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FEATURE

The Suffolk
Community
Resource
Guide group —
stronger together.

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Jam' Night | The event benefits scholarships, Boy Scouts, Peanut City Cloggers, churches, [and] local families in need.



The SPOT to Learn | Stock Pickers of Tidewater includes 18 members who meet monthly.

ON THE COVER



Cover photo submitted by John H. Sheally II

publisher's note

It takes a village

Take a good idea, mix in some movers and shakers, add a large dose of community agencies, foundations and individuals, and you have a winning recipe to make a good community even better! On this edition's cover is well known Ross Boone, a long-time educator and community activist. Boone, along with Harry Cross and many others in the community, have created the Suffolk Community Resource Guide. Turn to Page 12 to find out more about this important project. The group is looking to use their networking, experience and expertise to take on other cooperative projects that will benefit the community as a whole.

Cooler temperatures are in the forecast, and just in time for some great outdoor area events. The 15th annual Mutt Strut Festival is set for September 30 at Bennett's Creek Park. That same day, kicking off the Annual Suffolk Peanut Fest is a parade through downtown historic Suffolk. Turn to Page 8 for all the details on these events and many more.

Of course, there are more stories within these pages, and we hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together. As always, we are deeply appreciative of the many advertisers and readers whose support makes Suffolk Living magazine possible.

Suffolk Living Magazine strives to tell the story of our community. We are blessed and grateful to be a part of this community and are thankful that there are so many great stories to share. This is a magazine about, and for you, we welcome your ideas and invite you to share with us what you would like to hear more about by sending us a note at P.O. Box 1220, Suffolk, VA, 23439, giving us a call at (757) 539-3437 or sending me an email at Betty.Ramsey@SuffolkLiving.com.



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Suffolk Living is published six times per year by Suffolk Publications, LLC.
P.O. Box 1220, Suffolk, VA 23439
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what to do

each month followed by the opportunity to explore the museum and a take-home activity.

SEPTEMBER 30

Join the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's to fight for a different future. This year's Suffolk Walk will take place beginning at 9:40 a.m. and the walk at 10 a.m. at YMCA Camp Arrowhead.

SEPTEMBER 30

The American Girl Program returns featuring Addy Walker, a girl who escapes slavery with her mother during the Civil War in 1864. There will be a sitting at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. with limited space for girls 6 to 12. Reservation required.

SEPTEMBER 30

Kick off the Annual Suffolk Peanut Fest with a festive parade at 10 a.m. through downtown historic Suffolk. The parade stages in the Lakeside neighborhood and proceeds down West Washington Street, turning left onto North Main Street and

concludes at Finney Avenue.

SEPTEMBER 30, OCTOBER 28

Join the Historic Suffolk Narrated Bus Tour to see Suffolk through the eyes of years gone by! Suffolk's rich heritage dates back to the early 17th century when Captain John Smith first encountered the Nansemond Indians on the Nansemond River. Guided by a Suffolk historian, you meet the people and places that made Suffolk the city it is today. Highlights of this windshield tour include Cedar Hill Cemetery, Riddick's Folly House Museum, Constant's Wharf, College Court and Suffolk's Historic Lakeside neighborhood. Transportation via Suffolk Tourism's bus, which boards at 1:55 p.m. Masks must be worn while on the bus.

SEPTEMBER 30, OCTOBER 28

Cedar Hill Cemetery Stroll is set at the official Virginia Civil War Trail site. Cedar Hill Cemetery has long been an attraction for history buffs and even walking groups. The Suffolk Division of Tourism offers a

guided stroll through the pleasant 32-acre cemetery, rich in history and natural beauty. The 75-minute daytime tour offers unique insights into Suffolk's heritage as tourgoers traverse the cedar-lined terrain dotted with timeworn headstones.

SEPTEMBER 30, OCTOBER 28

Legends of Main Street: A Suffolk Ghost Walk is a hair-raising encounter with the spirited side of Suffolk. Follow a costumed guide through the shadows of historic Main Street discovering stories, legends and "unexplained occurrences" by lantern light. Tales of unsolved mysteries and unresolved affairs abound throughout Suffolk's historically hip Ghost Walk.

OCTOBER 5 THROUGH 8

This year marks the 45th anniversary of Suffolk's premier festival at the Suffolk Executive Airport, 1410 Airport Road. This family-friendly event honors the city's agricultural heritage and devotion to peanuts, our favorite legumes. Known for its fun family activities, Suffolk Peanut

what to do

Send us your news

To submit your calendar or news item, simply email it to: news@suffolklivingmag.com

SEPTEMBER 30

The 15th Annual Mutt Strut Festival will be held at Bennett's Creek Park from noon to 6 p.m. and will showcase exciting pet-related activities and fun for the entire family, including dog agility courses, a frosty paws eating contest, children's activities, dog talent contest and a lure course.

SEPTEMBER 16, OCTOBER 14

Hometown Heroes Tour of Cedar Hill Cemetery is a 60-minute walking tour that highlights and honors the graves and memorials of soldiers from Suffolk and old Nansemond County who died in combat during the two World Wars, the Korean War and Vietnam War. The tour starts at 11 a.m. and departs the Suffolk Seaboard Station Railroad Museum, 326 N. Main St. Cost is \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors, military, and children.

SEPTEMBER 16, OCTOBER 14, 21, 28

Victorian Suffolk: Dying To Be There, a Guided Discovery of Cedar Hill Cemetery is a 75-minute walking tour that explores the hidden meanings buried in Suffolk's Historic Cedar Hill Cemetery. The tour features Victorian-era symbolism, burial practices, funerary industries and mourning rituals. This intriguing and educational excursion is set to highlight how the residents of Suffolk both lived and died in the 19th century. Cedar Hill Cemetery is more than two centuries

old, with roots that harken back to the founding of Suffolk. With keen eyes and curious minds, this tour will bring into focus the fascinating world of Victorian America, their obsession with death, dying and living beyond the grave.

SEPTEMBER 19, OCTOBER 17

Storytime at the Station has returned to the Seaboard Station Railroad Museum. Come from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. to take part in this interactive program featuring a different transportation-themed book

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what to do

Fest offers concerts, amusement rides, contests and competitions, a demolition derby, a truck and tractor pull, motorcycle rally, fireworks and much more. Combine all of these great activities with local and national entertainment and you have a weekend full of good times! Admission is \$10 per person, with children 10 and under and parking free.

OCTOBER 6
One of the kick-off activities traditionally held at the festival site and a social gathering of large proportion. Enjoy AYCE shrimp, BBQ, coleslaw, iced tea and adult beverages, along with live entertainment by Island Boy. Tickets are \$40 per person in advance and are limited to 1,800 tickets sold. No tickets will be sold at the gate.

OCTOBER 13
The Suffolk Division of Tourism wants to give you the fright of your life as they present a series of horror films at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts. The first

movie will be "Prey For The Devil" at 8 p.m. for \$3 per person. This movie is rated R.

OCTOBER 14
The Great Dismal Swamp Guided Nature Walk takes place from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, Washington Ditch Boardwalk Parking Lot, 3076 White Marsh Road. Enjoy a biologist-led nature walk as you learn about the flora, fauna, wildlife and history that abound in the 112,000-acre wilderness. Cost is \$7 for adults and \$5 for seniors (60+), military and children ages 3-12.

OCTOBER 20
The Suffolk Division of Tourism wants to give you the fright of your life as they present a series of horror films at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts. The next movie will be "M3GAN" at 8 p.m. for \$3 per person. This movie is rated R.

OCTOBER 20 THROUGH 21
The 30th annual Driver Days will take

place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Enjoy lots of activities for the kids, great entertainment, good food, a parade, 5K run, crafters, cornhole tournament, car show, bike show, pony and train rides and so much more!

OCTOBER 27
The Suffolk Division of Tourism wants to give you the fright of your life as they present a series of horror films at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts. The next movie will be "The Pope's Exorcist" at 8 p.m. for \$3 per person. This movie is rated R.

OCTOBER 28 TO DECEMBER 1
The Suffolk Art League will present the 2023 Annual Juried Exhibition. This juried exhibition is open to artists working in any medium. The Art Gallery is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday at 118 Bosley Ave.

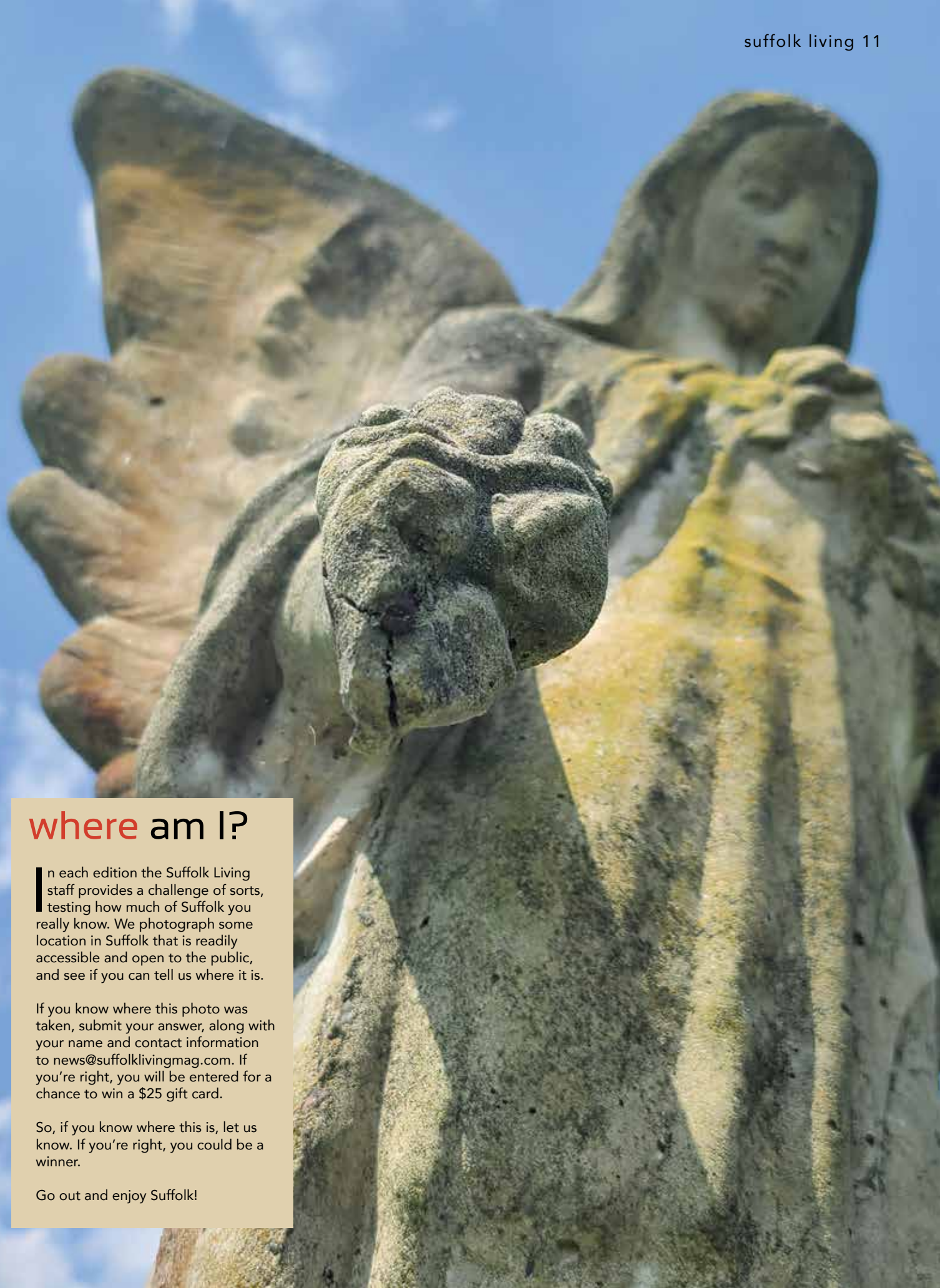
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\$30 per person all-you-can-ride wristbands are available on **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8**.
Military Appreciation Day is **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8** (Half-price admission for active, retired military and active first responders; Valid I.D. required).

SCAN ME



where am I?

In each edition the Suffolk Living staff provides a challenge of sorts, testing how much of Suffolk you really know. We photograph some location in Suffolk that is readily accessible and open to the public, and see if you can tell us where it is.

If you know where this photo was taken, submit your answer, along with your name and contact information to news@suffolklivingmag.com. If you're right, you will be entered for a chance to win a \$25 gift card.

So, if you know where this is, let us know. If you're right, you could be a winner.

Go out and enjoy Suffolk!



How To Make a Good Community Better?

Story by Phyllis Speidell
Photos by John H. Sheally II

Growing up in Suffolk, Harry Lee Cross III was aware of the divide between the city's Black and white communities. Now, as a successful Suffolk businessman and community booster, he recognizes that the divide he saw decades ago can still be narrowed. Just maybe, he thought, with so many talented leaders in both communities, great things might be done by working together.

He called Ross Boone, a long-time acquaintance and another Suffolk native, to talk about his inspiration. Boone, a retired educator and community activist, understood Cross's memories and concerns and was happy to get the call.

"I knew we could work as a team," Boone said. "What can we do together?"

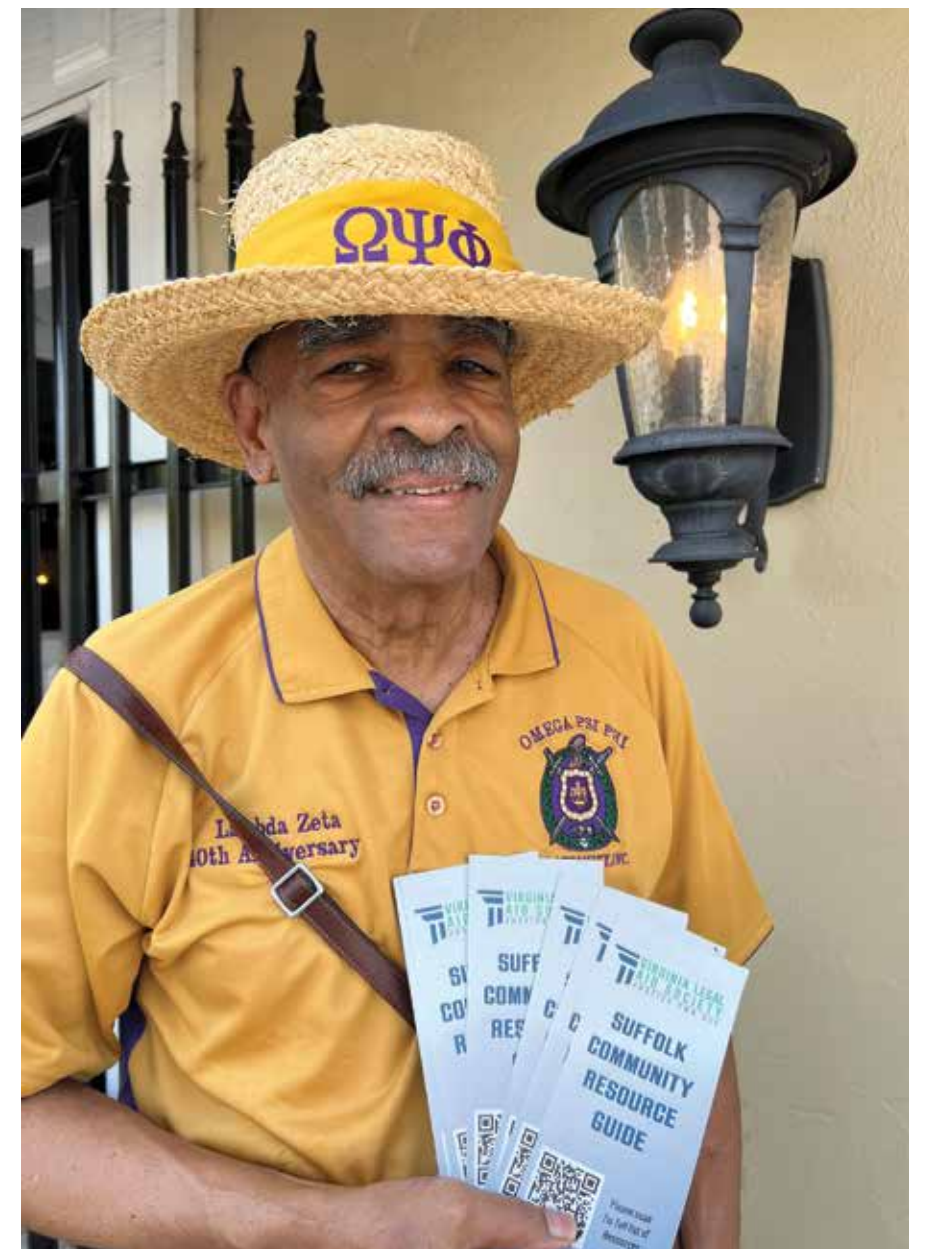
That same question drew an array of ideas at an initial gathering of community-minded Suffolk residents, including members of the social fraternities and sororities of the Black community. The group brainstormed with Cross and Boone, a life member of the Omega Psi-Phi Fraternity, at the Obici Health Foundation offices in downtown Suffolk.

As a group, they agreed that there are people across Suffolk who are in dire need of help – and that there are numerous agencies that can provide that help. Too often, however, those in need and those who can help are not aware of each other and the needs go unmet.

Ideas flew as individuals in the group mentioned agencies and services they were most familiar with in the city. The list of resources grew as the meeting continued. Gail Trzcinski, Housing and Community Navigator for the Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc. in Suffolk, volunteered to compile a listing of the suggested agencies and programs and serve as a focal point as more suggestions came in.

That list grew into a plan for a directory of community resources with the group nurturing the project's growth over the next months. In the past, other groups including the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Suffolk Partnership for a Healthy Community have compiled listings that are primarily accessible online if the person in need is aware of them and able to access the information.

The new Suffolk Community Resource Guide the group developed is a compact, up-to-date leaflet listing 42 agencies that can help with



Suffolk community activist and native Ross Boone went door to door delivering guides.

A QR code on the Suffolk Community Resource Guide leaflet will lead you to a fuller list of resources at <https://www.suffolkpubliclibrary.com/guide>.

The Guides are available at numerous sites around the city including:

1. Morgan Memorial Library, 443 West Washington St. Suffolk, 23434
2. North Suffolk Public Library, 2000 Bennetts Creek Park Road, Suffolk, VA 23435
3. Chuckratuck Public Library, 5881 Godwin Boulevard, Suffolk, VA 23432 open Mondays only

COMMUNITY continued from page 13

housing, food, physical and mental health care, legal questions, domestic violence, addictions, veterans' services, utilities, employment and education.

The group designed the guide to help people in need of immediate help, "the people who need help and need it now," Cross said.

A QR code on the back of the leaflet connects to a site hosted by the Suffolk libraries and contains additional information on 105 agencies that can provide additional help.

With a first printing of 14,000 copies, the group began distributing the leaflets across the city with requests soon coming in for more copies.

"Our target was to get the guides to people who could give them to people they knew needed help," Cross said. "We took them to doctors' offices, churches, schools, libraries, food banks, the police, and more."

Boone took the mission another step and went door to door, delivering the guides, – and recruited neighborhood youngsters to help.

The Suffolk Foundation and the Obici Health Care Foundation are two of the project's supporters. Mary Haddad, an active community volunteer, is a past president of the Suffolk Foundation Board. A Dayton, Ohio, native, she has lived in Suffolk since 1984 when she and her husband were looking for "a good community in which we could raise our four children," she said. They found Suffolk and Lake Prince and knew they had found their new hometown.

Haddad, echoing the sentiments of Cross and Boone about this community effort, said "We hope to grow this collaborative effort and we're excited about how the project is going so far – there's a lot of good energy in this group."

The leaflet also benefits the agencies who are able and eager to help. Trzcinski said, for example, the Legal Aid Society recognizes the resource leaflet as an unmatched opportunity to make connections and partner with other agencies and community minded individuals to provide the most effective legal support to residents.

Major David Miles, Chief Deputy of the Suffolk Sheriff's Department, sees another benefit of the group's cooperative work. He knows the positive value of community engagement in what he terms "the turmoil of the last few years."

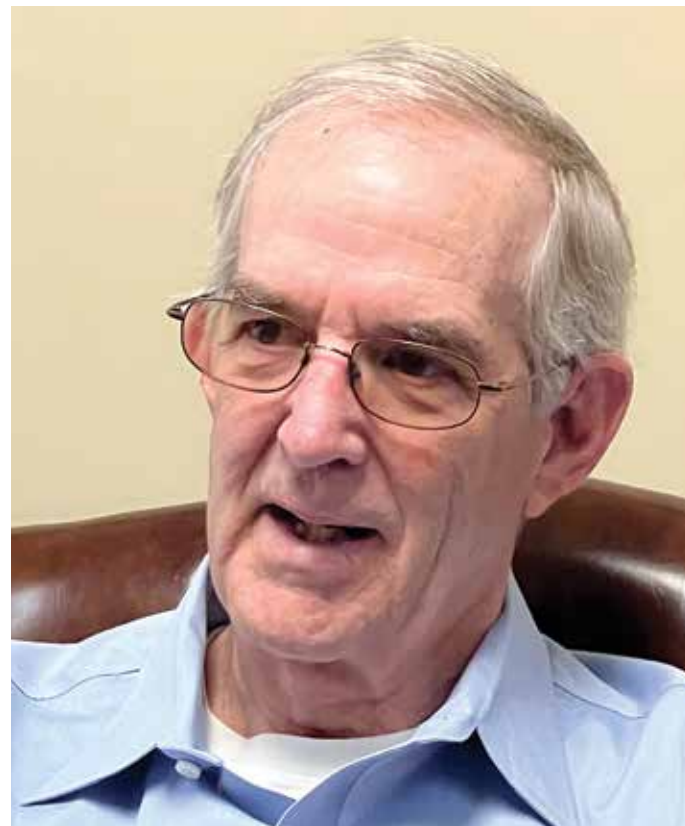
"I think this project is just the beginning – all the people involved are solution minded," he added "The main thing about this dialogue is the listening."

He believes this group's collaboration could also build bridges between what he sees as the city's three distinct communities – North Suffolk with its growth, downtown Suffolk with its history and rural Suffolk with its agriculture – and their resources.

Boone and Cross share his optimism, foreseeing that by networking through their varied contacts, experiences and expertise, the Suffolk Community Resource Guide group can involve others, take on other cooperative projects and create a stronger connection between residents across the greater Suffolk area – making a good community even better.



Gail Trzcinski, Housing and Community Navigator for the Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc. in Suffolk, volunteered to compile a listing of the suggested agencies and programs and serve as a focal point as more suggestions came in.



Bringing the many talented Suffolk leaders, in both Black and white communities together enabled The Suffolk Community Resource Guide to come to fruition. Pictured is Harry Cross.

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may/june 2021 • vol. 12, no. 3

Send us your travel photos with a copy of Suffolk Living. We'd love to publish them.



The Dallas Band performed a delightful selection of country and oldies to the Bethlehem Ruritan Club Friday, July 2. Pictured from left are Jeff Triplet, Stephanie Poole, Chris Knowlton, Cheryl Askew and Steve Meszaros.

Dallas Band gets the crowd moving at 'Jam' night

Story and photos by James W. Robinson

Good food, good tunes and good times filled the evening at Bethlehem Ruritan Club's "Jam." The Friday, July 2 event drew a great crowd too.

But why not when there's delicious barbecue, hot dogs, popcorn and desserts to enjoy with country music and oldies music performed by The Dallas Band from Newport News.

Fronted by Stephanie Poole on lead vocals, Cheryl Askew on lead guitar and vocals, Jeff Triplet on pedal steel, keyboard and vocals, Steve Meszaros on bass and vocals and Chris Knowlton on drums, the band had those attending slow-dancing and tapping their

toes to songs such as "Tin Man" by Miranda Lambert, "Rockin' Robin" by Bobby Day and "All I Have To Do Is Dream" by The Everly Brothers.

Those in the audience celebrating special occasions enjoyed anniversary and birthday tributes performed the band.

"We really enjoy it," Askew said. "We've been coming here [for] a while."

Askew, who is also Poole's sister, said their sisterly bond helps elevate the music during their performances.

"People enjoy our harmonies, we have the same blood," she said.

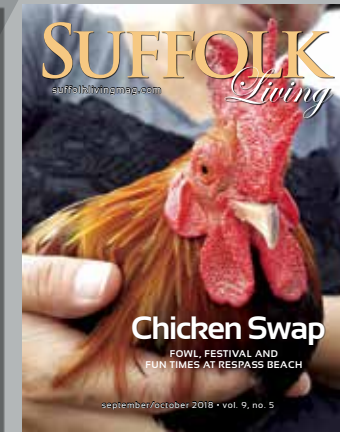
Bethlehem Ruritan Club's George Fowler

said the "Jams" got started in 2010 as part of an individual fundraiser. It has transformed to become the club's main fundraiser to help the community.

"It gives back to the community and that is what the Ruritans is about," Fowler said. "The event benefits scholarships, Boy Scouts, Peanut City Cloggers, churches, [and] local families in need."

Check out the Bethlehem Ruritan Club "Jam" held from 7:30-9:30 p.m. the first and third Friday of each month at 140 Manning Road Admission is free.

For more information, call Fowler at 757-617-5955.

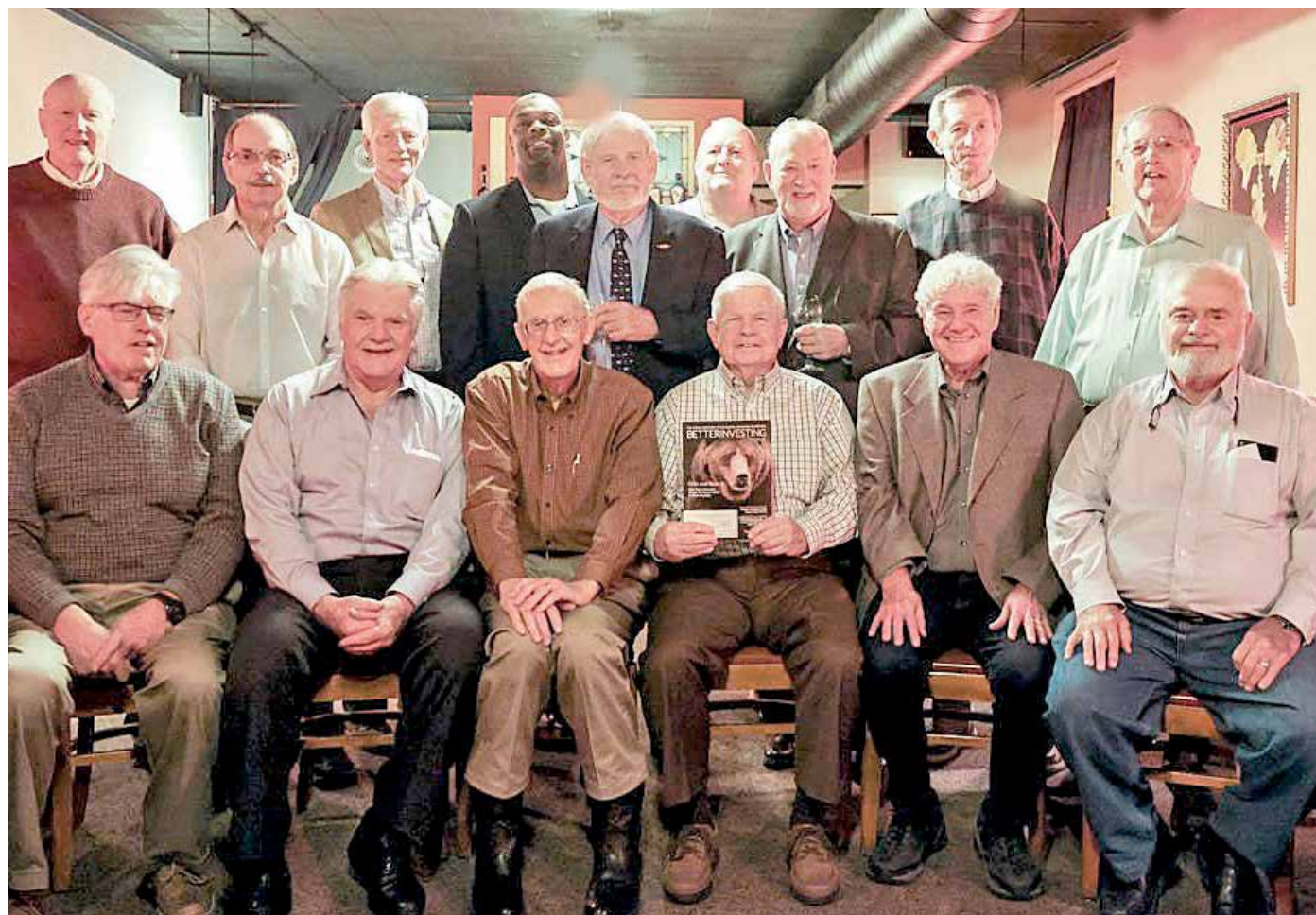


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From left, front, Steve Hetzler, Bob Boyle, Gary Abrams, Randy Caviness, Walt Speidell, Jim Layton. Back row, Tom Hoddinott, Bill Jobst, Jim Liedman, Rodney Spears, Carl Smith, Rick Burton, Ted Bailey, Paul Thompson and Jack Welsby.

The SPOT to Learn

Story by James W. Robinson
Photos by John H. Sheally II

With the daily financial news talk of rising inflation, possible recessions and a volatile stock market, how can you know if this is a good time to invest? How can you determine a sound investment? How do you learn more about the whole investment process?

If you are an investing rookie who would like to know more about investing or an experienced investor who would enjoy meeting with other private investors, you will appreciate how, in 2000, Gary Abrams, a Suffolk resident, launched a group where the 14 members could do all that while enjoying the camaraderie of others also intrigued by the

stock market.

Abrams, a Navy veteran, grew up in the Cradock section of Portsmouth and retired from the Naval Aviation Depot in Norfolk as the Director of the Planning Division. He and his wife, Ann Lynn, now live in the Bennett's Creek area.

Today the group he launched, known as SPOT (Stock Pickers of Tidewater), includes 18 members who meet monthly to share their ideas, learn how to invest in good quality companies and apply what they learn to their own personal investments as well. The club is a supportive environment in which aspiring

investors learn the skills of stock investing. Each month the members contribute \$25, or more if they choose, to a shared fund from which they buy and sell as a group, building a profitable stock portfolio for the club.

The club members have a variety of careers and backgrounds – a Coast Guard Captain, technical specialists, retired businessmen, retired military, shipyard workers and retired educators. Their varying fields of expertise enhance the club's collective knowledge and the club discussions can be peppered with good-natured jesting while they enjoy the cookies that members bring on a rotating

schedule.

The SPOT club is part of the Washington, DC chapter of NAIC/Better Investing, a national nonprofit (501c3), volunteer-based organization dedicated to teaching sound investing methods to individuals and investment clubs.

Recently Abrams received one of two national Better Investing awards recognizing his leadership in the club, being the “heart-beat” of the group that still includes eight charter members. The NAIC Better Investing Robert Wynn Award recognizes exceptional club leadership and dedication to educational programs that have introduced everyday Americans, including youths, to principles of “building wealth and managing personal finances.”

Abrams was, in the minds of the SPOT members, a clear choice for the award. He had started the club with a few friends and acquaintances with whom he often talked about investments. He served as president for 19 years and recently moved into the co-Treasurer position. Portsmouth resident, Steve Hetzler is the current club president.

“When Gary and I first started talking about the possibility of starting an investment club some 23 years ago, I knew that he would be instrumental in the creation and the ongoing direction of our club,” Hetzler said.

Back in 2000 the 14 club members met in a room over the garage of the Abrams home in North Suffolk.

“We had just enough chairs,” Abrams remembered. “The pool table became our board table.”

As the club started, Abrams, along with Hetzler, discovered that slogging their way through the numbers and calculations involved in stock selection could be a daunting and time-consuming process. To their surprise – and relief – Better Investing had software that could ease the research and evaluation process. The pair introduced the time and effort saving software to the club and guided the members in using it to check out their potential stock finds and prepare their stock reports for the meetings.

As you can imagine, with 18 members voting, the club stock purchase and sell suggestions are often open to lively discussion. The

club requires a 2/3 majority vote on any stock buy or sell for the club.

“One of the things that makes our club so successful is the freewheeling decision making – we don't always agree about buying or selling club owned stock,” Hetzler said. “But we do respect everyone's position.”

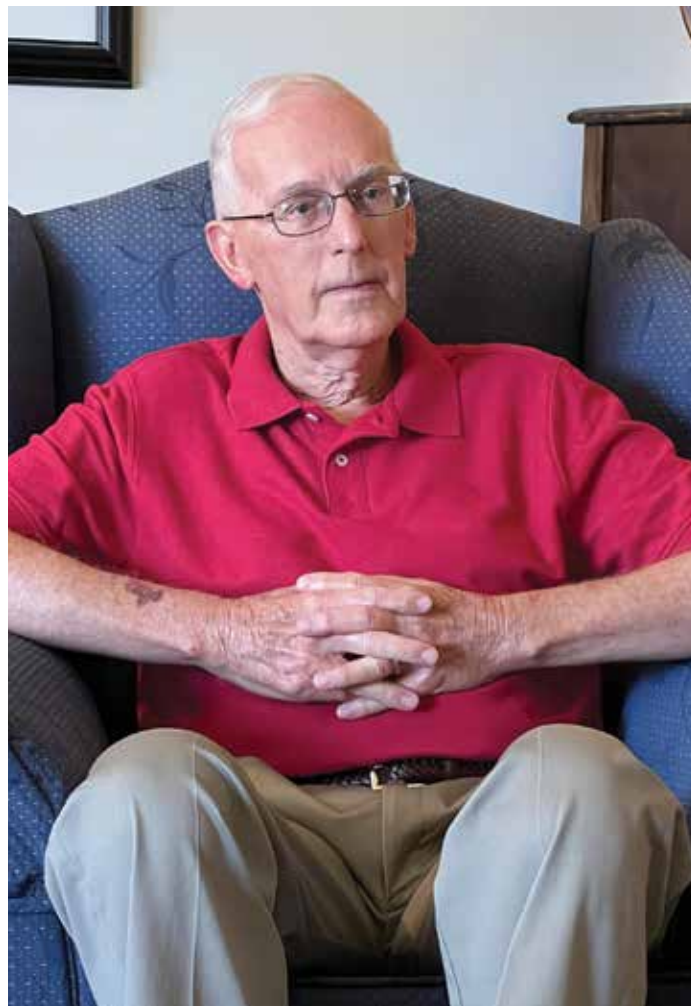
As much as investing as a group, the club focuses on education with guest speakers (live or via Zoom) and mentors assigned to new members to acquaint them with the Better Investing stock analysis guidelines. General membership discussions might include definition/explanation of investing terms, pertinent articles on the economy and stock market, how to analyze companies' track records, and how to know when to buy, hold or sell stocks.

Over the last 23 years, the club membership has remained stable with numerous long-time members still active. A decade after the club formed, one of the members developed ALS. At first members were able to help him up the steps to the second-floor meeting room but soon decided to move their meetings to a first-floor meeting room at Cherry Carpet in Portsmouth where Hetzler was then

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Send your vacation photos to news@suffolkliving.com



Abrams received one of two national Better Investing awards recognizing his leadership in the club, being the "heartbeat" of the group that still includes eight charter members.

employed. When he retired, however, the group moved their meeting site to an open room at Centenary United Methodist Church on Cedar Lane in Portsmouth where they continue to meet each month.

As club members retire or move from the area SPOT has a few openings for new members and would like to share their knowledge of investing - and friendship - with people who would like to learn. If you think you would like to try a meeting and see if SPOT is the right spot for you,

Email Gary Abrams at gabrams52@yahoo.com or steve-hetz@gmail.com

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Wendy Phelps, Annaliese Lemieux-Kaplan, and Amanda and Leo DiStasio on vacation in Greensboro, North Carolina to see a golf tournament.



Paul and Lavonne Fletcher traveled to Kenya, Africa accompanied by six other family members. In Nairobi they visited The Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage where they were able to pet the babies and The Giraffe Centre where they hand fed the Giraffe. They went on Safari at the Masai Mara National Reserve and sighted all but one of the Big Five. After Safari they relaxed at the Beach in Mombasa, Kenya before returning home. All had a great time. Lavonne can cross this off her Bucket List.

suffolk scenes National Night Out



Beverly Copeland along with Michael and Shelia Bullock took Suffolk Living magazine on vacation to Denver, Colorado. Special thanks to cousin Trudi Copeland for the daily tours. Mount Evans scenery was breath taking!



McKenzi Robinson, Mian Brown, and Morgan Robinson enjoy the party.



LaToya Barnes and Malika Traynham of Birth in Color RVA, advocacy nonprofit focused on maternal health awareness, helps celebrate safety at National Night Out at Kings Fork High School on Tuesday, August 1.



Impulse Art Company CEO and Founder Lasheena Harden and her Impulse Art Company performing arts team celebrate National Night Out at Kings Fork High School on Tuesday, August 1.



From left, are Deputy William Brinkley, Sgt. Reva Brinkley, Sgt. John King, Deputy Jay Burton, Deputy Wade Thomas, Deputy Bianca Martin, Deputy Kenneth Knight and Deputy Lawrence.



Valorie Baker, Danny Epperson and Jennifer Moore of Suffolk's Media and Communications Department also join the National Night Out fun at Lakeland High School on Tuesday, August 1.



Renee Wilson and Deborah Askew of the Suffolk Humane Society have a good time with their adorable pups Melbourne (Aussiedoodle) and Tillie (Black Lab) Lakeland High School's National Night Out party on Tuesday, August 1.

suffolk scenes

Nansemond Powwow



Daniel Brooks has a moment of respite during a busy day at Saturday's powwow.



Jack Dark is all smiles as he celebrates Native American culture and traditions at the Nansemond Indian Powwow Saturday.



Kimberly and Kevin Gardener take a peaceful stroll at the Nansemond Indian Powwow Saturday, Aug. 19, at Mattanock Town.



Erick Krigsvold, Rebecca and Vinn Hill, pictured from left to right, help educate those attending the Nansemond Indian Powwow Saturday.



Anton of the Yaqui Tribe provides a quick serenade for those near his shop during Saturday's powwow at Mattanock Town.

suffolk scenes

Suffolk TGIF



Residents Betty Franklin, left, and Keith Druitt, right, had a good time moving to the beat during the TGIF Summer Concert Series Friday, July 28 at Bennett's Creek Park.



Pictured from left, father and son Bill and James Harrison of Yorktown enjoy a drink together during the TGIF Summer Concert Series Friday, July 28 at Bennett's Creek Park.



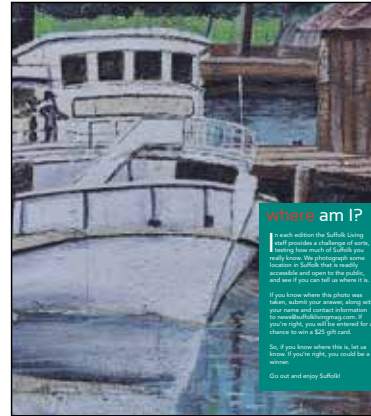
Earl and Lanitha Hudson enjoy the music during the TGIF Summer Concert Series Friday.



From left, residents Derrick Watkins and Renee Grisham enjoy a dance together during the TGIF Summer Concert Series Friday, July 28 at Bennett's Creek Park.

Last edition's Where Am I?

Joseph Verdirame guessed the snippet of this lovely river scene included in our last Where Am I challenge. This Mural can be found on the side of the Major Signs building on North Main Street. Find this month's challenge on page 11.





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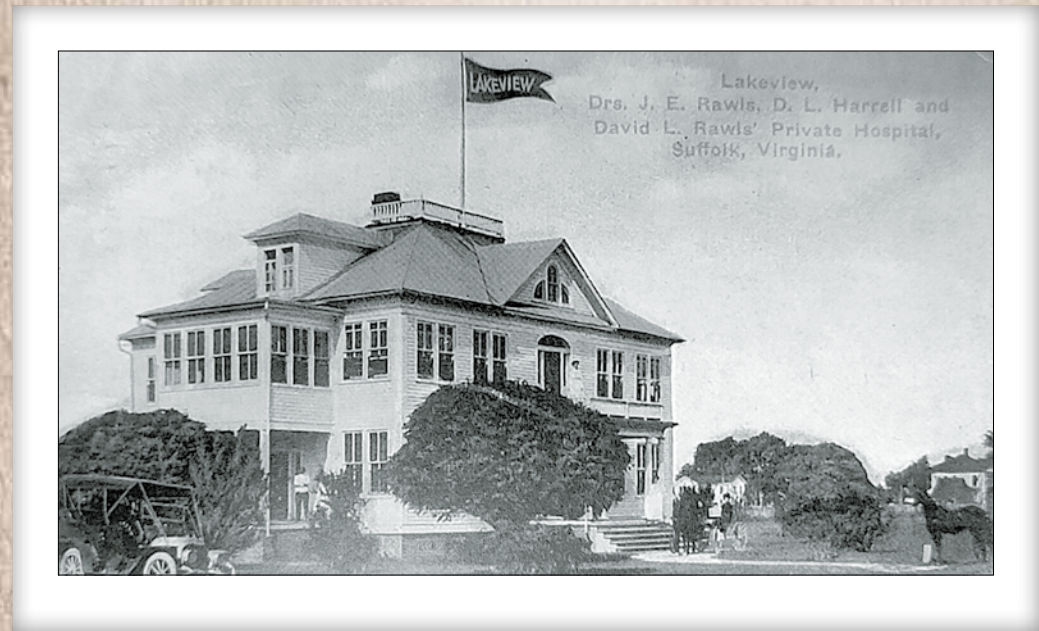
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scrapbook



FIRST HOSPITAL: Lakeview, Suffolk's first hospital, was built in 1906 at the west edge of town on two lots at the corner of Smith Street and Bosley Avenue. It was so far from downtown that one account of its history referred to Lakeview as "the hospital in the field." It was organized and built by Dr. J.E. Rawls and Dr. E.R. Hart.

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