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# SMITH MOUNTAIN EAGLE



SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE, VIRGINIA ■ WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2021

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## Reversal: Masks back at schools

### All Bedford County students required to wear masks

Bedford County Public Schools issued the following statement Sunday regarding an updated mask requirement:

Upon further consultation with legal counsel and with the support of a majority of the Bedford County School Board, the superintendent has updated the school division's health and safety mitigations to require that masks be universally worn by all students, staff, teachers, and visitors to our schools, regardless of vaccination status.

This requirement applies to all upcoming open houses, orientations, and other gatherings planned for this week. The change to require universal indoor masking follows recent

See **BEDFORD**, Page 8

### Franklin County providing exemptions; no proof needed

**WILLIAM SEIDEL**  
Smith Mountain Eagle

The Franklin County School Board have reversed course after its 6-1 vote to make masks optional for the students. After updated CDC guide-

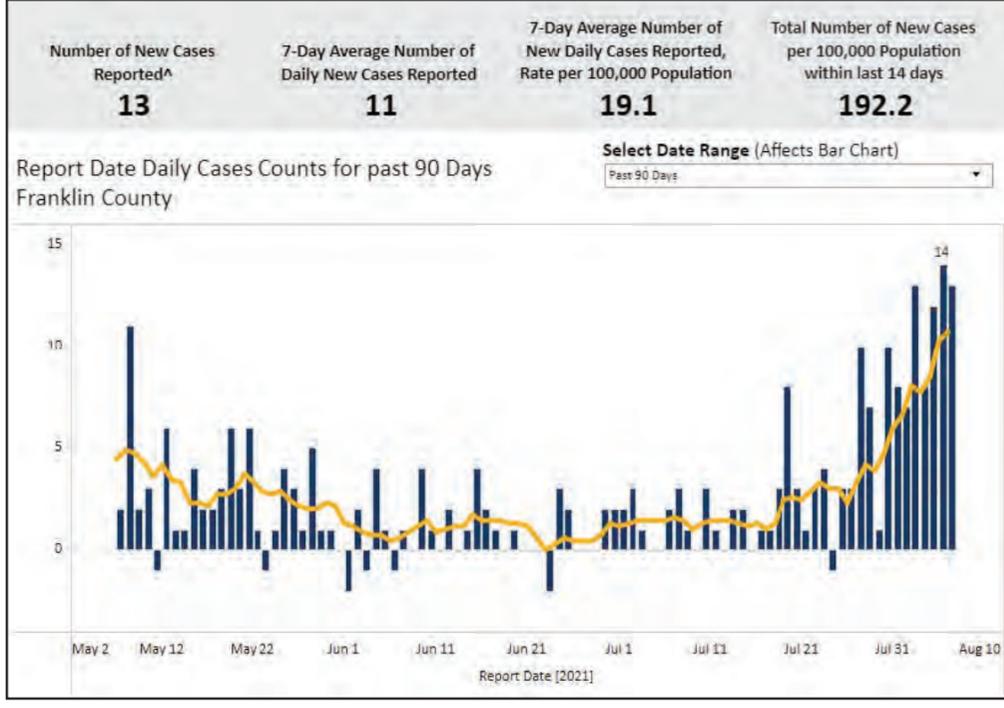
lines recommended anyone vaccinated or unvaccinated wear a mask, masks are now required for K-12 students with exemptions for health and religious reasons that don't require documentation.

P.D. Hambrick made

the motion after receiving clarification that they could not require documentation for anyone with health or religious exemption. The board voted in favor of the motion. This

See **FRANKLIN**, Page 8

## COVID-19 cases on the rise



On Friday, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) reports approximately 13 reported new COVID-19 cases in Franklin County. VDH reminds citizens the COVID-19 vaccine is available at the VDH offices and at all area pharmacies where walk in service is welcomed with no appointments needed.

## Summer, we hardly knew ye: Students return today

**JEFFREY WESTBROOK**  
Smith Mountain Eagle

Just as it seems to do every year starting the day summer vacation begins, time appeared to speed up, and once again students are packing up their school bags and climbing onto their great yellow buses for the start of another academic year. And so (borrowing from the title of an Irish folk song, "Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye"), the summer vacation abruptly ends just as we enter the dog days of August.

Yet perhaps it is with slightly less melancholy hearts that stu-

dents and teachers bid adieu to vacation this year as they anticipate a return to normalcy — or at least partial normalcy — following the challenges and restrictions of the 2020-21 academic year.

Some of that anticipated normalcy — no more mask mandates — evaporated earlier this week as both Franklin and Bedford County Public Schools abruptly changed their policies to require masks again, citing CDC guidelines. The CDC has flipped its mask guidelines yet again.

See **SCHOOL**, Page 9

## National Night Out returns to Westlake

**WILLIAM SEIDEL**  
Smith Mountain Eagle

When the 2020 National Night Out event was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) and the citizens missed out on a special annual event that brings both of them together. Not so this year.

The event at Westlake Cinema averages close to 400 in attendance. It has been held there for the past 5-6 years except last year.

Deputy Sheriff and Community Coordinator H.L. Nolen said the event in Franklin County became so popular that they outgrew where they originally held

**Inside**  
See more photos on Page 12.

it, which was at Walmart in Rocky Mount and the Rocky Mount Police Department.

Nolen, who is in his 46th year as a deputy sheriff, said when Sheriff Bill Overton took over almost 10 years ago, he made it a priority for the police department in Franklin County to get involved with community

outreach by giving back to them, which is why the event has expanded to what it is today.

"It's worked out really well," Nolen said.

The two-hour event Aug. 3 not only included food vendors, sections for kids, and displays, but there was a setup of all the FCSO divisions in Franklin County, which featured FCSO staff interacting with citizens. That aspect of the event is one of the main reasons it's held.

National Night Out shows the community all areas of the police department and how they operate. Nolen said that a lot of

See **NIGHT OUT**, Page 8



Pictured are kids waiting to get their balloon hat and swords from an officer with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office at the National Night Out event Aug. 3 at Westlake Cinema.

## She Doos celebrates 20-year anniversary

**WILLIAM SEIDEL**  
Smith Mountain Eagle



Above is a cake for She Doos' 20-year celebration Thursday at the Landing Restaurant at Mariners Landing. At right are current and former members raising their glass for a toast.



The She Doos, a group of women in their mid-50s to late-80s, celebrated their 20th anniversary at the Landing Restaurant at Mariners Landing on Thursday, Aug. 5. As usual, the members, and former members, were decked out in their lime green shirts and reminisced on the memories they have made the past 20 years.

Founder DeeDee Bondurant, who was one of the pioneers who created

See **SHE DOOS**, Page 4

Vol.37, No. 32

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Mattox Jalbert/  
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Kate Blenkinship  
puts pie in  
the face of  
Tyler Hanf's  
father, Mike  
Hanf, at the  
Riding for  
Tyler #cure-  
FOP event  
Sunday in  
Moneta.



## First big event held for local child with rare FOP disease

WILLIAM SEIDEL  
Smith Mountain Eagle

More than 400 people showed up to the Riding for Tyler #cure-FOP event Sunday in Moneta and enjoyed a variety of activities such as face painting, horse riding, cornhole, frisbee and more.

Back in November, Tyler Hanf, who attends Benjamin Franklin Middle School, was diagnosed with one of the rarest diseases known to man called Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP). With less than 1,000 known cases worldwide and one in two million people per birth, the chances anyone comes across an individual with FOP are slim to none.

Hanf's parents, Mike and Kim Hanf, knew that FOP didn't get the recognition or awareness it needed, and they can speak on that from their own personal

See **FOP**, Page A10



James Abscher/Contributed

Tyler Hanf, who was diagnosed with one of the rarest diseases known to man called Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP), rides a horse at the Riding for Tyler #cureFOP event Sunday in Moneta.

## Water/sewer rate increase OK'd for area

At the April 20 board meeting of the Bedford Regional Water Authority (Authority), the board of directors approved a rate increase for fiscal 2021-2022. These rates will go into effect June 1 and will be utilized for all billing statements after June 30.

A public hearing was held during the meeting to allow the public to comment or ask questions about the rates. The rates were previously advertised in March along with them being posted on the Authority's website.

No members of the public attended the meeting to speak during the hearing. After the public hearing closed, the board approved the rates in a unanimous 7-0 vote.

The average customer using 4,000 gallons of water a month will see a rate increase of approximately \$2.53 for water and \$2.17 for sewer. The modified rates also include a new rate for bulk fill stations of \$12 per every 1,000 gallons used.

See **RATES**, Page A9

## Cigarette tax proposal snuffed out

WILLIAM SEIDEL  
Smith Mountain Eagle

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to axe the proposed tobacco tax bill at their monthly meeting Tuesday, April 20.

Last year, the General Assembly passed legislation that authorized counties to implement a cigarette tax up to 40 cents per pack on July 1.

The proposed cigarette tax would have been 15 cents per pack, and the tax collection was estimated to be \$75,000, accord-

ing to Finance Director Brian Carter. The new cigarette tax would have been implemented, if approved, by Jan. 1, 2022.

A few convenience store owners signed up to speak at the meeting to voice their disapproval of the cigarette tax. One of these owners was Jay Patel.

"If the cigarette price goes up, the revenue goes down," he said.

The board of supervisors voiced the same opinion as the convenience store owners, as

See **TAX**, Page A10

## SMLCA sports fields given OK

WILLIAM SEIDEL  
Smith Mountain Eagle

On Monday, April 26, the Bedford County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to allow a special use permit for Eastlake Community Church (ECC) to implement three athletic fields that will be used by Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy.

Supervisors Mickey Johnson and Edgar Tuck abstained from voting due to their affiliation with ECC.

On March 16, ECC was one step closer after the

Bedford County Planning Commission unanimously voted in favor and sent it to the board of supervisors for the final say. Now with Monday's vote, ECC can officially move through with their plans.

"It feels good. I'm anxious to see all the excavating start to take place," said SMLCA Athletic Director Mike Greathouse, who attended Monday's meeting.

Doyle Allen, who took part in the design plans for the fields, said the conceptual layout was a fairly

See **SMLCA**, Page A10



Contributed

Shown is the plan for fields (in green) that will be constructed near Eastlake Community Church (bottom right) and will be used by Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy.

## Fire results in the death of two pets, displacement

A residential structure fire occurred Tuesday, April 20, on the 100 block of Pinetree Lane in Bedford County, resulting in the death of two pets and displacement of two adults and one child.

At about 1:17 p.m., Companies 1 (Bedford, first due), 8 (Moneta, second due), and 13 (Stewartsville-Chamblissburg, RIT) were dispatched to the fire, according to the Bedford Fire Department.

Engine 1 (with four) arrived to find moderate smoke showing from a single-story mobile home. Engine 1 passed command and assumed Division 1 as fire attack as Ladder 1 (with three) arrived and began the primary search. Tanker 1 (with three) established command and assumed water supply.

The fire was found in the walls and ceiling and brought under control within 15 minutes of arrival, according to the fire department. Ladder 1 quickly located two pets but despite resuscitation efforts, both perished from



Bedford Fire Department/Contributed

Shown is damage to a home caused by a structure fire Tuesday, April 20, on the 100 block of Pinetree Lane in Bedford County that resulted in the death of two pets and displacement of two adults and one child.

smoke inhalation.

With the fire marked under control and overhaul completed, command placed Wagon 8 and Rescue 13 back in service.

The Red Cross is providing temporary shelter for the adults and child who were displaced by the fire.

According to Responding Fire, also responding

to the incident were Medic 14-1 BCOFR, Medic 14-8 BCOFR, Squad 8 Moneta, County 10 BCOFR and Bedford County Fire Marshals Office.



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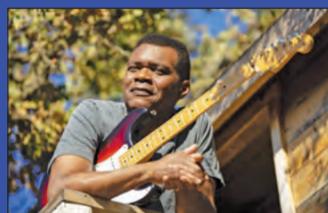
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## 'It was the best yet'



William Seidel/Smith Mountain Eagle

Crews members of this pirate ship throw water balloons at others during the water battle event Saturday on Smith Mountain Lake.

## Pirate Days a big hit

WILLIAM SEIDEL  
Smith Mountain Eagle

Pirate Days is a tradition that started less than 10 years ago at Smith Mountain Lake and has grown in events and popularity every year. This year was no exception, especially coming off last year that was hampered with COVID-19 restrictions.

"We really do think, overall, it was the best yet," said P.J. Nagel, who is the SML Pirate Days coordinator.

Nagel said that all activities that were indoors last

See **PIRATES**, Page 9



William Seidel/Smith Mountain Eagle

A group of pirates enter the Pirate's Ball on Friday at Mango's Bar and Grill.

William Seidel/  
Smith Mountain Eagle

Pirates enjoy a pancake breakfast at the Pancakes with Pirates event at Mexican Viejo on Saturday. At the head of the table is P.J. Nagel, who is the SML Pirate Days coordinator.



## Pancakes with Pirates revised

WILLIAM SEIDEL  
Smith Mountain Eagle

The Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce (SMLRCC) hosted Pancakes with Pirates at Mexican Viejo on Saturday. It was an event that exceeded expectations, according

to events manager Erin Stanley, who coordinated the event and wanted to try something different.

Originally, the event was held at Mango's Bar & Grill, and it was just someone grabbing a plate of pancakes and finding a table to sit at. This time, she wanted to put

more of a restaurant feel to it.

"I wanted to give people a change of scenery," she said.

Families could come out and enjoy a breakfast meal of pancakes, but kids also were treated to some special treats. Outside,

See **PANCAKES**, Page 12

## Poker run raises money for SVCAC

WILLIAM SEIDEL  
Smith Mountain Eagle

The Southern Virginia Child Advocacy Center (SVCAC) in Rocky Mount will receive a donation as a result of the Paddle Sports Poker Run event at Crazy Horse Marina that was set up by court-appointed special advocate (CASA) Sue



Contributed

Participants at the Paddle Sports Poker Run event Sunday at Crazy Horse Marina makes their last stop.

Vol. 37, No. 29  
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## No Wakesurfing Zone proposal creates waves of controversy

JEFFREY WESTBROOK  
Smith Mountain Eagle

The Tri-County Lakes Administrative Commission (TLAC) is receiving some pushback concerning its proposed policy involving No Wakesurfing zones around Smith Mountain Lake and Leesville Lake.

The commission is seeking public input via an online survey about a proposed policy involving No Wakesurfing zones. The policy, which the Navigation Committee of TLAC developed, would allow lakeside residents to create no wakesurfing zones and outlines the procedures re-

quired to establish those zones.

At TLAC's June board meeting, citizens and board members spoke for and against the policy in an extensive discussion. Given the sharply divided stances and concerns that were voiced — resulting in the board's reluctance to approve the policy — board member David Smitherman, Pittsylvania County Administrator, proposed seeking further public input before making decisions. The board voted unanimously in favor of that motion.

For those not familiar with

See **WAKE**, Page 8

## Musician dies in Huddleston wreck

At 12:27 a.m. Monday, Virginia State Police responded to a fatal crash in the Huddleston area of Bedford County near Huddleston Market (formerly Robbie's Store).

The two-vehicle crash occurred near the intersection of Wyatts Way and Thornbird Place.

According to state police, there is one confirmed fatality, and the crash remains under investigation.

The identity of the deceased has not been officially released

as of press time, but according to sources, that person was Jacob Doss, 19, of Hurt.

Doss was a guitarist and singer for The Jacob Doss Project band. He had just played at the Twisted Track Brewpub in Roanoke on Sunday.

According to the Huddleston Volunteer Fire Department, the road was shut down for an extended period of time during the incident.

See **WRECK**, Page 6

## Small business spotlight SML's Pier 122 offers fresh menu options

JEFFREY WESTBROOK  
Smith Mountain Eagle

Good news has arrived for seafood lovers in the Smith Mountain Lake area. A new seafood restaurant has opened: Pier 122, located at 60 Firstwatch Drive in Moneta (a mile south of Bridgewater Plaza).

Brigette Ashburn Joyce opened Pier 122 on May 8. She co-owns the restaurant with her husband, Charles Joyce, who works full time for Davenport in

Rocky Mount.

The restaurant offers a number of special touches that are sure to please diners. It makes its own cocktail sauce (with bourbon, she pointed out), tartar sauce and hush puppies. The batter on fried foods is unique.

"Everything we batter is different from anywhere else," Joyce noted. "We use a thinner batter, which makes a thin, crispy coating."

See **PIER**, Page 8



William Seidel/Smith Mountain Eagle

Pier 122, located at 60 Firstwatch Drive in Moneta (a mile south of Bridgewater Plaza), has opened.

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