

June 2019

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VOL. 13, ISSUE 6

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Meredith Collins, Publisher

Friendship, camaraderie, common interests, and shared philosophies bring people together as members of a variety of clubs and organizations here in the Williamsburg area. One of those common interests is clearly the desire to contribute to the community through persistent acts of generosity.

We see these members out and about proudly representing their organization: hosting events, fundraising, and educating and clothing and feeding countless neighbors in need.

From reading the stories in this issue, it is clear that there is far more going on than what we actually see; relentless undercurrents of philanthropic activity that we aren't even aware of are taking place. For every recognized act of giving there are dozens more that are performed with little to no recognition. That's the *spirit* in the *spirit of giving*.

Many of you may be members of these or other organizations already. Some of you may be moved to join one. No matter, we might all be more aware of the contributions these folks make to our community. Let them know our gratitude for all they do for their Williamsburg neighbors. NDN

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A Lion for Life

By Brandy Centolanza

LIONS
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For Jack Reitz, being a part of the James City Lions Club is not just a volunteer opportunity; it is a way of life. Jack is serving for the second time as president of the James City Lions Club. Although he has been an active member of the Lions organization since 1981, Jack, a native of Williamsburg, has been familiar with the Lions for much longer than that.

“My father was a member of the Williamsburg Lions Club,” Jack says. “I was exposed to volunteering at a young age. It’s always been a part of my family. My sister is in a Lions club in South Carolina.”

Jack started out as a member of the Mariners Lions Club in Newport News before becoming one of the 28 founding charter members of the James City Lions Club chapter in 1998. The Lions is the world’s largest volunteer organization, with roughly four million participants in more than 200 countries. When the Lions began, the club’s focus was on offering assistance to those with sight and hearing impairments. The Lions mission has since expanded to include devoting time and effort to combatting diabetes, hunger and environmental issues as well as helping youth in the community.

“Helen Keller was the one who got the Lions involved with sight and hearing,” Jack says. “She challenged the Lions to be the Knights



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

of the Blind. The Lions also focus on diabetes because it is a major cause of blindness in the world.”

Locally, the James City Lions help screen young children for vision issues. This past school year, the James City Lions screened 160 students in the Head Start preschool program and partnered with the Williamsburg Lions Club to test the sight of more than 1,800 local elementary school children. Additionally, the James City Club recently purchased an audiometer and was able to screen 130 Head Start kids for hearing issues.

Jack certainly does not take his own sight for granted and relishes helping others improve

their vision. When he was a member of the Mariners Lions Club in Newport News, he also worked with local school nurses to screen students.

“The sight and hearing aspect of the Lions has always been something near and dear to my heart for years and years, especially when it comes to children,” Jack says.

The James City Lions also have a presence at the Olde Towne Medical & Dental Center, where they opened up a vision clinic in 2017. Volunteers from the Li-

ons as well as volunteer optometrists screen patients and provide eyeglasses at little or no cost.

“It makes me so happy that the Lions are able to help those who use Olde Towne Medical & Dental Center,” Jack says. “It is such a great benefit to the community.”

The Lions collaborate with the United Way of Greater Williamsburg to help fund glasses and hearing aids for anyone who is eligible and may need them. They also work with James City County to offer vision and hearing screenings during their annual senior health expos and with the Angels of Mercy Medical Clinic to provide diabetes screenings.

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"It's such a wonderful feeling when we get a thank you note from someone whose life has been impacted by what we do," Jack says. "It makes me feel so good. It means that the James City Lions Club is accomplishing its objectives and goals. That is exciting to me."

The James City Lions also routinely donate to the FISH food bank and volunteer to prepare meals for needy individuals through the Greater Williamsburg Community Kitchen. They are involved with highway litter clean up and recently assisted the Roc Solid Foundation in Chesapeake with assembling care bags for kids who are hospitalized while battling cancer.

"The bags contain basic toiletry items as well as a tablet computer and other items for the kid's enjoyment," Jack says. "Our club also participated in building a backyard playground for a child once he completed his cancer treatment."

Jack has held several positions within the James City Lions Club through the years. He was treasurer for a decade, served as secretary as well as zone chairman, the coordinator of the five local Lions chapters from New Kent County to York County, and acted as a "Guiding Lion," assisting new clubs with their charters.

"I enjoy the camaraderie," he says. "I really feel like I am making a difference here in Williamsburg and in the world. Williamsburg has a great network of support in the community for people who need help and we enjoy working with them all."

As president of the James City Lions, Jack oversees 77 active club members. "I see my role as president as inspiring other Lions to become more involved with the club and become more active in the community," he says.

Though these days he may consider being president of the James City Lions a full-time job, for years Jack worked in the business world. He attended Matthew Whaley Elementary School and graduated from what was then James Blair High School, then later joined the U.S. Army for a few years before earning a Degree in Business Administration from Christopher Newport University in Newport News. He helped open Busch Gardens in 1975, then went on to spend the remainder of his career in the finance office with Riverside Health System.

"Riverside Health System really stressed giving back to the community, and I took that seriously," Jack says.

After retiring in 2005, Jack took up cycling

and was treasurer for a time for the Williamsburg Area Bicyclists.

"I love hopping on my bike and getting out and seeing nature and being outdoors," he says. "I also love the friendships I've made on group rides on the Virginia Capital Trail and with the Williamsburg Area Bicyclists."

Jack and his wife, Connie, whom he met 34 years ago at a party, are also both active with their church, Wellspring United Methodist Church. Like Jack, Connie, a retired nurse, spends most of her days giving back to the community as a Virginia Master Naturalist. Altruism is a big part of their lives.

"I've been blessed in my life. Others aren't as fortunate, and I just want to do my part and give back," Jack says. "I think everyone should step up and help others who need it so they can in turn pay it forward and improve the lives of others."


Jack can't think of a better place to do it than Williamsburg.

"I've lived elsewhere and I've always gravitated back to Williamsburg," Jack Reitz says. "Williamsburg is a safe, familiar, vibrant area with lots of activities. I have roots here. Williamsburg is just home with a capital H." NDN

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INSPIRED BY THE MOOSE

By Dawn Brotherton

Tucked behind The Shops at Carolina Furniture off of Richmond Road with only a square, white sign to point the way, lies Moose Lodge 757. Unassuming as it is, the tremendous outreach the Loyal Order of the Moose organization has within the Williamsburg community is surprising. Ron Steele is the governor of the 757 Lodge and became a member of the Moose Fraternity when he was 21 years old because his stepfather was a member. He had no idea about the full extent of membership and how reward-

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ing it would be throughout his life.

Ron grew up in St. Mary's, Pennsylvania, attending the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology for electrical occupations. "My mother lied to me twice. She said there was such a thing as Santa Claus, and if I graduated from college, I wouldn't have to dig ditches for a living," Ron says. He jokes about it, but Ron loves his job as a construction foreman with Cable Associates building fiber optic plants and doing long haul fiber optic runs. For twenty years, he installed main power lines before getting into fiber optics. He moved to Newport News in 1987 in search of work and then found his way to Williamsburg in 2005.

He and his new bride, Donna, are very active in the lodge. Originally, the Fraternal Order of the Moose was established as a social club for men. It rapidly expanded its mission to include housing and educating children of deceased Moose members at Mooseheart, a community outside Chicago. Beginning with eleven children in 1913, Mooseheart has since transitioned over 11,000 children through the Child City in the last 90 years. The war years

brought in the largest population of residents. In 1994, Mooseheart opened its application process to any child in need of help. Some of these children have lost one or both of their parents or were in an environment not conducive to healthy development.

Moosehaven, an active retirement community in Orange Park, Florida, is the other charity supported by the international Moose community. Established in 1922, it is exclusive to members of the Loyal Order of the Moose and Women of the Moose. Initially the residents operated a successful dairy farm to help offset the cost of living in the renovated hotel along the St. Johns River. Moosehaven has since been transformed into a 63-acre campus with a full range of activities for Moose members over the age of sixty-five.

Now the Loyal Order of the Moose and Women of the Moose boast over one million members with lodges in all 50 states, Canada, Great Britain and Bermuda. In addition to support at the international level to Mooseheart and Moosehaven, each lodge works within their community on projects they are passion-

ate about.

Moose 757 focuses a lot of their fundraising on supporting cancer patients. One of Ron's favorites is Russ' Pay It Forward Seafood Festival, run in conjunction with Uncle Russ' Dockside Seafood Market, held at the lodge in September. "This is money strictly to have fun with their families and their kids and to enjoy what time they have left. It's not for doctor bills. It's about quality of life," Ron says.

Along with the Warwick Lodge, Moose 757 is sponsoring the Massey Cancer Golf Tournament at the Kiskiack Golf Club on June 8. All proceeds will benefit the Massey Cancer Center in Richmond.

They also work with The ARC of Greater Williamsburg, donating time and resources to help enrich the lives of adults with developmental disabilities. In return, the members of ARC come to the lodge and help run some of their events. "Just the smile on their faces. That's all you can ever ask for. They're just thrilled to death to be at the party."

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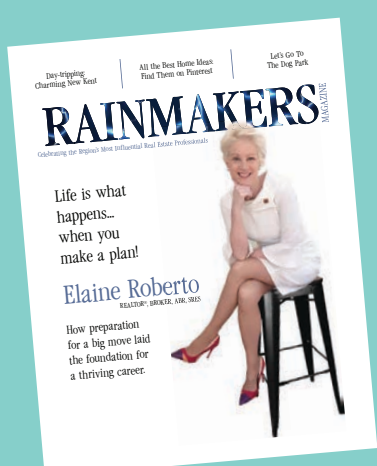
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who needs help. All they need to do is bring an idea, and we'll do whatever we can to help people," he explains. Ron was passionate explaining the lodge's involvement with the Safe Surfin' Foundation, a Virginia-based organization intent on educating children and parents on using the internet safely.

Moose members work with FISH on the EZ Child ID program, providing parents with an electronic file containing personal information, electronic fingerprints, photographs and a video file of their children. He hopes it never has to be used, but Ron knows it's best to have it available to law enforcement if a child becomes lost or is abducted.

After his stepfather passed away, Ron dropped his membership for a short time. But soon after his move to Williamsburg, he found his way to the 757 Lodge and renewed his standing. "I met the people in Williamsburg, and they make you feel at home. The first day I walked in there, I joined again. That was 2005, and I've been a member ever since."

Over the years, Ron has held many different positions in the organization including trustee,

prelate, the person who looks after members who are sick, sergeant at arms, the person who runs the meetings, various board chairs and now the governor for two years. One of the hardest tasks he is concentrating on is helping the Moose Lodge break away from the stigma that it's only a bar for old people. "We enjoy our libations every now and then, but it's so much more than that. People from the outside don't realize that. We make fundraisers fun."

Membership into the Fraternal Order of the Moose has its privileges as well. Their dining room is open seven days a week with daily specials. Watching sporting events is more fun with a group as they gather around the many televisions tuned into the game of the season. When he's traveling, Ron likes to visit other lodges. "If you're a member in one, it means you are a member in all of them. They are usually very friendly. You can go anywhere, and if you walk into a Moose Lodge, you feel like you're at home."

In order to attract the younger crowd, the lodge opens their doors to nonmembers for certain events and bands so others can learn more

about them. "It's a fun group that's family-oriented," Ron says. "I want other people to see it's not a beer joint. It's a place to go help others and do for others."

He is inspired by the people he has gotten to know who put others above themselves. "The person who will give you his last dollar because you need it more than he does. That's what motivates me. The people who put other people's well-being first. The world needs a whole lot more of that right now." Jimmy Ketron is one of Ron's mentors. He has been a Moose member for over 50 years. "He comes to every meeting. He's there for every fundraiser. He's what it's all about."

In a few months, Ron Steele's time as reigning governor will be complete. He hopes to get in more golfing. "I'm no good at it, but it only takes one good shot a day to make you come back." Even without the golf, Ron finds no shortage of things to do in Williamsburg. He enjoys the feel of a small town with all the city amenities. "I love it. It's got a little of everything you want right here. The best of both worlds: city and country." NDN



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Advocating for the Community's Smallest Hearts



By Caroline Johnson

Lisa W. Cumming Photography

While looking for a volunteer opportunity that would allow her to be hands-on within the community, Tracy Gharbo stumbled across Colonial CASA. "I wanted something face to face, something actionable," Tracy says. After putting in her interests on Volunteermatch.org, a suggestion for Colonial CASA appeared. She began reading about the organization and after talking it over with friends and family, she decided she would look into it.

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates and serves children by advocating for a safe, timely and permanent placement for them. Two and a half years later, Tracy is still

serving as a Volunteer Children's Advocate for Neglected and Abused Children.

Tracy and her family have lived in Williamsburg for the past four years. After moving here from Poquoson with her husband and their two daughters, they've found out just how easy it was to call Williamsburg their home. "Everything is accessible," Tracy says. "With the parks, farmer's market, bike riding trails, activities in the summer like the concert series and restaurants, there is always something to do." In her spare time, Tracy enjoys Williamsburg's experiences as well as hiking with their dog on local trails. By day, Tracy works as a Graphic

Designer for Comber Physical Therapy and Fusion Chiropractic.

Averaging 20 to 25 hours a month with Colonial CASA, it's safe to say that Tracy stays busy. However, she wouldn't have it any other way. The mission of Colonial CASA is to recruit, train and support court appointed advocates so that abused or neglected children can have the opportunity to thrive in safe and permanent homes. As one of these advocates, Tracy takes on two to three cases at a time involving local children. According to Colonial CASA, an average of 110 children per year in our community find themselves in Juvenile and

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Domestic Relations Court. These children land here because of reports of abuse or neglect. “Although it wasn’t anything as serious as some of the cases we see with CASA, I didn’t have the ideal childhood,” Tracy says. “I want to do my part to make their situations better. I want to let the children I work with know that they aren’t being judged by me and that some things are beyond their control.”

While each case varies, they typically begin with initial meetings to get to know the case. When Social Services or someone within the court requests an advocate within a case, an advocate is assigned. Some examples of possible cases that could need an advocate include substance abuse issues, homelessness, mental health problems or hardships due to financial difficulty. During each assignment for a case, it takes time for the advocates to get to know the details and get in touch with the people who they will be meeting with. Following the initial meetings, Tracy meets with the children in her cases once a month for the following six to 12 months after the case has taken off. The things that last longest during the process are completing court reports and initial investigations.

Tracy’s work with Colonial CASA consists of getting to know the children in her cases and supporting them. To her, the most important thing is that she gets to know them for their lives and friendships, showing interest in the things that go beyond the case. “Our goal is to make sure that their basic needs are being met,” Tracy says. “This includes food, housing, safety and making sure they are going to school.” CASA advocates can determine if these basic needs are being met through their regular visits and check-ins with the children and their families. With each case, Tracy and other advocates don’t only interact with the children involved in the cases, but with their families as well. “We are the eyes and ears for the judge.” As an unbiased party, Tracy may interact with parents, physicians, teachers or counselors, depending on the unique situation.

Since parents and guardians are required to cooperate with the courts during these cases, Tracy is able to serve them as well. Not surprisingly, being involved in these court cases can put a lot of stress and worry on the parents or guardians of a child and can introduce nervousness about losing the child. As a volunteer ad-

vocate, Tracy wants parents and guardians to know that they are there to hear their stories as well. “I see my job as not only looking out for the kids and helping them get through it but also encouraging the parents during that process,” Tracy says. The ultimate goal of Colonial CASA is to help reunite children with their parents or guardians.

While her monthly check-ins can take place wherever she chooses, Tracy likes to give kids old enough to make the decision a choice. “Some kids ask me to come to lunch at school, which I’ll happily do,” Tracy says. “I like to be able to give them a voice and let them feel like someone is listening to them and that someone is reliable.” Some challenges that Tracy and other advocates face include working with parents who don’t think Social Services should be involved or closing cases without seeing the significant changes they wanted to see. Although at times being an advocate can be challenging, Tracy has found that being a part of Colonial CASA has been extremely rewarding.

“The most rewarding experiences for me are just about any time I can see the kids smile or laugh,” she says. “It’s rewarding just to see that

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they're not getting stuck in this situation, that they are seeing that they can do these things and they can be successful." Along with watching the children she works with begin to flourish and improve their academics and social relationships, Tracy also witnesses the strides made by their caregivers. "To see the people that were caring for them making improvements and experiencing successes is wonderful," Tracy says. "I see them get jobs, remain sober and become productive members of society."

Tracy's work with Colonial CASA goes far beyond what happens in the courtroom or at meetings. It has also profoundly affected her ability to view others exactly where they are. "I don't think you could do this without gaining greater empathy for people as a whole," she says. "Whether it's a financial hardship or something else, we're all just trying to make it." Along with the empathy gained, Tracy also appreciates that she is able to share her experience with others to help them have an open mind about what is going on within the cases. "I think if people could be more open-minded and not categorize people or judge them, they might find that there's a lot more good in the world," Tracy says.

In between work and volunteering, she is also making time for a passion project that she hopes will help children going through the foster care system. Along with Linda Palmer, who has been with Colonial CASA for seven years, they are co-authoring a book titled "Project Hope & Resilience". The book's main goal is to relate stories of resilience after foster care to be shared with children in foster care to give them hope and begin their path to a successful and productive life. Their goal is to interview as many people as possible to share stories from across the spectrum.

With the leadership, attorneys and advocates at Colonial CASA truly caring about the work they do, Tracy Gharbo believes that working with the CASA organization is unlike any other experience. She encourages people of all ages, but especially young people, to get involved in some way by starting with something they enjoy and going from there. "I believe interaction with people who are different than you and have different perspectives than you help us all get along better," she says. "You can't possibly understand the world around you if you're not interacting with it in some way." NDN

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Publisher.....Meredith Collins
 Editor.....Narielle Living, narielleliving@gmail.com
 Copy Editor.....Ginger White
 Photographers.....Lisa Cumming, Corey Miller
 Graphic Designer.....Sue Etherton
 Account Manager.....Anne Conkling

Writers

Linda Landreth Phelps, Caroline Johnson, Brandy Centolanza, Alison Johnson, Susan Williamson, Lillian Stevens, Melanie Occhiuzzo, Morgan Barker, Susannah Livingston, Erin Zagursky, Cathy Welch, Erin Fryer, Christopher LaPointe, Michael Heslink, Naomi Tene' Austin, Gail Dillon, Lauren Plunkett, Ben Mackin, Laura Lane, Dawn Brotherton, Elara Strand, Anne Conkling, Harmony Hunter, Wheston Chancellor Grove and Kathleen Toomey Jobs

Advertising Information

Meredith Collins

(757) 560-3235

meredith@williamsburgneighbors.com
www.WilliamsburgNeighbors.com

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The Family of Kiwanis

By Elara Strand

Missy Zimmerman organizes her entire social life around the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg. Whether it's a volunteer activity or beers with friends, chances are it's a Kiwanis Club event. It also makes sense, since Missy is club president.

"Volunteering together is what gets me most excited. All my close friends are in Kiwanis with me so when I get together with them to volunteer, I'm actually hanging out with my friends. We laugh and we joke and

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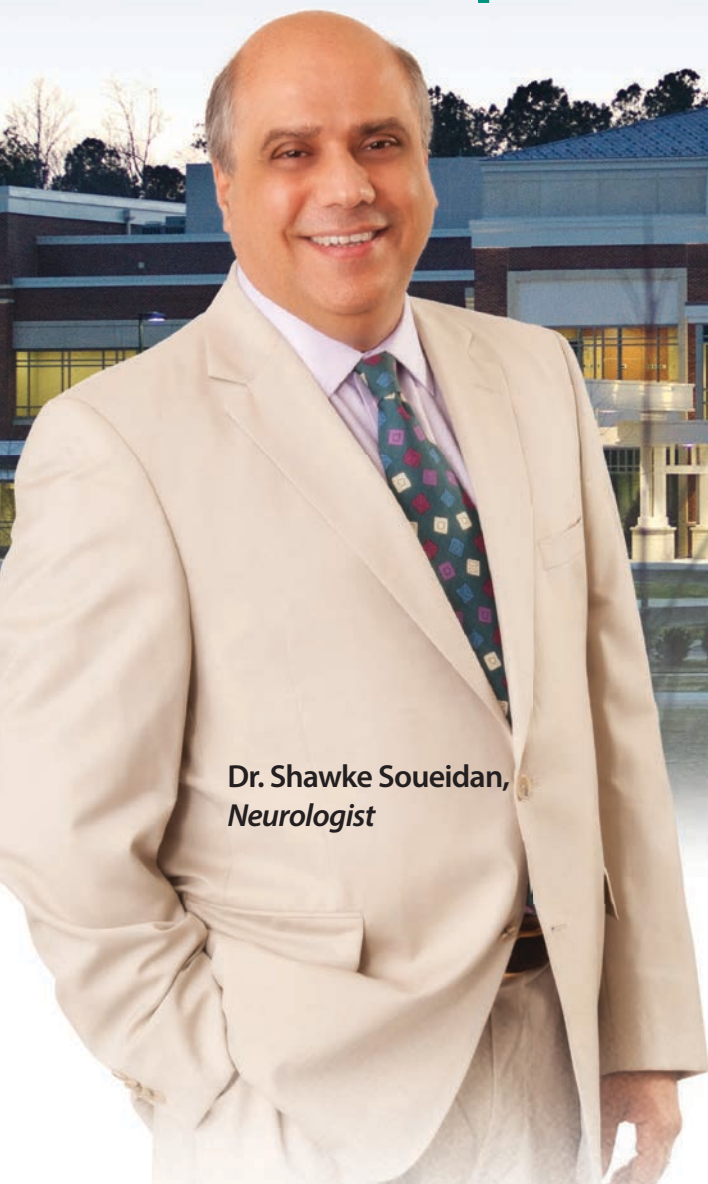
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we help each other out,” she says.

The Kiwanis Club mission to help children through outreach and fundraising speaks to Missy on a deep level. “There’s a real need, whatever community you’re in, for children of all ages to have some kind of support outside of their parents and their schools.”

Missy, a Project Manager for the IT firm FedMall, didn’t set out to join the Kiwanis Club. Instead, her skills and passion got her recruited. Missy’s husband, Scott Zimmerman, President and CEO of Conscientious Carpet Care, was president of the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg from 2005 to 2006. On one occasion, Scott was unable to go to a leadership workshop for Key Club high school students, and Missy substituted for him. Missy looks back at that workshop in 2011 as a pivotal experience.

“It’s a leadership program that focuses on really strong values and finding out your own style of leadership. There’s all kinds of small group activities and big group activities and I just had a wonderful time. I felt so uplifted and inspired at the end of the weekend, and I had a gentleman come up to me who was the Key Club Administrator for the Capital District. He said ‘I’m looking for someone who can be a Key Club Zone Administrator to work with the high schools in this area and I think you’d be good at it. But you have to join Kiwanis.’ And I said ‘Okay,’” Missy says with a laugh.

Missy served as a Key Club Zone Administrator and worked with high school students until 2017. “It’s the best job in Kiwanis because there’s so much energy and enthusiasm,” she says. “It really helps to keep you feeling young, interacting with young people and knowing what’s fashionable with them, and what’s their favorite music. The slang terms they use can be pretty interesting conversation.”

Missy’s work as a project manager for information technology projects isn’t traditionally associated with working with children, but she adapts it in several ways. In her administrative roles in the Kiwanis Club she assists with long range planning and management. But it’s when working with the local Key Clubs, the high school groups of Kiwanis Clubs, that Missy’s work skills shine. She helped write newsletters, taught them how to hold meetings and passed on other work skills.

“I like that the best, and I think after I finish my time in a leadership role for my club I’ll probably drift back that way.”

The kids like Missy, too. They voted her “Most Likely to Be Seen on a Runway” in a year end superlatives awards. Missy laughs when she remembers the event. “They were impressed that an ‘old person’ would wear UGGs and other cool things.”

When not working directly with kids, Missy and the rest of the Kiwanis gang are usually raising money for kids. Of the several annual fundraisers, Missy’s favorite is the Shrimp Feast, now in its 39th year. This fundraiser has all-you-can-eat shrimp, hush puppies and coleslaw, and the Kiwanis Club nets between \$30,000 to \$40,000, all for charity.

Friendship and volunteering are a combination that works for Kiwanians of all ages. It certainly works in Circle K International (CKI), the college arm of Kiwanis Club. Missy and Scott are active participants in a mentoring program between the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg and the William and Mary CKI called Kiwanis Integrates CKI Incentives & Teamwork (KICK-IT). “My husband and I have had one

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or two KICKIT partners every year since about 2010, many of whom are still friends. We've celebrated graduations, attended birthdays and weddings, and have enjoyed many fine afternoons and evenings with some very special young folks. It's very enriching and especially fun for me as a W&M alum to see College life through their eyes, in the 21st Century," Missy says.

Missy gets a kind of thrill from one particular Kiwanis tradition. "Our club begins and ends each meeting by ringing a brass bell with a Kiwanis logo on top of it. Only the president rings the bell. I love it! It's like getting to blow the horn on a fire engine for me. I've got several months to go before I pass the gavel, five more months of 'my little thrill of the week.'"

When Missy isn't being official, she prefers the more laid back feel of the Satellite Committee. Traditionally the Kiwanis Club meets every week for lunch, but an effort to modernize led to the creation of the more flexible Satellite Committee. The Satellite Committee meets once a month for a quick business meeting then heads for beers afterwards at Cogan's Deli and Sports Pub in New Town. "Anyone from the club is welcome to attend either meeting, but we especially encourage anyone and everyone to come over to Cogan's. So once a month you can find us over at Cogan's having a couple of beers together, having a sandwich, talking about what's going on, either in Kiwanis or personally and it's just very social and nice. You never know who's going to show up. Sometimes, you know, you stay for twenty minutes, sometimes you stay for an hour and a half. And you just have a good time," Missy says.

Sometimes great ideas come out of those conversations over beers at Cogan's. Missy and a group of six other Kiwanians at Cogan's worked out a float idea for the 2018 Williamsburg Christmas Parade held by the Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance. The theme of the 53rd Annual Williamsburg Christmas Parade was "Miracle on Duke of Gloucester Street." The Kiwanis Club float placed first in the Civic Organization category with their lively street scene focused on the intersection of 'Miracle Street' and 'Kiwanis Way.' "The group walking in the parade just ahead of us was the Colonial Newfoundland Club. One of their dogs went lame while waiting for the parade to start, so I said it would be just fine if he and his dog rode on our float. What could be better than a big shaggy dog to go with our strategically placed children on our 'Miracle on DoG Street' float? I think it really added a great touch," she says.

Meetings can even be a chance for some surprise giving to occur. Missy was particularly touched when her fellow Kiwanians came together to help some local school kids who had fallen behind on their school lunch accounts because of economic difficulties. "We made a donation because we found out about how there was a group collecting money that would go towards clearing off the bills that were in arrears and allowing children to reenter the school lunch program. When you get to do things like that, you hear about it, and you kinda look around the room at each other and everybody pulls out their wallet and says 'Here's \$5, \$10,' and you send the money in and you just did something spur of the moment that really helps," Missy says.

With spur-of-the-moment giving, meetings, service projects and social gatherings, Missy Zimmerman is one busy club president. But she wouldn't have it any other way. "It becomes a family," she says. NDN



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KATE ROGERS



**JUNIOR
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FINDING A GREATER PURPOSE

By Harmony Hunter

The Junior Woman's Club might have the ring of a dainty ladies' social clutch, but it's a force to be reckoned with in the City of Williamsburg. Established in 1954, this group was founded on the principle of living each day with purpose. Though their membership parameters have expanded over the years and the group has evolved along with the town in the last half-century, today's group holds the same



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mission at its heart.

This legacy of community service has found its way to Kate Rogers' capable hands as she takes the mantle of president for her second term this year. Kate first moved to Williamsburg seven years ago after graduating from Hollins College in Roanoke, Virginia with a degree in Art History. What began as a three-month internship with Colonial Williamsburg Collections has grown into a full-fledged career with the Foundation. She and her husband have put down roots in the town that they love and look forward to welcoming a son this winter.

Beyond linking herself to a long history of community building, the benefits of joining the Junior Woman's Club have been manifold for Kate. "After being in Williamsburg for about a year, I was looking for ways to get involved and meet some people who were in the same place I was in. I found Junior Woman's Club in 2016," Kate says. The early roots she sent into Williamsburg have paid dividends in the years since.

The ways that the club fills its coffers are as creative as they are varied. Their signature

event is Art on the Square, staged each year in Merchant's Square at the corner of Duke of Gloucester Street and North Boundary Street. The Junior Woman's Club has hosted this event for a 56-year streak, and it remains a cornerstone of the organization's fundraising profile.

"Art on the Square is the best example of our long tradition. It's something we've been doing in the community for a very long time," says Kate. This free, open-air art festival is a juried event that spotlights original and handcrafted art from as many as 150 artists.

"The money we raise from booth fees at Art on the Square goes towards our donations forum, and all of that money goes specifically to art-related requests. If a middle school art classroom is looking for supplies, they can apply for that. We also sell raffle tickets that go directly to a scholarship fund. Every year we present about \$3,000 to local area high school seniors who are going to college to pursue the arts," Kate says.

Other fundraisers round out an annual schedule of events for this busy civic group. In every season, the Junior Woman's Club is looking for ways to lend a hand in the community.

Their Breakfast with Santa at Waypoint Grill is a widely anticipated annual event, and other festivals like Whistle Belly in Merchant's Square and Brews that Benefit with Williamsburg Aleworks ensure that people from all walks of life can find an event that suits them.

After these events wind down, the magic can happen. "All of the money we've raised over that year, we give straight back to the community. Anybody can apply," says Kate. "We give out between \$30,000 and \$40,000 a year back into the community. Having made that much in a previous year, we always aim to match that number or beat it with our fundraising in the coming year."

The process for applying for the club's assistance is straightforward. "Every year, we host a donations forum and we meet as an entire club to accept applications from the entire community. Anybody within Williamsburg, James City County and the Williamsburg end of York County is eligible to apply for these mini-grants," Kate says.

The Junior Woman's Club has a soft spot for the arts, but a wide range of grants have been



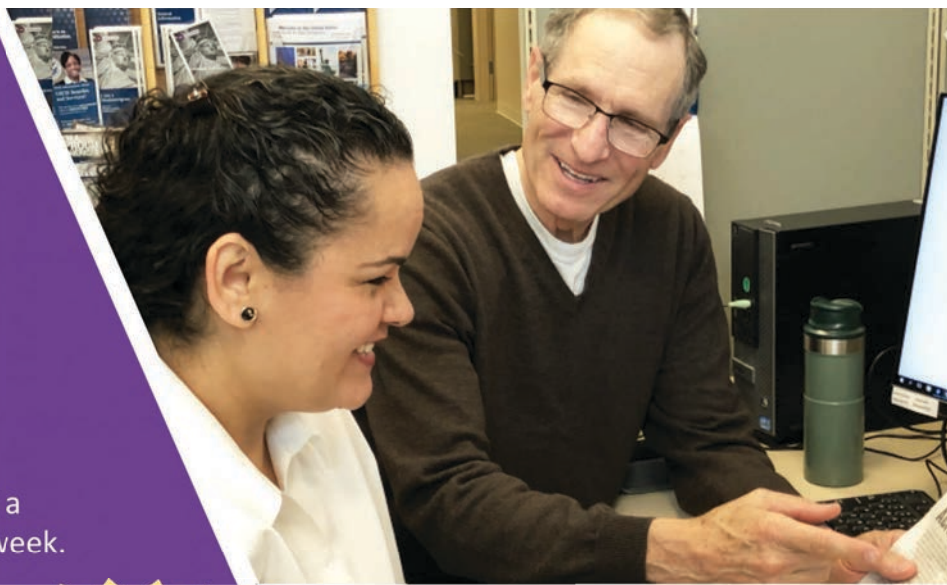
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awarded through the years. “We have groups that apply year after year and a lot of school systems apply for assistance in their classrooms. We’ll give money to non-profits or schools: any sort of educational mission,” Kate says. Past beneficiaries have included Flute Frenzy, iDance and the Youth Aeronautics Educational Foundation.

“It gives me friendships and involvement in the community and sort of a greater purpose, for lack of a better term. I work in Collections at Colonial Williamsburg and my role is very research-based. Having social time outside of work with people my own age is also really important,” she says. The Junior Woman’s Club combines the comfort of friendship with the rewards of pursuing higher goals and the gratification that comes with working for positive change.

Finding an outlet to share her talents is part of a long tradition in Kate’s family. “My mom was involved in Red Cross and we did a lot of volunteering as kids, things like soup kitchen and fundraisers for food banks. Junior Woman’s Club has helped me find people who share

goals that are similar to mine,” says Kate.

Kate’s involvement with Junior Woman’s Club has been so rewarding that she’s made the club’s growth her primary target in her second term. “Club presidency is technically a one-year term, but we have the option for a second term. I was lucky enough to be asked to serve a second term.” With her feet firmly beneath her, Kate is ready to attack some new goals in her second round of leadership. “Our big goal over the past year and then continuing into this next year is trying to get us out into the community a little bit more,” she says.


This is an initiative that hinges on recruiting new membership. With increased manpower, the group might see the ability to host wider or more numerous events, or find outlets for publicity that would let other community organizations know what the Junior Woman’s Club has to offer.

“We have about 20 women in our group right now. We’ve had more in the past. The main demographic historically has been women from age 25 to 40, but really, we’re from all walks of life,” Kate says.

Getting the word out is key. “We’re involved in the community and I feel like people who apply for our donations forum and who have been involved know us very well. But I feel like there are a lot of people in the community who might not know us as well and might not know what’s available through Junior Woman’s Club,” she says.

The Junior Woman’s Club is easy to find. “We host our general membership meeting every third Wednesday at seven p.m. at the James City County Rec Center. We’re looking to grow. To be in the club, you have to come to a certain number of membership meetings and help out with a service event and a social event. There are a couple of attendance requirements to meet, but anyone can join,” she says.


“The biggest thing for me has been making connections and meeting people that I otherwise wouldn’t have met so many of the women who are involved are people that I probably would not have come across otherwise. But we share a lot of the same goals and values, and they’re very interesting people. So I’m glad that I have had this chance to meet them.” NDN



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PETER MELLETTE



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Awareness & Empathy within the Community

By Narielle Living

Peter Mellette, the immediate past president of the Williamsburg Rotary Club, believes strongly in the values of service, and his life is a richly woven tapestry of work within the community. He has been a member of the Rotary Club for a number of years.

“The thing that attracted me about Rotary initially was the fact that my dad was a Rotar-

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ian,” he says. “And then my wife became a Rotarian. We are one of the few couples in rotary, although it’s more common today than it was 20 or 30 years ago. The goals of Rotary have always appealed to me which are the service opportunities in the community, in fact, in the world.”

To demonstrate his point, Peter places an award on the table that they received as a result of their work in Rwanda. “We have a global grant in Rwanda right now which is training pre-hospital workers. The medical situation in Rwanda is very different than it is here. They have hospitals but the hospitals require you to bring your own sheets, bring your own food, bring own everything. It’s a very different situation.”

Peter, a health care attorney, has lived in Williamsburg with his wife, Kerry, since 1987. When his wife accepted a job as the director for the United Way, they decided to move to the area. “Williamsburg’s a great place to live,” he says. “We raised two daughters here and fully expect to be here for the rest of our lives. It took me a few years to relocate my work. I commuted to Richmond for 17 years, then when I was leaving another firm in Richmond, I decided that I’d like to set up my own practice.”

Today, Peter has a health care law practice in Williamsburg. His decision to practice health care law was prompted in part by his mother, Susan, who was the first female oncologist in the state of Virginia. “My mom was certainly an influence,” he says. “I grew up around hospitals. My mom worked very long days and so the opportunity to see her was typically when she was working.”

Peter’s father was a member of the Richmond Rotary Club. “He was there in the late 1950s and was a member until his retirement in the 1970s. He was a minister by training but ran a nonprofit that now goes by the name the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities. With my mom working at MCV, I used to take the bus downtown from where we lived in north Richmond and go shopping and do a lot of things. It’s interesting to see how things change. I continue to go to Richmond with my work. It’s a vibrant city.”

Peter’s parents have an enduring presence in his life, despite their passing. He is able to memorialize them through an organization called the Torch Club. “The Torch Club is an academic and professional group that meets on a monthly basis during the academic year. Members, which include university professors as well as attorneys and accountants and other professionals, will give a talk on a subject of interest which can be vocational or avocational. I have memorialized my parents through giving talks at the Torch Club on subjects that I thought would be of interest to them in addition to giving talks on more vocational subjects. I’ve given one on health reform and one on advance directives. I gave one on my mother’s poetry and one on my dad that was focused on Martin Luther King’s *Chaos or Community*. It was his last book. I used that as a jumping off point to talk about my dad’s work with what was then the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Richmond and throughout the state. It was therapeutic because it obviously allowed me to reconcile all the emotions related to their lives, their influence and their passing.”

Peter joined the Williamsburg Rotary Club about 10 years ago. He

had not joined prior to this in large part because he had been primarily working in Richmond. “I didn’t prioritize it at the time, and of course when you’re raising two daughters you’re busy when you’re not working.”

According to Peter, Rotary was established in 1905 in Illinois. “Paul Harris was the founder along with others who got together and realized that there was no organization that did service work like Rotary. There were no other organizations that basically did the service work you see being done now around Williamsburg and elsewhere. The concept was that this gave the folks who were in business an opportunity to be servant leaders at that point, and they were able to give back to the community.” One of the Rotary concepts that greatly appealed to Peter is the four-way test. First: Is it truth; Second: Is it fair to all concerned; Third: Will it build good will and better friendships; and Fourth: Will it be beneficial to all concerned.

His club has worked to support a number of groups. Locally, they supported Literacy for Life and Here for the Girls and Avalon. They award grants to organizations throughout the community for various needs. “Usually 10 or 12 organizations receive those grants,” he says. “We’ve sponsored exchange students from other countries. We had one last year. We’ve done sponsorships of a youth in leadership training, and during my tenure last year we had three students who went to a leadership program. We’ve also participated in raising money for Salvation Army each year, and we pick up trash.”

In addition to rotary, Peter has chaired a couple of organizations in the community. “I was chair of the Hospice House back in the early 2000s as the house was opening and we were beginning to transition into the services that are currently being offered. I was also chair of Literacy for Life for two years. I’ve served on the advisory council for Literacy for Life since dropping off the board. I’ve worked with projects within my congregation, the Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists. There are lots of things I do in the community outside of Rotary, but Rotary is a good way to carry out a lot of those same interests.”

Peter is quick to mention that he is extremely proud of his two daughters, who are both now grown. “I’m very blessed and very proud of my daughters. Obviously, my wife had a great influence on their lives because she was here more than I was in terms of their early years, but both of them have had great starts to their careers. My oldest, Kelsey, went to law school and is now working for Senator Harris doing health education and labor policy as a legislative aid. My youngest, Margot, got a history degree from Yale, but is now in her third year clinical rotations at UVA med school.”

With his extraordinary involvement in the community, Peter Mellette has discovered that volunteer work has unexpected benefits. “It’s not the typical thing you think of with Rotary, where you’re working with people then you start referring business back and forth. That’s not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about developing skills and developing an awareness and an empathy for the folks who are in your community through your volunteer work. I think that then allows you to focus your other pursuits and be effective in the community.” NDN



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CIAO

Welcome to the Family

By Narielle Living

Lisa W. Cumming Photography

The Colonial Italian American Organization (CIAO) is thriving, according to the group's President, Ben DeMeo. In fact, rumors of its demise were greatly exaggerated. "We didn't die," he says with a laugh. According to him, about two years ago it appeared in an area newspaper that the group was no longer in existence.

"Someone wrote in and said, 'I hear the CIAO organization is now disbanded'. I don't know who wrote it or who put it in there." However, to the contrary, the group continues to grow. "We're looking to bring back more Italian culture and fun."

Throughout his life, Ben has lived in differ-

ent locations and owned a variety of businesses. "I had an insurance company and a call center. I had a construction company, a jewelry business, wholesale and manufacturing... I could go on. I would get a business up and going and in about five years sell it."

He and his wife relocated to Williamsburg



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from Miami. One day, a woman who worked with his wife at Colonial Williamsburg asked if he was enjoying the Italian club. He had no idea what she was talking about, but set out to find this group. "Coming from Miami, our Italian club membership was 1,400," he says. "I was considered the odd one because I was first generation Italian. The majority of the members were from Italy. We were in Miami for 20 years, and prior to that we were in New Jersey. That Italian American club was even larger there."

CIAO is now 25 years old and was started by a small group of people who came to this region from Italy. Originally, members had to be of Italian descent to join. Today, that has changed. "About four years ago we made it so you don't have to be of Italian heritage or descent to join the club," Ben says. This opens the door for anyone to learn about the food, art or culture, and participate in a club that is sharply focused on giving back to the children in the community by awarding scholarships.

"In our club, we have the social aspect," he

says. "We have dinners, and we go to a local, family owned Italian restaurant." In the Italian American tradition, Sundays are set aside for dinner at grandma's house, which is what the club tries to replicate. "We also do happy hour once a month, the first Wednesday of every month, from five p.m. to seven p.m." Happy hours are open to everybody, not just members. "It's really so you can see how friendly and warm the club is. We're Italian, of course we're friendly and warm!"

Ben and the board of directors for CIAO are working to make the club more active. In the past, the club had organized the Italian Wine Festival as a benefit for their scholarship fund. Since the event took place in October, they found that the market for this type of festival was not lucrative due to the large number of ongoing festivals. "It became less and less profitable to do it. So now we're thinking of trying to work other avenues to raise money."

Scholarships are the main focus for this group. They believe strongly in education and

in allowing everyone the chance to receive an education if they desire. "We've given out scholarships over the last 20 years of almost a million dollars," Ben says. "We've given locally to high school kids who are graduating from schools in the area. They could also be homeschooled, and they can still receive a scholarship. This year we're giving out four \$4,000 scholarships to kids in Williamsburg. You don't have to be a straight-A student to get a scholarship. We also go by financial situation. Does your family really need it?" Ben says that the group has given scholarships to families who simply cannot afford to send their children to college. "It's not going to pay for the full four years but it helps them a little."

The process of awarding scholarships is taken very seriously within CIAO. "We had one individual years ago who was homeless, and for her, this was great," he says. "I met a man who was going through a divorce and at that time he just didn't have the money. Yes, they have to have good grades but they also have to re-



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ally need it.” Ben says that it is not uncommon for most scholarships to be primarily based on grade point averages, but for his organization it’s a need-based award, too. “We take into account how badly you need it and what your finances are.” Demonstrated financial need plays a big part in awarding scholarships as long as a student’s grades are respectable. Board member Tom Hill agrees. “Some families are okay financially, but they might have four kids in college, so they could use our help.”

One of the social features of CIAO is a bike club. “We’ve been trying to meet, weather permitting, every Monday. We usually meet at Jamestown Island,” Ben says. Age and ability are no objects for this group of cyclists, as they strive for inclusiveness. “Nobody is left behind,” he says. “We have it at all different speeds. Some people go really fast, some go in the middle, but nobody goes home unless all have come back.” He goes on to say that if they sit waiting for someone for too long, they’ll go back and look for them. “Sometimes we meet

at the Chickahominy park and go up over the bridge and down to the Charles City courthouse and come back. Everybody rides a different speed but nobody is left behind.”

One of the aspects that unites many of the folks within the club is their ability to identify with the Italian culture and the experience of being Italian. “I think we might have come from different areas of the east coast, or some from the west coast, but we’ve gone through the same culture. People my age, from Northern Jersey, you’ve also gone through the same discrimination. I remember as a kid my father wanted to move into a certain community but he had a vowel at the end of his name, so they told him if you change your name we’ll sell you a house. Then thirty years later, my wife and I are buying a house in New Jersey. My wife is blonde, light skinned, and they had no problem. But when we gave them the contract and they saw our name was DeMeo, the owner wouldn’t sell to an Italian. That was 1990. It still existed in certain pockets.”

Others in the group can relate. Nancy Vanderhoof, the treasurer for the group, remembers her grandfather refusing to teach them the Italian language. “We could not speak Italian at all,” she says. “It was American, speak American because you are an American. It was very evident that he felt strongly about that. We all have the same background, and we come from the same area.”


Ben DeMeo agrees, saying his father wouldn’t speak the language at home, either. “He didn’t want to have an accent. He came to the United States when he was young.”

CIAO holds elections for the board of directors once a year. The group meets and the minutes are distributed to all the members. They also have committees, such as the welcoming committee and aid and comfort. “If someone gets sick, they send cards and flowers,” Ben says. “If someone dies, their spouse or family gets a basket with Italian wine and cookies. We try to make our members feel welcome and warm, even in passing.” NDN

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MARY VAN SWOL



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Home with the **VFW**

By Susan Williamson

In 2020, the Blacknall-Chess Post 4639 of the VFW will celebrate its 75th anniversary, but according to newly elected Junior Vice-Commander Mary Van Swol, few people know that Williamsburg has a VFW post. Mary and her husband, Glenn, who will become post commander in June, are trying to change that. They are working hard to recruit new members. The post has met the recruiting and other requirements to become an All American Post, but Mary would like to see the number of members, currently around 210, increase.

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She would especially like for more women to become active members. In a community like Williamsburg with so many active duty and retired military, Mary feels there are many more potential members.

The existing post building off of Old News Road on Jesters Lane is the original location of the local organization. Some of the walls and paneling have historic significance, according to Mary.

Mary joined the VFW eighteen months ago in order to help veterans. She has served as adjutant prior to being nominated for the junior vice commander position. The positions are voluntary but result from nominations by the members. VFW membership is open to any retired, separated or active duty servicemen or women who are veterans of an imminent duty hostile environment deployment. So far, she has found membership very rewarding.

“The post tries to help veterans and active duty members with whatever they need. Sometimes it’s a matter of filing paperwork for benefits, helping with GI bill issues and funding a special need, like a hospital bed for one mili-

tary family,” she says. One veteran was traveling through town on a motorcycle with his service dog. A heavy rain had begun, and he needed a dry place to spend the night. He had enough money for gas on his trip, but not for a motel room. The relief fund paid for his motel. While the VFW is ready to help with any specific needs, it also provides a social outlet where men and women can gather with others who may have similar experiences.

The local post is open every Friday night for dinner, usually cooked by Mary. “I guess you can say I’m a ‘foodie,’” she says with a laugh. “I love cooking for people, but I don’t usually have a recipe.” The monthly meeting, preceded by dinner, occurs on the second Monday of the month. The first Sunday is Bingo and the third Saturday is breakfast. Meals are reasonably priced, usually five to seven dollars, and beer, wine and soft drinks are available. The Friday night dinners offer members a chance to socialize, play pool and as Mary says, “Feel the love.” She often brings some of her dogs to visit with the members and provide companionship and emotional support. “Everyone knows every-

one else, and we’re here whenever the doors are open.” Mary makes a point of greeting everyone who comes in and offers a personal farewell to anyone leaving the post.

The post offers scholarships and essay contests for students through programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen and Scout of the Year. There are also teacher and community recognition programs. The VFW hosts an annual 4th of July picnic, a dominoes tournament and a spring golf tournament with sponsored holes which acts as a fundraiser. This year’s tournament was at Kiskiak Golf Course on April 27. “Several Wounded Warriors have played in the golf tournament. Worn out American flags can be brought to the post for disposal whenever it is open.”

Monies collected from semi-annual poppy sales, during Armed Forces Week in May and Veterans Day in November, fund the veteran’s relief and help create community awareness. The post members also visit VA hospitals in Richmond and Hampton. The post canteen dining hall is available for rental to the public for special events.

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The VFW was a part of Mary's life when she was growing up. She remembers going to the local post with her great uncle, so she was familiar with the various service and community activities.

Mary separated from the US Navy in 2012 after serving two back-to-back deployments on the USS Enterprise, which provided support for ground troops in Afghanistan. "I served on the decommissioning voyage of the Enterprise," she says, "and my great uncle's brother served on the commissioning voyage."

A Pierre, South Dakota native, Mary moved to Florida and joined the Navy at the age of 32. "I wanted to make a difference," she says, "and improve myself. It was the best decision I ever made." She met her husband, who is a retired Special Forces commander, in Virginia Beach. "He was an awesome deployment husband because he knew what it was like. He was extremely supportive." The couple moved to Williamsburg in 2010 while she was still on active duty as an E-4 logistics specialist. After her separation, she went to work full time as a civilian at Cheatham Annex, where she is a comp-

troller for Navy Expeditionary Medical Supply. The Van Swols make their home on five acres near York River State Park which they share with nine dogs, 12 chickens and eight ducks. She rescued their two larger dogs and they breed Chihuahuas. Their ducks include Indian Runners and Swedish Blues, two unusual breeds. Mary wanted the chickens and her husband asked for ducks which had been used for alerts on some of his deployments. "Our home is my happy place," she says. "I love being outside." Mary enjoys gardening, growing both flowers and vegetables that she cans and freezes. The couple has three grown children between them, and her stepson is also a member of the local post. Her son lives and works in Germany. She enjoys Skyping with her three and half year old granddaughter who is bilingual and wants to talk to "Oma" and "Opa".

While Mary was on active duty, she completed a three component master's degree: an MBA with managerial accounting, total quality project management and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt which means doing a lot with a little. She is now working on a doctorate in business from

Trident University International.

But that's not all she's doing. Mary has long made her own all-natural beauty products. Now she is crafting beauty products, pet products and cleaning products to sell under the brand of Iron Creek Trading. "Sometimes I'm out in the shop working until midnight or later with my dogs for company," she says.

She says that when she and her husband were first married, her husband asked her where she kept her beauty products. He was amazed to find out she made them from kitchen and garden ingredients and old family recipes and encouraged her to offer the products to the public. She and her next door neighbor are opening a spa in the Five Forks Area called "Beautiful Humans" which will feature her products and various beauty services. Her neighbor will manage the day-to-day operations while she furnishes the products.

Mary uses her education, her drive and her concern for others in all of her many daily activities. She joined the Navy and the VFW to make a difference, and there is no doubt that she has, and continues to do so. NDN



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MASONS

Making a Good Man Even Better

By Wheston Chancellor Grove



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

Ryan Young is an architect of the mind as well as a builder in the literal sense. At 33, Ryan has been working at the Newport News Shipyard in the X-11 Fitter department for almost ten years. He and his crew are described as “carpenters with steel.” He helps build the structure, framework, shell and bulkheads of ships, specifically tackling midlife refueling and overhaul of aircraft carriers. Ryan, along with another local from Williamsburg, John Thompson, helps perform the complex overhaul of the flight deck, catapults, island house and arresting gear on the aircraft carrier USS George Washington.

“It can be challenging at times but also fun. It has been rewarding. The shipyard has been good to me.”

Ryan comes from a family of builders; it’s in his blood. His father and uncles all worked in the shipyard, but building isn’t the only thing that runs in his family. Almost six years ago, Ryan petitioned to become a freemason. He turned to his uncle for one of his references.

“My uncle responded, ‘It’s about damn time.’ He had been waiting for me to ask him for years.”

Freemasonry as a fraternity dates to the building of King Solomon’s Temple in 586 B.C.E. In that time, an individual had to be an operative mason, someone who worked in the craft. Over the centuries the trade grew, allowing freemasons to travel throughout the middle ages. During the 18th century the fraternity experienced a reawakening and an expansion from “operative” masons to “speculative” masons. The fraternity caught the eye of other professionals like doctors and lawyers. These occupations, among many others, became the foundation for “speculative” masons. They didn’t work in masonry but used the lessons from it to be freemasons. After the Grand Lodge of England formed, freemasonry expanded into the colonies, predominantly in port cities. Many U.S. presidents were freemasons including George Washington, Andrew Jackson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman and Gerald Ford.

During the late 1770s Williamsburg formed the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Currently, there are almost 300 lodges in the state. The standard widely accepted Masonic rite has three degrees of “raising”: 1. Initiation of Entered Apprentice with catechisms that must be learned. 2. Fellowcraft. 3. Master Mason, the highest rank that anyone can earn.

It takes a certain kind of person who wants to become a freemason. “It is a thinking man’s fraternity where everything is interconnected,” Kent Brinkley says. Kent is a senior brother to Ryan. Every “brother,” as they call each other, is united by the same commitment to lifelong learning. The opportunity to broaden one’s horizons is a fountain of endless possibilities. The biblical adage “Seek and you shall find” is a keystone of freemasonry principles. For those who know little to nothing about the fraternity except conspiracy theories, “Masonry is not a religion; it teaches no dogma or salvation, but it does deepen one’s spiritual faith,” Kent says with candor. Its secrecy is more about sacred-

ness than mystery. One must be a good man to join. There are no drug dealers or felons within the brotherhood. Some exceptions occur, but the circumstances have to be discussed.

The Williamsburg Masonic Lodge has monthly stated meetings along with weekly practice meetings and typically a breakfast on the fourth Saturday.

“Becoming a freemason has led me down a completely different path in life,” Ryan says. I’m not saying I was going down a bad path, but it’s led me down a much better path. It brought me together with like-minded individuals. In very dark times in my life, when my mother was sick and passing, I had the brothers to lean on. It definitely is a benefit. I wish I had done it earlier.”

The Williamsburg Masonic Lodge focuses largely on charity funds. It provides scholarships to high schools and one scholarship to William & Mary. The brothers support blood drives and donate to the masonic home of Virginia which is like the “crown jewel.” It is a retirement home for freemasons where members can spend their last days among brothers and friends.

The Williamsburg Masonic Lodge also donates to natural disaster victims, including hur-

ricane survivors. The brothers emphasize giving back and instilling moral lessons. Freemasonry, throughout the ages, has “taught men that you live by the golden rule, and this makes good men better,” Ryan says. Part of the initiation process teaches lessons in moral philosophy, using the tools and techniques of architecture as metaphors. Tools that once had a practical use now have a symbolical purpose.

The core idea is banding together with a group of like-minded men who share similar values and philosophies. Friendships are built around supporting each other and living “life in a way that makes you a better person than you might have been if left to your own devices,” Ryan explains. The predominant faith of the brothers in a specific lodge determines the book of faith that will be used. Being a freemason reminds a man that he’s a spiritual being apart from just a physical form. The brotherhood also emphasizes the relationship one has with his creator and how to be comfortable in your skin. Not everyone agrees on how to go about this. There isn’t a one-size-fits-all answer.

How does a man become a freemason? “To be one, ask one. If you’re interested in freemasonry, ask a brother about it. You have to want to do it of your own accord. It is a commit-

ment that goes to your psyche and your soul. A freemason is never going to ask you to join. It’s a tradition that you must seek to know.” According to Ryan, becoming a freemason is a life changing step. “It is considered the first day of the rest of your life. When you make the important decision to join, you will be held to a higher standard. No one can make the choice, but you.” Freemasons do not recruit.

Surprisingly, it’s never too late to join. They are a multigenerational group of men which lends itself to younger members learning from those who are older and more experienced. However, inside the doors of the lodge, everyone is equal as brothers. Ryan emphasizes the quality relationships he has found at the Lodge. “You can go to [other brothers] in a pinch and depend on them to be there.”

Ryan Young has a deep and abiding respect for all that the Freemasons have taught him in his life and the guidance he finds from the members. “For younger people out there, if you’re missing something in your life and you want to find something deeper, to join something bigger than yourself, then freemasonry is definitely [worth] looking into. It’s not for everybody; all you have to do is knock on the door and ask.” Seek and you shall find. NDN

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Making A Difference Through Service

By Dawn Brotherton

Joe Adair is a Navy-man who has traveled the world but chose to settle in Williamsburg, Virginia because of the rich history here. “There’s no place you can go in Williamsburg more than one hundred and fifty feet without stepping into some kind of history somewhere along the line, either a Civil War history or American Revolution,” Joe says.

Raised in Corsicana, Texas, Joe joined the Navy to become a submarine auxiliary engineer. “Anytime the submarine went under the

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water, it was my job to make sure it came back up.” He spent 21 years working with various types of engineering and mechanical plants or systems that didn’t involve a nuclear reactor. His father and grandfather were both in the service, as well as uncles, covering across all branches. The military was a natural progression for him.

In 1993, Joe retired from the Navy out of Norfolk and moved to Richmond to work in the restaurant industry. He moved to the Hampton-Poquoson area for a short time and met his wife, Karen. They met online and spent months getting to know each other through email before meeting in person for the first time while Karen was getting her car’s oil changed. “We sat and talked for two hours and found out we had grown up pretty much the same way. We hit it off after that,” Joe says. They dated for two years before getting married at the Flagpole Bastion at Fort Monroe. Joe’s son-in-law is a minister in Smithfield and performed the ceremony. Joe and Karen have been married for 19 years and have seven kids and fifteen grandkids.

They moved to Williamsburg in 2007. After

four years here, they tried Florida for a short stint but missed this area and came back to stay in 2012. They still have family in the Gloucester community, so Williamsburg was a great fit. Joe worked in the hospitality industry with a variety of hotels. He finally retired a year ago after a job providing housing for the international students who came to work at Busch Gardens and Water Country.

Joe’s military background has drilled into him a life of service, and he continues this tradition by supporting veterans through his work with the American Legion. He is on his third one-year term as the post commander for Williamsburg Post 39 and is the vice commander for the Third District for the Department of Virginia, covering ground from Phoebus to Charleston County.

The American Legion was established in 1919 as an organization of veterans helping veterans. They are committed to mentoring youth, advocating for patriotism and sponsoring wholesome programs in local communities. The extent of their projects is large, including an amateur baseball league to teach sportsmanship, citizenship and fitness. They

work with wounded warriors through Operation Comfort Warriors, providing them with items to make an extended hospital stay more like home.

The Virginia American Legion Auxiliary supports Girls State and Boys State to teach students they are an essential part of their government. Locally, Post 39 raises money to help fellow veterans in times of need. During the recent government shutdown that hit the Coast Guard members so hard, Post 39 was able to support families and ensure they had food on their tables. If a veteran is having trouble getting medical care, the Legion is there to help them unravel the paperwork and get them what they need. If other emergencies arise, such as a fire or civilian layoff, the Legion can help.

The Williamsburg Legion members meet on the fourth Monday night of the month at Rocco’s Smokehouse Grill. By not maintaining their own facility, Post 39 is able to keep their dues low and concentrate their funds on veterans in need. “We have a large veteran population from people who get transferred here to Langley or to Yorktown or Fort Eustis, and they decide Williamsburg is where they want



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to build their home, so they retire here.”

Joe and Karen picked Williamsburg for many reasons, history being the first thing to capture their attention. “My wife’s great, great grandfather was in the Union Army, and mine was in the Confederate Army. We kind of joke around we’re about one hundred and fifty yards from not being alive because they were that close at Appomattox,” Joe says.

Growing up, Joe heard the old stories about the family homestead. “In the state of Texas, in the seventh grade, you get one course of Texas history. And at that point, history started intriguing me. Then I started looking more into my own family history and where my family came from.” He spent two years in Scotland tracing his heritage. “I’ve traced my family history all the way back to Robert the Bruce, first King of Scotland, and then tracked it a little further back to King John, who signed the Magna Carta.” He explains it takes a lot of reading and following the strings from one document to the other to gather the information. “It’s a big puzzle that you piece together.”

In addition to the history, Joe appreciates where Williamsburg is located. “You’re not far

from anything, really. You’re no more than a couple of hours away from the seashore, the mountains, the woods or wherever you want to go.”

In his spare time, Joe enjoys taking care of his grandkids. Hopping between here, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Alabama keeps him busy, but he wouldn’t have it any other way. Although he has been all over the world, Joe is ready to keep traveling. He and Karen plan on visiting Washington state, San Francisco and Disney World in the near future, giving him a chance to work on his photography hobby.

“Being in the Navy [as a submariner], I’ve been as far west as Perth, Australia. I’ve seen the Indian Ocean. I’ve been to both Antarctica and the Arctic. I’ve been as far east as the eastern Mediterranean. I’ve seen Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. I’ve seen Libya through a periscope. I’ve been to the North Sea and the Baltic Sea.” Now he wants to see it all again from above water, taking his time as a tourist. He also dreams of taking the trans Canadian train journey between Toronto and Vancouver and then back again. In the meantime, he may build his own model train set. Retirement has so many op-

tions for him.

For now, the American Legion keeps him busy with local post business and Virginia and national conferences. He’s constantly researching new ways to help veterans and to improve existing programs. Although he is the Post Commander, Joe prefers being the go-to guy in the background rather than the person leading the group. He enjoys doing the research and would rather leave the attention to someone else. “The most rewarding aspect of being in the American Legion is the satisfaction that what I’m doing is for somebody else.”

Although retired, Joe Adair is constantly looking for areas to expand. “When I get to the point where I can’t grow anymore, then it’s time for me to grow daisies.”

He takes his personal growth and calling very seriously. He is driven to make a difference in the lives of others. “If I could put it into one word, I would think it’d be service. First of all, I’m a Christian in service to God. I’m a husband in service to my wife. I’m a father in service to my family. I’m a veteran, still in service to my country, even though I’m no longer wearing the uniform.” NDN

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VACATIONS WITH BABIES

By Alison Johnson

When Emily Frezza's first child was six months old, she and her husband, Dan, took a road trip to visit their families in Wilmington, North Carolina.

They had to cram so much baby gear into their Jeep Liberty that their black Labrador, Bella, barely had room to sit. The day after they

got home, Emily started shopping for a bigger car, a Honda Pilot, which comes with a third row of seating.

Four years later, Emily has started a business to help other families just like hers. In February, the stay-at-home mom of two became an independent provider for the national compa-

ny BabyQuip, which rents equipment such as cribs, strollers, high chairs, car seats, toys and books to traveling families and anyone hosting a baby or toddler in a home.

"Believe me, I'm well aware that traveling with kids can feel overwhelming," Emily says. "Our goal is to help customers be able to fully

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enjoy themselves without the hassle of dragging gear to their destination, setting it all up and packing it away in their car for the trip home.”

BabyQuip provides an online platform similar to Airbnb that connects customers with clean and insured baby gear. Emily, a former middle school teacher, is tasked with delivering items to homes, hotel rooms, airports or whatever location is most convenient. She then picks them up at the end of a rental period and thoroughly scrubs and inspects them.

So far, Emily’s main customer base has been grandparents with visiting grandchildren. As summer approaches, she plans to reach out to local hotels and resorts in hopes of generating more referrals.

“I truly enjoy the customer service aspect of this work,” she says. “I love meeting different people, getting to know my customers and making visits and vacations memorable and easy.”

Emily’s experience as a mother to Maddy, four and a half years old, and Josie, six months, has been a major source of inspiration. In particular, she has learned the value of recreating home settings and routines as much as possible on the road. When baby Maddy had to sleep in a Pack ’n Play rather than a crib on that North Carolina trip, for example, Emily and Dan had multiple extra wake up calls.

“You start to realize if you change one thing, it might be completely miserable,” she notes. “So, you bring a lot of stuff. Unless you’re flying, of course, and then you have to figure out how to arrange for what you need.”

BabyQuip also helps parents avoid the scramble to set up equipment immediately upon arrival, often at a baby’s naptime or bedtime. “It can be the difference between a restful, enjoyable vacation and a hectic trip with grumpy kids and probably grumpy parents too.”

For Emily, 35, the business is a chance to tackle rewarding work from home after stepping away from teaching to raise her girls. With a Bachelor’s Degree in Chemistry and a Master’s Degree in Teaching from East Carolina University, she taught math and science in North Carolina for three years before moving to Williamsburg in 2011. They moved when her husband Dan accepted a position in fundraising and annual giving at William & Mary.

Emily spent the next four years teaching seventh grade math in New Kent County schools. While the tweens and young teenagers could be challenging in the classroom, she loved working at the middle school level.

“They’re more independent than elementary school kids,” she says. “Their goal isn’t to please you, so you have to figure them out and determine what works for them. Each one is like a puzzle to solve, which was really interesting to me.”

After Maddy was born, Emily finished out the school year but soon opted to become a full-time mom. “Teaching is not a job that you can put down at five p.m.,” she explains. “I like that I can be more flexible and not have to work when I want to spend time with my kids. We’ll see what happens in the future, but for now I really value having that flexibility.”

Not long after Josie arrived, Emily began to search online for jobs she could do at home. Trouble is, she doesn’t like to sell things, so the idea

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Jason Rohde has been an Arc member for 22 years. He loves spending time with his friends at Arc activities such as Open Art Studio, volunteering with Aktion Club, attending dances, taking part in the fitness program, and the annual Busch Gardens outing. Some friends, like Frankie, he’s known for over 20 years and newer friends, like Courtney, make him very happy.

Jason also works for the WISC Fitness Academy, where he and his boss, David Marmon, both describe each other as best friends! Jason dreams of being a fitness coach and is learning how to work with clients under the guidance of David. He has set high expectations for Jason and holds him accountable for his scheduled tasks while encouraging him to have fun and enjoy himself.

When asked how Jason has impacted the workplace, David was quick to say, “Most importantly, it has promoted an environment of inclusion. Everyone is welcome and everyone is accountable. For several of our clients, daily interaction with Jason may have been a new experience in having a relationship (not just knowing) someone with a disability. My hope is that our clients and staff continue to expect more from Jason as a coach, which will only allow him to grow socially and enhance his life.”


Jason Rohde is The Arc.

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of peddling beauty products or housewares held no appeal. BabyQuip caught her eye because it offered a service instead.

“I hate school fundraisers,” Emily says. “I’d rather just donate money than go around my neighborhood knocking on doors. And I don’t love the idea of trying to convince my friends that, you know, this lipstick I’m selling will stay on for 48 hours. This was a much better fit.”

BabyQuip’s independent providers build their own inventories, are responsible for liability insurance payments and keep 80 percent of rental and delivery fees, along with all of their tips, according to the company website.

Since launching her business, Emily has gradually bought new items to add to her supply of unopened or very gently worn gear and toys from her own children. She stores equipment in a large linen closet in her guest bathroom and attic and basement spaces.

Emily generally operates within a 30-minute delivery area, although she tries her best to accommodate any request. For recent grandparent clients hosting their family for Easter weekend, for example, she had set up a crib by ten a.m. to be ready for naptime when the visitors arrived, and a high chair waiting in the kitchen for lunch.

According to Emily, keeping items in near-perfect condition isn’t as hard as it sounds. “A steam cleaner, a vacuum and a good organic cleaner go a long way! You usually find that if part of a stroller or car seat ends up with a stain that can’t be removed, you can usually replace just the part that isn’t in great condition.”

Generally, BabyQuip’s products are designed for kids up to age five. The most-requested item is the full-sized crib, which includes a mattress, mattress cover and linens and rents for \$20 a day. Other popular items include infant and child car seats, standard strollers, and toy packages. Those packages, based on a child’s age and interests, can be built for indoor, outdoor or bath-time play, with larger ride-on toys among the options.

As a Williamsburg resident, Emily feels lucky to be based in an area with plenty of retirees and tourists. She also loves living near the water again. “Growing up in Wilmington, we were always going to the beach, swimming and eating great seafood,” she recalls. “All of that is so relaxing.”

Other hobbies include reading mystery novels, gardening, spending time with family and friends and traveling, with Italy at the top of Emily’s destination wish list. She also enjoys making “barn quilts”, or quilting designs painted on wooden squares for decorative purposes.

“I don’t consider myself a creative person, but I enjoy the attention to detail the process requires,” she says.

The BabyQuip job gives Emily plenty of time to focus on her daughters’ milestones, such as Maddy’s upcoming transition to kindergarten in the fall. “It’s emotional! I’ve already eaten a bunch of ice cream thinking about it,” she admits with a laugh. “Luckily, Maddy loves school.”

Looking back, Emily Frezza can imagine how Maddy’s first road trip would have been different if she’d known about BabyQuip.

“Dan and I probably would have slept a lot more,” she says. “Plus, I could have kept the car I wanted. We still had a great time, of course, but now I can help other parents have an easier time.” NDN



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Therapeutic Recreation for Everyone

By Kathleen Toomey Jabs

Corey Miller Photography

Inclusion comes natural to Tracy Newsom. For as far back as she can remember, she “always wanted to help people” and bring them together. She likes groups and belonging. She wants people to feel comfortable in their bodies and in their community. “We are so much better together,” she says. If a person is physically unable to join a group, attend an event or visit a park, Tracy finds a way to accommodate that person and their family or caretaker. She sees it as her mission.

While enrolled at Liberty University during her first year of college, Tracy experienced a series of events which helped her to narrow her focus on how she wanted to help others. She discovered her calling: to help people with disabilities. After some research, she transferred to Old Dominion University (ODU) where she intended to pursue a major in physical therapy. Then she discovered therapeutic recreation.

“I was walking past the Department of Education one day, and I literally saw the curriculum and classes hung on a wall. Something clicked,” she says. “I knew that’s what I wanted to do.” She saw a chance to help people by al-

lowing inclusion and breaking down barriers, creating safe spaces and accessible areas.

After graduating from ODU, Tracy found her dream job. “I love that I live and work in Williamsburg, and I’m part of the community.” For the last nine years, she has been serving as the Inclusion Program Coordinator for James City County Parks and Recreation. Officially, she works to ensure that all of the county recreation centers are American with Disability Acts (ADA) compliant and that there are inclusive programs for all ages. Unofficially, she is an ambassador for therapeutic recreation, both inside and outside. She ensures there are activities for everyone. And as a resident of James City County, she visits the parks as an employee and as a customer. She can see both sides.

Tracy’s passion shines through when she speaks about growing therapeutic programs, increasing awareness and seeing people grow and develop new skills. She leans forward and speaks quickly as she rolls off a list of partnerships and activities, “field days, dances, bingo, swimming, Special Olympics, movie nights with bouncy chairs.” She wants people of all

ages and with disabilities of any kind to share recreation opportunities. Her smile widens when she talks about the new water wheelchair at the Jamestown Beach Event Park and the newly installed Mobi-mat path which makes the beach fully accessible. “Navigating sand with wheels is a lot easier when the wheels can anchor on rubber,” she explains. “Now, someone can push a wheelchair all the way to the water. That’s amazing.”

Tracy knows something about trying to navigate pathways with wheelchairs and how difficult that can be. During her year at Liberty, she worked part-time in a local retail store. “I got a call one weekend,” she says. “One of my co-workers was involved in a horrific car accident and emerged from the wreckage paralyzed from the waist down.” As Tracy traveled back and forth from school to visit her family in Newport News, she started to stop and visit her co-worker at the hospital in Charlottesville where he was recovering. She befriended him and kept up the visits when he moved back home.

Once her friend was stable, Tracy says, “I

took him on outings, to parks and through shopping areas. I saw firsthand what it was like to be a caretaker to someone with disabilities. Sometimes people would just stare at us and it almost seemed like they were asking why is she with him? Sometimes people just looked away." She took away a sense of how difficult navigating the world could be without full mobility. She also took great pleasure in watching her friend's improvements. "Seeing his progress made me want to help people improve. I wanted to make a difference," she says.

At ODU, Tracy loved every class in the Therapeutic Recreation major. She excelled and pursued accreditation, passing board exams to become a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) and a Certified Park Recreation Professional (CPRP). She completed an internship with James City County in 2005 and was hired full time in 2010. She now frequently speaks at conferences and conducts disability awareness training. "I create activities for the staff where they might wear blindfolds or ear muffs and engage in simulated conversations," she says. When James City County renovated Veterans Park, she was on the committee to select equipment for the section called Kidsburg, a 30,000-square-foot lighted playground. In Kidsburg, there are play areas for children ages two to five and five to 12. "I had a chance to help select different physical and sensory activities so that there are different areas," she explains. The play areas balance both enrichment and enjoyment.

Tracy's position with Parks and Recreation is full time and she loves every minute of it, often attending programs on weekends and in the evenings. She works with many groups

who partner with James City County at both the James City County Recreation Center on Longhill Road and with the Abram Fink Jr. Community Center on Pocahontas Trail. Tracy also serves on the Board of Directors for The ARC of Williamsburg, which "works to improve the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities through community activities and advocacy." The ARC uses the recreation centers to hold dances and fitness field days. Tracy says, "James City County Parks and Recreation provides the space and some of the advertising. The other groups provide the services and the people." JCC also partners with the Young Life group, Capernaum, that works to help teens with disabilities. Tracy assists them with programs and works to find ways to promote involvement.

"One of the biggest challenges is letting people know all that we have," Tracy says. She wants to ensure the entire community is aware of all of the programs James City County Parks and Recreation offers. "We're working on sensory friendly events and special needs summer camps right now," she says. Often, she finds that parents of special needs children enjoy the camps as much as their children because they have the opportunity to meet other parents and make friends while they watch their children participate in a new activity or be exposed to a new experience. "I want all the activities to be places of no judging," Tracy says.

She also looks to find ways to spread the word that people with disabilities who want to use the recreation centers but need an aide or assistant are entitled to have that person accompany them free of charge. She has seen remarkable changes in some of her special needs

students who enrolled in parks and recreation programs as youth and are now graduating from high school. "I love to see the positive changes and know that recreation had a part in that." She stays in touch with many of her customers. She values their feedback and tracks their progress.

Tracy also balances her own family and other full-time commitments. She has been married for 11 years to her high-school pen pal, Ryan Newsom. Ryan works with his father at Delightful Gardens, a family landscaping business. Tracy and Ryan met when they were 11 and both lived in Newport News. They were neighbors and attended functions together. Ryan moved to Germany for high school and they became pen pals. When Ryan returned to the United States, he and Tracy reconnected. "We didn't start dating until we were 20," she says with a laugh. They moved to Williamsburg in 2008.

Tracy and Ryan are parents to Colby, age five, and Heidi, age two. "It's great that I can take the kids to parks and rec programs," Tracy says. "We all love to play outside and visit parks." Tracy strives for balance and finds herself fulfilled. Still, she's often "wishing I could do more."

Most of Tracy's family now live in Williamsburg. Her mother is close by and regularly helps out with the children. Her sister is in Toano. Her husband's family is scattered throughout the area, and Tracy enjoys how close they all are. Their lives are intertwined and something is always happening to bring them together. In that way, Tracy Newsom's home and work life mirror each other: the opportunities for inclusion are everywhere. NDN



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Corey Miller Photography

Playing Viola is Her Forte

By Narielle Living

Crystal Wallace Graves began playing the viola when she was a little girl in Little Rock, Arkansas and has continued to play into adulthood. “At the elementary school I attended they had an orchestra program, and there was a family in our church whose daughter had been in orchestra. She wasn’t going to continue, and she had a viola, so it was free. That’s how I started to play viola.”

According to Crystal, the instrument she plays, the viola, is very similar to the violin. “The viola is a 1/5 interval down from violin,” she says. “I tell people it’s like an alto to a soprano. We’re a middle voice. I’ve come to really like that aspect of playing the viola where you have the melody but you support everyone

around you and make them sound better. I feel like you get to be in the music a lot more.”

Crystal graduated in May 2011 from Carnegie Mellon University with a Master’s Degree in Arts Management. She began her job search prior to moving to Virginia and explored her options in this area. “I was looking at Colonial Williamsburg to get a summer job to tide me over, but then a job came open that I was qualified for, a real job.” After applying, she was offered the position within three months and moved to Williamsburg.

She moved to Williamsburg in October 2011, and her husband, Scott, had moved here in June 2011. “We met in August 2012, and the rest is history,” she says with a smile.

About five years ago, Crystal considered the idea of beginning to teach music from her home. She emailed her music resume to several music teachers at area public schools and received an interesting response from one of them. Susan Hines, mother to another musician, responded to her email. “Her daughter had a quartet and they needed a violist for this gig. She sent my information to her daughter and said they were going to be in touch with me. I played with them for that gig; I think it was at Riverwalk Landing in Yorktown.”

When Crystal agreed to play with the quartet, they arranged to practice together first. “I didn’t just show up,” she says. “Ultimately, it worked out well for everyone. We played that

gig together, and then I was their violist from then on. I love the young ladies in the quartet. It's funny, we started off as four single ladies, now two of us are married. We've been together through lots of gigs, and we've all become friends."

When Crystal's first child was born, she began teaching private music lessons from her home, which was her original intent. "I started teaching about two years ago, so now we're all music teachers." Mary Dart, a violinist, is the orchestra director at Lafayette, Carolyn Becerra, a violinist, teaches privately and Erin Hines, a cellist, has private students as well.

Crystal is able to play a little on other instruments as well. "I can pick out things on the piano," she says. "I always wanted to learn to play, but I never put in the hard work that it takes to do that. I play some violin and can teach beginner violin students."

In college, Crystal did not have any music classes, and she did not have the time to play viola with a group. "The Master's Degree of Arts Management is more about management, not performance. I didn't have time. There was a school orchestra for non-majors, and I went to a couple of rehearsals but it wasn't my thing."

When she moved to Williamsburg, she played with the Hampton Roads Philharmonic, but after having children she wasn't able to work that into her schedule. "For a while I played with the Hampton roads philharmonic here, but with nursing and everything, it's an hour down there and an hour back every week-day," she says. "I really loved playing with them but I just couldn't do it any more so I just play with the quartet."

When Crystal first came to Williamsburg,

she noticed that although there might have been things to do on the weekends, she and her friends could not easily find the information. So she began a blog. "Now the local paper has started doing a nice calendar which they did not do when I founded the blog," she says. "At that time, I felt like there wasn't a source for young people who were not in college to find out what was going on. People right out of college have zero money, at least most of us, so I wanted to focus on things that were ten dollars or less. There's no financial incentive for anyone to put together something like that, but I felt like I was always telling newcomers and friends of friends what was going on. I knew the things I liked to do and the things I knew about that were going on, so I started the blog. I had a lot of fun with it." An endeavor like this, however, is a lot of work, and eventually she reached a point where she couldn't keep up with it.

When Crystal and the quartet are hired to play at an event, they can play a variety of music. "We like to say we can play anything. We really enjoy playing all sorts of different music, and we hope that's what sets us apart. We of course have classical music but we also have several jazz standards, a few Broadway tunes, and we have a selection of Jewish music that we break out on occasion. We have a lot of fun with those, and over the years we've had many requests for pop tunes. We've gone out and purchased lots of music at the request of brides and grooms so we have a couple of new songs, a Radiohead song, several Cold Play songs, and we love doing that stuff. It's really fun, and we can play a concerto, also. I love the variety."

She loves being part of people's special oc-

casions. "We like being a part of people's special day, and it's fun to get around and see all the different venues. We've played at dozens of local venues. There are a ton of places to get married around here." In addition, the group has formed relationships with local wedding planners and coordinators. "It used to be that we would always meet with someone from the wedding party ahead of time, in person. But now they do everything online or work through a wedding coordinator. We might see them the day of the event but usually they're too busy."

Many times, people will request specific music or songs for a wedding, birthday or anniversary party. Crystal will go out of her way to ensure that the request is honored. "I think our forte is that we try to honor special requests as much as possible," she says. "I've done custom arrangements for people when they ask for a song. If I can't find a quartet version of it, I will make one. The songs people request at their weddings are incredibly important, and we don't want them to have to compromise that. All of us know that the wedding is just a day and what we should be focusing on is a marriage but we want to support that day as best we can. It's a life changing day."

One of the weddings they performed at is particularly memorable for her. "We had a father of the bride. He wanted to perform 'Longer' by Dan Fogelberg. He played guitar, and they had a singer. They wanted us to do a string part. There are arrangements of 'Longer' but nobody writes out the string part, so I sat there and listened to it and wrote it down to the best of my ability. We performed with the father of the bride, and I think her cousin was singing, and it was so beautiful and special." NDN

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Corey Miller Photography

A Twisted Event FOR EVERYONE

By Erin Fryer

Brandyn Baty's "let's do it" attitude has landed her at the helm of many professional and volunteer events throughout the years, but none as large-scale as the upcoming Twisted Tri Health & Wellness Festival.

Brandyn is the Development & Communication Specialist for Literacy for Life, an independent non-profit organization that has been working for over 40 years to provide literacy services to help community members reach their full potential. The Twisted Tri is a brand new annual fundraiser for the organization, and features a 5K run/walk coupled with a yoga session followed by meditation.

When the idea for the Twisted Tri was first brought up, it was unclear if anyone would have the time to plan such a large-scale event. Brandyn said "let's do it" and took the reins,

springing into action to make this a one-of-a-kind event for the whole family to attend.

“There will be yoga, meditation, a 5K race and so much more,” Brandyn says. This spin on the traditional triathlon will be followed with an exciting health and wellness festival with live music, beer and wine, food, health-conscious vendors and even a kid zone.

While Brandyn is confident in her abilities to put on a successful event, she also needs to secure corporate sponsors and vendors as well to ensure they meet their main goal: raising money for Literacy for Life.

A member of the Kingsmill Advisory Board, as well as several other committees in the neighborhood and the community, Brandyn keeps very busy. Until recently, she has been staying home with her children, and used to fill her free time volunteering and planning fundraisers. Now she is channeling her talents into her professional role at Literacy for Life.

A native of northern California, Brandyn moved to Virginia nine years ago. She’s worked in nonprofit management for the majority of her career, and her background is in finance.

When her now-husband got a job in Norfolk, Brandyn made the move across the country to start their life together and settle in Norfolk. The couple now has five and seven-year-old daughters.

Brandyn continued working in the nonprofit sector in Norfolk before moving to Williamsburg and deciding to stay home with her daughters. She did that for five years until her youngest daughter was preparing to go to school full time, and she was itching to get back to work.

“I am a natural volunteer. That is what I do,” Brandyn says. “I started a club in Kingsmill called the Kingsmill Athletics Club to engage families like ours. We do a variety of activities, like bowling. Last year we did the Cardboard Boat Regatta, which is a fundraiser for the William & Mary sailing team. I always have to be doing something, so after the regatta my friends in the neighborhood told me I needed to get a job where I could channel some of my energy and ideas.”

Brandyn started looking for jobs online and

found the Literacy for Life opportunity. “In the nonprofit world, you are always wearing a development hat and always fundraising, so I thought I would give it a try.”

While she officially started in September as a Development Assistant, by October Brandyn was promoted to Development and Communications Specialist. “Apparently I am good at talking to people,” she says with a laugh. “They basically told me I was going to be out in the community, so that’s what I am doing. I am out there joining networks and making connections.”

Always up for a challenge, Brandyn recently signed on to manage The Virginia Turfgrass Foundation to help them with their re-branding rollout in addition to her role at Literacy for Life.

Outside of her professional and volunteer positions, Brandyn likes to stay active. A former softball player, she found it hard to continue to play softball after having her daughters, but tennis was an option in her neighborhood because child care is available. “I love where we live,” she says. “Kingsmill is great for the kids, and I like being involved.”

In addition to her job and volunteer work, Brandyn is in the running to be on the board of the Kingsmill Community Service Association. “I have always been involved in the lifestyle here in Kingsmill. I love to help bring activities for the kids, like getting WISC soccer to come out so that the kids can get to practice in the neighborhood.”

Brandyn is almost constantly coordinating a new, creative idea. “I don’t know where all of this energy comes from,” she says with a laugh. “I do all of this to avoid cleaning the house and folding laundry.”

Last year, Brandyn organized a pub-crawl centered on a golf theme for her neighbors. “Everyone dressed up as golfers,” she says. “We started in Kingsmill then took the neighborhood shuttle into town and hit some of our favorite spots like Amber Ox and Culture Café, then ended back in Kingsmill.” From work events, to volunteer activities, to play groups and events that are just for fun, Brandyn is always coming up with new ideas.

For the time being, the Twisted Tri is the

recipient of most of Brandyn’s energy and creativeness. Literacy for Life’s HEAL Program is a driving force behind the fundraiser, because it helps to improve the health of adults using two approaches: educational classes and training of medical professionals. Through new knowledge and increased familiarity with the healthcare system, learners gain the confidence they need to take control of their health.

What better way to obtain funding for such a great program than to have a big health and wellness festival? Participants will get a discount if they sign up for all three events, the 5K run, yoga and meditation, and there will be a slew of other ways for people of all ages to enjoy the festival.

In her downtime, Brandyn enjoys everything Williamsburg has to offer. “I love that we can go to Colonial Williamsburg and just walk around,” she says. “I love the Farmer’s Market, the Second Sundays festivals, and just seeing all the different vendors. The food scene is really picking up here too. Amber Ox is my favorite spot.”

Brandyn also volunteers at community events like the Craft Beer Festival in April and drives a cart during the LPGA Tournament in Kingsmill. She also serves on the Parent Teacher Association at her daughters’ school.

Like their mother, Brandyn’s daughters, Reagan and Morgan, like to stay busy as well with horseback riding, music school, swim team, tennis and more. “I try to keep them active,” she says. “Kingsmill is such an active community so we have a lot of opportunities to keep moving. We also love to play pickleball!”

The Twisted Tri will be the perfect opportunity to see Brandyn Baty’s work first-hand. “We’re not only trying to educate people about Literacy for Life and our health program, but we’re trying to raise money for a great program so the event is open to everyone.” According to Brandyn, people can participate in the three events or just enjoy the family-friendly party afterwards. [NDN](#)

The date of the event will be announced soon. In the meantime, look forward to seeing upcoming promotions in print and social media.



Corey Miller Photography

Good Things Happen at **Serendipity Inn**

By Lillian Stevens

Five months ago, Deborah Hoernlein's big dream to open a small business came true when she opened The Serendipity Inn, a bed and breakfast (B&B).

"Serendipity means good things that happen by chance," Deborah says, "and that's exactly what I want people to feel and experience when they are here."

Located off of Newman Road, the establishment boasts two lovely, well-appointed guest suites and is just minutes from the historic area and all the attractions Williamsburg has to offer. Even so, Deborah says that guests rarely leave the property.

"I find that most couples come here to unwind and reconnect with each other," she says.

"They like the amenities, the peace and quiet and, of course, the romance of it all."

As visitors approach, they are transported from the hectic pace of their normal lives to the calm of a pristine Cape Cod style home that sits on 2.1 manicured acres. Birds feast at strategically placed bird feeders while butterflies and dragonflies perch on a birdbath in the butterfly garden.

Once inside, guests are offered a home-baked treat. In the morning, there will be a gourmet breakfast, always made from scratch. Visitors are encouraged to make use of the common spaces, from the well-appointed and cozy living room to the expansive back porch. They are welcome to enjoy themselves on

the screened-in porch or the hammocks and loungers on the deck. There's also a large hot tub, complete with LED lights and a water fall.

"I want everything to be comfortable and relaxing," Deborah says. "I love to see people gathered around the wood burning stove and playing cards or just hanging out wherever they want to, without feeling they are in a stuffy space. This isn't a museum, so I encourage people to interact and enjoy the common spaces."

The Serendipity Inn attracts some who just want to get outdoors and enjoy the hiking trails that extend beyond the back lawn. Others are content to appreciate the outdoors from inside. One of the hiking trails leads to a perfect spot to take in a sunset. "There is a trail that leads

down to the creek,” Deborah says. “This is all estuary protected land. That means a lot to me because these habitats protect coastal shores like ours from nature’s elements.”

Whether indoors or out, the hope is that her guests will enjoy their stay, basking in the tranquil atmosphere she has created.

The family lives there too.

Deborah and Chris Rangel, her partner in both business and life, have their own wing of the house. Deborah’s daughters Olivia and Carolina have their space as well. The two guest suites are located on the second floor. The Tranquility Suite is resplendent in elegance and classic Parisian décor, whereas the Serenity Suite is decorated in a more casual and nautical theme, evoking blue skies and colors of the ocean.

When she purchased her home, Deborah didn’t do it with an eye toward opening a B&B. “My daughters and I moved here from a rental home in Williamsburg,” she says. “I drove up to the house and got out of my car, and there were deer and rabbits and birds. One of the birds perched on my shoulder and sang a Dis-

ney tune.”

She is joking, of course, but only slightly.

“I was going through a huge change in my life, but the moment I laid eyes on this house, I could imagine having my coffee in the morning while listening to the birds sing. I was filled with such a feeling of tranquility and serenity.” Hence the names for her guest suites today.

Her B&B dream laid dormant for many years and, besides, Deborah had two daughters to raise. By last year, though, with the eldest starting her senior year in high school and the youngest not far behind, the timing was perfect.

“Last year, Chris and I were visiting Asheville, North Carolina,” Deborah says. “The bed and breakfast topic came up, and Chris reminded me that running a B&B had always been my dream.”

When the couple returned to Williamsburg from their trip, Deborah set out to turn her dream into reality. She reached out to local authorities for advice and guidance.

“They pulled up the plat of my property and told me I’m actually in a really good location,”

she says. “Since we live in a subdivision, I just needed to make sure my HOA and neighbors didn’t have any issues.”

In August, Deborah appeared before the York County Board of Supervisors and her B&B application was approved.

Disney bird on the shoulder notwithstanding, the path hasn’t been free of thorns.

Deborah suffers from dyscalculia, a disorder that has been described as the mathematical equivalent to dyslexia. She also has a learning disability, called dysgraphia, which affects handwriting and fine motor skills and can make the process of writing painfully slow, and the writing itself difficult to read.

Growing up, she was unaware of her disorders.

“I always knew my brain didn’t work like everyone else’s,” Deborah says. “In fact, my siblings and I were placed in LD (learning disability) classes.”

After nearly two years of neurological testing, the mother of two says she was actually relieved to learn of her diagnosis. “It made me feel validated,” she says.



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Bolstered by a supportive family and community, Deborah's dream to open a B&B also met with support from the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DSRS).

"DARS wrote a letter on my behalf to the York County Board of Supervisors," she says. "My goal was to get into the workforce after raising my family, and it has happened! One of my proudest moments was when my daughter read the DARS letter out loud at the Board meeting."

Today, Deborah is on a mission to bring attention to these disorders in hopes of raising awareness so that children are properly diagnosed. Research shows that one in five individuals struggle with learning and attention issues, so they are more common than one might realize.

"It's so important to have classroom accommodation and other supports for children who struggle with learning and attention," she says. "That will go a long way toward helping them find success in school and in life."

There is no cure for Deborah's disorder, but it is treatable and she says that the medicines prescribed for her have been a game changer. "It's been like night and day. It's like I was looking at Japanese words all these years and now suddenly I can read and understand it."

Thus far, running her small business has been a joy and Deborah says that she and Chris do most of the work themselves.

"The property management system is brand new," Deborah says, "but I'm learning it and it's going well. My big goal was to get on the online travel agencies like booking.com, and Expedia. Now I'm with a company that runs a front desk management system we are getting calls almost every day."

She has a CPA for the business accounting. "That's a necessity, but I can do simple math. I can decorate, I can cook, and I can host."

From maintaining the luscious landscaping and grounds to design and upkeep of the gracious home's interior to grounds maintenance to navigating the property management system, they keep busy. Though she isn't formally trained, Deborah has an amazing sense of style and design.

"It's something I love doing," she says. Her daughters help with all sorts of things, from baking welcome treats for guests to lending a hand with social media and technological assistance.

Deborah takes great joy in knowing how proud she's made her daughters. Eldest daughter Olivia is about to graduate from Bruton High School and will be headed to Old Dominion University in the fall to study cybersecurity, and Carolina looks forward to studying in the Veterinary Sciences program offered through New Horizons Regional Education Center.

These past months have been a wonderful whirlwind for Deborah Hoernlein and her family. She says that one of the best parts is knowing that when guests leave, they feel renewed and restored, and that she helped in some small way.

"I spent a good part of my own life traveling," she says. "So, I find as I'm getting older it's nice to be able to give that to other couples. It's a lot of work, but so rewarding. I love seeing the guests smile and reading their reviews." NDN

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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!

**“THAT’S ENTERTAINMENT!”—
ANNUAL SHOWCASE**

May 31 - June 1, 2019

Institute for Dance, Inc. (iDance) is pleased to present the 2019 Spring Showcase: “That’s Entertainment!” There are three festive performances at CrossWalk Church, 7575 Richmond Road: May 31 at 7 pm; June at 1 pm and 6 pm. <https://tickets.shovation.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=518>. For more information, call (757) 229-1717 or visit <https://institutefordance.org/annual-recital/>.

Hey Neighbor!

TREK THE TRAIL

June 1, 2019

Greensprings Interpretive Trail, 3751 John Tyler Highway from 9-11 a.m. Free! The first Saturday in June is National Trails Day, so get out and get active and join us for this self-guided family walk OR bring along your furry friend to participate in the “Tails on the Trail” event. Info: 757-259-4200 or jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation. Weather permitting; if inclement weather, call the Activity Hotline at 757-259-3232.

Hey Neighbor!

LIFE CHURCH ANNUAL YARD SALE

June 1, 2019

Location: Life Church at 4451 Longhill Road, Williamsburg. Time: 7 am-1 pm.

Hey Neighbor!

HIGH TEA EVENT

June 2, 2019

Join us on our 1st annual High Tea event to benefit Latisha’s House Foundation, Inc., helping survivors of human trafficking find safety, empowerment and a positive future from 3 - 5pm at the Two Rivers Country Club. The cost per person is \$55.00 and can be purchased online at latishashouse.com. Seats are limited.

Hey Neighbor!

WMCI’S 2019 SUMMER COM-

50 NEXT DOOR NEIGHBORS JUNE 2019

COMMUNITY COURSES

June 3 – August 1, 2019

Session II, which goes from June 3 - June 27, includes classes such as Chinese Level II, Chinese Calligraphy, Hulusi, Chinese Flute, and Tea Appreciation in Chinese Culture. Session III goes from July 8 - August 1, and in this session we will be offering a course in Traditional Chinese Customs. Classes will primarily be held at Rowe House, 314 Jamestown Rd, Williamsburg, VA. For more information, visit our website: <https://bit.ly/2FZ6Rou>

Hey Neighbor!

**WCAC’S ANNUAL MEMBERS
ART SHOW**

June 4 – July 19, 2019

The Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center is holding its annual Members’ Art Show Tuesday, June 4, through Friday, July 19. The show includes a variety of two- and three-dimensional art in different mediums and styles by outstanding local professional and emerging artists. All artwork is for sale. WCAC is located in the “Blue Building” at 110 Westover Ave. (off Lafayette St.) in the Arts District. Hours are 11-3 Tues.-Sat and 12 to 4 on Sunday. Closed Monday. Free.

Hey Neighbor!

**TRINITY ORGAN CONCERT
SERIES: CHERYL VAN ORNAM,
ORGANIST**

June 5, 2019

Join us for the closing concert of the eighth season’s Trinity Organ Series featuring Cheryl Van Ornam, Traditional Music Director at Redeemer Lutheran Church and Organist at First Church of Christ Scientist, Richmond. A reception will follow the free concert. Time: 1 pm at Saint Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road. For more information, call (757) 229-3631 or visit www.bede.va.org/concerts.

Hey Neighbor!

**COMMUNITY DAY-HEALTHY
PEOPLE, HEALTHY HOMES,
HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

June 7, 2019

The Williamsburg Area Association of REALTORS® would like to invite you to the annual “Community Day” from 10 am – 2 pm. Please join us and take advantage of a free shredding truck service (available 10 am – 1 pm), complimentary Wellness Screenings by Riverside, healthy snacks, bake sale (proceeds to benefit The Arc of Greater Williamsburg) and so much more! 5000 New Point Rd., Williamsburg – in the parking lot! Questions? Email info@waarealtor.com or call (757) 253-0028.

Hey Neighbor!

WOMEN’S WELLNESS WEEKEND

June 7-9, 2019

Join us at Jamestown 4-H Educational Center and treat yourself to a weekend designed for women ages 18 and better. Enjoy wellness workshops led by professional speakers in their respective fields. We take care of everything so you can enjoy a weekend of playing, laughing and learning with old and new friends. Join us on Friday, June 7, 2019- Sunday June 9, 2019. Arrival is between 4-6 pm and departure is on Sunday at 1 pm. Guests stay in our renovated lodge with rustic charm. Our menu is restaurant quality, healthy and well-balanced. Vegetarian and Gluten Free meals available at every meal. Call for more information (757) 253-4931 or <http://www.jamestown4hcenter.org/programs/#adult> to register. \$160/person for full weekend (includes lodging) or \$85 for Saturday only (no lodging).

Hey Neighbor!

**STARGAZING WITH NASA
SKYWATCHER CLUB**

June 8, 2019

Upper County Park, 180 Leisure Road in Toano from 8-11 p.m. Free! New! Ages 13+. Come Stargaze with the NASA Skywatcher Astronomy Club! Info: 757-259-4200 or jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation. Weather permitting; if inclement weather, call the Activity Hotline at 757-259-3232.

Hey Neighbor!

FARM FIELD DAY

June 8, 2019

Williamsburg Community Growers (WCG) is proud to invite community members of all ages to our inaugural Farm Field Day. Come out to the farm, located on Stadium Road in between Warhill High School and the WISC complex, between 9 am – 12 noon to enjoy various free, family-friendly activities, demonstrations, and educational presentations. To learn more, find WCG on Facebook or email growwilliamsburg@gmail.com.

Hey Neighbor!

**WILLIAMSBURG BOY SCOUT
GOLF OUTING 2019**

June 9, 2019

Join us at 1pm for the seventh annual Williamsburg Boy Scout Golf Outing to benefit the Scouts of Boy Scout Troop 300, Boy Scout Troop 414 and Cub Scout Pack 414. We will have a great day of golf at the beautiful Kiskiak Golf Club in Williamsburg, VA. The event will include a 4-person scramble, box lunch, and awards reception and dinner following the golf. All players also receive a free two-week membership to Kiskiak for the two weeks leading up to the event. Registration and information at www.planmygolfevent.com/32675-Scouts. Contact John Lacy (757) 784-6656 for additional information.

Hey Neighbor!

40 AND OVER CAREER CLUB

June 11, 2019

From 9-10:30 am, join the Experienced Employees in Transition (40-and-Over) Career Club. This program is provided by the Peninsula Agency on Aging for speakers, workshops, networking, emotional and resource support throughout your job search! June Topic: Using and Navigating Websites to Identify Jobs. Location: 312 Waller Mill Road, Room 801, Williamsburg

Hey Neighbor!

EYE DISEASES AS WE AGE

June 13, 2019

Dr. Anthony Farah, who specializes in LASIK Laser Vision Correction, Laser-assisted Cataract Surgery and General Ophthalmology, will review the latest on the symptoms and treatment options for three of the most common eye diseases that affect the eyes as we age. Riverside Doctors' Hospital Williamsburg is happy to offer the community this free, monthly lecture series. Please join us as Riverside providers discuss pertinent health-related topics geared toward those who live in our vibrant region. For additional information, or to RSVP: <https://riversideonline.com/events/Upcoming-Events.cfm?id=70>.

Hey Neighbor!

DISCOVERY LAB AT VIMS – HOW THE OCEAN WORKS

June 18, 2019

Join us as VIMS professor and CB-NERR Science Lead Dr. Carl Friedrichs gives us insight into how the ocean works. From tides and currents to storms and El Nino - we'll be exploring it all! From 6 – 8 pm (presentation from 6:30-7:00 pm) on the VIMS campus in Gloucester Point. Registration is required due to limited space. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call (804) 684-7061 to register and to find out more information on this and all upcoming Discovery Labs.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG-JAMES CITY COUNTY SCHOOLS: JOB FAIR

June 19, 2019

Williamsburg-James City County Schools will be hosting a job fair for support positions on from 9 am – 12 noon at the School Board and Central Office located at 117 Ironbound Road. Positions featured include Bus Driver, Bus Aide, Custodian, and Cafeteria Worker. Substitute positions are also available for Teachers, Homebound Teachers, and Nurses. To apply, or view a full list of vacant positions, visit: www.wjccschools.org/careers. For additional information, call (757) 603-6413.

Hey Neighbor!

13th ANNUAL CONSERVANCY GOLF CHALLENGE

June 20, 2019

Join us for our 13th Annual Conservancy Golf Challenge to benefit the Historic Virginia Land Conservancy at Ford's Colony Country Club for a Captain's Choice tournament on the spectacular Blackheath golf course. Prizes, raffles and an awards dinner fol-

low the 1:00 pm shotgun start. If your registration is less than four golfers for this flighted, net event, golfers will be arranged into teams. Please visit our website at www.HistoricVirginiaLandConservancy.org for a registration form and details about this action packed day!

Hey Neighbor!

PROJECT FIVEFORTYSEVEN

June 21, 2019

Held at various James City County park and facility sites from 5:47 a.m.-10 p.m. Free! All ages. Out late or up early? Celebrate the longest day of the year by joining Parks & Recreation for the Longest Day of Play! We'll cater to the sun and offer recreational activities all day long including extended hours at parks and facilities, sunrise and sunset paddles, outdoor yoga classes, and new opportunities to get in on the fun. The day kicks off at 5:47 a.m. and culminates with a solstice takeover of the James City County Recreation Center with pool battleship, a basketball skills challenge, and so much more! No registration required outside of summer camp programs. For more information on Project FiveFortySeven and a full schedule of programs, please visit jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation or contact sarah.oreilly@jamescitycountyva.gov, 757-259-5355.

Hey Neighbor!

ROTARY CONCERT SERIES

June 22, 2019

At the Kimball Theatre from 7:30-9:30 pm. Featuring The English Channel: A Tribute to the British Invasion. Tickets available at jccrotary.org or through eventbrite.

Hey Neighbor!

FREEDOM STORIES

June 22, 2019

Freedom Park, 5537 Centerville Road from noon-3 p.m. Free! Join Williamsburg native Dylan Pritchett, best known as "The Storyteller" along with other Virginia Black Storytellers (VirBS) as they share with you Freedom Stories at Freedom Park! The Free Black Settlement area is the backdrop for this special event. Also featured are unique crafts for kids, music and food available for purchase. Info: 757-259-5353 or jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation. Weather permitting; if inclement weather, call the Activity Hotline at 757-259-3232.

Hey Neighbor!

LATISHA'S HOUSE BBQ & BOOGIE

June 22, 2019

A backyard BBQ and Boogie benefit

helping survivors of human trafficking find safety, empowerment and a positive future. 5:30 -8:30 pm, at 8850 Merry Oaks Lane, Toano. Catered by Bubba N Frank's BBQ - chicken & pork options - all the fixings, games for the kids and adults alike, and dance to the Hullabaloo's – A British Invasion and American Pop/Rock Band. Advanced Tickets can be purchased at latishashouse.com or at the event. Parking is limited. Carpooling is encouraged and please bring a lawn chair. For any inquires, call Jeff Ameling at (434) 825-2853.

Hey Neighbor!

AFTER HOURS LECTURE AT VIMS

June 27, 2019

Then and now: from colonial ships to a state-of-the-art marine research vessel. Join us as Hank Mosley from the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and Durand Ward from VIMS compare navigation methods and research equipment as well as shipboard life from colonial times to today. At 7 pm in Watermen's Hall on the VIMS campus, 1375 Grete Road, Gloucester Point. Reservations are required due to limited space. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call (804) 684-7061 to register or to find out more information. The lecture is also offered as a live-streamed webinar. Register for the webinar at www.vims.edu/events.

Hey Neighbor!

JAMESTOWN JAMS CONCERT SERIES

June 28, 2019

Jamestown Beach Event Park, 2205 Jamestown Road from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Free. All ages. Come and enjoy live music during the Jamestown Jams free concert series, offered on select Fridays throughout the summer. Assorted beer, wine and food are available for purchase. For more event details, visit explorejccva.com. During the June 28 concert, also participate in friendly competition with family and friends in the Spikeball Tournament, 6-8 p.m. (ages 10+) offered by James City County and Williamsburg PickUp Games! Free! Pre-registration for the tournament is encouraged, but not required. For information on the tournament, visit jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation or call 757-259-5355.

Hey Neighbor!

WORLD CUP 3V3 SOCCER TOURNAMENT

June 28, 2019

Sanford B. Wanner Stadium, 4900 Stadium Road from 6 p.m. – midnight.

Ages 6-18; \$5/player. Join James City County Parks & Recreation and local soccer organizations for a youth 3 v. 3 soccer tournament to celebrate the 2019 Women's World Cup! Individuals should pre-register by June 19 in order to reserve their team's spot. Boys and girls divisions for U8, U10, U12, U14, U16 and U18. Teams names are assigned on a first come, first serve basis. Pre-registration required. For registration information, visit jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation and for specific event information contact sarah.oreilly@jamescitycountyva.gov or phone 757-259-5355.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG VFW POST 4639 ANNUAL 4TH OF JULY PICNIC

June 29, 2019

The Williamsburg VFW is having its annual free picnic this year from 12-4 pm. Open to the public, and of course all veterans and their families. We will have food, beverages, and activities for young and old. We are a 100% volunteer organization and our mission is to provide support to local veterans and their families in need. We are located at 109 Jesters Lane (behind Publix off of Old News Rd). Phone: (757) 258-9802 Website: vfwpost4639.com Email: vfwpost4639@gmail.com

Hey Neighbor!

2ND ANNUAL WILLIAMSBURG PRO-AM BBQ COOK OFF

June 30, 2019

The Rotary Club of the Historic Triangle is proud to present the 2nd Annual Williamsburg PRO-AM BBQ Cook Off from 11 am – 4 pm at Jamestown Beach Event Park. Ticketed guests will get unlimited samples of pulled pork, beef brisket and sides from some of the area's top BBQ purveyors and vote for their favorites. We have added a VIP ticket which gets you a "bottomless" souvenir glass mug for unlimited refills of beer and hard cider. More information at our website www.WilliamsburgPROAMBBQ.com. All net proceeds go to benefit 3e Restoration, a local non-profit that seeks to walk with our area's homeless and socially displaced back to holistic sufficiency.

Hey Neighbor!

LOOKING FOR PINOCHLE PLAYERS

Every Tuesday

Small group of seniors looking for more pinochle double deck card players. We play at the Williamsburg Moose Lodge from 1 – 4:40 pm. Willing to help anyone that has not played

for years. 5429 Richmond Road.

Hey Neighbor! **WILLIAMSBURG WOMEN'S CHORUS NEW MEMBERS**

June - August

The Williamsburg Women's Chorus is accepting new members for their fall season 2019. The first practice will be at 10 am in the Bruton Parish House lower level. Fall season runs from August thru early December. If you are interested in joining, please contact Beckie Davy, director, at bdavy@brutonparish.org.

Hey Neighbor! **JAMES CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH**

Ongoing

"A Door of Hope" No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, we're glad you're here. Located at 4550 Old News Rd., Williamsburg. Services: 9 am (nursery provided) and 11 am (birth - 5th grade programs provided). Come join us and feel free to participate as much or as little as you feel comfortable. We also offer Celebrate Recovery every Friday at 7 pm. Visit our website at www.jccchurch.com to learn more about Jc3!

Hey Neighbor! **LOCAL FARM ANIMAL SANCTUARY**

Ongoing

Life with Pigs Farm Animal Sanctuary in Williamsburg rescues farm animals that get to come and live out their happily ever-after here. We currently have a calf named Winnie who just arrived and has some mobility issues. She drags her back legs when walking and while she currently seems to be doing great, we are seeking a solution so that once she reaches full weight, she can continue to be mobile into old age. We also have another calf named Jenna who was born infertile, 4 turkeys, 7 chickens, and 3 pigs (who sleep on the couch inside often with a chicken in diapers on their backs). For more information, contact Ryan at Life with Pigs Farm Animal Sanctuary, (219) 331-6204.

Hey Neighbor! **TURF LOVE PROGRAM**

Year-Round

The Turf Love program is offered by the Colonial Soil and Water Conservation District to JCC residents who wish to grow and maintain a healthy lawn while protecting our surrounding environment. Through this program, homeowners can request a visit from a trained Virginia Cooperative Extension James City County/Williamsburg

Master Gardener, known as a Lawn Ranger, who discuss the importance of environmentally-friendly lawn care, and the potential for environmental issues that stem from not maintaining a healthy lawn, with each homeowner. Each homeowner will also receive a certified nutrient management plan, which is specific to their lawn maintenance needs, goals, and surrounding environment; decreases the risk of environmental harm from routine lawn care; and often provides an economical benefit from reduced costs associated with over-application of nutrients and over-watering through irrigation. To learn more about this program, please call (757) 645-4895.

Hey Neighbor! **FOOD TRUCK RALLY ON THE RIVER**

July 13, 2019

Jamestown 4-H Educational Center Presents Food Truck Rally on the River! Join us for "Beats and Eats" from some of your local restaurants on wheels! Food, Beer and Music! The fun begins at 4:00 on Saturday July 13th at Jamestown 4-H Educational Center. This is a family friendly event and pets are welcome! \$5 per car. We hope you will join us for another fabulous event on the river! For more information, please check out <http://www.jamestown4hcenter.org/events> or call us at (757) 253-4931.

Hey Neighbor! **ROTARY CONCERT SERIES**

July 20, 2019

Kimball Theatre. 7:30-9:30 pm. Featuring Elvis Genre Concert. Tickets available at jccrotary.org or through eventbrite.

Hey Neighbor! **AFTER HOURS LECTURE AT VIMS**

July 25, 2019

Fishy interactions: understanding the fish community in Chesapeake Bay. Since 2002, the Multispecies Fisheries Research Group at VIMS, led by faculty member Dr. Robert Latour, has been working to create a complete picture of how fishes in the Chesapeake Bay and along the Atlantic Coast interact with each other and their environment. Join us as Dr. Latour shows us how to tell the age of a fish, what you can learn from looking at stomach contents, and why the information his program collects is vital to ensure the fishes and ecosystems we care about and rely on continue to thrive. 7 pm in Watermen's Hall on the VIMS campus, 1375 Greate Road, Gloucester

Point. Reservations are required due to limited space. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call (804) 684-7061 to register or to find out more information about this and future After Hours lectures. The lecture is also offered as a live-streamed webinar. Register for the webinar at www.vims.edu/events.

Hey Neighbor! **FLUTE FRENZY SUMMER CAMP**

July 29 - August 2, 2019

Come join us for Flute Frenzy's Summer Camp: "A Week in the Big Apple" (for youth entering grades 6-12). Professional instruction and Technique classes; Learn to play Piccolo, Alto, and Bass Flutes; Games, Crafts, & Snacks. Be a part of Flute Choir Performances! Location: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Road Williamsburg. For more information, visit www.flutefrenzy.org

Hey Neighbor! **ROTARY CHARITY CONCERT SERIES**

August 17, 2019

Kimball Theatre. 7:30-9:30 pm. Featuring Soul Intent. Tickets available at jccrotary.org or through eventbrite.

Hey Neighbor! **DISCOVERY LAB AT VIMS - ART IN SCIENCE**

August 20, 2019

Art and science go hand in hand! From science illustrations of plants and animals, to photography of microscopic organisms - we will be investigating the intersections between science and art. Megan Beck, a fashion designer, will explain how she relies on horticulture (raising plants) to practice her art of clothing design. From 6-8 pm (presentation from 6:30-7 pm) on the VIMS campus in Gloucester Point. Registration is required due to limited space. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call (804) 684-7061 to register for this free event and to find out more information.

Hey Neighbor! **AFTER HOURS LECTURE AT VIMS**

August 29, 2019

Research around the world: asia's last natural and unstudied major river delta. Half a billion people worldwide live on river deltas, areas that are constantly changing and are at high risk of land loss and flooding. Dr. Steve Kuehl, faculty member at VIMS, has spent his career studying river deltas and the effects that nature and humans have on these environments. 7 pm in Watermen's Hall on the VIMS

campus, 1375 Greate Road, Gloucester Point. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call (804) 684-7061 to register or to find out more information. The lecture is also offered as a live-streamed webinar. Register for the webinar at www.vims.edu/events.

Hey Neighbor! **AFTER HOURS LECTURE AT VIMS**

September 26, 2019

Forecasting tidal flooding: helping hampton roads prepare for storms and rising seas. Join us as Dr. Derek Loftis of VIMS shares how the use of innovative technologies and citizen scientists is helping Hampton Roads communities predict and prepare for flood events and rising seas. All After Hours lectures take place at 7:00 pm in Watermen's Hall on the VIMS campus, 1375 Greate Road, Gloucester Point. Reservations to this free, public lecture are required due to limited space. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call 804-684-7061 to register or to find out more information about this and future After Hours lectures. The lecture is also offered as a live-streamed webinar. Register for the webinar at www.vims.edu/events.

Hey Neighbor! **AFTER HOURS LECTURE AT VIMS**

October 24, 2019

Cytobots in the bay: how technology is keeping Virginians safe. Harmful algae blooms, or HABs, occur when algae in the water grow excessively and produce toxins and other harmful effects on the environment and people. Dr. Juliette Smith, faculty member at VIMS, is using an autonomous, underwater instrument called an Imaging FlowCytobot in the York River to address those concerns. Join us as Dr. Smith describes the innovative technology she is using to protect public health as well as her vision for a network of cybotots throughout the Bay. All After Hours lectures take place at 7:00 pm in Watermen's Hall on the VIMS campus, 1375 Greate Road, Gloucester Point. Reservations to this free, public lecture are required due to limited space. Visit www.vims.edu/events or call 804-684-7061 to register. The lecture is also offered as a live-streamed webinar. Register for the webinar at www.vims.edu/events.

Hey Neighbor! **BERKELEY PLANTATION CELEBRATES 400TH ANNIVERSARY 1619-2019**

November 3, 2019

From 11 am – 4 pm, at Berkeley Plantation, 12602 Harrison Landing Rd. Charles City (directly off scenic Rt. 5 between Richmond and Williamsburg). House Tours 9:30 am– 4:30 pm. Berkeley Plantation hosts the Virginia Thanksgiving Festival. This annual tradition dates back to 1619 when Captain John Woodlief and his crew of thirty-five men landed on the shores of the James River. Festival Admission and Parking (Cash only for parking): \$5.00 motorcycle/bike, \$10.00 car/van, \$20.00 bus. Tours of Berkeley's Manor House Available \$12.50 per person. Discounted rates for seniors, military and children ages 6-16. For more information call 804-829-6018 or 888-466-6018

Hey Neighbor!

VOLUNTEER WITH JCC PARKS & RECREATION

Ongoing

Volunteer with James City County Parks & Recreation! Lend a hand, Make a difference, Be a part of something great! Volunteering is your gift to our community. For a list of volunteer opportunities both in parks and recreation and County-wide, contact Angie Sims at angie.sims@jamescity-countyva.gov or call 75-259-5403.

Hey Neighbor!

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOSPICE HOUSE

Ongoing

We invite you to tour our home and gardens and learn about all we do for the community. On the first Thursday of the month, drop by between the hours of 12 – 2 p.m. to learn more about our organization. Questions or to RSVP (not required) Call: 757-345-5195. Email: Diane Schwarz, dschwarz@williamsburghospice.org, 4445 Powhatan Parkway, Williamsburg VA 23188. www.williamsburghospice.org. Caring for people at the end of life, comforting the bereaved and empowering others to do the same.

Hey Neighbor!

VOLUNTEER WITH WILLIAMSBURG COMMUNITY GROWERS

Ongoing

Join us for a couple of hours of fun garden work planting, weeding, harvesting, learning about small scale farming and participating in our local food system! Our one-acre garden is located under the Dominion Energy power lines between Warhill High School and WISC, off Stadium Road. Tuesday evenings and second Saturdays mornings - choose as few or as

many days as you wish, and children are welcome! Almost all of our harvest is donated to local charities. Community Garden plots available too! Email growwilliamsburg@gmail.com, or sign up at <http://signup.com/go/EFuuFjo>. Visit www.growwilliamsburg.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter!

Hey Neighbor!

GRIEFSHARE

Ongoing

Walnut Hills Baptist Church, 1014 Jamestown Road, will offer a Grief-Share program beginning on Sunday February 3, 2019, and running for 13 weeks. This ministry is a Biblical, Christ-centered support group for those who have lost a loved one. It includes a video seminar, small group discussion and a participant guide. There is a \$15 registration fee to cover the cost of the participant guide. The group will meet from 2-4 p.m. each week in the church Hospitality Center. Participants are welcome to join at any time. Contact: Elaine Schrader at 757-268-1761 or eschrader4@gmail.com. For more information, visit whbconline.org.

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. 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., Students must be 16, 17, or 18 years old. The training

is done at Williamsburg Jamestown Airport through the Williamsburg Flight Center. We need to raise approximately \$25,000.00 to finish the current class of 5 students. The Williamsburg Aviation Scholarship Program is a 501C-3 corporation. Your donations are tax deductible on your State and Federal Income tax. Please make checks or money orders payable and mail to: Williamsburg Aviation Scholarship Program, 102 Marclay Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185.

Hey Neighbor!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Ongoing

We have an urgent need for a few volunteers with trucks/trailers and who are able to lift slightly heavy equipment like wheelchairs. It is a once or twice a month volunteer opportunity to pick up equipment from donors' homes in the Williamsburg area. It is on an as needed basis but the commitment would be no more than 2 times monthly. Contact: Diane Harrah, Program Assistant, Williamsburg F.R.E.E., 757-707-4741 or www.free-foundation.org. F.R.E.E. is a non-profit that gifts mobility related equipment to adults who are uninsured or under insured and have no other means of obtaining needed mobility equipment such as canes, walkers, bed rails, hover lifts, wheelchairs and power scooters. If you or someone you know is in need of equipment or would like to make a donation, call 757-707-4741, visit our website www.free-foundation.org, or find us on Facebook.

Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

Ongoing

Persons with Parkinson's and their caregivers meet at the Williamsburg Landing Health Club and Spa on the second Monday of each month at 1 pm. Join us as we learn from experts and share our experiences. Contact Jacob Hostetter at 757-221-0160 or WPSG@cox.net for more information.

Hey Neighbor!

MOM'S PRAYING FOR CHILDREN & SCHOOLS

Ongoing

Moms join together to pray for our children. Now more than ever our children and our schools need the peace and power of prayer. Moms in Prayer International meets weekly every Wednesday at Calvary Chapel Williamsburg from 1 – 2 pm. Calvary Chapel is located at 5535 Olde Towne

Road (behind Food Lion). Contact Info: Jeanne Hallman, 757-220-8400, Jeanne4J@cox.net

Hey Neighbor!

BIBLE STUDY IN NORGE

Ongoing

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. We also use the teachings based on the Shepherds Chapel for those that study with them. 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 7576046649

Hey Neighbor!

THE WILLIAMSBURG WOMEN'S CHORUS REGISTRATION FOR NEW MEMBERS FOR FALL SEASON.

Ongoing

The Chorus is open to women of all ages and voice parts. Rehearsals are held on Thursday Mornings at Bruton Parish House from 10 am to noon. We will be preparing for our Winter Concert which will be held in December. Rehearsals for the fall season will begin September 6, 2018. If interested please contact Beckie Davy at bdavy@brutonparish.org to set up an informal audition.

Hey Neighbor!

GROVE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Ongoing

Come by and see what is growing! There are over 900 bulbs in bloom right now! The garden is coming to life and you can help! All are welcome! Volunteer!!! No amount of time is too small! Check out our new fence and expanded planting area, sign up for a plot! For info call Rob Till @757-332-3361.

For a full listing of

Hey Neighbor!

submissions, visit

WilliamsburgNeighbors.com

and click on

Hey Neighbor

Williamsburg's
IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
photo challenge

THE GOLDEN
HORSESHOE

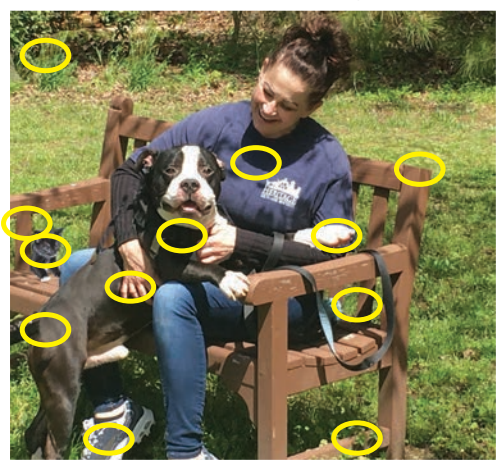
Find the 12 differences
between the original
photograph (top) and
the altered photograph
(bottom).

Enjoy!

INTERMEDIATE

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

MAY 2019
In the Neighborhood
Photo Challenge



Medical emergencies don't happen on a schedule...



But when they do, seconds matter.

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- Experienced doctors
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135 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

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Fords Colony - \$665,000

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Newly updated kitchen

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Extensive millwork & refinished HW floors
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http://185heritagepointe.info



Charlotte Turner
ASSOCIATE BROKER

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3443 FREDERICK DR.

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3BR • 2.5 BA • 2,112 sqft

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Great curb appeal!

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Private wooded back yard!

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ASSOCIATE BROKER, ABR, SRES, SFR

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