

## Student Financial Resource Center Opens at PVCC

Volunteer Club  
 Easter Egg Hunt  
 page 3

Aleena Haidari, staff writer

The Student Financial Resource Center is established to accommodate PVCC students' needs and assist them with their finances.

The Student Financial Resource Center had a grand opening March 28 from 12-2 p.m.. It is open to all PVCC members. The mission of this resource center is to educate, connect, and help PVCC students navigate the resources available to them.

The resource center provides numerous resources that students are encouraged to utilize, and it is located in M103. To fulfill their primary mission of educating students about financial literacy, this resource center will have workshops and literacy sessions to assist students with their budgets. They also connect students to PVCC

resources and community benefits such as SNAP, TANF, WIC, and energy assistance for car gas. In order to thoroughly assist students with these resources, they help students by applying to the aforementioned benefits. They also help eligible students apply for FAFSA and other forms of aid. If students are not eligible for FAFSA, PVCC offers Scholarships, which are great resources that assist students in applying and paying for school.

While the Student Financial Resource Center assists students with financial hardships through the Hudson Foundation and other aids, their primary mission is to educate students about resources that reduce their dependence on benefits. This helps students to be financially literate and independent.

Amanda Key, the Financial Resource Center

*See Financial Center on page 4*



Grand Opening of the SFRC on March 28. Photo by Callan Shore

### In This Issue

- PVCC Events -pg. 2
- SGA Update -pg. 3
- Job Fair - pg. 8
- Clubs -pgs. 10-11
- Theatre -pgs. 13
- Animals -pgs. 20-23
- Reviews -pgs. 25=27
- Classifieds -pg. 20

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- **International Food Festival** —  
April 3, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Bolick Student Center
- **Women in STEAM Workshop \*** —  
April 3, 12 -1p.m.  
Main Building Auditorium M229
- **PVCC Theatre Presents: *Time of My Life*** —  
April 4, 5, 6, 7:30 p.m., April 7, 2:30 p.m.  
Dickinson Building Maxwell Theatre
- **Phi Theta Kappa Induction Ceremony \*** —  
April 9, 4:30 p.m.  
Main Building East Patio
- **One Mic Stand \*** —  
April 11, 7 - 9 p.m.  
Dickinson Building Maxwell Theatre
- **Core Ensemble Performance ^** —  
April 13, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
Dickinson Building Main Stage Theatre
- **Awards Ceremony and Convocation \*** —  
April 18, 4 - 5 p.m.  
Dickinson Building Main Stage Theatre
- **Spring Fling \*** —  
April 19, 4 - 7 p.m.  
Dickinson Parking Lot
- **7th Annual Chocolate Chow Down \*** —  
April 19, 5-7 p.m.  
Dickinson Galleries
- **Free Movie Friday:  
*Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* \*** —  
April 19, 7:30 p.m.  
Dickinson Building Main Stage Theatre
- **PVCC Community Easter Egg Hunt \*** —  
April 20, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.  
East Patio and Lawn
- **John McCutcheon: Renaissance Man ^** —  
April 27, 7:30 p.m.  
Dickinson Building Main Stage Theatre

\* Free Event    ^ Student Vouchers Available

# Virginia's Flower the Dogwood

Francesca Black, staff writer

Charlottesville heats up in the spring with events left and right. The Charlottesville Dogwood Festival is one vital event that celebrates the state flower as well as Virginia in the spring.

The festival is broken up into different parts including the Dogwood Carnival, held at McIntire Park.

The Dogwood Festival began in the 1950's and stands as one of the longest running Charlottesville events. The carnival portion of the festival runs from April 11 - 28. This includes various stands for food such as caramel apples, funnel cakes, and burgers.

There are also multiple rides for all ages including the "zipper" and the Ferris wheel. T.D. Layman, from the Dogwood Board of Directors, said, "The carnival has been a staple of the Dogwood Festival since the beginning 70 years ago. The number of rides we have has increased since the early years and the rides are more thrilling." On April 12, the carnival will light up with the Festival's Firework show.

The hours are Monday - Friday 5:30 -10:30 p.m., Saturday 1-11 p.m., and, Sunday 1- 8:30 p.m.

Layman added, "The most popular part of the carnival is Armband Night. The armband allows you to ride all of the rides, all night long for \$20." Armband nights are Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, excluding April 11. On all other nights, a sheet of tickets will be \$20 and single tickets will be \$1.



Photo courtesy of Dogwood Foundation



# Student Government Association News

Sophia Keniston, SGA president

On March 19, SGA had elections for the Fall 2019 Semester. The new officers are as follows: President Jacob Laxton:, Events Officer Karen Garcia-Rivera, and Executive Senator Rainah Gregory.

The remaining open positions will be voted on in Fall 2019. The Spring Fling is coming up on April 19. This event will be in conjunction with the 7th Annual Chocolate Chow Down, and Free Movie Friday's showing of *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*.

The Spring Fling is open to the community and faculty of PVCC. During the event, there will

be food trucks, a live band, and an opportunity to take pictures with Spider-Man.

Many of PVCC's clubs have a chance to advertise their club during this time as well. Come to celebrate our graduates and the incoming students with this event.



## Volunteer Club Hosts Free Easter Egg Hunt

Samantha Aldridge, staff writer

The Volunteer Club met on March 6 at 12 p.m. in the main building to discuss the upcoming free Easter egg hunt at PVCC. All five attendees talked about ideas involving the upcoming egg hunt. They mentioned having face painting, egg races, and even raffles.

The club guarantees the event is free including concessions. The club spoke about various decorations and activities for children to participate in during the event. Ideas included Jenga, chalk, and board games for inside.

Eventually, they talked about promoting the event with fliers and a picture incorporating an Easter egg basket with Pouncer (PVCC's mascot). Acting fast, I went to Admissions and Advising Center and asked about someone dressing up in the costume so we could quickly get the shot they needed. The staff then told me that I could dress up in the costume if I wanted to. So I did, and we got the

picture for the flier.

The only way the event will be completely successful is with the help of volunteers from the community and students. The reason we need volunteers for this event is because of the labor involved with setting up and running the event. In the past, they have had over 100 children come to hunt for eggs or hang around the campus to do other activities. Having this many children requires supervision.

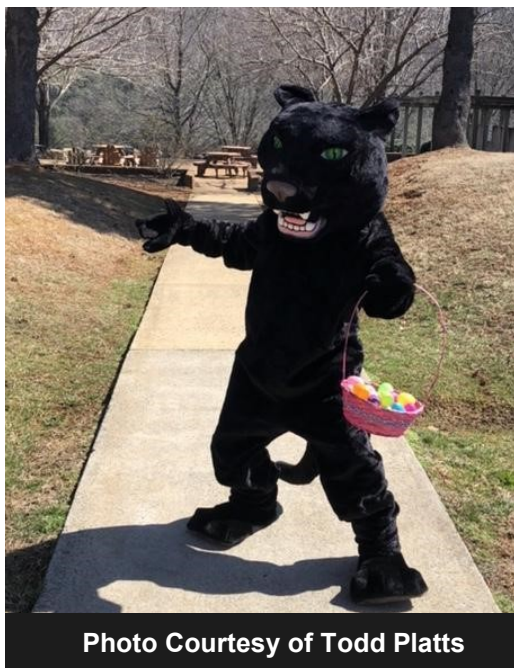


Photo Courtesy of Todd Platts

The Volunteer Club meets every other Wednesday. The attendees planned future endeavors involving the club. In the past, the club has featured movies only to have few people attended, so they mentioned promoting the egg hunt in advance to advertise it as soon as possible.

The club members wanted to expand attendance by putting up fliers and finding other avenues of promotion.

If anyone is interested in volunteering for the event contact Todd Platts [tplatts@pvcc.edu](mailto:tplatts@pvcc.edu).

## Financial Center, continued from page 1

coordinator, is dedicated to fully supporting and helping students throughout their schooling at PVCC.

Though the center did not officially open until March 28, Key has already helped many students who have sought assistance.

Key said, "I highly encourage all students at PVCC to reach out and seek help and support one another."

Key also hopes that students will contribute by volunteering in the clothing stock and food pantry.

The Student Financial Resource Center provides pop-up shop clothes for students to

prepare for their job interviews.

In addition, they provide food from the Pantry to students who lack access to nutrients and sustenance.

The Student Financial Resource Center is always seeking volunteers to help out with their clothing stock and food pantry.

If anyone is interested in helping their fellow students, reach out to Amanda Key in room M131 or by email at [akey@pvcc.edu](mailto:akey@pvcc.edu).

There are many resources available at PVCC and in the community that strive to help students be successful, but students must always initiate by seeking assistance.

## Take Advantage of PVCC Job Search Resources

Tiana Sigala, staff writer

Thursday, March 19 was the Drop-In Job-Win and LinkedIn Photobooth event in the Bolick Student Center, which offered free, no-appointment necessary resume help and LinkedIn Profile Photos.

LinkedIn, which is steadily becoming an important resource in the job market, does not have the reputation as a solid source of professional connection that it should among students, according to Job and Internship Coordinator Gigi Davis.

"Most students don't think they're ready for LinkedIn, or they think that they are not professional enough," Davis said, "but it is a tool for students to make themselves appear professional."

For those who are unfamiliar with LinkedIn, it is an online resume that doubles as a social media account. Members are able to list their professional and educational information, as well as interests and experiences, and to connect with other professionals.

Though LinkedIn can serve as a medium to invite job offers directly, or to spark interest in employers, Davis says there are students who still consider LinkedIn a social media account their parents might be on.

Dismissing the site this way could potentially

hurt job seekers. Davis said, "I've actually had companies say that if an applicant isn't on LinkedIn, it could hurt their candidacy."

For those intimidated by creating a resume, PVCC has plenty of resources to help get students on the right foot.

The Career Services office has an extensive sample resume packet, available by email to those who would like some help getting a resume started.

Career Services also offers resume counseling and mock interviews at events like the Drop-In Job-Win or by appointment.

These events offer help with questions one may have about a resume, or what students might do to strengthen theirs and help to alleviate anxiety about job interviews by critiquing mock interview performances.

There are plenty of Career Services events to look forward to, such as PVCC Workforce Services Health Care Programs Info Session on April 2, 5 - 6:30 p.m., or the Now What? Summer or Full-time Job Search Workshop on April 10, 12-1 p.m.

The next Drop-In Job-Win is April 2, from 4-6 p.m. in the Bolick Student Center.

For more information on Career Services or to set up appointments, contact Gigi Davis [madavis@pvcc.edu](mailto:madavis@pvcc.edu), or André Luck [aluck@pvcc.edu](mailto:aluck@pvcc.edu).

# PVCC Receives Award for Civic Engagement

Callan Shore, assistant editor

For Americans, voting is a right that had to be fought for, and it is a privilege that is not available in all countries. However, voting is still inaccessible or unimportant to many Americans.

According to *The Atlantic*, 49.3 percent of eligible voters and 31 percent of voters under 29 showed up to vote in the 2018 Midterm Elections. To counter voter inactivity, Connie Jorgensen, Assistant Professor of Political Science, appoints PVCC students to hold events and educate fellow students on voting.

For each major election, a group of political science and journalism students creates a bi-partisan voter guide which lays out each candidates' positions on important issues. Jorgensen has also helped students to organize non-partisan voter drives and mock-debates with students acting as real candidates.

Additionally, in 2018, two congressional candidates, Leslie Cockburn and Denver Riggleman, came to debate in PVCC's Dickinson building.

Jorgensen said, "PVCC is part of a nationwide study, and we are still waiting on the results from

2018 on how many students registered to vote."

Due to Jorgensen and students' work to encourage young voters, the Campus Vote Project and NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) recently awarded PVCC with the title Voter Friendly Campus. PVCC will hold this title until 2020.

The Voter Friendly Campus Initiative is dedicated to enhancing civic engagement and is led by both the Campus Vote Project and NASPA. The Voter Friendly Campus title has not only been awarded to community colleges, but every kind of college, from four-year to private. Liberty University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and James Madison University are among the other Virginia schools that were designated voter friendly for the 2019-2020 school year.

Jorgensen said, "We are wide open to suggestions for the next election, and we would love to get more clubs and classes involved."

In order to get involved with PVCC's effort to get out the vote, email Connie Jorgensen at [cjorgensen@pvcc.edu](mailto:cjorgensen@pvcc.edu). To learn more about the Voter Friendly Campus initiative, visit [www.voterfriendlycampus.org](http://www.voterfriendlycampus.org).



Students with Connie Jorgensen at the Get Out the Vote Party. Photo courtesy of Connie Jorgensen

# What You Need to Know About Canvas

Liberty Anderson, staff writer

PVCC is switching to Canvas this summer, no more Blackboard. It can be a little unnerving to learn a whole new system for classes. But we can relax; it is a lot easier than we think. This semester I had the pleasure of being apart of a pilot program using Canvas, so I have learned how it works throughout this spring semester.

There are a lot of new features in Canvas, starting with the notifications. Students can pick and choose which notifications they receive and they can select a different email to receive them, even if it is not the school email. Settings allow Canvas to access other web tools already in use, like Google Drive. Students can go to one place and access all of their files. Students can also write their own biography and add links in Profile. All of these features are under Account on the left side bar.

The dashboard is where all courses can be accessed. It has specialized buttons to go directly to the discussion board, announcements, or the course mainpage for the selected course. Inside each course is Home, which takes the user to the welcome page, syllabus, or modules. At the bottom of the welcome page are links to the To Do list and Recent Feedback. Everything that is due the current week will appear in the To Do list. All graded assignments will be in Recent Feedback.

The Courses tab is an easy way to get from one course to another. Users can also customize this to display selected courses, but it will default to an All Courses option. When in a course, there is the Home option, which is the same as the welcome page for the course.

Then there are tabs for Announcements, Modules, Syllabus, Discussions, and Grades. The Announcements are collapsed, making it easy to go through and find past announcements when needed. Next is Modules, a simple way to go from week to week. Canvas automatically checks off the items that students open in the module.

The syllabus has its own tab, making it easy to find at any moment. In addition, the syllabus tab also has a weekly schedule, course summary, assignments, and how the class is weighted. Discussions are organized by which board was most recently posted on. One big change from Blackboard is that in each discussion board when students post the threads are not collapsed. Students can either scroll down through the discussion, search for a specific author of the post, or click the up arrow to collapse threads.

In Grades, students can choose to organize by due date, module, or title. After displaying the grades, it gives the weighted total and then shows how your class grade is weighted. It is possible to show all details, which will display the grading criteria for every assignment.

Finally, the Calendar displays month by

month each assignment on the day it is due, color coded by class; the colors are customizable. You can also add personal events to the calendar, making it easy to use for everyday life. The next three are Inbox, Arc, and Help.

The Inbox is for sending a message to one of your professors through Canvas. Arc is where instructors can share videos with the class, and students can do the same. Help is where answers to things that do not make sense can be found.

**WELCOME TO ENG 243  
ENGLISH LITERATURE I**

Welcome to ENG 243, I am your instructor,

**The homepage for an ENG 243 course in Canvas**

# 25th Annual Run for Life 5k



Photo courtesy of Zeta Tau Alpha at UVA Run for Life 5k

Rachel Lemley, staff writer

For 24 years, the students at UVA have joined to race against the threat of breast cancer. People of all ages and areas of life come out to walk for loved ones who were diagnosed or lost their lives to breast cancer.

This year on April 6 at 8:30 a.m., the Zeta Tau Alpha sisters are arranging the event, and it already has more than 100 participants. Every dollar goes to the UVA Breast Cancer Center and the Zeta Tau Alpha Foundation, which both work towards the research and education of breast cancer treatments.

“I started running in elementary school when I did a cancer awareness walk, and I have been doing charity walks ever since. I don’t do them for the competition; I do it for the cause.” said Kelsey Crow, a PVCC student who does the runs and donates to the causes whenever she has can.

This 25th Annual Run for Life 5k is held in honor of Paxson MacDonald, who passed away Oct. 7, 2014, due to a brain tumor. She played a big part in the creation of the charity run and in the community as a role model.

This run is also in honor of the victims of

cancer because breast cancer affects one out of every eight women.

There are usually an average of 1,000 participants each year, combining the community of both Charlottesville and UVA.

Last year’s run raised over \$30,000 for the cause, using 40 percent in the ZTA foundation and giving 60 percent to the UVA Breast Care Center.

Crow said, “Make sure to pick the causes based on what you like. Also make sure to stay hydrated and motivated. Keep high energy, but don’t let the competition consume you because this is for charity. If you feel discouraged or tired, remember who and what you’re running for. Anybody can do these; you don’t have to be extremely active.”

There is a race packet and t-shirt pickup on April 5 at the Whispering Hall and April 6 at Westminster Presbyterian Hall. The registration for the run will be held April 6 at 8:30 a.m. in the center of UVA in a field by McCormick rd. The 5k run will begin at 10 a.m. Everyone is encouraged to sign up (for \$20) to participate and support those who are suffering from breast cancer.

# PVCC Hosts 35th Annual Job Fair

Deadra Miller, online editor

Wednesday, March 27 the Bolick Student Center was bustling with 74 different employers looking for fresh faces to fill their ranks with. Career seekers hoping to find a job ranged in age from high schoolers to middle-aged adults.

PVCC's Career Services had one employer come all the way from White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, Greenbrier Sporting Club. Many of the other employers came from around the Charlottesville area.

Some employers included two local jails, Central Virginia Regional Jail and Albemarle Charlottesville Regional Jail both of these jails were looking for guards to train for shift. There were three police departments—Albemarle County, Chesterfield, and Virginia State Police—looking for applicants for more than one position. Four separate media outlets, three of which were radio and one that was geared more towards sales, attended.

As far as employers geared toward sales, Prime Communications/AT&T was looking to get an individual starting in sales, with opportunity for movement and promotion within the company. Beth Miller, recruiter for Prime Communications/AT&T, said, “We promote within the company, but as you prove what

qualifications that you have there is room to grow and move up.” She also mentioned that they offer special discounts for veterans.

The other three media-oriented employers were Monticello Media, National Radio Astronomy Observatory, and Charlottesville Radio Group. Charlottesville Radio Group was advertising a radio-a-thon for the UVA Children's Hospital.

Educational opportunities included Albemarle County LEAD (Learning, Engineering, Access, and Design) and Averett University. Albemarle County LEAD was looking for potential employees and Averett was looking for new students after graduation.

Gigi Davis, M.Ed. job and internship coordinator said, “With 2 percent unemployment in Charlottesville, Career Services was uncertain on how many citizens from the community would take advantage of the opportunity. It is rewarding to know that at least 250 seekers participated with more PVCC students than ever inquiring about employment.”

Career Services here at PVCC continue to send emails out to the student body and post upcoming events on their Facebook page. For more information, email Gigi Davis at [madavis@pvcc.edu](mailto:madavis@pvcc.edu) or Andre Luck at [aluck@pvcc.edu](mailto:aluck@pvcc.edu).



Photo courtesy of PVCC Marketing & Media Relations



# Clown Brings Tears and Joy to PVCC

Bryn Dotson, assistant editor

Tim Cunningham, assistant professor of nursing at UVA and clown for Clowns Without Borders, breezed through PVCC's main building auditorium on Wednesday, March 6. He smiled broadly at the people sitting in the crowd and spoke to them with enthusiastic arm and hand motions. The atmosphere was comfortable and informal, allowing for those in the audience to mingle and interact with one another.

Cunningham cleared his throat gently, and the audience settled, watching him intently. He happily described his role at UVA, explaining that his passion for helping people encouraged him to pursue nursing.

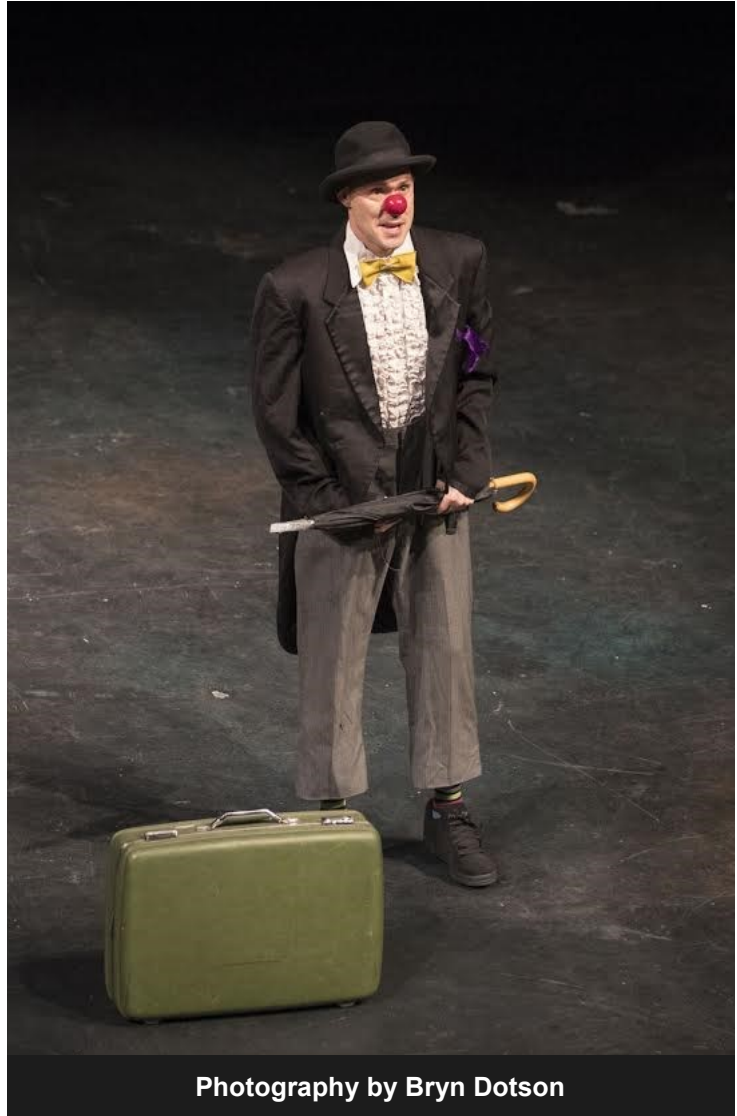
Cunningham then switched the projector screen from blank to a large picture of a clown. The audience shuffled in their seats. Some of them laughed; some of them stared with expressions of discomfort.

After explaining his role as a clown for Clowns Without Borders, Cunningham grinned widely. "I've told people that I'm a clown before, and I've literally seen them go gray in the face," He said, laughing good-naturedly.

To begin his presentation, Cunningham asked the audience to find a partner. After everyone had paired up, they performed a variety of different laughing exercises. The first was a counting game that left the room spluttering and giggling. The second was a name introduction game that resulted in hysterical laughter from Cunningham and from the people playing.

Through powerful and touching stories of tragedy, Cunningham explained the mission of Clowns Without Borders. This volunteer-run organization reaches out to communities that have been devastated and according to their website, "offers joy and laughter to relieve the suffering of all persons, especially children, who live in areas of crisis, including refugee camps, conflict zones, and territories in situations of emergencies."

Tears streamed down rosy cheeks as the audience listened to the impact that Clowns Without Borders has made on the world. Sniffles



Photography by Bryn Dotson

gave way to giggles as Cunningham tactfully displayed a bright red clown nose on the screen.

"This is our passport," he said, pointing at the display. "We have found that wearing the red nose makes us more welcome in situations that would otherwise cause tension."

Cunningham ended his presentation by stressing the importance of resilience and laughter in times of struggle. After he had finished, the audience swarmed to him as he began packing his bag. He gracefully answered all of the questions he was asked. He encouraged the room to visit the Clowns Without Borders website at <https://clownswithoutborders.org/>.

"So long as you are breathing, you are able to laugh," Cunningham concluded.

# Phi Theta Kappa Students Achieve Greatness



**PTK officers: VP of Communications Henry McLane, VP of Scholarship Katie Rabon, VP of Fellowship Virginia Gett, President Elena Cantwell, VP of Records Melissa Stacy, and VP of Service Nicholas Griffin. Photo courtesy of Bruce Robinson.**

Rachel Lemley, staff writer

Phi Theta Kappa has been a leading international honors society in two-year colleges for many years. Their current chapter in PVCC is Alpha Epsilon Tau, which helps students get connected to their communities by public services like helping victims of natural disasters, toy and food drives, charity walks, and environmental activism. This chapter also creates initiatives and goals for the students while letting them take part of the leadership in PTK.

“What motivated me to be Vice President of Fellowship was that I wanted to be more involved with PTK by having an officer position,” said the Vice President of Fellowship Gigi Gett.

PTK offers a variety of positions like president, vice president of communications, or vice president of service, that allow students to learn and take charge of the honors society. It also gives access to scholarships, conventions, and seminars, as well as the ability to socialize with others and be part of a supporting, achieving group of peers. Additionally, joining will open many opportunities socially and academically.

“PTK helps students achieve academic success because not only are scholarships and

trips offered, but also it is something great to add to your college applications or resume,” Gett said.

PTK invites all eligible students at the beginning of Fall and Spring semesters, where they then pay an enrollment fee (\$80) and officially join the Alpha Epsilon Tau chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society. The students who have not yet been invited are also encouraged to fill out an application form. To be eligible, members or applicants who have 12 to 30 credit hours must be full-time students and have a minimum GPA of 3.5. For those with more than 30 credit hours, they must be full-time students and have a minimum GPA of 3.25.

For more information on Phi Theta Kappa or a membership application, visit the Honors Programs page under Academics and click Phi Theta Kappa. The club meets usually on the 20th of every month in room M251 and there is also going to be a 40th induction ceremony of Phi Theta Kappa for the new 96 students joining the chapter. The guest speaker is the Professor of Communications from the Humanities, Fine Arts & Social Division, Dr. Laurie Thurneck.

This ceremony will be held on Tuesday, April 9 at 4:30 p.m. and all are invited to join this occasion.

# A Super Smashing Club on Campus

Cody Clark, staff writer

Smash club offers a place for those who enjoy the Super Smash Brothers games together, regardless of experience.

For those unfamiliar with the franchise, Super Smash Brothers is a long-standing game series that is beloved by fans old and new. The first game in the series, Super Smash Brothers, commonly referred to as Smash 64, was released in 1999 for the Nintendo 64.

The sequel to Smash 64, Super Smash Brothers Melee, was released in 2001 for the Nintendo GameCube. Melee was more popular and developed a competitive scene that still has a large following to this day.

Fast forward to Dec. 7, 2018, when Nintendo released the most recent Super Smash Brothers game, Super Smash Brothers Ultimate. The Nintendo Switch is a game console that can be used as a hand-held or can be placed in its dock and played as a more traditional console on a TV.

The Smash Club uses Super Smash Brothers Ultimate at club meetings.

At club meetings there are at least two Nintendo Switches set up for Super Smash Brothers Ultimate. Most Switches are used for casual games with four or more players, while at least one Switch is used for more competitive one-on-one matches.

The club president, Alexander Krecek, described their weekly meetings, “It’s a friendly atmosphere, and we’re all learning the game together.”

The club meets every Friday from 2-4 p.m. in room M173.

On March 8, the Smash club hosted its first solos tournament, while a duos tournament was hosted on March 21. Both tournaments were open to the public. The atmosphere at the club changed and everyone was focused on their respective matches. However, the usual friendly atmosphere remained and everyone was respectful to one another.

One of the duos tournament champions, Damien Pierson, said, “Overall, I loved the challenges that the other players brought with them. Made the games more fun and they also helped me improve as a player.”



Tournament finalists. Photography by Cody Clark



## Lessons in History and Rhythm

Teddie Frock, staff writer

On March 7, the sight and sounds of the World Beat Workshop ushered PVCC students into the world of the history and progression of Latin and African music and style. World Beat instructors offered lessons in rhythm worldwide. A large map of the world is used to track this music throughout the world.

As Africans experienced cultural and generational displacement, their music and culture traveled with them. While their culture merged with others, the beats and rhythm changed and progressed.

Member of UVA's faculty jazz ensemble, Robert Jospé, and workshop partner Kevin Davis used drums and percussion instruments through the clave, an instrument as well as a specific rhythm, which allows students to experience the music.

The audience was encouraged to participate by using some of the instruments provided and through clapping, dance, and song.

The World Beat Workshop began in 1992 and continues through the present with tourist grants

from the Virginia Commission of the Arts and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Thousands of students each year are able to experience innovative music at the workshops. The workshops are adaptive, offering a range of young children's classes to adult classes in college and other settings.

Jospé is a lifelong musician, artist, and educator with extensive experience in his craft. He has worked with artists and bands all over the world and has released multiple CD's of his music. He joined UVA as a music instructor and is currently a member of the faculty. He is also a member of UVA's Free Bridge Quintet.

In addition, he leads several bands, such as Robert Jospé Express and Inner Rhythm Quartet, and they play in multiple venues. According to Jospé's web page, he states, "Music has been my source of inspiration for decades. Playing drums brings me happiness every day."

If you are interested in learning more about the World Beat Workshop or experiencing the music of his bands, you can find more information at <https://www.robertjospé.com/>, and on Facebook.

# PVCC Arts Roasts Queen Elizabeth I

Tiana Sigala, staff writer

On Saturday, March 23 the Dickinson building's Maxwell Black Box Theatre was filled to the brim with excited community members, there to enjoy PVCC's production of Dario Fo's play *Elizabeth: Almost by Chance a Woman*.

The play revolves around Queen Elizabeth I who, in the midst of political upheaval, eagerly awaits her lover the Earl of Essex, who is involved in a coup against her regime. The play takes place primarily in the queen's boudoir, where she takes visitors and advisers such as Egerton (played by Professor Kit Decker) or Dame Grosslady (played by three separate actors: Anthony Madison, Connor Campbell, and Vincent Madison), and hilarity ensues.

The play is, according to director Brad Stoller, "a riot, a mess, an uncontrollable stampede of pure FUN." He asserted that one cannot attempt to get ahold on the play, they should just let it wash over them. This is in part because of the play's use of Grammelot, an onomatopoeic, satirical language used by the cross-dressing Dame Grosslady.

Grammelot often mimics or takes rhythm from other languages, giving the impression of meaning more than directly expressing any. Stoller said meaning will not come from the

brain, but more settle across you as the play goes on.

"It's really madcap code-switching," said Professor of Spanish Kit Decker, "It's a taunt of words. You can pick out a few and others don't mean anything, but there's sense hidden in there if you can pick it out."

This play came to life with an exhaustive effort from actors and production, with rehearsals taking place five days a week, sometimes twice a day. The result was a perfectly choreographed, lively play.

The titular character was played by Marie Lotter, and her performance as a monarch with nary a finger on reality was raucous and exciting. Her abuse of characters Martha (Callie Bandy), Dame Grosslady, and Egerton was surprisingly funny to watch. The characters were enveloping and kept eyes bounding across the small stage here and there as the energetic cast made use of every square foot of space, sometimes edging into the audience.

PVCC will feature performances of *Time of My Life*, the story of an unraveling family written by Alan Ayckbourn, on April 4-6 at 7:30 p.m, and April 7 at 2:30 p.m in the Maxwell Black Box Theatre. For more information or to purchase tickets visit the Fine Arts & Performance section of the PVCC website.



Photo courtesy of Brad Stoller

# Jessica Salfia and Lynn Waltz Speak at VFOTB

Jessica Adkins, assistant editor

On Friday, March 22, in the heart of City Council, the Labor Unions and Strikes panel for the Virginia Festival of the Book took place. This was one of the main locations for many VFOTB events. The members of the audience varied in age, but everyone was there for one reason and that was to learn more about authors Jessica Salfia and Lynn Waltz and their books having to do with labor unions and strikes.

Lynn Waltz is the author of *Hog Wild*, a book about “the battle for workers’ rights at the largest slaughterhouse,” as written on the cover of her book.

She has been nominated two times for the Pulitzer Prize and is a journalist. Waltz mentioned that the book takes place at Smithfield Slaughterhouse in Tarheel, North Carolina.

While talking about her book, Waltz said, “Labor and the middle class cannot exist without congressional litigation.”

Jessica Salfia is one of the co-authors of the

book *55 Strong*. She is also the president of West Virginia Council of Teachers of English, a high school English teacher, and helps run the WVCTE blog. The book shares personal experiences from the West Virginia Teacher Strike of 2018.

According to Salfia, striking in West Virginia was illegal in 2016. The reason for the strike in 2018 was the “erosion of pay,” said Salfia.

This meant that teachers pay was being cut by a sufficient amount.

Salfia went on to describe the work environment as being, “overcrowded and underfunded.” Teachers in West Virginia went as far as even holding what Salfia described as, “fed up Fridays.”

As the session ended, audience members were welcomed to buy a book from each author and had the opportunity to get the book signed and speak with the authors.

The authors were open to talking about anything relating to books, their lives, and their professions.



Eric Riback, Jessica Salfia, and Lynn Waltz begin their panel. Photography by Deadra Miller

# Exploring the Presidential Dress Code

Cody Clark, staff writer

At the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies on March 24 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Gaye Wilson spoke about her book *Jefferson on Display*. During her discussion, she described the content in the book and how many of the principals can be seen in politicians today.

Wilson summarized her book as, “Jefferson in the public arena.” She began by talking about how George Washington established the dress code for presidents that came after him.

Many people across the United States saw a highly circulated print of the Lansdowne painting of Washington, which would engrain what was seen as the presidential dress code for years to come.

Wilson reviewed how this precedent set by Washington contrasts with some politicians today. For example, Jeb Bush would go to rallies in a shirt with rolled sleeves and no tie or jacket. This

was so he may connect better with his audience and show he was independent.

However, as Vanessa Friedman said, “After all, Americans tend to like their presidents to look, well, presidential. And that most often involves a suit. They like them to display respect for the office. And that most often involves a suit.”

Wilson did reveal one exception Jefferson made to the presidential dress code. In painting of Jefferson, that was commissioned toward the end of his presidency, he wears a fur lined cape that is utilitarian in appearance.

The reasons for Jefferson’s appearance are somewhat unknown, but it is speculated that it could have a connection to the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Jefferson could also be trying to show his more casual side to the public. Similar to how some modern politicians have tried to dress more casually to relate to voters.

# Conversations About God and Improv

Teddie Frock, staff writer

On March 27, Charlottesville’s Festival of the Book event, God, Improv and the Art of Living with author Rev. MaryAnn McKibbin Dana took place at the First Presbyterian Church in Charlottesville.

Dana, a Presbyterian minister and mother of three, studied theatre in college and became interested in how people can use improvisation in their lives to help problem solve, create, communicate or resolve the present issues that we face as humans.

According to Dana, “Life is always handing us things that we couldn’t have planned for, so we have to learn to make the best of those circumstances. I have found that the tools of improv, of improv comedy, give us some really surprising ways to do that.”

In the interactive session, Dana encouraged the audience to participate and express their thoughts about using the techniques to look at situations in a different perspective by using

principles of improvisation.

Dana talked about several situations that she encountered as a pastor. Improv has allowed her to help them, by encouraging conversations and problem solving during the best and the worst of life’s journey.

Those who encounter illness and situations with their children, family and friends are faced with hard decisions and choices for everyone involved.

Acknowledgement and acceptance of reality allows them to move in the most positive and productive way possible. She encourages the use of the concept of “yes, and.” Yes, this is happening, and this is how I can create the best path forward.

As Dana explored the art of improv, she found that “there are tremendous learnings to be gained from this practice listening to each other, of taking risks, of putting our ideas out there, and also just playing with each other, we don’t play enough in our culture. I have found it to be life giving.”

# Festival of the Book: Women and War

Deadra Miller, online editor

Friday, March 22, the Virginia Festival of the Book was in full swing with events all over downtown Charlottesville. In the depths of the city council chambers citizens from all over the U.S. filled seats and listened to a session entitled Women and War: Untold Stories.

Heath Lee, author of *The League of Wives: The Untold Story of the Women who Took on the U.S. Government to Bring Their Husbands Home*, spoke in person, and author Eileen Rivers, who wrote the book *Beyond the Call: Three Women on the Front Lines in Afghanistan*, joined us via skype. Cliff Haury was the moderator and is a professor emeritus of history at PVCC.

Haury started off the session explaining some statistics having to do with past wars such as the Vietnam War. Haury said, “11,028 of the people that served in Vietnam were women, 58,000 listed were KIA (Killed In Action), 585 were POW’s (Prisoners Of War) and of the 585 POW’s 26 were named.” Then he explained how the selective service was deemed unconstitutional in February 2019.

Since Rivers came to the conference via Skype, Haury decided to start the questions off with her answering them. Rivers is currently a *USA Today* editor and a former Washington Post editor. Also, Rivers was a linguist in the U.S. Army who translated Arabic and Spanish for the U.S. Government.

Rivers said, “I wrote about women who served specifically in Afghanistan, but the stories of these women also stemmed from a battle in 2004 that took place in Ar Ramadi, Iraq when females started to get tasked to all male units to help handle the Arabic females during the elections.”

One story is of a woman Marine that got invited by Michelle Obama for a State of the Union address to make a point to congress that “women suffer in the same manners as men do when it comes to PTSD and TBI’s [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injuries].”

Another story within the book is about one more woman Marine that was pregnant and suffered from PTSD. Her command did not want to believe her when she informed

them of the situation. They believed that she was having a stressful pregnancy, not PTSD. Marine Veteran Liz Carlin was the inspiration for Rivers to write about these women’s stories.

With this book, Rivers hopes to show that women, no matter the branch of service, suffer from many different diagnoses when they return from overseas.

In the book Rivers discussed that Veterans Affairs and commands do not want to accept this fact and in turn these women are facing horrible consequences. Women get put into a bad position mentally and physically for being in the military to begin with, and now that women are allowed to enter into combat jobs men are making the situation worse for them.

Heath Lee is a Museum Curator and the author of *The League of Wives*, a fictional book about different women who had to face the government to get tasks accomplished and to live a happy life with their families after the war had ended. Lee also sold the book to Reese Witherspoon to hopefully make it into a movie showing the world what these women went through. Lee has an exhibit at the Virginia Museum of War and Culture currently on display.





# UVA Alumni Reminisce and Read

Callan Shore, assistant editor

The Virginia Festival of the Book lives in many homes throughout its week-long existence, but one of the most popular locations for book fest events is the UVA bookstore. On Friday morning, March 22, the UVA bookstore parking lot was brimming with action. Lines of cars streamed out of the garage door looking to find a parking spot, and people waited to pay at the meter, shivering and complaining.

A woman said to her daughter, “You should consider studying systems; you would learn how to solve unnecessary situations like this.”

The UVA Creative Alumni Reading event was hosted by the UVA Department of Creative Writing and took place on the upper level of the UVA bookstore. It was free to the public, as were the steaming bagels and cheese spreads. UVA Alumni Laura Eve Engel, Libby Burton, James McLaughlin, and Valencia Robin read excerpts from their most recent works of poetry and creative writing.

Libby Burton, my cousin, took the wooden podium first and introduced herself by thanking her parents and two of her teachers, Lisa Russ Spaar and Debra Nystrom, who sat in the audience.

Her poetry book *Soft Volcano* focuses on sex, death, and the small human moments in between. *Soft Volcano* was selected by Ross Gay as the winner of the 2017 Saturnalia Books Poetry Prize.

Laura Eve Engel followed after Burton and revealed that she and Burton were undergraduate students together at UVA. Engel’s book *Things that Go* is based around a biblical story, but expands out to discuss topics such as ISIS and the American West in a poetic voice.

*Publishers Weekly* called *Things That Go* a “nimble, philosophical debut.” Engel also thanked her teachers who sat in the folding chairs in front of her, and they beamed at their accomplished alumnus.

James McLaughlin was third to read, and he



Laura Eve Engel reads *Things That Go*.  
Photography by Callan Shore

began by saying, “The gestation period for my book was longer than everyone else here. I started working on this book in the 90’s, and I published it last year.”

McLaughlin’s *Bearskin* strayed from the other featured works because it is a novel, as opposed to a collection of short works. *Bearskin* is about the intersection of life and unfiltered nature. McLaughlin was named one of “4 Writers to Watch This Summer” by the *New York Times* in May 2018.

The final reader was Valencia Robin. Robin is the author of *Ridiculous Light*, a book of poems. Robin is also a painter and created her own cover art for the book. She is the winner of Persea Books’ 2018 Lexi Rudnitsky First Book Prize in Poetry.

# Richmond Ballet Mesmerizes Audience

Bryn Dotson, assistant editor

The parking lot outside of the Dickinson theater was packed and bustling. The theater was overflowing with sound and chatter as everyone settled into their seats. People sat together tightly with their arms often touching due to how populated it was. They were all gathered to witness Richmond Ballet's dancers perform for the evening.

The audience seemed to grow impatient as time ticked by. The show was meant to begin at 7:30 p.m. but the heavy red stage curtain did not show any signs of movement. It was not until nearly 7:45 p.m. when two men walked out to introduce the show. Harry Stillerman, vice president of institutional advancement and development at PVCC, spoke first. "Please enjoy the show and we hope that you will come again and come often," he said.

He introduced Val Thompson, a news director from CBS19, who concluded their short introduction by saying, "It is so important to be in awe now and again."

The men exited the stage and made their way back behind the curtain. The lights in the theater dimmed, shrouding the audience in near-darkness. A white spotlight illuminated the burgundy curtain, growing brighter and brighter until the curtain split open and revealed the dancers sitting on their knees with their backs to the audience. The stage was decorated simply, with exposed lightbulbs hanging at varying lengths from the ceiling, casting a dark amber glow over the dancers. The room remained silent like everyone was holding their breaths.

Abruptly, a deep voice came over the speakers. A man with a rich, smooth voice began

singing an intense opera piece, bringing the dancers to life. They moved elegantly with one another in correspondence with the music, synchronized in every moment and timed perfectly.

The audience was silent, all of them looking intently down at the stage with wide eyes. The opera music used throughout the performance was graceful and haunting, fitting the dancers as they

moved in erratic but controlled movements all over the stage. Many times, the dancers broke off into couples and danced to their own songs. When a dancing duet was on stage, the music shifted to something softer and sweeter.

Despite knowing when a dance had ended, there was little room for

applause. As soon as one song ended, another began. An uproar of applause erupted as soon as intermission began. Intermission lasted around 15 minutes, allowing for bathroom breaks even with a line.

The second and final act began without a hitch. As the dancers moved gracefully over the stage, their faces were pinched with concentration. Some of them kept a straight face throughout the whole performance while others smiled happily when they landed a pose.

Once the performance wrapped up, the crowd burst into clapping and cheering. The dancers received a standing ovation and bowed with giant smiles lighting up their faces.

For information on upcoming shows, visit Richmond Ballet's website at <https://www.richmondballet.com/>.

Madison Light, a student at Albemarle High School, said, "It really was mesmerizing. If I could watch that all day and all night, I absolutely would!"

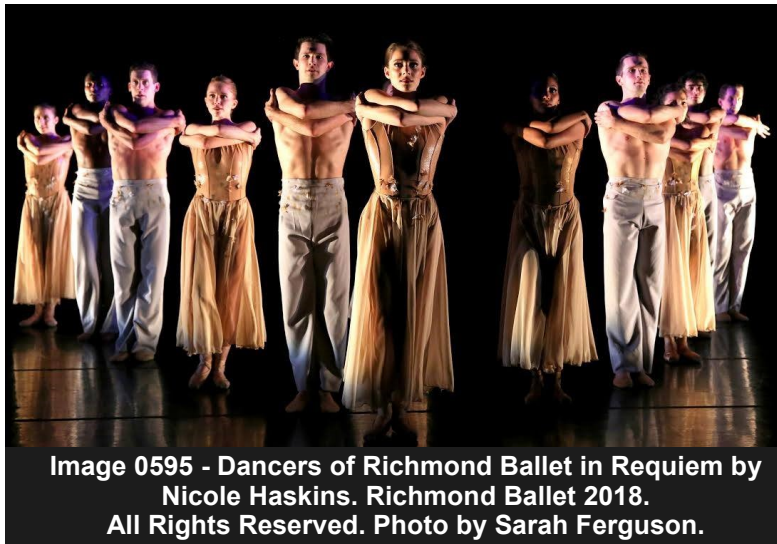


Image 0595 - Dancers of Richmond Ballet in Requiem by Nicole Haskins. Richmond Ballet 2018. All Rights Reserved. Photo by Sarah Ferguson.

# Bert Kreischer Amuses Washington, D.C.

Cody Clark, staff writer

The theatre was dark and the light was on focused on the stage where Bert Kreischer stood. He said, “When I was 22, I got involved with the Russian mafia; here’s how it happened.” The crowd roared in response. Many in the crowd had already heard the story before, but not live from the Machine himself.

Kreischer grew up in Tampa, Florida. His rise to fame began when he was featured in the Rolling Stone article while he was attending Florida State. He would then go on to do stand up comedy and appear in television shows.

He has become well known for taking his shirt off during performances, much of his material handles some controversial subjects, and his humor can be crude.

On March 16, Kreischer was at the Lincoln Theatre in Washington, D.C., as apart of his Body Shots tour. The doors opened at 9:30 p.m., and the show started at 10:30 p.m.

The opener, Shane Torres, was positively



Bert on stage. Photography by Lillian Miller

received by the crowd, and according to my friend, Lillian Miller, who frequents comedy shows, “It’s not often that the opener is actually funny.”

Once Torres left the stage, and Kreischer came on, the stage the crowd got excited with many screaming “The Machine!” Kreischer came on to the stage with jeans, a shirt, and a fedora. The shirt was promptly removed as he began to talk about how he would prepare material for a barista at Starbucks. Later Kreischer told the story of how he got his first gun then lost it.

Next was the story of his daughters going through puberty and getting their first periods. Kreischer then told the story of his dad talking to an owl while high on marijuana.

After that was the much anticipated story of how Kreischer joined the Russian mafia and robbed a train. Finally, the night ended with a story about how Tracy Morgan got out of paying a bill by starting a bar fight.

The crowd applauded as Kreischer finished his last story. My friend, Lillian Miller, had this say, “I thought that he was very unique mixture of family, life, and party life that allows him to relate to a very wide audience. He also isn’t afraid to laugh at himself.”



The Lincoln Theatre. Photography by Cody Clark



Callan Shore rides in the Coliseum at the Virginia Horse Center. Photography by Callan Shore

## Virginia Horse Show Season Kicks Off

Callan Shore, assistant editor

It is 5 a.m., and the pitch-black air carries a tense energy, but the barn is already bustling with action. Little girls in braids shake their ponies awake, and trainers begin the feeding process. This is life on the A-rated horse show circuit.

Horse shows require hard work and commitment, but trainer Will Brown said, “Until you’re relying on this sport for a living, you don’t have to be perfect; it is okay to make mistakes.”

Under the United States Equestrian Federation, horse shows range from C-rated to A-rated. C-rated shows are often known as local shows and are the least competitive, whereas A-rated shows have higher stakes.

The horse show season typically begins around February and ends in August, but there are shows scattered throughout the off-season as well. The Lexington Spring Welcome Show at the Virginia Horse Center kicks off the Virginia show season every year. This year, the show took place March 1-4.

A typical day at an A-rated show, such as Lexington, begins with schooling. To school means to exercise a horse prior to showing them and is a necessary exercise for all competitors. However, the window of time to school before the

show begins is very small, which results in the schooling ring being crowded. Horses pin their ears back as they pass each other, and riders yell “heads up” as they fly over jumps. After schooling, riders typically untack their horses and spray their saddle area with alcohol to dry the sweat.

The Lexington showgrounds are complete with eight barns, 600 acres, nine show rings, and a coliseum that seats 4,000.

The riders who jump three foot three inches or higher compete in the coliseum. For a team who have never showed under the bright lights and vaulted ceilings of the coliseum before, it can be intimidating.

Anxiety when showing is a common obstacle for riders, especially because horses are receptive and can reciprocate human feelings. “Competing every weekend, working hard every day and perhaps sacrificing a social life can result in you becoming obsessed about reaching a certain place or achieving certain results. You get caught up in every day work and forget why you started riding in the first place,” said Annette Paterakis in an article on [noellefloyd.com](http://noellefloyd.com).

In order to find out about upcoming shows and events at the Virginia Horse Center, visit <https://vahorsecenter.org/>.

# National Zoo Charms an Ordinary Day

Francesca Black, staff writer

Living in Central Virginia offers a multitude of options for day trips. A few hours in any direction lands you by the ocean, in the mountains, or, in my case this week, the big city: the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington, D.C.

The Smithsonian Institute provides free museums and parks including the vast National Zoo in the heart of D.C.

The sprawling park focuses on education and conservation efforts, while allowing visitors to experience animals from around the world.

Since the multiple entrances are integrated into the city, the park feels like a secret garden. The weather was beautiful, and the animals active.

The zoo is broken up into sections based on each continent, which made the experience fluid. The American Trail dipped down into the California sea lion exhibit, while the reptile house boasted a massive komodo dragon.

The zoologists give informative demonstrations throughout the day such as the North American river otter feeding and the Ruppell's griffon vulture information session.

The vulture handler surprised listeners by saying, "Vultures can digest a number of harmful pathogens including anthrax and the plague." In



**Panda. Photography by Francesca Black**

the Amazonia exhibit, guests walk through an open air greenhouse with exotic birds and sloths in the canopy.

The giant panda was a major attraction. The huge bears sat right in front of the glass and tore into their bamboo.

If you are looking for a cheap, informative, and entertaining day trip, the National Zoo is a great destination.



**Asian Elephant. Photography by Francesca Black**

# Connecting Pets and Owners for 150 Years

Rachel Lemley, staff writer

For many years, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) has provided homes and care to animals without a family or home. This organization has been running since 1866 to prevent wrongful treatment of pets throughout the U.S. and expanded into a large international operation, opening care centers across the globe for a variety of furry friends.

The SPCA in Charlottesville has been a staple of the community, allowing families to gain new members and people to meet lifelong companions. Even if adopting is not an option for some, the Charlottesville SPCA keeps their doors open for those who simply want some playtime with their favorite animals.

“Our main goals are for the pets to know what’s happening and for them to not be confused, and not be scared, and for them to be as comfortable as possible while they are here. And

to eventually find a home that suits them,” said Alissa Smith, a cat specialist who has worked for nine years at the CSPCA.

Smith helps with cat communication, behavior, and training not only for the animals but for their caretakers. She even makes special binders containing biographical pages for the cats, showing their likes, dislikes, hobbies, and pasts. A major part of her job is pairing cats with owners that they will be comfortable with and bringing out the best in their personalities because each cat is different.

She also makes sure that the situation and transition for the cats go as smoothly as possible, taking care of the especially stressed out cats and being there for those with rough pasts. She provides home visits which are helpful to teach owners how to let their new pets acclimate to new environments.

The CSPCA creates a calm environment for the dogs and cats after all they have been through. Soft music plays through the speakers, toys litter the floor, and a soft blanket covers the floor of each cage. All animals are given food that agrees with their specific diets and plenty of cuddles and playtime.

It has many rooms depending on the type of animal and their personalities. The dogs stay on one side of the building with a play area and walking trail, while the cats are separated depending on their behaviors and ages. The pets are placed with whomever they have bonded with, or who they feel the most comfortable with. This means pairs like brothers and sisters are never separated. If the animals have anxiety or stress, then they have their own area to be able to slowly come to terms with their situation.

“There was one cat who was an owner surrender, so she was in the basement in a room for cats who are difficult, and she had been screaming and was irritable and very upset. I sat at the front of the cage with her and just kind of got in the moment with her. I told her I was really sorry for what happened and that she wasn’t alone and she would get through it. I closed my eyes and when I opened them she was at the front of the cage rubbing her face against the bars. From then on, you could touch her. Once she was acknowledged for what she was feeling, she could shake it off and move on,” Smith said.



Photography by Rachel Lemley

# Local Food Thrives in Free Union



Photo courtesy of Lauren Read

Francesca Black, staff writer

The terms “free range” and “organic” suffer some serious misuse these days. The USDA and National Organic Program (NOP) provide broad definitions of these terms, allowing for a lot of what actually goes on to be muddled. However, local farms such as Free Union Grass Farm provide clarity. Local food, which is defined as food grown within 100 miles of retail, helps the community navigate the many answers to what’s for dinner.

Lauren Read, manager of Free Union Grass Farm, along with many other local farmers, is passionate about putting out products that taste great without sacrificing sustainability. The lush landscape and fertile soil raises happy animals. The differences between small farms and the industrial farms that dominate U.S. food production are very important to recognize when choosing what to eat.

Read said, “In small farming operations, especially those that are committed to sustainable farming practices, you are more connected to the land because your product is dependent upon the natural elements -- sun, air, dirt, and water -- to grow and thrive.” She expanded, while holding a

chicken, “You get the satisfaction of knowing that the meat came from an animal that was doing all the things its biologically meant to -- be under the sun, exercise, eat the food it’s body is able to digest. Everything has more character, and it is made obvious when you sink your teeth into that meal.”

Read explained about the lasting effects of the local food movement as well, saying, “The quality of the food that comes from small farms is why the small farm movement has continued to grow, and is proving to be not just a passing fad.” In Charlottesville and in much of Virginia, local food is alive and well.

Free Union Grass Farm raises cows, ducks, chickens, geese, and pigs that they then sell as product such as whole chicken and breakfast sausage. In addition to many Charlottesville restaurants, Free Union Grass Farm products can be purchased through the downtown City Market, held Saturday mornings starting April 6, or directly from the farm during farm stand hours, Fridays from 1-6 p.m. These purchases allow the local food systems to continue and to grow.

Read added, “Local businesses are good for the local economy because they keep money in the community.”

# Exploring Abandoned Houses for Fun

Samantha Aldridge, staff writer

There has been a heavy rise in urban and rural exploration throughout the world because of the mere curiosity for a fresh shot of something unusual. Everyday my timeline on Instagram is full of posts from explorers searching high and low for the newest abandoned attractions. I recently spoke with two urban explorers that have ventured across miles of Virginia to see these places. Taylor Parker and John Plashal regularly explore abandoned places and document their experiences on Instagram.

This exploring involves photographing, entering, and examining the contents and structure of abandoned places. People all over the world have created a community of interested individuals in this peculiar activity.

According to Plashal, explorer and writer, he finds these places by aerial maps and interviewing locals. The action of exploring is liberating for people with the thrill of being surrounded in the unknown. Now people have made livings by creating content incorporating abandoned places with videos, photography, and explaining the history behind them. People are fascinated by it.

Wanting to know the inspiration behind why people enjoy doing this, I asked explorer Parker. He said, “Whenever I find an abandoned home I wonder what life was like for the families that lived there. These homes are full of history and memories. That’s why I document them because one day they won’t be there anymore.” Old places are usually full of items left behind by families that tell stories to the people visiting. Sometimes people find old pictures, articles, and even clothing from the previous owners that add to the mystery of the place.

Explorers entering run down buildings risk

getting in contact with asbestos, falling debris, and other harmful toxins. These places are typically rotting considering the fact that they have had very little care and maintenance done to them after their owners leave.

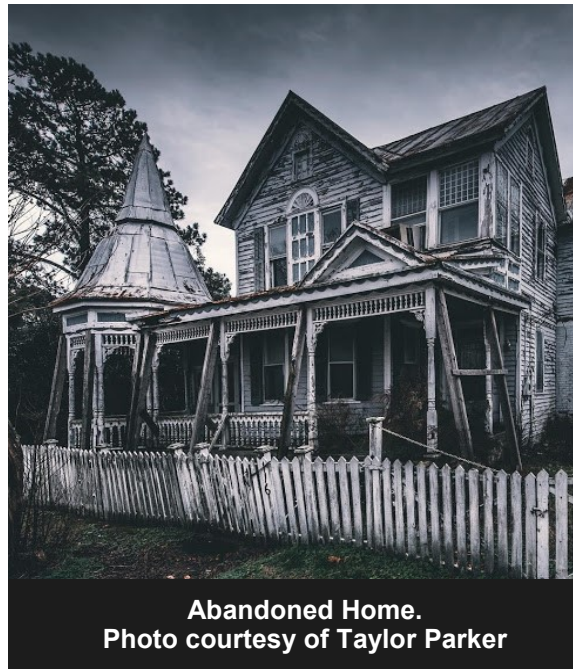
Plashal said, “Originally I was worried about unfriendly property owners until I quickly learned how friendly and accommodating Virginia landowners are. Now, it’s the structural integrity of the places I enter, potential toxicity of the interiors, and being careful exploring rural areas during hunting season.”

Something many explorers experience are some forms of vandalism in the abandoned places. Many explorers despise vandalism because of the damage it does. When asked about vandalism Parker said, “Vandalism is the most disrespectful thing you can do to an old home.

These places are full of history and memories and it’s a shame to see that people don’t care about that. I always respect the properties and try to get permission from the owners.” Plashal also hates vandalism and mentioned that Virginia thankfully does not have much vandalism in abandoned homes.

Overall, explorers venturing into abandoned houses will continue to gain attention as time goes. Houses and places will continue to become abandoned because of the sad reality Plashal addressed at the end of our interview saying, “Elderly parents die, estates, inheritance and wills get messy with siblings. Relationships get ruined. Lawyers get involved. The place goes into probate.”

These explorers will continue to investigate the history and document their findings until there is nothing left. Anyone can follow their journey on Instagram @johnplashalphoto and @explorewithtaylor.



**Abandoned Home.**  
Photo courtesy of Taylor Parker



# Escaping Reality in the Escape Room

Rachel Lemley, staff writer

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall has a good variety of things to do, and one good way to spend a day is locked in a room. Escape Rooms are fun ways to use the mind while going through thrilling or chilling tasks. The Cville Escape Room has many different kinds of rooms involving puzzles and clues for all ages. Some of the themes include Jack the Ripper's London, Archaeologist's Adventure, Sherlock: Moriarty's Revenge, Conspiracy X, and Paris: Le Chat et la Souris.

Every few weeks, the Escape Room will bring back a retired theme for one day, and the one that my friends and I ended up attending (\$25 per person) was that of the Mad Scientist. We ascended a long, steep staircase and were shown into a large office room with posters that had deformed versions of inspirational quotes. After a short wait, two people in lab coats came in to explain what to expect, what to do, and how to play the game.

We were ushered into a shadow-filled room, where the door was shut immediately behind us and we waited in the pitch dark. A few seconds in, some flickering fluorescent lights came on, exposing the disturbing contents of the quarters. The walls were covered with diagrams and maps of the human body, most of which were splattered in fake blood, and shelves of imitation bones and skulls were placed around the area. The floor was decked with an array of lock boxes and in the middle of the room was a body on a steel table half draped in a sheet.

After surveying our situation, one that we have never been in before, we collected a first clue and started the attempt to get out. The clues ranged from creepy poems to vague warnings of what would happen if our time ran out. There were about 30 different clue cards, all matching to boxes that had either key holes or pass codes. The first card said, "Look at the mind in a different light." We found a black light lamp and traveled around each of the

skulls, finally finding one word on the inside of one of the heads, "Safe."

We typed the word and one of the boxes finally clicked open to reveal three unattached arms, all wearing watches with different times, which we put in to unlock yet another box. This one had a crumpled up note with a few words circled in bright red. Following much speculation, our group split up so we could find the final key before time ran out.

About half an hour later, a drawer inside the desk of the scientist was open and the last key lay inside. With only minutes to spare, one of us rushed to the glass box on the wall that held a large button that would finally let us out. Pictures were taken, then our group left, feeling different, smarter, and free.

The Escape Room is open on Friday 5-9 p.m. and both Saturday and Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with many different rooms for all kinds of interests.



Photography by Rachel Lemley

# Amici's Italian Bistro Serves Scottsville

Teddie Frock, staff writer

Amici's means friends in Italian. This is the philosophy that is used by Sal Mini, Alex and Joe Lentini in their family business that includes three restaurants. Sal is Alex's father and runs Sal's Restaurant in Fork Union. Alex's husband Joe runs Pino's Restaurant in Dillwyn. When Alex and Joe married nine years ago, they opened Amici's in Scottsville which incorporated Alex's vision of Italian restaurant dining. The family is from Sicily, where many of their extended family still live.

The menu is varied, and all of the main dishes are freshly made per order. The tomato sauce and pizza dough are Sal's original recipes. Diners can choose from antipasti (appetizers), soups, salads, classic Italian main dishes, pizza, subs, calzones, strombolis and many Italian desserts.

There is also a kid's menu, as well as American-style burgers. Customers can make their decisions while sipping on a glass of vino from the choice of wines they offer,

Jenny, a long-time waitress at the restaurant said, "No one leaves without taking home

leftovers as the portions are so large."

As this reporter can attest, the food is delicious. For example, Penne Puttanesca is "Diced roma tomatoes, black olives, mushrooms, capers, garlic and basil simmered with olive oil and served tossed over penne pasta."

The cost for this dish served with salad and house made bread knots is \$12.95. The aroma of Italian cooking and beautiful presentation of the dishes gives diners a true Italian experience.

Customers will also enjoy the "Italian Bistro" atmosphere with outside tables, as well as a tastefully decorated, art-filled interior that makes them feel as though they have truly entered Little Italy.

Amici's lives up to its name with their warm and friendly atmosphere with staff, and their small family business origins. It is a great place to visit and no one will leave hungry.

Consider coming to Scottsville for a great dine in or take out experience, while enjoying the many activities that Scottsville has to offer.

As Grandma says, "Chi mangia bene, mangia mediterraneo!"

"Eat well, eat Mediterranean!"



Amici's friendly staff. Photography by Teddie Frock

# Little Star Fires up Delicious Food

Francesca Black, staff writer

In the ever-evolving Charlottesville food scene, creating a restaurant with a unique vision is rare. Little Star does just that.

This new gem on W. Main Street serves up Spanish and Mexican inspired dishes with bold direction.

At the center of the experience sits the wood fired grill. The grill smoke permeates many of the dishes which range from small plates to a few entree size portions. These strong flavors, along with the beautiful tile and wood fixtures adorned with plants and flowers, create a feeling of home.

We started with the Jamón Ibérico (\$16), a luscious cured ham that crowns the kitchen window, along with the lemony fried squid (\$12) and escalivada (\$10), a subtle dish of marinated vegetables. The beef tartar (\$14) shone with grilled cactus and pillowy parmesan, dotted with mustard seeds and served with grilled bread.

A spicy finish came in the form of pork spare ribs (\$16), smothered in a citrusy, chili pepper sauce that everyone at the table wanted more of.

Little Star also has an extensive, dynamic wine and cocktail list. I had a glass of La Cuadrilla (\$14), one of the several wines offered by the glass, and it paired perfectly with the acidic, buzzing flavors. The service felt smooth and the staff were knowledgeable as well as personable.



**Pork Spare Ribs. Photography by Francesca Black**

Overall, with its play on subtlety and intensity, texture and acid, Little Star shines. Although pricey, this place is definitely an experience rather than just simply dinner. The restaurant is open at 5 p.m. everyday except Sunday.

This place is worth every penny.

# Classifieds



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## Contact Us

### The Forum

501 College Dr.  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
[twhyte@pvcc.edu](mailto:twhyte@pvcc.edu)  
[www.piedmontforum.com](http://www.piedmontforum.com)

The Forum offers classified space to the PVCC community free of charge. Please send announcements along with full name, email, and phone number to: [twhyte@pvcc.edu](mailto:twhyte@pvcc.edu).

### **The Forum Staff**

(Listed alphabetically)

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Callan Shore

#### Online Editor

Deadra Miller

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