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Supervisors discuss options for utilities district

Caroline Pines could set precedent for future subdivisions

By Daniel Sherrier Editor

he Caroline Pines subdivision will eventually need to upgrade its aging water line. The question remains—how will they pay for it?

The Board of Supervisors discussed options at its April 8 meeting and will explore the matter further in future work sessions

Caroline Pines is already set up as a utility service district. This allows the board to increase the real estate tax rate on residences within the service district. The board can also establish a separate water user rate for the district's customers. The goal in either case would be to recover the costs of repairing and replacing the utilities infrastructure.

Currently, the residents of Caroline Pines pay an extra

\$46.67 per month on their water bills, and this additional charge goes toward paying off the county's availability fee—not toward future repairs.

The board had approved a discounted availability fee of \$2,800 per customer for the community, which Caroline Pines residents are paying over a five-year period. The more than 350 customers are roughly two years into that arrangement.

The county's current availability fee is about \$8,000 per customer.

Interim director of public utilities, Joseph Schiebel, recommended adding a fee to the customers' water bill beginning in the 61st month—or in other words, once the monthly \$46.67 charge is paid up.

"If you were to start a fee during that 61st month at \$40



a month, they will see a reduction in their bill of \$6.67, and you would generate \$173,000 that first 12 months (for Caroline Pines)," Schiebel explained.

"I believe you're actually doing the residents a favor by doing it this way. I would say that the service district is your

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CP photo by Daniel Sherrier

The kids at Ms. JoNi's Shining Stars Daycare were the first to check out books from the new and improved Caroline Library Bookmobile last Wednesday. At right, driver Sandy Coleman and library director Maureen Dorosinski greet the class.

Bookmobile back on the road

By Daniel Sherrier Editor

The Caroline Library Bookmobile is back.

The new bookmobile embarked on its maiden voyage April 16, which happened to be National Bookmobile Day.

Its first patrons were the children of Ms. JoNi's "Shining Stars" Daycare. Each one checked out a book.

"And what are you guys going to do when you're done with these books?" library director Maureen Dorosinski said to the children. "You're going to come back and you're going to get more books, and you're going to keep getting more books and having more fun reading, and it's just going to be awesome."

The previous bookmobile broke down several

months ago, and the library system started fundraising for a replacement.

A design contest drew 168 entries, and the new bookmobile's look incorporates elements from the designs of two winners—Aidan Huff, a sixth grader from Caroline Middle School, and Aaron Reames, who works at the Dawn Library branch.

Aidan contributed a motto, which is printed on the side of the bookmobile: "Everybody reads. Do you?"

"It's like Nike's 'Just do it.' He's a little tiny marketing genius," Dorosinski said.

Longtime bookmobile driver Sandy Coleman has returned to the wheel.

Coleman has driven the bookmobile for nearly 12 years, and she's been a Car-

oline County Public Schools bus driver for 32 years.

"I love children coming in and getting their books and putting a happy smile on them," Coleman said. "These children are my

Dorosinski said Coleman had "been heartbroken for months" without the bookmobile.

Coleman thanked everyone who participated in the fundraising. "They don't know how much it means to me." she said.

Fundraisers included book sales, a bake sale, a craft sale, and more, and local businesses helped out.

A group of county employees volunteered to build the shelves inside the vehicle. County building official Kevin Wightman, the Sheriff's Office's Scott Moser and Chris Hall, and the De-

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Port Royal establishes town manager position

By Daniel Sherrier Editor

The Town of Port Royal is looking to hire a part-time town manager.

Town Council established the position at its April 15 meeting and decided the starting salary would be \$600 per month.

The position description will be posted at the Port Royal Post Office, though Council members do have a candidate in mind from their own ranks—Vice Mayor Bill Wick.

Wick would have to resign from Council if he formally seeks the position. He's already been fulfilling some of the potential duties.

The town manager's responsibilities would resemble those of Bowling Green's town manager.

Typically, a town manag-

er is hired by the locality's town council and serves as the administrative head of the town government. He or she handles the town's day-to-day business between council meetings.

Port Royal's mayor has been serving those functions and acting as the main point of contact for the town.

"There's just a lot going on right now, and I can't get to it all, and everybody else is busy with work," Mayor Nancy Long said.

The pending boundary adjustment with Caroline County is expected to bring in more revenue to Port Royal, as well as add to the workload of Town Council.

"In an 80-odd-thousand-dollar-a-year town, those duties are going to be a lot more extensive than they were in a \$20,000-a-year

town," councilman Jim Heimbach said.

Council members discussed the possibility of having a town manager start within the next couple of months but deferring payment until after the new revenue from the boundary adjustment starts flowing in.

Councilman Bill Henderson recommended waiting until after the boundary adjustment is approved before hiring anyone.

"I'm worried about this revenue maybe not beginning in July. Maybe it's going to be delayed. ... I would rather wait until we have the money flowing in," Henderson said.

"What's another month? Why create a position we may not be able to pay for if this thing is delayed? ...

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LOCAL PUBLIC SERVANT SPOTLIGHT

Jeb Britton: The students keep me teaching

By Daniel Sherrier Editor

Jeb Britton has commuted from Richmond to Caroline High School for 10 years, and he keeps wanting to do it again every day because of the students.

"That's the one thing that's kept me here at Caroline is that the kids are

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awesome. They work hard. Sometimes they want to slack off, but they're teenagers and you just have to keep motivating them and staying positive," Britton said.

"The everyday interaction with them is what keeps me teaching," he added.

Britton teaches math at CHS. He's taught pretty much every level except geometry over his career. This year, he has different levels of calculus and algebra, including a college-level calculus course.

"I love math. It's always been a subject that I've enjoyed," Britton said. "It's like a puzzle, and finding the pieces for the puzzle to make it fit."

As a teenager, Britton participated in community service activities in Richmond-area schools, and some friends convinced him to take an education class when he attended UNC Chapel Hill. His senior year, he volunteered at an elementary school in North Carolina, and the itch to lead a classroom took hold.

Britton enjoys seeing students experiencing their "aha" moments.

"I get a lot of 'I don't get it,' but I always say you've got to keep trying. Eventually that light bulb will go on, and it will click. Now will it click today or will it click tomorrow or a month



Jeb Britton

and a half from now?

"That's a challenge—trying to keep the confidence level up as they are trying to wade their way through all the content that we're covering and to try to make those connections between stuff that we do in September versus in November," he

Britton said the upperlevel math courses are important even for students who aren't planning on pursuing careers in math-related fields.

"They're going to see those types of classes when they get to college," he said. "It also helps our kids get more competitive transcripts. ... Those students who have taken those upper-level math classes will be able to compete better against students from across the state. I think it's proven succe ssful for our kids because we're getting more kids into UVA and into more selective schools."

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CP photo by Daniel Sherrier

Making a new friend

Caroline Humane Society volunteer Bill Reilly bonds with one of several dogs that were up for adoption at Mayberry Days last Saturday. For more Mayberry Days photos, please see page 6.



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Caroline Economic Development & Tourism wins award

Fifth CEDA for Caroline County is the most any community in Virginia has won

The Caroline Department of Economic Development & Tourism won its fifth Community Economic Development Award (CEDA) from the Virginia Economic Developers Association April 11, giving the department more CEDA awards than any other community in Virginia.

Caroline County competes in the category of communities with a population between 15,000 and 40,000. Caroline has a population just below 30,000.

The award recognizes the department's marshaling community and governmental involvement in the creation of the Sidney E. King Arts Center in Bowling Green. The Sidney E. King Arts Center project is a model of cooperation among intergovernmental entities and with dynamic non-profit

organizations to create a facility of cultural and artistic significance that also promotes tourism and small business.

The Caroline County Board of Supervisors tasked the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to create a museum in a vacated county office space in the Town of Bowling Green. The department worked with a space limitation of 3,600 square feet, no allotted budget, and no specific topic for which a museum could be established.

By working with several non-profit groups, multiple jurisdictions, and an agency of the federal government, the county created the Sidney E. King Arts Center and thereby forged the last link in a countywide tourism initiative that seeks to channel 100,000 vehicles daily

from Interstate 95 through the County Visitor Center in Carmel Church to the towns and many attractions in the

The Sidney E. King Arts Center was sparked when the Fredericksburg and Spot-

National Military Park, a unit of the National Park Service, advised the Department of Economic Development that original paintings by Sidney King were available for display. King was a Caroline County artist known for his public art and illustrations composed from the 1940s to the 1980s.

The Caroline County Department of Economic Development and Tourism staff immediately saw the potential to create a museum based on the works of a local artist who had an international reputation, yet only very few paintings were on Economic Development to display in Caroline.

The department secured the permanent loan of the paintings for the Arts Center through the generosity of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. The National Park Service was the lynchpin and catalyst for the creation of the Center. Without their generous donation of the paintings, the project would not have been possible.

The Center also presented other opportunities based on the Park Service's outstanding participation. Additional partners were required to realize the project's full potential.

The Caroline County Industrial Development Authority contributed approximately \$5,000 to the project for security upgrades to the site, which were required by the Park Service as a condition for releasing the painting for display. IDA board member John Stoddard was the National Park Service representative who alerted

the potential of securing the King collection.

The Bowling Green Arts Commission created by the Town of Bowling Green brought an additional \$5,000 to the project while expanding the museum's mission to include displays of local artists' works, encouraging Caroline school children to participate in art competitions, teaching art classes, and participating in festivals.

The Bowling Green Arts Commission receives its \$5,000 from the Virginia Arts Commission, which was then matched by the Town of Bowling Green, doubling their financial im-

The Caroline County Historical Society also shares administrative and display space in the renovated Center. In addition to expanding the cultural significance of the facility, the Historical Society contributes its knowledge of Sidney King's work and the unique history of art in Caroline County.

The Caroline County Board of Supervisors played a vital role in the Center's success by providing the required space, in-kind services for improvements, and no-cost inspections for electrical work to upgrade the display area. Supervisor leadership was experienced throughout the project's planning and development phases.

The Sidney E. King Arts Center also hosts a retail shop, and an effort is underway between the Economic Development Authority (as it is now styled) and the Center to create prints and postcards of the works of Sidney King. Again, this opportunity is possible due to the generous terms of the loan agreement between the Park Service and Caroline

Caroline's Virginia award automatically qualifies its participation in the Southern Economic Development Council competition held later in the year.

Jeb Britton from page 1

Additionally, advanced math problems enable students to "think through a higher level process and be able to reason and use those analytical and critical thinking skills through problems that are not just one or two steps."

Britton's teaching day doesn't always end with the last bell. Twice a week, he stays after to tutor students, including students aren't in his classes.

"There are some days where I'll have two or three, and there are some days where I'll have 15 in my classroom after school," he Caroline High.

Previously, he's assisted athletics by announcing football games and keeping time at basketball games at CHS.

He's easily recognizable with his trademarked bow

"I've always worn bow ties, even growing up. I have long ties, but when I first started teaching here, they'd get in the way. ... I'd get chalk all over them, so I started wearing bow ties," he

Last month, Britton was named Teacher of the Year at

"I am honored. I am very grateful to my colleagues," Britton said.

"They've been awesome. They're great teachers, and I really enjoy the environment of Caroline High School," he

STUDY TIP

To learn math, you have to do math. Active learning is key, according to Britton.

"You have to actually put pencil to paper and redo problems or do problems to be successful with math," Britton said. "You can't just read your notes."

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"What if the judge delays it?" he added. "I agree that the position is necessary. I'm all for it once the money starts rolling in."

Councilwoman Mills said, "We're going to have to learn how to move a little faster than we have been."

"But let's be prudent about it. Let's not create a position we can't afford. We can't afford it right now," Henderson said.

"I really feel we need to have something in place by June so that we're ready," Long said.



Gladys Fortune

Council decided to post the position at a salary of \$600 per month, with the start date to be determined.

Also that evening, Coun-

cil scheduled a public hearing. At the start of its 7 p.m., May 20 meeting, Council will hear public comments about its proposal to raise water rates by \$10 per month for residential and commercial customers.

If approved, the increase would take effect in July.

At the start of the April 15 meeting, Council welcomed new member Gladys Fortune. She is filling the unexpired term of her late husband, Oliver Fortune, a longtime councilman who died in January.

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insurance policy. By doing this, they're paying a monthly fee instead of being hit by a large (real estate) increase

"It is my opinion that we are not going to have any major event that is going to cost the citizens, the utility system, additional money to fix those lines, so in order to benefit the citizens in there, one of the things we had talked about is not charging this fee until the 61st month, because they're already paying \$46 more than the rest of our water customers," he added.

County Administrator Charles Culley said that if a catastrophic failure did strike, there is a mechanism in place to address it. The county would have to borrow the money for the immediate repairs and then charge the service district a greater tax rate to start paying those funds back.

"We'll just have to borrow the money and charge

them an assessment, hold a public hearing, and say, 'Here's what we borrowed and here's what you owe,' twice a year," Schiebel said. and everybody (in the service district) gets a tax increase to fix their water line, but they'll see the work going on," Culley said.

Reedy Church Supervisor Reginald Underwood said, "If we had increased the availability fee, we wouldn't be at this juncture, would we?" Madison Supervisor

Wayne Acors commented, "I think the board had empathy for the people who lived in Caroline Pines in saying most of them couldn't afford the \$8,000, and \$2,800 was a number that was agreed to by their board down there as to what they felt like they could afford.'

"There's no way we can replace everything in there if we at some point don't employ some method to put those funds aside," Bowling

Green Supervisor Jeff Sili said, adding that in addition to the infrastructure, the production of water comes with its own costs. "We've got to do all we can to make utilities come as close to even as we can."

Sili said, "We need to have this discussion so that it's on the table, and I think it needs to be on the agenda next year for the budget session—what we're going to do with Caroline Pines-because it's something we've got to watch."

Western Caroline Supervisor Jeff Black was concerned about precedence.

"Caroline Pines is probably starting the process with other subdivisions that may be popping up down the road. That's something we're going to have to look at to do something uniformly with all subdivisions in what we charge them and how we go about collecting Caroline Pines," Black said.

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