

Louisa Life

September 25 - October 22, 2020 • ONE COPY FREE



Brian Gilbreth, Owner

Lake Anna Taphouse Offers Beer and Relaxation

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General: *Louisa Life* is published monthly by Valley Publishing Corp. A total of 6,000 copies are circulated throughout Louisa County. One copy is free, additional copies are \$1 each payable in advance to the publisher.

Subscriptions: Copies will be mailed for the subscription price of \$40 per year. Please mail a check and a note with your name and address to: *Louisa Life* Subscriptions Dept., P.O. Box 59, Palmyra, VA 22963.

Submissions, tips, ideas, etc.: *Louisa Life* encourages submissions and tips on items of interest to Louisa County citizens. However we reserve the right to edit submissions as deemed necessary and cannot guarantee they will be published. Email the editor: valleyeditor1@gmail.com

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Next deadline: Wednesday October 14, 2020

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Brian Gilbreth, owner, can satisfy any taste with his on tap beer.

Photo by Carol Barfield

Cover designed by Marilyn Ellinger

Helping with the Lord's Work

By Pat Wilson
Correspondent

For the 200 residents of Matoaka, the arrival of a caravan of volunteers from Restoration Ministries is a welcome sight. As the faith-based group, organized by Tammy and Joe Starkey, unloads seasonally appropriate clothing, small appliances, household items, furniture, non-perishable food and cleaning supplies, families eagerly stack the donations in a partially restored building. But, just as importantly, the missionaries bring hope for the future and the knowledge that caring people in the service of God have compassion without judgement.

Life in the poverty-stricken West Virginia town centers around Bridge Baptist Church and Pastor Tom Carpenter and his wife, Teresa. A former mining community that boasted over 1,000 residents, Matoaka's population decline over the past decade is directly related to job loss. Businesses, including grocery stores, restaurants, and a bank, as well as the local elementary school, have closed. Main Street buildings have fallen into disrepair or collapsed completely. The town was forced to become unincorporated and sell off its equipment to satisfy financial concerns. As a result, the rescue and fire departments shut down. The town has no local law enforcement or even free trash service.

"They had to sell their playground equipment which to me is particularly heart-breaking. It is so sad to see such poverty in our own country," said Tammy. "The town has to rely on services from other Mercer County towns, mainly Princeton which is 30 minutes away."

The US 2010 census stated that people living at or below the poverty level in the nation was 13.2 percent, while for Matoaka, the figure was 34.2 percent.

About 18 months ago, the Starkeys learned about the situation through their pastor at Grace Free Will Baptist Church. Having been involved in mission work for about six years, the couple had participated in trips to rural Mexico to build churches. But, after learning of the situation in Appalachia, the Starkeys and numerous members of the congregation formed the stand-alone Restoration Ministries, with eight to ten volunteers now making three-to-four day visits several times a year.

"When we first visited the area, we were overwhelmed by the needs, and our ministry was born out of the desire to help this poverty-stricken area," said Tammy.

A major project of the ministry is rebuilding the community both spiritually and physically. The group is currently labor-



Tammy Starkey sorts donated items which are stored in her garage.

ing to restore The Store, the term they use for a building donated to the local church. The completed downstairs, known as The Closet, is now equipped with shelves, clothing racks, and storage space for distribution of goods, as needed. An on-going effort is to finish the second floor, which the volunteers have termed the Upper Room. The space will be used by the local church for missionary and community activities as well as a gathering spot for youth. Eventually, the volunteers will be able to stay there overnight and reduce their personal expenses for lodging.

"We welcome everyone to join us in the Lord's work," said Tammy. "I want to get the word out that we always need helping hands, financial support and material donations from the community. We are grateful for the assistance from Louisa County residents along with caring people in the surrounding area."

Additional goals include helping residents with repairs to their homes. Tammy cited leaking roofs, ramps for the disabled and general maintenance.

"Fortunately, we have recently raised enough funds to install air-conditioners in building," said Tammy. "Building supplies are expensive, but a generous community and several other churches have always blessed us to meet the costs."

Tammy praises the on-going work of Pastor Carpenter, a local minister, who 14 years ago offered to serve the people of Matoaka on an interim basis when the previous pastor

See Matoaka Page 6

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Dear patrons and supporters of the art center

Despite the immense challenges faced by all of us in 2020, our love and passion for the arts has not wavered. I have been touched by all the heartfelt messages of support and concern for the Arts Center and have been working diligently with the Board, staff and volunteers over the last few months to ensure that we safely keep arts and culture in our lives.

As you can imagine, the Arts Center has not been spared the economic consequences that are impacting businesses throughout the community. We strongly believe our events and activities are vital to the Louisa community and essential to a healthy economy. As a non-profit organization we depend on income from event attendance and sponsorships, and every dollar we earn through ticket sales, donations or grants is funneled back into the community through entertainment and educational programs.

Giving back is integral to our mission and it is our goal to

once again open the doors to entertain everyone in our beautiful Cooke-Haley Theatre. To ensure the health and safety of all, current CDC guidelines will be observed including restricted seating capacity, the mandatory wearing of masks and increased safety measures inside the theatre. We are also exploring alternate ways to bring entertainment to our patrons with the use of an outdoor screen with seating on the terrace and also the possible live streaming of scheduled events.

With the shining light of arts and culture as our focus, we hope you will plan to join us at the center during our upcoming season as we need your support in navigating these unprecedented times.

Warm Regards,
Karen Welch
Executive Director



Brian poses by giant chair on his lake property in back of the Taphouse.
Photo by Carol Barfield



Walk out the back of Lake Anna Taphouse and enjoy drinks, food and a view that can't be beat! Photo by Brian Gilbreth

Lake Anna Taphouse offers beer, relaxation

By Carol Barfield
Correspondent

Everyone is eager for a place to go that provides scenery, safety and that “something special.” The Lake Anna Taphouse at 208 Lakefront Drive in Mineral fits the bill. Housed behind Lake Anna Plaza near the 208 bridge in the former Lake Anna Visitor Center, the Taphouse debuted Labor Day, 2019.

Brian Gilbreth, owner, combined his roles as businessman and father to envision a place where all are welcome. Celebrating the one-year anniversary of Lake Anna Taphouse under clear blue skies and warm temperatures, drinks, good food and fun were had by everyone.

“We celebrated by offering drink

specials and introduced new products. We are now serving rich and creamy soft-serve ice cream with toppings, and “Dole Whip”, which we first were introduced to in Oahu, Hawaii. It is also popular at Disney World. In a cone or a cup, it is a light, refreshing non-dairy pineapple. We have two ice cream machines and if you want to get really

decadent, we can mix our creamy vanilla and twist it with Dole.”

The Taphouse was conceived to fill what Brian saw as an empty niche. Lake Anna lacked a venue where people could come and not just drink a beer, but also relax. He toured breweries and

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God, Guns, and A Good Time

Saturday, September 26

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

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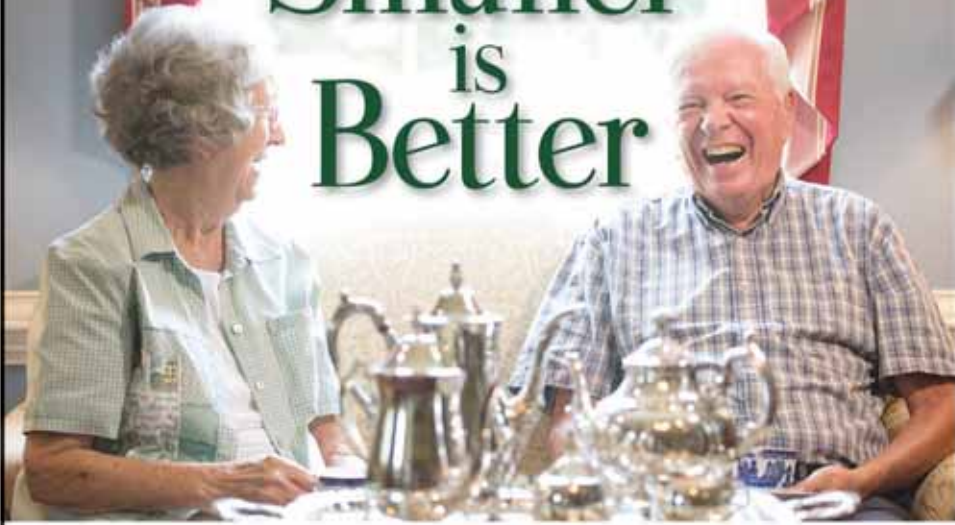
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Taphouse from page 3

kept notes on the ones he really liked, specifically beer gardens where kids and dogs were welcome—family-friendly places. “Attracting families tends to keep out those who might want to have too good of a time!”

Nestled close to beautiful Lake Anna, the Taphouse has a generous parking area and is also easily accessible by boat, offering 50 wet slips free of charge. Inside the building are 24 taps, 85% of which are flowing with Virginia craft beer, ciders and wine. Although currently there is limited indoor seating at the bar due to COVID restrictions, the recent addition of a stage bar provides another 8 taps outside, lightening the indoor traffic load.

There are multiple areas to order drinks. The grounds boast a huge outdoor area with tables safely spaced and a roped off ABC consumption zone. There is plenty of room to spread out and enjoy the breeze, sunshine and rippling water. While seated outdoors, the public is not required to wear face masks. “Some vacationers don’t seem to care... others think everyone should be wearing masks. We have to keep both happy.”

Brian and staff also serve food, which is prepared on site. The business was classified early on as a restaurant and sanitary practices were already well-established before the epidemic became an issue.

See Taphouse page 6

HOLLY GROVE HUNT CLUB 6TH ANNUAL RABIES CLINIC AND TRADE DAY

Saturday, October 10th 9:00 AM- 1:00 PM

\$10 per vaccine, provided by Melinda McCall DVM, for dogs and cats four months and older • Food, drinks and baked goods • Raffle • Vendors & Yard Sale



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abruptly left. He has been there for them ever since.

“He knows each family and I can call him to find out what is specifically needed. When we have extra funds, we can send the church a check and we know it will be used wisely,” she said. “He travels from his home in Princeton three or four times a week in addition to the weekend service. Church attendance has increased from less than 10 to over 50.”

A mission trip is planned for early October, and Tammy stressed the need for coats, boots, hats, blankets and even toys that do not require batteries. Helping hands are always appreciated. The group welcomes donations, both monetary and useful necessities such as practical clothing and household items in working condition. Donations can be taken to the Starkeys’ home in central Louisa County. Tammy appreciates a call prior at 540-748-0232. If necessary, volunteers will pick up large pieces, such as furniture.

“We accept practically anything, even cars,” said Tammy. “All we ask is that people give from their hearts and bring things that are truly in useable condition.”

Items that are suitable to take to Matoaka are loaded in a 16-foot utility trailer, while other donations will be stored in a garage and designated for periodic yard sales or placed on Marketplace. One hundred percent of the money raised goes to purchasing supplies or assisting residents with concerns like food and utility bills.

Taphouse from page 5

The staff wear gloves and face masks and deliver food straight to the table.

Recently added to the menu are two new items, including Brian’s own special recipe for chicken salad on a croissant, and spicy green beans. “What sets us apart is that we also allow our customers to bring in outside food such as pizza from Vito’s and sushi from Asian Café. In this way our business also supports two others. They are not our competitors, but fellow contributors.”

Brian was also fortunate in purchasing a feature called a canner, which gives him the ability to can 16 oz pints and 64 oz growlers. Although there weren’t a huge number of takers at first, the canner allowed them to offer product-to-go when foot traffic was restricted during the epidemic. Canners have become a hot commodity now and there is a year-long wait to acquire one. “It’s a special experience when a customer says, ‘I really liked these two beers and would like to take some home,’ and we can bottle them up.” The Taphouse is located in the unique triangle, including Richmond, Charlottesville and Fredericksburg, which combined has 14 distributors. This makes it easy to offer a wide range of products from all over Virginia and

the U.S.

Most often funds are forwarded to Pastor Carpenter as he is most informed on how they can be best spent. “As we assist with the basic necessities of life, we also want to give them hope through the love of Jesus Christ,” said Tammy. “As we care for them, we want them to realize He cares for them as well.”

Restoration Ministries has applied for non-profit status, but currently handles monetary donations through Grace Free Will Baptist Church, so that contributions can be tax deductible. Anyone wishing to support the missionaries can make a check payable to the church with a notation “for RM” and mail it to the Starkeys at 3554 West Old Mountain Road, Louisa, VA 23093. A letter from the church treasurer will acknowledge the donation.

Tammy anticipates a yard sale in early October, prior to their next mission trip. Items suitable to take to West Virginia or for the sale to raise funds are most appreciated. She again emphasizes to please donate only appropriate and useful items. Non-perishable food is always welcome.

More information about the ministries’ work is available on its Facebook page, at Louisa Happenings or by contacting Tammy by phone 540-748-0232 or at restorationministries2035@gmail.com.



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Brian takes his employees on field trips to the source, and they meet with the owners to hear what is unique to each brewery or winery. He really loves absorbing stories: “The Von Trapp Brewery, which is owned by the family from The Sound of Music, has two locations: one in Vermont and one in Austria. They offer Hellas Lagers, a cool and refreshing beverage. As I serve the lager at my business, I can tell their story to the customer.”

The Taphouse has been very busy during the summer, but Brian looks forward to the off-season as well when the locals return. He has hosted meetings for Lake Anna Business Partnership as well as Louisa Parks and Recreation and is eager to do so for others on the lookout for a great venue.

Brian enjoys learning the nuances of running the business, although he admits, “the roughest part is being pulled in 20 different directions on a daily basis. Something is always needing attention, tweaking or fixing!” He and wife Christy have a five-year plan filled with enhancements and improvements for Lake Anna Taphouse. Live music by the water is in that future plan, and the couple’s children, Ava and Ethan, are enthusiastic about post-COVID plans for a bouncy house. He also recently purchased an espresso machine from Italy and will be offering specialty coffees: hot, iced, and blended.

Brian truly loves what he does, and that is more than evident. “My ultimate goal is to make Lake Anna Taphouse a wonderful destination for visitors and locals alike.”

Come—take a drive, get out of the house, and check out Lake Anna Taphouse. Great music, Oktoberfest, Family Fun Festival, and Day of the Dead are just some of the events scheduled for the fall season. Please check the Lake Anna Taphouse page on Facebook, or their website— www.lakeannataphouse.com for more information.

Open 7 days a week: Monday-Thursday 12-9:30pm; Friday and Saturday 12-10:30pm and Sundays 12–8pm.

Louisa Arts Center Announces Outdoor Fundraiser

Karen Welch, executive director, is happy to announce an exciting informal outdoor fundraiser for the fall. Mark your calendars for **7:30 pm Saturday, October 3rd** for the Masked Music Mixer event which will be held on the grounds of the Art Center. A huge 250-300 person tent will be set up in the parking area to ensure your ability to attend, rain or shine.

Social distancing rules will be in effect. Since the tent can only be at 50% capacity, be one of the first 120 to purchase a ticket to ensure your place. A prize will be awarded for the best mask, and there will be other fundraising opportunities with an art auction and raffles. The Real Geniuses from Richmond will provide the music, and refreshments and hors d’oeuvres are included in the \$75 ticket price. Dress will be cocktail casual. Even though the annual Gala has been postponed until October of 2021, this is your chance to show up, have fun safely and support the local arts in your community.



The group Real Geniuses, Dave Vergauwen – Lead Guitar, Backing Vocals, Jay Novak – Drums, Electronic Drums, Sequencers, Percussion, Elena Martin – Lead Vocals, Keyboards, Percussion, Patrick Blades – Bass Guitar, Backing

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RENTALS

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VETERANS AND DEPENDENTS: Do you know your Veterans Benefits? We do! Virginia Department of Veterans Services: https://www.Virginiaforveterans.com or https://www.dvs.virginia.gov. Need Help?

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