

VCU earns ticket to the 'Big Dance' A8



You'll soon know Pastor G's successor B5



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State NAACP leaderless

John Marshall makes history



Photos by James Haskins/Richmond Free Press

Right, John Marshall coach Ty White responds emotionally as he guides the team to victory in the state championship. For the team, it was celebration time when the final buzzer announced their win over George Wythe and their first state title since the early '80s as part of the Marshall-Walker complex.



Khalfani officially dismissed

By Joey Matthews

King Salim Khalfani officially has been dismissed as executive director of the Virginia State Conference of the NAACP, according to the president, Carmen Taylor of Hampton.

Mr. Khalfani was formally removed March 1 by the executive committee she heads, Ms. Taylor noted in a statement to the Free Press last Friday — her first comment after weeks of requests.

"The decision to end the conference's employment relationship with Mr. Khalfani," Ms. Taylor stated, "was necessitated by the need for greater focus on conference affairs, the need to increase efficiencies in this position as they impact local branches and the Executive Committee, and the need to implement processes that will facilitate achievement of these goals."

She offered thanks to Mr. Khalfani for his "service to the organization." Mr. Khalfani directed the state's oldest and largest civil rights group for 15 years.

In her statement, Ms. Taylor made no mention of the appointment of an interim executive director to replace Mr. Khalfani or indicate if a search for Mr. Khalfani's successor is underway.

She also did not mention anything about reopening the now locked and darkened state headquarters office in the Baptist General Convention of Virginia's building at 1216 W. Graham Road, across from Virginia Union University.

The result has left the Virginia NAACP in a dismal situation given its proud history of fighting segregation and discrimination and upholding voting rights since its founding 79 years ago in 1935.

Its achievements include

Please turn to A4

Coach Ty White's Justices beat George Wythe in unprecedented state hoops championship match

By Fred Jeter

John Marshall High School's basketball report card is loaded with "A's."

Give Quaman Burton an "A" for assists, Jeremy Sheppard and "A" for aim and the long-overdue Justices an "A" for at last.

Burton's deft passing and Sheppard's marksmanship are prime reasons the North Siders have their first state hoops title since the walls of segregation came tumbling down.

In front of a Siegel Center crowd of about 4,000

and a local cable television feed, the Justices scored a 74-56 victory March 13 over crosstown rival George Wythe, the pride of the South Side.

The win came in the inaugural 3A state final and first-ever Richmond versus Richmond state championship match. (3A is part of a new VHSL classification system based on enrollment. Schools in 3A enroll between 750 and 1,112 students.)

Earlier, the two city schools split two spirited contests, with John Marshall taking the Conference 26 crown and the Bulldogs the 3A East Region title.

Justices coach Ty White billed the final as "Round

3," and in this brawl for it all the Justices scored a unanimous decision, winning each quarter en route to the final victory.

John Marshall led 18-13 after one period, 37-28 at intermission and 56-41 through three stanzas.

JM shot 51 percent (28 of 55 attempts) to GW's 38 percent (18 of 48 attempts), largely due to Burton's ball handling and Sheppard's GPS-like brilliance in locating nylon from long range.

JM has a proud history of iconic guards — Jerome

Please turn to A4

Shockoe Bottom referendum in the making

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

A referendum is in the making that could give Richmond residents an opportunity to vote in November on the mayor's proposal to develop a new baseball stadium in Shockoe Bottom.

Paul Goldman, a political strategist and city watchdog, is leading a newly formed citizens' group that is seeking to go around a balky City Council to give voters a say on a hot-button issue that has split the city.

"Council had an opportunity to provide for a referendum on the stadium issue, and has refused to do so," said Mr. Goldman, well known for helping L. Douglas Wilder make history as the first African-American to be elected as lieutenant governor and governor of Virginia.

"We don't have to wait for the council," he said, pointing to a City Charter section that allows for citizens to get charter change issues on the ballot without the council's approval. "We can do this on our own."

The effort began after City Councilwoman Reva M. Trammell, 8th District, challenged foes of the stadium to get signatures and put the issue on the ballot after a majority of the council declined to do so.

Mr. Goldman already has a track record on that score. Eleven years ago, Mr. Goldman led a similar citizen referendum effort to gain an elected mayor for Richmond and overhaul the government.

The goal of the new effort: To gain the signatures of at least 9,800 people on proposed changes to the City Charter by Aug. 1 and then to secure approval from the Richmond Circuit Court to put the referen-

dum questions on the fall ballot.

If passed, the proposed charter changes would have to go the General Assembly for approval in the 2015 session.

The proposals Mr. Goldman has written include:

- Blocking City Council from approving the stadium until it creates and receives a report from a commission that would study ways to achieve economic growth while protecting the history of Shockoe Bottom and the East End. The commission is based on a proposal Mayor Jones spearheaded when he served in the General Assembly.

- Requiring the council to hold an advisory referendum on any plan to develop a sports stadium or arena

Please turn to A4

Chris Brown behind bars for at least a month

Free Press staff, wire reports

LOS ANGELES

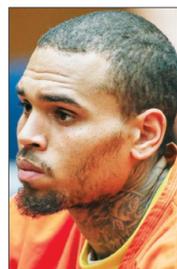
R&B star Chris Brown, right, had managed stay out of jail since he was convicted of assaulting former girlfriend Rihanna in 2009.

But that situation just changed for the Tappahannock, Va., native.

He's now behind bars by order of a Los Angeles judge and will be there at least until Wednesday, April 23.

That's when Superior Court Judge James Brandlin will decide whether to add additional time.

The entertainer is being held on a charge of violating the five-year probation he received in the



Rihanna case.

Mr. Brown was dressed in a bright orange jumpsuit when he appeared Monday before Judge Brandlin. He had spent the weekend at Los Angeles County's Men's Central Jail.

He was led out of the courtroom in handcuffs as his mother, Joyce Hawkins, sobbed.

Police arrested Mr. Brown, 24, last Friday after he was kicked out of a Malibu, Calif., rehabilitation center.

Judge Brandlin, seeking to avoid revoking Mr. Brown's probation, had assigned him to the center for

90 days. The judge did so after Mr. Brown was arrested Oct. 27 for assaulting a man in Washington, D.C. Mr. Brown allegedly punched and broke the nose of the man who was trying to get a picture with him.

The Malibu center called police to remove Mr. Brown. According to Judge Brandlin, Mr. Brown was arrested for violating center rules, including inappropriately touching a female client on the elbow and initially refusing a drug test.

Mr. Brown also told a group session at the center that "I am good at using guns and knives," the judge said in reading from a center report that cited the remark as overly provocative.

Please turn to A4



Sandra Sellers/Richmond Free Press

Aid at Capitol

Dr. Susan A. Miller gives emergency treatment to a woman who collapsed on the State Capitol grounds. The dramatic moment highlighted a rally Saturday that drew people from across the state to urge the General Assembly to approve the expansion of Medicaid.

Judge Spencer rejects filings by McDonnells

Free Press staff, wire reports

U.S. District Court Judge James R. Spencer has brushed aside an attempt by attorneys for former Gov. Bob McDonnell and wife Maureen to get additional information from prosecutors prior to their corruption trial.

The defense team had asked that prosecutors more clearly detail "official actions" they allege the McDonnells performed for wealthy Richmond-area businessman Jonnie R. Williams Sr. in exchange for gifts, luxury vacations and loans.



Judge Spencer

Judge Spencer issued an opinion Monday that the prosecutors' 43-page indictment against Mr. and Mrs. McDonnell was "sufficiently detailed."

He added that prosecutors did not need to produce a so-called "bill of particulars" to define the official actions the couple allegedly performed or promised to perform for Mr. Williams.

The indictment came in January after a lengthy federal investigation into gifts and loans totaling at least \$165,000 that Mr. McDonnell and his family received from Mr. Williams.

Prosecutors allege the McDonnells then used the power of the governor's office to promote Mr. Williams' money-losing, Henrico County-based dietary supplement business.

To prove the corruption charges, the government must show that Mr. McDonnell performed "official" acts as governor to benefit Mr. Williams and that his wife conspired with her husband to make those acts happen.

Defense and prosecution attorneys are likely to lock horns at trial over what counts as an official act.

Judge Spencer separately rejected another defense filing asking that prosecutors to immediately turn over a large volume of documents related to the case.

In another hearing Tuesday, the judge turned aside another defense request to have prosecutors retract their successful effort to delay a civil suit that investors have brought against Star Scientific and Mr. Williams. Neither McDonnell is named in the suit. The case is before another judge, and Judge Spencer refused to intervene.

The McDonnells did win on one point. The judge authorized the defense team to subpoena files from the Food and Drug Administration and Securities and Exchange Commission files on Star Scientific and Mr. Williams.

Both agencies have investigated the company, and the defense argued information from those agencies could provide evidence to attack Mr. Williams' credibility at trial. He is expected to be a star witness.

Questions raised on McAuliffe's tactic

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Gov. Terry McAuliffe took office with a pledge to be more ethical than his predecessor, Robert F. "Bob" McDonnell, who, with wife Maureen, is now facing federal charges of selling his office.

At a time of heightened attention to ethics, Gov. McAuliffe is facing sharp questions and stiff criticism after launching a new political action committee called Common Good VA.

The problem: A blatant fundraising pitch the PAC's staff issued last week that includes a price list for big contributors who want special access to the governor.

For example, donors of \$100,000 or more are being offered a private dinner with the governor and his wife as well as access to other private sessions.

Contributors of \$10,000 or more would be able to attend a private retreat, receptions and monthly roundtable talks with government policy experts.

Critics see this as déjà vu, with the new governor doing the same thing that got the former governor in trouble.

Past governors created similar committees, and Gov. McAuliffe, like them, plans to use his PAC as a vehicle to support candidates and to campaign on issues like Medicaid expansion.

Members of the PAC staff called the fundraising tactic standard practice and completely legal.

But some say Gov. McAuliffe's PAC goes further with the offer of special access and private sessions.

"Federal prosecutors have indicted former Gov. McDonnell on the basis that he took gifts and set up meetings" for a big supporter, Pat Mullins, chairman of the state Republican Party, stated in an email in response to the revelations of the price list.

"If doing that is an indictable offense, then what does it mean when you quite literally sell access to a sitting governor, and then have the gall to print up a price list to send around via blast email?"

The McAuliffe PAC's fundraising letter could bolster arguments that lawyers defending the McDonnells are pushing that it is typical for a governor to offer special access to big contributors, though the gifts and loans to the McDonnells were personal instead of PAC contributions.

Others were quick to recall that nearly 20 years ago, Gov. McAuliffe was the fundraiser who orchestrated the plan that allowed big supporters of President Clinton to stay in the Lincoln Bedroom at the White House.

"Is anyone surprised he's selling access to the Governor's Mansion?" Matthew Moran, spokesman for House Speaker William J. Howell, R-Stafford, stated in an e-mail.

Ben Wallace jailed

Basketball great Ben Wallace spent two days in a Henrico County jail this week after pleading no contest to a misdemeanor charge of leaving the scene of an accident.

Mr. Wallace, the former NBA and Virginia Union University star, faced the charge after an accident last month. He was sent to jail Tuesday afternoon.

His empty Cadillac Escalade was found around 2:30 a.m. Feb. 8 smashed against a tree near Gaskins Road and Peppertree Drive. The SUV had knocked down a fence before hitting the tree. Henrico officers determined Mr. Wallace was the owner.

Mr. Wallace was ordered to pay \$611 in fines and court costs and sentenced to a year in prison, with 11 months and 28 days suspended.

He was expected to be released by Thursday.



Spring cleanup

Left, Veronica Fleming and Tommy Cox pick up trash along Meadowbridge Avenue on North Side. They are among the volunteers who fanned out in Saturday's

Cityscape

Slices of life and scenes in Richmond

warm sunshine to clean up the commercial district in Highland Park. Spring cleaning will be revving up this week with the official arrival of the season on Thursday, March 20, accompanied by much warmer temperatures to melt away the last of the snow that fell earlier this week.

Photos by Sandra Sellars/Richmond Free Press



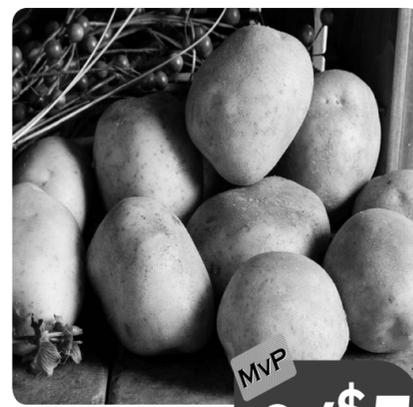
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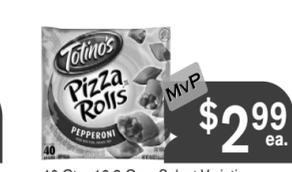
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ALWAYS THERE



No tax hike, but schools lose in mayor's budget

By Joey Matthews

No increase in taxes. No layoffs for the city workforce. But no pay increase, either, for the nearly 5,000 employees.

And the public schools would get a far smaller increase than the School Board hoped.

Those are some of the highlights in the \$777.3 million budget that Mayor Dwight C. Jones presented to City Council last week for fiscal 2015, which begins July 1.

Council has until May 31 to revise and pass its own version. The governing body will hold a public hearing on the budget at its Monday, April 14, meeting to allow city residents to sound off.

The mayor is only proposing \$1 million in additional funds to run schools. That's far short of the \$4.7 million the School Board requested to balance its budget — meaning spending cuts may be ahead if the council goes along.

The mayor's proposal is based on concern that most of the extra funds the School Board is seeking would go toward raises.

The mayor's staff said with city employee raises eliminated, it would not be fair to provide to fund raises for schools personnel — a potential blow to teachers who had hoped to finally gain a substantial increase after six years.

While the mayor has cut out raises for the workers under his command, he is proposing that the city pick up a \$1.9 million increase in employee health insurance costs and fully fund the city's contribution to the pension plan.

The mayor sought to soften the blow to schools with a sharp boost in spending on school maintenance in the separate \$237 million budget for capital spending.

His proposal calls for investing \$5 million in 2015 in maintenance, or 10 times the level he supported this year, and to provide up to \$13 million more for maintenance in the following four years.

That's still far short of the \$80 million the School Board has estimated is needed to replace roofs, aging heating and cooling equipment and other systems to keep its mostly aging inventory of buildings usable.

The mayor also is proposing to allocate \$21 million to replace Overby-Sheppard Elementary on North Side, a project the School Board has yet to endorse.

While the mayor did not propose any change in tax rates, city residents would see a hike in utility bills under his plan. His proposal calls for an average bill to rise \$6 a month for water, sewer and other service.

After years of talk, the mayor is proposing \$3.3 million in new spending on anti-poverty initiatives in a city where one in four residents lives at or below the poverty line.

That includes \$1 million to begin fueling the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to support development of reduced-cost housing, though still short of the \$5 million a year some on council had proposed.

The mayor's grand \$200 million proposal to bring baseball and other development to Shockoe Bottom also showed up as a top priority.

In the capital budget, the mayor is proposing that the city shell out \$13.6 million for infrastructure and set aside \$5 million for development of a center highlighting the city's history of slavery and its black heritage.

He also proposes to spend an additional \$7.6 million to prepare city property on the Boulevard for development, on top of past spending to relocate city and school operations from the 60-acre area next to The Diamond.

In his message to council, the mayor said the city is seeing small but steady recovery, with revenues up about 2 percent from the current year.

The mayor conceded his budget proposal is not perfect, but said his proposal continues to move Richmond toward becoming a Tier One city with a Triple-A bond rating.

"This depends on having a world class education system, demonstrating fiscal responsibility, serving all of our citizens, reducing poverty, and furthering Richmond as a good place to work, live and do business," he said as he presented his budget plan.

The fight against poverty is a big part of the budget, the mayor told the council in his message. He said the city already

spends \$194 million a year on programs that range from food stamp distribution to temporary housing, truancy control, health care and family services.

He said more needs to be done. Along with the \$1 million for affordable housing, his spending plan also provides \$2.3 million to fund recommendations from the 50-member Anti-Poverty Commission the mayor appointed in the spring of 2011.

His proposal earmarks the money to boost job training efforts, improve public transit and increase early childhood development programs.

"I think it's pretty clear they listened to our recommendations," said Thad Williamson, co-chair of the commission with Council Vice President Ellen F. Robertson, 6th District.

The mayor also asked council to provide \$4.3 million in capital funds to develop a pre-kindergarten facility at the new Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School and for \$1.25 million to aid plans to redevelop the Creighton and Whitcomb Court public housing communities in the East End.

On the flip side, the mayor proposed cuts to homeless services and foster care services.

However, he also sought to help Sheriff C.T. Woody Jr. reduce the jail population as he prepares for the opening of the new \$134.6 million Justice Center this spring.

The mayor has proposed an increase of \$200,000 for electronic home monitoring, \$190,000 for pretrial services and nearly \$60,000 for counseling services.

In a salute to the tremendous successes of the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League that has hosted the Inner City Classic and the Black World Series the past two years at The Diamond, the mayor allotted an additional \$20,000.

Most council members have reserved their comments on the mayor's plan. However, Reva M. Trammell, 8th District, did not hesitate to speak out.

"I don't think we should raise the rates on utilities, especially when Mr. Mayor praised himself (in his 2013 budget) for lowering the rate," she stated in a response to a query.

"Also, we need more money for our schools and raises for our employees. And, what about our retirees?"



James Haskins/Richmond Free Press

A jubilant John Marshall fan expresses joy over the Justices' win of the 3A state championship last Thursday at the Siegel Center. The Justices beat crosstown rival George Wythe 74-56 in the first state hoops competition to feature the two city schools.

John Marshall makes history

Continued from A1

Bell, Edmund Sherod, Edmund Sherod Jr., Warren Peebles and Lamar Taylor, to name just a few.

Still, none performed more brilliantly, on such a bright stage, as Burton did versus Wythe.

The muscular 6-footer, John Marshall's lone senior starter, ransacked the Bulldogs' defense for 14 points and a possible state record 14 assists.

There is no listed state mark for assists.

Burton attributed his performance to "getting into the paint," and Sheppard's talent of making "a three-pointer seem like a lay-up."

During the game, Burton continually drove toward the basket, drawing the Wythe defense with him and creating open looks for his mates.

Of Burton's leadership, JM coach White said: "Quaman is a winner; he could lead any Fortune 500 company."

In Sheppard, a precocious 6-foot-1 guard dubbed "Baby Face," Burton had the ideal passing target.

Sheppard hit five of eight from beyond the arc en route to 27 points. He also had four assists and four rebounds.

For the season, the 10th-grader whom White says "looks like he's 12 years old," was a grownup in firing three-point shots. For the season, he hit 103 of 231 three-point attempts or an eye-opening 44 percent.

Other players who helped John Marshall win include Taqqi Muhammad, who scored 12 points and had five rebounds; 6-foot-8 Nathan Williams, who scored seven points and had eight rebounds and four blocked shots; and Burton's heir apparent, Jerquante Broaddus, who had six points, seven rebounds and three assists.

And then there was 6-foot-5 center Greg Jones, whom White says "may be the best freshman in the state."

Jones was fairly quiet with five points offensively, but played a major role in denying the Bulldogs inside shooting lanes.

John Marshall finished 21-5 and is a clear favorite to repeat next year with all of the team's key players returning, except for Burton.

The record book shows the Justices won six state titles between 1920 and 1954 — long before the school moved from Downtown to North Side in 1961 and well before Brown v. Board of Education took the wrecking ball to public school segregation.

In finishing 21-5, George Wythe was one victory short of fulfilling its "Worst to First" theme.

Just a few seasons removed from a winless campaign, the Bulldogs underwent a remarkable turnaround this season under

Richmond Public Schools basketball champions				
Virginia High School League**				
YEAR	WINNING TEAM	SCORE	OPPONENT	SCORE
Group 3A*				
2014	John Marshall Justices	74	George Wythe	56
(*New classification for schools with 750 to 1,112 students)				
Group AAA*				
1984	JHW Trojans	73	Pulaski	55
1983	Marshall-Walker Cavaliers	66	T.C. Williams	65
1982	Marshall-Walker Cavaliers	65	William Fleming	58
1976	Maggie Walker Green Dragons	82	Lee/Springfield	68
1975	Thomas Jefferson Vikings	41	Halifax	37
1971	Maggie Walker Green Dragons	80	Lee/Staunton	63
(*1970-2013 classification for schools with largest enrollments)				
Group 1A*				
1954	John Marshall Justices	49	E.C. Glass	45
1948	John Marshall Justices	45	Newport News	35
1946	Thomas Jefferson Vikings	23	Jefferson/Roanoke	22
1944	Thomas Jefferson Vikings	32	Newport News	27
1937	John Marshall Justices	33	E.C. Glass	20
1936	John Marshall Justices	39	Jefferson/Roanoke	12
1932	John Marshall Justices	25	GW-Danville	24
1920	John Marshall Justices	27	E.C. Glass	12
(*Original classification for schools with largest enrollments)				
(**A champions list could not be found for the Virginia Intercollegiate Association in which Maggie Walker and Armstrong played during segregation. The VIA was merged into the VHSL in 1968.)				

second-year coach Willard Coker, former head coach at Virginia Union University.

Wythe will lose four senior starters but looks forward to two more go-rounds with do-it-all 6-foot-1 guard Maliek White, who had 19 points against John Marshall and showed off uncanny leaping ability with three blocks, including one on 6-foot-8 Williams.

Coker has a terrific freshman prospect in 6-foot-5 Richard Sanders, who got in five minutes in the final.

If ever there was a game in which both squads could leave the gym with chins held high, this was it.

"This was one for the city," Coker said.

Both squads have been invited to the City Council meeting next Monday, March 24, to be honored for their stellar seasons and sportsmanship, according to Councilman Chris Hilbert, 3rd District.

State NAACP leaderless

Continued from A1

the work of two NAACP attorneys from Richmond, Oliver W. Hill Sr., who helped found the state group, and Spottwood W. Robinson III, both deceased. Both were prominent members of the team that won the landmark Supreme Court case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kan., which abolished enforced government segregation of public schools and led to the dismantling of American apartheid.

Ms. Taylor did not return phone calls or emails requesting further details.

Asked about Ms. Taylor's statement, Mr. Khalfani, 54, stated in an email: "I have not received any communications from the (state) NAACP (president or executive committee). As such it would be inappropriate for me to comment."

"I am attempting to resolve this lack of communication," said Mr. Khalfani, who essentially was dismissed Feb. 18 when the locks on the doors to the offices at the headquarters were changed.

Further discussion on reopening the state office could take place on Saturday, April 5, when the state conference is scheduled to hold its quarterly meeting at its Richmond office.

Meanwhile, Ms. Taylor has notified the state NAACP's branches that Mr. Khalfani was dismissed, the first notice to them.

Among those receiving the information was L.J. McCoy, president of the Chesterfield Branch.

"I'm disappointed that Mr. Khalfani was terminated in this manner without the opportunity to address the executive committee or any branch," Mr. McCoy stated in an email confirming he finally had received an official communication from Ms. Taylor.

Referendum

Continued from A1

in Richmond or to approve financing whenever a minority of council requests such action. Under the proposal, council would need a super majority to block a referendum.

Mr. Goldman said he expects the group to begin collecting signatures as early as this weekend and certainly by next week.

He said he is working to get the petition collection started before City Council receives the proposed final contracts on the Shockoe Bottom stadium and related developments that the mayor's staff is now negotiating.

The resolution that council approved earlier this month on the Shockoe Bottom plan calls for Byron C. Marshall, the city's chief administrative officer, to present the package of information to the council by Thursday, March 27.

Mr. Goldman said the group should have four months to collect the signatures to make the Aug. 1 deadline. "That should be enough time," he said.

In his view, if the petition drive generates the kind of support he envisions, that could put pressure on the council to hold off on its vote on the development.

Chris Brown behind bars

Continued from A1

Mr. Brown's problems are complicated by the Washington misdemeanor case that is set to be heard Thursday, April 17. If convicted of assaulting the man, Mr. Brown could get up to a year in jail there.

Anger has been a problem for the "Turn Up the Music" singer and became most notable in 2009 with his horrific assault on singer Rihanna on the eve of the Grammy Awards.

He avoided a prison term after agreeing to five years probation, 1,000 hours of community service and domestic violence counseling.

He was required to repeat the community service after Judge Brandlin found Richmond Police submitted false records of the work Mr. Brown supposedly did in Richmond and Tappahannock under the department's supervision.

Since going on probation, Mr. Brown has been involved in several highly publicized incidents in which his anger got the best of him, including altercations with rapper Drake and R&B singer Frank Ocean.

Local News

As expected, Jones is state Dem Party chair

By Joey Matthews

The new face of the Democratic Party of Virginia has a poor track record on advocating for human equality and economic justice.

Ignoring disturbing evidence about Richmond Mayor Dwight C. Jones, the party's 300-member Central Committee still elected him as its new chairman and chief spokesman.

Only a few voiced dissent when the committee voted Saturday during the spring meeting at a hotel in Henrico County.

The mayor's easy win came after the three other candidates for the post withdrew their candidacies last week.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe nominated Mayor Jones, a political ally and friend, for the post.

The mayor has drawn criticism from the Free

Press and others after he staunchly supported a discriminatory training camp deal with the Washington professional football team.

The racist deal was brokered by Mayor Jones and backed by a corporate partner, Bon Secours Virginia Health System, which provided \$6 million to fund the \$10 million camp development.

The deal prevented local vendors, especially minority ones, from concessions opportunities inside the new taxpayer-supported training camp facility in Richmond last summer.

The mayor also has repeatedly refused to publicly urge the D.C. team to change its racist nickname.



Mayor Jones

His candidacy to chair the state party hit a glitch over his past opposition to gay marriage.

The 66-year-old Baptist minister voiced his opposition to same-sex marriage when President Obama endorsed it in May 2012.

"This is one issue that President Obama and I disagree on," he said at the time.

Democratic gay rights groups and at least four of the 11 Northern Virginia Democrats to succeed Rep. James P. Moran as the representative for the 8th Congressional District had expressed concerns about the mayor's candidacy.

Before the vote, Mayor Jones met with legislators and gay rights supporters to explain

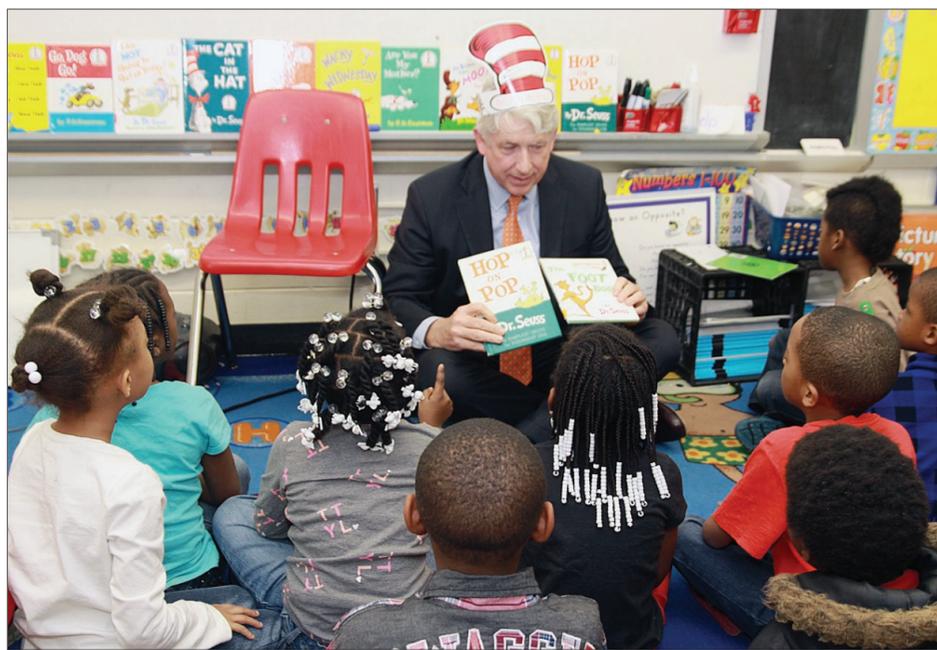
what he called his "evolving" stance on gay marriage.

Afterward, most of the opponents dropped their opposition to his election.

State Democrats hope the mayor can help the party continue its momentum that saw a historic sweep of the state's top three offices in the gubernatorial election in November.

In a statement after the vote, Mayor Jones, the first African-American man to chair the party, described himself as "excited to work with Democrats across the commonwealth to build a strong, sustainable party."

Mayor Jones takes over from Alexandria Delegate Charmiele Herring, the first African-American chair in the party's history. She threw her support to Mayor Jones before the vote. She stepped down to run for Rep. Moran's seat.



Paulette Singleton/Richmond Free Press

Ready to read

Attorney General Mark Herring prepares to read a Dr. Seuss book to first-graders at Woodville Elementary School in Richmond. To get in the mood, he's donned the signature Dr. Seuss hat from the "Cat in the Hat." He was among adults from all walks of life who went to schools last month to take part in the annual Read Across America salute to the late Theodor Geisel, author of the still hugely popular Dr. Seuss books.

New scholarship honors Dr. Francis M. Foster Sr.

Richmond dentist Francis M. Foster Sr. continues to touch people's lives six years after his death.

One example is a scholarship the VCU School of Dentistry has created to honor the genial Jackson Ward practitioner who taught the school's dental students for 18 years.

The school created the scholarship to celebrate a milestone — the graduation of the first 100 dentists of color, according to Barbara J. Payton, director of development for the school.

The school is establishing the Francis Foster Scholarship as it begins its quest to graduate the next 100, Ms. Payton said. The scholarship will be presented annually to a member of the Student National Dental Association.

The scholarship is already endowed, Ms. Payton said, thanks to a \$10,000 contribution from Dr. Ralph L. Anderson and his wife, Judith.

Dr. Anderson is a retired Richmond orthodontist who teaches at the VCU school. Mrs. Anderson is a former deputy secretary of the commonwealth who served during the administration



Dr. Foster

of Gov. Mark Warner, now a U.S. senator.

Another \$60,000 in donations and pledges has been received to fund the Foster scholarship, Ms. Payton said.

The scholarship was to be announced at a community gala, she said, but she said that program was canceled.

Dr. Foster, a community icon, died in 2008 at age 86.

Born into segregated Richmond, he practiced dentistry in his Jackson Ward birthplace for 41 years, after graduating from Virginia Union University, serving as a World War II Army dentist and earning his degree from the Howard University School of Dentistry.

He was an amateur magician who put patients at ease with his sleight of hand. He also was well known for his stories about the people and history of Jackson Ward.

After closing his practice in 1989, he went to teach at the VCU school until 2007.

Active in civic affairs, Dr. Foster and his family established a fund that purchases materials for the Richmond Public Library's African-American collection.



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Happy Spring

Spring has officially arrived and we couldn't be happier. It has been a long, cold winter. Repeated major storms have had a major impact on Virginians and have frequently crippled the activities of friends and family who live farther north.

Flowers are bursting forth from our moist ground, trees are beginning to bud and dog walkers abound. Have you noticed how warmer weather seems to make people smile, pause on the street, talk with neighbors and enjoy life just a little bit more?

Spring gives hope.
Happy Spring!

Opportunity time

A. Linwood Holton, the great former governor, was known for roaming the upstairs at the Governor's Mansion early each morning and waking up his three children by shouting, "It's opportunity time!"

When the Virginia General Assembly comes back to Richmond next week to finalize the two-year 2015-16 state budget and to consider expanding health insurance to Virginia's poor, the lawmakers will have a huge opportunity.

A proposed private insurance plan, "Marketplace Virginia," would enable our state to recover and utilize \$1.7 billion in federal funds each year to help up to 400,000 poor and uninsured.

We are grateful for the solid and strong support of Democratic legislators from the Richmond area.

We are also grateful to two Richmond-area Republican state senators, John Watkins of Powhatan and Walter Stosch of Henrico, who are co-patrons of "Marketplace Virginia." With their help, the measure passed the Senate.

A lot is up to Richmond area Republican members of the House of Delegates and their GOP colleagues across the state. It is sad to see some area delegates leading the opposition to this common sense, fiscally prudent, show of compassion toward our neighbors in need.

A majority of Virginians want to see state government use our tax dollars to help our citizens. Hopefully, some of those now supporting the naysaying House Republican leadership will reconsider their positions and put people first.

It would be callous to deny this opportunity.

Corrective actions

America's systemic practice of excessive incarceration, particularly of minority men, and the failure to aid former prisoners in their re-entry into society, is a serious continuing concern.

Progress is being made in significant categories: Sentencing reform; civil rights restoration for citizens with felony convictions; and various programs designed to aid former prisoners in finding employment and successfully re-entering society.

One group active in this cause, a coalition of Virginia civil rights organizations and churches led by Resource Information Help for the Disabled, is conducting a statewide advocacy effort billed as the "Mobile Justice Tour."

It touched down in eastern Henrico County this week at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church.

We salute these grassroots efforts to educate Virginians about the plight of those leaving our prisons and jails — and the corrective actions which can be taken.

Bullying

The bullying of President Obama by right-wing interest groups has reached a new and deplorable peak.

This month, the president has seen one highly-qualified appointee defeated and another seriously sidetracked due to pressure from conservative groups and the reluctance of a handful of U.S. senators to stand for principle.

President Obama's nominee to head the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, veteran civil rights litigator Debo Adegbile, was defeated in a 52-47 Senate vote March 5.

The Fraternal Order of Police and others venomously attacked Mr. Adegbile for his 1981 legal work in an appeal by his employer, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

President Obama deplored the Senate's action as a "travesty based on wildly unfair character attacks against a good and qualified public servant."

Then this week the president was forced to avoid a Senate vote on his choice of Harvard Medical School physician Vivek Hallegere Murthy, to be U.S. surgeon general. The reason: National Rifle Association threats to retaliate against Democratic senators in this fall's elections.

Dr. Murthy, who is supported by scores of medical groups, is an outspoken advocate for restrictions on firearms. That stance, of course, makes sense for someone in line for the top public health position.

Once more, narrow interests and partisan politics are disrupting the conduct of good government — and the American people are denied the services of patriotic and talented leaders.

Icy daffodils in West End



Sandra Sellars/Richmond Free Press

Rich are still getting richer

During his State of the Union Address, President Obama promised to use the power of his pen to achieve policy objectives that Congress continues to block. He's doing that where he legally can.



For example, he already has issued an executive order to require federal contractors to pay

workers at least \$10.10 per hour, or \$21,800 per year, effective Jan. 1, 2015.

Now the president is using the power of his pen to ensure that more workers receive overtime pay. Currently, the only workers required to receive overtime pay are those who earn \$445 a week, about \$11 an hour, or \$23,000 per year.

The president has proposed that amount be raised to somewhere between \$550 and \$970 a week. Splitting the difference would mean that those who earn about \$760 a week, or \$39,500 a year, would be entitled to overtime.

The business lobby has

said that both a higher minimum wage and an increase in mandatory overtime would cut into their profits and suggested such policies would lead to reduction in employment and cuts in hours.

Julianne Malveaux

These greedy corporate giants fail to note that while wages and salaries for the top 1 percent soared by nearly a third in the past three years, the wages of those in the remaining 99 percent rose by a fraction of one percent.

A worker earning \$30,000 a year saw her wages rise to \$30,300; someone earning \$300,000 a year saw his wages rise to \$396,000.

Clearly, those who earn \$30,300, if not poor, are a stone's throw away from poverty. These are the folks who struggle from paycheck to paycheck, who make decisions about whether to buy their children new shoes or pay the cable bill. These folks aren't trying to purchase luxuries, and they aren't looking for handouts. They just want to live decently, with enough food

on the table, enough money to pay the bills and enough extra for a little recreation. These are folks who don't take vacations. Luxury for them may mean a couple of days off to visit neighborhood parks. Summertime, when the living is easy for children, may be a burden to those parents who can't afford child care.

The president is moving in the right direction. Unfortunately he can't get enough members of Congress to follow, because they are committed to obstructionism. Aren't there poor people in these Republican districts? Are they willing to sacrifice the well being of their constituents to hold fast to party principles? Researchers should look at the levels of poverty in each congressional district and shame these miscreants into doing the right thing.

Republicans forget, and some Democrats fail to argue, that increasing the economic well being of those at the bottom improves the nation's economic status. Those at the bottom will use added wages to pump money into the economy. In contrast, those at the top are likely to save their money or invest it,

failing to spend enough to create a trickle to benefit those at the bottom.

It is said that a rising tide lifts all boats. But some folks are riding a luxury yacht, while others are struggling to survive on a raft.

To the extent that President Obama has the power of the pen, he can both improve the lives of those at the bottom, but also remind us of the meaning of fair labor standards. This is a conversation our nation has not had in awhile.

We have been content to let the wages of those at the bottom continue to drift downward, while using tax policy to enrich those at the top.

What does it take to sensitize those at the top to the plight of those at the bottom?

The Occupy Movement looks better by the day.

The writer is president emerita of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, N.C.

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Will we forget him again?

Now the world knows something of the story of Solomon Northup, a black American from New York who was kidnapped by slave-hunters in the 1840s and who spent the next 12 years as a captive



in America's man-made hell of slavery.

Now the world knows a truer version of antebellum America's "peculiar institution,"

of the suffering that "institution" caused the nearly 4 million Africans and African-Americans in bondage and of the precarious status of the half-million "free" black people like Mr. Northup who also were part of this nation.

And now the glow of the acclaim is still neon-bright for the movie "12 Years a Slave," which gained Hollywood's highest honor, the Academy Award for best 2013 film.

But will that glow remain? Or will Mr. Northup's story be forgotten again?

Two recent developments are related to those questions.

I'm thinking of the stunning discovery in Munich, Germany, late last year of more than 1,400 paintings stolen or confiscated by Nazi officials from their Jewish owners and from museums during the 1940s.

And I'm also thinking of the efforts of Japan's current prime

minister to erase the facts of the country's savage expansionist policies and actions during the wars on the Asian mainland and in the Pacific in the 1930s and 1940s.

The contrast is striking. On the one hand, the world has rediscovered lost paintings by

Lee A. Daniels

some of the greatest artists of the last three centuries — an incalculable re-addition to the world's cultural treasures.

On the other, Japan's national political leader is trying to pretend the evil his country engaged in a half-century ago didn't happen.

They show, just like Mr. Northup's story, that the events and facts of history can be buried and rediscovered — and, if the world isn't vigilant, buried again.

Mr. Northup's memoir was widely publicized and sold well when it first appeared in 1853 as the furious national debate about slavery careened inexorably toward the Civil War.

But it was mostly forgotten in the war's aftermath in white America's betrayal of Reconstruction.

The truth about the enslavement of and the achievements of black Americans ended up being distorted and buried, most notably in D.W. Griffiths' landmark film of 1915, "Birth of A Nation," which, far more than school history texts, "taught" so many about the big war and

its aftermath.

Indeed, that film's innovative cinematic techniques help it spread its vicious racist propaganda and justify the pervasive racist laws and policies white people in the North and South imposed on black people.

And its portrayal of black people influenced later Hollywood films, including the 1939 blockbuster "Gone With The Wind," which powerfully reinforced for another three decades black people's second-class status on and off the silver screen.

Hopefully, it is an omen of change that "12 Years a Slave" has gained Hollywood's most prestigious prize during the year that marks the 75th anniversary of the premiere of "Gone With the Wind," and the 99th anniversary of "Birth of A Nation."

Or is this breakthrough of "12 Years a Slave" at the box office and at the Academy Awards just a pause to celebrate a gripping story, excellent script, a fine cast and insightful director — to be forgotten by the next awards season when new movies are getting the attention?

What we must realize is that Mr. Northup's story will only live on if his book is read by and the film is shown to future generations. Otherwise, in a few years, he could just as easily again be consigned to the dust heap of history to be buried under fresh distortions.

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The Free Press welcomes letters

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Letters to the Editor

Visit to Deep South underscored need to continue to fight for vote

I recently returned from the annual Congressional Civil Rights Pilgrimage with Rep. John Lewis to Mississippi and Alabama. Every year, the Faith and Politics Institute sponsors the bipartisan pilgrimage to learn about our history and the sacrifices made so that we can truly be one nation indivisible.

This year, the main focus was on the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Freedom Summer in Mississippi. Nearly 20 members of Congress (including Virginia Republican Rep. Eric Cantor) learned about the passionate work done by local activists and college students to help people register to vote despite enormous barriers in their way.

We talked directly to the widow of Mississippi NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers at the home where he was assassinated in the summer of 1963.

We were joined by many of the Freedom Summer volunteers, including the brother of Andy Goodman who was kidnapped and killed with two other volunteers within days of their arrival in the state.



Sen. Kaine

And we visited the hometown of Fannie Lou Hamer and talked to her friends and family about her passionate advocacy for voting rights at the 1964 Democratic Convention.

On Sunday, we traveled to Selma, Ala., for a worship service at Brown Chapel AME Church. A commemorative panel on the wall remembered VMI graduate Jonathan Daniels, who was killed in Alabama as a civil rights worker in 1965.

The weekend concluded as we joined a huge crowd in marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge arm in arm with John Lewis as he narrated what happened in March 1965 as his group of marchers on the bridge was attacked and beaten by state and local police as the marchers peacefully advocated for voting rights.

The weekend was deeply spiritual, thinking of sacrifice and the deep faith of people who faced violence peacefully to help our nation be true to its principles.

But it also was joyous, as we heard again and again of the power of ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things.

And I even got to play blues harmonica at the Ground Zero Blues Club in Clarksdale, Miss.!

We can never take the right to vote for granted. I learned this living in Honduras when it was a military dictatorship.

And I'm learning it again as many states are acting to reduce voting access today. The weekend taught us all that the work continues.

TIMOTHY M. "TIM" KAINE
Washington

The writer is a U.S. senator who lives in Richmond. He also is a former governor of Virginia and a former mayor of Richmond.

GOP 'sickness' spreads to 7 Democrats

Re "7 Dems bolt party, side with GOP on Medicaid," March 6-8 edition:

After reading your story, I had to comment. Any amount of intelligence would inform one that the investment made in the health of all of its citizens is wealth for the Commonwealth in the long haul. The poor health of the citizens in Virginia will cost us in the end. The state cannot afford not to take advantage of including Medicaid expansion in the budget.

It was no surprise that the conservative faction, with its mean-spirited agenda, would hold out.

But what was very unconscionable and alarming was the fact that the Republican sickness had spread to the other side of the aisle.

The 7 Democrats gave evidence of that. How can those seven representatives, in particular, responsibly govern and be so detached and dense in their vote to help exclude Medicaid expansion? Medicaid

expansion could only aid in the quality of life for their constituency. There is no excuse! No rationale that is acceptable!

To Gov. Terry McAuliffe and supportive senators, stand your ground and don't back down!

The Richmond and Baltimore Guardian Angels have embarked on a campaign to reduce black-on-black homicides.

While black people comprise 13 percent of the population of the United States, there's a problem when 50 percent of the homicides involve black Americans.

And the situation is much worse here in Richmond. We make up 50 percent of the city's population, but almost 100 percent of the homicide victims are black, as are almost 100 percent of the perpetrators.

The 400,000 low-income Virginians need you. Valuable federal aid that other states are receiving would advance us into the future. A more informed populous concerning this issue is what is needed and would help annihilate the Republican sickness, thus empower the

people to push back with their votes. It's time for Democrats to fight back to allow Virginia to move forward into a new day.

THE REV. JOSINE C. OSBORNE
Richmond

Let's end black-on-black crime

Crime in Richmond has been going down steadily, and the homicide numbers are much lower than they were seven years ago.

However, the 37 homicides in 2013 were still too many for a city the size of Richmond. And again, it is terrible that almost 100 percent of those homicide victims were black and that almost 100 percent of the perpetrators were black.

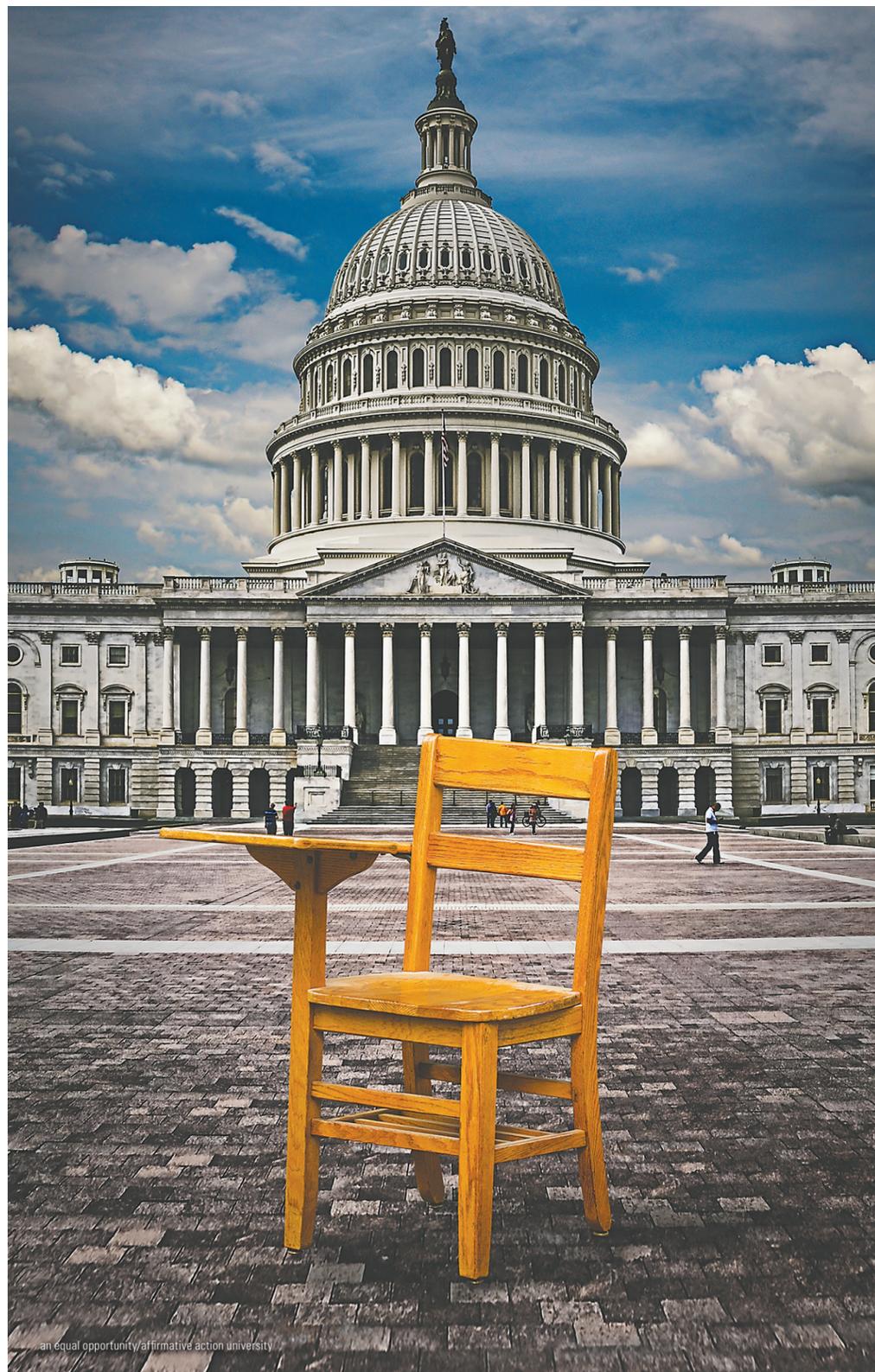
Please join us and a host of other community leaders and organizations that already

have joined the fight.

The mayor has changed the slogan for the City of Richmond from "Building a Better Richmond" to "Building the Best Richmond." Let's help make that a reality by ending this homicide scourge.

JO WHITE
Richmond

The writer is the commander of the Richmond Chapter of the Alliance of Guardian Angels.



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Sports

Stories by Fred Jeter

VCU earns ticket to the 'Big Dance'

Smart's Rams beat George Washington in ACC semifinals before losing to Saint Joseph's

VCU has its ticket to the NCAA's "Big Dance" — but on an unfamiliar floor far, far from home.

The Rams must travel 2,600 miles to San Diego to face Stephen F. Austin's Lumberjacks on Friday, March 21, in the first round of games in the NCAA tournament's South Region. Tip-off is scheduled for 7:27 p.m., at the 12,414-seat arena at San Diego State.



Coach Smart

Virginia Commonwealth University, 26-8, is seeded fifth in the region following its heartbreaking 65-61 loss Sunday to Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia in the Atlantic 10 tournament final that CBS broadcast nationally from Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Rams' first NCAA foe is from Nacogdoches, Texas, and named for the state's founder. Austin is the newly crowned Southland Conference champion and arrives with a 31-2 record based on 27 straight victories. The Lumberjacks only losses were in November at Texas and at East Tennessee.

This will be the Rams' fourth consecutive NCAA appearance under coach Shaka Smart. VCU advanced to the Final Four in 2011, losing in the semifinals to Butler. The Rams also won their first games in 2012 and 2013 before falling to Indiana and Michigan, respectively, in the next round.

Overall, VCU will be making its 13th NCAA appearance since 1980. Austin has gone "dancing" just once before in 2009, losing to Syracuse in its debut.

VCU's depth and outside shooting took a hit in Brooklyn when sophomore Melvin Johnson suffered a strained knee in the semifinal win over George Washington.

His status remains "questionable" for the Rams' first game in the NCAA tournament. Johnson was averaging 10.4 points and 22.4 minutes per game and was the A-10 Sixth Man of Year. Johnson also was the Rams' leader in 3-pointers. He had scored 66 this season, or 40 percent of his attempts.

With Johnson on crutches for the A-10 final, Smart used



These photos evidence the battle that raged between VCU and Saint Joseph's in the Atlantic 10 tournament final before the Rams fell 65-61. Left, Saint Joseph's DeAndre Bembry runs into tough defense from VCU's Jordan Burgess. Right, JeQuan Lewis beats the Hawks defenders and scores a quick lay-up for the Rams in Saturday's championship game at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, N.Y.

only eight players, though VCU's bench logged 47 minutes compared to just seven for the Hawks' reserves.

Johnson is the second roster loss of late. Last month, 6-foot-8 Florida State transfer Terrance Shannon left the team for personal reasons.

The game with Austin could be decided by how effectively the Rams' relentless "havoc" full-floor pressure works against the Lumberjacks.

VCU leads the NCAA in forcing 18.3 turnovers per game and in steals with 11.3 per game; the Lumberjacks have been pretty stingy with the ball, averaging a mere 11.2 lost possessions per game.

The match-up between VCU's 6-foot-2 Briante Weber, the NCAA steals leader, and the Lumberjacks



Photos by Seth Wenig/Associated Press

floor general, 5-foot-9 guard Trey Pinkney, figures to be key. Pinkney doesn't score much, but distributes the ball well, recording 115 assists and just 57 turnovers in 789 minutes.

If VCU takes down the Lumberjacks, the Rams would move on to face the winner of the UCLA-Tulsa match-up. That game is scheduled for Sunday, May 23, at San Diego State's arena.

VCU is likely to be without much of its fan base. The Rams had the largest, most raucous fan delegation in Brooklyn, but the trip across three time zones to San Diego is likely to reduce supporter numbers, bad news for a team that was perfect at home, but only so-so playing elsewhere.

MEAC champs seeking to add to upset tradition

MEAC champs have been giant slayers before in the NCAA "March Madness."

Now it's North Carolina Central University's turn with the slingshot.

The Eagles are getting their chance after winning their first ever Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference tournament title.

The conference's best team all season, NCCU claimed the MEAC's automatic bid to the national men's tournament with a 71-63 victory Saturday over scrappy Morgan State at the Norfolk Scope.

The Eagles now are set to face No. 3 seed Iowa State, the Big 12 tournament champion, in San Antonio on Friday. Tip-off is scheduled

for 9:50 p.m., with the game to be broadcast on TBS.

NCCU (28-5) is seeded 14th, meaning the Eagles drew ample respect to avoid the dreaded "First Four" play-in games in Dayton. One reason: NCCU's thrilling 82-72 overtime victory in November over North Carolina State of the powerhouse Atlantic Coast Conference.

The Eagles, rated by most analysts as unlikely to advance, will be seeking to change expectations by orchestrating an upset of the higher rated Cyclones.

Upset history is on the side of the Eagles. MEAC teams own three of the most memorable long-shot wins in NCAA tournament history.

Coppin State defeated South Carolina in 1997, Hampton KO'd Iowa State in 2001 and Norfolk State shocked Missouri in 2012.

In the Norfolk title game, the MEAC Player of the Year Jeremy Ingram poured in 29 points for the Eagles, foiling Morgan State's 7-foot-2 Ian Chiles, who dropped in 26 points.

This will be NCCU's first trip to the NCAA Division I "Big Dance." The Eagles won the national NCAA Division II title in 1989 under coach Mike Bernard.

Before that, the Eagles' only other tournament win was in 1950 when they won the CIAA title under legendary coach John McLendon.

Under LeVelle Morton, the MEAC Coach of

the Year this season, the Eagles have won 20 straight heading into the NCAA tournament.

The only other historically black school that qualified for the NCAA tournament is Texas Southern, a 78-73 winner over Prairie View in the SWAC finals in Houston.

On Wednesday, Texas Southern faced the Cal Poly Mustangs, winners of the Big West conference tournament, in a first-round game in Dayton. This was Texas Southern's fifth trip to the NCAA tourney, but the first under coach Mike Davis, a former head coach at Indiana (succeeding Bobby Knight) and at Alabama-Birmingham. He led those teams to the NCAA tournament as well.

Candidates vying to replace Jaaber at VUU

Vance Harmon, the basketball coach for Henrico High, appears to be a viable candidate for the vacant coaching job at Virginia Union University.

The post swung open when Luqman Jaaber's contract was not renewed after VUU finished 6-20 this season.

Harmon played on VUU's 1992 NCAA Division II championship team. In his four years at the Henrico helm, he has guided the Warriors to the 2013 state AAA championship, returned this year to the state finals and compiled an overall 100-19 record.

Former VUU coach Dave Robbins speaks highly of Harmon but noted "three or

four of my other players are also interested."

One is ex-Panther Terry Davis, a former two-time CIAA Player of Year who was a finalist for the job three year ago when Jaaber was selected.

Also applying is Anthony Peeler, a VUU assistant under Jaaber. Peeler played in the NBA from 1992 to 2005. He earlier starred at Missouri and was the Los Angeles Lakers' No. 1 draft pick in 1992.

Another possible VUU candidate is Delmar Harris, 35, head coach the last five years at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Harris, an alumnus of Virginia State University, starred

as a player at Monacan High School and Fork Union Military Academy and has been

an assistant coach at the University of Richmond, Virginia Military Institute and Morgan

State University. He also has coached for the Richmond Metro AAU.

CIAA champ goes down

The CIAA men's team with the best one-two punch went down fighting in the NCAA Division II tournament.

CIAA champ Livingstone, 21-8 and seeded eighth, was a 99-98 loser to No. 1 seed and host East Stroudsburg, Pa., in the Atlantic Region quarterfinals.

Livingstone was led, as usual, by CIAA Player of Year Mark Thomas, who scored 36 points. All-CIAA Jody Hill added 29 points for the Blue Bears in

the loss. It was the final college game for both seniors.

Virginia State University's women's basketball team ran out of gas in the mountains of West Virginia.

Coach James Hill's Lady Trojans were 75-57 losers to Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania in the NCAA Division II regional quarterfinals in Glenville, W.Va.

CIAA Player of Year Lamesha Deal scored 14 points for VSU in

her final college game, while junior Tiffanie Adair had 18 points for the Lady Trojans, who finished 25-3, the team's best ever record.

VSU earlier was the top seed in the CIAA tourney in Charlotte but fell to Shaw's Lady Bears in the semifinals.

The Lady Bears joined VSU in falling short in the Division II quarterfinals in West Virginia. With two of its best players injured, Shaw was a 76-70 loser to Gannon University, also of Pennsylvania, in the NCAA tournament's first round.

Maybe next year for Henrico Warriors

Henrico High failed in its bid for back-to-back state titles, but two-out-of-three remains feasible.

"I promise you, we will be back next year," Warriors' star De'Monte Buckingham vowed shortly after a 54-42 loss Friday to Potomac in the state 5A hoops finals at the Siegel Center.

Under coach Vance Harmon, Henrico finished 22-7 and state runner-up this season after going 30-2 and winning the

state AAA title a year ago.

Harmon said Henrico's biggest problem was with 6-foot-9 George Mason signee Trey Porter, who finished with 18 points and six blocked shots.

"It was like trying to shoot over someone with broomsticks for arms," said Harmon.

The focus of the Potomac defense, Buckingham led the Warriors with 18 points and seven rebounds before fouling out late in the game.

A 6-foot-4, 210-pound sophomore, Buckingham is strong, springy and savvy, able to be dominant near the bucket, smoothly handle the ball on the perimeter and score with a classic jump shot.

The younger brother of 6-foot-7 Daz Starke, a former Highland Springs standout now with the Richmond Elite pro squad, Buckingham already is attracting college scouts. He has offers from six Division I schools and interest from VCU and North Carolina.

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