



Meet chairman of Richmond Ethiopian Community Services **B1**



Obama's best-seller **B2**

FREE

Richmond Free Press

FREE

© 2020 Paradigm Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

VOL. 29 NO. 49

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

www.richmondfreepress.com

NOVEMBER 25-28, 2020

'Nursing school doesn't prepare you for this'

Working at ground zero



VCU Medical Center's Jade Jones knows the joy and pain wrapped into caring for COVID-19 patients as a respiratory ICU nurse

By Nichole M. Christian

Jade Jones is living her life's dream — in the midst of a deadly national nightmare.

She is a nurse in the respiratory intensive care unit at VCU Medical Center. Her days are long and scary — 12-hour shifts that for much of the last year have placed her face to face with the consequences and casualties of the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Ms. Jones has held hands with the dying, shed tears with the relatives of patients and some days found herself battling both tears and anger over the seemingly callous disregard of those who refuse to treat the crisis for what it is: A pandemic with no end or proven cure yet in sight.

"I wish people could really get a picture of our days and

Please turn to A4

Richmond family grateful through Thanksgiving changes



By Ronald E. Carrington

Thanksgiving 2020 will be very different for the Shaw family, like many others across the Commonwealth and the nation.

Their North Side home will not be filled as usual with their three adult children, Raymond, David and Maya, and about 20 others, including family, friends and neighbors, enjoying a scrumptious dinner laced with lively conversations, telling stories and catching up on the lives of the younger generation and the elders.

Listening to the warnings of experts, they are cutting back their holiday tradition — way back — because of COVID-19.

"We did not want to be responsible for starting any type of COVID virus spread," Linda Shaw said of her annual gathering.

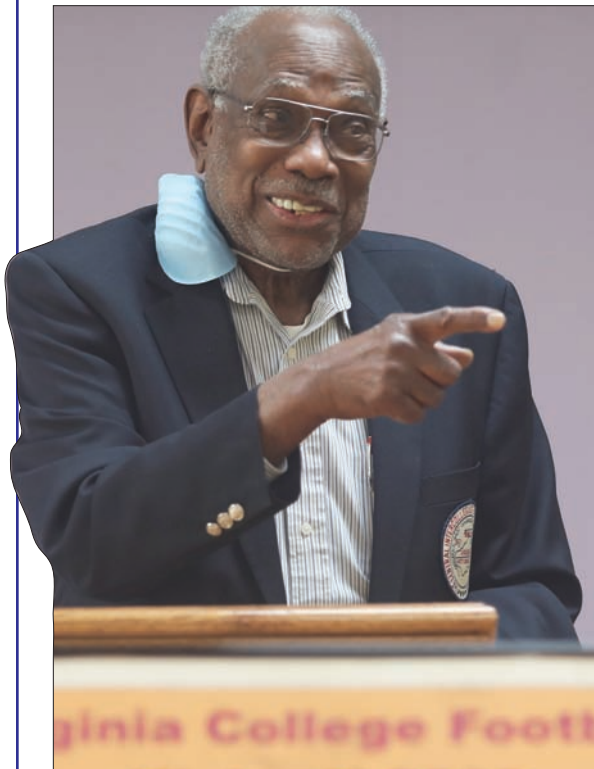
They decided on an alternate approach to Thanksgiving dinner and sharing.

"We are going to prepare and distribute 'to-go plates' — like restaurants — to be picked up at a particular time from our back

Please turn to A4

Ronald E. Carrington/Richmond Free Press
Linda and Lionel "Pooh" Shaw are scaling back their typical Thanksgiving plans to have family and friends receive "to-go" plates instead of sitting down together for dinner because of the coronavirus.

Coach Willard Bailey reaches mountaintop — Black College Football Hall of Fame



By Fred Jeter

An old sports writer phoned Coach Willard Bailey last week to interview the winningest football coach in the CIAA about being selected for the Black College Football Hall of Fame.

Coach Bailey, who had an illustrious coaching career at Virginia Union University, Norfolk State University, Saint Paul's College and Virginia University of Lynchburg, won seven CIAA championships and took teams to the NCAAs six times.

He retired from coaching in 2013 with a stellar 238-169-7 record and sent seven of his players to the NFL.

He is one of six giants in the sport who will be inducted into the 2021 Black College Football Hall of Fame during a ceremony and Juneteenth celebration in Atlanta on June 19, presented by the Atlanta Falcons.

Coach Bailey, who was a tenured professor while he led football teams, has served since 2015 as president and chief executive officer of Central International College, a private,

Please turn to A4

Regina H. Boone/Richmond Free Press
Coach Willard Bailey speaks at a celebration last Friday honoring him for his selection to the 2021 Class of the Black College Football Hall of Fame.

Free COVID-19 testing

Free community testing for COVID-19 continues. The Richmond and Henrico County health districts are offering testing at the following locations:

| DATE | LOCATION |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Tuesday, Dec. 1, 10 to noon | Eastern Henrico Health Department 1400 N. Laburnum Ave. Eastern Henrico Drive-thru testing only for those pre-registered. |
| Thursday, Dec. 3, 1 to 4 p.m. | The Diamond 3001 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd. Drive-thru testing. |
| Friday, Dec. 4, 1 to 3 p.m. | Eastern Henrico Health Department 1400 N. Laburnum Ave. Eastern Henrico Drive-thru testing only for those pre-registered. |

Appointments are encouraged by calling the Richmond and Henrico COVID-19 Hotline at (804) 205-3501 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Testing will be offered while test supplies last. The Chesterfield County Health Department also is offering free COVID-19 testing at the following location: **Second Baptist Church**, 5100 W. Hundred Road, Chester, 2 to 3 p.m. Monday, Nov. 30. Testing is encouraged for those who have COVID-19 symptoms. The testing is free, and no reservations are necessary. Details: Chesterfield County Health Department at (804) 318-8207.

Please turn to A4

City Council receives bids from 22 who want Confederate statues

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

To donate or not to donate? That is the question Richmond City Council may face when it comes to disposing of most of the city-owned Confederate statues.

"Donation preferred" is a common theme of the 22 bids that the City Council's staff has received from 17 organizations and five private individuals who have expressed interest in removing and re-establishing them elsewhere, according to a compilation prepared by Lawrence R. Anderson, council's chief of staff.

No date has been set for a decision on the statues the council controls and for at least three and possibly four others, including the statue of Christopher Columbus from Byrd Park. The Columbus statue's fate would be subject to a recommendation from Mayor Levar M. Stoney's administration.

The council's list of Confederate items awaiting disposal includes six items from Monument Avenue — the metal statues of Jefferson Davis, Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, Matthew Fontaine Maury and J.E. B. Stuart, and two cannons; the Confed-

Please turn to A4



Sandra Sellars/Richmond Free Press

Helping hand

Ronald Jackson, 12, was among the volunteers who helped load cars, trucks and vans last Saturday with meals for veterans, seniors and families for Thanksgiving. The event at the Military Retirees Club in North Side was led by Richmond City Councilwoman Ellen F. Robertson, and was one of several food giveaways and feeding programs set up around the holiday. The young man attended the event with his mother, Tanya Jackson. Please see other photos, B2.

‘Nursing school doesn’t prepare you for this’

Continued from A1

the patients stuck in the hospital for God knows how long,” Ms. Jones said.

Since March, the hospital has had on average two dozen or more patients hospitalized with COVID-19 at any given time, said Laura Rossacher, director of public affairs for VCU Health.

Each time a COVID-19 patient comes onto the unit, Ms. Jones wishes the same wish.

“I wish people could truly see the difference they could make just doing the basics — the social distancing, the masks, the hand sanitizer, the sacrifice of not seeing family this Thanksgiving. I really wish people would think of all the Thanksgivings and Christmases to come if we could just sacrifice now.”

For those who ask what it’s like to be on the front lines helping patients battle the virus, Ms. Jones offers one word — cruel.

“The deterioration is sometimes so rapid. One minute, it’s just a cough, a headache, maybe a slight fever. And the next thing you know, the patient is on the highest amount of available oxygen. It’s terrifying because you just don’t know who it’s going to happen to next.”

Despite all that she has witnessed on VCU’s North 9 Progressive Care Unit — the fear on the faces of COVID-19 positive patients; the anxiety and frustration in the voices of loved ones forced to say final goodbyes by phone or Zoom — Ms. Jones remains driven by the dream.

“Nursing school doesn’t prepare you for this,” Ms. Jones said. Her unit is effectively VCU Medical Center’s ground zero, the first and sometimes the last stop for patients trying

to fend off the virus, usually alone in rooms designed for two patients and equipped to combat airborne disease.

Nothing about the work or patients’ suffering is easy. Yet Ms. Jones insists, “I love what I do.”

“This is the whole reason I went into this field — to help,” Ms. Jones said. “Right now, it’s really hard because it’s one of the toughest times we’ve ever known as a society. But it’s also an honor to be able to be with patients on their journeys. I’m grateful that I get to help them feel less alone. I wouldn’t trade it.”

Yet the data from the Virginia Department of Health suggests there are plenty of reasons to fear coronavirus. State officials reported Tuesday there have been approximately 223,582 cases, with 2,544 new cases in the preceding 24 hours. Those figures, tracked and updated daily, included 14,212 hospitalizations and 3,979 total deaths.

Cumulative numbers for Richmond: 6,446 cases; 501 hospitalizations; 81 deaths. In Henrico County: 7,977 cases were reported, with 576 hospitalizations and 244 deaths. The numbers in Chesterfield County, where Ms. Jones grew up, were last reported at 8,827 cases, 479 hospitalizations and 127 deaths.

Ms. Jones, who turns 27 the day before Thanksgiving, will celebrate her second year in the nursing profession in December. It’s a career she stumbled upon during her senior year as an Old Dominion University biology major. At the time, she thought medical school would be her next stop after graduation. But a stint shadowing doctors changed her plans.

“I just had an epiphany that I never saw myself as being the person who goes in the room for only a couple of minutes,” Ms. Jones said.

She took a year off after college to reflect, then jumped straight into an accelerated nursing program at Virginia Commonwealth University. She graduated from the nursing program in 2018.

“I saw myself being at the bedside with the patient and being nurturing and caring. That’s the part I love even now, having my three or four patients, being part of every part of their care, getting to hear about their families and their hopes once they’re able to go home.”

One of the enduring joys of her job, she says, is listening to patients, who despite sometimes struggling to breathe, share stories about their lives even as she stands at a safe distance and works to limit her time in their presence unless medically necessary.

Ironically, it’s the days when Ms. Jones is away from the sick that she is most afraid of the virus’ reach.

“At the hospital, I know we’re doing our part. We know PPE works, and we sanitize our hands all day. I can’t even count how much or how often in a day,” said Ms. Jones, who works each shift in a face shield, nitro gloves and a constantly changing supply of masks, from the highly protective level 3 mask to the more typical airborne resistant mask.

“I’m scared when I go to the grocery store,” she continues. “That’s truly the place where I feel the most fear because you see people not doing their part.”

To balance some of the stress, Ms. Jones relies on a love of music, exploring nature in places like Deep Run Park in Henrico County with her dog, Rigby, and occasional FaceTime wine dates with girlfriends. Her time in the hospital has taught her to keep her gratitude simple and focused. “I’m super thankful just to have my health, to be able to walk around freely outside, breathing.”

If she could, Ms. Jones would blast the same message around the city and the entire country. “Just because you don’t think COVID can send you to the hospital, you can end up sending your mother, your grandmother, everyone you love into the hospital. Patients come into the hospital with multiple family members who’ve just passed away from the virus. The carelessness has a cost for all of us.”

So far, the coronavirus has not touched Ms. Jones or the lives of her family members, including her husband, Gavin, a Henrico County police officer. She has, however, endured the loss of some aspects of her job, little things that she took for granted yet loved the most.

“I miss touching patients with my bare hand,” she says. “I don’t ever get to touch my patients without gloves on. That’s a loss because there’s something really therapeutic about human touch, especially if the patient is having a hard moment or hard day.”

Ms. Jones dreams also of the day when she can unmask.

“There are times when you’re trying to explain to (patients) how to properly breathe, and you wish they could see your mouth and your nose. There’s just so much of the human part of the job that they don’t get to experience anymore. I try to put my personality out there, but I’m sure I look just like the nurse they had the night before in the same garb. I wish they could see my smile.”

For the holidays, Ms. Jones is looking to old traditions to help comfort patients in crisis. She and a few co-workers on the unit have been purchasing decorations and offering to put them up in the rooms of patients who are interested in a little holiday cheer.

“We want to make it as festive as possible for our patients while they’re stuck in isolation rooms.”

Ms. Jones sighs, then adds, “I would hope somebody would do the same for me.”

Coach Willard Bailey reaches top

Continued from A1

Baptist-oriented school based in Chester.

Even with the announcement last week of this latest honor, the conversation with Coach Bailey took a surprising turn. Instead of bragging on himself, something he had every right to do, Coach Bailey chose to turn the spotlight in just about every other direction, giving credit to others and to God.

He began the discussion with his faith.

“As coaches might say, I’ve made it to the mountaintop,” said Coach Bailey, referring to his Hall of Fame tribute. “But it was God who guided me there. I could have never made it without God in my life.”

From there, Coach Bailey shifted to his youth growing up in Suffolk.

“I must thank my elementary, junior high and high school teachers,” he said. “They were committed to making me and my fellow students the best they could possibly be.

“In many cases, we used hand-me-down books from the white schools. My teachers made the most with less.”

Never to be forgotten is Coach Bailey’s high school coach, Charles Snead.

“I didn’t want to go to college,” he recalled. “Coach Snead made me. Without him, I’d have never gone to college and none of this would have happened.”

Then there was close buddy Raymond H. Boone Sr., the late Free Press founder and editor, who Coach Bailey calls “my best friend.”

“We were rivals in high school. I went to Booker T. Washington; Ray to East Suffolk. But we became friends for life.

“When Ray became sick, I’ll never forget visiting him in the hospital. We talked about old times, about running around and laughed as loud as anyone has ever laughed.”

Coach Bailey then said his assistant coaches at VUU were more like brothers than employees.

“Anytime you write anything about me, be sure to mention

Hall of Fame Class of 2021

Coach Willard Bailey is one of six who will be inducted into the Black College Football Hall of Fame in the Class of 2021.

Joining Coach Bailey are players Coy Bacon (Jackson State), Greg Coleman (Florida A&M), Jimmie Giles (Alcorn State), Winston Hill (Texas Southern) and Roynell Young (Alcorn State).

Mr. Bacon, who died in 2008, played in the NFL from 1967 to 1981 and was a three-time Pro Bowl defensive lineman.

Mr. Coleman, now 66, was a standout NFL punter from 1977 to 1988.

Mr. Giles, 66, was a four-time Pro Bowl tight end during an NFL career from 1977 to 1989.

Mr. Hill, who died in 2016, was a four-time Pro Bowl offensive tackle between 1963 and 1977.

Mr. Young, 62, played defensive back for the Philadelphia Eagles from 1980 to 1988 and was a Pro Bowl pick in 1981.

The induction ceremony will be coupled with a Juneteenth celebration on June 19 at the Black College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. This is the 12th induction class.

(defensive coordinator) Jesse Chavis,” he insisted. “With Jesse, we always had a head start because Jesse’s defense never gave up a point.”

Then there was Joe Taylor, who Coach Bailey took in as a young assistant. Years later, Coach Taylor succeeded Coach Bailey as VUU coach and enjoyed a historic career of his own. Coach Taylor is the athletic director at VUU.

“Jesse Chavis, Joe Taylor, Waverly Tillar, John Wright, so many. My assistants were great. I’d go on, but I’m sure I’d miss someone,” Coach Bailey said.

Then there was the late car dealer Edwin Mugford, who graciously supplied Coach Bailey and VUU with much-needed transportation.

“Ed would never let me pay. He’d give me the car and make it seem like I was doing him a favor.”

Another businessman Coach Bailey praised was Bunkie Trinite, the late trophy store owner.

“Bunkie knew we were trying to run a program on nothing in ways of revenue. He made sure we had what we needed.”

Insisting on avoiding center stage, Coach Bailey even went so far as to praise the sportswriters who had followed his distinguished career.

That was a first for one

Through the years

Coach Willard Bailey’s coaching file

- Virginia Union University 1971 to 1983
- Norfolk State University 1984 to 1992
- VUU again 1995 to 2003
- Saint Paul’s College 2005 to 2010
- Virginia University of Lynchburg 2011 to 2013

Total record
238-169-7 (157-73-6 in two stints at VUU)

CIAA titles
Seven
1973, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984 and 2001

NCAA bids: Six

old sportswriter. Scribes know only too well that coaches are more apt to heap praise on a cockroach crawling across the Thanksgiving table than a guy with a pad and pen.

Coach Bailey won 238 college games, but rather than boast of that, he elected to bring up a particular loss — a 21-20 setback at North Dakota State in the 1982 NCAA playoffs.

VUU lost in the strangest of ways — on an inadvertent whistle — that voided what would have been a long, game-winning pick six by Dwayne Drew in the closing minutes.

“An ‘inadvertent whistle?’ Who’s ever heard of that? I considered that my championship because, if we’d won there, I think we’d have gone all the way,” Coach Bailey said.

“That’s OK. God didn’t want me to be the champion then. It wasn’t my time. But now it is.”

So now Coach Bailey has made it to the coaching mountaintop.

But he makes this crystal clear: “This is a blessing, not just for me, but for so many who helped me get here.”

The mountaintop would seem empty without Coach Bailey and friends.

Richmond family grateful through Thanksgiving changes

Continued from A1

patio while wearing a mask,” Ms. Shaw said in a Free Press interview. “Families can tell us what they are grateful for then take their dinners home.”

In past years, Mrs. Shaw’s husband, Lionel “Pooh” Shaw, has been the master chef, with family and friends supporting his effort by also preparing and bringing their favorites — seafood, macaroni and cheese, candied yams, cranberry sauce, potato salad, greens and many more vegetables, an array of desserts and much more.

That tradition will continue.

Mr. Shaw will cook and others will drop off food early to the Shaw home. The Thanksgiving meal then will be packed in to-go containers and sent off with family and friends at their appointed pickup time.

Because of Richmond’s ever-changing weather, the group nixed the idea of having dinner outside at the Shaw home, as some families may try this holiday.

“We are supporting two businesses this year by purchasing pies from Michaela’s Quality Bake Shop on Brookland Park Boulevard in the North Side and holiday greens from Chef Ida Mamusu’s restaurant on Main Street in Downtown,” Mrs. Shaw said.

As for family and friends who typically join the Shaws from as far away as San Jose, Calif., Atlanta and New York, there will be a Zoom meeting to connect with them.

Stay home. That’s the advice national, state

and local health experts are dispensing about the Thanksgiving holiday amid a steadily rising number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19.

Gov. Ralph S. Northam said last week it would be “an act of love” to keep people safe by staying home for the Thanksgiving holiday.

“Let’s not make this winter any worse than it has to be,” said Gov. Northam, the nation’s only governor who also is a doctor.

His comments came a few days after announcing new statewide restrictions on gatherings and certain businesses to slow the pandemic’s spread. Among them, public and private in-person gatherings are now limited to 25 people, down from a cap of 250. And everyone age 5 and older is required to wear a face covering or a mask in indoor public spaces.

Alcohol sales also are prohibited at dining and drinking establishments after 10 p.m., with all restaurants, food courts and dining establishments required to close at midnight.

With the typical Thanksgiving at the Shaw home being “a collection of all ages from different households,” as Mrs. Shaw described it, change was the only thing to do.

“We can all sustain through a non-traditional Thanksgiving this year,” Mrs. Shaw said. “Thanksgiving will come again in 2021 and beyond.”

Even if families aren’t together, it’s still a time to be thankful, Mrs. Shaw said.

“Be grateful that you have your health and that you and yours are safe,” she said.

22 bids for Confederate statues

Continued from A1

erate Soldiers and Sailors statue from Libby Hill Park in Church Hill; and a statue of newspaper publisher Joseph Bryan and a stone memorial to Fitzhugh Lee from Monroe Park.

When the time comes, “we will need to make sure we are not sending them to a place where they once again will have a prominent position,” said 9th District Councilman Michael J. Jones, who has been a leader in pushing for removal of the statues. “We didn’t take them down so they could go up elsewhere in a similar place.”

Dr. Jones, who would be just as happy to leave the statues in storage where they are out of sight and mind, said close scrutiny of the proposed relocation sites would be a top priority for him.

He said he agrees with other council members that it would be good if the auction to dispose of the statue could generate money to help defray city spending, including the \$1.8 million that Mayor Stoney authorized to remove them.

Protesters pulled down four monuments, including the statues of Jefferson Davis and Columbus. The two others, the statue of railroad tycoon and Confederate Gen. Williams Carter Wickham in Monroe Park and the Richmond Howitzers monument in a small park at Harrison Street and Park Avenue, are not owned by the city. However, the administration is working behind the scenes on the fate of those four as well.

For now, the council is not applying any pressure to its staff for a quick decision on the statues it controls.

Mr. Anderson said the bids are still being reviewed with the assistance of the city’s procurement department, and he anticipates that any council action on the statues will occur

after the new year.

He said he has not presented a recommendation on any of the items; the timing for any action would be up to council, he said. It could happen in January, but it could be February, March or even later, he said.

The council had 10 Confederate items on its list, but only nine are available at this point. One, the statue of Confederate Gen. A.P. Hill at Laburnum Avenue and Hermitage Road, is part of his grave and the council has been advised that a court order would be needed to remove it, although none has been sought.

The bids under consideration include one from a Los Angeles museum that wants them for up to two years for an exhibit, and another from a Connecticut art studio that proposes to break them up and sell the pieces as a fundraiser for Richmond Public Schools and charitable groups in the city.

Other bidders want to place them in battlefields or at historic homes with a connection to the Confederate icons, such as Gen. Stuart.

A few bidders, such as the Virginia and South Carolina divisions of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the Ratcliffe Foundation in Southwest Virginia and Belmead on the James, the site of a former Black Catholic school, want them all.

Several private individuals are offering space on their property as a relocation site to assist the city.

Other bidders are seeking specific statues. For example, The Valentine is seeking the Jefferson Davis statue to add to its collection of the works of artist and sculptor Edward Valentine, a member of the family that started the Richmond history museum and whose home remains a centerpiece of the museum property at 10th and Clay streets.

Free COVID-19 testing

Continued from A1

The Virginia Department of Health reported on Tuesday a total of 223,582 positive cases of COVID-19 statewide, along with 14,212 hospitalizations and 3,979 deaths.

The number of new coronavirus cases continues to spike in the state, with 3,242 new cases reported Monday, one of the largest daily spikes so far, officials said.

According to Virginia data, African-Americans comprised 23 percent of cases and 26.3 percent of deaths for which ethnic and racial data is available, while Latinos made up 25 percent of the cases and 9.1 percent of deaths.

Locally, as of Tuesday, 6,446 cases and 81 deaths were reported in Richmond; 7,977 cases and 244 deaths were reported in Henrico; and 8,827 cases and 127 deaths were reported in Chesterfield.

Meanwhile, the United States has more than 12.5 million people testing positive for the virus, with more than 3 million new cases in November alone. The number of deaths nationally has reached 258,000, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.