

The Free Lance-Star

Athlete of the Week:
King George XC's Timothy Wingart.

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CNN, MS NOW, Politico sue Trump, administration for WH ban.

NATION & WORLD PAGE A9

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Gov. rescinds Youngkin's order

DAVE RESS
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Former Gov. Glenn Youngkin's directives mandating a 25% cut in state regulations are no more, under a new streamlined regulatory review process ordered by Gov. Abigail Spanberger.

Spanberger's order, in addition to ending Youngkin's mandate for across-the-board cuts, returns the authority to make recommendations to the governor on

regulations to cabinet secretaries.

Youngkin had given this recommendation authority to a new section of his office.

Spanberger's order eliminates this Office of Regulatory Management and its economic analysis requirement, because the analysis duplicates cost-benefit analyses that state law already requires of the Department of Planning and Budget.

Separately, state agencies already

complete economic impact statements when proposing new regulations, revising regulations or repealing them.

The Office of Regulatory Management's review extended deadlines for action on regulatory proposals that were already required by law and by earlier governors' executive orders.

Spanberger's regulatory order also ends Youngkin's requirement that regulatory changes that had been exempt

from Administrative Procedure Act requirements had to go through a four-step process of review by the Department of Planning and Budget, a cabinet secretary's office and the Office of Regulatory Management before going to the governor.

Those exempt charges included measures to align state regulations with new federal requirements.

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Friends fur-ever



PETER CIEHLKA, THE FREE LANCE-STAR

A group of Shetland Sheepdogs get acquainted at the Northern Virginia Sheltie Rescue (NVSR) annual picnic at Curtis Memorial Park in Stafford County on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2026. Shelties, their owners, NVSR volunteers and visitors got together to spend time with others in the Shetland Sheepdog community and get a first chance to buy next year's Sheltie calendar. Annual NVSR calendars are available for purchase from the organization and are the rescue's primary fundraiser.

More felony charges for suspect in disappearance

KEITH EPPS
The Free Lance-Star

A Spotsylvania man who has been named as the main suspect in the case of a young woman who went missing nearly 11 years ago was charged with 13 more felony counts on Monday.

James Robert Branton, 46, was indicted by a Spotsylvania grand jury on 13 counts of possessing child pornography. Branton has been in jail since April on charges that include aggravated sexual battery, indecent liberties with a child, child cruelty and indecent exposure of a child.



Branton

One of the alleged victims in the initial set of charges is Katelin Michelle Akens, who was 19 when she disappeared in December 2015 after being dropped off at Branton's home in Partlow. He was supposed to take her to Washington to catch a flight to Arizona, where she was enrolled in a cosmetology school.

Akens never got on the plane, and her luggage was found a couple of days later in a drainage ditch off River Road in Spotsylvania near Motts Run Reservoir. Her case has drawn widespread regional and national attention.

The Spotsylvania Sheriff's Office has

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Culpeper's Masons rebuild after fire

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
Culpeper Star-Exponent

Local Masons rebuilt better than ever, restoring their lodge, which was destroyed in a fire 14 months ago. The nearly \$1 million renovation returns original features to the 125-year-old building located in the heart of the Culpeper Historic District.

The fraternal organization is likewise looking to renew its place in town as a landmark where the public visits, as around the turn of the century, said Worshipful Master Doug Lingenfelter during a Sept. 2 interview at the lodge, still a construction zone.

He frequently referenced archival articles from local newspapers that highlighted the location of the Masonic Hall, which opened in 1901 upstairs at 209 E. Davis St.,

on the corner of East Street. The Masons rent out two storefronts below to support their considerable charitable efforts.

"If you owned a business near it, it was a big selling point," said Lingenfelter, retired from the Fairfax County Police Department. "The paper cited the lodge purchased the property from Charles Chelf, who was one of Mosby's Rangers during the Civil War, for \$1200. It was a great improvement to Davis Street, a showplace for adjoining businesses."

He regaled accounts of 300-plated dinners for wedding receptions held there, church-hosted Thanksgiving dinners for the community, veterans' events and other civic organizations using the well-appointed space.

"We would like to see that

return, that revival," Lingenfelter said. "We are having a special called meeting for our members later this month to see the renovation and reignite that spark for people to come back and be part of this rebuild."

Lightening sparks electrical fire

The upstairs meeting place for Fairfax Lodge No. 43 of the Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons looks drastically different from how it did before and after an electrical fire started in the ceiling on July 26, 2025, a lightning-filled night, according to accounts.

Officials believe the fire was sparked by a lightning surge from



ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION. CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

Fairfax Lodge No. 43, Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons lodge room in downtown Culpeper is nearing the end of a more than year-long renovation following a devastating fire during the summer of 2025.

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VIEW: Download *The Free Lance-Star's* mobile app. Point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link. **NEWSVU**

Weather

Humid with rain
High: 71 **Low:** 59
Forecast: B8

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