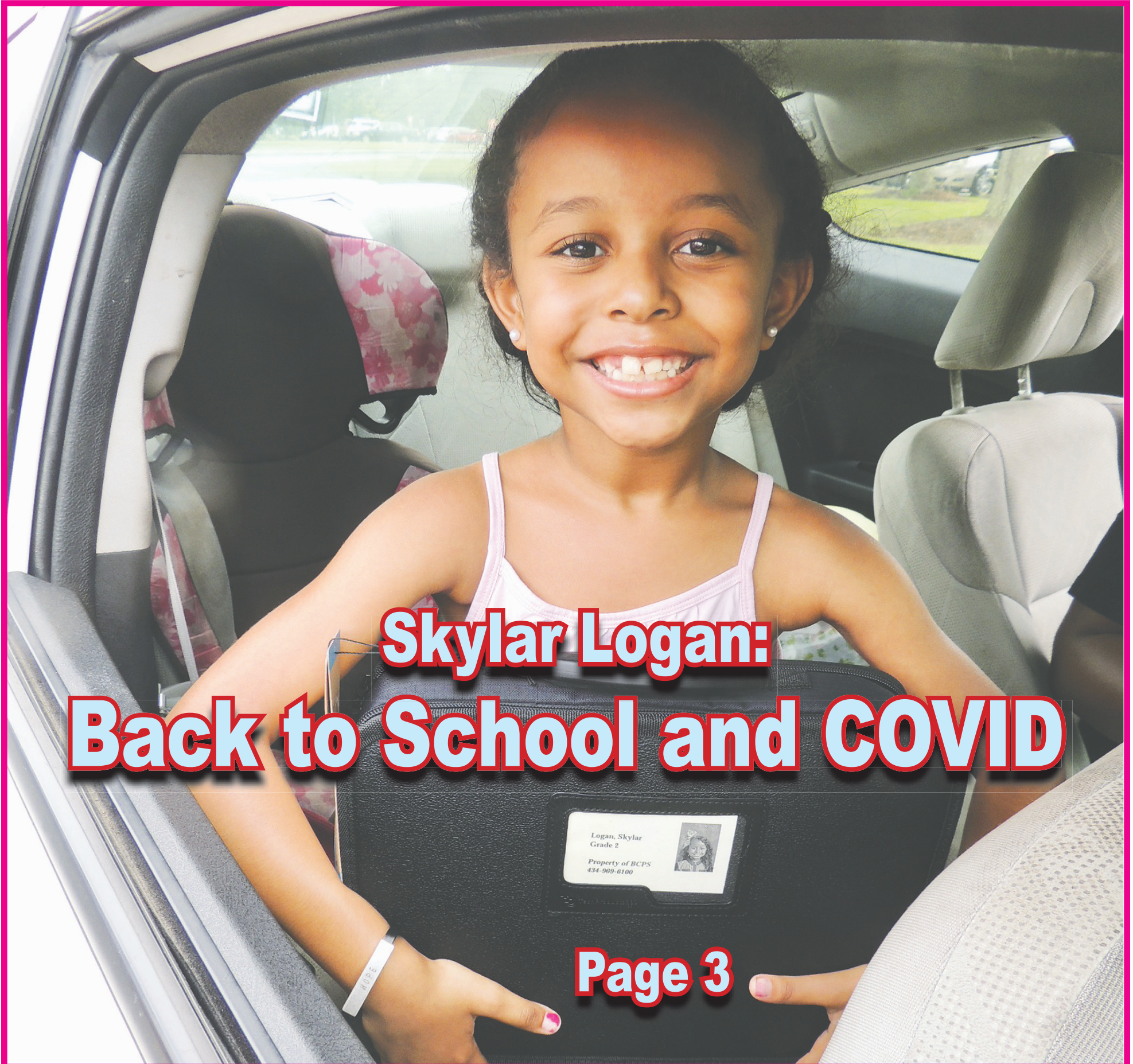


Buckingham

Beacon

September 11–October 8, 2020

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**Skylar Logan:
Back to School and COVID**

Page 3

Lindsey Taylor: Registrar in Action...Page 2



Several days before school began, students and their families came to their school to pick up Chromebooks, USB drives, and school supplies. Six-year-old Skylar Logan, who is in the second grade this year, was excited to collect her items and begin school again. Photo by Sue Miles

Cover designed by Marilyn Ellinger

Buckingham Beacon

A monthly publication

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Registrar in Action

By Sue A. Miles
Correspondent



Buckingham County's Registrar, Lindsey Taylor (right) is shown working with Assistant Registrar Paul Garrett, as they prepare for the upcoming General Elections. Photo by Sue Miles

Everyone knows that starting a new job has its challenges. But, consider starting the job of being the Registrar of Elections in a year where there are three (two primary and one presidential), 63 new elections laws and then add the phenomenon of COVID-19, and you'll likely get the perfect storm.

That's exactly what Buckingham's Registrar Lindsey Taylor, has encountered as she works through her first full year as Registrar. You'll quickly see that Taylor, who graduated with a major in Commerce from the University of Virginia, has the knack to work through all of the squalls calmly, professionally, and with grace.

"I learned from the best; Margaret Thomas," said Taylor. Thomas served as Buckingham's registrar for 28 ½ years until this past December. "She personally trained me for three months prior to my taking over and was a wonderful teacher. I was able to go through a General Election with her and see the preparation and post-election work needed to run a successful election." Taylor also credits some of the office's staff for her smooth transition. "Brenda Jones (assistant registrar) and Lynette Wright (registrar in Prince Edward) have also helped me along the way. The General Assembly passed a new law effective July 1st that General Registrars must complete a certification program within a year of appointment and any subsequent reappointment, I am currently in the process of completing the program."

As Taylor and her staff gear up for the November presidential election they are involved with activities such as voter registration and registration updates; absentee application processing and in-person absentee voting in the office; ballot design and pre-election coordination of machine programming and testing; poll worker recruitment and training; candidate processing and filing; and making sure each election is prepared and conducted in an efficient manner.

The big difference this year for voters, as well as the Registrar's staff, is the Vote By Mail program. Although there's always been an Absentee Voter system, the Vote By Mail program has basically combined the two; allowing people to not only absentee vote but also to have a wider range of time to cast their ballot in person. And, based upon conversation with Taylor, it is obvious that the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Elections has worked extremely hard to make sure that the Vote By Mail procedure is voter friendly while also being safe and secure. In other

See Registrar page 6

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Back to School and COVID

By Sue A. Miles
Correspondent

Back to school has proven to be a very unique experience for children all over the United States as COVID-19 has ebbed and flowed and changed the dynamics of normalcy throughout the country. But it's fall and time to go back to school in whatever fashion it may be. On August 10th, Buckingham students, parents, teachers, and staff began a new year; this time of virtual learning.

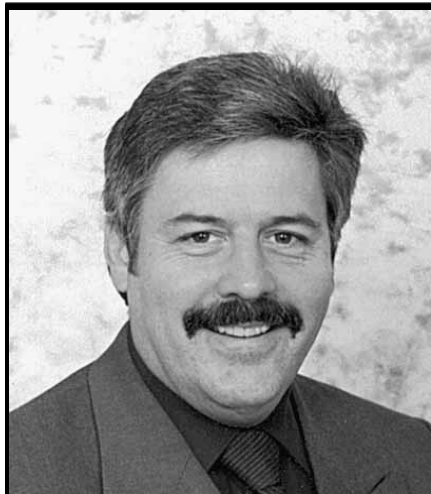
"We've been planning ever since March," said Dr. Daisy Hicks, Superintendent of Buckingham Public Schools. "We've been following the guidance and direction of the Governor, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), and the Virginia Health Department (VHD) when designing the best system to provide our children a quality education. We've had very clear direction from the VDOE throughout the process." Hicks noted that, like all school divisions, Buckingham had to present a reopening plan by July 25, that adhered to the state guidelines.

For the VDOE and local school divisions, the summer was filled with planning meetings, both state, division, and local, in the attempt to design a school year that would give three educational options: go full time, follow a hybrid schedule (alternating days) or go totally virtual. Dr. Daisy Hicks, as well as a number of Buckingham staff, were part of the state-wide planning, traveling to meetings throughout the summer. "We were very honored to be involved in the state planning," said Dr. Hicks, "as it provided a much needed perspective from the rural school systems. Throughout the summer planning, Dr. Hicks was always vigilant of the safety of the children. "I'm in weekly consultation with the Virginia Department of Health, Piedmont Health District office," said Dr. Hicks.

After much consultation with the state agencies, the decision was finally made for Buckingham students to go virtual for the first nine weeks of school. Obviously that decision has major impacts on children, parents, and teachers with each grade level having to deal with its own individual issues. Not having traditional school affects families and the community in a multitude of ways.

In an attempt to help the public understand how the school division is structured under this very difficult time, the Beacon has gleaned some basic information on the design of Buckingham's virtual system. It is important to remember that this is totally new to everyone - basically there is no blueprint to go by. The most important message that all educators keep stressing is that they want to do the best for the children. Here's the process:

See Back to School page 4



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Buckingham County

General Election

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

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U.S. Senate

U.S. House of Representatives, 5th District

Virginia Constitutional Amendments (2)

AN ID IS REQUIRED TO VOTE

Please verify ID requirements, your voter registration & polling place before Election Day at

www.elections.virginia.gov

POLLS are OPEN 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020: Last day to register to vote or change your voter registration information for this upcoming election.

In-Person Absentee Voting/Early Voting

September 18- October 31, 2020

Buckingham County Elections Office- Basement Level

13360 W James Anderson Hwy, Buckingham, VA

23921 (NO EXCUSE REQUIRED)

Monday- Friday In-Person Voting

8:30am- 4:30pm

Saturday In-Person Voting

October 24, 2020: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

October 31, 2020: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Saturday, October 31, 2020: Last day to vote an in-person absentee ballot at the Buckingham County Elections Office.

If you have requested a ballot by mail and wish to vote in-person instead, please bring your ballot with you

Absentee Voting is Also Available by Mail

Friday, October 23, 2020: Last day to request an absentee ballot to vote by mail. Applications must be received in the Buckingham Elections Office by 5 pm.

Tuesday, November 3, 2020 - Election Day: ALL voted absentee ballots must be returned to the Buckingham Elections Office by 7 pm or postmarked on or before November 3, 2020 and received by noon November 6th to be counted.

For questions contact:

Lindsey G. Taylor, Director of Elections

P.O. Box 222, Buckingham, VA 23921

PHONE: 434-969-4304

FAX: 434-969-2060

Email: Elections@buckinghamcounty.virginia.gov

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Chromebooks: All 2000+ students in the division have been loaned a Chromebook, which is basically a laptop that uses the Google Chrome browser to run applications. Most of all the students have always had access to these laptops while in school. This year, they will take them home. Just days before school began, parents came to the schools to pick up a Chromebook, several USB drives, and a packet of school supplies.

USB Drives: Every two weeks teachers will load taped video lessons, assignments, readings, and live in-classroom teaching, as well as other resources on students' USB drives. The information on the drives can be accessed without the internet. Teachers also will be available to meet with students on Zoom, via email, the telephone or if needed, in person by appointment.

Internet Access/Hotspots: In order to help facilitate the learning experience ten hotspots have been set up throughout the county. These hotspots are located on school buses which are at identified locations, Monday through Fridays, 7 a.m. through 7



Zoom meetings are the new norm for everyone these days. Special Education teacher, Sandra Mangialetti, who teaches at the high school, is shown meeting online with other teachers to prepare lessons for their students. Photo by Sue Miles

p.m. Bus drivers are given three hour rotation shifts (as per their contracts) to man the hotspots.

To further assist students in the learning process, the Board of Supervisors, at the August meeting, approved the purchase of 500 MiFi hotspots for students who do not have internet access at home. The number of hotspots purchased by the county was based upon the number of families who notified the division that they did not have access to the internet at home.

Assignments: Students will be asked to complete their assignments using the USB drives. Each week they must turn in one USB to the school at a drop-box on the campus. They can also give their computer work to the Hot Spot bus driver if they are not able to get to the school.

Special Education Services: In order to make sure that students with special needs and/or disabilities are not overlooked, the Buckingham school division has a specific policy to address this issue. The policy reads as follows: "During Phase 1 students in grades pre-K through 12, with the exception of some students with disabilities, will participate in virtual/remote learning for five days per week except for school holidays, teacher work days, and school closures. Students with disabilities who receive instruction through the Aligned Standards of Learning curriculum, or who participate in one of the adaptive curriculum self-contained classroom programs, will be permitted to attend school up to 2 days per full school week, as determined to be appropriate by the student's IEP team and with parental consent. IEP teams for

all eligible students will be meeting as needed to discuss plans for the respective student's education for the upcoming school year. IEPs will be developed to meet each student's unique needs and individual circumstances. IEPs will be implemented consistent with the School Board's Instructional and Health Plans and will consider remote learning opportunities."

Meals for children: Students will continue to be provided free breakfast and lunch as required by the VDOE. Each building's cafeteria staff will prepare ten meals per week for each child which will be available for pick-up every Wednesday at each school. Meals will be delivered to those students whose parents do not have transportation. This is especially important as, during this very difficult economic time, many children will often have their most nutritious meals of the day from the school.

Sports: High school sports, including JROTC activities, is governed by the Virginia High School League (VHSL). Sadly, the fall season will not see football, volleyball, golf, and cross country sports, nor will the JROTC cadets get to train and compete. The VHSL issued their most recent directive on August 24. For more information on VHSL go to <https://www.vhsl.org/>.

Athletic Director, Russ Gowin offered this statement: "First of all, we are excited about sports returning in the near future! Our student-athletes are gearing up for their seasons. We have had to scrap all our current schedules, bus trips, and special game activities until after our new schedules are complet-

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ed again. It has been frustrating to throw away all the previously made schedules and accommodations. We have been preparing our newly reduced schedules and getting safety protocols in line, but it will ultimately come down to Governor Northam's decision about playing sports this year. The VHSL and the Governor's Office are working together to make the best decision for our student-athletes, coaches, and staff. It's not an easy decision, but we are optimistic about playing if all goes well."

Funding and the CARES Act: In order to fund the many different aspects of providing virtual learning while also working to establish a safe environment for when the children do return, the school system receives funds from the CARES Act. Passed by Congress, this Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund-IHE/Student Aid provides funding to institutions to provide emergency financial aid grants to students whose lives have been disrupted, many of whom are facing financial challenges and struggling to make ends meet. The CARES Act has provided schools the


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works, there is a well-designed oversight on the process. That includes a system of checks and balances at the Registrar's office as well as the requirement for Vote By Mail citizens to sign a Voter's Statement noting that false statements are subject to felony penalties.

Citizens can be assured that as the November 2020 election nears, that Lindsey Taylor is busy at work preparing for the event. She is assisted by Paul Garrett (part-time Assistant Registrar), along with Brenda Jones and Kay Carter, two other part-time assistants. So, let the perfect storm begin, as the Registrar and her staff are ready.

Elections can be complicated due to many variables. Buckingham County, at this writing, has 10,458 registered voters. Election Day is November 3 but, note that registered voters can cast their vote beginning September 18. Here are the basics for the Vote By Mail process:

EARLY VOTING IN-PERSON - Beginning September 18, 2020

You can vote early at your local registrar's office beginning 45 days before Election Day and ending the Saturday before Election Day, October 31, 2020. That means you can vote early, starting September 18, 2020. The actual Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

First, if you are not a registered voter or if you're not sure, call your county's Registrar's Office at 969-4304 to register. If you are a registered voter and would like to vote by mail, simply complete the Virginia Vote by Mail Application Form. You can get the form by calling the registrar's office or going online at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting>. You do NOT have to have a reason to vote early.

The Registrar's Office will mail you the official ballot starting September 18, 2020 or as soon as the ballots are ready. Once you receive your ballot please refer to the instructions provided or contact your Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

If you'd like to go in person to the Registrar's Office, then you do not have to com-

Back to School from page 5

funding for Chrome book cases, Chrome books, and masks, thermometers, face shields, masks as well as other personal protective equipment (PPE) items to protect children, staff, parents, and the community.

Pre-School: The preschool teachers have been working hard to make virtual learning appropriate for preschoolers. Teachers have been teaching their classes through Google Sites where they combine age-appropriate virtual videos with hands-on activities and crafts. They are also implementing greeting circles, learning and moving and reading books to students by using Zoom and ClassDojo. The teachers are communicating daily with parents to make sure all needs are being met.

Primary School: The teachers at the primary school are working together collaboratively, especially in math and reading. Each day there is a recorded read aloud session by a teacher. Students will see a menu board that contains lessons for Monday through Friday. The consensus by the primary teachers is clear. "We just want to make sure we teach what the kids need and what the state requires." The teachers are also making Driveway Visits to say hi and drop off books for their students. This is especially important for the Kindergarten students since this is their first time at the "Big School."

Elementary: As everyone is learning more about virtual learning the teachers in the elementary school are pleased that they now work more collaboratively and can access each other's lesson plans. "There is more sharing," said one teacher. "The lessons are the same and now our delivery has more of a team approach. We are also watching and learning from teachers so we can teach better."

Middle School: The teachers in the middle school look at virtual as "just another learning experience." Acknowledging that the nature of teaching changes all the time one teacher shared her sentiment by saying, "As we go through this educational process, I see no better way to learn about the world that we are inheriting. At the end of the day, every child has to be educated." Through collaboration, the teachers are coming up with innovative ideas to provide quality instruction to all stu-

plete an application form. The voting location for Buckingham County will be in the basement level of the Registrar's Office, located at 13360 West James Anderson Highway (across from the County Administration building). The site will be open from 8:30 to 4:30 starting September 18.

When voting in person you must provide:

- Your name and address
- An acceptable form of ID or sign an ID Confirmation Statement. (see below)

You can show any of the following IDs to vote:

- Voter confirmation documents
- Virginia driver's license*
- Virginia DMV-issued photo ID
- United States passport
- Employer-issued photo ID
- Student ID issued by any community college or university located in the United States
- Other U.S. or Virginia government-issued photo ID
- Tribal enrollment or other tribal photo ID
- Virginia Voter Photo ID card
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document containing the name and address of the voter

Buckingham's Registrar's Office is happy to assist you in completing the Vote By Mail application and also when you are ready to complete your mailed ballot. Please call or get in touch with them at the number below:

Buckingham County Voter Registration and Elections Office
13360 W James Anderson Hwy • P.O. Box 222 • Buckingham, VA 23921
(434) 969-4304 • elections@buckinghamcounty.virginia.gov

dents including videos, Google Meet, and project based assessments.

High School: High school principal, Patti Branch, shared the approach of the staff for virtual learning. "This has given us a unique opportunity to truly fulfill the Profile of a Virginia Graduate. Now more than ever, our students have joined the workforce, and with flexible schedules they are able to get real world work experience while continuing their academic coursework on-line. Most teachers at the high school are running a virtual classroom using Google Classroom or Virtual Virginia. Our students continue to take Dual Enrollment classes and use the Canvas platform through Southside Virginia Community College. The teachers have been so adaptable in learning to use different modes of technology to teach lessons such as Loom and Google Meet, to different ways of communicating by using Google Voice and Remind apps. We know the 2020-21 school year will be different, but I am confident that my faculty and staff at BCHS are ready to embrace these challenges."

Career and Technical Center: Most of all the Business and Technology classes have always used on-line learning as part of their curriculum. The CTE Center, because of the state requirements for hands-on learning, acknowledges that "allowances will be made for some of the smaller CTE classes that are heavily 'hands on' to allow for one-on-one lab time. These opportunities will always follow the proper safety protocols."

Yet, let's be honest. The whole process is an adjustment. The ability to adjust to virtual teaching, especially for teachers who have been in front of a classroom with live students for many years has been challenging. "I feel like I am learning how to teach all over again and this first day has been a whole lot more challenging than my very first day of teaching 30 years ago," said one teacher. Another teacher shared his sentiments. "This will definitely be a "learn as you go through each day" experience. This year I will be depending on my students to help teach me a lot about the technology. We are all committed to doing our best each day and being flexible." Another teacher acknowledged the uniqueness of this school year. "My how things have changed," she said. "I'm still excited and probably more nervous than usual. There are so many unanswered questions bouncing around in my head and I'm sure the children feel the same. That's okay, because we are going to figure this out together with care and grace."

As everyone adjusts to the new learning system, it is obvious that everyone is thinking ahead to what happens after the first nine weeks is over? Dr. Hicks has offered a statement on that issue as follows:

"Buckingham County Public Schools would like nothing more than to have our students receive in person instruction. The level of COVID-19 transmission in the community is an important factor in determining when it is safe to begin in-person instruction. We will continue to partner with Piedmont Health Department as well as Central Southside Community Hospital and other local agencies to review the most up-to-date data. The data will aid us in our decision making as we determine when it is best to move to in person instruction."

For more information on the procedures for the school year readers can go to the School Divisions website at <https://www.bcpschools.org/>. Information from the Virginia Department of Education can be found at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/>

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Press release



Fork Union Military Academy announces that Cadet Brennan Stone was awarded the William E. Hatcher Valedictorian Award for earning the highest academic average of all graduating seniors in the Class of 2020 who have attended Fork Union Military Academy for at least two years. Brennan is the son of Trichelle and Thomas Stone of Dillwyn. Brennan has attended the Academy since the

sixth grade and has accumulated a grade point average of 4.849. He will attend Catholic University this fall.

"Brennan is one of the most gifted students I have had the pleasure of working with during my time in the classroom," said COL Mike Goad, the school's Academic Dean. "This accomplishment is a testament not only to his natural ability but his work ethic as well. There is no doubt in my mind that Brennan's natural talents, work ethic, charisma, and impeccable character will take him very far in life."



Cadet Brennan Stone

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EVENT

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DRIVEWAY STONE: Slate: 10 -Ton Crush Run @ \$200., 10 -Ton #57 @ \$230. Other stone/rock also available. Pricing includes local delivery and *Tailgate spread. Call (434) 420-2002.

CEMETERY SITES: Holly Memorial Gardens and Monticello Memory Gardens. Significant savings! Call (434) 295-1750.

BOOKS make great gifts. Give Linda Salisbury's 'Bailey Fish Adventure' series for kids, and humor for grown-ups. Can be found at many local gift outlets, online (plus Kindle and Nook), or from tabbyhouse@gmail.com, (540-895-9093), or www.lindasalisburyauthor.com.

HELP WANTED

THE LIGHT ACADEMY is seeking applicants for academic teaching positions. Applications can be found on our website www.thelightacademy.com. Contact Joyce Parr (434) 806-2903 for more information on our school.

CARING FOR CREATURES: located at 352 Sanctuary Lane, Palmyra, VA, Animal Care openings. Seeking 2 reliable, hard-working candidates with their own transportation. Must be 18 years of age, enjoy dogs/cats. Tasks:

HELP WANTED

Feeding/cleaning animal areas. Hours 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. /min. 35 hrs/wk, one weekend day required per month. Need fewer hours? Saturday and Sunday hours now available. Starting pay \$9/hr. Call 434-842-2404 to schedule interview.

RENTALS

KENTS STORE ARC COMMUNITY CENTER: Affordable facility available to rent for receptions, anniversaries, baby or bridal showers, birthday parties or any event where you need some extra space for a group gathering. Table & chairs included in rental fee. If interested in more information, please email Barbara: bab1122@sbcglobal.net

MONTICELLO PROPERTIES: Long and Foster office at 3661 Lake Monticello Road, Palmyra, VA 22963. For current Housing Rentals: Call Genevieve (434) 589-7653 office or email: monticellopropertiesmgt@gmail.com. Equal Housing Opportunity. Licensed Agent in Virginia

SERVICES

PAINTING/SMALL JOBS: House and garage doors painted, trim work, shutters painted, fences, patio furniture, bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms painted. Small sheds painted. Decks stained. Power washing. Small driveways sealed. Guttering cleaning and tin roofs. Call 434 962-6484 and 434 296-3146

FULL SERVICE SELF STORAGE: Fluvanna Self Storage on Lake Monticello Rd., (Rte 618, Burns Plaza) offers 2 convenient locations with both Climate Controlled and Regular month-to-month rentals (24/7 availability), also locks, moving supplies, U-Haul Trucks, and ON-SITE manager. Call (434) 589-2222, email: manager@storefss.com, or visit: storefss.com, today!

PAINTING, INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR: Also tin roofs, fences, decks stained, gutter cleaning and power washing. 40 years experience. Call (434) 962-6484 or (434) 296-3146.

SPECIAL NOTICES

THOMAS JEFFERSON HEALTH DISTRICT: offering COVID-19 testing information. Viral tests (swab) only. Tests are limited and for ages 6 + up. All services by appointment only. Find your local health department's clinic schedule at TJHD.org or call (434) 972-6261 for information.

ATTENTION VETERANS & DEPENDENTS: Do you know your Veterans Benefits? We do! Virginia

SPECIAL NOTICES

Department of Veterans Services, <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov>. or (434) 295-2782. Need Help? Call 1(800) 827-1000, M-F from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. for Veterans Affairs Benefits and Services.

LAND TESTING: Have your land ready to sell. I will do perk test, well permits, feasibility studies, and will provide all legal documented paper work for you. Call 434-249-0298.

HELP WANTED

TAC Officer (Part Time) PRN School Nurse (Part Time) School Counselor (Full Time)

For information and how to apply go to
<https://www.forkunion.com/employment-opportunities>



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