

Valley Character October Building Character Month: A Huge Success

Numerous Activities Held Throughout the Valley

On October 1st at Patrick Henry High School – following the first public demonstration of Virginia's first **Youth Court** developed by ValleyCharacter.Org, – Government Leaders of the City of Roanoke, Roanoke County, City of Salem, Town of Vinton and Franklin County jointly declared October as **Building Character Month**.

The wording of the actual **Joint Proclamation** that was signed and then reproduced in an ad kindly donated by Kroger, can be seen through this direct link - [PROCLAMATION](#)

Also note that on our website – under the "[Calendar](#)" section (follow the link on the left side of the HOME page) – you now have the opportunity to submit your own "character related" event to appear on this calendar. Our goal is to have one place where we can all find all and any such events planned in our Valley.

An all-volunteer organization, [ValleyCharacter](#) assists schools, students, local governments, businesses and all areas of our community at large, in raising awareness of the importance of good character in schools, at home and in the workplace.

Many different "**Building Character Month**" character-related activities took place from September 28 through October 29. The following pages include an overview of many of these:

Friday, October 1, 2004 – Patrick Henry High School Youth Court Demonstration

The Youth Court, at Patrick Henry High School, an alternative court for juvenile offenders, ordinarily closed to the public, demonstrated the court with a mock trial.

"Youth Court In Session" (From Spring 2004 Bar Association publication article)

The student jurors have been enthusiastic and anxious to learn, albeit a bit nervous at the outset. However, the lawyer advisers have done a terrific job of building confidence in the jurors and aiding them in better understanding the process and what is required of them.

Because the offender must admit guilt in order to participate in Youth Court, the focus of the proceeding is on eliciting essential dispositional information. The students, with the assistance of their attorney mentors have developed appropriate, well reasoned questions. One difficulty originally encountered was the failure to have all necessary witnesses present. To address this problem, the position of student advocate was added to the program. These advocates are charged with the responsibility of meeting before trial with the parties to explain the process and identify necessary witnesses.

The response from all participants has been positive. The students are learning about the role of law in society and its application to young people. The 20+ volunteer attorneys are making a professional contribution that directly impacts the lives of the students in a manner that promotes respect for the legal system and the bar.

The **second Virginia Youth Court** starts operating this month at [William Fleming High School](#).

Joint Proclamation Signing by Area Governments Declaring October
“Building Character Month” in the Greater Roanoke Valley
Friday, October 1, 2004 – Patrick Henry High School

City of Roanoke, Roanoke County, City of Salem, Town of Vinton and Franklin County officials issued proclamations showing support of *Building Character Month* during their final council meetings in September and their representatives *jointly* endorsed the proclamation on Friday, October 1st at 4:00 p.m. at Patrick Henry High School. Senator John Edwards, who championed character education in the state legislature, was in attendance as well as area school officials and other leading citizens.

Thursday, October 14, 2004 – Salem Civic Center
Roanoke Valley Minister’s Conference 2004 Interfaith Breakfast
“Honoring Different Beliefs – Sharing Common Values”

This year’s annual Interfaith Breakfast was held at the Salem Civic Center from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Sponsored by the Roanoke Valley Ministers’ Conference, Valley Character and the [Conflict Resolution Center \(www.rev.net/~crc\)](http://www.rev.net/~crc), this year’s theme was “**Honoring Different Beliefs – Sharing Common Values.**” This theme coincides with the proclamation of October as *Building Character Month* and focuses on how best to develop character in our community from an interfaith perspective, particularly in regard to the education of young people.

The featured speaker was Rod Handley, President of Character That Counts and author of numerous books, including *Character Counts: Who’s Counting Yours?* Rod Handley was Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes from 1986 until 2000 when he founded “Character That Counts”, a ministry dedicated to communicating the unique and critical message of character, integrity and accountability in our daily lives. See <http://www.gospelcom.net/ctc/> for more info.

Handley’s presentation was followed by comments and discussion by a panel moderated by Diane Elliot and including Reverend Audette Fulbright, Rabbi Manes Kogan, Audrey Wheaton, Claudia Whitworth, Corelli Rasheed, Audrey Kemp and others, assisted by Carl Tinsley and Kirk Ballin. The breakfast and panel discussion was followed by an interactive question and answer session, and small focus groups that explored how faith-based organizations and individual citizens can cooperate in building character within the Roanoke Valley based on our common values while honoring the beliefs of our different faiths.

Tuesday, October 26th and Wednesday, October 27th, 2004
At District Kiwanis Meetings
John A. Kelley Awards Presentations for Sportsmanship

The Sandlot Super Bowl program is a regional football team competition for nearly 100 clubs organized by the local sports departments of regional Parks and Recreation Departments, under the auspices of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Youth Sports Committee. It

covers Roanoke City and County, Salem, Franklin, Botetourt and Bedford. It is divided into three age groups, "Pee Wee" (8 and under), "Little" (10) and "Junior" (12). Part of the program has always been the *John A. Kelley Sportsmanship Awards*.

In order to help give more prominence to this whole important area of sportsmanship – Valley Character and local Kiwanis Clubs in Roanoke, Salem and Bedford honored the John A. Kelley award winners and presented permanent plaques to each district at each of their last regular local Kiwanis meetings in October.

The Sports Committee of Valley Character recognizes the importance of sports and good sportsmanship as a major opportunity for building good character. For example, in promoting team work and fair play it can help foster such elements as responsibility, caring, fairness and citizenship in general.

Kiwanis is a worldwide service organization with the motto, "Serving the Children of the World".

Local Kiwanis clubs have welcomed this opportunity to sponsor this program and help develop and focus on this crucial element of character development.

There is no doubt that parents play a crucial role in directing their children's attitudes towards sports and the Valley Character Sports Committee has been focusing on trying to help coaches see how they can best help players and their parents maintain the right standards while helping the players to give their best and recognize that winning is fine - but that playing fairly and as well as possible, is fine and fun also.

The criteria for the Sportsmanship Awards selection include such elements as:

- Player's interaction with other players.
- Coaches' interaction with other coaches.
- Coaches' interactions with players.
- Parents, fans and cheerleaders' behavior,
- Coaches' behavior toward officials and player's behavior towards officials.
- Coaches' behavior towards staff working the game.
- Do coaches run the score up?
- Overall team sportsmanship.
- Do coaches play all of their players?

Presentations of Sandlot Super Bowl Sportsmanship Awards

Jim Carroll, chairman of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce's Youth Sports Committee, spoke to the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke on Wednesday, October 27, 2004. Similar presentations were made in Salem and Bedford earlier the same week.

Carroll noted that Valley Character had designated October as Building Character Month and that good character is a vital part of good sportsmanship. He said that more than 3,000 people are involved each year with the Sandlot programs. He explained that the Chamber named the award in honor of John Kelley because of his dedication to Sandlot football from the 1950s until his death in 1987. Kelley was said to have attended more Sandlot games than any other non-parent in the area. Charlie Hammersley with Salem's department and Mark Moore with the City of Roanoke's parks and recreation department assisted Carroll with the presentation of the awards.

Steve Witt accepted the Pee Wee Division award for the Williamson Road Browns. Clay Dawson accepted the Little Division award for the Northwest/Wilmon recreation team. Jim Hammerstrom accepted the Junior Division award for the South City Knights.

A complete list of the winners is shown below:

John A. Kelley Award Winners - 2004

Sponsored By:

Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce, Roanoke Valley Kiwanis Clubs and Valley Character

Pee-Wee Division

<u>Locality</u>	<u>Football</u>	<u>Cheerleading</u>
Bedford City/County Ellis	South Bedford Bulldogs-Randy Ellis	South Bedford Bulldogs - Tammy
Botetourt County	Botetourt Warriors - Eric Foutz	None
Franklin County	Yellow Jackets - Emmanuel Brown	Yellow Jackets - Jennifer Spicer
City of Salem Tolley	South Salem Falcons - Bo Mitchem	South Salem Falcons - Dawn
Roanoke City	Williamson Rd. Browns - Steve Witt	Williamson Rd. - Dana Brooks
Roanoke County	Vinton Longhorns - Noel Spencer	Vinton Longhorns - Nikki Angle

Little Division

<u>Locality</u>	<u>Football</u>	<u>Cheerleading</u>
Bedford City/County	Bedford Panthers - Lee Willis	Bedford Panthers - Wendy Puckett
Botetourt County	Botetourt Cougars - Mike Maust	Botetourt Cougars - Angie Ross
Franklin County	Blue Devils - Todd Hunley	Blue Devils - Kathy Maples
City of Salem	W. Salem Cardinals-Randy Peregoy	W. Salem Cardinals - Kristi Haga
Roanoke City	NW/Williamson Rd. - Charles Price	NW/Wilmont. - Moneque Hall
Roanoke County	Vinton Terriers - Bear Adams	Vinton Terriers - Amy Buchanan

Junior Division

<u>Locality</u>	<u>Football</u>	<u>Cheerleading</u>
Bedford City/County	Bedford Patriots - C.J. Stanley	Bedford Patriots - Cheryl Daniels
Botetourt County	Botetourt Cougars - Chris McCarty	None
Franklin County	Steelers - Charles Bollings	None
City of Salem	Salem Spartans - Horace Hudson	Salem Spartans - Cynthia Wright
Roanoke City Alexander	South City Knights-Jim Hammerston	South City Knights - Diane
Roanoke County Rhonda Kay	N. Roanoke Charger -Scott Fisher	North Roanoke Chargers -

Friday, October 29, 2004 – Salem Civic Center

Ethics in the Workplace Workshop for Area High School Seniors

Ethics in the Workplace is a program to increase a young adult's understanding of values and ethics

Valley Character in cooperation with Hidden Valley Rotary Club and the U.S. Army invited High School Seniors to take part in this workshop. The workshop was held in the same location in 2003 and was well attended and enlightening for students.

Ethics in the Workplace is a program to increase a young adult's understanding of values and ethics and to show how they will apply to their likely career fields and jobs. This program also provides an excellent opportunity for parents, schools, and community organizations to join in a partnership for the betterment of their community. Robin Reed was again the emcee.

Each group was set up to match students career choices and led by an expert from that sector of the community an ethical dilemmas was presented that related interest to career choices of each group's participants. Activities were designed to help students learn the how and why of ethical decision-making and included discussion, role-playing, lecture and some video presentations.

Roy Marsico, Manager of Employee Relations for ITT spearheaded the project in cooperation with Major Herb Daniels of the U.S. Army Recruiting Corps, Robin Reed of WDBJ7, members of Hidden Valley Rotary Club and others.

Friday, October 29, 2004 Essay Contest Winners Announced

An Essay Contest for Middle School Students of Botetourt, Craig, Franklin Counties, Roanoke City, Roanoke County and Salem.

Valley Character, in conjunction with Salem Rotary Club and Roanoke College, sponsored an essay contest for middle school students of Botetourt, Craig, Franklin Counties, Roanoke City, Roanoke County and Salem.

There were awards for essays within each school, within each school district and within the Valley Character region.

The theme was *Celebrate Good Character - and Character Education*. Each student was required to choose as their essay subject, one or more of the following six "pillars" of character:

Trustworthiness
Respect
Responsibility
Fairness
Caring
Citizenship

Students identified a person that they felt possesses the character trait they have chosen to write about. This could not be a parent or a coach.

Each individual school winner received a \$100 US Savings Bond and a certificate. Each of the District winners received a \$200 US Savings Bond and a certificate and a Roanoke College Scholarship Certificate.

The one Region-wide winner received a \$500 US Savings Bond and a Roanoke College Scholarship Certificate. Area Rotary Clubs, led by Salem Rotary, provided over \$2,500 in savings bonds rewards and Roanoke College provided six \$500 scholarships for district winners and a \$1,000 scholarship for the overall region winner,

Six scholarships were offered of \$1,000 each to individual middle school winners and one scholarship of \$1,500 for the overall Valley winner. These scholarships are activated only for students enrolling at Roanoke College and may be renewed for up to four years.

School judging panels decided their school winners. The district winners, in turn, were chosen and passed to the Regional judging committee.

Essay Contest Winner

As School, District and Regional Winner, Tia Mason of Breckenridge Middle School was awarded a total of \$800 by Rotary and \$10,000 in scholarships by Roanoke College – if she goes to the college after High School.

Read her essay below:



Tia Mason

Tia Mason's Award Winning Essay

Have you ever had a teacher that you loved so much, that when the end of the year came you just wanted to break down and cry? I had a teacher like that once, and I'm going to tell you all that I can about her.

Mary Bolt was my favorite teacher in the whole world. She was short, she wore glasses, she had short dark brown hair, and she was as smart as a tick. She was my first grade teacher. Mrs. Bolt taught English, science, and she was my homeroom teacher. She was the most caring teacher that I ever had. Mrs. Bolt was everyone's favorite teacher, but I liked her the most. I met her my first day of first grade at Roanoke Academy for Mathematics and Science. Mrs. Bolt was a really great teacher, she was very kind to children, and she was very generous. She was the definition of caring. She was also very sympathetic. Some of the other teachers at school thought that she was too nice, and wasn't strict enough, but that didn't stop her from being the best teacher that she could be. One time before Christmas break she let us make candle holders for our parents with a scented candle in it for Christmas. After we made the candle holders, she gave each one of her students a small gift of appreciation.

The reason that I say that she is sympathetic is because one time, my mom had to come to the school and talk to all of my teachers to say that I would be out for a while, because I had to get surgery. Mrs. Bolt was so shocked that she actually cried, she gave me a gift basket with a card, a doll, some candy, a coloring book, markers, and a stuffed animal. I named my doll Mary after Mrs. Bolt. The day I came back to school she was so happy. She even had everyone sign a card for me. She had two kids, a boy and a girl, the boy was the oldest. They were really cool too. She and my mom were really close friends with each other. Mrs. Bolt would always leave good remarks on my report card about my performance in class and about me as myself. I could always tell my secrets to her, because she was trustworthy, and caring enough not to go tell all of my business to everybody.

I loved Mrs. Mary Bolt as if she were part of my own family. I even invited her and her two children to a birthday party I had when I was in the first grade. She was very respectful to each one of us. I really wish she could find this and read it. She was one of the most caring, respectful, loving, and generous people I know. She was as gentle as a summer breeze. I used to keep in contact with her when I was younger, but I lost her number. I still have a few report cards from her classes. I keep them to remember her by. Sometimes it could be hard to always be caring. For example, if you have a bunch of kids who are disrespectful to you and don't appreciate anything you do for them, it could be hard to care for them. Anytime Mrs. Bolt had a problem with any of her students, she was still caring for them and everyone else. I also think it would have

been hard for her to remain fair because in class you could have like five children talking, and the rest of the class would be doing their work, she could punish the whole class for talking but it wouldn't be fair. So the five talkers would be sent to a different class and the rest of the class would be rewarded.

Now you have seen how important Mrs. Bolt was to me. I have never felt so close to a teacher before in my life until Mrs. Bolt came along. I haven't seen Mrs. Bolt since the last day in first grade, but I can still remember her as if she is my teacher now.