

March 2015

WILLIAMSBURG'S

Next Door Neighbors®

VOL. 9, ISSUE 3

PRICELESS

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I believe we all have stories inside of us - true stories, fiction, humorous stories, family anecdotes, and others. Some of us also have a strong desire to document and share those stories with others and, more importantly, have the talent to do so as well.

I admire and understand writers and authors. I love to write, even though I don't make time for it often. I, too, have a strong desire to share stories with others. However, the stories I feel motivated to share are the stories behind the folks who are my neighbors. Fortunately, I was able to create this magazine as a vehicle for sharing these amazing stories, and find much better writing talent than my own. I also have the good fortune of living in Williamsburg, a rich source of interesting people and interesting stories, and a place where people care about their neighbors.

Bringing the magazine to life and to your mailbox each month was not easy in the beginning, which is why I admire the perseverance and passion the writers in this issue invest in their dreams. We have such an awesome variety of successful writers here! I find their stories to be similar in some ways, unique in many ways, and fascinating in every way. I hope that you enjoy them too and can take the opportunity to seek out the works of these and other local artists who are "Write Here" in Williamsburg. NDN



Meredith Collins, Publisher

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Writing Outside the Lines

By Lillian Stevens

Long before she became a writer, Dr. Hermine Pinson was a voracious reader.

“I should credit my mother with reading to us,” she says. “She would read poetry to us and sing to us and teach us little songs. She also played the piano. She was a wonderful piano player. We often saw our parents reading. My father read a lot too, especially early on when he was studying to become a doctor.”

Hermine also remembers the teacher who nudged her toward a lifelong love affair with words and books. “My first grade teacher was

very kind and attentive. At the end of my first grade year, she wrote a little note on my report card for my parents. It said, ‘Get Hermine to read more.’”

Books transported the future poet to and through other realms that were heretofore foreign. “When I was reading, I could forget my troubles and escape to another world.”

By the early 1990s, Hermine had received her Ph.D. from Rice University and was teaching at Texas Southern University in Houston. A friend sent word that the College of Wil-

liam and Mary was looking for an instructor for a year-long teaching engagement in the Department of English and American Studies.

The teaching engagement turned into two decades and counting. In addition to teaching, which she says is at the center of everything that she does, the associate professor of English is also an accomplished writer and jazz singer with three published poetry collections: *Ashe*, a chapbook; *Mama Yetta and Other Poems*; and *Dolores is Blue/Dolores is Blues*. Her poetry, fiction and critical essays have ap-

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peared in dozens of anthologies and journals and her most recent short fiction appeared in *Black Renaissance Noire*.

“I consider myself an artist who teaches. I have been teaching for a long time.” Hermine teaches creative writing and African American literature. “I enjoy my students and I learn so much from them. They are smart, diligent and imaginative. Each class is a new adventure.”

Her own writing leans toward the inner struggle to remain human. Themes emerge: family and her native south, the strength of matriarchs, the wisdom of fathers, and the wonder of family. She celebrates joy, pain, the human body, spirit and truth.

“One of my favorite poems of all time is Emily Dickenson’s ‘I Like a Look of Agony,’” she says. “I didn’t understand the poem for a long time but I liked it because it spoke to me and because I know that the words in the poem are true.”

Hermine has many favorite authors. Growing up during the latter portion of the Civil Rights Movement, she embraced, among others, the poems of Langston Hughes. “I didn’t understand what it meant to be an African American and the poem ‘I, Too (Sing America)’ spoke to me as a child growing up during the 1960s:

“I am the darker brother / They send me to eat in the kitchen / When company comes...”

Like generations of children and young adults before her, Hermine also enjoyed, and still enjoys, books ranging from *Horton Hears a Who!* by Dr. Seuss, to Madeleine L’Engle’s *A Wrinkle in Time* and, of course, *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens. There’s also Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, Edwidge Danticat’s family memoir *Brother I’m Dying*, and Joan Didion’s *The Year of Magical Thinking*.

“I could go on and on. Your favorites change from year to year but there are always going to be certain books that you go back to.”

Going back to the poetry, she has a favorite excerpt from Alfred Edward Housman’s “The Shropshire Lad”: “Terence, this is stupid stuff / You eat your victuals fast enough / There can’t be much amiss, ‘tis clear / To see the rate you drink your beer.”

“I just love this poem!” she exclaims. “I like the music of it and the fact that you have the word ‘stupid’ in the first two lines. Poems are supposed to be lofty and serious and here you have someone talking and saying ‘this is stupid stuff.’ So, yes, poetry is about the song and it is about the dance of words whether or not you are rhyming.”

Some poets prefer rhymed forms and others blank verse which is unrhymed iambic pentameter. There are many tricks to the trade. “Free verse writers use a lot of repetition to replace the end rhyme. Instead of the end rhyme, you have internal rhyme.”

She writes poems that are rich and smooth, with a bit of a backbeat, likely the jazz influence. About ten years ago, Hermine says that her writing took on a new dimension. In 2004 she underwent surgery to remove a malignant brain tumor.

“The body can prepare you for something before your conscious mind is aware,” she says softly. “I found that my writing was changing, and it has even changed since. Now, I write more about the mortal body and just human fallibility.”

Consider Hermine’s poem “Test for Cognitive Function” which was featured several months ago as a poem of the week on Split this

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Rock, an organization for socially engaged poets. In the poem, a patient, is being asked to remember these three words: mother, slipper and July.

Everyone knows that poems can be mysterious and interpretations can vary. To this reader, it is clear that the patient remembers the three words by calling up a childhood memory, a memory of siblings spending a summer day picnicking with their mother; glimpses of lessons learned at the feet of their mother. The poem also hints to a future that doesn't include their mother, except for memories. By the end of the poem, excerpted below, the reader has the three words - and so much more.

"We blackberried in barefoot grass and ate / July sandwiches. / Mama said, "Walk together, children" was code for / escaping to freedom, walking away... I'm older than she never will be / shrouded in her youth / Mama's slippers whisper / over dreamed banks... Mama birthed me / on Coca Cola, potato salad, / scripture, ditties, and good shoes... Always, she wishes for me / love and clarity in the cunning city / of language. / Every sea-

son she's gone, / she walks memory's winding / corridors."

"They say you can read your way toward some kind of healing," says Hermine. "I'm trying to write my way toward healing. I am using writing as a curative process. An operation, such as the one I had, shatters your personality. It shatters your psychic wholeness, and those various levels of wholeness are what keep us going. The process in me is an ongoing one."

Hermine has advice for potential writers (or the parents of potential writers).

"Yes," she says. "Read. Read a lot. Read something that is new to you. And write. It's good discipline to just write every day. Make a space every day to write something even if you only spend 30 minutes doing it."

Emerging writers might also consider joining a writers' group and there are many such groups in this area. The important thing, whether you write for therapy or intend to pitch your writing or self-publish, is to just do what writers do. "Writers write," Hermine says very matter-of-factly.

Her own creative writing began somewhere

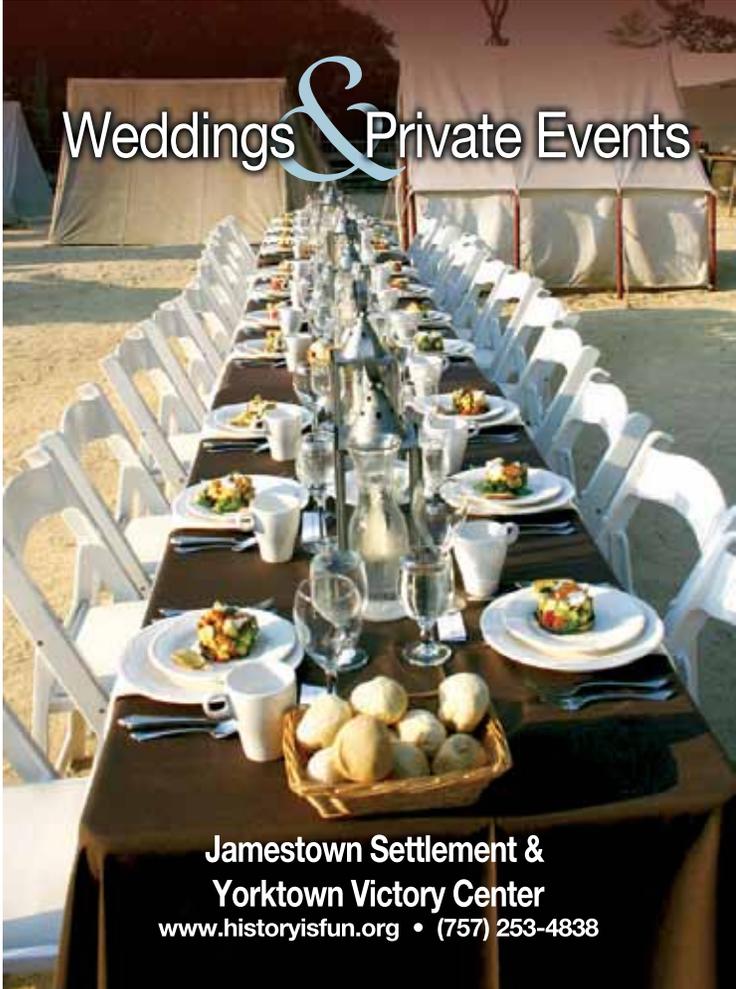
around the age of ten when she kept a diary, the five-year kind with small lined pages. "I asked my parents for a diary," she says. "I needed a place where I could write my feelings out. I didn't know how to just talk to people and just say 'I'm sad today' or 'I'm happy today' or 'I feel lost' or 'I like a boy.'"

That first year, the budding writer tried to keep her prose within the lines on the page.

"But then I realized that I could do what I wanted to do with this diary, and I could write outside the lines if I wanted to."

Even in this time of new technologies ever changing the way individuals communicate with each other, there is probably a ten year old who yearns to write outside the lines. Let's hope so. For, that is how we explore ourselves as people and as a society. That is how we are able to knit each generation to the next. Our poems and stories will never be irrelevant.

"As people read what I am creating, I hope they walk away with hope, not just for themselves, and with love," Dr. Hermine Pinson says. "At the bottom line, at the base of any good creative writing, is love - love lost or gathered. And love is energy." NDN



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A Beautiful Life

By Erin Fryer

Just outside of Williamsburg lies the small rural town of Croaker. Situated on the York River, the town is home to residential areas, farms, York River State Park and several generations of the Garrett family.

A life-long resident of the Williamsburg area, Phyllis Garrett has bounced around between Croaker, Williamsburg and New Kent her entire life. In 1909, her grandfather started the locally famous Garrett's Grocery store, a small store on Croaker Road that permanently closed its doors in 2013 after more than 100 years of serving the citizens of Croaker.

Now retired, Phyllis has found herself right back where her life first started, happily settled



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

in Croaker. Though the roads that led her to where she is today were as winding and bumpy as the dirt roads that once connected the small town to Williamsburg, it's those experiences that led her to write her autobiography, *A Country Girl from Croaker*.

At one point in time it seemed like only a

dream; Phyllis wasn't sure if her longing to write about her life would ever come to fruition. Eventually, it was her unwavering desire to tell her life story, the good, bad and even the ugly, so her children could know their mother in ways they would have never been able to otherwise, that led her to write her memoir.

Born in 1937, Phyllis revisits her years growing up in Croaker and spending time with her family at the grocery store. Though still considered a rural town, Phyllis paints a picture of just how "country" Croaker was before the days of Interstate 64.

A graduate of James Blair High School, Phyllis did what most young ladies in the 1950s did when they finished school and started their

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adult lives. She got married.

Phyllis describes her 28-year marriage as traditional, though imperfect. Her ex-husband provided for their family, and she tended to the home. While her home life was a typical arrangement during that time period, Phyllis wanted to accomplish more in life than cooking and cleaning day-in and day-out. Nearly 30 years after she said "I do," Phyllis decided it was time to follow her heart and find out who she really was.

"Deep down, I knew I had ability and talent," Phyllis says. "I wanted more and knew I could do more."

Phyllis says, in retrospect, she feels that the eventual end of her marriage was meant to be. "My husband and I grew apart. It just happened," she says. "It took many years, but I eventually became very mature and independent. I have accomplished a great deal since my divorce, so I think it was meant to be."

As a newly single woman, Phyllis had to do something she hadn't been able to do in a long time, find employment. After many rounds of interviews, she finally snagged a position at Camp Peary, a job she says she loved.

As the years went by and she neared retire-

ment, Phyllis had two dreams in mind. One was to take her beloved mother on a cruise, and the other was to write a book about her life.

Unfortunately, Phyllis' mother passed away the year she retired, which fueled her desire to get the book finished. She describes the January after she retired as snowy and cold, and it was then that she decided to sit down with a pencil and paper and start to write.

It took nearly three years for her to pour her heart out on those pages, but in 2012, *A Country Girl from Croaker* was published by Nighthawk/Raven Publishing.

From cover-to-cover, intricate details from Phyllis' life are splayed out on the pages of her autobiography. From her humble beginnings in Croaker, to her years as a young school girl, to her life as a young wife and eventually her greatest joy of all, her role as a mother.

A mother of three, Phyllis dedicated her book to her children. "My children are my entire life," she says. "I give thanks to God for allowing me the blessing and privilege of being their mother."

Phyllis says when writing the book she felt inspired to tell the honest story about her life. "I felt it was important for me to not leave any-

thing out," she says. "I wanted the truth about my upbringing, marriage and my eventual divorce to be told because it's my life. I wanted my children to know who I am as a person, and not just as their mother."

In an emotional moment, Phyllis shared that more than anything, she wanted her children to learn her thoughts, desires, and to learn more about her side of the family.

"When my children were growing up, we never really talked about my family, despite the fact that I adored them," Phyllis says. "I wanted them to learn about where they came from." Phyllis' mother's maiden name was Waltrip, another name that has been around Williamsburg for generations, just like Garrett. Phyllis' roots run deep in this area, and she wants her children to know about both sides.

Phyllis says an equally important motive for her book was to inspire other women who might be in a difficult situation and unhappy, to know that they don't have to stay in that situation. "I want women to know they can learn to live and improve their life because they're important," she says. "Everyone deserves a beautiful life."

Phyllis says she feels like one day she was

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down on the kitchen floor scrubbing and thinking how desperately she wanted to write a book, and now she wishes she could do it all over again.

Phyllis reveals the hardest part about writing the book was trying to decide what personal elements of her life she would keep to herself. "There were some things I wrote and then deleted because I felt like they were elements of my life that didn't need to be disclosed."

Phyllis describes the first time she held a copy of her book in her hands as being a very emotional moment. "I cried," she says. "I thought to myself, oh my gosh, I did it." To this day, she has read the book only one time. "Sometimes I think to myself, did I really write this?" she says. "I put long hours into that book. I lived and breathed it until it was written. It was very emotional to see it and hold it."

In addition to writing, Phyllis' other passions in life include ballroom dancing. She started dancing while working at Camp Peary, but was able to practice and throw her heart into it after retiring. When she wasn't writing, she spent hours perfecting the waltz, tango and several other dances until she became an

award-winning ballroom dancer.

Though she hasn't formally written anything besides her memoir, Phyllis says she is excited to continue with her new hobby, exploring the genealogy of the Waltrip side of her family.

"That is another story I would really like to write," she says. "I want to write about my mother's family history. That's one of my goals for the next phase in my life."

Phyllis says one of her greatest accomplishments was when her book was recognized in the Kindle Book Promos Book Contest for an outstanding achievement in the non-fiction category. "I am so proud of that," she says.

Now that the book is done and published, Phyllis says what really makes her tick is maintaining her health in addition to her passion for gardening. "I enjoy walking and exercising, and I look forward to having a small vegetable garden each year," she says.

With many family members still in the area, Phyllis says her greatest joy comes from spending time with her children, grandchildren and cousins. Each year, the family takes a trip to the Outer Banks to spend quality time together.

"I am so proud of my children and grand-

children, and love each one dearly," Phyllis says. "They each have special talents and have brought so much joy into my life."

Anyone who has the desire to write a book, whether it is his or her life story or a fictional tale, has the ability to do it. "It all starts with the desire," Phyllis says. "If you have the idea, just start writing," she says. "Write down your ideas and feelings and whatever your heart and mind lead you to and eventually, it will turn into a book."

Another challenging aspect when writing the book was knowing that by being as honest as possible, there would be some people who wouldn't feel like she should have disclosed all of her deepest secrets. "I knew I was going to have to accept the consequences of being true to myself and my story," she says. "I have certainly had some people who have read it and criticized it, but I can't help that. It's my story, it's my life."

Phyllis says when most people leave this earth, they take their story with them. After writing *A Country Girl from Croaker*, Phyllis Garrett has guaranteed her story will live on forever. [NDN](#)

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CONNECTING with CHILDREN

By Wynne Bowman



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

After years spent living in West Virginia, Colorado and Delaware, award-winning author Sarah Sullivan is delighted to have settled with her husband in Williamsburg this past autumn.

“We love it here,” she says. “We really appreciate the town’s colonial architecture and

cultural advantages, as well as the people. Everyone has been so welcoming.”

Sarah describes the path that led her to this historical town. “When I was a child, my grandparents lived on the Rappahannock River. My own family moved every few years, so it was my grandparents’ home that remained

a permanent fixture in our lives. Coming to this part of Virginia feels like coming home.”

This idea of home is a theme that runs through Sarah’s work. “I never intended to have a consistent theme, but it’s apparent that I have a slight obsession with concepts of family, home and finding one’s right place in the



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world.”

Sarah is the author of five published works: *All That's Missing*, *Passing the Music Down*, *Once Upon a Baby Brother*, *Dear Baby/Letters from Your Big Brother* and *Root Beer and Banana*. Speaking generally of children's writers, she explains, “It is not uncommon for people to ask us, ‘When will you move on to writing adult novels?’ My answer is to ask them if they remember any books from their own childhood. Almost without exception, that person will remember a book which left a deep impression on them and which remains important in their life to this day. I can't imagine a more worthy goal than to aspire to create something that might have that kind of impact on another person's life.”

Although Sarah's books have been reviewed by the New York Times, Publisher's Weekly, Kirkus, Booklist, School Library Journal and more, she did not begin her professional life as a writer. Before being able to claim the title of award-winning children's author, Sarah served as a lawyer for fourteen years.

After her ten year-old son was diagnosed with leukemia, Sarah's law career was put on hold while he underwent treatment at Duke. As treatment progressed, she resigned from her job, not certain what the future held. A few weeks before her son's death a couple of years later, Sarah's mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer. For a while after her mother's death, she floundered.

“Ultimately, it was my husband's emotional support and a job offer from my son's principal that saved me and put me back on track,” Sarah says. She was offered a position teaching English to 11th and 12th grade students. “Working with young people helped me heal and find purpose again,” she says. “Sharing my love of literature and writing with enthusiastic students was a joy.”

Sarah says, even as a lawyer, she had been attending writer's conferences and workshops for years. “Writing was always something I would do late at night and early in the morning. It wasn't that I abandoned one career and picked up another. It was more of a transition.” As multiple happenings yielded Sarah's authorial career, multiple inspirations and several people continue to push her writing forward. “It's impossible for me to know or understand how this works, but everyone I've known and loved in my life has some sort of involvement in my work.”

After selling her first two picture books, Sarah applied to the MFA in Writing for Children & Young Adults program at Vermont College. Following her graduation in 2005, Sarah believes she owes a huge debt of gratitude to her workshop leaders, advisors and fellow students. “The program has been hugely important in improving my writing skills and connecting with a network of writing friends. I was lucky to work with incredible faculty advisors – Louise Hawes, Phyllis Root, Jane Resh Thomas and Liza Ketchum. I still pinch myself when I think of being in workshops with leaders like M.T. Anderson, Kathi Appelt and Tim Wynne-Jones. The experience was invaluable.” Speaking gratefully of the colleagues she met at Vermont College, Sarah says she has remained friends with them to this day.

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Currently, she is a member of an online writing group that is composed of her fellow graduates from the program. In addition to keeping current with the online community, Sarah has attended several writing retreats with friends from the same program. “It is hugely significant as a writer to have people like that, fellow writers, whose judgment you trust, to be a part of your writing career.”

When it comes to the beginning of a project, Sarah says her stories usually begin with a voice or an image in her head. *All That's Missing*, for example, started with an image of a boy meeting his grandmother for the first time. She explains the roots of the story: “In my mind, I knew he had never met her, and I could sense that there was a rift in the family but I didn’t know why. I wrote to find out why.” *All That's Missing* is Sarah’s only published middle-grade novel to date. She is working on two more.

Her remaining four publications are picture books, each of which was illustrated by a different artist. “People are often surprised to learn that it’s the publisher who selects the illustrator,” Sarah says. “The illustrator brings his or her own independent artistic vision to the work, enlarging and enhancing what the author has written. I’ve been incredibly lucky to have my stories illustrated by enormously gifted artists.”

Though times of distress are what allowed Sarah to carry on with a writing career, she uses this personal experience to give her books a childlike charm. “Certainly my own experience leads me to think it is critically important for children’s stories to have hope. This does not mean they cannot be realistic. Children are perfectly capable of looking at the darker side of life, but I think it is important for them to see that it is possible to persevere and survive despite hardship.”

While her post-grad publications have been a success, the road to national acknowledgment was not always smooth. “For most writers, learning to deal with rejection and figure out how to keep believing in yourself is one of the main life skills you need to acquire,” Sarah says. “Once I came to understand that I was going to write regardless of whether anyone ever published my work, it made rejection much easier to deal with.”

Sarah is an active author, conducting writing workshops in elementary and middle schools. “When students get excited about something they have written, that is the most rewarding feeling without a doubt. Watching kids create their own stories is really exciting, too,” she says in an unintentional allusion to a character from one of her own books. *In Once Upon a Baby Brother*, Lizzie, a new big sister, finds her happy place in writing imagined adventures. Continuing with Sarah’s style of “finding one’s place in the world,” Lizzie’s adventures become a reality when she finds love and inspiration in her new kin.

With two middle-grade fiction books in the making, Sarah Sullivan’s career is still building. However, Sarah’s words have already left a path to the ties of home and heart. “I never try to deliver a message or teach a lesson,” she says. “I simply hope that readers will feel a connection to my characters, and if I am successful, that they will come away feeling that their hearts have been opened.” NDN

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Medieval Legends, Baseball and Dogs

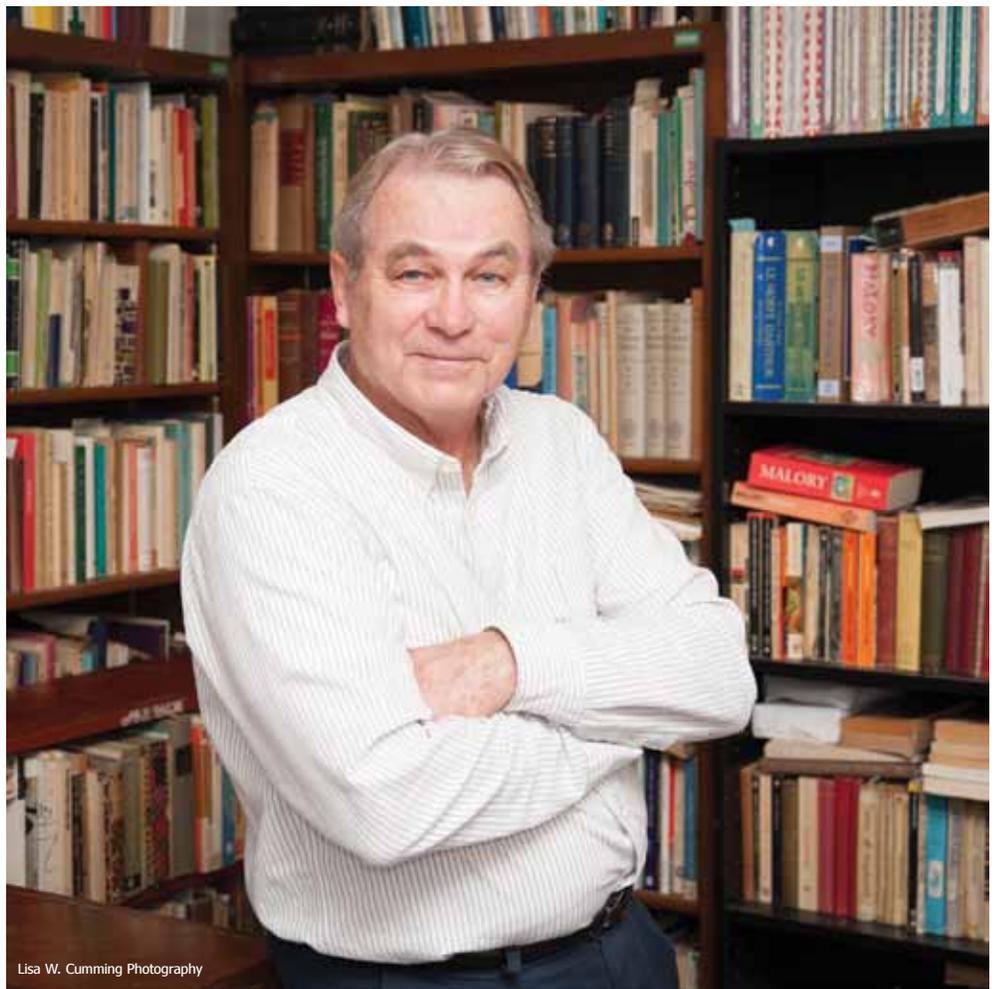
By Alison Johnson

As Dr. John Conlee begins writing a novel, he has a general sense of where the story will go. Sometimes, though, his own characters surprise him. That's what makes the long and, at times, difficult process of creating a book a joy to him.

"I'm as curious about what will happen as a reader hopefully will be," John says. "I often find the plot takes on a life of its own. Sometimes I even find a character intruding and taking over the story too much, and I have to take back control and say, 'Stop that!' I find the process so mysterious and intriguing, so much fun."

John, a professor of English and Medieval Studies at the College of William and Mary, has published seven novels to date, in addition to his academic works. His fiction combines his love for a handful of disparate subjects: medieval history, Arthurian legends, Celtic mythology, baseball and dogs.

His four-book Dragon Stone series for middle-school students, for example, relates the adventures of the legendary King Arthur's



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

dog, Cabal, who serves as the narrator. Two of his novels for adults, *Heater* and *Rounding Third*, follow a young baseball team through a season while re-enacting an ancient Celtic tale that brings his characters to western Ireland. A third, *The Voyage of Maeldun*, is a sea adventure set in a long-ago era when Ireland was first being Christianized.

Each book takes John a year or two to complete. He fits his writing time around his full-time job at William and Mary, where he has taught for decades. His goal is to write for at

least two hours on weekdays, usually working out of his college office but occasionally venturing to an outdoor spot on campus or to the deck at the Queens Lake home he shares with his wife, Julia.

Nights, weekends and even vacations also turn into extra writing time. "I'm a bit of a workaholic," John confesses. "I'll be on the beach or on an airplane, and I'm working on something. I can't stay away from it for very long."

John's novels generally run between 175 and

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300 pages, depending on the targeted audience. He releases them through Pale Horse Books, a publishing consortium that he runs with a small group of other writers from both the East and West coasts. Pale Horse has about 25 titles in print to date.

Revising is the hardest part of the writing process for John. "The original writing is the fun part," he says. "But then I'm sort of a perfectionist. I'm rarely happy with what I've done, so I'm constantly editing and polishing."

John is past the stage of having to convince a publisher to accept his work. He remembers it well and he advises all would-be book writers not to give up even if they compile a thick folder of rejection letters.

"The whole business of agents and publishers can be such a heart-rending, ego-crushing process," he says. "You have to just go for it. Keep believing in yourself, but also be prepared to get 100 rejections before you get one encouraging word. With a few rare exceptions, that's how it goes. Yet there are many wonderful stories of people who have been rejected many times but go on to become very successful."

Developing a thick skin is important for authors, he adds. He recommends that writers join or create reader critique groups and subject their work to regular scrutiny. "That's very valuable both to improve as a writer and to develop a sense of 'I can take it. I can keep going,'" he says. "You have to build a callus around your vulnerabilities."

John came by his love of books early, and his passion for fiction writing and medieval history evolved in college and graduate school. Growing up near San Diego, California, he had a homemaker mom who had majored in English, would become a librarian later in life and often read to her five children.

At the University of Southern California, where he earned an

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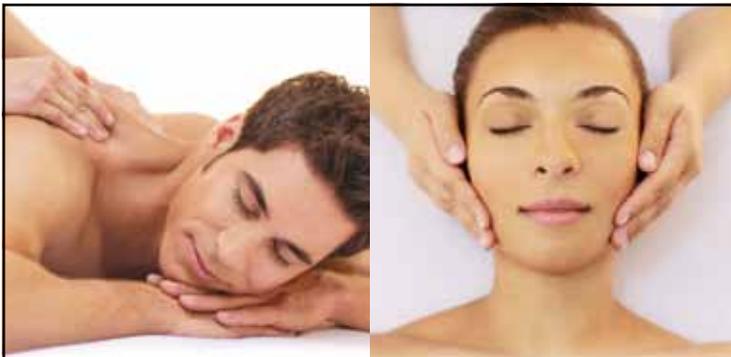


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English degree, John took his first fiction-writing class, a step he encourages all avid readers to take. "I see it as a complement to the academic study of literature, because it makes you more appreciative of the works you read," he says. "You learn that while writing is rewarding, it's really hard."

After college, John headed to graduate school at the University of Illinois expecting to focus on Shakespearean and modern drama. Instead, a professor sparked his interest in medieval literature, which led him to complete master's and doctorate degrees in the specialty.

"You get to lose yourself in a wholly different sort of realm," he explains. "It turned out to be good in a practical sense as well, because the job market was closing up and there were more positions in medieval literature than modern drama."

Baseball, like books, was a childhood love. John played the sport in high school and a bit in college, mostly at second base, and has traveled to major and minor league ballparks around the country. He still plays softball and tennis today. His favorite professional team is the Boston Red Sox because one of the team's all-time greats, Ted Williams, was born in San Diego.

As for dogs, John bonded with a now-passed Australian Shepherd named Nico that was meant to be a pet for his daughter, one of his four children. "He was beautiful, athletic and way too smart for his own good," John recalls. "He was far too much dog for a little girl of 7. For the next 12 years, we were about as close as man and beast can be."

So when he discovered references to what seemed to be a "really cool dog" in Arthurian literature, he had a perfect narrator for his books for younger readers. "A lot of people didn't know about Cabal, in contrast to things such as Merlin and the Lady of the Lake or the Holy Grail," he says. "I thought it was about time for this dog to have his day."

John's current book project is an Arthurian novel for adults, tentatively titled "The Brothers Pendragon." The story focuses on the relationship between King Arthur's two sons, one a well-known villain and the other, the book's hero, an illegitimate son born of an earlier affair. John hopes to finish the book by summer and publish it before Christmas.

After retirement, which he expects will happen in about two years, John, who describes his age as "unknown", plans to focus on a scholarly work about Sir Thomas Malory, a famed 15th-century English writer who compiled and interpreted traditional Arthurian tales. He also still gives lectures and writes academic papers for publication.

This semester, John is teaching classes in Arthurian Literature and Early Celtic Narratives, along with a freshman seminar in Post-Apocalyptic Fiction. He also is active in the college's Study Abroad programs, teaching at sites in Cambridge and Bath, both cities in England, and leading summer study tours throughout the United Kingdom.

Travel will be another big part of his retirement life, he hopes. He recently has developed a keen interest in visiting medieval pilgrimage sites. Next summer, he hopes to climb St. Patrick's holy mountain, Croagh Patrick, in Ireland; one day, he hopes to walk a long stretch of the "El Camino," an ancient route to a shrine in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. "I still have a real travel bug," he says.

Wherever Dr. John Conlee goes, he'll likely have a book on his mind. Even as electronic books increasingly replace hard paper copies, he expects small independent ventures such as Pale Horse to stay in business.

"I really think those types of companies are the future of publishing," he says. "I expect that they will keep old-fashioned book publishing alive." As for his own books, he can't pick a favorite. "I love them all in different ways and for different reasons," he says. "They're like your children."

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Today, the clinic is a 10,000 square foot modern facility with ten medical exam rooms, five dental chairs, and a staff of 30. LFC serves as medical “home” to over 1,500 patients with 12,000 patient visits each year. To qualify for care, a person must be an uninsured resident of Williamsburg, York County, Poquoson, James City County, or Newport News and meet income requirements.

Executive Director Carol Sale, RN, MSN says, “The staff at Lackey Free Clinic believes in the phrase, “There but for the grace of God, go I.” Time and again, patients tell stories of their once content, stable, and self-sufficient lives “before” the loss of a job or insurance or the occurrence of a family tragedy. “Even the fortunate among us have lives that can change rapidly and unpredictably,” says Sale.

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Middle Eastern Adventure *Inspiration*

By Nicole Puskar

As the winter sun streamed in through the front window of the quaint Williamsburg cottage, Patricia (Patti) Gray and her faithful dog, Molly, sat opposite me in the front room. Patti is warm, inviting and kind. She shares that it has been a long time since she was last interviewed.

If you were to ask Patti about her career as an author, she would describe it in one word: short. Her profession as a writer, on the other hand, is one that she's been cultivating most of her adult life. Her evolution from writer to author has been a journey. It is clear that there have been

no sprints, rather, thoroughly researched ideas and thoughtfully measured words, which eventually found themselves penned on the pages of *Petra*, a novel, Patti's first published work of fiction.

"Most of the jobs that I've had involved writing, but it was more report writing than it was non-fiction for publication or fiction for publication," Patti explains. "It was a journey, just like the book was a journey as well, but the journey that took me to the book was a very pleasant one."

Patti's journey begins in and eventually

comes full circle back to Virginia; however, there have been many varied stops along the way, often taking her around the globe. When Patti graduated from college, she went to work for the Agency for International Development (AID) in Washington D.C. While at AID, she met and married her husband, who also worked for the agency. They were both interested in doing international development work. However, at the time married couples were not allowed to both be employed by AID abroad. So Patti left the agency in 1966 when her husband received an assignment as a Development Officer

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that took them to Jordan. While abroad, Patti primarily worked for the Jordan American Institute teaching English as a foreign language. She also did some modest journal writing on her own.

“It was hard as a woman. There were a lot of really bright women married to Foreign Service Officers, and it was very hard to find a place to work. So, many of them never did, but I was lucky,” Patti explains.

During her time in Jordan, Patti recalls being very immersed in the culture and local community. Her social circle included a mix of Jordanians as well as Americans. “I loved being there. Jordan was just endlessly fascinating and really beautiful to be in a landscape that was so different from what I had grown up in, in the East Coast of the United States, a much more desert landscape. And the people were extremely wonderful to be with. Everything about living there and working there in a variety of capacities was just very satisfying. I left with this wonderful impression of the Middle East, in terms of the traveling I had done, the people I had met, and the scenery,” Patti shares.

While living in the Middle East, she visited the ancient archeological city, Petra, which was located about three hours south of where she

was living, more than a dozen times. Petra is known especially for its architecture, much of which is carved out of the surrounding stone.

After returning to the states, while staying with her sister who lives in the Berkshires, Patti was introduced to Olana, the former home of Hudson River School painter Frederick Church, which had recently been purchased by the state of New York to be preserved as a historic trust site. At the time of Patti’s visit, the home was not yet open to the public, so she and her sister walked along the outside, admiring the architecture and surrounding grounds. “We went over and it wasn’t open, but it was this unbelievably beautiful site; it’s up on a hill above the Hudson River. The house is a Persian palace, it’s just extraordinary. I haven’t seen anything else like it in the United States. So, I was just very intrigued from the beginning,” Patti explains. While walking along the outside of the house, they were able to peek in through an uncovered window, which allowed Patti to see one of Church’s paintings, which was a painting of Al Khazneh, “The Treasury”, in Petra. This piqued Patti’s interest because during the mid-19th century, when Church visited Petra, very few people had been there. “It had sort of been lost to the Western world. People knew that it had

once existed, but they didn’t know where it was and the Bedouin were not really very interested in having people know where it was,” Patti explains.

After her visit, Patti was so fascinated that she wrote to Olana’s first site director saying she would be interested in doing archival work for them if they had a need. The site director was delighted by Patti’s inquiry and offered her a position. Patti then spent four weeks cataloguing all of Frederick Church’s papers, including journals, letters and photographs, which provided an intimate glimpse into Church’s personal and professional life. “That was my first immersion in the real research materials, the primary materials that belonged to them. So it was a very nice opportunity to be the first person to work on that,” Patti explains.

“I always stayed interested in him and then I started to write a non-fiction book. I finished that and then I actually thought, ‘Well you know, maybe it’s time for me to learn something about writing rather than just writing the way I instinctively think is the right way to write, so I actually took a class at the college. It was through that that I transferred what had started as a non-fiction book into a fiction book, and that’s how I came to write *Petra*,”

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Patti explains.

When Patti speaks about the days she spent writing *Petra*, you cannot help experiencing her excitement and nostalgia. During this period, Patti's entire world seemed to revolve around her 19th century caravan of characters, including Thomas Hudson, based on Frederick Church, a French Orientalist painter Jacques Vesoul, an English professor Alexander Fowler, an American engineer and entrepreneur Charles Lockwood, and an English noblewoman married to a Bedouin sheikh Anne Hardy Mezrab. "I just felt like it was this wonderful place that I could go every day and be with these characters that I had created and understand them and get to that point where the characters start speaking to you. And that did happen," Patti shares.

While listening to Patti, I could not help but wonder if she was in the novel. "That's a very good question. If you asked my friends...they would say, 'Oh yeah, she's Anne.'...in her outspokenness about the Middle East," Patti says with a laugh.

Patti spent approximately four years of writing six to eight hours a day to finish her book. Eleven drafts later, *Petra*, was complete. Patti explains that many of the lessons she learned along the way were specific to inexperienced

writers, noting specifically the large amounts of rewriting she did in the first two years. She expects after the hurdle of writing one's first novel, the process should take less time for subsequent novels. "When I began the novel, I never thought about how many years I would devote to the book, so I would definitely say it's a process of wandering and discovery, evolving over the luxury of a time without measure. During all the years I raised children and worked I looked forward to a time when I could write with no deadlines, no assignments and no restrictions on my freedom." Patti's daughter, Laura, lives locally and, according to her mother, has been her most valuable advisor, editor and nearby cheerleader.

Patti's advice to novice writers is to be disciplined about keeping a journal. "I wish I had been disciplined about keeping journals. I think if anybody imagines that at some point they want to write, that keeping a journal is a way to sort of keep those writing juices flowing," Patti says. She also recommends reading books on the art of writing, noting specifically those of Stephen King and John Gardner. "The time that I spent reading books by authors on the art of writing was well spent," Patti Gray shares. NDN

Next Door Neighbors

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www.WilliamsburgNeighbors.com

Next Door Neighbors is a monthly, direct-mailed magazine serving the residents of the Williamsburg area.

Circulation: 39,000



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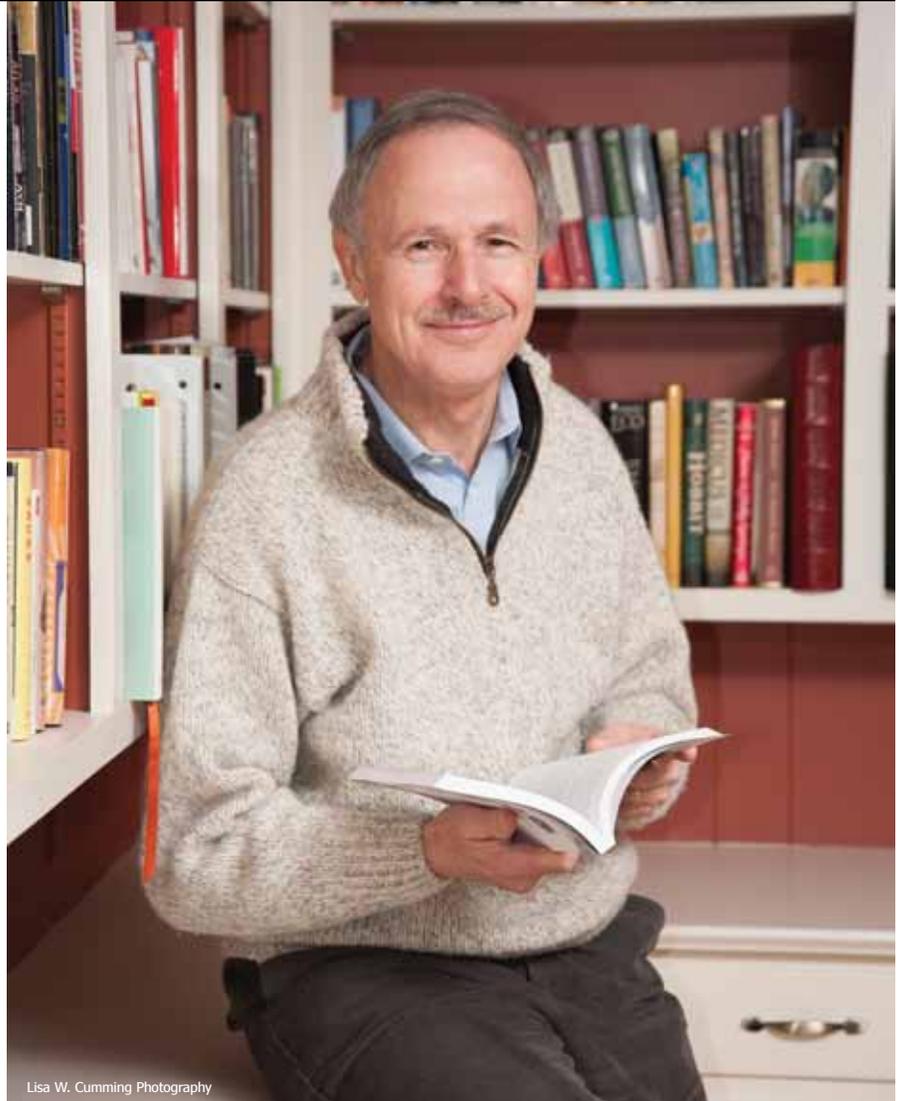


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Scientist and Writer



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

By Linda Landreth Phelps

Medical science is like a broad, moving river: knowledge once thought immutable swiftly changes with each new discovery downstream. According to a theory held by Dr. Roger Gosden, unless you're a scientist on par with Jonas Salk or Howard Jones, any chance of leaving a permanent mark in history is slim unless it's through the arts. After an illustrious career in

the field of human fertility, Roger hopes his own legacy will be found within the pages of the books he currently writes.

"As enjoyable as my career in medicine was," Roger says, "I realized that whatever discoveries I made were not unique to me. If I could discover something, someone else eventually would have done. That's the wonderful differ-

ence in the two careers for me. It's like living two distinct lives, the scientist and the writer."

Research came easily to the young Roger. "I'm a bit eclectic in my interests and curious by nature. I like to go into things in depth," he says in his pleasant English accent, looking very much at ease in a chair by the fireside with his golden retriever, Lilah, relaxing at his

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feet. A collection of antique microscopes on the bookshelf gives testimony to his past life. "As a boy, I had a museum in my dad's shed with all sorts of specimens I'd collected. Even though my family lived in London, I had a deep interest in nature, anything to do with animals, birds or butterflies. I started to write and illustrate my own bird book, my first foray into writing."

After spending his childhood years as part of a happy, middle class family, young Roger planned his next step carefully. "I would like to have become a naturalist, but didn't believe anyone would pay me to go out birding," he says with a rueful smile. "I thought biological science would combine my interests in scholarly work and nature." Following his university days at Cambridge, Roger's career soon focused on medical research.

Writing was always an integral part of what made Roger particularly effective as a researcher. "In science, it's not just about the data, though of course that's core, you have to persuade people. You need to be able to express results in a form that people will bother to read and remember."

Roger's vocation as an academic has brought

him from the halls of Cambridge to North Carolina's Duke University, then back across the Atlantic to Scotland, and eventually to New York City. Roger and his American-born wife, Lucinda, are now appreciating the slower pace that comes with life in Williamsburg.

Roger recalls the busy early days of his career. "I always had a fascination with mavericks and visionaries like my mentor in Cambridge, Sir Robert Edwards, who was eventually awarded the Nobel Prize in 2010. My first faculty position was at Edinburgh's University Medical School in 1976. During the years I spent in Scotland, my first wife and I also had two children. That was an important time in my life."

In addition to his work as a medical researcher, director and teacher, Roger's far-ranging interests led him on intellectual side trips, such as the creation of a program to allow postgraduate distance learning as well as various social science projects. "I was once on a committee studying Scottish prison reform, traveling all around to interview the country's worst criminals and writing up a report on our findings. There are some quite interesting stories there!" He smiles.

Next stop, Yorkshire, where Roger set up a

new research unit in Leeds, associated with the In Vitro Fertilization Program. "If you asked people in my field what I'm remembered for, they would probably say ovary transplantation and fertility preservation for young female cancer patients. Some of my methods are still being used, but with new developments in egg freezing, others are not."

"His writing never slowed. Over the course of his career, Roger has penned more than 300 scientific articles and books. Two of his books for general readers, *Cheating Time* and *Designing Babies*, have been translated into several languages.

After many years in Scotland, the opportunity arose to jump the pond again, for an endowed chair at Eastern Virginia Medical School and work at The Jones Institute with Dr. Howard Jones. It was there that Roger, single again, crossed paths with Dr. Lucinda Veeck, Head of Embryology at Cornell's Medical College, whom he had first met at a conference years before.

"That was the beginning of our story. Cornell University had been trying to recruit me for years," he says. Roger, at last ready to be swayed, moved to Manhattan and a position

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as Director of Research. Meanwhile, Lucinda continued her groundbreaking work there on the clinical side.

Though happy at Cornell and with his new marriage, Roger never relished the idea of becoming one of those ubiquitous ancients still donning their long white coats to roam the hospital halls. "Some of them look like escapees from the geriatric floor. They're in worse shape than the patients!" he laughs. Roger knew there was a rich, complex life outside the constricting walls of academia, and after six years of city life he was ready to explore it.

When a researcher has a paper published in a distinguished scientific journal, the prestige and gravitas achieved by publication is destined to be their only reward. The author retains no copyright, much less control, of his work.

According to Roger, that research was probably paid for by government grants financed by taxes, and yet the profits go to the publishing company. "As an author, if I want to mention anything subsequently from that paper, even to quote a figure, I have to write and ask permission to use my own work. I began to think it was time to put academic publishing aside

and concentrate my writing efforts privately."

Roger believes the future of the book publishing industry will reflect the inevitable proliferation of self-publication. "I've been an editor as well as an author, so I can do almost everything a conventional publishing house would do for me," Roger says. The average author gets little help unless they happen to be someone who has earned name recognition thanks to multiple best sellers. Even some of these fortunate few are bailing out of traditional methods, hoping to keep a larger piece of the pie and maintain better control of their work.

Since his early retirement from Cornell, Roger has self-published two nonfiction books and there are others in the pipeline. His first, *A Surgeon's Story*, is an updated, expanded edition of a 1935 autobiography by Dr. Robert T. Morris. He was a gifted surgeon who, like Roger, was also a naturalist and writer. This is no dry text drowning in technical jargon. The readable, anecdotal book has sold quite well on Amazon and garnered 5-star reviews as well as being the subject of a 30-minute National Public Radio program. It's still early days for his latest, *In Vitro Fertilization Comes to America*, but the signs of success are already pres-

ent. Through his long association with him, Roger had the opportunity to ghostwrite this memoir of Dr. Howard Jones, who, at 104, is currently busy with his own latest book. "He's an amazing fellow," Roger says. There have already been favorable mentions of the book in reviews, which is the only thing that really interests Roger these days.

I'm not out to make a lot of money; I simply want people to read my books," Roger says. His *A Surgeon's Story* can currently be downloaded on Kindle for \$3.99. "I'd sell them for a dollar if I had to," he says with a laugh. "I should keep better track of my sales numbers, but I'm always on to the next idea or project. My first experiences in self-publishing have been so positive and easy that I plan to continue indefinitely in this vein."

After so many years in a high-pressure scientific career, Dr. Roger Gosden's life path has come full circle, back to those boyish days when he and his imagination could roam freely. It's a luxury to wander the woods with his dog and smell the flowers, to seek out the shade of a chestnut tree, or admire the unexpected flash of a bluebird. Best of all, there's now time to write about it. NDN

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EMPOWERING WOMEN



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

By Cathy Welch

Nicki Royall Peet is passionate about many things. In her latest novel, *The Shaman's Daughter*, her passion for empowering women and contemplating the effects of progress shines through.

Born in 1948 to Taylor and Jane Robins, Nicki is part of an artistic family. her mother was a singer and wrote a novel she discarded after its first rejection; her sister, Judy, worked for a local newspaper; her sister, Susie, was a writer, a painter and a gourmet cook; her daughter, Samantha, is a writer and proofread her novel; her step-

daughter, Mollie, is an art teacher who did the cover art for Nicki's most recent book; and her stepdaughter, Julie, is a photographer who shot the book's author photo.

Raised on the Peninsula, Nicki attended Christopher Newport Community College in

1966. At 24, her interest in journalism led her to New York City to work for a publisher's in-house magazine. She wrote introductions for their book reviews, fact checked and wrote reviews.

A year later, Nicki returned to Newport News to work as office manager

for Bright Blue Productions, owned by songwriter, Austin Roberts. During this time, she took writing classes, wrote short stories and a play while attending an acting class. The instructor allowed her to write scenes and had

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the class act them out to see what worked and what didn't.

Nicki met her first husband, Sam Royall, and they moved to Georgia where he attended law school. Before finishing school, they moved back home so Sam could join his father's business, Williamsburg Press. The couple divorced after 12 years. They had two daughters, Hagen and Samantha.

Nicki married Cary Stephenson Peet in 1991. They met at a day care center where her daughters attended along with his two boys and two girls. The kids were three- to seven-year-olds when they married. "I'm not going to claim to be as happy and as wholesome as the Brady Bunch," Nicki says. "But we did just fine." Today the couple has three grandsons and one due in May. The oldest is eight and the youngest four.

Besides earlier jobs including disc jockeying for a country radio station, Nicki got a late start in her career. She finished her Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion at The College of William and Mary when she was 39.

From 1988 to 2003, Nicki worked as shelter director and director of the domestic violence services program for Avalon Battered

Women's Shelter.

She attended Baptist Theological Seminary in 1995 where she earned her Masters of Divinity. She served at Yorktown Baptist Church as church administrator/children's minister.

Working in the nonprofit sector was how she wanted to do ministry. She was clinic director at Gloucester-Matthews Free Clinic in 2003. Later, she became deputy executive director at the Virginia Association of Free Clinics where she wrote grants and administrated an accreditation program to increase free clinics' credibility. She was affiliate liaison at RX Partnership, an innovative, award-winning nonprofit supplying free drugs via pharmaceutical companies to free clinics and community health centers. RX Partnership vetted the organizations and individuals served by the program.

Seminary required a mission immersion experience as part of their program. She had to get to know her targeted population and provide service as requested. She chose the Cherokee people near Boone, North Carolina. "I learned so much in those two weeks," she says. "We visited different churches and learned about their denominations."

One church moved because a new highway was coming through their land. They had to move their graveyard too.

"The minister talked about what an upheaval that was for his church," she says. "People had to bury their relatives twice."

Some protested the highway and a mysterious musician played over the excavation for the healing of the land. They never found out who played the music.

Native Americans have great reverence for the land and the spirits in the ground. Her novel, *The Shaman's Daughter*, centers on an 18th-century Native American girl, Cistoo, and a modern-day Native American teenage girl, Lokie, who protests the highway coming through and is the fictional musician in the graveyard. She is caught and required to do community service at the excavation site for trespassing. While working, she discovers something in one of the graves that links her to Cistoo. The main themes of the book are the empowerment of women and what constitutes progress.

"The British thought it was progress to teach the natives to read and write. Maybe it was in some sense. Then you see this current

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society having to grapple with going from a rural area to an area with a major highway coming through.”

The Shaman's Daughter begins around 1790 with six-year-old Cistoo suffering from smallpox. The Shaman (medicine man) saves her, but her mother dies before he realizes she's sick. Cistoo's father shuns her, blaming her for her mother's death. The child tries to earn her father's love by excelling at traditionally-male activities like running and shooting. Her cousins try to kill her, but the Shaman saves her, eventually choosing her as his successor.

Nicki's research included the art of healing plants the Shaman teaches Cistoo. She spent time at the museum in Cherokee, North Carolina researching. She learned colonists' diseases decimated many Native Americans making it possible to take their land. She learned about the Cherokee creation story, their games and tools. She also researched Cherokee medicine, their stories and their symbolism.

Once the story captured her imagination she was off to write her novel, but the writing was sporadic before she retired in 2012. With a large family and work, it took two years to

complete her manuscript. “My main goal was to write a novel. I wanted it to be well-written and have something to say.”

The Shaman's Daughter also focuses on tribal religious beliefs. “I tried to show Native American spiritual beliefs, Christian spiritual beliefs and the validity of both to the people,” Nicki says. “I've studied Shamanism and all kinds of religion. I like to find those similarities where people go down different paths and come to the same conclusion. To me that's validating of a higher power.”

Nicki's previous works, *You Don't Have to Have a Repeat Cesarean* and *The Lines Have Fallen in Pleasant Places*, were published through traditional publishers. “Now, self-publishing doesn't have the stigma of a vanity press,” she explains. “I didn't want to spend years trying to get somebody to take this book. I wanted more control over its appearance and the process.” She believes this more democratic path to publication is the wave of the future.

“My main goals were to get the book done and have it of a quality I was happy with.”

She published *The Shaman's Daughter* through iUniverse, an imprint of Penguin

Random House. “iUniverse turned out to be best for me,” Nicki explains. “I wanted editorial advice. It was excellent. I got 40 pages of feedback from my editor.” She learned how to make the manuscript more powerful and engaging and exactly where to start. She worked full-time for three months to finish the edits. Nicki's first book event was at Yorktown's Grace Episcopal Church. She also participates in Second Sundays in downtown Williamsburg once a month.

She attended a “Pitch Fest” in Las Vegas last February. “We pitched our potential screenplays to Hollywood representatives. Two people were interested but I never heard any more from them.”

She had help with publicity for *The Shaman's Daughter* but mostly she does her own marketing. The book has its own Facebook page. “It's fun writing because you get to learn about a lot of things,” Nicki says of her continued interest in writing. “I have enough material to write a follow-up to *The Shaman's Daughter*.”

“This is the best time of my life,” Nicki Roy-all Peet says of retirement. “I'm free to do what I want to do.” NDN




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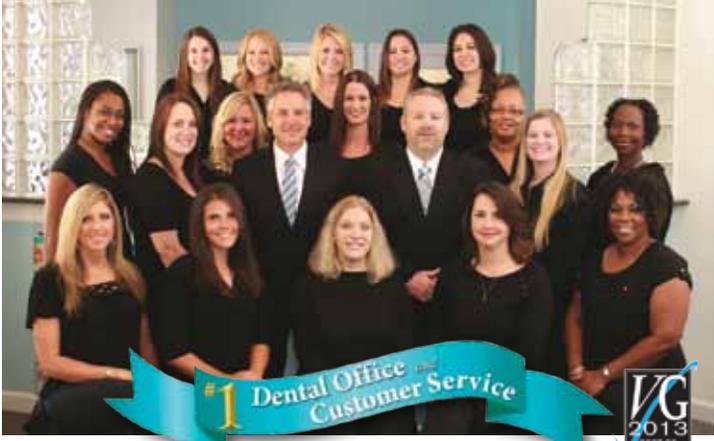
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EDUCATING WITH

Chester the Crab



By Brandy Centolanza

Like most boys, Bentley Boyd enjoyed reading comic books as a child. The fascination, however, never ceased, and Bentley now writes and illustrates his own comic books through his company Chester Comix, LLC.

“A lot of kids go through a phase where they like to draw,” points out Bentley. “I think ev-

erybody likes to draw and create when they first start kindergarten, but I just never stopped. To have a blank piece of paper in front of you and

to be able to draw what you want the world to be like is very powerful.”

Bentley knew early on that he wanted to be a writer and illustrator. In elementary school, he

started copying Peanuts comics during his free time.

“I saw the way writing and drawing pictures



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worked together, and I wanted to do both,” Bentley recalls. “I sent one of my Peanuts drawings to Charles M. Schulz and he wrote back ‘Looks great. Keep going.’ That’s all the encouragement I needed. I still have the letter.”

Bentley progressed to penning and drawing his own comic books about superheroes. He also began drawing comics for his elementary school newspaper and went on to write for his middle school and high school newspapers. After graduating high school in South Dakota, Bentley moved to Massachusetts, where he earned an All Honors Degree in History and Literature from Harvard University. He also worked for the school newspaper there.

Bentley’s interest in history came from his grandparents, while his interest in the arts stemmed from his parents, Joyce Hite, a classical pianist, and Don Boyd, a sculptor.

“I grew up feeling history, and I really listened to the stories from my grandparents,” Bentley recalls. “It was a generational history, and I really paid attention to that. My parents were both PhD level artists, and I wanted to find my own way with art. I think I found my

niche.”

Bentley started his post-college career as a reporter who drew political cartoons for a newspaper in Mansfield, Ohio. In 1992, Bentley moved to Hampton Roads after accepting a job with The Daily Press as a reporter. Three years later, he was writing and drawing political cartoons five times a week for the newspaper.

“The art that I do is art with a purpose,” Bentley says. “I am trying to move discussion.”

Bentley was asked to draw a cartoon in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of Earth Day in 1995. That assignment led to the birth of Chester the Crab, a character Bentley started to use as an educational tool for students and is the basis for his comic book company.

“I saw an opportunity to use Chester the Crab to make a long-term impact,” Bentley says. “When you make a living as a creative person, you need to keep an eye on opportunity, and I just thought it was a great educational opportunity.”

Bentley’s Chester the Crab comics began appearing weekly in The Daily Press on Tuesdays

in the Family section. In 1999, after receiving input from local teachers, Chester the Crab became a daily segment of the newspaper, incorporating the Standards of Learning. Chester the Crab was a regular feature of The Daily Press through 2004.

As Chester the Crab’s popularity grew among local educators, Bentley decided to start his own business writing and illustrating comic books about history using the character. In 2003, Bentley worked during the day at The Daily Press and then worked into the night at home getting his company Chester Comix, LLC off the ground.

“I had grandmothers who were cutting out Chester the Crab columns from the newspaper and mailing them to their daughters who were teachers out in California,” Bentley says. “I talked with teachers who would laminate the columns and use them for later lessons. Some teachers still use them today. I felt pretty confident about Chester the Crab, and that I was providing a needed, unique product, and I felt the audience would pay for it, so I wanted to expand my market.”

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Bentley left The Daily Press after covering the 2008 presidential election to focus on his comic book business full-time. He's self-published 33 titles, sending Chester the Crab on adventures with such historical figures as Harriet Tubman, Helen Keller, Patrick Henry, George Washington, and Lewis and Clark. His latest comic book takes place during World War I.

The recent recession did have an impact on Bentley, but not enough to make him close up shop.

"I am just too stubborn," Bentley says. "I think it is such a good idea, that it is worth fighting through any fear or discouragement I may feel. It is always on my mind, and I am not sure what I would do if I had to stop tomorrow."

To supplement his income, Bentley took a job in marketing and writing for the archeologists with the Jamestown Rediscovery Project at Historic Jamestowne.

"I love it," Bentley says. "It's a beautiful place to be and I've learned a lot in the last four years that will inform future Chester the Crab stories."

When he is not busy writing and drawing

his next Chester the Crab adventure, Bentley enjoys spending time with his two sons, Samuel and Truman, who appear to be following in their father's footsteps. Samuel is an aspiring writer for video games in Baltimore while Truman is a senior at Lafayette High School, where he serves as editor of the school newspaper.

"That makes me so happy," Bentley states with pride.

Meanwhile, Bentley also continues to focus on ways to expand his business. Currently, he is working on digitizing the Chester comics for electronic tablets and smartphones.

"Right now is a great time to be an author," Bentley says. "My comics are available on Amazon and I can Skype about them with schools in Wisconsin. I may be putting the story in a different place, but it doesn't change the story." Despite such technological advances, Bentley creates most of his work at home at the kitchen table with an old-fashioned pen and paper.

"It's not that complicated," he says simply. "There is no expensive equipment involved. Anybody with a piece of paper and a pen can do this. I am always revising, and what is great

about this is that every day we are making more history. It's a lot of work, but I enjoy it very, very much."

He especially enjoys traveling to schools throughout the country sharing his experience with students. Bentley is a motivational speaker mostly for fifth graders and has had discussions with students in Texas, Louisiana, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and across Virginia.

"I like the public part of my job," Bentley says. "I like speaking to kids and encouraging kids with their own drawing and writing. In some ways, I am more of an educator than a writer. I like it when the kids get all fired up about it. It gets me all fired up as well and reminds me of my purpose. That is very helpful to me."

Bentley isn't about to put his pen away anytime soon.

"I'm doing what I love," Bentley Boyd says. "I feel like I am adding something to the world. That is my main compensation, why I continue to do it. I truly believe this is why I was put on this Earth. How many people can say that?" NDN



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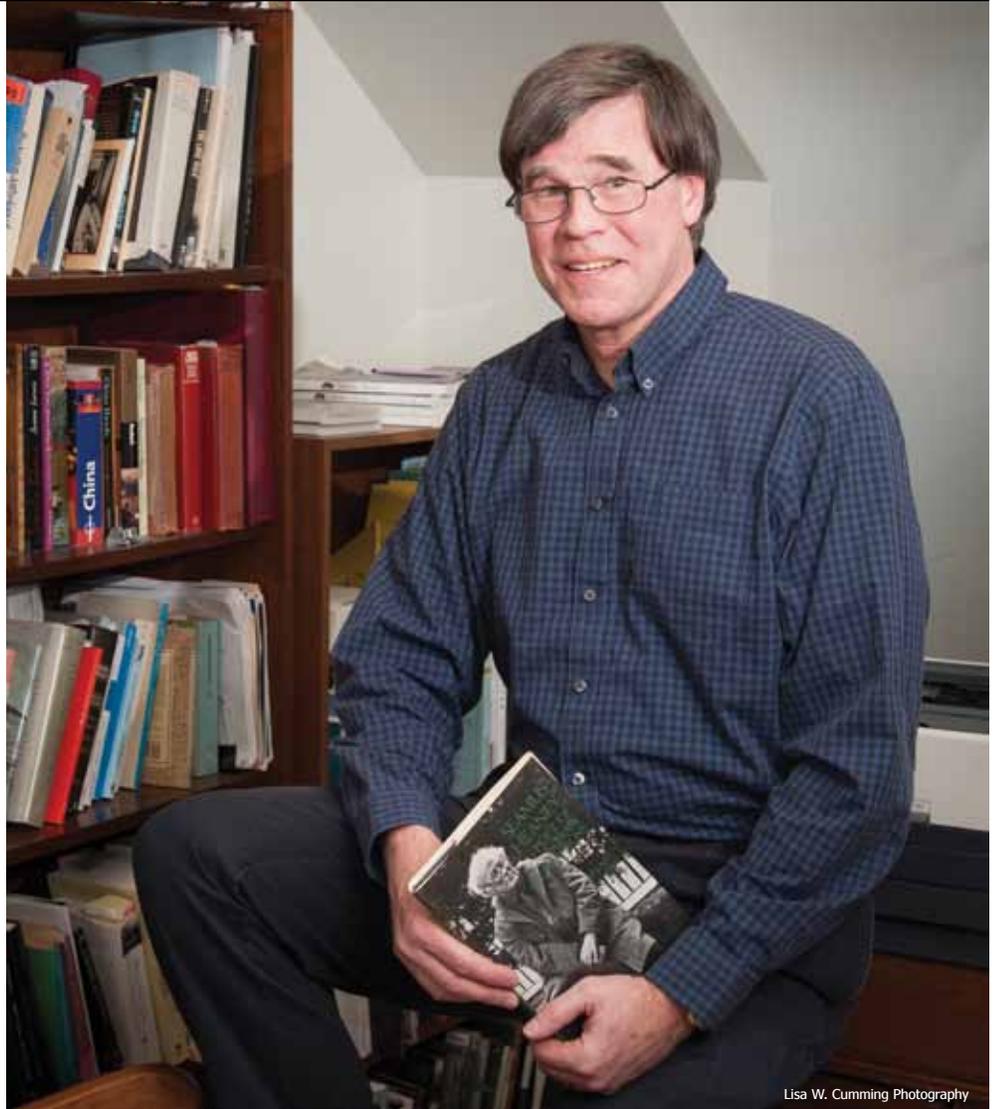
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Poet, Biographer & Novelist

By Rachel Sapin



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Dr. Henry Hart has fond memories of growing up on a farm in the Berkshire Hills of western Connecticut. “On 10 acres of rocky fields we owned, my father, two brothers and I planted Christmas trees. For years I worked on the trees, fertilizing them, mowing around them, pruning them and selling them before Christmas,” he says.

In the process Henry found what would later prove to be one of the most important foundations for his writing life. “A lot of my first poems focused on growing up in a farming community and on exploring the mountains, lakes and rivers of western and northern Maine,” he says. “My grandparents had a ‘camp’ in Maine where I spent a lot of time.

With my family and by myself, I fished, hiked and canoed up there.”

Henry specifically became interested in studying poetry at Dartmouth College as an undergraduate in the 1970s, where he fell in love with the genre and also greatly admired his professors and the life of the mind they led.

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ing about books, I figured, why not try to make a living doing that?” he says. Henry has since not only ‘made a living’ but thrived as a writer.

The College of William and Mary Mildred and J.B. Hickman Professor of English and Humanities has published four books of poetry that helped him garner the prestigious Carole Weinstein Prize in Poetry, which recognizes poets with strong ties to Central Virginia.

As a scholar, he’s published critical books on modern poets that include Geoffrey Hill, Seamus Heaney, Robert Lowell and James Dickey. His forthcoming biography due in May of this year will be on Robert Frost.

Henry says he’s drawn to poets who, like him, are interested in probing the beauty and complexity of rural life and the natural environment.

“I became interested in Seamus Heaney because I greatly admired his early poems about growing up on a farm and about the troubles in Northern Ireland,” Henry says. “Since I grew up on a farm during the ‘troubles’ of the Vietnam War, I could relate to his poetry. He was also an excellent craftsman.”

One of Henry’s favorite poems by Heaney is “Digging,” one of several Heaney would write that is as much a love letter to the boggy Irish landscape he grew up in as it is to the author’s family farm.

Henry also looked up to American author James Dickey as a craftsman, best known for his novel, *Deliverance*, that was later adapted into a movie in the 1970s, where it became a zeitgeist for the times.

Henry says he could relate in many ways to *Deliverance*, which is about seemingly mild-mannered men from Atlanta’s suburbia embarking on a journey along a remote, unruly Georgia river. As they go deeper into the woods, they encounter sinister characters. Some emerge lucky to even be alive, while others fall prey to a cold, apathetic wilderness.

Henry remembers being young and hearing tales of a Rambo-like man roaming the wilderness and raiding canoe parties in northern Maine. He says he has always been fascinated by the idea that beauty and terror can exist in the same space.

“When I was 14, I went on a month-long canoe trip in the Allagash Wilderness and surrounding areas in northern Maine. I didn’t witness the sort of horrors Dickey wrote about in *Deliverance*, but there were a number of traumatic events on the trip,” Henry remembers. “One of the more belligerent members of the group almost got into a knife fight with a backwoods guy who maintained one of the dams on a lake in the Allagash Waterway.”

Henry’s own biography on Dickey was a finalist for the Southern Book Critics’ Circle Award. He spent eight years researching Dickey, untangling a polarizing figure known as much for his lying and womanizing as he was for his tremendous talent. “What I realized early on in my research was that Dickey believed in the principle of ‘creative lying.’ That’s what he called it,” Henry says. “And he lied creatively, and often outrageously and humorously, about almost every aspect of his life. I did extensive research in various archives and interviewed dozens of his friends to try to discover the facts behind his fictions, and to try to understand why he lied the way he did. I felt like a detective and a psychologist at times. Dickey had always said nobody could write his biography because he was too complicated, had played too

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many different roles, and made up too many different stories about his life. What surprised me was how gullible his audiences had been, from family members to friends to reporters for *Life*, *Time* and many other periodicals. Dickey realized early on that people wanted to believe his stories about himself as a larger-than-life, All-American hero.”

For Henry, the book was the most challenging project he would ever take on, and not just because of the subject matter. Before it went to press, Dickey’s second wife threatened to sue him if she couldn’t see an advanced copy.

“She was convinced I’d filled the book with libelous lies about her and Dickey,” Henry says. “I had asked her several times for interviews over a seven year period, but she had always refused.”

In the end, through lawyers, a compromise was reached where she could read the part of the book that related to her marriage to Dickey.

“My publisher had promised to send me on a short book tour and advertise the book, but, perhaps because it had already spent so much money on lawyers, it eradicated its publicity budget,” Henry says.

Despite his talent for non-fiction, poetry, biographies and scholarly essays, Henry says the type of writing he enjoys most is fiction. “With novels, you’re working on a big canvas with characters, dialogue, plot and so on. So there’s a feeling of liberation,” he says.

He says that genre has ironically also been the toughest to publish. “I’ve written a number of novels, and worked extremely hard on two novels over the past decade. Unfortunately, they haven’t been published,” he says.

Henry says one piece of fiction he had to set aside because other work got in the way is based on his grandmother’s experience during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, where the Chinese tried to drive out all foreigners.

He’s also had an anthology of American literature in the works for the last decade that has gone through numerous editors, died and been resurrected.

Henry says that waiting as well as rejection for any writer is simply part of the profession.

“I tell my students that if they have a love of writing, of making things with words, they’ll put the rejections behind them and keep on writing,” he says. “Writers have to realize that editors have their likes and dislikes; sometimes an editor’s rejection says more about the editor’s prejudices and less about the merits of the writing under consideration. Writers, obviously, have to believe in themselves. It’s really a matter of faith (of ‘art-belief’ as Robert Frost called it) and they have to believe that they have the know-how to write something that others will appreciate and that an editor might publish. Like most things, writing can be frustrating, but it can also be rewarding both for the writer and for the reader.”

Like any good writer, Dr. Henry Hart also never quite gives up on the stories he hasn’t yet published. “Someday, perhaps in retirement, I hope to go back to the unpublished manuscripts and, like Rumpelstiltskin, spin them into gold,” he says. “Oddly enough, a lot of what I write doesn’t get published. I guess I should feel fortunate, at least in some cases, that some of it has made its way into print.” NDN

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Writing and Publishing

For Herself and Others



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

By Narielle Living

Sometimes truth makes good fiction, and sometimes truth needs a little poetic license on the road to becoming fiction, something Dawn Brotherton discovered when she wrote her first book, *It's The Right Thing To Do*. As a 2nd lieutenant, she was stationed at Whiteman Air Force base in Missouri.

"I had a bunch of really weird things happen to me when I was there. I had a stalker

and some scary stuff," she says. After telling her friends the story of what happened, they all encouraged her to write her story. "Finally, I wrote it down. Truth is never all that exciting, because here I am, and the story didn't have a clear end. I had to throw in some murders and make changes, so that's what started it."

Her first book centers around the character of Jackie Austin, a missile launch officer at

Whiteman. Although Dawn used some of her personal experiences to write the book, including the stalker aspect, much of the plot was added to enhance the story.

After writing her first book, Dawn assumed she was finished. Then her readers began asking for more about the character of Jackie. "People kept saying, we want to know more about Jackie, what's going on with Jackie?" Despite

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her apprehension that she didn't have another story to tell, Dawn continued to write, and later finished her second Jackie Austin novel, *Wind the Clock*. "Now the ideas are coming so fast that I don't have time to write them all down."

Dawn balances her career as a Colonel in the Air Force, writer and publisher with family life and community activities. Originally from Ohio, Dawn and her husband chose to retire in Williamsburg. "My husband is retired, but I'm still in," she says. "We built this house, and this will be where we spend our retirement. While I finish up my last few years I'm kind of coming and going, but my husband and kids are staying here. We love the area."

Dawn likes the fact that Williamsburg is big enough to have everything they want, such as stores and culture, but small enough to get to know people. "Being in the military and moving around all the time you get to know the people you work with very well," she says. "I can go almost anywhere in the world and have someplace to stay. But, it's neat here, because my girls are in sports, we have church, and now

we go out and see people at the store that we know. It's like you're part of the neighborhood, and you recognize people. It drives my kids crazy because we stop to talk to everybody."

When Dawn finished writing her first novel, she researched the world of publishing, and what she learned was surprising to her. "I found traditional publishers still have you do all the legwork, such as the advertising and promoting, and yet they take 65 percent of your royalties," she says. "I didn't think this was the dream of how it's supposed to happen." She also learned that sometimes it doesn't matter how good a book is, publishers and editors simply don't have time to read all the submissions they receive. "They get so many, they are overwhelmed," she says.

After learning those facts, she decided to publish her novel independently and set up her publishing company, Blue Dragon Publishing. "I knew marketing was going to be my issue, because marketing is not my strength. That's why I just got a marketing intern."

Once her company was established and her first book was published, other authors began

inquiring as to whether or not Dawn would publish their books. She was honest with each author and told them she was a very small independent publisher, and she didn't have the same connections as the bigger publishers. According to Dawn, authors needed to know that she was not able to be more than a springboard for their writing career.

"I didn't start this to make money. I started it to let other people in, to help them get their foot in the door. As a matter of fact, I even have a buyout clause in my contract that says if you get picked up by a big publisher I'll let you go. I also only take a very small percentage of the royalties, and that's for my legwork on getting the book published."

To date, Blue Dragon has published a wide range of genres, including a children's picture book, fiction and non-fiction. "The hardest one is mine, fiction," Dawn says, referring to her Jackie Austin series. "Fiction is the hardest thing to sell because there is so much of it."

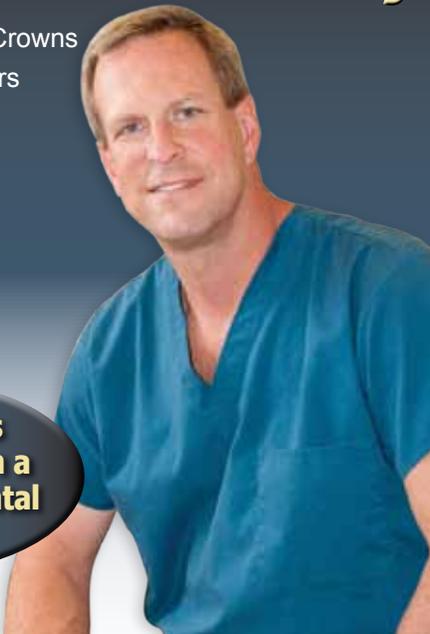
Dawn has been adamant that her publishing company not focus on any one genre, but focus instead on the writer and what they need.

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“It’s about getting them started. I feel that it gives them a little more credibility if they can put it on the query letter that they’ve been published once before. I think of myself more as a stepping stone than the final answer.”

When she decides to publish a writer, Dawn states that the writer goes into the contract fully understanding the limitations of working with a small company. Authors are responsible for marketing their books, a huge thing for any writer to accomplish. “I don’t market. I tell authors that right up front, so they will have to market themselves or pay someone to market. But I look at their story and listen to them.” Dawn also offers advice on stories, and will tell people up front whether or not she thinks the book will sell. Sometimes authors don’t care if the book will sell or not, but want to be published anyway. The only books Dawn will not publish are manuscripts that go against her moral beliefs and values.

“I would never print anything anti-Christian,” she says. She will, however, work with authors on editing their manuscript, as long as they are open to the suggestions she offers.

As for her own writing, Dawn is currently working on the third book in the Jackie Austin series, currently titled *Truth Has No Agenda*. In this book, the main character accepts a position working at the Pentagon within the Sexual Assault Prevention Response office. The story unfolds as she is tasked with investigating sexual assault and harassment complaints within the military.

Dawn is also getting ready to release the second edition of her first book, *It’s The Right Thing To Do*, under a new title. “I hate the title. It means something to me, it means something to Jackie, but it’s not catchy, so I’m retitling and redoing the cover right now. I probably won’t print any new ones until I’m out of stock.”

Most authors who have written multiple books learn and grow as writers, and Dawn is no exception. She explains that as a result of her military career she developed a sparse writing style, without a large amount of exposition. Her first book, in particular, showcases that style. “It’s a fast read because I don’t have all that descriptive stuff. Some people like it and some people don’t, but you can’t please

everybody. So I am probably going to fluff it up a little bit in certain places for the second edition.”

In addition to the Jackie Austin series, Dawn has begun writing a new series of young adult fiction about a girls’ softball team. Each book will focus on a different character and theme, and Dawn is very excited about this new project.

“The first book is about a young girl whose parents don’t want her to play ball, but she really wants to. The focus is on how she will get on the team without making her parents mad. Is she going to lie or tell the truth?”

Dawn’s advice for writers is to not give up. “I’m sure everybody’s heard that before, but it’s out there, and if you want it bad enough you’ll get it.” She goes on to acknowledge that writing can be a frustrating career, but encourages writers to reach out to other writers. “Being in a writing group and having other people to bounce ideas off of has been fantastic. Get other people involved in your writing, bounce ideas off them. Don’t give your book over to somebody, but share ideas.” NDN

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Know Your Value

in the workplace

By Greg Lilly, Editor



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Zee Worstell certainly encountered pay inequality between men and women in the corporate world, but thought that as an entrepreneur, those differences would evaporate. They didn't.

"I began looking into the differences between women and men entrepreneurs," Zee says. "I realized the differences were just as great or greater when we own our own busi-

nesses than in corporate America. My daughter had heard that women made less than men and was concerned. I told her that since I owned my business, that didn't apply to me, but as I did my research, I discovered that women business owners make 25% of what male business owners make in the same industry, across the board. That's significant."

Zee is the founder and CEO of Accelerate-

HER, a firm that strives to help women business owners succeed. She and her business partner, Francine Spinelli, help women determine the correct pricing for their services so they can earn what they're worth. She explains that women don't value their time the way men generally do. "I'll have a man ask about including his time spent creating a proposal in the pricing of that proposal," Zee says. "A woman



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will say that her time is free, so she spends many hours working that aren't billed to a project."

When Zee worked in corporate America, she didn't appreciate the way women were treated in that culture. "I was one of the top sales people, but one of the lowest earners. I felt like I was paid less because of my gender. I decided I would become an entrepreneur and create my own pay structure to get paid what I deserved based on my performance, not on my gender."

She partnered with a colleague to create an executive recruiting firm, a successful venture for eight years until the tragedy of 9/11. "The economy fell. People stopped hiring and people stopped traveling. Our business took a dive. I did what a lot of women do when that happens: I took a break. My second daughter was born about that same time, so it was a good opportunity to be with her. My business was on the rocks; I didn't see any options and I had a newborn."

Later, she returned to recruiting, opening an agency on her own. "I started it when the economy was doing well, but then the recession hit," she says. "This time it didn't affect me because I was in healthcare recruiting. I intentionally picked an area that was fairly resistant to recessions since I had been stung by that once before. With this second business, I came up with methods to make me successful. Other female recruiters came to me to ask how I took a new business to six-figures in one year. I realized that I did something very specific to make that happen. I then taught them how to do it and saw their businesses grow as well."

Recruiting can be a stressful field, dealing with clients strained by their need to find a job and anxious about their future. Zee noticed that, no matter how qualified or experienced the women were, few of them would want to negotiate with a potential employer. "The women would take the first offer they received – no negotiation. They would make less than men. It didn't occur to them that they made less. I witnessed companies making higher offers to men than to similar female candidates. That's just the way it is. I don't think there is anything we can do to change that right now. That's the culture of corporate America."

Zee had learned to be successful by asking for what she wanted and deserved. She had tried teaching these principles to women in the corporate world, but she is most passionate about entrepreneurship and helping small businesses. She decided to use her knowledge and tools to help women price their business services appropriately and strategically. The belief that a business new to the market needs to bid on the low side to get a foothold is a myth.

"Most of the time when you raise your rates, you get more business because people trust you more," Zee explains. A higher price sends the signal that you are experienced and that your service is well worth the expense. "We feel like the 'you-get-what-you-pay-for' philosophy doesn't apply to us when we start a business. It does. A customer decides on your value based on what you have decided your value is. If you undercut everyone, you have decided that your value is not as good as everyone else's. That's the communication."

Another reason that female entrepreneurs may not set their prices at the going market rate is fear. "We have a fear that we'll be discovered as not being as good as what we think we are," Zee says. "Women have this



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very powerful voice telling us we're not as good as people tell us or what we put out to the public. I don't think men have that." She explains that for women, this may go back to the high school experience. "We didn't want to be that girl who thinks she's better than everybody else. If you are, people won't like you. We get conditioned to not let ourselves shine. We don't let that brilliance shine through because someone might not like us."

A woman's capacity for nurturing and compassion, while wonderful qualities, sometimes gets in the way of business, she explains. "Women are taught as girls to help people in need. As nurturing beings, we are tasked to help them. I know men are taught that too, but for women, it's drilled into us." When a potential client approaches a female business owner for her services, yet can't afford them, that person becomes a person-in-need. "We have to help them. We end up lowering our price or giving the service or product away, despite the fact we still need to make a profit because we're helping someone."

These are generalizations and not every woman fits these statements, Zee clarifies. Some men do struggle with some of these challenges as well. "But, there is a little bit of this in each woman. I talk to many women at workshops on these subjects. It's not a lack of confidence. You can be super confident and still not charge the right amount for your business services. There isn't a lot of information on pricing available."

Through her company, Zee created products and services to help women price their offerings. Market research and detailed pricing analysis ensure that a profit is made on each and every sale or contract. "We give them the tools to do that and the confidence to say their service is worth the price. They see the real value of their work."

A tip for those wondering how their pricing compares to other businesses: Ask.

"You can research other people's prices. Find someone who really knows what they charge and who does what you do," Zee says. "Network with them. Ask them, 'How much do you charge for this?' I know we think that everybody is the competition, but in reality, we're all different with different strengths. Find a way to work with others. Be referral partners, not competitors."

If asking other businesses is difficult, then try the retail industry's secret shopper method. Ask a friend or business associate to poll others doing the same type of service to see where you fall in the pricing range for this market. "If people have a set price, not just making it up as they go, they'll tell you. Why not? Most people are afraid to ask. They'll tell you. I do. I know how much I charge. It's black and white, but we make it taboo to talk about."

Zee and her business partner have recently published a workbook to help women succeed in their businesses. They're turning the book into a workshop. "We're always developing new ideas to support women." As the mother of two daughters, Zee loves to spread her message and help empower women to feel comfortable asking for what they are worth, in hopes that it will become the norm and not just the exception. "Women business owners have made great strides to date, but there is still so much more to accomplish to reach a state of equality." Zee Worstell is up for the challenge. NDN



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Get Active!

By Greg Lilly, Editor

“The main things we need for physical conditioning are planning, consistence and patience,” Darin Striepe says. Darin is a personal trainer at Kingsmill Resort and helps his clients ramp up for spring sports and outdoor activities.

Don't set a lofty goal too soon, he adds. “That's the case where people get burned out and stop conditioning all together.”

For example, before the cold weather moved in, a person could have been running three miles a day, and starting up again in the spring, they become frustrated because it takes too long to get back to that distance. “Use a slower pace. Start out with a quarter mile or half mile, but be consistent,” he advises. “The consistency is important. You can't run and then take three days off. You have to be consistent in the ap-

proach to build your distance.”

Start out gradually and be patient. “Over the winter, were there injuries? Or an illness that needs to be considered in your renewed activity? Start slow and build.”

For tennis and golf, rotary sports, Darin says to concentrate on core strength. “You can do something as simple as a plank, which takes no equipment, to strengthen your core. You could

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start with a ten second hold and work up from there. It's a challenge. A wall-sit doesn't take any equipment, and it strengthens the lower body. Some very basic things build upon each other and move you toward bigger steps."

Darin began his fitness training at an early age. At a doctor's visit, he was diagnosed with scoliosis. "I had a curvature of my spine, a minimal curvature. The doctor recommended a yoga-type stretching. That, at 13 years old, held no appeal for me." After one or two sessions, he didn't return to the class.

"When we went back to the doctor, he said that if the condition progressed, he held up this contraption that looked like something from Medieval times, that would be the brace I would have to wear down my spine, inside my clothes, all the time to keep my back straight," Darin says. "From the vanity standpoint, I wasn't going to start high school wearing that brace."

His father is a boxing fan, and Darin and his dad would watch boxing matches together. "The conditioning of a boxer appealed to me. I gravitated toward that," Darin adds. "I started conditioning on my own, training like a boxer: pull-ups, sit-ups, push-ups and started lifting bleach bottles. When my mom finished with a bleach bottle, I would clean it out and fill it with water to be my weights. I dropped so many of them my parents bought me a real weight set."

He enjoyed lifting weights and learning more about making his body stronger. In high school, he started thinking about careers and considered how his workout interest could eventually become his vocation.

"In my freshman year in college, I was hired in a fitness facility similar to Kingsmill's where the director took a few of the new employees to mold into trainers. That was my first one-on-one training experience." That fitness facility taught the budding trainers every aspect of fitness conditioning. "Our program included anatomy, physiology, even people skills, all the subjects a good trainer would need to know. That was my foundation to fitness conditioning."

Darin studied science in college and, while working at the fitness facility, earned certification in the personal training field.

A few years later, he moved to Florida and continued work as a personal trainer. "I joined the Air Force and was part of the security police, but still did personal training," he explains. "Back in 1994, the military services were going in a wellness direction. One of my supervisors mentioned the Air Force was starting a new program, where by 1999, they wanted to be tobacco and smoke free. The goal was to re-educate service members and help them get out of these unhealthy habits." They assigned Darin, based on his background in fitness, the role of wellness coordinator for the squadron of 300 military professionals based on his background in fitness.

"That encompassed everything from counseling homesick new recruits, to addressing addiction issues, to maintaining fitness and nutrition goals, as well as helping people kick the tobacco habit." He was responsible for disseminating information, and if needed, motivating, coaching and training personnel.

"I had been in law enforcement in the Air Force, but that didn't carry my interest beyond the service. Although, having been the wellness coordinator sparked my interest to get back into personal training." Darin wanted to stay in the Virginia area and came across a Kingsmill job fair. "I applied for the fitness facility and I've been here for 17 years."

Working at Kingsmill for almost two decades, he's seen his Williamsburg neighbors go from teens to young adults and primetime adults to seasoned seniors. He says there are certain aspects of sports training that need to be addressed as we age.

"One of the most important things is recovery," Darin states. "We need to be aware of our post-exercise. Even though a joint isn't inflamed, we should still be putting ice on that joint. Post-exercise rehab, like stretching, is critical."

He recommends the foam roller as a therapeutic tool to improve blood circulation through muscles, tendons and ligaments. "As we age, we take for granted our level of flexibility. That's incredibly important," he stresses. "You'd be surprised at what ten minutes a day of stretching can do. After your activity, a foam roller is an excellent tool. It provides great circulation to those exercised areas. It's soft-tissue massage, and it breaks down that lactic acid build-up from the physical activity. It's imperative that we stretch. This post-activity rehab aspect of conditioning helps keep you in the game."

He explains that the traditional after golf or tennis gathering at the bar, which many sports enthusiasts relished in their twenties and early thirties, may need to wait now that we're a little older until after a rehab routine stretches and recovers our muscles and joints.

"We don't recover as quickly as we age," he says. "The stretching helps with the recovery aspect. You want to be as active as you want for as long as you want. Why let limitations stop you when you can counter those with a good post-workout routine?"

It's a proactive approach to take, he explains. Stretching, foam rolling A rehab routine after sports activities is critical.

Another important facet of staying active in sports is maintaining good balance. "You have to address balance issues, an aspect that most people have taken for granted. As we age, we need to maintain our balance," he says. "Challenge your balance all the time. It can be as simple as standing at the kitchen sink, lifting one leg off the ground while you wash dishes. It's basic. It's a challenge that we usually don't think about."

An additional technique Darin recommends to test your balance: stand and close your eyes. What happens? Are you stable on your feet? Now, with eyes closed, lift one leg off the ground. "How well balanced are you? Do this on a consistent basis to maintain your balance."

As spring draws near, Darin gets more active just like his fitness clients. "I love to lift weights. I've been doing that since I was 13. It's part of what I do," he says. "When the weather allows, I love to play golf with my wife, Caroline. We're active, outdoors people as much as we can be. We love to hike. My wife is an avid kayaker. She's asked me to get involved in that, so I'm starting to kayak more. We enjoy being outside."

Darin is considering getting back into powerlifting. "Specifically RAW Powerlifting Federation's program," he explains. "In powerlifting, there are equipment assists or support equipment. In the RAW version, you show up with shorts and a t-shirt, weigh-in and compete with others at that base physical level. I'm turning 50 this year, and I've been toying at trying it. I think I'll be training for that."

Planning, consistency and patience are the aspects that make conditioning for spring and summer sports safe and effective. "Start slow. Progress in small steps. Consistently workout. Remember that we're a year older, and your post-workout rehab program is important," Darin Striepe adds, "to keep you fit, happy and motivated." NDN

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Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Designing WOMAN

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Local artist Lisa Williams recently illustrated and designed her first children's book *Kitten Caboodle*. The author of the book is Lisa's sister-in-law, Paige Grant. "She asked me if I was interested," Lisa says. "She'd found a publisher and the publisher let her bring me in as the illustrator." Paige had shown the publisher examples of Lisa's art work, and Lisa was contracted to illustrate and design the book.

"The publisher was open to my style," Lisa says. "This story is set in the southwest and has that flavor to it, and they knew that my style

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could fit that bold southwest look.”

This was the first book Lisa had illustrated so she joined the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). “That was the best thing I did,” she states. The opportunity to learn from other artists who had been down the road of children’s book illustration helped her through the process. She attended a conference in Washington, D.C. and received critiques on her work, while learning the best methods to complete the project successfully.

“The author, Paige, sent the manuscript to me. I read it and suggested what parts spoke to me as an artist. We talked about the kinds of illustrations and the number of illustrations – the publisher had given us the number of pages to work with.”

She divided the story into proportional sections since she was also the book designer of the interior pages. “We thought about the images, how the text would flow, where the page breaks would be. It was an active collaboration with the author, the publisher and me.”

A particular challenge in *Kitten Caboodle* was that the story included math. “I had to consider how to illustrate mathematical concepts,” Lisa says. “The author had set it up, but the illustration is what brings the math con-

cepts to life. That was fun to figure out a way to do it and involve all the characters.”

Lisa was born and raised in Texas, so she knew the southwest style that the book had. At the University of Texas in Austin, she majored in art history with a minor in studio art.

“About a year after college, I moved to Williamsburg with a job at the Muscarelle Museum of Art as their first curator of education.” She worked at the Muscarelle on and off for several years while she earned her Master’s Degree in Art History at the University of Virginia.

“I decided I wanted more contact with the students in the community. I became certified to teach and taught in Hampton for three years and taught at Thomas Nelson Community College.” She taught art history and then moved into the studio classes, teaching all levels from art foundations to AP studio classes. “I taught photography and digital art. I liked that a lot. At Lafayette High School, I became the digital art instructor.”

The digital aspect intrigued her. For the book, she used a drawing application and created the illustrations on an iPad.

“I do a lot of my artwork by hand, brush on canvas, but to be able to create these images, change and manipulate them, the digital tools

are the best method for that.”

Lisa taught at the high school level for 13 years. “It was a good way to raise children and see my youngest through high school. When she graduated, I decided to graduate.”

Leaving the school system gave her flexibility with her time. “My partner had retired, and we had the opportunity to be more mobile,” Lisa says. “While teaching, I had an independent business of website design and graphic design. With that I could work and live part-time in Maine and part-time in Virginia. It was a hard decision to leave teaching and the students, but I was anxious to try out new projects like this book illustration project.”

Combining the text with the illustrations can be a tricky process. The connections and advice Lisa received from the SCBWI was an enormous help, but the book needed some testing by the target audience. “I’m sure it works differently with big publishing companies, but with us, we printed out the illustrations and the text then asked the children of friends and relatives to tell us what they thought.”

She asked the children such questions as: are the illustrations interesting, do they help them understand the story, are they fun to look at, are they too simple or too complex?

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“Honestly, we received some great feedback from the kids.”

Along with the kids as a test group, Lisa made sure the author’s vision matched what Lisa had created. “Was this what she imagined the characters to look like? Yes, we worked to make sure she was happy.”

On this project, Lisa learned a fine point about children’s book illustration. “The people at SCBWI stressed that if the text is duplicated in the illustrations, you aren’t doing the book justice,” Lisa explains. “Why does the reader need the illustration to be exactly what the text says? These days, for a children’s book, the text shouldn’t be overly wordy because the illustrations add to it. There is an interaction between the two.”

That rang true with this project. There’s no obvious indication that the family is a blended Anglo-Hispanic family until you see the characters that Lisa illustrated. “The father is Hispanic and the mother is Caucasian, which comes out later in the book in some of the language. It’s cool that we could bring that out in illustration when the text doesn’t refer to it until later in the book.”

Another aspect of the illustrator and book designer is producing the cover, and this was

the first time Lisa had created one. “I worked with both the author and publisher on the cover. It is not an exact image from inside the book, but a new one that hints at the book’s plot. It also had to have open space for the title text and for the author’s name. We wanted to use the kittens on the cover since the word ‘kittens’ is in the title,” she says.

“I spent hours in the library, sitting on the floor of the Children’s section, looking at the covers.” She also analyzed the flow of the illustrations with the text and the representation of the characters. “I learned a lot doing this project.”

She read all she could find on book cover design. “That is the first, and sometimes the deciding factor for someone buying the book.” Lisa is working on an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) in graphic design from Vermont College of Fine Arts. “I like learning. I’m busy with that. The graphic design program at the college covers a lot of topics, including book cover design.”

She continues her graphic design business and Website design projects. “These feed into book design. It’s an area I really enjoy. One of the reasons I knew this was an area I was interested in, when I taught at Lafayette, I helped

design their annual literary magazine. It was a beautiful publication that we won awards for.” She led a student team to design and create the full-color literary art magazine. “For me that was an awakening of how fun it was to work with graphics and a wonderful team.”

The Kitten Caboodle book project has Lisa thinking of other children’s book projects. “I have some fun characters,” she says with a smile. “In our summers in Maine, we volunteered at an organic farm. I was thinking of ways to teach co-existence in organic farming. From what I understand and from my brother who lives in Santa Fe and farms, they deal with groundhogs. I came up with a character for a story about a farmer and a groundhog, and how they solve their dilemma of opposing goals.”

Another project she’s developing is a shoe fly. “That’s a fly who loves shoes. I have a character wearing three pairs of shoes on his six feet. He’s a very unique fly with a flair for shoes. That’s my energy on illustration these days!”

A project that Lisa Williams did to help her sister-in-law has led to a new artistic outlet for this accomplished artist. “I found I really enjoyed the process. It’s exciting to see your work on the bookstore shelf.” NDN

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Corey Miller Photography

IT STARTS WITH EATING RIGHT

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Marcia Dadds became a registered dietitian nutritionist for a very personal reason. “I always had issues with my weight,” she says. “My mother was obese and died at an early age. My father had diabetes. There are a lot of medical issues in my family that didn’t have to happen if we were exercising and eating properly. I didn’t want those things to happen to me.”

Born and raised in Anderson, Indiana. Marcia started her working life as a Speech, Drama

and English high school teacher. “Education is the ‘through line’ of my life,” she says. She left Indiana for Manhattan. “I lived in Manhattan, New York for 30 years. My first career in New York was in show business.”

Her parents had been very musical. They’d met in college, singing in the choir. In Anderson, her father was in the electronics business. “My dad worked for, what was then called, the hi-fi store. We had the latest in stereo equip-

ment with surround speakers throughout the house. We were a very musical family. I was in all of the school plays in high school and college. My first Master’s Degree is in Educational Theater from NYU (New York University), and I started the PhD to pursue teaching teachers how to teach theater.” But she changed direction because she wanted to teach theater, not train others how to teach it.

“I gave myself ten years to achieve certain

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goals,” she explains about first moving to Manhattan. “If I didn’t get my Broadway show or national commercial or a number of other things, I would get out of Manhattan. I knew if I stayed as a struggling actor, I’d be living hand-to-mouth the rest of my life. I didn’t want that. So, I gave myself a time limit.”

When the ten years were up, she took inventory of all she enjoyed doing and where her interests were. “All the things I wanted to do pointed toward fitness and nutrition.” She earned her personal fitness trainer certification in Manhattan and completed a Master’s Degree in Nutrition from Columbia University’s Teachers College. She started a private practice as a personal trainer and nutritionist.

In 2000, she and her future husband, James Cameron, made a trip to Williamsburg. “It was for James’ birthday,” she says. “He’s an American history aficionado, and I knew he would love it. He certainly did. He fell in love with Colonial Williamsburg. He turned to me that day, and said, ‘I want to live here some day.’ Gulp. I was about to marry what I thought was a New Yorker. I thought I would spend the rest of my life in Manhattan.”

Although she wasn’t excited about the possibility, she understood how serious James was. “I remember the first time I visited New York

in high school,” she explains. “Our class had taken a trip for a theater weekend in New York City. On that weekend trip, I thought to myself, ‘I want to live here one day,’ and I did all I could to get there. I knew James well enough that I knew it would happen.”

They came back for a visit in 2004 and stayed at a timeshare unit at King’s Creek Plantation. “We went on one of their tours. James is a sales and marketing guru of over 30 years. The lady offered him a job to sell timeshares on the spot. I saw that pleading look in his eyes when he looked at me.”

By that time, they had been married for a year, and Marcia didn’t want to give up her private practice in Manhattan. They made it work between Williamsburg and Manhattan. James found his calling by portraying a historical character by the name of John Rollison. “He’s doing it as a self-employed individual, not connected with Colonial Williamsburg. He does the portrayal at universities, colleges and at events around town. I saw what he was doing was viable and working and he loved it.”

Marcia started interviewing for a job here. In 2007, she started work as an in-patient registered dietitian at Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center. Today, she’s at Cumberland Hospital for Children and Adolescents

in addition to her private practice in downtown Williamsburg. “At both Cumberland and in my private practice, I specialize in eating disorders and all things nutrition.”

Marcia says that healthy eating can be simple. Actually, simple is the key word. “We’re getting back to basics with food,” she says. Real food is the target for healthy eating.

In the past 60 years, food has become technology. “People are seeing the costs of that—the costs to health and well-being because of technologically-designed foods. It was really cool when Swanson’s invented TV Dinners in the 1950s.” The goal was to make food easy and convenient for the busy family. “Women were out of the kitchen and in the workforce, so they needed and demanded more convenience. That’s part of the food technology. With that, comes the fast food industry – more convenient, inexpensive food through technology. It’s all good at first, but now 40 or 50 years later, we see the detrimental effects to our health and well-being in the form of obesity, high blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks from the high calorie/low nutrition and high salt and fat content in the food. Those of us, of a certain age, who have seen this transition, can appreciate the back to basics movement.”

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mous amount of resources from the environment in terms of energy, packaging, transportation and the preservatives to make it last (chemical additives, antibiotics, Genetically Modified Organisms, injected hormones, pesticides and the list can go on and on). Marcia says to take food back to the basics.

“Sixty years ago, we knew where the food came from – eggs, chickens, beef and vegetables from our own garden. We knew what went into the food we ate,” she says. “We went too far in one direction and are swinging the pendulum back toward naturally and locally grown food.”

Whole foods usually have one ingredient: the food. Think of brown rice or an apple or spinach. With packaged foods, look for simple – like no more than five unrefined ingredients. Breads and crackers are best at 100% whole grain. Wild caught seafood and humanely raised chicken, pork, beef and lamb will be healthier. Natural sweeteners like locally harvested honey are better bets than refined sugar or chemical sugar substitutes.

Marcia realizes that this real food goal can look like a lot of work. She recommends assembling meals. “You don’t have to do a production of ‘cooking.’ You take basic ingredients and you can assemble, on a daily basis,

simple meals based on simple staples of certain things.” she explains. “Some people love to cook and that’s great. But for people who are very busy or don’t have the knack or desire to cook, you can assemble meals.”

We have a wonderful Farmers Market, Marcia says. “Go to the Farmers Market for vegetables. It takes a few minutes to chop them up. These can be steamed or sautéed in a pan with a little olive oil. If you want meat, look carefully at where the meat comes from. For example, look for wild-caught seafood instead of farm-raised. Locally-raised meats use fewer resources to get here. Grilling meat is a fast and healthy way to prepare it.”

She admits that some people don’t like microwaves as a healthy process, but steaming a vegetable in a microwave is quick and doesn’t take a lot of energy. “I’d rather have a whole potato or sweet potato in the microwave than a prepackaged, processed food.”

Simple meals go back to the basics. “Think of your dinner plate; include a protein, a little starch, a vegetable, maybe some fresh fruit. That’s what I mean by assembling a meal.”

On a personal front, Marcia’s future plans are exciting. She plans to go part-time at Cumberland Hospital in March, so she can spend more time with her private practice. “I work

with a lot of different conditions. My favorite is anything to do with body weight regulation from either end of the spectrum: from an eating disorder where a patient restricts their food to the person who, for a similar coping mechanism, is overeating, and everything in between.”

She still acts and has just finished a production with the Williamsburg Players. “I did an original piece called ‘Heart and Music: a Valentine to the Theater.’ My first show with the Williamsburg Players was in 2009 when I was Charity Barnum in ‘Barnum.’ In 2010, I played Joanne in Sondheim’s ‘Company.’ I was Mother Superior in Showstopper’s production of ‘Nonsense’ at the Kimball Theatre. I played Carlotta in ‘Follies’ at Poquoson Island Players. I plan to continue in local theater.”

Marcia Dadds loves spreading the word about nutrition because of the difference it can make in a person’s quality of life and length of life. “That is my passion because we can make a huge difference in our health and well-being by what we eat and whether we exercise,” she says. “It’s huge. My mom wouldn’t be dead if she had eaten better and exercised. My father wouldn’t have had both his legs amputated. I go back to that, because what happened to my parents is what got me into this.” NDN

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Corey Miller Photography

Hands-On Home Improvement

By Greg Lilly, Editor

Talking about spring home repairs, local handyman Patrick Dollar explains he's grateful he learned home improvement as an adolescent. "I learned a lot from my dad. He loved to fix things around the house. He was very handy and got me involved in a lot of the projects he was doing, even simple things like cleaning out the trap under the sink. He was the lead, and I was the assistant. It helped me gain confidence and not to be afraid to use my

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hands and be creative.”

As spring comes to Williamsburg, Patrick says there are some simple things that will spruce up a house, easy and inexpensive tasks that all homeowners should do. “A lot of it is cosmetic, but some items are structural,” he says. “We’re just coming out of winter, so rain, snow and ice can do some damage to wood. Moisture causes rot in the exposed areas.”

Wood rot hits the windowsills and window frames, the threshold and trim around the doors, even a back deck. “Anything that is wood, you should check for wood rot damage,” Patrick adds. The wood will feel spongy and probably collapse under your touch.

“Mold issues on siding,” Patrick says, “are a cosmetic issue. A lot of people will jump to power washing as the solution for that. But that could cause more damage than you think. A soft wash is the way to go. There are a few guys in the area who specialize in the soft wash. The cleaning solution isn’t toxic to your plants. Soft washing is good for the black streaks on roofs – that’s mold, too.”

He explains that spring is also a good time

to check pipes for any leaks, insulate and caulk around doors and windows where you might have felt drafts during the cold weather.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Patrick and his family moved to the Chesterfield/Midlothian area when he was five. His father was an information technology professional who worked for Philip Morris and then IBM. “We lived for over 20 years in Chesterfield,” he says. “In 2007, my parents moved back to Arkansas.”

After high school, Patrick joined the Army and was deployed to Iraq. Today, he’s an Army Reservist. “I’ve been in for 12 years. I’m a warrant office in the Reserves, a food service technician.”

About five years ago he decided to buy a house in Richmond. He did a lot of the repairs himself. Those years of helping his father around their house gave him the confidence to tackle the projects at his own home. “A lot of people may not feel comfortable doing things because they haven’t had the exposure of, for example, taking a toilet up and replacing the wax ring to fix a leak.” The hands-on experi-

ences his father guided him through showed Patrick nothing was too complex that couldn’t be broken down into smaller, logical steps.

“Originally, I thought my career would be more food service related. As a food service technician in the Army, I thought I would use those skills in the civilian world. I had a job at Bon Secours hospital.”

The job at the hospital wasn’t what he thought it would be. “Being in the reserves, I have opportunities to do a lot of different things,” he says. “I had the opportunity to train with the Army culinary team. While I was working at the hospital, I was also an apprentice for the Army culinary arts competition team.” The hospital, the culinary team and being a reservist became a lot of things to juggle. “After several months, I decided to leave the hospital.”

He called a friend in property management to see if he could point him in the direction of a new job. “He needed a maintenance man. I knew I could do those things,” Patrick says. He took the position, and for two years, he was the only maintenance man for 118 apart-

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what's up in real estate



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ment units scattered around Richmond. "I acquired a solid knowledge of how to make the repairs to prep an apartment between renters. I can fix things fast and on a budget."

During those years, he worked on his Bachelor's Degree in Business. His girlfriend, Jess Hench, was a teacher in Henrico County. "She saw me in my studies and writing papers, and she got the going-to-school itch again." Jess applied to William and Mary for her graduate program. "We moved here so she could pursue that full-time. She is working on her doctorate dissertation, now."

They moved to Williamsburg in August of 2012. Patrick was out of the maintenance man role, but still enjoyed doing projects. With his business degree, he decided to combine his skills in home repair with his business skills and become an entrepreneur. "I was able to apply what I'd been taught in the classroom."

Although he encourages homeowners to learn about their houses and try home repair projects, he says there are times that professional help is needed. "I would see this, a lot," he describes a common, yet involved repair. "The diverter in the shower – it's the part of the faucet behind the wall. It diverts the cold and the hot to the faucet or to the shower head." If it goes bad, a person has to get into the wall to make the repair. "Few tubs have an access panel. Usually it requires cutting out the sheetrock. This means you have to find someone to do drywall repair, along with a plumber to fix the diverter. If you don't feel comfortable, it's probably better to get professional help. A professional who does this on a regular basis will know how to do it efficiently, with the right products, and to code."

Beyond emergency repairs like fixing a diverter, there are enhancements that are easy and will be enjoyed immediately by the homeowner. "For the most 'bang for the buck,' painting," Patrick says, "is a quick and powerful transformation for a room. Changing the flooring is also an effective upgrade for the money; hardwood, tile and laminate floors are popular."

Larger scale projects are remodeling kitchens and bathrooms. "Those are exciting for the homeowners and are projects that they usually wish they had done sooner." A dramatic upgrade could be as simple as changing out the hardware on the cabinets. "That doesn't cost very much and you give the kitchen a whole new vibe. Upgrading the faucets is an easy improvement. Watch the price of the faucets," he advises. "The less you spend means it probably won't last as long. Spend your money on a quality faucet."

While helping Williamsburg neighbors with their home repair projects, Patrick has another, personal project he would like to start. "I want to educate adolescents. I want to do what my dad did with me," he explains. "I want to expose teenagers to fixing things at home. They will have to fix something in their future apartment or house one day. If I can teach them, they will always remember 'that guy that showed me how to fix a faucet' and they can do it themselves." The opportunities provided by working with his hands have made a difference in his life, and he wants to pass that along to area teens.

Patrick will be working on his master's degree soon. "These jobs pay for my education. I work with my hands, using that skill, to get

to a place where I'm learning more." The road he's taken toward an advanced degree is the path he needed to experience.

He explains that all people are different, some are skilled craftsmen, some technology and analytically oriented and some are scholars. "There are a lot of pressures to go to a four-year college and it's not for everyone. I rebelled and went to the Army," he states. "That was the best thing I could have done at the time. It showed me how I could be immersed in a trade like I was in food service. Once you gain that confidence, you know that you can go to a four-year college because you have mastered these other skills. A lot of kids could use that confidence booster. In the trades, you can be creative. I come up with a lot of creative solutions when I'm working. I can look at things differently."

Part of his creativity has emerged in painting furniture. "I'm working with the Velvet Rocker here in Williamsburg. They do workshops on how to paint furniture with chalk paint and milk paint to make a new look," he says. He views old furniture now as a possible project to apply paint and give it new life or to alter and repurpose it in some manner. "The process of taking something that is old and doesn't fit in your house then being creative and changing it into something you want and need, now that's fun for me."

Patrick considers all the different things he's repaired or painted or created and how that's led him to new projects, skilled, academic, personal and professional, and opened new opportunities that he didn't see as a teen. "That's another thing that I could teach kids," he says. NDN



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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!

TRINITY ORGAN CONCERT

March 4, 2015

U.S. Army training and doctrine command band woodwind quintet and Aaron Renninger, organist. The free concert will include works by Barber, Fauré, Saint-Saëns and others. Time: 12 noon at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. Bring a friend and your lunch. Beverages provided. For more information, call (757) 229-3631 or visit www.bede.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!

ALMOST SPRING - AN AFTERNOON OF FELLOWSHIP AND GAMES

March 5, 2015

The Woman's Club of Williamsburg (GFWC) invites you to Almost Spring – An Afternoon of Fellowship and Games. Play Bridge, Mah Jong, Mexican Train and more. Win big with a 50/50 raffle, door prizes and more raffles. Enjoy a lunch buffet of salads, desserts, coffee & tea. The event will be at Kings Point Club House, 119 Northpoint Drive, in Williamsburg. Registration opens at 11:30 am, with lunch at 12 noon. Games start at 1 pm. Call Jean Migneault at (757) 220-0036 to reserve your spot! The event is a fundraiser for the charitable organizations supported by The Woman's Club of Williamsburg.

Hey Neighbor!

COMMUNITY CAFÉ

March 5, 2015

Are you 60 or better? Get ready for fun, information and some light hearted entertainment! The Faith Community and the Aging and Disability Resource Center are sponsoring an afternoon out. Bring your friends in the Williamsburg Community, or make new ones. Join

us for a short panel discussion, question and answer period, snacks, entertainment and prizes. Free and open to Williamsburg community residents 60 or better. Caregivers are welcome. Dr. Thomas Bond, retired sleep expert, will talk about "Safe and Restful Sleep." St. Martins Episcopal Church (Miles Hall), 1333 Jamestown Road, from 1-3 pm.

Hey Neighbor!

CHILDREN'S CONSIGNMENT SALE

March 6-7, 2015

11 am* - 7 pm (*Get in at 10 am with a Jar of Peanut Butter for FISH); March 7 from 8 am – Noon. King of Glory Lutheran Church at 4897 Longhill Road. Great selection of new and gently used seasonal children's clothing (newborn to teen), maternity clothing, nursery and children's furniture, room accessories, baby equipment, strollers, high chairs, toys, books, videos, puzzles, games, and bikes.

Hey Neighbor!

BRUTON 5K RUN/WALK AND SILENT AUCTION

March 7, 2015

Come and support Bruton High School Athletics! To be held at Bruton High School, 185 East Rochambeau Drive. Race day registration begins at 8 am. Race begins at 9 am. First 100 participants will be guaranteed a t-shirt. Silent Auction immediately following the race. Awards to the top winner in each age group. Proceeds go to the Sports Program of your choice. For more information, contact Dawn Florence @ dwnflrnc@gmail.com.

Hey Neighbor!

IMAGES INTO WORDS WORKSHOP

March 12, 2015

Presented by This Century Art Gallery (TCAG) as a part of the Williamsburg Book Festival Workshop. This workshop is an opportunity to unleash your creative genius. Students will play with crayons and clay, toy with elements and concepts, and free themselves to think artistically. Students will also write, with permission to take imaginative leaps. Register at the TCAG Art Education Center 229-5549.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG CHORAL GUILD WINTER CONCERT

March 8, 2015

"Voices Divine & Sublime". A program in two parts that begins with the "divine" – romantic-flavored music by composers of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries – and ends with the "sublime" – earthy and worldly music by contemporary composers. Accompanied by piano and organ (Rebecca Davy) and woodwind quintet, the chorus will be joined by two vocal soloists, conducted by Artistic Director Jay BeVillie and Assistant Conductor Garry Sloan. Pre-concert lecture at 3 pm; the music begins at 4 pm in the sanctuary of the Williamsburg Presbyterian Church, 215 Richmond Rd. Tickets: \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door. Call (757) 220-1808 or visit www.williamsburgchoralguild.org to purchase tickets.

Hey Neighbor!

CATCH THE VISION! TOUR AT WCA

March 12, 2015

Get an up-close view of Williamsburg Christian Academy when you visit the beautiful campus for this informative one-hour tour. WCA is dually accredited, interdenominational, and provides personalized, college-preparatory

education from preschool – grade 12. Located at 101 Schoolhouse Lane, Williamsburg. For more information, visit williamsburgchristian.org or call (757) 220-1978, ext. 113.

Hey Neighbor!

POPE BENEDICT XVI CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT

March 14, 2015

Chamber Musicians joined by String Quartet from the University of Virginia. The program will include the Brahms String Sextet No. 2 in G major, the Beethoven Trio in E flat Op. 3, and the Boccherini Guitar Quintet No. 4. Time: 7:30 pm at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. Suggested donation is \$10. For more information, call (757) 229-3631 or visit www.bede.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!

NWBA WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL GAMES

March 14, 2015

Here's your chance to check out two nationally-ranked teams go head-to-head for what should be two spirited, highly-competitive games at the James City County Recreation Center off Longhill Rd. James City County Parks & Recreation Department will be hosting the event between NWBA #5-ranked NRH Ambassadors from Washington D.C. and #13-ranked Richmond Rimriders. Tip-off begins at 12 noon and 2 pm. For more info, contact: Tracy Newsom at (757) 259-5354 or tracy.newsom@jamescitycountyva.gov

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Hey Neighbor! SHAMROCK THE BURG

March 14, 2015
Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg presents Shamrock the 'Burg 2015 sponsored by ESG International. 6-10 pm, Williamsburg Community Building. Featuring live music by Glasgow Kiss, Guinness Draught, Kiwanis Corned Beef and Cabbage. \$10 general admission available at the door and at www.WilliamsburgKiwanis.com. Benefits Bacon St., Erase the Need, and Jamestown 4H Club. Get out your green and cheer on spring!

Hey Neighbor! COMMUNITY-WIDE SPRING CAR WASH

March 14, 2015
A fund raiser for Calvary Chapel Youth Ministry, donations will be accepted. From 10 am – 2 pm at C&F Bank, 4780 Longhill Road (corner of Longhill and Old Towne Roads) across from 7-11. Contact info: (757) 220-8400 or calvarycw.org.

Hey Neighbor! WILLIAMSBURG MUSIC CLUB: GRANTS-IN-AID AUDITIONS

March 14, 2015
The Williamsburg Music Club sponsors its Annual Grants-in-Aid Auditions for highly talented students with cash scholarship awards. The audition performances are free and open to the public from 10 am – 5 pm in Ewell Hall at the College of William & Mary. For further information, contact Rosanne Reddin at (757) 229-4429 or williamsburgmusicclub.org.

Hey Neighbor! RELAY FOR LIFE

March 17, 2015
Want to get involved? Meeting for all interested parties will be at the James City County Recreation Center on Longhill Road. Time: 6 pm. Relay For Life of Williamsburg is May 1-2, 2015. For information, visit the web site: www.relayforlife.org/williamsburgva.

Hey Neighbor! FEISTY FICTION - SHORT STORY WRITING CLASS

March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 2015
Presented by This Century Art Gallery (TCAG) as a part of the Williamsburg

Book Festival Workshop. Discover what makes short stories so enticing to the reader and to the writer. This class focuses on capturing a short story - from bare bones to voluptuous. Writing exercises explore the elements of fiction, and with these tools, you will create a short story, building it as the class progresses. This class is designed for beginning to intermediate writers. Register at the TCAG Art Education Center 229-5549

Hey Neighbor! THE GEOLOGY OF PLANTS

March 21, 2015
At the Freedom Park Interpretive Center, 10 am, and open to the public, \$5 donation is accepted. Retired Geology Professor Dr. Jerre Johnson will give a short review of the geologic history of this area, the processes that shaped its landscape and soils, and a brief look into the life that existed here during the recent geologic past. Contact Jerre at 358-8990 for more information. Presented for the Williamsburg Botanical Garden.

Hey Neighbor! MILITARY THROUGH THE AGES

March 21-22, 2015
Military Through the Ages, at Jamestown Settlement. A chronological timeline of military history from the first century A.D. to modern times – unfolds with re-enactors, artillery firings and military musical performances. Event also features a children's parade on Saturday and military pass-in-review on Sunday. Museum hours are 9 am – 5 pm daily. Jamestown Settlement is located on Route 31 South in Williamsburg. For information, call (888) 593-4682 toll-free or (757) 253-4838, or visit www.historyisfun.org.

Hey Neighbor! HARLEM AMBASSADORS COME TO TOWN!

March 22, 2015
Greenwood Christian Academy hosts the internationally acclaimed Harlem Ambassadors at Lafayette High School. Tip off at 5 pm, doors open at 4:30. Tickets on sale at www.greenwoodchristianacademy.com or and available at the door. Advance tickets \$10. Family Four-pack of tickets with dinner \$40 advance sell only. Concessions available, no outside food or drink. Open seating. Autograph session included with ticket purchase right after game. For more information, call (757) 345-0905.

Hey Neighbor! QUILT EVENT AT COLONIAL HERITAGE

March 24, 2015
With a portion of the proceeds to benefit the educational programs of the Williamsburg Botanical Gardens, the Williamsburg Area Council of Garden Clubs will hold a spring fund raiser event at Colonial Heritage. "The Quilter's Garden" luncheon will feature an

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Hey Neighbor! **HISTORICAL SOCIETY** **MEETINGS AND OUTING**

March 26, 2015

The Tidewater Virginia Historical Society (TVHS) offers unique tours, lectures, social events, and behind-the-scene adventures. TVHS opens doors to "off-the-beaten-path" and "not open to the public" historic sites. Lectures by experts in their field provide information prior to tours to complete the experience. The first outing of the season will be to the Northern Neck and is scheduled for Thursday, March 26. To learn more contact us at (757) 258-5587 or visit us on the web: www.tv-hs.org or info@tv-hs.com. Lectures are usually complimentary. Everyone is welcome.

Hey Neighbor! **AFTERNOON OF JAZZ**

March 29, 2015

The Williamsburg Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is excited to announce An Afternoon of Jazz featuring RaJazz. This annual event takes place from 4-8 pm at the Williamsburg Lodge. Dinner will be served at 4:30 pm. Tickets are \$60 per person. For tickets or more information visit www.williamsburgdst.org or email Margaret Stockton at mlcstockton@aol.com. Looking forward to seeing you on March 29th!

Hey Neighbor! **WILLIAMSBURG SYMPHONIA** **MASTERWORKS #4**

March 30-31, 2015

The Williamsburg Symphonia presents Masterworks Concert #4, Transitions to Jazz, featuring works by Bernstein (On the Town: Three Dance Episodes), Schubert (Symphony No. 8, "Unfinished") and Kurt Weill (Symphony No. 2). The Symphonia, Williamsburg's own professional orchestra, is conducted by Music Director Janna Hymes, in her 11th season on the podium. At the Kimball Theatre in Merchants Square. Performances begin at 8 pm. Single tickets are \$48 and \$58. Information: (757) 229-9857 or visit www.williamsburgsymphonia.org.

Hey Neighbor! **EASTER SUNDAY AT OLIVE** **BRANCH**

April 5, 2015

Pastor Richard Cline invites you to Easter Sunday activities at Olive Branch Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),

beginning with a sunrise service at 6:30 am in the nature trail area behind the church, followed by breakfast and morning worship services at 8:30 and 11, as well as Sunday School at 9:45. The church is at 76434 Richmond Road, halfway between Toano and Norge. Call (757) 566-8077 between 8 am - 3 pm, Mon-Thu for further information; email obcc1833@gmail.com; website www.ob-cc.org.

Hey Neighbor! **PICK UP THE PACE WRITING** **WORKSHOP**

April 11, 2015

Presented by This Century Art Gallery (TCAG) as a part of the Williamsburg Book Festival Workshop. Learn to structure the tempo of your writing. Whether a memoir, short story, romance, mystery, or thriller, your writing has a pulse. Learn how to quicken or calm the pace of your writing to keep your readers turning pages. This workshop is for intermediate to advanced writers. Register at the TCAG Art Education Center 229-5549.

Hey Neighbor! **REGISTRATION FOR YOUTH** **MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE SERIES**

April 11-12, 2015

Riders ages 3 - 18 are invited to participate in a youth mountain bike race series on trails designed especially for children at New Quarter Park, located at 1000 Lakeshead Dr. Pre-ride the trails (highly recommended) for free and sign up on Saturday, April 11 at 10 am or Sunday, April 12 at 1 pm for the Wednesdays on Your Wheels series. Then, race on four Wednesdays, April 15, 22, 29, and May 6, at 5:30 pm (May 13 rain date). A finale and banquet will be held on May 17 at 1 pm. Parents must be present and helmets are required. For more information and registration with York County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, call (757) 890-3500. Registration fee is \$25; \$20 for each additional child in the same family. Participate in one or more individual race days, for \$10 per child per day. All participants receive a WOYW wristband and a bike number plate.

Hey Neighbor! **LEARN ABOUT WOMAN'S CLUB** **OF WILLIAMSBURG**

April 15, 2015

Calling all Williamsburg-area women! The Woman's Club of Williamsburg - GFWC is holding an informal new-member information social at the Port Anne Club House, 211 William Way, Williamsburg, from 1:30-3:30 pm. All those interested in potentially becoming a member are welcome! If you are interested in community service, this is your opportunity to learn more! Come hear about the Club's many activities and the wonderful community causes that it supports, enjoy light refreshments and meet current members. Please contact

Betty Nicholls by April 10 to reserve a seat, (757) 645-2193 or email womansclubofwilliamsburg.org. More information about the Club is available online at <http://www.womansclubofwilliamsburg.org/>.

Hey Neighbor! **MIX-IT-UP WRITING CLASS**

April 16, 23, 30, May 7, 2015

Presented by This Century Art Gallery (TCAG) as a part of the Williamsburg Book Festival Workshop. This class is for advanced writers (fiction, non-fiction, poetry) who have published or are close to publishing. Students will have an opportunity to have their writing critiqued by their peers and to expand their understanding of other genres. Register at the TCAG Art Education Center 229-5549.

Hey Neighbor! **INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING** **GOLF TOURNAMENT**

April 17, 2015

From His Hands is having its inaugural fundraising golf tournament at Stonehouse Golf Club in Toano. From His Hands partners with 16 local churches and with the Salvation Army, Westgate Resorts, The Wade family and 3e Restoration. Its mission is to serve the hungry in our community, serving in Christ's name to glorify God. Since it began in 2005, From His Hands has served over 45,000 meals. Now there are over 10,000 meals served on a yearly basis. All the people involved in this ministry are volunteers with an executive committee that oversees its operations. From His Hands is solely funded by donations from churches, organizations, and individuals. Register for the golf tournament at www.uwgv.org/fromhishands. Local businesses interested in being a sponsor of the tournament can contact John Gregoire at 757-506-9192 or johngregoire185@hotmail.com.

Hey Neighbor! **"BREAST" BALL GOLF** **TOURNAMENT**

April 17, 2015

Fords Colony Country Club, 240 Ford's Colony Drive, Williamsburg, Time 1 -9 pm. Join us as we get into the swing of it, with a great day of golf in support of our mission. With over 300 players, our day kicks off with a 1 pm tee time and ends with an after-party celebration. This event offers the opportunity to win many great items in our raffle and auction, compete for awards, and enjoy dinner and fun long after the score cards have been tallied. For information, contact Vicki Vawter (757) 645-2649 or vicki@beyondboobs.org. Our website is <http://www.beyondboobs.org/events/bb-annual-events/breast-ball-golf-tournament/breast-ball-golf-tournament-registration/>

Hey Neighbor! **COMMUNITY OF STARS FUND-**

RAISING BANQUET

April 24, 2015

The Williamsburg-James City County Community Action Agency will hold its 12th Community of Stars fundraising at Colonial Heritage, Rte 60, Williamsburg. In celebrating its 47th year, the agency will honor several individuals, businesses and organizations that have strengthened and supported CAA by giving their time and resources. Proceeds from the banquet will go toward the agency's programs and services, to include Head Start pre-school and youth and family and emergency services. To purchase tickets contact Yvonne Joseph at 229-9332. The evening is semi-formal and includes a silent auction and cash bar. Silent auction items are welcomed.

Hey Neighbor! **3RD ANNUAL HIKE FOR HOSPICE**

April 25, 2015

Join us for a leisurely 2 mile walk followed by a Celebration of Life Park East in Governor's Land. Walk to celebrate the memory of loved ones, in honor of someone, or just to support Hospice House. For more information, visit williamsburghikeforhospice.kintera.org.

Hey Neighbor! **RELAY FOR LIFE EVENT**

May 1, 2015

Join the American Cancer's Largest Fundraiser, Relay For Life Movement. All are welcome - individuals, teams, sponsors, volunteers. Location: Jamestown High School from 7 pm - 7 am. For more information, visit the website: www.relayforlife.org/williamsburgva. Like us on Facebook: Relay For Life of Williamsburg VA.

Hey Neighbor! **CELEBRATE NEW QUARTER** **PARK'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY**

May 2, 2015

York County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism invites Historic Triangle neighbors to celebrate the Upper York County Park's anniversary from 10 am - 2 pm with activities and exhibits for adults and children. Park partner organizations will lead a bird walk, trail hike, mountain bike ride, botany walk and more while others will exhibit their programs under a big tent over the basketball court. Help archaeologists wash and sort artifacts from New Quarter's recent dig. Listen to music by Joe's Day Off, and buy native plants from the Virginia Native Plant Society. Kids will enjoy the bounce house and craft activities. A ceremony to commemorate and thank partners for 30 years of fun in nature will be hosted by the York County Board of Supervisors at 11:30 am. New Quarter Park is located at 1000 Lakeshead Drive, near the Queen's Lake neighborhood.

For more listings visit:

www.WilliamsburgNeighbors.com

Williamsburg's
IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
photo challenge

ART
EDUCATION
CENTER

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

Enjoy!



INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

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

FEBRUARY 2015
In the Neighborhood
Photo Challenge





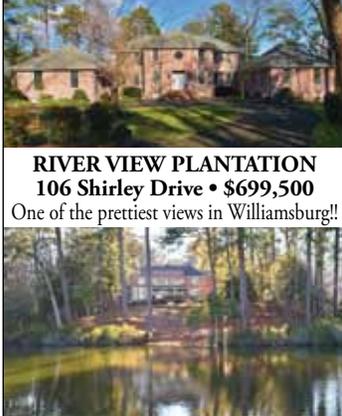
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