



# GLOUCESTER-MATHEWS GAZETTE-JOURNAL

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MELANY SLAUGHTER / GAZETTE-JOURNAL



CHARLIE KOENIG / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Students in Gloucester and Mathews started the 2024-2025 school year Monday morning. In photo at left, Abingdon Elementary School fifth graders Parker Blankenship (left) and Tucker Bond catch up after a long summer. At right, Mathews Elementary School principal Lee Anne Bray began her first day in the position, greeting kindergartener Magnolia Payne with a hug.

## Smooth openings reported in Gloucester, Mathews schools

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER AND CHARLIE KOENIG

Superintendents in Gloucester and Mathews counties reported smooth openings to the 2024-2025 school year. Classes began Monday in both counties.

### In Gloucester

"We had a phenomenal first day of school."

Superintendent of Gloucester County Public Schools Dr. Anthony Vladu said the first couple days of the new school year went well for the district.

Transportation issues were kept at a minimum and Vladu expects improvement every

day. "We're quicker than last year," said Vladu.

Though bus delays can be expected the first few days of school as thousands of Gloucester students rely on GCPSS transportation to get to and from school, there have been minimal problems so far. In fact, all Gloucester High School students were dropped off by 7:30 Tuesday morning.

As for GHS students and staff who have to navigate the renovation project for one more school year, Vladu said teachers have worked

diligently to adjust learning areas during this time.

GCPSS had a physical count of 4,808 students Tuesday, but the district expects enrollment to exceed 5,000. Vladu estimated that five to 10 percent of students were absent the first couple of days for various reasons. An enrollment report will be provided by Vladu at next month's Gloucester County School Board meeting.

Vladu said he is grateful for the parents, students and staff for showing positivity and enthusiasm this first week and wishes everyone a great

school year.

### In Mathews

"We had a really good opening" with new principals in two of the county's three schools, no staffing problems, buses running smoothly and the addition of the eighth grade to Mathews High School going well, said Mathews Superintendent of Schools Dr. David S. Daniel. "I think we're set up for a good school year."

"It looked pretty seamless," Daniel said of the eighth graders' first day at MHS. "There was enough staff and older

kids out helping everybody," he said. Part of the success, he said, was due to the MHS transition fair which was held a few weeks ago.

The division didn't encounter any problems with transportation, Daniel said. Buses ran smoothly, there were no delays and no missing children. "Mr. Royals [Transportation Supervisor Clyde Royals] does a good job," he said.

Enrollment at Mathews schools is right around where the division ended last year, Daniel said. Numbers are still fluctuating, as the division is finalizing who has moved out

of the county, who is homeschooling, who is coming back after having tried homeschool and with a couple students either still on vacation or who had gotten sick when on vacation, he said. The 2023-2024 school year ended with an enrollment of around 786-788, with this year's budget based on an Average Daily Membership of 785 students.

Students in both Gloucester and Mathews will get a chance to ease into the school routine with both Friday and Monday off for the Labor Day holiday.



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

### Welcome home celebration

Dilan Cotman and Taylor Jacobs of Gloucester and their children Audrey, 6, and baby Waverly, 7 months, look forward to meeting the people who helped them out during the toughest time of their lives at a welcome home celebration for Waverly and a thank-you to the community on Saturday, Sept. 14, at the Pankatank Community Center in Harcum. The family spent the past eight months in the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia while Waverly underwent a life-saving treatment. See story on page 13A.

## Bay Aging expanding mission, income base

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

Over the past 12 years, Bay Aging, a Gloucester-based nonprofit organization that provides services for seniors and other vulnerable populations, has worked to develop income sources that don't rely on government grants and private contributions.

It has been so successful with its business model approach that its revenues have increased from around \$12 million in 2015 to a projected \$64 million or so in 2025, with 81 percent of its total budget for 2025 coming from contract work rather than grants and contributions, which have remained essentially flat over

that time.

"We work for a living," said Bay Aging's CEO Kathy Vesley proudly.

Vesley, who has been at the helm of Bay Aging throughout this economic transition, said the additional money has allowed the organization to make up the difference in programs whose funding from state, federal and local grants and contributions regularly falls short of the growing need in a 10-county region that contains four of the five oldest counties in Virginia, in terms of the age of its residents. Those counties are Mathews, Middle-

SEE BAY AGING, PAGE 13A



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Bay Aging, a Gloucester-based nonprofit that provides services for seniors and other vulnerable populations, has taken a business-model approach to its services, increasing its revenues nearly five-fold over the past decade in spite of flat grant funding. Shown, from left, are Bay Aging statistician Julie Northcott-Wilson, CEO Kathy Vesley and CFO Tinsley Goad.

## Espinoza steps down from School Board

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

Andersen.

The Gloucester County School Board met Tuesday night in the T.C. Walker Education Center auditorium for a work session, tackling many items including the resignation of board member Karen Espinoza.

"We received her official resignation email last week," said school board chair Troy

The board must fill the vacancy within 45 days of Espinoza's resignation and appoint a qualified voter who resides in the Petsworth Magisterial District until her term expires on Dec. 31, 2025.

By unanimous vote, the board decided to advertise the open position for 14 days.

SEE GLOUCESTER BOARD, PAGE 13A

### Offices close for Labor Day

All post offices, courts, county offices and DMV customer service centers in Gloucester and Mathews will be closed Monday in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

Schools in the two counties will be closed both Friday and Monday.

Gloucester libraries will be closed on Monday, but the book drop will be open. Mathews Memorial Library will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

All Gloucester waste facilities will be closed on Monday, but the Mathews transfer station will be open for normal hours.

ABC stores will close early on Monday, at 6 p.m.



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### Songbird Trail

Machicomoco State Park, Hayes, opened its new trail to the public on Monday. The Songbird Trail was made in partnership with the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists. See story on page 4A.

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## Birthday at the Birthplace to be held Sept. 14

Happy 173rd birthday, Dr. Walter Reed!

The Fairfield Foundation is holding a special event on Saturday, Sept. 14, at Walter Reed Birthplace to celebrate the Gloucester County native best known as the conqueror of yellow fever, whose name was lent to hospitals in Washington, D.C., and Gloucester.

The fourth annual celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sept. 14 at the historic site in Belroi at the intersection of Routes 614 (Hickory Fork Road) and 616 (Belroi Road).

In addition to tours of the house, visitors may participate in public archaeology to search for evidence of the early Belroi community. Children are invited to play games that may have been played by Walter Reed's older siblings.

Prior to and during the event, a scavenger hunt featuring Walter Reed and Gloucester history is available for children to play for prizes. For more information about the scavenger hunt, email [outreach@fairfield-foundation.org](mailto:outreach@fairfield-foundation.org).

Riverside Walter Reed Hospital, Gloucester, opened on Sept. 11, 1977, is celebrating 47 years and is the event sponsor. They will provide information on infection prevention in honor of Reed's contributions to public health. The Gloucester Museum of History will also have a local history information

booth at the site.

Reed was born in this small dwelling in Belroi on Sept. 13, 1851, while his father was an itinerant preacher to Methodist congregations in the Gloucester, Mathews and King and Queen County circuit. The mid-19th century crossroads community "was a neighborhood thickly settled ... about midway the circuit, and a good school was there," according to Jefferson W. Stubbs, property owner and Bellamy Church member. In 1852, William Roy Jones and Isabella Taliaferro Jones moved to the neighborhood and built their home, named "Bell Roi." At the time a post office was established at the turn of the century, the community was dubbed Belroi.

Reed was a U.S. Army physician who, in 1901, led the team that confirmed the theory of Cuban doctor Carlos Finlay that yellow fever is transmitted by a particular mosquito species rather than by direct contact.

In 1926, Walter Reed's Birthplace was purchased and preserved by the Medical Society of Virginia. In 1968, the deed was passed to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, and the local Joseph Bryan Branch acquired more furnishings to interpret the house as a mid-19th-century dwelling. After the local chapter was dissolved, the Gloucester Preservation Foundation was

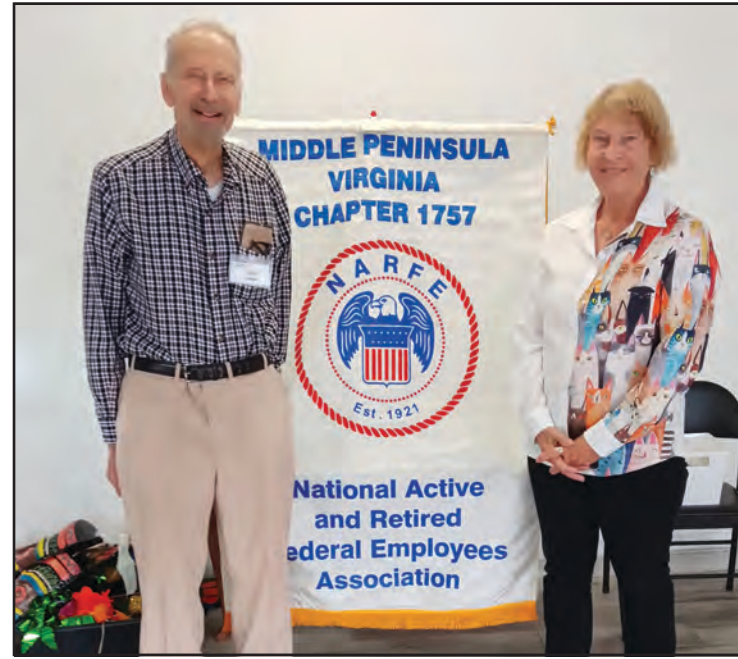
formed to care for the site. The Fairfield Foundation worked with caretakers of the birthplace for more than a decade and acquired neighboring parcels to preserve the historic landscape.

The Walter Reed Birthplace came under the Fairfield Foundation's umbrella for preservation and programming in 2019. These organizations' work ensured the rare survival of an architectural style once common throughout 19th-century Virginia.

The mission of the Fairfield Foundation is to promote and involve the public in hands-on archaeology, historic preservation and related education activities within Virginia's Middle Peninsula and surrounding areas.

Activities are conducted to educate and involve people of all ages in the process of archaeological and historical preservation, to provide outreach to students and the public about historic landscapes of the region, and to encourage discussion, research, collaboration and preservation of historic resources, including buildings, archaeological sites, historic documents and oral history.

The foundation's major projects include archaeological outreach at the Burwell plantation known as Fairfield/Carter's Creek, restoration and repurposing at Timberneck House at Machicomoco State Park, preservation of the Walter Reed Birthplace, preservation and tours at the Rosewell Ruins and Visitor Center, and interpretation of the restored 1930s Edgehill Service Station, which serves as its headquarters—the Center for Archaeology, Preservation and Education (CAPE). For more information, call 804-815-4467 or email [fairfield@fairfieldfoundation.org](mailto:fairfield@fairfieldfoundation.org).



### NARFE talk

Sherry West, animal adoption volunteer with the Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society, was the guest speaker at the Aug. 20 luncheon meeting of Chapter 1757 of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees. West is shown with NARFE chapter president Bob Howe. Call West at 804-693-5520 if you can foster or adopt GMHS animals.

## Democrats to open office in Gloucester Saturday

The Democratic Committees of Gloucester, Mathews and Middlesex counties will officially open their shared office from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday at 6882A Main Street, Main Street Center, Gloucester.

The office will be staffed by volunteers from each county and will be used to coordinate strategies to support Democratic Party candidates for local, state and national offices, and to share information and support. For more information or to volunteer, visit the three organizations' websites ([www.glodemsva.org](http://www.glodemsva.org), [www.mathewsvademo.org](http://www.mathewsvademo.org) or [www.middlesexvademo.org](http://www.middlesexvademo.org)) or email [info@glodemsva.org](mailto:info@glodemsva.org).



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## Museum presents talk on 'How to Tell Your Family Story'

Local historian and genealogist Lori Jackson Black will present "How to Tell Your Family Story," with a strategy for being successful in developing your own family history at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 6, in the Mathews Museum, 200 Main Street.

Black will discuss basic research techniques, share helpful hints, review ways to efficiently compile your family data, story, and photographs, and publish them, a release said.

Black is an author and maintains a website and blog focusing on history, genealogy and preservation projects. She is Project Manager for Timberneck, a Fairfield Foundation farm house restoration project at Machicomoco State Park in Gloucester, a board member and treasurer of The Fairfield Foundation, and on the board of Preservation Mathews, Inc., an organization that identifies at-risk homes/structures within the county and works to preserve or restore them. She is the principal and owner of LJB Professional Genealogy Services in Mathews, a full service genealogical and historical records research and consulting company.

The event is free and open to the public.

## Brunswick stew available at Market Days

Sons of Confederate Veterans Lane-Armistead Camp #1772 will have Brunswick stew prepared by the Stew Brothers, and SCV 5th Platoon available at Mathews Market Days (131 Main Street, Mathews) for a \$10/quart donation, beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 7. To pre-order, contact Allen Farmer at 804-725-4080.

## Mathews Y to hold open house Sept. 7

The Mathews Family YMCA, 33 Cricket Hill Road, Hudgins, will hold its fall open house on Saturday, Sept. 7 from 9:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

The public is invited to explore the facility, try out a group exercise class, and check out the Child Watch program. For more information, call the Y at 804-725-1488 or email mathews@ymcavp.org.



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Fred Lyon, at left, chair of the Mathews VA250 Committee, and Shawn Jaeger, president of the Court House Players, are working together on one of the initiatives for the 2026 250th Anniversary Celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence—a production of an expanded version of the beloved Judy Ward musical, "Crickets on a Hill."

## Mathews VA250 Committee teams with CHP

Mathews County's VA250 Committee, like other localities across the U.S., has been busy making plans for the 250th anniversary celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

But Mathews has two things other cities and counties can't lay claim to, said VA250 Committee Chair Fred Lyon: the Battle of Cricket Hill and an original musical that tells its story.

The battle, fought on July 9, 1776, was the final stand for Lord Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia. After making an encampment on Gwynn's Island, Dunmore was vanquished by General Andrew Lewis, members of the 7th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army, and local colonists, whom he haughtily dubbed "crickets."

As part of the 250th anniversary celebration in Mathews, said Lyon, the VA250 Committee is teaming up with the Court House Players, a community theater group, to stage a production of "Crickets on a Hill," the beloved musical written by the late Judy Ward, a Mathews native and regionally renowned singer and songwriter.

Shawn Jaeger, president of the Court House Players, said the show is getting a makeover, with all of the original version still intact, but expanded with a complementary current-day story that will include roles for children. David Shuber, Ward's singing partner, who played the lead character in the original show during the 1976 bicentennial celebration and orchestrated the music for the last produc-

tion in 2017, will be involved in this show, as well.

Lyon said the VA250 Committee's next job is to pull together the funding for the show by applying for grants and seeking private contributions.

There are other major initiatives in the works, as well, said Lyon, including encampments and reenactments that will fill the week following July 4 with lots of activities to celebrate the birth of the nation. Lyon said there will be more about those activities after a meeting next month with the Sons of the American Revolution and the 7th Virginia reenactment group.

But that final week doesn't tell the whole story. In the lead-up to the crowning events of the celebration, there are other initiatives being rolled out. These include a collaborative research effort by the Mathews committee and the Gloucester VA250 Committee to identify as many local people as possible in 1776 who were patriots, loyalists, free people of color, enslaved people, and Native Americans. Quarterly lectures are planned, as well, on various aspects of the fight for independence in the American colonies. The next lecture will be in October.

And, of course, the July 4 celebration in 2026 will be a big one, said Lyon, and will, thus far, include a parade and a picnic.

"There will be lots of Mathews-forward activities," said Lyon. "We're looking forward to lots of community involvement."

## Quilt exhibit debuts Oct. 5

A special quilting exhibit, "Threads of Our History: Quilts of Mathews Virginia," will open at the Mathews Museum on Oct. 5 and will remain on exhibit through the end of December.

The quilts are from a private collection of an old Mathews family, going back over a century, a release said. The quilts reflect their utilitarian use in a geographic area that was fairly isolated until the 1950s. They honor a southern tradition of quilting when scraps of fabric or clothing were used to make bedding when needed.

Southern quilts have their own identity, with their use of color, size of pieces, and choice of fabric, which was primarily cotton and feed bags, the release said.

Owners of the collection are Mathews residents Jay Black, a financial advisor with Davenport & Co., and his wife, Lori Jackson Black, a genealogist and historian, who said they are pleased to be able to share this treasured collection with the public at the upcoming special exhibit.

"These quilts represent the life of Polly Brooks Diggs (1884-1988) and her sister Marion Diggs (1878-1982) as well as other women in the Diggs family who worked together to provide quilts to their extended family and friends in Mathews," says Lori Jackson Black.

Lori recounts their discovery of the trove of quilts, "At the house of Carol Diggs Hindman, all three bedrooms had a quilt on the bed, and we found many more in each closet. He then went into the attic where we found more, along with several handmade comforters. We feel blessed to be able to share these family heirlooms with the public."

Some of the items on display will include a baby



A quilt for the upcoming exhibit at the Mathews Museum.

quilt of Jay's and a bed quilt

There is a private showing on Thursday, Oct. 3 for Mathews Museum members. For information on special tours, contact 804-695-4664 or Mathewsvamuseumfriends@gmail.com.

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## MATHEWS MARKET DAYS FESTIVAL ROAD CLOSURE NOTICE

The following roads will be closed for the 2024 Mathews Market Days:

Court Street between Church Street and Brickbat Road; Brickbat Road between Main Street and Church Street

There will be NO parking spaces available on the Court Green side of Church Street from Brickbat Road to Court Street

This will be from Thursday, September 5, 2024 starting at 12 p.m. until Sunday, September 8, 2024 at 12 p.m. There will be no on-street parking during these times.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

## LOCAL HISTORIAN TO DISCUSS

"How to tell your family story"

Friday, Sept. 6 at 7 p.m.

Local historian and genealogist, Lori Jackson Black, will present "How to Tell Your Family Story" with a strategy for being successful in developing your own family history. Lori Black will discuss basic research techniques, share helpful hints, review ways to efficiently compile your family data, story and photographs and publish items.



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More information at mathewsmarketdays.org

Street Dance Saturday Night from 6-9pm featuring The Detonators



## Student Art Contest winners

On Saturday, Aug. 24, Barbara Priest presented the winners of the Guinea Jubilee Student Art Contest with a certificate of achievement and a gift bag with candy at Buck's Store Museum. The winning artwork will be on display at Guinea Heritage Day, Sunday, Sept. 8, at the Abingdon Ruritan Club, and throughout September at the museum. Above, Priest stands by a display of the student artwork. Below, winners were, from left, Evalynn Hall, Aleigha Robbins, Colt Jones, Madelyn Porter, Ruby Austin and, not pictured, Elin Scearce, Charlotte Elias and Linley Chapman.



## Applications due by Sept. 6 for free beehive lottery

Applications will be accepted through Friday, Sept. 6, for the state program that provides Virginia residents free equipment for assembling new beehives.

Recipients are selected by lot at random from qualified applicants, according to a press release from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Applicants must be a Vir-

ginia resident, aged 18 and older, to be eligible to receive beehive units. Entities such as businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies are not eligible, the release said.

Recipients of beehive units must assemble the equipment and occupy it with a colony of honey bees within one year of receiving the equipment.

To learn more about the

Beehive Distribution Program or to submit an application visit [www.vdacs.virginia.gov](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov) and search for beehive distribution program.



Doug Dwoyer, a volunteer with the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists (center), gives a speech during Monday's ribbon-cutting ceremony of the Songbird Trail at Machicomoco State Park, Hayes. Behind him, from left, are Bill Blair, Josh Mazzententa, C.J. Bailey, Shaun Vest, Linda Dickerson, Tanner Working and Chris Hall.

## Songbird Trail opens to the public

BY RUBY WILLIAMS

Machicomoco State Park, Hayes, opened its new trail to the public on Monday.

The Songbird Trail was made in partnership with the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists and is located at the Interpretive Area (Shelter 1) of the park. It also connects to the park's Forestry Trail and the Loop Trail.

"This is the first trail we are opening since we opened the park in 2021," said Chief Ranger Josh Mazzententa.

The trail is a half-mile long and contains six boxes for birds to make nests and raise their young. The bird boxes are six feet above ground and also have snake guards on their posts to protect the nests inside the bird boxes.

Although this trail and the bird boxes are not exclusive to one particular species, the boxes were placed along the trail in an effort to help preserve the bluebird population.

It's great that the trail is open, said Doug Dwoyer, a volunteer with the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists. "Not only is it [the trail] completed, but we've got a season's worth of data out of this trail now," he said. "It has all been reported to the Virginia Bluebird Society. The information that we collect goes to them. They use that data for the health of the bluebird population across the state."

Dwoyer said that there was about a month's worth of man-hours of labor put into



C.J. Bailey and Shaun Vest finish the installation of the post at Machicomoco State Park's Songbird Trail.

building the bird boxes and the snake guards as well as getting everything else ready. There were about six people who came from the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalist chapter who came out and installed all of the boxes. He also said that a crew of two will monitor the boxes once a week.

"We have a crew of volunteers from the chapter who monitor these boxes weekly during the season that the birds are nesting and raising their young," said Dwoyer. "The season is just about trailing off now. The last clutch of chicks is about ready to fly off and will be done for the summer."

There are four more trails that contain bird boxes such as this one in Gloucester (at Woodville Park, Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society, Brent and Becky's Bulbs, and Beaverdam Park) and the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists monitor those locations as well.

Songbird Trail will have six additional bird boxes added at a later date.

Machicomoco State Park will also have another trail made at the park starting this fall. The trail will be over a mile long to be completed in the spring. The park asks for the public to not disturb the bird boxes as it is a violation of federal law.

The Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists will have a basic training course for future naturalists in spring 2025. For information on volunteering with Virginia state parks, stop by the Machicomoco park office or visit [www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/volunteers](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/volunteers).

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## 'Time Machine'

An opening reception for the art exhibit "Time Machine" will be held from 5-7 p.m. Friday at the Bay School Community Arts Center in Mathews. The exhibit includes art that is inspired by the past, present or future, incorporating time-related inspiration and themes in photography, paintings, multimedia, collage, fiber and jewelry. Guests will be able to meet the artists while enjoying finger foods and drinks. For more information call 804-725-1278 or visit [bayschool-arts.com](http://bayschool-arts.com). Shown here is "Colonial Carriage Quartet" by Bob Carlson.

## 'Alter Eagles' to perform at MHS on Sept. 15

The musical group "Alter Eagles," a tribute band playing all the Eagles classics as well as songs from the group's newer albums and solo careers, will perform in the next Concerts by the Bay show at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 15, in the Harry M. Ward Auditorium at Mathews High School.

Alter Eagles has performed over 2,000 shows, making

them one of the most prolific tribute acts today, said a release.

The band is comprised of versatile musicians and vocalists who each play multiple instruments during the show and have been entertaining audiences for over a decade, according to the release.

Tickets are \$30 at the door; students are admitted free of

charge. A subscription series of five concerts starting September through April is priced starting at \$120 through Concerts by the Bay, and includes reciprocal concert opportunities at Arts Alive (West Point) and Rappahannock Concert Association (Heathsville). To view the various upcoming concerts for 2024-2025, visit [www.concertsbythebay.org](http://www.concertsbythebay.org).

## Watercolorist to give free talk Saturday at Arts on Main

Watercolorist Doug Mock will give a free artist talk at 4 p.m. Saturday at Arts on Main, 6580 Main Street, Gloucester.

Mock teaches painting classes at Arts on Main and is an active member of RAL in Kilmarnock.

A press release said that

Mock's "humor and love of art never fail to captivate his listeners and students alike. Don't miss your chance to hear him."

The talk coincides with the closing of Arts on Main's August show, "Dog Days of Summer." The exhibit features works by nine artists, includ-

ing Mock, who captured the unique personalities of birds, cats, dogs, prairie dogs, and even a raccoon.

"This week is your last chance to come see the show that has delighted pet and animal lovers alike," said the release.

## Chesapeake Bay Writers to hold Sept. 4 luncheon

Williamsburg author Kathleen T. Jabs will speak on "Writing Military Fiction: Tips for Exposing and Sharing Unique Experiences with a Wide Audience" at the Chesapeake Bay Writers' Wednesday, Sept. 4 luncheon at Rocco's Smokehouse Grill, 207 Bypass Road, Williamsburg.

Jabs, a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and Special Assistant to the President for Military and Veteran Affairs at William & Mary, will offer

insights into writing fiction based on military experiences.

For more information, or to register, visit [www.chesapeakebaywriters.org](http://www.chesapeakebaywriters.org). Chesapeake Bay Writers is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1991. It is a chapter of the Virginia Writers Club, serving writers from the Middle Peninsula, Northern Neck, Williamsburg, and adjacent areas.



Kathleen T. Jabs

## NNO Chamber Music Series begins Sept. 8

The Northern Neck Orchestra's 2024-2025 Chamber Music Series kicks off next month with a celebration of music for guitar, including intricate works for classical guitar from Spain, vibrant

tangos from Argentina and an exhilarating medley from West Side Story performed by gifted soloists and more than one dozen members of the Tidewater Guitar Orchestra. The concert will be held

at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 8, at Good Luck Cellars, 1025 Goodluck Road, Kilmarnock. Tickets for the performance are \$35. Season tickets for the four-concert series are \$112. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.northernneck-orchestra.org](http://www.northernneck-orchestra.org) or at the door. Students are free.

The concert is partially supported by funding from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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CHARLIE KOENIG / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Artist Shawna Beavers, seated below, was named the winner of the Mathews Market Days 50th anniversary poster contest reveal, which was held on Saturday at the Bay School. Market Days chair Jennifer Roahrig, standing, served as master of ceremonies for the event. Beavers stayed after the unveiling to sign copies of her winning poster. The winning painting, "It's Corn," depicts a woman seated on a tractor in front of a cornfield.

## 'It's Corn' named winner of Market Days poster contest

The winner of the 50th annual Mathews Market Days poster contest was unveiled Saturday afternoon at a ceremony at the Bay School Community Arts Center, 279 Main Street.

Jennifer Roahrig, 2024 chair of the Mathews Market Days committee, served as master of ceremonies, announcing this year's winner—"It's Corn," a painting by Shawna Beavers.

"When asked how her painting reflected this year's theme of 'The Golden Era,' she [Beavers] said, "There is a bountiful harvest of corn, which is a symbol of longevity and prosperity. Sunflowers equals happiness; daffodils equals resilience," Roahrig said in making the announcement.

Beavers is a stay-at-home mom of two. She was born and raised in Cape Hatteras, N.C. The Beavers are a proud Coast Guard family who decided to make Mathews their forever



home in 2017, Roahrig said.

This year's winner was determined by an online voting poll, which took place from Aug. 1-14, with a total of 413 votes cast among this year's nine entries.

"It's Corn" received 134 votes, winning the Mathews Market Days prize of \$500. In second place, with 99 votes, was "Celebration," by Min Ja Burns, a previous winner of the Market Days poster

contest. Taking third, with 68 votes, was "Golden Shores of Mathews," a watercolor painting by Selena Zuhoski. The artist used water from the Mobjack Bay in her entry.

Those attending Saturday's reveal were able to purchase signed copies of the winning poster for \$20. The artist will also be at Mathews Market Days on Sept. 6 and 7 to sign copies, which will then be available for purchase for \$25.

## RAL Labor Day Art Show opens today

The RAL Art Center's 63rd annual Labor Day Art Show opens today, Aug. 29, at the gallery at 19 North Main Street, Kilmarnock. The winning works will be revealed to the public in a Fifth Friday reception at 5 p.m. tomorrow.

Included in the show are 137 original works of art, many of which have never been seen before, and many by artists exhibiting in the show for the first time, said a press release. An exhibition of RAL's co-op artists' work is also on display.

The Labor Day Art Show's judge, Diana L. Blanchard Gross, Visual Arts Center Manager at the Charles H. Taylor Visual Arts Center in Hampton, selected works to receive ribbons and cash prizes.

All show attendees are invited to vote for the People's Choice award from the works on display. Voting will be open until 4 p.m. on Sept. 14, when the votes will be tallied, the winner announced, and the People's Choice ribbon hung.

Both the 63rd LDAS exhibit and the co-op exhibit run from Aug. 29 until Sept.

27. They are available for viewing and purchase from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The RAL Center will also be open on

Sept. 1 and 2.

RAL's Labor Day Art Show is one of the longest-standing visual art shows in Virginia, said the release.

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**Mat Pilates, Tuesday, Sept 3, 9:30 am**  
Mat Pilates is a total body conditioning exercise method combining flexibility and strength, using the weight of the body with control. The benefits are improved balance, posture and overall core strength. Bring a mat and enjoy the causal setting. The 45 to 60 minute class is taught by Valerie Morgan, a well trained and certified group exercise and Personal Trainer for over 42 years, 32 of those years was as a manager at a local wellness center. \$10 per person, advance registration required.

Visit us online for more information on these events and to see what else we have going on!

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## On the job

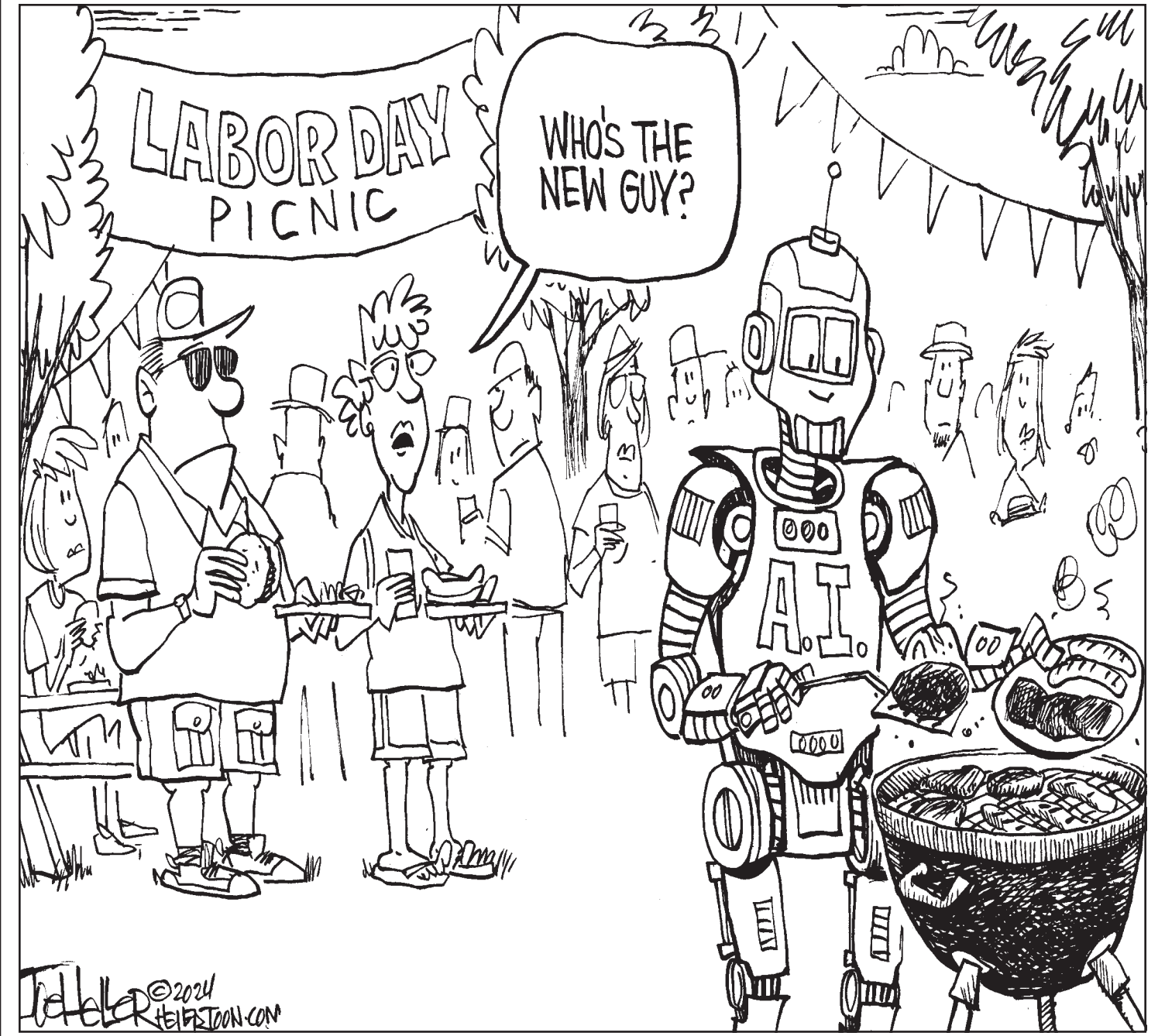
This coming Monday is a special day. For 130 years, Americans have set aside the first Monday in September as Labor Day, a day to recognize and reward the efforts and sacrifices that all of us continue to do every day for our fellow Americans.

Most of us get up and go to work each day because we have to. We have to punch the clock to earn the money to pay the bills, to keep ourselves and our family fed, to keep the car in running order so we can get back to work the next day. Yes, it can be a vicious and monotonous cycle at times.

But there's more to it than that. Or rather, there can be. You can see it in the pride a craftsman takes when he expertly installs a window in a customer's home, or makes the proper adjustment to a car engine. When the clerk at the grocery store makes sure to let you know that the steak in your shopping cart is past its expiration date. When a police officer checks back at the end of her shift on a family who had been going through a rough patch just to see that they're doing okay. When a young child is scared and alone in a hospital room and the on-duty nurse takes out time from her busy schedule to sit down and hold his hand and let him know that everything is going to be okay. Or when the cook at your local go-to breakfast spot serves bacon and eggs just the way you like it, and tops off your cup of coffee without having to ask.

While we work for ourselves, and the paycheck we get at the end of the week, we also work for each other—our friends, our neighbors, even people we'll never meet or see.

So, this Monday, take time to thank the workers you come across for everything they do for you. And enjoy the day off. You deserve it!



### READERS WRITE

#### Uncovering Gloucester's hidden history

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

Last week, the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (Aug. 23rd) marked 233 years since African Haitians triggered the collapse of slavery in the Americas.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said all U.N. member countries should yearly honor "the victims and freedom fighters" of the transatlantic holocaust (Middle Passage) so new generations can "build just societies [ensuring] ... equal ... unconditional dignity of ... every [person]."

My husband and I are transferring to an African American group a modest piece of historical land adjacent to the Rosewell Ruins. This peaceful site along Carter's Creek includes an 18th century brick works wharf where, very likely, some of America's earliest enslaved African ancestors first stepped foot on Virginia soil.

It also is a place of gathering for reflection and celebration for all of us to learn from our African

American citizens and experts documenting their own, but shared, American history.

This site, central to an African American narrative, is necessary along with other sites in Gloucester, centering on the Indigenous American as well as European American roles in our collective history. I believe these three cultures combined have the possibility to tell America's history most fully and richly.

Montpelier 2018 "rubric," Engaging Descendant Communities, is an essential guide forward. Also, Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch III, eight years ago, told New Yorker Magazine that the new National Museum of African American History and Culture was perhaps best understood as "not a black museum ... [but] a museum that uses one culture to understand what it means to be an American."

Our esteemed local archeologists continue uncovering Gloucester's hidden history. Much more remains to be revealed of our shared past.

Katherine Greaves  
Gloucester, Va.

#### Fiscal responsibility

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

Fifteen million dollars for one fire station is a huge amount for Gloucester County taxpayers to bear. An independent professional study should focus on what Gloucester needs in the near and far term to provide emergency support for all citizens. It should not focus on one building in one area of the county. The Board of Supervisors should be fiscally responsible and require an assessment of the entire county's needs to adequately protect its citizens.

William Andersen  
Hayes, Va.



Judy Ward

#### Thank you, MVRs Auxiliary

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

Thirty-five years ago, the Mathews Volunteer Rescue Squad Auxiliary began in Judy Ward's living room. Judy's idea was for the auxiliary to hold activities that would help the squad members feel appreciated and part of a big family. Also, she hoped the auxiliary would provide the extras for "creature comforts." They did not disappoint.

The new group enthusiastically pursued their mission and grew to 30 members strong. Their main fundraiser was a yearly bake sale at the Gwynn's Island Festival. Old Mathews recipes and great cooks produced sought after baked goods. The auxiliary also held raffles for donated items from local artists and huge yard sales. Their efforts funded bunk room beds, recliners, TVs, a pool table, benches in front of the building and reoutfitted the kitchen in the new squad building.

The auxiliary held many fun dinners, one with a MASH theme. Camo netting hung from the ceiling and the mess hall servers wore fatigues. Another was Italian night. One member stated it took weeks to drip wax on enough wine bottles to decorate the tables.

A few more activities they supported were treats and gift cards for EMS week, preparing and serving lunch and snacks at Camp Rescue, food before the monthly meeting, holiday treats and gifts, decorating the building for Christmas, stuffing donation letters and the Chili Cookoff.

It is not possible to list all the auxiliary has done since 1989, but it is possible to express our greatest appre-

ciation for all your morale boosters. We are sorry to see you close this chapter and you will be missed. Past and present squad members thank you for all your contributions through the years.

On behalf of the Mathews Volunteer Rescue Squad Board  
Debbie Holaday  
Mathews, Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Faced with a dwindling number of members, the Mathews Volunteer Rescue Squad Auxiliary disbanded in July.

#### Olympics of croquet coming to Hartfield

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

The Olympics are a great event. People from all over the world gather to compete at the highest level of athletics. Every night I watched athletes from places I've never been, compete in the sports that they love.

This fall, we will have a mini Olympic-type event right here in Middlesex. Athletes from 17 countries are coming to the Chesapeake Bay Croquet Club in Hartfield to play for the world croquet championship. The top five competing countries are Egypt, England, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.

We are lucky to have this once in a lifetime opportunity to see great international competition in our own backyard. The world championships run from October 18 through the 26th and are open to spectators. I will be there, and I hope a lot of others will come and watch too.

Macey White  
Hartfield, Va.

#### The contrast

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

The contrast between the two candidates who want to be our President could not be more stark. One talks of gloom and doom, of danger and decline in our country. The other speaks of hope, opportunity, and possibility in America, of all we can achieve if we all work together.

I like the second vision of our future, with a President who calls on us to love our neighbors, love our planet, and love our country. I am voting for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz.

For those who want to know more about what Vice President Harris stands for, go to <https://democrats.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FINAL-MASTER-PLATFORM.pdf>. Read the Democratic Platform for 2024. You may not agree with all that is proposed, but I guarantee, you will find a lot to like: economic growth, reducing everyday costs, saving our environment, leadership in the world, a strong military, and protecting our democracy.

For my Republican friends who are not sure what to do this year, I urge you to heed what former Georgia Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan, a Republican, has said to Republicans, "if you vote for Kamala Harris in 2024, you are not a Democrat. You are a patriot."

Sheila Crowley  
Port Haywood, Va.

#### Just say no

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

We are seeing the continued degradation of our political system by the communists who have taken control of the Democrat party. They tell us that Kamala Harris is going to make everything better when she is president; she is jointly responsible for all the heartache and uncertainty devastating the middle class.

It is the middle class that is hurt the most by inflation which is putting the American dream out of reach for young people. I have never heard Kamala Harris utter a single word opposing any of the policies that the Biden administration has imposed on America. A Harris administration will mean more of the same misery that we have known for the last four years. This would be obvious but for the efforts of the television news media, which is a cancer destroying American society. Everything coming out of your television set is a lie.

I encourage everyone reading this letter to just say no and turn your television set off. Your life will dramatically improve if you start living again, instead of living vicariously by what you see inside a box. Television is a fantasy; it is not real. Because you hear a claim made on television

SEE READERS WRITE, PAGE 7A

#### Letters To The Editor

Letters to the Gazette-Journal on any subject of public interest are always welcome. Letters should be 300 words or shorter, and all submissions must include the writer's complete home mailing address, email and phone number should we need to reach you (this information is not published).

We favor letters that thoughtfully respond to or offer perspective or content published in the Gazette-Journal, and on local or state issues. The Gazette-Journal will not accept letters which comment on articles published in other periodicals. We do not accept letters that are primarily broad endorsements or attacks on political candidates or parties. Also, space limitations often prevent publication of thank-you letters.

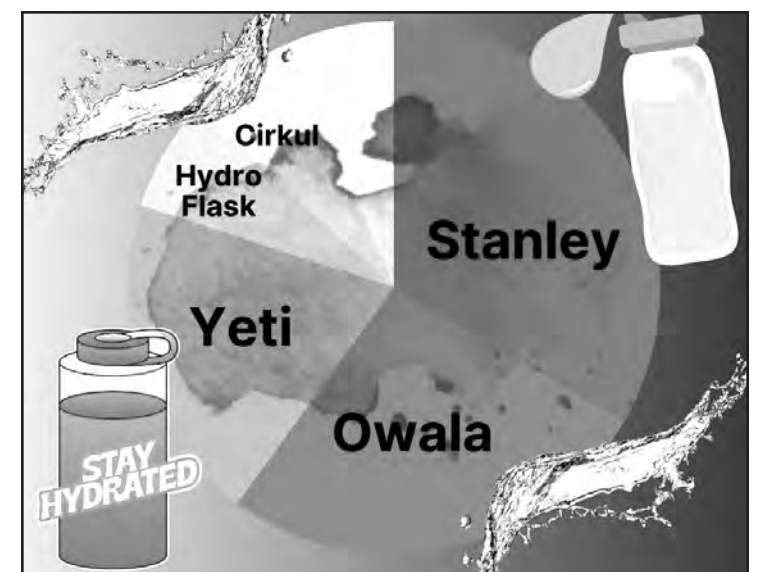
We will refrain from printing more than one letter per month from an individual.

The right is reserved to edit letters for length, accuracy, clarity, tone, style and other considerations. The newspaper requires a physically signed copy for our records. That can be accomplished by sending a digital image, such as a JPEG, to the editor.

## GLOUCESTER-MATHEWS GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Elsa Cooke Verbyla | Publisher  
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### Reusable water bottles

Using reusable water bottles is a great way to stay hydrated and help combat single-use plastics. We asked our Facebook followers which brand is their favorite. The top answer was Stanley at 33.3 percent of the vote, followed by Owala (26.7 percent) and Yeti (20 percent). Other responses included Hydro Flask and Cirkul. One person answered that they reuse old plastic seltzer bottles as water bottles. Anything to stay hydrated and help the planet at the same time. This survey was conducted on Facebook through Google Forms. The chart was made using Canva.

POETIC REFLECTIONS

Shepherd's pie

BY JOEL EMERSON, HAYES, VA.

The hired shepherd is sleeping, when a lion is about,  
 Makes me wanna holler, makes me wanna shout.  
 Wake up, man, you better take stock,  
 That lion is eating up the Master's flock.  
 Quiet as a mouse, crafty as a snake.  
 He charms those sheep for his supper to make.  
 The shepherd doesn't worry, doesn't seem to care,  
 He acts as though the lion isn't really there.  
 But that lion is for real, to steal, kill and destroy,  
 He'll steal our faith, wreck and kill our joy.  
 Wake up, shepherd, the Master told you what to do,  
 Stick to his orders, like a fast-setting glue.  
 It's not a big deal, it's easy as pie,  
 But you can't be snoozing. Let me tell you why.  
 'Cause the lion he devours them one by one,  
 He's the master of deception, while the flock's having fun.  
 He tricks one this way, he tricks another that way,  
 He's up all night and he stalks every

day.  
 Money can't buy him, it only makes him worse,  
 He decimates the flock from the cradle to the hearse.  
 The shepherds wield a flyswatter to chase away that giant cat,  
 The lion backs away and laughs then behind the flock he's at.  
 The lion likes to make them think, that their defense is strong,  
 But when they ignore the Master's warning, they couldn't be more wrong.  
 Come on, sheep, wake up from your sleep,  
 The lion is destroying the Master's own sheep.  
 When the Master comes, will He call you to account?  
 What will He do to you when sees the great amount  
 Of damage to the flock who was left unprotected?  
 By sleeping on the job, your job you have neglected.  
 Fall on your knees and open your eyes,  
 Clean your ears and don't be surprised.  
 For the big cats stalking the flock and you,  
 Sheep and shepherd pie is on his menu!

Past

BY T.A. LEACH, THE GLEBE, MATHEWS, VA.

We stand on the shoulders of those gone before us,  
 Who dedicated their lives beating graft into vile dust,  
 Did form a Republic of democratic vision,  
 As argued and fought through principles' division.  
 Some thought in one way, some thought in the other,  
 In Philadelphia's heat and the sweat of each brother,  
 They came to agreement, 'mid shouts of their souls,  
 For freedom, their search, their penultimate goal.  
 Then based on this concept, this one thought of all,  
 That one man, one vote, for the short

and the tall,  
 Would balance the coming decisions of right,  
 Eliminate the questions, avoid the mad fight.  
 The field of the players as even would stand,  
 Throughout each community, throughout all the land,  
 Not one would stand taller or shorter by vote,  
 Each of us, always, would sail the same boat.  
 As we come here to this field of our choosing,  
 Where everyone comes, where no one is losing,  
 This privilege, this right, handed down from their shoulders,  
 Our one vote, our power, our voice, even bolder.

Your Overwhelming Grace

BY PAUL K. MCKIBBON, GLOUCESTER, VA.

O God, I will worship and praise You,  
 You are my awesome and mighty King;  
 Even when I was in the midst of the storm,  
 out on dangerous waters, You led and guided me to safety by Your Holy Spirit,  
 You protected me under the shadow of Your wings.  
 Dear Lord, I depend on You when I need direction and I am out on the dangerous sea;  
 I will praise You in the good and the bad,  
 I will worship You in my trials and when I am being tested,  
 I just want to love and serve You with every ounce of my energy.  
 My King, I am saturated in Your presence by Your love,  
 I am amazed at Your overwhelming grace;  
 I just want to love, honor and serve You,  
 my desire is to seek Your holy face.  
 You're such an amazing God, and I am blown away at Your overwhelming grace;

I will do my best to be a faithful disciple,  
 and being empowered by Your love, strength and encouragement,  
 I will run the race.  
 I am so blessed by Your overwhelming grace;  
 Help me, O God, to be disciplined and to always lean on You,  
 so I can keep a good pace.  
 I am in awe of Your overwhelming grace,  
 and as long as I stay surrendered to You,  
 and yield to Your instruction, You will protect me from the enemy;  
 O God, I long for You and Your instruction,  
 remove my blinders and give me the eyes to see.  
 Give me the eyes to see how great and merciful You are,  
 and all that You have done for me;  
 As I rest by still waters, I am overcome by Your Holy Spirit,  
 I am saturated in Your presence,  
 O God, and You give me wings like an eagle to soar into the wind in freedom,  
 because I am free.

READERS WRITE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6A)

does not mean that that claim is true. Television presenters get hired primarily for their looks. They are not experts on economic matters, they are not military experts, they are not climate scientists, they are not lawyers. Most of them repeat what someone has told them as if it is a proven fact without trying to verify the accuracy of the information they are presenting. Most of them are cheerleaders for their favorite political party. You can say that politicians are responsible for some of these lies, but politicians will lie until the voters get fed up with their lack of integrity. It is the job of the media to expose lies so voters can make an informed choice. What we get instead are cheerleaders pushing the lies of the people they like and viciously attacking the people they do not like. Our nation is in peril; television is a cancer. Just say no.  
 Keith Ellenberger  
 Urbanna, Va.

**Living in the past**  
 Editor, Gazette-Journal:  
 A letter in last week's paper ("Seven steps," Aug. 22 Readers Write) is an example of a repeating editorial trend: living in the past.

Last week we time-traveled to the mid-1950s and were instructed on "How to Identify Communists in Our Midst" as presented by a Virginia State Representative to a Breakfast Club. Communism is an economic construct where people communally own all the means of production: farms, factories, mines, etc. People also have free access to the articles created by those production vectors. All people are equal, and without government or currency. Every adult I know has currency, most have jobs of differing requirements and pay scales, some are retired with differing levels of wealth. Most own cars, some own homes, others pay rent. Some own businesses and employ others to work in exchange for currency. We have government to create and enforce laws, which protect people and their belongings. We pay the government to perform actions that we, as individuals, cannot complete by ourselves: planning and building roads, schools, bridges, etc. We also pay to have representatives look out for our interests in government and we get to choose whether they are actually doing that. It seems to me that the Virginia Representative

who spoke to you is not actually doing their job; instead they are trying to frighten you with ghosts from the past, so you can be more easily manipulated. At the risk of repeating another letter writer, maybe you should look to the future, instead of consuming scare tactics. Democrats are not Communists, no matter what imaginary parallels are presented to you.  
 Sherrie Hill  
 Gloucester, Va.

**Respect, decency and integrity**  
 Editor, Gazette-Journal:  
 I am writing to share my thoughts on the importance of voting for Kamala Harris in the upcoming election. As someone who was raised to respect the office of the president, our government, and our country, I am deeply concerned about the negative example set by Donald Trump during his time in office. When I was growing up, my parents and teachers emphasized the importance of being a good citizen, respecting our democratic institutions, and appreciating the privilege of living in a democracy. Respect for the office of the presidency was instilled in us as a fundamental value. Sadly,

Trump's behavior has made it difficult to maintain that respect. Throughout his presidency, Trump repeatedly engaged in name-calling and personal insults, not only against political opponents but also against media figures and even his own staff. This kind of behavior is not just unbecoming of a president—it sets a poor example for our children, who look to leaders as role models. Trump's attacks on democratic institutions along with his role in inciting the January 6th Capitol riot have done serious damage to the trust in the foundations of our democracy. His lack of empathy during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and his history of derogatory remarks toward women further highlight his unsuitability as a role model. As a parent, I often found myself turning off the TV when Trump spoke, not wanting my children to be exposed to his divisive and disrespectful rhetoric. In today's world, where children are constantly exposed to political news through social media, we can no longer shield them from these negative influences. Supporting Trump again would not only tear down the democ-

racy that so many have fought and died for, but it would also set a damaging precedent for the future leaders of our country—our children. Voting for Kamala Harris represents a step toward restoring the respect, decency, and integrity that we should expect from our leaders.  
 Terri Hyman  
 Cobbs Creek, Va.

**Brotherhood**  
 Editor, Gazette-Journal  
 Sunday, August 11 was an unforgettable day thanks to the grace of God. That morning at church I listened to Pastor Chris read out of the book of Mark, with the topic being testimonies. After the service we went to Bobbi Morgan's house for the church baptism picnic. I had a great time bonding with my brothers Walker and Pearce, catching up with them while we were by the pool. As I was about to leave, we got Braden to take some pictures of us. I totally appreciate my brothers Walker and Pearce doing that for me so that I can have something to look back on.  
 Scotty Adams  
 Gloucester, Va.

THE BOOKWORM

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

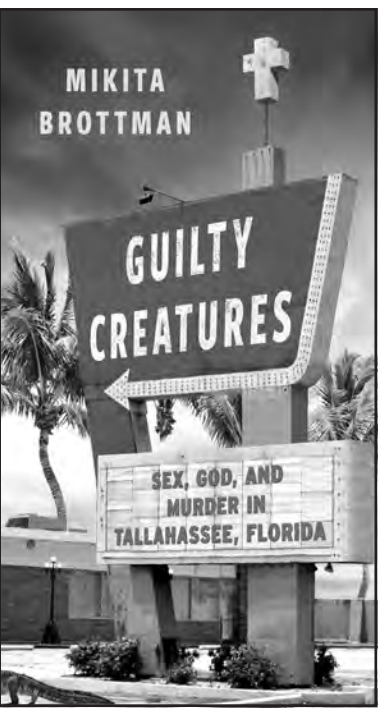
'The Mysterious Mrs. Nixon: The Life and Times of Washington's Most Private First Lady'

BY HEATH HARDAGE LEE; C.2024, ST. MARTIN'S PRESS; \$32.00; 416 PAGES



Nobody knows the troubles you've seen. They're all tucked firmly away in your head, never to be discussed. Your feelings on this, your viewpoint on that, they're nobody's business right now—or maybe ever. There are too many people in this world who'll twist them to fit their own narrative, so *no*. As in the new book "The Mysterious Mrs. Nixon" by Heath Hardage Lee, you'll keep things to yourself. Everyone who knew Thelma Catherine "Pat" Ryan also knew that she was single-minded and focused. She had to be, as the oldest daughter, especially after her mother died. Pat was just 13 then, and she took over the household to help her father raise her brothers. By the time her father died in 1930, Pat had gained a college education. She traveled, worked in a medical field, and reveled in a self-sufficient life on her own. Even during the Depression, she was employed and worked hard, and in 1937, she accepted a teaching position at a small high school in Whittier, California.

And that was where a former student invited Pat to try out for a community play, and she met Dick Nixon. By all accounts, Nixon was immediately smitten by the vivacious Ryan, and he pursued her relentlessly. She liked him but not enough to want to give up her solo life or her career. He doubled-down, willing to let her embarrass him by dating other boys while he waited for her at a nearby hotel. She sometimes pretended she wasn't at home when he came to call. It wasn't like her to hurt anyone's ego, but she showed him the door more than once. He persevered. He proposed, multiple times, and one of the proposals succeeded. Still, she had second thoughts, and third ones, and likely fourth ones. She understood where Nixon's dreams resided. Uneasy, as the wedding approached, she confided in a friend that she wasn't sure she could handle a move to Washington when he became President one day...



**'Guilty Creatures: Sex, God, and Murder in Tallahassee, Florida'**  
 BY MIKITA BROTTMAN; C.2024, ONE SIGNAL PUBLISHERS; \$28.00; 280 PAGES

It's all in the past. Whether it was yesterday or two decades ago, what's done is done. You can't jump in a time machine and change it. It's finished—but that doesn't stop you from thinking about it, from turning the event over in your head this way and that. What happened is in the past but, as in the new book "Guilty Creatures" by Mikita Brottman, it'll never be forgotten. High school graduation is always bittersweet: everyone

heads their separate ways, and nothing's ever the same again, though for Mike Williams, Denise Merrell, Brian Winchester, and Kathy Aldredge, very little would change. All four were raised in the Baptist faith, reared to love the Lord, and they were staying near family in Tallahassee, Florida. Says Brottman, they made a "tight foursome."

But there were cracks in their lives, starting almost immediately with Denise and Mike, who was a real estate appraiser. After the birth of their daughter, he became obsessed with work and money. He and Denise began having relationship problems, and Denise started hanging out more and more with Brian and Kathy—and then only with Brian. Brian and Denise discussed divorce, but Denise clung to her faith; yet halting their affair was impossible, too. People talked, but so what? They were discreet, and they began discussing something different and dangerous: if Mike, who loved the outdoors, *just happened* to fall out of his boat and drown, wasn't that God's will?

On December 16, 2000, Mike Williams left his house to go to a nearby lake for the day, and he never came home. With the help of friends, Denise quickly had him declared dead, so she could pay her bills. She received more than a million dollars in insurance money.

Brian divorced Kathy shortly afterward, which cleared the path so he and Denise could marry, settle down, and go on with their lives. Nearly two decades later, however, problems began to surface but, though they grew to hate it, they were together for life.

Says Brottman, "Their pre-nup was murder." Here's the thing you need to know about "Guilty Creatures": you know who did what, almost from the fifth page. Here's another thing you need to know: you aren't told how or why until this book screams to a blow-out of an ending.

As in most true crime stories, author Mikita Brottman keeps things tight, which had to have been a challenge: what happened in Tallahassee in those two decades was an awful lot like the tabloids, with serial bed-hopping, affairs, secrets, lies, an undercover agent—and, of course, a sordid murder, the discovery of which is told in properly gruesome ways. Yes, it's complicated sometimes, but Brottman helps readers out by holding their attention fast to the story. A nice critique of the justice system makes further sense.

This is a good book for readers new to the genre, and one that all true crime fanatics will love. Find "Guilty Creatures" and settle in; it's a book that should not be passed.

## CANDICE ANDERSON

Candice Anderson, known as Candy, passed away on August 18, 2024 in her Gloucester home. She is survived by her husband, Wayne Anderson, and her daughter, Heather Dean.



Candy previously worked as a Nurse's Aide for Visiting Angels. This job gave her great joy, as she enjoyed helping others.

Candy enjoyed cooking for healing and studied at The Natural Gourmet Cookery School in New York, N.Y. She was passionate about creating nourishing meals for others.

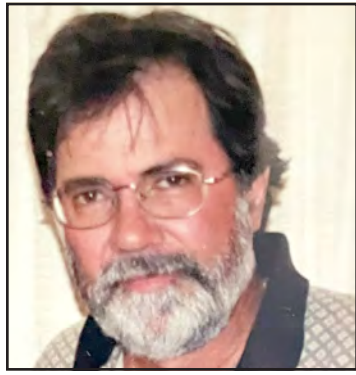
Originally from Newburyport, Massachusetts, Candy and Wayne later settled in Amesbury, Massachusetts, where they raised their daughter, Heather. In Amesbury, Candy built a successful business cooking meals for specific diets in her clients' homes.

In 1996, they moved to Canby, Oregon, and later in 2002, they relocated to Virginia, which they called home.

Candy will be dearly missed by her family and friends. Her caring nature, love for cooking, and dedication to helping others will always be remembered. Services will be private.

## DENNIS GORDON DAMANT

Dennis Gordon Damant, age 69, of Gloucester Point, died on Friday, August 23, 2024, at Riverside Regional Medical Center. He was born on February 7, 1955 in Seattle, Washington, to the late Harry and Harriet Damant. Dennis owned and operated Damant Appraisal Services, and was an avid golfer and fisherman. He was preceded in death by Harry Damant and Harriet Damant. Dennis is survived by his daughter, Michelle Damant; brother, Brian Damant (Ginny); nephew, David Damant; niece, Jessica Boggs, and son-in-law, Lee Mainwaring. The family will receive friends at Hogg Funeral Home on Sunday, September 1, 2024, from 3-4 p.m. The inurnment will be private. In memory of Dennis, contributions may be made to the Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society, P.O. Box 385, Gloucester, Va. 23061, or American Red Cross, P.O. Box 37839, Boone, Iowa 50037-0839.



Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home & Crematory.

## JOHN CONRAD GUSTAFSON

John Conrad Gustafson, 87, of Gloucester, passed away on Tuesday, August 20, 2024. He was born December 13, 1936 in New York City, New York, to Axel Gustafson and Hedvig Gustafson (Lorentson). He was a graduate of Concordia Preparatory School, Bronx, New York. John earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Connecticut and a Master of Science degree in Engineering Mechanics from George Washington University. He was a Licensed Professional Engineer in Virginia.



John began a career at NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., in 1962. During his career at NASA, John worked as a Research and Project Engineer on several important projects, including the Apollo 13 rescue, Viking Mission to Mars, Stratospheric Aerosol and Gas Experiment I (SAGE I), Stratospheric Aerosol and Gas Experiment II (SAGE II), National Transonic Facility (NTF), Clouds and the Earth's Radiant Energy System Project (CERES), and several Space Shuttle projects. He was most proud of his work on the SAGE projects and a rain mission project that was included in the CERES effort. John retired from NASA in 1994 after 32 years of service and remained in the Hampton Roads area, briefly teaching part-time at Thomas Nelson Community College as an instructor of Engineering Statics.

John enjoyed woodworking and built the workshop of his dreams at his home in Gloucester. In his younger years, he had been a motorcycle enthusiast riding his 1979 BMW R65 motorcycle that his son Carl still rides to this day. John enjoyed restoring old tractors, and his most recent project had been a 1929 Farmall Regular. He also enjoyed traveling and spending time in the mountains at his cabin in Monterey, Va.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 42 years, Helen. Left behind to cherish his memory are his son, Carl and daughter-in-law Theresa of Friendswood, Texas; daughter, Carolyn and son-in-law Kevin of Greenacres, Wash.; son, John of Pearland, Texas; grandchildren, Jennifer, Tina, Tyler, Travis, Kyle, Dylan, Kandra, and Megan; great-grandchildren, Conrad, Elsie, Oakley, and Nakai, and his loving companion, Louisa Lorentson, and her son, Lars Lorentson of Gloucester.

A service will be held at 3 p.m. on Friday, August 30, 2024, at Hogg Funeral Home, 3098 George Washington Memorial Highway, Hayes, Va. Following the service, a reception for family and friends will be held at the family home. The inurnment will be private at Hillside Cemetery in Wilton, Connecticut, at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Lone Star Flight Museum, 11551 Aerospace Avenue, Houston, Texas 77034.

Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home & Crematory.

## PATRICIA 'PAT' HOGGE

Patricia "Pat" Hogge, age 90, passed away peacefully in her home surrounded by her loving family on Tuesday, August 20, 2024. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother who touched the lives of all who knew her.



Patricia married her beloved husband, G. Dewey Hogge Jr., in 1954, beginning a union that would last 55 years until his passing. Together, they started a family in Wisconsin and raised three daughters: Jana, Lisa, and Paula.

Known affectionately as "Nana" to her family, Patricia was the proud grandmother of eight grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. She instilled in them the true meaning of family and love, leaving a legacy that will endure for generations to come.

Patricia had a zest for life and enjoyed many pastimes, including fishing, gardening, cooking, and embarking on traveling adventures with her husband and family. Above all, she cherished the time spent with her loved ones.

For 35 years, Patricia was the co-owner of Jana Kay's Beauty Salon, working alongside her daughter and touching the lives of countless community members.

Patricia is survived by her children, Jana Burnette (Dave), Lisa White (Bill), and Paula Williams (Gregory); grandchildren, Leslie Blanks (David), Ryan Hogge (Allison), Phillip Longest (Cara), Dustin Longest (Sherry), Jacob Hicks (Sam), Joshua Williams, Michael White, and Megan White, and great-grandchildren, Laine Blanks, Casie Henton, Kaelyn Blanks, Gavin Blanks, Chloe White, Ann-Marlowe Blanks, Hugh Blake Longest, Jackson Dewey Longest, Taylor Gray Blanks, Morgan Henry Longest, and Parker Hayes Longest. She is also survived by her sister, Shirley Davidson, and her extended family members down South.

The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to her lifelong friend, Teresa Smith, and caregivers, Laura Smolich and Ethel Schoenborn, for the compassionate care they provided in her final days.

Friends are invited to pay their respects at Hogg Funeral Home on Thursday, August 29, 2024, from 6-7:30 p.m. A graveside service conducted by Pastor Bill West will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, August 30, 2024, at Providence Baptist Church Cemetery, 3501 Providence Road, Hayes, Va. 23072.

In Patricia's memory, contributions may be made to the Gloucester Volunteer Fire & Rescue, P.O. Box 1417, Gloucester, Va. 23061.

Patricia's warmth, love, and dedication to her family will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home.

## RONALD 'RONNIE' K. HOWLETT

A Celebration of Life service will be held for Ronnie Howlett, 77, of Saluda, at 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 8 at Saluda Baptist Church. He died on July 29, 2024.

## SYLVIA CELESTINE JONES

Sylvia Celestine Jones, 88, widow of Paul Jones and a native of Mathews, died on Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024.



A viewing will be held from 6-8 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 30, at First Baptist Church of Mathews, 9654 Buckley Hall Road, Mathews, Va. 23109. A Celebration of Life will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 31, at First Baptist Church of Mathews. An additional viewing will be held from 10 a.m. until the hour of service. An interment will follow the service and will be held at Grafton Baptist Church Cemetery, 425 Grafton Church Road, Hartfield, Va. 23071. A repast will be held at Grafton Baptist Church following the interment.

Arrangements by Forrest Brothers Funeral Home, Hudgins.

## HELENA MASON

Helena Mason, of Mathews, widow of William "Bill" Mason, died on Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time. Forrest Brothers Funeral Home, Hudgins, is in charge of arrangements.

## CARDS OF THANKS

**HIGGINBOTHAM**—The family of Steven D. Higginbotham wishes to express their heartfelt appreciation to the many friends, family and loved ones who shared words of comfort, cards, flowers, food, prayers, visits and donations to the MHS Athletic Department during our time of loss. Your heartfelt expressions of sympathy will always be remembered.

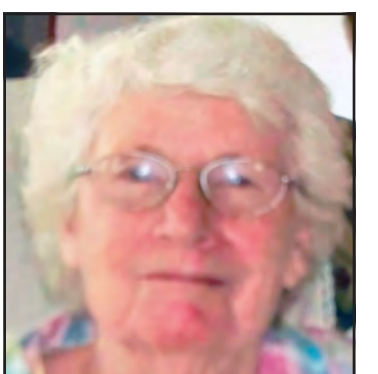
The Higginbotham Family

**JOHNSON**—The family of the late Raymond "Troy" Johnson wishes to express their appreciation of your kind thoughts and expressions of sympathy.

May God continue to richly bless you.

## MINNIE ROSE NEWELL

Minnie Rose Newell of Mathews County, passed away on August 13, 2024 at Walter Reed Convalescent Home in Gloucester. She was born on April 28 1928 in London, England, to Thomas and Charlotte "Lottie" Potter.



She moved to the United States of America with her husband, James Henry Newell, in 1981 and lived in Mathews for 43 years.

She leaves behind her son, James Henry Newell; her granddaughter, Lindsay Page Newell, and her grandson, James Henry Newell Jr.

She will be missed. Andrews Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

SEE OBITUARIES, PAGE 9A

# Sovereign Nations of Virginia to hold conference Sept. 19

The seven Sovereign Nations of Virginia will hold a conference on Pathways to Partnership: Enhancing Trust through Tribal Consultation, from 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 19, at Virginia Crossings Hotel and Conference Center in Glen Allen.

In-person attendance is full, but those interested may still sign up free of charge to attend virtually by visiting [sovereignnationsva.org](http://sovereignnationsva.org).

Virginia's seven Sovereign Nations are the Monacan, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Rappahannock, Upper Mattaponi, Chickahominy, and Eastern Chickahominy tribes.

The morning agenda includes presentations on Tribal Consultation as a Diplomatic Tool, Distinguishing

Tribal Consultation from Tribal Engagement, a panel on How Tribal Consultations Affect Sacred Sites, and Tribal Consultation and Higher Education.

The afternoon agenda will include a special presentation by Chief Anne Richardson of the Rappahannock Tribe and discussions on Tribal Consultation on Cultural Resources and Rethinking the Approach to Tribal Consultation.

According to the U.S. Department of the Interior, a tribal consultation is a formal, two-way, government-to-government dialogue between official representatives of tribes and federal agencies to discuss federal proposals before the federal agency makes decisions on those proposals.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Helen Augustine Booth**  
August 22, 1926 - July 24, 2001

*On the anniversary of the birth of our beloved Aunt Helen, we remember her abundant love, infinite wisdom, unwavering faith, compassionate grace, and elegant style. She was indeed a phenomenal woman with a story worth telling. She was never concerned with personal fame, but only that folks would smile and speak kindly when they called her name.*

*Maya Angelou reminds us that ... "And when great souls die, after a period peace blooms, slowly and always irregularly. Spaces fill with a kind of electric vibration. Our senses, restored, never to be the same, whisper to us. They existed. They existed. We can be. Be and be better for they existed." After two decades, we still remember the dramatic readings, sweet poetry, gourmet cooking, tireless kindness, profound beauty, and matchless brilliance of our magnificently gifted, talented, irreplaceable Aunt Helen. She did more than exist.*

*"Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing. And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb. And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance." ~ Khalil Gibran*

*A Tribute of Endless Love and Gratitude,  
Norma, Kathi, Robbie, Arnold, and Mark*

**Read all about it in the**

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## OBITUARIES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8A)

**DONALD WILLIAM SCHULTZ**

March 23, 1937-August 21, 2024

In the early morning of August 21, 2024, Donald "Don" William Schultz of Gloucester, Va., passed away peacefully at Patriots Colony in Williamsburg, Virginia. He was receiving skilled nursing care and was 87 years old.

Don was born in Toledo, Ohio, to Edward and Ethel Schultz in March 1937. He received his Bachelor of Business Administration/Marketing degree in 1960 and began a 40+ year career in construction material sales and marketing that included regional sales management for several manufacturing firms, and 10 years operating his own manufacturer's representative firm from Ottawa Lake, Mich. He spent 20 years with the Asheville, N.C.-based W.P. Hickman Co. as Marketing Manager and VP of Sales for their architectural sheet metal products. Don's successful career was built, as he said, on empathy for others.

He and his surviving wife, Carol, had been married for over 63 years. In 1958, Don met Carol and a love story for the ages began. They were never separated. 2024 marked 66 years together. They were best fishing buddies and together they purchased and renovated four old houses and traveled together at every opportunity. Over the years, they lived in Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina and, most recently, Gloucester, to be closer to their sons and grandchildren.

Don was a veteran of the United States Coast Guard for eight years in the Ready Reserve and was an electrician's mate 3rd class. His service included assignment to the Cutter Tupelo, ice breaker, and Aid to Navigation Lifeboat Station, Great Lakes. He tended the oldest continuously operated lighthouse at Marblehead, Ohio, and was honorably discharged in 1963. He believed in his country and the flag flew at his house 24 hours a day.

He had one sibling, his brother, Paul (deceased). Don is survived by his wife, Carol, and their two sons, Ed and Bob, affectionately nicknamed Peej and Catfish. Ed has been married to his wife Bain for over 32 years and Don and Carol have two grandsons through their marriage, William and Nathan. Bob is married to his wife Urvashi.

When asked what he wants to be remembered by, he said his dedication to his wife and family. His family agrees he accomplished this. He's characterized by his twinkling eyes and loving nature. In his final days with his family at his bedside and unable to speak he would mouth out, "I love you" to his family. He faced his impending death without fear because of his unwavering Christian faith. Don was a faithful believer in Jesus Christ his entire life. He was baptized and confirmed at Memorial Lutheran Church in Toledo, Ohio.

A graveside memorial service will be held at 10 a.m., Friday, August 30 at Bethany United Methodist Church cemetery, located at 1860 Hayes Road, Gloucester Point, Va. 23062.

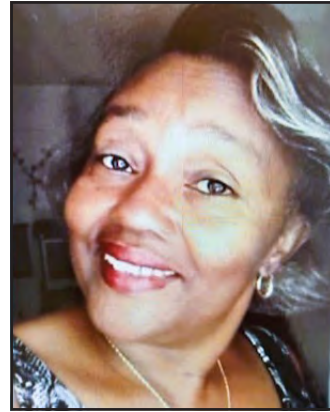
In lieu of flowers, please make online gift donations in memory of Donald Schultz to the Alzheimer's Association, which he donated to, <https://act.alz.org/donate>.

Funeral services are arranged by Andrews Funeral Home, 7192 Main Street, Gloucester, Va. 23061, 804-693-2366.

**SHIRLEY FOSTER SHABAZZ**

Shirley Foster Shabazz, age 66, of Stafford, Virginia, parted this life on Thursday, August 22, 2024. Shirley was baptized and joined First Morning Star Baptist Church in Hayes in August 1968. She later joined the Living Faith Christian Center on February 5, 2012, in Newport News, Virginia, where she served in the Hospitality Ministry. Shirley attended Gloucester High School. She worked for the United States Postal Service as a postal carrier and clerk for several years and retired in May 2006. In April 1975, she married Robert Anthony Gregory, and two children were born to this union: Tanika Lyna Gregory (deceased) and Robert Anthony Gregory Jr. Shirley was loved by many, especially her family and friends. She loved her children and grandchildren unconditionally. She enjoyed helping others, doing arts and crafts, playing family board games with her grandchildren, and spending quality time with family. She always provided a welcoming, warm sense of hospitality to family and friends no matter what the occasion. When food was involved, she would always step up to help and make the necessary provisions for any event. During the holidays, she enjoyed baking and making confectionaries for everyone in the family and community. She was preceded in death by her parents, Charlie and Viola Foster; her daughter, Tanika Lyna Gregory; brothers, Madison Lee and Maurice Foster. She is cherished in memory by her son, Robert Gregory, who resides in Gloucester County, and two bonus children, Ayesha Delpeche and Malikhah Delpeche, who currently reside in Florida; seven grandchildren, Sherkara Gregory, Mia Crowell, Ashonte Gregory, Tariq Gregory, Salemah Gregory, Kaden Gregory, Rhykeesia White, Robert Gregory III; two great-grandchildren, Aniyah Gregory and Aaliyah Crowell; sisters, Hazel Norris, Vanessa West, Patricia Trepeta and husband Warren Trepeta, and Charlene Foster; brothers, Franklin Foster and Tyrone Foster and wife Brigetta Foster; aunts and uncles, John Lee (Lenora Lee), Alberta Jackson, Alma Lee, Beatrice Lee, Catherine Lee, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. The family will receive friends on Saturday, August 31, 2024, from 11-11:45 a.m. at Hogg Funeral Home, followed by a Celebration of Life service in the chapel at noon. The inurnment will follow at First Morning Star Baptist Church Cemetery, 8906 Guinea Road, Hayes, Va. 23072.

Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home.

**PHYLLIS ANN WEBB**

Phyllis Ann Webb, age 56, of Hayes, died at her home on Sunday, August 25, 2024. Phyllis was born on August 13, 1968 to the late Thomas and Lucille Kellum Warren. Phyllis loved being outdoors. She had a green thumb and appreciated wildlife. She also enjoyed fishing with her husband and son and going swimming. She developed a love for classic cars; however, what she loved most of all was her family. In addition to her parents, Phyllis was preceded in death by her grandmother, Casey Warren. Phyllis is survived by her husband, Chris, and her son, Jordan. She is also survived by her brother, Tommy; uncles, Bobby and Jimmy (Kathy); her aunt, Doris (John); cousin, Yvette and her children Justin and Chantel; cousin, Andrea, and cousin, Wendell (Beth) and his children. A Celebration of Life service will be held on Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 11 a.m. at Hogg Funeral Home. The inurnment will be private. Flowers are welcome. Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home & Crematory.

**COMING EVENTS**

For listings, call 804-693-3101 or email [info@gazettejournal.net](mailto:info@gazettejournal.net)

**THURSDAY**

**VA250:** The Mathews County VA250 Committee will meet at 3 o'clock today, Thursday, Aug. 29, at Mathews Memorial Library.

**TUESDAY**

**POLICY AND MANAGEMENT:** The Gloucester Community Policy and Management Team will meet at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Social Services conference room, 6641 Short Lane, Gloucester.

**SUPERVISORS:** The Gloucester County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the T.C. Walker Education Center auditorium, 6099 T.C. Walker Road, Gloucester.

**NAACP:** The Gloucester Chapter of the NAACP will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Woodville School, 4310 George Washington Memorial Highway, Hayes. Mary Coleman of the American Red Cross will speak about Sickle Cell Anemia and a how blood donation saves the lives of those affected by the disease. All are

welcome to attend. You can attend in person or virtually. Email [gloucesternaacp@gmail.com](mailto:gloucesternaacp@gmail.com) to obtain a link to attend virtually.

**WEDNESDAY**

**WETLANDS BOARD:** The Mathews County Wetlands Board will meet at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 4, in the historic courthouse on Court Street.

**NEXT THURSDAY**

**PARKS & REC:** The Mathews County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission will meet at 4:30 p.m. next Thursday, Sept. 5, in the historic courthouse on Court Street.

**CLEAN & GREEN:** The Gloucester Clean & Green Advisory Committee will meet at 5 p.m. next Thursday, Sept. 5, in the Stewart Building program room, 6382 Main Street, Gloucester.

**PLANNERS:** The Gloucester County Planning Commission will meet at 6:30 p.m. next Thursday, Sept. 5, at 6504 Main Street, Gloucester.

**Library to hold Cuddle Care event Sept. 14**

Gloucester County Public Library, Main Street Center, will hold a Cuddle Care event on Saturday, Sept. 14, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Join Dr. Moonpie (Lisa Thomas) and Nurse Sara Robbins for a Cuddle Care celebration. There will be story time, build-a-buddy activity and light refreshments.

This program is for children in kindergarten through second grade. To register, stop by the library or call 804-693-2998.

**Project 2025 talk**

An audience of 58 attended the Gloucester County Democratic Committee's presentation on Project 2025 on Saturday afternoon in the community room of Gloucester Library, Main Street Center. William & Mary adjunct professor Dr. Alan Kennedy explained many of the mandates outlined in this manual compiled by the Heritage Foundation. Kennedy covered many of Project 2025 proposals and their implications on the community such as reclassifying civil servants to make them political appointees, eliminating the U.S. Department of Education and Head Start programs, and rescinding any regulations that prevent discrimination based on race or sex. Shown at the event are, from left, Sarajane Troxel, Maureen Bongarzone, Kent Willis, Kennedy, Leonne Arsenovic and David Helms.

**First-person history program**

Historian Patrick Schroeder will return to Gloucester next week to present his first-person program on George Peers, County Clerk of the Court in Appomattox during the surrender of General Lee's Confederate Army on April 9, 1865. Schroeder will discuss the impact of almost 100,000 troops descending on the small town during these pivotal few days in Appomattox. Schroeder is the Historian at Appomattox National Park and has published several books and papers on the historical significance of the area. The program will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 6, at Olivia's in the Village, 6597 Main Street, Gloucester. Call 804-695-482 for more information or to make a reservation. The program is free, with lunch on your own.

**Gloucester BOS to meet Tuesday**

The Gloucester Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the T.C. Walker Educational Center Auditorium.

On the agenda are two public hearings. One is for the revision and update of the Gloucester County Zoning Ordinance and the other is to consider an amendment to the FY 2025 budget. The regular agenda includes a request for additional FY25 appropriations, a discussion of considerations for the FY26 budget meeting calendar, and board appointments.

**\$5M short-term loan approved by Mathews supervisors**

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

At a special meeting last Thursday, the Mathews County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution approving a short-term loan of \$5 million in lease revenue bond financing to support the eventual funding of a new Station 1 for Mathews Volunteer Fire Department.

The interim financing was suggested by the county's financial advisor, Davenport & Company LLC, in order to give the county the ability to fund immediate capital needs without placing too much of a burden on the general fund in the short term. Davenport conducted a comprehensive financial review of the county's financial health in March in order to help develop an overarching capital funding plan for the county.

Kyle Laux, senior vice president at Davenport, explained to board chair Janice Phillips and supervisors

Tom Bowen and Tim Doss (supervisors Dave Jones and Mike Walls were unable to attend) that his company had sent out a request for proposals to local, regional, and national banks to solicit proposals for the interim financing, which will be tax-exempt and provide funding for a range of capital projects besides the fire station, including software purchases and improvements and repairs that might be needed.

Three banks responded to the RFP: Chesapeake Bank, Huntington Bank and Webster Bank. Laux recommended accepting the proposal offered by Huntington Bank because it was offering a 3.75 percent tax-exempt 5-year interest rate, it has no prepayment penalty as long as the entire balance is paid at once, it required that only two county buildings be used as collateral for the loan—the administration and human services buildings—and it allows the

county to choose where loan proceeds will be invested in order to offset debt service payments. Laux explained that the county can invest the money it receives on the loan at a higher interest rate than it's paying on the loan.

"Borrow at below 4 percent and reinvest at 5 percent or more," he said.

The funding will be funneled through the county's Economic Development Authority, with the loan treated as a lease on the two county properties.

Bowen asked Laux and the county's bond counsel, Jesse Bausch of Sands Anderson PC, whether some of the \$5 million can be used to help fund the placement of offshore breakwaters and development of additional parking at Haven Beach, and they said it could.

The county is expected to close on the financing and have the funds in hand on Sept. 12.

**Applications being accepted for home-repair program**

The Rural Housing Partnership (formerly Gloucester Housing Partnership) is accepting new clients in need of home repair in Gloucester, Mathews and King and Queen counties.

Those eligible for the home-repair program include people who are 60 years of older (with others on a case-by-case basis, as

funding permits), people who own their home and have lived in it for 12 months prior to applying, and whose household income is at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level.

All clients are screened in person for eligibility, said a press release, and must provide required documents to prove income and need.

There is currently a 3-6 month waiting list for minor repairs and a 6-9 month waiting list for major repairs.

New clients should call 804-792-5079 or fill out an inquiry for assistance online at [ruralhousingpartnership.org/need-help](http://ruralhousingpartnership.org/need-help).

Volunteers are needed, as well, said the release. Call the office to volunteer.

## OBITUARIES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8A)

**DONALD WILLIAM SCHULTZ**

March 23, 1937-August 21, 2024

In the early morning of August 21, 2024, Donald "Don" William Schultz of Gloucester, Va., passed away peacefully at Patriots Colony in Williamsburg, Virginia. He was receiving skilled nursing care and was 87 years old.

Don was born in Toledo, Ohio, to Edward and Ethel Schultz in March 1937. He received his Bachelor of Business Administration/Marketing degree in 1960 and began a 40+ year career in construction material sales and marketing that included regional sales management for several manufacturing firms, and 10 years operating his own manufacturer's representative firm from Ottawa Lake, Mich. He spent 20 years with the Asheville, N.C.-based W.P. Hickman Co. as Marketing Manager and VP of Sales for their architectural sheet metal products. Don's successful career was built, as he said, on empathy for others.

He and his surviving wife, Carol, had been married for over 63 years. In 1958, Don met Carol and a love story for the ages began. They were never separated. 2024 marked 66 years together. They were best fishing buddies and together they purchased and renovated four old houses and traveled together at every opportunity. Over the years, they lived in Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina and, most recently, Gloucester, to be closer to their sons and grandchildren.

Don was a veteran of the United States Coast Guard for eight years in the Ready Reserve and was an electrician's mate 3rd class. His service included assignment to the Cutter Tupelo, ice breaker, and Aid to Navigation Lifeboat Station, Great Lakes. He tended the oldest continuously operated lighthouse at Marblehead, Ohio, and was honorably discharged in 1963. He believed in his country and the flag flew at his house 24 hours a day.

He had one sibling, his brother, Paul (deceased). Don is survived by his wife, Carol, and their two sons, Ed and Bob, affectionately nicknamed Peej and Catfish. Ed has been married to his wife Bain for over 32 years and Don and Carol have two grandsons through their marriage, William and Nathan. Bob is married to his wife Urvashi.

When asked what he wants to be remembered by, he said his dedication to his wife and family. His family agrees he accomplished this. He's characterized by his twinkling eyes and loving nature. In his final days with his family at his bedside and unable to speak he would mouth out, "I love you" to his family. He faced his impending death without fear because of his unwavering Christian faith. Don was a faithful believer in Jesus Christ his entire life. He was baptized and confirmed at Memorial Lutheran Church in Toledo, Ohio.

A graveside memorial service will be held at 10 a.m., Friday, August 30 at Bethany United Methodist Church cemetery, located at 1860 Hayes Road, Gloucester Point, Va. 23062.

In lieu of flowers, please make online gift donations in memory of Donald Schultz to the Alzheimer's Association, which he donated to, <https://act.alz.org/donate>.

Funeral services are arranged by Andrews Funeral Home, 7192 Main Street, Gloucester, Va. 23061, 804-693-2366.

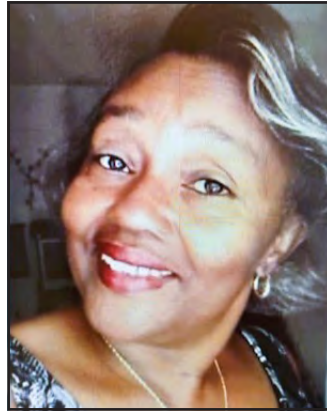


Donald and Carol Schultz

**SHIRLEY FOSTER SHABAZZ**

Shirley Foster Shabazz, age 66, of Stafford, Virginia, parted this life on Thursday, August 22, 2024. Shirley was baptized and joined First Morning Star Baptist Church in Hayes in August 1968. She later joined the Living Faith Christian Center on February 5, 2012, in Newport News, Virginia, where she served in the Hospitality Ministry. Shirley attended Gloucester High School. She worked for the United States Postal Service as a postal carrier and clerk for several years and retired in May 2006. In April 1975, she married Robert Anthony Gregory, and two children were born to this union: Tanika Lyna Gregory (deceased) and Robert Anthony Gregory Jr. Shirley was loved by many, especially her family and friends. She loved her children and grandchildren unconditionally. She enjoyed helping others, doing arts and crafts, playing family board games with her grandchildren, and spending quality time with family. She always provided a welcoming, warm sense of hospitality to family and friends no matter what the occasion. When food was involved, she would always step up to help and make the necessary provisions for any event. During the holidays, she enjoyed baking and making confectionaries for everyone in the family and community. She was preceded in death by her parents, Charlie and Viola Foster; her daughter, Tanika Lyna Gregory; brothers, Madison Lee and Maurice Foster. She is cherished in memory by her son, Robert Gregory, who resides in Gloucester County, and two bonus children, Ayesha Delpeche and Malikhah Delpeche, who currently reside in Florida; eight grandchildren, Sherikara Gregory, Mia Crowell, Ashonte Gregory, Tariq Gregory, Salemah Gregory, Kaden Gregory, Rhykeesia White, Robert Gregory III; two great-grandchildren, Aniyah Gregory and Aaliyah Crowell; sisters, Hazel Norris, Vanessa West, Patricia Trepeta and husband Warren Trepeta, and Charlene Foster; brothers, Franklin Foster and Tyrone Foster and wife Brigetta Foster; aunts and uncles, John Lee (Lenora Lee), Alberta Jackson, Alma Lee, Beatrice Lee, Catherine Lee, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. The family will receive friends on Saturday, August 31, 2024, from 11-11:45 a.m. at Hogg Funeral Home, followed by a Celebration of Life service in the chapel at noon. The inurnment will follow at First Morning Star Baptist Church Cemetery, 8906 Guinea Road, Hayes, Va. 23072.

Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home.

**PHYLLIS ANN WEBB**

Phyllis Ann Webb, age 56, of Hayes, died at her home on Sunday, August 25, 2024. Phyllis was born on August 13, 1968 to the late Thomas and Lucille Kellum Warren. Phyllis loved being outdoors. She had a green thumb and appreciated wildlife. She also enjoyed fishing with her husband and son and going swimming. She developed a love for classic cars; however, what she loved most of all was her family. In addition to her parents, Phyllis was preceded in death by her grandmother, Casey Warren. Phyllis is survived by her husband, Chris, and her son, Jordan. She is also survived by her brother, Tommy; uncles, Bobby and Jimmy (Kathy); her aunt, Doris (John); cousin, Yvette and her children Justin and Chantel; cousin, Andrea, and cousin, Wendell (Beth) and his children. A Celebration of Life service will be held on Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 11 a.m. at Hogg Funeral Home. The inurnment will be private. Flowers are welcome. Services under the direction of Hogg Funeral Home & Crematory.

**COMING EVENTS**

For listings, call 804-693-3101 or email [info@gazettejournal.net](mailto:info@gazettejournal.net)

**THURSDAY**

**VA250:** The Mathews County VA250 Committee will meet at 3 o'clock today, Thursday, Aug. 29, at Mathews Memorial Library.

**TUESDAY**

**POLICY AND MANAGEMENT:** The Gloucester Community Policy and Management Team will meet at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Social Services conference room, 6641 Short Lane, Gloucester.

**NAACP:** The Gloucester Chapter of the NAACP will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Woodville School, 4310 George Washington Memorial Highway, Hayes. Mary Coleman of the American Red Cross will speak about Sickle Cell Anemia and a how blood donation saves the lives of those affected by the disease. All are welcome to attend. You can attend in person or virtually. Email [gloucesternaacp@gmail.com](mailto:gloucesternaacp@gmail.com) to obtain a link to attend virtually.

**SUPERVISORS:** The Gloucester

County Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the T.C. Walker Education Center auditorium, 6099 T.C. Walker Road, Gloucester.

**WEDNESDAY**

**WETLANDS BOARD:** The Mathews County Wetlands Board will meet at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 4, in the historic courthouse on Court Street.

**NEXT THURSDAY**

**PARKS & REC:** The Mathews County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission will meet at 4:30 p.m. next Thursday, Sept. 5, in the historic courthouse on Court Street.

**CLEAN & GREEN:** The Gloucester Clean & Green Advisory Committee will meet at 5 p.m. next Thursday, Sept. 5, in the Stewart Building program room, 6382 Main Street, Gloucester.

**PLANNERS:** The Gloucester County Planning Commission will meet at 6:30 p.m. next Thursday,

**Project 2025 talk**

An audience of 58 attended the Gloucester County Democratic Committee's presentation on Project 2025 on Saturday afternoon in the community room of Gloucester Library, Main Street Center. William & Mary adjunct professor Dr. Alan Kennedy explained many of the mandates outlined in this manual compiled by the Heritage Foundation. Kennedy covered many of Project 2025 proposals and their implications on the community such as reclassifying civil servants to make them political appointees, eliminating the U.S. Department of Education and Head Start programs, and rescinding any regulations that prevent discrimination based on race or sex. Shown at the event are, from left, Sarajane Troxel, Maureen Bongarzone, Kent Willis, Kennedy, Leonne Arsenovic and David Helms.

**First-person history program**

Historian Patrick Schroeder will return to Gloucester next week to present his first-person program on George Peers, County Clerk of the Court in Appomattox during the surrender of General Lee's Confederate Army on April 9, 1865. Schroeder will discuss the impact of almost 100,000 troops descending on the small town during these pivotal few days in Appomattox. Schroeder is the Historian at Appomattox National Park and has published several books and papers on the historical significance of the area. The program will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 6, at Olivia's in the Village, 6597 Main Street, Gloucester. Call 804-694-0057 for more information or to make a reservation. The program is free, with lunch on your own.

**Gloucester BOS to meet Tuesday**

The Gloucester Board of Supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the T.C. Walker Educational Center Auditorium.

On the agenda are two public hearings. One is for the revision and update of the Gloucester County Zoning Ordinance and the other is to consider an amendment to the FY 2025 budget. The regular agenda includes a request for additional FY25 appropriations, a discussion of considerations for the FY26 budget meeting calendar, and board appointments.

**\$5M short-term loan approved by Mathews supervisors**

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

At a special meeting last Thursday, the Mathews County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution approving a short-term loan of \$5 million in lease revenue bond financing to support the eventual funding of a new Station 1 for Mathews Volunteer Fire Department.

The interim financing was suggested by the county's financial advisor, Davenport & Company LLC, in order to give the county the ability to fund immediate capital needs without placing too much of a burden on the general fund in the short term. Davenport conducted a comprehensive financial review of the county's financial health in March in order to help develop an overarching capital funding plan for the county.

Kyle Laux, senior vice president at Davenport, explained to board chair Janice Phillips and supervisors

Tom Bowen and Tim Doss (supervisors Dave Jones and Mike Walls were unable to attend) that his company had sent out a request for proposals to local, regional, and national banks to solicit proposals for the interim financing, which will be tax-exempt and provide funding for a range of capital projects besides the fire station, including software purchases and improvements and repairs that might be needed.

Three banks responded to the RFP: Chesapeake Bank, Huntington Bank and Webster Bank. Laux recommended accepting the proposal offered by Huntington Bank because it was offering a 3.75 percent tax-exempt 5-year interest rate, it has no prepayment penalty as long as the entire balance is paid at once, it required that only two county buildings be used as collateral for the loan—the administration and human services buildings—and it allows the

county to choose where loan proceeds will be invested in order to offset debt service payments. Laux explained that the county can invest the money it receives on the loan at a higher interest rate than it's paying on the loan.

"Borrow at below 4 percent and reinvest at 5 percent or more," he said.

The funding will be funneled through the county's Economic Development Authority, with the loan treated as a lease on the two county properties.

Bowen asked Laux and the county's bond counsel, Jesse Bausch of Sands Anderson PC, whether some of the \$5 million can be used to help fund the placement of offshore breakwaters and development of additional parking at Haven Beach, and they said it could.

The county is expected to close on the financing and have the funds in hand on Sept. 12.

**Applications being accepted for home-repair program**

The Rural Housing Partnership (formerly Gloucester Housing Partnership) is accepting new clients in need of home repair in Gloucester, Mathews and King and Queen counties.

Those eligible for the home-repair program include people who are 60 years of older (with others on a case-by-case basis, as

funding permits), people who own their home and have lived in it for 12 months prior to applying, and whose household income is at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level.

All clients are screened in person for eligibility, said a press release, and must provide required documents to prove income and need.

There is currently a 3-6 month waiting list for minor repairs and a 6-9 month waiting list for major repairs.

New clients should call 804-792-5079 or fill out an inquiry for assistance online at [ruralhousingpartnership.org/need-help](http://ruralhousingpartnership.org/need-help).

Volunteers are needed, as well, said the release. Call the office to volunteer.



### GI Foundation donation

The Gwynn's Island Civic League Foundation delivered over \$2,000 worth of school and classroom supplies to the three Mathews County public schools in time for the start of the school year. Funds used to purchase the supplies came from the foundation's fundraiser held in May at Richardson's Café, said a press release. In top photo from left, Mathews High School principal Drew Greve and the MHS Director of School Counseling Katelyn Dodge accept the gift from John Mathiesen, Lanette Beebe and Sue Mathiesen of the foundation. At Thomas Hunter Middle School (middle photo) are, back row from left, principal Jodie Simpson, John Mathiesen, art teacher Katie Witkowski, math teacher Carter Vrooman, health and PE teacher Laurie Haynes, band instructor Mark Givens, technology teacher Jason Williams, foundation member Lanette Beebe and, in front, family and consumer services teacher Michelle Williams, school board chair Dr. Mari Gibbs and Sue Mathieson of the foundation. At Mathews Elementary (bottom photo) are, front row from left, second grade teacher Jennifer Smith, principal Lee Anne Bray, Sue Mathiesen, Lanette Beebe; second row, assistant principal LaTanya Clark, John Mathiesen and second grade teacher Christina Tomcany.



### Rescuing turtles in Greece

Daniella Asnicar, a 2022 graduate of Gloucester High School and a rising senior at Virginia Commonwealth University where she studies environmental science, spent five weeks in late spring and early summer completing an internship with Archelon: the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece at its rescue center in Glyfada, where sick and injured turtles are rehabilitated. A story about her adventures can be found on the VCU website at <https://news.vcu.edu/article/2024/08/in-greece-undergrad-daniella-asnicar-helps-sea-turtles-heel-and-return-home>.



DREAM participants Cindy Lester of Central High School; Haley Marchetti of St. Clare Walker Middle School; Michael Carey of Middlesex High School; Brandi Brown of Page Middle School; Sheri Gross of Central High School; David Moore of St. Clare Walker Middle School, and Michael Duffey of Achilles Elementary School, from left, spend the day on the Dragon Run.

## Local teachers learn on Dragon Run

For a few immersive days on Dragon Run, teachers stepped into the shoes of students. The last week of July marked the second year Friends of the Dragon Run hosted Middle Peninsula educators as part of the Dragon Run Environmental Academy Mentorship (DREAM) program. For three days, DREAM takes educators out into the field and onto the waters of Dragon Run to teach them about the local watershed and help them develop lessons to take back to students. All of this is made possible by the FODR DREAM Team, composed of retired teachers and master naturalists: Molly Broderson, Carol Kauffman, Dave Norman, Terry Skinner, Bambi Thompson and Susan Walton. This year, participants came from three school districts: Gloucester, King and Middlesex. The first two days involved familiarizing educators with the Dragon Run through kayak paddle trips, hikes, and lessons on watersheds, local species, water quality, citizen science and biodiversity. On the last day, with their new knowledge and experiences, each educator chose an aspect of Dragon Run to talk about in a mini documentary to share with students, parents, and colleagues. Kayaks and cameras at the ready, the DREAM Team and participants headed onto the water to film the teachers as they described topics including the importance of beavers, bald cypress, and duckweed. During filming, Dr. Anthony Vladu, superintendent of Gloucester County Public Schools, observed the DREAM program in action and later spoke on its impact. "The most effective professional development for educators is one that is relevant, connected to the community, and meaningful to the lives of both students and teachers," Vladu said. "The time I spent on the water with Middle Peninsula teachers and Friends of Dragon Run was the best professional development I have attended in a while because it made learning science come alive through watershed education and environmental stewardship right here in our community." More information, including photos and videos from DREAM 2024, are available on the Friends of Dragon Run website at [dragonrun.org/dream](http://dragonrun.org/dream). Friends of Dragon Run is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Its mission is to protect, preserve and encourage the wise use of the Dragon Run watershed. They fulfill the mission through education, stewardship and citizen science.

## MCPS provides free meals to all students

Mathews County Public Schools provides free meals to all students served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Each school and/or central school nutrition office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party. All schools in the division will be participating in the Community Eligibility Provision as implemented under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, according to assistant superintendent Lesley Hunley. Students attending each of the county's three schools will be provided a nutritious meal for breakfast and lunch each day at no charge to the household. Households will not be required to submit a meal application form to receive meals at no charge. Each household will receive a letter informing them of the program, including contact information for any questions.



### School supply drive

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 75 held a school supply drive at Post 75, Gloucester. American Legion families participating in the event were the Auxiliary, Legion, Legion Riders and Sons of the Legion. Members of the Auxiliary delivered the supplies to Abingdon Elementary School on Aug. 22. Shown at the presentation are, from left, Sheila Korycinski, Cheryl Slavnik, Cheryl Knapke, Claudia Clifton, Leah Dugan and Abingdon Community Engagement Coordinator Lauren Ginder.

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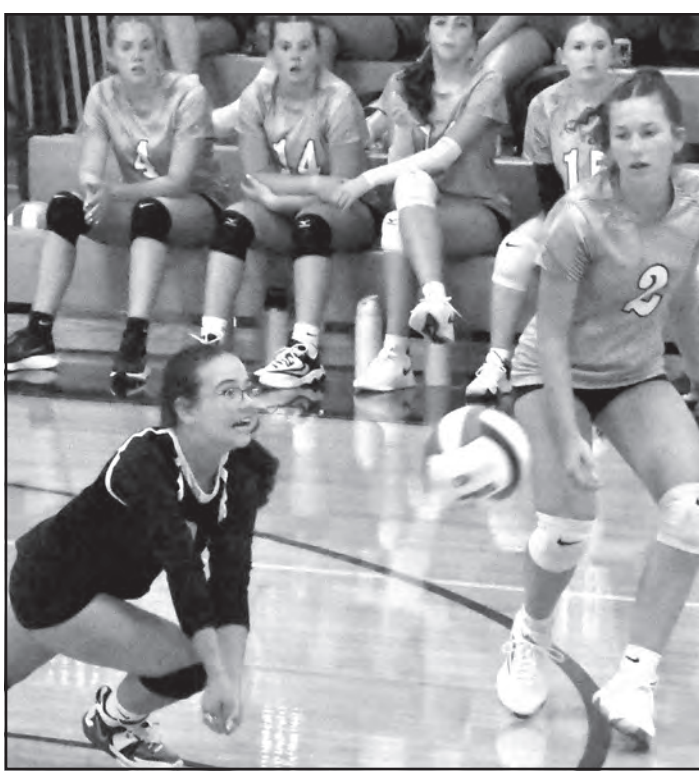
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MELANY SLAUGHTER / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

## First win

The Gloucester High School boys' varsity volleyball team defeated Nansemond River, 3-2, last Wednesday, Aug. 14, in a home scrimmage. Ryan Williams hits from the outside during the match.



TOM CHILLEMI / SOUTHSIDE SENTINEL

## Scrimmage

The Gloucester High School girls' varsity and JV volleyball teams played Middlesex in an away scrimmage last Thursday, falling to the Chargers, 3-0. Here, JV Libero Ava Hinton dives for the ball as teammate Rylee Perry looks on.

## Dukes win first game

BY RUBY WILLIAMS

The Gloucester Lady Dukes field hockey team started off with a very competitive win Tuesday over the Jamestown Eagles, 4-2. This was a rematch of the Region 4A Championship from last year. The Dukes jumped on the Eagles with four goals in the first half and the first couple minutes of the third quarter. They gave up a breakdown breakaway and gave up their first goal allowed of the season. Jamestown closed out the scoring with a second goal via a stroke. Statistically, the Dukes outshot the Eagles, 13-11, and earned 13 penalty corners to nine.

Addy Zabicki led the effort in the goal cage with 10 saves. Aaliyah Mattocks had two key defensive saves in the first half keeping the Dukes' advantage intact. Scoring goals were Kenzi Reece, Reese Miller, Chloe West and the eventual game winner Charlotte Houtz. Those with

assists were Houtz (two), Abby Junker (two), Miller, West, Ady Jeffrey and Peyton Sutton.

The team did well in its first outing with a tremendous effort all over the field. The game had the playoff feel.

The defense was led by McKayla Clark and Caroline Klink, who did a great job in shutting down the Eagles offensive pressure.

The midfield of Miller, Houtz and West controlled a majority of the position. The team came together very quickly and started fast.

The remaining schedule is one of the most challenging schedules they could face. The next game will be against Western Branch on Friday, another State contending team from Division 6.

### Jamboree

Gloucester's field hockey teams hosted a jamboree this past Saturday at GHS. The GHS Field Hockey Jamboree was the largest jamboree hosted in Virginia with over 800 athletes in attendance.

The varsity Dukes won their pool, winning all three games. The first game of the day was against Cosby and they won with a score of 1-0. In the second game of the day, the Varsity Dukes won against Poquoson 3-2. The last game of the game ended in a shutout with a 4-0 win over Walsingham Academy Trojans.

The GHS JV field hockey team also won its pool with wins against Poquoson, Western Branch, James Monroe and Smithfield.

Gloucester's teams will return to play Friday to take on the Western Branch Bruins.

## Dukes' golf picks up third win

The Gloucester High School golf team won its third straight match last Wednesday, Aug. 21, at the Hamptons Golf Course. The Dukes scored a 308 to take the win by 14 strokes over Menchville.

Senior Blake Sibley again won medalist honors by shooting a three-over par 73. Sophomore Penton Scott placed third overall with a six-over par 76. Freshman Levi Nannoy took fourth place with a seven-over par 77. Junior Joseph Moritz tied for sixth by shooting 12-over par 82. Also competing for the Dukes were sophomores Mahliah Richardson and Brayden Davidson.

Nine schools are competing in the Peninsula District for golf, with Gloucester and Menchville vying for first place.



The Gloucester High School golf team picked up its third win of the season at the Hamptons Golf Course last Wednesday, Aug. 21. Here, GHS sophomore Mahliah Richardson hits the ball off the tee. She is the only female golfer competing in the Peninsula District.

## High school football returns with home games

The Gloucester and Mathews high school football teams will open the season with home games tonight and Friday.

At 7 o'clock tonight, Thursday, Aug. 29, Gloucester will host the Keoughtan Warriors in a conference game.

The Mathews High School football team returns to the gridiron on Friday night at Ken Brown Field when the Blue Devils welcome the visiting John Marshall Justices from Richmond, also starting at 7 o'clock.

## Citation tilefish caught at Norfolk Canyon

Greyson Dehoux and Jonathan Dehoux, both of Mathews, caught citation-size blueline tilefish on Aug. 12 at Norfolk Canyon.

Greyson's fish weighed 10 pounds, six ounces; Jonathan's was 10 pounds, three ounces.

Also qualifying for citations in the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament, as reported Aug. 21 in [vasaltwaterfishing.com](http://vasaltwaterfishing.com), were James Riley of Gloucester, a 6-pound, 6-ounce flounder caught July 29 in Chesapeake Bay; and also for Riley, a 10-pound, 4-ounce sheepshead caught Aug. 2 in the bay.

Also, Kevin Horsley of Port Haywood caught a 10-pound, 7-ounce citation sheepshead Aug. 2 at Mobjack Bay Reef; and,

Keith Nuttall of Gloucester received a citation for a 27.5-inch speckled trout caught and released July 30 in Mobjack Bay.

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## MHS golfers take on Essex

The Mathews High School golf team competed against Essex on Monday at the Hobbs Hole Golf Course in Tappahannock. The MHS golfers had a score of 210, while Essex won the match with a 192, according to MHS coach Jake Jackson.

Chase Ambrose led Mathews golfers with a score of 44 followed by Bryce West with a 49. Hunter Byrd of Essex had the low score of the day with a 39.

"As a team score, these young men are still improving," Jackson said. "The progress I see in everyone on the team is unbelievable for these guys. Most of them have only been playing for such a short period of time."

Mathews was scheduled to host Rappahannock on Wednesday at the Piankatank River Golf Club, Hartfield.

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**MATHEWS BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP PRESENTS:** HUDGINS, VA 804-725-3707

# OVERTIME

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 30TH**

WHO: 8TH- 12TH GRADE YOUTH

WHEN: AFTER MHS GAME UNTIL 11 PM

WHERE: MATHEWS BAPTIST CHURCH FOR PIZZA, GAMES & DANCING AT MBC'S SILENT DISCO

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# MHS volleyball kicks off season

BY GRAYSON GRIFFITH

Mathews High School started a new volleyball season on Aug. 5, hosting tryouts. The team was completed with 16 athletes.

This year's seniors are Kristin Blake, Lindsay Coons, Hailey Denkinger, Grayson Griffith and Angel Shultz. The juniors are Emily Coons, Hannah Davis, Addy Lowe, Abigail Ramsey, Shelby Ray, Nora Suthard and Ella Ward. The sophomores are Kaitlyn Ball, Vanessa Boyd and Addison Griffith. The only freshman on the team is Bentlea Lawrence.

Coons, Denkinger and Shultz have been selected as team captains.

The volleyball team hosted its annual jamboree to raise money for the program on Saturday. The team also wrapped shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child in their free time between games. Bethel Bruins, Woodside Wolverines and York Falcons all attended. The first game started at 9 o'clock in the morning; the Blue Devils played the York Falcons.

The teams played a total of three sets; the first set the Devils struggled to get their footing, losing 9-25. The second set was difficult to watch as the teams traded point-for-point; the Blue Devils lost, 23-25. In the third set, the Devils got off to a late start and couldn't catch up to the Falcons; the game ended, 0-3. The next game they played the Bethel Bruins in only two sets. The Blue Devils struggled to keep up and lost the first set, 14-25, and the second set, 10-25. They lost the game, 2-0. The last game the Blue Devils played the Woodside Wolverines. They kept up with the Wolverines the first set but couldn't pull out the win, losing 21-25. The second set they played went downhill as well as the third. The final score of the game was 3-0 the Wolverines taking the win.

The people with 100 percent serv-



CHARLIE KOENIG / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Mathews High School senior Hailey Denkinger, a libero on the Lady Blue Devils' varsity volleyball team, keeps the ball in play in last Thursday's scrimmage against the visiting Lancaster Red Devils.

ing all day were Davis, Griffith, Lawrence, Ramsey and Ward. The highest passing average was Ward with a 2.5 serve/receive and the highest hitting percentage goes to Davis with a 1000 hitting average.

On Tuesday, the

Mathews girls traveled to Colonial Beach to face the Drifters. The varsity girls fell, 1-3. Mathews will look to get some revenge on Tuesday when Colonial Beach comes to town. The varsity game is scheduled to start at 7 p.m.

# Dale Garrett Memorial Golf Benefit to be held Sept. 15

The 14th annual Dale Garrett Memorial Golf Benefit will be held on Sunday, Sept. 15 at the Golden Eagle Golf Course, 364 Clubhouse Road, Irvington.

The tournament will have a 1 p.m. start. The cost is \$100 per single and \$400 for a team of four.

Hole sponsorships are available, with business sponsorships offering a hole sponsor sign, Facebook advertisement, and recognition on the tournament handout for \$100. Personal sponsorships are \$75 and include a hole sponsor sign in memory of a loved one and recognition on the tournament handout.

The beneficiary of this year's fundraiser will be Sissi Mise of Gloucester, who developed a new strain of lymphocytic leukemia and heart failure after being in remission from the disease for 13 years.

### Sissi's story

Mise, an employee of Gloucester County Public Library, shared the story she wrote about her cancer journey. She said she was treated for acute lymphocytic leukemia in 2008 and was in remission by 2009. For 10 years, "I was happy to celebrate that I had beaten my rare form of cancer, per what all the specialists would say," she said. The doctors told her that once she had passed 10 years, there would be "an infinitesimal chance of relapse," said Mise.

But in March 2022, she became weak to the point where she grew out of breath after walking only short distances, and tests showed the cancer had returned.

"I believe the first thing I said was 'That is impossible,'" said Mise. "The room became very small, the air was leaving my lungs, and all I could think about was, 'Why is this happening to me again.'"

Mise was given five days to "get my life ready for my absence from it" and report to Virginia Commonwealth University. Once there, she was diagnosed with a different variant of acute lymphocytic leukemia, along with chronic heart failure.

"My leukemia had started attacking my heart," she said. Chemotherapy began immediately, with the attendant lumbar punctures and bone marrow biopsies. She was



Gloucester resident Sissi Mise has been chosen to be the beneficiary of the Dale Garrett Memorial Golf Benefit, to be held on Sunday, Sept. 15, at the Golden Eagle Golf Course in Irvington.

in the hospital for over 100 days, then in rehabilitation at VCU for several weeks before being discharged home in a wheelchair "and barely able to get out of it," she said.

She spent another 24 days in the hospital, then moved into The Doorways, a nonprofit facility for patients, for another five months because she had to be within a 10-mile radius of the hospital.

"Coming home felt wonderful," she said.

Mise thought this was the end of her cancer journey and that "I could finally be at home and rest." But in January of this year she was told her bone marrow transplant had not been completely successful, and that she would need three donor leukocyte infusions, as well.

"I was devastated," she said. The leukocyte infusions weren't as bad as the bone marrow transplant, and the second infusion was a success.

Mise said she has to be monitored weekly because of continuing side effects, but that "every recovery always has a price to pay, and I am happy to ... pay that price for having my life."

Mise said she's elated to even be considered for the Dale Garrett Memorial Golf Benefit.

"I thought that beating cancer the first time was hard, but beating it a second time nearly took my life," she said. "I know that this just means that my story isn't over, and my journey has a few more chapters."

### LOCAL TIDES

	Mobjack Bay, East River Entrance	
	HIGH	LOW
Thursday 8/29	6:08 a.m.	12:19 a.m.
Friday 8/30	6:47 p.m.	12:05 p.m.
Saturday 8/31	7:07 a.m.	1:13 a.m.
Sunday 9/1	7:38 p.m.	1:04 p.m.
Monday 9/2	7:59 a.m.	2:02 a.m.
Tuesday 9/3	8:23 p.m.	1:57 p.m.
Wednesday 9/4	8:45 a.m.	2:45 a.m.
	9:02 p.m.	2:46 p.m.
	9:26 a.m.	3:23 a.m.
	9:37 p.m.	3:30 p.m.
	10:03 a.m.	3:55 a.m.
	10:11 p.m.	4:08 p.m.
	10:37 a.m.	4:25 a.m.
	10:44 p.m.	4:45 p.m.

Tide adjustments at other points:

- York River, Tue Marsh Light—Subtract 5 minutes.
- York River, Yorktown—Add 5 minutes.
- York River, Allmondsville—Add 1 hour, 5 minutes.
- York River, Entrance to Perrin River—Add 1 minute.
- Brown's Bay—Subtract 7 minutes.
- S.W. Branch Severn River—Add 4 minutes.
- Ware River—Subtract 4 minutes.
- North River—Subtract 4 minutes.
- New Point Comfort—Subtract 1 minute.
- Plankatank River, Cherry Point—Add 1 hour.
- Plankatank River, Dixie—Add 1 hour, 33 minutes.
- Urbanna—Add 2 hours, 50 minutes.

### THE SUN THIS WEEK

	Sunrise	Sunset
8/29	6:34 a.m.	7:37 p.m.
8/30	6:35 a.m.	7:36 p.m.
8/31	6:36 a.m.	7:34 p.m.
9/1	6:37 a.m.	7:33 p.m.
9/2	6:37 a.m.	7:31 p.m.
9/3	6:38 a.m.	7:30 p.m.
9/4	6:39 a.m.	7:29 p.m.

### THE MOON THIS WEEK

	Moonrise	Moonset
8/29	1:51 a.m.	5:29 p.m.
8/30	2:54 a.m.	6:09 p.m.
8/31	3:58 a.m.	6:42 p.m.
9/1	5:01 a.m.	7:11 p.m.
9/2	6:02 a.m.	7:34 p.m.
9/3	7:01 a.m.	7:56 p.m.
9/4	7:58 a.m.	8:17 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER MOON PHASES

New moon	9/2
First quarter	9/11
Full moon	9/17
Last quarter	9/26

# JV Lady Devils fall to Drifters

BY ADDISON GRIFFITH

The Mathews High School junior varsity volleyball team faced the Colonial Beach Drifters in a road game Tuesday in the Lady Devils' regular season opener.

In a hard-fought, competitive contest, the MHS girls came up just short, losing by scores of 25-20 and 25-21.

Starting off, Carter Hayes had four aces back-to-back. Marley Brock, Harmony Smith and Delaney Boatman all served up aces too. The game was not just filled with a ton of aces but also kills. Mya Schroeder had an amazing kill and drew the crowd in.

Mathews will have a rematch against the Drifters on Tuesday on the Devils' home court, with the JV contest beginning at 5:30 p.m.



CHARLIE KOENIG / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

JV Lady Devil Harmony Smith bumps the ball in last Thursday's preseason scrimmage against Lancaster.

# Knights open season

The Gloucester Youth Football and Cheer League Knights held their season opener Saturday at the old Page Middle School fields.

The 12U Knights defeated Grafton Tabb, 38-0. Tyrell Daisy had 84 rushing yards for one touchdown and 90 passing yards for two touchdowns; Durrall Daisy had 95 rushing yards for one touchdown and 73 receiving yards for another touchdown; Caiden Baumgartner had 56 rushing yards for one touchdown, 17 receiving yards for another touchdown, two sacks and five tackles; Camden Plum had 81 rushing yards for one touchdown and one fumble recovery; Alijah Plum had three sacks, one fumble recovery and one interception; Jeremiah Woolfork and Jacob Lewis both recorded two sacks and eight tackles each; and Delonta Ball Jr. had four tackles, three sacks and one fumble recovery.

The 10U Knights fell to

Grafton, 21-0. The 8U Knights also fell to Grafton, 13-6.

The Knights cheer teams were also present during the games. Roslyn Firth was named most spirited and Ainsley Imler had the best technique for the 8U squad. MyMy Smith was named most spirited and Elin Searce had the best technique for the 10U/12U team.

# Hammerheads win season opener, 2-0

The Baystars Hammerheads went head-to-head in soccer with the Smithfield Scorchers at Carrollton Nile Park on Sunday. The Hammerheads kicked off their season with a 2-0 win.

Zane Williams cracked the game open early, capitalizing on a well-placed through ball assisted by Alfonso Escamilla to go up a goal. Haydin Arquette was able to break free from the back line and go coast-

to-coast for a goal to bring the game to a final of 2-0 in favor of the Hammerheads.

Jackson Mandell was showcased by a variety of great saves and was supported by the stout D line including Arquette, Escamilla, Callum Small and Cole Christensen.

The Hammerheads will return to competition on Sunday, Sept. 15, at Woodville Park to play the Golden Ball Soccer Academy.

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# Local family to thank community in welcome-home celebration

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

Mathews native Taylor Jacobs and her family, including infant daughter Waverly, are back home in Gloucester after living in the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia for eight months, and they're ready to show their appreciation to all of the local individuals and organizations that helped them through tough times.

A welcome home celebration for Waverly and a thank-you to the community will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 14, at the Piankatank Community League at 11888 Harcum Road in Gloucester.

The food will be catered free of charge by Buz and Ned's Real Barbecue in Richmond, which is owned by friends of Waverly's dad, Dilan Cotman. It will include barbecued pork and chicken sandwiches, along with sides and drinks.

"We don't need an exact head count, but we'd like to let the caterer know whether to make enough food for 100 or 500," said Jacobs with a laugh.

Cotman said that the local community has done so much for his family. Money collected locally purchased food and transportation for him and for other family members as they traveled back and forth from Gloucester and Mathews to Philadelphia to provide support for Jacobs and her daughter Audrey, both before Waverly was born and while Waverly was in treatment after birth for complications arising from Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia. It paid for other things, as well.

"It allowed Audrey and I to have a life outside of the hospital room or Ronald McDonald," said Jacobs. "It was used for school and for activities to try to make life normal for her."

Jacobs tried to remember all the ways that people had reached out to help her family, from a yard sale at Mathews Baptist Church to a dinner at Howard-Dooley Café. A fundraiser at Damon & Company, a bowfishing tournament, cards with money and gifts, and more all helped ease the burden on the young family.

Jacobs emphasized that the family doesn't want people to bring donations or gifts to this community party.

"We've already received so much," she said. "We really just want to say thank you to the places, the churches, and the people, some we don't even know."

To let the family know who's attending, search for "Welcome home, Waverly! Thank You, Community" under Facebook Events.

### About Waverly's condition

Waverly was diagnosed with Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia last August, during Jacobs' 20-week ultrasound. The life-threatening birth defect is a hole in the baby's diaphragm, the muscle that separates the chest cavity from the abdominal cavity and assists with breathing.

Because of the hole, Waverly's stomach, small intestine, spleen, and part of her liver moved into her chest cavity, collapsing her left lung and pushing her heart toward the right side of her chest. This interfered with her lung development, so surgery was performed on her while she was still in the womb to insert a balloon in her trachea, blocking the airway and causing fluid to build up in the lungs and enhance their growth.

The procedure, which was performed last November, helped, but not as much as needed, so when she was born in January, Waverly had to be put on an Ecmo machine for two weeks to circulate her blood through

an artificial lung. She was also placed on an oscillator, which is a type of ventilator, and didn't breathe on her own until she was two months old.

Another complication arose. Because her abdominal organs were in her chest, Waverly's stomach distended out of shape, her liver grew too big, and she developed a hernia in her esophagus that her stomach pushes through. The result is that she can't eat anything by mouth and has to be fed 20 hours a day through a gastrojejunol feeding tube. Yet another tube inserted into her abdomen drains fluids from her stomach. In addition, being on so much equipment gave her tracheomalacia, a condition that causes her airway to collapse when she breathes.

Jacobs and Cotman aren't dwelling on those things, though. Having the surgery before birth increased Waverly's chances of survival from 10 percent to 70 percent. On top of that, Medicaid kicked in and is taking care of Waverly's medical treatment, which continues through the Medical College of Virginia, with less-frequent appointments at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

"I was going to make a payment plan and pay for the rest of my life," said Cotman. "But Medicaid took care of it all."

Jacobs said she's filled with gratitude for people she's known her whole life but wasn't that close to as well as perfect strangers "who were there for me in a way I can never repay them for." And she's grateful that Waverly is a happy, easy baby.

"If she didn't have all her medical stuff, we wouldn't know she was in the room," she said. "We don't know what the future holds. We're just enjoying the baby."

# BAY AGING: Expanding its services to the public

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A)

sex, Lancaster and Northumberland. The fifth county, Highland, is in the western part of the state.

The transformation began around 12 years ago, said Vesley, when projections increasingly emphasized a rapidly aging society, leading to the concern that "if we live long enough, services will eventually decline—grant funding would not keep up."

"We needed to do something other than rely on government funds," said Vesley. "We looked at what we could do. Bake sales were not gonna cut it, so we looked to sell services."

A natural fit for an organization that works with a vulnerable population was to contract with hospitals to work with chronically ill patients who were transitioning out of the hospital and into their homes after an acute illness, said Vesley.

"When an acute care patient left the hospital, we went into the home to work on setting goals," she said. "We reviewed the discharge plan and made sure the patient had the proper medications and understood them and how to take them. We made sure food was available, that patients who needed oxygen had it."

The cost for those services was reimbursed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said Vesley, with funding that was in the form of payment for services rendered rather than a grant.

That was just the beginning, she said. Bay Aging expanded the services it offered, contracting with insurance companies to provide health care screenings and with the Veterans Administration to provide patient-directed in-home services for veterans.

"By using this approach, the growth was phenomenal," she said.

Tinsley Goad, Bay Aging's chief financial officer, said that the 10-county area covered by Bay Aging is the size of the state of Delaware, and that Bay Aging additionally serves the counties of Charles City and New Kent and has a veteran's program that reaches into multiple states.

VAAA Cares is the income-producing division of Bay Aging that contracts with insurance companies and health care providers to provide health screenings and care transition services, said Goad. Veteran Directed Care is the other income-producing division, and it has seen substantial growth in the past few years. Bay Aging's contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has the organization providing services not just to Virginia veterans but also to veterans throughout 10 states and U.S. territories, he said. The result is unrestricted funding that Bay Aging can direct toward the programs it considers most beneficial.

"Meals are more expensive and wages for workers are higher, but federal grant funds are the same," said Goad. "We're able to run those programs despite deficits because of the programs that contribute unrestricted funding."

The Veteran Directed Care program is very popular with veterans, earning a 98 to 100 percent approval rating because of the model it uses, said Goad. The veteran enrolls in the program and then hires his or her own caregiver, which may be a

family member already providing care. Most of the budget for the program is payroll, he said. Bay Aging's job is to manage the program, including processing the payroll and time sheets of the employees. The program is providing services for 850 veterans and has more than 1,000 employees, he said.

Vesley emphasized that those 1,000 employees do not work for Bay Aging but are hired directly by the veterans themselves. According to its annual report, Bay Aging has 340 employees.

The money Bay Aging earns with its contract work goes into such programs such as Meals on Wheels and Active Lifestyle Centers, non-emergency transportation for medical specialty care and treatments, in-home care and durable medical equipment for people largely confined to their homes, housing support services to help people remain in their homes, home repairs, and caregiver counseling and support, said Vesley.

"The budget is a good way to quantify success," she said. "One of the things we're most proud of is that we've increased services in partnership with local governments, but we're able to keep their contributions relatively small compared to the growth in the budget."

Vesley said that, while local governments are providing more money now than they did in the past, the percent of the budget those contributions make up is just 2 percent, down from the previous 6 percent because of the agency's business model growth.

"It's a return on investment for Gloucester and Mathews," she said. "You give us \$1 and we give \$10 in value in real money."

A fact sheet provided by Julie Northcott-Wilson, Bay Aging's statistician, shows that in fiscal year 2023, the organization served 34,439 people, about a third of whom received care services. The second and third greatest numbers were served through information and referrals (16 percent) and publications and educational materials (15 percent). Others were served in the areas of transportation, counseling, training, meals, housing, and more.

Northcott-Wilson said that the 2022 American Community Survey had found that, while 22.3 percent of Virginians and 23 percent of all U.S. residents are age 60 and older, 34 percent—a full third—of the population of the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck is 60 and older. And, while the median age nationwide is 38.5 years, and the median age in Virginia is 38.7 years, the median age of this 10-county region is 48.5 years.

"We're like a whole generation older than the rest of the country," she said.

The fastest growing segment of homeless people in the U.S. is older individuals who can no longer afford to rent or who have to sell their homes because of taxes, said Vesley. But that demographic is also the fastest-growing segment of the workforce, she said, with people having to go back to work in their "golden years."

The special funds that are earned through Bay Aging's business model approach address the issues of housing, homelessness, and other support, she said, adding, "That was my motivation in 2010, 11, and 12."

Northcott-Wilson said that another reason for increased homelessness in the aging population is the change in the structure of retirement, with people no longer receiving big pensions.

"Social Security is not always enough," she said, "especially if the house you own doesn't work with mobility issues."

Neither government nor Bay Aging is going to solve all of these problems, said Northcott-Wilson, "but at least we're working to come up with solutions."

Vesley pointed out that when she came to work for Bay Aging, Bay Transit had one bus for transportation, with limited stops. Now it has a fleet and provides transportation to "pretty much anywhere in the service area" for \$2, along with a New Freedom program that offers rides outside of the service area for special care for \$5 up to 50 miles and \$10 for 51-100 miles, round trip.

The other area the agency has focused on has been food, operating on a policy set by the agency's board of directors of no waiting list for Meals on Wheels. The ultimate goal is to set up kitchens to provide hot, fresh meals for all MOW recipients, as Mathews County does, instead of ordering them from a Richmond company. Two such facilities are already in operation on the Northern Neck, said Vesley, and another commercial kitchen in this area is the next goal.

She said she's proud of Bay Aging's record, and of the fact that it's been recognized many times over with awards. There are 622 Area Agencies on Aging across the U.S., she said, and last year, Bay Aging won the leadership award nationally over all of the others. This year, of the 38 awards given out for various accomplishments across all 622 agencies, Bay Aging received four. One award was in the area of Community Care Innovation Collaboration for teaching other agencies "how to do what we do," she said, while another in the same category was for the agency's Leadership Institute, which helps employees develop the skills necessary to become community leaders. The agency also received two achievement awards, one for Healthy Harvest, a program operated in partnership with Northern Neck Food Bank to provide seasonal deliveries of fresh fruits and vegetables along with Meals on Wheels, and one for Caregiver Support, providing in-home counseling, support groups, and activities for caregivers.

Vesley emphasized that none of Bay Aging's accomplishments would be possible without its board of directors. "We are very, very blessed to have excellent directors," she said. She especially praised Dr. Barry Gross of Gloucester, currently serving as the board's vice chair; Ron Saunders of Gloucester, who is retiring; and Lynda Smith of Mathews. She said they're always active participants on the board and work to promote the agency.

"We are what we are because of them," she said. Finally, Vesley emphasized the importance of constantly moving forward, of innovating, of "trying to find what else is needed."

"It's really important that we keep stretching," she said, "that we keep thinking, 'What next? What should we be doing?'"

# GLOUCESTER BOARD: Espinoza steps down

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A)

All qualified candidates must submit a resume and a statement of interest to be considered. Interviews will depend on the amount of interest the board receives for the position.

Several committee assignments were left vacant with Espinoza's departure. To fill these vacancies, the board voted for vice chair Leonne Arsenovic to serve as a backup for the facilities use committee for Carlton Drew; Deborah McDonough to serve on the school board scholarship committee; Arsenovic to serve on the student disciplinary panel with McDonough to serve as an alternate, Arsenovic to serve on the Middle Peninsula Regional Special Education Board and McDonough to serve on the New Horizons Board of Trustees.

In other business, the board discussed its drafted

governance norms and protocols, including how board members should go about visiting school sites.

The sample procedure states that board members should notify the superintendent prior to visiting any school division site. However, the board and superintendent Dr. Anthony Vladu agreed that notification is only required if a board member is acting in their official capacity as a school board member. Volunteering or eating lunch with a student is exempt from notification.

Also discussed was the wording of the public comment introductory statement provided by the board chair at each meeting and the division's follow-up procedure for residents with concerns.

The current language states that concerns will be addressed at either a future meeting or by a staff member. However, this can pose a problem if people speak on rumors or inaccurate information.

"We value all public input and we want folks to speak," said Vladu. "But some examples don't require a response."

The board agreed that staff will respond to concerns or requests made during public meetings when warranted or appropriate and this will be determined by Vladu and his team.

Arsenovic suggested a system in which public commenters could fill out an index card with their name, magisterial district and contact information if they are seeking a response. Drew addressed civility issues that have occurred during past school board meetings.

"In the past we've had people get up and attack individual [board] members," said Drew. "That's highly unacceptable."

The board discussed including a statement that members of the public should address the board as a whole and not any individual.

"Public comment was totally out of control," said board member Cindy Saulman about her observations of the process before she was elected to the board.

The school board will hold its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 10, at the T.C. Walker Education Center.

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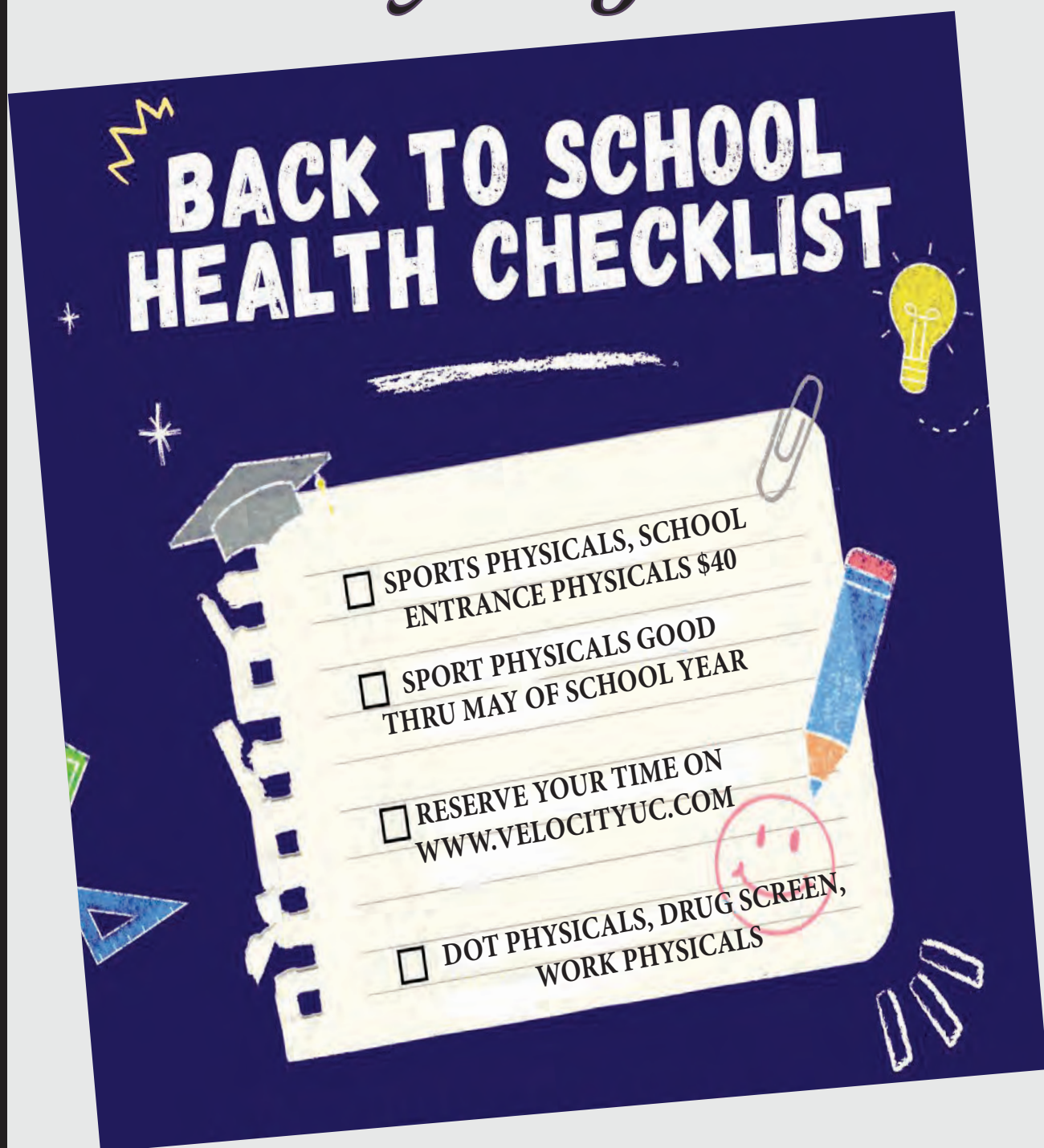
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Paid for by The Friends of Roz White

# HAPPY 99TH BIRTHDAY ROZ WHITE

**Dear Roz:**

Your many, many friends in Mathews (from the time you were a little girl at Port Haywood) and around the world want to wish you the happiest 99th birthday and thank you for your love of this community. Whether it's the Bay School Community Arts Center, the Community Foundation, the support for our schools and families, our high school rowing team, our businesses, and so many unseen acts of kindness and support, you are a shining light in our lives!



Jeff and Roz White speak to a gathering held in their honor at the Mathews Visitor and Information Center. The Whites were recognized for their philanthropic work and community leadership.



HONORARY MAYORS Jeff and Roz White met with State Sen. D. Nick Rerras (R-Norfolk) at the food court. Rerras, center, delivered the welcoming speech during opening ceremonies.



**Mathews mark of excellence**

Parents, teachers and the community at large turned out to take part in the Mathews County Public Schools' Mark of Excellence program at Thomas Hunter Middle School. The evening program included musical selections from all three schools and a number of student presentations. At the start of the event, Superintendent of Schools Dr. David J. Holleran, at left, presented a plaque to special guests Jeff and Roz White for their support of the school system. Since 1991, the White Trust has given nearly \$400,000 in grants to school projects in Mathews County.



**Happy Birthday  
Roz White!**



U.S. Sen. Mark Warner made a campaign stop at Rappahannock Oyster Company in Topping, where he praised the entrepreneurial success of the company, which is owned by Travis and Ryan Croxton. Here, Warner greets Mathews residents, from left, Martha Ann King, Roz White, and Mathews County supervisor Janine Burns.



Rosalyn Hudgins White ("Roz") is third from the left in the third row back. Guessing this was somewhere down Laban in Mathews.



**MATHEWS YOUTH CENTER** received donations recently including a \$95,000 gift from Jeff White of Gwynn's Island and Atlanta. White's donation represented the balance of his \$100,000 pledge to the Youth Center. White (second from left) enlisted the help of his granddaughters, Carolyn and Laura White (third and fourth from left, respectively), to present the check to Dr. Michael C. Richards, chairman of the center's Board of Directors. The money will be used to help retire the debt on the center property.