

May 2010

WILLIAMSBURG'S

# Next Door Neighbors®

VOL. 4, ISSUE 5

PRICELESS

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home

## Outdoor Enthusiasts

**Sven Dan Berg, Jr.**  
Williamsburg Inn  
Lawn Bowling Club



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I have always enjoyed the outdoors. As a kid, I would just as soon be climbing a tree or playing another game of "Kick the Can" than just about anything else. On weekends, I played outside until the street lights came on and I had to go inside. The next day I'd go outside for most of the day again.



Meredith Collins, Publisher

As an adult, I still enjoy being outdoors but I have long since given up climbing trees. With the winter and early spring weather we have had, I expect almost everyone is now an "outdoor enthusiast". I feel certain the recent weeks of sunshine are much appreciated by everyone. For some, however, the good weather means not only that they can get outside more, but that they can now also fully pursue their outside interests with vigor...and in comfort.

In this issue, we introduce you to some of your neighbors with a variety of outdoor interests - from those that involve athleticism and dedicated training to others that require a knowledge of the area's resources and an adventurous attitude. We've tried to bring you stories about some of your neighbors who are trying new things or moving forward with outdoor interests that have kept them engaged for many years. I hope this issue inspires you to get outside and get busy doing whatever you enjoy! NDN

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Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Sven Dan Berg, Jr. Invites You To A Game of

# Lawn Bowling

By Brandy Centolanza

At 73, Sven Dan Berg, Jr. is more active than ever thanks to participation in the Williamsburg Inn Lawn Bowling Club, and he wouldn't have it any other way.

Sven, who grew up in Gloucester, has been participating in the sport of lawn bowling for more than 40 years, and has been to the championships of the U.S. Lawn Bowls Association four times.

"I just think it is a wonderful sport," he says. "I like the camaraderie. It's a very social game. It's a lot of fun. I think it is one of the best kept secrets in Williamsburg."

The club is the only one of its kind in Vir-

ginia. Sven started to lawn bowl in 1958 shortly after being hired as a craftsman in Colonial Williamsburg, specializing in metals. A Canadian named Raymond Townsend introduced the employees to lawn bowling, an English sport that was once popular with the original Williamsburg Colonists as well as the settlers at Jamestown. The sport was played on the green next to Chowning's Tavern before moving to the lawn at the Williamsburg Inn about ten years later. (The lawn at the tavern no longer exists.)

The object of the game is to roll one's ball closest to a smaller ball called a jack. Lawn

bowling can be played singly, in pairs, or in groups of up to four people.

"It is a game that can be played by anybody, but to be good at it, it takes lots of practice," Sven explains. "It does not require a lot of strength, but rather a lot of concentration. Focus is very critical. I like to call it chess on grass."

Ann Wuest, the current president of the local club, adds: "It is a game for all ages and genders, a gentle game, full of deliberation. While lawn bowling has been around for generations, it's a game where an 85-year-old can beat a 20-year-old, women can beat men, and there is no

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discrimination between age, size or gender. It is a game in which skill and finesse are regularly honored, while strength and power are almost irrelevant.”

Ann says Sven is an important asset to the club.

“He is such an inspiration,” Ann says. “He is a gentleman on the green as well as off the green. We’re really lucky to have Sven playing in our club. He’s been playing for many years and doesn’t seem to be slowing down.”

Sven did not become serious about the sport until his retirement from Colonial Williamsburg 18 years ago. Now, he plays almost daily, and travels nationwide to compete. He has placed second two of the four times he’s participated in the U.S. championships. Sven also attends the national open of the U.S. Lawn Bowls Association every year where he has played against people from all over the world, including England, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and China.

The Williamsburg Inn Lawn Bowling Club is in the Northeast Division, one of seven divisions in the country. The next closest groups are in Delaware and North Carolina. The 60 members from Williamsburg often play against these groups in tournaments held during the season, which runs from April through November. Sven, who was president of the club from 1994 until 1996, still has vivid memories from the games he played in Pennsylvania in 1998 which led up to his first participation in the U.S. championships. He had to play and beat a friend from a club in Delaware, not once but twice, in order to advance.

“After I won, I was just so excited,” he says with deep emotion. “I was so excited, I was shaking and couldn’t even drive.”

Sven’s goal is to make it to the championships again this year. The divisional competition will take place in August, and one of the current national Silver singles champions, Patrick Duffy, will participate. Sven hopes to have a shot at playing against Patrick, who is roughly Sven’s junior by four decades.

When the weather is bad, Sven practices in an upstairs hallway. But, during lawn bowling season, he is often out on the green at the inn. There is someone on the lawn every afternoon to introduce new people to the sport, or to play with anyone who happens to show up.

“I like to ride my bike over and bowl,” Sven says.

Sven indeed does prefer to spend his time outdoors. As a child, he often spent time on the water, sailing with his father, Sven Sr., a naval architect who emigrated from Denmark. Today, Sven and his wife, Susan, like to walk, bike, garden, sail, and camp. The couple take their camper to Key West, FL each January, and Sven also travels south annually for the open of the southeast division of the U.S. Lawn Bowls Association. Susan is also a member of the Williamsburg Inn Lawn Bowling Club and serves on its board. Sven and Susan won the mixed pairs tournament last year.

“He wins regularly so I always pick him as my partner,” Susan jokes. Like her husband, Susan enjoys the sport.

“It’s enjoyable. It’s healthy. It’s social. It’s a little competitive,” she says. “Once people discover it, they really like it.”

Sven, for one, is definitely happy to have found his passion for lawn bowling.

“There really is so much you can get from it,” he says. “At my age, it gives me such a lift, and is something that makes me feel good. There is so much to be benefited from playing it.” NDN

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JOHN CARNIFAX

Finding Ways for Us to Enjoy

# The Great Outdoors

By Erin Zagursky

If you bike the trails of Freedom Park or work out in the James City/Williamsburg Community Center, you may find John Carnifax on a trail or an exercise machine near you. Because, for John, recreation isn't just a job, it's a way of life.

"I try to be somebody who doesn't just sit behind a desk," he said. "I try to get out and help and do what I can. I try to lead by example, and I try to utilize our facilities. I believe in getting outdoors and trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle that includes



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regular exercise.”

John, director of James City County Parks and Recreation, is responsible for the administration and oversight of the division, which includes numerous facilities, programs and open spaces. He was appointed to the position in February 2010 after serving as the division’s acting director for several months.

A native of Chesterfield County, VA, John has long enjoyed the outdoors. As a young adult, he brought that enjoyment to Old Dominion University where he channeled it into a degree in Recreation. Prior to moving to James City County, John spent 14 years serving as the director of parks, recreation, buildings and grounds in Louisa County, VA.

“I’ve always participated in sports and outdoor activities, so it was nice to find a career I was always passionate about,” he said.

John has served the James City County Park and Recreation Division since 1997 in positions including acting director, deputy director and superintendent of parks. During his more than dozen years with the division, he’s helped develop the Chickahominy Riverfront Park, Freedom Park, and the Warhill Sports Complex. In 2009, he also updated the county’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and helped build the ‘My Place’ playground at the community center with help of other graduates of the Leadership Historic Triangle program.

Although his job naturally calls for a love of the outdoors, it also demands the ability to be able to work with multiple groups of people. John regularly interacts with county administrators, elected officials, board members, community members and tourists.

“It’s a people job,” he said. “It’s nice when you can bring a group of people together and address an issue and do good things for the community.” He said that he enjoys meeting with the many groups that the division partners with and their volunteers.

“They are all very enthusiastic about whatever their passion is,” he said, adding that his job sometimes is to harness that passion and get them to understand the bigger picture, which includes the needs of other groups.

“We have to accommodate both the mountain bikers and historical folks over at Freedom Park,” he said. “To bring them together is both a challenge and reward.”

In any situation where he is dealing with people or groups who may not understand or who may be in opposition to something the division is doing, John said he tries to find a “win-win” solution.

“I try to understand the other person’s point of view and where they’re coming from,” he said. “If my goal is to get a win-win, part of that is getting them to understand why we’re doing something the way we are and how we make the two fit together to reach a common goal. That’s always rewarding when you can do it. We don’t always get the opportunity to do that but when that presents itself, that’s a success in itself.”

In order to improve communication between the division and all those they serve, the division is creating a monthly newsletter and new

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“customer focus teams” this year. Those teams, which were John’s brainchild, will meet with several large user groups on a regular basis to educate them on the division’s efforts and to get feedback.

“Our ultimate goal is to operate all of these programs and facilities as efficiently as possible,” he said. “Because so many volunteers are involved in [these] programs, it’s important that we come together and maximize the usage of our resources and [also] theirs. Especially as the tax dollars are diminishing, it’s more important than ever to say, ‘We have limited resources, how do we use them?’ ”

Looking forward, John is excited about developing new programs, partnerships and the development of the new riverfront properties. He also hopes to lead the division in adequately maintaining what it currently has.

“It’s going to be a challenge because it’s not as glamorous to spend money on maintenance and repairs as it is to build new,” he said. Though not glamorous, maintenance is vital – just as parks and recreation are vital to a community.

“I think (parks and recreation) is one of the county services that really adds to the value of a community,” he said. “Sometimes it’s hard to put a dollar value with it, but I think it does.”

John, who has two children, said that many people are concerned today that kids aren’t getting outside as much as they used to.

“I think that’s going to be a push for us over the next few years - to get our kids outdoors, whether it’s biking, whether it’s walking, or swimming, it doesn’t matter as long as they’re outside enjoying nature,” he said. “We’re just a part of that whole process. It takes parents to get kids out there and the community to support acquiring the land and developing it. It’s a team effort.”

It’s an effort worth pursuing, John believes, not only for its health benefits, but because it’s important for people to try new things.

“I’ve done everything from skydiving to scuba diving and everything in between, and I’ve always found great joy in trying something that I’ve never done before,” he said. “I think people get in a routine of doing just one thing or two things, and I think it’s important for people to challenge themselves. “

John encourages the local community to get their kids to try something new via the parks and recreation division, whether it be kayaking, hiking, or taking a class.

“Just getting out of your normal routine or comfort zone is definitely one of those things that strengthens us as individuals, to overcome a fear or try something new,” he said. “And I think we have those opportunities locally. I think that’s why we’re here – to give people opportunities to participate in activities they routinely enjoy as well as try something new.” NDN

For more information on opportunities available through James City County Parks and Recreation, visit: [www.jccgov.com/recreation/index.html](http://www.jccgov.com/recreation/index.html).



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# The Wonderful Challenge of Golf

WAYNE NOOE,  
KINGSMILL RESORT & SPA

*By Ryan Jones*

*I*t's been said that golf is a game that can't be won - only played.

Wayne Nooe, Vice President of Golf Operations at Kingsmill Resort and Spa, takes time to share his sentiments on the popular outdoor pastime as he stops by the golf club for a short break from his daily rounds. Inside the clubhouse lobby, pictures of LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) tournament winners adorn the walls, flanked by sweeping views of the Plantation Course outside. A painting of Kingsmill's legendary Hole #17 sits carefully perched on the mantle above a cozy-looking fireplace, inviting visitors in for a closer look.

"To me, golf is a never-ending challenge," Wayne remarks, settling into his seat. "You can play the same course every day, and every day

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it's different. You get funny bounces, the wind affects the ball - there's always a challenge. If you play poorly, you come back because you know you can play better. If you play great, you come back because you think you have it licked - then you realize you don't. It's almost an endless battle to be satisfied with it."

Wayne explains why the painting of the popular River Course's 17th hole is given such a prominent place in the clubhouse lobby. For over twenty years, number 17 was the traditional hang-out for locals who came to watch the annual PGA and LPGA tournaments that were hosted by the resort. "It was a great gathering spot for locals who knew the course," he says. "It had one of the best vistas because you could see multiple holes and not have to move around." Having served for the past six years as director for the LPGA event, Wayne has developed an appreciation for the flavor such local traditions bring to the sport.

"When the LPGA came to Williamsburg in 2003, it was definitely a step up compared to a lot of other events," he remembers. "We really strived to improve and do something different each year. It wasn't always something huge, but we always tried to take the opportunity to be a little better. I think we were successful with that."

Wayne remembers one particular event that was a big hit with those who played in the tournament.

"On the LPGA tour, the player - caddie relationship was more personal than on the PGA circuit, so if you took really good care of the caddies, you were taking really good care of the players," he explains. With this in mind, Wayne decided to host a 9 hole par 3 caddie tournament, where the pros would switch roles and carry the clubs for their caddies. The event evolved into a fun tradition for the LPGA players, complete with a scoreboard, awards, cookout, and a \$10,000 hole in one contest.

When the event was over, Wayne wondered what they could do to make the tradition better. The next year, each caddie received a sleeve of golf balls and a hat before the Caddie Tournament began. "We got the brightest hats we could find," says Wayne, chuckling at the memory. "Even though we provided a selection of hats, it seemed like the orange, green, and floral ones always went first - the caddies would try to pick the ugliest ones."

With traditions like these mingling with the hard work and dedication of over 1,400 volunteers and Kingsmill employees, the LPGA tournament evolved into a stellar event. "When you put it all together, it really added up to something special," says Wayne. "The players recognized that and voted it the best overall event on the LPGA tour."

Though disappointed that the tradition of LPGA tournament play has been interrupted at the resort this year, Wayne remains optimistic that pro-golf will return to the Williamsburg area. "We have put a lot of legwork into letting the LPGA know that we would like to host another event," he says. "I think people took a lot of pride in having a large sporting event in the area."

Wayne's love of golf and his success in hosting such high profile golfing events wasn't something he could have predicted. In fact, as a youngster growing up in a small North Carolina town, Wayne stumbled onto the sport almost by accident.

# Love • Money • Control



Carrie Rae Wisner

## Answers from your Estate Planning Attorneys at Ferris & Associates, P.C.

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When it comes to estate planning, there are many different plans a person could consider to transfer assets to his or her loved ones at death. Unfortunately, rather than do planning of their own, more than half of the population has chosen the default state mandated plan, called the law of intestacy. Intestacy is a statutory plan whereby the state determines who your beneficiaries will be and how they will receive your assets at your death. When presented with this information, we find people quickly become interested in an alternative, and for many people, that alternative is a Last Will and Testament.

A Last Will and Testament (a Will) is a document that names, among other things, an Executor (often referred to as a personal representative). An Executor is a person who will be responsible for the administration of a deceased individual's estate; so choosing your personal representative is an extremely important decision. When choosing an Executor, consider the following factors: the individual's age, maturity and responsibility, and residency.

In addition to an Executor, a properly drafted Will should also clearly name beneficiaries and what each beneficiary is to receive. These beneficiaries will be the people or organizations that you have chosen, rather than the default beneficiaries the state has already chosen for you. The Commonwealth of Virginia is not interested in determining which of your family members is your favorite or whether you would have preferred to leave everything to a charity or non family member at your death.

Once an individual with a Will dies, that Will is then offered to the court for Probate. Probate literally means "to prove the Will" but it has come to be known as the entire system of transferring

assets from a decedent to his/her beneficiaries. Once a Will is probated, it is put on public record and now serves as direction to the Executor for distributing your assets. Throughout the Probate process, your Executor will be responsible for a number of court filings and procedures which may include: Probate Information Form, List of Heirs, Probate Tax Return, Inventory, Notice(s), Affidavit(s), Accounting(s), and Debts and Demands Hearings.

Each of these must be approved by the Commissioner of Accounts, a privately practicing attorney in each jurisdiction that serves as an intermediary between Executors and the Probate Court. Failure to comply fully with the requirements could render the Executor personally liable for his or her actions or inactions. Only after all requirements are met is the Executor discharged of responsibility and the bond and/or surety is released.

For many, the Probate process can be very simple and straightforward, particularly in situations involving a husband and wife that owned everything in jointly or a single individual with minimal assets using beneficiary designations. For others, though, this process can be daunting and the need for legal or professional representation becomes vitally important.

For those seeking to avoid the Probate process or the use of a Will-based estate plan, alternatives are available, such as Revocable Living Trust. If you would like to learn more about how you can protect yourself and your loved ones by using a Will-based Estate Plan or some other type of plan, please consider signing up for one of our no-cost educational workshops held in the boardroom of our law office. See our website, [www.ferrisandassociates.com](http://www.ferrisandassociates.com), for the dates and times.

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“There was a brand called Putt-Putt that was the original miniature golf,” Wayne remembers. “It was founded and developed in Fayetteville, NC. They had this weekly TV series that featured a Putt-Putt tournament where they would film a match and turn it into a thirty-minute show.”

Having only three TV stations to choose from, Wayne watched the tournaments while he waited for his mother to cook dinner. His boredom slowly turned into interest as he followed the matches each week. After awhile, Wayne grew restless with being a spectator, and began to wonder how it would feel to pick up a club and play a match or two.

“One of the towns next to ours had a Putt-Putt golf course, so every time we went by there, I would try to get my dad to stop,” says Wayne. “Dad didn’t know anything about golf, and neither did I. He finally stopped, probably just to get me to stop asking. He paid the dollar, and I got to play a game of Putt-Putt - I just fell in love with the concept.”

Wayne enjoyed developing his skills on the Putt-Putt course, and was later encouraged by friends to continue his progression in the sport by joining the high school golf team. He smiles as he remembers being supported by parents who knew little about golfing. “I convinced them to buy me a set of clubs for my birthday one year,” he remembers. “They bought me the set of clubs, but didn’t get me a bag to put them in. It was almost a comedy how I got into golf.”

After being involved with the sport as a player and businessman for the past three decades, it is obvious that Wayne still loves being around the game. As he prepares to leave the clubhouse and finish up with his duties at the resort, he pauses to reflect on who he would pick to accompany him if he were given the chance to play a round of golf not limited by time or circumstance. “I’d have to create a foursome,” he says with a smile.

His first choice is Don Padgett, a friend and fellow-golfer who passed away a few years ago. “He was kind of my mentor - a good man who taught me a lot,” Wayne reminisces. “He was my best friend as well as my boss.” Padgett was well-known in the golf community for revitalizing the Pinehurst Golf Resort in North Carolina where Wayne worked in the early 1980’s.

His second choice is Bobby Jones - a man Wayne describes as a gentleman’s gentleman. Among other things, Bobby Jones was known for his impeccable honesty on the course. During the 1925 U.S. Open, he called a stroke on himself for slightly moving the ball while setting up for a shot. Since no one but Jones saw the ball move, the decision to call the stroke was left to him. Jones called the penalty on himself and lost the match by one stroke.

“You may as well praise a man for not robbing a bank,” he was later quoted as saying.

For the final slot in Wayne’s foursome, a multitude of players come to mind as potential candidates - Tiger Woods, Arnold Palmer, Greg Norman, and Jack Nicklaus are a just a few of the legends who have mastered the game and turned the sport into the popular tradition it is today. Wayne’s choice reflects a different mindset.

“I’d pick my son,” he says proudly. “He’s a high school golfer.” NDN

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# Caretaker of Our Environment

By Linda Landreth Phelps

*"...that one may walk in beauty, discover the serenity of the quiet moment, and dispel the shadows."*

Davis Paschall, President,  
College of William and Mary, 1966

This quote graces a plaque located at the College of William and Mary's lovely Crim Dell, placed to mark the dedication of a new bridge spanning the scenic pond, one of the most serenely beautiful places in Williamsburg. A sculpted heron reflected on the surface of the still water has been witness to countless embraces. Legend has it that a couple crossing the arched bridge while holding hands will be friends forever - and if they kiss, they will be lifelong lovers.

Surrounding the Dell is a stand of beech trees that carry the carved initials of many couples who hoped to fall into the latter category. Emeritus Professor of Biology Martin Mathes is one of the relatively few people who can tell you the proper name of those trees: *Fagus grandifolia*. Should you be lucky enough to be offered a personally escorted tour of the campus, he could likely point out and correctly name any of the large number of rare trees within the 1,200 acres that encompass Lake Matoaka and the College Woods. Arriving in Williamsburg




Lisa W. Cumming Photography

in 1967, Professor Mathes has been enthusiastically involved in the planning and preservation of the green spaces that make the College's campus so inviting.

"I retired after enjoying 36 years of teaching here," Professor Mathes says. "My students

were wonderful - eager to learn and environmentally aware. During my tenure I taught six botanical courses, including Botanical Interactions and Plant Environmental Relations. I was also able to initiate a number of botanical programs, such as the Living Remembrance Pro-



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gram, which gives people the opportunity to fund the planting and care of significant trees to honor special occasions such as weddings, or in memory of or tribute to someone. These serve as sentinels for the importance of trees in modifying our environment.”

This collection of trees was cited in his resolution to the Board of Visitors to establish The Baldwin Memorial Collection of Woody Species, named for the late Professor John T. Baldwin, Jr.

“Professor Baldwin had been responsible for the rescue and planting of rare and endangered trees and plants from around the world,” he says. “Thanks to him, for instance, William and Mary can claim the honor of having the largest specimens of Dawn Redwood in North America. These redwoods are considered living fossils since they’re members of the only living species of the genus *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*. These are fast-growing, deciduous trees that can reach 200 feet in height, grown from seeds collected in the 1940’s from a parent tree discovered in China. They have been successfully re-established, taken from near-extinction to the point that they’re now widely

available through nurseries.”

Another stop on the professor’s imagined tour would probably be the Millington Greenhouse, built in 1969 on the roof of Millington Hall. This was Dr. Mathes’ personal domain during his tenure at William and Mary. Four thousand square feet in size, it sustains an amazing variety of plants grown as student and faculty research projects and used for botany laboratories. Among the many unusual plants, the exotic orchids grown there stand out like colorful butterflies spreading their wings of purple, white, and yellow.

Dr. Mathes’ ongoing efforts to preserve and protect the campus for posterity helped to save the College Woods (at that time designated surplus property) from attempted encroachment. The most unthinkable was the then-Governor’s suggestion that this area was the perfect location to build a new prison. “Town” and “Gown” joined forces in opposition and brought about clear preservation resolutions at both the College and state levels. In 2008, 300 acres were set aside as a Nature Preserve and a living classroom.

The beauty and usefulness of the College’s

land was often guaranteed by Dr. Mathes’ personal diligence.

“In 1974 I recognized a quiet ravine in the center of campus which needed to be protected from the inevitable pressures of expansion,” Mathes remembers. With college support and some grant money, it was turned into The Wildflower Refuge, a haven for displaced native plants rescued from construction sites, and is a great place to view the spectacular spring that Dr. Mathes predicted this year. “Due to the extended cold winter suppressing the normal growth rate, it should be what’s called a ‘compressed’ spring, when everything blooms together.”

You don’t have to be a scholar who knows the proper names of the wildflowers to enjoy their display. Bloodroot is usually the first to bloom in the moist and shady Refuge, followed by Pink Lady Slipper; then Jack-in-the-Pulpit makes an appearance in April, along with Virginia Bluebells and Allegheny Foamflower. Each season has its own star performers, so fortunate students and nature lovers will continue to come, sit in the small amphitheater, and enjoy the show.



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A strip of now-protected forested land that follows a rambling brook to Lake Matoaka completes the conservation continuum from the center of campus to the lake. Unfortunately, further development of existing trails and new improvements of the Lake Matoaka area have been put aside for now due to budgetary restrictions.

Dr. Mathes is enjoying his retirement and what he jokingly refers to as "self-inflicted activities". Since the loss of his wife, Shirley, in 1998, Dr. Mathes has taken on a variety of hobbies and volunteer projects to keep busy. He says, "I'm currently a member of James City County's Purchase of Development Rights Committee, a preservation-conservation group which identifies and evaluates land for appropriate uses and removes them from the developers' zeal."

In addition, Dr. Mathes and his standard black poodle, Shadow, show up regularly at local nursing homes and an oncology group to deliver welcome doses of pet therapy. He also drives for Meals on Wheels and enjoys traveling, mainly with the Elderhostel program. His zest for preservation and conservation has late-

ly taken an interesting turn. He's found a way to both fill a creative void and recycle old windows by adding stained glass accents to them. Mathes also makes as many as a hundred glass ornaments as Christmas gifts for his family and numerous friends.

"I had a big 75th birthday party, and I announced that there would be a door prize. I had everyone put their name in a hat, and at the end of the party there was a drawing. The winner got one of my windows...the first time on record, I believe, that a window was a door prize!" Mathes chuckles.

During his retirement years, Dr. Mathes is applying his enthusiasm, talent, and education to his activities. His ambition continues to be what it has always been: "My greatest desire is to not only leave footprints on this earth, but to pass along a positive concern for it."

Dr. Mathes' legacy is the fulfillment of President Paschall's fondest wish.

*"...that one may walk in beauty, discover the serenity of the quiet moment, and dispel the shadows."* NDN

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STEPHEN CHANTRY

# Master Runner

By Lillian Stevens

Stephen “Steve” J. Chantry is a well-known local runner who recently brought home three medals (two Gold, one Silver) from the World Masters Championships in British Columbia, Canada. By day he wears a shirt and tie, serving as Williamsburg-James City County’s Executive Director for Student Services. But before the sun comes up – and sometimes long after it has set – he has already spent at least two hours running intervals on the outdoor track at Walsingham Academy or putting in miles on local roads. He’ll log another 16 to 20 miles on an average Sunday. It is the kind of training that keeps this Masters runner at peak performance.

“Masters runners are 40 years and older,” explains Steve. “And training really is my second job. Sometimes people don’t understand, but there is a difference between recreational running and intense training. Training is very, very difficult but essential



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if you want to go fast.”

Having celebrated a birthday on Christmas Day, Steve has advanced a rung on the ladder and is running fast in his new age group, faster than his record-setting runs last year. His accomplishments range from USA Track and Field National Champion (six times) to two-time USATF National Relay Champion (one World Record and one American Record) to running cross country on the Colonial Road Runners Team, winning a national championship in 2008.

In March, he took it to international heights, winning gold medals in the 3,000 meters and 1,500 meters, and silver for the 800 meters at the World Masters Championships in Canada.

“This is the Olympics of the Masters,” Steve says. “They present the medals on velvet pillows, call your name and the name of your country and play the national anthem. It is very emotional.”

Steve has been a runner for as long as he can remember, so the intense conditioning is

a part of his lifestyle. Although he has run a few marathons, he excels at the shorter races, especially the mile.

“Many people think when you’re a runner, you run marathons. A marathon is a prescribed distance race of exactly 26 miles and 385 yards. I run 16 to 20 miles on a Sunday as a workout but my best race distance is between a mile and a 5K,” Steve says.

He was a competitive runner in high school and at St. Lawrence University where he received his undergraduate degree. After graduation, Steve moved to Williamsburg to attend graduate school at William and Mary where he received his Masters and Doctorate degrees. It was during graduate school that his running career temporarily stalled.

“I was driving to class one day and another guy ran a red light, wrecking into me and causing me to go through the windshield. That ended my running for a couple years,” he says.

After graduate school, Steve began his career, got married and started his family.

“So I wasn’t running a lot,” he admits.

“Then slowly I started running again but everything hurt. It took me a couple years of easy running – on and off – but gradually I came back into the scene.”

At first, he ran in local road races. Then, drawing on lessons of tenacity which he learned from his own father who passed away two years ago, Steve was able to gradually build his endurance and shape his running future.

“Dad always taught us to approach everything in life the right and the best way we could. He always set the bar high – not so high that we couldn’t reach it – but he made us realize that if you do it the right way, and if you keep doing it the right way, you will succeed. So whether it’s your work or your family or sports, you just keep honing the practice of whatever it is that you’re doing and you will get better and better at it and then it becomes a habit and your way of life.”

Realizing that he needed to get back to what he knew was right for him, in terms of exercise and lifestyle, he redeveloped his habit. Gradually, he got back into training, set some goals



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and did really well competing in local races with Colonial Road Runners.

“Colonial Road Runners is a very small club but we’re huge in terms of our presence. We have the American Club record for the 4 x 800m relay and we were the national cross country champions for 5K cross country in 2008,” Steve says.

He loves living, working and running in Williamsburg.

“Everybody who lives here knows it’s a wonderful place – not just the history but the beauty too. For me to go out and run the Colonial Parkway or to run down in Colonial Williamsburg on Duke of Gloucester Street, it’s just so cool.”

And though he enjoys running, Steve does not always embrace the training regimen.

“It is hard. When you’re dedicated to something, though, it doesn’t mean you only do it when you want to do it. If it’s on my schedule it gets done, even if I don’t get to the track until 8 o’clock at night. And then afterward, I go home, go to bed, and get up at 5:30 to run

the next morning. I have felt guilty sometimes because running has taken me away from my family. But I do hope too that I’ve been a good role model for my kids.”

Steve and his wife, Dee-Dee, have three children. Their eldest, Jacquelyne, attends Longwood University on a cross country scholarship. Anna Leah, an art major, is also at Longwood. Their son, Stephen, is a junior at Lafayette High School – and a runner who is setting some records of his own.

Steve is very proud of all three.

“Jacquelyne and Stephen have always loved to run and they are so fast,” he laughs. “And Anna Leah is so talented and such a super student. She will be studying in France this summer,” he beams.

His children are proud of their dad and have encouraged his participation in competitive races all over the country. He has won high profile races like the 5th Avenue Mile in New York City and the world’s most competitive 5K, the Carlsbad 5000 in California.

“But I’m not one of those guys hanging

around after a race – I go home,” he says.

Home is in Powhatan Shores where Dee-Dee, a kindergarten teacher at Matoaka Elementary School, does her best to keep her family on their game.

“Dee-Dee has been great. She knows that the training is very intense and very hard – that it takes a lot of time and it requires rest, recovery and refueling. She understands the nutrition needs and is supportive of that. On the day before a race, without even asking, she’s got the routine down – for all of us. In winter months, I run in the dark in the morning – and again at night – but I have to do it. Even after a long day at work, even when it’s 37 degrees out, and even if there’s a little bit of sleet,” he says.

If that sounds grueling, it’s because it is. But Steve has learned that it is essential to meet interim goals in order to excel on the track. He has adopted as his running mantra a quote from a veteran Masters runner:

“You might not run as fast as you did five years ago – but you can always run faster than last year.” NDN

## Stephen J. Shonka Recognized As A Top Financial Advisor By LPL Financial

Stephen J. Shonka, an independent financial advisor at Stephen Shonka Family Retirement Planning & Wealth Management in Williamsburg, VA, today announced that he was recognized as a top financial advisor and named to the LPL Financial Chairman’s Council. This distinction is based on a ranking of all registered advisors supported by LPL Financial, the nation’s largest independent broker-dealer\*, and is awarded to less than two percent of the firm’s 12,027 advisors nationwide.

*“We congratulate Stephen J. Shonka for achieving this prestigious recognition, which is based on how successful advisors are in growing their businesses by delivering the services and solutions their clients need,”* said Bill Dwyer, President of National Sales and Marketing for LPL Financial. *“Members of the Chairman’s Council are among the premier financial advisors in our industry. They serve as trusted resources and counselors for their clients and their communities.”*

Stephen J. Shonka is affiliated with LPL Financial and provides access to conflict-free financial planning services, investment advice and asset management services to over 250 clients in the Williamsburg area.

### About Stephen Shonka

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# He's a Trailblazer!

PRINCE BUTLER



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

By Rachel Sapin

*H*ave you ever been to the Dismal Swamp? Prince Butler has. During the course of our interview, Prince often asked me questions that started with "Have you ever been..." to which I mostly replied with a sheepish, 'No'. As the trip coordinator for the Ford's Colony Trailblazers Club, Prince reconnoiters nearly every nook, cranny, brook, bike, kayak, and hiking trail around Hampton Roads, and is always happy to take others along for the journey.

Although a native of Suffolk, Prince spent most of his professional life as a patent lawyer in northern Virginia. He attended law school at William and Mary and having immensely enjoyed the experience, decided to retire in the Williamsburg area. He settled into the Ford's Colony community in 2002 with his wife, Erika.

As a former athlete and an ardent outdoorsman, it wasn't long before Prince

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discovered the Ford's Colony Trailblazers Club. However, the club wasn't quite what he expected. When Prince joined the Trailblazers, they were primarily dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the Ford's Colony Nature Trail, which at the time had suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Isabel.

"When I joined, I thought they were doing what I do now," he laughs. "When I asked them why they didn't have outings outside Ford's Colony, they replied, 'Why don't you start some?'"

Prince took their advice and ran with it, or to be more specific, biked, walked, and kayaked with it. Since the fall of 2007, he has led over 30 trips for the Trailblazers that have included everything from kayaking down the Chickahominy River to bicycling along the Richmond Canal.

What makes Prince's trips different from those described in the plethora of Chesapeake Bay travel guides lining bookstore shelves is that they are inspired by his local, often idiosyncratic knowledge of the area.

Take a trip he coordinated in April 2009 titled "Prince's Suffolk & Dismal Swamp for Bikers & Walkers." At first glance, the trip doesn't stand out much from others he has coordinated. The members take The Jamestown Ferry to walk and bike around Riverview (Prince's childhood neighborhood) and into the Dismal Swamp.

What made this trip so enjoyable though was the fact that Prince knew it was azalea season in Suffolk, and that they were especially beautiful around the area where he grew up.

"For some reason, the azaleas are just a lot prettier across the river on the south side," he reflects with his rich Southern drawl. "We did a walk and a bike ride in the neighborhood I grew up in, and we also went into the Dismal Swamp. To my surprise, everyone said that they enjoyed going through my old neighborhood even more than they did the Dismal Swamp."

Most members of The Trailblazers are trans-

plants, many having moved to Williamsburg from the Northeast. "My motivation for finding places is that I want to show some of the people who live in Ford's Colony the area," explains Prince. "A lot of them don't know much about this area, and I'm proud of it."

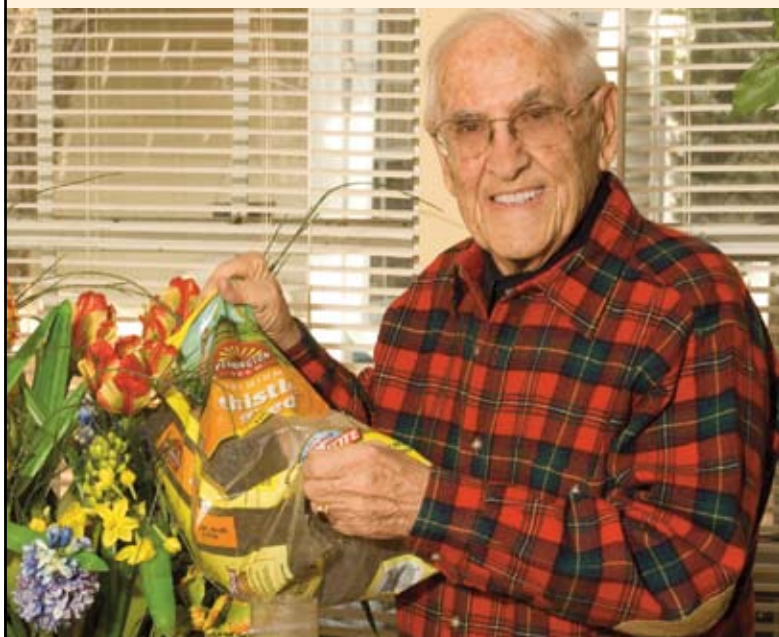
**My motivation for finding places is that I want to show some of the people who live in Ford's Colony the area. A lot of them don't know much about this area, and I'm proud of it.**

- Prince Butler

Not only do Prince's trips involve seeing historical sites and hidden local treasures, they also require some pretty hard work on the part of the participants. "They're not easy," says Prince. "I think a lot of people have been kind of shocked." In the fall of 2007, Prince coordinated a bicycling/walking trip around Jamestown Island, where bicyclists and pedestrians eventually met up at the Williamsburg Winery for lunch. Although the biking was along mostly paved, flat surfaces (and included the enticement of good wine and exercise), the trip



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*Why are you still driving to Pennsylvania?*

totalled 24 miles. "I did that trip again in 2009," laughs Prince. "I didn't get many bikers."

As he often leads trips that involve more than one mode of transportation, the planning that Prince puts into each Trailblazer trip is extensive. He reconnoiters entire trips in advance, sometimes exploring multiple trails weeks beforehand with one or two club members who are up to the task.

"There are several things about a recon that I really like," says Prince. "You don't know what you're going to run into or what you're going to find out. For example, in Governor's Land, they've got those nice trails, but the challenge is trying to figure where you're going to start and where you're going to finish." Although it seems to come naturally to him, reconnoitering is a skill Prince learned while a 1st and 2nd Lieutenant stationed in Germany in the Army Corps of Engineers. "We were 'in the field' training about one third of the time, doing things like bridging the Rhine and Danube Rivers," he remembers.

This year, Prince looks forward to taking on his most ambitious trip to date. "It's one that's from my personal knowledge from my childhood," he says. The logistics of the trip involve walkers navigating their way through First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach, to rendezvous with kayakers paddling on Broad Bay for a friendly picnic on the summit of White Hill. "There's a lot of Spanish moss in that state park," explains Prince. "It's the northernmost stand of Spanish moss in the country." White Hill gets its name from this grayish, gothic moss that blankets the summit and makes it appear white from a distance. "The reason this trip is my most ambitious one is that I don't think we'll get to recon this beforehand," laughs Prince. "I might go there and try to walk the walk. I'm not going to do the kayaking. From the walk, I'm going to see where the kayaks could land and how we could rendezvous."

Prince's local knowledge of Hampton Roads coupled with his athletic prowess and proclivity for adventure make him the perfect tour guide for anyone interested in exploring the array of bicycling, hiking, and kayaking trails that lie amidst Williamsburg's leafy suburbs and beyond. With all of the trips he has coordinated, Prince may well have the material to write his own Hampton Roads travel guide someday. "In a way, I've already written a book," he laughs referring to the numerous maps he has gathered and itineraries he has created over the years.

If you're still thinking about the Dismal Swamp, or like me, even wondering why a national wildlife refuge as lush and rich in natural resources would ever be named "dismal" to begin with, Prince can tell you about that too. "This question is often asked," he says. "There seems to be no existing literature explaining how the Dismal Swamp earned its name. The first time it is mentioned in writing, they called it the Dismal Swamp. A theory I have heard is that at one time all swamps were called 'dismals'. The full name of the swamp is actually the 'Great Dismal Swamp', maybe to distinguish this dismal from others. But now it is often only called the Dismal Swamp." NDN

# Dear Reader,

## In the next issue of *Next Door Neighbors*, we will be introducing you to a new service called **Business Neighbors Online**.

The purpose of this new website is to provide you with a convenient and simple way to learn more about local businesses - and the people behind those businesses - before you buy.

Statistics tell us that the soft economy and the challenges many people have faced over the past couple of years have changed the way people shop. Consumers are spending 47% more time researching their options when it comes to making a purchasing decision\* - not only the products and services that they may want, but also who they buy them from.

Remember the days before the Internet when you needed a plumber? You picked up your local phone book and went straight to the yellow pages for a name and phone number. Chances are, if you didn't know the plumber, your neighbor or a relative did. You could always find out a little about someone's business just by asking around.

Word of mouth is still alive and well today, but with the growth of our local market and the explosion of the Internet and its capabilities, word of mouth isn't always as effective. It takes a lot more time to decide where your money may be best spent. There are more opportunities than ever before for finding ways to fulfill your needs and your friends may not always have the best solution for you.

For those of you who are not comfortable using Internet search engines to find the websites of businesses, the whole idea of researching can become a daunting task. Even if you do find the websites you are looking for you will typically find product and service information and

very little about the people who own or run the business. That is why we have created **Business Neighbors Online**.

I have always believed that when it comes to doing business, people do business with people - not their products, services, buildings, prices, trucks or anything else they may own or manage. All of those are tools that will help fulfill the vision of the person who drives the business. Once you know something about that person you will either move forward with some



level of trust and confidence, or you won't.

**Business Neighbors Online** gives you the opportunity to simply find and read about that local businessperson to help you in making that decision.

**When you visit the site, you can select any number of local businesses to find out more about them.**

**Here is what you will find:**

- Quality stories written by one of our talented *Next Door Neighbors* writers from interviews with business owners or one of their employees.
- Professional photographs of the business owners in their place of business taken by *Next Door Neighbors*' professional photographer.

- Additional "pop up" photos that highlight aspects of their business.

- Specific and concise information about what the business owners do and how to contact them, including a link to their website and a link to Google® maps so you can easily find them.

- Interesting tidbits of information others may not know about the business owners that gives you a glimpse of them on a more personal level.

These tidbits may be humorous, reflect their business philosophy, introduce other members of their business and more!

- A testimonial from one of their customers accompanied by a photo of that customer, also taken by our professional photographer.

- A special offering or coupon that gives you additional incentive to do business with

them. This "call to action" can be printed by itself for your convenience!

My vision for **Business Neighbors Online** is that it will gradually develop into a very good resource for local consumers - one that is easy to find on the Internet and one that is constantly growing and changing with new information, new businesses and new insights into the buying options available in our area. It takes time to create something that has the depth and usefulness of a directory that is more than a name and phone number, so I hope you will visit us over the weeks and months ahead as we build something we believe will be good for both you and our Business Neighbors.

Best Regards,

  
Meredith Collins  
Publisher

\* *Advertising Age*, March 22, 2010

# A Stroke of Good Luck

**NATHAN WALKER**  
COACH OF  
WILLIAM AND MARY'S  
ROWING TEAM

*By Joe Collins*

Lisa W. Cumming Photography

For most people, the only exposure you may get to competitive rowing is while watching the summer Olympics on television or when it is shown in the background of a movie location in some place like Boston or London. Most of us would be surprised to

learn that we have student-athletes rowing and competing (rather well) right here in our own backyard. For Coach Nathan Walker, Program Director for the College of William and Mary rowing teams, this unintentional secret is his unabashed passion.

"I came here because my passion is rowing. This really good opportunity was here, and William and Mary is a great place," Nathan says.

Nathan was raised on the Southside of Chicago in the suburb of Homewood, IL where he was raised with his three sisters in Midwest,

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middle-class comfort. All through high school Nathan was an enthusiastic athlete in several sports for the Homewood-Flossmoor High School Vikings.

"In high school I did all the usual mid-western sports: basketball, football, that kind of thing," Nathan says. "I was somewhat of a jock but never really was good enough to make it into any of the Division I programs in any of my favorite sports."

That was unfortunate since it was almost pre-ordained that he would attend Purdue University, a Division I school. Nathan explains: "I had already been rooting for them ever since I was a kid. Both of my parents went there, one of my grandfathers taught at Purdue, and I had seven or eight aunts and uncles that had gone to Purdue. So it was almost like pre-decided."

But fate – and a little intimidation - played a hand in steering Nathan towards the sport he was meant to love. "I was walking around the Purdue campus and this big guy came up to me and said 'You need to row,'" Nathan recalls. As a nervous young freshman on an unfamiliar and overwhelmingly large campus, Nathan looked up at the 6'4", 230 lb stranger and gave him the only reasonable answer he could think of: "Ok," he said.

Though he had never rowed and knew next to nothing about the sport, Nathan was determined that he wanted to be involved in something while in college. Prior to his encounter with the behemoth from the rowing team he had considered joining a fraternity, but those thoughts were soon completely swept away when he realized how much he could gain by rowing.

"I went to the first couple of practices and it was one of those things where I really fell into it, I fell into my niche," Nathan remembers fondly. "Purdue is a big school so there were about 1,000 novices trying out. As it turned out, we were all kindred spirits. There were a lot of guys who could empathize with each other and we could all go and hang out together on Fridays. We didn't have the letters or anything like that, but we had houses we would all rent together and live in, so it was a bond stronger than anything I could have gotten with a fraternity, I think."

While a fraternity would have certainly offered Nathan social relationships, it would not have offered the kind of friendships that develop in a team sport where everyone has to work together to attain success.

"One nice thing I realize about rowing, since

I have been involved with the sport for a decent amount of time, is that it really sifts through the people who are originally interested in it and sort of keeps this core group of people that are very solid character people, people who do not shy away from hard work," Nathan says. "And you see these guys almost suffer sometimes because it is not always this fun-loving, sun shining down, 3 pm practice where you're completely rested and it is a nice and easy perfect row. There are some days where you are pushing through a really hard piece and the lactic acid is building up to an unimaginable level. There's a nice big headwind you are running into, and waves are coming over the gunwales, and there's probably a little cursing involved. It's through that, when you have these guys who have gotten up at 4 or 5:30 in the morning with you every day and you are all working towards a common goal and it forges a bond."

Like most sports, the blood, sweat, and tears that go into preparing for competition are difficult to fathom for those who have never done it. The strenuous workouts Nathan describes seem contrary to the apparent effortless exhibited when everyone rows in unison with no sign of strain. It looks downright enjoyable!

"And it is enjoyable," Nathans stresses. "Don't

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let me give you the wrong impression. The way you see the Olympic guys making it all look easy, that is the most efficient way of all. They look so graceful and elegant and it looks effortless when it is anything but. But they have refined their rowing techniques so much that it is completely smooth, no unintended energy is being spent and everything is in perfect, perfect balance.”

Nathan came to William and Mary to coach the rowing teams in the fall of 2008 to teach students rowing technique. He coaches both the men’s and women’s varsity teams, a combined total of about 65 rowers, experienced and novice.

“With the building of the new boathouse, which should be completed this summer, we’re thinking that next year we will be even bigger and hopefully the club can keep building,” Nathan explains, referring to the teams’ first real boathouse which is being built at the club’s rowing site at Chickahominy Riverfront Park, on Route 5 at the new bridge. “And once the boathouse is finished we are hoping to maybe get a high school team started in the area.”

In the meantime, Nathan, his assistants, and the rest of the club have their hands full preparing for their busiest time of year.

“The big season is the Spring season when we have the sprint races,” Nathan says, “The fall season is for head races. Head races are not the championship season, it’s more like ‘hey lets have fun, lets race here’, but we don’t really care quite as much how well we do. Spring is the real competition. The sprints are 2000 meters, like you see in the Olympics. It’s six lanes wide generally, and you’ll have buoys every so many meters and it’s a completely straight course.”

The teams have fared well in the first sprint races of the year. William and Mary hosted the Virginia Invitational in March, the club’s home race. Teams from George Mason University, Liberty University, and James Madison University converged on Chickahominy Riverfront Park and by the end of the day the William and Mary women were undefeated and the men won nearly all of their events. The team also did well at Occoquan Sprints in northern Virginia in late March.

“So I think we are positioning ourselves well to have a really good season,” Nathan says, “Last year we got our second medal ever at the national championships. And we won our first medal ever for the women’s last year so were excited to take that and move forward.”

The teams’ practices and competitions are

open to anyone who wants to watch, though most observers so far have been alumni or members of the Williamsburg Boat Club, one of the William and Mary club’s biggest supporters. While rowing is increasing in popularity in the Tidewater area, particularly in the high schools, it does not yet draw a big crowd here. “We think people do not really know about it yet,” Nathan surmises.

As Nathan and the rowing teams continue to succeed and build on those successes the attention is sure to grow. For Nathan, he is has found a home here with William and Mary.

“I’ve always been big on ‘your home is where you are’,” Nathan says with a smile. “My family is in Chicago and I have a sister in [Washington] D.C. so my heart will always be with them. But I have tried to really embrace this area. I have a fiancé, originally from Poquoson, and we live here in Williamsburg.”

Given his enthusiasm, experience and success to date, it’s probably a safe bet that the student/athletes on his team are happy about Nathan settling in as their rowing coach. In fact, they might even call it a stroke of good luck! NDN

For more information about William and Mary rowing, visit: [www.wmrowing.org](http://www.wmrowing.org)



## signs of spring

Flowers in bloom, greening lawns, and tree limbs sprouting with buds — all welcome signs of a long-awaited spring!

Other signs of spring are those “welcoming” red, white, and blue signs on storefront windows and doors of members of the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance.

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