



THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2015

Daily Press

WATCH THE VIDEO: Go to dailypress.com to see video of glowing algae in the York River.

ABOVE: Joe Cope, a Virginia Institute of Marine Science research technician, drives a boat in the York River on Tuesday night, causing stirred-up bioluminescent algae to glow in the wake. **BOB OSTERMAIER/DAILY PRESS PHOTO**



BOB OSTERMAIER/DAILY PRESS PHOTO

Aiden Barnes, Jay Gunn, Wanda Brooks and Paul Presenza are members of the Southeastern Virginia Skeptics. The group, which has more than 560 members, promotes discussions of science and critical thinking.

PATHS DIVERGE FROM ORGANIZED RELIGION

'UNAFFILIATED' RISING: Millennials may be helping to fuel recent surge in numbers

INSIDE

**SUBWAY'S
FOGLE GUILTY**

Former pitchman Jared Fogle pleaded guilty to child pornography and other sex charges in a case that destroyed his career and left the sandwich chain scrambling. **Pages 9 & 10 of News**

**CRACKING THE
HOKIE LINEUP**

Peninsula natives Marshawn Williams, Parker Osterloh and Dean Newsome have opportunities to play as starters or key backups for Virginia Tech this season. **Page 1 of Sports**

**SHORE THING
FOR BIRDERS**

It's a great time to head to the beach for some bird-watching. Our resident expert, the Bird Nerd, tells you which shorebirds you can expect to see in and around local waters. **Page 1 of Home & Garden**



BY ANDREA CASTILLO
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At 14, Aiden Barnes realized that he could no longer continue identifying with Catholicism.

He took religious education classes as a child, but when it came time for confirmation, a rite many Catholics undergo in their early teens to reaffirm the baptismal promises undertaken for them as infants, he said he couldn't go through with the process.

He had already spent years questioning the faith. "I was asking a lot of questions I wasn't getting answers to," said Barnes, now 34 and living in Yorktown.

That moment led to years of exploring other religious tradi-

tions. He visited other churches, mosques and synagogues. Of all the traditions he explored, he said he connected with Buddhism the most, because it was less focused on a higher power and more on techniques such as meditation.

Finally, in his early 20s, he concluded that he didn't connect with any of those, finding more appeal in work by Carl Sagan advocating a scientific, evidence-based worldview. His path led him to join and later organize a group called the Southeastern Virginia Skeptics.

Barnes is among the 23 percent of Americans who don't identify with any religion — whether they are atheist, agnostic or otherwise — according to a study released

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EPA GRANT BREATHE LIFE INTO ASTHMA, AIR QUALITY CAMPAIGN

BY PHIL SALASKY
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NEWPORT NEWS — People have talked about the coal dust at his life. But there's more to the health issues of residents in the Southeast Community in Newport News, believes Linwood DeBrew, 72.

As executive director of the nonprofit Greater Southeast

Development Corp., which operates out of the Moton Community House, he's spearheading an awareness campaign about air quality, asthma and its causes.

A \$30,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will help the group implement its plan to raise awareness and establish a sci-

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Newport News initiative

■ A day camp for children with asthma will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Aug. 24-28, with activities at the Hampton Roads Boys & Girls Club and Moton Community House, 2101 Jefferson Ave. Cost is \$30. For information, call Linwood DeBrew at 757-604-5367.

■ An Asthma Walk will start at 9 a.m., Sept. 12 at Booker T. Washington School and proceed to Zion Baptist Church. Sign up at Moton Community House.

LIGHT SHOW WITH A DARK SIDE

Dazzlingly luminescent at night, algae blooms creating choking red tide in York River

BY TAMARA DIETRICH | tmdietrich@dailypress.com

Acquatic animal pathologist Wolfgang Vogelbein held a small bottle of York River water up to the overcast sky Wednesday and gently shook it.

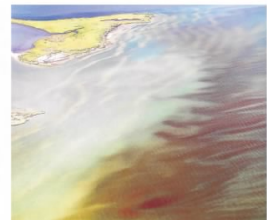
"Holy guacamole," he murmured. "Take a look at this."

"This" was all the tiny bits of microalgae floating in the sample — so many that Vogelbein didn't even need to magnify the sample to make them out.

Vogelbein and molecular ecologist Kim Reese are studying this particular algae, called *Alexandrium monilatum*, as well as a second species called *Cochlodinium polykrikoides* that at the moment are running rampant in the York and some surrounding waterways, bursting into massive blooms known as red tides.

Red tides are a particular summer scourge because the

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WOLFGANG VOGELBEIN/VIMS PHOTO
An algae bloom is seen encroaching on the Guinea Marshes in the York River in an aerial photo taken Monday.



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