

## Chavatel Honored for Donation of Artwork Campaign Exceeds Goal

Barbara Chavatel was honored recently as the largest contributor to the Keyser-Aday Theatre Campaign for generously donating several paintings and sketches by her late husband, renowned Abingdon artist George Chavatel.



Many of the art pieces are currently being framed and will be displayed on the VHCC campus, fulfilling the campaign's goal to establish a regional art exhibit that will bring the community to campus. Cash donations collected through the campaign will be invested in an endowment to provide scholarships for students pursuing careers in the arts and to support art programs on campus.

The campaign officially exceeded its \$90,000 goal this month after a year-long effort to honor William Van Keyser and Gary Aday, longtime faculty members who have led the theater program since the early 1970s, by establishing the Keyser-Aday Theatre at VHCC. Richard Leigh, the Grammy Award winning songwriter who began his performing career as a theater student at VHCC in the 1970s, returned to campus for a benefit concert to raise the final amount and celebrate the campaign's success.

He also paid tribute to Mrs. Chavatel, recognizing her generosity with a song that posed the question "Why do angels wear disguises?"

In addition to the art by Chavatel, VHCC now owns works by such noted artists as John F. Sauers, Landon Woody, Bari Ballou, and Clayton Proctor and Ollie Cox. The art is being displayed across campus and collectively is valued at more than \$40,000.

An official dedication of the Keyser-Aday Theatre is planned for next Fall. If you are interested in making a contribution to the Keyser-Aday Theatre Campaign or another project led by the VHCC Educational Foundation, contact David Matlock at [dmatlock@vhcc.edu](mailto:dmatlock@vhcc.edu).



Richard Leigh, a Grammy Award winning songwriter who graduated from VHCC in 1973, returned to campus April 23 for a special benefit concert to honor his former professors, VHCC faculty members Gary Aday (left) and William Van Keyser (right). Prior to the concert (below, right), Leigh toured historic Abingdon with Abingdon Vice Mayor French Moore Jr. and VHCC Vice President David Matlock (below, left).



## Grammy Winner Returns to VHCC

An old friend returned to the VHCC stage this month to honor the faculty members who first recognized his talent 35 years ago and to share the songs that earned him a lifetime of fame in the country music industry.

Richard Leigh, who won a 1978 Grammy for writing the Crystal Gayle hit "Don't it Make my Brown Eyes Blue" and later was inducted into the Nashville Songwriter's Hall of Fame, performed many of his greatest hits and recalled how it all started in the 1970s when he arrived at VHCC.

Then enrolled in a North Carolina forestry school, Leigh said he came to Abingdon to visit friends who were enrolled at Emory & Henry, eventually deciding to apply for admission himself. While he was waiting for the fall semester to begin at E&H, he enrolled at VHCC - a way to avoid involuntary admission to the

"University of Saigon," he explained. He was soon recruited by William Van Keyser and Gary Aday of the theater department to play the part of an English bobby in a Barter production and enjoyed acting so much that he decided to stay at VHCC and pursue a Theatre Arts degree.

Leigh dedicated "I Don't Love you Much Do I," a song he co-wrote with Guy Clark, to those who made those days so special and life-altering for him.

"I don't love you much do I? Just more than anything else in this whole world," he sang, adding "That's the way I feel about Abingdon, VHCC, Van Keyser and Gary Aday."

After graduating from VHCC, Leigh transferred to Virginia Commonwealth University to complete a bachelor's degree.

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VHCC News is produced each month by Anne Dunham of the Office of Institutional Advancement. If you would like to suggest information for the newsletter, please send your ideas to [adunham@vhcc.edu](mailto:adunham@vhcc.edu) or contact her by phone at 276-739-2456. VHCC is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

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Charles Boling of VHCC was among about 80 golfers who participated April 27 in the 2nd annual VHCC Educational Foundation Scholarship Golf Tournament at Glenrochie Country Club. Sunny skies and warm weather provided the perfect backdrop for the event, which netted more than \$20,000 for the Foundation and earned a championship trophy for the team from First Bank of Virginia. Boling played on a team sponsored by the Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program.

## Workers Comp Program Explained

The Commonwealth of Virginia selected Managed Care Innovations (MCI) to manage its workers' compensation program. The MCI team coordinates the medical and disability benefits related to employees' claims.

To qualify under workers' compensation, the injury or illness must be determined by MCI to fall within the parameters of "arising out of and in the course of employment." The following steps are required if you are injured on the job (also available on the HR web page under FYI-Benefits):

1. In the event of a medical emergency, seek medical attention immediately.
2. Report all details of the incident or injury to your supervisor and Human Resources as soon as possible. The supervisor is required to perform an accident investigation to explore safety prevention issues and claim compensability. The accident investigation form may be accessed on the Human Resources web page under the FYI-Benefits section.
3. Complete all required forms in Human Resources. These forms are then submitted to MCI.
4. Human Resources will offer you a panel of physicians. You must select a physician from the list provided. Please note, if you choose to go to a physician other than the panel provider, you may be responsible for the cost of the medical services. If you are to be admitted to the hospital, your medical provider should call MCI (804-649-2288).
5. This program also provides for the payment of covered pharmacy prescriptions. The Human Resources Office will help you access this service.
6. Prompt notification of workplace injuries is required. Contact your Supervisor and Human Resources.

## Administrative Team Runs Amazing Race

By Beth Duffield

The Center for Business & Industry hosted the 4th Annual Administrative Professionals Conference this month with the theme of "Your Life: The Amazing Race."

Building off the hit TV reality series, 60 women from all over the VHCC service region listened to motivational talks by Coach Susie Toomey, decorated coach and professor at King College; Jessica Stollings, speaker, consultant and 'NexGen' recruiter for Alpha Natural Resources; award winning motivational speaker and trainer, Dr. Brenda White Wright and David Matlock, Vice President of Institutional Advancement at VHCC.

Topics included Life Lessons from Coaching, Mentoring the Next Generation, Keys to Building Competence and Confidence and Running A Race That Makes a Difference. "

In addition to enjoying the speakers, participants were assigned to teams and competed in various team building contests throughout the day. The team with the highest score at the end of the day was awarded prizes.



Beth Duffield of the Center for Business & Industry and Barbara Chavatel, donor to the Keyser-Aday Campaign, were among those who attended a reception following the concert and collected Leigh's autograph.

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Within days of graduating from VCU, he headed to Nashville and began writing the songs that have been recorded by some of country music's biggest names including Reba McEntire, Billy Dean, Steve Wariner and Ray Charles.

His first break, however, came in 1976 when Crystal Gayle - who he first met in Bristol while attending VHCC - recorded "I'll Get Over You." The song went to No. 1 on Billboard's charts and earned Leigh a Country Music Association nomination for "Song of the Year."

Leigh performed the hit during his VHCC concert, remembering how it helped establish him as a serious songwriter. Then, two years later, he made Grammy history when "Don't it Make my Brown Eyes Blue" was nominated for "Best Song" in both the pop and country categories. He won in the country category and, in the years that followed, the song became one of the 10 most often performed of the 20th Century.

Leigh has been steadily producing hits since, but said he still considers his days in Abingdon as some of the best times of his life.

Prior to the concert, he and his wife, Shannon, spent the day touring Abingdon with town leaders and reconnecting with old friends. Their stops included the Abingdon Arts Depot and White's Mill, as well as lunch at House on Main - a converted house where Leigh lived while at VHCC.

"This used to be my room and our living room was over here," he said as he peeked in the upstairs rooms of the restaurant. "Man, this brings back memories."

Leigh's evening performance ended the year-long Keyser-Aday Theatre Campaign, an effort that pays tribute to the two faculty members by naming the campus theater for them. More than \$90,000 in regional art and cash has been raised to establish an art exhibit on campus and to provide scholarships for students pursuing careers in the arts.

## Campus Daycare Center Needed

By Nakya Saunders  
VHCC Student

As a student, my attendance in class is a definite advantage to my success. The opportunity to ask questions, to clarify a lesson, or get that one-on-one attention with my instructors is really spirit lifting and an inspiring experience. However a serious worry for some students really needs to be addressed. During the winter months when the weather gets bad, my worries become more intense.

As a single parent, if there is no school, I have to worry about finding a babysitter. My son is only 7 years old and he is definitely not capable of staying home alone. Therefore, I have to miss school or pay for a babysitter. I am on a tight budget and cannot afford to pay someone to watch my son while I attend class.

A daycare center should be set up on campus and payment should be income-based. This center should be open according to need. For students like me who are on financial aid, the program should be implemented as follows:

1. Students on financial aid that require

daycare for children ages 0-12, payment should be subtracted from their award and distributed to the program.

2. The facility needs to provide for each age group.
3. After school programs should include organized sport activities, help with homework, and community care and outreach so that community awareness can be increased. The people in charge of the facility should be students so that it provides jobs and helps students gain experience.

I work and attend school and feel that a lot of stress would be taken off my shoulders if I didn't have to worry about finding a babysitter. This would definitely help with attendance at VHCC. I believe there is potential at Virginia Highlands in making a mark on Southwest Virginia as a caring family college. A program like this could promote student enrollment and improve attendance.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Over the years, VHCC has explored the possibility of establishing a daycare facility to meet the needs of the campus community, but budget impediments have prevented the project from moving forward.