December 26, 2023 | Daily Progress, The (Charlottesville, VA) | Charlottesville, Virginia | Page 1

The Paily Progress

Floral firm Poppy weeds some stress out of wedding planning





Morris helps train some of area's top basketball players

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NONPROFITS

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

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 those five full-time employees,

Looking Glass immersive art ex- last month. perience every Thursday. That that said in September "operating if they use it at all. expenses had gotten too massive," Art Park that then laid off four of

is offering free admission to its including its executive director,

"Free" is the sort of word strugwould be the same Ix Art Park gling organizations use sparingly,

"We are trying to restructure stopped paying its full-time em- our entire organization and be ployees and cut back on opera- more streamlined, but it is still tions. That would be the same Ix very important for us to be out



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 Please see IX ART, Page A8 Days" on Thursdays is free.

WINE COUNTRY

FEUD & WINE



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

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.

DAILY PROGRESS STAFF

lisher, 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.

SANTA FUND

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 Daily Progress' founding pub-

The fund was created in 1894 by

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:
- 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 or 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 Ber-
- nard Carr: \$105. In honor of Doug and Barb:
- 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 won-
- derful 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

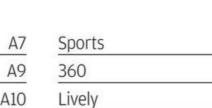
Occasional rain High 55 • Low 49 FORECAST • A10

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Health

Commentary

Business Obituaries A10 Weather





Daily Progress, The (Charlottesville, VA) - December 26, 2023 - page 8 . December 26, 2023 | Daily Progress, The (Charlottesville, VA) | Charlottesville, Virginia | Page 8

A8 | TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2023

Hatfield

From A1

commonwealth's oldest and larg-

drink. that any business has similarities what doesn't. in lots of ways," Hatfield told The circumstances of business. If you his connections. can do that, it doesn't matter what

dards." wife. He did some consulting for — businesses he remains in contact borders. the winery about five years ago that with even after leaving logistics. gave him a taste of what it would be like working in the industry. Now, honor from the Embassy of the istry and enhance it and give it more business. You can't just cut costs, management knowledge to lead the fostered between Waynesboro and a that way," said Hatfield. "I believe solutions other people bring with company into a new era.

"I've been in transportation my could help them."

"Success is never final."

you have all the answers," said Hat- ing the busy highway.

field. "Go into a place thinking you

est wineries into the future. Eye- long learner. He said he's learned a winery that married the "high-end" based out of Staunton. brow-raising because Hatfield has lot about business since taking his craft wines," as they called them, of no prior experience in the wine in- first job at 15. Each individual com- viognier, syrah and symbius, with key is to figure out and understand as peach and chocolate. "It is a leap, but the reality is those variations, what works and

sister city in China.

whole life, so thought I might as perience will help bolster business who we are right now." well finish in something else," said for a winery that is already one of the this business even greater than tributed in Central Virginia. Prince at an early age. there [at TA Services] because it Michel is familiar to East Coast growas a million-dollar company and cery shoppers as well as motorists it," Hatfield said with a slow drawl tor of sales for Century Oil. I thought, 'Well, my goal is to help traveling between Washington and permanently tethering him to his other companies, and I thought I Charlottesville. While it advertises Appalachian roots. "My fun in life been satisfied working just one job. for Hatfield, who brings a realpoli- dozens of Virginia wineries, it is far and to do it with a heart." tik to the job. His business motto is more apt to say Prince Michel is sit-

NEWS

largest winery in Virginia, and while While Hatfield has a few things to it has been usurped in the interven- for a man with no formal education 140-year-old feud between their Daily Progress. "What you have learn about his new position, Prince ing years — that title now belongs to do is acquire the knowledge of Michel has even more to gain from to Trump — it remains one of the actually running a business and, his years in logistics, his manage- more widely distributed wineries. at the same token, understand the ment skills and, perhaps above all, While pricier Virginia wines coming from the elite Monticello AVA can be As part of his job at TA Services, difficult to find on shelves outside in Waynesboro. He spent the next of the proudest moments of his business it is as long as you operate Hatfield was involved in handling Central Virginia, Prince Michel three decades there, and it's there career "because it wasn't done for the company with reasonable stan- international affairs, he said, al- can be easily found on shelves from lowing him to foster relationships Southside to Northern Virginia and Hatfield met Easter through his with businesses all over the world even beyond the commonwealth's came into play.

> He was recently awarded an great foundation, so all I want to do cal parts of running a successful while yet, he added. Those connections and that ex- a lot of places who don't even know you."

uated off a well-traveled stretch of few that didn't involve trucks, was cilman and vice mayor for the city. "Never go into a place thinking U.S. 29 with its tasting room front- working at a grocery store in Huntington when he was 15 years old. tween faith and finances that @EmilyHemphillO6 on Twitter

Founded in 1982, two years be- Hatfield was not bagging grocer- shaped how the younger Hatfield want to answer all your questions. fore the neighboring Monticello ies for long when he was drafted grew to see management. Ever since I've arrived all I've done American Viticultural Area was into the Army and stationed in eyebrow-raising decision to bring been doing it this way for years. I brainchild of Parisians-turned-Vir- Vietnam War. When he returned on Hatfield to help carry one of the want to give everything a freshlook." ginians Jean and Sylvian LeDucq. home as a 20-year-old, he found lessons. Hatfield considers himself a life- The Le Ducqs had a vision for a an entry-level job at Smith Transfer

typist. Eighteen years later, he was suing edicts. dustry and, more than that, doesn't pany "has a little quirk to it," so the more unique novelty wines, such the company's vice president and the company was the eighth-largest Early on it was recognized as the trucking company in the country.

in the industry beyond a two-year respective families that had lasted degree from Marshall University. so long and cost so many lives that But Hatfield wasn't finished.

his own company, Reo Distribution, where the lessons he learned at the anything." knee of his father, Reo Hatfield Sr.,

"I've enjoyed every minute of he also worked full-time as a direc-renceburg, Kentucky.

Waynesboro auxiliary police force pretty good," he said. His first job, and one of only a and two separate terms as a coun-

"You've got to run a business with is ask why when people say they've christened, Prince Michel was the Korea for three years during the a heart." That's what Hatfield said was one of his father's most valuable

Hatfield said he prefers to bring everyone to the table to hash out Hatfield started out there as a ideas and solutions, rather than is-

It's that sort of diplomacy that put Hatfield on national TV in 2003, when he signed a truce with Bo and It was already an accomplishment Ron McCoy, formally ending the it's become shorthand for the very After leaving Smith, he founded idea of a family feud.

Hatfield said he considers it one

That career of his will come to an end eventually, and it will come to "What he taught me was that an end at Prince Michel, Hatfield "This company was built on a revenue is one of the most criti- said. But that end won't come for a

Hatfield is already eager to capthey are combining Easter's love People's Republic of China in Wash- exposure than it has been getting in you've got to increase revenue," said italize off the recent recognition for wine with Hatfield's wealth of ington, D.C., for the connections he the past, so we're going to grow it Hatfield. "You can do that with the of the Monticello wine country as "Wine Region of the Year" by Wine that we can make a big difference to them when they come to work for Enthusiast magazine. Hatfield said he is looking forward to collaborat-The elder Hatfield, it may come ing with Prince Michel's other new Hatfield credits much of his busi- as a surprise, was a minister. But hire, winemaker Bryan Jones, who Hatfield. "I thought I could serve more well-known and widely dis-ness know-how to lessons learned since he refused to take any com-spent a decade as chief winemaker pensation for his ministerial work, at Lovers Leap Vineyards in Law-

> There are a lot of big moves hap-Like his father, Hatfield has never pening at Prince Michel.

Another one? The teetotaler Hatitself as "situated among the rolling is working with people and work- On top of his other duties, Hatfield field admitted he sampled this year's The learning curve isn't daunting foothills of the Blue Ridge," true of ing towards success for the business served 25 years as a member of the Decadence Chocolate wine. "It was

> **Emily Hemphill** (540) 855-0362 It was his father's balance be- ehemphill@dailyprogress.com

Ix Art

From A1

founder and its board president, Glass, she said. told The Daily Progress. "We're

ence to its founding mission to all days but weekends; admission inspire and foster artistic creation pegged at \$15 per person. that explains why the art park Thanks to Flow, the exhibit is jumped at the chance to partner now open for free Thursdays from with car dealership Flow Toyota noon to 6 p.m. and open the popular Looking Ix officials, still uneasy about Glass exhibit, billed as the first operating costs, said they chose of its kind in Virginia, for free on the time and day because they as-Thursdays. Those free "Commu- sumed traffic would be lighter on a nity Days" began on Nov. 6 and are weekday during work hours. 2024.

ing welcoming spaces that al- "free." low everyone a safe place to exist creatively," reads the nonprofit make or take any more cuts to its profit groups, the art park's finan-free three-day Soul of Cville Fest, We have something people want. group's mission statement. "The operations. Foundation believes that everyone can express themselves creatively that we had to downsize and lose In fact, Ix had just hired new staff while it did cost money to attend and deserves an inspiring space to an amazing team of people, but it's members mere weeks before the six-week summer art camp at misfortunes, the board's president do so."

to the art park in August when it Harr said. held there. The car dealership's ecutive Director Lisa Capraro, management said it was inspired who left after Ix said it had people off during COVID," said According to a report in C-ville grams or events, after Flow's free by the park's expressions of cre-stopped paying all employees in Krischel. "It wasn't the best fi-Weekly, he spent \$100,000 on Thursdays conclude. Acuff said he ative ingenuity and community September. Ix simply could not nancial decision, but it felt like the a 20-by-70-foot pergola con- hopes Flow's relationship with Ix outreach, so discussions began on afford her, said Kirschel. When best moral decision at the time." structed with the original beams will be one of continued support. how to make the space as accessi- Harr, who had been with the orble as possible.

munity," Bennett Acuff, group Capraro's role and the company's full-time artist and educational ing forward is to have the fund- Ix will have to tighten its grip on president at Flow Automotive, payrolls, she was the only one. ilege to be in the Charlottesville said Kirschel, who came to Ix's sources Ix Art Park was offering brainstorming how to continue one's support."

is contributing roughly \$13,000 for Ix to open for free on Thursdays.

But according to Krischel that doesn't mean the park is breaking there for the community and even on those days. The donation available to the community," "does not come close" to covering Susan Krischel, the art park's the operating costs for the Looking

When Ix began to cut back on trying to sort of find that balance." its operations earlier this year, It could be its resolute adher- the Looking Glass was closed on

the Thursdays booking up reveal "Ix Art Park seeks to empower they may have misjudged the pow-

Harr and Kirschel said Ix cannot

Flow Toyota was first introduced holds and bring back what we had," unlike most businesses and non-scholarships.

community, so we want to benefit board after spending more than free of charge. and bless any community we're in." 15 years as an assistant district According to Ix's newly installed attorney in New York City's Spe- the extent of Ix's free program-



COURTESY OF IX ART PARK

The Looking Glass at Ix Art Park in Charlottesville is billed as the first planned to last until November of The reservations rolling in and immersive art exhibit of its kind in Virginia.

our community through curat- erful allure of one simple word: staff to run the Looking Glass — as called "Arts from Underground" well as a bar manager.

cial struggles were exaggerated the "Ix Flix" free outdoor movie We just have to be smarter about "It was kind of heartbreaking with the arrival of the pandemic. series over the summer. And how we execute." also exciting to see what the future lockdowns were announced. But the park, Ix provided several free is optimistic about the group's profit groups, Ix chose not to let Alex Bryant was not yet 30 years to be more aggressive with fund-

ganization as director of events tions did not return as expected, site that predated the art park. "We want to benefit the com- since March 2022, stepped into some of the positions, like the director, were simply draining Ix's ing ahead of the programming," its wallet. told The Daily Progress. "We want "Harr understood Ix and what bank account. Another contribut- said Harr. "We got a little ahead to find those doing good and sup- we're trying to do here, so she was ing factor to its money woes was of ourselves in the past. We're experience a different reality," port them. It's genuinely a priv- the perfect person for the job," the amount of services and re- now in a phase of transition and said Harr. "The arts need every-

A 2022 "Impact Report" shows sustainable way."

Ix did retain a handful of hourly to Sunday, a free weekly event formally taken on by Ix's personal for adults to socialize while "ex-Like most businesses and non- ploring their inner creativity," the said Kirschel. "It's a good product.

But when business and dona- from the original silk mill at the

inspiring creativity but in a more

Krischel also acknowledged the ehemphill@dailyprogress.com executive director, Ewa Harr, Flow cial Narcotics Prosecutor's Office. ming: art kit giveaways Thursday organization has tended to be over @EmilyHemphillO6 on Twitter

eager when it came to programs that weren't prefunded. She said employing a full-time staff "got onerous" on the group's ability to function productively.

"The problem is simple," said Krischel in the September statement announcing Ix's "unsustainable funding gap." "The cost of staff, overhead, and programming has eclipsed our ability to fund the operations. It is time for us to rethink our financial model and create something that is more financially sustainable."

Some of those sustainable plans will include hiring contract labor when Ix is hosting events at the park, bringing on a temporary person to run summer camps instead of a yearlong educational director, and including more local artists on projects that were artist.

"The thing is, people love Ix,"

Despite the recent monetary ability to bounce back. She plans old when he was named Ix's ex- raising efforts in the future before "It didn't feel good to us to lay ecutive director in January 2022. committing to extensive pro-

It's an irony, but in order to continue embracing Charlottesville's The takeaway: "Our goal mov- arts community with open arms,

"People get to come here and

Emily Hemphill (540) 855-0362

Poppy

From A7

of talented floral designers out there who love creating dazzling displays outside the traditional network of wedding florists.

Poppy has a network of about 400 independent floral designers who can turn ideas into arrangements. "There are people who just want to do floral design who don't want to run businesses," Hardesty said.

Poppy's business model is empowering to floral designers and bridal couples alike.

"That has been a guiding ple who just want to do floral the flowers they want while saving money. design who don't want to run

businesses." and it took a lot of the stress out adding that its website is use- want. If you can't tell a rose



principle for this business," The week between Christmas and New Year's Day is a busy one for Hardesty said. "There are peo- Charlottesville-based Poppy, which enables brides and grooms to choose

of it," said Jessica Straus Fuchs, ful for couples who aren't really the \$5 billion wedding flower Jane Dunlap Sathe

"I used Poppy for my wedding, Poppy's marketing consultant, sure what kinds of flowers they industry.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF POPPY

ticulture to take this quiz. We newly engaged couples, too. can help you set your North Star

Poppy was a leap of faith in the beginning, but it has carved www.poppyflowers.com. out its own creative niche in

"Starting a wedding business jsathe@dailyprogress.com

from a ranunculus, you won't literally months before COVID end up on the hook for buying was really hard," Hardesty said. hundreds of the wrong bloom. But about 3,000 weddings "Poppy does a really good later, as the largest and fastest job of educating people," Fuchs growing wedding florist in the said. Its new customer-facing country, Poppy has raised a \$6.5 online quiz helps assess cus- million Series A financing led by tomers' style and color prefer- Michigan Capital Network, with ences and leads them to 13 dif- participation by IDEA Fund ferent color palettes that can Partners, Techstars, Angeles be tweaked to suit individual Investors, Riptide Ventures and Front Porch Ventures.

"Green and white in 2023 has The Dec. 11 financing news been the most popular color came at a fortuitous time for the palette," Fuchs said. "We don't company. During a sentimental make you get a degree in hor- time of year, it's good news for

"The week between Christwith your color palette, and ev- mas and New Year's is a big erything can flow from there." week for us," Hardesty said. For details, go to https://

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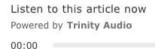














09:49

S tudents 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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- 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

lacksquare

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.



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.





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 retore 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.

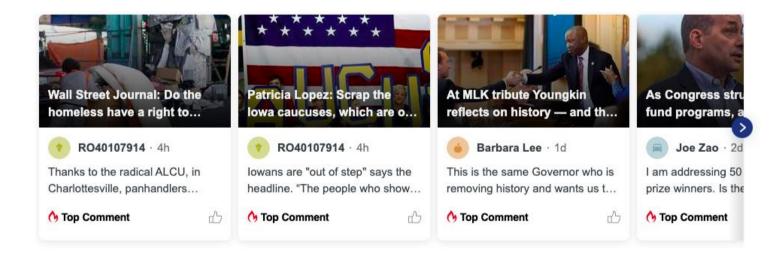


"It'd be like if we had a speed limit that was 35 and everybody was going 60 but nobody ever got pulled over," they said. "Then they started seeing what else they could do."

Jason Armesto (717) 599-8470

jarmesto@dailyprogress.com

@rmest0 on Twitter







WHERE YOUR STORY LIVES Friday, October 27, 2023 dailyprogress.com

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 racists 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.

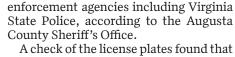
Adam Ryan Martin, 38, was arrested on Sept. 29 and charged with two offenses in Albemarle County, obstructing justice and assaulting an officer, in addition to three drug offenses and one eluding charge from

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



the registration belonged to another vehicle, and shortly after 3:30 a.m. the deputy began a pursuit, according to the sheriff's

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

"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 trving to put handcuffs on Martin, according the Albemarle County General District

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

Please see PURSUIT, Page A2

HEALTH & SAFETY

Algae bloom dissipates, swimming advisory lifted in parts of Lake Anna

Swimmers advised to take precautions after state says it won't be testing again until '24

DAILY PROGRESS STAFF

The dangerous algae bloom that has plagued branches of Lake Anna since at least August has started to dissipate, but not enough for the state to lift its swimming advisory for all branches of the body of water.

"Effective immediately, the (VDH) is lifting the harmful algae bloom (HAB) advisory for the Middle North Anna Branch of

"However, the HAB advisory for the Upper North Anna and Upper Pamunkey branches remains in effect."

It's the sixth consecutive year that algae bloom made the waters at Lake Anna dangerous for swimmers.

Also known as cyanobacteria, algae bloom can cause "skin rash and gastrointestinal illnesses, such as upset stomach, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea," according to the state.

It also can produce a strong Virginia Department of Health odor. Residents at Lake Anna likened the stench to that of "a gigantic cow pie."

The algae bloom in the Mid-

Lake Anna in Louisa County," the dle North Anna Branch has been agency announced in a statement. recorded since at least this past

> "Results of samples collected September 19 and October 10 indicated potentially toxic cyanobacteria were acceptable levels allowing the advisory to be lifted," the Department of Health said in its recent announcement. "All samples indicated acceptable levels of cyanobacteria with toxin results below advisory levels."

The Upper North and Upper Pamunkey branches have also been under an advisory since August, but those advisories remain in effect, the agency said.

"VDH needs two acceptable samples collected at least 10 days

While samples collected on Oct. 10 from the two branches were at acceptable levels, samples collected on Sept. 19 were not.

Swimmers are advised to take responsibility for their own health and safety in these branches going forward, as no additional samples will be collected by the state agency and sampling will not resume until May of next year weather permitting.

"This is the final status update for the 2023 recreational season," the Department of Health said. "The recreational HAB response season is set to end on November 1, therefore, there will be no additional HAB response samples conducted this season. Fall and winter lake recreators should

observe caution as blooms may appear as temperatures fluctuate as we go into the cold weather months."

The public is urged to be aware of and avoid any discolored water or scums in the inundated waters of the North Anna Branch down to the Route 522 bridge and from the upper inundated waters of the Pamunkey Branch to Runnymede Park.

"When in doubt, stay out," the agency reminds swimmers.

Avoid swimming, fishing or letting your children or pets play in bodies of water that:

Smell bad.

Look discolored.

Have foam, scum or algal mats on the surface.

Statue

Swords Into Plowshares project has been driven by a plan to melt down the statue and transform the remains into a work of public art.

Step one is complete. Now, the work begins to commission an artist and ideally bring an art installation to Charlottesville by 2027, 10 years after Unite the Right shook the city and the nation.

"It's been a long time coming for our community," Olivia Gabbay, who attended Thursday's press conference, told The Daily Progress. "To be around something that's caused so much sorrow and sadness and conflict in the community and to see the possibility of change, it feels good."

The Lee statue attracted national attention when White supremacists mobbed the city in 2017 to protest its planned removal from what was then called Lee Park, now Market Street Park. In addition to their tiki torches, the racists brought hate, mayhem and violence; one avowed racist drove his car through a crowd, killing anti-racist counterprotester Heather Heyer and injuring 35 others. Heyer's killer, James Fields, is serving a life sentence in a federal prison in Springfield, Missouri.

Douglas made clear that it has been a long road to melting Lee.

"In 2012, when Kristin Szakos dared to suggest that Confederate from the podium, referring to the former city councilor who long rallied to have the statue taken down.

resident Zyahna Bryant, then a teenager, created a petition to remove the statue and rename the park, garnering 700 signatures and thus bringing the issue to City Council. Council voted to remove the monument in 2017, a decision



Foundry workers adjust pieces of Charlottesville's bronze monument of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee atop a furnace to heat them in preparation for melting the statue on Oct. 21, 2023.

that Jalane Schmidt of the Memory Project at University of Virginia's Karsh Institute of Democracy and the Swords Into Plowshares steering committee, said should not have been controversial.

"Robert E. Lee himself had insisted that there should be no Confederate monuments. The the city did not follow the correct great abolitionist Frederick Dougmonuments and monuments to lass agreed, predicting that 'mon-White exceptionalism do not be- uments to the Lost Cause will prove long in our public spaces," she said monuments of folly," Schmidt told dation did not legally exist due to be to form a jury and solicit art prothe crowd gathered at Thursday's press conference. To her left sat a bronze ingot that was melted down Four years later, Charlottesville from the bronze Lee's sword.

> This and other Confederate monuments were "propaganda", she said, "tricking generations of Americans into adopting a Lost Cause misinterpretation of the Civil War."

Some, Schmidt added, argue they

should be preserved and used as teaching tools. That was the plan for the Louisa-based Trevilian Station Battlefield Foundation and Tazewell-based Ratcliffe Foundation, which tried and failed to prevent the Jefferson School from securing the statue earlier this year, arguing procedures when gifting the statue to the cultural center. Ultimately, a judge ruled that the Ratcliffe Founimproperly filed paperwork and the Trevilian Station Battlefield Foundation lacked standing.

"In a multiracial democracy, we should not maintain the artistic equivalent of a 'Whites only' sign in our public parks in the name of teaching history," Schmidt said Thursday. "The fact that the statues stood for a century in our central parks is a testament to their per-

verse success as propaganda."

By converting the propaganda into a public art piece, the Jefferson School and Swords Into Plowshares said they hope to begin to heal a community where so many of its residents were once enslaved and which still bears the scars of slavery and Aug. 12, 2017, known locally as A12.

posals, with the goal of naming an artist by 2024. Donations will also be collected to help fund the new art installation, and a fundraising goal of \$4 million has been set, a number Swords Into Plowshares said it based off of public artwork projects in other parts of the country.

The jury is meant to allow the community to participate in the process, Douglas said. She said

they will try to include people who specialize in sculpture, history and "members of our community who understand our narrative deeply." The jury will help to ultimately choose the artist who will then create a proposal.

"We'll bring those proposals to the community. They'll do some community engagement and then ultimately out of that process, they'll boil it down to one organization or artist," Douglas said.

Where in the city the piece will be placed, and if it will even be in the city at all, is still not known. Because the city owns the statue's former home at Market Street Park, it will have to give final approval on any proposed location within that jurisdiction.

"We have begun conversations with the city and they are open to this process, and so we will continue to engage with them as we move forward," Douglas said.

Three large photos of the statue being melted at an undisclosed foundry were placed next to the bronze ingot at Thursday's press conference. Douglas would not say what foundry ultimately melted Lee down. A Freedom of Information Act request submitted by The Daily Progress earlier this year discovered the statue was being stored at a foundry in Nashville, Tennessee. When that foundry was contacted, workers denied it was there.

Before Schmidt finished speaking Thursday, she told the crowd the But the process will take some next phase of the journey would be me. Douglas said the next step will to convert something negative into something beautiful. And she cited a line from the prophet Isaiah, from which Swords Into Plowshares derives its name.

> "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks," Schmidt said. "And they shall study war no more."

Jason Armesto (717) 599-8470 jarmesto@dailyprogress.com @rmest0 on Twitter

Pursuit

until he was escorted to ground," Stutes wrote on the arrest war-

The intersection where the Inifiniti crashed terminates at the north fork of the Hardware River, ply wrote "extensive" in the space

in that waterway was left unsaid in the documents.

a female passenger who was detained, according to the sheriff's

In deciding against bail, an Albemarle County magistrate sim-

but whether the fracas ended up usually reserved for a recitation of other offenses that include him in Albemarle County court. of the person's prior record.

Martin's legal problems appear Left behind in the Infiniti was to have started in 2005, when as a 21-year-old, he was arrested for burglary and grand larceny in Fluvanna County. He was convicted of both charges and has spent the subsequent 18 years

unlawful wounding and receiving stolen property as well as six probation violations. At the time sought on a fentanyl possession 16. charge in Fluvanna County.

The court file indicates that he has hired veteran defense attorin and out of jails after a spate ney Mike Hallahan to represent

In Augusta County, he will be represented by the Office of the Public Defender. His next Albeof his most recent arrest, he was marle hearing is slated for Nov.

> **Hawes Spencer** (434) 960-9343 hspencer@dailyprogress.com @HawesSpencer on Twitter

The Daily Progress

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