Oyster season starts early

The harvest is moved so most Virginia oystermen can tap into a smaller market brought on by damage from hurricanes.

By JOHN M.R. BULL

The Virginia Port Authority board members came out in favor of revealing the top paychecks.

By PETER DUJARDIN

Greenspan warns of risky business

The chairman points out that investors shouldn’t take low interest rates for granted.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Storm worries fuel money jitters

High yields in mortgage-backed securities fuel concerns.

By KENNETH R. HARNEY

Bill-paying score ‘might help you’

P icture yourself in this situation: These years ago, you had a serious medical problem, couldn’t earn money for a few months and loaded up on credit cards because you had medical bills. You turned to credit cards because you had medical bills. You turned to credit cards because you had no money, but you also owed money on a mortgage and had other bills as well. You found that you couldn’t pay the bills, but you also owed money on a mortgage and had other bills as well. You found that you couldn’t pay the bills, but you had credit cards that were due, and you had to pay them.

You had credit cards that were due, and you had to pay them.

The Nation’s Business

In general, the country enjoyed some of the best times in recent memory in 2005. The housing market was strong, retail sales were up, and the stock market performed well. But the economy was not without its problems. Inflation was a concern, and there were worries about the long-term impact of the housing bubble.

By KEVIN H. VARNEY

Consumer confidence plunges in September to its lowest level since 1990. What’s to blame? Katrina.

The ECONOMY

Hampton Roads likely to see some growth, ODU experts say

Consumer confidence nation-wide dropped an unexpected 18.9 points, to 86.6, from a revised reading of 105.5 in August. The September reading was also the lowest level since October 2001, when it registered 85.7.

Wall Street took the news of the September reading to be a signal that the housing boom has ended. Economists with Old Dominion University expect the Hampton Roads economy to take a hit as a result of the hurricanes in the second quarter, but it will outperform the year-ago levels.

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MONEY & WORK

Business briefs

Cox Communications was the winner of a $1.4 million prize in the (25) Peace and Ameri- can Samoa Power Initiative, a national competition sponsored by Residential Custom ers and the Department of Energy, for providing energy-efficient solutions for their customers with high power consumption.

Three post-9/11 orders to go up for auction

Effective Oct. 5, the Chesa- peake Bay Oyster Harvesting Authority in Annapolis will auction 970 acres of state-owned oyster lands at 3 p.m. Monday, Oct. 8, in the Hampton Inn conference room at 30 Brandywine Blvd. in West Ocean City.

NOTE: The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine will offer a free lecture on the subject of stem cell therapy for spinal cord injuries on the evening of Oct. 5, at 6 p.m., at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore. The event is free and open to the public.

Most home-improvement retailers are in a tight spot, although a few have been able to hold the line on prices. The top performers have been Target and Lowe’s, both of which have been able to keep their prices low and maintain their market share. Home Depot and Wal-Mart, on the other hand, have struggled to maintain their pricing strategy.

Many others must post pay raise

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