



Fun for All
at Kinsale Festival
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Verizon workers brave the rains and picket along Richmond Road in response to cancellation of their insurance by Verizon. This protest effort is one of many taking place across the state.

Verizon strikes rages on Workers fight for jobs as Verizon opposition grows

BY AMANDA CHISHOLM
James "Jim" Morris, Vice President of the 2201 area Communications Workers of America, said there has been, "Incredible support" for the Verizon strikers.

The strike has been in reaction to Verizon's decision to shift their company toward operating with mega centers rather than separate offices.

This move would mean the possibility of closing the Warsaw Main Street Verizon office, which could result in the loss of jobs for 36

employees, says Verizon employee and chief steward for the local chapter of Communication Workers of America, Theresa Balderson.

Employees from the Warsaw office have been vigilantly picketing along Richmond Road for the past few weeks; going as far as even picketing in the pouring rain.

Morris stated that they're fighting to keep their jobs because, "We love our jobs." He said it is, "Hard to hold back emotions. These are my friends. Our families."

Morris confirmed that Verizon has cancelled their insurance as of

Monday May 2. He said the worst part is that these people have families who rely on that insurance for their children's necessary medications.

Verizon plans to start outsourcing their work says Morris.

Morris says that they've had support from individuals at the Virginia Railroad Express (VRE) and people from Dominion Power, who have supplied the strikers with food. Morris also mentioned that one gentleman from Fredericksburg dropped off 15 Firehouse Subs gift cards for the protesters.

Local YMCA receives \$300,000 gift

BY AMANDA CHISHOLM

"I cannot express enough gratefulness to the Davenport Family. The Richmond County YMCA has served so many families and the need is there to serve more. This gift gives us hope that more people from every population can benefit from Y programs," says YMCA Richmond County and Westmoreland Branch Executive Philip Belfield.

Eleanor Davenport and her family donated \$300,000 to the cause. Belfield says this is the largest single gift the Richmond County YMCA has received since its opening in 2006.

Eleanor Davenport said she made her donation to the Richmond County YMCA because, "They do such a wonderful job" in helping so many individuals in the community.

Philip Belfield stated that the Richmond County YMCA has seen the need to expand since 2012. By 2015, they began to create design plans and started the process of asking for leadership level gifts for the project.

The total expansion project is projected to cost a total of \$1 million. To date, with the additional of the Davenport gift, the YMCA has raised \$500,000.

The Richmond County YMCA board of managers has already unanimously pledged to the project.

Since the location's opening, the Richmond County YMCA has increased its number of members from 400 to 1500. They've also expanded their number of group exercise classes from 10 per day to 30 a day with four offsite classes a week. Each exercise class studio can currently take in up to 20 participants. The new design plan will increase the number of potential participants to 40-50 people per class.

Belfield stated that there is also a need to expand their Child Watch program, which currently can only take in ten children at any one time.

Belfield also stated that one of the project's initiatives is to expand the facility's parking, which is currently limited to only 11 paved spots. In mornings and evenings, Belfield reports that there are as many as 55 vehicles parking.

Ms. Davenport said that she hopes that her donation challenges other people to make donations of their own to the cause.

The Richmond County YMCA is currently still seeking leadership level gifts.

Maine couple stops to tour Fones Cliffs on their voyage of America's Great Loop

Travelers enjoy the pristine beauty and abundant wildlife of the Northern Neck

BY AMANDA CHISHOLM
On Thursday, May 5 the husband and wife team, Captain Steve Spencer and Libbey Seigars stopped along their 10 month long boating journey to tour the Rappahannock's historic Fones Cliffs. Members of the Chesapeake Conservancy and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation led the tour.

Spencer and Seigars, along with their pet cat, have spent the last 10 months on their 24' Seaway workboat, *Laughing Gull*. The started their journey in Whitefield, Maine and worked their way down through America's Great Loop, circumnavigating Eastern North America by water.

The couple asked their friend, Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Senior

Naturalist John Page Williams, for recommendations of where to stop while along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. Williams suggested Fones Cliffs because of its pristine historical value and beauty. This location is currently at risk of major development.

Seigars explained, "We regularly use the boat in the spring and the fall in Maine, but we're usually out for a few days, a week, two weeks. And for years we were working and taking a two or three week vacation and go to Florida. The longest we've been on the boat was a month or six weeks, so this was the trip of a lifetime to be on the water for ten months. It was intimidating sometimes to think at the beginning of it, 'Will we get bored?



Maine Couple stops in for a tour at Fones Cliffs as part of their journey along America's Great Loop.

How will this work? But it's been nice, just enjoying the mornings where you are, having coffee. We're in these gorgeous locations. It's been fun. Just a couple of days ago we saw a bear swimming."

Libbey Seigars commented that on their journey, she's been able to study the migration patterns of many different birds.

"You always wonder, 'where do the birds go on land?' And now,

they're just popping up. I was looking around in Alabama and I saw this mysterious bird with this pale orange front and I said, 'I wonder what they are?' and one landed on the front of the boat like 'hey dummy, we're robins. We're the ones on your lawn in the spring'. It was just interesting to see them pop up in unexpected places. I'm a very novice birdwatcher, so things caught me by surprise."

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Boats gathered for the boat parade at last year's event

Blessing of the fleet to be held Sunday

The traditional Blessing of the Fleet will be held at the 11AM Sunday Service on Sunday the 15, at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. The ceremony marks the opening of the fishing season on the Chesapeake Bay.

Local clergy will ask for God's blessing for a fruitful fishing season, the safety of the ships and their crews, and for those lost at sea. This Sunday's event is a great way to spend the morning, while taking in a part of Reedville and fishing history.

2016 class inducted into Sports Wall of Fame Many local coaches were honored and recognized for their efforts and accomplishments.

BY ZACH HAMILTON
This past Saturday, The Northern Neck Sports Wall of Fame inducted their 2016 class with a ceremony at Dream Fields in Kilmarnock. The class of 2016 included Daniel Conner, Jack Walker, Andrea White, and Joe Taylor. All four of the inductees were there in person to accept their plaques. The event was attended by several athletes already on the Wall of Fame including Jim Coates, Carroll Lee Ashburn, and Leonard Hall. Daniel Conner was an extraordinary basketball star at Northumberland High School and went on to do great things

for Randolph Macon College. He was the MVP with the Yellow Jackets during his freshman year of 1973. Connor also was a co-captain on the team that was the National NCAA Division II Runner-up in 1977 and was inducted into the Randolph Macon Hall of Fame. In recent years, he has led the Meadowbrook High School girls team three times and was conference coach of the year in 2012 and 2013.

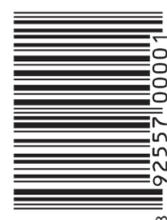
Jack Walker was a phenomenal two sport athlete during his years at Rappahannock High School. Walker accumulated over a .400 career bat-

ting average during his time with the Raiders. In 1981, he was the all-region and all-state player of the year. He was also an all-region and all-state player for Rappahannock basketball. Walker went on to be one of the best all-around-baseball player at Randolph Macon, where he batted .377 and ranked in the top five for hits and stolen bases. He is a member of the Rappahannock High School and Randolph Macon Hall of Fames.

Andrea White began her career at Lancaster High School as a two sport athlete. White led the Lady Red Devils to the State Championship Game two times

during her run with the team. She was the District Player of the Year all four years during high school and also all-district, all-region, and all-state during her career. White is the all-time scoring leader at Lancaster High School and was the AP State Player of the Year and VHSL All-Star Game MVP in 2010. Andrea was also a two time State Champion in high jump, long jump, and triple jump during her time at Lancaster. White went on to Georgetown University, where she was the Big East player of the week several times and second team All-Big East in 2014.

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