

December 2018

WILLIAMSBURG'S

Next Door Neighbors®

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PRICELESS

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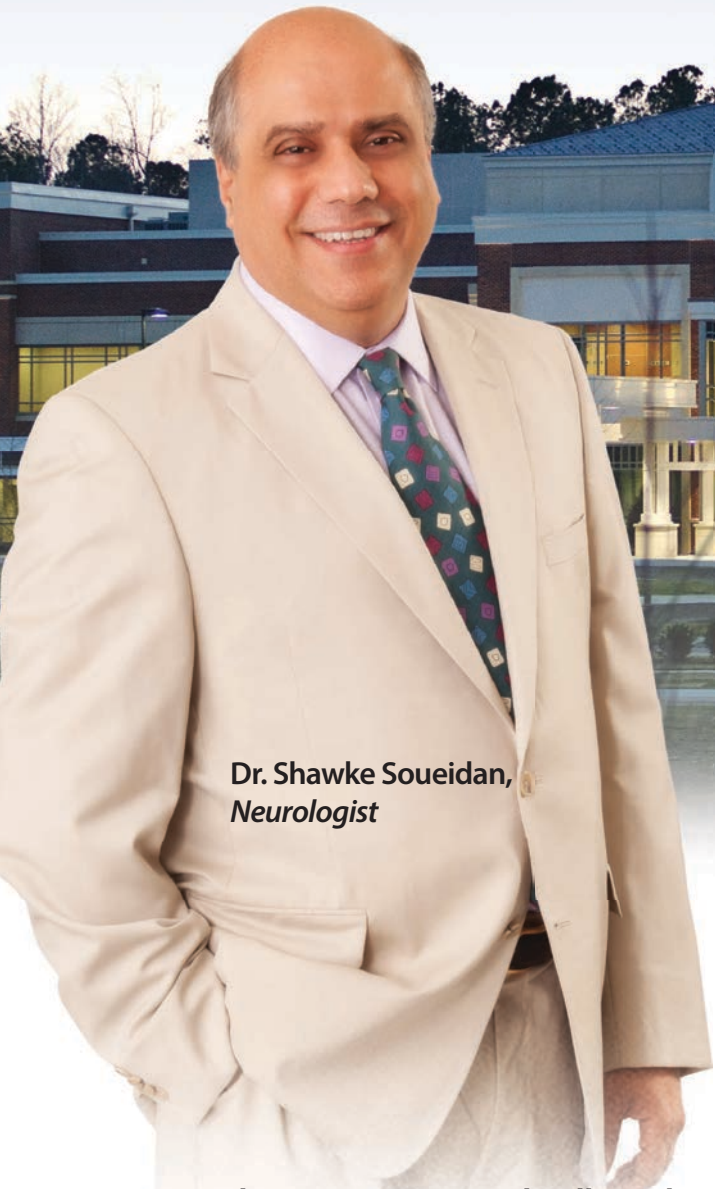
Williamsburg Holidays

Aundrea Holiday



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Meredith Collins, Publisher

It is not uncommon to roll into the holiday season exhausted from a busy year that seems very long and yet strikes you that it has flown by as well. When local radio stations start to play Christmas music the day after Thanksgiving and decorations have popped up everywhere we turn, it can be befuddling to realize the end of the year is once again upon us. Aside from perceptions, I remain inspired by the miracle birth that is the true focus of

the season and the spirit of love and sharing and happiness it fosters among us.

I am also inspired by people like those we have interviewed for this issue. Our neighbors like the officer who gives generously of herself in the spirit of the season, the Pastor who is moved by the spirit to minister to others, and even an intrepid investigator who seeks out spirits of the season and otherwise. We have also included the local renaissance man who doubles as a very jolly and memorable Santa Claus.

The spirit of Christmas is alive and well here in Williamsburg, as always. My wish for you is to experience it in whatever way your heart speaks to you. NDN

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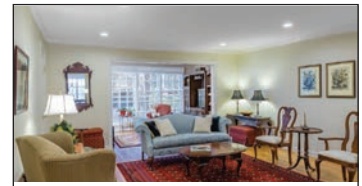
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Touching Hearts at Christmas

By Lillian Stevens



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Aundrea Holiday has always loved Christmas, mainly because her parents made such a big deal of the holiday when she was a child. “I think that every kid should have what I had growing up,” she says.

For the past 18 years, Aundrea has served her community as an officer with the Williamsburg Police Department (WPD). Her role for the past three years has been director of WPD’s Community Engagement Bureau. As such, the senior police officer is the force behind the wildly popular *Stuff the Trailer* holiday toy drive, a collaborative effort between the Williamsburg Police Department and the Williamsburg Social Services Department.

While this year’s toy drive will have taken place the weekend before this issue hits mailboxes, donors can still leave gifts at a dedicated box that is set up inside the Walgreen’s on Richmond Road. Gifts and monetary donations can also be delivered during the first two weeks of December to the Williamsburg Police Department on Armistead Avenue.

“We are super excited!” Aundrea exclaims. “The first year we did this toy drive was my first year in community services, and the outpouring from the community was so heartwarming. Everyone is very supportive of our efforts.”

Through *Stuff the Trailer*, now in its third year, toys and other gifts are provided to lower-income families identified by Social Services. Aundrea says that last year, the toy drive benefited approximately 30 families, nearly 100 children and youth.

“Isn’t that amazing?” she marvels.

Each year, the work, and the fun, begin in earnest just after Halloween.

“There are four of us in the unit doing these drives, as well as our supervisor, Major Greg Riley,” Aundrea says. “We have a large trailer, and the goal is to fill it with new bikes, toys and other gifts. We want to give as many families and children as possible a special Christmas.”

In late November, there’s a weekend when the officers get decked out in holiday gear and

take it to the streets (and parking lots). “We’re on the corner wearing Santa costumes, promoting the event with our signs. This is also when we tend to bring in the cash donations.”

Cash donations help to provide teenagers with gifts.

“A lot of times people hear ‘toy drive’ and they assume it’s for the little kids, but the teens in our community deserve a happy holiday too,” Aundrea says, “so we raise funds that are then turned over to Social Services so they can match up the teens’ wants and needs lists and try to fulfill what they can.”

Then comes the part that really distinguishes this toy drive from many others: families get to go shopping!

A large room is reserved at the City’s Stryker Building and every gift is delivered there.

“After we have our last push for donations and after all the gifts are purchased, we set up everything in the Stryker Building,” Aundrea says. “Then, the parents or guardians come in and select gifts for their children. I think that

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the way we do our toy drive helps to maintain people's dignity. Parents may not have the means to go shopping at stores, but here they can still choose their children's gifts."

She sees these outreach activities as putting a human face on law enforcement.

"In April, I will have been an officer for 26 years," she says.

Aundrea grew up on the Northern Neck but was born here in Williamsburg. She always expected to someday be a police officer.

"It's so funny because growing up, we actually lived next door to a state trooper," she says. "We called him Sparky. One day, I went to the post office and saw all of the 'wanted people' posters. I went home and told Sparky that when I grew up, I wanted to be just like him. I thought it would be so cool."

Aundrea earned an associate's degree from TNCC before setting out on the path that led her to her current role in community services. She started out as a dispatcher but quickly decided that wasn't for her.

"I couldn't sit in my seat long enough to dispatch," she says. "I have to be out there handling the calls."

She says that her family's reaction was posi-

tive. Her parents were impressed with the route their daughter chose. "My dad was a painter, and my mom was a pharmacy tech," Aundrea says. "We have some family members serving in the military but none working in law enforcement."

Her children have always been proud, too. "I was a young mother," she says. "I had my first child at age 17, and my second at 19, so that's part of the reason I wanted to go into law enforcement. It may sound cliché, but I wanted to make the world a better place for my children. I asked myself what field I could go into that would be good, honest work — something they would be proud of me doing."

She is living the answer.

Tragically, however, Aundrea lost her eldest son in 2015.

"He was murdered in Newport News," she says quietly. "He would have been 30 on Sunday. It's been so tough. I have had a lot of support here, though, and that's honestly how I have been able to get through it."

She and her husband Jeremy have two other sons and a daughter.

Even so, Aundrea says that her own Christmas will be a quiet one.

"Ever since Adrian died, we don't put up a tree," she says, "so this toy drive is how I celebrate Christmas. This is what I do. To see the parents' faces, to know that I somehow helped these kids have a Christmas, that's the biggest takeaway. I feel like God does touch people's hearts to donate and help us, and with their help we've definitely touched a lot of hearts."

Though she can't point a finger to any one life event that nurtured her altruistic spirit, Aundrea credits both of her parents with teaching her the importance of kindness and pride in a job well done.

"My dad was such a gentle soul," she says. "He was so laid back. He and my mom always instilled in my brother and me that if you're going to do a job, do it right. If you're not going to do the job right, just stay home."

After logging a work week that will easily exceed 40 hours, home is actually where she loves to be. Aundrea Holiday is happy to spend some down time with her husband and their two dogs. "We have a black Lab and a hound mix," she says. "Honestly, I just go home and snuggle with my puppies. I'm suffering from the empty nest syndrome, so they are my babies now." NDN

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DOUG CARLTON

Transforming Williamsburg

By Dawn Brotherton



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

The beauty that is Colonial Williamsburg doesn't happen without the hard work of a special team. Doug Carlton counts himself as privileged to lead these individuals as Mechanical Trades and Support Services Manager. "I'm very fortunate to manage such a talented and professional team. They deserve all of the credit for all of our accomplishments," Doug says. His team is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of nearly 600 buildings and 301 acres of Colonial Williamsburg, as well as the offsite buildings such as the Bruton Heights

Complex, the visitors' center and the Rockefeller Library. He cares for not only the inside of the buildings, but also the roads and grounds. As you can imagine, hurricane season and winter snow removal keep them very busy.

"On the mechanical trade side of it, we do heat and air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, electronics, fire and security and the two-way radio system. The support crew does everything from parking lot paving, roofing, repairs, and cleaning storm drains. We have in place a preventive maintenance program. We get a list

of buildings and properties every month that certain tasks need to be done in, and that's a revolving calendar," Doug says.

Although preparing for the winter holidays takes the most work in their surge efforts, Doug and his team also handle all special events such as weddings, naturalization ceremonies and reunions. "We do electrical support for wedding events, Occasion for the Arts, Farmers Market and different things in Merchants Square," he says. They set up lighting and sound support to make each occasion exceptional.

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While the upkeep of such a variety of buildings in different stages of aging is one of his biggest challenges, Doug finds real enjoyment working with the people he comes in contact with in the course of a day. He loves being involved with the museums and the conservation staff. "It's nice to be part of everything they have going on because of the importance of everything that we own. In the collection building, a lot of things there's only one of, and we own it." The buildings must be temperature and humidity controlled.

"We have some equipment that dates back to the late fifties and early sixties, still in place and operational. We try to have a plan in place every year for project work, and we focus on equipment that has been problematic throughout the years. We're slowly replacing equipment, but of course, with funding, that's a challenge."

Doug grew up in Williamsburg and graduated from Lafayette High School. After attending Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning school at Thomas Nelson Community College, Doug immediately went to work for Colonial Williamsburg. He worked as a floater doing whatever tasks he was assigned in facilities maintenance and absorbing new training opportunities.

Now 30 years later, he and his wife Angel live in New Kent with their two children Lauren and Tyler, and Doug has moved up the ranks to become a supervisor within the Operations Division of Colonial Williamsburg.

Doug kicked off this fall season helping to set up for the trick or treat event on Duke of Gloucester Street and the Pumpkin Patch Dance Party. Of course, Thanksgiving wasn't celebrated in the Colonial Williamsburg times, so Doug and his team start right into Christmas preparations.

"During November, that's really our busiest time preparing for Christmas. Our main focus is to get all the lighting situated," Doug explained.

To create the holiday magic, Colonial Williamsburg is transformed. Each window in the 67 buildings in and around Duke of Gloucester Street house a candle simulating the decorations from the 1700s. Granted, these candles are now LED, but the effect is stunning. The Christmas tree in Market Square is decorated with 7,500 LED lights, a three-day operation that involves an aerial lift and hundreds of man hours. "The Christmas tree is challenging just because of time, and you can't really predict the weather," Doug says. "We try to get ahead of

the snow and get everything in place in case we do have a big snow or something."

Recent flooding and power outages caused by the weather have tested Doug and his team. "Various buildings already have generators in place, and we focus on buildings that are problematic with flooding. We have a large fleet of generators, soft pumps and a lot emergency response equipment." When a hurricane is predicted, the mechanical trades division sets out the emergency equipment, just in case. Then it gets packed away to be ready for the next emergency.

The ice rink is in full swing. Keeping the chilled water system in working order, organizing power and water for the food kiosks, and setting up the booth for skate rental is yet another job on Doug's to-do list.

Throughout the colonial area of town, speakers are suspended in the trees and play holiday music, thanks to Doug Carlton and his team. To make it extra challenging, they also synch the music to the fireworks display for the Grand Illumination.

Doug's team is busier than Santa's elves; working behind the scenes year-round to help keep Colonial Williamsburg sparkling and humming along. NDN



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Peace Within Family Cultures

By Susan Williamson

Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Given the diversity of the Williamsburg population, residents participate in a myriad of holiday traditions and religious observances during December. The Kleiman-Walls household celebrates both Christmas and Hanukkah as a part of their intergenerational living arrangement.

Three years ago, Wendy and Ron Kleiman retired from their jobs near New York City. Wendy worked in human resources for a large corporation and Ron in flag manufacturing. The cost of living was high in their hometown of Parsippany, New Jersey, so, they downsized and accepted their daughter, Heather's, invita-

tion to move in with her family in Newport News on a trial basis. The experiment worked, and after a year, the family began to search for a home to accommodate all of them. They found the perfect house in Green Springs Plantation. The Kleimans live on the second floor where they have a small kitchen, a cozy dining and living area, along with a bedroom, bath and office. The upstairs kitchen and living area were already included in the house. Wendy repainted the space in a soft gray and added her own décor. Heather and Bryan Walls and their daughters live on the main floor.

Ron says, "None of the other children invited us to live with them, and personality wise, Heather and her family are the best match." The Kleimans travel to visit their other children, two daughters and a son, and grandchildren.

Wendy and Ron are both of Jewish ancestry and their grandparents observed Jewish religious customs, but not their parents. Ron decided to return to the conservative observances of his ancestors. The silver cup they use each Friday evening for Shabbat belonged to his grandfather's great grandfather. The family observes Shabbat each week together in the

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downstairs dining room, using kosher dishes. Having kosher meals is not a problem for the Kleimans. Other members of the family have other dietary restrictions, so eating kosher is just one of several food accommodations.

During December they observe Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights, along with their family.

While all four of their children were raised in the Jewish faith, they all married outside of the faith. Ron says, "I think everyone wants their children to marry within their faith, but it wasn't a problem for us."

Wendy adds, "The important thing is that they all married good people."

Heather and Bryan Walls and their daughters, Maia, almost 12, and Neely, almost 10, attend a Christian church and celebrate Christmas with a Christmas tree, Advent calendar, presents, lights, decorations and an "Elf on the Shelf." They also come upstairs each night of Hanukkah for the lighting of the oil lamps and to receive a small gift.

Wendy says, "I try to give Hanukkah gifts to all of our eleven grandchildren. The gifts are small, comparable to a stocking stuffer." The Kleiman's other children live in Pittsfield, Massachusetts; Long Island, New York and Tucson, Arizona.

Hanukkah is the festival observed in honor of a miracle which occurred when the second temple in Jerusalem was rededicated in 165 BCE after the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucid Empire which controlled Jerusalem. The temple had been defiled but was rededicated after the revolt. Jewish law required a light to burn in the temple at all times. This was the traditional seven branched oil lamp. At the time of dedication there was only one consecrated, sealed cask of olive oil remaining which was certified by the High Priest to be pure. Normally one cask would burn only one day, but the oil lasted eight days, the time



"When Patricia, originally from El Salvador, first moved to Williamsburg, she spoke very little English and depended on others to help her with everyday tasks such as going to the store. She learned about *Literacy for Life* and was soon matched with her tutor, Portia. "My tutor is very patient and made me feel comfortable when I started speaking English. She is able to meet with me at different times to fit with my work schedule. My goal is to get my GED which will open many doors for me. I would like to enter a career caring for animals. Thanks to my tutor, I know I will achieve my goal." ~**Patricia Cardona, Learner**

"Portia began volunteering at *Literacy for Life* after seeing an ad in *Next Door Neighbors* magazine. Working one on one to help someone particularly appealed to her. "It is so important to be able to communicate in the community in which you live. I knew I needed to be patient and a good listener if I was going to help Patricia learn English. The training, support, and resources provided to me by Literacy for Life have been extremely helpful. Patricia is hard working and has made excellent progress. We have become much more than student and teacher – we have become friends!" ~**Portia Belden, Tutor**



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During the festival, a Hanukkah Menorah (usually an eight branched candlestick with an additional ninth or Shamash branch used for lighting the others and located above or below the eight) is lit sequentially each night and often placed in the window or outside the house to remember the miracle. This year's Hanukkah dates are the evening of December 2 through December 10. The beginning date is always the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev. Since the Hebrew calendar is lunar, the date varies on the Gregorian calendar. Hebrew days begin at sunset.

The Hanukkah Menorah used by the Kleimans is not a candleholder but rather a small stone wall, symbolizing the "Wailing Wall" in Jerusalem, with eight jugs attached for the oil and another jug below, which is used to light the other jugs, one on the first night, two on the second and so forth. The lights must burn at least a half an hour after sunset, but when filled with oil may burn up to six hours. Wendy says, "By the end of Hanukkah, the house definitely smells like olive oil."

Their granddaughters also spin the dreidel, a four sided spinning top with Hebrew letters which are abbreviations for the words Nes Gadol Haya Sham which mean "A Great Miracle

Happened Here." Because of the importance of the olive oil, fried foods such as potato latkes and doughnuts are a part of the tradition as well as special Hanukkah songs and a blessing of thanks.

The entire family has attended a public menorah lighting ceremony in Newport News as well as Christmas concerts and tree lighting ceremonies. Wendy says, "We don't give Christmas presents, and we watch Christmas celebrations from the sidelines." Both Kleimans agree that Christmas lights and decorations are warm and beautiful and that Christmas music is very special even if it is played a little early in the season. Wendy assists Heather with the home and her granddaughters as needed, but she also stays busy with jazzercise classes three or four days a week. She enjoys reading and various community events. She attended the Citizens Police Academy which included ride-alongs with local police.

Ron takes care of household repairs and has a woodworking shop. He is also an avid kayaker. When they lived in New Jersey, he served as a whitewater guide and rescuer on the Delaware River, an activity he misses, but the Williamsburg area is wonderful for kayaking. He wanted an additional form of exercise for days when the weather wasn't ideal for kayaking and he looked

for the closest martial arts studio, thinking that he would be more likely to go if the studio was nearby. He found Krav Maga Hampton Roads on John Tyler Highway and when he walked in, was surprised to see an Israeli flag on the wall. The discipline he is practicing, Krav Maga, is actually an Israeli self-defense and fighting form. He works at martial arts two or three times a week and still finds time to write both prose and poetry.

The Kleimans enjoy living in Williamsburg although they do admit to missing New York pizza and bagels, but not the traffic nor the high cost of living.

The family participated in FISH food drive efforts which are carried out by several local faith groups. "When you rub elbows with people of all faiths," Ron says, "it leads to the love of your fellow man and your community." The Kleimans involved Maia and Neely in the project because they thought it would be a good experience for the girls to realize the needs of others.

Combining two religious traditions has been a fact of life for Wendy Kleiman and her family. In today's divided and partisan world, an understanding of two cultures surely contributes to the peace and goodwill heralded by the holiday season. NDN



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SANTA ON ICE

By Dawn Brotherton



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Stas Jirov is one of many very talented individuals who will be performing at Busch Gardens Christmas Town this season. Watch for him on the ice in the red suit, hiding behind the beard. Even the mask doesn't slow him down as he performs many jumps and spins to the delight of his audience.

Originally from St. Petersburg, Russia, Stas has been training to be a figure skater since he

was four years old. "I'm really thankful to the Skating Academy in St. Petersburg to give me this many years of high-level of training to become a good skater and performer and do this job to make people happy," Stas says. Growing up, in addition to his regular schooling, he skated before and after academic classes. He explains that it isn't like here where the parents pick and choose what the child will participate in. The

coaches in Russia decided what you would train in, for how long, and any additional training that would improve your main sport. "If you needed more flexibility, you did gymnastics. If you needed speed skating, you would skate more." Stas feels this experience gave him confidence and motivated him to do more.

There is a lot of athletic talent running through his veins. His mother, who is still in



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Russia, was a gymnast, and his father played soccer and ice hockey. His younger sister has danced with a professional ballet company in Russia for 20 years.

A few years ago, Maiya, his daughter, traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia to join the Skating Academy where Stas attended and to train with his coach for the summer. She was able to enjoy time with her grandparents and practice her Russian.

Stas visited many countries while traveling with Disney on Ice. The Tidewater area is fortunate that a few of those stops were at the Hampton Coliseum. He says that he had heard from others that Williamsburg was an interesting, historical place. "Many years before I stopped [traveling with Disney], I drove by and walked around and realized there's something wonderful about this place. It would be nice to be here." At the time, he knew he wanted to return to the area.

Whenever he got a chance, Stas toured Williamsburg. "Every time it had something different and something new." At that point, Stas decided that when it was time for him to stop traveling, he would settle in Williamsburg.

Stas first came to live in the United States in the early nineties. "I originally got my green card for extraordinary abilities because I was doing a lot of character work for Disney. For my characters, I was skating in not just the costume, but in a mask, and I was still continuing doing high-level competitive triples and jumps." It takes extra talent and concentration to get used to skating when your vision is limited by a mask.

All that experience came in handy because now he is doing the same type of skating for Busch Gardens as Saint Nicholas. "It's really great for Williamsburg to see not just beautiful lights but also the special skating show. It's outside. I believe every skater dreams about skating outside because that's where skating originally started."

Twas the Night Before Christmas will be performed many times a day. "At Christmas time, it's all a magic miracle, and that happens every show." Stas promises no two shows will ever be the same because something interesting always happens. He recalls last year when it was so cold, even with his thick Santa suit on, he was still colder than he can remember being in Russia.

"I'm on the ice, skating again with a wonderful cast from around the world, a group of skat-

ers who come here for the Christmas Town, and we're doing so many performances every day." One of Stas's all-time favorite skaters is in the show with him, three-time World Champion and twice-silver medalist, Canadian Elvis Stojko. "When you watch somebody that talented, it's just incredible. He's probably the most amazing skater I've ever seen in my life. And when people see him that close in the park, they will be enjoying so much, I guarantee it," Stas says.

Playing Saint Nicholas is a treat for Stas. He always believed in the mystery of Santa growing up. In Russia, Santa Claus has the same enchanted qualities as we appreciate in the States. "We have a nice fat man, friendly. For some reason, they have a different outfit, a little bit different cut, but we do have exactly the same colors in Russia."

The part he enjoys the most is watching the audience experience the magic taking place on the ice.

"You perform for people and see them happy." Stas says that he loves being on stage and looking into the crowd. "You have so much energy from them. You skate not just for yourself, you skate for people, and they like it." NDN

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CABELL WALLACE



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Christmas EVERY DAY

By Kathleen Toomey Jobs

Cabell Wallace understands traditions. He lives them. As a descendant of the original owner, and one of the current owners of The Christmas Shop in Merchant's Square in Colonial Williamsburg, Cabell has a unique sense of history. He and his family have been part of the city of Williamsburg history and the history of thousands of people around the world through the Christmas decorations purchased from the family shop over the last 50 plus years.

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Cabell says he thinks “about people readying their trees and pulling out ornaments.” He wonders, “How many ornaments purchased from The Christmas Shop and are now hanging on trees around the world? How many families are seeing an ornament and remembering the fun times they had when they came to Williamsburg?”

Thoughts of family, traditions and special moments are what keeps Cabell focused on Christmas, the actual holiday, not the Christmas marketing and merchandise which is a year-round endeavor. “Christmas is a religious holiday,” Cabell says. “It’s not all about bells, whistles, [and] trees. I want to realize and remember the true reason for the holiday. We’re celebrating a birth. Everyone does it differently, and everyone has their own traditions. That’s what’s fun about Christmas. You revisit traditions and moments and remember again. It’s such a special time. You see people you only see one time a year. It’s a chance to make all our relationships better.”

Relationships and family are important to Cabell. A native of Williamsburg, he grew up close to and around Merchant Square. He credits his grandmother with the idea for The Christmas Shop. The family was already in the retail business when Elisabeth Wallace, his grandmother, took a trip to Carmel, California in the early 1960s. She returned from the trip and told her son, Cabell’s father. “You need to open a Christmas shop in Merchant’s Square.” Cabell’s dad listened to his mother and started investigating possibilities and pitching ideas to Colonial Williamsburg. The idea of a year-round Christmas shop was something different and rather unique in the early 1960s. Retail, international trading and markets were yet to be the dominant forces of the U.S. consumer economy.

According to Cabell, Colonial Williamsburg was initially skeptical about the likelihood of success. They required minimum revenue thresholds for the store in the early years. No one expected tourists in the sweltering Mid-Atlantic summer heat to buy decorations for trees not yet purchased. The early Wallace team had to work hard just to acquire enough Christmas “stuff” to fill a 500 square foot shop. The challenge was not only finding merchandise but finding the right kind of merchandise and then convincing crafters and artisans to keep making Christmas decorations year-round. It took the Wallace family several years to find, build and sustain relationships with crafty, Do-It-Yourself types of people who could keep the store stocked.

Today, a retailer has their pick of merchandise. Cabell attends trade shows where there are three buildings with 8-15 floors per building, and he has his choice of every tree decoration imaginable. Even now, with the plethora of choices, Cabell sticks to the original formula. “We always tried to have more individualist, made-in-the-USA type of decorations.” He admits it’s still hard at times to keep the suppliers and the store stocked and to balance year-round inventory. He remembers many of the crafters and works to preserve relationships.

“I remember one lady,” Cabell says, “She made bread dough ornaments in all sorts of shapes and figures. We started buying them, Cabell explains. She supplied us for years.” Her husband was in the military, he explains, and received orders to Hawaii. She assumed she’d have to stop making the ornaments. Cabell figured out a way they could still work together. “We had these Tupperware form containers, lined with packing,” he explains. “She mailed them to us full, and we mailed them back

empty. Back and forth,” he lets out a slight laugh. Back then it was still a novelty to do overseas shipping for crafts but they kept at it.

Growing up in retail “made holidays interesting,” Cabell says. There’s a constant tension between having your most profitable time of the year come when most people are trying to celebrate or out doing their shopping and you’re pulled in many directions. “I’d be lying if I didn’t say sometimes I think, ‘here it comes again,’ but I know it’s good for business,” Cabell says. His own traditions and household decorations are minimal. “I’m in it all day,” he says. He’s not inclined to over-decorate his own house. But he knows plenty of people who keep Christmas decorations up all year.

“The odd thing about running a Christmas shop is that you spend your whole year working toward one date, not a month or a season, but a single day,” Cabell says. That adds complexity to the buying and stocking aspect. “On the 26th, you want it all gone.” Dated items, which are popular, are “essentially worthless on January 1.” There’s a calculus involved in trying to construct and stock a store of ornaments with enough unique but timeless and meaningful decorations to intrigue buyers all year round.

For Cabell and his extended family, Christmas day is the one day a year that The Christmas Shop is closed. Closed but not empty. Cabell and his family share a traditional Christmas Eve meal that brings everyone together, but he’s known, even as a boy, that Christmas day is for working. On Christmas itself, “we have to get ready for the day after,” he explains. He spends part of each Christmas inside the store, moving things away, reorganizing shelves, marking items down. The locked door doesn’t stop people from knocking. He smiles as he thinks about it. “We never want to forget how fortunate we are to be here.” The Wallace family all work on Christmas, and they accept it as part of their heritage.

Cabell can’t really remember not working at the stores. He started “behind the scenes.” Across the street from the store, in the basement under the family general store, is the storage area. Cabell remembers working as a runner and being instructed to “take it to the store.” He ran back and forth for years and then graduated to wrapping, mailing, and picking stock. It was all training and all part of the family effort. Now, he and his older brother and nephew are the ones in charge. They own five shops throughout Williamsburg, including R.P. Wallace & Sons General Store, The Campus Shop and The Christmas Shop, all in Merchants Square, and Wallace’s Trading Post and The Williamsburg General Store, both on Richmond Road. His dad still makes rounds and visits, provides occasional coaching, but the stores are now in the hands of the third and fourth generations.

The family relish their time outside. “When you’re in retail, you need the time to get outside,” Cabell says. He recollects his youth, which was mostly spent outdoors, when he wasn’t in the stores or school. He’s seen quite a few changes in Williamsburg over the years. Fields where he used to hunt are now housing developments; he himself lives in one. In his off time he tends to visit “open spaces somewhere.” Although, no matter what season, he’s still checking out merchandise. On a recent trip to Jackson Hole, Cabell had the chance to review Western ornaments at some of the gift shops. He started thinking about Western trends and what styles might work in Colonial Williamsburg. It really is Christmas every day for Cabell Wallace. As for his favorite holiday, he likes Thanksgiving. NDN



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THE SPIRIT OF GIVING BACK

By Narielle Living

The Salvation Army has been many things to many people, and their effect on so many lives is reflected in the people who work with the organization. For Sophia Harler, this nonprofit changed her family's life.

Sophia was raised in Williamsburg. Her parents had moved here when they were in their twenties. "My father came from the coal mines of West Virginia. My grandfather had died of black lung disease. My grandmother had seven children, and she came out of the coal mine camp with absolutely nothing."

When a spouse who worked in the coal mines died, generally the family would leave to find a different life. "My father was about five or six years old, and he was the youngest. That first Christmas she was going to have to tell her kids there is no Santa Claus because they had nothing." Instead, things turned out dif-

ferently. "A neighbor actually turned the family name into the local Salvation Army office, and because of that they had Christmas that year."

Sophia once worked for a gentleman named Phil Merrick, who owned Colonial Connections, a tour company in the area. "Phil was very integral and involved in the Salvation

Army at that time. He was my boss and my mentor, because he was truly the best and wanted the best for everybody. I looked up to him. He played a role in the Salvation Army when they first started here, the very first corps they set up," she says. Today, Sophia is the chair of the Salvation Army advisory board and one of their most enthusiastic supporters.

According to Sophia, the mission of the Salvation Army is deeper than just the holiday bell ringing that people usually associate with them. "You are going to find

a lot of people who only know us as a kettle or only know us as disaster, and a lot of people don't know we're a church as well. Different people have different ideas of what the Army is," she says.

The Salvation Army of Williamsburg has recently moved into a new location on Iron-



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bound Road. The building includes, large, cavernous spaces that provide ample room for storage for donations as well as classes and a chapel. “This is our first permanent building. We’ve always rented, so we are here hopefully to stay,” Sophia says. “It’s been a long time coming. It happened when and where God wanted it to happen.”

Sophia believes that the variety of programs they offer will make them more visible in the community, and that public involvement is key. Vicki Davis, Social Services Program Coordinator, agrees. “All the agencies in the area know about us because we go to different meetings and try to share what we have,” Vicki says. “Clients may not know we’re here until somebody tells them because we were never at a place where we could have a big sign, and here we will. I think having our own space and a little elbow room will be better now.” She gestures at the wide open space that can accommodate many groups and still house generous furniture donations, indicating that the building can be used in a variety of ways. “We’re hoping we can have some disaster classes,” Vicki says. Disaster efforts are close to Vicki’s heart, as that is what brought her to this area. “I’m here because of Katrina,” she says. “I worked for Salva-

tion Army in Ohio back in the 70s and 80s, and then I moved south to Chattanooga and worked for the postal service for about 13 years. Then Katrina hit. I had a lot of leave time and needed a break so I took my vacation time and went to Katrina. I was in Slidell, met this guy who lives here, a year later we got married and I moved here.” Her husband had been in the Air Force and liked this area, so they decided this is where they would settle. After that, Vicki decided to get back into nonprofit work. “It fits my personality better than other things.”

The programs run by the Salvation Army are numerous, and include a food pantry, Angel Tree Christmas donations, homeless and housing services, emergency assistance with utilities and food, youth programs and disaster relief services. That is just some of what they do. With the new building open, donations of all kinds are always welcome. “We’re always looking for everything, and the fact that we have this new building enables us to actually get more donations that we need,” Vicki says. Donations such as furniture are used in the transitional housing service, which assists a family in not only finding housing but in educating them for the future. “With transitional housing you apply, we take a family in and we provide them with the

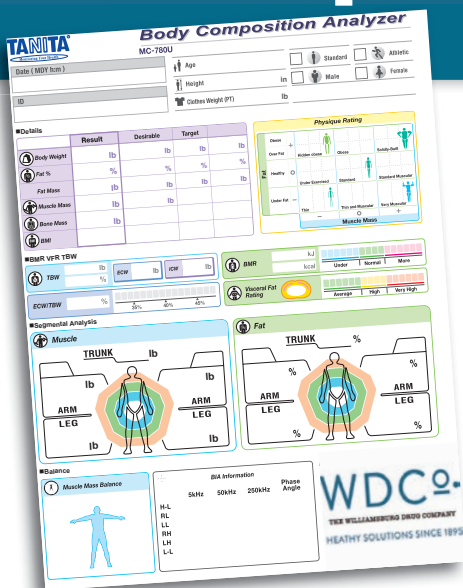
apartment for up to two years,” Vicki says. The program helps them understand how to manage finances and monitors the family’s accountability and responsibility. “We also furnish that apartment, and when they move out, they take that furniture with them. Now we are able to take donations of furniture to fulfill that need because we have the room. This building and this property are a Godsend for us. It’s going to allow us to grow and help the community in a way that we’ve never been able to.”

Although many people only think of the Salvation Army at Christmas, Sophia says that they are very glad people do think of them during the holidays. “The kettles are our largest fundraiser. We are very unique in the fact that there are very few corps in the entire nation that have an all-volunteer bell ringing campaign. I think every corps probably has volunteers to some degree but nowhere near what we do. Every man hour that we have is volunteer.”

Sophia speculates that the volunteers is perhaps the reason why they are so successful. After all, most volunteers have a deep connection to their community.

For Sophia Harler, the spirit of giving back is what it is all about, not just at Christmas but throughout the entire year. NDN

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Investigating Holiday Ghosts

By Brandy Centolanza



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

When it comes to talking about the ghost of Christmas past, Raphael "Ray" Savino has a slightly different perspective. The first time he had an experience with paranormal activity was in the early 1990s when he was living in an apartment in Pennsylvania. Behind the apartment building stood a cemetery.

"A lot of weird things would happen there," Raphael says. "I would come home and windows would be open. Lights would come on and off, or I would come back from doing my laundry in the basement and the TV would be on and blaring."

One night, he saw a shadow move from underneath a closed bedroom door, and his fasci-

nation with the unknown grew. Raphael became more interested in ghosts and ghost hunting after watching the show Ghost Hunters, a reality television show about paranormal investigators.

"I've always been intrigued and curious about ghosts," Raphael says. "I've always wondered about the after-life and life after death, and watching Ghost Hunters was like trying to find a piece of a puzzle, trying to find out why something was happening."

When Raphael, who grew up in Northern Virginia, moved to Williamsburg twelve years ago, he joined a group in Hampton Roads that focused on investigating the paranormal. While most members of the group saw it as a hobby,

Raphael wanted to take it more seriously, so he created his own company.

RTL Paranormal, founded in May 2009, is a business that investigates claims of paranormal activity in private homes as well as businesses and historic parks, landmarks and other places. The Historic Triangle was the perfect place to set up shop, given all of the history and haunted tales surrounding Colonial Williamsburg and other locales.

"I've always liked history and historical attractions," Raphael says. "Our job through our investigations is to prove that a ghost story has some truth and evidence behind it or that it is just a story and isn't real at all."

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Raphael's first investigation was at a local bed and breakfast. While he was in one of the rooms, Raphael took a photo of himself in front of a mirror. When he looked at the picture afterward, he saw the image of a woman looking over his shoulders.

"There was no one there, but you could see her reflection," he recalls. "You could see her whole face, the eyes, the nose, the lips."

Since then, RTL Paranormal has visited the bed and breakfast roughly 20 times for reports of paranormal activity. Raphael and his team of five paranormal investigators use various pieces of equipment during their ghost hunting expeditions including electromagnetic meter detectors, digital recorders and camcorders, spirit boxes and other technology. A spirit box is a device used for contacting spirits through the use of radio frequency. Raphael often hears voices through the spirit box.

The first time he had a ghost try to communicate with him was during an investigation at the historic Boxwood Inn bed and breakfast in Newport News. The Boxwood Inn is another place that RTL Paranormal visits frequently for unexplained activity.

"That was our second investigation," Raphael says. "When you hear something on the spirit box, it is cool. It is very cool when you ask a ghost a specific question and they respond with a specific answer, or when you hear your name or you hear something that is personal to a client."

In addition to encountering spirits, Raphael has also run into his fair share of human skeptics who simply roll their eyes or shake their heads as he passes by. Neither phase him.

"There is a lot of stuff out there that you can't explain," Raphael says. "It's easy to be skeptical and poke fun, but the majority of people who tag along with us who are skeptical at first end up seeing and hearing things that can't be explained, and it makes them believers."

Raphael became even more of a believer following the passing of his father last December. Prior to his dad's death from cancer, Raphael received what he describes as "weird" messages through his spirit box telling him to check up on his father.

A few months after his father passed away, Raphael was in the woods on a horse farm working a paranormal investigation when he heard what he thought was the sound of his father trying to communicate with him through his spirit box.

"When I reviewed it on my computer later, I could hear his voice, and I started to cry," Raphael says. He saved the message so he could have a reminder of his father's voice.

While ghost hunting is not his full-time job, Raphael does work hard to promote his company and teach others about what he does. RTL Paranormal has investigated between 150-200 reports of unexplained activity in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

When it comes to paranormal investigations, Raphael is thorough. "I always try to do my best for my clients," he adds. "I want to give them a reasonable explanation of why they are experiencing the things that they do."

As the holiday season approaches, Raphael reflects on Christmases past, especially those he shared with his late father.

"Christmas has always been a good memory for me," he says. "Everybody would come to the house and we would eat, drink, have a good time, joke around, and tell stories. It's all about family."

Raphael Savino hopes his own children will have similar memories when they grow up. While he and his children used to visit his dad and his dad's family in Northern Virginia over the holidays, Raphael is looking forward to starting new traditions this holiday season. "It's going to be different this year, but in a good way," Raphael says. "It's still going to be fun. The holidays always put a smile on my face." NDN



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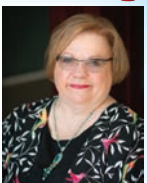
Williamsburg Baptist Church sits in the heart of downtown Williamsburg and has been part of the community since 1828. Today, a welcome banner unfurls on the front steps, signaling that the building is safe and inclusive and accepting of all people. That type of message is what Pastor Daniel Wilson has worked

hard to convey.

Arriving in Williamsburg in May 2015, Daniel's journey to the pulpit was not a typical one. "I grew up in southern California, just north of San Diego. When I was 16 my dad moved to Greenville, South Carolina. I finished high school and went to school in Florida." Daniel's

expression of spirituality has undergone massive changes in his lifetime. "I grew up a card-carrying fundamentalist," he says. "What I mean by that is there was a clear social and theological paradigm shift I had to experience just to become a conservative evangelical, then another paradigm shift to become a post-conservative."

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Daniel ended up going to a fundamentalist college, and his wife attended Bob Jones University. Having been raised by parents who were a missionary and pastor, his departure from their view of spirituality was somewhat of a puzzle to his family. "They felt like I was leaving the family tradition, and that was kind of tough but we weathered it." After moving back to Greenville, Daniel married and went to seminary. "My mind continued to change," he says. "They had a diverse faculty at the time, and the school was undergoing a split between the progressives and the conservatives." After a considerable amount of schooling, Daniel entered the ministry.

For two years Daniel was an associate pastor in Martinsville, Virginia, then he and his family made the move to Williamsburg. When asked how he likes the area, he smiles. "I love it. I love being a pastor in a college town." When referring to his move from associate pastor to pastor, he says, "It was tough. There were some wonderful people there, and it was hard for me to leave. I probably should have left earlier but I really wanted to try to make it work, because if you're a pastor you're called to love people, and that doesn't always entail leaving them. It was hard but it was also unrealistic. I have four

children and student loans."

The position in Williamsburg opened up as Daniel was ready to step out of the associate's role. It also meant a move closer to family. "My mom and sister are in town, and with four kids it's been nice to have family with us. My wife, Wendy, is teaching assistant at Bright Beginnings at Clara Byrd Baker and the kids are enjoying not moving. It's been an impetus to make things work here."

The holidays can be difficult, a fact that Daniel recognizes for his congregants and the community at large. His hope is that people recognize Williamsburg Baptist as a place of solace regardless of a person's perspective on life. He tries to convey a message of humanity that reaches out to everyone. "The example of the cross, I think, is perhaps what should be the biggest takeaway," he says. "The moral example is to be great enough in love that we freely, not out of obligation or coercion, that we freely take on the pain of the world for the good of another. So, a cruciform life is that parent at 3 a.m. holding their child. It's bearing with our more tension filled relationships, it's sacrifice of different sorts. The list goes on, right on up to the ultimate sacrifice, those times when we do give our lives. That is the moral example of

the cross. But what time is there when there's resurrection without someone dying? Marriage, to die to yourself so that we can be something life giving. That's one of the ways I think that our holidays, or our biblical stories, are so often domesticated."

He urges people to move beyond the domestication of the holiday into a deeper contemplation and conversation with ourselves and each other. "When it comes to Christmas, a lot of times we want Christmas but we don't want advent. We don't want to wait. I think that's a meaningful practice." When discussing the traditional story of Christmas, Daniel mentions that the story has aspects that leave him wondering. "King Herod is terrified that this king is going to be born. He's a tyrant willing to kill children over Jesus' arrival. It continues to boggle my mind how the magi, astrologers, magicians, the Greek word magoi is magician or someone who dabbles. They see the birth of this Jewish messiah, they come and pay him homage and they leave. What'd they do after that? They probably went on and continued to be magi."

Daniel says that if the birth of Jesus happened today, it would not be a perfect, domesticated Christmas story. "If Jesus was born today,

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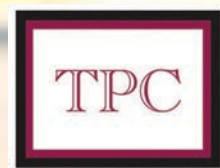


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the best analogous thing I can come up with is some motel in some place no one's ever heard of with homeless people hanging out saying, 'here, you need some help, you need some blankets.' That just doesn't translate for a lot of us. So, I wish we rediscovered how radical the birth narratives are." Rediscovering aspects of this narrative can help reframe the spirit of the season for many and can take away some of the pressure to have a "perfect Christmas."

In Williamsburg Baptist Church, Daniel is trying to create an environment of social justice and equality that welcomes anyone who needs refuge. "There are so many people who have a wistfulness, a longing for something spiritual. There is something about the Bible or something about Jesus, maybe even something about certain elements of Christianity that just have held on and they wish they could explore or nurture that," he says. Unfortunately, Daniel says that some churches have become out of touch with the rest of the world. "They talk about a world that should be shunned, but I feel like Christians misidentify what that world is. The part of the world that is all about discovering how creation works, the scientific world, that's a world we need to be getting closer to, speaking to and maybe even speaking into.

Parts of the world seeking justice, those are the parts of the world that we need to be a part of. The parts of the world we need to be shunning are the parts of the world that reduce human dignities to commodities. The justice struggle is a struggle, but it's waged in peace."

When asked about holiday classics such as A Christmas Carol, Daniel's face breaks out in a sardonic grin. "A banker becomes generous! Ebenezer is remembered for being a scrooge, but I think Dickens would be a little disappointed. I think he would prefer that Ebenezer be remembered as a generous soul who knew Christmas well."

Pastor Daniel Wilson wants the community to know that although no church is perfect, Williamsburg Baptist is aiming to be what people always thought church should be: home.

"Usually home is a place where you can let your hair down and be yourself, a place where people not only hear about hope but witness hope, in humanity, in family, in the future. Those are the churches I want to be a part of. I hope we can be a place where we can ponder a hope filled future together, not just talk about the past. To use another biblical metaphor, make this existence less like a wilderness and more like a garden." **NDN**

Next Door Neighbors

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Loving Life. Loving the Holidays

By Wheston Chancellor Grove

For many, a job is something to do. Real estate agent Dina Thomas has much more than a job. Raised in Gloucester, Virginia, Dina went to college, married and moved to Ohio where she managed a publishing company. Before she knew it, she had two children and was juggling long hours of work with being a good mother. Wisely discerning that being there for her daughters was paramount, she made the



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decision to leave the publishing field.

In 2003 her family moved back to the area. It was in the process of buying their first home that Dina discovered her calling. "Our realtor didn't do a lot of things I thought he should have done for us." That experience as a first-time buyer was eye opening. Dina wanted to know everything about the business. Regarding her decision to enter the field Dina says, "You know when you know. I knew I was meant to do this." At 32, Dina made the decision to embark on a new career path. She went to school, took the licensing exam and passed. While interviewing for a job, Dina met broker Angela Dougherty and decided to work with her and her company, Howard Hanna. "They put people first, and that was really important to me. [Angela] didn't lead with how much money I'd make; it was how I'd connect with people, and that's what I was looking for."

Ultimately, Dina chose to work with her company because of the education they offered and the fact that they embodied the same principles she upholds in life: Service to others and building a lasting relationship.

She's never looked back.

With training in place, Dina entered the real estate arena in 2005 when the market was solid. A few years later the recession hit and the market tanked. This was a critical time for agents still relatively new to the business. Real estate agencies went from selling houses immediately to being unable to close on them.

"I had to reinvent myself so I went into myself, as I always do, and said, okay, Dina, what do you need to do for the people?" There were so many families losing their homes that she learned to do short sales and foreclosures. She was the number one person in her office because no one wanted to take that on, it was brand new. She learned the system and what the banks were looking for, ideally. Dina knew her clients needed someone who wasn't worried only about the end result, but who could help them through the entire process.

Short sales and foreclosures carried her until the market turned. Those same people who once lost their homes came back three or more years later. They were very loyal and told her how she'd helped them navigate a difficult

and stressful time. Short sales aren't easy. "It's not when will we close, it's more like we may close. Back then it could take 6 or 8 months. You really had to be invested with someone to help them through the long process of waiting."

During a time of financial crisis when people were losing their credit and homes, Dina reminded clients that they still had a family and could rebuild their lives. "You have to have a why. Why you get up every day." For Dina Thomas it's not about making a quota, it's about who she can help and bless. "It makes me feel good because it lets me know I'm a part of their story."


Not only does Dina sell homes, she builds them, too. In 2014 she traveled with her daughters to the Dominican Republic on a missionary trip. Dina felt it would be a great experience for her girls and a positive way to celebrate her birthday. "In our society we're given so much that we really don't understand what it means to give back." The Thomas family flew to a village and spent a week constructing a home for a family of 15. The work

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was nonstop. The locals slept outside with the building materials because they were afraid it would be stolen. Initially, Dina thought she was going there to help them, but they helped her. She saw things in herself she needed to let go of and change. There was also a language barrier, but that didn't matter. Dina was a mother, and she connected with the mother of the large family. She watched as her own children played with the local family's children.

"We built the house together. They gave me the best birthday present ever in 46 years because the look on [the mother's] face as I was helping to build her home was priceless." In reflecting upon that time, Dina pauses before adding, "If we take the time to focus on someone else and help that person [we're reminded] that it's what we're created to do."

Dina loves the holidays. She comes from a big family. Her dad is one of 11. Dina has 41 first cousins, and they have kids. When Thanksgiving rolls around, they all get together that weekend and rent a big hall because there's more than a hundred relatives. She

might bake cookies or pies. Sometimes she picks up a box of chocolates to send to past clients. She puts holiday candles in listed homes to show the spirit of the season is present to prospective buyers. Thanksgiving is Dina's biggest holiday because it's about giving back. During the holidays she often sends notes to clients, thanking them. Very rarely does she lose track of the people who have come in and out of her life. When asked about her client she has known the longest, Dina laughs and says, "I went out to lunch two weekends ago with a client I've known for 13 years!"

As a divorcee, full-time mom and full-time agent, Dina's kids grew up in the real estate world. When she first started out her oldest was in fifth grade and her youngest was in kindergarten. Thinking back, Dina exceeded her own expectations. She was not focused on the end result, but on helping people. She's always maintained that you have to go through the journey to build character. In the beginning she sometimes brought her daughters with her to work. They'd do their homework while she showed houses. When asked if either of her

daughters is interested in real estate she says Mikiaiah, now 19, seems to be. "She is like me, a people person. DeNajiah, 24, prefers to be behind the scenes." Only time will tell.

For Dina, the best part of Williamsburg is that it still has a small hometown feel, and everyone takes care of each other to a certain degree. Dina works hard and feels everyone deserves a shot in life; someone who has his/her back, someone who will fight for you. She tries to live by the mantra, "To whom much is given, much is required. I feel people want a lot, but they don't want the responsibility that comes with it. You can't take it lightly."

Dina Thomas views life as a learning experience. "Always be a student. Even if you think you're an expert, it's good to have someone to go to as a mentor. This keeps you humble, learning and growing."

In the next 15-20 years Dina says she'd like to be a mentor to others.

"That's what I see myself doing. That is what I'll be doing," she amends with the same spirit of affirmation which has guided her throughout her life. NDN



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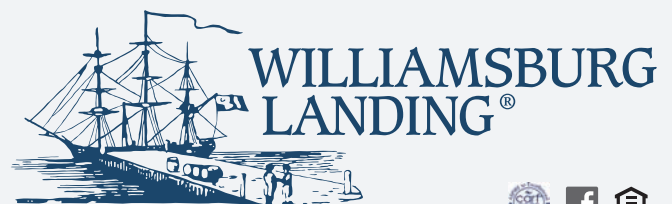


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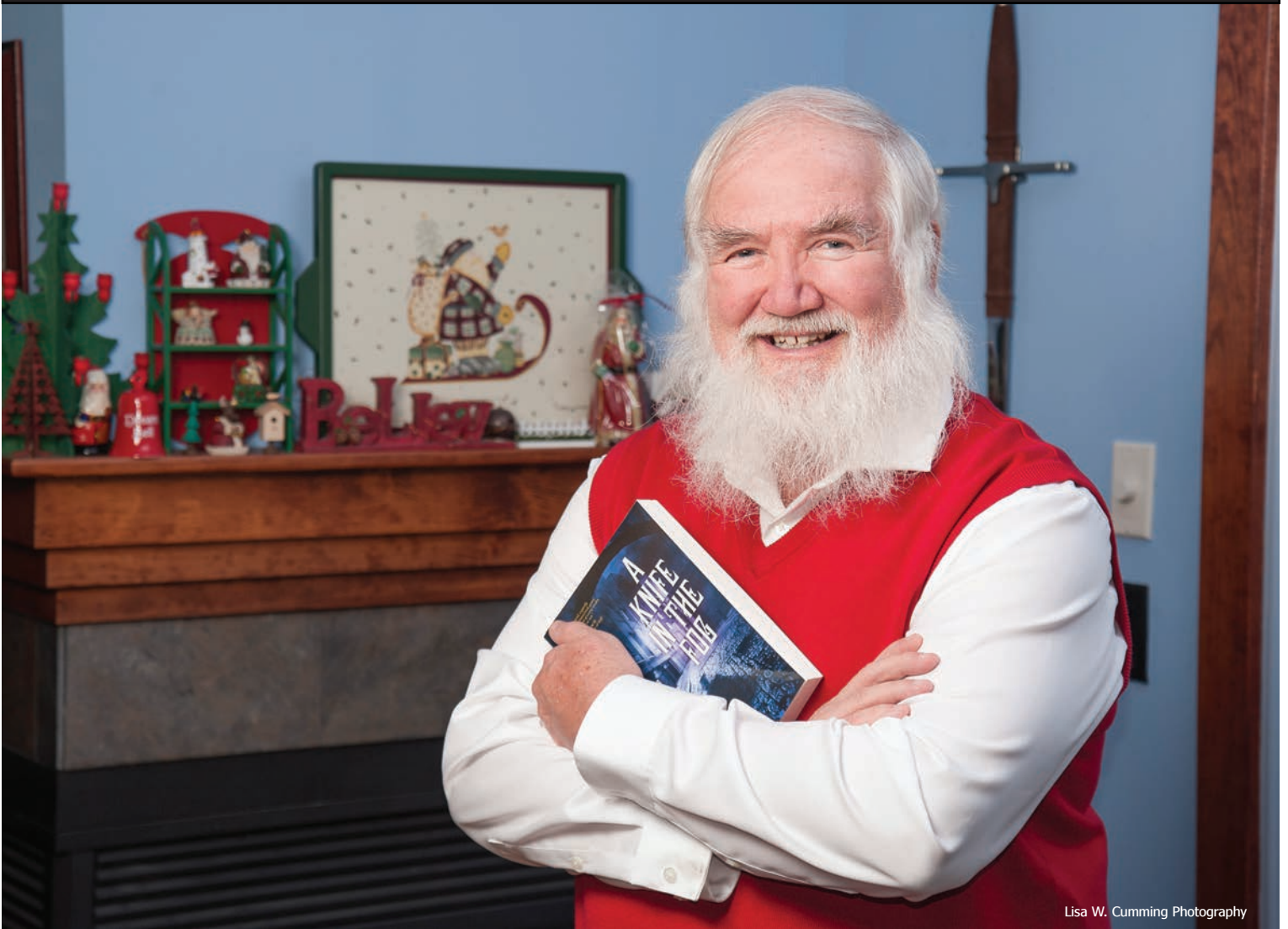
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BRAD "DOC HARPER"



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From Soldier to Santa

By Linda Landreth Phelps

Reinventing himself after 37 years in the United States Army wasn't easy. Thanks to a low draft number, Bradley Harper served his country as an officer during the Vietnam war. He was so incensed by inadequate medical care he once experienced that he vowed to become a doctor himself.

"My soldiers deserved the best care," he says,

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“and I meant to see they’d get it.”

After his four years were up, Brad used his GI benefits to study a science-heavy pre-med program and eventually be admitted to an army medical school. At 29, he was among the oldest in his class. Known as “Doc Harper,” Brad’s four commands and various assignments found him in places as diverse as Bosnia, Turkey, Italy, Spain and Afghanistan. On one memorable mission, he traveled the jungles of Colombia with a 9 mm weapon strapped to his side and a “blood chit” in his pocket. His experience with command led Colonel Harper to finish his career as the assistant to the Army’s Surgeon General. He and his wife and family had moved 30 times, and daughters Dawn and Linnea, both of whom he’d delivered himself, had attended many schools. It was time to settle down, but where?

After a lifetime in uniform, Doc Harper felt the need to examine who he was and decide the next chapter of his life by making a pilgrimage to Spain’s Santiago de Compostela. He followed an international walking path trodden by millions since the ninth century to the cathedral

where the bones of Saint James are said to rest. “It’s a spiritual pilgrimage known as El Camino, or ‘The Way.’ It was an amazing journey of contemplation of where I’d been and where I was yet to go,” Brad says. He felt accompanied every step of the way by the unseen ghostly presence of Michael, a suicidal young soldier who had once asked to walk this road with his former commander and friend. “I did it for us both.” Doc Harper, who speaks five languages beside English, stayed on for a while to help other pilgrims by translating for them.

Doc Harper never imagined retirement would lead him to sit on a magnificent gilded throne dressed in crimson robes at Busch Gardens’ Christmas Town, dispensing joy on a seasonal basis. “It all started in the Army,” he says. “When you’re deployed, the holidays can be a lonely season. As the commander, I was elected to put the Santa suit on and bring some cheer to the troops, and found I really enjoyed it. When I retired, my wife Cheré and I decided we’d like to continue that tradition.” Brad’s round cheeks, jolly smile and snowy beard make him a thoroughly believable Santa, though he could

work a bit harder on the traditional belly. Cheré appears both with him and individually as Mrs. Claus, a motherly woman in a red mobcap and Christmas apron. Even out of costume, the aura remains, her generous hugs seeming to leave behind a lingering faint fragrance of warm sugar cookies.

Cheré gently admonishes her husband when a mild expletive escapes his lips in the telling of military stories. “Santa doesn’t talk like that,” she sweetly reminds him. “It’s true that my life changed when I put on the suit professionally,” Doc Harper says. “Suddenly I realized there was a certain standard to live up to, even in my everyday life. I live conscious of the fact that there are children watching my behavior and speech 12 months out of the year. I keep a rein on my tongue and temper because I don’t want to dishonor Santa.”

At first, it was just a job. It was enjoyable and fun, but still a job, to show up. That changed one day when he was asked to do something special.

Santa’s elf approached him with an unusual request. “The next three children were or-

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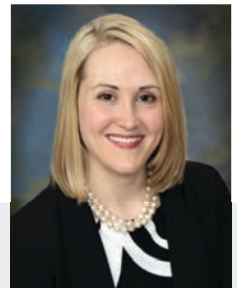
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phaned about a year ago,” she told him. “Their foster parents told me they just got word that they’ll be able to adopt them, and wanted you to be the one to tell them!” Surprised but willing, he nervously agreed. “The siblings and parents came into the room, and I could tell the oldest, a preteen, considered herself too cool for Santa. The middle child, at about 10, was hedging his bets and playing along, but the youngest, the 8 year old, oh, he was a believer!” Santa listened with half an ear to the usual requests while considering how best to deliver the news to the children. “I’ll be by on Christmas Eve, but for right now, I’ve got a special gift to give you... a family!” At first confused, when he explained that their foster family was adopting them all and they could stay together, the celebrating began. With the powerful memory of that moment and their ecstatic reaction, Doc Harper chokes up, and a rogue drop of moisture slides down his ruddy cheek into his silky beard. “That was when”, he manages to smile through his tears, “I became real!”

He also tells the story of one of his biggest fans, a man with Down Syndrome who’s an an-

nual visitor to Christmas Town. “One day I was on stage at the special Dinner with Santa venue, speaking to the audience, all miked up. Suddenly I realized that my old friend had escaped his caregiver and was rushing the stage, arms wide, calling out, ‘Santa! Santa!’. Now, he’s a big guy, and I’d learned to brace myself against his enthusiasm, so I stood and opened up for the hug I knew was coming.” The caregiver was right behind him, apologizing and trying to tug his charge offstage. “Don’t be sorry,” Santa told him. “Love is never wasted!” There wasn’t a dry eye in the house on that occasion, either.

Doc Harper is a busy guy, a man of many gifts and talents. When he’s not wearing the fur-trimmed red Santa one, he puts on his writer’s hat, which is an English derby. He’s just published his first novel, a Victorian-era thriller, and has a contract for another. His card, which reads, “Bradley Harper, Author, Examining the Mysteries of the Past” gives us a hint about his book’s premise. “If you like mystery, historical fiction, Jack the Ripper, and especially Sherlock Holmes, then I think A Knife in the Fog is a book you’ll enjoy,” Brad says. It was a story

that needed telling, and Brad decided he’d get an online Creative Writing degree to help him tell it well. His background as a chief of pathology lends reality and detail to the narrative. The finished manuscript garnered so much interest that five publishers got involved in a bidding war, and Brad’s agent is currently negotiating for a movie deal. His second book features a beloved female character from his debut novel, and Doc Harper is having fun seeing where this story takes him.

As our interview draws to a close, good hosts Doc Harper and Cheré stand side by side on the steps of their home in Stonehouse to wave goodbye. Neighbors arrive home and the men exchange hearty greetings. They’re obviously close friends, and banter flows back and forth across the street. One remark causes Doc Harper to throw back his head and laugh. His eyes squinch shut, his shoulders shake, and a booming “Ho, ho, ho!” emanates from deep in his chest.

Make no mistake, fellow believers: Santa is very much alive and well, living slightly south of the North Pole in Greater Williamsburg. NDN

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By Alison Johnson

Corey Miller Photography

A Recipe Done Right

The recipe for great barbecue is part art, part science and part sleep deprivation. Five nights a week, Matt Sileno wakes up every hour to check on his smoker over a 14-hour cooking period, making sure the temperature stays constant and precise to produce a clear smoke for flavoring.

“Otherwise, you can get a chemical taste on the meat,” Matt says. “I’m a big stickler about it. I baby my smoker. A lot of people think you can just light up some wood, throw the meat on and let it ride, but barbecue is a really hard craft. No cook is the same. It takes a lot of steps, time and patience.”

Luckily, Matt, co-owner and pitmaster of Matchsticks BBQ Company, embraces the challenge of serving up pounds of homemade brisket, pulled pork, ribs, sausage and turkey breast. He

and his wife Nicole, the business’ co-owner and director of operations, also love watching as customers take their first bites.

“It’s just the best feeling to see a smile cross their face,” Nicole says.

Since last spring, Matchsticks BBQ has operated as a food truck at special events, breweries and other spots around the region. The rolling restaurant’s uncomplicated menu features single- or double-meat platters and sandwiches, including a popular “Colonial” sandwich that combines brisket, pulled pork and sausage, and sides such as baked beans, collard greens and macaroni and cheese.

Matt, 37, handles all of the meat preparation, while Nicole, 31, takes care of most of the sides and handles scheduling, accounting and other

paperwork. The couple also has expanded into catering and ultimately hopes to open a brick-and-mortar location.

For Matt, who has loved cooking since he was a young child, Matchsticks BBQ is a dream come true. Growing up in a large Italian family from Brooklyn, New York, Matt was always in the kitchen with his parents, both gifted cooks. He was preparing full meals by the time he was about 10; by 12, he was cooking a signature pasta sauce with meatballs from scratch.

“I’ve never really measured out ingredients or followed recipes,” he says. “I like being creative and trying out different things. Cooking is one of my favorite things to do.”

The Silenos took a winding road to the food industry. After earning a degree in biological

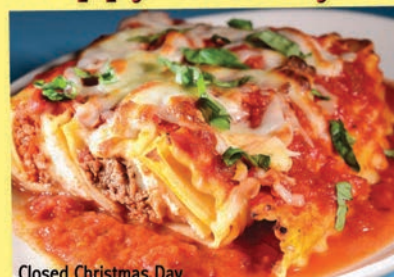

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sciences from North Carolina State University, Matt worked as director of sales for several companies and once owned a business that sold homemade soap and hair products for men. He moved around frequently, discovering good barbecue during a stint in a small town in North Carolina.

Nicole, meanwhile, graduated with a business degree from Hood College in Maryland and was a project coordinator for various government agencies, a background that has come in handy in her administrative role at Matchsticks BBQ.

Matt and Nicole married in 2017 and, on their honeymoon in Bora Bora, began to reevaluate their lives. Their careers, they realized, felt like a daily grind they didn't want to continue. They also discussed moving from Northern Virginia to Williamsburg, where they'd traveled for five years to celebrate Nicole's birthday at her favorite restaurant, Fat Canary in Merchants Square.

Beyond that, Matt knew he loved to cook, and Nicole had always wanted to have her own business. They did have some experience in the food world: coincidentally, both of their families owned bagel delis, and Nicole had worked as a waitress throughout college. "The best part was getting to hang out with new people all the time," she recalls.

On a bit of a whim, Matt contacted the chefs

who had catered their casual winery wedding from a food truck. When those two landed restaurant jobs in Washington, D.C. late last year, they sold Matt and Nicole that very same truck. After several months of repair work, the vehicle was back on the road in April. A friend applied its printed vinyl logo as a first anniversary gift.

The Matchsticks BBQ moniker is a nod to Matt's childhood nickname, which evolved from his great-grandmother dubbing him "Matchy" when he was a baby to an aunt editing it to "Matchsticks" during his toddler years.

By the time the company was born, Matt had owned a smoker for about four years and had been busy experimenting in slow-smoked barbecue, with Nicole's taste buds as his guinea pig. Some batches weren't so tasty.

"My lovely wife ate some pretty bad barbecue along the way," Matt says with a laugh. "I kept a journal and charted everything — weight of the meat, cooking time, temperature, smoke quality. It was a lot of trial and error to get it right."

Matt has his smoker set up outside the Silenos' home in Toano, where neighbors get to smell meats cooking and, as a major perk, welcome at-home deliveries. On a typical weekday, Matt starts the fire around 1 a.m., has the meats on by 2:30 a.m., sleeps sporadically and usually isn't cooling off the finished product until after 2 p.m.

the following day. He starts earlier on weekends.

"I think my body is just used to it," he says. "There's never been a time when I'm like, 'Oh I don't want to do this.' I just have a passion for feeding people." His biggest cook to date: approximately 100 pounds of brisket and pulled pork, 10 racks of ribs and two 30-pound turkey breasts.

Still, on their two "off" days, often Mondays and Tuesdays, Matt and Nicole have to restock on meat, produce and other supplies and deep-clean their truck. "When you have your own business, you have to be hustling, because no one else is going to do that for you," Matt says.

Nicole adds, "It's a lot of fun, but it's not easy. It can be a daily challenge sometimes with really long hours, but the payoff of owning our business and being able to put good back out into our community makes it all worth it."

Looking ahead, Matt and Nicole are excited to grow Matchsticks BBQ. They have booked several weddings for catering and have brainstormed a future physical restaurant, where Matt imagines adding specials and occasionally featuring different cuisines. "I like to cook basically everything," he says.

Still, Matt and Nicole Sileno plan to stick mostly to the basics of barbecue. After all, the recipe hasn't let them down yet. **NDN**

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Success on the Mat and In Life

By Ben Mackin

For a large number of people, finding a passion can take most of a lifetime. For James City County native and youth wrestling coach, Brandon Waltrip, it took until his freshman year at Lafayette High School. Up to that point Brandon had played several years of rec league baseball and basketball. He says, "My parents would not let me play football, and this was before the soccer generation." When he entered high school, he came to the realization that he was not a good fit for any of the sports he had been playing, so at the behest of his friends he tried out for the wrestling team. "I went out and went five and zero and made varsity," Brandon says. "From that day on, I had the bug for it, and I wrestled at least every other day until I graduated from high school."

In addition to lettering for the high school teams, Brandon participated in every wrestling tournament he could find during the spring and summer when the school season was not in session. "I would go to the Peninsula Wrestling Association practices and wrestled in Greco Roman or Freestyle tournaments all summer, all of which made me a lot better." Throughout his high school career at Lafayette and James-town, Brandon would be a perennial contender within the district and region, making the state tournament his final three years.



Corey Miller Photography

Next Door Neighbors Sports

After graduating from high school, Brandon went to Virginia Military Institute (VMI). "To be honest, I didn't really want to go to VMI, but I am glad I did it," Brandon confesses. "What I did know is that I wanted to wrestle and so it was a good fit." He went on to wrestle all four years while maintaining a chemistry scholarship. If being a student athlete while

maintaining an academic scholarship were not rigorous enough, factoring in the VMI military school life makes the experience seem nothing less than daunting. "It was difficult because of the pressure on your time as well as the physical requirements," he says. Using the time management skills as well as the mental toughness he had developed during his time as a wrestler,

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Brandon gutted out his freshman year on the rat line. The rat line at VMI is a process for freshman similar to basic training, where they are initiated into a militaristic way of being. "I would say there were some sports teams that got a break once in a while," Brandon says. "However, our coach thought it was only beneficial for us to participate in all the rat line stuff."

Feeling the need to get back out on the mat, Brandon got in touch with the coach and volunteered as an assistant. It was through coaching that he found a whole new side to the sport he loves. "At certain levels you break down matches more into things you need to work on and practice them," Brandon says. "For high school and youth teams it is about putting a system into place of certain skills that everyone can perfect, taking a move and breaking it down into parts and teaching a kid every step."

After four years in Nashville and three years as an assistant coach, Brandon decided that the chemistry lab was not for him, so he shifted his professional course dramatically and enrolled in law school at Mississippi College in Jackson, Mississippi. "I went to law school with the intention of going back to work for the same company in Nashville," he says. While in law school he discovered a passion for trial law and

after graduating he decided to return to his hometown and start his own practice.

Once he had moved back, Brandon once again found himself on the mat, this time as an assistant coach at Warhill High School. Seeing the need for off-season wrestling clubs, he formed one for middle school and high school age wrestlers who wanted to continue to train. Eventually Brandon would roll the club he started at Warhill into the already established Williamsburg Wrestling Club. "When I was growing up, I had to go to Poquoson to wrestle in the spring, and I have always dreamed of having a club to practice with year around," he says. "It is my goal to build a program where a kid can grow up here, wrestle in a youth league, middle school, high school, come back during the summer in college and train and hopefully give back to the program."

Brandon is excited about the future of the club going forward. "We have a whole new list of programs and more coaches coming in," Brandon says. "We are working to bring in some college coaches to do camps for both the high school and youth wrestlers." Another aspect of the club Brandon would like to grow is the number of female wrestlers. He notes that women's wrestling throughout the sport is gaining notoriety. "Female wrestling is expand-

ing exponentially. There are several colleges that have women's wrestling programs and going forward there are only going to be more," he says. "Girls are more than welcome in our program. It is great for them to start early, just like boys. I think the goal is, if not next year, the year after, to have a girls only state high school league."

As much as Brandon Waltrip likes seeing his wrestlers succeed on the mat as individuals and teams, his ultimate goal for the kids extends much further than that. "There is something about wrestling that prepares kids to excel in life," he says. Brandon stresses to his athletes the importance of academics. "As a coach, the thing I am most proud of is that every person who has come through our program at Warhill has gone to college," Brandon says.

Currently the club meets at Lafayette. Two nights a week will be for youth wrestling and the other two will be dedicated to high school. In the future there are hopes to have a wrestling facility and a program that develops kids to be successful on and off the mat. "It's a three fold goal," Brandon says. "One, to help these kids grow into productive adults. Two, turn kids into great high school wrestlers and three, to supplement the high school programs and how they want to develop their wrestlers." NDN

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Life of the Party

By Harmony Hunter

The winter season offers a landslide of occasions to celebrate. Holidays from almost every major faith, feasts, office parties and New Years' celebrations all can be marked with music, friends and food as people turn their focus inward to the warmth of hearth and home.

Bringing life and soul to those parties is the province of Matt Chambers, DJ and owner of Squared Away Entertainment. In Matt's eyes, every party has a heartbeat, and his work is the lifeblood which keeps that pulse strong. Squared Away Entertainment is a business he built to bring life to parties ranging from weddings and school dances to holiday celebrations and trivia nights.

Matt is an Army veteran who has deployed to Iraq three times and still stands by for duty as part of the Army National Guard. The discipline of the service and the joyful energy of a party might seem like strange passions to exist side by side in one individual, but for Matt, it's all about making connections with people.

A distinguished military career placed him in the front row while history was made around the world, but his proudest moments from ser-



Corey Miller Photography

vice are the ones where he was able to provide direct and immediate help to people in a crisis.

"The high point for me in my military career, a couple of years ago, we had a really bad snowstorm, and we got called up to Northern Virginia to help out. We just got in our Humvees. It was me and another couple guys riding around in a Humvee, helping people out of the snow, picking up people. We stayed in a fire de-

partment house, and whenever they called us; we were there. That stood out loud in my mind as one of the best moments of my life, doing that," he says.

Matt was on standby for another emergency in 2017. Remembering it, he says, "We got called up before Hurricane Maria hit St. Croix. We helped people every day and handed out food, water, tarps. Everyone was so thankful,



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and that was something I loved doing.”

It's this kind of heart that draws Matt to the work of taking a hand in constructing the memorable events that mark the milestones in people's lives. If a moment can be celebrated, he will be at his happiest as the master of ceremonies, delivering music and building an energy that will draw young and old out on the dance floor.

Matt is a natural when it comes to connecting with people, but it takes more than a generous spirit to lend life to a party. That's where the work comes in. He earned a foundational understanding of music structure, beats and keys in his own study of drums and the clarinet in his high school band.

Growing up, Matt soaked in music from across the spectrum and learned to love it all. “My dad listened to blues and southern soul. My mom listened to '80s and R&B. Then when I spent time with my uncle, he was into hip-hop. My family was all into different genres. So, I learned a lot.”

As a professional, apprenticing with other local DJs gave him an education in how to blend formats and eras without sacrificing any of the evening's energy. He's taking notes from the professionals he admires most. He says, “My mentor was my DJ at my wedding. I try to emulate

him as much as I can.”

Creating an evening event goes far beyond simply creating a playlist when Matt is at the board. He constructs his own mixes: tracks an hour long or more that seamlessly blend musical phrases for an uninterrupted flow. “What I do is essentially beat matching,” he says. “When the music's playing and the beat's going, I see that as a heartbeat. I like to keep that same heartbeat throughout the night. I don't want to start with one song and then go to something else that totally will kill the vibe, or kill that heartbeat. I try to keep the same beat throughout the night so that you can do the same dance move on one song and then through the next four or five songs.”

Likewise, at weddings, he prefers to offer songs that span the generations in attendance. “My signature thing is that I start it out slow. I like to get the older folks involved and then bring in the newer stuff. But throughout the time, I transition through classic rock and remixes that people don't expect to hear together, but it works,” he says.

Finding each gathering's unique mix takes persistence and luck. It's a process that Matt compares to fishing. “I see it as throwing out bait and seeing what [he] catches,” he says. When the dance floor is full and revelers are

coaxing wallflowers to the dance floor, Matt knows something good is getting started.

He says, “A packed dance floor, people singing, yelling, grabbing their significant other out to dance: that is the time I love. That's when you know you're doing a great job. I can feel it. It's the vibe of the crowd. If they are having fun, I start wanting to build up that energy even more.”

Matt also has made a name for himself in the burgeoning trivia scene. He's found a special niche in this growing bar trend by blending group trivia with his unique musical signature. “I do smartphone trivia. Players have an app on the phone and have 10 seconds to answer. It's pretty simple. My first round might be things in the news or maybe general knowledge — an easy round. Then the middle round will be a music round: finish the lyric, or all one theme. Like, the day before my wife went in to deliver our son, I did a round of songs that had ‘baby’ in the title,” Matt says. A successful summer trivia tournament at the Virginia Beer Company allowed Matt to hone his style hosting these events and to make a name for himself in the wider entertainment community. If I can help somebody out in a special way outside of doing something behind the scenes, I'd much rather be up front helping as much as I can.” NDN

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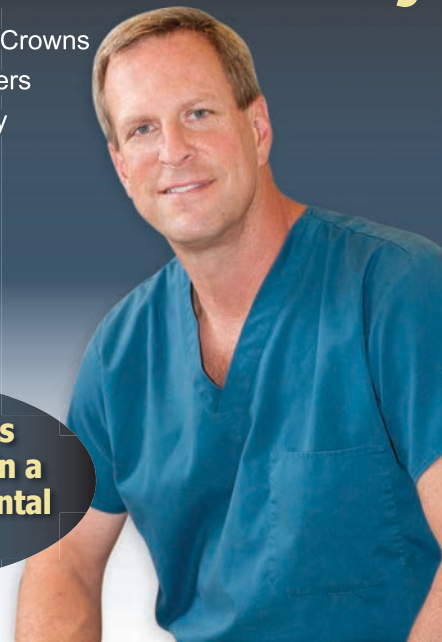


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Next Door Neighbors Health



A Combined Approach to Health

By Erin Fryer

Corey Miller Photography

Holistic Family Nurse Practitioner, Massage Therapist and Medical Anthropologist are not job titles you typically see paired together, but Susan Walkley has mastered the art of juggling all three.

Susan brings a unique background to health care. She currently splits her time between her roles as a nurse practitioner at Old Towne Medical Center and a massage therapist at her private practice on Penniman Road.

She also teaches a class in the anthropology department at William & Mary.

“I am kind of hard to wrap your head around,” Susan says with a laugh. “I put in about 30 hours a week as a nurse practitioner and do massage therapy part-time, but I hope to keep building my practice.”

Before moving to Williamsburg, Susan completed a Ph.D. program in medical anthropology at Columbia University where

she focused on treatment approaches to lower back pain. She shares her expertise with W&M students enrolled in her class on medicine and culture, which includes discussions of botanical medicine in North America, Colonial Williamsburg, traditional Chinese medicine and Thai traditional medicine.

Her combined backgrounds allow for an approach to health and healing in a holistic way. This is based on the belief that the treat-

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ment of medical conditions needs to address not only a patient's physical symptoms but also the mental, emotional, spiritual and social factors affecting a patient's health. Susan believes in the healing powers of sleep, exercise, mindfulness, eating real food, home cooking, social connections, a feeling of purpose and medicinal plants.

As a holistic nurse and massage therapist, Susan examines the triggers and likely causes of pain, assesses ergonomics, form, posture and training regimes, identifies what structures are hurting and utilizes non-pharmaceutical treatments including yoga, stretching, strengthening, home exercise programs, rest, realistic expectations and mindful body awareness.

Her massage therapy business, run out of the Work Nimble co-working space, is a dream come true for her. There she integrates her clinical experience with massage, myofascial and movement therapies, along with her anatomy background and holistic inclinations to approach musculoskeletal problems with clients in the same way she would treat her friends and family.

Susan has been a nurse practitioner in Wil-

liamsburg for seven years, mainly in urgent care settings, and has additional experience in orthopedics and pediatrics. While she appreciates how effective mainstream treatments such as steroids and surgery can be, she prefers them as last resorts.

While Susan is a professional at juggling her different roles, she is excited about a new law that will go in to effect next year. This new law eliminates the direct physician supervision requirement for nurse practitioners, allowing the ones that meet the requirements to have full practice authority.

Currently, Susan keeps her two main jobs very separate. "I don't mention to my patients that I am a massage therapist because it would not be appropriate," she says. She looks forward to that changing next year.

Susan says her passion for massage therapy led her to pursue her Ph.D. work in medical anthropology. "I was teaching massage classes, as well as anatomy and physiology classes, in New York City. My dissertation on back pain was inspired by my experience with massage." Medical anthropology is the cross-cultural study of medicine, looking at different approaches to disease and treatment. Susan spe-

cializes in Thai massage and traditional Chinese medicine like acupuncture. She hopes to offer Thai yoga massage in the future.

Originally from New Jersey, Susan moved to the Big Apple to attend New York University where she majored in health sciences. After graduating, she studied massage therapy at the Swedish Institute, the oldest massage institution in the United States. "It was a family joke my parents used to laugh at that I made it through undergrad and ultimately decided to do massage therapy," she laughs, "but my time in New York and the things I was exposed to in the city, combined with my experience as a massage therapist, fueled my love for holistic medicine."

If you visit her massage studio, you will almost instantly feel transported to a very calm, Zen environment centered on the ocean. "I love the ocean and beach, especially the Outer Banks. I also love nature and taking walks in the woods."

The beach and woods are not something Susan got a lot of exposure to during her 18 years in New York City. "It was certainly an adjustment moving to Williamsburg," she says.



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While she spends about three days per week at Old Towne, Susan fills the rest of her work-week with massage appointments. Many of her clients are referred to her from local doctors and yoga teachers.

With the new law that will come into play next year, Susan will finally be able to bring all of her passions together for the first time. "My vision is that I will be able to diagnose and send my patients for an X-ray or send a client to an orthopedist," she says. "That is something I am currently unable to do without a physician signing off."

While she is eager to get started with her own private practice, Susan loves working at Old Towne and plans to stay. "The clinic, which serves the uninsured and low income populations of our community, offers wonderful services, and I am so proud to work there. It's a great team, and it's wonderful working in a nonprofit environment."

Susan has also spent some time working at Sentara Urgent Care (now Velocity Urgent Care) and St. Mary's Hospital. "I have always patched together part-time jobs," she says. "That's just what works for me. I have varied interests, and a lot of people don't understand

how I juggle them all, but I make it work."

It's evident by her extensive background as a student and teacher that Susan is big on education. When she's with her patients, Susan never pushes her holistic approach to health but does try to educate her patients on changes they can make to help their ailments. "I try to coach my patients to try alternatives like sleep, diet, exercise, etc. Sometimes I see a patient's medication list, and I am horrified. The cost is astronomical."

Though moving from NYC to Williamsburg was a big transition, Susan has loved living in the Colonial Capitol, especially during the holidays. "I love the lights," she says. "My son and I put our tree up the weekend before Thanksgiving, and we keep it up until March. We take the ornaments off after the holidays and just keep the tree up for the nice light it provides in the evenings. We always laugh about how long we leave it up, but we love it."

Susan regularly returns to NYC to visit her old home and further her training and expertise. She is currently taking Chinese medicine classes with an old classmate from Columbia. "Chinese medicine is a different approach to the body in general," she says. "Once I am

done with training, I will incorporate it into my new independent practice."

Though she admits she misses New York sometimes, she loves the pace and lack of traffic that Williamsburg offers. "I love all of the trees and greenery," she says. "Sometimes when I am back in New York I feel like I have lost my edge. The city can be overwhelming after adjusting to the pace in Williamsburg. I loved every minute of it when I was there, but now I am not so sure that I would want to live there."

If she had to name her favorite massage technique, Susan says it would be the Thai Yoga massage, which is an ancient healing system combining acupressure, Indian Ayurvedic principles and assisted postures. "It's very unusual because the person getting the massage is clothed and on a mat rather than a table."

While many of us associate a massage with helping to loosen stiff muscles, Susan also says it's a great way to celebrate new chapters, like a graduation or new job.

With everything she has on her plate, Susan Walkley has to schedule time to not have anything scheduled. "I keep very busy, but it's important to have time to relax too." NDN



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Next Door Neighbors Home



Corey Miller Photography

SERVICING YOUR HOME

By Narielle Living

Every homeowner knows the frustration of the never-ending list of small jobs to be completed around the house. Whether it's tightening a screw or fixing a door handle, these things that have to be done can sometimes be an irritant if time is a limited commodity. That is when Bart Burcham, Newtown Handyman, is most able to help.

A native of Virginia, Bart is the youngest of five children in his family. He grew up in

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LA TERRAZA HAPPY HOUR: 4-7PM	LA TERRAZA HAPPY HOUR: 4-7PM

Lanexa and now lives in Williamsburg. He chose to come to this area because of his wife. After being married and divorced, he reconnected with a woman he knew from high school, Debi. "We were friends in high school, and we each had a kid about the same age," he says. They fell in love and have been together for 17 years. "She was from over near Jamestown Road."

In school, Bart and his three brothers had all taken auto mechanics classes. Bart found the idea of working in this field appealing, and he was good at it. "My oldest brother is still an auto mechanic. That's what I thought I wanted to do." After a decade of working as an auto mechanic, he decided he needed a change and used his skills to work in marine mechanics for the next four years. "Then I started doing maintenance, and it was more interesting," he says. He liked the fact that he was able to do a wide array of different jobs, something he felt kept his day interesting. "Now I can do plumbing, electrical, drywall, all this extra stuff, so I got into it and I stayed with it," he says.

According to Bart, he has been working in

this field for quite a while. After working at Patriots Colony for nine and a half years, he recently left that job. "At Patriot's Colony we did everything," he says. "It was a retirement military community, and sometimes that involved just sitting down and talking with the residents and having a good time and being friendly with them." Many residents had gotten used to having Bart around for maintenance work and were sad to see him leave. He admits that he does miss being there. "I didn't want to go but it was time."

In February of 2018 he had begun his business as a handyman on the side, working in homes outside of Patriots Colony. After a few months of doing this, he made the decision to take a leap and go out on his own. "It looked like it was going to be good so I went ahead and quit the first of August."

Bart's advice for home maintenance for the winter season is simple: prepare before it gets cold. The reason for this is that there are things people are not going to want to do in the cold weather. One example is crawling under the house to make sure the pipes are insulated. "You could have outside faucets that are not

freeze proof, and even if they are and the hose is hooked up it'll still freeze. If it freezes, very likely once it defrosts the pipe is cracked, and it will start leaking everywhere." With that, he says, comes a big water bill and possibly water damage, two potential situations to avoid.

While discussing water damage, Bart reminds people to check under their sinks. "Every once in a while you've got to look under your sink, because a small leak will turn into mold, and that will turn into something major [resulting in] thousands of dollars of damage." According to Bart, that type of situation could be avoided.

"You could just get someone to come in and tighten up something or replace a small item."

Bart has also seen appliances suffer from improper maintenance. He reminds people to clean their dryer vent. "It's a fire hazard," he says, referring to the lint that can build up in the vent. Plus, cleaning this out makes the dryer run longer. "A friend of mine thought she needed a new dryer. She told me hers wasn't working well." After suggesting her vent simply needed to be cleaned, he visited

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CDR Executive Director, Paul Scott

Eleven years ago, CDR welcomed Paul F. Scott as executive director. "Over these years, the children and families we serve have humbled and inspired me," shared Paul.

"I've watched dedicated staff provide strength and support to those searching for hope, compassion, and solutions to the obstacles they face. And we have partnered with a devoted and supportive community that helps provide the resources needed for each child so that they are able to experience their brightest possible future.

"Seeing families go from hopelessness to confidence inspires me every day. I am so thankful that I have been allowed to witness miracles."

Questions about your baby or toddler?
Call **757-566-3300** or visit **cdr.org**.

Photo courtesy of Sigmon Taylor Photography



and pulled out a large pile of lint. After doing that, his friend was ecstatic. “She basically said she didn’t have to buy a dryer anymore because it now dries in half an hour instead of an hour. Doing this saves a lot of electricity and wear and tear on the dryer.”

According to Bart, one of the major items for a homeowner to take care of before the snow begins to fall is to clean the gutters. After the snow comes, there is generally no good way for the homeowner to clear frozen items from a gutter. But when everything begins to melt a dam can form from the debris in the gutters, later causing the gutters to rip off. “It will dam up behind it and leak inside, because everything is made to flow.” Once things are frozen, any further precipitation will then travel underneath or behind the gutter, causing the fascia board to begin to rot.

Rot from water damage is something Bart sees often in fascia board, trim and sheetrock. “We have these carpenter bees that come out in the summer, and unless you actually spray right in the hole that they use you can’t kill them because they are all over the place.”

Bart also reminds people that the time to

buy the ice melt and the shovels is before the storm, preferably in the fall, not the day before or the day of a big storm. Leftover ice melt that may have been purchased the previous year should still be good to use, Bart says. “If moisture gets in it’ll just turn into a big clump, but if you keep it closed it’ll be fine. Even when it’s all clumped up it still works, it’s just hard to get it apart.”

For Bart, preparation is key to home repair. While things can certainly be fixed at any time, it is definitely more comfortable to fix outside lighting while the weather is mild as opposed to trying to get holiday lights to work in subzero temperatures. “You don’t want to put the Christmas stuff out and find it doesn’t work.”

Also, before family or holiday gatherings, inspect your oven and stove to ensure they are working properly. “Thanksgiving day is not the day to figure out the turkey isn’t getting cooked,” he says with a laugh.

Primarily, Bart focuses on taking care of the small household repairs that people do not have time to do. “People tell me they have 500 things to do, but it’s little stuff,” he says.

“I get that a lot: this receptacle doesn’t work in this room, this picture needs to be hung, there’s a small hole in the wall that needs to be patched, there’s just a lot of little things to be taken care of.” He adds that people who are older or who don’t want to spend all of their time doing these things on the weekends are usually the people who call him. “It’s easier to just pay someone to get it done. I get that a lot. People will say I’ve got all these things that have been bothering me for six months, they are driving me nuts.”

Bart Burcham stresses that in any business, customer service is key. “What I find with the kind of stuff I do is that people don’t call people back,” he says. People are often surprised that Bart answered his phone, as they had difficulty getting others in the business to call back. “We had that experience, too. There’s things I don’t want to do either.” He adds that while trying to get quotes to have brick pavers added to the front of his house, he found a number of contractors simply never responded to his request for a quote. “So, I know what it’s like. If you can’t do something just say you can’t do it. It’s about service.” NDN

OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, December 11

11am - 4pm

Please come in and spread
some holiday cheer!

Light Refreshments & Door Prizes
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Hey Neighbor!

Please visit

www.WilliamsburgNeighbors.com,

Click on **Hey Neighbor!** for a complete list of current community announcements.

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

Hey Neighbor!

FREE EVENT AT THE MUSCARELLE MUSEUM OF ART
December 7, 2018

Join Steve Prince, Director of Engagement and Distinguished Artist in Residence at the Muscarelle Museum of Art, for a brown bag lunch sneak peek and demonstration as he creates his series entitled "Cycles." Prince posits that "each coming generation is confronted with challenges intrinsically connected like a psychic umbilical cord to the past. It is my belief that we must soberly engage the troubled past while actively working together to solve the problems of today in order to break the damaging cycles." Bring your lunch and join the dialogue on the first floor of the Museum on Friday. More info can be found at our website: <https://muscarelle.org/>

Hey Neighbor!

FLUTE FRENZY WINTER CONCERT

December 7, 2018

At 7 pm, Flute Frenzy presents a winter concert at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Road, Williamsburg. The concert features seasonal works for flute choir, from Renaissance motet to popular contem-

porary carols. Join us for a fun-filled concert of music written for piccolo, flute, alto flute, and bass flute in ensemble. Free concert. Reception follows the concert. www.flutefrenzy.org.

Hey Neighbor!

YOGA FUNDRAISER WITH KATHY ZOLCINSKI

December 8, 2018

Embody the Joy of Giving: Join Kathy Zolcinski for a full spectrum yoga practice, to benefit Literacy For Life. From 9-11:15 am. Kathy Zolcinski is a Certified Anusara Yoga Teacher ERYT 500 as well as a graduate of Sianna Sherman's Rasa Yoga 300 Hour Advanced Teacher Training. Williamsburg Community Building, 401 N. Boundary Street, Colonial Williamsburg. \$25.00 per person minimum donation for the class. Donation only option available for those wishing to contribute to Literacy for Life without attending the class. 100% of proceeds go to Literacy for Life. All levels welcome. Contact: www.kathyzolcinski.com or kathy@kathyzolcinski.com or (757) 345-5900.

Hey Neighbor!

FLANNELS AND S'MORES ON THE RIVER

December 8, 2018

Join us along the shores of the James River @ Jamestown 4-H Educational Center beginning at 4:30 pm for a night of food, flannels, s'mores, movies and more! S'more kits, hot apple cider and hot chocolate will be available for cash purchase. Parking is \$5.00. (Plan to bring your blankets, chairs and a flashlight) See you on the River! Call (757) 253-4931 for details or visit www.jamestown4hcenter.org/events

Hey Neighbor!

THE WILLIAMSBURG WOMEN'S CHORUS HOLIDAY CONCERT "HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS"

December 8, 2018

At 7:30 pm in the Williamsburg Presbyterian Church, the Holiday Concert will feature music for women's voices from the baroque era to the present. The concert will open with a multi-movement setting of Mary's Magnificat by composer, Niccola Porpora, who was a contemporary of Antonio Vivaldi. Tickets are \$15 for Adults and \$5 for Children, available at www.williamsburgwomenschorus.org.

Hey Neighbor!

THE POWER OF MUSIC CHRISTMAS CONCERT, A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EVENT

December 9, 2018

From 3-4 pm at Williamsburg United Methodist Church, this special Christmas Concert, including children and adult hand bell ringers, WUMC Sanctuary choir, and Tom Marshall on the Organ, is open to the entire community. Following the concert, enjoy cookies and punch at Respite's Open House. Contact: Carolyn Yowell, Executive Director, Respite Care of WUMC, 757 229-1771.

Hey Neighbor!

GRIEFSHARE SUPPORT GROUP

December 9, 2018

Walnut Hills Baptist Church, 1014 Jamestown Road, will hold a Griefshare session on Surviving The Holidays. The program will meet from 2-4 pm at the church. This is a one-time support meeting for helping those who have lost a loved one learn to navigate the holiday season. There is no fee, but registration is required. Please register at carol.mitchell@cox.net or 757-345-6294. For more information, visit whbconline.org.

Hey Neighbor!

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

December 9, 2018

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and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. Candles are lit at 7 pm. <https://www.compassionate-friends.org/event/annual-worldwide-candle-lighting-2/>. Our Williamsburg chapter of TCF hosts a candle lighting vigil each year for children, grandchildren and siblings gone too soon. This year's ceremony will be at St. Martin's Episcopal Church on Jamestown Rd. at 6:30 pm, with candle lighting at 7 pm. Refreshments will follow. In addition to hosting this event, our chapter also hosts monthly support group meetings open to anyone in the community dealing with the death of a child, grandchild or sibling. Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month from 7-8:30 pm at Hospice House & Support Care of Williamsburg.

Hey Neighbor!

“WINTER FLYING - FROSTY THE SNOWMAN MEETS STEVE CANYON”

December 15, 2018

Free FAA Wings Safety Seminar @ KJGG. Winter flying best practices, tips, traps, and techniques. Time: 10 am. Location: Williamsburg Jamestown Airport (KJGG), 104 Marclay Road, Main Terminal 2nd floor, Williamsburg. Moderator: Tim McSwain. Topic: “Winter Flying” – a review of best practices to keep us out of trouble during the cold, icy, snowy winter months. We will discuss preparation including risk assessment, preflight, pre-and post-flight ground operations, in-flight risk management, weather changes, and common hazards of the season. The seminar will consist of 2 40-minute segments with a break in between.

Hey Neighbor!

CHRISTMAS DREAMS! DANCE PERFORMANCE

December 15-16, 2018

Institute for Dance, Inc. (iDance), a local dance studio and 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, presents Christmas Dreams! Featured performance by The Movement Dance Company and pre-show entertainment by The Stairwells. This annual family-friendly holiday show, will be held at Kimball Theatre, 428 W Duke of Gloucester Street. Show times: Saturday at 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm, Sunday at 2:30 pm. More Information at www.institutefordance.org or info@institutefordance.org. Tickets available through <http://kimball.wm.edu>.

Hey Neighbor!

CANTORI CHORAL ENSEMBLE PRESENTS GLORIA IN EXCELSIS!

December 16, 2018

The Ensemble presents its 2018 Christmas Concert at 5 pm at Walnut Hills Baptist Church, 1014 Jamestown Road. The concert will feature new and innovative arrangements of carols for the season. The 14-voice ensemble is under the direction of Agnes French, with keyboard accompaniment provided by Rebecca Davy. Tickets are \$15 in advance/\$20 at the door for adults. open for the concert at 4:30 pm.

Hey Neighbor!

WOMAN'S CLUB MEETING – COME JOIN US!

December 19, 2018

The Woman's Club of Williamsburg-GFWC is a group of women with many different talents and interests who have banded together to enrich the quality of life for citizens of our community, all while having fun and forming life-long friendships. We meet monthly for a short business meeting and to enjoy lunch and fellowship. Please email Lori (lori@womansclubofwilliamsburg.org) if you'd like to join or attend a meeting or to get more information about our activities. Meetings start at 11:15 am and are held at Ford's Colony Country Club, 240 Ford's Colony Drive. Visit us online (www.womansclubofwilliamsburg.org) or on Facebook (@[thewomansclubofwilliamsburg](https://www.facebook.com/thewomansclubofwilliamsburg)).

Hey Neighbor!

WCAC'S SMALL WORKS AND HOLIDAY ART SHOW

Through December 20, 2018

The Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center's annual Small Works & Holiday Show features affordable artwork for holiday gift-giving by WCAC member artists. “Small Works” encompass 2D (up to 80 sq. inches) and 3D art in a variety of media and themes. Traditions may cover Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, Winter Solstice, etc. All net sale proceeds benefit the exhibitions, programs, classes, and outreach efforts of WCAC. 110 Westover Ave. Hours: Tues.-Sat. 11-3; Sun. 12-4. Call (757) 229-4949 for information.

Hey Neighbor!

THE KING'S SINGERS

December 21, 2018

Hear this beloved ensemble—winners of two Grammy Awards, an Emmy Award, and a place in Gramophone Magazine's inaugural Hall of Fame—

in a celebration of ancient and modern Christmas music from across centuries! 7:30 pm at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg. Parking is limited, please consider carpooling. Tickets can be purchased through the Virginia Arts Festival at www.vafest.org. For more information, visit www.bedeva.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!

TRINITY ORGAN SERIES:

WOLFF VON ROOS, ORGANIST

January 2, 2019

The free concert will feature Wolff von Roos, Associate Organist/Music Scholar at Broadway United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Indiana. The program will include an improvisation based on audience-provided Christmas themes. Time: 1 pm at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. A reception will follow. For more information, please call (757) 229-3631, or visit www.bedeva.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!

WARM UP WILLIAMSBURG SOUP EVENT

January 25, 2019

From 5:15-8 pm, enjoy a delicious soup tasting dinner to benefit the Community of Faith Mission Winter Emergency Homeless Shelter. WUW will take place at Williamsburg Community Chapel and will feature tasty soups donated by our best local restaurants, and live entertainment by local band Elderberry Jam. Delicious home baked goodies will also be available through our Bake Shop. Join us for dinner and some great music or reserve a To-Go meal and enjoy your soup at home. Tickets are \$25 and may be obtained at COFM.info or by calling (757) 903-7031.

Hey Neighbor!

BUILDING A VOCAL COMMUNITY: THE POWER OF SONG IN COMMUNITY

January 25-26, 2019

In this highly interactive program, internationally renowned singer/conductor Dr. Ysaye Barnwell will lead participants in experiencing African & African American musical traditions while exploring the power of music to bring communities together. This is a 2-day event at the William & Mary School of Education, starting 6-9 pm Friday and continuing 9 am-4 pm Saturday (lunch provided). \$30 for general admission; \$10 for students. Registration is open now at <https://tinyurl.com/vocalcommunity2019>. Email

wmsbgvocalcommunity@gmail.com for more information.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CABARET AND COCKTAILS CONCERT

January 26, 2019

Williamsburg Lodge at 310 South England Street. Show begins at 8 pm. Drinks will be available for purchase but no food will be served. Visit <http://www.williamsburgsymphony.org> for program details. Tickets available by phone at (757) 229-9857.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MASTERWORKS 3 CONCERT

March 3 - 4, 2019

Kimball Theatre at 428 W Duke of Gloucester Street. Doors open at 6:30 pm, concert begins at 7:30 pm. Visit <http://www.williamsburgsymphony.org> for program details. Tickets available by phone at (757) 229-9857.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MASTERWORKS 4 CONCERT

April 9, 2019

Williamsburg Community Chapel at 3899 John Tyler Hwy. Doors open at 6:30 pm, concert begins at 7:30 pm. Visit <http://www.williamsburgsymphony.org> for program details. Tickets available by phone at (757) 229-9857.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MASTERWORKS 5 CONCERT

May 21 - 22, 2019

Kimball Theatre at 428 W Duke of Gloucester Street. Doors open at 6:30 pm, concert begins at 7:30 pm. Visit <http://www.williamsburgsymphony.org> for program details. Tickets available by phone at (757) 229-9857.

Hey Neighbor!

A GUIDE - SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID FOR WOMEN

Ongoing

This provides a great overview of the financial assistance opportunities for female students and how to optimize them. The guide details about 64 scholarships for women, presented in a useful search tool which helps the reader find relevant ones to apply for. There's also valuable advice about how to ace the application process. Other financial aid opportunities discussed are fellowships, loans and work-study programs. An expert interview pro-

vides further tips and advice. The guide concludes with additional useful resources. You can see it all here: <https://www.learnhowtobecome.org/college/financial-aid-for-women/> LearnHowToBecome.org is a comprehensive career resource with a mission to help students and aspiring professionals understand what it takes to land their perfect career.

Hey Neighbor!

AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM NEEDS YOUR HELP

Ongoing
The Williamsburg Aviation Scholarship Program organized in 2013 at Williamsburg Jamestown Airport (KJGG) in Williamsburg, Va. Our purpose is to get young people involved in aviation and get their private pilot's license. There is no charge to the student for the flight training. We furnish all training supplies, test fees, ground school kits, etc., etc., etc. at no charge to the student nor their family. Students must be 16, 17, or 18 years old and in the 10, 11, or 12 grade when they start the flight training. The program is 1 year long. We pay for up to 50 hours of flight training per student. The training is done at Williamsburg Jamestown Airport through the Williamsburg Flight Center. of Virginia. So your donations are tax deductible on your State and Federal Income tax. Any amount that you can donate will be used for training the students. Please make checks or money orders payable and mail to: Williamsburg Aviation Scholarship Program, 102 Marclay Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185. Cash Donations are also accepted at the airport.

Hey Neighbor!

BIBLE STUDY

Monday Evenings

There is a comprehensive and in-depth, ongoing bible study and question answering session held at the Williamsburg library in Norge every Monday night starting at 6 pm. If your Bible study is lacking the quality of study that you need to answer such questions, then you are invited to join us, see you there. Contact: (757) 253-0172 or (75) 604-6649

Hey Neighbor!

COMMUNITY OF FAITH MISSION (COFM) TO HIRE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ongoing

Community of Faith Mission is a faith-based winter emergency homeless shelter program that provides food and shelter for 18 weeks from mid-

November through mid-March for those without a home in the Greater Williamsburg, VA area. Job description: this position is responsible for the successful leadership and management of all projects and tasks related to shelter operations. The shelter season is seasonal with more hours required between October-April. Minimal summer hours. Qualifications: College degree preferred. Knowledge of leadership and management principles as they relate to non-profit organizations. Knowledge of volunteer management, financial management and project management. Must have excellent verbal, written and interpersonal skills. Candidate should be detail oriented and be able to problem solve as needed in a shelter environment. Grant writing experience preferred but not required. To apply, send resumes to information@cofm.info.

Hey Neighbor!

HOSPICE HOUSE & SUPPORT CARE OF WILLIAMSBURG OFFERS NEW BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Monthly meetings

WAY: Widowed and Young, a support group for widows and widowers in their 30's-50's meets at Hospice House. Recognizing that established support is as far away as Newport News and Richmond, Hospice House & Support Care hopes to make support more accessible to younger widows and widowers residing in the Williamsburg area through the facilitation of this group. Support sessions focus around specific subjects such as coping techniques and offer up opportunity for participants to share in their grief experiences. Individuals interested in registering for the group should contact Chaplain Hannah Creager, facilitator, at 757-206-1177 or via email: bereavement@williamsburghospice.org.

Hey Neighbor!

THE WALKING CLUB

Ongoing

This new event, sponsored by New Town's Iron-Bound Gym and Paul's Deli, happens each Tuesday at 5:45 pm through December 18. The walks are free and 45-60 minutes in duration. All walking levels are welcome! I Free long sleeve T-shirts will go to each person who completes 8 walks this fall.

Visit WilliamsburgNeighbors.com for a complete Hey Neighbor listing.

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

**CHRISTMAS AT
THE
VELVET
SHOE STRING**

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

Enjoy!

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

NOVEMBER 2018
In the Neighborhood
Photo Challenge



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Expansive Bonus Room
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3327 MORNING MIST
In Stonehouse

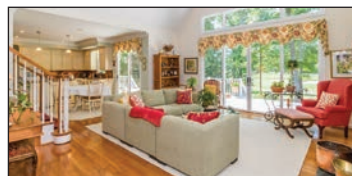
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