

December 2017

WILLIAMSBURG'S

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VOL.11, ISSUE 12

PRICELESS

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Jim Brennan

Elly Brennan

Williamsburg Holidays

TURN TO PAGE 38
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What a year. If we focused too much on the news during the past year, we may have been overloaded with a major dose of negativity. Between catastrophic weather, political haggling, ongoing racial and gender abuse and more, the assaults on our senses and spirits have been persistent and exhausting.



Meredith Collins, Publisher

The holiday season affords us an opportunity to embrace that which is good in our world. We can take encouragement from the miracle of the season and all the love and hope it has to offer. In Williamsburg, we have countless ways to enrich our lives through the many events and celebrations available to us during the holidays. All we need to do is reach out.

I hope you will find this issue a good way to jump start your holiday spirit while you learn about some of our neighbors who are dedicated to kindling that spirit through the selfless acts of giving back to our community. NDN



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photography

www.lwcpphoto.com commercial
757-532-4037 industrial
lisa@lwcpphoto.com architectural
portrait

Cover Photo by Lisa Cumming



A Visit With Santa & Mrs. Claus

By Brandy Centolanza

Anyone who doesn't believe in Santa Claus hasn't met Jim Brennan.

Jim has been donning the famous red suit and Santa beard since the 1980s. Locally, Jim and his wife, Elly, portray Santa and Mrs. Claus at Busch Gardens Christmas Town. For years, Jim also worked year-round as St. Nick at Yankee Candle Village.

Jim and Elly met in high school in the Bronx, New York. They married in 1972,

then Jim joined the U.S. Air Force three years later. Jim began his gig as Santa Claus during a Christmas party for the Air Force while stationed at Mather Air Force Base in California in the early 1980s.

"He started out as an elf, but I thought he'd make a good Santa because of his blue eyes and his deep voice," recalls Elly, who encouraged her husband to give playing Santa a try. At first, both the red suit and the wig

and beard were all fake, but then Jim started growing a real beard after he retired from the Air Force.

"I have not shaved fully since May of 1998," says Jim, who served 23 years in the military. Jim and Elly decided to retire in Williamsburg following a stint at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton.

After retiring, Jim did volunteer work with the American Red Cross, then decided to put



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on the Santa suit once again. He started portraying the jolly fellow first at the former Polo Club, a popular restaurant on Jamestown Road where his son, Michael, was a manager. Jim also worked private Christmas parties and other events and then a friend read about the opening of Busch Gardens Christmas Town in 2009 and encouraged Jim to audition for the role of Santa Claus there.

"I went with him to the audition to help him into his costume, and learned they were also looking for someone to play Mrs. Claus," Elly says. Both Jim and Elly were hired.

Elly has portrayed Mrs. Claus every season since Christmas Town opened. She is part of Santa's Fireside Feast in Ireland's Castle O Sullivan's grand dining room. The Fireside Feast gives guests an opportunity to enjoy an intimate dining experience with Santa and Mrs. Claus. The event includes a buffet meal, holiday stories and other entertainment.

"I have two elves with me, and we bring out cookies for the kids," Elly says. "It's very cute."

For nine years Elly has taken pleasure in sharing the holiday season with families at Busch Gardens.

"I help comfort the shy kids who may be afraid of Santa," she says. "It's nice when I recognize the children who have come here from year to year. I've also Facetimed with military men who are overseas and can't be with their families at Christmas. I've been a part of wedding engagements as well."

One year, a man asked Mrs. Claus to hide an engagement ring in her apron and then present it to a little boy to give to the man's girlfriend while he proposed. Another year, a boy asked Santa to bring his father, who was serving in Afghanistan, home for Christmas. Busch Gardens helped arrange for the boy's father to hide out at Das Festhaus and surprise his son.

"That was beautiful," Elly says. "There have been a lot of lovely things that happened at Christmas Town, and we've been able to be a part of it, which makes it even more wonderful."

Jim, meanwhile, worked as Santa for a year at Busch Gardens Christmas Town, then left to work full-time at Yankee Candle Village before returning to Christmas Town in 2015.

While at Yankee Candle Village Jim was able to spend more time interacting with children. "That was a lot of fun," he says. "During the off season I had more time to talk to kids, find out what they like, and get to know them."

Jim also started a Naughty or Nice list, where kids could write down their names. Jim and Elly later began collecting monikers with unique spellings and compiling them into a large book. Visitors to his workshop enjoyed checking the book and finding their name.

"We had a list with over 50,000 names," Jim says. "Elly and I would watch movies, including the credits, and write down names. I would also read the honor roll list in the Virginia Gazette and write down unusual names. Sometimes when people with an unusual name found their name in my book they would start to cry. I also overheard a father of

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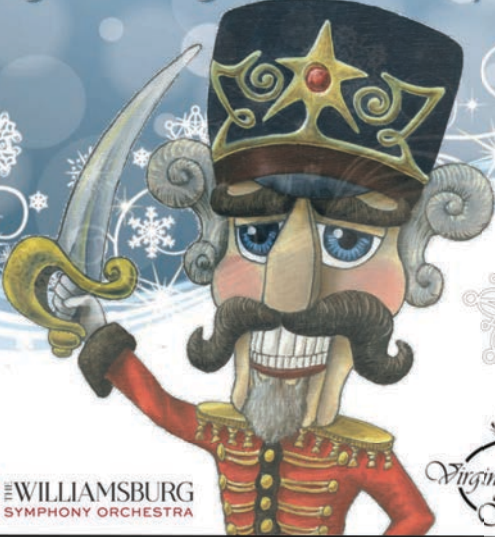
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one young boy say that writing his name in my book was the first document he had ever signed. That really touched me.”

For Jim, talking to the children is the best part of being Santa. “I love getting kids to smile, asking them if they’ve been behaving, and hearing what they want for Christmas,” Jim says. “I always tell them I can’t promise anything, but I’ll see what I can do. I’ve had kids ask me for a pony, a puppy, and a llama. Sometimes, kids will ask me to bring back a grandparent or family member who died. That is tough. I tell them as long as you have a memory, they are not really gone. They are still with you.”

As Santa, Jim meets people from all over the world. “One time when I was at Yankee Candle, there was a woman who visited me who was from Ireland. She knew some of my cousins who also live in Ireland,” Jim says. “It’s a smaller world than you think.”

Three years ago, Jim returned to Santa’s workshop at Busch Gardens Christmas Town.

One of his favorite aspects of the job is

peeking through the window of the workshop at guests as they wave when they walk by. “When it is slow sometimes I will put my hand up to the window and the kids will put their hands up against mine,” he says. “The window is just so magical, so special.”

This year, when Jim gears up as Santa at Christmas Town, he will be working in an expanded, more spacious Santa’s Workshop in Curse of the DarKastle. “I’m looking forward to it,” Jim says.

To prepare for their roles as Santa and Mrs. Claus, Jim and Elly read up on the best gifts each holiday season and watch children’s movies and cartoons with their two grandchildren. “You have to have an understanding of what the kids are talking about, and what they want for Christmas,” Elly says. “It helps you connect with the children.”

Kids are also curious about what Santa and Mrs. Claus do when they aren’t in the workshop. “Some of the questions they ask are cute, but you have to think fast on your feet,” she says. “Kids always want to know what Santa’s

favorite football team is. We pick teams whose colors are Christmas colors, red or green.”

Jim adds, “Kids like to ask me what my favorite food is. I’ve come up with a list of Santa’s essential food groups like Buddy the Elf: candy canes, candy corn, hot chocolate, and chocolate chip cookies.”

During the off season, Jim enjoys tinkering with his model train collection and both he and Elly like to travel and camp in their vintage motor home. “We just love it,” Elly says.

They also love being a part of everyone’s holiday traditions at Busch Gardens Christmas Town. “When I am dressed as Santa and everyone sees me, they always smile and are in such a good mood,” Jim says.

Elly also appreciates the extra joy that fills the air during the holiday season.

“Everyone seems happier, warmer, gentler this time of year,” she says. “I’ve seen the best of humanity working at Busch Gardens Christmas Town.” Join Jim and Elly Brennan during a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus at Busch Gardens Christmas Town. NDN



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JOHN LUCIANO



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New Town Christmas Caroloke

By Alison Johnson

As a kid, John Luciano had vivid thoughts about how music came to play on the radio. Every day he imagined bands would line up outside the door of a station, wait their turn and perform live in front of a microphone.

So not surprisingly, John was long fascinated by music and radio. One day in high school, he decided to knock on the door of WGH Radio in Hampton, introduce himself to the on-air personality, Neal Steele, and ask if he could visit the control room as Steele spun Top 40 tunes.

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"After that, I got to sit in there with him some days," John recalls. "I couldn't read notes or play an instrument, but I loved music. I got to thinking I might make a good disc jockey one day. I felt like I would be good at knowing what people would want to hear, and what they'd want to dance to."

He was right.

Now 57 and the owner of Panda Entertainment, a one-man local DJ service, John is again gearing up to host a unique holiday event: New Town Christmas Caroloke. Every Friday night from November 24 through December 15, adults and children can sing karaoke tunes, compete in contests and enjoy finger foods, cookies and a hot chocolate bar with peppermint, cinnamon and other mix-ins. Performers can tackle whatever song they'd like, holiday-related or not, as a solo or in a group. The hours are 6 to 8 p.m. at New Town's gazebo at the end of Main Street by Opus 9 Steakhouse.

Christmas Caroloke is back for a second, expanded year after proving very popular last season. "Everyone likes to be a star for a brief time," John says. "This is a fun opportunity for people to listen to singers, enjoy Christmas mu-

sic and get into the holiday spirit. And, it's fun for me to see people be so happy because they're having fun."

As the event's DJ, John is in charge of keeping the evening flowing well by playing requested music, making sure lyrics are displayed on a monitor, adjusting microphone volume and sound mixers to suit each participant's voice and, if needed, performing a song himself to fill pauses.

Although heat and humidity are hardest on equipment, cold weather can pose its own challenges. John notes with a laugh, "You don't want to be shaking and pressing 'start' or some other button when you're not supposed to. Like, 'Oops, sorry.'"

Quick with jokes and quips, John has mastered gigs ranging from birthday parties, after-proms and wedding receptions to corporate and club events and military celebrations. He also specializes in karaoke services and light shows. He just doesn't book in-school proms, for fear of inadvertently airing "dirty" versus "clean" versions of popular songs.

John's favorite musical genre is country, which he attributes to 28 years of living in Colorado.

His favorite karaoke tune is the Garth Brooks version of "To Make You Feel My Love". But he likes many types of music and works hard to tailor play sets to each customer and event. "To put it simply, my job is to play what people want to hear and dance to," he says. "That's a pretty great job, right?"

However, John didn't have the job full-time until fairly recently. He has an eclectic background, starting with his birth in Puerto Rico to an Italian father and a Puerto Rican mother. The family moved to New York City, home to a large Puerto Rican community, when he was 2. Following his parents' divorce, he relocated with his mom to Virginia around age 10 and spent time living in Hampton and Williamsburg.

After graduating from Lafayette High School, John earned an Environmental Studies degree from Ferrum College and a Master's Degree in Industrial Microbiology from Tennessee Technological University. While he did some DJ work along the way at restaurants, college radio stations and fraternity parties, his official career path led him to a job as a microbiologist at an Anheuser-Busch plant in Fort Collins, Colorado. That highly technical position in-



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After 15 years at the plant, John opted to get a teaching degree and take a job at a rural high school in eastern Colorado. He taught biology, horticulture, Spanish – he speaks both that and Italian – and woodworking, along with coaching football and track. In the woodshop, he found a lifelong hobby.

“I still love to turn wood on a lathe and make bowls and cups,” he says. “I’ve got my eye on a lathe now.” He pauses, and then jokes, “And I’ll go through the neighborhood stealing wood from trees. You’ll see a story about me, the wood thief, in the local papers. Maybe I’ll leave a panda stamp on the sides of the trees.”

Time in Colorado also drew John into breeding and training horses. At one point, he and his then-wife lived on a ranch with 40 mares and four stallions. He got into roping and his daughter, one of his five children, became a professional barrel racer. Despite some spills, including a tumble that eventually led to rotator cuff surgery, John discovered he was good at

breaking young horses.

“I’m a pretty patient person,” he says. “I found it’s like with kids. Horses need consequences. You praise them if they do something right, and correct them if they do something wrong. But you don’t ever want to get too relaxed, or they’ll buck you right off.”

A divorce brought John back to Williamsburg, where he could help care for his elderly mother and stepfather in their home. He did some volunteering for Dreamcatchers Therapeutic Riding before his business, now in its fifth year, took off. “I miss those horses,” he says. “I mean, I got a trailer in the divorce but no horses, so that doesn’t really do much.”

With Panda Entertainment, John aims to help people throw entertaining, energetic and worry-free events, with the slogan “Making Music and Memories One Song at a Time”. The name “Panda” originated from his days at Ferrum, where he was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. He was in the student center with a few brothers one day when they spied a girl looking sad. John walked over and asked if he could give her a hug. “When I did, she said, ‘You hug like a big panda bear,’” John recalls.

“My brothers heard it, and of course the name stuck.”

Christmas Caroloke is a great way to be involved in the community, John says. “A lot of my business comes through word of mouth, and I’m from this area,” he says. “I’m glad that I’m from this area. I like to contribute something back.”

The event is a team affair, organized by the New Town Commercial Association and sponsored by B-defined Personal Trainers, Chantel Ray Real Estate, Iron-Bound Gym and Tidewater Physicians Multispecialty Group. Paul’s Deli Restaurant is providing food, and other local businesses are contributing prizes and judges for the weekly holiday-themed contests.

Judges look for more than a good voice. John notes, “They like to see eye contact with the audience, and relaxed singers who know the lyrics and can walk around rather than fixing themselves in front of the monitor and staring at it.”

That said, John doesn’t want anybody to be afraid to give a tune a whirl, no matter how bad they consider their voice. “Be brave and get up there, because it’s a lot of fun,” he says. “For me, the smiles are all the reward I need.” NDN

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Helena S. Mock, Esquire

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FRANZ KITENKO



A Culinary Experience to Remember

By Erin Zagursky

Lisa W. Cumming Photography

As a child, when Franz Kitenko visited his grandfather, he knew he was in for a show and some good food. A professional waiter in some of Philadelphia's big dinner clubs when they were at the zenith of their popularity, Franz's grandfather was a self-made gourmand.

"He loved to cook. He loved the excitement of different foods," Franz says. "He would

make something he wanted us to see or experience. It was always a plus to go there, and he would make what, to me at the time, seemed like exotic food. It had a really big influence on me. It got me excited about food. I saw the excitement in him."

That contagious excitement led Franz to a career in the hospitality industry, much of it

spent at Busch Gardens Williamsburg where he currently serves as the vice president of culinary. Now, he spends the holiday season hoping to give visitors to Christmas Town what his grandfather gave him: a culinary experience to remember.

Franz started to work in a restaurant at the age of 15, sweeping the kitchen and vacuum-

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ing carpets in an authentic German restaurant in his hometown of Philadelphia. He soon graduated to washing dishes and later food prep before eventually becoming a bus boy and then a host. When Franz was old enough, he graduated to bartending.

“I went through the whole gamut at that restaurant,” he says. “I worked there about five years and just learned a ton. The biggest thing I learned was that I wanted this to be a career.”

In order to pursue that goal, Franz studied hotel and restaurant management at Penn State University, learning both culinary and business aspects of the industry. As he prepared to graduate, a job he had lined up fell through due to changes in the company. His sister had visited Busch Gardens the previous year, the year it had opened, 1975 – and Franz decided to look into job opportunities at the park.

He was hired as a supervisor, and one of his first projects was opening Das Festhaus, a now iconic food and entertainment venue in the heart of the park.

“I got to put the building together, so to speak, and get it ready to open and produced the food and trained people, so that was a great learning experience for me,” he says.

The next year, he was offered another position as full-time bakery and catering manager.

“Which was kind of interesting,” he says. “Because there was no bakery and there was no catering operation, so it was immediately clear what my first task would be: build a bakery and build a catering operation, which I did with a lot of help,” he says.

“It’s funny, our bakery now is just light years from where we were in the first days. Here we make everything from scratch, we are self-sufficient. We make our breads, our cakes, our pastries, our pizza crusts and just everything. It’s a phenomenal operation, so I’m proud of the progress that we made over the years.”

Franz progressed throughout the years to eventually becoming the park’s culinary operations manager and then its vice president of culinary operations. After about a dozen years in that position, he was asked to take on an entirely different role: vice president of merchandise.

He was serving in that position when Busch Gardens first introduced Christmas Town in 2009. The annual event, which runs in November and December, sees the entire park transformed for Christmas, with millions of lights, holiday shows and food, and special theming in each area. Franz says that the entire park came together to make sure that Christmas Town would be a success.

“It was breathtaking. Quite honestly, we impressed ourselves, it came together so well,” he says.

Now back in culinary operations for the past four years, Franz is focused on making sure that the quality of both the food and service that are offered at Busch Gardens during Christmas Town remain consistently good, no small task for a park that last year served 212,020 meals (about 6,057 per day) during Christmas Town, with 12,755 served on December 3 alone.

“First and foremost, any operation stands or falls on the quality of its food, so I would say that’s job one,” he explains. “Being able to stay close to the production of the food, I can’t tell you the last time I sat

down and had a meal here because my job is an open-ended buffet in a way. I make it a point when I go to a facility that I'm looking at their product, I'm tasting their product, I'm evaluating their product.

"The key to our business is consistency. If you see that consistency waver, you have to find out why before it creates a big enough gap where it becomes a problem."

Service is equally important, he says. "Our guests are in our house, and we want to make sure that their visit, their time here is good and that the memories they hope to gain from their visit are good ones."

In order to accomplish those goals, preparation for Christmas Town begins well in advance each year, and the culinary team is always looking for ways to improve.

For instance, a new "Cookies and Cocoa" offering has been installed in the Germany location where the Santa photo operation used to be (it moved to DarKastle). The area will include 16-17 different kinds of cookies, plus special hot chocolates that can be ordered in flights of four 4-ounce cups for sampling.

"It all starts with the combined brain power of culinary operations to develop these concepts, kick them around and once we settle on something, develop it into an operational stage," Franz says.

The process can include identifying a concept, developing a menu and undertaking sometimes extensive testing.


"When those concepts finally open up and you finally do them and they're successful, it's just an awesome feeling to know that you're able to put this together and people like it. The feedback we get is priceless."

While the culinary operations team is always looking to improve what it offers, it is also careful not to mess with some of the fan favorites that have become holiday traditions for visitors to Christmas Town, including hearty comfort foods like the chili at Trapper's Smokehouse, Annie Grogan's stew in Ireland, the roast sirloin sandwich that visitors can enjoy at the Festhaus while also taking in the "Deck the Halls" show, or the signature hot chocolate that guests carry in mugs to refill throughout the park. Last year alone, 172,531 hot chocolate items were sold during Christmas Town.

"There are just so many compliments about our hot chocolate, and we're really proud of that. We go through a lot of effort," Franz says.

Guests looking for something more than what is offered as part of a regular park visit can opt to dine with Santa or Rudolph or enjoy "A Taste of Christmas Town," which offers samples of food from throughout the park.

"We find that people really do want a lot of these different experiences to enhance their visit," Franz says.

In culinary operations, the aim is to complement what the guests experience in the park as part of Christmas Town's total package, Franz Kitenko says. "We want to be a part of the holiday experience. If we are able to put all of those parts together and somebody is able to walk away with just a phenomenal memory, it's pretty gratifying to see," he says. "It's pretty gratifying to see families this time of year and you see a lot of scenes where the grandparents, the parents and kids, they're all taking Christmas in and experiencing it together. It's a happy time to be able to facilitate that for people." 

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KATY RODGERS



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Christmas Dreams

By Gail Dillon

There's an old saying, "Those who can't do, teach," but Katy Rodgers categorically defies this in her dual roles as both a talented dancer of many genres and a skilled dance instructor. "This year I'm teaching ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical, modern and hip-hop," she says. The 25-year-

old has been a dancer for nearly 20 years and now teaches what she loves so much at the Institute for Dance (iDance). But wait, there's more. The busy young woman also teaches pre-school at The Kensington School. "It's all kids all the time," she jokes.

Katy grew up in a Navy family, the youngest of three children. Her father was a Judge Advocate General who retired as a captain. She was born in London, and then her family relocated to Alexandria, Virginia followed by a stint in San Diego before moving to Williams-

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burg when she was in elementary school. She tried various sports “off and on” over the years but nothing stuck except dance. “It was the only thing I wanted to come back to,” Katy says.

She attended George Mason University, majoring in production management and minoring in dance but originally intended to go into education. “Initially I wanted to be a teacher when I went to school and, you know, everyone has an opinion, and I listened to everyone’s opinion. I didn’t pursue a teaching degree. I did stage management instead.” But after graduation, when she was trying to decide on a career direction, she settled on teaching preschool. She left teaching for two years to work in development, but found she missed the classroom too much. “So now I’m back at Kensington.”

She readily admits there is room in her heart for both teaching young people to dance and helping small children learn the alphabet. “The thing is, I really love both of them,” she says. “Dance will always give you energy; exercise always gives you energy.” At Kensington, Katy is in charge of the pre-kindergarten kids and often has a long evening ahead after she leaves her “day job.”

“When I teach dance, I leave the preschool at 5:00 so I can begin teaching at 5:30.” Otherwise she’s there until 6 p.m. Her lesson plans are usually accomplished when the preschoolers are napping. “I do love kids and I obviously love dance because I’ve been doing it for so long. It’s a pretty easy transition to go from one job to the other.” She points out that teaching children all day long has made her relish a bit of silence when she comes home. “It’s a lot of talking,” she says with a smile. “I find at the end of the day I just want to be quiet.”

Katy is particularly busy this time of year because of the upcoming iDance holiday dance show, Christmas Dreams, which will be performed at the Kimball Theater December 16th and 17th. Unlike the famous Nutcracker, which features only ballet dancing, iDance’s Christmas Dreams incorporates a variety of different dance styles such as hip hop, tap and ballet. “We wanted to make sure we hit all styles of dance. We’ve got plenty of dancers who don’t prefer ballet. We didn’t want to alienate them from the performance,” she explains, adding that there are also “two different kick-line numbers.”

The show centers on a girl named Janie Sparkle who receives a snow globe and then falls asleep, entering an enchanted dream world full of new friends and adventures. About 60 young dancers between the ages of 8 and 18 participate in the production, and all must audition for roles. This will be the 10th anniversary year of Christmas Dreams in Williamsburg, and Katy’s third year of choreographing the show. In previous years she was primarily involved as a dancer.

She says that although much of the show doesn’t change, parts of it are a little different each year. “It’s funny actually, because you make little changes as you go along. While the base of the show does stay the same, I believe the little changes have added up and the show has in fact changed quite a bit over the years. I believe someone who hadn’t seen it in a couple of years would enjoy quite a few surprises.” Adding to the drama of the story is a narrator who helps tell the story, Mike Maddocks. “He sits over in the corner and he has the perfect voice for

the story,” Katy says. “And in the end, Santa makes his big appearance.”

She is pleased with the way things are coming together for this year’s performance and thinks the audience will find it to be charming. “It’s really entertaining, it moves really quickly. We don’t have numbers that are five minutes long. They change pretty quickly, and having the different styles, I think makes it a lot more fun.”

It’s hard to believe that Katy has any personal time for hobbies or relaxation with two teaching jobs, but she and her boyfriend, Grant Kelly, do manage to squeeze in some recreation together. The two recently bought a house together in Kings Point, which features a pond in their backyard. “If we don’t have a lot of time we’re often on the dock of our pond. If we’ve got a whole afternoon or even a few hours, we like to kayak.” She also enjoys running and will “jump into” a dance class whenever possible at the studio. “They’re really great about working with your schedule and allowing you to make time (to dance),” she says about iDance. Taking in shows at Chrysler Hall and the Ferguson Center is another pleasure she and Grant relish whenever possible. They recently saw *The Book of Mormon*, calling it “hysterical.”

Grant is the front office manager at Kingsmill Resort. He and Katy met through mutual friends and have been dating for a little over three years. “We bought a house so it’s serious,” she says, laughing. “He comes to all the shows and is very supportive. He loves the tap numbers.”

When it comes to role models, Katy doesn’t have to look too far, citing Kathy Martin-Palmo, the director of iDance. “She was my dance teacher all growing up, so she was someone that I always very much admired and looked up to. The way she runs her studio and the way she treats her students, she’s always been a big role model of mine.”

Katy says choreographing is a multi-faceted art, requiring many skills. “Musicality is key,” she states. “The best choreographers are the ones who pick out notes you wouldn’t necessarily pay too much attention to, and they’ll put an accent in their choreography that lets you hear the layers of music.” She adds that creativity is also crucial. “You know, finding new ways to move and new transitions.” One of her favorite choreographers is a woman named Kate Jablonski. “Her choreography is extremely clever,” she says.

Another person she has high praise for is Paige Jacobs, the seamstress at iDance. “She is amazing as a seamstress, especially with those quick changes and under time pressure.”

Christmas is a special time for her and her family because they always spend it together. “Nothing quirky or anything, but we always come together, my immediate family at least,” she says. “It’s always been a two-day thing, Christmas Eve and Christmas.” Decorating the house inside and out is a family tradition, as well as putting up both a formal and informal Christmas tree. One of Katy Rodgers’ favorite memories is of her mother bringing out the advent calendar and filling it with small treats each day.

“Every day my mom would put something different in—whether it was a Hershey’s kiss or a quarter. It’s the small things we remember and cherish. I hope the people coming to see *Christmas Dreams* will take a little bit of it with them for the holidays.” NDN



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BOBBY & KANDY FARINO



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A Community Hug

By Linda Landreth Phelps

“For the first time in 40 years of marriage Kandy and I weren’t going to be with family for Christmas,” Bobby Farino recalls about that season of 2015. “Our four grown children, their spouses and our grandchildren, 13 of them at last count, were going to be out of the country or with in-laws for the holidays.” Instead of moping, the Farinos decided they’d use being alone as an opportunity to bless others. As is often true with this community service-minded couple, the idea started small and rapidly snowballed.

“I thought about making a hot meal for the security team at Ford’s Colony, where we lived,”

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Kandy remembers. Over the years, they had often delivered plates of food to those working on holidays from their own overflowing family feasts. "But the more we talked, the more we were convinced that our James City County police officers could really use some encouragement. It had been a tough time for law enforcement and we wanted to show appreciation for their dedicated service to the people of our area."

At police headquarters off of Centerville Road, ten days before Christmas, Bobby expected to hear that more than enough such gestures were already in place. "We just wanted to be a part of it, but when I talked to the officer in charge, he told me that nothing like that had ever been done before. That jolted my heart, and I remember thinking, 'We're doing this!'"

They had in mind bringing an Italian feast and sharing a meal with the police officers mid-day, but for security reasons, were told they couldn't stay to eat with them. "We'd have to leave the food and go, and we couldn't use open flames to keep it hot," Kandy says. "We agreed to follow any rules they had; we just wanted to be a blessing." Bobby shakes his head as he remembers. "They were so blown away and appreciative that we wanted to do something for them that I thought others would probably like to join

us." At this point, the couple's original altruistic plan began to grow.

The Farinos spread the word. They told their church members, Relevant, where Bobby co-pastors, associates at Keller-Williams as well as fellow Realtors, friends and neighbors about their idea, and many of these people offered to provide food, too. "How much greater would our message of gratitude be if the entire community was able to show their love?" Kandy wonders. "So we told more people at local stores and restaurants." The community quickly embraced the project with an outpouring of generosity.

Their response was almost uniformly positive, even with short notice. Businesses loved the idea and promised the best of what they had. Staff at the restaurants volunteered to come in early and stay late to prepare fresh food. So many donations were promised, Bobby says, that the original date was expanded to include Christmas Eve and into the weekend following. "We fed them for four days straight! We needed an army of volunteers to transport it all."

They decorated the station's common area with festive tablecloths and holiday themed plates and napkins, and suddenly an institutional space felt homelike. The officers on duty got a home-cooked hot breakfast on Christmas

morning. By noon, platters of traditional holiday foods along with head-high stacked boxes of pizza, wings, cookies, pies, cakes, donuts and muffins, plus enormous pans of lasagna, barbecue, seafood and fried chicken were competing for space on every possible surface. The blended aromas permeated the building, and nobody could quite believe the bounty that was spread before them. As important as the hot food was to the hungry police officers, even more meaningful was the overwhelming tidal wave of love they felt from the community.

Kandy remembers a special moment with one of the young officers. "She thanked and hugged us as we left, and as we hugged, I patted her back. Under my hands I felt her rigid Kevlar vest. It just brought it home to me that here was a mom at Christmas, and instead of being with her family, she was on duty, willing to risk her life to protect me and our community. It brought tears to my eyes."

By 2016, those original security concerns were a thing of the past. A relationship between the volunteers and our police force had grown over the past year and trust was established. True friendships blossomed.

So many donors wanted to join in the holiday blessing by then that they could easily feed Wil-

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Williamsburg's police force and the York-Poquoson sheriffs as well as James City County's officers. Then one day Bobby was passing the Virginia State Police station and decided to stop and ask if they'd like to be included, too. Astonished, the trooper on duty said that it would be hard to do a meal because their people are usually out on the roads. 'Would it be okay if we got some peanut butter crackers? They're easy to eat while on duty,'" he said. That Christmas the troopers got their crackers plus more delicious foods specifically designed to be consumed neatly and quickly.

The scope of the program and its complicated logistics had outstripped their ability to provide meals to everyone at once, so holiday feasts were brought to the recipients on three different dates. At JCCPD's headquarters again for Christmas Day, a crowd of volunteers were eating and laughing with the officers. The Farino's son, Jason, and his wife, Julie, in town for the holidays that year, stopped by to play and sing Christmas songs for the group. A delighted television crew from WTKR's News3, working to cover a crime, happened upon this holiday celebration. Recognizing a unique feel-good story when they saw it, they taped an interview with the group that was aired all over Hampton

Roads.

"This is our new family tradition," Kandy says. "Our kids spend Christmas with their own families and in-laws, then gather on December 26th to celebrate Farino Christmas. We love it!"

Through this outreach, JCC Police Chief Brad Rinehimer has become a friend and can't praise them enough. "Bobby and Kandy Farino are a true testament to what makes our community one of the best places to live and work in."

Service to others has always been part of this family's core values. In the past they had a soccer ministry to orphanages in Eastern Europe and have arranged subsidized monthly golf outings for pastors and other ministries in the area. Soon, their annual Christmas police outreach wasn't enough to satisfy this newest urge to serve. "Wouldn't it be great if we could do this more often?" they thought. Date Night was then born, a plan that included those who also deserved to be recognized for their own sacrifices.

"I went back to the restaurants and explained our idea," Bobby recalls, "and they were all in." On April 21st and 28th, 2017, police officers from the Greater Williamsburg area could make reservations at fine restaurants, buying one dinner and getting another free. Participating businesses made a set number of tables available

each night, and most reported those were fully booked both weekends. Parents got a bonus: free child care at Williamsburg Indoor Sports Complex.

Next up is a picnic at Jamestown's 4-H camp in the planning stages for summer, 2018. Two years afterwards, that original simple impulse now encompasses the spouses and families of these dedicated public servants like a warm, all-inclusive hug of appreciation from the community.

People who have participated are taking this concept of community bridge-building away with them. The Farinos have made up a packet which they freely share of organizational information that describes just how it can be accomplished in other locations. Their fondest dream is that this idea will spread nationwide, or even globally.

"Our only interactions with officers of the law shouldn't be when we get a ticket," Bobby Farino says. "We can establish fabulous relationships when we share a meal and have fun together. The blessings flow both ways." "Amen!" Kandy agrees with a smile. "We've gotten to know and love one another on the most basic human level. We've seen into each other's hearts, and that's a beautiful gift." NDN

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LIUTENANT JEREMY & WHITNEY LIND



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FILLING THE RED KETTLES

By Gail Dillon

Serving God and people in need fill Lieutenants Jeremy and Whitney Lind with purpose and joy. The young couple, who were married last September, are both Salvation Army Officers and ordained ministers, co-running the Williamsburg Salvation Army (S.A.) office, as well as heading up the local Salvation Army

church.

They are about to enter their busiest season with Christmas rapidly approaching, and look forward to the challenge. The charity's famous "Red Kettle" campaign, aka "bell ringers," started November 13 and runs until December 23rd. "This is the Salvation Army's main

fundraiser for the entire year," Jeremy explains. "Here in Williamsburg, we're proud of the fact that we're 100 percent volunteer driven for our kettle campaign."

The Linds and their staff of seven including three full-time employees, serve Williamsburg, James City County and upper York County. He

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says their responsibilities are diverse and that being a husband and wife team is a plus. “Officers are pastors and administrators, so both Whitney and myself are fully ordained, and we preach at the Salvation Army church. During the rest of the week, we oversee together the social services and any other aspect of the Salvation Army work in greater Williamsburg.”

He emphasizes that the overall mission of the S.A. is to meet human needs in Jesus’ name without discrimination. “In 1865, a Methodist minister by the name of William Booth had a heart for helping people who weren’t at the top of society,” he explains. “He would go into the streets of London and find people who others didn’t want to talk to. He would just talk and share with them the words of Jesus, offer them a meal. The Salvation Army is, simply, the hands and feet of Jesus.”

Both the Linds are new to Williamsburg. He arrived last June while his wife came in October. They are hoping to stay for a while, preferably beyond the three-year standard “tour.” The Salvation Army operates similarly to the military in that it relocates its leaders every few years. They were thrilled to learn their first assignment together would be Williamsburg, mainly

because of the historical richness of the area.

Jeremy was born and raised in Clearwater, Florida but has since lived in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and most recently, Covington, Virginia. “So this is pretty much the farthest north I’ve ever lived,” he says. Whitney hails from Murfreesboro, near Nashville. She attended college at Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Music. Jeremy graduated from Montevallo near Birmingham, with Degrees in History and Political science. Both of them say they were “called” to serve in the Salvation Army, though their paths twisted and turned for a while.

Whitney began college majoring in computer information systems because of potential job security and the promise of a good salary. “I had my whole life planned out,” she says with a smile. “Then I met The Salvation Army and the Lord just got a hold of me big-time and changed my heart, and kind of revealed a lot of selfishness.” While still in college, a professor convinced her that music was her passion, so that ultimately became her major. Her knowledge of music has been useful when leading Sunday church services and organizing children to perform.

Jeremy’s journey was also a bit circuitous. “I originally wanted to be a high school history teacher,” he says. However, when he was in graduate school, through some conversations with his professors, he “felt like the Lord was calling me to something more.” While serving as a youth pastor in Decatur, Alabama, that feeling grew stronger. “I felt like there was a little piece of myself that was empty somehow.” His parents are both Salvation Army officers, but oddly, he says this was not as big of an influence on him as one might think. “I saw the hard work that my parents were doing but a lot of time it seemed thankless serving people and giving of themselves but not getting anything back.” He didn’t tell anyone of his change of career plans for a while, including his parents, but says they were excited and a bit surprised when he did share his new goals. “They were always my role models.”

With the arrival of the holiday season, Whitney and Jeremy are focused on getting the Red Kettle campaign organized as well as launching their other major fundraiser, the Angel Tree, which is a gift donation service for needy children and senior citizens in the local area.

“Last year we served 900 children and 100

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seniors,” Jeremy points out. Angel Trees are posted at several locations: Wal-Mart, on Ro-chambeau Drive, and in New Town in front of the Regal Cinema (Fridays and Saturdays only) and at the Plow and Hearth store. People wishing to help can simply select an “ornament” on the tree that identifies either a child up to 12 years of age or a senior citizen, 65 and older. People can volunteer to help an entire family as well. The deadline for purchasing gifts is December 15th.

For the Red Kettle campaign, there are 16-20 locations and many two-hour slots needing to be filled. Those interested in volunteering for either fundraiser are encouraged to call the Salvation Army office for more details. “We also encourage individuals, church groups, civic groups, or other organizations to stop by our office at 151 Kristiansand Drive and pick up their angels directly,” Jeremy says.

Besides heading up the Angel Tree campaign, Whitney is in charge of the Women’s Auxiliary, which is a group of 76 ladies who volunteer for the Salvation Army on a regular basis. Jeremy oversees the financial aspect of the organization, and often has speaking engagements or community meetings.

The Linds are proud of something else. The Salvation Army does for people who need more than short-term assistance—its Transitional Housing program. “In our area, we’ve found that when people are staying at a homeless shelter or a motel there’s an end date and the money runs out,” Jeremy says. “So, what do those people do in the interim?” He explains that the Salvation Army can assist them by working closely with the Williamsburg and James City County Social Services. “The Salvation Army leases ten apartments, and for a period of two years, the Salvation Army helps them with bills, with parenting classes...basically any specific needs. So the idea is, by the end of the two years, they will have gotten a job and saved up some money, so they’ll be self-sufficient.” He adds that they are usually “at capacity” for this program. “Ten families are receiving intensive case management at any time,” he says.

The Linds met while they were both going through their seminary training in Atlanta. All Salvation Army officers are required to complete the two-year school, Jeremy says. “We have religious training, Bible training, and we also have Salvation Army specific training as well. Any Salvation Army officer is com-

missioned as an officer but also ordained as a minister.” Whitney found the training to be challenging due to the small size of the campus. “There are about 150 to 200 people living on this campus. It’s very small,” she says. “And, you’re with each other all the time.” The two got acquainted while participating in the school’s band, sitting two chairs apart and playing the same instrument—the baritone. “I like to joke that she didn’t talk to me for the first six months,” Jeremy begins with a grin before Whitney interrupts him by saying, “However, I went on a date with him in the first six months so how I didn’t talk to him, I don’t know!” The two laugh together at their conflicting memories.

In their leisure time, Lieutenants Jeremy and Whitney Lind enjoy playing board games, hiking, reading and exploring historical sites. They also love romping with their two dogs, Finn, a Cairn Terrier and Reese, an Australian Shepherd mix. Looking ahead, they both want to keep serving God and helping others. “We want to continue doing the Lord’s work wherever he leads us,” Jeremy says. “We’re fully and 100 percent committed to Williamsburg while we’re here.” NDN

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ALBERT KURTYKA



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Made for Retail

By Ben Mackin

For Albert Kurtyka retail has never been just a job. To the manager of the Barnes & Noble in New Town, retail is a career he has built with almost 20 years worth of hard work and heart. Born and raised in Newport News, Albert graduated from Menchville High School in 1996. After a few year's studying at Thomas

Nelson, Albert found out that he was going to become a father. Realizing the universal truth that children cost money, he began looking for work. Taking a cue from his parents who had worked in stores throughout his childhood, Albert caught on with the now defunct home improvement warehouse Home Quarters. "I

found a liking to it," Albert says of his first years in the trade. "I moved up really quick. I love people and I love building relationships and love the challenges that come with it from an operation standpoint too." From that first gig, Albert found his calling.

From Home Quarters, Albert would go on

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to work for and manage several big name storefronts all over Hampton Roads. In places like Sears and Ross Dress For Less, he gained experience selling different kinds of merchandise to a wide variety of clients. "Retail has pretty much been it for me," he says of his career. "If I went into anything else it would probably be related to sales and customer service in some way. I just really enjoy what I do." Albert attributes his success in retail to his willingness to go the extra mile for the store and the customer. "The places I've been, I have always stepped up." He continues, "Everyone has the opportunities to advance, but I go in there to make a difference."

While building his professional life, Albert was also busy raising two sons and a daughter with his wife, Leora. All was going well for him until 2013 when he started to notice that he was getting fatigued really easily. Albert remembers, "I was working at Ross, and I was in the kids department. I walked out to the floor and I ran out of breath. I felt like my heart was in my stomach and vice versa." Shortly after that episode, doctors diagnosed Albert with cardiomyopathy, a weakening of the heart muscle.

Cardiologists at Riverside Hospital in New-

port News did their best to treat Albert's failing organ with drugs and a temporary pacemaker. When those methods proved unsuccessful, and after a few brushes with death from blood clots all over his body, doctors sent Albert to the VCU Medical Center. With few options and less time, doctors rushed the father of three into emergency surgery and replaced the failing heart with a Total Artificial Heart. As it happened, Albert was the 75th patient at VCU to receive the bionic wonder. After 44 days Albert received a heart transplant. Less than two weeks after the transplant Albert was able to go home for the first time in months. After taking a few months to rehabilitate, he decided that he wanted to continue with the retail profession.

"It's pretty fast paced at Ross and it wasn't easy." Albert remembers, "My team did not want me to do too much, but I did anyway, because I had to. But as time goes on you just get back into the motion."

After eight years with Ross Dress for Less, Albert applied for an open store manager position at Barnes & Noble in New Town and was brought in for an interview the next day. He was hired in September of 2016, eager to

start a new adventure. While living and working most of his life in Newport News, Albert is no stranger to the Historic Triangle. "I have so many ties to the area, just from family and work. Every company I've worked for has had stores here so it's not new territory. I love the Williamsburg area, and I've always tried to get in this area just because of the geography of it."

For Albert, the store's location in New Town lends to a fun atmosphere that helps drive business. "This shopping center makes it a great experience for people who are new to the area, especially the tourists," he says. "When they come in here, it's our chance to represent Williamsburg and Barnes & Noble on the map."

Before applying, he never saw himself as a purveyor of books. As he has gotten to know the market better, he's enjoying some of the more unique challenges brick and mortar stores face in a growing online economy. "Don't get me wrong, all retailers are having a challenge right now," he says. "E-commerce and Amazon are really challenging the brick and mortar game. So we are going to have to win them over with customer service." One of the ways Albert plans to do that is to not only make sure out-

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of-towners feel at home, but also cater to the locals. "We want our customers to come in, sit down and have coffee and enjoy themselves. We have regulars who come in every day. We want people to say that Barnes & Noble (B&N) is my book store."

Albert notes that from a corporate level B&N is planning to move from a one size fits all way of doing business to letting stores cater to their individual locality. Albert plans to take this new directive and run. Albert and his staff are looking forward to be able to tailor their store to fit their unique customer base. In an effort to make B&N the neighborhood bookstore, Albert is working to showcase local talent when possible. "I am trying to be more supportive of local historians and authors and get them to make this their spot. We are also trying to reach out to local institutions and schools as well. We are representing Barnes & Noble in a large tourist area while also making it a stomping ground for locals."

Some of the activities that draw both locals and tourist to the New Town store are the children's storytime events. December 1st brought Storytime with Gemma. Gemma is a Cava-

lier King Charles Spaniel therapy dog. Later that evening was The Polar Express Storytime. The Clara Byrd Baker Elementary School PTA bookfair will help support the school on Monday, December 11. The Saturday (12/23) before Christmas features storytime and Santa's Magic Key.

With a plethora of experience, Albert is looking forward to what his future with B&N will bring. "I have thought about going into other things, but I just haven't been able to break away from retail. I'm successful in retail," Albert says. "I always step up and do my part, and that's what makes it fun and a challenge. With my experience at the places I've worked I look at it as a career but also as being on a team, a really fine team that has each other's backs."

Albert Kurtyka says, while the thoughts of doing something else have come up, he's never seriously considered them. "After my transplant, there were a lot of questions about being able to come back, but I did. I think the most rewarding thing is the interaction with people. I am not the type to sit behind a desk. I like to be out there meeting people. It's what I enjoy." NDN

Next Door Neighbors

Publisher.....Meredith Collins
 Editor.....Greg Lilly greglilly@cox.net
 Copy Editors.....Al White, Ginger White
 Photographers.....Lisa Cumming, Corey Miller
 Graphic Designers...Sue Etherton, Lara Eckerman
 Account Manager.....Anne Conkling

Writers

Linda Landreth Phelps, Rachel Sapin, Brandy Centolanza, Alison Johnson, Ryan Jones, Lillian Stevens, Narielle Living, Chris Jones, Morgan Barker, Susannah Livingston, Erin Zagursky, Cathy Welch, Erin Fryer, Christopher LaPointe, Michael Heslink, Naomi Tene Austin, Gail Dillon, Lauren Plunkett, Ben Mackin, Laura Lane

Advertising Information

Meredith Collins

(757) 560-3235

meredith@williamsburgneighbors.com

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CARRIE HILL



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The Magic of Christmas

By Linda Landreth Phelps

It's the most wonderful time of the year, as the old song goes, but here in Williamsburg you don't have to wait for December to experience it. At Yankee Candle Village, it's Christmas all year long. As an employee, Carrie Hill can check in personally at Santa's workshop every day from March through December for a quick chat and to find her name in the "Nice" column of his Nice & Naughty List.

"We say it may be Christmas here 365 days a year, but when November arrives, it's roll out



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the red carpet time. Christmas on steroids!”

“Working here is a lot of fun,” Carrie says as she leads a tour of the large building, one of two company flagship stores in the nation. “I moved to Williamsburg in 2003 with my husband, Mike, after living in Hampton Roads all my life. I started at Yankee Candle about eight years ago as a sales supervisor, then was the human resources training manager until I moved up to my present position of Director of Sales and Operations.” Hers is a many-faceted job with responsibilities that range from making sure there’s an adequate, well-trained workforce in place to product placement and supply. Though proficient in every aspect of her duties, she does have one she especially likes.

“Honestly, my favorite part of the job is marketing,” Carrie shares. “I work with the marketing manager to plan creative year-round events here at the store.” These events consist of a nicely balanced mix of seasonal themes such as the two-weekend Spring Fling, with an emphasis on family-friendly activities. The standout in the year’s lineup and by far the store’s biggest draw occurs in early November

with the official arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Claus, who clip-clop down to 2200 Richmond Road in their horse-drawn carriage. Carrie’s eyes sparkle as she describes the excitement.

“They have a police escort as they travel to the store where there’s a crowd waiting, many wearing reindeer ears we supply. When the carriage comes into view and makes the turn into our parking lot, everyone cheers so loud!” The children traditionally enjoy milk and cookies and interact with live farm animals in pens on the storefront’s green space, and Carrie always adds some new and special entertainment annually. This year it was the Cirque de Vol, a circus arts aerialist company, who thrilled the crowd as they eagerly awaited Santa’s arrival.

Once Santa steps down from his carriage and mounts the stage, he leads his faithful believers in his favorite Christmas carols before entering the building. He and his wife, an equally jolly elf, make their way into the store. There Santa assumes a seat, ready to take children onto his lap and chat about their hopes for Christmas morning.

Every four minutes in front of Santa’s work-

shop, actual snow drifts down from above. When asked how it’s done, Carrie gives a playful answer: “Magic!” Also magical is the night sky in Holiday Park. Constellations of stars wink down upon a wintry scene of snow-covered trees and holiday decor. If you look closely, you can pick out the Big Dipper and other favorites. To add to the reality, planets emit a steady glow, while stars twinkle like actual heavenly bodies. The trees are sparkling with countless lights and some of the store’s 130,000 Christmas ornaments from all over the world, which can range in price from a few dollars to more than a hundred for intricate blown-glass creations. From the sacred to the secular, there’s something here for everyone. Snow Babies cluster together adorably on shelves while Baby Jesus graces nativity scenes in every size and style. Entire rooms are dedicated to collectible villages with themes from Dickens to modern day, which invite you to enter into a world where you create the holiday scenarios.

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Village, there's a sensory party going on that's equal parts sight, sound and smell. You enter a rustic village street lined with enticing shops surrounding a central piazza with a tiered fountain lending a soothing background sound of falling water to the seasonal musical selections. This time of year, it's all Christmas tunes, all the time. As you wander, you'll pass through pockets of scent; hits of fresh balsam and fir or spicy apple pie drift from the numerous fragranced candles on display. Vendors offer freshly made candies, fudge, ice cream, and popcorn creations should you care to add an optional fourth element, taste, to the sensory mix.

If you're not thinking of Christmas shopping before you arrive, it doesn't take long to get into the mood. Specialty name-brand jewelry kiosks dot the area, along with colorful apparel and tabletops set with everything you need to host a festive holiday meal. There's even a Man Cave section, stocked with merchandise carefully selected to appeal to men. It's tempting to drift from place to place, not stopping until every last person on your gift

list is checked off. You can create foolproof, one-size-fits-all gifts, sure to be a hit with even the most challenging relative.

"By far our biggest seller here at Yankee Candle Village, all the time, but especially popular around this season, is a personalized candle," Carrie says. "For a few dollars over cost, you get a unique gift. Email us your photo selection or bring it into the store on a USB stick and we generate a label with your family portrait as the star, or a couple's wedding picture for a special anniversary year, anything you choose. There's space for text, as well. It's amazing when you see people's reactions to receiving a gift with a special memory attached."

That's not the only creative option at the store. Carrie has been taking her two sons, Aidan and Ryan, ages 10 and 8, to work for as long as the boys can remember. They love the Waxworks section, where they can make their own candles, either by dipping them in brightly colored hot wax or layering fragrant wax beads in a jar, or just making impressions of their hands in soft wax. "I always say kids love it here, but really, it's kids of all ages," Car-

rie says with a laugh.

Especially intriguing is the area overseen by associate Ernie, who helps people create three-dimensional wax hands. Startlingly realistic, they're made by dipping hands repeatedly into warm paraffin, then ice water, until a wax glove forms. "Don't worry, it's not too hot," Ernie assures his customers. When it hardens, he coaxes the resulting sculpture off. Grandparents are thrilled with the gift of a 3-D rendering of a grandchild's hand, paused forever in time. One thrifty and imaginative couple clasped hands as they dipped and used the result as a unique cake topper on their wedding day.

The Yankee Candle Village may be a fun place to work, as Carrie Hill says, but perhaps it's even more fun to visit. Here, entering into the Christmas spirit is as easy as opening the front door. Stand in front of Santa's workshop under the stars with snow falling softly on your shoulders, close your eyes, take a deep breath, and listen for the sound of approaching sleigh bells...

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Hosting W&M's Yule Log Ceremony

By Lillian Stevens



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

In medieval times, the custom of burning the Yule log was one of the most deep-rooted traditions of the holiday season, and certain rituals were followed very carefully in order to ensure good luck in the upcoming year.

At William & Mary (W&M), a variation on this tradition continues each year and it is one that is much-loved by the students there.

On Saturday, December 16, students will gather in front of the iconic Wren Building

on campus. Warmed by festive wood-burning torches, they will enjoy live holiday music, performed by W&M choir groups, and hear speeches that touch on a variety of international holiday traditions.

Will Adie (W&M '18) is the vice president of Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK), one of two honor societies that plan and host the annual Yule Log ceremony.

"Yule Log falls on the weekend separating

the two weeks of final exams," Will says. "So it's always nice to take a break from the stress of exams and come together for this fun event."

Omicron Delta Kappa will co-host the ceremony with Mortar Board, the first national organization to honor senior college women. Traditionally, the vice presidents of each of these honor societies serve as co-chairs of the event. As such, Will and his friend and Mortar Board counterpart, Kathy Hopkins, are very excited

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about the planning that is underway.

“The Yule Log ceremony has always been my favorite William & Mary tradition,” Kathy says. “I enjoy gathering in the Wren courtyard with the same friends every year and listening to both strange and familiar faces talk about the tenets of their faith or culture that mean so much to them.”

Will and Kathy first met when they were both hired as Orientation Area Directors in fall of 2016 and have become nearly inseparable ever since.

“Our love for William & Mary initially brought us together and that same love now fuels our excitement for planning Yule Log,” Kathy says. “I will look forward to taking a break from studying for my psychopharmacology final exam to throw my sprig of holly into the fire with Will.”

The timing for the ceremony is perfect because it’s a welcome reminder that the holidays are just around the corner, but that’s but one facet.

“The Yule Log ceremony also brings the William & Mary community together during a time when it’s easy to find yourself holed up in your room studying,” Will says. “For students, it reinforces, as we finish up exams and prepare to go home for a month, that the William &

Mary community is alive and well, stronger than ever, and ready to take on another year.”

Participants are mostly students, but sometimes faculty, staff and community members will turn out. “Last year, my parents came because I had just been tapped for ODK,” Will says.

Students tapped for Omicron Delta Kappa are within the top third of their class based on GPA; they have demonstrated outstanding and varied leadership, and exemplify the university’s values of scholarship, service, integrity, character, and fellowship.

“ODK is the national leadership honor society on campus, so there’s the academic side of that,” Will says. “But also there’s a service side.” Members of Mortar Board also embody ideals of scholarship, leadership and service.

“Everyone gathers to enjoy the songs and music,” Will says. “Then, Kathy and I will welcome everyone, thank them for coming and introduce the speakers.”

Although W&M’s Yule Log ceremony is not a religious event per se, there is usually one representative from each religious organization on campus.

“The holidays are a religious time,” Will says. “So, there are usually seven or eight representatives who will speak about their traditions and what the holidays mean to them. It’s a nice re-

minder of who else is around us in our community.”

A particular highlight of the evening occurs when Ginger Ambler, vice president for student affairs, delivers her rendition of ‘*’Twas the Night before Finals*.’

“Vice President Ambler is great!” Will exclaims. “Her script always relates to current events on campus, so it will usually include inside jokes that only the community would know. People are listening, laughing and in a really great mood.”

Ginger is followed by – who else? Santa Claus! Spoiler alert, it’s really the university’s president, Taylor Reveley, in costume. “President Reveley reads *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and that’s always so funny. And he’s always complaining about how hot it is in his Santa suit.”

Then, the logs are carried through the courtyard and into the Great Hall where they are placed in a massive fireplace. Participants are given small sprigs of holly to toss into the fire, which signifies throwing away worries and bidding farewell to the year that has passed.

“For us, it’s also about good luck with exams and our hopes for the New Year,” Will says. “Then we enjoy some warm cookies, cider and hot chocolate – and just socializing with each



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other as a community.”

There is a philanthropic side to the Yule Log event, as well. Funds are raised to support a local charity, selected by ODK and Mortar Board. Service to the organization chosen is also encouraged.

“Last year, funds were raised for the Arc of Greater Williamsburg. We prefer a local charity that we can plug at Yule Log and encourage a day of service to that organization. We encourage not just donations but service, so we like to pick a local organization that students can easily get to.”

Dating to the 1930s the Yule Log ceremony is one of W&M’s most sacrosanct traditions. “It’s really a beautiful time as we spend a few hours together forgetting about the stress that comes with finals,” Will says.

As things wind down on campus, Will looks forward to traveling home to Andover, Massachusetts, which is located just north of Boston. Both sides of his family are native Massachusettsians whose family roots run deep.

“My mother traces her ancestors all the way back to the Mayflower,” Will says. “Also, one of my grandmothers is English and lives in Plymouth.”

The Mayflower was, of course, the English ship that famously transported the first pil-

grims to the New World in 1620. They landed in present-day Plymouth, Massachusetts which is where New England was first established.

Interesting that Will was raised in such an historic place, just a stone’s throw from some of the country’s best universities, but chose Virginia for his college experience.

“I always tell people that I don’t really have a beautiful story about tripping on a brick and falling in love,” he says with a laugh. “When it came down to it, I really just guessed! I do have an interest in business and so I wanted a strong business program, which we have here.”

He and his family are also not strangers to the area. “We knew Williamsburg because of family vacations over the years,” Will says. “My parents actually got engaged here and my great aunt and uncle retired here.”

“I think I could have been perfectly happy at a lot of schools but at William & Mary, I found a school that I love.”

The business major was also attracted by the university’s strong liberal arts program and the fact that he could come in as a freshman without having to commit to a major.

Over the span of his time on campus, Will has excelled academically, but has also immersed himself in a wide variety of efforts and organizations, including Club Golf and cam-

pus tour guides, Health Outreach Peer Educators, and a social fraternity. For the past three years, he has especially enjoyed his work within the Office of First Year Experience, first as an Orientation Aide, and then as an Orientation Area Director.

“That has been one of my bigger involvements,” he says. “To see the affect we can have on the people around us, but also the effect that we have on each other. I think back to sophomore year to my orientation staff. There were maybe 25 of us from Brown and Monroe Halls and we got really close.”

As 2017 winds down and graduation looms large on the horizon, Will is job hunting and has been busy with job interviews across campus, held at the Cohen Career Center. He is not too busy, however, to reflect on his time at William & Mary, and says it’s going to be tough to leave.

“Everyone graduates and says they will miss the people,” he says. “And I’m sure that’s true. But I will also miss the communities – the groups that I’ve been fortunate enough to be a part of.”

“It’s been an incredible time,” Will Adie says. “After freshman year, I thought one year down, three to go and it can’t possibly go by that fast. But it did.” **NDN**



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MICHELLE WILLIAMS



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

AS LOCAL AS LOCAL GETS

By Laura Lane

On the morning of December 2, Michelle Williams experienced the 52nd annual Williamsburg Christmas Parade as she has 48 times previously during her 49 years of life. However, this year was different. For the first time, she planned the entire event.

As director of business events for the parade's

producer, the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance, Michelle has been previously involved. This year's parade reins were transferred from longtime organizer Naomi Flythe, placing the job under Michelle's event planning umbrella.

"I've been in the parade, at the parade, and

now behind the scenes of the parade," Michelle says. Born and raised in Williamsburg, she completed her first parade march at age three as a Coloniaettes mascot, followed by many years with school bands and then her own children's participation. She's certainly no stranger to this Williamsburg holiday highlight, or anything

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else in town for that matter. "I'm about as local as local gets," Michelle says.

Michelle's mother, Maxine, moved to Williamsburg from North Carolina in 1951 to work at Eastern State Hospital, and her father, Ben Moss, followed upon discharge from the Army. As a carpenter foreman in construction, he helped build Williamsburg Hospital-ity House, James Blair Middle School and the Carmike movie theater. The day of this year's Christmas parade marked seven years since Ben passed away after a struggle with diabetes. Maxine, an independent 84-year-old, still resides in Williamsburg, as do three of her four children and their families.

After Michelle's WJCC education, she earned a mass communications degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1990. Although she dreamed of directing commercials, Michelle returned home to help her still-employed parents care for her ill grandfather. She accepted an advertising sales job with *The Virginia Gazette*, where she stayed for much of her career.

In 1995, Michelle married her high school sweetheart, Ken, a Williamsburg native who she'd known since they were both freshmen at Lafayette High School. Ken serves as the building engineer for Williamsburg Commu-

nity Chapel, where the Williams family attends church.

While she and Ken welcomed the birth of their daughter, Alex, followed by son, Jared, Michelle took a hiatus from the *Gazette*. A couple of years after she accepted an offer to return to the newspaper part-time, her position was cut due to company acquisition. She soon became thankful for the ability to devote attention to her family.

Three weeks later, just before Thanksgiving, 9-year-old Alex did a handstand at a gymnastics meet when an undetected blood vessel malformation in her brain hemorrhaged. From Sentara's ER to CHKD, it was 10 days before she came home. That was the one year that the family missed the Christmas parade.

Alex's long recovery included Gamma Knife radiosurgery at UVA the following spring. Apart from slight peripheral vision loss, today she is a healthy college freshman studying neuroscience at Virginia Tech. In fact, her experience has motivated her to pursue pediatric neurology with hopes to practice at CHKD. "She is the most amazing person I know for having gone through it, and she wants to help other kids with health issues because of it," Michelle says. "She makes me so proud."

A year of medical bills nudged Michelle to take an administrative job with the DoubleTree Hotel's catering department, where she discovered the joy of professional event planning, getting her feet wet with small business conferences. Recognizing her inclination, Michelle's boss recommended her for a more event-focused position at the Chamber with better hours. Michelle was hired in 2013 and is now responsible for more than 35 events per year, varying in size and ranging from Chamber Board meetings to the Alliance's eight signature events, such as the Annual Gala, Oktoberfest celebration and now the Christmas parade.

Each event that Michelle plans essentially provides marketing for local organizations or initiatives, not to mention the communications plan she develops to promote it. So although she didn't set out to become an event planner, the job creatively utilizes her advertising background.

"It's like a big puzzle, a big mosaic, and then when you're finished, you have this beautiful event that people look back on," she says. "Ultimately, what you're planning is for somebody to have a good time. That's the part I like—helping people enjoy themselves."

Whether the event runs like a well-oiled ma-

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chine or not, Michelle is known for keeping her cool. “You’ve just got to roll with it, you know? We’re going to make it work.”

Acknowledging why her husband calls her “tenacious,” Michelle says, “I’m here to take care of business. People say that there is no question where you stand with me. I wear my heart on my sleeve. But I’d like to think that I’m seen as someone that would lend a hand, especially at work. The best thing about my job is the people. We really are like a family.”

Michelle’s love for “planning parties,” as her children have described her job, extends into her personal life as much as her husband will let it. “If he had his way, it would be quiet,” she says with a laugh. Although Ken prefers the background, Michelle calls him a great cook and an excellent host. “While I’m running around, he is quietly washing and putting away dishes, vacuuming up the crumbs, or making sure everyone has what they need,” she says. “I love that about him. Every good planner needs a behind-the-scenes guy. He’s mine.”

A fan of the holidays, Michelle looks forward to this season’s festivities. “Once Thanksgiving comes, I listen to Christmas music all the way to New Year’s,” she says. “Thanksgiving is also one of my son’s favorite holidays, because

he’s a 15-year-old boy with hollow legs.” Jared, a sophomore at Jamestown High School, is an avid athlete, having played WISC soccer and Hornets football for years, despite his mom’s hesitation. “He’s the toughest kid, determined to go back to practice even with his arm in a cast at age nine,” Michelle says. “He makes me laugh and he’s fun to be around.” Jared hopes to attend UNC or Virginia Tech, with interests in ocean photography and science.

Both of Michelle’s children grew up participating in the Christmas parade. “It’s a big tradition for our family,” Michelle says. “That’s always the weekend that we go to the parade, get our tree and go to the Grand Illumination.”

The Williams family joined as many as 10,000 parade attendees. “It’s part of the tourist holiday experience, which is important for business to thrive,” Michelle says. “But it’s also a tradition for locals. It’s a free family day, and there are very few of those. Plus, it’s a place for all kinds of organizations, from kid-friendly to elderly groups, to take part in the same event and share awareness.”

In the wee morning hours, over 100 participating units set up, assisted by the Chamber’s 16-person staff and a team of enthusiastic community volunteers. For an hour or so, holiday

spirit and six months of planning were brought to fruition by an array of floats depicting this year’s “Winter Wonderland” theme.

When Christmas arrives, Michelle says she and Ken spend time with both of their large families. “We’re exhausted when it’s all said and done, but no one would change it.” A favorite moment is always the Chapel’s candlelight Christmas Eve service. “I like the reverence of it,” she says, “and that in the midst of all that chaos and fun, you take time to remember what the season is about.”

In her ideal future, Michelle sees health and happiness for her children, as well as “rocking chair” retirement days with Ken. The beach-loving family toys with the idea of moving to the North Carolina coast one day. But for now, Michelle says Williamsburg still holds more opportunity—and her heart.

“This is a great place to work and a great place to raise a family,” Michelle Williams says. “As my daughter is realizing when she meets new people at college, most come from places that either have water, history, or shopping and restaurants. We have all of it. Williamsburg is home. I don’t know how else to put it. And I don’t know any true local who wouldn’t say the same thing.” NDN

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HOLIDAY CALENDAR



You and your family can enjoy the magic of the holidays by experiencing many of the wonderful things there are to do right here at home. Enjoy this convenient sampling of holiday happenings.

Please visit the website above for additional events, specific information on admission, times and location.

STAR OF WONDER: MYSTERY OF THE CHRISTMAS STAR

Now - Dec. 31, 2017

Since 1965, we have journeyed in the footsteps of the Magi, seeking the identity of a mysterious star which foretold the coming of a king. Over the years, the scientific thinking has changed, archaeology has revealed new clues about the lands in which these events took place, and our understanding of who the Magi might have actually been has grown. The show was completely revised in 2008 to offer a truly immersive look at the journey of the Magi while examining the latest clues and seeking once more to understand the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem. Our presentation of Star of Wonder: Mystery of the Christmas Star is made possible by E&S Spitz. Recommended for ages 8 and up. Venue: Virginia Living Museum 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd Newport News, VA 23601 757-595-1900

HOLIDAY MAGIC PLANETARIUM SHOW

Now - Dec. 31, 2017

Holiday Magic is a delightful celebration of the holiday season that the whole family will enjoy! Featuring timeless classics and songs from the holiday specials we loved as kids, as well as modern holiday music,

this show has something for everyone. Ring in the holiday season with the most amazing light show in town! Venue: Virginia Living Museum 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd Newport News, VA 23601

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CHRISTMAS TOWN AT BUSCH GARDENS

Now - Jan. 1, 2018

Christmas shines brightest at Busch Gardens® Christmas Town™. The World's Most Beautiful Theme Park is aglow with more than eight million lights, the largest light displays in North America. Festive food and drink, special dining experiences, holiday shopping and heart-warming shows make the season come alive at Busch Gardens. Visit Santa Claus at his North Pole workshop and capture an unforgettable memory. Keep warm with a mug of the park's signature peppermint fudge hot chocolate and enjoy the spirit of the holiday season. Unwrap the gift of Christmas Town this winter. Event is a separate ticketed event. Parking is required. Dates and times are subject to change or cancellation without notice.

A COLONIAL CHRISTMAS AT THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION MUSEUM AT YORKTOWN

Now - Dec. 31, 2017, 9am - 5pm

At American Revolution Muse-

um at Yorktown, hear accounts of Christmas and winter in Revolutionary War encampment and glimpse holiday preparations on a Revolution-era farm. Holiday programs complement 17th-century holiday traditions at Jamestown Settlement. At Jamestown Settlement and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, visitors can enjoy a variety of 17th- and 18th-century holiday music December 23-31, including traditional music by David Gardner on fiddle and Barry and Lynn Trott on mandolin, guitar, flute and viola da gamba. Musical performances will be at 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. at Jamestown Settlement and at 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. at the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown. Save 20% with a combination ticket with Jamestown Settlement. Free parking. Tickets and packages are available with other Williamsburg attractions. Visit the gift shops and dine in cafes. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day. Learn more at historyisfun.org. Venue: American Revolution Museum at Yorktown 200 Water Street Yorktown, VA 23690. 888-593-4682.

A COLONIAL CHRISTMAS

Now - Dec. 31, 2017, 9am - 5pm

Experience centuries-old holiday traditions and, festivities featuring period musical enter-

tainment and appearances at Jamestown Settlement by the Lord of Misrule. A Jamestown Settlement holiday film and interpretive programs compare and contrast English Christmas customs of the period with how the season may have been observed in the difficult early years of the Jamestown colony. At American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, hear accounts of Christmas and winter in Revolutionary War encampment and glimpse holiday preparations on a Revolution-era farm. Visitors can enjoy a variety of 17th- and 18th-century holiday music, including traditional music by David Gardner on fiddle and Barry and Lynn Trott on mandolin, guitar, flute and viola da gamba. Learn more at historyisfun.org. Free parking. Tickets and packages are available with other Williamsburg attractions. Visit the gift shops and dine in cafes. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day. 888-593-4682. Venue: Jamestown Settlement 2110 Jamestown Road Williamsburg, VA 23185

TALK OF THE TOWN: CHRISTMASTIDE

Dec. 8, 2017, 10am - 11am

With an 18th century resident as your guide, walk about the city and experience the spirit of the Christmastide season as they share reflections on the



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holiday season, the news of the day, and perhaps even a little juicy gossip! Daily tour throughout the holiday season. Open to the public; separate ticket required. Venue: Lumber House Ticket Office 124 West Duke of Gloucester Street Williamsburg, VA 23185

SMALL WORKS & HOLIDAY SHOW

Now - Dec. 22, 2017, 11am - 3pm

The Small Works & Holiday Show features affordable artwork by Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center member artists for holiday gift-giving. "Small Works" encompass 2D and 3D art in a variety of media and themes, from paintings to pottery, jewelry, textile art, and sculpture. Holiday-themed 2D art may cover any tradition from Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza to Winter Solstice. All net sale proceeds benefit the exhibitions, programs, classes, and outreach efforts of WCAC. WCAC is located in the Blue Building at 110 Westover Avenue in Williamsburg. Hours are 11 am to 3 pm Tuesday through Saturday; and noon to 4 pm on Sunday. Closed Monday. Visit www.visit-WCAC.org or call 757-229-4949 for more information. Venue: Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center 110 Westover Avenue

(Blue Building) Williamsburg, VA 23185

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DEAN SHOSTAK'S CRYSTAL CAROLS CONCERT

November 25, 2017, 1pm - 2pm

November 25, 2017, 3pm - 4pm

December 2, 2017, 6pm - 7pm

December 2, 2017, 8pm - 9pm

December 4, 2017, 7pm - 8pm

December 8, 2017, 7pm - 8pm

December 23, 2017, 1pm - 2pm

December 23, 2017, 3pm - 4pm

December 27, 2017, 1pm - 2pm

December 30, 2017, 1pm - 2pm

Dean Shostak performs his popular holiday show at the Williamsburg Library Theatre this year. He is also bringing back the glass violin. In this family friendly concert you also hear crystal hand bells and Benjamin Franklin's invention, the glass armonica. Featured on NPR, PBS, and CNN. Tickets \$10 online and \$12 at the door. For more information and online tickets visit www.crystalconcert.com. Venue: Williamsburg Library Theatre 515 Scotland St Williamsburg, VA 23185. 800-588-3326.

FLUTE FRENZY HOLIDAY CONCERT

Dec. 8, 2017, 7pm - 8:30pm

Flute Frenzy's Prelude and Fantasia choirs will be presenting a holiday concert on Friday, De-

ember 8 at 7:15 p.m. The program will be a Winter's Journey of varied music for flute choirs of piccolo, C flute, alto and bass flutes. The program includes familiar classical and popular works from Sleigh Ride to the Nutcracker. Directed by Thom Recktenwald and Prelude Director, Olivia Lawson. The concert is free and open to the public. Reception to follow. Venue: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church 7479 Richmond Road Williamsburg, VA 23188

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Dec. 9, 2017, 8:30am - 10:30am

Join Santa and Mrs. Claus, our special guests from the North Pole, for a kid-friendly breakfast. Experience the enchantment on the children's faces as they relay their Christmas wish list to Santa. Special treats for the kids. Riverwalk Restaurant. Seating is limited. Tickets Required. \$ 757.875.1522 Venue: Riverwalk Restaurant 323 Water Street Yorktown, VA 23690

YORKTOWN MARKET DAYS AND TOYLAND PARADE

Dec. 9, 2017, 9am - 3pm

A favorite event, Yorktown Market Days on the Yorktown waterfront operates with extended hours Dec. 9. The Market features over 35 local farmers,

producers, vendors, and artists throughout the season, including a variety of homegrown favorites and local art. Delicious food, exciting entertainment, beautiful and inspiring artwork, and a view beyond compare. This week's featured music entertainment is Ron Herrick (Variety of Holiday Music). Shoppers can enjoy the added bonus of watching local chefs demonstrate the preparation of various dishes on select Saturdays. Toyland Parade: Decorate a stroller, wagon, yourself, or even a pet and join in the 1:30 pm parade. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand to greet the guests. The Fifes and Drums of York Town will lead the parade, and as an added treat, the Polar Express will be chugging along through Riverwalk Landing. All aboard! Riverwalk Landing. Free. 757.890.3500

JINGLE BARK IN THE PARK

Dec. 9, 2017, 10am - 1pm

Join Santa Claus and support the York River State Park. Walkers will receive a set of "jingle bells." Dogs will receive a special treat. Enter your pooch in the holiday hat/outfit contest. Coffee, hot chocolate, and cookies will be provided. Donations of pet food and supplies will be accepted. Venue: York River State Park 9801 York River Park Road-



Williamsburg, VA 23188. 757-566-3036.

ANDY GRAMMER AT UNCORKED & UNPLUGGED THE HOLIDAY EDITION

Dec. 10, 2017, 1pm - 4pm

Usher in the holiday season with wine and live music! 94.9 The Point presents Uncorked & Unplugged the Holiday Edition live from The Williamsburg Winery on Sunday, Dec. 10. Doors open at noon and music is from 1-4 p.m. Enjoy live music from Andy Grammer while sipping on delicious Virginia wine in the beautiful Williamsburg Winery vineyard. Grammer is a singer-songwriter and has released two studio albums with a third being released on Dec. 1, 2017. Grammer has had numerous hit singles including "Honey, I'm Good," which peaked at number 9 on the Billboard Hot 100. Other hit singles include "Good to Be Alive (Hallelujah)" and "Fresh Eyes." Uncorked and Unplugged has three ticket options. General admission includes one general admission ticket that provides standing room only, no seating is provided. VIP admission includes one VIP ticket, an official souvenir wine glass, access to a private cash bar and premium seating in a private VIP area. Meet & Greet admission includes one VIP ticket with all the amenities of the VIP ticket, one wine pour and one ticket to the meet and greet with Andy Grammer in the Williamsburg Winery's barrel cellar. Uncorked & Unplugged is certain to be a memorable event! All attendees must be 21 and over. Past Uncorked & Unplugged artists include LeAnn Rimes, David Cook and Ingrid Michaelson. Tickets are available online. Venue: Williamsburg Winery 5800 Wessex Hundred Williamsburg, VA 23185. 757-229-0999 .

TEA WITH KLARA AND HER NUTCRACKER FRIENDS

Dec. 10, 2017, 2:30pm

The Virginia Regional Ballet presents its 2nd annual Tea With Klara and her Nutcracker Friends. Enjoy refreshments, crafts, and dancing with Klara and many other characters from the beloved "The Nutcracker" ballet. A treat for children and their chaperones to interact with ballerinas who will perform the Nutcracker on December 16 and 17, 2017, at William & Mary's Phi Beta Kappa Hall. Tickets \$18; on sale November 1, 2017, through Virginia Regional Ballet at: <https://dancevrba.com/tea-with-klara/> Venue: Williamsburg Community Building 401 N. Boundary Street Williamsburg, VA 23185. 757-229-2553.

CAROLING AT THE COFFEEHOUSE

Every Sunday. Repeats Weekly. Dec. 10 - 17, 2017, 6pm - 6:45pm
Every Thursday. Repeats Weekly. Dec. 14 - 21, 2017, 6pm - 6:45pm
Cressets, carols, and Charlton's Coffeehouse. Celebrate the spirit of the season with a sing-along of holiday favorites. Gather around the porch with friends and family to usher in the best time of the year. Burning cressets light up Duke of Gloucester Street adding to the magic. Venue: Charlton's Coffeehouse 429 East Duke of Gloucester Street Williamsburg, VA 23185.

ROCKIN' AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Dec. 10, 2017, 7pm - 10:30pm
Rocking around the Christmas Tree presented by: Culture Fix. \$20 advance; \$25 day of show at www.culture-fix.org/events. Featuring the Michael Clark Band, Vexine, Andrew Shield & The Big Deal, and Billy Joe Daniel & Katie Boucher. Food and wine available for purchase. Venue: Kimball Theatre Kimball Theatre 428 West Duke of Gloucester Street Williamsburg, VA 23185.

"AT CHRISTMAS BE MERRIE" AT THE NELSON HOUSE

December 15, 2017, 6pm - 9pm
December 16, 2017, 10am - 4pm

Join us for a night of music, dancing, card playing, and singing in the Nelson House! This festive holiday atmosphere will extend down Main Street into On the Hill Gallery where you can find several unique gifts and stocking stuffers to check off your holiday shopping lists. Be sure to look (and listen) for The Fifes and Drums of York Town who will be marching through the area, playing Christmas tunes. Step out of the cold and into Grace Church to enjoy a warm welcome from the choir, along with refreshments! Dec. 16 at 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Nelson House. Join us for Christmas traditions inside the Nelson House! You can listen to festive music, sing, dance, and play cards all day. This holiday cheer extends down Main Street into the Gallery at York Hall and On the Hill Gallery where you can shop for unique holiday gifts handcrafted by local artists and artisans. The Fifes and Drums of York Town will also make an appearance to share a live performance of Christmas tunes. And Grace Church will be open to serve refreshments and merry entertainment from the choir.

DINO ON THE LOOSE

Dec. 16, 2017, 1pm - 1:15pm

Join our walking T-Rex for dinosaur parades, photo ops and a roaring good time on the Dinosaur Discovery Trail! The trail also includes a Paleo camp, dig pits for amateur paleontologists, and displays of dinosaur fossils, including an actual whale specimen from Hampton Roads. Venue: Virginia Living Museum 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd. Newport News, VA 23601

VIRGINIA REGIONAL BALLET NUTCRACKER WITH THE WILLIAMSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Dec. 16, 2017, 2pm - 4:30pm

Dec. 16, 2017, 7pm - 9:30pm

December 17, 2017, 2pm - 4:30pm

Virginia Regional Ballet will be performing its 11th annual production of The Nutcracker Ballet on December 16th at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm and 17th at 2:00 pm with The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra and guest principals from the Fort Wayne Ballet at the College of William & Mary. Virginia Regional Ballet, a not for profit organization, comprised of Virginia Regional Ballet Academy's most promising students and area professionals will be performing. Former artistic director of The Chamber Ballet for 35 years and VRB's artistic director since 2006, Heidi Robitshek's Nutcracker production has been a Williamsburg tradition for over 35 years, each year more magnificent than the last. Venue: Phi Beta Kappa Hall 601 Jamestown Road Williamsburg, VA 23185. 757-229-2553.

NATURE CONNECTS: ART WITH LEGO BRICKS

Every Saturday. Repeats Weekly. Now - Dec. 17, 2017, 9am - 5pm
Nature Connects is an award-winning, record-breaking exhibition now touring North America. Created with over a half million LEGO pieces, this show features larger-than-life sculptures built with LEGO bricks by Brooklyn artist and children's author Sean Kenney. The sculptures bring nature to life with a 6-foot hummingbird hovering over a trumpet flower, a deer family made from 84,000 bricks, a giant tortoise, a 7-foot long dragonfly and more. This spectacular combination of nature and art will be featured outdoors in the Conservation Garden and other outdoor areas. Created in partnership with Iowa State University, Nature Connects is foremost an educational platform and secondarily a means of artistic expression. Venue: Virginia Living Museum 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd. Newport News, VA 23601.

757-595-1900

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA CEREMONY

Dec.17, 2017, 12pm - 1pm

A remembrance ceremony conducted by the Yorktown Coast Guard Station and members of local organizations pay tribute to our fallen war veterans. Fresh Christmas wreaths will be placed on grave markers to honor veterans buried there. Yorktown National Cemetery. Free. 757.856.228 Venue: Yorktown National Cemetery1000 Colonial PkwyYorktown, VA 23690. 757-856-2287.

TIM SEAMAN AT THE GALLERY AT YORK HALL

Dec. 17, 2017, 1pm - 3:30pm

Come out to the Gallery at York Hall and enjoy Tim Seaman perform his Hammered Dulcimer. In addition to the exhibit, the Gallery will have a host of new and beautiful art, jewelry, pottery and much more for sale. Tuesday - Saturday 10 AM to 4 PM, Sunday 1 to 4 PM. Closed Mondays. Free. (757) 890.4490 Venue: York Hall301 Main StreetYorktown, VA 23690 757-890-4490

VIENNA BOYS CHOIR

Dec. 20, 2017, 7:30pm - 9:30pm

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Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Business *and* Social Etiquette

By Greg Lilly, Editor

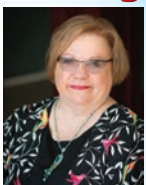
“I always observed people. People fascinate me, and different cultures fascinate me. I’m intrigued by how proper behavior changes from country to country,” Leela Peter explains. Leela is an etiquette consultant certified by The Etiquette Institute in St. Louis, Missouri. “Eti-

quette is a code of behavior. If you learn the correct rules of behavior, people will notice you for all the right reasons.”

Leela teaches children and adults business, social and dining etiquette. She notices when young people encountering other people may

not introduce themselves, look the person in the eye or even smile at them. “When I do my tutorials, I always ask, ‘What’s the universal language?’ and people will say English or Chinese, but they never mention a smile. A smile improves your looks; it makes people feel you

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are willing to communicate with them. The universal language is a smile. That opens up communication. If you smile at someone when you see them, they are more apt to say 'hello' or communicate with you."

Observing a baby, we can see a smile is a primal reaction of acknowledging another human.

"Yes, but we forget that as we grow older."

Leela was born in India and moved to the U.S. 47 years ago. She had her own interior design business before she and her husband and their family moved to Williamsburg about ten years ago. "I've been very fortunate to live in four different countries: India, the United States, Australia and the Cayman Islands. And in the U.S., we've lived in seven different states," she says. "I was a stay-at-home mom for years until my last child went to school. My husband had a very busy career. I felt somebody needed to be home for the children." When the family moved here from Wisconsin, Leela decided to close her interior design business.

Recently, Leela was in Italy with a group from the United Kingdom. "I observe people," she admits. "It was such a pleasure to see the Europeans eat, different from our way of eating. We change the fork and knife back and forth to our right hand. The English people never do

that. They hold the knife with their right hand and push the food onto the fork and eat it. I was mesmerized how they do this. One of the gentlemen asked why I park my knife on the plate and switch the fork to my right hand. I said it was a very acceptable thing to do in the U.S. He understood the behavior. From then on, he didn't critique me."

She explains that this developed in the U.S. because our ancestors used knives when they were cutting meat, but not as part of their regular utensils. "They used either a fork or spoon held in the right hand. That is how we learned to do it. Etiquette changes over the years. Actually, it was the Italians who set a standard of the way to eat and to set the table. When you go to Italy, and also South America, you see the place settings are done very differently than we do here."

When Leela came to the U.S. from India, she adapted and learned the normal social behaviors and dining etiquette in the U.S. "Since I was always interested in social and business manners and etiquette, I wanted to take a course and become certified. When I give constructive criticism to people, whether they are my family or someone who has hired me to teach them, I know the correct etiquette."

During her certification, Leela met others in class who worked at universities. They were being certified to teach their university students proper business, social and dining manners. Leela has worked with international students at William & Mary, instructing them on the differences between their home country and the U.S. "There is no 'right' way or 'wrong' way to eat," she stresses. "Where I grew up, we ate with our hands. The Asians eat with chopsticks. None of it is wrong. It's just a different way."

Etiquette tutorials are popular with young people. "Social etiquette is what I usually teach Girl Scout troops. It is basically social manners. I teach them how to walk, how to sit, how to greet people, look them in the eye and shake hands."

One business item that Leela has noticed is name tag placement. When a name tag is given to the people in her tutorials they take it with their right hand and slap it on their left shoulder. "Placement for it is four inches from your shoulder, down on the right-hand side. About 75 percent of the people I meet, even executives, have the name tag on their left-hand side. When you shake hands with someone, their eyes go up your right hand to your shoulder." This makes it easy on the person you are meet-

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ing, not for yourself.

Parents or grandparents may instruct children in proper etiquette, but some rely on a consultant like Leela. "I do a tea for young kids," she says. "They are still not flexible or agile enough to really hold a knife and cut their food, so I teach them how to sit properly, place their napkins, to know their place setting. Most people, even adults, don't know when sitting at a round table, which glass or bread plate is theirs."

Leela uses an easy method to remind us of the place setting's drinking glass and bread plate assignment. Using your right hand, touch the index finger to the thumb. This creates a lowercase "d" and reminds us that the right side of the setting is our drink. Using the left hand, touch the index finger to the thumb to create a lowercase "b" and this indicates that the bread plate is on the left.

"That is easy to remember. I tell the children not to do this above the table, but in their laps so they can remember. For the placement of the silverware, with the little kids, I tell them that the word 'right' has five letters. So does knife and spoon – that's where they go – on the right of the plate. The word 'left' has four letters and so does a fork. They go on the left side of the

plate."

She uses these reminders in her Girl Scout tutorials. "Once they take this course, the girls can get their 'Manners' badge for Girl Scouts. It's fun to be with young children because they love learning these etiquette guidelines."

With young adults or people going on interviews, Leela explains, that more and more companies are interviewing people over lunch. This is a time to impress a potential employer with knowledge, but not a time to be clumsy with manners. "When you can eat properly and confidently, that shows you can do other things confidently and with the right etiquette. I have a PowerPoint presentation for the college students that goes through what to wear, what not to order when having lunch in a restaurant – no spaghetti or lobster because that can be very stressful to eat properly."

On the other side of the dining occasion is the hospitality industry. Leela gives high marks to the professionalism of local waitstaff. One reminder for home and restaurant dining etiquette is collecting plates from a table. "A table will have fast and slow eaters. I'm one of those fast eaters. Everyone's plate should be taken away at the same time. Don't clear the table of just the people who have finished eating. That

is really bad manners. I see that in almost every restaurant." When some of a table's plates are collected, the remaining diners feel rushed to finish.

"Plus, I always tell my students to thank the waitstaff. No one thanks them when they are leaving. They work hard and appreciate it."

Leela says it is best to start teaching manners starts best when children are young. "They can be two years old and learn to say 'please' and 'thank you.' When they start to eat by themselves, you can tell them about sitting up straight and not chewing with their mouth full and elbows off the table."

She admits that sometimes etiquette can lapse after a hard day. "I was at my daughter's home the other day. I was tired from the drive and having wine at the table. I set my elbows on the table as I sipped my wine. My three year old granddaughter told me, 'Your elbows are on the table!' They absorb these things because I had told her eight year old sister to not do that. I said I was really sorry and I shouldn't have done it."

Etiquette isn't to put someone on the spot, but a standard conduct that puts everyone at ease. "It's fun, and I enjoy working with people," Leela Peter says. NDN



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Lisa W. Cumming Photography

The Gift of Tennis

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Growing up, Mike Caboy wanted to play tennis like his grandfather. “My grandfather, on my mother’s side, was a very high-level player. He was Cuban and played in Cuba. He was my role model. I remember I wanted to play tennis like him.” At the age of five, Mike went to his grandfather and asked to learn. “Because I have cerebral palsy from birth I remember it like it was yesterday. He said, ‘Kid, you’ve got some

issues. If you want to play, you better figure some stuff out.’ He took no excuses. We did it together, but he made sure I did it right. I fell in love with the game.”

Mike is the director of the McCormack-Nagleson Tennis Center. He began playing and progressed in his skills. By the age of eleven, he could out play his mother. “I didn’t have money for lessons,” he says, “so the wall was my best

friend. I’d put a chalk mark on the gym wall, then tried to hit it.”

He played all throughout high school in New Jersey. “I could not beat my grandfather on the court until my senior year in high school and had earned a scholarship. He had played doubles with Poncho Segura, who was Jimmy Connors’ tennis coach. My grandfather was an extremely high-level tennis player. I would play

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with him as often as I could.”

His freshman year in college, Mike played tennis at Florida International University in Miami. After that, he returned to New Jersey to finish school at Montclair State University with a focus on hospitality management. He interned with Walt Disney World his junior year of college. “My plan was to be a recreation manager at a resort,” he says.

“After graduation, I applied to Walt Disney World for a management position because I had interned there. The position wasn’t available until the fall, but they mentioned they knew I had played college tennis and taught some on the side. They asked if I would help at the Contemporary Resort as the assistant tennis pro for the summer. They had started a summer tennis camp.”

After a month of working on the courts, Mike knew tennis might be a suitable career for him. He told the management team that he’d like to stay as the assistant tennis pro rather than pursuing the management position that would come available that autumn.

“After about four years, I became the head tennis pro at the Grand Floridian Resort, and then I went on to managing all tennis operations at Walt Disney World.”

As business goes, Disney decided to outsource their tennis operations to a third-party vendor. They gave Mike the option of moving to that vendor to continue his position. Instead, he decided to stay with Disney. “I went through Disney’s leadership program and became the resort manager at the Grand Floridian Resort. I was in charge of guest services, bell services, concierge, all operations.”

From there, they needed his expertise for the Disney Cruise Line, where he became a task force manager. “I was in charge of the luggage system,” he describes. “On any given day, a seamless experience for the guests, from the airport to the resort to the ship and then back to the airport, we moved 10,000 pieces of luggage. That was a learning experience!”

Being at Disney for so many years, Mike developed a focus on the guest service experience. “It is amazing what they do for their guests.” He ended up at Disney’s All-Star Resort as a front desk manager. He heard about an opening for an operations manager on Hilton Head. “My wife was ready to move from Florida,” he says. Mike had worked with the woman who was the general manager at that Hilton Head

property during his years at Disney. “I took that job and moved the family to Hilton Head.” The move was a good one for him and his family, but he realized he missed tennis. “I was in the tennis Mecca of the world. I knew I could find a job there in the sport.”

At a small private resort with just two courts and no tennis program, Mike found his place. “Stan Smith, former Wimbledon Champion, was one of the resident members of this club,” Mike says. “I thought we could start a tennis program there from scratch. We built four new courts and had one of the most active programs on the island. Stan Smith was very helpful. We would hold an exhibition with him every year for the membership.”

For almost 15 years, Mike built the resort’s tennis program in Hilton Head. It was 15 years of working in the sun and heat for up to seven hours a day. “That was getting tough for me as I got older,” he admits. “I knew I couldn’t do it forever and wanted something to get me out of the sun and heat all day long.” The resort began to go through some organizational changes. Mike went to help at Stan Smith’s Elite Academy, teaching and learning.

He heard a head pro position was available at William & Mary’s McCormack-Nagelsen Tennis Center. He applied and interviewed. “I was offered the position as the head professional and facilities manager,” he says. “Tom Hawkins (former director) was planning to retire. His house sold and he retired earlier than anticipated. I took over as interim director. W&M moved me to the position of director a few months later. I took all I learned from Disney in terms of guest services, what I learned from Stan Smith in terms of teaching, and everything I learned growing up, and incorporated that with the wonderful team here.”

For the past year and a half, Mike has enjoyed seeing the community gather at the tennis center. “We have a thriving junior program – close to 70 kids on a regular basis. We hold 25 USTA (United States Tennis Association) sanctioned tournaments for the juniors.”

He and the staff have tweaked the membership structure for the community to four basic levels: junior, single, family or Tribe. “We took a large gamble to reduce the fees to draw more of the community to the McCormack-Nagelsen Tennis Center and its programs.” The gamble is paying off in the number of players on the courts for lessons (junior and adult),

leagues and special events.

“The W&M Tennis teams practice year round. Their actual tennis season is in the spring for both men and women. They practice outside through their December break. When they come back, they’ll practice in here. We share the building. They are the reason this building is in existence. I have a very good relationship with both coaches. Several of the team members work with us when they have the time.”

The W&M teams have priority for the courts. “It works,” Mike explains, “because the teams are here at our slowest part of the day, from 2 – 5 p.m. during the winter.” He says that retirees and seniors like the 9 a.m. to noon times, the juniors like after school times, and the adults like to play after work in the evenings. With the six indoor courts, everyone can find time on the schedule.

A number of programs help the community, including the Women’s Charity Tennis Classic each September that raises funds for such charities as Avalon, CASA and Latisha’s House, and the Men’s Charity Tennis Tournament in October that raises funds for Hospice House and Support Care of Williamsburg.

“One of my pros heard of a program called ACEing Autism,” Mike explains. “There wasn’t a facility in the state that offered it. There are several around the country but none in Virginia. We are the first here. We just completed our second series of the six-week program. Those kids are so appreciative of this. It’s my favorite hour of the week.”

Even with Kingsmill, Ford’s Colony, Two Rivers Country Club and others having their own tennis clubs, the McCormack-Nagelsen Tennis Center continues to add members. One reason is it is the only indoor facility in the area. “Many people will join our facility as well as their own club to have year-round play especially since we adjusted the membership fee. A family membership is just over \$800 for a year. We want to make it reachable for the community.”

Tennis has made a difference in Mike Caboy’s life, from his first lessons with his grandfather to his management and coaching at the McCormack-Nagelsen Tennis Center. “I can’t overemphasize how much this silly game has given to a kid who had cerebral palsy since birth. I’ve been able to do some amazing things and meet some amazing people because of tennis.” NDN



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

The Nutcracker Tradition

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Virginia Regional Ballet's *The Nutcracker* is a holiday tradition each December for dancers to perform and for the community to savor. This year's "Klara" is Margaret Luck, a freshman at Jamestown High School.

"I started dancing in second grade with tap and jazz. In third grade, I added ballet," she explains. It all started when a neighbor had asked Margaret and her mother, Tracy, if Margaret might want to try dance, and if so, they could carpool to the classes. In those first classes at Virginia Regional Ballet (VRB), Margaret dis-

covered the magic of movement.

"My favorite thing about dance is performing," she says. "The performance is what I practice for. It's exciting to be on stage in front of people. Also, I've made a lot of friends here. I wouldn't want to stop dancing and not see them anymore."

Margaret first appeared in *The Nutcracker* when she was in fourth grade. "I was a mouse and a cherub," she says. "Those are the basic roles in that age group."

The Virginia Regional Ballet, in collaboration

with the Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra, presents the ballet and its popular Tchaikovsky's score. The cast is made up of VRB students and professional dancers.

The lead role of Klara is a highlight of most young dancers' performances. "Lots of practice," Margaret says about how she was cast in the role. "I'm hoping between last year and this year I got better." Last year's production had Margaret in six roles, all in pointe shoes and quick costume changes. "Intense roles," she adds.

"In last December's *The Nutcracker*, Ms.

Heidi (Robitshek) and the other teachers in the studio could see what I was capable of," Margaret says. "They saw how I did on stage in those big roles and that helped them see I could do Klara as well." She explains that she auditioned for the ballet, but not for a particular role. She was cast for Klara based on her audition and her past performances with the company. "They select specific dancers based on our strengths."

Margaret started pointe in the fifth grade. "Once you get your pointe shoes, you take a couple combinations at first. Then you take the barre. Then you build from there" Margaret explains. "You don't get into advanced pointe work until a couple of years of practice. It takes a while to make sure your ankles are strong enough and to prevent injuries."

Since performing is the part Margaret looks forward to the most, the anticipation makes the performance for her. "When the lights first come on," she describes, "and we're all ready for the show to start, I can feel the promise, the confidence of the performers. We're all excited to see what will happen." She likes the part of Klara because it doesn't start off with a big dance for her. "The beginning isn't too intense, and I can get a sense of how the crowd will react. During school shows, with the little kids, we hear them laughing. The school shows are my favorites because we get to interact with the kids afterwards. They are a lot of fun."

At the beginning of *The Nutcracker*, Klara and her brother, Fritz, peer through a window at the Christmas tree being decorated because there's going to be a party. "Then all the party kids and parents come out. A couple of dances are all together then Klara breaks out into her own dance." The ensemble at the beginning gives Margaret time to settle and take in the mood of the audience before she's in front of them, on her own.

"The challenge," she says, "is the entirety of the ballet. Individual scenes are fun and excit-

ing. It's a really long show for a dancer to be in. You have to keep your energy up to keep the audience intrigued. You can't get tired." The first act is bustling for the role of Klara with her performances. "The second act isn't tiring for that role because it's the prince and Klara having the others dancing for them."

Their rehearsals ensure that the cast is conditioned for the performances. "Rehearsals are pretty intense," she says. "We have classes through the week and the show's rehearsals Friday night and Saturday throughout the day. Once we get closer to the show, we have rehearsals on Sunday, as well."

The technical rehearsals go the entire day before the opening performance. "We run the entire show to get the backdrops and lights in so that all the dancers know where to go on stage." Typically, these rehearsals can continue until 11 p.m. or midnight on the Friday before the show on Saturday.

"I don't think I want to pursue ballet as a career," she says of her future. "It's really hard to get into a company, especially to be a prima. Plus, you can't do it for very long. First, there's a huge risk of injury and not being able to dance anymore. Then, most professional dancers don't go beyond the age of 35. I feel like I would spend all this time training for a professional career and then it would be over. A college education that works toward a ballet career wouldn't prepare me for life after it was over. I'd be more set for life with a rock-solid job." Much like an athlete's chances at a professional sports career, the odds of making a career as a professional ballerina can be challenging, and then it's a short window of opportunity.

"Right now, I'm interested in psychology and helping people in the military," she says of her ambitions for higher education and a career. "I know they can be affected by PTSD, and that intrigues me. Ten years from now...we'll see. But, I think that's what I want to do right now."

With her interest in psychology, Margaret likes the dynamics of the VRB dancers. "All the kids who audition want to be there and are excited to perform. There are younger and older girls who have bad days and don't want to rehearse or get on stage, but the girls support each other and help get them going. It all pays off when the curtain opens. It's a rush."


On Sunday, December 10, at the Williamsburg Community Building, Margaret and her fellow performers have a special treat for their fans. They will be hosting *Tea with Klara and her Nutcracker Friends*. Geared toward the parents and elementary-aged children, the event will include interactive performances by Margaret and other dancers, along with crafts for the kids, plus refreshments such as finger sandwiches, scones, cookies, tea and lemonade.

This is Margaret's eighth year dancing and her fifth year in *The Nutcracker*. "It has become our family's holiday tradition. My brother was our prince the last two years. Not this year because he's focusing on college applications. He liked hanging out with all the ballerinas."

Her advice for young girls and boys wanting to participate in *The Nutcracker* is to practice hard to ensure they improve. "During auditions, do your best. If you audition hoping for one particular part and you don't get it that year, don't be discouraged. As long as you keep working hard, you could get that role the next time or the next. As long as you improve each year, you get higher in the ranks for parts."

The Virginia Regional Ballet, along with the Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra, presents *The Nutcracker* with Margaret Luck as Klara on Saturday, December 16, at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m., and on Sunday, December 17 at 2:00 p.m. at William & Mary's Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall, 601 Jamestown Road. [NDN](#)

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Merry Christmas!



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Art Therapy

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Acrylic paints, clay, charcoal sticks, sketch pads and pencils stock the shelves of Sarah Balsacio's office. She talks with her clients as they paint or draw or sculpt. "What do you think of this piece you are working on?" she asks. "What do you like about it? How do you connect with it? How did it make you feel while creating it? Was using the clay, messy and sloppy, making you feel uncomfortable or did it make you feel young and playful?" She stresses it's not so much about the art, but about how the person feels doing it. Sarah is an art therapist.

"In art therapy, we think about process versus product. It's more about the process – what it was like doing the art versus having some mas-

terpiece at the end. A lot of the time, people throw out the art. 'I'm done with that.' That's great. It's about the process of doing."

Sarah explains that art therapy is part of a larger field of Creative Arts Therapy. "That includes therapies such as music therapy, visual art therapy and dance therapy. I am an art therapist. Sometimes I incorporate writing, yoga and movement, but I am trained in visual art therapy. That is the use of art materials to aid in someone's therapy. You don't have to be an artist to be in art therapy. This is for a person interested in an alternative to traditional talk therapy. It's for someone who doesn't want to sit down and talk with a therapist."

The person may have a goal such as developing social skills, expressing themselves, addressing grief or anxiety. Sarah introduces the art materials. Some people who are artists take it from there. Others need more guidance. "I work primarily with children, adolescents and young adults," she says. "I find that they are more willing to try art. If it feels scary, then we talk about why that is. Art is a vehicle to talk about the feelings that emerge. The idea is: what we create is part of who we are."

Art therapy is a way for the person to be creative and discuss things triggered by their creative expression. "I find it's really great for teenagers because, generally, they are resistant

to traditional therapy. Also, it is helpful for people who have trouble communicating directly. I work with a lot of folks who are closed off or on the autism spectrum or don't like sitting and talking to a therapist. It is also a good fit for creative adults who want insight into what they are thinking and feeling."

Sarah grew up in New Jersey and went to college in Upstate New York. "I was an art major and education minor," she says. "After college, I went into museum education. That wasn't quite for me, more research and not enough interaction with people. I interned at the MET (Metropolitan Museum of Art) and worked at Sotheby's and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston." She went back to school and earned a Master's Degree in Art Education. She taught art in elementary and middle schools for five years and was awarded Vermont's Art Teacher of the Year.

"I felt skilled in teaching technique. But, what I loved most was when kids came in to talk with me," she explains, "kids who typically had trouble in their classes. Some of the other teachers would warn me about a particular student, but I found that they weren't disruptive in art class." She discovered she had students coming into her classroom to work on art projects at times they would typically be bullied, like during recess or lunchtime. "I always enjoyed seeing how the kids moods changed when we did art projects."

The realization that art could change a child's disposition and help them open up about their feelings spurred Sarah to earn another master's degree in art therapy from at the Pratt Institute in New York. "That's when I became an art therapist."

As an art therapist, Sarah worked in psychiatric hospitals in Vermont and at New York Presbyterian in New York City. Three years ago, she and her husband, Nickolas, moved to Williams-

burg. "Nickolas is a geology professor at William & Mary. We've done a lot of moving with his career in higher education, but now we have settled here and love it. We have really settled into Williamsburg. Our kids go to Matthew Whaley Elementary School. We live just around the corner from my office in the Walnut Hills neighborhood. I can walk to work. It's great."

Now in private practice, Sarah works at Williamsburg Counseling and facilitates groups throughout the community. "I do a couple of creative arts therapy groups at the counseling center at W&M. I also do one at One Child Center for Autism," she says. Parents have told Sarah that until they found art therapy that their child would not attend a therapy session. "That feels really good that art therapy has led the child to counseling."

She cautions that the sessions aren't just about having fun. "I have had some really intense moments with families. Maybe the child shows signs of being suicidal, and the parents need to get him or her to their primary care physician. I love that art therapy feels good for kids and that they trust me and we build a rapport, but it is also serious. That's when I need to collaborate with team members."

The atmosphere of an art therapy session is reminiscent of working on a project with close friends, whether planting a garden, building a tool shed, sewing a quilt or knitting scarves and caps. "It's the same idea of creating with the hands while the mind relaxes and conversation flows."

Sarah lists the results: "One, it calms the brain. Two, it disarms people, relaxes people. Three, doing something else, helps loosen up the person."

Generally, she explains, she will introduce an idea and then she and the client talk as the client paints, draws or sculpts. "Then at the end, we'll look at the art and talk about it." The per-

son doesn't feel the heat of a spotlight on them; the focus is on what they are doing or what they have created.

"I love the idea that therapy is not scary, and the person is not being dragged to it. I love watching people take risks with their art. They will look at the supplies and say they don't know what to do. But they reap the rewards of trying it, of taking a chance."

When Sarah worked in hospitals, the patients were there when they were very sick, then got better and left. "What I love about private practice are the extended relationships, seeing someone over the years, how they change, and being able to reflect back on those changes."

Art Therapy was initiated in the 1960s, Sarah explains. "It's a newer type of therapy. I think it is becoming more popular. It's along the trend of holistic therapies and alternative approaches rather than going to a psychiatrist and getting on meds. That's why it is becoming more popular," she says.

"I have always loved art. My dad was an artist, and I've always done art. But I didn't know what it was about it that I loved. That's why it took me a while to get to this path. Did I like looking at art in museums? No, too stuffy. Did I like teaching art? Sure, because you are actually in it. Then I realized I liked working with people. I felt sufficient at the skill of teaching, but what I relished was how it made people feel."

One of the schools where she taught in Vermont was very rural. "I did this big mural with the school and community about the history of the town. When we had an unveiling of the mural, I saw how the whole community came together over this. I saw how art made people feel creative and open up to each other as they worked on it." Sarah Balascio looks around her office and adds, "I love coming here every day, sitting beside people, hearing their stories and seeing their art." NDN

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COMMUNITY POLICING

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Williamsburg Police Chief Sean Dunn believes in the power of the community to work together making the area a great place to live, work, play and host our visitors. "I have been involved in community policing since 1994. Community policing is the epitome of law enforcement and the community working together," he says.

"Williamsburg is an international tourist destination and home to William & Mary," he describes the differences he's found in the municipalities where he's worked. "With that, brings forth hundreds of thousands of visitors a year. That's a unique challenge that I did not experience in Portsmouth or Martinsville. Both of the communities had some tourism element, but here the number of visitors is unique."

Sean grew up in Portsmouth, Virginia. His mother had grown up in Portsmouth and his father was from the Deep Creek area of Chesapeake. "After Dad got out of the military, we stayed in the Portsmouth area. My sophomore year of high school, we moved to northern Suffolk and I graduated from John Yeates High School. Early in my high school years, I started working at Bennett's Creek Rescue Squad as an



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

emergency medical technician and at Maryview Hospital, originally as a volunteer then as a patient transporter then as an orderly then ultimately as a respiratory tech." His mother was a nurse, so the field of medicine held an interest for him. While at Maryview Hospital, he worked for a time as an emergency room orderly, enjoying the action and pace of the emergency room and meeting some of the Portsmouth police officers.

Two years of study at Tidewater Community College and two years at Old Dominion University, Sean was a biology major looking toward medical school. He married, and he and his wife, Stacy, were both fulltime college students

and working fulltime. "I said I would focus on a career, and she should focus on school, then we could flip flop in a few years," he explains. "The most exciting and rewarding job I felt that was out there was law enforcement. Fortunately, I ended up with the Portsmouth Police Department at 21 years old. Six months in, I had the law enforcement bug so bad there was no quitting that career."

No one in the family had been in law enforcement. His mother was a nurse, his father had been in the Navy and then worked in the shipyard, most of his uncles and grandfathers had been career military. "The common theme was being service-oriented," he says. "My mom,

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being a nurse, was service oriented. I have a younger brother who was a physician here in Williamsburg and recently relocated to Winchester. Another brother is a firefighter. We are a family of public servants.” Sean knew he wanted to be in municipal management and police leadership. He earned his master’s degree at Regent University in organizational leadership with an emphasis in public executive leadership.

“In the Portsmouth Police Department, I served in every rank up to and including Police Commander and a variety of operational and administrative assignments, then in 2014, I retired after 21 years of service. I retired because I was offered a position in Martinsville, Virginia, as their police chief. It’s about four hours from Portsmouth. This was the farthest I had moved from Hampton Roads. I found Martinsville to be a wonderful community. The socioeconomics and the demographics were very similar to Portsmouth, just on a smaller scale – around 14,000 citizens compared to Portsmouth’s just under a 100,000 citizens.”

Martinsville and other rural areas of Southwestern Virginia have been hard hit by the loss of manufacturing jobs, Sean explains. “Severe unemployment and the socioeconomics that come with that make for a very tough economy, but that also creates a very resilient community. I met some of the nicest people I’ve ever met while I was in Martinsville.”

A tough economy can lead a community into helplessness and that can lead to crime. “Absolutely,” he says. “We did some very good things in Martinsville during my three years there. Violent crime was reduced 59 percent. A lot of the strategies that were effective in Portsmouth – community policing, the relentless focus on addressing crime issues, positioning ourselves to ensure we have the staff where we need it and a number of other strategies – also worked in

Martinsville. A lot of it is the close working relationship that law enforcement develops with the community. We were able to successfully, as a community, reduce crime in a significant way.”

The leaders of Martinsville found that without the jobs, their young people would leave for college and not return. The population dwindled. “They had high unemployment, one of the highest rates in the state, and high levels of poverty. Those things, unfortunately, lead to increased crime and violence. But, engaging the community helps to reverse that. Being a resilient community, Martinsville positioned themselves to put a tremendous focus in education and educating their young people. That will serve them well. The New College Institute is the centerpiece of the city. That speaks to the value they place on education. I have no doubt they will come out of it and be a stronger community tomorrow than they are today. It was a very rewarding experience for me.”

Sean and his family moved to Martinsville in May of 2014. “For more than a decade, my father had been battling prostate cancer. That July, it spread to his bones. Two months into being there and my first time away from home, I thought, ‘Why did I do this?’ Ten months later, I lost my father.”

Very close to his family and to Stacy’s family, Sean and Stacy decided that when the right opportunity came, they would move back to the Hampton Roads area. “Fortunately, for me and my family, the Williamsburg position was an opportunity to move home, but also an opportunity to move to an incredible community, an international tourist destination, a world-renowned community, a community with colonial history. It’s a perfect fit for me and my family.” Williamsburg is a very safe community, he adds, but with any community, there are crime concerns and challenges. “The police department

and the community have done a fantastic job over many years working hard to ensure it is a safe community. The Williamsburg Police Department is, what I consider, a high-performing police department. The Williamsburg city government is a high-performing government. It is very exciting to be in a position like this.”

While Williamsburg may seem to some a sleepy town, Sean has been impressed with the amount of activities and events. “So much going on here – a very active town and active citizens and so many visitors. It’s a fun place to live and work. That’s been my biggest surprise.”

Coming from Hampton Roads, from Portsmouth, with a brother living in Toano, Sean and Stacy visited Williamsburg multiple times a year.

Being aware of the happenings, the people and the culture of the area is a big part of community policing. “It’s important to have a police officer who knows his or her beat and everyone in that beat. As in the other cities I have worked in, community policing will take the majority of my attention. I am constantly looking for ways for our police department to better engage with our citizens and to facilitate positive interactions with police and community members.” He admits that there will always be some community members that love the police and certainly some community members who may never like the police. “But, it is our job to work as hard as possible to foster those relationships and gain as much community support as possible. That’s most easily accomplished through community policing.”

Police Chief Sean Dunn adds, “Crises are going to happen. Crime is going to occur. How we respond to that and manage that is my focus. At the end of the day, I want look back and see that we took the appropriate and realistic measures to do our best to prevent crime. Knowing that makes a good day for me.” NDN



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To submit your non-profit event to Hey Neighbor! send a paragraph with your information to:
heyneighbor@cox.net

Hey Neighbor!

FLUTE FRENZY'S PRELUDE AND FANTASIA HOLIDAY CONCERT

December 8, 2017

At 7:15 pm at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Road. The program will be a Winter's Journey of varied music for flute choirs of piccolo, C flute, alto and bass flutes. The program includes familiar classical and popular works from Sleigh Ride to the Nutcracker. Directed by Thom Recktenwald and Prelude Director, Olivia Lawson, the concert is free and open to the public. Reception to follow. For information on the various flute choir classes visit www.flutefrenzy.org

Hey Neighbor!

HERITAGE HUMANE SOCIETY CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

December 9, 2017

Join us from 9 am – 3 pm at the Bruton Parish Hall, Duke of Gloucester Street, Williamsburg. All proceeds benefit homeless animals at the Heritage Humane Society. You'll find unique gifts and stocking stuffers for all the people and pets on your list. Come early for the best selections of gourmet soups, baked goods and "jar foods" for your celebrations. We have themed baskets and hand-crafted gifts, as well as a wide

selection of jewelry, scarves, books, stuffed animals, holiday decorations and more! Your favorite pets will enjoy toys, togs and treats in their holiday "critter baskets". Try your luck at our raffles, with a chance to win exciting prizes.

Hey Neighbor!

TEA WITH KLARA AND HER NUTCRACKER FRIENDS

December 10, 2017

2:30 pm at the Williamsburg Community Building. Tickets: \$18.00 in advance; \$25.00 at the door. On Sale Now! www.danceVRB.com. Sip Tea and eat treats with Klara and all of her Nutcracker friends. Special ballet performance, crafts and more.

Hey Neighbor!

CHRISTMAS WITH THE WILLIAMSBURG CHORAL GUILD

December 10, 2017

The Williamsburg Choral Guild celebrates the season of giving with its annual gift to the community – a family-friendly concert of traditional favorites. Featured will be selections and arrangements of holiday music and a sing-along. Join us for a Williamsburg tradition! At St. Martin's Episco-

pal Church, 1333 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg. At 2 pm and 4 pm. This is a free event but a food donation is requested for FISH. For information call (757) 220-1808 or visit our web site: www.williamsburgchoralguild.org

Hey Neighbor!

JOIN THE WOMAN'S CLUB

December 13, 2017

Women interested in finding out more about The Woman's Club of Williamsburg-GFWC are welcome to attend our December meeting to meet us and learn more! We meet 11:15 am -1:30 pm at Ford's Colony Clubhouse, 240 Ford's Colony Dr., in Williamsburg. The meeting includes lunch (\$17) and a presentation and performance by Kathy Kasley, harpist and certified music practitioner. To attend, please email us at info@womansclubofwilliamsburg.org. The non-profit Woman's Club of Williamsburg-GFWC is a group of women with a common interest in community welfare and philanthropic projects. The Club provides financial support for a variety of local, national and international humanitarian organizations. Visit www.womansclubofwilliamsburg.org for more information about our club's activities!

Hey Neighbor!

AT-HOME PRUNING CLINICS BY VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS

December 15, 2017- January 20, 2018

Do you need to prune the plants in your yard – but don't know where to start? Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Master Gardeners are offering free pruning consultations in the yards of James City County and City of Williamsburg residents. During these sessions, a team of two to four VCE Master Gardeners will provide hands-on training to help homeowners maintain healthy ornamental shrubs and small trees. Two or three neighbors may request a session together at one of the homes in their neighborhood. Sign up at www.jccwmg.org. Pruning sessions will be scheduled during February and March. For more information, contact the Virginia Cooperative Extension James City County Office at (757) 564-2170.

Hey Neighbor!

THE NUTCRACKER BALLET

December 16 & 17, 2017

Presented by Virginia Regional Ballet, accompanied by The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra and Principal

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Dancers from Fort Wayne Ballet. Saturday, at 2 pm and 7 pm; Sunday, December 17, at 2 pm. All performances held at Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall at the College of William & Mary Reserved Seating. For Tickets visit www.danceVRB.com or for more information call (757) 229-2553.

Hey Neighbor!
CHRISTMAS DREAMS!
December 16-17, 2017

Institute for Dance, Inc. (iDance), a local dance studio and 501(c)(3) non-profit organization presents "Christmas Dreams!" Saturday, December 16, 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm, Sunday, December 17, 2:30 pm. It's Christmas in Williamsburg and Janie Sparkle wants just one thing this Christmas--for all her wishes to come true! Then, an unexpected event occurs, standing between her and Christmas morning. Janie finds herself in an enchanted world where nothing is as it seems. Come join Janie on her tremendous journey home, presented exclusively by Institute for Dance, Inc. This annual family-friendly holiday show, is celebrating 10 years and will be held at Kimball Theatre at 428 W Duke of Gloucester Street. Information at www.institutefordance.org or info@institutefordance.org. Tickets available through <http://kimball.wm.edu>.

Hey Neighbor!
VIENNA BOYS CHOIR
December 20, 2017

Beloved for its pure, heavenly sound, this internationally revered choir can trace its history as far back as the 13th century, and despite the youth of its singers, represents an art form steeped in tradition and history. The choir will perform some of the best-loved holiday music ever written at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. Time: 7:30 pm. Parking is limited, please consider carpooling. Tickets can be purchased through the Virginia

Arts Festival at www.vafest.org. For more information, visit www.bede.va.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!
WCAC'S SMALL WORKS & HOLIDAY SHOW NOW UNDERWAY!
Through December 22, 2017

The Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center's Small Works & Holiday Show is underway, featuring affordable 2D and 3D artwork by WCAC member artists for holiday gift-giving. WCAC is located at 110 Westover Ave. Hours are 11-3 Tues.-Sat; 12-4 Sun. www.visitWCAC.org; (757) 229-4949.

Hey Neighbor!
WOMEN'S ROLE IN COLONIAL ERA RELIGION
January 14, 2018

Anne Conkling, an expert on women's rights and their role in religion, will discuss the role of Women in Colonial and Revolutionary churches in Tidewater Virginia. The lecture will be held at the Hennage Auditorium of the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg, 3 pm. Hosted by the Tidewater Virginia Historic Society, everyone is welcome to attend and admission is free. Parking is available across the street to the left of the Museum and at other city parking locations. For more information contact Jane Burton, (757) 258-5587 or by email, harryjane@verizon.net.

Hey Neighbor!
WILLIAMSBURG COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANTS
January 17, 2018

WCF makes up to \$5,000 available for organizations that support a broad range of community enrichment opportunities and respond to changing community needs. Application deadline: Jan. 17, 2018. Application is online at WilliamsburgCommunity-Foundation.org/apply-for-a-grant-2/. Questions? Call Nancy Sullivan at

(757) 259-1660.

Hey Neighbor!
NEW YORK METS' DAVID WRIGHT HOSTS ANNUAL VEGAS NIGHT EVENT
January 19, 2018

Hometown hero David Wright, captain of the New York Mets, hosts the eighth annual Vegas Night to benefit children at CHKD, beginning at 7 pm at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The evening will include cocktails, heavy hors d'oeuvres and dessert with a live/silent auction and casino gaming including craps, roulette, blackjack, horse racing and poker. Attire is "Vegas casual." A \$150 general admission ticket includes \$2,000 in non-poker gaming chips. A \$300 poker tournament ticket includes general admission plus \$4,000 in poker chips and \$2,000 in non-poker gaming chips. The annual event has raised more than \$1.1 million for the kids at CHKD, since its start in 2011. Metal Tech is this year's royal flush presenting sponsor. Other sponsorships are still available. Advance tickets are required and are on sale now. No tickets will be sold at the door. Call (757) 668-7070 or visit CHKD.org/davidwright.

Hey Neighbor!
VCE MASTER GARDENER REGISTRATION
Ongoing

The James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners' Program is accepting applications for the Class of 2018. The entirely community based volunteer program is under the guidance and leadership of the Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia Tech and has been providing horticulture based programs for James City County and Williamsburg for over 20 years. Classes meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 am - 12 noon, January 9- March 27. For application and more

Hey Neighbor!
"CABARET & COCKTAILS" CONCERT
January 13, 2018

The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra presents its fourth annual "Cabaret & Cocktails" concert at the Williamsburg Lodge. Janna Hymes, Music Director. Featuring the nationally acclaimed Byron Stripling, performing vocals and trumpet in WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD: Tribute to Louis Armstrong. All tickets are table seating, available now at www.williamsburgsymphony.tix.com.

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Hey Neighbor! **2018 FAMILY HEALTH FAIR**

January 27, 2018

The Arc of Greater Williamsburg and James City County Parks and Rec will host their annual Family Health Fair from 9 am - noon at JCC Rec Center, 5301 Longhill Road. Join us for a fun-filled morning that will include healthy recipes and demos, nutrition workshops, giveaways, and activities for all ages! For more information or to become a vendor or sponsor contact Pam McGregor at (757) 229-3535.

Hey Neighbor! **JOIN WMCI THIS SPRING FOR MANY NEW, FUN, AND EDUCATIONAL COURSES**

Beginning February 5, 2018

This spring, WMCI will offer the following courses: Chinese Level I and III, Chinese Painting I, Chinese Calligraphy, and Erhu I for

Session I (February 5 to March 1); Chinese Level I, II, and IV, Chinese Painting II, Tea in Chinese Culture, and Erhu II for Session II (March 12 to April 5). Additionally, Chinese cooking classes will be held on Thursdays from March 15th through April 5th. A Taiji course will be held over both sessions, beginning January 23rd and ending April 3rd (no class March 6th). The cost for each course is \$10/class, to be paid in full on the first day of class. In general, each session holds about 8 classes per course (\$80). In spring 2018, the Taiji class will meet 10 times throughout the semester, totaling \$100. W&M faculty, staff, and students always receive a 50% discount (e.g. \$40 for 8 classes). Sign up today to secure your spot, as the classes are filling up quickly! Contact wmci@wm.edu or (757) 221-1286.

Hey Neighbor! **SEEKING VOLUNTEER TAX PREPARERS**

Ongoing

Williamsburg AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is looking for volunteers to assist seniors and low/moderate-income taxpayers in completing their 2017 Federal and Virginia tax returns. IRS certification training is provided during classes in early January. Basic knowledge of tax return preparation, as well as the ability to do returns on a computer, are needed. We help over 2,500 local taxpayers each year take advantage of tax credits and tax law changes, resulting in refunds of over \$3 million. The service will be offered at the Williamsburg and James City County Libraries in 2017 from February 1 to April 14. We also need facilitators for each session to register and do an initial screening of our clients. Please email District Coordinator George Richmond at grichmond4@live.com if you are interested in becoming a Tax-Aide volunteer.

Hey Neighbor! **WILLIAMSBURG WOMEN'S CONNECTION**

Ongoing

A monthly luncheon from 12 noon - 1 pm with an optional Meet and Greet/Vendor Shopping Time from 11:30-12 noon. We are open to all women. We socialize, shop, enjoy a delicious meal, listen to an inspirational speaker and maybe make a

new friend. Please join us at 11:30 am to socialize and shop, or for lunch and speaker only. Reservations are required. Our luncheon is held at Center Street Grill - 5101 Center Street, Williamsburg. Cost is \$14.00 all inclusive. Call Hazel Tillar for more information. (757) 229-4036.

Hey Neighbor! **GIVE THE UNIQUE AND MEMORABLE GIFT OF SAVING THE LIFE OF A HOMELESS PET THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.**

Ongoing

This is a gift that will leave a lasting impression for the recipient long after the holidays. Your sponsorship of an animal will make a vital difference to a homeless pet. In addition to saving a life, you will receive a photo and story of a pet recently rescued by Heritage Humane Society. Your support of local homeless pets matters now more than ever. Make your gift life-changing this holiday season. (Plus each gift is tax-deductible!). Visit Heritagehumanesociety.org to purchase your Pet Sponsorship Gifts Today! Each Sponsorship package includes a Heritage Humane Society Holiday Donation Card (left blank for you to personalize), 5" x 7" Sponsorship Certificate with two photos of a pet recently rescued and their story, a paw print stamped envelope (left blank for you to address or hand to the recipient). To order online, visit heritagehumanesociety.org/holiday to order by phone (757) 221-0150. Located at 430 Waller Mill Rd., Williamsburg.

Hey Neighbor! **VCE MASTER GARDENER REGISTRATION**

Ongoing

The James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners' Program is accepting applications for the Class of 2018. The entirely community based volunteer program is under the guidance and leadership of the Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia Tech and has been providing horticulture based programs for James City County and Williamsburg for over 20 years. Classes meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 am - 12 noon, January 9- March 27. For application and more information, contact the VCE office at (757) 564-2170 or visit www.jccwmg.org.

Hey Neighbor! **CHRISTOPHER WREN ASSOCIATION FALL SEMESTER MEMBERSHIP, COURSE, LECTURE, AND ACTIVITY REQUESTS**

Ongoing

The Christopher Wren Association is a self-funded, volunteer-led organization dedicated to adults of all ages who seek opportunities for learning and enrichment of their lives. This fall CWA will be offering over 150 courses, one-time lectures and activities, including the popular Town & Gown Lecture series. Classes are filling quickly, and students are encouraged to submit their course requests online as soon as possible. For information about becoming a member and to view the current catalog, visit our website: www.wm.edu/cwa. Questions? Call the office at 757-221-1506.

Hey Neighbor! **WMCI FALL COMMUNITY COURSES AND EVENTS**

Ongoing

This fall, the William & Mary Confucius Institute will be offering a variety of engaging language and culture courses, including: Chinese Level I, Chinese Painting I, Walking into Today's China, and Erhu I for Session I; Chinese Level II, Chinese Calligraphy, Chinese Painting II, and Erhu II for Session II. Additionally, Chinese cooking classes will be held on Thursdays from October 19 - November 9. A Taiji course will be held over both sessions, beginning September 5 and ending November 14 (no class October 17). We will also host a variety of lectures and scholarly events. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://www.wm.edu/sites/confuciusinstitute/index.php>. If you have any questions, call 757-221-1286 or email wmci@wm.edu.

Hey Neighbor! **THE TIDEWATER VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (TVHS)**

Ongoing

TVHS offers unique tours, lectures, social events, plus behind-the-scene adventures during 2017-18. "History in your own backyard" takes on a new meaning when you know what all TVHS has to offer. TVHS opens doors to "off-the-beaten-

path” and “not open to the public” historic sites. Lectures by experts in their field provide information prior to tours to complete the experience. Bill Kelso, everyone’s favorite archeologist, says, “You can read about history in a book but you can walk thru it here.” To learn more contact us at 757- 259-9134 or visit us on the web: www.tv-hs.org or info@tv-hs.com. Lectures are open to the public. Call or visit the website for more information. Everyone is welcome.

Hey Neighbor!
WILLIAMSBURG YOUTH CHORALE OPEN FOR NEW MEMBERS FOR THE FALL SEASON

Ongoing
 The Chorale is open to treble voices, boys and girls, grades 3-12. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 pm at the Bruton Parish House choir room. Rehearsals begin on September 19. The Chorale is featured in the concerts of the Williamsburg Choral Guild and the Williamsburg Women’s Chorus. Contact Ann Porter, aportermusic0@gmail.com for information.

Hey Neighbor!
CELEBRATE RECOVERY

Ongoing
 A Christ-centered, confidential recovery group for anyone who has trouble dealing with life’s hurts, habits, or hang-ups. We meet on Tuesday evenings at 6 for dinner. Our meeting starts at 7. Williamsburg Community Chapel – 3899 John Tyler Highway, Williamsburg. For information, contact (Men) Gale King, rgking10@gmail.com; (Women) Sheryl Buckner, sbuckner88@gmail.com.

Hey Neighbor!
CHAIR YOGA AND MEDITATION CLASS FOR ADULTS 60 AND OVER

Ongoing
 Every Monday, 1-2 pm. The Peninsula Agency on Aging has partnered with Breathing Space, Inc., a non-profit promoting mindful movement, to offer a free weekly Chair Yoga class. People with chronic pain and challenges with balance are welcome. Caregivers and their loved ones are encouraged to attend! At the Messmer Community Services Center, 312 Waller Mill Rd., Williamsburg, (Off Bypass Rd.). No registration needed; just drop by. Call 757- 345-6277 or email Information2@paainc.org if you need more information.

Hey Neighbor!
THE WILLIAMSBURG WOMEN’S CHORUS OPEN FOR NEW MEMBERS FOR FALL SEASON

Ongoing
 The Chorus is open to women of all ages and voice parts. Rehearsals are held on Thursday Mornings at Bruton Parish House from 10 am-noon. We will be preparing for our Winter Concert which will be in December . Rehearsals for the fall season will begin in September . If interested, contact Beckie Davy at bdavy@brutonparish.org to set up an informal audition.

Hey Neighbor!
YJCW-NAACP MEETING

Ongoing
 The York-James City- Williamsburg NAACP meets the second Monday of each month (except July) at First Baptist Church, 727 Scotland Street, Williamsburg. Branch meetings begin at 6:30 pm.

For more information, contact NAACP@yjcwnaacp.org

Hey Neighbor!
WILLIAMSBURG YOUTH CHORALE OPEN FOR NEW MEMBERS FOR THE FALL SEASON.

Ongoing
 The Chorale is open to treble voices, boys and girls, grades 3-12. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 pm at the Bruton Parish House choir room. Rehearsals begin on September 19. The Chorale is featured in the concerts of the Williamsburg Choral Guild and the Williamsburg Women’s Chorus. Contact Ann Porter, aportermusic0@gmail.com for information.

Hey Neighbor!
ALL-AMERICAN TEA PARTIES

Ongoing
 Colonial Williamsburg invites guests of all ages to take time to go back with its All-American Tea Parties the first and third Saturday of each month until August 19. The events, hosted by Mrs. Campbell herself at Christiana Campbell’s Tavern, feature a special blend of tea and sippets of mid-day fare to be shared. Guests are encouraged to bring along their period-inspired dolls and partake in the midday festivities. All-American Tea Parties begin at 1 pm and last until 3 pm. Tickets are \$39.95 per person and are available at colonialwilliamsburg.com/tea-parties or by calling 855-296-6627, along with additional information, which is also available by following Colonial Williamsburg on Facebook and @colonialwmsburg on Twitter and Instagram

Hey Neighbor!
BIBLE STUDY

Ongoing
 There is a comprehensive and in depth bible study and question answering session held at the Williamsburg library in Norge every Monday night starting at 6 pm, with questions such as where did Cain get his wife and what was the mark placed upon him or what is the mark of the beast and his number 666 mean or what is the unforgivable sin. So, if your bible study is lacking the quality of study that you need to answer such questions, you are invited to join us. Contact 757-253-0172 or 757-604-6649

Hey Neighbor!
HOPE PREGNANCY CARE CENTER

Ongoing
 Hours: Monday- Thursday 10:30 am – 3 pm. Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm by appointment. All services are free and confidential- no insurance needed. We serve all women with unplanned and unexpected pregnancies. We also accept donations of new or gently used baby clothes up to 2T, as well as maternity clothes. Located at 1315 Jamestown Road, Suite 202. Phone: (757) 229-6472. Visit: www.hopewilliamsburg.org.

Hey Neighbor!
HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS IS LOOKING FOR FALL RELIEF VOLUNTEERS

Ongoing
 As we prepare our clients for colder weather, Housing Partnerships is in need of volunteers to help us provide vital home repair assistance. We are a local nonprofit that provides emergency home repair assistance to our neighbors throughout the Historic Triangle. Volunteers

Happy Holidays to You & Yours!



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Ladybugconsign@gmail.com

assist with roof and flooring repairs, painting/sealing, as well as other minor repair jobs. Experience is preferred but not needed. We welcome all skill levels and are looking for help through November. Scheduling is flexible. If interested, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Kat Shaub at volunteers@housingpartnerships.org or at (757) 221-0225.

Hey Neighbor! **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Ongoing
National Historical Park (consisting of the National Park Service at Historic Jamestowne and Yorktown Battlefield) continues its mission, preserving and protecting the interests of the public since 1930. The Park operates two visitor centers and several historic homes. However, like all national parks, Colonial relies heavily on volunteers. Perhaps a sign of the times, but volunteerism is not as prevalent as it once was. But, you have a chance to change that trend at Colonial. A need exists for regular volunteers four hours a day, one day a week, orienting visitors to the park and the area. We also need volunteers to conduct tours for the public and operate historic homes. There is something for everyone. So, consider becoming a steward of your wonderful national parks, and begin at Colonial National Historical Park, (Historic Jamestowne or Yorktown Battlefield) by contacting Mike Byrd at 757-898-2422. Come make a difference!

Hey Neighbor! **NORGE DEPOT MUSEUM**

Ongoing
At the JCC Library, 7770 Croaker Rd, Norge. The Depot is open from 10 to noon on Saturdays and 2 to 4 on Sundays. See railroad and local historical exhibits including artifacts, photographs, and clothing. A model railroad layout is running and a wooden railroad is available for children. Take their picture with our cabooses! Free, but donations appreciated. More details at norgedepot.org.

Hey Neighbor! **GROVE, VA FACEBOOK PAGE**

Ongoing
Come check out the new Grove Community Facebook Page. If you are part of our small part of Wil-

liamsburg or have an interest in the success of Grove, please join the group! This discussion page is a great spot to share information, work together to solve common issues and foster our sense of community. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/grovecommunity>

Hey Neighbor! **WRITERS CRITIQUE - WORD WEAVERS INTERNATIONAL**

Ongoing
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at the James City County Library – 7770 Croaker Road, Williamsburg. We provide a forum for writers to critique each other's work in a face-to-face format to learn about and improve our craft. Writers of all levels are welcome. While WWI is a Christian-based group, all writers are welcome. Contact Sheryl Buckner for more information, 757-342-1460.

Hey Neighbor! **SUBJECT: GOT QUESTIONS**

Ongoing
If you are not getting enough from your bible study or church group, then perhaps you should join us at the Williamsburg Regional library every Monday at 6 pm or contact us at 757-253-0172 or 757-604-6649, that's where you can get answers to such question as what really happen in the garden between Adam, Eve and the serpent (i.e., to say the Devil) or why isn't Cain listed in Adam's genealogy, or where did Cain get his wife, did Adam and Eve really die the day they ate the forbidden fruit, and what was that fruit, or what is the mark of the beast 666 and what does it mean and what about the unforgivable sin and have I committed it, so if you have questions such as these, then bring them with you when you come.

Hey Neighbor! **COLONIAL HERITAGE INVESTMENT CLUB**

Ongoing
Open to all residents of Williamsburg area. Meetings held on the third Thursday of each month from 9:30 - 11:30 am at Colonial Heritage Clubhouse, 6500 Arthur Hills Drive, Williamsburg. A wide range of investment topics are covered through presentations, discussions, and question-answer sessions, all with a common goal

of helping people learn more about the markets, investment alternatives, and managing their portfolios. The club does not invest money, buy securities, or permit sales presentations. Guests admitted free. Meeting dates listed at www.CHinvestmentclub.org.

Hey Neighbor! **WILLIAMSBURG AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FUND REQUEST**

Ongoing
The Williamsburg Aviation Scholarship Program was founded in 2013 and is based at Williamsburg high school students involved in Aviation. We fund the students in their efforts in getting their private pilot license. Our board of consists of 4 officers and 8 directors, all volunteers. No one on the board of directors receives any compensation for his/her efforts. Our first class of high schools students (2015-16) consisted of 5 students selected from the applications received (both male and female). For the 2016-17 class, we selected 6 high school students from the applications received (both male and female). Students must be enrolled in high school, at least 16 years old, and in 10th, 11th, or 12 grade. The students receive their ground school training, flight training, training kits, licensing fees, etc., at no charge to them or their family. All training is done through the Williamsburg Flight Center here at Williamsburg Jamestown Airport. To raise the money for training the students, our board of directors holds fund raisers and solicits donations. The average cost of funding each student is approximately \$12,000.00. We need your assistance in our efforts to raise money to fund the students. Please make a donation in any amount that you may choose. Your donation is tax deductible for income tax purposes. We will mail you a receipt for your donation so you will have a tax deduction when you file your income tax. To donate to this worthy cause, make your check payable to and mail to Williamsburg Aviation Scholarship Program, 102 Marclay Road, Williamsburg, Va. 23185.

Hey Neighbor! **HEAD START OPEN ENROLLMENT**

Ongoing

Williamsburg James City County Community Action Agency's Pre-school Program for Children ages 3 to 5. Serving income eligible families including children with special needs. Apply by phone 757- 229-6417 or in person at 312 Waller Mill Road, Williamsburg.

Hey Neighbor! **JAMES RIVER BAPTIST CHURCH SATURDAY EVENING SERVICE**

Ongoing
From Homily, discussion groups and light refreshments create a warm environment for Christian spiritual growth. Join us at 4931 Centerville Rd, Williamsburg. For more information, visit our Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/JamesRiverBaptistChurch. You can also visit the website at www.JamesRiverBaptist.org.

Hey Neighbor! **CALLING LOCAL WRITERS!**

2nd Monday each month
Are you a writer* who longs for a group to connect with? Word Weavers International, Inc., established in 1997, has a local group just for you, Word Weavers Williamsburg. Word Weavers is more than just a group of writers clamoring for praise. Word Weavers has a tried-and-true formula for sharpening the skills of its members, turning out published authors who go on to win acclaim and awards. If you are a writer who is not afraid to critique and be critiqued, join us and see what all the WW talk is about. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month from 5:30 - 7:30 pm in the Cosby Room at James City County Library - 7770 Croaker Road. For more information, go to: www.Word-Weavers.com or contact Sheryl: 757-342-1460. *While WWI, Inc. is a Christian-based group, all writers are welcomed.

Hey Neighbor! **CHRISTOPHER WREN ASSOCIATION COURSE, LECTURE, AND ACTIVITY REQUESTS**

Online and Ongoing
The Christopher Wren Association is a self-funded, volunteer-led organization dedicated to adults of all ages who seek opportunities for learning and enrichment of their lives. This fall, CWA has over 150

offerings, including a wide variety of courses, activities (including the Town & Gown Lecture series), one-time lectures, and special events. The semester is already underway, but students are able to submit new or additional requests for courses and activities throughout the fall. For information about becoming a member, contact us at www.wm.edu/cwa, or 757-221-1506

Hey Neighbor! **HISTORIC JAMESTOWNE SEEKING VOLUNTEERS**

Ongoing
Historic Jamestowne seeks volunteers to greet and engage guests as well provide accurate information about this premier historic site. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available, including Visitor Center greeters, Fort Site interpreters, and Docents in our archaeological museum, the Archaearium. Volunteer shifts are available Monday through Sunday, 9:30 am – 1 pm and 1 – 4:30 pm. Training sessions will be held in the Spring and Fall. If you are interested in volunteering at Historic Jamestowne, please contact Kelly Williams at kwilliams@preservationvirginia.org.

Hey Neighbor! **YOGA AND MEDITATION CLASS FOR ADULTS 60 AND OVER**

Ongoing
Every Thursday, 1 – 2 pm. The Peninsula Agency on Aging has partnered with Breathing Space, Inc., a non-profit promoting mindful movement, to offer a free weekly Chair Yoga class. People with chronic pain and challenges with balance are welcome. Caregivers and their loved ones are encouraged to attend! This program enables family caregivers to participate in a yoga class while their loved ones participate in gentle chair yoga at the same time. At the Messmer Community Services Center, 312 Waller Mill Rd., Williamsburg, (Off Bypass Rd.) in Room 801. No registration needed; just drop by. Call 757-345-6277 or email Information2@paainc.org if you need more information.

Hey Neighbor! **BIRD WALKS AT NEW QUARTER PARK**

Ongoing

2nd and 4th Saturdays, The Williamsburg Bird Club leads bird walks at New Quarter Park every month on the second Saturday from 8 - 10 am and on the fourth Saturday from 7 - 9 am. Join them for upcoming walks to observe ducks, hawks, and eagles as well as songbirds that live in the area year round and those that are migrating in, out, or through the area. New Quarter Park is located at 1000 Lakeshead Dr. in Williamsburg near the Queens Lake neighborhood. Exit the Colonial Parkway at the Queens Lake and turn right. Travel a short distance to Lakeshead Drive and follow the signs to the park.

Hey Neighbor! **BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP**

Ongoing
The Williamsburg/Newport News Brain Injury Support Group invites all area brain injury survivors and their families to join them for discussion, socialization, support, information, friendship, and encouragement. The Support Group meets twice each month on first and third Thursdays. The first Thursday meeting is held at Riverside Doctors' Hospital Williamsburg from 3 – 4:30 pm and the third Thursday meeting is held at The Denbigh House, 12725 McManus Boulevard, Suite 2E, Newport News, from 5:30 - 7:00 pm. For more information, contact Sara Lewis at slewis@cox.net or 757-784-0344 or Lisa Kavitz at lisa@kavitz.com or 757-784-0952.

Hey Neighbor! **GROVE COMMUNITY GARDEN CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Ongoing
Located behind the James River Elementary School, Grove Community Garden is a quarter-acre plot growing fruits and vegetables for the families in the Grove Community. The Garden has communal beds and family beds for growing and recently became a 501c3 non-profit organization. We would welcome any individuals who would assist with a mower or rototiller, and ongoing garden maintenance. Please contact Rob Till, garden manager, at 757-332-3361 or email

grove.va.garden@gmail.com .

Hey Neighbor! **MEETINGS - COLONIAL NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB**

Ongoing, first Monday
We meet the first Monday of every month at the James City Library on Croaker Road at 6:30 pm. The club is one of the few photography clubs in the area and has been in existence for over eight years. We have about 60 members with skill levels ranging from novice to nationally recognized. The club web site is www.cnpcva.org

Hey Neighbor! **WILLIAMSBURG RESTORE EXPANDS FACILITY AND NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Ongoing
The Habitat for Humanity ReStore needs your help! We are looking for volunteers who would like to help fulfill Habitat for Humanity's mission of providing affordable housing for local families in need. We want you to be part of the ReStore family. 100% of the proceeds from the ReStore go towards building homes in your community. We need volunteers to help assist on the sales floor, processing donations, repairing furniture, processing recyclable materials, and customer service. Any amount of time you can volunteer at the ReStore is a huge help. Please contact Kristin or Diane at 757-603-6895 X5662.

Hey Neighbor! **WILLIAMSBURG MOOSE LODGE SEEKS NEW MEMBERS**

Ongoing
We are a charitable group of men and women that "do good" for neighborhood causes (as well as for MooseHeart and MooseHaven). Just this past year, at the local level, we have donated to Beyond Boobs, A Gift from Ben, all three local Fire Departments, Hospice House, Historic Triangle, and others. We also host many events at our lodge that donate to other causes and charities. Contact us for more information: Joe Roney, administrator (757) 565-5149 or Williamsburg Moose Lodge #757 at 757-565-9807 Moose757@cox.net

Hey Neighbor! **CALL FOR THEATRICAL VOLUNTEERS**

Ongoing
Williamsburg Players Theater is looking for volunteers to help in all areas of the theater. There are so many ways to get involved! No experience necessary. Please go to Williamsburgplayers.org/volunteers/ for more details. Come have some fun!

Hey Neighbor! **F.R.E.E. OF WILLIAMSBURG**

Ongoing
F.R.E.E. is a non-profit that gifts mobility related equipment to adults who are uninsured or under insured and have no other means of obtaining needed mobility equipment such as canes, walkers, bed rails, hoier lifts, wheelchairs and power scooters. Equipment gifted also includes bathroom transfer aids such as shower chairs, tub transfer benches and bedside commodes. If you or someone you know is in need of equipment or would like to make a donation, call 757-707-4741, visit our website www.free-foundation.org, or find us on Facebook.

Hey Neighbor! **ABUNDANT LIFE GROUPS MEETINGS**

Ongoing
Are you a vegetarian, vegan, raw food or just curious? Join us to taste new recipes and foods, get educated and share ideas around plant based living for a healthier you! You don't have to be plant based to join the fun. 1st Sunday of each month at 7 pm. Email AbundantLifeGroups@gmail.com for more information.

Hey Neighbor! **JAMES CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH**

Ongoing
"A Door of Hope" James City Community Church is located at 4550 Old News Rd., Williamsburg. Services: 9 am (Nursery provided) and 10:30 am (Nursery and Children Classes). Visit our website at www.jccchurch.com. Come join us and make yourself at home, and feel free to participate as much or as little as you feel comfortable. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, we're glad you're here.

Hey Neighbor! **MULTI-FUNDED NON-PROFIT AGENCY SEEKING TO FILL DIRECTOR OF**

FINANCE POSITION

Ongoing

Applicant must have financial experience working in a non-profit multi-grant environment and meet the following requirements: (1) Supervise financial and human resources staff. (2) Strong experience in developing and managing budgets annually. (3) Proficiency in the use of QuickBooks (QB) for Non-Profit Organizations. (4) Ability to explain how transactions would be distributed among different grants. (5) Proficient use of Microsoft Word and Excel to produce financial reports utilizing downloads from QB. (6) Ability to work with spread sheets. (7) Ability to communicate effectively financial matters with staff, board members, grantors and others. Prior experience working with Federal, State and local grantor agencies is a plus. Experienced with grant audits. Requirements – BS degree and/or MBA in accounting/business with at least 5 years working in a multi-funded non-profit financial office. EOE. Send resume to – Attn: Human Resource Department Williamsburg-James City County, Community Action Agency, 312 Waller Mill Road, Suite 405, Williamsburg, VA 23185. 757-229-9332. Salary Range – \$55,000 to \$60,000.

Hey Neighbor! VOICES OF CHANGE TOASTMASTERS CLUB

Ongoing

Develop your leadership and public speaking skills in a safe, friendly environment with the Voices of Change Toastmasters Club of Williamsburg. Visitors are welcome; this is an open club. We meet every Friday at 12:05-1:05 pm in the second floor conference room at EVB (formerly Virginia Company Bank), 1430 High Street, Williamsburg. For more information, visit www.voicesofchange.toastmastersclubs.org or www.facebook.com/VoicesofChangeWilliamsburg.

Hey Neighbor! BIBLE STUDY AND WORSHIP

Ongoing

Informal, interactive Bible study and Holy Communion worship each Wednesday evening, 6:30 pm, at St. Stephen Lutheran Church, 612 Jamestown Road, right across from the campus of the College of

William and Mary.

Hey Neighbor! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: WILLIAMSBURG AREA FAITH IN ACTION

Ongoing

Faith In Action relies on volunteers to transport care receivers to doctor's appointments, the grocery store, bank, pharmacy, etc. Right now, the demand for transportation is increasing. Faith in Action offers a flexible schedule for its volunteers. "Our organization was built on the idea of people helping people," Smith said. "If you have a few hours to dedicate to someone who may just need an arm to lean on to get to a doctor's appointment, then we have a spot for you. "If you are interested in volunteering, call the Williamsburg Faith In Action offices at 757-258-5890.

Hey Neighbor! VIRGINIA AERONAUTICAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY (VAHS)

Ongoing

Every third Wednesday of the month, the Williamsburg chapter of the parent VAHS headquartered at the Richmond Airport Aviation Museum meets with aviation related speakers, programs and field trips. Everyone with an interest in aviation is encouraged to attend meetings in the second floor conference room of the Williamsburg-Jamestown Airport terminal building. Come for the camaraderie and learning experience, which comes with expanding your interest in aviation – past, present and future. Point of contact: 757-258-0376

Hey Neighbor! VOICES OF WILLIAMSBURG

Ongoing

Do you want to end your fear of public speaking? Develop communication and leadership skills? Join Toastmasters in a caring and supportive environment. On Marvelous Mondays: Get a Powerful start to your week! Time: 7 am at the James City Community Center, Longhill Road. On Wonderful Wednesdays: meet, mat, and speak time at 7 pm (4th Wednesday of each month). Location: Anna's Brick Oven, 2021 Richmond Road. Contact John Steinbach at 757-897-6819 or <http://www.voicesofw.toastmastersclubs.org>

Hey Neighbor! BRUTON PARISH SHOP CALLS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Ongoing

We are the Bruton Parish shop located in the Parish House of Bruton Parish Church on Duke of Gloucester St. We have been here since 1995 and are a 501©3 store. We give all of our net proceeds to the Outreach and Mission ministries of the church. Our sales people are volunteers comprised of parishioners of Bruton Parish and other churches in the area. It is not a necessity to be a church member but just a believer in our mission. All ages are welcome from teenagers to mature adults. Much of the money raised by the shop is used in Williamsburg and the surrounding areas. We need more men and women to staff our shop. We are open 7 days a week 7 hours a day except Sunday, when we are open for 4 hours in the afternoon. Call Diane Koun 757-220-1489.

Hey Neighbor! ST. MARTINS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ongoing

1333 Jamestown Rd. Williamsburg, 757-229-1111. 10 am Sunday school; 8 am, 9:15 am, 11 am worship on Sunday, Noon Healing, worship on Wednesday; 5 pm Taize Service on Saturday. Visit www.st-martinswmbg.org.

Hey Neighbor! CALL FOR MUSICIANS

Ongoing

Do you play a musical instrument? Have you always wanted to be a part of a theatre's live orchestra? The Williamsburg Players, a 58 years-old, all volunteer, 501-C3 IRS non-profit community theatre, is looking for musicians to help bring the joy of musical theater to the area. Especially needed are rhythm section players such as keyboards, guitar, bass guitar, drums, and percussion. You should be able to read music. Email Mike McCoy at wmmccoy01@cox.net, or call and leave a message at 757-229-1679.

Hey Neighbor! MEETINGS - JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Ongoing, Second Sunday

The Jane Austen Society North

America Southeastern VA Region meets on the second Sunday of every month at the Schell Room, Williamsburg Regional Library (515 Scotland St.) at 2 pm. Donations accepted to help defray cost of meeting room. All are welcome to attend. For more information, visit our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/JASNASoutheasternVa>. For membership information visit the national site at www.JASNA.org.

Hey Neighbor! MEETINGS – REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE

Ongoing

The City of Williamsburg Republican Committee meets at the Williamsburg Regional Library the second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. Come and join other city residents who care about the future of their country. For more information please email rpc.lbg@gmail.com.

Hey Neighbor! MEETINGS – THE COLONIAL AREA REPUBLICAN MEN'S ASSOCIATION (CARMA)

Ongoing

CARMA meets on the third Thursday of each month at Giuseppe's Restaurant at 11:30 am. For more information, please go to their website at: www.carmagop.com.

Hey Neighbor! MEETINGS - JCC REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE

Ongoing

The James City County Republican Committee meets in the auditorium of the James City County Human Services Center located at 5249 Olde Towne Road. Monthly meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7 pm. Meetings are open to all who are interested in making a difference in our community and country. For information, please visit www.jccrc.org or email JCCRepublicanCommittee@gmail.com

Hey Neighbor! MEETINGS - HISTORIC TRIANGLE REPUBLICAN WOMEN (HTRW)

Ongoing

Location: Thomas Nelson Community College, President's Board Room at Thomas Nelson Community College (3rd Floor). Time: second Thursday of the month at 7

pm. HTRW is the only local Republican Women's Club that meets evenings. For more information please visit our web site: <http://www.htrwc.org> or look for us on Facebook.

Hey Neighbor! **MESSY CHURCH**

Ongoing

Are you looking for an innovative worship time that is fun, interactive, reflective, musical, creative, delicious and prayerful? Then come to Williamsburg United Methodist Church the second Tuesday of every month from 5:30-7:30 pm for Messy Church! Each month we celebrate a different theme. This experience is called Messy Church because we will be learning about God through active means as well as Bible teaching. Snacks, crafts, games, music and fun, followed by dinner are all a part of worshipping God together. Messy Church is free and for people of all ages, all denominations, and all abilities. For further information, go to www.williamsburgumc.org or call 757-229-1771 and ask for Cindy, Kay or Andy. Williamsburg United Methodist Church is located at 500 Jamestown Rd across from the college in Williamsburg.

Hey Neighbor! **COLONIAL CHURCH** **NOW MEETING**

Ongoing

Join Pastor Dennis Fox and members of the Colonial Independent Baptist Church as they meet weekly on Sundays for worship at 10:30 am in the Potomac Room of the Holiday Inn, 515 Bypass Road, Williamsburg. The hour-long service includes prayer, hymn singing, and preaching from the KJV. Bible study is held Wednesday eve at 7 pm at 3695 Bridgewater Drive, Williamsburg. For more information, call 757-585-7181 or visit ColonialIBC.org. All are welcome.

Hey Neighbor! **WCAC ART SHOWS AND GALA**

Ongoing

Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center's inaugural regional juried show featuring a diverse collection of 2-D and 3-D art, is now underway through Nov. 9. Next up - Small Works & Holiday Show, featuring small and holiday-

themed art, from Nov. 14-Dec. 22. November 12 - Fall Gala featuring an auction of high-end items and entertainment by the Three Jolly Coachmen. Admission \$75 per person - contact Janis Wood, WCAC President, at 757-220-2217 or jleewoodart21@msn.com, or visit www.visitWCAC.org.

Hey Neighbor! **FREE ENERGY SERVICES TO HELP REDUCE YOUR ELECTRIC BILL.**

Ongoing

Pre-qualification is required. For more information, contact the Williamsburg-James City County Community Action Agency at 757-229-9389 or visit our Website www.wjcc-caa.org to download an application.

Hey Neighbor! **PROJECT DISCOVERY PROGRAM**

Ongoing

Williamsburg-James City County Community Action Agency is currently accepting applications for the 2017-2018 Project Discovery Program. This program is offered at W-JCC Middle & High Schools. To register, visit www.projectdiscovery.org. For more information about this program, please contact our office at 757-229-9332.

Hey Neighbor! **REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEER TAX PREPARERS**

Ongoing

Interested in helping low to moderate-income taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their tax returns? Please consider volunteering one afternoon per week with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program during the coming tax season. VITA is a non-profit, volunteer run program supported by the Internal Revenue Service and Colonial Williamsburg locally. If you are comfortable preparing your own tax return and have basic computer skills, you have the basic qualifications. VITA will train you to complete tax returns for our clients. We will provide tax return preparation and e-filing services in the Bruton Heights building on the campus of Colonial Williamsburg February 1 through April 14. Please contact Al Cummins at 757-259-0739 or at almarlene10@cox.net.



Jacki G. Photography

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WILLIAMSBURG'S Next Door Neighbors

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home

PUBLISHED BY COLLINS GROUP, LLC

2018 PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

JANUARY ISSUE

Our Volunteers

Making our community better through volunteerism

- In Home Date: December 28, 2017
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Dec. 12th

FEBRUARY ISSUE

Got Game?

Outstanding high school athletes

- In Home Date: January 25, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Jan. 9th

MARCH ISSUE

Our Diverse Community

Focus on how diversity makes our community better

- In Home Date: February 22, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Feb. 6th

APRIL ISSUE

Antique Automobiles

Nostalgia for antique autos

- In Home Date: March 29, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Mar. 13th

MAY ISSUE

The Way We Were

Life in Williamsburg before the growth in recent years

- In Home Date: April 26, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Apr. 10th

JUNE ISSUE

Games We Play

Corn Hole, Bridge, Bingo, Poker, Geo Caching. etc.

- In Home Date: May 24, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, May 8th

JULY ISSUE

Our Military

Life in and after the armed services

- In Home Date: June 28, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, June 12th

AUGUST ISSUE

Hidden Williamsburg

People working behind the scenes

- In Home Date: July 26, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, July 10th

SEPTEMBER ISSUE

Art in Williamsburg

A look at the arts in our community.

- In Home Date: August 30, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Aug. 14th

OCTOBER ISSUE

Health

Annual health issue

- In Home Date: September 27, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Sept. 11th

NOVEMBER ISSUE

Thankful

The gratitude issue

- In Home Date: October 25, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Oct. 9th

DECEMBER ISSUE

Williamsburg Holidays

Holiday guide for locals

- In Home Date: December 6, 2018
- Advertising Deadline: Tues, Nov. 20th

If you know of someone interesting that you think we should interview in 2018, email our Editor, Greg Lilly. Remember, we work about 2 months ahead on each issue.

greglilly@cox.net

Questions about Next Door Neighbors?

Meredith Collins, Publisher.
meredith@williamsburgneighbors.com
(757) 560-3235

WilliamsburgNeighbors.com

Williamsburg's
IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
photo challenge

HUGHES TREE FARM

Find the 12 differences
between the original
photograph (top) and
the altered photograph
(bottom).

Enjoy!



INTERMEDIATE

**Look for the answers
in the next issue of
Next Door Neighbors**

November 2017
In the Neighborhood
Photo Challenge





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