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THE ROANOKE TIMES

Saturday, August 8, 2026

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Charges from game brawl resolved

Cases stemmed from Craig County-Narrows basketball game melee

MATT CASE
The Roanoke Times

NEW CASTLE — Criminal charges stemming from a brawl that erupted at a high school basketball game earlier this year were dismissed and dropped in court Friday.

The cases involving Rodney Wayne Dalton and Roger Wesley Shepherd were presented to Judge Robert C. Hagan Jr. in Craig County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. Hagan dismissed the felony malicious wounding charge against Dalton and dropped the misdemeanor assault charge against Shepherd by way of "accord and satisfaction."

The parties involved resolved the case outside the court system, and at the request of the juvenile

victim in Dalton's case, Dalton's charge was reduced to a misdemeanor and dismissed.

"Accord and satisfaction is a provision under the law in Virginia where if there's a criminal charge of assault and battery between two parties, it can be resolved civilly by way of agreement between the parties," Matthew Dunne, Craig County commonwealth's attorney, said. "And then the criminal charge is disposed of."

The contents of such

agreements are kept confidential, Dunne said.

Dalton, Shepherd and a third unnamed individual were first charged following a fight that broke out at the Craig County vs. Narrows boys high school basketball game Jan. 22 at Craig County High School. The melee involved players, coaches, spectators and school officials.

"When you're a criminal defense attorney, accord and satisfactions are used fairly

frequently," said James Turk, who represented Dalton. "I won't say all the time, but they are certainly something that's explored by both sides a lot of times."

The case involving Shepherd, an assistant coach at Narrows at the time of the brawl, was dropped by the prosecution, following this resolution. The prosecution's remaining witnesses, according to Dunne, asserted their Fifth

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STEPPIN' OUT IN BLACKSBURG

Patrons flood North Main Street during Blacksburg's annual Steppin' Out festival on Friday. The event drew hundreds to experience the live music and explore numerous vendors selling goods that ranged from pottery to barbecue sauce. The festivities continue on Saturday beginning at 10 a.m.

ETHAN HUNT, THE ROANOKE TIMES

Family sues over student's suicide

Va. Tech counseling center staff, state named in \$10.45M lawsuit

ETHAN HUNT
The Roanoke Times

BLACKSBURG — A family member of a Virginia Tech student who died by suicide in May 2025 is seeking a combined \$10.45 million in damages from the state and two mental health professionals employed by the university's counseling center.

Lea Paragas, administrator of the estate of Jules Paragas, alleges that Lydia Qualls, a mental health clinician at Virginia Tech's Thomas E. Cook Counseling Center, failed to provide the requisite standard of care after Jules Paragas disclosed suicidal ideation and a specific suicide plan.

The lawsuit also names Sarah Jones, the counseling center's director, and the state as defendants.

According to the lawsuit, Jules Paragas "specifically expressed to defendant Qualls that she planned to commit suicide by stopping or slowing her breathing." The lawsuit alleges that Qualls responded by recommending TimelyCare, a phone app offered through the university that provides "24/7, on-demand emotional support,"

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ECONOMY

US unexpectedly sheds 23,000 jobs in July

Economy added 103K fewer jobs in May and June than was estimated

LUCIA MUTIKANI
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The U.S. economy unexpectedly shed jobs in July and previously reported job gains for the prior two months were revised sharply lower, tempering financial market expectations for an interest

rate hike from the Federal Reserve next month.

While the Labor Department's closely watched employment report on Friday showed the unemployment rate falling to 4.1% last month from 4.2% in June, that was because another 264,000 people left the labor

force, pushing the participation rate to a near 5½-year low of 61.4%, and hampering hiring.

Job growth, however, has a tendency to slow down during summer, a phenomenon that economists attributed to difficulties adjusting the data for seasonal fluctuations related to the

timing of the end of the school year. Much of the decline in payrolls, the first in five months, was centered in local government education. There was a second straight month of job losses in the leisure and hospitality industry, attributed by economists to the fading boost from the FIFA

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Guided-missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner fires a Tomahawk land attack missile March 1 in support of an attack on Iran.

U.S. NAVY

Trump says US has 'virtual unlimited' missile supply

Analysts feel stockpiles could soon be exhausted after months of war

MICHAEL LORIA
USA Today

The war on Iran severely depleted key United States missile stockpiles and left the nation and its allies in a vulnerable position

for potentially years to come, several experts and reports say.

U.S. missile stockpiles were low before President Donald Trump and ally Israel launched the war on Feb. 28. But five months of fighting in the Middle East have left the nation's missile inventory depleted to the point where analysts feel they could soon be exhausted.

"This really has long-term strategic implications for the United

States," Kelly A. Grieco, a senior fellow at the Stimson Center, told USA TODAY. The center is a think tank focused on issues of global peace. "It's going to take years to get back up to the levels we had before we started this war, and that prewar level was already too low."

A USA TODAY look at of the nation's missile stockpiles came

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Teen dies, 4 students injured in car crash

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Sen. Cassidy says he will back Blanche

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