

Rappahannock News

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THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021

\$1

Supervisors take on the road more traveled

Citizens express concern about a dangerous stretch of 211

Whitson makes ‘appeal to the public for decency toward other citizens’

BY ROGER PIANTADOSI
Contributing Editor

Traffic inside the county courthouse, regular meeting place of the Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors, was unusually light this Monday afternoon — a rare first Monday of the month, moreover, when there wasn't even a 7 p.m. session scheduled.

Taking advantage of the absence of the usual time-consuming contention and/or compromise, the board primarily discussed something most everyone agrees on: traffic.

Near the start of the meeting, the board heard a

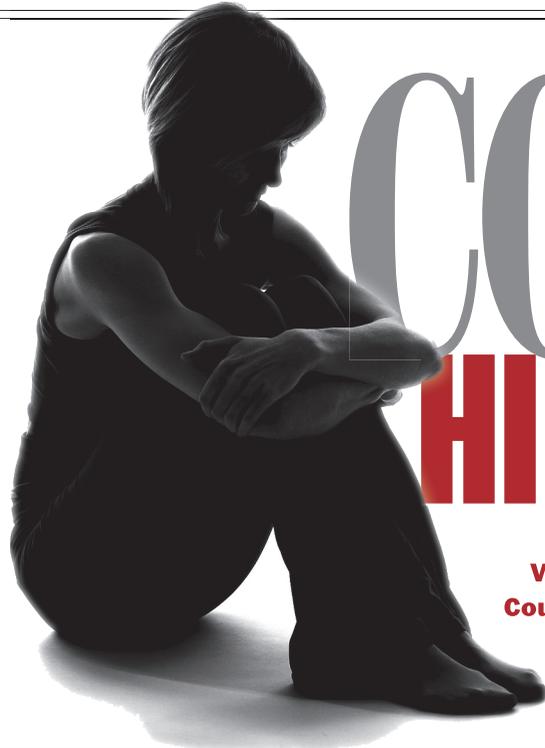
See **SUPERVISORS**, Page 8



BY RACHEL NEEDHAM

Burning Big Meadows

Fire Management Officer Dave Robinson briefs his team on prescribed burn protocols at Big Meadows on Tuesday. ➔ See story, page 15



COVID'S HIDDEN TOLL

A year of living with COVID-19 has taken a toll on Virginia's Piedmont, from deaths — 62 in Fauquier County and two in Rappahannock — to the economy. This is the first story in a series examining the unfolding mental health consequences of an ongoing pandemic.

Can kids bounce back?

Children have been less susceptible to the coronavirus, but for many, a year of social isolation and academic unpredictability has challenged their mental health.

BY RANDY RIELAND
For Foothills Forum

Kids are resilient. Right?

At least that's the conventional wisdom — that children innately bounce back from adversity.

But what about during a prolonged pandemic, when they've been isolated from not just their friends, but also their teachers and other supportive adults? When their home life is likely to be roiled with uncertainty and angst — or worse

— and when no one can answer the question “When will this be over?”

It's a matter that will come into sharper focus as their lives begin to take on a hint of normalcy. By next week, all public schools in Rappahannock and Fauquier counties will be on a four-day, in-person schedule. The hope is that once students fall back into more typical routines, their stress will fade and fears about the future will ease.

But like so much of what's happened over the past year, this is uncharted territory. One thing

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A RAPP NEWS/
FOOTHILLS FORUM
SPECIAL REPORT



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Let the hunt begin!

It's spring in Rappahannock, and morel mushrooms are beginning to sprout from the earth. Now is the time to venture into the woods and find this wild foraged delicacy. **17**



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that is clear is that the number of kids in "crisis" in the region is climbing.

"The children who do not have consistency and structure and stability at home are the ones who've been struggling," said Kathy Sickler, social worker for Rappahannock County Public Schools. "That's why I support having these kids come back to school four days a week. School can provide those things.

"But everyone is experiencing this pandemic in a different way, and for some people it's been very traumatic," she added. "Trauma can be very long-lasting."

MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Last November, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a report that included this sobering finding: Between April and mid-October of 2020, the proportion of mental health-related emergency room visits for children in the United States increased significantly from the same period in 2019. For kids aged 5 to 11, they rose 24 percent; for those 12 to 17, they jumped 31 percent.

Michael Jenks, director of Fauquier Hospital's Emergency Department, has seen this firsthand. "We are seeing an increase in mental health cases generally, but it seems to be disproportionately impacting our children and adolescents," he said. "When I talk to my fellow providers, this is something that we've all noticed."

Many of those cases have involved children who probably were already at risk of mental health issues, he said. They may have lacked good coping skills, and at some point felt out of control in the fluid uncertainty of a pandemic. "They talk about not being able to engage with other kids," Jenks said. "This is not mysterious. Everybody recognizes that that's an important part of the psychological development of children."

Another telling statistic comes from the Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Board: Between last July and February, 98 "crisis" cases were referred to the children's services office. That's almost triple the number during the same period a year earlier.

"We've definitely gotten more calls from parents who say, 'I'm really not sure what to do,'" said Taisha Chavez, director of children's services. "There's a lot of family disruption now. Parents have lost jobs. Kids are sensing that things are not that stable. There may be domestic violence."

Then there's the loss of what is often the first alert system for distressed kids: daily contact with teachers or coaches who might notice early signs of emotional problems. "When kids were in school, there were more eyes on them," Chavez said.

Without that, struggling children and teens are more likely to develop acute symptoms over time, such as becoming more physically aggressive or threatening harm to themselves.



PHOTOS BY LUKE CHRISTOPHER FOR Foothills Forum

"The children who do not have consistency and structure and stability at home are the ones who've been struggling."

— **Kathy Sickler**, Rappahannock County Public Schools social worker

THE "RUT OF COVID"

Most students, fortunately, have not spiraled into crisis. More often they've slid into what Deb Panagos calls the "rut of COVID." A social worker at Liberty High School and Cedar Lee Middle School in Fauquier County, Panagos said she has made more home visits

"COVID-19'S HIDDEN TOLL" is a recurring series produced jointly by four organizations: Foothills Forum and the



Piedmont Journalism Foundation, two independent, nonprofit civic news organizations; and Rappahannock Media and Piedmont Media, two local media companies. In this series, Foothills Forum provided the research and reporting; the media companies decide when and what to publish in their newspapers and on their websites.

• Foothills Forum focuses on Rappahannock County. See foothillsforum.org.

• Piedmont Journalism Foundation focuses on Fauquier County. See piedmontjournalism.org.

Community support of the nonprofits makes this and other projects possible. Funding for this series comes in part from the PATH Foundation, which provides grants to improve health and vitality in Fauquier, Rappahannock and Culpeper counties.

"We are seeing an increase in mental health cases generally, but it seems to be disproportionately impacting our children and adolescents."

— **Michael Jenks**, director of Fauquier Hospital's Emergency Department

the past year than any other time in her career. Her visits have been part of the school district's efforts to keep students motivated.

"We do see kids who are profoundly affected," she said. "My impression from talking to a lot of kids is that they're tired of COVID and the restrictions. But they've become used to the horrible rut they're in, and they don't know how to get out of it."

Lack of school routine obviously is a factor. But so is the prolonged sense of isolation from friends and teachers and teammates, which, for teenagers in particular, has come at a time when they're shaping their identities and trying to find their places in the world. And even when students have been back in the classroom a few days a week, they tell social workers and counselors that it hasn't been the same. They say that the fun parts of school are gone — the hallway chatter, the lunchroom laughs, the pep rallies.

Many have found it hard to adapt to virtual learning, and have dropped off the track academically. Often when that happens, they keep their struggles to themselves, and, without a teacher's support, fall further behind.

"Kids have had a lot of loss," said Carl Street, vice president for behavioral health services at Youth for Tomorrow, a mental health counseling nonprofit with an office in Warrenton. "Some have lost sports. Some have lost graduations. They've lost a lot of socialization. A lot used to have part-time jobs. Some have lost loved ones during the pandemic.

"We've had a lot of individuals who had finished counseling come back in," he said. "Maybe four or five months into the pandemic, they came back and said, 'I need the support right now.'" →





FEAR AND FRUSTRATION

For younger children, the pandemic's impact has been more fundamental. The loss of familiar routines drains their sense of security, so they're more likely to react emotionally to changes in schedules and structures. As more natural hands-on learners, they can get bored or frustrated with online lessons. When they returned to school, with new rules to follow, they were often fearful that they were going to do something wrong, said Candy Lamma, a counselor at Rappahannock County Elementary School.

"The younger ones don't always have the words to express how they're feeling," she said. "You'll sometimes see their eyes start to tear up."

Also, because they've spent much more time at home the past year, children are more likely to have been more exposed to any financial or personal stress their parents are experiencing. "Kids are very good at picking up emotional cues," said Lisa Paine-Wells, executive director of the Child

"If there's been a silver lining about COVID, it's that we've all been placed in the same boat."

— **Brittany Dwyer**,
director of Starfish Mentoring Program
in Rappahannock

Care and Learning Center in Rappahannock. "When we hear anxious feelings, that's often where it's coming from. We'll hear, 'Mommy cries.'"

The shift to Zoom classes brought its own form of anxiety. Fauquier social worker Amanda Shenk said a number of students, particularly in middle school, stopped turning on their laptop cameras because they felt uncomfortable being watched by others.

But some students embraced online learning because it allowed them to avoid classmates or school situations that made them anxious. That has raised concerns about potential higher rates of absenteeism with schools moving to a four-day, in-person schedule.

BOUNCING BACK?

The question remains: How long will it take kids to bounce back from a crisis that has disrupted every part of their lives? Brittany Dwyer is one who believes it may take time, but with enough adult support, most students will regain their step.

"Mentors can help them know they're not alone in what they're going through," said Dwyer, outreach coordinator for the Mental Health Association of Fauquier County and director of the Starfish Mentoring Program in Rappahannock. "They can also help them set goals, and provide hope for the future."

Some mental health professionals are warier. They've sensed in students more pessimism about the future, a realization that worldwide catastrophes can happen. Youth for Tomorrow's Carl Street said he wouldn't be surprised to see a wave of "secondary trauma" in coming months.

"When things settle down, kids may have some feelings they need to

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Children's anxiety: Symptoms and solutions

These are stressful times, and it's natural for a child to feel anxious in difficult moments. But it's not natural for that anxiety to be prolonged and interfere with his or her ability to handle everyday situations or cause him or her to avoid things other children enjoy. Symptoms and solutions below are compiled from mental health professionals:

Signs of anxiety in children/teens

- 1 Has trouble falling asleep or staying asleep. 
- 2 Often complains of stomach aches or headaches. 
- 3 Makes a point of avoiding certain situations. 
- 4 Refuses to eat lunch or snacks at school or day care. 
- 5 Has trouble focusing on school work; seems very fidgety and distracted. 
- 6 Has lost interest in activities they once enjoyed. 
- 7 Unusually moody and irritable. 
- 8 Disruptive behavior and explosive outbursts. 
- 9 Changes in weight. 
- 10 Harsh self-assessment. ("I'm ugly." "I'll never make friends.") 
- 11 Frequently asks "What if" questions. ("What if everyone gets sick?") 
- 12 For younger children, cries easily or is very clingy with parents or caregivers. 

What parents can do to help:

1. **Manage your own anxiety** and model calm behavior.
2. **Help your child maintain structure** and routine through the day.
3. **Check in with them regularly** and help them express what they're feeling.
4. **Acknowledge their feelings** of anger, disappointment, frustration; try to help them turn to positive things they can do.
5. **Help them focus on the positives**, not "what-ifs."
6. **Encourage regular exercise**; share walks or suggest physical activity they can do on their own.
7. **Focus on gratitude.** Encourage kids to list and reflect on people and things they feel grateful for.
8. **Practice mindfulness** with the child, such as calm concentration on deep breathing, and encourage them to take mindfulness breaks.

BY LAURA STANTON FOR FOOTHILLS FORUM

Where to get help and information:

Mental Health Association of Fauquier/Rappahannock (www.fauquier-mha.org or 540-341-8732): Can help finding a counselor or other local resources.

Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (540-672-2990, ex. 101): Provides guidance and mental health services for children. Has a 24-hour crisis hotline: Call 540-825-5656 and follow prompt for crisis services.

Children's Mobile Crisis Hotline (1-800-970-5897): Trained professionals come to the scene of mental health crisis involving children 18 and younger. Available Monday-Friday, noon to 7:30 p.m.

Youth for Tomorrow (703-659-9900): Nonprofit with an office in Warrenton that provides outpatient counseling for children above 5 years, teens and families.

Child Mind Institute (www.childmind.org): Website with extensive information and guidance on children's mental health.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/index.html): Government website with information about children's mental health.



COVID's HIDDEN TOLL



BY LUKE CHRISTOPHER FOR Foothills FORUM

How schools are catching up with students in need

BY RANDY RIELAND
For Foothills Forum

Now that in-person classes are resuming four days a week in Fauquier and Rappahannock public schools, it might seem that things are almost getting back to normal. But the ripples of the pandemic won't fade so easily. School counselors and social workers know this is yet another transition for kids who have been through a year navigating emotional and academic obstacle courses.

Teachers and staff will be paying almost as much attention to their students' mental health as to how they readjust to more classroom learning.

In Fauquier, students are being given an assessment called SAEBRS, or Social, Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener. They'll answer the same questions again next month, then next school year.

"Our social workers have spearheaded getting this tool to get a gauge of where our students are from a mental health perspective," said Frank Finn, the school district's executive director of student services. "We want to be able to be responsive."

Many of Fauquier's teachers received Youth Mental Health First Aid training before the pandemic, Finn said, which should help them spot early signs of students struggling.

In Rappahannock, a survey last fall showed that 40 percent of responding parents didn't know where to get counseling for their children. Their children's anxiety and depression was among their top concerns.

Soon Rappahannock students will be able to meet with a Health Connect America therapist at both the high school and the elementary school, said Susan Stoltzman, coordinator for the school district's Wellness Center project.

The therapist will be in each school half a day a week to start, but she expects demand to ramp up quickly.

The nonprofit Child Care and Learning Center is working closely with Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services to connect children to mental health professionals, said executive director Lisa Paine-Wells.

Talk therapy isn't for every kid, so CCLC has initiated a therapeutic riding program with Serendipity Equine in Amisville. So far, eight children have participated through a private grant, with another four starting soon. The physical work of caring for horses has helped several of the children deal with anxiety, Paine-Wells said.

This summer, the center plans to start a "Parent Café," where parents can share child-rearing experiences and worries.

To Jenny Kapsa, what many students have needed is a chance to be kids again. So last fall, she helped organize what became known as "Wonderful Wednesday" on the day no in-person classes are held at Rappahannock's public schools. Students of all ages are bused to the 4-H Center in Front Royal for a day of mainly outdoor activities. For the spring session, which started early last month, 89 younger kids signed up as campers and 56 older ones as counselors. "Mentoring is so powerful," said Kapsa. "The little campers love the older students. It's about having these high school students understand that they matter. Their words matter. And their actions matter."

"Here we are in this place where we can be together, and support each other, sing together, laugh together, learn together. It's a support system. I hope that once we get back to school, people can continue with that feeling."

Voices: One student looks back on a COVID year

Eden is a junior at Rappahannock County High School. That's not her real name, but she asked not to be identified. For most of this school year, she has been on a hybrid schedule of two days in school, three at home. Next week, she will start attending in-person classes four days a week.

This is her take on what her past year has been like.

What was it like when all this started?

I thought, "Okay, I can do two weeks of nothing." For a while COVID was like this really nice break. Then they extended the time we weren't going to school. My biology class was supposed to have this huge final exam that was worth a lot of points. But instead, because things had to shift so quickly, we were given a pretty easy study guide. So I passed biology. I was so happy.

What about over the summer?

I had a lot of summer camps that I was super excited about. Then some got cancelled, and some said they were only going to use Zoom. One was an immersive language camp. You can't do that over Zoom. I was so bored and didn't get to see people.

Did you stay connected with your friends?

I wasn't able to go to camp with some of them. That put a big damper on me. We tried to Zoom, but this is Rappahannock and the internet doesn't work well.

How was it when you started back at school?

Some kids thrived with online learning. I would like to be one of those people, but I am not. School's hard for me, and I don't like being there all the time. But when I'm there, at least I do my work. When I had to start working from home, I spent hours at night trying to keep up. Emails had to be sent back and forth with teachers. And constantly, stuff had to be explained. I was so lost sometimes.

Were you able to reconnect with your friends?

We used to hang out in the halls between classes. Now we can't. And half my friends are on the other hybrid schedule. Another one is all virtual. And another one doesn't even go to Rappahannock anymore because he couldn't do the online schooling.

How has this affected you academically?

I've been a good student and have tried hard to do all the things I needed to do to go to college. I was motivated. Now I'm doing a lot of procrastinating. My work is late. And I don't feel I'm learning as much. I hope and pray that I'm passing. I think a lot of my friends are also failing classes. They're usually good students, too. We had such high hopes, but we're failing.

How do you feel about going back four days a week?

I have mixed feelings. I feel like I'll learn more. And I think I'll do better having the structure of school. On the other hand, there are some things about school that give me anxiety. There are people I'll have to see constantly when I go back and I'm not ready for that.

How are you feeling about your junior year?

I was super excited about this year. I had gotten into the whole school spirit of pep rallies and homecoming. I had all these plans. But then all that shut down. I am an animated person, but there's nowhere for that energy to go.

Anything else that you feel you've lost?

I'm really grateful for the friendships I do have. But with friendships that were just starting or getting better, all that progress has been lost. That's really sad. Because I want to be more outgoing, I made a goal of making 150 new acquaintances. But I made that goal right before COVID. Then it was like, 'Well, dang.'

Do you think you'll be able to bounce back from this?

I think some kids adapt really well. But others — and sometimes I'm included in that group — depression and anxiety can become such a big aspect of your life. Part of my mental health requires knowing that I'm loved and that people still care.

Some people will be able to pick right up after COVID, and it will be great. But some people — including me — are going to struggle coming out of the box again and being the happy, charismatic people we were. I think a lot of the depression and anxiety are going to take a while to go away. It may never go away completely.

— Randy Rieland

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talk out," he said.

Others think this generation of children could be more phobic about germs and contagious illnesses. Or that given their parents' financial tribulations, they

might become more frugal to be better prepared for unexpected calamities.

But for all the disruptions, therapists and social workers say the pandemic's impact hasn't been all negative. They point to the benefits of families spending so much time together working through difficult situations and how parents have become much more

involved in their children's education. Virtual learning has made schools find innovative ways to incorporate technology into curriculums.

The greatest benefit, though, may have to do with mental health itself. The fact that the coronavirus affected everyone seems to have reduced the stigma of anxiety and depression.

That's especially true of how transparently those conditions are being viewed and treated in children.

"If there's been a silver lining about COVID, it's that we've all been placed in the same boat," said Dwyer. "I think people are more open about and better understand mental health issues. And that understanding facilitates change."

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COVID'S HIDDEN TOLL

The stealth epidemic

While the focus has been on COVID-19, drug overdose deaths in the state spike to record levels

BY RANDY RIELAND
For Foothills Forum

Addiction, it's said, thrives in privacy. So as everything began to shut down in March 2020, and isolation became a way of life during the pandemic, people in the treatment world saw trouble ahead. Recovery in normal times is hard enough. Recovery alone is rife with peril.

They were right to be apprehensive. According to the Virginia Department of Health, more people died of drug overdoses in the state during 2020 than in any previous year, a total of 2,297. That's a 41% increase from 2019, which had already set a record.

"The pandemic has had a devastating impact," said Jan Brown, executive director of SpiritWorks Foundation Center for the Soul, which operates a recovery center in Warrenton. "We've seen more people relapsing. We've seen more deaths because of the isolation. People are using alone. Help can't get to them in time."

Whatever progress had been made in what had been seen as one of the country's top public health crises — the opioid addiction epidemic — has been eroded by the more pervasive threat of COVID-19.

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A RAPP NEWS/FOOTHILLS FORUM SPECIAL REPORT

Broadband prospects gaining steam?

State, federal funds possible; Shentel floats plan for expanded service — and more towers

BY RACHEL NEEDHAM
Rappahannock News Staff

The Rappahannock County Broadband Authority is racing against the clock to meet a filing deadline for state funding through the Virginia Telecommunica-

tions Initiative (VATI). The county must submit a notice of application by July 27 and formalize the application by September 14.

During the public comment period at Monday's meeting, Piedmont resident Mark Anderson called attention to the challenge of meeting the application requirements with so little information at hand. "Someone's going to go through a lot of pain and stress over those seven weeks to try and get that together. ... To

See BROADBAND, Page 15



BY LUKE CHRISTOPHER

'A happy, joyful place to be' during unsettled times

Jenny Kapsa was crowned the "Coro-No-No" queen of Wonderful Wednesdays, as the school activity wound down. "Coronavirus is real and is scary and the fear of it I believe can cause a lot of anxiety for these young people ... but we also tried to make the situation as fun as we could." Kapsa said. ▶ See story on Page 16



WASHINGTON
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Morgan McKinney celebrates a major milestone

The Rappahannock resident graduates as Lord Fairfax Community College's Outstanding Graduate for the Fauquier Campus. 8



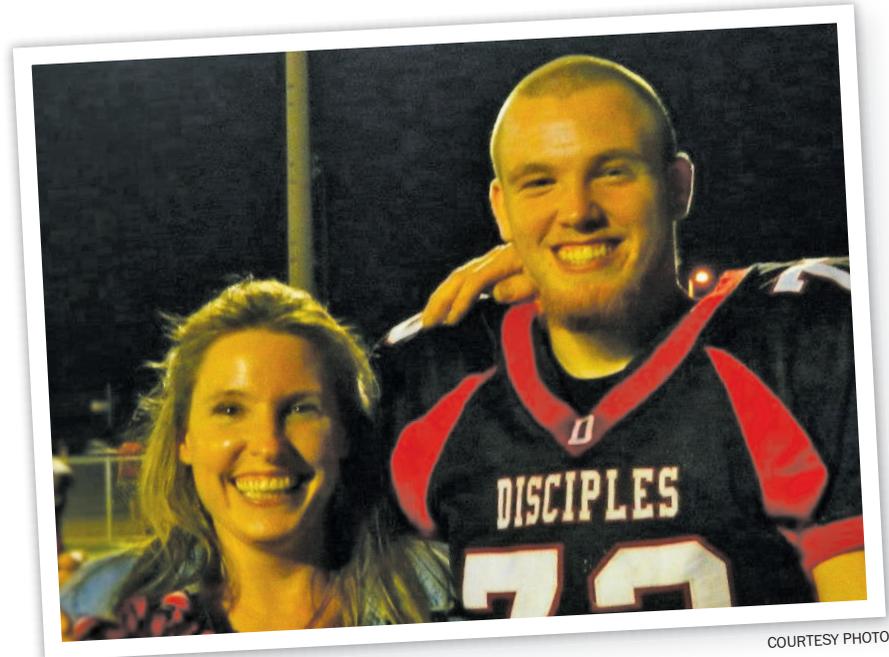
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COURTESY PHOTO

EPIDEMIC

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At the same time, those struggling with alcoholism have largely lost access to the in-person peer connections — Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, for example — that help sustain their efforts to stay sober.

“You have the normal stressors, then you add the stress of COVID, then you throw in the social isolation,” said Cory Will, peer recovery program manager for Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS). “A lot of people in recovery rely on a network of other people in recovery. And some people just don’t connect as well virtually.

“Ordinarily, they would be able to go to a meeting and talk through something that’s going on in their lives. They might say, ‘Has anyone had these issues? How have you been managing it?’ You take that piece away, and people are falling off the wagon.”

Sliding into crisis

It wasn’t too long into the pandemic before Dee Fleming started getting calls and emails from anxious parents. This was another ripple of COVID, tied to adult children moving back home after they lost their jobs. Many were using drugs or alcohol, and their parents worried that they were sliding into a crisis.

“They were functioning, but the situation was no longer manageable,” said Fleming, whose website, Culpeper Overdose Awareness, is a source of information about recovery programs in the region. She created it after her son, Joe, died of an overdose of cocaine laced with fentanyl in 2017.

She knows that many parents feel overwhelmed and ill-informed when they start looking for help. “It can be extremely challenging,” Fleming said. “I recommend that people first seek out a support group. Parents need somebody to talk to and walk alongside them.”

Unfortunately, the same pandemic that was fueling more destructive drinking and drug use was restricting

► **On Page 14:** Fighting alcoholism in the time of COVID. Plus, where to get help.

“We have people just starting their addiction journey because of COVID.”

— **Dee Fleming**, Culpeper parent and advocate, pictured above with her son Joe, who died from a drug overdose.

the services that treat those disorders. The Boxwood Recovery Center, a 28-day residential treatment program in Culpeper, had to halve its capacity to meet social-distancing restrictions. No in-person visits were permitted, meaning any support from family or friends had to come through a video screen. Plus, the center closed its detox program to use that space as a quarantine area.

The basic logistics of getting help have become more complicated, too. Instead of being able to just show up at the Warrenton or Culpeper outpatient clinics to be evaluated for mental health or substance use issues, people now must make an appointment a day in advance. And, while there’s more flexibility these days, initially most counseling was done virtually, a challenge for both therapist and person seeking help, particularly if he or she didn’t have access to a reliable broadband connection.

When support groups did start up again, they, too, usually met online. That made it harder for some people to engage, particularly those who were new to a group. And clicking on a Zoom link required considerably less commitment than getting dressed and heading out to a meeting. “I’ve seen meetings where somebody’s just lying in bed,” said Will, the RRCS peer coordinator. “Are they really trying to take the next step forward?”

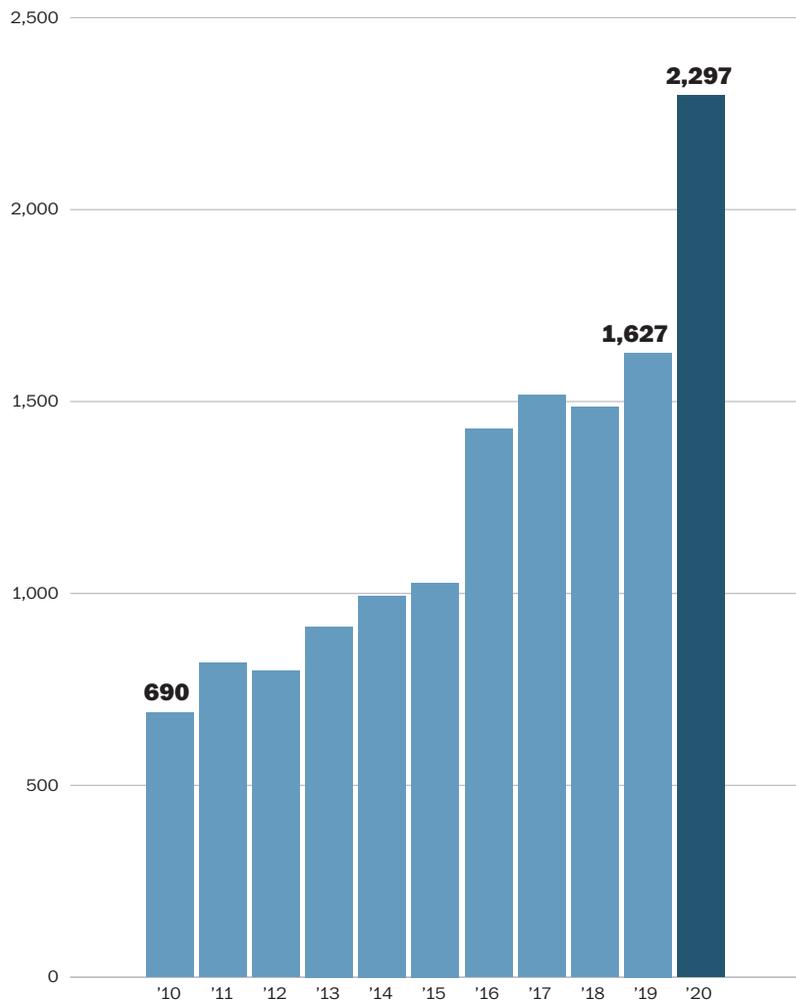
Renee Norden, executive director of the Mental Health Association of Fauquier County, suspects that the true impact of the pandemic on substance use is only now becoming apparent.

“As we’re able to see more people in person, we’re going to find more people worried about friends and loved ones,” she said. “For example, people can be in denial about how much they’re drinking. It’s not until they get around other people who see they’re drinking three beers for every one everyone else is drinking.”

Drug deaths: A new record

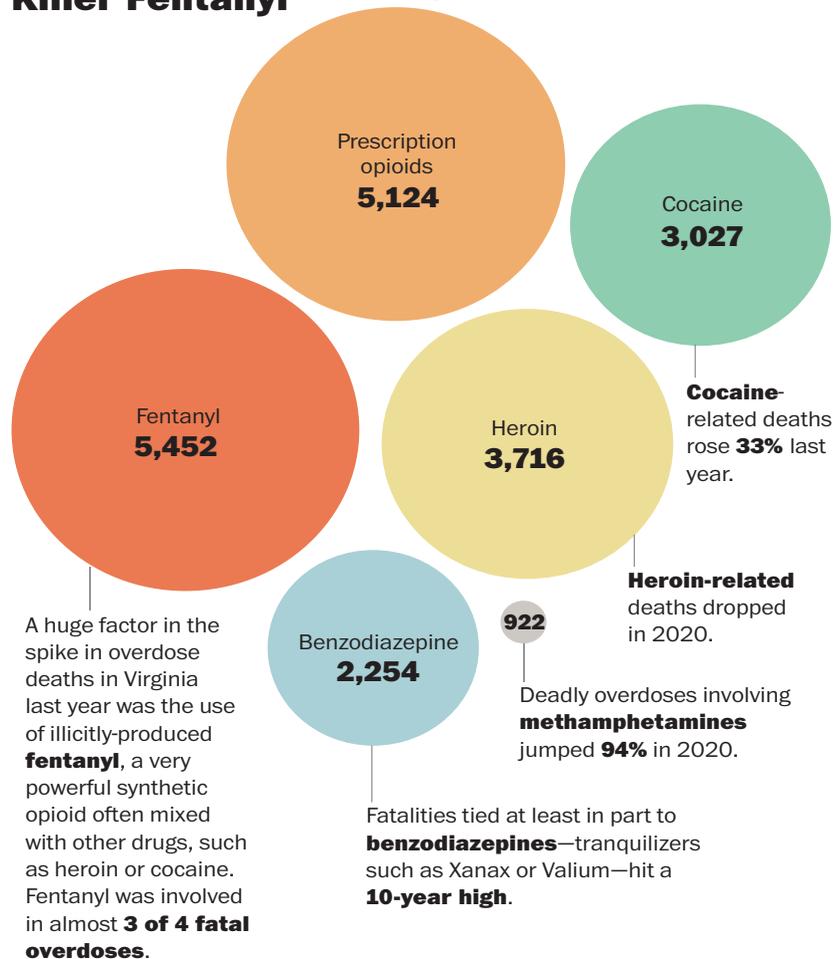
Fatal drug overdoses set a new record in Virginia in 2020, jumping 41% from the previous year. They were more than triple what they were a decade ago. This data is based on reports to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of Virginia.

Virginia



Breakdown of 2010-2020 Virginia overdose deaths involving various drugs, either alone or in combination. The prescription opioid data excludes use with fentanyl.

Killer Fentanyl

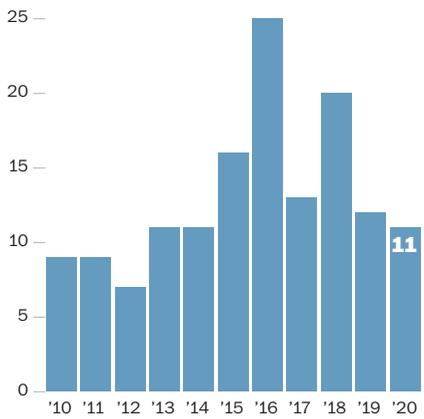


SOURCE: Virginia Department of Health. Since about 75 cases from 2020 remain open, the totals from last year are preliminary and subject to change.

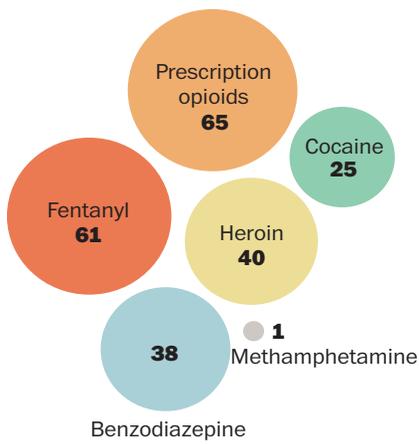
According to the Virginia Department of Health, Rappahannock, Page and Warren counties all hit 10-year highs in drug fatalities in 2020.

10-year high

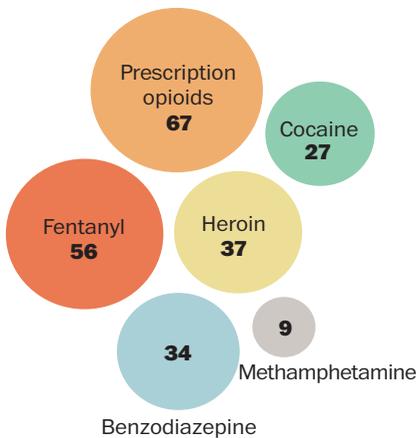
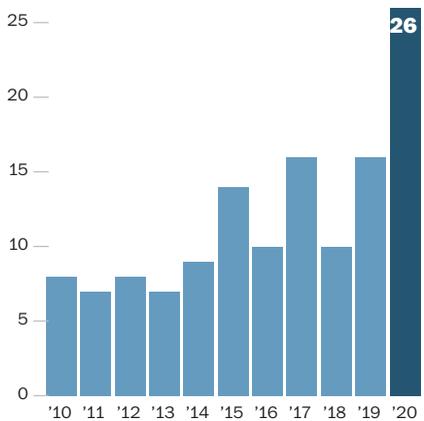
Fauquier 2010-2020 total: **144**



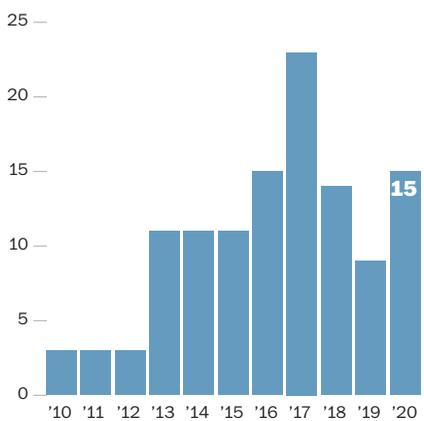
Breakdown of the types of drugs involved in 2010-2020 overdose deaths. The prescription opioid data excludes use with fentanyl.



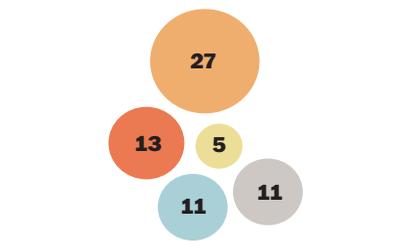
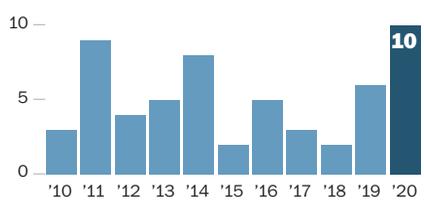
Warren 2010-2020 total: **131**



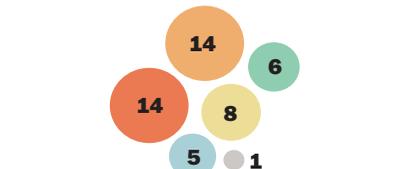
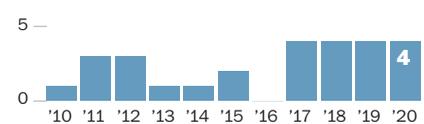
Culpeper 2010-2020 total: **118**



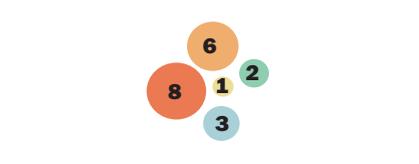
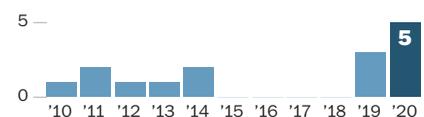
Page 2010-2020 total: **57**



Madison 2010-2020 total: **27**



Rappahannock 2010-2020 total: **15**



By Laura Stanton for Foothills Forum

Responding to COVID

➔ Last July, as drug overdoses kept climbing, a new state law went into effect. It prevents police from arresting for drug possession anyone who seeks help for a person experiencing an overdose, as well as those who administer care on-scene. Supporters of the legislation say it will save lives because it keeps people from hesitating before contacting authorities.

But Fauquier County Sheriff Robert Mosier contends that there also have been less positive effects: Officers are being called to the same house multiple times and are not able to take any legal action. That's frustrating to them, he said, and it means a person with a drug use disorder is less likely to get treatment.

Working with RRCS, Mosier's department has been overseeing a program at Fauquier's adult detention center where inmates can receive both counseling and access to Vivitrol, a drug that helps prevent relapses by blocking the effects of opioids. Research has found that former inmates are far more likely to die of a drug overdose within the first two weeks of their release from jail.

"Not everyone has the money to go to an expensive rehab program," he said.

At the federal level, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in response to COVID, has relaxed its regulations on people receiving methadone as part of medication-assisted treatment. Instead of being required to go to a clinic every day, patients receive 28-day take-home supplies. The Drug Enforcement Agency began allowing certified physicians to prescribe buprenorphine, a drug that reduces addiction cravings, without seeing a patient in person. A telephone evaluation will suffice.

Just last month, federal health officials went a step further, announcing that doctors, physician assistants and nurse practitioners will be able to prescribe buprenorphine without going through a special training program. The goal is to make the treatment more accessible in rural communities, where doctors are in short supply.

While he supports making buprenorphine available to more people in need, Dr. Ash Diwan, a physician at Piedmont Family Practice who is certified in addiction medicine, is concerned that with so many health

professionals permitted to prescribe the medication, other aspects of treatment will get short shrift.

"It has to be about more than dispensing medicine," he said. "There has to be a counseling component. If it was just like writing a prescription for an antibiotic, it would be easy. But it's not. That would be treating a chronic problem like an acute one."

Lost momentum

That's a common concern in the treatment community, that the push to better educate the public about the chronic nature of addiction has lost momentum in the pandemic, that reducing the stigma of substance use as a moral failing rather than a medical condition has faded.

There have been some gains. More patients have eventually gravitated to virtual support groups, not only eliminating transportation issues, but also enabling them to meet peers all over the world. Thanks to telehealth, more people are making their therapy appointments.

Cory Will said he is encouraged to see that people with substance use disorders are more likely to view their condition as a mental health issue.

"I sat in on an AA meeting, and there were a dozen people there," he said. "Not one person brought up drinking. They talked about mental health, about feeling alone and being anxious."

But the illicit version of the powerful painkiller fentanyl continues to be a deadly wild card, playing a role in almost three out of four overdose deaths in Virginia last year. And deaths related to methamphetamine rose precipitously in the state in 2020.

Will is worried about the long-term costs of such a prolonged period of stressful isolation. "You hear about alcohol sales going through the roof," he said. "When is that going to start showing up?"

Dee Fleming has the same concern. "We have people just starting their addiction journey because of COVID. We've had people who've been in recovery five years pick it back up again. People are using more alone than they used to," she said.

"I really think that if we don't start getting a handle on the substance use issue again, five years from now we'll be asking, 'How did it get this bad?'"



BY COV FERRELL/FAUQUIER TIMES

"You hear about alcohol sales going through the roof. When is that going to start showing up?"

— Cory Will, far right, peer recovery program manager for Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services with his team



COVID's HIDDEN TOLL

Voices | Fighting alcoholism in the time of COVID

Taylor, 30, works in the home improvement business in Culpeper. He started drinking when he was 15. Now, he says, it's a "problem." He asked not to be identified due to the stigma tied to his substance-use disorder. Here's his take on what it has been like to deal with his drinking during the pandemic.

When did you start to think you might have a problem?

Probably within the past two years.

Why?

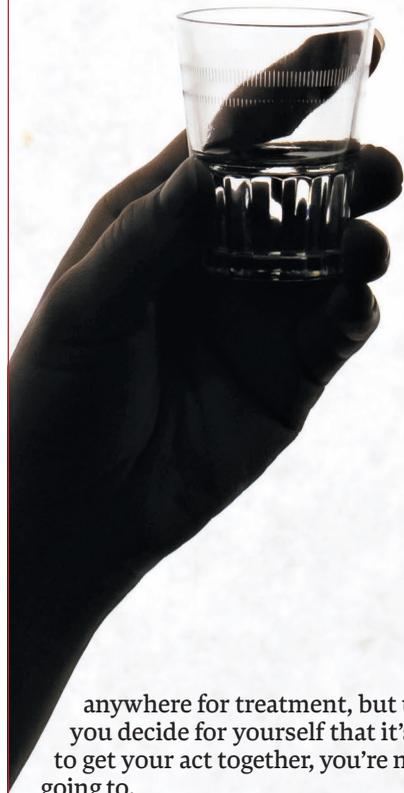
In August 2019, I got my first DUI. That was kind of a red flag. That December, I went into a 30-day program. Then COVID hit a couple months later. With COVID, it was just hard. There were no AA meetings, and for me, in-person meetings are better.

When did you start going to Alcoholics Anonymous?

I had actually been going to AA meetings and Restore Culpeper meetings before my treatment and even prior to my DUI arrest. I was trying to figure out if I did have a problem or didn't have a problem. I don't know that I so much have a problem with alcohol. I have some mental health issues from loss of family members, and worrying more about other people and not myself. That built up on me over the years, and alcohol was my solution.

Was being in a peer group beneficial?

Yes and no. It was beneficial if I listened. You can do anything or go



anywhere for treatment, but until you decide for yourself that it's time to get your act together, you're not going to.

What was your reaction when COVID started?

It was kind of an "Oh crap" moment. I have to do this on my own. With the sober network, it's kind of like a family. I stayed in contact with people via phone. But it felt like you were suddenly on an island.

What did you miss most about it?

Well, Monday nights I was doing the

Restore meetings.* And pre-COVID, I was doing at least two AA meetings a week. When you go to those meetings, it's like being part of a team. We're all trying to win the game of staying sober. I think mainly I missed the fellowship of being around people like me. I stayed plugged in with my community, but when COVID hit, it was more on-again, off-again, on-again, off-again.

Did you start to drink again once the COVID lockdown began?

Not right away. I made it to about the middle of summer. Then the wheels started to wobble. We had had our first child in January, and there was a lot of stress from that. You know, becoming a parent amidst all this COVIDness.

So, how did the drinking start again?

I was a closet drinker so no one knew. I'd drink coffee to mask it. And you get into the mindset of "Well, I don't know when I'll be able to do this again, so I'll drink as much as I can." When I did, it got messy quick.

What's been happening since then?

In March, I got my second DUI. I've been sober since then.

How has your drinking affected your relationship with your wife?

When I got arrested the second time, I thought that was going to be it for my marriage. We've been married less than two years.

But my wife is phenomenal. She sees the potential in me. But I do think this is it for me if I screw up this shot. It's more motivation to stay on track. I'm out of jail on bond [for the second DUI], and if I'm out drinking and get caught by law enforcement, I'm going to jail for a long time.

Are you feeling hopeful?

I'm starting a new outpatient treatment program three nights a week. It's therapy and group meetings. All virtual. I didn't want to do it, but I can't really leave any option on the table now.

What do most people not understand about recovery?

It's not that we're bad people. As part of our addiction, we can make bad decisions. It's really hard to get people to understand that. Also, anyone can go away for 30 days or 90 days, but if you don't learn how to live your normal life sober, it's not going to work.

Do you think there will be long-term consequences of the pandemic for people in recovery?

Absolutely. Our overdose death rates have been up. That's as long-term as it gets.

— Randy Rieland

* Restore Culpeper is a 12-step support group started by the Mountain View Community Church.

What family and friends should know

There was a time when the conventional wisdom said that a person could not begin to address his or her substance use issues until they hit "rock bottom." It's a term you never hear in the treatment community any more. As Renee Norden, executive director of the Mental Health Association of Fauquier County, put it: "If somebody had all the symptoms of diabetes, would you say we're going to hold off until they go into diabetic shock before we do anything?"

Here are other fundamentals of substance-use recovery:

- 1 Addiction isn't a matter of choice. It's a treatable, chronic disease.
- 2 Detoxification is only the first step of treatment and is rarely sufficient on its own to lead to long-term recovery.
- 3 It is very difficult for opioid drug users to quit by themselves. Relapse is common.
- 4 Many people with substance-use issues also have mental health disorders, which can make recovery even more challenging.
- 5 Boredom and isolation are top reasons for relapse early in the recovery process.
- 6 It's important for people in recovery not to have temptations or triggers in their homes.
- 7 Long-term drug use can cause profound changes in brain structure and function that result in uncontrollable drug craving.
- 8 Treatment that addresses many aspects of a person's life — including mental and physical health — can be most effective at helping end or reduce using.
- 9 Treatment can include counseling, medication and behavioral therapies, which can also be used in combination.
- 10 Dwelling on the past is counterproductive for someone in recovery.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the national Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Where to get help

HELPLINES

24/7 Crisis Hotline: Deals with mental health and substance use situations. 540-825-5656.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255.

NeverUseAlone: 24/7 peer-run call line. 1-800-484-3731.

Peer2Peer Regional Warmline: Not a crisis line, but callers connect with peers with experience in mental health and substance use issues. 833-626-1490.

THERAPY AND RECOVERY SERVICES

Boxwood Recovery Center: 28-day residential substance use recovery center in Culpeper that provides individual, family and group counseling. 540-547-2760. www.rrcsb.org/boxwood-recovery-center

Herren Wellness at Twin Oaks: Holistic residential addiction recovery center in Warrenton. 844-443-7736. info@herrenwellness.com

Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services: Agency that provides outpatient mental health and substance use counseling and clinical assessments to determine treatment needed. Warrenton clinic: 540-347-7620. Culpeper clinic: 540-825-3100. 24/7 Crisis hotline: 540-825-5656. www.rrcsb.org

SpiritWorks Foundation Center for the Soul: Peer-to-peer addiction recovery support. Warrenton office: 540-428-5415. www.spiritworksfoundation.org

"COVID-19'S HIDDEN TOLL" is a



FOOTHILLS FORUM

recurring series produced jointly by four organizations: Foothills Forum and the

Piedmont Journalism Foundation, two independent, nonprofit civic news organizations; and Rappahannock Media and Piedmont Media, two local media companies. In this series, Foothills Forum provided the research and reporting; the media companies decide when and what to publish in their newspapers and on their websites.

• Foothills Forum focuses on Rappahannock County. See foothillsforum.org.

• Piedmont Journalism Foundation focuses on Fauquier County. See piedmontjournalism.org.

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\$1

'Better than nothing'

Could Rappahannock learn from Wise County's Starlink program?

BY RACHEL NEEDHAM
Rappahannock News Staff

In a few important ways, Wise County in southwestern Virginia has a lot in common with Rappahannock: It's mountainous, it's rural, and roughly 40 percent of its school-aged population didn't have reliable access to the internet when the pandemic began in March 2020.

The beginning of the story will sound familiar to Rappahannock County residents.

For the past ten years, Brandon Short has been trying to get broadband at his house in Wise. Like other rural areas across the country, Wise has had a hard time attracting commercial internet providers, because the challenging terrain and dispersed population means companies have to do a lot of legwork for a relatively small number of subscribers. So when Short made inquiries, he said internet companies quoted him close to \$15,000. And without internet in the home, when the COVID-19 crisis hit and school shut down, his two children were forced to do their homework on

See **STARLINK**, Page 6

Town awaits Rush River Commons details

▶ Page 10

Blue Rock owner withdraws resort application

▶ Page 11



COVID's HIDDEN TOLL



BY LUKE CHRISTOPHER FOR Foothills Forum

Rappahannock Senior Center Supervisor Darcy Canton says goodbye to her Flint Hill "girls," driver Shelby Welch and Helen Corbin on Tuesday in Castleton.

Shrinking worlds

For many older adults, the question now is how they recover from a pandemic that made their lives dimmer and lonely

BY RANDY RIELAND
For Foothills Forum

Soon the regulars at the senior centers in Rappahannock and Fauquier counties will be able to come in four days a week again. They won't need to wear masks or social-distance around the tables, which will make conversation a whole lot easier for those with hearing problems. They'll be able to eat their lunches off plates

instead of from pre-packed plastic containers. It will be like old times.

But not everything will be as it was before the pandemic. Some of the seniors will be changed.

See **SENIORS**, Page 12

A RAPP NEWS/FOOTHILLS FORUM SPECIAL REPORT

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RAAC's fall art tour is back

The popular weekend event sponsored by Rappahannock Association for Arts and Community returns for its 16th year in November 2020. **8**



This week

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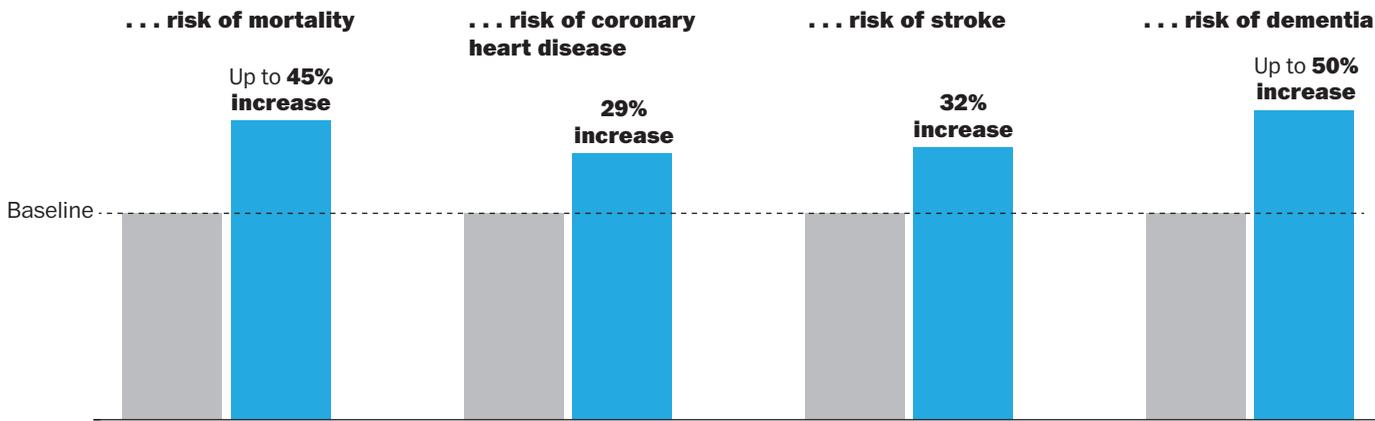


COVID's HIDDEN TOLL

Loneliness can kill

There's supposed to be safety in numbers, but not in a pandemic. For more than a year, a premium has been placed on people staying isolated. For many older adults, that has meant long, long stretches of being alone. More and more studies suggest that prolonged loneliness takes not just an emotional and mental toll, but a physical one as well.

Research indicates that loneliness among seniors can result in an increase in . . .



For the charts above **baseline** = seniors without prolonged loneliness

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In addition, studies suggest:

- More risk of death than obesity and physical inactivity.
- An increase in cortisol, a major stress hormone.
- Loneliness can affect production of white blood cells, which can limit the immune system's ability to fight infections.
- Sleeping problems.
- According to one study, loneliness can be as detrimental to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

GRAPHICS BY LAURA STANTON FOR Foothills Forum

SENIORS

From Page 1

Darcy Canton, supervisor of the Rappahannock Senior Center, noticed this when her regulars started returning after months of isolation. "For many people, it's been a very, very difficult time. Life was heavy for them," she said. "They already had a lot on their plates with aging and health issues. I saw the light dim in their eyes."

Rachel Pierce has seen much of the same at the Senior Center in Warrenton, where she is administrator. "I feel like the pandemic has changed a lot of them," she said.

"By them being home so long, they've become very comfortable just staying home. They're not being social. They're not being mobile. Mentally, physically, emotionally, they've declined. It's so hard to see that."

Home alone

From the beginning, it was clear that COVID-19 was going to take a terrible toll on older adults, particularly those struggling with chronic health conditions. Of the 600,000 people who have died, 80 percent were 65 or older.

But when it came to mental health, experts expressed more concern about the impact on children and teenagers isolated from their friends and forced to "attend" school through a computer screen at home. The thinking was that older adults, with more life experience, would not be as disoriented by the constraints and disruptions brought by COVID-19.

Through the early months of the pandemic, researchers found that largely to be the case. A survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention a year ago determined that participants 65 or older reported "significantly lower percentages of anxiety disorder, depressive disorder or trauma- or stress-related disorder than participants in younger age groups."



PHOTOS BY LUKE CHRISTOPHER FOR Foothills Forum

"For many people, it's been a very, very difficult time. Life was heavy for them. ... I saw the light dim in their eyes."

— Darcy Canton, Rappahannock Senior Center supervisor, pictured above with Bess Lucking and Frances Thornhill going for a walk this week at the center in Castleton.

But as the pandemic wore on into late fall and winter, and they faced a holiday season in isolation, followed by a big spike in COVID cases in January, many seniors felt disheartened.

"When people are home alone day after day after day, they begin to lose

hope," said Kathi Walker, support coordinator and long-term-care ombudsman for Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS). "When you lose hope, your world becomes smaller and everything around starts to shut down."

She said the need to talk to another person likely made seniors more vulnerable to phone scammers, and she worked with some to help them protect themselves from being duped.

"You hear a nice friendly voice on the phone, and you want to chat," Walker said.

Before she retired recently, Kathryn Treanor was member services coordinator for Rapp at Home, a non-profit serving older adults in Rappahannock. Her volunteers checked in on people through weekly calls. Over time, a number of those seniors seemed less sure of themselves and more dependent.

"Some of our members who normally could manage through challenging situations called us more often," she said. "These were problems that ordinarily they could have handled easily. It became more and more a debilitating situation."

Physical costs of loneliness

The smothering weight of loneliness also can have consequences for an aging person's physical health. Research has found that people who describe themselves as lonely are more likely to have trouble sleeping, and are at a higher risk of heart disease, stroke and obesity. They may have more difficulty fighting infections, too, because danger signals activated in the brain can affect production of white blood cells.

Social isolation similarly has been linked to a 50 percent increase in the risk of dementia, and lack of human interaction can accelerate the decline of those already suffering from it. Last year, in fact, there were at least 42,000 more deaths in the United States related to dementia compared with the average of the five previous years, according to the CDC.

Overall, research suggests that chronic loneliness increases the risk of mortality by as much as 45 percent. ➔

The toll at nursing homes

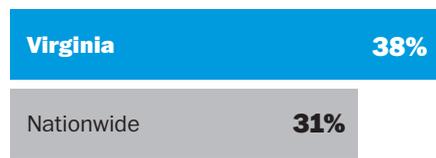
The impact of the pandemic has been particularly brutal on residents of long-term-care facilities, especially nursing homes. Less than 1 percent of the U.S. population lives in these places, but they've accounted for more than one-third of the country's COVID deaths.

Here are some of Virginia's grim statistics:

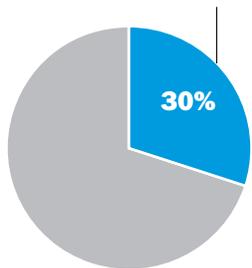
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Virginians had died of COVID-19 as of the end of May

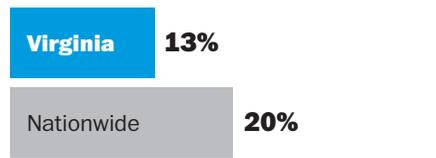
Percentage of those who died from COVID-19 who were living in **long-term-care facilities:**



Of the **3,568 COVID outbreaks** in Virginia, 3 in 10 were in **long-term-care facilities**



Percentage of **long-term-care residents** diagnosed with COVID **who later died:**



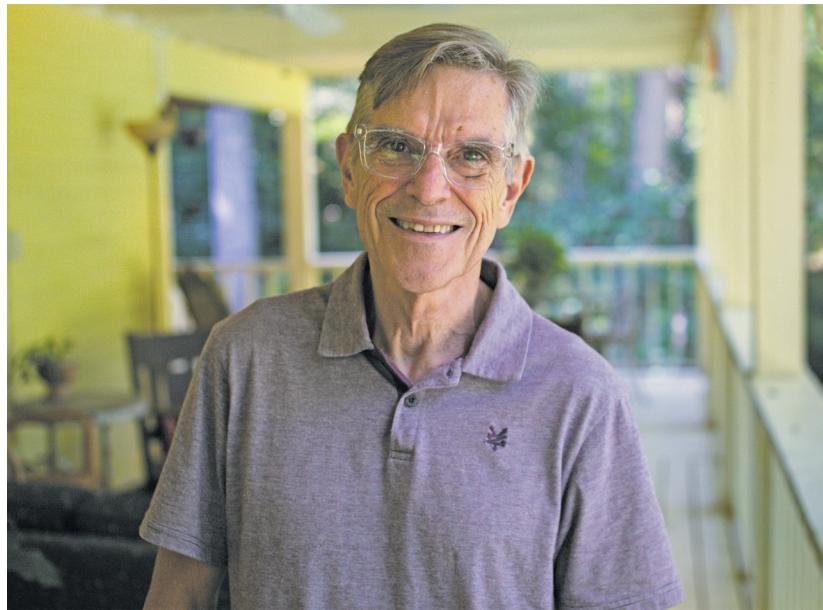
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Virginia long-term-care facilities have had **20+ COVID deaths.**

Sources: Virginia Department of Health, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, New York Times.



► Read earlier parts of this series at rappnews.com/hiddentoll



“They realized that this is awful, but they’ve figured out that this is what we have, so how are we going to deal with it.”

— **Danny Wilson**, longtime leader of a caregivers support group in the county who found that some seniors adapted — and eventually became at ease — with online sessions during the pandemic.

➔ The pandemic jeopardized the health of older adults in more basic ways, too. At a time in their lives when many need it most, health care was put on hold. In-person visits to doctors and dentists didn't happen. Some skipped cancer-treatment follow-up appointments. Elective surgeries, such as knee or hip replacements, were postponed, raising the likelihood of prolonged pain and limited mobility for many months.

Physicians tried to compensate with phone check-ins or online conversations, but the former precluded a visual appraisal and the latter wasn't an effective option for seniors with limited technology skills or broadband access.

“Most everything went digital overnight,” noted Rachel Pierce, “and a lot of seniors did not have the technology to make that shift.” She explored buying iPads for senior center members, but said the cost was prohibitive.

The senior centers reopened on a limited basis last July, and when members started showing up again, it was clear that many had not been physically active. Kathi Walker pointed out that some people who were moving with little trouble the last time she saw them had begun using walkers or other mobility devices.

“Exercise is part of the program at the senior centers, but it was so obvious people haven't been exercising,” said Poppy Foddrell, support coordinator for Aging Services at RRCS. “It's been hard to get some back in the swing.

“For people used to being social, the isolation has been really hard for them to manage,” she said. “It brought up mental health things that they didn't know they had. Like fear.”

That was particularly true at the Rappahannock Senior Center after one of its regulars died

of COVID-19 last summer in an outbreak at the Massanova Pentecostal Church in Castleton.

“That freaked everybody out,” said Darcy Canton. “A lot of people decided they were going to lock themselves in their houses.”

Nursing home scourge

The past year has been especially traumatic for residents of long-term-care facilities and their families. Almost four out of every 10 Virginians who died of COVID lived in nursing homes or other long-term-care facilities. Last September, there was a serious outbreak at the Brookside Rehab and Nursing Center in Warrenton: 103 cases were diagnosed; 20 people died.

For Ellen Phipps, executive director of the nonprofit Aging Together, the COVID scourge in the nation's nursing homes, while tragic, was also revealing. “The pandemic really shined a light on how poorly long-term-care facilities are managed, how understaffed they are, and how poorly equipped they were to provide infection control and hygiene,” she said.

Family members, not permitted inside to visit, could provide neither company nor the personal care needed to compensate for insufficient staffs.

“What's become clearer is how much care family members actually provide in these situations,” said Walker, who works with families with loved ones in long-term care. “It's emotional support, physical support, the whole gamut. But they weren't there.

“People were desperately lonely, but for long periods of time, they were locked in their rooms,” she added. “You had people who were in

See **SENIORS**, Page 14

Where to get help

HELPLINES

24/7 Crisis Hotline: For help with mental health and substance use disorders; 540-825-5656

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-8255.

Substance Abuse Hotline: 800-662-HELP (4357)

Peer2Peer Regional Warmline: Not a crisis line, but callers connect with peers with experience in mental health and substance use issues. 833-626-1490.

AGENCIES AND SERVICES

AARP Virginia: Information on health, wealth, retirement, lifestyle and more. <https://states.aarp.org/virginia/>; 866-542-8164.

Aging Together: Regional nonprofit that offers advice and programs on older-adult issues. <https://www.agingtogether.org/>; 540-829-6405.

Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org; 800-272-3900.

Area Agency on Aging, Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services: Information on home-delivered meals, long-term care and Medicare. www.rrcsb.org; 540-825-3100 x3427.

Caregiver Support Group: Open to anyone providing direct or long-distance care to someone with a physical or mental health condition. Contact Danny Wilson for more information. rapplander@gmail.com; 540-547-4126.

Department of Social Services: Provides support services to older adults and responds to reports of elder neglect and abuse. Fauquier County: 540-422-8400; Rappahannock County: 540-675-3313.

FAMS (Foothills Area Mobility Systems): Call center that arranges transportation. www.fams.org; 540-829-5300.

Fauquier Community Food Bank & Thrift Store: www.fauquierfoodbank.org; 540-359-6054.

Mental Health Association of Fauquier County: Nonprofit that provides information on mental health and addiction resources and treatment for Fauquier and Rappahannock residents. www.fauquier-mha.org/; 540-341-8732.

Rappahannock County Food Pantry: www.rappahannockpantry.org; 540-987-5090.

Rapp at Home: Member organization that supports neighbor-to-neighbor assistance to sustain an independent lifestyle for those over 50. www.rappathome.net; 540-937-HOME (4663).

Rappahannock Benevolent Fund: Provides financial and support services in a confidential manner to Rappahannock residents. www.rappbenfund.org/; 540-671-0421.

Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Senior Centers: Provide daytime support, meals, social activities and transportation for adults 60 or older. Fauquier: 540-347-7729. Rappahannock: 540-987-3638.

Warrenton Adult Day Healthcare Center: Offers participants programs and support and provides a break for caregivers. 540-347-2797 or 540-825-3100 x3427.

COVID's HIDDEN TOLL

SENIORS

From Page 13

the early stages of dementia and they couldn't understand why they had to stay in their rooms."

For those who have cared for loved ones in their homes, the challenges have been different but no less draining. In many cases, either outside help wasn't available or family caregivers didn't want to risk having someone come into their houses. So they handled everything themselves, often radically limiting their own trips outside the house for fear of bringing COVID home.

"One thing that keeps caregivers going is getting a break," Phipps said. "But now a lot of these people are really burning out because they've been doing this by themselves for a long time."

Danny Wilson would agree. The Rappahannock resident has been leading a caregivers support group for years. His group had to move to Zoom, which took some getting used to. Some people dropped out. But eventually, Wilson noticed a change in those who stuck with the virtual sessions.

"They began to share more," he said. "Within the group, people are more compassionate towards each other. Is that because of the pandemic or be-



BY COY FERRELL/FAUQUIER TIMES

Rachel Pierce, administrator of the Fauquier County Senior Center and Poppy Foddrell, support coordinator for aging services at Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services. "I feel like the pandemic has changed a lot of them," Pierce says of her clients.

cause they're online? I don't know for sure. But they are more open with each other."

Wilson has seen older folks who have shut down, and thinks they will have a hard time rebounding to where they were a year ago. He has also seen seniors who have been able to keep their balance during an earth-shaking

pandemic.

"They realized that this is awful, but they've figured out that this is what we have, so how are we going to deal with it," Wilson said.

Poppy Foddrell also has seen positive signs. "A lot of people were able to see through fresh eyes that they were stronger than they thought."

"COVID-19'S HIDDEN TOLL" is a recurring series produced jointly by four organizations: Foothills Forum and

the Piedmont Journalism Foundation, two independent, nonprofit civic news organizations; and Rappahannock Media and Piedmont Media, two local media companies. In this series, Foothills Forum provided the research and reporting; the media companies decide when and what to publish in their newspapers and on their websites.

- Foothills Forum focuses on Rappahannock County. See foothillsforum.org.

- Piedmont Journalism Foundation focuses on Fauquier County. See piedmontjournalism.org.

Community support of the nonprofits makes this and other projects possible. Funding for this series comes in part from the PATH Foundation, which provides grants to improve health and vitality in Fauquier, Rappahannock and Culpeper counties.

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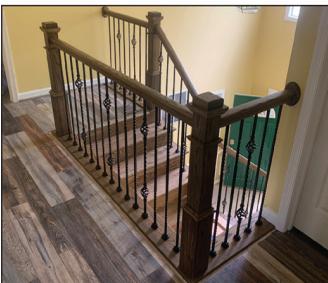
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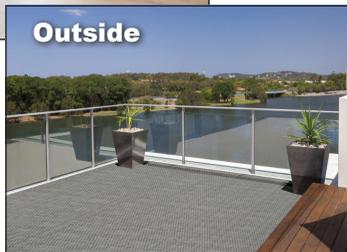
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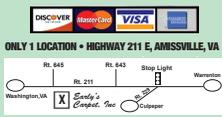
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COMMUNITY SHRED EVENT

EVENT DATE:
FRIDAY, JUNE 25TH

HOURS: 2:00 P.M. TO 5:00 PM

LOCATION:
Flatwood Refuse & Recycling Center
15 Flatwood Rd., Washington, VA 22747

Rappahannock County Residents Only
No Limit of Items per Person

Paper files only. No need to remove staples, paper clips, binder clips, rubber bands or tape. Hanging file folders, files with ACCO fasteners and spiral notebooks okay.
For complete listing please go to www.rappahannockcountyva.gov
TV Screen outside of Truck allows viewing of process inside vehicle

All Destroyed Files are 100% Securely Recycled

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