

ESSEX COUNTY
 Formed in 1691 from Old Rappahannock County, and named for Essex County, England. R. M. T. Hunter, United States Senator and Confederate Secretary of State, lived in this county.
 Va. Hist. Landmarks Comm.

County Seat: Tappahannock

Rappahannock Times

"Established 1850"

KING & QUEEN COUNTY
 Formed in 1691 from New Kent, and named for King William III and Queen Mary. The Family of George Rogers Clark long lived in this county.
 Va. Hist. Landmarks Comm.
 County Seat: King & Queen

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Rappahannock Legal Services

Legal Aid Office Finds New Home

BY G.C. ROSE

Rappahannock Legal Services' Tappahannock Office has found a new and potentially permanent home at 311 Virginia Street in the former Essex Physical Therapy building.

Rappahannock Legal Services' Tappahannock Office has been providing no-cost legal advocacy to low-income residents of Essex, Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, Lancaster, King William and King and Queen counties.

"When this place became available we jumped at the chance to have more space — all first floor — that is handicapped accessible," says John Rellick, the managing attorney for the Tappahannock Office which was previously located at 407 Prince Street. "A lot of our clients are handicapped or limited in their ability to move about. We're glad we did it, happy to be here and hope to remain here for a long time."

The new location is the fourth site the local agency has occupied since it began providing services here in 1982.

The non-profit organization began in 1973 as the Fredericksburg Area Legal Aid Society, with its volunteer membership referring indigent citizens with legal problems to participating private attorneys.

Eventually, the organization hired full-time staff and



The staff at the Tappahannock office of Rappahannock Legal Services includes (from left) Yolanda Harley (paralegal), Kim Wilkins (administrative assistant), and John Rellick (managing attorney).

changed its name to Rappahannock Legal Services, Inc. (RLS) to better reflect its expanded service area.

The service area — which also has offices in Fredericksburg and Culpeper — had a year 2010 poverty population of 52,573 (a 65 percent increase over the 2000 poverty popula-

tion of 31,870). Rellick said approximately 10,000 people in the Tappahannock service area are eligible for the civil case aid his office provides.

The organization is funded primarily by the state government and local Boards of Supervisors. Additional funding comes from United Way in

Fredericksburg and Culpeper, donations from attorneys and donations from clients or the relatives of clients.

"We do not charge anything for our services, but if a client has the ability to make a donation we appreciate that," says

Story Continues On Page 2

Commissioner Of The Revenue Blackwell Makes Reelection Bid

Essex County Commissioner of the Revenue Thomas M. "Tommy" Blackwell has announced he will seek reelection in the November election. He was first elected in 2005 and has served in his current position for nearly 10 years.

As commissioner of the revenue, Blackwell is the chief tax assessing officer for Essex County. He administers the assessments for businesses and individuals for real estate and personal property, and assists citizens with filing their state income tax returns.

Blackwell said he and his staff have been enrolled in the commonwealth's accreditation program since 2006, and his office has been certified by the University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center since 2011.

Blackwell grew up in Tappahannock and graduated from Tappahannock High School in 1970. He received his undergraduate degree in chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a second degree in computer science from Mary Washington College. He is a 20-year veteran of the U.S. Navy and Naval Reserve, retiring as a commander in 1994. He worked 25 years as a systems software engineer in the defense industry before his election to commis-



THOMAS M. BLACKW

sioner.

Blackwell has served as president of the Tidewater Commissioners of the Revenue Association and he is currently vice president of the Virginia Commissioners of the Revenue Association (VACOMRE). In addition, he is an active member of the Virginia Association of Assessing Officers (VAAO), serving on its Value Committee, and he is VACOMREV liaison to Virginia State Land Evaluation and Advisory Council (SLEAC).

Blackwell, 63, and his wife Lillian Baird Blackwell reside on Otterburn Farm in Chan-

Legal Aid Office Has New Home In Tappahannock

Continued From Page 1.

Rellick.

The Tappahannock office handles primarily cases involving family law (custody, support and domestic violence), and housing. Other matters involve government benefit cases involving the Department of Social Services, Social Security Administration or the Virginia Employment Commission.

"Sometimes we handle issues involving retired people and we'd like to do more veteran benefit cases," said Rellick. "We also represent clients seeking unemployment benefits from the Virginia Employment Commission. That was a big area of our practice a couple years ago when the economy was especially bad but things are finally turning around a bit and people are not as much in need of unemployment benefits."

Rellick has been with the Tappahannock office — which

has a three-person staff — since 1984. The office provides services to approximately 400 people annually.

"I see a great unmet need for the representation of low-income people who cannot afford a lawyer to represent them and I enjoy working with them," he said. "I get a lot out of interacting with them both personally and professionally."

Rellick says the assistance Rappahannock Legal Services provides its clients helps level the "playing field" in a courtroom.

"So often people are at a disadvantage with the justice system when one side has an attorney and the other side doesn't," he remarked. "I think we make the justice system run a little better, not only in levelling the playing field, but because an unrepresented party in court slows the process down a little bit. When both sides have an attorney, the pro-

cess is not only fairer, but it runs more efficiently."

In addition to Rellick, the local staff includes paralegal Yolanda Harley and administrative assistant Kim Wilkins.

Rellick says Wilkins, who has been with the office for nearly a decade, plays a crucial role in assisting clients.

"Kim is on the front lines," he remarked. "She gets the calls from the clients when they are at their most emotional distressed. By the time folks come in to see me, for the most part, the situations are not at such a crisis level. They have calmed down a bit."

Moreover, Rellick says some volunteer attorneys handle referrals.

"For the most part they take uncontested divorce cases from us," he said. "Those cases are pretty much straight-forward but we still appreciate them putting in their time."

Moreover, Rellick noted that every county in his office's service area provides some level of funding.

"While each county does not provide a huge amount of money, collectively it's a big part of our budget," he said. "We appreciate that they appreciate us."

Letter To Editor

Editor,
Rappahannock Times:

I recently had the privilege of attending and experiencing an incredible event at the Essex High School. The spring concert of the Essex Intermediate School and the Essex High School bands.

I witnessed an unbelievable display of talent perfectly and professionally executed under the direction of Michael Lovelless. I am so proud of each and every one of those 72 students. I understand story or history

Women's Conference Sign-Up Deadline Nears

First Baptist Church Loretto, 5338 Tidewater Trail, Loretto, will host the Greater Glory International Fellowship Women's Conference titled "Preparing For His Glory" hosted by Bishop Darryl and Lady Daisy Williams on Friday, July 10, and Saturday, July 11. Registration will begin at 9 a.m., doors will open at 8:30 a.m., all sessions start at 10 a.m.

A continental breakfast and

Family, Friends Day At First Baptist Church

First Baptist Church, Tappahannock, will observe its annual "Family and Friends Day" on Sunday, June 7, during the morning worship service at 11 a.m.

The guest speaker will be the Rev. Antonio Tucker Sr. of Kingdom Ministries of Petersburg along with his choir, ushers and congregation. The Latane family will be spotlighted this year.

Rappahannock Times

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lunch will be served. The Friday night service will begin at 7:30 p.m. The guest speaker will be Co-pastor Nailah Vega, Colorado. There will be an interpreter on site. The guest speaker for Saturday's closing session will be Pastor Paulette Scott, Maryland.

The cost is \$25 for adults, \$10 for children ages 2-12 and \$15 for young adults ages 13-18. The deadline to register is Tuesday, June 30. Rates after June 30 will increase by \$5. Accepted methods of payment are check or money order payable to Greater Glory Fellowship Family. For further payment information call (888) 616-4777.

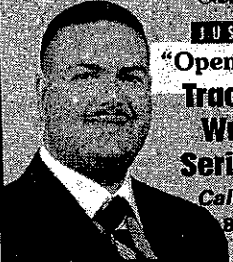
First Mt. Olive Women & Men In Red & Black

First Mount Olive Baptist Church Usher's Ministry will host its annual Women and Men in Red and Black program on Sunday, June 7, at 3:30 p.m. at First Mount Olive Baptist Church, Newtown.

The guest singers will be The Wings of Praises, Kilmarnock. A repast will be served by the Usher's Ministry following the service.

The public is invited.

WANT ADS 443-2200
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A Renewal Of Faith

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lives in the War Between the States, the memorial is adorned with the names of all members of Essex County who served in all wars from the French and Indian War through the Vietnam War. The names of those who returned alive and those who died on the field of battle are listed alphabetically, side-by-side.

The master of ceremonies read the names, some 39 in all with the aforementioned exception, of those who perished in defense of liberty. The list included those most recently lost on the field of battle in Afghanistan and Iraq. Appropriate prayers followed.

Prayers followed. The ceremony was a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made for freedom. The names of the fallen were read with reverence and respect. The ceremony was a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made for freedom.

childhood.

Many people expressed their gratitude for my meager words. Two expressions stand out for special mention. The Jewish Rabbi, a red-coated Marine Corps League member wearing jump wings and a Bronze Star with a second star, said the following, "When I came home I needed some real help. So I opened the Bible and started reading." A patrician looking Virginian, complete with blue blazer, khaki trousers, regimental tie and straw hat, looked me right in the eye and said, "I knew about all those things you spoke of, and promised myself I would never speak of them. Thank you for speaking them today." He didn't give his name, but I suspect that since I

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

FRIDAY
SPY(R): 5:00-7:30
INSIDIOUS CHAPTER 3(PG-13)
ENTOURAGE(R): 7:30-9:00
ALCHA(PG-13): 2:45-5:15
SAN ANDREAS(PG-13): 7:00-9:00

SATURDAY
SPY(R): 8:30-10:30
INSIDIOUS CHAPTER 3(PG-13)
8:40
ENTOURAGE(R): 2:45-5:15
ALCHA(PG-13): 2:45-5:15
SAN ANDREAS(PG-13): 7:00-9:00

SUNDAY
SPY(R): 2:30-5:00-7:30
INSIDIOUS CHAPTER 3(PG-13)
ENTOURAGE(R): 2:45-5:15
ALCHA(PG-13): 2:45-5:15
SAN ANDREAS(PG-13): 7:00-9:00

MON. JUNE 8 - THUR.
SPY(R): 7:00-9:00
INSIDIOUS CHAPTER 3(PG-13)
ENTOURAGE(R): 7:00-9:00
ALCHA(PG-13): 7:00-9:00
SAN ANDREAS(PG-13): 7:00-9:00

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