

NEW RIVER VALLEY

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THE ROANOKE TIMES

BLACKSBURG • CHRISTIANSBURG • RADFORD • PULASKI • MONTGOMERY COUNTY • FLOYD COUNTY • GILES COUNTY



Photos by Michael Shroyer, Special to The Roanoke Times

Belmont Christian Church parishioners fill the inside of a large tent set up for a groundbreaking worship service held June 22. Since 2002, the congregation has grown by more than 200 members.

Christiansburg church breaks ground for new facility

Belmont Christian's youth minister says the move will extend the congregation's visibility.

By Travis Williams
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CHRISTIANSBURG — For 17 years, Brandon Craig has turned left off Peppers Ferry Road to go to work on Sundays.

On June 22, however, the youth minister of Belmont Christian Church turned right.

Craig was joined by more than 500 church members in the vacant field at the 1500 block of Peppers Ferry Road that morning as the church held its morning worship service on the north side of the highway for the first time in its 68-year history.

The event commemorated the groundbreaking of the congregation's planned 23,000-square-foot facility intended to be completed on the land in the next 12 months.

Once complete, Belmont will be the second 500-plus-member church to relocate within the 1500 and 1600 blocks of the north side of Peppers Ferry Road in a four-year period. GraceLife Baptist Church, formerly Main Street Baptist Church, officially moved into its 44,000-square-foot building at 1640 Peppers Ferry Road in April 2011.

During the past six decades, Belmont



Billy James (left), a charter member of Belmont Christian Church in 1925, turns over piles of dirt alongside some of the newest members of the church during the groundbreaking ceremony.

Christian Church has grown into a well-known staple of the Belmont community at its current location on Dominion Drive despite being almost completely out of sight from the major highway.

"Unless it's the dead of winter and there's not a leaf on the tree, you can't see Belmont from the road," Craig said. "Unless you're looking right for it, you would never know there is a church back there."

Craig believes that will soon change and

that the church's reach into the community will be extended.

"Now, when this building is complete, ... thousands of cars, thousands of people a day will see our church building, so when people are thinking about where they'd like to start going to church, hopefully ours will be at the top of their list," he said.

The lack of visibility definitely hasn't

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Belview gets creative with final week of classes

Students engaged in technology workshops and activities.

By Travis Williams
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CHRISTIANSBURG — Kindergartner Xavier Brummer created a story on a recent Wednesday afternoon at Belview Elementary School.

"It was supposed to be called, 'Legends of the Snakes Killed,'" Xavier said.

But he settled on the simpler title, "Snax," for the tale he was able to create and illustrate without ever picking up a pencil or crayon.

Xavier and his classmates digitally produced their stories using iPads and an app called Story-Buddy as part of the school's day-long technology initiative Wired Wednesday.



Photo by Travis Williams, The Roanoke Times

Kindergartners Izzy Lytton and Sean McMurray use iPads to create a story.

While many schools use the students' final week to wind down the school year, Principal Tara Grant said she hopes the final academic week at Belview was the year's most engaging.

Students spent their final Monday and Wednesday participating in a variety of workshops and activities during the school's first-ever Maker Monday and Wired Wednesday.

School library media specialist Becca Rainey helped organize much of both days' events. She said the goal was to take what was typically seen as downtime during the school year and use it to provide students with engaging activities they otherwise might not get to do.

"It's a lot better than popping in a video," Rainey said.

Monday kicked off with a visit from members of Virginia Tech's Institute for Creativity, Arts and Technology, who ran a special session for fifth-graders to create handheld arcade games out of cardboard. That afternoon, a variety of "maker"-themed workshops were available to students, allowing each to create unique items ranging from books to clothes and shoes.

Wednesday's focus shifted to exposing students to new forms of technology and how to use them

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Calendar

Friday

Fourth of July Celebration

The celebration starts with the 33rd Annual Shawsville 5k and fun run. The parade down Oldtown Road, featuring the World Famous Shawsville Ruritan Club Marching Kazoo Band, begins at 5 p.m. It winds up at the Shawsville Middle School football field, where a magician, bluegrass music, kids' games, antique cars, an auction and food will keep you entertained until the fireworks start.

When: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Where: Shawsville Middle School, Oldtown Road, Shawsville

Cost: Free

Contact: timothywthornton@gmail.com, 268-5810

Spirit of America Celebration

Featuring live music, free children's games and attractions, vendors, festival food and fireworks. Statler Brother Jimmy Fortune will be the headliner.

When: 2 to 10:30 p.m.

Where: Bisset Park, Radford

Cost: Free

Contact: 731-3633

28th Annual Independence Day Parade and Celebration

Blacksburg's parade, sponsored by the Mount Tabor Ruritan Club, will travel along Main Street. There will be music, food and entertainment at 6 p.m. at Municipal Park, followed by fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

When: Parade begins at 2 p.m.

Where: Various locations in Blacksburg

Cost: Free

Contact: 961-1135

Colonial Celebration of Independence Day

Celebrate America's independence at a place that was witness to July 4, 1776. Enjoy food and craft vendors, live bluegrass music, blacksmithing and weaving demonstrations and an apple pie contest, as we honor Smithfield founder Col. William Preston's role in the Revolutionary War.

When: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Historic Smithfield Plantation, 1000 Smithfield Plantation Road, Blacksburg

Cost: Free

Contact: danderson@smithfieldplantation.org, 231-3947

Saturday

Beer, Cider and Whiskey Festival

Featuring craft beverages, music, food, a cornhole tournament and entertainment.

When: Noon to 7 p.m.

Where: Nesselrod Bed & Breakfast, 7535 Lee Highway, Radford

Cost: \$25 in advance; \$30 day of event

Contact: 731-4970

Live Music & Fireworks at Mountain Lake

Enjoy free live music with the band Big Daddy Love, refreshments available for purchase and a professional fireworks show over the lake.

When: 6:30 to 10 p.m.

Where: Mountain Lake Lodge, 115 Hotel Circle, Pembroke

Cost: Free

Contact: events@mtnlakelodge.com, 626-7121

Black Dog Rhythm and Vine Festival

Enjoy an afternoon of wine, food, art and fun. Sip wine, shop around and bring a blanket to enjoy live music on a cool mountain afternoon. The Alternate Routes, known for their song "Nothing More" featured on the hit show "NCIS," opens the festival, followed by a headline performance by Paul Thorn, who is currently promoting his recently released album.

When: 11 a.m.

Where: Chateau Morrisette Winery and Restaurant, 287 Winery Road S.W., Floyd

Cost: \$25 in advance; \$35 at the gate

Contact: info@thedogs.com, 593-2865

For a full listing of events, please see page 5