# The Charlotte Gazette

#### THE BEST INTERESTS OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY - FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS 50 cents

Vol. 147 - Number 2

Wednesday, September 25, 2019

Drakes Branch, Virginia

## **Officers awarded for valor**

**By Crystal Vandegrift** The Charlotte Gazette

The Virginia Sheriff's Association has awarded Lieutenant Charlie Brinkley and Deputy Dustin Brown of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Department with the Valor Award for their heroic efforts during Tropical Storm Michael last October.

The award was presented on Sept. 12 during the Annual Virginia Sheriff's Association conference in Williamsburg.

Brinkley and Brown are credited for saving the life of a 17-year-old when the vehicle he was riding in was swept into floodwater, but the two say they were just doing their job.

According to Brinkley, when he and Brown arrived on the scene on Mt. Harmony Road, they noticed that no one was in the vehicle but could hear someone yelling. "We went into the water knee level, and Deputy Brown spotted the teen cling to the guardrail," said Brinkley.

According to Virginia State Police, the other occupants of the vehicle, Ruby S. Allen, 62, and her son, Ronnie Allen Jr., 36, of Eureka, were swept away in the flash flood.

The two officers were able to use a six-foot dog leash that was in an SUV they were driving to tie around the teen's wrist. Brinkley said that he and Brown then locked arms and took slow steps in the waist-deep water to pull the teen out of harm's way. "I told him 'do not let go of the rail," said Brinkley. "The water was just rushing so hard, and you could hardly hear anything," added Brown.

The two may have been awarded for their bravery, but they are quick to point out that there are other Fire, Police and EMS personnel that were working just as hard to keep citizens safe that day.

"It's a great honor, but it still comes with the tragedy of losing two people," said Brinkley. "Everybody in the community was doing the best they could to save as many people as they could."



Pictured are, from left, Lieutenant Charlie Brinkley, Sheriff Thomas Jones and Deputy Dustin Brown. Brinkley and Brown received the Valor Award for saving the life of a teen during last fall's Tropical Strom Michael.



Bill Devin of Wylliesburg is one Southside farmer that has turned to growing hemp to supplement his income after his tobacco contract were cut.

## Wood arrested following robbery

Anthony Lee Wood, 44 of Chase City, was arrested on Sept. 21 following a robbery at Wilson's Grocery Store in Wylliesburg.

According to a release from the Charlotte County Sheriff's Department the incident occurred on Sept. 20.

The release stated, "The Sheriff's Office received a call from Mrs. Wilson, the owner of the store where she stated that her store had been robbed."

Upon arrival and while

talking to witnesses deputies learned that Wood had fled the scene by waving down a truck that was passing by.

The releases further stated, "Wood allegedly had taken an unknown amount of cash from the register while paying for other items."

There were no weapons involved.

Wood is currently being held in Meherrin River Jail with no bond pending advisement.



Anthony Lee Wood



## **Farmers** turn to growing hemp

By Crystal Vandegrift The Charlotte Gazette

With tobacco production in Southside down significantly, one Charlotte County farmer has turned to growing hemp to supplement his income.

Bill Devin of Wylliesburg is trying his hand, for the first time, this growing season at hemp production.

"This is a whole new thing for me and to a lot of people," said Devin. "Hemp is harder to grow and more expensive to grow than tobacco."

Currently, Devin is growing 2 acres of hemp.

According to Tony Banks, senior assistant director of the Agriculture, Development & Innovation Department with the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, as of Sept. 9 there are 1,007 registered hemp growers in Virginia; so far, they have reported planting 1,944 acres statewide. This total includes 26 acres in Charlotte, 10 acres in Cumberland, 44 acres in Lunenburg and 6 acres in Prince Edward.

"Production in Southside is down significantly due to

(See HEMP, Page 2)

**By Crystal Vandegrift** The Charlotte Gazette

Retired USAF Col. and Charlotte County Board of Supervisor Aspen/Phenix representative Donna Fore was the guest speaker during Friday's annual POW/MIA ceremony held at the Charlotte County Administration Building.

"There are still over 82,000 Americans listed as Missing in Action (MIA)," said Fore.

During her speech, Fore recounted the story of POW Louis Zamperini, a well-known WWII veteran and an Army Air Corps bombardier held captive for more than two years by the Japanese and POW Air Force Col. Lee Ellis, a F-4 Phantom pilot who spent five years in the infamous Hanoi Hilton.

Fore read excerpts from the book "Unbroken"

(See POW/MIA, Page 2)



Retired USAF Col. and Charlotte County Board of Supervisor Aspen/Phenix representative Donna Fore spoke during the annual POW/MIA ceremony.

## **Reeves seeks Cullen/Red House District seat**

M. Anthony "Tony" Reeves has announced his candidacy for the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors for the Cullen/Red House District.

Reeves is a lifelong resident of Charlotte County, attended Charlotte County Public Schools and Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg.

Community service has been a major part of his life. He served as fire chief of the Red House Volunteer Fire Department for 10

(See **REEVES**, Page 7)



M. Anthony "Tony" Reeves

### Turn to A4 for coverage of R-H golf at the regional tournament!

Advertising and news deadline: Friday at noon



## "Helping the Community One Tire at a Time"

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## HEMP: 'I don't think hemp is going to replace tobacco'

#### FROM PAGE ONE

China-US trade tariffs, cheaper tobacco leaf overseas and declining demand for domestic cigarettes," Banks explained.

Farm Service Agency reports 30 percent fewer acres of fluecured tobacco was planted in 2019 (14,500) versus 2018 (20,600) in Virginia.

Charlotte County farmers have reported planting 166 fewer acres of flue-cured tobacco. 734 acres were grown in 2019 compared to 900 acres in 2018. Devin is one of those farmers who has planted fewer acres of tobacco for the 2019 season. Devin said that in 2018 and for the past several years he has grown around 162 acres of tobacco, compared to this year where he is growing 122 acres.

"Many tobacco farmers across Southside and Southwest Virginia are planting some hemp to see if hemp can offset income losses occurring from smaller tobacco contracts," Blanks added.

According to Devin, who has been growing tobacco for 42 years, he was one of those farmers who lost a tobacco contract. "Universal Tobacco cut me 100 percent," said Devin. "US Tobacco Corporation cut all their growers 80 percent across the board and Japan Tobacco International cut growers across the board by 20 percent."

Devin went on to say that he felt like Universal Tobacco chose to cut some of their older farmers out of production contracts.

Devin's hemp production contract is currently with Isolera Extracts of Oxford North Carolina and according to Devin, the company only uses the buds from the hemp plant. "They use the buds of the plants to extract CBD oil," said Devin.

Devin also stated that this type of plant is used solely for CBD oils. "This is a totally different type of plant," he explained. "This is not the smoking type ... it looks like and smells like ... but it is not.

Per section 10113 of the 2018 Farm Bill hemp cannot contain more than 0.3 percent THC. Any cannabis plant that contains more than 0.3 percent THC would be considered non-hemp cannabis—or marijuana—under federal law and would thus face no legal protection under this new legislation.

CBD products have been on the rise with consumers lately with companies selling everything thing from pills, oils, and even candies containing CBD. Sellers of these products in recent years have boasted everything from helping with joint pain and headaches to relieving anxiety and depression.

When it comes to the growing and harvesting of hemp, Devin explained that it is very different from growing tobacco. "Everything must be organic," he said. "We can only use organic sprays if needed."

Devin says that hemp is not as durable as tobacco in the field. "Too much water can kill it, and too little water can kill it," he added. "It has to be just the right amount."

When it comes time to harvest the plant hemp must be put in a barn to dry at no higher than 80 degrees, the buds are then stripped off by hand, or a machine says, Devin. "Definitely a learning process to this.," said Devin. "But I don't think hemp is going to replace tobacco."



Retired Army 1st Sgt., Charlotte County Board of Supervisors Chairman and VFW 8902 Post Quartermaster/Adjutant Garland Hamlett Jr., welcomed those in attendance during Friday's POW/MIA ceremony.

# **POW/MIA:** 'There are still over 82,000 Americans listed as MIA'

#### FROM PAGE ONE

which tells of Zamperini's WWII experience and survival.

A portion of the book reads, "Louis and his fellow crewmen cheated death multiple times, but none more harrowing than after his plane went down in the Pacific Ocean. While most died in the crash Zamperini and another airman survived a total of 47 days adrift in the ocean on a life raft (a third survived the crash but died at sea)." In speaking of Ellis, Fore shared eight "life lessons learned featured in Ellis' book "Leading with Honor: Leadership

Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton. Some of those lessons included knowing yourself; being authentic; guarding your character; confronting your doubts and fears; staying positive.



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## Jerome awarded degree from UA

Kristi Haughwout Jerome, of Charlotte Courthouse, has been awarded a Master of Library and Information Studies from The University of Alabama during the Aug. 3 commencement, where some 1,450 degrees were handed out.





### DR. GRACE AND DR. SILIEZAR

## Centra Southside Pediatrics now open!

Centra Southside Pediatrics is a medical center for children under the age of 18. The center provides primary care to pediatric patients, as well as immunizations, allergy shots, school and sports physicals, and pediatric endocrinology.

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# The Charlotte Gazette

#### DEVOTED TO THE BEST INTERESTS OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY - FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS

50 cents

Vol. 147 - Number 6

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

#### Drakes Branch, Virginia

# Illegal narcotics seized

The Tri-County Drug and Gang Task Force has netted more than \$105,000 in illegal narcotics and 93 charges in Lunenburg and Charlotte county this year.

According to Virginia State Police Public Relations Director Corinne N. Geller, since January, the Tri-County Drug and Gang Task Force has been actively pursuing illegal drug trafficking, distribution and use within its established jurisdictions of Charlotte and Lunenburg counties.

From Jan. 1 through Oct. 1, the task force has initiated 95 new investigations that have resulted in 63 felony charges and another 30 misdemeanor charges for illegal distribution of narcotics, possession of narcotics and a variety of drug-related offenses. As a result of these investigations, the task force has seized three illegal firearms, hundreds of illegal prescription pills, and the following: (All are approximate quantities)

• 454 grams of cocaine, totaling an estimated street value of \$45,400

• 69.5 grams of methamphetamine, totaling an estimated street value of \$6,900 • 704 grams of processed marijuana and 15 marijuana plants, totaling an estimated street value of \$52,040

• 4.3 grams of heroin, totaling an estimated street value of \$967

"Keeping such highly-addictive and destructive substances as cocaine, meth and heroin out of our communities is at the core of this task force's mission," said Lunenburg County Sheriff Arthur Townsend. "But we know we can't arrest our way out of this problem. So the task force has also taken a very active role in drug prevention outreach and education within Lunenburg and Charlotte counties."

"These numbers show the impact of what our agencies

(See NARCOTICS, Page 3)



Bobby Long, owner of Pet Rock Farm in Charlotte County, has had to move his cattle out of certain pastures due to the dry weather conditions.

# Drought affects farmers, crops

**By Alexa Massey** *The Charlotte Gazette* 

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam announced a statewide drought watch advisory Oct. 11. Meanwhile, Charlotte County farmers are attempting to recover after a dry start to the fall season that resulted in dramatic crop losses.

Stuart Bayne, District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service for Charlotte and Lunenburg counties, explained that the USDA County Emergency Board met Oct. 16 to complete an assessment on crop losses for the counties. The board, consisting of professionals from Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Southside SWCD and Virginia Department of Forestry, works mainly to report crop losses due to natural disasters to the State Emergency Board with USDA. The State board can then request secretarial and/or presidential disaster

declaration.

According to the board's findings, this season Charlotte County has experienced an estimated 30% pasture loss and 20% loss of tobacco crop. Additionally, the county saw a 50% mixed grass hay loss and a 50% loss in soybean crops. Charlotte County has also seen a small loss of corn crop.

"We are very worried about pasture and hay supplies being low with some producers feeding supplemental hay starting in early August," Stuart stated in the drought report. "Most of the pastures are completely dormant and there is no chance to stockpile grass this year even if we do receive rain." Keary Mariannino, owner of Southpaw Acres farm in Charlotte Court House, stated in an interview with The Charlotte Gazette Oct. 18 that the dry weather has negatively affected her family-run hobby farm, as well as other larger cattle farms. "As the winter goes on, if we run



Land that was donated to Patrick Henry Family Services in 1968 was returned back to the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation. Pictured are, from left, Bruce Olsen, supervisor of Buildings and Grounds at Patrick Henry's Red Hill; Jeff Nitz, COO, Patrick Henry Family Services; Robert Day, CEO, Patrick Henry Family Services; Hope Marstin, CEO, Patrick Henry's Red Hill; Jack Schaffer, president of the Patrick Henry Descendants' Branch; Elsie Rose, board of directors, Patrick Henry's Red Hill; Gene Smith, chairman of the board of directors, Patrick Henry's Red Hill.

## **PHFS returns land**

**By Crystal Vandegrift** *The Charlotte Gazette* 

On Monday, Oct. 14, Patrick Henry Family Services (PHFS) officially returned 400 acres of land that was donated to them in 1968 by the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation.

According to Myra Trent, director of Community Relations for the Patrick Henry Family Services the land to support the creation of Patrick Henry's Boys Home as a home for orphaned boys," Trent said in a release.

Patrick Henry Family Services are no longer offering on-site residential care at the Boy's and Girl's Home located in Brookneal, and currently, there are no children living in the group homes on the property. According to PHFS they are mainly providing counseling to

(See **DROUGHT**, Page 3)

## Hamlett for School Board

Do you believe our children deserve a quality education? Shouldn't our schools prepare our children for making their way in the world? And shouldn't that transition from school to work or further education be smooth? Russell S. "Scotty" Hamlett believes the answer is yes to all of these questions.

Hamlett is running for Charlotte County School Board for the Cullen/Red House district. He states, "To be direct, I would like your vote."

When asked about his history and values Hamlett shared, "First, I listen. If you have ideas or comments, I want to hear them. One of my goals

(See **HAMLETT**, Page 10)



Russell S. "Scotty" Hamlett

#### Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation, the land that was given back was initially part of Patrick Henry's estate. "The Foundation gave

(See LAND, Page 3)

## Students learn more than cooking skills

By Crystal Vandegrift The Charlotte Gazette

Randolph-Henry High School (R-HHS) has rolled out a new elective this school term that instructor, John Engelhorn says is teaching more than just cooking skills.

"Cooking is a great life skill," says Engelhorn. "If along the way students develop a passion or interest in cooking, there are so many jobs out there for them."

Currently, Engelhorn is teaching students how to bake things like biscuits, sweet rolls and pizza dough from scratch. "The next half of the semester we will be working on knife skills and other techniques



Haley Perkinson and Brycen Arbogast working as a team kneading dough.

(See **SKILLS,** Page 2)

## Turn to A4 for updates on R-H's varsity and JV football teams!

## Advertising and news deadline: Friday at noon





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### LAND: 400 acres given back <sup>1944, the Foundation</sup> promotes educational

#### **FROM PAGE ONE**

children and families as well as offering fostering opportunities.

Bonnie George, gift shop manager at Patrick Henry's Red Hill, said, "Per the original documents that were drawn up in the 1950s when the Memorial Foundation donated the land to Patrick Henry Family Services, the property had to be returned to the Memorial

Foundation due to the current situation."

"The Foundation, ... is excited to have part of Henry's original estate back and is looking forward to continuing its efforts to preserve the legacy of Patrick Henry and Henry's garden spot of the world," added Trent.

The Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation is devoted to education and historic preservation. Established in

1944, the Foundation and research programs about the life, character, times, philosophy and legacy of Patrick Henry.

As part of that mission, the Foundation maintains and interprets Red Hill, Patrick Henry's last home and burial place, as a historic site and museum.

The Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation was founded to care for Red Hill and establish it as a National Memorial to Patrick Henry.

After acquiring Red Hill from Lucy Gray Henry Harrison, a great-granddaughter of Patrick Henry and the final descendant to live on the estate, the Foundation began the process of restoring the property and constructing a museum to house what is now the largest collection of Patrick Henry-related memorabilia in the country.

Red Hill is located in both Charlotte and Campbell counties and currently consists of just over 1,000 acres.

#### **OBITUARIES**

#### Lillian E. Jones 'Putt'

On October 9, 2019, Lillian E. Jones "Putt" was called to eternal rest in Farmville, VA. Lillian was born on April 29, 1940 in Keysville, VA to the late Mildred and George Davis. She was baptized at an early age at the Lone Oak Baptist Church in Keysville, VA and she received her formal education in Charlotte County Public Schools. Lillian moved to Philadelphia, PA where she later married the late Willie Jones and had three children, Michael, Tracy and Tommv.

Services were held Monday, October 14 at Lone Oak Baptist Church, Keysville, with the Rev. Vincent Eanes, eulogist.

Wilson Funeral Home, Keysville, served the family.

## **DROUGHT:** 'It's certainly not going to be a full recovery'

#### **FROM PAGE ONE**

out of hay, the hay prices will increase because most farmers did not get a good second cutting," Mariannino explained. "That is going to impact us later in the year, perhaps in February and March, because we've already had to start feeding hay. There's just not enough grass to go around."

Mariannino discussed her father-in-law who lives in Mecklenburg County owns 200 acres of cattle-farming land.

"He generally does not have to buy any hay. He's got three different types of cattle. He will have to purchase hay this year. He just doesn't have enough because he didn't get a good second cutting," Mariannino said.

She added, "It's been a blessing to have the rain recently. If it had continued much longer, we'd be in dire straits."

Charlotte County received a much-needed 4.22 inches of rain over the weekend, according to the National Weather Service. Despite the necessary rainfall, owner of Pet Rock Cattle Farm in Charlotte County and Co-Owner of Long's Farm Supply in Brookneal, Bobby Long, said that several crops will likely not see much improvement.

"The crop losses to the soybeans and the corn, they are what they are," said Long in an interview with The Charlotte Gazette Oct. 21. "There's no

changing that at this point. Those crops have pretty well done what they are going to do. They're at the point of drying down and getting ready for harvest. With the grassland, depending on temperature, you may see a little resurgence in pastures throughout the rest of the fall, but if it starts getting colder and the nights start getting down in the 30s like they would typically do in November, then of course the grass is going to slow down as well."

"It's certainly not going to be a full recovery by any stretch of the imagination," Long added.

Long said that he had seen the effects of the season's drought on his business, referencing that he had initially seen a delay in seed sales. "We're actually experiencing a good bit of seed sales now, because people are trying to catch up so to speak."

Long stated that the business had also seen a rise in supplemental feed sales in August and September.

"One of the things that farmers are doing, they are trying to supplement in other ways to help provide nutrition to cattle to help stretch that hay supply while it's still warm, so they are purchasing some feeds and different things to do that," Long said. "The other side of it is, a lot of those farmers would also plant small grains and different things in the fall that they would cut for hay next spring. Planting season's been delayed because of the drought, so not just the small grains, but the grass-

## **NARCOTICS:** 'It's been a very busy and productive year'

#### **FROM PAGE ONE**

can achieve when we work together toward enforcing our drug laws," said Charlotte County Sheriff Thomas Jones. "Not only has the task force arrested numerous drug suppliers and users, but has also kept more than \$105,000 worth of illegal substances from making it to Charlotte County's streets, communities and schools." Geller went on to say in an email release, "Also this year, the task force has conducted training for local area law enforcement personnel to keep them current with the latest drug trends within the region and across the Commonwealth. Investigators with the task force also attended the Piedmont Alliance for the Prevention of Substance Abuse meeting in an effort to enhance communication between law enforcefacilities and other community service groups.

"In addition, task force members have received training in Methamphetamine Laboratory Safety and naloxone/ Narcan. The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Narcotics Investigator

tended the 2019 Virginia Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force Conference, which included training in overdose investigations and "Fighting Fentanyl."

The Tri-County Drug and Gang Task Force is comprised of narcotics investigators from the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, Lunenburg County Sheriff's Office and the Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation Appomattox Field Office.



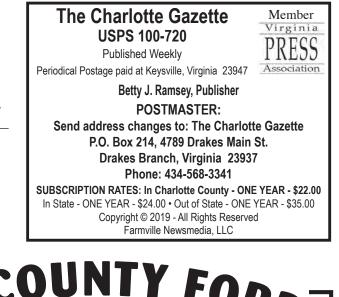
es that they would normally plant, the fescues and orchard grasses, have been delayed. There's been a decent amount of planting that started with the first rains last week."

In reference to county water supplies, the drought has not negatively affected water levels, officials cited.

"Everything is good to go," said Drakes Branch Water Operator James Napier. "Of course we got rain yesterday, but we hadn't had any issues. It got dry, but it's been dry before. We haven't had any issues with anything."

Napier, who is also the Water Operator for the town of Phenix, was confident in the Phenix water supplies as well. "Everything there is pretty good, except for that they need a well. They're just waiting for everybody to approve it."

Clay Samples, CEO of Samples Monitoring Service for Charlotte Court House and Keysville, stated that he had been newly contracted by the towns due to the loss of the previous water operator. Samples said that the water supplies for both Charlotte Court House, which primarily uses wells, and Keysville, operating on a spring-fed reservoir, were doing well.



is a certified instructor for the administration of Narcan, which is utilized to save the life of an individual suffering from an opioid-induced overdose. Members at-

