

Community News

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THE TIDEWATER NEWS **B1**



Sherod Charity, who turned 14 on Dec. 18, presents most of his awards from the 2022 season, and he is flanked by the karts he used to earn them. The racing prodigy from Southampton County won multiple championships, including one at the national level. SUBMITTED | ALFRED S. CHARITY

Charity becomes championship racer

BY ALFRED S. CHARITY

It has been 16 months since the last update on the go-kart racing experiences of Sherod Charity, and the prodigy from Southampton County who just turned 14 on Dec. 18 has been busy.

Sherod finished off the 2021 karting season racing a six-hour race in West Virginia with his free agent team finishing 10th out of 20 teams and fourth place in the rookie class, one step off the podium. He also completed a two-hour karting event at Virginia International Raceway, solo finishing in seventh place out of 18 teams entered. Sherod continued to work on his skills, racing at LeMans Karting located in Portsmouth, racing in the Pro League.

Seeing the passion for racing that his grandson Sherod has, Herman A. Charity funded the purchase of an Arrows X3 LO206 go-kart. We traveled to Mooresville, North Carolina, for the purchase and transported the kart back to Courtland in late October 2021.

Now we had to find a place to race it. Enter the Hampton Roads Kart Club, located in Hampton. They hold go-kart races at the Langley Speedway. The races are held by kart class and age;

the youngest racers out there start at 5 years old.

The season was over, but we went to the Turkey Race they hold each year at the end of the season. It's basically a "run what you have" race for fun. We were welcomed by everyone and fostered a friendship with brothers Jody and Tim Lithicum, Lee Hunnings and his son Xander, Ronnie Shumate, his wife Amy and son Chase Shumate. Father and son race under the banner Shumate Motorsports.

Sherod became a member of the Hampton Roads Kart Club in March 2022 and started racing at Langley Speedway in April 2022. The Hampton Roads Kart Club series had 13 scheduled race dates. He was recruited to the Quadrant Racing Team, led by Desmond Blount and his teammate Bill Gash, to run the Southern Division of the Endurance Karting Series, which has six races on the schedule. Races were held at Virginia International Raceway (twice), Charlotte Motor Speedway, Atlanta Motorsports Park and Carolina Motorsports Park.

Tommy Jeter, Phillip Pearson and Endurance Karting owner Chris McCoy have been a big part of Sherod's development



Sherod Charity has ambitious goals for 2023, hoping to race at Daytona, Pittsburgh, New Jersey and Chicago and to compete in a one-off money race at Go Pro Motorplex.

as a racer. Sherod was asked to be part of an established team that ran the northern schedule.

He competed in the Fall Racing 6-Hour Classic at Lime Rock Park located in Connecticut. He helped the team secure second place for the season and

others take notice of his talent.

We drove back after the race, and Sherod competed at Langley Speedway Sunday morning after a nine-hour ride and three hours of sleep. He was the No. 1 qualifier in Touch and Go and won his race. Sherod finished the season in fourth place in TAG after entering just more than half of the races. He finished fourth overall in LO206 in a stacked field of competitors.

The last outdoor race was in Jacksonville, Florida, on Dec. 3, 2022. Quadrant Racing finished 12th overall but first in the rookie class. The Quadrant Racing Team is the national champion for the Endurance Karting Championship (rookie class).

Sherod also started competing in the Teen Cup League in May 2022 at K1 Speed located in Richmond. Races are held once per month. Sherod has won five times, placed second once and fourth once. The last race was Dec. 6, and even though he did not make the podium, he had enough points to be crowned the Teen Cup Champion of K1 Speed in Virginia. That will add to him also being a member of the Southern Division Championship Team and the overall Na-

tional Championship Team (rookie class).

It has been a great first full season of racing, and he is looking forward to 2023.

Sherod would like to acknowledge and thank all of those who have supported his racing through contributions. Herman A. Charity, Tamara Charity-Brown, Alfreda Charity, Bev-Freda Jackson, Beverly Jackson, Bud Ham, Judy Ham, Gwen Ham, Lavelle Evans, Kenneth Williams, Franklin Sportsman's Association, JJS Custom Design, The Bakers Home, and The Youth Group. Your financial support has allowed Sherod to race and bring home three karting championships to the Franklin, Southampton County and Greensville County area.

In 2023, he hopes to race at Daytona, Pittsburgh, New Jersey, Chicago and compete in a one-off money race at Go Pro Motorplex.

If you would like to be a sponsor, please contact Alfred S. Charity at alfred.charity@gmail.com. In honor of Herman A. Charity, my father and Sherod's grandfather, the team name Sherod will race under this year will be Herman Charity Racing.

The journey continues until next time.



Southampton County's Sherod Charity earned five wins and the points needed to be crowned the Teen Cup Champion of K1 Speed in Virginia in 2022.



Fourteen-year-old Sherod Charity, of Southampton County, became a champion and earned the respect of accomplished peers and other key figures in the karting world during his first full season of racing in 2022.

Community News

Ahoy, me hearties! To the library!

STAFF REPORT

Al Chewning, of Histories and Haunts LLC, recently presented a program on pirates during the Summer Reading Program at the Courtland branch of the Blackwater Regional Library.

A library news release stated that attendees learned about the life and times of a pirate, pirate talk, stories and songs.

As noted at HistoriesandHaunts.com, in 2003, after 27 years in the Virginia Beach

Fire Department, Chewning started Histories and Haunts LLC as a way to share his love of history and his interest in the paranormal. He has created a unique, first-person educational experience that brings living history into the classroom, and in his personas, he uses museum-quality reproduction items to enhance his presentations.

For more information on all programs at the Blackwater Regional Library, visit its website, www.blackwaterlib.org, or its Facebook page, www.facebook.com/blackwaterlib.



One can virtually hear an “Aaarrggghhh!” accompanying this photo of Banner Cassidy, left, and Al Chewning. SUBMITTED | DONNA POPE



Aaliyah Kindred, left, and Jerrell Kindred are on hand to learn about the life and times of pirates.



Aveon Matos gets into the spirit of the program with a pirate hat and parrot.



Striking a pirate pose are, from left, Al Chewning and Hayden Whitley, the latter of which is holding Brynlee Whitley.



Children show engagement in the pirate program as they offer up responses to Al Chewning's presentation.



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Community News



Polar Express ushers in Christmas season

BY TITUS MOHLER
STAFF WRITER

A large crowd of mostly local families enjoyed a step back in time Saturday evening, Dec. 3, at the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event hosted by the Southampton Heritage Village/Agriculture & Forestry Museum in Courtland.

"We had 1,061 people through the gate, not including all the many workers," said Lynda T. Updike, one of the event's organizers. "We thought that was good, especially since it rained all day..."

She said that some attendees came from as far as Richmond and Dinwiddie County, but most were local people who came with their families, with a notable number of those family members being happy children.

The event afforded them the opportunities to decorate Christmas trees, string popcorn and cranberries, sing Christmas carols, see the model trains inside the museum, ride a train around the village, converse and get a photo with Santa and Mrs. Claus and the Snow Queen, visit a nativity scene including live sheep and enjoy free

refreshments, like hot cocoa and cookies.

There was a particularly long line to see Santa Claus.



TITUS MOHLER | THE TIDEWATER NEWS
A train ride leaves the station with a group of children during the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event in Courtland on Saturday, Dec. 3.

were 3 days old."

She noted that children in attendance kept asking what the little lambs' names were.

"We would tell them that we hadn't had time to name them, that they were just 3 days old," she said. "One was a little boy, and one's a little girl. But we got a lot of suggestions from kids. One said, 'Name one Polar and the other Express.' Somebody said, 'Name one East and one West.' They were very creative with their suggestions."

Santa and Mrs. Claus and the Snow Queen were not the only draws for photos.

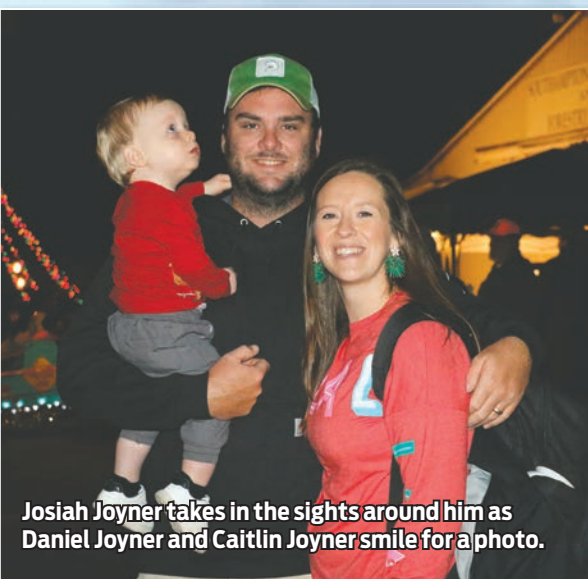
"I was very impressed that many parents and grandparents pointed out the baby Jesus in the manger and took photos of their offspring kneeling near it — explaining the reason for the season," Updike said.

To gain admission to the event, those attending had to pay either a small fee or donate canned goods for charity.

"We got a lot of canned goods for Bags of Hope, which is a local charity," Updike said.

She noted that the museum collected money that went to Bags of Hope as well.

"That's always the most popular," Updike said, "and to ride the train was another line. And once in a while there was a line to come play with the sheep and the two little lambs that



Josiah Joyner takes in the sights around him as Daniel Joyner and Caitlin Joyner smile for a photo.



Pausing for a picture at the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event are Kim Ellington, left, and Lisha Wolfe.



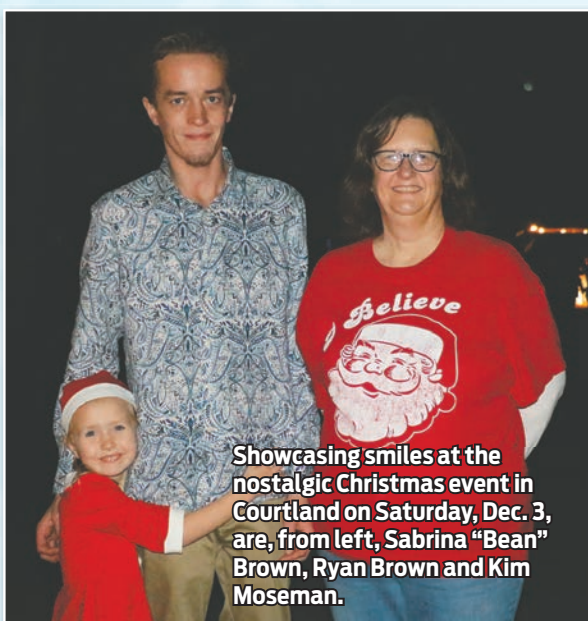
Exploring the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event are, from left, Julian Ross-Branch, Laverne Copeland and Sienna Branch.



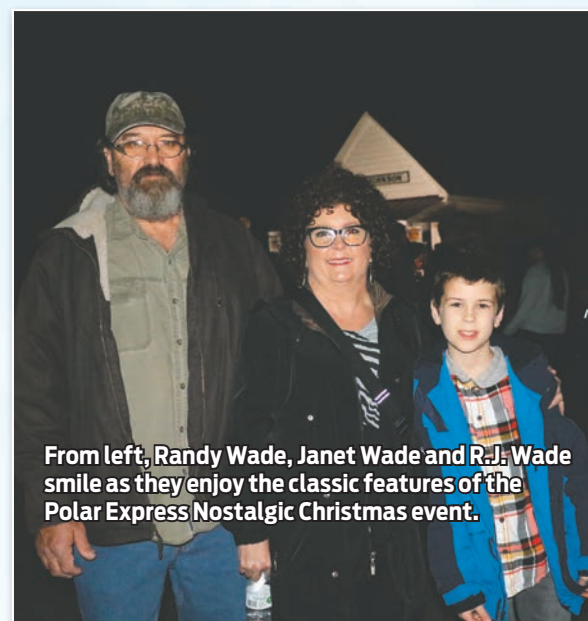
Joining for a photo in the Southampton Heritage Village are, from left, front row, Lily Sawyer, Peyton Hash; backrow, Kristen Winters and Amber Harris.



Brooke Nash and 4-month-old Vivianna Nash pose with Santa and Mrs. Claus as Susan Cornwell takes the photo.



Showing smiles at the nostalgic Christmas event in Courtland on Saturday, Dec. 3, are, from left, Sabrina "Bean" Brown, Ryan Brown and Kim Moseman.



From left, Randy Wade, Janet Wade and R.J. Wade smile as they enjoy the classic features of the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event.



Clayton Gaskins guides Keegan Gaskins through the Christmas event in the Southampton Heritage Village.