

THE VOICE

‘FOR THE PEOPLE AND BY THE PEOPLE’

Pounding Mill man convicted of murder in Mercer County, W.Va. **2B**

Task force targets high-level distribution

‘OPERATION PHOENIX RISING’

By Warren Hinkle

The Tazewell County Regional Drug and Violent Crimes task force

has officially concluded Operation Phoenix Rising, a complex two-month enforcement initiative targeting the supply and distribution of illicit narcotics and illegal firearms throughout the region.

“The operation focused on dismantling high-level distribution networks

and removing dangerous drugs and weapons from local neighborhoods,” Sheriff Brian Hieatt said during a press conference Monday in the Tazewell County Courthouse. “The targeted enforcement efforts resulted in multiple arrests and significant financial and material seizures from il-

licit operations.”

Those named in Operation Phoenix Rising include Duane Dale, Terrance Chatman, Tiona Rowe, Jerontae Hunter and Tristen Carner.

Hieatt said the officers had seized:

See **TASK FORCE**, Page 5A

DOLLYWOOD | BANDY’S GIANT PUMPKINS ON DISPLAY



Photo courtesy Priscilla Edwards

The Edwards family of Bandy have a couple of their giant pumpkins on display at Dollywood — one weighing in at 981 pounds and another 929 pounds. The 981-pound pumpkin is right outside the model of Dolly’s family home. Eric and Priscilla and their sons Caden and Nolan have displayed giant pumpkins at the Pigeon Forge park for the past several years. “We ended the season with 14 beautiful giants that took three trucks with 20-foot trailers to haul,” Priscilla Edwards said.

Jewell Ridge: Son shoots and kills father, then turns gun on himself

Sheriff: ‘Everything was contained in the house’

By Warren Hinkle

Members of the Tazewell County Sheriff’s Office responded to a home in the Jewell Ridge area of Tazewell County last Tuesday after getting a report of two men suffering from apparent gunshot wounds.

When deputies arrived, they found 44-year-old Leonard Joseph Mullins III and 19-

year-old Joseph Trent Mullins. Both were residents of the home. Both were pronounced deceased at the scene.

“Something happened in the house between the father and son,” Sheriff Brian Hieatt said. “Everything was contained in the house.”

“Unfortunately, the son shot his father and then killed himself.”

No additional details were immediately available from authorities.

See **JEWELL RIDGE**, Page 2A



Leonard Mullins



Joseph Mullins

Buchanan County supervisors make a hire

► Jeremy Ward gets the call, and \$96,000, to be the newly-created director of economic development

By Emily Love



Ward

Buchanan County supervisors voted 5-1 Monday night to hire Jeremy Ward of Grundy as the county’s new economic development director. He’ll get an annual salary of \$96,000.

Jeff Cooper, Craig Stiltner, Trey Adkins, Lee Dotson and David Rose voted for Ward. Roger Rife voted no and Tim Hess was absent.

Ward, 44, has been the transportation supervisor for Buchanan County Public Schools since August 2022.

Before that he was a teacher and football coach at Twin Valley High School and Grundy High School.

Twin Valley High property talk put off

STORY, 6A | Residents showed up for Monday’s scheduled public hearing on the future of the Twin Valley High School property, but Buchanan County supervisors postponed the hearing, and a vote on the issue, until necessary paperwork is ready.

Virginia rolls out new ‘chip and tap’ EBT cards

State: SNAP benefits will continue without interruption

The commonwealth is rolling out more secure EBT cards equipped with “chip-and-tap” technology to better prevent Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

(SNAP) fraud. Officials say the new cards will protect families from having their food assistance “skimmed.”

Virginia is among the first five states to implement this new technology.

Gov. Abigail Spanberger announced the rollout last Thursday, expected to take place now through December. The second

round of card rollouts will begin in late October and all EBT cardholders in Virginia are expected to have their new cards in hand by the end of this year.

Chip-enabled cards are significantly more resistant to a kind of theft known as

See **EBT CARDS**, Page 2A



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Inspiration

“You can’t help getting older,
but you don’t have to get old.”
George Burns



Things I’ve discovered since getting ‘older’

Now that I’m “older” (but refuse to grow up), I’ll share some things I’ve discovered:
I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
My wild oats have turned into prunes and All Bran.
I finally got my head together; now my body is falling apart.
Funny, I don’t remember being absent-minded.
All reports are in; life is now officially unfair.
If all is not lost, where is it?



It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
Some days you’re the dog; some days you’re the hydrant.
I wish the buck stopped here; I sure could use a few.
Kids in the back seat cause accidents.
Accidents in the back seat cause ... kids.

It’s hard to make a comeback when you haven’t been anywhere.
The only time the world beats a path to your door is when you’re in the bathroom.
If God wanted me to touch my toes, He would have put them on my knees.
When I’m finally holding all the cards, why does everyone decide to play chess?
It’s not hard to meet expenses ... they’re everywhere.
The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter ... I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I’m here after.



Once upon a time, an old man spread rumors that his neighbor was a thief. As a result, the young man was arrested. Days later he was proven innocent. After being released, he sued the old man for wrongly accusing him.
In court, the old man told the judge, “They were just comments, they didn’t harm anyone.”
The judge, before passing sentence on the case, told the old man, “Write all the things you said about him on a piece of paper. Cut it up into little pieces and, on the way home, throw

the pieces of paper out of your car window. Tomorrow, come back to hear the sentence.”
The next day, the judge told the old man, “Before receiving the sentence, I want you to go out and gather up all the pieces of paper that you threw out of your car window yesterday.”
The old man said, “I can’t do that! The wind spread them all over the place and won’t know where to find them.”
Then the judge replied, “The same way, simple words and comments may destroy the honor of a person to such an extent that a person will not be able to fix it. If you can’t speak well of

someone, don’t say anything at all. Let’s all be masters of our mouths, so that we won’t be slaves of our words.”
Gossips are worse than thieves because they steal another person’s dignity, honor, reputation and credibility which are impossible to restore. So remember this: when your feet slip, you can always recover your balance ... but when your tongue slips, you can never recover your words!
“Those who guard their mouths and their tongues keep themselves from calamity.”
Proverbs 21:23

“Then we which are alive (and) remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” *I Thessalonians 4:17*

From a sermon delivered Sept. 16, 1877, by famed pastor C.H. Spurgeon:

“We know that these words are full of consolation, for the apostle says in the next verse, ‘Wherefore comfort one another with these words.’ The very words it appears were dictated by the Holy Spirit the Comforter to be repeated by the saints to each other with the view of removing sorrow from the minds of the distressed.
“The comfort is intended to give us hope in ref-

erence to those who have fallen asleep. Look over the list of those beloved in the Lord who have departed from you, to your utmost grief, and let the words of our text be a handkerchief for your tears.
“Sorrow not as those that are without hope, for they are with the Lord though they are not with you and by-and-by, you shall surely meet them where your Lord is the center of fellowship forever and ever. The separation will be very transient — the reunion will be everlasting.”

► **Robert Brault** “It's like this. Father Time keeps pitching the years at us. We swing and miss at a few. We hit a few out of the park. We try not to take any called strikes.”

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Tazewell County

Page 1A | Police: Large-scale hit drug operation, several arrests made

■ BRIEFLY

Richlands: Public was a no-show at public hearing

Richlands held a public hearing on setting rules regarding how many times a council member may speak at a meeting. While several members of the public were in council chambers, no one spoke.

Mayor Rod Cury waited several minutes before declaring the public hearing closed.

Later, during the regular September council meeting, council approved a rule change on a 4-2 vote. Laura Mollo and Gary Jackson voted “no.”

■ More in County Talk, **Page 3A**

N.C. man wanted for theft of excavator in Tazewell



A North Carolina man is wanted by Tazewell Police. Chief of Police Stanley Lampert said his department filed charges Monday for Christopher Neil Coughenour of Gold Hill, N.C., for the theft of a 2011 Caterpillar 305.5 DCR excavator stolen from the 1500 block of Fairgrounds Road in Tazewell, late Wednesday night, July 1.

Coughenour is described as a male white, 6-foot-4, 160 pounds, brown eyes and brown hair. Three other persons of interest have also been identified as possible conspirators.

Additional charges are pending, Lampert said. The agency thanked Bluefield Police Department, the Tazewell County Sheriff’s Office, and the Cabarrus County, N.C., Sheriff’s Office for their assistance, as well as information provided by the public.

Clarification on the sentencing of teacher

In the case of Jessica McCoy, the former Richlands Elementary teacher who recently pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of cruelty / injury of a child, the Tazewell County Commonwealth’s Attorney’s office did not handle the case due to a possible conflict of interest.

The case was assigned to Russell County’s prosecutor, Zach Stoots, who did not make a deal with the defendant or her attorney.

According to Tazewell County Commonwealth’s Attorney Chris Plaster, Stoots argued the sentencing but, ultimately, the sentence was the judge’s decision.

McCoy was sentenced to two years for the crime, but the sentence was suspended and she will serve a year’s probation and pay court costs.

■ WEEKLY STATS

Tazewell County Sheriff’s Office
Communications Division

Total calls: 911 Center (Sept. 6-12)
911 emergency calls: 455
Non-emergency calls: 1,046
Total calls going into 911: 1,578

Incidents created by department
Law enforcement: 1,054
Rescue: 146 Fire: 37 VDOT: 1
Total: 1,238

Pounding Mill man found guilty of murder in W.Va.

▶ John Aaron Norton: Jury does not recommend mercy

A Pounding Mill man has been found guilty of murder in the 2023 shooting death of a Mercer County, W.Va., woman.

The jury did not recommend mercy.

John Aaron Norton, 31, faced multiple charges, including murder, after a gunshot he allegedly fired through a home’s front door in Princeton, W.Va., fatally wounded Jessica “Jessie” Smith.

Norton will be sentenced at a later date, said Mercer County Prosecuting Attorney David Pfeifer.

The incident began on a February Friday night around 9:30 p.m.



Norton

when Smith called Mercer County 911 and reported that she heard three gunshots near her residence.

“Multiple Mercer County Sheriff’s Department and West Virginia State Police units responded to the residence, securing the perimeter and evacuating the area,” said Sheriff’s Office spokesman.

See **GUILTY**, **Page 4B**

Being the light



Photo courtesy Tazewell Primary School

Tazewell Primary School honored the memory and the light of second-grade student Justin Allen Wayne Winingham last Wednesday by wearing yellow, Justin’s favorite color. The students were reminded to “be the light” in memory of Justin.



Justin Allen Wayne Winingham had been a student at Tazewell Primary since he was 3.

Justin Winingham, 8, passes away

By Warren Hinkle

Tazewell Primary School and schools across Tazewell County wore yellow to honor the memory and the light of second-grade special education student Justin Allen Wayne Winingham, 8, who passed away Sept. 2 in a Roanoke hospital.

Yellow was Justin’s favorite color. Students were reminded to “be the light” in his memory.

Justin loved music, fireworks, loud noises, and people. He enjoyed traveling to his favorite places — Pigeon Forge, Cades Cove, and the beach. Swimming and wearing his sunglasses were among his favorite activities on sunny days.

Justin had been a student at Tazewell Primary since he was three years old.

See **JUSTIN**, **Page 4B**

County gets end of the year treasurer’s report

By Warren Hinkle

Tazewell County Treasurer David Larimer gave supervisors the annual settlement showing the financial condition of the county as of June 30, 2026, along with the delinquent tax book.

Larimer said the total committed funds the county had was \$39,105,338.70 with uncommitted funds at \$5,282,250.98, for a total of \$44,387,589.68.

He told supervisors when taxes are paid, if a person owes back taxes, those — by Virginia Code

— must be paid first. He said there are less than 1% of 2021 real estate or 2021 personal property taxes owed to the county out of \$28 million. In 2022 there is a total of 1.09% delinquent of \$29.5 million.

The percentage increased to 1.51% delinquent in 2023 from total taxes of \$29.34 million. In 2024 the total taxes still owed are 2.31% of \$33.78 million.

See **REPORT**, **Page 4B**

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County Talk

IN MEMORY: EARL COLE | OPINION PAGE

“Everything on this page is my opinion and it is my constitutional right to express my opinion.”

THE VIEWS, CONCERNS AND STATEMENTS EXPRESSED ON THIS PAGE DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THOSE OF THE VOICE

Is there something to hide?



Richlands Town Council passed a new rule that limits the amount of times a council member can speak or ask a question following a motion and a second.

Richlands Town Council held another lengthy meeting that once again ended before the competition of the agenda — after a motion to adjourn was made by councilman Jordan Bales.

During the meeting the council voted to limit speech and denied the public being able to hear the prepared financial year-end review.

Council woman Laura Mollo asked to at least hear this report but the request was denied. Council was told they could each receive a private review of the documents later.

“I voted ‘no’ to adjourn early,” Mollo said. “Our financial director worked hard on that presentation. He stayed at that meeting to give that presentation and then we adjourned that meeting, so he wasted his entire night sitting there. It also doesn’t allow citizens to hear a year-end financial review.”

While there may be no major surprises in those financial documents, it leaves residents wondering what else is being hidden from them and keeping town taxpayers in the dark.

Council passed a new rule that limits the amount of times a council member can speak or ask a question following a motion and a second. While not stated, it is obvious to anyone who has watched recent Richlands council meetings that this was a direct slap at Mollo, who has raised questions about the generator project, its increasing price, and if it will provide any savings for residents who depend on the town’s electric grid.

Mollo voted no along with Gary Jackson, but they were outvoted by the other four council members — Bales, Seth White, Jan White and Rick Wood. Jackson asked that

council wait until they could seek consultation on the legality of the move and then said the rules are getting too confusing.

The council did drop the suggestion of making strict limits on citizen’s comments during the meeting, at least until their October meeting. Mayor Rod Cury once again told council that he will not stop a citizen if their comments run over a five-minute or three-minute time limit if he feels they need more time.

The rules for citizens also included not calling a council member by name and not expecting the council or town employees to answer questions during this time.

Mollo pointed out the attorney general opinion that stated banning citizens from mentioning council members by name is unconstitutional. She also pointed out that during the citizen comments earlier in the evening, a resident was able to learn that his problem was already being investigated and the town is looking at options to solve the problem.

Several times during the meeting Mollo brought up the fact that the Virginia State Police have an active investigation into the generator project. She asked that any votes dealing with the generator be postponed until the investigation is complete.

We hope that the investigation is soon completed and that questions raised by Mollo will be answered publicly. Keeping things hidden, behind closed doors, and in the dark only raises more questions. Citizens rightfully want to know if some members of the council have something to hide.

A letter to the vice president

Rachel Compton, the mother of murder victim Amber Compton and her unborn granddaughter Amelia Elizabeth, shared with The Voice a letter she sent to Vice President J.D. Vance about domestic violence — help that is needed in Southwest Virginia and other rural areas.

We are sharing the letter with you, our readers.

My name is Rachel Compton, and I am writing to you as the mother of murder victim Amber Compton. Just days ago, a jury in Southwest Virginia delivered a guilty verdict, finding Dustin Owens guilty of the brutal murder of my daughter — who was seven months pregnant with my granddaughter Amelia Elizabeth. I am writing to bring your urgent attention to the severe domestic violence crisis gripping the rural communities of Southwest Virginia and Eastern Kentucky.

I am asking for your help as someone who has openly shared your own family's experiences with the pain and trauma of domestic violence. Your people in Appalachia need your help. Southwest Virginia has remained a fierce, strong supporter of President Trump and the Republican Party because we believe in a leadership that protects our families and respects our way of life. But right now, our families are facing a perfect storm of geographic isolation, limited economic resources, and a lack of critical infrastructure. When domestic abuse escalates in these rural pockets, victims find themselves miles away from help, without public transportation, and relying on overextended local departments.

Our local authorities and prosecutors work tirelessly and fight with everything they have to protect victims, but they are continuously underfunded and outmatched by the scale of this epidemic. We urgently need targeted federal assistance to bridge these gaps. Specifically, the region requires increased funding for local domestic violence shelters, expanded rural crisis text and call networks, and specialized protective resources that account for the unique, isolated terrain of Central Appalachia.

Mr. Vice President, the people of Southwest Virginia and Kentucky are strong, but they should not have to fight this battle alone in the dark. I urge you and your administration to champion policy initiatives and emergency federal funding targeted specifically at rural domestic violence prevention and victim support. Our mothers, daughters, and grandchildren deserve to know that their lives are valued, that their loyalty is remembered, and that their voices are being heard at the highest levels of government.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your continued dedication to the people of the Appalachian region. I look forward to your administration’s support in bringing safety, resources, and justice to our communities.

Sincerely,
Rachel Compton, RN

Appointments

The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors made a few appointments to boards at Monday night’s meeting:

- ☛ Sue Bailey was appointed to the Buchanan County Planning Commission for the Knox Magisterial District.
 - ☛ Tim Hess was appointed to The Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority for Buchanan County.
 - ☛ Anita Karen Brown was appointed to the Buchanan General Hospital Board of Directors for the Garden Magisterial District.
- Law school board appointments were on the agenda, but that item was tabled.

VOICE FROM THE PAST

“Transparency is intrinsically good, since in a democracy, very little government activity is legitimately secret.”

Ari Melber

LETTER TO EARL

Show me where the ‘booming’ economy is

Dear Earl:

I’ve talked to people lately who claim the economy is “booming” in Buchanan County because they saw a few people driving new cars. Most people who buy new cars in this county pay for them with Social Security (aka “government checks”) or if they’re lucky, pension checks from a union job. They would get neither of these checks if it were up to the Republican party.

The only “boom” I see is at Southern Gap where the few “suckers and losers” who still pay taxes are paying for big buildings, where water, sewer, internet connections, paved roads, and “relief” from paying taxes are provided by public money that will then be turned over to “entrepreneurs” (private businesses) in exchange for “creating” a few minimum wage jobs. Any jobs “created” will be like those at the law school. Created as a direct result of taxpayer money. And I am sure the “entrepreneurs” will insist on a non-disclosure agreement to make sure taxpayers never find out where all their money went. This is not capitalism; at best it is “crony capitalism,” where those who know or are kin to those who make the decision get public money for what are supposed to be private businesses. This is what the Republican party used to refer to as “picking winners and losers in the marketplace.” An example of this is Walmart getting taxpayer financed subsidies, then Walmart runs companies like Magic Mart that didn’t get government help out of business.

The economy in Buchanan County was actually booming when I graduated from high school (“graduated 6th grade”) in 1977. There were new car dealerships, businesses that sold lumber and other construction supplies — we even had a bowling alley. And anyone could get a good-paying job in the coal industry, mostly because the UMWA forced the coal operators to pay decent wages and benefits. Island Creek Coal Company alone had six big union mines in

the county that employed from 350 to over 500 miners at each mine. And the occupant of the White House, Jimmy Carter, actually was a decent man who had some morals and principles instead of just preaching about them.

Someone show me where the Donald Trump / Morgan Griffith “booming” economy is. Trump claimed he could fix everything, including raising the coal industry from the grave. The only big coal mine I see in Buchanan County is Buchanan No. 1, and they have been there since the 1980s. And unlike the big union mines, their employees don’t get a pension or lifetime health insurance when they retire. Someone show me where Trump brought one new mine to Buchanan County.

Correspondence school lawyer Morgan Griffith claimed to be a big “job creator.” By my calculation, at \$174,000 per year, taxpayers have paid Griffith over \$2,600,000 in salary alone, yet no one can tell me where any jobs he created are. In over 15 years in office, show me one factory with good-paying jobs Griffith has brought to Buchanan County.

When Carter was president the parking lots at all the big union mines were filled with new cars and trucks; now people who see five new cars claim the economy is booming. In 2026, the average price of a new vehicle is nearly \$50,000 before financing, with loan payments stretching up to 96 months (8 years). In 1977, new car loans were for 36 months or less.

The illusion of a booming economy is like a Trump Casino — built on credit and government subsidies, or as George Herbert Hoover Bush said about Reagan’s “trickle down” theory of economics, “nothing but smoke and mirrors.”

Just like all the businesses Trump bankrupted, a lot of the people with these big car loans will default on the payments. But, unlike Trump’s casino bankruptcies, they won’t be able to steal everything off the car then write it off on their taxes.

Donnie Farmer
Indian Grave Gap

“YOU’VE GOT TO STAND FOR SOMETHING OR YOU’LL FALL FOR ANYTHING.”

Sports & more

FOOTBALL '26



AREA HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULES

GRAHAM (2-1)
Class 2 | Region D
Southwest District
Coach: Tony Palmer

August (1-0)
28 @ Bluefield, W.Va. 40-33

September (1-1)
5 Lynchburg Heritage 6-21
11 @ Union 14-12
25 Princeton, W.Va. 7:00

October
2 @ Marion* 7:00
10 Pulaski County 1:00
16 @ Virginia High* 7:00
23 @ Lebanon* 7:00
30 @ Tazewell* 7:00

November
5 Richlands* 7:00
* Southwest District (0-0)

TAZEWELL (1-1)
Class 2 | Region D
Southwest District
Coach: J'me Harris

September (1-1)
4 @ Pulaski County 30-27
11 @ Grayson County 20-32
18 @ Union 7:00
25 @ Giles 7:00

October
2 Virginia High* 7:00
9 Southern Gap* 7:00
16 Marion* 7:00
23 @ Richlands* 7:00
30 Graham* 7:00

November
6 Lebanon* 7:00
* Southwest District (0-0)

RICHLANDS (0-3)
Class 2 | Region D
Southwest District
Coach: "Bubba" Edwards

August (0-2)
21 @ Virginia High* 6-21
27 @ Gate City 0-49

September (0-1)
11 Lee High 0-33
18 @ Abingdon 7:00
25 Lebanon* 7:00

October
2 @ Southern Gap* 7:00
9 Wise Central 7:00
23 Tazewell* 7:00
30 Marion* 7:00

November
7 @ Graham* 7:00
* Southwest District (0-1)

SOUTHERN GAP (2-2)
Class 2 | Region D
Southwest District
Coach: Greg Tester

August (1-1)
21 Holston 22-6
28 Ridgeview 8-48

September (1-1)
4 @ Rye Cove 24-35
11 @ Giles 63-21
25 Honaker 7:00

October
2 Richlands* 7:00
9 @ Tazewell* 7:00
23 River View, W.Va. 7:00
30 @ Eastside 7:00

November
6 @ Wise Central 7:00
* Southwest District (0-0)

■ TO REPORT SCHEDULE
CHANGES, CORRECTIONS |
email to voice@suddenlink.net

Fall Free Fishing Days Sept. 25-27

Virginia DWR's inaugural fall Free Fishing Days are next weekend. During these three days, Sept. 25-27, no fishing licenses will be required for recreational rod and reel fishing in both fresh and saltwater. Also during that time, facilities use permits will not be required. All fishing regulations including size, season, catch limits, and gear restrictions will remain in effect. DWR fee fishing areas still require a fee for Free Fishing Days weekend.

Freshman turns in a 4-touchdown night



Photo courtesy **Desiray Brown**

Southern Gap freshman running back Gunner Baker (21) scored four touchdowns in last weekend's game in Pearisburg. Looking on is SG quarterback Brayden White (4).

■ WEEK FOUR

Playing a good team the week after they've lost? It can be tough. Tazewell's Bulldogs face the challenging task of going to Big Stone Gap to take on Union, while Richlands travels to Abingdon to play the Falcons. Union is coming off a home loss to Graham while Abingdon was beaten at home by Gate City. Southern Gap and Graham have the weekend off.

■ SCOUTING REPORTS

Tazewell (1-1) @ Union (2-1)
Last weekend: Tazewell lost to Grayson County 32-20; Union lost to Graham 14-12
2025: Union 49-7 **Recap:** Quarterback Kam Bostic threw three touchdown passes and ran for one to lead the Bears at Witten Stadium. The only Tazewell score came



■ FOOTBALL FRIDAY

FRIDAY
Tazewell (1-1) at Union (2-1)
Richlands (0-3) at Abingdon (1-2)

Open: Southern Gap, Graham

on Kaden Williamson's kickoff return with 1:58 left in the game. The Bulldogs were held to 36 yards of total offense. Union compiled 332 total yards of offense.
2024: Did not play; **2023:** Union 27-6 (playoffs)
Notes: THS QB Ty Whittaker was 23-of-37 for 314 yards with three touchdowns in last week's loss, and
See FOOTBALL FRIDAY, Page 6B

■ GAME RECAPS | WEEK 3

Grayson County 32, Tazewell 20

INDEPENDENCE — Jarred McMillian rushed for 224 yards and scored four touchdowns to lead the Blue Devils last Thursday night.

Quarterback Ty Whittaker was 23-of-37 for 314 yards with three touchdowns for the Bulldogs (1-1), who finished with 357 yards of total offense.

Chase McDonald had five catches for 111 yards and Ellis Day seven catches for 50 yards. McDonald, Day and Caden Williamson caught scoring passes for Tazewell.

THS opened the scoring in the opening quarter on a 34-yard pass from Whittaker to McDonald.

Day caught a 9-yard TD pass at the 10:50 mark of the second quarter for a 13-7 lead, but Grayson County responded with a pair of scores to go up 20-13 at halftime.

The Blue Devils (1-2) added two more TDs in the second half and led 32-13 before Tazewell got answered with Williamson's 20-yard reception and Robbie Galloway's PAT kick.

The Blue Devils had 390 yards of total offense.

Southern Gap 63, Giles 21

GILES — Freshman Gunner Baker scored four touchdowns and the Eagles soared to their second win of the season last Friday night in Pearisburg.

Southern Gap (2-2) jumped out to a 28-0 halftime lead and didn't take its foot off the gas in the third quarter, piling on four more touchdowns.

Baker gained 105 yards on eight carries. He opened the scoring on a four-yard run (first quarter), caught a 15-yard scoring pass (second quarter), had a 21-yard TD run (third quarter), and a 60-yard kickoff return for a touchdown (third quarter).

Quarterback Brayden White completed six of his seven passes for 129 yards with second quarter touchdown tosses to Baker and Ayden Whited (56 yards).

Carson Blankenship scored on a 34-yard run in the second quarter, Aidan Baker on a 12-yard run in the third quarter, and Caden Justice on a 20-yard run in the third quarter.

See **SOUTHERN GAP, Page 6B**

Graham 14, Union 12

BIG STONE GAP — Trailing 12-7 with 9:06 left in the game, Graham quarterback Garrett Palmer engineered a nine-play, 57-yard drive that ended with a touchdown and lifted the G-Men last Friday night at Bullitt Park.

The winning touchdown came on a four-yard pass from Palmer to Jeremiah Quick with 2:37 to play.

A sophomore, Palmer was held out of practice all week after spraining the MCL in his knee on the first play in the previous game against Lynchburg Heritage. He wore a knee brace against Union and picked up 38 yards on 13 carries.

The Bears (2-1) generated over 360 yards on Friday, only to self-destruct by losing four of six fumbles. Three of those fumbles came inside the Graham 20-yard line.

Senior linebacker Jysir Williamson (6-1, 250) was the defensive leader.

Union took a 6-0 lead in the first quarter on senior quarterback Abe Hall's three-yard run that capped an 84-yard, 12-play drive. The PAT kick failed.

Then, two plays after recovering a fumble at Union 13-yard line late in the opening quarter, the G-Men (2-1) went up 7-6 on an 11-yard touchdown pass from Palmer to senior Cambel Fix.

The Bears grabbed the 12-7 advantage early in the fourth quarter when Hall connected with Kaiden Keith for a 43-yard score.

That set the stage for Garrett's winning drive.



Grayson County's Jarred McMillian is about to score the third of his four touchdowns against Tazewell last Friday night in Independence.

Lee High 33, Richlands 0

RICHLANDS — Aiden Bates rushed for 192 yards with two touchdowns as the Generals marched through Ernie Hicks Stadium last Thursday night.

Lee High (2-1) limited the Blue

Tornado (0-3) to 86 yards of total offense.

Richlands had 21 rushes for 11 yards, although TJ Lawson had 31 yards rushing on 11 carries before negative team yardage was factored



into the team total. QB Jamie Capshaw was 7-for-19 for 75 yards and one interception.

The Generals led 7-0 at the end of the first quarter, 20-0 at the half and 33-0 after three periods.

Clay Robbins had 97 passing yards for Lee High and two TD passes.

GRUNDY | SPIRIT FEST 2026 IS IN THE BOOKS



A good time was had by all last Saturday at Spirit Fest 2026 in Grundy. Sunny skies and warm temperatures brought out a crowd for the second Saturday in September event. Free rides for the kids, food, and live music all played a part in the day.

Photos courtesy Lowe Drone Media (top) and From the Edge (right)



Budget approval for aerial imagery company EagleView

BUCHANAN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SEPTEMBER MEETING

The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors on Monday approved a \$669,453.84 budget proposal from EagleView for three flyovers using 3-inch definition for the entire county within the next six years. EagleView is a leading provider of high-resolution aerial imagery, computer vision, and geospatial data analytics. Their 3-inch Ground Sample Distance (GSD) resolution imagery provides incredibly sharp aerial photography where each pixel represents a 3-inch square on the ground. When deploying three distinct flyovers using this 3-inch definition standard, organizations (typically county GIS departments or property tax appraisers) gain a highly precise temporal data set.

Supervisors also approved an additional appropriation in the amount of \$109,028 for funding received from the State of Virginia Fire Fund to be divided equally among the volunteer fire departments that are located in the county with the exception of Jewell Ridge Volunteer Fire Department. Buchanan County Public Schools was the recipient of an additional \$811,151 appropriation from the Virginia Department of Education, after the approval of the state budget.

In other action, supervisors approved 15 coyote claims at \$100 per claim to Eddie Fletcher (4 claims); and Henry Deel, Billy Souleyrette, Cody Johnson, Tanner Hartford, Mark Stacy, Ethan Phipps, Donald Meadows, Michael Sparks, Jimmy Clevinger, Anthony Viers and Earnest Owens (one claim each). Moved Ryan Cook from a

part-time helper to a full-time helper at the Buchanan County Sanitation Department. Ratified the following part-time employees: Roger Edwards, North Grundy; Dominick Hurley, Knox; James Justus, Knox; and Thomas McCoy, IDA.

Dates set for the 2027 Trails and Tunes

The Buchanan County Board of Supervisors on Monday evening gave the green light to the dates for the 2027 Trails and Tunes festival at Breaks Interstate Park’s Southern Gap Adventure Center. The event will be held July 8-11, 2027. The inaugural Trails and Tunes was held last month but coincided with the first day of school. Breaks representative Josh McGlothlin spoke to the supervisors about the event, saying that 600 attended the Saturday night concert that featured well-known bluegrass performer and Grand Ol’ Opry member Rhonda Vincent.

DEATH NOTICES

Gloria Ann Prater, age 76, of Grundy, Va., passed away Sunday, Sept. 13, 2026, at Buchanan General Hospital, Grundy.

Thomas Ray Mullins, age 88, of Richlands, Va., passed away Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026, at his home.

Rhonda Renae (Whitt) Justus, 61, of Hurley, Va., went to be with the Lord on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026, due to a short illness.

David Clinton Gammon, age 51, of North Tazewell, Va., passed away peacefully at his home Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026, following an extended illness.

Clifford Thomas, 85 years of age, of Grundy, Va., passed away Friday, Sept. 11, 2026, at Heritage Hall in Grundy.

Juanita Blankenship Presnell, 84 years old, of Hurley, Va., entered her Heavenly home Friday, Sept. 11, 2026, at Pikeville (Ky.) Medical Center following an extended illness.

Timmy Roger Stacy, 59, of Hurley, Va., passed away Friday, Sept. 11, 2026, at his home.

Douglas Potter, 81, of Vansant, Va, passed away Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, in Pearisburg, Va.

Carl Edward Street, age 76, of Abingdon, Va., formerly of Buchanan County, Va., went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, at his home.

Landon Kevin Beavers, age 55, of Bandy, Va., passed away Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, at his home.

Phillip Darryl Robbins, 47, departed this life Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, at his home in Tazewell, Va.

Tammy Sue Slone, age 52, of Grundy, Va., passed away Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2026, in Huntington, W.Va.

Leonard Joseph Mullins III, 44, of Jewell Ridge, Va., passed away Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2026, at his home.

Joseph Trent Mullins, 19, of Jewell Ridge, Va., passed away Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2026, at his home.

Kenneth Robert Dye, 78, of Richlands, Va., lovingly known to everyone as “Pop,” passed away Monday, Sept. 7, 2026, in North Carolina.

YUM YUM | EASY RECIPE!



NUTTER BUTTER ACORNS

Each week The Voice presents a delicious dish or dessert that’s sure to please you and your family. Nutter Butter Acorns are a sweet and playful treat! You can craft these adorable acorns that are sure to delight kids and adults alike! And don’t forget to serve this fun fall dessert on a fun fall platter! See Page 5B for the complete recipe ... and enjoy!

BLOOD DRIVES | MARSH

Upcoming Marsh Regional Blood Center drives:

Wednesday, Sept. 16: Lebanon High School, One Pioneer Dr., Lebanon, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 16: Carillon Tazewell Community Hospital, 388 Ben Bolt Ave., Tazewell, 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 22: Castlewood Fire & Rescue, Castlewood, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 25: Russell County Social Services, 135 Highland Dr., Suite B, Lebanon, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 30: Pocahontas Correctional Facility, Pocahontas, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 30: Family Drug Center, 110 West Main St., Lebanon, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Details, complete schedule: marshblood.com

BLOOD DRIVES | RED CROSS

Upcoming Marsh Regional Blood Center drives:

Friday, Oct. 2: Mercer Mall, 261 Mercer Mall Rd., Bluefield, W.Va., noon to 5 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 15: Graham High School, Double Gates, Bluefield, Va., 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Details, complete schedule: redcrossblood.org

SEPTEMBER | NINTH DISTRICT TRAVELING STAFF OFFICE HOURS

Congressman Morgan Griffith’s Ninth District staff will be available at the following locations in September:

Thursday, Sept. 17

Tazewell County: 10 to 11:30 a.m., American Legion Building, 226 Central Avenue, Tazewell

Russell County: 1 to 2:30 p.m., Town of Lebanon government offices, 72 Gibson St., Lebanon

Tuesday, Sept. 22

Dickenson County: 10 to 11:30 a.m., Center for Education & Research, first floor conference room No. 155, 818 Happy Valley Drive, Clintwood

For more information, contact the congressman’s Abingdon office at 276-525-1405 or the Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671.

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(In-county rates include Breaks, Bee, Birchleaf, Haysi, Honaker, Jewell Ridge, Jolo, W.Va., Paynesville, W.Va., Swords Creek and Raven)

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Tazewell County: \$65/yr.
All other areas: \$75/yr.

Obituaries

An obituary serves as a community notice of death and acts as a biographical summary of the person’s life.

If you want your loved one’s full obituary included in The Voice, simply tell your funeral director. We handle all obituaries with care, and a color photo is included at no extra charge.

You may also contact The Voice directly by calling Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445



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Guilty of murder

Continued from Page 2B

ating neighbors,” the criminal complaint said. “Jessica Smith and her family were in the residence directly across from the residence the man was shooting from.”

As Jessica Smith, Roy Smith and their two children were in the process of evacuating their home, Norton “fired two more rounds ... through the front door of the residence toward Jessica Smith’s residence. One round traveled through the front door, then through the kitchen window of Jessica Smith’s residence, as Jessica Smith was standing in front of the window. The round struck her in the chest, causing her death.”

Norton was arrested after a standoff which lasted several hours.

Norton was previously convicted in Virginia on Aug. 17, 2021, for a felony offense involving a Schedule I or Schedule II controlled substance. Norton had also been served a domestic violence petition in Tazewell County.

Justin honored

Continued from Page 2B

“We loved his belly laughs, his big bright smile, his long eyelashes he would bat at all of us to get his way, and the pure joy he brought to our school,” the school said in a Facebook post. “He will be missed.”

The funeral for Justin, son of Randall Winingham and Melinda Bryant Winingham, was held last Wednesday in Tazewell.

Treasurer’s report

Continued from Page 2B

He explained that the reason the 2025 percentage is 5.26% of \$33.46 million is due to money owed on back taxes goes to the oldest amount first.

He said many people still do not realize that his office is happy to set up a monthly payment plan for those who can’t afford to pay a large lump sum at one time.

“We have a lot of people who are on a fixed income and are happy to go on the monthly payment plan so that their taxes are paid,” Larimer said. “We have widows, widowers, people just trying to make ends meet, and we are happy to set up a payment plan for them.”

■ TAZEWELL | NEW PLAYGROUND FUN



Photo courtesy Tazewell Primary School

Deputy Aaron Doud and Lt. Landon Hieatt, with the Tazewell County Sheriff’s Office, put these playground items together for the Pre-K classes at Tazewell Primary School. “The kids absolutely love them!” school officials said.

THINK ABOUT IT ...
Living involves tearing up one rough draft after another.

AUTOS & VANS

2005 Mazda RX-8 for sale. Six-speed manual transmission, 85,000 miles, and clean title. Battery and alternator need replaced. Tires only have 500 miles on them. Will need to be towed. \$3,500 or best offer. 276-345-3354, leave a voicemail if unavailable. *45

Want to buy a Plymouth or Dodge flathead 6-cylinder motor. Also looking for 1946, 1947 or 1948 Ford coupe body. Call 540-395-2083. *42

2012 Chevy Impala LT, silver. Excellent condition, very clean. Clear title. All power, sunroof. 68,000 miles. Asking \$10,000. Call 276-312-2789 or 276-935-5861. *39

4-WHEEL DRIVES & TRUCKS

1993 Ford F150. Long wheel base. Auto, 2-wheel drive. Good shape, no rust, runs good. Call 276-210-2028. *99

BABY ITEMS & ACCESSORIES

Nursery furniture: “Baby Cache” brand. Babies R Us. Over \$1,500 new. Includes crib bed, 2-in-1 convertible from infant to toddler to full bed and seven-drawer dresser, and changing top for dresser and mattress. Dusk grey color. Price is negotiable. Call 276-935-8797 for more information. Leave message if no answer.

BATHROOM ACCESSORIES

Walk-in shower bench and a sturdy step stoop, with a high handle to hold onto. Never been used; ordered from a pharmacy. Paid \$132, will sell \$75 for both. 276-979-8831.

BEDROOM ACCESSORIES

Full-size quilted bedspread. Mint green. Call 276-970-5520. *42

2 bedroom suites. With box springs and mattresses, chest of drawers, vanity with mirrors. Also large china cabinet, wardrobe and 6 end tables and one Sony TV stand. Will sell all for \$800 or will sell separate. Bedroom suites are \$300 each. I cannot deliver. Can be picked up in Richlands. Call 423-900-7389.

Seven-piece Basset Vaughn bedroom queen set (two nightstands, high dresser chest with mirror, tall chest, sofa bench, head and foot board). Pecan wood and American made. \$2,500. Call 276-935-8797 for more information. Leave message if no answer. *99

BOOKS

Western books: about 300, \$1 each. Most of them William W. Johnstone. Call 271-964-6371.

CAMERAS & ACCESSORIES

Luna-Lite meter: Professional light meter. New batteries, works great. \$75. Call for more information: 276-935-8797. Leave message if no answer.

CEMETERY LOTS

For sale: 2 cemetery plots at Greenhills Memory Gardens in Garden of Good Shepherd. \$2,800. each. Call 276-963-2452.

CLEANING EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

Shop vac cleaner. New, never used. Asking \$50. Call 276-312-2789. *46



Coming to a world near you ... next Tuesday, Sept. 22

CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES

Aigner tote bag, size 10, and Aigner pocket book. Call 276-970-5520.

Six pair of women’s Lee Jeans (3 pair never worn, 3 worn very little). Size 6. \$45 for all. 276-979-8831.

COLLECTIBLES

For sale: Liberty “V” nickels, \$3 each. Buffalo nickels, \$2 each. Call 271-964-6371. *41

“Gone With the Wind” 12 pieces set of figurines. Each are numbered and in pristine condition. Have been displayed in glass-covered curio cabinet. Each has own glass domes. These were sold by Turner Entertainment in the ‘80s. They are hard to find in complete sets. Each character in the movie is depicted in

Virginia holiday stats: 10 dead in 8 crashes

Virginia State Police reported 10 people died in eight crashes along Virginia roadways over the Labor Day holiday.

As part of the nationwide, state-sponsored Operation C.A.R.E (Crash Awareness Reduction Effort), VSP troopers cited 2,823 drivers for speeding and 1,571 drivers for reckless driving. Seventy-four people were charged with driving under the influence (five for driving under the influence of drugs). There were 514 seat belt violations and 94 child restraint violations. In total, troopers worked 848 crashes.

SERVICE DIRECTORY

Grundy Funeral Home
22208 Riverside Drive, Grundy, Virginia 24614
(276) 935-4571
www.grundyfuneralhome.com

Continued, Page 5B



Buchanan County
General Election
Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Offices on Ballot
US Senate: House of Representatives 9th District;
3 Proposed Constitutional Amendments
Town of Grundy
Mayor; 3 Town Council Seats

Please verify your voter registration and polling place before Election Day!
vote.elections.virginia.gov
POLLS OPEN 6 am – 7pm

Friday, October 23: Last day to register to vote or change your voter registration information for this election. Same Day Registration while voting with a provisional ballot is available after October 23.

Mailed voter registration applications must be sent to the Voter Registration and Elections Office postmarked on or before the deadline.

Early Voting Location
Voter Registration Office
23784 Riverside Drive Grundy, VA 24614

Monday-Friday: September 18 through October 30	8 am – 4 pm
Sunday, October 18	11 am -4:00 pm
Saturday, October 24	8 am – 4 pm
Sunday, October 25	11 am – 4 pm
Saturday, October 31	8 am – 5 pm

The office will be CLOSED Monday, October 12 for Columbus Day

Absentee Voting by Mail
Friday, October 23: Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail. Applications must be received in the Voter Registration office by 5 pm

Tuesday, November 3: Election Day ALL voted absentee ballots must be returned to the Voter Registration office in-person, to a polling place or postmarked by 7 pm to be counted.

Vicki L. Clevinger, Director of Elections & General Registrar
23784 Riverside Drive, Grundy, VA 24614
TELEPHONE: 276-935-6534 FAX: 276-935-4320
Email: registrar@buchanancounty-va.gov

Author David Baldacci will be in Grundy on Thursday

BUCHANAN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Global best-selling author David Baldacci will be at the Buchanan County Public Library on Thursday evening, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

He's the featured guest for the library's Lee Smith Speakers Series and will be discussing his book, "A Calamity of Souls," which was selected as the library's 2026 Community Read.

"It is an honor for our library to host an author of David's stature," said Teresa Matney. "Thanks to the Friends of the Li-

brary, we have distributed more than 200 copies of the community read selection so that readers can be more engaged in the discussion. I'm so grateful for him to visit our library and spend time with his readers."

The library will be running free bus service from the lower level of the Walmart parking garage to the library beginning at 4:30. Those riding the bus will be entered into a drawing for a Baldacci book bundle.

Baldacci will be signing copies of his books following his remarks. The library will have a limited number of books for sale



David Baldacci

on the night of the event and those attending are also welcomed to bring copies of Baldacci's books to be signed.

For more information about the event, call the library at 276-935-5721.

■ AT THE COURTHOUSE

■ DEEDS RECORDED

The following deeds have been recorded recently in the Buchanan County Circuit Court Clerk's office:

Arlene Stacy to Mack Estel Stacy, 20 acres Coon Branch, Knox Creek; \$1, deed of gift

Industrial Development Authority to Appalachia Service Project Inc., 3.329 acres, Prater District; deed of gift

Kay Lynn Ratliff to Jonathan David Hughes, et al, lot number 8 of map showing part of the Ben Ratliff Farm, Little Prater; \$100,000

Steve Davis, et al, to Ronnie Ray Lester, tract Knox Creek Nighway Branch, Slate Creek; \$1, deed of gift

Karen Lee Vandyke to Kimberly Dee Jewell, 1.5 acres, Buchanan County; \$10

Linda Davis, et al, to Bill Mullins, et al, tracts Rocklick Branch; \$24,000

(*The dollar amount in these listings may only be a consideration price and not necessarily the actual price paid for the property.)

■ MARRIAGE LICENSES

The following marriage licenses were recently recorded in the circuit court clerk's office as complete:

Matthew Tyler Stacy, 31, Grundy, and Christina Ann Blankenship, 24, Grundy; date of marriage: Aug. 22, 2026

Timothy Tyson Ramsey, 37, Arrington, Va., and Tina Louise Laquino, 45, Bound Brook, N.J.; date of marriage: Aug. 30, 2026

■ Cheer champs

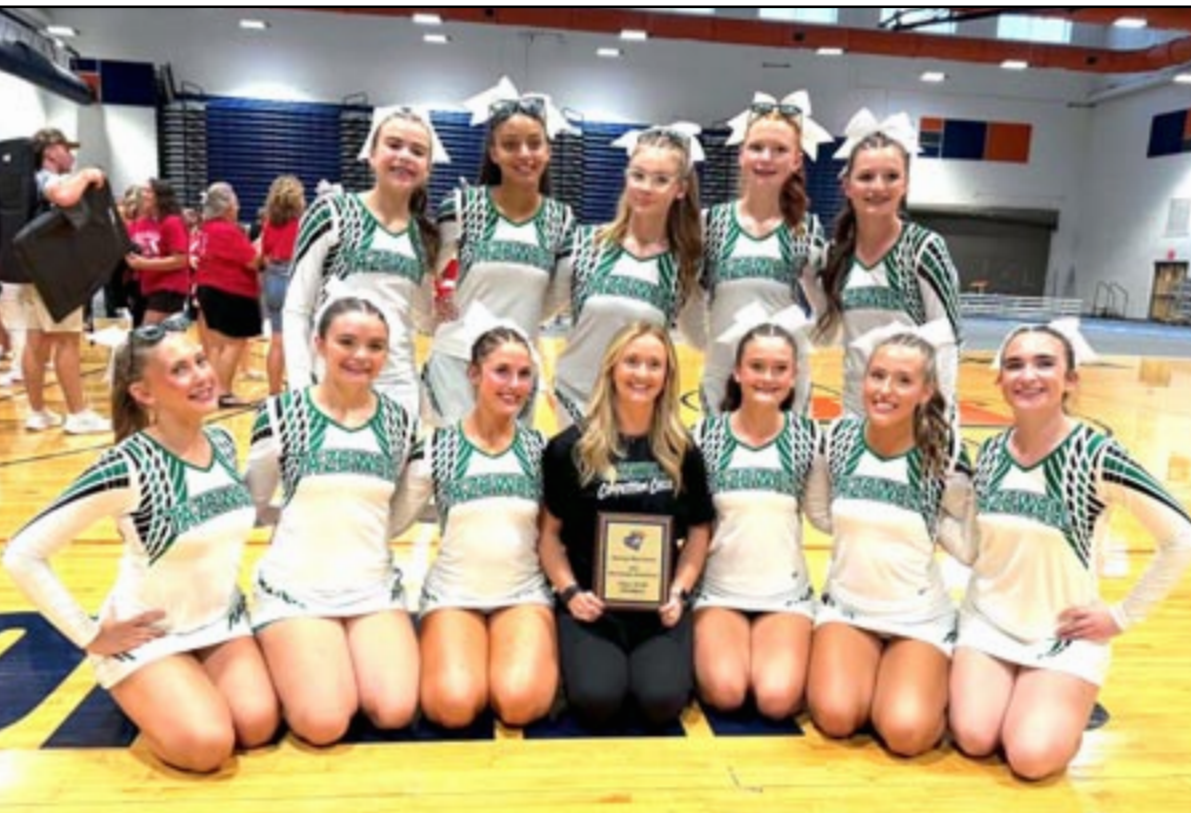


Photo courtesy Sheri Campbell Catron

The Tazewell High School competition cheer team took top honors at the Heritage High School 2026 Big Orange Invitational — these Bulldogs were crowned 1A-2A champions.

VDOT: 9 fall transportation meetings, including in Bristol

VDOT

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will host nine meetings across Virginia this fall — including in Abingdon — and is inviting the public to share feedback on transportation projects and programs related to highway, rail and public transportation across the commonwealth. Members of the community may participate by attending public meetings or submitting comments by email or by mail.

The public meetings are scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. in each of the locations, including Thursday, Nov. 6, for the Bristol District. That meeting will be at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Room 240, One Partnership Circle in Abingdon.

For additional information about the meetings, visit the CTB's webpage on the fall meetings.



Photo by Warren Hinkle

Tazewell County Sheriff Brian Hieatt speaks at a press conference Monday, announcing several arrests after a two-month enforcement initiative targeting the supply and distribution of illicit narcotics and illegal firearms throughout the region. Also pictured, left to right: Tazewell Chief of Police Stanley Lampert, Richlands Chief Adam Crouse, Bluefield Chief Shane Gunter, and Tazewell County Commonwealth's Attorney Chris Plaster.

Task force targets distribution

Continued from Page 1A

11.6 pounds (5,214 grams) of methamphetamine, with an estimated street value of \$239,845.84; 6.67 ounces (186.7 grams) of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$17,363; and nearly 6 ounces of fentanyl (156.2 grams) with an estimated street value of \$14,523.

Also seized were quantities of pharmaceutical narcotics such as oxycodone, Suboxone and gabapentin; 13 guns, including 6 rifles, two sawed-off shotguns, one full-sized shotgun, and four handguns; and \$35,376 in U.S. currency and two vehicles.

Hieatt said in addition to working with each police department in Tazewell County, the task force also works with several federal agencies. He said the new task force will have a revolving commandant and this

year he is serving in the position.

"The officers have put a lot of time and dedication into these arrests," Hieatt said.

While showing pictures of those arrested in the operation he said there are more to come.

Commonwealth's Attorney Chris Plaster said the arrests were the product of months of work.

"We want those who would bring this to our community this is what they can expect," Plaster said. "The task force has a common goal and it is good to see that goal accomplished."

Plaster said the officers had spent hundreds of hours following leads and focusing on those distributing the illegal drugs.

"The numbers speak for themselves," he said.

Plaster said just the amount of fentanyl that was seized was enough to kill everyone in the

courthouse.

He said the operation had not focused on those who were making a bad decision and using drugs, but on those who "view addicts as a business opportunity. There is a difference in the people who suffer from addiction and those who prosper from it."

Plaster called the drug traffickers "rats" who only care about themselves. He said they know the mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters that have been buried because of their actions but they continue to sell.

Both Plaster and Hieatt stressed that the investigation is not over.

"If your goal is to make money trafficking drugs don't let it be in Tazewell County," Plaster said. "When we identify you we will get you off our streets."

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1025 HOOT OWL ROAD

Whitewood High School Reunion 2026!

The Whitewood High School Reunion will be held this year at the Whitewood Community Center on Saturday, Oct. 17.

Please plan to come to the reunion this year, we always have a good time seeing everyone from our younger days!

Tell someone you know that hasn't been in a while or has never attended before.

The reunion will start at noon; dinner will be served at 2 p.m.

The cost this year will be the same as last year: \$20 per person if paid in advance, or \$25 at the door.

Send your fee to reach us no later than Oct. 10. This helps us know how much food is needed.

Everyone is welcome to attend, whether you went to Whitewood Elementary, the high school or didn't even attend school at Whitewood. Come and join us in visiting with friends and classmates from years gone by.

If you have any questions, call **Christine Cole 276-881-8232** or **Mike Lawson 256-508-8704**.

Send your name, phone number and address along with your fee to:

Whitewood School Reunion
19463 Dismal River Rd.
Whitewood, VA 24657

Coalfield Trader

Continued from Page 4B

great detail. Asking \$1,200 for entire set, will not sell separately. Call 276-935-8797 for more information. Leave message if no answer.

Easy Riders VHS videos. Various numbers from 22 to 41 covering bike shows, rodeos and rallies. Also two Sturgis videos from 1992. 'R' rated content. Part of motorcycle related collection, in good shape and still in original boxes. \$5 each or all 14 for \$25. Phone 276-988-6438. *99

FITNESS

For sale: Total Gym FIT with ab crunch. 2023 model, new in the box. \$849 or best offer. Call 276-935-4088. *42

FOR RENT

Nice, large 4-bedroom house in Town of Tazewell (off Lyons Avenue). Wrap-around deck and porch. On private property. Veterans welcome. Rent \$700 per month plus security and credit check. Great for family and kids. Call 917-855-7260.

FURNITURE

Two curio cabinets: One is 42 inches high, 21 inches wide, oak color. Inside back is a mirror and has mirror shelves and a small box of miniature tea sets. The other curio is smaller and also has a box of miniature tea sets. \$100 for all. 276-979-8831.

Two small oak-colored tables: \$10 each or both for \$15. 276-979-8831. *99

Card table: \$10. 276-979-8831. *99

Little black table: \$5. 276-979-8831. *99

95-inch couch. Off white fabric. With two matching chairs 42 inches. Like new. \$300 for all three pieces. Call 276-988-3950 or 970-0699.

Coffee table and two end tables. \$75. Call 276-498-3126.

Chairs (Clyde Pearson brand). Copenhagen blue with pineapple and accent pillows. \$50 each; total \$100. Call 276-935-8797 for more information. Leave message if no answer.

HEATING & COOLING

Fan: \$5. 276-979-8831.

HOME DECOR

Home Interior votive cups. 42 for sale, \$4 each or take all for \$2 each. Also candles for sale. 276-979-8831. *99

KITCHENWARE

Two slow cookers: \$10 each or both for \$15. 276-979-8831. *99

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Invacare Pronto MSI power wheelchair. Semi-recliner with captain seat. \$500. Call 276-498-3126.

MEETINGS

American Legion John R. Ratliff Post 164 meet the first and third Thursdays every month at 7 p.m. at the American Legion hall at Little Prater. 276-498-3450.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Childs Gentry Post 7360 of Grundy meets on the second Tuesday night of each month at the post, at 7 p.m., at 2559 Lovers Gap Road in Vansant. 276-935-4063.

MOTORCYCLES & ACCESSORIES

Leather chaps / coat: Black with chrome hardware, tassels, adjustable, zippered legs, pocket. Nylon lined for easy on / off. Women's size large. High quality. In excellent condition. \$40. **Coat:** Black. Has tassels, zippered pockets, zip out Thinsulate liner. Nylon lined for easy on / off. Women's size 18. High quality. In excellent condition. \$65 or both for \$50. Phone 276-988-6438.

PETS & ACCESSORIES

Home Interior two-piece bird cage. Gold color, sits on a gold stand. Has two glass shelves. \$20. 276-979-8831.

REAL ESTATE

For sale: 2-story, 1,150-square-foot cabin with 6 wooded acres at Pea Patch Virginia (Jewell Ridge address). Located on Virginia / West Virginia state line, 2 miles from Spearhead ATV Trail. Recent remodel with new plumbing, wiring, and bathrooms. Unfinished basement for storage. New paved county road to driveway. All new gravel driveway with lots of parking. County water, fiber internet, security system and locked gate. Wood or propane heat. Contact cell 256-508-8704, email mwlawson@me.com for photos. Serious inquiries only. Will negotiate a fair offer.

For sale: Commercial property with 2 houses (two bedrooms, one bathroom, 1,500 square feet) and (three bedrooms, two bathrooms, 3,000 square feet) plus ongoing storage units (32). Call for more information. Serious inquiries only. Located within town limits of Grundy, Va., Buchanan County. Call 276-935-8797 for more info. Leave message if no answer.

SPORTS EQUIPMENT

Shakespeare Ugly Stik rods. One piece 6-foot-6, medium / heavy duty with trigger finger and EVA grips. Four rods \$40 each. Phone 276-988-6438. *99

Penn Power Stick down-rigger rods. 8-foot medium action two-piece. \$80 each. Phone 276-988-6438. *99

WANTED

Looking for roommate. No drinking, no drugs. Call 276-245-7307. Ask for Harold. *44

EASY RECIPES OLD & NEW



NUTTER BUTTER ACORNS

Photo, more info | Page 4A

1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips

48 milk chocolate kisses

48 Nutter Butter Bites

Line two baking sheets with parchment or waxed paper, set aside.

Remove 48 chocolate chips from the 1/2 cup of chocolate chips.

Place the remaining chocolate chips in a microwave safe bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds, remove and stir until smooth. If they need to be microwaved longer, microwave in 15 second increments stirring in between.

Spread the flat side of each kiss with a small amount of chocolate and attach to a cookie. You can also carefully dip the bottom of the kiss in the melted chocolate if you prefer.

Dip the bottom of a reserved chocolate chip in melted chocolate and place on the opposite side of the cookie as a stem.

Place on waxed or parchment lined baking sheets and let sit until set. Store in an airtight container.

WORD SEARCH

L O N G E R N I G H T S N A A U C N
T O R U E S T U N Y R O K C I H R I
M S O A Y Q E N I S I A O T R W O K
R C Y H N E U V S T E R F H E O P P
C E A A C G K I A S N O A A B R S M
K N D N D S E R N E D S R N M C O U
S C Y L N R G L U O L P M K E E C P
Q R A K E I E R E T X G I S V R T S
U Y D T M A N T S A E F N G O A O E
A D Y D S I V G R T V S G I N C B P
S N R N G Y W E H O E E N V W S E T
H I E L P P A E S P H A S I V O R E
B W T Y L L I H C T E S P N R F L M
F T S E V R A H Y E L O I G C R E B
A A U H A L L O W E E N E F I O S E
A F L S E V A E L W O L L E Y S L R
L O B L W E C H E S T N U T S T R D

AUTUMN

ACORN
APPLE
BIRD MIGRATION
BLOWING LEAVES
BLUSTERY DAY
CANNING
CHESTNUTS
CHILLY
COLD
CROPS
EQUINOX
FALL
FARMING
FEAST
FROST
HALLOWEEN
HARVEST
HAYSTACK
HICKORY NUTS

LONGER NIGHTS
NOVEMBER
OCTOBER
ORANGE LEAVES
PIE
PUMPKIN
RAKE
RED LEAVES
SCARECROW
SCHOOL
SEASON
SEPTEMBER
SHORTER DAYS
SQUASH
SWEET POTATOES
THANKSGIVING
TURKEY
WINDY
YELLOW LEAVES

Coalfield crossword

Answers on Page 6B

ACROSS

- Utilizers
- Pierce
- Crones
- Send, as payment
- See the sights
- Iridescent gem
- Genus of heath
- Hindu princess
- Style of hairdo
- Lingering sensation
- Lingerie item
- Retained
- The wool of a sheep
- Flock members
- Type of primate
- Stitch
- Two considered together
- Indian dress
- Deservedly receives
- Injured
- Lay of the land
- Marsh bird



- Baking appliance
- Europe's highest volcano
- Angry
- Chapter in history
- Exude
- Sausage
- Torture device
- Duty
- Obsequiously complimentary
- Custom
- French for "End"

- Nobleman
- Border
- Poi source
- Sporting venue
- Elk or caribou
- Horse color
- Assail

DOWN

- Fertilizer component
- Drudge
- Broadcast
- Oriental grain

- Barren
- A form of torture
- It browns bread
- Parental sister
- Legal filings
- Domestic utensils
- A computer company
- Pertaining to cod
- Hillside
- Josh
- Lascivious look
- Declines
- Threadbare
- Decorative case
- Commander of a ship
- Repeated performance
- Assess
- One less than 10
- Break in two
- Crease
- Legislate
- Lanai
- Be unlike
- Scattered
- Battery terminal
- Thrust
- Meat on a stick
- Adriatic resort
- Scarce
- Angers
- Not any
- Pesky insect

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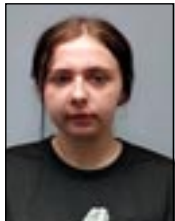
BOOKED



SW VA. REGIONAL JAIL TAZEWELL SEPT. 4-10



Melena Absher
BOOKED 09/05
Charged with Possession Schedule I or II drug.



Brooklyn Brown
BOOKED 09/08
Charged with 2 counts of: Probation violation - Felony.



Joann Brown
BOOKED 09/07
Charged with Disorderly conduct.



Eddie Quick
BOOKED 09/06
Charged with Simple assault, against family member.



Michael Cruely
BOOKED 09/07
Charged with Violation of conditions of release, pretrial release.



Thomas Riffe
BOOKED 09/06
Charged with Stab, cut, wound with malicious intent.



Matthew McDonnell
BOOKED 09/09
Charged with Probation violation - Felony.



Barry McCoy
BOOKED 09/10
Charges: 2 counts of: Possession Schedule I or II drug; Possession of a firearm by a felon; Possession of a stun weapon, explosives, ammunition or other weapon by a felon.



Robert Tiller Jr.
BOOKED 09/10
Charges: Possession w/intent to sell, distribute, etc., Sched. I/II; Possession Schedule I or II drug; Delivery of narcotics, marijuana to prisoner, etc.; 2 counts of: Probation violation - Felony.



Michael McGlothlin
BOOKED 09/08
Charged with 4 counts of: Probation violation - Felony.



Marvin Mendez-Esteban
BOOKED 09/06
Charged with Driving while intoxicated, first conviction.



Jessie Parks
BOOKED 09/04
Charged with Fail to appear after charged w/ felony/ misd., or released on summons.



Tyler Deakins
BOOKED 09/10
Charges: 2 counts of: Simple assault, against family member; 17 counts of: Threat by letter, communication, or electronic message.



Tristen Carner
BOOKED 09/10
Charges: Sell, distribute, etc., imitation Schedule I/II drug; Possession Schedule I or II drug; Distribution of needles, capsules, pipe, etc..



Brandon Taylor
BOOKED 09/06
Charged with Drunk in public, intoxicated from any drug.



David McCoy
BOOKED 09/10
Charged with Fail to appear after charged w/ felony/ misd., or released on summons.

BOOKED



SW VA. REGIONAL JAIL HAYSI SEPTEMBER 4-10



Isaac Brown
BOOKED 09/05
Charged with Simple assault, against family member.



Isaiah Fuller
BOOKED 09/09
Charged with Drunk in public, intoxicated from any drug.



Jason Hale
BOOKED 09/04
Charged with Driving while intoxicated, first conviction, influence of drugs.



Jessica Hall
BOOKED 09/10
Charged with Stab, cut, wound with malicious intent.



Jacob Jackson
BOOKED 09/05
Charged with Simple assault, assault and battery.



Timothy Mathews
BOOKED 09/08
Charged with Drunk in public, profane language, intoxicated from any drug.



Elena Yates
BOOKED 09/10
Charges: Possession Schedule I or II drug; False report on commission of crime to police.



Brian Reed
BOOKED 09/04
Violation of first-offender drug probation (original offense a felony).



Phillip Prater
BOOKED 09/10
Charges: Obtaining identifying information with intent to defraud; 2 counts of: Theft of credit card or credit card numbers; 2 counts of: Forging or using a forged credit card; Credit card fraud by a merchant against a card issuer; Selling or distributing a Schedule III drug.



Gavin Mullins
BOOKED 09/05
Charges: Attempted murder - Second degree; Simple assault, assault and battery; Stalking with intent to cause fear, assault or injury.



Jason Meadows
BOOKED 09/10
Charged with Unauthorized use of animal, auto, boat worth \$500 or more.



David Metz
BOOKED 09/04
Charged with Driving while intoxicated, first conviction, blood alcohol level .15 to .20.



Sabrina Stiltner
BOOKED 09/06
Charges: Drunk in public, intoxicated from any drug; Fail to appear after charged w/ felony/ misd., or released on summons.



Billy Sullivan
BOOKED 09/04
Charges: Driving while intoxicated, first conviction, influence of drugs; Drive without a valid license; Display altered or fictitious registration, title, or plates.



Dave Mullins
BOOKED 09/06
Charged with 2 counts of: Fail to appear after charged w/ felony/ misd., or released on summons.

BOOKED



SW VA. REGIONAL JAIL RUSSELL SEPTEMBER 4-10



William Boyd
BOOKED 09/09
Charged with Drunk in public, intoxicated from any drug.



Lukus Dotson
BOOKED 09/05
Charged with Driving while intoxicated, first conviction.



Lee Duty
BOOKED 09/04
Charged with Driving while intoxicated, first conviction, blood alcohol level .15 to .20.



Isom Hall
BOOKED 09/06
Driving after illegally consuming alcohol, under 21.



Glenn Miller
BOOKED 09/04
Charges: Driving on a revoked license; Fail to stop for police, attempt to escape or elude.



Shawnia Ratliff
BOOKED 09/09
Charges: Drunk in public, profane language, intoxicated from any drug; Resisting arrest, obstructing justice without threats or force; Arson, Explosives, Bombs.

■ ‘Booked’

All content provided in ‘Booked’ is considered public in nature and is made available as a public service in the interest of public safety.

The information in this section provides only booking records for said individuals. All individuals in this section are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

To obtain the final disposition of any criminal charges, contact the county circuit clerk’s office.

‘Got ahead of our horses:’ Details about Twin Valley High property plans off for now

By Emily Love

Several residents showed up for Monday’s scheduled public hearing on the future of the Twin Valley High School property, but Buchanan County supervisors postponed the hearing, and any vote on the issue, until necessary paperwork is ready. Garden District’s Jeff Cooper, chairing the meeting in the absence of board chairman Tim Hess, said the persons interested in purchasing the property at Pilgrims Knob are expected to visit the area in October with information about their plans; they then will hold a public meeting before a rescheduled public hearing, which is expected at the supervisors’ November meeting. Board counsel Lee Moise said the deed to the school property has not yet been received from the school board. With the consolidation of the county’s four high schools into the

new Southern Gap High School, the emptied properties revert back to supervisors. Plans have been announced to raze Hurley High School and attempt to repurpose others. The party interested in purchasing the Twin Valley property has been identified as Maverick Partners Holdings LLC “or its affiliates.” The Voice has been unable to locate any information about such a company; it is not registered with the Virginia Secretary of State’s office. An internet search revealed that “it appears to be a recent or privately owned entity (notably tied to regional development discussions in Southwest Virginia).” No further information was offered Monday night. “We don’t have the deed yet,” Cooper said, “so we got we just kind of got ahead of our horses and we were premature on this but the under-



Cooper

standing that I have is that — and I think the county has — is that this is going to be an energy project to develop and utilize Buchanan County’s natural gas resources to construct and develop an industrial project in the Pilgrims Knob area.” Cooper, who represents the district that includes the Twin Valley High School property, added, “We have got a commitment from the people, who would like to work with Buchanan County to invest some money and create some jobs and take energy and turn it into something else.” The company’s officers also plan to hold a public meeting before the November supervisors’ meeting, he said. “They are committed to coming in and being as frank as they can be about what they want to do before they do it.”

If the development is approved, Cooper said, “we’re going to go back and follow the normal process of property that’s going to be developed into any kind of job creating or investment creating format: to hopefully deed it to our Industrial Development Authority and that, the way we think right now, would happen at a public hearing on the November meeting,” tentatively Nov. 4. Cooper, who works in the gas industry, said several times that he was not at liberty to speak more about the project, but “they are talking about some large investments and the majority of the investments are going to be related to energy, which is only three things here so you know it’s either talking about coal, gas or electricity.” Addressing those who came for the public hearing, Cooper said, “I really apologize for it even being on this agenda here tonight ... I didn’t want to deter anybody from coming here. “I can’t talk about it so I defer to (company representatives) to speak on this, other than it’s an energy project. I will say I think it’s definitely not detrimental to the community.”

■ JOHN BLANKENSHIP | POINT BLANK

Autumn, and waiting for Autumn

I could tell there was a hint of autumn in the air when my son’s football smashed me in the face.

Next Tuesday is the beginning of Autumn. In my opinion, there are two times of year: Autumn, and waiting for Autumn. With the cooler temperatures, and our hills soon to be ablaze in magnificent color, for many of us it’s the best season of the year.

A couple goes to an art gallery. They find a picture of a naked women with only her privates covered with leaves.



The wife doesn’t like it and moves on but the huband keeps looking. The wife asks: “What are you waiting for?” The husband replies: “Autumn.”

There were four henchmen: Winter, Summer, Spring and Autumn. The boss stood before them. “Winter,” he began, “I need you to stay cool in the face of pressure. Ice in your veins,” he added, patting his shoulder. “Then there’s you, Summer,” he continued. “If the heat becomes too much for Winter,

use that hot temper of yours to make sure the cops remember who they’re working for. “As for you, Spring,” he chuckled, “this operation is gonna bring in a lot of ‘green.’ Make sure that it keeps growing.” He turned for the door as Autumn stood up. “Boss!” he sputtered. “What about me?” The boss turned back, shaking his head. “Sorry, son. You’re just the Fall guy.”

I got tired of looking at all those leaves in my yard, so I got up off the couch and went into action. I closed the curtains.



Photo courtesy Desiray Brown

Southern Gap quarterback Brayden White (4) looks for running room in last Friday’s game against Giles at Pearisburg. White completed 6 of 7 passes for 129 yards and two touchdowns in the Eagles’ 63-21 win. Also pictured on the play are Henry Brown (60) and Aiden Baker (20).

► Football Friday: Blues on the road

Continued from Page 3B

Chase McDonald caught five of those for 111 yards. But ... the Bulldogs’ defense gave up 390 total yards and 32 points. The Bears opened with wins by identical 42-0 scores over Lee High and Daniel Boone, Tenn., before being held in check by Graham. Still, Union generated 360 yards of offense, and QB Abe Hall passed for 240 yards. Junior speedster Elijah Lomax, who leads the Bears in rushing, missed the game due to injury.

Richlands (0-3) @ Abingdon (1-2)
Last weekend: Richlands lost to Lee High 33-0; Abingdon lost to Gate City 41-28

2025: Richlands 48-24. **Recap:** Senior quarterback Andrew Boyd passed for 360 yards and five touchdowns as the Blue Tornado beat Abingdon for the first time since 2019. Richlands led 28-24 after three quarters before outscoring Abingdon 20-0 down the stretch at Ernie Hicks Stadium. Boyd was 17-for-27 through the air, including scoring strikes of 82 and 70 yards to Landon Absher, and TD passes of 7, 36 and 57 yards to Wynnter Boyd. **2024:** Abingdon 56-6; **2023:** Abingdon 37-7

Notes: Multiple starters have been out with in-



On this play, Graham QB Garrett Palmer (1) hits Jeremiah Quick for the winning touchdown against Union.

juries, but still, there’s no way to sugarcoat it: the Blues are having big problems. The offense has scored six points in three games, and none since the first quarter of the first game. The defense has given up 103. The Falcons opened the season by blowing out John Battle (62-6), before a close loss at Christiansburg (37-34) and last weekend’s home setback to Gate City. Quarterback Eli Brooks was 11 of 22 for 206 yards and an interception, while Judge Dillow caught seven passes for 140 yards for Abingdon.

SG

Continued from Page 3B

Reid Stiltnner capped the Southern Gap TD parade with a 9-yard run in the fourth quarter. Blankenship ran eight times for 106 yards, and Justice had 87 yards on seven carries. Whited had three receptions for 97 yards and the TD. The Spartans fell to 0-3. Southern Gap is averaging 29 points a game, while allowing 27.5.

■ BLUEFIELD | EAGLES BLANK G-GIRLS



Photo courtesy Desiray Brown

Southern Gap’s Lucy Savage (9) hits the ball toward Graham defenders last Thursday in Bluefield, Va. The Eagles won 3-0.

Crossword solution

Puzzle on Page 5B

U	S	E	R	S		S	T	A	B		H	A	G	S
R	E	M	I	T		T	O	U	R		O	P	A	L
E	R	I	C	A		R	A	N	I		U	P	D	O
A	F	T	E	R	T	A	S	T	E		S	L	I	P
					K	E	P	T		F	L	E	E	C
E	W	E	S		A	P	E		S	E	W			
B	O	T	H		S	A	R	I		E	A	R	N	S
B	R	U	I	S	E	D		T	E	R	R	A	I	N
S	N	I	P	E		O	V	E	N		E	T	N	A
		M	A	D		E	R	A		S	E	E	P	
S	A	L	A	M	I		R	A	C	K				
O	N	U	S			F	L	A	T	T	E	R	I	N
W	O	N	T		F	I	N	I		B	A	R	O	N
E	D	G	E		E	D	D	O		A	R	E	N	A
D	E	E	R		R	O	A	N		B	E	S	E	T

■ ON THE CALENDAR

★ Daily and weekly library events are listed on the web. For Tazewell County libraries, visit: www.tcplweb.com and for Buchanan County, visit: bcplnet.org

★ During the month of September, the Friends of the Buchanan County Public Library are partnering with Feeding My Sheep Food Pantry for their annual Peanut Butter Drive. Drop off a jar at the library in downtown Grundy to help spread the love to a neighbor in need. Celebrate American’s independence by helping reach the goal of 1776 jars.

★ The annual Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival is Saturday, with events from 8:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. The festival offers a shuttle service at no cost, transporting passengers from Richlands High School. For more information and schedules, visit: cedarbluffheritagefestival.com

★ Thompson Valley Community Center will host International Observe the Moon Night at 7 p.m. Saturday. Free program. Some telescopes will be available but feel free to bring binoculars or a telescope.

★ The 4th annual Family Ag Day is Saturday, Oct. 3, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Grundy Community Center’s movie theater parking lot. Carnival games, educational demos, more. Free admission. Hosted by Big Sandy Soil & Water Conservation District.

★ Senior Safety Day is Wednesday, Oct. 21, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Nuckolls Hall in Tazewell. Lunch, vendors, games and prizes. The event is sponsored by Tazewell County TRIAD.

★ The 8th annual Hot Wheels Car Show is Saturday, Nov. 8, beginning at noon at the Buchanan County Library in Grundy. Bring your favorite Hot Wheels to compete in the car show and race on the tracks set up in the library. Categories include: car, truck, pop culture, and antique (Hot Wheels made before 1990). Free Hot Wheel to first 100 people to enter a car. For more information call 276-935-4751.

★ A Veterans Parade is Sunday, Nov. 8, beginning at 2 p.m. on Main Street in Tazewell, sponsored by Tazewell Today. Parade participants meet in front of Tazewell High School beginning at 12:30 p.m.

Kiwanis 5K is Sept. 26 at Breaks Interstate Park

The 26th annual Kiwanis 5K is Saturday, Sept. 26, at Breaks Interstate Park. The cross country race will begin at 10 a.m. in the swimming pool area inside the park and cover approximately 3.1 miles. The event is open to runners of all ages, including high school and middle school cross-country teams. Age divisions: 14 and younger, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59 and 60 and older. High school teams will also compete in separate boys and girls divisions. The individual entry fee is \$15 in advance or \$20 on race day. Registration for high school cross-country runners is \$2 per team member (T-shirts not included). A 1.5-mile middle school cross-country meet will follow the main race. The middle school competition will include divisions for fifth- and sixth-grade runners and seventh- and eighth-grade runners. * * * * *

All participants will enjoy a pancake breakfast sponsored by Buchanan General Hospital. Parking and restrooms will be available at the park. For registration information, contact Jon Rife at 276-935-2181 or jonrife@rifestv.net. Registration forms can be mailed to P.O. Box 724, Grundy, VA 24614.