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Sandra Cararo, owner of The Book Dragon Shop, first came up with the idea of Queen City Word Fest, a book festival and literary event in downtown Staunton. PATRICK HITE/THE NEWS LEADER

Second Queen City Word Fest coming to Staunton

Patrick Hite
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

The second Queen City Word Fest will feature author panels, writing workshops and a meet the authors event on Oct. 17 in Staunton.

The event is a literary festival “dedicated to celebrating the written word and fostering a vibrant literary community,” according to a press release. It is organized and staffed by an all-volun-

teer committee.

Panels and workshops for readers and writers will be held at Silver Line Theatre Exchange, 211 N. Lewis St. in Staunton throughout the day. Workshops will be announced later in August and advance purchase of tickets will be required.

The highlight of the Word Fest is a meet the authors event, to be held at 110 W. Beverley St. in Staunton, next to The Book Dragon Shop. More than 30 authors from variety of genres will sign

and sell their books from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission to the meet the authors event is free and open to all ages.

As a kickoff to the Word Fest, The Book Dragon Shop will host a conversation with Bill and Karen Brodsky (writing under the pen name K.B. Brodsky), authors of the new thriller “Beyond Honor,” published by Simon & Schuster. The meet-and-greet and book signing will take place at Redbeard Brewing Co.,

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Local man sentenced in fatal crash

Brad Zinn
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

VERONA — A man who struck an e-bike rider last year in Stuarts Draft, then drove for about two miles with the bike lodged in the front of his SUV, has been convicted of involuntary manslaughter.

The crash killed 25-year-old Dylan C. Knowles of Waynesboro, who was on his way home from a family dinner.

On Wednesday, Aug. 5, in Augusta County Circuit Court, Samuel W. Call, 37, of Waynesboro, entered Alford pleas to charges of involuntary manslaughter, hit-and-run, and driving while intoxicated. An Alford plea doesn’t admit guilt but acknowledges there is enough evidence to likely secure a conviction. It’s treated the same as a guilty plea.

In a plea agreement, Call was sentenced to seven years in prison.

Victim struck by SUV, suspect flees

On the night of Sept. 14, Knowles was on an e-bike on Stuarts Draft Highway and headed toward Waynesboro when he was hit from behind by Call near Ladd Road.

“However, the defendant did not stop,” said Augusta County Senior Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney Holly Rasheed. The prosecutor said Knowles died instantly.

With Knowles’ e-bike lodged in the grill of Call’s 2022 Kia Sorento and the SUV’s windshield shattered, Call continued to drive. Rasheed said the e-bike was “visibly sticking straight out.” A witness also snapped a photo of the e-bike protruding from the front of the SUV.

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People walk past an anti-U.S. billboard Aug. 3 on a street in Tehran, Iran.
MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY
VIA REUTERS

Iran issues warning to Gulf states

Parisa Hafezi and Samia Nakhoul
REUTERS

Iran has made a concerted diplomatic push with Persian Gulf states, warning them explicitly that Tehran will hit their oil, power and water plants unless they convince President Donald Trump to end U.S. strikes on Iran and instead

seek a negotiated end to the war.

The warning envisaged attacks on the energy facilities, oil fields, refineries, electricity grids, water infrastructure, transportation networks and other strategic assets of Washington’s closest Arab allies, according to a senior Iranian official.

The message, part of a broader Irani-

an effort to deter further U.S. military action by raising the prospect of severe economic disruption across the Gulf, was delivered through a flurry of high-level diplomatic contacts after Trump threatened on July 28 to strike Iran’s energy network and infrastructure, the

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