

USCG throws out a “thanks” to locals for assisting

Detailed accounting of the vessels and man hours the United States Coast Guard, and others, spent searching for the Florida boys lost at sea

By Courtney Wheeler

The two young boys gassed up their boat, not knowing this would be the last time.

They set afloat for a day of fun and fishing out of Florida, but they never returned.

In that moment, life as they knew it came to an abrupt halt.

The two 14-year-olds' parents came to a devastating realization on

a blustery evening this past July. The boys were nowhere to be found.

Despite a concerted effort on multiple fronts, including those by the United States Coast Guard, the United States Navy, the Royal Bahamian Police Force, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Group, various Florida police and marine forces, and many good Samaritans, the boys are still unaccounted for.



The only thing that the parents of Austin Stephanos and Perry Cohen know is that the boys' 19-foot pleasure

boat was found capsized off of the coast of Daytona, Fla., about 180 miles north of where they started.

No further evidence was ever collected.

The Coast Guard 7th Division out of Miami, Fla., received a citizen's report that a cooler, alleged to be the same type as the one the boys had aboard their boat when they went missing, was found somewhere off North Carolina's coast.

The Coast Guard agreed to meet to collect the evidence, but the person

never showed up.

The Coast Guard was never able to confirm this alleged finding, thus there is no evidence that any debris was ever found.



Continues on Page 2



Musicians Bob Linsly and Liz Needham

Bob and Liz striking the right chords with local music lovers

The two Virginia Beach musicians perform what he calls “Caribbean Redneck” music; he lives in Cape Story by the Sea, she lives in Bay Island

By Courtney Wheeler

It's the spring of 2013, dusk is setting in and Bob Linsly is playing solo, front and center at the Bayside Bar and Grill on Shore Drive.

The various scents of freshly prepared

food waft through the air, igniting the night and putting the crowd in a good mood as they vibe to Linsly's sound. He pauses between songs and up to the stage walks a

Continues on Page 9

On the Sunny side:

Opinionated president candidate Donald Trump keeps public wondering what he'll say next. If he wins, wife Melania becomes First Lady of Fashion



Donald Trump and wife Melania

Please see Page 8

Sunshine Girl

DeAnna Emborski

See Page 12



Say “hello” to: Greg Dagnes

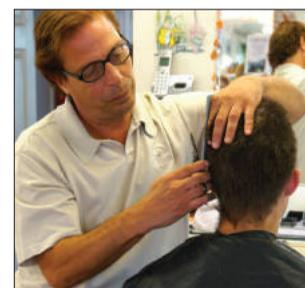
A Virginia Beach native and Kellam High School graduate, Gregory Dagnes was a professional photographer before opening his Oceanfront hair and styling salon, now celebrating its second anniversary in business

By Courtney Wheeler

The parking lot beside the large, old-school beach house on 32nd Street is packed.

The red, white and blue pole spins slowly beside the entrance.

The sign out front reads: Gregory's Oceanfront Barbershop and Salon.



Gregory Dagnes at work.

Continues on Page 16

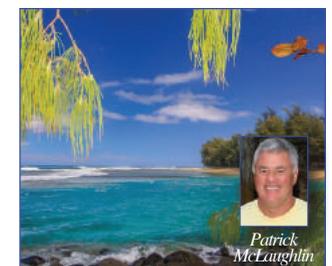
Creative Artist Profile: Photographer Patrick McLaughlin

Business entrepreneur, author, Croatan resident and dedicated waterman, he has captured thousands of images of our world around us!

By Brian Murden

A New Jersey transplant to the region 35 years ago, Patrick McLaughlin founded a military brokerage company providing sports related products to U.S. military personnel throughout the world. Growing up on the Jersey Shore it wasn't long before he discovered Croatan where he now lives with his family.

Even as a child, the draw towards photography was powerful when Patrick would sneak out in the mornings with his father's old 35mm Minolta, minus the film which he could not afford, and head to the beaches to capture in his mind the limitless images he saw everywhere he looked.



McLaughlin grew up in New Jersey.

In 1998, two influential factors collided to nurture McLaughlin's development as a professional sports and nature photographer: the advent of digital photography and his son's

Continues on Page 4

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Search for two Florida teens lost at sea reaches Virginia Beach; search ended after 30 days; no final determination made in boaters' disappearance

Continued from Page 1

Petty Officer 2nd Class Nate Littlejohn, Coast Guard 5th District, Portsmouth, Va., wouldn't speculate on the actual events that could have unfolded leading to the July 24 tragedy at sea.

He said that the boys were last seen buying \$116 worth of gas for their 19-foot boat and were setting off towards the Bahamas early that day.

The Coast Guard 5th District became aware of the boys' disappearance on July 26 at approximately 9:20 p.m., prior to its involvement. Its sister station, Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, deployed a HC130 Hercules aircraft and crew in response, Littlejohn said.

While the searches were maintained and led by the Coast Guard 7th District, the cry for help was heard all up the Eastern seaboard. The Virginia Beach Sun was sent a missing persons flier on behalf of the missing boater, asking the magazine to help

publicize their request for local volunteers on the water and in the sky to be on the lookout for the boys or debris. The boys' plight was also covered by local news and television media outlets.

"If people (Virginia Beach mariners, fishermen and sky pilots) were aware of it, I'm sure (they were out there looking)," said Littlejohn. "There are good Samaritans all over the country, including in Virginia Beach. Virginia Beach volunteers get involved all the time in search and rescue cases."

Along with the extra efforts put forth by many parties, the Coast Guard exhausted many resources of its own, Littlejohn said. Over the course of about two weeks, the Coast Guard utilized a total of 30 aircraft, 26 of which were fixed-wing, or planes, and four were helicopters. A total of 31 boats were used, four of which were small-craft, and the other 27 were the Coast Guard Cutters.

The searches extended over the course of 49,624 nautical miles and employed 56

different search patterns. The northernmost point that they searched was 30 miles south of Cape Hatteras, NC, the southernmost was Cape Canaveral, near Jupiter, FL. The farthest east they searched was 270 miles east of Savannah, GA.

Coast Guard man hours spent on the search totaled 372.14 hours, which equates to 15.5 days. Search time in general, including other agencies along with the Coast Guard, totaled to 736.84 hours, equating to 30.7 days.

Despite the effort put forth to find the missing boaters, there is still no sign of them. The parents cling to the hope that they will, someday, turn up, alive, according to published reports.

"The Coast Guard appreciated all of the support," Littlejohn said.

While the local Coast Guard does not handle matters concerning any final decisions on another district's case, there is no record of the boys being presumed or declared dead.

"To my knowledge," Littlejohn said, "no such declaration has been made."

"If people (Virginia Beach mariners, fishermen and sky pilots) were aware of it, I'm sure (they were out there looking.) There are good Samaritans all over the country, including in Virginia Beach. Virginia Beach volunteers get involved all the time in search and rescue cases."

*Petty Officer 2nd Class Nate Littlejohn,
Coast Guard 5th District, Portsmouth, Va.*



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Virginia Beach police officers may be wearing body cameras in the future; work group studying funding and strategic needs

The Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD) is in the analysis stage for the implementation of a body-worn camera (BWC) program for its uniformed officers. A work group is reviewing the various areas of this program to try to help ensure its successful deployment.

Among the areas of consideration currently being studied is the identification of a funding stream, to include exploring available federal grants. Start-up costs could cost more than \$1 million.

"As responsible stewards of public

funds, we owe it to the taxpayers of Virginia Beach to make sure we purchase the equipment that will best meet our strategic need and objectives and ensure the transparency and accountability expected by the public," said a police department spokesperson.

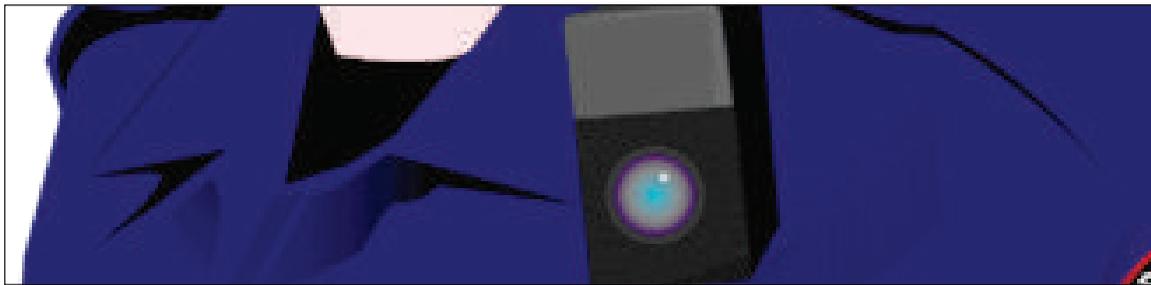
These BWCs will also require an adequate electronic storage capacity for downloads and a staff of personnel to conduct proper reviews of the video to answer requests for footage from prosecutors, defense attorneys, internal investigations and from those seeking footage through

Freedom of Information Act requests.

"Finally, our agency must ensure that our policies provide proper guidance for the use of BWCs," the spokesperson said. "We must incorporate all pertinent state and federal laws and consider all appropriate court case laws concerning privacy rights and use and records retention of electronic monitoring equipment used by police agencies. The VBPD is taking this approach in hopes to avoid mistakes made by other agencies that rushed into their own BWC programs and have run into various problems as a result."

The VBPD is not alone in taking the deliberate approach in rolling out this program. Agencies such as the Milwaukee, WI,

police department and the Dallas, TX, police department are also conducting proper studies to address each of the issues.



A creative rendering of a police officer's body camera.

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Creative Artist Profile: Photographer Patrick McLaughlin

Continued from Page 1

travels to beautiful surf locations around the world as a competitive surfer.

From that point onward he began to taking hundreds of thousands of photos each year and perfecting his trade.

McLaughlin's photographs have been published in major surfing and offshore fishing magazines, as well as, featured in local Tide-water publications.

His coverage of storms, community events, fishing tournaments and surf competitions delight the Virginia Beach community as unique and fresh perspectives of the things we love so much about our beachfront environment.

In 2014 Patrick published "Unleashed," a novel and screenplay based on the premise, when we take a photograph are we really capturing a piece of someone's soul?

Set on the Hawaiian Islands, the story follows, Shawn Perez, professional surf photographer as he struggles to bring his friend back from a terrible surf accident while combating terrorists who want to use his discovery against us.

Patrick would sneak out in the mornings with his father's old 35mm Minolta, minus the film which he could not afford, and head to the beaches to capture in his mind the limitless images he saw everywhere he looked.

"Unleashed," the screenplay, has won numerous prestigious awards with the hopes it will one day be made into a feature film.

As an extreme athlete, Patrick has competed in 2001 and 2004 in the Ironman World Championships in Kona, Hawaii.

Writer Brian Murden owns and operates Beach Gallery, 313 Laskin Road, #104, Virginia Beach, VA, 23451. Phone: (757) 428-3726.




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Located near Centerville Turnpike where the Virginia Beach city border meets Chesapeake, City View Park expands across 43 acres and features four lighted diamond fields and a single multi-purpose field available for large athletic events.

City View Park's north playground receives repairs and improvements; park is off Kempsville Road

The playground at the northern end of City View Park, located at 2073 Kempsville Road, has been closed while undergoing repairs, which are set to be completed by October 7, weather permitting.

During this time, the playground, at the southern end of the park near the softball fields, remains open for public use.

The playgrounds at City View Park underwent improvements earlier this year, including innovative play components and compliance with ADA Design Standards for public accessibility.

Located near Centerville Turnpike where the Virginia Beach city border meets Chesapeake, City View Park expands across 43 acres and features four

lighted diamond fields and a single multi-purpose field available for large athletic events.

As a recognized public asset and resource, the park offers the opportunity for active outdoor recreational uses, including hiking and biking on multi-use trails throughout the park.



City reports seven positive West Nile Virus samples

Concentrated spraying in Kempsville; serious illnesses rare; take nighttime precautions against the pests

The Virginia Beach Public Works Mosquito Control Biology Lab recently detected seven mosquito samples that are positive for West Nile Virus (WNV), which is high. Normal numbers for one entire mosquito season are seven for WNV, which will last several more weeks.

"While summer may be over in the minds of many people," said Jennifer Pierce with the Mosquito Control Biology lab, "we are coming up to the height of mosquito season. This increased activity will most likely continue for another six to eight weeks."

Mosquito Control's night ULV crews have increased night time spraying, concentrating in the areas of increased positives, particularly in the Kempsville

area. They have also increased their day time spraying of breeding sites.

Most WNV mosquitos are most active after dark, so anyone who plans on being out for any length of time in the evening should be sure to use mosquito repellent.

Other tips to follow are:

- Wear long, loose and light-colored clothing.
- Use insect repellent products for both adults and children.
- Follow label instructions when using insect repellents.

Residents can also help by eliminating mosquito breeding areas on their property:

- Turn over or remove containers in your yard where rainwater collects, such as potted plant trays, buckets, or toys.
- Empty bird baths once a week.
- Remove old tires from your yard.
- Clean roof gutters and downspout screens.
- Eliminate standing water on flat roofs, boats, and tarps.
- Clear obstructions in ditches so they flow and drain. Fill in puddles with soil, or a mixture of sand and gravel, or dig drainage ditches to drain puddles.
- If puddles or ditches cannot be drained or

filled in, treat standing water with mosquito larvicides (dunks or granules) that can be purchased at any hardware store.

Severe illness in humans from WNV is extremely rare - less than 1 percent of those infected develop any serious problems.

Property owners at the trapping sites have been contacted and advised and lab officials will continue to consult with the other mosquito control districts throughout the Hampton Roads region.

Mosquitos, such as this one, can spread West Nile Virus.

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Opinion: On the Sunny Side!

The buzz is over Trump, but can he really lead? If Trump wins, his wife gives other first ladies a good run for their money in fashion modeling department

By Courtney Wheeler



Donald Trump



Melania Trump

Loud, boisterous, arrogant and brash, he is Donald Trump.

What a fun and interesting smash-up this 2016 presidential election is shaping up to be! There's a Bush and a Clinton running again, but the candidate for whom many in the nation are really clamoring is the big boss man himself, Donald Trump, who seems to be trumping

his fellow candidates, leading the pack for the Republican party nomination.

He's itching to tell President Obama, "You're fired!"

Out of the forest of Republicans, who all seemed to slowly ooze from the woodwork to run for the office of President of the United States, only a select few are really making an impression on the American public, relegating the others to back-burner status.

The real question is, how much do Virginia Beach voters care about the other competitors, with celebrity candidate Trump making headlines left and right with his lack-of-a-filter way of approaching mainstream issues?

If Trump has an opinion about something, he makes sure America knows it. He has been in the public eye for years and apparently loves it; he really plays to the people, despite his, at times, questionable views on things.

This entire campaign is a public relations exercise for Trump, who could buy his way through this whole thing if he wanted to. He is now to politics what Howard Stern was to radio decades to radio.

Maybe the man with the money is the answer? Who knows, but whether or not he gets to taste sweet victory at the end of it, he and his interactions with the other candidates and the media will sure make for a fascinating visual and auditory experience.

Enough about Trump for a second, there are other republicans also vying for the same position. Jeb Bush, for instance, is a second generation of Bush to run for office, plus he is in an election against a Clinton. Is history repeating itself?

Probably not, with wild-card Trump in the mix. Bush and Trump have a little thing going on, Trump calling into

question Bush's liveliness and Bush retaliating, debuting his multiculturalism through use of his bilingual skills when addressing a crowd.

Virginia Beach political enthusiasts will see a lot of back-and-forth between the candidates before an official GOP presidential candidate is finally selected.

Hillary Clinton, one of the top Democratic candidates running for President this time around, is a headline-maker herself, so Trump better watch out.

She has a following of supporters who would love to crown the first woman president. She may have some controversy tied to her at the moment, but that is obviously not slowing her down.

She's a woman on a mission and is fighting all the nay-sayers all the way to the top.

Clinton shares the pool with Bernie Sanders (Joe Biden is still on the fence), and the public has yet to see either of their true fighting colors come out, mostly because Trump dominates much of the political conversation.

Since Trump is an undeniable part of these electoral proceedings, it is nearly impossible to have a conversation concerning the 2016 election without his name coming into it somehow, someway.

Trump has everybody buzzing: Good buzz, bad buzz, buzz buzz, you

name it! It is interesting to see how his fellow personalities weigh in on Trump's endeavor, which comes as a shock to some.

Trump has never been involved in



politics at-length, making his mark more with his entrepreneurial standing and social status.

He has ties in just about everything, from television to sports and so on, so it's no wonder that politics was next on his agenda.

He's even friends with National Basketball Association champion Dennis Rodman.

In a business setting, Trump is a blunt, serious man, never hesitating to do what needs to be done for the sake of his companies.

When addressing the public, he con-

tinues bringing that bluntness for which America knows him so well, yet carries it over with such stunning charisma that keeps you wanting more.

His supporters may stretch far and wide, but are matched probably almost evenly with those who question his ability to lead in such a serious position.

Imagine, talking to the leader of a major country with which America is attempting to align, and Trump doesn't agree, so, just as he would in an disparaging business meeting, he pops off and then BAM!, all negotiations are halted.

Can Donald Trump keep it together in such a tense situation?

He must to prove to America that he can.

The year to come will prove an interesting time for politics, as the 2016 presidential election draws nearer.

The many candidates will be stepping up their games, competing for top spots in America's eyes, but the world will have an extra close eye on Donald Trump.

Many would sure love to see this overzealous business mogul try to run a country, and build walls, at which he says he's very good, and he may get that chance.

Plus, if elected, his wife, Melania Trump, sure would give former first ladies a run for their money in the fashion modeling department!

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Continued from Page 1

man with intent, an eager blonde woman in tow.

He introduces himself as Chuck Needham, and his wife, Liz Jones. He asks Linsly if Liz could sing with him, and as Linsly later will tell, "the rest is history."

Bob Linsly, 59, has been in the music scene for quite some time, playing mostly by himself until he met his current partner, Liz, 47. His interest in music was piqued at the age of 10 when he picked up a clarinet, had one lesson and that was enough. "It did not go over well," he said.

Soon after that, someone suggested playing guitar, it struck a chord in his mind, so he jumped on the chance, going on to receive private guitar lessons from Bay Colony resident and musician Wym Price.

"He taught me a bunch of chords and folk songs," Linsly said, "and that was the beginning."

Music hasn't always been at the forefront of Linsly's mind as a career. A 1974 First Colonial High School graduate, he went on to attend Virginia Wesleyan College, Norfolk, Va., as well as Eastern Mennonite, Harrisonburg, Va. He studied Physical Education and is now a retired school teacher from Virginia Beach City Public Schools after 34 years.

"I taught most of my career. I did student activities for about eight years," Linsly said. "I had a lot of fun. Kids are cool!"

He and his wife of 32 years, Sarah, who works as a title examiner, have lived for the past 22

years in the Virginia Beach neighborhood of Cape Story by the Sea. Their two children, Kyle, 27, and Bobby, 29, are both Cox High School graduates who have gone on to graduate from college. Bobby received his Master's Degree from Norfolk's Old Dominion University, while Kyle received his degree in St. Augustine, FL.

Linsly attributes much of his musical success and happiness to his partner.

"How many female banjo players do you know out there?" Linsly said. "Liz makes it fun!"

Lifelong Virginia Beach resident Liz Jones and her husband, Chuck, live in the Bay Island neighborhood. Jones works as a church secretary at Frances Ashbury United Methodist, off Great Neck Road in Virginia Beach, Linsly said. Her husband works as an insurance adjuster. They have six children, all of whom are teenagers except for one.

A 1986 Cox High School graduate, Jones studied at Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Va., and worked for her father's company as a contractor before moving on to work with healthcare software.

"Eventually she was just a 'mom,'" Linsly said of Liz.

Jones has been interested in music ever since she was little, taking piano lessons at a very young age, Linsly said.

"It's only been in recent years that she's exploded with all of these different instruments," Linsly said. "She's amazing."

Jones plays the banjo, mandolin, stand-up

bass, harmonica, Djembe, which is a type of drum, "rhythm eggs," and she is also the duo's lead singer and does harmonies. Linsly sings and performs with a red Ovation guitar.

"I got my first Ovation back in the 80s," Linsly said. "Anybody who was anybody was playing an Ovation. I just stuck with them."

Due to a medical issue, Linsly prefers to play standing up and says that rounded-back guitars, like Ovations, are great that.

"It's lightweight and I like the sound," Linsly said. "Plus, it's pretty much bullet proof!"

"Bob and Liz" is what they call themselves and are working on establishing their own musical brand, getting more, and better bookings, he said.

"We describe our music as 'Caribbean Redneck,' it gives us flexibility," Linsly said. "We are kind of all over the map, we can play anything from Buffet to Chesney to Jonny Cash."

The pair usually performs more frequently during the summer months, averaging one to four performances a week, however, they still get some gigs during the off season.

"It's more of a seasonal thing for us. Fall is not busy (for Liz and I)," Linsly said. "Fall is more about football and family."

They perform once a month at the Cypress Country Club in Virginia Beach, as well as an annual performance for the Rooftop Ruckus, atop the Studio 56 Apartments' fifth story deck at Town Center, Linsly said.

"The Rooftop Ruckus is definitely the greatest place we've ever played," Linsly said. "It's not

something you usually do.

Linsly hopes to move on up to playing on the "big stages" at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront, he said, adding that it'd also be fun play at local events, such as the Neptune Festival. The two have already had some experience on some of the smaller area stages, such as the 34th Street stage at the Oceanfront boardwalk.

Though they have big goals for the future, don't call it a "dream."

"I don't call it a dream," Linsly said. "It's just fun. We're on auto-pilot," Linsly said. "We're confident."

They only have to practice once every couple of weeks, Linsly said, and it's not just about the money for them.

"It's fun, and nice to have people paying attention to you and get their reactions," Linsly said.

"Depending on the crowd, it can be a lot of fun."

The main goal, no matter what the setting may be, for Linsly and Jones when they are in front of a

crowd is to entertain, he said, whether it's gearing up before a set or just putting out an energy-filled performance that leaves them wanting more.

"I'm good at talking with a crowd, I'm kind of a smart-aleck," Linsly said. "I think crowd interaction is important. I want to entertain people."

At the end of the day, this family-man and hard-working mother have the same objective when it comes to their musical path: To enjoy the ride and have fun doing it!

"I like to make people smile," Linsly said.

Reach Bob Linsly and Liz Jones at (757)339-0016 or at his email, boblinsly@gmail.com.

They can be booked through Southern Entertainment of Virginia, Inc., 968 Oriole Dr #208, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, (757)431-0051.

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Sunshine Girl - DeAnna Emborski

Red Mill resident making is fourth runner-up at 2016 MS America Pageant; co-founded Victory Over Violence USA to help reduce domestic violence

Calling Virginia Beach home is on the list of one of the many blessings Red Mill area resident DeAnna Emborski can check off her life goals list.

In addition to loving where she lives, she was also fourth runner up and photogenic winner, as Ms Southeast America 2015 at the national Ms America 2016 pageant.

She is also married to her "real life hero," John Emborski, a retired master chief and master diver who served 30 years active duty.

She is "mom" to Logan, enrolled at the University of North Georgia; Layne, currently enrolled at Tidewater Community College and Hunter, who attends Princess Anne Middle School. She's also step-mom to Crystalynn, a University of Central Florida graduate; Nathan, active duty, United States Coast Guard; and Coralanne, currently enrolled at Florida State in Panama City.

Emborski has had many professional career highlights, such as being a grand marshal of a national NASCAR magazine, publisher of four newspapers in the Pacific Northwest and working in sales.

She retired from the media industry in

2012, and that brought her to the place she is today, a commitment to service in our community and being able to dedicate more time to her personal awareness campaign of Victory Over Violence USA.

Emborski is not only the founder of Victory Over Violence USA but is also a survivor of domestic violence herself. She founded the awareness campaign back in 2007 when she was Mrs. Florida and has helped spread the knowledge and the "Upside-Down Purple Ribbon Campaign" across the country.

The campaign's mission statement is "Remember the victims, Support the survivors and Educate our communities about domestic violence," she said. Her Upside-Down Purple Ribbon Campaign has been acknowledged and promoted by communities and celebrities nationwide, she said.

"Being able to now have the time to devote to our communities that I have always wanted to, is such an empowering feeling," she said. "I was grateful that when I needed assistance, it was there and I have

always wanted to be able to give back; and now I can do that and so much more."

Emborski is involved with Seton Youth Shelters, United Way, Rotary International, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, American Heart Association and Relay for Life.

Emborski credits her family with giving her the support, love and encouragement to continue to pursue her ambitions and dreams.

"I do feel I'm living in a 'fairy tale' because I have been blessed with these amazing people I share my life with, they are my power boost," she said.

Considering it fate rather than luck, Emborski met her husband in Virginia Beach in 2004.

"Being a part of the Virginia Beach community is something, when we were stationed in other parts of the country, that we truly missed," she said.

(Information and photos provided by Stevenson's Modeling Agency, Virginia Beach, Va.)



DeAnna and John enjoying themselves at a family reunion.



DeAnna Emborski



DeAnna and her "real life hero," John.

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On the Sunny side

Tats, ties and skirts

Should tattoos be part of professional dress code at work?

By: Courtney Wheeler

Inked up, tatted up, body art, designs etched in skin.

No matter how they're described, black and white and full color tattoos are almost everywhere!

They're practically main stream.

Day time, night time, at work, at play, at the grocery store, at the beach, in the office, no matter where, looks as though artistic body ink is here to stay.

Tattoos being so prevalent in the workplace, employers these days need to be prepared to deal with current and prospective employees having a tattoo, or two, or three or more.

They will have to decide if tattoos should be a part of their workplace dress code: "Do I want to judge this person based on how they look? Will these tattoos hinder their ability to do their job? Will my business suffer or benefit because of their tattoos?"

More often than not it seems that a prospective employee, inked to the nines, may lose out on that corporate office job because the employer may choose to deny them the opportunity to work solely based on their visible tattoos.

But then there are the times when the tattoos are overlooked, deemed as non-essential to the success or failure of the company and the individuals wearing them.

This is the way everyone should view this issue. Employers should not discriminate against people for having visible tattoos.

In a sense, it's as simple as going back

In that respect, yes, at this time in history America is more open and tolerant, hence the mainstreaming of tattoos in general. All that needs to happen is for employers to wise up; and big props to the ones that have.

to the old adage, "Don't judge a book by its cover," meaning that a person's job performance and personal character should not be prejudged because of artwork adorning their bodies.

That person should not be defined solely by their tattoos and should not be denied the right to work.

Tattoos are personal, creative outlets of self-expression and are sometimes more revealing than fashion or hairstyles.

They are usually permanent on people and shouldn't be viewed as distracting from whatever sort of appearance with which they are trying to present and distinguish themselves.

If a woman has full color tattoo sleeves down her arms to her fingertips and up her neck to her ears, but dons a business suit for her CEO job, do tattoos make her any less of a boss?

Is she not still dressed appropriately for her career?

Tattoos are looked down upon in many professional settings and this is a behavior that may be hard pressed to change.

What some people don't realize is that there are many people in Virginia Beach who are tatted up and still hold down their jobs and

get hired for new ones.

One's personal artistic canvas should not have any effect on one's livelihood.

Yet still, this happens.

Employers have been known to fire employees over visible tattoos, or demand that the ink be hidden or even go so far as to deny the chance at a job over a single glimpse of ink.

This is not a healthy reflection of today's society, which claims to be so much more accepting and innovative than in decades past.

In that respect, yes, at this time in history America is more open and tolerant, hence the mainstreaming of tattoos in general.

All that needs to happen is for employers to wise up; and big props to the ones that have.



One's personal artistic canvas should not have any effect on one's livelihood.



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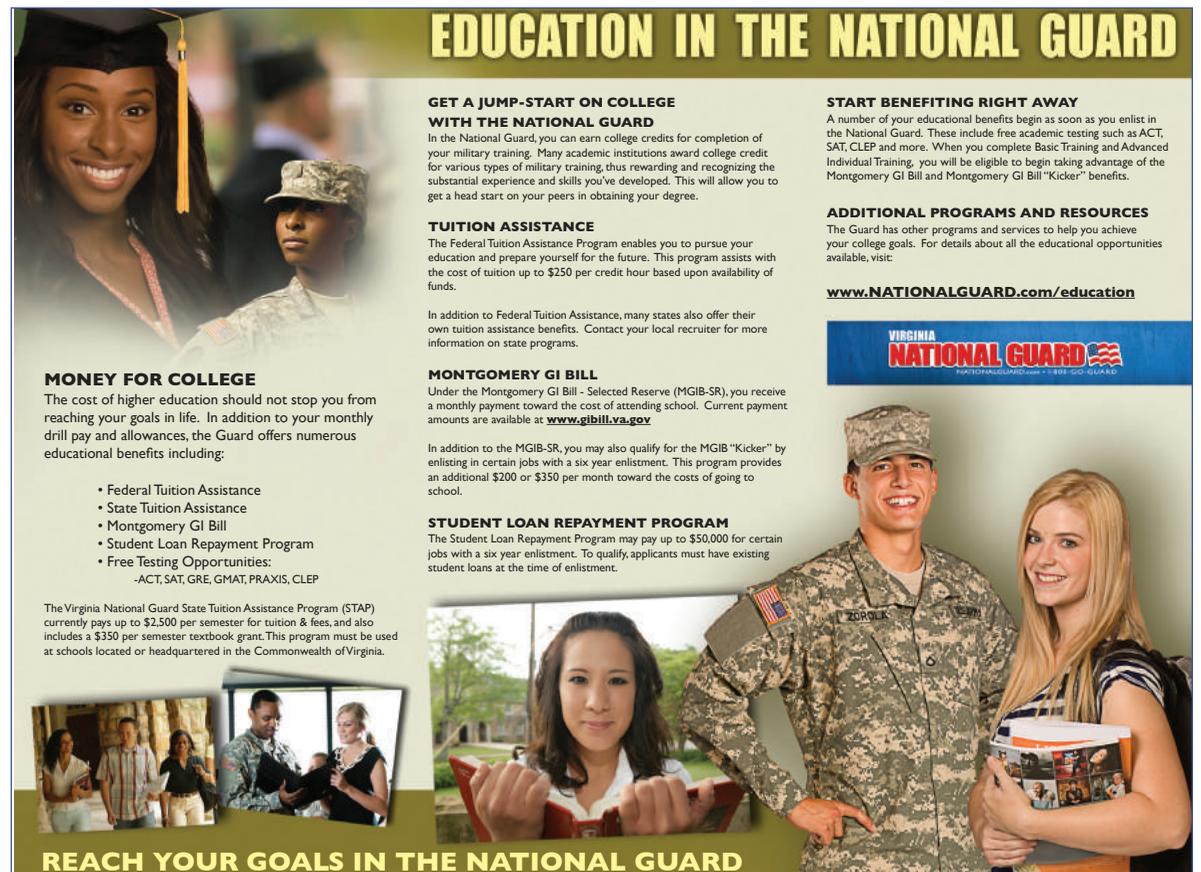
- Federal Tuition Assistance
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- Montgomery GI Bill
- Student Loan Repayment Program
- Free Testing Opportunities: -ACT, SAT, GRE, GMAT, PRAXIS, CLEP

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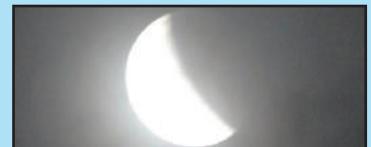


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Gregory's Oceanfront Barber Shop and Salon celebrating ...

Continued from Page 1

Inside, there's a beautifully restored barber shop and salon, operating under the direction of shop owner Gregory Dages, a licensed cosmetologist.

He has had his shop since October 1, 2013 and is about to celebrate the business' two-year anniversary.

"I'm a local guy, and I'm trying to make it work," Dages said. "So far, so good."

A Virginia Beach native and 1978 Kellam High School graduate, Dages resides in the First Colonial, Great Neck corridor, in Mill Creek Condominiums, he said.

He got his toes wet in the professional world early on, at age 16, landing a job as a cook at what he says was Virginia Beach's first discotheque, soon after becoming a retail clerk at a Safeway grocery store.

Dages, 56, dabbled in a career as a technician for Lombart Instruments, Norfolk, Va., from 1983 until 1998, traveling all over the east coast, setting up ophthalmic instruments and equipment, he said.

He left Lombart to become a part of his family's funeral home business, Maestas Fu-

neral Home, which his step-father owned on Baltic Avenue at the Oceanfront in Virginia Beach.

Dages underwent an 18-month apprenticeship to learn "the tricks of the trade," he said. After his apprenticeship, Dages said he realized that was not what he wanted to do with his life.

During this time, he also went on three trips abroad, to Africa, Australia and Greece. While overseas, he took many pictures, he said. When he

returned home, the public's response to his pictures was unexpected and overwhelming.

"Everyone kept saying, 'They look like National Geographic!'" Dages said.

It was then that he decided to go to school

in Applied Sciences of Photography from Tidewater Community College, Old Towne Portsmouth campus, in 2001.

Soon after, Dages made his first venture as a business owner, starting his own photography business, called Dages Photography, working as an art photographer. Dages enjoyed his photography career.

"I traveled a lot," he said. "I've lived all over the world."

Dages was a regular exhibitor at the Boardwalk Art Show and the Neptune Festival

Art Show in Virginia Beach as well as, the Stockley Gardens Art Show in Norfolk, he

said.

To supplement his income when he wasn't doing art shows, Dages moonlighted as a special event and wedding portrait photographer. Little did he know that his photographic work would lead to present vocation.

"On occasion, I'd hire a stylist to do my client's hair," Dages said. "Now, I was egomaniacal photographer at the time, and I started to notice that my clients were paying more attention to the hair stylist than they were to me."

Around 2007, Dages decided to get his cosmetology license from the Virginia Beach Beauty and Barber Academy on Holland Road.

"Everything was turning digital," he said, "and it kind of phased me out (as a photographer)."

When he graduated from cosmetology school, Dages worked for a well-known hair salon chain for a few years before becoming a manager.

After a while, however, Dages wanted



"Working for yourself and having fun going to work, the pleasure of having someone walk out happy - that's key," he said. "It gives me great joy and we really take pride in what we do."

Continues on Page 17

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... Its second anniversary of being in the styling business

Continued from Page 16

to grow his career in the hair business.

"I wanted something of my own," Dagnes said.

He heard about a barbershop that was for sale and immediately went to check it out.

The place was already called the Oceanfront Barber Shop and had been in operation as a barber shop for 15 years by the time Dagnes bought it, he said.

The barbershop was formerly a residential home, built in the 1920s and housed many varieties of businesses over the years, Dagnes said, including a doctor's office, lawyer's office and was also used by the Virginia Beach Chamber of Commerce, he said.

"I have my own parking lot because the Chamber of Commerce had built it," Dagnes said. "That's a rarity at the beach."

The barbershop was already furnished and equipped when Dagnes took over the business, it just needed some renovations. The founder and previous owner, who still works for Dagnes, helped out with the renovations.

"We basically gave it a facelift," Dagnes said.

He said he spent about \$40,000 to \$50,000 on buying the shop, painting, landscaping and

converting a big part of the shop to a salon area.

"We can accommodate men on one side (of the shop) and women on the other," Dagnes said. "I have a barbershop as well as a full-service salon."

Dagnes has a staff of nine, including himself, as well as his mother, Marshia Maestas, who is the receptionist, helps with accounting, as well as other things, he said. He also has a fourth-generation barber working for him.

"My mother is a huge influence and a big help," Dagnes said. "She's the one that pointed out (back when I was a photographer), 'Hey, why don't you just do some hair?' She's been very vital to my success."

Dagnes describes his staff as "private contractors."

Dagnes prides himself in the services he and his staff offer, including straight major facial shaves, which is a rarity, he says, and he also cuts men's and women's hair.

"I can do anything with women's hair," he said.

Dagnes also takes great pride in the quality of service his customers receive. It's something for which both he and his staff strive.

"Number one is quality. Quality is what matters," Dagnes said. "Quantity comes later."

The salon serves upwards of 1,200 people a month, he

cliente."

Dagnes hopes to continue to improve his business, with plans for certain expansions on his mind.

"I want to eventually buy building space to expand the building out for more room on the barber shop side," Dagnes said. "I also want to add more stations to the salon side; we have two, and I want four."

For now, Dagnes wants to concentrate on building his business up, and maybe adding a second location in the future, he said.

He said that he was well-suited for this type of business with his photography background.

"I see in shapes and forms," Dagnes said. "I can see through a viewfinder and look at different variables. I know what looks good on somebody."

At the end of the day, Dagnes said he feels successful, "beyond his wildest dreams."

"Working for yourself and having fun going to work, the pleasure of having someone walk out happy - that's key," he said. "It gives me great joy and we really take pride in what we do."

Gregory's Oceanfront Barbershop and Salon is located at 400 32nd Street, Virginia Beach, VA, 23451. Phone: (757) 422-3637. www.facebook.com/GregorysOceanfrontBarbershop.



Business owner Gregory Dagnes, at work at his Oceanfront Barber Shop and Beauty Salon.

"They do their own thing. No one works over 40-hours a week," Dagnes said. "I'm the only one who does. My only days off are on Wednesdays."

said.

"That's why I have so many people working for me," Dagnes said. "We don't want people to have to wait. Plus, I have a lot of regular

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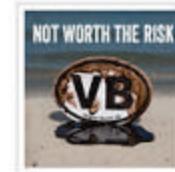
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