

June 2014

WILLIAMSBURG'S

Next Door Neighbors[®]

VOL. 8, ISSUE 6

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Lessons Learned Debbie Scott

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I read a quote the other day that I liked: "Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself." It takes courage to be an independent thinker, but if we have been fortunate enough through life's circumstances to gain confidence and clarity in our thinking then we can become whatever we want.

Of course, it helps to draw from lessons learned from others and oftentimes we can make better decisions from the wisdom shared by those who care about us - parents, family, friends, mentors and others we meet along life's journey. This issue, Lessons Learned, brings you thoughts and sentiments of gratitude from some of your Williamsburg neighbors who draw strength and courage from those who have helped them along the way. Some of these folks were deeply influenced by their parents and they remember ways that values were demonstrated when they were children. Most often they did not realize they were being shown something that would stay with them the rest of their lives.

When my father was much younger, he often helped the neighbors repair their cars and fix little things that would save them money and time. My dad is 90 now and all of my parents immediate neighbors from those days have passed away. I remember my dad's generosity and I can still hear him calling across the yard, "Hey neighbor!" Appropriately, this is now the name of the listings in the back Next Door Neighbors. It a place where people can find ways to help their neighbors - an invaluable lesson learned. NDN



Meredith Collins, Publisher

Inside

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3. Debbie Scott | 33. Kristen Cain Ladison |
| 7. Sterling Kane | 36. Aaron Ross |
| 10. Lesslie Hall | 39. Matt Crispino |
| 13. Rev. Dr. Robert Whitehead, Sr. | 42. Adelle Carpenter |
| 16. Troy Rapp | 45. Dave Masterson |
| 20. Meredith Vermillion Lunceford | 48. Jay Gaidmore |
| 24. Virginia Woodward | 52. Hey Neighbor! |
| 27. Branch Fields III | 55. In the Neighborhood |
| 30. Kimberly Blossom | |

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DEBBIE SCOTT



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A Mom's Love

By Lillian Stevens

Debbie Scott says that she would never be where she is today without the steadfast encouragement and support of her mother, Eloise (Sue) Heflip. Debbie is the owner of Acclaimed Appearance Hair and Image Salon in Williamsburg. She describes her mother as a

very tender, soft-spoken and gentle person.

“My mother is absolutely precious to me,” she says. “We have such a special bond. She has always – always – been there for me. And I have tried to be there for her, too.”

Debbie’s father died at the young age of

54. When he died, Debbie’s mother was only 52. She took early retirement from the lighting company where she worked to work at the Blacksburg, Virginia salon that Debbie owned at the time.

“She was my salon coordinator until I



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moved here to Williamsburg,” says Debbie. “And she was with me every day! What I keep coming back to is the knowledge that when I needed her, she was there for me. So when this traumatic thing happened – my dad died out of the blue – she was lost and she needed me. At the time, it was perfect timing because I needed someone to come in and take over the front desk. My mom did that and more. She did everything.”

Debbie always knew she wanted to own her own business.

“My parents owned a convenience store when my brothers and I were growing up in Christiansburg [Virginia]. The store was downstairs and we lived in an upstairs apartment. So that was the only life we knew and I loved it. My dad would let me sit at the desk and try to help out when I was little. I knew that I wanted to own a business – that it was in my blood – but I wasn’t sure what kind of business it would be until I was a little older.”

That day came soon after graduating high school.

“I’d received an administrative job offer in the sales field that sounded good to me,” Debbie says. “I wasn’t sure I wanted to go to college but my mom encouraged me to follow my dream.”

Debbie’s dream was to work in the cosmetology field. She found a cosmetology school in the area and signed up. Doubts soon set in, however.

“I was petrified!” she exclaims. “I didn’t think I could do it. But my mom really encouraged me to make it happen.”

Debbie’s mother went with her to the school interview and was there all day for moral support. When Debbie wondered how she’d pay for tuition, her mother told her – very matter-of-factly – that she would get a job and work her way through school.

“So I applied that day and the next thing you know, I passed the entrance tests,” she says. “It took me about a year and a half. I was going to school full time and I worked at night at a local Hardees restaurant to pay my tuition.”

After graduation, Debbie found a job in a small salon in Blacksburg. There, she found a second mentor. “I have to give a lot of credit to Penny for stepping right in and teaching me so much about the business. It really helped set the tone for my career over the years.”

At the age of 29, Debbie opened her first salon in Blacksburg and grew the business for 13 years to 18 stylists.

“The salon got really big,” Debbie says. “Too big. I decided that, for me, bigger is not always better.”

Debbie eventually sold the salon and moved to Williamsburg to start a new life and to open a new salon.

“We started small and then it just seems like one thing led to another and now we have eight stylists, two apprentices and one trainee, and two front desk employees. It’s perfect! I started small because I wanted to regain that passion for what I really wanted to do. And, of course, my mother was instrumental in that process.”

Naturally, it was hard for Debbie’s mother when she moved to Williamsburg but she was encouraging and supportive at the same time.

Two years after moving to Williamsburg, Debbie met a wonderful man, Wayne, the father of two daughters, Angela and Brittany. They

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fell in love and have been married for 13 years.

“He’s just wonderful, and he already had two amazing daughters. It’s been so great to be able to nurture and love those girls. It’s been perfect.”

Debbie also has another stepdaughter, Shannon, from her former marriage. “Shan-

non is grown now and lives in Blacksburg,” Debbie says. “We are great friends.”

Her business and personal approach to people grew from watching her parents run their business. “My father was a wonderful business man who taught us from a very young age to value people and to treat them like you want to be

“I wish we could encourage everyone – especially young mothers and grandmothers – to know how important it is to give them the nurturing they need so they develop self-esteem and confidence allowing them to follow their own dreams.” ~ Debbie Scott

“My mom is the strongest person I know,” she says. “It’s very hard to even articulate because she is so soft-spoken, refined and gentle, and yet there is this strength that shines through. It’s funny how things work in our lives, and it’s so important to have the right people guiding you. I am fortunate that I had that.”

Because of her own experiences, Debbie loves helping other people find their passion too. “I love mentoring other stylists and helping them grow,” she says. “I have two apprentices – and a third employee we are training from the ground up. It will take about two years before she’ll be completely finished but she’s doing great. That’s the kind of thing we do here, and I find that so exciting.”

No matter what kind of careers or paths we choose, though, Debbie feels that it is so important to support and give confidence to everyone with whom we come into contact.

“I wish we could encourage everyone – especially young mothers and grandmothers – to know how important it is to give them the nurturing they need so they develop self-esteem and confidence allowing them to follow their own dreams.”

It’s something Debbie Scott learned from the strong women in her own life, but especially from her mother, Sue. NDN

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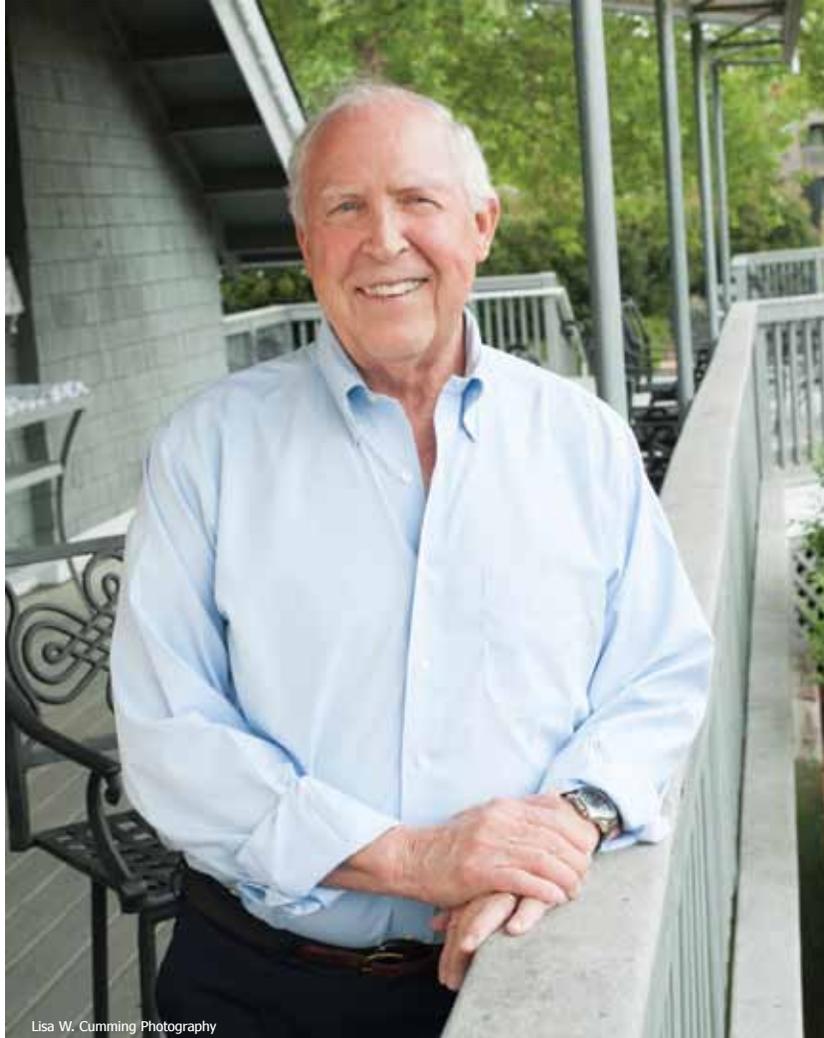
GOOD VALUES & WORK ETHIC

By Lillian Stevens

Sterling Kane grew up in a little town called Fries (pronounced “freeze”), Virginia. Fries is located north of Winston-Salem, North Carolina in southwest Virginia about 80 miles west of Roanoke. The town is named after Colonel Francis H. Fries who was a pioneer in finance and manufacturing circles in Winston-Salem in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The former mill town is located on the banks of the New River – the only river in North America that flows north. It’s a place that will always hold special memories for Sterling and his family.

For the past 17 years of his “retirement,” Sterling has worked part-time as a concierge at the Kingsmill Sports Club. Prior to that, he enjoyed a career that spanned three decades, with the YMCA in Roanoke (and Fries) and teaching and coaching in Bedford County. He retired, moved to Williamsburg and went to work at Kingsmill a month later.



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

It’s a work ethic he admits might be ingrained – not just by his parents, but by his tiny hometown.

“In the 1950s, Fries was a textile town employing about 1,500 folks,” Sterling says. “Colonel Fries came to the area, saw the New River and built that mill on the river’s dam.”

When Sterling was a child, everyone in Fries worked in the mill – and the textile company owned all the homes (until the 1960s) which were rented to the workers. He describes his childhood as “a Norman Rockwell painting.”

“We had everything,” he says. “We had the New River and we had a YMCA – most places that size didn’t have a Y. At the Y, we had basketball, ping pong, a swimming pool, sock hops and Halloween parties – we had it all. Everyone knew everyone else.”

Like most small towns of the time, there was a strip mall with a drug store, women’s stores, men’s store, hardware store, post office, grocery store, beauty salon and barber salon.

Sterling’s parents both worked at the mill.

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They were parents to five children. "I'm in the middle," he says. "I have an older sister and older brother and younger brother and younger sister. We had a wonderful childhood."

Sterling's father was a hard worker who – though he only had a 7th grade education – was a bookkeeper who worked his way up to supervisor.

"He was a wonderful Christian man," Sterling says. "In Fries, everyone went to church. There were two churches – Methodist and Baptist – right beside each other. My parents were good Christian parents. My mother was a wonderful homemaker – the best cook in the world!"

Like all of the other children in Fries, Sterling and his siblings were accustomed to regular chores. "We had a little farm outside of Fries where we raised corn, and we also had two cows that we took turns milking. We'd raise four hogs and sell two – keeping the other two for the family."

The family didn't take vacations – there was little time for leisure – but Sterling managed to spend portions of his summers at Claytor Lake State Park near Blacksburg. "I had an uncle and aunt who owned a place there and ran the concessions," Sterling explains. "So when I was 12, I started working and spending summers with them."

In 1955, he graduated from high school, one of 55 students in his graduating class. "We had excellent teachers and received great educations," he says. "But, unfortunately, the teachers didn't prepare us for life outside of Fries. It was like a village where everyone knows everyone and when someone told you they were going to do something, you took their word for it."

He says that he still tends to think that way.

"After graduation, I knew I couldn't stay in Fries. I was a good basketball player so I went to a junior college in Tennessee, played basketball, worked my way through and then I got a basketball scholarship at Tennessee Wesleyan College."

"College was hard," he says. "I remember hitchhiking from college back home through Knoxville. I was naïve and didn't know how to catch a bus so you can see that we really weren't prepared for the real world. But everyone who left there did great. College was my outlet and it was good."

By that time, he was engaged to his high school sweetheart, Judy. She was a nursing school student at Wake Forest. The couple married during Sterling's last year of college, and he transferred to East Tennessee State University. Soon thereafter, they started their own family and moved to Roanoke where Sterling landed a job teaching in Covington.

"I did that for a few years and then I was offered a job back home in Fries," he says. "Usually, you don't go back home but back in 1963 the director of the Y in our little town died, and they called me to see if I would take over."

He said yes.

"It's easy living there. Besides, we had three children and thought it'd be a good place for our family."

They stayed for seven years before moving to Roanoke where Sterling took a position with the Roanoke YMCA – a position he held until he retired. After retirement, the couple moved to Williamsburg to be near their three children and five grandchildren.

Also, like many of their Williamsburg friends and neighbors, Sterling and Judy fell in love with the city during vacations. "The first time we came to the area, we were with friends who introduced us to it," he says. "We wound up moving here but our friends still live in Roanoke."

These days, Judy and Sterling find that they still don't take a lot of vacations.

“Kingsmill is a wonderful place year round – why leave? And the people here are wonderful. They are hardworking people who – like us – got lucky and decided to live here,” he says.

Sterling and all of his siblings did well for themselves. One sister graduated from Radford University and two other siblings attended Phillips Business College in nearby Lynchburg. His older brother went into the Navy.

“Everyone has done really well,” he says. “Our parents gave us a good background.”

“The town shaped a lot of us – our parents shaped us too. They were hardworking people who wanted more for their own children. Most of us growing up there were successful. Some grew up to be lawyers, doctors or other professional careers. One of my friends ended up president of the University of Tennessee.”

Some music historians credit Fries as the place where the country music industry truly began. The town produced a good number of traditional Appalachian musicians like Henry Whitter who became the first singer to record a country record (“The Wreck of the Old ’97”).

Three decades later, as textiles were increasingly outsourced to countries like China, Fries’ textile mill went out of business and the town – according to Sterling – kind of “dried up.” Today, though, Fries is well-known for outdoor adventures like biking, hiking, fishing, canoeing, birding and horseback riding – and more.

Still, Sterling Kane carries memories of the town as it was when he was growing up and is grateful for the values and work ethic he inherited from his father. These days, he works “for fun” and is in his element when he’s chatting with folks at work – or riding rollercoasters at Busch Gardens with his grandchildren. He and Judy have traveled some but they are happiest at home. NDN

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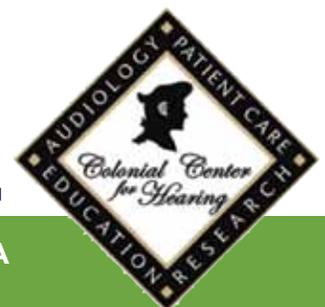


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LESSLIE HALL



The Value of Helping Others

By Alison Johnson

One of the most powerful lessons Lesslie Hall ever got from his late father came with a McDonald's hamburger.

Lesslie was a young boy then, about 9 or 10 years old, and he and his older brother, Channing, had successfully lobbied their dad to swing by the newest fast food restaurant in town. They got their food and had left the pickup window when Lesslie's father, Channing M. Hall, Jr., noticed that a worker had

given him 15 cents too much in change.

Their father turned around, got back in the long drive-through line and waited. When the family finally pulled up to the window again, he gave the extra coins back.

"It just really hit home for me, seeing him act with such honesty and truthfulness," says Lesslie, now 50. "It stuck in my mind for good, and it's the way I've tried to treat others ever since. My dad – and my mom – taught me that

if you show people respect and kindness, hopefully they will do the same to you."

Lesslie, whose full name is John Lesslie Hall, III, is part of a family with a long and rich history in Williamsburg. Multiple generations of Halls have held volunteer and leadership positions at local nonprofits, government bodies and the College of William and Mary.

Lesslie credits his parents – Channing Hall Jr., an attorney, and Ida S. Hall, now 84, a for-

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mer music teacher at Matthew Whaley School—with teaching him, by their own example, the value of helping others. His father was a member of the Lions Club and Williamsburg Rotary, for example, and his mother remains active in the Williamsburg Garden Club. Both also have volunteered at Bruton Parish Church.

“They never said, ‘Son, you’ve got to go out and do community service,’” he remembers. “I just followed their lead. I always enjoyed it. I feel like service is in my blood.”

A Realtor for Hornsby Real Estate Co. by trade, Lesslie has volunteered for many organizations since childhood and won a number of service awards along the way. He spent 15 years in the Williamsburg Jaycees before aging out, has been a member of the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg for 23 years and has served as president of the Williamsburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, among others.

The fire department is where Lesslie first began volunteering. At age 9, he read an article in the Virginia Gazette about efforts to raise money for a new ambulance. With permission from his parents and his principal at Jamestown Academy, Lesslie took an old cigar box

from his father, covered it in white tissue paper, decorated it with a green cross – the symbol on ambulances at the time – and went around to every classroom in his school, asking for donations.

He raised about \$5, all in coins.

“The fire chief very ceremoniously accepted the money when I brought it, and he told me to come back anytime,” Lesslie says. “So I did. You had to be 10 to be a junior volunteer, but my parents would drop me off at the station just to hang out. Like almost every boy I know, I thought it was such a cool job.”

The young volunteer also earned a nickname, “Book,” because he carried a spiral notebook to record everything the firemen did on their shifts. “To this day, I still answer to that name,” Lesslie says. “Even if I’m in the library and someone says, ‘book,’ I turn around to see if it might refer to me.” At 18, “Book” became a full-fledged volunteer, and now, as president, he is responsible for leading department meetings and fundraising drives.

As a child, Lesslie became aware of his family’s deep roots in the Williamsburg community. His great-grandfather and namesake,

John Lesslie Hall, Sr., was an English professor at William and Mary and one of the so-called “Seven Wise Men,” a group of faculty members who reopened the school after financial hardships closed it from 1881 to 1888. One of the professor’s sons, John Lesslie Hall, Jr., was a decorated admiral in the Navy, a World War II hero who had a guided-missile frigate named in his honor.

Lesslie’s grandfather, Channing M. Hall, Sr., his father and his brother all served on the Williamsburg City Council; his grandfather was Mayor for about 14 years and his brother, who is five years older, was Vice-Mayor for four. While Lesslie has never run for office, he acted as treasurer for his brother’s campaigns. Their father, he says, passed on the family’s belief that such government posts are about service, not politics: “The elections are non-partisan. They’re about issues and how best to serve the community.”

Lesslie also credits his parents with demonstrating the value of very local service. “There are a lot of incremental steps to take, whether it’s buying a piece of equipment for the fire department or helping a person who is hungry, or



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a family that doesn't have indoor plumbing," he says. "We can all do something to make a difference."

Lesslie has spent his entire life in Williamsburg, outside of 10 summers at the now-closed Camp Wallawhatoola in western Bath County, Virginia, and his college years at Washington and Lee University in Lexington. Like his father, he was both a camper and counselor at Wallawhatoola, sleeping in an Army tent, bathing in a river and learning the value of self-discipline and fellowship.

In high school at Walsingham Academy, he joined the volunteer Key Club and played varsity basketball, soccer and tennis (a sports lover, he's now an avid follower of William and Mary athletics, along with Atlantic Coast Conference teams). After earning a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science in 1986, he moved back home to help care for his father, who had suffered a stroke.

As Lesslie settled down in his hometown, he got a real estate license and began working at The Wood Agency before heading to Hornsby Real Estate in 2002. His specialty is in-town properties – a perfect fit. "I have such a great

love and affinity for the city of Williamsburg and its rich history," he says.

In 1999, that love of history helped him score a rare membership invitation from the Pulaski Club, a social group that began meeting around 1777 at the Raleigh Tavern in Colonial Williamsburg. The club was later named for Casimir Pulaski, a Revolutionary War hero who died in battle. Membership is capped at 34 and there are no dues, but has an initiation fee of a quart of Virginia bourbon. Members meet on benches on Duke of Gloucester Street and regularly discuss Williamsburg's past. "We're a quirky group," Lesslie says. "Perpetuating Williamsburg's history is important to all of us."

In addition to giving him strong ties to Williamsburg, Lesslie, who is single, reports that his parents shaped everything from his looks to his temperament. At 6-feet-5-inches tall, he takes after his dad (6-feet-2-inches) rather than his mom (only 5-foot-1-inch). "We Halls are typically tall, big-boned and heavyset, with big noses," he says with a laugh.

He generally shares his father's low-key personality, too: "My dad was a very quiet,

humble man. Like him, I'm not out for recognition. If it comes my way, that's fantastic, but it's not why I do things." And, he adds, "I may be a redhead, but I'm not a fiery redhead."

His mother, meanwhile, has shown Lesslie that kindness has a long life span. At restaurants and stores, the former Ida Smith frequently runs into former students from her days as a young music teacher, before she became a mother. "They'll tell her: 'Oh, Ms. Smith, everybody loved you; you were so sweet to all the children and so fun,'" Lesslie says. "Here it is decades later, and they remember so well."

Lesslie's dad passed away in 1989, but his mom got to watch as he and Channing shared a major prize for civic involvement and service, William and Mary's Prentis Award, at a ceremony in 2010.

"I believe that serving others is the noblest thing you can do in life, and my brother feels the same way," Lesslie Hall says. "That came from our parents. They were just people we wanted to be like."

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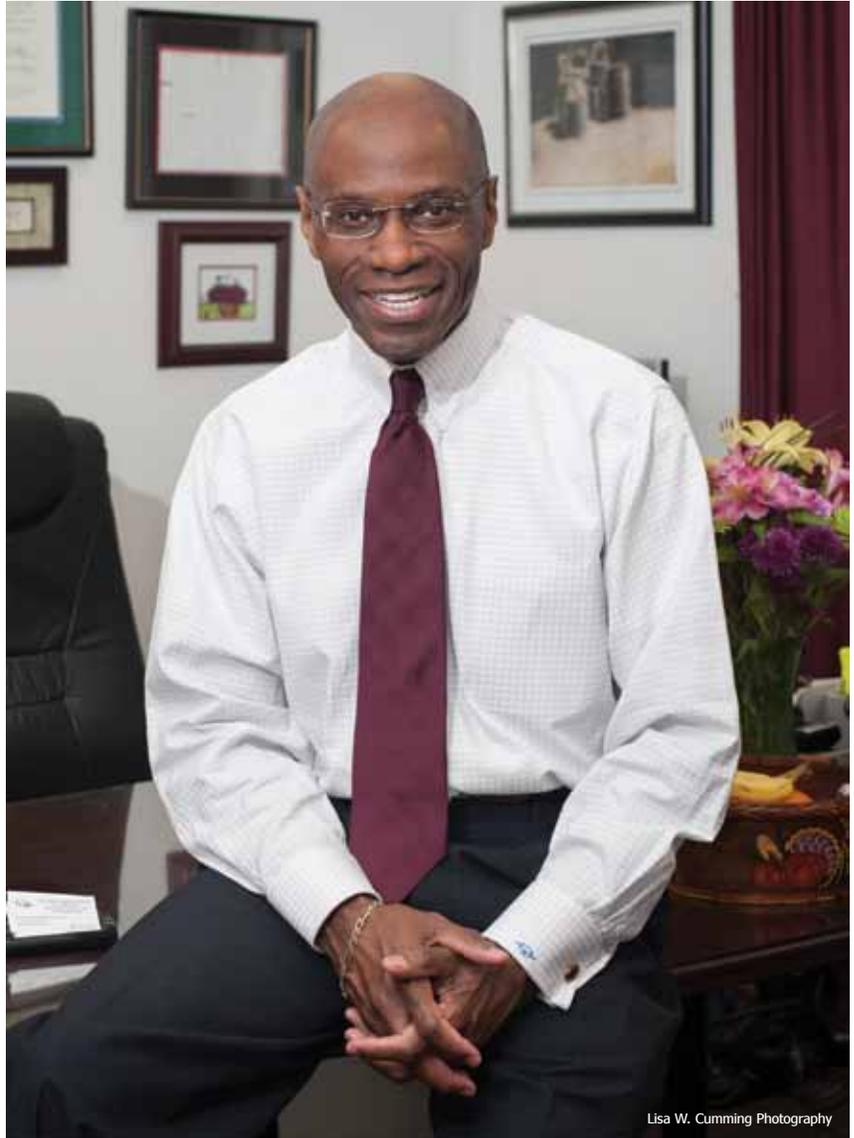
By Narielle Living

Pastor Robert Whitehead of the New Zion Baptist Church in Williamsburg is a believer that we learn our life lessons from everyone around us. Some lessons have a positive impact on our lives, but Robert reminds us that even lessons that have a negative effect on us can help create a positive outcome later.

“Even when people have views that are different than mine, if someone disagrees with me that’s fine,” Robert says. “I’ve learned that if people disagree with me it’s nothing personal, and I learned that from being part of a large family. You learn how to defend yourself, how to handle yourself. Good things happen when you’re part of a large family.”

The third of seven children in his family, Robert was raised in Portsmouth, Virginia. His father worked for the shipyard, and his mother stayed at home for a while and then worked in retail. Although both parents are deceased, he still carries the lessons he learned from them in his heart.

“The lessons I learned from my parents were to always do your best, treat everyone fairly by following the golden rule and learn how to get along with everyone,” Robert says. He adds that because he was part of a large family he learned at an early age how to get along with people. “There were seven of us in a three bedroom house,” he says. “That’s a close family, so we had to learn to get along.” He adds that he



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grew up in a middle class suburban community, with lots of families and children in the area. “We lived on the corner. We were part of the Baby Boom Generation, and everyone in our neighborhood had large families. The houses around us were the 7 Whitehead kids, the Waters had 6 kids and the Berringers had 5 or 6 kids, and so I grew up learning about all sorts of different types of people.”

Another important lesson he learned from his mother and father was to always live within your means. “That’s an important one,” he says. “My wife and I do not have an extravagant lifestyle, and we live in a basic house. We don’t spend what we don’t have.”

Robert received his undergraduate degree in Political Science at Virginia Commonwealth University, where he met the woman who would later become his wife. Robert and his wife, Dr. Jocelyn H. Whitehead, have been married for 34 years. “She is a very compassionate woman, and I learned about compassion from her. I have two sons, Bobby and Matt, and from them I learned to just use your talents and gifts.”

Originally, Robert had planned on becoming an attorney, as he was interested in justice and societal balance. Instead, he ended up going to seminary and did graduate work in business, all the while meeting others who would teach him valuable life lessons. “My father-in-law was a pastor,” Robert says. “He taught me some great things, lessons that have really helped me along the way.”

To illustrate his point about learning something from everyone he knows, Robert goes on to say that he learned how to run a business from his friend, Joseph Stills. “He had a store in Richmond, and I used to run his neighborhood store when I was in school. I went to school full time while I worked full time.”

When Robert worked for Circuit City, he became friends with the CFO, a man who is now in a facility because of Alzheimer’s disease. “I learned from him how to take care of people. I try to visit him now, but he doesn’t know who I am. When I see him I am practicing presence, where I’m just being there with him.”

Robert also learned valuable lessons from his grandparents. His father’s father died when he was only months old, but he learned about being family-oriented from his father’s mother. He used to see his mom’s mother and step-granddad every day, which had a large impact in his life. “They’d stop by the house every day, teaching me the importance of staying close as a family. I learned about cars from granddad, he would do things like get me tires for my car. He always had nice cars and he even let me drive his car to the prom,” Robert says, smiling. “I remember he taught us lessons and I didn’t even realize he was doing it. He used to give us a quarter every Friday, and I saved my quarters. Of course I had to hide the money, so I put it in a little truck I kept at the bottom of my closet. You have to learn the hiding places when you have a big family,” he says with a laugh.

While others certainly shaped his worldview, Robert was clearly influenced by his family the most. He attributes learning from his oldest sister Roslyn how to be the oldest and how to give directions, from his oldest brother, who was an army officer, how to be organized. Thinking about the various facets of his siblings, Robert goes on to say, “My brother Reggie could fix anything, even right now if I have something broken Reggie can fix it. My sister Angela has a very caring heart, she’s like my mom. My sister Stephanie is very business oriented, and my brother Stephen, who is the youngest, has his own way of doing things and has a real heart for people.”

Robert says that there were lots of people he learned from, and all those

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lessons kept him well grounded.

If he could talk to them now, Robert would thank his parents for all the sacrifices they made. "My mom dropped out of high school in 9th grade, and dad dropped out too, but went and got his GED. Both my parents read a lot, everything including books, newspapers and magazines. All of my brothers and sisters read well because there were always books and magazines at the house." He also remembers his parents reading both daily papers, the morning and the afternoon paper, and he attributes his love of reading and knowledge to his exposure to reading material.

Today, Robert is focused on his work at New Zion. "Here at New Zion, this is what I'm called to do. But I have extreme gratitude toward the New Zion family for their ability to work with me and love me. I've learned that to plan for the future I pray, plan and execute, and God will direct. I'm a firm believer in that, and this church has grown. We are very active in the community."

Robert's message to the community is simple. "We can work together as a community to make this a better place for everybody, across the board. This is a community of extremes. Some people are extremely well off and then there are those that you don't even know how they have made it this far and managed to keep their sanity. We can work together to make this a better place for everybody."

As he finished talking about the life lessons he's learned along the way, Robert adds one more thing: gratitude for the lessons learned. His gratitude extends to all of those along his path that have taught him, one way or another, about life, love and people. But most of all his gratitude is to God, for placing the Reverend Dr. Robert Whitehead within the New Zion family and allowing him to do the work he loves most. NDN



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Follow Your Passion

By Morgan Barker

Troy Rapp had an idyllic childhood in King William County. "I was raised in the house where my parents still live and grew up playing in the woods around their house in times when you could be gone for hours and no one worried about you until supper time," Troy says.

Troy attended the College of William and Mary, graduating in 1993 with a degree in biology. After graduation, "I ended up going to work for a housing nonprofit in eastern Kentucky where I had volunteered all four of my spring breaks as part of the Wesley Foundation (the United Methodist campus ministry) in college," he explains. "As I continued to work there one year quickly turned into two and eventually five years. During that time, I had



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

discovered a great interest in construction."

After years away, Troy returned to Williamsburg in 1998. "I came back in order to be closer to my parents just an hour away in King William County and to work for Housing Partnerships," Troy says. "I felt a desire to be more settled." Troy explored the options of buying

his own home. "I discovered I could not afford those dreams on the limited salary that nonprofits could pay. I decided to leave there and went to work for two different builders in our area for a little over 5 years."

Finally, Troy became a business owner, opening Rapp Remodeling and Repair in the Wil-

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Williamsburg/James City County area. "It is a good fit for me and engages me in many ways - it provides relationships and interaction with a whole range of great people in Williamsburg, allows me to be creative and problem solve, and it allows me to be outdoors most of my days."

Troy purchased a home near Rawls Byrd Elementary School about 10 years ago. "I've been slowly remodeling it over the years," he says. "As the shoemaker's children do not have shoes, the carpenter's house is the last one to be repaired at the end of the day. It has been a long remodeling project, but I get closer to having it be the home I want it to be with each project."

Troy's parents are both from Indiana farms and will celebrate their 46th wedding anniversary in June. "Most of our early family vacations each summer were spent vacationing at my grandparent's farms," Troy says.

His parents relocated to Virginia when his father took a job in the Virginia Forestry Department. "My mom was a high school mathematics teacher when she and Dad first married and then took time off when my sister and I came along. Later Mom became the office manager and tax preparer for H&R Block in King William and just finished her 35th year and looks forward to next tax season but is enjoying the time between now and then," Troy says.

His dad spends his days reading and plucking at the piano, while Troy's mom solves puzzles. "She has her master's in mathematics so it's no surprise that numbers interest her," Troy says. "Dad likes to hunt and fish - though Mom is usually the one that catches the most fish on any fishing trip." Both are active in their church.

Troy gained numerous important lessons from his parents. Several of the lessons pertain to pursu-



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ing work whole heartedly. "Even when I was working for little money in the Kentucky nonprofit housing world and not following the established biology career path, my parents were always supportive as they saw the excitement and energy I had for my work," Troy says with a smile.

Troy's parents also taught him the importance of service – professionally and within the community. "Both of my parents do their jobs as a service. I have seen my parents working long hours after the official work day is well over. They believe in taking the extra step especially as they realize that it affects someone else's life," he says.

Additionally, his parent's farm-life mentality made them believers in hard work. "They don't stray from it and aren't afraid to get their hands dirty. They have some of the strongest work ethics I know," he says and vows to mimic their work ethic. "Their example has really helped lead me as I've been in business for myself and wear the many hats of a business owner and operator. My mom often says that 'can't' should not be in our vocabularies."

Troy's parents taught him integrity of character. "Do the right thing even when it is hard and go to church, even when you don't really want to," Troy says with a chuckle. "I didn't always think this was good advice as a stubborn teenager, but as I have grown older I am so grateful for being raised in the church. Because of my parents I have an active faith and the support of a church community."

Nature is an important part of Troy's life. "Love the outdoors and care for it," he states. "Growing up in rural Virginia provided lots of time to be outdoors, and as a family we were always outside," Troy says. "I saw the love and care they had for the outdoors, and as we would walk along – my dad especially – would point out particular trees or animals we would encounter and teach us about them."

Finally, "Laugh! My parents are funny and love to tell stories and find the humor in life. Life's too short not to laugh along the way. Dad and I often swap jokes we have heard and part of the fun is just in the telling," Troy says.

He talks with his parents regularly and gets together with them for dinner or a movie. Troy's parents still have more to teach. "They have taught me what it takes to make it through life as a married couple in the good times and the bad. I watched as my mom fought a pretty tough fight with cancer a few years ago and how Dad was there for her through it all. I've watched them care for one another for their 46 years," Troy says. "I watched them make sacrifices and put their own personal agendas aside for the benefit of my sister and me."

And what lessons would Troy teach the next generation? "The most important lesson I would teach the next generation: be the person you were created to be. Be proud of who you are and embrace it," he says.

When not working Troy enjoys cycling, kayaking, backpacking, hiking, fishing, and even rock climbing with friends at the Red River Gorge in Kentucky. He is a member of Williamsburg United Methodist Church and has worked with youth there for almost 14 years.

Troy also takes his work on the road. "I enjoy going on home repair trips and try to go on at least one a year if not two. I went with the Wesley Foundation to North Carolina this spring to do hurricane relief and will go to Lee County, Virginia in October to do home repair with a college friend's church located in Delaware."

His parents encouraged Troy Rapp throughout his life. "Work hard, help other people, be honest, love nature and family, plus have fun," he says with a smile. **NDN**

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Family, Community, Business

By Linda Landreth Phelps

“In my experience, the busiest people I know are the ones who accomplish the most,” says Meredith Vermillion Lunceford, owner of Closet Envy, a Merchant Square’s contemporary women’s clothing boutique. “You have to be organized.”

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tion that combines business ownership with unstinting community service. To date, three generations of the Vermillion/Lunceford family have been an essential part of the Williamsburg scene. A few among the many fortunate beneficiaries of their time and skills have been Williamsburg Community Hospital, Bruton Parish Episcopal Church, the Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, Fire and Rescue...and the long list continues to grow.

"My grandfather, T.R. Vermillion, moved here from Albemarle County to join his uncle, R.B. Watts, owner of Watts Motor Company, located on York Street," Meredith says. After Mr. Watts passed away in 1948, T.R., fresh from his World War II stint in North Africa, returned to Williamsburg to a career selling Chevrolets, Fiats and motorcycles. His son, Hunter Vermillion, eventually joined him as a partner. In the early 1970s the duo changed course, steering away from cars and jumping into the booming hospital-ity business when they built The Best Western Patrick Henry Inn at that site. This was just one of many ventures they began and developed over the years, including the Jamestown Yacht Basin and a campground near T.R.'s home overlooking the river. T.R. passed away in 2002 and Hunter carried on the business for a short while.

"Dad broke up the company and sold most of the holdings when he retired," Meredith says, "but the things he's taught me, and later my husband, Leverett, about business have been invaluable. Leverett and I worked together in the hotel and learned by doing, right alongside his staff, many of whom had been with my grandfather first, then my dad. They were our friends--really more like a second family--and though I still run into them around town occasion-

New Insights In Treating Diseases of the Eye

Optometrist Dr. Gregory Schultz Focuses on Finding and Treating Eye Problems

Dr. Gregory Schultz likes to diagnose and find solutions to challenging eye problems. That is part of the reason he purchased Eyewear Plus Optometric Center near New Town. He brings decades of experience in both consultative optometry and in specialties such as glaucoma, retinal disorders, neuro-ophthalmic and corneal disease, to the Williamsburg community.

"It is challenging to me when a patient tells me: 'I have seen three other doctors and they can't tell me what's wrong,'" Dr. Schultz says. "I have a genuine interest in people. I have a genuine interest in diagnosing disease. I have an insatiable curiosity. I make it my priority to solve their health issues. It is the most rewarding thing I can do for my patients."

Dr. Schultz has an extensive background in his field which enables him to provide answers to his patients. After graduating from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry with honors, he spent the next 20 years working with leading optometrists, ophthalmologists and other specialists in medicine to gain understanding of some of the most challenging aspects of eye care. He provided second and third opinions on patients who were referred to him by other optometrists and ophthal-

mologists in eye referral centers of New York, New Jersey, Tennessee and Virginia. He is also a Fellow in the American Academy of Optometry with specialties in ocular disease, including glaucoma and retina problems. He stays current in new studies and research and has given 150 lectures internationally.

"To best help my patients, I want to be at the pinnacle of what my profession

can offer," Dr. Schultz says. He also is able to find difficult to diagnose eye problems such as pseudoexfoliative glaucoma.

"These patients often have normal pressure in the doctor's office and then have higher spikes later at night," he says. "These patients have been flying under the radar for years."

When he is not working with some

"I have a genuine interest in people. I have a genuine interest in diagnosing disease. I have an insatiable curiosity. I make it my priority to solve their health issues. It is the most rewarding thing I can do for my patients." - Dr. Gregory Schultz

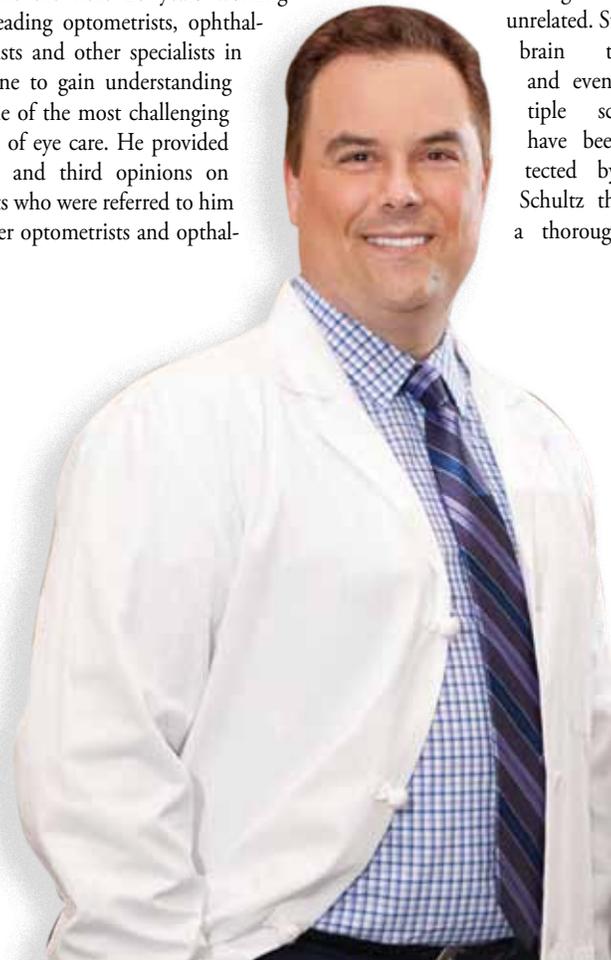
can offer," Dr. Schultz says.

Dr. Schultz knows that eye problems can offer early warning signals to something seemingly unrelated. Strokes, brain tumors and even multiple sclerosis have been detected by Dr. Schultz through a thorough ex-

amination of the patient's eyes. He also works with patients who simply need the right prescription, eye glasses or lenses to improve their sight. He spends ample time with each patient so that he can build a relationship with each one to find out what he needs to know to make an accurate diagnosis.

"When you see a doctor, he or she needs to spend time with you to do a thorough job, especially when it's complicated," Dr. Schultz says.

In addition to his breadth and depth of clinical experience, Dr. Schultz's excellent chair side manner and extra time he spends with patients as needed enables him to develop a great rapport with his patients. That relationship is critical not just because it makes the appointment a better experience but because the trust that develops allows him to find out what he needs to know for a better, more complete diagnosis.



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ally, I miss seeing them every day.”

Through this experience Meredith learned the key to inspiring loyalty in her employees. It starts and ends with attitude. “I don’t even call myself the boss. They might, but I don’t. Dad always taught me to let your staff know they’re part of a team and work as hard as they do,” she says. “It’s supposed to be fun to come to work, too. I sell pretty things and absolutely love to make people feel beautiful and special. That ought to be fun!”

When Hunter retired, some longtime employees seamlessly followed Meredith and Levrett into their new adventure in retail. “Patty and Laveita came with me when we bought the D.M. Williams clothing store in 2007. We changed the name to Closet Envy about six months later.” The Luncefords expanded in 2012 when they opened their second store across the river in Virginia Beach.

Meredith is the smiling public face of Closet Envy, a blonde whirlwind who is gregarious and extroverted, while Leverett handles much of the business’ administrative aspects from his office offsite. “There’s just a little too much girl stuff going on in the store for him,” Meredith

jokes.

Meredith Lunceford’s business and personal model began with her grandparents, T.R. and Marguerite Vermillion. In the 1960s they bought a historically significant house – “Amblers on the James” – where Marguerite lavished attention on maintaining a gracious, welcoming home and caring for her famously lovely azalea gardens.

“She was a huge influence in my life,” Meredith remembers. “She was a William and Mary graduate, the most elegant and gracious woman I’ve ever met, a true southern lady, but also the perfect grandma. She loved playing in the yard with the children.”

Among her many other interests and acts of service to the community, Marguerite was a lifetime member and past president of the Williamsburg Garden Club. Meredith has carried on that tradition; she was co-chair of the 2014 Historic Garden Week and heads the 2015 tour. She bubbles over with creative ideas that will center that event in the traditional heart of Williamsburg. “It’s coming together; I’m getting the details firmed up and securing locations. It’s going to be pretty special,” she says,

“since 2015 also happens to be when Bruton Parish, my home church, will celebrate its founding 300 years ago.” Marguerite died in 2005, but if she could see Meredith in action, she would be proud of her granddaughter’s service to the community and enthusiasm for the job at hand.

“I really wish my daughter could have known my grandmother and learned from her example as I did,” Meredith reflects. “I try to model the gracious qualities she had in such abundance, but I think it’s harder when the pace of modern life is so hectic.”

As for Meredith’s grandfather, T.R., business was his only hobby. “He was very active in the community, but also a workaholic. He lived and breathed the hotel, the marina and the Jamestown Beach campsite. He worked right up until he died,” she says. While grateful for the work ethic her grandfather helped to instill in his family, Meredith hopes that she can maintain a healthy balance in her many responsibilities as a business owner and community servant as well as a wife and mother. Family time is important to her.

As an only child, Meredith feels lucky that

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DESIGNS by REGGIE AKDOGAN

daughter Chamberlain, 9, who is a 3rd grader at Hampton Roads Academy, and their son, Hunter, 2, have so much family nearby. "We all live in a pile here in Williamsburg: we're in the city, across from the college, and my dad and stepmother, Judy, live in First Colony. My mom and her husband, who are both Episcopalian priests, aren't always here, but we see them quite a lot."

Meredith attended an Episcopal boarding school for girls in Richmond from 9th grade until graduation, the venerable St. Catherine's, then traveled further south to continue her education.

"I felt like I wanted to get outside of Virginia for college and broaden my horizons," Meredith says. "Being from a small town like Williamsburg, everyone knew each other. If I did anything, good or bad, my dad would hear about it immediately, whatever it was!" Athens, Georgia seemed to Meredith to be a great place to gain a measure of independence, get a good education, and have some fun. "I loved every minute I was at the University of Georgia," she says now, "and that's where I met my husband, through a Williamsburg friend who was a fra-

ternity brother of his at UGA."

In 1997, Meredith and William Leverett Lunceford relocated to Meredith's hometown, joining her father's company after they had graduated with Bachelor of Business Administration degrees, Meredith's in Management Information Systems, Leverett's in Finance. In May they celebrated 16 years of what has been both an ideal business partnership and a happy marriage.

"Being a business owner is rewarding, but hard," Meredith says. "Whatever else I'm doing, in the back of my mind I'm always thinking of the next thing, whether it's something for Closet Envy, An Occasion for the Arts, or Garden Club. But no matter how busy I am, I still have to try to be a good person, too. The way to do that is by giving back to the community and being good to your family, your friends and your employees. When I go to bed at night, I have to be okay with who I am. That's how I live my life."

That simple credo, an amalgam of wisdom and grace, clearly had its genesis in the family from whom Meredith Vermillion Lunceford learned so much. NDN

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FAITH

By Cathy Welch

“He challenged us to be love to the hurting,” Virginia Woodward says of her father, Pastor Dick Woodward.

In 1930, Dick Woodward was born one of 11 in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. After high school, he received his undergraduate degree at Biola College in Los Angeles and his seminary degree at Dallas Theological Seminary before coming to serve as youth pastor at Tabernacle Church in Norfolk in 1955.

Ginny Johnson is a Norfolk native born in 1930. She met Dick at Tabernacle Church. She met his father years earlier, playing a violin duet with him once when he visited the church. She was impressed with his godly character.

“She said, if he has a son, I want to marry him,” Virginia explains. “Mother was a violinist with the Norfolk Symphony from the time she was 15. Daddy saw Mother singing in the church choir and the light was shining on her beautiful red hair. He asked my aunt to introduce him to the redhead. He didn’t know that mother had already paved the way for them.”

Ginny was working on her elementary edu-



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cation degree at Old Dominion University. “They married in her junior year (1956), but my father had to promise her mother that she would finish school,” Virginia says. Ginny finished her degree, but only taught during the first year of their marriage.

Dick and Ginny Woodward have five children: Shere Perry, married to Woody; Cindy Kranich, married to Mark; Dean Woodward, married to Lynn; Virginia Woodward; and Dwight Woodward. They have seven grandchildren and three great-grandkids with one on the way in July.

In 1981, Dick went to Mayo Clinic and was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis after experiencing a decline in motor function. In the late '90s, doctors changed his diagnosis to a rare quadriplegia.

“He was pastor emeritus of Williamsburg Community Chapel (WCC) when he died,” Virginia explains. “People remember him as the wheelchair pastor.” At the time of his death in March 2014, Dick had been a pastor for 59 years.

“He was bedfast for the last 15 years meaning we had a hospital bed here and one in the bedroom. We hoisted him between the two beds,” Virginia says.

Virginia moved to Williamsburg with her parents and family when Dick was sent to serve as pastor at WCC. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in German from the University of Virginia and her MBA at The College of William and Mary’s Mason School of Business when she was in her 30s. She worked in Kosovo during relief efforts in 1999. “When everybody else was doing their MBA internships, I was out there dodging bullets and leading communications teams.”

She began her work in relief and development starting in 1992.

“I was in the Middle East and the Jerusalem West Bank in Gaza for World Vision, a large international relief and development agency,” Virginia says. “Most of my experience has been with them for over ten years.”

Her most recent position was Director of Marketing and Communications for World Vision, Tanzania. She worked from Dar es Salaam, a city of four million in Tanzania, with refugees, community development, children’s programs, HIV/AIDS education and on marketing campaigns for their work with malaria.

“In 2005, we met up in South Africa for holiday,” she says of a visit with her brother, Dwight. He had been with their parents for 13 years helping out. “I could see it was getting to be a little too much. Mama and Papa asked me to come home.” She returned in November 2005 thinking it would be a short-term stay as Dick’s health had declined to the point that she thought they would only have six months with him. Dwight acted as his father’s orderly. Their mother had to pass more duties to him as her health challenges increased due to a diagnosis of brachial neuritis in which she lost the use of her left arm and hand. She had lived for years with challenges from rheumatoid arthritis.

During his last eight years, Dick completed the Mini Bible College, a clear and systematic expository survey of the scriptures which is now distributed through International Cooperating Ministries, in 31 languages, to billions around the world. He wrote many books, specifically sharing his Four Spiritual Secrets in the book of that title.

“Dad and Mom loved music and they instilled their love of music in us,” Virginia shares. “My sister, Shere, teaches piano. My brother, Dean, is a pastor in Virginia Beach and plays piano and trumpet. For so many holidays we were around the piano, and Dad would be in his hospital

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bed here.”

Her parents used to play loud music. “When I was here for grad school, Mom and Dad would crank up the music in the bedroom playing and singing loud hymns. The walls were shaking. I’d knock on the door and yell, ‘I’m trying to study. Can you keep it down?’”

Weeks after her father’s death on March 8, 2014, Virginia reflects on the things her father taught her.

“That background about Dad being completely bedfast is very important to understand,” she says. “He could not move anything. Even to wipe his nose. Wonderful thing about Daddy: he had a great sense of humor. We had code words for everything. Instead of asking, ‘Can you wipe my nose?’ he would say, ‘Sweet baby, sweet baby.’ So we’d know to grab the tissue.”

“Papa had an attitude of gratitude. He was in pain, 24/7. His medication would cover a small amount of the pain but he wanted lucidity. He would always thank God first, then us, on a daily basis. He would say, ‘My blessings outweigh my challenges.’”

“Joy, love, peace and all these things we seek after are a choice,” Virginia says. “Daddy could

have chosen to be bitter. Instead he reached out and chose joy with the power of faith and grace. I’m constantly reminding myself to choose joy.”

Virginia says her father could be a little high maintenance and he knew it. “He would cut his little brown eyes and say, ‘I was wrong. I am sorry. Will you forgive me?’ He said those ten little words were the most important words you can ever learn.”

“Daddy was a wonderful mentor,” she says. There were times in her leadership roles when she felt like she was caught in a difficult situation. “He would say you can’t change other people. You can only control your response to them.”

“We had a lot of laughter here even though a lot of what we did was very hard,” Virginia says of her father’s contagious sense of humor. “Mother and I pray daily that we’ll be conduits of God’s grace, peace and laughter to each other and to those in need.”

Virginia learned many of these lessons under her mother’s guidance. “Something that sticks out to me is her faithfulness. In 58 years of marriage, over 30 of those years Papa had physical challenges. Mom laid down her life to

care for Dad. She said once, when asked about it, ‘Well, in sickness and in health, I made a vow.’ To me, she’s one of the ultimate examples of a faithful heart and sacrificial love.”

“You can’t think of my dad without thinking of faith,” Virginia says. Dick attributed everything to God as evidenced in his Four Spiritual Secrets: I’m not but He is; I can’t, but He can; I don’t want to, but He wants to; and I didn’t but He did. “People ask me, ‘How could you do the caregiving gig for eight years?’ I look back on it and say, I know it couldn’t have been me. It had to be God. And I know that’s what Daddy would say too.”

Visitors over the years were inspired by Dick even from a bed. Virginia says, “They’d see him in the bed and feel sorry for him. At Papa’s celebration, Dwight said, ‘He made the bed disappear.’ He was so inspiring. Visitors left totally amazed and encouraged but also challenged by him.”

“We miss him so bad it hurts all the time and there’s this huge hole in our lives,” Virginia says. “We will carry him in our hearts always.” She says the family is grateful for him. “His love is in us. He challenged us to be the love of Christ.” NDN

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Singing Praises



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

By Linda Landreth Phelps

“Singing as a career is a privilege,” says bass Branch Fields III. “The best operatic voice might be out there on a remote farm somewhere, but not everyone who has talent will be able to nurture it. My professional life has been influenced by a series of great teachers and mentors, but I truly do owe my success to my

parents.”

Branch is grateful that his folks, Dr. Branch Fields, Jr., and his wife, Jaylene--though they were, as he puts it, “firmly in the middle of the middle class”--had the means to give him a college education. “As I was growing up,” Branch says, “Dad loved good music and I was exposed

to it, but singing as a career never crossed my mind. If it were not for their encouragement and support, I wouldn’t be up on that stage in the spotlight.”

Branch smiles when he says that his children, Noah, 13, Elijah, 9 years old, and daughter Trinity Grace, 6, should probably choose some-

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thing more pragmatic than music for themselves given the financially erratic nature of his profession. However, whatever they decide, he'll cheer them on.

As for Branch's career, the recent recession meant that parental assistance came into play again. Years after launching their son into the rarefied world of opera, his parents offered to share their long-empty Queen's Lake nest when Branch and Mya Fields made the decision to leave New York City.

Times were tough in 2011 for any professional musician; the shaky economy had brought with it some fundamental changes in the music industry. The New York City Opera was massively in debt and slowly dying. Branch's position as understudy for the lead in a successful Lincoln Center revival of "South Pacific" had run its course.

"I never did get to go on, unfortunately, and I think they gave me the job in part because I was the same size as the star and they could save money on the costumes," Branch says with a laugh.

Though still a global hub for musicians, opera roles were becoming more scarce for everyone and located further afield. Even with a steady income from Mya's physical therapy

profession, the cost of a Manhattan apartment that would accommodate their growing family of five would never be within their grasp. If Branch was going to continue to be a professional singer, it was clear they needed to change tactics and regroup. They decided to take their children to Virginia to grow up, just as his parents had done.

In 1980, Dr. Fields accepted a job at the VA Medical Center in Hampton and moved Branch, who was 11, and his three sisters from Little Rock to Williamsburg. As he grew, several people encouraged him in the arts. "I was in some musical productions at church and was always in choir. My A.P. English teacher at Bruton High, Mrs. Carew, unsuccessfully tried to recruit me for her drama class. How I wish now I'd taken advantage of that!"

Though Dr. Fields hadn't pushed for it, Branch's intent then was to follow in his father's footsteps. Branch graduated and attended Virginia Tech, immediately joining the university's chorus but sure he'd be in medical school one day.

"Two years in, it wasn't going well," Branch recalls. "It turned out that I was really different from those other chemistry majors," he says with a wry smile. One summer he worked for

a book company and was so successful at sales that he won a trip to Cancun. Branch recalls, "After that, I thought I'd finally found my true niche, so I changed my major to marketing." A practical choice, but ultimately one for which he had no real passion.

"I was taking voice lessons to fulfill my Liberal Arts core curriculum, and one day my teacher sat me down and told me I should become an opera singer. I thought he was crazy," Branch says. Shocked but intrigued, he sought a second opinion from Williamsburg neighbor and well-known voice coach Genevieve McGiffert, who told him he had the talent for a career in music.

"The best thing my dad ever gave me was freedom to choose my own path in life. As a parent myself, I now realize it took a lot of faith to support my decisions."

Suddenly, Branch was on fire with purpose. Already in the first semester of his fifth year, he hurriedly rearranged his remaining classes and graduated with a triple minor in Marketing, Chemistry, and Music. He then auditioned at all the top music schools for graduate study in the performing arts and was accepted by Indiana University, tied with The Juilliard School for first place in vocal department ranking.

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"I gave God full credit for arranging that I go to Indiana when I got a phone call from Giorgio Tozzi, saying in his wonderful, rich basso voice, 'Welcome to my studio, Branch!'" This was the start of a long relationship which made true friends of teacher and pupil.

Of all the opera singers' recordings he had listened to during his undergrad days, Giorgio Tozzi was the only bass Branch had really liked. "His 'Aida' with Leontyne Price was incredible," he remembers. "His voice is the one used to dub Rossano Brazzi in the movie version of 'South Pacific.' If I ever have any doubt that I'm doing what I should, I look back at providential things like this."

Branch tells of another moment so meaningful to him that it seemed to stray beyond the border of mere coincidence. Years ago, as Branch was exiting a flight that had brought him to his first starring appearance as Emile de Beque in a production of "South Pacific", he heard that Giorgio Tozzi had died. "It was like the passing of a torch, and I feel as if he's been looking down from heaven ever since, praying me into all these roles." Branch has done four different productions of "South Pacific" in the last two years, with a long run in Canada coming up this summer. At 45, Branch still looks

youthful enough that he has to add gray to his hair for believability as Emile, but his deep voice has matured into the richness needed for this romantic, iconic role.

After 20 eventful years of marriage, Branch and Mya Fields and their family are now firmly settled into their own home in Queen's Lake. The successful model of intergenerational family living reached its tipping point with Branch's sister Molly's return from Israel with her family. For a while, there were six adults and six children living under one packed-full roof.

"Molly and her husband are both highly trained chefs, so we ate very well, but it was getting pretty tight," Branch says with a laugh. The grandparents still help with child care when needed, especially during summers when Branch is on the road and Mya's work schedule keeps her busy. The boys' swim meets and Trinity's dance lessons usually means someone's wheels are turning somewhere.

"My mom takes it all in stride. She's selfless and so well equipped--much better than I am at nurturing--and she's just a warm, loving, accepting person," Branch says.

The strong inclination to help others passed down from his parents hasn't disappeared with Branch's initial career plans, it's just been redi-

rected. Whenever the opportunity comes along to give something back, he's always grateful and ready.

A Bruton classmate from 25 years ago recently asked Branch for a personal favor. She's now a nurse, and one of her dying patients was mumbling and humming fragments of a hymn under her breath in her last hours of life. His friend hoped that if this woman could hear the complete song it would help ease her passing. She asked if he could quickly get them a recording of him singing "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling." Branch contacted his friend, Ted Cornell, choral director of Williamsburg Community Chapel, who immediately offered their equipment and to accompany Branch on piano. "Her family, who I didn't know at all, wrote me a kind letter of thanks, saying it had brought them all peace and comfort."

From the darkly dramatic heights of a portrayal of Mephistopheles in "Faust" to a simple, private rendering of an old, beloved hymn, Branch Fields considers them equally a privilege. He counts the many blessings that have flowed his way as well as their source.

"I love what I do," he says. "I may not be God's gift to the world of opera, but I know it's His gift to me." NDN

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A FOUNDATION OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

By Susan Guthrie



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Kimberly Sutton Blossom has come a long way since the Gloucester soccer fields of her youth. Now residing in Williamsburg, she credits her parent's dedication, strong bonds with her grandparents and especially their unconditional love, for the person and mother she is today.

With two spirited boys, ages 2 and 5, and a well-respected career as an environmental scientist, she faces every challenge with the confidence that stems from her family's unconditional love. "When you are loved unconditionally, the way my parents loved me, it shapes who you are as a person. It is something you always have to fall back on when you aren't feeling great, when you question who you are, it makes a big difference."

Evie and Norman Sutton raised their children with a clear division of roles. As anyone who knows the Suttons will tell you, Kim is an ardent daddy's girl. "Dad was the sports guy, and Mom's arena was academics." Although she may not have appreciated it at the time, she is grateful for her mother's commitment to the details. The family structure provided Kim and her brother, Kevin, with a strong foundation. "Plus I was such a good kid, they were lucky," she affirms with a giggle.

"There is so much more going on behind the scenes, it's a lot of work and you don't realize it until you are doing it," Kim says of her new appreciation for motherhood. She admits getting her children up, dressed and to daycare feels like an entire day's worth of work before she even gets to her job.

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She acknowledges that her husband, Scott, is more structured and regimented with the morning routine. "He is much, much better at it, and we have developed a system of helping each other. I don't remember how my parents juggled it. I think when parents do it well the children don't even realize all the work that is involved. You are busy being a kid, playing outside until it's dark; when the porch light comes on it's time for dinner. It's what I want for my kids; I want them to be carefree."

Since becoming a mother herself, she and her mother have become even closer on a completely new level. Which is why one of Kim's favorite quotes "Mothers and Daughters become closest when Daughters become Mothers"- author unknown, has a deep personal meaning. "I really didn't even know what it was to give that kind of love until I had my boys. I tell Grant all the time how special he is because he made me a mommy."

Kim talks about her mother with limitless respect and admiration for the way she prioritized family and made having a successful career seem effortless. "I didn't realize it was hard until I tried to do it myself." Evie has been with Riverside for over 40 years and was able to work nights and weekends to be home with her young children. As a mother, Kim now appreciates that managing a family and having a career is not as easy as her mother made it appear. "She did make it look easy. Now that I am handling similar logistics, I realize she was driving us to school in Gloucester then going to Newport News for work and then trying to get back to pick us up or take us to games."

Of course, she didn't realize how much she appreciated her mother's academic focus until she was in college at Christopher Newport University. "Probably because of my mom, I started as a biology major and planned to follow a pre-med curriculum." Although the inspiration of a professor and several courses refocused her career towards environmental science, her mother planted the seed for academic excellence at an early age. "I remember going to my mom's graduation ceremony when she received her master's degree. I was very young because I remember wearing an American girl doll outfit." Even at such a young age, she was impressed that her mother was working, getting her master's degree and raising two young children.

With such an incredible role model, Kim never doubted that she would also be able to have it all. "I think because my mom had, and still has, such a successful career it gave me a different outlook on what I could do as a mother. I never dealt with the mentality that you have to choose. Even when I heard people say you can't have a family and a career, I thought no, my mom did it and she did it really well."

Her father's guidance was equally influential and she recognizes his important role in developing her strength of character. She remembers a useful tool he gave her when he taught her how to drive. "My dad told me to use him as an excuse to avoid getting in the car with a drunk driver. He said to tell them my dad was a real hard-ass and if he sees me in a car with someone that has been drinking, I am going to pay dearly. So I'd tell them I'd rather just call him for a ride or things would get ugly." She realized the importance of her father's strategy when her oldest son started dealing with his own social pressures. "I told him to blame it on me and tell them your mom is crazy." Even though he looked at her like she was crazy, she believes her father's lesson makes it easier for kids to handle a difficult situation and ultimately make the right decision.

Kim admires that her father is a man of few words, because when he makes a point she knows it is important and it always sticks. Her father was never one for harsh love, so she especially remembers his response to a dilemma she faced in college. As a serious soccer player, her new coach's



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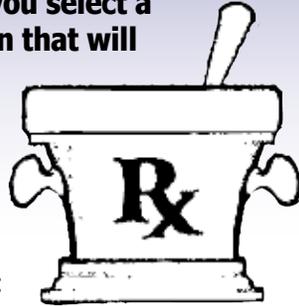
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criticisms hit Kim hard. "Being benched hurt me to my core and got into my psyche off the field too. I felt degraded, belittled and less confident in everything I did." When Kim told her dad she had let it affect her schoolwork, it only took a few words to make his point loud and clear. "I remember him saying something to the effect of 'if you are really letting her affect you that much then you are not the person I raised you to be.' It was really hard to hear but very memorable." She immediately adopted a new attitude towards the situation. "I thought, he's right, it's not the end of the world. I realized I had gotten myself so wrapped up in who my coach wanted me to be that I had stopped being good at being myself." Once she regained trust in herself and let go of trying to be the person her coach wanted her to be, her academics rebounded. Her soccer game even improved so much that her teammates asked what had changed. "I just told them I relaxed, but I had really taken my dad's message to heart."

Kim's first job after college took her far away and proved to be a challenge for her and her parents. Her father thought the opportunity to work with the US Forestry Service conducting vegetation surveys in Washington State was the greatest adventure ever. However, her mother wasn't thrilled by the thought of her baby 3,000 miles away in the woods, especially since she would have to drive across country and then on the forestry service roads alone.

"It was the first time I had been that far for so long, but we all thought my cell phone would make communicating easy." Unfortunately, the lack of cell phone service deep in the forests of Washington State made frequent communication impossible and sometimes it would even be weeks in between conversations. The silence was difficult for all of them, but Kim found that her family's unconditional love kept them close despite the distance and it gave her the strength she needed to accomplish her goals. "When I was out in the woods there were moments when it was a matter of willpower to get through the day. Hiking in extreme conditions 15 hours a day was so physically exhausting I would question if I could make it, but having confidence in myself got me through it." Her family bonds gave her the strength to endure such challenges. "I needed less approval from the world around me because I had unconditional love."

Her family's unconditional love is a blessing that spans generations. Her grandparents were dedicated members of their church family in Mathews and made sure religion was a prominent part of her life. "My parents were so busy and focused on all of our other needs, so my grandparents filled in that role. We even used to sing old hymns in the car." She didn't exactly look forward to their big family dinners when she was young, but now she recognizes how special they were. Her great-grandmother was a seamstress for Colonial Williamsburg, making costumes and curtains and her great-grandfather "Pop" worked at Jamestown taking care of the three ships.

"All of those great-grandparents, grandparents, my mom and dad, my aunts and uncles, my cousins and even my little brother were a part of shaping me into the person I am today. There was a lot of tradition in my family name and I respected it. The fear of disappointing my parents or any of my family was enough to keep me in line."

Kimberly does her best to keep family memories and traditions alive for her children, so they understand the importance of family and not just saying it, but also seeing it and living it. "Maybe it's obvious that I'm a mother to two imaginative little boys, but I like to think of it as a love cloak. Instead of an invisibility cloak as a super power, I hope to send them out into the world cloaked in generations of love." NDN

The Value of Time Together

By Narielle Living



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Kristen Cain Ladison has always had a close relationship with her father, Frank Cain, and in 2012 she made a short movie to let him know how much she cared. She posted the video on Facebook and has received a number of comments from family and friends. The movie consists of snapshots of their entire family through the years.

The images of people laughing and celebrating birthdays, graduations and holidays together flash on the screen, complimented by the background music of Lee DeWyze singing the upbeat song "Weightless."

In between images Kristen inserted text that reads:

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Even people who have never met Kristen's father are moved to tears after seeing this tribute. "Everybody cried when they saw that," she says.

Kristen decided to create this movie in an effort to let her father know how much he had influenced her life and how important he is not only to her, but also to her siblings and her own children. "He's been a great influence on so many people, and I wanted to do something for him." With the help of her husband, Kristen gathered photos and put them into an

order that would tell the story of a man who cared about his family and was always there for them.

Kristen and her two sisters were raised in the small town of Queensbury, New York, north of Albany, in an upper middle class neighborhood. Her neighborhood was close knit, and one of her childhood neighbors still visits her father regularly. Both of her parents and one sister still live in the area.

Kristen's father worked as the director of finance for an engineering firm when Kristen was a child. "He worked a lot," she says, "but the thing I remember most from my childhood was that he was the one who came to the school to get us when we were sick, and he was the one to go on our field trips and do stuff like that. He was always picking us up from activities. Because my mom owned her own business, she usually couldn't get the time off to do that kind of thing, so it fell to him. He was able to be there when she was working."

Unfortunately, Frank was laid off from his position at the company when he was in his 50s and was unable to find comparable work.

"My mom still owned the travel agency, and they also owned a liquor store at the time," Kristen says. "So when he couldn't find work, he decided to work full time at the liquor store. He ended up standing on his feet for about 13 hours a day, and at that point, he was in his 60s." Kristen pauses for a moment, thinking about her father's work ethic. "He never complained. His attitude was that you do what you have to do, and just do it. Other people would comment that it was so bad that he had to work like that, but he would tell them it wasn't that big of a deal."

When Kristen talks about her father's personality, she can't help but smile. "He's really funny," she says. "He has the best sense of humor, which is part of the reason all the kids love him."

She tells the story of a family vacation to Disney World in Florida. During the visit to Disney, Frank galloped through the entire park. "He didn't walk, he galloped," she says, laughing. "That's the one thing we remember about that vacation, my dad galloping around Disney."

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According to Kristen, her father was very adamant about family vacation time. They did not go away on vacations every year, but he made certain that they had family time together, and he would often spend years saving for one vacation so they could go to places like Disney. "He made it a priority to take that time, and he told us that if you work hard and do all these things then you should spend time with your family. We might not have always had the money to go to Disney, but we did other things, we made time to be a family together."

Spending time together as a family is something Kristen and her two sisters all make room for in their lives. Both sisters have three children each, and for all of the sisters, family time is a consistent theme. "My younger sister doesn't travel as much as my older sister, but you don't need to travel to spend time together," Kristen says.

One of the biggest lessons Frank taught Kristen was to have faith in herself, just as he had faith in her. At the time when Kristen was ready to leave for college, her father pulled her aside to give her some words of advice.

"I was very introverted and shy," Kristen says. "Most parents would tell their children to make sure to study and don't get in trouble. My dad told me 'Kristen, college is not all about books. I want you to go out there and have fun and make memories and live your life and not worry.' His advice was the opposite of other parents, because he wanted me to get out of my shell and experience life."

With those words, Frank showed her that he had faith that she would not fail.

Frank has a good relationship with Kristen's two children, and the kids love visiting their grandfather.

"They talk on the phone sometimes, but when they get to see each other they have a blast. My dad has always been the guy all the kids go to because he's really funny, and he's animated and loves playing games. Talking on the phone isn't really the same, but once they're around him it's more of a relationship. The kids haven't seen him since Christmas but when they go back they have a good relationship."

People in our lives, such as family members, are always trying to teach us different lessons,

and Kristen advises taking the time to see what they have to offer, what they're trying to give you. "Take the time to put what they're teaching you to work, little things such as spend time with your family or be kind. Whatever they're trying to teach you then you should use it," she says.

Kristen says that the biggest lessons she learned from her dad was how to be a compassionate, caring person, how to love your family, and how to do what you've got to do in life with minimal drama.

"There are so many memories and lessons I learned from my dad, so many different and good things. He taught by example. He really did show people happiness and how to be loving and compassionate. There was a Facebook comment from my aunt under the video I made for him. She mentioned that the one thing she remembered was that he never complained, even when he had to work full time and go to school full time when he had a baby in the house. That's just the way he was. It wasn't about the drama, it was just do what you have to do and enjoy the time you have." NDN

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GETTING
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Public Speaking

By Greg Lilly, Editor



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Aaron Ross is a project manager for Leebcor Services, a commercial contractor and design-build firm headquartered at McLaws Circle. One item that recurred on Aaron's annual reviews was to enhance his public speaking and communications skills.

"Due to the job and the travel schedule, I researched college and on-line courses for public speaking, but nothing seemed to fit," Aaron explains. The company had implemented a training program with a consulting firm. "I brought

up the struggle of finding a public speaking program that fit my schedule with the consultant. I wanted to address that part of my annual review and didn't want to leave it open ended."

The consultant told Aaron to look into Toastmasters, International. Aaron joined the Williamsburg chapter last fall. "They have far exceeded my expectations," he says.

Aaron grew up in Williamsburg and graduated from Lafayette High School in 1990. "My step-father, George Ross, was a custom home

builder in the area, while I was growing up. Though I didn't know it then, he had a profound and direct influence on me."

After graduation, Aaron attended the University of Alabama, where one of his friends was enrolled. "The appeal of the deep South resonated with me. It still does today. I really enjoyed the food and culture. I was there for a year and found myself still looking for adventure."

He ended up in Charleston, South Caro-

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lina, where he opened a commercial landscaping firm and operated it for about eight years. "Around 2004, the landscaping business was doing well and gave me time to explore. I knew that I wanted to do more, to move ahead. My step-father was semi-retired. I asked him if he and my mother would like to move to Charleston and help me build some custom homes."

They opened Gaslight Homes, their custom home business in 2004. "It did well for a few years until the economy took a hit," Aaron says. "Gaslight Homes could no longer afford to support both of us. Since he had made the move down there, I decided he should continue to build while I made a move into commercial construction."

Aaron started in the commercial construction business renovating hospital rooms at Medical University of South Carolina and then went on to a few restaurant projects. "I had graduated from Lafayette with two of the owners of Leebcor Services: Derek Robertson and Jon Liebler. We were very good friends. Derek called me to say he had an opportunity here in Williamsburg for a superintendent. I thought this would be exactly what I was looking for. From there, I knew I could grow and climb in the opportunities." A trait he had learned from his step-father was to constantly strive for new possibilities and advancement. "I wanted to make sure there was the opportunity to move into an executive level position. They said that if I could handle it, it was a possibility."

With a successful run as a project superintendent, Aaron moved up to project manager. The request for enhanced communication skills from his annual review was another possibility for advancement.

"There are so many opportunities to speak in front of groups: clients, architects, engineers, the government," Aaron says. "Not having confidence, not speaking clearly or not speaking in an organized fashion when dealing with people is really not a good thing. When I'm speaking in front of government departments during weekly briefings on a project, or speaking to the architect or engineer during the pre-design phase of a project, or speaking to a client, I have to give them confidence that I know what I'm doing with the job." He explains that confidence in communication carries more assurance to a client or customer than a tepid delivery of the message.

The skills he learns in public speaking and communication adds to his confidence and goes a long way in building influence in his business and personal interactions. "That's the number one thing for me: the confidence. Being able to have a presence in the room, not being arrogant or cocky, but being confident and making other people feel secure that the two parties are able to speak with respect, organization and professionalism. That's what I am working toward."

Aaron has enthusiasm for developing his skills. "I'm constantly asking my boss, Steve Mileski, for the next training, how am I doing, what's next. I didn't create an easy road for myself. To be where I am, I've had to take a little longer to understand the process, go through trial and error – that's expensive and a risk. Hopefully, I'm giving confidence through my performance and my extra effort so that they'll continue to put me in positions that I'm able to speak in front of these professional individuals or even larger clientele." The company employees attend government contractor conferences in cities such as Baltimore, Savannah and Atlanta. "There is a room full of government and public sector workers at these conferences where I could be asked to speak about the company or our current project," Aaron says. "I see that as an outlet for what Toastmasters is helping me develop."

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speaking skills through multiple presentations and critiques of their speeches. "I was not familiar with Toastmasters until I heard about it from the training consultant. It's people pushing forward – people of diverse backgrounds – all working toward better communications. It's a helpful and friendly environment; it's encouraging, yet honest. I was pleased to see that the people receiving feedback were open to it."

His first meeting this past fall surpassed his expectations. "I like that there is a system, a program with a chance to grow. There is a sense of accomplishment with each module completed. I listened and understood that I need improvement. The best thing about the program is that you can continue to grow for yourself and for others. You can have a hand out for someone to help you at the same time you have a hand down to help somebody else. That's important for me. It's like a big circle chain. Someone is helping me; I'm helping someone else."

Effective communications might come easily to some, but most people need help and practice. Aaron realized that some of the hurdles he has are common for all public speakers. "Nervousness, anxiety, forgetting things in the middle of the speech and having to recover – while not letting the audience know," he lists. "Be in the moment and grasp onto the next part of the speech and move on. Getting lost in the speech or the middle of the thought – that can happen to anyone. You have to be able to recover. You almost need a Plan B. I see these things in everyone. A lot of people don't know techniques to mitigate these barriers." Working with the local Toastmasters chapter, Aaron found that he shared these obstacles with everyone there.

"Practice makes perfect. Doing it over and over in front of different groups is a key to becoming a successful speaker," he says.

Self-awareness has been Aaron's biggest revelation. "Coming to the realization that I need a lot of work," he says with a smile. "Just looking in the mirror after listening to the recordings and watching the video of myself, the biggest surprise was that I have a long way to go. But, I'm in the perfect environment to continue to grow and build. The gentlemen that are there and are retired, they say they are continuing to grow. That's inspiring to me."

He enjoys his learning process and hopes to continue building his skills. "Naturally inside, I want to be a motivational speaker. I have muscular dystrophy," Aaron says. "I feel, but I don't know how, all of this is going to tie together. My end goal is to inspire others, to work with others with a similar or same condition, and to speak to large groups to help people. I want to bring a positive, hopeful attitude. I try doing that here at work and at home with my family."

Everything he's accomplished leads to the next adventure, the next piece in the puzzle. "I am working toward moving to a bigger stage to influence those who need inspiration, hope, help. I feel that Toastmasters is a piece of that puzzle that I didn't see coming."

Since Aaron has owned a small business, he sees that having employees who can communicate makes all the difference in interacting with customers, closing a sale or getting the most out of the team members. "Whether you are at ground level, out in the field or in management," he adds, "it is worth the time and investment to provide employees opportunities to build their public speaking skills. They are the face of the company and can be the difference in securing the next job or referral." NDN

The local Toastmasters International chapter is VOICES of Williamsburg: www.voicesofw.toastmastersclubs.org



Making A Splash!

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Corey Miller Photography

“Stay well-rounded in the early years, do your research in the later high school years and be proactive by talking to coaches and e-mailing coaches if you are interested in their school,” advises Matt Crispino, head swimming coach at the College of William and Mary.

His advice for aspiring college swimmers will be part of this year’s Colonial Swim Camp (June 15 – 19) at William and Mary. “The most important thing while still in the middle school and early high school years is to stay well-rounded in the sport,” Matt says.

“It seems that everyone wants to specialize at an early age – even to the point that they are giving up other sports to dedicate everything to swimming. In middle school, play all the sports you like. Don’t get narrowly focused too early. In the pool, don’t get narrowly focused on one stroke or one event. College coaches like well-rounded, versatile swimmers.”

He commends the local swim clubs for a great job at keeping their swimmers well-rounded.

“In high school when you are thinking of college, do your research. You have to find the

right fit. There is a right fit for every swimmer out there. A lot of people think that because they can’t swim at UVA or Virginia Tech, they’re not a college swimmer. That’s not true. It just takes a little work to find the school that’s the right fit for them. There are so many options in the state of Virginia alone – you can find a place to swim, it can be affordable, it really enriches the college experience.”

He says that college coaches can help find the right program for a young swimmer, and if a swimmer is a rising high school senior, it is not too late.

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“Our recruiting process in swimming is not like soccer or lacrosse or volleyball when kids are committing as freshmen or sophomores in high school. For us, we still recruit seniors. We’re traditional like that. You have time. If you find the right place, everyone can swim in college.”

Matt’s own experience illustrates his advice. He grew up in Southington, Connecticut. “That’s just outside of Hartford in central Connecticut,” he explains. “I played a bunch of sports, but was a swimmer, primarily. I graduated from high school in 1998 and was recruited by a few schools. I won’t say I was a great swimmer. I happened to apply to William and Mary and got in. I came down and met the coach, Ned Skinner. I asked him if I was fast enough to be on the team and he said ‘yes.’”

Coach Skinner called Matt about a week before Matt’s freshman year began to tell him that he’d taken the head coaching job at Virginia Tech and was leaving William and Mary. “I never actually got to swim for Ned, but now we’re good friends. He’s still the coach at Virginia Tech,” Matt says.

Matt says there was a lot of coaching turn-

over during his four undergraduate years at William and Mary. “I had two different coaches, three different assistant coaches, and there had been two more coaching changes after I graduated in 2002. I guess I’ve established the second longest tenure ever with my seven years coaching for the Tribe swim teams.”

He came south to college because he wanted to experience life out of New England and to “experience something a little different,” he says. “I love the climate down here. William and Mary offered the best combination of school and swimming of any of the places I was looking.”

Government was his area of study and the college was a great fit. “I had a master plan to go to law school or work on Capitol Hill. Somewhere along the line – probably my senior year, I realized that wasn’t what I was passionate about. Athletics was the only thing that really got me excited. I took the LSAT (Law School Admission Test), and I remember sitting there for five hours poring over the test, thinking ‘this is a waste of time.’ I got my scores back and they were okay, but by then I had made my decision. I’d talked to my coach

who coached me for my last three years here. He schooled me on the idea that this can be a career, and that there was no shame in taking a William and Mary degree – that most people think should be parlayed into big business or big money – and put it to use in something you really love. I could tell that athletics was really my passion.”

His path to coaching opened up for him at just the right time. “It was strange how it happened. I didn’t have an offer for grad school until the summer. So, when I graduated from William and Mary, I had no idea what I would do. I went back home to Connecticut and coached a summer league team for a couple of months, just trying to figure out my next step. The Florida State opportunity presented itself at the last minute.”

Matt went to Florida State in Tallahassee for his Masters in Sports Administration. While there, he helped coach the swim team. “Andy Robbins from Yorktown and a William and Mary graduate (class of 1983) was their assistant coach,” Matt says. “We had that connection, so he let me hang around the pool deck and help coach. That’s when I fell in love with

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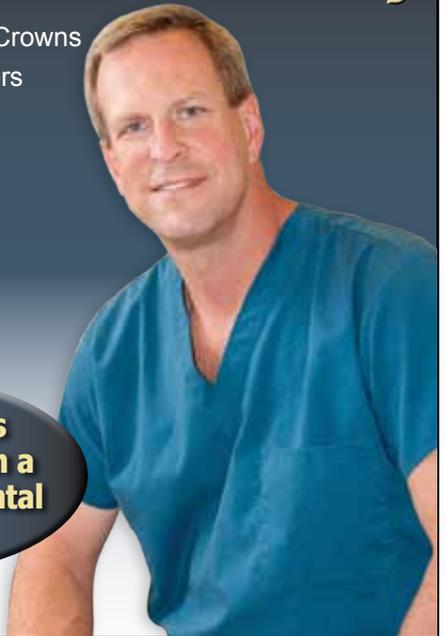
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coaching.”

After earning his masters at Florida State, Matt’s first full-time coaching job was at West Point. “I was assistant men’s and women’s coach there for three years. Then I went to Colgate University and was assistant coach there for one year. This job opened up in late summer 2007. That’s when I came back.”

Since arriving back at William and Mary, Matt wanted to hold a summer swim camp. “It took a few years of trying to get my feet under me with recruiting and staff before we felt like we were ready to give it the attention it needed. This will be our fourth year.”

The Colonial Swim Camp runs from June 15-19. “We do one session and it’s a day camp. That limits it to kids in the immediate local area. There are so many swimmers in this area because of the summer league swimming programs. You have thousands of kids swimming all summer, and this is a neat way for them to kick off the summer swim season by coming to a camp and working on skills for their summer league races.”

The camp is Sunday through Thursday – four full days and a half day. “We see some im-

pressive results. At the time trial meet on the last day of camp, we’ve seen something like 30 lifetime best swims by our 35 campers. Almost every kid in camp was doing their best times.” That’s thrilling for the campers as well as the coaches. “I get so used to working with the 18-22 year olds that seeing the young kids get excited by their times is fun.”

The camp concentrates on technique. “We work on mechanics and underwater film analysis so they can see what their strokes look like underwater,” Matt explains. “We start off the day with a stroke lecture. We’ll watch videos of the stroke. We focus on a stroke a day.”

Matt and the assistant coaches break each stroke down into components and then they take the campers to the pool to practice the stroke. Drills and technique work help perfect the strokes. Also, the campers have a period of dry land work – core work, aerobic training, strength training and flexibility exercises. In the afternoon, a topic of the day deals with things like goal setting or the physiology of swimming or mental toughness. “Then back in the pool for the afternoon session, which includes the underwater filming of their stroke. They have a

lot of fun and it’s interactive,” Matt adds.

For the future, Matt enjoys watching the William and Mary swim program grow and develop. “I love seeing our swimmers gain life lessons and go off and do great things in society. That’s rewarding to me.”

His wife, Liz Koch Crispino, swam at William and Mary, as well. “She was my teammate in college. She was a two-time conference champion, school record holder. She’s a school librarian at Matoaka Elementary School. We enjoy the Williamsburg community and have put down our roots here. We have a two year old and are looking forward to watching her grow up here.”

The next couple of years hold some exciting times for local swimmers. “2016 is coming up, and our sport always ramps up in excitement during the Olympic cycle,” Matt says. “Last time, in 2012, we had four William and Mary swimmers at the Olympic Trials in Omaha.” He’s aiming to take more swimmers back to Omaha in 2016.

“I want to see what we can accomplish around the pool,” Matt Crispino says, “and maybe make some noise in 2016.” NDN

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Corey Miller Photography

Classical BALLET

By Greg Lilly, Editor

The annual Chamber Ballet's June Show started Adelle Carpenter's love of ballet. "My grandmother took me to Chamber Ballet's June Show when I was 10 years old. I said that's what I wanted to do. From then on, I was in Heidi Robitshek's class almost every day. It became the love of my life since the age of 10."

The Chamber Ballet, started by Heidi Robitshek in 1978, was housed in the old Community Building – the current Virginia Regional Ballet location (next to the Williamsburg Community Pool and adjacent to Ace Hard-

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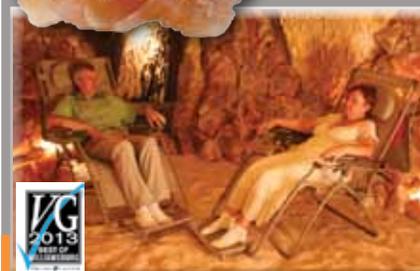
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ware on Richmond Road). Adelle and Heidi opened Virginia Regional Ballet to continue the tradition of quality ballet training.

The love of ballet comes in different forms for everyone. “For me,” Adelle says, “I liked the routine of it. I had to be here at a certain time for the daily classes. Then ballet is a lot of storytelling, a way for me to express myself, show different emotions, get to be different characters. We did ‘Alice in Wonderland’ and I was Alice. It was a lot of acting, which I liked. I grew up as a shy person. But to get onto the stage, I can tell the story and dance it out.”

Adelle, a Williamsburg native and Walsingham graduate, studied dance at Old Dominion University (ODU). “They have a great dance program. They had a company there, Old Dominion Ballet, that I danced with. At the same time, I began teaching to have some fun money in college.”

After graduating from ODU, Adelle spent the summer with the Joffrey Ballet in the training program. “I thought that joining a company was what I wanted to do,” she says. “I realized that I was already doing what I loved to do – teaching children. The competition of

being in a company is a tough world.” She felt that was not her calling.

“I came back to Williamsburg and continued teaching with Heidi Robitshek. She is my partner here at the studio and like a second mother to me. We’ve been together since I was 10.”

They decided to open Virginia Regional Ballet together with the mission to preserve training of classical ballet. “That’s our focus,” Adelle says, “but we do offer other dance classes because we want the dancers to be well-rounded and versatile. For children who love dancing for fun and exercise, we have classes to explore the joy of movement. I hope that love of dance continues throughout their lives and fosters supporting the arts – whether attending ‘The Nutcracker’ performances, taking their own children to ballet or creating great memories for them.”

Like most art forms and physical activity, ballet creates life-long traits. “A really big life skill that they learn is following directions. Additionally, a dance student develops determination – always feeling that they can improve their performance, pushing themselves

to always do their best,” she states. “Flexibility, memorizing patterns....It’s a lot of mental and physical discipline. It teaches them to be strong, sometimes it teaches them to handle disappointment when they don’t get the part they want – and to work harder next time.”

An additional benefit to students is the amount of time they spend in class and rehearsals. “The kids are here every day, four hours each day and rehearsals on the weekend. They don’t have time to get into trouble!” she adds with a laugh.

Ballet and other types of dance and movement, Adelle explains, are open to all ages. “We start with a ‘Mommy and Me’ class at 18 months. Then we have classes all the way through high school and college. Actually, we have some adult classes. So we’re all age ranges.” For the younger children, they don’t get enthusiastic for ballet until around the age of 9 – that’s when it becomes their choice to continue. Then later, they become serious or it becomes just one of their many activities. “By middle school, they either love it and stick with it or they want to try other things,” she explains. Middle school extracurricular ac-

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tivities like band, cheerleading or team sports need as much time as ballet, so it's difficult for a student to give ballet full focus.

"I'm lucky to have a really good group of kids," she adds. "We have about 12 middle school age students here, who are studying the art of ballet intensively."

As the ballet students learn and practice, they also have the opportunity for performance. This summer, Adelle and Heidi will hold auditions for this holiday season's performances of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker." Once the performers are selected, classes and training start. "All the other shows," Adelle says, "the entire school is eligible to do. The annual June Show is a dance concert – their final production of what they have learned in the classes."

The school performs often for the community. "We go to the retirement homes to perform, as well as the James City County Family Fun Fest and the Williamsburg Arts District's Children's Art and Performance Festival. In May alone, we had nine performances."

Summer camps help students with intensive study. "We have a ton of summer classes,"

Adelle says. "Dance camps during the day for the younger kids, along with 'tween camps and fitness camps. Our regular evening classes continue all summer. A lot of the older girls have auditions for big companies' summer intensives, and they go out of town for the month of July. Some go to Joffery, Ballet West, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet – they're going to big programs to study. They'll be back in August, and we'll have our own ballet intensives here for three weeks."

After a two week break at the end of the summer, the ballet students and Adelle begin "The Nutcracker" and An Occasion for the Arts (AOFTA) rehearsals. "For our performance at An Occasion for the Arts, we bring in things from the dance concert in June along with some new dances. The kids look forward to that every year."

Adelle's commitment to ballet and dance makes Virginia Regional Ballet more than a job to her. She does it for her students. "To see them progress, develop and grow. To see their smiles when they accomplish milestones... Just being a part of that makes it special for me. The experience of watching children I

have taught since they were 3 years old, then seeing them graduate high school, and then come back from college and take classes with us again – that's rewarding. Now, they're having families of their own, and a second generation is starting with us," she describes.

"This is my family. I have a support system here. My dad helps me every day. I have three children: Olivia, Riley, Ainsley. My girls dance. It's not like going to work for me, it's coming home."

Adelle Carpenter has big dreams and works to make them happen. She is the president of the Williamsburg Arts District Association and helps organize the businesses and artists to promote the area as an arts destination. "I would love to see Williamsburg have a performing arts center and Virginia Regional Ballet being a big part of that. It's important for us in the arts community to keep pushing forward, creating a positive arts environment for Williamsburg." NDN

The Virginia Regional Ballet's June Show is Sunday, June 8th, 11:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. at the Kimball Theatre.

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It's About Relationships

By Greg Lilly, Editor

After over six months of bachelor living, Dave Master-son, President of Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center, is looking forward to bringing his family to town.

“This will be new because my wife and children have never lived in Virginia. It’s home to me, and it’s an opportunity to help them explore what is unique about Virginia. Williamsburg is the hub of that.”

Dave attended a meeting last year and ran into someone from Sentara he had worked with back in 1983. “He asked if I was ‘ready to come home.’ My kids were finishing school. One is transitioning into high school and the other transitioning into college, and I thought with them graduating that it might be a good time to look at something.”

Dave worked for an independent hospital in North Carolina that was showing signs of a future affiliation with a larger health care system. He’s guided several hospitals through large transitions. “Did I really have the energy



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

to go through that again?” he asks. “I had gone through three affiliations. Can I do another one? It really saps the energy. I promised my wife that the next hospital I went to would be a fully-integrated hospital.” The tension and stress to the hospital staff and their families can

be nerve-wracking. Dave admits that the top administrators usually go when medical centers merge.

“I didn’t know where the opening in Sentara was. ‘Home?’ Was it back to Virginia Beach or somewhere else on the Southside? My wife had always lived in small communities, I didn’t think she would be happy on the Southside. I had the opportunity to talk after the meeting. I found out it was in Williamsburg. That was it. I knew we would come here.”

Dave grew up in Virginia Beach and volunteered at local hospitals knowing that he wanted to work in the medical field. “I was a teenage volunteer at Bayside Hospital, which is now part of the Sentara network. At that time, it was a Humana hospital. It was just down the street from my grandparent’s house. I volunteered at

Norfolk General when I was a student at Old Dominion University (ODU).”

In high school, Dave had enjoyed biology and thought he would become a medical doctor. “I took some heavy duty classes in college – organic chemistry, microbiology and com-

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parative anatomy of chordates. The last one was a summer accelerated session. That killed my interest in medicine. I guess I got to a point in biology that I was so saturated on the science side that if I didn't absolutely love it, that wasn't the career I should go into. I was preparing for my MCATs (Medical College Admission Tests) for medical school. I decided that I needed to make a career change."

He had worked his way through school, paying his own tuition, and had always had at least one job, if not more. "One of my jobs was working at a credit union processing loans. I liked the business aspect of it. My father is an accountant. I thought I should learn more about the business end of things. So, as a senior in biology at ODU, I decided to explore the operational side." He took some electives in business, enjoying subjects like statistics. This started him thinking about mixing his interest in health care with the business aspects that he liked. "That's how hospital administration came to light for me."

He enrolled in the Medical College of Virginia at VCU for the masters program in hospital administration. He knew he had made the right career choice. "I had worked at Norfolk General in referral development – to reach

out to physicians in rural areas to see what we could do for them – to develop relationships. I think that's a core piece of what I've learned along the way: it's about relationships."

For the hospital administration masters program, a one-year residency is required to complete the degree. "I took a residency in Greenville, South Carolina as part of a community-based multi-hospital system. I worked at the main hospital. I didn't know anyone in Greenville or in South Carolina. It was all new to me, but that's attractive to a 27 year old. I finished my year there and graduated. They offered me a job to come back and stay. I worked there for 8 more years." His first job was the assistant administrator at the 700-bed hospital.

"A lot of support departments reporting to me, and the area I really liked – based on the relationship issue – was customer service. Developing programs that listened to the voice of the patient and the patient's family were important to me."

Dave moved up to the administrator for women's and children's programs at the hospital. "I was the only unmarried, single guy, and they gave me women's and children's program," he adds with a laugh.

"My wife was a nursing director at the hos-

pital in Greenville. We met while I was working there and married."

They left Greenville, and Dave took a job with Health Management Associates (HMA) out of Naples, Florida. "HMA is a for-profit health system that specialized in going into rural communities and purchasing the hospitals to keep them afloat." He found he didn't subscribe to the for-profit health care model. "Because it was all about business and not about relationships and outreach to the community."

He was not happy there. "I lived in the community, but my job did not connect to the community at all. I opted to leave. My son was born there. We were foster parents and our son came to us through foster care. We're adoptive parents to both of our children. That's been a blessing in our lives."

From Georgia, the young family moved to Indiana. "I took a job with the Daughters of Charity in rural Indiana – more rural than any place I had ever worked. My job was to reconnect the local hospital to the community. I chaired their main street committee. I was a young guy with a lot of energy interested in making a difference and connecting the hospital to the community. We stayed there six years. We adopted our daughter there."

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With two young children, they lived in the Midwest. "But all of our family was in the Southeast. We decided it was time to come back," he states.

That's when Dave started working for a small, county-owned hospital near Wilmington, North Carolina. "It was different than any where I had worked. I had been in privately-owned for-profit or not-for-profit hospitals. I got a taste of county politics and working with county budgets and municipalities. It was a great little hospital that had won a lot of awards." As county budgets tightened, Dave made the decision that the hospital needed to affiliate with a larger system. "We couldn't be independent any more, not unless the county wanted to feed more money into the hospital. We led an initiative to find an affiliate partner. We chose Cape Fear Valley Health in Fayetteville, N.C."

He led the hospital and doctors through that affiliation process. "I could see how things change and the benefits. I became a vice-president at Cape Fear Valley, but was stationed at the small hospital through that transition. Six months later, another independent hospital, just north of us needed a new CEO. They asked me. I really enjoyed that new experi-

ence." That's when he attended the meeting and ran into his former co-worker.

"At that point, I didn't know that a new hospital had been built here; I thought it was still the old Community Hospital building – the one I was familiar with. I went on-line and looked it up. 'A new hospital? In Lightfoot, near the Pottery Factory?'" he says.

"This is an excellent opportunity. This is a brand new hospital. This is a hospital with high patient satisfaction scores. This is a hospital with the highest employee satisfaction scores in The Jackson Group surveys. This is the hospital with great quality outcomes."

So far, Dave has been talking with the people around him. "A lot of one-on-one discussions, interviewing our medical staff, hospital staff and community leaders, establishing relationships," he describes. "I'm an open book. I'll tell whatever they ask me. I want to know their expectations of the president of the hospital. What would they do as president? What advice can they give me? I think there is an opportunity for collaboration and inclusive planning and decision making. That's a big one. Our medical staff, because of the changes with the hospitals (with Riverside opening its Doctors' Hospital), have been divided. There's an opportunity to

pull them back together. At the end of the day, we're all people living in the same community. We should get to know each other and find common ground to make things work. I want of see us all surviving and doing well."

From a professional perspective, Dave says being part of Sentara is exciting. "I've watched Sentara grow from Norfolk General over the past 30 years. I love that I heard someone say that 'it wasn't that the Community Hospital was bought out, but that Sentara had bought in.' I want to find out what Sentara can do for the local community that hasn't already been done. There's still a lot out there. There's a lot of potential there and that excites me."

At 54 years old, Dave states that his career is where he wants it to be. "I'm at the point that success isn't as important to me as significance. I want to be in a place where I can make a positive difference."

Dave Masterson likes that he gets to meet new people every day.

"It's about relationships and people. That's what drives us. People helping people. That's why people go into healthcare – to help people. That's what I get to do every day. It might not be a patient, but it could be a nurse or a doctor. I get to be here for them." NDN

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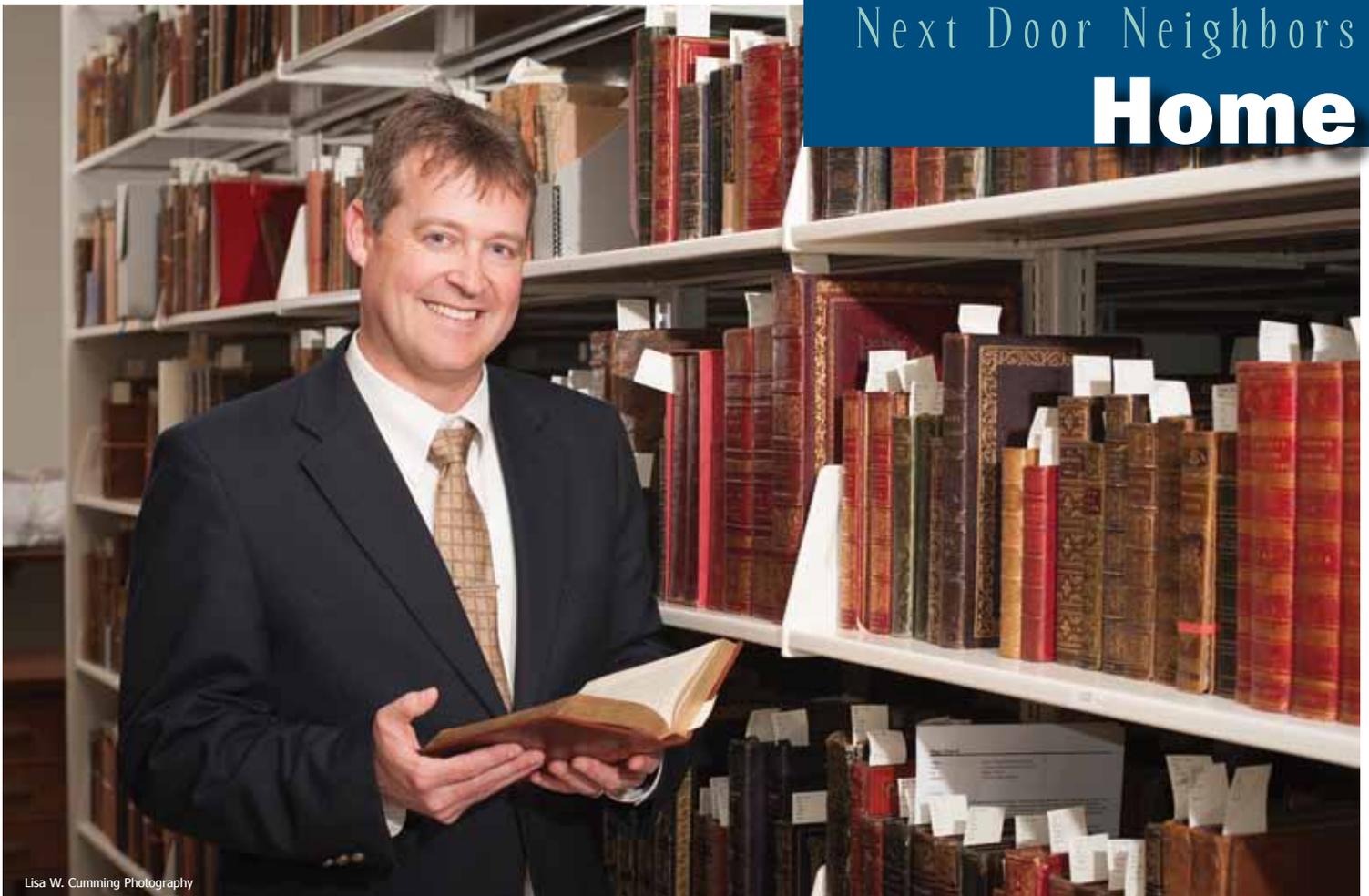
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Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Researching the Family Tree

By Greg Lilly, Editor

“There’s the saying that we’re all from Virginia since the Europeans started at Jamestown and branched out from there. We have a lot of early Virginia family papers. If someone is related to the Tuckers, the Blows, the Taliaferros, there could be material related to their ancestors at the Swem,” explains Jay Gaidmore, the Marian & Alan McLeod director of the Special Collections Research Center at Swem Library on the William and Mary campus.

“A lot of the family papers have family trees



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documented and are of great genealogical interest. Those family papers may have access to records that are not available today – like records that were burned during the Civil War. We have papers of genealogists like Earl Gregg Swem who did a lot of work with county records and in family research. We have his research notes. We have abstracts of records from Virginia counties.”

Jay grew up in New Hampshire and had ties to Virginia. “My mother was from Kentucky, but her side of the family started in Spotsylvania County, Virginia. That’s my connection with Virginia. I really became interested in the Civil War when I was young, and my parents encouraged me by taking me to see battlefields like Gettysburg and Fredericksburg.”

While studying at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire, Jay decided he wanted to be an archivist. “I loved history. I worked my way to the graduate program at Old Dominion University (ODU) in Norfolk. That is how I became associated with William and Mary. Taking classes at ODU, my horizons in history expanded, and I became very interested in 20th century Virginia politics. I wrote my thesis on a third party started on the Southside in the 1960s, the Virginia Conservative Party. A lot of the records of the politicians Governor Mills Godwin, A. Willis Robertson and Bill Tuck were housed here at the Swem Library.” The Virginia Conservative Party was a segregationist party that ran in the governor’s race against Mills Godwin (Democrat) and Linwood Holton (Republican) in 1965.

“I wrote my thesis on that and many of the personal papers were at the Swem Library. I remember Margaret Cook was the long-time curator of manuscripts, and she treated me really well as I did my research. I always had fond memories of Swem Library.” The experience encouraged Jay to think of working at the College of William and Mary’s library someday.

“No jobs popped up at the Swem after I graduated, so I worked at the ODU’s library in Special Collections. Then I worked at the Library of Virginia in Richmond for a long time, 1999 to 2006.”

After Richmond, Jay and his family moved to Rhode Island, where he worked at Brown University. “I realized there was a reason I left New England – those long winters. My wife is from Virginia Beach, so we came back south.” At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Jay was the university archivist. Several years passed, and last summer a position opened at Swem. “I knew this is where I wanted to be. I’ve been an archivist now for about 15 years.”

He explains that the role of an archivist is to not only catalog, but to protect. “A lot of what we do is preserve the documentation created by individuals, organizations or institutions. Things like letters, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs, audio/visual materials like film, VHS tapes and sound recordings,” Jay explains. “We document it and preserve it so researchers can explore the past based on the raw materials that make up that history.”

One of the main objectives is preventing the materials from deteriorating. Books are placed in phase boxes to protect the cover and binding. The books and documents are stored in temperature and humidity

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Association of REALTORS®

what’s up in real estate



Q: I understand that there may be moves to change some of the legislation regarding deductions for mortgage interest. What are the Realtors® doing to address this?

A: The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® first ever Consumer Call for Action (CFA) was initiated April 30, 2014, and will run through mid-July.

This consumer outreach will help NAR find out more about how NAR should communicate with consumers in the future. It is part of a concerted homeownership awareness, education and action campaign to demonstrate to homeowners that REALTORS® share concerns with consumers on issues relating to homeownership; and that REALTORS can be counted on to articulate those concerns and stand up for consumers at the federal, state and local level.

NAR has been regularly communicating with consumers, but this is the first occasion we have asked consumers to take action.

As NAR President Steve Brown said in a letter to state and local leaders on April 29, “This is an important event and effort for NAR and for homeowners, and I trust you are as proud of this step forward as the Leadership Team and I are.”

The Consumer CFA is to alert consumers that Congress is having discussions about tax reform that include the possi-



By
Andrew Nelson
President
Williamsburg
Area Association
of REALTORS®

bility of future loss of current deductions for home interest and local and state tax deductions.

Consumers are being asked to sign a petition and/or send a letter to their U.S. House of Representatives member to ask him or her to help homeowners keep their deductions.

To be clear, there is no legislation being proposed in Congress at this time to reform the federal tax code. There are congressional discussions going on, but as NAR President Steve Brown said, “I believe it is never too early for homeowners to know what the next Congress or a future Congress may consider that will impact their investment and their home.”

Q: How is the housing market recovering?

A: Housing activity was subpar in the first quarter of this year, dampened in part by severe weather patterns, but an uptrend is expected with healthy underlying demand over the balance of the year and through 2015, according to presentations at a residential real estate forum during the Realtor® Party Convention & Trade Expo.

For additional expert information and guidance, consult a REALTOR®.
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controlled stacks. "We have some books printed in the 1480s that are in amazing shape." Fragile documents will be limited in usage or may be digitized with access only to the digital version.

"We have Thomas Jefferson letters and George Washington letters that we digitize for research use. Preservation is one of the most difficult things we do." The archivists create a listing of what the document is, the type of information contained and where the original documents are located.

The Swem Library has a large collection of rare books, and some of those books may be duplicated at other libraries. The team does not re-summarize the material, but uses the documentation from other institutions. "But if there are differences in the rare book, like annotations, we will have a distinctive description that details those unique features," he explains. "For instance, we have a first edition of Sir Isaac Newton's Principia from 1687. Our copy is unique because there are annotations in Latin in the margins. In the catalog record, we've indicated that our copy is annotated in Latin by an unidentified person."

Over his career, Jay has seen some fascinating documents. "One of my favorites, and it's here at Swem, is a George Washington document. I had never seen the real thing before I came here. The Library of Virginia kept theirs in the vault. UNC and Brown didn't have any George Washington materials. This is a letter from George Washington writing to Jonathan Boucher, who was a tutor to Washington's stepson. Being a Loyalist, Boucher returned to England in 1775. But in 1773, Washington is writing him because Boucher was encouraging him to send his stepson to William and Mary. In the letter, Washington is telling Boucher that he'd never send his son to William and Mary because the professors weren't attentive enough and there were too many holidays," he describes with a smile.

"It's always nice to have documents from Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, but I get just as excited to see things like the Korean War letters we just received. A veteran from Pennsylvania had written his wife about 200 letters from 1951 - '52 while he was in Korea. I get just as excited about that. It's someone who isn't famous, but is just as important as the more famous people's documents."

Jay says most days he finds something in his work that excites his interest in history. "Starting back when I was with ODU and finding things in the archives to my days at the Library of Virginia to here at the Swem. It's fun very day to discover something someone wrote, what was on their minds, how they phrased their thoughts."

Preserving the original documents means that some of the materials are scanned and stored digitally. "We are making digitization a part of our process," Jay says. "People want to be able to search without the travel to see the original documents." Although much genealogical research can be accomplished on-line, there are times when searching through archive boxes and files needs to happen in person.

"We have early Virginia Gazette newspapers. Early newspapers sometimes had a lot of hometown information about visitors coming to see local families. In addition to what we have in Special Collections, we have a Virginia Reference section in the general collection. There are

a lot of materials on Virginia.”

While digitizing has made some information more accessible, researching is not like Googling on the Internet. Searching the database at Swem may turn up an abstract, but then you would have to be willing to sit in the reading room and flip through books to find names or snippets of information.

“Most genealogists are used to that, but some of the students today are horrified that they have to go through books and ledgers with handwriting. They are so used to typed content,” he says with a laugh. “Come prepared to do research.”

Summer is a special time on the campus. Williamsburg residents and visitors find it an ideal time to explore the stacks of Swem Library for genealogy research. “What’s nice about us being a public institution is that we’re open to the community. We get a lot of local people. That’s one of the reasons we have Saturday hours during the academic year and it gets busy here during the summer.”

Even if locals aren’t researching genealogy, Jay says there are some real treasures to be found in Special Collections. “We have a lot on legal history. We have the papers of the Tucker-Coleman family. St. George Tucker was a law professor and legal scholar. He wrote Tucker’s Blackstone, which compared American law to Blackstone’s Commentaries on the Laws of England. We have the original handwritten manuscript of that book.” The library has the Tucker-Coleman family papers from the 1700s to the 1990s.

“St. George Tucker had correspondence with many of the Founding Fathers, like Thomas Jefferson, George Wythe, Edmund Randolph. It was around the time that he was writing Tucker’s Blackstone that The Constitution and Bill of Rights were being adopted. His legal notebooks are a perspective of what American law was in the early republic.”

Special Collections has one of the largest collections of fore-edge painting books in the country. “When you bend the pages at the fore-edge of the book, a painting shows,” Jay says. “Another fun fact and a lot of people are surprised by this: we have the second largest collection of books on dogs in the country – after the American Kennel Club. Our collection includes the earliest book printed in English about dogs.”

Jay’s ideal day is filled with discovery, helping researchers find documents and showing students an original source. “A great day is when people call to say they have documents they’d like to donate – things like family letters. They don’t have to be from someone famous. I like when people who aren’t familiar with Special Collections come in and take a tour – just their expressions when seeing the fore-edge painting, the George Washington letter or the St. George Tucker’s Blackstone’s Commentaries. You can really see how excited they are to see these things. They are as excited to see it as I am to show it. That makes me feel really good.”

Jay Gaidmore enjoys his archivist work and touching history. “It’s good because I’m preserving something that someone has brought in and making it accessible to others. In my opinion, there is no use having this valuable material if no one is going to use it. It’s all about us connecting people to the resources they need.” NDN

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Hey Neighbor!

Please visit www.WilliamsburgNeighbors.com, go to the magazine site and click on **Hey Neighbor!** for a complete list of current community announcements.

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

Hey Neighbor! THE SCAMMON-MCCULLEY SCHOLARSHIP OFFERED

Ongoing
Each year The Williamsburg Players offers the Scammon-Mcculley Scholarship to assist graduating Hampton Roads Peninsula seniors with their college pursuit of theatrical arts, which include acting, dancing, musical theatre, music, or any other facet of the performing arts, including, but not limited to, set design, costume design and lighting design. To apply, go to <http://www.williamsburgplayers.org/policies/scholarship.pdf> and read the requirements and deadlines for filing.

Hey Neighbor! BIBLE STUDY

Ongoing
A shepherd chapel type bible study is held every Monday at the Williamsburg regional library Norge, starting at 6:30 pm to help you answer such questions. Contact: 757-253-0172 or 757-604-6649

Hey Neighbor! MOMS IN PRAYER INTERNATIONAL

Ongoing
Meets weekly thru June 2014. Join us and other Moms for a powerful time of prayer Every Wednesday at 1pm at Calvary Chapel Williamsburg, 5535 Olde Towne Road. Contact info: Jeanne Hallman, 757-220-8400/Jeanne4j@cox.net. Visit

www.MomsInPrayer.org; or www.calvarycw.org.

Hey Neighbor! SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS

Ongoing
Come join us, the Baker-Temple Assembly 226, at our monthly meeting for an evening of magic. Details regarding meetings can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/samassembly226/>. If you have any questions or would like to attend one of our meetings, please contact us at assembly226@gmail.com.

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 each month on third Thursday nights for discussion, socialization, support, information, friendship, and encouragement. For more information, contact Sara E. Lewis, Support Group Coordinator/Facilitator, at 757-784-0344 or slewis@cox.net

Hey Neighbor! MASTER GARDENER HELP DESK

Ongoing
Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners staff the Helpdesk from 9 am – 1 pm, Monday-Friday from April-September. 757-

564-2175. You may also email your questions at jccwmg1@gmail.com.

Hey Neighbor! CALL FOR MUSICIANS!

Ongoing
The Williamsburg Players is looking for musicians for our upcoming musical productions of Into the Woods, Peter Pan and Cats. If you able to sight read, have some free time and would love to be a part of the live theater experience with the Williamsburg Players, the peninsula's oldest community theater, please call Mike at 757-390-7050.

Hey Neighbor! CHURCH MUSIC DIRECTOR POSITION AVAILABLE

Ongoing
Stone House Presbyterian Church (9401 Fieldstone Pkwy, Toano) is seeking a part time music director. We are currently hiring and trying to get the word out to as many in the local area as possible. Contact Ann Grossman at music@shpchurch.org or at 757-565-1130.

Hey Neighbor! NEW QUARTER PARK MONTHLY EVENTS

Ongoing
Bird Walks - led by members of the Williamsburg Bird Club, twice each month, year-round. On second Saturdays walks are held from 8-10 am and on fourth Saturdays they are conducted from 7-9 am. For more

information, call 757-890-5840. Located at 1000 Lakeshead Dr, near Queens Lake neighborhood.

BYOK – Bring Your Own Kayak – From 9 am-12 noon every third Saturday from May to Out-and-back paddle on Queen's Creek led by park staff. For more information, call 757-890-5840. Located at 1000 Lakeshead Dr, near Queens Lake neighborhood.

Moonlight and Music-Join other acoustic musicians and vocalists from 6:30 - 8:30 pm every fourth Wednesday night from May through September for this outdoor jam session led by musician Joe Duggan (Joe's Day Off). For more information, call 757-890-5840. Located at 1000 Lakeshead Dr, near Queens Lake neighborhood.

Disc Golf Doubles at New Quarter Park - Meet up with other disc golfers to create foursomes for informal disc golf tournaments every Sunday at 10 am at New Quarter Park, located at 1000 Lakeshead Dr. Check in at www.facebook.com/newquarter for news and updates.

Hey Neighbor! GROVE COMMUNITY GARDEN INVOLVEMENT

Ongoing
If you would like to assist gardeners and help with the landscaping, then please get involved at the



Come Join Us for the Fifth Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta

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Hey Neighbor!

NEW2YOU THRIFT STORE

Ongoing

4500 John Tyler Highway, Five Forks Shopping Center. Hours: Monday through Saturday from 10 am – 6 pm. Tax-deductible donation items may be dropped off at the store during business hours or picked up by appointment. For more information, call 757- 221-6633 or email new2you@williamsburgchristian.org. The store is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community thrift store; it's primary goal is to support local Christian education. Proceeds go directly to Williamsburg Christian Academy.

Hey Neighbor!

THURSDAY AFTERNOON FILM SERIES BRINGS THE TROPICS TO YOU

Ongoing

The movies are shown in the Williamsburg Regional Library Theater located at 515 Scotland Street. Admission is free and reservations are not required. For more information, call 259-4070.

Hey Neighbor!

CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

May 30, 2014

James City and the Newtown Lions Clubs are hosting a Charity Golf Tournament at Ford's Colony, 240 Ford's Colony Drive in Williamsburg. Registration time is 8am with a Shotgun Start at 9 am. There will be men's and women's flights. Proceeds from this tournament support sight, hearing, and diabetes programs in the greater Williamsburg community. For information, contact Dave Hartsough at Harth2otec@aol.com.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG FARMERS MARKET

May 31, 2014

From 8 am – 12 noon. Over 40 vendors. Choose from meats, produce, baked goods and so much more. The Master Gardeners will have an exhibit and Orion will perform

from 9-11 am. 402 W Duke of Gloucester St. in Merchants Square.

Hey Neighbor!

JERUSALEM MARKEPLACE

May 31, 2014

Wellspring United Methodist Church, 4871 Longhill Road, is hosting the Jerusalem Marketplace Event from 4-7 pm. Jerusalem Marketplace immerses learners of all ages in biblical times culture. For more information, go to www.VisitJMP.com. Jerusalem marketplace is a multi-sensory experience where the bible comes alive. Activities for all ages. Free admission and parking. Food will be available from Sticks© Kebob Restaurant.

Hey Neighbor!

GERMAN SHEPHERD ADOPTION OPPORTUNITY

June 1, 2014

The Virginia German Shepherd Rescue (VGSR) will hold an adoption event at PetCo, 4600 Casey Blvd., Williamsburg. Hours are 12 –3 pm. The public is invited to come and meet German Shepherds up for adoption, learn about the rescue organization and the volunteer opportunities. Visit us at info@shepherdrescue.org

Hey Neighbor!

"FASHION IN COLONIAL VIRGINIA" THEME MONTH

June 1-30, 2014

Jamestown Settlement & Yorktown Victory Center. Explore how clothing of the period was fashioned during an interpretive theme month with hands-on activities. Jamestown Settlement is located on State Route 31 in Williamsburg. The Yorktown Victory Center is located on Route 1020 in Yorktown. Call 888-593-4682 toll-free or 757- 253-4838, or visit www.historyisfun.org.

Hey Neighbor!

TRINITY ORGAN CONCERT

June 3, 2014

This free one-hour concert will feature the Brass Quintet from the U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Band and organist Aaron Renninger performing an assortment of classical pieces including Fanfares for Brass, Organ and Timpani by David Hurd. 12:00 pm at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. Bring a friend and your lunch. For more information, call 757-229-3631 or visit [# Love • Money Control](http://www.be-</p></div><div data-bbox=)



Trey Parker

Answers from your Estate Planning Attorneys at Carrell Blanton Ferris & Associates

460 McLaws Circle, Suite 200 Williamsburg, VA 23185 (757) 220-8114

In discussing estate planning with my clients, this question sometimes arises during a consultation – “Is there a way that I can keep my estate plan private, even after I die?” In other words, they want to limit who will have knowledge of the contents of their estate or to whom they are leaving it. Many of my clients simply do not want anyone to know how much money they have, or they believe that knowledge of their estate plan could lead to fighting among family members or prevent their children from working toward their own financial independence. For clients with such concerns, I often recommend using a revocable living trust, which offers greater privacy than a last will and testament.

Unlike dying intestate or with a simple will, a revocable living trust, if properly funded, can avoid the courts and its probate system. Therefore, using a trust can ensure that your plans and affairs do not become a matter of public record upon your death or incapacity.

The more complicated question, however, is whether the beneficiaries of a revocable living trust, such as children and other family members, can also be excluded from knowing the particulars of the estate plan. Like most questions regarding the law, the answer is “maybe.”

Virginia has adopted the Uniform Trust Code, which addresses the rights of beneficiaries to information about the trust. The Code requires

that certain information must be provided to all beneficiaries of a trust. In determining what information must be provided, the Code distinguishes between “beneficiaries” and “qualified beneficiaries,” with qualified beneficiaries being entitled to greater information. Depending on the type of beneficiary, they may be entitled to a copy of the trust instrument, a listing of trust assets and their respective market values, and all liabilities, receipts and disbursements of the trust. Although such information provides beneficiaries with the ability to enforce their rights under a trust, it can also provide unscrupulous beneficiaries with the opportunity to unnecessarily scrutinize its administration.

Fortunately, the Uniform Trust Code, as adopted in Virginia, allows a trustmaker to modify or waive some of these reporting requirements. However, the trust instrument must include a specific waiver to achieve that result. A well-drafted revocable living trust will have extensive language addressing this issue in accordance with the goals of the client.

If you would like to learn more about this topic, or other differences between wills and revocable living trusts and how each can achieve your estate planning goals, please consider signing up for one of our no-cost educational workshops held in the boardroom of our law office. See our website, www.carrellblanton.com, for the dates and times.

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James City County Comprehensive Plan Community Workshop

The Community Participation Team invites you to discuss economic development, transportation and land use:

- **Upper JCC – Monday, June 9, 7-9 p.m.**
Toano Middle School, 7817 Richmond Rd.
- **Central JCC – Tuesday, June 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**
King of Glory Lutheran Church, 4897 Longhill Rd.
- **Lower JCC – Wednesday, June 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**
Little Zion Baptist Church, 8625 Pocahontas Trl.



Can't attend? Want more info?
jamescitycountyva.gov/2035input
 757-259-4990



deva.org/concerts. Please note that this concert is on Tuesday, not the usual Wednesday.

Hey Neighbor!
BOOK GROUP TRAINING

June 7, 2014

Williamsburg Regional Library is offering a Book Group Basic Training from 10:30 am -4 pm at the Williamsburg Library on Scotland Street. Learn tips and tricks for starting a new group or trying new formats for your current group. Call 259-4050 to register or with questions. Event contact: Andrew Smith, asmith@wrl.org.

Hey Neighbor!
CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER'S ANNUAL YARD SALE

June 7, 2014

From 7 am-1 pm. Bring friend or family & browse through our many items at wonderful prices to find your next treasure to take home. For information, call Kim Lee 871-3439.

Hey Neighbor!
"OLD TIMERS"

WILLIAMSBURG REUNION

June 7-8, 2014

The Williamsburg Reunion welcomes everyone who lived in or around Williamsburg, James City County, and York County's Bruton District in the year 1974 or earlier. Go to www.williamsburgreunion.com to check out details on the registration form on how to attend this free church service. This is a biannual event. To be eligible, you need to have been living the area 40 years ago or more. For more information, contact Cathy Waltrip (Class of 1967 – Blair High School), Marketing Chair for the Williamsburg Reunion cathywaltrip@cox.net or 757-870-1772.

Hey Neighbor!
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

June 9, 2014

From 7-9 pm at Toano Middle School - 7817 Richmond Road, take part in the future of your community. The James City County Planning Division and Community Participation Team (CPT) invite everyone who lives, works and plays in the County to attend a Comprehensive Plan Community Workshop. Each workshop will focus on economic development, transporta-

tion and land use in the County as a whole but will spotlight one of three geographic regions. The Comprehensive Plan is the County's master plan for guiding future growth as put forth by County citizens. It is reviewed every five years and is used to evaluate development proposals and guide the decisions of County departments over the next 20 years. For more information, call 757-253-6685.

Hey Neighbor!
WILLIAMSBURG CHORAL GUILD SUMMER SINGS #1

June 11, 2014

Summer Sings features sing-alongs of great choral masterpieces, each with an eminent guest conductor and piano accompaniment, and the audience is the chorus! These Wednesday events start at 7 pm, with registration, announcements and an introduction to the music; singing begins at 7:30 pm. At Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists, 3051 Ironbound Rd., Williamsburg. Information found at <http://williamsburgchoralguild.org> or call 757-220-1808. Cost \$10.

Hey Neighbor!
CATCH THE VISION

June 12, 2014

Williamsburg Christian Academy invites you to a one hour captivating glimpse of the Academy; it begins at 5:30 pm. WCA is a pre-school through 12th grade Christ centered, interdenominational, college preparatory jewel in our community. Attend a tour to see if this is the educational option that's just right for your family! 101 Schoolhouse Lane, Williamsburg. Visit our website at williamsburgchristian.org or call 757 220-1978, ext. 113, for more information.

Hey Neighbor!
BARBEQUE LUNCHEON SENIOR CENTER EVENT

June 13, 2014

A Historic Triangle Senior Center event, from 11:30 am – 2 pm at the Senior Center (5301 Longhill Rd., Williamsburg, in the JCC Rec Center). Sign up early to reserve and pay for your meal. The luncheon sign up will be open until Friday, June 6. Call the Historic Triangle Senior Center at 259-4187 from 9 am – 4 pm, Monday – Friday, for more information.

Williamsburg's
**IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD**
photo challenge

**SUPREME
STYLES...
STYLE!**

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

Enjoy!



ADVANCED LEVEL

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

MAY 2014
In the Neighborhood
Photo Challenge





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8 WHITBY COURT

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