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COVERSHEET

- 1. Hats off to Gertie Edwards, following her mother's lead (May 4, Aimée O'Grady)
- 2. What's the buzz? It's Half Past Moon in Marshall (June 22, Aimée O'Grady)
- 3. Erin's Elderberries celebrates grand opening at Vint Hill Aug. 27 (Aug. 25, Aimée O'Grady)



Virginia Gold Cup special section. See inside.

'Fight' at Auburn Middle School prompts juvenile court action against student

By Robin Earl

FAUQUIER TIMES STAFF WRITER

What school officials claim was a "fight" between two students at Auburn Middle School on Friday, April 29 has led the sheriff's office to pursue action in juvenile court against one of the students.

Tara Helkowski, spokeswoman for Fauquier County Public Schools, said that because of the ongoing investigation and the fact that the students are juveniles, she could not comment on the victim's condition, the alleged assailant's status at the school or whether specific safety procedures were being put in place as a result of the incident.

Fauquier County Sheriff Jeremy Falls said that a petition for juvenile intake had been submitted against the alleged assailant. "It means that the accused will be served by juvenile services and a court date will be set," he said Saturday.

See FIGHT, page 8

Hats off to Gertie Edwards, following her mother's lead



FAUQUIER TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL Gertie Edwards and her hats can be found through June at 81B Main Street, Warrenton. Edwards runs her business wherever she finds space. "I grow where I am planted," she said.

Aimée O'Grady

SPECIAL TO THE FAUQUIER TIMES

Gertie Edwards, owner of Your Hat Lady, has been bringing fashionable hats to her Fauquier customers since 2009. Edwards was inspired by her mother, Sally Ann Caison, "My mother always made sure to wear a hat that suited her attire."

Her first rented space was with Anne Michelle Greene in Marshall. Today, Edwards and her hats can be found in Old Town Warrenton through June at 81B Main Street. Edwards runs her business wherever she finds space. "I grow where I am planted," she says of sharing space in other businesses.

Early this year when her customers asked her to come back, she began looking again. In March, she leased space from Crown Units, across Main Street from Latitudes. She will be there until mid-June, when she hopes to have found a new space to rent.

See **EDWARDS**, page 4



FAUQUIER TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL Jackson Kelso and Julia Karns were named Fauquier High's prom king and queen Saturday night.

Fauquier, Kettle Run high schools hold long-awaited proms

After a pared-down event last year, hundreds of Fauquier High School students gathered in the old gymnasium on campus Saturday night for the first full-fledged prom since 2019.

After an afternoon filled with all the rituals — struggling with boutonnières, complying with Mom's request for just one more photo in that rented suit — associated with the coming-of-age event, students let loose on the dance floor in a joyful celebration of youthful exuberance after two years of missed milestones amid the pandemic. A dance circle even formed in front of the DJ as students egged on their friends to show off their moves — and cheered wildly when they did. Other friend groups formed their own dance parties on the edges of the floor. Even a few chaperones couldn't resist busting a move or two on the sidelines of the dance floor.

Fauquier has traditionally held a popular after-prom event each year. This year, the school opted to go with a "senior celebration" at Falcon Field on May 13, complete with all the games, food and prizes typically on offer at after-prom.

See **PROM**, page 6



Fauquier Times takes top honors in VPA contest.



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Recreation center offers fresh start for recovering addicts

VERDUN, from page 3

Glenn Heath, a gray-haired veteran, sat to the side of the room and offered periodic words of encouragement. "It's a good tool in your toolbox to just slow down and start breathing. ... [it] has a way of cleaning the body," he said. Himself a recovering addict, Heath was attached to Project SOAR as a "peer recovery specialist" through the S.E.E. Recovery Center, a Culpeper-based substance use recovery center that collaborates with Verdun on the program. He described his role within the program as something akin to a mentor, someone who can use their own experience to support another's recovery from addiction.

"We come here [and do] these exercises, and it's just incredible ... the improvement people show in just eight weeks," said Heath. The key to the program's success, he suggested, lies in "building a sense of solidarity" between individuals who may have been isolated by their own struggles. "There's a stigma that once you've fallen into these divots in life, you never think you're going to get out," he said. But getting sober is far from impossible, he insisted with an almost ever-present grin, when people get the support they need.

Throughout the day, several Project SOAR participants told the *Fauquier Times* that the experience had felt transformative.

"At first, there was a lot going through my

"It feels good to do it all sober."

head. ... I didn't know if it was for me," said Cierra, who commutes from Gordonsville twice a week for the program. "I was a really bad alcoholic and got into trouble," she said, and as part of her bail had to see a counselor with the Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Board, who recommended Project SOAR.

But much to her surprise, Cierra found herself returning to Verdun week after week. "Every time, it was something different, something interesting," she said. "I like doing all these challenges" and how they've tested her mentally and physically. "It feels good to do it all sober." Since starting the program, she now meditates and prays to deal with anxiety, she's done rock climbing for the first time — something she said she's always wanted to try — and started fishing again, which she hadn't done regularly since childhood. "I see there's more to life than drinking, and I can do all these things and not have to drink" to enjoy myself, Cierra said.

"That feeling of accomplishment when they push themselves seems to really stick," McElhinney said of the program's methodology. "We know we're not going to turn everyone [who] comes to SOAR into rock climbers, and that's not our goal." Rather, the hope is that they find some form of external fulfillment that doesn't involve drugs or alcohol.

The current group, McElhinney observed, "all seem enthusiastic and curious and open. They definitely aren't hesitant at all, whereas in the beginning, I'd say there was definitely hesitation when we brought out something new."

Verdun has held three Project SOAR "rotations" since 2020, and McElhinney hopes to continue with a fourth this fall. When asked about his inspiration for the program, he recalled attending a conference on the opioid epidemic convened by the Virginia State Police. He was struck by the words of one officer, who admitted, "We can't arrest our way out of this problem. We've tried. It's not working." The police "were basically asking: 'How can the nonprofit world jump in and help fight this problem," according to McElhinney, "and that's where we figured we could fit in."

For Heath, the peer recovery specialist, Verdun's program offers a template for other treatment programs. The community, as he liked to put it, was "ripe" for the change. "We've got a revolving door of people going into the judicial system" due to mental illness and addiction, he said, and "anytime we can divert someone it saves the community a bundle of resources." Programs like this "stop that before it starts."

Hats off to Gertie Edwards, following her mother's lead

EDWARDS, from page 1

Your Hat Lady compliments Crown Units nicely. Crown Units provides synthetic and human hair products and carries a full line of wigs, hair extensions, beauty supplies and customized pieces for customers.

Large derby-style hats are displayed in the front window along with wigs and other hair pieces. Smaller style hats of rich navy blue, red and black are also available. More hat towers can be found within the store in varying shades and styles. Your Hat Lady also sells fascinators -- light, decorative pieces with feathers, flowers or beads attached to a comb or hair clip.

Edwards is an artist, and her medium is hats.

She loves period hats like those seen on the series Downton Abbey, the roaring 1920s and even bonnets worn on the 1970s series "Little House on the Prairie." She's made many pillbox hats, like the ones worn by Jacqueline Kennedy, and loves the hat styles of the 1950s and 60s. She follows British fascinator trends for inspiration. Some hats she makes and others she purchases and embellishes. Every hat is an original.

For her photo shoot for this article, Edwards made sure that her hat complimented her attire. As it turned out, she was wearing black and white -- her mother's favorite all-purpose colors.

Edwards was one of 11 children; the fifth child and has four sisters and six brothers. "Of five girls, I am the only one who followed in our mother's footsteps with her affinity for hats," said Edwards. "My mother's wardrobe was very important to her. Whether it was church on Sunday or any outing, she wanted us all to look good," she said.

Edwards was raised in nearby

Berryville. Her father worked in construction and her mother, with 11 children to raise, rarely worked outside of the house, but when she did, she did domestic work for other people.

Your Hat Lady is a tribute to her mother. "My mother used to say, 'Don't wait for the situation to change, be happy with the situation you have.' This helps me keep going. I adapt to whatever space I am in," she said.

Edwards' mother not only inspired her love of hat fashion, but she also set an example on how to raise a family. "As a child, people would gather at our house every weekend. We had a yard full of friends and cousins, and my mother would feed them all," she said. "She encouraged us all to cook and assigned us different nights to take care of dinner. She taught us how to be responsible."

Edwards and her husband, Sam-

uel, have been married for 55 years. They have two children, a son who lives in Florida and a daughter who lives here in Warrenton. The couple has four grandchildren, the eldest, Kechia, lives in Manassas. "Kechia is my right hand. She told me that too many ladies need me when I started looking for space in March."

Sally Ann Caison raised her children to treat people the way you would want to be treated. "If you do that, you won't be alone or sad," said Edwards. Edwards takes what her mother told her to heart and remembers it each time she adds feathers, flowers, trim or other embellishments to her customers' hats.

Like her mother's home, Edwards welcomes people to come and visit with her. "I am here, growing, and I want to give hats to my customers."

Your Hat Lady may be found at 81B Main Street, Warrenton, through June 2022.

The Fauquier Times wins statewide award for 5th straight year

AWARDS, from page 2

for the publication, and video clips accompanied the stories to mimic the "real" Quibbler newspaper (with pictures that move) from the Harry Potter series. The *Times* editorial team is already planning issue 2 of The Quibbler, to coincide with this year's Wizard Walk scheduled for Oct. 15.

Advertising

The *Times'* advertising team also took home several first-place awards for print and digital ads, most of them the result of collaborative efforts between the sales and production teams.

Designer Cindy Goff and sales associate Nancy Keyser earned first place in the professional services category for their full-page advertisement for V&V Wedding Planning; judges called the ad "very eye catching." Goff worked with sales manager Anthony Haugan on a first-place entry in the entertainment category for their ad promoting the Fauquier County Fall Farm Tour. Goff also earned an individual first-place award for her "Words Matter" ad promoting the *Fauquier Times*.

A fourth advertising win came in the food and drug category, with production manager Vincent Sales and sales associate Carla Bailey collaborating on an ad for Field & Main Restaurant.

The Prince William Times

The Fauquier Times' parent company, Piedmont Media, also owns The Prince William Times, which covers Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park. The newspapers staff and freelancers combined for four first-place

awards in the Non-Daily, Group 4 division, which includes weekly newspapers with the largest circulation.

Reporter Daniel Berti won a first-place award in health and environmental writing.

Photographer John Calhoun won a first-place award in breaking news photography.

Reporter Cher Muzyk won a first-place award for feature writing portfolio.

Production manager Vincent Sales won a firstplace award in professional services advertising; a second-place award for informational graphics; and a third-place award for a self-promotional ad.

Managing editor Jill Palermo won a second-place award for headline writing

Sports editor Peter Brewington won a thirdplace award for headline writing.

What's the buzz? It's Half Past Moon in Marshall

By Aimée O'Grady

SPECIAL TO THE FAUQUIER TIMES

Ana Rodriguez is bringing a bit of West Coast flair to her Half Past Moon Coffee Buzz shop in Marshall. Anyone looking for a cup of Joe will also find a new offering on the menu: CBD lattes. "I was prompted to add this to the menu from my experience and observation," she said.

Rodriguez explained that as someone at risk for both bipolar disorder and depression, she is thankful for the health benefits of CBD. "I have always been very aware of signs, from an early age, that I could fall into either of those categories. As I've grown older, I've come to be very grateful for the positive impact CBD has had on me as an adult. The great part of owning my own shop is the opportunity to share with others the things that make me happy," she adds.

CBD can be added to any of the drinkable menu items, but Rodriguez's favorites are coffees and lattes.

The journey to entrepreneurship

Four years ago, Rodriguez experienced a vision of sorts while working at a spa in Warrenton. "It was a small business, and I was the only assistant. We talked about adding coffee service to the spa. I would fill orders while customers waited." The idea never came to fruition, but Rodriguez would find a way to give it a second life.

Cordial Coffee in Marshall, feeling the impact of the pandemic, decided to close its Marshall location in 2020 and focus on its Berryville coffee bean roasting operation.

Anne Tran, owner of the Marshall Day Spa on the first floor of the historic house where both businesses were located, purchased the coffee shop and changed the name to West Main Coffee Shop. Tran ran both businesses, and in early 2021 she hired Rodriguez. Rodriguez was promoted to manager the following summer and just six months later, Rodriguez was the owner.

With business improving, [Tran] was no longer able to manage both the spa and the coffee shop, and I offered to buy the business from her," said Rodriguez.

"I'm originally from a small town near San Francisco and while it's been a long time since I lived there, I remember the atmosphere and cultural diversity, and I was excited about infusing West Coast coffee energy in Marshall," she said. CBD lattes are one example of this energy. The décor in the coffeehouse also has West Coast vibes with a strong connection to the natural world.

Although the menu is refreshed, customers who have grown to expect coffee at that location are pleased to know that some things have remained the same. "We are still using the Cordial coffee beans. We also have a lot of the same items on the menu, including a quiche made by [Tran] and smoothies," she said.



COURTESY PHOTO

Ana Rodriquez, owner of Half Past Moon Coffee Buzz in Marshall.

The menu includes a lot of what coffee shop patrons expect. From drip coffee, pour over, espresso, cold brew nitro, Americano and Perry (an Americano with sparkling water), with a variety of house-made syrups and milk from both cows and almonds. Other hot drinks include hot chocolate, apple cider, vanilla or caramel steamer.

An affogato – an Italian dessert with ice cream drowned in espresso – satisfies a craving for both dessert and coffee. A modest food menu is also available, offering a variety of breakfast sandwiches and plant-based sandwiches along with the

favored quiche.

Rodriguez is both content with where she is and is looking to the future. "I feel like I have the shop in a good place with good baristas helping me. I have a few ideas for the future, like adding live music on Sunday afternoons."

Half Past Moon Coffee Buzz is located at 8375 W. Main Street in Marshall. The coffee shop is closed on Monday; open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday to Saturday; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday. The shop has a Facebook page called Half Past Moon Coffee Buzz.

Clarification

A story in the June 15 edition of the Fauquier Times cited the taxes that would have been due to Fauquier County and the Town of Warrenton in 2021 on 42 acres now owned by Amazon Data Services. Due to Amazon's purchase of the property in Sept. 2022, its assessment has increased, and taxes on the property for 2022 are calculated to be \$282,480 for the county and \$12,513 for the town.



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FOOTBALL PREVIEWS: Fauquier, Liberty, Kettle Run kick off this week. SPORTS, Pages 17, 18, 19, 20

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VIRGINIA PRESS ASSOCIATION: BEST SMALL NEWSPAPER IN VIRGINIA 2017-2021



Levi Norwood

Levi Norwood pleads guilty to murders

Teenager confessed to beating mother, brother to death after shooting them

> By Coy Ferrell FAUQUIER TIMES STAFF WRITER

Levi Norwood, the Midland teenager who on Valentine's Day in 2020 killed his mother and 6-year-old brother at their family home, pleaded guilty Monday to two counts of murder. A document outlining the events before, during and after the murders was filed with the plea, providing new details about what happened on the day of the murders. Norwood, now 19, will be sentenced by a judge in Fauquier County Circuit Court after a sentencing hearing that has not yet been scheduled. He faces up to life in prison plus 40 years.

Norwood, a 17-year-old Liberty High School student at the time of the incidents, pleaded guilty to one count of first-degree murder and one count of second-degree murder, part of a plea deal with prosecutors in which they agreed to drop several lesser charges related to the case — including one count of attempting to murder his father.

See **NORWOOD**, page 6



Erin Mann with her husband, Craig, and son, Luke, 7. PHOTO BY LITA **TRIMMINGS** PHOTOGRAPHY

Erin's Elderberries celebrates grand opening at Vint Hill Aug. 27

By Aimée O'Grady SPECIAL TO THE FAUQUIER TIMES

Erin's Elderberries, located at 4257 Aiken Dr. in Vint Hill, carries all 20 Erin's Elderberries products, but the inventory doesn't stop there. The shop also stocks items from 75 other small Virginia businesses — cleaning and body care supplies, soaps, baking kits, books, hot sauces, wreaths, key chains, dog accessories and treats and kids' products, including locally made playdough, beeswax candle kits, books, swaddle blankets and more.

See **ELDERBERRIES**, page 8

Two-plane crash at Flying Circus Saturday left pilots, passengers with minor injuries

Police say the aircraft crashed as one was landing and the other was taking off

By Robin Earl

FAUQUIER TIMES STAFF WRITER

Virginia State Police responded to a two-plane crash on Ritchie Road in Bealeton on Saturday, Aug. 20, that left both pilots and two passengers with minor injuries. The crash happened at 9:05 a.m., during the Flying Circus Airshow's annual Hot Air Balloon Festival.

Sgt. Brent Coffey, spokesman for the VSP, said that the preliminary investigation revealed that a Stearman

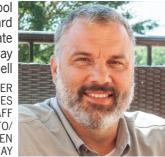
See CRASH, page 6



PHOTOS BY DOMINICK A. PUCCI, III Two planes crashed on Saturday during the Flying Circus Airshow's Hot Air Balloon Festival. One plane flipped

School board candidate Clay Campbell aims to empower teachers

School board candidate Clay Campbell **FAUQUIER** TIMES STAFF PHOTO/ **COLLEEN**



Other priorities include ensuring civility at meetings and encouraging new workforce training for Fauquier students

By Colleen LaMay FAUQUIER TIMES STAFF WRITER

Clay Campbell, 50, of New Baltimore, said he is running for a seat on the Fauquier County School Board because he feels a strong calling from God and has a wealth of experience with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Fauquier that will help him hit the ground running. This is his first run at public office.

See CAMPBELL, page 10

"Rev. Dick" celebrates 100 years. See page 2.







Erin's Elderberries celebrates grand opening at Vint Hill Aug. 27

ELDERBERRIES, from page 1

Products are made by both men and women and represent several minority-run businesses. "Our youngest entrepreneurs are two 12-year-old girls who make bracelets," said Erin's Elderberries owner, Erin Mann.

"When I started making Erin's Elderberries syrup, I spent a lot of time asking local businesses to give me a chance by carrying my products in their stores. I wanted to offer the same opportunity to other small businesses," said Mann.

The shop also serves as a mini grocer, carrying local toilet paper and food items like kombucha, hummus, milk, eggs and farm products. "We are very deliberate about the food products we carry. We can't be a full grocer, but we can offer enough ingredients for one meal to help fill the gap between grocery store runs. Our food items are also all locally sourced," she said.

The front corner of the shop is designed as a living room with a couch and loveseat, a television and children's toys. "I've had a toddler, and I remember what it was like to shop with one. I wanted to create a space where children could be somewhat contained, and parents could make educated decisions on what they were interested in purchasing," said Mann. She said parents come in to escape.



ANDREW SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHY Erin's Elderberries is located at 4257 Aiken Dr., Vint Hill.

Erin's elderberries

Mann's interest in elderberry syrup began in 2016 when her then 1-year-old son Luke suffered a severe illness. When he recovered, he was susceptible to allergies and had a weakened immune system.

Mann was desperate to strengthen her son's immune system and reached back to her family roots. "My grandfather's side of the family lived and worked on an Alabama farm. If it grew on their land, they found a use for it," she said.

Elderberry was one such plant on the farm, and Mann recalled being told of its health benefits.

A year later, after thorough research and formula development, Luke, who had been taking the syrup each day, no longer needed his nebulizer or medicine. Both Erin Mann and her husband, Craig, had also suffered fewer colds during the first winter of taking the syrup. Speaking with other parents, Mann found others interested in her syrup.

Ribbon cutting for Erin's Elderberries

When: Saturday, Aug. 27, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Where: 4257 Aiken Dr., Vint Hill Details: A full day of celebrating small businesses with a bounce house, complimentary food, drink specials and a visit from Costume Teacher, who will be dressed as a princess.

By 2019, Mann had tables at both the Warrenton and Manassas Farmers markets. One year later to help meet demand, her father, Mel Leigeber, built a commercial kitchen in her basement. "My parents have both been very supportive of my business. My mother, Donna Leigeber, cannot travel very much, but my father came whenever I needed him to help build the business," said Mann.

In December 2021, she signed a lease on the former Vint Hill Coffee Shop. Doors opened in January 2022. In March, her father spent two weeks moving the commercial kitchen from her home to the new brick-and-mortar business.

Mann also worked with another local business to make sure her customers could continue to enjoy a comfort they were used to finding at the location. "We collaborated with a small local roaster who mentored us, taught us, and put us in contact with their previous employees to bring the coffee shop component to

life," said Mann.

A maker space

Down the hall from the 900-square-foot retail space and adjacent 700-square-foot commercial kitchen, is Studio H, a 350-square-foot room that sits empty until someone needs it. "Studio H is a maker space. The space is available for rent for anyone who wants to interface more with clients and help build their brand loyalty. We also rent it to local groups who want to get together," said Mann.

A group of retired law enforcement, the Wuzz Fuzz, have enjoyed the space recently. Mann said, "I love when the sounds of laughter echo down the hallway."

Mann, who used to work for the FBI, as did her father, welcomes all law enforcement and veterans into her shop. "We appreciate the service and sacrifices made of our law enforcement personnel and don't charge them for coffee or café items when they are in the shop," she said.

Looking back over the past three years, Mann laughs when she recalls that all she wanted was a few hours at the farmers market for adult time. "This has been such a blessing. I felt so alone when trying to manage my son's health. And since that time, I have realized there are so many other people out there who have created a product that their family has benefitted from, and they want to share that benefit with more people. That's where Erin's Elderberries can help.



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