

Watch Out Notre Dame

Patrick Henry football star Bodie Kahoun commits to Fighting Irish **SPORTS, B1**



The Frenchie Connection

A look at how the breed became America's favorite **EXTRA, B8**



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MVP regains forest permit

Approval is for 3.5-mile path through Giles and Montgomery counties

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Construction of a natural gas pipeline through the Jefferson National Forest, held to a near standstill since 2018 by litigation, received its latest approval Monday from the U.S. Forest Service.

The permit, issued for the Mountain Valley Pipeline's 3.5-

mile path through the forest in Giles and Montgomery counties, is a step toward the company's goal of completing construction by the end of this year.

However, the \$6.6 billion project still must receive authorizations from other government agencies — and survive legal challenges from environmental groups — if it is to avoid additional delays.

In an announcement late Monday, the Forest Service said it approved amendments to its Land and Resource Management Plan to allow the massive

buried pipeline. But work in the national forest, which will include boring a tunnel under the Appalachian Trail at the top of Peters Mountain, cannot start until Mountain Valley has other permits in hand.

"We maintain that the Mountain Valley Pipeline cannot be built through the Jefferson National Forest without lasting damage to sensitive forests, habitats and waters," said Jessica Sims, Virginia field coordinator for Appalachian Voices.

"Amending a forest plan 11 times to accommodate a ruinous

project on federal land is unacceptable," Sims said.

Siding with environmental groups, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has twice thrown out earlier Forest Service approvals for the pipeline, first in the summer of 2018 and again in the winter of 2022.

Each time, Mountain Valley has obtained a new permit. The latest permit issued Monday follows a year of additional review by the agency and an updated environmental impact statement.

The statement takes into ac-

count newly listed protected species and other issues that were identified by the Fourth Circuit when it struck down the second permit last year, according to the Forest Service.

The Forest Service said it considered significant public input that consisted of 359 comment letters, roughly 9,100 forms and several petitions. Appalachian Voices has said that more than 30,000 individuals and organizations oppose the pipeline's route through the forest.

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ABOVE: Roanoke Vice Mayor Joe Cobb delivers remarks during the rededication of Dorothy Gillespie's 1979 mural "Accentuated Forms In Space," background, that was recently restored at 312 2nd St. S.W. Monday, May 15, 2023, in Roanoke. **RIGHT:** Mural restorers Jack Fralin, right, and Dana James, both from Best Bet Arts & Media, make remarks during the rededication of Dorothy Gillespie's 1979 mural "Accentuated Forms In Space," background, that they recently restored at 312 2nd St. S.W. Monday, May 15, 2023, in Roanoke.

REDEDICATION OF DOROTHY GILLESPIE'S 1979 MURAL

SCOTT P. YATES PHOTOS, THE ROANOKE TIMES



Radford coach to go back to court

Darris Nichols had been convicted of intoxicated driving

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Radford University men's basketball coach Darris Nichols will have to go back to court because of a positive reading on an ignition interlock device that tests for the presence of alcohol.

Nichols had been convicted of intoxicated driving, first offense after pleading guilty Feb. 23 in Radford General District Court. The conviction was a misdemeanor.



Judge Erin DeHart had imposed a \$2,500 fine and a suspended jail sentence. DeHart granted Nichols a restricted driver's license that required him to have an ignition interlock device in his car in order to drive for the next year. The interlock device tests for the presence of alcohol in the driver's breath.

Nichols is due back in court June 1 for a revocation hearing.

The Radford High School graduate had a positive reading on his vehicle's interlock ignition device, according to court files. The date of the offense was May 3.

Because of the positive reading, Nichols received a violation notice for allegedly failing to comply with the terms and conditions of his Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program. A revocation hearing has been scheduled for Nichols to show cause why his suspended jail sentence should not be imposed.

He faces two charges, one regarding the revocation of the suspended sentence and one for noncompliance with his Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program.

Nichols will be going back to court two months before he is set to coach his team in the World University Basketball Series, which will be held Aug. 10-13 in Tokyo.

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Council tables gun panel issue

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After another back-and-forth debate about the Gun Violence Prevention Commission on Monday, the Roanoke City Council ultimately tabled an ordinance that

would subject the commission to more spending oversight.

Right now, the council reviews the recommendations of council-appointed boards, authorities and commissions — including the GVPC — about how to use general fund money, but

not grant money. The ordinance discussed Monday would give the council the ability to review GVPC recommendations regarding grant funds.

Councilwoman Stephanie Moon Reynolds, who has been critical of the commission, found

fault with the ordinance Monday afternoon. As she has several

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■ **Roanoke City Council votes down plan for Fishburn Park cafe A2**

Columnist Dan Casey is taking a break. His column will return next week.

Moneta man dies after falling in Smith Mountain Lake A2

Weather Heavy thunderstorms High 79 • Low 60 FORECAST • A10

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