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‘A great passion for helping others’

BY KRISTI SELLERS
The Farmville Herald

A friend first told Daniel Clark about firefighting when he was in high school. Born and raised in South Boston, Clark soon signed up as a junior member, a volunteer of the South Boston Fire Department.

“With permission from your parents, you are allowed to join under the age of 18,” Clark said. “During this time, I developed a great passion for helping others and serving my community. I attended any training that came available.”

Clark said he fell in love with the brotherhood involved with the department, the ability to help people, to the point he now knew what he wanted to do as a career.

“After graduating from high school, I



couldn't imagine doing anything other than being a career firefighter,” Clark

When he saw the job posting for the fire chief position, he knew that Farmville would be a great place to bring his family for this new opportunity. Now the fire chief is head of a group looking at a time of renovation, both of the physical firehouse here in town and of the department itself.

CHANGES IN BOTH PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY

“We currently have three full-time firefighters and will be hiring an additional in the near future. The full-time staff will never take the place of our dedicated volunteers but are there to work alongside the volunteers,” said Clark.

Clark has skillfully blended full-time and volunteer service to strengthen the Farmville Fire Department's capabilities and community ties. Recognizing the department's rich volunteer history, Clark has implemented a “combination model” that integrates a growing number of career staff with the department's dedicated volunteer force.

And on the physical side, changes are happening as well.

The Farmville Fire Station was built in 1991 and it was built as an all-volunteer fire station. There's no real living quarters in the fire station. That's a problem as the group now has more female volunteers than ever.

said.

At 18, Clark took on a full-time position at South Boston, while also juggling college classes at Averett University in Danville. He would stay on with South Boston a combination of more than 20 years when you factor in his time as a volunteer. That would continue until 2022, when he heard there was opening in Farmville.

Clark had visited Farmville before and knew it was a similar area, not including the colleges, to South Boston.

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C E N T R A



The women’s bathroom does not have a shower. When one of the five female volunteers has to shower after an event, they go tell everyone else in the firehouse they’re going to take a shower and lock the men’s bathroom. There’s also just not enough space. As it stands now, the firefighters sleep in the meeting room and do any decontamination in the apparatus bay. Personal protective equipment (PPE), the helmet, hood, suspenders, coat, pants, boots and gloves used to fight fires, doesn’t like sunlight.

If you just have your gear out in the apparatus bay and the sunlight is hitting it, it’s degrading the chemicals and coatings in it.” That’s backed up by data from the National Fire Protection Association. Cleaning, drying and properly storing PPE away from sunlight can extend its lifespan by several years. And that’s not cheap to replace. A full PPE set is around \$2,000.

So what would this renovation change or add? Well, it would mean building bunk rooms, shower rooms



and laundry rooms. The gear would be stored in a separate room, one

that’s constantly ventilated. It will dry the equipment out and have a longer life and will pull the gases off the equipment and out of the building. This renovation would also include a better fitness area, one also accessible 24-7 to members of the police department. Bunk rooms in this building would also be directly connected to the apparatus bay, reducing the rate of response. “As a growing department and one that has several female members,

changes were needed,” Clark said. “The new renovations will include sleeping areas for full-time staff as we move toward 24-hour shifts as well as for volunteers. Multiple showers will be included to ensure privacy for all. While our members train regularly, physical fitness is another vital aspect of being a firefighter. A fitness room will be included with an array of equipment for members to use.”

SETTING UP PROPER DECONTAMINATION

Firefighters are at a high risk of cancer due to the nature of the job. Areas for proper decontamination and storage of personal protective gear will help reduce some of the risk firefighters face. These renovations will prepare the department for future changes and growth as well as provide its members with a safe place to train and prepare for emergency calls.

In many ways, Chief Daniel Clark embodies the evolution of Farmville’s firefighting force: from volunteer-dependent roots to a professional, hybrid department equipped for today’s challenges. His certifications, community engagement, civic leadership, and hands-on command strengthen both prevention and response. As Farmville grows and modernizes, Clark stands at the helm — not only extinguishing fires but kindling a sustained legacy of safety, service, and stewardship.

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Nurses serve in a variety of roles

Nurses are invaluable professionals within the medical community. Whether they work in hospital settings, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, doctor's offices, or elsewhere, nurses provide vital services to individuals in need every day.

Nurses wear many hats, and that's evidenced by the different types of nurses making a difference each day. Individuals considering a career in nursing should know that talented nurses are in high demand and career opportunities in the field are expected to grow in the years to come. For example, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that employment of registered nurses will grow by 6% between 2022 and 2032. That growth rate exceeds the average expected rate for all occupations. Whether individuals want to become a nurse or gain a greater understanding of the many ways nurses contribute each day, this rundown of the various



types of nurses can shed light on these unsung heroes of the medical community.

PEDIATRIC NURSE

Pediatric nurses make a strong impression because they are the first nursing professionals many people recall interacting with, and those interactions may last from early childhood through adolescence. Pediatric nurses perform a range of tasks, including the administration of medication; monitoring of vitals like temperature, pulse and blood pressure; health evaluations to

identify symptoms; and even speak with parents to calm any nerves or anxieties they may have. Pediatric nurses typically work in doctor's offices or hospital settings.

GERIATRIC NURSE

Geriatric nurses figure to be in especially high demand in the coming years, as an analysis from the Bipartisan Policy Center indicates more than four million individuals in the United States turned 65 in 2024. AARP has characterized that surge in the over-65 population as a "silver tsunami," and geriatric nurses will play pivotal roles in ensuring the aging population gets the care it needs in the decades to come.

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

The American Association of Nurse

Practitioners® notes family nurse practitioners (FNPs) provide a wide range of family-focused health care services to patients of all ages. FNPs perform physical exams; order or perform diagnostic tests; prescribe medications; develop treatment plans; and treat acute and chronic illnesses. If that sounds like a role played by physicians, it's not far off, making this among the most challenging jobs within the nursing profession.

EMERGENCY ROOM NURSE

Individuals who think a fast-paced work environment is for them may want to consider a career as an emergency room nurse. ER nurses treat patients of all ages from all walks of life. No two emergency room patients are the same, so ER nurses will rarely, if ever, have the same day on the job more than once. Accurate assessment skills are vital for ER nurses, who also must be skilled communicators, as emergency room patients are often in distress.

Nursing is an expansive profession with a host of opportunities for aspiring professionals who want to work in the medical community.

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How to show your appreciation for EMS workers

Emergency Medical Services is a system that provides emergency medical care to patients in need. The Office of EMS defines its efforts as a system of coordinated response and emergency medical care that encompasses multiple people and agencies. The system includes law enforcement first responders, emergency services dispatch workers, transportation providers, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, nurses, and more.

According to the 2020 National EMS Assessment from the National Association of State EMS Officials, there were 1,030,760 licensed EMS professionals in the United States in 2020. EMS responders face many potential job hazards and sometimes put their own lives on the line to address patient emergencies. Exposure to hazardous bodily substances and chemicals; lifting patients and equipment; treating infectious illnesses;



and riding as passengers in high-speed transportation efforts are just some of the dangers EMS workers encounter every day.

EMS responders work tirelessly to help people in need. They often encounter people in dire situations and are

routinely exposed to potentially traumatic situations. Still, many continue to show up to work each and every day. In recognition of the invaluable services they provide, here are just a few ways anyone can show their appreciation for EMS workers in their community.

safety can greatly reduce instances that call for emergency responses.

OFFER YOUR GRATITUDE

When you see EMS responders on the job or around the neighborhood, offer words of thanks for all they do to keep your community safe. Your words of encouragement and appreciation can provide support and inspiration.

RALLY LOCAL YOUTHS

Children in school or at home can create thank you cards depicting the hard work of EMS workers. Drop them off at a nearby location or display them around the community.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO SPREAD THE WORD

Celebrate those in the EMS community by sharing examples of their hard work, dedication and compassion on social media.

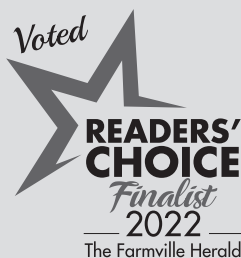
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PRIORITIZE ACCIDENT AND INJURY PREVENTION

One of the ways to give EMS workers a break is to reduce the need for their services. By following safety guidelines and conducting yourself in a safe and responsible manner, you can reduce the number of accidents that require EMS workers to respond. While not every incident can be avoided, prioritizing

BUY WORKERS LUNCH

Contact a local EMS agency or visit a nearby first aid squad and deliver a catered lunch. Go the extra mile and enlist neighbors to help finance this gesture.

EMS workers have stressful and demanding jobs. Taking time out of one's day to thank them can remind EMS professionals just how much they are appreciated.

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Some facts about law enforcement

Law enforcement professionals are in the business of keeping people safe and secure. Statista reports that, in 2022, there were 708,001 officers employed in the United States.

People from all walks of life work in law enforcement, where careers include dispatchers, crime scene technicians and police chiefs. The law enforcement field is vast and interesting, and the following are 14 facts about those who protect and serve, courtesy of Fact Retriever, Kiddle, the National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund, and the Law Enforcement Legal Defense Fund.

- In 1916, Georgia Ann Robinson became the first African American police

woman.

- Law enforcement agencies are still staffed primarily with men. However, about 12% of sworn law enforcement officers in the U.S. are women.

- The deadliest day in law enforcement history was on September 11, 2001. Seventy-two officers were killed while responding to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and other locations.

- Police are trained in first aid and rescue because they usually are the first to arrive on the scene of an emergency.

- The police are known by different names in other countries. In Ireland, for example, they are known as the Garda.

- Police in the United States cannot make an arrest without probable cause and the

intent to prosecute.

- The vast majority of Americans (71%) are satisfied with local police.

- Most cops (95%) never fire their service weapons on duty during their entire careers.

- 99.9% of police calls are resolved peacefully.

- The first policing organization was created in Egypt around 3000 BCE. However, Nicolas de la Reynie was the first Lieutenant General of the Paris police, and his views on law enforcement were used to form the basis for modern police forces.

- Only about one-third of a police officer's time is spent actually enforcing crime. Officers spend the majority of their time maintaining the peace and solving problems.



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Forever linked with his hometown

BY BRIAN CARLTON

CHARLOTTE

Sheriff J.R. Grissom's story has always been one connected to Charlotte County. A lifelong resident of the county, he graduated from Randolph-Henry High School. Charlotte is also where he met his wife of 25 years, Stephanie, another lifelong resident and where they're raising two daughters, Sarah and Amy.

But his ties are especially highlighted when it comes to his job. Over more than 25 years, Grissom has served in various roles with the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, working his way up and learning all of the different skillsets along the way.

"I began my career with the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office in July of 1997 and was hired by Sheriff Jones," Grissom said in an earlier interview with *The Charlotte Gazette*.

He started out as a correctional officer, moving up to patrol deputy in 1999. Then he went back to his alma mater, serving as a school resource officer at Randolph-Henry High. Over the years, he's served as a master deputy, a narcotics investigator with the Virginia State Police Drug Task Force, a patrol lieutenant and then patrol captain. Then he earned the second in command's role, serving as major to then-Sheriff Royal Freeman. It was at that point he was tasked with overseeing the daily operations of the entire department, helping keep people safe throughout the county. More training came with that position as well.

"I have had extensive training to include Fielding Training Officer, General Instructor, and Project Life Saver," Grissom said. "I have also served as a tactical team member from its inception. I



have taken part of every accreditation since January 2007 when we received our initial state accreditation."

NUMBERS SHOW GROWTH

One thing he's discussed in county meetings is the improvements people have noticed. For example, during the first quarter of 2025, Deputies with the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office conducted 1,294 traffic stops on vehicles in the county. Of those traffic stops eight summons were issued for vehicles traveling reckless by a speed of 20 mph or more over the posted speed limit. During the same period in 2024, there were 743 traffic stops but dramatically more related to reckless driving. In the first quarter of 2024, there were 125 traffic

stops related to reckless driving. That reduction in reckless driving cases has been pointed to as helping prevent accidents and save lives.

The data also shows there have been 76 felony warrants and 49 misdemeanor warrants obtained and served during the first quarter in Charlotte County. The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office also served 20 warrants consisting of misdemeanors, felonies, capias for other jurisdictions. The execution of these warrants led to the arrest of 97 people here in the county.

As a lifelong county resident, Grissom has said he's proud of his department. And having risen through the ranks, it's a way he can help keep his community safe.



Thank you, first responders,
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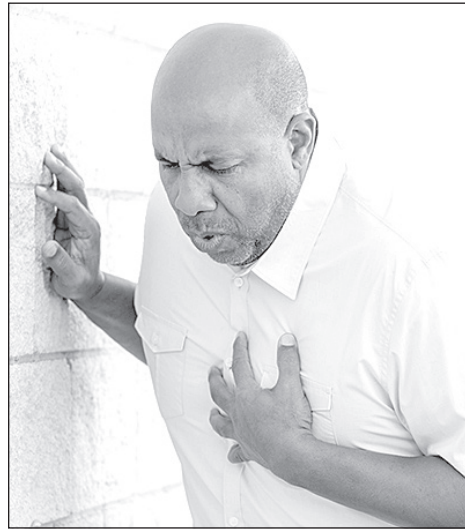
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How to plan for medical emergencies

Medical emergencies pose a significant threat to human health. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, unintentional injuries accounted for more than 192,000 deaths in 2020. That marks a significant increase since 2015, when NCHS data indicates roughly 146,000 people died from unintentional injuries.

Unintentional injuries are not the only situations that qualify as medical emergencies, which also can result from sudden, life-threatening issues like heart attack or stroke. Knowing what to do in the wake of a medical emergency can reduce the likelihood that such instances end in tragedy. And though medical emergencies might be most often associated with aging men and women, such scenarios can affect anyone at any time. That means it's in everyone's best interest to learn how to plan for medical emergencies.



- Document your medical history and keep printed documentation in an easily accessible place. Younger individuals likely won't have as much documentation regarding their medical histories, including existing conditions, medications and even previous emergencies.

But all individuals should print out a document that includes a brief rundown of their medical histories, and keep the document in an easily accessible place so caretakers, spouses or roommates can quickly find it and share all relevant information with first responders.

- Pack an overnight bag. Aging men and women or young people with a history of illness and/or medical emergencies should pack an overnight

bag or ask their caretakers to pack one for them. Include pajamas, personal toiletries and other care items, and even some books or activity books so you have something to do should you require an extended stay in the hospital. Include a spare phone or device charger in your overnight bag, as it's easy to forget such items when you're hurrying out the door in an emergency situation.

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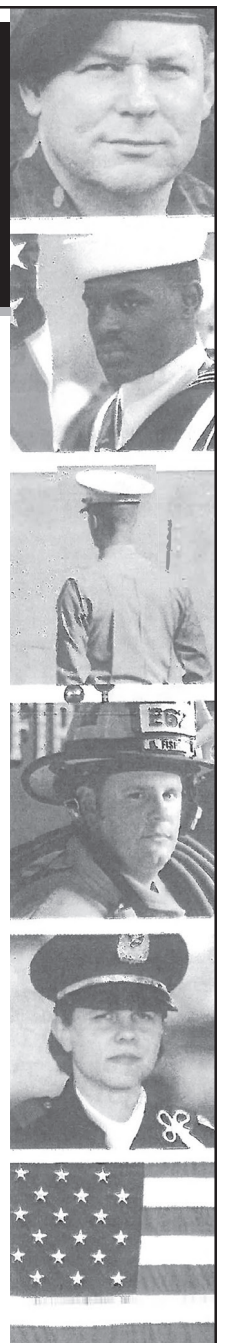
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- Map out the quickest route to the nearest emergency room. Modern drivers are accustomed to relying on their car's GPS systems to get from point A to point B. However, during a medical emergency it's ideal if individuals or caretakers already know where the nearest hospital is and how to get there. That removes uncertainties from the situation and ensures that precious seconds won't be wasted trying to get devices to connect with automobiles.

Medical emergencies can affect anyone at any time. Knowing what to do in such situations can save lives and increase the chances of a positive outcome.

Many skilled professionals work in police departments

Each and every day, communities rely on law enforcement agencies to keep their cities and towns orderly and safe. Uniformed patrol officers may be the most visible employees of police departments, but there are many individuals who work in concert to keep communities safe and precincts running smoothly. The following are some of the essential personnel who serve in local police departments across the country.

DISPATCHER/TELECOMMUNICATOR

This may be the first person individuals speak with during an emergency situation. Dispatchers typically work on the phone in police departments or from remote call centers. They patch information through to law enforce-

ment so that officers can respond to situations.

CIVILIAN INVESTIGATORS

Some departments employ civilian detectives to strengthen their investigative services. They work primarily from desks within the police department. These investigators will look into a wide range of low-level crimes like traffic incidents, burglaries and financial crimes. Sworn officers are able to devote their time elsewhere in the field as a result.

POLICE TECHNICIAN

A technician assists sworn personnel in follow-up investigations. Technicians also may perform other tasks, including working on paperwork or filing incident reports.

OFFICER/DETECTIVE

The broadest rank in the police department belongs to those who are police officers, patrol officers and police detectives. These people respond to emergencies and non-emergency calls, patrol areas, obtain warrants, and perform many other duties, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALISTS

Those with IT experience can work in police departments with video surveillance, in-car mobile data terminals, wireless communications, and global mapping technology to assist with crime prevention. Some IT professionals enter cybercrime detective units to help solve crimes related to computers and the internet.

VICTIM ADVOCATES

These people help victims of crime cope with trauma and may work in the services department of a police force. They typically inform victims of their



legal rights, including their right to protection.

SHERIFF

A sheriff is an elected official authorized by the state to enforce laws at a county level. They cover areas that are wider than those covered by local police departments. Sheriffs also may manage local jails and ensure security in these areas.

EVIDENCE CUSTODIAN

This is the person who oversees evidence and is responsible for cataloging and securing it safely in storage.

CRIME SCENE TECHNICIAN

The technician is a forensic expert who works with law enforcement to collect evidence found at crime scenes to help solve crimes.

ADDITIONAL OFFICIALS

Police departments follow a hierarchy of rank advancement. Above officers one will find corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, captains, a deputy police chief, and a chief of police. Higher ranks may manage other officers, monitor budgets and programs, enforce policies, and serve as the public face of local police departments.

Various professionals work at police departments across the country.

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A calling found early in life

BY ABBY DOWDY

CUMBERLAND

Usually when adults are asked what they wanted to be growing up, the answers usually always vary from the wide list of careers. However, Cumberland County's Coordinator of Emergency Services Darren Hurley didn't stutter with his answer – his calling found him, early in life and with clarity.

CALLING FROM THE START

Growing up in Cambridge, Maryland along the Chesapeake Bay, Darren spent his young teen years working on fishing boats with his father. But even as he hauled blue crab traps and worked on the water, his heart was somewhere else – helping people. By age 15, Darren was volunteering at his local fire station. By 18, he'd earned his EMT license and was chasing fire trucks in busier towns, taking classes on his

own time and dime. Now, decades later, Darren calls Cumberland County home – not just as Emergency Coordinator, but as a neighbor, outdoorsman, and family man.

DECADES OF SERVICE

After obtaining his EMT license, Darren spent a few years working for nearby stations around Cambridge. While these years were in motion, he applied for law enforcement jobs in towns, counties, and different states. At 21, Darren landed a full-time firefighter/EMT position in Chesterfield County, Virginia in November of 1989, and he stayed there for 32 years.

After retiring in 2022, Darren traded in his station environment for an on-the-road view, as he drove trucks up and down the East Coast. But by October 2024, he stepped into his current role as

Emergency Management Coordinator for Cumberland County.

This background is what shaped Darren Hurley – the outdoorsman, the husband, the father, the man who still heads to Maryland every month to crab with his 80-year-old dad. “In the fall, me and my dad will deer hunt. And the rules are, if you shoot it, you eat on it for the next year or so,” said Darren.

Now in the rural life of Cumberland,

Darren and his wife Carrie find their hobbies in the great outdoors. When the weather is nice, they'll travel to lakes like Buggs Island or the beach of Nags Head for some time by the water – one of Darren's favorite places to be. “We've even got a pool in our backyard, and I like to hang out there any time I get to,” Darren said. “We spend as much time outdoors as we can. It's a great way to focus on health, both mental and

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physical.”

While embracing the natural environment around him, Darren and his family also enjoy spending time on the High Bridge Trail – whether that’s biking, walking, or running the trail on days he’s able. “I’ve had a lot of fun learning about the neat history around our towns, like the relation between the Battle of High Bridge and Camp Paradise out near Prince Edward,” Darren noted.

A MINDSET OF SERVICE

Alongside his love of nature, Darren is motivated everyday by the simple art of helping others. After asking him what values he lives by, Darren responded: “I’ve always tried to uphold doing my best, telling the truth, and

abiding by the law, and helping others even if they don’t accept the offer. I’ve always strived to at least do one good thing a day, whether that’s lending a hand or coming up with a solution to some challenge. That way, I can look back on the year and say I did 365 good things. That’s really all I want to achieve.”

Ever since he was young, helping with his grandfather building stick-built homes, Darren remembers his strict hours: work started at 7 a.m., a half-hour lunch, and off at 3:30 p.m. “And there was no goofing off in between,” Darren added. And that same mentality has stuck with him till this day. “Showing up on-time is important because when it’s time to work, it’s time to work. Things gotta get done. And when the



time comes to take a break, take it.” For Darren, work isn’t just a job, it’s a way to stay disciplined and get things done.

HURLEY’S WISH OF LEGACY

Darren doesn’t want to be seen as someone who only manages emergencies in his county– he wants to be remembered as someone who made a difference in his community. Whether that’s pushing for new safety initiatives

or simply showing up on time and doing the work, he believes impact comes from consistency, not credit. “I always just want what’s good for the community, for the people,” he says plainly. And when the workday ends, you’ll likely find him outside– either crabbing with his dad, hunting in Cumberland, or spending time near the water with his family. For Darren Hurley, that’s more than enough.



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What to do after an auto accident

Car accidents occur every day. According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there are more than five million car accidents in the United States every year. Forty-three percent of car accidents resulted in injuries in 2020.

No one wants to get into an automobile accident, which can be stressful and even fatal. Even accidents that do not result in any major injuries can be traumatizing. Knowing what to do in the immediate aftermath of an accident may make such instances less stressful.

ASSESS THE SITUATION

The insurance experts at GEICO® advise individuals involved in an accident to first determine if any of the involved parties suffered an injury. If you are injured, stay put. If not, check on the condition of the other driver. At this point do not admit any fault or reveal any policy limits.

Next, make a call to emergency services to request assistance from the police and an ambulance, if necessary.

MOVE YOUR VEHICLE

If possible, pull the vehicle over to a safe, well-lit public location. This is especially important if you believe you were the victim of a staged accident, says the Insurance Information Institute. If the car will cause another road hazard, it is best to move it over to the side and use flashers to alert oncoming traffic. It is important that you don't leave the scene, according to American Property Casualty Insurance Association.

GATHER EVIDENCE

Have the police write up an accident report. You should take pictures of the damage to your vehicle, the other vehicle, if possible, and the scene of the accident, including any skid marks, debris and/or property damage. If there

are any witnesses to the accident, get their names and contact information. You'll need this information when filing an insurance claim.

EXCHANGE INFORMATION

Collect the names, phone numbers, addresses and email addresses of other drivers and vehicle occupants and exchange insurance information with all drivers involved. That includes the insurance company name, policy number

and the name of the insured.

NOTIFY A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER

Even if the accident is not serious, you may want to call a friend or family member to provide emotional support. If you've been injured, a friend or family member can meet you at the hospital and/or arrange to have your vehicle towed or returned home while you get the care you need.

Automotive accidents can be nerve-racking. Knowing the steps to take can alleviate some stress.



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Firehouse sees some changes

BY BRIAN CARLTON

If you go through the town records, the Farmville fire department shows up about 155 years ago. In fact, it was part of the area long before Farmville was incorporated as a town. Farmville was formed in 1798, but didn't get incorporated until 1912.

The Farmville Fire Department pops up for the first time in 1870 and has been serving the town ever since.

And now, after a long time without any changes, the department is set to see some big ones over the next two years. The changes and the need for them, highlight what the volunteers who serve our town have made do with over the last 20 to 30 years, adjusting and finding ways to make things work.

Now this station, while not dating



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back to the original charter, is fairly old. It was built in 1991 as an all-volunteer fire station. That last part is important because at the time, nobody was thinking of a need to house firefighters or have living quarters of any kind on site. So what happens when firefighters now need to catch some sleep in between shifts? They have to sleep in the meeting room. More concerning is the fact they have to

handle all types of decontamination in the apparatus bay. And then there's the issues for female volunteers. The women's bathroom in the firehouse doesn't have a shower. So when one of the town's five female volunteers have to shower after a fire, they have to go into the men's bathroom and lock the door.

It's also worth mentioning that personal protective equipment (PPE),

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the helmet, hood, suspenders, coat, pants, boots and gloves used to fight fires, all do not like sunlight. If you have to stick your gear out in the apparatus bay and the sunlight is hitting it, that means its degrading the chemicals and coatings in it.

That's backed up by data from the National Fire Protection Association. Cleaning, drying and properly storing PPE away from sunlight can extend its lifespan by several years. And that's not cheap to replace. A full PPE set is around \$2,000.

LOOKING AHEAD AT CHANGES

So we talked about the need, but now here's what's actually going to happen. The renovation will mean building bunk rooms, shower rooms and laundry rooms. The gear will be stored in a separate room, one that's constantly ventilated. It will dry the equipment out and have a longer life and will pull the gases off the equipment and out of the building.

This renovation will also include a better fitness area, one also acces-

sible 24-7 to members of the police department. Bunk rooms in this building would also be directly connected to the apparatus bay, reducing the rate of response.

As to when all this would happen? It'll be broken down in phases. Phase One will involve building the support areas, then an expansion of the parking lot to the rear. This will allow the department to move supplies out of the existing building. Phase Two will involve developing the shell outside construction around the existing building. Once that's done, you can finish the interior renovation, upgrade the apparatus bay and do any final paving. This is estimated at a 12-14 month project.

GETTING STORMREADY

This isn't the only change for the department. It's also part of a project to make the town "StormReady". As we've seen over the last month especially, being prepared for major storms is important for Farmville and the surrounding areas.

The StormReady program is supposed to help improve the timeliness and effectiveness of hazardous weather warnings. The National Weather Service takes a look at the emergency program and offers recommendations on how to improve the area's hazardous weather operations. The fire department, along with Farmville as a whole, started their application in October 2024.

There's a few things a community has to do before being certified as StormReady. First, they have to set up a 24-hour warning point and op-

erations center. Second, you need to have more than one way for residents to get severe weather warnings and forecasts. Third, you have to create a system that monitors weather conditions locally. Fourth, you have to develop a hazardous weather plan, including training weather spotters and holding emergency exercises. Finally, you have to encourage people to be prepared through community seminars. The fire department and town have completed all that work and so they have officially been recognized now by the National Weather Service.

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The important, lifesaving role of AEDs

Medical emergencies happen every day. Thankfully, many medical emergencies are successfully navigated and those at the center of such incidents typically return to normalcy.

Knowledge is everything when faced with a medical emergency. Emergency situations that affect heart health are often navigated thanks to devices known as AEDs. Knowledge of AEDs and recognition of why they're such vital components of medical emergency response protocols can save lives.

WHAT ARE AEDS?

The American Heart Association notes an automated external defibrillator (AED) is a lightweight and portable device that delivers an electric shock to the heart through the chest when the device detects an abnormal rhythm. The shock delivered by the AED returns the rhythm to its normal



pace.

WHAT TYPE OF EMERGENCY CALLS FOR THE USE OF AN AED?

The AHA notes AEDs help people who experience sudden cardiac arrest, which is often deadly if not treated

immediately. Sports fans may recall an incident in January 2023 that played out on national television during Monday Night Football.

In that situation, Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin went into cardiac arrest on the field after making a tackle against the Cincinnati Bengals. Those in

the stadium and millions more watching at home looked on in fear and uncertainty as Hamlin laid on the field for 10 minutes. It was later revealed that an AED was utilized to restore Hamlin's heartbeat on the field before he was taken away by an ambulance. The instance involving Hamlin, who has since fully recovered and returned to play for the Bills, underscores the significance of AED training and the benefits of having a readily accessible AED.

WHO CAN USE AN AED?

The AHA notes AEDs were designed to be used by the general public so anyone with access to the device can

save a life when a person goes into cardiac arrest. Various professionals, including non-medical personnel like flight attendants and some security guards, are trained to use an AED. But anyone can benefit from such training, which might just save a life.

WHERE CAN AN AED BE FOUND?

Wider availability of AEDs remains a point of emphasis for many both within and outside the medical community. Educators and coaches remain among the most vocal advocates for AEDs within schools and in places where athletes routinely compete. The AHA recommends AEDs be placed near elevators, cafeterias, main reception areas, and on walls in well-trafficked corridors. Educating individuals, including young athletes, about the location of AEDs and how to use them can be a lifesaving preventive measure.

AEDs also can typically be found in the vehicles of first responders, including police officers, firefighters and EMTs.

IS AED TRAINING AVAILABLE?

The AHA offers CPR and AED training to individuals within the United States, and information about such sessions can be found at heart.org/CPR.

AEDs save lives, and anyone can learn to use these invaluable devices.



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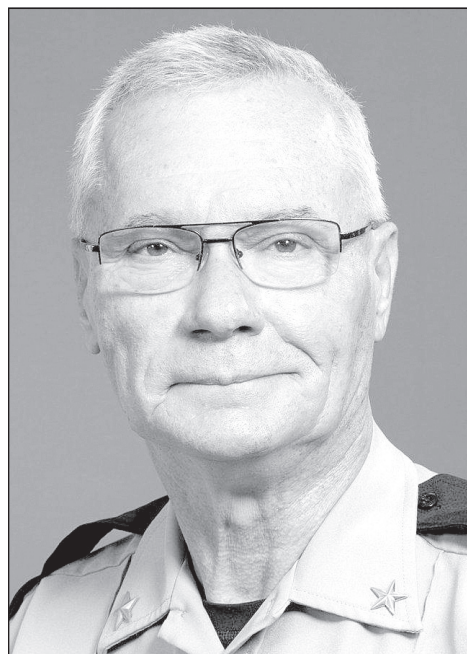
Bottom 20 is a good thing

BY BRIAN CARLTON

In sports, you want to always be in the Top 20 of your league, aiming for the Top 5. It's the reverse in law enforcement, when it comes to statistics. In fact, many a sheriff would love to be in the same position as Buckingham's Billy Kidd. His county remains in the Bottom 20, when **BUCKINGHAM** it comes to both the number of crimes committed and those left unsolved.

The numbers are holding steady in Buckingham. And the county is in better shape than some of those surrounding it. Those were some of the points taken from the 2024 Crime in Virginia annual report, which details data in each of the cities, counties and towns across the Commonwealth.

Overall, Buckingham's number of crimes comes out to 394, the exact



same as in 2022. The way it works is the higher the number, the higher you are on the list. In other words, this is not a

list where you want to be ranked first or second. It's a positive that Buckingham finds itself in the Bottom 20 in the state, able to say it's one of the safer counties.

In Virginia, sheriffs are constitutional officers elected to four-year terms. They are responsible for their community's law enforcement, jail administration, court security and civil processing. While some sheriff's departments handle law enforcement directly, oth-

ers cede that responsibility to local police departments. In Buckingham, it's all handled by the sheriff's department and the numbers show that what they're doing is working. Kidd gives the praise for that to his staff.

"Over the years, we have been able to attract some really great officers who are very much on the ball and want to make a difference," Kidd said in an earlier interview with *The Herald*. "They

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try to concentrate on areas where we are having problems and concentrate their patrols accordingly."

That can be hard to do at times, Kidd said, as his department fields an average of 300 calls a week. To be clear, that doesn't mean 300 crimes have been committed, but these are people asking for officers to come out and investigate.

RUNNING UNOPPOSED

Another number that stands out during Kidd's tenure is 17. That's the number of years he's served as sheriff in Buckingham County. Originally taking the seat in 2008, the former Fish and Game officer had some competition in the first years that he served, but now it's been a while since anyone competed for the seat. That, combined with the

lack of complaints about or against the department, show a group that's working with the community.

"It has been an ongoing project to continue to build up the staff here, especially in light of the fact that very few people are called to do law enforcement work in today's political climate," Kidd stated. "Fortunately, we have been lucky enough to attract some very talented individuals to our staff and I look forward to continuing to work with them into the future".

He added that "I deeply thank the citizens of Buckingham County for their support over the years and look forward to working with all of you in our efforts to make Buckingham a safer place to live, work and raise our families"

Four unique roles within EMS

The Office of Emergency Medical Services works in partnership with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to reduce death and disability. The Office of EMS notes that the best preparation for any incident, whether it's big or small, is a comprehensive EMS system with skilled personnel ready to respond every day and to every emergency.

EMS workers provide an invaluable service to their communities, and projections indicate those services could be in even greater demand in the years to come. For example, projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that, by 2026, job opportunities for emergency medical technicians could grow by 15% compared to a decade earlier. During that period, more than 37,000 new EMT jobs could be created or need to be filled.

EMS workers serve in a variety of capacities. The following are four unique roles that fall under the EMS umbrella.

Emergency Medical Responder has the skills and knowledge to provide immediate services to individuals in emergency situations. Qualifications vary, but EMRs must complete EMR coursework and pass a variety of examinations before they can take on this vital role. EMRs do not offer advanced care, but they can provide potentially life-saving care in emergency settings until other responders arrive.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

Emergency Medical Technicians, or EMTs, provide medical care after responding to emergency calls. The BLS indicates that job growth among EMTs is expected to outpace growth in all other occupations by 2030. That illustrates both a need for the vital services EMTs provide as well as a need for special individuals willing to pursue this line of work. EMTs often help to stabilize patients and provide patient care in an ambulance en route to the hospital.

ADVANCED EMT

Advanced EMTs, sometimes referred to as "AEMTs," must meet

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extra educational and certification requirements compared to EMTs. AEMTs can provide the same services as EMTs, but are often chosen to respond to situations that require or potentially require more advanced services, such as administering fluids and medications. Many states consider AEMTs advanced life support providers, which also differentiates them from EMTs.

PARAMEDIC

Paramedics often must complete a degree program and pass a variety of

exams before they can be certified. According to the UCLA Center for Pre-hospital Care, a paramedic program may require between 1,200 and 1,800 hours. Once certified, paramedics can provide both basic and advanced care, including critical care during emergencies. To become a paramedic, individuals must be an EMT and have experience working as an EMT.

Emergency medical services is an umbrella term that includes an assortment of trained professionals who perform a variety of tasks in an effort to protect public health.

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What contributes to floods?

Flooding can result in extensive and expensive damage. The Pew Charitable Trusts indicate that at least one flood event has occurred on nearly 300 days per year each year since 2000 in the United States. That's almost a flood a day. The Center for Disaster Philanthropy indicates there have been 44 floods in the U.S. between 1980 to October 2024, with each resulting in more than a billion dollars in damage.

Considering how catastrophic floods can be, people may wonder what contributes to these events and if there is anything they can do to prevent them. An understanding of flooding can help anyone respond more effectively should a flood occur.

WHAT IS A FLOOD?

Flooding occurs when an overflowing of water finds its way onto land that is normally dry, says the National Severe Storms Laboratory of the National Oce-

anic and Atmospheric Administration. Damaging floods may occur with only a few inches of water, or flooding may be so severe it can cover a house to the rooftop. The NOAA says floods are the most common and widespread of all weather-related natural disasters.

WHAT CAUSES FLOODS?

Many different situations can cause flooding. The main types are:

- Melting snow and ice
- Dams or levees breaking
- Storm surges, resulting in ocean waves coming on shore
- Heavy rainfall
- Geography, such as locations that are near rivers

HOW DOES URBANIZATION IMPACT FLOODING?

As land is increasingly converted from fields and woodlands to developed areas, it loses the ability to absorb rainfall, according to officials with the city

of Brownsville, Texas. Urbanization can increase runoff two to six times over what would occur on natural terrain. Urban areas are at higher risk for floods because rooftops divert rain to the ground below, which is comprised of cement and paved surfaces that prevent the ground from absorbing rain.

WHAT IS A FLASH FLOOD?

Some flooding can be anticipated, but flash floods often happen with little to no warning, says the NOAA. They occur when there is more rain than the soil can absorb. This extra water quickly flows into rivers and creeks and can overwhelm storm drains. Flash floods can be the most dangerous kind of floods because they feature fast-moving flood waters. Flash flooding can affect an area within minutes. Densely populated areas often are at highest risk for flash floods because these urban areas cannot absorb the rain and water runoff effectively.

WHAT CAN I DO IN THE EVENT OF A FLOOD?

People can take certain precautions if flood conditions are anticipated.

- Listen to local media for flood watches and warnings.
 - Know the evacuation zone and route, and evacuate if prompted.
 - Have a "grab bag" ready with essential items.
 - Seek higher ground, which could be the highest floor of the home.
 - Do not drive, walk or try to swim through floodwaters. Even shallow moving water can sweep a person away.
 - Water can conduct electricity, so stay away from downed electrical wires.
 - Use a stick to check the depth first if you must walk in flood water.
 - Turn off and disconnect appliances and utilities, if advised.
 - Remain away from damaged areas until officials have officially cleared them for return.
 - Consider purchasing flood insurance as homeowner's insurance policies typically do not cover flood damage.
- Staying alert, prepared and safe during floods is vital.



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