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Fire destroys SML home garage



Moneta Volunteer Fire Department/Contributed
Moneta Volunteer Fire Department (Company 8) was dispatched just after 4 p.m. Thursday for a loud explosion with black smoke visible. With a large column of black smoke on the horizon, the incident was upgraded to a working fire by Company 8 officers. Units arrived to find a fully involved detached garage with exposures to a vehicle, a water craft, and other property. Units operated for around three hours with no injuries reported. Units on scene were Engine 8, Brush 82, Wagon 7, Tanker 7, Attack 7, Brush 7, Ladder 1, Tanker 1, Medic 14-8, Medic 8-4, FM1 and Training 1.



Huddleston Volunteer Fire Department/Contributed
Shown is a cropped still image from a video of a garage fire Thursday. Huddleston Volunteer Fire Department (Company 7) dispatched as second due to a garage fire with Company 8 (Moneta) first due. Wagon 7, Tanker 7, Attack 7, Fire-Rescue 7 and Utility 7 responded from Huddleston.

Bedford Co. schools not banning hot topic books

WILLIAM SEIDEL
Smith Mountain Eagle

Bedford County Public Schools have decided not to ban any of the 11 library books that some county citizens requested to be removed from the high schools due to content being inappropriate for school-aged children.

The books that were reviewed include: "Beloved," "The Bluest Eye," "The Kite Runner," "The Glass Castle," "#MurderTrending," "Freaky," "All Boys Aren't Blue," "Love Drudded," "What My

Mother Doesn't Know," "Beautiful Music for Ugly Children," and "Rick." Another book that was mentioned with the other books was "Two Boys Kissing"; however, that book is not in any of the Bedford County public schools.

Reasons for these books making the list, according to comments by citizens at previous meetings, include violent content, sexual content, a 17-year old transgender, etc.

Dr. Shawn Trosper, who is the director of curriculum

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Man to serve 30 months for ATM skimming

A Romanian national, who traveled to the United States and participated in an ATM skimming conspiracy that included Roanoke, Rocky Mount and Vinton, was sentenced March 7 to 30 months in prison.

Marius Catalui, 47, pleaded guilty in June 2021 to one count of access device fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft.



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Catalui

\$10K spent with stolen cards

Contributed
A Bedford County resident had their credit/debit cards stolen from their vehicle on March 6, according to the Bedford County Sheriff's Office. These cards were used at numerous Lynchburg retail stores within minutes of being stolen, totaling nearly \$10,000. This number is expected to grow as other transactions post before the cards were canceled.

If anyone recognizes the male and/or female pictured, contact Investigator Burnette at 540-586-7827 or 540-586-4800 ext. 4066 with any tips or information. One can also submit a tip to Central Virginia Crime Stoppers via phone at 1-888-798-5900, online at <http://p3tips.com>, or the PSTIPS3 app on a mobile device. Those who offer tips via Crime Stoppers remain anonymous and could receive a cash reward of up to \$1,000.



Patio furniture stolen



Contributed
The Bedford County Sheriff's Office is seeking the public's assistance in reference to a larceny of patio furniture that occurred on March 6 from NextHome245 located at 18292 Forest Road. The larceny occurred from their business during the nighttime hours. Shown is the suspect vehicle. If anyone recognizes this vehicle and/or have information on the crime, notify dispatch with attention to Investigator Maddox at 540-586-7827 or Central Virginia Crime Stoppers at 1-888-798-5900. One can also enter a tip online at <http://p3tips.com> or use the P3TIPS app on a mobile device. Crime Stopper callers remain anonymous and could receive a cash reward up to \$1,000.

Small business spotlight Moneta Tractor & Trailer hosts event

WILLIAM SEIDEL
Smith Mountain Eagle

Moneta Tractor & Trailer, which is owned by Scott and Kate Heath, hosted its second annual open house/customer appreciation day Saturday. The event was to look at the equipment lines at Moneta Tractor & Trailer and the big sales the owners had on them.

"It's to jumpstart our locals who are planning on buying a tractor and save a few thousand

dollars," said Scott Heath.

Scott Heath has owned Moneta Tractor & Trailer with his wife for about six years and said the event was considered for a few years before they decided to pull the trigger on moving forward with it.

Lasting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the open house event, despite the chilling temperatures and wind, still had a sizable crowd throughout the day. Those in

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Shown is the crew from Moneta Tractor & Trailer. From left are Dennis Dellis, Joyce Walker, Kevin Feagans, Andy Self, and Kate and Scott Heath (owners).



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Radford

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Appearing on the Dean's List is the most prestigious academic recognition Radford University students can receive for their performance during a semester. Students will be placed on the Dean's List if they meet four specific criteria. They must have 12 semester hours of coursework graded A-F; earn GPAs of at least 3.4 for all courses not graded on a pass-fail basis; obtain no grade lower than "C"; and no incomplete grades.

Radford University is a public university of 8,998 students that has received national recognition for many of its undergraduate and graduate academic programs, as well as its sustainability initiatives. Well known for its faculty/student bonds, use of technology in the learning environment and student life on a 211-acre American classical campus, Radford University offers students many opportunities to get involved and succeed in and out of the classroom.

With over 300 clubs and organizations, Radford University offers many

opportunities for student engagement, leadership development and community service. In addition to robust academic offerings and engaging student experiences on the main campus located in Radford, Virginia, Radford University also offers a clinical-based educational experience for more than 1,100 students living and learning in Roanoke, Virginia, as part of Radford University Carilion, a public-private partnership focused on the cutting-edge delivery of health sciences programming, outreach and service.

Books

Continued from Page 1

and instruction at Bedford County Public Schools, held four separate committee meetings, one in December, one in January, and two in February to review the books and came to the decision to not remove any of them from the library. All 11 of the books were found in Jefferson Forest High School's library, 5 of 11 books are in Liberty High School's library, and 4 of 11 are found in Staunton River High School's library.

Chief Learning Officer Karen Woodford said most of the books are available in the library for enjoy-

ment reading rather than instructional reading. She also said that if there are parents who do not want their children checking out any of these books, then the librarian of the school will honor their decision.

"Parents or guardians should make that request known to the school librarian, and they'll make sure they don't check them out," Woodford said.

On Thursday, District 4 representative Marcus Hill asked if the vote from the committees were unanimous to keep the books, and Trospen said he could say "comfortably" that there were very little disagreements to keep the books on the shelf.

Hill then asked if a student has to check out a book to read it in the library, or could they pull it off the shelf, read it, then put it back on the shelf before leaving the library. He then asked how parents were supposed to know if their child is reading one of the books if they don't check it out.

Trospen responded that there have been very few parents who have made that request, so the librarians know the kids who they need to keep an eye on.

"I think we can say that they would intervene and notify the parents or the child that it was expressed that they could not read that," Trospen said.

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ATM

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According to court documents, between December 2018 and May 2019, Catalui and others worked together to obtain personal identifying information, including debit and credit card numbers and PINs from bank customers without lawful authority and used that data to make unauthorized cash withdrawals from the victims for their personal gain.

The group utilized device-making equipment, commonly referred to as "skimming devices," to facilitate this scheme by

installing them into card readers on ATMs at federally-insured banks throughout the Western District of Virginia. In conjunction with small hidden cameras that they placed on the ATMs, Catalui's group stole customers' PINs and account numbers, re-encoded the information onto blank plastic cards, and then used those cards to withdraw over \$300,000 before being apprehended.

According to reports, the skimming devices were placed on ATMs in 11 areas, including Roanoke, Roanoke County, Rocky Mount and Vinton.

In addition to over two years of prison time, Cata-

lui was also ordered to pay \$351,642 in restitution to the impacted banks.

U.S. Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh made the announcement Monday.

The United States Secret Service, the Botetourt County Sheriff's Office, the Roanoke County Police Department, the Campbell County Police Department, the Henry County Sheriff's Office, the Farmville Police Department, the Patrick County Sheriff's Office, the Blacksburg Police Department, and the Lynchburg Police Department investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Coleman Adams prosecuted the case.

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