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CITY HALL



LYNCHBURG, VA.

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Bif Johnson Commencement Speaker for CVCC's 50th Graduation Celebration

Bif Johnson, H&P's CEO/President, delivered the Commencement Address at Central Virginia Community College's Graduation on Thursday, May 10 at the Liberty University Vines Center. Bif graduated from CVCC with an associate degree in engineering in 1987 before earning a bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech in 1989.

"CVCC gave me an important start many years ago and it was a great honor to be a part of the 50th commencement activities," said Johnson. A combined total of 1,387 credentials for associate degrees, diplomas, certificates, career study certificates, and Workforce credentials were recognized.

In his keynote, Bif touched on three areas he wanted the graduates to take away with them. First was the influence of people you allow in your life. "Choose carefully who it is you spend your time with; they will shape you more than you shape them," Johnson advised. Second, he encouraged the graduates to heed the wisdom of the adults in their lives. "Take some time and listen to what they are saying," Johnson said. Third, he urged the graduates to recognize the value of their educational experience at CVCC and to never stop learning. "You are leaving here well prepared." Johnson told the graduates.



CVCC President, Dr. John Capps, (pictured with Bif in the photo below) also presented Bif with the Central Virginia Community College Outstanding Alumnus Award to honor his outstanding professional achievement.



Emilee Nixon, daughter of employee Chris Nixon, with Bif Johnson after graduation ceremonies.





Bonnie Svrcek: Guiding Lynchburg's Renaissance

By Su Clauson-Wicker

Bonnie Svrcek has been the Lynchburg City Manager for almost two years, after 17 years as the city's Deputy City Manager. Lynchburg's first female City Manager, Svrcek is also a former president of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the second woman to ever hold this role.

"I'm honored to be the first or second, but I will be happy when we won't need to identify women executives or other minority populations as the 'first' or 'second' ever," Svrcek says.

During her ICMA presidency, Svrcek pulled together women and "a few good men" from around the country to create a task force on women. This cul-

minated in a permanent organization, the League of Women in Government, whose goal is to increase the number of women in executive roles. Women hold less than 20 percent of such positions, she says.

"Our communities are stronger when they have a diverse leadership. In the private sector it has been proven that balanced gender leadership leads to stronger profit margins," Svrcek says.

Svrcek has three strong priorities for her tenure as City Manager—tackling poverty with a focus on community wealth building; continuing to build on the vibrancy of downtown; and getting the police department unified in a new

headquarters on land donated by the Greater Lynchburg Transit Co.

"I see downtown becoming an ideal location for small conferences, an entertainment, arts, culture and foodie destination, a place people will want to visit and live," Svrcek says.

Lynchburg is working on long-range planning, as well as preparing for a downtown utility and streetscape project that will upgrade aging water lines in one of Virginia's oldest city business districts. Other major developments are underway. By June, Hilton will open the restored, 115-room Virginian Hotel, boosting downtown's meeting space by 8,000 sq. feet. *(Continued on page 4)*

H&P Sponsors SERCAP

The re-opening of the Academy Center of the Arts theater in December will bring in a spectacular performance space.

The City and its partners have been working on initiatives geared toward raising Lynchburg's median income. One is Co. Starters, a program run by the City's Economic Development office to equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the resources, tools and relationships to turn a business idea into action. Graduates have opened Benny's Pizza, Good Karma Tea, and other businesses.

Svrcek too hopes to someday become a Lynchburg entrepreneur. "I want to start a natural yarn and dyeing company," she says. "I've taken a workshop in dyeing with indigo. Creating beautiful yarns is such a magical process, so different from anything else I do." Her passion for knitting and beautiful yarns propelled her into a knitting group that produced scarves and hats for the homeless.

Svrcek also enjoys traveling with her husband, Keith, who patiently visits numerous yarn shops with her.

Bonnie & Keith Svrcek (far right) with Brian & Maggie Cossman (Left) and Dr. Tim & Dr. Kim Buzzelli (center) supporting the Lynchburg Humane Society's Best Friend Ball on May 5 in Lynchburg, Virginia.



Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP) hosted its 49th annual Water Is Life Luncheon and Conference on April 11 in Roanoke, VA. H&P was excited to attend and sponsor the event again this year. The conference workshop topics were versatile, ranging from GIS to financial health to disaster preparedness.

The Keynote Speaker was Dr. Daniel McLaughlin, an assistant professor in the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation in the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech. Dr. McLaughlin shared specific research and teaching interests including forest ecohydrology, wetland and stream processes, emerging environmental sensors, and watershed and landscape hydrology.

Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project's mission is to promote the development of affordable water and wastewater facilities, activities, and resources to improve the quality of life for low income rural residents. Established in 1969, Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project provides more than 15 programs to help low income rural residents lead better lives through clean water.

Town of Warsaw Holds Demolition for the Gannon Property

The Town of Warsaw held its demolition kick-off celebration for the Gannon Property on April 25 at 4 p.m. The property, a group of buildings that in the past had been a shopping center, has been left empty for years. It was commonly dubbed an eyesore.

Sporting a hardhat bearing the Town's insignia, Warsaw Mayor Randy Phelps addressed the crowd at the event, speaking of the air of excitement that's only growing in Warsaw with numerous new construction projects that have been recently completed and more that are on the horizon. The mayor even had the honor of beginning the demolition by taking the initial turn operating the excavator.

Hurt & Proffitt provided the demolition plan as well as lead and asbestos testing. The company performing the demolition has a 60-day contract to demolish the property.

After demolition, the Town plans

to transform the Gannon property, which was once a center of commerce for the Town, into a recreational hub. Hurt & Proffitt will be providing the design, bidding assistance, and construction administration for the project that includes a lake with fountains, walking paths and trails, trees, picnic tables, and an amphitheater overlooking the water.

The lake is intended to serve as an area for storm water to travel to where it will be processed before being returned to Jugs Creek. An event lawn is also planned which will be adjacent to the amphitheater. H&P is excited to be a part of this project.



Chris Nixon: Home at Hurt & Proffitt

Chris Nixon started his career at H&P in 1990 as an Environmental and Geotechnical Driller, working under Ken Meritt and Earl Dickerson, who still work at H&P. That first stint with H&P ended in 1996, when he left for Syracuse, New York to finish his education and start his family.

In 2006, he moved his wife, Karen, and their two daughters, Emilee and Gabby back to Virginia, where he was able to start providing consulting services in the environmental and hazardous materials management industry as

an independent consultant. In 2011, Chris was hired to develop additional services within the H&P Environmental Department.

“I have had the honor of coming home to H&P, working diligently to develop the Environmental/Industrial Hygiene Department, expanding the group into four new locations, with growth in new and exciting consulting capabilities.” A key component to success within his work group is community engagement and education.

Chris has had the opportunity to work

with several schools within Amherst County, Virginia. He has assisted Mr. Steve Roberts, a local Physical Education teacher, develop their National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) competition teams.

Chris has been volunteering since 2013 as a NASP coach to elementary, middle school and high school teams.

“I have taken part in 5 State, 5 National and 3 World Championships with the kids and have raised money for individual families to afford the sport, as well as attend the various competitions each



Chris Nixon arriving to the devastation after the tornado hit his home town of Elon, VA.

are required to attend, in order to continue growth within the NASP system,” says Nixon.

Chris currently volunteers as the Amherst County High School Head Archery Coach. The school system has produced many state championship teams in the Elementary and Middle School Divisions as well as expand their reach across state lines into the National and World ranks.

He also volunteers his time to Amherst County working to develop a County Archery Park. The park would allow access to families to spend time in the outdoors and/or in the classroom, learning the various styles and forms of archery. He is also helping coordinate a fundraiser for Amherst County in the form of an Archery Tournament as part of the first Amherst County Fair, to take place in August of 2018.

In April this year, a tornado hit Chris’ home town of Elon, Virginia, after it had devastated the Timberlake area of Campbell County and the Boonsboro

area of Lynchburg. In Elon alone, over 20 homes were destroyed, that were in the direct path of the EF3 monster. Chris stopped on the side of the road as it passed in front of him. The mass of devastation was unbelievable; however, it gave Chris the opportunity to help so many families in need.

He has worked tirelessly to raise thousands of dollars for various families that have lost nearly everything they owned. He provided assistance to neighbors, helping cut down trees laying across houses, yards, cleaning up brush and moving debris for disposal.

Most recently, Chris raised funds for his local archery team who were headed to Louisville, Kentucky for the NASP National Championships. He was able to provide assistance to 19 different fami-



lies who would not otherwise have been able to afford to make the trip. “The outpouring of volunteerism within our community has been staggering, from local churches, businesses and individuals dropping everything to help out our small community hit with such devastation. This outpouring has given me strength and the hope that I will be able to continue helping others in hard times. It’s great to be home!” says Nixon.



Chris Nixon (back row, second person on left) with his team at the NASP World Championship tournament.

VRWA Conference

Hurt & Proffitt was excited to attend and exhibit at the 30th annual Virginia Rural Water Association (VRWA) Conference at the historic Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. This year's program offered water and wastewater professionals the opportunity to attend training sessions to introduce them to the latest industry advancements, meet with water and wastewater suppliers and service companies, and mingle with other operators around the state.

Participants earned CPE credits choosing from over 36 available sessions. In addition to training sessions and exploring the exhibit hall, attendees were given the opportunity to showcase their shooting skills in the annual clay shoot outing and to participate in a round of golf. VRWA held its 18th annual Water Taste Contest, and everyone enjoyed Casino Night.



Brian Cossman (L) and Dennis Amos (R) at the VRWA Conference in Roanoke, Virginia.



Bif Johnson with other speakers and Administration on stage at CVCC's Graduation.



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CORPORATE OFFICE

2524 Langhorne Road
Lynchburg, VA 24501
1-800-242-4906
(434) 847-7796

ROANOKE

5238 Valleypointe Parkway
Suite 2B
Roanoke, VA 24019
(540) 777-0277

BLACKSBURG

1861 Pratt Drive, Suite 1100
Blacksburg, VA 24060
(540) 552-5592

WYTHEVILLE

370 South 4th Street
Wytheville, VA 24382
(276) 228-0008