



Sparky's Current Events

Give the Gift of Education!

In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, finding the perfect gift for everyone on your list can be stressful, time consuming and often disappointing. Before you get overwhelmed trying to find the perfect gift or end up purchasing a last minute something-or-other, consider giving a gift that keeps giving year after year, a gift that puts money in your loved ones pockets every single month. If this sounds appealing to you, look no further than the gift of a VTA course!

A new year is right around the corner and your friends and family probably have a list of goals they want to accomplish. Have they talked about changing careers? Is the lack of an education or certificate on their resume holding them back from a promotion at their current company? By giving the gift of a VTA education, you can help a loved one take the first step toward achieving their goals in 2022. The gift of a VTA course can help them jump into the new year with enthusiasm for realizing their career dreams!

While a gift card to their favorite store can be an easy present, you're confident they'll enjoy, it's not long lasting. The clothes or items they purchase can bring short term joy, but eventually they wear down or are forgotten in a few years. Helping your loved one further their education, however, can have an impact on their happiness and on their earnings for a lifetime!!

Don't forget to take care of yourself this holiday season, too! While you're working on wrapping up the season with the perfect gifts for friends, family, and coworkers, don't forget to take time to treat yourself! After you've crossed off your holiday to-do list and are confident that your holiday gifts are going to be a hit, get a head start on your own 2022 goals. Whether you want to learn new skills or refresh old ones, work on earning your Journeyman or Master license, our courses can help you start the new year off on the right foot.

~ by Tammy Langfeld



Inside this issue

- Holiday Food Drive Raffle.....2
- Appliance Tips for the Holidays...2
- Avoid Holiday Accidents and Mishaps.....2
- Congratulations VTA!.....3
- Looking Ahead to 2022!.....3
- Did You Know.....3
- “Green” Holiday Tips4
- Upcoming Events4

Holiday Food Drive Raffle

Virginia Technical Academy is having a Holiday Food Drive Raffle!

Bring in **5 non-perishable food items for one raffle ticket!** You can “purchase” as many raffle tickets as you would like for a chance to win an item from the Christmas tree! If you’ve seen our Christmas tree in the lobby, you will know that there is a huge selection of quality Klein tools as well as t-shirts and hats.

The food drive is an opportunity to help our community during the holiday season, it’s a great way to give back. The food drive will continue through to the end of January, closing on January 31, 2022. The drawing will be held on February 1, 2022 at 5:00pm. One winner will be drawn. Please turn in your food donations to the front desk during normal office hours to get your raffle tickets!



Appliance Tips for the Holidays

Clean out your refrigerator.

Before doing your holiday grocery shopping, make room for all of the extra food you’re going to prepare, and the leftovers. Rule of thumb: Anything you can’t identify or any condiment that’s more than a year old: put it in the trash.

Have you cleaned your fridge’s coils yet this year?

We’re supposed to do it every six months, but do we? Take 15 minutes and either dust or vacuum the coils (make sure you unplug the fridge first). This will ensure it’s running properly and efficiently.

Disinfect your kitchen sink.

There’s more E. coli and other nasty bacteria in your kitchen sink than in your toilet bowl, according to multiple health experts. Lovely! Disinfect it (now that you know this, you’ll be doing it daily, won’t you?) with either one part rubbing alcohol to one part water, or bleach and water, and let the solution run down the drain.

Clean your dishwasher.

It sounds like an unnecessary thing to do — cleaning the appliance that cleans your dishes. Using an approved dishwasher cleaner will remove stains on the tub, clean mineral buildup in the wash system and the tub and help with odors.

Some dishwashers have removable filters that need to be cleaned regularly. So, check out the section on routine maintenance in the owner’s manual to keep your dishwasher in good working condition.

Inspect the hoses on your washer.

Make sure there are no tears or cracks. The last thing you need is a flood in your house five minutes before guests arrive.

If your appliances need a little extra attention – or if you want them checked out before a problem arises – Schedule an appliance diagnostics!

~ by Marcus Cordle

Avoid Holiday Accidents and Mishaps

The holiday season is upon us! And after a pandemic year that put a damper on traveling to see family and friends and just getting together, many of us are planning festive gatherings once again. With this, there will be decorations to put up around the house and meals to plan, and, if you’re able to find a Christmas tree this year, a tree to trim! Just remember, **safety first!**

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, more than 1/3 of home decoration fires are started by candles! Don’t leave candles unattended, keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that burns, keep children and pets away from lit candles, and keep matches and lighters in a cabinet, away from children. Better yet, get the LED candles that look remarkably like real candles!

Trimming the tree with lights? Make sure to replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Use lights and extension cords that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory, such as “UL”. Be sure the cord does not pose a tripping hazard and do not overload the outlet! And ALWAYS turn off Christmas tree lights, and any other lit decorations, before leaving home or going to bed!

Stringing up lights outside? If you’ve taken our OSHA 10 safety course, you would know how to use ladders properly! For step ladders, be sure to fully open and lock a ladder before climbing it. Place the ladder on a level, hard surface (doesn’t sink). Check shoes to ensure they are free from grease or mud. Carry tools in pockets or in a tool bag attached to your belt, not in your hands. Work facing the ladder. Don’t climb higher than the third rung from the top. It’s best to have a second person on the ground to hold the ladder if you can. Know where electrical wires and power lines are and keep away from aluminum ladders! And hang light cords with clips, not nails! And ALWAYS plug exterior lights into ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets!

Congratulations VTA!

Virginia Technical Academy has successfully completed an audit from the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) and has been moved from “candidate” status to “full accreditation” status as outlined in the NCCER Accreditation Guidelines & Program Compliance. What this means is Virginia Technical Academy is now established as a fully accredited trade school that can provide instruction in Heating Air-Conditioning, Plumbing, and Electrical for nationally accepted certifications. The NCCER portable certification and registration system is a standard recognized and accepted by the construction industry.

What does this mean for the VTA student? The standardized assessment for certification falls within two categories, the written assessment, and the performance assessment. Passing the written assessment will result in a “Knowledge Verified” certification, passing the performance assessment will result in a “Performance Verified” certification, and passing both will result in a “Certified” designation. Because VTA registers each student with NCCER, and at each level of certification, whether completing Level 1 or all four levels of training, a prospective employer can access the student’s academic grades and performances on a national registry. This helps the employer with assessing the base pay and job placement, all based on the student’s achievements.

By getting this fully accredited status, VTA is proving that we are here to help our students at every turn. VTA is providing the trade education and standardized assessments and certification programs that will help our students get fair access to a career and employment.

~ by David Gillespie

Looking Ahead to 2022!

As we close out the year, we reflect on all that was in 2021. This time last year, we still did not have a vaccine for COVID-19. The world was in a second wave of winter infections. This year, we’re facing yet another variant of this virus. Whatever side of vaccinations you might be on, I think it’s safe to say that we all are ready to get back to as normal a way of life as we can.

While the pandemic caused a big ripple in the workings at VTA, it is safe to say that 2021 was still a great year for VTA! We held the first graduation ceremony for a trade school in the area, and several local politicians are taking notice of what we are doing here. Delegates and gubernatorial candidates visited our school, and we were able to show them all the good things we are achieving to help educate the local workforce.

Looking forward, VTA is planning on working with the new governor of Virginia and delegates to get some bills written for trade school access to student financial aid and professional status for appliance technicians! So, enjoy the holidays, stay warm and healthy, and stay tuned for what’s coming in 2022!



Did you know...

~ that if you gave all the gifts listed in the “Twelve Days of Christmas,” (repeating the lyrics) it would equal 364 presents?

~ Thomas Edison’s colleague, Edward Johnson, was the first to put electric lights on a Christmas tree? Before electric string lights, people would use candles to light Christmas trees, which was dangerous and caused many home fires, DUH! It was 1882 when Johnson thought to string electric lights to decorate a Christmas tree. There were only three colors: red, white, and blue!

~ Santa has a postal code in Canada? His address is Santa Claus, North Pole, HOH OHO!

~ that the original name for mistletoe was mistaltan? “Mistal” comes from the Anglo Saxon word for “dung” and “tan” means “stick.” So all this time we’ve been kissing under the dung stick!

~ that eggnog dates back to medieval times? Monks in the 13th century used to enjoy a drink called “posset,” which was made with sweetened and spiced milk curdled with ale or wine and to make it more interesting, they added eggs and figs, and this was served hot. Mmm!

~ that the Statue of Liberty is the largest Christmas present ever given? It was given to the U.S. by France in 1886 and was considered a holiday gift. So, at 150 feet tall and 225 tons, it’s officially the largest Christmas present in the world!

~ that you may be able to donate your Christmas tree to the zoo? Some zoos will take Christmas trees to feed the animals. It is a festive treat for them. Just be sure to take ALL the decorations off first.

~ that “Jingle Bells” was originally a Thanksgiving song?

“Green” Holiday Tips

First and foremost, reduce! Buy gift items with as little packaging as possible.

Gift cards have little wrapping, other than an envelope, and the recipient gets to pick out their own gift.

With all the festive entertaining comes all the additional plastic utensils, paper plates, bottles and cans. Try to use washable plates and silverware. Buy large bottles of drinks instead of individual serving sizes, and use paper cups. If you do have a lot of drink cans, crush them first before placing in your recycling cart to make room. Break down and flatten boxes and containers, too.

Give living gifts such as plants, trees and seed that will contribute to the quality of the air we breathe.

Upcoming Events



December 1: Hampton Alternative Learning Center to visit VTA.

December 13: Level 1 Day Time Electrical starts.

Level 3 Day Time Electrical and HVAC starts.

December 24– Jan 2: Christmas Break for Students

January 3: Building/Property Maintenance starts.

January 12: EPA-608 one-day course with exam, 8am-4pm

January 17: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 24: Level 4 Day Time Electrical and HVAC starts.

“Try to be a rainbow in someone’s cloud.”
~ Maya Angelou

Virginia Technical Academy was founded on the principle that every community needs a skilled and well-educated workforce. Our goal is to provide an environment that will exceed the educational requirements and needs of both future tradespeople and their employers.

MISSION STATEMENT

Virginia Technical Academy is dedicated to keeping our trades strong through education, validation, and professional

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



**VIRGINIA TECHNICAL
ACADEMY**

757-586-5322 • LEARN. APPLY. THRIVE.

809 OMNI BLVD. NEWPORT NEWS, VA 23606

