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FEATURE

Suffolk's Micheala Rose continues to blaze her way into the track and field record books.

12



CONTENTS

mar-apr | 2024

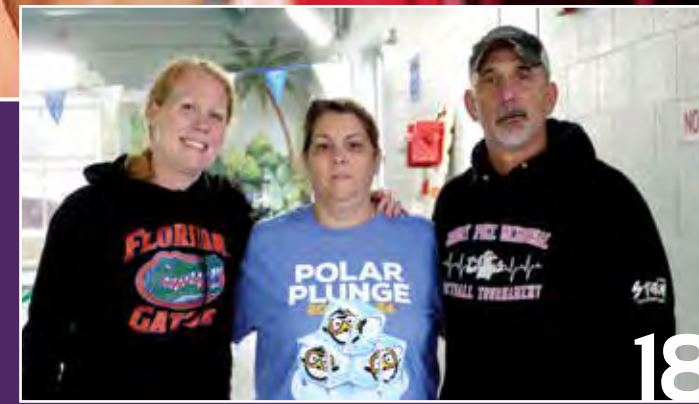
11 | WHERE AM I? | Think you know Suffolk well? Then see if you can identify this photo.

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16

In the News | 6-year-old Suffolk transplant recipient granted a wish of a lifetime



18

Breaking through limitations | Suffolk Special Olympics prepares for upcoming games

ON THE COVER



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publisher's note

Suffolk's heart

If there is one thing the people of Suffolk have, it's heart. Yes, we all have a heart that goes "thump thump" inside our chests, but this type of heart takes strength, determination, unwavering faith, and, most of all, kindness. Within the pages of this edition of Suffolk Living, you'll find stories that showcase some of Suffolk's heart.

*Just take a look at Michaela Rose in our cover story. Michaela, a Suffolk native, is not only winning championships for the track team at Louisiana State University (LSU) but setting record pace. Read more about her love for God and sport and her record-breaking wins in *Running with Faith*, written by Ed Pugh, on page 12.*

Joshua Buchhiet and his parents show us the meaning of strength as they share Jousha's journey from a life-threatening illness, diagnosed before his birth, to a now healthy 6-year-old. Thanks to the kindness of the Chartway Promise Foundation and Make-A-Wish Greater Virginia and a little "pixie dust," Jousha's dream of having an ice cream social and visiting the happiest place on earth, Walt Disney World, is coming true. Learn more about Joshua and his wish on Page 16.



*Turn to page 18, and you'll find out more about Suffolk's Area 29 Special Olympics. From backstrokes to karaoke, athletes with intellectual disabilities participate in Olympic-style sports competitions that not only help them to become more physically fit but also help build self-esteem. In this story of *Breaking Through Limitations*, you'll discover how determined the Area 29 Special Olympics program coordinators, volunteers, and families are for participating athletes to reach their full potential.*

Suffolk Living Magazine is honored to bring you the stories of our community and those who live in it. We are grateful to our readers and customers who make this publication possible. After reading this edition, we hope that you'll agree with us that the people of Suffolk have heart!

We look forward to continuing to fill our pages with the best Suffolk offers.

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 lindsay.richardson@suffolknewsheald.com

Lindsay Richardson, Publisher

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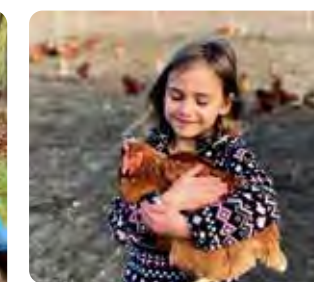
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what to do

bags. Participants opting for boat-based cleanup will receive longer grabbers. For those cleaning by land, you can work from the wharf or be directed to specific nearby sites. Preventing litter from reaching the river is crucial! For further information, contact us via email at ksb@suffolkva.us or by phone at 757-514-7604.

MARCH 17
Greater Virginia-Carolina Temple Holiness Church, 550 Carolina Road, will host at 11 a.m.. Dr. Charlie Wiggins, Jr. will bring the morning message. The public is invited.

MARCH 18
Suffolk Youth Athletic Association (SYAA) General Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. 501 Kings Fork Road, Suffolk, VA

MARCH 22
Sign up your family, friends, business, or group for the 2024 Great Suffolk Cleanup effortlessly! Simply gather your group, choose a roadway or park for cleanup, and complete your registration using the

button below. All necessary supplies, including grabbers, reflective vests, gloves, and bags, can be picked up at the Public Works office on the second floor of Suffolk City Hall, located at 442 W. Washington Street, in the weeks leading up to the event. For any inquiries, feel free to reach out via email at KSB@suffolkva.us or call 757-514-7604.

MARCH 23
Join us for our upcoming Recycling Drive and Tire Amnesty Day from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., located at 800 Carolina Road, Suffolk, VA 23434! This event is a FREE tire amnesty and recycling opportunity. While there is no charge to participate, we would greatly appreciate donations of non-perishable food and toiletries. At this event, you can responsibly dispose of various items such as common recyclables (#1-2 plastic bottles, cardboard, paper), household hazardous waste, clothing, electronics, appliances, scrap metal, residential tires, eyeglasses/hearing aids, plastic bags, and decommissioned US

flags. We also have secure document shredding available on-site! For a detailed list of accepted items, click the button below. *Please note that tire and household hazardous waste disposal requires a Suffolk ID.

MARCH 24
Greater Virginia-Carolina Temple Holiness Church, 550 Carolina Road, will host at 2:30 p.m. Faith and Love in New Jerusalem Church, Carrsville; Dr. Robert Warren Public is invited.

APRIL 7
Greater Virginia-Carolina Temple Holiness Church, 550 Carolina Road, will host at 2:30 p.m. New Community COC; Suffolk, Elder Kenneth Jenkins Public is invited.

APRIL 13
"My God, Your God" will take the stage at 7 p.m. at Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts, 110 Finney Ave. Tickets are \$40, \$35 and \$30.

Mountain Highway will perform at 6 p.m.

what to do

Send us your news

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

MARCH 20
Managing Money: A Caregiver's Guide To Finances 10 - 11:30 a.m. located at the Suffolk Workforce Development Center 157 North Main Street Suite D (2nd Floor) Suffolk 757-514-7730 Suffolk Workforce Development Center recognizes the importance of education and tools to help with these conditions. The Dementia Talk Series will bring together experts from the Alzheimer Association, caregivers, and community members to provide support, knowledge, and resources.

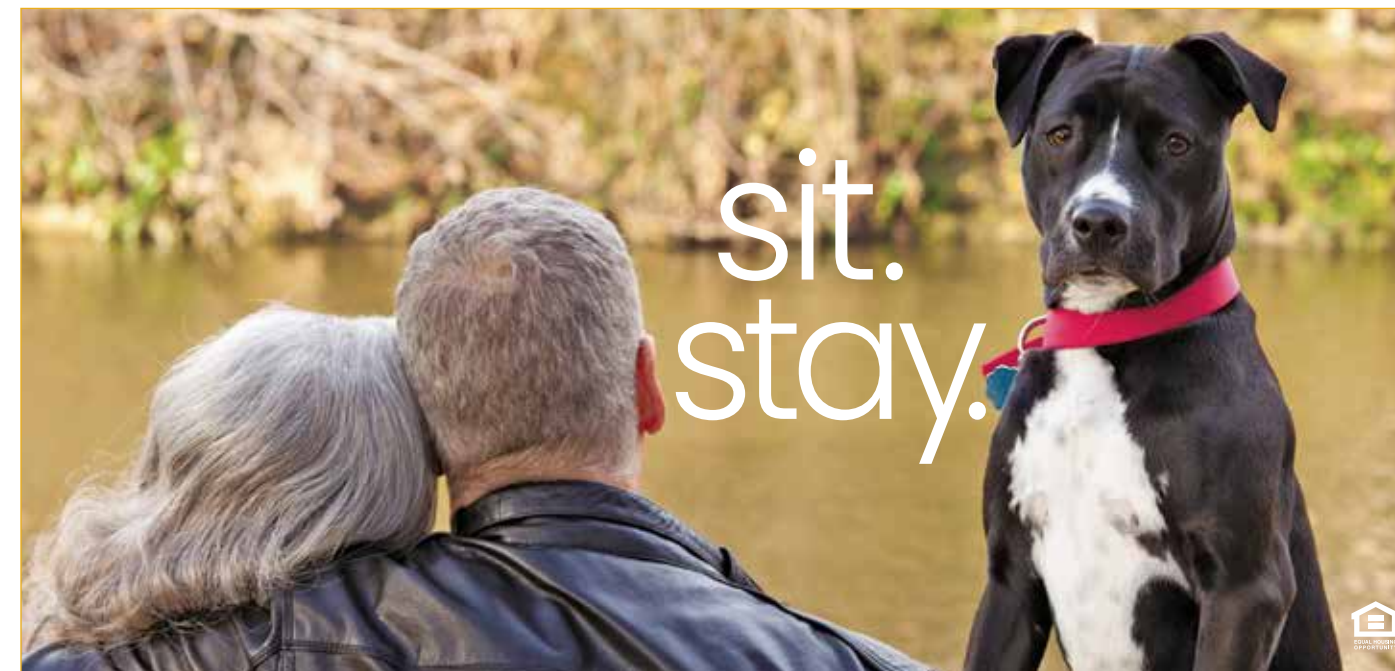
MARCH 14
The East Suffolk Gardens Civic League will meet at 4 p.m. at Suffolk Parks and Recreation, 138 S. 6th Street.

MARCH 15
"The Dallas Band " will perform from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. featuring Country/Oldies/ Gospel music at the Bethlehem Ruritan Club House, 140 Manning Rd. Suffolk, VA This event is open to the public there is no admission charge. Donations to the Band go to the tip jar. Please give generously.

Come early doors open at 5:30 p.m. BBQ, Hot Dogs, Deserts, Pop Corn, and Soft Drinks Also, 2 lb. containers of Hardison's BBQ will be available to purchase. For more information, call George Fowler 757-617-5955.

MARCH 16
Matilda Jr. The Musical will be performing at 2 p.m. at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts. Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$18 for under 15.

Participate in the St. Patrick's Day River Cleanup on March 16, 2024, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm - no registration is required! This inclusive land and water-based cleanup is open to individuals, families, and groups. Meet at Constant's Wharf Park & Marina (100 East Constance Rd., Suffolk, VA 23434), where we'll focus on cleaning the Nansemond River in Downtown Suffolk. If you plan to clean from the river, please bring your kayak or canoe. On-site, we provide cleanup equipment such as reflective vests, grabbers, gloves, and



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what to do

at Southside Baptist Church, 917 Carolina Road. A love offering will be received.

APRIL 16
CIVIL RIGHTS: Finding Your Voice will take place at 10:30 a.m. at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts, 110 Finney Ave.

WEDNESDAY
Dementia Conversations 10 - 11:30 a.m. located at the Suffolk Workforce Development Center 157 North Main Street Suite D (2nd Floor) Suffolk 757-514-7730 Suffolk Workforce Development Center

recognizes the importance of education and tools to help with these conditions. The Dementia Talk Series will bring together experts from the Alzheimer Association, caregivers, and community members to provide support, knowledge, and resources.

APRIL 27
Artrageous will perform at 2 p.m. at Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts, 110 Finney Ave.

The Annual Suffolk-Nansemond IWLA Teddy Bear Hunt will be held from 10

a.m. until 3 p.m. at 480 Kings Fork Road, Suffolk. The event is for children ages 3-10 years old. The cost is \$15 per family (covers parents and or guardians and 1 child), \$5 for each additional child. Lunch is included for all. The Teddy Bear Hunt will be from 10 a.m. until noon, followed by lunch. After lunch, participants can explore the park, try fishing in the pond, try their hand at archery or just relax outdoors. Limited space is available. RSVP to trimpey@hotmail.com or 757-449-4910.

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.

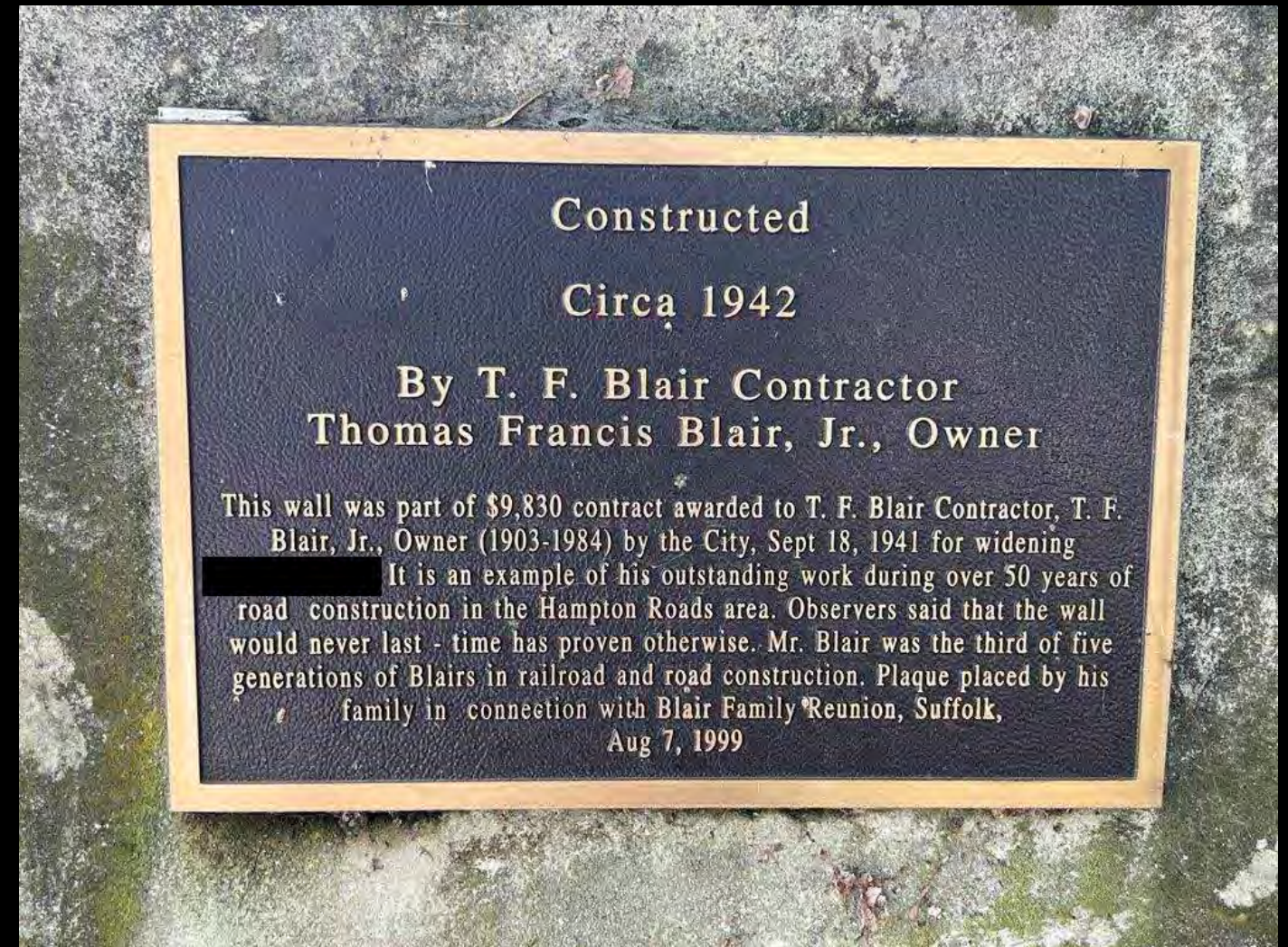
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Running with faith

Story by Ed Pugh
Submitted photos

In January 2024, Suffolk's Michaela Rose, now with the LSU track and field team, set the collegiate record in the 600-yard at the Corky Classic in Lubbock, Texas, beating a mark that stood for 41 years. Shortly after, she went 1:59.49 in her season-opening 800-meter performance at the David Hemery Valentine Invitational in Boston for the fastest season-opening time in collegiate history. These are just the latest in a young but already storied track career that includes an NCAA Division I championship, 6-time All-American honors, and a 2-time Southeastern Conference (SEC) champion.

Before breaking records and winning championships at LSU, Michaela was tearing up the competition in Hampton Roads.

Michaela, born in Hampton, moved to Suffolk with her family when she was 12 and took a nontraditional route to Division I stardom. Rose and her three siblings were home-schooled by their parents, Michael Sr. and Marcia Rose. Michaela had been running track for eight years, with her father coaching her.

"I was born in Hampton," Michaela said. "My family moved to Suffolk when I was around 12 and has lived there ever since. I've been running track since I was four."

Michael, who at the time was coaching at Stonebridge School in Chesapeake, says he would allow all his children to come to practice at that age, but they had to participate in workouts and train — "Papa is not here to babysit," Michael Sr. said.

Michaela said she is grateful for the homeschooling her parents provided, and above that, she is grateful for teaching her to follow the word of God.

"I'm grateful to God that he's called my parents to home-school," Michaela said. "My parents have home-schooled all four of my siblings ... It's just the calling that God gave my parents. God wanted my parents to focus on home training, you know, training us in the doctrines of Christ to follow after him and what he calls us to do so we can have him for ourselves and learn how to listen to God's voice in the things that we choose to do in life, and I feel like being home-schooled, I was able to focus on more of the subjects I would be studying in college."

Michaela also said the flexibility of homeschooling allowed her more time for personal training, which has aided her physical abilities.

"You have a little bit more flexibility because it's not like in the time constraints of being in a school building for seven hours," Michaela



Michaela Rose runs a relay during the Razorback Invitational



Michaela Rose rounds a turn during a recent race at Boston University

said. “I feel like I was able to do more personal training, like core work, you know, things like treatment. I was able to do meditative stretching, and that really advanced my physical abilities because I was able to focus on it more instead of like sitting in the building all day.”

Being home-schooled created a slight disadvantage in competing at regular meets because her father was coaching at the high school level. Michaela still had the ability to train with her peers, and when club meets came around, she could put her talent on display.

“Having my father still able to train me with high schoolers, I was still able to get that daily competition or daily work with my peers,” Michaela said. “And even though I couldn’t translate that regularly at track meets like at states or at those big meets, I was able to produce whenever clubs came, or club nationals came; that’s when I was at my peak because that’s all I have to focus on.”

One year, during a New Balance event, Michaela was labeled a state champion solely because of her times, even though she had never competed at a state championship. Her times set her apart from her competition. For example, in 2019, Michaela took home first place and broke a national record in the 15-16-year-old 800 meters, finishing with a time of 2:05:53, six seconds faster than the second-place finisher.

It was well before her teenage years that Michael Sr. knew Michaela had a special determination and drive to win and not be outworked by anyone.

“He [Michael Jr.] was two years older than she is, Michael Sr. recalls. “I remember one Saturday morning, I took them to Mt. Trashmore because I usually have my youth practice at Mt. Trashmore on Saturday mornings ... there was a three-and-a-quarter mile loop. She ran it and beat him ... From then on, I realized she’s determined. She don’t like to lose when she sets her mind to do stuff.”

Running track has always been fun for Michaela and her siblings, who, according to Michael Sr., spent their free time “playing track” when they were outside and not training.

“When I come home from work, they’re playing track,” he recalls. “And they keep score, I mean times and all that stuff. So even though they were playing on the off days, people could call it practice, but that was play to them.”

Keeping track fun is something Michaela

wants every aspiring track athlete to realize the importance of.

“I really think it’s very important that you keep track and field fun,” she said. “The moment it stops getting fun, that’s when you can start losing your edge because it’s a job or it’s I want to win, and if I don’t win, it’s no longer fun, so just finding ways to keep it fun. Just go back to the roots of just having the wind in your hair or just going as hard as you can and just feeling exhausted at the end but feeling that dopamine that you’ve accomplished something, just have fun with it.”

While Michaela continues the winning ways she grew accustomed to under the tutelage of her father, both Michaela and Michael say it is hard for him to watch her race live, but not because of his coaching obligations — but because he says it is nerve-wracking not coaching her and not knowing what the game plan is, but one thing is certain, he knows Michaela is doing what she is supposed to do

in preparation, but the unknown creates a pit in Michael Sr.’s stomach that keeps him from watching live or with anyone else.

“When I have a game plan, I know, from conception to finish, if you do everything to conception and know what the product is going to be on the track,” he said.

Faith is the driving force behind everything in Michaela’s life; without it, she is unsure if she could have accomplished all she has up to this point. With the encouragement of the Word of God from her family and friends, Michaela continues to step to the line and outperform her competitors on and off the track.

“I’m really grateful to my parents for answering the calling that the Lord had for them because I really feel like without it, I wouldn’t have the general strength, faith basis that I have,” Michaela said. “I feel like Jesus has been part of me and dwelling with me my entire life. I cannot remember a time with me that I didn’t know that Jesus always loved me.”

TAKING A TRIP?
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6-year-old Joshua Buchheit receives a gift basket during his ice cream social made possible by Chartway Credit Union and Make-A-Wish.

What dreams are made of, 6-year-old Suffolk boy granted a wish of a lifetime

Story and photos by James W. Robinson

With the help of Chartway Credit Union and Make-A-Wish, 6-year-old Joshua Buchheit of Suffolk was able to have an ice cream social and receive a trip with his family to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Buchheit had hydronephrosis when he was around 20 weeks in utero, resulting in his kidneys shutting down and being in end-stage renal failure. Joshua's father, Ryan Buchheit was able to

donate his kidney to his son when he was 18 months old, with both healing afterwards. Now, Joshua is swimming, lively and living his best life. Jennifer Buchheit talked about looking at the good times now and how it reminds her and Ryan of where they used to be. "So sometimes it can actually be really traumatizing because the good things remind you of the terrible things that end up happen-

ing, and it's in a good way because those are the good things that you didn't process while it was going on," Jennifer said. "And I think that it's very healthy and important to admit 'Oh, he was two days from dying.' You don't do that while it's happening, and so it's really important that we realize how sick he was, and that again makes us appreciate how healthy he is..."



Joshua Buchheit (right) looks on as Sheri Lambert, president and CEO of Make-A-Wish Greater Virginia, reads him the wish he was granted.

Jennifer also said watching Joshua has given her a different perspective when seeing other kids in different difficult situations. "I think too when you're in a hospital and he's strapped to a bed, under paralysis... and he's not the sickest kid in the hospital, there is a different perspective. You just have a different perspective on pretty much everything," she said. "And so we're not really like 'Everything's positive! Look to the right side,' people, but we also are like, when you know it could be worse, that almost makes it a little bit like, 'we have not hit rock bottom yet.'"

She continued. "There are people that don't leave the hospital with their kid, and so that part was really easy to acknowledge and I am thankful for that every day," Jennifer said. Chartway Promise Foundation President Christine Wilson talked about how CPF and the Make-A-Wish Greater Virginia work to support medically fragile children and their families. On how they're able to give back, Wilson says they give back through fundraising and donations.

"We hold a variety of fundraisers, so the public is welcome to join in on those fundraisers and of course, make a donation. We also have some wonderful corporate partners that support us in raising our funds," Wilson said. "We work with different organizations like Make-A-Wish, Toby's Dream, Hooked on Hope and of course, CHKD, and where they need help in programming and supporting these families, we're there to provide the funds to make the magic happen."

Joshua's family says the next big goal for him is eating as he is currently not able to eat solid foods, having to eat through a tube. Despite this, they are looking forward to the trip to Disney World. On who he wants to see the most?

"Mickey," Joshua said. "And I want to go see Goofy and Donald Duck!"

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Coach Beth Brant, Area 29 Co-Area Coordinator Pat Smith and Swim Coach Michael Clark help the Area 29 athletes reach their potential.

Breaking through limitations: Area 29 Special Olympics defy the odds

“Let Me Win, But If I Can Not Win, Let Me Be Brave In The Attempt” – this is the athlete oath of Suffolk’s Special Olympics, which helps local children and adults with intellectual disabilities reach their potential.

Special Olympics Area 29 continues their work of giving opportunities to individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, develop social skills and increase their self-esteem while competing in an Olympic-style sports program. Along with

these benefits, the overall goal is to help bring these individuals into the larger society to be respected, accepted and become productive citizens. During the athletes’ swim training at Suffolk Family YMCA, Area 29 Area Coordinator Saul Godinez talked about how the program benefits the athletes’ self-esteem and worth.

“...Where some of them were maybe shy or introverted, guess what? They’re here with their friends. They come out here to practice

and they’re going to visit with their friends. Some of them were last night doing another activity, ‘Hope and Happiness,’ some of them were at ‘Night to Shine.’ There’s so many activities and it’s their friends that they’re coming to see,” Godinez said.

Godinez also emphasized that the friendly competition brings out the “universal” competitive spirit that the athletes have when going for gold. Godinez reflected how his son and fellow athlete Jesus’ Godinez benefited

from the program.

“My son when he was in third grade or fourth, he was just a shy little boy. You get him out there? I mean, he will run you and he’ll take over. He’ll take charge of the group,” he said. “It just does so much for all the kids, and I think that’s important and most people in the communities don’t get the opportunity to see it.”

Godinez became emotional when looking back on his son’s journey to where he is now. Area 29 Co-Area Coordinator Pat Smith reflected on seeing Jesus’ evolve with the Special Olympics, even noting her own son Ethan.

“He did karaoke at the ‘Night to Shine’ the other night. When we got him, he would hardly talk to you. When you watch them and they come together, they learn each other,” Smith said. “Ethan and Jordan went to school together, so they knew each other, but now when you come here and you watch them – they’re on the side and one other is racing – they’re hollering for whoever is racing. They are the ones encouraging them... they are the ones that are doing that for each other.”

Originally, Suffolk only had Special Olympics opportunities for students at Lakeland High School. Swim Coach Michael Clark reflected how he and his wife Amy set out to start a community-based Special Olympics program in the city back in 2003. Clark says that with much help, the program got off the ground starting with swimming and soon expanding into soccer, volleyball, golf and more.

“So we kind of took off and everything just kind of snowballed and grew and grew and grew,” Clark said. “We used to get athletes from Zuni Presbyterian Home, they would come. That kind of hurt our numbers once they closed that facility down, but so far [we’ve] still been going strong.”

Clark also talked about both the competition and training process for the swim team.

“They will be scored on individual swimming events. Freestyle breaststroke, backstroke, butterfly, IMs [Individual Medley], relays, and they’re just like a normal swim meet, and how they place is the ribbons that they get,” he said. “They’ll swim every Sunday, so they’re practicing getting in shape. The

skill levels are from beginner swimming and then to pretty much advanced swimming, but they’ll do timing for them to get them placed. So they’re swimming against athletes of their own ability.”

Smith says that the athletes have a local swim meet with Dare County Special Olympics in March in Outer Banks, North Carolina with a Regional swim meet in April at Old Dominion University. Area 29 will also host a local swim meet on the second Saturday in May and will participate in the State Games held in Richmond in June. The unified bowling team also will have their Nationals game in Las Vegas at the end of February.

Currently with approximately 40 athletes, Area 29 offers Spring and Summer sports of swimming, tennis and singles bowling and in the Fall, golf and team bowling. Likewise, 20 Suffolk volunteers serve their time to the group and personally finance incidentals such as uniforms, equipment, lodging, meals and more to make these opportunities happen for the athletes. Smith talked about their fundraising efforts.



Area 29’s athletes train for their upcoming swim meets with Coach Beth Brant on Sunday, Feb. 11 at Suffolk YMCA. Photo by James W. Robinson/Suffolk News-Herald

“The biggest one we have is the Polar Plunge, we just did that last weekend. We get a percentage back of everything that we raised for the area. So that goes a good ways in being able to take [the athletes] to State,” Smith said. “When we go to State level games we have to pay for hotels, meals, registration, all of that is in the one delegation charge. But we want to take as many of them as we can. So that’s why we fundraise all year long.”

Both Godinez and Smith emphasized the importance of volunteers to help continue their work for the athletes.

“Come on and help out if you would like. It really takes a little bit of a level of commitment, and I would challenge people to do that. Again, the benefit that you get back is like a 100 fold. It’s pretty amazing.”

Smith agreed, noting a need for volunteers for their swim meets.

“We need timers, we need runners, we need staging people. We’re always looking for volunteers to help,” Smith said.

For more information, go to www.specialolympicsva.org



One of Area 29’s stars, Athlete Spencer Holt, competes in a tennis match during the 2023 Special Olympics Summer Games in Richmond, Virginia.

Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts Imagine Gala



Harry and Lisa Cross with Selena during the Tzvi Kipnis during the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts Imagine Gala on Feb. 24, 2024



Imagine Gala co-sponsors Cristin Pond and Jeremy Branch pose for a photo



Dr. Joleen Neighbours pose for a photo with some friends during the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts Imagine Gala on Feb. 24, 2024.



Louis and Mary Haddad, with Selena and Tzvi Kipnis, stop for a photo during the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts Imagine Gala on Feb. 24, 2024



Penny Birdsong, Christi Johnson and Kristy Edwards at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts Imagine Gala on Feb. 24, 2024



Lisa Morrison spins a little pottery.

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Nansemond-Suffolk Academy admits qualified students without regard to race, color, ethnic background, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, handicapped status or religion.

Last edition's Where Am I?

Lee Houser was one of two people who correctly identified the Where Am I in the Jan/Feb edition. The statue of Jesus carrying the cross can be found in Meadowbrook cemetery on Shoulders Hill Road. Find this month's challenge on page 11.



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EGGSTRAVAGANZA
MARCH 23

EGG HUNT, PETTING ZOO, CRAFT, MUSIC, FOOD TRUCKS, PETER COTTONTAIL & MORE

BENNETT'S CREEK PARK

3000 Bennetts Creek Park Rd.
11 A.M. - 2 P.M.
All Ages Welcome

Why did the chick jump up & down?
He was egg-cited!




Historic Garden Week

Saturday, April 20, 2024 | 10am - 5pm

A HIDDEN OASIS
Homes & Secret Gardens of Riverview

SUFFOLK TOUR
VaGardenWeek.org



Purchase Tickets

A botanical delight, Riverview is situated on a peninsula flanked by two waterways, Lake Meade and the Nansemond River. Featuring custom homes built in a variety of architectural styles during the early to mid-1900s, this picturesque neighborhood is conveniently located close to historic downtown Suffolk. Winding brick walkways lead to charming porches and established gardens filled with blooming camellias, hydrangeas, and colorful perennials. Riverview residents invite visitors to soak in the timeless charm by experiencing six well-preserved homes with manicured landscapes and well-loved gardens.

Hosted by: Nansemond River, Franklin and Elizabeth River Garden Clubs

scrapbook



CHURCH: Suffolk Christian Church was started on the eve of the Civil War with its first building constructed in 1860. This church and others of the same denomination were started by the Rev. William B. Wellons, a staunch Confederate who became a Confederate army chaplain. The building shown here was built in 1890s and replaced the original one. In the 1920s this facade was altered and significant additions were made.

- COURTESY OF "SUFFOLK IN VINTAGE POSTCARDS," SUFFOLK-NANSEMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Opportunities for a new home are in bloom!



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