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SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2020

'A WALL OF WATER,' 25 YEARS LATER



Ruth and Randall Lillard's home was knocked off its foundation and carried away during the Great Flood of June 27, 1995, in Graves Mill. DOUG GRAVES

Graves Mill recalls Great Flood of 1995 in mountain hamlet

BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

GRAVES MILL—Doug Graves still gets nervous when there's a hard rain in this mountain hamlet on the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge.

A longtime resident of the scenic Madison County village where his grandparents were raised and descended from the family for which the colonial English settlement was named, the retired police officer survived the Great Flood of June 27, 1995—a cataclysmic day 25 years ago that he thinks about frequently.

It was an extremely wet spring, Graves recalled.

"We had had several months of rain, all the fields were flooded and the mountain slopes were saturated ... the next morning, the heavens broke loose," he said during a recent visit to places that saw the heaviest damage.

"I tried to go out to the main road, but I couldn't cross the stream. When I got on top of a hill, looked out across the valley, all I saw was water. I'm not exaggerating—I thought it was the end of the world."

Graves, a farm manager at the time, documented the flood's aftermath on horseback with his Nikon camera in the days after the catastrophic storm that



Rapidan River flooding the entire front field of Rivers Edge Farm during the Great Flood on June 27, 1995. DOUG GRAVES

dumped 32 inches of rain in 24 hours. The stalled storm's heavy rainfall triggered hundreds of mudslides.

"It looked as if a bear had clawed the mountains,"

Graves recalled.

He retraced his route during a recent driving tour of Graves Mill at the headwaters of the Rapidan, Middle and South rivers. Seemingly untouched by time, the area's watershed extends some 17 miles north up the mountain to Big Meadows in Shenandoah National Park.

"So what occurs up there, everything just goes downhill, and water is no exception," Graves said. "When it comes down elevation wise, it's rolling."

The storm didn't go over the mountain as forecasters predicted, he said. Instead, it stayed on the

See **FLOOD**, Page A8

Good relationship between lawmen, protesters breeds peace in Culpeper

BY DEVIN PAYNE
CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

When George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police last month, it was the last domino to fall in an effect created by longstanding racism and police brutality against African Americans in the United States.

In the wake of Floyd's death on Memorial Day, protests have erupted in every state across the country. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets in more than 2,000 cities and towns. In most cities, the demonstrations were peaceful. Some protests, as near as Richmond, Fredericksburg and Washington, have included some altercations with police.

Since Floyd was killed, two protests have taken place in downtown Culpeper; one drew more

than 800 people. On both occasions, the proceedings were well-organized and nonviolent, something that protesters and police take pride in.

"I think the biggest difference between what's happened in our community as opposed to some of the others, where things have gone off the rails, is the fact that there's been transparency between law enforcement and the protesters," Culpeper police Capt. Tim Chilton said in an interview last week. "I met with the organizers prior to the last two events to basically get their feelings on what they wanted to do. From there, we went over everything from point A to point B."

The first event, which involved over 100 protesters, was held on June 1, and was put together in about a two-hour timeframe. The second, on June 6,

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Culpeper police Capt. Tim Chilton (third from left) and Maj. Chris Settle (far right) stand with organizers of June 6's Black Lives Matter protest in Culpeper, (from left) Lauren Chapman, Jaylyn Hinton, Brandon Miles and Brianna Reaves. CULPEPER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Man sentenced to 17 years in last year's fatal hit-and-run in Culpeper

STAR-EXPONENT STAFF REPORT

A Spotsylvania County man who overdosed on drugs while driving was sentenced this week to 17 years and six months in prison in last year's fatal hit-and-run wreck in Culpeper County.

Culpeper Circuit Judge Susan Whitlock on Thursday sentenced Earl Jackson Nicholson Jr., 38, to 31 years, with 13 years and six months suspended, in the Nov. 15, 2019, death

of 54-year-old Pamela Mazingo of Culpeper, the Culpeper County commonwealth's attorney's office said in a statement.

Nicholson pleaded guilty in May to involuntary slaughter, two counts of felony maiming and driving while intoxicated.



Nicholson

As he drove north on Sperryville Pike near Gibson Mill Road, his car crossed the center lane and struck Mazingo's vehicle head-on, also seriously injuring her two adult sons.

Evidence showed Nicholson experienced a narcotics overdose at the time of the wreck, so Culpeper County sheriff's deputies had to revive him with Narcan. His blood tested positive for high levels of

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EMS worker tests positive for COVID-19 in Madison County

CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT STAFF REPORT

An employee of the Madison County Department of Emergency Medical Services has tested positive for COVID-19 and is quarantining at home, Madison County Administrator Jack Hobbs said Saturday.

This employee was known to have had contact with other EMS employees and with members of the all-volunteer

Madison County Rescue Squad prior to the diagnosis, Hobbs said in a statement.

The department is following VDH and CDC protocols. Contact tracing by the Virginia Department of Health was expected to begin Saturday morning.

Additional information on the situation will be posted at madisonco.virginia.gov as available. "As always, Madison

County thanks the members of its first responder team (firemen, law enforcement, dispatch, emergency medical/rescue squad, emergency management and others) for their work to keep Madison's residents safe and healthy," Hobbs said.

In the five-county Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District, Madison County has been on the low end of positive

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» **HOMETOWN LIVING:** Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a mother keeps setting records. **C1**



» **SUNDAY POLITICS:** Who's watching the watchers? Facial-recognition backlash brews after fury over police conduct. **B4**

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Flood

From Page A1

east side in a very limited geographical area: "It just dumped all this rain down the mountain into Graves Mill."

Graves remembered "an eerie sound" after the deluge.

"You've heard a calm stream, the nice pleasant sound, well, the water was louder," he said.

In a time before cell phones, people in the valley town, including Graves, used CB radios to communicate. Surveying the disastrous scene, he asked via his CB—"Is anyone out there?"—because I didn't know."

Neighbor Randall Lillard, who went by Scootie, answered the call. A farmer, Lillard had several generations of family, including two grandkids, visiting for the summer at the time. All escaped.

"I could tell right away something was wrong," Graves said. "He says, 'Everything is underwater. All of Graves Mill is underwater. It's gone—my house is gone.'" "I said, 'Scootie, you mean the river came up to your house'—because he's at the foot of the mountain—and he says, 'No, the mountains got it.' I thought maybe he had lost it."

A Virginia State Police helicopter pilot surveyed the post-disaster, mud-smearred, apocalyptic-like scene from the sky. He reported, "The rest of the farm is gone. You can see the corn crop—gone."

A year later, NBC 29 News-Charlottesville returned to interview the Lillard family members who lost not just their home, but outbuildings, silos, livestock and an entire crop.



An aerial view captured by a Virginia State Police helicopter shows the aftermath of the Great Flood of June 27, 1995, in Graves Mill in Madison County.

Many volunteers came from the wider community to remove rocks and boulders scattered around the property by slides. A reporter asked Randall Lillard if he would rebuild on the mountain, and he said no: "Because it flooded would be in back of my mind. We had the flood. I couldn't live there."

What made the Great Flood such a unique occurrence was that the force and volume of water washed away the mountains, Graves said, creating "alluvial fans"—debris fields that on the Lillard property stretched some 500 yards.

"It just tears through everything in its path. It hit the house twice and moved it 35 feet off its foundation, and debris built up to the second-story window, the first floor was covered," he said. "You cannot believe all the debris—boulders as big as this van that came down."

Estimates by researchers and government officials who descended on Graves Mill for months after the Great Flood put the speed of the water rushing down the mountains at 35 to 45 mph.

Graves' house survived, protected, he believes, by a concrete wall that diverted the water. A woman on the other side of the mountain in Syria died when her house



Doug Graves talks about the catastrophic impact of the 1995 Great Flood in Graves Mill, including relocating its main road.

was swept away, and rescue crews conducted many water rescues in treacherous conditions. Many families were displaced.

"I'm not trying to be overly dramatic here, but unless you experienced it in real time, you just can't imagine," Graves said.

The unprecedented rainfall impacted 18 counties statewide, including Culpeper, Orange and Greene, washing away bridges and roads, most notably, a portion of U.S. 29 at the Greene-Madison line. The Rapidan River peaked at 31.5 feet, necessitating helicopter rescues, in what was deemed the highest recorded flooding event east of the Mississippi River.

Sonny Slaughter lost his house, car and most everything else he owned.

"Something like that starts, you just need to get

out of the way," Slaughter said at the time.

In Graves Mill, three homes were swept away by the massive downward flow, along with two abandoned mercantile stores, a carriage house, the post office and the voting precinct. Vehicles, heavy equipment, outbuildings and farm animals were all swept away or submerged.

The flood reworked the landscape, shifting future roads farther from the river. People came from near and far to help clean up.

Graves hopes people will remember what NBC 29 dubbed "A rushing wall of water." The headline on a 1995 article in The New York Times read, "Flooding turns town into lunar landscape."

"That's what history is about, recalling the past," he said. "Maybe someday, people will start thinking about the people around here and trying to protect them from the river. It's beautiful and everything, but you haven't seen it flooded."

For the 20th anniversary of the flood in 2015, Graves compiled film footage and still photos to create a 26-minute video titled "A Wall of Water—A Time To Remember." It includes excerpts from NBC 29 News-Charlottesville, Virginia State Police, Virginia Department of Transportation, the Ruth and Randall Lillard family, Dr. Scott Eaton and the Virginia Farm Bureau.

Some audio portions are not audible, Graves wrote in a mass email he sent Wednesday, before the 25th anniversary.

"However, the visual impact alone is quite astonishing in of itself!" he said.

View the YouTube video at [youtube.com/watch?v=dWBGWiQwFmg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWBGWiQwFmg).

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Peters

From Page A7

was familiar with the man's story once he was told.

Peters, a biology teacher at Essex High School, was experiencing a mental health crisis when he was seen unclothed and unarmed, running onto Interstate 95/64 in downtown Richmond, where he was hit by a car and then rolled on the pavement. His psychological state was later described by his family's lawyer as "excited delirium."

When Peters stood up, lunged at and threatened to kill an officer, the officer unsuccessfully attempted to use his Taser on Peters before shooting him twice in the abdomen. Peters died later that day at VCU Medical Center. Blanding has said repeatedly that her brother needed help, not death. Michael Herring, the city's commonwealth's attorney at the time, ruled the officer's action a justified shooting.

Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney now supports a "Marcus Alert," which would require mental health professionals to be first responders to a mental health crisis, not police officers, who would serve as backups.

In early June, about a week after George Floyd died in police custody in Minneapolis, the first sign appeared near the Lee statue. It was small, written on white plastic, stuck into the ground with wires and read "Welcome To Marcus-David Peters Circle."

There was later a second white sign in purple

ink and red hearts and then a larger green professional-looking sign. But it didn't last long. It was removed and soon replaced by the sign that stands there today.

It looks similar to the work of a certain local sign maker, multiple individuals have said. But when the man was contacted by The Times-Dispatch, he declined to say if the work was his. Earlier this week, purple, red and white violas were planted around the sign's base.

Because many still do not know Peters' name, his uncle, Jeffrey Peters, comes to the Lee statue nearly every day and places a large photo of Marcus on the ground leaning against the statue. In the photo, Marcus is smiling, his head shaved, a black beard wrapping under his chin.

Next to the photo is a white sign that says "My Name Is Marcus-David Peters" and tells the man's story in four dense paragraphs, written in the first person.

"This October, I should be turning 27 years old," the story begins. "I miss my family, I miss laughing and playing with my nieces and nephews, I miss cracking my corny jokes," it continues.

Blanding has asked that her brother's case be reopened. To her, it doesn't add up: How can her brother's death spur a potential remodeling of how mental health crises are addressed and still be considered justified? she asks.

"We can't bring Marcus back. We know that," Blanding said. "But we can fight for a better tomorrow for everybody."



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TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2020

U.S. economy officially in recession since February

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON—The U.S. economy entered a recession in February, a group of economists declared Monday, ending the longest expansion on record. The economists said

employment peaked in February and fell sharply afterward, marking the beginning of the downturn.

The economists make up a committee within the National Bureau of Economic Research, a trade

group that determines when recessions begin and end. It defines a recession as “a decline in economic activity that lasts more than a few months.” The committee noted, though, that in this case, the depth of the downturn

since February had led it to determine that a recession had begun.

“The unprecedented magnitude of the decline in employment and production, and its broad reach across the entire economy, warrants the

designation of this episode as a recession, even if it turns out to be briefer than earlier contractions,” the NBER panel said.

The unemployment rate is officially 13.3 percent, down from 14.7 percent in April. Both figures are

higher than in any other downturn since World War II. A broader measure of underemployment that includes some of the unemployed who have given up looking and those who have been reduced to part-time status is 21.2 percent.

‘ENOUGH IS ENOUGH’



PHOTOS BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION / CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

Demonstrators march on Blue Ridge Avenue, returning to Yowell Meadow Park for a rally. Young people organized the Saturday event.

Slave auction block is moved

BY CATHY JETT
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Fredericksburg removed its controversial slave auction block early Friday morning in preparation for its display at the Fredericksburg Area Museum.

The weathered stone at the corner of William and Charles streets had been slated to be dug up and moved since last December. This was delayed by two unsuccessful lawsuits to keep the auction block in its historic location, and then concerns about city staff tackling the project during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The auction block, with its painful history, became a focus of some of protesters who were downtown over the last few days seeking an end to police violence against African Americans. It served as a way stop along processions, with some protesters standing on top of the stone.

“Move the block!” became a chant of those protesting the death of George Floyd in Minnesota. The block was spray-painted

See **BLOCK**, Page A5



DOVETAIL CULTURAL RESOURCE GROUP

City staff use stabilizing straps, weights and other equipment to lift the roughly 800-pound stone.

800 gather in Culpeper at Saturday's peaceful protest



Culpeper Police Officer Julia Cole (right) steps forward to support a girl (center) who bravely came forward to speak.

BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

An estimated 800 people from diverse backgrounds peacefully assembled and demonstrated Saturday in Culpeper to demand justice and an end to systemic racism.

The worldwide, youth-led movement turned local in Yowell Meadow Park on a humid afternoon as many families with children, young and old of all colors, clergy and police joined together

to affirm: Black Lives Matter.

“Look around real quick. That’s what the revolution looks like,” said co-organizer, 20-year-old college student Brianna Reaves, of Culpeper. “That means when you see something happening to somebody you speak up! What I want ya’ll to do is to show up for black people.”

Local African-American leaders and community organizers from church, the arts, govern-

See **PROTEST**, Page A4

Orange public libraries reopen with curbside pickup

BY HILARY HOLLADAY
ORANGE COUNTY REVIEW

As part of its phased reopening, the Orange County Public Library began curbside service June 8. Library card-

holders can now order books and other materials online or by phone and pick them up at the branch where items are on reserve.

The three branch libraries have been closed to the public for more

than two months due to the pandemic. During this decidedly grim time, many have made do with the library’s e-books and other electronic resources, but staring at a screen is not the same as

plopping down with an actual book and inhaling that distinctive library scent that emanates from its pages.

“I know folks in the community have been missing their books and

movies,” said Library Director Katie Hill.

To reserve a library item, go to <https://www.ocplvacat.org>. Alternatively, patrons can call the library where they

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INSIDE

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Protest

From Page A1

ment, education and business shared emotional testimonies at the Rally for Racial Justice, sparked by the May 25 suffocation death of George Floyd, a black father and athlete, in Minneapolis while in police custody.

Many demonstrators wore face masks, available for free at the event, while others did not even amid continued fears of spread and impact from the novel coronavirus pandemic.

There were many chants at the several-hour event – “Say his name – George Floyd!” and “Breonna Taylor!” for the 26-year-old African-American EMT shot eight times by police in her Kentucky apartment.

Demonstrators shouted, “No justice, no peace, no racist ass police,” and carried many different signs with messages: Get your knee off my neck, Make America not racist for the first time, Together we rise, Justice for George, Color is not a crime and United we stand.

“Repeat after me, can I get a yeah, yeahhhh, we are here for justice, we are here for liberation so we want to make sure we are united on this movement,” said Reaves, an Eastern View High School graduate attending Mary Washington University.

The mood was urgent and angry yet calm and friendly with many people seemingly getting reacquainted following months of recommended quarantine.

Social distance was generally not observed with the crowd standing close together to protest centuries of oppression. Youth playing basketball in the nearby courts came over to see what the noise was all about and skaters held their boards while walking in solidarity.

Culpeper Police Chief Chris Jenkins and Major Chris walked with local protesters and police bike patrol followed along as the large crowd of marchers exited Yowell Meadow Park via Gardner Street onto Sperryville Pike and Evans Street. The protest, including babies in carriages, turned right on North Main Street through the center of town before turning onto West Culpeper Street to face the historic black church, Antioch Baptist. The march made its way west back to Blue Ridge Avenue, onto Sperryville Pike and back to the park for the rally.

“This movement happened because of black labor, black lives were taken, black sweat, black blood, black tears,” said Reaves. “We said George Floyd’s name, we said Breonna Taylor’s name, do you know how many other names that we don’t know whose family don’t have justice or peace of mind because white supremacy, because racism has taken that from them? Do you get that? It shouldn’t take the murder of a black of man for you to get out here and support black lives.”

Brianna Reaves’ grandfather, the Rev. Sanford Reaves Jr., past president of the Culpeper Branch NAACP, told the crowd what is happening now is just the beginning.

“We’ve seen this happening over and over. This didn’t start yesterday so we are pleased to see the allies we have,” he said. The Rev. Reaves implored parents to go home and talk to their children about the long fight for racial justice.

“Look around and see the clergy who are here, I



Demonstrators march on Main Street Saturday in Culpeper to protest the death of George Floyd and racial injustice.

PHOTOS BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION / CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT



Demonstrators listen to speakers at the rally in Culpeper.



Free masks were provided at Saturday’s demonstration.

am proud of Generation X and the youth who are here. This is what a lot of us have been trying to do, we heard what you said in the past, how you prayed for it, but enough is enough,” he said.

Local entrepreneur Brandon Miles took his place alongside the movement Saturday, building on his many years of outreach and advocacy for Culpeper area youth.

“All my black men that look like me I want ya’ll to put your first in the air. It’s a whole lot of positivity going on around here. Make sure you support each other. Make sure you register to vote,” said 32-year-old Miles, encouraging people of color to run for office as he intends.

He said he was proud of Culpeper, especially all the young people who attended.

“This is the first time they’ve seen something like this in their lives and the first time when I’ve seen it spread like this,” Miles said, recalling the Holy Week Uprising in Atlanta after Martin Luther King was assassinated. “Sometimes you shake the world for things to happen.”

Karen Brown, a minister at Pilgrim Baptist in Locust Grove who works in domestic violence advocacy, told the crowd, as she was marching with a friend in the heat they remarked to each other, “We’re 50, 51 and we should not have to be doing this walk right now.”

“Why do we have to keep asking, how many more?” said the black mom of black men dying. “Why so much hate? Why do we have to keep asking these questions?”

In a powerful moment, Brown read the last words of George Floyd as he laid on city street his last breaths escaping, a portion of: “... Mama. Mama! I can’t! ... I’m through, I’m through! I’m claustrophobic! My stomach hurts! My neck hurts! Everything hurts! Please, I can’t breathe. Officer, don’t kill me! They gonna kill me, man, come on! I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe.”

Former Charlottesville Vice Mayor Wes Bellamy addressed the Culpeper

crowd, saying marching is the easy part. The hard part, said Bellamy, who was in office during the 2017 Unite the Right white supremacist rally, is standing up to racism in your own home.

“When you’re talking to your parents, your grandparents, nieces, nephews and they say that racial comment and you challenge them it’s not what you want to reflect. That’s the challenging part. That’s how you show Black Lives Matter,” he said. “How many of us have the courage when we see that Confederate flag coming from someone we know or love (to say) that flag represents hate and not heritage?”

Bellamy encouraged demonstrators to make their voices heard at local government meetings and to fight for equal resources and government spending for communities of color. To go to school board meetings and demand equal access to advanced classes for black students. To complain about crime, drugs and more police brutality occurring at higher rates in black neighborhoods.

“You will be talked about you will be condemned ... people will say you are a reverse racist, you are being ugly ... but if you won’t do the challenging work it won’t change. What are you going to do today to make tomorrow better?” Bellamy said.

Reggae artist Adwela Dawes, who got his start singing at Antioch Baptist, showed up to make sure the message was not diluted.

“We’re here solely for the end of systematic racism and oppression towards people of color in America,” he said. “I won’t stop until they do ... we need to keep applying the pressure until they do. Change the policy. It’s 400 years of us being docile and peaceful about this and now is time things need to change.”

Near the end of the rally, an African-American girl unknown to organizers approached the gazebo by herself to speak through tears to demonstrators. She told the crowd her mother was fatally shot

men in America has got to stop, Groves said.

“George Floyd was murdered on TV without a doubt, and it just keeps happening over and over and over again ... I mean when is it going to stop?” she said. “This movement is beautiful because the change is going to have to come from white America, and now I think finally they’re getting it.”

25-year-old white male, Trevor Herring, of Charlottesville, came armed to the rally as part of what he called a civilian task force charged with protecting liberty.

“We wanted to show solidarity with these folks, that they have the right to peacefully demonstrate. We’ll do whatever we need to do to ensure that right,” he said.

Herring called Floyd’s death a murder saying the officer who killed him “deserves to hang for it.” Billy Allen, 27, of Culpeper attended with Herring for a similar reason.

“Armed minorities are harder to oppress. My message is pretty much the same as his. Being armed gives the liberty to defend yourself,” Allen said. “Nonviolence is always the best way, but unfortunately we as individuals don’t get to decide when things will become violent.”

Demonstrator, 27-year-old Katie Wetsel, of Alexandria, traveled from Alexandria with a friend for the rally in Culpeper, her former hometown.

“I decided to come back just to speak up for my community because at the end of the day this is my community. We want to end racism and injustice,” she said.

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

HARVEST DAY FARM TOUR



Elizabeth Kolmstetter of Madison County interacts with the beautiful Norweigan Fjords housed at Ironwood Farm in Culpeper County on Saturday. It was one of a dozen sites featured on the weekend's Harvest Days Farm Tour.

PHOTOS BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION / CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

Norwegian Fjord Horses steal spotlight

BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

RIXEYVILLE—Margaret Bogie and Tom Snyder fell in love with the Norwegian Fjord breed of horses while on a trail ride in France more than two decades ago.

"Somebody did not want to ride the pony—I did," Bogie said of the riding the draft breed known for its short and stocky stature. "My bridle fell off twice and I did not die. His name was Troll and he was so much fun to ride."

Now semi-retired, the married couple adored the European creature's temperament, disposition and appearance so much that they built 132-acre Ironwood Farm in Culpeper around the horse highlighted in the Disney smash hit, "Frozen."

The scenic location opened in 1998 and is the state's largest Norwegian Fjord operation, located in the northwestern reaches of the county. Ironwood Farm opened its paddocks this



Award-winning Norwegian Fjord Horse, Lupin, demonstrates driving with owner Margaret Bogie in the dressage ring Saturday at Ironwood Farm.

past weekend for the Harvest Days Farm Tour.

The weather was perfect and fall-like, resulting in reports of record turnout at more than a dozen participating sites. Hundreds and hundreds of visitors got outside to enjoy fresh air and

agricultural heritage at one of the few events not curtailed by COVID-19.

"I hope we continue this for years and years," Bogie said. "We're always willing to be on it."

The well-versed horse farm
See **HORSES**, Page A4

Culpeper mom dies in shooting Saturday night

BY ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

An apparent alcohol-involved verbal altercation Saturday night in Culpeper ended with a beloved local mom fatally shot, a man sent to the hospital and another man charged with homicide.

Culpeper Police Officers responded at approximately 7:55 p.m. on Sept. 19 to the 1100 block of Vantage Place along James Madison Highway in town. A man and a woman were found suffering from gunshot injuries, according to a Sunday night news release from the Culpeper PD.

The woman, Torri Robinson, 56, of Culpeper died at the scene. The 59-year-old male was taken to Novant Health UVA Culpeper Medical Center with non-life-threatening injuries.

Leroy Chandler, 66, of



CULPEPER BLUE ANGELS
Torri Robinson was a team mom with the Culpeper Blue Angels All Stars Cheer Team.

Culpeper was charged with first degree murder and malicious wounding. He is being held in Culpeper County with no bond eligibility.

Investigators determined Chandler and an acquaintance got into a

See **SHOOTING**, Page A5

Culpeper center's outbreak is over

Warrenton nursing home outbreak remains active

CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT
STAFF

Another 19 positive cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in Culpeper in the past week with VDH recording 1,182 positive cases countywide as of Monday, Sept. 21.

The county's death toll from the infectious respiratory disorder was 16 – two more than a week ago.

In Fauquier County, 22 deaths were reported Monday – one more than on Sept. 14. Of those, 12 people died in Brookside Rehab & Nursing Center in Warrenton, with no new deaths reported in the nursing home since last

week. It reported a coronavirus outbreak Aug. 14.

As of Sept. 21, Brookside reported three residents actively positive in the facility, down from the dozen reported a week ago. VDH reported 93 total cases of Monday in the center, still listed among active outbreaks by VDH.

The outbreak reported in July at Culpeper Health & Rehab Center on Madison Road was closed Sept. 5, according to Candy Morrison, the new nursing home's new administrator.

As of Sept. 18, the center reported no cases among its residents and 15 cumulative cases, since May 1, among residents. The center reported two current cases among staff as

See **VIRUS**, Page A3

Virtual enrollment continues to rise at Germanna

CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT
STAFF REPORT

While many colleges nationwide are seeing declines in enrollment due to the pandemic, Germanna Community College virtual enrollment continues to climb.

The local state community college on Monday reported enrollment was up 4.24 percent for the fall compared to those who enrolled in 2019 when in-person classes were still being held. Offering all classes

online for the past six months, Germanna also experienced a 25 percent surge in summer enrollment.

Part of the increase in enrollment could be attributed to the fact that GCC announced earlier

than most schools—in May—that it had decided to move fall classes online. Last spring's classes shifted online in March.

Germanna announced Monday it will continue online through

the spring semester of 2021.

"We're sad not to be back on campus," Germanna President Janet Gullickson said in a statement. "We miss each other, our students
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Horses

From Page A1

operator, retired from a career in medical education in Washington, D.C., interrupted an interview to sold one of the horses.

“Oh, Cecelia, you are so nasty,” Bogie said as one horse nudged another. “She’s the boss mare, the alpha. That’s actually her sister, but she doesn’t care. Because CeCe is nasty to the mares, she is, but it’s like people, a pecking order and so you learn a lot about human behavior from horses.”

The breed is actually gentle, smart, sensible and willing, produced from the harsh terrain of Norway. They are used in driving, dressage, draft, jumping, trail riding, therapy, children’s lessons and more. A striking feature of the Fjord Horse is its distinctive upright mane, cut to enhance the darker center stripe. The breed is uniquely suited to cold weather and do not need coverings being from the land of Anna and Elsa.

“In the winter, they’re delighted,” said Snyder. “It can’t get cold enough for them. It’s like 10 degrees, 15 degrees and they’re like yeah, excellent. A blanket would be an insult. The babies get like this amazing fur the first year, like ultra-fur, like a little baby yak.”

Ironwood Farm, as of Saturday, had about two dozen Norwegian Fjords on site including five foals, larger than the typical annual offspring. The farm specializes in breeding, training and selling on a national market and also offers boarding and private lessons. One of the world’s oldest and purest breeds of equine, the horses sell for \$4,000-\$8,000 each or more, according to



Alex Snyder (right) works to bridle a horse with his mom, Margaret Bogie (left), Saturday at Ironwood Farm in Culpeper.

Snyder.

At the Farm Tour, Bogie demonstrated the complex task of bridling 25-year-old, Lupin, and hooking the experienced mare to a Marathon carriage. She then led the award-winning “hall of famer” down a hill to a show ring for a driving demonstration. Lupin, with his owner at the reins, weaved in an out of cones, trotted and walked backwards, all while hitched to the carriage.

Kristina Hopkins of Maryland to got to ride along having just purchased her own foal from the farm. The young woman’s smile could be seen through her face mask.

“He is amazing. My older quarter horse I can’t ride him anymore so I was looking for something rideable, but ended up falling in love with Daydreamer last year. He’s



A few month old Norwegian Fjord foal looks for a snack.

everything about the Fjord breed that I love – smart, strong, very playful and very curious. They are very loyal and loving. It’s probably the best horse I ever spent a lot of time with,” Hopkins said.

She jumped at the opportunity to be around the horses while waiting for hers to be old enough to ride: “It’s a really great

thing to get some popularity for the breed ... and to be outside and safe.”

Bogie’s sister, Christine Hurst, was visiting from Houston, Texas and volunteered for the Farm Tour. She and her sister grew on a dirt road riding horses in Fairfax County when

it still had rural spaces. Hurst also recently purchased a foal from Ironwood Farm and spoke admiringly of the breed.

“I wanted something I could work with,” she said. “I wanted a baby and do whatever I want because they’re so versatile. You can drive, you can ride, you can trail ride. Gentle horses, also it’s never far down so if you fall.”

Hurst also liked the event: “I think it’s a great idea for the community. In a COVID year, how good is this?”

Elizabeth Kolmstetter visited with her husband, Michael, from Syria in Madison County. She wore a fleece jacket with a horse pattern on the cool, but sunny late summer day. A first time Harvest Days tour taker, Kolmstetter

said she was not aware of the Norwegian Fjord prior to the weekend event.

“We said we have to come and check this out and what a beautiful day,” she said standing at a fence, petting the horses. “I think it’s super to have an outdoor activity for everybody of all ages can come out and get out of the house. And I think it’s wonderful these owners are sharing their property.”

Bogie and Snyder, who worked for the U.S. Dept. of Education and is still consulting in the city, plan to fully retire and live at the farm full-time. They plan to build a bed & breakfast and meeting facility on the property and hope to expand into the agri-tourism market with support from their 26-year-old son, Alex.

“I’m really happy here,” Bogie said. “What’s not to like? You’re on a farm but we’re close enough to D.C. so people can come down and have some agricultural experience. It’s really important that we don’t disconnect from nature. It’s not all city or suburb.”

The 2020 Harvest Days Farm Tour, presented by the Culpeper County Department of Economic Development, turned out to be a huge success, said Winona Pritts, business development coordinator in the county office.

“We’ve heard from several farms that their overall visitor count was significantly higher than years past. Our recently released Farm Tour app also generated over 700 users for this weekend,” she said.

Final visitor numbers are pending, but it was clear that the tour happened at a perfect time.

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Three dozen orders issued with new ‘red flag’ gun law

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RICHMOND—At least three dozen Virginia residents have been prohibited temporarily or permanently from having firearms or purchasing them based on a new state law allowing authorities to convince a judge that a person would be a danger to themselves or others.

The “red flag” law creating the petition for substantial risk orders began July 1, as one of many gun-related restrictions approved this year by the now Democratic-controlled General Assembly.

Twenty-six temporary and 10 permanent orders were issued in July and August, the Richmond

Times-Dispatch reported. The numbers came from the Virginia State Police, which operates the Virginia Firearm Transaction Center. The state police is prohibited from releasing details about the orders.

The red flag law is designed to reduce gun-related deaths, including suicides, by confiscating a person’s guns or preventing the purchase of firearms. The law directs police or a prosecutor to petition a judge or magistrate to issue a 14-day “emergency substantial risk order” against someone considered a threat.

Authorities must submit an affidavit outlining their reasoning. A hearing must be held within 14 days of

any seizure to give the gun owner the chance to ask the order be resolved and the person’s guns returned. A judge could then issue a permanent order of up to 180 days. That order could later be extended for additional 180-day periods, with no limits on extensions.

Republican lawmakers opposed the law, which was approved on a party-line vote and signed by Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam. The Virginia Citizens Defense League and other gun rights groups argue it violates the Second Amendment by allowing confiscation without due process and based solely on someone’s word.

Hanger

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feel like I’ve been labeled a ‘Mountain Valley Republican,’ and that’s where I feel pretty comfortable.”

He acknowledged that winning his party’s gubernatorial nomination is “a high hurdle for me,” but he thinks he would stand a better chance in the general election in 2021 for a statewide office that Republicans haven’t won since 2009.

“It’s going to be tough for a Republican to win next year,” he said. “With my background and the experience I’ve had, I may be in better position than the others to appeal to a

broader base.”

That includes Cox, whom Hanger considers a friend.

“I think he would be a great governor,” Hanger said of the conservative former speaker. “It’s a matter of how he might position himself. The base needs to be broader.”

Hanger has prevailed against intra-party challenges primarily by staying true to himself and his legislative record after 33 years in the General Assembly—nine in the House and, after a four-year hiatus, 24 in the Senate.

He runs a real estate business in Mount Solon, in western Augusta, with son Chad, the youngest of

five children.

Hanger said he’s still talking with his wife about the personal cost of running for governor and, if he wins, moving to Richmond for a four-year term.

But he said he is dismayed by the political polarization of state and national politics, and the lack of civility that has accompanied what he sees as a push to extremes in both major parties.

“I’d like to pull us back together a little bit,” he said.

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