

VIRGINIA HIGH'S  
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SPORTS » C1

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Evidence released in clown murder case

**BY ROBERT SORRELL**  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Nearly 200 pages of evidence — showcasing jailhouse letters and a clown picture — have been released by prosecutors in Florida who are seeking the death penalty for an Abingdon, Virginia, woman accused of shooting another woman in 1990.

Sheila Keen-Warren, 56, remains in custody at a Belle Glade, Florida, jail awaiting her February 2020 trial, when she faces a first-degree murder charge in the death of Marlene Warren, 40.

Authorities said Marlene Warren was gunned down by a person wearing a clown costume on May 26, 1990. The case remained cold until 2017 when DNA evidence led police to arrest Keen-Warren near her home at South Holston Lake.

Keen-Warren had left Florida, married Michael Warren, Marlene's husband — who has been the recipient of many letters since her arrest, moved to the Tri-Cities and opened the Purple Cow restaurant in Kingsport, Tennessee.

"There is no words to describe how much I love and miss you,"

Keen-Warren wrote her husband on May 21. "I feel so empty inside and my whole body aches for you. You are a part of me and I always feel you with me, even though you are so many miles away. I long to be in your arms to

See **EVIDENCE**, Page A7

**Impeachment Investigation**

Inquiry a threat like no other Trump has faced

**BY JULIE PACE and ZEKE MILLER**  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — From the moment Donald Trump became a national political figure, he has been shadowed by investigations and controversy.

They have been layered, lengthy and often inconclusive, leaving many Americans scandal-weary and numb to his behavior. And with each charge against him, Trump has perfected the art of deflection, seemingly gaining strength by bullying and belittling those who have dared to take him on.

Now Trump is facing a high-velocity threat like none he's confronted before.

See **TRUMP**, Page A6

**INSIDE**



**Storytelling festival has rich history » D1**

Thank you, **Vivian Kendrick**, for subscribing to the Bristol Herald Courier.



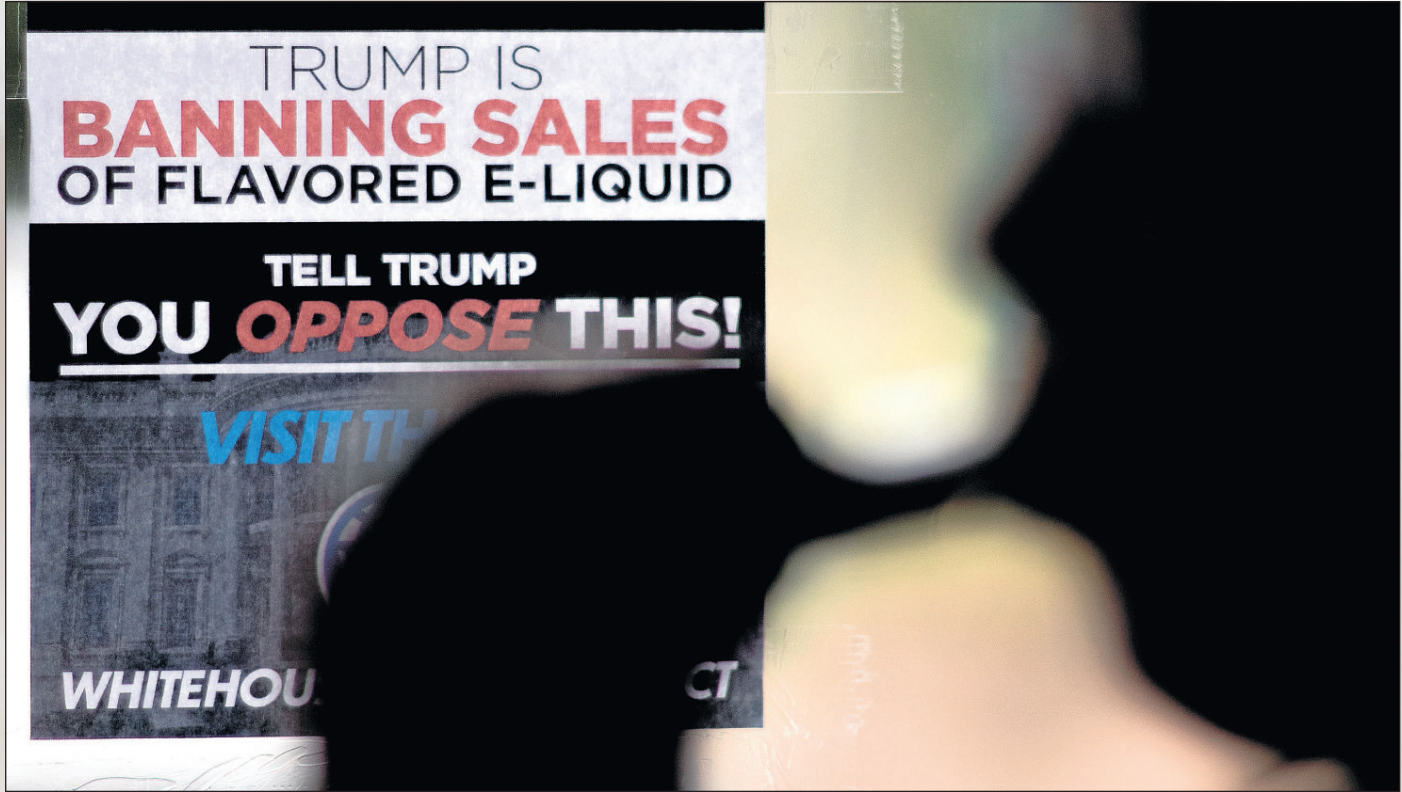
**88/66**  
Weather » A10



**TWIN CITY**

**TAKING A HIT**

Local vape shop owners fear new regulations will endanger business



A person vapes near a sign at Vapor 42 in Bristol, Virginia, urging citizen action against a proposed White House ban on flavored e-liquids. Members of the vape industry sympathize with the concerns over youth vaping and the recent illnesses, but they also claim regulators are conflating separate issues involving nicotine products and illegal substances.

**Terms to Know**

**Electronic cigarette**  
A battery-powered device that heats a liquid (usually containing nicotine) to create an aerosol that a user inhales. They are also called e-cigarettes and vapes, among other names. They can resemble USB flash drives and pens, although there are also larger devices, often called "tanks" and "mods."

**E-liquid**  
The solution — usually containing nicotine — heated to create the aerosol. E-liquids come in a variety of flavors often known for their fruit and dessert-themed tastes. These are also called e-juices.

**Vaping**  
The act of using an e-cigarette product.

**Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)**  
The psychoactive component of marijuana. Many of the patients who have developed the recent vaping-related lung illnesses reported using e-cigarette products containing THC, although some of the patients have said they only used nicotine.

**BY TIM DODSON** | BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

**"L**ight up the switchboard at the White House!"

That's the message from some Bristol vape shops to customers as the federal government considers stricter regulations on electronic cigarettes.

The businesses launched political advocacy efforts this month urging customers to contact the White House and oppose a so-called "flavor ban."

Rocky Top Vapor in Bristol, Tennessee, was just one of several local retailers to post signs about the issue on countertops and near cash registers.

A similar notice at Vapor 42 in Bristol, Virginia, encouraged shoppers to "tweet directly" to President Donald Trump.

Parkway Vapor in Bristol, Tennessee, even started offering raffle tickets for prizes to customers who post on social media in protest of the proposed changes.

The recent efforts come amid national headlines over vaping-related respiratory illnesses, 13 reported deaths and a looming ban on flavored e-cigarette products.

Local vape shop owners and employees fear new regulations will endanger their businesses.

See **HIT**, Page A4

**Coming Monday**

This is the first in a two-part series. Coming Monday: How are Bristol's two school systems responding to vaping by students?

INSIDE: CLASSIFIED E1-12 | COMICS Insert | DEATHS B2,4 | OPINION A8 | SCOREBOARD C2 | TELEVISION Insert

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**Hit**

From Page A1

“A flavor ban decimates and destroys this industry,” said Dave Nelson, owner of Rocky Top Vapor, a chain of vape shops in the Tri-Cities.

On a recent afternoon, his Bristol location employees passed out flyers to customers, encouraging them to share their concerns with federal officials and “Keep the phones ringing!”

The “flavor ban” refers to a plan announced by the Trump administration earlier this month to prohibit the sale of flavored e-cigarette products — with an exception for tobacco flavors — to try to curb their appeal to young people. The liquid nicotine vaporized in an e-cigarette device often comes in fruit and dessert-themed flavors.

Overshadowing these efforts are hundreds of cases of severe lung illnesses reported around the country, which health officials say are tied to vaping. But the vape industry says its products are being unfairly targeted for issues arising from illicit black market products.

Shops also argue that a sweeping ban will spark a new public health crisis of ex-smokers returning to traditional tobacco cigarettes after many of them turned to vaping as a form of smoking cessation.

“It’s a crazy time right now to be a vaper, a vape industry worker,” said Bobby Harbuck, an assistant manager at Vapor 42.

Members of the vape industry sympathize with the concerns over youth vaping and the recent illnesses, but they also claim regulators are conflating separate issues involving nicotine products and illegal substances.

At the same time, local health officials say the public would be wise to avoid all vaping products until more is known about the potential health effects.

**Concerns over health impacts**

Stores acknowledged the gravity of the recent epidemic — which has reportedly sickened 805 people and claimed 13 lives across the country — but they claim the devices and e-liquids sold at their stores aren’t associated with the illness. Many patients who have developed respiratory issues admitted to using e-cigarette products containing tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, a psychoactive component of marijuana.

“It is just a completely different ballpark,” Harbuck said about illicit THC products.

Employees in local vape stores pointed to statements from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration advising consumers to avoid vaping products containing THC. At Rocky Top, printed copies of an FDA statement from early September were available for customers to review.

However, some patients have also reported only vaping nicotine without the THC and the FDA has stated, “No one substance has been identified in all of the samples tested.”

And the leading federal agencies offered somewhat different advice over recent weeks — although the FDA advised consumers to avoid THC products, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention went a step further to recommend consumers avoid e-cigarette products entirely until more is known about the respiratory issues.

# Investigation of vaping illnesses focuses on THC

BY MIKE STOBBE  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — U.S. health officials said Friday that their investigation into an outbreak of severe vaping-related illnesses is increasingly focused on products that contain the marijuana compound THC.

Most of the 800 people who got sick vaped THC, the ingredient in marijuana that causes a high, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But officials said they didn’t know if the THC is the problem or some other substance added to the vaping liquid, such as thickeners.

“The outbreak currently is pointing to a greater concern around THC-containing products,” said the CDC’s Dr. Anne Schuchat.

So far, investigators have not identified a particular electronic cigarette, vaping device, liquid or ingredient behind the outbreak.

But officials say patients have mentioned the name Dank Vapes most frequently.

Many of the people who got sick in Illinois and Wisconsin said they used prefilled THC cartridges sold in Dank Vapes packaging.

“It’s a generic product name that doesn’t really tie back to one store or one distributor,” said Dr. Jennifer Layden, chief medical officer for the Illinois Department of Public Health.

“Folks are getting it from friends or folks on the street, with no understanding of where it came from prior to that,” she said Friday.

Until a cause is pinned down, the CDC continues to advise Americans to

consider avoiding all vaping products, though the agency on Friday added the phrase “particularly those containing THC.”

“We didn’t feel comfortable dropping the broader recommendation yet,” said Schuchat.

This week, the CDC reported 805 confirmed and probable cases of the lung illness. Thirteen people have died. Only the U.S. has reported such an outbreak, although Canadian officials this week confirmed that country’s first case.

On Friday, the agency provided more details in two reports:

- » The first case in the U.S. began in late March. Cases ramped up in late June and rose dramatically in late July.
- » The most illnesses have occurred in California, Illinois, Texas and Wisconsin.
- » In Illinois and Wisconsin, patients mentioned 87 different product names and many vaped more than one.

Officials continue to find a substantial numbers of U.S. patients — the new report says 16% — who said they vaped only nicotine, and not THC. But the report noted that in Wisconsin, five patients who initially denied using products with THC turned out to have used them.

In Wisconsin and Illinois, recreational marijuana use is currently illegal.

Since 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has lightly regulated the manufacture and ingredients used in nicotine-based e-cigarettes. But there is no FDA review of THC products, which are illegal under federal law.



MIKE WREN/NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH VIA AP

This photo shows a few of the cannabis-containing vaping products that contain high levels of vitamin E acetate. Most of the 800 people who got sick vaped THC, the ingredient in marijuana that causes a high, according to the CDC.

In an update Friday afternoon, the CDC said the latest data “suggest products containing THC play a role in the outbreak.” This was based on an analysis of 514 patients’ cases, in which about 77% reported using THC-containing products or products with both THC and nicotine.

The agency still cautioned that “the specific chemical exposure(s) causing lung injuries associated with e-cigarette product use, or vaping, remains unknown at this time.”

“We still don’t know what is the ultimate cause,” said Andrew May, the regional medical director for the Sullivan County Regional Health Department.

May said two of the confirmed cases of the illness came out of Sullivan County.

He recommends that people who don’t vape shouldn’t start and that people who do should stop, particularly in light of the recent epidemic and limited information about e-cigarettes’ possible long-term effects.

“If we don’t know the answer ... it’s best to avoid it all together. That is the safe and prudent recommendation you can make until you do the science and figure out what’s really going on,” May said.

In Virginia, no cases of the illness have been reported in the Mount Rogers Health District, which includes Bristol, according to Karen Shelton, the

health district’s director. However, she said the Southwest region of the state — extending from Roanoke to Lee County — reported one confirmed and one probable case thus far.

E-cigarettes are often promoted as a smoking cessation product to help with quitting traditional tobacco products, but claims over whether e-cigarettes should be recommended as a “safer” alternative are coming into question.

Critics point to young people who have never smoked turning to the products and developing nicotine addictions.

The vapor from e-cigarettes can also contain substances linked to lung disease, heart disease and cancer, according to a statement from the American Cancer Society, which has said it is closely monitoring research on the effects of these products and recommends that adult smokers attempt to quit all substances that contain nicotine, including vaping devices.

“Adults who vape and are not ready or able to quit should only use unaltered e-cigarette products, should not purchase vaping products from an unknown source, and should not add anything to the devices,” Richard C. Wender, the chief cancer control officer of ACS, said in a statement on the organization’s website earlier this month.

Shelton said the “origi-

nal hope” of e-cigarettes — helping smokers quit using tobacco products and reducing their use of nicotine — has not played out as intended.

“The products were made colorful and attractive, especially to youth, and now many people vape that would never have considered smoking cigarettes. Nicotine is one of the most addictive substances there is — once you start, it is very hard to stop,” she wrote in an email to the Bristol Herald Courier.

## IN MEMORY



It’s been 15 years today since you were tragically taken away. You were such a nice, well-mannered little man, with a wonderful sense of humor. The world was a much better place while you were in it. You’re often in my thoughts and missed every day. It was supposed to happen the other way around.

~ Love, Dad

## By the Numbers: Lung Disease

- 805**  
Number of cases reported across 46 states, including Tennessee and Virginia, and 1 U.S. territory. (The states that have not reported any vaping illnesses are New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Alabama and Alaska.)
  - 30-49**  
Number of cases reported in Tennessee
  - 10-29**  
Number of cases reported in Virginia
  - 13**  
Deaths related to vaping
  - 10**  
Number of states where deaths occurred
  - 23**  
Median age for those with illness from vaping
  - 50**  
Median age of those who died
  - 9 in 10**  
Number of cases that required hospitalization
  - 87**  
Number of different product names mentioned by patients in Illinois and Wisconsin
  - 77%**  
Percentage of patients who reported using THC-containing products in an analysis of the substances used in e-cigarette products by 514 patients, the CDC says. However, the agency cautions that “no single product or substance has been linked to all lung injury cases.”
- Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

purchases in another state. If a federal ban took effect, “I guess I’ll cross that bridge when I get to it,” he said.

Aaron Smith, 28, of Saltville, Virginia, said he smoked cigarettes in high school and unsuccessfully tried gum and patches in an effort to curb his addiction. Vaping is the only thing that’s worked to keep him away from cigarettes, he said.

If a flavor ban took effect, he said it was “90 percent likely” he would start smoking again, even though he doesn’t like the taste of tobacco.

Other people said they vape for reasons besides smoking cessation.

Controlling sugar intake and diabetes is the reason Daniel Huffman, a 31-year-old from Bristol, Tennessee, uses e-cigarettes. He said he has vaped since age 18 and uses candy flavors so that he avoids eating junk food.

“It’s going to hurt me,” Huffman said about a flavor ban. He added that he does not use e-liquids that contain nicotine and “never have and never will” smoke cigarettes.

He plans to make his own vape juice if retailers are banned from selling flavored products, but if he’s also prohibited from making it himself, he fears his diabetes will worsen.

## A teen epidemic

Health officials say the appeal of non-tobacco flavors — with fruity and sweet-sounding names like “Apple Bomb” and “Strawberry Custard” — contributes to an epidemic of teenage vaping and nicotine addiction. Nationally, more than one in four students in the 12th grade, one in five in the 10th grade and one in 11 in the eighth grade reported vaping in the past 30 days, according to data from a government-supported survey published earlier this month in the New England Journal of Medicine.

“They say it’s all these kids doing it, but I don’t see it,” said Jason Grizzel, owner of Parkway Vapor.

Indeed, adults make up the majority of those who vape — about 10.8 million U.S. adults use e-cigarettes, according to survey data released last year using 2016 data from the CDC.

But millions of young people still use the products. The 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey — supported by the FDA and CDC — estimated 3.6 million middle and high school students used e-cigarettes.

See **VAPING**, Page A5

## Kristopher “Kris” Timothy Cooper

Sept. 13, 1993  
~  
Sept. 28, 2004





# Vaping

From Page A4

Store owners like Grizzel, who see themselves as offering a product to help adult smokers quit a harmful addiction to cigarettes, argue that a flavor ban will drive more people to purchase dangerous black market products and that some will return to traditional cigarettes. “I’m not saying that [vaping] is good for you,” said Grizzel, standing behind the counter at his store on a recent afternoon. “I don’t recommend you do it if you’re not a smoker.”

Vape shop employees said they think it’s a misconception that flavored products only appeal to kids — “the flavors are crucial to adults, too,” said Brittany Pruett, the manager at Rocky Top Vapor in Bristol, Tennessee.

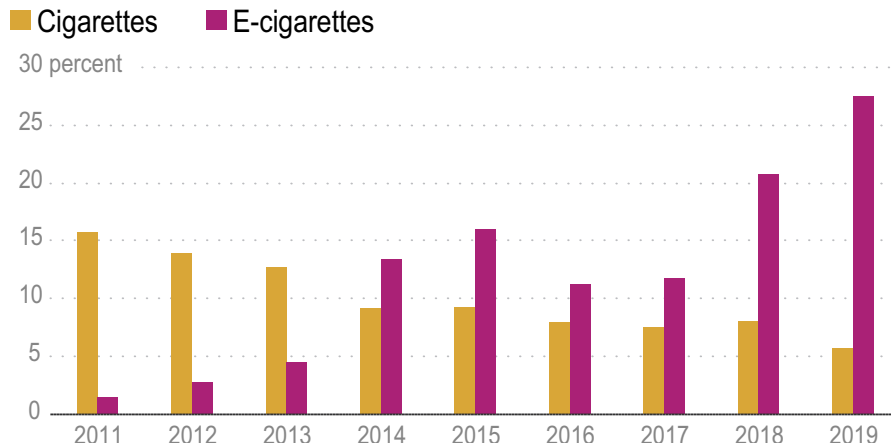
Adult smokers trying to quit tobacco want to be “as far away from a cigarette as they can get,” said Pruett, who estimates 95% of the adults who want to switch to vaping prefer to buy non-tobacco flavored e-liquids.

Local vape shop employees also repeatedly said that they check customer IDs before purchases — the minimum age to purchase e-cigarette products is 18 in Tennessee and 21 in Virginia, which raised the age from 18 in July.

But business owners admit more can be done to keep the products away from young people.

“There’s plenty of ways to address the teen epidemic short of banning flavors,” said Dave Nelson, owner of Rocky Top Vapor. He attended a confer-

## Teen e-cigarette use increases



Note: Data from the 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey conducted of students in grades 6 through 12. Responses are from within 30 days preceding the administration of the survey.

Graphic: Dien Magno; Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

AP

ence of the Vapor Technology Association earlier this month in Washington, D.C., where he said members of the trade group met with legislators about the potential ban and questions over regulations.

Marketing standards and raising the minimum purchase age are examples of changes that Nelson said he would support.

If a ban takes effect, he fears it would wipe out competitors to e-cigarette giant Juul and put retail vape shops out of business. The Vapor Technology Association claims a ban could affect 14,000 small businesses and thousands of jobs.

For its part, Juul, which has faced intense criticism from people who claim the company markets its products to young people, announced Wednesday that it is suspending all of its advertising in the U.S. and will refrain from lobbying the Trump adminis-

tration as regulators move forward with crafting restrictions on flavored products. The company’s leadership also said a “broad review” is underway of Juul’s “practices and policies to ensure alignment with its aim of responsible leadership within the industry.”

Others are not holding back on their criticism of Trump and how they think the policies could play out.

“This man is supposed to be giving us jobs and making the work market better, and this is the exact opposite of that because small businesses everywhere are going to suffer because of it,” said Harbuck, assistant manager at Vapor 42.

### ‘The tip of the iceberg?’

Concerns of broader health issues developing from vaping and questions over regulations tie into the tensions that exist between members of the vaping industry who be-

lieve their products help smokers live healthier, more comfortable lives and doctors who say there’s a lot of unknowns when it comes to vapor products.

Nelson, with Rocky Top Vapor, said a flavor ban could result in a “public health disaster” if a black market for illicit products takes off and smokers return to combustible cigarettes. He — and employees in other stores — cite a figure from England’s public health agency, which found that vaping is 95% less harmful than smoking.

About 480,000 deaths in the U.S. each year are linked to cigarette smoking, according to numbers used by the CDC and also cited by Nelson.

“I know all the rest of the vape shop owners agree that we’re not OK with that,” Nelson said. “We’re going to try to save as many lives as we can.”

But physicians like May, in Sullivan County, say

## Symptoms

Doctors say the illnesses resemble an inhalation injury. Symptoms have included shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain, diarrhea and vomiting.

Source: The Associated Press

they’re recommending that people refrain from vaping in light of recent illnesses and ongoing research into the exact causes. He said he needs to see more scientific data before he recommends vaping as a safer alternative to smoking.

“We don’t like to do guesses when it comes to people’s lives. We’re erring on the side of safety until the science comes in and tells us what’s really going on,” May said.

Given that limited information about the po-

tential long-term health effects of vaping, May said the respiratory issues making headlines could be “the tip of the iceberg as far as looking at vaping-related lung illness” and researchers may eventually find a spectrum of effects from e-cigarettes.

“The question I ask is, ‘What are we really going to see in the long term if this is what we’re seeing in the short term?’” he said.

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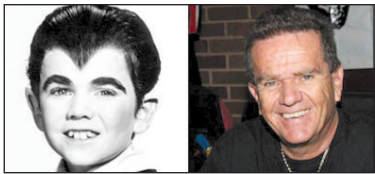
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## GAMBLING IN THE REGION



The DraftKings logo is displayed at the sports betting company headquarters in Boston. Online sports betting becomes legal in Tennessee on Monday, but you won't be able to place a wager from your smartphone just yet. The state is still creating specific licensing rules and sports wagering regulations.

AP PHOTO/CHARLES KRUPA

# OVER/UNDER

Online sports betting legal in Tenn. on Monday, but hold off on wagers

**BY TIM DODSON**  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Online sports betting becomes legal in Tennessee on Monday, but you won't be able to place a wager from your smartphone just yet. The state is still creating specific licensing rules and sports wagering regulations, so online sportsbooks might not be up and

running until early next year. This spring, the Volunteer State joined a series of states that legalized forms of sports betting after a U.S. Supreme Court decision last year gave states the green light to move ahead with legalizing and regulating sports wagering.

See **SPORTS**, Page A6



AP PHOTO/WAYNE PARRY, FILE

This 2018 photo shows workers at the FanDuel sports book at the Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, New Jersey, preparing to take bets.

### COMING MONDAY

» Beginning Monday, drivers in Tennessee can no longer hold a cell phone while driving.

### INSIDE

» Va. and Tenn. will see a number of new laws take effect Monday. » A7

## Debit cards used for lotto sales in Va., but not in Tenn.



ANDRE TEAGUE/BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Karen Tuck, co-owner of Carl's Food and Beverage in Bristol, Tennessee, talks about Tennessee's lottery tickets — which can only be bought with cash.

**BY TIM DODSON**  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Betsy Carico works as a cashier at Andy's Market on Commonwealth Avenue in Bristol, Virginia.

Generally, she estimates that about 75% of lottery ticket sales are in cash and 25% are made with debit cards. People don't always carry cash, she says, so it's a convenient option for some customers.

Drive 10 minutes to Carl's Food & Beverage off Virginia Avenue on the Tennessee side of the border, and you can still buy lottery tickets — but you can't pay with a debit card.

The Virginia and Tennessee lotteries offer similar games, but under Tennessee law, sellers can only accept cash for lottery tickets. Stores can take cash and debit cards in Virginia.

It's a seemingly small difference and legislators in Tennessee have proposed changes over the years to allow consumers to use debit cards, but the bills have had no success.

For Karen Tuck, who co-owns Carl's with her husband, the idea of accepting debit cards is a potential threat to her business. She

See **DEBIT**, Page A6

**ONLINE**  
At **HeraldCourier.com**: **Poll**: Should you be allowed to buy lottery tickets with your debit card?; **Video**: Co-owner of Bristol, Tennessee, market talks about whether debit cards should be used for lottery ticket sales; and **Database**: A listing of Virginia Lottery ticket sales.

# 2 dead in I-81 crash

Bristol, Va., man killed in head-on collision

**BY ROBERT SORRELL**  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Two people, including a Bristol, Virginia, man, died Saturday afternoon in a head-on crash on Interstate 81 in Sullivan County, Tennessee, authorities said.

William Henry Carpenter Jr., 56, of Bristol, was traveling northbound in a silver 2008 Honda Ridgeline pickup truck when it veered left, crossed the grassy median and began traveling north in the southbound lanes of I-81 near the 62 mile marker, according to a news release from the Kingsport Police Department.

See **CRASH**, Page A5

### Bristol, Va.

# Osborne appears likely for mayor

**BY DAVID MCGEE**  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

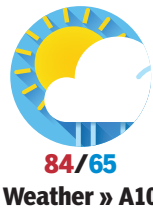
BRISTOL, Va. — Councilman Neal Osborne has voiced interest in becoming mayor of Bristol, Virginia, and may have the votes when the City Council holds its annual reorganizational meeting Monday.

The City Council is scheduled to convene at 9 a.m. to choose a mayor and vice mayor, name a city manager and attorney and decide on committee assignments. Osborne — who was first elected in 2018 — emerged as the apparent favorite of some council members during a telephone poll. If chosen, he would succeed Kevin Mumpower, who has served in that role for the past two years.



Osborne

See **MAYOR**, Page A5



84/65  
Weather » A10

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### REGION

Fate of Pal's in Abingdon to be considered on Monday » B1

### INDEX

CLASSIFIEDS ..... E1-E12  
DEATHS ..... A2-A3  
LOTTERY ..... A4  
OPINION ..... A8  
TELEVISION ..... Insert

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## LOTTERY SALES IN VIRGINIA: AT A GLANCE (June 2018-May 2019)



## Debit

From Page A1

says she would be concerned about merchant fees associated with the cards and how those could easily add up to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“For a mom and pop, that’s a lot of money we would have to absorb,” she said.

She said she would be open to accepting debit “only if there was a way that we can get back the money that it costs us to run the debit cards.”

Mohammad Ahsan, owner of Fame Corner Mart on Pennsylvania Avenue in Bristol, Tennessee, also said he would be concerned about merchant fees on debit sales for lottery tickets, given that the amount he makes on each ticket is already fairly small to begin with.

While it doesn’t appear the rules in Tennessee are set to change anytime soon, data from the Virginia Lottery shows that debit purchases on its side of the border only account for a minor portion of purchases — at least from

what the commonwealth is able to track.

Over a 12-month period from June 2018 to May 2019, the Virginia Lottery made about \$2.28 billion in sales. Of this figure, recorded debit sales on state lottery self-service machines accounted for over \$43 million, about 1.89% of total purchases. The actual percentage of people using debit cards for tickets is likely higher, but the lottery currently doesn’t track clerk-assisted transactions made specifically with debit versus cash. It only has debit data for the self-service machines. Both cash and debit payments with clerks are counted together in the system, Virginia Lottery spokesman John Hagerty said.

During the same time period, debit sales at Virginia Lottery self-service machines accounted for \$163,258, about 1.32%, of nearly \$12.32 million in total lottery sales in Washington County, and \$45,749, about 0.65 %, of \$7.08 million in Bristol.

Out of just self-service sales, Washington County customers made about 6 percent of their purchases with debit, \$163,258 out

of about 2.71 million. In Bristol, debit accounted for about 6.6% of the self-service sales, \$45,749 out of about \$686,186 in sales.

The Virginia Lottery started using debit for its self-service machines last year, so the data is fairly new.

“The percentage does appear to be growing, but it’s clear that the vast majority of players prefer to use cash. Nevertheless, we’re happy to provide this feature for the consumers who find it more convenient,” Hagerty said via email.

But not all merchants in Virginia are taking debit cards.

Brian Self, co-owner of George & Sid’s off Commonwealth Avenue in Bristol, Virginia, said it’s cash-only store when it comes to lotto tickets.

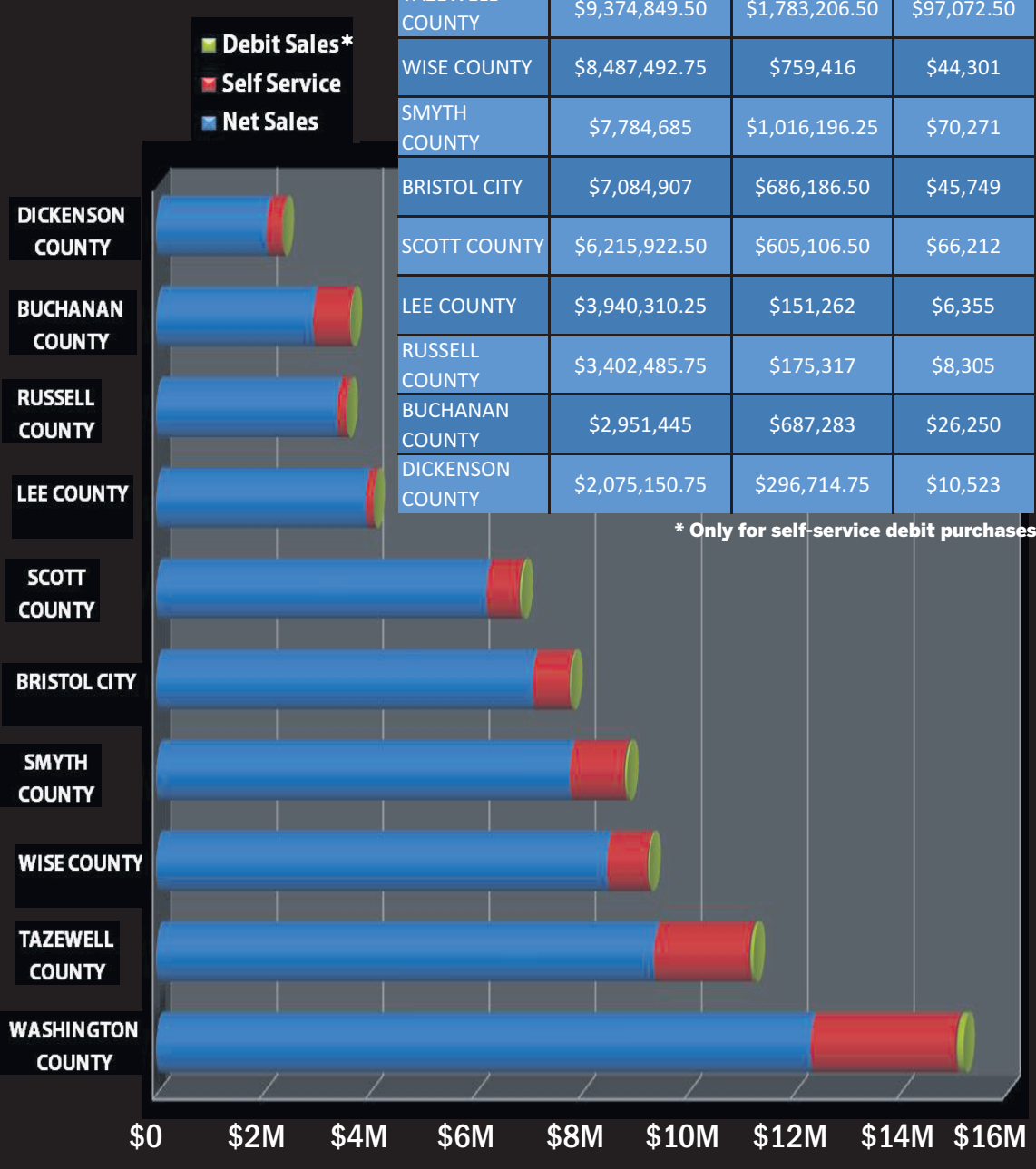
“It’s always been that way since I’ve been here,” Self said.

And despite what may be an inconvenience for customers who can’t use debit cards, some Tennessee-side store owners are hoping to keep a cash-only policy, too.

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## SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

Locality	Net Sales	Self Service	Debit Sales
WASHINGTON COUNTY	\$12,324,489.50	\$2,719,129.50	\$163,258.25
TAZEWELL COUNTY	\$9,374,849.50	\$1,783,206.50	\$97,072.50
WISE COUNTY	\$8,487,492.75	\$759,416	\$44,301
SMYTH COUNTY	\$7,784,685	\$1,016,196.25	\$70,271
BRISTOL CITY	\$7,084,907	\$686,186.50	\$45,749
SCOTT COUNTY	\$6,215,922.50	\$605,106.50	\$66,212
LEE COUNTY	\$3,940,310.25	\$151,262	\$6,355
RUSSELL COUNTY	\$3,402,485.75	\$175,317	\$8,305
BUCHANAN COUNTY	\$2,951,445	\$687,283	\$26,250
DICKENSON COUNTY	\$2,075,150.75	\$296,714.75	\$10,523



SOURCE: VIRGINIA LOTTERY | GRAPHICS BY SANDY ROSS/BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

## Sports

From Page A1

The Tennessee General Assembly passed a bill in April to legalize online sports betting only. It does not allow for brick-and-mortar sportsbooks.

Gov. Bill Lee let the bill become law but declined to sign it, saying he is “philosophically opposed to gambling and will not be lending my signature to support this cause.”

Supporters of the new law point to illegal online sports betting that already exists and say regulation will bring wagering into the sunshine.

“People are doing it anyway,” said Daniel Kustelski, CEO and co-founder of the Nashville-based company Chalkline Sports. “It’s really a function of whether or not the state wants to reap the rewards of the taxes.”

Kustelski, who has closely followed the development of sports betting laws, said the new rules can also offer better protections for players who have lacked protections with unregulated betting.

“It’s about putting together rules and regulations in order to manage sports betting and protect the customers,” he added.

The Tennessee Sports Gaming Act takes effect Monday. Here’s what we know so far:

### Who can play?

There’s two basic requirements you’ll need to meet if you want to place a bet — you need to be over 21 and physically present in the state when making a wager.

Most people should be able to place bets, but the new law lists several kinds of individuals who can’t participate due to inherent conflicts of interest, like a person who can impact the outcome of a game and professional athletes wagering on an event overseen by their sport’s governing body.

Sportsbooks will need to use geo-location and geo-fencing technology to ensure their online wagering services are only accessible from inside Tennessee.

### Where can you place bets?

An operator must obtain a license to operate in the state. However, the Tennessee Education Lottery Corp. — which is tasked with regulating online sports betting — is still “working to create the requirements and processes that will be necessary for the licensing and regulation of the online sports wagering,” said Kym Gerlock, the state lottery’s spokeswoman.

The law also calls for the creation of a nine-member sports wagering advisory council, which will advise the lottery corporation board on best practices in sports wagering and provide administrative and technical assistance.

Gerlock said she didn’t yet have a timeline for when the public can start placing bets, and that information will be posted on the Tennessee Lottery’s website as it becomes available.

DraftKings and FanDuel may be some of the sportsbooks eyeing an expansion into the Tennessee market. According to records from the Tennessee Ethics Commission, both companies had lobbyists registered in the state this year.

Kevin Hennessy, director of publicity for FanDuel, said in an email that “there is nothing to comment on at this time.”

DraftKings did not return an email seeking comment on sports betting in Tennessee.

### What can you bet on?

Rules vary across different states, but generally speaking, operators offer bets on professional football, basketball, golf, hockey, and soccer, among other sports. College basketball and football are also popular.

State law does prohibit a few types of wagers. Bets can’t be placed on injuries, penalties and other types of wagers deemed “contrary to public policy,” “unfair to consumers” or in violation of the state constitution.

In-game proposition bets are prohibited for collegiate sports. A “proposition bet,” or “prop bet,” is a bet on the occurrence or non-occurrence of an event during a game that doesn’t directly impact the game’s ultimate outcome [for example, whether a specific team will be the first to score in a game].

### Where will the money go?

The state will collect a 20% tax on the adjusted gross income of a licensee. Eighty percent of the tax revenue will go into the state’s “lottery for education account,” 15% will go toward local governments for infrastructure projects and 5% will go to the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to help people with problem gambling or gambling disorders.

State officials estimate Tennessee will collect about \$50 million in taxes and fees each year as a result of the new law. However, an Associated Press investigation earlier this year found that collected tax revenues were

lower than expected in four of six states that legalized sports betting.

### When can you start betting?

The state lottery hasn’t released a specific date for when consumers can expect sports betting to be up and running. An analysis by the General Assembly Fiscal Review Committee from April noted that “Due to the effective date of this legislation, it is assumed that sports gaming will not commence and be available to bettors until January 1, 2020.”

Kustelski, of Chalkline Sports, also said he doesn’t anticipate that consumers will be able to place online bets in Tennessee until the first quarter of 2020.

He cautions people in Tennessee to be aware of whether the online services they are using are legal and licensed to operate in the state.

“Sometimes, people hear that it is legal and so they think that every product on the internet where they can wager on sports is legal, but that’s simply not the case,” he said.

He added, “Just because it is legal does not mean that it is licensed and legal in Tennessee



# Number of new laws take effect in Va., Tenn., on Monday

**BY TIM DODSON**  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

A number of new statutes are set to take effect in Virginia and Tennessee on Monday, July 1.

Each state has new laws covering a range of topics, from how to classify electric scooters in Tennessee to happy hour advertising in Virginia.

Both states have new laws affecting car safety — for example, in Virginia, a child must be placed in a rear-facing safety seat while traveling in automobiles until they turn 2 or weigh enough to sit in a front-facing safety seat. Meanwhile, Tennessee will see a “hands-free law” take effect to curb distracted driving.

Virginia will also see a major change in tobacco regulations, with the minimum age for purchasing tobacco and vaping products being raised to 21. Tennessee’s minimum age is still at 18.

Here are a few of the new laws that take effect:

## VIRGINIA LAWS

**Disclosing lottery winners [HB 1650]**

If you win more than \$10 million from the Virginia Lottery, the state won’t be able to disclose your name, hometown and amount won — unless you give them permission. The state could previously disclose that information about individual winners [and they still can for people who win amounts less than \$10 million].

**Reduced tuition at UVA’s College at Wise [HB 1666]**

The board of visitors at the University of Virginia can now offer reduced tuition rates at UVA’s College at Wise for students who reside in the Appalachian region. The federal government defines the region as including parts of states as far south as Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi and as north as New York. The change will allow UVa-Wise to offer in-state tuition for residents in Appalachia.

**Happy hour advertising [HB 2073]**

Businesses can now advertise the prices of alcoholic beverages served during happy hours. They can also use “creative marketing techniques” as long

as the techniques “do not tend to induce overconsumption or consumption by minors.” According to the Virginia ABC, licensed establishments can use phrases like “Wine Down Wednesday” and “Thirsty Thursday.” However, the ABC says businesses still can’t advertise “two-for-one” and “bottomless” drink specials.

**Tobacco products and nicotine vapor products [SB 1727]**

You now need to be at least 21 years old to buy tobacco, nicotine and alternative nicotine products. The law allows a narrow exception for active duty military personnel who are 18 or older.

**Child safety seats [HB 708]**

Last year, the Virginia General Assembly passed a law that requires children to be in rear-facing safety seats until the age of 2 or they reach a minimum weight for a forward-facing safety seat. Children under 8 must be secured in a safety or booster seat. More information on safety seats can be found on the Department of Motor Vehicles’ website at [dmvNOW.com](#).

**TENNESSEE LAWS**

**“Hands Free Law” [HB0164]**

This “Hands Free Law” prohibits drivers in Tennessee from using or holding their cell phone while operating a motor vehicle. The law also prohibits drivers from texting and watching videos while behind the wheel, although an exception exists for “viewing data related to the navigation of the motor vehicle.” Reporter Robert Sorrell will take a closer look at this new law in Monday’s edition of the Bristol Herald Courier.

**“Lemonade Stand Bill” [SB 0433]**

Referred to as the “Lemonade Stand Bill,” this new law prohibits a locality from requiring a license, fee, permit or other form of regulation for a business operated by a person under 18 on private property, with the owner’s permission. This applies to businesses generating gross receipts of \$3,000 or less annually.

**Minimum age for marriage [HB0189]**

This law prohibits a marriage license from being issued to an

applicant younger than 17. The state previously allowed licenses to be issued for people who were at least 16 but under 18, with the consent of their parent or guardian. The new law also specifically defines “parent” or “parents” as “a person or persons listed as a parent on the child’s birth certificate or who have been adjudicated to be the legal parent of the child by a court of competent jurisdiction.”

**Electric scooters [SB 1107]**

This law establishes that an electric foot scooter will be considered a motor-driven vehicle under the state’s DUI laws. If you drive an electric scooter — like a Bird or a Lime — while under the influence, you can be charged with DUI.

**Required civics test [HB 1016]**

To earn their diploma, high school students will be required to pass a civics test covering American government, history and civics. Students need to answer at least 70% of the questions correctly to pass.

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## Betting

From Page A6

yet. And licensed and legal operators will only be operating in Q1 [of 2020], so if you are betting on sports right now, you’re probably doing it illegally, if you’re living in the state of Tennessee.”

**What happens to the rule breakers?**

A licensee who fails to follow the law — for example, by accepting wagers from minors or people otherwise ineligible to place sports bets — can be investigated by the lottery corporation board and face administrative fines. The board can also revoke licenses.

The law prohibits the transmis-

sion of non-public information [like playbooks or confidential medical information] for the purpose of wagering. Violating this ban can result in a Class A misdemeanor. People who violate ineligibility rules, like an athlete betting on their own sport, can also potentially face misdemeanor charges.

Sullivan County District Attorney General Barry Staubus said he doesn’t anticipate dealing with many criminal cases resulting from the law and that most of its provisions call for administrative fines in response to violations. Nevertheless, he acknowledges it’s a new statute for the state.

“How it will play out, we’ll just have to see,” he said.

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## New Jersey tops Nevada in sports betting volume in May, leads nation

**BY WAYNE PARRY**  
The Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Here’s all you need to know about how fast sports betting is growing in New Jersey: the state took in more sports bets last month than Nevada did to lead the nation.

According to gambling regulators in both states, New Jersey saw \$318.9 million worth of bets, edging past Nevada, which took \$317.4 million.

From those bets, New Jer-

sey casinos and racetracks made \$15.5 million in revenue, compared to \$11.6 million in Nevada.

New Jersey won a U.S. Supreme Court case in May 2018 that cleared the way for all 50 states to offer legal sports betting should they so choose.

And it jumped into the market with both feet with the goal of dethroning Nevada as the sports betting capital of America.

“I predicted this a long time ago,” said Raymond Lesniak, a former New Jersey state senator who led his state’s decade-long effort to legalize sports betting by overturning a federal law prohibiting it in most places. “The Northeast is a hotbed of sports betting. We are going to leave Nevada in the dust and never look back.”

Jay Kornegay, head of the Westgate SuperBook in Las Vegas, said it is possible New Jersey could maintain a lead over Nevada due in part to its larger population.



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## JOINT INVESTIGATION



TBI Director David Rausch speaks during a press conference announcing the Sullivan County Drug Related Death Task Force. With Rausch are (from left) Kingsport Police Chief David Quillin, Sullivan County Sheriff Jeff Cassidy, Sullivan County District Attorney General Barry Staubus and Bristol Tennessee Police Chief Blaine Wade.

DAVID CRIGGER/BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

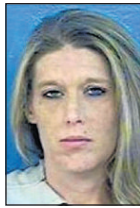
# Murder charge

Task force's efforts lead to arrest in overdose death of Bristol woman

BY ROBERT SORRELL  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

**B**LOUNTVILLE, Tenn. — Investigative efforts of the newly formed Sullivan County Drug Related Death Task Force resulted in the arrest of a Kingsport, Tennessee, woman charged with murder in the overdose death of a Bristol woman.

Tonya Gray, 38, was indicted by a Sullivan County grand jury Nov. 6 on charges of second-degree murder, three counts of sale of heroin, one count of delivery of heroin, one count of sale of fentanyl and one count of delivery of fentanyl, according to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation. Back in late July, detectives from



Gray

the Bristol Tennessee Police Department initiated an investigation into the death of a 28-year-old woman who appeared to have overdosed, according to TBI Director David Rausch, who spoke during a news conference Tuesday afternoon at the Sullivan County Justice Center in Blountville.

The woman, Lyndsey Keesee, died of a fentanyl and heroin overdose in Bristol on July 20. Gray is accused of selling heroin and fentanyl on July 19-20, the indictment states.

the Bristol Tennessee Police Department initiated an investigation into the death of a 28-year-old woman who appeared to have overdosed, according to TBI

“Bristol detectives reached out to the Sullivan County Drug Related Death Task Force, and as a result of that partnership, murder charges have been placed against the person who sold the deadly combination of heroin and fentanyl to the victim,” said Rausch, who previously launched a similar task force in Knoxville, where he earlier served as police chief.

Gray was arrested last Thursday by the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office and is being held at the county jail on \$100,000 bail.

The new Sullivan County Drug Related Death Task Force

See **MURDER**, Page A6

# GOP assails security aide who reported Trump's call

BY LISA MASCARO  
and MARY CLARE JALONICK  
The Associated Press



**WASHINGTON** — A career Army officer on Donald Trump's National Security Council testified Tuesday he was duty-bound to object to the president's clearly “improper” phone call seeking Ukrainian investigations of U.S. Democrats. Republicans answered him with doubts about his loyalty to the United States.

Arriving on Capitol Hill in military blue with medals across his chest, Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman told impeachment investigators he felt no hesitation in reporting the president's request of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Vindman, a 20-year military officer who received a Purple Heart for being wounded in the Iraq War, was among the officials who listened in to the July 25 call when Trump asked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for “a favor” — investigations of Democrat Joe Biden and other issues.

“It was inappropriate, it was improper for the president to request, to demand an investigation into a political opponent,” Vindman told the House Intelligence Committee.

His testimony launched a pivotal week as the House's historic impeachment in-

vestigation reaches further into Trump's White House.

Democrats say Trump's pressure on Ukraine to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden while withholding U.S. military aid to Kyiv may be grounds for removing the 45th president. Republicans have argued both that there was no linkage between the two matters and that there would be nothing inappropriate even if there was.

In a remarkable day of back-to-back hearings, Vindman testified alongside Jennifer Williams, an adviser in Vice President Mike Pence's office. Both said they had concerns as they listened to Trump speak with the newly elected Ukrainian president about political investigations into Biden.

Trump insists Zelenskyy did not feel pressured and has cast the impeachment probe as a partisan affair aimed at pushing him from office. The White House lashed out at the Army officer.

It wasn't the first time Vindman was alarmed over the administration's push to have Ukraine investigate Democrats, he testified.

See **TRUMP**, Page A7

## INSIDE



**Elderly Bristol man dies in house fire** » A3

Thank you, **Susanne Martin**, for subscribing to the Bristol Herald Courier.



# Report: Va.'s Appalachian counties lagged behind state in post-recession job growth

BY TIM DODSON  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Although Virginia experienced statewide employment growth in the years after the Great Recession, the state's portion of the federally designated Appalachian Region lagged behind the rest of the state, and there was a slight decline in employment between 2012 and 2017, according to recently released research.

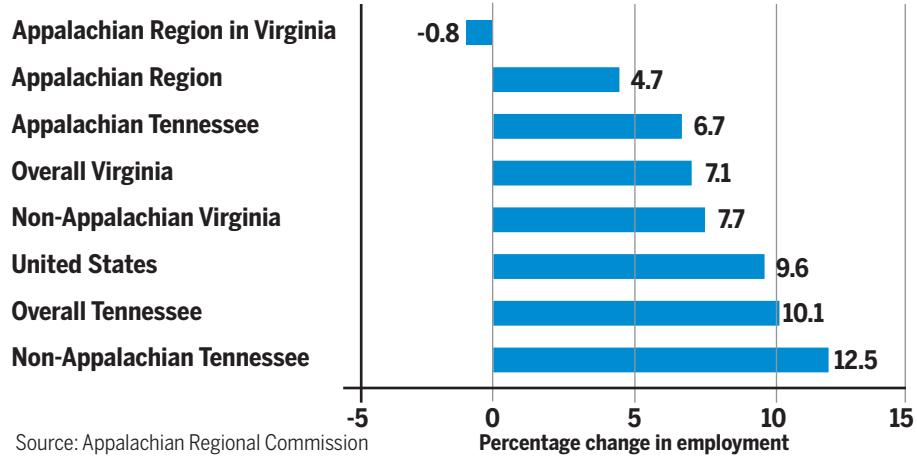
This finding was part of a nearly 200-page report the Appalachian Regional

Commission (ARC) published last week that examined employment and earnings across 15 broad industrial categories in the Appalachian Region. This territory includes 420 counties in 13 states, including parts of Virginia and Tennessee.

“Understanding where we are seeing growth and in which sectors helps guide our investments toward a resilient and strong Appalachian economy,” ARC Co-Chairman

See **REPORT**, Page A7

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN TOTAL EMPLOYMENT, 2012-2017



Source: Appalachian Regional Commission

BRISTOL HERALD COURIER GRAPHIC BY ROBERT ALLEN, TIM DODSON

INSIDE: CLASSIFIED B8-10 | COMICS B6 | DEATHS A4-5 | OPINION A8 | SCOREBOARD B2 | TELEVISION B5

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# Report

From Page A1

Tim Thomas said in a news release about the report, which looked at trends from 2002-2017. Between 2012 and 2017, Virginia's Appalachian counties had a 0.8% decrease in employment, compared to 7.7% positive growth in the state's non-Appalachian counties, according to the report. Overall, Virginia saw a 7.1% rise in employment in 2012-2017. The Appalachian region of Virginia includes 25 counties and eight cities, from Lee County in the far southwest corner extending east to Henry County and north to Highland County.

Tennessee also saw a disparity between its Appalachian counties and the rest of the state, but its portion of the Appalachian region experienced positive employment growth. Between 2012 and 2017, Appalachian Tennessee experienced 6.7% growth, and

the rest of the state saw a 12.5% increase in employment, according to a statewide snapshot from ARC.

The entire Appalachian Region experienced 4.7% employment growth over this time period, trailing the country as a whole, which had a 9.6% increase. Across the region, employment has been shifting toward sectors like professional and technical services, health and social services and tourism-related jobs, ARC noted in its news release.

In Virginia's Appalachia counties, professional and technical services saw the most positive change among the sectors the report analyzed, with 5% growth between 2012 and 2017, according to a statewide summary ARC published. But the state's Appalachian counties also experienced a 37% drop in "coal, gas, and other mining" jobs, from nearly 8,000 to 5,000 jobs over the five-year period.

A report ARC published last

year identified competition from lower natural gas prices and regulations that have increased the cost of burning coal for electricity as some of the factors driving down coal demand.

In a recent interview, the leader of the state agency in charge of administering Virginia's ARC program did not seem surprised by the latest findings that Appalachian counties lag behind the rest of the state.

"There is a rural growth challenge and a rural economic development challenge," said Erik Johnston, director of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. "I think Virginia, though, and especially the ARC region of Virginia, has some positive signs that it is trying to tackle that challenge."

Johnston cited the work of GO Virginia, a bipartisan economic development initiative with a focus on creating more high-paying jobs throughout the state.

A more recent slight employ-

ment decline was similarly reported in a growth and diversification plan published in August by GO Virginia Region One, which covers 13 counties and three cities in the southwest corner of the state. That report cited data showing a 0.2% drop in employment over the four quarters ending in December 2018.

But this report also highlighted employment growth in 2017 and 2018 in advanced manufacturing, food and beverage manufacturing and energy and minerals, which are three of the four key target industries the initiative identified for Region One. The fourth, information technology, saw a small decline in employment.

"Overall, the region is being really diligent in focusing on those target sectors," Johnston said.

A number of other efforts are also focused on economic development across the region. Marketing initiative InvestSWVA is working to attract more high-tech

jobs to the area. Local and state leaders hope that the arrival of Amazon's second headquarters in Northern Virginia may also benefit the southwest region of the state, which company executives visited in October. And the federal government's Abandoned Mine Land Pilot Program is slated to award \$10 million in grants to projects that would redevelop former coal sites in Virginia with new uses.

Diversifying the region's industries and employment opportunities is a key part of ongoing economic development efforts, said Amanda Love, public relations director for the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

"Everybody together is working across agencies, across federal, state and local [government] — it's really a combination effort all the way through," she said.

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# Trump

From Page A1

He highlighted a July 10 meeting at the White House when Ambassador Gordon Sondland told visiting Ukraine officials they would need to "deliver" before next steps — a meeting Zelenskyy wanted with Trump.

"Ambassador Sondland referred to investigations into the Bidens and Burisma in 2016," he testified, referring to the gas company in Ukraine where Joe Biden's son Hunter served on the board.

On both occasions, Vindman said, he took his concerns about the shifting Ukraine policy to the lead counsel at the NSC, John Eisenberg.

An immigrant who came to the U.S. as a toddler from Ukraine, Vindman opened his testimony by assuring his father that in America

he would be "fine for telling the truth."

Yet Vindman spent long stretches fielding Republican attacks on his loyalty and his career in public service. The Republicans' lead counsel asked at one point about an offer he got from a Ukrainian official to become the country's defense minister.

Vindman called it "comical" and said he swiftly reported it up his chain of command.

"I'm an American," Vindman said. "And I immediately dismissed these offers."

Later Tuesday, the House committee heard from former NSC official Timothy Morrison and Kurt Volker, the former Ukraine special envoy, who said he hadn't understood the scope of the investigations Sondland and Rudy Giuliani, the president's personal attorney, were pursuing for Trump.

Sondland, the U.S. am-

bassador to the European Union, is to appear Wednesday as the most-anticipated witness yet.

At the White House, Trump said he watched part of the day's testimony and slammed the ongoing impeachment hearings as a "disgrace." Over the weekend, he had assailed Williams as part of the "Never

Trumpers" who oppose his presidency, though there is no indication she has shown any partisanship.

Vindman was ready to defend his loyalty to the United States. When the top Republican on the committee, Rep. Devin Nunes, addressed him as "Mr. Vindman," the colonel reminded him to address him by his rank.

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Thursday, November 28	Monday, November 25 - 2:00 PM
Friday, November 29	Tuesday, November 26 - 2:00 PM
Sunday, December 1 Society	Tuesday, November 26 - 12:00 Noon
Saturday, November 30	Tuesday, November 26 - 4:00 PM
Sunday, December 1	Wednesday, November 27 - 11:00 AM

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