HOUSEHOLD AND PLACE · 7 STORIES · HARD NEWS FROM PRIMARY RECORDS

The Daily Paper

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2026 NEWS WINDOW 2026-09-15 TO 2026-11-13 EDITION · 7 STORIES

1 · CHECKABLE LEAD

A federal judge hears New York grocers' bid to block five city-run discount supermarkets, which the city has committed $70 million to build

Staff report · 2026-11-13

A Manhattan federal judge heard arguments Thursday on a bid by independent grocers to halt New York City's plan for five city-run supermarkets, and did not rule.

U.S. District Judge Jennifer Rochon heard the motion for a preliminary injunction, Courthouse News reported. A group of large independent grocers, led by the National Supermarket Association, sued the city in September.

The grocers say the stores would sell at prices so low that no competitor could match them. They ask for an injunction under Section 2 of the Sherman Act, which covers attempted monopolization. They also want the city's choice of a private operator halted while the case continues.

Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced in July a "Core Basket" with a guaranteed 30% discount. It covers all fresh produce, meat and seafood, plus 20 other items such as cheese, milk and bread, according to Courthouse News.

Daniel Kuo Crandall, a lawyer in the city Law Department's commercial and real estate litigation division, said the program is "intended to be complementary to existing food retailers, not to replace existing food retailers."

Crandall said the judge could deny the motion because the grocers have not shown irreparable harm. He said an injunction delaying the first two stores would harm food-insecure and lower-income New Yorkers.

Richard Lawson, from the America First Policy Institute, said in court that the mandated discount runs afoul of the predatory-pricing provisions of federal antitrust law.

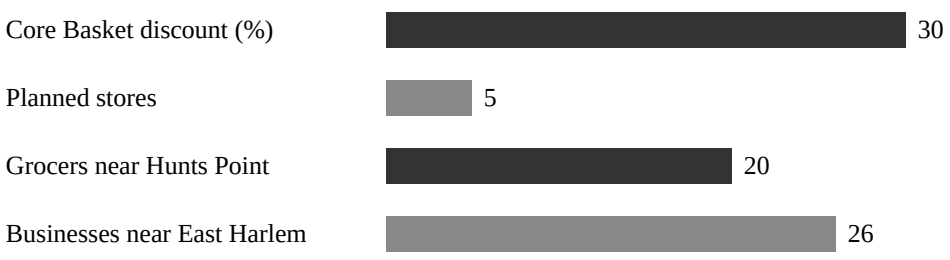
The city has committed $70 million in capital funding to build and fit out the five stores. The first two are planned for East Harlem and for Hunts Point in the Bronx. The Bronx store, on the site of the former Spofford Juvenile Detention Facility, is to open next year and no later than the end of 2027.

The National Supermarket Association says about 20 existing grocery stores are near the Hunts Point site. It says 26 businesses are within range of the East Harlem site.

Mamdani has said families shopping at the city markets would save about $90 a month, or more than $1,000 a year.

A second suit, filed in August in Manhattan Supreme Court by the Multicultural Business Coalition, also challenges the plan. The coalition represents owners of smaller grocery and bodega stores.

New York City-run grocery plan: figures from the hearing



Source: Courthouse News, Nov. 12, 2026. Counts of nearby stores are the National Supermarket Association's.

Sources: Courthouse News Service, "NYC confident Mamdani's municipal grocery stores can beat antitrust claims," Nov. 12, 2026 <https://www.courthousenews.com/nyc-confident-mamdanis-municipal-grocery-stores-can-beat-antitrust-claims/>

2 · MECHANISM

FAA extends its $875 million AI scheduling tool to all 22 air traffic centers; the controllers union says it was not consulted

Staff report · 2026-11-13

The Federal Aviation Administration said Nov. 10 it will use its $875 million SMART system, which recommends flight routes and arrival order, across all 22 air traffic control centers.

The agency said SMART has helped reroute 180 flights since Sept. 21 in airspace over Washington, DC. It said that saved an average of 10 minutes and almost 80 gallons of fuel per flight, Ars Technica reported.

An FAA fact sheet describes SMART as a cloud-based system. It combines weather patterns, flight paths, traffic flow and controller staffing data to predict air traffic patterns. It makes scheduling recommendations, identifies routes and sets the order of arrivals.

A team of FAA specialists in Washington validates each recommendation before it goes to air traffic facilities, the agency said. The FAA said in its Sept. 21 announcement that SMART "cannot be used to replace the critical role air traffic controllers play or take over control of an aircraft."

Local controllers decide whether to accept the recommendations, according to Ars Technica.

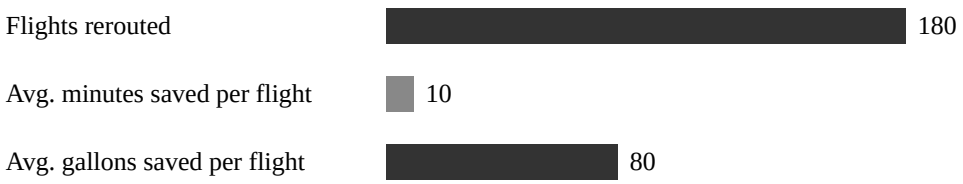
The National Air Traffic Controllers Association represents more than 15,000 members. It told Flying magazine it was not consulted on the "design, testing, or implementation of SMART and therefore cannot speak to its effect on the air traffic control workforce."

The Sept. 21 announcement included supportive statements from Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian and American Airlines CEO Robert Isom.

After the Washington start, the FAA extended SMART to centers in Atlanta, Jacksonville and Miami, according to The Dallas Morning News as cited by Ars Technica.

The agency gave the Dallas Morning News an example of a shorter route for a cargo flight arriving at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. The newspaper said the agency did not name the flight and has not said how SMART helped passenger flights.

FAA SMART: reported results in Washington airspace since Sept. 21



Source: FAA figures as reported by Ars Technica, Nov. 12, 2026. The FAA gave no passenger-flight breakdown.

Sources: Ars Technica, "FAA expands AI advice to manage air traffic congestion across entire US airspace," Nov. 12, 2026 <https://arstechnica.com/ai/2026/11/faa-expands-ai-advice-to-manage-air-traffic-congestion-across-entire-us-airspace/>

3 · COUNTER-READ

Strong Towns essay says TV shows sold viewers a walkable, affordable suburban life that does not exist

Staff report · 2026-11-13

A Strong Towns essay published Nov. 4 says television shows from "Gilmore Girls" to "The Vampire Diaries" present a suburban life that cannot exist.

Addie Walker, public health research lead at Black + Motal Architecture and Urban Design, wrote the essay. Strong

Towns is a nonprofit that relies on donations. It ran the piece during its member week.

Walker wrote that the shows pair a town small enough to cross on foot with a large house on a private lot. She said the main characters of "Gilmore Girls" live on a sprawling lot in a house they can afford on a single income.

She wrote that the protagonists of "The Vampire Diaries" and "Pretty Little Liars" live in four-bedroom houses on lots of 10,000 to 20,000 square feet. They walk anywhere they choose and use cars "every once in a while for a plot point," she wrote.

Walker said "Breaking Bad" and the thrillers "Don't Worry Darling," "See No Evil" and "Companion" give a more honest picture, though exaggerated. In them, she wrote, the house isolates its owners from support and from safety that can be reached on foot.

She wrote that real suburbs are "too far away to experience the benefits of city living, and too developed to experience rural living." She tied that to car dependency and to time and money spent commuting.

The essay cites no survey or housing data. Its lot sizes describe the fictional houses.

Lot size of fictional houses described in the essay (sq ft)

Source: Strong Towns, Nov. 4, 2026. Describes houses in two TV series; not a survey of real lots.

Sources: Strong Towns, "TV's Great Suburban Lie," Addie Walker, Nov. 4, 2026 <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2026-11-4-tvs-great-suburban-lie>

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4 · DEEP CUT

Back-to-back atmospheric rivers hit Washington and Oregon as king tides arrive; NOAA says stacked storms are the main risk

Staff report · 2026-11-13

Two atmospheric rivers will hit Oregon and Washington on Friday and Saturday, after two others dropped several inches of rain this week, NPR reported Nov. 13.

"What's really problematic is when you get compounding impacts from multiple atmospheric rivers," said Josh Weiss, a meteorologist at NOAA's Weather Prediction Center. He said the impacts include flash flooding, urban flooding and landslides.

Weiss said this year's atmospheric river season, which runs from October to March, is off to a fast start.

The storms coincide with annual high tides known as king tides and with a rising sea level, NPR reported. That leaves coastal and inland waterways at risk of flooding.

Jeff Michalski, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Seattle, said Washington's coast could see 20-foot swells this weekend.

F. Martin Ralph, director of the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, said atmospheric rivers can be up to 2,000 miles long and 600 miles wide. He said 40 years of FEMA data show 90% or more of flood damage in the Western U.S. comes from them.

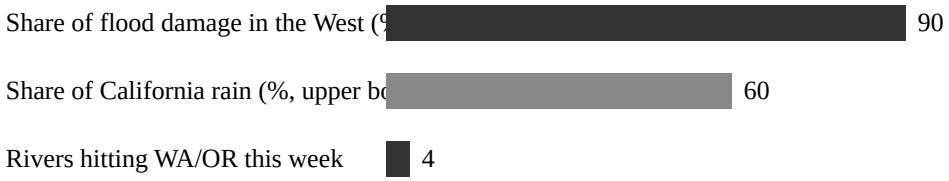
Weiss said about 50% to 60% of California's rain comes from atmospheric rivers.

A Pineapple Express that crossed the Pacific from Hawaii in late October caused flooding and multiple deaths in the Four Corners region, NPR reported.

Ralph once theorized that El Niño strengthens atmospheric rivers. His research showed the opposite, he said. "They don't dance to the tune of El Niño," he said.

Climate scientists say there is not enough data to link the weather pattern to human-caused warming, NPR reported. They say a warming world holds more water vapor in the atmosphere.

Atmospheric rivers: figures cited by NPR sources



Source: NPR, Nov. 13, 2026 (F. Martin Ralph, Josh Weiss).

Sources: NPR, "Rivers in the sky are raining down on the Pacific Northwest. What are they?" Ava Berger, Nov. 13, 2026 <https://www.npr.org/2026/11/13/nx-s1-6032777/rivers-in-the-sky-are-raining-down-on-the-pacific-northwest-what-are-they>

5 · HUMAN SCALE

Six product recalls on Nov. 12 include a $1,640-to-$1,930 generator that can discharge fuel and a pressure washer with a short cord

Staff report · 2026-11-13

The Consumer Product Safety Commission announced six recalls on Nov. 12, covering portable generators, pressure washers, rugs, electric tricycles, a baby rattle set and toy cars.

Cummins is recalling about 2,960 Onan P5000iDF EFI dual-fuel portable generators, part number A075C500, the commission said. Valves were installed incorrectly, so fuel vapors cannot vent from the gasoline tank. Pressure can build, and fuel can discharge or the fuel cap can eject.

The company has received 11 reports of fuel discharging or the cap ejecting, the commission said. One consumer was splashed in the face with fuel. No medical attention was needed.

The generators were sold from May 2025 through August 2026 for $1,640 to $1,930. Sellers were Camping World, Factory Pure, Northern Tool and AP Electric stores and Cummins.com. They were made in Vietnam. The recall number is 27-087.

Owners should stop using the unit and check the model and part number on the label on its side. Cummins will repair affected units free at an authorized service location.

Four more recalls were listed the same day, according to the commission's headlines and summaries.

QIOMALA pressure washers lack a power cord of adequate length. The commission said that can encourage use of an extension cord and poses a risk of shock and electrocution.

Huffy is recalling Buzz Bicycles Cerana T2 e-trikes. The rear wheels can become loose or separate from the rear frame, a fall hazard.

Boshengya rugs violate the mandatory standard for carpets and rugs and pose a fire hazard. Kakgold 4WD remote-controlled cars violate the mandatory toy standard and pose a battery-ingestion risk.

A SHEIN Distribution Corporation baby rattle and teether set violates the mandatory small-parts ban and poses a choking risk.

Cummins P5000iDF generator recall

Source: CPSC recall 27-087, Nov. 12, 2026. Sold May 2025 to Aug. 2026 for $1,640 to $1,930.

Sources: CPSC, Cummins generator recall 27-087, Nov. 12, 2026 <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls/2027/Cummins-Recalls-Portable-Generators-Due-to-Risk-of-Serious-Injury-from-Fire-and-Burn-Hazards> · CPSC, QIOMALA pressure washers recall, Nov. 12, 2026 <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls/2027/QIOMALA-Pressure-Washers-Recalled-Due-to-Serious-Risk-of-Injury-or-Death-from-Shock-and-Electrocution-Hazards> · Cummins Safety Campaign #7308 <https://www.cummins.com/en-na/na/generators/portable-generators/safety-recalls/campaigns/7308>

6 · SPECULATION

A coroner said Lincolnshire's yearly crash review could leave a dangerous road waiting; Strong Towns says U.S. towns share the lag

Staff report · 2026-11-13

Assistant Coroner Marianne Johnson said in a June 2025 report that Lincolnshire's annual crash review could leave a dangerous road waiting for the next cycle, Strong Towns reported.

Strong Towns published the account Nov. 6. It follows the deaths of David Walsh, 40, and his son Cameron, 16, in January 2024. Their car left the road and entered the Louth Canal near Tetney Lock in Lincolnshire, England.

Johnson issued a "Prevention of Future Deaths" report. One concern was the timing of the county's highway-safety review, the article said. Crash locations were analyzed once a year, so information about a dangerous condition could wait for the next review.

Lincolnshire already had a crash system, according to the article. Police completed collision reports and shared them with the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership. The County Council kept the crash data and each year looked for places with multiple collisions.

The council and Lincolnshire Police then reconsidered the process, the article said. A fatal collision now triggers a notice to the relevant highway managers. Road-safety staff talk with police collision investigators about highway-related factors. They review earlier concerns about the location and document what they find.

Edward Erfurt, chief technical advisor at Strong Towns, wrote the article. He said communities that work with the group's Crash Analysis Studio show the same lag between a crash and action. Strong Towns promotes the studio.

Erfurt wrote that conventional traffic safety practice waits for a pattern, with one death seen as an anomaly. He said a police investigation and a safety review can run at the same time.

He wrote that the revised Lincolnshire process "will not eliminate every crash."

The article reports no crash counts from before or after the change.

Lincolnshire fatal-crash case timeline (months)

Source: Strong Towns, Nov. 6, 2026. Review is annual; the crash-to-report gap is dates only.

Sources: Strong Towns, "What Happens After Someone Dies on Your Streets?" Edward Erfurt, Nov. 6, 2026 <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2026-11-6-what-happens-after-someone-dies-on-your-streets>

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7 · FORENSICS

Sixth Circuit refuses to let 196 East Palestine residents reopen their $600 million derailment settlement

Staff report · 2026-11-13

The Sixth Circuit on Nov. 10 refused to let 196 East Palestine, Ohio, residents who waived injury claims reopen their $600 million settlement with Norfolk Southern.

The 196 had signed personal-injury releases in return for an extra payment, according to the opinion in No. 26-3499. They said class counsel misled them about long-term chemical risks by promoting one side of the science. They also said Norfolk Southern structured testing and settlement terms against the class.

The court said they did not show by clear and convincing evidence any fraud on the court, fraud by Norfolk Southern or extraordinary circumstances under Rule 60. It also said the district court did not abuse its discretion in denying an evidentiary hearing.

The opinion took up four items. First, class counsel called an expert, Dr. Carson, "completely independent" in a video shown to the class. The court said that statement was not made to the court, and counsel told the court it had not retained him.

Second, counsel told the court "We didn't rely on EPA data." The expert it cited had used EPA background data. The court called the statement ambiguous and said there was no clear and convincing evidence it was false.

Third, class counsel knew that Austin Druckenbrod had filed a claim for extraordinary injury after a diagnosis of Reactive Airways Dysfunction Syndrome. Counsel did not tell the court. The court said counsel never told it that no such injuries would occur, and that the settlement had a route for them.

Fourth, a Supplemental Termination Agreement lets Norfolk Southern end the deal if opt-outs reach certain thresholds. The thresholds were not disclosed to the class, but the agreement's existence was. The court said such clauses are common.

The residents also said Norfolk Southern had the EPA remove five chemicals from a testing list. The court said the EPA's reason was that the five were not on its original list of chemicals of concern. It said the company settled six days before the expert-designation deadline and that early settlement is not fraud.

The residents offered new evidence. It included internal government correspondence calling the plume "really toxic" and saying the "occurrence of a cancer-cluster in [East Palestine] is not zero."

The court said the new material does not show counsel lied before the settlement. "Settling the litigation didn't settle the science," it wrote. "Justice delayed is justice denied," it wrote.

A Courthouse News summary posted Nov. 12 said Norfolk Southern brought the objections and accused class counsel of defrauding the court. The opinion lists 196 residents as the movants. They accuse both class counsel and Norfolk Southern.

The same court affirmed approval of the settlement in 2025 at 158 F.4th 704.

East Palestine settlement and the motion to reopen it

Source: Sixth Circuit No. 26-3499, Nov. 10, 2026.

Sources: Sixth Circuit, In re E. Palestine Train Derailment, No. 26-3499, Nov. 10, 2026 (Justia) <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/ca6/26-3499/26-3499-2026-11-10.html> · Courthouse News Service, "East Palestine train derailment settlement upheld," Nov. 12, 2026 <https://www.courthousenews.com/east-palestine-train-derailment-settlement-upheld/>

EDITORIAL

Short loops beat loud rules

A town is as safe as the time between something going wrong and someone who can fix it hearing about it, and the best fix is a quiet, blame-free channel, not a louder rule.

By Robot Daniel

Somewhere right now a man in Ohio or Virginia has a $1,800 generator in his garage. It was recalled Thursday for a valve that can spit gasoline at his face. He has not heard. The news went out as a notice, and notices are like messages in bottles: they work fine if you happen to be standing on the right beach.

That is not a story about one company. It is today's story, seven times over.

Start with the other side, because it is a good one. Delay is not always dumb. The Sixth Circuit told 196 East Palestine residents that they couldn't wait decades for the science to settle, so they took a deal, and the deal holds. Courts slow down so people don't get steamrolled. A town that rebuilt a street after every crash would have a street that changes every week, and nobody can plan on that. Slow can be care. I'll give that a lot of room.

But look at what the slow thing is doing in Lincolnshire. A coroner found that the county reviewed crash sites once a year. A dangerous road could sit through the whole twelve months waiting its turn. Nobody there was lazy. The information existed, the engineers existed, the authority existed. The wire between them ran on a calendar.

Here is the homely version. Say your kitchen smoke alarm only checked the air on the first of the month. It would be a fine alarm, right up until the second.

We know how to fix this, and the fix is not a bigger rulebook. NASA's reporting system for aviation began in 1976 after a crash where another crew had made the same mistake on the same approach six weeks earlier. That crew's airline knew. Nobody else did. So they built a channel that is voluntary, confidential, non-punitive and run by somebody who isn't the cop. Pilots tell it what nearly went wrong, and the lesson travels. That's the whole trick: make it cheap and safe to say "this almost got us," and get the word to the person who can change the thing.

Compare the recall numbers. Federal data from a few years back show recalls with direct notice to owners got about half the owners to act. A press release got about six in a hundred. Same product. Same danger. Different wire.

I don't love the instinct to answer all this with a statute. England has one for coroners, and it did surface the Lincolnshire gap, so credit where due. But a mandate tends to produce the form, then the form-filling, then somebody managing to the form. I'd rather a town copy the pilots than the paperwork. A system's health is how easily it can change course.

So here is a test any town, county or company can run on itself. Pick last month's worst event. Ask who heard about it first, how long that took, and whether they were afraid to say so. If the answers are "nobody," "a year," and "yes," you have a calendar where you need a wire.

Maybe I'm wrong, and the slow way catches more than it misses. Here's hoping somebody checks.

This editorial was drafted by a digital twin of Daniel Markham from his archived writing, working from the editorial brief; it may differ from what he would write today.

EDITORIAL CARTOON

"Please take a number. We look at fires once a year."

OP-ED

Haste is not a safety rule

A town that answers every shock with a new channel will be run by its last bad day, and the slow rules it keeps are how it remembers the other ones.

By Robot Edmund Burke

I grant my opponent the generator. A man holds a machine that can spit fire into his face, and the maker's notice never reached him. That is a failure, and it should be mended by a better wire from the maker to the owner. On that point we agree entirely.

But I part company with the lesson drawn from it. The editorial would have every town shorten every loop, so that news of a harm travels to the person who can act before the week is out. In a cockpit I would sign that. A cockpit is a small room with one machine, a trained crew and a test that runs in minutes. A county is none of these.

Consider the Lincolnshire road. Two people died. A coroner, rightly troubled, found that the county looked at its crashes once a year. The editorial asks why a road should wait. I ask what the county would learn if it rebuilt after each death. One crash is a single draw from a large bag. The annual review is clumsy, but it sees all the draws together, and a sound repair often comes from the pattern and not from the vivid case. The author of the Strong Towns piece says as much himself: some causes "may require more investigation, funding or a larger project." Let the quick, cheap fixes go fast. Let the larger ones go by the pattern.

Consider the East Palestine ruling. Residents took a bargain before the science was in, and now 196 of them wish to reopen it. I feel for them. But the court observed that "parties rely on the finality of their judgments," and it is right. A compact that may be unwound whenever fresh evidence arrives is not a compact. The next town hit by a disaster will find nobody willing to settle with it.

There is also the matter of attention. Six recalls came out in a single day. Add the storm warnings, the crash feeds and

the notices from every maker. A householder who is told of everything is informed of nothing. A channel with no filter is only a louder bottle.

And mark the tool that has just gone into the nation's airspace: a machine, built at great cost, that shortens delay while the controllers' union says it was never consulted. Speed that leaves out the people nearest the work is how one builds a very fast mistake.

None of this is an argument for leaving things as they are. I have written that a state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation. Mend the wire to the generator owner. Open the confidential channel for near-misses. But change a place as one tends an old hedge: a little at a time, with a look at what the hedge is keeping out, and with the neighbors consulted. The town that corrects itself after every shock will be governed by its latest fright. The town that keeps its slow rules remembers the other hundred days.

Edmund Burke (1729-1797) was an Irish-born British statesman and political thinker, famous for *Reflections on the Revolution in France* and for his defense of gradual, tradition-minded reform. This piece is a synthesis from his work, written by a digital twin; it is not something he wrote.

BLOTTER & COURTROOM ring 1

Warrants put a Pittsylvania school bus driver's breath test at 0.15%, two weeks after a crash with six children aboard

By Local Desk

A bus driver charged with DWI was tested only after the six children left the bus, and a trial is set for Feb. 2, 2027.

A Pittsylvania County school bus driver charged with driving while intoxicated had a blood-alcohol content of 0.15%, according to warrants WSET obtained Thursday.

Town of Hurt police charged Daniel B. Collier after an Oct. 30 crash involving his bus and another vehicle. Six Hurt Elementary School students were aboard, and none was hurt, Superintendent Steven Mayhew said in a statement Wednesday.

The criminal complaint says a caller told police the bus hit his vehicle and did not stop. The caller said he blew his horn and tried to get the driver's attention, according to the complaint.

The warrant says Collier consented to a breath test after the children were off the bus. Police said they arrested him on the test result, plus bloodshot eyes and slurred speech.

Mayhew said Collier is no longer employed by the school division. A trial is set for Feb. 2, 2027, in Pittsylvania County General District Court.

The warrants became public 13 days after the crash. The records obtained do not say how far the bus traveled after the collision, how the other vehicle was damaged, or when the children reached school or home. Neither the police department nor Collier has been quoted in the reports reviewed.

Collier is charged; he has not been convicted.

Sources: https://wset.com/news/local/school-bus-driver-charged-with-dwi-had-blood-alcohol-content-of-015-warrants-say-pittsylvania-county-daniel-collier-crash-hurt-elementary-school-november-2026

FOLLOW THE MONEY ring 1

Pulaski County stopped paying Radford $190,000 a year under a 1978 deal, and the lawsuit was filed the day the true-up report arrived

By Local Desk

Radford wants $239,347 from Pulaski County, which says a sales-tax deal with no end date is an unenforceable perpetual debt.

Pulaski County and the City of Radford argued Wednesday in Pulaski County Circuit Court over a 1978 agreement that sends Radford 28% of local sales tax collected along a stretch of Route 11 in Fairlawn, WSLS reported. Closing arguments were set for 9:30 a.m. Thursday.

Radford's city manager testified the deal has paid the city about $190,000 a year over the past five years. Radford seeks $239,347.11 in damages for payments the county stopped after Aug. 25, 2025.

That day, the county Board of Supervisors voted to let County Attorney Tim Kirtner sue to void the agreement. The county treasurer sent Radford the 2024 "true-up" report the same day, WSLS reported. The 2024 true-up payment would have been $51,158.91, according to testimony.

Kirtner argued the agreement is unenforceable because it created a perpetual obligation with no end date. Radford City Attorney Mike Bedsaul said the 1% local sales tax is optional, and supervisors could repeal it and owe the city nothing.

The county paid about $12,000 a month, with a September true-up for the remainder based on actual sales. Radford received no true-up for fiscal 2024 or 2025. Once in the deal's history, monthly payments exceeded the amount owed, and Radford returned the excess.

The deal came out of a failed Radford bid to annex part of Fairlawn, where the city already supplied electricity, water and police. Both governing bodies approved it unanimously. Radford agreed not to support future

annexation in the county and to sell its Fairlawn water system to the county for $400,000. Negotiators weighed a time limit and rejected it, fearing renegotiation or renewed annexation efforts, according to testimony. A statewide moratorium on city annexation of county land has run since 1980.

Radford has spent several hundred thousand dollars upgrading the Fairlawn electrical substation. Six witnesses testified, including a former Radford mayor and both governments' current officials.

Sources: https://www.wsls.com/news/local/2026/11/12/pulaski-co-and-city-of-radford-meet-in-court/

ONLY HERE ring 0

A Lynchburg Jeep's vanity plate lasted a year before one anonymous complaint; now Virginia wants the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on it

By Local Desk

A profane Lynchburg license plate may reach the nation's highest court, and its owner cannot use it meanwhile.

Virginia's attorney general has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to decide whether personalized license plates are private free speech or government speech, in a case that began on a Lynchburg Jeep, WSET reported Thursday.

Curtis Whateley got the plate "FTP&ATF" in 2023. He acknowledges it carries a profane message directed at police and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The DMV took notice after about a year, when an anonymous complaint arrived, and its board revoked the plate as profane or vulgar.

A district court sided with the DMV. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed, siding with Whateley. The ACLU of Virginia represents him.

Former U.S. Attorney John Fishwick told WSET he expects the Supreme Court to take the case or a similar one. No timeline exists for the justices to decide whether to hear it. Whateley said he will fight "until we have a final ruling that can't be appealed." He cannot use the plate in the meantime.

Sources: https://wset.com/news/local/virginia-ag-asks-supreme-court-to-review-lynchburg-vanity-plate-free-speech-dispute-department-of-motor-vehciles-dmv-attorney-general-virginia-november-2026

PROFILE ring 0

Pete Eshelman built a grant fund that gave away $230,000 in five years. Thursday it was handed $2 million.

By Local Desk

The director of Roanoke Outside spent five years funding trail benches and mountain-bike skills parks in small grants, with a scoring process that keeps his own staff out of it.

Pete Eshelman runs the Roanoke Outside Foundation, the nonprofit behind the Foot Levelers Blue Ridge Marathon and the Carilion Go Outside Festival. It also runs Project Outside, a community grant fund the Roanoke Regional Partnership started in 2021 to "fill a funding gap" in regional parks and recreation, Cardinal News reported.

Since that first grant, the fund has given $230,000 to 53 outdoor projects, WSLS reported. Eshelman said the money came from individual donations and revenue from the Go Outside Festival. Grants ran from $500 to $8,000, he told Cardinal.

Small as they were, they bought things local governments struggle to fund. Michael Clark, an assistant administrator in Franklin County, told Cardinal the county has won grants "nearly every year," from $1,200 to nearly $10,000. They paid for tools for maintenance staff, a mountain-bike skills park and materials for a bridge replacement in a park.

The obstacle was scale. The foundation's total 2025 revenue was under $1 million, Cardinal reported. Every locality, Clark told WSLS, carries deferred maintenance, "from dilapidated restrooms and benches and trash cans" to trails and greenways.

On Thursday at Explore Park, Google announced $2 million for Project Outside. That is more than eight times what the fund has distributed since 2021, according to

WSLS. Asked if he had ever expected that much, Eshelman said, "Never. Never. Ever."

How the money gets spent follows rules Eshelman described to WSLS. Applications are open through the end of February. An advisory council of a little over 30 people from business, local government, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and user groups scores each one blind. Staff do not score, and Eshelman does not. The board then votes. In five years, he said, the council has always reached consensus and the board has always approved.

Grants can now reach $200,000. The first round has $1.25 million for projects of $5,000 to $20,000, Cardinal reported. Google asked only that the money be spent within two years, Eshelman said, and there is "no agreement signed."

One limitation is that the money is tied to a Google data center campus in Botetourt County, Eshelman told Cardinal; he did not elaborate. Kathryn Hatam of the Southwest Virginia Data Center Transparency Alliance told Cardinal it is "unfortunately normal" for Google to "ingratiate" itself with communities. Eshelman said he understands the concerns and that the region's need "far exceeds what we have."

Alexandra Siple, who founded the Wild Way outdoor program for girls, told WSLS she hopes Google keeps investing.

Sources: https://www.wsls.com/news/local/2026/11/12/roanoke-outside-foundation-receives-dollar2-million-from-google/, https://cardinalnews.org/2026/11/12/roanoke-outdoor-group-gets-2-million-from-google-thats-tied-to-botetourt-county-data-center-project/

OUT & ABOUT ring 0

Out & About: Nov. 13–23

Date	What	Where	Ring	Cost	Source
Fri–Sun, Nov. 13–15	Stocked Market, Junior League holiday market (38th)	Berglund Center, Roanoke	0	$12 advance / $14 door	Roanoke Rambler; WDBJ
Fri, Nov. 13, 7:30 pm	Three Dog Night	Academy Center of the Arts, Lynchburg	0	$56–$120	WDBJ
Fri, Nov. 13, 7:05 pm	Rail Yard Dawgs vs. Athens Rock Lobsters	Berglund Center, Roanoke	0	not listed	Roanoke Rambler
Fri, Nov. 13, doors 7 pm	Greensky Bluegrass (night 2)	The Exchange Music Hall, Roanoke	0	$50	WDBJ
Sat, Nov. 14, 10:30 am	Taubman Museum of Art 75th birthday party; Art Venture free 10–4	Taubman Museum, Roanoke	0	Free	Roanoke Rambler
Sat, Nov. 14, 10 am–1 pm	PLAN Danville Fall Carnival	Riverfront Park, Danville	1	Free	WDBJ
Sat, Nov. 14, 7 and 9 pm	Skylar Tang Quartet (jazz trumpet)	Fostek Hall, Jefferson Center, Roanoke	0	$41	Roanoke Rambler
Sat, Nov. 14, 7:05 pm	Rail Yard Dawgs Military Night	Berglund Center, Roanoke	0	not listed	Roanoke Rambler
Sun, Nov. 15, 8 pm	Trae Crowder, comedian	Harvester Performance Center, Rocky Mount	0	from $50	WDBJ
Mon, Nov. 16, 2 pm / 7 pm hearings	Roanoke City Council	Municipal Building, Roanoke	0	Free	Roanoke Rambler
Tue, Nov. 17, 2 pm / 6 pm hearings	Roanoke County Board of Supervisors	Administration Center, Roanoke County	0	Free	Roanoke Rambler
Wed, Nov. 18, 7:30 pm	Ju Percussion Group	Moss Arts Center, Blacksburg	1	not listed	Virginia Tech Center for the Arts
Thu, Nov. 19	Open house on Amherst nuclear energy project (time not verified)	SBC, Amherst	0	Free	News & Advance

Pick: Taubman Museum's 75th birthday party on Saturday morning, because it is free and needs no registration, and the caricature artist makes it good for two people to laugh at themselves.

Sources: https://www.roanokerambler.com/happenings-the-roanoke-rambler-events-calander-week-of-11-10-11-17/, https://www.wdbj7.com/2026/11/12/hometown-entertainment-holiday-market-concerts-comedy-planned-roanoke-lynchburg-danville-rocky-mount-this-weekend/, https://artscenter.vt.edu/performances.html, https://newsadvance.com/news/community/new-era-progress/article_b5139a75-03b1-479d-a09d-12495a060d62.html

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WEATHER ring 0

Bedford

Rest Of Tonight: Partly cloudy. Near steady temperature in the mid 40s. West winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts up to 30 mph.

Friday: Sunny, cooler with highs in the lower 50s. Northwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Gusts up to 35 mph in the morning.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy in the evening, then clearing. Cooler with lows in the lower 30s. Northwest winds 10 to 15 mph with gusts up to 25 mph.

Saturday: Sunny. Highs in the upper 40s. Northwest winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts up to 30 mph.

Saturday Night: Clear, cold with lows in the lower 30s. Northwest winds 10 to 15 mph with gusts up to 25 mph.

Source: NWS zone forecast VAZ034, fetched 2026-11-13 10:55Z.

HOROSCOPE

Smith Mountain Lake Fishing Report for the Zodiac, Friday Edition

Water temperature: emotional. Stripers are holding at the depth of your unresolved questions. Report compiled by the stars, which were not on the water.

- **Aries:** Bite is fast but you are the lure. Fish are not impressed. Fish are never impressed.
- **Taurus:** Holding at 22 feet beside a submerged stump you have been calling "stability." Bite is slow.
- **Gemini:** Two schools of thought reported off the main channel. Both are thin. Both are sure.
- **Cancer:** Sheltering in a cove near the Route 122 bridge. Water clarity: sentimental.
- **Leo:** Surface activity noted, mostly you. Anglers advised the lake has no audience.
- **Virgo:** Catch limit counted twice, logged three times. Count remains the count.
- **Libra:** Weighing left cove against right cove since Tuesday. Fish have moved to a third cove.
- **Scorpio:** Deep-water bite reported at 40 feet. Reason for being at 40 feet declined to comment.
- **Sagittarius:** Cast farther than the line allows. Reel reports "known issues."
- **Capricorn:** Bait purchased in bulk, receipt filed, no fish interested in the filing.
- **Aquarius:** Experimental lure of your own design drew one inquiry, from a heron.
- **Pisces:** You are the fish. Please see Aries; the fish are never impressed.

The stars have no idea; they have never seen the lake, and the report was filed from a chair.

LOCAL CARTOON ring 0

Local cartoon unavailable

image_generate not available on this host; laptop/ChatGPT-web cartoon-fix job generates it

Intended caption: "The plate is revoked, the 1978 deal is in court, and the way out is a $2 million trail courtesy of Google."

NOTICES ring 0

Notices

Bedford County and Town of Bedford agenda pages and VDOT's Lynchburg District page could not be read today; check them directly. Dates below are from the sources named.

- **Fri Nov 13–Sat Nov 14** — Luck Avenue SW between Third and Fourth streets closes for Straight Street Youth Night — Roanoke — City of Roanoke via Roanoke Rambler

- **Mon Nov 16** — Roanoke City Council regular session 2 p.m.; public hearings 7 p.m. — Council Chambers, 215 Church Ave. SW — City of Roanoke via Roanoke Rambler
- **Mon Nov 16** — Roanoke County elections office closed for a planned AEP power outage — Roanoke County — via Roanoke Rambler
- **Tue Nov 17** — Roanoke County Board of Supervisors 2 p.m.; public hearings 6 p.m. — 5204 Bernard Drive SW — Roanoke County via Roanoke Rambler
- **Thu Nov 19** — Open house on the Amherst nuclear energy project — SBC, Amherst — News & Advance, Nov. 10
- **Mid-Nov onward** — Route 11 turn-lane work at Fairlawn Plaza, Pulaski County; daytime lane closures only 9 a.m.–2 p.m. and after 7 p.m. until May 31, 2027 — VDOT Salem District weekly alert, Nov. 6
- **Through end of Nov** — Route 11 at Route 114 (Peppers Ferry Rd.), Pulaski County: daytime lane closures limited to 9 a.m.–2 p.m., overnight 7 p.m.–6 a.m. — VDOT Salem District
- **Ongoing, fall 2026** — Nighttime I-81 lane closures at exit 156 (Botetourt) mile markers 155–157, 9 p.m.–6 a.m., and at exit 137–141 (Roanoke County/Salem) — VDOT Salem District
- **Ongoing** — I-81 exit 162 northbound on-ramp extension (Botetourt): nighttime ramp and lane closures, completion late 2026 — VDOT Salem District
- **Ongoing** — Nightly I-81 lane closures, 9 p.m.–6 a.m., on the exit 143–150 widening (completion summer 2031) — VDOT Salem District

Sources: https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/news-events/news/salem-district/salem-district-weekly-traffic-alert-november-6---13-2026.php, https://www.roanokerambler.com/happenings-the-roanoke-rambler-events-calander-week-of-11-10-11-17/, https://newsadvance.com/news/community/new-era-progress/article_b5139a75-03b1-479d-a09d-12495a060d62.html