

Valley Business

FRONT

FOR THE UP AND COMING
AND ALREADY ARRIVED

\$3 • Vol I: ISSUE 11 • AUGUST 09

MISSION STATEMENT

Professionals Serving
In The Third World

4D Replicas
3D Animation

Mechatronics!

catching the
June Bug

Travelers
Clinic

The Business
Broker,
Iron Man,
Her Crazy Office
and so much more!



Dixie Tooke-Rawlins,
VCOM

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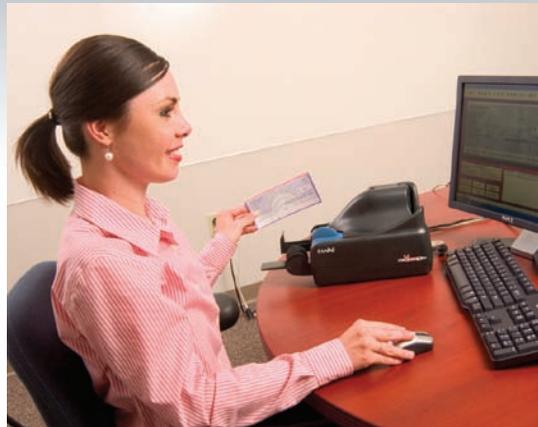
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WELCOME to the FRONT

The face of business for the past few years has been embodied in the image of a perp-walking Bernie Madoff. That's completely fair in one sense, utterly absurd in another.

This month's cover story, "Mission Statement," gives the other half of that face of business and it's a whole lot prettier. Throughout this region and many others just like it, business professionals are regularly dedicating their vacations to working with and for those who are often poor, sick and helpless. We have physicians laying concrete blocs and digging sewers; school teachers helping to make populations literate; construction workers designing orphanages; artists befriending and instructing destitute mothers.

It's a team effort of the most noble sort and nobody's doing it for the attention. To a man and to a woman, the simple explanation is, "I get a whole lot more than I give." Bernie Madoff would not understand. We suspect you do.



Tom Field



Dan Smith

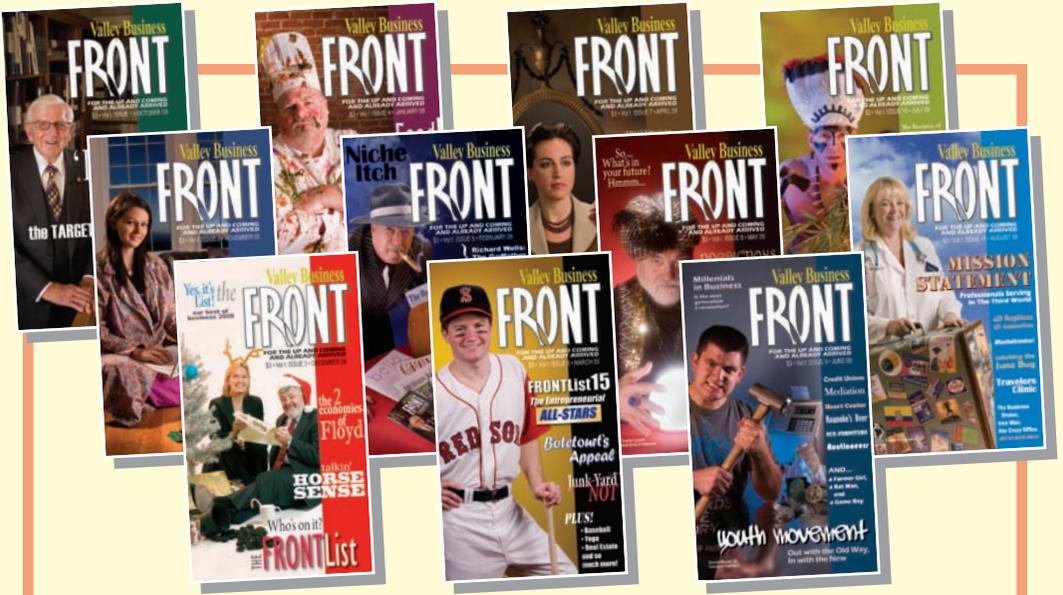
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Valley Business FRONT

DEPARTMENTS

8

COVER STORY

MISSION STATEMENT

TRENDS

- business etiquette 16
- workplace advice 17
- business dress 19

FINANCIAL FRONT 20

LEGAL FRONT 22

WELLNESS FRONT 24

TECH / INDUSTRY FRONT 32

DEVELOPMENT FRONT 36

RETAIL FRONT 44

RECREATION FRONT 47

EDUCATION FRONT 50

CULTURE FRONT 54

REVIEWS & OPINIONS

- dan smith 58
- tom field 59
- letters 61
- book reviews 62

FRONT'N' ABOUT 64

EXECUTIVE PROFILE 70

FRONTLINES

- career front 72
- front notes 76
- calendar 79
- patrons 80



Page 25

Travelers Clinic



ONE CRAZY OFFICE

Page 40



Page 44

Meet the IRON MAN

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morefront.blogspot.com

Cover photograph of Dixie Tooke-Rawlins by
Greg Vaughn Photography

Valley Business FRONT

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AUGUST



Anne Giles Clelland



Jane Dalier



Deborah Nason



Huong Nguyen



Tim Thornton



Nicholas Vaassen

Editorial Advisory Board

Valley Business FRONT has organized an Editorial Advisory Board in order to help direct coverage. FRONT selected a group of 16 diverse business professionals, who will meet as a group periodically during the 18 months of the first board's service. It will turn over every year and a half.

The board will be given the task of helping FRONT understand the issues and develop coverage. "We're journalists," says Editor Dan Smith, "and not business experts. This group of distinguished business professionals—whose range in age, experience, level and specialty is impressive—will give us a solid handle on how business runs and what the primary issues and key players are in this region. My guess is that our coverage of business will be especially useful because of this group of people."

CONTRIBUTORS



Donna Dilley



Tom Field



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Becky Hepler



Gene Marrano



David Perry



Dick Robers



Leigh Ann Roman



Dan Smith



Kathy Surace



Greg Vaughn



Lori White



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Biographies and contact information on each contributor are provided on Page 83.

2008 / 09 Members

Nancy Agee Carilion
Laura Bradford ClaireV
Warner Dalhouse retired banker, community activist
Cory Donovan NewVa Corridor Technology Council
Nanci Hardwick Schultz-Creehan
Ed Hall Hall Associates
George Kegley retired journalist, community activist
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Cynthia Lawrence Design Marketing
Stuart Mease Roanoke City
Mary Miller Interactive Design & Development
Bill Rakes Gentry, Locke, Rakes and Moore
Court Rosen Walnut Creek Development, Roanoke City Council
Jay Turner J.M. Turner Construction
Ed Walker Regeneration Partners
John Williamson RGC Resources

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.

“
You can play
'name that
bobblehead'
”

— Page 41



MISSION STATEMENT

Missions: A love story >

Executive Summary:
Regardless of the initial reason professionals from this region have for volunteering for Third World mission work, it ultimately comes down to a very real love for humanity.

**By Tim Thornton
and Dan Smith**

The line of buckets keeps moving, hand to hand, through the oppressive heat.

Cement and sand and water, mixed in five-gallon buckets, passes from hand to hand from the spot where it is mixed. It travels across the yard, up a ladder, across the roof— where it is dumped in front of three men who spread it across the roof. The bucket keeps moving to the end of the roof where the men drop it to the ground, a few feet from where the process begins, so it can start again.

Just a few weeks ago, on his first trip to Haiti, Barry Welch president of Internet Databases, watched residents of the village of Jacsonville as they built a house for the missionaries who come to help the tiny community help itself.

These are not the stereotypical missionaries come to civilize and Christianize heathens in a warmer climate. This is a more pragmatic lot, offering practical help with workable projects that improve people's lives. They help build schools, lay water lines and offer medical care. And they are almost universally convinced that they and their employers get at least as much as they give.

'I am energized'

"It's hard work. It's tiring work. But I am energized," says Aubrey Knight, a doctor with Carilion who's been going on mission trips for a decade or more. "And I think I am a better Carilion employee because of the energy that I gain, the perspective I gain and just the new understandings I gain of human nature, of need."

Not everyone begins with such noble goals and motives.

"It's something that really looks good on your resume," Gail Billingsley says. "It shows a lot of initiative. It shows courage in a lot of ways. It shows curiosity. If they go down there with that in mind and they learn some other lessons along the way, that's fine, too."

Billingsley leads Virginia Tech students on "alternative break" trips. Instead of heading to Cancun for a spring break of fun and frolic, they may help build a school or plant a garden in the Dominican Republic or Ecuador.

The alternative break trips give students better understanding of the world, Billingsley insists. For some, it's a life-changing experience. She recently began corresponding with a man who went on one of these trips in the 1950s. He changed his major from business to international studies. He's recently retired from a career of working on international aid projects.

"We don't want everyone to feel like they have to go into community service," Billingsley says. "But when the students, particularly, start realizing that a five day period can change the life in a whole community, it starts really making them understand the value of hands-on service, as well as the contributions to nonprofit groups.

"So we feel like we're not just creating future volunteers and future leaders, but also future donors and board members for non-profits."

People like Knight and Welch.



Aubrey Knight: "My driving influence to go is my faith."

Dan Smith

“ ”

I think I am a better Carilion employee because of the energy that I gain, the perspective I gain and just the new understandings I gain of human nature, of need.

—Aubrey Knight



Gail Billingsley: "It shows a lot of initiative. It shows courage in a lot of ways. It shows curiosity."

Dan Smith



Barry Welch: “A kind of community and spirituality that they have that we could learn from.”

Dan Smith

A model program

Welch helped form a non-profit to work with the people of Jacksonville. Knight is a leader of a non-profit that supports a children’s home in El Salvador.

The home offers children food, shelter and counseling, but it also works with the families and communities the children came from, so

they can return to a better situation than they left.

“We would like to believe this would be a model that would be replicated elsewhere, but right now we’re only in El Salvador,” Knight says.

Knight mixes visits to the children’s home with medical missions. Carilion allows him to take medical residents on the trips, too. Knight sees the trips as a professional and spiritual duty.

“Medical professionals in the U.S. are blessed in a lot of different ways,” he says. “We have access to technology. We are well respected in our communities and we are paid well for what we do. That is not the case in other parts of the world.

“Part of what is my driving influence to go is my faith. As a Christian, I believe it is my responsibility to use the gifts and talents that I’ve been endowed with and the blessings that I’ve received to give some of that back. So this is one way to do that. Faith plays a large role in how I came to do it.”

One of the enduring lessons Welch brought back from his recent trip to Haiti is how hardworking and self organizing the people are. Isolated from social and physical infrastructure, they created their own, forming a committee that prioritizes projects and makes community decisions; creating a water system that means teachers and staffers don’t have to carry buckets of water to the school every morning before class.

“There’s a lot of one family helping another do anything,” Welch says. And he wasn’t talking about big things that happen in a barn raising kind of way, but everyday things, too—like laundry.



Dr. Susanne Voekler: “I drove a lot of nails.”

Dan Smith



So we feel like we’re not just creating future volunteers and future leaders, but also future donors and board members for non-profits.

—Gail Billingsley

"It's a kind of community and spirituality that they have that we could learn from, too," he says.

Medical involvement

The medical community in the region is deeply and broadly involved in a variety of missions and its members don't necessarily go to deliver medical care. For example, internal medicine physician Dr. Susanne Voekler of Bonsack Family Medicine has been visiting Rio Bravo, Mexico, for seven years and for the past two she has been accompanied by her nine-year-old daughter Trista. Voekler does not go as a physician, but "I do different things in different years. This past trip, I was an assistant stone mason and I drove a lot of nails.

"Of course, I always practice some medicine, getting concrete out of people's eyes, treating cuts, things like that." Her mission is with the International Christian center for the Deaf, which has headquarters in Cloverdale ("right up the road from our practice"). Voekler says Mexican children in rural areas "don't get to go to schools. There are some teenagers we've worked with who don't even know their names ... It's gratifying to work with them ... I think how different life can be for them with a bit of education that they get."

Dr. Tom Fame of Roanoke initially went Haiti on a medical mission 13 years ago, but he saw that medical care was fleeting and temporary. "Doing the medical thing, I was so busy I didn't get a chance to meet the people," he says. "But I thought, 'How are they better off once the meds are gone? What have I done?' What's valuable to them



Dr. Tom Fame: "Sounds kinda cosmic. Go there and just be."



Leah Fame works with children.



Tom Fame's daughter, Michelle, in Haiti



is to educate their children.”

So, he changed direction and started raising money and involving himself in projects that had nothing to do with medicine: schools, water systems, nutrition and the like. Recently, he bought and sold Ford stock (taking a huge chance) and the tripled investment will go for solar panels for a village. He’s working with Virginia Tech to build a cistern.

His experience, he says, “Sounds kind of cosmic. Go there and just be. Bring some humanity and allow yourself to fall in love” with Haiti and the Haitians. He was so in love that he wrote *The Lambi’s Call*, a book based on his experiences and he is an in-demand speaker.



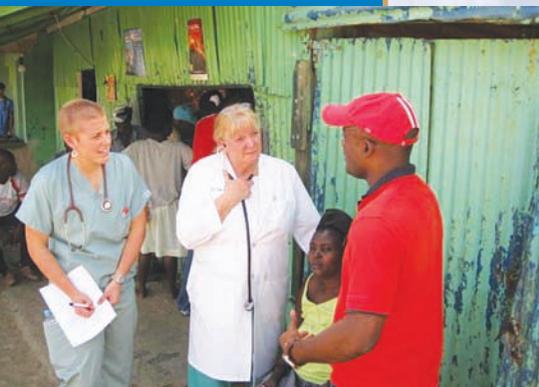
Fame has involved his family in his trips to Haiti, as well. Wife Leah is an occupational therapist and daughters Ryann, Rachael and Michelle have all taken part.

The Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg has built a national reputation for its involvement in overseas missions. Says Executive VP and Dean Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, a physician, “VCOM’s core mission is to prepare global-minded, community-focused physicians and to care for those most in need. We live in a multicultural society which requires an understanding of many populations and beliefs. In each community, whether rural or urban, you will find a multicultural population.

“More physicians are not needed to care for the urban insured or affluent; the need exists to care for those patients in rural areas where geographic access prevents care or for those who cannot afford to pay as much for their care and must be seen in community health centers. The international sites instill in our students the rewards of caring for underserved populations and prepares them to practice in a multicultural world.”

To accomplish those goals, says Rawlins, “In each site we have built a sustainable clinic, provide ongoing care for children’s homes (orphanages), and provide our outreach to nearby communities. We partner with the medical schools in those countries so our students interact with

Dixie Tooke-Rawlins: Missions “instill in our students the rewards of caring for underserved populations and prepares them to practice in a multicultural world.”



Dixie Tooke Rawlins works with colleagues and natives.

medical students and physicians from that country as well as the bilingual physician who is in charge of the VCOM students.

“The medical help has a lasting effect because we are able to provide longitudinal care through our clinics which are year round. Many of our one week trips are built around health literacy and engaging people in preventive health practices, which has a very positive long lasting effect.”

Schools and food

Jean Denton, a Roanoke artist and author, has accompanied Fame five times and her husband, Tommy (a retired editor) has also been on trips as part of a contingent from Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Salem, which teams with a Catholic church in Cabestor, Haiti.

She says, “Together we have built three schools and developed a daily feeding program ... I spend time trying to talk to people in the community and paying attention to their lives and their needs. We believe in the importance of building relationships as a basis for addressing the real needs of the people in Haiti. That means, going to people's homes, visiting school classrooms, talking with the pastor, teachers, families.”

Occasionally, medical missions expand. Centra Health's Terrell Maddox, a manager in the organization's engineering department, has been going to Jamaica with a building team every year, and his wife, Debbie, is part of the medical mission team.

Debbie, who works with the elderly, was involved with the



Terrell Maddox (yellow hat): 10 houses, 5 days.



Debbie Maddox (blonde): Got her husband interested.



Debbie Maddox, a nurse, treats a native.



Jean Denton (center):
“We believe in the
importance of building
relationships.”



If you make that
trip and you're not
changed, then there's
something wrong.

—June Hall-Long

medical team about seven years ago and a curious Terrell became interested. He initially accompanied the Central Virginia Mission team as a technology trouble-shooter, and then became a member of the Jamaica Building Team, a partner with the medical team, which concentrates on rebuilding schools and churches damaged by hurricanes.

Recently, the team constructed 10 houses in 5 days with a group of 17 people. Granted, the 16-foot-by-24-foot one and three-room houses are basic, but still ... 10 houses, 5 days! The houses cost \$5,200 for the three-rooms and \$2,600 for the single room to build. Maddox notes that the houses fill quickly: “A quarter of St. Thomas Parrish is homeless,” he says. “People live in whatever the wind blows in their direction.”

June Hall-Long of Salem has traveled to 36 countries, most recently, India and Zambia, where she helps distribute polio vaccines, “shelter boxes” (tent package equipped with supplies), and builds schools through the Rotary Club and its mission involvement with Orphans Medical Network International (OMNI).

The retired educator (18 years on Salem School Board) says the Rotary set a goal in 1985 to rid the world of polio, and the disease has all but been eradicated except in four countries (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria, India), where she is doing her part as district rep to



June Hall-Long: Just back from Zambia where she has an adopted son.

Tom Field

raise the \$555 million needed. She was recently in Zambia, where OMNI established a school with 183 students, including Lawrence, a first-grader and her newly adopted son.

"If you make that trip and you're not changed, then there's something wrong."

Important lessons

Aubrey Knight has learned lessons about people and community El Salvador that have helped him deal with the people and community he serves in the Roanoke Valley.

"We think we can overcome anything on our own," he says of Americans. "We are not as willing to reach out for help, to acknowledge our need to help."

"I think I've learned something about human nature and the human needs from another culture that has allowed me to be a better physician in this culture."

Bob Flynn, a project manager for Fralin & Waldron, a Roanoke-based developer, has been going to the Third World for a number of years, but harkens back to his first trip to Haiti, which Fame calls "an African country in the West," referencing its horrid poverty. Flynn had seen a lot of crushing, spirit-sapping poverty of the type Americans rarely experience. "I was at the airport getting ready to leave," he says, "and I was feeling really down. Our group leader saw me and came over and said, 'Now don't go home and sell your house. What we need is for you to spread the word.'" And Flynn has. Every chance he's had. 



The concrete bucket brigade goes up a ladder as a new building is constructed in Jamaica



Bob Flynn: "Don't go home and sell the house."

Dan Smith



Using Twitter professionally >

The political unrest in Tehran has helped us fathom the power of Twitter and other social media platforms as great technological tools. Imagine what could have occurred in China in 1989 if the protesters in Tiananmen Square had technologies such as Twitter at their disposal. Imagine how businesses might successfully launch new services and products by using Twitter effectively.

Before entering the Twitterverse, there are a few productivity questions that should be asked.

Am I already overwhelmed with a blog, Facebook, Blackberry and e-mail account? If the answer is yes, resist the urge to jump into another time-consuming and potentially addictive social media venue.

If there is an established social media plan for your business, go ahead and leap into the Twitter world, keeping your company objectives in mind. If you want to use Twitter to develop relationships and be more human to potential clients and customers, go ahead and tweet your little heart out.

Here are guidelines from Tim Berry, CEO of Palo Alto Software, that will assist in becoming a good Twitter citizen:

- Stay within the 140 character limit. (That's why it's called a limit.)
- Consider pausing between tweets. Thirty tweets an hour is a bit much.
- Keep small conversations private.
- Be vague when tweeting about social events. Your host may not want all your followers to know they weren't invited.
- Remember that Twitter is publishing, not advertising. You should provide content, not spam.
- Do tweet about great movies, books, music and art. Your followers care what you think and will appreciate the tips.
- Don't argue with people in Twitter. Words tweeted in anger live forever and aren't biodegradable.

Most important, remember that what is rude in the real world is rude on Twitter, too. 

Business Etiquette

By Donna Dilley

Executive Summary:
Use Twitter and other social media carefully until you learn it and discover how it can be of use to your business.

Who's the boss? >

Dear Getting a Grip: *Every few years I hire an employee who seems like a team player, but ends up challenging my authority. The most recent one asks questions about my decisions, suggests new projects, and sends e-mails with rewrites of the company's mission statement. I find myself wanting to say, "I'm the boss, not you!" What do I do with this meddling employee?*

Dear Authority: When an employee defies the authority of an employer, what to do is clear. That's a mismatch and the employee-employer relationship must terminate.

When employees meddle, or try to insert themselves into the management process, that's usually another dynamic.

Sadly, much too often, and for a variety of reasons, families from which some employees come have had uncertain structures lacking parental authority. To keep the family intact, often to survive, the children shifted from being care-receivers to care-givers. They become expert at serving as pseudo "team players" to preserve the illusion of the parents in charge, yet the children served as the family's decision-makers, managers, and coaches.

We all tend to bring the pattern we used at home to work. Employees from challenging homes are used to propping up leadership that has proven unreliable. They actually had to try to control their family's leadership. They may not be conscious of how much they doubt and mistrust authority.

Getting a Grip: The greatest gift leaders can give their employees is to draw a clear line between employer and employee, designate who's to do what, and do the leader's side with authority, credibility, and consistency.

Yes, employees may not like you over there all the time, and, yes, leadership is lonely and crossing the line may be tempting. But when you have to say, "I'm the boss!" it's likely your boss-like actions aren't speaking loudly enough for themselves. Find fellow leaders as confidantes, thank meddling employees for their ideas, and lead the company so well that the meddlers can stop worrying about whether they're the coach or you are, and be the true team players you hired in the first place. 



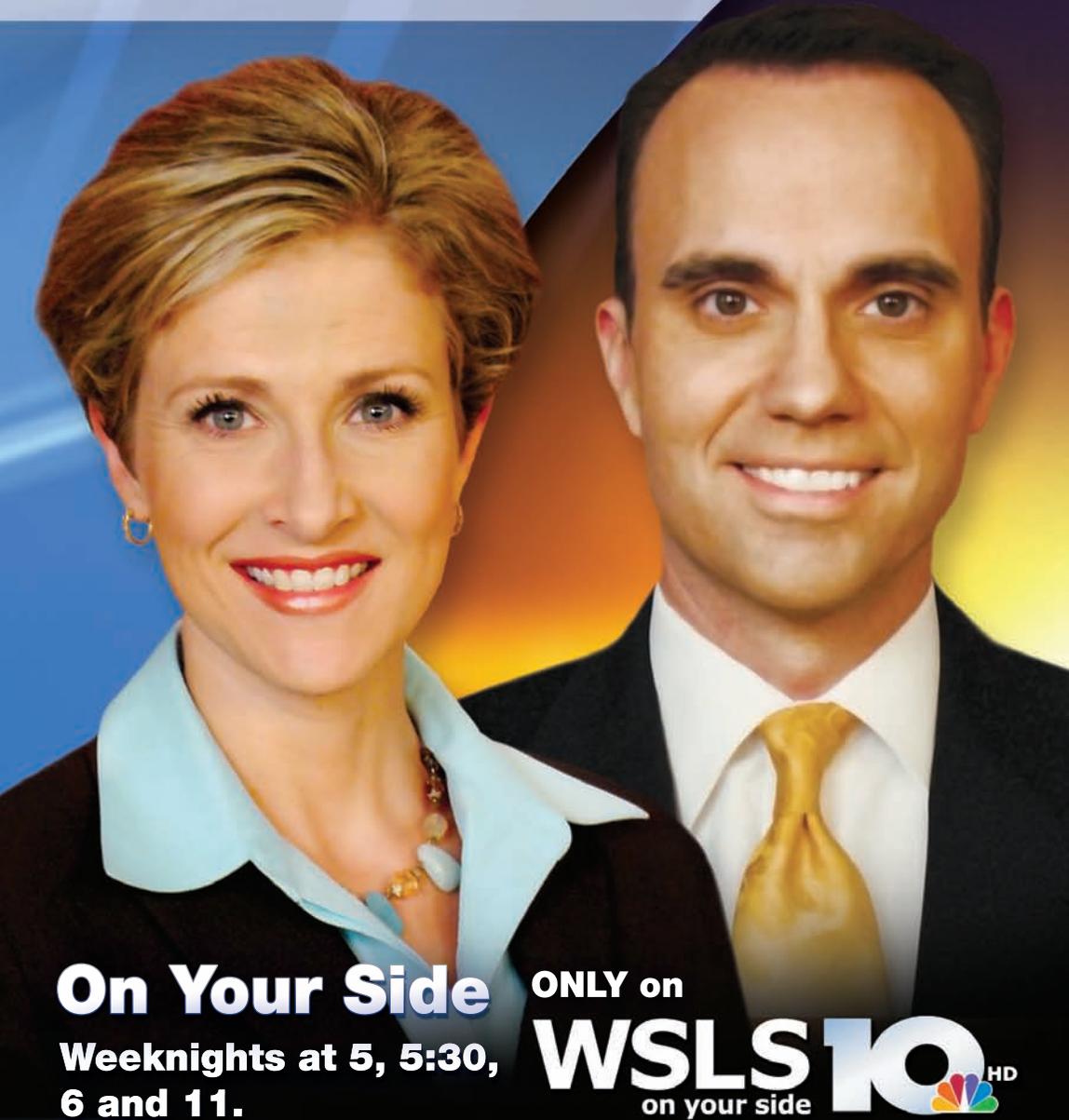
Workplace Advice

By Anne Giles Clelland

Executive Summary:
Need to start "Getting a Grip" on a personal problem at work?
E-mail your question to grip@handshake20.com.

Your Prime News Team

**Jay Warren joins
Karen McNew**



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A look ahead to fall and spring >

Women in our region continue to search high and low for fashions that are appropriate for the workplace. A recent trip to Atlanta afforded me the opportunity to check out the Americasmart apparel mart and get an idea of the fashions we can expect in the fall and next spring.

It was not surprising to find that menswear is reliably offering suits, dress pants, khakis and blazers, along with dress shirts and ties in bright colors for the upcoming fall and spring season.

On the other hand, women's wear continues to offer casual separates, often in flimsy or see-through fabrics that are useless for the workplace. Most of the fashions appear to be targeting young women in their early 20s. It is easy to understand why women over 30 are finding few matching jackets and skirts or pants: very few designers and wholesalers are showing them. Those that are available are not inexpensive.

Right now, finding a pair of slacks and a matching jacket will require a diligent search from store to store and when you find it, the style may be unflattering. However, if and when you find a flattering jacket and slacks with good design and quality construction, buy it.

If the designers and wholesalers ever get the message that women are desperately shopping for wardrobes that look professional—just as men do—we will be inundated with suiting coordinates. Until then, grab the few coordinates on the market and pray that they hold up until the trend swings away from casual sundresses and jeans for the young working woman.

On another note, just when we thought that we had seen every inappropriate fashion that could be designed, along comes the jumpsuit and the gladiator sandal. Just for the record, these two fashions are definitely not office-appropriate and will destroy any professional credibility a woman has established. Save these two fashions for your personal life.

The fashion industry is convinced that all women want their wardrobe to be novel and cutting-edge every season. Not so: most women understand what basics look best on them and they use seasonal trends to make them versatile. The problem is that very few designers and wholesalers are interested in filling this need right now.

Menswear rarely attempts to change the face of men's professional clothing and my guess is designers have it right and they are sticking to what is working. 



Business Dress

By Kathy Surace

Executive Summary:

If you're a woman over 30, good luck finding appropriate clothing for work. Menswear continues to get it right.

MeadWestvaco >

Compiled by Deborah Nason

Overview:

MeadWestvaco Corporation [recently rebranded as MWV] is a global packaging company that provides packaging solutions to many of the world's brands in the healthcare, personal and beauty care, food, beverage, tobacco, media and entertainment, and home and garden industries. MWV's other business operations serve the consumer and office products, specialty chemicals, forestry and real estate markets. The Company operates in five business segments: Packaging Resources, Consumer Solutions, Consumer and Office Products, Specialty Chemicals, and Community Development and Land Management.

[Source: reuters.com]

Market Commentary

- MeadWestvaco Corp. ... will eliminate 80 jobs in Germany as it reconfigures its home and garden primary plastics operation to cut costs. The Richmond-based company announced in January it will lay off about 2,000 employees, or about 10 percent of its work force, as it accelerates cost cutting this year.
[Source: news.moneycentral.msn.com]
- MeadWestvaco Corporation has been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a SmartWay Transport Partner. This innovative program brings the EPA, freight industry and shippers together to increase energy efficiency by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fuel consumption associated with ground transportation. ... MWV has set aggressive SmartWay goals for 2009, including:
 - o Increasing the amount of freight shipped with SmartWay certified carriers.
 - o Changing the way ground transportation metrics are tracked and reported from pounds to tons/mile.
 - o Integrating SmartWay certification into the bidding process.
 - o Implementing "No Idling" policies with carriers.
 - o Increasing intermodal shipments and taking trucks off the road. ... For example, MWV's Covington facility has taken more than 400 trucks per month off of Virginia's roads as part of this program.

[Source: money.aol.com]

- The United Steelworkers (USW) announced that the union reached agreement on a new, six-year collective bargaining agreement on behalf of 900 hourly production and maintenance employees at MeadWestvaco.
[Source: zcom.zacks.com]

Total Executive Compensation

Name	Title	Amount
John A. Luke Jr.	CEO	\$6,996,726
E. Mark Rajkowski	CFO	\$2,253,576
James A. Buzzard	President	\$3,314,448
Wendell L. Willkie II	SVP, General Counsel	\$1,724,832
Mark S. Cross	SVP	\$1,622,250

Board of Directors

Name	Primary Company	Age
Thomas Cole Jr.	MeadWestvaco Corporation	67
Richard Kelson	Alcoa Inc., Pension Arm	62
Robert McCormack	CrossHill Financial Group, Inc.	68
Timothy Powers	Hubbell Inc.	59
Susan Kropf	MeadWestvaco Corporation	59
Michael Campbell	Arch Chemicals Inc.	60
Douglas Luke	HL Capital	67
Jane Warner	Illinois Tool Works Inc.	61
Edward Straw	Pittiglio Rabin Todd & McGrath Inc.	68
James Kilts	Centerview Partners, LLC	59
James Kaiser	Sunoco Inc.	64

Institutional Stock Ownership

There is significant interest in MWV by institutional investors. The 83.20 percent of the shares outstanding that they control represents a greater percentage of ownership than at almost any other company in the Pulp & Paper industry.
[Source: businessweek.com]

Major Non-institutional Stockholders

Name	Shares held
John A. Luke, Jr	228,406
James A. Buzzard	52,179
E. Mark Rajkowski	66,002
Wendell L. Willkie, II	28,872
Mark T. Watkins	29,355

Sources

[finance.yahoo.com] / [finance.aol.com]
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Note

This article is meant for information purposes only and is not intended as an investment guide.

What drives your financial behavior? >

Executive Summary:

Knowing who you are and what is important to you are vital elements in your investment strategy.

By Joel Williams

Most of us in this busy and turbulent world are on a discovery journey, searching for a quality of life that will come down to how we integrate all of life's choices—including our financial decisions.

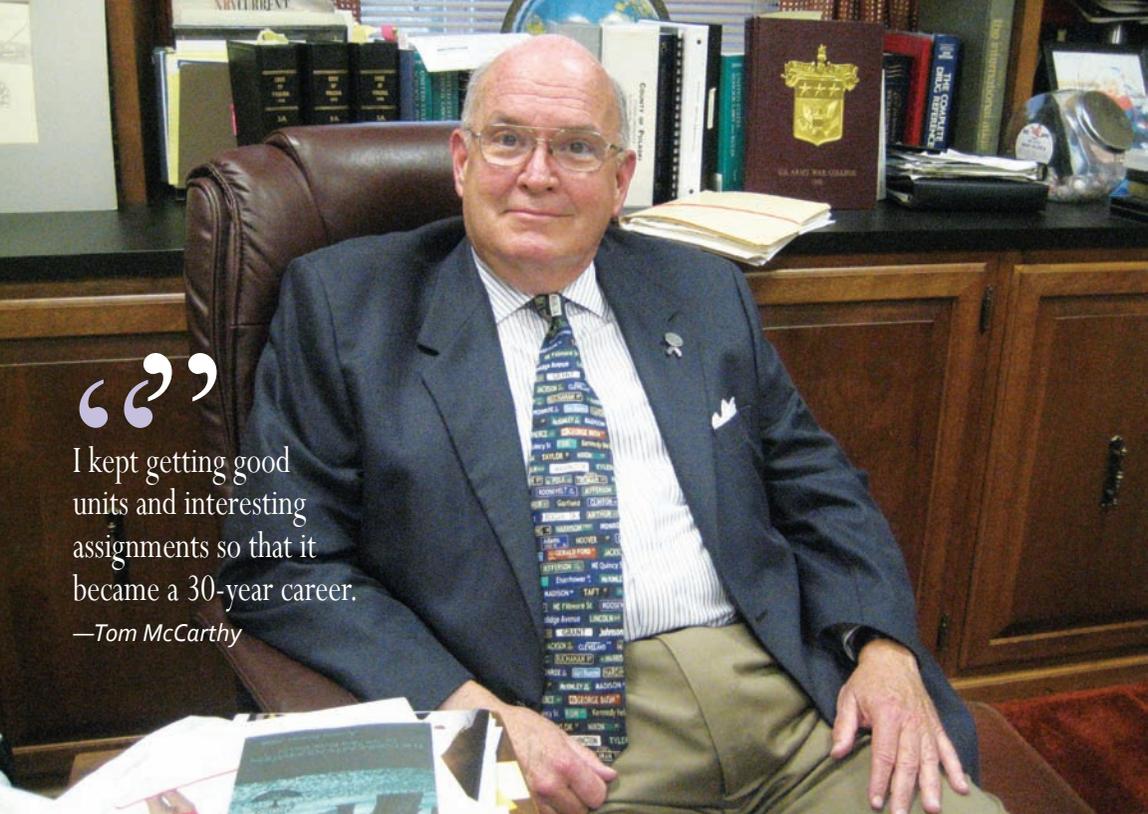
Why do some people appear to achieve success and everything that they want in life, while others fall short? What sets people apart? Experience and research show that 5 percent of your wealth creation comes from investments and 95 percent from your behavior. In my 29 years of experience, the factors highlighted in *Why Smart People Make Big Money Mistakes* (Simon and Schuster) are true and tell part of the story:

- **Pain of loss outweighs pleasure of gain:** Which would you rather sell, a stock that has fallen in value or one that has gone up? While most people are biased to hope for loss to be regained, wise investing is based on the prospects of the stock involved rather than their previous value.
- **"Sunk costs" are difficult to let go:** Haven't we all experienced the difficulty of giving up something into which we have sunk a lot of money? While understandable, this is another bias that can cost you.

- **Some dollars are worth more:** We treat money we "win" (inheritance, winnings, bonus) with less care than money earned. Invest each dollar with intention.
- **Too many choices foster indecision:** We all know this one.
- **Limited sampling creates bias:** It is unwise to base decisions on information gathered over either a limited time span or limited sampling, yet investors do this.
- **Preconceptions color information:** People believe what they choose to believe and little irrelevancies are often the tipping point in our decisions. Knowing your biases help you to become more objective and wiser.
- **Attractive descriptors vs. facts:** "Deep, rich, velvety chocolate or brown?" Studies prove that engaging descriptions affect our decisions more than facts.

In addition to these behaviors, our social and economic environments impact us differently causing us to each develop a unique financial personality code. Some firms use an assessment tool that determines both natural (hardwired) and learned financial behaviors and preferences. Knowing the same of your spouse, family members, and business associates creates more effective communication and alignment of your financial, business and life decisions.

Financial success requires a comprehensive and objective understanding of who you are so that you are equipped to make committed financial decisions consistently and confidently. 



“”

I kept getting good units and interesting assignments so that it became a 30-year career.

—Tom McCarthy

Tom McCarthy: “My theory is, you try to help people find out how to do the things they want to do, not tell them why they can’t do things.”

Becky Hepler

A lifetime of local service >

Executive Summary:

Pulaski lawyer Tom McCarthy has discovered that working for the public has its own rewards.

By Becky Hepler

What is it about a small town that commands loyalty and generates a strong sense of responsibility? Let’s see what the case of Tom McCarthy, Pulaski lawyer and hometown hero, tells us.

“Dad was a New Yorker, who, as he put it, had the good sense to come south and stay,” marrying a Virginia girl and starting a family, says McCarthy.

Besides running the old Maple Shade Inn, the elder McCarthy was president of the local bank, vice-mayor of the Town of Pulaski, and active on the town council that put in the sewage treatment plant and the Gatewood Reservoir. Tom McCarthy saw the tradition of public service established. “Pulaski had

been good to Dad and he tried to give back,” McCarthy says.

Tom had a good education, finishing with a law degree from UVA. His father died while Tom was at UVA and also during that year, McCarthy was offered a clerk opportunity with Virginia Supreme Court Justice Alexander Harman, who had been a partner at what is now Gilmer, Sadler, Ingram, Sutton and Hutton, a venerable Pulaski firm established in the 1870s. “I’ve been here ever since,” he says.

McCarthy’s early work in domestic law led to meeting the woman who became his wife, Sally, who worked in Social Services.

After 13 years of doing domestic, corporate and estate law, McCarthy added a new expertise when he became the attorney for the County Board of Supervisors and shortly thereafter, the attorney for Pulaski County Schools.

Joe Sheffey, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, raves about McCarthy’s work: “He’s so knowledgeable about the law and he gives such good advice. The best thing Tom’s done for us is keeping us out of court.”

McCarthy’s attention to detail is legendary.

There's the story of the time the Board of Supervisors was dedicating a new fishing pier. "I was supposed to say a few words and then throw out the first line on this new pier, and Tom had gone out and gotten me a fishing license just to be sure the whole operation would be legal," he laughed.

Pulaski County Administrator Pete Huber thinks the key to McCarthy's success is his gentlemanly yet pragmatic approach. Says McCarthy, "My theory is, you try to help people find out how to do the things they want to do, not tell them why they can't do things."

McCarthy stays busy in the community, serving on the board of New River Community College several times and he has been active in the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club. He helped the Pulaski County School system set up its Educational

Foundation, donating his time and services with the legal work.

McCarthy joined the Army Reserves during the Vietnam war, rather than allowing himself to be drafted. "I thought I was going to get in, do the work and then get out pretty quickly," he says. "But I kept getting good units and interesting assignments so that it became a 30-year career."

He was appointed as the Judge Advocate General for the Chief of Reserves, serving in the Pentagon three days every month, advising on legal matters for that office. He has since retired from the Army Reserves.

When asked what makes Pulaski County worth all his public service efforts, he says, "We have good people here, industrious people who are a pleasure to live and work with. Just one man's opinion." 

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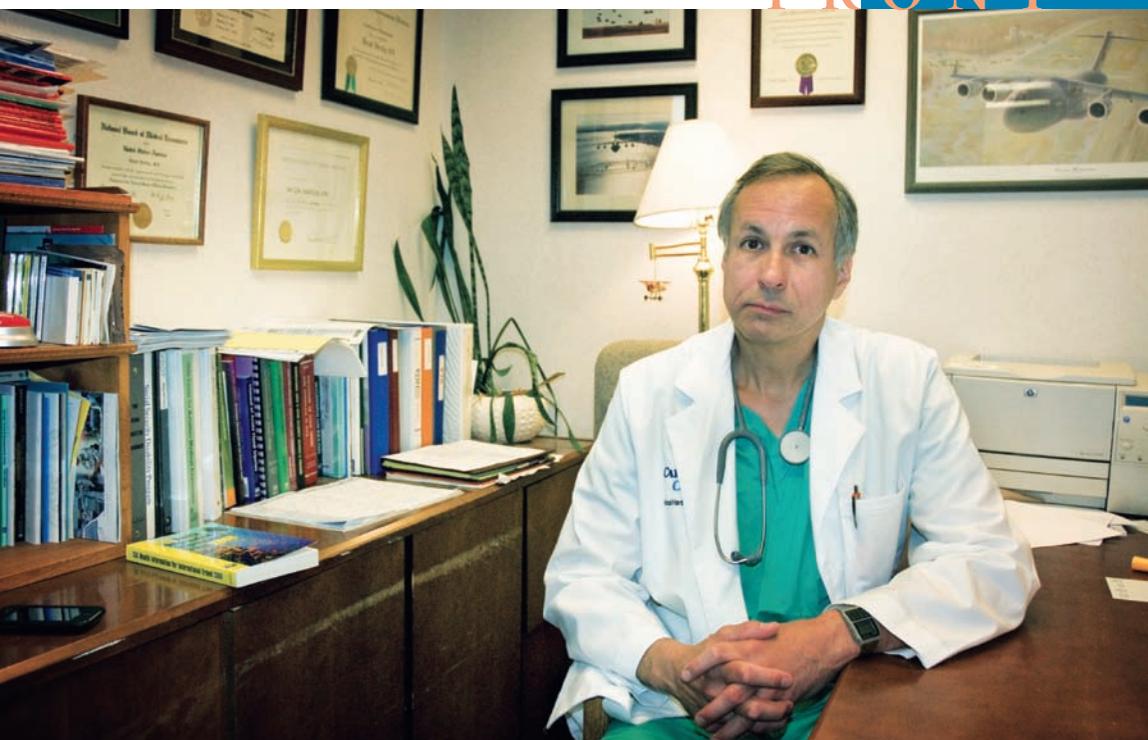
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Travel Clinic doc Hetzal Hartley: “You have to have a special license to even keep the Yellow Fever vaccines.”

Huong Nguyen

A clinic for the traveler >

Executive Summary:

Hetzel Hartley used to get military people ready for their overseas assignments. Now, he's doing it for civilians.

By Huong Nguyen

After working as a flight surgeon and being deployed to 26 different countries during his Air Force career, Dr. Hetzal Hartley knows a little something about travel and medicine.

He knows a lot of somethings. Hartley spent most of his time in the Air Force giving vaccinations and medication to troops preparing for deployment and he's doing much of the same today. The difference is that he's preparing civilians for travel instead of soldiers.

Hartley is the medical director of the Carilion Occupational Medicine Program at Carilion Roanoke Community Hospital. Among his

In Brief

Name:	Hetzel Hartley
Age:	53
Company:	Carilion Roanoke Community Hospital
Location:	Roanoke
Title:	Medical Director of the Carilion Occupational Medicine Program
Background:	Native of Normal, Ill.; graduate of Northwestern University with additional degrees from the Universities of Illinois and the Medical College of Wisconsin and a number of other programs. Board certified in occupational and emergency medicine. Homeland Security's designated civil surgeon. Decorated Air Force veteran. Member of a variety of professional organizations and is an assistant scout master, a Little League coach. Married (Terry) with a daughter and two sons.



Huong Nguyen

many responsibilities: he runs the travel clinic, specifically dealing with businesses and larger companies that send groups of technicians or sales people overseas.

For normal vacation travels to well-known destinations, there is another travel clinic in the Infectious Disease Department at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital run by Dr. Thomas Kerkering, who serves as chief of infectious diseases.

The difference between the business traveler and the vacationer is that the former is generally gone for longer periods of time and usually to more exotic destinations, whereas most vacationers tend to travel to the well-known countries that are fairly safe and for shorter periods of time.

The travel clinic physicians are specialists in infectious diseases and have extensive work and travel experience from all over the

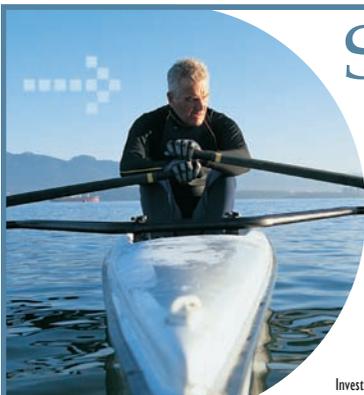
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world. They are set focused on giving vaccinations, whereas family practices, though they have the ability to, might not be prepared to do it on the spot.

"We keep vaccines on hand and we're registered as a federal distribution center for Yellow Fever vaccine," says Hartley. "You have to have a special license to even keep the Yellow Fever vaccines."

The clinic provides pre-trip consultation and examinations, gives detailed advice concerning the location and activities on your itinerary and provides medicines and prescriptions for the prevention of numerous travel related illnesses. The clinic even offers a traveler's medical kit for business travelers and can suggest items for a kit based on

your itinerary and current health.

One of the more important services that from the clinic is checking the latest updates on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website for every patient to make sure there hasn't been an outbreak in the last few days in the country they're traveling to. Though the CDC offers a standard travel book with basic information for each country, it doesn't provide up-to-date minute-to-minute information like the Web site does.

Hartley has had patients who visited the CDC Web site change their change their minds when they found out what they were getting into. But at least they had the opportunity. 

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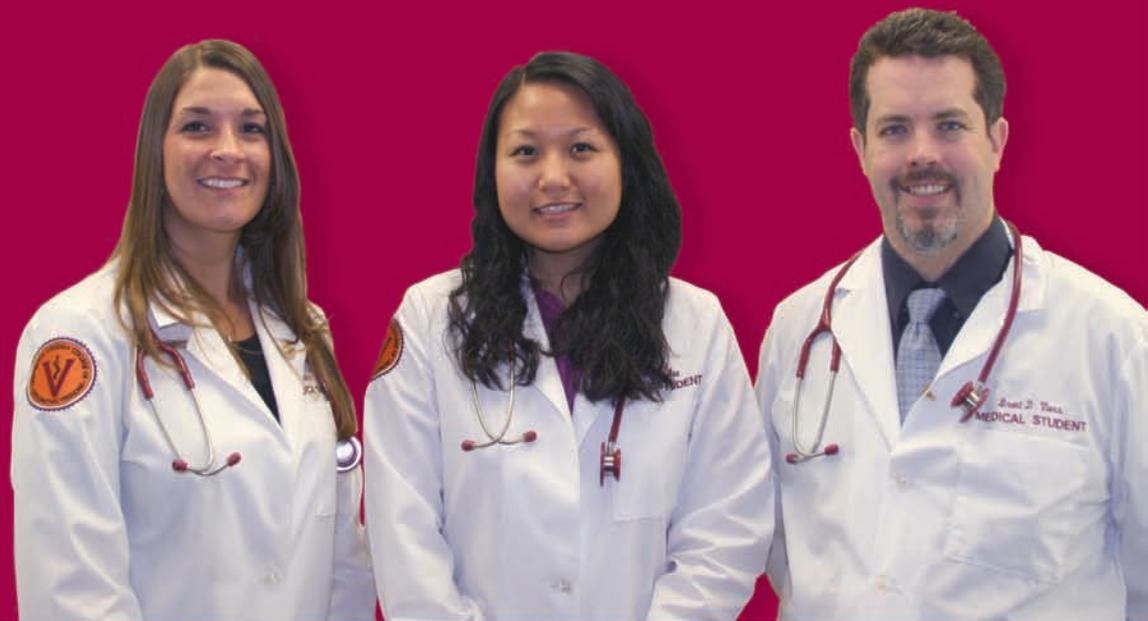
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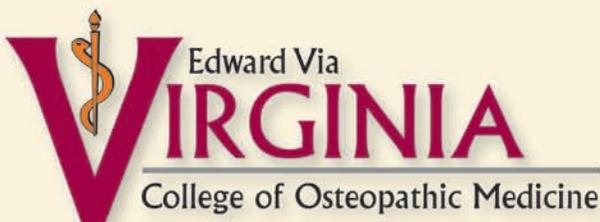
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David Perry

Mark Watts: "It's a whole paradigm shift, and trying to do a paradigm shift with docs is not easy."



We have 30 percent primary care docs in the country and 70 percent specialists. It should be the other way around.

—Dr. Mark Watts

The value of the non-specialist specialist >

Earl?

"It's a good ol' boy name," jokes Dr. E. Mark Watts, a physician with Carilion Family Medicine, Parkway Physicians in Vinton. He prefers Mark.

Executive Summary:

Recognizing the value of the family physician—the professional who directs health care for the individual—is thought by many to be one of the keys to solving the health care crisis.

Don't let the good ol' boy name fool you. Watts has some pretty bright ideas about health care.

Watts is a proponent of the "patient-centered medical home," a system of healthcare in which a patient's primary care physician runs the show, bringing in specialists when needed. The result is more affordable health care and better outcomes.

By David Perry

Growing since 1975



Brett Nichols, local organic farmer



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Watts says that too often, patients bounce from specialist to specialist, with no one looking at the big picture.

"You go from one specialist to the next. 'I've got a skin problem,' 'I need to go to the dermatologist.' Sometimes you're right and sometimes you're not," says Watts. "You need somebody who's looking at the big picture and taking care of the whole ball of wax."

Watts says there are many challenges to changing the current system to a patient-focused one.

"It's a whole paradigm shift, and trying to do a paradigm shift with docs is not easy," he says. "Right now we have 30 percent primary care docs in the country and 70 percent specialists. It should be the other way around, and in countries that have kept down the cost of health care effectively, it is the other way around."

Insurers and employers need to step up as well, Watts says, by changing the ways in which primary care physicians are paid.

"The way it is now, the only way I can get compensated to make a living is to bring in patients for a visit," he says. "That's why patients complain docs don't spend any time with them—they can't afford to. You have to see a lot of patients to make a living now."

He says patients need to be a part of the solution too.

In Brief

Name:	E. Mark Watts, M.D.
Age:	52
Company:	Carilion Family Medicine, Parkway Physicians
Location:	Vinton
Type of business:	Family Medicine
Title:	Physician
History:	A Patrick Henry High School grad and South Roanoke resident who has both undergrad and medical degrees from UVa. Comes from a medical family: dad was a doctor, mom was a nursing professor at Virginia Western Community College; one brother is a radiologist and another brother works for Anthem.

"People don't like to be nudged real hard, but we've got problems in this country," Watts says. "Twenty-five percent of Americans are still smoking and 66 percent are overweight."

Still, Watts has hope that dramatic changes can be made to the health care system in America. "We need to take drastic measures in this country if we're going to save primary care," he says. "We're a dying breed." 



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Dan Smith

Al Williamson: "The difference between a nice-looking sign and one that is all jammed together in Helvetica is 10 minutes of effort by someone who cares about the layout."

Basically, it's still a sign >

Executive Summary:

Al Williamson knows all about the sign technology, but he also knows the basics that tell him a good sign is a good sign in any medium and despite the technology.

By Leigh Ann Roman

The times—and the signs—are a-changin' for Al Williamson's longtime Roanoke business.

Williamson is owner and founder of Sign Design of Roanoke, which he began as a side business in 1976 when redwood signs engraved with a router were popular. Now housed in a barn on Cloverdale Road, Sign Design has moved to a new age, one that is completely digital.

The company still excels in non-electric,

three-dimensional work such as the Bonsack Community sign, but, in an homage to the future come to rest in the present, he says, "We can do banners and vehicle graphics. There is no limit to the number of colors. We can reproduce photographs and images. That's where the sign business is going."

The Roanoke native graduated from Virginia Tech and began working in project management for Fralin & Waldron Inc. The sign business was a side business until 1990 when he began working it full time. He employs seven people.

You can see his signature signs at the entrance of Hunting Hills, Roanoke Catholic School or the Greenfield Center in Botetourt County. Those types of signs—once his entire business—have become about one-third of the business, while digital banners and vehicle graphics now make up two-thirds of it.

"Our trademark signs represent our basis in good design principles and we are trying to carry those good design principles into other sign products that people buy all the time," says the affable Williamson. "The difference between a nice-looking sign and one that is all jammed together in Helvetica is 10

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With Al Williamson at the right, Tara Cumella hand paints an old-style sign for Roanoke County.

minutes of effort by someone who cares about the layout.”

Williamson estimates that his business grew by 15-20 percent annually from 1990 until 2004, when it leveled off. He’s stayed around, he says because of a penchant for “fixing things that are wrong. Finding out what works and doing more of that and less of things that don’t work ...Signs need to be less detail and more [getting] the message across.”

Williamson emphasizes that “the first impression that people have of a business



photos: Dan Smith

is their sign. It might not be the sign on the front of their building. It might be their vehicle graphics.

“In our business, if we think we nailed it, we call it a clean sign. It does a good job of getting the message across and is not too busy and not too cluttered. It just fits.” 

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L-R: Paul Jacobson, Robert Dawson, Dan Siegel, Jim Cornwell, Ben Emerson

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Tim Groover: “We have a process that we think is unique in the profession, and that is the way we’re able to get the multiple parties together and come to decisions pretty quickly.”

Lori White

A new center for applying great ideas >

Executive Summary:

New London center will show off the region’s technology—not to mention its design and construction capabilities.

By Lori White

Tim Groover, President of Wiley and Wilson in Lynchburg, is out to prove that the region is full of world-class talent.

Fresh from snagging the winning bid on a competitive contract for designing a new

research and education facility, Groover is excited over the implications for both Wiley and Wilson and the area.

“Sometimes the most difficult projects to win are the ones in your own back yard,” he says, adding “we are going to be a part of something that is demonstrating our technical expertise, strength, and capabilities for our region’s companies that are going to be using this facility. And because we’re going to be able to design that facility reinforces the fact that there’s an awful lot of capability and talent here in our region, which is really what this facility is all about.”

The New London center will be an impressive 27,000-plus square-foot facility. It’s the brainchild of the Center for Advanced Education and Research and made possible, in part, by a \$7.6 million grant by the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission.



Artist's rendering of the \$7.6 million Center for Advanced Education and Research facility in New London

The center will be a place where both private enterprise and higher education can come together and work collaboratively, focusing on such things as alternative energy, electronics, and wireless technologies. It will be a cutting edge facility that has the potential to condense the time from research to application.

Wiley and Wilson is known predominantly for its infrastructure work—waste water treatment, utility and engineering types of projects. It is less known for design. However, it has been quietly at work on significant architectural and design projects such as the Bedford Area Welcome Center (award winning for its architectural design),



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"It was important for us to be successful in winning this project because the local folks don't have the perception of you that folks outside your immediate area do," says Groover. "Ninety percent of our work is outside" the region.

The company is wrapping up the design for a sophisticated laboratory facility for the Department of the Navy—a facility, Groover says, is larger than the planned center for research and education. "Frankly, we would have been extremely disappointed had we not won the bid," he says.

"We never go into a project thinking we have it locked up, but we have a process that we think is unique in the profession, and that is

the way we're able to get the multiple parties together and come to decisions quickly, which is possibly one of the main reasons CAER said that it picked us."

Wiley and Wilson's "process" is one that would be appealing to clients. In a short period of time it is able to acquire a "wish list" from the couple of dozen different entities who have a say in the project and distill that to something workable, integrating those needs. It is then able to come to fairly swift decisions concerning project design. With the Center, Groover says the process will save at least a month.

This way of doing business is "ingrained," says Groover. "It gets stakeholders involved in the process, as well as saving time. We wouldn't be comfortable doing a project any other way. It's just one of the things we do as a company." 

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Michelle Bennett in the middle of all her stuff.



all photos: Dan Smith

Michelle Bennett, perched on her ball/chair, reaches for the phone.

Work Spaces

'Kids love to come in here' >

Executive Summary:

Michelle Bennett's office is a whole lot more than kid-friendly.

By Dan Smith

You wouldn't possibly expect anything different in the 400 or so square feet of workspace of the funniest woman in Roanoke, unless maybe it had the tires from Roger Rabbit's car.

Michelle Bennett's office is so ... well ... her. It is a series of visual one-liners, some quite naughty, packed on top of theatrical stories and stored inside a cubbyhole at the back of the third floor of Center in the Square. It's a space most of you don't even know exists and it's quite a step up from the dungeon she once occupied for 11 years in the bottom of the building where they hid the Mill Mountain Theatre regulars. This office has light that illuminates a kind of nickelodeon atmosphere, minus the calliope. Well, it had light. Until it was moved a couple of weeks ago.

Now it's in the main portion of Center in the Square—more of an uptown address—but

the feel is the same: pure Michelle Bennett, all theater, no business. Doesn't make so much difference where the space is; it's what's inside that counts.

Officially, Michelle is the creative director for administrative outreach for Center in the Square (Mill Mountain Theatre's landlord and the landlord for several other arts organizations). She has worked in the building for MMT and Center for 20 years. She was even fired by MMT a little over a year ago, even though she didn't work there any more, in a dispute with the creative director. That's just so Michelle Bennett.

Realistically, she's a good bit more than a creative director or anything else that says she does one thing—as is the case with so many people in the arts. She pretty well fills whatever role is necessary to be filled from day to day. The "creative director" dealie is for her business card.

She is a self-taught graphic designer and if you look around the office, you can pretty well document her progression in the posters for the theatrical productions of MMT (which is closed these days in reorganization). Michelle has a degree in arts management from East Carolina University and her hometown is Johnson City, Tenn., a fact you almost have to pry out of her. She grew up mostly in small-town North Carolina (there's certainly

no trace of that; she's about as urbane as people come), the daughter of teachers.

The office is a combination museum, curio shop, pop culture conservatory and comedy hall of fame. It is dotted with bobble-head dolls of people you know (Jesus, Obama, Cheech and Chong, Rosie the Riveter) and people you don't (Tim Gunn, Daz). There's a miniature Walter the Farting Dog (and if you don't have the book, run right out and buy it) and several versions of Hello Kitty, an icon Michelle swears she's collected for years. She didn't say why.

In an atmosphere that "is necessary for the freedom of creativity," a goat that sings "The Lonely Goat Herd" from the Sound of Music sits on top of a copy machine. Stuffed Valleydale Pigs adorn a shelf just over her head, behind her and the large blue ball she sits on. That's her chair ("great for the abs," she brags). She pulls out an Asian spray fan that informs you about menopause. She laughs at that and hasn't even finished that laugh before she picks up Eneman, the stuffed Fleet enema syringe with a face, arms and legs—and a pointy hat (presumably the business end). He is not to be confused with Eminem.

On one corner of her desk are miniature paparazzi taking shots of characters from the "Night of the Living Dead." Don't ask. There's the electronic Whoopie Cushion and the stress weenie.

Her posters line the walls from one wall to another "so I won't make the same mistake again," she insists. One of the posters has Michelle in a see-through genie costume from the one speaking part she had in an MMT play.

At one point, she breaks the creativity and falls into the obvious: "Kids love to come in here," she says. "Their parents say 'oh, don't touch anything.' Never have figured out why they say that. You're supposed to touch this stuff." 



The theatrical posters show Michelle Bennett's progression as a self-taught designer.



The Valleydale Pigs.



Here we have paparazzi shooting zombies from "Night of the Living Dead."



You can play "Name That Bobblehead."



Dan Smith

Bill Bundy

Mergers/acquisitions in tough times >

Executive Summary:

If you're considering selling your business (or buying a business), there are some things you need to know. We asked an expert to help you.

Bill Bundy, president of Bundy & Company in Roanoke is the president and founder of Bundy Group, Mergers and Acquisitions Advisors. He holds the designation of Mergers and Acquisitions Master Intermediary. We

asked him to discuss some of the inside maneuverings of the business, especially in challenging times. Here are his answers.

What is the current activity level for privately owned companies being bought and sold?

In this market, businesses with profitable operations, a strong customer base, quality facilities and employees and growth potential continue to sell.

Transaction financing remains a challenge. All levels of buyers are finding it more difficult to obtain the levels of financing that they could 12 to 18 months ago. This is resulting in more creative deal structuring techniques, including seller



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financing and “earn-out” agreements.

Is it a private equity group a potential buyer for my company?

A private equity group (PEG) consists of a team of professionals that manage a fund, focused on investments in private companies. The PEG’s goal is to buy a majority percentage of a private company, with existing management maintaining a minority share. Serving in a board of director’s role, the PEG works with management to grow and then sell the business (often within three to seven years of initial acquisition).

PEGs are buying based on profitable operations, strong growth potential, market and geographic niches, strong management and employees and specific industries, locations and sizes.

What do I need to do to prepare my business for sale?

Early and thorough preparation and good advice from an M&A professional are vital. Here are important steps:

1. Understand your post-sale financial needs and minimize your company’s debt.
2. Be sure your financials are easy to understand and correctly itemized. Eliminate or minimize personal expenses on financials.

3. Identify opportunities for growth and improvement in your business. Prepare a projected budget.

4. Ensure your business is streamlined and achieving full profit potential.

5. Reduce the number of shareholders before the sale if you can.

6. Begin the planning process 3 to 5 years before you’re ready to sell.

How do I determine what my business is worth?

A business is worth what a buyer and a seller agree to and there are many ways to determine value. Values are typically based on assets, earnings, percentages of sales or other formulas common in the industry.

A mergers and acquisitions advisor or other business valuation professional can provide you with an independent opinion of value.

When is the right time to sell my company?

The best time to sell is when the proceeds will generate enough value to provide the shareholders with an return to sustain them through retirement or until they are ready to seek other opportunities.

(William C. “Clint” Bundy Jr., a Bundy & Company senior advisor, helped his father prepare these answers.) 

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Welding is a huge part of forming the metal.

David Perry

Bending and shaping a business >

Executive Summary:

This couple entered the wrought-iron business through the back door, and then started re-working the whole house.

By David Perry

Greg Fagg had a skill for molding metal.

Problem was, he was using it to fix cars that had been in fender-benders. His luck turned when a local developer drafted Greg's skills for a construction job.

"He told me that he was going to make me a wrought-iron specialist," says Greg. Appalachian Ironworks was born, and over the past 10 years, Greg and wife Julin Rice have done projects in three states and as far away as Myrtle Beach.

"We had our largest job in March, which

was a three-story spiral staircase," in a Civil War-era home in Buchanan, says Julin. A prestige job was working for three years on a Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired estate in Radford. "We took a crash course on Frank Lloyd Wright," says Greg.



Greg and Julin bend a tube.

David Perry



We took a crash course on Frank Lloyd Wright
—Greg Fagg



Greg grinds an end

David Perry

The hardest part of working wrought iron is not the work itself, says Greg. It's "trying to figure out what somebody wants."

"A lot of times we'll take some of the architectural features of the house and go with that," says Greg. "They might have something else like a lamp or a chandelier or an outside porch light" that generates ideas as well.

"What's helped us a lot with that is the ability to design on the computer," adds Julin.

The couple fabricates most of their parts at their home on property where Greg's family had been doing blacksmith work for generations. One of Greg's most important tools is a bar bender, made from a 200-year-old wagon wheel he found and mounted on a frame.

In Brief

- Names:** Greg Fagg and Julin Rice
- Age:** 46 and 34
- Company:** Appalachian Ironworks
- Location:** Roanoke County
- Type of business:** Wrought iron construction
- History:** Salemite Greg moved into the iron work business from auto collision repair when a local developer saw his skill with metal. Now, Greg and wife Julin, a western New York transplant by way of Virginia Tech (biochemistry), hand-craft staircases, railings, fences and more.



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Greg Fagg and his homemade, wagon wheel bar bender.

David Perry

Greg and Julin learned much of their craft by trial and error. Their hardest job was “our very first spiral staircase,” says Julin. “We wondered what we’d gotten ourselves into.”

“The top rail is a helix,” she says, referring to the twisting, three-dimensional curve that can be found paired in models of DNA. But “we can whip them out now,” she says.

“We got one under our belts, and it took us probably a couple of weeks,” says Julin. The trick is “to get it to look smooth like it’s all one piece of metal.”

“We use solid materials, whereas a lot of our competitors use tubing,” says Julin. Greg explains that “anything tubular is going to condensate inside of it,” causing rust.

But Julin says the real secret is Greg’s attention to detail. “He’s a perfectionist. Any little thing out of place drives him nuts.” 

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GM Ehab Salem (from left), VP Bill Burke and President Clinton Hatcher of 4DD

Gene Marrano

At 4DD it's a replica world >

Executive Summary:

The Roanoke studio creates its impressions from a variety of materials and an array of clients.

By Gene Marrano

4DD Studios in Roanoke specializes in a kind of faux reality we've grown accustomed to seeing at Disneyland, in movies, parks, museums and as backdrops. It's about the replica, the illusion, the outsized version, the eye-catching promotion.

4DD Studios (www.4ddstudios.com) uses wood, plastic and foam to create its alternate worlds ranging from a Ruby the Tiger image for Mill Mountain Zoo in Roanoke to a globe for NATO, a dinosaur for Montana or Medals of Honor for the Pentagon complex in Northern Virginia.

Designers and sculptors use 3D laser scanning and CAD/CAM systems to replicate objects



Holocaust panel is from a museum in Skokie, Ill.



Wall hanging (map) is from NATO at Pentagon.

before scaling them to nearly any size. A giant VMI ring being updated for next year's graduating class ceremony is testament to that, looming in the center of the shop.

"We start out with a sketch and start processing it into the computer," says General Manager Ehab Salem, who left the world of retail electronics behind in New York City to join 4DD Studios. Once a contouring program is written, the CNC milling and hot wire work stations carve up the raw materials, which can be foam, resin, polymers, or other materials. "From there

it's all [fine] hand work," says Salem.

One eye-catching recent project involved the fabrication of wall panels that look like concrete for a holocaust museum in Skokie, Ill. They are decorated with the famous images of pajama-clad concentration camp inmates faintly printed on the finished project, giving it the appearance of an etching. Other parts of the Skokie project simulate brick walls.

4DD can create custom animatronics, sculptures, signs, models, lightweight trade show booth fixtures and replica exteriors.

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“ ”

There's no one [else] within hundreds of miles doing anything like this. Good location, good people.

—Clinton Hatcher



Ehab Salem (left) and Clinton Hatcher move a NASCAR panel.



NASCAR tires before and after paint.

Owner Clinton Hatcher had several businesses at Smith Mountain Lake before he sold them and invested in 4DD. "I did a lot of research and it seemed like there was a need in this area," he says. "There's no one [else] within hundreds of miles doing anything like this. Good location, good people."

Hatcher has found quite a few capable art and design professionals in the area and employs them on a contract basis.

The Pentagon has been a good customer ordering a giant version of the NATO globe and Medal of Honor replicas displayed in the room where they are given out.

Salem says museum pieces—like the 23-foot dinosaur recently shipped to a facility in Montana—are specialties. 4DD often produces smaller models first and has them approved by the client before starting on the larger version.

Pricing has ranged anywhere from \$1,000 to \$60,000 so far. "It all depends on what you're looking for," says Salem.

Hatcher hasn't found anything 4DD Studios cannot make, even if the work gets challenging at times. "We call in the right people that have the expertise. If you need a 40 foot tall Statue of Liberty, we're the people. We can build it." 



This alligator was a demonstration project for 4DD

Gene Marrano



Ruby the Tiger from Mill Mountain Zoo.



Dan Horine with North Cross 9th grader Anna Sawyer and Madison Golding of Mechanicsville.

all photos: Huong Nguyen

Girls can't do WHAT!?! >

Executive Summary:

The word was that girls have difficulty with mechanics and electronics. Huh! Who says?

By Huong Nguyen

Dan Horine has been an Instructor in Electromechanical/Mechatronics at Virginia Western Community College (VWCC) for the past two years, but he's rarely had a five-day period like he did in June when he spent five days with 19 middle-school aged girls. During that work-week, he spent his time instilling confidence, challenging minds and getting them excited about technology.

After offering a Mechatronics camp last summer, Horine and Education Support Specialist Terry Drumheller found that only

boys signed up for the camp, which is why this year the focus was on GEMS: Girls Embracing Mechatronics Systems.

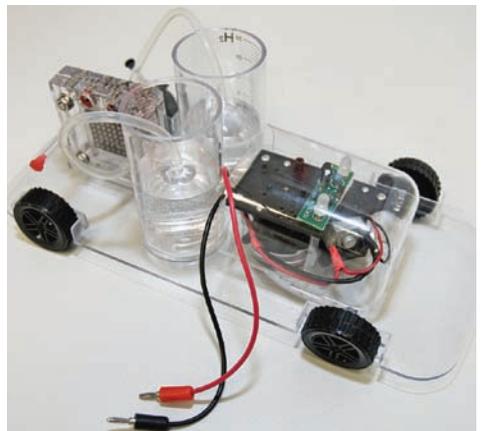
The word Mechatronics is a combination of "mechanical" and "electronics" and is the combination of mechanical engineering, electronic control and systems thinking in the design of products and manufacturing processes. Instead of concentrating on individual parts, mechatronics concentrates on systems operations as a whole.

GEMS focused on reaching rising 7th-9th grade girls because he thinks feels that a lot of girls excel at these sort of things, but once in high school, they divert from their natural talents because having an interest in math and science isn't necessarily considered "the cool thing to do."

With this camp, he hoped to not only win their interest in technology but to also give them the confidence to believe that they can be successful in the male-dominated industry.



Dan Horine and Megan Perdue a seventh grader look over a wind turbine.



An experimental car from the class.

Horine has a background in engineering technology, was a combat engineer in the Army, and worked in the industry as an automation engineer. He takes broad, practical experience into the classroom and applies it to the theories he teaches. "There's one thing I learned in the service and it's that you don't really know what your body or mind is capable of until someone pushes you to that point," says Horine. These students were exposed to ideas, circumstances and situations they've never attempted on their own and were successful.

Two projects were completed during the week: one which was a wind turbine that generated electricity to power LEDs, electric motors and pumps; and the other, a hydrogen powered car that uses electrolysis to separate the hydrogen from distilled water to power the car. Through these projects, the students learned how electricity is generated,

stored and used to do work.

Anna Sawyer, who will be starting 9th grade this fall at North Cross School, heard about GEMS from her mother who was taking a typography class at VWCC. Sawyer's not the kind of girl who gets excited about math and science but said "this camp has made me like science a little more and I'd recommend it."

VWCC offers various electromechanical/mechatronics programs, one as short as a six-week intensive program that many employers seek graduates of. "In today's economy, mechatronics is an excellent field to get into because you're going to be very versatile," says Horine. "You'll have mechanical experience, electrical experience, and experience in information technology and there are not enough students to support the demand, especially in the Roanoke area." 

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Liberty University's Joel Coleman checks his cell phone, which can be used to enhance students' safety

Executive Summary:

A new electronic system at Liberty University helps to intensify student protections and it has some business applications.

By Lori White

“ ”

We must be continually testing and examining new ways to raise the bar in campus safety.

—Matthew Zealand

Throwing a safety net around campus >

Liberty University has recently joined the ranks of such universities as Duke, Texas A&M, and Virginia Commonwealth University with its adoption of Federal Signal critical communications system to upgrade its campus security.

According to Matthew Zealand, Liberty's chief information officer, "We implemented sirens around our campus and were looking at multiple vendors who provided emergency notification systems at the time of the tragedy at Virginia Tech."

Zealand says the new system has been fully adopted at the university, but "we can't stop there. We must be continually testing and examining new ways to raise the bar in campus safety and our partner, Federal Signal, helps us do that."

Many businesses have adopted the same security system as the university, for the same practical reasons. "This was not," says Manager of Network Services James Graham, "an overly-expensive move. We looked at a number of

different security systems and this was the one that did everything we needed it to and was still cost-effective.”

Graham says, “The campus was already equipped with a siren system which worked to alert anyone out of doors when there was cause for alarm.”

There was a need for an indoor alert system as well, particularly in buildings of some density, where occupants were unlikely to hear the sirens. The new system enables integration of the sirens, digital, and other platforms such as cell phones, landline phones, pagers, email and PDAs, so that warnings can be immediately and simultaneously activated.

Graham says alerts are categorized into

several areas that candidates sign up to receive, such as “severe weather approaching,” “emergency” and “life-threatening emergency.” All candidates are required to receive the “life-threatening emergency” update.

Recipients select the portals for receiving alerts—cell phone, PDA, and landline phone, for example.

Dispatcher Jimmy Bible says that the actual application of the system was simple. In the event of an emergency, Liberty Police Chief Richard Hinkley dictates a statement to the dispatcher and he sends the alert through the software.

From there, it’s up to the students and faculty to react. 

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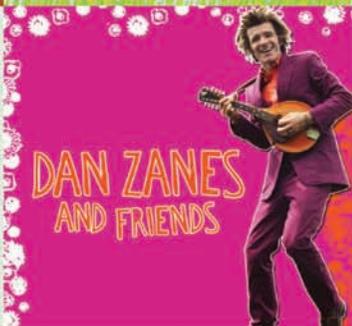
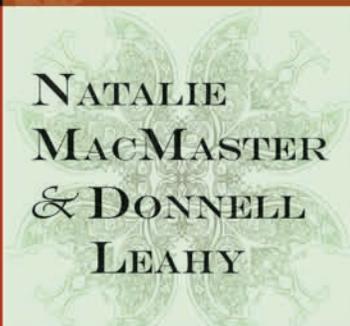
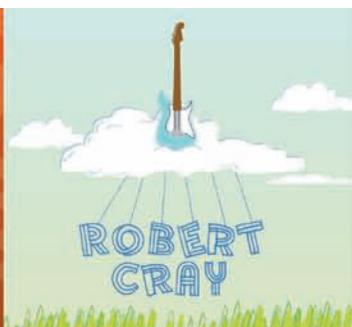
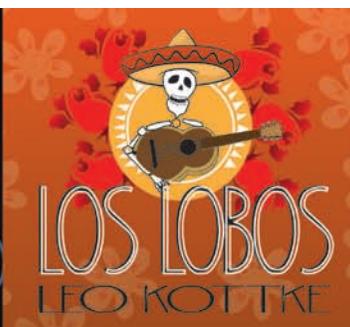
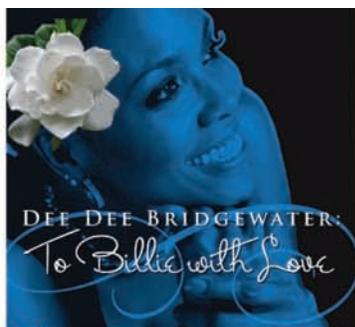
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King Lear Cast from the June Bug Center in Partnership with the American Shakespeare Center.

June bug Center: A full array of the arts >

Executive Summary:

The Floyd-based center serves the entire region with a kind of fresh approach the cultural crowd just loves.

By Rachael Garrity

If you spent part of your childhood in Virginia or other eastern seaboard states, you no doubt can remember the iridescent green beetle commonly referred to as the "June bug," and the feeling of the sun warming your back as you reached down to turn the hapless creature over on his legs. The legend was that without help, he'd never make the roll. Mission accomplished, he flew and you skipped away, you perhaps feeling as good as he.

The June Bug Center in Floyd was not, in

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We Be Pirates is one of the Kidstock summer camp productions from The June Bug Center.

actuality, named after the insect (taking its name instead from the nickname of founder Swede McBroom's mother), but the work it does bespeaks just that kind of mutual success.

With a budget of only \$200,000 a year, the center operates an impressive array of programs, possibly says Executive Director Mary Souder because of diverse collaborative efforts with a full range of organizations. They include the Girl Scouts of Southwest Virginia, Franklin County Arts and Recreation, Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia and similar organizations in Giles, Patrick and Henry Counties, not to mention their work in the Roanoke area.

Then, on the production side, there are the groups like the Virginia Alliance of Storytellers and a bevy of professionals willing to offer master classes, plus various students and interns. Last year the center served 36,000 people, operating throughout the area, as well as in its own black box theatre, dance studio and general educational/production space.

Souder can articulate what it's about in one eloquent, but fiercely grounded statement: "To celebrate human experience in all its diversity; to create joy, stimulate learning and engage people and communities through theater, dance, music and storytelling."

A CALL TO WRITERS

The Arts Council of the Blue Ridge has expanded its services to include literary artists. Membership is open to all genres — creative, technical, journalism, marketing/P.R. — including published writers and those aspiring to be published.

Member benefits:

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- Grant opportunities
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- October 15, 7-8:30 p.m. CPA Joe Schaban "The Financial Side of Writing"
- November 17, 7-8:30 p.m. Sharyn McCrumb "History, Folklore in Fiction"
- December 15, 7-8:30 p.m. Jill Elswick "Writing Social Media"

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In other words, let's not talk about who we are; let's go have some fun together, and, oh by the way, we'll be learning, too.

That fun takes place in:

- Weeklong camp experiences called "Kidstock," that culminate in a theatrical performance that draws thespian talent from Hollins, Virginia Tech, Radford and Roanoke Colleges
- Various dance events, this year including a summer camp at the center; a trip to Charlotte in October to participate in the Stepp with Me festival; a fall-winter instructional program culminating in a winter concert; and a presentation of a new take on the popular holiday performance of the Nutcracker
- The use of visual and electronic stories for children with severe communications problems.
- Creative use of storytelling in various not-for-profit organizations
- A selection of Shakespearean plays, presented in collaboration with an independent student production company at Mary Baldwin College and staged at different venues for a pay-what-you-will entry fee

Souder's passion to meld community, art,



June Bug Center's performance of "Scrooge the Goat," with Dennis Souder and Lisa Gabourel



Spencer Allen and Eve Speer in "Julius Caesar" performed at the Black Box at the June Bug Center

technology and the collaborative spirit is infectious. Quality programming and active participation vie for top billing in the June Bug operation. High tech and grassroots efforts play integral roles in setting the stage. "We're small," she says, "but effective." Indeed. 

NewVa Corridor Technology Council's Demo Day & Tech Expo

Unlike other tradeshows, the main purpose of this event is not about finding customers, but about the other technology firms and innovators in our region. We hope our members can foster productive relationships and ultimately a stronger regional technology community.

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The NewVa Corridor Technology Council

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—Mary Miller, NCTC President

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Living Sara Elizabeth's dream >

My View

By Dan Smith
Editor

BLOG: [fromtheeditr.blogspot.com]

Executive Summary: *Young filmmaker Sara Elizabeth Timmins' "Lake Effect" is taking on the force of her personality, creating something of a gale-like wind.*

At that very moment in early July, Sara Elizabeth Timmins was looking at the prospect of raising \$500,000 in about three weeks. You'd have thought she had a surplus.

If sheer force of will has anything at all to do with the making of the new Smith Mountain Lake-based movie "Lake Effect," it'll be impressively rendered and a box office smash. This small, pretty, 33-year-old actress/producer from L.A. via Ohio and now The Lake, where her parents have retired, has a resume that includes 12 productions of various kinds, so it's not as if she was a rookie. But, the conventional wisdom goes, what about the worst economy in the memory of most of us?

Huh! Opportunity: "It's more exciting this way," she said at the time, leaning forward and emphasizing each word. "Millionaires are made and people do great things during recessions." Advantages?

Yep: "There are fewer movies being made and therefore more talent available and it's cheaper."

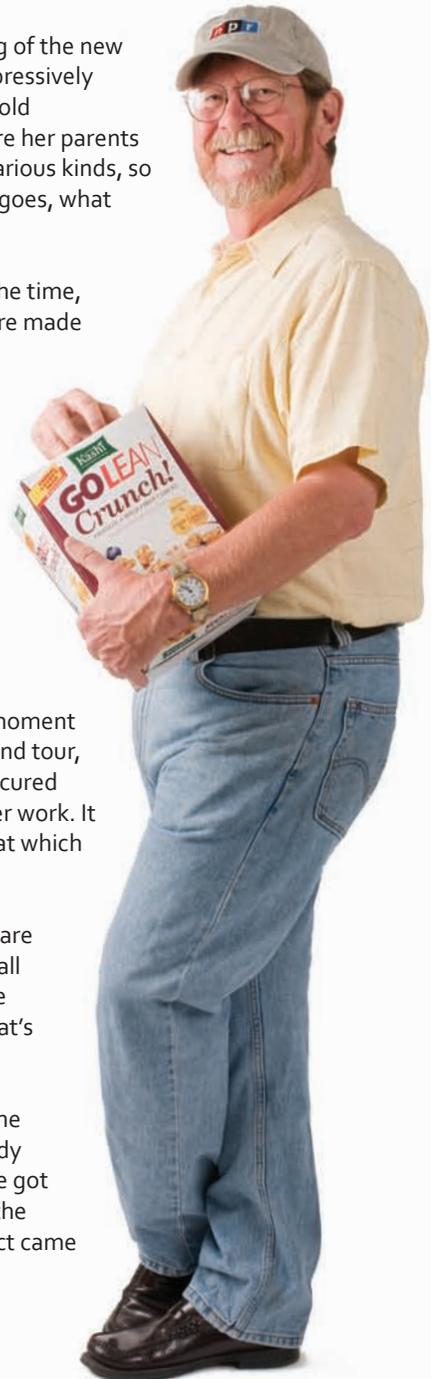
The economy, however, edged in a little harder than anticipated and Sara Elizabeth came up a smidge short of the goal July 15. She was philosophical: "It was supposed to happen. I feel good about it. We hope that in the next month or two to secure [the remainder of the money]" and produce "Lake Effect" in 2010. The cards are in place for that to happen sooner rather than later."

In early July, raising that 500 Large was the problem of the moment and Sara Elizabeth Timmins was in the middle of her whirlwind tour, meeting, cajoling, convincing, charming. She had already secured roughly \$1.3 million in donations, loaned materials, volunteer work. It is a wide variety of necessities from boats to homes to all that which is required to put together a movie and support its crew.

The goal was to begin shooting in October, when the leaves are at peak, but, says Sara Elizabeth, the starkness of the shortfall staring at her, "We go to spring or next fall. The movie will be made." She said that with a strong, firm resolve. The kind that's hard to argue.

Sara Elizabeth has been something of a roiling storm from the beginning. She went to Xavier University in Cincinnati to study theater and discovered there was no theater major when she got there. She put together a coalition of students, demanding the major and voila! It was deemed so. Her first producing project came

continued to Page 60



A breathtaking preview >

On Tap from the Pub

By Tom Field
Publisher

BLOG: [ontapfrompub.blogspot.com]

You might want to hold your breath for this one. Word on the street is Michael Moore's newest docudrama will be called "Capitalism: A Love Story." He's going to take on the people who love money and caused the economic meltdown. A nasty bunch, those capitalists. I hope he gets one of them to light a cigar with a hundred dollar bill. That would be classic.

Bullets in Wal-Mart—right there behind the counter where you can walk up and buy them! Media outlets and George Bush hyping up our reason to go to war—over one unfortunate date! Pharmaceutical companies running amuck—not like our well-managed public utilities!

That Michael Moore sure knows how to dig up the *real* reason for society's ills. Well, America's ills anyway.

He did such a good job responding to Columbine, September 11, and the healthcare crisis, that I'm confident he'll be once again, right on the money on the this newest *investigation*. Who else but a man who's made his fame and fortune being a capitalist himself could truly understand the evils of such a system?

A system that put one of the newest countries on the globe in first place. Enabled its own citizens to build itself up from the inside. But that doesn't make it right.

Moore truly understands.

That's why I'm excited about him exposing "Capitalism."

I'm sure he'll round us up some greedy bastards. And he'd be remiss not to show us how Bernie Madoff, the King of Corrupt Capitalism, pulled off the greatest scam of all. Moore will get to the bottom of it, I'm sure!

His offensive probing camera will *certainly* show all the whistle-blowers who were ignored. He'll *definitely* pan over to the financial statements that indicate numbers even a novice trader could see were impossible. And then he'll *absolutely* introduce us to the auditors from the Securities and Exchange Commission who somehow overlooked the fraud passing right over their desks.

The movie will *undoubtedly* insist the SEC auditors join Madoff in jail, because they were either involved in the ponzi or they were grossly negligent. Regulation failed, Moore will *surely* say. I know Moore will do this because he's only interested in the truth! Go Michael, go! Give us another movie that will take our breath away!

That way, I won't need to hold my breath. Well, Mr. Moore, I wasn't going to hold it, anyway. And not because the docudrama doesn't come out until October. I'm just not going to hold it. 





Dan Smith

Sara Elizabeth Timmins: "I have no money. It's more exciting to do it this way."

Smith / My View

from Page 58

when the producer of a movie on which she was working as a volunteer left to do "Seabiscuit." She had so impressed the powers that be that they slotted her into the producer's chair for "Tattered Angel," an award-winner.

She's been in the business eight years (and yes, she admits, she still looks like a teenager) and has 12 credits that include features, music videos, television and other work. She's also an actor, but it's the business side that fascinates her most. Will she act in "Lake Effect"? "Probably," she says, unimpressed.

She's been a Los Angeles resident for the past six years, but has never really taken to it. "I was disheartened by what I found," she says. "It is not in line with the way I work. There's a lot of dishonesty there." The Lake, though, is another matter. She loves the Lake.

"I was here one winter," she says, "and went for a walk. I was suddenly calm and, click, there was clarity. The film based here came to me." So, she hired a writer (Scott Winter of Providence, R.I.) who produced a script and she was right smack in the middle of "taking my own advice. I do motivational speaking and I always tell people to follow their dreams."

The idea is to tell a good story (it's about coming home), showcase the Lake and create community around the movie. Her company, Life Out Loud Films, "can be a catalyst for possible change," she says. "When I started, I asked myself how I could do this differently or better. I felt like we had to give some of the profits to lake cleanup.

"My dad started getting the word out and I was getting calls from people offering lodging, medical care, a plane, boats, things we could use." Bart Wilner of Entre Computer in Roanoke became the first cash investor and Sara Elizabeth is working the room for more, maybe 10 total at \$50K each.

"When I started pitching," she says, "it ceased to be my project and became the community's project. It all began to click that way. We're hoping to create a positive economic impact with this film. We're using the name of the lake, businesses at the lake and we're using Virginia products everywhere we can. We'll use as much as we can without losing the integrity of the project."

It's a project "we couldn't do in L.A.," she says, emphasizing that "I have no money. It's more exciting this way." 



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Letters

Editor,

Every time I pick up Valley Business FRONT to glance at it, I end up sitting down and reading it from cover to cover. That's what happened again this morning. Congratulations, it's simply a wonderful publication, crammed with wonderful articles and information. I am going to enroll as a Patron as soon as I send this e-mail to you.

Kathleen Harvey Harshberger
School of Protocol
Radford

Editor,

LOL at the cover this issue (10). VB Front was in my inbox next to the BRBJ (Blue Ridge Business Journal) this morning and WHAT a contrast! You guys rock.

Susan J. Stengel
AECOM Design
Lynchburg

Editor,

I enjoy receiving VBFront on a monthly basis as it is by far the best publication for business professionals to stay engaged in SW Virginia. However, I must say that I'm a bit disappointed that with the strong demand in the labor market for technology professionals (IT unemployment ~4.5 percent) that TEKsystems was not included in your most recent cover story. TEKsystems is privately owned and the largest and number one rated IT staffing and services firm in the US for the last eight years. In my humble opinion TEKsystems could have added some value and insight into your cover article. I can only imagine the paths you could follow with any story, which naturally leave out potential sources on the periphery. I thought the article was an enjoyable read, but I feel obligated to express some disappointment in TEKsystems omission. I appreciate your time and consideration and will continue to look forward to receiving the VBFront.

Dan Cagle
TEKsystems.com
Roanoke

Send letters to 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



Aftercare.



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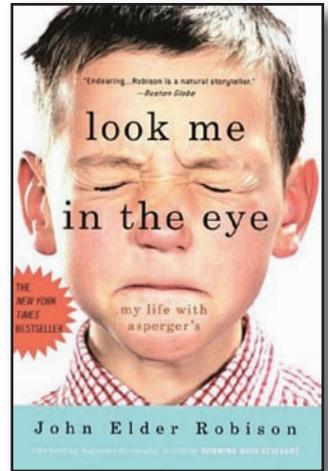


Nicole Drew,
Aftercare Coordinator
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Books @ the FRONT >

Following are book recommendations from our editor and business people in the Roanoke and New River Valleys who are inveterate readers. Each month, we ask or assign readers to submit two or three well-crafted paragraphs about a book they've read lately. You're invited to take part.



Making adjustments

Look Me in the Eye by John Elder Robison (Three Rivers, \$14.95 paperback) is an alarmingly fascinating book. I highly recommend it for anyone who knows someone with Asperger's syndrome (high functioning autism) or just interested in a one man's real life, often dark and entertaining, story as part of a highly dysfunctional family. John Elder Robison's name may not be as familiar as his brother's, Augusten Burroughs, author of *Running with Scissors*.

Robison lacked communication skills, preferred using his own names for family and friends (Snort for his brother) and his odd behavior earned him the label of social deviant. His knack for technical stuff guided him into an unlikely career path including special sound and visual effects for bands like KISS and later on into engineering and small business.

—Joyce Waugh

How it should be done

Historical fiction is a field I usually avoid, but *Retreat: A Story of 1918* by Charles R. Benstead (University of South Carolina Press, \$21.95 paperback) is an excellent example of how the genre can be done well. Benstead's story of World War I focuses on the experiences of an English padre who goes to the front to provide spiritual comfort to the Tommies fighting the first modern war,

which was also the last old-style war.

The vicar, Elliott Warne, is a fictional character who embodies the courage and frustration met by British clergy on the Western Front. Through Warne, we come to understand the futility of the war and the social and personal changes that were caused by that seemingly endless war of attrition.

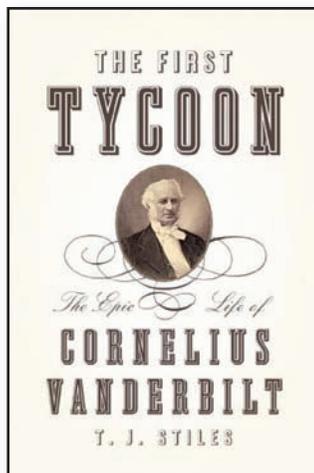
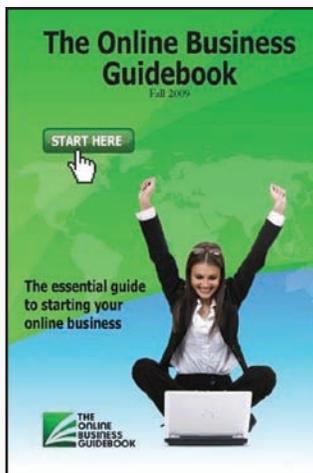
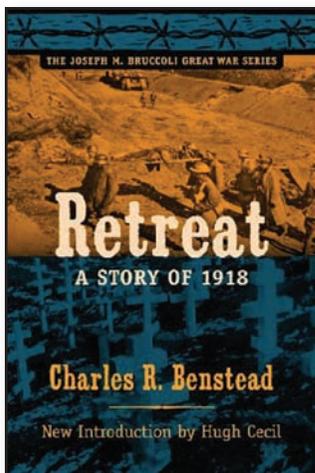
Benstead was a British artillery officer in World War I (and again in World War II), and his fictional account of the war has the verisimilitude that could only be crafted by one who had seen war's devastation.

This book is a reprint of the 1930 book (Benfield died in 1980). *Retreat* was part of a shift in British accounts of the war from celebrating heroes to exploring the futility of a war that had no victors and is a good prose companion to the poetry of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen.

—Michael L. Ramsey

A worthy effort

The Online Business Guidebook (Self-published, \$9.95) is a Virginia Tech Pamplin College of Business student-developed book designed to assist individuals with step-by-step processes to establish online businesses. The book is an actual business. Under the curriculum of his business information technology course, Alan Abrahams has led his students in creating a useful tool for small



businesses, while exposing college students to entrepreneurship and creating a sustainable profitable entity in the b-school.

The book includes sections on establishing, developing, selling, promoting, and evaluating the online business concept. Each section offers a brief overview followed by a detailed step-by-step process, caution items, and links to online vendors. It's a blueprint anyone can use regardless of experience, capital or knowledge to establish a profitable business. Abrahams and his students have created an admirable model.

—Stuart Mease

Big wheel

T.J. Stiles' *The First Tycoon* (Knopf, \$37.50) is like the man it depicts, Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt: a big (736 pages), detailed book, often confusing and at odds with itself. It will give you considerable insight about who we are, where we've been and where we are going. Vanderbilt defined capitalism, corporations and monopolies, even though he spent his life complaining about them and often detesting them. He was a poor kid, filled with ambition who ruthlessly manipulated everything about him. He hated ostentation, yet he wallowed in it.

You can blame today's markets on him or you can credit him with the dot-com bubble. You'd likely be right either way. Mark Twain

described Vanderbilt as the "idol of . . . a crawling swarm of small souls"; Lincoln sought his help in destroying the rampaging Merrimack (and got it); a woman who was probably his lover became a stock broker before women did that; his children presented huge challenges to him (one was a compulsive gambler); and he built Grand Central Station with his own money, pocket change, some would say.

Vanderbilt began his career running a ferry in Staten Island and wound up operating railroads and shipping lines. Vanderbilt University was his (emerging from a deal he struck to give Jefferson Davis a break). The Biltmore Estate was his son's "summer cottage." He once recklessly gambled with the economy of the entire United States, which he could do given his wealth, and won. But he could have lost.

Fascinating man. The picture's not pretty, but is necessary to our understanding of ourselves in this highly-readable treatment.

—Dan Smith

(**The reviewers:** Joyce Waugh is president of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce. Michael Ramsey is president of the Roanoke Public Library Foundation. Stuart Mease works in the Roanoke Department of Economic Development. Dan Smith is the editor of FRONT.)



photo: Dan Smith

Ad/PR talk

NewVa Corridor Technology Council (NCTC) President Mary Miller of **IDD** in Blacksburg introduces her panel of advertising/public relations experts at the June 18 Technology & Toast breakfast in Blacksburg. The breakfast set an attendance record, the second in Miller's tenure in a month. The NCTC awards dinner also set a record. Waiting to address the crowd were **Thomas Becher** of **tba**, **John Carlin** of **Access** and **Ernest DelBuono** of **Neathawk, Dubuque & Packett**, all in Roanoke.



photo: Dan Smith

Predictions

Roanoke Mayor **David Bowers** greeted economist **Christine Chmura** at an early-June gathering sponsored by the **Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce**. Chmura gave an overview of the national, state and regional economies.

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



photos: Dan Smith

Cotton Mill Open House

A crowd estimated to be in the hundreds filed in to the open house June 16 at the **Cotton Mill**, a new apartment development in downtown Roanoke. Among those attending were **Lisa Solstis**, who works for the City of Roanoke (top in the right photo), and **Mary Jean Levin** of Halifax Furniture.



photo: Jane Dalier

Pulaski Focus

Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce meets for a small business focus group on July 1. From left to right, chamber director **Peggy White**, **Mike Waller**, **Kim Davis**, **Cindy Rollison**, **John Tuttle**.



photos: Tom Field

Fair Business >

The **Salem Fair** is not just cotton candy and carnies guessing your weight. With an estimated 300,000-plus attendance, it is big business for the Roanoke Valley. Initiated in 1988 by **Carey Harveycutter** and **John Saunders**, the 2009 Fair ran July 2—12, and represents the second largest fair in Virginia.



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FRONT 'N ABOUT



photos: Jane Dalier

Montgomery Chamber at Maison Beliveau >

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce held its mixer at **Maison Beliveau** on June 25. Among those attending were **David Hodges** of Cobb Technologies and **John Tuttle** with ServPro (lower left).



photos: Dan Smith, Jane Dalier

At the old ball game >

Attorneys **Keith Finch** (left) and **James Creekmore** of Blacksburg's **Creekmore Law Firm** enjoyed a little repartee in their skybox at the Salem Red Sox baseball game June 10. The whole gang (with FRONT editor Dan Smith, in green) gathered for a group photo with a couple of Red Sox mascots.



photo: Dan Smith

An ash tray for the gov

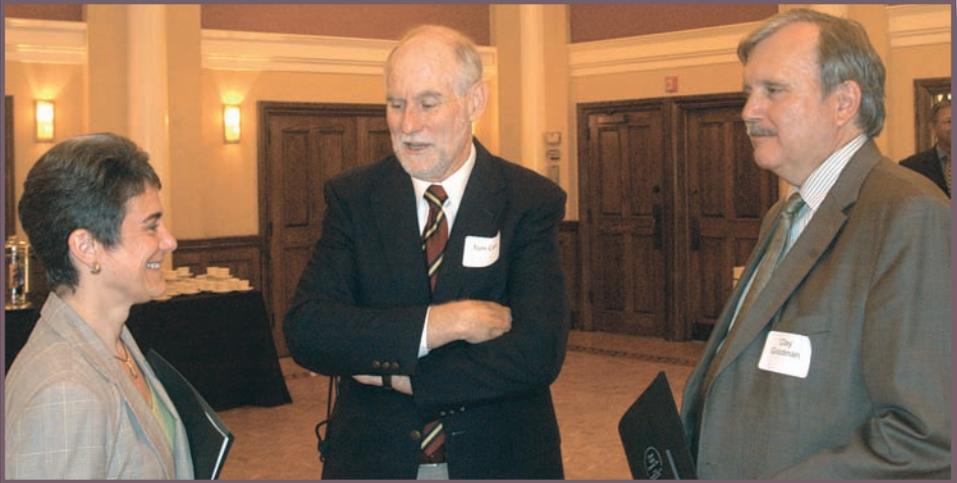
Roanoke City Councilwoman **Gwen Mason** handed a laughing **Gov. Tim Kaine** one of her ubiquitous "portable ashtrays," a symbol of her personal **Clean and Green Campaign** June 3. Kaine was in town to promote Roanoke's business environmental coalition's success over the past year. To Kaine's right are **Diana Christopoulos** of the Cool Cities Coalition, **Joyce Waugh** of the Roanoke Regional Chamber and to his immediate left is VWCC President **Robert Sandel**.



photos: Tom Field

Independence Day Tea Party >

The **July 4th "Tea Party"** was held in Roanoke's Elmwood Park to an estimated 1,000 crowd over the four hour event. Speakers included **Dr. James Lark**, past national Chairman of the Libertarian Party.



photos: Dan Smith

CVC awards >

Ann Masters (lower left) ramped up the environmental chatter at the annual **Clean Valley Council** awards (see FRONTLines for the winners) June 9 at the Jefferson Center. Among those taking part were **Kathy Claytor** of the Jefferson Center, chatting with **Tom Cain** (center) of Impact + Amplify and **Clay Goodman**, Roanoke County Administrator and a table full of talk featuring (from left) **Laura Wasko** of Retellus, **Vickie Damico** of Breakell Inc. and **Sandy Murray** of Building Specialists.

Mixing

The **United Way** of the Roanoke Valley held a mixer in mid-July at **Fork in the City** and got a percentage of each meal sold there that night. Here are three of those in attendance, doing what young people do (from left): **Jas Ghumman**, United Way of Roanoke Valley; **Ashley Boot**, Titan America; and **Erica Ramsey**, Mill Creek Child Care Center.





David Perry

Jamal Milner: "I was going to work and get the money, and then start the business."

Executive Summary:
Sometimes accidents are good things. Jamal's Milner's car wreck—the one that gave him the halo—certainly was.

By David Perry

“ ”

You know it's sad when you send an invoice and they send you more money than what the invoice is for.

—Jamal Milner

The accidental businessman >

He's big.

Big man. Big smile. Big personality. Big brain. Big ambitions.

There's just nothing small about Jamal Millner, president of M3:Grafix, a Roanoke multimedia company. It even took a big accident to make this supersized dynamo realize his true calling in life.

Miller was driving his sister to college in St. Louis with their father when a blowout caused their Ford Escort to crash and flip repeatedly. Dad and sis escaped relatively unscathed, but Jamal suffered a C2 "hangman's break" in his neck. Fortunately for him, he ended up wearing just a halo and not the full set of wings.

While being in a neck brace had its benefits ("Halos are babe magnets," says Jamal), it put a serious crimp on his studies at Virginia Western Community College. He took a hiatus from school, and the rest is history.

"I figured since I was bored and sitting around at home, I'd go ahead and start up a business," he laughs now.

Millner and his father sought guidance from the local SCORE office, which recommended a small business loan. The advice fell on deaf ears.

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

"I wasn't going to get a loan," says Jamal. "I was going to work and get the money, and then start the business ... My whole business concept was, I buy a computer, and anything I do with that computer, it has to make enough money to pay for itself."

Millner started out doing what he knew best—designing things on the computer. "I was doing party flyers for friends. You having a party? I'll do a flyer." He soon branched out into 3-D animation for television commercials.

Happy just to be working, Jamal undervalued his services. "I was doing stuff for \$50 a project," he says. "People kept telling me my prices were too low. You know it's sad when you send an invoice and they send you more money than what the invoice is for."

Over the years, Jamal has diversified from just animation into Web design, Web and e-mail hosting, content management systems, and even photography.

"I still do animation, but it's hard to get a proper budget to do anything," says Millner.

Jamal says animation is time-consuming and complicated compared to Web work: "An average animator will finish nine seconds in a week. With animation, it's 'What shade of blue is that?' or 'He walks a little funny.'" In contrast, "There's so little room to interpret with the Web. With the Web, it's when I click this button, I want it to do this."

In Brief

Name: Jamal Millner
Age: 32
Company: M3:Grafix
Location: Roanoke
Type of business: Multimedia, animation, web design
Title: President
History: A marine corps brat who was born in Camp Lejeune. Graduated from William Fleming High School in 1996 looking for his big break—and it came, literally, when a fractured neck forced him out of Virginia Western and into his own business. Lives in Salem with wife Monica, a Roanoke City school teacher, and son Jamal II, and likes to play video games and watch movies in his spare time. His clients include HomeTown Bank, ITT, and the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce.

It's less work, but it pays less, too.

"It's less money, but I have a lot of these 'less monies'," says Jamal, laughing large. 

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Career FRONT

FINANCIAL FRONT



Davis

Banks

T. Clay Davis, senior VP and CFO of Select Bank, has been named to the board of directors of Select Bank of Lynchburg.



Perkins

Credit Unions

Charles Perkins, retired president/CEO of Roanoke-based Freedom First Federal Credit Union, has won the Virginia Credit Union League's James P. Kirsch Lifetime Achievement Award. Perkins worked for several credit unions and credit union trade associations during his career. He also worked for the Virginia and Michigan credit union leagues, two trade associations representing credit unions in their respective states.

Insurance

Karen O'Conner has been named employee development consultant at Rutherford in Roanoke.



Harder

Investing

Thomas McDonald III of Davenport & Company in Roanoke has become a registered representative, passing the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority exam.

Wealth management advisor **David Harder** has joined Joel S. Williams|An Alliance of Wealth Advisors in Roanoke.

LEGAL FRONT

Law Firms

David Williamson has become a member of the law firm of Brumberg Mackey & Wall, which has offices in Roanoke and the New River Valley.

Roy Creasy of his own law firm in Roanoke has been elected president of the Roanoke Bar Association. **Francis Casola** of Woods Rogers is president-elect. **Lori Thompson** of LeClair Ryan is secretary-treasurer.

WELLNESS FRONT

Brain Injury

Helen Butler, executive director of Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia in Roanoke has an additional position as a CARF Surveyor, an accreditation process.

Eldercare

Dr. S. Jewell Ritchey, has resigned from Blacksburg's Warm Hearth board of directors after 28 years. He was named Commonwealth Trustee of the Year in 2006 by the Virginia Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging (VANHA). Ritchey served on the Board for 21 years and was chairman from 2000 to 2006.



Reuwer



Macdonald

Physicians

Dr. John Reuwer has joined the Free Clinic of the New River Valley as a staff physician seeing patients by appointment, Monday-Thursday.

The Free Clinic of Franklin County has named Roanoke native **Lois Macdonald** director, replacing **Karon Jones**.

Psychology

Julian Taylor has been named to the clinical staff of Psychological Health Roanoke.

TECH/INDUSTRY FRONT

Valeria Owens has been named office manager at Schultz-Creehan in Blacksburg.

DEVELOPMENT FRONT



Medina



Chester

Architects, Engineers

Alejandro Medina has joined Clark Nexsen in Roanoke as an intern architect.

Martha J. Chester, a vice president at Hughes Associates Architects in Roanoke, has earned a LEED AP credential.

Have a career announcement?

Send announcements to news@vbFRONT.com. Photos should be color, 300dpi. A contact / source must be provided. Inclusions are not guaranteed and all submissions are subject to editing.



Van Hyning



Witt

Thompson & Litton of Radford has hired **Scott Wilson** as an associate.

Kerry Buck of SFCS Inc., an architectural and engineering firm in Roanoke, has been LEED certified.

Cassandra Van Hyning, a civil engineer with Spectrum Engineers in Roanoke, has passed the LEED accreditation exam.

Donald R. Witt, an architect at Hughes Associates Architects in Roanoke, has earned

LEED AP certification.



Underwood

Contractors

Catherine Underwood has been named VP of construction management by Branch & Associates in Roanoke.

Zach Fletchall of Martin Brothers Contractors Inc. in Roanoke has earned LEED accreditation and has graduated from the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Roanoke Valley program.

Roanoke Cement in Troutville has announced several



Clark



Bayne

manager; **Paul "Chris" Bayne** to electrical manager; and **Dan Babish** to production manager.

Allen Whittle, president of Thor Inc. General Contractors and Engineers in Roanoke, has become a U.S. Green Building Council LEED accredited professional.

Troy Henderson at G&H Contracting has completed the U.S. Green Building Council LEED accreditation exam for new construction and major renovations.

Quarries

Rockydale Quarries of Roanoke has named **Ken Randolph** president. **Joseph Altizer** has been selected CFO and **Edgar Baker** is the new board chairman.



Babish

promotions, including: **Lance Clark** to environmental

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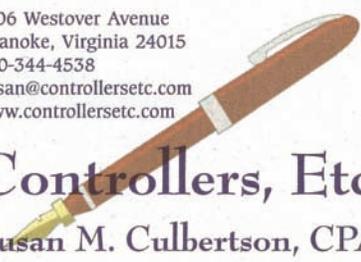
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Independent Representative

The company has expanded its board, bringing in four members from out of state.

Real Estate

Long & Foster has made the following agent additions in the region: **Kimberly Smith** and **Ramona Thompson**, Smith Mountain Lake; **Val Alphin**, **Jay Conley**, **James Glass**, **Robin Laing**, **Carolyn Tiller** and **Jane Walters**, South Roanoke; **Keri Gearheart**, Blacksburg; **Davinia Irvin**, Christiansburg; and **Steven Joseph**, Lynchburg. Conley is an occasional writing contributor to the FRONT. **Brenda Carter** has been named an Accredited Buyer Representative. Additionally, **Mary Rudisill** and Capital Relocation Group have merged with Long & Foster.



Kennedy



Lemon



Goodwin

Tech. **Donald Baird** of the engineering department at Tech has won the Society of Plastics Engineers' International Award.

Salem native **Anna Goodwin** has been named Hollins University registrar and executive director of institutional research.

CULTURE FRONT

Clubs

Robert McAdam of the Roanoke law firm of Kalbaugh, Pfund & Messersmith has been named president of the Rotary Club of the Roanoke Valley.

Non-Profits

Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia has named the following new board members: **Ted Keffer** of the Branch Group, **Scott Morling** of Lite Steel Technologies, and **Garry Norris** of Express Employment Professionals.

regional manager for The Titan Group, which recently opened an office in Roanoke. It is based in Richmond and concentrates on human resources.



Mongan

Services

William Quinn Mongan, president of SERVPRO of Roanoke, Montgomery and Pulaski Counties has attained the cleaning industry's highest technical designation, IICRC Master Status for both Master Fire and Smoke Restorer and Master Water Restorer.

Catherine Fox of the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau has been named president of the Blue Ridge Parkway Association.

The Historical Society of Western Virginia has named officers and new board members. New officers are: **W. Tucker Lemon** of Martin, Hopkins & Lemon, president; **Katherine Watts**, a community advocate, vice president; **Michael Bell** of Anderson & Reed, treasurer; and **Nancy Warren**, community advocate, secretary. **Edgar V. Wheeler** of Wheeler's Dry Cleaner is Director Emeritus. New directors are **Alison Blanton** of Hill Studio in Roanoke and **Kevin Sullivan** of the Virginia Tech Foundation Inc.

OTHER FRONTS

Hotels

Elsie R. Allen has been named general manager of Blacksburg's Main Street Inn.

Human Resources

Jeff Smith has been named senior consultant and

RETAIL FRONT

Groceries

John Bryant has been named marketing director for the Roanoke Natural Foods Cooperative.

EDUCATION FRONT

Colleges

Reed B. Kennedy has been appointed director of international programs in the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia

Carilion wins award

Carilion Clinic in Roanoke has been selected as a 2009 "100 Most Wired" hospital system according to the Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study. This is the third time in three months Carilion Clinic has received national recognition for IT achievement. Hospitals are named to the list based on a detailed scoring process. The survey asks hospitals to report on how they use information technology in regard to safety and quality, customer service, business processes, workforce, and public health and safety.

Plans to hire 200

Roanoke's **UnitedHealth Group** on Thirlane Road, which sells prescription drug plans for Medicare Part D patients, plans to hire 200 employees by the end of December. The jobs will be in inside sales and customer service primarily.

Luna files bankruptcy

Much-honored Roanoke-headquartered Luna Innovations Inc., which focuses on sensing and instrumentation solutions and pharmaceutical nanomedicines, has asked U.S. Bankruptcy court to estimate the lawsuit claims against it at \$1.3 million instead of \$36 million in a Chapter 11 filing. That, says company chairman and CEO Kent Murphy, will allow Luna to pay all its creditors at 100 percent. Murphy says Luna expects to continue to operate normally.

"The jury verdict in our dispute with Hansen Medical in April

obviously presented a very serious potential negative outcome for Luna as well as its creditors, shareholders and other stakeholders," says Murphy. "In the absence of reasonable settlement of that dispute, we believe that today's filing is in the best interests of Luna and our shareholders, creditors and communities, while providing the first step toward securing a future for Luna." Murphy says Luna has "filed motions with the court in California to have the award reduced, and Hansen has filed motions to ask the court to increase the award. While we believe we have arguments as to why the award should be significantly reduced, there is no way to predict the outcome of the litigation."

Murphy stresses that "since the first quarter of 2007, we have grown our revenue base by approximately 20 percent while reducing our baseline expenses and increasing the efficiency of operations by nearly 20 percent. These results are a tribute to our employees and the work they do for our customers every day. We look forward to operating in the normal course of business during our restructuring to meet our customers' needs."

VT KnowledgeWorks' Director Jim Flowers shared the stage in Paris with French Minister for the Economy, Industry, and Employment Christine Lagarde in mid-June, as they honored the winning student team at the Annual Entrepreneurial Project Challenge at TELECOM Sud-Paris.

As part of their award, the winning students

were given a week in September at VT KnowledgeWorks in Blacksburg. Activities for their stay include a welcome dinner, a two-day Founders' Readiness Retreat at Mountain Lake Resort, on-the-job shadowing of company presidents in the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, social time with Hokie Entrepreneurship Society student members, and tickets to the Virginia Tech-Marshall football game.

"The market for technology-based businesses is global," says Flowers. "By encouraging person-to-person overseas relationships for our local companies and entrepreneurial students we provide them with easier access to markets beyond our shores. Of course, the reverse is true as well. The dialogues also improve understanding of American markets for our foreign visitors."

VTLS celebrates 25th

VTLS Inc. in Blacksburg has begun celebration of its 25th year as a corporation. Over the past 24 years, VTLS has provided software, custom solutions, and service to the global library community. From the initial Circulation and Finding System (CFS), which was groundbreaking software in 1975, to Chamo, which is groundbreaking software in 2009, VTLS has consistently been at the front of library automation and information technology. VTLS dates back to the mid 1970s when the initial CFS system came into existence. Created in 1979 and distributed in 1980, VTLS (the product) was the very first MARC-based ILS. In 1985, VTLS Inc. was created to address the growing service needs

for VTLS software. The company has experienced constant growth since incorporation and remains independent, debt free, and profitable.

B&W seeks facility

Babcock & Wilcox in Lynchburg is seeking federal approval for a new Campbell County facility to create medical isotopes that would be used in procedures that detect cancer and heart disease, among other disorders. There is a potential looming shortage of the isotopes used in many procedures daily. B&W wants Congress to clear regulatory requirements and approve the facility before the initially projected 2014 deadline. B&W is looking for state and county incentives to help build the facility, which could provide as many as 60 full-time jobs, officials say.

Large cash infusion

Intrexon Corp. of Blacksburg, which has announced it has found an experimental treatment for advanced metastatic melanoma, a skin cancer, has received an investment of \$10 million to continue its work. Third Security of Radford has added the funds to \$56.5 million already invested in Intrexon Corp., a life sciences company focused on modular DNA control systems for biotherapeutics and other industry sectors. The new Series C-2 investment comes through New River Management V, a division of Randall Kirk's Third Security. Gene and cell therapy are used in the new treatment.

Have an announcement about your business?

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

Pulaski losing Mack

Volvo Trucks North America's plant in Pulaski County will have a little less work to do beginning this fall when its Mack Trucks division consolidates its manufacturing in Pennsylvania at a plant where Mack assembles construction and garbage trucks. The number of layoffs expected because of the shift is uncertain at this point, officials say, though could be as many as 200 of the plant's 1,200 workers.

Countering that bad news for the plant is a ray of light: Volvo has announced it is taking orders for a low-emission truck that will be built in Pulaski with production beginning in the fall. Truck manufacturers must comply with new air pollution standards from the EPA in 2010, one of the reasons truck sales have lagged. For a period, about a year ago, sales were high as companies loaded up on trucks that were less expensive than the new, low-emission trucks are expected to be.

Westvaco contract

MeadWestvaco in Covington and its United Steelworkers Local have finally reached agreement—after more than two years without a contract—on a new six-year pact. More than 80 percent of the voters approved the contract, the union reported.

Plant to close

Botetourt County's **JTELKT North America** (formerly Koyo Steering Systems) is the latest victim of the depression in the automobile industry, costing the county as many as 260 jobs. The

company plans to close during the first quarter of 2010 because its plants have been operating at dramatically reduced capacity, often as low as 35 percent, according to officials.

JTELK made adjustments recently (wage freeze, overtime reduction, layoffs, early retirement, among others), but it will begin to slow operations in October with a likely close in February. Production will move to Texas and Tennessee where some employees will be offered opportunities to move. The company has eight plants and 2,400 employees overall in the U.S.

RVCVB head retiring

Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau Director David Kjolhede, who has been in that position for nearly 13 years, will retire at the end of this year. His retirement date of Dec. 31 is tentative, depending on whether the position is filled.

The 60-year-old Kjolhede says the search for a replacement should begin in July and that he will remain in the Roanoke Valley. Kjolhede says his decision to leave has nothing to do with friction between the City of Roanoke's levels of funding for the organization, and that he's unsure what he will do in retirement.

Spectrum cited

The Virginia Sustainable Building Network (VSNB) has awarded **Spectrum Design** its 2009 Green Innovation Award for Best Multi-Family Residential Facility for the State & City Building in downtown Roanoke.

Firm wins award

Roanoke's Claude Moore Education Complex has been selected from 2,000 submissions as a Green Building of America Award-winning project. The **Smith-Lewis Architecture** project will be featured in the upcoming special Real Estate & Construction Review-Northeast Green Success Stories edition. The Real Estate & Construction Review has been published by Construction Communications since 1999. The Smith and Lewis of the Salem firm's name are Jennifer Smith and her husband Gregg Lewis.

Montgomery hires administrator

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors has named **F. Craig Meadows**, 48, new County Administrator effective Aug. 1. Meadows' annual salary will be \$140,000. He has worked in this region in the past, serving as City Manager of Bedford from 1998 to 2005. Meadows was named City Manager of Monroe, N.C., in 2005, where he managed a staff of 455 employees and a \$135 million budget. His duties there included daily management of city operations, including police, fire, public utilities, planning, tourism, parks and recreation and

economic development. He is interim Town Manager of Red Springs, N.C. after departing Monroe earlier this year.

PETCO coming

PETCO, will open its first Roanoke store in the spring of 2010 at Towers Shopping Center. The pet store has leased 12,065 square feet on the lower level next to Kroger. Will Collins of the Rappaport Companies represented the landlord in the transaction. PETCO is a pet specialty retailer that provides pet supplies and services like pet adoption, grooming, dog training, vaccinations and pet photography services.

Country clubs to merge

A merger of the Roanoke Valley's two most prestigious country clubs—both struggling in hard economic times—could save a combined \$750,000 a year and make both viable, officials say. The venerable **Roanoke Country Club**, home of Roanoke's elite old money for many years, and the newer (and nouveau riche) **Hunting Hills Country Club** would not take place before 2010 and "the need is really economics," according to Hunting Hills' Tom Van Durren. He talked of "the opportunity ... to increase value to our members" in a published report.

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Members would be able to use sports facilities at both clubs. Dining would be a Hunting Hills function and banquets would be held at RCC. Van Durrsen laid much of the blame for declining memberships on the need for two working parents in most households, leaving less time for country club life.

Campaign kicks off

Heywood Fralin of Medical Facilities of America in Roanoke and several other prominent regional business and education leaders helped kick off

Grow By Degrees in July at the Taubman Museum of Art. GBD is a campaign initiated by the Virginia Business Higher Education Council (VBHEC) to promote economic growth through high-impact investment and innovation in Virginia's higher education facilities.

Fralin was joined by Nancy Howell Agee, COO, Carilion Clinic; Charles Steger, president of Virginia Tech; Penny Kyle, president of Radford University; and Glenn DuBois, chancellor of the Virginia Community College System.

Grow By Degrees advocates a sustained, long-term program of higher education investment and reform, embodied in state law, to ensure affordable access for Virginia students and to generate strong economic activity and growth revenues for the Commonwealth. Prominent business leaders joined other members of the Grow By Degrees coalition to announce the statewide effort.

CVC awards

The Clean Valley Council presented its

annual awards in July to a number of businesses in the region that have found a way to make money and care for the environment. The winners include: Environmental education award: WDBJ Television Inc.; clean-up: Koppers; recycling and environmental stewardship award: Roanoke Cement/Titan America; government award: Northside High School, addition and renovation; beautification award: Yokohama Tire of Salem's "Forever Forest Project"; award of excellence: Breakell, Inc.

Calendar

Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce
bedfordareachamber.com

Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce
lynchburgchamber.org

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
"Business After Hours"
August 20 / 5:30—7:30pm
Holiday Inn University—Blacksburg
montgomerycc.org

Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce
pulaskichamber.info

Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce
"State of the City of Roanoke Address," Mayor David Bowers
August 13 / 7:30—9:00am
roanokechamber.org

Salem-Roanoke County Chamber of Commerce
s-rchamber.org

Smith Mountain Lake Chamber of Commerce
visitsmithmountainlake.com

Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce
vintonchamber.com

Rotary Blacksburg Noon Club
info@blacksburgrotary.org

Rotary Club of Roanoke Valley
Bob McAdam, 540-776-2583

Salem-Glenvar Rotary Club
Bob Jones, 540-521-5924

Kiwanis Club of Roanoke
Judy Clark, 540-344-1766

Cosmopolitan Club of Roanoke
Mike Russell, 540-772-2778

Toastmasters International Clubs (Roanoke Area)
2nd / 4th Thursdays, 7:00pm
540-342-3161;
1st / 3rd Thursdays, 7:00pm
540-989-1310;

Thursdays, 12:00 noon
540-483-0261;
1st / 3rd Fridays, 12:00 noon
540-983-9260

NCTC
"Technology & Toast"
August 20 / 7:15—9:00am
Holiday Inn University—Blacksburg

"Tech Expo"
September 18 / 2:00—5:00pm
Roanoke Civic Center
tethechnologycouncil.com

Virginia Aviation Conference
August 26—28 / Hotel Roanoke
doav.virginia.gov

Steppin' Out
August 7—8 / Blacksburg
downtownblacksburg.com

Olde Salem Days
September 12 / 10:00am—
5:00pm
oldesalemdays.org

Send listings to:
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BRB celebrates 50

Blue Ridge Beverage Company Inc., a family-owned and operated beverage distributor serving a 49-county area in central and southwest Virginia, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. The Salem-based company has been in existence since 1938, but it has been under the continuous leadership of the Archer family for 50 years since 1959, when it had only 10 employees and four beverage delivery routes. Since that time, Blue Ridge Beverage has expanded its territory and has facilities in Salem, Waynesboro, Lynchburg, South Boston, Marion and Norton. The company has 350 employees and annually distributes

more than 7,300,000 cases of beer, wine and soft drinks, making it one of the largest beverage distributorships in Virginia. Bob Archer, President/CEO of Blue Ridge Beverage, is a former Virginia Chamber of Commerce Small Business Advocate of the Year. Archer has been heavily involved in small business issues for many years. Regine N. Archer serves as chairman of the board; James E. Archer as executive vice president and chief operating officer; and Jacqueline L. Archer as executive vice president and CFO.

tba wins ad awards

tba (the becher agency), a Roanoke public relations and advertising firm, has

been recognized by the Virginia Press Association for the best newspaper ad of 2008 created by an agency. The firm also won a third place award. Separately, tba won a silver ADDY award from the Third District of the American Advertising Federation. All three awards were for advertisements created for Friendship Retirement Community.

Goodwill opens store

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys has opened a new store in Blacksburg at 1411 North Main Street in the Patrick Henry Centre. Goodwill retail stores support training and employment programs for individuals who face barriers to employment. Last year the donated

goods operation generated \$22.2 million in revenue and provided over 400 jobs throughout the area in Virginia served by Goodwill Industries of the Valleys. The new store is Goodwill's 28th retail store and adds approximately 15 jobs in Blacksburg, including management positions.

B&B named best

Maison Beliveau has been selected by the U.S. Commerce Association as Blacksburg's best Bed & Breakfast in its Best of Local Business program.

Compiled by Dan Smith

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Read extended versions of items listed above, plus photos and many more current listings each day on the moreFRONT blog, also available by link at vbFRONT.com.

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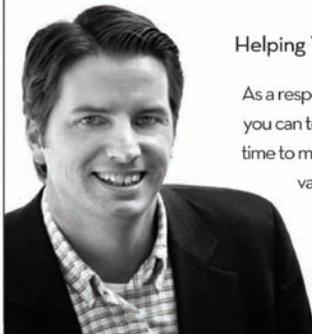
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Blue Ridge Copier	32	Pheasant Ridge	73
Business Solutions	55	Pitzer Transfer	80
Carilion Clinic	24	Poe & Cronk	39
Clark Nexsen	45	Quality Coffee / Mountain Springs / Darte Vending	27
Davis H. Elliot Company	30	Rife + Wood Architects	71
Fralin & Waldron / Daleville Town Center	48	Roanoke Natural Foods Co-Op	31
Hall & Associates	43	Salem Jaycees / Olde Salem Days	3
Hometown Bank	Back Cover	Sands Anderson Marks & Miller	36
IDD, Inc.	35	Spectrum Design	38
Jarrett Electric	42	StellarOne	66
Jefferson Center	54	Valley Bank	2
Joel S. Williams	26	VCOM	28-29
Krull & Company	82	Woods Rogers	23
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 We took a crash course on
 Frank Lloyd Wright — Page 44

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Gene Marrano, a former sales and marketing executive in various manufacturing fields, is one of the most prolific journalists in the Roanoke Valley. He not only writes for several publications, but he has a television show ("Interview With Gene Marrano" on Cox Channel 9) and a radio show ("Studio Virginia," WVTF Public Radio). [gmarrano@cox.net]

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Huong Nguyen is an award-winning photographer and writer who loves to travel, shoot film and lives by the motto of "happy endings aren't for cowards." Her photographs and writing have appeared on pages of magazines, newspapers and even soda bottles. She is based in Roanoke. [www.huong-nguyen.com]

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Anne Giles Clelland

JULY 2009 >
Contributor of the Month

Valley Business FRONT congratulates **Anne Giles Clelland**, who receives the Publisher's Choice and Editor's Choice for our "Contributor of the Month" including a "One Who's in the FRONT" certificate and special gift.

Anne's advice has been sophisticated, sensitive, practical and smart. We especially noticed how she isn't afraid to take a stand. Agree or disagree, FRONTreaders like that. No mamby-pamby same old psycho-drive! With a background in teaching, counseling, and writing for St. Petersburg Times, Anne just celebrated the first year anniversary of her new media company, at Handshake20.com.

If you missed "Workplace Advice" for July (or other months) you can go back and see them online at vbFRONT.com

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Go there and
just be. — Page 12

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The best way to understand people is to listen to them" -Ralph Nichols



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