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**SOME OF WHAT'S INSIDE THIS WEEK**

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**Spirit**

The week from  
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**November 20, 2018**

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 24 pages,  
 2 sections

**| SINCE 1844 |**

**Police investigate threats against Rockwool**

By **CHRISTINE SNYDER**  
 editor@spiritofjefferson.com

**RANSON** – Ranson Police Chief William Roper says his office is investigating multiple threats made against Rockwool, the Danish stonewool insulation manufacturer completing site preparation at the former Jefferson Orchards.

Though he said he could not go into detail about active investigations, Roper said Tuesday that the threats involve both written communications and face-to-face contact.

“In this day and age with social media, some people believe they can print, write or send whatever they’d like, and they truly cannot,” he said. “In Ranson, threats made face to face or over social media won’t be tolerated.”

Roper said the cases could “absolute-

ly” result in criminal charges.

The furor over the Rockwool plant – a project announced last November – has set off a firestorm among many in the county and beyond who say they do not want a heavy manufacturer in Jefferson.

“I truly understand people not wanting Rockwool to come here, but there are ways to voice concern in a civil manner,” Roper said. “If you have

■ **Related items** A6, A7, A10, A11

a disagreement, talk about it. Do not make a threat of violence.”

Even if the police probes ultimately conclude with a decision not to prosecute, he said the department must use its resources to determine what unfolded.

In one case, a Facebook post suggested bombing the plant once it’s up and

(See **THREATS** Page A3)



**Builder: Hill Top agreement would show town ‘unity’**

By **TIM COOK**  
 Special to the Spirit

**HARPERS FERRY** – Hill Top project manager Laurel Ziemanski told a packed Town Council meeting Monday night that the Leesburg, Va., firm she works for wants to find common ground with town officials on public access to the historic hotel site’s scenic overlook and other issues.

“We’re looking to figure this out together with you and come up with a mutual solution together,” said Ziemanski of SWaN Investors.

“And instead of coming up with a plan we want to team up with you and do the plan together, so that the Hill Top could be a symbol of unity for the town and prosperity for the town, and we all can be happy about this together.”

Ziemanski said the overlook lawn outside the hotel would remain open to the public during daylight hours, but that SWaN wants to work out what evening hours the lawn could be closed to promote safety and quiet for overnight hotel guests.

(See **HILL TOP** Page A2)



**KICKING OFF ‘RANSON WALKS’**

**Members of the Jefferson Activities Group who walk at 9 a.m. every Tuesday make their way around the Ranson Civic Center, where a “Ranson Walks” kickoff event happens tonight. Dr. Mark Cucuzzella, the physician and nationally recognized health guru, will detail the benefits of walking starting at 5 this evening at the newly renovated center at 431 W. Second Ave. There are giveaways planned as well. For more information and another photo, see Page A10.**

ROBERT SNYDER

**Study: Shepherdstown’s theater fest has multi-million impact**

By **RICHARD F. BELISLE**  
 Special to the Spirit

**SHEPHERDSTOWN** – In 2008 an economic research study showed that the Contemporary American Theater Festival contributed \$3.2 million to the region’s economy.

It showed how much theater patrons spent in local hotels, restaurants and retail stores in addition to the amount the theater itself spent putting the festival together.



Ten years later, a just-released study has revealed that in the 2018 season, festival audiences spent \$4.61 million on lodging, meals and shopping while the theater itself spent \$1.25 million locally – for a total of \$5.86 million, nearly double the amount reported in 2008.

Details were provided Thursday at Shepherd University at an event hosted by Ed Herendeen, CATF found-

er and producing director, Shepherd University President Mary J.C. Hendrix and Monica Ligenfelter, director of Shepherd University Foundation.

CATF and its partners are “creating and inventing the future,” Herendeen said at the meeting.

In a later interview, Herendeen said the festival supports 87.6 full-time-equivalency jobs, generates \$2.6 million in household income and \$1.09 million in local and state government taxes. “This festival not only enhances our quality of life, it also invests in the region’s economic well-being,”

he said at Thursday’s meeting.

“Art is never necessary, merely indispensable and we are a community that embraces and supports art,” he said. “The arts inspire us, soothe and provoke us, involve and connect us and they create jobs and contribute to the economy.”

The study, part of CATF’s strategic plan, was conducted by Americans for the Arts, a nonprofit based in D.C. that’s dedicated to advancing the arts in the United States. The study was

(See **CATF** Page A2)

**Jeff Barr**  
 of Summit Point  
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# Civil War Center to host talk on Gettysburg book

**SHEPHERDSTOWN** — A longtime educator will be here Thursday to talk about the new book he co-authored, "Greetings from Gettysburg."

David R. Craig's presentation is hosted by Shepherd University's George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War.

The book discussion and signing — free and open to the public — begins at 7 p.m. Thursday at Shepherdstown's War Memorial Building at 102 E. German St.

Craig will discuss the book that includes 160 historic images from the Gettysburg Battlefield.

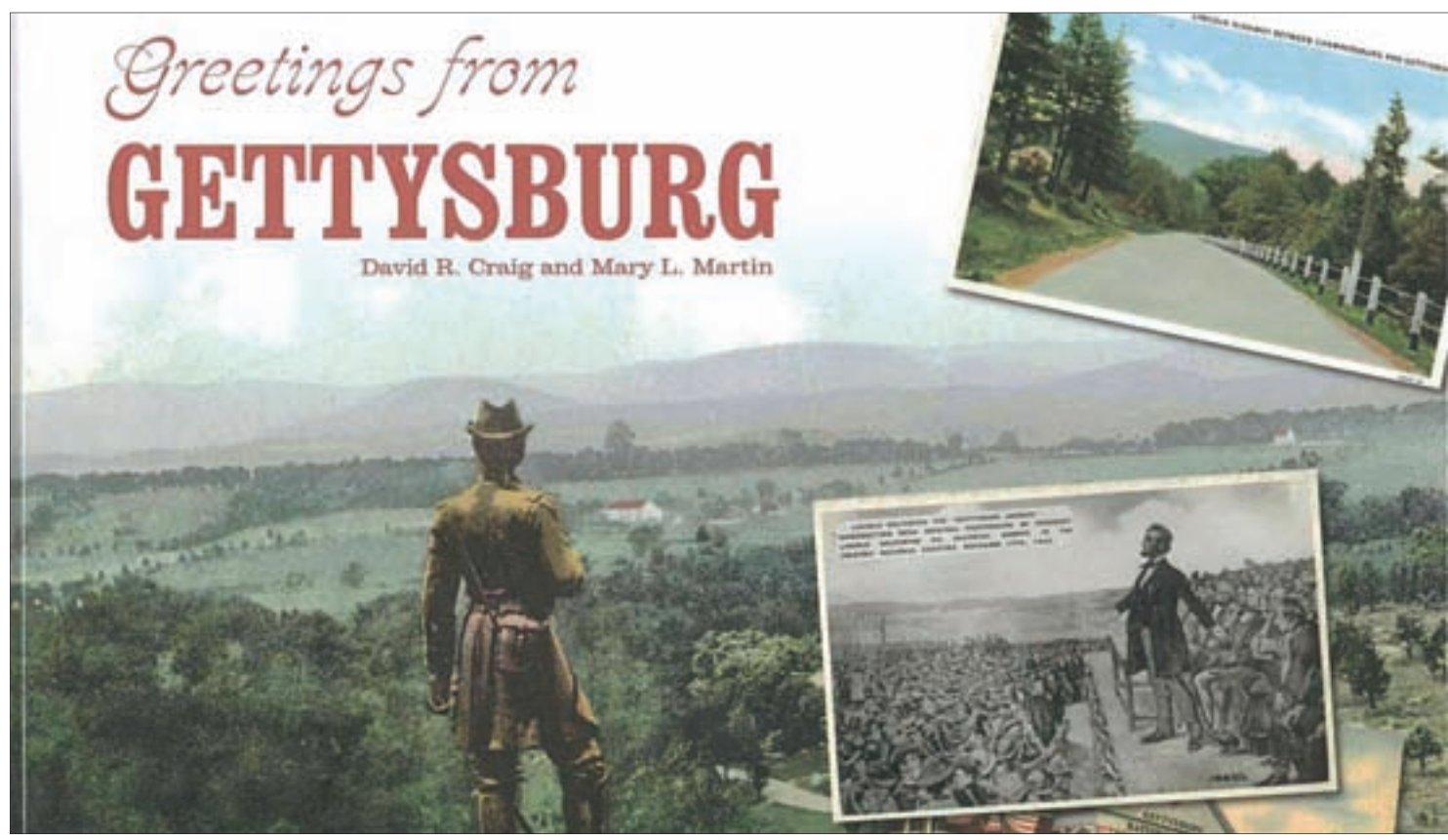
Craig was an educator for 34 years in Maryland's Harford County Public Schools, where he taught middle school social studies and served as an assistant principal. He has served in six elect-

**RIGHT: A book discussion with David R. Craig, the co-author of "Greetings from Gettysburg," is set for Thursday at the War Memorial Building in Shepherdstown.**

ed positions in Maryland — on the Havre de Grace City Council, as the town's mayor, as a Maryland state delegate and state senator, and as Harford County executive.

He served as secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning and is currently executive director of the Maryland World War I Centennial Commission, which was established by the governor in 2015 to give the state's residents and its visitors a way to remember, commemorate and learn about the meaning of World War I and the role of Marylanders during that time.

For more on Thursday's event, call 304-876-5429.



## Threats FROM PAGE A1

running in 2020 and then blaming "terrorists" and then a woman's comments to an employee at the Rockwool open house in August that were interpreted as threatening.

"It's the person who posted the threat, the people who participated in the discussion, the people who saw it — our resources get tied up in tracking down all of that," Roper said. "But we will investigate each and every one reported to us. Just because you're sitting behind a computer does not mean you don't have to follow the law."

After Jefferson County Development Authority board chairman Eric Lewis and 11 JCDA board members resigned Friday, some spoke about name-calling, baseless allegations of corruption and other unpleasantness they'd

endured since the controversy erupted in July.

One of those who resigned, Harry Wilkins, who had been the JCDA secretary, said he's seen similar controversies in the county over the year.

"I have lived through Jefferson County residents being violently opposed to the development in Huntfield, only to see their fears unrealized and many opponents of that project now residing there," he said. "I have seen extreme opposition to table games at the casino out of fears of rampant prostitution and social evils that would follow, yet somehow none of those fears materialized."

"Now we have opposition to Rockwool. The same unfounded fears are causing uncivil responses in this instance. Emotional responses are prevailing over civility and common sense. Progress stops when ignorance prevails."

Wilkins started his work with the JCDA in 2002, when he was serving as executive vice president and chief financial officer at American Public University Systems.

"Over the last two decades, the JCDA — led by Eric [Lewis], the board and great staff members — has worked tirelessly and successfully in creating a vibrant, diverse and healthy economy in this county. The JCDA is one of the main reasons Jefferson County doesn't look like the other 54 counties in the state.

One would think such success would be rewarded with gratitude about the past and trust in the future. Sadly, it has not."

Wilkins said he's gotten anonymous hate mail left in his mailbox. "I have been subject to public ridicule, mostly from people who have no history of accomplishment in the county yet believe they

have the proper 'vision of Jefferson County."

Patsy Noland, who is serving her second six-year term on the Jefferson County Commission, said she's never seen the kind of personal attacks lobbed at her, the JCDA members and others who are not part of the anti-Rockwool movement.

"I've lived in the county all my life and it's sad to see the direction we've taken," she said. "It's so divisive. I've been called a horrible person, someone unfit for public office, despicable, so much else."

"It's difficult to hear that, but I know I've done my research and what I've seen is that Rockwool is not going to be threat to life here at all."

Noland said she regularly hears from citizens who do not want to be known as "Rockwool advocates" who privately tell her they're glad she's not fighting the factory. "They say they know Rockwool is not going to be bad for the county, that they're sad and upset to see this hysteria, that we need these jobs in

the county. They don't want to publicly say any of that because they see how those who are opposed to the anti-Rockwool crowd are treated and they don't want that. They hate to see the way people are being treated."

Last week's election results show that there is plenty of support for Rockwool, said Noland, a Democrat.

Though Ralph Lorenzetti, John Doyle and others who oppose the project did win, there was no "anti-Rockwool wave," Noland said.

She pointed to the Jefferson County Commission race where Robert Barrat, who made Rockwool opposition the centerpiece of his campaign, lost to Jane Tabb, the Republican who had visited the Rockwool plant in Mississippi and initially praised it before later raising questions about the project after citizens began protesting.

Peter Onoszko, the Republican who lost in the race for the other open seat on the JCC, supports the Rockwool project, but had other issues

that may have made him a vulnerable candidate.

He was appointed to the JCC in 2016 and had never won an election. Other voters rejected Onoszko for his support for the Confederate plaque on the Jefferson County Courthouse. Photos of him sleeping at JCC meetings also circulated on Facebook in the weeks before the Nov. 6 election.

Sammi Brown, a Rockwool opponent, beat incumbent House of Delegates member and Rockwool supporter Jill Upson but Upson's ties to a Republican group that created a controversial radio ad prompted the state NAACP to call for her resignation.

Noland also pointed to the House race in the 66th district. "Paul Espinosa didn't oppose Rockwool and it's in the district he represents," she said, "and he won."

Noland said she hopes the threats and hateful language will stop soon.

"We have to find a way to get back to civil discourse," she said.

# THANK YOU!

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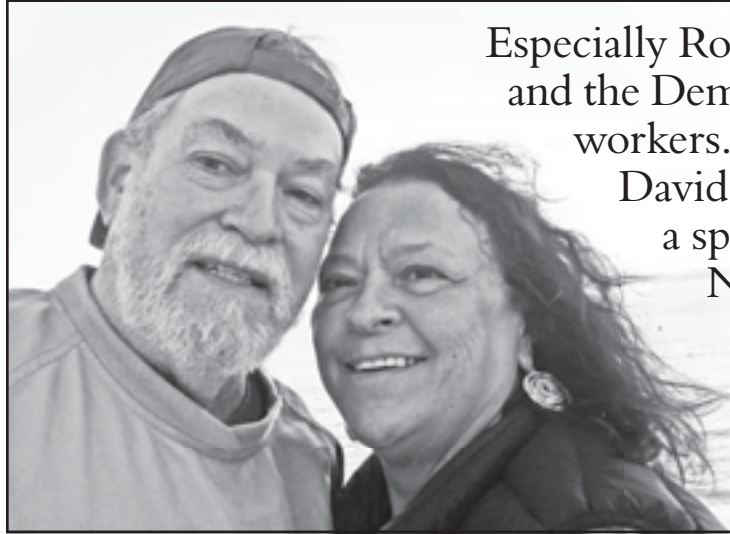
**John Doyle**



Authorized by Doyle for Delegate, Rod Snyder, Treasurer.

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voters of Jefferson County for our win.



Especially Rosie, my family and the Democrat Headquarter workers. A salute to David and Peter for a spirited campaign. No tall stacks!!!

**Ralph Lorenzetti**

lorenzetti1@earthlink.net

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**To Whom It Concerns:** I would like to thank all the people I met during the campaign that supported me, when I was out canvassing, making calls, at the debates and meeting and greeting at different locations. Further I would like to thank Leigh Koonce and the Jefferson County Democrats for their hard work and support. It is my hope my opponent and the sitting Jefferson County Commission is able to now go forward and keep Rockwool from doing business in Jefferson County.

Sincerely, **ROBERT BARRAT**  
former Jefferson County Commission Candidate, Democrat



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