



HURRICANE CAMILLE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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Special 56-page section inside

# The News & Advance

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**LYNCHBURG ADULT DRUG COURT**

## ‘We’re the GPS’ on journey of recovery

Program to grow out of two-year pilot model, seeks sustainable funding

By Rachel Mahoney  
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Having graduated several participants after a two-year pilot, the Lynchburg Adult Drug Court docket will be growing, changing and seeking additional funding from the state.

Over the past two years, people have started the program by pleading guilty to a probation violation — typically the result of using drugs — in Lynchburg Circuit Court. Instead of serving additional jail time, they agree to a closely monitored, long-term regimen of check-ins and therapy facilitated by the court and other partners in the community.

**24**

Number accepted into the drug court program

**5**

Number of people who have graduated

**14**

Number of people who have been removed from the program

providers, court officials and other criminal justice officials agreeing to make it work without funding for two years to see if the program would be worthwhile to continue.

It was the first drug court docket to set up in the 24th Judicial District — which consists of Lynchburg and the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell and Nelson. Since then, Bedford County has started a family drug court docket and Nelson County officials have discussed a drug court docket.

SEE RECOVERY | A5

## In touch with nature

VISITORS CAN FEED ABOUT 2,000 ANIMALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD AT VIRGINIA SAFARI PARK



EMILY ELCONIN/THE NEWS & ADVANCE

A llama looks through the car window during a drive through Virginia Safari Park in Natural Bridge. The park also has a 10-acre walk-through area that includes a petting zoo with pygmy goats and baby llamas; habitats housing African penguins, anteaters, Bengal tigers, wolves, kangaroos and a variety of snakes and lizards; and a free-flight aviary.

By Shannon Keith  
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**NATURAL BRIDGE**  
Sarah Friedel said working with animals of more than 100 different species — including llamas and camels — has taught her one thing: Spit happens.

“This is a really fun place to work,” said Friedel, the assistant curator at Virginia Safari Park in Natural Bridge. “However, things can sometimes get sticky.”

Each year from March to November, thousands of visitors come to the 180-acre, drive-through zoo to get in touch with nature.



SHANNON KEITH/THE NEWS & ADVANCE

Keegan Condon, of Syracuse, New York, smiles as a budgie bird lands on his neck.

SEE SAFARI | A3

“What makes this park special is that people can interact with the animals as they go through the park. I don’t know of many places where you see this many animals in a natural environment.” — Sarah Friedel, assistant curator at Virginia Safari Park

**Mostly sunny**  
Weather, A12

**85°**  
**63°**

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