

Danville Register & Bee

Hundreds of runners race through Danville in Three Sisters Marathon

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‘Never forget’ takes new meaning to days of unity following Sept. 11

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Drought issues deepen

Chatham ratchets up emergency level as conditions worsen

CHARLES WILBORN
Danville Register & Bee

A brief glimmer of hope was short-lived in a monthslong drought battle when new data

pulled Southside Virginia back into a more dire category, and the town of Chatham notched up its response efforts.
On Thursday, the United States Drought Monitor moved Danville and Pittsylvania County back into what it calls an extreme drought, the second-highest tier on the national scale.
The Virginia Drought Task Force

also maintained a drought emergency advisory status for the Roanoke Drought Elevation Region, which includes Danville and Pittsylvania County.
The task force first issued the emergency advisory in mid-July. The group can only advise Virginia officials on the situation. Actions like mandatory water restrictions have to come from the state level.

The drought traces back to about October and has worsened over the last few months. While rainfall in August made lawns more lush, it did little to resupply water levels below ground.
The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality noted in a Sept. 8 summary that streamflow

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PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

NEW KENTUCK WING DEDICATED



CHARLES WILBORN, REGISTER & BEE

Pittsylvania County Schools Superintendent Steve Mayhew speaks at Saturday morning’s dedication ceremony for Kentuck Elementary School’s new wing.

Ribbon cut on \$6.1 million expansion, courtesy of 1% sales tax referendum

CHARLES WILBORN
Danville Register & Bee

RINGGOLD — It started as a vision in 2021.
Money was needed to renovate schools in Pittsylvania County, with security the paramount issue.
A fast-paced campaign to have voters approve a 1% sales tax referendum ensued, but failed.
A year later, a do-over vote passed.
Kentuck Elementary School was at the top of the list for needs. With more students than space, mobile units — essentially doublewide trailers — were makeshift classrooms, leaving students exposed when going to different classes, the main building or the free-standing gym.
On Saturday, Pittsylvania County

WATCH: For video of the ceremony, point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link.
[NEWSVU](#)

Schools marked the completion of the \$6.1 million expansion that created a new wing of 12 classrooms and connected the gym to the rest of the building.
After the ribbon was cut — a tradition to mark a new facility — attendees entered the new space to see the modern classrooms full of the latest technology.
Accolades flowed at Saturday’s event,

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■ **INSIDE:** See more photos from the dedication on page B6

DOLLY PARTON

Donations flow, more kids sign up for program

Children under age of 5 get free monthly books

CHARLES WILBORN
Danville Register & Bee

Cathy Gore just happened to be talking about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library at the Danville Regional Foundation on the afternoon of Aug. 25.
Gore, the president and CEO of the United Way of Danville-Pittsylvania County, was chatting about new ways to engage children.
A moment later, someone received a text notification of the icon’s death.
Gore’s phone then started lighting up with texts, calls and emails.
The local United Way started hosting the library project in 2021.
The country music star launched her project in 1995. Eventually, it went nationwide with a goal to deliver free books to children once a month.
Hours after her death, Gore received an email from the Dollywood Foundation that the library will continue.
Since Parton’s death, Gore has received more than \$1,000 in donations, and nearly 130 new children have signed up for the program that gives free books to kids up to the age of 5.
“Within a day,” she had received a \$500 donation from the national site.
“It’s pretty rare,” Gore said, to have someone donate to the local Dolly Parton Imagination Library. “Very rare.”
The program is free to families, but there is a cost to the supported agencies. On average, program partners pay about \$2.60 per child each month, which includes the wholesale price and mailing costs, according to the program’s website.
“The Imagination Library provides the infrastructure of the core program including managing the secure central database for the Book Order System and coordinating book selections and wholesale purchasing,” according to the website.
In May, the United Way reached its goal to have 2,000 children enrolled in the program in Danville and Pittsylvania County.
Census research shows there are more than 5,000 children locally under the age of 5.
While the children are too young to read themselves, studies show that when parents read to children, it leads to higher engagement and a desire to

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Weather
Partly sunny, less humid
High: 84 **Low:** 54
Forecast: A8

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