

RAPPAHANNOCK ELECTRIC

Cooperative *Living*

A close-up photograph of a juvenile red-tailed hawk. The hawk has brown and white streaked feathers and a large, dark beak. It is being held by a person wearing blue nitrile gloves. One hand is supporting the hawk's head from below, while the other is near its beak. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with warm lighting.

WILDLIFE HEROES

PAGE 10

A juvenile red-tailed hawk
being treated after it was
hit by a car.

PHOTO COURTESY
WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA



MADE FOR VIRGINIANS

Virginia Farm Bureau has deep roots in your community, and we have been working hard to support your local Virginia agriculture for more than 90 years.



Virginia farms are home to more than 70,000 sheep and lambs.

MORGAN SLAVEN

Get the Membership Advantage — enjoying valuable benefits and savings while helping Virginia farmers.



We advocate for Virginia farmers in the halls of government, which helps provide a reliable food supply.



Our county boards invest in future leaders through our Young Farmers programs and annual scholarships.



We help farmers attain grants for cutting-edge technology that helps create more sustainable farms.



We support worthy causes like local food banks and the Agriculture in the Classroom program.

Become a Friend of the Farm® today. Visit one of over 100 local offices or join online at vafb.com.

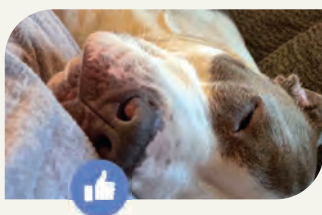


CL ONLINE/SOCIAL MEDIA

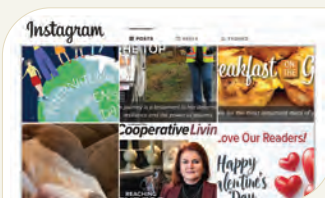
VISIT CO-OPLIVING.COM



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK



FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM



DEPARTMENTS

- 4 Powerful Careers
- 5 Happy & Healthy
- 8 Farm Life
- 10 Cooperative Focus
- 28 Cooperative Kitchen
- 30 Happenings
- 32 Rural Living
- 33 Branching Out
- 34 Marketplace
- 35 Member FYI
- 36 Say Cheese



FEATURES

2 OUR COMMUNITIES

The beautiful and practical art of quilting.

6 FIXER UPPER

Modern design trends for rural homes.

24 GREEN THUMB

How to attract pollinators to your garden.

26 CO-OP PEOPLE

King William County Courthouse celebrates 300th anniversary.

VIEWPOINT

The Spirit of Renewal

When I think about this month, I recall hearing my mother say, "April showers bring May flowers." In the Mosier household, that was always her way of saying it was time to go to work and help my father plant our family garden. Even though it was a small garden (it seemed so big to me at the time), it certainly created many fond memories during my childhood.

With the spring season upon us, the April issue of *Cooperative Living* features articles about planting, gardening and the history of two agricultural organizations: Future Farmers of America and 4-H.

Our Cooperative Focus feature looks at wildlife rescue organizations, highlighting what to do — and not to do —



should you come across injured wildlife this spring. The article includes many adorable animal photos and covers a wide range of animal species, offering different tips for encountering each one.

April is Autism Awareness Month, and our Powerful Careers column features a young man who has persevered and is now a well-respected technician. This month's issue also includes an article about the 300th anniversary of the King William County Courthouse and a look at an upcoming celebration commemorating the momentous event.

This is a beautiful time of year when everything comes to life in a vibrant spirit of renewal. Hopefully, you'll get a chance to enjoy the springtime weather and spend some time outside at one of the events featured in these pages. ●

Brian S. Mosier

Brian S. Mosier, President & CEO
Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives

Cooperative Living

VOL. 80, NO. 4 • ISSN 1529-4579

OUR MISSION

To inform you about your cooperative and its efforts to serve your energy needs; how to use electricity safely and efficiently; and the people who define and enhance the quality of life in communities served by electric co-ops.

GREGG MACDONALD • Executive Editor
LAURA EMERY • Deputy Editor
JOHN GROTT • Creative Services Director
SONJA KINNEY • Advertising Account Representative
JIM ROBERTSON • Manager of Member Services
TOMMY CAMPBELL • Digital Producer
NINA JACOBS • Production Coordinator

Published by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives

GEORGEN. GOIN • Chair
FRANK W. BACON • Vice Chair
RUSSELL G. BROWN • Secretary/Treasurer
BRIAN S. MOSIER • President & CEO

Board of Directors: Christopher D. Bott, Belvin Williamson Jr., A&N; C. Michael Sandridge, Bill Buchanan, BARC; George N. Goin, Gary E. Wood, Central Virginia; Robert E. Arnold, Michael E. Malandro, Choptank; Jeannette S. Everett, Steven A. Harmon, Community; James E. Huffman, Jeff M. Ahearn, Craig-Boetourt; Patricia S. Dorey, Rob A. Book, Delaware; Fletcher B. Jones, Casey J. Logan, Mecklenburg; Russell G. Brown, Brad H. Hicks, Northern Neck; Wade C. House, David E. Schleicher, Northern Virginia; Lena Short, M. Brad Coppock, Powell Valley; Herbert R. Patrick, Sarat K. Yellepeddi, Prince George; Sanford Reaves Jr., John D. Hewa, Rappahannock; G. Todd Van Horn, Greg S. Rogers, Shenandoah Valley; Frank W. Bacon, Jason C. Loehr, Southside.

To advertise in *Cooperative Living*, contact:
advertising@co-opliving.com 804-297-3429

National Advertising Representative:
AMP, 611 South Congress Ave., Suite 504,
Austin, Texas 78704 • 800-626-1181



Member of AMP network of publications, reaching more than 9 million homes and businesses.

To change your subscription, contact your electric cooperative.

For editorial inquiries, contact editor@co-opliving.com.

COOPERATIVE LIVING MAGAZINE (USPS 473-300) is published 10 times a year, monthly except for combined January-February and November-December issues, by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives. POSTMASTER, address changes should be sent to: *Cooperative Living*, 4201 Dominion Blvd., Ste. 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060, 804-346-3344. Periodicals postage is paid at Glen Allen, VA, and additional mailing offices. Subscription: \$6.09 per year for members of subscribing co-ops; \$10 per year for all others.

ADVERTISING PUBLISHED is accepted on the premise that the merchandise and services offered are accurately described and willingly sold to customers at the advertised price. Neither this magazine nor the electric cooperatives in Virginia, Maryland or Delaware endorse any products or services advertised herein. If any readers encounter noncompliance with these standards, they are asked to inform the Association.

Cooperative Living is a registered trademark of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives.



Please recycle.



PHOTOS COURTESY SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA MUSEUM

Utilitarian Art

Southwest Virginia Museum's quilt show displays the art of practicality

by Gregg MacDonald, Staff Writer

THERE MAY BE SEVERAL BIG STONE HOUSES IN BIG STONE GAP, VA., BUT ONE STANDS OUT IN PARTICULAR: THE SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA MUSEUM.

Designated a National Historic Landmark, the museum is housed in a Victorian stone mansion from the 1890s, boasting an original oak interior. According to the museum's website, its collection features over 60,000 pieces of furniture, folk art, historical artifacts and many other state-of-the-art exhibits that narrate the story of Southwest Virginia's exploration and development, from the pioneer era of the early 1700s to the mining "boom and bust" period of the late 1800s.

The museum also hosts numerous interpretive and special events throughout the year. One of these is the "A Stitch In Time" Quilt Show, which begins on April 1 and continues through May 31. Now in its 28th season, the event features quilts not only from the museum's vast collection but also from community members who display their own quilts. "A Stitch In Time" allows us an opportunity to celebrate the rich tapestry of our Appalachian heritage and what each of these quilts represent — a story woven with love, tradition and resilience," says Gretchen Cope, park manager at the Southwest Virginia Museum Historical State Park.

Cope adds that quilts, as we generally know them in America, were originally strictly practical articles. They were borne of the necessity of providing warm bed covers and hangings for doors and windows that were not sealed well enough to keep out the cold. Because the earliest American quilts, made by English and Dutch settlers, were considered utilitarian and connected to the early colonists' everyday life, little design information exists. Only in later years, when fabrics were being manufactured in America, making them more affordable and freeing quilt makers from the work of producing their own yarns and fabrics, did the more artistic type of quilting become more widespread.

"A Stitch In Time" allows quilters to share stories through a deep dedication to their art and expression," says Historic Preservation Specialist Burke Greear, "Remembering always that while a quilt is something we hold in our hands, art is something we hold in our hearts." •

► For more information about the museum and the "A Stitch In Time" Quilt Show, visit dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/southwest-virginia-museum.



CRUISE THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Your All-Inclusive Lower Mississippi River Cruise Includes:

- ★ 9-day/8-night exploration
- ★ 7 ports of call with guided excursion options at each
- ★ All onboard meals and our signature evening cocktail hour
- ★ Full enrichment package with guest speakers and nightly entertainment
- ★ Newest fleet of ships with just 90 to 180 guests
- ★ All tips and gratuities

*America's #1
River Cruise Line*



Call today

800-459-2596

to request a
free Cruise Guide

The Future is Now

Dreamer lands powerful career

by Jim Robertson, Staff Writer

Less than two years ago, Kaleb Jeffries was featured in *Cooperative Living* as a young man fixated on his future with only dreams of a real career. Today, he's living out that dream following a fruitful internship with Sentinel Robotic Solutions. Thanks to a strong commitment to community embraced by the Sentinel team and the electric cooperatives they serve, Jeffries joined the Wallops Island, Va., company full-time in January 2024 as an engineering technician.



"It has been exciting to see his growth within the company," says Jason Taylor, director of UAS programs for Sentinel Robotic Solutions.

Jeffries conducts online searches for relevant business opportunities for his employer at state and national levels. His responsibilities include reviewing both facility maintenance issues and engineering lab projects and tool organization. He assists with preparations for upcoming UAS classes and missions, while supporting company product sales.

"Kaleb approaches each of these tasks with a structured mindset, developing checklists to ensure every item is completed efficiently," says Taylor.

Jeffries, diagnosed as a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, grew up in Chincoteague on the Virginia Eastern Shore with a passion for weather patterns and events. He turned the fixation caused by his condition into an advantage as he pursued his interests.

"My experience with SRS has been wonderful. I love working with drones!" exclaims Jeffries, who serves as Taylor's secondary pilot in command and visual observer on missions. As a vital part of the flight crew, the visual observer assists the remote pilot by watching for other aircraft and objects while following the drone. One project planned during March included aerial inspections over 10 miles of transmission power lines for a cooperative in Kentucky, during which Jeffries would serve as the visual observer.

Jeffries also provides the meteorological aerodrome report during a mission.

"Being part of Kaleb's journey in the UAS industry has been incredibly rewarding for our team," says Taylor.

"His enthusiasm for learning and his ability to adapt to new challenges make him a valuable member of our organization. We look forward to his continued growth as he takes on greater responsibilities in the future."

Robin Sexauer, certified vocational rehab counselor for the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, played an instrumental role in connecting Jeffries with the right people and opportunities while attending Eastern Shore Community College, thus preparing him for his future career.

"He has more confidence and is becoming more independent," says Kara Jeffries of her son, who recently earned his driver's license and now drives himself to work each day. "I am so proud of him." •

Sentinel Robotic Solutions provides electric cooperatives with aerial system inspections and training for the Unmanned Aircraft Systems certification. To date, approximately 200 drone operators within the 16 member co-ops in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware have trained and earned their Part 107 UAS license.



Kaleb Jeffries helps represent Sentinel Robotic Solutions at the 2024 Gaff-n-Go Rodeo.

**POWERFUL
CAREERS**

PHOTOS BY JIM ROBERTSON

Building Bolder Shoulders

Preventative and rehabilitative moves for shoulder health

by Vanessa LaFaso Stolarski, Contributing Columnist

The complex joints of our shoulders form the framework for daily functioning, whether we are active or not. Daily movements can sometimes cause more pain or discomfort than exercise or work-related injuries; movements such as reaching for a cabinet item, driving or even doing household tasks.

Since the shoulder joint is a ball-and-socket structure, our shoulders move in multiple planes, making them very prone to injury. As such, shoulder stretching can offer numerous benefits by increasing the range of motion, allowing the shoulder to move more freely, and reducing the risk of strains or tears. Regular stretching also improves blood flow, promoting faster recovery after workouts or injuries.

Shoulder impingements are a typical result of poor posture, especially from sitting at a desk all day or hunching over your laptop. Shoulders roll forward in these positions, and when repeatedly like this, the surrounding tissue shortens, causing tightness at the front of the joint. Additionally, the rotator cuff — a group of muscles in the back of the shoulders that stabilize the joint — can lose rigidity from being overextended for long periods.

If you have an active job that requires frequent reaching, carrying or lifting, shoulder stretches performed before and after your shift can help prevent injury or mitigate its worsening effects. Even a few minutes of stretching each day can significantly improve shoulder health. The key is consistency and proper technique. Start with gentle stretches, like the ones below, and gradually increase intensity as you adapt.



CROSS-BODY STRETCH

- Sit or stand upright
- Raise your arm across your chest
- Use the opposite arm to gently press or hug the arm closer to your body
- Hold for 15-30 seconds, then switch arms

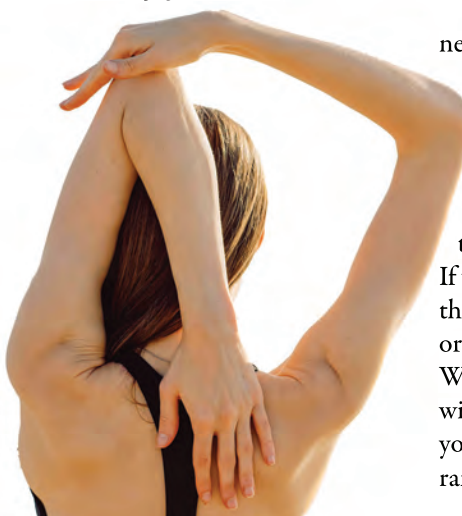
OVERHEAD TRICEP STRETCH

- Sit or stand upright
- Raise your arm overhead
- Bend your elbow, letting your hand hang behind your head
- Use your opposite hand to gently push your elbow down
- Hold for 15-30 seconds, then switch arms

CLASPED HAND STRETCH

- Stand upright
- Reach both arms around your back
- Clasp hands and rotate both so palms are facing out
- Lean chest slightly forward
- Hold for 15-30 seconds

PHOTOS COURTESY DARIA LIUDNYA VIA PEXELS.COM



PHOTOS COURTESY AKSHAY GUPTA VIA PIXAHIVE.COM

SCAPULA STRETCH

- Sit or stand upright
- Tilt your right ear to your right shoulder so you feel the left side of your neck stretching
- Relax your left arm and let it dangle at your side
- Place your right hand on your left forehead temple
- Gently pull your head to your shoulder like you are lengthening your neck
- Hold for 15-30 seconds

CL



Remember that stretching should never cause pain. Avoid forcing your muscle tissue to extend or contract past the point of your personal flexibility. Inhale as you begin to perform the stretch and exhale at the point of tension. If this is new to you, take each stretch slowly.

If you experience discomfort, ease off the stretch or consult a physical therapist or fitness professional for guidance. With patience and persistence, you will likely notice improvements in your flexibility, muscle tension and range of motion. ●

Vanessa LaFaso Stolarski is a certified nutrition counselor, weightlifting coach, life coach and stress-management specialist.

All health-related content and media provided by Cooperative Living or its website(s) is created and published for informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice and should not be relied on as health or personal advice. Always seek the guidance of your doctor or other qualified health professional with any questions you may have regarding your health or a medical condition.

An exterior featuring natural wood double front doors, an expansive front porch with ceiling fans, and painted wood columns and shutters.



PHOTO COURTESY
HIBBS LUXURY HOMES

PHOTO COURTESY HIBBS LUXURY HOMES

How Farmhouses Went Modern

Design trends for rural homes

by Jim Winnerman, Contributing Writer

You might be familiar with interior decorating styles known as mid-century modern, contemporary or, simply, modern. Less familiar to you may be a design approach known as modern farmhouse. It's a style of home decor that evokes a feeling of warmth and comfort.

The origin of the farmhouse can be traced to Germany and Scandinavia when they were built to house farm workers. Then it was not a style, but a necessary shelter for a way of life. Farmhouse architecture arrived in the U.S. in the 1700s. Since then, farmhouses have undergone various iterations, from being purely functional as they were in Europe to slowly morphing into a variety of styles of interior and exterior design adopted by everyday families.

Today's modern farmhouse version became largely popularized by the show "Fixer Upper," hosted by Chip and Joanna Gaines. The show aired for five seasons on HGTV, a network focusing

on reality programming related to home improvement and real estate. The Gaineses did not start out to popularize a style of decor. They were just following their instincts. Chip was a contractor who was renovating homes in Waco,

after another, their personal appeal and approach to interior design gained popularity.

Prominent features included were architectural elements, like the use of natural materials such as wood and stone, and an open and airy floor plan conducive to a comfortable lifestyle. The decor was an eclectic mix of furnishings and accessories. Color choices were warm and neutral hues that did not overwhelm a room. There are no set guidelines, just a homeowner's interpretation of what feels right for them. Modern farmhouse design can incorporate a traditional wooden kitchen table set in a large kitchen with vaulted ceilings and wooden accent beams, while the overall design is sleek, functional and bright.

The practical part of modern farmhouse design is frequently expressed through open shelves in living spaces. In family rooms, shelves contain family heirlooms and collectibles. In the kitchen, clear glass cabinet doors display



PHOTO COURTESY NORMA O'BRYAN, DISCOUNT DRAPERIES

A great room features a fireplace of recycled brick, hardwood flooring and a windmill ceiling fan.

Texas, and Joanna was a self-taught designer who decorated the homes and authored a blog about what they were doing.

Eventually Joanna's blog caught the eye of an HGTV executive, and in 2014, their show premiered with each episode featuring a home they were renovating. As their show aired, featuring one home

everyday functional utensils, like dishes, textiles and other practical objects meant to be used, as well as rustic cooking decor.

Early farmhouses did not have walls made from drywall like those found in most new and existing homes. Walls were shiplap, beadboard or tongue-and-groove boards, and the use of the same material today is an important part of modern farmhouse decor. Painted in shades of white and installed vertically or horizontally, either approach delivers the coziness found in the rustic charm of historic farms.

KITCHEN CREATIVITY

Although stainless-steel kitchen appliances would not seem to fit the modern farmhouse approach to decor, they are easily incorporated into a kitchen that features the clean straight lines of Shaker cabinets, shiplap walls and other natural elements like soapstone sinks.

Similarly, while modern farmhouse design does not usually incorporate busy, repetitive patterns on furniture, walls or draperies, kitchens can again be an exception. It is not unusual for a subtly patterned tile backsplash to be used above the oven where a geometric design works well and does not compete with white subway tile installed nearby.

Wallpaper designs include vines, flowers and leaf botanicals while stripes and diamond patterns work as a valance over a kitchen sink window.

Variations in surfaces can also work, using natural accents like a hammered copper vent or a farmhouse apron sink in a contrasting color, even if they are more intense and absent elsewhere in the home. The colors in the pattern shouldn't be overwhelming and should conform with the modern farmhouse color palette.

A kitchen island styled as a table with rustic turned legs beneath its countertop,

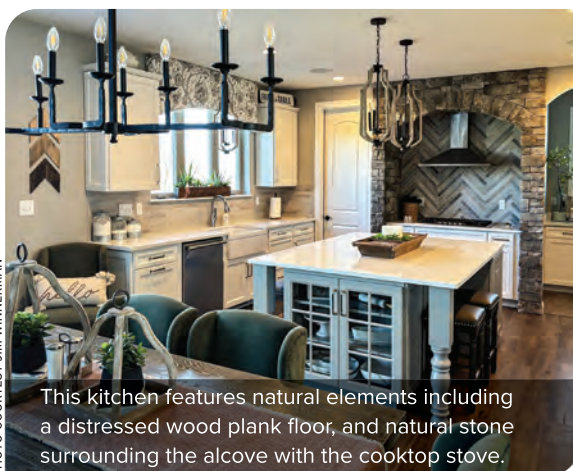


PHOTO COURTESY JIM WINNERMAN

This kitchen features natural elements including a distressed wood plank floor, and natural stone surrounding the alcove with the cooktop stove.

copper drawer knobs and pulls, and a butcher block surface all work anywhere in a modern farmhouse kitchen.

When looking for basic design materials, look for historical pieces or items that could be found in nature. Examples include wood, slate, marble, soapstone, brick, aged brass, cast iron and tin. Most importantly, both comfort and function are goals in modern farmhouse decor, versus aesthetics, trends or a consistent sense of design.

MODERN EXTERIOR

While interior decor for a modern farmhouse design is popular when existing homes are remodeled, builders, architects and contractors of new homes have been quick to add a modern farmhouse exterior aesthetic to their portfolios.

Kim Hibbs, president of Hibbs Luxury Homes in St. Louis, Mo., and Park City, Utah, has been designing and building modern farmhouse homes since they started becoming popular. "We find that the style appeals to people because it combines the cozy feel and charm of a traditional farmhouse inside and out, while allowing homeowners to surround themselves with interior decor that makes them feel good," he says. "True to the use of the word 'modern,' it incorporates contemporary design, furnishings and color schemes with natural elements of stone and wood reflective of the times."

Considerations for an exterior

design include the siding and color, roof, lighting, and the all-important entrance that invites guests from the curb to the front door.

As for color, the same approach applies outside as it does inside. Neutral hues, such as whites, creams and beiges, are commonly used for a clean and fresh exterior. That palette provides a background which easily incorporates elements such

as natural stone on a portion of the facade, wooden shutters, and wooden porch railings and posts that evoke a rustic, familiar feel.

A combination of vertical or horizontal siding is often blended with cedar shingles under the roof peaks to add interest and texture, while vintage barn-style lantern light fixtures or industrial lighting are popular near the front door.

Nothing exudes a modern country exterior like a welcoming, comfortable front porch as part of the entrance architecture. Embellished with a porch swing, a wooden bench or vintage rocking chairs, a porch can create a sitting area that invites visitors to sit down and relax before entering the house.

Popular modern farmhouse porch decor includes colorful pillows on the furniture, a "Welcome" porch sign, and accent side tables painted to match the color of the front door.

A front door can be contrary to an overall paint scheme. Pale colors work, but almost any color can add texture and interest to the entrance. In fact, it is more welcoming to have a door in a pleasant shade of red, yellow or blue that conveys a happy vibe to arriving guests. ●

Jim Winnerman is a freelance writer with published articles in several National Electric Cooperatives Statewide Editors Association publications.

Changing with the Times

Virginia agricultural youth programs have evolved

by Kathy Dixon and Alice Kemp, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation

One began as an organization to help farm boys learn leadership skills. Another started as corn clubs that encouraged farm boys to grow high-quality crops. Today, the National FFA Organization and 4-H have evolved to keep up with the times.

Since its establishment in 1928, the FFA has promoted youth development and has become a nationally recognized standard in agricultural education. Black and other minority students began joining the FFA in 1964, and girls were admitted as members in 1969. In 1988, what was initially known as the Future Farmers of America rebranded itself as the National FFA Organization to better reflect diversity in its membership.

Early 4-H programming emphasized agriculture and homemaking skills for rural youth. From the 1980s to the early 2000s, the organization expanded its curriculum to include STEM, civic engagement and the arts. Today, there are 4-H clubs in Virginia's 96 counties and most cities, with about 160,000 members. Virginia FFA has 14,110 members in 227

chapters and boasts the country's first FFA chapter charter — the Weyers Cave chapter in Augusta County.

FFA was modeled after Virginia's Future Farmers of Virginia, which was started in 1925 by four Virginia Tech agricultural educators. "Farm boys didn't have as much confidence in themselves as their city cousins did," explains John Hillison, retired Virginia Tech agriculture education professor and curator of the Agricultural, Leadership and Community Education Department's FFA Historical Room.

"So, the founders say 'What if we had an organization where they learn leadership skills, win competitions and get awards for their work?' That's how it all got started." Soon, several states had their organizations, and the national FFA was founded.

The national 4-H movement traces back to the late 1800s. In 1908, the Virginia Cooperative Extension established the state's first corn club in Dinwiddie County. The next

year, clubs were created for rural girls to learn about food preservation

Sarah Gregory of Chesterfield has been involved with 4-H for over 60 years.

and gardening. "4-H uses experiential learning to help young people be better citizens and better individuals in the working world," says Chad Proudfoot, Virginia 4-H organizational specialist at Virginia Tech.

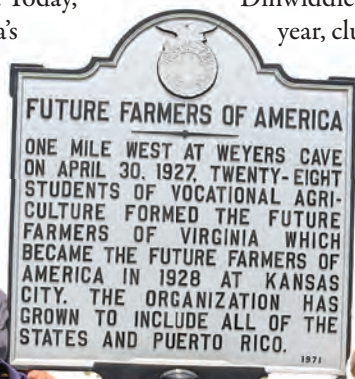
In the 1910s, Virginia and other segregated southern states began 4-H clubs for rural African Americans and minorities, until the clubs were desegregated in 1964.

Sarah Gregory of Chesterfield County has been involved in 4-H since before segregation. The organization offered education, community connections, and leadership opportunities for several generations of her family. Today Gregory volunteers and educates youth from all backgrounds. She leads multiple 4-H programs, and her 60-plus years of volunteering led to her induction into the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2022.

In Rockingham County, Kern Houff has also turned FFA into a generational activity. He served as the vice president of the Montevideo FFA chapter, where he competed in parliamentary procedure and public speaking. Recognizing the value of communication, leadership and vocational skills you can't learn in books, Houff nudged his children, Jeremy and Sonja, to join.

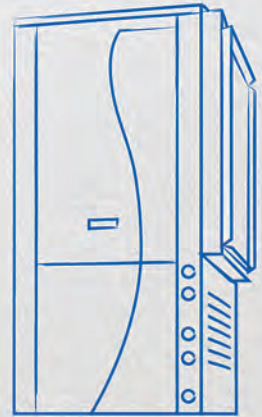
Both served as FFA officers, and their children have joined the organization, continuing the family FFA legacy. ●

Future Farmers of Virginia began in 1927, near Weyers Cave in Augusta County, Va.



WATERFURNACE UNITS QUALIFY FOR A 30% FEDERAL TAX CREDIT¹

Comparing is believing.



Scan to learn more!

R THE RELIABLE
RENEWABLE™



When you compare our geothermal system to a traditional gas or electric HVAC unit, the winner is clear.

We've got the competition beat on every level. A WaterFurnace geothermal heat pump offers unmatched efficiencies, so your energy costs are much lower than with a conventional furnace or a/c. It doesn't rely on fossil fuels, so it's much better on the environment. And the consistent temperatures and low humidity allow you to dial in your ideal comfort. Try it out and you'll see—WaterFurnace wins.

Geothermal is the only renewable that provides reliable operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



visit us at waterfurnace.com/MainStreet

WaterFurnace is a registered trademark of WaterFurnace International, Inc. ©2025 WaterFurnace International Inc.

1. ENERGY STAR rated units qualify for 30% through 2032, 26% through 2033 and 22% through 2034

BECOMING A NATURE HERO



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY BLUE RIDGE WILDLIFE CENTER

An inside look at wildlife rescue and rehabilitation

by Amanda S. Creasey, Contributing Columnist

One of the greatest thrills of spending time outside is encountering wildlife. Whether it's a box turtle or bird, fox or frog, rabbit or raccoon, seeing native wildlife in its natural habitat reminds us that we share this world with many creatures.

But what should you do if you encounter one of these wild animals in distress? Do you know how to differentiate an ill or injured animal from a healthy one? Do you know what practical first steps you can safely take to increase the chances of survival for an animal that has collided with a window or been hit by a car?

Most of us want what's best for our wild neighbors, but we may not always know how to help.



BABY SEASON

The arrival of spring brings flower blossoms, warmer days and later sunsets. It also ushers in what the wildlife rescue world knows as “baby season.”

According to Connor Gillespie, director of outreach for the Wildlife Center of Virginia in Waynesboro, Va., baby season begins in early spring and continues through early fall. It's the busiest time of year for wildlife rescues

because it's when most of our native wildlife are having babies. While Wildlife Center of Virginia might admit only five animals per day during the winter, that number can exceed 50 daily intakes during baby season.

Jen Riley, DVM, serves as the hospital director at the

Blue Ridge Wildlife Center in Boyce, Va. According to Riley, one of the most common mistakes people make is assuming a baby animal is orphaned and inadvertently abducting it. In the case of most wildlife, the adults do not stay with the baby 24/7. She advises would-be helpers not to intervene unless there is a clear injury.

OBVIOUS INJURY

If an animal is injured, a person's first instinct is often to offer food or water, but that can often cause more harm than good. "People want to help, but there may be underlying issues that could make food or water harmful to the animal. Young animals can also aspirate if not fed properly," Gillespie says. In addition to the risk of aspiration, the first step usually taken at the Wildlife Center of Virginia is to anesthetize the animal for a thorough examination — and, just like humans, animals should not eat or drink before anesthesia. "Instead of providing food or water, safely contain the animal in a crate or box so it can be taken to a wildlife rehabber — the sooner, the better," Gillespie advises.



NO OBVIOUS INJURY

If no obvious injury can be discerned, an animal may still need help. Even if an animal appears unharmed, if it has been in a cat's mouth, been hit by a car or collided with a window, contain it and contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. "Most of what we see is trauma, with the overwhelming majority being vehicle collisions and cat attacks," says Jessica Andersen, rehab manager at Blue Ridge Wildlife Center.

SAFE CONTAINMENT

In the event of an obvious injury, cat interaction, vehicle or window collision, or upon the advice of a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, safely containing the animal is imperative. To reduce stress on the animal and risk to yourself, minimize contact by wearing gloves and placing a cardboard box over the animal to contain and shelter it. If necessary, you may need to gently restrain the animal using a towel or blanket, which can be placed in the box with the animal. Best practice includes using the smallest possible box in which the animal will fit, thus decreasing the animal's ability to thrash, potentially inflicting further injury on itself.

(continued on page 12)

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU FIND ...



TURTLES

Upon finding a turtle in the road or near the roadside, first check for signs of injuries or illness, such as blood, discharge from the nose or eyes, or swollen eyes. If no issues are apparent, never relocate a turtle to what you believe is a safer or better location. "Doing so is often a death sentence," Riley says. Instead, move it across the roadway in the direction it was headed, placing it at least three feet off the shoulder.

If injury or illness is apparent, contain the turtle in a box and call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. Be sure to take note of the turtle's specific location, as turtles cannot be released back into the wild without this information. The same advice holds true for hatchlings, who need no parental care.



BIRDS

If a bird collides with a window or other object, it needs help, even if it seems fine.

Head trauma rarely manifests until between 12 and 24 hours after a collision, so even a bird that appears uninjured has likely sustained trauma that requires treatment.

If the bird is a raptor, such as an osprey, hawk or eagle, the sharp talons and beak can pose serious danger to would-be rescuers. In the case of an injured or ill raptor, calling an expert is the first step.

Songbirds pose fewer dangers, but keep in mind that they may not need a rescuer.

Unless a bird shows obvious signs of injury or illness, or you know it has collided with a window or been in a cat's mouth, it's best not to intervene. If you are unsure whether a bird needs help, call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for advice.



OPOSSUMS

Mother opossums can carry up to 13 joeys in their pouches, and even if a mother opossum has died, her offspring (joeys)

may still be alive in her pouch and in need of help. If you find an opossum that appears dead, you can save lives by checking for a pouch and joeys. It is important, however, to make sure the opossum is deceased before checking for a pouch. To do so, gently poke the opossum with a stick or broom. If surviving joeys are in the pouch, leave them there and bring the mother's entire body to a wildlife rehabilitator or rescue in a box. A joey less than 7 inches long, or shorter than the length of a dollar bill, is too young to be on its own and needs the assistance of a wildlife rehabilitator.

Becoming a Nature Hero

(continued from page 11)

WILDLIFE INJURY

Prevention is always the best option, and many actions can be taken to avert wildlife emergencies in the first place. “Cats are one of the most common reasons for admission [to Blue Ridge Wildlife Center] and half of free-roaming Virginia cats are pets [that could be kept inside],” says Riley. Gillespie says, “We love cats, but any time they’re outside, they pose a risk for wildlife.” Another preventive measure includes avoiding rodenticides or other poisons.

Not only do these substances cause suffering and death to their intended targets, but animals that consume the poisoned creatures are also adversely affected. Similarly, avoid glue traps and other inhumane trapping methods, which almost always result in injury and may result in death. Many unintended victims fall prey to these inhumane trapping options. Lead bullets and sinkers also pose myriad health risks to wildlife and humans alike.



According to Riley, studies show lead alternatives to be just as effective and much safer for humans and wildlife that consume game meat. Perhaps one of the simplest preventive measures is picking up litter, which attracts animals to the roadside and leads to traffic incidents. When on the road, be prepared to stop for any animals in the roadway, particularly when animals are most likely to be on the move — at night, dawn or dusk. Another simple way to prevent harm to wildlife includes avoiding feeding wildlife, feeding pets indoors and storing pet food inside. When it comes to birds, be sure to clean bird feeders at least every two weeks to reduce the risk of spreading diseases and treat windows to prevent window strikes.

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Myths abound when it comes to baby animals, one being that a fawn with curled ears needs help. According to Riley and Andersen, curled ears on a fawn does not indicate the fawn is in distress. Another popular myth is the belief that handling a baby animal will discourage its parents from returning

to care for it. “This is not true for any animal in Virginia,” says Riley. Nor is it true that a baby animal needs food and water right away. In fact, offering food and water risks killing a baby animal that might otherwise have survived.

Many people believe they are doing right by wildlife viewed



DEER

A fawn on its own is probably not orphaned, but according to Riley and Andersen, even an orphaned fawn will likely fare

better without human intervention. “Does will often adopt fawns. If you see a fawn with a dead mom or crying, it’s still best to let it be and see if it’s adopted. That is its best chance,” Riley says.

Signs a fawn may be in distress include: diarrhea on its rear end, flystrike, numerous ticks or lethargy, or the fawn cannot stand, is experiencing difficulty walking or is laying completely flat on its side with its legs stretched out. If attempts have been made to leave an orphaned fawn undisturbed and no adult has adopted it or you note any signs of distress, contact a rehabber for advice.

Adult deer rehabilitation is prohibited in Virginia for a variety of reasons.

White-tailed deer are a high-stress species and often suffer from Capture Myopathy. “When deer undergo extreme stress, often during capture or handling, that stress can lead to muscle damage, organ failure and, in some cases, death,” Gillespie explains. Riley adds, “If an adult deer runs off, there is no need to intervene. If it can’t get up, it’s best to call animal control or the non-emergency police line.”



SQUIRRELS

Even if a baby squirrel has fallen from a tree, or the tree in which it was nested is cut down, if it is not injured and

it is during daylight hours, wait four-to-eight hours before taking action to allow the mother time to retrieve her baby. Mother squirrels make and maintain multiple nests. If one is destroyed, she will relocate her babies to one of the others. In the meantime, you can help both mother and

baby by placing the baby in an open-topped container, such as a shallow cardboard box, to keep it in the same place.

If a baby squirrel remains in the same place for over eight hours, if it’s after or near sundown, or if it’s cold outside, contact a licensed rehabilitator.

Keep in mind that adult squirrels with injuries or illnesses can be a bite risk, and you should not attempt to contain them without speaking to a licensed rehabilitator first. Should you be advised to contain the squirrel, wear thick leather gloves.



FROGS AND SNAKES

Only three types of venomous snakes make their home in Virginia. If you find a venomous snake

with an injury or illness, do not attempt to contain it. If you cannot identify a snake as venomous or non-venomous, do not attempt to contain it. Instead, call an expert

as pests when they trap and relocate them. In fact, doing so is illegal, spreads disease, usually kills that individual animal and orphans any babies left behind.

Popular myth would diagnose a raccoon active during the day with rabies. In actuality, a raccoon out during the day, especially during baby season, is likely just a busy mom trying to find food for her young.

Finally, people often believe snakes are always aggressive and dangerous. “Any wild animal that is cornered or being harassed may bite, but snakes are no more aggressive than any other group of wild animals,” says Riley. Gillespie concurs. “Most snake bites occur when people try to harm or move snakes; if you give snakes space and don’t approach them, then they will eventually go on their way,” he says.



Though people have been taught that a bird that has suffered a collision is just stunned and will recover and fly away, such trauma is often fatal within a day or two of the injury. Any bird that collides with a window, car or other object should be taken to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

HOW TO HELP

Be prepared for wildlife emergencies by supplying your car with flattened cardboard boxes in various sizes, thick leather gloves, nitrile or latex gloves, towels, and a cellphone and charger.

DO

- Call a wildlife rehabilitator before intervening
- Contain the animal in a ventilated cardboard box or pet carrier
- Wear gloves
- Keep the animal in a safe, warm, quiet, dark space away from other animals

DON'T

- Offer food or water, administer medications, or apply any ointments or topical solutions
- Constantly check on a contained animal
- Handle wildlife with bare hands
- Relocate wildlife

for advice and assistance. Many centers, including Blue Ridge Wildlife Center, treat venomous snakes. Only if you are absolutely certain a snake in distress is non-venomous is it safe to contain it and transport it to a licensed rehabilitator or wildlife rescue.

Be sure to scoop reptiles or amphibians up with gloved hands, as the natural oils on human hands may harm some species.



COTTONTAILS

According to Riley and Andersen, baby cottontails are often caught up and hurt by lawn mowers and weed trimmers, as

rabbit nests are difficult-to-spot, shallow depressions in the ground.

If you find a nest on your property, do not relocate it, as even a few feet of difference will make the nest impossible for the mother rabbit to see. “Young rabbits

usually leave the nest after a mere three weeks,” Riley says, so even a nest in an inconvenient place will not be active very long. Keep cats and dogs away from any known nests in your yard.

Should concerns about baby rabbits arise, remember that quiet babies snuggled in a nest are likely cared for, though you may not see their mother, who is active only at dusk, dawn and overnight. Baby rabbits who have left the nest while their eyes are still closed or who are making noises are likely in distress, and such conditions warrant a call to a licensed rehabilitator for advice.

If you find a baby bunny out of the nest, call a rehabilitator to confirm it needs help, bearing in mind that even healthy young rabbits may “freeze and allow people to easily pick them up occasionally, resulting in many abductions,” Andersen says.



HIGH-RISK SPECIES

Foxes, bats, bobcats, groundhogs, skunks, beavers and raccoons are

all high-risk rabies vector species, making it imperative to avoid physical contact. Making contact with a rabies vector species may result in the euthanasia of an animal that might otherwise have made a full recovery and been released back into the wild.

A humane trap can be used to contain an injured animal that is still mobile, but if an injury is preventing mobility, use a shovel to gently move the injured animal to a crate or box and transport it to a wildlife rehabilitator. ●

► For more, visit wildlifecenter.org or blueridgewildlifectr.org.

Amanda Creasey writes about the outdoors. Her column, Explore More, can be seen in Cooperative Living.



DISCOVER HOPEWELL

Discover Hopewell, Virginia, located just 20 minutes south of Richmond at the convergence of the James and Appomattox Rivers. Come take in a show at the historic Beacon Theatre. Explore the water on foot or kayak at the Hopewell Riverwalk. Browse the shops in historic downtown, then break for coffee or lunch at one of our cafés or restaurants. Visit historic Weston Manor and Appomattox Manor to walk in the footprints of the nation's founders. Enjoy drinks and dinner on the deck of the Boathouse at City Point overlooking the James River.



PLAN YOUR TRIP
804-541-2270
HopewellVA.gov

Mow smarter, not harder

Go electric for a greener lawn

Cut down on emissions, noise, and difficulty, with electric lawn equipment. Small changes in your lawn equipment can make a big difference. Electric lawn equipment, such as mowers, blowers and trimmers are quiet, convenient, and greener than gas-powered versions.

EnergizeEfficiently

Learn more about saving money and energy at ee.odec.com





RAPPAHANNOCK
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Lineworker Appreciation Month

Celebrating the Workers Who **Power Our Communities**

Five storms hammered REC's service territory in a 13-day stretch of February that won't soon be forgotten.

While many of us hunkered down, lineworkers rolled out.

From Winter Storm Freya, which dropped several inches of heavy wet snow, to Wind Storm Jett, which brought hours-long 50-plus-mph winds, the storms battered REC's service territory and caused more than 52,000 power outages. The storms downed dozens of trees, breaking poles and electric wires.

In between those major storms, REC linemen spent Valentine's Day weekend at Central Virginia, Mecklenburg and Southside electric cooperatives, which were hit with an ice storm that missed REC's service territory.

"One of the Cooperative Principles is Cooperation Among Cooperatives," said Jason Satterwhite, Chief Grid Operations Officer. "That's one of the biggest lifelines in the co-op world. If we can help our sister co-ops in their time of need, we're going to help them any

time because the shoe could be on the other foot at any moment." With this winter's storms, REC's lineworkers learned that firsthand.

Through it all, the lineworkers focused on the members without power, the and families and businesses that depended on them to push through long hours in difficult situations to make repairs and restore service.

It's what they do. And it's why this month, we celebrate them and the difficult, dangerous and critical work that they do every day to power our homes and communities.

"I've been at REC for almost 27 years," said Satterwhite. "And I can safely say storms of this size coming back-to-back really felt unprecedented. But, like they always do, our lineworkers stepped up to serve our members."





Satterwhite noted that the families of the lineworkers are often unsung heroes.

“Without their support in taking care of the homefront, our lineworkers wouldn’t be able to do what they do to take care of members.”

Gary Garrett, a General Foreman, said the work is both exhausting and rewarding.

“It can be very taxing on you physically and mentally,” he said. He

noted that lineworkers stay prepared and ready to respond at all times, even under trying circumstances.

Aside from dedication and, he joked, caffeine, he said there’s something else that propels him and other lineworkers.

“Even when we’re tired, we know when we’re out there, people are counting on us,” Garrett said. “That’s a big motivator as a lineman. That’s something that runs deep in your heart, and you want to be able to get the lights back on for everybody.”





Higher Electric Bill? Here's Why — and the Power YOU Have Over Your Energy Use

Spring has sprung, but the electric bill you receive this month still includes energy you used during some of January's and February's coldest days — and colder nights.

When the temperature dipped into the 30s, 20s or even teens, **your heating system worked overtime to keep your home warm.** That's due to what is known as the temperature differential, which refers to the difference between the temperature inside your home and outside.

So, if the temperature dropped to 30 degrees overnight and your thermostat was set to 70 degrees, that's a 40-degree difference. The coldest hours of the day are typically overnight, so you may not realize how much more the heat is running.



The decisions we make around heating and cooling our homes often account for the largest portion of our energy bill. That's why REC gives YOU the power to monitor your energy use and make the necessary decisions on your energy use to keep your bill as low as possible.

WHERE TO START: In MyREC SmartHub, click on Usage and then Build Your Home Profile. That will allow REC to provide you energy tips customized just for you! Get started today at myrec.smarthub.coop.

YOUR ACTION YOUR SAVINGS YOUR SUMMER

ENROLL IN THE SUMMER SAVINGS PLAN!



Virginia's heavy humidity and stifling heat won't settle in for a several more weeks. But that doesn't mean you can't **PLAN NOW to SAVE** on your electric bill this summer.

HOW IT WORKS: Extreme heat during the summer often results in more electricity being used as people spend more time indoors. This impacts the price REC pays for the electricity it delivers to members. You can help and earn a bill credit by reducing your energy use!

Members who choose to participate will receive a bill credit based on how much energy they save during these times. For every kilowatt hour (kWh) saved, you will earn 75 cents in bill credits, which could add up quickly!

Enrollment in the Summer Savings Plan is FREE. It's a simple, voluntary solution that allows most residential members and some business members to earn a bill credit for using less energy on days when electricity is in high demand.



ENROLL TODAY

- » Log in to MyREC SmartHub.
- » Click Contact Us.
- » Select Report an Issue.
- » Select Summer Savings Plan - Sign Up.

Get started today: myrec.smarthub.coop



‘There’s Power in Numbers’

Your Small Change Makes a Big Difference in Our Communities

Ray Zegley grew up in the 4,300-person community of Minersville, Pa.

His dad worked alongside many of his neighbors in mining anthracite coal from deep in the Northeast Pennsylvania earth.

Over the past half century, Zegley has come a long way from that mining town. But the lessons he learned there — caring for community, giving back, service — continue to guide him to this day.

After attending West Point Military Academy, he spent 21 years in the Army. He then worked 16 years as a program manager for Lockheed Martin in Northern Virginia.

When he retired to the Rapidan community of Culpeper County, he joined the Planning Commission, where he hoped to serve his new neighbors in maintaining the beauty and open spaces the region is known for.

That’s where he met REC Board member Sanford Reaves Jr., who asked Zegley if he’d want to do even more to help his community.

That led Zegley to join the CARE Charity Board, which oversees funds distributed through The Power of Change. He represents the counties of Fauquier, Rappahannock, Culpeper and Madison.

“We were talking and Sanford said, ‘How’d you like to get more involved?’” Zegley recalled.

He has no regrets about saying yes.

“It’s very rewarding to be able to tell our community that funds are available to them and then to be able to sit down and decide the best place to allocate the money that has been donated,” he said. He also enjoys listening to the perspectives of the other CARE Charity Board members.

Zegley has a soft spot for supporting nonprofits that feed the hungry, support veterans or enhance the lives of children and families. He makes a point of reaching out to local organizations to educate them on the funds available through The Power of Change.

He is especially proud of contributions made to the St. Stephen’s Food Closet in Culpeper; the Paul Stefan Home for women in crisis in Orange; and free clinics in Madison and Culpeper.

“It’s a great feeling,” he said, “to be able to give out a check and just see how grateful the recipients are.”

He encourages all REC members to contribute.

“It’s very little monetary commitment, but if enough people enroll the amount of money we can award is very significant. There’s power in numbers. The more people who sign up to give just a little bit each month, the more we are able to give out to help our communities.”

Fun fact: Zegley has been playing electric guitar since high school — and still plays to this day. The instrument served him well. In his junior year of high school, he taught lessons to a classmate and they started dating. They married, had three children and now have six grandchildren.

About The Power of Change

Each month, more than 35,000 REC members round up their electric bill to the next whole dollar. The donated funds are then awarded to nonprofits and charities that support our communities.



Enroll today: Your small change — the average monthly donation is just 52 cents — makes a big difference. The more members who enroll, the more money is given out.

Learn more and enroll today: myrec.coop/donate



At REC, the phrase “connected to our communities” means so much more than providing electricity and the best service possible to all members.

It also means looking for opportunities to give back.

That’s why four REC employees were among hundreds of supporters of Empowerhouse who turned out recently for the annual Empty Bowl fundraiser. The event raises funds for those who have experienced family difficulties or domestic violence.

Among those attending were Public Relations Specialist Lindsey Edwards; Departmental Assistant Tracy Woods; Director of Member Services and Community Relations Joanie Griffiths; and Departmental Assistant Linette Kasper, for whom the evening was personal.

“I have a close friend who was helped by Empowerhouse,” Kasper said, “so it’s meaningful to me because of what they did for her and how they helped her with her situation. I just wanted to support them so they can continue to help other people.”

At Empowerhouse, she said, “They are doing something to help people who are in these difficult situations and to give them a resource to find a way out because sometimes it’s hard.”

Her friend didn’t think she and her children would ever escape their difficult situation.



“So for her and her children, it meant so much. With the Empty Bowl fundraiser, it just gives you a good feeling, and being there and seeing all the people wanting to help, it really makes you happy that they are doing something to assist people who are victims of domestic abuse.”

Edwards noted the mission of Empowerhouse connects closely with REC’s core values.

“Our employees truly care about our communities, including the most vulnerable, and we are proud to support Empowerhouse each year by helping to sponsor this important event.”

**Learn more about Empowerhouse: empowerhouseva.org
The Empowerhouse 24-hour confidential hotline is 540-373-9373.**

REC Celebrates Nearly 8,000 Members Connected to Broadband Internet

REC proudly marks a significant milestone in its mission to ensure broadband connectivity across our communities, with nearly 8,000 Cooperative members now enjoying high-speed broadband internet thanks to our strategic partnership with Firefly Fiber Broadband, a wholly owned subsidiary of Central Virginia Electric Cooperative.

This monumental milestone highlights REC's efforts to bring high-speed internet to unserved and underserved communities.

"We take great pride in our ongoing partnership with Firefly, which is delivering remarkable progress in expanding broadband access across five counties," said John D. Hewa, REC's President and CEO. "Together with our contractors, REC has successfully constructed a fiber network in parts of Albemarle, Louisa, Madison, Greene and Goochland counties, which Firefly is now leasing to connect our members to reliable high-speed internet."

In total, over 10,000 REC members are registered for Firefly's broadband service, and several thousand additional REC members are registered for broadband as a result of REC's partnerships with other internet service providers. Construction is nearly 95% complete on the 2,650 miles of fiber to the home that will be leased by Firefly in the counties of Louisa, Greene, Goochland, Madison and Albemarle.



REC is collaborating with a variety of contractors who are working in all phases of the project to build the fiber network. Make-ready engineering is when workers go to each pole to determine if any modifications are required to support the fiber and its associated steel strand. Make-ready construction is when contractors set new poles or make other system modifications so that fiber construction crews can then come in and install the fiber.



Check to see if Firefly will serve your area and then register for service at fireflyva.com. Once registered, you'll be notified when service is available in your area.



REC is going on tour, and we're coming to see you — announcing the 2025 Power of Community Tour! More tour stops to be added all year long.

MARCH

Maker Energy Fair **MARCH 15**
Culpeper, VA

APRIL

Clarke County Fun Day & Community Fair **APRIL TBD**
Berryville, VA

Sperryfest **APRIL 26**
Sperryville, VA

King William Ruritan Fish Fry **APRIL 8**
King William, VA

MAY

Apple Blossom Festival - Fire Truck Rodeo & Kids Fun Day **MAY 2**
Winchester, VA

Town of Warrenton Touch a Truck **MAY 2**
Warrenton, VA

Fredericksburg Area Junior Livestock Show & Sale **MAY 3**
Doswell, VA

Madison Chamber Business Expo **MAY 22**
Madison, VA

Culpeper Fireman's Parade **MAY 22**
Culpeper, VA



John D. Hewa
President &
Chief Executive
Officer



Board of Directors

Michael W. Lindsay
Region I



Christopher G. Shipe
Region II



Darlene H. Carpenter
Region III



Sanford Reaves, Jr.
Region IV



Randy Thomas
Region V



Linda R. Gray
Region VI



J. Mark Wood
Region VII



Eric Paulson
Region VIII



Eugene L. Campbell, Jr.
Region IX

Local Pages Editor – Casey M. Hollins, CCC
Staff Writer – Brian Baer
Designer – Justice Newkirk

Contact Information:
P.O. Box 7388
Fredericksburg, VA 22404
800.552.3904 | office@myrec.coop

Rappahannock Electric Cooperative is an
equal opportunity provider and employer.



WORKING OUTSIDE?

DIG INTO SAFETY WITH VA811.COM

Before you dig anywhere around your home, be sure to visit VA811.com. Staying safe is quick, easy and free.

Here's what to do:

- » Visit VA811.com to have underground utilities marked.
- » Wait at least three business days to have your property marked.
- » Dig into your outdoor project, knowing that you and your neighbors will stay safe in the process.



Nurturing Children's Confidence

The unexpected benefits of creativity

story courtesy of Family Features



PHOTO COURTESY FAMILY FEATURES

Creative expression not only helps children express their thoughts and feelings, but also builds the self-esteem and resilience needed to navigate life's complexities. Additionally, creativity can serve as a powerful catalyst for educational, emotional and cognitive growth.

These findings are part of a study conducted by YouGov of 6-to 12-year-olds. The study explored the connection between creativity and the development of essential life skills. It revealed that when faced with challenges, children most often rely on their own creative ideas rather than depending on others or giving up. This instinct to turn inward for solutions demonstrates a natural tendency toward creative problem-solving.

CREATING CONFIDENCE

Specifically, the study found that 92% of participants believe being creative boosts their confidence, and 6 out of 10 say that engaging in a creative activity gives them a sense of pride. Furthermore, 65% of children reported that participating in a creative activity makes them feel happy and eager to join in.

"Creative activities help children discover their unique talents and build a stronger belief in their abilities — providing them with a profound sense of joy and accomplishment," says Cheri Stermann, senior director of education at Crayola. "By prioritizing creativity, we not only boost children's

immediate happiness and sense of pride but also equip them with the confidence and skills necessary for future challenges."

The study supports the premise of Crayola's Campaign for Creativity, an advocacy initiative championing the importance of childhood creativity as a critical life skill that empowers kids to reach their full potential and encourages adults to nurture that creativity.

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in incorporating creative moments into their child's day, whether it's in a traditional form of artwork or reflected in a wide range of other activities, including storytelling, drama, dance, music and even sports.

Notably, more than half of survey participants (53%) shared they wished they could spend more time expressing themselves creatively with a parent or caretaker.

"Engaging in creative activities together is a powerful way for parents and children to strengthen their bond while helping children grow into confident, capable individuals," Stermann says.

As a parent, you can tap into programs such as Crayola Creativity Week to gather ideas and inspiration for nurturing creativity that promotes development of essential life skills, including:

Self-Expression: Engaging in creative activities allows children to express their thoughts, feelings and

identities. This expression helps them better understand themselves and fosters a sense of ownership over their ideas and creations.

Confidence: Sparking creative moments with kids allows them to build their confidence through self-expression, idea exploration and problem-solving. This, in turn, empowers them to tackle challenges, think independently and develop resilience.

Problem-Solving: In the study, children reported often turning to their own creative ideas to face challenges. Fostering creative problem-solving empowers children to navigate obstacles independently.

Self-Esteem: When children feel free to create without fear of judgment, they develop a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work, which can strengthen their self-esteem. Creative activities also help them recognize their unique talents and develop a deeper belief in their abilities.

Creative Capacity: The act of creating something can empower children. When they conceptualize and execute their ideas, they realize they have the skills to turn their thoughts into reality.

Resilience: The creative process involves experimentation and failure. Children learn that setbacks are part of learning, which enhances their resilience. This experience fosters a belief in their ability to bounce back and tackle future challenges independently. ●

Canine Cleanliness

Brushing up on your puppy's dental health

story courtesy of Brandpoint

Every new puppy owner has an album filled with pictures, but don't let that adorable puppy smile deceive you — maintaining good dental health requires a plan. Without a plan, by the age of three, most dogs will show the early signs of periodontal disease, according to the American Animal Hospital Association.

When left untreated, periodontal disease can cause pain, infection, inflammation and other health problems for your best friend. It's essential to ensure you have the necessary tools to keep your puppy happy and healthy.

Don't know where to start? Check out these three expert tips from veterinarian and puppy expert Dr. Callie Harris.

1. SET UP A BRUSHING SCHEDULE

Like you, your dog needs its teeth cleaned. Since they can't do it for themselves, you must do it for them. "Brushing your puppy's teeth early on not only keeps them healthy but also supports a strong bond between pet and pet parent," says Harris.

It's important to establish teeth brushing as part of your puppy's routine early on. To help ease the process, use flavored dog toothpaste (never human toothpaste) and a soft-bristled toothbrush or a finger brush.

You may not be able to do a full toothbrushing session at first, but you can start by brushing your puppy's teeth for a few seconds every day and work up to a full session. Beginning a toothbrushing routine may also help reduce stress for potential future teeth cleanings at the vet. Remember to praise and reward your puppy during and after brushing.

2. OFFER CHEW TOYS OR TASTY DENTAL CHEWS

Around the time you take your puppy home — usually 12-16 weeks — they'll be teething. As they lose their baby

Maintaining good dental health requires a plan.



PHOTO COURTESY BRANDPOINT

teeth and their adult teeth come in, they'll follow their instincts to chew. While this instinct keeps their teeth clean, it could lead to your dog chewing on household items.

You can prevent negative chewing behavior by offering your puppy chew toys that are appropriate in size and don't pose a choking hazard. Rubber dog toys with ridges or nubs are a great option for your pup, as they help remove plaque during chewing.

Dental chews are another great way to invest in your puppy's oral health while providing a tasty treat.

3. SCHEDULE PROFESSIONAL DENTAL CLEANINGS

As your puppy grows and develops, it is important to explore when it should get its first professional dental cleaning. Recommendations vary across breeds.

During a cleaning, your vet can examine your pup's teeth and gums for disease and remove hardened tartar. They'll also be able to help you address any issues they find so you can keep your best friend happy and healthy for years to come.

Remember, establishing good dental habits as a puppy can set them up for dental success. Using these three expert tips, you'll be well on your way to keeping your puppy's smile healthy and bright. ●



MOORMAN'S 1530 SF

Our brand new craftsman model!



Double front doors for a grand entrance into this open floor plan. 3br, 2ba. 2 car garage includes a mudroom and covered front porch. This model can be built on a conditioned crawl space or basement. **Visit our website or give us a call to see if we build in your area.**



bethelbuilders-va.com

209 East Main Street | Louisa VA 23093

540-748-8810



SUPREME COIN AND BULLION

*"Gold is money.
Everything else is
credit."*

- J.P. Morgan

If you are buying as an investment, a gift, or just safeguarding your cash, this is the perfect way to do so! We are looking forward to EARNING your business, not just gaining it!



\$5 Gold American Eagles at **COST**! It's that simple. These Government issued coins are the easiest and safest way to protect your money and family!

DON'T WAIT!

\$289
per coin



Vault Code:
EX4ST

Accepted Payment Methods:



CALL TODAY!
(346) 445-6656

2025 YOUTH ART CONTEST

AMERICA ★ THE ★ *Beautiful*



23rd Annual *Cooperative Living* Youth Art Contest

Through your artwork, show us what you think makes the United States of America beautiful.

The contest is open to all K-5 students. **The deadline for submission is Friday, May 9.**

The entry judged best in show from all categories will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card!

For rules and details, visit co-opliving.com/contests/youth-art.

Scan this code for more information.



Cultivating a Pollinator Paradise

Picking plants for a thriving garden

by Beth Burrell, Contributing Columnist

With over 40 years of gardening experience, I pursue perennials that attract the best pollinators — native bees, butterflies, birds, honeybees and moths. Many flowers provide enticing nectar and pollen, acting as magnets for beneficial insects. My favorite perennials not only showcase stunning blooms but also attract various helpful pollinators, are excellent for cutting, and thrive in both full sun and partial shade.

I plan my plantings season by season to ensure a vibrant display of color and variety from spring to late fall. While I incorporate some native plants in my garden, I enjoy blending them with native cultivars and non-native species, prioritizing their performance and the beneficial insects they attract.

A key planting for April is the Cottage Pink (*Dianthus gratianopolitanus* 'Firewitch'), which showcases bright magenta flowers atop clumps of grassy gray foliage, shining from April through early June and attracting emerging swallowtail



An orange coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea* 'Big Kahuna') being visited by a metallic sweat bee.

butterflies, as well as visits from native bees, hoverflies and hummingbirds. Moreover, Cottage Pinks produce a delightful fragrance, and their evergreen foliage looks outstanding year-round.

Bees, butterflies and hummingbirds accumulate frequent flyer miles during their many visits to Meadow Sage (*Salvia nemorosa* 'Blue Hill'). This heat- and humidity-tolerant perennial bursts into bloom in May with abundant spikes of true-blue tubular flowers that continue to flower into September.

Shasta daisies, featuring large, flat white flowers, are perfect landing pads for pollinators. (*Leucanthemum superbum* 'Becky') boasts 3-foot stems, while the shorter (*Leucanthemum* 'Snow Lady') reaches just 20 inches. These vibrant blooms create a buffet for butterflies, attracting species like the painted lady and eastern tiger swallowtail.



Large white flowers of Shasta daisies are easy landing pads for native mining bees.

I introduce annuals like lantana and zinnia as summer progresses, which thrive from summer into fall. My favorite visitor is the enchanting hummingbird moth, which dances through my garden and can remarkably visit thousands of flowers daily to meet its high-energy needs.

From June into August, coneflowers and black-eyed Susans take center stage, competing for the attention of beneficial insects and birds with their flowers and seeds. The orange coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea* 'Big Kahuna') stands out with its dark rust center and vibrant orange mango petals, while black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida* 'American Gold Rush') keeps the excitement alive.

Both are abundant in nectar and pollen, attracting bumblebees, parasitic wasps, honeybees, and various butterflies and hummingbirds. As their flowers mature, they yield plenty of seeds for goldfinches, sparrows and chickadees to enjoy. By planting these carefully chosen perennials and annuals, we nurture a vibrant ecosystem that supports local biodiversity and ensures essential pollinators keep buzzing. ●

Beth Burrell holds degrees in landscape design and ornamental horticulture. Her family gardens have been featured on the TV show Home Grown.



Fall flowering Joe Pye weed (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) may have up to 20 different insects gathering its nectar at the same time.

GARDEN TIPS:

- Cutting back the spent flowers of many perennials improves appearance, stimulates rebloom, and keeps your plants looking their best.
- Don't dead-head the flowers of coneflowers and black-eyed Susans as they will continue to produce seeds for birds.

New Location
Coming Soon!

WE'RE ROLLING



Roll into spring with confidence! At County Line Materials, we provide high-quality 27-gauge metal that's rolled on-site and ready for delivery within 24 hours of your order. Don't wait — get the job done faster and with precision this season!



540-437-9360

4562 S VALLEY PIKE | ROCKINGHAM, VA



**Lifetime
METAL
ROOFING**

**SUPERIOR DURABILITY
ENERGY EFFICIENT ROOFING
NO MORE STAINED SHINGLES
40 YEAR FINISH WARRANTY**

WE FINANCE!
LOW MONTHLY PAYMENTS*
SENIOR CITIZENS DISCOUNT
*With Approved Credit

FREE QUOTE! CALL NOW TO SAVE!
800-767-1591



**MOBILE
HOME
ROOFING**

**METAL
BUILDINGS**



LifetimeMetalRoofing.net



FREE ESTIMATE!
HOUSES & MOBILE HOMES

GET A QUOTE





King William County Courthouse Celebrates 300 Years

story and photos by Gene Campbell, Contributing Writer



The oldest continuously used courthouse in the U.S. is in the heart of King William County, Va., surrounded by a picturesque rural landscape and deep echoes of history.

The brick courthouse, constructed around 1725, symbolizes tradition and heritage. It defies time by blending the past and present while transcending the limits of years. The rich history of the King William County Courthouse is a testament to the enduring legacy of America's colonial heritage. It is listed on the U.S. National Register

of Historic Places.

On Saturday, April 12, this historic landmark will mark its 300th anniversary. The event will feature tours of the courthouse grounds and museum, historical reenactments, singing and dancing, local vendors, and speeches by officials and community leaders. Attendees will be able to learn more about the courthouse's history and its role in shaping the community over the years. "King William County encourages you to come and take part in this grand celebration," says Debi Moren, president

of the King William County Historical Museum.

King William County was established on April 11, 1702, from King and Queen County and named in honor of King William III of England. The county's first presiding justice, The Honorable Henry Fox (along with Capt. Richard Littlepage), conveyed a two-acre courthouse site to the county from a larger tract of land they jointly owned in central King William County. In its early days, a building was necessary to record land acquisitions, hold court



and conduct county business.

Since the two acres already included a dwelling, this structure became the first courthouse. After 20 years of use, the house fell into irreparable condition due to relentless use by settlers.

Consequently, in 1722, the justices of King William County, the governing body, petitioned and received approval from the House of Burgesses — which served as the lower house of the Virginia General Assembly from 1619 to 1776 — to construct a new courthouse. No records are available to establish the courthouse's exact construction date. Still, it is believed that construction likely began shortly after the House of Burgesses granted its approval in 1722.

A tablet near the courthouse entrance is still visible today, indicating the construction date as 1725. To further support the 1725 date, the nearby Hanover County Courthouse, built in 1735, is said to have been designed after the King William County Courthouse.

THE TEST OF TIME

It is widely believed that the King William County Courthouse is one of the finest examples of colonial brickwork still in use today. Constructed from brick arranged in a Flemish bond pattern, it is named after the Flemish bricklayers who were brought over from England. The original Capitol building in Williamsburg is believed to have inspired the design. This one-story brick structure has a T-shaped layout and a slate-covered hipped roof, featuring five rounded brick arches that support an open portico roof. The floor of the portico is paved with large flagstones.

The front entry functions as the only door in the building's exterior walls. Upon entering through the front door into the courtroom, small rooms designated for the justices and juries are visible on either side. The courtroom was heated by fires, with one fireplace situated behind the judge's bench and one in each of the small adjoining rooms.

The long windows flanking the courtroom allow for ample light. Many courthouses in Virginia once featured low brick walls around the complex to keep wandering livestock and cattle at bay. In 1840, such a wall was added to the King William County Courthouse complex and is considered the only one left fully intact.

The early courthouse played many roles in the community. In addition to being the center of government for the county, the courthouse served as a polling place for elections. Unlike today, there was no secret ballot; each voter had to stand before the sheriff and those present to declare his choice of candidates. Candidates often set out large bowls of punch to sway the undecided, a practice known as “swilling the planters with bumbo.” Hotly contested elections often led to fistfights.

Another common activity at or near the courthouse was horse racing. Among the more unusual entertainment options offered at the courthouse were classes in dancing (minuet) and fencing, especially during the American Revolution, when many French, German and Polish officers arrived in the colonies.

A FREQUENT VISITOR

A crucial part of every courthouse setting was a tavern or inn, privately operated to accommodate travelers, justices, lawyers and anyone else with overnight business. King William's early courthouse tavern was located to the east of the courthouse. It included a two-story building with four bedrooms on each floor and a porch that extended across the front. George Washington was a regular patron for meals at the tavern during his trips between Mount Vernon and Williamsburg to attend the House of Burgesses. He also frequently

stopped at the tavern while courting his future wife, Martha, who lived nearby in New Kent County.

Today, the ongoing archaeological excavation of the tavern site by the Fairfield Foundation, commissioned by the King William County Historical Society, has uncovered numerous artifacts from centuries past. Among these discoveries are a nearly complete English delft plate from the 1740s and an 1850 gold coin. Presiding Circuit Court Judge B. Elliott Bondurant supervises activities at the courthouse.

As the oldest continuously used courthouse in the U.S., the King William County Courthouse is a testament to America's colonial legacy. Its distinctive architecture and rich history make it a unique and significant landmark in American history. Whether you're a



history enthusiast, a resident or a visitor, the courthouse provides a fascinating glimpse into the past and an opportunity to connect with the people and events that shaped our nation. “Virginia is known as the birthplace of our nation, and the King William County Courthouse is the oldest courthouse in continuous use in the U.S.,” says Moren. “That fact has even appeared as a question on [the TV show] Jeopardy.” ●

Gene Campbell, a director for Rappahannock Electric Cooperative since 2018, is a volunteer writer and photographer for the Country Courier newspaper.

TEX•MEX

Try these bold and spicy recipes at your next big fiesta!

Southwest Ranch Taco Salad

recipe courtesy of Family Features

Ingredients:

- ½ head romaine lettuce
- 1 pt. cherry tomatoes
- 2 small avocados
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 lb. ground beef (80/20 ground chuck)
- 2 teaspoons taco seasoning
- ¼ cup water

Directions:

Coarsely chop lettuce, halve cherry tomatoes, and pit, peel and slice avocados. Set aside. In large frying pan over medium-high heat, heat olive oil. Brown ground beef, stirring occasionally, 4-5 minutes. Add taco seasoning and water; cook according to package directions, 5-8 minutes, or until meat is thoroughly cooked. Drain and rinse black beans. Set aside. Divide lettuce among serving bowls or plates. Top with ground beef, tomatoes, avocados, black beans, corn, cheese and 2 tablespoons cilantro. Tuck in tortilla chips. Drizzle with Southwest Ranch dressing and sprinkle with additional cilantro, if desired.



- 1 can (15.5 oz.) black beans
- 1 ½ cups canned corn
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, plus additional for serving (optional), divided
- 1 cup Southwest Ranch dressing
- 6 oz. tortilla chips

Mexican Lasagna

recipe courtesy of Family Features/Culinary.net

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans
- 1 can (4 oz.) chiles
- 2 cans (14 oz. each) fire-roasted diced tomatoes, divided
- 1 can (15 oz.) whole kernel corn
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon taco seasoning
- 6 cups shredded cheese
- 18 taco-sized tortillas of choice
- fresh cilantro, for garnish
- sour cream, for serving

Directions:

Heat oven to 350 degrees. In large skillet, brown ground beef; drain grease. Add black beans, chiles with juices, 1 can tomatoes with juices, drained corn, garlic powder, onion powder and taco seasoning. Open remaining can of tomatoes; take out half and set aside. Add remaining half with juices to beef mixture. Mix well and turn off heat. In 9-by-13-inch pan, line bottom with six tortillas, slightly overlapping. Cover with 1/3 of beef mixture and top with 2 cups shredded cheese. Repeat with remaining ingredients then top with reserved tomatoes. Cover pan with foil and bake 30-40 minutes. Garnish with cilantro and serve with sour cream. Serves 4-6.

GOT A
TASTY TREAT
TO SHARE?

Email your favorite **side dish and quick dish recipes** to cooperativekitchen@co-opliving.com, or mail to Cooperative Kitchen, c/o Cooperative Living, 4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060 and include your email address. You also can submit them online at co-opliving.com/cooperativekitchen.

Because of volume we cannot guarantee publication of all recipes. Reader recipes are submitted in good faith. Cooperative Living cannot warrant results.

Shade, shelter and savings

The power of energy efficient landscaping

A well-designed landscape can not only add beauty to your home but also can reduce your heating and cooling costs. A well-placed tree, shrub, or vine can deliver effective shade, act as a windbreak, and reduce your energy bills. Carefully positioned trees can save up to 25%* of the energy a typical household uses.

*U.S. Department of Energy

EnergizeEfficiently

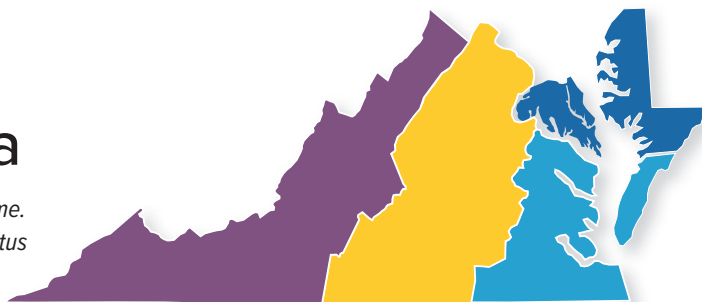
For more landscaping tips, visit ee.odec.com



ODEC Old Dominion
Electric Cooperative

Events Around the Area

Editor's note: All information is believed to be accurate as of press time. Before attending, please use the contact information to verify the status of an event. Listing an event does not constitute an endorsement.



BLUE RIDGE WEST

APRIL

18-19 WINCHESTER. Lord Fairfax Orchid Society Show and Sale. Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Themsv.org.

19 MIDDLETOWN. Easter Egg Hunt. Middletown Park. 11 a.m. 540-869-2226. Middletownva.gov.

22 MIDDLETOWN. Earth Day Tree Planting. Mainstreet. 540-869-2226. Middletownva.gov.

25 FRONT ROYAL. Blue Ridge Singers Spring Concert Series: Anchored in Song. Front Royal Presbyterian Church. 7:30 p.m. 540-635-6947. Blueridgesingers.org.

27 WINCHESTER. Blue Ridge Singers Spring Concert Series: Anchored in Song. First Baptist Church of Winchester. 3 p.m. 540-635-6947. Blueridgesingers.org.

MAY

4 UPPERVILLE. Blue Ridge Singers Spring Concert Series: Anchored in Song. Trinity Episcopal Church. 3 p.m. 540-635-6947. Blueridgesingers.org.

PIEDMONT

APRIL

26 FREDERICKSBURG. 13th Annual Heart for Missions Youth Car & Truck Show. Bethel Baptist Church. 9 a.m. Hfmyouthcarshow@gmail.com.

26 GOOCHLAND. Goochland-Powhatan Master Gardener Assoc. Spring Garden Fest. Reynolds Community College. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Gpmga.org.

29 MANASSAS. Blue Ridge Singers Spring Concert Series: Anchored in Song. All Saints Catholic Church. 7:30 p.m. 540-635-6947. Blueridgesingers.org.

MAY

3 MINERAL. Annual Spring Yard Sale. St. Jude Catholic Church. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Louisacatholics.org.

3 BEAVERDAM. The Gunpowder Incident. The Gunpowder Incident. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Patrick Henry's Scotchtown Museum.

TIDEWATER

APRIL

18-19 CHINCOTEAGUE. 44th Annual Chincoteague Island Easter Decoy & Art Festival. Chincoteague Combined School. Times vary. Chincoteaguechamber.com.

26 CAPE CHARLES. Cape Charles Annual Love Run. 21 Bay Ave. 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Runsignup.com.

MAY

1 MELFA. E.S. Literacy Council Spell-Rite "Bee for Literacy." Eastern Shore Community College. 5-9 p.m. 757-789-1761. Shoreliteracy.org.

3 NASSAWADOX. Antique Tractor Show. 10150 Mill St. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Peninsulatractor.org.

3 CAPE CHARLES. Historic Garden Tour on the Eastern Shore. 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Gcvirginia.org.

10 COURTLAND. Heritage Day. Heritage Ln. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 757-654-6785.

MARYLAND

APRIL

19 EASTON. Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Talbot County Courthouse Grounds. 10 a.m. Discovereaston.com.

23-27 CHESTERTOWN. Paint the Town. Fountain Park. Ctownra.org.

MAY

3 SNOW HILL. Artisan Day. 3816 Old Furnace Rd. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Furnacetown.org.

10 SNOW HILL. Furnace Fairies & Gnomes Celebration. 3816 Old Furnace Rd. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Furnacetown.org.



A \$10 GIFT

A one-year subscription is available for \$10 per year.

Please send name, mailing address and a check made payable to Cooperative Living magazine.

Cooperative Living Magazine
4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101
Glen Allen, VA 23060

SUBMIT YOUR CLASSIFIED ADS

A FEW WORDS CAN GIVE YOU BIG RESULTS!

Our Marketplace page is reaching over 600,000 homes, farms and businesses throughout Virginia and Maryland!

Contact Sonja Kinney at 804-297-3429 or at skinney@vmdaec.com.

PRINT DEADLINES: May 1 for June 15-July 15
June 1 for July 15-Aug. 15

Email: happenings@co-opliving.com
Send to: Happenings, 4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060
Online: co-opliving.com/happenings

TRIPLE PLAY

Limited Collector's
Edition

Three knives. ONE amazing price!
Originally \$249. Limited time
special offer ONLY \$69!



Not shown
actual size.

Looking for a knife that's a cut above? We can do you two better. The **Triple Play Knife Collection** gives you three different styles of hunting blades for one unbelievably amazing price of just \$69. Because serious hunters know that sometimes one knife isn't enough, and so do serious collectors.

All three blades in the **Triple Play Knife Collection** are made with genuine 440A stainless steel and measure an impressive 52-58 on the Rockwell scale for hardness. There's the reliable lockback blade, designed to open up and never let you down. The two-blade trapper knife, engineered for those who trap small game, and a solid, simple, fine fixed blade measuring 9" in overall length, and the antler-textured handles on every knife complete the expert hunter look.

With all three blades along with a decorative display box priced at just \$69, this is some big collectible prey worth hunting down. This deal truly is a cut above.

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Your Money Back. Try out the **Triple Play Knife Collection** for 30 days. If it doesn't make the cut, send it back for a full refund of the item price.

Limited Reserves. We only have 850 available for this ad only at this incredible price. Call today!

What customers are saying
about Stauer knives...



"First off, the shipping was fast and the quality is beyond what I paid for the knife. Overall I am a satisfied customer!"

— D., Houston, Texas

Triple Play Knife Collection ~~\$249*~~

Offer Code Price Only \$69 + S&P **Save \$180**

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: TPK225-01

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.

Stauer®

14091 Southcross Drive W., Dept. TPK225-01
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

*Discount is only for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.

California residents, please call 1-800-333-2045 regarding Proposition 65 regulations before purchasing this product.



Rating of A+



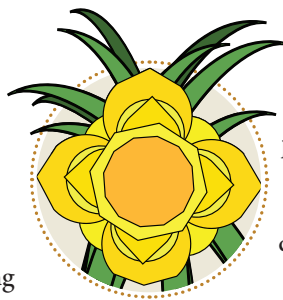
• 3-piece set: 9" overall fixed knife with 5" blade; 4 1/4" trapper knife with two 3 3/8" blades; 4" overall lockback knife with 3" blade • Stainless steel blades with antler patterned resin handle • Comes in decorative display box

Stauer... Afford the Extraordinary.®

Springtime in the Mountains

Wildlife, flowers and holes in my carport

by Margo Oxendine, Contributing Columnist



I was sitting here at my desk, staring into space, when — whoosh! — something zipped past outside. Then, again. And again.

What could it be? Well, after a long, hard, cold winter, it turned out to be a bird. The birds are back! Can spring finally be here?

Now that I've noticed, birds now seem to be everywhere. And that's wonderfully fine with me. When I took a little stroll outside, in the patches where the winter snow had finally melted, I saw a glorious sight, a true harbinger of spring: a tiny yellow daffodil shoot peeking through from the recently frozen ground, next to a purple crocus.

Of course, I know the outcome. It won't last. I can't count the number of photos I've taken of daffodils in the snow. I enjoy them while I can. I think the latest date I've ever seen it snow around here was April 19. That just ain't right!

I've started looking for early signs of spring during my walks, which I can take

again without scurrying back to the car because it is just too bone-chilling cold. Some of the grass seems to be turning green. And the birds are everywhere up on the wooded lane. Well, maybe not everywhere, but at least they are in evidence. However, the first robin has yet to appear around these rural mountain parts.

You know me: I'm starting to keep my eyes peeled into the woods for bears. They're probably still hibernating. Bears are no fools! But it won't be too long before they come out and take a cruise around. The thing is, this time of year, the mamas will be escorting the world's cutest babies. I wouldn't mind a quick peek at them, but if I see any, I will calmly and quietly turn around and skedaddle.

I can see evidence of large and small deer, raccoons, perhaps a bobcat or some well-fed escapee housecat, and bunnies hopping out to make an appearance. I love to examine animal tracks. This winter, my own yard seemed as if, during the night, there had been some sort of great wildlife

party. Tracks were everywhere. I wish I could stay up and peer out the window in the late-night dark to watch them.

One of my favorite wildlife encounters usually occurs in late April or early May, when the does introduce their babies — often twin fawns — to the yard. I watch them frolic and gambol about, and they always head down the driveway. "Hey!" I want to yell, "The highway is down there. Run for your lives!"

Not long ago, I almost hit a smallish bear who leaped out of the brush and scampered across the driveway right in front of me. It was a thrill I did not need.

Just now, I was sitting here writing this and watching out the windows. What captured my eye was a big, red-headed woodpecker. I love woodpeckers, even if they destroy my carport hole by hole. They are not easily deterred. And I try not to mind.

The woodpecker cinched it for me: Yes, folks, spring is finally here! It won't be that long before I can start complaining about the summer heat. ●

To order a copy of Margo's "A Party of One," call 540-468-2147 Mon.-Wed., 9 a.m.-5 p.m., or email therecorderoffice@gmail.com.



PHOTO BY KATY BRANSCOMB, REC MEMBER



WHEREZ IT?

Look for the CL logo, like the one above, in the pages of this issue of *Cooperative Living*. Submit the page number where you found it, along with your name, email and phone number to **WherezIt**, c/o *Cooperative Living*, 4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060 or go online at co-opliving.com under "Contests." Deadline is **April 20**. The winner will receive a \$25 Amazon email gift card.



Magnolias

Spectacular trees all year long

by Steve Carroll, Contributing Columnist

Magnolias are justly admired for their striking, fragrant spring flowers. While red maple, serviceberry and other trees bloom earlier, a magnolia on your property likely takes center stage once its large blossoms unfold. Members of the genus *Magnolia* can be found in North, Central and South America, as well as in Southeast Asia; five species are native to our region, with others either naturalized or planted as ornamentals.

Botanists consider magnolias to be primitive. They are among our most ancient flowering plants, dating back about 100 million years. In addition to fossils, other evidence of their antiquity comes from floral traits, such as the spiral arrangement of their reproductive structures and the presence of many petal-like structures — more appropriately called tepals since they lack distinct differences between outer sepals and inner petals found in so many other flowers.

Flowers of our native magnolias may be white, creamy white, pale yellow or yellow-green, while flowers of many hybrids and cultivars come in shades of pink, purple, and red. And magnolia flowers are large — up to twelve inches in diameter for Bigleaf magnolia (*M. macrophylla*). The flowers of our native species may be odorless, as in Cucumber tree (*M. acuminata*), unpleasantly aromatic (Umbrellatree, *M. tripetala*), or pleasantly fragrant as in Bigleaf magnolia (*M. macrophylla*), Sweetbay (*M. virginiana*) and Mountain magnolia (*M. fraseri*). Of course, what is considered pleasant is in the nose of the beholder.

And then there are the leaves. The

Magnolias date back about 100 million years.



Magnolia flowers are characterized by spirally arranged multiple parts.

leaves of Cucumber tree, Mountain magnolia and Southern magnolia can exceed 10 inches in length; those of Umbrellatree can reach up to 20 inches long; and Bigleaf magnolia leaves may be 30 inches or more. The leaves of Southern magnolia, and sometimes Sweetbay, are evergreen, creating a striking contrast against winter's snow.

You may appreciate magnolias primarily for their flowers or leaves, but be sure not to overlook their fruits and seeds. The 2- to 5-inch long cone-shaped fruits mature in late summer. When ripe, they open to display striking, orange-to-red seeds hanging on sticky threads. A variety of birds and small mammals eat these seeds and threads.

Although closely related, our five native magnolias each prefer different habitats and are generally found more frequently farther south. Cucumber tree thrives in various

locations across the western mountains and valleys; Fraser magnolia favors rich coves and mountain slopes in southwest Virginia; Umbrellatree is scattered throughout the mountains of western Virginia and farther south, while being less common to the east; Sweetbay flourishes along swamp edges and in low, wet areas, particularly along the coast; and Bigleaf magnolia can be found in extreme southwest Virginia. Southern magnolia, native to the southeastern U.S., is widely planted throughout our area and has escaped cultivation, becoming naturalized.

Magnolia wood is soft and weak and has only occasionally been used to manufacture items such as boxes and crates. Magnolia leaves are important hosts for a variety of butterflies and moths, while deer browse the leaves and twigs. However, by far, the most important economic use for this group is in the nursery and landscaping trade. Lucky is the homeowner who has a mature magnolia, a tree that can and should be appreciated no matter the season. ●

The distinctive seedpod of a magnolia.



PHOTO COURTESY DRUSSZ007/DWR VIA FLICKR

Steve Carroll is a botanist and ecologist who writes about trees, gardening and the world of plants. He is the co-author of "Ecology for Gardeners," published by Timber Press.

BUSINESS

FIREARM-RIGHTS RESTORATION. Call for free consultation: Attorney John Janson at 434-953-8794 (Virginia Bar #91236).

REAL ESTATE

ARE YOU PART OWNER OF A FARM OR INVESTMENT PROPERTY? With family members, partners or unknown parties? Do you want to separate or cash out your interest? Call today for a free consultation. (VSB #91236) Attorney John Janson at 434-953-8794. Johnmjanson@gmail.com.

FOR SALE

FUNERAL INSURANCE PLANS for any budget. No exam, easy qualification. Premiums NEVER increase, benefits NEVER decrease. Visit finalexperienceassured.com or call 813-352-2587 today for information.

WANTED

ARROWHEADS. Buying all types of Native American artifacts. Any size collection. 757-373-3502.

OLD ADVERTISING SIGNS. Gas, Soda, Auto, Farm and any others. 1 or many, Metal or Plastic, will travel. Call or text John 571-238-3088.

AMERICAN WHISKEY AND BOURBON. Entire collections or single items, bottles or decanters. Sealed and unopened. The older, the better. Cash. Call 540-845-6107 or email majiddk@comcast.net.

VINTAGE SPORTS CARDS. Pre-1980. Baseball, football, basketball, non-sports and hockey. Sports memorabilia/autographs. Vintage toys, G.I. Joe and diecast cars (Hot Wheels, Matchbox, Corgi, etc.) The older, the better. Fair cash offers. Call or text Loni at 434-760-5060.

Grower Direct
Grow half-dollar size **Muscadines** and **Blackberries**. We also offer over 200 varieties of Fruit and Nut Trees plus Vine and Berry Plants.
Since 1934 *Ison's Nursery*
PO Box 190, Brooks GA 30205
1-800-733-0324 • isons.com
Free Catalog

Steel Mobile Home Roofing
PERMA-ROOF®
from Southern Builders
Eliminates Leaks, High Energy Bill, & Roof Rumble!
www.roofover.com
Contact us at 800.633.8969
sales@southernbuildersar.onmicrosoft.com

1967-1969 CAMARO & 1955-1969 CHEVY PROJECT or parts cars no matter how rough, old hot rod parts like aluminum intakes, posi rears, Holley carbs, what do you have? Call 804-943-2283 or send pictures to 66stingraycoupe@gmail.com.

FREE

STAY INFORMED ON CHURCH/STATE ISSUES – like religious liberty, a National Sunday Law coming soon. Send mailing address to tbsmads@yahoo.com, TBSM, P.O. Box 374, Ellijay, GA 30540. 888-211-1715.

AUCTIONS

ESTATE OF WANDA ELLIOT. Church Road, Va. — Starts on March 21 at 6 p.m. Lots start closing on April 4 at 6 p.m. Shop Tools, Equipment, Boating & Fishing Items, Household Items, Decor & Much More! Over 500 Lots! Something for everyone!
CARWILE AUCTIONS INC. www.carwileauctions.com. Facebook & Auction Zip. VAAR392. 434-547-9100.

Small town TRANSPORT CREWE VA
SPECIALIZING IN MOVING EQUIPMENT
DUMP TRAILER // GRAIN + GRAVEL
STEP DECK + LOWBOY // ANYTHING YOU CAN LOAD
ERIC MARTIN • 717-594-8680

ESTATE SPORTSMAN & GUN AUCTION #2. Saxe, Va. Starts on March 28 at 6 p.m. Lots start closing on April 11 at 6 p.m. Estate Guns, Ammo & Knives. CARWILE AUCTIONS INC. www.carwileauctions.com. Facebook & Auction Zip. VAAR392. 434-547-9100.

SUBMIT: We accept classifieds by email (classifieds@co-opliving.com), telephone (804-297-3429) or mail to: Classifieds, 4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060. Please type or print your ad as you would like it to appear and how many months it should run. Include your name, street, email address and pre-payment. Checks should be made to *Cooperative Living*. Ads with incomplete information will be returned to the sender.

RATES: Non-business: \$100 per 25-word block plus \$5 per word over 25; OR "Mini" ad – \$5 per word (max. 10 words). Business, agent and broker ads: \$150 per 25-word block, plus \$5 per word over 25. Display Real Estate: \$350 per block.

DEADLINE: April 5 for May issue; Publisher reserves the right to designate classification or reject any ad. No personals, please.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.

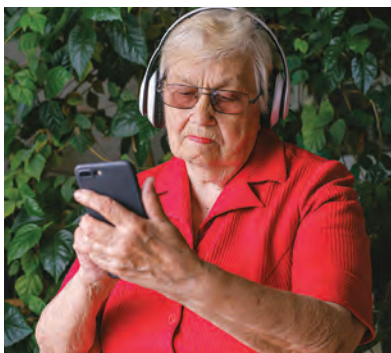
To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

CL ADVERTISING INDEX

American Cruise Line	3
Bethel Builders	23
County Line Materials	25
Hopewell	14
Lifetime Building Supply	25
Mitchell Homes	Back Cover
ODEC	14
ODEC	29
Renewal by Andersen	Inside Back Cover
Stauer	31
Supreme Coins & Bullion	23
Virginia Farm Bureau	Inside Front Cover
Waterfurnace	9



PHOTOS COURTESY STATEPOINT

Modern Smartphones

Is yours up to the challenge of daily life?

story courtesy of StatePoint

As smartphones have transformed from simple communication devices to essential tools for navigation, entertainment, productivity and much more, so have their vulnerabilities — and the consequences of damage have become more severe. Now central to how we work, connect and play, a broken smartphone can significantly disrupt daily life.

For over 12 years, Allstate Protection Plans has conducted its well-known Breakability Test, in which its robots drop, bend, dunk and fold the latest smartphones to assess their durability. These tests have uncovered evolving risks, providing valuable insights into each new phone generation's vulnerabilities.



with only minor issues like pixel damage or hinge wear.

This represents a significant engineering leap, pushing the boundaries of what a smartphone can be.

THE HARDWARE EVOLUTION

Manufacturers now employ toughened materials like Gorilla Glass, aluminum and ceramic to withstand drops and scratches. Yet, despite these advances, modern smartphones are far from unbreakable. In recent drop tests, even flagship devices, like the Samsung S24 Ultra with its titanium frame and Corning Gorilla Armor, shattered after 6-foot falls. Similarly, the iPhone 16, despite its aluminum sides and ceramic shield, sustained cracked screens and scuffed corners when dropped.

LARGER PHONES, LARGER PROBLEMS

Early smartphones typically featured screens around 4 inches. In response to consumer demand, today's models, such as Samsung's Galaxy line, boast displays as large as 6.8 inches. While bigger screens offer enhanced viewing experiences, holding and using larger phones with one hand has increased accidental drops. A survey by Allstate Protection Plans found that 78% of users have dropped their devices while using them with one hand. The question remains whether the trade-off between screen size and ease of use is worth the risk.

TOUGHER, BUT STILL VULNERABLE

Smartphone durability has made impressive strides, yet no manufacturer has designed a device impervious to the Allstate Protection Plans' DropBot — or the unforgiving impact of a sidewalk. Given their vital role in our lives and the high repair costs for the latest models, protecting these valuable devices is essential. Cases and screen protectors are must-haves, and a protection plan can be a real money-saver when accidents inevitably happen. ●

LIQUID DAMAGE

Without waterproofing technology, even a minor spill or accidental dunk in water could wreak havoc on a phone's internal components. In a 2012 survey, liquid damage accounted for 18% of smartphone damage. In 2014, the iPhone 6 struggled being dunked for 10 seconds in less than a foot of water. However, five years later, in 2019, the iPhone 11 remained functional after being submerged by Allstate Protection Plans' DunkBot for 30 minutes in five feet of water.

Thanks to advancements like IP68 ratings and waterproof casings, modern smartphones, such as the latest Apple iPhone and Samsung Galaxy, can be exposed to water for extended periods without harm.

THE FOLDABLE PHONE

While foldable phones first entered the market as early as 2008 with Nokia's "Morph" concept, it wasn't until 2019 that foldable devices made a proper resurgence. Despite initial skepticism, foldable phones are proving to be surprisingly durable. Devices like the Samsung Galaxy Fold can endure up to 200,000 folds, or roughly three years of regular use,

DON'T WORRY, *Be Happy!*

WE WANT TO SEE YOUR PHOTOS!

Submit a photo
for a chance
to win a \$20
Amazon gift card!

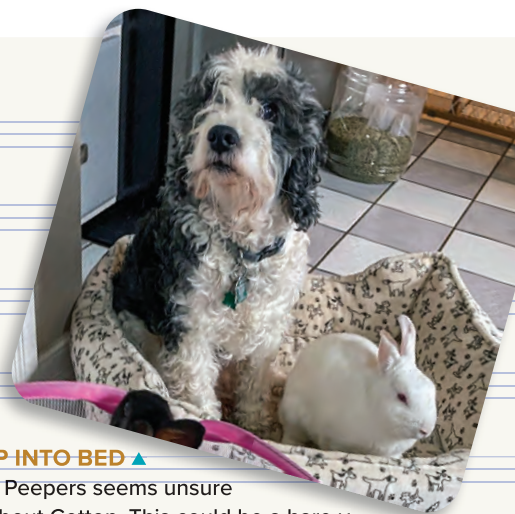
If your photo is published in this column, we will send you a \$20 Amazon gift card credit via email. Send your high-resolution images to saycheese@co-oliving.com. Please include your first and last name, along with a description of the photo.

You may also mail your photo(s) to: Say Cheese, 4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060. Do not send originals; photos cannot be returned.



◀ A GOOD HARE DAY

Ear-resistably cute bunnies make everything better. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY LISA WRIGHT



HOP INTO BED ▲

Mr. Peepers seems unsure about Cotton. This could be a hare-y situation. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY DAVID AGNEW

CUDDLE BUNNY ▼

Jasper is feline cozy with his big-eared bunny buddy, ButterScotch.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KEVIN SALYER



▲ YAPPY EASTER!

Did someone say treats? Zeus is all ears.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY VINEETA ME

◀ SOMEBUNNY TO LOVE

Summer and Flower, the bunny, were fast friends. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY TAMMY EDWARDS

ACT NOW AND GET
20% OFF
All Windows and Doors¹

Minimum purchase of 4

AND

TAKE AN EXTRA
\$100
OFF Your
Entire Purchase¹

Minimum purchase of 4

AND **NO Money Down | NO Monthly Payments | NO Interest** for 12 months²

Minimum purchase of 4 - interest accrues from the date of purchase, but is waived if paid in full within 12 months

TESTED, TRUSTED, AND TOTALLY PROVEN.³

"My overall experience was great. I love the window, and from sales to scheduling, the experience was very good. The installers are highly skilled professionals and I would recommend Renewal by Andersen to all my contacts."

LYNN F. | RENEWAL BY ANDERSEN CUSTOMER

**More 5-Star
Reviews**



Than Other Leading Full-Service
Window Replacement
Companies⁴



**Nation's Best
Warranty⁵**

KEEP THE COOL AIR IN AND THE HEAT OUT!

Solving your window problems and having a comfortable home is easy and enjoyable when you choose Renewal by Andersen. Take advantage of this great offer to save money on your window project - and help save on high energy bills for years to come!



**RENEWAL
by ANDERSEN**

FULL-SERVICE WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENT

Offer Ends May 31

Call for your **FREE** consultation.



855-560-3065

FINDYOURWINDOW.COM

¹**DETAILS OF OFFER:** Offer expires 5/31/2025. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Get 20% off your entire purchase and 12 months no money down, no monthly payments, no interest when you purchase four (4) or more windows or entry/patio doors between 4/1/2025 and 5/31/2025. Additional \$100 off your purchase, minimum purchase of four (4), taken after initial discount(s), when you purchase by 5/31/2025. Subject to credit approval. 12-month Promo Period: while no payments are due, interest accrues but is waived if the loan is paid in full before the Promo Period expires. Any unpaid balance owed after the Promo Period, plus accrued interest, will be paid in installments based on the terms disclosed in the customer's loan agreement. Financing is provided by various financial institutions without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or familial status. Savings comparison based on purchase of a single unit at list price. Available at participating locations and offer applies throughout the service area. See your local Renewal by Andersen location for details. License numbers available at renewalbyandersen.com/license. Some Renewal by Andersen locations are independently owned and operated. ⁴Review aggregator survey of 5-star reviews among leading national full-service window replacement companies. January 2024 Reputation.com. ⁵It is the only warranty among top selling window companies that meets all of the following requirements: easy to understand terms, unrestricted transferability, installation coverage, labor coverage, geographically unrestricted, coverage for exterior color, insect screens and hardware, and no maintenance requirement. Visit renewalbyandersen.com/nationsbest for details. ²Values are based on comparison of Renewal by Andersen® double-hung window U-Factor to the U-Factor for clear dual-pane glass nonmetal frame default values from the 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018 International Energy Conservation Code "Glazed Fenestration" Default Tables. ³Based on testing of 10 double-hung units per ASTM E2068 20 years after installation. ⁴Renewal by Andersen and all other marks where denoted are trademarks of Andersen Corporation. © 2025 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved. RBA14201 ⁵Using U.S. and imported parts.

BUILD ON YOUR LAND



CUSTOM HOMES

WHERE YOU WANT THEM



**SCAN TO LEARN MORE
OR GET IN TOUCH:**



(804) 538-3912



WWW.MITCHELLHOMESINC.COM

NO DOWN PAYMENT - NO CONSTRUCTION LOAN COSTS - NO CLOSING COSTS

SAVE UP TO \$45,000 ON A \$450,000 HOME