

CULPEPER-AREA COMMUNITY BRIEFS FOR DEC. 24, 2025

**The Phipps plays The Stage at Unionville Brewery**

Christian Phipps, a loop artist who comprises the one-band The Phipps, played a fabulous holiday-themed acoustic show Saturday night at The Stage at Unionville Brewery.

The Lake Anna musician with a soulful voice covered a range of rock and R&B favorites by Michael Jackson, Alicia Keys and Steve Miller Band and other hits from the 70s, 80s and 90s along with an original and a few Christmas tunes.

Phipps stepped in last minute when scheduled musician Bailey Hayes was unable to attend the Christmas at Unionville event hosted by the brewery and The Stage creator Gordon Humphrey, Culpeper Has Talent founder.

Interactive, talented and clearly passionate about the music, The Phipps was well received by a local crowd and is on social media.

"Huge shoutout to The Stage at Unionville Brewing Co. for having me out last night! What an INCREDIBLE stage!! Not to mention the hospitality! They treated



**ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION, CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT**  
Christian Phipps, a Lake Anna-based musician, performs Dec. 20 at The Stage at Unionville Brewery in Orange County.

me like a king! I really needed a night like this. The energy of a crowd that was THERE FOR THE MUSIC!" The Phipps posted.

"There's nothing in the world like playing an awesome show for a crowd that is involved and interactive. To say I felt the love is an

understatement. Thank you so much for making me feel at home Unionville!"

**Local students on dean's list at Belmont University**

Over half of students at

Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. made the Dean's List for the fall 2025 semester, including two locals.

"The high percentage of students earning Dean's List honors reflects more than academic excellence, it reflects who we are becoming together as a Belmont community," said Dr. David Gregory, provost and executive vice president for academic excellence. "This achievement demonstrates what is possible when students pursue their goals in an ambitious, supportive community committed to the flourishing of all. It speaks to the dedication of our students, the mentorship of our faculty and a shared commitment to wisdom."

Dean's List eligibility is based on a minimum course load of 12 hours and a quality grade point average of 3.5 with no grade below a C.

Colette Semon of Amissville made the list for the fall semester along with Adalene Linebaugh of Warrenton. Belmont University consists of nearly 9,000 students who come from every state and 33 countries.

**Free coffee at Sheetz for holidays, Culpeper store soon opening**

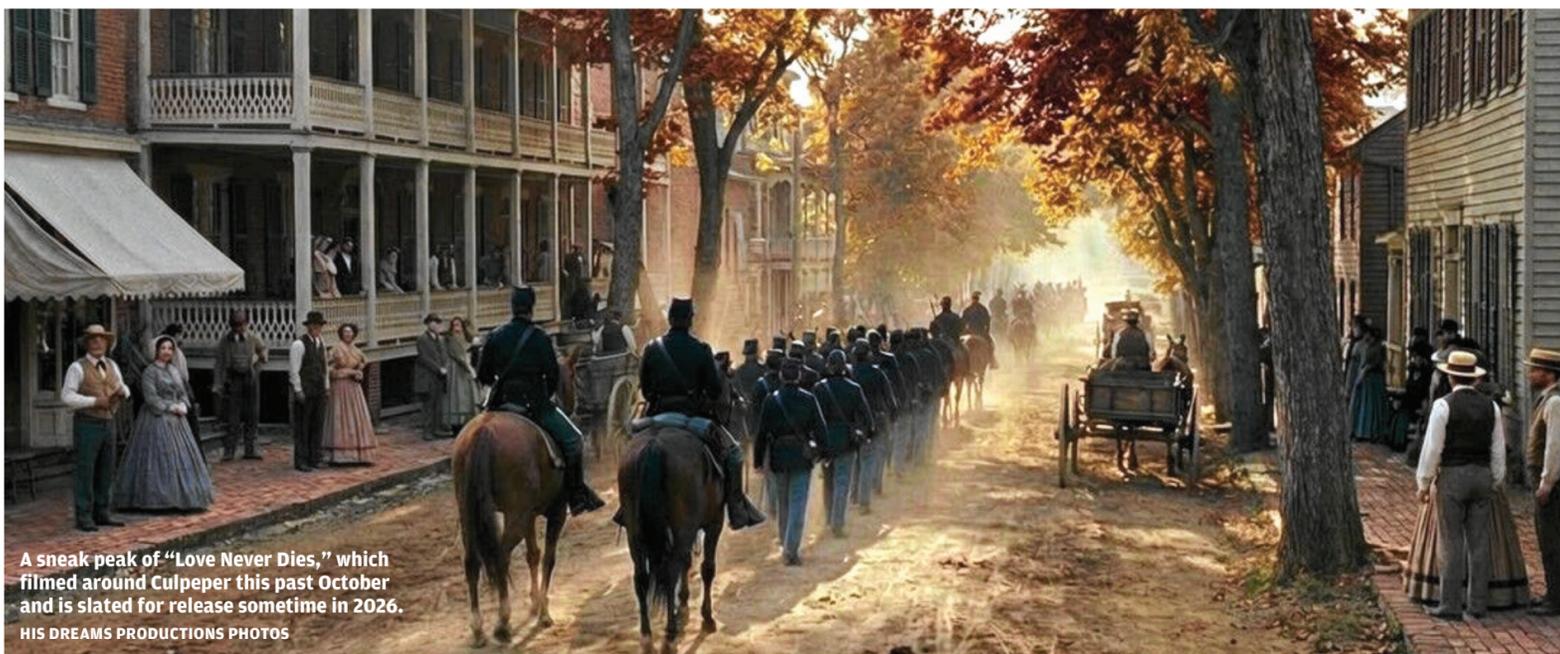
Sheetz will continue celebrating the holiday season by offering free self-serve coffee from Christmas Eve to New Year's Day.

From Wednesday, December 24 to Thursday, January 1, 2026, Sheetz will offer My Sheetz Rewardz customers one free self-serve coffee. This offer will be available at all of Sheetz's 800+ store locations, including in the town of Orange. The first Sheetz in Culpeper, along James Madison Highway at Nalles Mill Road, is slated to open in the first quarter of the New Year.

Sheetz Bros. coffee features 100% arabica coffee in four signature blends with a light to dark progression, freshly ground in every store. Additionally, Sheetz offers a full line of Made-to-Order cappuccinos, lattes, espressos, mochas and more created on espresso machines.

All Sheetz locations are open 24/7/365 including Christmas Day, New Year's Day and every other day of the year.

**SNEAK PEEK: LOVE NEVER DIES**



A sneak peek of "Love Never Dies," which filmed around Culpeper this past October and is slated for release sometime in 2026.  
HIS DREAMS PRODUCTIONS PHOTOS

**Civil War Culpeper comes alive**

Film based on Virginia Morton's "Marching Through Culpeper" in post-production

**ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION**  
Culpeper Star-Exponent

Civil War Culpeper comes alive in a new sneak peek from "Love Never Dies," an independent feature film now in production.

A recently released AI still frame from the film shows the Virginia House Hotel, still standing on North Main Street, today housing Culpeper Music and other businesses. The Shackelford House, directly across the street, is gone, and Quail in the Woods Antiques, The Chaotic Collector and Final Boss occupy the approximate site today.

Constance Armstrong, the movie's heroine, is based on Bessie Shackelford, and thus this real-life building is the Armstrong town home in the film based on the novel "Marching Through Culpeper," by Virginia Morton and celebrating its 25th anniversary. The scene in the movie sneak peak took place Oct. 11, 1863, when the Union Army rapidly retreated northward.

Elated townspeople heckled the enemy soldiers as they skedaddled, according to Morton. Later that day the town was shelled and the 4th Battle of Brandy Station, the opening salvo of the Bristoe Campaign, took place on the rolling fields of Auburn plantation at Brandy Station, she said.

The film, incorporating AI technology with live actors wrapped up filming around Culpeper in October.

"As a parting shot, feast your eyes on this final glimpse of our two magnificent leads—Riley Brazzell and Damien Chinappi—dressed in their elegant ball attire." Love Never Dies on social posted at the time. "In one of the film's most

memorable scenes, they flirt and waltz across enemy lines at a real-life Union ball held in Culpeper, VA, during the Union occupation."

Morton called it an unforgettable indie journey powered by passion, grit, and an extraordinary team.

"A gigantic thank you to every single person on our cast and crew. Stay tuned to our Facebook page as we head into postproduction, as we'll be sharing editing updates and sneak peeks. When will the finished film be screened or released? Sometime in 2026 we hope, but you'll hear it here first!"

**Allison Brophy Champion:**  
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Regional actress Lillyana Anderson, who is playing the role of Amanda, the protagonist's older sister in "Love Never Dies," applies her behind-the-scenes skills with hair and makeup to get Virginia Morton, screenwriter and executive producer, ready to portray Granny Ashby, during filming in October. Fans of "Marching Through Culpeper" may remember for her unfiltered comments.

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