



# The Tidewater News

115TH YEAR, NO. 70

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022

\$1.00

## Collision on Meherrin Road involves Southampton deputy



TITUS MOHLER | THE TIDEWATER NEWS

Southampton Towing & Recovery loads onto the truck one of the vehicles involved in the traffic collision on Meherrin Road in Southampton County on Wednesday, Feb. 16.

BY TITUS MOHLER  
STAFF WRITER

Breaking news photo

A traffic collision involving a Southampton County Sheriff's Office deputy occurred Feb. 16 in Southampton County on Meherrin Road.

Detective Justin Boone of the sheriff's office confirmed the deputy's involvement and stated that the Virginia State Police is actively investigating the collision.

The Courtland Volunteer Fire Department reported on its Facebook page that it had units on the scene of the collision, which it described as a two-vehicle accident with entrapment.

CVFD stated that one of its units extricated the entrapped individual 12 minutes after arriving on scene and 20 minutes

from the initial time of dispatch.

The social media post noted that one patient was airlifted by LifeEvac 4, and one patient was transported to a local hospital.

Sgt. Michelle Anaya, with the Virginia State Police, stated in a Tuesday morning, Feb. 22, email, "In reference to the two-vehicle crash involving the on-duty deputy, the case is still under investigation."

SEE COLLISION, A8

## City council celebrates Black History Month

BY TITUS MOHLER  
STAFF WRITER

The Franklin City Council unanimously adopted a resolution celebrating Black History Month at its Feb. 14 meeting.

Ward 3 Councilman Gregory McLemore read the resolution in full.

The resolution adopted is as follows:

Whereas, Black History Month originated in 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievements of African Americans in the United States; and

Whereas, Black History Month is designed to recognize and pay tribute to the many contributions of African Americans to the history, society and culture of the United States of America; and

Whereas, the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life and their endeavors to learn and thrive throughout history and make unforgettable marks in our nation

SEE COUNCIL, A8



TITUS MOHLER | THE TIDEWATER NEWS

Franklin Department of Parks and Recreation Director Sammara Green-Bailey performs the ribbon cutting inside the new learning center that is part of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center. She is joined by Franklin Mayor Frank M. Rabil and Franklin City Manager Amanda C. Jarratt, among others.

## Grand opening held for new learning center

BY TITUS MOHLER  
STAFF WRITER

The Franklin Department of Parks and Recreation hosted the grand opening of its new learning center Tuesday, Feb. 22, at the Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center.

The learning center was two-and-a-half years in the making.

Franklin Parks and Recreation Director Sammara Green-Bailey summed up

the purpose of the gathering Tuesday in her presentation to community leaders and donors that were present.

"We are assembled here

SEE CENTER, A8

## Petition for elected county school board begins to circulate

BY TITUS MOHLER  
STAFF WRITER

Beginning to circulate in Southampton County is a petition calling for a referendum on the November ballot that would allow voters to change how the Southampton County School Board is selected.

Mandy Hall, who is helping to promote the petition, shared the question being asked of qualified voters in the county: "Shall the method of selecting the school board be changed from appointment by the School Board Selection Commission to direct election by the voters?"

The current selection method involves a circuit court judge appointing three people who comprise the School Board Selection Commission, and that commission selects the school board members.

For the petition to successfully

SEE PETITION, A8

## IW arrest of motorcycle gang suspect leads to search of Portsmouth business

STAFF REPORT

Isle of Wight County Sheriff's Office deputies searched a Portsmouth business on Feb. 18 - an investigation they say stems from their arrest of suspected outlaw motorcycle gang member Ronald Matthews last year.

Deputies arrested Matthews, 35, at his Carrsville home in December, charging him with seven felonies and one misdemeanor stemming from their search for two vehicles that had been reported stolen.

SEE ARREST, A8

## Construction on new Foodbank facility passes midpoint

BY TITUS MOHLER  
STAFF WRITER

Construction on the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore's Western Tidewater Branch and Community Produce Hub has passed its midpoint and has been proceeding well, with little incident.

When it is ready, this two-story facility at 618 South St. in Franklin will become the focal point of the Foodbank's efforts in the area to address food insecurity and its root causes.

"It's several months into construction now," said Foodbank Chief Operations Officer Bob Latvis, who is managing

the project.

He noted that the only major roadblocks in the construction process have been the supply chain interruptions that are affecting people and projects across the country. He said the supply chain has been especially impacted in the construction world.

Foodbank Interim President and CEO Jaynee K. Day said the Western Tidewater Branch and Community Produce Hub's projected launch date is July 1.

"But again, back to Bob's point, supply and demand and the supply chain has been

SEE FOODBANK, A8



TITUS MOHLER | THE TIDEWATER NEWS

This photo shows the construction progress that had been made as of Feb. 9 on the second story of the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore's Western Tidewater Branch and Community Produce Hub. The branch and hub, located at 618 South St. in Franklin, is estimated to be open and operational by July 1.

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Meta J. Cutchin  
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Wendy B. Harrison  
Barbara G. McDowell  
Jerry D. Rice

Linda G. Rowe  
Lloyd R. Shaffer Jr.  
Samuel W. Stephenson Jr.  
Wilton R. Woods

BEST BET  
**Black History Hall of Fame:** Stop by the Courtland branch of the Blackwater Regional Library to unscramble and guess famous faces during the month of February. For more information on all Blackwater Regional Library programs call 757-653-2821, visit our website or Facebook page at www.blackwaterlib.org/.

# TWO SINGLE DELUXE *with Cheese* \$6

Don't forget to Round Up to

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