



**Callao**  
**Hometown**  
**Community**  
**Association**  
 NEWSLETTER

**New Retaining Wall Installed in Callao**

As part of the Revitalization Project, Northumberland County was able to get the Virginia Department of Transportation to install a new retaining wall at the intersection of routes 360 and 202. It replaces the previous wall which was deteriorating and crumbling. The new wall is a huge improvement. Once the landscaping is complete, it will further enhance the appearance of Callao, Virginia.



**Callao, Birthplace of Crab Pot**

Years ago, watermen did not have many options to catch the succulent Atlantic blue crab. They used a long rope with baited lines attached, referred to as a “trotline” and worked it up and down all day, pulling up the baited lines hoping to catch enough crabs to make a living.

Benjamin Franklin Lewis (aka “Frank”) of Harryhogan, VA (now part of Callao) was one such waterman during the 1920’s. His granddaughter, Elizabeth Lewis Evalhoch (Swicegood) told the story of

her grandfather working the trotline on a hot day in July during the nineteen twenties. The family lore says he declared it was “too hot” to carry on any longer with the trotline. Apparently, Benjamin Franklin Lewis announced there just had to be a better way and he abandoned his trotline, bait and all (selling it to a neighbor), to work on figuring out a more efficient (and less back breaking) way to catch blue crabs.

He tinkered all that summer with pieces of chicken wire and other parts he got from Krentz Marina,

constructing a square wire cage with funnels and a place to put bait.

B.F. Lewis received a patent for his invention in 1928. He (cont. page 9)

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# THELMA'S DELI

Thelma's Deli & Catering, located next to the Callao Brewery in Callao, Virginia, recently celebrated its grand opening. The proprietor, Michelle Carroll, named her business in honor of her mother, Thelma, who passed away six years ago.

Ms. Carroll knew she wanted to operate her own business one day. However, she didn't start out thinking it would be a restaurant business. Ms. Carroll originally considered opening a CNA medical business, because of her mom. When that didn't work out, she said, "God put me in a different direction. He found all my people. I have great people and we are doing well."

A woman of great faith, Ms. Carroll says when she faces challenges in life, God tells her: "stand still, I got you." When she listened in this case, she said, "things kept getting better and better." Ms. Carroll was originally going to open her food business in Heathsville. However, when that fell through, someone sent her a screenshot of the firetruck deli in Callao, which is how she connected with Dan Corder. Ms. Carroll said Mr. Corder has been a great supporter and has encouraged her every step of the way. He reminded her, "you have to crawl before you can walk." She got busy setting up her

new business and says, "Now, I am starting to 'walk.'"

*Thelma's* offers healthier foods and caters to baby boomers and seniors who are the customers normally looking for healthier food choices. The chef gets creative with the specials and came up with Thelma's steak bowls and also an air fried crab cake special, which is super popular with the Brewery crowd. (The Brewery offers outdoor seating and of course, the cold beverages go great with the tasty items on Thelma's menu.) Besides the air-fried crab cakes and other specials, some of the popular items on Thelma's menu include: the Strawberry Pecan Salad; the club sandwich; and the turkey panini. Thelma's also makes various flavors of bread pudding which includes whisky and lemon, in addition to the original. Ms. Carroll said, "people keep sharing pictures of their food" on social media and she always loves seeing smiling faces of happy customers. You can find Thelma's on Facebook. They are sure to appreciate it if you also post pictures of your tasty meals after you visit Thelma's, as well.

The current hours of operation are: Monday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: (cont'd page 3)



TURKEY PANINI

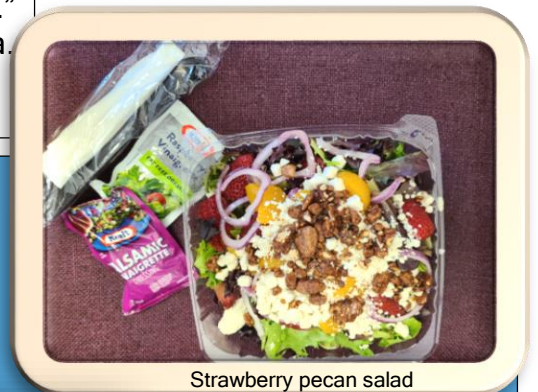
7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday: 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Sundays: 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Yes, they are open early enough to get a hearty breakfast before you get started on your fun filled day in the Northern Neck. They have pancakes, breakfast sandwiches and a tasty yogurt parfait.

The recent gas crisis slowed their delivery service. Before the gas shortages raised the price of fuel, Thelma's was delivering within an eight-mile radius. You will have to call them to see if they have picked back up with the deliveries.

The catering aspect of the business is taking off also. Thelma's has been fortunate to get some big orders from various businesses, the schools, and even a sorority. They listen to the customer and customize the menu to cater to the needs of the customer. Weekend specials now include "Oysters Jeanette" (after her mother's middle name) and steamed shrimp.

Ms. Carroll says, "I love what I do. Callao has embraced me with open arms." When asked, "Where do you see yourself in five years?" Ms. Carroll responded, "Here" [in Callao]. She has just a few more years until she retires from the US post office, so she plans to grow her restaurant business into a thriving 'go to' spot in Callao.

Michelle Carroll greatly appreciates the community, her customers, but most especially, her staff. "I'd like to say 'Thank you' to Dontay Davis, William Thompson, and a special thanks to Jolena Towles. Without them, there would be no me. Your people make you who you are," she said. She also wants to thank her current staff, Latasha "Nikki" Woods, who is the cook, and cashier, Brittani Keeve. She speaks highly of these impressive young people. Ms. Carroll also said she wants to "Thank the people of Callao for believing in us" and "I thank God. I owe it all to God." Lastly, "I miss you Momma. This is for you!"



Strawberry pecan salad



**CALL**  
**(804) 580-1718**

# MUNDY POINT ANTIQUES

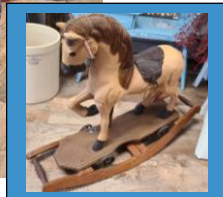


There is a new antique and gift shop with a Callao address called, "Mundy Point Antiques and Collectibles." The shop is located at 871 Mundy Point Road, Callao, VA. Owned and operated by Tammy & Dean Truax, Mundy Point Antiques & Collectibles "has something for everyone." They carry new and antique furniture, metal yard art, gift items, jewelry, and collectibles, all sold at reasonable prices. Additionally, Tammy refinishes furniture, creating unique benches made from beds, and restoring and painting furniture to create new treasures. She also takes night stands and tables and turns them into pet beds. According to Dean, Tammy "has an artistic eye" and can see things before he does. Their talents seem to complement one another.

Mundy Point Antiques' stock is constantly changing, so if you see something you love, you should definitely make a purchase. Their most popular items include the metal yard roosters. They even offer delivery. Along with the shop in

Mundy Point, Tammy and Dean Truax run King William Auction in Aylett, Virginia. When COVID hit last year, they were not able to conduct auctions in person. This caused them to re-evaluate their practices. So, they put their auction business online, and decided to open up Mundy Point Antiques and Collectibles. Their auction business tripled and now they are shipping items all over the country. They buy furniture and toys, whole estates and pieces-everything from furniture to vehicles ("except boats or pianos" Dean adds with a chuckle, since he is usually the one who has to move the heavy objects.) The next phase will include antique toy repairs and customization. We can't wait to see what's in the store next!

Hours: 10 am - 5 pm  
 Thursday - Sunday  
 (804) 456-6658  
[www.KingWilliamAuctionInc.Highbid.com](http://www.KingWilliamAuctionInc.Highbid.com)



## Callao Amish Community Grows

The Northern Neck of VA currently has twenty-two (22) families in the Amish community. Ben Esh and his family is one of the newest families to join the Callao Amish society and it has been lovely to get to know them.

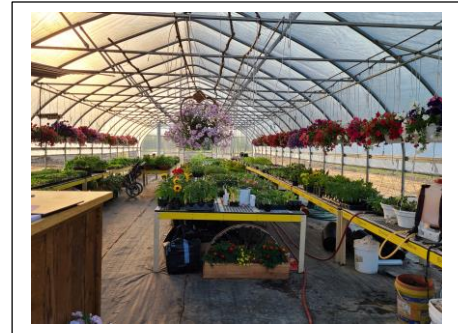
The homestead of the Esh family is located at 1415 Fruit Plain Road, Callao Virginia. This is where the greenhouse they built earlier this year (Woodland Acres Greenhouse) is located and it is open to the public six days a week. The Eshes sell a variety of plants including herbs, annuals, planters and hanging baskets. Hours are Monday through



Daisy

Saturday 7am - 7pm during the summer months.

The Esh family also has a roadside stand nearby on route 202 near the old Hyacinth Post Office next to Henderson Church. They operate at this location most Saturday mornings. Along with the plants for sale, his wife and daughters are talented bakers, so they also sell a variety of tasty baked goods including pies, breads, cinnamon rolls and more. Ben likes the location because it is close enough to home that he can use his horse and wagon and restock if needed. (Ben said for longer rides, though, they



typically hire taxis and drivers to avoid tying up traffic for long periods in order to be considerate of the residents.) Later this summer, he hopes to add fresh produce and perhaps home-made ice-cream to the items offered. Right now, though, they are focused on getting the land at the homestead ready.

The Esh family also plans on adding a new green- (cont. pg. 6)



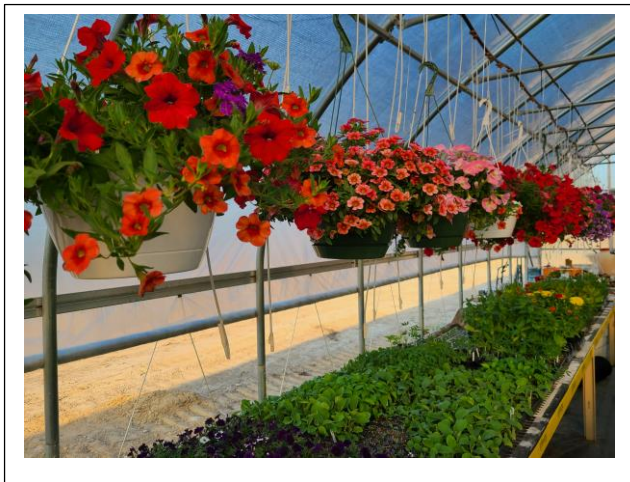
# ESH FAMILY (cont.)



house this fall to grow cold crop plants such as cabbage, broccoli and Brussel sprouts. Ben hopes to also sell mums, possibly pumpkins, corn stalks and other autumn items. He will also be adding perennials next year and wants to raise berries.

They grow most of their plants from seeds or purchased plugs/cuttings, and occasionally replenish from an Amish plant auction in southern Maryland where they lived previously. In southern Maryland, Ben used to own a buggy

shop, so he says he is definitely a strong believer that buggies should be equipped with a set of really good blinking lights. Ben says he greatly appreciates other drivers' patience as they get used to seeing buggies and wagons on the roads. He says, "I would like to thank the community for accepting us. We hope we are in nobody's way." He says his goal is to make a farm to provide a place for his family to flourish and grow. It will be wonderful to see what they grow!



# RIVAH INTERIORS

Rivah Interiors, located on the east end of Callao, across from Los Portales, has been at this location for over seventeen years. This business carries top quality casual furniture and merchandise and caters to customers seeking “casual furniture for casual lifestyles.”

Owner Ron Jewell, who has been in the furniture business for over fifty (50) years, says it helps that Callao is near the river and various bodies of water because the area is experiencing an increase of people owning homes on the water and these folks make ideal customers for casual furniture. He also takes custom orders and ships product throughout the U.S.A. Mr. Jewell said, “What we sell is a one-time purchase.” Most of the parts are actually replaceable if ever needed. The quality is so high, you typically do not have to re-purchase the item, (unless, of course, you want to expand your collection).

As part of their casual line, Rivah Interiors carries top quality yard umbrellas. In fact, they offer the largest selection around. Two of the brands carried include Tuuci, The Ultimate Umbrella. In addition to these umbrellas, they also sell Frankford Umbrellas and Telescope Casual outdoor furniture, one of the top rated in America and made in the U.S., Mr. Jewell considers it some

of the finest in the world. Additionally, over 90% of Rivah Interior’s high end furniture and merchandise is made in the United States of America. Much of the outdoor furniture such as tables and Adirondack chairs are made of recycled plastic materials which are durable, quality yard furniture that lasts for years and is environmentally responsible.

Mr. Jewell wants his customers to know they deliver free in the Northern Neck. Rivah Interiors also attracts customers from Richmond, Fredericksburg, Northern Virginia, as well as, LaPlata, and Southern Maryland. They have even shipped a 12’ Tuuci Umbrella to a happy patron in Michigan. Clients can custom order many of the products. For example, Caprice has 500 different fabrics and can be customized for different comfort levels. You can really satisfy a unique

taste for quality products by ordering from Rivah Interiors.

As with many businesses, this past year has presented a challenge to the furniture business. The biggest challenge they have experienced over the past year is the difficulty of getting merchandise timely because COVID-19 greatly delayed manufacturing. Therefore, Mr. Jewell encourages customers to plan early and allow a little extra time. However, he says the high quality of his top of the line products is more than worth the wait. Mr. Jewell likes to support other local businesses and encourages all to shop local, you may be surprised with what you will find! (804) 529-7770 [www.rivahinteriors.com](http://www.rivahinteriors.com)



## 50 YEARS OF BULL



The Annual Bull Roast has been a long standing tradition in Callao, Virginia. This year was the fiftieth anniversary of the event. The first Callao Ruritan Bull Roast was held September, 1971. Originally, they slaughtered one of Phillip Deitz’s cows, butchered it and cooked it behind the Callao Fire House. Today, of course, they slow roast the delicious cuts of meat in the smoker. If you’ve never tried the Callao Ruritan Bull Roast, you are missing a mouth-watering, tasty sandwich, with some of the best barbeque sauce you’ll ever eat. If you missed it this year, you’ll have to try again next Memorial Day Weekend!

Ruritan members working the bull roast this year were: Leonard Headley; Alice Swann; Ruth Turner; Joyce Keller; Ross Bullen; Henry Boughn; Jim Michel; Phillip Deitz; Curtis Albrite; and David Parr. Individuals from the community helping out

this year included: Jason, Casey and Tyler Dawson; Elaine Moss; Kevin and Kyleigh Harrison; and Philip Parr. They did a great job. Thanks to all who supported this worthwhile event. (A

special “Thank you” to David Parr for his contributions to this article and Joyce Keller for the photo above and below of the savory bull roast being cooked.)



**Leonard Headley & Henry Boughn**

### CORRECTIONS FROM LAST ISSUE

In the article entitled, “Los Portales, Mexican Restaurant,” the following corrections should be noted: the restaurant is in its “sixth” year of business at the Callao location and the article stated “eight” years in error; “Portales” means a “door way,” and “Agrade emos mucho a nuestros clients hispanos per el gran apoyo atravez de estos anos y lestos tiempos.” should have read: “Agradecemos mucho a nuestros clients hispanos per el gran apoyo atravez de estos años y estos tiempos.” This author apologizes for the errors as the issue had already been distributed when realized.

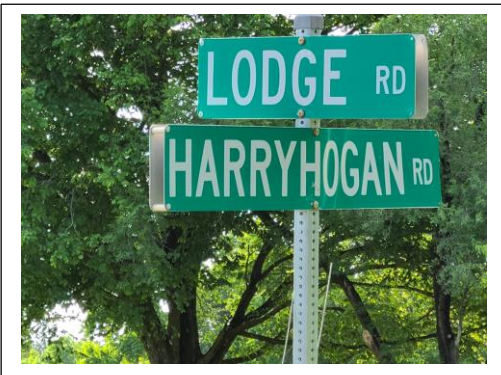


(cont'd from page 1) continued to work on his contraption over the next several years. Once he moved the funnels to the bottom and added an upper chamber to the wire square, the crab pot did a much better job of trapping their intended prey.

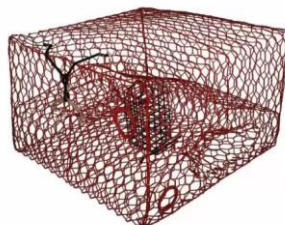
In 1938, B. F. Lewis was issued a second patent for the improved device. This is pretty much the same design used today and responsible for so many tasty crab related delicacies over the years. While Lewis had a brilliant design, he was pretty much a victim of his own success. His crab pot was so easy to replicate, there were many "copycats" and he had a difficult time collecting the royalties (\$4 per 50 pots) from so many watermen spread throughout the Chesapeake region. Also, many of them tried to take credit as the inventor, but luckily

Benjamin Franklin Lewis was successful with all of the court cases he brought against those infringing upon his patent and not paying royalties. The family was able to collect royalties for a period of seventeen years. After that, people could freely replicate the design without violating patent rights. While Mr. Lewis did not get rich from his invention, we will be forever indebted to him.

So just remember this summer, when you bite into a tasty crab cake sandwich or dig into a bushel of hot steamed crabs, we have Benjamin Franklin Lewis and his clever invention to thank. Everyone should take the time to remember Mr. Benjamin Franklin Lewis and Callao's "claim to fame" as the place where the crab pot got its humble origins, right here in Callao, Virginia.



Culling rings were added in recent years to allow undersized crabs to escape



# CHCA UPDATE

The Board of Directors of the Callao Hometown Community Association has been busy in recent months trying to get operations back to some form of normalcy. Our main focus has been on getting our website up and running to promote local businesses and to educate the public about the history of the area. We have also been working with our partners, Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern and the Reedville Fisherman's Museum, to finalize the tourism brochure "Disconnect to Reconnect," for which we received grant funding. It is anticipated that it will go to print any day now.

Our website is also just about ready to go live. We are putting the final touches on it and verifying the business contact information. Along with contacts to various businesses and services in the area, the website will feature links to places to Discover, Explore, Shop and Eat, in and around Callao. The site will list Community Events and will archive our organization's newsletter. COVID-19 may have delayed our progress, but we hope you will be happy with the end result and feel it was worth the wait.

CHCA saw phenomenal traffic with our social media last quarter. One article posted on our Facebook page about our developing Amish

Community received over 34,000 views! It also stimulated additional viewers for the previous articles about local businesses and piqued interest in our community. Since we started, our Facebook followers have tripled! The Newsletter also attracted international attention with viewers in Jamaica and Bahamas. There is a link on the website to subscribe to our newsletter. If you know of anyone who is interested in receiving our newsletter please encourage them to subscribe on our website.

Other social media mediums CHCA has added is a YouTube channel and Instagram. The YouTube channel is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXD5J3RElu54ciBF8IUOW>

The Instagram address is:

[https://www.instagram.com/callao\\_virginia/](https://www.instagram.com/callao_virginia/).

We hope to add more videos soon to highlight our wonderful area and plan to feature local happenings on Instagram. We are looking forward to using these social media outlets to spotlight our little piece of heaven in the Northern Neck. There are so many services, shops, and fun things to do in and around Callao (especially in the summertime), that we want to tap in to as many avenues on social media as possible, to get the word out. A special "Thanks" to LoveCreateArt for all of their help with our social media needs and the tourism brochure.

The brochure will include a QR code that links to an itinerary on the website that we can update

seasonally. Along with placing these guides to Northumberland County in the Visitor Center and local area businesses, we plan to place these brochures in rest stops, hotels, and businesses.

If you wish to support our non-profit group, the website will include a donation button to assist you in making a financial contribution. Donations help to fund our mission to promote Callao, upcoming education and training sessions, community events, and our goal of eventually opening a park. We also have some upcoming fundraisers to further support these activities. We plan to have a 5k walk/10k run in September. If you wish to volunteer to help at upcoming events, message us on Facebook. We continue to sell the Callao crab pot ornaments at Callao Supply and Olde Crab & Crow, so please stop by these locations for yours.

Additionally, Dan Corder is sponsoring a Music and Crafts Festival at Rivah Celebrations June 26, 2021. The proceeds will benefit the CHCA. His continuous support is greatly appreciated. We hope the community will come out and have a great time.

Lastly, CHCA continues to sponsor the American flags lining Callao around patriotic holidays. A big "Thank You" to Jim Michel and the Callao Moose Lodge members for their continued installation and removal of the flags throughout Callao. Enjoy and have a great summer!

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeanette M. Cralle*  
Secretary, CHCA

