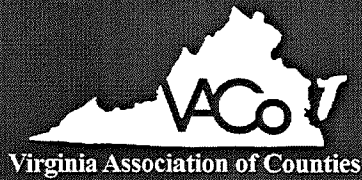


Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



2012 Achievement Awards

ATTN: 2012 Achievement Awards Program
Virginia Association of Counties
1207 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, Va. 23219-3627

Call for Entries



2012 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2012

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. Deadline: June 1, 2012.

Program Information

Locality County of Louisa, Virginia
Program Title Teen Quest Special Program
Program Category Parks and Recreation

Contact Information

Name Jane Shelhorse
Title Director
Department Parks and Recreation
Complete Mailing Address PO Box 160
Louisa, Virginia 23093
Telephone # (540) 967-4420 Fax # _____
E-mail jshelhorse@louisa.org

Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Robert Dubé
Title County Administrator
Signature* *R. Dubé*

*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.



2012 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline for Entry: June 1, 2012

Description

The VACo Achievement Awards is a competitive awards program open to local government members of the association. The awards program is held annually to recognize local government programs that exemplify innovation, model practices, partnering or collaboration with other local governments, a private enterprise or state and federal government. Please encourage all county departments to apply!

Eligibility

All local government members of the Virginia Association of Counties, which are in good standing with the association, may participate. There is no limit to the number of applications a county may submit.

All applications must comply with the following standards:

1. The program must have become operational before Jan. 1, 2012, and must be currently operational.
2. Local government officials and/or staff must have played a significant role in developing and implementing the program, with only limited assistance from outside experts and/or consultants.
3. All steps in the application must be completed.
4. Awards will be given to departments or units, not individuals.
5. Programs that have received a previous VACo Achievement Award are ineligible.
6. The program must meet one or more of the criteria outlined below and must be signed by the county administrator or chief administrative official before submission.

Criteria for Selection

The nominated program must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Offer an innovative solution to a problem, situation or delivery of services.
2. Promote intergovernmental cooperation and/or cooperation with local, state and federal entities and/or a private enterprise in addressing a problem or situation.
3. Provide a model that other local governments may learn from or implement in their own localities.
4. Programs may be based on programs from another public or private entity but must represent innovative approaches or customization by the local government.

Website

To view past Achievement Awards winners and all the entries from the 2011 competition, visit www.vaco.org/AchievementAwards.html.

Questions?

Contact Gage Harter, VACo's Communications Director, at (804) 343-2502 or gharter@vaco.org. Additional application forms are also available at www.vaco.org.

Categories

Program Categories:

1. Community/Economic Development
2. Customer Service
3. Communications (public relations)
4. Criminal Justice & Public Safety
5. Health/Human Services (youth, elderly and others)
6. Information Technology
7. Parks and Recreation
8. Transportation
9. Organizational Development
10. Environmental
11. Regional Collaboration

Rules

Rules of entry:

1. All entries must be submitted in duplicate. Mail two copies of each entry bound in a notebook or presentation folder. Include the entry form, all appendices and supplemental materials, photographs, DVD, etc. Additionally, submit one copy in electronic format--PDF or WORD file (e-mail electronic entry to gharter@vaco.org).
2. Entries must be typed and double-spaced. State the problem, challenge or situation faced by the locality and how the program fulfilled the awards criteria (innovation, partnering or collaboration and a model for other localities). Tell how the program was carried out, including financing and staffing, and the program's results. Be concise and submit no more than eight one-sided typed pages plus photos or supporting materials.
3. Include a short overview of the program (no more than one page double-spaced) that can be used as a quick reference guide for judges. Please include the application form.

Judging

Entries will be judged by a three-member panel selected for their expertise in local government. When there are no selected nominations, no award will be made. One entry will be named "Best Achievement."

Award Presentation

Award plaques will be presented at VACo's Annual Business Meeting on Nov. 13, 2012, in Bath County. The winning entries will be featured in a booklet that will be distributed during VACo's Annual Conference, and winners will receive a special ribbon to be worn on their nametags. Winners will be recognized on the VACo website and in a news release sent to statewide media. A VACo staff member also attends Board of Supervisors meetings to present an award.

Deadline

All entries must be postmarked no later than June 1, 2012, and mailed to VACo Achievement Awards, 1207 East Main St. Suite 300, Richmond, Va., 23219-3627. Entries will not be returned.

TeenQuest Special Program - Overview

When the earthquake hit Louisa County on August 23, 2011 it damaged the only high school in the county so badly that it was deemed unusable. Rather than cancel school for the year, county officials decided to use the county's one middle school for both middle school and high school, alternating the days of the week students attended school. To address parents concern about supervision for their middle school students on the days they were not in school, and also to give teachers the working hours needed to fulfill their contracts, the parks and recreation department partnered with the county schools to create the TeenQuest Special program.

The middle school students would come to the Betty Queen Center, a Parks and Recreation facility with a gym, cafeteria, and multiple classrooms on days that the high school was in session for a variety of supervised activities that included physical activity, study time, computer and game time, and free time. The school system provided teachers for supervision, transportation to the program, and free breakfast and lunch for all participants.

The program was up and running within three weeks of the disaster, and continued for approximately five months, until the new mobile high school was established. The program helped to establish a much more cooperative relationship between the school system and parks and recreation department, inspired a good use of resources (including federal grants) and gave the County the opportunity to provide needed services to the community during a very disruptive time for many of our residents.

2012 VACo Achievement Award Nomination - TeenQuest Special Program

On August 23, 2011 there was an earthquake in Louisa County that damaged many homes, businesses, schools and other buildings throughout the County. The quake damaged the only high school in the county so severely, it was deemed un-useable. The County officials had to make a choice - cancel school for the year, or make other arrangements so that students could get the needed hours of education to earn credit for the school year.

There is only one middle school in the county, which is located next door to the high school, and officials decided that the best option was to use that school for both high school and middle school until a more long term solution could be found. The plan was simple – the middle school would be used as a high school on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 am – 5 pm and it would be used as a middle school Tuesday, Thursday and every other Saturday from 8 am – 4:45 pm. Classrooms and office space would be shared, and it would give students at both schools the needed hours of education.

Among other issues that arose from the plan, was the parents' concern over child care for their middle school students on the days that they were not going to be in school. It was one thing for children in grades 5 – 8 (ages 11- 14) to be home an hour or two on a work day (as they might be on day with a regular school schedule), and it was another thing for children to be left all day three days a week without supervision.

Another issue was the teachers' schedules and salaries; would they still be paid the amount in their contract if they were working less hours, and if so, was that fair to the teachers in the other schools who were working their regular schedules.

Louisa County Parks and Recreation partnered with the schools to create the TeenQuest Special Program as a solution to these problems. The middle school students would come to the Betty Queen

Center, a Parks and Recreation facility with a gym, cafeteria, and multiple classrooms on the Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays that the high school was in session. The school system provided teachers for supervision, transportation to the program, and free breakfast and lunch for all participants. Computers that were removed from the computer room at the high school were installed in a classroom at the Betty Queen Center to create a computer lab for the students.

The program schedule was designed such that children rotated through activities throughout the day; study hall, gym, computer room, teen center for pool and video games. Whenever possible, the students went outside, walking the fitness trail, playing on the community playground and enjoying free time. Children were charged \$30 per week for the program, although there were scholarships available (from funds contributed by local community organizations), and children were allowed to attend for free if referred by social services or the school for remedial work or to accommodate students with special schedule requirements. The fees collected were used to cover the expenses such as supplies and the additional part time parks and recreation staff needed to manage the program.

The hours of the program were 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays. Parents could drop off and pick up their child at the Betty Queen Center or could take advantage of free transportation provided by the schools. During a regular school year, the high school and middle school students ride the same bus, so the program participants were able to ride the bus to school. From there, participants were transferred to one bus for the short trip over to the Betty Queen Center. Each afternoon, the participants were taken back to the school where they got on their regular bus for the ride home.

The schools also provided approximately ten teachers and instructional aides each day to assist in the supervision of the children, and provide homework assistance during study hall. The hours worked by school staff went toward the hours necessary for the fulfillment of their contract.

Lastly, using a grant from the USDA, the schools provided free breakfast and lunch to all children attending the program. School personnel prepared the food at the middle school while preparing school meals, and then transported and served them to TeenQuest participants. This allowed all students access to at least two healthy meals each day.

The feedback from parents, students and teachers was very positive regarding the program. Parents appreciated having a safe, supervised place for their children to go. Many even said their children's grades improved because of the designated study hall and assistance they received from the teachers. The students enjoyed hanging out with their friends, and the variety of activities kept them from being bored on the days they were out of school. Finally, the teachers used the program as an avenue to give student additional assistance or to catch up on missing school work if needed. It was also a great opportunity for students and school staff to interact in different ways; perhaps playing basketball, creating a masterpiece during a special cooking class, playing a board game, or working together on a team challenge.

Approximately eighty five children enrolled in The TeenQuest Special Program, which began September 12, 2011 and lasted until the end of January 2012, when the new "temporary" high school opened. Although the parks and recreation department and the schools work together throughout the year, the TeenQuest Special Program was a unique opportunity for them to partner in ways never previously considered. The goal was to make the best of a bad situation for the children, and to do it cost effectively. By making the most available resources, some innovative thinking and real cooperation the County was able to provide a much needed service for the community.

Education.....B-2
 Yard Sale Map.....B-3
 Business.....B-4-5
 Classifieds/Legals.....B-6-8
 Law and Order.....B-9
 Around the County.....B-10
 B-1

COMMUNITY

The Central Virginian

Thursday, September 29, 2011

TeenQuest offers Laughing & Learning

Students and teachers interact on new level

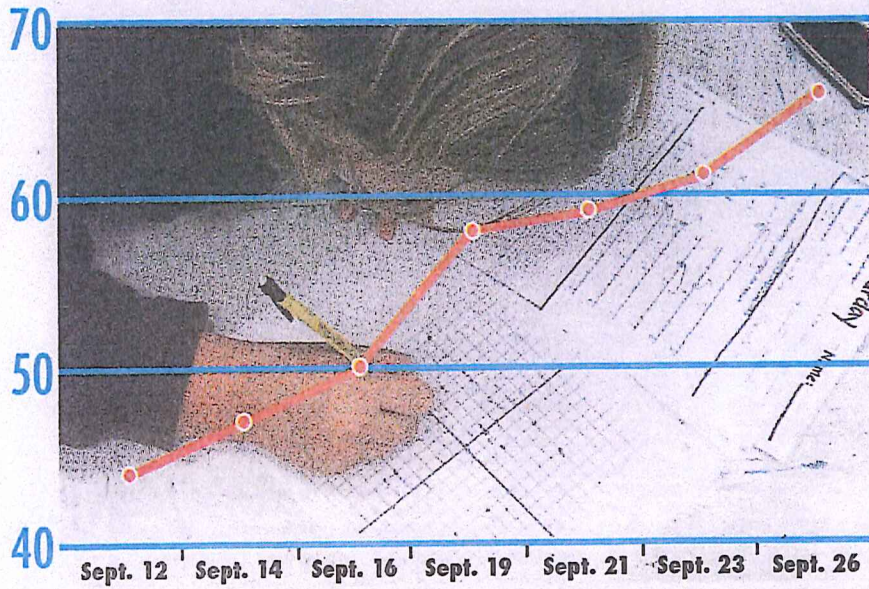


TeenQuest students Michael Williams and Travis Johnson challenge LCMS staff Mrs. Horne, Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Stover to a game of foosball. Photo by Gail Martin

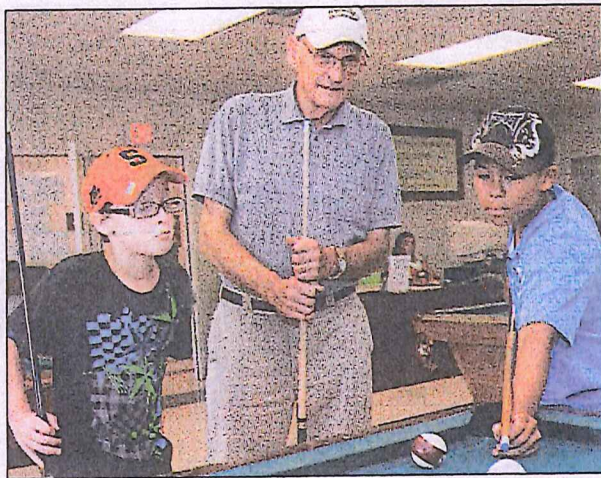


These students enjoy bag lunch provided by the middle school cafeteria. The TeenQuest program is available Monday, Wednesday and Friday for middle school students. Activities include indoor and outdoor sports, video and board games, foosball, pool and of course, an hour of required study hall. Photo by Gail Martin

TeenQuest Program enrollment on the rise



Michael Ligas, (l to r) Johnny Lynch, and Corie Cosby work on their pool game together in the recreation room during Teen Quest. The program allows seniors students to interact together and share stories and knowledge. Photo by John Strader



Jane Shelhorse, director of Louisa County Parks and Recreation, works with upwards of 50 kids a day at the TeenQuest Program. Photo by John Strader

By Gail Martin

The Phoenix rising from the ashes is nothing compared to Louisa County schools, rising from earthquake rubble. What seemed like insurmountable problems just a few short weeks ago now has Jane Shelhorse, director of Parks and Recreation, "weepy" as she puts it.

"Everyone worked together as a team to make this happen," she said.

After the earthquake left Louisa High School unusable, a plan was developed for middle school students to attend their building's classrooms Tuesday, Thursday and alternate Saturdays and the high school students to attend classes there on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

"My biggest concern with this schedule," said Shelhorse, "was for middle school students being left alone, especially when parents work. TeenQuest was an idea to meet that need. It offered structure, fun, exercise and study time in a safe environment with a professional team at the Betty Queen Center."

In its third successful week, TeenQuest has three groups of middle school students,

66

Everyone worked together as a team to make this happen.

-Jane Shelhorse,
Director of Louisa County
Parks and Recreation

99

about 20 in each group, with more coming in new each day. Students have about an hour at each station: indoor and outdoor games, computer lab, sports, a nature walk, pool, foosball, video and board games and a study hall. Stations are supervised by middle school staff, who are scheduled at TeenQuest one day in six. There is no extra pay for this but is required as part of their regular salary.

Breakfasts and lunches are served, all prepared in the middle school cafeteria and brought over fresh and hot twice a day. Thanks goes to Randy Herman, School See Teen on page B-8



The computer lab is a popular stop in the program. Photo by Gail Martin

Teen

continued from page B-1

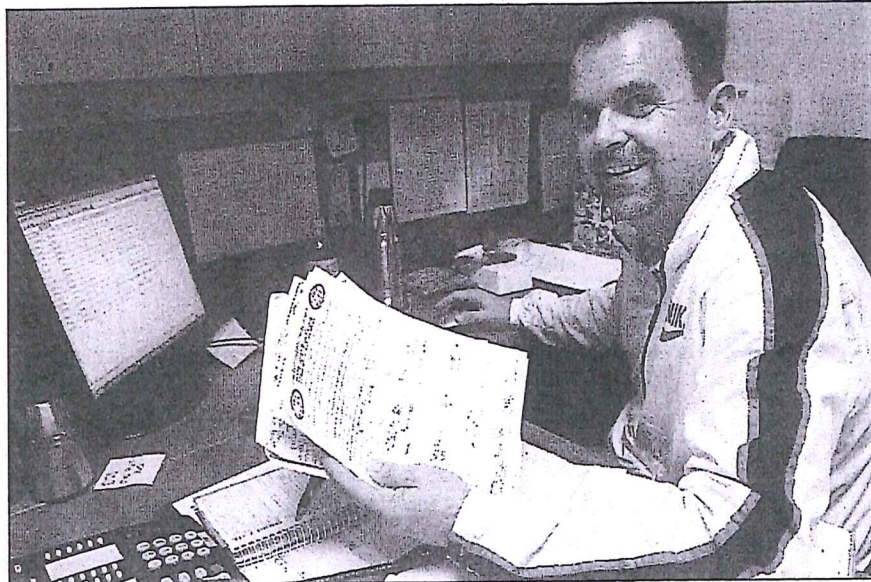
Food Services, who obtained a grant for this service, with not a penny being paid by taxpayers.

"The cafeteria staff has been amazing, preparing two meals a day for all high and middle school students, even on Saturdays," William "Skip" Davis, middle school science teacher said.

"TeenQuest is amazing in other ways too," he continued. "It gives these kids a chance to interact with each other socially, which doesn't happen often enough during regular school. For me, I share my room and equipment with the high school science teacher successfully. I have had to alter what I teach in class to cover everything then the kids get more homework. But they work here and have help in study hall. Nothing gets left out. We are all making the best of a bad situation and the kids are moving forward. We are doing the best we can with what we have."

Joyce Ventre, middle school instructional assistant for special education students agrees.

"The school day is longer but we break it up with a snack and a quick exercise," she said. "It all works out well, but I will be ready when we go back to the traditional schedule."



Les Bullock with Louisa County Parks and Recreation on Monday morning looking over attendance numbers at his desk at Betty J Queen Intergenerational Center.

"Another advantage is that kids see their teachers in a different light here, as just regular people and not as a 'mean' teacher," Shelhorse said. "So many people came together for the kids and made this work - I get weepy every time I talk about it."

TeenQuest is Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Betty J. Queen Intergenerational Center. Bussing, breakfast and lunch with all activities included, is \$30 per week for the first child and \$25 for each child after that.

For information or to register a child, call (540) 967-2240.

Text Alerts from The Central Virginian

Because you want to know now

- * Weather
- * Sports
- * News



sign up at www.thecentralvirginian.com



PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE LOUISA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Louisa County Planning Commission will meet on the following items at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 13, 2011, in the Louisa County Public Meeting Room, Main Floor, Louisa County Office Building, Louisa, Virginia:

1. **Public Hearing - CUP05-11;** Wayne E. Williams, Sr., Applicant; Wayne E. Williams and Tristin W. Williams, Owners; request the issuance of a conditional use permit for the establishment and operation of *Custom Manufacturing (Welding Shop)* in the Agricultural (A-2) Zoning District. The property is located on the south side of Route 678 (Hanback Road), west of Spring Hill Drive. The property is further identified as a TMP 3-(2)-1A, in the Green Springs Voting District
2. **Public Hearing - Amendments to the following sections of the Louisa County Subdivision Ordinance - Section 66-158 to add (f) and (f)(1).** The draft amendment to the Louisa County Code proposes amendments to the Louisa County Subdivision Ordinance, Section 66-158, adding subsection (f) whereby any recorded plat or part thereof, may be vacated pursuant to the provisions of Sections 15.2-2270, 15.2-2271, or 15.2-2272 et seq., Code of Virginia, as applicable and (f)(1) to vacate Stoney Creek Subdivision, identified as TMP 84-(21)-A, 84-(21)-1 through 84-(21)-18 and road right-of-way; recorded at Deed Book 1115 and Page 210; Plat Book 8 beginning at Page 2511; Recorded in the Louisa County Circuit Court Clerk's Office February 14, 2008.
3. **Public Hearing - Amendments to the following sections of the Louisa County Zoning Ordinance - Sections 86-412 through 86-414 and to add new sections 86-415 and 86-416.** The draft amendment to the Louisa County Code proposes amendments to the ordinance to clarify certain aspects of the site plan review process and ensure this process is conducted in compliance with the Code of Virginia.

Additional information and copies of the above files are available for review in the Community Development Department, Main Floor, Louisa County Office Building, Louisa, Virginia during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or by calling (540) 967-3430.



PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to advise that the Louisa County School Board will have a Called Joint Closed Session Meeting with the Louisa County Board of Supervisors on **Monday, October 3, 2011 at 5:00 p.m.** for the purpose of discussing legal matters in accordance with Section 2.2-3711(a)(7) of the Code of Virginia. The meeting will be held in the Virginia Extension Meeting Room located in the Louisa County Administration Building located at 1 Woolfolk Avenue, Louisa, Virginia

By Order Of:

Gregory V. Strickland, Chairman
Louisa County School Board



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING LOUISA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Louisa County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on the following items at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 17, 2011, in the Louisa County Public Meeting Room, Main Floor, Louisa County Office Building, Louisa, Virginia:

Public Hearing - CUP04-11; Crossroads Farrier Supply c/o Anita Leckie and John Turner, Applicants; William C. Cooke, Inc., Owner; requests the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit for a *Specialty Shop* in the Agricultural (A-2) Zoning District. The property is located on the north side of Route 250, west of the intersection of Route 250 and Rol-



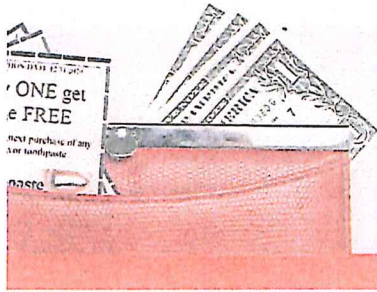
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOUISA Monday, October 3, 2011 Louisa County Office Building 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Invocation - Mr. Spencer
Pledge of Allegiance
Constitutional Officers
Adoption of Agenda

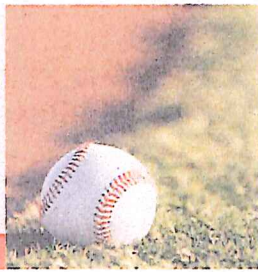
I. Presentation

1. Presentation - 2011 VACo Achievement Award



**WANT TO
SAVE \$140?**
CLIP OUT
TODAY'S
COUPONS

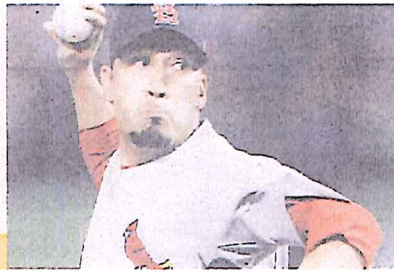
INSIDE



**AMERICA'S
PASTIME**
WHY OUR
AREA NEEDS
BASEBALL

D1

VIEWPOINTS



**CARDIN
RANGERS
SEEK LEAD**
SEE WEBSITE
FOR RESULTS

B1

SPORTS

The Free Lance-Star

SERVING FREDERICKSBURG, SPOTSYLVANIA, STAFFORD, KING GEORGE, CAROLINE, ORANGE, CULPEPER, WESTMORELAND, FAUQUIER AND LOUISA

\$1.50

WEATHER: HIGH 67, LOW 44, SUNNY AND PLEASANT. A2

FREDERICKSBURG, VA. FOR 24-HOUR UPDATES, GO TO FREDERICKSBURG.COM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2011

SPOTSYLVANIA » POLICE URGE VIGILANCE AFTER 2ND INCIDENT IN WEEK

GIRL REPORTS ABDUCTION TRY

BY AMY UMBLE
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Spotsylvania County police yesterday asked parents to be cautious after a 9-year-old girl reported an attempted kidnapping Friday afternoon.

The school bus had just dropped off the girl near her Salem Fields home when she noticed a man get

out of a minivan, said Col. Michael Timm with the Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office.

The man ran toward the girl and chased her for a few yards down Polaris Court before going back to his minivan and leaving, Timm said.

This attempted abduction comes on the heels of another try a little

more than a week ago, and Timm said parents should be "extra vigilant."

The earlier attempt was in Ashleigh Park, which is about three miles from Salem Fields.

There seems to be no connection between the two attempts, Timm said. In the first, the 15-year-old girl who reported the crime identi-

fied her almost-abductor from a photo lineup. Police identified him as Jacinto Hernandez-Andrades. She said he fled the scene in a light blue Toyota Camry.

This latest would-be victim gave a detailed description of the man who chased her, and he sounds nothing like Hernandez-Andrades, Timm said.

The girl described a young white man, possibly a teenager, with short, blond, curly hair.

The man wore a sky-blue shirt with flames, baggy jeans, tan hiking shoes or boots, and a jacket with orange and green panels on the front that were reversed on the back, according to a Sheriff's Office

SEE ABDUCT, PAGE A9

Murderer freed 10 years too soon

INMATE USES CLERICAL ERROR TO CON JUDGE AND GAIN EARLY RELEASE

BY KEITH EPPS
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Stafford County prosecutor Eric Olsen was miffed when he got a call in 2009 about Dion Darnell Waller, a man he'd prosecuted in Stafford for killing his infant daughter in 2001.

The caller, a prosecutor in Indiana, told Olsen that Waller had been arrested in Allen County.

The prosecutor wondered why someone who had killed a small child had served only six years in the Virginia prison system.

Olsen said that at first he figured the Indiana prosecutor couldn't be talking about the same Waller who was convicted of felony murder and and felony child abuse here in 2002, because Waller

SEE INMATE, BACK PAGE

INSIDE TODAY

INDEX	LOTTERIES	B4
BOOKS	D6 OBITUARIES	C2
BUSINESS	D8 REGION	C1
CLASSIFIEDS	F1 SPORTS	B1
COMMUNITIES	C5 SUDOKU	E8
EDITORIALS	D2 TELEVISION	E11
HEALTHY LIVING	E1 TRAVEL	E14
HOROSCOPES	E11 VIEWPOINTS	D1

In Louisa, rec center doubles as school



MIDDLE-SCHOOLERS DISPLACED BY AUGUST QUAKE MOVE TO NEW THREE-DAY-A-WEEK HOME

BY EDIE GROSS
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Ann Toney dealt the stack of Uno cards, stared across the table at her pint-sized opponent and narrowed her eyes.

"Game on, man," said Toney, an instructional aide at Louisa County Middle School. "Game on."

"Game over!" shot back Jamal Quarles, an equally confident sixth-grader sporting a pretty decent hand.

Welcome to sixth period at the Betty Queen Intergenerational Center, Louisa County's parks and recreation building.

It's Friday, and normally Toney would be working in a middle school classroom, and Jamal would have his face in a textbook or his hand in the air.

But Louisa County hasn't known normal since a magnitude-5.8 earthquake rocked the community on Aug. 23, causing nearly \$81 million in damage to schools, churches, businesses and homes.

The structural damage to Louisa County High School—the county's only high school—was so severe that it's closed for at least the rest of the school year.

High-schoolers now take classes at Louisa County Middle School on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, displacing middle-schoolers like Jamal, who attend the school on Tuesdays, Thursdays and every other Saturday.

The new schedule meant that about 1,000 middle-

For \$10 a day, middle-schoolers can take a school bus to the Betty Queen Intergenerational Center, enjoy breakfast and lunch, get help on their homework, socialize with their friends and blow off steam.



About 80 Louisa middle school students have signed up for the recreation center program, which runs from

\$10 haircuts? Louisa's trying

COUNTY RELYING ON PRIVATE FUNDS AFTER GOVERNMENT REFUSES EARTHQUAKE AID

BY MICHAEL ZITZ
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

What do you do when you're a less-than-affluent rural county like Louisa, and a magnitude-5.8 earthquake does an estimated \$80.6 million damage to your schools, homes and churches?

When almost all of the damage is uninsured?

And when the Federal Emergency Management Agency declines to provide aid?

You hold a bake sale.
You have a yard sale.
You put on a haircut-a-thon.

You vote early and often online till you win a contest to have country star Alan Jackson do a benefit concert. But even that can raise only a tiny fraction of the funds that are necessary.

And yet every little bit helps. It adds up—very, very slowly.

Casey McNutt, general manager of the Best Western Crossroads Inn and Suites at Zion Crossroads, just off Interstate 64 in Louisa, organized a bake sale and yard sale in the hotel's conference room yesterday.

It raised \$653 for the Louisa County Earthquake Recovery Program.

Six hundred fifty-three dollars is 0.000081 percent of \$80.6 million.

"Because of the failure of FEMA to help out, a lot of people in the community have come together to do different benefits and festivals," McNutt said. "It's the only choice you have."

Today, the Hair Cuttery at 49 Market St. in Gordonsville is holding a Cut-a-Thon to benefit the Louisa Education Foundation. Haircuts are \$10 each, and all proceeds go to the cause.

At \$10 each, it would take 8.06 million haircuts to raise \$80.6 million. But even if only 10 heads are shorn today, that would be, well, headway.

"I think it's rotten," 69-year-old Marilyn Whanger said of FEMA's decision not to provide aid. Whanger, who was shopping at the Best Western fundraiser, said her house was damaged by the quake. But she was luckier than some friends and neighbors. Whanger's home remained safe for her and her husband, Julian.

Whanger is a retired insurance agent, and she had no earthquake insurance. "No one expects an earthquake on

the East Coast," she said.

According to U.S. Sen. Jim Webb's office, fewer than 2 percent of those whose homes were damaged in Louisa had earthquake insurance.

Last week, when President Obama, a Democrat, made a stop in Hampton to deliver a jobs proposal speech, Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell, a Republican, spent 10 minutes asking the president to lean on FEMA. McDonnell had requested aid from FEMA soon after the quake and been turned down.

But displeasure with FEMA was bipartisan.

"BECAUSE OF THE FAILURE OF FEMA TO HELP OUT, A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY HAVE COME TOGETHER TO DO DIFFERENT BENEFITS AND FESTIVALS. IT'S THE ONLY CHOICE YOU HAVE."

—CASEY MCNUTT

Last week Webb wrote to FEMA asking how Louisa's case for aid could be strengthened.

And Webb's fellow Democrat U.S. Sen. Mark Warner pondered in a statement how a "once in a generation" disaster doesn't qualify for FEMA aid.

The people of Louisa say they are hoping for help from the president in persuading FEMA. But they aren't counting on Washington. They just keep plugging away as they try to raise that estimated \$80.6 million, more than \$60 million of it the estimated cost of repairing and/or rebuilding public schools.

According to a Louisa public schools press release, an Oct. 14 event, "Louisa Cares ... A Movement for Healing," raised more than \$20,000 for the Louisa Education Foundation and the Louisa Housing Foundation.

"We are delighted with the response from our community and will continue to support the foundations' work for the foreseeable future," Lloyd Runnett, event organizer, said in a statement.

Twenty thousand dollars, by the way, is 0.002481 percent of \$80.6 million.

Slowly, but surely. Very slowly.

Michael Zitz: 540/846-5165
mikez@freelancestar.com

ON THE NET
louisacares.com



REZA MARVASHTI / THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Louisa middle school students, mostly sixth- and seventh-graders, attend the recreation center when they are not in school. A grant provides the children with free lunch.

LOUISA: After-school program became an all-day program at Queen Center

FROM PAGE A1

of middle school parents was what would they do with their kids," said Jane Shelhorse, county parks and recreation director. "My first reaction was if they're not at school, they should be with us."

So she and her staff partnered with middle school teachers and expanded their after-school program to an all-day one on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

For \$10 a day, middle-schoolers can take a school bus to the Betty Queen Intergenerational Center, enjoy breakfast and lunch, get help on their homework, socialize with their friends and blow off steam.

Jamal did just that Friday when the wiry 12-year-old swept the first round of Uno and promptly capped his win with a victory dance.

Toney, who took the next two rounds, said she has enjoyed getting to know students beyond the classroom. She and Jamal had teamed up for a game of pool earlier, losing in a nail-biter to sixth-grader Joseph Teece.

"I like coming up here, because you get to interact with them [students] like this," said Toney. "It's already 2:30, and I wouldn't have guessed that. It goes by so fast."

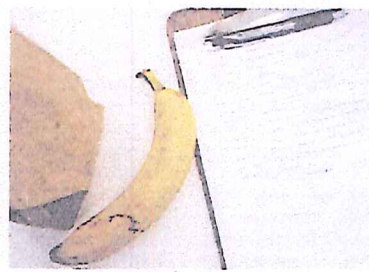
'IT'S PRETTY COOL'

Shelhorse, formerly the assistant director of parks and recreation in Fredericksburg, said about 40 students signed up for the program during the first week. Six weeks later, those numbers have doubled.

Many kids have family members who can look after them during the day, she said, and some are old enough to stay home alone.

But the program, which runs from about 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., is a great help to parents who work but want their children in a supervised environment.

"I just don't like leaving a 12-year-old at home," said Christina Perkins, who signed up daughter Carmen Meadows. "I thought it was a great way for her to keep up with her homework and keep



A schedule outlines the activities for the four groups that use the Betty Queen Intergenerational Center.

her involved. It's an awesome opportunity for her to be in a safe environment, and she loves it."

Carmen, a seventh-grader, said she likes to spend time in the computer lab—the high school donated the equipment—and pal around with her friends.

"I was really surprised it was this much fun," she said. "We get to get on computers and play. I don't have much to do at home."

The day is broken into periods, just like at school. The students get gym time and study hall along with opportunities to use the rec center's nature trail, playground and teen center, where they can play pool, watch TV or challenge each other on the Wii.

And just to keep things interesting, the staff and teachers occasionally toss in a first-aid class or a Hula Hoop contest.

"There's more freedom than regular middle school," said eighth-grader Tiernie Grooms, 14, who originally didn't want to come because her mom referred to it—jokingly—as baby-sitting.

"We thought it was going to be just us and little kids," said Tiernie, who attends with her twin brother, Trent. "Instead, it's all the kids we know from school. So it's pretty cool."

'WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE OK'

Not that it's been easy. The students say they enjoy hanging out with their friends at the rec center and the extra-

long weekends when there's no Saturday school. But the compressed school week has meant long days in class followed by mountains of homework. And spending every other Saturday in school hasn't been popular.

"I'm so tired after school, I just want to go home and stay in bed," said sixth-grader Jaycee Ward. "The four-day weekends are awesome, but Saturdays? I'm not cool with that."

It hasn't been easy for the recreation staff, either.

They've had to make room in their gym for the high school volleyball and girls basketball teams, and they've loaned their kitchen to the high school's culinary arts program.

They've also juggled the schedules of other groups that use the facility, from Weight Watchers to Zumba class, to accommodate the middle school students.

Somehow they've managed to make it work. "The middles," as Shelhorse calls them, have been great to the preschoolers who come daily to the center. And they've even offered to teach senior citizens texting and computer tips.

Officials hope to return all students to a more normal schedule in mid-January after setting up a temporary high school made of mobile units near the middle school.

Until then, the program at the rec center offers a semblance of a routine to the students who have absorbed a lot of change over the last nine weeks, said Jaclyn Jacobson, a seventh-grade counselor.

"The schedule is tough, but this has been good for them," she said. "Structure and routine, especially after a traumatic event, are really critical for kids."

Sixth-grade English teacher Kathie Lewis said the students have done an amazing job of adapting.

"Middle school kids are pretty good about rolling with it," she said. "I think we're all going to be OK."

Edie Gross: 540/374-5428
egross@freelancestar.com