

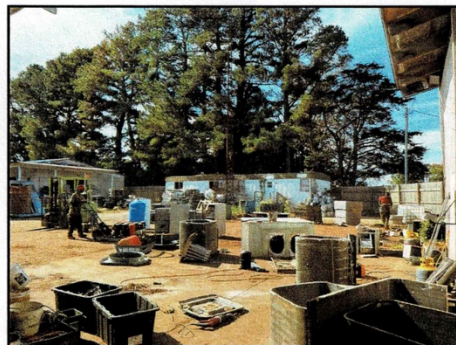
# WACHAPREAGUE Times

News, information  
& happenings from  
the Flounder  
Capital of the World

Volume 1

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No. 7



Top, former mayor Fred Janci.  
Above and right, Janci's metal-

## A Lifetime in Metal

**FRED JANCI SERVED** as mayor of Wachapreague for 10 years, but says he never really ran for the position.

Aileen Joeckel, current council member and one of the Jancis' neighbors, stopped in shortly after Janci and his wife Cathy moved to town, and asked if he'd be interested in serving on the council. He said OK, adding that he'd never done anything like that in his life, and Joeckel said that was OK.

Two or three weeks later, he says, she came back and asked if he'd consider being the mayor. He said OK, and that was that.

Janci saw the town through many changes, including planting and flowers and grasses around Seaside Park, installing new signage and the start of the sewer project.

He says he's proud of his time in office, and his realization that "as a town,

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## An Honor in Country

**MAYOR CHARLES ELLIOTT** won a songwriters achievement award in late October at the Josie Music Awards at the Grand Ol' Opry in Nashville, TN.

The song was "Life's Too Short," he said, which "is basically about losing someone you love. The beginning of it reminds me of my

mom," he said, adding that the day before she died, about six months ago, he was able to tell her he had been nominated for the awards.



The song is going to be released soon, he said, adding that a record is in the works, and will be mixed and

mastered in Nashville, and released in 2024. He is planning a tour in the spring.

Visiting Nashville for the awards "opened a lot more doors," he said. He met a lot of people in the music business, including Kid Rock, who, Elliott said, "does a lot of stuff with independent labels."

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## This and That

**NOMINATIONS ARE IN** for the Wachapreague Times Person of the Year. They are:

Pat Hart  
Town Clerk Charlie Gible  
Fire Chief Sean Fate  
Steve Joseph

The Person of the Year is the one who has brought the most to the town during 2023. Who has made the most difference? Who has helped deepen the character and soul of the town the most?

Please drop your vote in the box at the General Store, or email me at [carrieBjacobson@gmail.com](mailto:carrieBjacobson@gmail.com) by Dec. 15. Thanks!

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## Interesting Visitor

**EVEN IF YOU** didn't walk out to the end of the town dock, you might have noticed the tall green mast poking up above everything else for a few weeks in late October/early November.

It was the Green Dragon, a 60-foot motor sailing vessel, homeported in Eastport, NH, and captained by Chris Kruger.

The boat, a one-off handmade after a design by Steve Dashew, is made of aluminum. It weighs 65,000 pounds and has a 5'2" draft.

Kruger and a friend were headed to Montserrat but ran into trouble in Gloucester, MA, where a line got wrapped around the drive shaft.

He put on his wetsuit and freed the line, but it had already pulled something awry.

Kruger does all the work on the boat himself. He fixed the hull after running into debris last year, and took the side off the boat to install a new engine, then welded it back.

He graduated from King's Point and served as a merchant marine for 22 years. Then he bought a waterfall in Rockingham, VT, and built and ran a half-megawatt power plant for 17 years.

He has a house in Accomack (he and his friend rowed the 5 miles from Wachapreague to the inlet nearest his house one day, a trip that took the entire day).

His friend, Joe Vanderhoof, had to go home before Kruger set off from Wachapreague. Kruger's wife refuses to accompany him. "She thinks I'm a bad captain," he says.

### Janci, continued

we need to maintain what we have," the character and personality of the town. He says he believes he helped reach that goal, and is proud of it.

Janci has led an interesting life. He grew up in New Hampshire, and says he has nearly always worked for himself, after a five-year stint in the Merchant Marines. "I brought bullets and beer to Vietnam," he says, with a laugh.

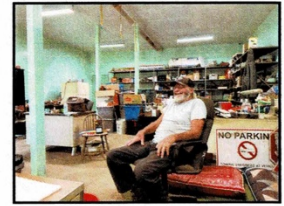
And working for himself has been key. "In theory," he says, "working for someone else is great. But working for myself, I'll control my own destiny."

He has been in the scrap metal business since his 20s, and was running one in Lebanon, NH, in the early 2000s, when the city closed the landfill where he had rented 6 acres for his business, and decided to make it into a mini-golf course.

He was working a rare stint for someone else, doing railroad demolition in Maine and Massachusetts when he got a project to do some demolition at Wallops Island.

That was when he and Cathy found Wachapreague. He rented a place on the Drummondtown Road. Cathy stayed in New Hampshire, mostly, but came down on the weekends.

They found their home - the former Masonic Hall at the



corner of Richardson and Brooklyn, waited until the price dropped, made an offer and bought the house in 2008. They moved in a couple years later.

Janci is proud of his time as mayor, and particularly the ideas he had and supported to keep the character of the town. "You get to know your neighbors," he says. "Everybody is friendly, everybody waves. It's safe."

"I don't think I did anything to change the town. I worked hard to keep it going. We made some nice improvements."

He makes special note of the work that Steve Joseph is doing to reclaim houses around town, and also says he thinks the Wachapreague General Store is a great addition. And, he says, the sewer will help.

These days, Janci, who is 73, specializes in recycling air conditioners, mainly large, commercial ones. And the South is a good place for that.

"In New England, you open the windows," he says, "but everybody has an air conditioner here."

## More This & That

**THE WACHAPREAGUE GENERAL STORE** will close on Dec. 25 and will be closed until April 1.

**THE EASTERN SHORE ARTISANS GUILD** Holiday Studio Tour takes place Nov. 24-25, the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Ann Crain and Lynne Rogers, both on Center Street, are on the tour, and I am (Carrie Jacobson), at 18 Bayview Ave.

**GROUNDBREAKING** for the sewer system will take place Tuesday, Nov. 28 at 1 p.m. at the Gazebo in Seaside Park. After the

ceremony, there will be A "light lunch" will follow at 2 p.m., at the Island House.

**HELP IS NEEDED** to decorate the Christmas tree and the gazebo in Seaside Park. Please come to the gazebo on Sunday, Nov. 26, at 1 p.m. to help!

**SANTA** will drive up to Seaside Park on a Wachapreague Fire Company fire truck on Saturday, Dec. 9, at 6 p.m. There will be hot chocolate, cookies, carols and the pleasure of sharing a moment with your friends and neighbors. In case of weather, the festivities will take place in the fire hall.

### Elliott, continued

It was an amazing feeling to be in the Grand Ol' Opry he said, adding that "Honestly, it seemed smaller in person. What seemed bigger to me was not the ground floor but the upper levels." One rarely sees those seating areas on TV, he said, and there are a lot of them.

Elliott has no intention of moving to Nashville. He said that one of the best pieces of advice he's ever received came from Barbara Orbison, wife of the late Roy Orbison.

"She said one of the biggest mistakes singers and songwriters make is leaving where they are from and

coming to Nashville. If we wanted someone, we could go to any street corner and find someone. Sometimes it's best to stay back and wait for the right opportunity."

Elliott said he and his family were dismayed at the number of homeless people in Nashville, and the state of the city itself. "It's getting run down," he said. "It's a shame."

He feels that his winning the award is helpful for the town. He's had lots of people liking his Facebook page, and the Eastern Shore Post had a story about him.

It all "spreads the word about Wachapreague," he said, and that is a good thing.