

The Free Lance-Star

Losing ways continue

From poor defense to injuries, inconsistency has hurt the Commanders. **SPORTS, PAGE B1**



Salmon skills

Two recipes to help beat those dinner woes. **FOOD, PAGE C1**



Wednesday, November 12, 2025

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World War II Sgt. James Wescoat (in wheelchair) meets Gunner, a service dog belonging to wounded veteran Tyler Vargas-Andrews, left, during the Marine Corps 250th birthday celebration at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Wescoat, who will be 104 next month, and Pvt. Joseph Pacella, right, 19, were recognized as the oldest and youngest Marines at the ceremony.

PETER CIHELKA, THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Spotsy meeting turns into spectacle

Superintendent shows credentials and school system bans a critic

SCOTT SHENK
The Free Lance-Star

Monday night's Spotsylvania County School Board meeting included the odd spectacle of the schools superintendent displaying his credentials along with the school system blocking an outspoken critic from attending the meeting.

During board member comments, school board Chair Megan Jackson talked about the situation without mentioning anyone by name.

As the board chair, Jackson said she "has worked to be fair" but sometimes "you have to make tough decisions some will not like, such as my decision to have a public speaker removed for the second time from the last regular meeting."

The speaker to which Jackson referred is Shamgar Connors, a Stafford County resident well-known to the board as a regular speaker who dresses in costumes and makes odd, satirical, and some say unacceptable, comments aimed at DEI hires and "the woke school board."

Connors' name was read aloud as a signee to speak during public comment at Tuesday's meeting, but he did not show up. The no-show may be related to a no-trespassing order.

According to the online blog Spotsy Wire, the school system issued a no trespassing order against Connors, which was signed by Jackson.

Spotsy Wire included a photo of the no trespassing order, which notes that Connors was issued a warning letter in June "for similar disruptive behavior" and informed that a repeat of his actions would "result in the school division issuing a no-trespass order against you."

Please see **SCHOOL BOARD**, Page A5

Hundreds help Marines celebrate 250th birthday

Ret. Maj. Gen. James Lukeman, CEO of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, said the annual birthday gathering is "more than a piece of cake, it's a celebration of who we are."

CATHY DYSON,
THE FREE LANCE-STAR



People from across the country attended event held at the museum in Triangle

CATHY DYSON
The Free Lance-Star

They may not all cut the cake with a sword, but wherever two or more Marines are gathered on Nov. 10, anywhere in the world, there will be a "Happy Birthday" exchange and the sharing of anything that resembles cake.

So says Ret. Maj. Gen. James Lukeman, president and CEO of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, the stewards of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle. On Monday, he watched as hundreds

crammed into the Leatherneck gallery — the museum entrance — to celebrate a monumental occasion.

Most national museums are still closed because of the federal government shutdown. But because of the public-private partnership between the Marine Corps and the Foundation, the latter was able to pick up the tabs for the cake-cutting ceremony.

"We couldn't pass up the 250th birthday of the Marine Corps without having a celebration here in the National Museum," he said.

Based on the license plates of vehicles in the packed-to-the-gills parking lot, people from across the country couldn't pass up the chance to be there, either.

Please see **MARINES**, Page A12

Young Spotsy Marine receives national award

Faith Clevenger 'represents the very best of today's youth'

CATHY DYSON
The Free Lance-Star

Faith Clevenger, a home-schooled senior in Spotsylvania County and member of the Young Marines, has two distinct connections to World War II.

She was one of two national recipients of the Jimmy Trimble Award and scholarship during the 28th annual American Valor Honor Gala on Saturday in Washington. Trimble was a star athlete who passed up the chance to play professional baseball so he could serve in the Marines during World War II.

He was 19 when he was killed

at Iwo Jima, eight days after the flag was raised at Mount Suribachi, which is one of the most iconic images for Marines.

Clevenger has been a public affairs correspondent in the Young Marines, and she draws inspiration from Lee Miller, an American woman who worked as a photographer during the Second World War. Miller began her career as a model in Great Britain, but as war broke out and male photographers joined the service, Miller chose to be behind the camera.

Her work as a war correspondent includes images after the invasion of Normandy, during the Allied liberation of France and the discovery of Nazi concentration camps in Germany.

Please see **CLEVENGER**, Page A12



YOUNG MARINES

Faith Clevenger of Spotsylvania, right, is one of two national recipients of the Jimmy Trimble Award and scholarship. She's shown with fellow Young Marine Jadan Rogers, left, of Honolulu and Rob Riggle, an actor and comedian who's also a retired lieutenant colonel in the Marine Corps.

Dog rescued, no one injured in city blaze

KEITH EPPS
The Free Lance-Star

Fredericksburg fire officials are investigating a fire that broke out Monday morning at a garage in the 2000 block of Princess Anne Street.

City public information officer Caitlyn McGhee said responding units found smoke and flames coming from two garage units behind the old Coca-Cola building. Fire Chief Mike Jones said it took a while to get to the fire, in part because the building has no easily accessible rear access. But he said firefighters got the blaze knocked down fairly quickly once the accessibility issues were resolved.

Please see **FIRE**, Page A12

For more on the forecast, see our daily online videos. **FREDERICKSBURG.COM**

Weather
Mostly sunny & breezy
High 62 • Low 35
FORECAST • B6

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