

The Daily Progress

Floral firm
Poppy weeds
some stress
out of wedding
planning
PAGE A7



Morris helps
train some
of area's top
basketball
players
PAGE B1

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

WHERE YOUR STORY LIVES

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NONPROFITS

How do you fix Ix?

Bohemian art park
faces 'unsustainable
funding gap' that free
admission isn't filling

EMILY HEMPHILL
The Daily Progress

Ix Art Park in Charlottesville

is offering free admission to its Looking Glass immersive art experience every Thursday. That would be the same Ix Art Park that said in September "operating expenses had gotten too massive," stopped paying its full-time employees and cut back on operations. That would be the same Ix Art Park that then laid off four of those five full-time employees,

including its executive director, last month.

"Free" is the sort of word struggling organizations use sparingly, if they use it at all.

"We are trying to restructure our entire organization and be more streamlined, but it is still very important for us to be out

Please see **IX ART**, Page A8



CAL CARY, THE DAILY PROGRESS

The Looking Glass immersive art experience at Ix Art Park in Charlottesville is open on Saturdays and Sundays. Admission is \$15 per person. Limited admission on "Community Days" on Thursdays is free.

WINE COUNTRY

FEUD & WINE



CAL CARY, THE DAILY PROGRESS

Reo Hatfield, CEO of Prince Michel Vineyard and Winery in Madison County, sits in his office on Monday, Dec. 11, 2023.

Prince Michel's new CEO doesn't drink and has never worked in wine, but he knows how to bring people to the table

EMILY HEMPHILL
The Daily Progress

Pope John Paul II, Nelson Mandela, Jesus Christ and Reo Hatfield II.

How a boy from Huntington, West Virginia, came to have his name on a list of the greatest acts of forgiveness alongside some of history's greatest figures is a tale of an age-old Appalachian feud — yes, he is one of those Hatfields — and history-changing big moves.

Hatfield has once again made a big move, leaving TA Services, a Texas-based, multimillion-dollar logistics company where he served as vice president of business development, for Prince Michel, a Madison County vineyard and winery where he has been named president and CEO.

It was Prince Michel owner Kristin Easter who made the

Please see **HATFIELD**, Page A8



Prince Michel Vineyard and Winery in Madison County is seen on Monday, Dec. 11, 2023.



SANTA FUND

DAILY PROGRESS STAFF

The Santa Fund, one of the nation's longest running newspaper-sponsored charities, collects donations to provide vouchers for families to buy shoes, clothing, school supplies and other essentials for children in need.

The fund was created in 1894 by The Daily Progress' founding publisher, James H. Lindsay.

Co-sponsored by The Progress and radio station WINA-AM, in conjunction with the United Way of Greater Charlottesville, the Santa Fund serves children in the city of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson and Orange.

You can donate online at TheSantaFund.org or by mailing a check to Santa Fund for Schoolkids, 200 Garrett St., Suite I, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

You also can honor or remember a loved one by giving in their honor or memory. The Daily Progress will publish the names of new donors and designate in whose honor a gift is donated as collections are made.

Today's total: \$4,480.

Running total: \$91,554.10.

Goal: \$225,000.

To reach goal: \$133,445.90.

Today's contributions

- Ann Long: \$25.
- Pete and Mary Anne Bickers: \$500.
- In honor of Leah, Emmie, Isaac and Miles: \$100.
- K. and J. P. Roberson: \$100.
- In loving memory of Gramma and Herbie: \$50.
- In honor of Fletcher, Zee, Sam, Charlie and Phebe: \$50.
- In loving memory of Bill Davis, Jackie Davis, Randy Davis, Mike Baber and Frank Hill. In honor of Betty Davis: \$100.
- Rebecca Thomas: \$50.
- T and J Wolanski Family Fund: \$500.
- In memory of the world's sweetest kitty, Tiny Toe: \$30.
- Linda and Frank Dukes in honor of their grandson: \$210.
- Charles and Louise Ward: \$52.50.
- In memory of Thelma and Bernard Carr: \$105.
- In honor of Doug and Barb: \$105.
- In memory of Max and Shirley. ... Best dogs ever!: \$52.50.
- Anonymous: \$1,000.
- Anonymous: \$100.
- Kate Kessler: \$500.
- Gracie Parks: \$125.
- The Falcon Club Foundation: \$300.
- In honor of my two most wonderful sons, CHG and CNG, and new grandbabies!: \$75.
- From Ace and Mac: \$100.
- Mitombo Fund: \$250.

UVa Medical Center named one of top teaching hospitals in country
PAGE A6

Weather
Occasional rain
High 55 • Low 49
FORECAST • A10

Inside

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FEATURED TOP STORY BREAKING

EDUCATION

The kids are not all right: Violence, intruders and chaos at Charlottesville High School

Friday was a breaking point for teachers at CHS



Jason Armesto Nov 17, 2023 4



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00:00



09:49

Students roaming the hallways during class. Brawls in the common areas. Intruders let onto school premises. Teachers afraid for their own safety. Administrators unwilling or unable to discipline.

Things are not OK at Charlottesville High School.

On Friday, classes were abruptly canceled when teachers did not show up to work. The decision by so many school employees to call out appears to have been prompted by a series of wild student brawls that occurred the day before.

At least one of those fights included an 18-year-old intruder who does not even attend CHS and who was let into the school by a student for the sole purpose of perpetrating violence.

Charlottesville police received two calls from the school within minutes of each other Thursday, according to Charlottesville police spokesman Kyle Ervin.

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- 4 [Snow ahead Monday in Virginia: Here's how much to expect](#)

Officers were first dispatched to a report of “physical disorder” at the school.

“The caller also advised that an adult who was not to be in the school was involved,” reads the incident report.

Eleven minutes after the first call, a second incident was reported.



LOCAL EDUCATION

Charlottesville High School abruptly cancels class due to 'unusual' staff absences

Jason Armesto

“CPD officers on scene assisted CHS staff in separating the involved parties and restoring order,” that report reads.

Charges have been filed against the 18-year-old intruder.





Gurley

That's according to Charlottesville City Schools Superintendent Royal Gurley, who spoke with the press Friday afternoon to address the crisis at CHS. Gurley said that things are going to be changing at Charlottesville High.

“On Monday, we’re going to ensure consistent personnel is at the entrance of the school, in terms of how people get buzzed in and out of the building,” he said. He also said adults will be assigned to cover a “wider footprint” of the building during the day to ensure nothing like the two fights witnessed Thursday happen again.

But one CHS staffer told The Daily Progress there were more than two fights, and also more than one intruder.

The CHS staffer, who agreed to speak to The Daily Progress on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation from the school district, claims to have overheard an administrator telling police there was also a 20-year-old intruder in the school. Neither Gurley nor the police backed up those claims.

According to the staffer, things are far worse at CHS than administrators are letting



on. There has been one fight every week since the beginning of the school year, they said.

And those fights have been “larger and more ferocious” than in previous years.

“That’s because there are more kids in the hall with more accessibility and more opportunity,” the staffer said. “And I think this is a really important point to make: There’s about 30 kids that never go to class and have not gone to class from the first day. They’ve never intended to go to class and do nothing but walk the halls and avoid adults.”



LOCAL NEWS

Filmed brawl at Charlottesville High prompts calls for action

FROM STAFF REPORTS

“If an adult approaches them, they swear at them, keep walking and there are no consequences,” the staffer continued. “Those 30 kids set the tone for the rest of the 1,400 kids in the school.”

Gurley also stressed that the fights are being instigated by a small group of students. Ninety-nine percent of CHS students are well-behaved and focused pupils, he said Friday.

But he disagreed that students feel free to disregard administrators.



“I don’t think students don’t think there are consequences,” Gurley said.

That directly contradicts not only the anonymous staffer that spoke with The Daily Progress but Charlottesville City Schools employees who took to social media on Friday, their names and job titles on display.

CHS counselor David Wilkerson took to Facebook on Thursday, hinting that employees would likely not be showing up to work the next day and explaining that Charlottesville City Schools employees have their hands tied.

Leaning on data from the Virginia Department of Education reflecting a correlation between punishment and dropouts, Charlottesville City Schools has opted for less severe punishments in a bid to boost graduation rates.

“The VDOE would prefer that the data shows that no kids are being punished due to the correlation between punishing kids and a poor graduation rate,” Wilkerson wrote online. “Administrators keep asking kids to do things that they do not wish to do and in the absence of consequences, the kids expand their misbehavior.”



LOCAL EDUCATION

Another Charlottesville High School brawl filmed, circulated online

Faith Redd

Although Gurley maintained on Friday that there are already consequences, he hinted

more serious disciplinary measures are incoming.

The band of students, which the anonymous staffer said often walks the halls in groups of five, have at worst received suspensions of five or 10 days. Gurley suggested Friday that longer suspensions or other repercussions could be implemented to discipline bad actors.

“We’re not going to allow students to compromise safety,” Gurley said.

Safety has become a pressing issue not just for students at the school but teachers and administrators.

According to the anonymous staffer, a librarian hurt his hand while caught in the middle of a recent brawl in the school library.

Gurley said Friday he was not aware of any librarian being injured.

Some teachers have been inadvertently punched while trying to break up fights, according to the staffer, and many more have real fears that they could one day be hurt intentionally.

“When kids are using profanity to explain to the teacher why they’re not going to go to class, they often include verbal threats,” the staffer said. “There are just so many kids that are willing to be physical very quickly. I’m sure there are some teachers that fear they can be the next target.”



It took hours to restore order after just one of the fights on Thursday, the staffers said.



CRIME

Police called to Charlottesville High School after student 'altercation'

DAILY PROGRESS STAFF

The Daily Progress viewed a video of one of the brawls taken by a student. It shows two girls grabbing each other's hair and throwing punches as a large crowd watches, cheering them on. It's a chaotic scene with students laughing and yelling, reveling in the disorder.

"Hundreds of students showed up, observing and filming and dancing and celebrating," the staffer said. "From there, they refused to return to class during the lockdown."

It's not just administrators the students don't respect, the staffer said.

"Even when the police showed up, there were kids mocking the police and not responding to administration directives."

Much like Wilkerson, the anonymous staffer said the dysfunction has been the result of a lack of consequences.

That starts with the school's "off and away" cell phone policy. Charlottesville students are not supposed to use cell phones during the school day. The sheer number of fights



filmed on mobile devices and posted online, however, is evidence that rule has not been fully enforced.

Gurley said that while teachers say cell phone use in class is down, the devices are still widely used in hallways between classes.

It has been an issue since the beginning of the school year.



CHARLOTTESVILLE NEWS

Charlottesville hires new school safety coordinator

Alice Berry

“On the very first day of school, kids were told, ‘Off and away.’ The phones did not go off and away. The next thing you know, we have a revolution on our hands, because they realized that there’s no enforcement of that rule,” the staffer said. “And then they discover there’s no enforcement of the rule of having to go to class. And if you mess with the principal, there’s no punishment.”

That’s if there is a principal. Charlottesville High School Principal Rashaad Pitt announced his resignation earlier this month after a little more than a year at the school, citing “his family and health.”





Pitt

It was only a matter of time before teachers reached a breaking point, the staffer continued, going through the same motions every day without anything changing.

“Telling the same kids every day to go to class and being told to f–k off every time, it’s exhausting. But they keep doing it,” the staffer said.

That is, they kept doing it until Friday.

Gurley said when he went to bed Thursday night there were 24 teachers already expected to be absent the next day. Eighteen of those were not related to illness. By the time he woke up, there were 27 expected teacher absences. It was too much for CHS to handle.

Finding substitute teachers on a Friday is particularly difficult, Gurley said.

Shortly after 6 a.m., Charlottesville City Schools sent a message to parents.

“Due to an unusual number of staff absences & limited available substitutes, classes at Charlottesville High School are canceled today,” the school district said.





LOCAL EDUCATION

Charlottesville High School principal resigns

Jason Armesto

The city's teachers' union, the Charlottesville Education Association, said in a statement Friday that while it did not have a role in the teachers' decision to not come in, it supported the Charlottesville staff.

And it went even further. The statement called for a "hard reset" on Monday and Tuesday before the Thanksgiving holiday, asking that there be no students present so that staff could "address the climate and the culture at CHS."

Gurley said Friday that's not happening: School will be in session Monday and Tuesday.

Instead, the school district has floated a "hard reset" for December.

In the meantime, parents, teachers and administrators who were sharing their thoughts online and with The Daily Progress said they hope the school district is able to restore order at CHS for the majority of students who want to learn without the distraction and danger of violence on school grounds.

To do that, the anonymous staffer said there will need to be consequences for misbehavior.



“It’d be like if we had a speed limit that was 35 and everybody was going 60 but nobody ever got pulled over,” they said. “Then they started seeing what else they could do.”

Jason Armesto (717) 599-8470

jarmesto@dailyprogress.com

@rmest0 on Twitter

The image shows a grid of four social media comment cards. Each card has a thumbnail image at the top, a user profile picture, a name, a timestamp, a text snippet, and a 'Top Comment' label with a flame icon and a thumbs-up icon.

- Card 1:** Thumbnail: Homeless people on a street. User: RO40107914 · 4h. Text: "Thanks to the radical ALCU, in Charlottesville, panhandlers...".
- Card 2:** Thumbnail: American flag with 'ALCU' text. User: RO40107914 · 4h. Text: "Iowans are 'out of step' says the headline. 'The people who show...".
- Card 3:** Thumbnail: A man in a suit shaking hands. User: Barbara Lee · 1d. Text: "This is the same Governor who is removing history and wants us t...".
- Card 4:** Thumbnail: A man's face. User: Joe Zao · 2d. Text: "I am addressing 50 prize winners. Is the".



4 Comments

Tags School Systems Education Job Market Police Law Telephony Politics Weapons Crime Medicine Criminal Law

The Daily Progress

Friday, October 27, 2023

WHERE YOUR STORY LIVES

dailyprogress.com

A FIERY END

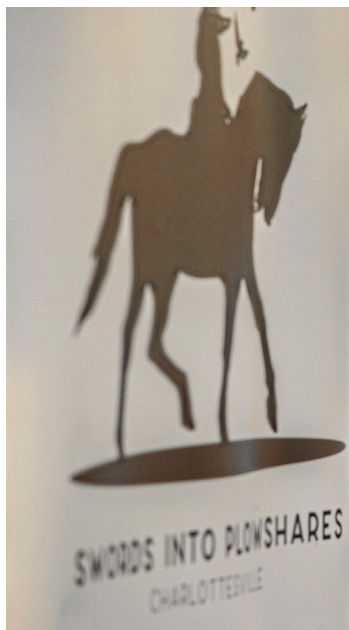
LEE DEFEATED (AGAIN)



ÉZÉ AMOS

A foundry worker uses a plasma torch to cut the head of Charlottesville's bronze monument of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in preparation for melting the statue on Oct. 21, 2023.

Iconic and infamous monument to Confederacy melted



CAL CARY, THE DAILY PROGRESS

Andrea Douglas, executive director of the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, speaks at a press conference outside the Charlottesville courthouse where the cultural center announced that the statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee it acquired from the city has been melted on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023.

JASON ARMESTO
The Daily Progress

Charlottesville's monument of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee is no more.

"We come together this afternoon as a community to announce definitively that racist symbols don't belong in our parks or in our city," Andrea Douglas, executive director of the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, the statue's owner, told a crowd of some 30 people on Thursday afternoon outside of the Charlottesville courthouse.

She spoke of the deadly 2017 Unite the Right rally-turned-riot, the city's long racist past and the Black community members, past and present, who fought back.

"We honor their belief that Charlottesville could become a place where democratic ideals and imaginings would flourish. I'm proud to announce today we have fulfilled our promise to the city and to our supporters to melt Charlottesville's statue of Robert E. Lee," she said.

Since it acquired the bronze equestrian statue in 2021, the Jefferson School's

Please see **STATUE**, Page A2

COURT

Police: 'He just kept driving on the rims'

A tire-less, cross-county chase lands Gordonsville man in even more trouble

HAWES SPENCER
The Daily Progress

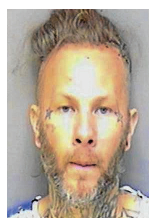
A Gordonsville man with a lengthy record remains jailed without bail since his late September arrest after an automobile pursuit that ended when the tires came off his car.

Adam Ryan Martin, 38, was arrested on Sept. 29 and charged with two offenses in Albemarle County, obstructing justice and assaulting an officer, in addition to three drug offenses and one eluding charge from

Augusta County, where the chase began.

"It started in Augusta and ended in Albemarle," Lt. Leslie Schneider of the Augusta County Sheriff's Office told The Daily Progress. "They put out the spike strips, and his tires deflated, and he just kept driving on the rims."

Martin's latest trouble began in the early morning hours of Sept. 29 on the Shenandoah Valley side of Afton Mountain. An Augusta County sheriff's deputy on routine patrol around U.S. 250 reportedly spotted a black Infiniti that had been the subject of multiple pursuits by several law



Martin

enforcement agencies including Virginia State Police, according to the Augusta County Sheriff's Office.

A check of the license plates found that the registration belonged to another vehicle, and shortly after 3:30 a.m. the deputy began a pursuit, according to the sheriff's narrative.

As the chase moved to Interstate 64 heading east into Albemarle County, Albemarle police then pitched in by deploying spike strips, according to the narrative.

"The suspect vehicle continued to drive on Dudley Mountain Road in Albemarle County at reduced speeds, and losing several tires," according to the sheriff's office.

Eventually, the narrative continued, the driver lost control and crashed down an

embankment at the intersection of Dudley Mountain Road and Red Hill Road and fled on foot.

"Once the deputy got within an arm reach of the male suspect, the male suspect turned on the deputy in a fighting stance," according to the narrative. "There was a physical altercation between Martin and an Augusta County Sheriff's Deputy while taking him into custody."

That was Deputy M. Stutes who was trying to put handcuffs on Martin, according to the Albemarle County General District Court file.

"Martin had resisted by flight and had pushed me down into water and continued

Please see **PURSUIT**, Page A2

