walk, which offers a solution to the lack of prosthetic legs. Amputations are expected to "skyrocket" over the next 30-40 years, largely because of the prevalence of diabetes, says Mabry. The World Health Organization also estimates that there is a shortage of 50,000 people capable of making, fitting, and fixing prosthetics.

With commercial above the knee prosthetics costing about \$15,000, how does Hope to Walk help meet these needs with \$250-\$300 devices? First, the organization uses local and inexpensive materials, on-site, with a one-size-fits-all approach, cutting the materials to the proper length. (A custom



fit is important, says Mabry.) Then HTW trains people in other countries to do the work, enabling the concept to spread.

Mabry elaborates on the HTW model with the analogy of cars, Toyota versus Mercedes. Both get you where you want to go, but they are different in style. "We are focusing on the Toyotas" of prosthetics, says Mabry.

Such a system has never been implemented, Mabry says. As a result, HTW has generated interest from large sources such as governments and diabetic associations. Recently, the organization was awarded a prestigious Rotary International Grant for \$50,000 to develop its training program promoting sustainability.


Though HTW's news has spread "organically" through word of mouth and social media, funding has been the biggest challenge, Mabry says. Money comes from individuals, churches, businesses, and grants. Still, he says, "This is the first year paying Phil monthly." The rest of the staff is volunteer. The other challenge, he continues, is finding leadership: "We need more people instead of a couple of people wearing multiple hats."

Yet people have been key to the success of HTW. The team is focused and diverse. Volunteers range from their teens to their 70s and perform a variety of non-medical tasks, from intake paperwork to woodworking.



**Hope To Walk's Below Knee Johnson Prosthetic Leg**

Also important is "keeping our eye on the ball," says Mabry. HTW has had calls from over 50 countries seeking help, so the organization could become spread too thin. Instead, it wants to "do quality," he says. In five years, Mabry sees HTW in 10 countries helping 2,000-3,000 people per year.

HTW does its work with a religious undercurrent. The group aims to show recipients they are loved. Nothing is asked in return. Mabry says they have seen "miracle after miracle." He concludes, "People get drastic life change for minimal cost. The impact of Hope to Walk is huge." 



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# Business Operations

By Mike Leigh

## Executive Summary:

*You can overcome obstacles to cultivating a learning organization with proactive measures.*

## Why can't we learn? >

Leaders often tell me they want a "learning organization" and to "improve every day." The evidence is strong that companies with a learning culture are the most innovative and successful. So why do organizations and their leaders struggle to develop this culture?

In an article in the Harvard Business Review titled *Why Organizations Don't Learn*, the author tells us we have biases and human tendencies that keep us from learning, one of which is a bias toward success.

I see this bias almost every time I work with clients. Leaders often have the attitude that improvement efforts are failures if they do not provide ROI. Clearly results are important in the long-term, but the learning that occurs from failures and mistakes is also valuable. The article lists four obstacles that cause this bias and offers countermeasures to overcome them:

- 1. Fear of failure.** This fear is rampant and institutionalized in many organizations. Leaders structure improvement efforts such that success only comes with ROI. Countermeasure: Leaders must destigmatize failure and constantly reinforce the message that mistakes are learning opportunities.
- 2. A fixed mindset.** This mindset causes people to want to appear smart at all costs. It limits learning because of too much focus on performing well. Countermeasure: Leaders must embrace a growth mindset and a belief that their employees can develop and improve.
- 3. Overreliance on past performance.** In hiring and promotion, leaders put too much emphasis on past performance instead of potential. Countermeasure: Consider potential in selection decisions, and make it clear to candidates that this is what you are looking for. It will encourage new employees to be innovative and to develop themselves, and may also improve the diversity of your candidate pool.
- 4. The attribution bias.** This phenomenon occurs when people attribute success to hard work and skill, but blame failures on bad luck. This hinders learning unless they recognize that failure came from their mistakes. Countermeasure: Use data-driven approaches to identify the factors of success and failure.

Leaders – it's time for YOU to learn to support innovation, congratulate initiative, and see mistakes as learning opportunities, instead of only asking for results! 📊

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



## Coming signs >

### Signs4gotten

There's a new brewery in downtown Roanoke. In fact there are like ten new breweries in our hip small city.

We're the up and coming craft brewing mecca of the east coast with regional and local artisan beer serving rooms here for Deschutes, Ballast Point, Big Lick Brewing, Soaring Ridge, Starr Hill, Twin Creeks, and Parkway. There's even a one called "A Few Old Goats" Brewing.

Another new joint opened this past fall at the busiest corner in town, yet a lot of people haven't caught on to it. I think one of the main reasons is there's no sign to point the way for tourists and locals who may be interested. I'm not involved with this business, so it's possible there is another reason why the sign didn't go up. My guess is there was a miscalculation on how long it would take to have the signage completed and installed – that's a frequent occurrence.

### Plan Ahead2Make It Work

Long before the doors to a business open, the building design or renovation is planned out. The zoning and blue prints are mapped. There is typically a public relations and marketing soft launch plan – sometimes even advertising is a part of that. While many marketing and communications projects can be turned pretty quickly, it's important to note that some parts of the grand opening plan can take a bit longer.


Signs are one of the main setbacks.

To start with, sign companies seem very busy – at least around this part of Virginia. Then there's the design and approval process which can take quite some time. There are also zoning approvals that can eat up a chunk of time too. Then pieces have to be ordered and production has to be done and all of that is before you even schedule installation.

Signs, signs, everywhere signs.

Man it can be a drag when you want to open that new location and have to wait on your signs.

We're not a sign company – let me make that clear. We do, however, help a lot of clients with their signage needs and coordinate those efforts with sign companies. We've found there is one thing you can absolutely count on when it comes to signage – the process always takes longer than you think it should.

So, if you are involved in any type of business that is expanding, moving, or relocating, start the sign process early and let that point your way to opening success. 



## A Little Insight

By Bruce C. Bryan

### Executive Summary:

*In retail, street side, and walk-in merchant and business locations, signs are particularly important; proper planning is essential for new launches.*



“ ”

I decided to dedicate my  
life to the alleviation of  
suffering in all beings

— Susan Adkins





## Emphasis on essential >

**Executive Summary:**  
*Essentials Massage Therapy was named appropriately, according to its clients.*

**By Brian Bongard**

Are massages really essential? After you get one here you'll think so!

Essentials Massage Therapy on King George Avenue in Roanoke has been helping people feel better since David and Susan Adkins first opened for business 19 years ago.

They take a holistic approach to therapy which includes massage as well as other key elements of Traditional Chinese Medicine in order to help people relax, reduce stress, improve flexibility, relieve pain, and decrease the need for medications.

According to a study of 3,200 physicians conducted by Health Products Research, more than 50 percent of physicians in the U.S. planned to begin or increase use of alternative medicines, including those rooted in Traditional Chinese Medicine within the following year. It is increasingly being referred to as "Complimentary-Alternative" medicine.

David and Susan met in 1992 and were married in '95. David was a Taekwondo instructor studying under Master Pae at

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his studio in Roanoke. He said "Master Pae was also an acupuncturist. He would put dots on my body with a pen, then tell me to 'push there' with a chop stick. That was the beginning of my interest and training in Shiatsu massage as well as Traditional Chinese Medicine." By the year 2000, David had graduated from the Daniels Institute of Holistic Health, Susan from the Virginia School of Massage, and they opened their business.

These days Susan is the person out front, running the business and greeting clients like they are family. She said "Many of them have been coming here since the beginning, so they really have become like family." David, along with two other therapists,

Mindy Shively and Charlotte Dowd, work their magic on the massage tables.

Mindy was inspired by her Grandmother to pursue a career in massage when she was 14. She said, "Grandma was dying of ovarian cancer. Through my love for her and my desire to reduce her pain and suffering any way I could, I decided to dedicate my life to the alleviation of suffering in all beings." She graduated from the Blue Ridge School of Massage and Yoga in 2010. Her focus is on Swedish, Deep Tissue, Sports, and Prenatal massage, as well as Trigger point, Reiki and Aromatherapy.

When asked to share a success story about a client, she related a pretty dramatic one. "During our session, I felt an energy around this client's






heart that would not move or change with my energy work. When he left the session, he went straight to his doctor, who sent him straight to the hospital, who immediately performed bypass surgery!" She also said "More than that though, I feel blessed knowing that my work is a small part of the healthy change people are making in their everyday lives."

Charlotte was inspired at an even younger age than Mindy. "My mother became handicapped from a severe accident when I was very young. She'd ask me to massage her back and arms, telling me it was the only thing that got her through the day. At 5 years old, she told me I would grow up to be a healer. I guess mothers know best!" Charlotte received her training from Miller Motte Technical College, graduating in 2015. She also focuses on Swedish, Deep Tissue, Sports and Prenatal as well as Trigger point therapy.

When asked about the best and worst parts of their jobs, Susan said it's the smiles she sees on people's faces as they leave an appointment. The worst for her is having to enforce policies regarding no-shows. First time is a warning, second time is the full charge which all goes to the therapist.

All the therapists said that the best part of their job was helping people feel better.

They also all said that the hardest part was self-care. Paying attention to proper body mechanics as they bend over the table to work on clients is extremely important. They also have to take care of their hands. David in particular has very strong hands and uses them all day doing deep tissue Shiatsu massages. He has a regular work out regime for his hands that includes stretching, work with weights and proper rest for them. 



## Steve & Debbie Miller

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FRONT

**Citizens CEO Greg Sapp opens the press conference by opening the 1914-founded Floyd County co-op telephone company's "Minute Book"—a record and legacy of an intense rural community's insistence of not being left behind.**

## One [gig] for the books >

### Executive Summary:

*Citizens celebrates its provision of 1 Gigabyte fiber optic network service throughout one of the state's most rural counties.*

### By Tom Field

Oh, it was a press conference all right. The company CEO, executives, representatives from communication trade associations, state officials, a congressman, and the media were all there.

It's just that it felt as much like a family reunion.

And apparently, everyone's doing all right.

On April 18, Citizens (the name of Floyd County's preeminent communications provider shortened from Citizens Cooperative Telephone or still called "the co-op" by old-timers) held its official recognition of a milestone in service and broadband network installation at its own headquarters in Floyd.

The 50+ attendees got the royal hometown

treatment, including breakfast by the culinary class of Floyd County High School, a swag packet of Citizens and Floyd merchandise, and a report by nine people who are most intimately familiar with what it means to have "1 Gig" service in a place like, well... this place.

The nine addresses were delivered with efficiency as if to mimic the network speed they were celebrating. Citizens CEO Greg Sapp served as host, launching the affair by pulling out the old company "Minute Book" and referencing how serving the community remains a priority even if the technology advances.

And indeed, there's been a few changes... since 1914.

"Do you realize," a voice booms from the audience, not a presenter, "just how committed we are to our communication technology here? You were able to talk on the phone before turning on a light." County board of supervisors member Linda DeVito says the old co-op phone company served citizens even prior to electricity.

The audience claps on that remark.

It is a remarkable thing. Greg Sapp reminds the audience that Floyd County averages 18 homes per square mile (Fairfax is over 900 per square mile, for reference). The average



drop (distance from fiber/cable run to a house) is 600 feet. And yet, Citizens provides broadband service to all its customers, starting at \$39. Sapp says the plans are based on usage levels, the data speed is the same for all, there is no cap, and as one person hollers out "and we don't throttle." He also predicts 97% of Floyd County residents (and businesses) will have fiber access by 2021.


Ashley Spinks with NTCA, a national rural broadband association, was beaming during her five minutes. You would have thought she lived here, even though her group now serves 170 members with 1G service. Just not like Floyd.

One person didn't mind jumping off the technical geeky part of the celebration. Lydeana Martin, director of Floyd County's

Community and Economic Development cited local businesses (mostly small, super small) and how they benefitted from the upgraded broadband access.

"We don't have a lot of things here," Martin said, listing so many things such as interstates and ports that are usually essential for economic development. "But we do have this..." she says, about today's announcement. "A secret weapon... beautiful underground glass."

The conference wraps up. Citizens executive vice president of customer relations and marketing Lori Saltus leads everyone off on the tour as she chalks up another milestone celebration for the book.

The chatter returns, and we get back to the (105th) family reunion. 

## ARE YOU READY?



**MAY 3 - THE WORX**  
**MAY 17 - FUZZY LOGIC**  
**JUNE 7 - LEGGZ AND GASOLINE ALLEY**  
LADIES GET IN FREE 6.7.19

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We've been able to come up with creative solutions to make the new tax laws work...

— Page 19




## Packing it in >

It happens every Thursday night. Up to one hundred volunteers spend a couple of hours filling backpacks with enough food for the upcoming weekend: breakfast, lunch, and dinner X 2, plus snacks, juice and milk boxes. The next morning, another set of volunteers (and, of course, some of the same ones) will deliver the bags to schools in Blacksburg, where they will be given to nearly 300 children who otherwise might go without food, or with minimal food until their next lunch on Monday. The program is called "Micah's Backpacks," so named by the original six people who began the work in 2008. Sarah Ryan, a Price's Fork Elementary School teacher who currently serves as program director, explains: "The name derives from Micah 6:8, the Bible verse that ends with 'To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'"

Sponsored by St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Blacksburg, where it shares its name with other community programs—Micah's Closet, Micah's Garden and Micah's Soup for Seniors—the program is one of several efforts in Southwest Virginia to assure that school children have enough to eat. In the summer, and on winter and spring breaks, Micah's volunteers use school buses for distribution.

It was riding one of those school buses that attracted Sarah to the idea of working as program director. "Originally, I became involved as a Blacksburg Junior Women's Club volunteer," she remembers. "Price's Fork is the only Title One (receiving federal funds because there is a concentration of needy children) school in Montgomery County, and teaching there gives me a firsthand idea of how important it is to address hunger. It is especially rewarding to watch the dynamic that forms among the volunteers, who often include middle- and high-school students, plus all of the individuals and organizations who provide the food. Kroger gives us food, a host of community organizations stage food drives, other church groups serve other parts of the county, Feeding America in Roanoke supports us, and that's by no means the total list."

As Nelson Mandela famously said: "Overcoming poverty is not a task of charity; it's an act of justice." 



## Good Work

By Rachael Garrity

**Executive Summary:**  
*To ensure school children have enough to eat, a church and volunteers in Blacksburg operate Micah's Backpack.*



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# On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field

**Executive Summary:**  
*We have more options  
than ever in where  
and how we get our  
news; it's also more  
confusing than ever.*

## Biz intel >

Who's your shoeshine boy?

In the old television series *Police Squad*, detective Frank Drebin (Leslie Nielsen) relied on Johnny the shoe shine boy for his best intelligence. Frank would climb up in the chair stand, Johnny would whip out the polish rag, both of them would look side-to-side, shifty-eyed, during the entire conversation which always began with the same opening:

"What's the word on the street, Johnny?"

And dang, could that "boy" deliver. Information so detailed, no crime should have ever gone unsolved in that town. Information so credible and valuable, Frank's short visit might be followed by, oh, say a priest, who would ask Johnny, "what's the meaning of life?"

Johnny ALWAYS had the answer.

Today, nobody visits Johnny. Anything he knows—is already out there. Online, on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, from local news media outlets to your Aunt Maxine, who re-shares EVERY alert (because no one else had heard the latest, we suppose—and by golly she's going to be FIRST).

Detective Frank Drebin always went to Johnny. Routinely. He may have waited until he was stumped or his sources weren't panning out, but when he really needed the intel, that's when the gumshoe found his real shoes suddenly needed polishing up. (Why he didn't just start with Johnny at the beginning of every case, I guess we'll never know.)

The thing is, he trusted Johnny. Not the barber, not the butcher, not his fellow officers, not even—*gasp!*—the reporters.

We don't have single sources for our intelligence today (Aunt Maxine, notwithstanding). And if we suspect someone does (*he only watches FOX; she follows Slate; he's quoting Rachel Maddow; she's repeating Rush Limbaugh*); we all know that person is simply a minion, right?

We also don't trust the media anymore. So what? That's not the worst thing. We should never find ourselves at the point of 100% reliance in the accuracy of any news report—not from local news stations, not even like we thought we did from the reputations of stalwarts like Paul Harvey and—*GASP!*—Walter Cronkite. Heck, not even your local business journal or Aunt Maxine (*you know how she gets*).

With charges of "FAKE NEWS!!!" (which now has completely spread over to what is actually "biased" news or any news you disagree with) circulating the political spectrum like seagulls at a turned over box of Cheez-It crackers, we might hope the result would simply be that consumers become even more discerning.



## Letter

### Clarification

In our Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs hockey team feature (March 2019), some of the quotations were incorrectly attributed to the wrong personnel. Mickey Gray is the team president and provided most of the information and insight.

### Correction

Lillian Hindman is the model on the cover of FRONT April 2019; her last name was spelled incorrectly.

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)

Unfortunately, the reality is elevated counter-response.  
*My momma's not trash—yours is. My news, fake? HA! Yours is.*

Johnny has abandoned the shoe shine stand. He can't compete with all that clutter, noise, chatter, and... THE FEEDS. Heck, he can't even compete with Aunt Maxine.

Can we bring Johnny back? Do we want to?

Not entirely; and yes, somewhat.

- Rule #1: Question everything.
- Rule #2: Be wary of instant and BREAKING news.
- Rule #3: Gravitate to sources that have been consistently reliable.
- Rule #4: Follow the money. ALWAYS.
- Rule #5: Unfollow the clearly biased.  
Even Maxine if you must.

Goodby, Johnny. We'll try our best to get by without you. 📺

# Reach Out!



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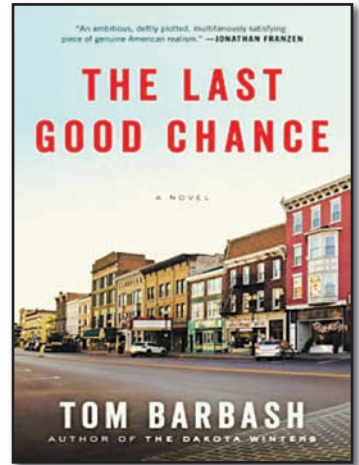
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## Books @ the FRONT >

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)



### *Novel development*

In *The Last Good Chance* (HarperCollins; 2002), Tom Barbash paints a realistic slice of American Small Town Main Street—not so unlike the kind we follow when reporting for the business journal. There's a tad of underbelly drama, but not exaggerated. During our redevelopment and reinvigorated promise of retail and restaurant commerce, our slightly flawed protagonists live out their juxtaposed intimate personal relationships right along town council shenanigans.

A few years ago, during a lunch with a local top level executive about to retire, he and I mused about who "runs" a town these days. How it has shifted from stalwart industries (like the railroad) to a new group. We concurred. Today, it's more likely the developers (and perhaps the bankers and financiers behind them). Who doesn't want to slap the backs of folks who inject energy in the veins of our Main Street, with repurposed buildings and quickened steps of shiny-happy-people populating the sidewalks? That's our novel here... with a caveat warning to not turn a blind eye to missteps and broken rules because you're so seam-busting with optimism.

—Tom Field

### *Colorful flashback*

Artist and designer Chris Rush's first book, *The Light Years* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2019) is an immersive, colorful, dark and funny memoir about his very unusual childhood and adolescence in the 1960s and '70s.

At just 11 years old, Rush was sent away to boarding school, both because his flamboyant way of dressing was an affront to his father and because his IQ scores on recent tests were "alarming" in the words of his mother, and "inappropriately high" in the words of his sixth-grade teacher. He tried a Catholic boarding school and a very liberal art school, but neither worked out. Rush knew he was different and felt isolated, so shortly after his 13th birthday, he left his home in New Jersey and went to the Southwest, where he moved in with his older sister. Still just a boy, Rush became a part of the counterculture, surrounded by young adults of the "turn on, tune in, drop out" generation. He lived an exciting life of adventure but also one filled with loneliness, disappointment and violence.

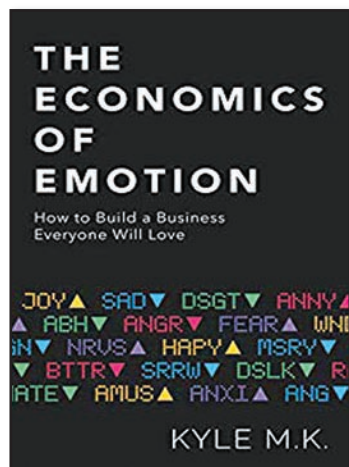
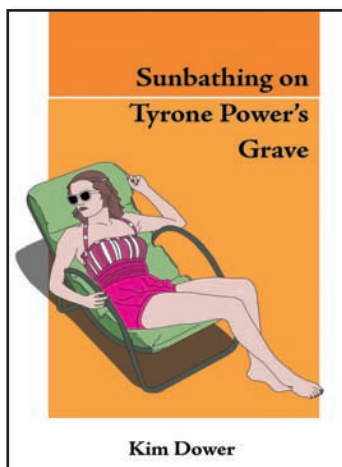
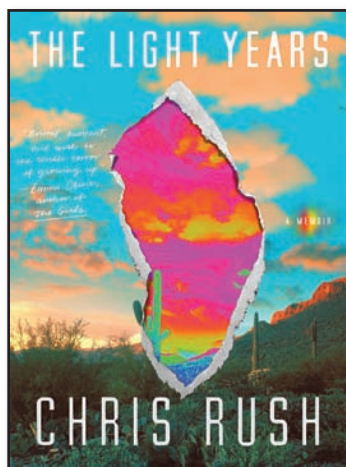
In this truth-is-stranger-than-fiction memoir, Rush tells his stunning, remarkable story with warmth and authenticity. Despite his sometimes-horrifying experiences, almost every page is imbued with a wicked wit and plenty of laugh-out-loud moments. Miraculously, he is able to look back on these wild and dangerous years of his adolescence with humor rather than bitterness in this engrossing memoir.

—Suzan L. Jackson

### *Hollywood poet*

*Sunbathing on Tyrone Power's Grave* (Red Hen; 2019) by Kim Dower brims with the vitality and preoccupations of everyday living. Life and death are inextricably entwined in Dower's poetry: the distinct grief of losing a parent, bidding farewell to a pet, but also the joys of naming a puppy and the





pleasure of using a favorite fountain pen.

While the death of her father hovers over Dower's fourth collection, the focus is on remembering the good times and celebrating the small victories that add up to a productive day. From the comic irony of a grocery store clerk commenting on her "beautiful aura" to the keen sense of accomplishment when successfully parallel parking her car, Dower pays tribute to the power of mundane everyday activities to spark happiness and wonder.

Dower's wicked sense of humor fuels poems about alternative facts, the indignities of air travel and the misunderstood color pink. Pockets of anxiety open up here and there, with lingering concerns over mental decline. In "Letters to My Son," as profound a piece as anything Dower has ever written, she admits to a primal fear of losing her mind to dementia.

An L.A. transplant from the East Coast, Dower was named City Poet of West Hollywood, Calif., in 2016 and held the post until 2018. The title poem features Dower's father's favorite actor, Tyrone Power, a swashbuckling American icon from the '40s. The cemetery where he is buried among other Hollywood royalty is a place of celebration, awash in sunshine, memories of great movies and "angels in bikinis smoking KOOL Lights."

—Shahina Piyarali

## Happy matters

Every manager deals with them at some point: angry employees. But when leaders have no clue how to handle them it's detrimental to

business. According to Kyle M.K., author of *Economics of Emotion* (Lioncrest; 2019) and a conflict resolution expert and leadership mentor, it's all about emotions—and companies approach it all wrong.

"It is possible to design company conversations, culture, events, or products to make people happy," says Kyle, who has worked with some of the world's largest corporations, like Disney and Apple. "In fact, transactions of emotion can be analyzed and refined, used to the advantage of businesses and to the benefit of all."

Kyle takes a deep dive into emotional triggers and their impact on business, including:

- Why manipulation is meaningless: success has nothing to do with using and controlling people
- How emotions directly affect our ability to be comfortable, loyal, and productive
- The untapped economic system that's a driving force behind humankind's most notable events and accomplishments
- Why a happy employee is a strong employee: content employees are more productive and are more likely to stick with your company
- Five core emotions that impact decision-making, profit, and productivity

—Mallory Campoli

The reviewers: **Tom Field** is a creative director and publisher of *FRONT*; **Suzan Jackson** is a freelance writer and author of *Book By Book* blog; **Shahina Piyarali** is a writer and review for Seattle-based *Shelf Awareness*; **Mallory Campoli** is a publicist with *Smith Publicity*.



## Women empowerment >

For two days nearly 200 students, faculty, researchers, and practitioners from around the world gathered at **Virginia Tech** to raise critical issues in gender and international development—the first conference of its kind aimed toward students and early-career professionals. More than 60 poster presenters also shared research, such as a project to improve drying of fruits and vegetables for female farmers in Nepal, the impacts of mobile phones in patriarchal societies, and challenges faced by female village chicken producers in Kenya. Organized by the Center for International Research, Education, and Development, part of Outreach and International Affairs, above, **Bineta Guisse**, national director of the Virginia Tech-managed Feed the Future Senegal Youth in Agriculture project, shares lessons from the field about gender and youth issues.



## Gen art affair >

**Friendship** senior living and rehabilitation provider, **Taubman Museum of Art**, and **Wasena Elementary School** collaborated to host an intergenerational Vitality Art and pen-pal program on March 29 to learn about artistic expression and build relationships.

# FRONT 'N ABOUT

FRONT



## Musical side gig >

This colorful vintage sign depicting Machine Works Band adorns the wall of The Roanoker restaurant. Old photographs and records show the band played between 1890 and 1900 and were workers for Norfolk & Western Railroad... one wonders whether they played "I've Been Workin' on the Railroad" (which would have been a brand new song; circa 1894).



Courtesy of CFSWV

## ¼ mil for elderly >

**Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia**, through its Mary Louise Home Fund and Marion S. and Willie Z. Camp Fun for Eldercare (Winter Grants Cycle), awarded \$34,142 to Botetourt Resource Center; \$20,000 to Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment; \$13,228 to LEAP for Local Food; \$100,000 to Local Office on Aging; and \$85,000 to Renovation Alliance—a total grant of \$252,370. Pictured left to right: Ellie Rigby, Renovation Alliance; Norma McCroskey, Local Office on Aging; Sam Lev, LEAP for Local Food; Melissa McLucas, Botetourt Resource Center; and Robin Ramsey, FREE.





Courtesy of ODU Batten College  
of Engineering and Technology

## Gobbling up space >

**Virginia Tech** launched its first satellite built by undergraduates on April 17, a collaboration with NanoRacks CubeSat deployment; computer engineering student **Madison Brodnax** and physics major **Nick Angle** conduct a final inspection.



FRONT

## Winnie welcomes >

**Unleashed Dog Bakery & Boutique** “employs” Winnie, who watches over the store floor and greets customers; the boutique on street level in downtown Roanoke’s historic Ponce De Leon (former hotel, current apartment / commercial mix) offers dog treats baked with simple ingredients as well as merchandise designed for the most enthusiastic dog lover.

# FRONT 'N ABOUT



## Mass transit in style >

**Art by Bus** program, in its fifth year, sent out its two Roanoke City buses, featuring the art of JM Lamb (above) and Ann Glover; a collaboration of RIDE Solutions, Roanoke Arts Commission, Greater Roanoke Transit Company and this year, Hollins University.

**Bank of Botetourt** **APRIL 20**  
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**SUPERHOLD**  
**MAY 18**



**DALEVILLE**  
town center

**JUNE 1**



**ADAM RUTLEDGE**

**THE WORX**  
**JUNE 22**







Courtesy of Radford Visitor's Center

## Samples on the waterfront >

Radford's **Rollin' on the River Food Truck Rodeo** was held April 27 at Radford's Bisset Park along the New River, sponsored by Thai This Express, Radford University Athletics, Front Porch Recycling, SignWise, New River Adventure, and the Radford Visitor's Center; photo from 2018 event.



Courtesy of Deb Cooney, Radford Visitor's Center



## Pow wow, wow >

The 9th Annual **Native American Heritage Festival** has held April 13 at Bisset Park in Radford; featuring visionary hoop dancer, flute player, storyteller, educator/artist and cultural ambassador **Kevin Locke**, as well as a Pow Wow with Aztec dancers, Native Americans in full Regalia, music, crafts, food.



# FRONT'N ABOUT



## All about wine >

The 11th Annual **Blacksburg Fork & Cork** was held April 20 at Virginia Tech's Corporate Research Center to large crowds; featuring wine tastings from regional wineries, culinary delights, live music, and demonstrations such as John Boyer's tasting seminar and Yvan Beliveau's winemaking (above).

*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.*

# Career FRONT

## FINANCIAL FRONT



Custer

**Becky Grindstaff Custer** has joined as retail lender at Rocky Mount service region of Carter Bank & Trust.



Newby

**Jeanne Newby** has been promoted to vice president of people and culture at ValleyStar Credit Union.

**Melissa Mason** has joined as senior mortgage banker at Atlantic Bay Mortgage Group.

**John Harris, III** has joined as sales agent at AmeriLife Roanoke office.

**Mark Smith** has joined as senior vice president and regional credit officer at American National Bank and Trust.

## WELLNESS FRONT



Mueller

**Dr. Andrew Mueller** has been named president and CEO of Centra.

## TECH/INDUSTRY FRONT

**Carrie French** has been promoted to director of provisioning and support at Gridpoint.



Cole

**Dustin Cole** has been promoted to executive vice president of Lawrence Equipment.

## DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Donna Davis

**Donna Davis** has been hired as administrative assistant; **Dorinda Vinson** has been hired as residential property manager; and **Kristine Davis** has been hired as administrative assistant of marketing and transactional



Vinson



Kristine Davis

management at Waldvogel Commercial Properties.

## SENIOR FRONT



Bell

**Joyce Bell** has been appointed director of

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human resources, compliance and culture for Richfield Living.



Pruett

**Christine Pruett** has been named director of nursing for assisted living at Friendship.

## RETAIL/SERVICE FRONT

**Nikholas Tipton** has been appointed director of family services for Fair View Cemetery and Cedar Lawn Memorial Park.

## EDUCATION FRONT

**Dr. John Wells** has been promoted from provost and chief academic officer to president of Emory & Henry College on July 1.

## 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.



Wells



Davalos

for planning and university architect; **Kim Smith** has been elected as the Career Advising Chair for NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising at Virginia Tech.



Cooke

**Shonny Cooke** has been named manager at Virginia Western Community College Hall Associates Career Center.



Morris

**Paul Hanstedt** has been named director of the Center for Academic Resources and Pedagogical Excellence at Washington and Lee University.

**Joanne Villers** of Roanoke Valley Governor's School received the 2019 Outstanding High School Chemistry Teacher by Virginia Blue Ridge Section of the American Chemical Society.

**Rafael Davalos** has been elected to the American Institute for Medical and Biological

Engineering College of Fellows; **Sterling Nesbitt** and **Leo Piilonen** are recipients of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's 2019 Outstanding Faculty Awards; **Liza Morris** has been appointed assistant vice president

**Jacqueline Gill** has been appointed

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3132 Electric Rd. SW  
Roanoke, VA 24018  
NMLS# 336851



**Amanda Rogers**  
Mortgage Loan Specialist  
434.609.3462  
370 Arbor Dr.  
Christiansburg, VA 24073  
NMLS# 1584328

## Career FRONT



Gill

president of Danville Community College.

**Jacklyn Higgins** has been named director at HoneyTree Early Learning Center in Christiansburg.

### CULTURE FRONT

**Margaret Lawrence** has been named



Lawrence

director of programming for the Moss Arts Center.

### MUNICIPAL FRONTS

**Jon Barnes** received a first place award and Overall Best Operator; and **Richard Moll** was awarded Rookie of the Year at the State Bus Rodeo; both are



Barnes



Moll

drivers with Blacksburg Transit.

*Compiled by Tom Field*

“You were able to talk on the phone before turning on a light”  
— Page 40

**SELECT THURSDAYS**

**PARTY AT THE PAVILION**

**MAY 9 - TOO MUCH SYLVIA**  
**MAY 23 - THE KINGS**  
**JUNE 6 - UPTOWN**  
**JUNE 20 - SUPERHOLD**  
**JULY 18 - THE WORX**  
**AUGUST 1 - FUZZY LOGIC**

**daleville town center**





## BRINGING TOP NATIONAL ACTS TO ROANOKE



**JUNE 7**

JAMEY  JOHNSON



**JUNE 27**

## FLASHBACK FRIDAYS



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YOUR FAVORITE OUTDOOR CONCERT VENUE



MAY 10 - PRINCE TRIBUTE



JUNE 14 - AEROSMITH TRIBUTE



JULY 12 - FLEETWOOD MAC TRIBUTE



AUG 9 - LED ZEPPELIN TRIBUTE



SEPT 13 - TOM PETTY TRIBUTE



OCT 11 - KISS TRIBUTE

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<https://drpepperpark.com>

# FRONT Notes

## *Tech to market*

**Avolant**, a consultancy specializing in technology transfer, patent valuation, marketing and licensing, and new invention startups from the university as well as private sector, has opened from Blacksburg and at [www.avolantllc.com](http://www.avolantllc.com).

## *Connie gives local nod*

**Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center** received the Connie Award for the property's 2019 brand awards program; the Connie is the highest hotel award for all brands across the Hilton Worldwide organization.

## *Buzz on the river*

**Honey Bee**, a redevelopment of the former Danville Register & Bee buildings on South Union Street, has been announced by Live Oak (Ed Walker and Brent Cochran) to feature a 42-room boutique hotel; a \$6 million + project scheduled for the downtown River District in Danville.

## *Here's your card*

**Card Isle** (custom greeting card public kiosk systems) has partnered with Canon

printers to include a print-cards-at-home application for consumers.

## *Parks & Rec wins*

**Roanoke County Parks, Recreation and Tourism** won the 2019 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award.

## *German company on auto*

**Torc Robotics** autonomous vehicle company in Blacksburg may be acquired by Daimler Trucks and Buses Holding pending regulatory approval.

## *College cuts*

**Virginia Western Community College** is eliminating six full-time positions at the end of the school year, citing a decline in enrollment.

## *College collaboration*

**Blue Ridge Community College and Bridgewater College** have signed a guaranteed admission agreement.

## *College scores*

**Longwood University** received a \$15 million contribution from alumna Joan Brock for construction

of its Joan Perry Brock Center, used for ceremonies, athletic events, lectures, concerts.

## *College kudos*

Smart Asset, a fintech reporting agency, ranked **Virginia** as the number one state in the nation for higher education, based on its ranked parameters in student-faculty ratio; graduation rate; in-state attendance rate; 20-year return on investment; and average net price; the 2019 report indexed Virginia (100) to Montana (0).

## *Opened wide*

**Spencer Dental** kids-focused family dental practice and affordable dental care provider has opened offices in Roanoke, Christiansburg, and Danville.

## *Paddling North x Northwest-ward*

**Twin Rivers Outfitters** (Buchanan, James River) has opened its second location at Intervale Park on the Jackson River in Alleghany County.

## *Health equality center*

**Roanoke College** has established a Center

for Community Health Innovation that will direct the Roanoke Valley Community Health Living Index, manage resident-partner collaboration on equitable practices, and provide grant support and technical assistance to promote a culture of health.

## *Turkey fattening*

**Virginia Tech** has increased the university's minimum starting pay for full-time, benefits-eligible staff employees to \$12 per hour, a policy affecting about 225 employees.

## *Not working on the railroad*

**Norfolk Southern** announced a furlough of about 45 employees in Roanoke.

## *Wasena wine spot*

**Bloom Restaurant & Wine Bar** is planning to open by early summer in Roanoke's Wasena Bridge / Main Street neighborhood.

## *Municipal or private or hybrid?*

As rural areas address how to provide broadband internet service in unserved or underserved

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communities, some are considering contracting with private companies to build a municipal network, as is one proposition on the table in **Campbell County**.

*Bye, Pat—Hi, Floyd*

**Thomas Industrial Fabrication** is relocating from Patrick County to Floyd County to a larger facility.

*Emit less*

**Virginia State Air Pollution Control Board** has approved a rule requiring a 30 percent reduction in carbon emissions from power plants in the next decade.

*Shortcut in lieu of US 460*

**Virginia Tech** campus will have a perimeter road linking Southgate Drive to Prices Fork Road from a proposed \$63 million project; on the heels of the recent road construction at that same Southgate entrance.

*Pediatric strokes*

**Sharon Ramey** with Virginia Tech Carilion's Fralin Biomedical Research Institute was awarded a \$13.5 million grant for studying care

standards for 8–24 month old babies who have strokes.

*Exploring creeks*

**Twin Creeks Brewing Company** in Vinton is opening a second location at Roanoke County's Explore Park in the historic Brugh Tavern; fall of 2019.

*Store more*

**Virginia Varsity Storage** is expanding with the purchase of a 93,000-square-foot facility on Franklin Road and building another three-story, 90,000-square-foot self-storage facility on top of the parking lot.

*Lodging going once, twice...*

Roanoke's **Blue Ridge Hotel & Conference Center** (formerly Sheraton Airport) and Lynchburg's Main Street **Holiday Inn** are being auctioned.

*Combatting nurse shortage*

The **Radford University–Jefferson College of Health Sciences** merger scheduled to complete in the fall is projected to produce double the number of nurses within

*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.

five years (200 graduates to over 400).

*Trails and metro-mountain*

**Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge** tourism agency is launching its \$1 million + "Be a #Trailsetter" marketing campaign promoting the region's outdoors recreation and amenities, the largest campaign to date and showcasing Roanoke as a "metro-mountain vacation destination."

*Trail stop*

Roanoke City Council voted April 15 to discontinue its pursuit of eminent domain for the Roanoke Valley **Greenways** walk/run/bike trail system from property owned by Walker Foundry.

*Capital lagging*

A report by **Valleys Innovation Council** shows the access to capital for business startups is much lower in

the Roanoke, Blacksburg, Lynchburg market area than other parts of the state; and significant seed investments are often secured from sources outside this region.

*Tapped out*

**Deschutes Brewery** announced its decision to delay indefinitely its \$100 million construction of the Roanoke-based brewery that was to serve as the company's east coast operations, citing craft beer market instability.

*Tapped in*

**HomeTrust Bank** is investing \$2.5 million with Virginia Community Capital, including direct funding of Local Impact Opportunity Notes for Roanoke, Martinsville, and Danville stimulation efforts.

*Tapped on deck*

**Salem Red Sox** (High A; Carolina League minor

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## FRONT Notes

baseball) has introduced the Salem Beer Mongers—an “alter ego” team brand for Thursday home games to attract fans and celebrate the region’s local craft brewery growth and contribution.

*Wheeeee!*

**Explore Park** in Roanoke County is opening an aerial adventure course this summer, including zip lines managed by Treetop Quest.

*Below goal good news*

**Appalachian Power Co.** has completed its \$38 million upgrade project started in 2014 to improve the electric network beneath downtown Roanoke.

*Rolling along*

**Interstate 81** in Virginia received passage by the General Assembly for \$2 billion in improvement to be collected from raised gas and diesel taxes along the corridor and increased tractor-trailer registration fees; committees meets to prioritize the projects

(road-widening, access ramps, message signs, cameras, etc.).

*Russell cap-italizes*

**Polycap**, a Toronto-based manufacturer of caps for plastic packaging is opening its first U.S. facility in Russell County, a 76,000-square-foot shell building in Lebanon; an expected \$8 million investment and about 50 jobs.

*Multi-state fermented tea time*

**Blue Ridge Bucha**, a kombucha brewery in Waynesboro, is expanding its product distribution to Whole Foods Market stores in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Kentucky, and Washington DC.

*Roanoke–Lynchburg non-stop*

**Bedford/Franklin Regional Rail Initiative** committee received discouraging news from Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to deny funding for now of an

Amtrak stop in Bedford; officials citing low projection of passengers.

*Gallery out*

**Inkular** art gallery in Boones Mill has closed and will operate as artist/owner David Rake’s personal studio.

*Hey, Google—what’s at Hollins?*

**Google** has selected **Hollins University** as a partner institution to implement its Applied Computing Series (using Python language SQL and data-informed applications).

*Sippin’ and hoistin’*

**The Jolly Grape**, a wine and beer retailer with onsite drinks and food, is planned to open in Roanoke’s Grandin Village.

*Number one in golf*

**The Omni Homestead Cascades** golf course has been ranked number one in Virginia Golf Ratings Panel ranking of

the top 50 courses in the state; others in our region include Ballyhack (#12); Pete Dye River Course (#18); Boonesboro (#32); Roanoke Country Club (#38); Poplar Grove (42); the “old course” at Homestead (#48); and Danville Golf Club (#49).

*Number five in accounting*

**Brown, Edwards & Co** accounting firm was ranked at the top fifth position in Accounting Today’s 2018 Top 100 Firms to Watch in the nation and one of four profiled in its special report on Inside the Top 100 Firms published in April.

*Bath barrels*

**Speyside Bourbon Stave Mill** is expanding its Batch County oak stave / header manufacturing plant for bourbon barrels that will add another 45 jobs; the Scotland distillery operates several US facilities included locations in Virginia’s Bath, Smyth, and Washington Counties.

*Compiled by Tom Field*

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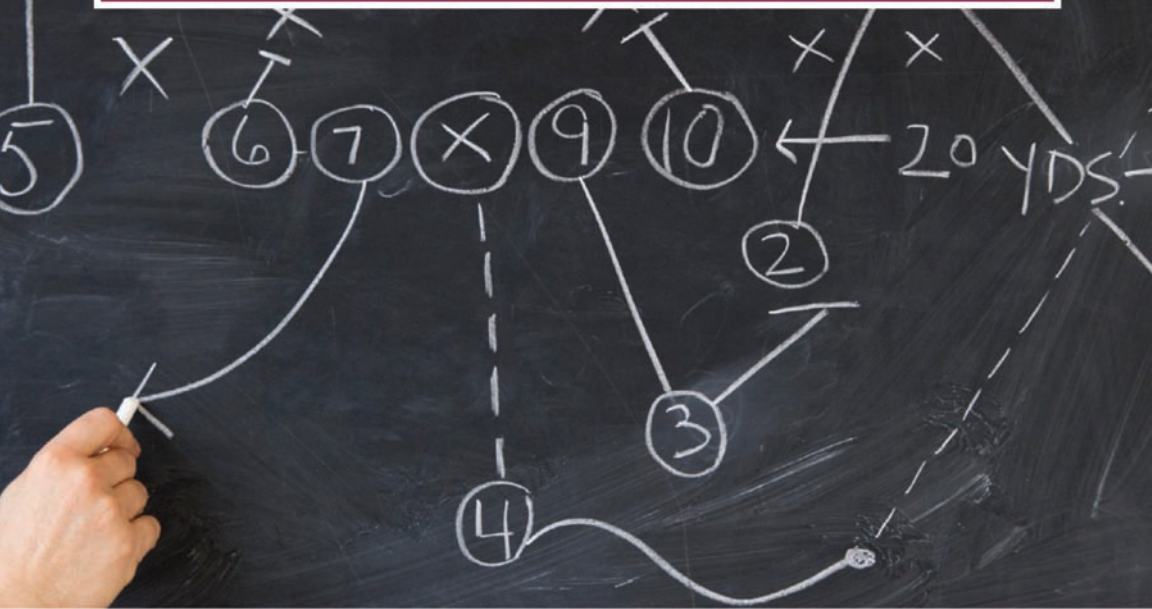
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