



Volleyball wins! B1



Taming the Wilderness A9



JMM annual meeting A10



Carver exhibit opens B6

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ELECTION 2019

Candidates answer questions at Chamber forum

O.C. voters have four contested races on Nov. 5 ballot

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

Del. Nick Freitas (R-Culpeper) will be a write-in candidate on the November ballot because he neglected to file his candidacy paperwork on time, but neither he nor his opponent, Democrat Ann Ridgeway of Madison County, mentioned his summertime saga involv-

ing the State Board of Elections during the candidates' forum sponsored by the Orange County Chamber of Commerce Monday night.

Instead, the two-time incumbent, a former Army Ranger and ardent defender of the Second Amendment, and the political newcomer, a retired educator and advocate for improving mental health care,

presented their opposing views on gun safety, the minimum wage and the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to an engaged and respectful crowd of about 50 at Lafayette Station in Rhoadesville.

The battle for House delegate in District 30, which includes Orange, Madison and part of Culpeper County, is one of four contested races before Orange

County voters on Nov. 5.

The nonpartisan chamber of commerce gave all candidates running for office in local and district elections, including announced write-in candidates, a chance to speak at the forum. Orange attorney Sean Gregg served as moderator, and Doug Rogers, chair of the Orange

See FORUM, page A12

New Dollar General proposed in Barboursville

Planning commission sets public hearing on SUP Oct. 3

BY JEFF POOLE
Editor

Earlier this year, Dollar General announced plans to open 975 new stores in 2019. One of those stores may be in Barboursville.

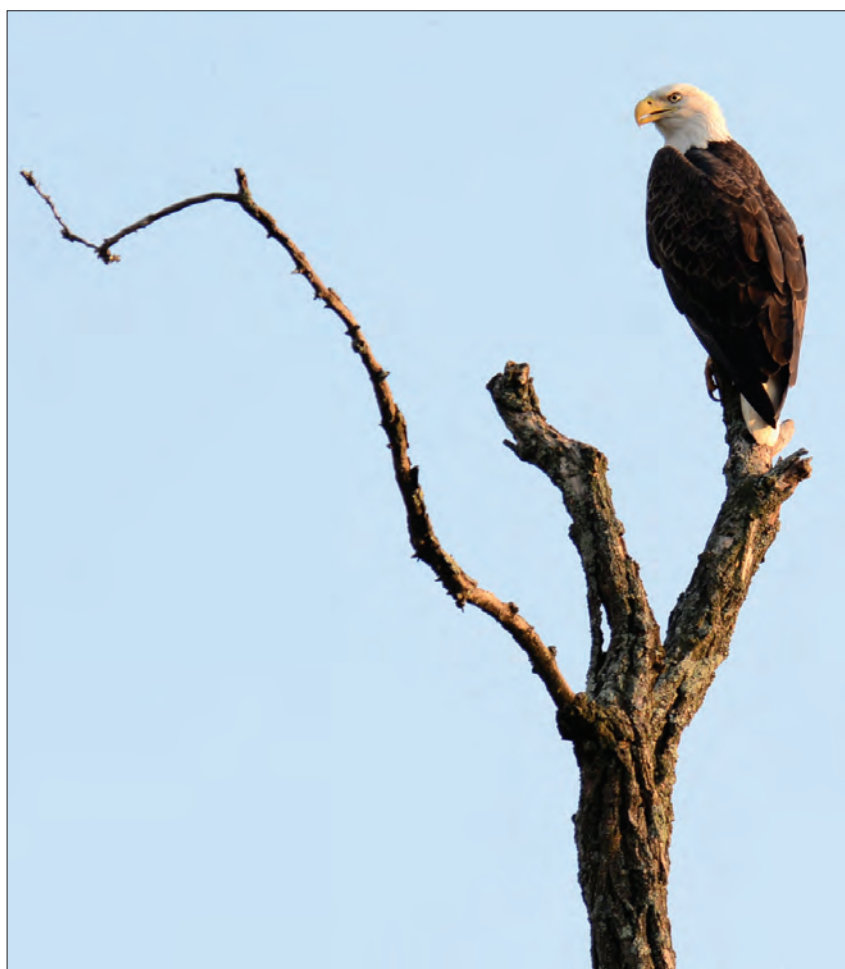
Next Thursday, Oct. 3, the Orange County Planning Commission will consider a special use permit application from JMB Investment Company to construct a 9,100-square-foot retail store on 1.235 acres of land between Route 33 and Governor Barbour Street in Barboursville. The site, near High Speed Auto and opposite the intersection of Route 33 and Route 20, is in the Barboursville Village Overlay District. The property is zoned commercial.

The parcel is owned by Pro Investments LLC and includes a small home that would be removed if the new store is constructed.

According to Orange County Administrator and Planning Director Bryan David, the county was approached by Dollar General more than six months

See SUP, page A2

Regal eagle



This bald eagle was spotted in the early evening along Route 231 between Gordonsville and Somerset. Send your best Orange County wildlife photo to news@orangenews.com by Oct. 11. We'll assemble an online gallery and publish the top photos in an upcoming issue.

PHOTO BY JEFF POOLE

Smith pleads not guilty to 2018 fatal wreck

Jury trial scheduled for April 2020

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

Noah Christopher Smith of Unionville will face a jury trial in April for his role in a three-vehicle crash that resulted in the death of a Fredericksburg woman and the serious injury of another victim.

During his arraignment on Friday morning in Orange County Circuit Court, Smith, 21, pleaded not guilty to felony charges of involuntary manslaughter and maiming, plus two related misdemeanor charges, and requested a jury trial.

Judge Dale Durrer has scheduled a three-day trial for April 28-30, 2020.

The three-vehicle crash occurred shortly after 2 a.m. on Dec. 23, 2018, in the 25400 block of Constitution Highway in Rhoadesville.

See SMITH, page A2

Feeling the heat

With conservation focus, Montpelier faces growing environmental challenges

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

In her four years at James Madison's Montpelier, curator of horticulture Allyson Whalley has seen extreme flooding in unexpected places, stressed and dying trees, invasive plants crowding out native ones and an inconsistency in weather patterns that makes it hard to schedule plant-

ings and routine pruning.

This is what climate change looks like on the ground, literally, at the home of the nation's fourth president who, as Whalley points out, was deeply concerned about the environment and advocated for the value of planting and preserving trees. As seen by

See ENVIRONMENT, page A13



James Madison's Montpelier held a Conservation Celebration Saturday in recognition of the additional 1,024 acres the presidential property recently placed in permanent easement. Visitors enjoyed live music, food and drink and an evening on the grounds before being treated to a fireworks display. For more photos, see page A13 and www.orangenews.com.

PHOTO BY JEFF POOLE



EQUUS V: Horses in the Virginia Landscape
The Arts Center In Orange's newest exhibit, "EQUUS V: Horses in the Virginia Landscape," will open on Thursday, Oct. 3. Page A11

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Federal shutdown has local implications

Orange FSA office opened briefly

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

Alan Knewstep of Rapidan isn't going out for dinner these days, and he thinks about the cost of gasoline before he ventures too far from home. His bills are paid up for now, but if the federal government's shutdown doesn't end soon, he wonders how much longer that will be the case.

A rural development area specialist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Culpeper Service Center, Knewstep found out two days before Christmas that he would be furloughed until President Donald Trump and Congress agree on a budget to fund federal agencies and operations.

On Dec. 26, Knewstep participated in an "orderly shutdown" of the office where he has worked for more than 39 years. The last time he received a paycheck was on Dec. 31.

"You get used to a certain cash flow in your household," Knewstep said. "And when those paychecks don't arrive, how are you going to meet your financial obligations?"

The current shuttering of the federal government was announced on Dec. 22 and is the longest in U.S. history. Although many federal workers like Knewstep are on furlough, some are working without pay. Such was temporarily the case for Cynthia B. Smith, executive director for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office in Orange.

Smith and a colleague, Donna Olinger, were required to work without pay last Thursday, Friday and Tuesday.

According to a press release issued last week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), "almost half" of the country's FSA offices would be open for those three days to assist farmers with existing farm loans "and to ensure the

See SHUTDOWN, page A2

Montpelier 2019



"Understanding our democratic DNA"

BY AMBER GALAVIZ
Staff Writer

There's no denying Constitutional education is a priority at Montpelier, the historic home of President James Madison. Often called "the father of the Constitution," Madison developed the document which serves as the foundation of American democracy in his upstairs library while he looked out on the Blue Ridge Mountains. While 2019 has been deemed "The year of the Constitution" at Montpelier, visitors can expect much more than a static mansion tour and basic

See MONTPELIER, page A9

The sun shines over Montpelier after last week's snowfall. Montpelier Foundation President and CEO Kat Imhoff, left, poses with the six national awards recognizing Montpelier's "The Mere Distinction of Colour" exhibit.

PHOTOS BY AMBER GALAVIZ

The year of the Constitution

Main Street America Board of Directors member and local resident Joe Grills greets new Orange Downtown Alliance Executive Director Charlotte Cole Thursday evening. Grills was one of approximately 75 participants at an ODA "relaunch reception" at Boxwood Villa to introduce Cole and the ODA's new vision and mission. Cole comes to ODA after working for the Southern Governors' Association, the "Virginia is for Lovers" marketing campaign and two of the U.S. Army's capstone museum projects.



A new day at ODA

"Relaunch reception" introduces Cole, vision, mission

BY JEFF POOLE
Editor

They changed the vision. They changed the mission. They changed the logo. They changed the website. They changed the director. About the only thing the Orange Downtown Alliance (ODA) didn't change was

its name.

When 75 people decided getting a look at all those changes in the middle of a winter storm was more important than staying home where it was safe and warm, it was clear those changes were resonating.

See ODA, page A10



OCAAHS annual meeting Sunday

The Orange County African-American Historical Society will hold feature a presentation on Boy Scout Troop 111 at its annual meeting Sunday. Page A4

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Freitas ballot status deferred

Two candidate forms missing

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

Del. Nick Freitas (R-Culpeper) is still waiting to hear whether his name will be on the ballot in the 30th District on November 5.

Last Thursday afternoon in Richmond, the Virginia State Board of Elections deferred the Freitas matter to a later date, just as it had at its June 28 meeting, and said it would seek further guidance from the state attorney general's office.

This week, the board announced it will meet at 2 p.m. Friday.

At issue are two required candidacy forms, neither of which the Virginia Department of Elections received by the posted deadlines: a one-page party certification of Freitas' candidacy for the general election and a separate form validating his candidacy from Freitas himself.

The board heard from Freitas' attorney, Christopher Woodfin, and gathered information from state elections officials before going into closed session. Woodfin told the board Freitas believed he had submitted the "certificate of candidate qualification" via postal mail, and he said Bruce Kay, chair of the 30th District

See **BALLOT**, page A9

African fellows visit Orange



PHOTO BY JEFF POOLE

As part of their visit to Orange County, the young African leaders participating in the Presidential Precinct's Mandela Washington Fellowship program attended the Orange County Playin' in the Park Independence Day celebration July 6 in Booster Park. The participants spent four days at James Madison's Montpelier, learning about rights-based constitutions, building a strong civil society, moving from factions to coalitions, policy advocacy and grassroots campaigning. Here, a number of the participants take a group selfie during their visit to Booster Park.

Next generation of global leaders study constitutions at Montpelier

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

A group of young African leaders recently converged on Orange County from Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda and many other African nations. In classes with scholars at James Madison's Montpelier and over informal dinners with Orange County residents, they discussed key political and social issues in their home countries and soaked up lessons on American history, government and cultural traditions.

The Presidential Precinct, a

nonprofit organization based in Charlottesville, is hosting 25 participants in the Mandela Washington Fellowship Program, a national initiative with 700 fellows spread out across the country, many of them staying at universities.

The idea behind the program is to give the fellows, who are between the ages of 25 and 35, the opportunity to study and discuss "human rights and justice, good governance and women's empowerment through the lens of civic leader-

See **LEADERS**, page A9

County denies "camping" changes

Supervisors reject zoning definition revisions supporting "glamping"

BY JEFF POOLE
Editor

"This looked like a horse until we got up close and it looked like a donkey."

That was District 1 Supervisor Mark Johnson's assessment following a public hearing last Tuesday that included more than a dozen citizens speaking out against proposed changes to definitions for camping, campground and recreational vehicles in the county zoning ordinance. The board unanimously voted down the proposed changes.

In the current ordinance, "camp, campground and recreational vehicle park" are all uses allowed with a special-use permit. Meanwhile, the current definition of "camp" requires some sort of instructional component, while "campgrounds" must contain a minimum of five acres of land and accommodate paying guests in tents or travel trailers owned by guests.

Three months ago, Albemarle County resident Rusty Speidel approached the county with an idea to create upscale rural lodging ("glamping") opportunities in Orange County. He pitched the idea of "proximal lodging," that would allow tourists traveling to the county to stay at the very places they came to visit.

Essentially, he (or another applicant) would partner with a local landowner, business or agritourism operation and enter into a

See **GLAMPING**, page A2



PHOTO BY HILARY HOLLADAY

Families cool off in the Dix Memorial Pool at Verling Park in Gordonsville. The pool is the only public pool in the county. A grassroots group is hoping to improve the park and pool area to promote recreation and enhance the neighborhood and community.

Town to Trail Connecting communities with recreation

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
Staff Writer

When Sunnie Capelle looks at Verling Park in Gordonsville, she sees all it has to offer and all it could become. As a member of Town to Trail, a working group organized by the Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC), she is committed to helping raise money to renovate the little park that area residents have enjoyed for many decades.

Capelle grew up in northern Virginia, where she made full use of recreational

opportunities readily available to her. The former lifeguard and pool manager said, "I love outdoor recreation."

Over the past several years, Town to Trail has been working with the Town of Gordonsville to consider ways to expand and improve Verling Park, home of Orange County's only public swimming pool. Among the group's recent achievements is its contribution of \$35,000 toward the town's purchase of 112 Linney Street at the corner of Piedmont and

See **TOWN TO TRAIL**, page A10



Quad County Business Summit

The Quad County Business Summit committee has announced its keynote speaker and released its agenda for the Oct. 2 event. **Page A6**

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