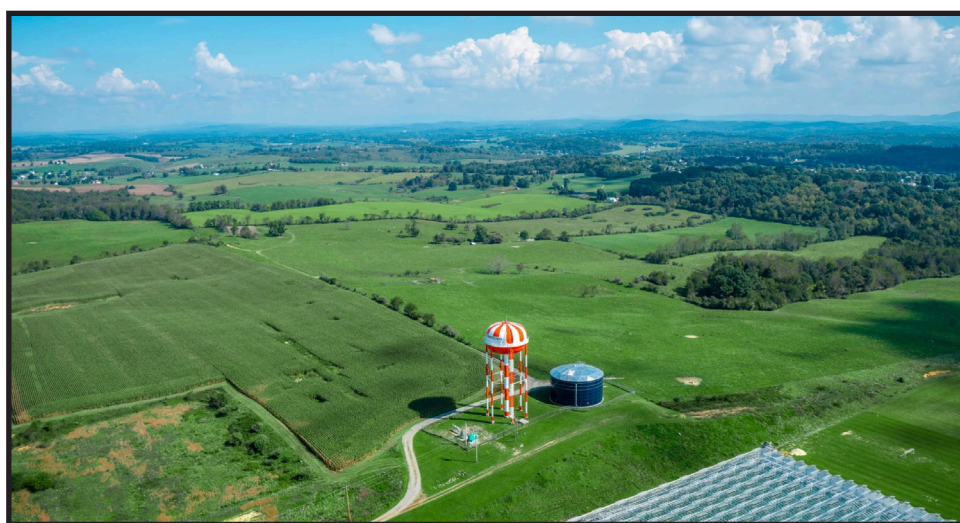


Proposed Data Center in Pulaski Sparks Controversy and Petition

By: *KEIKO KLISIEWECZ*
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Pulaski, Virginia, is a beautiful area of Appalachia, known for its outdoor enthusiasts who take advantage of the landscape in an ethical way but something is threatening that peace: a data center. Data centers are “a secure, physical facility that houses IT infrastructure,” such as servers and other computer tech. Lately, they are used to power generative AI, a highly debated and ethically dilemma-riddled means of doing tasks, creating art, documents, and more. Residents don’t want this to be a part of their community, and one member has spoken up and started a Petition against the proposed data center.

Tim Vela is a resident of Pulaski. He shared with us his love for Southern Virginia after previously being a resident of Austin, Texas. He enjoyed the peace and quiet and the landscape as compared to Texas. Vela is the voice of the petition against the proposed data center, a voice for the people. When asked if he would be open to working with data centers, he said “In the current state of affairs, I don’t think it’s a wise choice to



NRV commerce park, the area where the center would be built Photo Credit: nrvcommercepark.com

work with data centers, first because there are no real ramifications for infringing on local regulations and citizen rights.” Vela hopes to local, state, and even federal regulations, for data centers but he shares that he doesn’t see it happening anytime soon.

Another factor is the environmental impacts that concern residents like Vela. What would this data center do to our community? **On the change.org petition site, he mentioned the amount of water these data centers can use: “3-5 million gallons per day.”** When answering our interview questions, he also shared his personal concerns, stating that “I don’t want to see that be destroyed by a large concrete slabbed building with a vibration that you can feel for miles around, using resources like it owns the place.” And his concerns are valid. Southern Virginia is such a beautiful place, and it is fair not to want to see it destroyed by these big tech companies.



QR code for Tim Vela’s petition against Pulaski data center

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the Tartan Presents: **The Club Corner**

Upcoming Events:

Prism - Just Dance Fundraiser

March 25, 4-7 p.m. in Heth Hall 157

\$5 entry for a March Madness style Just Dance Tournament.

Professional Development and Networking Hosted by Connected Communities

March 25, 3-5 p.m. in Russell Hall third floor

A collaborative event designed to help students strengthen the skills needed to succeed in professional environments. Hosted in partnership with departments across Radford University, this session will focus on key areas that influence career success and workplace readiness.

Political Science Society, TPUSA Cross-Club Debate

March 26, 5:15-7 p.m. Hemphill Hall room 4700

This is a group debate between the Political Science Society and Turning Point USA. Each group will propose a few topics, and we will take turns choosing which one they would like to debate.

Radio Free Radford Open Mic Night

March 27, 8-10 p.m. Hurlburt Student Center Stage

This is an event where anyone can sing songs or karaoke, tell stories, jokes, play instruments or all of the above!

R-SPaCE Movie Night: Sinners

March 28, 8 p.m. Hurlburt Student Center Auditorium

Reach out to tartan@radford.edu or visit [@rutartan](https://www.instagram.com/rutartan) on Instagram for interview/advertising inquiries

By: KEIKO KLISIEWECZ

Another issue is the lack of transparency these communities are receiving; nobody is talking to them regarding this issue they are making the decisions without input from the community. Vela shared with us his personal frustrations, which I am sure others share, regarding how the information came out to the public. "I think the county failed initially in this conversation about a possible data center coming to Pulaski County. It took a journalist going in search of the information to learn about the prospect before the county officials came out and made statements on the fact that they were in pursuit of a data center for the NRV Commerce Park."

So there's a lot of secrecy here about the proposed data centers, almost as if officials knew there would be backlash. So what does the community propose? Well, they want the county to pursue a more environmentally friendly and ethical way of gaining income. "We request that our local government explores more sustainable

alternatives to create growth within the county. To ensure that natural spaces are preserved and remain a place where humans and wildlife co-exist. And most importantly, the opinion of our

community is involved in the decision-making process." Vela states in his petition. Next, what can you do? Firstly, you can sign the petition against the data center in Pulaski (QR code featured with this article) to support the cause. You can also check



Commerce park map Photo Credit nrvcommercepark.com

the petition site for related updates on the cause. Another thing you can do is speak up and speak out against these data centers and the potential consequences they will have. If you live in Pulaski, or even if you don't, feel free to reach out to the local officials and let them know your distaste. Don't be afraid to be loud or speak the truth about the effects these data centers have; it really does make all the difference in these communities. Southwest Virginia is done being exploited, and its residents have had enough.

SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!

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A NIGHT OF HIPHOP/RAP ENERGY!

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CONCERT: 8-10 PM

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 April 5, 2:00 PM

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Get Ready for Spring Migration

By: FRANKIE PELLETIER
fpelletier@radford.edu

Feel like the birds have been extra loud recently? You're not imagining things! Spring is now upon us, following the spring solstice on March 20 we are steadily approaching the peak of spring migration, which will last from mid-April to mid-May in south-west Virginia this year.

During this time there are, of course, more birds contributing to the dawn song every morning, as hundreds of thousands of migratory birds pass through the New River Valley. Numerous types of birds, including songbirds, raptors, water fowl and hummingbirds, are on their way back to North America after wintering in Central and South America. What you may not know is that birds are also singing louder and more often during the spring-time. As breeding season approaches, both male and female birds sing louder as they search and compete for a mate to build a nest with.

Every year, plenty of birds migrate through our beautiful region of Appalachia, and can be spotted in parks, near rivers, on trails through the mountains and sometimes even on campus. This is a spectacle that entices thousands of people each year, and is a great way to start getting out in nature more as the weather welcomes us back outdoors in short sleeves and tennis shoes.

If you're new to birds and birdwatching, don't stress! There are plenty of resources online to help you identify birds you see and hear and learn about their habits, behaviors, and migration patterns. **Merlin Bird ID** is a great free, easy tool from the Cornell Lab of



Collage made from photos via allaboutbirds.org

Ornithology. Just download the app, select your local region, let it listen to the sounds around you, and it will identify nearby birds by their song or call. If you want to identify birds by sight, the **Audubon app** is the tool for you. This app allows you to choose qualities you can identify, such as color, size, type and activity-and will show you a list of birds in your region that match those qualities. On the app, you can learn more about each bird's songs and calls, feeding behavior, conservation status and more. You can even track your sightings, so you never forget the birds you've identified, or where you saw them!

Spring migration is a natural occurrence that brings so many unfamiliar colors and melodies to the world, especially our beautiful, blooming New River Valley. This time of year is full of new wonders and opportunities ready to be explored, so it is the perfect time to get out there and learn about something new!

Virginia Special Election Coming Up

By: LACEY BANKS
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On April 21, Virginia will head to the polls for a special election centered on two controversial questions: **“how should congressional districts be drawn and who gets to draw them?”**

The focus of the ballot is a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would temporarily allow the General Assembly to redraw congressional districts before the next census cycle ends in 2030. Supporters argue the move is necessary to “restore fairness” in response to district changes happening in other states, while critics say it opens the door to political manipulation.

The word “fair” has become the center question of the debate. Supporters of the amendment say it allows Virginia to respond to partisan redistricting in other states and maintain balance in national politics. The outcome could influence control of the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as new district maps might shift several seats.

However, opponents argue that allowing lawmakers to redraw districts mid-decade undermines the state’s existing bipartisan redistricting system. They worry that changing the rules now could set a precedent for future political interference.

Republicans and Democrats disagree over how district lines should be controlled, since whoever draws them can influence election outcomes, or “gerrymandering.” Many republicans are urging voters to vote “no” on the amendment, arguing that changing the current system could weaken their party’s position or create instability by redrawing districts mid-decade. Supporters of the amendment say it is necessary to keep Virginia competitive with other states.

While today’s debate is political rather than violent, there are parallels between the tensions that led to the American Civil War. In the mid-1800s, Virginia stood at the center of a divided nation, where disagreements, power, representation, and government escalated into conflict. Similarly, today’s redistricting debate revolves around fundamental issues of representation and political power.

If voters choose “yes,” new district maps could be drawn before 2030, potentially reshaping which party has an advantage in certain areas and affecting who wins seats in future congressional elections. If voters choose “no,” current district lines remain in place until the next scheduled census-based update. Highlanders Vote is offering shuttles to the polls on April 21 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The

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Freshman Actor Leads in Her Second University Performance

By: ANGELINA CAPOTS
acapots@radford.edu

Radford University's Department of Theatre and Cinema put on a week-long production of Arlene Hutton's "Gulf View Drive" last February. The Tartan met with Charlotte Hall, the woman who portrayed the lead, May Brummett. Hall is a freshman in her second semester and is a major with an acting focus within the department. This is Hall's second role, as she was cast last fall semester in the theatre for the young audience's production of "Lily and the Magic Stones" by Benjamin Tyler Roberts and Sam Roberts.

Hall reflected on her time after the cast list had come out and how she instantly got to work. She said **the play was "very different. I had a lot of work to do. Yeah, the children's show was a lot of work, too, of course. But it was also on the main stage (unlike this show, which was held in the black box theatre), which is a lot bigger, and for a completely different audience."** For Hall, this role was a major turn from her previous roles. May Brummett, a school teacher forced to adapt to an ever-changing home and marriage, was a character who had more emotional depth than she had ever portrayed on stage before. To prepare for this task, Hall told me she reread the script five times leading up to the audition night. "At first, I didn't like any of the characters. It took me a while to fully get through. But as we got closer to auditions, I reread it, each time keeping certain characters in mind, and my thoughts and ideas changed." She explained that, in doing this, her notes helped her focus on the roles she had been called back for, including May. After being cast, she took the time to read the two plays that come before Gulf View in the trilogy, which are "Last Train to Nibroc" and "See Rock City". She also shared that in preparation, she did a deep character analysis and watched a recording of a production of Gulf View Drive. She felt this really helped her honor the character and informed her choices as May on stage.



Charlotte Hall sits with fellow lead Brandon Smith during Gulf View Drive Photo Credit: Jimmy Ray Ward/CVPA

When moving on to the rehearsal part of the process, Hall felt incredibly grateful to be working with a cast and director who are upperclassmen. The cast consisted of two seniors, **Brandon Smith and Angelina Capots**, juniors **Gwendolynne Arnold**, and **Kathryn Pendleton** and the play was directed by junior **Mazie Wakefield**. She felt incredibly supported by her peers and appreciated the knowledge they would share as well as the encouragement. "I think being cast with upperclassmen and then having the show directed by Mazie, who is my friend too, kind of pushed me to do a lot of the work too because...I wanted the show to be great for everybody. For some of them, this is their last show! I wanted it to be good." May is an incredibly complex and emotionally charged character, one who Hall portrayed with a lot of resilience. She shared with me, "I did feel a certain amount of pressure at first... Mazie worked with me a lot to get me to the place where I needed to be. At first, I didn't really understand her... Then I really got to understand her... of course, with the time period and her being 34, there

are differences, but I also feel that May and I have a lot of similarities.”

Hall concluded by discussing college life as she’s been performing and working in shops. She expressed extreme gratitude and love for her peers and the experience she gained. **“This has definitely been one of the most impactful shows I’ve ever been allowed to work on for so many reasons, just getting to know the characters and their complex relationships, how they would have felt during that time period in the 50s, which is so different from where we are now, and how to best bring that to life. I’ve never performed in the studio theatre so closely, I feel like I have been supported by this entire cast. And I’m really happy because I mean, they’re upperclassmen, so they’ve had more experience, and I’ve learned so much. Everyone has been so supportive and so helpful.”** Hall is excited to continue her studies and continue to participate in more productions following this semester. Hall encouraged the student body to come out and see “Little Shop of Horrors”, a musical by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken, from March 31st through April 5th.

Ringling in the Spring Season

By: RYLEE LYONS
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While studies have shown a decline in popularity of spring being one’s favorite season, its refreshing effect after the harsh winter may bring some extra appreciation. After a few false tastes of warm weather followed by rain and even snow, we have officially crossed the barrier into spring, and many believe it is here to stay this time. However, adjusting to new seasons can be difficult, no matter how refreshing the weather may be. Seeing as spring comes with a time change, it is normal to feel a little ‘off’ for these first few weeks. Here are a few ways to prepare for the change of season and optimize the feeling of spring.

Longer days and darker mornings come along with springing forward, but sometimes the change can feel like you’re falling backwards. Here are some tips to make the transition smoother.

Go to sleep earlier and wake up earlier. Your body needs to adjust to the new time — and a little extra sleep and a few extra moments to wake up can make the day feel much easier to get into
Soak up sunlight in the mornings.

Even if it just means opening the blinds, it can pay a huge part in adjusting your eyes and mind to the daytime.

Maintain your routine. Just because the time changes, doesn’t mean your habits have to. Make sure the things that keep you balanced and centered persist through the seasonal changes.

Next are some tips to combat allergies. Things are blooming and everyone is sneezing. The best ways to combat allergies are as follows.

Keep windows and doors shut. The fresh air is nice, but pollen comes in with it. Monitor the pollen count to see if it is too severe to let it in your home.

Spring cleaning. It’s cliché, but effective. Dusting and cleaning up everyday debris is crucial during this time of year, and organizing a space is also a great way to get a feeling of a fresh start for a new season.

Spring semester

The second semester always seems to go much faster. To prevent this half of the year from feeling like a blur, stay grounded with your academics in these ways.

Prioritize attendance. It’s getting to the point in the year where it’s easier than ever to want to skip class. While it can be tiring, this crunch time is when it really counts.

Get organized. As well as having a neat space, it can be helpful to sit down and plan things this time of year. When projects, exams, summer plans, next year’s schedule, or possibly graduation plans start to take priority, set aside time outside the regular school day to organize your thoughts in a peaceful place.

Practice self-care. Studying and schoolwork will not be as effective if your personal wellness isn’t being prioritized. Stay hydrated, stick to routines, spend time with friends, and soak up the lovely weather outside.

Highlander Highlights

By: BRANDON WHITAKER



Women's Basketball

Radford Advances! Highlanders Win in Round One of WNIT 77-58

After the Highlanders left their conference tournament as runners up in the Big South it was announced that they would be participating in the Women's National Invitational Tournament, hosting Morehead State. This is the first time ever that the women's basketball program has hosted a postseason tournament game.

It took a quarter and a half for the crowd of 1100 in the Dedmon Center to get rowdy as the Highlanders offense started slow. Radford was down early but cut their deficit to one heading into the second quarter, 18-19. In the second, Radford found their groove offensively. Junior guards Joi Williams and Cate Carlson combined to score 14 of Radford's 25 second quarter points, en route to a 25-11 run. The High's led at halftime 43-30. The Highlanders outscored Morehead State again in the third, and would hold their lead for the remainder of the game, winning 77-58. Head Coach Mike McGuire had a message for the Dedmon crowd after Radford advanced stating.

"This is one of the best environments we've had for a women's game, you all are fantastic, I want to thank President Bret (Danilowicz) for making this home game happen...Now heres the challenge, lets build off this now and next season." At the time of printing Radford will have already played their second round match up on the road facing Arkansas State. For a recap of that game visit www.rutartan.com.



#4 Joi Williams and #44 Anaiah Jenkins celebrate, #32 Angelina Nice shoots a jump shot Photo Credit: Radford Athletics - @radford_wbb

Track and Field

Highlanders Compete in Big South vs Southern Conference Challenge

Last weekend the men's and women's track and field teams competed against the Southern Conference in an outdoor meet.

Fridays field portion saw senior **Jaylen Rosser** finish third in the women's hammer throw with her sister **Mya Rosser** finishing tenth and freshman **Grace Crowe** in 18th. Later in the day, senior Kandace McIvor finished seventh in the women's javelin throw. On Saturday in the women's 400m, three Highlanders placed in the top ten led by Raichelle Cornelius sneaking into first place by .04 seconds. Senior **Jaslyne Robinson** placed second in the women's 100mH and finished first in the 400mH. Lastly during the final event of the meet for Radford, the 4x400m team featuring Robinson, Cornelius, Jeylah Hamrick and Jordan Jackson placed first and broke the school record by four seconds.