

March 2014

WILLIAMSBURG'S

Next Door Neighbors[®]

VOL. 8, ISSUE 3

PRICELESS

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home

Welcome

Rich Keurajian

BUSINESS

Nancy Wiseman

SPORTS

Jennifer Morton

A & E

Tempy Barbru

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Meredith Collins, Publisher

We've published issues in past years where we have interviewed locals who have lived in Williamsburg for a long time. Those magazines were well received by our readers and we will be re-visiting that theme again soon. For this issue, we thought it might be interesting to hear what newcomers have to say about our community.

As someone who has only lived here about seven years, I have my own thoughts about Williamsburg. For me, it is a wonderful place to live and to publish a community magazine. People here care about one another and that makes life in Williamsburg very special. In the newspaper business, I moved around quite a bit over the years and lived in several cities - both small towns and larger ones. Once I got married, I was much more content to grow roots. Joe and I love it here. I have told friends that I plan to happily "hunker down" right here and just grow old.

I hope you enjoy the stories in this issue. Many of the folks we interviewed had similar reasons for wanting to live in Williamsburg as those who have lived here all of their lives. There is no doubt that most people cherish our unique community - no matter how long they have lived here. Whether you are a "been here" or a "come here", I think you will enjoy this issue. Read on and decide for yourself. NDN



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RICH KEURAJIAN



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

A Career in Hospitality Leads to Williamsburg

By Lillian Stevens

This year, Rich Keurajian is celebrating his 30th year in the hotel business – and this past November marked the Keurajian family’s second year in Greater Williamsburg.

Rich and his family have fully immersed themselves in the community and are enjoying the friendly pace and hospitality that makes the area such a wonderful place to call home. The native of northern New Jersey loves the small-town feel of Williamsburg – and how everyone seems to know everyone else.

“We just enjoy living in the comfort of a town where people are so friendly,” Rich says. “People here make eye contact and are quick to say hello. Plus, this is a town that has some diversity to it and I love that.”

In the fall of 2011, Rich was named Vice President for Sales and Marketing at Kingsmill Resort, so he moved his family here from Princeton where he had worked in progressive capacities with various corporate hotel companies.

“Over the past three decades, I’ve involved

myself with a variety of hotels and customers and demographics and types of properties,” Rich says. “I’ve gone from casinos to conference centers to golf resorts to suburban hotels. But a resort environment is actually where I started when I was fresh out of college, and I decided a few years ago that I would set my sights on getting back to that kind of setting.”

When the position at Kingsmill became available, Rich was looking for an opportunity to work at a complex resort property that had

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what he calls “a lot of moving parts.”

Situated on 2,900 acres along the James River, Kingsmill Resort is not only a local treasure, but one of the best known resorts on the east coast and home to the annual PGA Kingsmill Championship. With some 425 exquisite villa-style guest rooms and suites, a renowned Spa and fine dining – not to mention three 18-hole championship golf courses – one could certainly say that Kingsmill has a lot of moving parts.

Rich has lived and worked all over the United States, but he and his wife, Carolyn, were looking for just the right fit for their family. They were hoping to relocate to a city or community that wasn't too touristy or transient. In addition to a good career opportunity for Rich, the couple was searching for a family-friendly community in which to raise their three children, who range in age from 10 to 16.

They found it right here.

Williamsburg reminds the couple very much of Princeton because of the size and scale of the town itself and because of the academic and cultural bonuses that come with living in a college town.

“Our youngest is in the 5th grade – and so wouldn't it be great to stay here? Each of our children is busy with school, sports and other activities – so that keeps us busy too. And Carolyn's work with the Symphonia has involved us both in the community.”

On the work front, Rich says that it's a fun time to be a part of all the things that are going on at Kingsmill. And after work, he enjoys blowing off steam playing indoor soccer at the WISC.

“It is a great match for us all,” he says. “We couldn't be happier.”

Theirs was not always an easy path, though.

“In 2004, we moved from northern New Jersey to Princeton,” Rich explains. “I'd gotten a job working for a great hotel there, and we were settling into this wonderful community. What I could not have known at the time was that the great hotel was being sold and I was going to be out of work.”

Although this turn of events was unexpected, Rich used this time as an opportunity to strategically plan his next career move. He could have gone to work in New York City, but he wanted to choose his next steps very carefully, ensuring a good lifestyle and abundant opportunities for his children.

Never one to look back or dwell on the past, he looked forward. “I always figured that good things will happen to you if you apply yourself.” Rich built his resume working with various hotel companies, and when the opportunity to come to Kingsmill – and Williamsburg – came along, he and his family were ready to make the move.

He finds it just a little bit amusing that people can often make such a big deal out of moving from one state to the next – or even one town to the next. He sees it here in Williamsburg and was keenly aware of it back home in New Jersey too. Just two generations ago, things were very different.

“My grandfather immigrated to this country from Armenia after the Armenian Genocide in 1918 – with a wife and a two-year old,” Rich says. “And like many immigrants of that time, he didn't speak any English. But he boarded a steamship, crossed the ocean and landed in New York. He arrived with the skills of his trade and a spirit to succeed, and he eventually became the head jeweler at Tiffany's in New York City during the 1920s.”

The elder Keurajians lived in and around New York City, so Rich was



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born and raised in Old Tappan, a suburban town in New Jersey located about 20 minutes outside of New York City. He went to the College of New Jersey, graduating in 1984 with a business degree.

“After graduating from college, I went to Atlantic City with my college roommate,” he says. “The plan was to be a beach bum for one last summer before moving back home and getting a job in the City.”

After a great summer at the beach resort, Rich found a job there and went to work at Atlantic City’s Resorts International Hotel. This ultimately led to a life-long love affair with the hotel business. Through the years, he has met so many interesting people from church groups to pharmaceutical companies, and entertainers like Don Rickles and Frank Sinatra.

Still, things haven’t always been exactly posh. “When I was ten years old, I worked in my uncle’s motel in Nyack, NY,” he says. “My job was picking up cigarette butts. But by high school, I was working as a desk clerk there.”

Fast forward thirty or so years and Rich is working at a resort where the President of the United States has been a guest.

“It’s true,” he says. “Last year, I had the plea-

sure of meeting President Obama when he spent three days at Kingsmill. No matter what your political persuasion, that is a big deal.”

Ask him what he misses about New York and New Jersey and he won’t miss a beat.

“The food,” he exclaims with a hearty laugh. Rich also sometimes misses the energy and “that overall edginess. The back and forth – is going to always be in my blood,” he says. “And that’s not a bad thing because sometimes it takes pushing the envelope just a little – to get people to come out of their comfort zones and think a little differently.”

For others new to Williamsburg – just settling in or wondering if they ever will – Rich has some solid advice. He believes that learning about the community enhances our everyday living and it makes us fun to visit. And let’s face it, when you live here, people will visit. So, he encourages new residents to learn all that they can, from facts about local history (including dates, facts and unique characteristics) to the best restaurants.

“Become an ambassador. It might be our home but to our out-of-town friends and family, it’s also an area of interest for vacations and getaways.”

As an illustration, years ago Rich was living in Miami and working at the Doral Resort there. He found that he was often entertaining both friends and clients.

“Sooner or later – usually sooner – we found ourselves on the golf course. I would be telling everyone about the golf course design, but I recall my visitors taking in the beauty of the course and asking me, ‘what kind of tree is that?’ or ‘what kind of flower is that?’ or ‘what kind of bird is that?’ and my reply was always, ‘I don’t know, but that putt is going to break two inches to the left.’”

Williamsburg, of course, has its own rich traditions as well as gracious residents who are happy to welcome newcomers, whether they are visitors or new residents. Rich recommends that new residents invest themselves in the community in order to understand all of the treasures it holds.

“There is so much going on here – so many activities to take advantage of. Invest yourself in them. And through these activities you will meet people and get involved and that will lead to a whole network of new and interesting people. Then, you can just pick the path that you want to take.” NDN



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DOUG KEIPER



HONEYMOON RETURN

By Alison Johnson

Some 42 years after selecting Williamsburg as a honeymoon destination – and after decades of travels that have taken them literally around the world – Doug and Dawn Keiper are back, this time to stay.

Looking back on those newlywed days, Dawn recalls that she and Doug quickly decided Williamsburg was a special place. The Pennsylvania natives have always shared an interest in Colonial history, architecture and furniture, so they loved the atmosphere on Duke of Gloucester Street.

“It was like being emerged in a different time period,” she says. “There was such an authenticity about it. I remember looking around at the interiors of the houses and talking about how we hoped to acquire the same look in our home one day.”

Now they’ve done just that.

In October, the Keipers closed on a home in the Governor’s Land community that is architecturally inspired by the King’s Arms Tavern, itself a reproduction of a genteel restaurant that dates back to 1772. Inside

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the frame home, built in 2000, Doug and Dawn have decorated with the antique furniture they've collected over four decades together.

"We've tried to build Colonial homes in the past, but we could never get just what I wanted: an old house, or a house that looked old, with all new amenities," Doug says. "I'm definitely a history guy, and architecture has always been my love. We looked at 10 or 15 houses here, and this particular house was a perfect fit. The quality and level of detail is just incredible."

Doug and Dawn, both 67, moved to James City County from Florida, where they have lived since 2001. Along with Williamsburg's historic flavor, they were drawn to its cultural and academic offerings and its variety of seasons, a welcome change from Florida's longer stretches of heat and humidity.

One other perk has caught them by surprise: just how friendly the people are.

"I was sitting alone in a restaurant one day and got invitations from two different groups of people – nobody I'd ever met – to join them," Doug says. "I don't know if I've met anyone who isn't nice. It's different from anywhere I've ever lived before." Seconds Dawn, "I'm surprised by how quickly I felt comfortable, how quickly this felt like home."

Dawn and Doug spent most of their married lives in Williamsport, a city in north-central Pennsylvania that's most famous as the birthplace of Little League Baseball. The two met on a blind date, set up by a mutual friend, as college students: Doug was a history and math major at Williamsport's Lycoming College, and Dawn was studying early childhood education at Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, about 30 minutes away.

Both later earned master's degrees at Penn State, Doug in counseling and Dawn in her undergraduate field. Married in 1971, the young couple spent eight years after graduate school living in an apartment inside a fraternity complex at Lycoming, where Doug worked as a counselor. "It was good in the beginning, but after a while that's going to kill you," says Doug, who was also Associate Dean of Students. "Loud. Sometimes you could feel the vibrations from the floors overhead."

The two moved off campus after Doug took a job in admissions. His varied career also has included time as a high school teacher – and wrestling and track coach – director of economic development for a county, commercial lender for a bank, marketing director for a construction company and commercial and industrial real estate agent. Dawn, meanwhile, was a kindergarten teacher for 33 years.

After 40 years in Williamsport, Doug and Dawn headed to Florida for its warmer climate. They chose a condominium in Celebration, a master-planned community near Walt Disney World Resort. The Walt Disney Company envisioned Celebration as an urban utopia, complete with amenities such as sidewalks, biking trails and children's playgrounds. The Keipers later built a home there.

With the Orlando airport close by, the two also got a chance to travel extensively, one of their favorite pastimes. They've traversed the United States and gone as far as Australia and Antarctica; in 2012 alone, in fact, they ventured to all seven continents by private jet. Williamsburg's proximity to Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport, not surprisingly, was a major selling point.

While Doug and Dawn enjoyed life in Florida, they decided they preferred a more varied climate. In Celebration, days of 90-degree heat and humidity could stretch from May to the end of September, with very few breaks.

“It sounds clichéd, but I missed the seasons,” Dawn says. “I didn’t want to go all the way back North – that’s too cold – but somewhere closer to it.” The hot weather also limited what she could grow in her yard: “I like to garden a lot, and I’m looking forward to growing daffodils, hydrangea and peonies – the temperate-climate plants. I know it can be very hot here, but it won’t be for quite as long.”

The Keipers considered a few spots south of Virginia, including Charleston and Myrtle Beach, S.C., but found Williamsburg’s historic traditions impossible to beat. They had visited the Historic District often since their honeymoon and even happened to be in town for the 2009 opening of the reconstructed 18th-century R. Charlton’s Coffeehouse. They’re also closer to Doug’s mother, their only surviving parent, who lives about six hours away in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The area’s outdoor recreation opportunities were another plus: Doug and Dawn, both former lifeguards, enjoy staying active. Doug, a nationally competitive kayaker in his age group, is happy to live near water. Dawn, a runner who has completed three half-marathons – the last one about two years ago – liked the walking and biking trails and health facilities in and near Governor’s Land.

After their years on university campuses, the couple also embraced the chance to live near the College of William and Mary. Both expect to take advantage of plays, concerts and lifelong learning classes, especially in early American History. “There’s a great intellectual scene here, especially for such a relatively small place,” Dawn notes. “There are a lot of choices on activities, a lot of diversity.”

They’ve already found some favorite restaurants, including the Blue Talon Bistro, Fat Canary and Café Provencal, the dining room at the Williamsburg Winery. They like the atmosphere of the taverns in Colonial Williamsburg too, of course.

Another pleasant surprise for Dawn, an avid reader, has been the quality of the Williamsburg Regional Library branch on Scotland Street. She also has enjoyed retail outings at the Marketplace Shopping District on Monticello Avenue and New Town Williamsburg. “There’s not a huge department store, granted, but I’ve had no problem finding anything I need,” she says.

The Keipers have been shuttling back and forth between Williamsburg and Florida, where their house is on the market. They plan to maintain some kind of presence in Florida, likely a condo where they can spend part of the year and stay connected with friends.

As they get settled, Doug and Dawn are looking forward to exploring Jamestown, Yorktown and other historic sites on their own and with visitors. They also want to check out new hiking and biking trails and the area’s beaches, as well as the Grand Illumination and other special events.

The summer will be steamy, they know, but as Florida veterans they’re not sweating it. “In Florida, people complain it’s cold if it’s 67, 68 degrees,” Dawn says. As for the winters, they’re not big fans of the few 20-and-below degree days that were more common in Pennsylvania – but again, they’re ready. “I bought my first winter coat in a good long time,” Dawn says with a laugh. “I was getting by with denim, cotton and raincoats.”

Overall, the Keipers are simply happy to call their honeymoon destination home.

“We’re still pretty giddy and excited about being here,” Dawn says. Adds Doug: “After coming so many times as visitors, it’s nice to be able to drive downtown anytime we want and go for a walk through the restoration. It’s just lovely.” **NDN**

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The Farmers Market and Home

By Cathy Welch

Tracy Herner became manager of the Williamsburg Farmers Market last summer. “The more I worked here, the more I wanted to live here,” she says. “They do things differently in Williamsburg.”

Born in 1980 in California, Tracy is one of five children. “I have a little sister who is 15 months younger than me and she’s my best friend.” Her father accepted a networking job offer in Virginia and the family moved to Fluvanna County near Charlottesville. “I spent every fun afternoon of my youth in Charlottesville,” she says. Two of her siblings still live in Virginia.

Tracy met her boyfriend 12 years ago. Their first date was in Merchant Square. “It was almost Christmas time and the Christmas decorations were in the windows,” Tracy says. “It was the best date ever.”



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

The couple bought a townhouse in mid-town Newport News when Tracy’s boyfriend began work at Liebherr America in the city’s south end. “It was a fixer-upper and it took six months of hard work to make it livable since we wanted a really hip place.”

Tracy has a long and winding career path. “I ran an Internet service provider in the dotcom bubble,” she says. She trained company employees in excellent customer service. Her boss wanted every single one of his employees to

treat customers the way she did.

After the dotcom went under, she worked for TruGreen in Charlottesville and then in Newport News. Missing her work in the technological field, Tracy worked as a network engineer for AT&T in Richmond, commuting daily from Newport News to downtown Richmond for eight months. She left there to work full-time for a Verizon technical support center in Hampton as a customer support analyst. After

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working 6:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. for two years, with little chance of gaining a better shift, Tracy took an option to leave Verizon at the time.

Her shift wore on her family which now included an elementary school-aged daughter. “And then I got pregnant with my son,” Tracy says. “He’s a healthy little guy and I loved being a stay-home-mom.”

But she missed adult human contact. “I was looking for places to volunteer and was having hour-long conversations with grocery clerks just for the adult interaction.”

When her son was three-months-old, she revamped and distributed her resume. Billing herself as an IT professional, she received multiple job offers but for low pay. “I couldn’t go from making a lot of money to making no money without any benefits.” She refused to sell herself short.

“I saw this posting about working for a farmers market and I thought, if I’m standing on the side of the road selling fruit, okay,” Tracy explains. She had never been to a farmers market in Virginia. She was hired at Williamsburg Farmers Market for a part-time administrative position.

The first thing that happened when Tracy went to work with Libbey Oliver, the market’s previous manager, her eyes began to open to differences in the Williamsburg community.

“She took me to our municipal building and introduced me to everyone who works for our city. I don’t know many people who live in Williamsburg who have met all those people,” Tracy says. She found the city employees to be happy and positive.

She was impressed by the quality of the nonprofit’s board members. “The people on our board are integral community members from Colonial Williamsburg, City of Williamsburg and Merchant



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Square. These are the people that create the city to be as wonderful as it is and are so important to the quality of life here.”

Tracy moved with her family to Williamsburg in February 2013. “We had outgrown our townhouse after our son was born.” The beginning of middle school for their daughter was looming. Crime in Newport News was getting a little too close to home. They began looking for another place to live.

The couple searched in Smithfield, Yorktown and better neighborhoods in Newport News. They could not find a house they fell in love with.

Finally, after searching for three months, they found a home in the heart of Williamsburg. Tracy was already working part-time at the Williamsburg Farmers Market then.

“When we bought the house we were so excited to live in such a nice place,” Tracy explains. They bought a four-bedroom with a downstairs master suite. “My mother can’t walk and couldn’t visit us in Newport News because she had to go up two flights of stairs to the first bedroom,” she explains.

Shortly after their move, Libbey told Tracy that she planned to retire soon. “The timing

was perfect,” Tracy says. Oma and Opa, the children’s German grandparents, live in the family’s neighborhood and keep the children while she works. It has been a great way for them to get to know their grandchildren.

“Here, I do all the marketing and a lot of strategic planning,” Tracy says. She does the vendor coordination, volunteer coordination, and everything else needed to run the market. She learned about the nonprofit side of the small company and was intrigued. “Here I have a tangible meaning and every hour I put into my work, I’m doing something that means something to more than just myself,” she explains.

“I’m in love with what I do,” Tracy says. “I have a job that I love, I’m close to my children and I get to work as independently as anyone could ever hope to.” She also loves the fact that she gets to be on the inside of her community while working in the nonprofit world.

The market is open four hours on Saturday, but it takes about 60 hours to put together a four-hour event every week. Tracy works with approximately 45 volunteers who gave over 800 hours of their time in 2013.

“We’re a very esteemed farmers market and

everything must be Virginia-produced,” Tracy explains. As manager, she must verify vendors’ certifications and legal compliance. This requires her to make farm visits.

“That’s a fun part of my job,” she explains. “I will go to about eight farms a day until I get them all done. This will be my first year visiting all of them.”

Tracy plans to become more involved in the Williamsburg community. “I’m big on volunteering,” she says. “I just haven’t found the time to find my niche.” She says it will probably be either food- or social media-related. “I haven’t found the perfect place that works with my schedule.”

A lot of the volunteer opportunities require advance commitment. She finds the spontaneous nature of life in Williamsburg delightful. “It’s the perfect place for somebody like me who hates making plans. When it comes to work, I plan everything. But when it comes to my home, vacation or even weekend getaways, I’m spur-of-the-moment.”

“I think my first impression of Williamsburg is how service-minded everybody is,” Tracy says. “Everybody who lives in Williamsburg wants to give back to Williamsburg.” **NDN**

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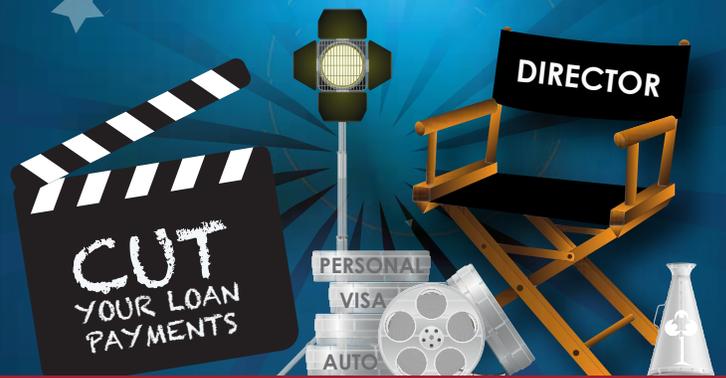
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THRIVING TRANSPLANTS

By Linda Landreth Phelps

Recent transplants, Ralph and Debbie Abrams, are reestablishing their roots in the Old Dominion. “Debbie’s a native of Richmond and graduated from Radford, and I grew up in Lynchburg,” Ralph says, a class of 1973 alumnus of Virginia Tech.

They may have been Virginians, but soon after they married corporate life took them on an adventurous odyssey. After many moves, including an extended stay in England, their last career stop was New Jersey. With retirement from Ralph’s position as president of Lea & Perrins, Inc. on the near horizon, the Abrams’ began researching where they ultimately wanted to live. For the first time, the needs of career took a back seat to personal preference. Ralph’s business skills and Debbie’s as her household’s manager were brought to bear on the question of precisely where to put down permanent roots.

“It’s never a good idea to make such a decision solely based on where



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your children live,” Debbie says. “You never know where their careers will take them. Our strategy for family closeness was to choose a place to retire that was so much fun that they would visit often and hate to leave.” That plan seems to have worked well for everyone; Ralph and Debbie are so enthusiastic about their new home town of Williamsburg that they could write ad copy for the Chamber of Commerce.

“We looked all up and down the coast for the perfect place,” Ralph remembers. “Lynchburg and Richmond had gotten too big for our taste, and we really wanted a small town feel. We were definitely searching for a planned community with a mixed age demographic that had good golf courses. Debbie and I saw plenty of such communities, but in many cases there was nothing outside of their gates.”

Ralph’s early memories of Williamsburg centered on annual childhood school trips. He recalls the area as “mostly pancake houses” back then, though that recollection could have been colored by a boy’s robust appetite.

“I was surprised to see how much Williamsburg had grown when we bought a Marriott timeshare in the early 2000s and started coming here to play golf,” he says. “It was enticing,

with the college and all those activities and the town’s proximity to the beach. We put it on the list of places to consider for retirement because it was close to the families here in Virginia--my parents in Lynchburg are just a few hours away and Debbie has a cousin who lives in Kingsmill - while still being an easy drive from New Jersey for visits to our daughter, Kari, and two grandchildren.”

Their son, Ryan, lives in Dallas, Texas, and one of the items on Ralph and Debbie’s check-off list was ease of travel by air. Having a choice of two accessible airports within 45 minutes was a bonus, especially for a couple used to the controlled chaos surrounding larger airports near their former home. Ryan has found it quite convenient to visit his parents for the Christmas holidays.

Debbie was also attracted to this area because Tidewater enjoys four distinct seasons without the extremes in weather typical of communities farther south and north. “That was a big draw for me,” Debbie says, “as are the good shopping places in New Town and Newport News being just 25 minutes down the road. It’s a good mix between Costco and the boutiques in Colonial Williamsburg.”

With aging in place being a priority for their future, Debbie remembers the health care available in the area as being critical in their choice of new home. Ralph says he and Debbie assumed, with their proximity to New York City, that their care had been optimal.

“One of the pleasant surprises I found when we moved here was that everything is digital,” Ralph remembers. “All of our medical and dental information is online and easily available. You have a blood test done and they send you an email saying the results are ready for viewing. We didn’t have any of that in New Jersey; it’s more sophisticated here.”

Another important draw was cultural diversity and the presence of a peer group that shares the same kind of life experiences. They wanted to make new friends who would also enjoy a night at the symphony, a glass of fine wine or a good place to dine.

When they made the decision to relocate to Williamsburg, Debbie and Ralph jumped into intellectual, athletic and social activity immediately. Ford’s Colony, where they chose to build two years ago, has an extensive network of clubs and activities, some specifically targeted to new arrivals to the neighborhood.

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"We signed up for everything," Debbie says. "We joined Newcomers Club, Wine and Dine, BYOB, Book Club – you name it. I kind of dragged Ralph into it along with me," she says with a laugh.

"The first year, I was in classes through the Christopher Wren Association all the time," Ralph remembers. "Then I got involved with the William and Mary Executive Partners Program, where former executives are paired with grad students for mentoring. There are about a hundred of us to date, and our job is to impart leadership skills and give the students the benefit of our real world experience."

Involvement with William and Mary broadened their scope from neighborhood to community and, eventually, to region. "My students love to explore, and they're always asking if I've done something or been somewhere they've discovered. We sit around and brainstorm different options within a two-hour radius of Williamsburg." Trolley tours of Richmond and winery trips got added to the growing list of fun activities that Debbie and Ralph wanted to try out.

James City County has exceeded the Abrams' expectations on many fronts. Ralph especially appreciates the Recreation Center's affordable

fees for gym membership and other amenities that he did not find in New Jersey.

"Our grandson, Franklin, was here over Christmas and on a day when the temperature was over 70 degrees we went looking for a playground for him. I was stunned to find the nearby Mid-County Park had this great place for kids."

High on their list of public places to visit one day with grandchildren is the "Go Ape" attraction near the Williamsburg Botanical Garden in Freedom Park. "I haven't been to the garden yet, and I'm looking forward to it," Debbie says, who is the co-president of the Ford's Colony Garden Club. Though not a member of their group, she volunteers to be a hostess and create a lovely floral arrangement for the Green Spring Garden Club's Christmas Historical Homes Tour. Debbie says, "That's my thing and I really enjoy it."

In Williamsburg they have found more than a place to live; the Abrams family has found a delightful new home. They are transplants again thriving in their native soil, but now nurtured by an exciting and dynamic, actively retired lifestyle. As Ralph likes to say about his new hometown, "It's an old area that keeps you young." NDN

Next Door Neighbors

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CORINNE BLACKFORD



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NYC
TO WILLIAMSBURG

By Brandy Centolanza

Corinne Blackford was living in New York City just last year when a job opportunity arose, providing her a chance to move to small town Williamsburg to be closer to her mother.

Corinne, who had been familiar with Williamsburg since her mother, Lisa, moved here eight years ago and since she had previously interned with the City of Williamsburg, was more than happy to accept the newly created position of Economic Development Specialist after receiving an email from Williamsburg's Economic Development Director, Michele DeWitt. Corinne settled in Williamsburg last April.

"I love Williamsburg because it is beautiful, obviously," Corinne says. "That aesthetic feel is certainly appealing. It's cozy. The people here are also friendly. Coming from the streets of Manhattan, it's nice to see people smile and make eye contact. I also like the small town feel and the slower pace. It's nice."

Corinne grew up in Arizona, then headed east for college. She received her undergraduate degree in economics from Bard College in upstate New York, and later moved to New York City after receiving a graduate degree in city and regional planning from Cornell University. She worked in Manhattan for a few years at different non-profit organizations, aiding with fundraising and securing grants. She was looking for a change when she received the email from Michele DeWitt about the job opening in Williamsburg.

"What I did in New York was the kind of work you learn a lot from, but it wasn't really in my degree," she says. "I was surprised by the email from Michele and excited about it."

Before she arrived, she assumed that Williamsburg was simply a destination for older, retired individuals. She soon realized that young professionals like herself also abound.

"There are a lot of young people that work and live around here," she says. "I've met some and would like to meet some more."

Corinne has connected with people through organizations like Young Emerging Professionals of Williamsburg (YEP) and Young Professionals of Williamsburg (YPOW), as well as through her job.

As Economic Development Specialist, Corinne spends time doing administrative work and research, and provides resources and support to small businesses and specialty groups. Currently, she is assisting business owners in the Arts District who are looking to open a school for their specific fine arts trades as well as freelancers who are seeking a co-working office space.

"We also get a lot of walk-ins, particularly from real estate agents who are looking for connections, so we set them up with resources and information," she says. "We also do a lot of work with the College of William and Mary. We like to connect with alums, especially those in business, to see what mutual interests we may have and how we can support each other."

One of her goals is to reach out more to the college students.

"Students are such a big part of our population, so we want to find out what their needs are, what they want. We want them to stay here and work here, so we try to find opportunities for them. We want them to be a part of our community too. We are trying to do everything we can to diversify our economy."

Her favorite part of the job is also working with people from surrounding areas.

"We get out and about a lot," Corinne says. "We attend a lot of regional events with other Hampton Roads communities, and they are a lot of fun. I like the social aspects of this job. I also like planning events. This job is a lot of fun, and each day is different. This is not your typical cubicle job. I also spend a lot of time investigating what is going on in town. It is about staying in the know and finding out what is going on. I meet a lot of different people, work with a lot of different departments

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Corinne also finds living downtown in the heart of Williamsburg enjoyable. She can walk to work as well as to Colonial Williamsburg. "It's fun to walk or jog in Colonial Williamsburg in the morning and see all the locals there before it opens and the tourists arrive," Corinne says. "It's very peaceful. Having a traffic-free street here is awesome."

Corinne is a frequent visitor to the historic area. "I just love to go there, and I love all the animals in Colonial Williamsburg," she shares. "It is a delight. I wish there were more animals there. I also really like the Farmers Market. Williamsburg's Farmers Market may even rival the Union Square Farmers Market [in Manhattan]. It's a good one."

At the Williamsburg Farmers Market, one can witness the true blending of the people of Williamsburg.

"The Farmers Market has the best mix of all of our people coming together, the students, the families, the elderly, people with their dogs," Corinne says. "They all come here, and it is nice to see."

Corinne also enjoys dining out at the various restaurants throughout Williamsburg. Blue Talon on Prince George Street is one of her favorites. "There are some really good restaurants here," she says. "It is quite different than New York, where there are more take out and fast food options."

Though the food, culture and weather are certainly different than the Big Apple, Corinne isn't complaining.

"I just love how the sense of community here is so strong," she says. "I love that the sense of obligation the people have here to each other is so strong."

She is also committed to helping the community through her work. She's been a part of the revitalization and expansion of the downtown area, particularly the Triangle Building along Armistead Avenue. She's looking forward to the construction completion.

"That is going to be something very exciting to witness," she says.

Next up is hopefully finding ways to reinvest and redevelop dilapidated properties in the City of Williamsburg, particularly old, abandoned hotels along the Capitol Landing Road corridor.

"That's been exciting, but also challenging," she says. "Some have been laying fallow for a long time. There is some potential there, but there is a long way to go."

Now that she's been in Williamsburg for almost a year, Corinne feels it is time to expand her horizons of meeting residents beyond her job. She would like to connect with others through more involvement with the Williamsburg Area Arts Commission, and by joining the Quarterpath Recreation Center as well as a musical group in which she can utilize her talents as a violinist.

"I'd love to connect with people in the music scene here, maybe find a bluegrass group," she says. "I'd also love to make more use of the water here, do some boating or kayaking. There certainly are a lot of opportunities for that around here. I'd also like to go down to Virginia Beach and to Charlottesville. I'd love to see Monticello."

Corinne has plans to stick around Williamsburg for a while. "It's been a lot of fun so far," she says. "I am really happy to be here. I like it here. I'd like to make this a launch pad for things for me both personally and professionally. I think it's a good community to do it in." NDN

Williamsburg boasts many unique reasons to want to call this place home: an abundance of history, beautiful neighborhoods, mild climate and friendly people. For LeAnn and Tony Zotta, who recently came here from Franklin, Tennessee, those factors were part of what motivated them to make a move to Williamsburg.

A landlocked city just outside of Nashville, Franklin bears some similarity to this area, yet remains different. The flavor of Williamsburg is unique from Franklin's in that our historical, small town atmosphere from the colonial era provides a platform to witness living history on the downtown streets. LeAnn and Tony knew long ago this was where they wanted to settle.

The one thing they miss about living in Franklin is the proximity to Nashville. "We miss the 'Music City' aspect of living there; it's a very fun town. You frequently see celebrities at Starbucks, the mall, or the grocery store just going about their business."

Tony agrees. "I've been in line behind Keith Urban at Starbucks, seen Martina McBride just walking around, and Taylor Swift often shops at the store where I used to work. You never know who you're going to spot. It made life interesting." After acknowledging the one thing they will miss, he adds that they will not miss the stifling summer heat of Franklin. "At least this area has something of a breeze."

This is not the first time LeAnn and Tony have made a significant move. LeAnn was born and raised in Michigan, and then lived in San Diego for a while. Tony, originally from New Jersey, moved to Colorado when he was in his twenties. Tony says, "We met in Denver in the early nineties, then moved to Boston, then Cape Cod, then back to Michigan, then Tennessee, now here. We're done moving."

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When people decide to settle in an area, the reasons are usually job or family related. LeAnn and Tony, however, have loved this region for a long time, and needed no prompting to relocate. "We spent part of our honeymoon here 20 years ago, and we've always loved it. Living by the water again was a big pull, too," Tony says. LeAnn agrees, adding, "Tony sings professionally and wanted to be closer to Washington, D.C. where he can do more of that. Plus, we both love history and Williamsburg fit all of our criteria very well."

Tony has been performing as a singer for much of his life, and enjoys playing in a variety of formats, from solo to ten-piece bands. He performed at hundreds of weddings and black tie events, including the Massachusetts Governor's inaugural ball, the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston, the Samoset Resort and the Harvard Club. He is looking forward to finding and working with area musicians.

"I work for Brooks Brothers up in Richmond," Tony says. "At the top of my list is to find a good corporate-event band to join. I'm looking forward to doing some gigs in D.C. I've been singing professionally since I was in my teens, it's something I'll do until my voice gives out."

LeAnn is a communications expert, working at web design and copywriting. She works out of a home office, and her agency, Berkshire Communications, specializes in marketing and design. Due to the nature of her work, remote communications make it possible for her to be anywhere and get the job done. While her clients range from nationally known brands to local mom and pop businesses, LeAnn is very excited about being in business in Williamsburg.

LeAnn and Tony have only lived in Williamsburg for about one month. They scoured the Internet for a home, and were able to connect with a real estate agent who proved to be a valuable resource for them.

"Honestly, I don't know how people looked for houses in other parts of the country before we had the Internet," LeAnn says. "Being able to check things out online made this so much easier for us. Plus our real estate agent was amazing."

They love their new neighborhood and are thrilled with the decision to move. Their first impression of Williamsburg was that the city was charming, friendly and quaint. "The people are very kind and engaging, just lovely folks," LeAnn says. "There is a gentility here

you don't find much on the East Coast, except maybe Charleston and Savannah."

Although they have only lived in their home for a short time, they believe this move was a very good decision for them. "After exploring a bit and having had a chance to eat at some of the wonderful area restaurants, I'd say we have pretty much found the perfect spot for us. We like it better every day. The people have been great to us."

One of the aspects LeAnn and Tony like most about Williamsburg is the scenery of the region. "The surroundings are beautiful... the winding roads, the trees, the water, the traditional architecture. We went to a Christmas concert at the Bruton Parish church, which is 300 years old. Where else can you do that? Living in the midst of history is a real privilege," LeAnn says.

The Zottas also learned a couple of pleasant surprises after their move. "We had no idea the James River was so close; it's only about six minutes from our house," LeAnn says. "We had been to New Town on a house-hunting trip, but never saw all of the shopping that was available on Monticello. It's incredibly convenient. There is a grocery store a half a mile away. I used to have to drive 20 minutes to get

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to one in Franklin.”

LeAnn and Tony love living in a place where there is so much history and people work diligently to preserve that.

“This is a fabulous place where I can feel comfortable,” LeAnn says. Her delight for Williamsburg is evident in her language, and she clearly has an emotional connection to this area. “I really want to be part of what is going on in this town, in the downtown area and in Colonial Williamsburg.”

LeAnn and Tony look forward to exploring more of Williamsburg and getting to know their neighbors within the community. LeAnn

is especially excited for the warmer weather to arrive, as that means she will have an opportunity to explore the Williamsburg Farmers Market that takes place in Merchants Square.

“I’m a huge fan of farmers markets and I understand there is a great one downtown,” LeAnn says. “I’ve had the pleasure of meeting Marina Ashton, a founding sponsor and Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Vice-Chair, as well as Marty Wilson, the owner of The Carousel and the Farmers Market Chairperson and Founding Sponsor. I’m interested in volunteering for the Market as soon as it starts up again in the spring.”

The Farmers Market is not the only plan the Zottas have for continuing to discover more about Williamsburg.

“We also want to tour some historic homes and learn more about Williamsburg decorating styles and gardening, and find out how people deal with the shrink-swell soil and humidity in the crawlspace... all new to us.”

As they continue to settle and unpack, newcomers LeAnn and Tony are excited about what the future holds for them. From farmers markets to history to fine dining, Williamsburg has given the Zottas a new community, new friends and a new home. NDN



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Laying Down Roots

By Morgan Barker

Kristin and Jason Romesburg moved to Williamsburg in July 2013 with plans to make it their forever home. After adjusting to Williamsburg and a few colonial surprises, they quickly grew to like the town. Now they just cannot wait to move into their new home.

The melding of modern and colonial details was quite a shock to the young couple.

“I still get caught off guard when I pass a Colonial Williamsburg employee on the road. You just don't expect to see someone in colonial garb in the driver's seat,” Kristin says.

Kristin and Jason met at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia. They graduated in 2002 and tied the knot in 2005.



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"We got married in Stratford Hall. Now, we have a two year old daughter and a schnoodle named Merlin," Kristin says.

Between demanding jobs and education, young married life has been full of moves for the couple. "After we got married, we lived in three places before settling in Williamsburg. Safe to say, we are excited to put down real roots and call Williamsburg home."

One of their previous homes was Winston-Salem, North Carolina where Jason completed his fellowship and residency at Wake Forest University. The couple misses a few things about Winston-Salem. Jason reminisces about the food and environment.

"There were hot Krispy Kreme donuts right off the line, crepe myrtles that lined the sidewalks of Ardmore, our old neighborhood, and we had a really great nanny," Jason says.

Kristin misses the convenience of Winston-Salem as well. "From day one in Winston-Salem, we knew that it was most likely a temporary home, and it took me a while to get used to," Kristin says. "However, it was a very easy city to live in, and I miss some of its silly conveniences. We had a Whole Foods and a mall and there was no rush hour, especially when compared to I-64."

In spite of being a little nostalgic for Winston-Salem life, Kristin and Jason have happily settled in Williamsburg. Currently, Jason works as a radiologist at Tidewater Diagnostic Imaging. Kristin is a defense contractor focusing on environmental compliance, primarily for the Navy.

The couple considers Williamsburg the right choice for their desire to be near family and pursue professional aspirations.

"It was a perfect fit between professional interests and wanting to move back to Virginia. Both of our parents live in the Northern Neck of Virginia so we wanted to be closer to them," Jason says. On the professional side, Jason feels he's found a good place to grow into a career. "I found a great group of people to work with that have been very helpful in my transition from training into practice."

They both also enjoy the Williamsburg environment. "I love how it has a college town feel intertwined with historic areas," Jason says.

The couple also engage in water sports. "And we're drawn by the proximity to the James River with water access for boating. It's a beautiful community with fantastic recreational activities," Jason says. "Plus there are excellent public schools," Kristin says.

Kristin enjoys the unique feel of Williamsburg. "It has small-town charm with big-city amenities."

Kristin finds it difficult to choose one favorite thing about Williamsburg, but has a long list of things she's enthusiastic about. The close proximity to her family topped the list.

"I am glad to finally be back in Virginia and within a short drive to many family members and friends," she says.

Additionally, Kristin is enthused by the many diversions in Williamsburg. "A close second favorite thing would be all of the outdoor activities that Williamsburg has to offer. We enjoy boating and biking, and I hope to improve both my tennis and golf games," she says. "I love the down-

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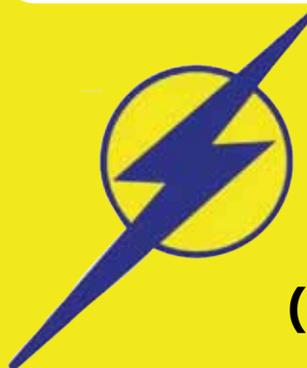
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town farmer's market on Saturdays, too."

Jason enjoys taking in the historic atmosphere. "I love walking Colonial Williamsburg with our daughter and dog while checking out the farmer's market and other events downtown," Jason says. "It's a great place to raise a family and a place that friends and family would enjoy visiting," he says.

The couple is building a home in Kingsmill and will move into their new home around their one year anniversary of moving to Williamsburg.

"We hope to move in early this summer. We've enjoyed getting to know the local vendors while making all of our selections. We're very excited to get settled in and unpack all of our stuff," Kristin says.

In addition to being thrilled to get out of their rental house and into a new home, Kristin and Jason are particularly eager to move into Kingsmill. "We were initially drawn to Kingsmill because we were looking for river access and proximity to I-64 E," Kristin says.

The couple has known Kingsmill was home since they started searching. "Once we started looking seriously in the region, Kingsmill intuitively felt like home," Kristin says. "This feeling continues to be reaffirmed with every resident that we meet. They have been quick to welcome us to the neighborhood and sing its praises," she says.

The building process is quite stimulating for the couple. It's the second home they've built. "But it's a completely different process from the first," Kristin says. "The first one was in Winston-Salem and we built with resale in mind. This time around, we are planning for our long-term."

Kristin and Jason find the home building process exhilarating, but tiring at times. They are taking their time to get their forever home right. "We've put a lot of pressure on ourselves. Forever is a long time," Kristin says.

For the couple, making decisions on their new home means juggling a lot. They find time for home decisions in between working hours and time spent raising their young daughter.

"We visit various vendors during Jason's time off," Kristin says. "We've had some great professionals assisting us in the process."

Kristin says one of the most rousing things about building a home is watching the process. "We've enjoyed walking through the house weekly watching its transformation."

And what will be the best part about moving into a new home? Getting the stuff out of storage!

"Our stuff is stored in every nook and cranny of our rental house, closets, under the bed, the garage," Kristin says.

This has proved a challenge as the seasons have changed.

"We found our hats and gloves halfway through the second snowstorm. I decorated the Christmas tree without a box of ornaments, which I found after the holidays, and I hosted a baby shower with only half of my platters."

Kristin and Jason embrace the area's distinctive ties to the past while well on their way to making a wonderful future for their family in Williamsburg. NDN

The Long and Winding Road to Williamsburg

By Susannah Livingston



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

They seem so completely at home in their new town, one would never guess that Herman and Annette van Geertruyden arrived in Williamsburg just six months ago. It's the culmination of a journey that began decades ago with something of a leap of faith. In a conversation that ranged far and wide, they told about their circuitous journey to Williamsburg and how their new community has welcomed them so

warmly.

The story of the family's migration from Belgium to the United States actually goes back more than a century. The van Geertruydens were prosperous, but Herman's grandfather was a younger son who had to make his own way in life. "My grandparents were farmers and they were on their way to the States as immigrants in the 1880s," Herman explains. They had

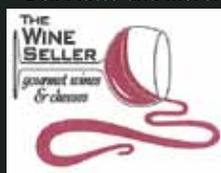
planned to sail from Antwerp on the Red Star Line. But in a decisive twist of fate, an acquaintance sold their tickets on the black market and Herman's forebears found themselves starting their "new life" in Antwerp instead.

Herman's own fascination with America began when he was bedridden with asthma as a child. Wanting to keep him occupied, his father set him to binding and caring for old

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books. Many of those books told colorful tales of the California Gold Rush and the building of the transcontinental railroad - tales that fired his imagination and helped guide his later decision to start a new life in the U.S.

Meanwhile, Herman finished university and pursued a medical career in Belgium. During his residency, he encountered a young American couple whose child he had treated for acute appendicitis. "They were very grateful and one day they said 'Why don't you come to the States?'" Intrigued, he applied for a Fulbright fellowship, was accepted, and trained for two years at Boston's Lahey Clinic and Children's Hospital.

Back in Antwerp, Herman became known as one of Belgium's leading pediatric surgeons. He was on duty at the hospital one day in 1969 when he met a young volunteer named Annette. Three years later, after shuttling back and forth between Antwerp and Oxford, England, where Annette was studying, they were married. With the arrival of their young sons, the couple became increasingly eager to raise them in a country more philosophically in sync with their views on education.

"After having children, I felt I was able to compare the life that I'd lived in Boston - and it was an ideal time to be in Boston in the late 1950s - with life in Belgium," Herman explains. "I still had that picture of the United States in mind and we finally decided to come over for the education of the children."

"And the future of the children," Annette quickly adds.

Though the couple knew it was the right thing to do, it was not a decision they made lightly. "It's easy to say 'Come over,' but we were doing very well in Belgium so it was a bit of a shock to start over," Herman says. Some of their family members struggled to understand the decision.

Herman knew he would have to be re-trained in order to practice medicine in the United States. Several medical schools expressed interest in him, and he and Annette traveled the country for interviews. One of the schools was the relatively new Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, and Herman soon found himself doing a rotating residency at the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital in Hampton and other area hospitals. Including his training in Belgium, he would ultimately complete a staggering 10 years of surgical residency.

Asked to compare the American and European system of medical training, Herman says without hesitation, "There's no comparison possible if I may say so. The United States is far ahead in terms of types of practice, and the technical aspect is completely different. For European students, it's almost become a must: If you want to go into academics in Europe, you have to come here for a couple of years. It's a stamp that indicates you are better trained."

The family stayed in Norfolk for 15 years. Though they came to love the place, the transition was not easy. "We were immigrants and it was much more difficult to be accepted then versus now," Annette explains. "But when you do a big move like that I feel like you have to look forward, not back."

All three sons attended Norfolk Academy and relished their time at the school. Annette stayed busy with volunteer work while raising them. In 1991 the family moved to Tampa, where Herman began working at the VA hospital. The boys soon graduated from high school and left the nest, but Herman and Annette would remain in Tampa for 23 years. "Florida

was very nice but boring,” Annette says. The weather was monotonous, and cultural events were too few. Annette had joined American Express as a VIP corporate travel counselor and enjoyed the work. As retirement approached, they knew they wanted a change.

The family had visited Williamsburg many times over the years, and when it came time to choose a place to retire, the city made the short list. So did Norfolk and Virginia Beach (where they still had friends), the Eastern Shore, Annapolis and Fredericksburg.

In the end, the decision was easy. “Williamsburg was everything that we wanted - a small city with the amenities and benefits of a big city... a college, history, culture, nature - it’s all concentrated here, without the traffic,” Annette explains. The couple’s three sons “never had time to go to Florida and actually didn’t like Florida at all... we were always taking a flight to D.C. to see them.”

In Tampa the family had lived in a community similar to Kingsmill. “We were looking for a smaller house - less yard,” Annette says. “But our Realtor said, ‘I know exactly what you want.’” They looked at the spacious house with the airy floor plan and high ceilings for 10 minutes and said, “This is it.”

Life in Williamsburg has yielded some surprises - most good, some funny. “We are overwhelmed with the welcome of this neighborhood and the town,” Annette says. “And it’s amazing to see how people from all corners of the U.S. conglomerate here - also from around the world. Just on our street we have people from Germany, Japan, Austria, [and] Belgium.”

No doubt referring to a recent 25-degree day, Herman says, “The weather is something we have to get used to, although we love the seasons.”

Annette adds with a laugh, “Everybody is so well dressed here. In Florida all you see is skin. For 23 years I lived in shorts and a tank top.”

The van Geertruydens knew Williamsburg would offer plenty of diversion, but, Annette says, “There are more things to do than we could ever dream to do.” In the scant six months they’ve lived here, the couple has taken classes at the Christopher Wren Association; attended the Virginia Opera and the Williamsburg Symphonia; gathered with members of the Alliance Française, a group of local French speakers; and enjoyed as many lectures, films and plays as they could fit in. Annette also plays tennis in a league twice a week. As they settle into their new community, she and Herman hope to get involved in volunteer work that they can do together.

Visits with their children also promise to keep them busy. Herman and Annette’s oldest son, Yann, worked for a U.S. Senator before attending law school and is now an attorney in Washington. Their second son, Peter, attended West Point and is now a physician with the Army not far away at Fort Belvoir. William, the youngest, was born two weeks after the family’s arrival in the States and used to enjoy reminding his brothers that he was the only one who could become President. Instead, he’s flourishing as an engineer with Exxon in Houston. Herman and Annette have five grandsons; by the time this piece is published, their first granddaughter will have joined the family.

For Herman and Annette van Geertruyden, life these days is good, and Williamsburg is proving to be a more-than-congenial new home. “The real, classic old U.S. that you read about - that you dream about,” Herman says. “That’s exactly what we have here.” NDN



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WORKPLACE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

By Greg Lilly, Editor

"Successful workplace relationships begin with the basics," Nancy Wiseman, a Licensed Professional Counselor, explains. "Have some type of mission statement and a plan of where your company is going," she advises. That is the number one requirement.

Communicating the goal, the reason why everyone shows up for work, the rationale for being in business, keeps owners and employees focused on achieving that goal.

"This leads to detailing what you're going to do and what you will need to do it," Nancy adds. "What is it you really want to accomplish? Do you want to grow and expand? Do you want to maintain a business? Is your focus customer service?" This communicated overall plan helps everyone in the business work together.

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She explains that it's imperative that a business owner and the management staff know the answer to a few basic questions: "What do you stand for? What is your market? What type of people do you want working for you? What type of training are you going to give them? What needs to happen?" Nancy has a background in training and employee development. Consistency and structure in the workplace help oil the wheels of success.

"Consistency," she stresses. "Employees need to know what is okay and what's not in terms of operations and customer interaction. This can eliminate a lot of problems and put people at ease. This helps with teamwork and promoting good staff relations."

Growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, Nancy was a lucky child as some might say. Her father was a trainer for the Cleveland Browns professional football team during the Browns' championship years. "From the time I was three years old, we went to the football games every Sunday. Football was part of the Cleveland lifestyle."

She saw the teamwork on the field and the fundamental need to have the players working toward a goal.

Nancy received her undergraduate degree in teaching. She taught school for a few years, but found that she enjoyed "people development" and began working with companies to enhance productivity with training and employee development programs.

Nancy met her husband, Larry, who was the chair of the Biology Department at William and Mary. "When my dad realized I was moving to Virginia, he wanted to make sure I knew some sports people, not just faculty," she adds with a smile. "He was friends with Jim Copeland, who had played for the Browns (and was the Athletic Director for William and Mary at that time)." Nancy and her husband became active at the college, with its sports programs and in the Williamsburg community.

Her interest in the development of people in their personal and professional lives led Nancy to enroll and graduate from the counseling program at William and Mary. She became the director for the New Horizons Family Counseling Center and then worked as a therapist at Riverside. Eventually, she went into private practice as a psychotherapist. "I've been so fortunate for the people who have mentored me."

Building respect and trust through activities like mentoring is the second requirement for good workplace relationships. From the business owner to the managers to the employees, each part of the company can learn from the other. For that matter, Nancy says that it can extend to customers and vendors, as well. "You hire and do business with people you trust. If there is a lack of trust or respect, this shows in interpersonal communications and may cause a sore spot that grows into conflict."

A place of mutual respect is an enjoyable place to be. Customers will take notice, vendors pick up the vibe and the staff wants the company to reach its goals.

Nancy's third requirement for good workplace relationships involves diversity of people and personalities. "Hiring? Find a good mix of people who want to work," she says. "Hiring a person just because you need a body in a spot tends to create more problems than it solves. Take your time to select people who fit into the goal of the organization as well as have something to contribute."

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Each person has her own strengths and weaknesses. Nancy suggests taking the time to discover those and match them to the tasks needed in the business. Assessments like the Myers Briggs Type Indicator® personality inventory help employers and employees see what types of tasks are more appealing and natural for different people. In a restaurant, the chef requires a different type of personality than the hostess or server. For a hotel, a great concierge might not make a wonderful manager. A mix of people in the right positions takes advantage of what the people like to do and tasks in which they can excel.

A mix of people can also have a downside: personality conflicts. No one wants an argument between server and bartender, or between sales associate and operations manager, or the worst possible situation – a customer and employee. When two employees clash, Nancy suggests the manager pull the employees off the floor and get them to talk it out in private. “If it’s not possible to leave the floor, they need to remember they are in a business, in public, in front of customers and need to put it on the back burner until they can talk. Employees need to be professional while in the workplace.”

When the two sides begin to communicate, understanding develops. “Sometimes, it could be caused by being stressed and under pressure,” Nancy says. “For example in restaurants, the front of the house versus the back of the house. Different personalities shine in the kitchen than the ones that are great in the dining room. The stresses are different too. Again, the overall goals are still the same – to create a great meal for the customers.”

Some of Nancy’s communication tips can help working relationships. “Use the ‘I’ message not the ‘You’ messages. Say ‘I feel...’ not ‘You did...’” Stick to the facts, she stresses. Between two people, your fact is how you feel about something, not what you think is the motivation of the other person. Express how you feel about an action.” You can say, ‘I feel insecure and ignored.’ Which will be taken better than: ‘You don’t listen to my ideas.’”

Many people forget that blaming doesn’t help. “The other person feels attacked and will usually counter-attack. When a person feels attacked, his first reaction is to defend himself or shut down.”

Stay on topic, she advises. “One person talks at a time. That really helps by sticking with the topic and not adding unrelated grievances. People will lose sight of the original purpose.” Just as in family communications, business conflict resolutions need to stay focused and not dig up past disputes to add to the fire.

“Go back to the original mission of the work/business. What is the mission?” Nancy asks. “Conflicts can be settled easier when that number one requirement of good workplace relationships stays the focus. Is this relevant to the goal of the company? What’s in the best interest of the business?”

Like a professional football team driving toward the goal line, the people who make up a business work together best as a team with a clear purpose.

“A happy workplace is a productive workplace,” Nancy Wiseman says. “Keeping the business goal in the minds of the owner and employees sets a framework to guide decisions and help settle conflicts.” NDN



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Corey Miller Photography

Competitive Fast-Pitch Softball

By Greg Lilly, Editor

“My daughter and the girls on our team have all committed to wanting to play at the college level. That’s impressive for 12 year old girls to see that as their goal,” explains Jennifer Morton, a coach for the Williamsburg STARZ fast-pitch softball organization. The travel league focuses

on teaching skills the girls need to be successful softball players in the league, in middle school, high school, and hopefully, in college.

“I think that’s common in the STARZ organization,” Jennifer says. “We came to STARZ from another organization. Madalyn (Jennifer’s

daughter) started playing travel ball when she was 8, mostly because her cousin was playing. The following year, the organization wasn’t going to have a team for her age group. She wanted to play, so we (Jennifer and her husband Dave) found the Williamsburg STARZ.”

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Jennifer was a softball player when she was in school in Newport News. "My dad moved us from Ohio when I was five. I grew up in the area and graduated from Denbigh High School and Christopher Newport University. I've always been local. We moved to Williamsburg a little over three years ago; it was the start of our daughter, Madalyn's, fifth grade year. We moved here for the schools."

When Jennifer was growing up and playing softball, the game was slow-pitch. "Fast-pitch is a skill game. It's fast-paced and competitive. When I was in high school, it was just starting. We were in the recreation leagues in Newport News playing slow-pitch softball. When I went into high school, we played fast-pitch."

While playing, she injured her arm. Still wanting to be part of the team, she became the team manager. "That was a great experience. I learned about the game and watched the coaches. I learned about keeping a score book and stats and all those types of things. That was something I wouldn't have been evolved in if I had still been playing."

As life became busy with career choices and marriage and a daughter, Jennifer didn't have the time for softball. "We began to spend a

whole lot of time at the ball fields because my nephew started playing baseball," she says. "Madalyn decided at the age of six that she wanted to play. She started with baseball because there wasn't a good softball program for the six-year-old girls. She played machine-pitched baseball with the boys. She and my niece were the only two girls in the league."

The following year, Madalyn decided she wanted to move from baseball to softball. "Then the next season after she started, the league needed a coach," Jennifer says. "I was asked. Being the mom of an only child, I 'theoretically' have more time than most parents." She laughs. "I told them I had played, but I didn't know anything about pitching since I had never pitched before." That was no problem. The other coaches paired her up with a pitching coach to teach her.

For the Williamsburg STARZ, Jennifer is the only female coach. "We're starting to see more and more women coaching," she says. "Not so many moms, but more college girls out of school are coaching. For me growing up, there were always male coaches. It's mostly the dads who think they know baseball and can coach softball. Moms have enough to do."

With the baseball world open to both boys and girls, softball still holds one distinct advantage for the girls. "The girls are not going to play baseball in high school. If the girls want to keep playing, they have to play softball," Jennifer explains. "One of our girls who was on the 10U team (10 years old and under) played baseball and softball. Now at 13, she still plays both. I wouldn't discourage any kid from doing anything athletic, but it's a different game. Once she gets to high school, she's not going to play baseball. A girl can't get a baseball college scholarship. Eventually, the boys outgrow the girls in strength, so they'll always beat the girls size-wise." Softball is the way to go if a girl wants to play in high school and college.

"Our STARZ organization teaches the girls the fundamentals and skills of the game, along with the leadership qualities required. Plus, we want to prepare them for school ball: middle school and high school...and on to college."

The area school teams, Jennifer explains, need a strong competitive feeder league. She and the other coaches see the Williamsburg STARZ organization as the support for the middle and high school teams. "The girls need to learn things like pitching at an early age.

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They can't wait until they're in middle school. It's just not a game they can pick up at 13 years old."

The competitive aspect of the program is important to Jennifer. "This travel league gives the girls competitive experience. Those don't exist in softball without a league like ours. As a mom of a daughter, I find those non-competitive softball leagues lacking. There is something to be said for girls who can compete. Life is always about competing in one way, shape or form. You are always competing for a job or advancement. Non-competitive leagues seem to miss out on this opportunity."

The girls play in the fall with local tournaments until around Thanksgiving, if the weather permits. "A 'local' tournament is considered to be in a 90-minute radius. The coaches choose which tournaments we want to play, how often to travel, that's all up to the individual coach." Then the winter is slower with the holidays, but then they gear up again for spring and summer games and tournaments.

Jennifer has found that there are certain traits successful softball players share. "Good softball players can't be afraid to try new things. Adventurous and outgoing girls are probably the most successful."

Another trait is the willingness to listen and learn. "In any sport, the kids need to be coachable. If there is something they don't know and people are trying to show them, an attitude of 'I'm listening and taking it in and I'll try' is what we look for – versus the (sigh and eye roll) 'I know it all' attitude."

The girls Jennifer has seen over the years playing softball, on the same teams or not, really enjoy the camaraderie. "It's a very social sport. Yes, competitive – they compete with their team members and with other teams – but they still come together and have a good time."

Once on the team, the girls learn important life skills. "The thing that has impressed me the most is how confident the girls are," Jennifer adds. "When they feel like they have coaches and parents supporting them, teaching them and helping them get to the next level, they go all out. They are used to a little bit of failure. They enjoy a lot of success. They carry themselves very confidently. They aren't afraid to compete with anyone on any level."

Along with confidence, the girls learn responsibility. "When they play travel ball, they have to learn quickly how to balance school time and grades with the games and practices.

School always comes first. It takes a lot of responsibility to juggle athletics and school."

They are very goal oriented, as well. "These girls know what they want and aren't afraid to go get it. Those are some of the best qualities we see in the kids."

In the future, Jennifer wants to keep coaching. "Dave and I have talked about this," she says. "Our goal, as Madalyn ages up to the next team, is to pass her off to someone who knows more than I do – a coach who can move her to the next level. If I need to stay with this age group, I'll do it. I love working with the younger girls. I'll stay with coaching. It's fun and very rewarding. We've spent so much time and learned so much, it would be wasteful to not share it."

As winter turns to spring then to summer, Jennifer wants to her team to qualify for the National Softball Association (NSA) Eastern Class "B" 2014 World Series, which is scheduled to be held in Williamsburg again this July.

"All of the girls on my team (12U Blue) are turning 13 this year, so next year they will move from the 12U to the 14U team," Coach Jennifer Morton says. "Competing in the World Series here in Williamsburg will be a nice cap on the season." NDN



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Lisa W. Cumming Photography



Discover Create Inspire!

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Tempy Barbru is the new Executive Director for This Century Art Gallery (TCAG). A long-time resident of Williamsburg, Tempy has worked with arts and non-profit organizations for many years. Those experiences help her and the staff, volunteers and board of This Century Art Gallery move toward their vision. "We strive to enrich the community through art: discover, create and inspire," she states.

When TCAG created their strategic plan, Tempy assisted the effort as a consultant. She's excited to be back to be part of its implementa-

tion. "This Century Art Gallery began with the idea that there was not only room, but a need for a contemporary art gallery/organization in Williamsburg, which is typically known for its more traditional art."

This is Tempy's type of challenge. "I love taking an idea and making it into something that people thought couldn't be done. That has been a driving force in my life. I have to know that the project I'm involved with will be inspirational to me, but more importantly, it will have

a benefit to the community. I'm driven by that kind of passion."

Tempy's parents left Alabama when her father went to California after the attack on Pearl Harbor. "My parents really liked California, and they stayed." Tempy and her sister were raised in San Diego where her father was a school principal and superintendent. Her mother was an elementary school teacher who wrote curriculum for the schools. She says that since both her parents were educators, they encouraged inquisitiveness in their daughters. "I

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come to my curiosity of life experiences very naturally, and I love that. I always want my brain to be curious about what's in front of me."

Tempy gravitated toward music. "I didn't know I could sing, but I liked music. I was tested in junior high, and when I opened my mouth to sing, I wondered where that came from. It was the strangest thing." She had quite a voice and a lot of volume.

"I've been singing professionally since I was 17. I performed many years with Cabaret Tonight and now perform with Musings of Songbirds. My gifted pianist, Bobby Jasinski, graduated from William and Mary, and he's working and performing in Washington D.C. now. We try to perform once a quarter."

She explains that she loves live performance. "That's where all my passion is. Whether it is a poetry reading or intellectually-stimulating lectures, I see a work of art and think 'I would give anything to produce that.' That involvement in art is a foundation for how a community, or a person, moves forward." The involvement in the arts teaches the artists, the production team and the audience.

"My parents were wonderful people and encouraged me to try everything that drew my interest. I have always been fascinated with contemporary art." She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from San Diego State University. "I've been attracted to this grassroots building of creativity. I think that came from me being a high school teacher for seven years. I taught English, speech, drama, music and journalism. That was my first job out of college, many years ago," she adds with a laugh.

"The leadership of the school came to me – I was the speech coach – and asked me to help get the community enthused about bond elections to support things that were not in the school's budget. They needed funding for things like school trips, band uniforms, things that were not a line item in the administration of the school. I loved it."

She enjoyed rallying the community for a cause, and when she married and moved to Virginia in 1982, she built on that experience. "My first entrée into the development world was the Virginia Stage Company in Norfolk where I was the marketing manager. That jumped me to WHRO, where I spent many years. I was originally a co-host for Morning Edition. My last foray there was as the executive director of their foundation." After many years in management for the United Way in Richmond and Battersea Foundation in Petersburg, Tempy brings her experience and passion home to Williamsburg.

As the executive director of TCAG, Tempy's three primary focuses are: strategic planning, fund raising and board development.

"I had consulted with this group several years ago when they first created the strategic plan," she says. "I have been a part of those types of processes with many organizations. I'm very familiar with the quality of TCAG. So, one of my main objectives is to implement the strategic plan and carry that vision to fruition."

Additionally, she wants to "raise the level of the bar in terms of fund raising, revenue and development support, and lastly, enhance the Board. The organization is run by volunteers and staff. I've never seen volunteers work so hard. It's astonishing."

In a long-range objective of the strategic plan, the Art Education Center (located in the Arts District on Westover Avenue) and This Century Art Gallery (on North Boundary Street) would be housed in the same structure, a new building to be located in the City Square area. The strategic plan was created for TCAG to take effective and economical steps

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forward.

This Century Art Gallery exhibits the work of its members, but also has educational opportunities at the Art Education Center. “That’s one of the pieces of TCAG that we’re most proud of,” Temy says. “The Art Education Center offers art classes to the community. It gives the students a vehicle to exhibit their art as well as the chance to learn new skills. We offer a variety of classes that other organizations don’t, at prices that are affordable for everyone. It’s a pleasure to see the students when they create a new work. It’s great to be part of the student’s ‘a-ha’ moment when they realize they’ve created something original.”

The current popular programs for TCAG include the high school art show, Buddy Art and the Annual Member Artists’ Show. “Those are the ones that stand out,” Temy says. “Another thing that stands out to me is the variety of superior art that we have hanging in the gallery at all times. It’s a marvelous opportunity for artist members, both local and non-local, to exhibit their art. In doing that, you can see how that enriches people’s lives. You can see it in the faces of the artist and the public.”

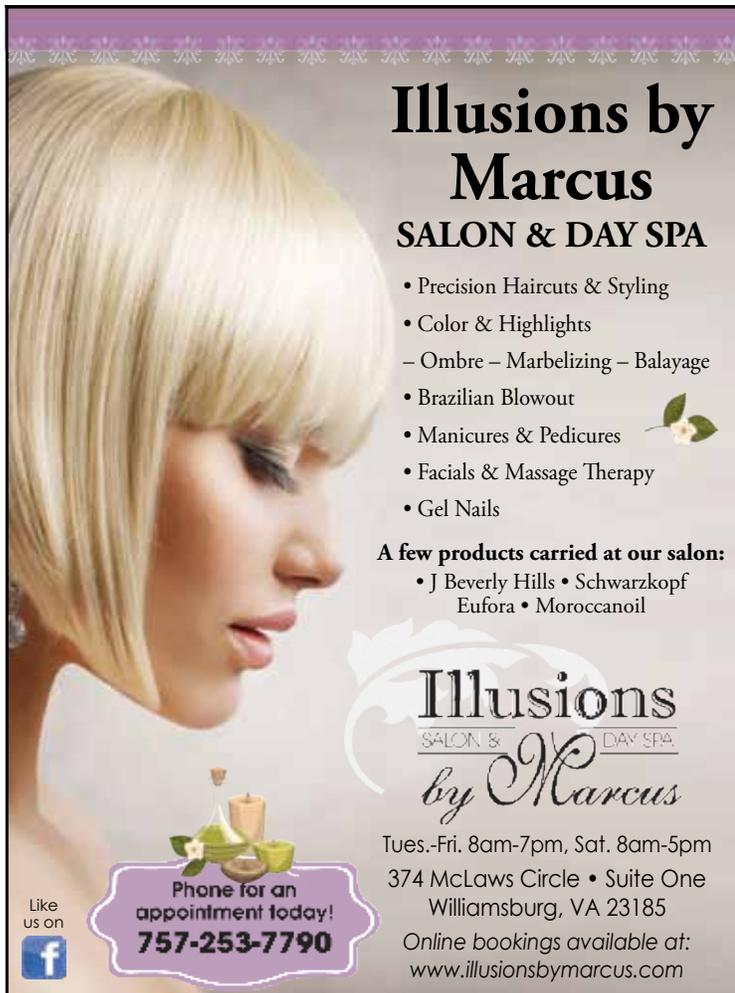
TCAG has just concluded the Annual High School Student Art Show. “We had a reception for it, and the place was packed with students, their teachers and parents and friends. The kids who created that art were just as colorful as their paintings – a variety of cultures, talkative, creative – absolutely marvelous.” One of TCAG’s objectives is to continually increase their audience, especially to reach a younger audience. “This is a marvelous vehicle to do that.”

Temy says she’d like to see the programs expand. “There is no more room to physically expand, but we do want to expand our outreach where we can take art to people who might not be able to do it at the Art Education Center. We want to take art into other locales. We want to continue to beef up our lecture series at the library – those are marvelous speakers. We do that in partnership with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. We’re always looking for ways to expand our reach.”

Art exercises the creative spirit of the community, Temy explains. “Creative people are at a premium. Sometimes, we’ve been so pigeon-holed, doing what was necessary for a job description, that we lose sight of the original creative inspiration for a task.” She says she noticed it years ago when she taught in the public school system. “The students would ask: ‘How do I figure this out?’ And our standard response, because we didn’t have enough time and there were 42 other kids in the classroom, was to go back to the text book and read the formula. Our response should be: ‘How would you like to figure out that problem?’ It forces us to think of the next step. As a child, I was always asking ‘why?’ I wanted to know why and how things happened and what sparked it.”

Looking for those creative problem solving steps is a skill Temy brings to her new job. “It’s exciting for me to be a part of this process because, when everyone is willing to reach for it, the sky is the limit. When you can do that with sound thought processes that build a solid structure, it’s absolutely amazing. This combination of TCAG having opportunities for exhibit space and for classes excites me with the potential.”

Temy Barbru bounds with enthusiasm. “I’m delighted to be here and in Williamsburg – a town I love. I’m hoping that the next several years spark real growth opportunities for This Century Art Gallery, and we can build on the vision we’ve had by making something genuinely special for contemporary art in this town.” NDN



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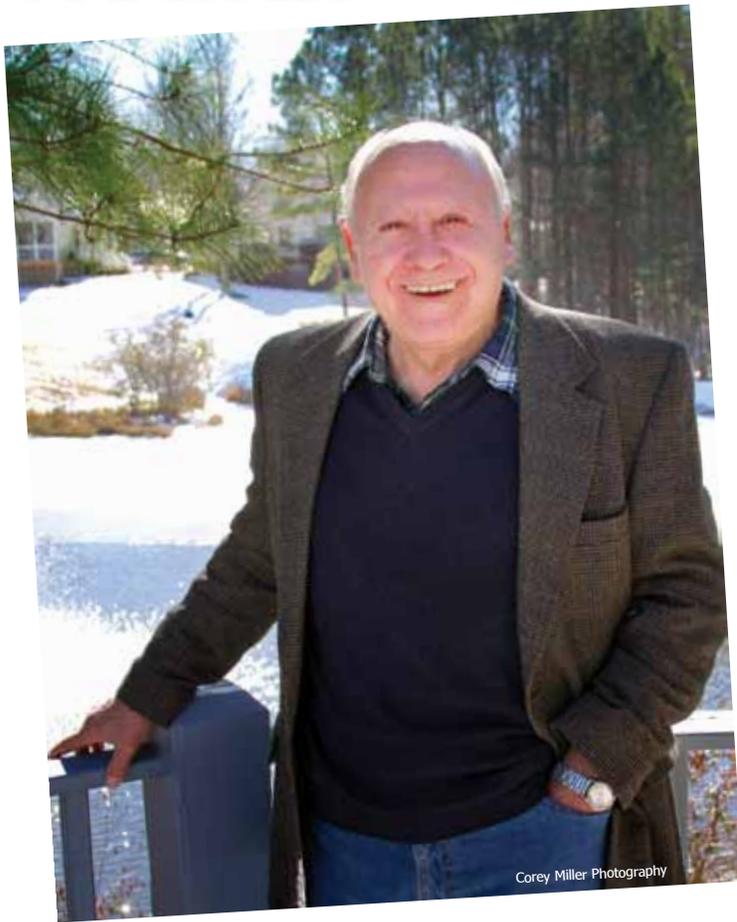
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Eliminating Maternal/Neonatal **Tetanus**

By Greg Lilly, Editor

“When I was in Egypt, we experienced the cholera,” Raga Elim explains. “The government of Egypt was not prepared to deal with it. It spread like brush fires. The only thing the government could do was quarantine to prevent people from traveling from one village to another to attempt to contain the cholera.”

Raga was 13 years old in 1946 when the Cholera Epidemic of Egypt was taking hold of the country. “I had a lot of relatives and friends who died. I was very fortunate to have been vaccinated against the cholera.”

The memory comes back to Raga vividly. “The government of Egypt issued a world-wide appeal. It needed help. The United Nations was just being organized and there was no World Health Organization or



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UNICEF. There was a response by countries, by their governments. The United States was one of the leading governments that responded to the call. I remember standing in line. There was this American nurse. I would say she was in her forties. She vaccinated me against the cholera. That saved my life. Otherwise I wouldn't be here."

Today, Raga is leading the Kiwanis of Toano in a pledge to raise funds to eliminate Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus (MNT) across the globe. "My passion is for vaccines because they save lives," he says.

Raga grew up in Egypt and lived there for his first 24 years. He obtained his law degree from the University of Cairo and began practicing law. He was offered a scholarship at the University of Chicago to study economics. "In 1957, I went to Chicago, which was quite a different place than where I was raised. The cold!"

Economics was taught differently in the United States than in Egypt. "I didn't do very well because the University of Chicago teaches economics by way of mathematics and statistics – economics as a mathematical model. Well, being trained as a lawyer, I thought it sounded like magic to me. I wasn't able to follow it. I was scared I would fail – fail my parents, fail my aspirations and hopes. I counseled with the foreign student advisor, who suggested I might want to study political science. That has a resemblance to a law degree. I got my masters from the University of Chicago in 1958. That was my goal: to get my master's degree and go back to Egypt." But, before he left the United States, he was offered a fellowship at Johns Hopkins University. "I stayed to take the fellowship and studied in Baltimore. My interests were in international law and international organization and administration." He received his PhD from the School of International Service at American University in Washington D.C.

Raga began teaching at the university level. He's taught at such diverse institutions as the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, the State University of New York in Binghamton, Kent State University and served as dean at a small college in Anchorage, Alaska. Between teaching, he's worked to further international relations through understanding and peace.

"I became the director of a foundation in Houston, Texas that had an interest in peace studies. I advocated that for years. In Paris, I organized a conference on how curriculum and universities can help promote peace in the world through education. The aim was to establish a United Nations University. The idea was to mobilize universities around the world and to present the United Nations an overwhelming desire on the part of universities to promote peace. That helped to establish the United Nations University, which is now in Tokyo, Japan."

Raga says he retired from a federal position in 2004. "I was in the U.S. Foreign Service for several years. I was in charge of the relief program in Somalia." He and his wife decided they wanted to move south and drove to Florida to consider it. "My daughter lives here in Williamsburg. She had gone to the College of William and Mary, just as my younger son did," Raga says. "We didn't think of Williamsburg initially. We drove to Florida to see it and realized it was too far from our daughter." They settled in Williamsburg in 2004. He joined Kiwanis a year later.

The Kiwanis International organization took up the cause of Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus as their "Eliminate Project." Raga knew this was a cause he would champion.

"Vaccines save lives," he stresses. "It did work with the cholera. It worked with other diseases. It wiped out the cholera. Although, recently it's shown up in some South American countries – scattered incidents. But for the most part it is gone, like the polio. Naturally, I was attracted to this cause. I would have been attracted to it even if I didn't have that background. Saving life is the highest order of opportunities."

He points out that many people and organizations have been working toward this elimination of MNT. "There has been a lot of effort in this direction. Many others like the Save the Children organization and Doctors without Borders are doing work in this area. But, I belong to Kiwanis, and I'm doing this project as part of Kiwanis International."

Tetanus spores, found everywhere in soil, can come into contact with open cuts before or during childbirth. "It's a sickness. It's in the ground. It's killed mothers when they deliver the infant. It's killed infants," Raga explains.

The Kiwanis website lists the grim statistics: "MNT kills one baby every nine minutes. Its effects are excruciating — tiny newborns suffer repeated, painful convulsions and extreme sensitivity to light and touch. There is little hope of survival. And tetanus kills mothers too."

Raga adds, "In poor countries, they don't have fresh water. They don't have the medical systems to help them escape the sickness. It grows on the ground and infects mothers who have not been vaccinated against it. They deliver the baby, then within a few days, that baby suffers a great deal and dies."

The United Nations had adopted a number of declarations and conventions, he describes. "The more relevant one is the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child. It deals with the suffering of children. It calls for the protection and rights of children. The first right is the right to survive! That's the basic, fundamental right for anyone – the right to survive. It's a very emotional subject. I survived because of a vaccine and because of the help of this nurse from the United States."

His personal commitment is to help eradicate MNT from the earth. Part of the way Raga and the Kiwanis Club of Toano will raise money in this fight is a benefit concert on Saturday, March 1. The band The Hark will play a concert of popular soul, pop, rock, folk music from the 1960s through today. The concert will be held at the James-York Playhouse at 200 Hubbard Lane. Both the band and the venue have donated their time and resources to the cause.

"To borrow the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we shall overcome this sickness, along with UNICEF, we shall overcome it," Raga Elim promises. "I had benefited from a vaccine. I want to payback humanity – more than payback, but go beyond." NDN

"Eliminate Project" Benefit Concert featuring The Hark
Saturday, March 1 from 7 – 9 p.m.; James-York Playhouse (Home of the Williamsburg Players); 200 Hubbard Lane; Tickets: \$15
Call Lynda Kleiwerda, Old Point National Bank at 258-0467

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Corey Miller Photography

OUTDOOR LIVING

by Greg Lilly, Editor

When planning an outdoor living space, the infrastructure, Dave Bar-glo says, is the most important part of the design and build stages. Dave is the owner of Mid Atlantic Enterprise, a company that designs, builds and maintains outdoor living spaces.

Growing up in Spencer, Iowa, Dave spent a lot of time around his father's construction company and the family farm. By the age of 10, he helped his father on jobs. "My dad did concrete work like foundations, basements, retaining walls, things like that," Dave says. An injury caused his father to close down the construction part of his work and focus on farming.

"Our family time was work time. That's just what we did together. We didn't go to ball games or camping – we farmed," Dave says with a laugh. "Dad helped me start my first company when I was 14 doing custom swathing and things like that. I'd travel several hundred miles cutting hay."



"As a mother of two boys, for whom my business is named, I draw motivation from their energy and creativity. When I design your home or office, I take into consideration the functionality of the space and tailor it to your specific needs and inspiration. It's important to us that your personal tastes are reflected in the completed project."
~Christine Estep

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Out of high school, Dave started his own construction company in Iowa. "The work grew into the Minneapolis area market. My specialty was outdoor living and hardscapes. We did jobs like DOT (Department of Transportation) restoration, retaining walls, patios and things in that line. The construction of large retaining walls led us to residential work." He understood the importance of stability and strength where construction integrates and anchors into the earth.

Dave joined the U.S. Army Reserves. Being in the Reserves meant he could be part of the Army as well as keep his business going. "The Army was a learning experience. The Army taught me more about integrating systems within a construction project."

He did a tour to prevent drug trafficking in South America. "We did anti-drug missions in the Gulf of Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and Puerto Rico. That was still manageable with that tour and keeping my company going."

That changed on September 11, 2001. "I was in a training mission in the Atlantic Ocean with the Army when it happened. We were on our way to Portland, Maine." They received orders to reroute to the waters just off New York City. "They didn't tell us what had happened," Dave says. "There were no televisions or commercial radios or Internet available to us. We sat there in a holding pattern."

Later, the Reservists were told to "get our affairs together because we could be deployed in October. We were," he adds.

Before then, the Army wasn't going to be part of his life. "But after a couple of deployments to Iraq and Kuwait, I decided to shut down the company and continue my career with the Army. I realized I couldn't keep the construction company going while I was away. I decided that staying in the Army was the best choice. I planned to retire from the Army."

That was his plan until a military accident in 2007 sent Dave to the VA Hospital. After his physical rehabilitation, he decided to start the construction company again. He and his wife, Angela, started Mid Atlantic Enterprise.

"My goal was always to do the design/build of outdoor living. I think what attracted me to the market was the heavy equipment – that's my forte. I've always had a passion for operating equipment and for building things and being outdoors."

Dave gives the projects careful infrastructure attention and recommends that's the phase that makes later construction easier and less expensive. "Outdoor living should take into account the infrastructure to support the project: soil bearing strengths, types of soils, what it will take to make the infrastructure hold up," he lists. "Even with a phased project, all the conduits need to be in for things like electrical wiring, low-voltage wiring, natural gas lines, water pipes and plumbing for the future."

He suggests for homeowners to start gathering ideas of what they would like in their outdoor spaces now. Most companies stay booked about six months ahead – six months before they can get to a new project. So, the earlier the ideas start flowing the sooner the design can be created. "If you want to have the outdoor space ready by next spring, start talking to designers this summer," Dave says. "The design phase sometimes takes a long time. That's where most people underestimate time."

A good example is a pool installation. "A pool takes geotechnical work, soil samples, engineering, environmental work... That's after the design is finished. Those aspects could take three months. There're a lot of steps before a shovel goes in the ground."

For new home construction, the homeowners should consult with a

provided by the Williamsburg
Association of REALTORS®

what's up in real estate



Q: What is happening on Flood Insurance?

A: The following is a statement by National Association of Realtors® President Steve Brown: "The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, S. 1926, passed by the Senate this afternoon (February 1st 2014) is the time-out Realtors® first advocated when dramatic flood insurance premium increases went into effect on October 1, 2013.

"This legislation will help homeowners nationwide who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of extreme flood insurance rates that are the unintended consequence of the Biggert-Waters reforms to the National Flood Insurance Program.

"Congress needs to hit pause on the unforeseen price increases and negative market effects of the reforms while the Federal Emergency Management Agency can complete an affordability study and research the true impact of the law. NAR data shows that through January 2014, four months into the law's implementation, more than 40,000 home sales were estimated to be either delayed or canceled because of increases and confusion over flood insurance rates."

Q: What are the Demographics of Homebuyers?

A: The millennial generation is becoming an increasingly important part of the hous-



By
Andrew Nelson
President

*Williamsburg
Area Association
of REALTORS®*

ing market. According to a 2013 National Association of Realtors® study that looked at generational housing trends, millennials (or, Generation Y), those born between 1980 and 2000, are the second biggest segment of the buyer market, behind only Generation X, which covers those born between 1965 and 1979. Increasingly, this new population is looking to have a "turn-key" property which emphasizes to sellers the importance of making sure that the property is prepared for sale to show it in its best light.

Q: What are some of the upcoming Real Estate issues currently under consideration at the Virginia State Capitol?

A: The Virginia Association of Realtors® is constantly looking to protect and improve the rights of property owners. Currently, some of the issues under consideration are a First Time Homeowners Savings Plan, clarification on the 2008 Vested Rights law and several issues relating to the Property Owners Association/Condo Act. Further details will be provided once these issues have passed the legislature.

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outdoor hardscape or landscape designer to make things easier and less expensive in the future for any outdoor living spaces to be added.

"Honestly, moving a door, or adjusting a wall or window, or adding electrical and plumbing for outdoor spaces is much simpler during the house construction than after." He says that he sees more pre-planning when people are working with an architect for a custom house. But, most people don't think about the outdoor living spaces when looking at new homes. "It's not always a priority at the beginning."

Before talking with a designer, browse magazines and stores and the Internet sites, Dave advises, to get some ideas on what you might like. "Gather key elements – they don't have to match – but you can gather ideas of things that appeal to you and your outdoor lifestyle. That helps speed the design process along." The designer will configure the elements to meet the homeowner's style.

He adds that we're lucky in the Williamsburg area because most architectural outdoor styles work here. "The biggest thing is to use local stone for materials. Shipping in stone from other areas of the country can be cost-prohibitive."

While many styles are popular, there is a Williamsburg outdoor style. "Blue stone is popular, and marble is getting to be more popular," Dave says. "Brick and blue stone are the most requested. Williamsburg is a brick town. We're getting more into hand-hewn timbers, too. People like the southern Georgian and Greek Revival styles, updated a little bit."

Outdoor kitchens are getting much more popular in this part of the country. "The new materials open up more possibilities. There are outdoor cabinets that look just like your indoor kitchen cabinets."

A trend that has come up fast, and seems to be a logical one, is the idea that some part of the outdoor living area have a roof over it. "Of course, the kitchen and bar area are the most logical places for that. With a roof protecting an area, infrared heat can be installed for the cold seasons and misters and fans for the hot weather. With a roofed area there are more options for lighting. It also extends the life of the kitchen equipment."

The trend for outdoor living spaces isn't just for the high-end homes. If you enjoy your home and want it to adapt to your outdoor lifestyle, Dave's advice is to just do it.

"Even the higher-end homes won't have exactly what you want outdoors. Make your house a home by adding what you will enjoy."

He cautions that adding outdoor living spaces is for the owners' enjoyment, not for resale value. "I will never tell anyone this is an investment. It's a luxury and you do it because you want it. It adds perceived value, which is the value you get from it. Perceived value is a good thing when selling a house, but it doesn't add to the selling price – it gives one house an edge over another. You won't get the money back when you sell. It makes it more attractive for you."

The trends Dave says to investigate if you want to plan an outdoor living project include fireplaces, pools, natural stone and arbors and pergolas. "Fireplaces are more popular than fire pits," he says. "Pools are getting more common again. Concrete isn't as attractive to people as pavers or natural stone. In Williamsburg, the natural stone mixed with brick is very popular. Roofs over outdoor spaces, arbors and pergolas are gaining attention."

Dave's work experience started with foundations, concrete work and retaining walls, and he continues to give focus to solid footing for his outdoor living projects. Planning and design should start early for an infrastructure that supports a beautiful and functional outdoor living space. NDN

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:
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Hey Neighbor!

FREE TAX PREPARATION AND ELECTRONIC FILING SERVICES

Ongoing

The Greater Williamsburg Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Team will provide free tax preparation and electronic filing services through April 15. IRS certified volunteer tax preparers are trained to prepare all ordinary returns, and will do so without charge to the taxpayer at the following locations and times: CW Bruton Heights School Education Center, 301 First St. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2 - 6 pm; James City County Recreation Center, 5301 Longhill Rd: on Mondays and Wednesdays, 2 - 6 pm; (all tax season); Quarterpath Recreation Center, 202 Quarterpath Road on Saturdays, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm; Toano Middle School, 7817 Richmond Rd on Mondays 3:30 - 7 pm.

Please bring drivers license, social security cards, W-2s/1099s, receipts for deductions, bank account information, and last year's state and federal tax returns.

Hey Neighbor!

FREE TAX PREPARATION AND ELECTRONIC FILING SERVICES

Ongoing

Williamsburg-James City County Community Action Agency offers free tax preparation services to low-and moderate-income workers. Families and individuals with an income less than \$50,000 may be eligible to claim the earned income tax credit, which can reduce the amount of income taxes owed. If you need additional information, or would like to schedule an appointment, please call John Smith at 757-229-3316 or Yvonne at 757-229-9332.

Hey Neighbor! BIBLE STUDY

Ongoing

If you have Biblical questions about the Bible, such as what is the mark of the beast or what is the unforgivable sin, 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

Moms in Prayer International meets weekly thru June 2014. Join us and other Moms for a powerful time of prayer Every Wednesday from 1 - pm 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! MARCH AFTERNOON FILM SERIES

Thursday afternoons

Williamsburg Regional Library's Thursday Afternoon Film Series in March features movies about Famous Ladies. At 1 pm, a short documentary precedes the feature film. The movies begin at 2 pm in the Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland St. Admission is free and reservations are not required. For more information visit www.wrl.org or call 259-4070.

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Hey Neighbor!

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM

March 8, 2014

At Fort Magruder Conference Center at 12 noon, the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club Inc. of Williamsburg and Vicinity will honor Williamsburg's Ladies of Distinction. Our National Women's History Month theme for 2014 is: "Celebrating Women of Character, Courage and Commitment." The tickets for this event are \$30 per person which covers the lunch for the event. Door prizes will be given during the celebration. For tickets or more information, contact Betty Wallace at 757-847-3663.

Hey Neighbor!

DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION

March 8, 2014

Williamsburg United Methodist Church, 500 Jamestown Road from 10 am – 2 pm. Your documents will be safely and securely accumulated, transported, and destroyed off site by Eggleston Services, a not-for-profit organization providing education, training and employment for people with disabilities since 1955. A suggested contribution of \$10 per bag will raise money to support a medical mission trip to Honduras April 4 -12 from Williamsburg United Methodist Church and a portion will be donated to Eggleston Services to support their work.

Hey Neighbor!

THE WILLIAMSBURG CHORAL GUILD WINTER CONCERT

March 8-9, 2014

"French Impressions" on March 8 at 7:30 pm and March 9 at 4 pm. Conducted by Artistic Director Jay BeVillie, the Guild will perform Duruffe's "Requiem" and Vierne's "Messe Solennelle." A pre-concert lecture begins one hour before each performance. At Williamsburg Presbyterian Church, 215 Richmond Rd. Tickets: \$15 in advance; \$20 (\$10 for students with ID) at the door. Contact 757-220-1808 or www.williamsburgchoralguild.org

Hey Neighbor!

LEAD HISTORIC TRIANGLE CLASS OF 2015 DEADLINE

March 14, 2014

Applications for the LHT Class of 2015 are available online at LEAD-

HistoricTriangle.org. Sponsored by the Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance, LHT's mission is to enhance the quality of life in the Historic Triangle by developing, encouraging, and supporting community leaders. Applications must be received at the Alliance office no later than March 14, 2014 at 5 pm. For more information about the program visit the website or contact LEAD Administrative Coordinator, Ellie Wade, at 757-566-4490.

Hey Neighbor!

LA BOHEME

March 14 2014

Presented by Lyric Opera Virginia. 8pm. Kimball Theatre on Duke of Gloucester St. Call LOV 446-6666 for tickets and info. Tickets also available at the box office.

Hey Neighbor!

ST. PATTY'S DAY LUNCHEON

March 14, 2014

From 11:30 am – 2 pm at the Senior Center located at 5301 Longhill Rd., Williamsburg, in the JCC Rec Center. The meal will consist of Potato Soup, Corned Beef, Cabbage, Potatoes, Rolls, Dessert and Beverages. The cost for members is \$10 and for guests is \$12.50. Call the Historic Triangle Senior Center at 259-4187 from 9 am – 4 pm, Monday – Friday, for more information.

Hey Neighbor!

HISTORIC TRIANGLE SENIOR CENTER TRIPS

March 15, 2014

Robert Russa Moton Museum in Farmville, VA. 2014 is the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement. Lunch will be at Charley's Waterfront Café prior to the tour of the museum. Lunch is included in the cost of the trip. For members – \$40 and for non-members – \$45. The cut-off date for the trip is Monday, March 3, 2014. We will be leaving the Senior Center at 8 am and returning at 5 pm. Call the Historic Triangle Senior Center at 259-4187 from 9 am – 4 pm, Monday – Friday, for more information.

Hey Neighbor!

TO HAVE BUTTERFLIES, MAKE BUTTERFLIES

March 15, 2014

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BUSINESS INSIGHT

Wednesday, March 26th

Guest Speaker

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Hey Neighbor!
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March 15, 2014

Learn all about proper lawn maintenance and rain gardens. Virginia Cooperative Extension, James City County Office. 9 am – noon. James City County Recreation Center, 5301 Longhill Road, Williamsburg. To register call Virginia Cooperative Extension, 564-2179

Hey Neighbor!
THE POPE BENEDICT XVI CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
March 15, 2014

The second concert of this new chamber music series will feature Scarlatti "Cantata" for soprano and string quartet, Mozart Quartet for flute and strings, and Paganini Trio for violin, cello, and guitar. Guest artists will include Thomas Lindsay-violin, Lucy Manning- violin, Alice Lindsay- viola, Stephen Custer-cello, Judy Olbrych- soprano, and Timothy Olbrych- guitar. Time: 7 pm at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. Suggested donation is \$10 per person. For more information, call 757-229-3631 or visit www.bedeva.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!
COMMUNITY CAR WASH, FOOD AND DRINKS
March 15, 2014

Hosted by Calvary Chapel Williamsburg, a fund raiser for CCW Youth Ministry. Donations accepted. Time: 9 am – 3 pm. Where: C&F Bank, 4780 Longhill Road, corner of Longhill and Old Towne Roads, across from 7-11. For more information, call 757-220-8400 or visit www.Calvarycw.org or info@calvarywilliamsburg.org.

Hey Neighbor!
CATCH THE VISION TOUR
March 15, 2014

Williamsburg Christian Academy invites you to a one hour captivating glimpse of the Academy. Tours are both 8 am and 2 pm. 101 Schoolhouse Lane, Williamsburg. WilliamsburgChristian.org or call 220-1978, ext. 113 for more infor-

mation.

Hey Neighbor!
MILITARY THROUGH THE AGES
March 15-16, 2014

Hundreds of re-enactors join with the Virginia Army National Guard to present centuries of military history in one weekend. Admission is \$16.00 for adults and \$7.50 (ages 6-12). Children under 6 are free. Museum hours are 9 am – 5 pm daily. Jamestown Settlement is located on State Route 31 in Williamsburg. For information, call 888- 593-4682 toll-free or 757- 253-4838, or visit <http://www.historyisfun.org>.

Hey Neighbor!
RELAY FOR LIFE MEETINGS
March 18 and April 22, 2014

At the offices of James Blair, Room 402. Accounting and Registration open at 5:30 pm; meeting begins at 6 pm. Actual Relay For Life Event is May 16-17 from 7 am – 7 pm at Jamestown High School. For information, visit www.relayforlife.org/williamsburgva. Contact Sue Harmon with questions at 617-447-4283 or Sberry921@yahoo.com.

Hey Neighbor!
WILLIAMSBURG MONTESSORI SCHOOL'S AUCTION
March 22, 2014

6-11 pm. The Settlement at Powhatan Creek, 400 River Moor. Silent and live auctions, cocktails, dinner, music and raffle drawings. Tickets are \$40 per person in advance or \$45 at the door. Contact www.williamsburgmontessori.org/2014-auction/ or call 757-565-0977. All proceeds benefit the Williamsburg Montessori School.

Hey Neighbor!
BUSINESS INSIGHT
March 26, 2014

Guest speaker is Pete Synder of Disruptor Capital. Held at the Mason School of Business. Doors open at 3:30. Free to the public.

Hey Neighbor!
AFTERNOON OF JAZZ
March 23, 2014

The annual Afternoon of Jazz, sponsored by the Williamsburg Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., will take place from 4-8 pm at the Williamsburg Lodge. Dinner will be served at 4:30 pm. Tickets are \$60 per person. Visit www.williamsburgdst.org or email Margaret Stockton at mlcstockton@aol.com.

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

Enjoy!

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

February 2014
In the Neighborhood
Photo Challenge



ADVANCED LEVEL





Real Estate. Reinvented.®

WE HAVE THE RIGHT HOME FOR YOU & YOUR FAMILY



3320 TIMBER RIDGE Heritage Landing • \$450,000

Impeccable, all brick Colonial with updated kitchen, corian countertops, gas range & island opens up to the family room, great for entertaining. Gleaming hardwood floors. Separate 4th bedroom/bonus/media room. Large laundry room. Walk up attic for possible office. Beautifully landscaped level lawn, fenced backyard. NEW ROOF! Easy to show. 3 bedrooms, 3 full baths, 2,900 sq. ft.

Find your next home
Charlotte TURNER
757-784-4317
charlotteturner@lizmoore.com • www.homesbycharlotte.com



181 SOUTHPORT Ford's Colony

A beautiful location for Your Dream home on this nearly 1 acre, Cul-de-Sac, wooded home site in Southport. Offers a generous tree buffer for additional privacy & preserve view. Rear exposure faces SW. Priced to sell offering an amazing value for your custom home. \$159,000.

Lorraine Funk
lorrainefunk@lizmoore.com
757-903-7627
www.lizmoore.com/lorrainefunk

Do You Want to Sell Your Home in 2014?
Sold in 3 days!



Inventory is *low*.
Demand is *high*.
NOW is a great time to sell!

Denise Fleischmann
Cell: 757-846-0202
Denise@LizMoore.com
www.WilliamsburgHomesandFarms.com



KENSINGTON WOODS

This gorgeous 3 BR, 2.5 BA - plus a loft - transitional style home features an open flowing floor plan. Loaded with natural light, soaring ceilings. Meticulously maintained both inside and out!! HOA fee includes both trash removal AND yard maintenance so you can relax and enjoy life!! One year home warranty. \$290,000.

dianebeal
(757) 291-9201
dianebeal@lizmoore.com



Fabulous octagonal great room w/panoramic views of one of the only natural ponds in Ford's Colony. Granite kitchen opens to dining area, Moldings, built-ins, hardwood, 2 pantries, walk-in storage, composite decking, LL rec area + addl temp/control storage. 4,005 sqft., 4 BR, 5 BA, Irrigation. Freshly painted w/new furnace 2013, Well Taken Care Of! \$650,000

Andrea Pokorny
757.291.9119
andrea@williamsburghomefinder.com



GREENSPRINGS WEST 4201 Cavendish Ct.

5 BRs, 4.5 BAs, 4,263 sqft., \$495,000. Wonderful home in sought after Greensprings West. Large kitchen with granite counters, SS appliances, double ovens & island open to family room. Formal DR & LR. Partially finished basement w/BA. Large master BR w/ his & her closets. Master BA has dual sink, separate shower & garden tub. Built in 2012. Move in ready.

Tim Parker
(757) 879-1781
Cyril Petrop
(757) 879-8811
www.timparkerrealestate.com



105 CAMBRIDGE LANE

Charming Colonial in mint condition. First owners. 4 BRs, 3 BAs, 2,329 sqft. Large deck w/automatic awning, beautiful lawn w/lots of dogwood, fish pond, 2 fenced garden areas. Garden shed. Pella windows & sliders. Extensive HW, kitchen w/bright bay breakfast area & built-in bar, gas FP, room over garage. Additional 18x20' insulated & heated workroom. \$365,000

Susan B. Smith
757-876-3838
susansmith@lizmoore.com
www.lizmoore.com/susansmith



FORD'S COLONY

11th hole of the Blue Heron
| Open floor plan |
Renovated kitchen with
upgraded appliances
| Bonus with coffered ceiling |
\$710,000 | 4 BEDROOMS |
3.5 BATHS | 3,519 SQFT

Deelyn
757-503-1999
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www.PremierWilliamsburgRealEstate.com