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# Virginia Beach Sun

Vol. 1 No. 11, January 3, 2013

Virginia Beach's Hometown Newspaper

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In The *Sunshine*: Pastor Mike Lucas

## First enjoyment, then passion!

Bayside Church of Christ Pastor Mike Lucas leads a non-denominational congregation of 300-plus members, teaching life lessons from long ago, while cultivating friendships for the future.

By Nathan Denny  
Sun Correspondent

The extravagant vaulted ceiling is made of a dark, lacquered wood.

Beautiful stained glass, anchored in a thick sandstone, adorns the side walls, drawing the eye immediately to the baptistery straight ahead.

It's quiet now, but would not be so were it Sunday morning, as this is the auditorium where Mike Lucas, pastor of the Bayside Church of Christ, preaches to a congregation of more than 300 members.

"The churches of Christ are non-denominational and

have a history back to the Bible," said Lucas. "We want to do things the way they did in the first century and make it work for the 21st century."

*"Seeing people find answers for their problems and finding the purpose for which they were created, that's what drives a preacher."*

Lucas, who has been preaching for the Bayside congregation for almost 13 years, says his conviction to be

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(Sun Photo by Nathan Denny)

Pastor Mike Lucas.

## The 'Year' in Review

The Virginia Beach Sun this issue looks back over some of the city's news events of the last six months of 2012, starting back on June 7, when the community newspaper began publishing again after a more than 10-year hiatus. Since its return, some 25,000 to 30,000 copies of the free publication have thus far been distributed citywide to the Resort City's locals, visitors and business owners, many of whom still carry fond memories of hand-delivering, and reading, what was once, Virginia Beach's (and Princess Anne County's) beloved weekly newspaper for some 75 years. Please enjoy the following photos and excerpts from news stories appearing over the Sun's last 10 issues:

June 7, 2012

### Beach's park system is 7<sup>th</sup> among largest U.S. cities

Virginia Beach's system of 13 public parks has been named one of the top 10 systems in the country, earning the city four "park benches," based on the "ParkScore" rating system.

According to figures recently released by the non-profit group, Trust for Public Land, Virginia Beach's system ranked 7th overall, when compared to other systems in the nation's 40 largest cities.

ParkScore rates municipal park systems on a scale of zero to five "park benches." It is a comprehensive park-rating-system that's designed to help local communities identify where new parks are most needed; and which park improvements have the greatest impact on the local citizenry.

June 28, 2012

### Class of 2012: \$32.7 million in scholarships

The class of 2012 has been awarded an amazing \$32,788,893 in scholarships, as reported by graduating seniors to high school guidance offices. It is the highest amount ever awarded to Virginia Beach City Public Schools' graduating seniors.

This amount represents only scholarships that were accepted by the graduates, according to Joe Burnsworth, assistant superintendent in the school division's Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

July 19, 2012

### Atlantic Avenue getting new look, improvements

By a 9-2 vote, Virginia Beach City Council has approved an oceanfront form-based code, which is a new type of zoning for the resort area.

This new approach to regulating commercial and residential development focuses more on the form of the buildings and their relationship to the street; and less on a strict separation of land uses.

The result is a more integrated development pattern, with a mixture of uses, pedestrian-friendly streets



Enjoying Bayville Farms Park's walking path, left to right, are: Todd Ricks, a contractor; Virginia Beach native and Bayville Park resident; his wife, Isabelle; Amy Butcher, a Bayville Park resident and homemaker; and Eli, 9, who is home-schooled. Todd and Amy are Virginia Beach natives and Cox High School graduates.

"If we calculated everything that was offered to students in terms of scholarships to colleges and universities they ultimately chose not to attend, or financial aid such as loans and grants, the figure would be as much as 50 percent higher."

Students from all 11 of the city's comprehensive high schools are represented in the scholarship amounts, which includes scholarship awards from in-state and out-of-state educational institutions.

and more active store fronts.

City officials have worked for nearly three years on the plan, consulting all-the-while with property and business owners, who called for more tree-lined sidewalks, decorative brick buildings and more attractive store fronts, with condos and apartments upstairs.

As part of achieving a more urban oceanfront envi

Please see The, Page 2

## City thanks governor for continued funding of Oceana partnership

By Robert Matthias

Virginia Beach city leaders thanked Governor Bob McDonnell recently for continuing to fund the city-state partnership that continues the response to encroachment and safety issues around Naval Air Station Oceana. McDonnell recently included \$7.5 million in his FY14 budget amendments to help buy incompatible homes, businesses and properties around the master jet base.

"Seven years ago, we partnered with the commonwealth and promised to do whatever it takes to save Oceana," said Mayor William D. Sessoms, Jr. "We take this promise very seriously. We are grateful to Governor McDonnell, the General Assembly and Terrie Suit, the state Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security, for maintaining this vital partnership. It means so much to our military men and women, to the City of Virginia Beach and the nation."

Each year since 2007, the city and state have dedicated \$7.5 million each – a total of \$15 million annually – to buy properties around the master jet base from willing sellers. This prevents the development of new homes and businesses that are incompatible with the jet base's mission, and rolls back existing incompatible developments. The city and state began this program in response to a 2005 recommendation from the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission to move the master jet base from Virginia Beach.

Governor McDonnell said, "The \$7.5 million in funding for the Oceana partnership is a continuation of sound policy ensuring that the area around Naval Air Station Oceana is safe, the military training mission is enhanced and the economic and cultural benefits of the base remain in the Commonwealth for years to come. The memory of the 2007 Easter plane crash near the installation should remind us that this partnership is essential to protecting the public's safety. Additionally, the base represents a significant source of jobs and economic activity for the region. It is critical that it remain in Virginia."

Secretary Suit added: "I am pleased that the governor continues to support the important contributions of Naval Air Station Oceana. The proposed amendments reinforce

To date, the city and state have bought 1,879 acres around Oceana and have eliminated 52 incompatible businesses and 550 homes and potential homes near the base.

Virginia's commitment to our military and to this installation while enhancing the safety of the area around the base as a whole. The governor's budget ensures that the critical partnership with the City of Virginia Beach and the Department of Defense continues. Virginia as a whole enjoys the benefits of Naval Air Station Oceana and the precious freedom protected by all who serve there." To date, the city and state have bought 1,879 acres around Oceana and have eliminated 52 incompatible businesses and 550 homes and potential homes near the base.

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The new code will allow oceanfront businesses to develop designs that are more compatible with the environment and overall more aesthetically-pleasing.

## The 'Year' in Review

Continued from Page 1

ronment, council agreed to develop a new parking and funding strategy, designed to meet the needs of employees, employees, residents and visitors.

August 9, 2012



## City's bond with Japan marks 20th anniversary

200 attend Red Wing Park's building dedication; street renamed Sakura Lane; cherry trees added.

August 30, 2012

## In the Sunlight: Rosemary Hinds, co-owner, Heritage Bake Shoppe



Standing along with Heritage Bake Shoppe owner Rosemary Hinds, on the left, is co-owner Susan Kauffman. In front of them are their children, left to right: Elizabeth Hinds and Felicity Kauffman.

September 20, 2012



The proposed new tower

## Town Center looking for its third business tower

14-story office tower, \$89 million mixed-use development planned for city's central business district.

October 11, 2012



## Douglas gets 'key' to city

Proclaiming Sept. 28 as "Gabrielle Douglas Day" in Virginia Beach, Mayor Will Sessoms recently presented Douglas with the "key" to the city. On hand for the presentation, left to right: Virginia Delegate Algie Howell, Gabrielle Douglas, Lauren Poythress and Mayor Sessoms.

## 2013 Citywide Teacher of the Year

Angela German, Eighth Grade English Teacher, Plaza Middle School



Angela German

November 1, 2012



## City preserves Pleasure House Point's 118 acres for generations to come

Partners with other groups working together to protect Virginia Beach's natural areas.

November 22, 2012

## Va. Supreme Court OKs Cape Henry Beach access

City prevails on lawsuits designed to protect public access along two-mile stretch of beach from Lesner Bridge to First Landing State Park.

December 13, 2012



Brandon Vera, on the left, being congratulated.

## Regent University, Hispanic Leadership Forum hold concert

Featuring music by Sergio Grillo, the special holiday event attracted 130 attendees.

Happy New Year!

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*In The Sunshine: Pastor Mike Lucas*

## First enjoyment, then passion!

Bayside Church of Christ Pastor Mike Lucas leads a non-denominational congregation of 300-plus members, teaching life lessons from long ago, while cultivating friendships for the future.

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come a minister was a gradual one, beginning during his childhood in rural West Virginia.

The son of a coal miner, Lucas grew up with his mother and father, two brothers and sister in a small town called Shinnston, WV. When Lucas was still a child, his mother became a Christian and soon his father did, as well.

“They immersed themselves in the Christian life, so I had that modeled for me growing up,” Lucas said, of his parents. “They were also committed to a Christian education.”

Lucas decided to attend Ohio Valley College, now a university, in Parkersburg, WV, a school affiliated with the Churches of Christ. After receiving a two-year degree from OVC, Lucas continued his education at Oklahoma Christian University in Edmond, OK, where he graduated with a B.A. in Bible.

His time at Christian colleges allowed him to expand and grow his faith, and was an important step in his journey towards ministry.

“This is where I developed a great enjoyment for ministry, and that turned into a passion for it,” he said.

This passion turned into Lucas’s life work and he has been preaching and teaching at several churches over the past 35 years. Two churches in West Virginia and one in Ohio were home churches to Lucas and his family before they decided to make Bayside Church of Christ their home congregation and moved to the Great Bridge area of Chesapeake in 2000. He lives there with his wife Kim and their three children, Brandon, Tressa, and Autumn.

A brick building with a hexagonal stained glass window trademarking its façade, the Bayside Church of Christ was constructed in 1996, after the congregation at the Central Church of Christ in Norfolk decided to relocate to a property it owned on Shell Road in Bayside.

The congregation sold its building in Norfolk, began holding services at Shelton Park Elementary School while the new building was being constructed, and moved into the completed Bayside Church of Christ in June 1997.

Working with the diverse, dynamic congregation at Bayside, said Lucas, has been a joy.

“This body places such a high value on relationships,” he said. “People are encouraged to engage in deep friendships - and it goes well beyond what we do on Sunday mornings. It is a living, moving, breathing body of believers.”

Bayside is a busy place with a long list of ministries and programs for its members, guests and the surrounding community. Members actively participate in growth groups, which are smaller, sub-groupings of the congregation that meet in members’ homes on Sunday nights. Bayside has an active youth group, as well as a young adult group for people in their 20s.

The church also sponsors missionaries in Nigeria and China and puts on a semi-annual “free market” for the community. And these are just a few of the many efforts that keep Lucas busy aside from his Sunday morning sermons. In addition to preaching, Lucas has been invited to teach and speak at various seminars and conferences in 16 different states across the country. Lucas enjoys traveling and the experience of speaking in front of so many different groups, but says he does not do that

as much anymore.

“That slowed down about when my hair started changing color,” Lucas laughs, pointing to his white hair.

The experience of living in Chesapeake and working in Virginia Beach has given Lucas a great appreciation for each city’s uniqueness.

“For me, having grown up in the country, living in a larger metropolitan area has been a great experience that I have thoroughly enjoyed,” he said. “There is a rich history here, there is community pride in our military, and there is such natural beauty in the coasts and waterways here.”

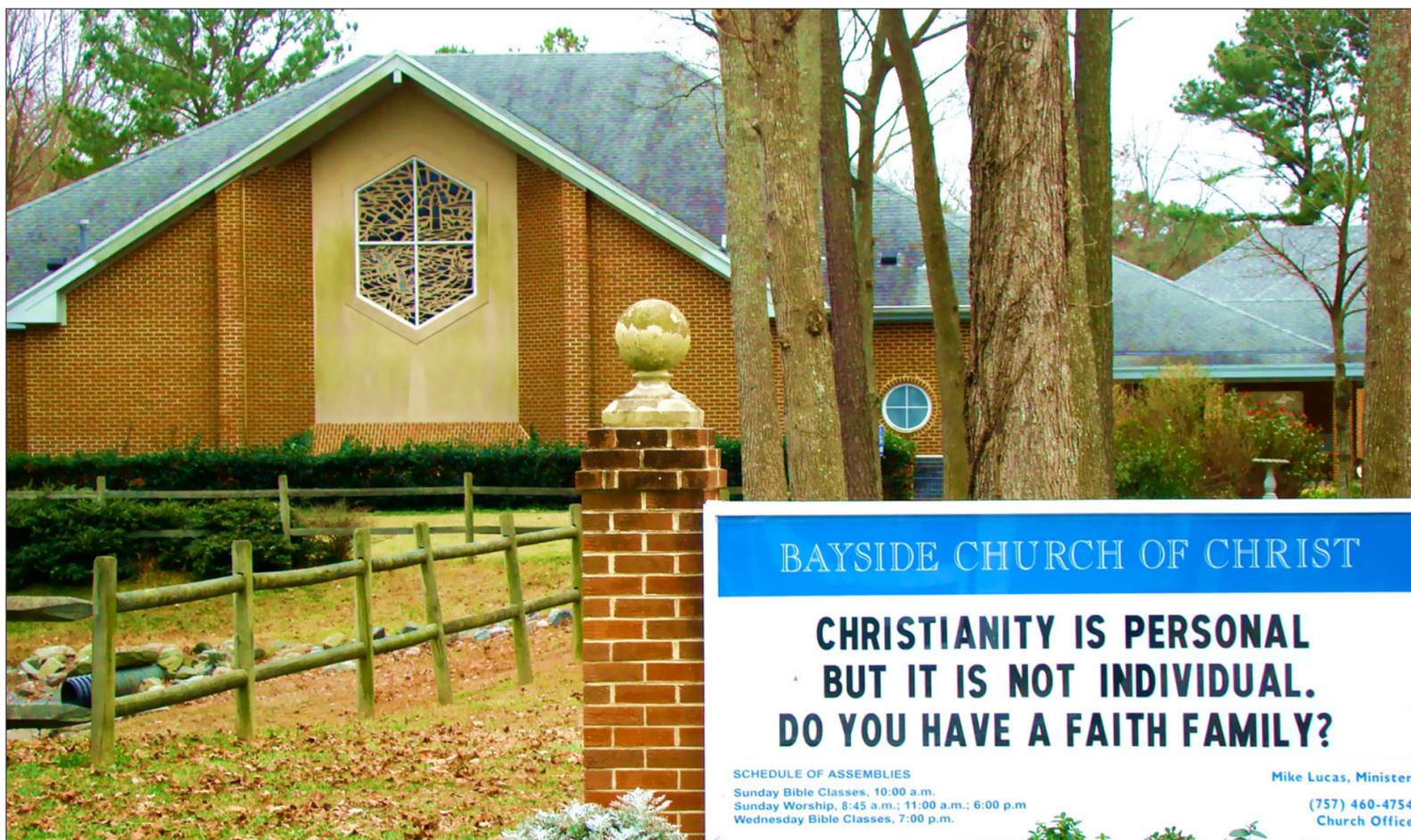
Living in the Hampton Roads area seems to have rubbed off on him as well. An avid West Virginia Mountaineers football fan, Lucas admits that since coming to the area, he has begun following Virginia Tech football more and more—rivalry aside.

Lucas is looking forward to entering his 13th year with Bayside; and is currently enrolled in the graduate program at the Regent University School of Divinity, where he has three semesters to go. He is motivated to grow personally and he is excited to see the Bayside congregation continue to grow, as well. His passion for preaching is as strong as ever.

“I really enjoy making the connection between past and present,” said Lucas, 53. “Seeing people find answers for their problems and finding the purpose for which they were created, that’s what drives a preacher.”

Bayside Church of Christ, 5025 Shell Road, can be reached at 757-460-4754; info@baysidecoc.org.

*Nathan Denny, 757-748-2898; njdenny@vt.edu.*



# Virginia Beach Sun

Virginia Beach's Hometown Newspaper

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With a limited staff, the Virginia Beach Sun depends on its friends in the community to contribute articles and photos – such as those related to church groups, community groups, personal, sports, arts, entertainment, education and business - for city-wide publication as a free public service. The Sun welcome news from any corner of the city; please email it to [thevirginiabeachsun@gmail.com](mailto:thevirginiabeachsun@gmail.com), along with "who, what, when, where and why" – and a contact person's complete name and daytime phone number.

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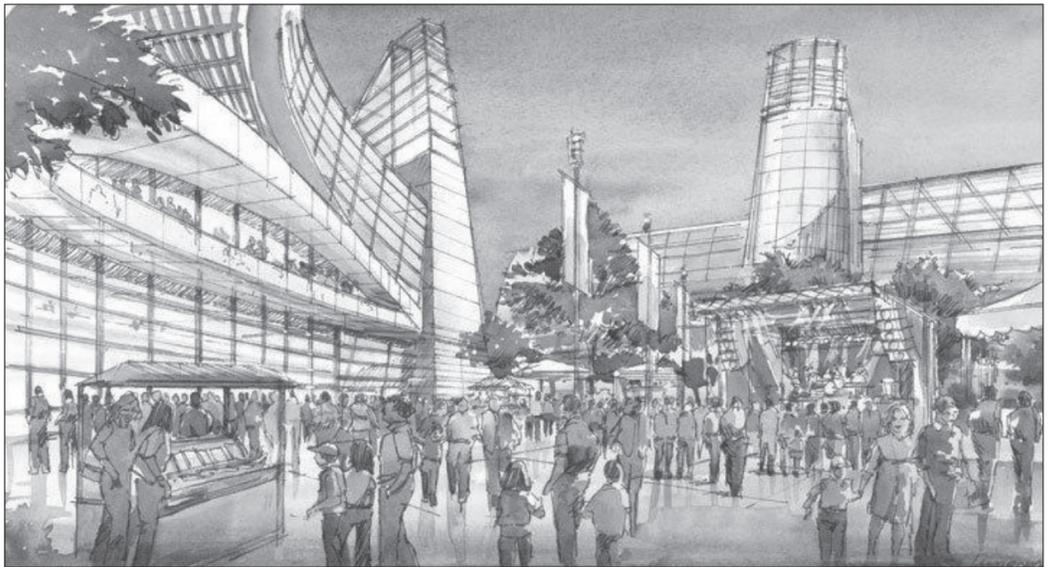
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Artist rendering of the proposed arena.

## Share your thoughts on the proposed arena – online

The City Council wants to hear from you

By Marc Davis

Virginia Beach is exploring a possible 18,500-seat arena at the Oceanfront, to host large sports events, concerts and conferences. Negotiations are ongoing and there is no deal yet. The city also is talking with a major-league sports team that may move to the arena.

Meanwhile, we want to hear from you. We have created a special online forum – called Virtual Town Hall at [www.VBgov.com/virtualltownhall](http://www.VBgov.com/virtualltownhall) – for citizens to discuss the project and answer two simple questions:

What intrigues you about the possibility of having a sports and entertainment venue in Virginia Beach?

What concerns do you have about the arena project?

Comcast-Spectacor, one of the country's biggest sports and entertainment companies, would run the arena for 25 years, paying rent to the city and all operating expenses, including any losses. Live Nation, the largest producer and promoter of live music events in the world, would book events.

The arena would be built across from the Convention Center, funded by the city, state and Comcast-Spectacor. It would cost \$300 million, plus \$46 million for financing. Comcast would contribute \$35 million and the city's \$161 million. The city has asked the state for \$150 million. The city's share would be paid for by people who use and benefit from the arena, not by taxes on real estate and personal property. There might also be \$80 million in team relocation costs.

Why an arena? In all of Virginia, there is no large, modern arena outside of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. Norfolk, Hampton and Richmond have older, smaller arenas. None can hold mega-concerts and very large sporting events and conferences. The City Council is committed to the project only if arena income funds all of the city's debt and increases existing revenues to the city.

For more information about the project, visit [www.VBgov.com/arena](http://www.VBgov.com/arena)

Marc Davis, (757) 385-4308, [maadavis@vb.gov](mailto:maadavis@vb.gov)

## Sixth annual African-American male summit slated for January

By Yolanda Jones-Howell

For the sixth consecutive year, Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VB-CPS) will host a summit to motivate African-American male students on their journey toward academic and personal success. Entitled Becoming a Drum Major for Change: Transforming Knowledge into Action, the event will be held at Landstown High School, Saturday, Jan. 12 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will feature presentations by dynamic keynote speakers and a variety of powerful workshops for students in grades nine through 12.

The summit is traditionally held around the birthday of the late civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to commemorate his life and

encourage African-American male students to follow in his footsteps of embracing a life of purpose by serving other people and communities.

"Virginia Beach City Public Schools is again proud to offer to its African-American male students this priceless opportunity to receive a wealth of information that can literally transform their lives into an example of excellence," said Dr. Esther Monclova-Johnson, director of the Office of Equity Affairs for the school division. "School administrators have no doubt that the summit has played a role in the narrowing of the achievement gap. Young men who have attended prior summits have experienced a change in their mindset and direction of their lives after attending the assemblies and break-out sessions where speakers and facilitators share data, thoughts and ideas. We encourage students to attend the summit to learn how they can design their lives and control their destinies."

Six years ago, Tallwood High School planned and hosted the first summit in response to the Virginia Beach School

Board's goal of improving the academic performance of African-American male students that lagged behind their fellow students in other demographic groups. The objective to close the achievement gap for African-American males is included in the school division's strategic plan Compass to 2015.

This year's summit will open with a general assembly featuring keynote speaker Marlon Smith, founder of Success by Choice, a nationally-known leadership consultation firm. Smith speaks at motivational conferences and other events primarily geared to secondary school students to help them find their purpose in life.

Smith has worked for two Fortune 500 companies, was featured in *Essence* magazine as one of the nation's top motivational speakers, has been a contributing author to the International best-seller "Chicken Soup for the Soul" and has contributed to motivational leader Tony Robbins' Global Youth Leadership Summit for 12 consecutive years.

Break-out sessions will be facilitated by educators, guidance counsel-

ors and other professionals who volunteer their time to discuss such topics as goal setting, how to succeed in high school, college preparation, the importance of enrolling in challenging courses and other topics. It will also present a Parents Institute with a collection of workshops on various topics designed to engage parents and guardians in their children's quest for educational and personal achievement.

Don Roberts, an award-winning reporter, news anchor for WAVY-TV 10, and author, will close the event According to the WAVY-TV 10 website, Roberts is WAVY-TV 10's "Marathon Man." He co-hosts nearly six hours of news a day, first as anchor of the number-1 rated morning newscast in Hampton Roads: WAVY News 10 Today and WAVY News 10 MIDDAY.

The summit is presented in part from school division and corporate funding. For more information about the event, contact Monclova-Johnson at 757.263.6967.

Yolanda Jones-Howell, fax 757.263.1010, [yolanda.jones-howell@vbschools.com](mailto:yolanda.jones-howell@vbschools.com)



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Red Barn Food Store - 2001 Indian River Road

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Virginia Beach City Hall - Front Reception Desk

**Bayside**

Jenro's Diner - 1085 Independence Boulevard

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## Mayor's committee for persons with disabilities opens annual award nominations

By Barry Shockley

The Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities is seeking nominations from the community for its 2012 annual awards program. The awards recognize individuals, businesses and service organizations that have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to improving and enriching the lives of the citizens of Virginia Beach who have disabilities. Award recipients will be honored at the Committee's February 21, 2013 meeting. The deadline for submission of nominations is January 10, 2013.

The award nomination form can be found and completed online at <http://www.vbgov.com/accessibility-award-nomination>. People who do not have access to the Internet can use a computer at any Virginia Beach Public Library. Computers at the Bayside, Central, and Princess Anne Area Libraries have assistive devices to make information accessible for persons with impaired vision.

A printed application can be obtained at any City of Virginia Beach Public Library. If you have questions, call 757-461-8007. The completed application

can be e-mailed to the ADA Coordinator at [adacoordinator@vbgov.com](mailto:adacoordinator@vbgov.com) or mailed to the Office of the Mayor, Municipal Center, Building One, 2401 Courthouse Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-9000.

The awards ceremony will be held on February 21, 2013, at 3 p.m. at the Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library, 4100 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452. The award recipients are chosen from nominations from the community

*The awards recognize individuals, businesses and service organizations that have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to improving and enriching the lives of the citizens of Virginia Beach who have disabilities.*

for individuals and groups that have impacted the lives of Virginia Beach citizens with disabilities in a positive manner. Each recipient exemplifies the best of the Beach and has made significant contributions in time and resources to ensure that people with disabilities have full integration in the community in which they live.

Barry Shockley, (757) 385-8558

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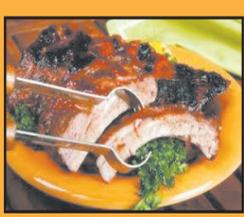
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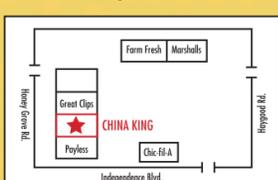
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# Virginia Beach Sun Photo Gallery

*Through the lens of Gabriel Vargas*



Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, where waterfowl often take to the air.

*My name is Gabriel Vargas, I am 27 years old, I was born in Jinotega, Nicaragua in Central America, but grew up in Washington DC. I lived in DC for most of my life until moving here about a year-and-a-half ago. I originally went to school for Business Administration and I am a self-taught photographer.*



*My interest in photography comes from trying to document social issues, one of my earliest recollections of utilizing a camera for that purpose was going out and photographing an IMF protest in DC around the age of 15. I enjoyed the feeling of being in the midst of things unfolding before my eyes and having the chance to capture those things as they were happening.*

*I also have an attraction to want to document the homeless wherever I go, whether it be in NY City or Downtown Managua, I believe these people should have a voice and an ongoing project that I have and I believe will continue for the duration of my life is getting to know at least a small part of that person's story and be able to put that behind their photograph. I have traveled to several parts of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico and also within the US and I am progressively adding on to that list.*

*I am not limited to what I shoot as i am just as comfortable shooting in controlled lighting or out in the world and creativity is the rule and I am constantly pushing myself to try new things.*

*I can be reached at 757 305 3944, or visit my website [GabrielVargasPhotography.com](http://GabrielVargasPhotography.com)*



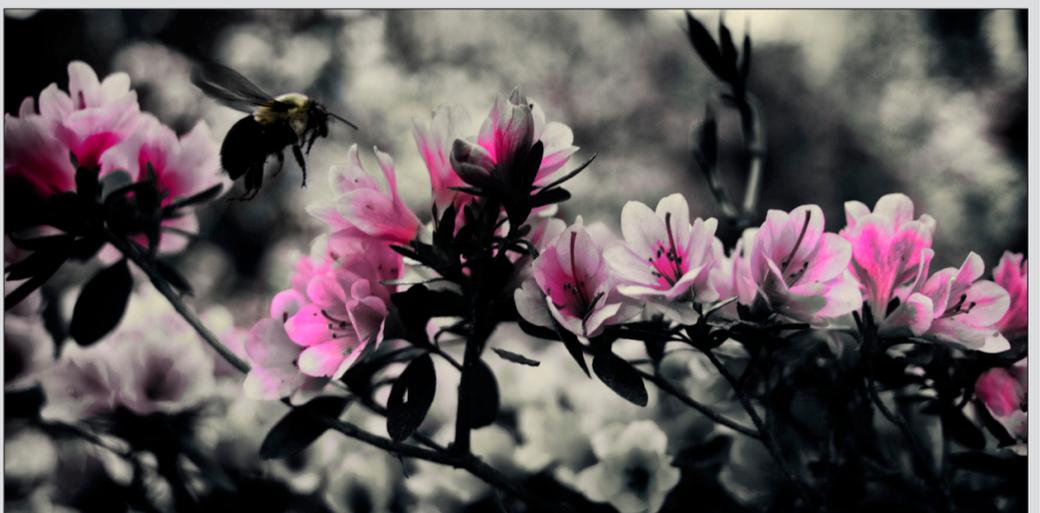
2012, Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C., originally from New Jersey, "Ron" has been homeless for 17 years.



2012, Managua, Nicaragua, "Pancho" has lived in the streets since age 11, where is is regularly assaulted and mistreated.



2012, Richmond, Va., recording artist and mixed martial arts fighter, Julie Ho.



2012, Norfolk, spring at Norfolk Botanical Garden.