

August 2009

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VOL. 3, ISSUE 8

PRICELESS

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Technology in Our Lives

Richard Dollieslager

TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

Lindsay Mizell

TECHNOLOGY AT HOME

Beth Carlson

TECHNOLOGY IN HEALTH CARE

Melanie Beaumont

TECHNOLOGY IN BUSINESS

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Meredith Collins, Publisher

Technology is everywhere and there are few, if any, of us who aren't touched by it in some way. What's more, technology just doesn't sit still. It has the perpetual exuberance of a five year old and it continues to evolve day-by-day, even minute-by-minute. Just when we get used to one new gadget it becomes outdated and replaced with a newer, upgraded model.

There are a number of locals who work in technology - some intensely and some in more peripheral roles - who would have made great subjects for interviews for this issue. With *Technology in Our Lives*, I wanted to introduce you to people who have interesting connections to technology that you might be able to relate to in your own life. In the pages ahead, you'll meet a few of these folks who tell us about themselves and their connection to technology in terms that most of us can readily understand and appreciate. Who knows, you might just learn something too! NDN

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CORRECTION: In last month's issue we brought you a story about kayaking that contained incorrect information. According to the National Park Service, kayaks (and other vessels) are prohibited from being launched or landed on the Colonial Parkway. This prohibition is enforced by patrolling Park Rangers. For more information you may call the Park Service at (757) 898-2410. *Next Door Neighbors* regrets the error.



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richard dollieslager

Technology in today's classrooms

By Brandy Centolanza

**TECHNOLOGY
IN EDUCATION**

Advances in technology have made it more convenient than ever for students and teachers to communicate with each other beyond the classroom. Richard Dollieslager, an English professor at Thomas Nelson Community College who will be making the

transition to the college's new Williamsburg campus, views that as a good thing.

"Technology has improved teaching in remarkable ways," Rick says. "Now it's so easy for students to stay connected with each other and with the faculty. It's easier for

students to ask questions and keep up with schoolwork."

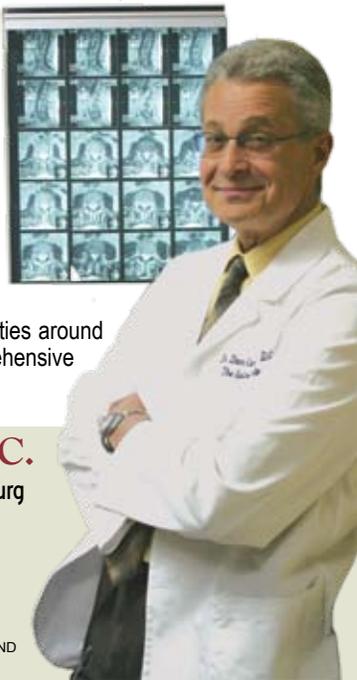
Inventions such as the smartboard, a device which allows images from a computer to be projected on a whiteboard where the blackboard used to be, enable students



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to track class discussions and class notes immediately after a class ends.

"These are really nifty," Rick says. "They can do a lot of things and it's all (done) by touching the screen."

When the Williamsburg campus opens later this summer, it will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including the most modern computers with wireless Internet capability. Access to computers and e-mail will allow students to engage with instructors more on their own schedule

"This is a very tech savvy generation," Rick says. "Students are very conversant with technology, and they expect their faculty to also be conversant with the technology."

To that end, Rick, who holds Bachelor's degrees in Journalism and Philosophy and a Masters Degree in English Education, tries to stay up with the latest in technology.

"When the Internet first started to become accessible to people in the mid 1990's, I just saw right away that this was going to be huge," Rick says. "This was going to be the way that people connect and communicate in the future, and I wanted to be a part of that process. I guess it was

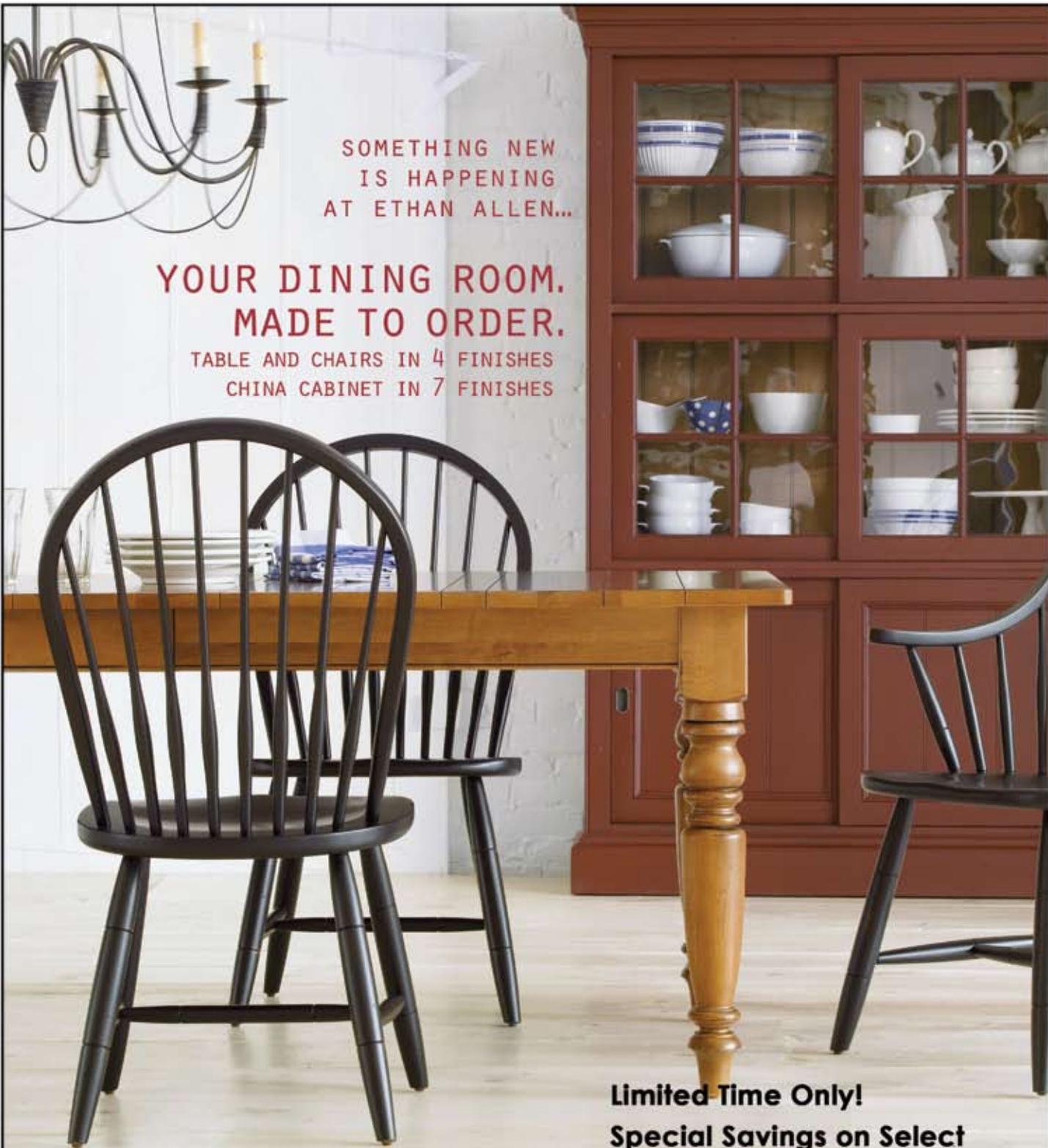
largely because of my journalism/mass communication background that I hooked into the Internet immediately. I mean what a wonderful way for students to have a voice and to communicate with millions of people. It was the manifestation of Alvin Toffler's and Marshall McLuhan's 1970's visions of the next phase - of the new age, the 'Information Age' that they had predicted - and they were so



"A smartboard is connected to a computer like the one you see above and the image is projected on a white board (shown on the previous page).

A projector is used to display a computer's video output onto the whiteboard, which then acts as a huge touchscreen. The smartboard usually comes with 4 digital writing utensils that use digital ink replacing the traditional whiteboard markers. The digital ink works by using an active digitizer that controls the computer input information for writing capabilities such as drawing or handwriting. The interactive whiteboard is usually mounted on a wall or a floor stand and is used in face-to-face or virtual settings in education, business and government. The interactive whiteboard accepts touch input from a finger or a pen".

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_Boards



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right. Now we are living in it, and isn't it great?"

Rick certainly thinks so, and he works to help his students embrace technology as well. His instruction includes aiding students in the development of their own websites and webfolios. Webfolio's are collections of a student's work on a web page or web site that may contain commentary on the work. Class assignments are maintained on a webfolio in lieu of the traditional term paper. This gives students practice in using the Internet, helps develop better communication skills as they write for a broader audience, and preps them for their careers post-graduation. It is Rick's hope that students will use the webfolios for academic, professional, and personal purposes as they share what they accomplish via technology with family, friends, and potential employers and realize that learning through the use of a computer can be fun.

"Through the webfolios, I want to give my students an opportunity to be a part of the world dialogue that is taking place all around us, and to develop their own voice by contributing to it," Rick says. His students are enjoying the concept and focusing beyond a letter grade.

"Students tend to put more effort in their work if they know it is going to be online and it is going to potentially be read by a lot of people," he says. "They are pretty proud of themselves, and they should be."

In addition to his own website creations, sometimes Rick turns to other sites during the course of his teaching. One of his favorites is www.YouTube.com, a popular web site in which anyone can post video footage about any subject matter.

"I like YouTube," Rick says. "I use it a lot."

Though technology has proven to be beneficial in the classroom, there are some drawbacks.

"The one challenge is when things aren't going well, when the Internet may be inaccessible, and this usually happens at inopportune times," Rick says. "But you just need to have a plan B."

Rick is a native of Illinois and graduated from Southern Illinois University. He worked at Southern Illinois as well as at a community college in Iowa before joining the faculty at Thomas Nelson Community College as an English professor in 1992. He and his wife, Laura, are avid sailboaters and history buffs, making greater Williamsburg the perfect place to live.

"We just love it here," he says.

His wife works at Eastern State Hospital, and Rick is looking forward to the switch to the Williamsburg campus. For now, he remains committed to his current crop of students.

"I spend a lot of time in front of the computer," he says. "But I want my students to have that access to me and to be well-informed, and that's what technology allows us to do." NDN



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TECHNOLOGY AT HOME

lindsay mizell

Making technology make sense!

By Linda Landreth Phelps

Enclosed with my latest electronic toy comes something I call “the destructions.” To my chagrin, a written instruction manual seldom suffices, because if it involves numbers or moving parts, it’s all Geek to me. Fortunately, Lindsay Mizell is bilingual and easily translates Geek into plain English.

Lindsay began working for Best Buy, a store that specializes in home electronics, in October of 2007. She was cross-trained in almost every department, but she is currently best acquainted with small electronics.

“We have people come in who have little or no familiarity with anything technical,” Lindsay says, “so we have to learn to gauge our technotalk to their comfort level. For in-

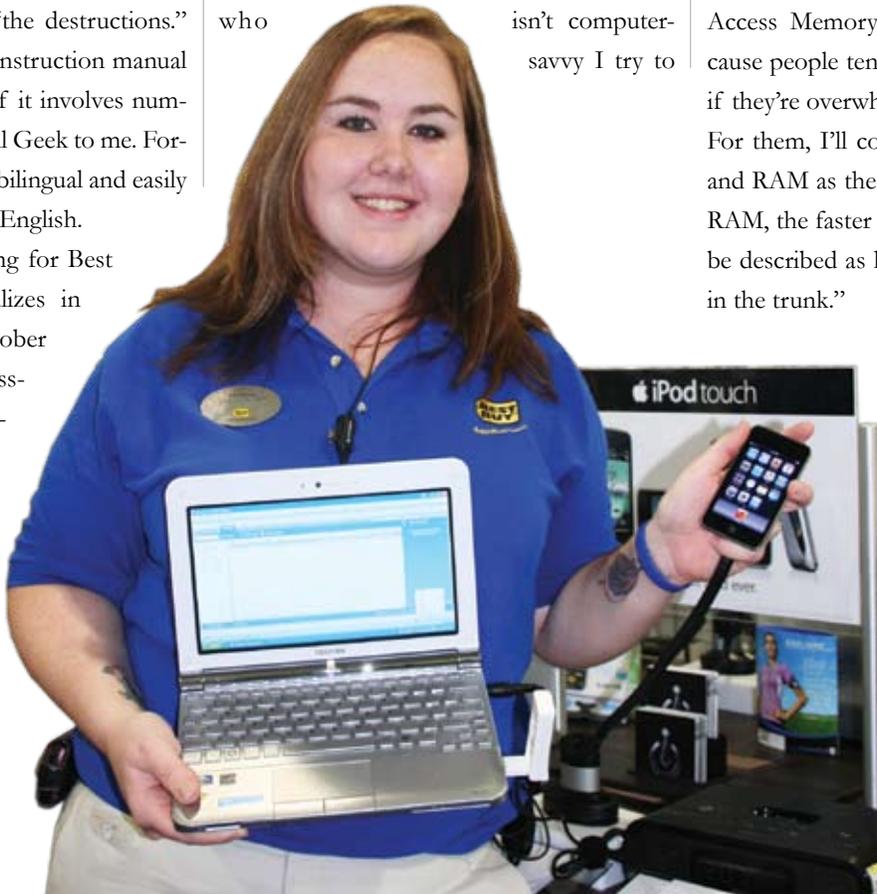
stance, who

for someone isn’t computer-savvy I try to

describe features such as RAM (Random Access Memory) and memory simply, because people tend to shut down and give up if they’re overwhelmed with technical terms. For them, I’ll compare a computer to a car and RAM as the car’s accelerator - the more RAM, the faster you go. Memory (bytes) can be described as how much room you’ve got in the trunk.”

Lindsay loves her job and living here in Williamsburg and her enthusiasm for both is apparent as we chat.

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I made the move. It's just beautiful and so peaceful compared to where I was. I live in the Carter's Grove area; it's affordable and with just a five minute commute, I can go home for lunch if I want to!"

Unlike some 22 year-olds, Lindsay has already focused on a definite career goal. Within the next two years she hopes to be an assistant manager and is taking courses in business to help ensure this.

"My 5-to-10 year goal is to be a general manager of my own store or be in corporate," she says. "It's an excellent company to work for."

If you can't imagine a day without email, text messages, or tweets, and you liken loss of signal as an experience equivalent to being stranded alone on a desert island, you're probably not a member of the Baby Boomer generation. Conversely, if you read that last sentence and thought, "Uh...tweets?" you are most likely a Boomer - and might even

live in a home where digital clocks always say its noon. Young people like Lindsay who grew up in a time when kids were expected

er laptop, and she goes online and Googles™ anything she wants to know about."

As one of those techno-challenged Boom-

"I tell my customers to play with their new computers all they want, to explore all its possibilities because you're not going to break it unless you drop it on the floor. The more you play around with it, the more you learn." - lindsay mizell

to explore and not be told "Don't touch that!" now help us bridge that technological generation gap.

"I tell my customers to play with their new computers all they want, to explore all its possibilities," Lindsay says, "because you're not going to break it unless you drop it on the floor. The more you play around with it, the more you learn." Lindsay laughs and goes on. "My little cousin is 11 and she owns two cell phones, an iPod®, a Netbook, plus a large-

ers, I'm fuzzy about just what an iPod® does besides play music. "The iPod® is an Apple product," Lindsay explains patiently. "Their iPod Touch® is a lot like a Palm Pilot organizer but can replace that PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) to keep track of your calendar and contacts. Ipod Touch® also has full use of the Internet where there is an accessible wireless signal, or Wi-Fi. You can sync it with your computer, and it has movie and photo capabilities as well as music. But there are

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other good entry level MP3 players such as Sony’s Walkman™ or the basic version of Zune™ by Microsoft, which will store 1,000 songs,” Lindsay says.

“Out of all the electronics that are out there, I personally think the laptop computer has made the most impact. We have what we call a ‘road warrior’ laptop with 4 gigabytes of RAM that is small and portable. On a computer with enough memory you can edit movies, create your own music, just about everything you’d want. But the future,” Lindsay says, “is all about miniaturization and portability, and they’re making more powerful and versatile electronics with every passing day.”

Consider this: Four decades ago a state of the art computer filled a large, climate-controlled room. It had 64 kilobytes of memory and was infinitely less capable than present day hardware. Thanks to ever-smaller and efficient microprocessors, this technology now fits comfortably in a shirt pocket. Today you can make a call, check email, listen to music, read a book, or watch a movie with a handheld device. With a 2.5 lb. Netbook laptop, all of the information in the world is literally at your fingertips. You can video chat with a sister in Australia, send her pictures of the new grandbaby, or pay your bills without ever touching paper. Thanks to satellites orbiting the earth, for approximately a hundred dollars a postcard-sized GPS (Global Positioning System)

means anyone can travel confidently and never get lost. We can mount a flatscreen TV on our wall and watch Wimbledon live and larger than life, in such high definition that we can see every bead of sweat on the players’ brows. We live

“The future is all about miniaturization and portability, and they’re making more powerful and versatile electronics with every passing day.”

- lindsay mizell

in an age of marvels, and we cannot even begin to imagine what miraculous inventions await Lindsay’s children and grandchildren.

I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the changes I’ve seen, but even so, I can’t imagine going back to the days when life was slower paced but more constrained and less convenient, an era when this story would have been slathered in Wite-Out™ several times over during the editing process. Time marches on and so does progress, so it’s best to embrace it wholeheartedly.

I wonder... do you suppose Lindsay would show me how to program my DVR? NDN

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TECHNOLOGY IN HEALTH CARE



beth carlson New ways of keeping patient data

By Alison Johnson

Beth Carlson's first experiences with care giving came when she was a young child on her family's farm in Nebraska. There, Beth and her six siblings helped raise chickens,

bottle-feed tiny calves and warm newborn animals by the fire in the dead of winter.

When Beth was 14, her 21-year-old sister Charlyn was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

Doctors first told Charlyn she had just three months to live, but thanks to surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, she is alive and well today.

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That was when Beth decided she wanted to go into health care and use her nurturing skills to help guide other people back to health.

"I saw what a wonderful thing it was to be able to help someone like that," says Beth, a registered nurse and Vice President of Patient Care Services at Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center. "That ability to make a difference – I felt strongly early on that I wanted to be a part of it."

These days, Beth's main focus is her hospital's move to a comprehensive electronic medical record system, called Sentara eCare®. She is overseeing the operations committee in charge of getting eCare® up and running, including ordering specialized equipment, coordinating staff training and anticipating potential snags before they occur.

In September, Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center will become the fifth Sentara hospital in Hampton Roads to go live on the eCare® system, which also is drawing in local physician's offices. With it, doctors will be able to enter prescriptions by computer. This will speed medication delivery to hospitalized patients and likely cut down on human error. They also will have access to a patient's complete medical history and real-time vital statistics at the touch of a button.

"This will really enhance patient safety," Beth says. "People are excited about it because it has such benefits for both patients and staff."

Eventually, area residents will be able to call up their medical charts at home – on a secure system that guards privacy – and use their computer for basic tasks such as scheduling appointments, requesting prescription refills and researching medical conditions.

"Beth is a respected leader who promotes a real sense of teamwork among the management and staff," says Kim Van Sickle, spokeswoman for Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center. "She has previous experience with implementing an electronic medical record system and her perspective provides great value to the team."

When doctors can enter orders by computer, they avoid handwritten prescriptions – which aren't always completely legible – and send their directions directly to the department or person who needs them, including pharmacists, nurses, physical therapists and dietitians. That significantly speeds delivery of treatment to patients. At the Sentara hospitals already active on eCare®, for example, the length of time from a doctor ordering a drug to a patient receiving it has dropped from an average 132 minutes to 35 minutes. Caregivers who administer medication also will be able to double-check the type and dose by first scanning a bar code on a patient's wristband.

Sentara hopes to have all its hospitals and affiliated doctors on the system by the end of 2010. That means any doctor – including an emergency room physician seeing a patient for the first time – could call up past test results and medical histories, information that can be crucial in saving lives.

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and each staff member likely will need eight to ten hours of training before it launches. Beth and others at Sentara think it's worth the effort, especially as more hospitals locally and nationwide move to electronic medical records and President Obama has tied some federal stimulus funds to such efforts. The system should cut costs down the road and, as an added benefit, require hospitals to use

“This will really enhance patient safety. People are excited about it because it has such benefits for both patients and staff.” - beth carlson

much less paper.

Beth, 48, began to focus on the new project not long after making a major change in her own life. In October, she and her husband, Wade, moved to Virginia from Lincoln, Nebraska, where Beth had worked at another hospital that recently made the transition to electronic medical records.

Nebraska had been the couple's lifelong home. Both are from Wausa, a small town near the state's northeast corner where everyone knew everyone and heavy snowstorms were part of life. Beth and Wade started dating while they were in college at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. Beth graduated with a degree in nursing in 1982; Wade studied pharmacy.

One day at college, Beth ran into the neurosurgeon who had operated on her sister years earlier. He not only remembered Charlyn but wanted to hear all about how she was doing.

This happenstance meeting helped to solidify her career choice in health care.

Beth and Wade raised five children in Lincoln, the youngest of whom is now a college freshman. When several of their children moved toward the east coast, the couple decided to relocate to Virginia and they bought a home in James City County.

“I love it here,” Beth says. “It's a beautiful area, and there is so much to do. And I love the winters! I remember when it snowed a little in March and everybody was asking for rides to work. I was like, ‘No problem, I'll get them!’”

When she's not busy at the hospital, Beth enjoys staying in touch with her children, traveling and going to music and arts performances. Among her favorite outings are the instrumental and choral performances held at Bruton Parish Church.

Tackling the eCare® project has been hard work, but also a perfect fit for Beth because she witnessed such a system's benefits at her hospital in Nebraska.

“It's just the right thing to do,” Beth says. “We're glad the countdown is on.”

Beth is a long way from her small farm in Nebraska where she nurtured baby chickens and calves, but she hasn't strayed far from her roots. She's still busy taking care of others - her friends and neighbors in Williamsburg. NDN



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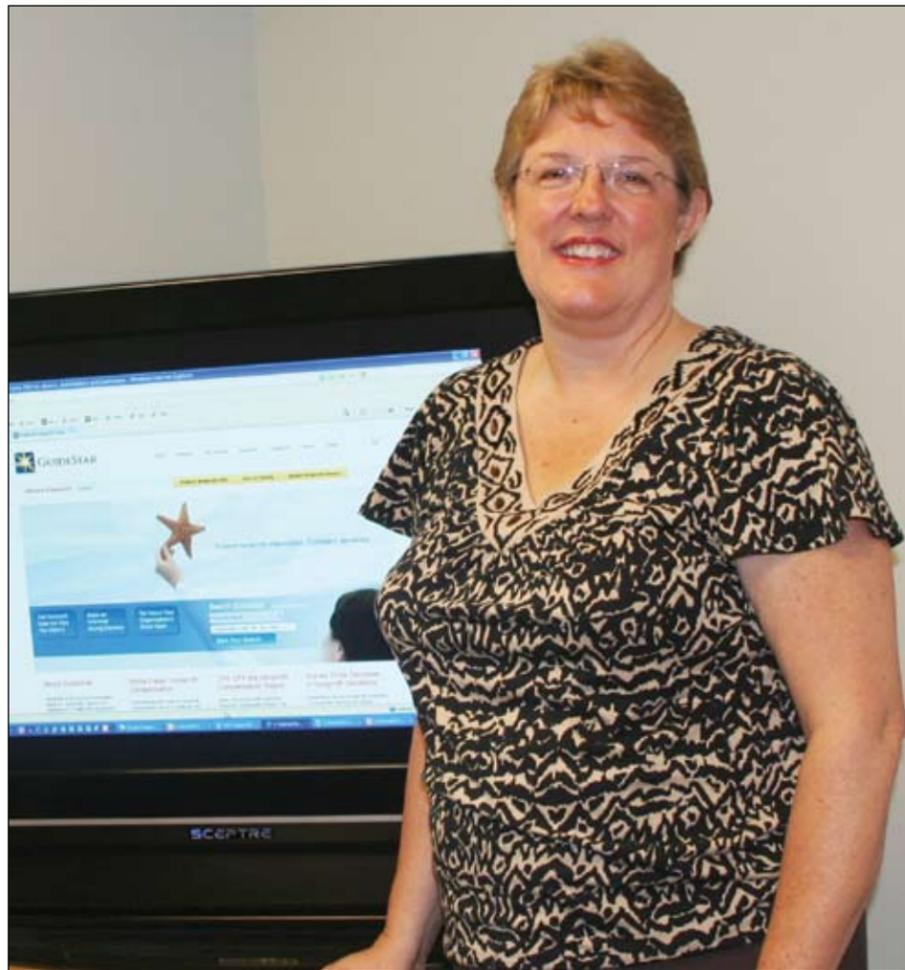
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melanie beaumont

Using the Internet to connect nonprofit organizations

By Sara E. Lewis



Melanie Beaumont had the technical skills that were needed to get the data entry job she saw advertised at Philanthropic Research, Inc. nearly 15 years ago. The key to her long-term success, however, has been her ability to grow with the offline company as it evolved into the Williamsburg-based Internet research company, GuideStar. Her special ability has to do with using good old-fashioned people skills to demystify technology, thus making it more useful in nonprofit sector work.

“Technically, I’m not a technology person,” said the Director of Nonprofit Support. “I think my job has evolved the most out of anyone here at GuideStar.” After starting in a position where she entered information into the company’s database from microfiche received from the IRS, she began to manage teams of college students who entered the data. Later, she moved up to a

customer service position and eventually became manager of the Customer Service department. She now directs the nonprofit support team.

“Keeping up with the technological changes is indeed a must in order to assist the nonprofits,” Melanie said. Her support team translates the technology into human terms and helps organizations find their way around their web site and use the forms. Melanie and others on the support team talk users through uploading documents and photographs and adding links to video clips.

Soon after Melanie began to enter data for the company, she discovered what they were doing and was hooked on their vision for the future. She is motivated by the GuideStar mission: To revolutionize philanthropy and nonprofit practices by providing information that advances transparency, enables users to make better decisions, and encourages charitable giving.

In the early days of Internet development, Philanthropic Research compiled data in a paper directory for individuals and organizations to use to research nonprofits. They went on to create a Directory of American Charities on CD ROM. The book and CD ROM were outdated almost as quickly as they were published. The data was soon transferred to the Internet and the GuideStar web site was launched in 1996. She is continually challenged to keep up technology and changes in the philanthropic sector too.

The GuideStar volume is huge. The site has handled 19 million page views so far this year and a lot of ordinary people use the site to make donations. “Prior to the inception of GuideStar, donors did not have any other avenue of researching nonprofits except to rely on the solicitation piece they received in the mail or from the phone calls they received at dinner time each night from the company hired to solicit donations,” Melanie said. The company founder wanted to change that model. He wanted it to be easier for donors to give and nonprofits to solicit. “Anyone who is interested in learning about a cause, or just someone wanting to learn more about their local food bank or humane society can come to GuideStar and do the research,” she added.

Visitors can research and donate online while on GuideStar’s site. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been donated by individuals who use the site to check up on companies that may be soliciting them. “That’s why it’s important for nonprofits to go to the site to upload their latest information, mission, names of Board members, photos and videos of events. They can do it themselves.”

To research nonprofit information above and beyond the basic level, individual clients as well as financial institutions and foundations pay for products and services. They might order custom data sets that require searches to find nonprofits that meet particular criteria in a zip code area of interest, for example. Libraries buy mem-



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berships that allow their patrons to research beyond the basic level.

"I deal with the nonprofits on a daily basis," said Melanie. "It excites me when I hear of donations that they have received because the donor was able to locate them on GuideStar."

For example, by using GuideStar a charitable group in Washington D.C. found an agency in Kentucky that works with early intervention for children with disabilities. The Washington group chose the agency to receive the proceeds from an annual gala. The Kentucky nonprofit was able to pay off debt, buy equipment, and add a staff position with the funds.

"This particular story comes from a co-worker, but the outcome simply makes me feel good all over whenever I hear it," said Melanie.

"Keeping up with the technological changes is indeed a must in order to assist the nonprofits."

- melanie beaumont

GuideStar doesn't have comparison numbers regarding how many people are using their site to find charitable causes or to make donations vs other means. However a recent article in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* reports that online fund raising continues to bring in larger individual and combined donations. Unfortunately, however, this giving has not made up for the recent decreases in direct mail solicitation. One source quoted by the Chronicle feels that the Internet is "just another channel" used by fund raisers.

Has the Internet changed the way nonprofits solicit? "Absolutely," Melanie said. "More nonprofits are taking advantage of providing full disclosure and transparency by utilizing sites such as GuideStar." Thousands of nonprofits recognize this and are putting more information on the GuideStar Web site.

GuideStar's successful business model has attracted competitors, but no one else does exactly what GuideStar does. "GuideStar does not evaluate charities," Melanie explained. The GuideStar site includes many more nonprofit organizations, making it more useful to large donors and institutions.

Guidestar continues to grow and serve the needs of charitable giving. "I have been with GuideStar for over 14 years and hope to continue to grow and change with the organization for many years to come," said Melanie. The economic downturn provides yet another opportunity for GuideStar to innovate. "We certainly have heard from the charities on how the downturn has impacted them and the need is there more than ever for sites like GuideStar." NDN

To learn more visit: www2.guidestar.org.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE LAW



bambi faivre walters, pc

Turning technology dreams into reality

By Sara E. Lewis

Energetic, daring, and persevering are just a few of the words that come to mind to describe a woman named Bambi. Perhaps it is the name that has stirred her to be gentle,

but never fawning.

Like many in the Gen X cohort, she saw the computer become as commonplace as television and the Internet rise as a tool

for global social and economic change. Early on, she dreamed of going boldly where no one had gone before. But the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster and the Savings and Loan

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crisis were defining moments that tamped down her intrepid dreams. She met her husband in engineering school. Both husband and wife chaffed at the idea of engineering management careers so they tried again. He went to medical school and she pursued law.

In the next turn of events, Bambi's life took off toward legal defense and development of technology. She honed skills in products liability, toxic torts, and entertainment representation. When her children came along, she slowed down and switched gears to patent protection. The woman who had at first spurned management soon enough found herself managing intellectual property matters for a Fortune 500 client. More work in managing designs and products followed. She was reminded that in a world ruled by the Internet, every business that used computers - most by the turn of the 21st century - was a global technology business. Technology-based intellectual properties needed protection.

"In 2002, a Fortune 500 client offered me all the work that I could possibly need to start my own firm. So, pregnant with my third child, I left to hang out my own shingle," explained Bambi. She has been in solo practice ever since and her firm has prosecuted more than a thousand worldwide patents and trademark cases.

Within a few years, after the third child entered kindergarten, Bambi made a strategic change. Instead of handling one or two large clients, she began to work with independent inventors and start-up businesses. She helped them wade through intellectual properties law to identify, protect and grow assets. "I wanted to know that I was needed, that I brought strategic value, and that I was making a difference."

If you've read the children's book or seen the movie, *Adaptations*, you know that Bambi was actually a strong and fearless young deer. That fawn grew up to be a leader, helping others find their way in the wild woods. Similarly, Bambi is making her own way in the world of technology and Internet law.

In September 2008, Bambi opened her Williamsburg practice and founded the local Virginia Inventors' Forum, a collaborative of innovative businesses, inventors, manufacturers, attorneys, and other professionals. Her practice has grown and moved to larger quarters on the corner of Route 199 and Jamestown Road. Linda Quigley, who teaches Internet and Technology Law at William and Mary, has joined the firm offering experience in copyrights, trademarks and online business regulation. The staff includes two law clerks and a registered patent agent. Bambi's firm is the only Native American woman-owned law firm in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

"We've felt growing pains, but the fact remains that I am very proud of where I have come and know that my team makes a huge difference," she said. Just last week she heard a Top 10 song on the radio that was written by a local writer who recently registered for copyright protection.

Bambi is excited and challenged to help clients turn dreams into dollars. "We are working on projects with DreamWorks, Virgin Records, Lifetime Network, government agencies, and over eighty businesses in Tidewater to protect innovative products and processes.

We take on the David and Goliath cases that address the underworld of social networking, Second Life emoticons, privacy, and infringement on the Internet. We have a case pending in federal court against YouTube.”

Bambi points out that the U.S. Constitution includes the word “right” only once. In Article 1, Section 8, it promotes “the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.” The Bill of Rights secures other rights, but Bambi emphasizes that our forefathers thought it important to protect the intellectual rights of innovative average citizens in the Constitution.

Though the right is guaranteed, artists, inventors, and businesses are advised to sit down with an attorney to talk about patent,

“I nurture businesses and propel technology. I learn about the people, processes and products. I help them identify assets that are worth growing, protecting, and leveraging.”

- bambi faivre walters, pc

copyright, trademark, and trade secret protections. Attorneys that specialize in federal laws can help them navigate the minefield. Bambi explains that her approach is to act as a problem solver.

“I nurture businesses and propel technology,” Bambi says. “I learn about the people, processes and products. I help them identify as-

sets that are worth growing, protecting, and leveraging.”

She likes to help the “McGivers” of the world like Williamsburg innovator Troy Lapetina. “We call him Inspector Gadget,” said Bambi. Troy has recently invented a rapid access tool that penetrates barriers to minimize rescue times when accidents occur. “His invention is saving lives,” Bambi says. Orders are coming in from Homeland Security and Emergency Fire and Rescue Squads.” Bambi worked with Troy to patent his invention, copyright his instructional videos, and secure his trademark and trade secrets.

Bambi’s firm is dedicated to inventive people like Troy who are interested in the commercialization process. No one is in business to give their product away, she argues, and they don’t want to be ripped off. “A business can be dedicated to the public good, but if a person is in business to make money, they need to sit down with us,” she adds.

“Almost all of our new clients are referrals from other clients, businesses or practitioners,” she said. Bambi protects them in the wild woods when somebody tries to knock them off, blocks pirated imports, and copyrights songs and books headed for the top of the charts. “I wake up every day, look in the mirror, and know that I am blessed. We take on a lot of responsibility and I try to surround myself with talented, hard-working professionals and give them praise for keeping us on course.” NDN

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TECHNOLOGY IN COMMUNICATION

maria holdren

She “tweets” and she “twitters”!

By Rachel Sapin

The popularity of Twitter as a means of both personal and professional communication is increasingly evident. Upon news of Michael Jackson’s sudden death, thousands of Twitter users flooded the site to express their grief.¹ According to The New York Times, during the recent controversy surrounding the Iranian election, protestors used Twitter as a means of directing photos and video to journalists who the government had restricted from reporting about the event on the streets.²

“Twitter gives people an immediate pulse on news and events, and what people are talking about, often before any news outlet,” explains Maria K. Holdren, founder of Holdren Design, LLC in Williamsburg, a company that specializes in graphic design, print advertising and website design. “Twitter broadens an individual’s reach to a wider community, and allows him or her to learn from others.”

The way in which Twitter is changing our social landscape seems typical of many Web 2.0 tools that have gained popularity in recent years. These tools that include social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and MySpace, allow users to serve as active contributors to an online community. These sites often provide a platform through which users can set up profiles and interact with other users (in real-time), by posting comments and sharing content that can include photos, website links, and video.

Being relatively new to the social networking scene (it was developed in 2006, two years after Facebook), Twit-



ter sits on the fringes of mainstream use and still seems somewhat better understood by technophiles than the general public. Maria, who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design & Fine Arts from Carnegie Mellon University, is technology savvy. In addition to founding Holdren Design, she also recently launched Vahzio, a website design agency in Williamsburg, and serves as its Creative Director.

Before founding her own design agencies, Maria served for 14 years as the National Art Director for Sodexo, a \$5B company where she worked in various media that included computer/hand-generated illustration to electronic media, and photography.

She started using Twitter around 7 months ago primarily as a way to connect with people in her profession. Given her proficiency with online technology and her passion for design, Maria had little trouble understanding how to use Twitter as a tool for communication in both her personal and professional life.

According to eMarketer, a marketing and

research company that tracks Internet trends, Twitter had around 6 million users in the U.S. in 2008. The company predicts that by 2010 that number will go up to 18.1 million.³

Maria started using Twitter in part because it allowed her to get in on this rapidly expanding online conversation. "For me, Twitter provides greater exposure and networking opportunities," she says. It helps me spread the word about what I'm doing professionally (and personally) and helps me stay connected with my community."

To better understand the community Maria is referring to, it helps to know what Twitter is. When asked how she would describe Twitter to someone unfamiliar with it, Maria used the analogy of Twitter being like a vast and easily accessible online bulletin board. "Twitter is a free social networking service that basically functions like a giant bulletin board where anyone can stick a short note - 140 characters or less," she explains. "These posts are called 'tweets.' You can choose to read other people's tweets (this is called 'following' them), and other people can choose

to read yours (these are your 'followers'). Some people choose to keep their tweets private, and approve each request to be 'followed.'"

Most users on Twitter, however, allow almost anyone to see their tweets. "Since anyone can follow you, you really don't have any way of controlling who sees what, unless you 'block' the person that is following you, or set your profile to private, which in my opinion, defeats the sole purpose of Twitter - to share information," adds Maria.

"Twitter is about connecting humans to humans," observes Maria of why individuals and businesses are attracted to its informality. Although some people may be wary of mixing their personal and professional life or even wary of the idea of "following" someone or being "followed" by someone, on Twitter the practice is standard (and not as creepy as it may sound).

Maria finds Twitter especially useful for connecting with creative individuals in her field that she may not have otherwise known about. "Unlike Facebook or LinkedIn, where

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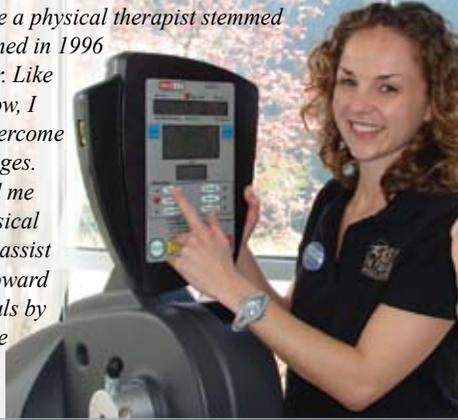
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you have to grant permission for people to connect with you, on Twitter you can allow anyone to follow you," she explains. "My Twitter page is customized so that it is a reflection of the Holdren Design 'brand,' and contains keywords that help make it searchable to people who are interested in me and my work."

In addition to using the site as a tool to network with other design professionals, Maria also uses Twitter to connect with other individuals whom she calls her "Twitter peeps." This category consists of people she knows personally and users whose tweets she simply finds interesting. Her posts on Twitter reflect her interaction with an online community that consists of both personal and professional contacts. She explains of her posts, "Content posted varies from where I am at the moment, to work-related links, to tweets about personal projects, to quotes and other links that I find interesting." On any given day, Maria may tweet about a recent trip to the beach or a service she needs for her business. "I think that giving individuals a glimpse of my personal side makes me more approachable, and also, it encourages others to become more engaged when I post interesting and less formal status updates," she says.

Although Maria makes it sound easy, successfully using Twitter as both a personal and professional tool can prove challenging. Her advice to users who are unfamiliar with the site is to not give in to the impulse to "follow" just anyone who follows you. "If you're just starting off on Twitter, you shouldn't feel obligated to follow all people back, even if you worry they'll think it's rude of you," she says. "Instead, you should follow people who share your interests or whose tweets you find meaningful or compelling. Start building a network by following your friends, family and co-workers. If you know other professionals in your field that are on Twitter, you should network with them as well. More than likely if you follow them they will follow you."

Another challenge that Maria believes many first-time users face with Twitter is being knowledgeable of the etiquette required to successfully communicate with others on the site. "There is quite an extensive Twitter-specific lingo," she explains.

"Twitquette", is one of those words, which means "Twitter etiquette" - the set of guidelines that dictates good (or bad) behavior on the service." An important Twitquette for any new user of Twitter is to stay true to the 140-character rule. "Don't chat," Maria emphasizes. "While Twitter is a great way to communicate with people, it isn't meant to be a chat room. If you are having a conversation with another Twitterer that exceeds more than just a couple tweets, use the Direct Message feature. Otherwise, your conversation is equivalent to telling an inside joke in the middle of a party."

Since Twitter is so widely accessible, Maria also suggests keeping the other users in mind when posting your tweets. "Keep your posts clever, or at least interesting," she advises. "No one really cares if you're simply 'eating,' or 'working.' You'll have more success with people engaging with you regarding your status updates that peak curiosity and prompt dialogue."

Although Maria enjoys the malleability of Twitter in the sense that

she feels comfortable posting both personal and professional content on the site, she still feels that its 140-character nature serves as a limitation for promoting her graphic design work. “[In regards to business] I have found more success with LinkedIn and Facebook, where you are able to share much more information than Twitter allows,” she says. “On Facebook, the interaction is much more dynamic. I consider Twitter to be more of a social networking tool, and prefer to maintain my business profile on a business-oriented site, such as LinkedIn. In my profession, it’s very important for prospective clients to see my work and get a better perspective of my services. Facebook and LinkedIn give me that opportunity; Twitter’s functionality does not.”

What differentiates Twitter from other social networking sites and perhaps makes it at the same time both exciting and scary to use, is that in contrast to other social sites such as Facebook and MySpace that offer greater user privacy, Twitter allows and even encourages you to “follow” almost anyone: from athletes and celebrities, to people who scavenge for online travel deals and post Web links to them, to experts who posts advice related to your work field. To be successful on the site, you in turn have to be open to having others “follow” you.

Despite the fact that there is a certain etiquette to using the site, Twitter is still so new and growing in terms of what it is used for that there is really no concrete definition as to how one should use it. According to Maria though, it is important to remember that when you join Twitter, you are joining a community that often spans nationalities, ages, races, and religions. “I definitely think that one must exercise caution as with any web-based social networking site in terms of divulging too much personal information,” she warns. “Twitter can be an amazing tool for creating a network of friends, contacts, and resources. However, you must always remain considerate of others to be considered a valuable member.”

Of course tweeting on Twitter isn’t the only thing Maria likes to do with her day; she also enjoys spending time with her family and friends, drawing, reading, going to the symphony and ballet, running, extreme sports and traveling; Maria’s thoughts on the above activities may very well be posted on Twitter from time to time as well.

Since Twitter is such a new form of technology, it’s difficult to understand exactly what it is just by reading about it; it’s hard enough to even write intelligently about it. The best way to learn about Twitter is to simply explore the site for yourself. You can start by visiting Maria’s Twitter profile at <http://twitter.com/mariaboldren>.

Happy Tweeting! NDN

1 <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/06/25/michael-jackson-tops-the-charts-on-twitter/?scp=2&sq=twitter&st=cse>

2 http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/21/weekinreview/21cobenweb.html?_r=4&scp=4&sq

3 <http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?R=1007059>

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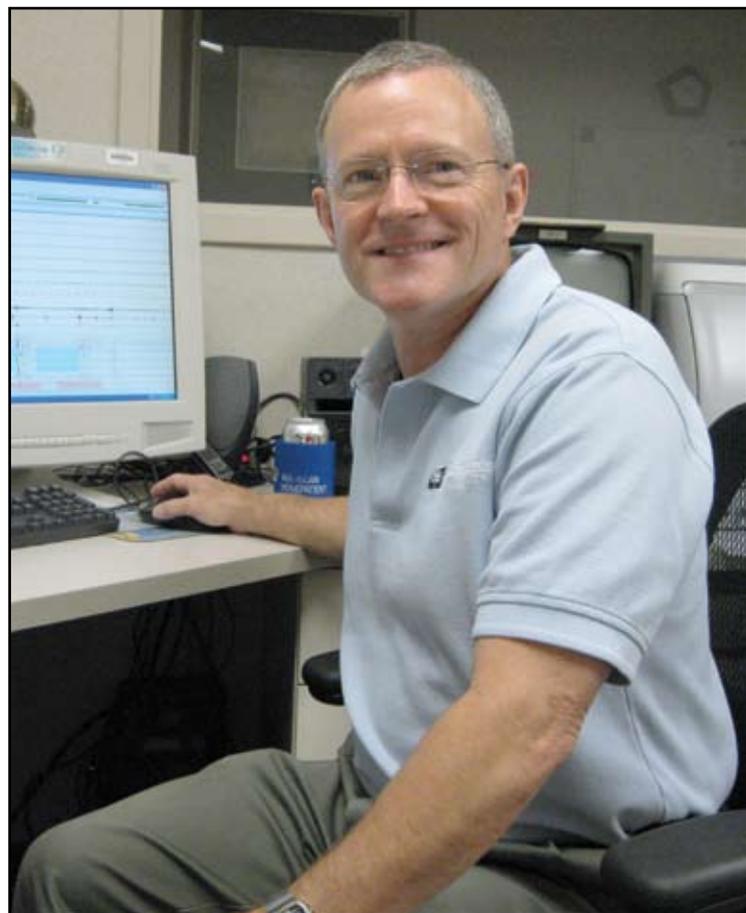
**Dr. Tom Bond
KNOWS THE SECRET TO A GOOD
NIGHT'S SLEEP**

by Greg Lilly, Lifestyle Editor

Don't miss the magic of sleep, Dr. Tom Bond always tells his technicians at the Sleep Disorders Center at Williamsburg Neurology. "It's fascinating," he explains. "You spend a third of your life asleep. You spend more time asleep than you do any other activity." Most of us know very little about what goes on during that third of our life, except whether we slept well or not.

That aspect of not sleeping well has interested Tom for 40 years. "I taught at Thomas Nelson Community College while I went to graduate school. Then during my internship at Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS), I did a rotation in the Sleep Disorders Center in Norfolk, and I absolutely just fell in love with the subject." He became a full-time faculty member at EVMS, then a few years later when Williamsburg Community Hospital wanted to establish a Sleep Disorders Center, Tom was the man chosen to set up the clinic.

He describes his work simply: "I see sleep patients, read sleep studies and help people with their sleep." But the extent of that statement covers many facets of health. Not sleeping well affects all aspects of your life, according to Tom. "Sleep disorders can make you miserable." Patients find their way into the Center saying they're not sleeping well, and Tom and his staff conduct sleep studies to diagnosis the problem: insomnia, restless legs, nocturnal eating syndrome, seizures, or other issues. "Our most common referral isn't for insomnia, although that is the most common sleep disorder. The most common referral is for obstructed sleep apnea. That's where your throat closes at night," he explains. "Apnea can kill you." Untreated apnea puts you at a greater risk of stroke, heart attack, high blood pressure, or even having a fatal car crash from falling asleep at the wheel.



The state of sleep shifts your body into a different gear. "Your brain waves change," Tom says. "Everything in your body changes: your metabolism changes, your respiratory system changes, your heart changes." At the Sleep Disorders Center, Tom and his staff, hook patients to monitors and record these variations throughout the night. The computer screen displays graphs of activity where Tom can pinpoint changes in sleep and physical conditions.

For people who have prolonged difficulty sleeping, contact your doctor. But for the occasional restless night or drowsy day, Tom says it can be caused by our habits. "The major issue for North Americans," he says, "is that we're sleep deprived. We don't get enough sleep at all."

These tips should help you set the optimum stage for a good night's sleep:

Seven to Eight Hours: "The average person needs seven to eight hours of sleep a night," Tom says. If on weekends, you want to, and do, sleep longer, then you probably aren't getting enough sleep during the work week. "You really can't make up for lost sleep," he adds. "It helps to sleep more, but it's not the same as getting seven to eight hours per night."

Just as with any measurement, there is variability, some people need nine hours and some can get by on six to seven. "Below six hours you are really unusual," Tom says, "or you're someone sitting in meetings, falling asleep, and drinking caffeine to stay awake."

No Caffeine Past Noon: "Caffeine has a half-life of eight to twelve hours," Tom says. Although some people may fall asleep with caffeine in their system, they usually wake up during the night. "It fragments their sleep," he adds.

No Late Meals: Eating a meal within a couple of hours of going to bed can keep you from resting. "Spicy foods can cause reflux," Tom explains. "Eating within two hours of going to bed is not a good thing if you have reflux."

Settle Down: Just like getting children ready for sleep, you should try to wind down and relax before going to bed. Don't exercise late at night, don't engage in a heated debate with your spouse or pay bills before bed. "We're just big kids," Tom says. "Don't

get overly excited when you know you need to sleep soon."

Dark & Quiet: "The way we're designed to sleep is dark, quiet, and at night," Tom explains. "No television, no reading, no clock watching," he stresses. Turn the alarm clock away from the bed. There is no need to see it during the night. "Clocks frustrate you if you have trouble sleeping," he adds. Your optimal environment may be a little different, but most people sleep better in a slightly cool room, a room with no sounds from television or radio or anything that might jolt you awake, a room as dark as possible. "Light is an incredible enemy of sleep," Tom explains. "It suppresses the production of melatonin."

Quality Mattress: If your mattress is

over ten years old, or you can't remember when you bought it, it's time to visit some showrooms. "You don't need to spend a huge amount on a mattress," Tom says, "but you spend a third of your life in bed. Don't cheap out on a mattress that you spend a third of your life on."

"You know," Tom says, "there's this intimate thing we all do: We go home, brush our teeth, put on some sort of night clothes, we get in bed, turn off the light, and then we go into this *whatever* state and wake up in the morning, not knowing what went on for those eight hours." His job is to monitor those hours, look into that nocturnal cycle, and help make that time more restful for his patients. "It's just cool," he adds. It's the magic of sleep. **NDN**

FINAL UPDATE READERSHIP SURVEY

Lucie Vinciguerra was the winner of the \$500 Gift Certificate. The drawing was held on June 30th. All 313 survey entries were entered into the drawing.

Lucie will use the gift certificates at various restaurants that are members of the Williamsburg Area Restaurant Association and Ace Hardware.

Thanks again to all who took the time to complete the survey!

Next Door Neighbors

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Comfortable Classic Design

by Greg Lilly, Lifestyle Editor

For Jolene Burke, style follows function. She and her husband Joe know what they like in their living space and what they need. “We use every square foot of this house,” Jolene says, “it’s not too big for our lifestyle.” They have created an environment tailored for their lives.

When they met, Jolene and Joe each had their own place and their own style. “We decided we would get rid of the things that we could part with,” Jolene explains, “and make our home *our* home, not leftovers from other lives.” While building their house, they purged household items that they didn’t need and furniture they didn’t love in order to have a fresh start.

“We thought about what we wanted,” Jolene says. “We don’t have children, so we knew we didn’t need a four bedroom home.” A smaller home appealed to them, but they knew to keep in mind re-sale possibilities. Joe, “an excellent cook and chef” according to Jolene, needed a well functioning kitchen and

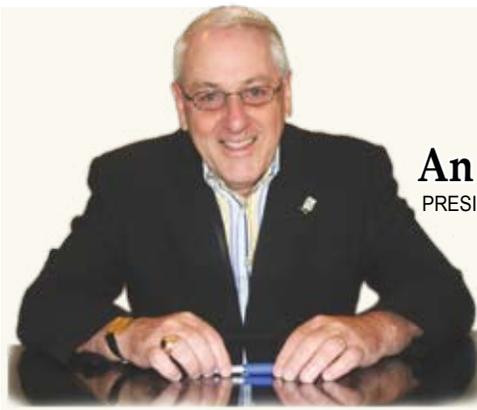
WWW.WBURGNDN.COM

Jolene Burke Makes a House a Home...with Style

dining room. Jolene wanted a home office. The plans fine-tuned into their present home.

To make the house a home, the décor had to be comfortable and durable. “We thought about the fact that we have big dogs - two Golden Retrievers,” Jolene says. “I had been in people’s homes where they had hardwood flooring and dogs. Dogs, especially large dogs, just tear up the floors. So we decided to put down laminate floors. We bought commercial grade laminate flooring and installed that throughout the house. It is a sense of style and not the look that everyone likes, but we really love it. Our dogs can race down the steps and slide across the living room floor and I’m not freaking out. This floor does not scratch. So for functionality, the flooring was one of our first selections.”

She admits that she’s the type of person who wants a project finished, so it was hard for her to wait for just the right furnishings for the home. Stores beckoned her with new furniture, pieces that she fell in love with, but she didn’t have a concrete idea of where they would go. “We bought a sofa and chair while living in the condo during the construction of this house,” Jolene explains. “The advice I would give anybody: to wait until you’re in that new space. We got a great deal on a sofa and over-sized chair, and when we got it in our living room, it was just huge. It was too big. I ended up consigning that furniture and replacing it. Take your time, get in the place and think about the functional-



Q & A

An Interview with Frank Hughes

PRESIDENT OF WILLIAMSBURG AREA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Email Frank at info@waarealtor.com

Last month you were able to give us a partial report on the 2nd Quarter in terms of real estate sales. Now that the 2nd Quarter is complete, what was the outcome?

HUGHES:

The recent data gives me some reasons for guarded optimism. In the 2nd Quarter pending sales were up 9% in James City County. That is extremely encouraging because pending sales is one way we forecast future activity.

The number of days a home is on the market has also decreased in James City County. It is down about 8% so it is not taking as long to sell a home in James City County as it did a year ago.

Perhaps the best news for the 2nd Quarter is that the homes in the \$400,000 to \$700,000 range are now showing signs of life. Sales in this price bracket are only down 10% as compared to the same time period last year. With homes priced under \$350,000 already moving and higher priced homes beginning to move we may be seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

However, let me also touch on some of the challenges we still face. As I mentioned last month, condominiums and townhomes are still taking the brunt of it. The largest percentage of decreases is in those areas. I don’t see any

change here in the immediate future because the inventory levels are so high.

Home sales are still down as compared to this same Quarter last year with James City County faring a bit better than the City of Williamsburg and upper York County. 2nd Quarter combined sales for all areas (James City County, Williamsburg, and upper York County) were down 28% compared to the prior year. If you isolate the sales statistics for the City of Williamsburg and upper York County (and exclude James City County), you will see that their combined sales were down 46%. These two areas represent about 20% of total sales in the market. If you look at the data for James City County only, sales were down 22% in the 2nd Quarter, and the average sale price was down only about 11% compared to the prior year. James City County represents the highest percentage of home sales in the area.

Last month you pointed to the Williamsburg Area Association of Realtors® web site as a place to go to find these statistics. What other resources are there for the public?

HUGHES:

For consumers, the Association’s web site is a click away for one stop shopping: www.waarealtor.com.

If you go to the web site and click on “Consumer Infor-

mation” you will see the home sales statistics posted quarterly. Most people don’t realize, however, that every available listing – all 2,482 – is on our web site for people to see.

If you click on “Find a Home” you can view every property that is available for sale. Provide the parameters you want and view only the properties that meet those parameters. There are photos, virtual tours and detailed information about each of the listings. You also will discover what Broker has that listing and with a quick telephone call you can speak with the Realtor® that is marketing that particular property. The available data includes lots, and commercial properties – anything on the Multiple Listing Service for our area.

The web site also will help you find a Realtor®. Click on “Find a Local Realtor®” and agents are listed in alphabetical order with all contact information. Click on “Information on Buying a Home” and find links to Home Buying Guides. If you are selling your home, click on “Information on Selling a Home” and learn how to select the right Realtor® including recommended interview questions. Click on “Housing Market Facts” to learn about the First Time Home Buyer Tax Credit.

There are also consumer links to local attractions. There is school information – public, private and even colleges, government links, utility information and more. You can also view information on our web site in a number of languages.

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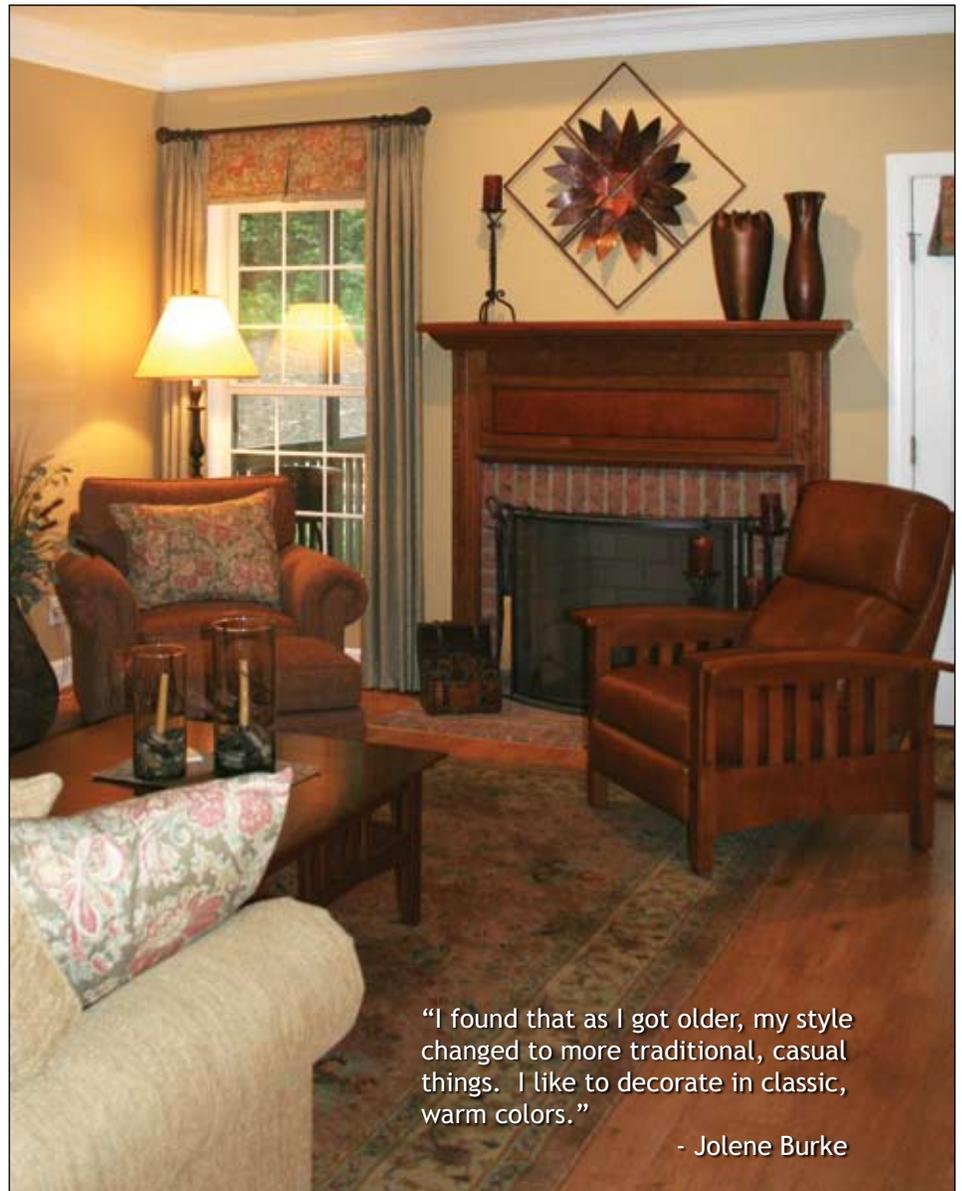


Next Door Neighbors Home

ity of the room.”

She says their style is a work-in-progress, always developing, honing in on their needs. “When I was younger, I liked country style and antiques,” Jolene explains. “I found that as I got older, my style changed to more traditional, casual things. I like to decorate in classic, warm colors. I’m not a wallpaper fan because I get tired of things quickly and it’s a lot of work to change wallpaper out.” She and Joe add color with wall art, accessories, bedding, and other items that can be changed easily. “Just think through what it is you like and want, and what will stay with you for a long time,” she advises. “My husband and I do the selection together. This is his house too and he has a stake in the look and feel.”

Recently, they finished the attic of the home to include a guest suite, exercise room, Joe’s office, and a television room. Both Jolene and Joe had been busy with work, so they sought assistance from Helen Conti, an award-winning designer at Ethan Allen. “The guidance was wonderful,” Jolene says. “Helen and her team were so easy to work with. My husband is in the military and was out of the country when we started designing this,” she says pointing out the newly decorated television room. “I worked with Helen and we picked out everything.” She explains that when Joe returned home, he liked it conceptually, but wanted to change some of the shades and tones of the color



“I found that as I got older, my style changed to more traditional, casual things. I like to decorate in classic, warm colors.”

- Jolene Burke

choices. “The team rose to the challenge,” she adds. “Their presentation was incredible - we basically bought Helen’s presentation. I had never done that before because I usually did it on my own. I feel like I have a decent decorator’s sense.” But with her busy schedule, Jolene was grateful for the help and insight. “Helen listened. She got to know us.

She really designed what fit both of us. She refined the presentation to meet Joe’s ideas.”

Designing a home to incorporate the tastes and necessities of a couple can be a challenge, but Jolene and her husband Joe worked together, and when they needed it, enlisted assistance to create the perfect environment for their lifestyle. NDN

Hey Neighbor!

There are more community announcements for this issue that did not fit on this page.

Please visit www.wburgndn.com and click on **Hey Neighbor!** for a complete list of current community announcements.

Hey Neighbor!

ITEMS NEEDED FOR AVALON

Avalon: A Center for Women and Children offers shelter, advocacy, education, and support to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Needs: a dishwasher, a television, and a reliable minivan. If you can assist with any of these items, please contact us at 258-5022 or kim@avaloncenter.org.

Hey Neighbor!

5K RUN FOR OPERATION HOMEFRONT

July 25, 2009

Operation Homefront provides emergency and morale assistance to our troops, their families and to wounded warriors when they return home. Held at Ft. Story VA. To register go to www.active.com or visit our website at www.operationhomefront.net/hamptonroads and download an application to complete and mail with check. For more information contact Carol Berg 272-6122.

Hey Neighbor!

HISTORIC TRIANGLE SENIOR CENTER TRIP

July 25, 2009

Trip to Colonial Downs Race Track. \$48 includes Jockey Room and lunch. Call 259-4187 for reservations.

Hey Neighbor!

ENERGY ASSISTANCE & CONSERVATION FAIR – VIRGINIA WORKFORCE CENTER

July 28, 2009

From 9:30-1:30 p.m., Sponsored by Dominion Virginia Power. Representatives from Dominion Virginia Power will be on-site to discuss bill payment options, ways to reduce

energy usage, and how customers can benefit from EnergyShare and other Dominion Assistance Programs. 5235 John Tyler Highway. (757) 253-4738.

Hey Neighbor!

FUNDRAISERS FOR PASHN

July 29, 2009

PASHN (Parents & Advocates for Special Housing Needs) will be providing housing opportunities in the Greater Williamsburg Area for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. All funds received from monthly fundraisers will help fund the “BUILDING COMMUNITY...ONE HOME AT A TIME” project. PASHN’s goal is to serve these residents throughout all stages of their lives, providing respite care, assisted living and convalescent care. To find out where you can dine to help support this cause call PAHN at 757-564-7624 or email pashn@cox.net.

Hey Neighbor!

FREE JOB TRANSITION WORKSHOP

August 1, 2009

8am to 12pm at Williamsburg Community Chapel, 3899 John Tyler Hwy. Learn how to update your resume, prepare for interviews, how to review your career choices, where to look for resources and much much more.

Hey Neighbor!

PARENTING HOT TOPICS – COLONIAL SERVICES BOARD

August 5 – 26, 2009

A 4 week class all about what parents need for coping with the challenges we face every day as parents. Topics include: What do you mean, “chill out”?, When do I have time? Where’s the Love? and who am I anymore? Classes are from 9:30 – 11:30 at the York River Baptist

Church in Williamsburg. Call 566-9777 to register. Class session fee is \$20.00 and child care will be provided for a suggested donation of \$5.00 per class. Scholarships are available.

Hey Neighbor!

VINEYARDS 5K RUN TO BENEFIT CHILD DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

August 8, 2009

Sentara presents the Vineyards 5K to Benefit Child Development Resources, a Colonial Road Runners Grand Prix Race! The event includes both a one mile walk and run and a 5K walk and run. There will be great food, children’s activities, and a raffle. For more information visit, www.vineyards5K.cdr.org

Hey Neighbor!

HERITAGE HUMANE SOCIETY CRITTERS CAMP

August 10-14, 2009

For rising 5th & 6th Graders. 12:30-4pm. Campers will build a sense of kindness, respect and responsibility for companion animals through hands-on activities, games, guest speakers and lots of interaction with shelter animals. The children will learn safe ways to interact with companion animals and will learn positive ways to train animals. The fee is \$175. For more information please call or email Ruthann McDermott, Volunteer Manager at 757-208-0382 or volunteermgr@heritagehumane.org

ATTENTION NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS!

Please email heyneighbor@cox.net
on or before Tuesday, August 4th to be
considered for inclusion in the August
20th issue of *Next Door Neighbors*.

Network Williamsburg

COLLECTION DRIVES to benefit area nonprofits have been coordinated by NetworkWilliamsburg and are being held until the end of August.

One church & eight area businesses are hosting the collection drives. To see a complete list of items needed and collection locations, please visit www.NetworkWilliamsburg.com.

If you are in their neighborhood, donations are welcome & much appreciated!



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