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All adult Virginians to become eligible for vaccine this month

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY— Early this month Governor Ralph Northam announced that all individuals in Virginia age 16 and older will be eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine starting on Sunday, April 18, ahead of the May 1 nationwide goal set by President Joe Biden. Governor Northam made the announcement during a visit to a vaccination clinic at First Mount Zion Baptist Church in Prince William County, shortly before a vaccine clinic at that location.

According to a statement from the Governor's office most high-risk individuals for have pre-registered for a vaccination appointment have received one, and those still on the pre-registration list are expected to receive appointment invitations within the next two weeks.

"The COVID-19 vaccine is the light at

the end of the tunnel—and that light is getting brighter every day as more and more Virginians get vaccinated," said Governor Northam in a recent statement. "We continue to work with diverse providers and community partners across the Commonwealth to distribute vaccines in a fair and equitable way and ensure those at the highest risk are vaccinated first. Expanding vaccine eligibility to all adults marks an important milestone in our ongoing efforts to put this pandemic behind us, and I thank all of the public health staff, health care workers, vaccinators, and volunteers who have helped make this possible."

More than one in three adults in Virginia have received at least one dose, and one in five Virginians are fully vaccinated. Virginia is administering vaccine doses as quickly as they are provided by the federal

government.

Efforts by Virginia to focus on equity throughout its vaccine rollout include providing targeted resources in multiple languages, scheduling clinics in collaboration with community partners, performing grassroots outreach to drive pre-registration and scheduling, and implementing large, state-run Community Vaccination Centers in areas with vulnerable populations. These efforts will continue when eligibility opens to the general public in Phase 2.

21 of Virginia's 35 local health districts have already started vaccinating essential workers in Phase 1c after providing appointments to everyone eligible in Phases 1a or 1b on the pre-registration list. Beginning April 4, districts that have invited everyone pre-registered in Phase 1c may



Union Star/ File photo

Governor Ralph Northam

invite members of the general public who have pre-registered. Based on the supply projected by the federal government, all local health districts will have enough vac-

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Campbell County Registrar seeks poll workers

RUSTBURG, VA - The Campbell County Office of the General Registrar is in need of dedicated men and women to serve as Election Officials on Election Day.

Local Registrar, Kelly Martin, invites citizens to help your family, friends and neighbors and serve the Campbell County locality.

"Election Officials are given a great deal of responsibility and trust in the election process. They work together to produce accurate election results, provide equal access to voting and give any necessary assistance to individual voters who need their help," Martin adds.

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Forest Volunteer Fire Department The incident occurred on US 460 East.

Bedford County man dead after crash, entrapment

A vehicle crashed into a home on Leesville Road on April 1, causing significant damage to parts of the structure.

Various Bedford County Public Safety personnel aided the Lyn-Dan Heights Volunteer Fire Department during the in-

See **Crash** Page 3



Courtesy of Phillips Equipment

Phillips Equipment Corporation celebrates 50 years since opening

A.J. O'LEARY
Union Star Editor

Phillips Equipment began selling John Deere products 50 years ago, and like the John Deere Company, still bears the name of its founders.

J.B. Phillips Jr. and his wife, Barbara, started the company in 1971. Their sons, Brad and Keith, took over more than 20 years ago, and still run it to this day.

"We give all the credit to our customer base and employees for staying here," Brad Phillips said about the company's longevity.

Located at 10364 Wards Road in Rustburg, Phillips Equipment still caters to the farmers it has served since day one, along with a growing number of residential customers with more lawn- and garden-focused needs. The store offers a wide range of parts and services for John Deere equipment, and various mowers, balers and tractors.

Brad, 71, handles service and Keith, 66, handles sales. Both have worked at the company for their entire adult lives. Keith Phillips recalled working in parts, sales and as a mechanic before ever working his way into a management role. Aside from a job driv-

ing school buses in high school, the younger Phillips has never worked outside of the family business.

Both brothers said they are proud of every year they've been with Phillips Equipment.

"I had no other desire in any of those years to venture out and do something else," Keith Phillips said.

Originally located near the Lynchburg Regional Airport, Phillips Equipment moved to its current location in 1976.

Brad said the company sold just 10 lawn mowers the year it opened. Now, selling 400 to 500 in a year is nothing out of the ordinary.

Since Brad and Keith took over they've made two major additions to the store, finishing an expansion that increased its size by 50% shortly after their father passed, and adding another significant section to the front of the store roughly a decade ago.

"We have continued his dream," Brad Phillips said when asked what his father would think about the business today.

In a typical year, the company would bring several gators to the Uncle Billy's Day Parade, host a large open house with food

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Broadband access help coming soon

Low income individuals and families in Virginia and across the nation may be eligible to receive temporary federal assistance to pay for broadband internet services in the near future, thanks to a program designed to help people during the COVID-19 crisis.

"If you have questions about your eligibility, which broadband providers are part of the program or any other issues, the Federal Communications Commission has an online page," said David Neumeyer, executive director of Virginia Legal Aid Society. "The ability to find services, help and information, to apply for jobs and schedule COVID-19 vaccinations, and to take part in online school and college classes depends on having reliable internet connections. For many low-income people those connections are unavailable or unaffordable; that is why Virginia Legal Aid Society is helping to publicize this financial help."

Families and individuals will receive a monthly discount of up to \$50 (or up to \$75 for eligible households on tribal lands). They will not receive the money directly. Instead, the money will be sent to the provider of their broadband services. The provider, in turn, will lower the monthly bill of eligible families.

On Dec. 27., the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 became law and established an Emergency Broadband Connectivity Fund of \$3.2 billion in the United States Treasury to help Americans afford internet service during the pandemic. The act directed the Federal Communications Commission to use the fund to establish an Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB Program), under which eligible low-income households may receive a discount off the cost of broadband service and certain connected devices, and participating providers can receive a reimbursement for such discounts. The EBB Program will conclude when the fund is expended or six months after the end of the public

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Rustburg fights but comes up short

ALLEN BAILEY
Sports Correspondent
Union Star

Rustburg traveled to Liberty High School Friday night to finish up the regular season. Both teams were winless, and both had a lot to prove.

The game started out with Rustburg receiving the opening kickoff. A few plays later QB Avery Dixon fumbled on a sneak up the middle. Two plays later Rustburg received the ball again after Liberty fumbled the ball. That drive started with Chris Cardwell making a long drive up the middle to place Rustburg in scoring position. Two plays later Avery Dixon drove in for the touchdown followed by a QB keeper for the 2-pt. conversion. Liberty answered with their running attack, driving in for a TD.

Liberty couldn't convert the following 2-point conversion attempt, leaving Rustburg on top 8-6. Rustburg then threw 2 interceptions in the the first half. Liberty capitalized on those mistakes and went into half leading 27-8.

Liberty started the second half right where they left off, driving down the field with help from two 15-yard penalties. They made it down to the 2-yard line but Rustburg's defense pulled through and stopped them from getting a first down or a touchdown. Liberty put up one more score but Rustburg finished the season strong with two swing passes to Jaidian Johnson from Avery Dixon for two long touchdowns. Rustburg fell short to Liberty 34-22 but showed a lot of promise going into the fall season.



Allen Bailey/ Sports Correspondent

Avery Dixon rolls out to make a pass.

Generals finish season strong against Colonels

JASON DANIEL
Sports Correspondent
Union Star

The Altavista Colonels faced off with county rival William Campbell this past Friday night, with the Generals coming out on top 48-13 in the regular season finale for both teams. Altavista would strike first as running back Marquel Dawkins (94 yards rushing) capped off an opening 80-yard drive with a 1-yard TD run to put the Colonels ahead 7-0. The Generals answered quickly on their next possession as quarterback Russell Thompson found receiver JaCoriyou Graves on a 15-yard TD pass for an 8-7 lead. Colonels quarterback Jayllen Jones responded, going untouched on a 15-yard TD scamper to put his team back in front 13-8. The rest of the second quarter belonged to the Generals as Thompson would connect on three TD passes in consecutive drives, the first a 41-yard TD to Perry Elam and then hooking up

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