

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 10th 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.

Sports



TITUS MOHLER | THE TIDEWATER NEWS

Members of the 1995 Windsor High School varsity football team join in the middle of the school's football field during halftime of the Dukes game Thursday night, Aug. 31, to receive recognition — via a listing of accomplishments and a commemorative No. 1 Windsor jersey — as being the most successful varsity football team in school history. Joining the team members are cheerleaders, student-athletes, administration, faculty and staff members who were with WHS in 1995.

**BY TITUS MOHLER
STAFF WRITER**

The Windsor High School varsity football team's home opener on Thursday evening, Aug. 31, yielded tears of joy for a variety of reasons.

The game was the setting for a reunion and celebration of the most successful varsity football team in the school's history — the 1995 Dukes.

The game was also the setting for the sweetest taste of success that the school's modern varsity football program has experienced in years.

A JOY-INSPIRING VICTORY

The 2023 Dukes held a 20-14 lead at halftime against visiting King and Queen Central High School on Thursday and then pulled away in the second half for a 41-14 blowout victory — the varsity program's first win since 2019, according to MaxPreps.com.

Benjamin DuBois, who is in his first year as head coach of the Dukes after



Torrance Saunders carries the Windsor Dukes banner as he helps lead fellow members of the historic 1995 Windsor High School varsity football team onto the field Thursday evening, Aug. 31, during the 2023 Dukes' home opener.

servicing as offensive coordinator last season, acknowledged that his team started a little slow on Thursday, something they are trying to fix.

But he noted that his players' spirits were bol-

stered by the greats from the 1995 team cheering them on from the sidelines, along with all the fans in the stands.

"With us being so young, nerves are a big deal for us, so once they settled in,

I just felt like they played a great game," DuBois said.

"I was so proud of them, I had to walk away last night. I kind of started tearing up a little bit."

And he said he wasn't the only one.

"Most of these kids have been in the program since they were eighth-graders, so they've gone four years without a win, and now, for them to get one, it got to a couple of them too," he said.

DuBois participated in a halftime presentation to the members of the 1995 team, and then he re-joined his team as halftime continued.

He shared what he told his players to help them go on to score 21 unanswered points in the second half.

"I said, 'Look, y'all see it works. It's worked for two weeks,'" he said, alluding to the Week 1 game in which the Dukes lost but managed to produce 36 points. "I said, 'We've just got to hunker down and stick with what we planned and do it the way we worked on it all week.' I said, 'And if you do those things, no penalties and no turnovers,' I said, 'We'll be fine.' I said, 'The only way they got back in the game was a turnover.' I said, 'If we don't do that,' I said, 'we'll be fine.' And

they bought into it."

He said he had to back them off in the fourth quarter because they were still running full speed with the game clearly in hand.

"I'm so proud of them," he said. "One of the things I felt last year was when times got tough, they kind of gave up. And this year, they're not giving up for anything."

A JOY-INSPIRING TEAM

The 1995 Dukes became the first 10-win varsity football team in the school's history, finishing 10-3 overall.

The '95 Dukes were the first football team in school history to win a regional championship, defeating Surry County High School in the Virginia High School League Region A final, 20-13.

The Windsor squad was also the school's first football team to reach the VHSL state playoffs.

The team's head coach,

SEE WINDSOR, B3



The Windsor High School Marching Dukes stand at the ready in the moments leading up to the Windsor varsity football team's home opener on Thursday, Aug. 31.



Windsor High School sophomore Gavin Marshall runs forward to execute the kickoff shortly after the Dukes had taken a 14-7 lead in their home opener Thursday, Aug. 31, against King and Queen Central High School.



At left, members of the historic 1995 Windsor High School varsity football team — from left, David Bickley, Wayne Briggs and Steven Harold — serve as honorary captains during the coin flip for the 2023 Dukes' home opener on Thursday, Aug. 31. The 2023 Dukes captains include, from left, senior Criss Mosley, senior Zachary Gilmore, sophomore Jeremy King and senior Jamari King.



Defending King and Queen Central High School wideout on Thursday, Aug. 31, is Windsor High School sophomore safety Hudson Williams.

Community News



Nostalgia reigns supreme at the village

**BY TITUS MOHLER
STAFF WRITER**

The Southampton Ag & Forestry Museum's annual Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas gathering drew large numbers of people from the area Saturday, Dec. 2, and people also came out for the scaled-down second day of the event Saturday, Dec. 9.

Denise Wlodyka, who was the chairperson for the event, sent out an email late on Dec. 2, thanking everyone who helped make the first night of Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas possible.

"It was another great event," she stated. "Preliminary estimates are that we had between 900 and 1,000 people attend, despite the weather."

Puddles populated the ground in certain parts of the Southampton Heritage Village due to intermittent rain that helped shape the day.

"Over 300 of the attendees were kids," Wlodyka stated. "We had over 60 volunteers. We received a lot of food donations for Bags of Hope!"

People were admitted to the



TITUS MOHLER | THE TIDEWATER NEWS

The Rev. Hoyle Green drives the Son-beam Express full of children through the decorated Southampton Heritage Village on Saturday, Dec. 2, during the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event.

event for a small per-person fee or a non-perishable food item set to be donated to the Bags of Hope local food bank.

The Dec. 2 gathering included the Polar Express and Christmas model trains; train rides for chil-

dren, navigating through the decorated Heritage Village on the Son-beam Express; an opportunity to visit and be photographed with Santa and Mrs. Claus; cookies and hot cocoa; old-time tree decorating; a

campfire; a Nativity with live animals; special appearances by favorite Christmas characters; hot dogs, chips and drinks for sale and more.

At the Dec. 9 event, attendees were able to walk around the Heritage Village to see the lights, and the model trains were also running.

"We had close to 100 people on the second night," Wlodyka stated. "It was a beautiful evening with the candles and Christmas lights providing the ambiance. Everyone enjoyed the peaceful walk through the village, and of course, the model trains were a big attraction. It was a much more subdued atmosphere than the first night, but those who attended commented on how beautiful everything looked."

Joining Wlodyka on the committee that orchestrated Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas were Hope Pittman, Renita Snyder and Al Briggs.

And Wlodyka added that "we can't do any of it without all of the wonderful museum members and volunteers who pitch in to help. By my count, it's over 70 people."



Pausing for a picture as they navigate the Southampton Heritage Village on Saturday, Dec. 2, are, from left, Makinleigh Darden, Starla Spear and Sidney Darden.



Four-year-old Linda Tupea gets a photo with Olaf the snowman from the "Frozen" movies.



Jaxon Lee and Becca Lee pause for a photo as they begin their exploration of the 2023 Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event on Dec. 2.



Navigating the Southampton Heritage Village on Saturday, Dec. 2, are, from left, children in the front, Noah Tanner, Thomas Tanner, Beulah Tanner; parents in the back, Zach Tanner and Taylor Tanner.



From left, Melissa Hagerstrom, Kensire West and Kamryn West interact with Pig the Goat, who is being managed by Lynda T. Updike at the Nativity scene Saturday, Dec. 2, amid the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event.



A group of children embark on a train ride around the Southampton Heritage Village aboard the Son-beam Express on Saturday, Dec. 2, in the early going of the Polar Express Nostalgic Christmas event.